



Parshat Naso 5769

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NOTE: This Shabbat, 7 Sivan, was Parshat Naso in Israel and the second day of Shavuot in Chutz la'Aretz. As a result, for the next four weeks through Shabbat 12 Tammuz, the Kriat HaTorah in Israel will be a Parsha ahead of that in Chutz la'Aretz. Eretz Yisrael readers can click here to view this week's newsletter with Torah on the Parshat HaShavuah.

NEXT WEEK

MINI-SHABBATON: There will be a mini-Shabbaton with HaRav Chizkiyahu Nebenzahl Shlit"א on Shabbat Parshat Beha'alotcha (for Chutz la'Aretz) - June 12th -13th. The Shabbaton will take place in Woodmere at the home of R' Ariel Edelstein. To participate, please RSVP to [R' Ariel Edelstein](#) indicating which part(s) of the Shabbaton you plan to attend (Dinner, Oneg, Shalosh Seudos). Space for the Friday night seudah is limited to the first 20 people who respond. Please only reserve a spot for dinner if you fully intend to come.

SPHARDIC SHABBATON: Netiv Aryeh Sephardic alumni will be having a Shabbaton in West Orange on Shabbat Parshat Beha'alotcha (for chutz la'aretz) June 12-13, with the participation of HaRav Ephraim Maoz and HaRav Yaakov Darmoni. On Motzaei Shabbat HaRav Chizkiyahu Nebenzahl will be joining us for a melave malke. For more information contact [Mark Nakash](#).

Snapshot

Shavuot/Shabbat:

- In keeping with the Yeshiva's annual custom, the talmidim stayed up both nights of Shavuot learning. Many Rabbanim were in attendance, some of whom enlightened the students with special shiurim.
- HaRav Chizkiyahu Nebenzahl hosted an oneg Shabbat in his home on Friday night (second day Yom Tov). At its conclusion, the talmidim returned

to the Beit Midrash for the second round of all-night learning.

Monday:

- There was a special chug for Alumni at the Rubin Shul in Washington Heights with Rav Amos, Rav Yoel Rackovsky, and Rav Ehrman.

Rav Nebenzahl on Parshat Naso

HaRav Nebenzahl asks that his Divrei Torah are not read during Tefillah or the Rabbi's sermon

TWO APPROACHES TO NEZIRUT



NAZIR - HOLY OR SINNER?

This week's *parsha* elaborates greatly on the mitzvot of the *nazir*. What is the root of the word *nazir*? There are two possible roots which depend on the way we view the *nazir*. One possibility is that it is from the same root as *nazoru achor* meaning to turn their backs (see Yeshayahu 1:4). The *nazir* has in a sense turned his back on the pleasures of this world. I would like to suggest that the word *nazir* perhaps is derived from the word *nezer* - a crown - as we find in the *pasuk*: *nezer Elokav al rosho*. According to this latter interpretation, the *nazir* is wearing the crown of *nezirut*.

These two interpretations correspond to the two views presented by Chazal regarding whether or not *nezirut* is something positive. On the one hand, the Torah refers to him as holy (see Bamidbar 6:5), while on the other hand he is required to offer a *korban-chatat*, a sin-offering, upon completion of his term of *nezirut*. Why should a *nazir* be viewed as a sinner? Did he not abstain from drinking wine, cutting his hair, and becoming *tamei* as the Torah requires? Why then must he bring a *korban* reserved for one who has sinned? One view in Chazal and the Rishonim states that he is guilty of descending from the high level he had reached. If he was able to rise to such a level where he separated himself from some of the pleasures of this world, why was he unable to remain on that level?

The other position states: "'He shall offer atonement for having sinned concerning the soul' (Bamidbar 6:11), and concerning which soul has this *nazir* sinned? Rather he has distressed himself from wine" (*Taanit* 11a). This approach in Chazal teaches us that becoming a *nazir* is in and of itself sinful. The A-lmighty has provided us with many pleasures in this world one of which is wine - what gave this man the right to deprive himself of this enjoyment of Hashem's creation? According to the Gemara his sin is simply that he deprived himself of wine, it is not that he did not recite Kiddush over wine, because this mitzvah could have been fulfilled by hearing the Kiddush from someone else.

Chazal, however, teach us that there are times when it is proper for a person to take upon himself the vow of *nezirut*. For example, in response to the question of why the section dealing with *nazir* immediately follows that of *sotah*, Chazal answer "To tell you that anyone who sees a *sotah* in her state of disgrace should take upon

himself to abstain from wine" (Sotah 2a). Wine is a cause of much sin, and anyone who witnesses too much corrupt behavior should take upon himself more stringent behavior than that required of the average person as a way of setting boundaries or fences for himself to protect the levels of holiness.

As we mentioned above, it appears from one perspective based on the Tanach and Chazal that the *nazir* is a holy man - he is not a sinner! In general, the Tanach views *nezirut* as something positive as well. The prophet praises Hashem for all the great gifts He has given us: "I established some of your sons as prophets and some of your young men as nazirites" (Amos 2:11). This would indicate that *nezirut* is very close to the level of prophecy which is associated with *ruach hakodesh*. I cannot say whether or not the *nazir* has the prophet's ability to see into the future, yet what is clear is that the *nazir* appears to be a holy individual not far below the level of prophet.

I would venture to say that these two perspectives on *nazir* are not contradictory. Perhaps the reason for this dichotomy is because there are two sorts of *nezirim*. On the one hand we find Avshalom, the son of David. He may have been a *nazir* who grew his hair and kept the other laws of *nezirut*, yet he was a very bad person. He fought against his father and almost murdered him in addition to his other treacherous acts. In the end he was hanged from his own hair as it became caught in a tree and he was unable to escape. The level of his *nezirut* was unable to save him. On the other hand, we read in this week's *haftarah* about the birth of *Shimshon HaGibor*. He became a *nazir* after an angel informed his mother that she would give birth to a son who would become a *nazir* at birth. From that point on she refrained from partaking of anything that was forbidden to the *nazir* such as wine. Shimshon's *nezirut* gave him the strength to battle the Plishtim and save the Jewish nation. His *nezirut* was fulfillment of a great mitzvah. Furthermore, there is a view in Chazal that the prophet Shmuel was a *nazir*, in fulfillment of his mother's prayers. Certainly Chana was not praying for a son who was going to be a sinner, G-d forbid. Why would his mother wish for him to become a *nazir*? I believe that Chana came to pray for a son on the same day that Eli HaKohen became the leader of *Klal Yisrael*. Eli became the leader following the death of Shimshon. Chana wanted to have a son that would continue in the path of Shimshon, the *nazir* who battled the Plishtim.

IT ALL DEPENDS

Not every *nazir* can be considered a *kadosh* and not every *nazir* can be viewed as a sinner. The Gemara cites incidents of those who would take this vow out of anger, as a means of getting back at someone who did something to them - according to all views this is not to be viewed positively. On the other hand, many take this vow upon themselves in an effort to defeat their *yetzer hara* - this is certainly positive. Shimon HaTzaddik was known to have held that a *nazir* is a sinner. However, the Gemara relates that he met a young man who had just completed his *nezirut* and arrived in the *Beit HaMikdash* with his *korbanot*. The Torah mandates that on the day a *nazir* completes his *nezirut* he must cut his hair. Upon seeing this young man, Shimon HaTzaddik said to him: "you have such beautiful hair, why are you cutting it?" The young man answered: "I saw my reflection in the water and noticed how beautiful my hair looked. I was afraid that it would make me too proud. To avoid this I have decided to cut my hair." The Gemara records that Shimon HaTzaddik kissed the young man and said: "you clearly took upon yourself *nezirut* in order to defeat the *yetzer hara*, such *nezirut* is praiseworthy."

According to all opinions, a person who drinks too much wine should do his utmost

to reduce his wine intake. These two opinions regarding how to view a *nazir* are both correct, depending on whom we are speaking of - some *nezirim* are sinners while others are holy people.

KEDOSHIM TIHYU - DEFEAT THE YETZER HARA

It is unlikely that there is even a single *tanna* or *amora* who views every case of *nezirut* as something negative, after all Hashem sent an angel to make Shimon a *nazir*. As we mentioned, a vow of *nezirut* with the intent of breaking a person's *yetzer hara* is a positive thing. Given the difficulty in keeping to the restrictions of vows, a person wishing to curtail the effects of his *yetzer hara*, best take upon oneself these stringencies, *bli neder*. A person with a drinking problem should perhaps try to abstain or at least lessen his intake. The Ramban views a person who tries to curtail permitted pleasures as fulfilling the dictum of *kedoshim tihyu*. A holy person is one who battles against his *yetzer hara*. The *yetzer hatov* instructs us to eat and drink in order to remain healthy and have the strength to learn Torah. The *yetzer hara* entices us to eat and drink with the opposite intent.

NAZIR VS. BEN SORER UMOREH

In *Parshat Ki Tetze* we read about the *ben sorer umoreh*, the wayward son. He begins by overeating meat and overdrinking wine, which eventually leads to stealing and other terrible acts. Why is such a young man punishable by death for simply having eaten too much meat or having drunk too much wine? The Gemara explains that it is not the specific act of eating meat and drinking wine, but rather his manner. Someone who follows this path will eventually have to be dependent on stealing, at times having to resort to killing people in his way - he is not guilty of any terrible acts now but his lifestyle will lead to acts which are punishable with death by stoning.

Nezirut is supposed to sanctify us, to help us control our *yetzer hara*, while the *ben sorer umoreh* does whatever his heart desires. The Torah gave us *nezirut* as a way of improving our lives. Meat and wine are often used in fulfillment of mitzvot (Rav Dessler used to say, however, that when we eat our *chulent* we must make sure not to eat the Shabbat with the *chulent*. Although we are commanded to eat on Shabbat we must remember that it is a spiritual experience). The *nazir*, however, understands that there is such thing as having too much. We must enjoy this world but not to an extreme. Eating must be *leShem Shamayim* in order to have strength to learn. A Jew eats in order to live while a non-Jew lives in order to eat. We must understand what is of primary importance and what is of secondary importance. What must be primary in our lives is leading lives of Torah and mitzvot. Food is important, it sustains us, but it is not our primary focus. The *ben sorer umoreh*, on the other hand, lives his life simply in order to eat meat and drink wine.

HEALTHY VS. TASTY

I once asked the Rav zt"l the following question: When a person is about to eat two vegetables - one very healthy and one very tasty, over which one does he recite the *bracha*? The *halacha* states that he need only recite the *bracha* over the preferred one - the *chaviv*, and the *bracha* he recites counts for the other vegetable as well (see *Shulchan Aruch Orach Chaim* 211:1). Is the healthier food or the tastier food considered the *chaviv*. The Rav answered that man's purpose in eating is to remain healthy and strong to be able to learn Torah, it is not to fulfill his earthly desires. If so, the healthy vegetable is the *chaviv* and the *bracha* must be recited over that one. Although, just as I can change my mind regarding which one

is more *chaviv* from a taste perspective, the expert doctors can change their opinion regarding which is more healthy, yet "you need not seek to go to any judge other than the one that is in one's own days" (Rosh Hashana 25b). I thought that perhaps the ruling of the Rav zt"l only applies to weekdays and not to Shabbat and Yom Tov, for on Shabbat and Yom Tov we have a mitzvah of *Oneg* and *Simcha* and perhaps one should then specifically choose the food that he enjoys more.

TRANSFORMING OLAM HAZEH INTO OLAM HABA

When we use this world for increased spirituality then in effect we have transformed *olam hazeh* into *olam haba*. Our goal in this world must be more than simply to fill our stomachs. *Olam hazeh* must be a means to an end, not an end in itself. A person who takes *nezirut* upon himself for the right purposes, realizes this. *Nezirut* for this purpose is viewed positively. The *ben sorer umoreh* is traveling in the opposite direction - his goal is to eat and enjoy the pleasures of this world. We just celebrated the Yom Tov of Matan Torah. Prior to the Torah being given, Hashem commanded us to become a *mamlechet kohanim vegoy kadosh* "a kingdom of priests and a holy nation" (Shmot 19:6). This world must not be an end but rather a preparation for the Next World. This world is can be viewed as a stop on our way to the Next World and therefore any enjoyment we get from this world must be only as a means of bringing us into the Next World.

Staff Dvar Torah

by Rav Kenny Hirschhorn, Shana Alef Rebbe

Perhaps it is fitting that *Parshat Naso* is read at this juncture as the year in Yeshiva draws to a close. Among the many topics discussed in the *parsha* are the *halachot* pertaining to a Nazir. While the whole concept of a Nazir is something very foreign to us, for none of us have even met a real-live Nazir (though many of us in Yeshiva have heard *shiurim* in the Nazir room which served as the office of Rav Goren's father-in-law - HaRav David Cohen, father of Haifa's chief Rabbi - HaRav Shaar Yashuv Cohen), there are lessons here which are as timely as they were when the Beit HaMikdash was standing.



The Torah writes: "the Kohen shall make one as a sin-offering and one as an olah-offering, and he shall provide him atonement for having sinned regarding the soul and he shall sanctify his head on that day" (Bamidbar 6:11). Rashi is bothered by the phrase: "for having sinned regarding the soul". We are speaking of a Nazir who refrains from wine, cutting his hair, and coming in contact with the dead. What does the Torah mean by "regarding the soul", and what sin was he guilty of?

Rashi provides two explanations which are diametrically opposing views of what *Nezirut* implies. Rashi writes: "the sin regarding the soul is that he was not careful to keep away from impurity of the dead. The Tanna R' Elazar HaKappar says that his sin was that he pained himself by abstaining from wine." The soul here can refer to the soul of the deceased - the body he has come in contact with, or it can refer to the soul of the Nazir himself - he has violated the mandates of his *Nezirut*, and now requires atonement for having defiled himself. The second explanation offered by Rashi is that his sin was having become a Nazir in the first place. Hashem created a world for us to enjoy. In fact, the Yerushalmi at the end of Massechet Kiddushin writes that we will be held accountable for not having taken the time to

enjoy the permissible pleasures of this world. (R' Shimshon Raphael Hirsh at a very old age told his family that he wished to travel from his home in Germany to Switzerland. When asked why, he replied that when he reaches the Heavenly Tribunal he will be asked "Shimshon, what did you think of My Alps?").

If we were to follow the latter explanation that a Nazir requires atonement for having become a Nazir, the following question can be asked: why does the Torah state: "all the days of his status as a Nazir, he is holy to Hashem" (ibid. 8). If a Nazir is holy then why is it considered sinful for a person to take Nezirut upon himself? Perhaps the fact that in spite having taken this upon himself he has become defiled shows that he was not ready for this high level and will therefore be held accountable for the pleasures of this world which he did not permit himself to enjoy. As Shlomo HaMelech writes: "do not be overly righteous" (Kohelet 7:16). (The idea of a particular lifestyle being appropriate for one person and not necessarily for the other is an idea that we stress in this Yeshiva).

The two viewpoints on Nezirut cited by Rashi is actually the subject of a dispute between two Amoraim which we have just learned in *Taanit* 11a. The Nazir is referred to as both a sinner and as a saint. Based on the ideas we have just presented, we can say that both are possibilities, it all depends on the person becoming a Nazir.

The Rishonim also debate the virtues of becoming a Nazir. The Ramban claims that he is a saint while the Ibn Ezra writes that the fact that the portion discussing Nazir is juxtaposed to Birkat Kohanim teaches us that the Nazir longs for the *kedusha* associated with the *kehuna* and has therefore taken this *nezirut* upon himself. Why then does the Torah consider him a sinner? It must be because he descended from this lifestyle of *kedusha* and has returned to his mundane existence. (Perhaps we can compare this to leaving the sanctity and holiness of the Yeshiva lifestyle and returning to the mundane existence of the outside world - I will leave it up to you to make this parallel).

On the other hand, the Rambam is well-known for his idea of following the Golden Mean. He is opposed to all extremism - a person should try to remain "normal" (sounds like Rav Bina doesn't it?).

R' Moshe Isserlis, the Ram"za provides us with an interesting insight that perhaps can be viewed as bridging these two opinions. Sometimes, in order to achieve the Golden Mean a person needs to temporarily go to an extreme in order to attain a balance. Realizing how overly important his physical pleasures are to him, he becomes a Nazir, not as an end but as a means to wean himself from his base existence.

After experiencing the lifestyle of a Nazir, he has now experienced the extreme life of spirituality. Only now is he ready to blend his spirituality and physicality. This explains why the Torah describes the Nazir as: "holy he shall be" (ibid. 5) - in the future tense. He does not achieve a level of holiness during his Nezirut, but only after attaining that equilibrium.

This has been the goal of the Yeshiva - we are not asking you to learn in Kollel the rest of your lives, but the one or two years of the intense Yeshiva lifestyle was necessary for you to learn to make Torah and mitzvot the most important aspect of your daily lives - whatever path you may choose.

Shabbat Shalom.

Alumni Dvar Torah
by Naftali Kassorla (5766-67)

LACK OF SHOLOM BAYIT IS WORSE THAN THE DESTRUCTION OF THE BEIT HAMIKDASH

Among the many topics discussed in Parshat Naso are the laws concerning the Sotah. I would venture to say that this has to be one of the saddest episodes in the Torah - distrust between husband and wife leading to the destruction of the *sholom bayit*. A woman becomes a Sotah when a man accuses his wife of inappropriate behavior with another man. She is then instructed to drink the bitter waters. In these waters are placed parchment on which the Parshat Sotah is written including Hashem's Ineffable Name. The waters thus erase Hashem's Name.

We must keep in mind that erasing Hashem's Name is a very serious *aveirah*. Rashi explains that the Kohen would send the suspected adulteress from place to place in order to tire her out - perhaps this would cause her to confess and thus save Hashem's Name from being erased. Why is Hashem willing to have His Name erased? Would it not have been sufficient for the Sotah to be interrogated, or perhaps to have her read the Holy Name? A tremendous lesson lies here on the paramount importance Hashem places *sholom bayit*.

In general, most fights begin with a small issue which gets escalated to a point beyond repair. By the time the disagreement reaches that stage, the initial cause is often forgotten, and the argument perpetuates because neither side is willing to compromise for the sake of peace - each side insists on proving that they are right, adding fuel to the already raging fire.

The story of the *sotah* probably did not begin with an accusation of unfaithfulness. It probably began with some small and petty argument which escalated with each side fighting hard to win. By erasing His Name, Hashem is teaching us how we must conduct ourselves. Hashem is in effect saying to the man and woman: "if each of you is not willing to give in for the sake of peace, then I will forfeit - erase My Name." It is worth being the loser for the sake of peace. What I have said is based on the Gemara in Nedarim which points out that Hashem is willing to have His Name erased even for a slight possibility that the woman sinned, anything to bring an end to disputes.

When I was in *Shana Bet*, I had the privilege of assisting my Rebbe HaRav Yoel Yehoshua Shlit"a in the "Ask Rav Nebenzahl" project. Alumni would send *halachic* questions which we would organize and forward to Moreinu V'Rabeinu HaRav Nebenzahl Shlit"a. He once gave us an answer which shook me to the core and which I will never forget. He was asked whether it was proper for a person to rise for *Tikkun Chatzot* if by doing so he would wake up his wife. After a very short pause to gather his thoughts, Rav Nebenzahl said the words that will remain with me forever: "a lack of *sholom bayit* is a greater *churban* than the destruction of the Beit HaMikdash." Think of how many times a day we pray for the restoration of the Beit HaMikdash? We devote so much time and energy to mourning its loss. Yet, the destruction resulting from *sholom bayit* is more severe than the destruction of the Beit HaMikdash! Incredible!

May we all merit growing and perfecting our *middot*. My our re-acceptance of the

Torah and Mitzvot, both *bein adam l'makom* and *bein adam l'chaveiro*, bring us to new spiritual heights, meriting the arrival of Moshiach speedily in our days. Amen.

Shabbat Shalom.

**Visitor Log, Mazal Tov's, Tehillim List
Announcements from the Yeshiva**

Mazal Tov:

The Yeshiva would like to wish a Mazal Tov to:

- Jonathan (5748) and Hindee Rosner on the Bar Mitzvah of their son.
- Richard (5751) and Daphna Soclof on the bat mitzvah of their daughter, Lizzy.
- Jacob (Yaakov, 5760, 62) and Adina Ellis on the birth of a baby girl, Gila Raisel.
- Yaakov (5759-60) and Leah Seidenwar on the birth of a baby boy, Lavi Avraham.
- William (Zev, 5764-65) Eleff on his marriage to Melissa Stieglitz.
- Jason (5755) and Batya Koppel on the birth of a baby girl, Rivka Ruchel.
- Azi (5748) and Jessica Cutter on the birth of a baby boy.
- David (5743) and Marcia Kreinberg, as well as Josh and Barbara Klapper, on the engagement of their children, Tova (sister of Elliot Kreinberg (5769)) and Yitzie (brother of Elli Klapper (5762-63)).
- Steven Jaspán (5758) on his marriage to Hila Reich.

Visitors:

The following people have visited/learned in the Yeshiva:

- Daniel Simon (5768)
- Michael Oppenheimer (5767-68)
- Joseph Skydell (5767-68)
- Gershon Paul (5764-65)
- Gil Simchi (5764-65)
- Daniel Turkel (5767-68)
- Paul (5739) and Sharon Kreditor
- Shaul (5748) and Rebecca Lubetski
- Eric Mirvis (5761-62)

Tehillim List

The following members of our extended YNA family need our tefilot:

- Taube Yehudit bat Temma Gasia
- Yitzchak ben Shayna Ita
- Zev Eliezer ben Chaya Shayndel
- Rueven ben Tova Chaya
- Fruma bat Eeta
- Moshe Zanvel ben Breindel
- Sima Rivkah bat Eidel

- Leah bat Eidel
- Chaim Shmuel Moshe ben Golda
- Aryeh Rephael ben Sarah
- Chaya Sarah bat Fanya Luna
- Yitzchak ben Tova
- Fraida Rachel bat Sarah Milcha
- Lea bat Bracha
- Miriam Rivka bat Adina Leah
- Dina Sarah bat Shaindel Mira
- Tali bat D'vorah Bina
- Tobah Pessal bat Esther
- Nachum Tzvi ben Ratza
- Lottie Adina bat Claudia
- Orly bat Yaerah
- Miriam Naomi bat Sarah
- Yehudis Sara bas Esther
- Dov Eliyahu ben Mindel Hudis
- Rahamim ben Miriam
- Hinda bat Sara Leah
- Rivka Zelda bat Bracha
- Miriam Leba bat Esther
- Dovid Ben Miriam
- Yaackov Chaim Meir ben Miriam
- Avraham ben Leah
- Chaim Naftali Yaakov ben Shifra Shaulah
- Michael Yosef ben Tzipora
- Gidon Shlomo ben Esther
- Haya Rebecca Rivka bat Jeanne Yaffa

[Send Us Your Announcements](#)

Please, if you have any smachot or chas v'shalom, less happy occasions, [let our office know](#) so we can keep everybody updated. Are you visiting Israel? - [let us know!](#) We'd love to host you for a shabbat meal, davening, a shiur and would love for you to stop by.

Shabbat Shalom,

HaRav Aharon Bina, Netiv Aryeh
Yeshivat Netiv Aryeh

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