



יואל ווערצבערגער,  
נשיא מכון

# THE Zera Emes זרע אמת PROJECT

והגדת  
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RAV CHAIM BEN MOSHE ATTAR (4 AV 1696 – 15 TAMUZ 1743) - אור החיים הקדוש

The Zera Emes Project by Rabbi Moshe Hubner was created to honor and share the Torah of over 250 Gedolim who weren't zocheh to descendants of their own. Their legacy lives on through their words of Torah and emunah that continue to inspire and touch countless lives. By bringing their timeless divrei Torah and wisdom to life, we create a powerful connection to the past to help inspire today's generation.

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## Titles

We instinctively refer to the Torah as being divided into five books. Each one is known as a *chumash*, a name that likely stems from the word *chomesh*—one-fifth. While each volume stands on its own, Chazal identify them in two distinct ways.

The first is simple: each sefer is named after one of its opening words. Thus we have *Bereishis* (first word); *Shemos* (second word); *Vayikra* (first word), and so on.

The second approach is more descriptive. Here, the title reflects the central theme of the sefer. The second book is known as *Exodus* because it chronicles the Jewish nation's departure from Egypt and its birth as a people. In this sense, every *chumash* carries a title that captures its defining message.

Following this approach, the fourth book is often called *Chumash HaPekudim*—the Book of Countings – Numbers. The title refers to the two national censuses recorded in Sefer Bamidbar. The first takes place at the beginning of the sefer, “in the second year after the Exodus from the land of Egypt” (1:1). The second appears nearly forty years later, in Parashas Pinchas, near the end of the forty years the Jews traveled in the desert, just before the nation enters Eretz Yisrael.

A careful comparison of these two censuses reveals subtle but meaningful differences. One notable example is the order in which the tribes of Ephraim and Menashe are listed. In the first census, Ephraim precedes Menashe (1:32, 34). In the second, the order is reversed, with Menashe appearing first (26:28, 35). The commentators examine these and many other variations, finding significance even in what appears to be the smallest textual change.

One such nuance appears in the census of the tribe of Naftali.

### NAFTALI

Throughout the first census, every tribe is introduced with the expression לבני—“for the sons of.” Naftali alone is different. Instead of לבני נפתלי, the Torah simply writes בני נפתלי, omitting the initial letter *lamed* (1:42).



R' AVRAHAM ZE'EV WOLF MUND

The Baal HaTurim explains what this omission is teaching us. Naftali, he writes, had more women than men. Remarkably, the same phenomenon occurs in the second census in Parashas Pinchas. There, the Torah omits the prefix *lamed* not only for Naftali, but for every tribe. The reason, explains the Baal HaTurim, is that after the decree following the sin of the spies, the men of the generation died in the wilderness, while the women—who had not participated in the sin—survived. As a result, every tribe now contained more women than men.

At first glance, however, the connection is puzzling. Why should the presence or absence of a single letter – the *lamed* – hint to the proportion of men to women?

### RAV SHIMSHON MUND

Rav Shimshon Mund (Kovetz *Leket Shoshanah*, Year 8, Siman 68) explains that the Baal HaTurim is building upon a principle cited by the Pri Megadim.

When the Torah says simply בני ישראל, without the prefix *lamed*, the phrase often refers to the Jewish people as a whole, including women. Thus, in many halachic contexts, even if one can transliterate the words “to the sons of Israel,” such a verse applies equally to men and women. By contrast, when the Torah writes לבני ישראל, the wording is more specific, directing itself to the male population.

With this principle in mind, the

Baal HaTurim’s comment becomes beautifully clear.

Naftali, whose women outnumbered its men, is described without the *lamed*. The wording subtly broadens the focus to include the women, reflecting their greater presence within the tribe. The other tribes, where the male population remained larger, are introduced with לבני, language directed primarily toward the men—who were the majority.

The same explanation illuminates the second census in our *parashah*. At this time, the generation of men had largely disappeared, while the women remained. Accordingly, every tribe is counted without the prefix *lamed*. The Torah’s language quietly acknowledges that the women could no longer be viewed as secondary.

The Torah teaches us a lot with just the quiet disappearance of a single letter.

Elsewhere (ibid., Siman 18), Rav Shimshon Mund records a remarkable tradition from his grandfather, Rav Shlomo Aryeh Leib Weinschelbaum, the Maharshal of Stutshin. Rav Shlomo Aryeh Leib relates that the Sar Shalom of Belz would refer to the Baal Chareidim as “my rebbi”—despite the fact that the Baal Chareidim had lived centuries earlier. The explanation was that the Sar Shalom learned from his sefer constantly. A teacher need not share the same generation as his student. Anyone who illuminates another’s path in Torah earns the title of rebbi.

In a footnote, it states that this beautiful idea may be alluded to in the Torah’s words: “זה ספר תולדות” — “This is the book of the descendants of Adam” (*Bereishis* 5:1).

Read homiletically, the verse suggests that a person’s *sefer* itself can become his *toldos*—his descendants. Chazal teach that students are considered like children. Every Torah scholar who records his understanding for future generations continues to teach long after he has left this world. Each reader who studies his words becomes, in a sense, another spiritual child.

(The Torah thoughts that become the written word possess a remarkable ability to transcend time. Centuries after its author has departed, his Torah can still inspire minds, shape hearts, and can create generations of talmidim – who are like children.)

That is the vision of the **Zera Emes Project**: to ensure that the Torah legacy of those who have left this world childless continues to live and flourish. By publishing and sharing their chiddushei Torah, we help create new generations of talmidim—spiritual descendants who live for years, and even centuries, to come.)



### ר' שמשון ב"ר אברהם זאב מונד

R' Shimshon Mund (1916 - 21 Sivan 1983) was born in Tutchin, Galicia (8km. from Reisha), where his maternal grandfather, R' Shlomo Arye Leib Weinschelbaum (1848 -10 Tamuz 1927) served as a Chassidic Rebbe. The Noam Elimelech's parents are buried in the same cemetery as R' Shlomo Arye Leib, and is a place that people who daven there have seen *yeshuos*. R' Shimshon's mother passed away while he was a young boy, and in 1924, his father, R' Avraham Zev 'Volf' Hy"D (1888-1941) married his first cousin, Rachel Mund. As young as 18, R' Shimshon was already corresponding with the leading scholars in Poland, such as R' Dov Berish Weidenfeld (1881-1965) of Chebin. In 1939, R' Shimshon published a volume dedicated to the life and teachings of his grandfather, the Rebbe of Tutchin (*Toldos Maharshal*, Krakow 1939). This work is extremely rare (owing to the outbreak of the war shortly after its release), and R' Shimshon prepared a new edition for publication in 1948. While this edition was ultimately never published, extracts of it appeared in print in the summer of 2010 (in the periodical *HaMevaser*). Due to the serious health issues that R' Shimshon had he was sent to live in Switzerland before the Nazi occupation of Poland. This is how he was spared the fate of his father and siblings Hy"d. Both he and his wife, Chana Gittel bas Aleksander Ziskind (d. 22 Teves 1986), are buried in Zurich. The family is under the impression that there were many letters from Gedolim in his possession when he passed away that seem to have been lost חבל על דאבדין חבל.