

Tell a story Parshah Nasso

by Julie Zhuk on 2022-06-11

Comments

Every week a parent or both will bless their children young or old at the shabbat table. This usually happens on a Friday night. Parents look forward to sharing some muttered words with their children. Children look forward to it as well. From the Torah reading this week, G-d showed Aaron and his descendants how to bless the Children of Israel. Aaron's descendants were the Kohanim. After the Kohanim bless the Children of Israel, they go on to say some other priestly blessings. The words in these prayers are, "May G-d bless you and protect you, May G-d cause his countenance to shine upon you and give you grace. The last part of the blessing is, May G-d raise His countenance towards you and grant you peace". All of these blessings may be said by the Kohanim, but they are ultimately coming from G-d. These Kohanim are simply his emissaries, his agents on earth, He sends the messages to the Jews through the Kohanim. There are three stages of these blessings.

The first one is that G-d wants to give Jews wealth, then there is security and protection coming from G-d. The last one of these stages is G-d giving us a sense of peace. We learn in this parsha how we may think we know what is right for ourselves, other people in our lives may know that as well. In reality the only source who really knows what is right for each individual is G-d Himself. When we get the blessing of wealth, for many people there is still a desire to have more of that. With the blessing of having peace, people start to feel they are content.

We already learned from last week's Torah portion that G-d wanted the Jews to be counted. This week many of those men who were counted would be doing the work of actually transporting the tabernacle. There were three families responsible for moving the tabernacle. They were sons from three different men. The first one was Gershon, the second one was Merari, and the last one was Kehathite. This was important for the Jews to know, because they never remained in one spot. They were constantly on the move.

The sons from the three different families each had their own job to do. The sons from the Gershon family transported the tabernacle tapestries, the veils, and the coverings. The sons from the Merari family were responsible for carrying the structural components, this included the beams, boards, and the pillars. The parsha doesn't tell us what the sons from the Kehathite family were responsible for. At some point G-d graced the Jews with His presence in front of the tabernacle.

He instructed the Jewish people to get rid of those who were acting in impure ways. Originally these types of people had been banned from entering the tabernacle. There was one person who got leprosy and had to leave the entire encampment. G-d told Moses to ask any Jew who was impure or unclean to leave the area they were living in. The parsha doesn't elaborate much on this. There were different levels of how impure someone was or what steps were needed to be taken so they could become pure again. All we know is these people were supposed to live in other places outside of that camp, in other words they were supposed to live in isolation.

The next topic the parsha focuses on is the Sotah. Before reading this parsha, I didn't know what a sotah was. It was a married woman who was unfaithful to her husband. She was warned by her husband to not be secluded in a room with a man who was known to be an adulterer. The husband was allowed to bring her to the Jewish court.

In the court they would give her a drink with bitter herbs. This section in the Torah is written on parchment and then it is soaked in water until the ink dissolves. If the woman is guilty, she dies a gruesome death. If she is innocent, she gets many blessings.

G-d instructed Moses on the laws of being a nazir. Anyone who wished to be a nazir or promised to be a nazir, stayed away from dead bodies, alcohol, and never cut their hair. It is not mentioned in the parsha, but a famous prophet who later became the leader of the Jewish people was a nazir. This individual was Samuel. The nazir was allowed to bring certain offerings to the temple. The nazir was allowed to give priestly blessings.

Judges 13:2-25

Haftarah

The haftarah starts out remembering Samson. He was born as a nazirite. His parents were childless for a long time. His mother's name was Manoah and his father was from the tribe of Dan. One day an angel appeared in front of Manoah saying she was going to have a child. The angel told Manoah she would need to keep her child as a nazir forever. There were many laws this child was going to have to follow. The child would grow up staying away from forbidden foods such as grapes, because that could lead him to want to drink wine. As a nazir he could not have any trace of alcohol.

The angel told Manoah her son would grow up and save the Jewish people from their oppressor known as the Philistines. As soon as Manoah heard the news, she shared it with her husband. The father came before G-d asking Him to send a messenger to share this news.

Reading the haftarah, one feels the father was jealous for not hearing the news himself. G-d didn't give into the husband's request. Manoah and her husband didn't know at the time that it wasn't G-d who gave her the news, but an angel.

G-d sent an angel a second time. The angel came before Manoah and not her husband. When the couple found out it was an angel who gave them a message, they tried inviting it over for a meal. The angel didn't accept this, saying that it had to stay focused and work.

The angel encouraged Manoah to take a goat and give it as an offering to G-d. The angel told Manoah to make sure the goat was slaughtered for a meal. Manoah did as she was told, and the angel went back to heaven. The haftarah comes to a close with Manoah giving birth to Samson. He grew up and G-d blessed him.