

DIVREI TORAH FROM INTERNET
ON PARSHAS NASO - 5756

For back issues and questions e-mail me at cshulman@paulweiss.com

Some Internet Dvar Torah Lists

JER 1: E-mail to: listserv@jer1.co.il In msg type: subscribe <listname> Your_Name" Some of lists: Aviner-Eng; Ateret Cohanim; Ask: Ask-the-Rabbi; DafYomi: Ohr Somayach; Halacha: Weekly; Parasha-Page: Rabbi Kornfeld (Yeshivat Ohr Yerushalayim); Parasha-QA; Torah-Talk: Parasha w/ Rabbi Steinberg; Weekly: Highlights of Parshah; yhe-metho by Rabbi Moshe Taragin; yhe-sichot - of Rav Lichtenstein and Rav Amital; yhe-jewhpi - on Jewish philosophy; yhe-parsha: by Rav Menachem Leibtag (also yhe-par.d); YITorah. Send command "lists" for complete lists.

SHAMASH: E-mail to listserv@israel.nysernet.org In message write " sub 'listname' <your name>" ByteTah: Zev Itzkowitz; Enayim: YU parsha; Daf-hashavua: London; mj-RavTorah: Rav Soloveichik ZTL on Parsha. Send "lists" for complete list.

PROJECT GENESIS E-mail to majordomo@torah.org with "subscribe listname <your e-mail address>" in message. Lists include: Torah-Forum-digest / DvarTorah / Halacha-Yomi / Maharal / Rambam / Ramchal / RavFrans / Tefila / YomTov / Drasha. Send "lists" for complete list.

CHABAD E-mail to listserv@chabad.org. In subject write: subscribe me. In text write: "Subscribe <code> (e.g.: code = W-2)" Some of Codes: D-3) Rambam Daily; W-2) Likutei Sichos On Parsha; W-3) Week in Review on Parsha; W-4) Once Upon A Chasid; W-7) Wellsprings - Chasidic Insight into Torah Portion. Send command "lists" for complete list of codes.

ISRAEL NEWS To: Listserv@vm.tau.ac.il Subject: Subscribe Listname <your name> Type "Subscribe <listname> <your name>". Lists include "Israeline" and "Israel-mideast". Must confirm w/i 48 hours by sending to same address msg "OK xxxx" with xxxx the code receive in confirmation. Also Jer1 (listserv@jer1.co.il) has Arutz-7.

WWW SITES - Shamash - <http://shamash.nysernet.org> & <http://shamash.nysernet.org/tanach/dvar.html>; Jerusalem 1 - <http://www.jer1.co.il>; YU - <http://yu1.yu.edu>; YHE - <http://www.etzion.org.il>; OU - <http://www.ou.org>; Chabad - <http://www.chabad.org>; Jewish Comm. Ntwk - <http://www.jcn18.com>; Project Genesis <http://www.torah.org>; List - http://www.yahoo.com/Society_and_Culture/Religion/Judaism; Israel - <http://www.ac.il>

Josh Rapps <jr@sco.COM>"" mj-ravtorah@shamash.org" naso

Shiur HaRav Soloveichik ZTL on Parshas Naso

The Rav noted that though Parshas Naso contains several different themes, the Haftorah deals with the topic of Nezirus, specifically with the Nezirus Shimshon. The Rav analyzed the connection between Parshas Naso and Nezirus Shimshon.

Shimshon was one of the judges, Shoftim, of Bnay Yisrael. He was the only judge that Hashem demanded of him Nezirus. Not only was Shimshon forbidden to drink wine and eat unclean foods, his mother was forbidden to eat them as well throughout her pregnancy and birth of Shimshon, as Shimshon was to be a Nazir from conception, Nazir Mibeten.

The Malbim comments that Manoach requested that the angel should return and instruct him what to do with the child that would be born to him. We find that when Manoach's wife recounts her encounter with the angel she only mentions those things that she was forbidden to do, such as being forbidden to drink wine and grape derived products and to eat unclean (Tamay) items. She does not mention the specific restrictions that apply to the child, such as the child is forbidden to ever cut his hair. The angel returns and tells Manoach that that the child was restricted from whatever he mentioned to his wife: to refrain from eating and drinking wine and grape products and unclean items and that the child shall never cut his hair. This last aspect was new to Manoach. He was told that the Nezirus of Shimshon was special from all other Nezirus. Usually a Nazir is restricted in 3 areas: drinking wine; defiling himself through touching an item that is Tamay, e.g. touching a corpse; cutting his hair. Shimshon was only forbidden to cut his hair and drink wine. The permanent ban on cutting Shimshon's hair was not mentioned to Manoach by his wife until the angel appeared to them a second time. Shimshon's Nezirus was unique and made him unique as well, as he mentioned to Delilah that if his hair was to be cut he would lose his unique Kedusha, and be like any other man, without his special gifts and strength. The Rav raised the question as to why was Shimshon singled out as the only Shofet that was required to be a Nazir from cradle to grave? The Rav answered this by noting the difference between Shimshon and all the other Judges. All the other Judges, as well as the Kings of Israel and the High Priests, were sanctified either with Shemen Hamishcha, the anointing oil, or

when there was no Shemen Hamishcha, they were consecrated through fulfilling the required tasks associated with their appointed roles. The Shoftim were characterized by their leadership of the people in various campaigns, yet they were always joined by members of the other tribes in their campaigns (e.g. Gideon). They had a "Heskem Hatzibbur", an acknowledgement of their leadership expressed by the participation of the people in their battles. This consecration via "popular acclamation" granted a certain Kedusha to the Shofet.

Shimshon acted alone, without the help and assistance of his fellow Jews.

What sanctified Shimshon and granted him his special status as Judge? What provided him with the special powers and abilities far beyond those of normal men to kill 10,000 Phillistines at a time? It was his status as a Nazir, his hair that was unique and immediately recognizable, that was the symbol of his uniqueness and selection as Shofet. It also was the medium that consecrated him as a unique Shofet, one who acted as an individual without the assistance of the rest of the Jewish People.

It is noteworthy that when Shimshon revealed the source of his strength to Delilah, he mentioned that as a Nazir he was forbidden to cut his hair, and were he to cut his hair he would be rendered weak as a normal man. Why did Shimshon neglect to mention that as a Nazir he was also forbidden to drink wine? Because the central defining characteristic of a Nazir is his hair, Ki Nezer Elokav Al Rosho. In fact the, the hair of a Nazir who has completed his Nezirus is to be burned on the altar and it is forbidden to derive any benefit from it. That is why Shimshon told Delilah that his power derives from his hair as the symbol of his Kedusha. As long as he or any leader of a generation retains their aspect of Kedusha that identifies them as a leader they will be victorious.

(The Rav noted that this applies to leaders in our generation as well. They must appreciate and distinguish themselves through Kedusha. If one attempts to lead without appreciating this special Kedusha, they become like Shimshon after his hair was cut. Shimshon went out to battle the Philistines as he always did, yet he did not realize that Hashem had left him. Leaders who have been successful in confronting our enemies, often forget that their mandate derives from the special Kedusha. If they fail to maintain that Kedusha, their attempts to confront the Phillistines of today and be successful as they were in the past will not be rewarded.)

In addition to his great strength, Shimshon possessed other "magical" powers that enabled him to kill so many of his enemies. Apparently they were mesmerized by him and panicked to a degree that they could not escape him. His mysterious spiritual power could be described as a magical aura that surrounded him in battle. The Phillistines recognized that they were facing someone who possessed something that went beyond great physical strength. They were unable to vanquish him in battle and they were also unable to escape from him as well. The aura that surrounded him instilled fear and paralyzed his enemies. According to Chazal the secret of his aura was his Nezirus as symbolized by his hair, Ki Nezer Elokav Al Rosho. The Phillistines enlisted Delilah in an attempt to discover the secret of his aura, Bameh Kocho Gadol. Shimshon explained to Delilah that through his hair he maintains the Kedusha that makes him special, that makes him a Shofet. Without his hair he becomes like any other man, weak without the special aura that strikes fear in the heart of his enemies. Shimshon's hair functioned like the Tefillin Shel Rosh does for all Jews: "And all the nations of the world shall see that the name of Hashem is upon you and they shall fear you". (The Rav noted that a similar paralysis was obvious in the 6 Day War in 1967, when the Arab armies were overcome by fear and fled in panic before the Israeli Army. This was a manifestation of the special Kedusha that Bnay Yisrael have. However if the leaders of the state want it to become like the other nations of the world, they will relinquish the special Kedusha that makes Eretz Yisrael unique and strikes fear in the hearts of our enemies.) The Rav noted that one of the important messages in Parshas Naso is to be found in the verse that Vlivnay Kehas Lo Nasan Ki Avodas Hakodesh Alayhem Bakasef Yisau. (Bnay Kehas were responsible for carrying on their shoulders the holy objects of the Ohel Moed.) The power of the Jew rests in the fact that he is willing to carry the Holy Ark on his shoulders for all to see. This symbolizes the Kedusha that is inherent in Bnay Yisrael.

This summary is Copyright 1996 by Dr. Israel Rivkin and Josh Rapps, Edison, N.J. Permission to reprint and distribute, with this notice, is hereby

granted. These summaries are based on notes taken by Dr. Rivkin at the weekly Moriah Shiur given by Moraynu V'Rabbeinu Harav Yosef Dov Halevi Soloveichik ZTL over many years. You can subscribe electronically to receive these Divrei Torah by sending mail to listproc@shamash.org with the following message: subscribe mj-ravtorah yourfirstname yourlastname.

YESHIVAT HAR ETZION VIRTUAL BEIT MIDRASH PROJECT (VBM)
PARSHAT HASHAVUA
PARSHAT NASO
by Menachem Leibtag

One of the commonly asked questions found in the commentaries to Sefer Bamidbar is: "lama nis'm'cha.." - why are these two parshiot juxtaposed? Why is this phenomenon so common in Sefer Bamidbar?

Parshat Naso is typical in that it contains what appears to be random and unrelated parshiot (i.e. leviim, nazir, sotah, chanukat ha'mizbayach, etc.). In order to comprehend its structure, we must begin with a general analysis of Sefer Bamidbar.

In this week's shiur, we analyze Sefer Bamidbar in search of a unifying theme which will enable us to explain its complex structure.

INTRODUCTION

The basic assumption in these shiurim has been that each "sefer" (book) in Chumash carries a unique theme. In the shiurim on Breishit, Shmot, and Vayikra we found a specific theme for each sefer which explains its overall structure. Finding such a theme for Sefer Bamidbar will be more difficult, for it contains numerous parshiot which appear to be totally unrelated.

Parshat Naso, for instance, is an excellent example of a Parsha containing unrelated topics. What logical connection exists between the details of the duties of the Leviim (chapter 4) and the laws of "sotah" & "nazir" (chapters 5->6)?

RAMBAN'S OVERVIEW

In his introduction to Sefer Bamidbar, Ramban presents a concise overview of its content, opening with:

"... and this book deals entirely with "MITZVOT SHA'AH" (transient commandments) which applied only during Bnei Yisrael's stay in the desert...";

Then, three lines later, he makes a very bold, yet puzzling, statement:

"This book does NOT CONTAIN any MITZVOT L'DOROT (commandments for all generations) EXCEPT for a FEW MITZVOT DEALING WITH KORBANOT

which the Torah began discussing in SEFER VAYIKRA, but did not finish their explanation there, and they are finished here instead."

For some reason, Ramban differentiates between two types of mitzvot that are found in Sefer Bamidbar, one type - "mitzvot l'sha'ah" - BELONG in the sefer, while the other type - "mitzvot l'dorot" - DO NOT BELONG!

[If you are not familiar with this distinction, here are a few examples: (1) "Mitzvot l'sha'ah" - commandments which were given specifically for the generation of the desert - e.g.:

* Organizing the camp around the Mishkan (chapters 1->4);

* sanctifying the Leviim (chapter 8);

* travel and encampment following the "anan" (chapter 9). (2) "Mitzvot l'dorot" - regular mitzvot - e.g.:

* the laws of "sotah" (chapter 5);

* the laws of "nazir" (chapter 6);

* the laws of Korbanot Tmidim u'Musafim (chapters 28->29).]

The fact that Ramban makes this distinction between parshiot which BELONG and DO NOT BELONG implies that Sefer Bamidbar has a main theme, i.e. a primary topic. Mitzvot that are related to that topic 'belong' in the sefer: those unrelated do not.

Although the Ramban never explicitly tells us what the primary topic is, we can deduce it from two additional statements regarding the NARRATIVE of Sefer Bamidbar which he makes in his introduction:

"[This book contains...] the miracles which were performed for Bnei Yisrael and how He began to deliver their enemies before them...

and He commanded them how the Land should be divided among the tribes...

In other words, Sefer Bamidbar details the events which take place during Bnei Yisrael's journey from Har Sinai towards the Promised Land. This includes BOTH the NARRATIVE that details those events, as well as the special mitzvot - MITZVOT L'SHA'AH - which Bnei Yisrael are given concerning that journey.

Therefore, Ramban concludes that the MITZVOT L'DOROT, dealing with topics unrelated to the journey through the desert, do not belong in Sefer Bamidbar!

Before we discuss this conclusion, we will prove that the Ramban's analysis is indeed correct.

The following table illustrates the distinction made by the Ramban in his overview by listing the main topic of each chapter of Sefer Bamidbar according to the Ramban's two categories:

(I) WHAT SHOULD BE IN SEFER BAMIDBAR

including both (A) narrative and (B) mitzvot "l'sha'ah";

(II) WHAT SHOULD NOT BE IN SEFER BAMIDBAR

i.e. the "mitzvot l'dorot", that belong in Vayikra.

SEFER BAMIDBAR

PARSHIOT THAT DO BELONG | PARSHIOT THAT DON'T BELONG

Narrative & Mitzvot l'sha'ah | Mitzvot l'dorot CHAPTER ffffffff | ffffff 1 -> 4 Organizing the camp 5 ("sidur ha'machanot")

Korban Chatat

Laws of Sotah 6 Laws of Nazir Birkat Kohanim 7 Dedication of Mishkan

8 The appointment of Leviim 9 Offering Korban Pesach in the desert /

Laws of Pesach Sheni Travelling by the Anan 10 Gathering camp by

trumpet/"chatzrotrot" Leaving Har Sinai (on 20th of Iyar) 11 Complaints

during the journey ("mitonnim", "mitavim", etc.) 12 Complaints against

Moshe ("chet miriam") 13 Sin of the 'spies' ("chet ha'm'raglim") 14 The

punishment of 40 years' wandering 15 Laws of Shlamim, chala, chatat,

shabbat, & tzizit 16-17 Korach's rebellion 18 Laws concerning what the

kohen receives in reward

for his service. 19 Laws of "tumat meyt", 20-21 Events of the 40th year:

death of Miriam; "mei mriva" incident; death of Aharon; conquest of

Transjordan, etc. 21-24 Story of Bilam & Balak 25 Sin of Baal P'or and the

act of Pinchas 26 The census for inheriting the Land 27 Transfer of

leadership from Moshe->Yehoshua 28-29 Korbanot Tmidim u'musafim 30

The laws of "n'darim" 31 War against Midyan 32 Inheritance of Reuven

& Gad 33 Summary of the journey through the desert 34-36 Laws in

preparation for conquest and inheritance of the land ("nachalot", "arei

miklat").

Carefully study this table. Note that if Sefer Bamidbar did not contain the parshiot listed in the right column, it would have a very simple continuous theme, i.e. the story of Bnei Yisrael's journey from Har Sinai, through the desert, until they reach Arvat Moav. Note also that most of the MITZVOT L'DOROT (the right hand column) appear to be either totally unrelated or only tangentially related to the ongoing narrative.

In other words, the ongoing narrative of Sefer Bamidbar appears to be periodically 'interrupted' by parshiot containing "mitzvot l'dorot" [sort of like 'commercial breaks' in the middle of the sefer]!

This structure is unique to Sefer Bamidbar. To show how, we will compare its structure, as described above, to the structure of Shmot and Vayikra. SHMOT & VAYIKRA

Sefer Shmot, although somewhat similar to Bamidbar, differs in a number of ways. Though Shmot contains both NARRATIVE and MITZVOT L'DOROT, its mitzvot constitute an INTEGRAL PART of the ongoing narrative! Let's explain:

Sefer Shmot contains the story of Bnei Yisrael's journey from Mitzrayim until their arrival at Har Sinai. [This includes the story of Yetziat Mitzrayim (chapter 1->13), the journey from Mitzrayim until Har Sinai (chapters 14->17), and the events that take place there: Ma'amad Har Sinai and building the Mishkan (chapters 18->40).]

Within that narrative, we find mitzvot that are directly related. For example, as Bnei Yisrael leave Egypt, they are commanded "mitzvot l'dorot" which commemorate that event, such as korban pesach, chag ha'matzot, kedushat b'chor, etc.

Sefer Shmot also contains many mitzvot which are part of the narrative. "Aseret ha'dibrot" (20:1-14) are an integral element of the story of Ma'amad Har Sinai, while the mitzvot recorded in Parshat Mishpatim" (20:18-23:33) constitute the "sefer ha'brit" (see 24:3-7) over which Bnei Yisrael proclaim "na'seh v'nishma" during the ceremony which took place at Har Sinai (see Ramban 24:7). The Mishkan itself is a mitzvah which perpetuates Har Sinai.

Unlike Sefer Bamidbar, Sefer Shmot does not contain independent parshiot containing "mitzvot l'dorot" which do not relate directly to the ongoing narrative.

In Sefer Vayikra, we find a structure which is almost the opposite to that of Sefer Shmot. Vayikra, as we explained in our shiurim, contains primarily "mitzvot l'dorot" organized by topic ("kedushat ha'Mishkan v'ha'am" or "torat kohanim"), presented in a very organized fashion. The lone narrative found in Sefer Vayikra, the dedication of the Mishkan (8:1-10:10) directly relates to that topic.

Thus, the structure of Bamidbar - an ongoing narrative with related mitzvot, periodically interrupted with unrelated "mitzvot l'dorot" - is quite unique.

Why does the Torah employ this structure in Sefer Bamidbar? To answer this question, we must review all the mitzvot which DON'T BELONG in order to determine where they DO BELONG.
WHERE DO THEY BELONG?

A quick glance at the list in the right hand column of the above table confirms what the Ramban stated in his introduction that the "mitzvot l'dorot in Bamidbar actually belong in Sefer VAYIKRA. For example:

- * Parshat "sotah" (5:11-31) and parshat "nazir" (6:1-21) are both contained "torot" (ritual procedures) for korbanot (see 5:29 & 6:21). Thus (as we explained in previous shiurim) these parshiot belong with the other "torot" found in the first half of Sefer Vayikra.
- * Parshat "parah adumah" (chapter 19) belongs in Parshiot Tazria/Metzora, together with the presentation of all of the other laws of how one becomes "tamey" and the necessary procedures to become "tahor".
- * "Korbanot tmidim u'musafim" (chaps. 28->29) belong with the chagim in "Emor" (Vayikra 23 / note that on each holiday mentioned in Emor we must bring an "ishe rayach nichoach l'hashem". Sefer Bamidbar details the specific "ishe" (korban) which must be brought for each chag.

Thus, it appears as though Chumash has deliberately taken parshiot which could have been in Sefer Vayikra and 'randomly' placed them throughout the narrative of Sefer Bamidbar! Why would the Torah take a mitzvah which 'belongs' in Sefer Vayikra, and purposely move it into Sefer Bamidbar?

One might suggest that these 'unrelated parshiot' are recorded in Sefer Bamidbar for the technical reason that they just happened to have been given to Moshe Rabeinu at this time (i.e. during the journey from Har Sinai through the desert). For example, the mitzvah of "shiluach tmayim" (5:1-4) - sending unclean persons outside the camp - most likely was commanded only after the camp was organized (chaps. 1->4). However, this approach explains only a very few parshiot. Most all the mitzvot l'dorot in Bamidbar must have been given at an earlier time, most probably on Har Sinai. For example, the laws of "tumat meyt" must have been given before the Mishkan was erected, otherwise it would have been impossible for the kohanim to perform the "avodah". Furthermore, certain mitzvot recorded in Bamidbar had already been mentioned earlier in Chumash (e.g. see 5:5-8 / compare with Vayikra 5:20-26).

"LAMA NIS'M'CHA..."

If this special structure of Bamidbar is deliberate, then the obvious temptation is to find a some connection, even if only tangential, between these 'unrelated mitzvot' and the juxtaposed narrative in Sefer Bamidbar. In other words, this unique style of Sefer Bamidbar challenges us to find a THEMATIC connection between these "mitzvot l'dorot" and the ongoing story.

This approach is reflected in many commentaries that begin with the question: "lama nis'm'cha..." (why are certain parshiot juxtaposed...?).

Based on this approach, we will suggest possible reasons for the inclusion of the various parshiot of mitzvot in Parshat Naso.

SHCHINA IN THE CAMP

The first topic of Sefer Bamidbar is the organization of the camp ("sidur ha'machanot") surrounding the Mishkan (chaps. 1->4). As we explained last week, this re-organization of the camp stresses the importance of the

interdependent relationship between the camp and the Mishkan, i.e. between the nation and the kohanim & leviim.

This may explain the reason why Sefer Bamidbar chose to include the parshiot which follow:

A) "Shiluach Tmayim" (5:1-4)

As the camp was organized with the "shchinah" dwelling at its center, the first mitzvah is to remove anyone who is "tamey" from the camp.

B) "Gezel ha'Ger". (5:5-10)

Here we find laws that reflect the special relationship between the nation and the kohanim.

This mitzvah begins with the standard law of the Korban Asham as explained in Parshat Vayikra (5:20-26). The halacha requires that prior to bringing the korban, the transgressor must first repay the person ("keren v'chomesh"). This parsha describes the case when the payment is given to the Kohen, i.e. when the person who is owed the money has passed away and left no inheritors (see Rashi 5:8). The parsha continues with a general statement regarding the legal ownership of tithes which the nation must give to the kohanim (see 5:9-10).

C) Parshat Sotah (5:11-31)

Here again we find a special relationship between the Mishkan and the nation, as the kohen is instrumental in solving problems in a marital relationship. Even though this is a korban mincha, its nature is quite different from those mentioned in Sefer Vayikra (see Ramban 5:9).

D) Parshat Nazir (6:1-21)

Here we find a case where a member of the nation takes upon himself laws similar to those of a Kohen (see 6:6-8), as well as the 'kedusha' of a Kohen. Note also the similarity between the korban which the nazir must bring (6:13-21) and the special korbanot brought by the kohanim during the seven day miluim ceremony (Vayikra chapter 8).

E) Birkat Kohanim (6:22-27)

The blessing which the Kohanim bestow on the nation is yet another example of the connection between the Kohanim and the machaneh. The kohanim serve as vehicle through which God can bless His people.

CHANUKAT HA'MIZBAYACH (7:1-8:26)

This parsha, discussing the dedication ceremony of the Mishkan, appears to be out of place. The story of the dedication of the Mishkan was already detailed in Parshat Pkudei (Shmot 40) and Parshat Shmini (Vayikra 9). Furthermore, this dedication ceremony took place on the first of Nisan, while the narrative of Sefer Bamidbar began a month LATER, on the first day of Iyar (1:1)!

Why then is it included in Bamidbar, and why specifically here?

The primary topic of this perek is the 'korban' which the tribal leaders brought on the day of the dedication of the Mishkan. Their offering included a joint presentation of six wagons and twelve oxen as well as an offering for the mizbayach presented by each "nasi" individually.

Those wagons are given to the Leviim to help them while transporting the Mishkan. Therefore, this detail of the dedication ceremony is recorded in Bamidbar for it relates to the organization of the camp ("sidur ha'machaneh") and the duties of the Leviim in preparation for the journey from Har Sinai. Even though the wagons were presented a month earlier, Sefer Bamidbar begins with the census of the army in anticipation of the journey from Har Sinai. Once the detail of how the camp will travel is completed, Sefer Bamidbar recalls the story of how "nsiim" presented the Leviim with the wagons. The remaining details of that joint presentation of the nsiim are detailed in the parsha which follows (7:12-99 / the individual korban of each "nasi").

TRAVELLING WITH THE "SHCHINA"

Why are parshiot from Sefer Vayikra in particular woven into Sefer Bamidbar? This structure of Bamidbar may reflect a 'way of life'. In our study of Sefer Vayikra, we explained how the kedusha of the Mishkan (first half of Vayikra) affects the kedusha of the entire nation (second half). This fundamental concept is now applied to Sefer Bamidbar. The Torah periodically interrupts its detail of the journey of Bnei Yisrael through the desert with mitzvot that deal with the special connection between the kohanim and the nation.

As the nation leaves Har Sinai, Bnei Yisrael begin to deal with mundane tasks such as preparation for the conquest of the Land. At the same time they

must constantly remind themselves of their spiritual goals, symbolized by the Mishkan at the center of the camp.
shabbat shalom menachem

FOR FURTHER IYUN

A. Is the primary purpose of "parshat sotah" to punish a wife who has cheated on her husband, or to re-unite a couple where the wife has no way to prove her innocence to her suspicious husband?

Use the above shiur to answer this question.

B. Compare the korbanot of the nazir to that of the kohanim during the seven day miluim service (as mentioned in the shiur). Compare also to Bamidbar 8:5-13, especially 8:7. 1. Is primary purpose of nzirut to be a nazir, or complete the process of nzirut? Use the comparison to answer this question.

C. PARSHAT B'HAALOTCHA - intro & preparation

Upon the completion of these parshiot, Sefer Bamidbar (in perek 9) continues with the account of 'Pesach Sheni'. This narrative is directly related to the journey, as it explains why Bnei Yisrael could not travel from Har Sinai immediately after the completion of the dedication ceremony. Before travelling, it was required that everyone re-affirm the covenant of Yetziat Mitzrayim - Korban Pesach. As certain individuals could not bring their Korban until the Pesach Sheni (14 Iyar), the camp could not travel before that date. The actual departure took place only a few days later on the 20th of Iyar (10:11). The parshiot in the interim explain how the 'machaneh' was to travel, guided by the "anan" (9:15-23), as well as the 'signals' of the trumpets used to coordinate the organized procession (10:1-10).

At the end of perek 10, the preparation for travel is complete, and entire nation, led by the Aron (10:33), begins its journey to the Promised Land. The final two psukim of this perek: "V'yhi b'nsoah ha'Aron..." (10:35-36), delimited with backward "nun's", represent the ideal manner in which Bnei Yisrael were supposed to travel and conquer the Land. Unfortunately, as becomes apparent from perek 11 onward, this journey was far from ideal. This 'downhill' journey will be discussed in next week's shiur. 1.

Compare the nature of Moshe Rabeinu's reaction to the complaints of the people in Sefer Bamidbar to his reaction in Sefer Shmot. Can you suggest a reason for this difference? 2. Compare carefully Bamidbar 11:10-15 to the account of Chet Ha'egel! Note the contrasting parallel, and try to explain it. Relate to question #1.

Relate these psukim carefully to Dvarim 1:8-14.

[We will return to this when we study Parshat Dvarim.]

enayim l'torah -- naso

Enayim LaTorah Parshat Naso Publication of Student Organization of Yeshiva University

The Contradictory Nazir by Rabbi Yosef Zitter

We find contradictory attitudes among the Tanaim concerning a nazir, someone who has vowed to abstain from wine, forgo cutting his hair, and refrain from any physical contact with the dead.

Rabbi Elazar HaKappar (Ta'anit 11a) criticizes the nazir because if the nazir defiles himself through contact with a corpse he must bring a korban chat'at. The Torah tells us that he must achieve atonement "me'asher chata al hanefesh" - "[because he has] sinned against the person" (6:11). What sin has he committed, and against which person? Rabbi Elazar HaKappar answers that he has sinned by depriving himself of the enjoyment of wine. Furthermore, the Yerushalmi at the end of Kiddushin criticizes all ascetic behavior: Atid adam litein din v'cheshbon al kol she'rat eino v'lo achal A person will ultimately be called to account for any worldly pleasure which he has passed up.

On the other hand Rabbi Elazar ben Shamua calls the nazir a "holy person," based on the words "kadosh yihyeh" (6:5) - "he shall be holy."

A possible resolution of these two viewpoints is hinted at in a story elsewhere in the Talmud (Nedarim 9b). Shimon HaTzaddik, the great and famous kohen gadol in the time of the second Beit Hamikdash, tells of his personal practice concerning n'zirim. He never was willing to eat the korban

asham of a nazir who had become impure except on one occasion.

The Talmud explains that if a nazir becomes defiled he must shave off all his hair and offer this korban ashame, which is eaten by the Kohanim serving at the time. Then, he must start a new count of n'zirut, with all the days of prohibition until now counting for naught. Out of frustration, the nazir regrets having made his vow altogether - and thus, in a certain sense, his korban served no purpose, and thus violates the prohibition of bringing non-sanctified meat to the Beit Hamikdash (chulin ba'azarah). However, once, an extremely handsome, young shepherd, with beautiful curls, brought his korban ashame to Shimon HaTzaddik and explained that he had taken the n'zirut upon himself as a protection against great temptation. From the shepherd's story, Shimon HaTzaddik perceived that his n'zirut was undertaken only with the deepest sincerity and thus, there was no regret at all when an unexpected impurity lengthened the period of his n'zirut.

The Ramba"m seems to adopt this conditional viewpoint. He presents the negative view of Rabbi Elazar HaKappar that since he has deprived himself of wine, he needs to achieve atonement (Hilchot Deot chap. 3). However, at the end of Hilchot Nezirut (10:4) the Ramba"m's attitude is more positive: One who vows to Hashem in holiness is proper and praiseworthy, and it is said about him: "the crown of God is on his head ... holy is he to Hashem" (6:7,8)

According to this opinion, the propriety of becoming a nazir depends upon the commitment of the person and upon his success in carrying out his obligations. (For additional praise of the status of nazir see the comments of Ramba"n, quoting a pasuk in Amos) (Also, for a similar discussion of the merits of undertaking voluntary fast days, see Mishneh B'ruah Siman 571)

The Two Dimensional Nazir by Yosef Crystal

At first glance, the laws of nazir seem to be describing a set of actions to be undertaken by one who wishes to become closer to God. This sentiment is encapsulated in the pasuk: Kol y'mei nizro kadosh hu la'Hashem. (6:8) All the days of his n'zirut he is holy to God (6:8) However, another pasuk indicates that the nazir is not an ideal toward which one should strive in order to bring oneself closer to God: ... he shall effect atonement for him for that which he sinned concerning the person, and he shall hallow his head again on that day. (6:11) On this pasuk the Talmud (Ta'anit 11a) comments: Rabbi Elazar HaKappar Berabbi says, against which soul did he sin? [He sinned in that] he denied himself wine. Thus, not only is the nazir not ideal, but it involves an element of sin. How is one to understand the conflicting messages in the nazir?

The answer may be found by examining the following case in the Talmud (Nedarim 9b): Shimon HaTzaddik said: only once in my life have I eaten of the korban ashame brought by a defiled nazir. On one occasion a nazir came from the south country, and I saw that he had beautiful eyes, was of handsome appearance, and had thick locks of hair neatly arranged. Said I to him: "My son, why did you decide to destroy this beautiful hair of yours?" [a requirement for a nazir] He replied: "I was a shepherd for my father in my town. Once I went to draw water from a well and gazed upon my reflection in the water, whereupon my evil desires sought to drive me from the world [through sin]. I said to it [my lust], "Rasha! Why are you vain in a world which is not yours, with one who is destined to become worms and dust? I swear that I will shave you off for the sake of Heaven." I [Shimon HaTzaddik] immediately arose and kissed him upon his head saying: "My son, may there be many n'zirim such as you in Israel. Of you the pasuk writes, when a man or woman shall separate themselves..."

Shimon HaTzaddik made an exception for this one nazir. What was it about this nazir that was special, that differentiated him from other n'zirim? From the Talmud, it is clear that it was his motivation that placed him above the rest. He became a nazir only because he saw that it was the only way he could overcome his desires. Herein lies the essence of the nazir.

N'zirut serves to correct a spiritual problem in an individual. If one is unable to cope with a certain physical temptation, then he is allowed to remove himself from the physical world by abstaining from things which may lead him down the wrong path. This is the nazir of Shimon HaTzaddik. However, one is not permitted to simply remove oneself from the world in order to

avoid the temptation altogether. The purpose of the mitzvot is to sanctify the physical world, not to escape from it. Thus, one who becomes a nazir in order to avoid ever having to deal with temptation is not striving toward the correct ideal.

One who becomes a nazir to overcome a forbidden desire follows the example of the nazir described by Shimon HaTzaddik. However, one who becomes a nazir in order to escape the difficulties of everyday life does so for the wrong reasons and is sinning in the manner described by Rabbi Eleazar HaKappar.

Seth L. Ness

Ness Gadol Hayah Sham ness@aecom.yu.edu

Parashat Naso - "The yearly Torah-reading cycle"

The Weekly Internet

P * A * R * A * S * H * A - P * A * G * E

by Mordecai Kornfeld

kornfeld@jer1.co.il

=====

This week's Parasha-Page has been sponsored by Naftoli (Nat) Bodner of Kew Gardens Hills NYC, in memory of his mother, Dina bat Reb Menachem Arye Z"L. Her Yahrzeit is the 14th of Sivan. *** Would you like to dedicate a future issue of Parasha-Page and help support its worldwide dissemination of Torah? Help spread Torah, using the farthest reaching medium in all of history!

=====

Parashat Naso, 5756

THE YEARLY TORAH READING CYCLE

This year Shavuot began on Friday, and an interesting predicament was created in the world Jewish community. In Israel, where Shavuot is observed only one day, Shabbat (the day after Shavuot) is treated as a normal Shabbat, and the next weekly portion in the weekly cycle of Parshiot was read -- Parashat Naso. In the diaspora, however, Shavuot is observed for two days, and Shabbat was the second day of Shavuot. Because of this, the weekly cycle of Parshiot was disregarded in favor of a Torah-reading dealing with the theme of the festival. Naso is read in the diaspora only on the *following* week (this week). Thus, for the next several weeks the Torah-reading in the diaspora will lag behind that of Israel by one Parasha! This one-week lag is not adjusted until after six weeks, when Parshiot Chukat and Balak are read as two separate Parshiot in Israel while they are combined into one reading in the diaspora.

A similar situation occurred last year (5755), when the seventh day of Pesach was a Friday -- the following day was observed as a regular Shabbat in Israel (Parashat Kedoshim), but was celebrated as the eighth day of Pesach in the diaspora. Last year, however, the gap between the two communities was bridged only after *fifteen* weeks (when Mattot and Masei were read separately in Israel but together in the diaspora). Interestingly enough, in that case several opportunities for doubling Parshiot were passed up before the disparity was corrected by the doubling of Mattot-Massei. It seems apparent that whatever the criteria are for deciding whether to combine two particular Parshiot or to read them separately, bridging the gap between the Jews of Israel and those of the diaspora does *not* seem to play a major role, if any at all.

What indeed are the criteria that determine the doubling of Parshiot? And why were certain Parshiot chosen to be doubled rather than others? In this week's Parasha Page we will look into these questions. (I would like to thank my friend Dr. Norman Bloom of Miami Beach, Fl., whose excellent article entitled "The Torah Reading Cycle, Past and Present" provided much valuable source material on this subject. Another helpful essay on this issue can be found in Rav Reuven Margolios' work "Hamikra Vehamesorah," Ch. 11.)

II

The division of the Torah into weekly Torah portions, or Parshiot, is already noted in the Talmud (Megillah 29b and 30a; see also Bereishit Rabba 91:1). The Zohar (Tikkunei Zohar #13, p. 29b; Midrash HaNe'elam, Vayera, 104b) mentions that there are 53 Parashiot in the Torah. From this figure it is clear that these Parshiot were meant to be linked to the Shabbatot

of the year. In a leap year (of the Jewish, lunar-solar calendar) there can be as many as 55 Shabbatot in the year, but not all of them are available for Torah-readings from the yearly cycle. Since Sukkot and Pesach are 8 days and one week, respectively, there are always at least two Shabbatot per year during which the regular weekly cycle is interrupted in favor of festival-related readings. This leaves a maximum of exactly 53 Shabbatot which require weekly Torah readings! (It is not clear at which point in history the division into 53 Parshiot was instituted. It is possible that this division of the Torah is indeed a Mosaic tradition -- see Mishnah Berurah, O.C. 135:8.)

Incidentally, as a quick count of the number of Parshiot in today's texts will reveal, we now have *54* Parashot Hashavua! This is because, as some point out ["Sefer HaOrah" (attributed to Rashi), Hil. Sefer Torah, #73], Vezot HaBerachah is never read on a Shabbat as a weekly portion, but on Simchat Torah, so it is not counted. It is the remaining 53 Parshiot that are read on the 53 Shabbatot of the longest year. An even simpler explanation is that Nitzavim and Vayelech actually constitute one Parasha, as is apparent from the words of many early commentators. (See, for instance, the Rambam's enumeration of the weekly Parshiot at the end of "Sefer Ahavah" of Mishneh Torah, Rashi's own list in "Sefer HaPardes." See also Rav R. Margolios, Nitzotei Zohar to the above-mentioned Tikkun.)

When a year has 53 free (non-holiday) Shabbatot, one Parasha is read every week until the following Sukkot is reached 53 weeks afterwards, when VeZot HaBerachah is read. This can only happen in a leap year in which both Pesach and Sukkot have only one Shabbat, and no Shabbat is "lost" to other holidays (i.e. Shavuot, Rosh Hashanah or Yom Kippur). Such a situation only occurs when the Rosh HaShanah starting a leap year begins on a *Thursday*, as in the year 5744 or 5765. (This is only true in the diaspora. In Israel, a 53-Shabbat year may occur under other circumstances as well.)

When there are fewer than 53 "available" Shabbatot, we must obviously combine one, or several, of the Parshiot in order to be able to arrive at the next Sukkot "on schedule." But is there any pattern that determines which Parshiot should be joined with which, and when this should happen?

III

The Gemara (Megillah 31b) supplies us with two important rules in this regard. We are told that the two Tochechot ("rebukes") -- the one in Bechukotai and the one in Ki Tavo -- should be read before Shavuot and Rosh HaShanah respectively, in order that "the old year may be ushered out along with its curses." (Shavuot is also considered a "new year day" in certain respects.) Actually, as the Tosafot elaborate, these two Parshiot must be read on the *second* Shabbat before Shavuot and Rosh Hashanah.

Another ancient custom (not mentioned in the Gemara) is that Parashat Devarim must always be read on the Shabbat preceding Tisha B'Av (see Siddur Rav Amram Gaon; Rambam, Hil. Tefillah, 13:2 etc.). Although the original sources do not offer any logic for such a custom, "Eliyahu Rabba" (O.C. #428) suggests that it is in order to read Moshe's words of rebuke before Tisha B'Av, so as to induce a mood of somber contrition before the fast.

In addition to these three rules, Rav Amram Gaon and the Rambam (and others) present a fourth regulation concerning the placement of Parshiot: Parashat Tzav should always be read on Shabbat Hagadol (the Shabbat before Pesach), during a *non-leap* year. What is the significance of connecting Tzav to Pesach in this manner? Eliyahu Rabba suggests that this Parasha (see esp. Vayikra 6:21) contains the source of the laws of Hag'alat Keilim (the purging of cooking utensils of the residue of forbidden foods), which is commonly practiced before Pesach in order to make utensils kosher for Pesach use. (In a leap year, however, there is no way to stretch things out so that Tzav would be read on the Shabbat before Pesach.)

These four fundamental rules of Parasha placement -- (1) Tzav before *Pesach*, (2) Bechukotai two weeks before *Shavuot*, (3) Devarim before *Tisha B'Av* and (4) Ki Tavo two weeks before *Rosh Hashanah* -- form the basic foundation upon which all the rules of Parasha-joining are based. We may also add the requirement that (5) Vezot Habrachah be read on *Simchat Torah*. This formula is used to determine when Parshiot are to be joined during any given year.

In order to accommodate these four rules, up to 7 times a year, two Parshiot are combined and read as one, large, double-Parasha (Vayakhel-Pekudei,

Tazria-Metzora, Acharei-Kedoshim, Behar-Bechukotai, Chukkat-Balak, Mattot-Massei and Nitzavim-Vayelech). These provide flexibility in the Torah-reading cycle at many different points in the year. However, no reason is offered to explain why these particular 7 Parasha combinations are used rather than any others. Why not combine, for instance, Vayikra and Tzav when necessary? Why were these seven chosen to be the ones which are joined to each other when joining is called for? It may be proposed that two simple, logical rules were used to produce the present pattern of Parasha-combinations.

IV

In order to demonstrate this, let us divide the year into five sections, corresponding to the five requirements of Parasha placement mentioned above: (1) the period from Sukkot until Pesach which must be arranged so that Tzav is read right before Pesach; (2) the period from Pesach until the second week before Shavuot which must end with Bechukotai; (3) from then until just before Tisha B'Av, when we must ensure that Devarim is read; (4) from Tisha B'Av until two weeks before Rosh Hashanah, when Ki Tavo must be read; and (5) from then until Simchat Torah, when Vezot Habrachah must be read.

The two basic rules for choosing which Parshiot to combine with which are the following. (A) It is preferable that only two Parshiot which have a common theme or subject matter be joined together. (B) If there are no such similar Parshiot to combine, we push off the combination of two Parshiot until the last possible opportunity to do so.

In section (1) of the year, there are exactly 25 *Parshiot* to work with (from Bereishit to Tzav). In a non-leap year, there are either 24 or 25 *Shabbatot* during this period. When there are 25 Shabbatot there is obviously no problem fitting Parshiot to Shabbatot. However, in those years which have only 24 Shabbatot, two Parshiot must be combined. Of all the Parshiot from Bereishit to Tzav, the two which are the most closely related to each other are Vayakhel and Pekudei, both of which deal with a review of the process of the construction of the Mishkan. That is why *these* two Parshiot were chosen to be the ones that are joined together in order to enable Tzav to be "on schedule."

In section (2) of the year (Pesach to Shavuot), there are always five Shabbatot. However, Bechukotai is *eight* Parshiot after Tzav! We must thus double up Parshiot *three* times in order to ensure the timely arrival of Bechukotai two weeks before Shavuot. Are there any Parshiot among these eight that are thematically related? In fact, there are several such candidates. Tazria and Metzora both deal with the laws of Tzaraat. Acharei and Kedoshim both contain very similar sections dealing with incestuous relationships. There do not seem to be any other suitable candidates for joining based on a thematic relationship among the available Parshiot, so we wait until the last possible opportunity -- the week of Bechukotai itself -- in order to make Bechukotai come out on time. Behar is therefore joined together with Bechukotai to cut out the third extra Parasha.

In a leap year, there are 33 or 34 Shabbatot between Sukkot and the second week before Shavuot (sections (1) and (2) of the year). If there are 33, there is no problem arranging for Bechukotai, which is the 33rd Parasha in the Torah, to be read on time. If there are 34 Shabbatot, we just can't help it -- Bechukotai has to come a week early, *three* weeks before Shavuot.

In section (3) of the year (which takes us from two weeks before Shavuot until just before Tisha B'Av), there are only ten Shabbatot but eleven Parshiot must be read. Are there any adjacent Parshiot that "match" each other thematically from Bemidbar to Devarim? No, there are none. Therefore, the last possible opportunity is taken to "squeeze in" the extra Parasha, and the two Parshiot just before Devarim (namely, Mattot and Masei) are joined, in accordance with rule (B) above. (A combination of Masei with Devarim cannot be done, because they are in two separate Chumashim. See Mishnah Berurah O.C. #135, middle of note #7.)

Section (4) goes from Tisha B'Av to two weeks before Rosh Hashanah, a period which always includes six Shabbatot. Since there are exactly six Parshiot to read from Devarim until Ki Tavo, there is never any need to merge Parshiot at all during this period of time.

Section (5) of the year, from two weeks before Rosh Hashanah until Sukkot, is the shortest of the five sections of the year, with three Parshiot to fit in -- Nitzavim, Vayelech and Ha'azinu. In many years there are three

"free" Shabbatot during that time period, so there is no need to combine Parshiot. In some years, however, there are only two free Shabbatot (due to Rosh Hashanah or Yom Kippur occurring on Shabbat), so there is a need to join two Parshiot together. According to rule (B) formulated above, since no two of the Parshiot under discussion are thematically related we should have waited until the "last minute" and combined Vayelech with Ha'azinu. Why is this not done?

The answer is that we are really looking at this backwards. Originally Nitzavim and Vayelech were one Parasha, and Vezot Habrachah was read on Shabbat (and not on Simchat Torah!). Later, when Vezot Habrachah became the reading for Simchat Torah, it became necessary to *split up* an existing Parasha, in order to supply the now-empty third Shabbat between Rosh Hashanah and Sukkot with a portion to read. The Parasha chosen for this was Nitzavim. (Ha'azinu could not be split, as the Shira in it comprises a single unit.) The last 30 verses of this already-short Parasha were lopped off and Vayelech was born! It is obvious that when there is no need to split off Vayelech from its parent Parasha of Nitzavim, it is not done. This is why, when there are only two Shabbatot to accommodate the three Parshiot of Nitzavim, Vayelech and Ha'azinu, it is Nitzavim and Vayelech that are "joined" (actually, reunited) and not Vayelech and Ha'azinu.

We can now understand why the diaspora Jews do not take immediate action to catch up to the Israeli Jews when there is a divergence in their Torah-reading cycles. Parshiot are never joined together unless it is to follow one of the two rules that we established -- either because there is a thematic connection between the two Parshiot, or because it is the last chance to allow one of the five basic readings to take place in the proper time.

May we merit to see the day when all Jews live together in Eretz Yisrael, when these incongruities become obsolete!

Torah Weekly - Naso * TORAH WEEKLY * Highlights of the Weekly Torah Portion with "Sing, My Soul!" thoughts on Shabbos Zemiros Parshas Naso For the week ending 7 Sivan 5756 (14 Sivan 5756)* 24 & 25 May 1996 (31 May & June 1 1996)* *week ending dates for locations outside of Israel Summary The Torah assigns the exact Mishkan-related tasks to be performed by the sons of Gershon, Kehas, and Merari, the Bnei Levi. A census reveals that over 8,000 men are ready for such service. All those who are ritually impure are to be sent out of the encampments. If a person confesses that he wrongfully retained his neighbor's property after having sworn to the contrary in court, he has to pay an additional fifth of the base-price of the object, and bring a guilt offering to atone for his transgression. In the event that the claimant has already passed away without heirs, the payments are made to a Kohen. In certain circumstances, a husband who suspects that his wife had been unfaithful brings his wife, a Sotah, to a Kohen. The Kohen prepares a drink of water mixed with a certain dust and a special ink that was used for inscribing Hashem's Name on a piece of parchment. If she is indeed innocent, the potion does not harm her -- in fact it brings a blessing of children. However, if she is guilty, she suffers a supernatural death. A Nazir is someone who voluntarily vows to dedicate himself to Hashem for a specific period of time. He is obliged to abstain from all grape products, let his hair grow, and avoid all contact with corpses. At the end of this period, he shaves his head and brings special offerings in the Temple before returning to normal life. If he fails to successfully complete his count, he needs to begin the count anew after shaving his head and bringing an offering in the Temple. The Kohanim are commanded to bless the people. The Mishkan is completed and dedicated on the first day of Nissan in the second year after the Exodus. The Princes of each Tribe make a communal gift to help transport the Mishkan, as well as donating identical individual gifts of gold, silver, animal and meal offerings.

ffffffffffffffffffffffff Commentaries Crime and Punishment "A man or woman who will take the vow of a Nazir for the sake of Hashem...from new or aged wine...shall he abstain" (6:2). "Good evening! And here is the nine o'clock news. The perpetrators of last year's spectacularly daring \$5,000,000 diamond heist were finally sentenced today, to life in prison..." David leaned forward and turned off the TV, and then sinking back in his armchair he mused to himself "\$5,000,000! Their only mistake was they weren't careful enough...if that had been me, I would have gotten away with

it!" In order to restore a husband's trust in his wife after she has behaved in a way which indicates that she may have been unfaithful to him, the Torah provides a means of verifying her innocence. This is called the mitzvah of Sotah. If she is innocent her childbearing is blessed, but if not, she dies a spectacular and miraculous death. The Torah immediately follows this with the mitzvah of the Nazir: A person who takes upon himself additional stringencies such as refraining from wine and all grape derivatives. Rashi explains that the connection of the two sections is to teach us that someone who sees the terrifying demise of the Sotah should understand that indulgence in wine leads to adultery, and distance himself from anything to do with wine. But the question remains, surely the spectacle of the grisly end of the Sotah should, in itself, be more than adequate warning! The implication here is that we are more attracted by the crime than deterred by the punishment: A person can always rationalize and say to himself: "They weren't careful enough -- I would have gotten away with it!" The spectacle of punishment enforces the idea of the feasibility of sin more than the danger of getting caught. "ARE YOU RECEIVING ME? OVER." "May Hashem illuminate His countenance for you and be gracious to you..." (2:22) You can have the largest radio transmitter in town, blasting out 50,000 watts of power, but if the radio at the other end isn't turned on, you won't hear a thing. In the above verse, 'Be(ing) gracious' means finding grace in the eyes of others. But the question arises -- if Hashem illuminates his countenance for us, surely there can be no question that we will find favor in the eyes of others. So what can the additional bracha of Hashem being gracious -- of giving us favor in the eyes of others -- mean? We can have all the best qualities but they can still go unrecognized. Our good qualities can live like a princess locked in the top of a castle with nobody recognizing our true selves. When Yosef was in prison in Egypt, Hashem gave Yosef grace in the eyes of the prison guard. Yosef is called Yosef HaTzadik -- Yosef the righteous -- not Yosef a tzadik, but Yosef the tzadik. Yosef was the essence of righteousness, and yet Hashem still had to give him favor in the eyes of the prison guard. There are some people who are unable to see the true virtue of a person, very often they perceive them as being the opposite of their true selves. It needs a special bracha for a person's virtues to be recognized by the world. That's the bracha of finding favor in the eyes of others -- that their receiver will be turned on to us. (Based on Degel Machane Ephraim) HEARING AID "When Moshe arrived at the Tent of Meeting to speak with Him (Hashem), he heard the Voice speaking to him from atop the Cover that was on the Ark of Testimony between the two Cherubim." (7:89) The whole world proclaims the presence of Hashem! Every blade of grass, every bird singing, every plant growing, every nebula and star system being born on the fringes of space -- everything is saying in a loud voice "Hashem is G-d!" How come people find it so hard to hear the Voice? How come to some people the universe looks like a self-replicating absurdity or a cosmic bad joke? Why don't they hear the Voice? Rashi explains the above verse to mean that Moshe would go into the Tent of Meeting and there he would hear the Voice coming from on top of the Cover of the Ark of Testimony. What is this verse telling us? Surely Moshe could hear the Voice in all of nature, for everything sings the praises of Hashem, for nothing can exist outside of the Will of Hashem. The Voice is everywhere, but if we want to hear it, we must do what Moshe did. First we must go into the Tent of Meeting, the Beis Midrash (study- hall) where the Voice emanates from the interior spiritual world of the Torah. Then, when we are filled with the wisdom and the clarity that comes from learning the Torah with single-minded application and dedication, and we have refined our character and behavior, then, only then, can we go outside and hear the Voice in the world at large. This verse is hinting to that message: Moshe is to tell Israel that Hashem speaks to them from on top of the Cover within, and that Voice reaches to our ears and to our hearts which are outside the veil of the Holy of Holies. (Based on Rabbi Moshe Feinstein zt"l)

Written and Compiled by Rabbi Yaakov Asher Sinclair General Editor:
 Rabbi Moshe Newman Production Design: Lev Seltzer ffffffff
 (C) 1996 Ohr Somayach International - All rights reserved.

A discussion of Halachic topics related to the Parsha of the week. For final rulings, consult your Rav.

The Kohen... shall uncover the woman's head... (5:18). It is disgraceful for a married woman to be seen with uncovered hair (Rashi). Married Women With Uncovered Hair QUESTION: A married female guest at the Shabbos table does not have her hair covered. May Kiddush be recited in her presence or not? DISCUSSION: According to Torah law, married women must cover their hair(1) whenever they are outside their home(2). A woman who fails to do so forfeits her Kesuba and should be divorced by her husband(3). Since the hair must be covered, when it is not covered it is considered an Erva, an uncovered area. No male may recite Krias Shema, Daven, make a Bracha or learn Torah when the uncovered hair is visible to him(4). Accordingly, if such a person happens to be at the Shabbos table, Kiddush may not be recited.

Many theories have been postulated as to why some women - although meticulous in keeping other Mitzvos - are lax in regard to covering their hair. Some do not cover their hair at all and others do so partially. It must be stressed that this practice is roundly condemned by all Poskim. There is not a single, solitary authority who finds a leniency for married women to have their hair uncovered(5). Indeed, in recent years there has been a gradual improvement and many women who did not previously cover their hair, have begun to do so.

In the last century or so, the many women who did not cover their hair presented an Halachic problem. The previously mentioned Halacha that a woman's uncovered hair is considered an Erva regarding Krias Shema and all Brachos, made it practically impossible for men to recite Tefilos and Brachos or to learn Torah in their own homes. A situation developed which was impossible to live with.

Because of the prevalence of the problem, the Aruch Hashulchan (75:7) ruled that in a locale where the majority of married women do not cover their hair, we can no longer consider hair an Erva. In his opinion, only in a locale in which most women keep their hair covered can uncovered hair be considered an Erva. This controversial ruling was accepted by some Poskim(6) and strongly rejected by others(7). Harav Moshe Feinstein(8) ruled that one can rely on this leniency only in a She'as Ha'dchak, a time of urgency.

Concerning our case in point, therefore, the following is the correct reaction : If it is possible to explain the problem to the woman in private without embarrassing her, then that would be the preferred solution; If it is difficult to do so, one should avert his face from her or close his eyes before reciting Kiddush; If that is difficult, one can rely on the Poskim who rule that under present-day conditions, women's hair is not considered an Erva. If the woman sitting at the table is not-Jewish, her uncovered hair is not considered an Erva(9).

If the woman at the table is not dressed properly [according to minimum Halachic guidelines], then, too, the man saying Kiddush must avert his face or close his eyes(10). The Aruch Hashulchan's leniency does not apply to immodest dress.

HALACHA is published L'zchus Haya'el Doniel Meir ben Hinda.

If you wish to sponsor a HALACHA Discussion, receive it free via the Internet or have any questions, please call (216)321-6381/ FAX (216)932-5762 or E-mail to:75310.3454@compuserve.com

* Distributed by: * The Harbotzas Torah Division of Congregation Shomre Shabbos * 1801 South Taylor Road * Cleveland Heights, Ohio 44118 * HaRav Yisroel Grumer, Marah D'Asra

FOOTNOTES: 1 Divorced or widowed women are also required to do so - although some Poskim hold that their obligation is Rabbinic, see Igros Moshe Even Haizer 1: 57. See Machazei Eliyahu 118-120. 2 According to the Zohar and many Poskim, women should cover their hair even in the privacy of their own homes, see Mishna Berura 75:14 and Biur Halacha for a complete discussion. 3 Kesuvos 72:1; Shulchan Aruch Even Haezer 115:1-4; Many Poskim hold that nowadays, when many women erroneously, but sincerely, believe that they are not required to cover their hair, the husband is not required to divorce them since it is their ignorance, not their disregard for the Law, which leads them to conduct themselves so - see Igros Moshe EH 1:114; Doveiv Meishorim 1:124; Lev Avrohom 1:105 quoting the Chazon Ish. 4 OC 75:2. This Halacha applies to one's own wife, sister, mother etc. as well. 5 There are some communities who have allowed women to expose the

small portion of hair that protrudes from beneath the covering. Even those who are lenient in this do not allow more than a total of 3.5 inches of hair to show - See Igros Moshe EH 1:58. 6 Ben Ish Chai Parshas Bo:12; Sridei Ish 2:14; Yavia Omer 6:13. 7 Mishna Berura 75:10; Chazon Ish OC 16:8 and most other Poskim. 8 Igros Moshe OC 1:39,42-43; OC 3:23-24; EH 114. 9 Igros Moshe OC 4:15. 10 Mishna Berura 75:1; Chazon Ish OC 16:8. Not all Poskim agree that closing one's eyes helps in this situation.

Rabbi Frand on Parshas Naso \ "RavFrاند" List - Rabbi Frand on Parshas Naso
Parshas Naso: -----

Rav Shlomo Breur on Lessons Learned from Gifts of The Nesiim

Parshas Naso is the longest parsha in the Torah. When I was a little boy, reaching my Bar Mitzvah age, I used to take note of how many pesukim each parsha contained. I always had sympathy for boys whose Bar Mitzvah parsha was Parshas Naso -- 176 verses -- a major task to learn. But as I grew a little older, I became less sympathetic, because so much of it is apparently just repetition. In Parshas Naso, the Torah describes the offerings of the Princes at the dedication of the Mishkan. There were 12 Princes, one from each Tribe. Each of the Princes basically donated the exact same thing. Therefore, as a Ba'al Koreh all you have to learn is one set of donations and you are all set. The truth of the matter is that this in itself presents a problem for us. We who know the teachings of Chaza"l and know the style of Chumash know that from just one extra letter sometimes we learn out many significant legal principles. [There is not one extra letter in the Torah.] By the offerings of the Princes however, the Torah apparently, needlessly goes ahead and says over and over again (12 times) the exact same thing. This itself is a difficulty. Would it not have been all right to say Nachshon ben Aminadav offered such and such and so too the representatives of the eleven other tribes? A second problem is the following: We find in a Medrash in this week's parsha "Beloved are the offerings of the Princes like the Song sung by the Jewish People at the Red Sea." The Medrash learns this out from a type of Gezerah Shava: By the Song of the Sea it says "ZEH Keli v'anveihu" (THIS is my G-d and I will glorify Him) [Shmos 15:2] and by the offerings of the Princes it says "ZEH Korban Nachshon ben Aminadav" (THIS is the offering of Nachshon son of Aminadav) [Bamidbar 7:17]. The Medrash extends this Gezerah Shava and says that the offering of the Princes are as beloved as the Two Tablets of the Covenant (on which the 10 Commandments were inscribed) about which it is written "m'ZEH u-m'ZEH hem kesuvim" (on THIS side and on THIS side were they written) [Shmos 32:15]. These seem to be rather arbitrary expositions. What does the Medrash really mean? Rav Shlomo Breur offers a beautiful interpretation of both these teachings of the Medrash and uses the interpretation to answer our original question. The Torah does not repeat the description of the offerings 12 times in order to teach us that each Prince brought exactly the same as every other Prince. On the contrary, the Torah is telling us just the opposite -- they were 12 different offerings. They were 12 different offerings because what a person gives is not important, how a person gives is important. One can ask a person for \$1000 for a Yeshiva and for that person the \$1000 is a major contribution. On the other hand, one can ask another person for that same \$1000 and for him that sum is a mere pittance. We see that two people, who give the exact same amount, may, in truth, actually perform two different types of giving. This is what the Torah is telling us. The fact that the Torah has to repeat 12 times what the Princes gave, perforce means that these 12 gifts were not exactly alike. Each Prince put his own special stamp on his gift, making it unique and special. The Medrash says that we see this concept from the Song of the Sea. What happened by the Song of the Sea? There were 600,000 people, each singing praises to G-d. So what should the verse say? ZEH Keleinu -- This is OUR (collective) G-d. How can 600,000 people say ZEH Keli -- This is MY (personal) G-d? This is the very point. Six hundred thousand people at the Red Sea saw the same thing, but each one experienced it differently -- to the extent that later on they were able to say "This is MY (personal) G-d". This is where the Medrash draws the comparison between the ZEH korban Nachshon and the ZEH Keli v'anveihu. Just as over there at the Red Sea, it was a singular experience, so too over

here, each gift offering was different. Then, the Medrash continues and says that the Princes' gifts were like the Two Tablets of the Covenant about which it is written "m'ZEH u-m'ZEH hem kesuvim". Rav Shlomo Breur asks, what do Chaza"l learn out from the expression "m'ZEH u-m'ZEH hem Kesuvim"? The Gemara in Shabbos teaches that the commandments were written on the tablets with a miraculous script. It was not, as we would imagine that they were inscribed on one side and came through on the backside, backwards; rather, you could read the writing just the same from either side -- even though the writing penetrated all the way through the stone. There was no "reverse" side to the tablets. Both sides were miraculously readable in exactly the same fashion. There is a tremendous symbolism in this. Our Rabbis are telling us something about Torah. Every commodity in the world, even those that are very positive, has a "flip side". There is always the negative side to consider. The Torah however, has no reverse side. "There is no Good, other than Torah", our Rabbis tell us. Torah is a commodity which is totally good; no flip sides; no drawbacks. This is what Chaza"l mean to convey by linking the Tablets to the gifts of the Princes. There is a "Good" in the world which everybody says is Good, but we all know its drawbacks. This is Wealth. Wealth is wonderful, one can accomplish so much with wealth. However, we all know that wealth has its flip side. The verse tells us "With pain (b'etsev) you will give birth" [Bereshis 3:16] -- the curse of labor pains, for women. But there is something even worse -- the curse that G-d gave mankind -- "With strong pain (b'etsavon) you will eat" [Bereshis 3:17] -- this is the curse of having to make a living (Parnasah). A woman has a baby and the labor pains cease; but the pains of Parnasah never stop! You make money, you need more money. One who has \$100, wishes \$200. You make your first million, you want to make your second million. "No one dies having achieved even half of his desires". You make your second million, you have to make 10 million. You have 10 million, you sit and worry if the prime is going to go up or down one-half percent. To me, it does not matter that much if the prime goes up or down a half percent. But if one has \$10,000,000, a quarter of a point makes all the difference in the world. This is what the verse means "With strong pain (b'etsavon) you will eat". It is not like labor pains that come and then stop. The pain of Parnasah goes on and on. There is one type of Wealth, however, that has no flip side. What type of wealth is that? "The Wealth of the L-rd, that will enrich" [Mishlei 10:22]. When G-d gives you wealth, this will make you wealthy. And the verse concludes "v'lo yosif etzev". Meaning that there is such a Wealth that does not have this Etsavon (pain) attached to it. That is the Blessing of G-d. When a person perceives his wealth as coming directly from G-d and the person therefore realizes that he must use this wealth for the sake of G-d, that is a Blessing from G-d, that will truly enrich him. Where do we see such wealth that does not have a flip-side? We see this wealth by the chapter of the Princes. Princes who are blessed with wealth but who turn around and donate it to the Service of G-d, to the Mishkan, they truly possessed a Wealth with no flip-side. This is the linkage of the Medrash between the gifts of the Princes and the Tablets of the Covenant -- Through and through the same thing, totally positive, with no flip-side.

Transcribed by David Twersky; Seattle, Washington twerskyd@scn.org
RavFrاند, Copyright (c) 1996 by Rabbi Y. Frand and Project Genesis, Inc.
the Jewish Learning Network. Project Genesis, the Jewish Learning Network
learn@torah.org P.O. Box 1230 Spring Valley, NY 10977 (914)
356-3040

Ask the Rabb - #107 Ask The Rabbi 1 June 1996 Issue #107
This Issue Contains: 1. Water on Tap Ohr Somayach
Sharona Shapiro <mshapiro@pluto.mscc.huji.ac.il> wrote: >Dear Rabbi: >I have never used this forum before but I understand that you give answers >to halachic questions. Here is mine: I have a Brita water filter >pitcher. Can I refill it on Shabbat and allow the water to go through the >filter? Thank you very much and tizku l'mitzvot. * * * * *
>Dear Sharona Shapiro, As you know, there are 39 categories of creative activity forbidden on Shabbat. One of them is borer -- selecting one type of food or object from a mixture. Pouring wine or water through a cloth in order to strain out sediments or dirt is an example of borer. But let's say for

example you have a full glass of wine, and you only want to drink half. So you pour half back into the bottle. All you've done is to separate 'wine' from 'wine.' This is not an example of borer, since there was no 'mixture' to begin with. So too in the case of a water filter. Most people looking at a glass of clean tap water see nothing but pure water. Even though we all know it's full of impurities, we accept it and drink it as is. Since we don't view it as a 'mixture' of water and impurities, the impurities are therefore considered part of the liquid itself. It's therefore OK to run it through a water filter. This is true for most people. However, if you personally would never drink the water without filtering it, then for you the impurities can't be considered part of the liquid; filtering them would be borer. Neither may someone else filter the water for you; but if someone filters water for himself, you may drink it. Sources: o Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chaim 319:10 o Ibid. Bi'ur Halacha "Ho'el"

Ask The Rabbi is written at Ohr Somayach Institutions / Tanenbaum College, Jerusalem, Israel. General Editor: Rabbi Moshe Newman Production Design: Lev Seltzer (C) 1996 Ohr Somayach International - All rights reserved.

DRASHA PARSHAS NASO -- PLAY IT AGAIN, SCHLOOMIEL
PARSHAS NASO PLAY IT AGAIN, SCHLOOMIEL 5/31/96 Volume 2
Issue 35

by Rabbi Mordechai Kamenetzky

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 end of the parsha discusses the dedication of the Mishkan (Tabernacle). It describes the offerings that every Nasi (prince) brought in honor of the auspicious occasion. Each Nasi brought the same items. Numbers 7:12: "On the first day, Nachshon the son of Aminadav brought his offering. It was (comprised of) one silver bowl that weighed a hundred and thirty shekels; one silver basin that weighed seventy shekels. Both were filled with fine flour and oil. One golden ladle filled with incense. A young bull, a ram, a sheep, and so on." The Torah uses six verses to expound, in precise detail, the exact measurements and components of the offering. On the second day, Nesanel ben Tzuar of the tribe of Yissachar brought the exact same offering. On the third day Eliyav of Zevulun performed the same ceremony. Elitzoor ben Shdayoor of Reuvain repeated the same ritual on the fourth day, and on the fifth day of the dedication, Shimon's prince Schloomiel, repeated the same. This was repeated twelve separate days, by twelve different N'siim (princes). And each day the Torah repeats verbatim the entire offering, changing only the name of the presenter and his tribe. Normally, the Torah is concise and abbreviated. It leaves us to expound the hidden and to deduce the conclusions. In fact, the two Talmudic Tractates that explain the intricate laws of marriage and divorce are derived from only a handful of verses in Deuteronomy. Why, if all twelve brought the exact same gifts, 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: "one silver bowl that weighed a hundred and thirty shekels one silver basin that weighed seventy shekels filled with fine flour and oil. One golden ladle filled with incense a young bull, a ram, a sheep, and so on." Next, the Torah should list the names of the twelve princes who brought the offerings. The first day Nachshon of Yehudah; the second day Nesanel of Yissachar; and so on. That way, seventy verses would be compacted into no more than ten or fifteen! And Parshas Naso would be fifty verses shorter. A noted American Rabbi was invited to address two major cities in South Africa. Since the cities were hundreds of miles apart, he only prepared one speech for both events. It was a wonderful lecture. It encompassed a wide spectrum of Jewish ideas and was filled with Midrash and Jewish law. Informative, enlightening and entertaining, it was the best speech he had ever prepared. The first night's audience attested to that. They sat with their mouths open, taking in every nuance and motion of the dramatic presentation. After the lecture a crowd gathered around the Rabbi to both praise him and hear variations on his poignant theme. After such a wonderful reception, the Rabbi thought that the second evening on the other side of the country should be a breeze. As he walked up to the podium to deliver his magnum opus he looked at the crowd and froze. He spotted at

least fifty faces of people he was sure had attended the previous night's speech. Stunned, he quickly ruffled through the index cards of his mind. He pieced together parts of an old High Holy Day speech, added little from Chanuka, Purim, and the Hagadah. What resulted was a scattered array of varying thoughts. To say the least, it was not his best performance. After the speech the same faces of the previous evening gathered once again around the Rabbi. "I'm sorry," he stammered to them, "I had originally planned to repeat last night's speech. Seeing your faces, I hastily arranged a piecemeal lecture based on some previous talks. Had I known you were coming, I would have prepared a totally new talk. I am 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 to hear it over again word for word!" 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. They are all beloved and cherished. Day after day after day. Hashem wants to hear and see the exact same prayer, blessing charitable action over and over again. It is as dear as the first time. Good Shabbos! by Rabbi Mordechai Kamenetzky Yeshiva of South Shore 516-328-2490

Fax 516-569-7954 Mordechai Kamenetzky Ateres@pppmail.nyser.net
Drasha, Copyright (c) 1996 by Rabbi M. Kamenetzky and Project Genesis, Inc. Rabbi Mordechai Kamenetzky is the Rosh Mesivta at Mesivta Ateres Yaakov, the High School Division of Yeshiva of South Shore.
Project Genesis, the Jewish Learning Network learn@torah.org P.O. Box 1230 <http://www.torah.org/> Spring Valley, NY 10977 (914) 356-3040

YESHIVAT HAR ETZION VIRTUAL BEIT MIDRASH PROJECT(VBM)
STUDENT SUMMARIES OF SICHOT DELIVERED BY THE ROSHEI
YESHIVA PARASHAT NASO

SICHA OF HARAV AMITAL SHLIT"A The Levite Service

Summarized by Rav Eliyahu Blumenzweig [Note: since in Israel we are reading Parashat Beha'alotekha this week, and in Chutz La-aretz Parashat Naso will be read, we are mailing sichot for both parshiot. In several weeks we will all return to reading the same parasha; until then, we will be mailing sichot for the parasha to be read in Israel. Those outside of Israel will thus get the sicha a week early, and those in Israel will get it in time.]
The tasks assigned to the Levi'im, which are detailed in our parshiot, seem to be temporary tasks, limited in their duration. However, the Levi'im in fact teach and demonstrate the paths of Divine service for all generations. The Levi'im had three principal roles in the desert: carrying, dismantling and erecting the mishkan; guarding the mishkan and singing; and teaching the nation Torah ("They teach your judgements to Ya'akov").
The first task - carrying the mishkan - exemplifies and characterizes the nature of the Levite service. They are responsible for carrying the place where the Shekhina is revealed, bearing this holy site and building this edifice at each station. With each journey the nation reaches a new destination, each complete with its own new environment and new challenges. In each place they build this holy edifice. While the Kohanim are responsible for those aspects which are static and fixed - "And the Kohanim stood in their place" (Divrei Ha-Yamim II 35:10), the Levi'im take charge of that which changes - "And the Levi'im in their divisions" (ibid.) - i.e. the various different situations, places and times. At the same time, despite the feeling of transition and change, they are commanded to build the edifice each time as a permanent and eternal building.
"If a matter for judgement be beyond you... you shall come to the Kohanim and the Levi'im... and they shall tell you the judgement" (Devarim 17:8-9). The Kohanim teach God's judgements, while the Levi'im "caused the people to understand the Torah" (Nechemia 8:7) - they explain the words of Torah to the masses, facilitating the acquisition of Torah by the nation as a whole, each person according to his ability and capacity.
From here we can understand the nature of their second task, too - that of guarding. The Levi'im guard the mishkan from outside forces. These forces change and renew themselves from time to time, and the Levi'im are continually forced to deal with new currents, to fight new battles and to approach new challenges.

We tend to believe that not every task uplifts its performer. With regard to those who carried the aron (ark), the Torah teaches us that the aron "carried its bearers" - their work uplifts them; their task elevates them, advances and develops them. But when it comes to the other associated tasks, much physical effort is required, and one may fear that the task limits and blocks the possibility of spiritual elevation. God's command at the beginning of the parasha comes to combat this conception: "And God spoke to Moshe saying, 'Count ("naso" - literally, "lift up") the number ("rosh" - literally, "head") of the sons of Gershon, them too...' - they, too, lift their heads proudly. The most important thing is the readiness to perform any task and any job, with the recognition that this is holy work. With such an attitude - one of readiness to perform work which would seemingly represent an obstacle to development and personal progress - every task elevates. This attitude in Divine service is particularly emphasized in the service of the Levi'im. We are taught that a Levi who was supposed to sing, but chose to guard the gates because he felt that the job of singing was too elevated for him, was deserving of death; and a Levi who accepted all the mitzvot pertaining to the Levi'im except for one, was not accepted. In a famous passage at the end of Hilkhot Shemitta ve- Yovel (13:13), the Rambam writes: "And not only the tribe of Levi, but any individual in the world whose spirit and understanding drive him to separate himself in order to serve God and to know God, and who walks straight as the Lord made him, and removes from himself the yoke of all the various mortal concerns - this person is sanctified as Holy of Holies, and God will be his portion and his inheritance for ever and ever, for all eternity. And God will cause him to receive all that he requires in this world, as He did for the Kohanim and Levi'im."

Anyone who wishes to join in Divine Service in fact enlists in the ranks of the Levi'im, and must learn from them how the task is to be performed. (Originally delivered on Leil Shabbat Parashat Naso 5733. Translated by Kaeren Fish.)

Bircas Hatorah <bircas@jer1.co.il> Weekly Words of Torah from Bircas H... Selected, translated and arranged by Rabbi Dov Rabinowitz Nasso "All the days that he is a nazir, he is sanctified to HaShem" (6,8) The Meshech Chochma explains that we should not imagine that (the nazir) is only sanctified with regard to his actions, but he himself (with regard to his intrinsic disposition) is not holy. For this reason, the Torah tells us "All the days that he is a nazir, he is sanctified to HaShem" (to stress that) he becomes sanctified in his very nature, and (aspires) to a higher (spiritual) level. Since he is separated from his (physical) cravings and removed from superfluous (luxuries), and is careful not to transgress, even his material (existence) becomes refined, and his quintessential fabric is exalted. That is why "when a person dies unexpectedly in his proximity" (6,9) and "unexpectedly" indicates that he did not have to (suspect and) take precautions to avoid it, ... "and he shall bring two doves... and the Cohen will offer ... and will atone for him for having transgressed with regard to (the desecration of his sanctity as a result of) the dead person." (6,10 & 11). Since he is sanctified and exalted, he has to bring an atonement for the incident that someone died in his proximity (and defiled him). This is comparable to what our Sages explained with regard to a person who murders unintentionally that he must remain (in his city of exile) until the Cohen Gadol dies because (the Cohen Gadol) should have prayed (that such a disaster would not occur in) his generation, and he did not. (Makkos 11a) The nazir is on a similar level to the Cohen Gadol ... (so he too should have prayed that such an event would not occur); this is the meaning of "for having transgressed with regard to ... the dead person." Another facet (of this concept is recounted there in Makkos) that it occurred that a lion ate someone at a distance of three parsas from (where) Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi (was), and Eliyahu Hanavi did not talk to him (for the next three days.)

 "And afterwards the nazir may drink wine." (6,20) The Chasam Sofer explains that HaShem guarantees that after a person becomes a nazir for the sake of HaShem, having assessed and judged himself that he was in need of self-deprivation (in order to aspire to self-enhancement), then after (completing his regimen) he can (safely) drink wine (and it will not detract

from his attainments.)

"dmgreen@michiana.org (Dovid Green)"dvar Torah@torah.org"
 Parshas Naso To: Dvar Torah <dvar Torah@torah.org> From: Rabbi Mordechai Perlman <aw004@freenet.toronto.on.ca> Subject: Parshas Naso Life's Struggle

"Why is the section of the *Nazir and placed next to the section dealing with the woman suspected of adultery (Sotah)? To tell you that one who sees an adulterous woman in her disgrace ought to separate himself from wine which brings to acts of adultery." (Rashi s.v. Ki Yafli)
 Let us picture for a moment the scene in the Bais Hamikdash (Temple). A woman is brought to the Kohen (priest) on suspicion of sharing herself immorally with another man. The Kohen makes the woman swear that she is innocent and thereby pronounce judgement upon herself should she be lying. The Kohen writes the curses on a parchment and then dissolves the ink used to write these curses, in water. The woman is forced to drink this concoction. If she is in fact guilty, upon drinking this seemingly innocuous solution, she dies a horrible and agonizing death.

Any witnesses to this tragic incident, upon viewing this spectacle, (which inevitably included a viewing of the woman in an uncovered state), perhaps thrashing in the throes of a torturous death, are urged by Hashem to strengthen their spiritual connection to Hashem (G-d) which may have become temporarily weakened through this unnatural display of Divine justice.

Rav Shmuel Kamenetsky sh'lita, Rosh HaYeshiva (Dean) of the Philadelphia Yeshiva asks a most penetrating question. The B'nei Yisroel (Jews) were standing on the bank of the Sea of Reeds, with the swiftly flowing sea directly in front of them and the raging army of Egyptians to their rear, all contemplating the certain natural outcome of the situation unfolding before their very eyes. Suddenly, Hashem showed Himself to be the ever-guiding force in their lives by performing an awesome public miracle, rescuing them from their dire predicament, redeeming their lives and punishing their oppressors.

Upon witnessing this overwhelming turn of events, they came to a level of faith in Hashem which wasn't merely intellectual. An intellectual faith they already possessed while still living in Egypt and after witnessing the plagues visited upon the Egyptians. However, at this juncture they arrived at a level of faith in Hashem which had an effect on their senses, enveloped their hearts, filled their minds, and struck deep into the very marrow of their bones.

Similarly, when a person beheld this manifestation of Hashem's justice discharged upon this sinful woman in terrifying detail exactly as predicted in the Torah, he was observing an open miracle of the magnitude of the splitting of the Sea of Reeds in miniature. Surely this frightening event would inspire him to bind himself with iron cords to Hashem as well as warn him of Hashem's retribution for gross immoral behaviour. Is he really required to deprive himself of wine? Can his momentary sighting of the woman's shame and consequent fleeting immoral thought cause him to be influenced into allowing himself to carry his thoughts over to imitate this wicked woman's actions? Isn't this encounter surely sufficient to dispel any such notions? The explanation can be understood clearly by way of the following story. Many years ago in a shtetl, a small town somewhere in Europe, lived a small Jewish community. The members were humble folk serving their Creator with simple faith. One Shabbos it was announced that on Sunday a maggid (Jewish Preacher) would come to town and would address them. The townspeople looked forward enthusiastically to the maggid's coming and it seemed that even the beloved Shabbos could not pass quickly enough. The thought of the maggid brought forth from the mouths of the elderly the recounting of their experience the last time the maggid arrived.

However, the town's leaders were beset by a slight dilemma. Since every member of the community was sure to be there from the very young to very old, the large crowd precluded holding the maggid's oration in any structure in town. Therefore, it was decided that the discourse would be held in the field just on the edge of town. Early Sunday morning, people could be seen bringing benches and chairs out to the field, some people having camped in the field overnight to assure themselves of the best seats.

Just before the maggid began to speak, a fellow was seen riding his horse through the field on his way into town. Having been away for Shabbos, he had been unaware of the momentous occasion and therefore had no chair prepared. He quickly dismounted and tied his horse to a tree and sat on the ground. The maggid began to speak. He made the populace laugh and cry, and aroused all of their emotions in between. When the maggid concluded his discourse every member of the assembly was affected and inspired. They were all influenced in some way. However, one question remains. What about the horse? Was it also affected? Was it influenced to strive to greater devotion to its Creator or at least to its master? The answer of course is in the negative. After all, a horse has no intellect that can be influenced in this way. A Jew is made up of two separate, distinct parts. He is a unit comprised of a malach (angel) and a horse. The n'shama (soul) of a Jew, his spiritual component, is like an angel. In fact, it can reach levels even unattainable by angels. His body, the material component, is like a horse. This creation of these two opposites are never at rest. The two extremes are really at war with one another. The spiritual side of a Jew pulls him every moment towards more glorious heights of attachment to Hashem. The material side constantly strives to pull him down to greater physicality and hedonism.

Undoubtedly, witnessing the **Sotah** die in such a ghastly manner serves to strengthen his spiritual energies. However, when watching the woman in her shame, he can come to immoral thoughts. Which drive will be victorious? Since we cannot leave the possibility to chance that the horse in him will gain ascendancy over the angel within him, he must endeavour to be as energetic as possible to reinforce his n'shama. Hashem's advice is clear. He should become a nazir. The lessons inculcated in him through his further experience as a nazir together with his abstinence from wine will serve him well in that never-ending war of wills and will ensure his n'shama success in its quest for mastery over his physical impulses. Good Shabbos! Mordechai Perlman DvarTorah, Copyright (c) 1996 Project Genesis, Inc. This list is part of Project Genesis, the Jewish Learning Network Project Genesis, the Jewish Learning Network learn@torah.org P.O. Box 1230 http://www.torah.org/Spring Valley, NY 10977 (914) 356-3040

"Project Genesis <genesis@j51.com>" "lifeline@torah.org"
Project Genesis LifeLine - "It is a tree of life to all who cling to it." D'var Torah and News from Project Genesis - learn@torah.org - www.torah.org Volume III, Number 33 - Naso

PROJECT GENESIS: 7000 SUBSCRIBERS, AND GROWING!
"And it was on the day that Moshe completed the construction of the Tabernacle... that the princes of Israel, the heads of the parental houses, who were the princes of the tribes... they brought their offering before G-d, six covered wagons and twelve oxen, each wagon for two princes and one ox for each, and they brought them before the Tabernacle." [7:1-3] Rashi quotes the following Medrash: "Rebbe Nossan asked, why did the princes decide to donate first [before the rest of the nation] at this point, while in the case of the building of the Tabernacle they did not give first? Rather, this is what the princes said: 'Let the congregation give what they will give, and whatever is missing, we will complete.' Since they saw that the congregation completed everything, as it says [Ex. 36:7], 'And the labor was sufficient...', they asked, 'Now what is left for us to do?' They brought the precious stones for the cape and breastplate [of the High Priest, because nothing else was left]. Therefore, here they gave first." I see two lessons in this Medrash. First of all, we see the importance of zeal - moving forward quickly and energetically instead of being lazy. We are studying "The Trait of Zeal" in the Ramchal class right now, because this is the first requirement for positive action on the path towards growth. In The Path of the Just, the Ramchal follows the path set by Rebbe Pinchas ben Yair in the Talmud [Avoda Zara 20b]: "Torah brings a person to caution, caution brings to zeal, zeal brings to [spiritual] cleanliness..." First we studied caution, which helps us to avoid negative actions (Aveiros). The next step is zeal, which demands that we immediately do positive actions (Mitzvos) whenever one comes to our hands. "Zrizus" is not merely energy, but the desire to act quickly in a very focused direction. I wonder what it says about our society when there really is no word for this trait, save one that is most often used to describe irrational extremists... In any case, the princes failed to act immediately when the Tabernacle was

constructed. It appears that they were being extremely generous - "whatever is missing, we will complete" - but there was a bit of laziness, a failure to act, in their proposal, so they nearly missed the chance to participate. The second lesson: they learned from their mistake. The princes weren't perfect, because no one is perfect. But they saw what happened, and responded to ensure that it wouldn't happen again - so that they would not lose their opportunity to participate in future Mitzvos. Perhaps their ability to so quickly correct themselves is one reason why they merited to be the princes of Israel! Good Shabbos, Rabbi Yaakov Menken

Project Genesis, the Jewish Learning Network P.O. Box 1230
http://www.torah.org/Spring Valley, NY 10977 (914) 356-3040 FAX:
356-6722

B"H Torah Studies Adaptation of Likutei Sichos
by Rabbi Dr. Jonathan Sacks Chief Rabbi of Great Britain
Based on the teachings and talks of the Lubavitcher Rebbe
Rabbi Menachem M. Schneerson on the weekly Torah Portion
Naso

Our Sidra includes the details of the procedure through which a Sotah had to pass: That is, a woman suspected by her husband of adultery in a case where there were no witnesses.

A phrase used in this context, "if any man's wife goes aside," is quoted by the Talmud to support the statement that "a person does not commit a transgression unless the spirit of folly enters him."

The connection between them, superficially, lies in a play of words, the similarity in Hebrew between the words for "folly" and for "goes aside."

But the Rebbe searches out a deeper parallel, resting on the traditional image which sees the relationship between the Jewish people and G-d as one of marriage, and hence sees sin as a kind of infidelity. Its theme is the implication of this image for the Jew.

SIN AND THE SPIRIT OF FOLLY

There is a statement in the Talmud that "a person does not commit a transgression unless the spirit of folly enters him," and the text which is cited in support is a phrase from our Sidra, "If any man's wife goes aside."

The previous Lubavitcher Rebbe, Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak, in explaining the nature of folly, also makes use of the same phrase.

What is the connection between them? Why is adultery, of all the many transgressions, the one that most conclusively shows that sin is always irrational?

Neither in the Talmud nor in Chassidut are texts quoted for their own sake or to make a show of learning. They are chosen with precision, to make the most comprehensive case.

In this instance, there is a superficial reason.

There is a verbal similarity between "goes aside" (tisteh) and "folly" (shetut). But this does not entirely remove our puzzlement. Why quote a text at all?

Many Rabbinic aphorisms are not "derived" from a Biblical text in this way. There must be some deeper connection, not apparent at first sight, between adultery and sin in general.

There is an added difficulty.

Adultery is a very grave sin, carrying the death penalty. For someone to commit it is obviously irrational. There could be no grounds for choosing to do an act with such consequences.

But the Talmudic saying was intended to apply to all sins, to the most minute detail of Rabbinic law, and even to a permitted act which was not done for the sake of Heaven.

In however slight a way a man turns his back on G-d, the saying applies: It is an act of folly. So how can we prove the folly of a minor sin from the obvious folly of a major one?

SIN AS INFIDELITY

The answer is that adultery is the prototype of all sins, and this is so in two ways.

Firstly, the sin of adultery in Jewish law applies only if the woman concerned is married. A single woman cannot be guilty of it. Hence the

phrase, "If any man's wife goes astray." But the Jewish people as a whole are regarded as the "wife" of G-d.

The bond forged between them at Sinai was like a marriage. And so every time a Jew commits a sin, however slight, he is betraying the covenant, the "marriage contract" between himself and G-d. He is guilty of spiritual adultery, unfaithfulness to his Divine partner.

The Zohar relates: A philosopher once asked Rabbi Eliezer: If the Jews are the chosen people, how is it that they are the weakest of the nations?

Rabbi Eliezer replied: Such is their fate. Because they are chosen, they cannot tolerate any faults, either spiritual or material. Because of their special spiritual vocation, what is pardonable in others is a sin in them. And like the heart - the most sensitive and vital of the body's organs - the slightest tremor or faltering is of life and death significance.

This, then, is the connection between our verse about a wife's unfaithfulness and the maxim about the spirit of folly.

Between the Jewish people and G-d is a bond of eternal mutual loyalty, a marriage of which G-d is the male, the initiating partner, and we the female, the keepers of the faith. Even exile is not a separation, a divorce.

It is recorded in the Talmud that the prophet Isaiah told ten men to "Return and repent." They answered, "If a master sells his slave or a husband divorces his wife, does one have a claim on the other?" (In other words they argued that with the Babylonian exile G-d had effectively divorced Himself from His people and had no further claim to their obedience.)

The Holy One, blessed be He, then said to the prophet: "Thus said the L-rd, Where is the bill of your mother's divorcement, whom I have put away, or which of My creditors is it to whom I have sold you? Behold, for your iniquities you have sold yourselves, and for your transgressions is your mother put away."

In this way, it is certain that even in the temporary separation of exile, G-d will not take another people for His chosen.

If so, then since the faithfulness of a wife lies in her compliance to her husband's desires, when a Jew commits even a slight transgression or even a permitted but self-centered act, it is a gesture of unfaithfulness and betrayal of the Holy Wedding at Sinai. This is why the statement of the folly of sin - every sin - is followed by the phrase from our Sidra, less as a proof than an explanation. How is it that even a trivial sin is folly? Because it brings about a severing of the link between man and G-d. Why does it do so? Because it is an act of infidelity intervening in the marriage between G-d and the Jew.

SIN AS A PASSING MOMENT

The second connection between the two statements is this: The phrase "if any man's wife goes aside" does not apply to the certain, but merely to the suspected, adulterer; where there were no witnesses to the supposed act, and it was "hidden from the eyes of her husband." This suspicion by itself makes her liable to bring an offering of barley, which was an animal food, a humiliation in keeping with the nature of her supposed offense.

The whole procedure is difficult to understand.

If the charge against her is only based on suspicion, not proven fact, can we not rely on the presumption that most Jewish wives are faithful, and dismiss the charge? The answer is that so high are the standards of fidelity which the Torah sets for Jewish wives, that it is culpable even to lay oneself open to suspicion.

However, this stigma is short-lived. If, after the procedure for deciding whether the suspicion was well-founded, she is deemed innocent, she returns to her husband untainted; "she shall be cleared and shall conceive seed."

And this, too, is the case with the Jew who, in a spirit of folly, commits a sin. The breach he opens up between himself and G-d is only a temporary one, and in the last analysis, "My glory (that is, the G-dly spark within every Jew) I will not give to another."

No Jew is ever so distant from G-d that he cannot return, untainted

and pure.

This is the second connection: Just as a wife suspected by her husband is only temporarily displaced from her marital closeness, so is the separation from G-d which a sin creates, only a passing moment.

THE FRUITFULNESS OF RETURN

Even though it is true that someone who attaches significance to things independently of G-d denies G-d's unity, and while contemplating his sins he may fall into the despair of thinking "the L-rd has forsaken me and my L-rd has forgotten me," he must remember that he can always recover his closeness to G-d.

More than this, he must remember a third resemblance between the woman suspected of adultery, and the sinner in general.

If she is declared innocent, not only is she cleared of any stain on her character; she shall return to her husband "and shall conceive seed."

This means that if she has previously given birth with difficulty, now she will do so with ease; if she has borne girls, she will have sons as well; one authority maintains that she will bear children even if beforehand she was barren.

This hope lies before the person who has sinned. He must not fall prey to melancholy or despair. For G-d has said, "My glory I will not give to another." And when he returns to G-d he too will be fruitful. He will rise to the love and fear of G-d. He will work towards true closeness, until "husband and wife are united," and the presence of the Divine is revealed in his soul. This is his personal redemption: a preface to the collective redemption which is the Messianic Age.

(Source: Likkutei Sichot, Vol. II, pp. 311-314)

From jr@sco.COM Fri May 31 03:46:57 1996

Received: from sco.sco.COM (sco.sco.COM [132.147.128.9]) by shamash.org (8.7.1/8.6.12) with SMTP id DAA25993 for

<mj-ravtorah@shamash.org>; Fri, 31 May 1996 03:46:53 -0400 (EDT)
Received: from jade.newjersey.sco.com by sco.sco.COM id aa14351;
31 May 96 0:49 PDT

From: Josh Rapps <jr@sco.COM>

X-Mailer: SCO OpenServer Mail Release 5.0

To: mj-ravtorah@shamash.org

Subject: Shiur HaRav Soloveichil on Parshas Naso

Date: Fri, 31 May 96 3:48:55 EDT

Message-ID: <9605310349.aa26428@jade.newjersey.sco.com>

naso

Shiur HaRav Soloveichik ZTL on Parshas Naso

The Rav noted that though Parshas Naso contains several different themes, the Haftarah deals with the topic of Nezirus, specifically with the Nezirus Shimshon. The Rav analyzed the connection between Parshas Naso and Nezirus Shimshon.

Shimshon was one of the judges, Shoftim, of B'nei Yisrael. He was the only judge that Hashem demanded of him Nezirus. Not only was Shimshon forbidden to drink wine and eat unclean foods, his mother was forbidden to eat them as well throughout her pregnancy and birth of Shimshon, as Shimshon was to be a Nazir from conception, Nazir Mibeten.

The Malbim comments that Manoach requested that the angel should return and instruct him what to do with the child that would be born to him. We find that when Manoach's wife recounts her encounter with the angel she only mentions those things that she was forbidden to do, such as being forbidden to drink wine and grape derived products and to eat unclean (Tamay) items. She does not mention the specific restrictions that apply to the child, such as the child is forbidden

to ever cut his hair. The angel returns and tells Manoach that that the child was restricted from whatever he mentioned to his wife: to refrain from eating

and drinking wine and grape products and unclean items and that the child shall never cut his hair. This last aspect was new to Manoach. He was told that the Nezirus of Shimshon was special from all other Nezirus. Usually a Nazir is restricted in 3 areas: drinking wine; defiling himself through touching an item that is Tamay, e.g. touching a corpse; cutting his hair. Shimshon was only forbidden to cut his hair and drink wine. The permanent ban on cutting Shimshon's hair was not mentioned to Manoach by his wife until the angel appeared to them a second time. Shimshon's Nezirus was unique and made him unique as well, as he mentioned to Delilah that if his hair was to be cut he would lose his unique Kedusha, and be like any other man, without his special gifts and strength.

The Rav raised the question as to why was Shimshon singled out as the only Shofet that was required to be a Nazir from cradle to grave? The Rav answered this by noting the difference between Shimshon and all the other Judges. All the other Judges, as well as the Kings of Israel and the High Priests, were sanctified either with Shemen Hamishcha, the anointing oil, or when there was no Shemen Hamishcha, they were consecrated through fulfilling the required tasks associated with their appointed roles. The Shoftim were characterized by their leadership of the people in various campaigns, yet they were always joined by members of the other tribes in their campaigns (e.g. Gideon). They had a "Heskem Hatzibbur", an acknowledgement of their leadership expressed by the participation of the people in their battles. This consecration via "popular acclamation" granted a certain Kedusha to the Shofet. Shimshon acted alone, without the help and assistance of his fellow Jews. What sanctified Shimshon and granted him his special status as Judge? What provided him with the special powers and abilities far beyond those of normal men to kill 10,000 Phillistines at a time? It was his status as a Nazir, his hair that was unique and immediately recognizable, that was the symbol of his uniqueness and selection as Shofet. It also was the medium that consecrated him as a unique Shofet, one who acted as an individual without the assistance of the rest of the Jewish People.

It is noteworthy that when Shimshon revealed the source of his strength to Delilah, he mentioned that as a Nazir he was forbidden to cut his hair, and were he to cut his hair he would be rendered weak as a normal man. Why did Shimshon neglect to mention that as a Nazir he was also forbidden to drink wine? Because the central defining characteristic of a Nazir is his hair, Ki Nezer Elokav Al Rosho. In fact the, the hair of a Nazir who has completed his Nezirus is to be burned on the altar and it is forbidden to derive any benefit from it. That is why Shimshon told Delilah that his power derives from his hair as the symbol of his Kedusha. As long as he or any leader of a generation retains their aspect of Kedusha that identifies them as a leader they will be victorious.

(The Rav noted that this applies to leaders in our generation as well. They must appreciate and distinguish themselves through Kedusha. If one attempts to lead without appreciating this special Kedusha, they become like Shimshon after his hair was cut. Shimshon went out to battle the Philistines as he always did, yet he did not realize that Hashem had left him. Leaders who have been successful in confronting our enemies, often forget that their mandate derives from the special Kedusha. If they fail to maintain that Kedusha, their attempts to confront the Philistines of today and be successful as they were in the past will not be rewarded.)

In addition to his great strength, Shimshon possessed other "magical" powers that enabled him to kill so many of his enemies. Apparently they were mesmerized by him and panicked to a degree that they could not escape him. His mysterious spiritual power could be described as a magical aura that surrounded him in battle. The Philistines recognized that they were facing someone who possessed something that went beyond great physical strength. They were unable to vanquish him in battle and they were also unable to escape from him as well. The aura that surrounded him instilled fear and paralyzed his enemies. According to Chazal the secret of his aura was his Nezirus as symbolized by his hair, Ki Nezer Elokav Al Rosho. The Philistines enlisted Delilah in an attempt to discover the secret of his aura,

Bameh Kocho Gadol. Shimshon explained to Delilah that through his hair he maintains the Kedusha that makes him special, that makes him a Shofet. Without his hair he becomes like any other man, weak without the special aura that strikes fear in the heart of his enemies. Shimshon's hair functioned like the Tefillin Shel Rosh does for all Jews: "And all the nations of the world shall see that the name of Hashem is upon you and they shall fear you". (The Rav noted that a similar paralysis was obvious in the 6 Day War in 1967, when the Arab armies were overcome by fear and fled in panic before the Israeli Army. This was a manifestation of the special Kedusha that Bnay Yisrael have. However if the leaders of the state want it to become like the other nations of the world, they will relinquish the special Kedusha that makes Eretz Yisrael unique and strikes fear in the hearts of our enemies.)

The Rav noted that one of the important messages in Parshas Naso is to be found in the verse that Vlivnay Kehas Lo Nasan Ki Avodas Hakodesh Alayhem Bakasef Yisau. (Bnay Kehas were responsible for carrying on their shoulders the holy objects of the Ohel Moed.) The power of the Jew rests in the fact that he is willing to carry the Holy Ark on his shoulders for all to see. This symbolizes the Kedusha that is inherent in Bnay Yisrael.

This summary is Copyright 1996 by Dr. Israel Rivkin and Josh Rapps, Edison, N.J. Permission to reprint and distribute, with this notice, is hereby granted. These summaries are based on notes taken by Dr. Rivkin at the weekly Moriah Shiur given by Moraynu V'Rabbeinu Harav Yosef Dov Halevi Soloveichik ZTL over many years. You can subscribe electronically to receive these Divrei Torah by sending mail to listproc@shamash.org with the following message:

subscribe mj-ravtorah yourfirstname yourlastname.