

## ~NAZIRITE (660)

(Naz'i-rite) [One Singled Out, Dedicated One, Separated One]

- Special Vows
- Requirements If Nazirite Became Defiled
- Requirements At Conclusion Of Vow
- Lifetime Nazirites

• There were two classes of **Nazirites**. Those who volunteered and those who were such by divine appointment. The regulations governing volunteer Nazirites are found in the book of (**Numbers, Chapter 6**).

• Either men or women could take a special vow to Yehowah to live as Nazirites for a period of time. However, if a daughters father or a wifes husband heard the vow and did not approve, he could cancel it.

• Then Moses spoke to the heads of the tribes of the sons of Israel, saying; This is the word that Yehowah has commanded. (**Numbers 30:1**)

• In case a man makes a vow to Yehowah or swears an oath to bind a vow of abstinence upon his soul, he must not violate his word. According to all that has gone out of his mouth he should do. (**Numbers 30:2**)

• And in case a woman makes a vow to Yehowah or she does bind herself with a vow of abstinence in the house of her father in her youth. (**Numbers 30:3**)

• And her father actually hears her vow or her abstinence vow that she has bound upon her soul and her father does keep silent toward her, all her vows must also stand, and every abstinence vow that she has bound upon her soul will stand. (**Numbers 30:4**)

• But if her father has forbidden her on the day of his hearing all her vows or her abstinence vows that she has bound upon her soul, it will not stand, but Yehowah will forgive her, because her father forbade her. (**Numbers 30:5**)

• However, if she at all happens to belong to a husband, and her vow is upon her or the thoughtless promise of her lips that she has bound upon her soul. (**Numbers 30:6**)

- And her husband actually hears it and keeps silent toward her on the day of his hearing it, her vows must also stand or her abstinence vows that she has bound upon her soul will stand. (**Numbers 30:7**)
- But if her husband on the day of hearing it forbids her, he has also annulled her vow that was upon her or the thoughtless promise of her lips that she bound upon her soul, and Yehowah will forgive her. (**Numbers 30:8**)
- There were three principal restrictions resting on those taking the **Nazirite** vow.

(1) They were to drink no intoxicating beverage, neither were they to eat any product of the grapevine, whether unripe, ripe, or dried, nor drink any of its juice, whether in the fresh, fermented, or vinegar state.

(2) They were not to cut the hair of their heads.

(3) They were not to touch a dead body, even that of the closest relative father, mother, brother, or sister.

- And Yehowah spoke further to Moses, saying; (**Numbers 6:1**)
- Speak to the sons of Israel and you must say to them; In case a man or a woman takes a special vow to live as a **Nazirite** to Yehowah. (**Numbers 6:2**)
- He should keep away from wine and intoxicating liquor. He should not drink the vinegar of wine or the vinegar of intoxicating liquor, nor drink any liquid made from grapes, nor eat grapes either fresh or dried. (**Numbers 6:3**)
- All the days of his **Naziriteship** he should not eat anything at all that is made from the wine vine, from the unripe grapes to the skins. (**Numbers 6:4**)
- All the days of the vow of his **Naziriteship** no razor should pass over his head, until the days that he should be separated to Yehowah come to the full, he should prove holy by letting the locks of the hair of his head grow. (**Numbers 6:5**)
- All the days of his keeping separate to Yehowah he may not

come toward any dead soul. (**Numbers 6:6**)

- Not even for his father or his mother or his brother or his sister may he defile himself when they die, because the sign of his **Naziriteship** to his God is upon his head. (**Numbers 6:7**)

## ·· **Special Vows**

- The person taking this special vow was to live as a **Nazirite** that is, dedicated, separated to Yehowah and not for the plaudits of men due to a showy display of fanatical asceticism. Rather, all the days of his **Naziriteship** he is holy to Yehowah.

- Speak to the sons of Israel and you must say to them, In case a man or a woman takes a special vow to live as a **Nazirite** to Yehowah. (**Numbers 6:2**)

- All the days of his **Naziriteship** he is holy to Yehowah. (**Numbers 6:8**)

- The blessings of your father will indeed be superior to the blessings of the eternal mountains, to the ornament of the indefinitely lasting hills. They will continue upon the head of Joseph, even upon the crown of the head of the one singled out from his brothers. (**Genesis 49:26**) Footnote

- The requirements laid on **Nazirites**, therefore, had special significance and meaning in the worship of Yehowah. Like the High Priest who, because of his holy office, was to touch no dead body, not even that of one of his closest relatives, so too the **Nazirite**.

- The High Priest and the underpriests, because of the serious responsibility of their offices, were forbidden to drink wine or intoxicating liquor when performing their sacred duties before Yehowah.

- And Yehowah proceeded to speak to Aaron, saying; (**Leviticus 10:8**)

- Do not drink wine or intoxicating liquor, you and your sons with you, when you come into the tent of meeting, that you may not die. It is a statute to time indefinite for your generations. (**Leviticus 10:9**)

- Both in order to make a distinction between the holy thing and the profane and between the unclean thing and the clean. (**Leviticus 10:10**)
- And in order to teach the sons of Israel all the regulations that Yehowah has spoken to them by means of Moses. (**Leviticus 10:11**)
- And as for the High Priest of his brothers upon whose head the anointing oil would be poured and whose hand was filled with power to wear the garments, he should not let his head go ungroomed, and he should not tear his garments. (**Leviticus 21:10**)
- And he should not come to any dead soul. For his father and his mother he may not defile himself. (**Leviticus 21:11**)
- Furthermore, the **Nazirite** should prove holy by letting the locks of the hair of his head grow, such serving as a crowning sign by which all could quickly recognize his holy **Naziriteship**.
- All the days of the vow of his **Naziriteship** no razor should pass over his head, until the days that he should be separated to Yehowah come to the full, he should prove holy by letting the locks of the hair of his head grow. (**Numbers 6:5**)
- The same **Hebrew** word *na-zir'* was used in regard to the **unpruned** vines during the sacred Sabbath and Jubilee years.
- The growth from spilled kernels of your harvest you must not reap, and the grapes of your unpruned vine you must not gather. There should occur a year of complete rest for the land. (**Leviticus 25:5**)
- A Jubilee is what that fiftieth year will become for you. You must not sow seed nor reap the lands growth from spilled kernels nor gather the grapes of its unpruned vines. (**Leviticus 25:11**)
- Interesting too is the fact that the gold plate on the front of the turban of the High Priest, engraved with the words, **Holiness belongs to Yehowah**, was called the holy sign of dedication **Hebrew**, *ne'zer*, from the same root as *na-zir'*.
- Finally they made the shining plate, the holy sign of dedication,

- out of pure gold and inscribed upon it an inscription with the engravings of a seal, **Holiness belongs to Yehowah.** (**Exodus 39:30**)
- Then they put a string of blue thread to it in order to put it upon the turban up above, just as Yehowah had commanded Moses. (**Exodus 39:31**)
  - Likewise, the official headpiece, or diadem, worn by Israel's anointed kings was also called a *ne'zer*.
  - So I stood over him and definitely put him to death, for I knew that he could not live after he had fallen. Then I took the diadem that was upon his head and the bracelet that was upon his arm, that I might bring them to my lord here. (**2 Samuel 1:10**)
  - Then he brought the son of the king out and put upon him the diadem and the Testimony, and so they made him king and anointed him. And they began to clap their hands and say; Let the king live! (**2 Kings 11:12**)
  - In the Christian congregation the apostle says that a woman's long hair is given to her instead of a headdress. It is a natural reminder to her that she is in a position different from the man, she should be mindful of her submissive position under God's arrangement.
  - So such requirements uncut hair, unnatural for the man, total abstinence from wine as well as the need to be clean and undefiled impressed on the dedicated **Nazirite** the importance of self-denial and complete submission to the will of Yehowah.
  - Now I commend you because in all things you have me in mind and you are holding fast the traditions just as I handed them on to you. (**1 Corinthians 11:2**)
  - But I want you to know that the head of every man is the Christ. In turn the head of a woman is the man. In turn the head of the Christ is God. (**1 Corinthians 11:3**)
  - Every man that prays or prophesies having something on his head shames his head. (**1 Corinthians 11:4**)
  - But every woman that prays or prophesies with her head uncovered shames her head, for it is one and the same as if she

- were a woman with a shaved head. (**1 Corinthians 11:5**)
- For if a woman does not cover herself, let her also be shorn, but if it is disgraceful for a woman to be shorn or shaved, let her be covered. (**1 Corinthians 11:6**)
  - For a man ought not to have his head covered, as he is God's image and glory, but the woman is man's glory. (**1 Corinthians 11:7**)
  - For man is not out of woman, but woman out of man. (**1 Corinthians 11:8**)
  - And, what is more, man was not created for the sake of the woman, but woman for the sake of the man. (**1 Corinthians 11:9**)
  - That is why the woman ought to have a sign of authority upon her head because of the angels. (**1 Corinthians 11:10**)
  - Besides, in connection with the Lord neither is woman without man nor man without woman. (**1 Corinthians 11:11**)
  - For just as the woman is out of the man, so also the man is through the woman, but all things are out of God. (**1 Corinthians 11:12**)
  - Judge for your own selves. Is it fitting for a woman to pray uncovered to God? (**1 Corinthians 11:13**)
  - Does not nature itself teach you that if a man has long hair, it is a dishonor to him. (**1 Corinthians 11:14**)
  - But if a woman has long hair, it is a glory to her? Because her hair is given her instead of a headdress. (**1 Corinthians 11:15**)
  - However, if any man seems to dispute for some other custom, we have no other, neither do the congregations of God. (**1 Corinthians 11:16**)

**See Also HAIR**

**See Also HEAD COVERING**

**See Also NATURE**

**See Also CROWN**

**See Also DEDICATION**

## · Requirements If Nazirite Became Defiled

- A **Nazirite** would become unclean for seven days if he touched a dead body, even if, because of an accident beyond his control, he inadvertently touched someone that died alongside him.
- On the seventh day he was to shave the head and purify himself, and the next day he was to take to the priest two turtledoves, or, two young pigeons, one serving as a sin offering, the other serving as a burnt sacrifice, he was also to present a young ram as a guilt offering.
- Furthermore, the one having taken the vow of **Naziriteship** must now begin all over again counting the days of the vow as stipulated at the start.
- All the days of his **Naziriteship** he is holy to Yehowah. (**Numbers 6:8**)
- But in case anyone dying should die quite suddenly alongside him so that he has defiled the head of his **Naziriteship**, he must then shave his head in the day of establishing his purification. On the seventh day he should shave it. (**Numbers 6:9**)
- And on the eighth day he should bring two turtledoves or two young pigeons to the priest to the entrance of the tent of meeting. (**Numbers 6:10**)
- And the priest must handle one as a sin offering and the other as a burnt offering and make atonement for him, since he has sinned because of the dead soul. Then he must sanctify his head on that day. (**Numbers 6:11**)
- And he must live as a **Nazirite** to Yehowah for the days of his Naziriteship, and he must bring a young ram in its first year as a guilt offering, and the former days will go uncounted because he defiled his Naziriteship. (**Numbers 6:12**)

## · Requirements At Conclusion Of Vow

- When the specified duration of the vow came to an end, the **Nazirite** presented himself to the priests before the tent of meeting, bringing along the prescribed sacrifices consisting of a young ram for a

burnt offering, a female lamb for a sin offering, and a ram for a communion sacrifice.

- He also was to bring a basket of unfermented, unleavened, cakes and wafers that were well oiled, together with the proper grain and drink offerings. In addition to these necessary sacrifices, the **Nazirite** brought such other offerings to the sanctuary as he could afford.
- Now this is the Law about the **Nazirite**. On the day that the days of his Naziriteship come to the full, he will be brought to the entrance of the tent of meeting. (**Numbers 6:13**)
- And he must present as his offering to Yehowah one sound young ram in its first year as a burnt offering and one sound female lamb in its first year as a sin offering and one sound ram as a communion sacrifice. (**Numbers 6:14**)
- And a basket of unfermented ring-shaped cakes of fine flour, moistened with oil, and unfermented wafers smeared with oil, and their grain offering and their drink offerings. (**Numbers 6:15**)
- And the priest must present them before Yehowah and render up his sin offering and his burnt offering. (**Numbers 6:16**)
- And he will render up the ram as a communion sacrifice to Yehowah along with the basket of unfermented cakes, and the priest must render up its grain offering and its drink offering. (**Numbers 6:17**)
- This is the Law about the **Nazirite** who vows, his offering to Yehowah over his **Naziriteship**, besides that which he can afford. According to his vow that he may make, so he should do because of the Law of his **Naziriteship**. (**Numbers 6:21**)
- Next, the **Nazirite** had his long hair cut off, and it was placed on the fire under the communion sacrifice. Then portions of the offerings were placed in his hands by the officiating priest and waved by the priest as a wave offering before Yehowah.
- And the **Nazirite** must shave the head of his **Naziriteship** at the entrance of the tent of meeting, and he must take the hair of the head of his **Naziriteship** and put it upon the fire that is under the communion sacrifice. (**Numbers 6:18**)



- And the priest must take a boiled shoulder from the ram and one unfermented ring-shaped cake out of the basket, and one unfermented wafer, and put them upon the palms of the **Nazirite** after he has had the sign of his **Naziriteship** shaved off. (**Numbers 6:19**)
- And the priest must wave them to and fro as a wave offering before Yehowah. It is something holy for the priest, along with the breast of the wave offering and the leg of the contribution. And afterward the **Nazirite** may drink wine. (**Numbers 6:20**)
- It appears that in time the Jews made it possible for wealthy individuals to provide the necessary sacrifices, as an act of charity, for persons of little means who desired to take the **Nazirite** vow.
- This seemed to be the recognized custom that the apostle Paul took advantage of upon arriving in Jerusalem at the end of his third tour.
- To allay the false rumors that Paul had been teaching all the Jews among the nations not to walk in the solemn customs of the Jewish nation, Paul's Christian brothers recommended the following plan.
- After hearing this they began to glorify God, and they said to him; You behold, brother, how many thousands of believers there are among the Jews, and they are all zealous for the Law. (**Acts of Apostles 21:20**)
- But they have heard it rumored about you that you have been teaching all the Jews among the nations an apostasy from Moses, telling them neither to circumcise their children nor to walk in the solemn customs. (**Acts of Apostles 21:21**)
- What, then, is to be done about it? In any case they are going to hear you have arrived. (**Acts of Apostles 21:22**)
- Therefore do this which we tell you; We have four men with a vow upon themselves. (**Acts of Apostles 21:23**)
- Take these men along and cleanse yourself ceremonially with them and take care of their expenses, that they may have their heads shaved. And so everybody will know that there is nothing to the rumors they were told about you, but that you are walking

orderly, you yourself also keeping the Law. (**Acts of Apostles 21:24**)

- As for the believers from among the nations, we have sent out, rendering our decision that they should keep themselves from what is sacrificed to idols as well as from blood and what is strangled and from fornication. (**Acts of Apostles 21:25**)
- Then Paul took the men along the next day and cleansed himself ceremonially with them and went into the temple, to give notice of the days to be fulfilled for the ceremonial cleansing, until the offering should be presented for each one of them. (**Acts of Apostles 21:26**)
- As to the length of time that one might be a **Nazirite**, this was optional with the one making the vow. Jewish tradition, not the Bible, said it could not be less than 30 days, for it was thought that anything less than that degraded the solemnity of the vow, making it commonplace.

#### •• **Lifetime Nazirites**

- In the case of those appointed as **Nazirites** by Yehowah for life, being singled out by him for special service, they took no vows and were not bound by a limited period of time, the days of which were recalculated from the beginning if the vow was broken before being completed.
- For these reasons Yehowah's commandments for them differed somewhat from his requirements for voluntary Nazirites. Samson was such a God-appointed lifetime **Nazirite**, having been divinely appointed to be such before his conception.
- Even with his mother it was not a discretionary matter. Because her son would be a **Nazirite**, she was commanded by the angel to observe special regulations not to drink wine or intoxicating liquor or to eat anything unclean during her pregnancy.
- Meanwhile there happened to be a certain man of Zorah of the family of the Danites, and his name was Manoah. And his wife was barren and had borne no child. (**Judges 13:2**)
- In time Yehowah's angel appeared to the woman and said to her; Look, now, you are barren and have borne no child. And you will

certainly become pregnant and give birth to a son. (**Judges 13:3**)

- And now watch yourself, please, and do not drink wine or intoxicating liquor, and do not eat anything unclean. (**Judges 13:4**)
- For, look! You will be pregnant, and you will certainly give birth to a son, and no razor should come upon his head, because a **Nazirite** of God is what the child will become on leaving the belly, and he it is who will take the lead in saving Israel out of the hand of the Philistines. (**Judges 13:5**)
- Then the woman went and said to her husband; There was a man of the true God that came to me, and his appearance was like the appearance of the angel of the true God, very fear-inspiring. And I did not ask him from just where he was, neither did he tell me his name. (**Judges 13:6**)
- But he said to me, Look! You will be pregnant, and you will certainly give birth to a son. And now do not drink wine or intoxicating liquor, and do not eat any unclean thing, because a **Nazirite** of God is what the child will become on leaving the belly until the day of his death. (**Judges 13:7**)
- And Manoah began to entreat Yehowah and say; Excuse me, Yehowah. The man of the true God that you just sent, let him, please, come again to us and instruct us as to what we ought to do to the child that will be born. (**Judges 13:8**)
- Accordingly the true God listened to the voice of Manoah, and the angel of the true God came again to the woman while she was sitting in the field, and Manoah her husband was not with her. (**Judges 13:9**)
- Immediately the woman hurried and ran and told her husband and said to him; Look! The man that came the other day to me has appeared to me. (**Judges 13:10**)
- At that Manoah got up and accompanied his wife and came to the man and said to him; Are you the man that spoke to the woman? To which he said; I am. (**Judges 13:11**)
- Then Manoah said; Now let your words come true. What will become the child's mode of life and his work? (**Judges 13:12**)

- **So Yehowah's angel said to Manoah; From everything that I mentioned to the woman she should keep herself. (Judges 13:13)**
- **Nothing at all that comes forth from the wine vine should she eat, and no wine or intoxicating liquor let her drink, and no unclean thing of any sort let her eat. Everything that I have commanded her let her keep. (Judges 13:14)**
- **Finally he disclosed to her all his heart and said to her; A razor has never come upon my head, because I am a **Nazirite** of God from my mothers belly. If I did get shaved, my power also would certainly depart from me, and I should indeed grow weak and become like all other men. (Judges 16:17)**
- **Regarding Samson, the regulation was that no razor should come upon his head.**
- **For, look! You will be pregnant, and you will certainly give birth to a son, and no razor should come upon his head, because a **Nazirite** of God is what the child will become on leaving the belly, and he it is who will take the lead in saving Israel out of the hand of the Philistines. (Judges 13:5)**
- **However, no prohibition was placed on his touching dead bodies. Hence, Samson's killing a lion, or his slaying 30 Philistines and then stripping the corpses of their garments, did not profane his **Naziriteship**.**
- **On still another occasion, with God's approval, he killed a thousand of the enemy with the jawbone of a male ass one heap, two heaps!**
- **Then Yehowah's spirit became operative upon him, so that he tore it in two, just as someone tears a male kid in two, and there was nothing at all in his hand. And he did not tell his father or his mother what he had done. (Judges 14:6)**
- **And Yehowah's spirit became operative upon him, so that he went down to Ashkelon and struck down thirty men of theirs and took what he stripped off them and gave the outfits to the tellers of the riddle. And his anger continued hot, and he went his way up to his father's house. (Judges 14:19)**

- **He, for his part, came as far as Lehi, and the Philistines, for their part, shouted exultantly at meeting him. And Yehowah's spirit became operative upon him, and the ropes that were upon his arms came to be like linen threads that have been scorched with fire, so that his fetters melted off his hands. (Judges 15:14)**
- **He now found a moist jawbone of a male ass and thrust his hand out and took it and went striking down a thousand men with it. (Judges 15:15)**
- **Then Samson said; With the jawbone of a male ass, one heap, two heaps! With the jawbone of a male ass I have struck down a thousand men. (Judges 15:16)**
- **In Samuel's case it was his mother, Hannah, who made a vow, setting apart her yet unconceived child for Yehowah's service as a Nazirite.**
- **To God she said in prayer; If you will without fail give to your slave girl a male offspring, I will give him to Yehowah all the days of his life, and he shall drink no wine nor strong drink,**
- **Nathan now said to Bath-sheba, Solomon's mother; Have you not heard that Adonijah the son of Haggith has become king, and our lord David does not know of it at all? (1 Kings 1:11), LXX**
- **And no razor will come upon his head.**
- **Then Hannah got up after they had eaten in Shiloh and after the drinking, while Eli the priest was sitting upon the seat by the doorpost of the temple of Yehowah.**
- **And she was bitter of soul, and she began to pray to Yehowah and to weep greatly. (1 Samuel 1:10)**
- **And she went on to make a vow and say; O Yehowah of armies, if you will without fail look upon the affliction of your slave girl and actually remember me, and you will not forget your slave girl and actually give to your slave girl a male offspring, I will give him to Yehowah all the days of his life, and no razor will come upon his head. (1 Samuel 1:11)**
- **As for Hannah, she did not go up, for she had said to her**

husband; As soon as the boy is weaned, I must bring him, and he must appear before Yehowah and dwell there to time indefinite. **(1 Samuel 1:22)**

- And I, in my turn, have lent him to Yehowah. All the days that he does happen to be, he is one requested for Yehowah. And he proceeded to bow down there to Yehowah. **(1 Samuel 1:28)**
- **John the Baptizer was to drink no wine and strong drink at all. Few other details concerning his Naziriteship are given except that he, too, by divine appointment, was to be such from the day of his birth.**
- To him Yehowah's angel appeared, standing at the right side of the incense altar. **(Luke 1:11)**
- But Zechariah became troubled at the sight, and fear fell upon him. **(Luke 1:12)**
- However, the angel said to him; Have no fear, Zechariah, because your supplication has been favorably heard, and your wife Elizabeth will become mother to a son to you, and you are to call his name John. **(Luke 1:13)**
- And you will have joy and great gladness, and many will rejoice over his birth. **(Luke 1:14)**
- For he will be great before Yehowah. But he must drink no wine and strong drink at all, and he will be filled with Holy Spirit right from his mothers womb. **(Luke 1:15)**
- But this very John had his clothing of camels hair and a leather girdle around his loins, his food too was insect locusts and wild honey. **(Matthew 3:4)**
- Correspondingly, John came neither eating nor drinking, yet people say; He has a demon. **(Matthew 11:18)**
- **John the Baptizer was among those Nazirites whom Yehowah himself raised up. As he says by the mouth of his prophet Amos; I kept raising up some of your sons as prophets and some of your young men as Nazirites. However, they were not always accepted or respected, and wayward Israel even tried to break their integrity to Yehowah.**

- And I kept raising up some of your sons as prophets and some of your young men as **Nazirites**. Should this really not be, O sons of Israel, is the utterance of Yehowah? (**Amos 2:11**)
- But you kept giving the **Nazirites** wine to drink, and upon the prophets you laid a command, saying; You must not prophesy. (**Amos 2:12**)
- When the full measure of Israel's sins reached their limits and Yehowah removed typical Israel in **607 B.C.E**, the unfaithful **Nazirites** within Jerusalem did not escape either. Jeremiah describes how the once healthy and strong Nazirites turned black as their skin shriveled up on their bones because of the terrible famine.
- Her **Nazirites** were purer than snow, they were whiter than milk. They were in fact more ruddy than corals, their polish was as the sapphire. (**Lamentations 4:7**)
- Their aspect has become darker than blackness itself. They have not been recognized in the streets. Their skin has shriveled upon their bones. It has become just as dry as a tree. (**Lamentations 4:8**)
- Better have those slain with the sword proved to be than those slain by famine, because these pine away, pierced through for lack of the produce of the open field. (**Lamentations 4:9**)