

# Parshat Bemidbar- May 23, 2020- 29 Iyyar 5780

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This week we begin the Book of Bemidbar (Numbers). “Bemidbar” means “in the wilderness,” a reference to the Sinai desert, the place we received the Torah. The Talmud posits that the wilderness context was not accidental. A person must make one’s self untamed and unaccounted for, as in a desert, in order to find Torah (Ned. 55a).

The wilderness is a place lacking structure but by that token unfettered by artificial limits. Amidst

synagogue closure, we are thrust similarly into a situation where we can neither serve nor be served by the structured, predictable Jewish practice to which we’ve become long accustomed.

As in a wilderness, we have been granted a singular opportunity to reimagine and reinvent. We

may build anew. Perhaps prayer will become a walk in a park. Perhaps engagement will take place during an online Torah class. Perhaps growth will be sparked by reading a Jewish book or

watching an Israeli TV show. In a wilderness one is either lost or having an adventure. The choice is ours.

B’Yedidut (in friendship)

RML

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