



Kinder Torah®



For parents to share with children at the Shabbos table Parshas Bamidbar – Shavuuous

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Rechov Chai Taib 39, Har Nof, Jerusalem

YOU Are Important

"Take a census of the entire assembly of the Children of Israel . . ." (Bamidbar 1:2). This is the beginning of Sefer Bamidbar, the fourth book of the Torah. Rav Shimshon Refael Hirsch zt"l comments that the Jewish people are referred to as an *eida* (assembly) – a people unified by a common purpose. The members of our people were counted one by one. This accomplishes two things. It reminds our leaders that the Jewish nation is not an impersonal mass, rather it is a society composed of individuals. Secondly, each individual realizes that he is an important member of the organization. He is counted among the *eida*. Everyone is a bona-fide member, trusted with an important job. This unification of purpose is what makes us an *eida*. What is that purpose? To uphold the Torah.

Kinderlach . . .

Everyone wants to be important. Guess what? Rav Hirsch is telling us that we are all very important people! Isn't that great? Don't ever let anyone convince you otherwise. Did you ever notice that important people are always doing important things? We have many important things to accomplish in our lives. To do that, we have to take care of ourselves. You never see an important person walking around with dirty clothes. He always watches what he says and does because he knows that others follow his example. He guards his health because a healthy person can accomplish more than a sick one. Kinderlach, we expect great things from you because you are great people!

The Thirsty Fish

Yossie, are you still looking at those fish?

Yes, Imma. I can watch the fish tank for hours.

Did you ever notice that the fish are always opening and closing their

mouths, swallowing the water?

Yes I did Imma. Why is that?

Rav Simcha Wasserman zt"l learned an important lesson from the fish. Although they live in the water, they are still swallowing water all of the time. Don't they ever have enough? The Torah is compared to water. Just as water flows to the lowest place, so to Torah goes to those who humble themselves. That is why the Torah was given on Mt. Sinai, a low, "humble" mountain. The Jewish people are like fish when it comes to the "water" of Torah. Although they are immersed in Torah learning, nonetheless, they can never get enough of it. They are learning on the bus, while waiting in line at the bank, early morning, late at night. They are always looking for another shiur, another opportunity to be inspired.

Imma, that's great! Please tell me more.

Shavuuous is coming Yossie. Our celebration of the giving of the Torah. This is your chance to show yourself and Hashem how "thirsty" you are to hear His words. "Drink in" all of the Torah that you can this Shavuuous. Hashem is ready to give you a whole "ocean" of Torah. If you are thirsty enough, you can drink the whole thing.

The Entire Night

This Shavuuous night, as every year, the shuls and *bottei medrashim* (study halls) will be filled with people learning Torah the entire night. What is the source of this custom? The Magen Avraham in his commentary on the Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chaim (494) explains the possible reason from the Zohar. The Jewish people slept the night before the giving of the Torah. The Medrash tells us that Hashem had to awaken them. We stay awake to correct that mistake. The Pesach Haggadah tells us that each person is obligated to consider himself as if he left Egypt. We make many preparations for the Pesach Seder and have many mitzvos that night to

bring us to the experience of leaving Egypt. Rav Chaim Friedlander says that the same is true about the receiving of the Torah at Mt. Sinai. A person is obligated to prepare himself to receive the Torah on Shavuuous. We have been doing advance preparations during the 49 days of counting the Omer. Perfecting one's character traits is one of the keys. Unity amongst the Jewish people is another key. When Shavuuous night arrives, we do not want to waste one minute of learning time. Hashem is prepared to give the Torah in its entirety, just as He gave it at Har Sinai. We must be in the Beis Hamedrash learning in order to show Him that we want to receive it. The Shlah write that the Divine Presence was revealed to the Beis Yosef and his companions on Shavuuous night.

Kinderlach . . .

It is a big privilege to stay up and learn Torah with Abba on Shavuuous. It may be tempting to run around and play outside. After all, when do we get to stay up so late? However, the reason that we are awake is to learn. If we cannot learn, then we can sleep and be rested for the next day. Let us use the opportunity that Abba gives us in the proper way.

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