

PARSHA GAMES

The Nasi Relay Race

by Sammy Schaechter

GOAL: In this week's parsha, we read about how each nasi brings a korban in honor of the dedication of the mishkan. Each nasi brought the exact same thing, but yet the Torah repeats everyone to show that Hashem values each offering as unique and special.

TYPE: Moderate, indoor, group game.

HOW TO PLAY: Split the group up into two (or more) groups. Have them compete against each other trying to complete the race as quickly as possible going from one side of the room to the other. The first team to have all their players done first, wins! Here are a few ideas for relay races to do. You can use one or many of them, whichever you prefer. Feel free to also use your own ideas!

- Put a Mike and Ike in a spoon and the spoon in their mouth
- Jump roping, hula hooping, skipping, leapfrog, three legged race

- Building a cup pyramid
- Sack race
- Drink 3 cups of a drink

DISCUSSION: The idea behind this game is to teach the kids that despite everyone doing the same exact thing, each one of them plays a very important role to the team. Without each team member doing their part, the team wouldn't be able to complete the task they must accomplish. Each nasi gave the same exact korban, but each one is special to Hashem. No two people are the same and we should take pride in the people we are and serve Hashem to the best of our ability. Hashem wants to hear from us and see us trying to be the best people we can be. He doesn't compare us to what other people are doing, but rather he looks at us for us. We're each unique in our own way and it's important to use our unique qualities to the best of our ability every day.



Naso Wrap-Up

by Sammy Schaechter

This week's Parsha begins with finishing off the counting of Bnei Yisrael from last week's Parsha. Moshe is now counting the Levi'im, who will be carrying the parts of the mishkan, from ages 30-50. The total number of Levi'im men is 8,580. Gershon carries the curtains, the coverings, and screens for the courtyard of the mishkan; Kehat carries the vessels; and Merari carries the pillars and boards of the walls.

Naso then goes on to talk about a nazir- a person who decides to be extra righteous and stay away from specific things, despite them being per-

mitted. A nazir is not allowed to cut his hair, drink wine or grape juice, or become impure by touching a dead body.

Hashem then tells Moshe about the unique mitzvah that Aharon and his sons will have to bless all Bnei Yisrael, commonly known as Birkat Kohanim.

The last part of the Parsha discusses how each nasi brings a korban for the installation of the mizbeach. Each nasi brings the exact same korban, but the



TEFILAH TREASURES

Birkat Hashachar

Boruch... Hamavir Shayna May-aynoi Ooh-snuma May-ahf-ah-poi.

"Blessed are You... Who removes sleep from my eyes and slumber from my eyelids."

As we take care of our most basic needs each morning, it is important to remember that we are created in Hashem's image. Each and every one of us has a very special gift, a Neshoma, a soul. The soul is wrapped carefully in a beautiful wrapping, made specially for us. It is our body! We show respect for this precious soul by

keeping our bodies clean. The Talmud (Tractate Shabbos 50b) teaches that a person should wash his face, hands and feet every day in honor of his Creator in Whose likeness he was formed.

.....Sheh-targi-laynu B'torah-techa V'dahb-kaynu B'mitzvo- techa.....

"And may it be your will, Hashem, my G-d, that You accustom me to (study) your Torah and attach me to your Mitzvot

We ask Hashem to send us off with a good start! Everyone knows that when you get a good start, chances are you'll

keep up the momentum. Therefore, we pray that Hashem will give us the extra push to do Mitzvot and study Torah. Of course, a little extra dose of common sense will help us avoid mistakes, bad judgment and arguments during the day. So we ask Hashem to steer us away from confrontation and bad influences.

LEADER TIP:

We ask Hashem to "attach us to His mitzvot". Are some mitzvot harder to do than others? Why or why not?



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Torah repeats every single one of them to show that Hashem values and appreciates each korban and each nasi as distinct and unique.

LEADER TIP:

Come to groups dressed up as a nazir!

The Merchant and the Necklace

Whatever a man shall give to the priest, it shall be his (5:10)

R'Yosef Shaul Natansohn, av beis din of Lvov, and his brother-in-law, R' Mordechai Zev, once went to collect funds to ransom Jews who had been imprisoned for their debts. As they made the rounds, they came to the home of Reb Herzele Berenstein, an extremely wealthy Jew. He was overjoyed to see the two distinguished men in his home and begged them to remain for lunch. "I promise to complete the sum you still lack, if you honor me with your presence," he said.

The two men accepted the kind invitation and joined Reb Herzele at his table. During the meal, the conversation turned to the purpose of their visit, pidyon shevuyim. The rabbis noted that this worthy deed was so important that one should never overlook an opportunity to perform it, since it offered reward in both this world and the next.

The host listened and said, "That is so true. Let me tell you a story of an incident of my youth, a tale that shows how essential a mitzvah it really is.":

After my marriage, I was supported by my father-in-law for several years, so that I could continue learning. When these years came to an end, I had to begin fending for myself, to support my wife and my children. Taking four hundred rubles, all that I possessed, I traveled to the annual fair at Lashkowitz, hoping to invest in some merchandise. I intended to follow the family line of business — jewelry.

I arrived at the fair. The hectic activity and the babble of noise was overwhelming. It was hard to distinguish one voice from another, for all the fairmen were hawking their wares at the top of their lungs. And yet, one sound caught my attention; it was the sound of heartbroken weeping. I looked around and saw a poor woman crying, her hand outstretched to passers-by, begging. When I approached her

and asked why she was so unhappy, she explained that her daughter was betrothed to be married, but the wedding would not take place until she gave a dowry of four hundred rubles. She did not possess such a huge sum and could never hope to gather it, for all she ever received from begging was an occasional penny. When she had finished her tale of woe, she burst into a fresh torrent of tearful sobbing.

I was deeply moved by her tragic plight. Seized by an impulse, I thrust the entire sum I had brought, the sum of my earthly possessions, into her hand and told her to cease her weeping. She looked at me gratefully, unable to express her great joy. I, merely, shrugged my shoulders, wished her the best of luck and walked away.

So there I was at the fair, without a penny to my name. I wandered aimlessly among the stalls, idly looking at the wares being offered for inspection, knowing that it was a futile gesture. I stopped by the counter of a jewelry dealer. The man was holding a magnificent coral necklace up to the light. Even I, who had grown up with jewels, had never seen its like; it was worth a fortune. When the dealer saw my attention riveted on the necklace, he drew near and asked, "Are you interested in buying this?" I nodded and, hardly trusting my voice, said, "Certainly, but I do not have the money to pay for such an expensive item."

"That doesn't matter. I can see that you are an honest person. I will give it to you on credit. Come back tomorrow and pay me the price — one thousand rubles."

To my own surprise, I did not even hesitate, but took the necklace at once. I soon found another jeweler willing to pay a higher price for it. I offered my services as an agent to the second jeweler. I would find him a customer willing to pay even more. The necklace passed through many hands that day and I acted as the go-between in each

transaction, reaping my commission. I earned large sums from just that one coral necklace. Towards the end of the day, I went back to the first jeweler, who had originally sold me the necklace, and paid him the money I owed.

"I knew that you were an honest man," he said, offering me new merchandise worth one thousand rubles, on consignment. "Since you did so well with that one item, I am sure that you will fare equally well with these jewels and precious stones. You need not pay me now, but only after you have sold the goods."

I worked diligently at the fair and pocketed a huge profit. After a few days, I sought out the jeweler, but could not locate him. He had disappeared. I asked for him and searched all the alleys and byways of the fair grounds, but in vain. I continued my search the next day, but without success. He seemed to have vanished into thin air.

A year passed. It was time again for the annual fair at Lashkowitz. I went to it, hoping to find my benefactor, but he was not there. I questioned all of the visitors at the fair, until they became annoyed with my persistence and said, "You will never find him. That man must have been Eliyahu Hanavi."

Since then I have been visiting the fair, year in and year out, but I have found no trace of that mysterious jeweler who started me on my path to riches. I always wonder if he was Eliyahu Hanavi, after all. I suppose I will never know."

Herzele turned to his guests and added in conclusion, "One thing I do know for certain; it was those thousand rubles and the profit I earned on them that built the empire that I now own. Now, you can understand why I give so readily to helping people out of their plight." And with that, he laid out the entire sum which the two rabbis were still lacking.

Sarah Schenirer

July 15, 1883 – March 1, 1935

Sarah Schenirer was a pioneer of Jewish education for girls. In 1917, she established the Bais Yaakov school network in Poland. She discovered that Rabbi Samson Raphael Hirsch, a leading 19th century sage who lived in Frankfort, Germany, had developed schools which provided Jewish girls with a Torah education, and she was inspired to do something similar in Poland. She decided to give up her work as a seamstress who wove clothes, in order to devote herself to establishing Torah schools for girls. Although she initially faced some opposition, she won the support of most of the leading Torah sages of her era, including the Chofetz Chaim. For example, Sar-

ah's family were followers of the Belzer Rebbe, a leading sage, and at the suggestion of her brother, she consulted with the Belzer Rabbe about her plans to educate Jewish girls. The Rebbe told her, "Blessing and Success!" She therefore established the first Torah school for Jewish girls in Poland.

After the outbreak of World War I in 1914 she moved to Vienna, but returned to Kraków early the next year, where she organized a group of girls and taught them Jewish studies. She succeeded in overcoming initial resistance against this new type of school and saw rapid development of about 300 schools in pre Holocaust Europe. Her initiative was approved by the leading rabbis of the times, such as the

Gerrer Rebbe, Rabbi Avraham Mordechai Alter and Rabbi Yisrael Meir Kagan (known as "the Chofetz Chaim").

In 1923 Schenirer set up a teachers' seminary to train staff for her rapidly expanding network of schools. The main goal of the schools was "to train Jewish daughters so that they will serve the Lord with all their might and with all their hearts; so that they will fulfill the commandments of the Torah with sincere enthusiasm and will know that they are the children of a people whose existence does not depend upon a territory of its own, as do other nations of the world whose existence is predicated upon a territory and similar racial background."

PUZZLERS ANSWERS

PARSHA CODE

1. LEVI's 3 SON's were GERSHON, KEHAS, and MERARI
2. The LEVI'IM were in charge of CARRYING the MISHKAN and its VESSELS
3. a SOTAH's STOMACH EXPLODED if she SINNED
4. a NAZIR may not DRINK WINE, CUT his HAIR, or become TAMAY
5. a NAZIR SHAVES all his HAIR and BRINGS KORBANOS when his NAZIRUS is DONE
6. the KOHANIM have a MITZVAH to BLESS (BENTCH) all of BNEI YISROEL with 3 B's
7. during the 1st 12 DAYS of NISSAN, the NESI'IM brought KORBANOS for the DEDICATION of the MISHKAN
8. the PARSHA of NASO is the LONGEST in the TORAH with 176 PESUKIM

TORAH RHYMES & RIDDLES

1. Sotah.
2. Nazir.
3. The twelve princes of the tribes
4. Dedication

TEST YOUR PARSHA KNOWLEDGE

1. Its own degel (flag), symbolizing each shevat
2. His whole life
3. She drinks the water, and if she is guilty, both she and her wrong partner's inside explodes and they die, but if she is not guilty she will have a baby more easily
4. Because he jumped into the Yam Suf (Red Sea) first
5. a. Eat or drink grapes or anything that comes from grapes, b. Cut his hair, c. Became tameh met
6. They receive a berachah from HaShem
7. Thirty days
8. Each one was allowed to bring karbanot to help dedicate the mishkan, on a separate day
9. The Nasi of Shevat yehudah – Nachshon Ben Aminadav
10. If the husband suspects his wife (without full proof) and warned her, and she continued
11. Between thirty and fifty years old
12. HaShem should bless you
13. Three: machaneh shechinah (camp of HaShem's presence) in the center, and the Mishkan was in it, machaneh leviyah (leviim's camp) was around it, the kohanim and leviim lived in it, and the outermost camp was machaneh yisrael (camp of the yisraels)
14. A tameh lamet had to leave machaneh shechinah (the innermost camp)
15. A metzora had to leave all the camps
16. He must admit before HaShem, return what was stolen, plus one fifth extra, and bring a karbon
17. Death
18. He had to cut his hair, bring certain karbanot, and begin the nezirut period again
19. NO
20. A special karbon of regular (not finely sifted as usual) flour of barley (not wheat as usual) without any oil or spices
21. Levi

A poor chassid became rich, and convinced himself that his new prosperity was due to his own cleverness. Foolishly, he boasted in this vein to others. In his arrogance, he also did not behave respectfully toward R' Yechiel Michel of Zlotchov.

Passing R' Michel's house one day, the prosperous chassid averted his eyes so as not to see the Rebbe. R' Michel himself stepped outside to invite

him in.

"Come, stand here, by the window, and look outside," the Rebbe said.

A few minutes later, R' Michel asked his wealthy visitor, "What do you see through the window?"

"I see people coming and going."

"Now stand in front of the mirror." The rich man did so. "And what do you see now?" the Rebbe asked.

"I see my own face," the visitor said.

"And how," asked the Rebbe, "is the window, in which you see other people, different from the mirror, which shows you no one but yourself?"

The Rebbe then answered his own question. "A window pane lacks a silver backing. Through that glass, one can see all other people. But the glass in a mirror is coated with silver — and in it, a man can see only himself!"

STORIES MY GRANDFATHER TOLD ME

A Special Library

"So shall you bless the Children of Israel" (Bamidbar 6:23)

In the city of Volozhin, a prosperous businessman by the name of R' Yitzchak generously supported the Jewish community in his town. His work took him on trips to many Jewish cities. On his return, he always brought his wife, Rivkah, a nice gift.

One day, as R' Yitzchak prepared to set out on yet another business trip, his modest and clever wife made a request. "Instead of a present," she said, "I'd prefer that you buy a full set of Shas for our home." Such a set was an expensive rarity in those days.

R' Yitzchak heeded his wife's request. On his trip, he succeeded in buying a full set of Shas. Not all the volumes had been printed by the same printer, nor were all of them the same size, but it was a full set — containing every Mesechta.

R' Yitzchak and his wife decided not to keep this treasure to themselves. Anyone could borrow a volume of Shas if they desired to learn. The news spread quickly through the town, and many students of Torah would come to their house to borrow a volume.

Upon finishing what he wanted to learn, the student would hurry back to R' Yitzchak's home to return that volume and borrow another one.

Since R' Yitzchak was often away from home on business, he appointed his good and wise wife to be the "librarian." He gave her the keys to the case and put her in charge of keeping a record of those who came to borrow volumes of the Shas.

One day, the illustrious Sha'agas Aryeh came to town. He sat alone, learning diligently, in a beis midrash. From time to time, he went over to R' Yitzchak's house to exchange one volume of Shas for another. Though unaware of his identity, Rivkah sensed that a great man stood before her — a Torah giant. On one of his visits to her "library," she said, "His Honor mustn't trouble himself to come to the house every time he wants to exchange a volume. I will send one of my servants to the beis midrash every morning, and he will bring the Gemaras that His Honor needs for the day!"

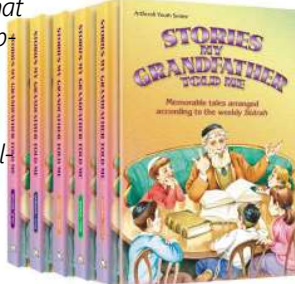
The Sha'agas Aryeh agreed to this plan, and the arrangement lasted for a long period of time. When the Sha'agas Aryeh was finally about to leave town,

he went over to R' Yitzchak's wife and gave her the following blessing:

"In the merit of your making it possible for me to learn with the Shas in your possession, I bless you that you will give birth to two sons who will light up the Jewish nation. One son will head many Jewish kehillas and will teach young Jewish children Gemara. The other, however, will not need a Shas, because he will know the entire Torah by heart!"

The tzaddik's blessing came true. One of Rivkah's sons was the gaon, R' Chaim of Volozhin, who became a student of the Sha'agas Aryeh and went on to found the mother of all yeshivos — the Volozhiner Yeshivah. The other son was R' Zalman, who rose above nearly everyone in his generation in knowing the entire Torah by heart!

Stories My Grandfather Told Me by Zev Greenwald (Author) Libby Lazewnik (Translator) and Tova Katz (Illustrator) is packed with short pleasant stories that teach children important life lessons from the weekly Parsha. The five-volume set is available from your favorite Jewish book store, or at artscroll.com.



Blessing From Heaven

And they shall put My name upon the Children of Israel and I will bless them (6:23)

During his tenure as rabbi of Jerusalem, R' Moshe Galanti had never experienced a drier winter. Not a drop of rain had fallen; all the cisterns were bone-dry. Water had to be bought — and at high prices for every precious ounce. Summer was already around the corner and with it, all hopes for any rain would vanish.

The people of Jerusalem went about with bowed backs. They seemed to have shrunk and shriveled from lack of water; the fear of famine was reflected in their eyes. They gathered and huddled in small groups in the batei midrashim and synagogues throughout the city. Their heartbreaking cries rent the air as they pleaded to the One on High to open the gates of Heaven and release the rains. The city's rabbis decreed fast days; the holy men went to pray upon the graves of tzaddikim and other sacred sites to arouse Heavenly compassion for the suffering community. But salvation seemed so far away. Not even the slightest cloud marred the brilliance of the blue sky.

The gentiles of the land were also devastated by the drought. They, too, turned to prayer — the Moslems in their mosques and the Christians in their churches. But there was no hint of rain.

Jerusalem anti-Semites sought to place the blame of the drought upon the Jews. They even convinced the governor that Heaven was withholding rains because of Jewish sins. In his desperation, he allowed himself to be swayed by the illogical arguments and decided to avenge himself upon them.

He summoned the rabbi of Jerusalem, R' Moshe Galanti, and in no uncertain terms accused him and his people of being to blame for the drought. "You are the chosen people of G-d," he said. "He heeds your prayers when you sincerely implore Him. If the rains have not fallen, it is because you have not prayed fervently enough. I am giving you an ul-

timatum of three days. If it does not rain within this time, you will all be banished from Jerusalem and no Jewish foot will ever tread its streets again!"

R' Moshe Galanti left the governor's mansion and immediately summoned the rabbis of the city. He, again, ordered them to assemble the people to the houses of prayer and to pour out their hearts in prayer while fasting, beseeching Hashem to save them from this new threat. The entire Jewish community was to participate in the prayers and fasting — men, women and children alike.

All the Jews flocked to the synagogues and did not budge from there for two whole days. The skies remained as cloudless and metallic as before with no sign of a break in their impassive expanse. "Had the prayers not gone up to Heaven at all?" people wondered. On the third day, the rabbi went up to the bimah and announced that everyone was to follow him to the tomb of Shimon Hatzaddik outside the city limits. But, he added, everyone was to return home first to fetch warm clothing and headgear to protect them from the heavy rains which were about to fall.

The Jews wondered at the rabbi's words. True, it was winter, but only in name. The weather was arid; the sun glared down; it felt like a torrid summer day. But no one dared mock, or even question, the words of the revered rabbi and they did as they had been bidden.

The long procession of Jews, shrouded in coats and shawls, in readiness for a winter storm, wended its way to the outskirts of the city. Walking in the direction of the tomb of Shimon Hatzaddik, they were met with gales of laughter from the gentiles. When asked why they were so dressed, the Jews replied that their rabbi had ordered it.

The young gentile scamps and urchins taunted the Jews and even threw sticks at them. One of the more brazen ones ran up and slapped the rabbi across the face. R' Moshe swallowed his pride and continued on without the flicker of an-

ger, as if nothing had happened.

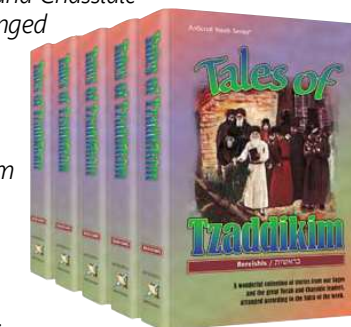
When they reached their destination, R' Moshe and the other rabbis entered the tomb while the rest remained outside, praying fervently. Once within, R' Moshe clenched his eyes tightly in deep concentration. His soul seemed to be transported beyond his body, up into the spiritual realms of another world.

The sun of the third day began setting when, suddenly, the rabbi threw himself down upon the tomb, weeping aloud. And then the wind began to blow. It shook the branches of the nearby trees and became more intense as the rabbi's weeping increased. The sky turned grey and tiny droplets began falling. By the time he had finished praying, it was pouring heavily. The rain came down in thick sheets and soon filled the gaping cisterns of Jerusalem to overflowing.

The residents of Jerusalem rejoiced and even the gentiles conceded that the Jews had brought the salvation from Heaven through their prayers. They rushed to the tomb to thank the Jews and do them homage, disregarding the drenching rain. Even the insolent urchin who had slapped the rabbi was there. He approached R' Moshe and fell at his feet weeping and begging forgiveness.

Most moved and impressed was the governor. He felt ashamed that he had allowed himself to be swayed by the Jew-haters in the city to put the Jews in such a predicament. Henceforth, he became an ardent admirer of his Jewish subjects and their sworn defender.

Tales of Tzadikim by G. Matov is a wonderful collection of stories from our Sages and the great Torah and Chassidic leaders, arranged according to the Sidra. The five-volume set is available from your favorite Jewish book store, or online at artscroll.com.



PARSHA PUZZLERS

TEST YOUR PARSHA KNOWLEDGE

by Sammy Schaechter & Dovid Saleman
Answers on page 7.

EASY Qs

1. What was the longest amount of time that a person could be a Nazir?
2. What happens to the soteh?
3. Why was he chosen to go first?
4. What are the three prohibitions that a Nazir may not do?
5. What happens to the kohanim who bless the Bnei Yisrael?
6. If someone said "I am a Nazir," for how many days was he a Nazir?
7. What honor was given to the Ne-siim?
8. Which Nasi brought his sacrifices first?
9. When is one called a Sotah?
10. How old were the Leviim who served in the Mishkan?

MEDIUM Qs

11. What does yevarechecha HaShem mean?

12. How many machanot (camps) were there, and who was in each?
13. From which camps did a tameh met (one who is unclean from contact with a dead body) have to leave?
14. From which camps did a metzora (leper) have to leave?
15. If a person stole, then swore falsely, then admits that it was false, what happens?
16. What is the punishment for a married woman caught living with another man besides her husband?

HARD Qs

17. What happened if a Nazir became tammeh met in the middle of the time he was a Nazir?
18. Are the Bnei Yisrael supposed to look at the kohanim during birkat kohanim?
19. If a soteh is brought to the kohen in the mishkan/mikdash, what kind of offering does she bring?
20. Who was the father of Gershon,

CRACK THE PARSHA CODE

by Rabbi Yaakov Levine
Answers on page 7.

1. L 3 S were G, K, and M
2. The L were in charge of C the M and its V
3. A S S E if she S
4. a N may not D W, C his H, or become T
5. a N S all his H and B K when his N is D
6. the K have a M to B all of B Y with 3 B
7. during the 1st 12 D of N, the N brought K for the D of the M
8. the P of N is the L in the T with 176 P

Rabbi Yaakov Levine is the 5th grade rebbe and afternoon mashgiach at Yeshiva Toras Moshe in Queens, NY. He is also the Night Activity Director and a rebbe at Camp Lema-la. Rabbi Levine can be reached by email at rabbiylevine@gmail.com

Kehat, and Merari?

PARSHA PUZZLERS

TORAH RHYMES & RIDDLES

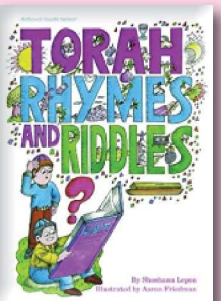
Answers on page 7.

1. I'll drink the bitter waters,
And if I've told a lie,
I'll be punished for my sin
And right then I will die
But if I'm really truthful
And have not sinned one iota,
I'll be blessed to have a child
I am called the _____
2. I'm not allowed to cut my hair.
The dead I don't go near.

- I can't have wine or even grapes.
For I am a _____
3. We are twelve important men
And we listen to Hashem.
Each day a different one will bring
The exact same offering.
The _____ of the _____
4. Bowls of silver, bowls of gold,
Bull, ram, sheep, just one year old,
Goats and oxen, oil and flour

And the finest incense powder
All this was offered in celebration
Of the Altar's _____

Torah Rhymes and Riddles by Shoshana Lepon (Author) and Aaron Friedman (Illustrator) is filled with rhyming riddles that test young children's comprehension of the weekly Parsha. For more great children's Torah books, visit artscroll.com



PARSHA STORIES

STORIES MY GRANDFATHER TOLD ME

To Give His All

"And all that is raised up of all of the holies that the Children of Israel bring to the Kohen, it shall be his." (Bamidbar 5:9)

A story is told surrounding the birth of R' Menachem Mendel of Rimannav. His father, R' Yosef, and his mother were childless until they withstood an ordeal and was rewarded by Heaven with a son who would serve as a brilliant light for the Jewish people.

The poritz who owned the village and surrounding land had cause to flee the country. Knowing R' Yosef's integrity, the poritz approached him with an astonishing proposal. He offered to sell the village and land to R' Yosef for an extremely low price.

R' Yosef did not have the required sum in cash. He asked his wife's advice on the matter, and she suggested that he sell everything they owned, including her jewelry, the housewares and furniture, and even their cows. By supplementing this with a small loan, R' Yosef would be able to purchase the land and become very rich indeed.

R' Yosef followed this advice. With a large bundle of cash in his bag, he started out happily to see the poritz. Suddenly, he heard somebody crying. It turned out that a large Jewish family had lost the head of their household just moments before. The brand-new orphans — and there were a good many of them — were hungry and barefoot. R' Yosef's compassion overwhelmed him. Impulsively, he handed his bundle of money to the grieving widow, to enable her to bury her husband and support her children.

The impact of this tremendous mitzvah shook the heavens. R' Yosef had thrown away his own future and the enormous profits that awaited him on concluding his deal with the poritz. In the beis din up Above, it was agreed to grant him a son who would be a great tzaddik and would illuminate the world.

The satan, however, was not satisfied and acted as prosecutor. At his insistence, the Heavenly court decided to test R' Yosef once more. A righteous man came to the newly destitute R'

Yosef with an unusual and tempting request: He wished, for a lavish sum, to purchase the merit of the mitzvah R' Yosef had done.

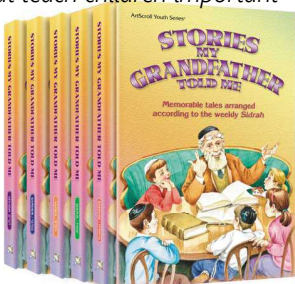
R' Yosef rejected the offer out of hand. "There is no gold or silver equal to the value of a mitzvah," he declared.

Hearing this, the stranger revealed that he was a messenger from Heaven who had come with the news that a son would be born to R' Yosef and his wife in a year's time.

Sure enough, one year later a boy was born. They named him "Menachem" — "He will comfort us!"

Stories My Grandfather Told Me by Zev Greenwald (Author) Libby Lazewnik (Translator) and Tova Katz (illustrator) is packed with short pleasant stories that teach children important life

lessons from the weekly Parsha. The five-volume set is available from your favorite Jewish book store, or at artscroll.com.



PARSHA STORIES

TALES OF TZADIKIM

May Such Nezirim Increase

When either a man or a woman shall clearly utter a vow (6:2)

Shimon Hatzaddik said that there was only one nazir sacrifice from which he ate in his entire life.

That happened when a nazir once came to Jerusalem from the south of the country to bring his sacrifice. He was a handsome youth with captivating eyes and shimmering long curly hair. When Shimon Hatzaddik beheld him he said, "My son, what caused you to accept such a difficult restriction as nezirus? You are spoiling your lovely

locks by letting them grow wild and unruly."

The nazir replied, "I am a shepherd. Once, as I was watching my father's herd, I went to fetch some water for the thirsty sheep. Leaning over the well, I could not help but notice my own reflection in the water. I saw how handsome I was and felt proud and haughty. But, then, I caught myself right away. Addressing my own wicked impulse, my yetzer hara, I said, 'Wicked one! Why must you boast of something which is not even yours? Your

good looks will not last forever. You will become food for the worms, as is the way of all flesh.' I decided then, to become a nazir and sacrifice my lovely hair to Hashem."

When Shimon Hatzaddik heard this, he kissed the nazir upon the forehead and said, "My son, may nezirim such as you increase amongst our people. Of such as you it is said: 'If a man shall take a vow to become a nazir to abstain himself to G-d...'"

(Adapted from Tractate Nedarim 9a)