



The Greater Washington Community Kollel

SHABBOS DELIGHTS

TORAH MINUTE

IN MEMORY OF RABBI KALMAN WINTER ZT"l

Similarly Unique

Presented by Rabbi Moshe Sadwin, Kollel Adjunct

Parshas Nasso is the longest Parsha in the Torah. Near the end, there is a list of the special offerings that were brought by the *Nesi'im* (tribal leaders), in honor of the dedication of the *Mishkan*. The Torah details each and every aspect of the offerings and gifts that each leader brought for the dedication ceremony.

What is perplexing about this list, is that the offerings were exactly identical to one another. The same offerings and gifts that Nachshon ben Aminadav, the *Nasi* of Yehuda, brought on the first day were brought by Nesanel ben Tzuar, the *Nasi* of Yissachar, on the second day, and the same is true for days three through twelve, the final day of the special offerings. The Torah is so particular not to write even a single extra letter. Why, therefore, does the Torah see fit to repeat the exact list of offerings twelve times?

The commentaries explain that the Torah is not listing twelve identical offerings. This is because Hashem does not only look at the externalities. Hashem sees the heart, the passion, and struggle of each individual, and He appreciates each individual for who they are. Although in the actual physical offering, the *Nesi'im* offered the same items, each *Nasi* had his own specific *kavanah* (intent) for his offerings. By listing each *Nasi's* offering separately, the Torah emphasizes that they were each viewed as individualized contributions due to the unique and personal involvement of each *Nasi*.

We must realize that each of us are special to Hashem and our actions make a meaningful difference. Let us use our own unique talents and abilities to serve Hashem the best that we are able!

Wishing you a Good Shabbos!

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TABLE TALK

Point to Ponder

Speak to Aharon and his sons, saying: So shall you bless B'nei Yisrael... (6:23)

...that you sanctified us with the holiness of Aharon and you commanded us to bless His people with love. (Bracha recited by kohanim before Birkas Kohanim)

Master of the world, we have done what You have decreed upon us... (Ribono Shel Olam, recited by Kohanim after Birkas Kohanim)

When an act is performed with love, it is not usually viewed as having fulfilled a decree. Why do the kohanim use these seemingly contradictory terms?

Parsha Riddle

This week's parsha has 176 verses. What other 'holy work' has the same amount of verses? What other 'holy work' has 176 of something?

Please see next week's issue for the answer.

Last week's riddle:

Besides Matan Torah, which famous event occurred at Har Sinai? Answer: Hashem appearing to Moshe at the Burning Bush.

HATORAH V'HAMITZVAH

HALACHA INSIGHTS FROM THE PARSHA

In *parashas Nasso*, Hashem commands Aharon and his sons to bless the Children of Israel; this is the *mitzvah of birchas Kohanim* (called "*nesias kapayim* – lifting of the hands" in the Talmud).

The Talmud states: **Rabbi Yohanan said: Any priest who killed a person may not lift his hands** in the Priestly Blessing **as it is stated:** "And when you spread forth your hands I will hide My eyes from you ... **your hands are full of blood.**" Here we see that the Priestly Blessing, performed with hands spread forth, is not accepted when performed by priests whose "hands are full of blood." (*Berachos* 32a)

Homicide is the only sin that our Sages explicitly state disqualifies a Kohen from *nesias kapayim*. Many post-Talmudic authorities add one additional disqualifying family of sins: various forms of idolatry and apostasy. Some cite the *Sheiltos* as ruling this way on the grounds that idol worship is worse than homicide (*Tosafos Sotah* 39a s.v. *ve-Chi*); the Rambam derives this disqualification from a Biblical verse (*Hilchos Tefillah u-Birchas Kohanim* 15:3).

The Rambam rules that a Kohen who has committed homicide or idolatry is permanently disqualified from *nesias kapayim* even if he repents. Many medieval *ashkenazic* authorities, however, are lenient in the case of a repentant Kohen; one of their arguments is that if we do not accept repentance, this will discourage sinners from repenting (*Tosafos ibid.*; *Semag Essin* #20).

Some authorities maintain that repentance is accepted for the sin of homicide as well (see *Hagahos Maimoniyos ibid.* #1; *Darhei Moshe OC* 128:17), although others maintain that even according to the opinions that repentance is accepted for the sins of idolatry and apostasy, it is not accepted for the sin of homicide, since the same hands that committed homicide may not perform *nesias kapayim*, due to the principle that "a prosecutor [*kateigor*] cannot become an advocate [*sanneigor*]" (*Rosh Hashanah* 26a – *Pri Chadash ibid.* #37, and see *Elyah Rabbah ibid.* #64; *Biur Halachah ibid.* s.v. *Afilu*).

Various authorities have discussed whether a Kohen serving as a soldier who kills in battle is disqualified from performing *nesias kapayim*, but R. Ovadia Yosef (*Yechave Daat* 2:14) rules that "it is absolutely certain without any shadow of doubt" that a soldier who kills in defense of the People of Israel and the Land of Israel is not disqualified (cf. *Mishpetei Uziel* 8:OC:21:3).

PRESENTED BY
RABBI YITZHAK GROSSMAN, ROSH CHABURAH

KIDS KORNER

Who Am I?

#1 WHO AM I?

1. I am recited daily.
2. For some the priests recite me.
3. For all on Yom Tov.
4. I carry G-d's blessing.

#2 WHO AM I?

1. I am to turn.
2. Some spell me with a "Samech."
3. Some spell me with a "Sin."
4. I may have done the above.

Last Week's Answers

#1 Torah (I pre-dated the world, I am written in black, yet I was a blueprint, I am for all, I am named for Moshe.)

#2 Counting Jews (I can cause a plague, Use money, For me some use a verse, Don't confuse me with royalty.)

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