

MAN SOARS THROUGH INITIATIVE



Original Painting By:
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YadAvNow.com Weekly Video Series: Nasso

Rabbi Yosef Kalatsky

Encrypting the Blessing for All Contingencies

1. The *Kohen* blesses the congregation with three blessings.
2. First blessing: G-d should bless you and watch over you.
3. *Rashi*: G-d should bless you with material wealth and your possessions should not be plundered.
4. G-d provides divine protection to retain the blessing.
5. *Ohr Hachaim Hakadosh*: G-d should protect you from any negative influence due to the material.
6. *Seforno*: The objective of the material is to provide all that is necessary for the spiritual.
7. "If there is no flour, there is no *Torah*."
8. Second blessing: G-d should bring illumination upon you.
9. After your needs are satisfied, G-d should illuminate your eyes to see G-d's wonders from His *Torah* and actions.
10. You will see His wonders and divine providence.

Ensnaring the Suspected Adulteress

1. The suspected adulteress claiming innocence is brought to the *Kohen* for the ritual of the *Sotah*.
2. *Sotah* is juxtaposed to the portion of the tithes given to the *Kohen*.
3. If one withholds the tithes from the *Kohen* he will be forced to come with his wife as a suspected adulteress to the *Kohen*.
4. Because Aaron participated in gathering the gold for the golden calf it was decreed his four sons should die.
5. *Moshe's* supplication annulled 50% of the decree.
6. Why were Aaron's adult sons liable for their father's sin?
7. *Midrash*: They died because they officiated after they drank wine, or acted on their own without consulting with *Moshe*.
8. Due to Aaron's piety they should have merited clarity not to err as they had.
9. Because Aaron deserved suffering for his role in the golden calf his two sons were not given clarity.
10. Their failing was their own.
11. Had the husband not withheld the tithes from the *Kohen*, his merit would have protected his wife from not having an interest in another man.

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When The Terrestrial Supersedes the Celestial

1. G-d's intent in creation was to dwell on the terrestrial with Man – not only on the celestial.
2. He commanded Man to not eat from the Tree of Knowledge.
3. Adam failed – causing G-d to remove Himself from the terrestrial; He ascended to the 7th Heaven.
4. Avraham's good deeds caused G-d to descend from the 7th to the 6th Heaven.
5. Yitzchok, offering himself as a sacrifice, caused the Divine Presence to descend to the 5th.
6. Moshe brought G-d onto Mt. Sinai?
7. Why was Moshe able to reinstate G-d's Presence onto the terrestrial?
8. Moshe was the only one qualified to receive the Torah.
9. The objective of creation was that there should be a Jewish people and the Torah.
10. Moshe brought creation to fruition as the location for the Torah to be fulfilled.
11. Moshe was therefore able to bring G-d's Presence to the terrestrial.

Weekly Video: Tracing The Accomplishment To An Antecedent

Weekly Torah Commentary Series: Nasso

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G-d's Worthwhile Investment in Creation

"It was on the day that *Moshe* finished erecting the Tabernacle..."

Midrash: Our holy Rabbis teach us that the world stands on three principles: *Torah*, service of G-d (*avodah*), and acts of loving kindness (*gemilas chasadim*). If this is so, how was the world maintained before the *Torah* was given at Sinai?

There were twenty-six generations from the time of Creation until the *Torah* was given at Sinai. G-d maintained the world through His Kindness (*Chesed*). It is because of this kindness that King David writes in Psalms, "*Ki l'olam chasdo* – for His kindness endures forever" twenty-six times (corresponding to the twenty six generations.)

At the splitting of the Sea, *Moshe* alluded to this in *Az yashir*. It states, "*am zu* - this people" twice in the Song at the Sea. The numerical value of *zu* is

thirteen, multiplied by two is twenty six. This alludes to the nations who were maintained for twenty-six generations through *Chesed* until the *Torah* was given at Sinai. In what merit were they maintained?

It was for the sake of the giving of the *Torah*, which is referred to as 'Oz (strength)' as it states, 'He gave His strength (Oz) to His people.'

Until the *Torah* was given, the world was similar to a basket that stood on two legs. When the *Mishkan* was erected, the world was able to stand secure.

"*Moshe* finished erecting the Tabernacle (*HaMishkan*)."
The word 'the' is to include all of Creation. The *Mishkan* is referred to as the "*Mishkan* of the Testament" by the *Torah* because it is a testament that G-d forgave the Jewish people for the Golden Calf. Had it not been for the *Mishkan*, the location for G-d's Presence on earth, the world would not be able to continue. The *Mishkan* is the third leg needed to secure the basket.

Although the first twenty-six generations of existence were only maintained due to G-d's *Chesed*, it was because there was an objective. Just as Creation came about in six days in order to arrive at the ultimate goal, which is the *Shabbos* on the seventh day, so too the world evolved for twenty-six generations until it came upon its objective, which was the giving of the *Torah*.

There needed to be twenty-six generations from the time of Creation until Sinai in order for the Jewish people to come about and develop to the point where they were qualified to receive the *Torah*. Thus, G-d maintained the world with *Chesed* for twenty-six generations because of the ultimate objective of Sinai. It was worthwhile for G-d to maintain existence with *Chesed* only for the sake of Sinai event.

Gemara: *Moshe* asked G-d three questions; two of them He answered, and one of them He did not. G-d did not answer the question regarding the "evil person who experiences good (*rasha v'tov lo*)."

Moshe could not understand if one was evil, why he should be treated in a special way by G-d despite the evil he perpetrated.

Ramchal: There may be two evil people who are not distinguishable in their deeds and are equal in their evil ways, yet one suffers (*rasha v'ra lo*) and the other experiences good. What is the rationale for this?

Since G-d knows that in the future there will be a devoutly righteous individual (*tzaddik*) who will descend from one of these two evil people, He maintains the *rasha* by providing him with good, because ultimately the *tzaddik* will descend from his progeny.

Similarly, the vast majority of the twenty-six generations from the time of Creation were evil; however, regardless of their failings and evil, G-d maintained them because they were a necessity and precursor for Sinai, which was the ultimate objective of Creation.

There are billions of people in the world. Out of these myriads of people only an infinitesimal percentage are Jewish. Although the number may be insignificant, since the Jewish people are meant to address and fulfill the objective of existence through the adherence to mitzvos and study of the *Torah*, it is worthwhile to maintain the world in their merit.

Chazal: "It is worthwhile for G-d to maintain existence even for the sake of one *tzaddik*."

Identifying the Source of Accomplishment

"It was on the day that *Moshe* finished erecting the Tabernacle."

Midrash: King Solomon writes, "The one who cares for the fig tree is the one who will eat its fruit. And the one who watches over his master shall be honored." (Proverbs)

G-d does not withhold the just reward from any creature. For whatever one toils and sacrifices, G-d does not withhold reward from him. Where do we find this?

King Solomon built and completed the First Temple. However because King David had sacrificed selflessly for its building by purchasing its location and longing to be able to build it, G-d did not withhold his reward. The Temple is identified with his name.

"This is a song for the inauguration of the House of David." Was it King David who inaugurated the Temple? It was King Solomon his son who had done so. However, because King David sacrificed for it, the Temple is identified with his name.

"It was on the day that *Moshe* finished erecting the Tabernacle." If all of the Jewish people assisted in building the *Mishkan*, why does the *Torah* attribute its completion to *Moshe*? Although every Jew participated in the building of the *Mishkan*, because *Moshe* had given of himself selflessly and sacrificed to a greater degree, the *Mishkan* is identified with his name.

When an animal is rendered as a *treifa* it cannot be eaten by a Jew, but rather it should be thrown to the dog. From this we learn "G-d does not withhold the just reward from any creature."

At the time of the tenth plague in Egypt, the killing of the first-born, G-d said that the dogs should not bark. Because the dogs remained silent and did not bark, G-d rewarded them with the carcass of an animal that is found to be *treifa*. We learn from this passage that G-d does not withhold reward even from a lowly creature.

If the principle that G-d does not withhold reward from any creature is derived from a verse in the *Torah*, why does the *Midrash* need to cite a verse from Proverbs in order to establish the same principle?

We can draw from the example of the dog that G-d does not withhold reward from any creature. That reward is commensurate with doing the Will of G-d. However, regarding the *Mishkan*, *Moshe* did not participate in the actual building of the *Mishkan*. He only performed the final act of its erection.

We see regarding the example of the *Mishkan* that G-d rewards even the one who did not actually physically participate in the performance of the *mitzvah*. Although *Moshe* did not participate in the building of the *Mishkan*, he oversaw it and prayed that every aspect of the *Mishkan* should have the greatest capacity to be the receptacle for G-d's Presence.

The reward that is derived from the verse in Proverbs teaches us that although an individual only sets a dynamic in motion to bring about a result, he is fully credited for the end result.

King David wanted to build the Temple; however, G-d did not allow him to do so. King Solomon was the one destined to build the Temple; however, had it not been for King David's personal sacrifice on its behalf, his son King Solomon would not have been able to create the setting for G-d's Presence. Thus, the inauguration of the Temple identifies as the "House of David."

It is known that the *Chazon Ish* *zt"l* was holy since the time of his birth. He dedicated his life at the most advanced level of commitment to *Torah* since his childhood. He stated, "How did I merit such Divine Assistance in order to be able to choose the proper path from a young age and succeed to such a degree?" He took out mother's book of Psalms and said, "You see this book of Psalms is saturated with my mother's tears. Her prayers are the basis for the Divine Assistance that I received."

There is nothing that happens on its own. The supplications of his mother to have a special holy child resulted in the *Chazon Ish*.

Although King David did not actually participate in the building of the Temple, it is associated with him because of his prayers and sacrifice. The *Mishkan* is identified with *Moshe* because of his selfless sacrifice and dedication. Had it not been for *Moshe's* prayers, the *Mishkan* would have never functioned in the capacity that it did. Thus it is identified with him based on the principle of "The one who cares for the fig tree is the one who will eat its fruit."

Chofetz Chaim: If one provides for what is needed to give a child a proper Jewish education and that child is set forth on a path to become a true *Torah* observant Jew who eventually establishes a family, the one who initially provided for that education will receive merit from all the generations who will descend from the initial beneficiary until the end of time. It is through that one act of providing for the child's *Torah* education that gives the benefactor unlimited merit. Had it not been for his interest and initiative to provide the *Torah* education for the child, all the generations that evolved from that one person would not have been *Torah* observant Jews.

If a person, in any way, affects the life of another Jew positively, even by offering him a kind word, that single act, although may seem to be inconsequential could have infinite value. It is because an unending chain of events can evolve from that one kind word. Even more so, if one truly sacrifices selflessly on behalf of a spiritual endeavor, how much greater will he be a beneficiary of that accomplishment.

The Achilles Heel of Spirituality

On the second day of Passover, the *Omer* offering was brought. This communal offering was comprised of barley flour. On the festival of *Shavuot*, the day on which the *Torah* was given to the Jewish people, the communal offering that was brought was comprised of two loaves of wheat bread (*shte'i ha'lechem*).

Gemara: The bringing of the *Omer* offering permitted the new grain to be consumed by the masses, and the two loaves of bread brought on *Shavuot* permitted the new grain to be used as meal offerings in the Temple.

"The man shall bring his wife to the *Kohen* and he shall bring her offering...a tenth ephah of barley flour."

Mishna: Although a regular meal offering is comprised of wheat flour, the meal offering of the suspected adulteress is comprised of barley flour. The meal offering that is brought by the suspected adulteress was made of barley flour because, "Since her behavior was similar to that of an animal (by sequestering herself with a man other than her husband after defying his warning not to do so), the material make-up of her meal offering is the grain that is used as animal fodder (barley)."

If barely is a grain that is representative of animal fodder, why was it brought as the Omer offering?

Maharal of Prague: When the Jewish people left Egypt they were devoid of spirituality. They were at the point of spiritual extinction, which is the 49th level of spiritual contamination. At that point, the classification of the Jewish people was the equivalent of the animal that has no relevance to spirituality and is totally physical. Therefore, the *Torah* chooses the ingredient of barley for the Omer offering to signify the spiritual level of the Jewish people at that moment.

However, fifty days later at Sinai, when the *Torah* was given to the Jewish people, they had reached the pinnacle of their spirituality. At Sinai, they had achieved the classification of *adam* (man), whose objective and function is to achieve spiritual perfection.

Gemara: “You (the Jewish people) are called *adam*.” (*Yechezkel*) In contrast, the nations of the world are not classified as *adam*.

Adam was the ultimate spiritualized being that was created by G-d Himself. After the Jewish people accepted the *Torah*, their status no longer was the equivalent of the animal, but rather, they reflected the characteristic of Adam. In order to signify their advanced spiritual level at the time of the giving of the *Torah* at Sinai, the *Torah* tells us that the communal offering must be comprised of wheat flour.

Gemara: The primary consumption of wheat grain is by human beings. The *Mishna* also suggests that the Jew should eat wheat bread in the morning because it activates the mind. One opinion in the *Gemara* states that the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge was wheat.

R' Yehuda says, “The child is not able to recognize his father and mother until he has tasted wheat.” We see from this that wheat has relevance to the development of the intellect, which is a characteristic of man and not the animal.

All meal offerings that were brought in the Temple were not leavened (*matzah*). The only two meal offerings that were leavened was the meal offering of the two loaves of wheat bread brought on *Shavuot* and the *Todah* offering (thanks offering).

Chazal: The leavening process represents the evil inclination. One would think that the meal offering that is brought on *Shavuot* would be only *matzah*

and not leavened especially since the two loaves of bread on *Shavuot* signify the most advanced spiritual level of the Jewish people. Being leavened and being comprised of wheat flour seem to be contradictory to the symbolism of the two loaves of bread.

Because the Jewish people had miscalculated the time when *Moshe* was to return from heaven with the *Torah*, they became vulnerable to the influences of the rabble, which led to the sin of the golden calf. Despite the fact that they had reached an unprecedented level of clarity after hearing the voice of G-d, within a short period of time they had fallen victim to idolatry.

Pirkei Avot: One should not believe in himself until the moment of his death because only at that moment is he no longer subject to his evil inclination.

The holy Patriarchs are referred to as the location of the Divine Presence in the world, “*hein hein hamerkava* (they are G-d’s chariot).” Despite the holiness of the holy Patriarchs, G-d only associated His Name with them after their passing because of this principle.

Only *Yitzchak* our Patriarch merited that G-d should associate His Name with him during his lifetime because he was blind and confined to his house. He was not subject to the evil inclination.

The two loaves of wheat bread that were brought on *Shavuot* were leavened in order to act as a reminder that despite the advanced spiritual level that one may reach, until the moment of his death, he must be aware that he is vulnerable to the influences of the evil inclination.

One must always be in a state of battle and remain intolerant of any deviation from G-d’s Will. Although the two loaves were comprised of wheat flour to indicate that the Jewish people had reached the level of *adam*, it nevertheless needed to be leavened to indicate their vulnerability to the evil inclination.

To Perceive G-d in All Aspects of Our Existence

“May *Hashem* bless you and safeguard you. May *Hashem* illuminate His countenance for you and be gracious to you. May *Hashem* lift His countenance to you and establish peace for you.”

Rashi: “May Hashem bless you” means that one’s material possessions should be blessed and succeed.

“G-d should safeguard you” means that G-d should protect one’s assets so that plunderers should not come and steal what was given.

“May Hashem illuminate His countenance for you” means G-d should suppress His anger and thus allow His countenance to shine upon you and give you special charm.

Sforno: “May Hashem illuminate His countenance for you” means that G-d should illuminate your eyes so that you should be able to gaze upon the wonders from His *Torah* and His actions.

“How great (*rabu*) are Your works Hashem.” (Psalms)

The word *rabu* can be interpreted as numerous or immense.

Tomer Devorah: *Rabu* means “how prestigious and exalted are Your works” because they all came about through G-d’s wisdom. The imprint of the Craftsman who brought about existence is obvious in all that He created; therefore, they are exalted and special.

“The heavens speak G-d’s Glory.” (Psalms) King David was able to appreciate and see and G-d’s Glory when he gazed upon the heavens. How is one able to appreciate and see G-d’s imprint on every aspect of creation?

One needs Divine Assistance so that his eyes should be illuminated to have this level of appreciation. Even for one to fathom G-d, one needs for Him to illuminate one’s eyes to have the ability to see G-d’s wonders.

We say at the end of the *Uva L’Tzion* prayer, “May He open our heart through His *Torah* and imbue our heart with love and awe of Him and that we may do His will and serve Him wholeheartedly.”

One would think that if one was imbued with love and awe for G-d, then doing His will would be a natural consequence. Why is it necessary to supplicate G-d

for the ability to do His will despite the fact that one’s heart is filled with intense love and reverence for Him?

We see from this supplication that even when one possesses love and awe for G-d, one needs Divine Assistance to be able to actualize His will. If one merited the Divine Assistance to be able to actualize the *mitzvos*, one would think that he would do so wholeheartedly. We see that one needs to also supplicate G-d to do His will wholeheartedly despite that fact that one has love and awe.

Every level of advancement requires a separate degree of Divine Assistance in order to succeed in his spiritual ascent. One may have love and reverence for G-d and yet falter in doing His will. Within the spiritual realm there is no end to levels of growth and achievement.

Rebbe Akiva, one of the greatest rabbis of the *Tanaic* period, gave his life as one of the ten martyrs in order to sanctify G-d as expression of his love. Despite this unique level of love, it was not the equivalent of *Moshe*’s level of love for G-d. It is not to say that *Rebbe Akiva* was not unique in this regard, but rather *Moshe* reached the ultimate level that no human being had ever achieved.

As great as *Yehoshua Bin Nun*, the successor of *Moshe*, was regarding his responsibility to bring the Jewish people into the Land of Israel and to guarantee the transmission of *Torah* from generation to generation, he was only a reflection of his master.

Gemara: “The face of *Moshe* was the equivalent of the sun, and the face of *Yehoshua* was the equivalent of the moon.” *Moshe*’s face had an intense radiance as the sun, but *Yehoshua* only reflected the radiance of his master as the moon reflects the sun.

One’s achievement in the spiritual realm is not only dependent on one’s intellectual capacity, but rather it is determined by the degree of Divine Assistance that the individual merits. We supplicate G-d to assist us on multiple levels to perform as G-d dictates.



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