

NASO { נָשָׂא } (Elevate)

Numbers 4:21-7:89, Judges 13:2-25, Acts 23:20-24

A Messianic Jewish Commentary

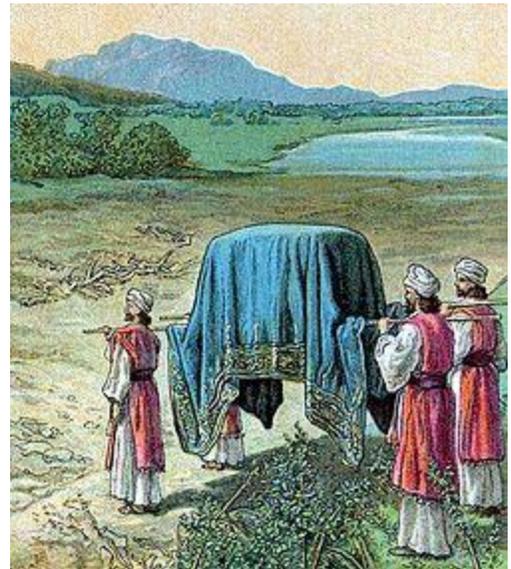
By Hannah Neshet

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“The LORD spoke to Moses, saying, “Take a census of the sons of Gershon also, by their fathers' houses and by their clans.” (Numbers 4:21-22)

The title to this week's Parashah, Naso, means to 'lift up' or 'elevate' and was the term used to take a head count (census) of the children of Israel. In the Hebrew it reads, “Lift up the heads” (naso et rosh) נָשָׂא אֶת-רֹאשׁ . . .

In a nutshell, Parashat Naso deals with the responsibilities and duties of the Cohanim (Jewish priests), how to keep the camp clean, how to make restitution for wrongs, how to deal with a jealous husband who suspects his wife of infidelity (sotah), explains the vows of the Nazarite, and ends with the Aaronic Benediction (Bircat Hacoהנים ברכת כהנים) or more commonly known as the Priestly blessing.



Carrying the Ark of the Covenant (illustration from a Bible card published circa 1896–1913 by the Providence Lithograph Company)

Kehilla – Community

The Word continues from last week's Scripture portion with the numbering of the Levitical families and detailing of their transport duties. Each man was specifically named for his specified task. This orderly system ensured a fair and equal distribution of the heavy responsibility of caring for the Tabernacle.

When we live and work together in community (called kehilla in Hebrew), life becomes do-able. Everyone has their own assigned tasks so that each one carries his or her own load and the burden does not fall too heavily on just a few individuals. This is the ideal behind the Israeli kibbutz movement – the communal lifestyle.

The early community (kehilla) of Messianic believers¹ also adopted this form of lifestyle: **“Now all who believed were together, and had all things in common, and sold their possessions and goods, and divided them among all, as anyone had need.”** (Acts 2:44-45)

¹ Followers of Yeshua the Messiah



Panorama of [Kibbutz Barkai](#) in the [Wadi Ara](#) region

The enemy has since perverted the idea of the community into ungodly, immoral communes and cults; but in its early days, the disciples of Yeshua lived a communal lifestyle. In our society and culture today, many of us live such isolated lives that even if we do go to a church, fellowship or congregation, we basically do life on our own. Along with the blessing of increased mobility in our society (through international air travel) comes the common scenario of children and grandchildren living a far distance from their parents. Whereas families used to stay in close proximity and support one another throughout birth, life (with all its trials), old age and finally death; today, extended families are often scattered and disconnected across continents.

Today more and more people are breaking down under the resulting loneliness and stress of carrying such heavy burdens. Fibromyalgia and Chronic Fatigue Syndrome - signs of a body just basically 'giving up' on trying to cope - are becoming all too common maladies in today's society. I recall vividly the time when my landlady, Tzipi (who suffers from fibromyalgia and chronic fatigue) fell in her kitchen and broke her knee, requiring emergency surgery.

Thankfully, her husband, Ori, was able to take her to the hospital; but afterwards she was in a full leg cast and needed assistance for several weeks. Ori could not take that much time off work and they simply had no one else to help. The wheels of the health care system grind slowly at times in Israel and since we live in a rural area, it was not possible to find home nursing care. I found it so sad that they had no one to ask for help – their grown children had moved away to Canada and the United States. Their one daughter left in Israel lived a distance away and also could not take time off work to stay with her mother.



Tzipi lighting Chanukah candles in her kitchen with Avi

They had no other choice but to ask me (whom they knew only from our landlord-tenant relationship) for help. I considered it a privilege to live out one of the most important commands in the Torah, “*You shall love your neighbor as yourself.*” (Leviticus 19:18, Mark 12:31) What I realized from helping nurse Tzipi back to health for those couple of weeks; however, was her profound loneliness. There were days when she wept for hours over how alone she felt and how much she missed her children and grandchildren.

This is the unfortunate emotional state of many in our world today. We are, on the one hand, more connected than ever before through the internet and social media; and on the other hand – we have never been more lonely and isolated.

I once read that ‘*carrying an unreasonably heavy burden for too long of a time*’ is one of the things can cause a broken spirit –an unbearable state of being according to the Word of God. “**The spirit of a man will sustain him in sickness, but who can bear a broken spirit?**” (Proverbs 18:14) The Hebrew word used here is ‘nicheah’ נִכְּאָה which means ‘smitten or afflicted’.

We are called to fulfill the Torah of Messiah by helping bear each other’s burdens: “**Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Messiah.**” (Galatians 6:2) We may do this in practical ways to those overloaded with responsibilities; but also through encouraging and comforting others who carry heavy emotional burdens such as grief or loss.

Yeshua is willing to bear our heavy burdens, as He invited us to do, saying ‘**Come to me, all you who are weary and heavy burdened, and I will give you rest.**’² (Matthew 11:28) But we must first be willing to lay them down at His feet and simply rest in Him.

“**Cast all your burdens upon Him for He cares for you.**” (Psalm 55:22)
This is not giving up – it is ‘letting go and letting God.’

We have to stop trying to play God - to do it all - to be everything to everybody at all times and in all places. We must stop playing Superman or Superwoman and admit that we can’t carry everyone else’s load anymore.

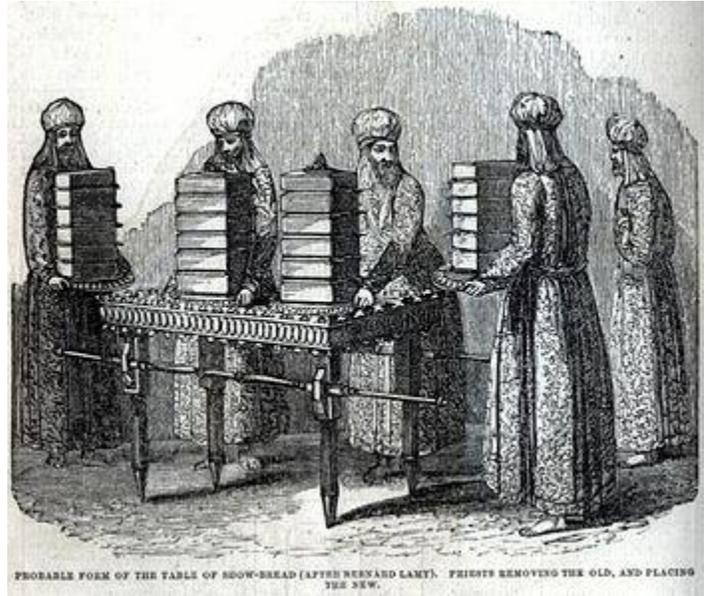


I have heard that people in North America work even longer hours than the nation of Japan, which actually invented a new word for ‘*death by overwork*’.

² Also lyrics to a beautiful song, [Come to Me All You Who are Weary](#), by Kari Jobe

By coming into community, each doing their specific task, we may enjoy a lighter, more balanced, more enjoyable life. This is our hope and our vision.

We may notice that all the people listed in this portion of the parashah are men; no women are even mentioned. This is not a reason to feel overlooked, slighted, or even downright offended; but rather see it as an acknowledgment that, as women, we usually have our hands more than full just caring for our children, families and household responsibilities.



PROBABLE FORM OF THE TABLE OF SHOW-BREAD (AFTER REEN AND LAMY). PRIESTS REMOVING THE OLD, AND PLACING THE NEW.

Priests replacing the showbread, the table for which was the responsibility of the Kohathites (19th-century illustration)

Even in Orthodox synagogues today, women are not required to perform many religious tasks and obligations like the men. That is because God values the work that women do and doesn't expect us to carry additional burdens. He knows that if a child has a runny nose or dirty diaper we have to go tend to them. I remember once trying to lead a Passover Seder and my then toddler son tripped and fell down in the middle of the Ten Plagues. I looked up, seeing his bloody nose and tear-stained face, and that was that! Time out! The whole Seder had to come to a halt while I hugged and comforted my little boy.

Cast out the leper

The Lord spoke to Moses about regulations meant to keep the camp clean and undefiled. He commanded the children of Israel to cast out of the camp every leper and whoever was unclean (defiled).³ Here, we begin to see a huge difference between life before and after the life, death and resurrection of Yeshua, which ushered in the New Covenant.



The Healing of Ten Lepers by James Tissot - [Brooklyn Museum](#)

³ Numbers 5:1-4

In ancient times, lepers (by necessity for hygienic reasons) had to be excluded from society – living as perpetually alienated, rejected, outcasts from the life of community (kehilla); but part of Yeshua’s ministry was the healing of lepers. He came to heal, bind up, set free, deliver, reconcile, restore and ultimately - to save.

We see the same spirit of salvation, grace and mercy in the account of the woman caught in adultery. We may first look at how the issue was dealt with in this Torah portion and then contrast it with the New Covenant.

The Law of Jealousy

This next section deals with **the law of jealousy**⁴. God gave Israel a way to deal with the problem of jealousy and suspicion in marriage. Sometimes a husband would get jealous and suspect unfaithfulness on the part of his wife. Their suspicions could prove to be either true or false; and so the Cohen (priest) would administer a strange test to the woman in question to determine her guilt or innocence.

Her hair would be loosed (some translations say uncovered) (Numbers 5:18). In today’s culture and society a woman often wears her hair loose and casual. But in ancient Israel, a woman with loose hair indicated loose morals – ‘letting one’s hair down’, so to speak.

Having one’s hair loosed could indicate mourning, grief or shame in these ancient times. Some Messianics believe in the necessity of a woman’s head covering but I don’t want to plunge into a debate over this controversial issue. The main point is for women to dress modestly and decently at all times. This is called **tzniut** (Hebrew: [צניעות](#)).



Women's tichels⁵ and headscarves

Unfaithful Wives

In somewhat of a strange ceremony, the Cohen would hold a vial of bitter water and place the woman under an oath. He would write terrible curses in a book and scrape them off into the water which he would give the woman to drink. If she was guilty, apparently her belly would swell and her thigh would rot; but if she was innocent, the curse would not take effect and she would go free to conceive children having had her purity proven.

“... then the priest shall put the woman under the oath of the curse, and he shall say to the woman—“the LORD make you a curse and an oath among your people, when the LORD makes your thigh rot and your belly swell; and may this water that causes the curse go into your stomach, and make your belly swell and your thigh rot.”

(Numbers 5:21-22)

⁴ Numbers 5:29

⁵ Tichel is Yiddish for headscarf

Amen Amen....

After the priest pronounced the curses upon the woman, if she was indeed guilty of adultery she would then say “*Amen, Amen (so be it)*”.⁶ We often hear Yeshua using this expression, “Amen, amen, I say unto you....” This word, **Amen, אמן** comes from a root that means faith (emunah) **אמנה**. This is also the root word of the Hebrew word for art (omanut) **אומנות**; and is related to the meaning of the name, ‘Na’aman’ (m) **נאמן** (faithful) or Na’amah **נאמה** (f).

When someone would say ‘amen’ to a vow or oath, it was as if they swore the oath themselves. This is the Hebrew meaning behind this common word spoken even today at the end of most prayers. When we say ‘amen’ to something we are coming into agreement with what they have said - by faith.

The woman accused of adultery would have to drink the waters of bitterness that would either bring her guilt to light or clear her as innocent. We can see that the people of Israel believed the curse to be very real. If the curses did not come into effect and her reputation was cleared of all suspicion, then she would be able to ‘conceive seed’ (become pregnant).⁷

This shows us that once all the suspicions were cleared away and trust re-established, then the man and woman could be reconciled and able to resume sexual relations in their marriage. One cannot enjoy a loving, intimate relationship when trust is broken or even if questions exist as to the other person’s fidelity in marriage. Trust must be restored and jealousy eliminated before reconciliation can occur.

The fact that the woman conceives once she is proven innocent also shows us that fertility was considered a sign of God’s favor. It also explains why it was so devastating for a woman (in these ancient days) to be barren. Hannah, for example, was continually tormented and teased by Elkanah’s other wife, P’nina because of Hannah’s inability to conceive.

Sarah and Rachel both conceived only by divine intervention. Yeshua’s birth was also a miraculous conception. The Word of God says that children are a blessing and that the fruit of the womb is our reward. In Hebrew it actually uses the word for salary (sahar); **‘happy is the man whose quiver is full of them’**. (Psalm 127:3-5)

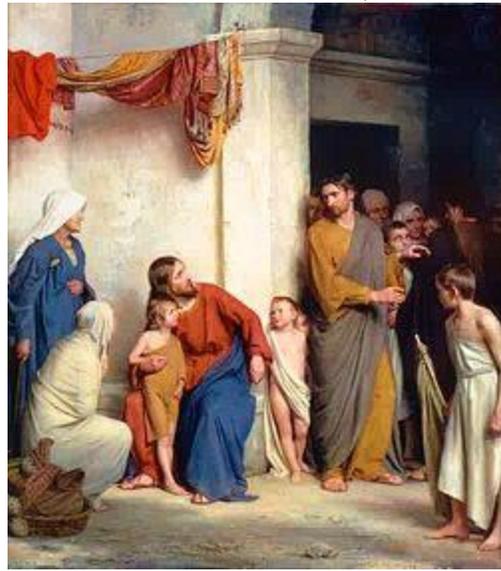
Today, however, many women delay childbirth and limit the number of children they bear. Some couples actually choose to be childless for life, forfeiting the joys of parenthood in order to avoid the responsibilities. Our society and culture fosters the mentality that children are a burden rather than a blessing. This is exactly the kind of attitude that leads to abortion for the sake of convenience. How often are children treated as nuisances, shunted off to the side, left with the electronic sitters (T.V., video games, computers), herded into mass schools; and unwelcome at ‘adult-only functions’?

⁶ Numbers 5:22

⁷ Numbers 5:28

But Yeshua said, “**Let the little children come unto Me and do not forbid them.**” (Matthew 19:14, Mark 10:14, Luke 18:16). I love that! I will always remember a time when, at a Christian ‘revival’ tent meeting, I asked the Lord to show me His glory. At that moment, I felt the Holy Spirit direct my attention to a group of little children, laughing and playing outside the tent of meeting in carefree delight. “*Here is My glory*”, I felt the Lord whisper to my heart.

I must admit that there are times when I certainly don’t feel like I’m dealing with God’s glory when I am with my children. In fact, the day I first sat down to write this study was an extremely tiring and trying time. It was one of those days when you lift your eyes to heaven and say, “*Lord, I know these children are a blessing, but...*”



Christ with children by [Carl Heinrich Bloch](#)

Sometimes it takes so much energy, patience and creativity to ‘train up our children in the way they should go’. And when we are carrying too heavy of a load, we may just not have the strength to deal with the issues or to discipline them properly according to the Word of God which tell us that a child left to himself will bring shame to his mother⁸; but when we correct our son he will give us rest.

A big ‘todah rabah’ (thank you very much) to the men who *are* out there playing an active, loving, involved role in parenting your children. Kol Hakavod! (good for you!) I’ve heard the expressions that it takes a village to raise a child. Once again - a call to kehilla (community).

El Kanah – Jealous God

“when the spirit of jealousy comes upon a man.” (Numbers 5: 30)

Not only is there a ‘law of jealousy’; but this verse states that an actual ‘spirit of jealousy’ (*Ruach Kin’ah*) can come upon a person. Jealousy is not necessarily a negative thing in an intimate relationship; it is a desire for undivided loyalty, devotion and faithfulness - especially sexual fidelity.

One of the names for God is ‘Jealous’ **{El Kanah.}**⁹ God is jealous over us. He wants His Bride to be devoted, loyal and faithful to Him alone and to have no other gods but Him.¹⁰ This is one of the Ten Commandments. God desired an exclusive relationship with the nation of Israel. He doesn’t want us to ‘date’ Him while still ‘playing the field’. He wants our undivided heart.

⁸ Proverbs 29:15

⁹ Elkanah was also the name of Hannah’s husband,, and the father of Samuel the Prophet

¹⁰ Exodus 20:3, Deuteronomy 5:7

My daughter, Liat, tells me that in their teenage slang, a 'BAE' means someone very, very, VERY special. It is an acronym that stands for 'Before All Else'. God wants to be our BAE ☺. When we go after other gods or put other things (or people) first before God, He becomes jealous. The Word of God says: **“Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.”** (Matthew 6:33) Halleluyah!

How would we feel if our husband (or wife) felt no jealousy at the thought of us being intimate with a person outside of the marriage? It seems to me that this would indicate a serious problem in the relationship! The Word says, **“Therefore jealousy (kin’ah) is a husband’s fury;”** (Proverbs 6:34)

A loving, devoted husband will become jealous if he suspects his wife of being unfaithful to him; and vice versa. The pain of betrayal that comes with infidelity can only be healed by the love of God in Messiah Yeshua. He came to heal the broken –hearted and bind up our wounds.

Jealousy is not only a male prerogative; a woman may also feel jealous or suspicious of her husband. But we don't see the jealous woman's perspective addressed here. I began to wonder - “why not?” Even in the story of the woman caught in adultery, we never hear about what happened to the man, do we? Why was only the woman dragged before the congregation to be stoned? Does God just ‘wink’ at a man who commits adultery but punish a woman? It seems as if the man got off ‘scot-free’. *“Unfair!”* we naturally cry out - but there is more here than what meets the eye.

The woman is stated to be under her husband's authority (the head of a woman is a man); therefore if she has acted as a harlot, she dishonors her head and bears her guilt. But the man, whether he accepts it or not, is under God's direct authority. Therefore when the man engages in adultery and fornication, he dishonors God Himself.

When Joseph ran away from Potiphar's wife, it was because he could not bear to sin against God in this abominable way. Joseph said, **“How then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?”** (Genesis 39:9)

When a man commits adultery, he destroys his own soul. **“Whoever commits adultery with woman lacks understanding; he who does so destroys his own soul.”** (Proverbs 6:32)



[Joseph](#) and Potiphar's Wife, by [Guido Reni](#) 1630

Proverbs 7:27 states that the adulteress' house is the way to hell. This is the destination of the men who visit her. So God most definitely does deal with men as well (not just women) in the area of sexual immorality. Of course, with repentance comes divine forgiveness; but negative consequences still almost always follow sin. David committed adultery with Batsheva and although God forgave him when he repented, their child still died.

Although God will forgive if the unfaithful husband or wife repents, the offended party may decide not to reconcile. Even Yeshua gave adultery as acceptable grounds for divorce.¹¹ Marriages can and have been healed and even become stronger after dealing with this issue than before; but it takes a work of the Holy Spirit and the grace of God, accompanied by deep, sincere, and real repentance on the part of the one who has committed this serious breach of covenant in marriage.

Marital unfaithfulness is a moral crime destructive to the foundations of social order; therefore it tended to be dealt with harshly. According to the Law of Moses, adultery carried the death penalty by stoning in ancient Israel.

Therefore, when the Jewish men brought a woman caught in the act of adultery before Yeshua, the expectation was her execution.

They were trying to trap Yeshua, saying “**This is what the Law of Moses says; what do YOU say?**” Yeshua never denied the Law (Torah) but He introduced the element of mercy and grace. He answered, “**Whoever has not sinned may cast the first stone.**” (John 8:7).



[Pieter Bruegel](#), Oil on panel, 24cm x 34cm. [Courtauld Institute](#) Galleries, London

One by one all the men put down their stones and walked away. No one was left except Yeshua and the woman. His words to her are so beautiful, “**Where are your accusers? ...Neither do I condemn you, go and sin no more.**” (John 8:11).

He did not give her a blanket license to sin; what He did give her was another chance – that is grace and mercy. That is the message of the cross: “*I do not condemn you. Go and sin no more.*” No matter what mistakes we have made in the past, there is hope. God will give us another chance to get our lives back on track.

Yeshua said he did not come to judge the world but to save. Yeshua spoke of Himself as the Light of the World. Once we choose to follow Him, we do not need to walk in darkness any longer. Once we have tasted of His gift of grace, how can we judge others with such harshness?

The Vow of the Nazirite

Besides the marriage vows spoken by bride and bridegroom at their wedding ceremony, there are other vows such as that of the Nazirite: “**Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, “Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: ‘When either a man or woman consecrates an offering to take the vow of a Nazirite, to separate himself to the LORD, he shall separate himself from wine and similar drink;’**” (Numbers 6:1-3)

¹¹ Matthew 5:32

The vow of the Nazarite could be made by a man or a woman; and it could be a lifetime vow (as in the case of Samson (Shimshon)) or it could be a temporary, voluntary, self-imposed vow to be consecrated and set apart to the Lord for a minimum of thirty days.

This word, Nazir (Nazirite) can mean either ‘*separation*’ (as in keeping oneself separate from grapes and wine) or even to be a ‘hermit’; but it can also be derived from the Hebrew word, Nezer נֵזֶר (crown), as it is written, **“the crown (nezer נֵזֶר) of God is on his head.... He is holy (set apart) unto the Adonai.”** (Numbers 6:7-8)

This Hebrew word also means a tiara, diadem, or precious thing. It indicates the dedication of all a man’s strength and service unto the Lord. All the days of his Naziriteship he is holy unto the Lord. He becomes like a diadem or precious jewel in the crown or tiara of God through his consecration and self-denial.

Did you know that God calls Zion and Jerusalem a ‘royal diadem’ in His hand? Israel is set apart from all the nations, and destined to be His dazzling tiara: **“You shall also be a crown of glory in the hand of the LORD, and a royal diadem in the hand of your God.”** (Isaiah 62:3)

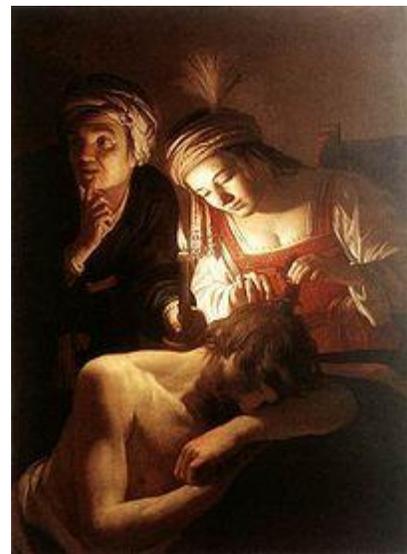
Three aspects comprised the Nazirite Vow:

- 1) Hair must remain unshorn
- 2) No intoxicating drink or anything from grapes
- 3) No contact with the dead



Shimshon the Nazirite

“And the Angel of the LORD appeared to the woman and said to her, “Indeed now, you are barren and have borne no children, but you shall conceive and bear a son. Now therefore, please be careful not to drink wine or *similar* drink, and not to eat anything unclean. For behold, you shall conceive and bear a son. And no razor (מִרְחָה, *morah*) shall come upon his head, for the child shall be a Nazirite to God from the womb; and he shall begin to deliver Israel out of the hand of the Philistines.” (Judges 13:3-5)



Samson (Shimshon in Hebrew), whose story is studied in this week’s haftarah was destined by God from the womb to be a Nazirite and called to deliver Israel from out of the hand of their enemies, the Philistines.

Samson failed to live out the consecrated life that God intended for him. He did not act with the humility and consecration required of his calling as a Nazirite; nor did he live an ascetic, monastic lifestyle. His Nazirite vow did not automatically make him holy.

Samson and Delilah (1615 painting by [Gerard van Honthorst](#))

Instead, Samson indulged his flesh and followed the lust of his eyes with regards to women –he married a Philistine woman, against his parent’s wishes - an act of rebellion that led to his downfall.

The prophet Samuel was also a Nazirite from the womb, since Samuel’s mother Hannah dedicated him to the Lord’s service and vowed, “**and no razor (מורה, morah) shall come upon his head.**” (1 Samuel 1:11)

Why is the law of the Nazirite and the law of the unfaithful wife (called a ‘Sotah’) discussed in this same Torah study? Is there a connection? The laws of Sotah begin with a Hebrew word, ‘ma’al’, meaning ‘trespass or embezzlement’. This shows us how sacred are the vows of marriage that any spousal unfaithfulness is like the sin of trespassing or treason.



[Eli and Samuel](#) (1780 painting by [John Singleton Copley](#))

The first act of unfaithfulness towards God occurred in the Garden of Eden, when Adam and Chava¹² ate from the forbidden fruit. Although not specifically written in scripture, Jewish tradition holds that the Tree of Knowledge was a vine with grapes, the ingredient of wine which the Nazir vows not to drink.



Grapes, forbidden to the Nazirite

Why may the Nazir not drink wine? It is because under the influence of wine or strong drink, he may be more vulnerable to temptation to sin against God. In the case of both the Nazir and the Sotah, indulgence in excess wine or alcoholic drink may lead to disastrous immorality.

Each of us also has been given a precious calling and destiny; we cannot live only for ourselves, to gratify the desires of the flesh. We were bought with a price and our lives are now not our own.¹³ If we follow the flesh instead of the Spirit, we may also forfeit our destiny and inheritance. We are blessed to be a blessing; to bring deliverance and salvation to people enslaved and in bondage.

It is sad that Samson was so far gone into carnality that he didn’t even initially realize that the Spirit of God had left him. This was King David’s primary fear: “**Do not cast me away from Your presence and take not Your Holy Spirit from me.**” (Psalm 51:11)

¹² Eve

¹³ 2 Corinthians 5:15

Samson the Nazarite possessed great physical strength but failed miserably in his morality and spirituality; and yet in the end, God's purposes prevailed. With his death, Samson did succeed in delivering the people of Israel from the Philistines.

We can learn so much from Samson's tragic life and death. Making an external vow doesn't necessarily change the heart; and outward signs such as headcoverings and tzitzit (fringes) cannot make us holy.

Also, we see that God had already assigned a special destiny to the child even before he was born. The angel warned his mother to be careful during her pregnancy. Our prenatal experiences matter! We could be carrying a very special child in our womb.



Samson Slays a Thousand Men (watercolor circa 1896–1902 by James Tissot)

God may have a divine calling and destiny for a child even while still in his or her mother's womb. God said to Jeremiah, **“Before I formed you in the womb I knew you; before you were born I sanctified you; I ordained you a prophet to the nations.”** (Jeremiah 1:5)

This is what makes abortion such a grave sin and tragedy. Recently, while walking along Ben Yehudah Street in downtown Jerusalem we came across a man carrying a placard with this very Scripture in Hebrew and English. He called in a loud voice for the people of Israel to repent for abortion and for killing their unborn children. It was amazing!



Various denominations can ordain individuals to be ministers, pastors, priests and rabbis; but ultimately it is God who ordains us into His service. Halleluyah! We must never fall prey to the lie that perhaps because our parents didn't want us, or maybe our father wanted a boy or some such nonsense, that we are unwanted children.

God is the third partner in the creation of every child, along with a man and a woman. The father contributes the sperm and the mother, the egg, but God breathes life into the child with His Ruach (spirit, breath, wind).

When we die, the portion we received from our father and mother remains; but God's portion - the eternal breath of life - leaves the body and returns to Him. Abortion, when viewed in this perspective, therefore is unthinkable. The prevailing idea that the fetus is not really a baby but just a growing body of indiscriminate cells is a lie of the enemy. As post-abortion women, we need to declare the truth!

Apostle Paul the Nazirite

We can also see an example of a Nazirite vow in the New Testament as well.¹⁴ At this time, there were **'myriads of Jews who have believed, and they were all zealous for the Torah'** (Acts 21:20) So much for the idea that the Torah was abolished and that the early disciples of Yeshua were set *'free from the law'*. First of all, *'myriads of Jews believed'* and secondly, *'they were all zealous for the Torah'*.

Yeshua never taught his disciples not to keep the Torah; nor did they teach this heresy to others. In fact, Yeshua warned us that anyone who teaches people that it is acceptable to break God's commandments will be the least in the Kingdom.¹⁵ When the Jewish people begin accepting our Messiah, we will see resurrection life! (Romans 11:15) But just as Yeshua's disciples did not recognize Him after His resurrection (they mistook him for the gardener); people may not necessarily recognize the Messianic Jewish Believers who are all *'zealous for the Torah.'*

In this instance, the Believers in Yeshua had heard that Paul was coming and they were concerned about the false rumors flying around. Some people were accusing Paul of teaching the Jews to forsake Moses and not to circumcise their children. Has v'chalilah! (God forbid!).

The brethren's advice to Paul was to take a vow to prove that these rumors were false. **"...that all may know that those things of which they were informed concerning you are nothing, but that you yourself also walk orderly and keep the Torah."** (Acts 21: 24)

This is an amazing statement. Paul has been accused of many things, but this verse shows that, not only did Paul *not* teach a Torah-less religion but he himself kept the Torah after he came to faith. I have heard so many Christians claim that Paul was an example of an Orthodox Jew who was *'set free from the law'*; but nothing could be further from the truth.

¹⁴ Acts 21:20-24

¹⁵ Matthew 5:19

Orpah & Ruth

If Paul kept the Torah and encouraged his fellow Jewish Believers to continue in Torah observance as well, then what about the Gentile Church? This was the whole reason for the Jerusalem Council – to settle this potentially contentious issue. We have ‘Jews for Jesus’, but what about “Gentiles for Yeshua”? Some Gentiles believe, but they maintain their Gentile ways and probably always will, unless they have a spiritual awakening or supernatural revelation.

I see this Church as a type of Orpah - one of Naomi’s Gentile daughters-in-law from the book of Ruth. Orpah was the daughter-in-law who, after Naomi urged her to leave, kissed her mother-in-law and went back to her people and her gods. This is the Church who says, yes, I love Israel and the Jews; but that’s about where it ends. And if it comes right down to the line, they are most likely going to turn their backs on Israel and the Jewish people under pressure from the anti-Christ, like the German Church under Hitler. In fact, Orpah means ‘*back of the neck*’ in Hebrew.



Naomi entreating Ruth and Orpah to return to the land of Moab by [William Blake](#), 1795

Ruth, however, uttered the famous lines, “**Do not ask me to leave you, or to turn back from following after you, for wherever you go, I will go; and wherever you lodge, I will lodge, Your people shall be my people, and your God, my God. Where you die, I will die, and there will I be buried.**” (Ruth 1:16-17)

Ruth’s name means ‘*friend*’. There is a friend that sticks closer than a brother. Ruth represents the type of Gentile follower of Yeshua who not only receives the Messiah of Israel; but also the people of Israel and the God of Israel – along with His Torah.

Naomi represents the people of Israel, having been exiled from the Land, bitter against the Almighty after losing everyone they loved and everything they owned (in the Holocaust). Why does Boaz, the Redeemer (a type of Yeshua) notice Ruth, a foreigner (Gentile)? It was because of the kindness and faithfulness that she showed to Naomi, her mother in law.

I believe that our Redeemer, Yeshua the Messiah, takes special notice of those who show kindness and commitment to Israel and the Jewish people who, like Naomi, are returning to the Land in poverty of possessions and poverty of spirit. For those who help these people, God has a special reward; of this I am absolutely convinced.

Naomi told Ruth to go back to her people because there was nothing in it for Ruth. She could have no self-centered motive to stay committed to Naomi. But God rewarded Ruth with the privilege of being a link in the lineage of King David and ultimately the Messiah. (Ruth 4:17) Israel, like Naomi, is spiritually barren; but a humble, faithful Gentile in covenant and intimacy

with the Redeemer will bring forth life and place it in the bosom of Naomi - a high calling indeed.

Stay faithful, all the 'Ruths' out there. It may seem an unrewarding calling, but I believe with all my heart that you will **receive your full reward from the God of Israel under whose wings you have come to take refuge.** (Ruth 2:12).¹⁶

Nazirite Vow Fulfilled in Days of Messiah

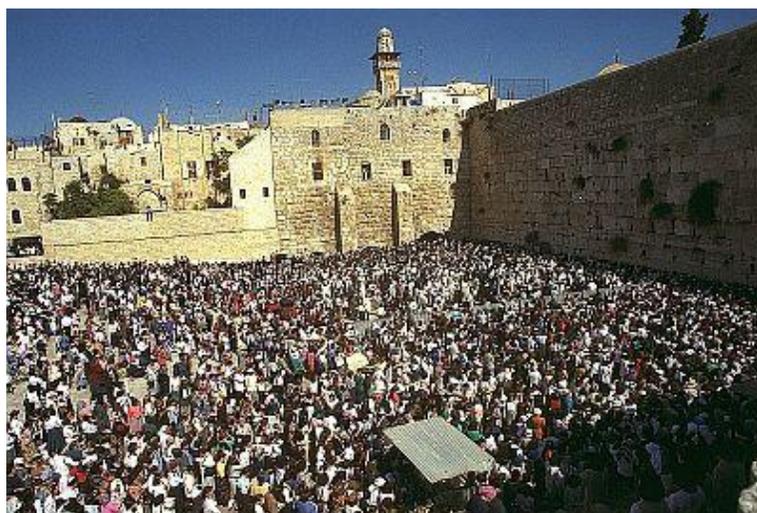
Although most people are not to stay separate or aloof from society but rather to bring holiness into the world in which we live; Nazirites are allowed to do so and are considered holy - spiritually equal to prophets. "I set up prophets from your sons and Nazirites from your young men." (Amos 2:11)

The rabbis believe that in the 'days of Moshiach' (the time of redemption under the Messiah), there will be no need for separation from worldly matters since they will no longer impact us negatively. Instead, in the Messianic age, since all will be peace and beauty, our single minded focus will be to know God – to love, serve and worship Him forever. This will fulfill the holiness of the Nazirite vow.¹⁷

Jewish people pray for God's salvation (Yeshuah) every day. They say in their daily prayers, "every day (and all day long) we hope for Your salvation"; or in the version of the Thirteen Principles of the Faith: "I await his coming every day."¹⁸ Please pray for the salvation of the Jewish people who wait with longing each day for the coming of the Messiah.

The Aaronic Benediction

This portion of Scripture ends with the priestly blessing, the Aaronic Benediction. Called Bircat Cohanim (**ברכת כהנים**), this blessing is to be recited in the Holy tongue (lashon Hakodesh) - the Hebrew language. Even today, the Cohanim of Israel, whose lineage has been preserved over thousands of years, stand up and bless the people in synagogues and Jewish communities all over the world. In Israel, the Western Wall Plaza (Kotel) is packed with people who come at special festival times to receive the Aaronic Benediction of the Cohanim in Jerusalem.



Receiving the Bircat Hacohanim at the Kotel in Jerusalem

¹⁶ [Ruth a Righteous Gentile DVD](#) of Hannah teaching on this message available by mail or website' www.voiceforisrael.net Ruth is the assigned reading for the Festival of Shavuot (Feast of Weeks/Pentecost) which is usually celebrated around the time of the reading of Naso.

¹⁷ http://www.chabad.org/library/article_cdo/aid/145615/jewish/Living-with-Moshiach-Nasso-I.htm

¹⁸ http://www.chabad.org/library/article_cdo/aid/145616/jewish/Living-with-Moshiach-Nasso-II.htm

This simple but eloquent blessing is a benediction of love and peace:

May the LORD (YHVH) bless you and guard you -

יְבָרֶכֶךָ יְהוָה, וַיְשִׁמְרֶכָּךְ

("Yevārēkh-khā Adhōnāy veyishmerēkhā ...)

May the LORD make His face shed light upon you and be gracious unto you -

יָאֵר יְהוָה פָּנָיו אֵלֶיךָ, וַיַּחַנְּךָ

("Yā'ēr Adhōnāy pānāv ēlekhā viḥunnēkkā ...)

May the LORD lift up His face unto you and give you peace -

יְשֵׁא יְהוָה פָּנָיו אֵלֶיךָ, וַיִּשְׂם לְךָ שְׁלוֹמִים

("Yissā Adhōnāy pānāv ēlekhā viyāsēm lekha shālōm.") (Numbers 6:24-26)

Only adult males over the age of Bar Mitzvah (age 13 and up), of direct descent from the lineage of Aaron may perform this benediction and only in the presence of a minyan (a quota of ten adult males in Orthodox Judaism). Other more liberal sects of Judaism may allow for women to be included in the head count for the minyan.

According to Jewish custom, the Cohen may not recite the blessing under the influence of alcohol, or after the recent death of a close relative. Other conditions that may disqualify a Cohen from participating in the reciting of this special blessing are: a serious speech impediment, having taken a human life, blindness, or marriage to a disqualifying woman (a divorcee, widow or non-virgin).

Once assembled on a raised platform, the Kohanim recite the blessing with raised hands. The Kohanim (descendants of Aaron, brother of Moses) had a special duty to bless the people by raising their hands and blessing the Jewish people. Although the blessing came through the raised hands of the Kohanim, God made it clear that it is His blessing being transmitted through the Priests as His chosen vessels. God said, *"So they shall put My name on the children of Israel, and I will bless them."* (Numbers 6:27)



The positioning of the fingers of the Kohanim during the Priestly Blessing

There are still people today whom God has given the power to bless and even heal through their hands. Yeshua said that His followers would lay hands on the sick and they would recover.

"They will be able to handle snakes with safety, and if they drink anything poisonous, it won't hurt them. They will be able to place their hands on the sick, and they will be healed." (Mark 16:18)

Not only did God place His name on the hands of the Kohanim; but He also has engraved the names of the children of Israel on the palms of His hands (Isaiah 49:16).

Traditionally, congregational members cover their heads with their tallitot (plural for tallit – prayer shawl) and do not look directly at the Kohanim during the reciting of the benediction. A man’s children, even if grown, will come under their father’s tallit for the blessing as well.



A version of this blessing inscribed in silver is the oldest Biblical text ever found to this date. Amulets with these verses written on them have been unearthed in graves dating from the period of the First Temple and are stored at the Israel Museum in Jerusalem.

Many Messianic congregations continue this practice and bless the people in their services with the Bircat Hacoהנים as well. What is so special about this blessing? Is there a difference between a prayer and a blessing? The Rabbis tell us that there is a distinction.

The blessing of a tzadik (righteous man) imparts to us whatever God has intended for our life. For example, when Jacob blessed his grandchildren, Menasheh and Ephraim, the younger brother (Ephraim) received the bigger blessing.¹⁹ When Jacob crossed his hands to give the greater blessing to Ephraim rather than Menasheh, this was not his personal decision; but he was being guided by Adonai to give the blessing He has intended for these particular tribes.

Prayer, however, say the rabbis, can actually change circumstances for the better. It can cause a sick person to recover, a single person to find their b’sheret (chosen one), and a person plagued with poverty to have their needs met. Every prayer is to end with the phrase, “*Yehi Ratzon*” (May it be God’s will).

This Bircat Hacoהנים, however, acts as both a blessing and a prayer. The Cohanim bless us with God’s peace, protection, favor, and grace; but as a prayer, it can also change our circumstances to bring us that which we desire into our life.

Let us examine each of the elements of the Aaronic Blessing:

1. The first element is blessing. **“May the Lord יהוה bless you”... יברכך יהוה**

Blessing (y’varech) **יברך** contains the same root as knee (berech) **ברך**. It takes real humility - getting down on our knees (figuratively or literally) - to receive the blessing of God. Like the

¹⁹ Genesis 48:20

prayer of Jabez that has recently become so popular, we can humbly ask God to bless us. Yabez' name comes from the same root as Yob (Job) and it means pain. Even if we are in pain, in very real physical or emotional distress, we can still bend our knee to the Lord and say, *"I'm really hurting right now, Lord, but would you please bless me?"*

There are times when, like our Forefather, Jacob, we must prevail with God for His blessing and say, *"I will not let you go until You bless me."* (Genesis 32:26). It seems to me that we have this idea we must struggle and strive with God for His blessing (and there may be times when this is so); but we also need to keep in mind that Jacob's hip was torn out of its socket - therefore he could no longer fight.



[Rembrandt](#) (1659)

All Jacob could do is cling to the Divine messenger of Elohim and hold on tight! Jacob simply refused to let go; and we must do the same – clinging for dear life to our Heavenly Father and holding on tightly to faith, refusing to ever let go until He blesses us. *"...then He blessed him there."* (Genesis 32:29)

2. "and keep you..." וישמר

The word for 'keep' is shomer שמר which means 'to guard, watch over, and protect from all evil, sickness, poverty and calamity'. The other day I experienced an example of God's 'keeping power' when my son, Timothy, slipped on some mud and fell hard on the edge of a cement barrier right on his spine. His friends heard a loud 'crack' and were frightened; he fell very hard and they were worried that he may have sustained a spinal injury. But 'for some reason' (and we know why), Timothy had taken his backpack on this particular walk and had stuffed it with books and a jacket which protected him from a potential disaster. The crack was the books breaking rather than his back. PTL! Thank you Adonai that you promise to be our keeper and to give Your angels charge over us (and our loved ones) to guard us in all of our ways.

It is interesting that the Cohen asks first for the Lord to bless us and then to keep us. Sometimes God's material blessings can bring prosperity that leaves us open to certain temptations such as greed, covetousness and idolatry. When the Lord 'blesses us', we then need Him to 'keep us' from becoming possessed by our possessions.

3. "May He make his face to shine upon you..." יאר יהוה פנינו אליה

God's face shining upon us denotes His attention, favor, light and friendship. When the children of Israel gained possession of the Land, they freely admitted that **"they did not gain possession of the land by their own sword, nor did their own arm save them/ but it was Your right hand, Your arm, and the light of Your countenance, because You favored them."** (Psalm 44:3)

In Hebrew, it is written, “the *light of His face*”. It is the light of the face (panim) of God and His divine favor that we so desperately seek and need. If He hides His face from us, we are undone. This is called in Hebrew, ‘*Hester panim*’.

The same Psalmist, a son of Korach, cried out to God, “**Why do you *hide Your face*, and forget our affliction and our oppression?** (Psalm 44:24)

Psalm 69 is also such a desperate pleading with God, “**And do not *hide Your face* from Your servant, for I am in trouble;** (Psalm 69:17)

One of the worst things for most of us is to feel ignored; that someone has turned away from us. Even Yeshua on the cross felt that God had turned His face away from Him and He cried out: “*Eli, Eli, lama Sabachtani, lama azavtani*” (My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?) Yeshua understands how we feel; but we can ask for God to turn toward us and shine His face upon us.

“God be merciful to us and bless us, and cause His face to shine upon us...” (Psalm 67:1)

The lyrics to a song we sing (by Keith Green) is, “*O Lord, You’re beautiful; Your face is all I seek. For when Your eyes are on this child; Your grace abounds to me.*”

This brings us to the next portion of the blessing – grace!

4. **”and be gracious unto you...”** חַנּוּן

If we seek the face of God, instead of just His hands – what He can give us – He can cause His favor and grace to be poured out upon us. The word used here in Hebrew comes from the root chen {חן} from which my Hebrew name Hannah חַנָּה or the masculine version, Hanan {חנן} is derived. This quality of God’s grace or favor is something that money just cannot buy.

Moses said to God, “**If I have found favor in Your eyes, then teach me Your ways.**” (Exodus 33:13) The Hebrew expression used even today for ‘found favor’ is ‘*motzeh chen*’. It is this special grace of God that causes us to have favor with people. Joseph even had this favor in prison. I often pray that the favor of God will surround me like a shield. And I pray daily the favor of God upon my children.

When my youngest daughter Liat was younger, she seemed especially excited one day when I picked her up from school. Why? The student body had again elected her as mayor of the class. She was elected the very first mayor by an overwhelming majority and also the last mayor before the end of the school year. She was also the only child to be given this honor twice. Is it because she is so cute and charming?



Liat around age 5

Well, as her mother I might like to think so, but I really know (and so does Liat) that this is evidence of God shining His face upon her and showering her with His grace/favor/chen {חַן}.

More and more I feel that I just can't live without sensing the face of God shining upon me. God has brought people to support this ministry prayerfully and financially. He has given us people who volunteer their help, gifts and talents to work alongside us. They are like gold! This too is evidence of the grace/favor/chen {חַן} of Adonai. Let us thank the Lord for His grace and mercy. He is longing to be gracious to each one of us.

“Yet the LORD longs to be gracious to you; therefore he will rise up to show you compassion. For the LORD is a God of justice. Blessed are all who wait for him!”
(Isaiah 30:18)

5. **“The Lord יהוה lift up His face upon you...”** **ישא יהוה פְּנֵי אֲלֶיךָ**

Here, the word for ‘lift up’ (yisah) comes from the same root as Naso, the title of this parashah. It means ‘to elevate’. Most translations write, ‘His countenance’; but actually the Hebrew word used is the same as in the previous verse – ‘panav’ פָּנָו – His face. It means God turns His attention toward you - good news for saints; but bad news for sinners. ☺

Again, we deal here with the issue of abandonment. How were you treated by your earthly father? Were you ignored? Or did he have lots of time for you? Many children come from homes where the father was either physically or emotionally absent. This is why it is so healing to consider that our heavenly Father is looking at us. Really looking and seeing us for who we are – turning His gaze upon us. When you think of your father looking at you what do you see on his face? Do you see him smiling? Does he look as if he likes you and approves of you? Or is he frowning and scowling in anger and disappointment?

Some of us had fathers who didn't often smile at us - when they turned their face toward us, it may have been to yell or criticize or frown. But I believe that God wants us to see His face with a big smile on it. God is not always in a bad mood. He is not chronically frustrated and stressed because of work pressures and fluctuations in the stock market. When He lifts up His face upon us, He smiles in love, acceptance and approval.



6. **“...and give you peace.”** **וַיַּשֶׁם לָךְ שְׁלוֹם**

The pinnacle of this blessing is for ‘shalom’ שְׁלוֹם - peace . Actually, ‘give’ is a very poor translation of the original Hebrew. ‘Give’ would be ‘yiten’; but the word used is ‘yasem’ . ‘Lasim’ is to ‘set, place, or establish’. It is not just that the Lord ‘gives’ us peace and then says, “Here it is - do whatever you want with it.” He actually ‘sets, places, and establishes us in a place of shalom’. This shalom (peace) may be in the very center of a storm.

All of us seek for this precious gift of peace but how can this peace be achieved and maintained? It is not enough to simply receive the blessing of peace from the Cohanim if we then go out and act in ways that create strife.

The Bible tells us that as far as it depends upon us, we are to live in peace with everyone (Romans 12:18). Much of the peace in our life (or lack thereof) depends upon us and not others. The word says to pursue (actually chase after) peace. We can't expect it to passively fall upon us. We have to be willing to even shut our mouth once in a while and not have to have the last word or prove we are right!

The rabbis believe that peace is achieved only through avoiding the evil of lashon hara (literally an evil tongue). These are sins that involve our words such as slanderous gossip, careless speech or simply speaking in a rude manner towards others.

“Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen.”
(Ephesians 4:29)

Before Yeshua died, He said, **“My peace (shalom) I leave with you...”** (John 14:27) Peace is our very inheritance. When someone dies and they read the will, the person states what he or she leaves to those left alive. In His will, before His death on the cross, Yeshua left us His peace. He did not give as the world gives –peace only if everything is going our way - but a supernatural peace that passes all understanding.²⁰

The rabbis say that peace is one of the pillars of the world. Like the pillars of the temple that Samson pushed apart, toppling the entire structure down upon all who dwelt within, a home cannot stand when it is divided through strife. Shalom is not only ‘hello, goodbye and peace’; it also carries the connotation of wholeness, completion and perfection.²¹ We can be imperfect people but still be whole, complete and perfect in Yeshua, the Prince of Peace (Sar Shalom). Shalom is not only freedom from disaster, conflict and war but also health, welfare and security.

Often we want peace at all costs. We think peace means never confronting people when we disagree with them or what they are doing. We equate peace with passivity but this is not the true meaning of peace. Aaron carried the quality of a peacemaker; he loved peace. But he carried it too far when he joined with the people in creating a golden calf when they put the pressure on him. His peacemaking spirit turned into a people-pleasing spirit so that he cared more about pleasing man than pleasing God. Many of us struggle with this because we so desperately want peace that we refuse to stand up against evil.

When Saphira passively went along with her husband's plan to lie to the Holy Spirit, she didn't end up with shalom. She ended up dead. We have to be careful about carrying the ‘submissive wife’ thing too far; we cannot blindly follow our husbands into evil. A wife is called in Hebrew an ‘ezer k'negdo’, which means a helper ‘against’. Sometimes we do have to stand against something we don't agree with. The servant of the Lord is not to be quarrelsome, so this is not what I am advocating.

²⁰ Philippians 4:7

²¹ See article [Shalom, shalom Jerusalem](http://www.voiceforisrael.net/articles) on website: www.voiceforisrael.net/articles

Yeshua taught us that ‘Blessed are the peacemakers.’²² But there are times when we absolutely cannot come to a place of peace without first going through a war. The rabbis affirm that there are, unfortunately, occasions when war is less evil than a dishonorable peace. I am thinking now of Hitler and how they tried to appease him and to make peace with this servant of satan by giving him what he asked for until it became apparent that such appeasement was actually doing more harm than good.

I believe the same holds true for the giving away of the Land of Israel to the Palestinians; it is worse than futile – it is utterly destructive and will never result in the peace that the Israeli peacemakers desire. If they believe this, they are only deceiving themselves.

How many people are destroying their souls by living in a state of ‘dishonorable peace’? No one really ‘wants’ war; we don’t want to fight; but sometimes peace can only come after confrontation and even a series of bloody battles.

King Solomon’s Hebrew name is Shlomo, which comes from the root shalom . In his lifetime, Israel enjoyed peace and security. But this peace did not come until after Shlomo’s father, King David, had fought many bloody battles. In fact, David had so much blood on his hands that he was disqualified from building the Holy Temple. He made all the preparations, but it was his son, Shlomo, who carried that honor and responsibility? Why? Shlomo had peace.

The Holy Spirit abides in a place of peace, not turmoil and upset. If we allow ourselves to be upset by every little thing, it is going to be difficult to hear from the Holy Spirit. We have to find a place of quiet, rest and peace to hear from God. Often, His name is abbreviated as the letter hey ה . At the end of the word, the ה hey is totally silent. Even at the beginning or middle of a word, it is a very soft exhalation, barely audible.²³ Sometimes we can only hear God in a still, small voice.

Abraham knew the value of peace - so much so, that he allowed Lot to take the best of everything and was willing to settle for the barren leftover land rather than live with strife between their herdsmen. Strife will kill and destroy everything in our lives – our prosperity, our health, even our anointing. The Holy Spirit abides in peace. Sometimes we have to cut something off or someone out of our lives in order to have peace. ‘*Cast out the scoffer; strife and contention will cease.*’ (Proverbs 22:10)

We cannot be afraid of confrontation. The Jewish people are known for their peace loving qualities; but we all have a sin nature that often leads us into strife. At my children’s Jewish school in Canada, we celebrated Yom Ha’atzma’ut several years ago on Israel’s 60th birthday. The children sang and spoke and danced beautifully – and most of the songs carried an element of the desire for shalom (peace) in Israel.

After this lovely concert, I came out the doors of the school only to find two people engaged in a noisy and obviously ‘heated’ argument. Someone’s kid had bothered someone else’s kid and the parents got involved and oye vi voy! What a mess! I couldn’t help but think to myself – this is

²² Matthew 5:9

²³ See Shalom Morah II, Wisdom in the Hebrew Alphabet DVD set. www.voiceforisrael.net

the whole problem – in our hearts we so desire peace; but find it sometimes impossible to live it out in our personal relationships one to another. What is our hope? Our hope is only in the Lord, to abide in Him and be filled with His spirit. Peace is one of the fruits of the Spirit of God.²⁴

When all will be Shalom

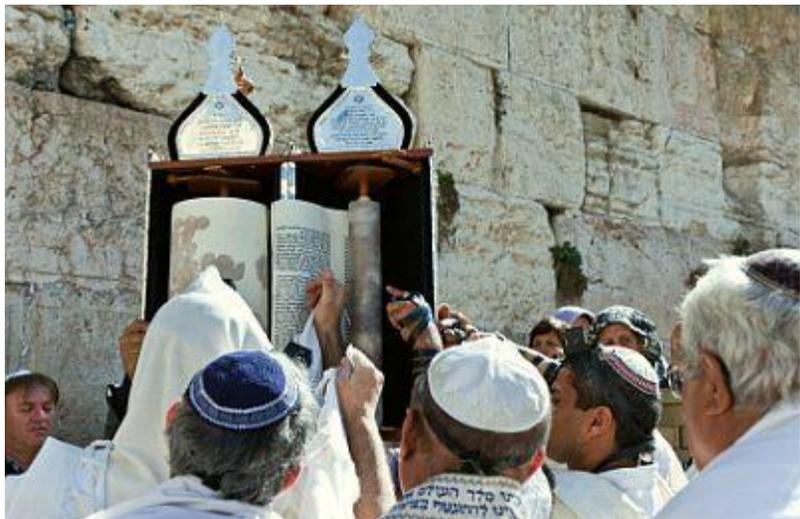
The prophets promised us a day, when the Messianic age arrives, that nation will not lift up sword against nation and they will no longer learn war. ‘Loh yisa goy el goy chereb; loh yilmedu od milchamah.’²⁵ This will be the day when even the beasts of the field will lie down together in peace: the wolf with the lamb, the leopard with the goat and the calf with the lion. A young child will have no fear even of playing with a cobra or a viper. (Isaiah 11: 6-9)

This will be the day that the rabbis call: sh’hakol yihye shalom (that all will be peace). When will this time come? The prophet Isaiah tells us it will be when the ‘branch (netzer) comes out of the root of Jesse (father of Jesse)’. We know that King David came from Jesse and that Yeshua is in the line of King David. He is called ‘the branch’ (netzer). In Hebrew it is נֹצֵר . Yeshua is called Jesus of Nazareth (in Hebrew Natzeret) נֹצְרֵת .

In Hebrew, someone who follows Yeshua, is called ‘Notzri’ נֹצְרִי. The other meaning to the word Notzer is a ‘guard or watchman’. This is proof that those who follow Yeshua of Natzeret are to be Notzrim (watchmen on the walls) of Jerusalem. (Isaiah 62:6-7)

The Aaronic benediction ends with these words: **“So they shall put My name on the children of Israel, and I will bless them.”** (Numbers 6:27)

As the Cohen blessed the people of Israel, they were to remember that it is ultimately God who blesses. He is the ultimate source of all blessing. Just as this parashah study ends with the Bircat HacoHanim (priestly blessing), may we each receive Adonai’s blessing, divine protection, favor, the light of His face, and also peace, wholeness, and completion – in Him!



**“God, our own God, shall bless us.
God shall bless us,
And all the ends of the earth shall fear Him.”**

(Psalm 67:6b-7)

²⁴ Galatians 5:22

²⁵ Isaiah 2:4

Naso Study Questions

1. Do you live as part of a community (kehilla)? Do you feel that you have sufficient support from family and friends or are you struggling to do life on your own? Discuss how we can move towards a greater sense of community in the Body of Messiah.
2. Do you feel that responsibilities and duties are fairly evenly distributed among the members of your congregation (or family/ fellowship) or does the burden fall primarily upon a few individuals carrying most of the weight? What could you do to correct this?
3. Discuss the issue of jealousy in marriage or relationships. If trust has been broken how may it be restored? Share.
4. Is God your BAE? 😊 Are you giving God any reason to be jealous for your devotion?
5. How do you account for the difference between Old Testament law regarding the death penalty of stoning for adultery and Yeshua's response to the woman caught in adultery?
6. Do you live in the shadow of your sins and mistakes of the past or can you receive God's grace and move on into the good plan He has for your life? Share and discuss.
7. Have you ever taken a vow before the Lord? Do you see yourself as wholly devoted unto Him? Can you see yourself as a royal diadem or beautiful tiara (sorry guys) in His hand?
8. What are the three aspects of the Nazirite vow? Give examples of two biblical characters who were Nazirites from the womb.
9. How did Samson fail as a Nazirite? How did he succeed in the end? What can we learn from Samson's life (and death)?
10. Why did the apostle Paul take upon himself a temporary Nazirite vow?
11. Do you see the Torah as being relevant to Gentile followers of Yeshua? Discuss from the examples of Ruth and Orpah.
12. What are the six elements of the Aaronic Benediction (Bircat Hacoהנים)? Which one speaks most to your heart? Do you pronounce this blessing over the people of your kehilla (congregation)?
13. Do you feel that the Lord has blessed you with His love, peace, grace and protection? In the areas where you still desire to see more of God's blessing on your life, has this study encouraged you to 'cling' to Adonai in faith and never let go? Discuss.
14. We are called to not only be blessed; but also to be a blessing. Are there ways that you can think of to help carry someone's burden or be a blessing to someone in need?

About the Author:

Hannah Neshar grew up in an Orthodox Jewish home and received her education in a religious Hebrew school in Canada. During a crisis pregnancy, she came to know Jesus (Yeshua) as her Messiah and Savior. She now lives in Israel with her children and grandchildren, teaching the Jewish roots of the Christian faith.

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