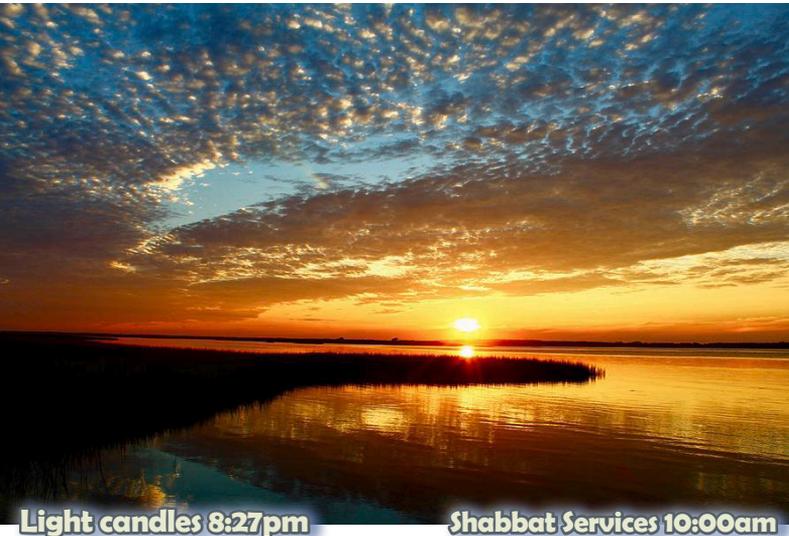




Carnegie Shul Chatter

June 9, 2022



Light candles 8:27pm

Shabbat Services 10:00am

Naso in a Nutshell

Numbers 4:21–7:89

Completing the headcount of the Children of Israel taken in the Sinai Desert, a total of 8,580 Levite men between the ages of 30 and 50 are counted in a tally of those who will be doing the actual work of transporting the Tabernacle.

G-d communicates to Moses the law of the sotah, the wayward wife suspected of unfaithfulness to her

Zoom in for Services

Shabbat services are held by Zoom, at 10am and last 60-90 minutes. A link is sent to all Shul members; if you don't receive it, contact Wendy Panizzi at panizziw@gmail.com.

Blessings

As our Birnbaum siddur says in our daily Amidah, “It is the threefold blessing written in the Torah by thy servant Moses and spoken by Aaron and his sons the priests, thy holy people, as it is said, ‘May the Lord bless you and protect you; may the Lord countenance you and be gracious to you; may the Lord favor you and grant you peace.’”

The blessing is first conveyed by God to Moses in this week’s parshah, and what a beautiful blessing it is. We read it when we daven daily. The Kohains bless their fellow congregants by reciting it from the bimah in many shuls on Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, and in some families the parents place their hands upon their childrens’ heads and bless them with it every Shabbos.

It is three blessings in one, and is any of the three better than the others?

My parents never blessed me with these blessings on Shabbos.

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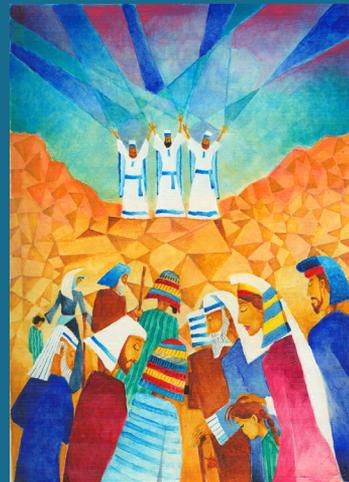
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I doubt my father knew them, and he definitely could not read Hebrew. But I have seen my grandchildren blessed with these blessings by their parents on Shabbos and I was deeply moved.

I blessed my fellow congregants, as a Kohain, on the High Holidays at my shul in Harrisburg and I was deeply humbled.

I was asked by a tour guide to bless him with these blessings in Jerusalem and it was possibly the most humbling experience of my life.

May God bless each and everyone of us with these blessings, and let us say, Amen.



husband. Also given is the law of the nazir, who forswears wine, lets his or her hair grow long, and is forbidden to become contaminated through contact with a dead body. Aaron and his descendants, the kohanim, are instructed on how to bless the people of Israel.

The leaders of the twelve tribes of Israel each bring their offerings for the inauguration of the altar. Although their gifts are identical, each is brought on a different day and is individually described by the Torah.

Here is a commentary on this week's parshah from *myjewishlearning.com*.

Parashat Nasso: Getting the Message

Two linguistic features of this Torah portion remind us of the need to speak carefully even when our message is true.

By Rabbi Elliot Goldberg

Princely Gifts

After providing details about how the Israelites organized their encampment during their travels in the desert, the Torah turns its attention in Parashat Nasso to the gifts that were brought by tribal chieftains for use in the Tabernacle:

On the day that Moses finished setting up the Tabernacle, he anointed and consecrated it and all its furnishings, as well as the altar and its utensils. When he had anointed and consecrated them, the chieftains of Israel, the heads of ancestral houses, namely, the chieftains of the tribes ... drew near and brought their offering before the Lord (Numbers 7:1-3).

The construction of the Tabernacle and its dedication have been a central theme of the biblical narrative beginning in the second half of the book of Exodus, continuing into the book of Leviticus, and concluding in the book of Numbers. The task engaged many people.

The Israelites were commanded by God to donate the materials that would be used to build and equip the Tabernacle. The Torah reports that their response was overwhelming, so much so that the people were told to stop giving as the sheer quantity of the materials that had been donated had become a burden to the project managers.

So given the widespread involvement in the Tabernacle project, why would the Torah choose to open its narrative with the words, “On the day that Moses finished setting up the Tabernacle”? In doing so, it appears that credit is being given to Moses for a project that was a group effort.

The medieval commentator Rashi suggests that the Torah does this “because Moses devoted himself wholeheartedly to it, ensuring that the shape of each article was exactly as God had shown him on the mountain and showing the workmen how it should be made — and he did not err on a single shape.”

In other words, in giving credit to Moses, the Torah is not ignoring the contributions of others, but rather recognizing Moses’ unique leadership, passion and dedication for the project and his efforts to ensure that it was completed exactly as God had envisioned.

Just a few verses later, while describing the gifts brought to the Tabernacle by the heads of each of the tribes, the Torah fails to identify Nachshon Ben Aminadav as the chief of his tribe as he brings the first gift. This is noteworthy, as the Torah takes the time to describe each chieftain’s gift individually, even though they are all identical, emphasizing their equal status. Why would the Torah present Nachshon differently from his peers?

One could say that in dropping his title, the Torah is not slighting Nachshon; rather, it is honoring him for bringing humility to his position. Perhaps while serving as chieftain of his tribe, Nachshon never held himself above those he represented, and unlike his peers, he did not let the status of his position go to his head. Thus, what appears to be a slight is actually a compliment.

The Midrash has a different theory. It suggests that the reason Nachshon is not called by his title is so that “if he should ever feel tempted to lord it over the other chieftains by saying, ‘I am your king, since I was first to present the offering,’ they could retort by saying, ‘You are no more than a commoner, for every one of the others is called a chieftain, while you are not described as one.’”



Sometimes, people in positions of authority need to be reminded not to overstep. Yet couldn't the message that bringing the first gift did not mean that Nachshon was first among equals have been delivered without slighting him? Likewise, couldn't the Torah have found a way to recognize Moses for his leadership alongside others whose contributions are worthy of recognition?

Thinking about Parashat Nasso, it's hard not to think about the need to speak sensitively, to find ways to praise someone without slighting others, and to honor the contributions of every individual without diminishing those of their peers. Doing so strengthens our ties to one another and helps ensure that God's presence will reside in the sacred spaces that lie in the heart of our encampments.

Yahrtzeits

This week the Carnegie Shul acknowledges the yahrtzeits of:

Ignatz Brunner

David Herskovitz

Tziporah Herskovitz

Joseph Kaliski

Pearl Lowe

Carrie Roth

May their memories be for a blessing.

Donations

The Carnegie Shul is most grateful for the following recent donations:

Sanford Adler

In memory of Ethal Ray Adler

Myron Roth

In memory of Mitzi Roth, Mother