

INTERNET PARSHA SHEET
ON NASO - 5760

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From: RABBI YISSOCHER FRAND [SMTP:ryfrand@torah.org]

"RavFrاند" List - Rabbi Frاند on Parshas Naso -

These divrei Torah were adapted from the hashkafa portion of Rabbi Yissocher Frand's Commuter Chavrusah Tapes on the weekly portion: Tape # 241, Yichud And the Housekeeper. Good Shabbos!

Calling Torah "Shira" Is Allowed; Calling It "Zimrah" Is Not Allowed

A pasuk [verse] at the beginning of Parshas Naso defines the varying duties of the different families of Levi. The job given to the family of Kehas was to carry the Aron HaKodesh [the holy Ark] on their shoulders during travel.

The Talmud [Sotah 35] discusses an incident in the book of Shmuel when King Dovid ordered that the Ark be transported by wagon. This was contrary to halacha. An incident occurred where the Aron almost fell off the wagon. Uzza reached up to try and save it from falling, and he was killed on the spot. The Talmud says that this punishment befell King Dovid because he referred to the words of Torah as 'Zemiros' (songs), as it is written "Your statutes were like songs (Zemiros) to me" [Tehillim 119:54]. (Rash"i explains that when Dovid was fleeing from King Shaul and was leading a tension-filled existence "on the run", he was able to achieve 'playful enjoyment' in the words of Torah and they served to calm him down, like a soothing song.)

G-d responded, as it were, "About my Torah it says 'If you blink your eye in it, you can lose it' [Mishlei 23:5], and you refer to it as a song and plaything? I will cause you to err in a matter that even young school children are aware of -- namely, the explicit verse [Bamidbar 7:9] that the Aron must only be carried on the shoulders of the family of Kehas (and not on wagons)." As a result of this 'flippancy' on King David's part he forgot this halacha, and the unfortunate death of Uzza followed.

Rav Bergman, in his work "Shaarei Orah," asks an obvious question: What is so wrong with referring to the Torah as "Sha-a-shuai", a pleasant and uplifting thing (literally, a 'play' thing)? We are all familiar, with the verse "Lulei Torashcha Sha-a-shu-ai, az avadati b'anyi" [Tehillim 119:92] (If not for Your Torah which was my plaything, I would have been overwhelmed with my suffering). We do not find anywhere that Dovid is held accountable for this statement where he refers to Torah as a plaything.

The unavoidable conclusion is that Dovid's crime in the earlier verse was not that he referred to Torah as a plaything (Sha-a-shu-ai), but that he referred to Torah as a song (Zemiros). But what is so terrible about calling Torah 'Zemiros'? I would have better understood it, if the objection was that he called Torah a plaything. That might be objectionable. Torah is not Nintendo -- it is not a game! Why is it a sin to call Torah 'Zemiros'? Moreover, the Vilna Gaon makes the question stronger: the Torah itself refers to Torah as a Song: "And you write for yourselves this Shirah [Song]" [Devorim 31:19].

The Gaon answers that there exists a tremendous difference between "Zemirah" and "Shirah". Zemirah, like the Zemiros of Shabbos, are finite. They have a beginning and end. [Kah Ribbon (a Sabbath song) starts with a Yud, it ends with a Lamed -- and it's over. All Zemiros are

B'S'Dmilar.] Shirah represents the infinite. Shirah represents the articulation and expression of feelings, which have no end and no beginning. When a person breaks out in Shirah, it is a manifestation of what his essence is all about. There is no end to that. It is not finite.

Torah can be called Shirah, but Torah can not be called Zimra. To refer to Torah as Zimra has the connotation that there can be a beginning to Torah and an end to Torah and then I would be finished with Torah. That is untrue. Torah can't be finished. Torah is Shirah -- the infinite expression of what a Jew is all about, his innermost essence. That was King Dovid's sin.

Based on this distinction, the Ponevezher Rav (Rav Yosef Kahaneman, 1886- 1969) once gave a brilliant interpretation to a famous Gemara. The Talmud [Megilla 3b] mentions that when Yehoshua was encamped during the siege of Jericho, an angel confronted him with a drawn sword. Yehoshua queried the angel as to whether he was friend or foe. The angel identified himself as follows: "I am an angel of the L-rd of Hosts; I have come now." The Talmud explains that a dialog took place. The angel informed Yehoshua that he committed two sins of negligence: (a) he did not bring the daily sacrifice that day and (b) he neglected his study of Torah that night. Yehoshua asked for which of the two sins he was being held accountable and the angel responded "I have come now" e.g. -- for the current sin, that of failing to study Torah.

Tosfos identify the linkage between the words "ATA ba'si" [I have come NOW] and the failure to study Torah, by quoting the verse "v'ATA kisvu lachem es haShirah haZos" (and NOW record for yourselves this Song -- referring to Torah) [Devorim 31:19].

The Ponevezher Rav asks why the Angel used such an obscure reference, rather than telling Yehoshua outright -- "I have come because of your failure to study Torah?" The Ponevezher Rav answers that when a person is fighting a battle and is in the middle of a siege, there are a million excuses not to learn. "I'm busy", "I'm worried", "I have things on my mind."

What is the reason why a person must continue to learn, regardless of the circumstances? Because of the phenomenon alluded to in the verse "And now write for yourselves this Shirah [Song]". Torah is a Shirah that has no beginning and no end. It has no time. It has to be learned every place and under all circumstances. It is that endless expression of what a person is supposed to be all about. Yes you are tired, and worried, and busy, and fighting a war. But "NOW I have come". There is never an excuse not to learn. Torah is not confined to time or space. It extends toward infinity, like a Shirah.

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RABBI YAAKOV NEUBURGER
Serving God Ka'asher Diber

(5:4)"And the Jews did so, and they sent them [those who were tameh, had tzora'as or were zavim] out of the camp as Hashem had told Moshe". There are many occasions in which the Torah reports that obligations were performed in accordance with Hashem's instructions, and all are appropriately noted as "ka'asher tzivah" - as Hashem commanded. However in an observation that only Rav Meir Simcha of Dvinsk could make, he notes that the pasuk quoted here is the only time in Torah where Hashem's instructions were carried out "ka'asher dibeir" -

as Hashem spoke. Throughout all of Noah's preparations for the Mabul, he is described as following the command of Hashem, "And Noah [brought all the animals into the Teivah] - ka'asher tzivah - as Hashem commanded him" (6:22). "And Avraham performed the bris on his son Yitzchak, who was eight days old ka'Easher tzivah - as Hashem commanded him" (21:4). "And they went and they [brought the korban pesach] as Moshe and Aharon were commanded (Ex12:28)". The record of the gifts that were brought for the building of the mishkan is punctuated with the refrain, ka'asher tzivah Hashem - as Hashem commanded. Why then is the reference to the mitzvah of sending some individuals who are tameh out of the camp, said to be observed ka'asher diber - as Hashem spoke.

Rav Meir Simcha in his commentary to the Torah, Meshech Chochma, answers that the word "tzivah" does not simply mean command. Rather, ka'asher tzivah implies encouragement, prodding, perhaps even demanding. Ka'Easher tzivah indicates acts of obeisance alone, which are void of any anticipation of great satisfaction and certainly empty of any self-serving consequences. Indeed Rashi at the beginning of Parshas Tzav reminds us that the very usage of "tzav" indicates that the loss of money associated with the korban olah required greater encouragement than other mitzvos. However, remarks the Meshech Chochma, sending the tameh out of the camp, was welcomed by the tameh as it would achieve kaparah, forgiveness and a reinstatement of his position in the eyes of Hashem. That did not require any additional encouragement and was carried out, "ka'asher diber," as something unceremoniously taught to Moshe, with no push or fanfare.

It would seem to me that there is another insight lurking in the Meshech Chochma's observation. Mitzvos that are observed "ka'asher tzivah", are by virtue of the added encouragement, informed with the vigor, passion and pride of one who sees oneself as doing the Creator's bidding. One can only imagine that all the misgivings that Noah had about the oncoming destruction notwithstanding, he must have been exhilarated to be chosen to ensure the survival of all that Hashem had wrought. Surely the paternal pain felt at the time of Yitzchak's bris was overwhelmed by the joy that filled Avraham, as he witnessed the continuation of all that he sought to bring into this world. There is no question that the bris was performed ka'asher tzivah. Can one doubt that the Jews leaving Egypt were joyous beyond description as they brought the Korban Pesach signaling their nascent redemption?

However there is one mitzvah that we understood on our own to carry out in a begrudging manner - "ka'asher diber", because He said so, as an act of obeisance. Asking someone to leave the camp, even if it is because he is tameh and even if he welcomes the opportunity for kaparah, is one of the hard realities of communal life that Hashem has on occasion demanded of us. The Jews understood that the manner in which this mitzvah is exercised must communicate the hesitation always inherent in distancing Jew from Jew. When a destructive attitude or a negative influence has to be separated away, it must be done with the visible pain of someone doing one's duty and devoid of the satisfaction that should otherwise highlight all service to Hashem. In so doing one remains true to the love of every Jew that must guide all interactions with others.

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Olas Shabbos beShabbato: Rabbi Eliyahu Hoffmann
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An "Uplifting" Experience

This Shabbos we read Parshas Naso, the longest Torah portion of the year. The parsha begins with a census of the families of the tribe of Levi, and by describing the various tasks that these families performed in the transportation and service of the Mishkan (Tabernacle).

Hashem spoke to Moshe, saying, "Take a census of the sons of Gershon, them too, according to their fathers' house, according to their family." [4:21-22]

A similar thought is found in many sifrei Chassidus which explain this passage homiletically. The sons of Gershon, alludes, they say, to those who feel "cut off" and detached from the Torah, from their community, and perhaps from Hashem. [The word Gershon stems from the root ger - foreigner, or gerush - divorce, estrangement.] Moshe is told: Nas es rosh bnei Gershon - Lift the heads of these Jewish children, whom, for whatever reason, feel distanced and separated from Israel.

The pasuk, they say, is a message to the leaders and educators of the Klal Yisrael never to allow any Jew to become estranged from the Torah. To the best of our abilities, we must try to detect the signs of rejection and despair, and do everything we can to make sure that everyone is given an equal chance to grow and thrive within a Torah environment.

In our times, when our educational institutions place a such great deal of emphasis on scholastic achievement in Torah-study, it is especially important to remember that not all children/students are equally gifted. The below-average student, if not given the attention he/she needs, is a prime candidate to become a "son of Gershon," discouraged and unhappy with their Yiddishkeit. If their rebbes and teachers are not sensitive to their needs, it can be devastating to their self-confidence and self-esteem.

This explanation is a lesson and a message to all of us - teachers, parents, even friends - to make sure that nobody is made to feel that they have no place among the Torah-observant community. Whatever their abilities, whatever their talents, every Jew is important and unique. If we notice a friend, a student, or even our own child, and we are concerned that they may be having feelings of rejection and distance from the Torah, we have to do our utmost to correct this by encouraging and helping them as much as we can. We must "lift up their heads" by helping them through their difficulties; and not add to their dejection by treating them harshly and insensitively.

Recently, a friend told me an amazing story which happened to him. One Friday night he was sitting in shul when his friend approached him. "I have to tell you the most amazing vort [Torah thought] which I heard from Rabbi Yechezkel Grubner of Detroit," he said. "He asked the following question: We find in the Gemara the concept of Rabo Muvhak - an intimate Rabbi. While one is obligated to show respect to any rebbi who has taught him Torah, there is a special obligation to show honour to one's rebbi muvhak, the rebbi who has taught him most of the Torah he knows. Now, in the time of the Gemara, when a student often studied with the same rebbi for many years, it would have been quite common for one to have a rebbi muvhak, from whom he had acquired the vast majority of his Torah knowledge. But nowadays, when children are educated in institutions, advancing year-by-year from one rebbi/teacher to the next, no one rebbi could truly be credited with having taught a child the majority of his Torah knowledge. So where, in our times, is the concept of rebbi muvhak to be found?"

"I'll tell you where," he said. "Sometimes a child is not enjoying his learning; he finds Talmud Torah difficult, frustrating or unenjoyable. Then along comes a friend, or a rebbi, or a parent, and takes the time and effort to sit down with him and help him along. They encourage him and study with him at his own level and pace, until the child slowly begins to acquire a love for Torah study and an appreciation of its beauty. This person, without a doubt, has the status of rabo muvhak - an intimate rebbi. After all, any Torah which he will learn from this point on will be at least in part due to the attention given to him by the one who took the time to do so."

My friend, who deals with a lot of "problem students," was very touched and encouraged by this thought. That same Friday night, just minutes later, one of the boys whom he had taught in the previous year approached him to say good Shabbos. This boy had begun the year as an

embittered, lacklustre student, but was now excelling in his studies.

"Good Shabbos Rabbi Muvhak!" he said.

My friend was taken aback! Never had he called him thus. "Why did you call me that?" he asked.

"I don't know," the boy said, "it just came into my head."

I am not an expert on the upper realms, but somehow my friend felt that this occurrence was some degree of "Heavenly consensus" to this interpretation of rebbi muvhak.

There are so many "sons of Gershon" out there waiting for someone to come along and "lift up their heads" - to stop seeing them as a problem, and to start seeing them as an unpolished jewel waiting to shine and take its place in Hashem's holy crown, along with all the other gems of Klal Yisrael. Wherever we find ourselves in life; a yeshiva bachur, a rebbi, a parent, a friend, there are always opportunities to give a little time and caring to those who still feel distanced from the Torah, and to help them to appreciate its sweetness.

Have a good Shabbos.

This week's publication is sponsored by Mr. and Mrs. Chaim Perl, in honour of the bar mitzvah of their son Moshe Yaakov.

May the Bobover Rebbe - Shlomo ben Chaya Fraydl, merit a speedy and full recovery from his illness. We ask that our readers pray for him.

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<http://www.kby.org/torah/parsha/naso.html> Parshat Naso
Nazir - Holy or Sinner?

Rosh Hayeshiva, RAV MORDECHAI GREENBERG, shlita

R. Moshe Chayyim Luzzatto (Ramchal), in his classic mussar work *Mesillat Yesharim* (ch. 13), points to apparent contradictions in Chazal's evaluation of "prishut" [self-denial]. Some statements praise self-denial, while others criticize abstinence. On the one hand, they prohibit fasting unnecessarily, saying, "Is that which the Torah prohibits not enough for you that you seek to prohibit other things?" (J. Nedarim 9:1) Similarly, they say that a person will have to give a reckoning before G-d for all permitted food that he saw and avoided eating. (J. Kiddushin 4:12) On the other hand, they say, "Anyone who fasts is considered holy, all-the-more-so for a nazir!" (Ta'anit 11a) The Ramchal cites many other sources supporting each of these seemingly contradictory sides of the issue.

The Ramchal's conclusion is that a person has to carefully weigh and measure whether each of the worldly things that he wants is really necessary for him or if it is just a luxury. He summarizes the issue as follows: "This is the rule. Anything that is not necessary for worldly needs - a person should refrain from. However, something which is necessary, for any purpose - if a person refrains from it, he is a sinner. This rule is clear, although the particular application of this rule is subject to one's judgement ... Each instance has to be evaluated on its own."

This rule, that refraining from worldly pleasures has to be evaluated based on each person's needs, is implied in the laws of the nazir. If a nazir is defiled by the sudden death of a person, he has to bring a sin offering, to atone for having sinned "al hanefesh." (Bamidbar 6:11) Our Sages ask: Regarding which "nefesh" did he sin [since the defilement was sudden and unavoidable]? R. Elazar Hakapar says, "Because he abstained from wine [and thus sinned against his own soul]." (Nedarim 10a) This explanation is difficult, since it now seems that every nazir should have to bring a sin offering! Why is it only required of a nazir who became defiled?

The Netziv (Ha'amek Davar) explains that becoming a nazir and abstaining from physical pleasures is worthwhile in order to achieve the spiritual pleasure of "dvaykut" [clinging] to G-d. However, when an misfortune occurs to a person, requiring him to halt his nezirut, it is a sign from heaven that he is not fit to be a nazir. It turns out, then, that this particular person abstained from the pleasure of wine for naught, since such abstinence was not appropriate for one on his level. He therefore requires atonement. We see, then, that one person who becomes a nazir is considered holy, while another person who does exactly the same thing is considered a sinner.

Similarly, the Kuzari writes (3:1) that when the Divine presence was felt in Israel, there were people who would abstain from worldly matters in order to achieve spiritual heights. However, now that there is no prophecy and true wisdom is difficult to attain, one who becomes a nazir only brings upon himself suffering and sickness, both spiritual and physical, since he cannot cling to the "Divine light" in this manner.

Rav Kook, zt"l, also writes (letter #73) about those who have not achieved a high spiritual level, yet undertake a lofty manner of service through fasting and self-denial. He says that as long as their hearts remain empty, they will not accomplish anything, neither for themselves, nor for their generation.

Regarding this kind of issue our Sages taught us: Whether one does a lot, or a little - so long as his intentions are directed towards G-d. (Berachot 5b) All your actions should be for the sake of G-d! (Avot 2:12)

From: Yated USA[SMTP:yated-usa@ttec.com]
Parsha Perspectives Parshas Naso Repeat Performance by
RABBI MORDECHAI KAMENETZKY

Parshas 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 seemed to say the same thing-over and over again.

The end of the parsha discusses the dedication of the Mishkan. It describes the offerings that every Nasi brought in honor of the auspicious occasion. And every nasi brought the same items. It begins with the offering of Nachshon ben Aminadav: "On the first day, Nachshon the son of Aminadav brought his offering. His korban 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 Nasi, Schloomiel, repeated the same. This continued for twelve separate days, by twelve different N'siim. And each day the Torah repeats, verbatim, the entire offering, changing only the name of the presenter and his shevet.

The Torah, which is normally so concise and abbreviated, and normally leaves us to expound the hidden and to deduce the conclusions, seems to be superfluous here. After all, if all twelve n'siim brought the exact same gifts, why should each and every Nasi's offering be detailed over and over?

Couldn't the Torah have simply said 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."

Then, the Torah should list the names of the twelve n'siim 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.

We find that the Torah, sometimes so concise in areas of intricate halacha, gittin and the like, often expounds when it comes to the endearment of its founders and leaders.

In fact, I once heard a story that reminded me of the cherished repetition of things dear.

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 halacha. 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 Teshuvah speech, and added a little from Chanukah, Purim, and the Hagaddah. 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!"

Perhaps this parable is analogous to the lesson we can learn from the seemingly redundant enumeration of the gifts to the Mishkan.

The Torah, in repeating the twelve offerings, and spending six psukim on each one, leaves us with a message that is as powerful as it is pertinent. Many of our mitzvos 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 tefillin, the same tefillah, the same brachos, the same greeting b'saiver panim yafos.

The Torah is telling us that when performed with proper enthusiasm, they are all worthy of being recorded and announced-day in day out, praised and cherished by Hakadosh Boruch Hu, -again and again. All are as dear as the first time.

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From: kenblock@att.net[SMTP:kenblock@att.net] Parshat Naso
RABBI PESACH LERNER Executive Vice President, NCYI Daf
Yomi: Ketuvot 79

The Haftorah of Parshas Naso, (Shoftim 13:2-25) discusses the visit of an Angel of G-d to the parents of Shimshon. The Angel informs Shimshon's mother, whose name was Tzlelponis (Talmud,Bava Basra 91A) and afterwards during a second visit informs Manoach,

Shimshon's father, that Shimshon will be a Nazir and explains the numerous restrictions associated with such Nazirus.

In analyzing the various discussions between the Angel and Shimshon's parents, Harav Shimon Schwab, z"tl, of the Washington Heights, NY community, in his sefer Mayan Bais Hashoeva asks some poignant questions.

Let us review the Pasukim:

- In Pasuk 3 the Angel informs Shimshon's mother that she will give birth to a son.

- In Pasuk 4 she is told not to drink wine and not to eat any spiritually unclean foods.

- In Pasuk 5 she is told the reasons for the prohibitions of Pasuk 4 - because Shimshon will be a Nazir (and it will be Shimshon who will begin to save the Jewish people from their enemies.)

- In Pasuk 7 she shares with her husband her discussion with the Angel, the restrictions she - as Shimshon's mother - must keep because Shimshon will be a Nazir while in his mother's womb, and remain a Nazir until he dies.

- In Pasuk 8 Shimshon's father asks of G-d to send the Angel once again to teach him and his wife what they should do with the young lad.

At this point, Rav Schwab questions - we have already learned that Shimshon is to be a Nazir. What more did Shimshon's father need to know? The rules of Nazirus are in Parshas Naso. If there are additional questions, there were ample scholars and judges that could be asked. Why was it necessary for the Angel to return?

Yet the Angel does make a second visit. And seemingly, the Angel repeats exactly what he told Shimshon's mother, "Of all that I spoke to the woman she should beware." (Pasuk 13)

What was Shimshon's father asking of the Angel of G-d and what "new information" did the Angel share with Shimshon's father?

Shimshon's father understood the rules and regulations of Shimshon's being a Nazir. His query was not halachic but educational. "What should we do with the lad who is to be born?" (pasuk 12) How is it possible, asked Shimshon's father, to educate and raise a Nazir with all his extra responsibilities, if there is no role model for Shimshon to emulate. Shimshon's own father, not to mention his neighbors and friends, have no such restrictions and they are all "Ehrliche Yidden."

This is the question the Angel returns to answer. You are correct, the Angel told Manoach. You too must become a Nazir. You must be there not only to teach Shimshon but to be one whom he can emulate. And that was what he told Manoach. "Of all that I spoke to the woman."

The commandments I gave her not to drink wine and not to eat any spiritually unclean foods, You should keep. [The word tishamer can grammatically mean that she should keep, referring to a third party feminine or it could mean you - speaking to someone directly before me- should keep.]

The Angel shared with Manoach the secret of a successful educational process. If a parent wishes for his child to adopt a specific action or custom - regardless of how many times the parent tells the child, it will only work if the child sees his parent actively doing that action or custom. Yes Manoach, if you want to be certain that Shimshon will be a Nazir he must see you acting like a Nazir.

The message is clear, explains Rav Schwab. If we want our children to learn, they must see us, their parents, as role models doing exactly as we want them to do.

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Intentional Emotion

Every letter in the Torah is written for a profound and eternal purpose. Nothing is superfluous. The mind is therefore boggled at what seems to be a complete redundancy. During the dedication ceremony for the Mishkan (Tabernacle), the leaders of each tribe (Nesi'im) brought special offerings. Each offering was identical. The short route would have been to list their names and then describe what they all brought in one succinct paragraph. Instead, the Torah repeats the entire procedure for each individual leader.

Ask any Baal Korei: Parshas Naso is the longest Parsha in the Torah. The main reason is because of this seemingly redundant repetition. Why was it necessary? Would it have been so bad to abbreviate?

One possible explanation: Although on the surface it appeared as though they were all doing the exact same thing, internally, spiritually, they could not have been more unique. For what is a mitzva? Is it a mere physical act? Can monkeys perform mitzvos? What makes a mitzva special?

Kavanna. A synthesis of intent and emotion, Kavanna makes the mitzva. True, the physical act must be performed. Merely feeling close to Hashem is insufficient to achieve that closeness. Action is essential.

But the action alone without the intent is empty -- like a body without a soul. The external action arouses the inner emotion, and together, in perfect harmony, they bring the Jew closer to his Creator.

As a diamond is weighed in Karats, so are mitzvos weighed in Kavanna. A mitzva performed perfunctorily is not as valuable as a mitzva performed with purity of mind and heart. A mitzva performed at great personal sacrifice is worth infinitely more than a mitzva that was easy to come by. "Corresponding to the sacrifice is the reward (Avos 6:23)."

Thus, although the tribal leaders appeared to bring exactly identical offerings, each one was unique and indispensable. The effects of one offering were completely distinct from the effects of another. Each played a unique role to bring about the symphonious whole. Had one been missing, the symphony would have been flawed.

So is it with our mitzvos. We all pray more or less identically. The same Shmone Esrei, three times a day, every day. What's the point? In light of the above, the point is obvious. No two Tefillos are alike. What I achieve with my Tefilla, no one else can achieve. And together, all of our Tefillos blend beautifully into one harmonious whole. Every Tefilla is special; each one indispensable.

May we learn to value our own self-worth, and play our own indispensable roles in helping to bring the Cosmic Plan to fruition.

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From: Jeffrey Gross[SMTP: jgross@torah.org] Subject: Weekly Halacha - Parshas Naso

Weekly-halacha for 5760

Selected Halachos Relating to Parshas Naso

BY RABBI DONIEL NEUSTADT

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

DO DESSERTS REQUIRE A BLESSING?

The blessing of ha-motzi, recited over bread at the beginning of the meal, includes anything in the meal which is normally eaten with bread - even though it is not actually being eaten with bread at this particular moment. Even if these foods are never actually eaten together with bread, but if they are "meal type foods", i.e., they are main components of a meal that are served to satisfy one's hunger, they are included in the ha-motzi blessing. Meat, fish, eggs, pasta, rice, vegetables, cheese, most beverages and all other foods eaten to satisfy one's hunger are included

in the ha-motzi blessing. Dessert, on the other hand, is not normally eaten with bread, nor is it served to satisfy one's hunger. In most cases dessert is served after one is already full, either as a finishing touch to a meal or to satisfy one's craving for sweets. It is considered a separate food at the end of the meal and therefore requires its own blessing. This basic principle is agreed upon by all of the early authorities and is recorded in the Shulchan Aruch. Let us review the halachos of some common desserts:

RAW FRUIT (apples, grapes, etc.) ??the correct blessing is recited?1??

COOKED FRUIT - there are conflicting views. The basic halachah follows the opinion of most poskim who hold that a blessing is recited(2), since the cooked fruit is being served as dessert and is considered a "dessert type food". A minority opinion suggests that no blessing is recited(3) since a cooked fruit, even though it is being eaten at the end of the meal, may still be considered as one of the courses of the meal. One who wants to avoid a questionable situation should eat cooked fruit only with bread(4) or recite a blessing over a raw fruit before eating the cooked fruit(5).

POPCORN - the correct blessing (ha-adamah) is recited.

PEANUTS - the correct blessing (ha-adamah) is recited.

CHOCOLATE - the correct blessing (shehakol) is recited.

COFFEE and TEA - there are conflicting opinions. Some hold that beverages, no matter when they are served, are considered as part of the meal and no blessing is recited. They reason that the coffee or tea is served for satiation and is part of the meal. Others maintain that coffee or tea should be treated as dessert and that a shehakol is recited. In their opinion, these beverages are served to aid digestion and are not an intrinsic part of the meal. To avoid a questionable situation, it is best to recite a shehakol on another food which is definitely dessert, and thus exempt the coffee or tea. If another shehakol item is not available, no blessing is recited(6).

ICE CREAM and SHERBET - the correct blessing is recited(7).

CAKE

The basic rule quoted above that a "dessert-type food" requires a separate blessing when eaten at the end of the meal applies to cake as well. It should follow that cake eaten at the end of the meal as a dessert requires a mezonos. In actual practice, however, this is not the case. In order to explain why not, we must present some background information concerning pas habaah b'kisnin, commonly known as cake, and what its proper blessing is.

One thing is clear: Normally, people are koveia seudah ("base" their meal) on pas, bread. The proper blessing over pas is, therefore, ha-motzi. The proper blessing over pas habaah b'kisnin, which has bread-like properties but yet is not bread, is mezonos, since people are not usually koveia seudah on it. But how exactly is pas different from pas habaah b'kisnin? What distinguishes the two foods? Is it the ingredients or is it the texture? There are three opinions among the rishonim as to the definition of pas habaah b'kisnin and the main characteristic that distinguishes it from pas: Some hold that pas habaah b'kisnin is what most people today call cake: Cake batter consists of many ingredients beyond flour and water; it contains significant amounts of sugar, cocoa, chocolate, oil, honey, etc. According to this view, the blessing over pretzels or fruit-filled pies will be ha-motzi, since their basic ingredients are flour and water, just like bread.

Others hold that pas habaah b'kisnin is a hard, crunchy substance such as a pretzel or a cracker. According to this view, the blessing over most cakes and pies is ha-motzi.

Others hold that pas habaah b'kisnin is a fruit or nut filled pie. According to this view, the blessing over most cakes and pretzels and crackers is ha-motzi.

What is the practical halachah? As a rule, whenever doubts arise concerning the proper blessing to recite, we follow the basic principle of

safeik berachos l'hakail - we tend to rule leniently. Accordingly, whenever any one of these foods is eaten [not during the meal] the blessing is mezonos, since requiring one to wash and recite Bircas ha-Mazon over them would be a stringency(8).

But when these foods are eaten as a dessert during the meal, the halachah should be the reverse. Since there is a doubt as to whether these foods are classified as pas, bread, or pas habaah b'kisinin, we ought to be lenient and not require a mezonos to be recited, since they may very well be bread, and an ha-motzi was already recited at the beginning of the meal.

In practice, however, various poskim have issued numerous, somewhat contradictory, rulings. This issue is so confusing that some G-d-fearing people do not eat cake for dessert at all; rather they recite Bircas ha-Mazon and eat the dessert cake afterwards(9). Another solution suggested by some poskim is to have express intent while reciting ha-motzi at the beginning of the meal to include any cake eaten for dessert(10). But if neither option is practical, there are various opinions among contemporary poskim about how one should conduct himself: Mishnah Berurah states that only fruit-filled pies are considered "real" pas habaah b'kisinin and a mezonos is recited over them when served for dessert. Other cakes are too similar to bread and are covered by the original ha-motzi blessing(11).

Harav M. Feinstein ruled that as long as flour and water are not the majority ingredients, which holds true for most cakes today, a mezonos is recited over them when served as dessert(12). One should follow his custom or the opinion of his rav.

A notable exception to all of the above is when cake is eaten when one is still hungry, i.e., the main course was not filling and the dessert is being eaten to satisfy one's hunger. In that case, clearly, no blessing is recited on the cake since it now becomes an essential part of the meal covered by the original ha-motzi blessing(13).

Another point to remember is that our discussion applies to cake only. Wafers, waffles, pancakes, kugels and all other mezonos items which do not have bread-like properties are considered mezonos items according to all views and would require a separate blessing when eaten for dessert and not for satiation.

FOOTNOTES: 1 O.C. 177:1. 2 Mishnah Berurah 177:4; Chazon Ish (Dinim v'Hanhagos 6:7); Orchos Rabbeinu 66; Yalkut Yosef, pg. 196; Harav S.Y. Elyashiv (quoted in Vezos ha-Berachah, pg. 78 and Vesain Berachah, pg. 87). 3 Several sources report that the Chafetz Chayim eventually changed his ruling and exempted cooked fruits served as dessert from a blessing; see Orchos Rabbeinu 66 and Vezos ha-Berachah, pg. 78. [Others dispute that the Chafetz Chayim changed his ruling.] Reportedly, Harav A. Kotler ruled that no blessing is recited over cooked fruit. 4 Custom of the Brisker Rav (quoted in Teshuvos v'Hanhagos 1:177). 5 Harav A. Kotler (reported by several disciples); Harav S.Y. Elyashiv (quoted in Vezos ha-Berachah, pg. 78). 6 See the various opinions in Chayei Adam 43:11, Mishnah Berurah 174:39; and Aruch ha-Shulchan 174:14 (who distinguishes between coffee and tea). See also Vezos ha-Berachah, pg. 73. 7 Harav S.Z. Auerbach (V'sein Berachah, pg. 87); Harav Y.S. Elyashiv (quoted in Vezos ha-Berachah, pg. 74); Shevet ha-Levi 1: 205; Harav C.P. Scheinberg (Vezos ha-Berachah, pg. 76). There are some who quote Harav M. Feinstein as ruling that certain types of ice creams or ices are considered beverages which do not require their own blessing. But this is difficult to confirm or understand. 8 O.C. 168:7. 9 This was the custom of the Chida, quoted in Sefer Minhagei Yerushalayim. See also Ohr le-Tziyon 12:10 who suggests this approach. 10 Chayei Adam 43:7 (quoted by Beir Halachah 168:8); Kaf ha-Chayim 168:49; Harav Y.Y. Fisher (quoted in Vezos ha-Berachah, pg. 75.) 11 Beir Halachah 168:8. 12 Oral ruling quoted in Rivevos Efrayim 5:153. See also Igros Moshe O.C. 3:33 where this is clearly explained. This also seems to be the opinion of Harav S.Z. Auerbach (oral ruling quoted in Vezos ha-Berachah, pg. 229). 13 Mishnah Berurah 168:41. Another case where no blessing is recited over cake eaten as dessert is when a large amount - enough to be considered keivus seudah - is eaten; ibid.

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... We would like to express our gratitude to Adam Smith & Company which has so generously donated and maintains the computer center at the Yeshiva in memory of HaRav Aryeh Bina zt"l, founder of Yeshivat Hakotel. This enables us to communicate this sicha to you each week - "lehagdil Torah ulehaadira".

Please say a teffila for refuah shlema for Baruch Yoseph ben Adina Batya he is the ten year old son of one of our alumni who is in great need of "rachamei Shamayim".

PARSHAT NASO (SHAVUOT)

There is a dispute among Chazal (Taanit 11a) whether one who becomes a Nazir, as detailed in our Parsha, has committed a sinful act (which is why he brings a Korban Chatat), or it is in fact a holy endeavor (thus the Torah refers to him as "kadosh", holy). Clearly, the opinion that refers to his act as sinful does not claim that there is no positive aspect to it. In fact, the prophet includes the Mitzvah of Nazir as one of the benefits Hashem gave us: "I established some of your sons as prophets and some of your young men as Nazirites" [1] (Amos 2:11) - Some of the Jewish people merit the Divine Presence in the form of prophecy while others merited their holiness as Nezirim.

One of the most famous Nezirim was Shimshon. Chazal praised Shimshon by describing him in terms of "the Divine Presence was dangling in front of him as a bell" [2] (Sotah 9b), and that "he judged his people as their Father in heaven does" [3] (ibid. 10a). In fact, Hashem Himself sanctified Shimshon as a Nazir. Being a Nazir, is therefore obviously not a totally sinful act. Hashem provided Shimshon with this extra level of holiness in order to prepare him for his ultimate task of judging the Jewish people. Shimshon was the only one of the judges (with the exception perhaps of Shamgar ben Anat) who fought the enemies of Israel alone, without the assistance of others - perhaps he needed that extra degree of strength in order to stand up to this task. So long as Shimshon kept the laws of Nezirut, he was able to succeed in overpowering the Philistim, once they were broken he fell into their hands. This shows us the Nazir in a positive light.

There is an opinion in the Mishna that the prophet Shmuel was a Nazir. This opinion claims that when his mother Chana declared that if Hashem grants her wish and gives her a son, then "I shall give him to Hashem all the days of his life" [4] (Shmuel I 1:11), she was in fact accepting upon her son the vow to become a Nazir. They interpret "a razor shall not come upon his head" [5] (ibid.) as referring to her desire that he become a Nazir. Chana's desire was that her son become close to Hashem. We see from here too the praiseworthiness of becoming a Nazir.

The Gemara relates how Shimon HaTzaddik never used to eat from the "Korban Asham" offered by a Nazir who became defiled during his term. He explained: "when they regret their evil deeds they become a Nazir, but when they become defiled, and the period of Nezirut is extended they regret their vow, and thus 'chullin' is brought to the Azarah" [6] (Nedarim 9b). He made an exception when he met a Nazir from the South, and realized that this man had taken this vow with a full heart - "leShem Shamayim". Upon realizing the sincerity of this man's vow, he stood up and kissed him saying: "my son, may there be many Nazirites such as you in Israel" [7] (ibid.). Shimon HaTzaddik, we should note, was from the remaining members of the Anshei Knesset HaGedola (see Avot 1:2) and therefore preceded R' Elazar HaKapar (the one who declared Nezirut as sinful) by many years. Presumably R' Elazar HaKapar was not in total disagreement with Shimon HaTzaddik, and agreed that there was a positive aspect to Nezirut.

We must realize, that even when viewed in a positive light, Nezirut is no guarantee of success in serving Hashem. There were evil as well. Chazal (Nazir 4b) tell us that Avshalom was a Nazir. Despite this, he is listed among those who do not have a share in the World to Come (Sanhedrin 103b). For one who is meritorious, however, Nezirut can serve as a tremendous aid in serving Hashem.

There is even a situation where the Torah itself advocates taking on Nezirut. Chazal tell us: "why was the portion concerning the laws of a Nazir juxtaposed with the portion concerning the laws of a Sotah? To tell you that whoever sees a Sotah in her ruin should take a lesson from her plight and separate himself from wine" [8] (Sotah 2a). What greater "mussar" can there be then witnessing her being punished for her grave sin, seeing: "her stomach shall become distended and her thigh shall collapse" [9] (Bamidbar 5:27)? (The same punishment is given to the man who had relations with her). Is witnessing this horrendous sight not enough a deterrent? Why then the need to become a Nazir? Watching another person sin, even if they are then punished, serves to "dilute" the impact of the sin, to lessen the perceived severity. Similarly, the pasuk describes the war with Amalek "asher korchah baderech" "that he happened upon you on the way" [10] (Devarim 25:18). The word "korchah" "happened upon" can also be interpreted as being rooted from the word "kar" - cool. Rashi cites from Chazal "this can be compared to a boiling hot bath into which no person could descend, one scoundrel came, he jumped and went down into it. Although he was scalded, he cooled it off for others" [11]. Observing a sinner being punished is not a sufficient deterrent to prevent future sinning, the Torah therefore commanded one who observes a Sotah in her ruin, to distance himself from wine - the cause of sin.

Moshe Rabenu erected an altar immediately following the victory over Amalek. Why did he not do so after the sea was split, was not the latter a far greater miracle that should have elicited a greater expression of thanks to Hashem? Based on what we have just said, we can offer an explanation. The Rambam (Moreh Nebuchim Section three, chapter 32) explains that the purpose of bringing offerings is to distance our hearts from avoda zara. After the splitting of the sea, this was not required, for there was a situation of "peoples heard, they were agitated; terror gripped the dwellers of Pleshet" [12] (Shmot 15:14), all the nations feared Hashem. After Amalek had "cooled down" the other nations' fear of Hashem however, there was a need for an altar and sacrifices to distance the people from avoda zara.

Regarding Lot we see again that witnessing a punishment for a sin is not a sufficient preventive measure. Lot not only observed the destruction of Sodom, he was afflicted by Hashem's punishment as well - he lost his wife, his two married daughters, and his wealth. This, however did not prevent him from drinking and getting drunk. The wine led to

an incestuous relationship with his daughter. Chazal tell us that he had realized that he had relations with his older daughter, yet this did not deter him from drinking the following night. He should have realized that the wine may lead to such an act with his younger daughter. Did he not see what ultimately happens to those who sin? For such a person observing the destruction of Sodom was not a sufficient deterrent, for "whoever is obsessed with intense desire for forbidden relations, in the end they 'feed' him from his own flesh" [13] (Rashi Bereishit 19:33). The Torah therefore tells us that it is not sufficient to observe a sinner being punished, we must do our utmost to distance ourselves from our desires, in particular that of illicit relations. (What caused Lot to sink to such a low level? The fact that he separated himself from Avraham for the sake of his physical welfare. Ruth, a descendant of Lot, made up for this by giving up a life of wealth (Chazal tell us (Nazir 23b) that she was the granddaughter of Eglon king of Moav), descending to dire poverty in order to follow the righteous Naomi. It is for this reason that Ruth merited cleaving to Hashem and becoming the matriarch of the kingdom of David).

If one who observes one Sotah in her corruption must become a Nazir, what should we do? Our entire surroundings are corrupt. Every step we take we hear heresy, and observe Shabbat desecration and other things that are not good for our eyes to see. We should have to refrain not only from wine, but to separate ourselves from this world entirely! Maybe we should fast every day. What right do we have not to undertake such drastic action? The answer is that we would not be able to physically withstand it. If we do not fast, we must at least find ways to prevent ourselves from being influenced by our negative surroundings. The Rambam (Hilchot Deot 6:1) tells us that man is easily influenced by the ideas and actions of his society. If the society is composed primarily of people with evil tendencies, he must move elsewhere where there are righteous people. If everywhere he goes, he finds this negative behavior (the Rambam was speaking of his day, how much more so today), he must retreat to the caves and deserts. It is told that when the Satmar Rebbe visited Israel, he asked the Chazon Ish with our generation the way it is, why we do not retreat into the desert today? The Chazon Ish explained that our Yeshivot are the desert, they too are places where one can live in without being surrounded by sin.

We, of course, must make sure that our Yeshiva is clean - free of whatever may be a negative influence on one's soul. We must move as far away as we can from heresy, and if we do hear it not to accept it. When we attend a shiur, thank G-d, we hear the living word of G-d. The same cannot be said of various books and newspapers. The publisher who published them does not take responsibility for the veracity of the contents. We must be careful, therefore, not to be drawn towards their contents. This is not the time to be wise as in: "who is wise? he who learns from every person" [14] (Avot 4:1). Even if "everyone" says that it is fine, this does not constitute a "hechsher".

It is told of the "Divrei Chaim" of Sanz that he encountered a particular man who started relating gossip he had heard about another Jew. The "Divrei Chaim", of course responded that he did not believe the story for it constituted "loshon hara". The man answered, "but 'everyone' says so". The "Divrei Chaim" replied that Gehinom is large enough to accommodate everyone. The fact that "everyone" says so, does not make it permissible. The Gemara in Yoma in fact tells us "once a person commits a sin and repeats it, it becomes permitted to him" [15] (Yoma 86b). The Gemara continues "Can it even enter your mind that the sin becomes permitted to him? rather say, it becomes to him as though it were permissible" [16] (ibid.). One who is accustomed to sinning no longer contemplates its effects and does not take to heart that his actions are forbidden. We have become so accustomed to seeing and hearing such negative things. Despite this, we must do our utmost to prevent as much of this as possible.

The Gr"a even said that one who prevents himself from indulging in idle conversation will merit the hidden light that no angel or human being can imagine. How much more so must we take care to close our mouths, eyes, and ears from speaking, hearing, and seeing that which is forbidden?

Chazal tell us "the world continues to exist only in the merit of the breath of schoolchildren" [17] (Shabbat 119b). Rav Pappa asked Abaye why only the schoolchildren, what about us? to which the response was "one cannot compare breath filled with sin, with that which is free of sin" [18] (ibid.). The Amoraim certainly did not sin, yet they were grown married men and perhaps some improper thoughts entered their minds. They cannot be compared to schoolchildren who study Torah with total purity and innocence. Although even Abaye and Rav Pappa cannot compete with the purity of small children, and we certainly no longer fit into the category of schoolchildren, we must nevertheless do our utmost to insure that the Torah we study remain as "clean" as possible. If so, it will be a positive influence upon us, otherwise it will not. We must clean our eyes and our thoughts from that which is improper in order that our Torah and our prayers remain pure!

Chazal quote R' Shimon Bar Yochai (Yerushalmi Brachot 1:2) as having said that had he been present when the Torah was given, he would have requested that each person be given two mouths - one for the needs of this world, and a separate one for words of Torah. This applied even for matters that one is permitted to speak, such as asking one's wife to purchase bread and butter at the grocery store. Even speaking of bread should not be done with the same mouth as speaking Torah. Later on (perhaps as a result of having to spend many years in a cave due to "loshon hara" having been said about him to the Romans), he retracted his statement, claiming that if too much "loshon hara" is spoken with one mouth, we can only imagine how much would be spoken if each person had two mouths? Today we have not only a mouth, but a telephone, radio, television, and other broadcasters of "loshon hara" and other forbidden things.

Chazal tell us that at Matan Torah "with every single statement that emanated from the mouth of the Holy One Blessed is He, the whole world became filled with the fragrance of spices" [19] (Shabbat 88b). The Gemara proceeds to ask "now since the world became filled from the first statement, where did the fragrance of the second statement go? [20] (ibid.). The Gemara's answer is: "The Holy One, Blessed is He took the wind from His storehouses and drove away each fragrance in turn" [21] (ibid.). Whether this happened

literally is not clear, but it certainly occurred on a spiritual level.

Chazal relate how R' Yehuda and R' Yossi entered a town and came across a child. The child was very big, as described by Chazal. The mother turned to the child and said: "Two talmidei chachamim are approaching go and greet them". The child answered "I cannot go - they smell as if they did not recite 'Kriat Shma' that day. They indeed had not recited the Shma, because they were busy with the Mitzvah of "Hachnassat Kallah". We see from here that even though they had a justifiable reason for not fulfilling the Mitzvah, one with a true sense of smell can detect that they did not recite the Shma. One who purposely does not recite the Shma or who performs another transgression certainly gives off such an odor.

Prior to the giving of the Torah, the world was filled with the "smells" of sin. When the Torah was given, the aroma of the Torah filled the world and these smells disappeared - the world was cleansed. Chazal tell us: "With every single statement that emanated from the mouth of the Holy One Blessed is He, the souls of the Jewish people departed, as it says "my soul departed at His decree" [22] (Shir HaShirim 5:6)" [23] (Shabbat 88b). Their souls departed because they were so close to Hashem that their souls separated from "olam hazeh", this world, leaving only their physical body behind. If the fragrance of the giving of the Torah was able to drive away the bad smell of sins, perhaps our annual re-acceptance of the Torah can serve to correct this scent of sins that is upon us.

Chazal tell us: "and make them known to your children and your children's children, the day that you stood before Hashem, your G-d at Chorev" (Devarim 4:9-10), just as there it was in dread and fear and quaking, so in this case too it must be in dread and trembling and quaking" [24] (Brachot 22a). Although the Gemara uses this derivation for another purpose, perhaps we can use it for our own interpretation. We must accept the Torah on the same level as it was given at Har Sinai. They witnessed the fire, sounds, and thunder, and thus cleaved to Hashem until their souls departed - we must do the same. This does not imply that our souls should depart, G-d forbid, but we must cleave to Hashem as if we too are witnessing the fire and all the sounds right before our very eyes. With this intense feeling, we will succeed in studying the Torah and in passing it on to future generations. Such an acceptance this coming Shavuot will serve to drive away some of the bad scent from our sins. The level achieved when the Torah was actually given was even beyond the reach of Abaye and Rav Pappa, yet we must come as close to that level as possible.

The Ramma begins the Shulchan Aruch with "I have set Hashem before me always" "this is a great rule of the Torah and of the positive attributes of the righteous". [25] (Tehillim 16:8). One can assume that the Shulchan Aruch does not argue with this point, for the source of the Ramma's words are the Beit Yoseph, who quotes the Rambam. Thus, this adage applies to the Yemenites and Sephardim as well as the Ashkenazim. One way in which to overpower the "yetzer hara" is "I have set Hashem before me always" and to follow in the footsteps of the righteous.

There is a known saying that wicked people are constantly filled with regret. An evil person understands in his mind that the ways of the righteous are good, but his heart dictates otherwise. He is living in a constant inner struggle, at times the mind wins, at times the heart wins. At times he regrets not having performed more Mitzvot, at times he regrets not having sinned more. If we can clean our eyes and thoughts and manage to erase this struggle from ourselves, we can attain higher and higher levels without stumbling. There is no guarantee however, as Chazal tell us: "do not believe in yourself until the day you die" [26] (Avot 2:4). The Gemara tells of a Kohen Gadol who served for eighty years only to become a "Tzduki" Sadducee. If we cleave to Hashem, to "set Hashem before me always", recalling Matan Torah with the fire, the sounds and the lightning, we have a chance to overpower our "yetzer hara".

Shlomo Hamelech said: "hold fast to discipline ("mussar"); do not let go, guard it, for it is your life" [27] (Mishle 4:13). Without "mussar" we will weaken and fall. "Mussar" is our life saver - "for it is your life". "It is a tree of life to those who grasp it" [28] (Mishlei 3:18). If a man were drowning and someone throws him a piece of wood to help rescue him, would he make all types of calculations to find "kulot", leniencies, whether it is sufficient to hold the wood with one hand, perhaps only three fingers, must he hold on to it the whole time or can he let go from time to time? One who feels he is about to drown will hold on to this wood with all his might! One who understands that the Torah is a tree of life for him, does not look for "kulot", he holds on to it as tightly as possible.

The word "mussar" comes from the same root as "yissurim", afflictions. One who does not take "mussar" himself, must be afflicted with "yissurim" in order to straighten him out. One who absorbs "mussar" can save himself from much affliction. The "mussar" however must afflict, it must break his heart. As a result he will cleave more to Hashem and to the study of Torah. The Torah is a burden, we must work and toil in its study. The road to it, however, can be filled with milk and honey. This is one reason we eat dairy foods on Shavuot. The study of "mussar" can serve to make the Torah as sweet as milk and honey. We must not be filled with regrets - the Torah is our life and the length of our days.

The Avnei Nezer tells us that one is not only permitted to derive pleasure from Torah study but there is a Mitzvah to do so. It need not be a Mitzvah such as "marmor" that we fulfill without satisfaction - the Torah is honey not "marmor". Each day we pray: "please, Hashem, our G-d, sweeten the words of Your Torah" [29]. If we can prevent "yissurim" by studying "mussar", the Torah can be to us as sweet as honey. In fact, it allows us a taste of the next world. In the next world, should we merit arriving there, we will sit and study the Torah. If we can do so in this world, then we are already experiencing part of the next world. As the Chazon Ish said, the Yeshivot are deserts (in the positive sense that they remove us from sin). They are not, however, deserts in the negative sense, where one can have no enjoyment. One can derive much pleasure in the Yeshiva. Thank G-d, the Yeshiva provides three meals a day, thus one can remain in the Yeshiva without worrying about earning a livelihood.

One who does not enjoy the Torah now, will be miserable in the time of the Moshiach. If he prefers to read the newspaper rather than study Torah, he will open the newspaper only to find a report of a question asked by the Moshiach, and the answer provided by Elyahyu HaNavi. There will be a report of one shiur given by Moshe Rabenu and another

by Aharon HaKohen. The radio will report of a "drasha" by Yehoshua bin Nun or one of the other Rabbanim. One has to start enjoying Torah study in this world if he wants to find happiness in the next world.

Regarding this, Chazal tell us: "an analogy is drawn to a rooster and a bat who were awaiting the light of dawn, the rooster said to the bat 'I am awaiting the light, because the light is mine, but you, why do you want the light?' [30] (Sanhedrin 98b). The rooster can jump, break a few dishes, and enjoy the light of day. The bat is blind, why would he await the light? The same can be said regarding the Moshiach. For those who study Torah it is a light. The other nations have no reason to await the Moshiach, for them it will just be a continuation of darkness. For one who hates the Torah, the days of the Moshiach in which everyone is engrossed in learning will be one long darkness. For a lover of Torah it is a tremendous light. In fact, Gehinom and Gan Eden are not in two different locations. One person feels the Gan Eden and another the Gehinom. In order to be saved from Gehinom one must love the Torah and derive pleasure from its sweetness - enjoy a good question and a good answer. This is how we can prepare for the upcoming arrival of the Moshiach and for the Yom Tov of Shavuot - the day that we receive the Torah anew. May it be the will of Hashem that we merit receiving the Torah with love and that the world be filled with the fragrance of Torah. Amen.

APPENDIX (TRANSLITERATIONS OF SOURCES)

[1] "vaakim mibneichem linevim umibachureichem linzirim" [2] "shehayta Schina mekashkeshet lefanav kezug" [3] "dan et Yisrael ke-avivim shebashamayim" [4] "unetativ laHashem kol yemei chayav" [5] "umora lo yaale al rosho" [6] "keshehen metamin verabin aleihen yemei nezirut, mitchartin bahen venimtzeu meviin chulin laazara" [7] "kamocha yirbu nozrei nezirut beYisrael" [8] "lama nismecha parshat Nazir leparshat Sotah? Lomar lach shekol haroeh sotah bekkikula yazir atzmo min hayayin" [9] "tzavta bitna venafla yerecha" [10] "asher karcha baderech" [11] "mashal le-ambati rotachat she-ein kol birya yechola leired betocha, ba ben bliyaal echa kafatz veyarad letocha, af al pi shenichve hikra ota bifnei acherim" [12] "shamu amim yirgazun chil achaz yoshvei plashet" [13] "kol mi shehu lahu achar bolmus shel arayot lesaf maachilin oto mibsar" [14] "eizehu chacham? halomed mikol adam" [15] "kivan she-avar adam aveira veshina ba hutra lo" [16] "hutra lo salka daatach? ela eima naaseit lo keheiter" [17] "ein haolam mitkayem ela bishvil hevel tinokot shel beit rabban" [18] "eino domeh hevel sheyesh bo cheit lehevel she-ein bo cheit" [19] "kol dibur vedibur sheyatza mipi HaKadosh Baruch Hu, nitmalei kol haolam kulo besamim" [20] "kivan shemedibur rishon nitmalei, dibur sheni leheichan halach?" [21] "hotzi HaKadosh Baruch Hu haruach meotzrotav vehaya maavir rishon rishon" [22] "nafshi yatza bedabro" [23] "kol dibur vedibur sheyatza mipi HaKadosh Baruch Hu yatza nishmatan shel Yisrael" [24] "vehodaatam levanecha velivnei vanecha yom asher amadeta lifnei Hashem Elokecha beChorev, ma lehalan be-eima uyvira beretet uveze-a af kan be-eima uveyira uveretet uvezeia" [25] "shiviti Hashem lenegdi tamid hu klal gadol baTorah uvemaalot hatzadikkim" [26] "al taamen be-atzmecha ad yom motcha" [27] "hachazek bemusar al taref, natzra ki hee chayecha" [28] "ki hee chayecha" [29] "etz chayim hee lamachazikim ba" [30] "vehaarev na Hashem Elokenu et divrei Toratcha" [31] "mashal letarnegol ve-atalef shehayu metzapin leor, amar lei tarnegol laatalef ani metzpe leora, sheor a shelihai ve-ata lama lecha ora?"

The HaRav Nebenzahl parsha archives can be found at <http://www.hakotel.edu/torah/n.html> HaRav Nebenzahl's sichot in Hebrew, including the recently published Sichot on Sefer Bamidbar are now available on the internet: www.judaicabooks.net ☎ 5760/2000 by American Friends of Yeshivat Hakotel

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ME'OROS HADAF HAYOMI

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Kesubos 73b KOSHER WEDDING RINGS

The laws regarding Kiddushin require the Chassan to give the Kallah an object that is worth at least one Perutah. If a Chassan would give his Kallah an object that is worth less than a Perutah, Kiddushin would not occur even if later on the Chassan would give her a series of additional objects whose total value exceeds a Perutah.

Our daf explains the reasoning:

Kiddushin is not measured in increments, but as a single act. Therefore we do not take into account the accrued value of the objects the Chassan gave to the Kallah. The individual object he gives her at the time of Kiddushin is all we look at-it must be worth at least a Perutah on its own.

But sometimes problems arise even when the Chassan gives the Kallah an object that is worth even more than a Perutah.

Take the case of the gold-plated wedding ring, for example.

If a Kallah were to receive a gold-plated ring and mistakenly think that it is made out of solid gold, some Rishonim say that her error has no halachic relevance. As long as the ring is worth at least a Perutah, the

Kiddushin is kosher (Otzar Haposkim Even Ha'Ezer 31:15).

However, other Rishonim disagree. They are of the opinion that the woman's mistake casts serious doubt on the validity of the Kiddushin, particularly in cities where the local custom is to use solid gold rings for this purpose.

This disagreement among the Rishonim is the source of today's prevalent custom to use plain gold rings devoid of any precious stones for Kiddushin. A ring with stones mounted on it is liable to give the Kallah the impression that it is worth more than its real value, in which case the validity of the Kiddushin would come into question. For the same reason the Poskim advise not to use gold-plated silver rings (Nissuin K'Hilchasa 7:6).

In fact, some authorities even advise against using a ring that has the Kallah's name engraved on it, lest the engraving induce her to ascribe more value to it than it's real worth. Some authorities go a step further and advise against using a ring that has its karat rating stamped on it lest the measurement ascribes a higher level of purity to the gold than the metal in fact has.

This disagreement among the Rishonim is also the reason the Messader Kiddushin shows the ring to the two witnesses under the Chuppah and asks them whether in their opinion it is worth a Perutah. By answering in the affirmative, they in essence clarify to the Kallah the value of the ring and dispel any illusions she may have concerning its real worth. This warning works even in cases where the ring does have precious stones mounted on it, though obviously it is preferable not to use such rings

(Pis'chei Teshuva 31:4).

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INSIGHTS INTO THE DAILY DAF brought to you by Kollel Iyun Hadaf of Yerushalayim daf@dafyomi.co.il, <http://www.dafyomi.co.il>
KESUVOS 75-80 - dedicated by Mrs. Rita Grunberger of Queens, N.Y., in loving memory of her husband, Reb Yitzchok Yakov ben Eliyahu Grunberger. Mr Irving Grunberger helped many people quietly in an unassuming manner and is sorely missed by all who knew him. His Yahrzeit is 10 Sivan. Ask all your question on the Daf to the Kollel! daf@dafyomi.co.il

Kesuvos 77 HALACHAH: GETTING DIVORCED AFTER TEN YEARS OF CHILDLESSNESS OPINIONS: Rav Asi says that if a couple have not had children after being married for ten years, Beis Din does not force them to get divorced. Rav Tachlifa in the name of Shmuel argues and says that Beis Din does force them to get divorced. (See Yevamos 64a.)

What is the Halachah?

(a) RASHI (Yevamos 65b, DH Hu and DH Hi) says that Beis Din forces a man to divorce his wife. This is also the ruling of the RIF and the RAMBAM (Hilchos Ishus 15:7). They write that Beis Din forces him to divorce her, even if it means that they must use physical force, in order to have him fulfill the Mitzvah of Piryah v'Rivayah. (The ROSH (6:15-16) adds that this means that Beis Din also forces him to marry another wife; otherwise there would be no point in divorcing the first one. Similarly, he adds, Beis Din is enjoined to force, at a certain point, a bachelor who refuses to get married.)

(b) TOSFOS (Yevamos 64a, DH Yotzi) and RABEINU CHANANEL (ibid.) rule, based on the YERUSHALMI (Kesuvos 11:7), that Beis Din does not force the man to divorce his wife. Rather, Beis Din tells him that he is obligated to divorce his wife and that if he does not, it will be permitted to call him a sinner.

HALACHAH: (a) Regarding the question *who* is enjoined to remarry after ten years:

1. The Poskim cite the YERUSHALMI which states that the Halachah of our Sugya applies not only to someone who did not have

children or who had stillborns, but even to a person who had children who died and he no longer has any living children (or grandchildren). Such a person must divorce his wife if ten years pass and they do not have any more children so that he can fulfill the Mitzvah of Piryah v'Rivayah.

2. The Gemara here, and the Mishnah in Yevamos says that this applies if ten years pass "without giving birth." The RAMBAN and other Rishonim infer from here that if a man's wife bore him a single child, he does not have to divorce her (even though he has not fulfilled the Mitzvah of Piryah v'Rivayah with the birth of only one child). The REMA cites this ruling. The PISCHEI TESHUVAH adds, quoting the ME'IL TZEDAKAH (#93), that even if the wife is no longer capable of having children and they will never have a second child, Beis Din still does not force him to marry another wife.

(b) Regarding the current practice in such a situation:

1. The SHULCHAN ARUCH (EH 154:10) cites the RIF and the RAMBAM who rule that Beis Din forces the man to get divorced after ten years. However, others limit -- or entirely do away with -- this practice for various reasons:

2. A number of Rishonim (RASHI, HAGAHOS MAIMONI; see Insights to Yevamos 64:1) rule that the Halachah of the Gemara applies only in Eretz Yisrael and not in Chutz la'Aretz.

3. The Hagahos Maimoniyos (Hilchos Ishus 15:4) adds in the name of the AVI'ASAF that nowadays even in Eretz Yisrael, Beis Din does not force a person to divorce after ten years. This is because of the Gemara in Bava Basra (60b), which states that the Chachamim wanted to make a Gezeirah prohibiting marriage from the time that the nations started persecuting the Jewish people, on the grounds that it is better for us to refrain from having children and cause our own end than for our enemies to destroy us. The Chachamim, though, could not make such a stringent Gezeirah on the people. Nevertheless, the proposition of such a Gezeirah suffices for Beis Din to have reason not to force a person to fulfill the Mitzvah of Piryah v'Rivayah.

4. The REMA (EH 1:3, 154:10) concludes that nowadays, it is not the practice of Beis Din to use force (in all matters of Ishus).

Regarding whether the person himself should divorce his wife l'Chatchilah even though Beis Din does not force him to do so, the PISCHEI TESHUVAH cites the SEFER BIGDEI KEHUNAH (#1) who rules that if a man's wife is a G-d-fearing woman and they are happily married, then they may remain married even l'Chatchilah, because of the opinions which maintain that in Chutz la'Aretz one does not need to divorce his wife. Secondly, one can never know for sure that the source of the problem is not his own inability to have children (and thus divorcing her and marrying someone else will not help). Therefore, he should remain with his wife.

This has been seen to be the practice of many great Talmidei Chachamim who, Rachmana Litzlan, did not have children, as mentioned by RAV MOSHE STERNBUCH, shlit'a, in TESHUVOS V'HANHAGOS (1:790). Rav Sternbuch adds that even if the couple are living in Eretz Yisrael, nowadays we are so sullied with sin that we cannot be sure that it is not one's sins causing him not to have children. (In his Teshuvah, Rav Sternbuch describes some interesting Segulos that he recommends for couples trying to have children.)

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	(A) COMPLETELY UNCOVERED	(B) COVERED BY A "KALSAH" (1)	(C) COMPLETELY COVERED (2)
1) IN HER PRIVATE COURTYARD (3)	Mutar (some say Asur) (5)	Mutar (7)	Mutar
2) WHEN WALKING FROM ONE COURTYARD TO ANOTHER (3); IN AN ALLEY (4)	Asur (Das Yehudis) (6)	Mutar (7)	Mutar
3) IN THE MARKETPLACE AND IN AN ALLEY THROUGHWAY	Asur (mid'Oraisa)	Asur (Das Yehudis)	Mutar

FOOTNOTES:

- (1) RASHI explains that a "Kalsah" is a wearable basket that a woman wears upon her head, into which she places her spindle and thread. Accordingly, it is the same gear discussed in Gitin (77a), "He threw [the Get] into her Kalsah," as Rashi explains there. The RAMBAM (Hilchos Ishus 24:12) describes it as a "Mitpachas," and the Yerushalmi calls it "Kaflatin." Apparently, according to this description, the "Kalsah" is a type of cap ("Kipah") that covers the head, as the ARUCH (Erech "Kafleta") explains with regard to the word "Kafleta" in the Yerushalmi (Shabbos 6:1). However, the Aruch elsewhere (Erech "Kaflitin") explains that the word in the Yerushalmi here is actually "a Roman word for hair and braids, and it refers to a wig." According to all of these explanations, the Kalthah is not a complete head-covering because it does not cover all of the hair, but only some of the hair. Alternatively, it is not made to be worn as clothing and it easily slides off, revealing all of the woman's hair.
- (2) The RAMBAM (ibid.) calls this a "Redid," which is the same as the "Kevinta" mentioned in Gitin (15a), as Rashi explains in Yeshayah (3:23). It is the Aramaic translation of the Hebrew word, "Tza'if" (Bereishis 24:25), or kerchief, which is the word that the RI'AZ here uses to describe the full head-covering mentioned our Gemara. The Rambam elsewhere (Hilchos Ishus 13:12) explains that there is a "Redid," or Kerchief, that is very long and wraps around one's entire body. It appears from the Rambam's words, though, that our Sugya is not discussing such a "Redid," but one that covers only the entire head.
- (3) This refers to a Chatzer in which there are not many people present, as the Yerushalmi (7:6) explains, and as cited in the Shiltei Giborim. If there are many people present there, even a Chatzer has the status of a public marketplace. Moreover, it is permitted to be in her Chatzer with no hair covering only when she does not stay there for a long period of time (SEMAG).
- (4) This refers to a Mavoy, or alley, which is not an open thoroughway to Reshus ha'Rabim (RI'AZ). If it is open to Reshus ha'Rabim and the public walk there, it has the status of Reshus ha'Rabim, as the Yerushalmi (ibid.) states.
- (5) Rashi, Tosfos, the Ritva and the Ran seem to imply that she may go into her Chatzer with her hair completely uncovered. However, the ME'IRI writes that it is shameful ("Megunah") to do so, and the RI'AZ prohibits it (based on the Yerushalmi here), and so rules the SEMAG (cited in Hagahos Maimoniyos). This also seems to be the implication of the Aruch (Erech "Kalas"). The BACH and Acharonim (EH 155) explain that according to these stringent opinions, our Sugya is only saying that wearing a "Kalsah" in a Chatzer does not constitute "uncovered hair" with regard to divorcing her' but there does exist an Isur for a woman to go out in such a manner in a Chatzer. (Rashi and the other Rishonim may agree to this as well.) This is the ruling of the Poskim, l'Halachah.
- (6) It appears that this Isur is only because of "Das Yehudis," because the verse from which we learn the Isur for a woman to go out with her hair uncovered is discussing Reshus ha'Rabim (according to the second explanation of Rashi, and even the first explanation of Rashi seems to be saying that she uncovered her hair "in Reshus ha'Rabim" in order to attract her adulterer to be alone with her at a later time).
- (7) Even though, according to the letter of the law, it is permitted for her to go out with a "Kalsah," nevertheless the BACH (ibid.) writes that "in all areas where Jews have lived it has always been the custom for a married woman to cover her hair completely; even in front of the people of her own household she at least wears a basic head-covering." In either case, the Gemara (Yoma 47a) states, in such matters, that "a woman who is modest and who covers her hair even inside her own home will merit that children will come forth from her who will serve as Kohanim Gedolim..."
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CHARTS FOR LEARNING THE DAILY DAF
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THE REQUIREMENT FOR A MARRIED WOMAN TO COVER HER HAIR