

## **Day 153 - FRIDAY: May 12th**

### Numbers 6

#### **Numbers 6:1-27 NKJV**

Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, "Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: 'When either a man or woman consecrates an offering to take the vow of a Nazirite, to separate himself to the LORD, he shall separate himself from wine and similar drink; he shall drink neither vinegar made from wine nor vinegar made from similar drink; neither shall he drink any grape juice, nor eat fresh grapes or raisins. All the days of his separation he shall eat nothing that is produced by the grapevine, from seed to skin. 'All the days of the vow of his separation no razor shall come upon his head; until the days are fulfilled for which he separated himself to the LORD, he shall be holy. Then he shall let the locks of the hair of his head grow. All the days that he separates himself to the LORD he shall not go near a dead body. He shall not make himself unclean even for his father or his mother, for his brother or his sister, when they die, because his separation to God is on his head. All the days of his separation he shall be holy to the LORD. 'And if anyone dies very suddenly beside him, and he defiles his consecrated head, then he shall shave his head on the day of his cleansing; on the seventh day he shall shave it. Then on the eighth day he shall bring two turtledoves or two young pigeons to the priest, to the door of the tabernacle of meeting; and the priest shall offer one as a sin offering and the other as a burnt offering, and make atonement for him, because he sinned in regard to the corpse; and he shall sanctify his head that same day. He shall consecrate to the LORD the days of his separation, and bring a male lamb in its first year as a trespass offering; but the former days shall be lost, because his separation was defiled. 'Now this is the law of the Nazirite: When the days of his separation are fulfilled, he shall be brought to the door of the tabernacle of meeting. And he shall present his offering to the LORD: one male lamb in its first year without

blemish as a burnt offering, one ewe lamb in its first year without blemish as a sin offering, one ram without blemish as a peace offering, a basket of unleavened bread, cakes of fine flour mixed with oil, unleavened wafers anointed with oil, and their grain offering with their drink offerings. 'Then the priest shall bring them before the LORD and offer his sin offering and his burnt offering; and he shall offer the ram as a sacrifice of a peace offering to the LORD, with the basket of unleavened bread; the priest shall also offer its grain offering and its drink offering. Then the Nazirite shall shave his consecrated head at the door of the tabernacle of meeting, and shall take the hair from his consecrated head and put it on the fire which is under the sacrifice of the peace offering. 'And the priest shall take the boiled shoulder of the ram, one unleavened cake from the basket, and one unleavened wafer, and put them upon the hands of the Nazirite after he has shaved his consecrated hair, and the priest shall wave them as a wave offering before the LORD; they are holy for the priest, together with the breast of the wave offering and the thigh of the heave offering. After that the Nazirite may drink wine.' "This is the law of the Nazirite who vows to the LORD the offering for his separation, and besides that, whatever else his hand is able to provide; according to the vow which he takes, so he must do according to the law of his separation." And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: "Speak to Aaron and his sons, saying, 'This is the way you shall bless the children of Israel. Say to them: "The LORD bless you and keep you; The LORD make His face shine upon you, And be gracious to you; The LORD lift up His countenance upon you, And give you peace." ' "So they shall put My name on the children of Israel, and I will bless them."

### **Daily Deep Dive:**

Here is what the UCG reading plan states regarding the Nazirite vow: "We usually think only of men as Nazirites, as John the Baptist apparently was (compare Luke 1:15). But,

surprisingly, women too could take the vow of a Nazirite (Numbers 6:2). However, in the case of the woman, her husband or father could disallow the vow and God would not hold her to it (Numbers 30:5). Nazirites neither drank wine or strong drink, and stayed away from grapes altogether for the duration of the vow. They were to let their hair grow long, and bring special offerings to the tabernacle. The vow was for a set time, at the end of which they were to be purified for seven days (compare Numbers 6:9; Acts 21:27), cut their hair and burn it, and partake of certain offerings, including unleavened bread and oil. When the vow was fulfilled they could, once again, drink wine and eat grapes. The vow was usually voluntarily taken for the purpose of making a special request of God, to give thanks to God, or to dedicate themselves to some other such purpose. There are biblical examples of the vow being a lifelong one (Judges 13:5). A vow was often made in thanksgiving to God; it was not something to replace weakness of character in the sense of someone needing the vow and its visibility to others in order to be kept in line with God's way.

Incidentally, we should not confuse the words Nazirite and Nazarene. The word Nazirite comes from the root *nazir*,

meaning to "separate" or "keep away from," while Nazarene denotes a resident of Nazareth. Confusing the words, some have argued that Jesus Christ was under a Nazirite vow, and they employ this reasoning to argue for Him having had long hair. But Jesus was not a Nazirite, for He drank wine (Matthew 11:18–19) and on at least one occasion touched a dead body (Luke 8:51–54). And thus, He would not have had long hair (compare 1 Corinthians 11:14). The apostle Paul actually did take a Nazirite vow, not cutting his hair until the vow's completion (Acts 18:18). And he later paid for and shared in the purification rites of four others completing a Nazirite vow (Acts 21:23–27).

Interestingly, since "Nazirite" means "separated one," Christ and all Christians are Nazirites in a spiritual sense—our lives being consecrated to God. The Nazirite vow is one of a number of Old Testament actions or rites that can be viewed as parallels to the Christian's commitment to God at baptism." [END]

Verse 3 – The Nazarite vow represented the entire surrender of oneself to God. In some regards it was more restrictive than the rules of the priest. We see clearly that priests were to avoid alcohol while serving in the tabernacle (Leviticus 10:9), but here we see that someone taking on a

Nazarite vow was to avoid alcohol the entire time of the vow. God went beyond even alcohol but restricted anything dealing with a grape (including raisins and juice). Here is what the Ellicott's commentary states: "The prohibition to eat any of the produce of the vine, even of that which was not intoxicating, seems designed to denote the entire consecration of the Nazirite to the Divine service".

Verse 5 – They were not to cut their hair which verse 7 tells us was to be a sign that they were separated to God during this time. Any man having long hair would immediately be recognized as being under the Nazarite vow.

Verses 6 & 7 – As mentioned above, in some regards, the Nazarite vow was more restrictive than the rules for the priest. Here again, in Leviticus 21 the priests were allowed to bury their mother, father, children, brother, or virgin sister, but here, like the High Priest (Leviticus 21:11), the Nazarite was to stay away from all dead bodies. As we saw in Leviticus, death and decay made one unclean and the Nazarite was to avoid any dead body as they were dedicated to God as Holy.

Verse 11 – In this dedicated state, defilement was sin and required a sin offering, a trespass offering, and a burnt offering.

Verse 12 – Regarding “the days before shall be lost”, John Gill’s commentary states: “which were before the pollution, how near soever the time of Nazariteship being at an end was, whether his vow was for thirty days, or a hundred, or a whole year; be it what it will, and the pollution happened on the last of those days, all were lost; he was obliged to begin again, and go through the whole time he at first vowed; and this was the case if he drank the least quantity of wine, or shaved ever so little of the hair of his head, or was any ways polluted by the dead; and this severity, as it may seem, was used to make him cautious that he broke not his vow by any means” [END].

Verse 14 – At the conclusion of the vow, the Nazarite presents a series of offerings: Sin, Burnt, Grain, Drink & Peace offerings. We’ve looked at these in detail in Leviticus.

Verse 18 – The hair now shaved off, is burned under the peace offering because it was the sign of the Nazarite’s vow. Adam Clarke’s commentary states: “The hair was

permitted to grow for this purpose; and as the Nazarite was a kind of sacrifice, offered to God through the whole term of his nazarate or separation, and no human flesh or blood could be offered on the altar of the Lord, he offered his hair at the conclusion of his separation, as a sacrifice – that hair which was the token of his complete subjection to the Lord, and which was now considered as the Lord's property.”

[END]

Verse 21 – John Gill's commentary states: “the above offerings were what he was obliged unto by the law of God, even though a poor man; but, besides these, it was expected of a man of substance, that he would voluntarily of himself offer more, according to his ability and the length of the time of his Nazariteship” [END].

Verses 22 through 27: The UCG reading plan states: “In 1979 the Israeli archaeologist Gabriel Barkay was excavating some ancient burial caves overlooking the Hinnom Valley, just to the south-west of the Old City of Jerusalem, when to his surprise he found one that was undisturbed. It contained the bones of at least ninety-five people, some with pottery, arrowheads, pieces of gold and

silver jewellery buried alongside them. But Barkay's most spectacular find in this cave was a pair of small cylindrical scrolls made of pure silver. Although insignificant-looking when first found, the largest no more than 4 inches long, they were both found to bear eighteen lines of Palaeo-Hebrew script when unrolled, including the words:

*"May Yahweh bless you and keep you*

*"May Yahweh cause his face to shine upon you and grant you peace.*

"As palaeographic specialists are generally agreed, the date when these words were incised on the scrolls can be no later than the 7th century BC, i.e. the time of [the prophet] Jeremiah. Since they are none other than the 'priestly blessing' of Numbers 6:24–26, still used in both Jewish and Christian liturgies, they are by far the oldest portion of Biblical text yet discovered" (Ian Wilson, *The Bible Is History*, 1999, p. 173).

This discovery was a major blow to those scholars and other Bible critics who claim that the books of Moses were actually not written until the Hellenistic period in the third century B.C." [END]