

"From twenty years and upward all that are able to go forth to war in Yisrael, you shall number them by their hosts." (1:2)

All male members of the tribes were soldiers - except the *Leviim*. The census counted everyone from age twenty and above -except *Shevet Levi*. Is this not ironic? Who came forward with his brother, Shimon, to avenge the shame of their sister, Dinah, if not Levi? When *Bnei Yisrael* sinned with the *Eigel Ha'zahav*, Golden Calf, Moshe *Rabbeinu* called out for "volunteers" to expunge the evil from the people. "*Mi L'Hashem Eilai*," "Who is for Hashem (shall come) to Me!" he declared, and who came, if not *Shevet Levi*? When Zimri, the *Nasi* of *Shevet Shimon*, publicly desecrated Hashem's Name by performing an illicit act with a pagan princess, who came forth to zealously avenge this blatant, reprehensible violation of *Torah* morality, if not Pinchas of *Shevet Levi*? Considering *Shevet Levi*'s extreme devotion to Hashem, would it not make sense that they should be at the forefront of the Jewish army? Is there anyone more worthy of going to battle than the *Levi*?

Two types of soldiers serve in different capacities. One type of soldier fights the enemy face to face, either hand- to-hand, or via artillery and other means of destruction. Another type of soldier achieves victory via his brilliant strategies. The *Levi*'s challenge is to eradicate the source of evil. He must see to it that more *Torah* is studied, that *Klal Yisrael* increase their commitment to uphold *Torah* and mitzvos. If this is accomplished, the *Leviim* will not have to fight - for there will no longer be evil.

The *Leviim*'s forbearance and strength of character, their ability to endure humiliation in order to teach *Torah* to the masses, to fight for what is right and expose hypocrisy and corruption, gave them the credentials to be soldiers in Hashem's army. In addition, their spiritual ascendancy gave them access to serve in the *Mishkan*, so that their spiritual devotion gave strength to the other soldiers who were fighting in hand-to-hand combat. Indeed, if the *Leviim* are successful in their battle to promulgate *Torah*, other battles will not occur.