

What do you think?

Some people just love to buy gifts. For them, weddings, birthdays, anniversaries, bridal showers, and graduations are all opportunities to go out and shop for that special doodad for that special someone. Others dread the thought of having to find something appropriate – the perfect “something” that will be received with approval and appreciation by the recipient.

Giving is an art. Its purpose is to acknowledge another person’s worth. It’s a sign of love, appreciation, or congratulations. But so often the problem is that despite all the effort and expense we invest in giving a gift, we leave out a key element – ourselves. Giving of ourselves is a gift that always succeeds in making the recipient feel important. It lifts the spirits and makes an individual happy.

Soon you might have to face a choice again: “What should I give?” Before you answer the question and invest time and money in acquiring the “toy”, ask yourself, “How can I add a little of myself to the gift? How can I personalize it?” Maybe baking cookies or writing a personal note inside the *sefer* would make the message you want to convey truly “you” speaking. Your own input may take some extra effort, but by giving this way, you will always get what *you* want out of the gift. (One Minute With Yourself – Rabbi Raymond Beyda)

Brain Food

“Among the miracles of the stomach is that it uses a very powerful chemical (hydrochloric acid) to digest foods. This concentrated acid can break down the toughest meat so that it becomes almost liquified. The stomach acid is so powerful that a person putting his finger into it would get a skin burn.”

The Torah is a very powerful chemical that we should digest daily. Ingesting the Brain Food of spirituality, nourishes each cell in our bodies, maintaining our spiritual health. (Norman D. Levy Based on Rabbi Miller’s teachings with permission from Simchas Hachaim Yeshiva Gedola Bais Israel)

To Tell the Truth

A man once came to Rabbi Yoel Teitelbaum, the Satmar Rebbe, seeking a blessing that the business he was about to begin should be successful. The Rebbe asked him what he was planning to do, and the man said that he was going to be a diamond broker.

The Rebbe told him, “I wish you *hatzlachah!* But I want to make one condition: You must promise me that you will never say a lie!”

Stammering, the man said, “Er, Rebbe, I would surely not say an outright lie, but sometimes in this business it is...necessary to exaggerate a bit! If I wish to sell a diamond to a potential customer, I must tell him that it is beautiful, that there are few that can compare to it...And when I am asked if anyone else is interested in buying that particular stone, then even if I don’t have a serious buyer, I must say that there is someone – otherwise it won’t sell! I think I would be wasting my time to go into this business if I have to be 100% truthful!”

Replied the Rebbe, “You are sadly mistaken. The Torah tells us, ‘Distance yourself from a false word’ (*Shemot 23:7*), which means that it is possible for a person to succeed in business and only say the truth! It can’t be that the only way a person can make a living is by lying or exaggerating.”

This man took the Rebbe’s advice and only spoke the truth. He developed a reputation as a broker who never lied, and was flooded with customers who wished to purchase their diamonds only from him, because they knew he would not mislead them. (Gut Voch)

The Lorraine Gammal A "H Edition
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SHABBATNASO ☆ τΓ"β, X♥↑

Haftarah: Shoftim 13:2-25

JUNE 14-15, 2019 12 SIVAN 5779

Friday Shir Hashirim/Minhah: **6:55 & 7:30 pm** Shaharit: **4:27, 6:40, 8:10, 9:15 am**
Candlelighting: **8:09 pm** Morning Shema by: **8:14 am**
Evening Shema after: **9:07 pm** Shabbat Classes: **6:45 pm**
Shabbat Minhah: **7:45 pm**
Shabbat Ends: **9:07 pm (R)"T 9:39 pm)**

These times are applicable only for the Deal area.

Sunday Minhah: **7:05 pm**

Rabbi Dabbah will be giving a ladies' class one hour before Minhah in memory of Naomi bat Zakia.

Weather permitting, Bircat Halebanah will be recited on Saturday night. If not, it may be said until Sunday night, June 16.

A Message from our Rabbi

”כֹּה תְבָרְכוּ אֶת־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל”

“So shall you bless the Children of Israel” (*Bemidbar 6:23*)

Every day in our synagogues the people receive a blessing from the *Kohanim*. If one studies the commentaries on the blessing he will discover that this blessing is to grant great physical bounty for each Jew. Fundamental to our beliefs as Jews, we know that all of these things come from Hashem. If so, why do we need the *Kohanim* as middlemen? Why can’t we be blessed straight from Hashem?

Rabbi M. Sternbuch explains that the function of the *Kohanim* is to serve in the *Bet Hamikdash* (the Holy Temple in Jerusalem) and to teach the people Torah. The *Kohanim* are joined by the Torah scholars in the mission of studying and teaching Torah. The livelihood of the *Kohanim* is from the general population of the Jewish people. The nature of the people is to view this situation as the *Kohanim* receiving support without them contributing to the welfare of the people. Hashem wants to tell the people that this isn’t so. On the contrary, the success of the people depends on the *Kohanim* serving in the *Bet Hamikdash*, and nowadays, by the *hachamim*, the ones that carry the Torah. Therefore, Hashem commanded the *Kohanim* to bless the people, in order for the people to get benefit from their blessings. Then the people will view these scholars as partners in their success.

In truth all things that Hashem gives us, both good and bad, are only good. Even bad things are truly good. It is only due to the limited vision of the human being that it appears as bad. However, Hashem loves His people and wants us to have everything good, so that even according to our limited understanding we should feel it is good. So what did Hashem do? He placed human beings, *Kohanim*, and gave them the command to bless us with blessings that even *Kohanim*, human beings, can sense as good. This causes the *Kohanim* to bless us with all of their hearts, because our success in our livelihood gives them success, since their livelihood depends on our livelihood. May we all look forward to have opportunities to help *Kohanim* and today's scholars, because their success is ours and our success is theirs. Shabbat Shalom.

Rabbi Reuven Semah

Play It Again

Naso is the longest portion in the Torah. It did not have to be that way, but the Torah chose to include seventy verses that say the same thing — over and over again. The end of the *perashah* discusses the offerings that every *Nasi* (prince) brought in honor of the dedication of the *Mishkan* (Tabernacle). Each *Nasi* brought the same items. This was repeated twelve separate days, by twelve different *Nesiiim* (princes). And each day the Torah repeats verbatim the entire offering, changing only the name of the presenter and his tribe.

Normally, the Torah is concise and abbreviated. Why, if all twelve brought the exact same gifts, is each and every *Nasi's* offering detailed over and over?

A noted American Rabbi was invited to address two major cities in South Africa. Since the cities were hundreds of miles apart, he only prepared one speech for both events. It was a wonderful lecture. It encompassed a wide spectrum of Jewish ideas and was filled with *Midrash* and Jewish law. Informative, enlightening and entertaining, it was the best speech he had ever prepared.

The first night's audience attested to that. They sat with their mouths open, taking in every nuance and motion of the dramatic presentation. After the lecture a crowd gathered around the Rabbi to praise him and hear variations on his poignant theme.

After such a wonderful reception, the Rabbi thought that the second evening on the other side of the country should be a breeze. As he walked up to the podium to deliver his magnum opus he looked at the crowd and froze. He spotted at least fifty faces of people he was sure had attended the previous night's speech.

Stunned, he quickly ruffled through the index cards of his mind. He pieced together parts of an old High Holy Day speech, added little from Hanukah, Purim, and the *Hagadah*. What resulted was a scattered array of varying thoughts. To say the least, it was not his best performance.

After the speech the same faces of the previous evening gathered once again around the Rabbi. "I'm sorry," he stammered to them, "I had originally planned to repeat last night's speech. Seeing your faces, I hastily arranged a piecemeal lecture based on some previous talks. Had I known you were coming, I would have prepared a totally new talk. I am sorry for my poor performance."

"But, Rabbi," they replied. "That is exactly why we came! Last night's talk was the most fascinating we had ever heard. We expected you to repeat it. We came all the way to hear it over again word for word!"

The Torah, in repeating the twelve offerings, and spending six verses on each one, leaves us with a message that is as powerful as it is pertinent. Many of our deeds are repeats of generations passed. Many are repeats from yesterday. They are all beloved

and cherished. Day after day after day... Hashem wants to hear and see the exact same prayer, blessing charitable action over and over again. It is as dear as the first time. (Rabbi Mordechai Kamenezky)

Perceptions

(*Bemidbar* 8:13) "וְזֹאת תֹרַת הַנָּזִיר בְּיוֹם מְלֵאת יָמָיו נִזְרוֹ"

"This is the law of the *Nazir*, on the day of the completion of his vow."

The *Nazir* concludes the days of his *nezirut* vow and brings a *korban*, offering. The type of offering is similar to a *Korban Hatat*, sin offering, which raises the question: Why bring a sin offering at the conclusion of the *nezirut* vow? This is not a sin, but a *misvah!* The *Nazir* has just devoted time to bringing himself closer to the Almighty. This is the manifestation of a holy calling. By removing himself from the whims and pleasures of this world, the *Nazir* has elevated himself above the spiritual plateau of most Jews. Yet, he is treated like a sinner who must bring a *hatat*. Why?

Rabenu Bahya explains that this *korban* is brought to counteract appearances/perceptions. Apparently, the *Nazir* acted in a certain exalted manner during his *yemei nezirut*. Now, it appears that he is descending from that plateau, and returning to his more mundane lifestyle. It is not as if the *Nazir* is doing something wrong. He is simply going back to his previous level, which was more the norm. Consider a person who had moved to a high level of service to Hashem. When his – in this case, a *Nazir's* – relationship with the Almighty, which had been closer than originally, reverts to the accepted standard, his actions **appear** inappropriate and people will begin to talk – as they usually do, out of boredom and utter ignorance. This requires a *korban* seeking atonement.

After all is said and done, who cares about appearances? What difference does it make what people will say? Let them mind their own business and not be so nosy. Is it my fault if people cannot control their maligning tongues?

Rav Henschel Leibowitz z"l derives a powerful and perhaps frightening lesson from here. Although our actions may well be within the parameters of *halachah*, if it **appears** inappropriate, this in itself is a sin. In other words, as difficult as it may be to accept, it is not what we do, but rather, its perception that counts. What will the neighbors say? The mere appearance of impropriety is a sin. Acting in a manner that is seemingly wrong – but is not – is not that much different than actually executing a sin. The harmful effect on us is similar.

The *Rosh Yeshivah* observes that this *korban* illuminates the significance of our actions. Whatever we do – be it physical or spiritual, affects us. There is an impact. If people **think** we are sinful, we **are** sinful! We will be taken to task for all of our actions, even those that only appear to be lacking. Thus, the manner in which we dress, speak, eat, interact with people will be scrutinized by the Heavenly Court. Commensurate with our station in life and that which is expected of us, we will be appropriately chastised. Even if it **only appears** that we are acting undignified, sinful, in a harmful manner to others, such as speaking *lashon hara*, slander, we are nonetheless guilty of committing a sin, and we are still culpable although there is not a shred of truth to anyone's erroneous observation. This is frightening, yet compelling, because it reminds us who we are, whom we represent and how we must project ourselves to the world. This should catalyze pride – not fear. (*Peninim* on the Torah)

Gifts

Giving gifts is fun.

Giving gifts is a pain.