35. NASO { נָשׂא } (Elevate)

Numbers 4:21-7:89, Judges 13:2-25, Acts 23:20-24

The title to this week's Parashah, Naso, means to 'lift up' or 'elevate' and was the term used to take a head count (census) of the children of Israel.

Naso deals with the responsibilities and duties of the Cohanim, how to keep the camp clean, how to make restitution for wrongs, how to deal with a jealous husband who suspects his wife of infidelity (sotah), explains the vows of the Nazarite, and ends with the Aaronic Benediction or more commonly known as the Priestly blessing.

The Word continues with the numbering of the Levitical families and detailing of their transport duties. Each man was specifically named for his specified task. This orderly system ensured a fair and equal distribution of the heavy responsibility of caring for the Tabernacle.

When we live and work together in community (called kehilla in Hebrew), life becomes do- able. We are called to fulfill the Torah of Messiah by helping bear each other's burdens: "Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Messiah." (Galatians 6:2) We may do this in practical ways to those overloaded with responsibilities; but also through encouraging and comforting others who carry heavy emotional burdens such as grief or loss.

Yeshua is willing to bear our heavy burdens, as He invited us to do, saying 'Come to me, all you who are weary and heavy burdened, and I will give you rest."2 (Matthew 11:28) But we must first be willing to lay them down at His feet and simply rest in Him.

As the Cohen blessed the people of Israel, they were to remember that it is ultimately YHWH who blesses. HE is the Ultimate Source of all blessing. Just as this portion ends with the priestly blessing, may we each receive Adonai's blessing, divine protection, favour, the light of His Face, and also peace, wholeness, and completion – in Him!