



## *Naso*

### **Are You A Kehat Or A Gershon?**

At the commencement of the parsha of Naso, we are given a commandment:

“נָשָׂא אֶת־רֹאשׁ בְּנֵי גֵרְשׁוֹן גַּם הֵם”  
“You must also count the heads.”

Meaning, take a census figure of the children of Gershon. What is the context of “גַּם הֵם”? “Also”?

At the end of last week's parsha, we were told how the children of Kehat were counted and we were also told of their responsibilities. The children of Kehat had the responsibility of carrying the Aron, the Holy Ark, through the wilderness - the ultimate compliment to them. And the children of Gershon? What was their responsibility? They were to carry the coverings, the curtains and the hooks.

You see, Levi had three children: Gershon, Kehat and Merari. The children of Gershon, who was the oldest, must have felt they had been given ‘the leftovers’. But Rav Moshe Feinstein tells us the wording “גַּם הֵם” teaches us that the children of Gershon were also important, because when you are taking a role behind the scenes, when you are acting in a

supportive manner in order to help those who play the ultimate role, you are just as important as they are.

We could even go one step beyond that, and say that the children of Gershon are even more significant than those of Kehat. Because the reference to the children of Gershon appears at the commencement of the parsha. I think everyone would agree that most people are far more familiar with the beginning of a parsha than the rest of it and the Children of Gershon are placed there.

Some of us are Kehats, we're in the limelight. We're the leaders. And others are the Gershons. The remarkable people behind the scenes, who do menial tasks with great humility. It's the Gershons who are the most crucial parts of a family, of a community and of a nation.

So if you happen to be a Kehat, thank you for the starring role that you are taking. And if you happen to be a Gershon, thank you *even more* for playing such an important role within the Jewish people.

Shabbat Shalom.