

PARSHAT NASO
NUMBERS 4:21-7:89
HAFTARAH JUDGES 13:2-25
12 SIVAN 5783/01 JUNE 2023



E Pluribus Unum
Painting by Ephraim Urevbu

THE TRUE MEASURE OF FREEDOM

1. “Take a census (שָׁאוּ אֶת־רֵאשֵׁי) of the whole Israelite community by the clans of its tribes....The Israelites shall camp each under the banner of their ancestral house.” (Numbers 1:2, 2:2)
2. Census of all tribes (Bamidbar). Record of Levite clans (Bamidbar; Naso). Responsibilities of Levite clans. Laws of sotah. Laws of Nazirite. Priestly blessing. Gifts of tribes for Mishkan.
3. The chieftains brought the dedication offering for the altar....The one who presented his offering on the first day was Nahshon son of Amminadab of the tribe of Judah. His offering: one silver bowl weighing 130 shekels and one silver basin... (Numbers 7:10-13)
4. Our rabbis says that although they all presented similar offerings, they meant by them to symbolize great events, which each one selected in accordance with their own judgement. (Midrash Bamidbar Rabbah 13:14)

5. In those days there was no king in Israel; everyone did what was right in their own eyes. (Judges 21:25)

Haftarah Naso, Judges 13:2-25 (story of Samson the Nazirite)

6. Social disconnection contributes to many poor health outcomes, and even to premature death. (*Our Epidemic of Loneliness and Isolation: The U.S. Surgeon General's Advisory on the Healing Effects of Social Connection and Community* 2023 Report)
7. And for the support of this Declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our Lives, our Fortunes and our sacred Honor. (Concluding sentence of Declaration of Independence)
8. You mix various rich sweets in one fragrant collection. (Concluding line to poem introducing the motto of Gentleman's Magazine, "E Pluribus Unum," 1731)
9. "We're all just walking each other home." (Ram Dass, born Richard Alpert)