

# Mussar HaTorah

ת"ב

Torah Insights into Human Nature – Dedicated in memory of Rabbi A. Henach Leibowitz zt"l

26 Iyar, 5768 Vol. 9, No. 5

Parashas Bamidbar

“COUNT THE CHILDREN OF LEVI AFTER THE HOUSE OF THEIR FATHERS...” (BAMIDBAR 3:15)

**The Torah is often very concise**

THE TORAH GOES TO GREAT LENGTHS to detail the numbers and the assignments of the families of Levi. The Ralbag questions this elaborate treatment and offers the following explanation: The Torah is often very concise when dealing with profound topics, and therefore, in places such as this, it wants to show a contrast, and thereby dispel a possible misconception. People might think that brevity is simply the Torah's customary mode of expression. These lengthier sections serve to show us that the Torah does not have a particular concise “writing style.” Once we realize this, the Ralbag continues, it will motivate us to search for the true reason why the Torah is concise in a certain topic. As we examine and analyze the topic thoroughly to find that reason, we will delve into the subject matter to read between the lines and words to discover the full message that Hashem is teaching us

**Who is this lesson meant for?**

Who is this lesson meant for? Who is the Torah trying to motivate? Obviously, the Torah is talking to a discerning reader who notices the difference between the concise and less concise sections. He is studying the holy Torah – given by Hashem on Har Sinai – and trying his best to understand the sublime message contained in every word. Doesn't this person already understand this idea of careful study and analysis? The Torah is not talking to an unmotivated Bible reader, but rather to people who appreciate the value of the Torah and its message. Will lengthening certain portions and shortening others make a difference to people who already take the Torah's message seriously?

The Torah's lengthy description of the families of Levi and its message, as explained by the Ralbag, is not for ignorant people and it is not just for budding Torah scholars. It is a message for even the most experienced and motivated Torah scholar. Even such an inspired scholar can use extra motivation. Despite his appreciation of the Divine Source of the Torah, which surely drives him to exert his energies to uncover the deeper understanding of Hashem's infinite wisdom, there is still room to delve deeper and probe even further. Internalizing this message of the Ralbag can provide the added push to make that effort.

**Extra inspiration can increase our capacity and carry us further than we thought possible**

The human condition is one that needs constant reminders and added inspiration. Everyone needs *chizuk* and certainly when it comes to Torah study, which requires toil and continuous mental exertion. The Gemara (Berachos 32b) quoted by the Mesilas Yesharim (Chap. 6) enumerates the ideas that need constant *chizuk*; among them, not surprisingly, are Torah and *maasim tovim* – good deeds. No matter how much we may want to achieve our goals, extra inspiration can increase our capacity and carry us further than we thought possible. Let us use all the tools at our disposal, especially those provided in the Torah itself, to fortify and reinforce ourselves with every possible drop of extra motivation, so that we can plumb the fathomless depths, and scale the dizzying heights, of Torah study and *avodas Hashem*.