

The Nazarite Vow - Strength Through Holiness

***Num 6:2** Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When either man or woman shall separate themselves to vow a vow of a Nazarite, to separate themselves unto the LORD:*

***Num 6:3** He shall separate himself from wine and strong drink, and shall drink no vinegar of wine, or vinegar of strong drink, neither shall he drink any liquor of grapes, nor eat moist grapes, or dried.*

***Num 6:5** All the days of the vow of his separation there shall no razor come upon his head: until the days be fulfilled, in the which he separateth himself unto the LORD, he shall be holy, and shall let the locks of the hair of his head grow.*

Total abstinence from anything that induced intoxication was a non-negotiable condition for anyone who wanted to enter into a Nazarite vow. What does this tell us about a holy relationship with God? It tells us that we can only have one Master – the Lord Jesus Christ. The apostle Paul puts it this way: “All things are lawful unto me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any” (I Cor 6:12). God needs our minds to be sharp so he can communicate his will to us, and we can execute his will in turn. A person who is intoxicated cannot fulfill the greatest of all commandments. “Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD: And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might” (Deut 6:4,5). Remember how great a man of God Noah was. Wine does not care about one’s spiritual or other credentials. Wine left Noah drunk and naked. This is why Solomon said of wine, “Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging: and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise” (Proverbs 20:1). As born-again Christians, we are the Temple of the Holy Ghost. The Spirit of Jesus himself dwells in us. As such, we absolutely cannot imbibe anything which can compromise our spiritual, mental and physical faculties.

***1Cor 3:16** Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?*

***1Cor 3:17** If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are.*

Now, thankfully, Samson’s problem was not wine. He actually observed this command throughout his short life of 30-40 years. There were several others but let me highlight one: he ignored the divine order to avoid contact with the dead. “All the days that he separateth himself unto the LORD he shall come at no dead body. He shall not make himself unclean for his father, or for his mother, for his brother, or for his sister, when they die: because the

consecration of his God is upon his head” (Numbers 6:6). Samson’s main sin was the fact that he was often in contact with that which was dead. God does not want us to become comfortable with spiritually dead people. Samson seemed to love Philistine women. He did not appear to be troubled by their false gods and customs which were a danger to the people of God. This attitude of Samson is encapsulated in the story of the lion which he killed. “And he took thereof in his hands, and went on eating, and came to his father and mother, and he gave them, and they did eat: but he told not them that he had taken the honey out of the carcase of the lion” (Judges 14:9). It was not only the Nazarite, but all of Israel who were commanded to abstain from dead bodies. Samson not only touched the carcass of the lion, he also shared the honey from the carcass with his family. A Christian who loves the world is an enemy of God. This does mean that we cannot spend time with worldly people – indeed, we must witness to them. However, there comes a time when we ought to know when the carcass is just that: a carcass. What good will come out of fellowshiping with dead bodies?

2Cor 6:14 Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?

2Cor 6:15 And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel?

2Co 6:16 And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.

2Co 6:17 Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you,

2Co 6:18 And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.

In seeking a union with a Philistine woman, Samson compromised his identity as a chosen instrument of God’s deliverance. The narrative in Judges 14:1-3 portrays the peril of intermingling with those who do not share one’s devotion to the Lord. Samson’s choice reflected a deeper spiritual infidelity, highlighting the seductive allure of worldly pleasures that can lead even the most anointed individuals astray. So, what happens when a consecrated Christian continues to love the world? The world will cut off the source of our contact with Jesus – our holiness. This holiness was symbolized in the locks of Samson’s uncut hair. Just as hair grows naturally, holiness grows naturally through the Spirit of the Lord dwelling in us. “But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord” (2 Cor 3:18). Samson thought that he could go wherever he wanted, and God would go with him. We are supposed

to follow God, not the other way around. The Christian must always ask this question: “Am I following Jesus or am I expecting the Lord to follow me?” This was Samson’s tragedy – he never seemed to self-reflect. He slept in the arms of Delilah thinking he was safe, but this was the most dangerous place in the world for a man of God. That which appeared to love him, appeared soft, meek and loving destroyed Samson. Believe it or not but the meaning of the name Delilah is “feeble”. The Devil was laughing. She cut his hair off, enfeebled him true to her name and delivered him to the Philistines. Samson lost his freedom, his eyes and finally his life.

Jdg 16:21 But the Philistines took him, and put out his eyes, and brought him down to Gaza, and bound him with fetters of brass; and he did grind in the prison house.
Jdg 16:22 Howbeit the hair of his head began to grow again after he was shaven.

Thank God for punishment! Sadly, that is what it takes sometimes for holiness to be restored. When the circumstances for sinning against the Lord are done away with, holiness has a chance to grown once again. It would have been better for Samson to stay in the Tabernacle with the priests, the prophets and those who love God. That is where holiness flourishes – that is where the hair of holiness grows best. Thank God there is always the hope of restoration for those who repent. Despite the depths of Samson’s fall, Judges 16:22 offers a glimmer of hope in the form of his hair beginning to grow again. This symbolic resurgence of strength signifies the enduring nature of God’s mercy and the promise of restoration for those who turn back to Him in repentance. Samson’s eventual redemption serves as a testament to the unfathomable grace of God, who can bring beauty from ashes and strength from weakness. The compassionate and merciful nature of the God of Israel shines forth as a beacon of hope for all who seek His face. His willingness to pardon iniquity and extend grace to the repentant serves as a testament to His unfailing love and unending compassion toward His wayward children.

Mic 7:18 Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage? he retaineth not his anger for ever, because he delighteth in mercy.
Mic 7:19 He will turn again, he will have compassion upon us; he will subdue our iniquities; and thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea.

May we heed the lessons embedded within this timeless tale, guarding our hearts against compromise, repenting of our transgressions, and embracing the hope of restoration that springs eternal from the well of divine grace. Amen!