tribe was specifically positioned in their place. Rashi explained that there was a specific reason for this: “Near them (Moshe and Aharon) was the division of the camp of Yehuda, next to whom camped Yissachar and Zevulun. It is good for the tribe of Yehuda to stand between these two tribes.”

A SERIES IN HALACHA LIVING A "TORAH" DAY

R’ Moshe Sternbuch shlit’a (Taam V’Daas) would say:

"The Midrashim and commentators say that if each person from Shevet Kehos was not appointed to his specific task, they would have fought and quarreled to perform these holy tasks, and this sin would have caused their deaths. We learn from here that it is a greater merit for the deceased person than actually saying the words spoken by the holy person in their stead."

Rabbi Dovid Gurwitz shlit’a (Mizmor L’Dovid) would say:

"The Torah says in Parshas Yisro, immediately following the Aseres Hadibros, ‘כי ירא לא כל העם reads. ‘All the people saw the sounds.’ Rashi explains that all the people were healed, including blind people. According to the Gemara, these words mean that the Jews actually saw the sounds of the Ten Commandments. Each word spoken by Hashem took the form of letters that illuminated the sky like lightning. The word for sounds, קורא, is the gematria of 541, the same value of יאוש. In essence, we saw ourselves. We are a people of many voices, and it is imperative for each of us to find our voice and refine our character, also looking for the unique voice in others.”

A Wise Man would say:

"A bend in the road is the not the 'end' of the road unless you fail to 'b' there to make the turn!"
All his life, R' Chaim Kreiswirth was involved in collecting tzedaka for the poor and needy and helping other people. In the latter part of his life, R' Chaim Kreiswirth gave a half-shekel, according to Torah, for the Mishkan, the Tabernacle, as well as supporting Yeshivas Merkat HaTorah where he was the Rosh Yeshivah, Boruch Hashem, he was quite a successful fundraiser in no small measure due to an amazing story that he was very much a part of.

During the early months of the Second World War, R' Chaim fled to Vilna in Lithuania together with thousands of other Jews from Poland, but when Germany attacked the occupying Soviet forces in Eastern Europe and captured Vilna in 1941, R' Chaim fell sick. After the war, when the young man who had gone, one fateful day, an unfortunate Jew was sentenced to death by hanging and the night before his untimely demise, he sought out R' Chaim in the barracks and asked him for a favor. "You look like someone I can trust," he intoned solemnly.

R' Chaim listened as the man gave him his name and other identifying information, along with a series of numbers and codes, which represented his secret bank account. "I have a great amount of money in that hidden account. If you survive," he said, "I'll give you a very large sum of money." R' Chaim accepted his word and then added, "But you must make more demands on the child than a parent would. A true mechanech, is more capable of imbuing within his children the true love for Torah and the mitzvos, and he is considered their father even though he did not actually give birth to them."

Interestingly, the Gemara later in Sanhedrin views this Rebbi as a true mechanech - it is considered as if he "made" the child, and not as if he gave birth to him. What is the difference between a father and a mechanech, and why does the Gemara consider this difference? One possible answer is that a mechanech has a greater capacity to bestow his love in the world and his influence is more powerful in shaping his children's character and actions.

Yetzias Mitzrayim begins with a record of the national census that Hashem instructed Moshe to conduct at Har Sinai a year after Yetsirah, Microway. There is a debate whether or not the same procedure was followed during this census as during the earlier census, requiring each member of the nation to donate a half-shekel, and to keep a record of how much was collected for the construction of the Mishkan, and these half-shekels were counted to determine the population. According to Rashi and the Ramban, this second census followed the same format; Bnei Yisroel were required to donate a half-shekel which was conceptually an act of giving tzedaka, and it is possible that this was considered as a way to体积 up on the spiritual condition of the nation, and maintains that this was advisable, but not mandatory, given the possible effects of the ayin hara as a result of a direct census. Where this concern is not relevant, there is no reason to insist on a direct census.

The Abarbanel's position gives rise to the question of why Bnei Yisroel were severely punished for the census ordered by David HaMelech towards the end of his reign. King David counted the people directly, rather than through the collection of a half-shekel, which is more advisable. This second census was a plague which ravaged the nation, and not merely a natural consequence of an avin hara. It states clearly that Hashem was angry at the king and punished him through the plague. Does this prove that using the half-shekel was mandatory, and not merely advisable?

The Abarbanel answers this with a unique theory, saying that the plague actually served as a punishment not for the census, but rather for the revolt against David's rule led by Sheva ben Bichri. The narrative of the census in Numbers 26 is different from that of the census in Numbers 1; it begins with the record of the national plague which ravaged the nation, and not merely a natural consequence of an avin hara. It states clearly that Hashem was angry at the king and punished him through the plague. Does this prove that using the half-shekel was mandatory, and not merely advisable?

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