

## Points to Ponder

Naso 5775

**And their numbers according to their families were 2750 (4:36)** – Kehat had 4 sons- Amram Yitzhar Chevron and Uziel. These four had offspring who, in total numbered 2750 while one, Amram had 6 of them. That means that 2744 came from the other 3 brothers. How could there be such a discrepancy in the same family? **Rav Sorotzkin ztl.**(Oznayim L'Torah) explains that this is based on the words of Chazal that Ra'isee Bnei Aliyah V'Heim Muatim. Simple grass and weed can grow on its own but roses need to be cultivated. To have a family with a Moshe, Aaron and Miriam also meant that it would be a small family.

**Gezel HaGer (5:9)** - Why is this section in the Parsha? **Rav Aharon Lichtenstein ztl.** explained that the underlying idea of the book of Bemidbar is "le-mishpechotam le-beit avotam" - "according to their families and by the house of their fathers." The beginning of the book of Bemidbar is filled with the idea of family and tribal roots. However, there is a psychological danger stemming from feelings of tribal rootedness and connection; it can lead to disregard and even hostility towards all outsiders, towards all those not belonging to the clan. While Judaism sees the family and the nation as central to Jewish identity and consciousness, it is well aware of the danger to which these loyalties can lead when taken to an extreme. It is for this reason that we are commanded with regard to gezel ha-ger in the middle of Parashat Naso. It is precisely the ger, the foreigner, lacking the sense of familial, tribal and national roots, who is most vulnerable to the atmosphere pervading the beginning of Sefer Bemidbar. Therefore, the Torah commands us here to deal with the ger exactly as we would with our fellow Israelites.

**Juxtaposition of Sotah and Nazir** – The **Gemara (Sota 2a)** cited by **Rashi** notes that these 2 sections of the Torah are placed next to each other to inform us that whomever sees the Sotah in her degrading position will stay away from wine. **Rav Hershel Schachter Shlita** seized on this idea to inform us of the critical need to respond to a corrupt society by going to the other extreme. He added that this is not only true for Aveiros Bein Adam L'Makom but also Bein Adam L'Chaveiro.

**All the days of his Nezirus he shall not eat anything produced by the grape vine (6:4)** – Why does the Torah forbid the Nazir from becoming tamai and from consuming ANY grape byproduct? **Rav Dovid Tevel ztl.** explains that this is consistent with the idea that the fruit of the Eitz HaDaas was a grape which brought the Yetzer HaRa and death into the world. The Torah forbids the Nazir from becoming Tamai and partaking from grape by-products. This is to help him separate from the Eitz HaDaas and cling to the Eitz HaChaim.

**And he should display Chein to you (6:24)** – **Ramban** explains that the Jewish people should fine Chein in the eyes of Hashem. Why is Chein so important? After all, isn't that dependent on the other? **Rav Simcha Zissel Broide ztl.** explains that Chein is an indication of Shleimus that comes to a person who is and does nice things. Diligent Torah study and practice coupled with

traits like humility help make up this critical trait. V'Yichuneika is a blessing that through the perfection of these traits we should be found to be without blemish in our intentions and actions.

**On the day of his completion, he shall be brought to the entrance of the Ohel Moed (6:13)** – Why must he be brought to the Mikdash to complete the Nezirus? **Rav Dovid Gross Shlita** of Cleveland suggests that the Nazir undertakes his nezirus in order to help him suppress his Yetzer HaRa. That process is able to be seen as complete when he presents with the objectivity of an outsider. To overcome desires, one needs to look at himself with the vantage point of an objective outsider.

**They brought their sacrifices before Hashem (7:3)** – The **Ramban** quotes a midrash that notes that each Nasi brought the Korban that matched his unique intentions. It was a coincidence that the results were the exact same Korban. The question needs to be asked as to why the same Korban should be offered with a variety of different Kavanos? **Rav Soloveitchik ztl.** explained that when a person brings a korban he needs to have in mind that it is HIS korban that is replacing HIM. Each Nasi had his own intentions. That mission is unique to each Nasi and Shevet which represented specific middos and strengths.

**Haftorah: Why do you ask my name? (Shoftim 19)** – The Malach asks Manoach why he wants to know his name but then answers the question – V'Hu Peli. Why the difficulty? And if he was going to answer him anyhow, why begin with the question “Why are you asking my name?” **Rav Binyamin Eisenberger Shlita** explains based on the Arizal's understanding that the world is really just a Mashal for our relationship with Hashem. Malachim do not live in the world of Mashal and as a result have difficulty putting a name on something. However, even to Manoach it is covered but also as the Malbim explains, it is a Pele – a wondrous thing representative of a deeper relationship with something greater if you allow yourself to be open to that deeper level of interpretation. We added that this is the ultimate post-Shavuos Haftorah in that Shavuos is the holiday of above surface-level relationship with Hashem – even the eating of Shavuos is transformative and indicative of something higher (Hakol Modim D'B'Atzeeres Bainan Namee Lacheem). The trick is U'Maflee LaAsos.