



נשא *Naso* Lift Up

Numbers 4.21—7.89/Judges 13.2—25/John 3—4

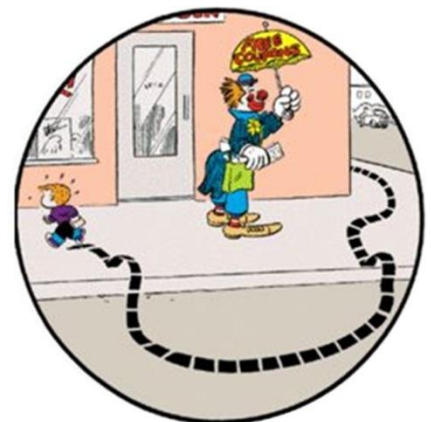


Confess and שוב *shuv* Return/Make Restitution/Repent/Turn

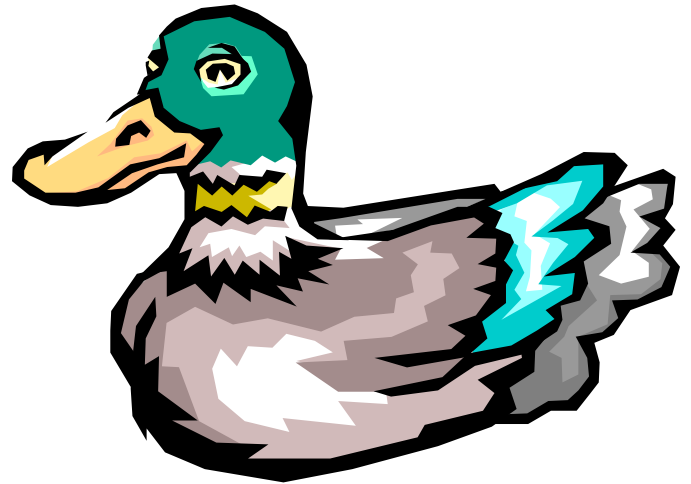
Numbers 5.6-7 says to שוב after we confess a sin. Too often, believers take a “whatever” attitude toward sin. “Yeah, I sin, but I’m saved, so it’s OK.” But if we’re serious about building a relationship with God, we need to put the sin in the trash, make sure the trash goes out to the curb, and make sure it gets hauled away. If we let sin sit in the garage where we can get to it, maybe there hasn’t been repentance. More encouragements to שוב:

- Deuteronomy 30.8 After sin, ישראל *Yisra'el* Israel will שוב and be blessed
- Jeremiah 3.13-15 Acknowledge iniquity and שוב—then God will bless. Like a parent who gets more upset with a child’s failing to admit guilt than with the original offense, God waits for us to confess and שוב.
- Ezekiel 18.30-32 Repent and שוב so that sin will not be your ruin. Cast away your transgressions (make sure the trash goes out). Get a new heart and spirit. God takes no pleasure in the death of the sinner, so שוב and live!
- Psalms 51.3 I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin is ever before me
- Psalms 32.5 I will confess my transgressions unto יהוה *YHVH* the LORD
- Matthew 3.5-6 Many go to John the Baptist to confess their sin and be baptized
- Matthew 18.15-20 Confession and repentance are essential to a healthy Church
- Matthew 18.21-35 Forgiveness is the other essential part of the equation
- Romans 3.23 All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God
- Luke 19.1-10 Zacchaeus expresses שוב by giving half his possessions to the poor and paying back four times the amount to anyone he has cheated. ישוע *Yeshua* Jesus/salvation doesn’t say, “Don’t be a legalist, Zacchaeus!” Instead ישוע says, “Today salvation has come to this house.”
- 1 John 1.10 If we say we haven’t sinned, we make God a liar
- 1 John 1.9 If we confess, God will forgive and cleanse us
- 1 John 3.4 Sin is transgressing the Law: John can only mean תורה *Torah*—he wouldn’t be talking about Roman law!

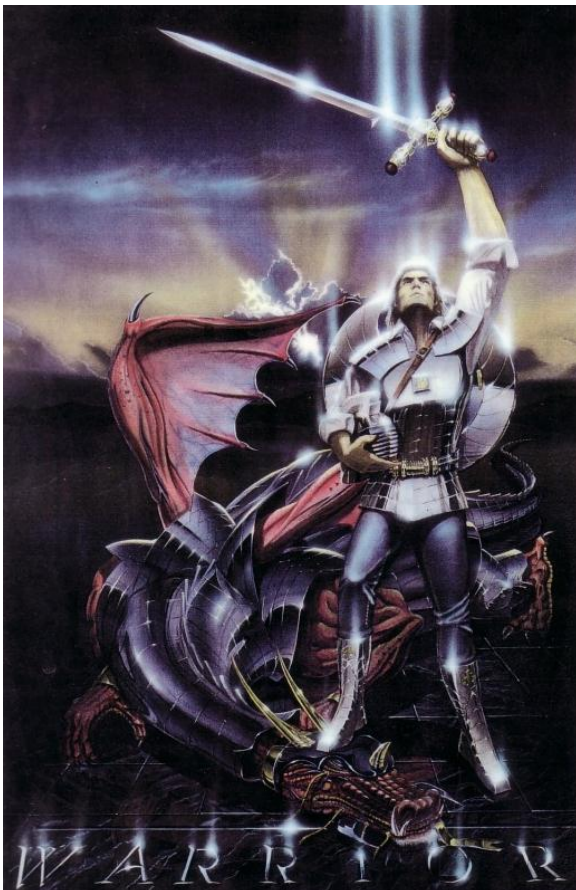
שוב isn’t just “doing a 180” or changing direction like the cartoon. Without a reference point, we are still lost. שוב is returning to God’s Written Word, תורה, and His Living Word, ישוע.



The Duck and the Devil Here is a story that helps explain how good it is to confess sin. Johnny and Sally visit their grandma for the summer. Grandma has a pet duck. One day, Johnny sees the duck across the yard and throws a rock to scare it. Instead, the rock hits the duck in the head and kills it instantly! Johnny is afraid and quickly hides the duck in the woodpile. Then he sees that Sally has been watching the whole time. But she doesn't say a word and Johnny wonders why. That night after dinner, Grandma says, "Sally, please help me with the dishes." Sally replies, "Grandma, Johnny said that he wanted to do the dishes." Sally turns and whispers to Johnny, "Remember the duck!" This goes on for weeks with all the chores. Each time, Sally says, "Remember the duck!" and finally Johnny can't stand it anymore. He confesses, "Grandma, I killed your duck!" Grandma replies, "I know, Johnny. I was watching out the window when it happened. I've already forgiven you. I've just been wondering how long you would let Sally make a slave out of you."



"Confession is good for the soul," but it needs to be followed up with **שוב**. If an arsonist says that he's sorry for the fires he has set, but he won't give up his matches, can we say he has repented? Is he really done setting fires?

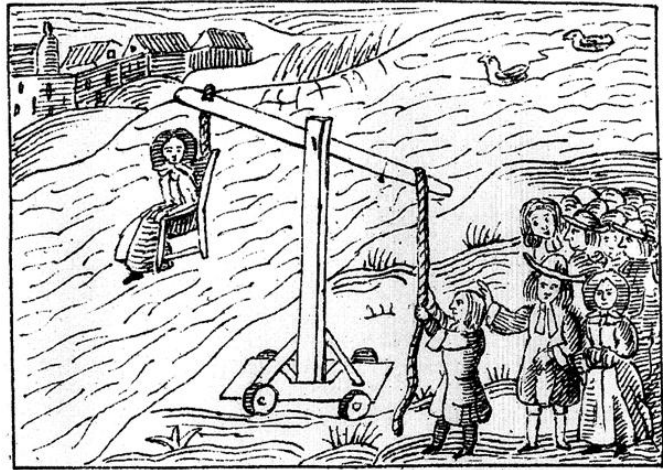


What's the Point? It's easy to think the whole reason to confess sin is to get eternal life and stay out of hell. But if there were no hell, would there be a reason to pray for and lead sinners to salvation? Yes.

The true goal of confession and **שוב** is to regain a lost relationship with God. It's easy to approach God for the benefits, but the best reason is love. In the Hebrew Roots movement, believers may decide to obey **תורה** for health, prosperity, or simply to avoid God's wrath, but the real motivation should be relationship. One believer's heart says, "God, save me!" Another believer's heart says, "God, let me be part of seeing people **שוב**!"

The High Value of Marriage [Numbers 5.12-28](#) explains an interesting procedure if a man suspects his wife of adultery. The husband is to take the wife to the priest, who puts dust from the floor of the Temple in some water. The priest also writes a curse on a page, twice writing the divine name יהוה. The ink of the curse is then rinsed into the water with the dust and the woman drinks it. If she has done nothing wrong, she will be free of the curse and become pregnant. If she has done wrong, the curse will cause her bitter suffering and make her a curse among the people.

This is the opposite of a worldly way of testing for guilt. Trial by Ordeal was practiced through the Middle Ages until the 16th century. The suspected sinner was exposed to some type of suffering or torture, sometimes to the point of death. Sometimes innocence was proven by the survival of the suspect, other times by the death! Instead, this process in Numbers prescribes something which is innocuous to an innocent woman—drinking water with some dust and ink in it—and only results in suffering if God reveals guilt.



[Deuteronomy 12.1-4](#) tells ישראל to destroy pagan shrines and names of the gods, but “Ye shall not do so unto יהוה your God.” Yet in this procedure involving suspicion of adultery, God is willing for His Name to be written twice and then completely erased to settle the suspicion. A marriage free of suspicion is that important to God.



In [John 4](#), ישוע meets a woman at the well. The implication is that she has been unfaithful. ישוע offers her living water instead of bitter, and her heart changes. ישוע has a personal experience with the charge of immorality. Because of the virgin birth, which many apparently never bought, the Pharisees ask ישוע in [John 8.19](#) about His father, and then in verse 41 they add, “We be not born of fornication...” 30 years later, it seems, they still remember the circumstances of the birth of ישוע and are willing to embarrass Him about it.

Nazarite Vow [Numbers 6.1-5](#) describes the Nazarite vow. [Verse 2](#) says to פלא *pala* separate one's self by a distinguishing action/to be marvelous/be wonderful/be surpassing/be extraordinary. Related words: פלא *pele*, wonder/marvel and פלאי *pil-ee* wonderful/incomprehensible/extraordinary. פלאי is used only twice in Scripture, [Psalm 139.6](#), "Such knowledge is too פלאי for me..." and [Judges 13.18](#), after Samson's parents meet the Angel of יהוה. When Manoah's wife first sees the Angel, she thinks He is just a man of God. The Angel describes in [Judges 13.5](#) how her son Samson is to be a נזיר *nazeer* Nazarite/consecrated or devoted one. Later her husband Manoah meets the Angel and asks, "Are you the man...?" The Angel replies, "I am." (Remember [Exodus 3.14](#)). When asked His Name, the Angel replies, "...it is פלאי." After the Angel of יהוה rises in the fire, Manoah and his wife realize they have seen God.

So פלא is used to describe the נזיר who wishes to separate himself to God, and פלאי describes the wonderful knowledge of God and the Name of the Angel of יהוה who is the physical representation of God in the Tenach, what some call a pre-incarnate appearance of שוע" or a theophany. [Isaiah 9.6](#) says, "Unto us a child is born...and His Name shall be called פלא..." This well-known prophecy of the birth of שוע" describes Him as פלא, dropping the י of פלאי. The י can symbolize God, since it's the first letter of יהוה. In [Philippians 2.5-9](#), Paul says that שוע" gave up His position of divinity—gave up His י so to speak—and became a man, even to the point of death. This can be seen in the Hebrew of Isaiah 9.6. The last verse of [Matthew 2.23](#) says that ישוע", by being born in Nazareth, fulfills the prophecies, "He will be called a

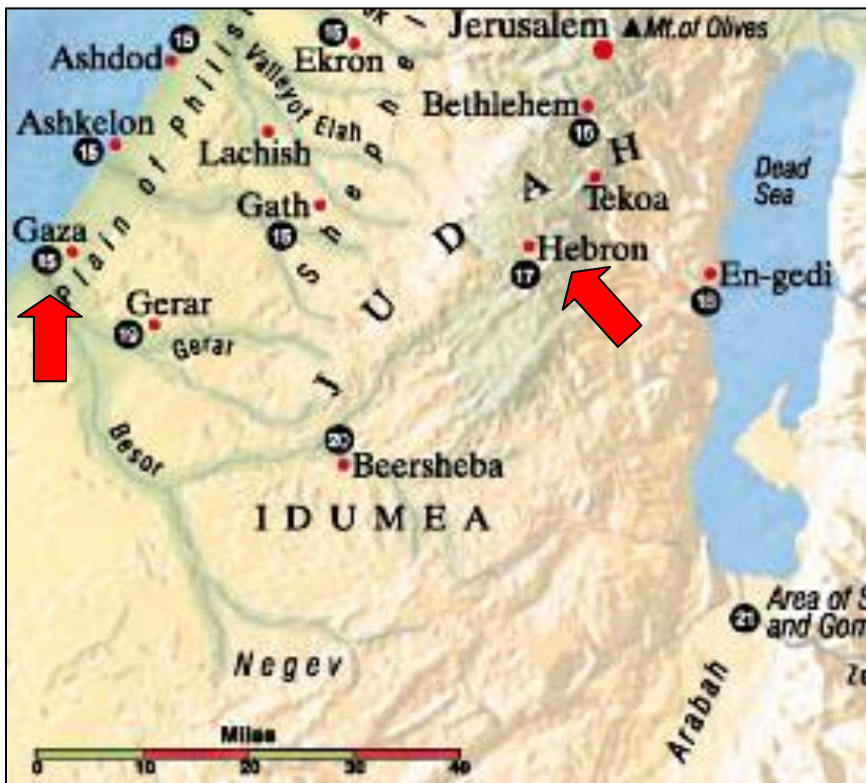
Ναζωραῖος *Nazōraios* Nazarene/one separated." Actually, there is no one such explicit prophecy. Instead, it seems to be God's sense of humor to pull together Isaiah 9.6, that Messiah will be פלא as a נזיר, [Isaiah 11.1](#), that Messiah is a נצר *netser* Branch, [Isaiah 53](#), that Messiah will be unattractive, despised, rejected, punished, afflicted, and

ultimately glorified, and then have שוע" grow up in נצרת *Natsaret* Nazareth, what we could refer to as "Branch Town," in fact we could say that ישוע" is a Nazarite and the fulfillment of Messianic prophecies.



Paul, another נזיר Does the Apostle Paul teach that the Law is done away with as many Christians believe? In [Acts 18.18-21](#), Paul has shaved his head because of a נזיר vow and he is compelled to keep the upcoming Feast in Jerusalem. Then in [Acts 21.20-28](#), Paul rejoices that many thousands of Jews believe, all zealous for תורה. Because some believers think that Paul teaches Jews to forsake תורה, he agrees to keep his נזיר vow with four other men, plus he pays their expenses, just to prove that he *does* keep תורה. This was a perfect opportunity for Paul, whom many believe taught the death of תורה, to say, “Wait, I do teach believers to turn away from Moses!” But he doesn’t. The נזיר vow release requires a sacrifice of several animals plus meal and drink offerings, [Numbers 6.13-15](#). By paying the expenses for each of the four men and himself, Paul is putting his money where his mouth is—תורה is for today.

Sacrifice for Selfishness Why would a נזיר need to bring a sacrifice to end the vow after he has been a living sacrifice while under the vow? Maimonides/Rambam, a Jewish sage of the 12th century, said that there are two models of the virtuous life: saint and sage. Saints specialize in extremes while sages prefer moderation, not too miserly or too generous, not too sober or too rash. A saint pursues personal perfection, while a sage pursues societal perfection. The Bible is about people working with others to bring about God’s kingdom, not a job that can be done in isolation. Rambam says that a נזיר is a saint who has been neglecting others, so he must bring a sacrifice for being selfish!



Strong Man Possibly because of the earlier reference to פלאי in [Judges 13](#), that is the Haphtarah for this portion. שמשון *Sheemshown* Samson/Like the Sun carries the gates and gateposts of the city of Gaza to Hebron. Gaza is on the seacoast and Hebron is at an elevation of 3,300’. You can see in the map that the two cities are a little over forty miles from each other as the crow flies—probably longer if you’re carrying the city gates and following roads. What a feat of strength to carry the gates of the city 40 miles with an elevation gain of 3,300’!

The Priestly Blessing [Numbers 6.22-27](#) gives the priestly blessing for Aaron to bless יִשְׂרָאֵל. If we are part of יִשְׂרָאֵל as Paul says in [Romans 11.11-24](#), this blessing belongs to us as well. Furthermore, ישוע fulfills this blessing:

יהוה bless you and keep you

God sends His one and only Son, ישוע, [John 3.16](#)

[Numbers 6.24](#) בָּרַךְ *barach* bless or kneel as in [Genesis 24.11](#) and [Psalm 95.6](#)

ישוע kneels to wash and bless His disciples' feet in [John 13.5](#)

Paul assures that he will come in the full measure of the blessing of ישוע, [Romans 15.29](#)

The blessing of Abraham comes to Gentiles through ישוע, [Galatians 3.14](#)

יהוה make His face shine upon you and be gracious to you

God allows us to see His glory in the face of ישוע our Messiah, [2 Corinthians 4.6](#)

God's grace through ישוע: redemption, forgiveness through His blood, [Ephesians 1.6-7](#)

יהוה lift up His countenance upon you and give you peace

Through ישוע we can come to God without fault and with great joy, [Jude 1.24-25](#)

The Lord of Peace Himself gives us peace, [2 Thessalonians 3.16](#)

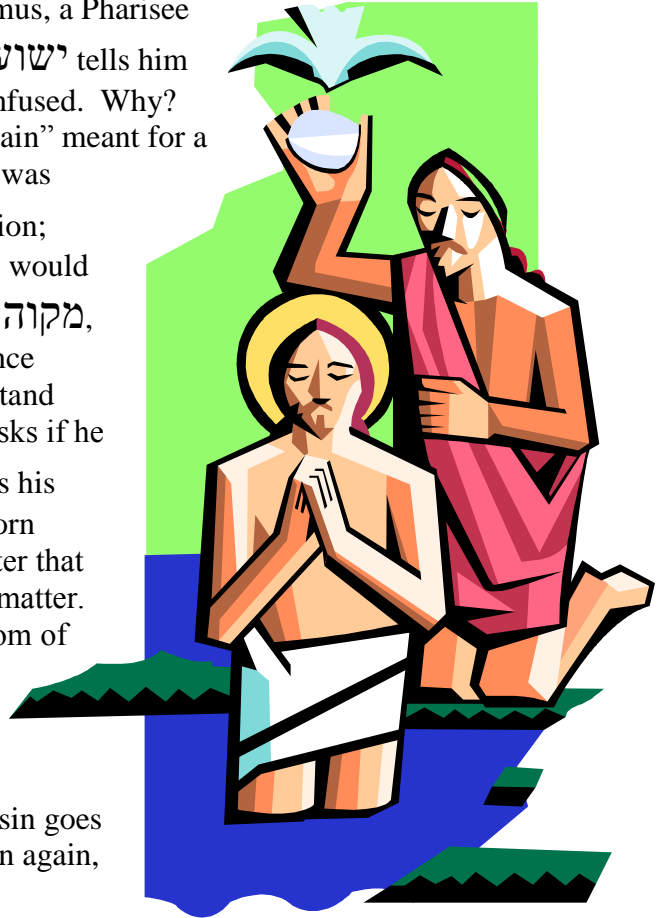
He will be called שר שלום... פלא *Sar Shalom* Prince of Peace, [Isaiah 9.6](#)



Nicodemus and “Born Again” When Nicodemus, a Pharisee and ruler, meets secretly with ישוע in [John 3](#), ישוע tells him that he must be “born again.” Nicodemus is confused. Why? To an observant Jew at the time, being “born again” meant for a Gentile to convert to Judaism. This conversion was symbolized by a [מִקְוָה mikvah](#) literally: collection; generally: a collection of water, what Christians would call a baptism. (There were many reasons for a [מִקְוָה](#), conversion from Gentile to Jew is just one). Since Nicodemus is already a Jew, he does not understand why he must be born again, and that’s why he asks if he must reenter his mother’s womb. ישוע rebukes his lack of understanding and explains that being born again is being born of the Spirit. It doesn’t matter that Nicodemus is already a Jew. Ethnicity doesn’t matter. He must be born of the Spirit to “see the Kingdom of God.”

Remember the story of *The Duck and the Devil*. Confession is good—it frees us from Satan’s condemnation. Then we need to make sure the sin goes out to the curb with the trash. When we are born again, born of the Spirit, the purpose is to [פלא, שוב](#)

ourselves to God, and regain the lost relationship, made possible through ישוע. Not just so that we stay out of hell, but so that we can love the One Who loved us first, so that we can be part of His plan for seeing others [פלא](#) and [שוב](#).



Glossary, in order of appearance:

נשא	<i>naso</i>	lift up
שוב	<i>shuv</i>	return/make restitution/repent/turn
ישראל	<i>Yisra'el</i>	Israel
יהוה	<i>YHVH</i>	the LORD
ישוע	<i>Yeshua</i>	Jesus/salvation
תורה	<i>Torah</i>	Law/Instruction
פלא	<i>pala</i>	separate one's self//to be marvelous/ be wonderful/be surpassing/ be extraordinary
פלא	<i>pele</i>	wonder/marvel
פלאי	<i>pil-ee</i>	wonderful/incomprehensible/extraordinary
נזיר	<i>nazeer</i>	Nazarite/consecrated or devoted one
Ναζωραῖος	<i>Nazōraios</i>	Nazarene/one separated
נצר	<i>netser</i>	branch
נצרת	<i>Natsaret</i>	Nazareth
שמשון	<i>Sheemshown</i>	Samson/Like the Sun
ברך	<i>barach</i>	bless/kneel
שר שלום	<i>Sar Shalom</i>	Prince of Peace
מקוה	<i>mikvah</i>	literally: collection generally: a collection of water