

# *Shiur L'Yom Revi'i*<sup>1</sup>

[Wednesday's Study]

READINGS:     **Torah Naso:**                     **Numbers 6:1-21**  
                  **Haftarah:**                             **Judges 13:8-14**  
                  **B'rit Chadasha:**               **Acts 21:23-24**

*This is the torah of the Nazir'im ....*  
[Numbers 6:21]

Today's Meditation is Micah 4:1-5;  
This Week's Amidah Prayer Focus is Petition #6, *B'racha* [The Petition for Blessing]

*Vayedaber Adonai el-Moshe l'emor* – And the Holy One spoke to Moshe, saying .... **Daber el-B'nei Yisra'el v'amarta aleihem** – Speak to B'nei Yisrael, and say to them ... **ish o-ishah ki yafli lin'dor neder nazir l'hazir l'Adonai** – Any man or woman, if he sets himself apart by making a Nazarite vow of separation unto the Holy One ... **Numbers 6:1-2.**

The winds of change are blowing. The Holy One is stirring our hearts, minds, and souls to restless wonder. He is getting us ready to leave our comfort zones and launch out into the great Wilderness Obstacle Course that He has designed for our edification. A vast outback of watersheds and wadis, shifting sands and sweltering heat, calls to us. *Bamidbar Sinai* will soon give way to *Bamidbar Paran*. *Bamidbar Paran* will eventually give way to *Bamidbar Tzin*. *Bamidbar Tzin* will, in time, give way to *Mount Hor*. *Mount Hor* will then give way to the great wilderness region to the east of Moab. The wilderness to the east of Moav will then give way to the *Moavian Plain*. In all these places, the Holy One will test us regarding our commitment to keep our eyes on Him, follow His lead, and faithfully serve mankind and Creation HIS way instead of reacting in the flesh or pseudo-intellect.

The intense survival-training course that looms before us will be chock full of individual, familial, tribal, and national challenges. Hardships, obstacles, hindrances, and distractions will beset us at every turn. Our flesh will chaff. Our pseudo-intellect will be offended. Our resolve will be tested. Enemies lie in wait for us there. But our Bridegroom-King will be there every step of the way as well. He will love and lead us. He will strengthen and encourage us. He will protect and provide for us. He will encourage us, comfort us, and empower us. And that will make it all worthwhile.

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## ***Lifting Up the Head – To the Coming Nazir'im***

Soon we will hear the trumpets sound – and we will be off. But that day is not today. There are still a few things our Divine Bridegroom knows He has to teach us. So, this week's parsha began with another prophetic call to *nasa et-rosh* 'lift up the head'. The Holy One wants us to *look beyond* the earthly images and circumstances that usually consume our attention; He wants our focal point and center of gravity to be the vast Beauty Realm that lies just beyond the thin veil of the temporary, finite, and ordinary. He knows that if we don't learn to live with heads lifted to His Throne in *ha-shamayim* – i.e. 'the heavens' - *we will all die in the desert*. And He knows that if we die in the desert, the reason will be because we failed to *lift up our heads to ha-shamayim* at the appropriate time. As a result of looking only on the surface of things, with eyes of the flesh, when tough times came we could not see beyond the *pain*, the *exhaustion*, the *heat*, the *frailty of human leaders*, and the *unquenchable hatred of those who set themselves up as enemies of our God*.

### ***A Potential Area of Dissension/Division: Adding To the Torah***

The Holy One knows that within the great community of redeemed souls that He is about to send into the world to be a light to the nations there will be great diversity – and that, because of that diversity, there will be a danger of separation and division. He knows that even among His courtiers, much less his subjects, there is not complete unity. He knows that once the hosts of B'nei Yisrael leave the 'life-in-a-bubble' incubation chamber of Sinai, and have to deal with the challenges of the desert, the diversities/differences will come to the surface and threaten the unity of the camp. That is why He has given them the Torah. As long the *mitzvot* of Torah are their focus, He knows, the people will be able to work through their differences respectfully. He also knows that if, in the heat of the desert, individuals or groups decide to either *subtract from* or *add to* the Torah, there will be problems. If one group devalues, and therefore ceases to follow, some of the *mitzvot* of Torah – or if they make up their own rules, adding to the *mitzvot* the Holy One has given - the unity of the camp will quickly erode.

The Holy One knows the tendency of people in this fallen world to want to go rogue/extreme and/or 'holier-than-thou' in relation to matters of spirituality. See Nadav and Avihu for the latest example in our camp. What drives some people to look/go beyond what Torah – the actual words/instructions of the all-wise, far-more-holy Creator - actually says? What drives people to make up their own rules? What drives them to add to the Torah more stringent limitations, restrictions, sacraments, and pious practices, declare fasts and abstentions where Torah does not, and/or add 'holy days' to the calendar? Does all this stem from feelings of inferiority? Are people who do such things burdened by heavy loads of guilt and/or

shame? Are they afraid that if they do not ‘build fences around’ the Torah, their fleshly urges, drives, and appetites will overwhelm them? Do they crave attention, respect, and/or admiration from men? Do they seek to ‘earn’ special favor, honor, or position from the Holy One – the very One Who wrote the Torah as our only guidebook? Are they just over-emotional? Are they so enamored with their own pseudo-intelligence that they think themselves smarter – or more holy – than God?

The Holy One understands human proclivities. He therefore provides a pathway for safe-harbor/pressure-release modality for those who feel compelled to go beyond the Torah in regard to issues of piety. Hence He offers the ‘law of the Nazirite’, for those who seek to be more religious than the average Yosef.

### ***Channeling the Overflowing Passion of those Who Would Be Nazirim***

Today’s aliyah deals exclusively with one subject – *Nazirim* [KJV ‘Nazarites’]. The following beginning and ending quotes introduce the subject nicely:

*The Holy One spoke to Moshe, saying Speak to the children of Yisra'el, and tell them:  
“When either man or woman shall make a special vow, the vow of a Nazir,  
to separate himself unto the Holy One ....*

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*All the days of his separation he is set apart unto the Holy One.*

A company of passionate, highly dedicated, and voluntarily disentangled people that the Holy One calls *nazirim* is apparently scheduled to appear in the world at some point in the near future. Will the world be ready for people who are so in tune with the Holy One and His True Tone that they are unmoved by social trends, unaffected by societal outrage, and undistracted by ethnic, cultural, political, ideological, factional, economic-class focused and gender-based differences? What kind of impact will such people have on the times, the geographical places, and the societies in which they live? Will *Nazirim* bring healing, inspiring light into their spheres of influence – or will they bring a spotlight so intense that their presence will cause the breath of uncleanness in other people to trigger, rail, act-out and manifest? Will they bring a blessing – or will they pave the way for a curse?

### ***Mah Nazir? [What is a Nazir?]***

If you have been following these studies you know that the concept of the *nazir* is totally new to Torah. Were our father Avraham or our matriarch Sarah ever *nazirim* at any point in their lives? Were either Yitzchak or Rivkah? Was Ya’akov, Rachel, or Leah? Was Yosef or Yehudah, or Moshe, or Aharon, or Miryam, or Yehoshua, or Kalev? Did those beloved fathers and mothers of our people lack something? Did the pioneers of the Covenant Lifestyle that has been passed down to us not love the Holy One with all their heart, soul, mind, and strength? Why suddenly now is the Holy One talking about some people within our ranks who choose to pursue an even higher level of commitment and consecration than the

rocks from which we are hewn – or the *mitzvot* the Holy One gave us as guides for every aspect of our lives, including ‘piety’? Why suddenly is the Holy One telling Moshe that there will be people who feel compelled to add to – and thereby effectively subtract from/disrespect - the Torah?

After all we have been through with our Bridegroom-King at Sinai, why now is He now suddenly talking about a group of people who will voluntarily choose to go far beyond the basic terms of the Covenant and *make a special vow to separate themselves* unto Him? Is the stunningly broad *na’aseh v’nishma* commitment we all made at Sinai somehow not going to be enough of a challenge for some people – or some eras? What could provide the impetus to motivate a person to engage in seasons – or perhaps even a lifetime - of extraordinary self-discipline? Why would a person who is already redeemed by and engaged in an intimate Covenant relationship with the Creator of the Universe voluntarily choose a heightened level of flesh-denial? Would such a decision be motivated by passion? By guilt? By intercession? By peer pressure? By pride?

The Hebrew word English Bibles translate as “Nazarite” is ***Nazir***, *nun, zayin, yod, resh*<sup>2</sup>. The word literally means “*an untamed, unpruned vine or tree*”. The same word is often translated in this manner. See **Leviticus 25:5 and 25:1**. As the vines and fields of Israel were left un-pruned in the *sh’mittah* year and in the *Yovel* [Jubilee], even so the hair of a Nazirite was allowed to grow “wild”, uncut, during the period of his consecration.

*Mah nazir? Mah nazir* indeed. The Holy One defines a *nazir* as one who chooses voluntarily to set himself or herself apart from his/her normal activities, and *unto the Holy One*, in three ways. Let’s talk about the *nazir*’s ‘*kedusha protocols*’.

### ***The Three Areas of Voluntary Abstention***

The *nazir*’s first *kedusha protocol* is to self-deny far beyond the level called for by Torah. The first form this ‘extreme’ self-denial is to take is separation and abstention – for the duration of the vow - from any product derived from the grape or its vine. No wine – or even grape juice. No grapes. No raisins. No products made from or with grapes. A complete boycott of all products of the vineyard. Secondly, the *nazir* is to vow not to engage in the regular grooming process of trimming and/or shaving his or her hair. No trims. No cuts. No shaves. No fades. No combing. No brushing. Not even the plucking of ‘wild hairs’. Thirdly, the *nazir* vows not to go near any dead body – i.e. not to be with any dying friend or relative or mourn for anyone who dies – including, without limitation, one’s parent, one’s

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<sup>2</sup> Strong’s Hebrew word #5139, *nazir* is pronounced *naw-zeer*’. The verb root of this word is ***nazar***, *nun, zayin, resh*, Strong’s Hebrew word #5144, which literally means to “*hold aloof*”, or to “*abstain*”.

spouse, one's child, one's mentor, or one's best friend. Keep in mind, as you read the Holy One's instructions, that none of these abstentions are anywhere required – or even suggested - by Torah. They are unnecessary additions. They are radically extreme.

Torah tells us first that the *Nazir* will voluntarily vow *lo yishteh* [not to drink] and *lo yochel* [*lo yochel*] certain things that are completely *tahor* and perfectly fine for everyone else – *i.e.* the flesh or juice of a grape [Hebrew *anav*]. As you will recall, Torah introduced us to the grape [*anav*] near the end of *the story of Noach*. [Genesis 9]. After the Flood, Noach planted a vineyard in the now rich, alluvial soil around Ararat. He eventually harvested grapes from that vineyard, extracted the juice from the grapes, allowed some of the juice to ferment, and drank some. The consequences of the patriarch's ingestion of the fruit of the vine were *lo tov*. It set into motion a spiraling chain of events that ultimately resulted in Noach's famous declaration: ***Arur Kena'an*** – *i.e. limited/restricted in all things be Kena'an . . . eved avadim yihyeh l'achav* – *a servant of servants will he be unto his brothers*. Genesis 9:23.

Perhaps it is with this episode in mind that the Holy One says regarding the self-limiting vow of the *Nazir*:

*He is to drink no vinegar of wine, or vinegar of fermented drink,  
neither is he to drink any juice of grapes, nor eat fresh grapes or dried.  
All the days of his separation he is to eat nothing that is made of the grapevine,  
from the seeds even to the skins.*

Neither at Sinai nor in the desert was this going to mean much, of course. All we were eating when this instruction was given was manna, and all we were drinking was water from the rock of Horeb. There were no vineyards. There were no grapes. There were no raisins. There was no wine. But the Holy One knew it would be a very different story when the Redeemed Community arrived in the land of the patriarchs. One of the things for which the land of Israel is famous is its vineyards. Our Bridegroom-King has specifically promised to bless our vineyards and our 'new wine'. But some, apparently, will vow to eat no grapes – or even grape jam on toast. They will drink no wine – new or old. So much for *kiddush*! So much for the four cups of the traditional Passover seder! Of their own volition – for reasons known only to them – some will choose not to eat a single raisin – or anything containing, cooked with, or flavored by vinegar. What is all that about?

Please note as well that even the *nazir* is limited by Torah in his/her extreme behavior. He/she is not to commit to anything close to a complete fast – even for a few hours – except, of course, on Yom Kippur, as Torah provides. He/she is not to commit to abstain from eating and enjoying bread – be it leavened or unleavened – beyond Torah's clear restrictions on *chametz* during the seven days of Chag Ha-

Matzah. He/she is not to commit to abstain for religious purposes from partaking of the meat of deer or fish or fowl or any other *tahor* animal. He/she is not to commit to abstain from delighting in sweet fruits like figs, pomegranates or dates. He/she is not to commit to abstain from drinking milk, water, or any fruit juice other than the juice of the grape.

Secondly, Torah tells us concerning a *nazir* that he is to set himself apart in the way he takes care of personal grooming:

*All the days of his vow of separation **no razor is to come on his head, until the days are fulfilled in which he separates himself to the Holy One. He is to be set apart. He is to let the locks of the hair of his head grow long.***

No haircuts – not even a little trim? No shaving, plucking, or grooming of body hair? Sounds a little messy! But again, the *nazir* is not to go further – not to put restrictions to wear only sackcloth and ashes, go around in beggar’s rags, etc. There is not to vow to wear head coverings, belts, or shoes. Unlike the Roman Catholic ‘vow of silence’, there is nothing even approaching that a self-imposed limitation on conversation is authorized.

The third special *kedusha* protocol the *nazir* is to follow is stated as follows:

*All the days that he separates himself to the Holy One **he is not to go near a dead body. And he is not to make himself tamei<sup>3</sup> for his father, or for his mother, for his brother, or for his sister, when they die; because his separation to the Holy One is foremost - literally ‘on his head’.***

No joining with family and friends to care for the dying or escort the dead – even one’s own father, mother, or sibling? Is that healthy? But note that there is, for the *nazir*, not a commitment to either celibacy or solitude. Nor is there any suggestion that a *nazir* will not engage in commercial interactions or transactions, or refrain from acquiring physical possessions with or otherwise handling any currency of exchange.

### ***Lifting Up Our Heads – Because Our Redemption Draws Nigh***

Wow. It really is time to *lift up our heads*. It is time to get a vision for people getting *passionate concerning the Holy One* - and then actually making meaningful but completely reasonable and ‘do-able’ life-choices that testify of that passion. It is time for including in our frame of reference the idea of making decisions of self-denial for absolutely *no other reason but passionate love of the Holy One*. It is

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<sup>3</sup> Our English Bibles translate this word as “unclean”. The Hebrew word, however, has nothing to do with “cleanliness” or “uncleanliness”. *Tamei* merely means a state of enhanced spiritual alertness which one should observe when entering what the Holy One tells us is a spiritual “danger zone”, where the spiritual worlds of light and darkness intersect. Contact with the realm of death – by touching a corpse OR by being in the same building (under the same roof) as a corpse such as at a funeral - is just one of these intersections.

time to contemplate a passionate love for the Holy One that *far exceeds* in quality and is therefore unmoved by the passionate hatred our enemies direct at us. It is time for us to picture in our minds a people ‘not yet created’ – a people who is *radically committed, dramatically transformed*, and whose dedication to the Bridegroom-King is unshakeable by bodily appetites, by cultural ideas of fashion, by considerations of personal comfort, or even by grief over the loss of our nearest and dearest family and friends.

Even as most of us succumb to moaning, groaning, whining, complaining, and taking sides in the power struggle in the desert that lies ahead of us, others in our midst will actually be planning to become *nazirim* for the Holy One. Of the two groups, which do you think is most likely to make it to the Promised Land?

***But Let’s Face It: Nazir’im – And Their Voluntary Abstention  
From Things That Are Highly Valued by Others –Can Be Intimidating  
To Those Who Are Cold or Lukewarm of Heart!***

Among the sages of Israel there is a famous debate as to whether a Nazir was a *super spiritual person* whom we should all look up to and aspire to be, or if he was instead someone who just had more difficulty than others curbing his natural appetites and therefore had to lean on the ‘crutch’ of a public vow with very visible ‘accountability criteria’ in order to keep himself focused. Perhaps this is because most of Judaism – at least Judaism as it exists and as we know it today – well . . . it just *doesn’t know quite what to do* with ‘Nazirites’. Modern Christianity doesn’t know what to do with such people either. You see, *Nazir’im* make ordinary people – even good, Torah-*sh’ma*-ing people – well ... downright *nervous*. Let’s face it: *Nazir’im* can be just plain intimidating! And when they appear in your midst, you will need to understand whether it is your flesh or your spirit that is being disturbed by their presence.

But is it really our job to judge the *nazirim* of the world? Is it really any of our business why they do what they do? They are no threat to any of us. So why can’t we just bless them, and go on? Is it possible their presence among us is a test from the Holy One – to see how we will respond to someone who appears more committed to Him than we are? Is it possible this is just another way our Bridegroom-King has of getting us to lift up our head, and look at Him instead of at being obsessed with our fellow sojourners on earth?

***Overcoming the Scariness by Uncloaking the Mystery***

Keep in mind as you read the instructions about *nazir’im* that a *nazir* vow was not something commanded or required by the Holy One of anyone. Neither are *nazirim* one bit more loved by the Holy One. Not only was becoming a *nazir* a purely



voluntary act - it was also an act without any expectation of reward. A nazir earned not one 'brownie point' – or even a blessing – by reason of their chosen season of self-denial. An act of passionate love, their vow was simply a declaration of joyful submission to the Holy One's Wonderful Will, His Wise Ways, and His Infinite Worth.

The vow was usually made for a very *restricted period of time* - usually according to Hebraic tradition 30 days, 60 days, or 100 days. During such a period the *Nazir* would "deny himself" in the three specific ways listed above - and would seek a higher state of spiritual sensitivity.

### ***Korbanot Ha-Nazir [The Nazirite's 'Final Approach' Protocols]***

The Holy One provides in Torah for a special ceremony to be held at the *Mish'kan*<sup>4</sup> to mark the end to the Nazir's period of consecration and the beginning of his new life. Here is how the Holy One begins the discussion of that ceremony:

#### ***Vezot torat ha-nazir b'yom melot***

*The following are the instructions concerning what the nazirite is to do*

#### ***yemei nizro yavi oto el-petach Ohel Mo'ed***

*on the day the Nazir vow is complete and he returns to the Mish'kan's entrance:*

[Numbers 6:11]

As we shall see shortly, the ceremony the Holy One prescribes for the *nazir* is to center upon the making of a special celebratory approach to the Holy One on the *nazir's* behalf. Note as you read through the specific instructions how the Holy One's instructions on the matter continue the theme of *sets of three* which began with the three special abstentions discussed above. First, upon completion of his vow the *Nazir* is instructed to bring to the *Mish'kan* **three separate surrogate animals**, each of which has a special meaning, and addressing a separate aspect of the *Nazir's* transformed essence. Here is how Torah puts it:

#### ***Vehik'riv et-korbano l'Adonai***

*He is to draw near to the Holy One through a surrogate presentation made on his behalf;*

#### ***keves ben-shnato tamim echad***

*[consisting of] one unblemished yearling male sheep*

#### ***l'olah***

*for a 'burnt offering' [i.e. acknowledging his total surrender to the Holy One's will]*

#### ***v'chavsah achat bat-shnatah tmimah l'chatat***

*and one unblemished yearling female sheep for a 'sin offering'  
[i.e. acknowledging his forgiveness for breaches of Torah];*

#### ***v'ayil-echad tamim l'sh'lamim***

*and one unblemished ram for a 'peace offering'*

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<sup>4</sup> The Temple was later used for this purpose.



*[i.e. celebrating his enhanced state of shalom and his deepened relationship with the Holy One and the Community of the Redeemed]*  
[Numbers 6:12-13]

But it is not only animals that the *Nazir* is instructed to bring with him to the *Mish'kan* for his celebration. He is also instructed to bring another set of three 'offerings' – two different types of bread and a skin of wine. For Torah continues the discussion of the ceremony by telling us the *Nazir* is also to bring:

***sal matzot solet chalot blulot b'shemen***

*.. a basket containing unleavened wheat loaves kneaded with oil*

***urkikey matzot meshuchim b'shemen***

*And flat matzahs saturated with oil*

***uminchatam***

*along with 'grain offerings' [i.e. acknowledgements that all possessions are held in trust for the Holy One]*

***v'niskeihem***

*and libations.*

[Numbers 6:11-15]

After the *kohen* places these *korbanot* [surrogate presentations for approaching the Holy One on the fire of the altar] one of the most moving parts of the ceremony is to occur. As the fat portions of his *korban sh'lamim* [peace offering] are being consumed by the fire of the *mizbeach* the *Nazir* is to take a knife, cut his hair – the very locks he has let grow long in connection with his vow - and is to place those special dedicatory locks one-by-one in the fire. As the Holy One describes the process in Torah:

***Vegilach ha-nazir petach Ohel Mo'ed***

*[After the surrogates are surrendered] at the Communion Tent entrance,*

***et-rosh nizro v'lakach et-se'ar rosh nizro***

*the nazirite is to trim off the crown of hair on his head.*

***V'natan al-ha-esh asher-tachat zevach ha-sh'lamim***

*And he is to place the hair cut from his head in the fire under the surrogate of shalom.*

The hair is cut away. Man's glory – representing whatever level of Sampson-like strength he or the world thought he possessed - is burned up in the fire. He is now starting over. He is *naked, but not ashamed!*

The *nazir's* 'new beginning' ceremony is still not complete. The Holy One continues with some instructions for the presiding *kohen* [priest/kingdom ambassador]:

***V'lakach ha-kohen et-ha-z'roa b'shelah min-ha-ayil***

*And the priest is to take the foreleg of the ram*

***V'chalat matzah achat min-ha-sal urkik matzah echad***

*along with one unleavened loaf and one flat matzah,*

***v'natan al-kapei ha-nazir achar hitgaleicho et-nizro***  
*and place them on the nazirite's open hands.*

***V'henif otam ha-kohen tnufah lifnei Adonai***  
*These are sanctified by the kohen by presentation unto the Holy One*

***kodesh hu l'kohen al chazeh ha-t'nufah***  
*it is holiness for the priests, so the breast of the animal he is to wave as a wave offering*

***v'al shok ha-t'rumah***  
*and the leg he is to receive as a symbol of ascent.*

Oh yes. And then there is one more thing. The period of abstention is over – and now that which one voluntarily eschewed in the flesh is re-engaged in the spiritual – under sanctification, with a blessing. The Holy One says:

***v'achar yish'teh ha-nazir yayin***  
*... and after [all] this, the nazirite is to drink wine.*  
[Numbers 6:20(c)]

*Why drink wine? Not to get drunk. Not for a 'buzz'. Not to feel more social. Not to conform to a social custom. The nazir drinks wine reverently – not as an indulgence of the flesh, but as an act of worship. He makes the drinking of wine a holy declaration. In so doing, he joyfully acknowledges that the Kingdom of Heaven, and its power to overcome the lusts and weaknesses of the flesh, has come to dominate his life – and that he is no longer a slave to either lust, gluttony, drunkenness, debauchery fear, or shame. **L'chaim**, everyone – to **life!***

### ***The Nazir As a Kohen [Kingdom Diplomat/Ambassador] Of a Different Order***

In his book “*The Temple: Its Ministries and Services*”<sup>5</sup> Alfred Edersheim states that the *nazir* has another connotation besides *separation/holiness*. He says:

“we have also here the idea of *royal priesthood*, since the word *Nezer* is applied to 'the holy *crown* upon the mitre' of the high priest (Exo. 29:6; 34:30; Lev 8:9), and 'the *crown* of the anointing oil' (Lev 21:12), as also, in a secondary sense, to the royal crown (2 Sam 1:10; 2 Kings 11:12; Zech 9:16).”

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He was to be not only a priest, but one in a higher and more intense sense, since he became such by personal consecration instead of by mere bodily descent. If the priest was to abstain from wine during his actual ministration in the sanctuary, the Nazirite must during the whole period of his vow refrain from all that belongs to the fruit of the vine, 'from the kernels even to the husk' (Num 6:3,4). a priest was to avoid all defilement from the dead, except in the case of his nearest relatives, but the

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<sup>5</sup> Available online at [http://philologos.org/\\_eb-ttms/temple19.htm](http://philologos.org/_eb-ttms/temple19.htm)

Nazarite, like the high priest (Lev 21:11), was to ignore in that respect even father and mother, brother and sister (Num 6:7).

Aviya Ha-Kohen of *Yeshiva Har Etzion* has made the following comments on the subject:

“The *Nazir* is similar to the *Kohen*. Just as the *kohen*, during his period of service in the *Mish'kan*, is forbidden to drink wine or other intoxicating liquor, so the *Nazir* is likewise forbidden - for the entire period of his vow.

Regarding the *Kohen* the Torah says: “**They shall be holy to their God**” (21:5), while regarding the *Nazir* we read, “**He shall be holy... He is holy to God**” (6:5-8).

Moreover the *Nazir* is comparable to the *Kohen Gadol*: Concerning the *Kohen Gadol* the Torah says, “**For the crown (nezer) of the anointing oil of his God is upon him**” (Vayikra 21:12), and the language used in the case of the *Nazir* is remarkably similar: “**For the crown (nezer) of his God is upon his head**” (6:7).<sup>6</sup>

One of the purposes of the Holy One in giving us the instructions concerning the *Nazir'im* may well be to *point us to a higher priesthood than the priesthood of Aharon*. The strategic placement of such instructions in parsha *Naso* points us to a priesthood in a higher spiritual plane than that of Aharon and his sons - a priesthood that existed before the foundation of the world, but which would only be revealed to human eyes and understanding at a later day. The *Torat Nazir'im* thus points to a priest who would arise later, who would allow his hair to go unkempt, and would declare:

***I tell you that I will not drink of this fruit of the vine from now on, until that day when I drink it anew with you in my Father's kingdom.***

[Matthew 26:29]

Yeshua was most definitely not a *nazir* during most of His earthly ministry – He drank wine, and touched the dead, and allowed His hair to be anointed with oil. But He became a *nazir* – the essence of what the *nazir* was all about – on the night of His betrayal. And He thereby became for us the High Priest of priesthood higher than that of Aharon. *Keep that image clearly in your mind. It could come in very handy in the desert that lies ahead.*

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<sup>6</sup> See The Israel Kozchitsky Virtual Beit Midrash study on *The Order and Contents of Sefer B'midbar*, which is available for viewing online at <http://www.vbm-torah.org/parsha/34intbem.htm>

## *Questions For Today's Study*

1. Consider as you read the instructions of Torah regarding the *Nazir'im* what might motivate you to take such a vow. Consider also what you think the effect of fulfilling such a vow might be for you.

[A] Read Amos 2:10-12. The Holy One is speaking, and He says:

*Also I brought you up out of the land of Mitzrayim,  
And led you forty years in the wilderness, to possess the land of the Amori.  
I raised up some of your sons for prophets, and some of your young men for Nazirim.  
Isn't this true, You children of Yisra'el?" says the Holy One.  
"But you gave the Nazirim wine to drink,  
and commanded the prophets, saying, 'Don't prophesy!'*

- i. Where do those verses indicate *Nazir'im* come from - that is, who "raises them up"?
- ii. What sin did society in Israel commit against the "consecrated ones"?

[B] From what three things was the *Nazir* to abstain and completely avoid during the period of his consecration?

[C] What do you think each of these things symbolizes? [Suggestion: you may want to look up these three things in a book on dream interpretation or on Hebrew symbols]

[D] Was Yeshua ever a *Nazir*? If so, when was He a *Nazir*?

2. Imagine you lived during the time the Temple was standing and had taken a *Nazir* vow for 30 days, and had reached the end of Day 30. Write an imaginary "journal entry" for that 30th day, describing

[A] everything that you did and

[B] how you felt as you were doing those things.

3. In today's haftarah reading from the book of Judges M'noach seeks more instruction from the Holy One on how to raise the child who was to be a *Nazirite* all of his life. Our aliyah today begins with his earnest prayer to receive wisdom from the Creator of the Universe, regarding how to "father" and train the miracle child growing in his wife's womb.

*Then M'noach entreated the Holy One, and said,  
"Oh, Holy One, please let the man of God whom you sent before come again to us,  
and teach us what we are to do concerning the child who shall be born."  
The Holy One sh'ma-d the voice of M'noach;  
and the angel of God came again to the woman as she sat in the field:  
but M'noach, her husband, wasn't with her.  
The woman made haste, and ran, and told her husband,  
and said to him, "Behold, the man has appeared to me, who came to me the [other] day."*

*M'noach arose, and went after his wife, and came to the man, and said to him,  
“Are you the man who spoke to the woman?” He said, “I am”.*

*M'noach said, “Now let your words happen:  
what is to be the protocol relative to the child? And [what] are we do regarding him?”*

*The angel of the Holy One said to M'noach, “Of all that I said to the woman  
let her sh'mar. She is not to eat of anything that comes of the vine,  
neither is she to drink wine or strong drink,  
nor eat any tamei thing; that which I instruct her, that let her sh'mar.”*

[Judges 13:8-14]

[A] Did the Holy One give M'noach any additional instruction(s) beyond what had earlier been given to his wife? If so, what additional instruction(s)?

[B] What do you think was the purpose of the Angel of the Holy One's visit?

4. In Acts 21:23-24 the Messianic leaders in Jerusalem under James [his name was really Ya'akov [Jacob]<sup>7</sup> are discussing with Shaul of Tarsus the accusations which are being made against him. He has been accused of teaching *Y'hudim* [Jewish people] in the Diaspora to [1] “forsake Moshe”, [2] not to circumcise their sons, and [3] not to *halak* [walk in] the customs [the “Oral Torah”]. These accusations are *very* serious! If these accusations are true, Shaul is anti-Messiah - for Messiah taught us concerning the Torah:

*Whoever therefore breaks one of these least mitzvot, and teach others to do so,  
will be called least in the Kingdom of Heaven;  
but whoever will do and teach them will be called great in the Kingdom of Heaven.*

[Matthew 5:19]

Are the accusations against Shaul true? The accusations are still being made today. The accusations are the linchpin of the “Christian” doctrine that the Torah has been done away with – a covenant that has “passed away”. But wait! The writer of Scripture, inspired by the *Ruach HaQodesh*, categorically calls these accusations “false accusations” [See Acts 6:11-14]. The writer of Scripture clearly teaches that Shaul was NOT GUILTY of telling people not to follow Torah. Most of the book of Acts is about how he DEFENDED himself – and how the Holy One defended him – against these false accusations.

The Messianic leaders in Jerusalem certainly understood that these accusations were false. They developed a plan, under the inspiration of the *Ruach HaQodesh*, how these ridiculous accusations could be proven to be false. And now, imagine you are the ‘jury’. Based upon what Shaul does at this critical juncture, rather than on what English translations of Shaul's letters by theologians with an anti-Semitic bias *tell us he said*, you will have to determine if the charges made against Shaul –

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<sup>7</sup> The name “James” is an English name which was substituted for the Hebrew name Ya'akov by English speakers in the era of King James I of England.

then or now – are true. Let's read together the very interesting suggestion made by Ya'akov and the rest of the Messianic leadership in Jerusalem:

*Therefore do what we tell you. We have four men who have taken a vow. Take them, and purify yourself with them, and pay their expenses for them, that they may shave their heads. Then all will know **that there is no truth in the things that they have been informed about you, but that you yourself also walk jealously guarding the Torah.***

[Acts 21:23-24]

[A] What kind of 'vow' do you think was taken by the four young Messianic Jews in question? Why do you think that?

[B] What "expenses" were they going to have [See verse 24]?

[C] What two things did the Messianic leaders Shaul state that Shaul's assistance to these four young men in connection with their vow would prove?

*May the People of the Holy One seek His Face out of pure love, be elevated into His Presence, and never cease to shine with His glory.*

### ***The Rabbi's son***

### ***Meditation for Today's Study***

Micah 4:1-5

*But in the latter days, it will happen that the mountain of the Holy One's temple will be established on the top of the mountains, And it will be exalted above the hills; and peoples will stream to it.*

*Many nations will go and say,*

***"Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the Holy One, And to the house of the God of Ya'akov; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths."***

*For out of Tziyon will go forth the Torah, and the word of the Holy One from Y'rushalayim; He will judge between many peoples, and will decide concerning strong nations afar off.*

*They will beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks.*

*Nation will not lift up sword against nation; neither will they learn war anymore.*

*But they will sit every man under his vine and under his fig tree;*

*And no one will make them afraid;*

*for the mouth of the Holy One of Hosts has spoken.*

*Indeed all the nations may walk in the name of their gods; but we will walk in the name of the Holy One our God forever and ever.*