



## TableTalk: Parshat Nasso

TableTalk wonders what is the best way to connect to God.

In this week's Torah reading, Parshat Nasso, we learn about a nazir – someone who decides to separate himself from wine and haircutting (physical pleasures) in order to dedicate their days to God and Torah only!

First of all, just think about that for a minute, and try to come up with what is distracting YOU from God. What would YOU have to separate from in order to focus more on Torah and spiritual growth?

The Torah tells us that when the *nazir* is done with this temporary life-style change, he must bring a *korban Chatat*, a sin-offering.

Two very famous commentators disagree as to why this Jew must offer a sin-offering upon completing his *nezirut*:

Rambam (Maimonides) explains that such a Jew was not practicing ideal Judaism. We believe, in contrast to Christianity, that we do NOT have to separate from this world to get close to God. Our religion is one that believes in sanctifying the world around us and seeing God in everything and achieving closeness to God through everything. This Jew was not "in the right" and was actually lacking/failing – sinning - in his need to separate in order to focus on God.

Ramban (Nachmanides) believes that this Jew is bringing a sin-offering because he is ending this period of holiness. What a wonderful, special and holy thing to dedicate your life to God and leave behind Earthly pleasures! The termination of this short-term arrangement is the sin.

What opposing views! Interesting to think about both of them. With which opinion do you most agree? How do you feel about this idea of nezirut?

Bonus: Can you name some famous *nezirim* that we learn about in Tanach?