



אמרי בנימן

דברי תורה, מחשבה וסיפורים מאוצרו של  
הגאון רב בנימן קמנצקי זצ"ל

*A Dvar Torah from the writings of Rav Binyamin Kamenetzky zt"l,  
transcribed by his grandson, Rabbi Shmuel Kamenetzky*

## **5780 - Parshas Bamidbar - In for the Count**

Parshas Bamidbar tells story of the Jews' forty year trek through the desert, their trials and tribulations, and lessons we must learn. Before that begins, Hashem counts the Jews. The passuk tells us, "And Hashem spoke to Moshe saying... Count the entire assembly of the children of Israel.."

Rashi is quick to explain, "Because Hashem loved His children, He counts them often. When they left Egypt, He counted them. When they fell after the sin of the Golden Calf, He counted them..., and when He is ready to rest His Shechina amongst them, He counted them..."

Yet something is still bothersome. How does the act of counting portray love?

***Rabbi Aryeh Levin zt"l was once standing outside his yeshiva in Jerusalem while the children were in the yard, playing during their recess break. His son Reb Chaim, a teacher in the yeshiva, was standing and observing, when his father turned to him. "What do you see, my son?" asked Rav Aryeh. "What's the question?," he answered, "I see children playing!"***

***"Tell me about them," said Reb Aryeh. "Well," answered Reb Chaim, "Dovid is standing near the door of the school with his hands in his pockets. He is probably not an athlete. Moshie is playing wildly, he is probably undisciplined. Yanky is analyzing how the clouds are drifting. I guess he was not counted in the game. That's how kids are!"***

***Reb Aryeh turned to him and exclaimed, "No, my son. You don't know how to watch the children.***

***"Dovid is near the door with his hands in his pockets because he has no coat. His parents can't afford proper winter clothes for him. Moshie is wild because his Rebbe scolded him and he is frustrated. And Yanky is moping because his mother is ill and he bears the responsibility to help with the entire household.***

***"In order to be a Rebbe, you must know each boy's needs and make sure to give him the proper attention to fulfill those needs."***

My grandfather, Rav Binyamin Kamenetzky, zt"l, would quote the Chidushei Harim, Rav Yitzchok Meir Alter, zt"l who answered this question. The Gemara (Beitza 3b) explains that the laws of bittul, (when a prohibited food's forbidden status can be nullified when it becomes part of a mixture with permissible food items) do not apply to an item, which "is counted." Since this item is counted, it has its own importance, and is too significant to be nullified.

The Jews as well, are part of a mammoth mixture of nations in the world, and Hashem, by counting the Jews, ensured that they will not be nullified, as we retain our standing as a single proud nation in a world of chaos.

Perhaps this message can be taken further - into our own lives as well. When educating and parenting our children, this message is equally as appropriate. As rabbeim and parents, we may have multiple children to train and teach. Each one is an individual - and each one has unique abilities, talents, and needs that make him or her count. Make sure to notice them as individuals - and count them in!

**Good Shabbos!**

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