



Volume 3. Issue 24.

## Introduction to Nazir

The week marks the beginning of the next *masechet* in the *Mishnah Yomit* cycle - *Masechet Nazir*. A *nazir* is a person who has taken a vow of *nezirut*, obligating himself to take on certain restrictions not incumbent upon the rest of *klal Yisrael*. *Masechet Nazir* therefore follows on from *Masechet Nedarim* since the acceptance of *nezirut* is a *neder*. In other words, we move from a broader discussion about vows in the previous *masechet*, to describing a specific type of vow - that of a *nazir*.

There are a number of similarities between regular vows and a vow of *nezirut*. Both types of vows require a verbal declaration, and once said these declarations are legally binding. Likewise, both general vows and *nezirut* can be annulled by following certain processes (as discussed previously *hatarah* performed by a *Beit Din*, or *hafarah* performed by a husband or father).

There is however a major difference between these types of vows. A general vow will obligate the declarer to his own nominated parameters, while a vow of *nezirut* obligates its declarer to certain conditions which are specified by the Torah. These conditions include growing one's hair, abstaining from grapes and grape products, and not coming into contact with a dead body.

There is a *machloket* in the *Gemara* (*Ta'anis* 11a) about how a vow of *nezirut* should be viewed. *R' Elazar HaKappar* states that a *nazir* is a sinner, which is supported by the fact that a *nazir* must bring a *korban chatat* after his *nezirut* has finished. This is due to the sin of depriving himself from some pleasures in this world. However, *R' Elazar* seems to approve of someone taking on *nezirut* due to the fact that the word '*kadosh*' (holy) is used in connection with a *nazir*.<sup>1</sup>

The *Sefer HaChinnuch* (*Mitzvah* 374) provides a novel explanation for the purpose of a *nazir*. He explains that the man was put onto this world to serve *Hashem*. In order to do this, one must be in touch with the spiritual world. Man is severely constrained due to the fact that he is composed of physical matter, and therefore must at times turn aside from the service of his Creator and exert effort for the needs of his physical side. However, to focus solely on the Creator and completely neglect the needs of the body is also a sin.

The *Sefer HaChinnuch* therefore suggests that the vow of *nezirut* is a good compromise. This vow allows a person to raise himself to an exalted level, yet not totally neglect his physical 'dwelling'. A person must abstain from wine and from cutting their hair, for this is enough of a separation from the physical world to subdue the *yetzer hara*, without destroying the physical 'dwelling' given to him by *Hashem*.

The *Kli Yakar* (*Bamidbar* 6:2) agrees with this explanation and says that the purpose of *nezirut* is to separate oneself from the material pleasures of this world. The abstinence from wine is fundamental, as wine is the epitome of worldly pleasures. The *Kli Yakar* also adds that the purpose of becoming a *nazir* is not only to take on the *nazir* restrictions solely for the time of the vow and then to return back to his previous spiritual standing. The purpose of becoming a *nazir* is to change a person's *middot* for a lifetime. However, the *Kli Yakar* recognises that sometimes changing one's personality is very difficult while having an exposure to the physical world, therefore a vow of *nezirut* is needed, whereby one goes to the extreme and denies himself some physical pleasures in order to build and develop his relationship with *Hakadosh Baruch Hu*.

**Yehuda Gottlieb**

<sup>1</sup> *R' Elazar* contends that the *pasuk* which states a *nazir* must bring a *chatat* are referring only to a *nazir tameh* (ie. a *nazir* who has violated his *neder* by coming into contact with a dead body).

**Revision Questions**

נדרים י"א: ו' – י"ב

- What is the law regarding a woman that makes a neder against figs and grapes and her husband: (י"א: ו')
- Confirmed the vow but only with respect to figs.
- Was *meifer* the vow but only with respect to figs.
- What is the law regarding a husband who hears his wife's *neder* and then after a day says: (י"א: ו')
- I did not know about the concept of *hafarat nedarim*.
- I did not know that what my wife did was considered a *neder*.
- If a man made a *neder* against giving any benefit to his son-in-law, how can he give a gift to his daughter? (י"א: ח')
- What is learnt from the following *pasuk*: (י"א: ט')
- "ונדר אלמנה וגרושה... יקום עליה" (במדבר ל' י')
- If a woman made a *neder*, then on the same day, divorced and remarried the original husband, can he *meifer* the *neder*? (י"א: ט')
- Complete the following principle: (י"א: ט')
- \_\_\_\_\_ זה הכלל: כל שיצאת לרשות עצמה \_\_\_\_\_
- What are the nine categories of "na'arah" whose *nederim* are confirmed? (י"א: י')
- Can a husband *meifer* a *neder* whose condition (but not effect) falls under the category of *beino u'veina*? (י"א: י"א')
- Which three women were initially divorce without a *ketubah* and why did the law change? (י"א: י"ב')

נזיר א' – א' – א' ו'

- Is someone a *nazir*, if he saw a *nazir* walk past and he said "I'm like him"? (א' – א')
- What phrase is debated between *R' Meir* and the *Chachamim* in the first *Mishnah* as acceptance of being *nazir*? (א' – א')
- What is the law regarding one who says "I'm a *nazir* from impurity"? (א' – ב')
- What is the law regarding one who says "I'm a *nazir Shimshon*"? (א' – ב')
- What is the difference between a *nazir Shimshon* and a *nazir olam*? (א' – ב')
- What is the standard length of time for being a *nazir*? (א' – ג')
- How long is the duration of a person's *nazirut* if he says:
  - "I am one and half *nazir*"
  - "I am a *nazir* and one hour"
  - "I am a *nazir* for thirty days and one hour." (א' – ג')
  - "I am a *nazir* like the number of hairs on my head" (א' – ד')
  - "I am a *nazir* like a full house" (א' – ה')
  - "I am a *nazir* from here to Elsternwick" (א' – ו')
  - "I am a *nazir* like the days of the year" (א' – ו')

**Local Shiurim**

**Sunday -Thursday**  
Between mincha & ma'ariv  
Mizrachi Shul

**Friday & Shabbat**  
10 minutes before mincha  
Mizrachi Shul

**Audio Shiurim on-line!**

- [613.org/mishnah.html](http://613.org/mishnah.html)
- [www.shemayisrael.com/mishna/](http://www.shemayisrael.com/mishna/)

**Going Away?**

Subscribe to the email mailing list at:

**www.mishnahyomit.com**

**Next Week's Mishnayot...**

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	שבת קודש
21 <sup>st</sup> January ב' שבט	22 <sup>nd</sup> January ג' שבט	23 <sup>rd</sup> January ד' שבט	24 <sup>th</sup> January ה' שבט	25 <sup>th</sup> January ו' שבט	26 <sup>th</sup> January ז' שבט	27 <sup>th</sup> January ח' שבט
Nazir 2:1-2	Nazir 2:3-4	Nazir 2:5-6	Nazir 2:7-8	Nazir 2:9-10	Nazir 3:1-2	Nazir 3:3-4

