

# Agudas Yisroel Anshei Kielce



## Zmanim

Candle Lighting: 5:44 pm

Mincha/Kabbalas Shabbos: 5:45 pm

Shacharis: 8:45 am

**Hilchos Shabbos Shiur: 5:35 pm**

Mincha/**SEUDAS SHLISHIS**: 5:15 pm

Maariv/Motzei Shabbos: 6:48 pm

Motzei Shabbos Rabbeinu Tam: 7:15 pm

**Sunday Shacharis: 8:00 am & 9:00 am**

## **Parshas Ki Sisa**

*Adapted from Rabbi Yochanan Zweig [www.torah.org]*

### **Making Sense of the Census**

When you take the census of the people of Israel according to their number...from twenty years old and above... (31:12-14)

Here the Torah describes the process of tallying those in the Jewish nation. Remarkably, the way we conduct our census is far different from a typical nation's census. Generally, a nation's interest in censuses is only natural as a census is a pretty good measure of a nation's strength and overall wellbeing. Over three thousand years ago, the Babylonians conducted an exhaustive census of their population, livestock, and food staples. The records of a Chinese population study, done during the Han Dynasty in the first century, are still extant. The United States conducted its first census a few short years after the War of Independence.

Yet, the Jewish method for conducting a census is very different. Rashi (ad loc) explains that the only ones who were counted were those

that were eligible for service in the army: specifically, men over the age of twenty. In other words, the word "census" in this context is really a misnomer, as we aren't really doing a population study. Rather, the Torah is asking us to count the number of men eligible for service in the army. Obviously a leader would want to know the number of men in the army as this is a good indication of their military strength, yet, this is the only type of census that the Jewish people ever undertook. Why?

The answer to this question defines the essence of the Jewish people and perhaps even reveals the secret to its longevity. Most nations are made up of a collection of individuals living in a certain geographic location with similar ideals and goals with, perhaps, some kind of common ancestry. Jewish people, on the other hand, perceive themselves as a unified whole. In other words, the Jewish nation is a living corporeal body that just changes cells over time. Meaning, we are a community of people not a

collection of individual people choosing to live the same way. In such a community, there is very little value in knowing how many individuals there are.

Ramban (Bamidbar 1:2) seems to indicate that it is from the age of twenty and on that one becomes involved in community activities. The entire strength of the Jewish people and the responsibility to fulfill her mission depends on the strength of her community. Because of this, the only real measure of the strength of the Jewish people is the amount of people who are community minded and even willing to sacrifice themselves for the sake of the community. That can only be measured by those that are of the age of communal responsibility and able to serve in the army.

This may also explain the strange insertion in this week's Parsha of the spices and "recipe" for making the Ketores. The Ketores was well known as a remarkably pleasing fra-

grance that permeated the Mishkan and later, the Beis Hamikdosh.

Yet, out of the eleven spices that made up the formula of the Ketores, one (Chelbona) had a putrid smell. Rashi (30:34) explains its inclusion: "This comes to teach us that we should not take lightly the law of including in our gatherings even those with severe transgressions, as part of our communal prayers." On the face of it this seems very difficult to understand; wouldn't we want to Daven to HaShem with only those of a pure heart and righteous deeds? Chazal are teaching us that we must never look at ourselves as individuals; our entire strength lies in the strength of our community. Just as the Ketores is invalid without the Chelbona, we aren't a complete community without including everyone. It is only when we present ourselves as a community that HaShem will truly respond to our prayers.

**Good Shabbos**

**\*\* To ensure accurate publication of all announcements and sponsorships,\*\*  
 \*\*information must be submitted to mailings@agudahsouth.com \*\*  
 \*\*prior the publication deadline of 10:00 am on Friday morning.\*\***

**This week's kiddush is sponsored by:  
 Danny & Bruria Frances in memory of Bruria's mother: Raizel bat Baruch.**

**The kids' program will take place downstairs beginning at 9:30 am.**

**The guest speaker for Seudas Shlishis is TBD.  
 Seudas Shlishis is sponsored by the shul.**

**The cholim list is being updated for Chodesh Adar. If you would like to submit a name to the cholim list please email gabbai@agudahsouth.com or contact one of the gabbaim.**

Shacharis	Weekday Schedule	Mincha
Sunday: 8:00 am & 9:00 am		5:55 pm
Monday & Thursday: 7:00 am & 7:55 am		Maariv
Tuesday, Wednesday & Friday: 7:00 am & 8:00 am		6:15 pm & 8:00 pm (Mon-Thur)
Daf Yomi with Rabbi Kaufman: 8:00 am (Shabbos), 7:15 am (Sun), 7:40 am (Mon-Fri)		
Amud Yomi with Rabbi Rafi Greenspan: 7:20 am (Mon-Fri)		

To sponsor Kiddush/Seudas Shlishis contact Baruch Klein (kiddush@agudahsouth.com.)  
 Have a Simcha to announce? Email announcements to mailings@agudahsouth.com.  
 To subscribe or unsubscribe to the email bulletin please email mailings@agudahsouth.com.

**Friday Night Learning Program (FNL)**  
**The Friday Night learning program will take place this week.**  
**Learning Seder: 8:00 pm Or Hachaim/Esoteric Mefarshim shiur: 8:45 pm**  
**FNL is sponsored by Hershy & Elaine Weinberg**  
**in honour of the upcoming Reichmann wedding.**