



Carnegie Shul Chatter

May 18, 2023



Light candles 8:15pm — Shabbat Services 9:30am

Shabbat Services

Join us in the sanctuary, providing you have been vaccinated for Covid 19, or attend virtually. Watch your email for a Zoom link or contact Rosalyn Hoffman at rjlynman@yahoo.com. The complete Torah reading, in Hebrew and English, can be found at https://www.chabad.org/parshah/torahreading_cdo/aid/2492773/jewish/Bamidbar-Torah-Reading.htm

We are in Crisis

I do not take the use of the word “crisis” lightly. Sometimes I watch the news and think the word is completely overused, and that using it too often diminishes it and you never know what truly is a crisis.

So when I use the word “crisis,” as I am doing right now, it really is a crisis. And we have a crisis at our Carnegie Shul.

Both Larry Block and Joel Roteman, two of our leaders who help us make a minyan every Shabbos, are dealing with health issues that may keep them away from Shul for a while. And, in Dr. Block’s case, his absence means we are without the man who for years has delivered an inspiring D’Var Torah every week, reads the Torah for us, and helps to lead other portions of our services as well.

Other volunteers are stepping forward to help fill the gap that Dr. Block’s absence creates, but with both Joel and Dr. Block absent, our numbers are down by two and being sure of having enough attendees to have a weekly minyan becomes problematic.

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And, to me, that is a crisis because, for us, the weekly minyan is the biggest reason for our Shul's existence.

How can you help? Please, if you possibly can, attend minyan either, and preferably, in person, or if you can't come in person, by attending via Zoom.

A minyan allows us to read the Torah and allows mourners to say Kaddish. Helping us to make minyan is truly a mitzvah.

Bamidbar in a Nutshell

Numbers 1:1–4:20

From Chabad.org

The name of the Parshah, "Bamidbar," means "In the desert" and it is found in Numbers 1:1.

In the Sinai Desert, G-d says to conduct a census of the twelve tribes of Israel. Moses counts 603,550 men of draftable age (20 to 60 years); the tribe of Levi, numbering 22,300 males age one month and older, is counted separately. The Levites are to serve in the Sanctuary. They replace the firstborn, whose number they approximated, since they were disqualified when they participated in the worshipping of the Golden Calf. The 273 firstborn who lacked a Levite to replace them had to pay a five-shekel "ransom" to redeem themselves.

When the people broke camp, the three Levite clans dismantled and transported the Sanctuary, and reassembled it at the center of the next encampment.

They then erected their own tents around it: the Kohathites, who carried the Sanctuary's vessels (the Ark, menorah, etc.) in their specially designed coverings on their shoulders, camped to its south; the Gershonites, in charge of its tapestries and roof coverings, to its west; and the families of Merari, who transported its wall panels and pillars, to its north. Before the Sanctuary's entranceway, to its east, were the tents of Moses, Aaron, and Aaron's sons.

Beyond the Levite circle, the twelve tribes camped in four groups of three tribes each. To the east were Judah (pop. 74,600), Issachar (54,400) and Zebulun (57,400); to the south, Reuben (46,500), Simeon (59,300) and Gad (45,650); to the west, Ephraim (40,500), Manasseh (32,200) and Benjamin (35,400); and to the north, Dan (62,700), Asher (41,500) and Naphtali (53,400). This formation was kept also while traveling. Each tribe had its own nassi (prince or leader), and its own flag with its tribal color and emblem.



Haftorah in a Nutshell

Hosea 2:1-22

This week's haftorah begins with the words, "The number of the children of Israel shall be as the sand of the sea [shore], which can be neither measured nor counted." An appropriate reading for the first Torah reading of the Book of Numbers.

Hosea first prophesies about the eventual reunification of the houses of Judah and Israel. During the Messianic Era, these two perennial antagonists will make peace and appoint a single leader. Hosea then rebukes the Jewish people for their infidelity, abandoning their "husband," G-d, and engaging in adulterous affairs with pagan deities. He describes the punishments they will suffer because of this unfaithfulness.

Eventually, though, Hosea reassures the Jews that they will repent, and G-d will accept them back wholeheartedly. The haftorah concludes with the moving words: "And I will betroth you to Me forever, and I will betroth you to Me with righteousness and with justice and with loving-kindness and with mercy."

Haftorah Commentary

By Rabbi Dovid Siegel • Torah.org



This week's haftorah reveals Hashem's indescribable love for His people.

The prophet Hosheia opens with warm words of blessing and says, "The Jewish people will be likened to the sand of the sea that cannot be measured or counted." Hosheia digresses then and says, "And in place of not being recognized as My nation, they will be regarded as 'the sons of Hashem.'" This

passage indicates that, prior to this prophecy, they experienced serious rejection. In truth, the preceding chapter reveals that they temporarily forfeited their prominent status of Hashem's people. Scriptures state, "Declare them no longer My nation because they are not Mine and I am not theirs" (1:9) Yet, one passage later we find Hashem blessing His people in an unlimited capacity conveying upon them the elevated status of "sons of Hashem." We are amazed by this sudden, drastic change of attitude from total rejection to full acceptance in an unparalleled way. What brought about this change and what can we learn from it?

Chazal address these questions and answer with the following analogy. A king was enraged by his wife's atrocious behavior and immediately summoned a scribe to prepare her divorce

document. He calmed down, shortly thereafter, and decided not to carry out his original plan. However, he faced a serious dilemma because he was unwilling to cancel the scribe and reveal his drastic change of heart. He finally resolved his problem and ordered the scribe to rewrite his marriage contract doubling its previous financial commitment. Chazal conclude that the same was true of Hashem. After instructing Hosheia to deliver sharp words of reprimand Hashem retracted them. However, instead of canceling the initial prophecy Hashem tempered it with warm words of blessing. These words were so uplifting that they reflected the Jewish people in a newly gained status of “sons of Hashem”. (Sifrei, Parshas Balak)



We can attempt to uncover Chazal’s hidden lesson in the following manner. When studying the analogy of the king and his wife we sense the king’s deep affection for her. Although he was angered to the point of total rejection this anger was short-lived. He was appeased within moments and his true affection immediately surfaced. In order to compensate for his initial rash response, he strengthened his relationship with her by doubling his expression of affection. The queen undoubtedly understood her husband’s compassionate response to her outrageous behavior. Instead of totally rejecting her he actually increased his commitment to her. She sensed this as his way of securing their relationship even after her previous conduct. This unbelievably kind response evoked similar feelings from her and she reciprocated with her fullest expression of appreciation to him.

This analogy reveals Hashem’s deep love and affection for His people. The Jewish people in Hosheia’s times severely strayed from Hashem’s will and engaged themselves in atrocious idolatrous practices. Hashem was enraged by their behavior and summoned the prophet Hosheia to serve them their rejection papers. This severe response elicited Hashem’s counter response of unlimited compassion for them and He immediately retracted His harsh decree. However, Hashem did not stop there but saw it appropriate to intensify His relationship with His cherished people. He therefore elevated them from their previous status of merely His people to the highly coveted status of His children.

We now understand Chazal’s message to us. Hashem was sincerely angered by the Jewish people’s conduct and sent Hosheia to reject them. Yet, even this angry response could not interfere with Hashem’s boundless love for His people and He immediately retracted His harsh words. The Jewish people however, needed to understand the severity of their actions. Hashem therefore instructed Hosheia to reveal the entire story, their intended rejection and ultimate acceptance. Hosheia’s prophecy served its purpose well and the Jewish people sensed Hashem’s boundless love for them. Although their actions called for total rejection Hashem’s compassion for them would not allow this. Instead of rejecting them Hashem actually increased His display of affection towards them. This undoubtedly evoked their

reciprocal response which ultimately produced their side of their newly gained status of “sons of Hashem”. They previously enjoyed the status of Hashem’s people but after this they would be known as His cherished children.

We find a parallel to the above in this week’s sedra which describes the Jewish nation’s encampment. They were previously stationed at the foot of Mount Sinai for nearly a year. During that time they developed a special relationship with Hashem receiving His Torah and witnessed many revelations. This intimate bond, however, was interrupted by their inexcusable plunge into idolatry. Hashem was enraged by their atrocious behavior and immediately summoned Moshe Rabbeinu to deliver their rejection papers. Hashem informed His loyal prophet of His intention and Moshe Rabbeinu pleaded on their behalf. Moshe subsequently sensitized the people to their severe wrongdoing and they returned from their shameful inappropriate path. Hashem accepted their repentance and reclaimed His nation. But Hashem’s compassion extended far beyond forgiveness and He therefore consented to dwell amongst them resting His Divine Presence in the Mishkan.

In our sedra we discover that even the Mishkan was insufficient expression of Hashem’s love for His people. He therefore acquiesced in their request and permitted them to camp around the Holy Ark and encircle His Divine Presence. This special opportunity created an incredible feeling of affection, tantamount to embracing Hashem Himself. Indeed Shlomo Hamelech refers to this unbelievable experience of intimacy in the following terms, “And His flag was for me an expression of love”. (Shir Hashirim 2:4) Although Hashem initially rejected His people this did not interfere with His boundless love for them. After they rededicated themselves to Him they deserved all of His warmth and affection, even the sensation of embracement itself.

We learn from this the unbelievable love Hashem possesses for His people and that even during moments of rejection Hashem’s true affection for us is never effected.

Yahrtzeits

This week the Carnegie Shul acknowledges the yahrtzeits of:

George Friedman

Richard D’loss

Nathan Samuel Arenson

Julia B. Shifrin

Ignatz Brunner

David Herskovitz

Tziporah Herskovitz

Joseph Kaliski

May their memories be for a blessing.

Donations

The Carnegie Shul gratefully acknowledges the following contributions:

General Donation

Carl and Roni Schiffman

In Memory

Cecily A Routman

In Memory of David Routman