

Parsha Plug: Parshat Behaalotecha

Bamidbar 10:2	במדבר י"ב
2 Make yourself two silver trumpets; you shall make them [from a] beaten [form]; they shall be used by you to summon the congregation and to announce the departure of the camps.	ב עֲשֵׂה לְךָ שְׁתֵּי חֲצוֹצְרוֹת כֶּסֶף מְקֻשָּׁה תַעֲשֶׂה אֹתָם וְהָיוּ לְךָ לְמִקְרָא הָעֵדָה וּלְמִסַּע אֶת־הַמַּחֲנֹת:

Riva on Bamidbar 10:2	פירוש הריב"א במדבר י"ב
[In Midrash Aggadah we learn that] the trumpets were silver and not gold because the Torah wished to spare Israel unnecessary expense. Alternatively, [according to the Riva] because elsewhere the verse says, 'They will be a reminder to you', they are silver and not gold so as to not remind Israel of the sin of the golden calf.	חצוצרות כסף ולא חצוצרות זהב לפי שחסה תורה על ממונם של ישראל. ד"א לפי שכתוב והיו לכם לזכרון אמר הכתוב חצוצרות כסף ולא חצוצרות של זהב שלא יזכר על ידו עון העגל שהיה של זהב.

Rashi on Bamidbar 10:2	רש"י על במדבר י"ב
To summon the congregation: When you wish to speak with the members of the Sanhedrin court and the rest of the people, and you summon them to gather before you, convene them with the trumpets. And to announce the departure of the camps: At the time the camps are due to depart, blow on them as a signal. It follows that they traveled at the permission of three: At God's bidding, by the word of Moshe, and by the call of the trumpets.	למקרא העדה: כשתרצה לדבר עם הסנהדרין ושאר העם ותקראם לאסוף אליך, תקראם ע"י חצוצרות: ולמסע את המחנות: בשעת סלוק מסעות תתקעו בהם לסימן, נמצאת אתה אומר על פי שלשה היו נוסעים, על פי הקב"ה וע"פ משה ועל פי חצוצרות:

Panim Yafot on Bamidbar 10:2	פנים יפות על במדבר י"ב
Chazal learn that the reference in our verse to two trumpets teaches us that if two blew simultaneously the entire series of sounds, his obligation is fulfilled. It is brought in the Rama (Orach Chayim 588:3) that this cannot mean that they blew one after the other, for if this were the case, then two trumpets would not have been needed. One would have sufficed. Rather, when they blew both of them simultaneously, it was cherished and they would apply themselves to hearing the sounds.	עשה לך שתי חצוצרות וגו' ותקעו בהן וגו'. נראה מכאן למדו חז"ל אם שנים תקעו כאחד כל הסדר וכו' יצא כדאיתא ברמ"א בא"ח תקפ"ה ס"ג, דהא א"א לומר שתקעו בהן בזא"ז אם כן א"צ שתי חצוצרות באחת סגיא אא"כ כשתקעו שניהם כאחד ואגב דחביבי יהבי דעתייהו:

Rav Joseph Dov HaLevi Soloveitchik, Kol Dodi Dofek: Encampment and Congregation
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...“Make for yourself two silver trumpets of hammered work; and they shall be to summon the *congregation* and for causing the *encampments* to set forth” (Numbers 10:2, emphasis added). Encampment and Congregation constitute two different sociological experiences, two separate groups that have nothing in common and do not support one another. An Encampment is created out of a desire for self-defense and thrives on fear. Congregation is fashioned out of longing for the realization of an exalted moral idea and thrives on love...An Encampment, in its essence, is not a uniquely human phenomenon; one finds its traces in the animal kingdom as well. There, too, the encampment serves as a shield against outside danger...In man’s world too, an Encampment is created solely from fear. When fateful, choiceless existence terrifies man, the individual grasps the inadequacy of his strength and aligns himself with others for purposes of self defense, in order to prevail over a common enemy. The establishment of an Encampment is a stratagem of warfare. Learn what the Torah has taught: “When you shall go out as an *encampment* against your enemy” (Deuteronomy 23:10, emphasis added). An Encampment is born out of the terror of destruction and loss, from the fear that fate is overwhelming. From the midst of the Encampment, the People arises. In the beginning, the Jews in Egypt were an Encampment. When they were freed by the Holy One, they rose to the level of a nation...The Congregation is not created as a result of negative causes or out of fear of the fate that pursues man, who senses his own misery and feebleness, but rather as a result of positive impulses. Destiny is the foundation of the Congregation. A Congregation is a collection of individuals with a single past, a common future, shared aspirations, identical yearnings for a world that is totally good and pleasant, and a singular and harmonious destiny. The beginnings of the Congregation are embedded in the tradition of the people’s ancestors at the dawn of its existence. Its end is rooted in a common vision of the end of days. The people of the Congregation are *witnesses* to the events that have passed and to the miraculous future that has not yet arrived. The Congregation encompasses not only those who are alive today but everyone who has lived and who will live from the dawn of humanity until the end of days. The dead who have passed on are still alive within the confines of the Congregation, and those destined to be born are already alive within its jurisdiction. A Congregation is a holy nation that does not fear fate and does not live against its will. It believes in its destiny and of its free will sanctifies itself for its realization. The Covenant of Egypt was made with a people that was born in the Encampment, the Covenant of Sinai was concluded with a holy people.

Rabbi Jonathan Sacks, Behaalotecha 5769: Camp and Congregation

The events of the past century – persecution, pogroms, the rise of racial anti-Semitism and the unfolding of the Holocaust, followed by the birth of the State of Israel and the constant fight it has had to undertake to survive against war and terror – have immeasurably deepened the brit goral, the covenant of fate that still continues to unite Jews in the face of the hostility of the outside world. We are, and remain, a machaneh, a camp. But we are no longer an edah, a congregation. Instead we have fissured and fractured into different edot: orthodox and reform, religious and secular, and the many subdivisions that continue to atomise Jewish life into non-communicating sects and subcultures. The words of our sedra still contain a challenge: “Make two trumpets of silver; make them of hammered work. They shall serve you to summon the congregation [edah], and cause the camps [machanot] to journey.” Our identity as Jews is

not just as a camp but also as a congregation. We need to recover our vision of what it is to be G-d's witnesses on earth.