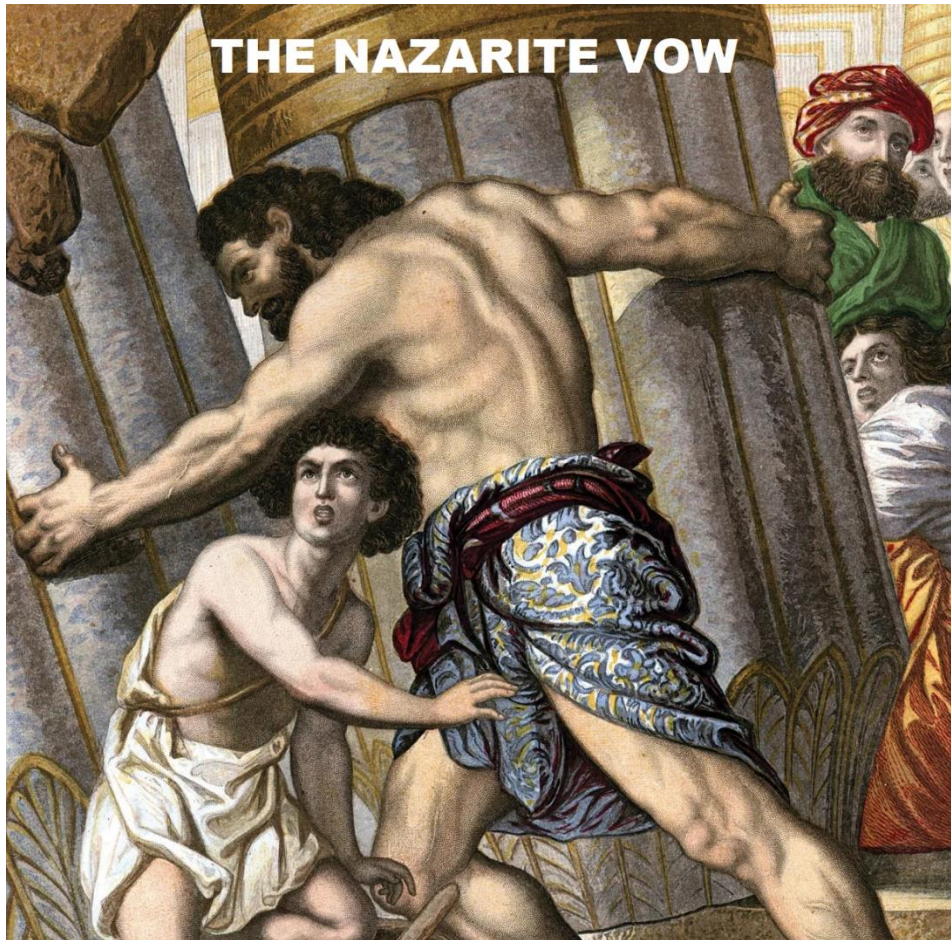




Revelation 4:8: *And the four Living Ones had each of them six wings about him; and they were full of eyes within: and they rest not day and night, saying, **Holy, holy, holy**, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come.*

Those Called Out into the Ecclesia of God, are to BE Holy, Holy, Holy, or separate, separate, separate. When called out they are to separate themselves from their former way of life, and live anew-devoted and dedicated to serving God, and the Lord Jesus Christ. The children of Israel were taught this in their approach to God in Divine worship, where they reached the outer court of the tabernacle, seeing the priests go into the Holy Place, and being told about the Most Holy Place beyond, into which the High Priest went in once a year on the Day of atonement. An ongoing process of separation in

their approach to God. It was the same in their national organisation. In this book of Numbers we can see this same principle of separation in the first few chapters. The separation through the census of soldiers, Levites and priests, and their specific functions, showed how the nation would be dedicated in **their duties** for the work of God. The separation in the camp of aspects which pollute, such as leprosy, even those which had issues or defied by the dead were to go without the camp. Even those involved in secret sin were given ordinances so that the camp was not defiled. So it was that the nation would be dedicated in their bodies. In the teaching of the Nazarite vow in Chapter 6 the nation is taught via a living parable how they were as individuals to be dedicated in their minds. Holy Holy Holy.

The Nazarite vow.

This was a law, which provided for an individual who was not a priest who could make a vow, and dedicate himself utterly to the work of the Will of God. This vow, and the ritual associated with it was completely open to women as well as men.

In order to do this, they had to make life changing sacrifices. This was a affirmative, positive thing that they could do. Ironically it involved giving up specific things.

- Not allowed to touch wine or strong drink.
- Not allowed to have any drink with grapes as an ingredient.
- Not allowed to eat, or drink anything associated with the vine.
- Not allowed to cut the hair in any way.
- Not allowed to come near any dead body. Not even for a close relative.

Keeping these prohibitions was not as easy as it sounds. Practical illustrations are given, on how the Nazarite was to keep himself devoted and separated for this vow.

verse 9 **he hath defiled the head of his consecration**

- If someone suddenly died next to the Nazarite, they would be ritually defiled, and so seven days afterwards had to shave all his or her hair off
- on the eighth day they had to bring 2 turtledoves or 2 pigeons to be offered at the tabernacle, one to be offered as a sin offering and the other as a burnt offering
- They had to rededicate to the Lord all the days of their separation and bring a first year male lamb as a reparation but all the time dedicated before would not be counted.

Finally when the length of time which had initially been promised by the Nazarite had been fulfilled

- They had to bring 3 sheep – a male lamb for a burnt offering, a female lamb for a sin offering, and a ram for a peace offering
- a basket of bread made without yeast, some cakes of fine flour mixed with olive oil, some yeast free wafers but smeared with olive oil, with grain offering and their drink offerings.
- The priest had to offer all this before the Lord.
- The Nazarite then shaved all their hair off their head at the entrance of the tabernacle, and threw it in the fire where their offering was burning.
- At the same time, the priest would take a shoulder of the ram, with some of the bread, and put them in the hands of the Nazarite, and then the priest would wave the offering around
- Then that would be eaten by the priest together with other choice parts of the ram.
- Only then could the individual drink wine, and then carry on as a normal citizen.

We have described the Nazarite in such a way that it could be a man or woman. In the chapter all the way through though it is in the male gender. It must be remembered that under the law of Moses, if a woman made such a vow, her husband or father could annul such a

vow, and so even if a woman made such a dedication – if she failed in it, then the head of the house was responsible. He would have to provide the offerings as well.

What did it all mean?

To begin with the word Nazarite is from the Hebrew *Nazar* which means to separate. We commenced by saying how the whole nation was to be separate in its behaviour, holy holy holy, - in duties, body and mind. This opportunity to dedicate a part of one's life to God in such a public way, was for the benefit of all the nation, who would celebrate such an effort, and it was a parable of how the people as a whole should give their lives to God.

Of course women and men were commanded to do this, it must be an automatic default setting for all who are called out. There must be no difference between male and female, bond and free, all are one in Christ. – Galatians 3:28.

There are not many examples of those who embarked upon this dedication. Samson, Samuel and John the Baptist are good examples. The only female example is Samson's mother – Judges 13:4

As noted above the most obvious difference was the abstaining from anything to do with the vine, *from the kernel even to the husk*. Wine and other strong drink was permitted in the congregation, but in a controlled way. Priests were not allowed to have it. The reason being, that too much of it impairs clear thought and rational judgement, and that it is very easy to have too much. Drinking wine or strong drink was encouraged – *to make glad the heart of man* (Psalm 104:15), or *for thy stomach's sake*, (1 Timothy 5:23) and was actually commanded to drink strong drink in Deuteronomy 14:26 and Proverbs 31: 6 *Give strong drink unto him that is ready to perish, and wine unto those that be of heavy hearts*. However, the key is moderation. Human beings are not very good at moderation. What is it that normally



moderates? Society is self-moderating. The nations around Israel used alcohol very publicly to make users so inebriated to be unconscious in ritual religious orgies and dances to their gods. Alcohol was used to lose self-consciousness, to be transformative for wrong reasons. Israel was being taught to be self-conscious, to have discipline of the mind to moderate not by what society does – the other nations, but to moderate by the Word of God, Divine thinking, not the celebration of human lusts, but the celebration of the Divine mind. Alcohol, as a gift from God is for specific reasons, and must be used a such. The Nazarite in abstaining from all strong drink – and in fact anything associated with it, was making a public statement, going well over, above and beyond the requirement to moderate the mind. Showing the congregation how such self-control imposed upon the body, is through control of the mind.

Paul also advances this thinking: Ephesians 5:18 *And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit.* This alternative hints at another way of being drunk. To be filled with the Spirit, is to be drink deeply of the Word of God. The society in which we live is drunk, with no self-moral awareness, no sense of moderation, are drunk on false ideology. In fact, the prophet says as much: Jeremiah 51: 7: *Babylon hath been a golden cup in the Lord's hand, that made all the earth drunken: the nations have drunken of her wine; therefore the nations are mad.*



During the time of the vow, the Nazarite was not allowed to cut the hair of the head. If during the course of the dedicated time allocated to the vow, the individual broken one of the rules, then they had to cut off the hair – shave it right off, and start again. We recall how the Lord Jesus said to his disciples that every hair of the head is numbered, (Matthew 10:30) Some suggest that growing the hair long showed the Nazarites were representing the Bride of Christ, but perhaps it is simpler than that and more powerful. The hair of

the head continues to grow all the time. It needs to be kept under control. But the point of the Nazarite shaving the hair and starting all over again, - if they broke the rules, and the former time would not count towards the vow, - shows that the hair represents the life, the time dedicated to God. Man needs to be cut down like the grass of the field to be kept under control. But the disciples of Christ whose Head is Christ who moderate their mind, and dedicate their time, and life, will not be cut off, but will be a glory to their Head, and the hair of his head of the Ancient of Days like the pure wool, and His Strength will be in his hair, as the philistines of this world will discover. It is perhaps helpful to notice how it is the Head of the Nazarite, crowned with glory – (long hair not shameful at all for this purpose), that stands out. If someone did suddenly by them it was their Head that was defiled- see verse 7 and 9. The consecration of God was upon his Head.



The Nazarite was to come at no dead body, not even to mourn a beloved. (Matthew 10:37 *He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me.*) In Israel where men and women lived that much closer to nature and were more familiar with life and death than we in this modern world, this would have been no easy task. Mourning the dead was an important aspect of life, and to make a point often the prophets were commanded not to. So a Nazarite showing complete aversion to the dead was a very public declaration.

The Nazarite was to be a personification of Holiness, of freedom from sin, a personification of life in the Kingdom of God. He was to be a living demonstration of new life, where death would be swallowed up in victory. The seriousness of undertaking such a vow, was such that if a Nazarite actually allowed himself to be defiled by the dead, he had sinned! It was regarded as a sin. (See verse 11).

Maybe it was not his fault, but such was the significance attached to his role as a lesson to others, that offerings had to be made.

The Nazarite was then in the days of consecration a type of the Anointed, an example of the Royal Priesthood (1 Peter 2:9) In his glorification, and separation from mankind, Jesus is the ultimate Nazarite. Why he vowed Matthew 26:29 *But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom.* When the days of his separation are fulfilled there will be a sacrifice made – that of the nations! But Jesus was Nazarite in a literal sense, whereas all other Nazarites have been so in a symbolic sense. Jesus separated himself from sin, and the effects of sin throughout his life. Every day was dedicated to God, - his whole life, he never became defiled through the liquor of false doctrine. Every strand of his life was controlled, bound under the crown of righteousness, never allowing himself to be defiled by the dead corpse of Judea. His whole life was a vow. The New Covenant. When the days of his vow were fulfilled, he willingly provided the offerings. He had been a living sacrifice unto the Lord.

So then Romans 12:1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.

A lamb for a burnt offering, a ewe lamb for a sin offering, a ram for a peace offering, meal and drink offering, including the bread free from yeast. As a Nazarite fulfilling a vow – why a sin offering? Jesus did no sin, but first for himself and then for the people, Human nature is itself corrupt, inherited from the first sinner – Eve, a ewe lamb then appropriate, a burnt offering signifying the complete dedication of the life, a peace offering symbolic of unity in fellowship, and the meal and drink speaking of the devotion to God, all presented to the priest, who in turn would with the offerer wave the portion – as if giving it a new life – because this is exactly what God has promised. Every man's vow has an end - because of death, but the promise of God is eternal, and that eternity is His Promise to

those who give their life to Him in their mortality, and separate their mind, moderating it with the Word, controlling their thoughts and glorifying their Head.

Brother Terry