



הַמִּזְרָחִי HAMIZRACHI PARSHA WEEKLY

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PARSHAT NASO 5783 • 2023










ISRAEL
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


**וַיִּשְׂאוּ אֹתוֹ וַיַּעֲלוּ וַיִּקְבְּרוּ
אוֹתוֹ בֵּין צַרְעָה וּבֵין
אַשְׁתָּאֵל בְּקֶבֶר מְנוּחַ אָבִיו
שׁוֹפְטִים ט:לא**

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Based in Jerusalem and with branches across the globe, Mizrahi – an acronym for *merkaz ruchani* (spiritual center) – was founded in 1902 by Rabbi Yitzchak Yaakov Reines, and is led today by Rabbi Doron Perez. Mizrahi's role was then and remains with vigor today, to be a proactive partner and to take personal responsibility in contributing to the collective destiny of *Klal Yisrael* through a commitment to Torah, the Land of Israel and the People of Israel.

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SHALOM –

From Conflict & Cold Peace to Completeness



Rabbi Doron Perez

Executive Chairman, World Mizrahi

The Hebrew word “Shalom” is one of the most misunderstood concepts in Judaism. It is often translated as “peace” which is, at best, a partial and superficial understanding of this critical concept.

“Peace” derives from the Roman word “Pax” which is related to the word “appeasement”. Peace in Hebrew would be closest to the word used by our Sages in the Mishna known as “פיוס”. “Peace” is defined as a state of non-aggression where there is no war and no fighting. It refers to a situation where there is no confrontation and hence two or more parties are able to live with each other, either individually or collectively, in a state of non-aggression. When two sides in a conflict make a decision not to kill or harm each other this is a very noble and a great accomplishment and must be lauded. This is, though, a very far cry from the concept of “Shalom”.

The reason for this is that “peace” does not imply any **positive** relationship but only a negation of war – a cessation of fighting. A peaceful relationship is therefore not defined by what it is, but rather by what it is **not**. It is not war – no combat or confrontation. The problem is that peaceful relationships are often ones where each side is totally emotionally disengaged. It can be an apathetic relationship where each side doesn't particularly care about

the other. In many ways it can reflect an absence of any positive relationship. Peaceful relations can be very cold ones; sometimes a chilling peace where there is no positive and warm relationship whatsoever. Not doing bad is not the same as proactively doing good.

Shalom

“Shalom” is something very different. It is closer to the English words of “harmony”, “wholeness” and “completeness”. שלום in Hebrew means just that – complete. Such a relationship, in order to be wholesome and harmonious, presupposes positive, warm, proactive interaction. Each party does their bit in complementing the other. Two parts, both partial and incomplete, come together to form a harmonious whole. At the core of something whole and complete is the understanding that each side is, by definition, incomplete. So often the two parts are so different that they so deeply contrast each other that it can turn into combative confrontation. This becomes the mainstay of the relationship where both sides are locked inside the proverbial boxing ring of an ongoing power struggle. Some reach the conclusion that the differences are so irreconcilable that they cannot find a way to accommodate them in their relationship and divorce and separation follows. Others choose to remain in the relationship but since

the differences are so great, and in order to avoid confrontations at all cost, they step out of the fighting ring and totally disengage emotionally. They settle for an apathetic cold peace.

Divorce, emotional disengagement or constant conflict are not the only ways of interaction. There is also the path of “Shalom” – a great challenge and ultimate blessing. Shalom is the ability to transform contrast and confrontation into something complementary and complete. Difference need not be eternally divisive but can rather be embraced – what Rabbi Sacks has famously coined “the dignity of difference”. Unity never needs to be uniformity. Thesis and antithesis need not be locked in eternal confrontation but can ultimately be converted into synthesis. I can vehemently disagree with your view but not delegitimize you. I can have a very different opinion from you without destroying you or disengaging from you. I can accept that you are also striving, just like me, for truth and the greater good. We can create room for both of us in our relationship – Shalom and Truth can learn to coexist and complement one another.

Win-Win vs Compromise

The term win-win which is used in relationship jargon in recent years definitely comes from the world and terminology of “Shalom”. It is not to be confused with the word “compromise”. The reason why “compromise” can be negative is because so often the nature of compromise is lose-lose. Both sides feel that they have given up on something very important to them for the sake of peace and indeed they have compromised something essential. When this happens, both sides somehow feel that they have lost. Win-win is something very different. It happens when both sides attempt to truly understand the other, as each side believes that the needs of the other is crucial to the very success and future of their relationship. Neither side wants the other side to compromise something important to them, since the integrity of both parties is important to the other. When too many compromises happen, this often comes with resentment as the genuine needs of the other have not



Remarkable strength and courage are needed to find a place in our relationships for different and strong held views.

been met. Win-win happens when both sides wish to find a way to accommodate the genuine needs of the other so that both can find expression in any given solution. Both sides feel that they have won, since the good of the relationship has prevailed and both feel that they have found expression in the relationship. They have both been prepared to limit their “I” for the greater “We”.

Black and White or Grey

A tangible example of this may be with respect to the colors black and white. A compromise between black and white is to mix them together, creating a new color grey. Both colors have compromised in that neither is expressed in this solution. Grey is neither black nor white but something in between. Grey is essentially a disingenuous expression of black and white – they have both compromised themselves to create something which reflects neither. Win-win is very different. This would be to fill a sheet of paper with half black and half white. Black and white are both fully and genuinely expressed in this solution. What they have done is found a place for themselves and for the other to be who they are in their relationship. Ebony and ivory can live together in perfect harmony – this is the nature of win-win and this is the nature of Shalom.

The Ultimate Blessing

It is for this reason that Shalom is the pinnacle and apex of our prayers and blessings – it is at once the final word of the daily Silent Prayer, Shas Mishnayot and the blessings of the Kohanim in this week’s Parsha.

“שים שלום” is the final blessing of the Shmona Esrei where we pray for peace and harmony and ends with prayer that Hashem blesses his People with Shalom.

The Birkat Kohanim – the Priestly Blessings – which appear in this week’s Parsha are beautiful, multi-faceted blessings that the Kohanim are commanded to bestow upon the people. The crescendo and final three words of the Bracha, are “וישם לך שלום” – and Hashem should bestow Shalom upon you. It is the ultimate blessing.

It is also the final word and teaching in the last Mishna in Shas (Masechet Uktzin 3,12) לא מצא הקב"ה לישראל כלי מחזיק ברכה אלא השלום – “Hashem has not found a greater receptacle for blessing than Shalom”. As the verse which completes the Mishna says, “ה' עוז לעמו יתן ה' יברך את עמו בשלום”, “Hashem will give courage and boldness to his people and will bless them with Shalom” (Tehillim 29).

This last verse is most revealing – to be a person of Shalom requires great courageousness. Remarkable strength and courage are needed to find a place in our relationships for different and strong held views. Contrast need not be confrontational – we need not fight and perhaps can live in peace. Much better still, if we dig deep we can merit to live with the great blessing of Shalom – where contrasting views are converted into something complementary. Where we are more complete and whole, more holy and harmonious in the relationships that truly matter.

The attribute of “Shalom”, on a personal and collective level, is the ultimate key to fulfilling our personal and collective missions. May we merit it soon in our days.

PERSONAL GROWTH

Our Need for Personal Growth

Scan here to join
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Rabbi Reuven Taragin
Educational Director, World Mizrahi
Dean of Overseas Students, Yeshivat Hakotel



This week Rabbi Taragin begins a new series that addresses issues of personal growth. The pieces will relate to the goals Judaism sets for us and how we can achieve them.

Not Necessarily Good

Man is created last, as the climax of creation. The Torah tells us that Hashem saw what he created before man's arrival as "good." Everything was put in place in preparation for man's arrival in the world Hashem created for him.¹

Surprisingly, though, Hashem does not describe man as good.² Rav Yosef Albo³ attributes this to a basic difference between man and all other creations. Everything else is created as *objectively* good – ready to function properly automatically; man's status depends upon his choices and decisions. He is created in G-d's image which includes the freedom to choose good, but also the option to choose evil and be destructive.

Not Our Final Form

Man's fate is in his own hands – he chooses between good and bad for both the world around him and for himself. Man is not created as a finished product. He is created with the need and responsibility to fashion himself properly.

Rebbe Akiva⁴ understood this as the message of the *mitzvah* of *brit milah*. The Roman general Turnus Rufus challenged *milah* as a defamation of Hashem's creation. He claimed that, if Hashem wanted us to be circumcised, he would have created us that way. As "G-d's creations are better than man's," man cannot possibly improve His world.

Rebbe Akiva responded that man's creations are actually greater than G-d's; G-d creates his world in incomplete form in order to leave us the space to complete it.⁵ The *mitzvah* of *milah* teaches us that we too need improvement. Just as we turn wheat

into bread and cookies, so we are meant to improve our own body. Rebbe Akiva proved this from the fact that babies are born with an umbilical cord that needs to be cut in order for mother and child to survive. We, as opposed to all other mammals, are born this way to teach us our responsibility to develop ourselves.

The Sefer Hachinuch⁶ takes Rebbe Akiva's idea an important step further. He explains that *milah* teaches us that we are meant to improve ourselves *spiritually* as well. Hashem creates us with a need to improve our body in order to teach us the need to improve our soul. Our role in cultivating the physical should inspire us to develop ourselves spiritually as well.

Learning From How We Were Created

The Netziv⁷ inferred this idea from the Torah's description of man's creation. As opposed to the animals who are described as "*nefesh chaya*" immediately upon their creation, man is described this way only once Hashem added a soul. This, explained the Netziv, is because animals' existence is purely physical. Man, on the other hand, is only truly alive only once he develops himself spiritually, only once he fully appreciates his soul.

The Zohar⁸ used this idea to explain another difference between the Torah's description of man versus animal. As opposed to human beings for whom we use different names to describe him at different ages and stages of life (baby, child, adult), the Torah describes baby animals with the terms usually used for those fully grown. It describes a baby ram⁹ as a ram, a baby ox as an ox, a baby sheep as a sheep, and a baby goat as a goat.¹⁰

The Zohar explains that we use different names for the different stages of

(specifically) human life because humans (as opposed to animals) develop significantly (not just physically) from stage to stage. The distinct names connote the meaningful difference between the stages of a properly lived human life.

The Maharal¹¹ saw a hint for our need for personal development in the physical material used to create man as well – "*afar min ha'adamah*."¹² Man was created from the dirt of the ground to teach us that we, like the ground, have growth potential. This, explained the Maharal, is why Chazal¹³ describe man's accomplishments as his *pei'rot* – he, like the ground, produces fruit. The ground's fruits are external fruits; our's is our personal development.

The Baal Shem Tov saw this idea as Hashem's intention when he exclaimed (before creating man) "*na'aseh adam*"¹⁴ – we will make man." The commentators wonder who else Hashem involves in creating man. The Ba'al Shem Tov identifies the *adam* Hashem creates as the one He includes as his partner in the process. Hashem creates us together with ourselves. Hashem begins the process; we are meant to complete it.

Our Historical Emphasis on Personal Growth

Judaism often finds itself at odds with society on this issue.

In Greco-Roman times the debate related to the change of our *physical* selves. Turnus Rufus (and his colleagues) objected to the change of the human body.

In contemporary times, the debate focuses on our *emotional* makeup. Much of contemporary society celebrates and seeks recognition for our natural emotions and emotional state. The Torah teaches us that

Continued on next page

HAFTARAH - PARSHANUT ON THE PARSHA

Naso – Chinuch and Nezirut



Rabbanit Shani Taragin
Educational Director, World Mizrahi

The obvious connection between this week's *haftarah* (*Shoftim* 13:2-25) and Parshat Naso is the subject of *nezirut* – a vow of various prohibitions. The Torah presents the framework of the nazirite status as a voluntary acceptance, whereas the narrative of the *haftarah* presents the prohibitions as commandments dictated by Hashem. Therefore, the *haftarah* does not begin with the naziriteship of Shimshon, but with the prelude of Manoach and his wife's reactions to the visit of a divine angel, thereby serving as commentary on the parasha of "nazir". Closer examination of the narrative of the *haftarah*, however, reveals *parshanut* on the broader themes of the parasha as well.

What is most striking about the story of Manoach and his wife is their passivity, alluded to in the name "Manoach", i.e. *menucha* (rest). As opposed to other barren couples in Tanach, they seem peacefully reconciled with the status quo of childlessness. There is no mention of prayer or cries, attempts of surrogacy or sacrifice. When an angel appears to "eshet Manoach" she is so frightened that she does not question or engage at all. Manoach, very suspicious of the angel's visit, asks not only what shall be done in utero, but requests an educational "instruction manual" – "What shall be the rule for the child, and what shall be done for him" (v. 12). The *haftarah* presents the "flip-side" of a *neder* of *nezirut* as presented in our parasha – a commitment initiated by

the person as a means of serving as a "kohen" amidst the people, a paradigm of holiness. These "parents" are already at a loss for raising a leader; they lack the tools necessary to teach Shimshon how to transition from temporary holiness to everlasting holiness.

These are in fact the broader messages of our parasha – beginning with the appointment of the *Levi'im*, and followed by the Kohen's interaction with the people in the machaneh, the Torah creates a system of integrated holiness. Sanctified leadership is not confined to the ivory towers of the sanctuary, but is involved proactively with the people. Therefore, the priests lead the impure and the thieves, the promiscuous women and the nazirites and they bless the encampment with benedictions of prosperity. Additionally, the tribal leaders are involved in the inauguration of the altar, known as "*chanukat hamizbayach*" – the same root as "*chinuch*", establishment and education!

The *haftarah* presents the antithesis of Parshat Naso – the absence of parental authority and education in the *haftarah* is an expression of the *zeitgeist* of the time – the rejection of the frameworks of authority among the entire people! Just as there is no king in Israel, and everybody does as he pleases, so too there is no parental authority in Shimshon's house from his conception through his inter-marriage with a Plishti woman, "for she pleases me well."

Shimshon's upbringing is introduced as one wherein his father suspects his mother – similar to the "*isha sotah*" of parashat Naso. The *haftarah's* twenty-four verses employ the phrase "*ishto*" (his wife) seven times, parallel to the four times in the parashah of *sotah*. Similarly, both repeat the rare term "*ish-a*", "her man" three times in close juxtaposition. The *haftarah* presents Manoach and his wife as a man married to a "*sotah*" woman wherein Hashem gets involved to bring peace – just as the divine angel reappears to resolve Manoach's suspicions. In the parasha, the goal of the *nazir*, immediately following the laws of *sotah*, is to incorporate greater sanctity in the camp; as Shimshon the *nazir* should do the same within his house and nation.

The *haftarah* thereby ends with the hope of the "nazirite" blessing of "the spirit of Hashem" that should reeducate and lead the people properly. The narrative, however, already alludes to the failure of this "*nazir*" as it is imposed by Hashem and not voluntarily accepted. Additionally, this *nazir* (i.e. Shimshon) lacks the proper educational role models who are meant to guide and inspire and lead the people with him. Though the institution of naziriteship contains within it great spiritual potential as presented by the parasha, it presents considerable religious dangers and problems when not directed by proper educational role models of "*chinuch*".

Continued from previous page

our natural emotional makeup is merely a starting part for personal development. Holiness is a goal, not (just) a starting point.

Attaining the Ultimate Good

Personal growth is very hard; Rabbi Yisrael Salanter taught that changing one

middah is harder than finishing all of Shas. But this is our life's mission, the purpose of our creation.

Bereishit Rabbah explains that, though man is not described as "good", (when he lives his life properly) he is the ultimate

embodiment of "very good". When we channel our freedom towards proper personal growth, we are better than other creatures who are programmed to reflexively play their roles.

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Halachic Q&A



Rabbi Yosef Zvi Rimon

Head, Mizrahi Rabbinic Council | Rabbi of the Gush Etzion Regional Council
Rosh Yeshivah, Jerusalem College of Technology | Founder and Chairman, Sulamot and La'Ofek

Question: I stayed up all night this Shavuot. Should I have said birkot hashachar and birkot haTorah in the morning?

Answer:

Birkot Hashachar

The Rishonim debated the reason why we say *birkot hashachar*. According to the Rambam, these *brachot* were instituted for the individual to say immediately after experiencing and enjoying specific things (opening eyes, putting on clothing, etc.). If one did not benefit, a *bracha* would not be made. For example, if one did not hear the rooster, he would not make the *bracha* of “*ashar natan lesachvi vina*.” Similarly, if he did not put on shoes, he would not say “*she’asa li kol tzarki*.” Many other Rishonim (Tosfot, Rosh, Ramban) disagree, and assume that these *brachot* were instituted based on the general pleasures of the world. Therefore, even an individual who did not benefit directly would still make a *bracha*.

The Shulchan Aruch and the Rema disagree over this matter (OC 46). The Shulchan Aruch quotes the opinion of the Rambam, while the Rema presents the opinion of the other *rishonim*. Nevertheless, the widespread practice amongst Sephardim is to *paskin* like the Rema and say all of the *brachot*, especially because this is the opinion of the Arizal. This is the ruling of the Shu”t Yabiyah Omer and the Kaf Hachaim as well.

Based on this, one who is awake all night still makes *birkot hashachar* (see below, however, about specific *brachot* which are subject to dispute).

Al Netilat Yadayim

The nature of the *bracha* of “*al netilat yadayim*” is also subject to dispute. It appears from the Rosh that “*al netilat yadayim*” was instituted as form a preparation for prayer. On the other hand, the Rashba writes that we make a *bracha* over the fact that we are a new creation in the morning (there are different ways to understand the Rashba which are beyond the scope of this article). A practical difference between the Rosh and Rashba is our question. If the *bracha* was instituted as a preparation for prayer, then it would be said regardless of a sleepless night. However, if the *bracha* is about how we are a “new creation” in the morning, it seems that one who remains awake would not say the *bracha*.

The Shulchan Aruch (OC 4:13) leaves this as a matter of doubt, while the Rema rules to wash without a *bracha*. The Bach understood that according to all reasonings, one should wash hands and make a *bracha* (this is also the opinion of the Gra and Aruch Hashulchan).

In practice, in order to satisfy all the opinions, the Mishnah Berurah writes that one should go to the bathroom before *tefillah* and then wash one’s hands with a *bracha*.

Birkot HaTorah

Additionally, the *rishonim* discuss the nature of *birkot hatorah*. Why do we make a new *bracha* each day? Some explain that the reason is because the night passed, while others explain that it is because one went to sleep. The practical difference is when one stays up all night. The Mishnah Berurah (47:28) writes that one should hear the *brachot* from another in order to fulfill all opinions.

Rebbe Akiva Eiger presents a novel ruling. If one slept at all the previous day, even if he remained awake during the night, then a new *bracha* is required in the morning according to both opinions. If the night passing is what demands a new *bracha*, then the *bracha* should be made. If going to sleep is what requires a new *bracha*, then one needs a *bracha* from the previous day’s sleep. The Mishnah Berurah agrees to this ruling.

Rav Ovadya paskins in Yabiyah Omer that one should always say *birkot hatorah*.

Hama’avir Sheina and Elokai Neshama

While we mentioned earlier that one who stays up all night does say *birkot hashachar*, a specific question arises regarding the *bracha* of “*hama’avir sheina*” and “*elokai neshama*”. The formulation of these *brachot* are specific to the individual (...who removes slunder from my eyes, etc). Aruch Hashulchan and Kaf Hachaim write that one should still say these *brachot*. The Mishnah Berurah quotes the dispute amongst the *acharonim* and concludes that it is best to hear it from somebody else. This is the accepted ruling of Rav Moshe Feinstein.

Summary:

Here is the summary of the correct practice for one who is awake all night:

1. Netilat Yadayim – use the bathroom and then wash with a *bracha*.
2. Elokai Neshama/Hama’avir Sheina – try to find somebody else who slept to say it for you. If you cannot find somebody, there are opinions to rely upon to make a *bracha* yourself.

Continued on next page

ברכת כהנים

הרבנית שרון רימון
Tanach teacher and author



במעמד חנוכת המשכן, לאחר שהשכינה שורה במשכן, יוצאים הכהנים ומברכים את עם ישראל: "וישא אהרן את ידיו אל העם ויברכם... ויבא משה ואהרן אל אהל מועד ויצאו ויברכו את העם ויגרא כבוד ה' אל כל העם" (ויקרא ט', כב-כג). ברכת הכהנים לעם נובעת ממקור הברכה - מן השכינה השורה במשכן. מה ברכו הכהנים את ישראל באותה שעה?

לפי רוב הדעות, הכהנים ברכו את ישראל ב"ברכת הכהנים" הידועה, המופיעה בפרשת נשא: וידבר ה' אל משה לאמר: דבר אל אהרן ואל בניו לאמר: כה תברכו את בני ישראל אומר להם:

יברכה ה' וישמרך:

יאר ה' פניו אליך ויחנך:

ישא ה' פניו אליך וישם לך שלום:

ושמו את שמי על בני ישראל ובני אברהם (במדבר ו', כב - כז).

ברכת הכהנים לעם ישראל איננה כברכה רגילה שמברך אדם את חברו או את בנו, אלא ברכה המגיעה מאת ה' - הוא היוזם אותה ומצווה עליה, ומועברת דרך הכהנים, כצינור להעברת הברכה והשפע. לשון הברכה חוזרת על כך שוב ושוב: יברכה ה', יאר ה', ישא ה'. ולסיכום נאמר במפורש: "ושמו את שמי על בני ישראל ואני אברכם" - הברכות נאמרות בשם ה' המפורש, כך שלמעשה זו ברכת ה', ולא ברכת כהנים.

ברכת ה' לישראל, שהכהנים מברכים אותה במשכן, במקדש ובתפילה בכל יום, היא אותה ברכה שהורים נוהגים לברך את בניהם בה.

מהי אותה ברכה?

יברכה ה' וישמרך - ברכה היא תוספת שפע טובה. אולם, שפע רב עלול להביא איתו גם קשיים, כגון: חטאים או פגיעה מצד אנשים אחרים המקנאים או רוצים לגזול. לכן, אל מול השפע יש צורך בהגבלה ובשמירה, כפי שמסביר אור החיים: "שיצוה ה' שמירתו להם לפי ערך הברכה וגדולתה... שכל כך תהיה גדולת הברכה עד שיצטרך ה' לשומרך. עוד ירצה יברוך ולא יסובב רעה מהברכה..."

יאר ה' פניו אליך ויחנך - החלק הראשון של הברכה מתאר את אופן נתינת השפע לישראל - את מאור הפנים, היחס הקרוב והאהוב של ה' לישראל, כפי שמפרש אור החיים: "פירוש שלא יהיה מסך המבדיל בין ישראל לאביהם שבשמים שבזה יאיר אור שכינתו על ישראל". מתוך הארת פנים של ה' אל האדם, מגיע גם "ויחנך" - מציאת חן בעיני ה' ובעיני כל רואיו, ומילוי כל הבקשות, כפי שמפרש ר' יוסף בכור שור: "שתעלה לחן על רואיך, וישמחו על טובתך. וגם משמע שבסבר פנים יפות יתן לך מתנתך, ש"ויחנך" לשון מתנה... וגם משמע לשון רחמנות...".

ישא ה' פניו אליך וישם לך שלום - נשיאת פנים היא יחס מועדף של ה' כלפי ישראל (אפילו לפנים משורת הדין). יחד עם ברכה זו מובאת ברכת השלום, המשלימה אותה. יחס מועדף ושפע ברכה עלולים

לגרום לצרות עין ולהתנגדות של הסובבים, אך ה' מברך אותנו בברכת השלום - ביכולת להגיע להרמוניה עם אנשים אחרים, כפי שמסביר רש"י הירש: "...דוקא לך ישים ה' שלום והתאמה הרמונית עליונה. אם תהיה עבד ה' כהלכה בכל כוחותיך הגופניים והרוחניים, ואם ה' יראה בך את הגשמת כל מטרותיו - כי אז כל בעלי הרגש והמחשבה שמסביבך יראו בך השלמה לעצמם; אליך ישאפו, ובך יראו את היסוד להווייתם; והעולם כולו ישיר שיר מזמור לאדם העובד את ה' באמת".

אפשרות נוספת להבנת ברכה זו היא על דרך הקבלה (על פי פירוש אור החיים):

"ישא ה' פניו" - ה' יוציא את היסוד המבדיל ומפריד בין ה' לישראל, ובמקומו "ישם לך שלום" - יסוד מחבר בין ה' לישראל. כשם שמידת השלום היא המחברת בין בני אדם כך גם בעולמות העליונים - השלום הוא היסוד המחבר בין עולם האלוקות לבין העולם הזה. החיבור בין העולמות מאפשר השפעת שפע ברכה מן העולמות העליונים אל העולם הזה.

ברכת כהנים, שכולה מכוונת לחיבור ולהשפעת שפע אלקי על ישראל, מסתיימת בברכה ל"שלום" - המאפשר את החיבור בין העולמות ואת השפעת השפע האלקי עלינו.

Continued from previous page

3. Birkot Hatorah - if you slept, even during the previous day, you can say birkot hatorah. If you did not sleep, find somebody to say it for you or have intention for the bracha during "Ahavat Olam" and learn immediately after davening.
4. Rest of Birkot Hashachar - you may say yourself.

5. Birkot Tzitzit - the bracha over tzitzit is covered by making a bracha on the tallit. If you do not wear a tallit, you should either change pairs of tzitzit and make a bracha or hear the bracha from somebody else.

The main purpose in finding a shaliach tzibur who slept to be motzi those who did not sleep is for the brachot of hama'avir

sheina (he should say the entire bracha aloud), elokai neshama, tzitzit, and birkot hatorah (for those who did not sleep even the day before).

● Compiled by Yaakov Panitch.

No One is Disposable



Sivan Rahav Meir and Yedidya Meir
World Mizrahi Scholars-in-Residence

Three years ago, in the midst of the coronavirus pandemic, throughout the world everyone was talking about the front page of The New York Times: a densely packed list of a thousand names of coronavirus victims in the United States with a short sentence describing each of the deceased. A few lines written above the list informed us that these thousand individuals were among the hundred thousand US virus victims and that their loss is immeasurable: "They were not simply names on a list. They were us." Without huge headlines, without graphics and without photos this front page shocked many people.

This week's Torah portion, parashat Naso, is the longest Torah portion in the Torah. The reason for this is that the parasha describes 12 times in succession and in great detail the many gifts brought by the chieftains of the 12 tribes for the inauguration of the Mishkan (sanctuary). Even though the gifts of the tribes' chieftains were all the same, the list of gifts was repeated verbatim 12 times. The commentators explain that the parasha is extended not because of the storyline, but because of the attention given to the individuals involved. Even if each of the chieftains did the same thing, each one of them found different meaning in what he did since the perspective of each was unique. We can find here a desire by God that each and every one of us deserves our own valued place since we are all uniquely significant – that each of us is an entire world.



In the Naso parasha, the famous priestly blessing appears:

"May HaShem bless you and protect you,

May HaShem shine his countenance upon you and be gracious unto you,

May HaShem lift up his countenance towards you and give you peace." (Bamidbar 6:24-26)

Blessing, protection, a shining divine visage, graciousness, peace.

For thousands of years, parents have been blessing their children with these words on Shabbat eve. At the end of the Amidah prayer, the kohanim also articulate this blessing before the congregation and it is instructive to pay attention to how the blessing is introduced. Someone from the congregation cries out "kohanim!" at which point the kohanim cover themselves in their talit and say: "Blessed art Thou HaShem our G-d, King of the universe, who... commanded us to bless the nation of Israel with love." The end of this blessing is rather astonishing. In other blessings, we do not say, for example, that we have been commanded to light Shabbat candles "with love" or that we have been commanded to eat matzah "with love." But in order to bless our fellow Jews, we must open our hearts with love. This is the kohen's pre-condition for bestowing the blessings of abundance and goodness upon the people. We too, through a positive attitude, generosity of spirit, and fellow feeling, can bring blessings into the lives of everyone around us.

Rabbi Moshe Grilak writes that the priestly blessing is a daily exercise for all of us. A permanent exercise that teaches

us about love. In an era of charlatans who offer fake magical cures, in an era when you never know where your charitable contribution really goes, this Torah portion reminds us that in every synagogue in our neighborhood, every morning, this powerful blessing is given, at no charge and with love.



לא סתם קוראים את הקטע הזה מייד לאחר חג השבועות. יום אחרי החג, פרשת השבוע ("נשוא") מספרת על כך שכל הנשיאים, כלומר כל מנהיגי השבטים, ניגשו להקריב כל אחד את הקורבן שלו, בזמן חנוכת המשכן במדבר. מדובר בתיאור ארוך מאוד, שבו מתואר איך כל אחד עושה בדיוק את אותו הדבר. אז למה לא לכתוב בקצרה שכולם עשו כך וכך? למה צריך את השם והפירוט, שוב ושוב, ביחס לכל אחד?

פרשנים רבים מסבירים שזה המסר שצריך לקחת מחג השבועות: מבחוח, כולם נראים אותו דבר, לומדים את אותה תורה, מקיימים את אותן מצוות. אבל לכל אחד יש כוונות ותחושות שונות, כל אחד מביא משהו חד פעמי שאף אחד אחר לא יכול להביא. לכל אחד יש חלק משלו בתורה, יש קדושה מיוחדת באישיות של כל אדם, ממש כמו שטביעת האצבע שלנו היא ייחודית רק לנו. העובדה שהתורה טורחת לפרט בדיוק מה כל אחד עשה – מראה שאין פה אחידות. יש חשיבות לעבודתו של כל פרט ופרט.

For the Shabbat Table



Rabbi Danny Mirvis

Deputy CEO, World Mizrahi

Rabbi of Ohel Moshe Synagogue, Herzliya Pituach

“**A**nd Hashem spoke to Moshe, as follows: ‘Speak to the children of Israel: A man or woman who commits any of man’s sins, by committing treachery against Hashem, and that person shall become guilty...’” (Bemidbar 5:5-6)

The book of Bemidbar, which we commenced last week, opens with the establishment of the Israelite camp in the wilderness in preparation for entering the land. This week’s Parsha continues in the same spirit, concluding last week’s census, moving on to matters relating to encampment around the Mishkan (Sanctuary) and culminating with the offerings of the princes and the Mishkan’s dedication.

However, the narrative is disrupted by a set of laws which seemingly have little connection to each other, let alone the wider context of the Parsha. First, we learn about “committing treachery against Hashem” through theft and disavowing monetary obligations (with specific reference to theft from a convert). This is followed by the portion of the Sotah – a wife suspected of being unfaithful. The

break from the narrative is completed with the laws of the Nazir, who aims to increase his spirituality by temporarily cutting himself off from certain worldly experiences. What are these laws doing at the beginning of the book Bemidbar?

We can answer that each of these *mitzvot* addresses issues that may arise when building a society according to tribes and households. Specifically in this context, we are warned to take care of the property of the convert who does not belong to any household or tribe. This is followed by the portion of the Sotah, who (if guilty) challenges the units of family and society. Finally, we learn about the Nazir, who seeks to somewhat cut himself off from the society being built.

Now that there is a common denominator between each of these *mitzvot* and the wider context, we can take the connection one stage further. Bemidbar is not only about building a society, but building a society in which the Shechina (Divine presence) can rest. Each of these *mitzvot* represents a different focus necessary to achieve this goal.

The first section deals with responsibility “*bein adam l’makom*” (between man and G-d), with specific sins that, “commit treachery against Hashem”. The portion of Sotah, which follows, reflects our responsibility “*bein adam l’chaveiro*” (between man and his fellow). Finally, the laws of the Nazir focus on responsibility “*bein adam l’atzmo*” (between man and himself).

The Torah specifically disrupted the narrative about establishing a society to teach us that it is not only about the technical concerns of housing, censuses, transport or hierarchy. Nor can it be built on spiritual development, good deeds or personal growth alone. For the Shechina to rest comfortably in a society, it must be a society that encompasses all of these areas, focusing on the service of Hashem, fulfilling its social responsibility, and allowing for personal growth and development.

By focusing on our relationships with Hashem and our fellow man, and working towards self-improvement, may the Shechina feel comfortable in our midst.

Shabbat Shalom!

Continued from page 5

Our series of pieces over the coming weeks will “chart out the personal growth goals and the processes that can help us realize the mission we were created to achieve.

● Summarized by Rafi Davis

1. Talmud Bavli, Masechet Sanhedrin 38a. See also the *mishnah* in Masechet Sanhedrin (4:5), which adds that each person should see the world as created for him.
2. Though the Torah tells us that Hashem saw the entirety of creation as good (Bereishit 1:31), this point is not made about man in particular.
3. Sefer Haikkarim 3:2. See also the Ramban who explains that man is not described as good

because he is only good when connected to others.

4. Midrash Tanchuma Tazria 5. See also Talmud Bavli, Masechet Bava Batra 10b for a similar conversation between the two regarding the *mitzvah* of *tzedakah*.
5. In a similar discussion about *milah* (Bereishit Rabbah 11:6), Rebbi Hoshaya proved this point from Bereishit’s description of Hashem having created the world “*la’asot*.” The world was created imperfect in order for us to fix it. See also Kelach Pitchei Chochmah (131) who speaks about the world developing spiritually. The Kotzker Rebbe saw this idea in the Torah’s first word – “*bereishit*.” G-d created the “beginning”; the rest is in man’s hands.
6. *Sefer Hachinuch*, Mitzvah 2.

7. Ha’amek Davar Bereishit 2:7. (See also his commentary to Devarim 4:1.)
8. Zohar 3:91b
9. Sefer Bereishit 31:38. See Rashi there who quotes the Talmud Bavli, Masechet Bava Kamma (65a) which infers from this *pasuk* that a baby ram can be referred to as a ram.
10. Sefer Vayikra 22:27
11. Tiferet Yisrael 3. The Maharal describes the idea that man is created in his ultimate, final state as a “*machshevet pigul*” – a disgusting, unacceptable thought.
12. Sefer Bereishit 2:7. This is why man is called ‘*adam*’, from ‘*adamah*’
13. Talmud Bavli, Masechet Sotah 46a. See also Sefer Devarim 20:19 which compares man to a fruit tree.
14. Sefer Bereishit 1:26.

The Blessing of Love



Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks zt"l

At 176 verses, Naso is the longest of the *parashot*. Yet one of its most moving passages, and the one that has had the greatest impact over the course of history, is very short indeed and is known by almost every Jew, namely the priestly blessings:

The Lord said to Moses:

“Tell Aaron and his sons, “Thus shall you bless the Israelites. Say to them “May the Lord bless you and protect you; May the Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you; May the Lord turn His face toward you and give you peace.” Let them set My name on the Israelites, and I will bless them.” (Num. 6:23-27)

This is among the oldest of all prayer texts. It was used by the priests in the Temple. It is said today by the Kohanim in the reader’s repetition of the Amidah, in Israel every day, in most of the Diaspora only on festivals. It is used by parents as they bless their children on Friday night. It is often said to the bride and groom under the *chupah*. It is the simplest and most beautiful of all blessings.

It also appears in the oldest of all biblical texts that have physically survived till today. In 1979 the archaeologist Gabriel Barkay was examining ancient burial caves at Ketef Hinnom, outside the walls of Jerusalem in the area now occupied by the Menachem Begin Heritage Center. A thirteen-year-old boy who was assisting Barkay discovered that beneath the floor of one of the caves was a hidden chamber. There the group discovered almost one thousand ancient artefacts including two tiny silver scrolls no more than an inch long.

They were so fragile that it took three years to work out a way of unrolling them without causing them to disintegrate. Eventually the scrolls turned out to be *kemayot*, amulets, containing, among other texts, the priestly blessings. Scientifically dated to the sixth century BCE, the age of Jeremiah and the last days of the First Temple, they are four centuries older than the most ancient of biblical texts known hitherto, the Dead Sea Scrolls. Today the amulets can be seen in the Israel Museum, testimony to the ancient connection of Jews to the land and the continuity of Jewish faith itself.

What gives the priestly blessings their power is their simplicity and beauty. They have a strong rhythmic structure. The lines contain three, five, and seven words respectively. In each, the second word is “the Lord.” In all three verses the first part refers to an activity on the part of G-d – “bless,” “make His face shine,” and “turn His face toward.” The second part describes the effect of the blessing on us, giving us protection, grace, and peace.

They also travel inward, as it were. The first verse, “May the Lord bless you and protect you,” refers, as the commentators note, to material blessings: sustenance, physical health, and so on. The second, “May the Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you,” refers to moral blessing. *Chen*, grace, is what we show to other people and they to us. It is interpersonal. Here we are asking G-d to give some of His grace to us and others so that we can live together without the strife and envy that can so easily poison relationships.

The third is the most inward of all. There is a lovely story about a crowd of people

who have gathered on a hill by the sea to watch a great ship pass by. A young child is waving vigorously. One of the men in the crowd asks him why. He says, “I am waving so the captain of the ship can see me and wave back.” “But,” said the man, “the ship is far away, and there is a crowd of us here. What makes you think that the captain can see you?” “Because,” said the boy, “the captain of the ship is my father. He will be looking for me among the crowd.”

That is roughly what we mean when we say, “May the Lord turn His face toward you.” There are seven billion people now living on this earth. What makes any of us more than a face in the crowd, a wave in the ocean, a grain of sand on the sea-shore? The fact that we are G-d’s children. He is our parent. He turns His face toward us. He cares.

The G-d of Abraham is not a mere force of nature, or even all the forces of nature combined. A tsunami does not pause to ask who its victims will be. There is nothing personal about an earthquake or a tornado. The word *Elokim* means something like “the force of forces, cause of causes, the totality of all scientifically discoverable laws.” It refers to those aspects of G-d that are impersonal. It also refers to G-d in His attribute of justice, since justice is essentially impersonal.

But the name we call Hashem – the name used in the priestly blessings, and in almost all the priestly texts – is G-d as He relates to us as individuals, each with our unique configuration of hopes and fears, gifts and possibilities. Hashem is the aspect of G-d that allows us to use the word “You.” He is the G-d who speaks to us and who listens when we speak to Him.

How this happens, we do not know, but that it happens is central to Jewish faith.

That we call G-d 'Hashem' is the transcendental confirmation of our significance in the scheme of things. We matter as individuals because G-d cares for us as a parent for a child. That, incidentally, is one reason why the priestly blessings are all in the singular, to emphasise that G-d blesses us not only collectively but also individually. One life, said the Sages, is like a universe.¹

Hence the meaning of the last of the priestly blessings. The knowledge that G-d turns His face toward us – that we are not just an indiscernible face in a crowd, but that G-d relates to us in our uniqueness and singularity – is the most profound and ultimate source of peace. Competition, strife, lawlessness, and violence come from the psychological need to prove that *we matter*. We do things to prove that I am more powerful, or richer, or more successful than you. I can make you fear. I can bend you to my will. I can turn you into my victim, my subject, my slave. All of these things testify not to faith, but to a profound failure of faith.

Faith means that I believe that G-d cares about me. I am here because He wanted me to be. The soul He gave me is pure. Even though I am like the child on the hill watching the ship pass by, I know that G-d is looking for me, waving to me as I wave to Him. That is the most profound inner source of peace. We do not need to prove ourselves in order to receive a blessing from G-d. All we need to know is that His face is turned toward us. When we are at peace with ourselves, we can begin to make peace with the world.

So the blessings become longer and deeper: from the external blessing of material goods to the interpersonal blessing of grace between ourselves and others, to the most inward of them all,



When we are at peace with ourselves, we can begin to make peace with the world.

the peace of mind that comes when we feel that G-d sees us, hears us, holds us in His everlasting arms.

One further detail of the priestly blessings is unique, namely the blessing that the Sages instituted to be said by the *Kohanim* over the mitzva: “Blessed are You... who has made us holy with the holiness of Aaron and has commanded us to bless His people Israel *with love*.”

It is the last word, *be'ahavah*, that is unusual. It appears in no other blessing over the performance of a command. It seems to make no sense. Ideally, we should fulfill *all* the commands with love. But an absence of love does not invalidate any other command. In any case, the blessing over the performance of a command is a way of showing that we are acting intentionally. There was an argument between the Sages as to whether mitzvot in general require intention (*kavanah*) or not.² But whether they do or not, making a blessing beforehand shows that we do have the intention to fulfil the command. But intention is one thing, emotion is another. Surely what matters is that the *Kohanim* recite the blessing and G-d will do the rest. What difference does it make whether they do so in love or not?

The commentators wrestle with this question. Some say that the fact that the *Kohanim* are facing the people when they bless means that they are like the cherubim in the Tabernacle, whose faces “were turned to one another” as a sign of love. Others change the word order.

They say that the blessing really means, “who has made us holy with the holiness of Aaron and with love has commanded us to bless His people Israel.” “Love” here refers to G-d’s love for Israel, not that of the *Kohanim*.

However, it seems to me that the explanation is this: The Torah explicitly says that though the *Kohanim* say the words, it is G-d who sends the blessing. “Let them put My name on the Israelites, and I will bless them.” Normally when we fulfil a mitzva, we are doing something. But *when the Kohanim bless the people, they are not doing anything in and of themselves. Instead they are acting as channels through which G-d’s blessing flows into the world and into our lives.* Only love does this. Love means that we are focused not on ourselves but on another. Love is selflessness. And only selflessness allows us to be a channel through which flows a force greater than ourselves, the love that as Dante said, “moves the sun and the other stars,”³ the love that brings new life into the world.

To bless, we must love, and to be blessed is to know that we are loved by the One vaster than the universe who nonetheless turns His face toward us as a parent to a beloved child. To know that is to find true spiritual peace.

AROUND THE SHABBAT TABLE:

- Can you feel that G-d cares for you and sees you?
- Do we need to “see G-d” to strengthen this relationship also?
- What is the connection between G-d turning His face towards us and our experiencing peace?

1. See Mishna Sanhedrin 4:5.

2. See Rosh Hashanah 28b.

3. Dante Alighieri, *Divina Commedia*, Paradiso p. 33.

Emunas Chachamim



Rabbi Hershel Schachter

Rosh Yeshivah, Rabbi Isaac Elchanan Theological Seminary of Yeshiva University

Speak to the Children of Israel and say to them: Any man whose wife shall go astray. (Bamidbar 5:12)

The parsha of Sotah is the only instance in which the Torah promises that a miracle will occur. Generally, we follow the principle of אין סומכין על הנס – “we do not rely upon a miracle,” but here the husband may rely on the sotah-water to ascertain the innocence or guilt of his wife.

The Mishnah in Eduyos (5:6) records that Akavya ben Mahalalel, in contrast to the opinion of the Chachamim, expounded the clause, דבר אל בני ישראל, to teach that this miracle was promised only to those born as Jews (Rashi, Berachos 19a). Thus, Akavya excluded the wife of a *ger* or of a freed *eved Cana'ani*, who has the status of a *ger*, from the sotah procedure.

In support of their view, the Chachamim cited an incident that occurred in Yerushalayim, in which Shemayah and Avtalyon, who officiated as the Nasi and Av Beis Din in the generation preceding Hillel and Shamai, administered sotah-water in such a situation. To this, Akavya disparagingly replied, דוגמא רשוקה – “They [Shemayah and Avtalyon] gave her [sotah-water] to drink because they were similar [to her],” being descendants of *geirim* themselves (Gittin 57b; Yoma 71b). The Mishnah describes that these words caused a fierce reaction.

Akavya, despite his being a great man, was placed in *niduy* (excommunication), and he actually died in that state. The beis din placed a large stone on his coffin to serve as a token of stoning, signifying that he died because of the curse of the *niduy*.

What was so bad about Akavya's statement? Apparently, Akavya accused Shemayah and Avtalyon of advancing

their opinion in favor of *geirim* since they themselves descended from *geirim*. In other words, they decided the halachah this way in order to make a self-serving point about equality for *geirim*. According to the Mishnah, the punishment for expressing such an attitude is nothing less than *niduy*!

Emunas Chachamim entails believing that honest *talmidei chachamim* develop their views based on what they think the halachah should be, and not as a result of their personal biases. One is not permitted to impute socio-economic or political considerations into the minds of *talmidei chachamim* and claim that those factors directed them to a particular *psak*.

Years ago, whenever Sukkos followed a shemittah year, there would be two consecutive advertisements in the Yiddish newspapers. Satmar chassidim would place an ad asserting that since the *heter mechirah* (the sale of parts of Eretz Yisrael to non-Jews in order to avoid the stringencies of shemittah) is not reliable, one should be careful not to buy esrogim that grew in Eretz Yisrael. A second ad would be placed by the Mizrahi, quoting Rav Soloveitchik, stating that one should purchase these esrogim and support the *yishuv* in Eretz Yisrael that year, just as in other years.

There were always those who commented that they could have predicted the halachic positions of these rabbonim. After all, the Satmar Rebbe, being an anti-Zionist, would certainly disqualify these esrogim, whereas Rav Soloveitchik, the honorary president of the Mizrahi, would surely approve of their use!

The truth of the matter is, however, that the *pesakim* had nothing to do with

Zionism. The Satmar Rebbe's view was based on the fact that an esrog must have a *heter achilah* (Sukkah 35a), and Rabbeinu Tam (Tosfos, Yevamos 122a, s.v. shel) maintains that since the Torah demands that all produce be left for the public during shemittah, *meshumar* produce (produce that was guarded in the field during shemittah) may not be eaten. Therefore, one would not fulfill the mitzvah with esrogim grown through reliance on the *heter mechirah*.

Rav Soloveitchik's *heter* was similarly based on halachic reasoning. First, the opinion of Rabbeinu Tam that guarding fruit during shemittah renders it forbidden is not necessarily accepted *l'halachah* (see Igros Moshe, Orach Chaim 1:186, 5:42; Chazon Ish, Shvi'is 10:6, s.v. v'esrogin). Second, even according to Rabbeinu Tam, an esrog *hameshumar* is not classified among the *ma'achalos assurah* (forbidden foods), like an esrog of *orlah*. Rather, one may not eat such an esrog since by doing so, he thereby participates in the violation of not making shemittah produce *hefker*. This does not confer a change of status on the esrog itself, which remains an item that has a *heter achilah*. [See Nefesh HaRav, 1994 ed., pp. 83-84.]

As we saw from the Mishnah in Eduyos, it is not proper to have the attitude that non-halachic concerns affected a *psak* halachah. Assuming that the Satmar Rebbe and Rav Soloveitchik were honest *talmidei chachamim*, one must have the *emunas Chachamim* that they were expressing their honest halachic opinions, completely free of outside considerations.

● Adapted from Rav Schachter on the Parsha II.

The Role That The Kehilla Plays During Birkas Kohanim



Rabbi Yisroel Reisman
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By the three separate *pesukim* that are said by the Kohanim during Nesiat Kapaim, the congregation responds “*amen*” after each one of them. What many do not know is the greatness of this specific *amen*. Rav Moshe Feinstein ZT”L (Igros Moshe Chekel Daled 21:2) says that the *amen* in response to the Kohanim is more significant than the answering of “אמן יהא שמיה רבא” in Kaddish. To properly comprehend Rav Moshe’s reasoning, we should begin by understanding the background of this *amen*.

We are taught in the *mishna* in Brachos (34B) that the Chazzan does not answer *amen* in response to the Kohanim’s *duchening* as he will become confused as to which *pasuk* he is next supposed to call out to the Kohanim. Tosfos looks very meticulously at the way the *mishna* is worded and suggests that had it not been for the concern of potential confusion of the Chazzan, seemingly there would be no issue with him answering *amen*. Could this really be? I am not sure how the Chazzan could answer *amen* in the middle of his own Shemoneh Esrei but at the same time Tosfos does not suggest this would be a problem.

The Taz (128:14) brings a big *chiddush* based on our Tosfos. He says that if confusion was not a concern and therefore the Chazzan could be able to answer *amen*, it must be that this *amen* is connected

to the *bracha* being said (in this case, the *pesukim* being said). Then why would it be that Chazal tells the Chazan still not to answer? Seemingly not that much *kavana* is needed for him to answer *amen*. The Taz continues to explain that saying *amen* is something that needs *טפי כוונה* – a lot of *kavana*. One must focus extra carefully on the *bracha* being said and say *amen* with the proper mindset, this is the reason a Chazzan does not respond *amen* because it is not simply a one word response but a connection to the rest of the *bracha* said in a correctly intended way.

Rav Moshe in the same *teshuva* brings a proof for this reasoning based on the Shulchan Aruch (Orach Chaim 128:25) which teaches that in a *minyan* that is full of Kohanim there should be 10 that go up to *duchan* and the rest should be left to answer *amen*. How can we say that a Kohen can abstain from doing this *mitzvas aseh*? Rav Moshe answers that we see the *amen* must be part of the rest of the *Bracha* as well. The *amen* is significant both in terms of how it is part of *bracha* we receive from the Kohanim as well as the special *kavana* that is needed in order to say it.

We have learned that during Birkas Kohanim even those who are not Kohanim still play a role. As the Biur Halacha explains (Orach Chaim 128:1 in the name of Sefer HaChareidim) that those in the

shul need to have *kavana* as well to be *yotzei* will the *bracha* made by the Kohanim. The *mitzvah* is not just on those making *bracha* but on the Leviim and Yisraelim receiving the *bracha* as well. In addition to understanding the significance of answering *amen* we as well need to understand what it means to be blessed by the Kohanim and have the proper *kavana* here as well.

What is it that we should have *kavana* for? Rav Schwalb ZT”L explains that each of the three *pesukim* is a different *bracha* for Am Yisrael. The first, *יברכך ה' וישמרך*, as he explains is a *Bracha* for our physical needs whereas *פניו אליך ויחונך* is for our spiritual needs. The final *pasuk* is *ישא ה' פניו אליך וישם לך שלום* is for *menuchat hanefesh* – peace of mind.

For the Ashkenazim of *Chutz La'Aretz* this opportunity does not come around enough for us to be part of a *minyan* where we can take part in these *brachos*. Rav Aharon Leib Shteinman ZT”L and Rav Chaim Pinchas Scheinberg ZT”L when visiting America would be sure to *daven* in a Sephardi *minyan* to not miss out on Birkas Kohanim and perhaps it would be appropriate to consider every so often joining this *minyan* as well, all the more so if you are a Kohen.

● Edited by Zac Winkler.

Trading Places!



Chief Rabbi Ovadia Yosef zt"l
Former Sephardic Chief Rabbi of Israel

The Parasha states, “The sacred offerings of each individual remain his own property. When they are given to the *cohen*, they become the [*cohen's*] property.” (Bamidbar 5:10).

What does the *passuk* mean? Tosafot (Ta’anit 9a) quote the *chachamim* from the Sifrei who explained the *passuk*, “Take a tithe (indeed you shall tithe) of all the seed crops” (Devarim 14:22), tithe in order to generate further wealth. Meaning one who tithes will eventually become wealthy. This doesn’t only refer to produce but even to money, “all the produce of your seed”, even other forms of commerce which aren’t produce. Whatever a person profits from it is a *mitzva* to tithe from it to the poor and to Torah institutions, such as *yeshivot* and similar.

The *chachamim* explain in the Gemara that it once happened to a G-d-fearing man that every year his field produced 100 tonnes of grain, a blessing rested on this field, and this person would thank his Creator.

In those days until the period of the Amoraim, they had the ash of the red heifer through which they could purify themselves from the impurity of death and as such the people became pure from the impurity of death. Our Rebbe the Arizal explains that in those days the *chachamim* were able to utilise Holy Names of Hashem, for example at times of danger. But today it is forbidden to use the Holy Names, for we are impure from contact with the dead. As they said in Avot (4:5) “And one who makes personal use of the crown of Torah shall perish”.

Since they were pure, what did they do with the produce? They gave *teruma* to

the *cohen*, meaning 2% was given to the *cohen* as *teruma gedola*, (today the halacha is somewhat different regarding these amounts). Apart from this there is *ma’aser rishon* (a tenth) to the *levi* and also *ma’aser sheni* (a further tenth is separated). In the 3rd and 6th years of the cycle of *shemitta* they gave *ma’aser ani* instead of *ma’aser sheni*.

This man, who owned the field, was G-d-fearing and gave in earnest *teruma gedola*, *ma’aser rishon* and *ma’aser sheni*. Some 20% he would give each year as the Torah requires.

This man had on son. Close to his death, he called his son and said to him, I am leaving you a fertile field, a blessed field. Every year it produces 100 tonnes of produce, be careful to separate from it *terumot* and *ma’asrot* and Hashem will bless you. With this message he passed away. The following year the field produced 100 tonnes. His son saw this and fulfilled his father’s wishes. He separated from the produce *terumot* and *ma’asrot* according to the *halacha*. He saw some 20 tonnes going to *terumot* and *ma’asrot*. He said to his household, next year I am not doing this! I will of course separate *teruma* to the *cohen*, 2%, but *ma’aser rishon* and *ma’aser ani*, I won’t separate!

However, Heaven heard what he said. And as it states, “He Who implants the ear, will He not hear? Will He Who fashions the eye not see?” (Tehillim 94:9). And the following year the field only produced 10 tonnes of produce! The son saw this and was very distressed how could his field be cursed and only produce one tenth of what it had produced in previous years!

His family, saw what happened to him. What did they do? They donned white

garments, festival garb and came before him. They said, “*Mazal tov! Mazal tov!*” He asked them, “Are you mocking me? What *mazal tov?*” They replied to him, “Your father ensured that every year that he gave the *cohen* his portion, to the *levi* and poor man their portions but now you made yourself a *cohen*! You receive the *ma’aser*! And *Ha’Kadosh Baruch Hu*, kept the rest of the field for Himself! In which case, you have been elevated, so *mazal tov!*”

This is what the *passuk* means, “The sacred offerings of each individual remain his own property. When they are given to the *cohen*, they become the [*cohen's*] property.” If he gives the *terumot* and *ma’asrot* according to *halacha*, the rest of the field will remain for him. But if he will not give, then “that which he gives the *cohen*, shall be for him,” only that which he gives the *cohen* will remain from himself. Such is the punishment of a tight-fisted person!

A person who gives *tzedakah* generously, then all his business dealings will be blessed, blessing will rest on all his work. The Gemara (Temura 16a) quotes the *passuk*, “The rich man and the poor man meet; Hashem is the Maker of them all” (Mishlei 22:2). The Gemara explains that the rich man and the poor man met. The poor man extended his hand, give me *tzedakah*! If he gives him, all is dandy, but should he not give and replies to him, “May Hashem have pity, may Hashem have pity,” then *Ha’Kadosh Baruch Hu* says to him, I made him poor and I made you rich, you aren’t giving him? The One who made this man poor will make him rich and the One who made you rich will impoverish you!

In the Basket!



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In Parshat Naso we are introduced to the *nazir*. A *nazir* is an individual who takes an oath to refrain from drinking wine, cutting his hair, or becoming *tame met* (impure from a corpse). There is a debate among the *rishonim* as to whether or not *nezirut* is commendable. The Rambam believes it is not ideal and indicates a weakness in one's self-control, to take an oath in order to refrain from certain physical pleasures. The Ramban on the other hand argues that *nezirut* is praiseworthy and one offers a *chatat* after having completed his or her *nezirut* period because they are digressing from a higher spiritual level.

At the end of one's *nezirut* cycle there is an obligation to offer three sacrifices: one as a *korban olah*, one as a *chatat*, and one as a *shlamim*. (Bamidbar 6:14). In addition, the *nazir* is to bring a basket of bread – referred to as a סל – “sal” (Bamidbar 6:15)

סל מצות סלת חלת בלילת בשמן ורקיקי מצות משחים בשמן ומנחתם ונסכיה.

It is interesting to note that the bread that is brought by the *nazir*, is specifically placed in a סל – basket. In fact, the term סל – basket is used three times in this paragraph (pasuk 15, 17 and 19). When one offers a *korban todah* and brings 40 loaves

of bread there is no obligation to place the bread in a basket. **What is the emphasis here on the basket?**

There is only one other occasion when the Torah dictates that one brings bread in a basket in connection with a *korban* and that is in reference to the *korbanot* that were brought during the *miluim* and *chanukat Hamishkan* (Shemot 29:3 and Vayikra 8:2).

Not only is the basket of bread mentioned both with respect to the sacrifice of the *nazir* and the *miluim*, but the same three *korbanot* (*olah*, *chatat* and *shlamim*), were offered on both occasions as well.

What exactly is the connection between a *nazir* and the *miluim* (the days the *mishkan* was inaugurated)? One would think that they are in fact opposites. The *miluim* represented the **initiation** of the *mishkan*, while the *nazir* brought these offerings and the basket of bread at the **completion** of his cycle.

Rav Sorotzkin in *Oznayim L'Torah* derives an important lesson from this apparent parallelism. The purpose of *nezirut* is not to set aside a certain period where one “feels” holy. Rather, it is supposed to be a period that elevates an individual such that it impacts his future – post *nezirut*

period and leads to a permanent change. Essentially to place that spiritual boost into the “basket” and take that uplifting moment with you. Similar to the *chanukat hamishkan*, which represented the preparatory stage of priming the *mishkan* for the *avoda*, – so too the *nazirut* period should be viewed as a preparatory stage in grooming the individual to undergo a permanent, positive and lasting change in his or her life.

Although we cannot fulfill *nezirut* today in its complete format, this lesson is very relevant to each and every one of us. We often feel inspired after hearing a good *shiur*, performing an act of *chesed* or participating in a meaningful *davening*. We cannot allow those inspirational experiences to dissipate. Rather, we have to internalize those moments by inserting those inspirational highs into our “spiritual basket” and carry it with us. To allow that feeling to penetrate us and to serve as the primer to enable us to permanently improve upon ourselves and our religious observance.

Necessary Repetition



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Parshas Naso, is the longest parsha in the Torah. This is, in a large part, due to *perek zayin*, which is 89 *pasukim* long!

The *perek* begins with: *And it was on the day that Moshe finished erecting the Mishkan (Tabernacle) that he anointed it and sanctified it and all its utensils, and the Altar and all its utensils, and he anointed them and sanctified them; And the princes of Israel, the heads of their fathers' household, brought offerings... and they brought their offering before Hashem: six covered wagons and twelve oxen – a wagon for each two princes and an ox for each – and they brought them before the Mishkan... (Bamidbar 7:1-3).*

The Torah then proceeds to enumerate, in precise and repetitious detail, the identical offering brought by each *nasi* on each day.

R' Mordechai Kamenetzky writes, “Naso is the longest portion in the Torah. It did not have to be that way, but the Torah chose to include seventy verses *that say the same thing – over and over again*. The parsha discusses the dedication of the *Mishkan*, describing the offerings that every *nasi* (tribal prince) brought in honor of the auspicious occasion. Yet each *nasi* brought *the (exact) same items*.”

“The Torah uses six verses to expound, in precise details, the exact components and measurements of the offerings.... And on each day the Torah *repeats verbatim the entire offerings*, changing only the name of the presenter and his tribe.

“Normally the Torah is concise, even abbreviated, leaving man to expound upon the hidden and deduce the proper conclusions. In fact, two entire Talmudic tractates explaining the intricate laws of marriage and divorce are derived from only a few verses in Devarim! Why, then,

if all twelve tribes brought the exact identical gift, is each and every *nasi's* offering detailed over and over?

“The Torah should simply say the following: the daily offering was brought on twelve consecutive days. It consisted of the following. Next, the Torah should list the names of the twelve princes who brought the offerings. That way, seventy verses would be no more than ten or fifteen – and Parshas Naso would be fifty verses shorter.”

R' Kamenetzky answer this famous question with a story: “A noted American rabbi was invited to address two different audiences, in two major cities in South Africa. Since the cities were many miles apart, he prepared one speech for both events. It was a wonderful lecture, encompassing a wide spectrum of Jewish ideas and filled with Medrash and Jewish law. Informative, enlightening and entertaining, it was the best speech he had ever prepared.

“The first night's audience attested to the lecture's brilliance, taking in every nuance of the dramatic presentation. Afterwards, a crowd gathered around the rabbi to praise him and hear variations of his theme.

“After such a wonderful reception, the rabbi thought that the second evening on the other side of the country would be a breeze. As he walked up to the podium to deliver his opus, he looked at the crowd and froze. He spotted at least fifty people he was certain had attended the previous night's speech!

“Stunned, the rabbi quickly shuffled through the index cards of his mind. Piercing together parts of an old High Holy Day speech, adding a little from Chanukah, Purim and the Haggadah,

the rabbi presented a scattered array of varying thoughts – not his best performance, to say the least.

“After the speech, people from the previous night once again gathered around the rabbi. ‘I am sorry,’ he stammered to them, ‘I had originally planned to repeat last night's speech. Had I known you were coming, I would have prepared a totally different talk. But seeing you, I hastily arranged a lecture based on some previous material. I am very sorry for my poor performance!’ ‘But Rabbi,’ they replied, ‘that is exactly why we came! Last night's talk was the most fascinating we had ever heard. We expected you to repeat it! We came all the way here to hear it again, word for word!’”

R' Kamenetzky concludes and writes, “The Torah, in repeating the twelve offerings, and spending six verses on each one, leaves us with a message that is as powerful as it is pertinent. Many of our deeds are repeats of generations passed. Many are repeats from yesterday. Yet they are all beloved and cherished. Day after day after day, Hashem wants to hear and see the same prayer, blessing and charitable action over and over again. They are all as dear as the first time” (Parsha Parables, Bamidbar, p.424-464).

In *avodas Hashem*, repetition in our actions plays an important role. Every day, we recite the same *nusach ha'tefillah*, the same *brachos*, don the same *tefillin* in the exact same way. Weekly we light Shabbos candles the way we did the week before, we learn a *pasuk* and *perek* of Chumash, a *daf* Gemara, a *kapitel* of Tehillim, and then we relearn the same thing over again... Every year we take the *arbah minim* (four species of Succos), hear

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An Almost Perfect Finale



Rabbi Menachem Leibtag

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At the conclusion of the Torah's tally of all of the offerings brought during those twelve days, we find a 'perfect' summary *pasuk*: "... this was the dedication offering for the *mizbayach* on the day that it was consecrated."

Clearly, this could (and should) be the final *pasuk* of this unit. But to our surprise, after this summary is complete, the Torah 'adds on' an additional *pasuk* that appears to be totally unrelated: "And when Moshe would come into the Ohel Mo'ed to speak to Him, he would hear G-d's voice speak to him from **above the Kaporet** above the **Aron between the two keruvim**, and then He would speak to him."

The information in this *pasuk* may be important, but what does 'how G-d spoke to Moshe from the Ohel Mo'ed' have to do with the twelve days of *korbanot* that were just offered? To complicate matters, not only does this *pasuk* appear to be 'out of place', it also appears to be superfluous for it doesn't contain any information that we didn't know beforehand. Let's explain why. In regard to the description of **how** G-d speaks to Moshe from above the Kaporet etc., this very same detail was already recorded in Parshat Terumah in G-d's commandment to Moshe concerning how to build the Mishkan.

Furthermore, the first *pasuk* of Sefer Vayikra already informed us that indeed God had already spoken to Moshe Rabbeinu from the Ohel Mo'ed. Therefore, not only is this *passuk* 'out of place,' it also appears to be superfluous.

Recall that in the aftermath of Chet Ha'Egel, G-d punished Bnei Yisrael by taking away His Sh'china from their

midst, for they were no longer deserving of His Presence. As a consequence of this punishment, G-d instructed Moshe to relocate his own tent from within the camp of Bnei Yisrael to **outside** the camp.

Hence, the location of Moshe's tent **outside** the camp, and the fact that G-d would now only speak to him at this location, reflected Bnei Yisrael's 'rejected' status. Note as well that Moshe's tent outside the camp is now named the **Ohel Mo'ed** - the tent of meeting (between G-d and Moshe) - a name that will later be used to describe the Mishkan itself!

With this background, we can better appreciate the thematic importance of God's commandment to build the Mishkan: "And you shall build for Me a **Mikdash**, so that I can dwell **in their midst...**"

The location of the Mishkan at the center of the camp, and G-d's speaking to Moshe from its innermost sanctuary would certainly symbolize that Bnei Yisrael have returned to their pre-Chet Ha'Egel status of Ma'amad Har Sinai.

Recall as well that even though Moshe had descended with the Second Luchot and G-d's thirteen attributes of Mercy on Yom Kippur, the Sh'china did not immediately return to the camp. Indeed Bnei Yisrael were forgiven for Chet Ha'Egel, but in order for the Sh'china to return, Bnei Yisrael must first build the Mishkan. Therefore, for the entire time period between Moshe's descent on Yom Kippur until the Mishkan's dedication in Rosh Chodesh Nisan, any conversation between G-d and Moshe took place in the **Ohel Mo'ed** located **outside** the camp.

Hence, until the Mishkan was assembled, the existence of Moshe's special **Ohel**

Mo'ed outside the camp served as a constant reminder to Bnei Yisrael that they were still not worthy enough for G-d's Sh'china to dwell in their midst.

With this background, it becomes clear that the highlight of Yom HaShmini for Bnei Yisrael would be the return of G-d's Sh'china to the camp, a sign of their divine pardon, as well as a sign that they could now continue on their journey to Eretz Canaan.

Therefore, the **first** time that God will speak to Moshe from the **Mishkan** (in contrast to his **Ohel Mo'ed** outside the camp) will certainly be a major event in the eyes of the nation; it will indicate that the Mishkan has achieved its goal!

Hence, our 'add on' *pasuk* - describing how G-d spoke to Moshe from the **Kaporet** in the **Ohel Mo'ed** - becomes the **highlight** of the entire chapter. The fact that G-d now speaks to Moshe from the Mishkan is a sign that the Sh'china has indeed returned.

Recall how the first ten chapters of Sefer Bamidbar describe Bnei Yisrael's preparation for their journey from Har Sinai to Eretz Canaan. During this journey it was the job of the Leviim to carry the Mishkan. The tribes would surround the Mishkan and travel with the Mishkan at their center in royal fashion.

On the day of the Mishkan's dedication, the leaders of the twelve tribes - i.e. the *n'si'im* - all joined together to present the Leviim with a present of six wagons to help them carry the Mishkan during their journey. At that same time, each one of these twelve *n'si'im* also presented Moshe Rabbeinu with a special *korban* for the dedication of the Mishkan.

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Marital Harmony



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The Torah in Parashat Naso discusses the procedure of the “Sota,” which was required when a husband had reason to suspect his wife of infidelity. He would bring her to the Bet Ha’mikdash where the Kohen would conduct a special ceremony whereby her innocence or guilt would be determined.

In introducing this section, the Torah writes, “*Ish Ish Ki Tisteh Ishto...*” – “If a man’s wife strays...” The question immediately arises as to why the Torah here repeats the word “*Ish*” (“man”), as though it was saying, “A man, a man whose wife strays...” What is the purpose of this repetition?

One of the scholars of Musar suggested that the Torah here subtly addresses the question of why a married woman would enter into an extramarital relationship. What might cause a woman to betray her husband? The answer, the Torah teaches us, is often “*Ish Ish*” – that the marriage was only about the husband. A marriage



Marriage must never become a one-way street. Each must respect and look out for the needs and wishes of the other, rather than focusing only on his or her own interests.

is supposed to be “*Ish Isha*” – a husband and wife. But when one spouse dominates the relationship, concerning himself or herself with only his or her concerns and interests, without giving proper consideration and regard to those of the other spouse, the other spouse might naturally feel tempted to find emotional satisfaction elsewhere. Of course, this does not justify betrayal. But the Torah cautions the husband that a situation of “*Ish Ish*,”

if he does not pay sufficient attention to his wife’s needs and wishes, if he does not show her respect and care, he unwittingly builds her temptation to pursue other sources of gratification.

The Rambam (Rabbi Moshe Maimonides, Spain-Egypt, 1135-1204) writes that a husband is required to “honor his wife more than himself.” Marriage must never become a one-way street. Each must respect and look out for the needs and wishes of the other, rather than focusing only on his or her own interests. This mutual care, respect and attention will help ensure that both spouses receive the happiness and satisfaction they seek, that the marriage will serve them both as an everlasting source of joy and fulfillment.

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Instead of each *nasi* trying to outdo the other, each *nasi* offered the exact same *korban*, and they all presented their *korbanot* to Moshe Rabbeinu on that day. Instead of offering all of these *korbanot* on one day, G-d instructed Moshe to set aside a special day for each *nasi*. The Torah continues by informing us of how each *nasi* brought his *korban* over the next twelve days. This show of unity was so important, that the Torah finds it necessary to detail each and every *korban*, even though they were identical!

But note carefully how the summary *psukim* in 7:84-88 return to the very

first day, when the Mishkan was first dedicated: “This was the dedication of the *mizbayach*, on **the day** that it was anointed, by the *n’si’im* of Israel...”

This explains why the Torah summarizes all of the *korbanot* together. The Torah is not teaching us addition (or multiplication); rather it is emphasizing once again how **all** of these *korbanot* were presented to Moshe by **all** of the *n’si’im* on the very first day! These *psukim* return us to the very first day of the Mishkan’s dedication and conclude with the highlight of that day in 7:89 – that G-d spoke once again to Moshe from the **Ohel**

Mo’ed within the camp of Bnei Yisrael!

One could suggest that it was this show of tribal unity that made Bnei Yisrael worthy once again of the Sh’china. As we know, unity of Am Yisrael, a nation whose destiny is to represent G-d before other nations, is a prerequisite for the dwelling of G-d’s Sh’china in our midst.

It is this nature of a collective effort, where everyone must be alike and work together towards a common goal, yet at the same time keep his own identity and shine as an individual, that makes room for G-d to ‘join along’ as well!

Human Blessings Versus Divine Blessings



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We are זוכה, merit, to be blessed with Birkas Kohanim, the blessing the Kohanim give the Jewish people, on Yomim Tovim here in the exile and every single day in Eretz Yisroel. Before the Kohanim begin Birkas Kohanim, the chazzan gives an amazing introduction to their blessing. He says "ברכנו בברכה המשולשת בתורה ע"י משה עבדיך האמורה מפי אהרן ובניו עם קדשיך כאמור: יברכך ה'...", "Bless us with the triple blessing of the Torah through Moshe which is spoken from the mouth of Aharon and his sons, Your holy people, as it says, 'May Hashem bless you...' On a simple level, it is called the "triple blessing" because it uses Hashem's four letter name three times.

The medrash (Tanchuma Bamidbar 8) explains that the Jewish people were not happy that Hashem told the Kohanim to bless them. According to the medrash:

The Jewish people said before the Holy One blessed is He: "Master of the world, you have commanded the Kohanim to bless us. We need no one's blessings but Yours! We only want to be blessed from Your mouth!" As it says (Devarim 26:15), "Look down from Your holy dwelling place." The Holy One said to them, "Even though I have told the Kohanim to bless you, I am standing with them and blessing you." Therefore, the Kohanim stretch out their hands as if to say "The Holy One is standing behind us!" Thus it says (Shir Hashirim 2:9), "Behold He is standing behind our wall, watching from the windows and peeking from

between the lattices," from between the fingers of the Kohanim.

The Ksav Sofer (the son of the Chasam Sofer) offers a beautiful explanation of the Jewish people's objection to Birkas Kohanim. He explains that human beings cannot truly understand what "blessings" will truly be good for a person. Everyone wants the blessings of wealth and long life, for example. The truth is that very often, these things are not good for a person. I have read that for the majority of people who win the lottery, their lives turn out very badly afterward. As it says in Koheles 5:12, "wealth is kept by its owner for his harm." Others detest their own old age and wish they could end their lives, although they are prevented from doing so because it is forbidden.

According to the Ksav Sofer, the Jewish people were saying that no human being knows whether wealth, long life, or any other "blessing" is truly good for a person. Only Hashem, who looks into someone, sees his entire past and all of his past lives, as well as his future, can truly know what is good for a person. That is why Hashem told the Jewish people He would stand with the Kohanim and bless the people with the specific words of Birkas Kohanim, which are worded generally, and not in the form of specific blessings. It says "Hashem should bless you and watch over you" generally. It does not say "Hashem should bless you with wealth."

For some people, wealth is a blessing, and for others, poverty is the biggest blessing. Such a person's life would fall apart if he were "blessed" with wealth. That is why

the Torah says (Bamidbar 6:23), "Thus shall you bless the children of Israel." The Kohanim may only bless the Jewish people with the general blessings of Birkas Kohanim, through which Hashem will give the people whatever blessings they truly need. The K do not have the discretion to "customize" Hashem's blessings.

When I was thirteen years old, and we lived in Eretz Yisroel, there were two boys in the class whose last names were Mizrachi, a Kohein, and Amrami, who had a habit of stealing Mizrachi's bike. One time, when Mizrachi was saying Birkas Kohanim, he said "יברכך ה' וישמרך", "May Hashem bless you and watch over you, except for Amrami!" The Kohanim are not allowed to customize Birkas Kohanim!

The Belzer Rosh Kollel, Rav Friedman, expands on this concept and explains why Birkas Kohanim is called a triple blessing. Rav Friedman emphasized that Hashem's intention in establishing Birkas Kohanim was (Bamidbar 6:27) "וְשָׂמוּ אֶת-שְׁמִי עַל-בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְאָנִי אֲבָרְכֶם", "and you shall place My name on the children of Israel and I will bless them." Rashi there explains that the words "My name" mean that the Kohanim in the Beis Hamikdash should say Birkas Kohanim "בשם המפורש", by pronouncing the four-letter name of Hashem. That name of Hashem, which is composed of the letters yud hei and vav hei, is an abbreviation of the words "היה הוה ויהיה", "He was, He is, and He will be."

This emphasis on Hashem's eternal presence in the past, the present, and in the future is especially relevant to Birkas

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The Narcissist & the Nazirite



Rabbi YY Jacobson
TheYeshiva.net

Where does the term “Narcissism” come from?

Henry Havelock Ellis retrieved it from Greek mythology. The Greeks told the story of a young man named Narcissus, who was remarkably handsome—so handsome that even one of the pagan Greek gods, Echo, fell in love with him. One day Narcissus arrived at a pond, where he saw for the first time his reflection in the water. He was so taken by the splendor of his reflection that he did not want to move, but stood there gazing and admiring his own reflection in the pond. At some point he declared to his reflection, “I love you.” Echo saw him, and repeated, “I love you.” Narcissus thought his reflection had spoken, and he continued to gaze at himself in the water for days and weeks. At the end, he takes his own life.

This Greek story has been authored around the year 50 BCE, 120 years before the destruction of the Second Temple. Yet a similar story is found in Jewish sources taking place a few centuries earlier. The end of the Jewish story is completely different, capturing the key distinctions between Greek mythology and Judaism.

The story is quoted three times in the Talmud. It is about a young handsome man who came to Shimon Hazaddik who served as a High Priest in the beginning of the Second Temple era.

In order to appreciate the story, a brief introduction is necessary.

In this week’s portion, Naso, the Torah relates the laws of the Nazirite— a man or woman dedicated to holiness in an extra intense way. The Nazir was an individual who undertook, usually for a limited period of time, to observe special rules of holiness and abstinence: not to drink wine or other intoxicants (including anything

made from grapes), not to have his hair cut and not to defile himself by contact with the dead. His vow was for a fixed term (though it could also be for life), at the end of which he would come to the Temple, cut and burn his hair there, and bring a special offering.

Now, Shimon Hatzaddik as a rule was critical of Nazirites. He felt that under ordinary circumstances it should not be done. It is too difficult a life style and most Nazirites will regret their vow at some point. Thus he never ate of the sacrifices they offered. But there was one exception described in the Talmud:

Shimon Hatzaddik related this story:

Once, a young man a Nazirite came from the South [of Israel] to the Holy Temple. I saw that he had beautiful eyes, a handsome appearance and long, braided hair. He came to the High Priest and sage Shimon Hatzaddik and told him that he had just completed a term as a Nazir, and was now going to shave off the hair on his head.

Shimon Hatzaddik asked him, “What made you decide to take this vow and destroy your beautiful hair?”

The young man replied: “I worked for my father as a shepherd in my city, and I went to draw water from a wellspring. I began to gaze at my reflection in the water. When I saw how gorgeous and attractive I am, how awesome my hair looked, my evil inclination asserted itself and urged me to engage in immoral and promiscuous behavior, and thus destroy my world. I told my evil inclination: ‘Wicked one! Why are you so arrogant in a world that does not belong to you? Why are you so arrogant about a body that will end up rotting in the grave, eaten by worms?! I swear, I will shave off your hair for the sake of heaven!’”

“Immediately I stood up and kissed him on his head. And I said, ‘May there be many more Nazirites like you among Israel.’”

This young man, just like the Greek character Narcissus, was beautiful and attractive. His body was comely, his physique exquisite, and his hair enthralling. In the Greek myth, Narcissus falls in love with the figure to the point of self-destruction. In the Jewish story, in stark contrast, the handsome shepherd is keenly aware of the danger of self-worship. He knows, in his own words, that he is capable of becoming a hedonistic glutton, of fulfilling every promiscuous craving. With such magnificent hair and striking features he can get his hands on perhaps anyone he desires, and as a result, ultimately—as he put it—lose his entire world. He realizes how easily he can forfeit his integrity and balance, if he aggrandizes that which will “end up rotting in the grave.”

He decides to do something drastic: Dedicate his beauty to G-d. He takes his hair and burns it in the Holy Temple, as is the tradition of every Nazirite.

In the best-selling book *The Culture of Narcissism: American Life in an Age of Diminishing Expectations*, by the cultural historian Christopher Lasch (1932–1994), the author believes that our western culture has essentially become a “narcissistic culture,” in which we have become pathologically obsessed with ourselves above anything and everything. Where it used to be that people believed in making sacrifices for something outside of themselves—say for marriage, family, children—today more and more people feel that they want to gaze at nothing but their own image for their entire life.

It's not known what causes narcissistic personality disorder. As with other mental disorders, the cause is likely complex. Narcissistic personality disorder may

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Out There, In Here



Rabbi Judah Mischel

Executive Director, Camp HASC; Mashpiah, OU-NCSY

Rav Shimshon Pincus, zt'l, once related an extraordinary encounter he had with a granddaughter of the holy Chafetz Chaim, zy'a. She was already an elderly woman, had recently emigrated from Russia, and was temporarily staying in a *merkaz klitah*, absorption center for new olim in the southern Israeli city of Be'ersheva. Soon after WWI, she had left home as an idealistic teenager to attend university and was studying science and technology when she returned to Radin to visit her grandfather for the last time. With great emotion, the woman recalled the final conversation she had with her saintly grandfather:

“Zeideh, I asked, ‘why do you sit here all day in the *finsternish* of the *shtetl*, in the darkness of our small town? There is a big bright world out there of enlightenment and technological advancement. Just look outside! There are airplanes in the sky and no limits to where mankind can advance!’

“For a few moments, my holy grandfather gazed out of the window of his tiny study in his simple home in Radin, then looked at me intently and answered me with both love and fiery conviction: ‘One day, Zei, they, with their enlightened technology will build airplanes and drop bombs that can destroy the entire world. *Ubbber mir machen mentchen* — but in here,’ he said, placing his hand on the wall of that holy room, ‘we are building people! Darling,

do you hear? With Torah, *mir machen mentchen...*”

• • •

נָשָׂא אֶת־רֹאשׁ בְּנֵי גֵרְשׁוֹן גַּם־הֵם
לְבַיִת אֲבוֹתָם לְמִשְׁפְּחֹתָם:

Take a census of the sons of Gershon, of them too, following their fathers' houses, according to their families. (Bamidbar, 4:22)

The descendants of Gershon, the eldest of the sons of Levi, were charged with the care of the outer Mishkan including the tent and its covering, doors and hangings. Rashi explains the straightforward pshat of our pasuk's instruction: following the counting of Bnei Kehas, the Torah instructs all of those Bnei Gershon who are able to perform the service of the Mishkan to be counted.

Different terminology is used throughout Torah to describe counting: *pekidah*, *sefirah* and also the term that is the name of our *sedra*, ‘Nasso’, which literally means ‘lifting up’. Our *sedra* is read on the Shabbos following Shavuos. Rav Moshe Feinstein, zt'l, notes that every man, woman and child was present at Har Sinai, and each one of us experienced revelation. At Sinai, we became ‘lifted up’ or elevated. After the chag of Shavuos, too, we are different people. It follows reason that we be ‘counted’ again this week, after we have received the Torah; Matan Torah has filled

with a renewed awareness that every one of us counts. We have come to believe in our potential for growth and ascension. The power of Torah has ‘built us up’.

The students of the Baal Shem Tov point out that the particular avodah assigned to Bnei Gershon on the outer elements of the Mishkan represents individuals who are ‘on the outs’. Those among us who have travelled some distance away from their spiritual home-base and tradition, can feel *מגורשים*, or ‘foreign’ to their their identity and roots. This resonates with the meaning of the name Gershon itself: “a sojourner there”.

Reb Simcha Bunim of Peshischa, explains, however, that even those who see themselves as ‘Bnei Gershon’ are too included in the census, and are lifted up by being counted “following their fathers’ houses, according to their families”. Even those who have strayed and drifted away to sojourn, *לְמִשְׁפְּחֹתָם לְבַיִת אֲבוֹתָם*, ‘territory’ foreign ‘in remain essentially connected to the Avos, to their whole ancestral line, and to the collective family of Israel.

May we be inspired by the reverberations of Z'man Matan Toraseinu, and may we be counted among the *mentchen* who are aware of the power of our holy Torah to uplift and build us, no matter where we have sojourned.

Continued from previous page

be linked to nurture, nature, genetics or psychobiology.

Yet some scholars have speculated that it often stems from the person experiencing, consciously or unconsciously, a major void in self-worth and dignity. To compensate for sensing no real place in this world, and feeling very unsafe in an

essentially overwhelming universe, this person developed the need to focus on himself or herself exclusively. If my “I” does not really exist, creating space for the “Thou” is too scary and difficult.

If you realize that this world belongs to G-d, and that you were created by G-d to serve Him in His world, you discover that

your identity has true and infinite Divine value. You need not resort to narcissism. G-d loves you unconditionally, and you can thus love others the same way. You will not melt and die from opening your heart to others.

Because to live means to live for.

The Twelve Tribes: A Model Diversity

Mrs. Shira Smiles

International lecturer and curriculum developer

Parshat Naso is the exception to the rule that the Torah always uses terse language. The Torah devotes seventy-two verses to what could easily be said in six. The Torah could have listed the names of the heads of each tribe, and then stated that each one brought the same offering for the dedication of the Tabernacle. Instead, the Torah devotes six verses to each tribe. The first states the name of the tribe and its leader. But then the Torah recounts the exact same offering for each tribe for an additional five verses per tribe. The Torah goes one step further; it summarizes in five more verses the total gifts received.

This verbosity seems to contrast and also complement another time the twelve tribes are listed individually, in Parshat Vayechi. There Jacob blesses his twelve sons, the progenitors of the twelve tribes in our current discussion. Jacob starts by giving an umbrella blessing that covers all the tribes, “Let me tell you what will be at the end of days.” But he then individualizes the blessings so that each son receives a different blessing. By comparing these two parts of the Torah, we will gain insight into some of the values the Torah teaches.

The whole is greater than the sum of its parts. However, each part is important. Without any given part the whole would be incomplete, and possibly even useless.

In our study of these two sections of the Torah, we will understand how this duality expresses itself within Bnei Yisrael.

Let us start with the story of Jacob blessing his sons. Each son seems to receive an individualized blessing. But did Jacob really bestow twelve different blessings? Are they rather twelve interpretations of one blessing?

A blessing is the wish that an innate potential become realized. If we are each unique, then each of us must be blessed differently. But Jacob understood that when an individual knows his talents and shortcomings, he can contribute effectively to the collective. So while the particular trait Jacob focused on for each tribe was different, his message to each was the same: “Embrace your unique nature. Now, utilize these distinct characteristics to serve the larger community.” Our diversity gives each of us a special place and makes each of us a unique component of the whole.

This idea, but in reverse, explains the repetitions of the tribal offerings. While physically the offerings were identical, each man brought his own thoughts and emotions to the process. Each offering was brought with the same mindset of contributing to the service, yet each was unique.

There was one more important aspect to these offerings. While each leader brought one ox for a total of twelve oxen, each contributed to only half a wagon for a total of six wagons. The message is clear. Each offering was incomplete without partnering with another. Each tribe had to hitch his ox to a wagon in partnership with another tribe's ox. Otherwise his own gift would be useless. No one tribe has everything necessary for the fulfillment of our mission. No one Jew can complete the task of Judaism on his own. We must join together with our fellow Jews.

We are all individual parts of the greater entity of Knesset Yisrael, the collective Jewish Soul. Instead of looking askance at a fellow Jew whose customs differ from our own, who wears a different head covering, or dresses differently, or makes a different cholent, we should embrace the beauty of the diversity of our heritage. We each serve the same G-d, but with our own unique history and talents.

We are one, emanating from one holy place, and emerging as many individuals. We should not be judgmental, but embrace and respect our diversity. As the offerings of the tribal leaders teach us, and as Jacob our forefather understood, we can only achieve unity through loving our diversity. Only then can all our offerings be dedicated to His service.

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the same *Shofar*, and fast the same fast of Yom Kippur... And yet! All this repetition is necessary, beloved, important, cherished and precious to Hashem!

Our *avodas Hashem*, when does *b'levav shalem* – with a full heart – and with *kavanah* (intent) to serve Him, is as

exciting, accepted, and beloved by the RS”O as our *avodah* of every other day. As long as our hearts and minds are behind our actions, there is no such thing as boring repetition before Him.

May we always find the passion to serve Him, may we realize that each and every

action is precious before Him, and may our service always be as new and as exciting as the offering of every *nasi* on every day, even though we surely have “been there and done that” many times before.

An Addictive Game



Rabbanit Yemima Mizrachi
Popular Torah teacher and author

“If Your teaching had not been my delight,” King David would say, “I would have perished in my misery.” Delight?! The Chazal say that when David declared, “Your laws are a source of strength to me,” G-d was angry with him because the Torah is not a source of strength. But the Torah is a pleasure? A game?!

Just this week, when I was teaching how a chicken does not cluck and a cow does not moo while the Torah is being given, someone said to me, “This is exactly how my son looks when he’s in a computer game,” and explained everything ...

The house might shake and he will not move. The room is messy and he will not notice. Call him over and over again and? You do not see him and you do not hear him. Addicts.

This is exactly how King David apparently saw the power of Torah. Exactly the power that draws them to the computer in this way.

1. See the voices. This is not reading a book, this is reading an instruction, this is an instruction that must be fulfilled. So when you study the Torah, according to the Ramban, you should see it as a practical instruction for the moment. What key do you have to press, where do you have to go now.

2. Make it short!!! They have no patience for a long message, they want the whole Torah in a nutshell. And G-d “sums up” all the time: Ten Commandments, Seven Commandments of the sons of Noah, Chabakkuk came and stood on one: faith, Daf Yomi, there was no generation in which this wisdom could be consumed, not even in a nutshell, because they hate nothing more than length. And even if they want to say that it is too long, they will say it in abbreviations: ITL

3. On topic!!! There is no age in which topicality is squeezed into verse as it is today. A daily letter from G-d written on the screen, Bennett and Parshat Naso, the question of conversion and Ruth, the cheesecake and Mount Sinai, the Parsha and a woman.

4. Movement. On the screen, things are in motion. Learning should also be in constant motion. The Baal Shem Tov would say, “Do not spend all your study on one and the same book.” A guide to attention and concentration difficulties. Insist on not pausing.

5. Relationship apps. Rabbi Nachman of Breslav used to say, “Because the Torah couples,” explaining in a mystical statement that Torah study exposes the learner to completely

opposing opinions that will eventually be reflected in the Torah itself. Even the spouse will sometimes have opposing views. Torah study reconciles the soul with these differences and makes marriage possible.

6. Clashes on Twitter. Rabbi Wolba calls this clash “the instinct of the Chavrutas” Let out these passions in the form of an argument about a topic in the Gemara “Waheb in Suphah”: shout at each other while studying the topic, and do not get up from it without loving each other in the end ...

7. Have you lost? You can play again. The Ten Commandments are written in the future tense. They do not say, “Thou shalt not steal.” They say, “Have you ever stolen? Okay, you lost the first tournament. Now what? You are not going to steal again. Try again.”

Forget it, Mom, my son told me when I gave him this list that it’s just idling! Do not look for anything else! The screen is in operation, we are resting.

That’s exactly the Torah, I told him. Even if you do nothing, if you learned from it, it put you elsewhere, in general ...

Moshe Rabbeinu also saw a dense screen. But he approached the mist that had been set up by Hashem.

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Kohanim, where only G-d, who can look into a person’s past, see inside of him in the present, and see how the blessing will affect him in the future, knows which blessings are truly good for a person. As Shlomo Hamelech said in Mishlei 10:22, “Hashem’s blessing will make one wealthy and will not add any sadness with it.”

Because only Hashem’s blessings, and not any human being’s blessings, come with an ability to see into the recipient’s past, present, and future, only Hashem’s blessings carry no sadness with them. Therefore, because Hashem stands with the Kohanim and they bless the people with Hashem’s four letter name, which

invokes His eternal nature that looks into the past, present, and future of the recipients of the blessing, Birkas Kohanim is truly a blessing. Hashem’s triple vision of the each person’s past, present, and future is therefore why Birkas Kohanim is called a triple blessing.

Hebrew Language in the Parsha



David Curwin

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Parashat Naso includes the laws of the nazirite. One of the prohibitions upon the nazirite includes shaving:

כָּל־יָמֵי נְדָר נְזָרו תְּעַר לֹא־יַעֲבֹד עַל־רֹאשׁוֹ עַד־מְלֵאחַ הַיָּמִם אֲשֶׁר־יִזְיֵר לֵהּ...
“Throughout the term of his vow as nazirite, no razor shall touch his head; it shall remain consecrated until the completion of his term as nazirite of the LORD, the hair of his head being left to grow untrimmed.” (Bamidbar 6:5)

The word for razor here is תְּעַר and it also appears in next week’s parasha, in the instructions for the preparations of the Levites:

“... וְהָעֲבִירוּ תְעַר עַל־כָּל־בְּשָׂרָם...”

“...and let them go over their whole body with a razor...” (Bamidbar 8:7)

However, later in the Tanakh, when we read about Shimshon and Shmuel, who had similar restrictions to the nazirite, a different word for razor is used. In both cases¹, we find this phrase:

וּמִוֶּחֶה לֹא־יַעֲלֶה עַל־רֹאשׁוֹ

As in our parasha, it means “no razor shall touch his head,” but instead of תְּעַר we find the word מִוֶּחֶה. Since all verses are referring to the same object, in the same category of laws, we can assume that they are synonyms.

In fact, linguists say that both words share a common etymology. They claim that both derive from the root ערה, meaning

“to lay bare, strip.” This is also the source of the word עָרוּם – “naked.”

The word תְּעַר contains the letters ער from the root ערה, and מוֶחֶה is a contraction of the word מְעֵרָה², meaning “open, bare place,” in which the letter ע eventually dropped out.

Scholars note a similar development between the roots גלה = “to uncover, expose” and גלח – “to shave.”

In Modern Hebrew, מוֶחֶה is almost never used for razor – probably because its other meaning, “female teacher,” is much more prevalent. We do see תְּעַר used for “razor,” but the phrase סָפְּנוּ גְלוּיָהּ is also common.

1. Shoftim 13:5 and Shmuel I 1:11.

2. See Shoftim 20:33, and Rashi’s commentary there

Parsha Riddle



Reb Leor Broh

Mizrachi Melbourne

What animal appears 13 times in Parshat Naso, one of these times appearing with an additional letter?

Answer to the Parsha Riddle

(Baal Haturim 7:17)

the book of Shmuel 16:18.

The “vav”, which has a numerical value of six, alludes to David HaMelech who descended from Yehudah and was blessed in six ways, as listed in

by the Nassi of the Tribe of Yehudah.

The word עֲרֵי־הַעֲזִים (7:17) appears 13 times in the Parsha, but the only time it is spelled in full with the letter “vav” is amongst the animals offered



DUST AND stars

THIS WEEK in Jewish History

June 3, 1940: The Madagascar Plan was proposed by the Nazis to exile the Jews of Europe to a police state in Madagascar, an important psychological step toward the Final Solution.

Sivan 15, 2196 (1565 BCE): According to *Midrash Tadshe*, Yehudah, the fourth son of Yaakov and Leah, was born; and also died on the same day in 2314 [1446 BCE].

June 5, 1967: On the first day of the Six Day War in a pre-emptive strike, the Israeli army destroyed virtually the entire Egyptian air force on the ground.

June 6, 1982: The IDF crossed into Lebanon at the beginning of Operation Peace for Galilee to destroy P.L.O. bases used to launch Katyushas against Northern Israel.

June 7, 1967: Israel liberated the Old City of Jerusalem, uniting the city for the 1st time since establishment of the State.

Sivan 19, 5658 (1898): Yahrzeit of Rabbi Shmuel Mohilever, early advocate of aliya for Russian Jews, whose efforts served as the foundation for Mizrachi organization.

Sivan 20, 3830 (70 CE): Yahrzeit of Rabban Shimon ben Gamliel, *Tanna*, head of the Sanhedrin during the destruction of the 2nd Temple, and a leader of the Great Revolt against the Romans.

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Yeshivat Hakotel
Yeshivat Orayta

BEIT SHEMESH

Tiferet Midrasha
Kehillat Nofei Hashemesh
Yeshivat Ashreinu
Yeshivat Hesder Lev HaTorah

HERZLIYA

Mizrachi OU-JLIC Herzliya

MEVASERET ZION

Yeshivat Mevaseret

RAMAT GAN

Israel XP at Bar Ilan University

THE NEGEV

Mechinat Ruach HaNegev

LATVIA

JURMALA
Jewrmala - the Jurmala Jewish Community

MALTA

Jewish Community

NORTH MACEDONIA

SCOPIA
Jewish Community

POLAND

Chief Rabbinate of Poland

PORTUGAL

PORTO
Rabbi Daniel Litvak

SCOTLAND

EDINOBORO
Edinboro Hebrew Congregation

SERBIA

BELGRADE
Rav Isak Asiel

SOUTH AFRICA

JOHANNESBURG
Mizrachi Glenhazel Shul

SWEDEN

The Jewish Community of Stockholm
Kehilat Adat Yeshurun
Kehiliat Adat Yisrael

SWITZERLAND

BERN

Jüdische Gemeinde Bern

ZURICH

HaKehila HaYehudit Zurich
HaKehila HaYehudit Lausanne
Mizrachi
Wollishofen

TANZANIA

ARUSHA

Bayit Knesset Shalem Al Shabazi

UNITED KINGDOM

Mizrachi UK

UNITED STATES

NATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

Kol Hatorah Kulah
National Council of Young Israel
RZA-Mizrachi USA

CALIFORNIA

Beth Jacob Congregation
Harkham Hillel Hebrew Academy
West Coast Torah Center
Young Israel of North Beverly Hills
YULA High School
Young Israel of Century City

COLORADO

DAT Minyan
East Denver Orthodox Synagogue
The Denver Kehillah

CONNECTICUT

Beth David Synagogue
Congregation Agudath Sholom
Young Israel of West Hartford

FLORIDA

Beth Israel Congregation
Hebrew Academy RASG
PlayHard PrayHard
Congregation Torah Ohr
Sha'arei Bina Torah Academy for Girls
Young Israel of Hollywood-Ft. Lauderdale

GEORGIA

Congregation Beth Jacob
Congregation Ohr HaTorah

HAWAII

Kehilat Olam Ejad Ganim

ILLINOIS

Mizrachi-Religious Zionists of Chicago

MARYLAND

Kemp Mill Synagogue
Pikesville Jewish Congregation
Bnai Jacob Shaarei Zion Congregation

MASSACHUSETTS

Congregation Beth El Atereth Israel

Congregation Kadimah-Toras Moshe
Congregation Shaarei Tefillah
Young Israel of Brookline

MICHIGAN

Young Israel of Oak Park
Young Israel of Southfield
Congregation Kadimah-Toras Moshe

MINNESOTA

Congregation Darchei Noam

MISSOURI

Yeshivat Kadimah High School Nusach
Hari B'nai Zion Congregation
Young Israel of St. Louis

NEW HAMPSHIRE

Hillel at Dartmouth

NEW JERSEY

Ahavas Achim
Volunteer Chaplain Middlesex County
Congregation AABJ&D
Congregation Adath Israel of the JEC
National Council of Young Israel
Congregation Ahavat Achim
Congregation Ahavath Torah
Congregation Brothers of Israel
Congregation Darchei Noam of Fair Lawn
Congregation Etz Chaim of Livingston
Congregation Israel of Springfield
Congregation Ohr Torah
Congregation Sons of Israel of Cherry Hill
Kehilat Keshet
Ma Tov Day Camp
Ohav Emeth
Pal Foundation
Shomrei Torah of Fair Lawn
Synagogue of the Suburban Torah Center
Yavneh Academy
National Council of Young Israel
Young Israel of Teaneck

NEW YORK

Beis Community
Congregation Anshei Shalom
Congregation B'nai Tzedek
Congregation Bais Tefilah of Woodmere
Congregation Beth Sholom
Ramaz
Ma'ayanot Yeshiva High School for Girls
MTA – Yeshiva University High School for Boys
Young Israel of Merrick
Congregation Beth Torah
Congregation Etz Chaim of Kew Gardens Hills
Congregation Kehilath Jeshurun
Congregation Ohab Zedek
Great Neck Synagogue
Iranian Jewish Center/Beth
Hadassah Synagogue
Irving Place Minyan

Jewish Center of Atlantic Beach
Kehilath Jershurun
Kingsway Jewish Center
Lincoln Square Synagogue
Merkaz Yisrael of Marine Park
North Shore Hebrew Academy
Young Israel of Merrick
NYC Department of Correction
OU-JLIC at Binghamton University
OU-JLIC at Cornell University
Queens Jewish Center
Stars of Israel Academy
The Jewish Center
The Riverdale Minyan
Vaad of Chevra Kadisha
West Side Institutional Synagogue
Yeshiva University High School for Girls
Young Israel of Hillcrest
Young Israel of Jamaica Estates
Young Israel of Lawrence-Cedarhurst
Young Israel of New Rochelle
Young Israel of North Woodmere
Young Israel of Oceanside
Young Israel of Scarsdale
Young Israel of Woodmere

OHIO

Beachwood Kehilla
Congregation Sha'arei Torah
Congregation Torat Emet
Green Road Synagogue
Fuchs Mizrachi School
Heights Jewish Center

PENNSYLVANIA

Shaare Torah Congregation

SOUTH CAROLINA

Brith Sholom Beth Israel
Congregation Dor Tikvah

TENNESSEE

Baron Hirsch Congregation

TEXAS

Mayerland Minyan Synagogue
Robert M. Beren Academy
United Orthodox Synagogues of Houston

VIRGINIA

Keneseth Beth Israel

WASHINGTON

Bikur Cholim-Machzikay Hadath
Northwest Yeshiva High School
Sephardic Bikur Holim Congregation

URUGUAY

Comunidad Yavne Uruguay

VENEZUELA

CARACAS

Ashkenazi Kehilla
Mizrachi Venezuela



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