

# Torah Weekly

ת"ב

May 28-June 3, 2023  
8-14 Sivan, 5783

Torah Reading:  
Naso: Numbers 4:21 - 7:89  
Haftarah:  
Judges 13:2-25

## PARSHAT NASO

### Calendars

We have Jewish Calendars. If you would like one, please send us a letter and we will send you one, or ask the Rabbi/Chaplain to contact us.

### Family Programs

Do you have family on the outside struggling? Please contact or have them contact our office to learn more about our family programs. You and they are not alone, we are here to help.

### Grape Juice & Matzah

We offer free Grape Juice and Matzoh for you to be able to make the blessings every Shabbos. Please have your chaplain / Rabbi contact us to enroll (available to all prisons).

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No One Forgotten.

## Transporting The Temple

After describing the order in which the twelve tribes of Israel traveled through the desert, the Torah tells of the census of the tribe of Levi, the tribe tasked with transporting and building the Mishkan, the Tabernacle.

Like everything in the [Torah](#), the details of the story of the Levites are just as relevant to our lives today as they were to our ancestors in the desert. For we, too, are tasked with the mission of the Levites, to erect a home for G-d in a spiritual desert, the world we live in. In order to create this sanctuary, we rely on the spiritual part of ourselves, on the Levite within our soul.

The tribe of Levi was divided into three families. The families of Gershon and Merari were tasked with transporting the curtains that covered the [Mishkan](#) and the wooden planks of the Mishkan walls. As the Torah tells us:

This is the service of the Gershonite families to serve and to carry. They shall carry the curtains of the Mishkan and the Tent of Meeting, its covering and the *thetachash* skin covering overlaid upon it, and the screen for the entrance to the Tent of Meeting . . . [As for] the sons of Merari . . . This is

the charge of their burden for all their service in the Tent of Meeting: the planks of the Mishkan, its bars, its pillars, and its sockets.

To create a sanctuary in our lives, to build a haven of spirituality in the midst of a spiritual desert, we too employ the skills of the [Levite](#) families. Like the families of Gershon and Merari, we must create walls and a roof in order to take control of our environment. We must cultivate the capacity to say no, to reject negative influences, temptations and distractions.

Yet saying no, rejecting the distractions and negativity, is not enough. The third family of Levites, the family of Kehat, was tasked with transporting the vessels of the Mishkan, the Ark, Menorah, Table and Alters:

Aaron and his sons shall finish covering the Holy and all the vessels of the Holy when the camp is set to travel, and following that, the sons of Kehat shall come to carry [them], but they shall not touch the sacred objects for [then] they will die. These are the burden of the sons of Kehat for the Tent of Meeting.

Like the family of Kehat, we too must fill our with the holy vessels, with positive experiences.

The spiritual mission of each of the Levite families is alluded to in their names. Gershon is derived from the

word *garesh*, which means "to chase away," to divorce. Merari comes from the word *mar*, which means "bitter." They represented the difficult task of learning to say no to that which seeks to pull us away from our commitment to holiness. Kehat, on the other hand, is derived from the biblical word *yikhat*, which means "to gather." Kehat teaches us to cultivate positive experiences and gather them into our sanctuary, to use them as a conduit to fulfill the purpose of our creation.

By Rabbi Menachem Feldman

## Journey Toward Peace

"And when Moses came to the Tent of Meeting to speak with Him (the Almighty), then he heard the voice speaking with him, from upon the golden lid (*kaporet*) which was on the ark of testimony, from between the two cherubim; and [G-d] spoke to him" ([Numbers 7:89](#)).

When Moses heard G-d's voice in the Sanctuary, a miraculous phenomenon occurred. Although the divine voice was as loud as at Mount Sinai when all two million people heard it, so loud as to be audible far beyond the confines of the Sanctuary, the sound was miraculously cut off at the Sanctuary entrance and

went no

further. Moshe was compelled to enter the Sanctuary in order to hear it (Rashi).

In the works of Chassidism we find a significant explanation as to why it was necessary for the voice of G-d to be cut off at the Sanctuary entrance and go no further: It is G-d's desire that Man serve Him out of free choice, and that "G-d's voice"—His call, message and teaching—be brought into the world by man's service.

The "voice of G-d" is a revelation of G-d. A place which the Almighty sets aside as an established location for repeated revelations of G-dliness, a place where His voice is heard again and again, is a place possessing a higher order of sanctity. Such a place was the Sanctuary, which was named the "Tent of Meeting" because G-d's Presence was regularly encountered there. G-d's voice, the same great voice that was heard at Sinai, regularly and repeatedly filled the Sanctuary.

If the voice and the speech of the Almighty had gone forth into the world, repeatedly and regularly, then the world would have become one great "Tent of Meeting," a sanctuary in which Man could not choose to go contrary to G-d's wishes. Man's service of G-d, through free choice, would be impossible. It was G-d's desire that we transform, through our service—not through divine intervention—an environment in which His Voice is "not heard" into a fitting dwelling place for His presence.<sup>1</sup>

*By Rabbi Menachem Feldman*

**Sunday, May 28, 2023 --- 8 Sivan, 5783**

**Rabbi Escapes Crusaders (1147)**

Rabbi Yaakov ben Meir Tam, known as the "Rabbenu Tam," was one of [Rashi's](#) illustrious grandsons. During the Second Crusade, on the second day of the holiday of [Shavuot](#), the Crusaders entered his hometown of Ramerupt, and pillaged and massacred many Jews. They broke into Rabbenu Tam's house, plundered all his wealth, and seriously wounded Rabbenu Tam. On the next day, the 8th of Sivan, Rabbenu Tam escaped Rameru and the clutches of the Crusaders.

Two years later he completed his famous treatise on Jewish ritual and ethics, *Sefer Hayashar*.

**Monday, May 29, 2023 --- 9 Sivan, 5783**

**Passing of "Kaf Hachaim" (1939)**

Rabbi Yaakov Chaim Sofer, better known as the *Kaf Hachaim* (the name of the monumental halachic work which he authored), was born in Baghdad in 1870. In his youth he studied Torah under the Sephardic greats of the times, such as the [Ben Ish Chai](#). In the beginning of the 20th century Rabbi Yaakov Chaim emigrated to the Land of Israel, and settled in Jerusalem. There he became renowned as a great kabbalist as well as a recognized halachic authority. He authored an eight-volume book on Jewish law, with a special focus on Jewish law and customs from a mystical viewpoint. He passed away on the 9th of Sivan in Jerusalem and was buried on the Mount of Olives.

**Tuesday, May 30, 2023 --- 10 Sivan, 5783**

**Wolf Wissotzky (1904)**

Klonimus Wolf Wissotzky, the son of poor parents, established The Wissotzky Tea company in 1849 and became known as the "King of Russian Tea." He was a great Jewish philanthropist and called for the settlement of Jews in Israel, which initiated the move of Jews to Lod, Nablus and Gaza. In his will he left over a million rubles to charity. In 1936, Wissotzky Tea became the very first tea company in Palestine and has since been the leading tea company in Israel.

**Wednesday, May 31, 2023 --- 11 Sivan, 5783**

**Rebbe's Parents Wed (1900)**

The [Rebbe, Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson](#), of righteous memory's, parents, [Rabbi Levi Yitzchak Schneerson](#) (1878-1944) and [Rebbetzin Chana Yanovsky](#) (1880-1964) were [married](#) on the 11th of Sivan, 1900. Their oldest son, [Menachem Mendel](#), was born two years later, on the 11th of Nissan of 1902.

**Friday, June 2, 2023 --- 13 Sivan, 5783**

**Moses Atop Mount Sinai (1313 BCE)**

"Moses went up to the mountain, and the cloud covered the mountain...for six days. On the seventh day G-d called to Moses from within the cloud... And Moses came within the cloud, and he went up to the top of the mountain, and Moses was upon the mountain forty days and forty nights" (Exodus 24:15-18).

On the morrow of the giving of the Ten Commandments (see Jewish History for the [6th of Sivan](#)), [Moses](#) ascended Mount Sinai in order to receive from G-d the remainder of the Torah -- the remaining commandments and the [Oral Law](#). After being "cleansed" by the cloud for six days, he was ushered into the presence of G-d on the 13th of Sivan.

**Shabbat, June 3, 2023 --- 14 Sivan, 5783**

**Jewish Books Spared (1510)**

In 1509, Emperor Maximilian of Germany ordered that all Jewish books in the cities of Cologne and Frankfurt am Main be destroyed. This followed the request of Pfefferkorn, a baptized Jew, who claimed that Jewish literature was insulting to Christianity. The Jews appealed to the Emperor to reconsider this edict, and Maximilian agreed to investigate the matter. He appointed Johann Reuchlin, a famed German scholar, to conduct the investigation. The report issued by Reuchlin was very positive. He demonstrated that the books openly insulting to Christianity were very few and viewed as worthless by most Jews themselves. The other books were needed for Jewish worship, and contained much value in the areas of theology and science.

The Emperor rescinded his edict on the 14th of Sivan, 1510.