



## TORAH 4 TEENS

## BY TEENS

NCSY ISRAEL



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### Individuality or Unity?

The Emet Layaakov asks why each shevet are only given flags now in this weeks Parsha, after all the purpose of flags are for war. Am-Yisroel had already left Egypt a year ago already and have been through war. So why only now are they getting flags, surely, they should have got them as soon as they left Egypt? Before each shevet has their own flag we first need to be unified. Therefore, we first have Sefer Vayikra which is about the avodah in the mishkan, and only then after we are unified around and through the mishkan do we get flags. Flags are a symbol of each shevet's individuality, and in order to portray individualism we first need to be united.

This teaches us that Individuality and each person's own colors are so important, but we first need to remember the nation we are a part of and be united with it. Once we are a strong unified nation, then the special differences between groups and individuality will not harm our unity but will add to the nation and make it even stronger. May we all always be united and add to our nation, homes, and families, through our special unique abilities. ■

### Everyone Counts

In the beginning of the book of Bamidbar we see that Hashem counted the nation of Israel but left out the Leviim who were counted separately. The question is why. Why did Hashem tell Moshe not to count them with the rest of the nation?

But wait a minute, before we get ahead of ourselves, let us first understand, why did Hashem count us in the first place? Doesn't counting people devalue them? Rashi explains that this is not the case. For one, Am Yisrael was counted by half shekels and that is not actually counting people, it is counting money and a whole different ball game.

Secondly, counting Am Yisrael wasn't devaluating or degrading them since Hashem did it out of love. For instance, Hashem also counted Am Yisrael when they left Egypt. In addition, Hashem likes to count us to show that he sees each and

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every one of us as special individuals with unique talents that contribute to the Jewish people and the world.

So back to the main question; why Hashem instructed Moshe to count the Leviim separately? Rashi offers a very good answer to this question. Hashem decided not to count Shevet Levi with the rest of Am Yisrael because they had not sinned with the golden calf incident and were not punished. Hashem really wanted them to enter Israel and not get pulled down with the rest of the nation's sin. As a result, every single Levi received the honor to enter Israel even those above twenty years old.

One important lesson to take away from this Parsha is that Hashem values each individual for their own uniqueness and not as just part of the nation. He has a personal interest in you, so just remember he is always watching and listening. ■

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