



## *Parshas Naso 2022, hold true to our belief*

*This week's Parsha Perspective is in loving memory of Shlomo Ben Edward & Yirachmiel Daniel Ben Gedalia. May their souls be uplifted & their memories a blessing.*

Our Parsha begins with G-d telling Moshe the transport duties of the three families of the tribe of Levi. Gershon, the first family, was responsible for carrying all the tapestries, veils, and skins used in the Mishkan.

The Kehos family was tasked with transporting all of the holy vessels that were custom-made for the Kohanim. The Merari family was entrusted with carrying its structural components.

G-d then teaches Moshe about the Sotah and the Nazir. A Sotah is a suspected adulteress who was witnessed going into seclusion with another man. This seclusion was specifically after being warned not to associate with that individual.

She is forbidden to her husband and must be escorted to the Beis Hamikdash. When she arrives, the Kohanim write this Torah portion on parchment and soaked in water until the ink dissolves.

The Sotah must drink the water, and if she indeed committed adultery, her belly would miraculously swell until she died. However, if she is unharmed by the water, it is clear that she is innocent and blessed with many blessings.

Conversely, a Nazir is a person who vows to abstain from wine and grape products. They must not cut their hair and may not come in contact with a human corpse to achieve and attain a deeper level of spirituality and holiness.

However, a question comes to mind: Just before the laws of the Sotah and Nazir, the Torah teaches us about stealing from a fellow Jew. (Naso 5:6) *"Speak to the Jewish people, a man or woman who commits a sin against a fellow human being breaking their bond with G-d, must realize their guilt."*

The Talmud in Bava Kamma (109b) explains that the Pasuk refers to stealing from a convert. It concludes this because most other transgressions were already mentioned in the book Shemos. So why is this specific transgression taught just before the laws of the Sotah and Nazir?

The Rashbam (*Rav Shmuel Ben Meir, one of Rashi's grandsons*) answers that since a convert gives up their biological family to join the Jewish people, there could be no one to pay back what was stolen.

It creates an interesting dilemma if a sin was committed against a convert and they passed away with no Jewish offspring. (*They could have never married, or their spouse also passed away and did not have children.*) Who does the transgressor repay and give back what they stole?

Hence, the Torah continues (5:8), *"If there is no kin to whom the reimbursement can be made, the payment should be made to G-d through the Cohen."* The Rashbam explains we are discussing laws that deal with cases in which a person will need to bring a unique offering to the Cohen, such as the Sotah and Nazir. Accordingly, the scenario of the convert is also mentioned, explained, and answered.

However, the Chizkuni (*Rav Chezekiah ben Manoah, a French Rabbi from the 13th century*) gives a deeper and more profound explanation. He writes that Torah mentions the convert before the Sotah to demonstrate the gravity of a sin committed against a convert.

As a person begins their journey to Judaism, they will obviously hold observant Jews in high regard since they represent what they hope to accomplish. But if an observant Jew commits a sin against the convert, the effect can be highly detrimental. They could stop their righteous path or discard their Judaism after conversion.

Unfortunately, their reaction is understandable; they are about to give up so much in their life for G-d. But then they see how some of the people of G-d don't necessarily follow basic human principles. We know that spirituality does not always translate to being a kind and understanding person.

Therefore the Torah details this law next to the Sotah, a suspected adulteress, to emphasize the importance of being a kind human being. This applies to everyone regardless of religion and faith because they are also G-d's creation.

In our daily life, we must realize the importance and consequences of our actions. Whether from a religious or secular perspective, we know that we can truly impact and change our surroundings.

This insight should impel and drive us to be the basis of morality and ethics for other communities in our area. It is the most authentic way of demonstrating our belief in G-d and the Torah He gave to Moshe.

**"In the beginning G-d created the world as a home for humanity.  
Since then He has challenged humanity to create  
a world that will be a home for Him.  
G-d lives wherever we treat another as beings in His image."**

*-Rabbi Jonathan Sacks of blessed memory*

*Have a meaningful Shabbos,  
Rabbi Sholom Yemini*