



The Greater Washington Community Kollel

SHABBOS DELIGHTS

TORAH MINUTE

IN MEMORY OF RABBI KALMAN WINTER ZT"l

Uniquely Identical

Presented by Rabbi Moshe Sadwin, Kollel Adjunct

The latter part of our Parsha describes the offerings of the Nesi'im (tribal princes) that were brought in dedication of the Mishkan. The Torah describes each Nasi's offering in great detail, listing exactly which animals and other gifts he brought. Upon closer look, however, it is apparent that each Nasi brought the same exact tribute. In that case, why was the Torah compelled to describe the offerings of each individual Nasi as if they were unique - it would have sufficed to describe the offering once for everyone?

The Chofetz Chaim explains that each Nasi could have tried to bring a more lavish tribute than his fellow Nasi. Perhaps they even contemplated bringing their own unique offerings, but eventually they decided to bring identical gifts. They collectively decided to put aside their personal ambitions and instead chose to honor and respect their peers by not trying to outdo each other, which would inevitably lead to jealousy and bitterness.

Hashem was so pleased by their actions that He recorded each Nasi's individual contribution, despite its repetition, to display His pleasure in their selfless decision. Their selflessness and desire to act for the common good actually afforded them even more honor. We see from this episode just how much Hashem cherishes when individuals get along with one another and stay far away from scenarios that may lead to contention. We, too, must learn to emulate the actions of those Jewish leaders and choose behaviors that will only bring us closer together.

Wishing you a Good Shabbos!

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TABLE TALK

Point to Ponder

May Hashem bless you and safeguard you. (Kohen's Blessing - 6:24)

Safeguard you from the Evil Inclination. (Midrash Agadda)

Everything is in the Hand of Heaven, besides fear of Heaven. (Berachos 33a)

The only one responsible to ensure we fear Hashem, and thereby stay away from sin, is ourselves, not Hashem. Why do the kohanim bless the people that Hashem should protect them from the Evil Inclination?

Parsha Riddle

At what other point in the year do we read from Parshas Naso?

Please see next week's issue for the answer.

Last week's riddle:

Where is the boundlessness of the Torah hinted to in Akdomus (read on Shavuos morning)?

Answer: The letter Aleph and Taf which are at the end of each line refer to the fact that the Torah is all encompassing, just as these letters bookend the Aleph Bais.

HATORAH V'HAMITZVAH

HALACHA INSIGHTS FROM THE PARSHA

In parshas Naso, Hashem instructs Moshe to command Aharon and his sons to bless the Children of Israel, in the ritual generally known as birchas kohanim or nesias kapayim. The Torah does not specify when the kohanim are to do this, but the Talmud specifies that they are to do so during the prayers of shacharis, mussaf, and ne'ilah (and minchah on certain fast days). (Taanis 26)

For more than seven centuries, the Ashkenazic custom in the Diaspora has been to limit the practice to holidays (and the Sabbath, in some versions). Various rationales for this custom have been offered, although none are entirely satisfactory; following are some of these, along with their weaknesses:

- *Inconvenience to the congregation (Kolbo). It is very difficult to understand why the relatively minor inconvenience of birchas kohanim constitutes sufficient grounds to neglect a Biblical mitzvah.*
- *The kohanim would immerse themselves before birchas kohanim, and this was difficult to do daily during the winter (Maharil). This is problematic, since immersion is not actually required, so it seems perverse to abandon the mitzvah due to the difficulty of abiding by a mere stringency. (Beis Yosef OC end of siman 128)*
- *Birchas kohanim should be performed in a state of joy, and the regnant economic hardship in our societies engenders a perpetual state of anxiety and stress. The blessing is therefore reserved for holidays, when we are commanded to rejoice. (Darchei Moshe ibid.) Once again, it is difficult to understand why a concern for an ideal state of joy is sufficient basis to neglect a Biblical mitzvah.*
- *A non-kohein may not perform nesias kapayim, and our traditions of kehunah status are unreliable. The ritual is nevertheless performed on holidays, in order that kohanim not forget their (presumptive) kehunah status and neglect to observe the attendant prohibitions (in which they are still obligated, despite the unreliability of our traditions). (Beis Efraim OC siman 6)*

Sephardim (and even Ashkenazim in Israel) generally perform nesias kapayim daily, and even many Ashkenazic authorities have acknowledged that that custom is admirable and more logical than the Ashkenazic one, although they have nevertheless been generally reluctant to abandon the venerable Ashkenazic tradition. (Shulchan Aruch Harav seif 57; Mishneh Berurah s.k. 164; Aruch Hashulchan seif 64)

PRESENTED BY
RABBI YITZHAK GROSSMAN, ROSH CHABURAH

KIDS KORNER

Who Am I?

#1 WHO AM I?

1. I am a crown.
2. I am a vow.
3. I prevent intoxication.
4. I am separated.

#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 Shloshes Yimei Hagbala (3 days before Matan Torah) (We are "fence" days, On us all may shave, On us all purified themselves, Get ready for the Torah.) **#2 Shavuos** (I am weeks, I am milky way, You sleep less on me, I am after seven sevens.)

The raffle has been postponed until after the shuls are reopened. We are still accepting entries to the raffle.

All children 13 and under who answer a "Who Am I?" correctly will be entered into a raffle to **WIN a Claw Machine Arcade Game**



Visit gwckollel.org to submit your answers.

Answer as many as you can.

Each correct answer will entitle you to another raffle ticket and increase your chances of winning!

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