Discourse 29

"VeHayah Mispar Bnei Yisroel... -The number of the children of Israel will be..."

Delivered on Shabbat Parshat Bamidbar, 2nd of Sivan, 5726 By the grace of *HaShem*, blessed is He,

1.

The verse states,¹⁷⁹⁴ "The number of the children of Yisroel will be like the sand of the sea, which can neither be measured nor counted; and it shall be that in the place where it was said to them, 'You are not My people,' it will be said to them, 'Children of the Living God.' The children of Yehudah and the children of Yisroel will gather together, and they will appoint one head for themselves... for the day of Yizre'el is great."

The question about the precise wording here is well known.¹⁷⁹⁵ That is, the verse first states, "The number of the children of Yisroel will be," specifically indicating that there is a matter of a number here, but then states, "which can neither be measured nor counted," this being that which transcends number.

We also must understand the relationship between the beginning of the passage which states, "The number of the children of Yisroel will be etc.," and the continuation of the passage, which states, "In the place where it was said to them etc., it will be said to them, 'Children of the Living God,' and the

¹⁷⁹⁴ Hosea 2:1-2 – Haftorah of the Torah portion of Bamidbar

¹⁷⁹⁵ See the discourse entitled "*VeHayah Mispar Bnei Yisroel*" in Maamarei Admor HaZaken 5565 p. 586; Discourse by the same title in Maamarei Admor HaEmtza'ee, Bamidbar p. 113; Also see Torat Chayim, Mikeitz 222c; Hemshech 5672 Vol. 1, p. 165 and elsewhere.

continuation that, "the children of Yisroel will gather together... for the day of Yizre'el is great."

We also must understand the relationship between the above-mentioned verses and the holiday of Shavuot. For, these verses are in the Torah portion of Bamidbar, which is always read before to the holiday of Shavuot (unlike the Torah portion of Naso which only is sometimes read before to the holiday of Shavuot). It must therefore be said that it relates to the holiday of Shavuot. Shavuot. Provided the said that it relates to the holiday of Shavuot.

This is similar to what we find about the Torah portion of Nitzavim, that since it always is read before Rosh HaShanah, (unlike the Torah portion of Vayeilech, which is only sometimes read before Rosh HaShanah), ¹⁷⁹⁸ it therefore is related to Rosh HaShanah. ¹⁷⁹⁹ From this it is understood that the Haftorah of the Torah portion of Bamidbar, in which the above-mentioned verses are found, has a connection to the holiday of Shavuot.

2.

The explanation is that the verse, "The number of the children of Yisroel... which can neither be measured nor counted," is that the number (Mispar-מספר) itself will transcend count (Mispar-מספר). To explain, the matter of counting (Mispar-מספר) indicates limitation, beginning with the count the Sefirot, which number ten, [as it states], 1801 "Ten and not nine; Ten

¹⁷⁹⁶ See Tosefot to Talmud Bavli, Megillah 31b

¹⁷⁹⁷ See Likkutei Sichot, Vol. 8, p. 1, note 1.

¹⁷⁹⁸ See Tosefot to Talmud Bavli, Megillah 31b ibid.

¹⁷⁹⁹ See Likkutei Sichot, Vol. 8, p. 1, note 1 ibid.

¹⁸⁰⁰ See Maamarei Admor ĤaZaken ibid. p. 587; Maamarei Admor HaEmtza'ee ibid. p. 114 and on.

¹⁸⁰¹ Sefer Yetzirah 1:4

and not eleven," – (This is as explained before, 1802 that the matter of "enumeration-*Mispar*-מספר" is itself one of the four meanings of the word "*Sefirot*-ספירות," as explained at length in Ohr HaTorah on the Torah portion of Chayei Sarah.) 1803 – up to and including the ultimate limitations of the world.

However, what is meant is that the number (Mispar-מספר) itself comes to be in a state that transcends count, meaning that even in the limited world the aspect of the Unlimited is drawn down. This was actualized at the giving of the Torah, that even in the limited world - this being the general matter of "Egypt-Mitzrayim-מיצר," which is of the root "constraint-Meitzar-מיצר indicating limitation 1804 - there can be the revelation of the limitless light of HaShem-יהר", blessed is He, the Unlimited One.

More specifically, 1805 enumeration (*Mispar*) is the matter of the *mitzvot*, which were given in a way of number, such that there are 613-מרייג. Torah *mitzvot* and 7-1 Rabbinic *mitzvot*, and they were given to the Jewish people as they were divided into the number of six-hundred thousand sparks of [primary] souls etc. This is because, for the *mitzvot* to be drawn [to the souls] below, the matter of division and number had to come to be. However, this descent is for the purpose of their ascent, to bring about the state of "running" (*Ratzo*) desire and thirst [in them] etc., so that the count will be such that it "can neither be measured nor counted." This is the matter of returning to *HaShem-*הו" in repentance (*Teshuvah*), which transcends the order of the chaining down of the worlds (*Seder Hishtalshelut*) etc.

¹⁸⁰² In the prior discourse of Shabbat Parshat Mishpatim, Parshat Shekalim of this year, 5726, entitled "*Ki Tisa* – When you take a head count of the children of Israel," Discourse 17, Ch. 2 (Sefer HaMaamarim 5726, p. 126).

¹⁸⁰³ Ohr HaTorah, Chayei Sarah 106b and on.

 $^{^{1804}}$ See Torah Ohr, Shemot 49d and on; Va'era 57b and on; Yitro 71c and on, and elsewhere.

¹⁸⁰⁵ See Likkutei Torah, Bamidbar 6a and on.

This is also the meaning of the words, "For the day of Yizre'el is great." The explanation 1806 is that the meaning of "Yizre'el-יזרעאל" is "the sowing of God-Zeriyat E"l-יזרעת א"ל." This refers to the *mitzvot*, the totality of which is the matter of charity (Tzedakah) and kindness (Chessed), being that Kindness-Chessed is called [by HaShem's-יהו" title] "God-E"l-יהו" א"ל"." א"ל"." This refers to the matter of sowing the Supernal lights that are in the *mitzvot* that descended and materialized in physical things, such as [the mitzvah of] Tzitzit made of wool, the [mitzvah of] Tefillin written on parchment, [the mitzvah of] charity done by giving silver coins, which are inanimate objects, and similarly all the other *mitzvot*. That is, they are comparable to the physical sowing [of seed], like the sowing of wheat in the earth, in that the seed is buried in the soil that covers over it, in which it decomposes. However, specifically through this, growth is caused with much greater abundance etc.

This is as our sages, of blessed memory, taught, ¹⁸⁰⁸ "No one sows a *se'a* [of grain] except to bring out several *kor* [of grain]." That is, through the decomposition of the seed in the earth, the power of growth in the earth is caused to be awakened to bring forth growth in great abundance etc., which bears similarity to the aspect of the Unlimited (*Ein Sof*). ¹⁸⁰⁹

The same is so of sowing the *mitzvot*, about which the verse states, ¹⁸¹⁰ "[Days] are coming when Yaakov will take root,

¹⁸⁰⁶ See Likkutei Torah, Bamidbar ibid. 6c and on; 8a; Maamarei Admor HaZaken ibid. p. 588; Maamarei Admor HaEmtza'ee ibid. p. 117 and on; Ohr HaTorah ibid.

¹⁸⁰⁷ See Shaarei Orah of Rabbi Yosef Gikatilla, translated as Gates of Light, Gate Seven (*Chessed*).

¹⁸⁰⁸ Talmud Bavli, Pesachim 87b; See Torah Ohr, beginning of Beshalach.

¹⁸⁰⁹ Tanya, Iggeret HaKodesh, end of Epistle 20 (132b).

¹⁸¹⁰ Isaiah 27:6; See Torah Ohr, Shemot 53c and on.

(this being the matter of nullification of self (*Bittul*) which is similar to the decomposition of the seed, by which [the verse continues]), Yisroel will bud and blossom (such that they) fill the face of the earth with fruit." That is, even in the "earth-*Teivel*" there is the matter of "fruit-*Tenuvah*-תנובה," which is a word that divides into the words "give into her-*Tenu Vah*-", "תנו בה," indicating that there be the absorption in the aspect of the "earth-*Teivel*", "הבל-nulli (as in the Tzemach Tzeddek's explanation of this). In general, this specifically refers to the matter of drawing down the limitless light of the Unlimited One, *HaShem*-", blessed is He, below.

Beyond this, from the fact that the verse states, "For the day of Yizre'el is great," specifying the "day-Yom-יום"," this refers to the fact that everything will become the aspect of "day-Yom-יום"," as the verse states, "Night will shine like day." That is, when the night will shine like day, there then will be an increase in the greatness of the matter of day ("The day... is great"). This matter comes about through returning to HaShem-יהו" in repentance (Teshuvah), for it is through repentance (Teshuvah) that we transform even the darkness to light.

More specifically, as known, there are two views on the matter of darkness (*Choshech*), ¹⁸¹⁴ whether darkness merely is the absence of light (*Ohr*), or whether it is an existence that covers, conceals, and opposes the light (*Ohr*). However, the superiority of repentance (*Teshuvah*) is that through it we transform (not only the absence of light, but even) the existence of darkness that covers, conceals, and opposes the light. This is what it means that

¹⁸¹¹ Torah Ohr ibid. 54a

¹⁸¹² Ohr HaTorah, Shemot p. 98

¹⁸¹³ Psalms 139:12

¹⁸¹⁴ See Sefer HaMaamarim 5679 p. 17 and on; Sefer HaMaamarim, Kuntreisim Vol. 2, 342a and on; Discourse entitled "*HaYom HaRat Olam* – Today the world is conceived" 5713, translated in The Teachings of The Rebbe 5713, Discourse 1 (Sefer HaMaamarim 5713, p. 8 and on);

the effect of repentance (*Teshuvah*) is that "willful sins are made to be like merits for him." In other words, [through repentance (*Teshuvah*)] we even transform willful sins, which is the ultimate matter of opposition, in that "he knows his Master and but intends to rebel against Him." Nevertheless, [through repentance] even this darkness is transformed into light.

This is also the meaning of the verse, "In the place where it was said to them, 'You are not My people,' it will be said to them, 'Children of the Living God," meaning, 1817 in the very same place, literally! This is like what our sages, of blessed memory, stated about the matter of repentance (*Teshuvah*), that it must be "with the same woman, at the same time, and the same place," and as mentioned before, through repentance (*Teshuvah*) even willful sins become as merits for him.

4.

Now, since the general matter of service of *HaShem-*היהי, blessed is He, is to draw down the limitless aspect ("which can neither be measured nor counted") into limitation ("number"), as mentioned above, it is understood that the same must likewise be so in the person who serves *HaShem-*הי", blessed is He. About this the verse states, "The children of Yehudah and the children of Yisroel will gather together, and they will appoint one head for themselves etc."

The explanation is that Yisroel-ישראל refers to the aspect of Zeir Anpin of the world of Emanation (Atzilut), the matter of which in our service of HaShem-יהו", blessed is He, is the drawing down from Above to below. Yehudah-יהודה is the aspect of Kingship-Malchut of the world of Emanation (Atzilut) (which

¹⁸¹⁵ Talmud Bavli, Yoma 86b

¹⁸¹⁶ Torat Kohanim and Rashi to Leviticus 26:14

¹⁸¹⁷ See Likkutei Torah ibid. 6b; 7d; Ohr HaTorah, Bamidbar ibid. p. 64.

is why the kings are from the tribe of Yehudah). His matter in our service of *HaShem-*הו"ה, blessed is He, is the matter of submission (*Hoda'ah-*הודאה), (as in the verse, 1818 "This time I shall submit-*Odeh-*הודאה [to *HaShem-*הו"]"). The matter of submission (*Hoda'ah-*הודאה) is that it is lower than the intellect (*Sechel*) and even lower than the emotions (*Midot*), the primary aspects of which are Kindness-*Chessed*, Might-*Gevurah*, and Splendor-*Tiferet*, that also are above the aspects of Victory-*Netzach*, Majesty-*Hod*, and Foundation-*Yesod*, and thus are certainly above Kingship-*Malchut*. Thus, this is the matter of ascent from below to Above.

About this the verse states, "The children of Yehudah and the children of Yisroel will gather together." That is, there must be the union (Yichud) of $Zeir\ Anpin$ and Kingship-Malchut, [both] the ascent and the drawing down, [these being] HaShem's-מ"ה-H" אור" ה"ה מושר למ"ה מושר ה"ה מושר ה

Beyond this, "They will appoint one head for themselves." That is, it is not enough for them to only gather in one place, in the domain of the One (*Reshut HaYachid*) [the private domain] but remain as separate matters, in which case they can also come to be in a state of separation, (this being the general matter of the sin of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, which is the source of all sins, transgressions, and rebelliousness), but rather, it must be as the verse continues, "They will appoint one head (*Rosh Echad-*They will become one matter.

The explanation is that presently there are "two heads," these being the aspect of the Upper Unity of HaShem-יהו"ה (Yichuda Ila'ah) and the aspect of His Lower Unity (Yichuda Tata'ah), which are not equal as one. This is because the Upper

¹⁸¹⁸ Genesis 29:35

Unity of HaShem-הו"ה (Yichuda Ila'ah) is a state of the nullification of independent existence (Bittul b'Metziyut), whereas His Lower Unity (Yichuda Tata'ah) is only the state of nullifying one's somethingness (Bittul HaYesh) to HaShem-הו"ה, blessed is He. However, in the future the "one will join with the [other] one," so that they will become inter-included with each other, in the ultimate state of unity and inter-inclusion, such that the Lower Unity of HaShem-הו"ה (Yichuda Tata'ah) will ascend to become completely subsumed in His Upper Unity (Yichuda Ila'ah), and the aspect of His Upper Unity (Yichuda Ila'ah) will spread to be below as it is Above, and there then will only be "one head-Rosh Echad-Tata"."

This may be further elucidated by the explanation in Kuntres Etz HaChayim, 1820 that it is imperative for the service of HaShem-יהויה of every Jew to be of His Upper Unity (Yichuda Ila'ah). This is because when serving Him in His Lower Unity (Yichuda Tata'ah) one can easily fall from his level to a state of complete sense of self (Yeshut) etc., Heaven forbid. This is why everysingle Jew must toil within himself to come to the nullification of self (Bittul) in HaShem's-יהויה Upper Unity (Yichuda Ila'ah), by which he then will be able of serving Him in His Lower Unity (Yichuda Tata'ah) with true service etc.

The general explanation is that even when it comes to serving HaShem-יהו", blessed is He, in the aspect of His Lower Unity (Yichuda Tata'ah), to the point of being engaged in the thirty-nine mundane forms of labor, one must also have a sense of HaShem's-הר"ה- Upper Unity (Yichuda Ila'ah) blessed is He. Through doing so, in the coming future there will be the bond of His Upper Unity (Yichuda Ila'ah) and Lower Unity (Yichuda Tata'ah) in a way that there will be "one head-Rosh Echad-מור" alone, this being similar to the statement above, that even

¹⁸¹⁹ Job 41:8

¹⁸²⁰ Kuntres Etz HaChayim, Ch. 7

enumeration (Mispar) itself will be in a state that transcends enumeration.

5.

Now, this is why we read the above-mentioned verses in the Haftorah that precedes the holiday of Shavuot. For, in them the general matter of the giving of the Torah is emphasized, this specifically being the drawing down of limitlessness (absent of enumeration) below (into numeration). This is why the Torah was specifically given to the Jewish people below, as they are in a state of, "Did you descend to Egypt ("the nakedness of the land")?¹⁸²¹ Is there an evil inclination amongst you?"¹⁸²² This is to such an extent that there must be the matter of, ¹⁸²³ "You have chosen us from amongst all the nations," and, ¹⁸²⁴ "You have chosen us from amongst all peoples and tongues," (this having taken place at the giving of the Torah). ¹⁸²⁵

As explained in Tanya, 1826 "This refers to the material body which, in its corporeal aspect, appears to be like the bodies of the nations of the world," this being the lowest level. However, even so, the Torah specifically was given there, and it transcends measure and limitation. This is to such an extent that through this we effect that even the darkness of the world will be transformed into light, this being the matter of "night will shine like day," as explained above on the words, "for the day of Yizre'el is great," that it all will be the aspect of "day-Yom-"."

¹⁸²¹ Genesis 42:9; 42:12; Midrash Kohelet Rabba 1:4 (toward the end)

¹⁸²² Talmud Bavli, Shabbat 88b and on.

¹⁸²³ The Amidah prayer of the holidays.

¹⁸²⁴ Blessings of the *Shema* recital in the morning prayers.

¹⁸²⁵ Magen Avraham to Orach Chayim, end of Siman 102; Shulchan Aruch of the Alter Rebbe 102:4.

¹⁸²⁶ Tanya, Likkutei Amarim, Ch. 49

Now, this matter is emphasized on the holiday of Shavuot. For, as known, the custom amongst all Jews is to stay awake [and study Torah] the entire night of the holiday of Shavuot. The reason is also to draw from the aspect of "night will shine like day." This is similar to what we find about the day of Shabbat, that it does not say about it "it was evening and it was morning" as it does on the six days of creation. This is because there is an illumination upon it from the aspect of "the day that is entirely Shabbat," which is "the day that is entirely lengthy," so that even "at the time of evening it will be light."

This is as our sages, of blessed memory, stated, 1833 "That [the primordial] light functioned for thirty-six hours." This is also the meaning of what our sages, of blessed memory, expounded about the obligation to have three meals of Shabbat, from the verse, 1835 "Eat it today (HaYom-היום), for today (HaYom-היום) is Shabbat for HaShem-היום, today (HaYom-היום) you will not find it in the field," in which the word "today-HaYom-י" is mentioned three times. That is, even about the night meal [of Shabbat] the verse states, "eat it today-HaYom-היום," as the verse states, "sich-Ohr-יום," as the verse states, "Sar-Yom-יום," "this being the matter of "night will shine like day-Yom-"."

¹⁸²⁷ Shulchan Aruch of the Alter Rebbe, Orach Chayim 494:3

¹⁸²⁸ Likkutei Torah ibid. 8a

¹⁸²⁹ See Ohr HaTorah ibid. p. 65.

¹⁸³⁰ Talmud Bavli, Tamid 33b

¹⁸³¹ See Talmud Bavli, Kiddushin 39b; Chullin 142a; Torah Ohr, Toldot 18d

¹⁸³² Zachariah 14:7

¹⁸³³ Midrash Bereishit Rabba 11:2

¹⁸³⁴ Talmud Bavli, Shabbat 117b

¹⁸³⁵ Exodus 16:25

¹⁸³⁶ See Ohr HaTorah, Beshalach p. 604.

¹⁸³⁷ Genesis 1:5

However, we still must better understand this. For, at first glance, the matter of "night will shine like day - ("for the day of Yizre'el is great"), the matter of which in our service of *HaShem*"הר"ה, blessed is He, is the matter of returning to Him in repentance (*Teshuvah*), by which "willful sins are made as merits for him" (as mentioned in chapter three) - relates to the seven weeks of comfort, which are in preparation for the month of Tishrei, which is the [time] of repentance (*Teshuvah*).

That is, as known, that the month of Tishrei is the matter of the service of *HaShem-הו"ה*, blessed is He, of those who return in repentance (*Baalei Teshuvah*) from below to Above. In contrast, the month of Nissan is the matter of the service of *HaShem-הו"ה*, blessed is He, of the righteous (*Tzaddikim*), from Above to below. Now, being that the holiday of Shavuot does not have a fixed day of the month, but is rather established to be on the fiftieth day of the counting of the Omer, beginning from the day after [the first day] of the holiday of Pesach, it therefore relates to the month of Nissan, the matter of which is the service of *HaShem-הו"ה*, blessed is He, of the righteous (*Tzaddikim*), rather the service of the repentant (*Baalei Teshuvah*).

However, the explanation is that the general matter of repentance (*Teshuvah*) is also present in the month of Nissan. To preface, it was explained before in the discourse of the holiday of Pesach, ¹⁸³⁸ based on the discourse of the Tzemach Tzeddek ¹⁸³⁹ about the matter of "This is the bread of affliction that our fathers ate in the land of Egypt," ¹⁸⁴⁰ that the matter of the "bread of

¹⁸³⁸ The preceding discourse of this year, 5726, entitled "*v'Heineef* - He will wave His hand over the River," Discourse 26, Ch. 8 and on; Discourse entitled "*VaYehi BaYom HaShemini* – It was on the eighth day," Discourse 27, Ch. 2 (Sefer HaMaamarim 5726 p. 191 and on; p. 197).

¹⁸³⁹ Ohr HaTorah, Drushim L'Pesach p. 458 and on.

¹⁸⁴⁰ In the Pesach Haggadah.

affliction" (*Lechem Onee*) (through which we specifically fulfill our obligation to eat Matzah), si the labor in serving *HaShem*-יהנ"ה, blessed is He, through self-restraint (*Itkafiya*).

This is also why the departure from Egypt was in a way that "the people fled." As explained in Tanya, 1843 this is because the evil in the souls of the Jewish people was still in its full strength in the left ventricle etc. It therefore was necessary for there to be the labor of the counting of the Omer (*Sefirat HaOmer*). For, in addition to the explanation of Rabbeinu Nissim 1844 from Midrash Aggadah, that the Jewish people counted the days leading up to the giving of the Torah out of excitement and anticipation for the giving of the Torah, there also was the matter of refining and clarifying the particular emotional qualities (*Midot*) of the animalistic soul [in preparation to the giving of the Torah].

This is why the Omer meal-offering is unlike all other meal-offerings that come from wheat, which is human food, but is rather like the Sotah meal-offering which comes specifically from barley, which is animal fodder. This is because upon the exodus from Egypt there only was the matter of self-restraint (*Itkafiya*), and it therefore was necessary for it to be followed by the matter of the counting of the Omer (*Sefirat HaOmer*). This is as stated in Zohar, that this is like the verse, the must count for herself [seven days, and afterwards she can be purified]. That is, it is to affect the refinement and transformation of the emotional qualities (*Midot*) [of the animalistic soul] in a way of self-transformation (*It'hapcha*).

¹⁸⁴¹ Mishneh Torah, Hilchot Chametz uMatzah 5:20; 6:5; Shulchan Aruch and Shulchan Aruch of the Alter Rebbe 462:1

¹⁸⁴² Exodus 14:5

¹⁸⁴³ Tanya, Likkutei Amarim, Ch. 31 (40b).

¹⁸⁴⁴ Rabbeinu Nissim at the end of Tractate Pesachim.

¹⁸⁴⁵ Talmud Bavli, Sotah 14a; See Likkutei Torah, Emor 35d; 36a

¹⁸⁴⁶ Zohar III 97a and on, explained in the discourse entitled "U'Sefartem" 5630 & 5652.

¹⁸⁴⁷ Leviticus 15:28

Now, the general matter of the self-restraint (*Itkafiya*) that took place upon the exodus from Egypt is similar to the matter of repentance (*Teshuvah*). From this it is understood that in the month of Nissan there also is the matter of repentance (*Teshuvah*), except that this is repentance (*Teshuvah*) as it applies to the righteous (*Tzaddikim*). This is like the teaching, Moshiach is destined to bring the righteous (*Tzaddikim*) to return in repentance (*Teshuvah*)."¹⁸⁵⁰

¹⁸⁴⁸ See the discourse entitled "*Kedoshim Tihiyu* – Be holy, for I am holy" 5721, translated in The Teachings of The Rebbe 5721, Discourse 23 (Torat Menachem, Sefer HaMaamarim Iyyar, p. 257); Likkutei Sichot, Vol. 4, p. 1,302.

¹⁸⁴⁹ See Likkutei Torah, Shemini Atzeret 92b; Shir HaShirim 50b; See Zohar III 153b

¹⁸⁵⁰ The conclusion of this discourse is missing.