

ירושלמי עירובין. מַחֲנֶה, according to their legions, a legion, is like a camp, a מַחֲנֶה. Klal Yisrael asks, לְצַבָּאוֹתֵם, how many form a camp? “R’ Yochanan and R’ Yehuda ben Pazi said, ‘Ten.’” No units.

Rav Meir Simcha returns to the subject of our pasuk, the counting of the Leviim. He refers to *how* the counting process occurred by acknowledging the Midrash Tanchuma Rashi quoted. Although Tanchuma tells us that the Shechina would inform Moshe that “there are five infants in this tent; there are ten infants in that tent,” it is quite reasonable to assume that there were amounts in between and yet the totals for each of the three divisions, i.e., the Gershoni, Khathi and Merari, were, respectively, seven thousand five hundred, eight thousand six hundred and six thousand two hundred, and notice, all very round sums. Moshe Rabbeinu must have adjusted this on his own. How did he know to do this? Rav Meir Simcha tells us that it is the “not anymore” superfluous בְּאֶשֶׁר צִוָּה which hints that when Moshe was told to report the count of Leviim, it was to be בְּאֶשֶׁר צִוָּה, which harkened to a past command i.e., earlier in this Parsha, when the rest of the Nation was counted, with rounded numbers.

Rav Meir Simcha concludes this piece by pointing out, as he puts it, מַה שְּׂאִין בֵּן בְּמִנְיַן הַבְּכוֹרִים, as he puts it, when it came later, to counting the first-born males, the total was a quite different twenty-two thousand, two hundred and *seventy-three*. Down to the last individual. And this makes much sense as the purpose of *this* counting was to redeem the firstborns and therefore the exact number of them was essential. If I may add, that may be why the commandment to Moshe is written as a straightforward פְּקֹד כָּל בְּכוֹר זָכָר לְבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל מִבֶּן חֹדֶשׁ וּמַעְלָה וְשָׂא אֶת מִסְפָּר *Count every first-born male of the Children of Israel from one month of age and up, and take a census of their names* and when the pasuk informs us that Moshe did exactly that, it writes, וַיִּפְקֹד מֹשֶׁה בְּאֶשֶׁר צִוָּה ה' אֹתוֹ אֶת כָּל בְּכוֹר בְּבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל *Moshe counted-as Hashem commanded him-every firstborn of the Children of Israel*. Notice, בְּאֶשֶׁר צִוָּה and not צִוָּה בְּאֶשֶׁר. Not like the previous commands to count, and certainly not superfluous because this counting was for a different purpose and therefore required a higher degree of accuracy. בְּאֶשֶׁר צִוָּה.

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