

Parshas Naso

This week's Parsha is Naso begins with the census of the Gershon Kehos and Merrari houses and their services. The latter half of the Parsha deals with Nazir, Sotah and the priestly blessing and concludes with the establishment of the service of the Mishkan. I now understand why in Masechtos Sotah and Nazir, we have references to specific historical incidences and the discussion around the priestly blessings. It derives from the order that it is found in the parsha.

Because the book of Bamidbar begins the post-Sinai travels and the bulk of the time in the wilderness, certain elements that were mentioned earlier in Shemos and Vayikra are repeated, for how they are manifest in reality, i.e., with the establishment of the Mishkan.

The Torah provides the background and method through which the themes of the Parsha are recorded on how humans operate. For example, based on Rashi's explanations on the counting of the Gershon Kehos and Merrari, it seems that the distinct roles and responsibilities are laid out, so there is an accountable and responsible party because, without such detailed appointment, it is not apparent that the positions would be filled. But then again, one may be jealous of someone else being appointed, which somehow reflects on your detriment (falsely), so the Torah tells us of the Sotah. This manifest interaction takes place because of jealousy. Then you may excuse the behaviour and tell yourself it's because of wine; therefore, you want to refrain from all mundane, and we learn about the Nazir. But the Nazir is not an (obviously) ideal way of living (as explained

in the Gemara in Nazir). So now you are lost? It seems there is no way out of being Human...comes the Parsha and tells us of the priestly blessing, which is about love and cohesion among the Jews, and that Hashem will bless us materially and spiritually (Rashi; Ibn Ezra) and in our physical environments (Bamidbar Rabbah), so we can focus on ourselves and not be jealous, and not have to act in extreme ways to serve Hashem. More importantly, we must concentrate on attaching and connecting with Atzmus, not the Giluyim, which can seem like an ideal place to connect.

By remembering that Hashem blesses us and that the way to manifest His blessing is through a cohesive unity between ourselves and our fellows, we can have the Mishkan established, i.e., a metaphor for the future re-establishment of the Beis Hamikdash. Ultimately the bracha reflects a top-down and bottom-up connection we must make with Hashem. Thematically this is consistent with our Avoda as Yidden. We are constantly pushed and pulled toward Hashem. This Parsha reflects the humanity of existence, for which the different elements of the Parshas are interconnected.

The tachlis is, that Hashem loves us, and blesses us, and our role is to serve Him, B'Simcha U'Vetuv Leivav,

Good Shabbos!