



## The Community

12550 Biscayne Boulevard · Suite 310 · North Miami, Florida 33181

(305) 892-1234 · Chabadnmiami@gmail.com

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Boruch Hashem

Rabbi Avrohom Lipszyc

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## Rabbi's Article

### "Princes"

This week's Torah-portion is always read before *Shavout* ([-Link](#)), and therefore, *Parshat Bamidbar* ([-Link](#)) must carry a message of preparation for the *Giving of the Torah*. Additionally, being that both, the year that the Rebbe delivered, and the year that the Rebbe then edited for publication, this talk, this Shabbat coinciding with the 2<sup>nd</sup> of Sivan, hence, the focus is what happened on that day, at Mount Sinai: "Moses ascended to G-d, and the L-rd called to him from the mountain, saying, 'So shall you say to the house of Jacob and tell the sons of Israel, 'You have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and [how] I bore you on eagles' wings, and I brought you to Me. And now, if you obey Me and keep My covenant, you shall be to Me a treasure out of all peoples, for Mine is the entire earth. And you shall be to Me a kingdom of princes and a holy nation.'" Which leads us to a question: Why does the *Alter Rebbe* ([-Link](#)) define this day only with (-Oirech Chaim, Simon 494, Law 20), "Monday was Rosh Chodesh, and on Tuesday (2<sup>nd</sup> of Sivan) he ((G-d to Moses, and) Moses to the Children of Israel) said to them, 'And you shall be to Me a kingdom of princes, etc.," with no mention of what else was said on this day? Not even the closing of the statement itself, "and a holy nation," but rather, with an "etc."?!

The actual Hebrew texts for, "(Kingdom of) *princes*," is, "*kohanim*," upon which we find two interpretations: (i) RaMBaM ([-Link](#)) defines it as, 'priests' servers of G-d in the Holy Temple ([-Link](#)), and the *Baal HaTurim* ([-Link](#)) details it as, "*High Priests*," while Rashi ([-Link](#)) defines it as *princes* ('*saarim*' -leaders). Rashi's reason for diverting from the interpretation of *kohanim* being to as the offspring of Aaron being *kohanim*, for this is the meaning of, "*a holy nation*," holy and set aside for G-d's service, as the verse states concerning the offspring of Aharon (-Chronicles I 23:13), "And he separated Aharon to *sanctify*.. him and his sons..," hence, Rashi feels forced to interpret, "(Kingdom of) *kohanim*," as, "*princes*."

According to Rashi, the our verse states three virtues of the Children of Israel, in an order from lower to higher: (i) *a treasure* -separated from all nations, (ii) *a kingdom of princes* -rulers of the country, and (iii) *a holy nation* -above and beyond the mundane, completely dedicated to the service of G-d, as the simple meaning of *kohanim* -offspring of Aharon, wholly serving in the Temple. In our service to G-d, these three levels represent, (i) being chosen by G-d, not because of who we are, but simply because G-d chose, (ii) serving G-d through our engaging with the mundane, "*in all your doings for the sake of Heaven*," and, "*in all your ways know him*," (iii) our service to G-d in holiness, Torah and Mitzvot. Hence, the difference between, "*a kingdom of princes*," and "*a holy nation*," is that the *prince* ("*your actions*" and "*your ways*") is all about engaging in the mundane world, while the *holy nation* (*priest*; Torah and mitzvot) is about disengaging from the mundane world into the world of holiness.

And even in Torah and Mitzvot there is (i) with the intention of cleaving to G-d (disengagement from the world), and (ii) with the intention of creating for G-d a dwelling place here on earth (engagement). The primary focus of Torah and Mitzvot is about making for G-d a dwelling place, hence, engagement of, "*a kingdom of princes*," engagement, is the primary, and hence the one, quoted by the *Alter Rebbe* as the deepest message of this day (2<sup>nd</sup> of Sivan). And this is what Moses answered the angels, who were demanding that G-d should give His perfect Torah to perfect angels, in the perfect environment of Heaven, and not to the imperfect human, within the imperfect world. Moses' response is, "*did you descend into Egypt? do you have jealousy? parents to honor?*" The message being that the primary purpose of Torah and Mitzvot is about engaging specifically with the imperfect world, and to transform it.

In *Parshat Bamidbar*, there are *three counting's* of the Jewish people: (i) the entire nation, as a *chosen nation*, (ii) the *Tribe of Levi*, as those dedicated to being appointed to serve and engage, and (iii) the specific *Kehotites* family of Levi, which were to carry the holiest items of the Tabernacle (disengage from the outside world). And here too, the primary counting that is *unique* to this Torah-portion is that of the (entire) *Tribe of Levi*, appointed to engage and to serve.

## This Week...

FRIDAY, JUNE 3, 2022 ★ ד' סיון תשפ"ב

Shabbat Candle Lighting: North Miami: 7:51 PM · Mincha: 7:15 PM

SATURDAY, JUNE 4, 2022 ★ ד' סיון תשפ"ב

TORAH READING: [Bamidbar](#) (Number 1:1-4:20) · HAFTORAH: [Hosea](#) 2:1-22

Shacharit: 9:30 AM · Mincha: 7:45 PM · Holiday Candle Lighting: North Miami: after 8:48 PM

SHAVUOT EVE: See [SHAVUOT GUIDE](#) for a complete Shavuot guide.

SUNDAY, JUNE 5, 2022 ★ ו' סיון תשפ"ב

1ST DAY SHAVUOT: Hear the *Ten Commandments*: 10:45 AM · Candle Lighting: North Miami: after 8:49 PM

MONDAY, JUNE 6, 2022 ★ ז' סיון תשפ"ב

2ND DAY SHAVUOT: *Yizkor Services*: 11:00 AM · *Farbrengen* 7:45 PM · Shavuot Ends: North Miami: 8:49 PM