Points to Ponder

Naso 5782

**נָשׂ֗א אֶת־רֹ֛אשׁ בְּנֵ֥י גֵֽרְשׁ֖וֹן  Take also a census of (literally: lift up) the sons of Gershon (4:22)** - It is interesting to note that the Torah uses the word, "Naso, lift up," with regard to the families of Gershon (above) and Kehat (4:2), but not with reference to the family of Merari (4:29). Why is this? **Rav Amital ztl.** explained that perhaps it is because while the family of Kehat carries the vessels, and the family of Gershon carries the curtains, the family of Merari carries the beams. The Temple service is not simply an expression of the good will of the Leviyim; it is their duty and obligation, whether or not they desire the role.

**אֵ֤לֶּה פְקוּדֵי֙ מִשְׁפְּחֹ֣ת הַקְּהָתִ֔י  This is the census of the family of Kehus (4:37)** – The numbers of Kehus totaled 2750. When you consider that these numbers came from 4 people 2 generations before, it just seems incredible. Moreover, Amram’s third generation was only 6 while his 3 brothers had the rest. How do we explain the population explosion disparity? **Rav Sorotzkin ztl.** explained that this is a support for the statement “Raiysee Bnei Aliyah V’Heim Muatim”- that the ones who grow are few in number. Hashem notes that he can make populations large or small but the real one who grow are few in number.

**וְהִתְוַדּ֗וּ אֶת־חַטָּאתָם֘ אֲשֶׁ֣ר עָשׂוּ֒  They shall confess the sin that they have committed (5:7)** – **Rambam** notes that the main component of Teshuvah is the Vidui. Why is this lesson taught specifically here in regard to the Asham Gezailos and the theft from the convert**? Rav Bernard Weinberger ztl.** explained that when one sins, s/he is in essence stealing from Hashem who created each of our body parts to serve Him.

**אִ֥ישׁ אִישׁ֙ כִּֽי־תִשְׂטֶ֣ה אִשְׁתּ֔וֹ  When a man’s wife goes astray (5:12) - Ramban** claims that this is the only time in the entire Torah where Hashem asks us to rely on a miracle. **Rav Yaakov Kaminetsky ztl.** explains that this is done because otherwise there will always be a doubt with the husband about whether his wife was unfaithful. The gemora in Chullin demonstrates based on this how important Shalom Bayis must be because Hashem is willing to allow his name to be erased.

**אִ֣ישׁ אֽוֹ־אִשָּׁ֗ה כִּ֤י יַפְלִא֙ לִנְדֹּר֙ נֶ֣דֶר נָזִ֔יר  When a man or a woman takes the vow of becoming a Nazir (6:2)** - The **Avnei Miluim** debates the issue of whether nezirus is an issur gavra or issur cheftza. In other words, does the nazir take upon himself all of the restrictions and through that, he becomes holy or does he take upon himself to be holy and the dinim are an application of his holiness? **Rav Yaakov Luban Shlita** explained that Nezirus is a model for making a significant change in one’s life and as such, these two approaches to understanding nezirus are two approaches we can take to make significant changes. Sometimes, we make changes through our actions, hoping that it will cause us to grow. Other times, we take upon ourselves to be holier people, hoping that our actions will follow.

**ישא ה’ פניו אליך May the Lord turn his countenance to you (6:26)** - The standard translation of ישא ה’ פניו אליך is “May the Lord turn his countenance to you.” However, the **[Sfas Emes](https://rabbanan.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/SefasEmesNaso.pdf)** [(5637)](https://rabbanan.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/SefasEmesNaso.pdf) has a different interpretation of פניו. It doesn’t have to mean His face or countenance. It could also mean פנים — internal attributes. **Rav Lamm ztl.** notes that in order to reach וישם לך שלום, we have to do deal with our own פנים, our own inner peace and clarity. He adds that true peace is not something external or superficial. In order to achieve real peace, the parties involved have to have a sense of inner peace, security and confidence.

**וַיָּבִ֨יאוּ אֶת־קָרְבָּנָ֜ם They brought their Korban (7:3) – Ramban** notes that each Nasi had a different intention in the combination of elements for his offering. How could the same combination of the Korbanos be filled with such different intention? **Rav Schachter noted in the name of Rav Soloveitchik ztl.** that the Korban is a part of the person himself. If that is the case, each Korban reflects the thoughts of the person bringing it even while containing the same result (often the same has been noted about one’s Tefillah).

**Haftorah:**

**מכל אשר אמרתי אליה תשמר Whatever I told her you should do ( Shoftim 13:13)** - Why does Manoach ask for a malach to come and teach the laws of nezirus? Why didn’t he consult with someone else? And While we are asking, when the malach comes back and gives the instructions, he doesn’t seem to say anything new. What was the purpose of this visit? **Rav Shimon Schwab ztl.** answers that Manoach was bothered by the following “How could I teach my son to be a nazir if I myself am not a nazir?” To this, Hashem sent a malach who tells Manoach מכל אשר אמרתי אליה תשמר. If you want your son to follow, you personally have to keep everything that I told your wife that your son must keep. In In other words, if we want to be successful in educating our children, we need to lead by example.