



Naso (Take a census or elevate)

Numbers 4:21 And יהוה spoke to Moses saying, **22** Take אָתְּ a count of the sons of Gershon, also, by the houses אֲבוֹתָם of their fathers; by their families; **23** From thirty years old to fifty years old count אֹתָם them; all who will enter in to perform the service, to do the work in the Tabernacle of the Congregation. **24** זֹאת This is the duty of the families of the Gershonites, to serve and transport loads: **25** And they will carry אָתְּ the curtains of the Tabernacle אָתְּ and the Tabernacle of the Congregation, its covering and the covering of the badger's skins (fine leather) above it אָתְּ and the screen for the door of the Tabernacle of the Congregation, **26** אָתְּ and the tapestries for the courtyard אָתְּ and the door of the gate of the courtyard, which is by the Tabernacle and around the altar אָתְּ and the ropes אָתְּ and all the utensils they need for their service אָתְּ and all that is made for them so they shall serve. C-MATS

Question: Besides carrying the Tabernacle, what service did the Gershonites perform? Part of their responsibility was to participate in the musical accompaniment of some of the public offerings. *Chumash*

Question: Were the Gershonites considered an inferior family because they were not chosen to carry the most sacred parts of the Tabernacle? The Kohathites carried the most sacred parts of the Tabernacle, while the Gershonites carried the less sacred. By saying as well, the Torah makes the point that both tasks are necessary for the Tabernacle and both should be done with equal joy. This is an implied message to people who may not have been successful in their studies of Torah or who cannot afford to contribute very large amounts to the poor. It is easy for such people to be discouraged and say that there is no use in their attempts to study or to make contributions that are not enough to solve all budgetary problems. To this, the Torah responds that whether one can bear the exalted Ark or only hooks and curtains, every role is significant, because each is a unique participant in the sacred service. *Chumash*



Levite choir and musical instruments



Numbers 4:27 Aaron and his sons will supervise all the work of the sons of the Gershonites in transporting loads and in all their service: and you will assign to them the duties of אָת all their loads. 28 זָאת This is the service of the families of the sons of Gershon in the Tabernacle of the Congregation: and their duties will be supervised by Ithamar, the son of Aaron the priest. 29 As for the sons of Merari, you will count אֹתָם them after their families, by the houses אֲבֹתָם of their fathers; 30 You will count them from thirty years old to fifty years old, everyone who enters into the service to do אֶת-הַעֲמֹל the work of the Tabernacle of the Congregation. 31 וְזָאת And this is the service in the Tabernacle of the Congregation is to carry the frames of the Tabernacle, the crossbars, posts and sockets of the Tabernacle. 32 And the posts for the surrounding courtyard with their sockets, tent pegs and ropes, with all their accessories and everything to do with all their service: and by name you will assign אֶת-הַמְּשָׁל the loads to specific persons. C-MATS

Question: How was each task assigned to the Levites? Each Levite must be named to his specific task, rather than an entire family being assigned in a general manner. This rule applied to the Kohathites and Gershonites, too, but it was important to spell it out for the Merarites. Since they carried the heaviest parts of the Tabernacle, it was necessary to make sure that each individual had a fair share of the burden. *Chumash*

Numbers 4:33 זָאת This is how the families of the sons of Merari are to serve in the Tabernacle of the Congregation, under the supervision of Ithamar, the son of Aaron the priest. 34 And counted Moses and Aaron and the leaders of the congregation אֶת-הַבְּנֵי the sons of the Kohasites by their families, by the houses אֲבֹתָם of their fathers, 35 from thirty years old to fifty years old, everyone who enters into the service of the work in the Tabernacle of the Congregation: 36 And those that were counted by their families were 2750. 37 These are the ones counted from the families of the Kohasites of all those who might work in the Tabernacle of the Congregation that Moses and Aaron counted according to the commandment of יהוה through Moses. C-MATS



The Kohasites carried the sacred furnishings for the Tabernacle

Numbers 4:38 And those who were counted from the sons of Gershon by families, by the houses אֲבֹתָם of their fathers, 39 from thirty years old to fifty years old, everyone who enters into service for the work in the Tabernacle of the Congregation, 40 those who were numbered from them by families, by the houses אֲבֹתָם of their fathers were 2630. 41 These are the ones who were numbered from the families of the sons of Gershon from all who might do service in the Tabernacle of the Congregation that Moses and Aaron counted according to the commandment of יהוה. 42 And those who were counted from the families of the sons of Merari by families, by the houses אֲבֹתָם of their fathers, 43 from thirty years old to fifty years old, everyone who enters into service for the work in the Tabernacle of the Congregation, 44 those who were counted from them by families were 3200. 45 These are the ones who were counted from the families of the sons of Merari that Moses and Aaron counted according to the word of יהוה through Moses. 46 All those that were counted of whom Moses and Aaron and the leaders of Israel אֶת the Levites by their families and clans, after the house אֲבֹתָם of their fathers, 47 from thirty years old to fifty years old, everyone who came to do the service of the ministry and carrying the loads in the Tabernacle of the Congregation, 48 the total number was 8580. 49 According to the commandment of יהוה אֹתָם they were counted under the supervision of Moses, every one according to his specific service and load: so they were counted as commanded אֶת יהוה Moses. C-MATS

Numbers 5:1 And יהוה spoke to Moses saying, 2 Command אֶת Children of Israel to send out of the camp every leper and every one that has a discharge and whoever is defiled by touching the dead: 3 You will send both male and female outside the camp, so that they will not defile אֶת their encampments where I live among you. C-MATS

Question: Why were all the unclean people sent away from the camp? To make their camp a worthy home for the newly erected Tabernacle and the Divine Presence [Shechinah] that had begun to rest among them, the Israelites were cautioned to free their camp of ritual contamination. Chumash



Unclean person sent away from the camp

Numbers 5:4 And *the Children of Israel* did this and put אותם *them* outside *the* encampments. *The Children of Israel* did as יהוה spoke to Moses. 5 And יהוה spoke to Moses saying, 6 Tell *the Children of Israel* that when a man or woman commits any kind of חטאת *sin*, that men commit, to do a trespass in ביהוה and that person is guilty; 7 Then they will confess אָתְּ *the sin* which they have done: and he will make restitution אָתְּ *for his sin* by adding twenty percent to the principal and giving it to *the one* against whom he has sinned. C-MATS



Add 20 % to what is stolen to make restitution.

Question: What was “*the sin*” אָתְּ יהוה was referring to? The case here is of someone committing treachery toward יהוה by unlawfully holding the money of a fellow Israelite -- a loan, a theft, overdue wages and the like -- and then compounding the sin by swearing falsely that he owes nothing. The sin of swearing falsely blemishes the soul, and affects not only the sinner himself, but the entire nation. By taking someone else's money, one, in effect, denies that יהוה acted justly in giving it to the other person, and by taking His Name lightly through a false oath, the sinner diminishes the awe that the Israelites feel for the Divine Presence that rests among them. *Chumash*

Numbers 5: 8 But if the man has no kinsman to make restitution for his sin, then let the restitution go to ליהוה *to the priest*; in addition to the ram of atonement through which atonement will be made for him. 9 And every offering consecrated by *the Children of Israel* and presented to the priest will belong to him. 10 And every man's אָתְּ consecrated contributions will be his own, but whatever any man gives the priest will belong to him. C-MATS

Question: How do these verses foreshadow the coming Messiah's atonement for our sins? Numbers 5:5-7 shows us clearly the established pattern by Father through אָתְּ Yahusha in obtaining forgiveness of sin when confession is made (*repentance*), and then restitution must be paid and finally verses 8-10, אָתְּ blood is shed for atonement. C-MATS

Question: Who keeps the offerings given to the priest? The verse teaches that whatever gifts the Torah assigns to the priests must be given to him, and they become his personal property. One who gives the priest his due will not suffer any loss; to the contrary it shall be his, for יהוה will reward him in return for his generosity. Torah teaches that if someone keeps for himself the sacred gifts that he is required to turn over to the Kohanim, יהוה will punish him by depriving him of his prosperity and leaving him with nothing more than the small amount that he should have given away to יהוה's servants. *Chumash*

Question: Can there be atonement for your sins unless you orally confess? A thief must make restitution to his victim, whether or not he is cleansed of his sin by confessing his sin, and if witnesses establish his guilt, he must pay even if he continues to protest his innocence. To gain atonement, one must repent, and this repentance is expressed by confession, for one can repent only if he recognizes and regrets his sin. This obligation is stated here to teach that even where the Torah mandates a specific offering, as in this case, there cannot be atonement without an oral confession. *Chumash*

1 John 1:8 If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. **9** If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. **10** If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us. C-MATS



Do not steal

Question: What do you consider a worse offense: armed robbery, where one forcibly takes away someone else's possessions against his will, or the type of theft where the item is 'lifted', or taken secretly, without anyone being aware of it at the time? Why? Our first impulse may be to say the brazen, open robbery is worse. However, in an ultimate, spiritual sense, the second crime is actually worse. While the robber has been overcome by his improper desires and acts upon them openly, the second, seemingly more 'civil' perpetrator can control himself to the degree that he's concerned that his act shouldn't be seen by other people. Yet he is not equally bothered by the fact that יהוה is witnessing the entire crime. One of our main spiritual tasks in life is to become more and more aware of יהוה, to the point that His presence is as real to us as any other presence. The 'secret' thief sadly demonstrates that his relationship with יהוה hasn't even gotten off the ground.

Question: It is impossible for a person to acquire even one iota of someone else's rightful possessions. How do you understand this, and how does this relate to the concept of stealing? A person's possessions are not merely haphazard acquisitions; rather, יהוה has arranged that whatever we need for accomplishing our spiritual life-task comes into our hands in a legitimate way. Yet יהוה also gives man free will, and unfortunately some use this free will to try to circumvent יהוה's will, and steal from others. However יהוה ultimately is in control of everything, and will see to it, one way or another, that no one will benefit from illegitimately gotten gains, nor lose out from having something that's legitimately his taken away. With this knowledge, one can relax and neither feel the need to take from others - it won't help anyway - nor feel overly upset if something of his is taken - he'll either get it back, or it wasn't really meant to be his in the first place.

Question: Is it ethical to 'steal from the rich and give to the poor'? While we can feel bad about what seem like social injustices and try to encourage people to share their wealth - stealing, even in this case, is ethically wrong.

Question: Do you think a person who truly trusts in יהוה can steal? No. Trust in יהוה means trusting that He has the capacity to give us anything we need, in an honest way. Therefore we should try our best to get what we want honestly and if we don't get it we should accept that יהוה must feel that getting it would not be for our ultimate good.

Question: What did King David secretly steal? King David stole another man's wife through adultery. When he finds out she is pregnant, he then seeks to hide the sin by committing more sins. In 2 Samuel 11, King David executes two plans, which involve even more sin, to keep his sin hidden:

Plan #1: King David brings Uriah home to give him a report on the war. He throws him a party, gets him drunk, and hopes that he will have intercourse with Bathsheba, offering a cover-up for her pregnancy. The lies, manipulation, and impact on the armed forces that remain in battle without one of their leaders is obvious. Plan fails.

Plan #2: King David puts Uriah on the front line so that he will be killed in the intensity of battle. The disregard for human life in order to keep his sin hidden is again obvious. Plan succeeds.

It is important to note the plans King David is willing to pursue in order to keep his sin from being exposed. Yet King David had no peace.

Psalm 32:3 When I kept silence, my bones wasted away through my groaning all the day long. **4** For day and night Your hand was heavy upon me. C-MATS

Question: How did King David deal with his hidden sins once Nathan the prophet told David that יהוה was very displeased with him? David confessed his sin before יהוה.

Psalm 32:5 I acknowledged **חַטָּאתִי** my sin to You and my iniquity did I not hide: **אָמַרְתִּי** I said, I will confess my transgressions to לַיהוָה; **וְאַתָּה** and You forgave the iniquity of **חַטָּאתִי** my sin. C-MATS

Psalm 51:2 Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin. **3** For I know my transgressions; and my sin is ever before me. **4** Against You, You only, have **חַטָּאתִי** I sinned and done that which is evil in Your sight; that You may be justified when You speak and be clear when You judge. C-MATS

Hard work brings
prosperity;
playing around
brings poverty.

- Bible

Question: If someone claims to have achieved something spiritually worthwhile without effort, don't believe him. How do you understand this? It is a spiritual rule that that which is genuinely worthwhile is going to require effort to achieve. Although we might wish it were otherwise - when it comes to spiritual greatness, there is no free ride.

Question: Why should someone work hard and have responsibilities? Life in this world is about maximizing our potential and working hard to achieve worthwhile goals. Responsibilities build us up and give us the inner strength we need to succeed. Besides this, they also polish our character and help turn us into givers instead of takers, which is one of life's main spiritual goals.

Question: In your opinion, do comfort and pleasure go hand in hand? Although it may seem so, in truth they are miles apart. Often the greatest pleasures in life take much effort to achieve and sustain and aren't comfortable at all. Comfort seeking is a kind of retreating from life - a mini-death - and missing out on many of the greatest pleasures life has to offer.

Question: Do you want to avoid hard work? Are you seeking the easy way out? Do you seek your own pleasure and not seek what יהוה wants you to do?

Colossians 3:23 And whatsoever you do, do it heartily, as to יהוה, and not unto men; **24** Knowing that of יהוה you shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for you serve Adonai the Mashiach. C-MATS

Proverbs 14:23 In all labor there is profit; but the talk of the lips *leads* only to poverty. C-MATS

Galatians 6:9 And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not. C-MATS

Ecclesiastes 9:10 Whatsoever your hand finds to do, do it with your might. C-MATS

Proverbs 12:11 He that tills אֲדַמְתוּ *his land* (works) shall have plenty of bread; but he that follows after vain *persons* is void of understanding. C-MATS

Proverb 21:17 He that loves pleasure shall be a poor man: He that loves wine and oil shall not be rich. C-MATS

Isaiah 58:13 If you keep your foot from breaking the Sabbath, from doing your pleasure on My holy day; וְקָרַאתָ *and you call* the Sabbath a delight and the holy of יְהוָה honorable; and shall honor it, not doing your own ways, nor finding your own pleasure, nor speaking *your own* words: 14 Then shall you delight yourself in יְהוָה; and I will make you to ride upon the high places of the earth; and I will feed you with the heritage of Jacob your father: for the mouth of יְהוָה has spoken it. C-MATS

2 Timothy 3:1 Know this also, that in the last days perilous times will come. 2 For men will be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, 3 Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, without self-control, fierce, despisers of those that are good, 4 Traitors, rash, conceited, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of Elohim; 5 Having a form of godliness, but denying its power: turn away from them. C-MATS

Spiritual Exercise: Strive to work hard and achieve something worthwhile this week and not seek your own pleasure.

Numbers 5:11 And יְהוָה spoke to Moses saying, 12 Speak to *the* Children of Israel וְאָמַרְתָּ *and you say* to them if any אִשְׁתּוֹ *man's wife* goes astray and is unfaithful to him, 13 And lie a man with אִתָּהּ *her* bed without her husband's knowledge and she becomes impure secretly and *there be* no witness against her and she was not taken in the act; 14 And the spirit of jealousy comes on him and he is jealous of אִתָּהּ *his wife* and she has become impure: or *if* the spirit of jealousy comes on him and he is jealous of אִשְׁתּוֹ *his wife* and she has not become impure: 15 Then the man will bring אִתָּהּ *his wife* to the priest and he will bring אִתָּהּ *her offering* for her, the tenth part of an ephah (*two quarts*) of barley grain; he will pour no oil on it or put frankincense on it; for it *is* a *grain offering* for קִנְיָאָה *jealousy*, a *grain offering* for remembering, for recalling guilt to mind. C-MATS



Woman accused of adultery brought before the priests

Question: What symbolism does the wife's offering have? It is coarse barley flour, coarse because she acted coarsely, and barley, which is usually used as animal feed, because she degraded herself and behaved like an animal. It is not beautified with oil and frankincense like other meal-offerings, because incense recalls the fragrance of the Matriarchs and oil symbolizes light, but she did not follow their example and she acted in the dark to hide her sin. She has earned the resentment of both her husband and her Maker. *Chumash*

Question: How did יהוה deal with a jealous husband? The Torah provides a miraculous process that will either prove that she sinned and caused both her death and that of her illicit lover, or show conclusively that she was faithful and thereby restore trust and love to the marriage. And if, indeed, she had been unfaithful, her fear of imminent death might well induce her to confess. If so, the marriage would end in divorce, but without any penalty to her, since there was no judicially acceptable evidence of her guilt. *Chumash*

Question: What would cause the husband to become jealous of his wife? If a man and a married woman had secluded themselves in such a way and for a sufficient time that they could have sinned, then a spirit of jealousy -- based on earlier improper activity -- had seized her husband and he had become suspicious of his wife and the other man. He had warned her not to seclude herself with the man, but she ignored the warning. A pair of witnesses testified that the two had been together and had the opportunity to commit adultery, but they did not see whether or not they had actually done so: she may have ... and she may have not (v. 14). She had not been coerced into the seclusion or to commit adultery, for if she had been overpowered she would be innocent (v. 13). *Chumash*

Question: How is marriage intended to function? Marriage is not a convenient means of satisfying passions and material needs; it is a sacred relationship that demands faithfulness and purity between the partners. *Chumash*

Numbers 5:16 And the priest will bring her forward and bring אֶתָּה *her* before יהוה: **17** And the priest will take consecrated water in an earthen vessel; and the priest will take the dust that is on the floor of the Tabernacle and put *it* into the water. C-MATS

Question: Where was the "consecrated water" drawn? The water is drawn from the Temple Laver, the utensil that, by its very essence, recalled the purity of Israelite women and their devotion to their husbands. The Laver was made of the mirrors of the Israelite women, who used the mirrors to entice their husbands while they were in slavery in Egypt to join with them and produce children. *Chumash*

Numbers 5:18 And the priest will bring אֶתָּה the woman before יהוה and uncover אֶתָּה head of the woman and put in her hands אֶת offering for remembrance, the grain offering for קִנְיָאָה *jealousy*: and the priest will have in his hand the bitter water that brings the curse: **19** And the priest will make אֶתָּה *her* say an oath and say to the woman, If no man has slept אִתָּךְ *with you* and if you have not gone astray to make yourself unclean while under your husband's authority, you will be free from this bitter water that brings the curse: **20** But if אִתָּךְ you have gone astray while under your husband's authority and if you have become impure and has laid some man with you אֶתָּה have lain instead of your husband.

Numbers 5:21 Then will make the priest אָתְּ the woman say an oath that brings a curse and the priest will say to the woman, may יהוה make אֹתְךָ you an object of cursing and condemnation among your people, when does make יהוה אָתְּ your private parts shrivel (rot) אָתְּ and your abdomen to swell; 22 May this water that brings the curse go into your inner parts to make your abdomen swell and your private parts shrivel: And the woman will say, Amein and Amein. 23 And the priest will write אָתְּ curses in a book and he will wash them off into the bitter water. C-MATS



The Woman Taken In Adultery by William Hole

Question: What death would the woman who committed adultery suffer? The womb would be destroyed in retribution for its sinful activity. *Chumash*

Question: Why were the curses washed away with the water? Great is peace! This was done to make peace between husband and wife, the Torah instructs that the curses should be blotted out in water. *Chumash*

Numbers 5:24 And he will cause to drink **את** the woman **את** water *made bitter* that brings the curse: and the water that brings the curse will enter into her and *become bitter*. 25 Then the priest will take out of her hand the woman's **את** *grain offering of jealousy* and will wave **את** the offering before יהוה and offer **אתה** it (her) on the altar: 26 And the priest will take a handful of the grain offering, even **את** memorial portion and burn it on the altar and then he will cause to drink **את** the woman **את** the water. 27 And when he has made her to drink **את** the water, then if she is impure and has sinned against her husband, then the water, that brings the curse, will enter into her and *become bitter* and her abdomen will swell and private parts will shrivel and the woman will be a curse among her people. 28 And if the woman has not become impure, then she will be free and will have children. 29 **זאת** *This is the Torah of Jealousy, when a wife goes astray from her husband and becomes impure;* 30 Or when the spirit of jealousy comes on the husband and he is jealous over **את** *his wife* and will bring **את** the woman before יהוה and will deal with her, the priest **את** all according to **זאת** *this Torah*. 31 Then the man will be clear of guilt from sin and the wife will bear **את** her iniquity. C-MATS

Question: How do these verses foreshadow Yahusha's bride? *Numbers 5:12-31 is called the Torah (law) of Jealousy* and is a type and foreshadow of *Yahusha's bride* during the end times and why she will be tested by יהוה *Father's judgments* and will have to endure the Great Tribulation to see who will be faithful and who will not be faithful. Only the ones with the extra vessel of oil will make it to the bridal chamber. It is fascinating to see where the **את** are in this section. *The wife being tested is definitely an את covenant child of יהוה and the high priest definitely sits in the office of את Yahusha* administering the **את** bitter water (Numbers 5:27) but according to the **את** curse (Numbers 5:23) if she is guilty, the punishment is administered by both יהוה and **את** according to verse 5:21 **when does make יהוה את your private parts shrivel (rot) ואת and your abdomen to swell**. C-MATS

Question: What is the reward for an innocent woman who has had to endure this ordeal? She will bear children more successfully. If she had suffered difficult labor, she will give birth more easily. Or, יהוה will give her a child to compensate for her ordeal. *Chumash*

Question: If the woman died because she is guilty, is any guilt imposed upon the man for her death? If the woman died because she was guilty, no guilt attaches to the husband who caused it to happen. Conversely, if she was proven innocent, he may resume marital relations despite his earlier suspicions. *Chumash*

Question: What happens if the man has been morally impure himself? The ordeal of the bitter waters is effective only if the husband is free from sin himself, but if he, too, was immoral, the waters will not affect his wife. Only a morally pure husband can properly value the marriage bond and invoke a miracle to punish an adulteress. *Chumash*

Question: A blessing rests on that which is hidden from the eye. What do you think this means? Our attitudes - and those of other people - toward what we have can have a very real physical effect on our circumstances. If we flaunt and make others jealous over our good fortune, it is a spiritual rule that we will be much more likely to end up losing that good fortune than if we had remained modestly low-key.

Numbers 6:1 And יהוה spoke to Moses saying, **2** Speak to *the* Children of Israel וְאָמַרְתָּ and you say to them that when *either a man or a woman* makes a special type of vow, the vow of a Nazarite, to separate *themselves* to יהוה: **3** He will abstain from wine and strong *intoxicating* drink and not drink any vinegar from the wine or strong *intoxicating* drink, neither will he drink grape juice or eat grapes or raisins. **4** All the days of his separation *as a Nazarite*, he will eat nothing that is made from the grapevine, from the grape skins or the seeds. **5** All the days of the vow of his separation *as a Nazarite*, he will not shave his head until the days are fulfilled *in* which he separates *himself* to ליהוה, he will be sacred and will let his hair grow long. **6** All the days that he separates *himself* to ליהוה *as a Nazarite*, he cannot come near a dead body. **7** He will not make himself unclean for his father, mother, brother or sister when they die: because his consecration to Elohim *is* on his head. **8** All the days of his separation *as a Nazarite*, he is sacred to ליהוה. C-MATS

Question: Who were the most notable Nazirites? They were Samson (divinely appointed), Samuel (his mother offered a vow), John the Baptizer (divinely appointed) and Paul (voluntarily).



Question: How does one become a Nazarite? The Torah permits a man or woman to adopt voluntarily the status of a Nazarite, which includes three restrictions: (a) A Nazarite is forbidden to eat or drink grapes or grape products; (b) A Nazarite's hair may not be cut; and (c) A Nazarite may not become contaminated by a human corpse. The Nazarite adopts a state of righteousness -- and the Torah dictates that such righteousness is incompatible with those forbidden activities. *Chumash*

Question: Why does a Nazarite give up wine? A man can more easily fall into temptation while drinking wine or other intoxicating liquors. When a person drinks one cup, he is like a lamb, modest and meek. When he drinks two cups, he becomes mighty as a lion and begins to speak with pride, saying: "Who compares with me!" As soon as he drinks three or four cups he becomes a monkey, dancing and frolicking and profaning his mouth, and knowing not what he does. When he becomes drunk, he becomes a pig, dirtied by mud and wallowing in filth. *Chumash*

Question: Why would someone want to become a Nazarite? The person seeks to separate himself from the temptations of his environment. It is truly uncommon for someone to undertake a vow that will cut him off from a physical pleasure that others find enticing, so he is doing an amazing thing. *Chumash*

Question: What is the minimum period of taking a Nazarite vow? The minimum period of being a Nazarite is thirty days, but a Nazarite who so desires may adopt longer periods. *Chumash*

Question: Why is the Nazarite not allowed to cut his hair? The commandment against trimming the hair helps one avoid thoughts of flaunting his physical beauty. The Nazarite's hair is a crown of loyalty to יהוה. *Chumash*

Question: Why is a Nazarite not allowed to go near his dead mother or father? Like a Kohen Gadol, the Nazarite may not let anything interrupt the devotion he has accepted upon himself. *Chumash*

Question: Is it good to tell yourself "no" to certain things? Sometimes saying 'no' to ourselves can make us even happier than saying 'yes.' A Nazarite is someone who commits to abstain from wine, in order to achieve a higher goal. We too can achieve more of our important life goals if we find the inner strength to say 'no' to things that will distract us from becoming the person we really want to be.



SAY NO!

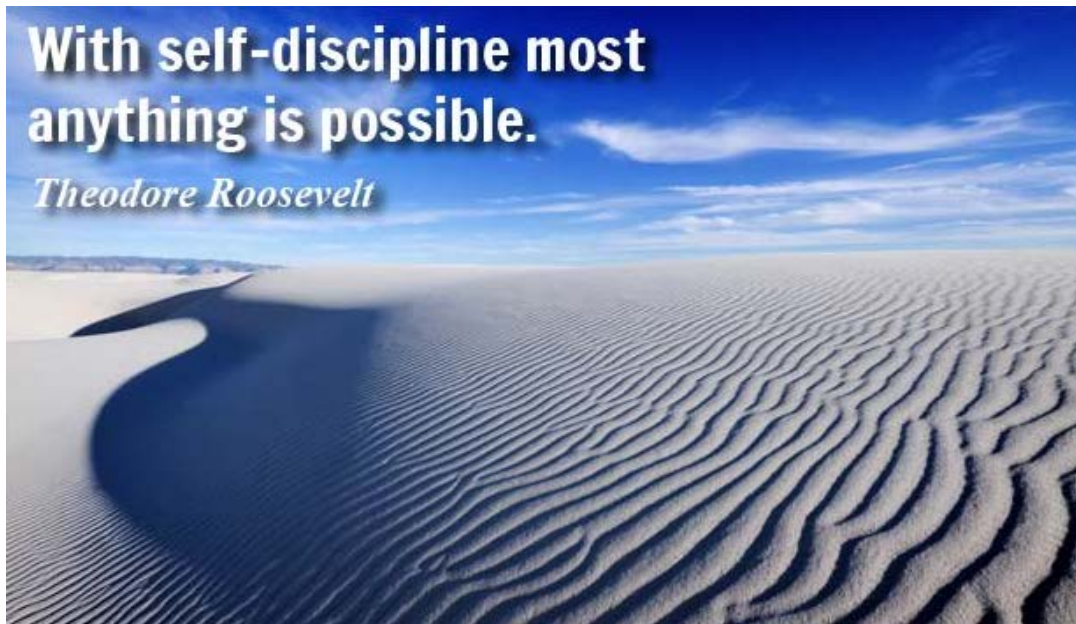
Proverbs 5:21 For the ways of man are before the eyes of יהוה; and He makes level all his paths. **22** His own iniquities shall capture אֶת the wicked and he shall be held with the cords of חַטָּאתוֹ his sin. **23** He shall die for lack of instruction; and in the greatness of his folly he shall go astray. C-MATS

Proverbs 12:1 Whoever loves correction loves knowledge; but he that hates correction is foolish. C-MATS

Proverbs 13:18 Poverty and shame shall come to him that refuses correction; but he that regards correction shall be honored. C-MATS

2 Timothy 1:7 For Elohim has not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, love, and a sound mind. C-MATS

Spiritual Exercise: In what areas of your life do you need more self-discipline? Try to improve one of these areas this week.



Numbers 6:9 And if any man dies very suddenly close to him and he defiles his consecrated head, then he will shave his head on the day of his purification, he will shave it on the seventh day. **10** And on the eighth day he will bring two turtledoves or two young pigeons to the priest to the door of the Tabernacle of the Congregation: **11** And the priest will offer one for a sin offering and the other **לְחַטָּאת** for sin [offering] and make atonement for him, because he sinned because of the dead person and will re-consecrate **אֵת** his head that same day. **12** And he will consecrate to **אֵת** לִיהוּה the days of his separation and by bringing a lamb in its first year for a guilt offering: but the previous days will not be counted, because his separation was defiled. **13** **וְזֹאת** And this is the Torah of the Nazarites, after the days of his separation have been fulfilled: he will bring **אֹתוֹ** him to the door of the Tabernacle of the Congregation. C-MATS

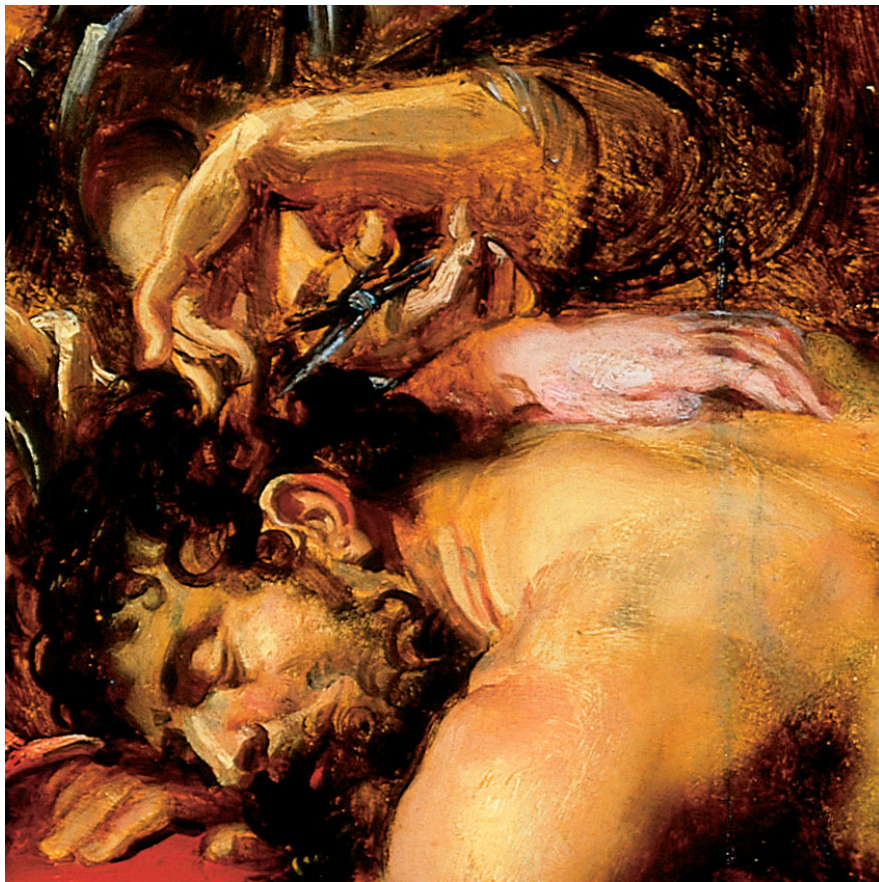
Question: What happens if the Nazarite is defiled by a corpse? If the Nazarite becomes contaminated by a corpse during this period, the days already counted are forfeited. The following sacrificial ritual is performed and a new term of being a Nazarite begins. He must undergo the seven-day purification process of a person who becomes contaminated by a human corpse and bring an offering to the priest. *Chumash*

Numbers 6:14 And he will offer **אֵת** his offering to לִיהוּה, **אֶחָת** one male lamb in its first year without blemish for a burnt offering and one female lamb in its first year without blemish **לְחַטָּאת** for sin [offering] and one ram without blemish for a peace offering, **15** And a basket of unleavened bread, cakes of fine flour mixed with oil and wafers of unleavened bread anointed with oil, their grain offering and their drink offerings. **16** And the priest will bring them before יְהוָה and will offer **אֵת** חַטָּאתוֹ his sin offering **אֵת** and his burnt offering: **17** **אֵת** and he will offer the ram as a sacrifice of peace offerings to לִיהוּה with the basket of unleavened bread: will offer the priest **אֵת** his grain (meat) offering **אֵת** and his drink offering. **18** And will shave the Nazarite at the door of the Tabernacle of the Congregation **אֵת** the head of his consecrated and will take **אֵת** the hair of his consecrated head and put it in the fire under the sacrifice of the peace offerings. C-MATS

Question: Why does the Nazarite put his hair on the fire? Now that the Nazarite has succeeded in elevating and making himself ready to rejoin the community, he puts the hair under the offering, symbolizing that he is now subordinating his life of separation to his duty to contribute to the wholesome life of the nation. *Chumash*

Question: Why does the Nazarite bring a sin-offering after a period of sanctity and devotion? Because it would have been fitting to continue the abstinence from worldly pleasure and extend the vow of being a Nazarite indefinitely. The sin-offering atones for his decision to return to worldly pursuits. A peace-offering symbolizes contentment and joy. The Nazarite brings it in rejoicing over the fulfillment of his vow. The Nazarite thanks יהוה for permitting him to achieve a high level of sanctity. *Chumash*

Numbers 6:19 And will take the priest אֶת־ the shoulder of the boiled ram and אֶת־ one unleavened cake out of the basket and one unleavened wafer and will put *them* in the hands of the Nazarite after *he* is shaven *the hair of* אֶת־ his separation: 20 And the priest will wave אֹתָם *them* as a wave offering before יהוה: *this is set aside for the priest along with the breast and shoulder for the wave offering:* and after that the Nazarite may drink wine. 21 זאת *This is the Torah of the Nazarite who has vowed and for his offering to ליהוה for being separated, in addition to anything more for which he has sufficient means. According to the vow which he vowed, so he must do according to the Torah for the Nazarite. The Priestly Blessings Numbers 6:24-27: Vows of the Nazarite. C-MATS*



Samson was a Nazarite from birth and was commanded never to cut his hair.



Samson broke his vow and cut his hair and lost his strength



Levite priests blessing the people

The Priestly Blessing

Numbers 6:22 And יהוה spoke to Moses saying, 23 Speak to Aaron and his sons and tell them how to bless אֶת Children of Israel. You are to say to them, 24 יהוה bless you and keep you: 25 יהוה make His face shine on you and be gracious to you: 26 יהוה lift up His face towards you and give you peace. 27 And they will put אֶת Name of Mine on *the* Children of Israel; and I will bless them. C-MATS

Question: What blessings are being bestowed on the Israelites?

יהוה bless you and keep you- Blessing for material prosperity. May your possessions increase, as well as the days of your life. יהוה blesses Israel with prosperity to enable the people to devote themselves to Torah study and fulfillment. The exact form of the blessing must depend on the needs of each individual. The student will be blessed in his learning and the merchant in his business, just as someone's gratitude for יהוה's blessing must be expressed according to the degree and form of the prosperity granted him.

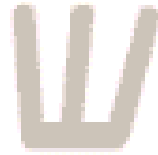
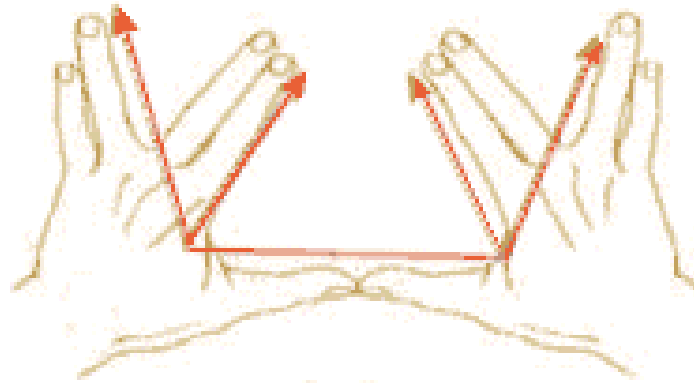
יהוה make His face shine on you and be gracious to you- Spiritual blessings of Torah knowledge and inspiration. May יהוה enlighten you so that you will be capable of perceiving the wondrous wisdom of the Torah and of יהוה's intricate creation. יהוה sheds light upon His workings of the universe. Thus, we can perceive a purpose in creation that, in turn, helps us to better understand the greatness and will of the Creator.

יהוה lift up His face towards you and give you peace- יהוה's compassion above and beyond what one deserves, as expressed in forgiveness of sin and the giving of peace. May יהוה suppress His anger, meaning that even if you are sinful, יהוה will show you special consideration and not punish you. One may have prosperity, health, food and drink, but if there is no peace it is all worthless. Therefore, the blessings are sealed with the gift of peace. *Chumash*

Question: What is "peace"? "Peace when you enter, peace when you leave, and peaceful relations with everyone." This alludes to three levels of peace: within the family, in the country where one lives, and throughout the world. Peace is not simply the absence of war. It is a harmony between conflicting forces. Within man, it is the proper balance between the needs of the body and his higher duty to the soul. In the universe it is balance between the infinite elements as well as between the sacred and the mundane. When Israel is sinful, it disrupts this balance because it is not making proper use of the human and physical resources יהוה gives the world. This creates a barrier between יהוה and His people, a barrier that יהוה, with compassion, removes so that we can repent and return to the blessed condition of peaceful harmony. *Chumash*

Question: How can you preserve your wealth? May יהוה bless you with wealth and protect you so that you use the money to perform blessings. In many places, the best way for someone to preserve his wealth is to use it for charity and good deeds. That assures him יהוה's continued blessing. *Chumash*

Question: When was the priestly blessing used? In ancient times, the priests recited the blessing twice each day while standing on a special platform. The common procedure was for the Levites, the descendants of the tribe of Levi who served as assistants in the temple, to wash the hands of the kohanim, who then remove their shoes and stand before the ark. At the appropriate point in the service, the prayer leader will call out "kohanim." The kohanim then cover their heads with their prayer shawls, arrange their fingers, and recite an introductory blessing. The leader then calls out each word of the blessing one by one and the kohanim repeat it.



The letter Shin for Shaddai

The position of each hand in this image forms the Hebrew letter shin (ש), the first letter in Shaddai (שדי), the name of יהוה that refers to Him as a protector.



As a little boy, Leonard Nimoy, who is Jewish, was told not to turn around and look around to see what the Rabbi was doing, since he was not of age yet. But as most young boys do, he did it anyway. What he saw was the Rabbi facing the worshipers and blessing with his hands in the air and fingers spread. He used this blessing for his character Spock meaning “live long and prosper”.

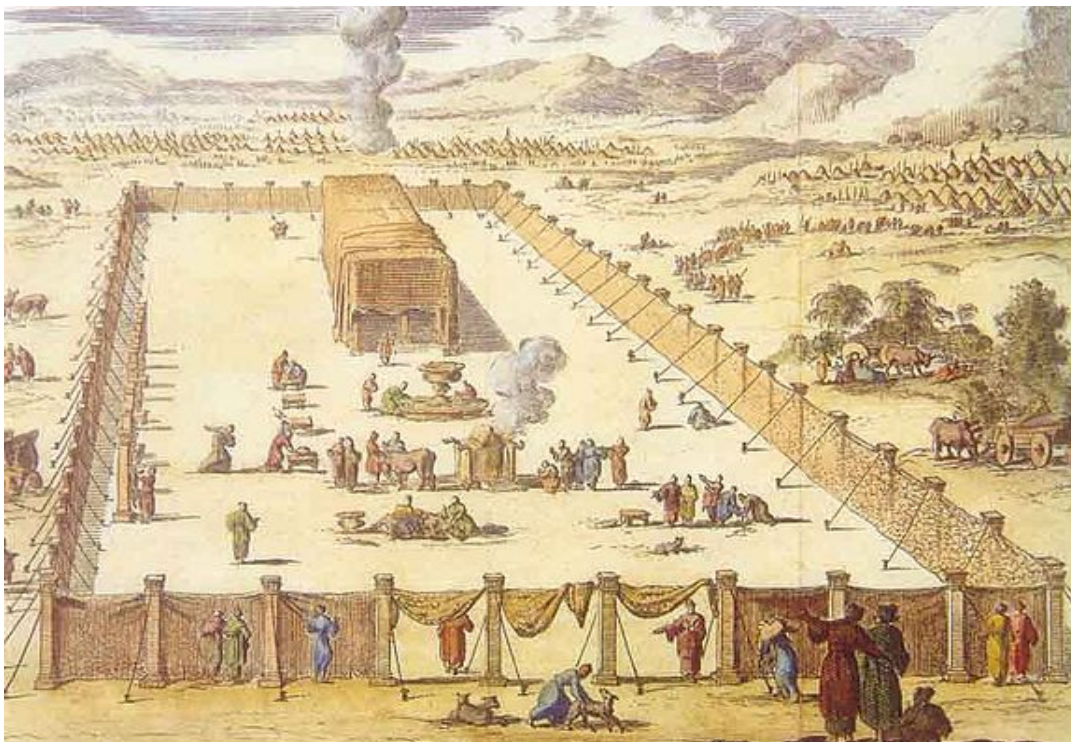
Gifts of the leaders of Israel

Numbers 7:1 And it came to pass on the day that Moses had fully set up אֶת־ the Tabernacle (*mishkan*) and had anointed אֹתוֹ *it (him)* and sanctified אֹתוֹ *it (him)* וְאֶת־ and all its furnishings וְאֶת־ and the altar וְאֶת־ and all its utensils. After he had anointed אֹתָם *them* and sanctified them; 2 Then the princes of Israel, who were heads רִאשֵׁי of their father's clans, made an offering. They were the princes of the tribes in charge over those who were counted, 3 and they brought אֶת־ their offering before יְהוָה, six covered wagons and twelve oxen; a wagon for every two princes and for each one an ox: and they brought אֹתָם *them* before the Tabernacle. C-MATS

Question: Who were the leaders of the tribes? They earned their position because they had been the Hebrew foremen in Egypt and they willingly suffered beatings at the hands of the Egyptians rather than persecute their brethren. *Chumash*

Numbers 7:4 And יְהוָה spoke to Moses saying, 5 Take it מֵאֹתָם *from them* that they may do אֶת־ *the* service of the Tabernacle of the Congregation; and you will give אֹתָם *them* to the Levites, to every man as needed for his duties. C-MATS

Question: Why was Moses hesitant about accepting the gifts from the leaders? Moses thought that the Levites were to carry all parts of the Tabernacle on their shoulders, including the very heavy planks, whereas the leaders felt that wagons should be used for that purpose. Here, יְהוָה agreed with the leaders and ordered Moses to accept their wagons and oxen, and apportion them to the Levites according to the difficulty of their work. *Chumash*



Numbers 7:6 And took Moses אָתְּ the wagons וְאֶתְּ and the oxen and gave אֹתָם them to the Levites. 7 אָתְּ two wagons וְאֶתְּ and four oxen he gave to the sons of Gershon, as needed for their duties: 8 וְאֶתְּ and four wagons וְאֶתְּ and eight oxen he gave to the sons of Merari, as needed for their duties, as supervised by Ithamar, the son of Aaron the priest. 9 But to the sons of Kohas he gave none, because their duties involved the sacred articles, which they carried on their shoulders. 10 And brought an offering the princes for אָתְּ dedicating the altar on the day to be anointed of אֹתוֹ him, even offered the princes אָתְּ their offering before the altar. 11 And יהוה said to Moses, each prince on his day for a period of 12 days will offer אָתְּ their offering for the dedication of the altar. C-MATS

Question: Why did the leaders bring their offerings on separate days? The leaders had wanted to bring all their offerings together on the same day, but יהוה ordered that each have his own day, to give equal honor to each and to prolong the celebration. Moses did not know which order they should follow, so יהוה instructed that they should bring their offerings in the order the tribes followed while journeying through the wilderness. *Chumash*

Question: If the leaders' gifts were identical, why were they described separately in identical verses? Even though the twelve offerings were identical, each indirectly refers to the special mission of its tribe, so that each was unique in its spiritual essence. This is why the Torah describes each one separately in virtually identical verses. *Chumash*

Question: How should you bring an offering to יהוה? Everyone who brings an offering must bear sincere inner feelings of repentance and desire to draw closer to יהוה. *Chumash*

Question: How can you give an offering to יהוה today? Love those around you. Help those in need. Give to the poor.

Numbers 7:12 And the one who offered on the day of the first אָתְּ his offering was Nahshon the son of Amminadab, from the tribe of Judah. 13 His offering was אֶתְּ one silver dish weighing 130 shekels ($3 \frac{1}{4}$ lbs), one silver basin weighing 70 shekels ($1 \frac{3}{4}$ lbs) using the shekel of the sanctuary; both of them were full of fine flour mixed with oil for a grain offering. C-MATS

Question: How much is a silver shekel worth? As for the current value of a Biblical half-shekel, Maimonides records it as weighing 160 grains of barley, which is equivalent to 8 grams, or 0.28 ounces. A Biblical half-shekel equals about \$5.60 and a shekel equals about \$11.20 based on the current rate of silver at about \$20.00 USD per ounce.














Silver shekel

Numbers 7:14 תתס One pan weighing 10 shekels of gold (1/4 lbs) full of incense; 15 One young bull, one ram, one lamb in its first year for a burnt offering; 16 One male goat תאטתל for sin [offering]; 17 And for a sacrifice of peace offering two oxen, five rams, five male goats, five lambs in its first year. This was the offering of Nahshon the son of Amminadab. 18 On the second day Nethanel the son of Zuar, leader of Issachar, presented an offering. 19 He offered for תתס his offering תתס one silver dish weighing 130 shekels (3 ¼ lbs), one silver basin weighing 70 shekels (1 ¾ lbs) using the shekel of the sanctuary; both of them were full of fine flour mixed with oil for a grain offering; 20 תתס One pan weighing 10 shekels of gold (1/4 lbs) full of incense; 21 One young bull, one ram, one lamb in its first year for a burnt offering; 22 One male goat תאטתל for sin [offering]; 23 And for a sacrifice of peace offering two oxen, five rams, five male goats, five lambs in its first year. This was the offering of Nethanel the son of Zuar. 24 On the third day Eliab the son of Helon, leader of the children of Zebulun, presented an offering. 25 His offering was תתס one silver dish weighing 130 shekels (3 ¼ lbs), one silver basin weighing 70 shekels (1 ¾ lbs) using the shekel of the sanctuary; both of them were full of fine flour mixed with oil for a grain offering; 26 תתס One pan weighing 10 shekels of gold (1/4 lbs) full of incense; 27 One young bull, one ram, one lamb in its first year for a burnt offering; 28 One male goat תאטתל for sin [offering]; 29 And for a sacrifice of peace offering two oxen, five rams, five male goats, five lambs in its first year. This was the offering of Eliab the son of Helon. 30 On the fourth day Elizur the son of Shedeur, leader of the children of Reuben, presented an offering. 31 His offering was תתס one silver dish weighing 130 shekels (3 ¼ lbs), one silver basin weighing 70 shekels (1 ¾ lbs) using the shekel of the sanctuary; both of them were full of fine flour mixed with oil for a grain offering; 32 תתס One pan weighing 10 shekels of gold (1/4 lbs) full of incense; 33 One young bull, one ram, one lamb in its first year for a burnt offering; 34 One male goat תאטתל for sin [offering]; 35 And for a sacrifice of peace offering two oxen, five rams, five male goats, five lambs in its first year. This was the offering of Elizur the son of Shedeur. 36 On the fifth day Shelumiel the son of Zurishaddai, leader of the children of Simeon, presented an offering. 37 His offering was תתס one silver dish weighing 130 shekels (3 ¼ lbs), one silver basin weighing 70 shekels (1 ¾ lbs) using the shekel of the sanctuary; both of them were full of fine flour mixed with oil for a grain offering; 38 תתס One pan weighing 10 shekels of gold (1/4 lbs) full of incense; 39 One young bull, one ram, one lamb in its first year for a burnt offering; 40 One male goat תאטתל for sin [offering]; 41 And for a sacrifice of peace offering two oxen, five rams, five male goats, five lambs in its first year. This was the offering of Shelumiel the son of Zurishaddai. 42 On the sixth day Eliasaph the son of Deuel, leader of the children of Gad, presented an offering. 43 His offering was תתס one silver dish weighing 130 shekels (3 ¼ lbs), one silver basin weighing 70 shekels (1 ¾ lbs) using the shekel of the sanctuary; both of them were full of fine flour mixed with oil for a grain offering; 44 תתס one pan weighing 10 shekels of gold (1/4 pound) full of incense; 45 One young bull, one ram, one lamb in its first year for a burnt offering; 46 One male goat תאטתל for sin [offering]; 47 And for a sacrifice of peace offering two oxen, five rams, five male goats, five lambs in its first year. This was the offering of Eliasaph the son of Deuel. 48 On the seventh day Elishama the son of Ammihud, leader of the children of Ephraim, presented an offering. 49 His offering was תתס one silver dish weighing 130 shekels (3 ¼ lbs), one silver basin weighing 70 shekels (1 ¾ lbs) using the shekel of the sanctuary; both of them were full of fine flour mixed with oil for a grain offering; 50 תתס one pan weighing 10 shekels of gold (1/4 lbs) full of incense; 51 One young bull, one ram, one lamb in its first year for a burnt offering; 52 One male goat תאטתל for sin [offering]; 53 And for a sacrifice of peace offering two oxen, five rams, five male goats, five lambs in its first year. This was the offering of Elishama the son of Ammihud. 54 On the eighth day Gamaliel the son of Pedahzur, leader of the children of Manasseh, presented an offering. 55 His offering was תתס one silver dish weighing 130 shekels (3 ¼ lbs), one silver basin weighing 70 shekels (1 ¾ lbs) using the shekel of the sanctuary; both of them were full of fine flour mixed with oil for a grain offering. C-MATS

Numbers 7:56 תתס One pan weighing 10 shekels of gold (1/4 lbs) full of incense; 57 One young bull, one ram, one lamb in its first year for a burnt offering; 58 One male goat תתס for sin [offering]; 59 And for a sacrifice of peace offering two oxen, five rams, five male goats, five lambs in its first year. This was the offering of Gamaliel the son of Pedahzur. 60 On the ninth day Abidan the son of Gideoni, leader of the children of Benjamin, presented an offering. 61 His offering was תתס one silver dish weighing 130 shekels (3 ¼ lbs), one silver basin weighing 70 shekels (1 ¾ lbs) using the shekel of the sanctuary; both of them were full of fine flour mixed with oil for a grain offering; 62 תתס One pan weighing 10 shekels of gold (1/4 lbs) full of incense; 63 One young bull, one ram, one lamb in its first year for a burnt offering; 64 One male goat תתס for sin [offering]; 65 And for a sacrifice of peace offering two oxen, five rams, five male goats, five lambs in its first year. This was the offering of Abidan the son of Gideoni. 66 On the tenth day Ahiezer the son of Ammishaddai, leader of the children of Dan, presented an offering. 67 His offering was תתס one silver dish weighing 130 shekels (3 ¼ lbs), one silver basin weighing 70 shekels (1 ¾ lbs) using the shekel of the sanctuary; both of them were full of fine flour mixed with oil for a grain offering; 68 תתס One pan weighing 10 shekels of gold (1/4 lbs) full of incense; 69 One young bull, one ram, one lamb in its first year for a burnt offering; 70 One male goat תתס for sin [offering]; 71 And for a sacrifice of peace offering two oxen, five rams, five male goats, five lambs in its first year. This was the offering of Ahiezer the son of Ammishaddai. 72 On the eleventh day Pagiel the son of Ocran, leader of the children of Asher, presented an offering. 73 His offering was תתס one silver dish weighing 130 shekels (3 ¼ lbs), one silver basin weighing 70 shekels (1 ¾ lbs) using the shekel of the sanctuary; both of them were full of fine flour mixed with oil for a grain offering; 74 תתס One pan weighing 10 shekels of gold (1/4 lbs) full of incense; 75 One young bull, one ram, one lamb in its first year for a burnt offering; 76 One male goat תתס for sin [offering], 77 And for a sacrifice of peace offering two oxen, five rams, five male goats, five lambs in its first year. This was the offering of Pagiel the son of Ocran. 78 On the twelfth day Ahira the son of Enan, leader of the children of Naphtali, presented an offering. 79 His offering was תתס one silver dish weighing 130 shekels (3 ¼ lbs), one silver basin weighing 70 shekels (1 ¾ lbs) using the shekel of the sanctuary; both of them were full of fine flour mixed with oil for a grain offering; 80 תתס One pan weighing 10 shekels of gold (1/4 lbs) full of incense; 81 One young bull, one ram, one lamb in its first year for a burnt offering; 82 One male goat תתס for sin [offering]; 83 And for a sacrifice of peace offering two oxen, five rams, five male goats, five lambs in its first year. This was the offering of Ahira the son of Enan. 84 ואת This was the offering for the dedication of the altar on the day when was anointed אהו it (him) גא from the princes of Israel: twelve silver dishes, twelve silver basins and twelve gold pans: 85 Each silver dish תתס the one [weighing] 130 shekels (3 ¼ lbs) and each basin weighed seventy shekels (1 ¾ lbs). All the silver vessels weighed 2400 shekels (just over 60 lbs) using the shekel of the sanctuary: 86 The twelve gold pans full of incense weighing ten shekels (1/4 lbs) apiece, using the shekel of the sanctuary. All the gold in the pans was 120 shekels (3 lbs). 87 All the livestock for the burnt offerings consisted of 12 bulls, 12 rams and 12 male lambs in its first year with their grain offering. There were 12 male goats תתס for sin [offering]. 88 And all the livestock for the sacrifice of the peace offerings consisted of 24 bulls, 60 rams, 60 male goats, 60 male lambs in its first year. ואת this was the offering for the dedication of the altar after it had been anointed of אהו him. C-MATS

So each day, for twelve days in a row, a leader presents to the temple:

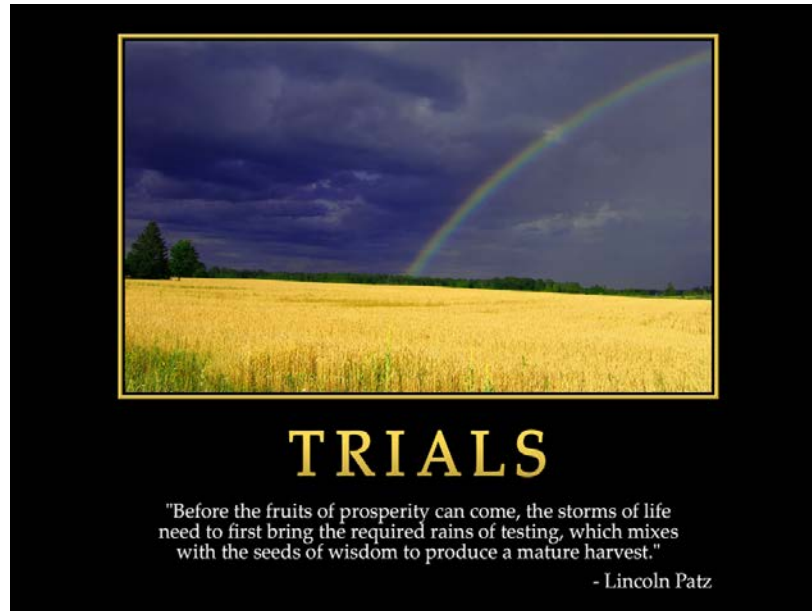
Offering and Grain Sacrifice	Burnt Offering	Sin Offering	Sacrifice of Well-being
 <p>flour mixed with oil</p> <p>1 silver plate weighing 130 shekels*</p>	 <p>1 young bull</p>	 <p>1 male goat</p>	 <p>2 oxen</p>
 <p>flour mixed with oil</p> <p>1 silver basin weighing 70 shekels*</p>	 <p>1 ram</p>		 <p>5 rams</p>
 <p>incense</p> <p>1 golden dish weighing 10 shekels*</p>	 <p>1 male lamb one-year-old</p>		 <p>5 male goats</p>
			 <p>5 male lambs one-year-old</p>

* No one is really sure how much a shekel actually is, but www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/source/history/weightsandmeasures.html says it's maybe 10 grams +/- 1 gram



Numbers 7:89 And when Moses went into the Tabernacle of the Congregation to speak **אִתּוֹ** with Him, then he heard **אֶת־** the voice speaking to him from above the mercy seat that was on the Ark of Testimony, from between the two cherubim: and He spoke to him. C-MATS

Question: How did Moses hear יְהוָה's voice? When Moses would come into the Tabernacle of Meeting to speak with יְהוָה, he would hear the voice speaking to him from the two cherubim above the covering, which was over the Ark of Testimony. The voice emanated from heaven to the area between the two cherubim, and from there it went out to the Tabernacle of Meeting. *Chumash*



Question: Why are we constantly being tested in this life? The Bible says that life is a test. יהוה continually tests people's character, faith obedience, love, integrity, and loyalty. Character is both developed and revealed by testing. And the truth of the matter is – All of Life is a Test. You are always being tested. יהוה is constantly watching how you respond to people, problems, success, conflict, illness, disappointment, and even the weather. יהוה tests us to see if we are worthy of entering His Kingdom of Light and be called this children-heirs to the kingdom.

1 Chronicles 29:17 I know also, my Elohim that **אתה** You try the heart and have pleasure in uprightness. C-MATS

Judges 2:20 And the anger of יהוה was kindled against Israel; and He said, Because *they* have transgressed My people this **את** My covenant which I commanded **אתם** *their fathers* and have not listened to My voice, 21 I also will not drive out any from before them of the nations that Y'hoshua left when he died; 22 That I may test through them **את** Israel, *whether they will keep the* **את** way of יהוה to walk in it, as **אתם** *their fathers* did not keep it. 23 Therefore, left יהוה **את** nations, those without driving them out hastily; neither delivered He them into the hand of Y'hoshua. C-MATS

Psalm 66:10 For You, O Elohim, have tested us: You have tried us, as silver is tried. C-MATS

1 Peter 1:6 In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a season, you suffer grief through various temptations: 7 That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perishes, though it be tried with fire, might result in praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Yahusha haMashiach. C-MATS

James 1:12 Blessed is the man that endures temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which Adonai has promised to them that love him. C-MATS

Every battle is for a reason. Every battle is for a season. Life is a series of battles. Make every day a victory!

Question: What are Seven Examples of Testing?

1. A Test of Patience.

Trials and tribulation can be a test of patience. יהוה has a timing for fulfilling His plans and purposes. Often His plans take much longer than we expect. In the meantime we go through severe trials and tribulations and they seem to last forever. These seasons are tests of our patience. Are we willing to wait for יהוה's timing?

James 1:2 My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trails; 3 Knowing this, that the trying of your faith works patience. 4 But let patience have her perfect work, that you may be perfect and entire, lacking nothing. C-MATS

1 Timothy 1:16 But for this reason I obtained mercy, that in me first, Yahusha haMashiach might show His longsuffering, for an example to them who would believe on Him and receive life everlasting. C-MATS

Job's life was a test of patience. "You have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the purpose of יהוה; that יהוה is very sympathetic, and of tender mercy. James 5:11 C-MATS

2. A Test of Faith.

Trials can be a test of our faith. Do we believe in יהוה even in the midst of pain and suffering? Do we believe in the promises of יהוה even when everything looks impossible? Do we trust in יהוה even if He does not deliver us? Do we trust in יהוה even when we do not understand His ways and working in our lives? How do you know if you are faithful unless you are tempted with unfaithfulness? Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego were tested and showed their faith.

Daniel 3:16 Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego answered and said to the king, O Nebuchadnezzar, we have no need to answer you in this matter. 17 If it be *so*, our Elohim who we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery **אֶתֵּן furnace and He will deliver us out of your hand, O king. 18 But if not, be it known to you, O king that we will not serve your gods, nor worship the golden image which you have set up. C-MATS**

3. A Test of Love.

Trials can test our love. They can reveal whom or what we love most in our lives. They reveal our priorities and desires. יהוה wants us to love Him more than anybody else or anything else. The depth of our love to יהוה is revealed during the seasons of trials. How much do you love Yahusha? Would you do whatever He asked you to do?

John 14:23 Yahusha answered and said to him, If a man loves Me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and We will come to him, and make our abode with him. 24 He that does not love Me does not keep my sayings. C-MATS

1 John 4:19 We love Him, because He first loved us. 20 If a man says, I love Elohim, and hates his brother, he is a liar: for he that does not loves his brother whom he has seen, how can he love Elohim whom he has not seen? 21 And this commandment we have from Him, That he who loves Elohim loves his brother also. C-MATS

Matthew 19:29 And every one that has forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive an hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life. C-MATS

4. A Test of Endurance.

Trials can be a test of our endurance. How much are we willing to endure for יהוה? Will we give up easily from following יהוה? Will we endure till the end? The life of Paul is an example of endurance.

2 Corinthians 11:24 From the Jews five times I received forty stripes minus one. **25** Three times I was beaten with rods, once I was stoned, three times I suffered through shipwrecks, a night and a day I have been in the depths of the sea; **26** On frequent journeys, I faced dangers from waters, dangers from robbers, dangers from my own countrymen, dangers from the heathen, dangers in the city, dangers in the wilderness, dangers in the sea, dangers among false brethren; **27** In weariness and painfulness, in sleepless nights, in hunger and thirst, often without food, cold and lacking clothes. C-MATS

2 Timothy 2: 3 Endure hardships, as a good soldier of Yahusha haMashiach. C-MATS

Matthew 24:13 But he who endures to the end, he shall be saved. C-MATS

5. A Test of Humility.

Trials can be a test of humility. יהוה humbles us by allowing us to go through seasons of trials. יהוה wants us to have the mind of Yahusha who humbled Himself to take the form of a servant and became obedient even to the death of the cross. Humility is not thinking less of yourself. It is thinking of yourself less.

Philippians 2:8 And being found in the form of a man, He humbled himself, and became obedient to death, even the death of the stake. C-MATS

Moses went through times of trial and his humility shone forth. **Numbers 12:3** Now the man Moses was very humble, *more so than all the men who were on the face of the earth.* C-MATS

Deuteronomy 8:22 And you will remember **את** all the ways, which יהוה your Elohim led you these forty years in the wilderness to humble you and to test you, so *He would know את* what was in your heart, *whether you would keep His commandments or not.* C-MATS

Isaiah 66:2 For all these things has My hand made and *so* all these things came to be, says יהוה: **ואת** and to man will I look, even to him that is humble and of a contrite spirit and that trembles at My word. C-MATS

6. A Test of Sacrifice.

Trials can be a test of our sacrifice. Are we willing to sacrifice everything for יהוה? Are we clinging to the possessions and treasures of this world? Are we crucified to the world? When we lay ourselves on the altar and die to our self then we can bear much fruit for יהוה. יהוה leads us to the point of total surrender by leading us through the path of trials. He tests the level of our willingness to sacrifice for Him. He tested Abraham in this way.

Hebrews 11:17 By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his only son, 18 Of whom it was said, That in Isaac shall your seed be called. C-MATS

Romans 12:1 I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of Elohim, that you present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to Elohim, which is your reasonable service. 2 And be not conformed to this world: but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is the good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of Elohim. C-MATS

7. A Test of Obedience.

Trials can be a test of our obedience to יהוה. Are we willing to obey יהוה even when He commands us to do what we do not like or what we wish to avoid? יהוה teaches us obedience by leading us through trails. Yahusha is the prime example of obedience.

Matthew 26:39 And He went a little further, and fell on His face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me: nevertheless not as I will, but as you will. C-MATS

When testing and trials come our way, we should receive them with joy, because we know that it is יהוה who allows them to strengthen our faith. When we are knocked about in the storms of life, like the tree that digs its roots ever deeper for a greater grip, we must dig our roots deeper into יהוה's Word so we can withstand whatever comes against us. Most comforting of all, we know that יהוה will never allow us to be tested beyond what we are able to handle and in all things will provide a way out of the test.

1 Corinthians 10:13 No temptation has seized you but what is common to man: but Elohim is faithful, who will not let you be tempted above that you are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that you may be able to bear it. C-MATS

This does not mean He will remove the trial from us. Why would He when He says trials are for our benefit? Rather, the "way out" is the way through. the trial, with Him ever faithful by our side, until we come out on the other side of it by His grace and power, stronger and more mature believers.



Do You Know?

1. A _____ wants to be extra holy so he takes an oath to refrain from certain things.
2. A Nazarite is not allowed to cut his hair or drink _____.
3. A Nazarite could not be in contact with a _____ or he would have to start his vow over again.
4. Aaron and his sons have a commandment to _____ the People of Israel.
5. For the inauguration of the altar, each _____ brought an offering.
6. The gifts that the chiefs brought to the Temple were _____.
7. The Levites who did the work in the Temple were between the ages of 30 and _____.
8. ____ and his sons supervised the work of the Levis in the Tabernacle.
9. If a spirit of jealousy came upon a man concerning his wife, he would take her to the _____.
10. The woman accused of adultery was tested by _____.
11. If the woman was guilty of adultery, her _____ would swell.
12. If the woman was innocent of adultery, she would be rewarded by _____.
13. If a person became unclean by a skin disease or a bodily discharge or contact with a corpse, he would have to go _____ (Where?)
14. If a man steals, he must make restitution by adding _____ to the amount he stole.
15. יהוה spoke to Moses above the cover of the _____.

Answers:

1. Nazarite
2. Wine
3. Dead corpse
4. Bless
5. Chief of the tribe (nassi)
6. Identical
7. 50
8. Aaron
9. Kohen (priest)
10. Bitter water
11. Stomach
12. Becoming pregnant
13. Outside the camp
14. One-fifth or 20%
15. Ark of Covenant

Haftorah



Samson was a Nazarite

Question: Who was ordained as a Nazarite from birth? **Judges 13:2** And there was a certain man of Zorah, of the family of the Danites, whose name was Manoah; and his wife was barren and bare not. 3 And the Angel of יהוה appeared to the woman and said to her, Behold now, אַתְּ (you?) are barren and bear not; but you shall conceive and bear a son. 4 Now therefore, beware, I pray you and drink neither wine nor strong drink and eat not any unclean thing: 5 For, lo, you shall conceive and bear a son; and no razor shall come upon his head; for the child shall be a Nazarite to Elohim from the womb: and he shall begin to save (yasha) אֶת־ Israel out of the hand of the Philistines. 6 Then the woman came and told her husband, saying, A man of Elohim came to me and His countenance was like the countenance of the Angel of Elohim, very awesome; and I did not ask Him where He was, אֵינִי and neither His name did He tell me: 7 But He said to me, Surely, you shall conceive and bear a son; and now drink neither wine nor strong drink and do not eat any unclean things; for the child shall be a Nazarite to Elohim from the womb to the day of his death. 8 Then Manoah entreated יהוה and said, Oh, Adonai, I pray you, let the Man of Elohim who you sent come again to us and teach us what we shall do to the child that shall be born. 9 And Elohim listened to the voice of Manoah; and the Angel of Elohim came again to the woman as she sat in the field: but Manoah her husband was not with her. 10 And the woman made haste and ran and told her husband and said to him, Behold, the Man has appeared to me, that came to me the other day. 11 And Manoah rose and went after אִשְׁתּוֹ his wife and came to the Man and said to Him, Are הֲאַתָּה You the Man that spoke to the woman? And He said I am. 12 And Manoah said, Now let your words come to pass: what shall be the ordering of the child and what is he to do? 13 And the Angel of יהוה said to Manoah, Of all that אָמַרְתִּי I said to the woman, Let her beware. 14 She may not eat of anything that comes of the vine, neither let her drink wine or strong drink, nor eat any unclean thing; all that I commanded her let her observe. 15 And Manoah said to the Angel of יהוה, I pray אֲנִיךָ you; let us detain you that we may make ready a kid for you. C-MATS

Judges 13:16 And the Angel of יהוה said to Manoah, Though you detain Me, I will not eat of your bread; and if you will make ready a burnt-offering, you must offer it to ליהוה. For Manoah knew not that He was the Angel of יהוה. 17 And Manoah said to the Angel of יהוה, What is your name, so when your words come to pass, we may do you honor? 18 And the Angel of יהוה said to him, Why ask you after My name, seeing it *is* secret (*wonderful*)? 19 So took Manoah אֶת־ the kid אֶת־ and with the meal-offering and offered it upon the rock to ליהוה: and the Angel did wondrously and Manoah and his wife looked on. 20 For it came to pass, when the flame went up toward heaven from off the altar that the Angel of יהוה ascended in the flame of the altar: and Manoah and his wife looked on; and they fell on their faces to the ground. 21 But the Angel of יהוה did not appear to Manoah or to אִשְׁתּוֹ his wife again. Then Manoah knew that He was an Angel of יהוה. 22 And Manoah said to אִשְׁתּוֹ his wife, We shall surely die, because we have seen Elohim. 23 But אִשְׁתּוֹ his wife said to him, If יהוה were pleased to kill us, He would not have received a burnt-offering and a meal-offering at our hand, neither would He have showed us אֶת־ all this, nor would at this time have told such things as these. 24 And the woman bore a son and called אֶת־ his name Samson (*sunlight*): and the child grew and יהוה blessed him. 25 And the Spirit of יהוה began to move him in Mahaneh-dan, between Zorah and Eshtaol. C-MATS

Brit Chadashah

Question: Did the believers following Yahusha take a Nazarite vow and follow the laws of Torah? Acts 21:17 And when we were come to Jerusalem, the brethren received us gladly. 18 And the day following Paul went in with us unto James; and all the elders were present. 19 And when he had saluted them, he declared particularly what things Elohim had wrought among the Gentiles by his ministry. 20 And when they heard it, they glorified יהוה, and said unto him, You see, brother, how many thousands of Jews there are which believe; and they are all zealous of the Torah: 21 And they are informed of you, that you teach all the Jews which are among the Gentiles to forsake Moses, saying that they ought not to circumcise their children, neither to walk after the customs. 22 What is it therefore? the multitude must come together: for they will hear that you are come. 23 Do therefore this that we say to you: We have four men which have a vow on them; 24 Them take, and purify yourself with them, and be at charges with them, that they may shave their heads: and all may know that those things, whereof they were informed concerning you, are nothing; but that you yourself also walk orderly, and keep the Torah. 25 As touching the Gentiles which believe, we have written and concluded that they observe no such thing, save only that they keep themselves from things offered to idols, and from blood, and from strangled, and from fornication. 26 Then Paul took the men, and the next day purifying himself with them entered into the temple, to signify the accomplishment of the days of purification, until that an offering should be offered for every one of them. 27 And when the seven days were almost ended, the Jews which were of Asia, when they saw him in the temple, stirred up all the people, and laid hands on him, 28 Crying out, Men of Israel, help: This is the man, that teaches all men everywhere against the people, and the Torah, and this place: and further brought Greeks also into the temple, and has polluted this holy place. 29 For they had seen before with him in the city Trophimus an Ephesian, whom they supposed that Paul had brought into the temple. 30 And all the city was moved, and the people ran together: and they took Paul, and drew him out of the temple: and forthwith the doors were shut. 31 And as they went about to kill him, tidings came unto the chief captain of the band, that all Jerusalem was in an uproar. 32 Who immediately took soldiers and centurions, and ran down unto them: and when they saw the chief captain and the soldiers, they left beating of Paul. C-MATS

Discuss: According to Number 6:14 (And he will offer **את** his offering to ליהוה, **את** one male lamb in its first year without blemish for a burnt offering and one female lamb in its first year without blemish **את** for sin [offering] and one ram without blemish for a peace offering. C-MATS) Paul was supposed to bring a blood sacrifice to the Temple in fulfillment of the Nazarite vow. Paul still was obeying the Law for over 30 years after the death of Yahusha, even laws concerning sin offerings as atonement for sin. Did Paul feel like the Law had passed away or that it should be used as a pattern for life for the believers in Yahusha? What other evidence do we find that the disciples kept the Law?

Question: What did Yahusha say about the wife accused of unfaithfulness? **John 8:1** *Yahusha went unto the mount of Olives. 2 And early in the morning he came again into the temple, and all the people came unto him; and he sat down, and taught them. 3 And the scribes and Pharisees brought unto him a woman taken in adultery; and when they had set her in the midst, 4 They say unto him, Master, this woman was taken in adultery, in the very act. 5 Now Moses in the Torah commanded us, that such should be stoned: but what say you? 6 This they said, tempting him, that they might accuse him. But Yahusha stooped down, and with his finger wrote on the ground, as though he heard them not. 7 So when they continued asking him, he lifted up himself, and said unto them, **He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her.** 8 And again he stooped down, and wrote on the ground. 9 And they which heard it, being convicted by their own conscience, went out one by one, beginning at the eldest, even unto the last: and Yahusha was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst. 10 When Yahusha had lifted up himself, and saw none but the woman, he said unto her, **Woman, where are your accusers? has no man condemned you?** 11 She said, No man, Master. And Yahusha said unto her, **Neither do I condemn you: go, and sin no more.** (Note: The entire story of the adulteress woman is not in the earliest of Greek manuscripts, but was added later, nor does the story appear in the original Aramaic Peshitta) C-MATS*

Question: Why do many scholars believe this story is not part of the original manuscript of John? (1) The passage does not appear in the oldest and most reliable Greek manuscripts. (2) It is not found in the best manuscripts of the earliest translations of the Bible into Old Syriac, Coptic, Gothic, and Old Latin. (3) No Greek writer commented on this passage for the first 11 centuries of Christianity. (4) It is not cited by most of the great early church fathers, including Clement, Tertullian, Origen, Cyprian, Cyril, and others. (5) Its style does not fit that of the rest of the Gospel of John. (6) It interrupts the flow of thought in John. John reads better if one goes right from John 7:52 to 8:12. (7) The story has been found in several different places in Bible manuscripts—after John 7:36; after John 21:24; after John 7:44; and after Luke 21:38. (8) Many manuscripts that include it in John 7:53–8:11 have marked it with an obelus or doubtful. *When Critics Ask: A Popular Handbook on Bible Difficulties* by Norman Geisler and Thomas Howe.

Question: According to this account if it actually did happen, did Yahusha and the Jewish leaders follow the laws of Moses concerning adultery?

1. The woman was brought to the Temple according to Law to be examined by the priest to see if she was found guilty. **Numbers 5:15** *Then the man will bring **את** his wife to the priest.* C-MATS

2. The man and woman caught in adultery should have both been brought to the priest, but only the woman was brought to Yahusha. The Jewish leaders did not obey the law or they would have brought the man also, since the woman was “taken in adultery.” **Deuteronomy 22:22** *If a man is found lying with a married woman then both of them will die; the man that laid with the woman and the woman.* C-MATS

3. Since the woman was caught in the very act there would have been witnesses to the adultery. Yahusha asked for the witnesses to cast the first stone. The Jewish leaders did not bring the witnesses to Yahusha. **Deuteronomy 17:6 He who is worthy of death will be put to death at the testimony of two or three witnesses; but at the testimony of one witness he will not be put to death. C-MATS**

4. The woman and man were to be punished by stoning. The Jewish leaders only brought the woman to be stoned. **Deuteronomy 17:5 Then you will bring אֶת the man or אֶת woman, who has committed אֶת this thing which is wicked, at your gates אֶת that man or אֶת that woman you must stone with stones until they die. C-MATS**

5. The witnesses were to begin the punishment by casting the first stone. Yahusha called for the witnesses to cast the stones, but no witnesses came forward. **Deuteronomy 17:7 The hands of the witnesses will be first to stone him and then all the people will stone him to death. C-MATS**

6. If a person came forward and was found to be a false witness, then this person would be stoned instead of the falsely accused person. Apparently no one wanted to take this chance. **Deuteronomy 19:16 If a false witness comes forward against any man to testify against him of wrongdoing; 17 Then both the men in the controversy will stand before יהוה, the priests and the judges in office at that time; 18 And the judges will make a thorough inquisition and see if the witness is a false witness and has testified falsely against his brother; 19 Then you will do to him as he had thought to have done to his brother. C-MATS**

Question: Why did Yahusha not have the woman stoned? Yahusha was not a witness to her adultery and no witnesses came forward to condemn her, so Yahusha let her go and told her not to repeat her adultery. יהוה will always offer forgiveness for our sins if we truly repent and turn away from our sins, but this does not mean that the woman would not have to pay for her sin. **For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Mashiach; that every one may receive what is due him for the things he has done in his body, whether it be good or bad. 2 Corinthians 5:10 C-MATS**

True Freedom

Question: What is true freedom? Following instructions in order to learn a valuable skill isn't limiting - it's liberating. The Torah is יהוה's 'instructions for living,' an all-inclusive guide to help us develop the skill of living and enjoying life to the fullest. Sometimes what looks like giving up some freedom can really be the key to much more freedom.

Galatians 5:13 For, brethren, you have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another. 14 For all the Torah is fulfilled in one word, even in this; You shall love your neighbor as yourself. C-MATS

"HITTING A HIGH NOTE"

"I don't know if we're good, but at least we're loud!" laughed Gary, yelling over racket coming from the amplified pair of electric guitars. He and his friend, Rob, decided to form a two-man band to play some of their favorite music together. Neither of them really knew how to play an instrument, but that didn't stop them from jamming away, turning Gary's garage into their 'studio' and treating the neighborhood to two hours of off-key tunes every afternoon - all at top volume. One day the boys were in the middle of a particularly grating jam session when they heard what sounded like a drum beat coming from the garage door. Soon enough they realized it wasn't a drum - it was someone knocking loudly. "Oh, oh," Gary said. "We're in trouble now. That's probably old Mr. Isaacs from next door. I'll bet we woke him up from his nap and he's coming to yell at us."

Gary nervously opened the door. It was Mr. Isaacs all right. He looked tired, but not particularly angry. "Boys, I see you love music," he said with a sigh. "I can understand that, because I love music too. In fact, you don't know it, but many years ago I used to be a professional jazz musician."

The boys looked at each other in wide-eyed surprise, as the older man went on. "I didn't come here to ask you to stop playing, but rather to make a deal with you. How about once or twice a week you come over to my house and I'll give you free music lessons. I think a little instruction will help you enjoy playing your music more, and..." he added with a wink, "might just help your neighbors enjoy it more, too." It sounded good to the boys, and they showed up the next day, as planned with their instruments in tow. Mr. Isaacs patiently sat with them and gave them some exercises to practice, assuring them that if they followed his instructions carefully they would soon be making beautiful music together. A couple of days later, Gary stopped by Rob's place to pick him up for the next music lesson set for that evening. But his friend balked. "I'm not going," Rob said. "Why not?" "The lessons are too restricting. I just want to jam the way I feel like, and not limit myself by following any set lessons and instructions." Gary could hear his friend's point, but still felt having the chance to learn from a pro was worth it, so he kept going to the lessons by himself. One day the boys were cranking away at one of their jam sessions, Rob was amazed when Gary, instead of his usual scratchy off key sound, started playing a really sweet sounding guitar solo. "Hey cool! How did you manage to do that?" Rob asked. "Oh, that was something Mr. Isaacs taught me last night," Gary answered matter-of-factly. He kept playing and Rob was impressed - but not enough to pin himself down with guitar lessons. As time went on, Rob couldn't help noticing that Gary was starting to sound more and more like a real musician and he was still hacking away like an amateur. But more than that, Rob noticed that Gary was having a great time using all the new skills he had been learning. He didn't look like he felt restricted at all.

"Okay, just put your fingers on the strings like this and there you've got it!" said Mr. Isaacs enthusiastically as he and Gary sat down to another music lesson. Just then the doorbell rang.

"I'll get it," said Gary, wanting to spare the older man who had been helping him so much from having to walk across the room. He opened the door and was greeted by the sight of Rob, guitar case slung over his shoulder. "Room for one more at the lesson?" he asked sheepishly. "Sure but I thought you didn't want to be stuck taking lessons?" "I know, but after seeing how much you've gotten from the lessons, I realize taking instructions isn't a prison that's going to restrict my music - it's actually what I need to get the skills to stay on key and really play free."

Question: What lesson can we learn from the story? A person might think that happiness comes from being free to do things however they feel like doing those things, without any guidelines or rules. But if the rules are really tools to gain an important skill, then by following them he will gain much more than he loses.

Question: Do you think it would be possible to devise a man-made philosophy or code for living as comprehensive and as successful as the Torah? A sensitive and wise person might be able to devise a reasonably successful code of living, but it would never approach the depth and all-inclusiveness found in the Torah. The Torah isn't man-made; it's יהוה given. Since יהוה made us, He knows the deepest secrets of the psyche and the soul, and knows what system of living will ultimately bring the greatest success and happiness to the individual, society, and planet.

Question: Does a person sacrifice his free choice by following the Torah's set guidelines for life? Free choice, in its deepest and most meaningful sense, isn't whether to wear a black or purple (or no) tie. Rather, it is the ethical choice one makes of whether to live and behave according to his core values in the face of momentary desires to do otherwise. In that context, someone who is trying to live according to Torah values, which provide an ethical framework for every life situation, will find his free choice exercised constantly and by staying true to his values will develop into a truly ethical, sensitive, and spiritual person.

TAKING TO TASK

"What are you doing?" asked Scott to his cousin Gary, whom he was visiting from out of town. "What does it look like I'm doing? I'm taking out the garbage." Scott stared at his cousin wide-eyed. "What are you gawking at? Haven't you ever seen anyone take out the garbage before?" "Yeah, but in our house the maid always does that kind of stuff." "The maid?" Gary made his eyes big and talked in his snobby voice. "You have a maid? Well la-di-dah!" Scott punched his cousin playfully on the shoulder, and the two quickly moved on to other things. But Gary didn't forget the conversation so easily. That night, he asked his mom, "Is Scott rich?" His mother raised her eyebrow. "Why do you ask?" "Because they have a maid to do all their chores - instead of the kids, that's why." "I see." smiled his mom. "Well, they're not exactly rich, but they do live differently than us. His mom and dad are both really busy with their businesses, so they have help, including a maid that lives with them." "Can we get a maid, too, instead of doing chores?" Gary asked hopefully. "What on earth for?" his mother laughed "There's plenty of us around to take care of what needs to be done, and besides - chores are good for a person." "What's good about them?" Gary sniffed. "Because they teach you how to be responsible and train you how to cope with life. Listen Gary, it's getting late. You should get some rest for tomorrow's trip. But, please don't forget to sweep the front steps before you go to sleep. It's your turn." As Gary reluctantly pushed the broom, he thought to himself how much better life would be if he didn't have to do chores, like his cousin, Scott, who as far as he was concerned was coping with life just fine.

The next morning, the two boys got ready to go on an overnight camping trip in the woods behind Gary's house. They'd been planning since before Scott's arrival and Gary couldn't wait to show him all the cool caves and streams he'd discovered and to get that special thrill that only sleeping under the stars can bring. The boys started out together really excited, until they realized that their ideas of "camping out" were completely different.

"Hey, where's the cabin we're going to sleep in?" asked Scott, as Gary threw their gear down in the middle of a clearing in the park. "What cabin? I brought my tent. Who needs a cabin?" "What about all the animals and bugs and stuff?" "Ah, don't worry about it. There's nothing really dangerous around here and whatever comes up, we'll handle it." But Scott was worried, and got more so as the day wore on. And grumpy too. Scott was stumbling, tripping, and dropping things all afternoon, grumbling all the while about how much work everything was. "Okay, Scott. The tent is almost ready. I'll hold it up while you bang in the pegs with the hammer, okay?" "Why do we have to bang it in? This is so hard. Won't the tent just stay up the way it is?" "Listen, will you stop griping and just bang in the pegs!" "Okay, if you insist. OUCH!!!" The tent fell down as Gary ran to check out what happened. Scott had banged himself so hard on his finger that they had to cancel the trip and go home. As they were making their way back home, the silence between them was thick. "I'm sorry, Gary," said Scott. "I didn't mean to ruin the trip. I never really use hammers and that kind of stuff at home. Our handyman..." "I know, you told me, your handyman does everything, and your maid, and your gardener. Look, it's not your fault. I guess I shouldn't have taken us on this trip in the first place. I didn't think camping out was such a big deal, you know." "For you it isn't because, you know how to do things and work hard." Gary turned to Scott, whose eyes were kind of red and misty. "You know, Gary, when I first got here, I thought I had it so much easier than you and felt sorry for you - you know, having chores and stuff. Now I see that all those chores you do give you something I don't have. You're used to working hard and you're able to take care of yourself and do things I can't do ... and maybe never will." Gary had never looked at it that way, but now that Scott said it, it made sense. As they trudged home, Gary reminded himself to talk to his mom about this when he got home, and ... as strange as it sounded ... thank her for giving him chores.

Question: What life-lesson do you think the guys learned that day? Gary had felt that the only difference between him and his cousin was that he had to do work and his cousin had everything done for him. In other words, he had it worse. But after the camping trip, when he saw how all his work had given him skills to cope that his cousin didn't have, he saw that chores and responsibilities have an 'up' side, too.

Resources:

The Stone Edition of The Chumash

The Complete Messianic Aleph Tav Scriptures **C-MATS** www.AlephTavScriptures.com

"Weekly Torah Portion" from www.aish.com (stories)