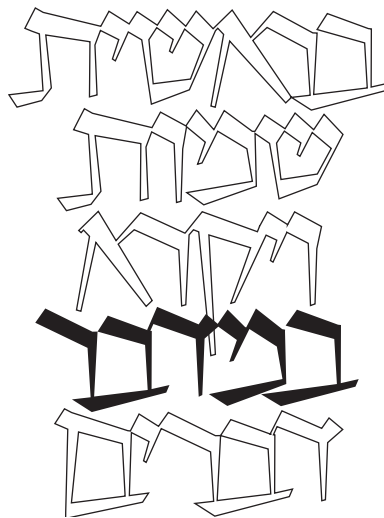


THE NAGEL EDITION

חומש קורן לב לדעת

THE KOREN LEV LADAAT HUMASH

BEMIDBAR / NUMBERS



TORAH TRANSLATION BY

Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks זצ"ל

COMMENTARIES BY

Rabbi Shlomo Einhorn, Executive Editor
and Rabbi Dr. Zvi Grumet, Senior Editor

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YAHBEMo4

THE NAGEL EDITION
OF THE KOREN YOUNG ADULT HUMASH LEV LADAAT
IS DEDICATED TO THE MEMORY OF

Jack M. Nagel ז"ו

ר' יעקב אלימלך ז"ל

A beloved husband, devoted father, adoring grandfather and great-grandfather.

A true Visionary, who survived the Shoah, and whose philosophy was
to deal compassionately and kindly with all people.

His love for Torah and being a mensch guided him throughout his life.

He believed Education was the key to Jewish survival, and he made it his life's mission
to enrich the Los Angeles community with all aspects of Jewish scholarship and culture.

He established and remained committed to many yeshivot and Centers of Jewish
Learning throughout the United States and in his cherished homeland, Israel.

He had great faith, great heart, and great courage and was blessed
together with his Eshet Chayil, our Mother Gitta,
to leave a legacy of Tzedaka, Chesed and Emunah.

מרבּה תורה מרבּה חיים. מרבּה צדקה מרבּה שלום.

"The more Torah, the more life. The more charity, the more peace." (Avot 2:8)

Dedicated with love by his children:

Dr. Ronnie and Cheryl Nagel

Los Angeles, California, USA

Esther and Dr. Paul Lerer

Englewood, New Jersey, USA

David and Marnie Nagel

Los Angeles, California, USA

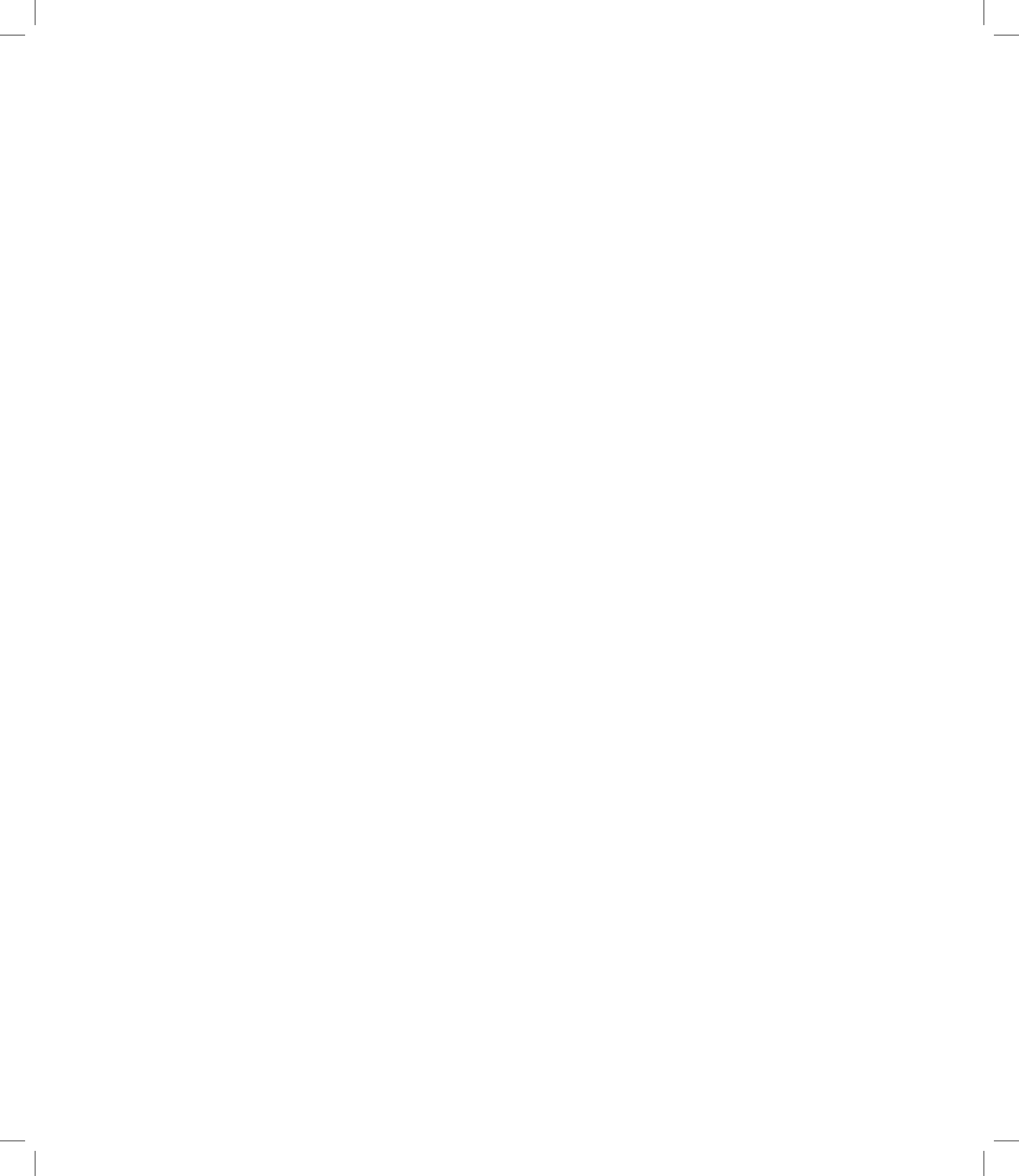
Careena and Drew Parker

Englewood, New Jersey, USA

And his devoted wife, Dr. Gitta Nagel

Los Angeles, California, USA





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PUBLISHER'S PREFACE

“דוד לדוד ישבח מעשיו” (תהלים קמה, ד)

“One generation will praise Your works to the next...” (Psalms 145:4)

It is with gratitude and a certain ambition that we introduce this volume of **THE NAGEL EDITION OF THE KOREN LEV LADAAT HUMASH**, a Hūmash designed to encourage connection, reflection, and learning of our foundation stone, the Torah.

The connection between Jewish young adults and the Torah is critical. Our children must learn the text of the Hūmash and the classical commentators who have illuminated difficult passages. But it is just as important – and all-too-often neglected – that the student or young adult engage emotionally and experientially with the text. How does the Torah give them a prism to view the world around them? The need for this deeper, spiritual interaction gives rise to the name of this edition: **Lev Ladaat: The Understanding Heart**. For our ambition is that every Jew engage with the Torah and incorporate its values into his or her daily life, not just as an academic exercise.

It is with this ambition that Koren Publishers Jerusalem has created this edition, designed for high school students and young adults in synagogue *minyanim*. Since 1962, the Koren Tanakh has been recognized for its textual accuracy and innovative graphic design. We have remained committed to these qualities, and we have recently had the privilege of enriching the Hūmash text with the eloquent English translation of one of the most articulate and original Jewish thinkers of our time, Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks, *zt”l*.

It is with gratitude that we acknowledge Rabbi Sacks for this exceptional translation of the Torah. And our thanks are no less due to Rabbi Shlomo Einhorn, from whose fertile imagination and broad educational

experience the concept for this Young Adult Hūmash sprang. Likewise to Rabbi Dr. Zvi Grumet, whose intimate knowledge of the Hūmash and its commentaries has enriched these pages inestimably. And to Caryn Meltz, our Managing Editor, who brought it all together into a handsome and useful edition. And finally, to the team of translators, editors, and typesetters – Rabbi Yedidya Naveh, Rabbi Jonathan Mishkin, Suri Brand, Ilana Sobel, Carolyn Budow Ben-David, Rina Ben-Gal, Efrat Gross, and Avichai Gamdani – who made the volume a reality.

None of this would have been possible without the support and detailed involvement of the Nagel Family of California and New Jersey, who understood both the ambitions and methods of this edition. **THE NAGEL EDITION OF THE KOREN LEV LADAAT HUMASH** is dedicated to the memory of Jack Nagel, *z”l*, who was an exceptional community leader. He and his beloved wife Gitta have enabled so much of Jewish life in the Los Angeles community, especially in the area of Jewish education: *yeshivot*, high schools, and so much more. Surviving the Holocaust and making a new life for himself and family, Jack’s was an exemplary Jewish life, combining *Torah im derekh erez*. Koren is honored to be associated with his memory.

On behalf of all our *rabbanim*, scholars, and designers, we thank the Nagel Family. And to the many thousands of readers, in this and future generations: We are forever in your debt.

We hope the use of this Hūmash will bring Jews closer and closer to the Torah and all the good it represents.

Matthew Miller, Publisher
Jerusalem, 5783 (2023)

EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

What if there were no more bookstores left on Earth? What if we woke up to discover that the written word had been almost eliminated? This is the frightening possibility we confront when we visit “The Last Bookstore” in downtown Los Angeles. The Last Bookstore takes the guise of a survival shelter where all of Earth’s great books are sold, in case there may one day be no other places to find books. I once had the opportunity to spend some time there, and I found my way to a Bible, which included a commentary for teenagers. It roused my curiosity – why is there no edition of the H̄umash directed toward young adults? Ought we be simply waiting for young Jewish people to come to the Torah, instead of bringing the Torah to them?

Some might say that teens aren’t interested in the H̄umash. They are mistaken. For twenty-two years I have been teaching young adults, and I have always found them to be as hungry for knowledge and connection as any other group. Whenever I look past a student’s distracted veneer and genuinely engage them with some profound thought, it opens a reservoir of dialogue that I could not have found elsewhere.

With social media and technology becoming a constant part of our lives, our need for real and deep connection has only grown stronger. The Torah, we know, is an עץ חַיִּים – a tree of life for all who hold on to it.

Putting together a project like this H̄umash is complex. It’s very easy to slip into anachronistic concepts aimed at grabbing attention. But we owe more to ourselves; we are hungry for substantive and truly thought-provoking conversations.

To you, our young adults, we now offer this H̄umash. Will you use it? Will you allow it to guide you? When you are having a hard day and the walls seem to close in on you, will you pick this Torah up and let it lift you up? Will you let God into your life? We find Him in these words.

Why do we study Torah?

- *The Torah is a blueprint of the universe*, starting at the beginning – Bereshit. The Midrash teaches that God “looked into the Torah and created a world.” Do we want

to understand the world? “We should look at where it came from.”

- *How to practice Judaism.* Torah teaches us how to live as Jews. It teaches us how to practice our Judaism. The Gemara teaches: “תלמוד גדול, שהתלמוד מביא לידי מעשה” – learning is great in that it moves us to action. I love the word *halakha*, which denotes Jewish Law. It means to walk. We can’t walk in the ways of Judaism unless we know the *halakha*.
- *The values of Judaism.* The Torah guides us not only in how to practice Judaism’s laws but, at times more importantly, how to live its values. The emphasis that our people places on charity, education, visiting the sick – it’s all derived from the sensibilities of the Torah.
- *To help us do battle.* The sages interpret the wars described in the Torah as symbolic of our struggle against the *yetzer hara*, our evil inclination. Our shadow side is cunning. We have only one weapon against it, says the Gemara in Kiddushin: Torah study.
- *It is our oxygen, our life force.* The Gemara in Berakhot teaches us that just as a fish cannot live without water, so too we cannot exist without Torah. There isn’t an example of a Jewish community that has thrived and flourished over multiple generations without a love and appreciation for producing Torah.
- *Crisis management.* Think about what enabled Yosef to survive trauma after trauma in Egypt? What made him so resilient? What did Yosef have that allowed him to survive? Rashi tells us that before he was thrown into the pit, Yosef would spend his time with Yaakov, studying the Torah taught by Shem and Ever. Shem and Ever were survivors. They had endured the flood and the generation of the dispersion. Deep down, Yaakov knew that Yosef would need this Torah.
- *To develop a relationship with God.* Part of our mission in this world is to cleave to the Almighty. Through a relationship with God one learns what it means to be a proper human being. We enter into a relationship with our Father in Heaven by learning His word.

- *It's the great equalizer.* Rav Boruch Ber, the great rosh yeshiva, is quoted to have once said that Torah is the great equalizer. A child starting sixth grade could learn Bava Metzia, as though it's the most basic and simple piece of the Gemara. But at the same time, it's one of the hardest parts of the Talmud, challenging even the most advanced scholars. Torah is accessible to everyone at all levels.
- *It's your story.* Project years ahead and imagine bringing your spouse back to the house of your parents. While you're cleaning up the house, you find your old year-book. You can't wait to share it with the person that you love. Why are you so excited? Because you are going to share the story of your life. That's why we open up the Torah. Our entire legacy is there; where we came from, what we went through, where our customs come from, and where our identity has come from.
- *And finally: It's your way out.* Imagine you are lost in a maze. You cannot find the way out. Suddenly, you're told by the maze keeper, who stands above the maze, that there is one way out. It's the simplest way of all – the way that you came in. Retrace your steps, and that's how you'll find a way out. The Jews have survived the Shoah and have rebuilt a remarkable edifice called the State of Israel. We have done amazing things in America and around the world. We have built *yeshivot* filled to the brim with students. But we also find ourselves at a crossroads, facing multiple challenges. God's guidance for us is: Retrace your steps. Figure out where you became lost, because that will tell us how to get through the maze of life. That's why we need the Torah.

With all these ideas in mind, we have designed this *Humash* in such a way as to maximize the student's opportunity for reflection, connection, and learning. In addition to Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks's beautiful new translation of the Torah, we have included several different commentaries to add meaning to your journey:

WISDOM OF THE HEART: This commentary is designed to make you think critically about the stories, laws, and poetry in the Torah and how they relate to your life. It

often includes a question about your own experiences and opinions.

THE CLASSIC COMMENTATORS: This section begins with a guiding issue or question and brings two or three classic commentaries from Jewish history who have offered answers. Compare the answers given by the different commentaries. With whom do you agree? These are followed by *Questions for Thought*, which push you to read the commentaries more closely and find hidden ideas below the surface.

TEXTUAL SKILLS: These questions encourage you to read the text of the Torah more closely. The exact words and phrases appear carry tremendous meaning, and by paying attention to details we can make ourselves better readers.

QUICK BITES: This section provides a brief thought about the Torah that we can take with us out of the classroom and share with family and friends. It can be a jumping-off point for a deeper conversation.

EXPLORING HASHKAFKA: This essay at the end of most *parashot* deals with a "big idea" that challenges us as Jews in the modern world. It is not meant to give us easy answers, but to help us learn to think in creative ways about complex questions.

I write these words with profound gratitude to God. It is my hope that this project brings about a deeper love and understanding of God among the Jewish people.

It is an honor to work on this project together with Koren Publishers. Their professionalism, responsibility to tradition, and keen sense of style have made this a truly wonderful experience. Thank you to Matthew Miller and all the talented and hardworking editorial staff at Koren.

Thank you to my wonderful school and community, Yeshivat Yavneh, where many of these teachings were first developed and shared with teenagers.

Thank you to my wife, Shira. We were standing on the shore of the Mediterranean Sea when you held a rough draft of this *Humash* in your hand. You looked at me and said: "This project must happen."

◀ Thank you

Thank you to my parents and family who continue to encourage, praise, and support my work.

Thank you to the Nagel family. The connection between our families goes back over sixty years, and our bond of Torah began with a family *havura* on Wilshire Boulevard. Together with Jack, of blessed memory, we completed Sanhedrin and then began Bava Batra. It has been an exceptional privilege, and I have the *zekhut* of

continuing this tradition with the family. This work was made possible by the incredible family vision gifted to the Nagels by Jack and Gitta. To Dr. Ronnie, Esther, David, and Careena, my blessing is that the merit of this project may stand for your whole family's long life and health. May we continue to follow your trailblazing path, as together we celebrate this very historic moment – *The Koren Lev Ladaat Humash*.

Rabbi Shlomo Einhorn
Executive Editor

פרשת במדבר

PARASHAT BEMIDBAR

“Wilderness. The word itself is music.”

Edward Abbey

The date: One month after the inauguration of the *Mishkan*, the traveling Tabernacle.

The travels are about to begin, not only of the *Mishkan*, but of the entire nation and its mission. Little did those people know that their travels would become a template for the wanderings of Jews for millennia. Internal fighting, external enemies, and self-doubt become our adversaries, and yet each makes us stronger. The Wandering Jew becomes the Learning Jew, learning from experiences. They learned from their experiences, we learn from our ours, and we can learn from theirs too.

PARASHAT BEMIDBAR

1:1–16 *Toward the beginning of Benei Yisrael's second year in the wilderness, God commands Moshe to count all of Benei Yisrael, which he does together with Aharon. They are given twelve assistants – one notable from each tribe.*

1 ¹ The LORD spoke to Moshe in the Sinai Desert, in the Tent of Meeting, on the first of the second
² month, in the second year since their coming out from the land of Egypt. He said: “Take
a census of the entire community of Israel by their clans and their ancestral houses,
³ listing every male by name individually, twenty years of age and upward: everyone
in Israel who is capable of active service. You and Aharon shall number them by their
⁴ divisions. And one man from each tribe shall join you in the task, each the head of his
⁵ ancestral house. These are the names of the men who will assist you: from Reuven,
⁶ Elitzur son of Shedeiur; from Shimon, Shelumiel son of Tzurishadai; from Yehuda,
⁷ Nahshon son of Aminadav; from Yissakhar, Netanel son of Tzuar; from Zevulun, Eliav
⁸ son of Helon. For the sons of Yosef: from Efrayim, Elishama son of Amihud; from
⁹ Menashe, Gamliel son of Pedatzur. From Binyamin, Avidan son of Gidoni; from Dan,
¹⁰ Ahiezer son of Amishadai; from Asher, Pagiel son of Okhran; from Gad, Elyasaf son
¹¹ of Deuel; and from Naftali, Ahira son of Einan.” These were the ones chosen from
¹² the community, princes of their ancestral tribes; they are the heads of Israel’s clans.
¹³
¹⁴
¹⁵
¹⁶

QUESTIONS FOR THOUGHT

- Regarding what do Rashbam and Sforno agree?
- What is the basic disagreement between them?
- Can you find a verse from the daily *tefilla* which would support one of those two positions?
- In what way is Ibn Ezra’s explanation very different from the other two?

TEXTUAL SKILLS

1. Notice which of the twelve tribes is omitted. Did God explain why that tribe has no representative?
2. Look at the names of the representatives of the tribes. What do you notice?

WISDOM OF THE HEART

According to a midrash, the Torah was given in three ways: fire, water, and wilderness. That suggests that Torah is meant to be engaged on three levels. The first is fire, passion. Encountering Torah is more than simply an intellectual pursuit; it is meant to engage us personally – and we are meant to engage it passionately. The second is water, fluidity. Liquid fills all the nooks and crannies; it can adapt to any shape. Torah can be meaningful in

every place, every generation, every society, and every type of learner. Finally, there is wilderness, which represents the need to strip away preconceived notions and prejudices, about others and about ourselves.

Which encounter would you like to experience with Torah? Fire, water, or wilderness?

פרשת במדבר

א וַיְדַבֵּר יְהוָה אֶל־מֹשֶׁה בְּמִדְבַר סִינַי בְּאַהֲל מוֹעֵד בְּאַחַד לַחֲדָשׁ א
 ב הַשְּׁנַי בַּשָּׁנָה הַשְּׁנִית לְצֵאתְכֶם מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם לֵאמֹר: שְׂאוּ
 ג אֶת־רֹאשׁ כָּל־עֵדֶת בְּנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל לְמִשְׁפְּחֹתֵם לְבֵית אֲבֹתְכֶם
 ד בְּמִסְפַּר שְׁמוֹת כָּל־זָכָר לְגִלְגָּלְתֶּם: מִבֶּן עֶשְׂרִים שָׁנָה וּמֵעַלָּה
 ה כָּל־יֵצֵא צֶבֶא בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל תִּפְקְדוּ אֹתָם לְעִבְאֹתָם אֹתָהּ וְאֶהְרֹן:
 ו וְאַתְּכֶם יִהְיוּ אִישׁ אִישׁ לַמַּטֵּה אִישׁ רֹאשׁ לְבֵית־אֲבֹתָיו הוּא:
 ז וְיֵאלֶּה שְׁמוֹת הָאֲנָשִׁים אֲשֶׁר יַעֲמְדוּ אִתְּכֶם לְרֹאוּבֵן אֶל־יִצְחָר
 ח בֶּן־שִׁדְיָאוֹר: לְשִׁמְעוֹן שְׁלֹמִיאֵל בֶּן־צֹרִישִׁדַי: לְיְהוּדָה נַחֲשׁוֹן
 ט בֶּן־עֲמִינָדָב: לְיִשְׁשָׁכָר נַתָּנָאֵל בֶּן־צֹעֲפֵר: לְזָבוּלֹן אֶל־יָאָב
 י בֶּן־חֵלֹן: לְבִנְיָמִן יוֹסֵף לְאֶפְרַיִם אֶל־יִשְׁמָעֵל בֶּן־עֲמִיחֵד: לְמְנַשֶּׁה
 יא גַּמְלִיאֵל בֶּן־פְּדָה־צֹר: לְלֵוִי לְבִנְיָמִן אֲבִידֹן בֶּן־גְּדֵעֲנִי: לְדָן אַחִיעֶזֶר
 יב בֶּן־עֲמִישִׁדַי: לְאֲשֶׁר פִּגְעִיאֵל בֶּן־עֲכָרֹן: לְגָד אֶל־יִסָּף בֶּן־דְּעוּאֵל:
 יג לְנַפְתָּלִי אַחִירָע בֶּן־עֵינָן: אֶלֶּה קְרִיאֵי הָעֵדָה נְשִׂאֵי מִטּוֹת קְרוּאֵי

CLASSIC COMMENTATORS

Why was there a need to count *Benei Yisrael* – weren't they counted as they left Egypt, only thirteen months earlier?

אבן עזרא
 לתקן הדגלים, ואיך יסעו ואיך יחנו בעבור המקדש.

IBN EZRA

The Israelites were counted for the purpose of arranging the flags, and to determine the distribution of the people for traveling in concert with the Tabernacle.

רשב"ם
 לפי שמעתה צריכים ללכת לארץ ישראל, ובני עשרים ראויים לצאת בצבא המלחמה.

RASHBAM

At this point the nation was preparing to enter the land of Israel. This meant that men age twenty and above had to be organized for battle.

ר' עובדיה ספורנו
 לסדרם שיכנסו לארץ מיד, "איש על דגלו" בלתי מלחמה אלא שיפנו האומות מפניה.

RABBI OVADYA SFORNO

The goal of the census was to arrange the nation for immediate entry into the land of Israel, each man according to his banner. Hopefully the nation would be able to take the land without a fight; the inhabitants of Canaan would flee in fright before them.

- ¹⁷ Moshe and Aharon took these men, those who had been marked out by name, and
¹⁸ they convened the entire community on the first day of the second month. And the
 people declared themselves by their clans and their ancestral houses. All those over
¹⁹ twenty years old were counted individually by name, as the LORD had commanded
²⁰ Moshe; so it was that he counted them in the Sinai Desert. The children of Reuven, Yisrael's
 firstborn – his descendants by their clans and their ancestral families – the tally of their
 names, each male aged twenty years and above: everyone capable of active service, all
²¹ counted individually – those counted from the tribe of Reuven numbered 46,500.
²² Of the children of Shimon – his descendants by their clans and their ancestral fami-
 lies – the tally of their names, each male aged twenty years and above: everyone capable
²³ of active service, all counted individually – those counted from the tribe of Shimon
 numbered 59,300.
²⁴ Of the children of Gad – his descendants by their clans and their ancestral families –
 the tally of their names, each male aged twenty years and above: everyone capable of
²⁵ active service, all counted individually – those counted from the tribe of Gad numbered
 45,650.
²⁶ Of the children of Yehuda – his descendants by their clans and their ancestral families – the
 tally of their names, each male aged twenty years and above: everyone capable of active
²⁷ service, all counted individually – those counted from the tribe of Yehuda numbered
 74,600.
²⁸ Of the children of Yissakhar – his descendants by their clans and their ancestral fami-
 lies – the tally of their names, each male aged twenty years and above: everyone
²⁹ capable of active service, all counted individually – those counted from the tribe of
 Yissakhar numbered 54,400.

CLASSIC COMMENTATORS

Benei Yisrael were counted in Exodus 38:26, and their number there was identical (!) to their number here. How can that possibly be?

רמב"ן

יותר נכון שנאמר שכן אירע מעשה ... מתו מהם
 הרבה ... כנוהג שבעולם ובני עשרים משלימים שנתם
 מתשרי ועד אייר, ואירע הדבר שהיו המשלימים
 כמניין המתים.

ר' יצחק שמואל רג"ו

וזה פלא גדול ... אות על היות האומה מושגחת
 בהנהגה למעלה ממנהג התורות והטבע.

RAMBAN

The correct interpretation of this phenomenon is that in the months be-
 tween Tishrei and Iyar, many Israelites died. However, the number of youths
 who turned twenty in that same period, and who were now included in the
 census, was exactly the same as the total of expired citizens.

RABBI ISAAC SAMUEL REGGIO

This represents an astounding wonder, and testifies to the fact that Israel was
 governed by celestial and unnatural providence.

יז אבותם ראשי אלפי ישראל הם: - ויקח משה ואהרן את
 יח האנשים האלה אשר נקבו בשמות: ואת כל-העדה הקהילו
 באחד לחדש השני ויתילדו על-משפחתם לבית אבתם
 יט במספר שמות מבן עשרים שנה ומעלה לגלותם: כאשר

כ צוה יהוה את-משה ויפקדם במדבר סיני: > ויהיו
 בני-ראובן בכר ישראל תולדתם למשפחתם לבית אבתם
 במספר שמות לגלותם כל-זכר מבן עשרים שנה ומעלה
 כא כל יצא צבא: פקדיהם למטה ראובן ששה וארבעים אלף
 וחמש מאות:

כב לבני שמעון תולדתם למשפחתם לבית אבתם פקדיו במספר
 שמות לגלותם כל-זכר מבן עשרים שנה ומעלה כל יצא
 כג צבא: פקדיהם למטה שמעון תשעה וחמשים אלף ושלש
 מאות:

כד לבני גד תולדתם למשפחתם לבית אבתם במספר שמות
 כה מבן עשרים שנה ומעלה כל יצא צבא: פקדיהם למטה גד
 חמשה וארבעים אלף ושיש מאות וחמשים:

כו לבני יהודה תולדתם למשפחתם לבית אבתם במספר שמות
 כז מבן עשרים שנה ומעלה כל יצא צבא: פקדיהם למטה יהודה
 ארבעה ושבעים אלף ושיש מאות:

כח לבני יששכר תולדתם למשפחתם לבית אבתם במספר
 כט שמות מבן עשרים שנה ומעלה כל יצא צבא: פקדיהם למטה
 יששכר ארבעה וחמשים אלף וארבע מאות:

- 30 Of the children of Zevulun – his descendants by their clans and their ancestral families – the tally of their names, each male aged twenty years and above: everyone capable
 31 of active service, all counted individually – those counted from the tribe of Zevulun
 numbered 57,400.
- 32 Of the children of Yosef: of the children of Efrayim – his descendants by their clans
 and their ancestral families – the tally of their names, each male aged twenty years and
 33 above: everyone capable of active service, all counted individually – those counted from
 the tribe of Efrayim numbered 40,500.
- 34 Of the children of Menashe – his descendants by their clans and their ancestral
 families – the tally of their names, each male aged twenty years and above: everyone
 35 capable of active service, all counted individually – those counted from the tribe of
 Menashe numbered 32,200.
- 36 Of the children of Binyamin – his descendants by their clans and their ancestral
 families – the tally of their names, each male aged twenty years and above: everyone
 37 capable of active service, all counted individually – those counted from the tribe of
 Binyamin numbered 35,400.
- 38 Of the children of Dan – his descendants by their clans and their ancestral families –
 the tally of their names, each male aged twenty years and above: everyone capable of
 39 active service, all counted individually – those counted from the tribe of Dan numbered
 62,700.
- 40 Of the children of Asher – his descendants by their clans and their ancestral families – the
 tally of their names, each male aged twenty years and above: everyone capable of active
 41 service, all counted individually – those counted from the tribe of Asher numbered
 41,500.
- 42 The children of Naftali – his descendants by their clans and their ancestral families – the
 tally of their names, each male aged twenty years and above: everyone capable of active
 43 service, all counted individually – those counted from the tribe of Naftali numbered
 53,400.

QUESTIONS FOR THOUGHT

- In what way are the approaches of Ramban and R. Reggio similar? In what way are they dramatically different?
- Which of these approaches do you find most rational? Why? Which do you find most inspiring? Why?

TEXTUAL SKILLS

1. What is odd about the order in which the tribes are counted?
2. What do you find interesting about the relative sizes of the tribes?

ל לבני זבולן תולדתם למשפחתם לבית אבתם במספר שמות
 לא מבן עשרים שנה ומעלה כל יצא צבא: פקדיהם למטה זבולן
 שבעה וחמשים אלף וארבע מאות:

לב לבני יוסף אפרים תולדתם למשפחתם לבית אבתם
 לג במספר שמות מבן עשרים שנה ומעלה כל יצא צבא: פקדיהם
 למטה אפרים ארבעים אלף וחמש מאות:

לד לבני מנשה תולדתם למשפחתם לבית אבתם במספר שמות
 לה מבן עשרים שנה ומעלה כל יצא צבא: פקדיהם למטה מנשה
 שנים ושלשים אלף ומאתים:

לו לבני בנימין תולדתם למשפחתם לבית אבתם במספר שמות
 לז מבן עשרים שנה ומעלה כל יצא צבא: פקדיהם למטה בנימין
 חמשה ושלשים אלף וארבע מאות:

לח לבני דן תולדתם למשפחתם לבית אבתם במספר שמות
 לט מבן עשרים שנה ומעלה כל יצא צבא: פקדיהם למטה דן
 שנים ושישים אלף ושבע מאות:

מ לבני אשר תולדתם למשפחתם לבית אבתם במספר שמות
 מא מבן עשרים שנה ומעלה כל יצא צבא: פקדיהם למטה אשר
 אחד וארבעים אלף וחמש מאות:

מב בני נפתלי תולדתם למשפחתם לבית אבתם במספר שמות
 מג מבן עשרים שנה ומעלה כל יצא צבא: פקדיהם למטה נפתלי
 שלשה וחמשים אלף וארבע מאות:

44 These were the ones counted by Moshe, Aharon, and the twelve princes of Israel, one
 45 from each ancestral house. Thus the total number of the Israelites counted, by their
 ancestral houses, aged twenty years and above – everyone in Israel capable of active
 46 service – was 603,550. The ancestral house of the Levites, however, was not counted
 47 among them.

48 For the LORD had spoken to Moshe and said, “You shall not count the tribe of Levi,
 49 nor take a census of them among the Israelites. Instead, you shall appoint the Levites
 50 over the Tabernacle of the Testimony, over all its utensils and all that belongs to it. For
 they are to carry the Tabernacle and all its utensils; they are to tend to it, and around
 51 the Tabernacle they shall encamp. When the Tabernacle is to move onward, the Levites
 shall take it down, and when the Tabernacle is to encamp, the Levites shall erect it.
 52 Any outsider who draws close to it shall be put to death. The Israelites shall encamp in
 53 their respective camps, each by his own banner, in his division. But the Levites shall
 encamp around the Tabernacle of the Testimony, so that fury does not engulf the com-
 munity of the Israelites; the Levites shall keep watch faithfully over the Tabernacle of
 54 the Testimony.” The Israelites did so; all that the LORD had commanded Moshe, they
 fulfilled.

QUESTIONS FOR THOUGHT

- Which of the commentaries understands the omission of Levi as a technical matter?
- What important information is missing from both explanations?
- If the instruction to omit Levi didn't come until *after* the count was over, why didn't Moshe count them earlier?

TEXTUAL SKILLS

1. In verses 44–47, notice the repeated use of the word **כל**. What do you think it is trying to say? but with two different meanings! What are those two different meanings?
2. In this passage, the root **פ-ק-ד** appears seven times,

WISDOM OF THE HEART

The Torah already noted that the Levites camped around the *Mishkan*. Why did it have to mention this again? R. Naftali Tzvi Yehuda Berlin answers that there are two aspects to the position of the camp of Levi. One is that the Levites surrounded the *Mishkan* as an honor guard. The second is that the camp of Levi served an important function – as a buffer between *Benei Yisrael* and the *Mishkan*. It is one thing for people to make mistakes and

sin, but it is quite another to do so directly in the presence of God. The placement of Levi ensured that the Divine Presence dwelling among the people would be a source of blessing, not disaster.

Is there a difference between doing something wrong privately and doing it when you know people are watching?

מד אֵלֶּה הַפְּקֻדִים אֲשֶׁר פָּקַד מֹשֶׁה וְאַהֲרֹן וּנְשֵׂי־אֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל שְׁנַיִם עָשָׂר
 מה אִישׁ אִישׁ-אֶחָד לְבֵית-אֲבֹתָיו הָיוּ: וַיְהִיו כָּל-פְּקוּדֵי בְנֵי-יִשְׂרָאֵל
 לְבֵית אֲבֹתָם מִבְּן עֶשְׂרִים שָׁנָה וּמַעְלָה כָּל-יֶצֵא עֲבָא בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל:
 מו וַיְהִיו כָּל-הַפְּקֻדִים שֵׁשׁ-מֵאוֹת אַלְפֵי וּשְׁלֹשֶׁת אַלְפִים וַחֲמִשׁ מֵאוֹת
 מז וַחֲמִשִּׁים: וְהַלְוִיִּם לְמִטָּה אֲבֹתָם לֹא הִתְפַּקְדוּ בְּתוֹכָם:
 מח וַיְדַבֵּר יְהוָה אֶל-מֹשֶׁה לֵאמֹר: אַךְ אֶת-מִטָּה לְוִי לֹא תִפְקֹד
 נ וְאֶת-דְּאִשָּׁם לֹא תִשָּׂא בְּתוֹךְ בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל: וְאַתָּה הַפְּקֹד אֶת-
 הַלְוִיִּם עַל-מִשְׁכַּן הָעֵדוּת וְעַל כָּל-כְּלָיו וְעַל כָּל-אֲשֶׁר-לוֹ הִמָּה
 יִשְׂאוּ אֶת-הַמִּשְׁכָּן וְאֶת-כָּל-כְּלָיו וְהֵם יִשְׁרֹתֶהוּ וְסָבִיב לַמִּשְׁכָּן
 נא יַחְנוּ: וּבְנִסְעַ הַמִּשְׁכָּן יוֹרִידוּ אֹתוֹ הַלְוִיִּם וּבַחֲנַת הַמִּשְׁכָּן יִקְיִמוּ
 נב אֹתוֹ הַלְוִיִּם וְהִזְרֹק הַקָּרֵב יוֹמֵת: וַחֲנוּ בְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אִישׁ עַל-
 נג מַחֲנֵהוּ וְאִישׁ עַל-דְּגָלוֹ לְעִבְאֹתָם: וְהַלְוִיִּם יַחְנוּ סָבִיב לַמִּשְׁכָּן
 הָעֵדוּת וְלֹא-יִהְיֶה קֶצֶף עַל-עֵדוּת בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְשִׁמְרוּ הַלְוִיִּם
 נד אֶת-מִשְׁמֶרֶת מִשְׁכַּן הָעֵדוּת: וַיַּעֲשׂוּ בְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל כְּכֹל אֲשֶׁר
 צִוָּה יְהוָה אֶת-מֹשֶׁה בְּן עָשׂוּ:

CLASSIC COMMENTATORS

Why was Levi not counted together with *Benei Yisrael*?

אבן עזרא IBN EZRA

כי פקודת המשכן עליהם, על כן לא יצאו בצבא.

The tribe of Levi was tallied separately from the rest of Israel. Because they were invested with the responsibility of the Tabernacle, they were not sent out to war.

ר' יוסף בכור שור RABBI YOSEF BEKHOR SHOR

שלא היה מניינם שוה, שאלו נמנו מבן עשרים והלויים מבן חדש ומבן שלשים.

Levites were counted according to a different criterion than everybody else. Whereas the men of the other tribes were included in the census once they turned twenty years old, those in Levi were counted when they were one month, and, separately, when they were thirty years old.

2:7–34 *The camp of Benei Yisrael was organized into four flanks, each flank consisting of three tribes, one of which was designated the leader. The first flank was led by Yehuda (in the east), the second by Reuven (in the south), the third by Efrayim (in the west), and the fourth by Dan (in the north). Every tribe had an identifying flag distinguished by its color and an image. Levi did not camp with the other tribes but formed its own camp, with four flanks arranged as an inner ring – a buffer between Benei Yisrael and the Mishkan, which was at the heart of the camp.*

- 2** ¹ The LORD spoke to Moshe and Aharon: “The Israelites shall camp, each by his banner, the ensign of his ancestral house, positioned around the Tent of Meeting at a distance.
² Camping to the east, toward the sunrise, shall be the divisions under the banner of
³ Yehuda. The leader of Yehuda’s descendants is Naḥshon son of Aminadav. And his
⁴ division numbers 74,600. Camping next to them shall be the tribe of Yissakhar. The
⁵ leader of Yissakhar’s descendants is Netanel son of Tzuar. And his division numbers
⁶ 54,400. Then the tribe of Zevulun. The leader of Zevulun’s descendants is Eliav son
⁷ of Helon. His division numbers 57,400. The total number in Yehuda’s camp, in their
⁸ divisions, is 186,400. They shall be the first to set out. The divisions under the banner
⁹ of Reuven’s camp shall be to the south. The leader of Reuven’s descendants is Elitzur
¹⁰ son of Shedeiur. And his division numbers 46,500. Camping next to them shall be the
¹¹ tribe of Shimon. The leader of Shimon’s descendants is Shelumiel son of Tzurishadai.
¹² His division numbers 59,300. Then the tribe of Gad: the leader of Gad’s descendants is
¹³
¹⁴

QUESTIONS FOR THOUGHT

- The Talmud Yerushalmi quotes a debate about whether *Benei Yisrael* traveled in the same square formation as they camped or if they traveled in a line. Which of these opinions seems to be indicated by each of the above commentaries?
- How would each opinion explain verse 17?
- Which opinion seems to be more logical? Which seems to fit the text of the Torah best? (Note: See Num. 10:11–28!)

TEXTUAL SKILLS

1. Can you figure out why the flanks were organized as they were? For example, why were Yissakhar and Zevulun attached to Yehuda, and why were Shimon and Gad attached to Reuven, etc?
2. There are two roots which stand out because they are repeated so frequently in this chapter – one appears nineteen times and the other appears twenty times! What are they? What do you think the Torah is trying to convey through their repeated use?
3. Find another two roots, one which appears seven times and the other which appears eight times. What is the connection between these two?
4. Compare 2:33 with 1:47. Can you explain the reason for the difference between them? Why do you think that the Torah needed to write this a second time?

ב וַיְדַבֵּר יְהוָה אֶל־מֹשֶׁה וְאֶל־אַהֲרֹן לֵאמֹר: אִישׁ עַל־דָּגְלוֹ ב
 בָּאתָת לְבֵית אֲבֹתָם יַחְנוּ בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל מִנֶּגֶד סְבִיב לְאֹהֶל־
 ג מוֹעֵד יַחְנוּ: וְהַחֲנִים קִדְמָה מִזְרָחָה דָּגַל מַחֲנֵה יְהוּדָה
 ד לְעֵבְאֹתָם וְנָשִׂיא לְבְנֵי יְהוּדָה נַחֲשׁוֹן בֶּן־עַמִּינָדָב: וְעֵבְאוֹ
 ה וּפְקֻדֵיהֶם אַרְבַּעַה וְשִׁבְעִים אֶלֶף וְשֵׁשׁ מֵאוֹת: וְהַחֲנִים עָלָיו
 ו מִטָּה יִשָּׁשְׁכַר וְנָשִׂיא לְבְנֵי יִשָּׁשְׁכַר נְתַנְאֵל בֶּן־צוּעָר: וְעֵבְאוֹ
 ז וּפְקֻדָיו אַרְבַּעַה וַחֲמִשִּׁים אֶלֶף וְאַרְבַּע מֵאוֹת: מִטָּה זְבוּלֹן
 ח וְנָשִׂיא לְבְנֵי זְבוּלֹן אֶלִיָּאָב בֶּן־חֶלֶן: וְעֵבְאוֹ וּפְקֻדָיו שִׁבְעַה
 ט וַחֲמִשִּׁים אֶלֶף וְאַרְבַּע מֵאוֹת: כָּל־הַפְּקָדִים לְמַחֲנֵה יְהוּדָה מֵאֵת
 י אֶלֶף וְשִׁמְנִים אֶלֶף וְשִׁשְׁת־אַלְפִים וְאַרְבַּע־מֵאוֹת לְעֵבְאֹתָם
 יא דָּגַל מַחֲנֵה רְאוּבֵן תִּימְנָה לְעֵבְאֹתָם
 יב וְנָשִׂיא לְבְנֵי רְאוּבֵן אֶלִיָּצוּר בֶּן־שִׁדְיָאוּר: וְעֵבְאוֹ וּפְקֻדָיו שֵׁשׁ
 יג וְאַרְבַּעִים אֶלֶף וַחֲמִשׁ מֵאוֹת: וְהַחֲנִים עָלָיו מִטָּה שְׁמֹעוֹן
 יד וְנָשִׂיא לְבְנֵי שְׁמֹעוֹן שְׁלֹמִיאֵל בֶּן־צוּרִישָׁדַי: וְעֵבְאוֹ וּפְקֻדֵיהֶם
 טו תְּשַׁעַה וַחֲמִשִּׁים אֶלֶף וְשָׁלֹשׁ מֵאוֹת: וּמִטָּה גַד וְנָשִׂיא לְבְנֵי גַד

CLASSIC COMMENTATORS

The setup of the camp of *Benei Yisrael* is clear. The setup of their travel is not.

רש"י RASHI
 הליכתן כחנייתן, כל דגל מהלך לרוח הקבועה לו.
 During the marches the entire nation maintained the formation which they observed when they settled down. Each group of three was assigned a specific side of the national camp.

רשב"ם RASHBAM
 שני דגלים נוסעים תחילה, ואחר כן המשכן והלויים, ואחר כן שני דגלים אחרונים.
 Two companies – each comprising three tribes – marched at the front of the nation. These were followed by the Tabernacle and the Levites. Bringing up the rear were the final two banners, with the remaining six tribes.

¹⁵ Elyasaf son of Reuel. And his division numbers 45,650. The total number in Reuven's
¹⁶ camp, in their divisions, is 186,400. They shall set out second. And the Tent of Meeting
¹⁷ and the Levite camp shall set out in the midst of the camps. All shall set out as they
¹⁸ encamp, each in his own place under his banner. The divisions under the banner of
 Efrayim shall be to the west. The leader of Efrayim's descendants is Elishama son of
¹⁹ Amihud. And his division numbers 40,500. Next to them shall be the tribe of Menashe.
²⁰ The leader of Menashe's descendants is Gamliel son of Pedatzur. His division numbers
²¹ 32,200. Then the tribe of Binyamin: the leader of Binyamin's descendants is Avidan son
²² of Gidoni. His division numbers 35,400. The total number of men in Efrayim's camp,
²³ in their divisions, is 108,100. They shall set out third. The divisions under the banner of
²⁴ Dan shall be to the north. The leader of Dan's descendants is Aḥiezer son of Amishadai.
²⁵ His division numbers 62,700. Camping next to them shall be the tribe of Asher. The
²⁶ leader of Asher's descendants is Pagiel son of Okhran. His division numbers 41,500.
²⁷ Then the tribe of Naftali: the leader of Naftali's descendants is Aḥira son of Einan. His
²⁸ division numbers 53,400. The total number in Dan's camp, in their divisions, is 157,600.
²⁹ They shall set out last, by their banners."
³⁰
³¹

WISDOM OF THE HEART

Have you ever noticed or heard that some people are very strict with mitzvot when at home in their communities but make all sorts of leniencies when they are traveling and there is no one else around? Verse 17 says **כִּאֲשֶׁר יֵחַנּוּ בְּזֵי יָסַעוּ**, meaning that they should travel just like they camp. Rabbi Yekutiel Yehuda Teitelbaum, author of *Yetev Lev*, comments that this verse could be understood as a warning against that practice. If our beliefs are genuine and our practice authentic, then there should be no

difference at all between what we do when we are around others or when we are alone. True religion is transparent, and our insides should match what we show to others.

How do you think you might change if you lived in a world where people could read what you were actually thinking?

טו אֱלִיסָף בֶּן־דָּעוּאֵל: וַעֲבָאוּ וּפְקֻדֵיהֶם חֲמִשָּׁה וְאַרְבַּעִים אֶלֶף
 טז וְשֵׁשׁ מֵאוֹת וַחֲמִשִּׁים: כָּל־הַפְּקָדִים לְמַחֲנֵה רְאוּבֵן מֵאֵת אֶלֶף
 וְאַחַד וַחֲמִשִּׁים אֶלֶף וְאַרְבַּע־מֵאוֹת וַחֲמִשִּׁים לְעֵבְאֹתָם וּשְׁנַיִם
 יז יִסָּעוּ: וְנָסַע אֶהֱל־מוֹעֵד מַחֲנֵה הַלְוִיִּם בְּתוֹךְ הַמַּחֲנֵת
 יח פֶּאֶשֶׁר יַחֲנוּ כֵּן יִסָּעוּ אִישׁ עַל־יְדוֹ לְדַגְלֵיהֶם: דָּגֶל
 מַחֲנֵה אֶפְרַיִם לְעֵבְאֹתָם יִמָּה וְנָשִׂיא לְבְנֵי אֶפְרַיִם אֱלִישַׁמֶּע בֶּן־
 יט עַמִּיהוּד: וַעֲבָאוּ וּפְקֻדֵיהֶם אַרְבַּעִים אֶלֶף וַחֲמִשׁ מֵאוֹת: וְעַלְיוֹ
 כז מִטָּה מְנַשֶּׁה וְנָשִׂיא לְבְנֵי מְנַשֶּׁה גְּמַלְיָאֵל בֶּן־פְּדָה־עֶזֶר: וַעֲבָאוּ
 כב וּפְקֻדֵיהֶם שְׁנַיִם וּשְׁלֹשִׁים אֶלֶף וּמֵאוֹתָיִם: וּמִטָּה בְּנִימֵן וְנָשִׂיא
 כג לְבְנֵי בְּנִימֵן אַבִּידֵן בֶּן־גְּדַעֲנִי: וַעֲבָאוּ וּפְקֻדֵיהֶם חֲמִשָּׁה וּשְׁלֹשִׁים
 כד אֶלֶף וְאַרְבַּע מֵאוֹת: כָּל־הַפְּקָדִים לְמַחֲנֵה אֶפְרַיִם מֵאֵת אֶלֶף
 טה וּשְׁמֹנֶת־אֶלְפִים וּמֵאָה לְעֵבְאֹתָם וּשְׁלֹשִׁים יִסָּעוּ: דָּגֶל
 מַחֲנֵה דָן צַפְנָה לְעֵבְאֹתָם וְנָשִׂיא לְבְנֵי דָן אַחִיעֶזֶר בֶּן־עַמִּישַׁדַּי:
 לו וַעֲבָאוּ וּפְקֻדֵיהֶם שְׁנַיִם וּשְׁשִׁים אֶלֶף וּשְׁבַע מֵאוֹת: וְהַחֲנִים
 לז עַלְיוֹ מִטָּה אֲשֶׁר וְנָשִׂיא לְבְנֵי אֲשֶׁר פִּגְעִיאֵל בֶּן־עַכְרָן: וַעֲבָאוּ
 טט וּפְקֻדֵיהֶם אֶחָד וְאַרְבַּעִים אֶלֶף וַחֲמִשׁ מֵאוֹת: וּמִטָּה נַפְתָּלִי
 ל וְנָשִׂיא לְבְנֵי נַפְתָּלִי אַחִירַע בֶּן־עֵינָן: וַעֲבָאוּ וּפְקֻדֵיהֶם שְׁלֹשָׁה
 לא וַחֲמִשִּׁים אֶלֶף וְאַרְבַּע מֵאוֹת: כָּל־הַפְּקָדִים לְמַחֲנֵה דָן מֵאֵת
 אֶלֶף וּשְׁבַעַה וַחֲמִשִּׁים אֶלֶף וְשֵׁשׁ מֵאוֹת לְאַחֲרֹנָה יִסָּעוּ
 לְדַגְלֵיהֶם: