



## The Nazir and the Kohen Gadol<sup>1</sup>

*Mishnah* 1 of *Chapter 7* discusses the case of a *Nazir* and a *Kohen Gadol* who are walking together and come upon a *met mitzvah* – an abandoned corpse.

*Kohanim* are forbidden from becoming impure from a corpse, except in the case of close relatives. The *Kohen Gadol* has an even more stringent prohibition – he cannot become impure even for a close family member. The *Nazir* has the same prohibition as the *Kohen Gadol*. However an exception is made in the case of an abandoned corpse when there is no one else available to attend to the burial. If a *Kohen Gadol* and a regular *Kohen* come upon an abandoned corpse the regular *Kohen* would attend to the burial so that the *Kohen Gadol* would not become impure. This is because the *Kohen Gadol* has a higher degree of sanctity than a regular *Kohen*. Who would take priority between a *Nazir* and a *Kohen*? According to *Rabbi Eliezer* the *Nazir* would take priority even over a *Kohen Gadol* because the *Nazir* has to bring a *korban* if he becomes unclean. However the final *halacha* is that the *Nazir* would have to attend to the burial because a *Kohen* is sanctified for his whole life while the *Nazir* is only sanctified during the time of his *Nezirut*.

We see a number of comparisons between the *Nazir* and *Kohanim* in general and the *Kohen Gadol* in particular:

- The *Nazir* and *Kohanim* are forbidden from becoming impure, as explained above;
- The *Nazir* and *Kohanim* are forbidden from drinking wine (the *Kohanim* are forbidden from drinking wine while they are serving in the *Bet Hamikdash*);
- The *Nazir* and the *Kohanim* are both described as “Holy to Hashem” (*Vayikra* 21:6 and *Bamidbar* 6:8);
- In relation to the *Kohen Gadol* the *pasuk* says: ‘for the *nezer* (crown) of anointing oil of his G-d is upon him’ (*Vayikra* 10:12) and in relation to the *Nazir* the

*pasuk* says: ‘for the *nezer* (crown) of his G-d is upon his head’ (*Bamidbar* 6:7).

Can we learn a lesson from these similarities?

Judaism seems to have a rigid class system. See *Kiddushin* 4:1 which lists ten genealogical classes of people who returned to *Eretz Yisrael* after the Babylonian exile and explains which of those classes are allowed to intermarry and which are not.

It seems we are locked into a social class due to accident of birth. Those who are ‘lucky’ enough to be born as a *Kohen* are entitled to serve in the *Bet Hamikdash*. Even a king cannot serve in the *Bet Hamikdash* (see the story of *Melech Uzzyahu* who tried to serve in the *Bet Hamikdash*, with tragic consequences - *Divrei Hayamim* II 26:16-21). Someone who is ‘unlucky’ enough to be born a *mamzer* is limited in who they can marry.

This seems to be unfair. In the last cycle of *Mishnah Yomit*, during our study of *Masechet Kidushin* we tried to reconcile our Western notions of equality with Judaism’s apparent class system. Please see Volume 3, Issue 41 for this discussion.

Today we will present a different answer. Even though some people are born as *Leviim* or *Kohanim*, it is still possible for any person to reach an elevated level of *Kedusha*. An individual can choose to take upon themselves a vow of *nezirut* and become comparable to the *Kohen Gadol* himself.

Today we no longer have this opportunity to become a *Nazir*<sup>2</sup>. But we can still achieve an elevated level of *Kedusha*. The ‘accident of our birth’ is irrelevant. Regardless of which social or intellectual or religious ‘class’ we are born into, we can all achieve incredible heights of sanctity through *Torah* study and the keeping of *mitzvot*. We just need to grab the opportunity.

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<sup>1</sup> Some of the ideas in this article are based on a *shiur* by Rav Amnon Bazak from Yeshivat Har Etzion.

<sup>2</sup> In truth, one can still take a vow today to be a *Nazir*. However, in the absence of the *Bet Hamikdash* there is no procedure to end the vow and

one would need to be a *Nazir* for life. Rabbi David Cohen (the ‘*Nazirite Rabbi*’) (1887-1972) is a famous example a modern day *Nazir*.

### Revision Questions

נזיר ו' ט' ב'

- Describe the process of *tiglachat ha'tumah* for a *nazir*? (ו'י)
- According to *R' Tarfon* how does *tiglachat ha'tumah* for a *nazir* differ from that of a *metzarah*? (ו'י)
- Describe the process of *tiglachat ha'taharah* for a *nazir*. (ו'י)
- What was done with the *nazir*'s hair once it was shaved? (ו'י)
- Explain how the *nazir*'s *shlamim* was offered. (ו'י)
- From what point would the *nazir* once again be allowed to become *tameh met*? (ו'י)
- What is the law if after the *tiglachat*, one *korban* is found to be *pasul*? (Be specific) (ו'י)
- Explain the debate regarding a *nazir* that became *tameh* after the *korbanot* were offered, yet prior to the *tiglachat*. (ו'י)
- Can a *nazir* and *kohen gadol* become *tameh met* for a relative? (ו'י)
- If a *nazir* and *kohen gadol* come across a *met mitzvah* who should become *tameh met* to bury the body? (ו'י)
- List some of the forms of *tumat met* that causes a *nazir* to forfeit all the days already observed forcing him to restart? (ו'י)
- What are the three ways a *nazir* attracts the *tum'ah* described in the previous question? (ו'י)
- On which days of the purification process is the *nazir* sprinkled with *mei effer haparah*? (ו'י)
- From when does the *nazir* restart his count after coming into contact with a *met*? (ו'י)
- List some of the forms of *tumat met* that do not cause a *nazir* to forfeit all the days already observed. (ו'י)
- Regarding the previous questions, would the *nazir* be required to bring a *korban* as a result of becoming *tameh met* in those manners? (ו'י)
- If a *nazir* become a *zav*, do those days of *tumat hazav* count towards his *nezirut*? (ו'י)
- According to *R' Eliezer* for what other *halacha* is the distinction between forms of *tumat hamet* important? (ו'י)
- What is the law regarding a case where a person says to two *nazirs*, "I saw that one of you became *tumat hamet* but I am not sure which one"? (ו'י)
- Regarding the previous case, what are the two opinions if one of the *nazirs* then dies? (ו'י)
- What is the law regarding a *nazir* that is *tameh b'safek* and *muchlat b'safek*? (ו'י)
- Can a *goi* become a *nazir*? (ו'י)
- What is the difference between where a person is *meifer* his wife's *neder* to become a *nazir* and where a person is *meifer* his servant's *neder* to become a *nazir*? (ו'י)
- Which form of *tumat hamet* does not forfeit any days, if it is discovered after a *nazir* has completed his term? Provide an examples of this form of *tumat hamet*. (ו'י)

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#### Melbourne, Australia

##### Sunday -Thursday

10 minutes before *Mincha*  
Mizrachi Shul  
Melbourne, Australia

##### Friday & Shabbat

10 minutes before *Mincha*  
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#### Efrat, Israel

*Shiur in English*

##### Sunday -Thursday

Rabbi Mordechai Scharf  
9:00am  
Kollel Magen Avraham  
Reemon Neighbourhood

#### ONLINE SHIURIM

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[www.shemayisrael.com/mishna/](http://www.shemayisrael.com/mishna/)

Rav Meir Pogrow  
[613.org/mishnah.html](http://613.org/mishnah.html)

Rabbi E. Kornfeld  
Rabbi C. Brown  
<http://www.dafyomi.co.il/calendar/myomi/myomi-thisweek.htm>

#### SHIUR ON KOL HALOSHON

Rabbi Moshe Meir Weiss  
In US dial: 718 906 6400  
Then select: 1 – 2 – 4

### Next Week's Mishnayot...

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	שבת קודש
11 <sup>th</sup> November כ"ו חשוון	12 <sup>th</sup> November כ"ז חשוון	13 <sup>th</sup> November כ"ח חשוון	14 <sup>th</sup> October כ"ט חשוון	15 <sup>th</sup> November א' כסלו	16 <sup>th</sup> November ב' כסלו	17 <sup>th</sup> November ג' כסלו
Nazir 9:3-4	Nazir 9:5 - Sotah 1:1	Sotah 1:2-3	Sotah 1:4-5	Sotah 1:6-7	Sotah 1:8-9	Sotah 2:1-2

