

# MY TORAH

*by Rabbi Pinchas Avruch*

## Parshios Naso & Shavuos

### My Torah

#### By Rabbi Shlomo Jarcaig

Despite the maxim that the Torah contains no extra letters - no less extra words or paragraphs - and the fact that each one of the Nesi'im (Princes of the Twelve Tribes) brought the exact same offering for the inauguration of the Mishkan (Tabernacle), the Torah details the components of each Nasi's offering, repeating all six verses of detail twelve times. Thus, Parshas Naso is the longest parsha in the Torah.

The Midrash explains that while all twelve of them chose the exact same offering, each one had completely different intentions and motivations for each element of his offering that were unique to the characteristics of the tribe he represented. Since the function of these offerings was for each tribe to express its own strengths in its Divine service, why did G-d inspire them to "coincidentally" select the exact same components to express their individuality? Furthermore, what is the significance of this episode always being read in the season of Shavuos when we celebrate the acceptance of the Torah?

Rabbi Reuven Leuchter (1) explains that this chapter teaches us G-d's definition of individuality. In contemporary society, many people express their individuality and sense of self through their dress, their jewelry, their public behaviors. In truth, their unique hairstyles or fashion statements tell us very little about who they really are. The genuinely important differences between people lie not in these externalities, but who the person is inside - his spirituality, his connection to the Divine, what is within the soul. The Nesi'im expressed their individuality not by performing actions that were externally different, but by performing the exact same mitzvah (Divine command) that others had already performed. The uniqueness of each offering was not external, it was the soul and G-d consciousness of the Nasi who brought the offering. Because it was coming from him, and G-d alone understood his struggles and successes involved in fulfilling this mitzvah, the offering from him was completely different in G-d's eyes than that of anyone else.

The Talmud (Kesubos 17a) teaches, "The taking away of the Torah (when one dies and his study ceases) is like the giving of the Torah...600,000 are needed (to accompany him to the grave)". When an individual dies it is considered by G-d as if the Torah departed from the world. Even though the Torah studied by this person came from the exact passages studied by millions before him and millions more who will follow, with his demise his Torah has left the world. Nobody else in the history of mankind has ever or will ever share the exact same experiences, insights and perspective as this individual. Therefore, his Torah is unique and its loss is significant.

Thus, this chapter always comes in the season of Shavuot every year. At this time when we reaccept the Torah as our beacon of Divine guidance, the Torah reminds us that we are all unique and special to G-d. The Torah we study and mitzvos we do are unique and can never be duplicated. And when we reaccept it - for the 3317th time - each of us is receiving a Torah that is uniquely ours.

*Good Shabbos and Good Yom Tov!*

(1) An internationally renowned speaker, Rabbi Leuchter is a Rosh Kollel/Kollel Dean in Jerusalem and is one of the closest protégés of the famed master of Torah ethics and character refinement, Rabbi Shlomo Wolbe

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