



Greater Washington Community Kollel SHABBOS DELIGHTS

TORAH MINUTE

IN MEMORY OF RABBI KALMAN WINTER ZT" L

On Closer Examination

Presented by Rabbi Hillel Shaps

Kollel Scholar, and Director of Special Projects for the Kollel

This week's parsha includes the laws pertaining to a Nazir, a person who has taken an oath to abstain from consuming grape products and from becoming ritually impure for a period of time. Upon the conclusion of his Nazirite period, the Nazir must come to the Tabernacle to engage in a series of rituals. In introducing this concluding process, the Torah (6:13) instructs us that the Nazir "shall bring him to the entrance of the Tent of Meeting." Rashi comments that although the verse states that he shall bring "him," it means that he should bring himself. This obviously demands an explanation. Why does the Torah refer to the Nazir in the third person?

Rabbi Baruch Mordechai Ezechai explains that the Nazir accepted upon himself this oath in order to improve and elevate his spiritual state. As he prepares to complete his oath, it is now time to perform a self-assessment as to whether he has accomplished his goals. A person, however, has difficulty seeing his own blemishes. In order to properly assess himself, the Nazir would have to attempt to examine himself objectively, as if he were a different person. Therefore, the Torah says he shall bring "him" – because at this moment, as he scrutinizes himself to determine whether he has successfully achieved his predetermined spiritual goals, he must put himself in the place of an outsider who is making an assessment of "him."

There are numerous lessons we can learn from this. First, while becoming a Nazir isn't necessarily the right idea for all of us, we learn from the Nazir about the importance of setting goals and guidelines to help us reach loftier spiritual heights. Second, after establishing goals, we must intermittently perform a self-assessment of our progress to make sure we are on track. Finally, when we are assessing ourselves, we should remember to try and look past our personal biases by imagining what an onlooker would see when gazing upon us.

Wishing you a Good Shabbos!

TABLE TALK

POINT TO PONDER

On the seventh day he shall shave his head (6:9).

The nazir first goes to the mikvah and then shaves his head (Rashi Nazir 44b).

One must cut his fingernails before going to the mikvah. Otherwise, the fingernails are considered a separation between one's body and the water (Bais Yosef Yoreh Deah 198).

How can a Nazir go to the mikveh before cutting his hair? Is this not a separation between his body and the water? (Chasam Sofer Yoreh Deah 195)

PARSHA RIDDLE

On average, how many marital conflicts did Aaron HaKohen resolve daily?

Please see next week's issue for the answer.

Last week's riddle:

Even according to the opinions that after Mashiach the avoda will return to the firstborns, which two avodas will the Kohanim still perform?

Answer: 1) Lighting the Menorah and
2) Bringing the Ketores (Ramban).

HATORAH V'HAMITZVAH

HALACHA INSIGHTS FROM THE PARSHA

In *Parashas Naso* (6:11), a Nazarite is commanded to bring a sin-offering. As we have noted in previous years, the Talmud (*Bava Kama* 91b) cites an explanation that the offering is to atone for the sin of having (unnecessarily) deprived himself of the enjoyment of wine. Elsewhere (*Nedarim* 10a), the Talmud derives from this that one who engages in (discretionary) fasting is called a sinner.

But in yet another discussion of the topic, the Talmud (*Taanis* 11a-b) again begins by citing the opinion that the Nazarite and the faster are considered sinners, but then proceeds to cite two other opinions: one that considers them both 'holy,' and one that invokes the term 'pious' (although Rashi and Tosafos actually disagree whether it is the faster, or the one who refrains from fasting, who is termed pious).

The Tosafos complicate matters even further, noting that the same sage (Shmuel) who maintains that the faster is considered a sinner, elsewhere maintains that fasting is permitted, and even a *mitzvah*! They explain that although fasting is inherently sinful, the *mitzvah* involved outweighs the sin. This is obviously difficult to understand.

R. An-Shlomo Astruc, in his *Midrashei Ha'Torah*, adopts a similar position. He elaborates that the 'sin' requiring 'atonement' is not the Nazarite's abstemiousness itself. Rather, the issue is that his urges have become so powerful that he is compelled to become a Nazarite and renounce wine "which cheers G-d and man" (*Shoftim* 9:13) in order to subdue his base nature and evil characteristics and eliminate his carnal lusts. He explains that just as some substances are good for the physically healthy but harmful to the ill, similarly, wine is good for the morally healthy but abstention therefrom is a tonic for the morally deranged (cf. *Gilyonot Nechama* year 5710).

The Ramban in his commentary to our *parashah* sides with the view that Nazarism is praiseworthy. He explains that a Nazarite ideally ought to maintain his elevated status permanently - "he should remain all his days a Nazarite and holy to his G-d" - and that by declining to do so, he commits a grave sin, "and he requires atonement as he returns to becoming defiled by the lusts of the world."

PRESENTED BY
RABBI YITZHAK GROSSMAN, ROSH CHABURAH

KIDS KORNER

WHO AM I?

#1 WHO AM I?

1. For some I am daily.
2. For most I am Holy day.
3. For many I am Friday night.
4. I am three-fold.

#2 WHO AM I?

1. I am like Bava Basra.
2. Compare me to Chapter 119.
3. My hint is Nachshon's father.
4. One more than Avraham's life

Last Week's Answers:

#1 *The Encampment of Bnei Yisrael* (I'm from the Wholesome ones funeral; we were flagged; four split; stop and go.

#2 *The month of Sivan* (I have weeks before a week; third or ninth; reception happened in me; did you see the van?)

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who answer a
"Who Am I?"
correctly will
be entered
into a raffle to

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