

א ב י ס כ ל ת ו ר א !

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Everything in Moderation

By Maayan Schwartz '28

There are many examples of separation within Judaism. חול and שבת, טמא and טהור, חלב and בשר. Separation comes naturally to us. In פרשת קדושים (not this week's פרשה), (!פרשה) commands us to be holy: "דְּבַר: (ויקרא יט:ב) 'קְדוּשִׁים תִּהְיוּ כִּי קְדוֹשׁ אֲנִי ה' אֱלֹהֵיכֶם. Many פרשנים interpret this פסוק to show that we should be distinct from other nations. Many פרשיות in ספר in פרשיות, specifically נשא, delve deeper into the theme of separation by describing the distinct kinds of people within our own nation. The פרשה begins with גרשון asking משה to count the families of his and מררי's younger sons, their role is to serve in the משכן. Levi's older son, קהת, and his family have already been counted, and will also have their own unique role within the משכן. Another example of separation is where משה told anyone who was impure, "צֵאוּ אֶת־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְיִשְׁלְחוּ מִן־הַמַּחֲנֶה כָּל־צָרוּעַ וְכָל־זֶב, (במדבר ה:ב) "וְכָל טָמֵא לְנֶפֶשׁ".

While these categories may seem random, חזקוני says that the common denominator is that they all need 7 days in order to be purified. Perhaps the greatest example of separation within נשא is the section of פרשת that details the laws relating to a נזיר. In פרק of פסוקים that details the laws relating to a נזיר. In פרק of פסוקים, the many restrictions that a נזיר must undertake, such as not drinking wine or cutting their hair, are given. This section concludes with the way a person completes/ends their time as a נזיר. In פרק of פסוקים it says that a נזיר has to bring two types of קורבנות, a חטאת

and a שלמים. The שלמים makes sense, as it is normally given in times of joy or gratitude. A חטאת, however, contradicts the expected purpose of being a נזיר. If the whole point of being a נזיר is to strengthen your spirituality and closeness to Hashem, why would you have to bring a sin offering after?! Two ראשונים with opposing opinions come to light when considering this question. רמב"ן believes that being a נזיר is an incredibly holy thing to do, and the חטאת has nothing to do with the actual lifestyle; rather, it is for ending this incredibly close relationship to Hashem. Contrastingly, רמב"ם states in הלכות דעות, משנה תורה, חלכות דעות, that the חטאת is for the נזיר restricting themselves to an extreme. רמב"ם quotes from תענית יא. that if a נזיר has to bring a חטאת for not drinking wine, it must be worse for a regular person to not do things that the תורה allows. Additionally, רמב"ם quotes from ירושלמי נדרים ט"א: that states that people who restrict themselves from participating in activities that the תורה allows are actually doing the wrong thing. רמב"ן and רמב"ם's views may seem irreconcilable, yet Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks z"l highlights a later רמב"ם in the aptly named הלכות נזירות that seems to contradict earlier, negative, view of נזירות. In הלכות נזירות, he says that as long as a person becomes a נזיר with the correct intentions, they are elevated to the level of a נביא and they are actively sanctifying Hashem's Name. Rabbi Sacks uses both of רמב"ם's statements to teach an important lesson about balance. Once we have determined the greater parameters of our lives, such as the fact that we are Jewish, we need moderation in order to achieve clarity

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within the grey areas of our lives, such as the reality of what Judaism personally means. This concept of moderation connects deeply with רמב"ם's philosophy. In משנה תורה, הלכות דעות א:ה, רמב"ם states that true wisdom comes not from turning to the opposite extreme of a trait, but rather going to the "medium" level of that trait. This is the true lesson we learn from separation. While there are obvious distinctions we need to make as a people to preserve our traditions and community, there are others, such as internal separations, that are less clear-cut. רמב"ם is teaching us that the path to living a fulfilled life is to balance our internal divisions. We need to have individual identities and connections, while still operating as a nation. The separations in פרשת נשא are meant to enable us to develop our individual roles, while maintaining our collective identity. May we all find our own meaningful role to play within כלל ישראל.

Repetition

By Ethan Ravid '27

Repetition, something that appears throughout most of this week's פרשת נשא, פרשת נשא. In poetry, repetition emphasizes an idea or belief by stating it repeatedly. Additionally, repetition appears all over Judaism, such as the repetition of the עמידה after the silent one, שבת every 7th day, etc. Repetition also gives us structure and routine in our daily lives. While in this week's פרשה it seems to drag it out, there might be more to it than the same gift being brought for 12 days straight. For each day it says (ויקרא פרק ז) that each נשיא brought the exact same amount of each offering in their gifts. As seen from this incredibly long

repetition of each gift from each נשיא, part of the service was that the נשיאים brought many types of sacrifices. They brought a חטאת, עולה, and שלמים. However, it is interesting that they give all of the sacrifices except for an אשם offering. Why do they exclude this offering with their other ones?

The רמב"ן says, that the אשם is included under the חטאת, as they are respectively, the guilt-offering and the sin-offering, which being part of the same concept and having a similar name, they can be put under the same umbrella sacrifice.

The ספורנו accepts this approach, of having an umbrella sacrifice and opens the umbrella wider. He expands the sin-offering to not just be applying to the individual נשיא, rather, being an offering given on behalf of the entire representative tribe. This would be done by each נשיא performed the סמיכה, the act of placing all his weight on the animal, having in mind the entire tribe while doing so.

Something one can notice about these gifts is that the נשיאים bring many sacrifices as gifts. While at first it would seem weird to give extra work for the כהנים, given that there are only three remaining, it served two purposes: one, being as a gift to G-d, and a second, showing the Jewish people how to give sacrifices and show them that it is the correct and right thing to do. However, in giving the super sin-offering, encompassing an entire tribe with guilt-offering included, the נשיאים deliver another message. While the נשיאים seemed to be giving self-focused sacrifices to G-d, in reality they are sacrifices for their entire tribe. Rather than focusing entirely on oneself when living one's life, one must also think of others, as shown from this week's פרשה.

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Email, Email bisltorah@maimonides.org

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