

and been given a heart of flesh with the indwelling of the Holy Spirit? Can you testify of your salvation and that you are born from above?

While knowing about the proper arrangement of tribes of Israel around the ancient Tabernacle, or remembering a little about the Roman census in Judea—the most important thing is **to know the Messiah Yeshua** and experience His saving grace! Additionally, it is also critical to remember that once you are counted among the assembly of the faithful, you should also recognize that you have been granted important spiritual gifts which are to be properly employed for the benefit of your fellow brothers and sisters in the Lord. *You are to be actively glorifying the Holy One of Israel via acts of kindness and goodness toward others!*

Do not forget the admonition by Paul to earnestly desire the greater gifts! Seek the Lord so you can be a more useful vessel and a blessing to others!

## Reflection for *Naso* “Jealous Judgment”

John 7:53-8:11  
Acts 21:17-32

This week’s Torah portion, *Naso* (Numbers 4:21-7:89), continues the census of the Ancient Israelites. More specific tasks are assigned to the three family lines of the Levites: the Kohathites, Gersonhites, and Merarites.<sup>8</sup> After their duties are delineated, the reading turns to some specific means for maintaining purity in the camp during Israel’s wilderness sojourn.<sup>9</sup> The extremely close quarters for their encampment precipitated some challenges, as illness and death would need to be properly handled, so defilement could be avoided and sanitation could be maintained. It is not difficult to see how the proximity of living circumstances could allow the human proclivity toward the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life (1 John 2:16) to germinate and blossom. Certain instructions about how to deal with wrongful behavior toward another is outlined, as well as how to handle the problems of possibly sexually immoral actions and the jealousy it provokes.<sup>10</sup> After the details of the Nazirite vow are given,<sup>11</sup> as well as the specifics of the priestly blessing known as the Aaronic Benediction (Numbers 6:22-27), our *parashah* concludes with a section dedicated to recording the actions

---

<sup>8</sup> Numbers 4:1-49.

<sup>9</sup> Numbers 5:1-10.

<sup>10</sup> Numbers 5:11-31.

<sup>11</sup> Numbers 6:1-21.

---

associated with the dedication and consecration of the Tabernacle and its accoutrements.<sup>12</sup>

It is quite logical to see that when selecting an appropriate Haftarah reading for *Naso*, the Jewish Sages chose to focus on the early life of Samson (Judges 13:2-25). Samson's life as a Nazirite from the time of his birth represents and amplifies the blessings of one fully dedicated to serving the Lord, although one does have to consider some of the severe challenges which he encountered in later life. When we move ahead and look at the Apostolic Scriptures, we see that those within Second Temple Judaism continued to follow the prescriptions for taking a Nazirite vow. When he returns to Jerusalem with his offering collection from the nations (cf. Romans 15:25-27), the Apostle Paul is asked to quell a false rumor that he teaches against the Torah by helping to pay the expenses of four Jewish Believers who would be finishing up their Nazirite vows:

“After we arrived in Jerusalem, the brethren received us gladly. And the following day Paul went in with us to James, and all the elders were present. After he had greeted them, he *began* to relate one by one the things which God had done among the Gentiles through his ministry. And when they heard it they *began* glorifying God; and they said to him, ‘You see, brother, how many thousands there are among the Jews of those who have believed, and they are all zealous for the Law; and they have been told about you, that you are teaching all the Jews who are among the Gentiles to forsake Moses, telling them not to circumcise their children nor to walk according to the customs. What, then, is *to be done*? They will certainly hear that you have come. Therefore do this that we tell you. We have four men who are under a vow; take them and purify yourself along with them, and pay their expenses so that they may shave their heads; and all will know that there is nothing to the things which they have been told about you, but that you yourself also walk orderly, keeping the Law” (Acts 21:17-24).

There would not be sufficient time for Paul himself to take a Nazirite vow here, but he could purify himself to be present for when the four who had taken a vow would complete it. Paul being present—and the fact that taking a Nazirite vow was not a standard, daily or weekly Torah practice—would indicate to those who had heard the rumor that Paul was not at all anti-Law. Yet, when he arrives at the Temple, the crowd is stirred up against him and he is arrested (Acts 21:26-32). Thankfully, though, Paul had been told by the Lord that these events would be used in order for him to be sent to Rome (Acts 19:21; 23:11).<sup>13</sup>

As important as Paul's arrest is to much of the Book of Acts, rather than focus on the motives of the agitated crowd—the Numbers 5 law of jealousy has tended to stimulate a great deal of reflection and speculation on the part of Bible readers.

---

<sup>12</sup> Numbers 7:1-89.

<sup>13</sup> The ramifications of Acts 21:17-26 are examined in detail in the commentary *Acts 15 for the Practical Messianic* by J.K. McKee.

The emotion of jealousy is something that can be either godly (Exodus 34:14; 2 Corinthians 11:2), or extremely carnal (Genesis 37:11), in humans. We can see Scriptural examples of how there is a godly trait of jealousy or zeal for righteousness, to be contrasted with a selfish or self-centered jealousy that erupts in emotions, which if kept unchecked, can lead to sinful behavior and immoral acts. In both the Book of Proverbs and the Song of Songs, we see descriptions of the potential for unbridled vengeance which can lead to serious harm and/or even death if not kept disciplined:

- “**For jealousy enrages a man**, and he will not spare in the day of vengeance” (Proverbs 6:34).
- “Wrath is fierce and anger is a flood, **but who can stand before jealousy?**” (Proverbs 27:4).
- “Put me like a seal over your heart, like a seal on your arm. For love is as strong as death, **jealousy is as severe as Sheol**; its flashes are flashes of fire, the *very* flame of the LORD” (Song of Songs 8:6).

Within Numbers 5, the procedures given for handling improper sexual activity—whether actual or perceived—take place when the “spirit of jealousy” (*ruach-qinah*) overwhelms a man. These instructions are not necessarily given for when the same jealous emotion overcomes a woman:

“Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ‘Speak to the sons of Israel and say to them, ‘If any man’s wife goes astray and is unfaithful to him, and a man has intercourse with her and it is hidden from the eyes of her husband and she is undetected, although she has defiled herself, and there is no witness against her and she has not been caught in the act, **if a spirit of jealousy comes over him and he is jealous of his wife when she has defiled herself, or if a spirit of jealousy comes over him and he is jealous of his wife when she has not defiled herself**, the man shall then bring his wife to the priest, and shall bring *as* an offering for her one-tenth of an ephah of barley meal; he shall not pour oil on it nor put frankincense on it, for it is a grain offering of jealousy, a grain offering of memorial, a reminder of iniquity” (Numbers 5:11-15).

Perhaps because men are generally more physically powerful and sexually aggressive than women, the Lord instructed Moses to relay these somewhat laborious procedures in the event that sexual jealousy was erroneously aroused in a man. After all, if the rage was ignited, no matter whether the woman was had committed adultery or not, the enraged man who is offended might demonstrate some physical harm toward his wife—or even murder her, or the suspected or known fornicator—under the influence of the emotional passions of jealousy. By slowing the discovery process down to the measures required in this passage, the offended man would have some time to “cool down.” He would hopefully let any evidence of infidelity be revealed by the swelling of his wife’s abdomen and the wasting of her thigh, as it is detailed in the test for determining adultery:

---

“The priest shall have her take an oath and shall say to the woman, ‘If no man has lain with you and if you have not gone astray into uncleanness, *being* under *the authority of your husband*,<sup>14</sup> be immune to this water of bitterness that brings a curse; if you, however, have gone astray, *being* under *the authority of your husband*, and if you have defiled yourself and a man other than your husband has had intercourse with you’ (then the priest shall have the woman swear with the oath of the curse, and the priest shall say to the woman), ‘the LORD make you a curse and an oath among your people by the LORD’s making your thigh waste away and your abdomen swell; and this water that brings a curse shall go into your stomach, and make your abdomen swell and your thigh waste away.’ And the woman shall say, ‘Amen. Amen.’ The priest shall then write these curses on a scroll, and he shall wash them off into the water of bitterness. Then he shall make the woman drink the water of bitterness that brings a curse, so that the water which brings a curse will go into her and *cause* bitterness. The priest shall take the grain offering of jealousy from the woman’s hand, and he shall wave the grain offering before the LORD and bring it to the altar; and the priest shall take a handful of the grain offering as its memorial offering and offer *it* up in smoke on the altar, and afterward he shall make the woman drink the water. **When he has made her drink the water, then it shall come about, if she has defiled herself and has been unfaithful to her husband, that the water which brings a curse will go into her and *cause* bitterness, and her abdomen will swell and her thigh will waste away, and the woman will become a curse among her people.** But if the woman has not defiled herself and is clean, she will then be free and conceive children. This is the law of jealousy: when a wife, *being* under *the authority of* her husband, goes astray and defiles herself, or when a spirit of jealousy comes over a man and he is jealous of his wife, he shall then make the woman stand before the LORD, and the priest shall apply all this law to her. Moreover, the man will be free from guilt, but that woman shall bear her guilt” (Numbers 5:19-31).

The judgment as to whether or not a man’s wife has committed sin comes down to the action of God. Despite the indictment and the embarrassment of going through the ordeal of having to drink bitter water, the woman is presumed innocent throughout the procedure. It is only when time is able to demonstrate whether or not she will swell and waste away, that she can then be considered an adulteress. Interestingly, the final statement of the law of jealousy (Numbers 5:31) asserts how the accusing husband will be free of guilt, even if he has erroneously accused an innocent wife by casting suspicion upon her. In later Rabbinical teaching, with support offered from Hosea 4:14,<sup>15</sup> it is concluded that the ordeal

<sup>14</sup> Heb. *tachat isheikh*; “under your husband” (LITV).

<sup>15</sup> “I will not punish your daughters when they play the harlot or your brides when they commit adultery, for *the men* themselves go apart with harlots and offer sacrifices with temple prostitutes; so the people without understanding are ruined” (Hosea 4:14).

with bitter waters was only effective if the husband himself was innocent of sexual immorality (b.*Sotah* 47b).<sup>16</sup>

When one encounters the Numbers 5 law of jealousy from the vantage point of a modern person in the Twenty-First Century, we do rightly wonder why women were not given the same right within Ancient Israel—to challenge the suspected infidelity of their husbands. The question naturally arises about what recourse a woman would take, who suspected *or knew* that her husband was unfaithful. Should he not be put to some kind of a touchstone of testing, in the event that he violates his marriage obligations? Human nature certainly does not discriminate when it comes to the manifestation of jealousy in people. The often-quoted axiom, “Hell hath no fury like a woman scorned,” can certainly come to mind...

Our biggest disadvantage in understanding instructions, like that of Numbers 5, is that we often fail to place ourselves into the position of the Ancient Israelites who received this against a much larger Ancient Near Eastern setting. Law codes contemporary to the Torah of Moses had much more rigorous procedures in determining the potential adultery of a woman, like casting the accused into a rushing river<sup>17</sup>—and most frequently with the accused *already assumed* to be guilty. If the accused survived the ordeal, then obviously the woman was considered innocent. In the thought of J.A. Thompson, “Strange as the whole circumstance and ritual may seem to us, it compares so favourably with non-Israelite practice that it may be taken as evidence of that generally considerate attitude of the law of Moses towards women.”<sup>18</sup> The Israelite ordeal in Numbers 5 with an accused woman making an offering, taking a vow, and drinking some water laced with dust and some non-toxic script rubbed off an animal skin—was by far more humane than what an Assyrian or Babylonian woman accused of adultery would be made to do! Most important, though, the determination of judgment would be left to the Creator Himself, and not with any male accusers.<sup>19</sup>

Obviously, according to the Ten Commandments, adultery was to be considered a capital crime—resulting in the stoning of *both parties* liable to the transgression. God was certainly not mincing His words when He delivered the Seventh Commandment of the Decalogue:

“You shall not commit adultery” (Exodus 20:14; Deuteronomy 5:18).

The punishment of death prescribed for mutual adultery was applicable to both the man and woman who were caught in the act:

---

<sup>16</sup> Cf. Jacob Milgrom, *JPS Torah Commentary: Numbers* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1990), 43.

<sup>17</sup> Philip J. Budd, *Word Biblical Commentary: Numbers* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1984), 63.

<sup>18</sup> J.A. Thompson, “Numbers,” in D. Guthrie and J.A. Motyer, eds., *The New Bible Commentary Revised* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1970), 176.

<sup>19</sup> For further consideration, consult the excursus “Adultery in the Bible and the Ancient Near East,” in Milgrom, pp 348-350.

---

“If *there is* a man who commits adultery with another man's wife, one who commits adultery with his friend's wife, the adulterer and the adulteress shall surely be put to death” (Leviticus 20:10).

By the time the Numbers 5 law of jealousy was instituted for Ancient Israel, as their desert sojourn was progressing—the positive laws of holiness (Leviticus 19:1-37) and the instructions which handled pagan worship and sexual degeneracy (Leviticus 20:1-27)—were also a part of how the people were to be set-apart from their neighbors. When surveying all of this, we discover that according to God's prescription, a number of violations can result in capital punishment by either fire or stoning, or for milder transgressions simply being cut off from the nation. It is most notable that within the midst of Leviticus chs. 19-20, **one of the most important Biblical commandments appears.** As the Israelites are instructed how to remove the presence of sin from the camp, they are admonished not to hate their fellow countrymen in their hearts, but how they can reprove or rebuke them without taking vengeance. They are required to actually *love their neighbors*:

“You shall not hate your fellow countryman in your heart; you may surely reprove your neighbor, but shall not incur sin because of him. **You shall not take vengeance, nor bear any grudge against the sons of your people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself; I am the LORD**” (Leviticus 19:17-18).

Anyone who has read the New Testament is aware of how Leviticus 19:18 is one of the most frequently quoted verses from the Old Testament (Matthew 19:19; Mark 12:31; Luke 10:27; Romans 13:9; Galatians 5:14; James 2:8). At the same time, the thrust of Leviticus 19:18 was most important to the ancient Pharisee Hillel the Elder, who taught immediately prior to the ministry of Yeshua in the First Century B.C.E., and whose grandson Gamaliel trained the Apostle Paul (Acts 5:34; 22:3). Hillel is noted for the famed statement, “*What is hateful to you, to your fellow don't do.* That's the entirety of the Torah; *everything else is elaboration. So go, study*” (b.*Shabbat* 31a).<sup>20</sup> In other words, Hillel said that people are to love their neighbors because they are just like you—and subject to the same temptations that you are!

Yeshua said Himself, “In everything, therefore, treat people the same way you want them to treat you, for this is the Law and the Prophets” (Matthew 7:12). *Judge others via the same scale as you expect to be judged.* In His Sermon on the Mount, elaborating on how the Torah was to be “fulfilled” (Matthew 5:17ff) in His teachings, Yeshua delivered clarity and meaning to what the original intention of Moses' Teaching actually was:

“Do not judge so that you will not be judged. For in the way you judge, you will be judged; and by your standard of measure, it will be measured to you. Why do you look at the speck that is in your brother's eye, but do not notice the log that

---

<sup>20</sup> *The Babylonian Talmud: A Translation and Commentary.*

is in your own eye? Or how can you say to your brother, 'Let me take the speck out of your eye,' and behold, the log is in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother's eye'" (Matthew 7:1-5).

One Gospel passage which draws some parallels from the Numbers 5 instructions is John 7:53-8:11. In this scene, there appears to be elements of the law of jealousy, the requirement to love one's neighbors, the admonition not to judge in order to avoid a similar measure of judgment—and the wide-reaching Biblical principle to extend grace, mercy, and fairness to those who are guilty in their trespasses and sins. A woman and a man appear to have been caught in the act of adultery. Yet, the attention of those who are deliberating over what to do is given only to the woman, as the man who was apparently involved is nowhere to be seen. The text indicates that the scribes and Pharisees present wanted to test Yeshua, in order to have further grounds to somehow accuse Him of being a false teacher:

*"Everyone went to his home. But Yeshua went to the Mount of Olives. Early in the morning He came again into the temple, and all the people were coming to Him; and He sat down and began to teach them. The scribes and the Pharisees brought a woman caught in adultery, and having set her in the center of the court, they said to Him, 'Teacher, this woman has been caught in adultery, in the very act. Now in the Law Moses commanded us to stone such women; what then do You say?' They were saying this, testing Him, so that they might have grounds for accusing Him. But Yeshua stooped down and with His finger wrote on the ground. But when they persisted in asking Him, He straightened up, and said to them, 'He who is without sin among you, let him be the first to throw a stone at her.' Again He stooped down and wrote on the ground. When they heard it, they began to go out one by one, beginning with the older ones, and He was left alone, and the woman, where she was, in the center of the court. Straightening up, Yeshua said to her, 'Woman, where are they? Did no one condemn you?' She said, 'No one, Lord.' And Yeshua said, 'I do not condemn you, either. Go. From now on sin no more'" (John 7:53-8:11).*

There is no doubt that Messiah Yeshua not only knew the Seventh Commandment prohibiting adultery, but also the Leviticus 20:10 injunction to put adulterating offenders to death. He also knew the Numbers 5 law of jealousy, and the command to love one's neighbor (Leviticus 19:18). Most importantly, the Lord was quite aware of the sordid motives of the religious persons present, as they were searching for a reason by which they could accuse Him of violating the Torah of Moses and so discredit Him and His ministry.

In this scene—with a group of people on the Mount of Olives, and then onto the Temple with the Messiah delivering some teaching—He is rudely interrupted by some scribes and Pharisees, thrusting into the center of the Temple court a woman caught in the act of adultery. *They fail to bring forward the man with whom she*

---

was fornicating, though. When Yeshua heard their venomous demand to respond to the claim, “In the Law Moses commanded us to stone such women. Now what do you say?” (John 8:5, NIV), Yeshua did not react hastily. Only one of the two apparent offenders involved in the adulterous act was even present—and the Torah instructed that *both* were to be put to death. Something was amiss with what was going on, especially how the accusations would easily gain the attention of many or most in the Temple complex. Yeshua was certainly quick to hear, slow to speak, and slow to anger (cf. James 1:19).

Instead of reacting to their prodding, Yeshua waited a moment, while probably surveying the scene as the accusers pointed to the woman and yelled out their demands. Rather than responding to their words immediately, Yeshua simply stooped down and began writing something on the dusty ground. While some might speculate that He was etching in the dust the curse prescribed by Numbers 5:23, it is impossible to categorically make such a claim. Nevertheless, there does appear to be some similarities as noted in the procedure of the law of jealousy, hence the association with what is witnessed here:

“Then the priest shall bring her near and have her stand before the LORD, and the priest shall take holy water in an earthenware vessel; and he shall take some of the dust that is on the floor of the tabernacle and put *it* into the water. . . . The priest shall then write these curses on a scroll, and he shall wash them off into the water of bitterness. Then he shall make the woman drink the water of bitterness that brings a curse, so that the water which brings a curse will go into her and *cause bitterness*” (Numbers 5:16-17; 23-24).

Rather than asking someone nearby to fetch a jar or vessel filled with holy water to complete this rite—Yeshua stood up, looked intently at His inquisitors, and directly and authoritatively makes this soul-piercing statement to all within hearing distance, gathered at this mock trial: **“If any one of you is without sin, let him be the first to throw a stone at her”** (John 8:7, NIV). *Can you imagine the deafening silence as those piercing words from the Messiah Yeshua sunk into the hearts of those hearing?*

Yeshua simply stooped over again, and continued drawing on the dust on the ground. Next, the group of accusers begins to dissipate as the older and wiser of them, who knew the power of these words, recognized that they all were with sin (John 5:9a). *They began to guiltily leave the scene.* In a relatively short amount of time, Yeshua was left with the accused woman and whatever remaining onlookers were observing this extraordinary encounter.

Yeshua straightened up, and with unparalleled love in His eyes for this woman, He simply asked her who those who had condemned her were (John 8:10). Her response to His question was simply, “No one, Lord” (John 8:11), certainly recognizing Yeshua as a spiritual Authority. Yeshua then made it abundantly clear to her and to all who had sinned (or will ever sin), **“I do not condemn you, either. Go. From now on sin no more”** (John 8:11). We



cannot know whether or not she actually was guilty of committing adultery; all we know for certain is that the accusations were *not proven*. In His great mercy, Yeshua released her from any penalty that was due her—and that those present would have wanted to see enacted—yet He clearly admonishes her to never sin again.

Moving ahead in John's account, we see Yeshua demonstrate His great grace toward us as He declared Himself to not only be the Light of the World—but how He was sent from the Father Himself. In contrast to some of the Pharisees present, Yeshua's words were true as He came to Earth from Heaven—something that they do not know or can comprehend:

“Then Yeshua again spoke to them, saying, ‘I am the Light of the world; he who follows Me will not walk in the darkness, but will have the Light of life.’ So the Pharisees said to Him, ‘You are testifying about Yourself; Your testimony is not true.’ Yeshua answered and said to them, **‘Even if I testify about Myself, My testimony is true, for I know where I came from and where I am going; but you do not know where I come from or where I am going. You judge according to the flesh; I am not judging anyone. But even if I do judge, My judgment is true; for I am not alone in it, but I and the Father who sent Me.** Even in your law it has been written that the testimony of two men is true. I am He who testifies about Myself, and the Father who sent Me testifies about Me.’ So they were saying to Him, ‘Where is Your Father?’ Yeshua answered, ‘You know neither Me nor My Father; if you knew Me, you would know My Father also.’ These words He spoke in the treasury, as He taught in the temple; and no one seized Him, because His hour had not yet come” (John 8:12-20).

Within these statements, Yeshua invoked the Torah requirement for two or three witnesses to attest to the guilt of another. As people who had highly valued and treasured what He rhetorically called “your law,” they should have been aware of such an obvious principle:

**“On the evidence of two witnesses or three witnesses, he who is to die shall be put to death; he shall not be put to death on the evidence of one witness.** The hand of the witnesses shall be first against him to put him to death, and afterward the hand of all the people. So you shall purge the evil from your midst” (Deuteronomy 17:6-7).

Without equivocation, Yeshua strongly asserted how His testimony about Himself and His Heavenly Father was enough to confirm His position as not only Lord—but the ultimate Judge who can release captives and extend mercy to those who have transgressed, like the woman accused of adultery. In the balance of the Apostolic Writings, we find multiple witnesses testifying that Yeshua is indeed the One appointed by the Father to judge the living and the dead.

Peter declared this in Caesarea, to those of the household of Cornelius:

“*You know of* Yeshua of Nazareth, how God anointed Him with the Holy Spirit and with power, and *how* He went about doing good and healing all who were

---

oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him. We are witnesses of all the things He did both in the land of the Jews and in Jerusalem. They also put Him to death by hanging Him on a cross. God raised Him up on the third day and granted that He become visible, not to all the people, but to witnesses who were chosen beforehand by God, *that is*, to us who ate and drank with Him after He arose from the dead. **And He ordered us to preach to the people, and solemnly to testify that this is the One who has been appointed by God as Judge of the living and the dead.** Of Him all the prophets bear witness that through His name everyone who believes in Him receives forgiveness of sins” (Acts 10:38-43).

The Apostle John recorded in his Gospel how Yeshua said,

“For just as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, even so the Son also gives life to whom He wishes. **For not even the Father judges anyone, but He has given all judgment to the Son,** so that all will honor the Son even as they honor the Father. He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent Him” (John 5:21-23).

The Apostle Paul, in his final letter written, told his disciple Timothy,

**“I solemnly charge you in the presence of God and of Messiah Yeshua, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by His appearing and His kingdom:** preach the word; be ready in season *and* out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with great patience and instruction” (2 Timothy 4:1-2).

With great confidence and a jealousy that is tempered by God for His service, born again Believers can confidently declare that Yeshua is Lord and God without any reservation! With thankful hearts we can embrace the forgiveness that was secured by the shedding of His precious blood on Golgotha (Calvary).

Finally, it is imperative that Believers recognize how the King of Kings and Lord of Lords is a righteously jealous God. He tells us that one of His names is actually “Jealous,” because of His zeal for His people:

**“[F]or you shall not worship any other god, for the LORD, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God”** (Exodus 34:14).

With this in mind, I ask you to simply consider some words from James the Just, the half-brother of Yeshua—who witnessed not only the character of Yeshua up close and personal—but who himself is a great example for all Believers to emulate. **James warns people not necessarily about the sexual adultery that we have been discussing, but rather committing adultery with the world and with pleasures that tempt the flesh to pursue friendship with fallen society.** James appealed to how the Lord jealousy desires His Spirit to dwell in His people. He also warned individuals about the dangers of improperly judging others:

“What is the source of quarrels and conflicts among you? Is not the source your pleasures that wage war in your members? You lust and do not have; *so* you commit murder. You are envious and cannot obtain; *so* you fight and quarrel. You do not have because you do not ask. You ask and do not receive, because you ask

with wrong motives, so that you may spend *it* on your pleasures. You adulteresses, do you not know that friendship with the world is hostility toward God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God. Or do you think that the Scripture speaks to no purpose: **‘He jealously desires the Spirit which He has made to dwell in us?’** But He gives a greater grace. Therefore *it* says, ‘GOD IS OPPOSED TO THE PROUD, BUT GIVES GRACE TO THE HUMBLE’ [Proverbs 3:34]. Submit therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded. Be miserable and mourn and weep; let your laughter be turned into mourning and your joy to gloom. Humble yourselves in the presence of the Lord, and He will exalt you. Do not speak against one another, brethren. **He who speaks against a brother or judges his brother, speaks against the law and judges the law;** but if you judge the law, you are not a doer of the law but a judge *of it*. There is *only* one Lawgiver and Judge, the One who is able to save and to destroy; but who are you who judge your neighbor? Come now, you who say, ‘Today or tomorrow we will go to such and such a city, and spend a year there and engage in business and make a profit.’ Yet you do not know what your life will be like tomorrow. You are *just* a vapor that appears for a little while and then vanishes away. Instead, *you ought* to say, ‘If the Lord wills, we will live and also do this or that.’ But as it is, you boast in your arrogance; all such boasting is evil. Therefore, to one who knows *the* right thing to do and does not do it, to him it is sin” (James 4:1-17).

James’ words are most important for us to consider when it comes to the proper judgment of individuals or situations. After all, if we are truly jealous in a godly way to be all that we can be before the Almighty, should we not be judging ourselves—and especially the thoughts we have and actions we take? If we know that our thoughts or actions are not consistent with the Word of God, and we continue to act and think according to a worldly model—**then it is absolutely clear that we are sinning before an omniscient, omnipotent, and omnipresent God.** We are surely not fooling Him or hiding from Him, but rather are sinning before Him while knowing what the right thing to do actually is.

Without reservation and without hesitation, I urge you to confess and repent of any hidden sin. As Yeshua, the ultimate Judge told the accused woman: “*Go and sin no more!*”

---