

Parshas Naso in a Nutshell
(Numbers 4:21–7:89)

Completing the headcount of the Children of Israel taken in the Sinai Desert, a total of 8,580 Levite men between the ages of 30 and 50 are counted in a tally of those who will be doing the actual work of transporting the Tabernacle.

G-d communicates to Moses the law of the sotah, the wayward wife suspected of unfaithfulness to her husband. Also given is the law of the nazir, who forswears wine, lets his or her hair grow long, and is forbidden to become contaminated through contact with a dead body. Aaron and his descendants, the kohanim, are instructed on how to bless the people of Israel.

The leaders of the twelve tribes of Israel each bring their offerings for the inauguration of the altar. Although their gifts are identical, each is brought on a different day and is individually described by the Torah. ❖



The name of this week's Torah reading, Naso means "Lift Up." [The Torah] gives one the potential to rise above the framework of mortal understanding and to relate to G-d on His terms.

Judaism teaches a person how to lift his "self" above himself: to conduct himself in a G-dly manner, not by forgetting about who he is and what potentials he has been given, but by using those potentials for a G-dly purpose.

– The Rebbe

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Naso Notes

Chapter 5, Sentence 7:

"And confesses the sin he committed"

Repentance consists of three steps:

1. regret for the past,
2. positive resolution for the future, and
3. verbal confession of the sin to G-d.

The need for the first two aspects is clear, but why the need for a verbal confession?

Every sin creates a negative energy that has a "body" and a "soul." The "body" of this energy is created by the sinful deed, while its "soul" is created by the lust that precipitated and accompanies the sin. When one feels regret for a sin, the life and soul of the negative energy is destroyed; the verbal confession, a physical deed, destroys its body. ❖

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Halachic Zmanim

Shabbos, May 22, 2021

Daylight Savings Time

Earliest Tallis 4:25 AM
Latest Morning Shema 9:10 AM
Earliest Mincha (Gedola) ..1:31 PM
Plag Hamincha6:46 PM
Earliest Evening Shema8:47 PM

Anshei Lubavitch Congregation

Rabbi Levi and Leah Neubort

Adult education:

Rabbi Avrohom and Rivky Bergstein

Youth Outreach:

Rabbi Eli and Ruty Steinhauser

Shabbos Schedule

Erev Shabbos – May 21 / Sivan 10

Candle Lighting7:55 pm

Mincha7:30 pm

Shabbos Day – May 22 / Sivan 11

Shacharis 10:00 am*

Torah Reading 10:50 am

Rabbi Drasha 11:15 am

Beis Medrash..... 10:50 am

Mincha8:05 pm

Rabbi's Drasha.....8:20 pm

Shabbos Ends9:03 pm

**Latest morning Shema is now 9:10 AM. Be sure to recite the Shema at or before that time (even if at home).*

Weekday Schedule (not on a holiday):

Minyan

Shacharis (Mon-Fri)6:15 am

Shacharis (Sunday) 9:00 am

Mincha (Sun-Thurs)1:45 pm

Maariv (Sun-Thurs)9:15 pm

Bulletin

*This week's Bulletin
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Chassidic Masters

Bikkurim: A Lesson for Today

*Based on the teachings of
the Lubavitcher Rebbe,
Rabbi Menachem M. Schneerson*

In the Torah portion of Naso, we learn that “all terumah — elevated gifts — that the Jewish people present as sacred offerings to the priest shall become his property.”

Rashi notes: “R. Yishmael said: ‘Is terumah to be considered as presented to the priests — [after all,] the priest had to go after it to the granary? ... [Rather,] this refers to bikkurim [the first-ripened fruits], concerning which the verse states: “you shall bring to the house of G-d your L-rd.” But we know not what to do with it.... The verse here teaches us that bikkurim are to be given to a priest.’ ”

Producing fruit, especially the choice fruit presented as bikkurim , requires great effort and toil; a person must plant, sow, prune, etc. When a Jew finally gets to see the fruit of his labors, the Torah tells him that the very first and best must be given to a priest.

Since all lessons of the Torah are applicable at all times and in all places, this manner of conduct regarding a Jew’s earnings is expected of him nowadays as well.

When a Jew has the opportunity to give tzedakah (charity), he should not dwell on the fact that earning a livelihood requires great effort, and think that the first and best should thus be kept for himself.

Rather, the first of his hard-earned money should be “brought to the house of G-d” — it should be donated for tzedakah.

A person might well think to himself: If this money were going towards an institution such as a yeshiva or synagogue, or toward benefiting the public, then it would make sense to give. In this instance, however, it is going to an individual priest.

Since he himself also has needs, and concerning all Jews, the verse states: “You shall be unto Me a kingdom of priests,” why does he have to give the first of his hard-earned income to another? Why should that other person come before him? At the very least, why not divide the “bikkurim” into many equal parts, distributing them among many individuals — including himself?

The Torah therefore teaches us that, in order to properly know what to do with one’s “bikkurim,” one must first bring them to “G-d’s house,” i.e., one must realize Who it was that made these “bikkurim” possible. When he does so, he will reach the proper conclusion: that, in truth, they should be given to a priest.

A person can fool himself into thinking that his own needs take precedence only when he does not understand that all his money is in fact tzedakah -money. Such a person has yet to free himself from the feeling that the money he is considering giving away belongs solely to him, coming without any assistance from Above. When a person feels that he alone is responsible for his wealth, it is

Difficult for him to share his bounty with another.

But if a person’s evil inclination were simply to declare that he should not give money for tzedakah , it would be ignored. Instead, the evil inclination begins with a “just” complaint: since the worker himself also has needs, let him keep some of the first of his hard-earned money for himself — after all, that too can rightfully be considered tzedakah.

But if a person is intent on “bringing it to the house of G-d, your L-rd,” he will take it as a given that “bikkurim,” the first and best of his fruits, should be given to others, and not think of taking any for himself, just as he would never dream of taking other money designated for tzedakah.

When a Jew acts in this manner, he can be assured of the blessing that Rashi speaks of in the verse that follows:⁶ “He that gives to the priest ‘the gifts that are coming to him ... shall be blessed with great wealth.’ ” ❖

*Adapted by Sholom B. Wineberg
Based on Likkutei Sichos, Vol. VIII, pp.
29-40*

When a person is observing the Torah and its mitzvos, he is doing what G-d wants. Nevertheless, within that framework, he has ample — indeed, unlimited — room for self-expression, for the intent and the mode of observance are left to his choice and his initiative.

-- The Rebbe’s Teachings

From Our Sages

Take a census of the clan of Gershon (Numbers 4:22)

There are two steps in preparing a palace for an esteemed guest. First, the rooms are scrubbed clean, and then they are decorated with beautiful furniture and objets d'art. The first step logically precedes the second.

The same two steps apply to how we make our lives and ourselves into a home or sanctuary for God. We refrain from what is wrong and actively do good. The names and respective missions of the families of Gershon and Kehat reflect these two steps.

The name Gershon is derived from the verb "to banish" (le-garesh), signifying the necessity to banish evil. Their main load was the outer coverings of the Tabernacle, which protected it from undesirable elements. This corresponds to our job of avoiding harmful activities and influences.

The name Kehat, on the other hand, signifies "gathering" or "collection" (yikah). Their mission was carrying the furnishings of the Tabernacle, each of which corresponds to a particular positive endeavor. This family thus embodied the task of actively pursuing positive energy.

Just as Gershon was born before Kehat, it is necessary to first remove oneself from evil in order to be able to properly pursue good. Nonetheless, Kehat was counted before Gershon, for removing oneself from evil is only a preparation for the true work, that of pursuing good.

-- (Lubavitcher Rebbe)

May G-d make His face shine upon you, and give you grace (Numbers 6:25)

He will give you the wisdom to be gracious to each other and merciful to each other.

-- (Midrash Rabbah)

May G-d lift up His face to you (Numbers 6:26)

He will turn His face towards you, for it is not the same thing for a man to greet his neighbor while looking him in the face as to greet him with his head turned to one side.

-- (Midrash Rabbah)

... and give you peace (Numbers 6:26)

If there is no peace, there is nothing.

-- (Torat Kohanim)

They shall set My name upon the children of Israel; and I will bless them (Numbers 6:27)

I would have thought that if the kohanim desire to bless Israel, then Israel is blessed, but if they do not, they are not; therefore the verse tells me: "I will bless them." In either case, says G-d, I will bless them from heaven.

The kohanim bless Israel, but who blesses the kohanim? Therefore the verse tells me: "I will bless them."

-- (Sifri Zuta)

Haftorah for Naso in a Nutshell

Judges 13:2-25

This week's haftorah describes the birth of Samson, a lifetime nazirite. A condign haftorah for this week's reading, which discusses all the laws of the nazirite.

Manoah and his wife, members of the Tribe of Dan, were childless. One day an angel appeared to Manoah's wife, informing her that she will give birth to a child. This child, the angel instructed, was to be a lifetime Nazirite. In addition, the angel instructed her to abstain from all foods forbidden to a nazirite — such as wine or ritually impure foods — from the moment she would conceive. The angel further informed the woman that her son will save the Jewish people from the Philistine oppression they were enduring at that time.

The soon-to-be-mother told her husband the good news. He entreated G-d to send His messenger again — they were unaware at the time that the messenger was an angel. G-d sent the angel again, and he repeated his instructions. Manoah and his wife then invited the angel to partake of a special meal they would prepare, but he declined. Instead he encouraged Manoah to offer the goat he wished to slaughter for the meal as a sacrifice to G-d. The angel then ascended to the heavens in the flame that devoured the sacrifice.

The haftorah ends with the birth of Samson: "And the lad grew, and G-d blessed him." ❖

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Good Shabbos to all!

שבת שלום גוט שבת!

