

# Ha Shavuah B' Sha'arey Israel

May 20 – May 26, 2010

7 Sivan – 13 Sivan 5770



Candle lighting time 8:12 pm  
Friday May 21

Friday Evening Kabbalat Shabbat Services begin at 6:15 pm  
Saturday morning Shabbat Services begin at 10:30 am

## PARASHAT NASO

Annual (Num. 4:21-7:89): Etz Hayim p. 791  
Triennial (Num. 7:1-7:89): Etz Hayim p. 805  
Haftarah (Judges 13:2-25): Etz Hayim p. 813



### We would like to extend our condolences to:

Bess Cotton and her family on the passing of her sister, Reva Kalinsky.  
There will be a Shiva Minyan on Monday, May 24, 7:00pm, at the home of  
Bess & Arnold Cotton, 150 Covington Place, Macon.

### Best Wishes for a Speedy Recovery to:

Elaine Dreizin, Ethel Koplin, Paul Kruger, Doris Rabinowitz, Valiant Haller and Paul Adler

### We wish a Happy Birthday this week to:

Lise Dayan, Amy Schwartz, Ashley Goodrich, Deborah Cohen, Leigh Brody, Jay Freedman, Ross Vogel,  
Fran Hirsh, Joshua Perkel and Will Finkelstein

### We wish a Happy Anniversary this week to:

Carol & Alan Schwaber, Margo & Michael Kenirey, Joan & David Kent and Shelley Davidson & Jeff Lehman

### This week we remember the Yahrzeit of:

Eli Lehman, Sol Schwartz, Diana Eisinger, Lee Carter, Rhonda Marlene Cohen, Ida Gordon Chanin,  
Henry Koplin, Annie S. Levy, Myar Nirenstein, Blanche Krugman Rosenberg, Harry Chanin, Samuel  
Schwartz

## Friday Night Service - May 21 - 6:15 PM

Confirmation of Seth Hirsh  
Our Teen Class will lead the Service  
followed by a Family Shabbat Dinner

Adults \$10.00 ~ Children \$7 ~ Under 3 Free  
All Religious School Students - Free!

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***Tefilat Lev Shaleyem Whole Heart one hour service  
This Saturday, May 22, beginning at 10:30am***  
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**The TBI Annual Auction  
Sunday - May 23**

**Silent Auction: 4:30 - 5:30 PM - Live Auction: 5:30 - 7:00 PM**

**Call TBI at 745-6727 for more information**

**Bring a friend!!**

**CONGREGATIONAL MEETING  
SUNDAY – JUNE 13 – 4:00 PM**

**The CSI Gift Shop**

**Birthdays - Anniversaries  
Bar/Bat Mitzvahs - Graduations  
House Warming Gifts**



Call Terri 477-8597 or Deborah 474-0505 for an Appointment

# PARASHAT NASO

(Numbers 4:21-7:89)

*This week's torah commentary is by Rabbi Abba Wagensberg, a popular lecturer in Jerusalem and throughout the Jewish world. Originally from New Jersey, he now lives in the Old City of Jerusalem with his wife and children.*

## The Triple Pattern

One of the highlights of Parshat Naso is the Priestly Blessing. The text of this blessing, which the Kohanim bestow upon the Jewish people, concludes, "May God turn His face to you and give you peace" (Numbers 6:26).

Our Sages speak very highly of the quality of peace. For example, we find the statement in the Midrash (Bamidbar Raba 11:7) in the name of R' Shimon bar Chalafta, "Great is peace, for there is no vessel that can receive blessing other than peace." The Midrash brings a proof to this idea from the verse (Psalms 29:11), "God will bless His nation with peace."

We can understand this idea more deeply by taking a closer look at the phrase, "His nation." The Jewish people are composed of three categories of people: Priests (Kohanim), Levites (Leviim), and Israelites (Yisraelim). The Hebrew acronym of the words "Kohanim," "Leviim," and "Yisraelim" spells the word kli, which means "vessel." Once we understand that the Jewish people themselves are a vessel, we can gain a more profound insight into the Midrash's statement. The vessel of the Jewish people can receive blessing only when there is peace!

We can offer four primary pieces of advice for how to achieve peace with others:

1. Make sure that all our efforts are for God's sake. If we do everything for the honor of God, and not for the sake of boosting our own ego, we can view one another as part of the same team, pooling all of our different strengths and talents for a common goal.
2. Train ourselves to see only the good in others. Instead of being threatened or challenged by others' differences, view the differences as positive qualities.
3. The Peleh Yoetz suggests that we should focus on the reward we receive for making peace, as an incentive to pursue it. He gives a striking example. Imagine a person approaches you and asks you to make peace with someone you can't stand. Your initial reaction is to immediately turn down the offer. Then the person asks, "What if I give you \$50? Do you think you could try? How about \$100? Or \$1,000? If I give you \$100,000, could you do it? How about two million dollars?" There is a point at which every person would give in and decide it was worth the effort to make peace.

According to the Peleh Yoetz, the reward we get in the World to Come for making peace far outweighs any financial bonus this world can offer. This knowledge should be an incentive to us to make peace.

4. Making peace sometimes requires us to compromise or to give in. We can do this only if we cultivate our humility and learn to be satisfied with the minimum.

### THREE LEVITE FAMILIES

Although these four points are important, we can also suggest another approach in understanding God's expectation of us when it comes to peace. The beginning of this week's Torah portion focuses on the tribe of Levi, which is composed of three main families: Kehat, Gershon, and Merari. Based on the Shem MiShmuel and the Netivot Shalom, we can understand these three families as representing three spiritual levels.

The family of **Kehat** represents the highest, most righteous level. Their role is to carry the Holy Ark (Rashi on Numbers 4:4) - the highest component of the Tabernacle. The importance of this task underscores their lofty spiritual level.

The family of **Gershon** represents the middle level. They carry the curtain that divides the Holy of Holies from the rest of the Sanctuary (Numbers 4:25). One side of the curtain is close to the intense sanctity of the Holy of Holies, while the other side is not. We could suggest that this curtain hints to the spiritual level of an average person, who fluctuates between moments of intense devotion and moments of feeling less connected to the Divine.

The family of **Merari** represents the lowest level. They carry the beams and pillars of the Sanctuary (Numbers 4:31), the weight of which can be burdensome. This physical weight represents the heaviness of the lowest spiritual level.

The tribe of Levi is charged with teaching the Jewish people how to attach themselves to the Divine (see Rambam, "Shmita V'Yovel," 13:12-13). The three main families in this tribe show us that we are required to serve God not only when we are on a spiritual high, like the most righteous people, and not only when we feel average, but even when we feel the lowest and furthest away from God. Regardless of the emotional state in which we find ourselves, we must commit ourselves to doing God's will with a positive attitude.

This idea will offer us a new perspective on God's expectation of peace. In addition to being at peace with others, we must learn to be at peace with ourselves - whatever level we are functioning on. When we are frustrated with ourselves, it is much more likely that we will lash out at others. Being at peace with ourselves, however, usually leads to our being at peace with others. If we can learn from the tribe of Levi how to maintain our inner equilibrium, we have a much better chance at establishing peace with others as well.

May we be blessed to cultivate within ourselves the four primary qualities that lead to peace: acting only for God's sake; seeing the good in others; focusing on the rewards earned through this behavior; and being humble and satisfied with the minimum, which will enable us to compromise. Most important, may we learn to be at peace with ourselves. May we recognize the worth of our service, even at its lowest point, and realize that, even then, we have the potential to function at the highest level.

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**For other commentaries on this week's Torah portion check out these sites:**

[Aish.com](http://Aish.com)

[ISJL Taste of Torah](http://ISJL Taste of Torah)

[JTS](http://JTS)

[MyJewishLearning.com](http://MyJewishLearning.com)

[USCJ Torah Sparks](http://USCJ Torah Sparks)

