

## Parshas Bamidbar – “Longing for the Flags”:

### Relevant Dates about the first year for the Jewish people :

1. 15<sup>th</sup> of Nisan 2448 Exodus from Egypt ( Passover ) ; first counting of people.
2. 7<sup>th</sup> of Sivan 2448 Revelation at Sinai ( Shavuot )
3. 17<sup>th</sup> of Tamuz 2448 Golden Calf
4. 1<sup>st</sup> of Elul 2448 Moshe’s Third ascent to Sinai
5. 10<sup>th</sup> of Tishrei 2448 Moshe returns with second tablets (Yom Kippur)
6. 15<sup>th</sup> of Tishrei 2448 Construction of Mishkan begins( Sukkot ); second counting
7. 25<sup>th</sup> of Kislev 2448 Construction of Mishkan completed ( Chanuka )
8. 1<sup>st</sup> of Nisan 2449 Erection/Dedication of Mishkan
9. 1<sup>st</sup> of Iyar 2449 Third Counting of the Jewish people.

1. **Midrash Bamidbar Rabbah 2; 4:** These nations said to them: ‘Return, return, O Shulamis.’ [Song of Songs 7,1] – Cling to us, come onto us and we will make you governors, generals, commanders. Lieutenants, commanders-in-chief: ‘Return, return, that we may look upon you.’ – and we will make you rulers. Israel, however, replied, ‘What will you see in the Shulamis.’ – What greatness would you confer upon us?...Can you confer upon us anything like the greatness that G-d conferred upon us in the desert by giving us the flag of the camp of Yehuda, the flag of the camp of Reuven, the flag of the camp of Dan, the flag of the camp of Ephraim? Can you give us any such thing?’
2. **Midrash Song of Songs Rabbah 2; 11:** “In the shadow of G-d I longed for, and I sat there.” Israel formed three good expectations by the Sea: they looked forward to the Torah, they looked forward to the flags, and they looked forward to the Tabernacle.
3. **Midrash Bamidbar Rabbah 2; 6:** To what extent did He love them, to what extent did He guard them, to what extent did He keep them?...For G-d said to Moshe: ‘O Moshe tell them that they shall make a Tabernacle in their midst, and I shall, as it were, abandon the heavens and come down and dwell among them. Moreover, He even organized them under separate flags in His name! Hashem said to Moshe, ‘Organize them under flags in My name. Why? ***Because they are my children... and they are my soldiers.***’
4. **Midrash Tanchuma 14:** When G-d revealed Himself at Mt. Sinai, a formation of 22,000 angels descended with Him in a particular flag formation...Once the Jewish people saw them in a flag formation, they began to desire these flag formations.
5. **Bamidbar Rabba 2; 8:** Moshe began to feel distressed. He thought, “Now strife will arise among the tribes; for if I ask the tribe of Yehuda to camp on the East side of the Tabernacle and he says, ‘I will accept only the South’... what am I to do?” Hashem said to Him; ‘Moshe, why should that trouble you? They have no need of you. They know their places full well themselves. They are in possession of a testament left by Yaakov their father, which tells them how to camp under their flags. I am not going to make any changes. They already have a traditional order from Yaakov their father: in the same way that they arranged themselves when carrying his coffin, so they shall arrange themselves around the Tabernacle.’
6. **Bamidbar Rabba 2;2:** ‘We will shout for joy in Your salvation, and in the name of our G-d we will set our flags, and G-d will answer all our requests.’ [Psalms 20:6] It was Israel that was being redeemed and, as it were, g-d was being redeemed...for Hashem fixed His name in our name and organized us under our flags.
7. **Midrash Shmos Rabbah 23; 4:** ‘She opened her mouth with wisdom; and the law of kindness is on her tongue. [Proverbs 31; 26] From the day that G-d created the world until the Children of Israel stood near the sea, no one besides them sang unto G-d... G-d said: ‘I have been waiting for these.’
8. **Midrash Shmos Rabbah 23; 1:** Your throne was not firmly established nor were You known in Your world before Your children recited the Song.
9. **Midrash Beraishis Rabbah 99:** Since we have already been told that he blessed them, why add, “every one according to his blessing, he blessed them”? Because he had blessed Yehuda with the qualities of a lion, Dan with the qualities of a serpent, Naphtali a hind, Benjamin a wolf: therefore at the end he embraced them all in one blessing, declaring them all lions, all serpents, etc.