



## *Parshas Naso 2021, the choice is yours!*

*This week's Parsha Perspective is in memory of Shlomo Ben Edward and Edward Ben Efraim. May their souls be uplifted and 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. The Sotah is a suspected adulteress who was witnessed going into seclusion with another man despite being warned not to associate with that individual. She has to be escorted to the Beis Hamikdash, have this Torah portion written on parchment, and then soaked in water until the ink dissolves.

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

The 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.

However, a question comes to mind: The laws of a Sotah and Nazir are taught after each other. But what is the connection between the Sotah and the Nazir? One is a suspected adulteress who may have committed one of the worst sins of the Torah. The other is a person who forbids himself from worldly pleasures. Why are these two Mitzvahs seemingly attached?!

Rashi on the Pasuk provides a well-known answer. He explains that there is an inherent connection between these two Mitzvahs. The Sotah is a woman who is lacking in her self-control, which is a byproduct of drinking alcohol. So the Torah teaches us about the Nazir, a person who does not drink alcohol and consciously works on their self-control to attain a higher connection to G-d.

However, the Alshich Hakadosh (*Rav Moshe Alshich, a famous commentary from the holy city of Tzafes*) gives a deeper and more profound explanation. He explains that the Torah connects the Sotah and the Nazir to teach us that holiness depends on free will and not on the circumstances of a person's birth.

**Every person can sanctify themselves to a point where they are a role model for their friends and family.**

But the contrary is also true; a person can neglect and ignore the inherent holiness of their soul. They can forget the power that G-d has embedded in them to uplift the physicality to spirituality and sanctify His Holy Name in this world. The Parsha is teaching us that our connection to our Father in Heaven is ultimately in our hands.

In our daily lives, we must realize that every action we take, whether spiritually or physically, has ultimate significance. For our future is not entirely written, there is no fate that we cannot change, and there's no prediction we can defy because we control our destiny. We can lead ourselves toward success through our choices, willpower, and determination.

We are created in the image of G-d, which means that we have free choice. We have the freedom to stay stagnant in our life or learn from past experiences and change, grow and reach our full potential. We can change history, but only if we choose to do it.

***“You are free to choose,  
but you're not free from the consequences of your choice.”***

*Have a meaningful Shabbos,  
Rabbi Sholom Yemini*