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May the studying of the Daf Notes be a zechus for their neshamot and may their souls find peace in Gan Eden and be bound up in the Bond of life

Mishna

The *Mishna* states: If one declares, “Like the *nedarim* of the wicked,” it is a valid vow to become a *nazir*, to bring a *korban*, or to an oath. (*The Gemora explains that if a nazir was passing by at that time, this wording implies the acceptance of nezirus; or if an animal was standing before him at that time, this is a vow regarding a korban; or if there was a loaf before him at that time, he meant to say that he will not eat from it, the prohibition of an oath applies to him. All these are valid for the wicked are accustomed to vow and take oaths.*) If one declares, “Like the *nedarim* of the righteous,” he has not said anything (*since they do not vow*). If he declares, “Like their *nedavos*,” it is a valid vow to become a *nazir* (*since the righteous vow to become a nazir*) and to bring a *korban* (*there is a halachic difference between a neder and a nedovah in respect to a korban; a neder means that the obligation is upon him; if the animal dies or gets lost, he is required to bring another one; a nedovah means that he is obligating himself to bring this animal; if it gets lost or stolen, he is not required to bring another one; the righteous do not make nedarim, but they do make nedavos*). (9a1)

Explaining the Cases

The Gemora asks: But perhaps he meant to say as follows: Like the *nedarim* of the wicked I am **not** vowing?

Shmuel explains the cases of the *Mishna*. A man declared, “Like the *nedarim* of the wicked,” and then, he either added, “am I,” or, “upon me,” or, “from it.” When (a nazir was walking before him, and) he said, “am I,” it is a vow to become a nazir. When (an animal fit for a korban was before him, and) he said, “upon me,” it is a vow to bring a korban. When (there was food before him, and) he said, “from it,” it

is a vow regarding an oath (and he is prohibited from eating the food).

The Gemora asks: If he says, “am I,” he vowed to become a nazir!? But perhaps he meant to declare a fast?

Shmuel said: it is referring to a case where a nazir was walking before him.

The Gemora asks: in the case where he said, “from it,” he means to make an oath that he will not eat from it. But perhaps he meant that he will eat from it!?

Rava said: The case is where he said, “from it I will not eat.”

The Gemora asks: if so, why was it necessary to state?

The Gemora answers: I might have thought that (it is not effective, for) he did not express an oath at all; The *Mishna* therefore teaches us that it is effective. (9a1 – 9a2)

Distinction Between a Neder and a Nedavah

The *Mishna* had stated: If he declares, “Like their *nedavos*,” it is a valid vow to become a *nazir* (*since the righteous vow to become a nazir*) and to bring a *korban* (*there is a halachic difference between a neder and a nedovah in respect to a korban; a neder means that the obligation is upon him; if the animal dies or gets lost, he is required to bring another one; a nedovah means that he is obligating himself to bring this animal; if it gets lost or stolen, he is not required to bring another one; the righteous do not make nedarim, but they do make nedavos*).

The Gemora asks: Who is the *Tanna* that makes a distinction between a *neder* and a *nedavah*? It would seemingly not be following Rabbi Meir or Rabbi Yehudah's opinion. For we learned in the following *braisa*: It is written [Koheles 5:4]: *It is better that you do not vow, than that you vow and do not pay it.* Rabbi Meir says: One who does not vow at all is better than this one and that one (*one who vows and pays and one who vows and does not pay*). Rabbi Yehudah says: One who vows and pays is better than this one and that one (*one who does not vow and one who vows and does not pay*). (*Neither of them differentiates between a neder and a nedavah!*)

The Gemora answers: Our *Mishna* can be in accordance with Rabbi Meir, for Rabbi Meir only said that it is best not to vow at all by a *neder*, but he never said this by a *nedavah* (*since the verse mentioned was only referring to nedarim, and not nedavos*).

The Gemora asks: But the Mishna stated: If he declares, "Like their (the righteous) *nedavos*," it is a valid vow to become a *nazir* (*since the righteous vow to become a nazir*) and to bring a *korban*?

The Gemora answers: The Mishna should be taught as follows: It is an effective *nedavah* with respect of becoming a *nazir* or with respect of bringing a *korban*. (9a2 – 9b1)

A Virtuous Nedavah

The Gemora asks: What is the difference between a *neder* and a *nedavah*? Just as the righteous do not make *nedarim* because it might lead to a transgression, so too they would not make *nedavos* because it might lead to a transgression (*although the animal is immediately consecrated, he might delay more than three festivals before bringing it as a korban and has violated the prohibition against delaying!*)

The Gemora answers: A *nedavah* is regarded as virtuous when done according to Hillel the Elder's method. For we learned in a *braisa*: They said about Hillel the Elder that no person committed *me'ilah* (*one who has unintentionally benefited from hekdesch or removed it from the ownership of*

the Beis Hamikdosh has committed the transgression of me'ilah, and as a penalty, he would be required to pay the value of the object plus an additional fifth of the value; he also brings a korban asham) with their *korban olah* in his days. Hillel would bring an unconsecrated animal into the (*entrance of the*) Temple Courtyard and only then, would he consecrate it, place his hands upon it (*for the mitzvah of semichah*) and slaughter it. (*This way, there was hardly any time for me'ilah; this was the method that the righteous employed to make a nedavah.*)

The Gemora asks: This explains the *nedavah* to bring a *korban*, but how can we explain the *nedavah* to becoming a *nazir* (*there should be a concern that he will violate his vow during the time of nezirus*)?

The Gemora answers: A *nedavah* for *nezirus* is regarded as virtuous in cases such that of Shimon the Righteous (*a great Kohen Gadol who served in the beginning of the second Beis Hamikdosh*). For we learned in a *braisa*: Shimon the Righteous said, "I never ate from the meat of an *asham* sacrifice offered by a *nazir* who had become *tamei* except for one case. There was once a handsome young man from the south with beautiful eyes and locks of hair arranged in curls (*who had become tamei and came to the Beis Hamikdosh to have his hair removed and to offer the required sacrifice*). I asked him why he had taken upon himself a vow to become a *nazir*, which would eventually lead to having such beautiful hair removed (*even if he would have completed his term of nezirus without becoming tamei, a nazir shaves his head upon completion*). He responded to me, 'I was a shepherd for my father and one day I went to a spring to fill my pail of water and saw my reflection in the water. My evil inclination suddenly tempted me to take advantage of my looks and wished to drive me out from this world. I said to my evil inclination: Wicked one! Why are you being so haughty in a world that is not yours, with one that in the future will be worms and maggots? I swore at that time to become a *nazir*.' I was so impressed (*by his piety*) that I kissed him on his head and said to him, May there be more vowers of *nezirus* like you in Israel."



Rabbi Mani asks: Why is the *asham* of a *nazir* who has become tamei different than any other *asham*; they all are brought because of a sin?

Rabbi Yonah answered him: The reason that Shimon the Righteous was reluctant to eat from the meat of the *nazir*'s *asham* was based on the following: When people felt bad about their previous actions, they would vow to become a *nazir* and when they contracted *tumah* (through contact with the dead) and were compelled to restart their period of *nezirus*, they might be regretful of their initial vow. This would result in them offering unconsecrated animals to the *Beis Hamikdosh*.

The *Gemora* asks: If so, why did he eat from the meat from the *korbanos* of a *nazir* who remained *tahor*?

The *Gemora* answers: We assume that a *nazir* evaluated himself before he accepted the *nezirus* upon himself that he will be able to fulfill his vow of *nezirus*. (9b1 – 9b2)

Quick Summary

* What is the *halacha* if one says, "Like the *nedarim* of the wicked am I"?

He is a *nazir* if a *nazir* was walking by at that time.

* What is the *halacha* if one says, "Like the *nedarim* of the wicked from it, I shall not eat"?

He is prohibited from eating it.

* What is the *halacha* if one says, "Like the *nedarim* of the wicked upon me"?

He is obligated to bring an offering (if an animal was passing by – *Ran*).

* What is the *halacha* if one says, "Like the *nedarim* of the righteous"?

He has not said anything (even if he concludes the vow with the proper phrases).

* What is the *halacha* if one says, "Like the *nedavos* of the righteous"?

He is obligated to either bring a *korban* or become a *nazir*.

* What does Rabbi Meir hold in regards to making vows?

One who does not vow at all is better than one who vows and pays and one who vows and does not pay.

* What does Rabbi Yehudah hold in regards to making vows?

One who vows and pays is better than one who does not vow and one who vows and does not pay.

* When is a *nedavah* for a *korban* considered righteous?

When it is done according to Hillel's method.

* When is a *nedavah* to become a *nazir* considered virtuous?

When it is sincere like the youth by Shimon the Righteous.

INSIGHTS TO THE DAF

A Virtuous Nazir

The *Gemora* states: A *nedavah* for *nezirus* is regarded as virtuous in cases such that of Shimon the Righteous (a great *Kohen Gadol* who served in the beginning of the second *Beis Hamikdosh*). For we learned in a *braisa*: Shimon the Righteous said, "I never ate from the meat of an *asham*

sacrifice offered by a *nazir* who had become *tamei* except for one case. There was once a handsome young man from the south with beautiful eyes and locks of hair arranged in curls (*who had become tamei and came to the Beis Hamikdash to have his hair removed and to offer the required sacrifice*). I asked him why he had taken upon himself a vow to become a *nazir*, which would eventually lead to having such beautiful hair removed (*even if he would have completed his term of nezirus without becoming tamei, a nazir shaves his head upon completion*). He responded to me, 'I was a shepherd for my father and one day I went to a spring to fill my pail of water and saw my reflection in the water. My evil inclination suddenly tempted me to take advantage of my looks and wished to drive me out from this world. I said to my evil inclination: Wicked one! Why are you being so haughty in a world that is not yours, with one that in the future will be worms and maggots? I swore at that time to become a *nazir*.' I was so impressed (*by his piety*) that I kissed him on his head and said to him, May there be more vowers of *nezirus* like you in Israel."

The question is asked: Why didn't the young man with the locks of hair arranged in curls simply go to a barber for a haircut to remove this temptation?

Rabbi Mendel Weinbach answers that on the way to the barber he was likely to change his mind and give in to temptation. The only solution was to immediately take upon himself a vow of *nezirus* which would eventually force him to eliminate his hair and the problems that accompanied it.

Food for Thought

*** What was the necessity to state that the *nazir* came from the south? What difference did it make where he came from?

*** How was he permitted to look at his reflection in the water; isn't it forbidden for a man to look at a mirror?

*** Why connection is there between the "haughtiness" of the evil inclination and the temptation to sin?

DAILY MASHAL

Humility

By Rabbi Yosef Levinson

The Torah details the laws which apply to one who makes a vow to be a *nazir*. He must refrain from drinking wine and eating fresh grapes and raisins, grapeseeds and skins. He may not shave his hair; rather he must let it grow long. A *nazir* may also not defile himself by coming in contact with a corpse. And when the term of his vow has ended, and the *nazir* wishes to revert to his former life, he must first shave off all his hair and then bring *korbanos*, offerings, to Hashem. In total, there are ten mitzvos pertaining to the *nazir* (Sefer Hachinuch Mitzvos 368:377).

The mitzvos which are enumerated in the parsha of *nazir* were given by Hashem in order to provide a means of self-sanctification for one who wishes to do so. The Chinuch (mitzva 374) writes that by abstaining from wine, one breaks his desires and humbles himself. (While one's main focus should be on spiritual pursuits, nevertheless one should not ignore his physical needs. Abstaining from wine allows the *nazir* to break his desires in a manner that is not detrimental to his health, Sefer HaChinuch, *ibid*.)

The Chinuch adds that this is also why the *nazir* must let his hair grow long. By not concerning himself with his appearance, he humbles himself. Similarly, the *nazir* shaves his hair completely at the end of his *nazirus* because there is no doubt that either, extremely long hair or totally bald distorts the appearance of man.

The Chinuch proves that the purpose for growing the hair is to subdue the *yetzar hara*, evil inclination from the following anecdote recorded in the Gemara (Nedarim 9b). "Shimon Hatzaddik (who was the Kohen Gadol) related that once a certain *nazir* appeared before him. The man had beautiful

eyes, was very good looking and his locks were arranged in curls. Shimon Hatzaddik asked him: 'Why do you make a vow of nazirus, which necessitates that you destroy your beautiful hair?' (For he will be required to shave his head at the end of his nazirus.) The man replied: 'I was a shepherd for my father. Once I went to draw water from the well and gazed at my reflection in the water. My yetzer hara seized me and wished to drive me from the world. I said - Rasha (wicked one), why are you conceited in a world that is not yours, with one who is destined to be consumed by maggots and worms? I swear that I will shave you for the sake of Heaven.' "

The Steipler Gaon, HaRav Y. Y. Kanievsky zt"l observes that although the shepherd did not mention the sin that the yetzer hara was enticing him to transgress, nevertheless from his response to himself, we see that he was concerned lest he become conceited. Indeed there is nothing that can drive one from both this world and the next, other than ga'ava, haughtiness. As it is written: "It is an abomination to Hashem, all who are haughty in their heart (Mishlei 16:5)." Chazal also say that regarding one who is conceited, Hashem says: "I and him cannot live in the world together" (Sota 5a). The Shechina departs from a ba'al ga'ava and he is left to his own defenses to combat his yetzer hara and survive in this world.

The Steipler continues that when one is praised for his accomplishments, he is overjoyed. At times, he might let this joy "go to his head" and he begins thinking that he is deserving of honor. One must be wary lest he fall into the trap of haughtiness. We see how this shepherd trembled when he saw his handsome features and realized that it might lead him to ga'ava. He therefore took an oath of nazirus.

HaRav Yerucham Levovitz zt"l points out that growing one's hair can have the opposite effect and can lead to ga'ava as is evident from Shimon Hatzaddik's story. It all depends on one's intent. One may become obsessed with his appearance and become conceited. Hashem despises such a

person. On the other hand, if one lets his hair grow so that he appears disheveled, he will be humbled. Such an individual is Kadosh L'Hashem, holy to Hashem. Moreover, the hair itself becomes kadosh. This is meant literally - the law states that it is forbidden to derive pleasure from the hair of a nazir. Thus, the status of the nazir's hair is similar to the status of Kodashim (articles sanctified for the Beis Hamikdash).

This is the lesson of the nazir. We must realize the significance of humility. In addition, the nazir teaches us that we have the ability to elevate and sanctify ourselves. If by abstaining from wine and letting one's hair grow, a nazir is sanctified, all the more so, one who sincerely undertakes to improve himself and tackle his desires and bad character traits, is Kadosh and beloved to Hashem.

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Maharal on the Yetzer Harah

By Rabbi Shaya Karlinsky

That man's yetzer harah exists only as a result of his arrogance is alluded to by the Rabbis in a number of places. In Nedarim (9b) Shimon HaTzaddik said: I have never partaken from a Nazir sacrifice, except for one time. Once, a person came from the south (at the conclusion of his nazir period) and I saw that he was very handsome, with his hair arranged in long curls. I said to him: My son, why did you see fit to destroy such beautiful hair? (A nazir must cut off all his hair at the end of the nazir period. By undertaking to become a nazir, he ensured that all his hair would have to be cut off.) He said to me: "I was a shepherd for my father in my home town, and I once went to draw water from the spring. As I looked at my reflection, my yetzer harah surged forth in an effort to distract me and undermine my existence. (The commentary attributed to Rashi explains that when he saw how handsome he was, his yetzer harah wanted to seduce him to improper behaviours.) I said: 'Evil one! How can you



be arrogant in a world that is not yours, trying to incite one who is destined to become a worm (in the grave). I swear that I will shear you for the sake of Heaven.'" Immediately, I (Shimon HaTzadik) stood up and kissed him on his forehead and said to him "My son, there should be many more Jews like you who commit to a nazir period. It is those like you to whom the Torah refers in the verse 'A man who will make a nazir oath, for the sake of G-d (Bamidbar 6:2)'."

We see that when the man saw how handsome he was (leading to a feeling of arrogance) the yetzer harah was immediately aroused, with the intention of distracting him and leading him astray in order to undermine his existence. For this is the goal of the yetzer harah: To destroy a structure which has a stable existence. When the structure is already in a tenuous state, there is no need to undermine it further, and the yetzer harah leaves it alone. This young man recognized how vulnerable he was to the yetzer harah, and in order to remove (and undermine) the source of his arrogance (which he understood as being the breeding ground for the yetzer harah, and caused by a lack of sufficient clarity of his dependency on G-d) he vowed to cut off his hair for the sake of Heaven. (How much of our arrogance is caused by unwarranted attention given to our appearance? How much of that attention is caused by our need to cover up our own feelings of insecurity?) It was for this reason that Shimon HaTzadik praised him with the blessing that there should be more Jews who undertake neziruth for these pure motivations, and applied the phrase "an oath for the sake of Heaven" to this person.

Normally a person vows neziruth out of remorse for a sin that he committed. But as the neziruth drags on, he may come to regret the neziruth itself, as it becomes more difficult than he anticipated. This regret is even more likely when the person began the neziruth out of feelings of remorse for an earlier act, indicating that his decisions are frequently subject to vacillation. Just as he swung from a sinful act to an act of self-denial, it is possible that, as the difficulty of the neziruth weighs on him, he will once again change his mind.

But this young man wasn't motivated by any regret, making his neziruth purely for the sake of Heaven.

(When the source of activity is reactive, it embodies the potential for regret, and is also built on personal motivations - in this case, the desire to protect himself from damage and to eliminate guilt. So the element of *lshaim shamayim*, for the sake of Heaven, is lacking. When one's behavior is proactive, as it was in the case of the young man in our story, the motivation is to reach beyond the level at which he finds himself, out of an altruistic desire to elevate himself to become closer to G-d. We have discussed in a number of the *shiurim* the difference between service of G-d out of love and out of fear. Service out of fear includes a dimension of personal motivation. You are afraid of what will happen to you if you don't do the right thing. Service out of love is purely altruistic, and is therefore on a much higher level. This also has relevance to *chumroth*, adapting halachic stringencies. The Mahral in Chapter 1 indicates that the proper motivation for these stringencies is an intense love of G-d, with the desire to reach higher spiritual levels in order to come closer to Him. Too often, however, people are motivated to increase stringencies out of fear and self-centered motivations.)

(The Mahral will now elaborate on how each element of the young man's story reflected the purity of his motivations, and the fact that he was not acting in a way in which future regret was likely.)

The reason it mentions that he "came from the south," which is a long distance (from Jerusalem, where the nazir sacrifice was brought) is to emphasize that the person knew when he made the vow that he would have to travel that long distance to bring the sacrifices. This diminished the likelihood that the great distance he would have to travel would subsequently cause him to regret that he took the vow. Only unanticipated difficulties, those which a person rarely experiences, such as abstaining from wine for a significant time, raise the possibility of later regret.



The reason that it mentions that he was "a shepherd for his father in his home town" is because the yetzer harah besets a person when he is idle instead of being involved in productive activity. If the young man's yetzer harah was aroused due to his own idleness, then he would have been responsible for having invited the yetzer harah to entice him. Activities which would then be necessary to neutralize that self-inflicted yetzer harah could not be termed "for the sake of Heaven," but would have been a protective measure taken for his own welfare, in response to his own negligence. Therefore, it was significant that he had been a shepherd (a productive activity), not wasting his time in an idle way and not making himself vulnerable to the yetzer harah. Furthermore, the work of being a shepherd was being done for his father, so he was involved in a mitzvah (honoring his father) further insulating him from the yetzer harah. In addition, the task was being done in his home town, where he felt subject to the influence and authority of his father (which enhances humility, further insulating him from the yetzer harah). Had he been far away from his home, he may have felt the desire and the ability to resist the authority his father, creating a sense of independence and arrogance, inviting the control of the yetzer harah. A nezirut made to in response to a feeling of independence and arrogance would not be judged purely "for the sake of Heaven." (When a person travels away from home, there is a common tendency to lower our inhibitions compared to the way we would behave at home. This is true for young men and women going away to university or camp, and for adults away on vacation or a business trip. This is an important and very relevant insight that we have from the Maharal's explanation.

But the young man did nothing to induce the yetzer harah. Rather it came upon in an unexpected way, as he unexpectedly saw his reflection in the pond and realized how handsome he was, inducing an urge to show off this beauty. This attack by the yetzer harah was no fault of his, and the response to become a nazir, resulting in his cutting off his hair, was purely "for the sake of Heaven."

(In order to fully to understand the connections being made by the Maharal, we again need to focus on the difference between serving G-d out of love and out of fear, which we discussed in the first chapter, especially in Mishna 3. Most dependable people will intervene to rectify a situation for which they feel responsible, with an element of ego being one of the motivating forces. So in the case where the individual was responsible for creating his vulnerability to the yetzer harah, the response to neutralize that yetzer harah can be viewed as having a self-centered component. But when someone observes a situation for which he has no responsibility, he will only take action to rectify a problem if he feels a connection to the outcome on a transcendent level. You look to help a loved one without examining how the situation developed, because of your love and commitment to that person. It is an altruistic and giving perspective. When someone finds himself in a situation where he has a legitimate excuse for inaction, the motivation for taking action is on a higher plane than action taken when one will be blamed for a negative outcome. So, when our young man found himself beset by the yetzer harah through no fault of his own, it would have been very easy to succumb to that yetzer harah. His proactive response, not looking for excuses but looking to do what needed to be done to fulfill the will of G-d, is the result of "service out of love," and is why Shimon HaTzadik referred to this as a nezirut that was purely "for the sake of Heaven," motivated by something that transcends the individual.)

From every element of this story, we see that the source of the yetzer harah is arrogance, with the goal of distracting man from the purpose of his existence in the world, leading to his ultimate destruction.

The class is taught by [Rabbi Shaya Karlinsky](#)

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