



*Revealing the inner beauty of the Torah in a way that touches and inspires the Jewish soul*

## PARSHAS NASSO

B.S.D.

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In this weeks Parsha, Hashem instructs the Levyim between the ages of 30 and 50 to carry the objects belonging to the Mishkan. Hashem was very specific as to which family was responsible for each item. Kahas were given the privilege of carrying the holiest vessels. The tapestries and woven materials were assigned to Gershon and the family of Merori carried the boards, pillars and sockets. It is interesting to note that the language used to assign their respective duties, also differs. The lashon used to describe Kahas's work is service, Gershon's is service and load, while Merori's is load.

We know the Torah is not a history book, rather a comprehensive system of great significance, containing profound meaning and purpose, filled with life lessons. So in this narrative of Bnei Levi, what is the message that we need to extrapolate?

The answer is simple, yet profound.

On a deeper level, the Bnei Levi represent 3 different levels in our approach to life and in our service of Hashem. The Bnai Kahas representing the highest level. A type of person characterized by their willingness to do the emotional and spiritual work necessary to evolve into their greater selves. People with a new mindset and a larger vision of what it means to be a Jew. We refer to this group as a Baal Aliya - because of their desire to grow, stretch and aspire to their greatest potential.

But most importantly, this group is distinguished by their constant love of Torah and Mitzvos - resulting in a connection to Hashem that can never be severed. It is therefore evident why they merited to carry the holiest vessels of the Mishkan.

The Bnai Gershon - who carried the tapestries and woven materials of the Mishkan represent the Benonei - the average person. The majority of the world falls into this category. They grow to a certain point and then they plateau - and it is at this level that they are content to remain for the rest of their lives. Complacent, comfortable and satisfied - this group is characterized by a lack of spirit, experiencing many lapses in their service of Hashem.

Lastly, the Bnei Merari - who carried the boards, pillars and sockets of the Mishkan, represent the lowest level. Characterized by their name Mar - meaning bitter - this group expends a great deal of emotional energy to cope with the stresses of life. Feeling powerless, out of control and unable to make an impact, life is viewed as unpleasant and challenging. Surviving or just getting by becomes the dominant theme of their life. To them serving Hashem is a burden, hassle and yoke sometimes too heavy to bear.

In this account of the Bnei Levi, the Torah is describing three distinct paradigms - or approaches to life. Since all three approaches are contained within us, it is common to shift between paradigms at different times of our life. As we change from one approach to another, a number of dimensions of our experience also change, how we view others, how we feel about ourselves, our motivation, our attitude, our overall approach to life.

As we move up the ladder from Merori, whose approach to life is based on fear - to Gershon who's approach is based on obligation - ultimately to Kehas whose approach is based on love and service to others, we are aligning our lives more and more with principles that lead to moral and spiritual excellence.