



Likkutei Sichos

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Prepare the Kingdom

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1.

BAMIDBAR AND SHAVUOS

As known, “we always read the *parshas Bemidbar Sinai* before Shavuos.”¹ Since every *parshah* is tied to the time during which it is read,² understandably, the connection between *parshas Bamidbar* and Shavuos is mainly regarding the **preparation** for the festival of Shavuos — for *Matan Torah*.³ (In contrast, *parshas Naso* is usually read after Shavuos, and just **occasionally** before Shavuos. Therefore, *Naso* is more closely linked {than *Bamidbar* is} to Shavuos and to the *Matan Torah* itself.)

This concept is further emphasized by the calendar this year,⁴ as *Shabbos parshas Bamidbar* falls on the second of Sivan. On the second of Sivan, “Moshe spoke with the Jewish people to sanctify them **for the Torah**,”⁵ or in the Alter Rebbe’s words, “Moshe **began** to prepare the people to receive the Torah.”⁶

Every year on the festival of Shavuos, during “the time of the Giving of our Torah,”⁷ Hashem gives the Torah anew; in fact, He gives the Torah in a loftier manner than He did the previous year.⁸ Understandably, therefore, before receiving the Torah on Shavuos this year (and every year), the preparations made by the Jewish people when they originally received the Torah need to be made again.

This is also emphasized in *halachah*, since for this reason, “It is customary... not to fast and not to recite *Tachanun*⁹ from Rosh Chodesh {Sivan}.”¹⁰

¹ *Tur* and *Shulchan Aruch*, “*Orach Chaim*,” sec. 428, par. 4; *Mishneh Torah*, “*Hilchos Teffilah*,” ch. 13, par. 2.

² *Shelah*, the beginning of *parshas Vayeishev*.

³ {The Giving of the Torah.}

⁴ {This *sichah* was delivered in the year 5726 (1966).}

⁵ *Magen Avraham*, sec. 494, sub-par. 4.

⁶ Alter Rebbe’s *Shulchan Aruch*, sec. 494, par. 20.

⁷ *Siddur*, festival *Amidah* and *kiddush*.

⁸ As understood from *Tanya*, “*Iggeres Hakodesh*,” sec. 14.

⁹ {The penitential prayers, which are not recited on festive days.}

¹⁰ Alter Rebbe’s *Shulchan Aruch*, loc cit.

2.

QUESTIONING THE SPECIFICS

In order to appreciate the connection between *parshas Bamidbar* and the (beginning of the) preparations for *Matan Torah* (which took place) on the second of Sivan), we will preface by explaining the aforementioned *halachah*.

The Alter Rebbe's words:

It is customary in these regions not to fast and not to recite *Tachanun* from Rosh Chodesh Sivan until — and including — the eighth of the month.... The rationale is that directly after Rosh Chodesh, Moshe began to prepare the people to receive the Torah. {That year} Rosh Chodesh Sivan fell on Monday. On Tuesday, Moshe conveyed to them Hashem's words,¹¹ "You will be a kingdom of *kohanim* for Me, etc." On Wednesday, Moshe told them of the Divine commandment to set up a perimeter {around Mount Sinai, saying}¹² "Guard yourselves lest you ascend the mountain...." On Thursday, Moshe conveyed to them the mitzvah of chastity — that they should separate from their wives that day and the following day, and "be prepared for the third day,"¹³ i.e., Shabbos, on which the Torah was given.

We need to clarify:

- a) Why is the verse, "You will be a kingdom of *kohanim* for Me," cited as proof, also by the Alter Rebbe, that "Moshe began to prepare the people to receive the Torah"? In truth, on that Tuesday, the second of Sivan, Hashem said numerous things to Moshe regarding the preparation for *Matan Torah*, beginning with an **earlier** verse,¹⁴ "So shall you say to the house of Yaakov... you have seen...."

Even if we were to answer that the Alter Rebbe wanted to quote a verse in which Hashem speaks of the present and future, and not of the past ("You have **seen**..."), however, {this answer is not tenable, since} we also find a

¹¹ *Shemos* 19:6.

¹² *Shemos* 19:12.

¹³ *Shemos* 19:10,11.

¹⁴ *Shemos* 19:3,4.

verse {speaking about the future} that appears **earlier** (before the quoted verse, “You {will be a kingdom of *kohanim*}”):¹⁵ “You will be a treasure to Me from among all the nations, for the entire world is Mine.”

- b) Moreover, we find two explanations of the *pshat* of the verse, “(You will be) a kingdom of *kohanim* for Me”: (a) Ramban¹⁶ explains: “A *kingdom of kohanim* — This means that you shall become the kingdom of My attendants. *And a holy nation*¹⁷ — to cleave to Hashem, the Holy One.” (This is like the *Mechilta*:¹⁸ “All the Jewish people were fit to partake of holy food items.” This idea is expanded by Baal Haturim, who writes, “*Kohanim Gedolim*.”) (b) Rashi explains: “ministers.”

According to the first explanation, that “a kingdom of *kohanim*” means that the Jewish people will literally be *kohanim* — attendants of Hashem — we can appreciate how this relates to acceptance of, and involvement in, the Torah. Meaning, the Jewish people will become devoted attendants of Hashem by studying Torah and fulfilling mitzvos. But according to Rashi (and others), who say that “a kingdom of *kohanim*” means “ministers” — what relevance does this have to the acceptance of Torah?

- c) After “a kingdom of *kohanim*,” the verse continues, “and a holy nation.” The Alter Rebbe: (a) does not quote these words, but (b) alludes to them by writing “etc.” {Why?}

¹⁵ {*Shemos* 19:5.}

¹⁶ Commenting on the verse.

¹⁷ {*Shemos* 19:6.}

¹⁸ Commenting on the verse.

3.

KOHANIM

The explanation for all the above:

By way of introduction: We need to clarify why Rashi does not interpret the word “*kohanim*” simply. Rashi’s interpretation is even more puzzling because Rashi himself writes in an earlier *parshah*,¹⁹ “**Any** instance of the word *kohen* {appearing in Scripture} means, ‘a person who is an attendant to a deity.’” (This is also implicit from Rashi’s commentary here, which seems to show that his interpretation presents a novelty. This is clear from the fact that he needs a proof and source that [it does not mean “attendants,” but] “ministers, as you say in the verse,²⁰ ‘and the sons of David were *kohanim*.’”)

The solution to this difficulty: Had Rashi interpreted “*kohanim*” literally, the continuation and the end of the verse, “and a holy nation,” would have been superfluous. A *kohen* who serves Hashem is inherently holy (set apart), as the verse says,²¹ “Aharon was **set apart**, to be **consecrated**..., he and his sons...”

The verse **adds**, “and a holy nation.” This shows that “a kingdom of *kohanim*” **here** does not mean holiness (and being set apart) for Hashem.

Therefore, Rashi understands “a kingdom of *kohanim*” here (not in the sense of *kehunah*, priesthood, as “*kohen*” is usually rendered, but rather) as meaning “ministers.”

Thus, the three virtues listed in Scripture are presented in ascending order:

“You will be a treasure to Me from among all the nations.” This refers to the Jewish people being a cherished “treasure,”²² separated from the other nations. Then, Scripture adds that not only are the Jewish people a “treasure

¹⁹ *Bereishis* 47:22.

²⁰ *Shmuel* II 8:18.

²¹ *Divrei Hayamim* I 23:13.

²² Rashi’s commentary on this verse.

from among all the nations,” but they are “ministers.” “Ministers” govern and rule the country and the surroundings.

Then, Scripture adds, “and a holy nation.” The Jewish people are completely separate and uplifted from mundane matters. They live on a higher plane than their entire surroundings, and are beyond all worldly affairs — “a holy nation” to Hashem, similar to actual *kohanim*.

4.

TRANSLATION INTO *AVODAH*

These three levels, in their essence, exist in a person’s *avodah*:²³

“You will be a treasure to Me from among all the nations.” First of all, comes the exercise of free choice. Hashem elected to choose the Jewish people at the time of *Matan Torah*.²⁴ True choice is entirely a function of the one who chooses.²⁵ The choice is not **necessitated** by (or connected with) the advantages and virtues of that which is being chosen. Hashem’s choice of the Jewish people emanates from a level {in the G-dhead} where light and dark are equal²⁶ (in particular, in respect to receiving Heavenly bounty) and from even higher. The distinction between the Jewish people and the other nations was not the main reason Hashem picked the Jewish people. As Rashi puts it,²⁷ “And **do not** say that you alone are Mine, and that I have no others along with you.” Only because of Hashem’s **choice** are the nations, “in My eyes, and before Me, as nothing,” and “My love of you {the Jewish people} is evident.”

Afterward, the ***avodah*** of the Jewish people follows. There are two general modes of *avodah*: (a) *Avodah* performed through permissible activities

²³ {Divine service.}

²⁴ Alter Rebbe’s *Shulchan Aruch*, sec. 60, par. 4.

²⁵ See *Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 11, p. 5ff.

²⁶ *Tehillim* 139:12.

²⁷ Rashi on *Shemos* 19:5.

that a person does for the sake of Heaven,²⁸ or preferably,²⁹ in the manner of, “Know Him in all your ways”;³⁰ (b) the *avodah* of Torah study and mitzvah observance.

This is the difference between the virtue of the *kohanim*, attendants of Hashem, according to the way the term *kohanim* is generally rendered (or as the verse says here, “and a holy nation”), and the virtue of “a kingdom of *kohanim*” — “ministers.”

A person’s *avodah* within the realm of holiness (Torah study and mitzvah observance,) removes him from the mundane and the worldly. This is analogous to the *avodah* of the *kohanim*, “to stand **before Hashem** to attend to Him.”³¹ They live apart from worldly matters; only “Hashem is his heritage.”³² Their entire being and purpose is “to stand before Hashem to attend to Him.”

From this perspective, the Jewish people are called “a holy nation” — they are “My attendants and a holy nation, to cleave to Hashem, the Holy One,” through Torah and mitzvos.

And from the perspective of their *avodah* performed in permissible activities, viz., “all your actions should be for the sake of Heaven,” and, “know Him in all your ways,” the Jewish people are called “*kohanim* — ministers.” Because these activities are “**your** actions” and “**your** ways,” meaning, they are permissible activities performed for the sake of Heaven, this name “*kohanim* — ministers” expresses the Jewish people’s rule over and **governance** of worldly matters (and automatically, being involved with such matters).

This *avodah* is performed not by disengaging from the world, but (mainly) by ruling over and governing worldly matters — using permissible things for the sake of Heaven so that ultimately, the physical world itself

²⁸ *Pirkei Avos* 2:12.

²⁹ See *Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 3, pp. 907, 932.

³⁰ *Mishlei* 3:6.

³¹ *Devarim* 10:8.

³² *Devarim* 10:9.

recognizes G-dliness — “know Him.” Physicality is purified and elevated until it becomes a holy object, i.e., a vessel for G-dliness.

5.

BREAKING IT DOWN A LITTLE MORE

The above is {a description of the differences in *avodah*} in a general sense. More specifically, within the *avodah* of performing mitzvos, there are two approaches or methods:

- a) A person studies Torah and performs mitzvos in order to cleave to Hashem, and “one cannot truly cleave to Him except through fulfilling the 248 positive commandments, for they are the 248 ‘organs of the King, as it were.’”³³ Meaning, he studies Torah and performs mitzvos in order to be “an attendant of Hashem,” to become holy and separate from the world — “a holy nation.”
- b) A person busies himself with Torah and performs mitzvos in order to affect his body, his animalistic soul, and his portion of the world, to make the world into a home for Hashem in the **lower realms**.³⁴

6.

MITZVOS FOR THE WORLD

On this basis, we can suggest a reason — based on the “wine of Torah”³⁵ in Rashi’s commentary — why Rashi interprets the term, “a kingdom of *kohanim*,” as “ministers,” and not more simply, as in many other sources, “attendants of Hashem.”

³³ *Tanya*, “*Likkutei Amarim*,” ch. 4.

³⁴ See *Tanya*, “*Likkutei Amarim*,” ch. 36-37.

³⁵ {The deeper ideas in Torah.}

The *Gemara*,³⁶ when discussing *Matan Torah*, says:

When Moshe ascended On High {to receive the Torah} the ministering angels said before the Holy One: “Master of the Universe, what is a human being doing here among us?” The Holy One said to them: “He came to receive the Torah.” The angels said before Him: “The Torah is a hidden treasure... and you seek to give it to flesh and blood? ‘What is man that You are mindful of him?’... *Place Your majesty upon the Heavens.*”³⁷ The Holy One said to Moshe: “Give them an answer”.... Moshe said before Him: “Master of the Universe, the Torah that You are giving me, what is written in it? ‘I am Hashem, your L-rd, Who brought you out of Egypt.’”³⁸ Moshe said to the angels: “Did you descend into Egypt? Were you enslaved to Pharaoh? Why should the Torah be yours? What else is written in it? ‘You shall have no other deities before Me.’”³⁹ {Moshe said to the angels:} “Do you dwell among the nations {who worship idols}?”

And Moshe continued to answer the angels in a similar vein regarding the other commandments:

“Do you perform labor?... Do you conduct business?... Do you have a father or a mother?... Is there jealousy among you? Is there an evil inclination within you?...” Immediately, they agreed with the Holy one....

This shows that the purpose of Hashem giving the Torah and mitzvos was not (only) for the Jewish people to rise above worldly matters (labor, business, etc.). **This** the angels can do, and more perfectly than the Jewish people are able to in this world. Rather, the purpose is (primarily) for Jewish people to become ministers **while** existing in the world, interacting with the other nations and with worldly affairs to the extent that there is “an evil inclination within you.” Meaning, a Jew should become a ruler and governor of his evil inclination and his emotions; and similarly, over the world around him. He is a minister and conducts his worldly affairs so that they will be purified and permeated with G-dliness. (This is the *avodah* of “all your actions,” and “in all your ways,” as mentioned).

In general, this is what *Matan Torah* accomplished, and this is the advantage of Torah study and mitzvah observance following *Matan Torah* over

³⁶ *Shabbos* 88b ff.

³⁷ *Tehillim* 8:2.

³⁸ *Shemos* 20:2.

³⁹ *Shemos* 20:3.

the Torah study and mitzvah observance of the *Avos* (who fulfilled the entire Torah even before it was given).⁴⁰

The *Avos* fulfilled Torah and mitzvos not to refine or elevate the physicality of the world, but to commune with G-dliness, as our Sages say, “The *Avos* are a chariot.”⁴¹ *Tanya* explains:⁴² “For all their limbs were holy, detached from mundane matters. Throughout their lives, they served as a vehicle for nothing but the Divine will.”

As a result, their lifelong occupation was shepherding, removed from the world.

7.

MINISTERS AND THEN HOLY

Therefore, Rashi maintains that in Hashem’s words regarding the *avodah* of the Jewish people in connection with *Matan Torah*, first the *avodah* performed on the level of “ministers” is discussed. Only afterward, the *avodah* performed on the level of “a holy nation” is (also) addressed.

On this basis, we can also appreciate why, in *Shulchan Aruch*, the Alter Rebbe — when he writes, “immediately after Rosh Chodesh, Moshe began to prepare the people to receive the Torah” — only quotes the verse, “On Tuesday, Moshe conveyed to them Hashem’s words, *You will be a kingdom of kohanim for Me*,” and (just) alludes to the words “a holy nation,” by writing “etc.” His intent is to emphasize, as discussed, that the clause “You will be a kingdom of ***kohanim*** for Me” refers to a specific type and level of *avodah*. (And the phrase, “a holy nation” refers to a **second** level, albeit one that continues and completes the previous one.) Herein lies the primary goal of receiving the Torah. Therefore, the **first** preparatory step (“Moshe **began** to prepare the people to receive the

⁴⁰ *Yoma* 28b; *Kiddushin* 82a.

⁴¹ *Bereishis Rabbah*, ch. 47, sec. 6; ch. 82, sec. 6.

⁴² *Tanya*, “*Likkutei Amarim*,” ch. 23.

Torah”) was that Moshe “conveyed to them Hashem’s words, *You will be a kingdom of kohanim for Me.*” Meaning, the main intent of receiving the Torah was to engage in the *avodah* alluded to by the verse, “You will be a kingdom of *kohanim* for Me.”

And the level of “a holy nation” is {the last stage, and therefore, only alluded to by the word} “etc.” Meaning, this level is achieved after the *avodah* of “a kingdom of *kohanim*,” and completes it.

8.

BAMIDBAR CENSUS

In this context, we can explain the connection between the 2nd of Sivan and *parshas Bamidbar*:

The subject of the *parshah* is the census of the Jewish people. So much so that the entire book is called “*Chumash HaPekudim* {the Book of Censuses}.”⁴³

More specifically, the *parshah* speaks of three separate censuses:

At the beginning of the *parshah*, it speaks about the census of all the Jewish people except for the tribe of Levi — “But you shall not count the tribe of Levi, and you shall not take their census among the Children of Israel.”⁴⁴ Subsequently, the tribe of Levi was counted alone:⁴⁵ “Every man from one month of age and up shall you count them.”⁴⁶ Then, at the end of the *parshah*; “Take a census of the family of Kehas from among the families of the Leviim... from thirty years of age and up....” “Count from among them those who are fit for the work of carrying.”⁴⁷

⁴³ *Yoma* 68b and Rashi, s.v., “*she’bechumash ha’pekudim.*”

⁴⁴ *Bamidbar* 1:49.

⁴⁵ Rashi on *Bamidbar* 1:49.

⁴⁶ *Bamidbar* 3:15.

⁴⁷ *Bamidbar* 4:2,3, and Rashi, ad loc.

These three specific censuses correspond to the three ideas mentioned above, viz., “You will be a treasure to Me from among all the nations”; “You will be a kingdom of *kohanim* for Me”; and “a holy nation.”

9.

DAVAR SHEBEMINYAN

The explanation: *Shelah* writes⁴⁸ that the counting of the Jewish people changed them into a *davar shebeminyan*,⁴⁹ and a *davar shebeminyan* is never nullified.⁵⁰ The reason a *davar shebeminyan* is not nullified is different from the reason that other distinctive entities, like a {whole} creature⁵¹ or an animal,⁵² and the like, are not nullified. In these cases, the distinctiveness of the item itself is palpably visible; it is visibly different from the other things {in the admixture}.

In contrast, a *davar shebeminyan* is not nullified because by having counted the item, the person shows it has a special measure of importance. That’s why it is not nullified. The importance, though, is not clear and recognizable in the item itself {before the person counts it}.

The spiritual equivalent of this concept is:

Counting alludes to the level where outwardly, the Jewish people (seemingly) are not unique amongst the other nations. The reason they can’t be nullified is because Hashem counts them. This exposes their preciousness, etc.

Therefore, the underlying idea of counting is consistent with the verse, “You will be a treasure to Me from among **all the nations**, for **the entire**

⁴⁸ *Shnei Luchos Habris*, 347a ff.; see *Hemshech Ayin Beis*, maamar “Tzohar Taaseh” 5673; see *Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 4, p. 1019 ff.

⁴⁹ {*Davar shebeminyan*, lit., “something that is counted. This is a *halachic* term for items sold by number as opposed to by weight. This gives these items special importance, and they, therefore, are not nullified by a larger quantity.}

⁵⁰ *Beitzah* 3b; *Shulchan Aruch*, “Yoreh Deah,” sec. 110, par. 1; Alter Rebbe’s *Shulchan Aruch*, “*Orach Chaim*,” sec. 447, par. 20.

⁵¹ *Chullin* 100a.

⁵² *Zevachim* 73a.

world is Mine.” Even though “the **entire** world is Mine,” i.e., there are others besides them, the Jewish people are distinctive because Hashem **chose** them, and they are not nullified in relation to the other nations. This distinctiveness is revealed by being counted, because by counting, “your dearness is evident,” as Rashi says at the beginning of the *parshah*: “Because of their preciousness to Him, He counts them often.” Or as Rashi writes at the beginning of *parshas Shemos*, “to show their preciousness.”

10.

LEVI AND KEHAS

Subsequently, the verse emphasizes, “But you shall not count the tribe of Levi, and you shall not take their census among the Children of Israel.” The census of the tribe of Levi related not only to their separation from all others whereby they are not nullified, but also to the command, “You shall appoint the Leviim.”⁵³ This directive connotes they were appointed to a role of **authority**⁵⁴ — they were elevated to their **own** category, a special class.

The reason the members of the tribe of Levi were counted, “from one month of age and up,” was because through this census, “he is be counted to be called **keeper of the holy charge.**”⁵⁵ This responsibility was analogous to the virtue described as, “You will be a kingdom of *kohanim* for Me” — ministers. This was **besides** the fact that they will not be nullified (“You will be a treasure to Me...”).

Next comes the census of the families of Levites — Gershon, Kehas, and Merari — who were counted from thirty years of age and up, “who {are fit to} participate in the service, to work in the **Tent of Meeting.**”⁵⁶ Our *parshah*

⁵³ *Bamidbar* 1:50.

⁵⁴ Rashi on *Bamidbar* 1:50.

⁵⁵ Rashi on *Bamidbar* 3:15.

⁵⁶ *Bamidbar* 4:3.

includes the census of the family of Kehas: “This is the responsibility of the family of Kehas in the Tent of Meeting: the **holy of holies**.”⁵⁷

This census was not taken on account of their general tasks as Leviim — their officiation as “keepers of the holy charge” — but rather, on account of their work in the Tent of Meeting {in general}. And regarding the family of Kehas {specifically}, they were counted because they were special in that they carried the {*Mishkan*'s} holy utensils — “the holiest of them all.”⁵⁸

In general, this is analogous to the advantage of the *avodah* of “a **holy** nation,” as discussed. Additionally — in our *parshah* — the family of Kehas was counted because of their revered *avodah* of carrying the Ark, etc., the most sacred of all. This {theme of holiness} also is linked with the fact that the *kohanim* were descendants of the family of Kehas, and “Aharon the *kohen* descended from Kehas, who was the holiest of holy.”⁵⁹

11.

THE NOVELTY OF *PARSHAS BAMIDBAR*

We discussed above how the main preparation for *Matan Torah* is that “You will be a kingdom of *kohanim* for Me” — ministers. Similarly, we find in this context that the special novelty of *parshas Bamidbar* is regarding the census of the families of the Leviim {which parallels the advantage of “ministers” discussed earlier}:

The census of the whole Jewish people is not a novelty and an accomplishment that happened for the first time in our *parshah*. Censuses had taken place earlier. As Rashi writes⁶⁰ immediately {at the beginning of our *parshah*}, “When they left Egypt, He counted them....” (“Because of Israel’s

⁵⁷ *Bamidbar* 4:4.

⁵⁸ Rashi on *Bamidbar* 4:4.

⁵⁹ *Bamidbar Rabbah*, ch. 6, sec. 2 (end); see *Shelah*, 349b ff.

⁶⁰ {Rashi on *Bamidbar* 1:1.}

preciousness to Him, He counts them **often.**") And this verse is already the third time that Hashem counted the Jewish people.

Also, the novel command to “take a census of the family of Kehas” is not entirely associated with *parshas Bamidbar*. Although the family of Kehas was distinctive in its work, the manner in which this family was **counted** (“from thirty years of age and up”) was the same as the rest of the tribe of Levi. The family of Gershon even performed the same type of work as the family of Kehas (i.e., carrying). Thus, the clause, “take a census of the family of Kehas” (at the end of our *parshah*) is a prelude⁶¹ to the continuation of this theme (in the following *parshah*), “Take a census of the family of Gershon **also.**”⁶²

The novelty and **uniqueness** of *parshas Bamidbar* is the census and role of the tribe of Levi as a whole: Hashem appointing the Leviim “in place of every firstborn among the Jewish people,”⁶³ as substitutes for the firstborns. A firstborn is the first, and leader, of all his siblings; he receives a double portion of the inheritance, **etc.**⁶⁴

(For all these things are used by “the firstborn of the nation of Israel” in the service of *Hashem*.)⁶⁵

For as discussed above, the primary intention and purpose of *Matan Torah* is that “you will be a kingdom of *kohanim* for Me” — ministers. That is, to rule over mundane matters and steer them in a direction that will cause them to become a home for Hashem.

⁶¹ {{In other words, the discussion in our *parshah* about the census of Kehas also serves as the introduction to the census of the family of Gershon (and also the family of Merari).}}

⁶² {*Bamidbar* 4:22.}

⁶³ *Bamidbar* 3:41.

⁶⁴ See Rashi on *Bereishis* 49:3: “By having the *kehunah*... by having the kingship.”

⁶⁵ {The Rebbe explained earlier that the tribe of Levi as a whole parallels the concept of “ministers,” which entails involvement in the world, yet serving as a leader, and using materialism for the sake of Heaven. Here, the Rebbe develops this theme further, because this *parshah* emphasizes that the tribe of Levi, as a whole, was to substitute in the role of the firstborn. He thus is showing a parallel between a “firstborn” and the role of “ministers.” A firstborn is the leader of the family, i.e., a leadership role involving the matters of this world (as discussed in the end of the previous paragraph, inheritance, etc.). In this paragraph, the Rebbe adds that all the physical matters (and leadership role) of the firstborn are (obviously) used to serve Hashem. By saying this the Rebbe is highlighting the parallel of a firstborn to the role of “ministers,” discussed earlier, - which is employing physical matters in the service of Hashem.}}

Every year, when “these days are remembered,”⁶⁶ every Jew busies himself with preparing to fulfill the Divine promise, “You will be a kingdom of *kohanim* for Me” — ministers. This also accomplishes {and leads to the fulfillment of this promise that the Jewish people will be} “a kingdom of *kohanim*,” literally; and, in the most basic sense, in the third Temple.

The Jewish people are ministers over all worldly matters, to the extent that they “appoint the heavenly ministers” (as the Maggid of Mezrich⁶⁷ explains the phrase, “a kingdom of *kohanim*”).

We will merit that “kings will be your nurturers, and their princesses your wet nurses,”⁶⁸ while we are still in exile. We prepare ourselves to receive the Torah **joyfully** and **inwardly**. And by doing so, we also prepare ourselves to study the Torah of Moshiach, may it be soon. For then, “Hashem will be king over the entire **world**,”⁶⁹ and “Dominion will belong to Hashem.”⁷⁰

— Based on a talk delivered on Shabbos *parshas Bamidbar*, 2nd of Sivan, 5726 (1966)

⁶⁶ *Esther* 9:28.

⁶⁷ *Or Torah*, 34a. {*Avodas Yisrael* (by Maggid of Kozhnitz, Rabbi Israel Hopstein), “*Sefer Vayikra, Shabbos HaChodesh*.”}

⁶⁸ *Yeshayahu* 49:23.

⁶⁹ *Zechariah* 14:9.

⁷⁰ *Ovadiah* 1:21.