

# Parashas Nasso Kinder Torah



## King or Slave?

*The table setting was royal. No luxury was spared. The finest silverware, bone china, crystal goblets, and silk tablecloths graced the grand table. The servants began bringing out the food: delicacies from around the world, prepared by the finest gourmet cooks. A meal fit for a king.*

*And so it was. His Royal Majesty, the King, was escorted to his seat at the head of the table. He sat down ready to partake of the feast. His servant placed the first course on the plate, and set it in front of the King. He raised the fork to his lips and tasted the food.*

"This is horrible!!!" he screamed. "There is no salt on these tomatoes!!! The cook knows that I eat tomatoes only with salt!!!"

*The King threw the plate on the floor, smashing it to pieces.*

"If I see that cook, I'll have his head!!!"  
 "Yes, Your Majesty," the servant calmly replied.

*The King's tirade did not faze him. He had seen it before. Any action or gesture that did not meet the king's expectations 100% threw him into a fit of rage. He lost control of himself.*

"The King is not a king," the servant thought. "He is nothing more than a lowly slave. His *tayvas* (desires) rule over him. Such a person is a servant to his appetite, his petty pleasures, and his craving for honor and power. Who is truly a king? My friend the *nozir*. He rules over his desires. That is real kingship."

"A man or woman who shall dissociate himself (*yafli*) by taking a *Nazerite* vow of abstinence" (Bamidbar 6:2). The verse uses the word "*yafli*" to mean dissociate. The same root word ("*pela*") also means amazing. The Eben Ezra explains that the *nozir* did an amazing thing. Most of the world is running after their desires. Their days are filled with the pursuit of money, power, physical pleasures, and prestige. This *nozir* took a vow to refrain from wine and cutting the hair, in order to come closer to Hashem and serve Him better. How does the Torah value this seemingly small action? 'He will be holy. The crown of his G-d is upon his head. All the days of his *nazirus* he is holy to Hashem.' (Bamidbar 6:5,7,8). The Medrash Rabba relates that Hashem considers him as a Kohen Gadol, the holiest of all people. Both he and Kohen Gadol may not become *to mei* (impure). He wears Hashem's crown (so to speak) on his head, just like a Kohen Gadol. He acquires a higher level of *kedusha* (holiness), just like a Kohen Gadol.

This is perplexing. Is it that difficult to refrain from wine and hair cutting? Is it such a great act of spiritual heroism to earn a person a Heavenly Crown? Rav Leib Chasman answers that the *nozir* teaches us the great value of a pure, holy thought. Spiritual accomplishments are measured by quality, not quantity. The *nozir* takes a small step closer to Hashem. His sincere desire, expressed in this action, brings him to a completely new *madrayga*, a level of holiness. The Eben Ezra concludes with a compelling statement. "Know that all of mankind is servants to the pleasures of the world. One who is free of his *tayvas*; he is the true king who has the crown and glory of royalty upon his head."

*Kinderlach . . . We do not take the vow of nazirus in our days. However, we can capture a bit of his kedusha. How? By ruling over our tayvas, in our own way. Don't be a slave to sweets. You don't have to get the first candy, or the biggest piece of cake, or the most ice cream. Be happy and satisfied with what you get. Even if you get nothing, you can also be happy. How? Because you have taken a step closer to Hashem. We see how He values the nozir. He values your deeds also. The nozir is a pela. He goes against the whole world. Dare to be different. Take a step toward Hashem.*



## Security Service

Ring ring.  
 "Hello, are you Mr. Glick?"  
 "Yes."  
 "This is Mr. Swindler from the state lottery. I have great news for you."  
 "Yes. What is it?"  
 "Congratulations! You have won the state lottery. You are a millionaire."  
 "What? A millionaire? I don't believe it!"  
 "Believe it. Come to our office tomorrow to collect your prize."  
 "This is fantastic!"  
*Mr. Glick was so excited. This was a dream come true. He did not hesitate to tell his wife and all his friends. Early the next day, the phone rang.*

"Hello Mister Glick, this is the IRS calling. I understand that you just won a million dollars in the state lottery."  
 "That is correct."  
 "I must inform you that this prize puts you into the 70% tax bracket. Therefore you will have to pay \$750,000 to the IRS."  
 "What! That is highway robbery!"  
 "I'm sorry sir. This is not robbery, this is the law. Our collectors will be coming by tomorrow."

*Mr. Glick did not sleep well that night. He tossed and turned, thinking about the IRS. Suddenly, he heard footsteps. He got up and was terrified to find to thieves in his house. They had heard that he won the lottery, and came looking for cash and other valuables.*

"Oy vey vey, vey vey, vey vey," the man thought. "This lottery is not a dream come true. It is a nightmare. What good is all that money if I cannot hold on to it? Oy vey vey, vey vey, vey vey."

"May Hashem bless you and keep you" (Bamidbar 6:24). This is the first of three blessings that the Kohanim bless the people of Israel. The first part of the benediction asks directly for Hashem's blessings. This is a straightforward request. Is there anyone who does not want the blessings of health, prosperity, and children? The second half is a bit more subtle. What good is wealth if you cannot keep it? Rashi explains that one who gives a present to his servant cannot guard the gift. Robbers can come along and take it. What pleasure does he get from a gift like that? Just like the lottery winner in our story. However, the Almighty's blessings are complete. He gives you a gift, and He guards it for you. As the verse states, "May Hashem bless you and keep you."

*Kinderlach . . . We hear the three blessings of the Kohanim every morning. The Ateres Zikaynim on the Shulchan Auruch relates that the congregation should have kavannah (intention) to receive the blessings. This is an opportunity to contemplate Hashem's greatness. He is able to shower us with all good things. Moreover, He is able to guard them. We can enjoy them without fear that they will be taken away. Kinderlach, may Hashem always continue to bless you.*

- Parasha Questions
- What was Merrari's job in the Mishkan? (4:29-33)
  - What was the total census of the sons of Levi? (4:48)
  - What happens to a *nozir* who becomes *to mei*? (6:9-12)
  - Who carried the parts of the Mishkan on wagons, and who carried them on their shoulders? (7:7-9)
  - How many crowns did the day of Chanukas HaMishkan garner? (Rashi 7:12)