

The Shul

at the Lubavitch Center

6701 Old Pimlico Road
Baltimore, MD 21209

www.chabadshul.org



February 19, 2022

Ki Tisa

18 Adar A, 5782

Who's Taking the Census

Most countries throughout the world periodically conduct a population census. According to the Constitution of the United States of America, every ten years the government conducts a population census. In the past, thousands of census-takers have attempted to visit every household in the nation, especially those in poorer neighborhoods, to record the number of persons living there, their ages, and other statistical information.

State budgets for the United States Government census 2020 has made headlines. California has approved a \$187,000,000 budget to assure that all residents get counted. New York might spend up to \$70,000,000 on census promoting efforts.

Most of the information garnered for the census will primarily be conducted in the age-old manner of mailing questionnaires to every household in the United States and then sending census-takers door to door to try and make sure no one is left out.

Who are the census-takers? It can be just about anyone. In the past, it has included high school and college students, unemployed individuals or people with part-time jobs, and seasonal workers. Basically, census-takers are people with time on their hands who can use the extra money and aren't looking for highly-skilled work. The counting itself can, and is, done by virtually anyone.

The Jewish people were counted three times during their 40 year sojourn in the Sinai desert. On three separate occasions, G-d commanded Moses that a census should be taken.

But G-d did not merely tell Moses to organize a census. He commanded Moses to conduct the actual count. The same Moses whose received and transmitted the Divine truths of the Torah to the Jewish people and to all humanity went from tent to tent to count the Jewish people. Moses, who sat every day, all day, from morning to evening, conducting the affairs of the nation and serving as their chief jurist and judge; Moses, the greatest teacher and prophet of all time, was instructed to personally visit every "household" in the Israelite camp to tally how many individuals between the ages of 20 and 60 resided there.

Of course, no single individual could visit hundreds of thousands of homes. Moses needed helpers. And who was appointed to assist him? Aaron, second in stature only to Moses. (The final census took place after Aaron's passing; his son and successor, Elazar, assisted Moses.) When additional help was needed, the leaders, the princes of the twelve tribes of the Jewish people, were enlisted.

Counting numbers may be a relatively simple task. But when it is people who are being counted-when each number represents a unique and holy soul-it is a task that must be conducted with sensitivity and reverence.

Jewish teachings explain that every Jew contains within him or her a spark of Moses. Surely, then, each of us can act with sensitivity and reverence toward our fellow Jews and count them in.

(from <http://www.lchaimweekly.org/>)

An Evil Eye

From time immemorial, mankind has grappled with the idea of an evil, sabotaging force. In a G-d-run world, one expects good to always succeed and evil to fail, good things to happen to good people and bad things to bad people. When the results are twisted, it can only be a cynical evil force at work, like an eerie evil eye.

Is it just an eye, and not two? Is the eye part of someone's head, like our eyes are, or does it merely exist as some kind of eye in the sky? And what's its source of power that it can even hurt people whom G-d would otherwise leave alone? And what does it have against counted things?

You have been shown, in order to know that G-d, He is G-d; there is none else besides Him. (*Devarim* 4:35)

No one even stubs a finger if it is not decreed in Heaven. (*Chullin* 7b)

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Well, doesn't this just change everything? If G-d is the only power, then the Ayin Hara has none of its own. It's just another instrument of G-d's justice, and the question is why, how? What does Divine justice have to do with eyes?

The Talmud says:

Rebi Yehoshua ben Levi said: An *eglah arufah* was only brought because of *tzari-ayin* — stinginess. (*Sotah* 38b)

An *eglah arufah* was an unworked calf whose neck was broken as part of the atonement process for a mysteriously murdered wayfarer. It was a whole procedure outlined at the end of *Parashat Ki Seitzei*, carried out by the city to which the wayfarer was closest when he was found. Rebi Yehoshua ben Levi said that such an incident occurred because of *tzari-ayin*, the stinginess of the town.

In other words, no murder is accidental, even the ones we treat as accidental. Every death is G-d-arranged and approved. Likewise, knowing the cause of death is also a matter of *Hashgochah Pratis*, Divine Providence. G-d can either arrange for the cause of death to be known, or hidden. And in a case of murder, *G-d forbid*, for the murderer to be found or to escape.

Thus, if some town finds itself having to carry out an *eglah arufah* ceremony, it is their Divine Providence. The person who died was meant to die. The person who killed them will be judged for doing so, and pay for it at the right time in the right way. But the town by which it happened was guilty of their own sin, and that, said Rebi Yehoshua ben Levi, was *tzari-ayin*. They were stingy, and G-d "rewarded" their stinginess with an unresolved murder and the *eglah arufah* process.

Is stinginess really that bad?

(by Rabbi Pinchas Winston from Project Genesis at www.torah.org)



The Shul is looking to hire a (young) woman to assume responsibility to structure and supervise the children's groups. If you are interested or know of someone, please contact the Rav.

Yahrzeits This Week:

Allan Genut	19 Adar - Saturday night / Sunday	for Mother	Mamtze Fruma Nechama bas Avrohom Laib
Chaim Eisenberg	21 Adar - Monday night / Tuesday	for Father	Avrohom Kopel ben Aryeh Lev HaCohen

SHUL DIRECTORY

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DAVENING AND SHIURIM SCHEDULE

<p>Friday, 2/18 — 17 Adar נ Shacharit — 7:00 a.m. Shabbat Candles — 5:28 p.m. Minchah / Ma'ariv — 5:30 p.m.</p> <p>Shabbat, 2/19 — 18 Adar נ Shacharit — 9:00 a.m. Sof Z'man Kriat Shema — 9:35 a.m. Minchah — 5:15 p.m. Ma'ariv — 6:29 p.m.</p> <p>Sunday, 2/20 — 19 Adar נ Shacharit — 8:00 a.m. Minchah / Ma'ariv — 5:35 p.m. Father and Son Learning — 6:10 p.m.</p> <p>Monday, 2/21 — 20 Adar נ Shacharit — 6:50 a.m. Minchah / Ma'ariv — 5:35 p.m.</p>	<p>Tuesday, 2/22 — 21 Adar נ Shacharit — 7:00 a.m. Minchah / Ma'ariv — 5:35 p.m.</p> <p>Wednesday, 2/23 — 22 Adar נ Shacharit — 7:00 a.m. Minchah / Ma'ariv — 5:35 p.m.</p> <p>Thursday, 2/24 — 23 Adar נ Shacharit — 6:50 a.m. Minchah / Ma'ariv — 5:35 p.m.</p> <p>Friday, 2/25 — 24 Adar נ Shacharit — 7:00 a.m. Shabbat Candles — 5:36 p.m. Minchah / Ma'ariv — 5:35 p.m.</p>
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