HADAR Children & Families
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נָשֹׂא Naso

Because learning Torah is sweet

DeVAsH

ח׳ — י״ד סִיוָן תשפ״ו

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מָה בַּפָּרָשָׁה • In This Week's Parashah

- Moshe completes the count of the families from the tribe of Levi.
- Benei Yisrael must keep their camp free of טֻמְאָה (tum'ah, impurity).
- The סוֹטָה (sotah) ritual is meant to address cases where trust breaks down in a marriage. It either reveals that something dishonest happened or clears the record, hopefully creating peace between the couple.
- A נָזִיר (nazir) is a person who promises not to cut their hair, drink wine, or come into contact with a dead body for a period of time. After this, they would bring a korban.
- Kohanim are commanded to bless Benei Yisrael by reciting three special pesukim called בִּרְכַּת כֹּהֲנִים (Birkat Kohanim).
- Each day for 12 days straight, one נָשִׂיא (nasi, chief) from each שֵׁבֶט (shevet, tribe) would bring offerings of silver and gold objects, flour, spices, and animals. Now the Mishkan is fully stocked and ready for operation!



פְּשַׁט הַפְּסוּקִים • Understanding the Verses

A nazir is someone who would observe special rules as a way of becoming dedicated to God for a certain period of time:

Bemidbar 6:3-5

They shall separate from wine and other alcohol; they shall not drink vinegar of wine or alcohol; they may not drink anything in which grapes have been steeped; they may not eat fresh or dried grapes.

For the whole time they are a nazir, they may not eat anything that comes from the grapevine, even seeds or skin.

For the whole time they vowed to be a nazir no razor shall touch their head; until the end of the time they are a nazir to God they shall remain kadosh (holy), with the hair of their head left to grow untrimmed.

במדבר ו:ג-ה

מִיַּיִן וְשֵׁכָר יַזִּיר
חֹמֶץ יַיִן וְחֹמֶץ שֵׁכָר לֹא יִשְׁתֶּה
וְכָל מִשְׁרַת עֲנָבִים לֹא יִשְׁתֶּה
וַעֲנָבִים לַחִים וִיבֵשִׁים לֹא יֹאכֵל:

כֹּל יְמֵי נִזְרוֹ מִכֹּל אֲשֶׁר יֵעָשֶׂה מִגֶּפֶן הַיַּיִן
מֵחַרְצַנִּים וְעַד זָג לֹא יֹאכֵל:

כָּל יְמֵי נֶדֶר נִזְרוֹ תַּעַר לֹא יַעֲבֹר עַל רֹאשׁוֹ
עַד מְלֹאת הַיָּמִם אֲשֶׁר יַזִּיר לַה'
קָדֹשׁ יִהְיֶה גַּדֵּל פֶּרַע שְׂעַר רֹאשׁוֹ:

- What do you notice? What seems important here?
- Can you think of a few different reasons for a nazir to avoid grape products and haircuts?
- Is there something you would give up for a period of time in order to be closer to God? Do you think that would be a wise idea? Why or why not?
- The Torah has lots of mitzvot that we have to do. Why do you think there is something like nazir that is optional?
- The rabbis have a big debate about whether it's good to be a nazir! Some say yes, it's something God wants; others say no, it's not ideal (see Bavli Ta'anit 11a). Do you think our pesukim are encouraging the choice to be a nazir? What evidence can you find? (Can you find other evidence in the rest of the section in the Torah about being a nazir?)



מִדְרָשׁ • Midrash

Bzzzz
A lot of midrashim are **bugged** by something unusual in the Torah text



I thought we aren't allowed to erase God's name! Why does the סוֹטָה (sotah) ceremony involve writing down some pesukim with the name of God, and then dissolving them in water?

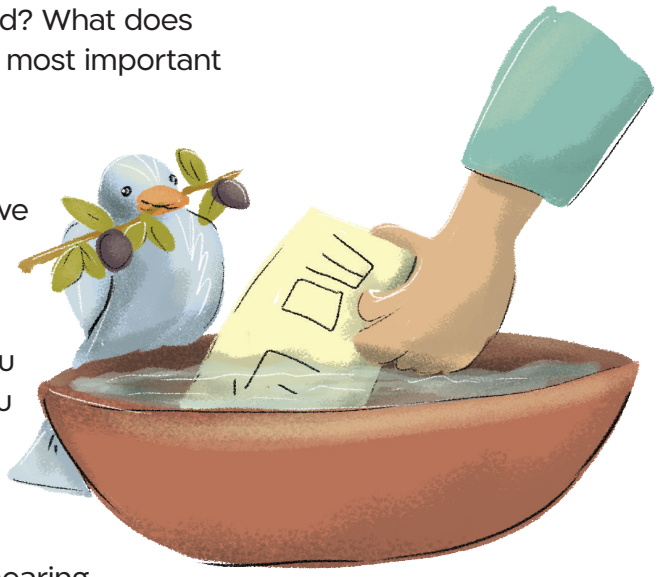
Derekh Eretz, Perek Shalom #9

R. Yishmael said: Peace is so important that God let the Holy Name be erased by water in order to bring peace between a married couple.

מסכת דרך ארץ פרק שלום הלכה ט

אָמַר ר' יִשְׁמָעֵאל גָּדוֹל הוּא הַשָּׁלוֹם, שֶׁמָּצִינוּ שֶׁוִּתֵּר הַקָּדוֹשׁ בָּרוּךְ הוּא עַל שְׁמוֹ שֶׁנִּכְתַּב בִּקְדֻשָּׁה שֶׁיִּמָּחֶה עַל הַמַּיִם, כְּדֵי לְהַטִּיל שָׁלוֹם בֵּין אִישׁ לְאִשְׁתּוֹ.

- Why would God allow God's own Name to be erased? What does that represent? What does that tell us about what's most important to God?
- Why do you think שָׁלוֹם (shalom, peace) is so important? What's possible in our lives when we have shalom? What happens when shalom is missing?
- What are things you're able to do to increase shalom in your family or among your friends? Do you ever have to give up things that are important to you for the sake of peace (like God allowing the Holy Name to be erased)?



Did you know that the word "Shalom" is considered to be one of the names of God? Because of this, you aren't even supposed to say this word in the bathroom! (Talmud Bavli Shabbat 10b)

- We'll be hearing about בִּרְכַּת כֹּהֲנִים (Birkat Kohanim, the Priestly Blessing) later in our parashah. (Look it up! Bemidbar 6:23-27.) Where does shalom fit into this berakhah?

Content and editing by Yitzhak Bronstein, Elie Kaunfer, Chana Kupetz, Shoshie Lockshin, Ethan Tucker, Effy Unterman.
Illustration by Rivka Tsinman. Design by Jen Klor.

פֵּרוּשִׁנוּת • Commentary

Here's the first line of בִּרְכַּת כֹּהֲנִים (Birkat Kohanim, the Priestly Blessing):

Bemidbar 6:24	**במדבר ו:כד**
May God bless you and protect you.	יְבָרֶכְךָ ה' וְיִשְׁמְרֶךָ:

Our פַּרְשָׁנִים (parshanim, commentators) wonder: **What berakhah (blessing) are we asking for? And what's the request for protection? Is there a connection between the berakhah and the protection?**

Seforno (Italy, 500 years ago)	**ספורנו**
Bless you - with wealth and property, because without flour there is no Torah.	**יְבָרֶכְךָ** - בְּעֹשֶׁר וּנְכָסִים שֶׁאִם אֵין קֶמַח אֵין תּוֹרָה.
And protect you - from thieves.	**וְיִשְׁמְרֶךָ** - מִן הַגַּזְלָנִים.

"Without flour there is no Torah" means that we need to have basic things like food and money in order to survive physically, and before we can do spiritual things like learning Torah. According to Seforno, the berakhah here is getting the things that meet our physical needs. The request for protection is about making sure those things don't end up being stolen from us.

- How does Seforno explain why we need wealth and property? What's the goal of being blessed with these things?



Ha'amek Davar (Eastern Europe, 150 years ago)

May God bless you - This includes a berakhah for each person according to the way they need to be blessed... for a Torah student it's a berakhah for successful learning, and for a person who does business it's a berakhah for success in business...

And protect you - Every blessing needs protection so that it doesn't become a stumbling block, God forbid. Torah scholars need protection from becoming too proud... People who do business need protection so that their wealth doesn't corrupt them.

העמק דבר

יְבָרֶכְךָ ה' – נִכְלָל בָּזֶה לְכָל אָדָם כְּפִי הָרָאוּי לוֹ לְהִתְבָּרֵךְ... לְעוֹסֵק בַּתּוֹרָה בִּלְמוּדוֹ, וּלְעוֹסֵק בַּמִּסְחוֹר בִּסְחוֹרָתוֹ...

וְיִשְׁמְרֶךָ – דְּכָל בְּרָכָה בָּעֵי שְׁמִירָה שֶׁלֹּא תֵּהָפֵךְ לְרוֹעַ חַס וְשָׁלוֹם. בַּעַל תּוֹרָה בָּעֵי שְׁמִירָה מִן הַגַּאֲוָה... בַּעַל נְכָסִים בָּעֵי שְׁמִירָה שֶׁלֹּא יִהְיֶה עֹשֶׁר לְרָעָתוֹ.

According to Ha'amek Davar, we all have our own dreams and abilities, and so we all need (and get) a special berakhah from God that fits who we are.

But if God gives you a special blessing—helping you to become extra good at something—there's a risk that it might "go to your head." So we also ask God to protect us from that.

- Can you explain in your own words how Seforno and Ha'amek Davar each understand "and protect you"? What's being protected and why is that important?
- Can you think of a berakhah that you have—it could be something that you own, or something that you're really good at? Could you imagine that berakhah ever becoming a "stumbling block" for you? How does your berakhah give you responsibility? How can different berakhot be used for good, and how can the same berakhot be used for bad?





aliyot:
1) Bemidbar 4:21 to 4:37
2) 4:38 to 4:49
3) 5:1 to 5:10
4) 5:11 to 6:27
5) 7:1 to 7:41
6) 7:42 to 7:71
7) 7:72 to 7:89

haftarah: Shoftim 13:2–25

שְׁאֵלוֹת הַשָּׁבוּעַ • Parashah Scavenger Hunt

The answers to the first seven questions can be found in the matching numbered aliyah in the Torah reading. The answers to questions 8 and 9 are harder and can come from anywhere in the parashah. The answer to question 10 is in this week's haftarah.

Good luck!



1. Who supervised the work that the family of Gershon did?
2. Which family of Levi'im was the smallest?
3. Who is supposed to be sent out of the camp?
4. What part of Shabbat dinner is a nazir not allowed to have?
5. Why didn't the family of Kehat get any wagons?
6. What kind of קָרְבָּן (korban, sacrifice) was the goat that each נָשִׂיא (nasi, chief) brought?
7. Where did Moshe hear God's voice?
8. Who burns their hair?



9. Did a שֵׁבֶט (shevet, tribe) bring gifts to the mishkan on Shabbat?
10. **From the haftarah:** What's the angel's name?

* Look for the answers on page 9!

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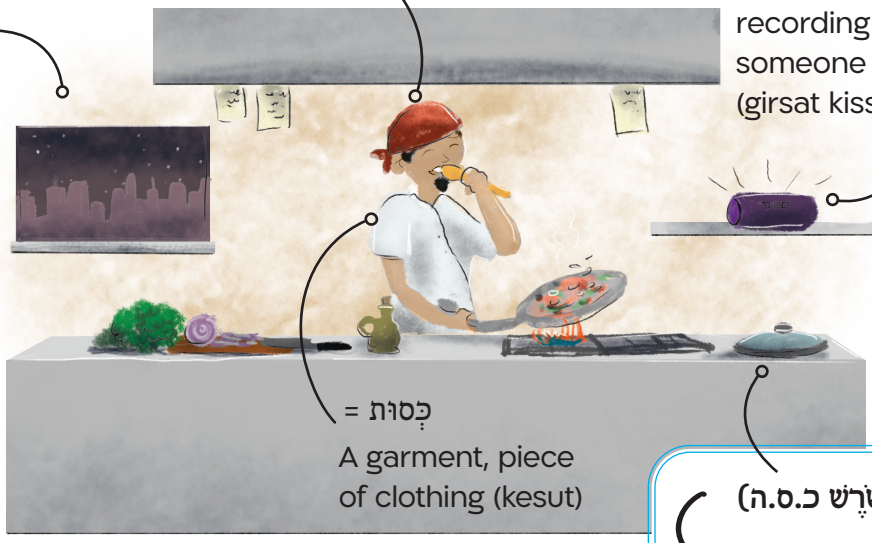
רֶגַע שֶׁל עִבְרִית • A Moment of Hebrew

Bemidbar 4:25

They shall carry the cloths of the mishkan, the Tent of Meeting with **its covering, the covering** of tahash skin that is on top of it, and the screen for the entrance of the Tent of Meeting.

במדבר ד:כה

וְנָשְׂאוּ אֶת יְרִיעֹת הַמִּשְׁכָּן וְאֶת
אֹהֶל מוֹעֵד **מִכְסֵהוּ וּמִכְסֵה**
הַתַּחַשׁ אֲשֶׁר עָלָיו מִלְמָעְלָה וְאֶת
מָסַךְ פֶּתַח אֹהֶל מוֹעֵד:



כְּסוּי רֹאשׁ =
A head covering (kissui rosh)

כֶּסֶה =
The new moon (which is "covered up" at the beginning of the month and can't be seen) (keseh)

גִּרְסַת כִּסּוּי =
A cover song (a new recording of a song someone else wrote) (girsat kissui)

כְּסוּת =
A garment, piece of clothing (kesut)

מִכְסֶה (שֹׁרֶשׁ כ.ס.ה)
A covering, a lid (mikhseh)

Find the Word!

In Sefer Bereishit, God tells Avraham about the plan to destroy Sedom. Can you find where God uses a word from our שֹׁרֶשׁ (shoresh, root), to describe the decision not to "cover up" what God is about to do? (Hint: Look at Bereishit 18:17.)

הֲלָכָה • Halakhah

Learn one way the parashah practically impacts our lives



Something sort of shocking happens in this week's parashah. As part of the סוֹטָה (sotah) ritual—which was meant to resolve a dispute between a married couple—the Torah tells the כֹּהֵן (kohen, priest) to write a curse that contains God's name on a scroll and then to erase it in a container of water!

We saw a midrash (p. 3) that pointed out how the sotah practice highlights what a priority it is to bring about peace and to end fights

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between people. Because, in general, we are very careful not to erase God's name.

Here are names of God to avoid erasing. We'll write them with dashes so it doesn't count as really writing them, and you don't have to worry about erasing them!

י-ה-ו-ה

א-דנ-י

א-ל, א-לוה, א-להים, א-להי

ש-די

צב-אות

So if you find a piece of paper where someone wrote a name of God, don't erase it, and don't throw it away! Instead, you can ask a grown-up to help you find a genizah, a special place where holy things are taken care of respectfully (usually buried) after we don't have any use for them any more.

But what about Devash? On the one hand, there is a lot of Torah in Devash, and sometimes we quote full pesukim to learn. So old copies definitely cannot be thrown in the garbage. Putting them in a genizah instead is a very good option.

On the other hand, that can sometimes be hard to do.

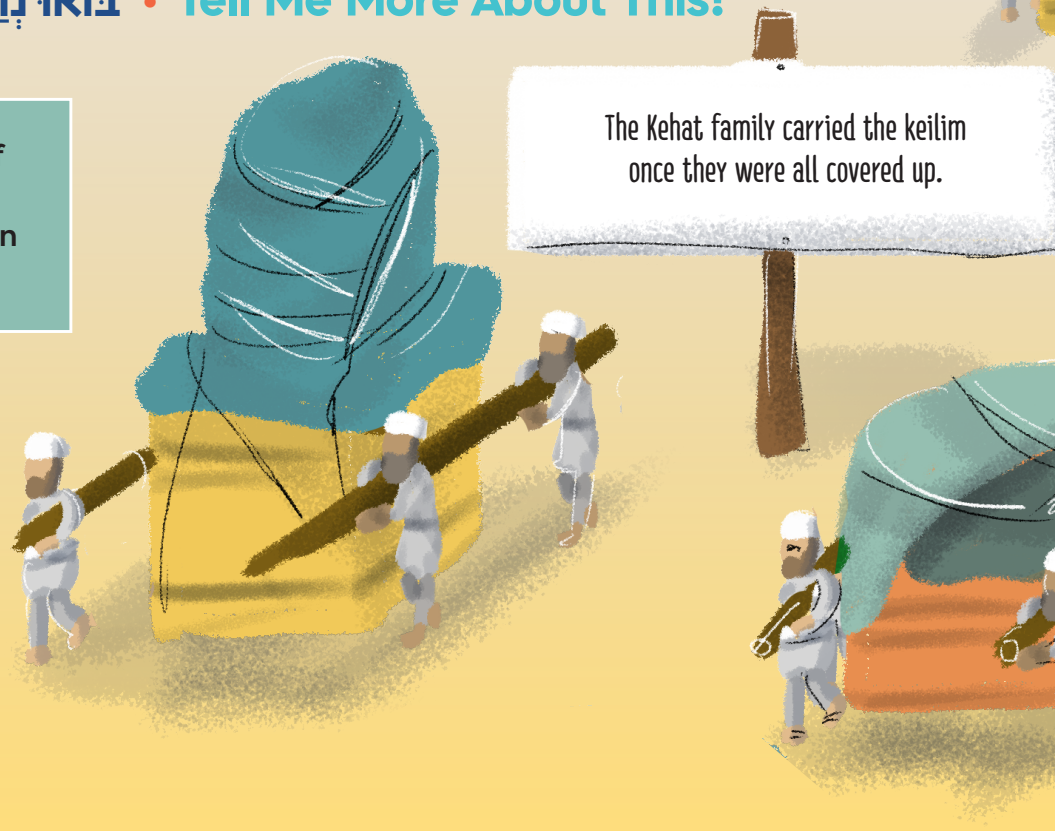
That's why we avoid printing the Hebrew names of God in their full forms in Devash, either replacing some of the letters or using dashes to separate the letters. Also, you don't have to worry about English words, like "God." We are only concerned about names of God written in Hebrew (Shakh Yoreh Deah 179:11).

For these reasons, recycling in a respectful manner can be an option. This can be done by putting old copies in a bin with paper that is otherwise clean and tidy, and then allowing the pages to be collected by a recycling service.

But you can also keep and learn them year after year!

בּוֹאוּ נְדַבֵּר עַל זֶה • Tell Me More About This!

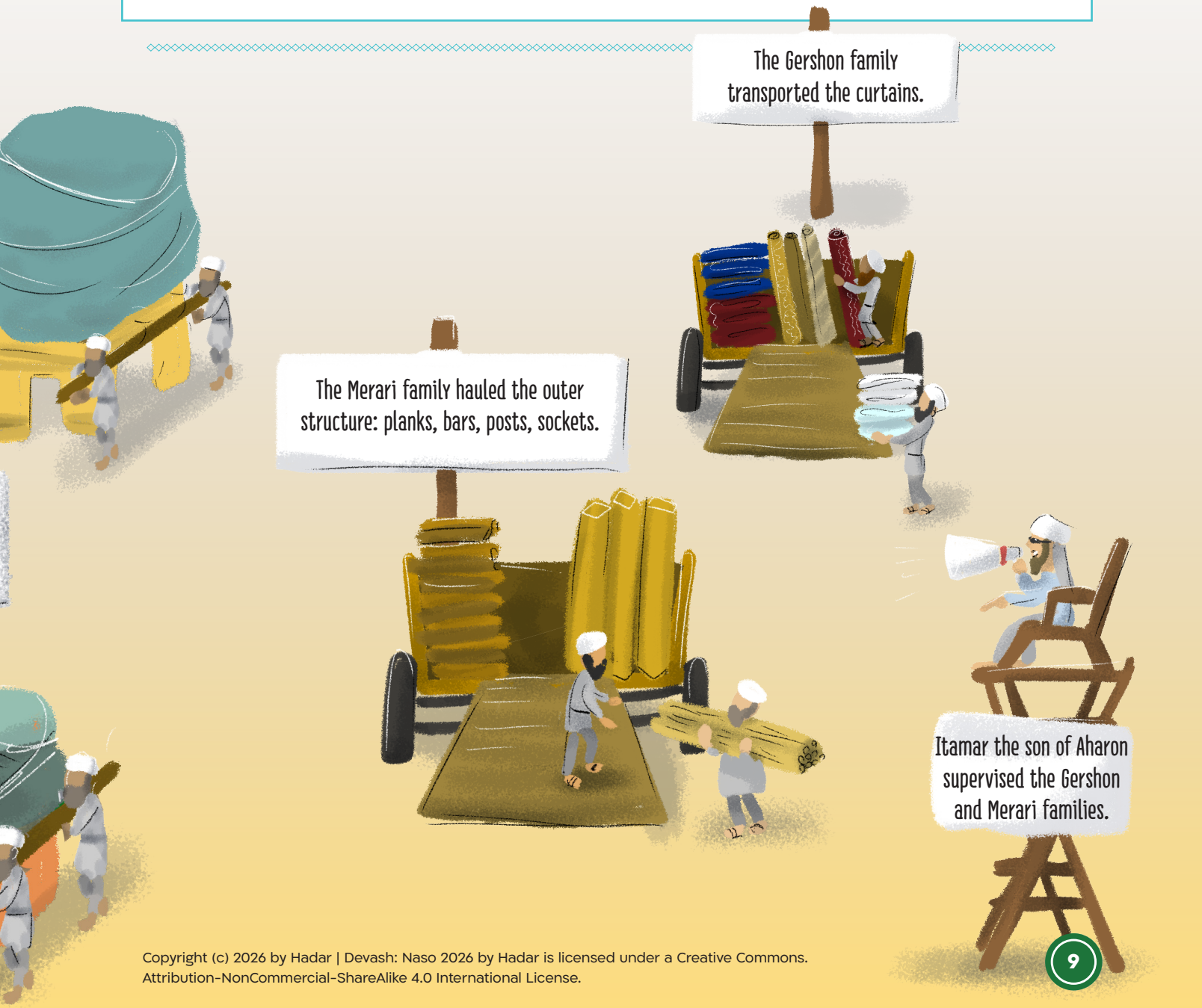
The families in the tribe of Levi had different jobs to help transport the mishkan through the wilderness.





Parashah Scavenger Hunt Answers:

1. Itamar the son of Aharon (4:28)
2. The family of Gershon, with a count of 2,630 (4:40)
3. Someone who has the skin disease צָרַעַת (tzara'at) and someone who is a זָב (zav) (5:2)
4. Wine or grape juice! A nazir can't eat or drink anything that comes from grapes (6:4)
5. Because they did their carrying jobs with their shoulders (7:9)
6. חַטָּאת (hattat, sin/purification sacrifice) (7:46)
7. From above the כַּפֹּרֶת (kaporet) that covered the אָרוֹן (aron, ark), between the two כְּרוּבִים (keruvim, winged angels) (7:89)
8. Someone who is bringing sacrifices to mark the end of their period of being a nazir (6:18)
9. They must have! Moshe was told נָשִׂיא אֶחָד לַיּוֹם נָשִׂיא אֶחָד לַיּוֹם (one chief should present a gift each day, one day after the other; 7:11), and there were 12 chiefs, so that had to include a Shabbat. There's a midrash (quoted in Da'at Zekeinim on Bemidbar 7:48) that it was Efrayim who brought the gift on Shabbat. Can you guess why? Take a look at Bemidbar 7:48.
10. He won't tell! (Shoftim 13:18) (Bonus: Who's another angel with a secret name in Tanakh? Look at Bereishit 32:30 for the answer.)



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בּוֹאוּ נְדַבֵּר עַל זֶה • Tell Me More About This!

In this week's פַּרְשָׁנוּת/Commentary discussion (p. 4) we saw a well-known Jewish saying:

אִם אֵין קֶמַח, אֵין תּוֹרָה

WITHOUT FLOUR, THERE IS NO TORAH

This idea comes from a mishnah (Avot 3:17) which lists a bunch of pairs of things that depend on each other.



רַבִּי אֶלְעָזָר בֶּן עֲזַרְיָה אוֹמֵר: אִם אֵין תּוֹרָה, אֵין דֶּרֶךְ אֶרֶץ. אִם אֵין דֶּרֶךְ אֶרֶץ, אֵין תּוֹרָה.

R. ELAZAR BEN AZARIAH SAYS: WITHOUT TORAH, THERE IS NO DEREKH ERETZ (APPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR). AND WITHOUT DEREKH ERETZ, THERE IS NO TORAH.



Why do Torah and derekh eretz need each other? Why can't you have one without the other?



Is it possible to be wise without fearing God? What kind of wisdom is the mishnah talking about here?

אִם אֵין חָכְמָה, אֵין יִרְאָה.
אִם אֵין יִרְאָה, אֵין חָכְמָה.

WITHOUT WISDOM THERE IS NO FEAR OF GOD. AND WITHOUT FEAR OF GOD, THERE IS NO WISDOM.





אִם אֵין בִּינָה, אֵין דֵּעָת.
אִם אֵין דֵּעָת, אֵין בִּינָה.

WITHOUT UNDERSTANDING, THERE IS NO KNOWLEDGE. AND WITHOUT KNOWLEDGE, THERE IS NO UNDERSTANDING.

What could be the difference between "understanding" and "knowledge"? What do these two categories mean to you?



אִם אֵין קֶמַח, אֵין תּוֹרָה.
אִם אֵין תּוֹרָה, אֵין קֶמַח.

WITHOUT FLOUR, THERE IS NO TORAH.
AND WITHOUT TORAH, THERE IS NO FLOUR.

Seforno quoted half of this—the part about Torah needing flour—to explain why Birkat Kohanim would include a blessing for wealth. What do you think about the flipside? Why would flour require Torah? What could that part mean?



דַּקָּה שֶׁל דִּיוּן • One-Minute Debate

A nazir makes a vow not to drink wine or get a haircut or become טָמֵא (tamei, impure). (Bemidbar 6:3-6)

Debate: Holding back from certain things you enjoy can be a way to become more holy.

How to play:

Here are some arguments to get you started, but try to come up with your own. Then debate someone!

For a true one-minute debate, give each side 30 seconds to make its best case.



Agree!

- Your own pleasures–like the foods or games you enjoy–can distract you from thinking about God.
- Physical is the opposite of spiritual. So if you want to be more spiritual, try to be less physical!
- Making sacrifices for God can train you to be more giving and less self-centered.



Disagree!

- Just because something brings you pleasure doesn't mean it's bad.
- God created a beautiful world as a gift for us. Enjoying the world God created can be a way to bring us closer to God.
- We can bring holiness and spirituality even into physical experiences. For example, saying בְּרָכוֹת (berakhot, blessings) over your favorite foods can help you use that pleasure to do something holy.



תְּפִלָּה • Prayer in the Parashah

This week we saw a midrash (p. 3) that pointed out just how important peace is. We also noticed that peace is the climax of בִּרְכַּת כֹּהֲנִים (Birkat Kohanim, the Priestly Blessing).

Peace is also a prominent theme in tefillah. We end every single Amidah with a prayer for peace; either שִׂים שָׁלוֹם (Sim Shalom, "grant us peace") or שָׁלוֹם רָב (Shalom Rav, "abundant peace"). When we pray for peace, what are we really asking for? Can you think of different possibilities?

A midrash offers three ways to understand it:

Sifrei Bemidbar 42	**ספרי במדבר פרשת נשא פיסקא מב**
"And grant you peace" (Bemidbar 6:26)-	"וְיָשֵׂם לְךָ שָׁלוֹם" (במדבר ו:כו)-
R. Hanina, the assistant high-priest says: "And grant you peace" — in your house.	ר' חֲנַנְיָה סְגַן הַכֹּהֲנִים אוֹמֵר: וְיָשֵׂם לְךָ שָׁלוֹם בְּבֵיתֶךָ.
R. Natan says: This is the peace that happens when David and his family are king.	ר' נָתָן אוֹמֵר: זֶה שְׁלוֹם מַלְכוּת בֵּית דָּוִד.
Another explanation: This is the peace of Torah.	דָּבָר אַחֵר: זֶה שְׁלוֹם תּוֹרָה.



R. Hanina highlights peace between family members, which we often call שְׁלוֹם בַּיִת (shelom bayit, peace at home).



R. Natan points to the peace that happens when we have the right leaders, so we don't have fighting or wars.

- When you say Sim Shalom or Shalom Rav, do you usually think about one specific kind of peace? Is it one of these three? Next time you pray for peace, can you try imagining a few different kinds of peace?
- What peace do you experience when you learn Torah? How is that peace different from the other kinds of peace?



Another possibility is that we're talking about the peace we experience when we learn Torah.