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[Nezirus is included in the general category of vows, for it is written, "If a man or woman shall clearly utter a vow, the vow of a nazir" (Bamidbar 6:2); accordingly, this tractate follows Tractate Nedarim (Gemara, Sot. 2a; Rambam, Introduction to the Mishnah).

It is taught at the beginning of Tractate Nedarim, "All equivalent terms for vows are as vows ... and for nezirus are as nezirus." It is explained there that there are three possible ways of formulating a vow: (1) the basic vow; (2) a "handle" of a vow; (3) the equivalent term for the vow. The same applies to nezirus. The basic form of nezirus is "I am a nazir," or "I am a nazir to Hashem." Whoever formulates these words becomes a nazir, and is prohibited from consuming any grape product, cutting the hair of the head and any corpse related uncleanness, as it is written (Bamidbar 6:2-8): "He shall abstain from new wine and aged wine: he may not drink new wine vinegar or aged wine vinegar, nor may he drink anything in which grapes have been soaked, nor may he eat moistened dried grapes. All the days of his nezirus he shall not eat from anything made of the grapevine, from the seeds to the skin. All the days of his vow of nezirus no razor may pass over his head; until the completion of the days, that he dedicated himself unto the Lord as a nazir, he shall be holy, he shall grow long the hair of his head. All the days that he keeps himself a nazir unto the Lord he may not approach a dead body. Even to his father or mother, to his brother, or sister, he may not contaminate himself to them upon their death, for the crown of his God is upon his head." He is also obligated to observe the other laws pertaining to a nazir which are stated in this section of the Torah, the details of which will be explained in our tractate. A person may accept upon himself nezirus for a specific amount of time, but not for less than thirty days (as will be explained below, 1:3).

Hence standard nezirus without specifying the duration means all the laws of nezirus apply to him for thirty days. Even one who accepts upon himself nezirus by a "handle" or the equivalent terms is regarded as having vowed with the basic wording of nezirus.

This Mishna lists the "handles" of nezirus and the equivalent terms of nezirus, which are the same as the basic nezirus vow. Kehati.]

Mishnah

All substitute words for nezirus are effective just as a genuine nezirus. If someone says, "I shall be" (*the Gemora explains that he says so when a nazir passes before him*), he becomes a nazir. Or if he says, "I shall be handsome," he is a nazir.

If someone says, "I shall be a nazik," or, "I shall be a naziach," or, "I shall be a paziach," he is a nazir.

If someone says: "I am hereby like this" (*as a nazir was passing by*), or, "I am hereby to be mesalsel" (*the Gemora will explain its meaning*), or, "I am hereby to be mechalkel" (*the Gemora will explain its meaning*), or, "It is hereby incumbent upon me to grow tresses," he is a nazir. If someone says, "It is hereby incumbent upon me to bring birds" (*implying as an offering*)" Rabbi Meir says: He is a nazir. The Chachamim, however, say: He is not a nazir. (2a1)

Why Discuss Nazir Now?

The Gemora asks: The Tanna is in the middle of the Order of Nashim (the Tractates that discuss issues dealing with women); why did he start teaching Tractate Nazir?

The *Gemora* answers: The *Tanna* is referring to the verse: *And if it happens that she does not find favor in his eyes for he has discovered in her a matter of adultery.* The *Tanna* is saying as follows: What caused her to sin? Wine (*i.e. drinking too much*) caused her to do so. The *Tanna* is saying: Whoever sees an adulteress in her degradation should restrain himself from consuming wine (*by vowing to be a nazir*). (2a1 – 2a2)

“References” and “Handles”

The *Gemora* asks: The *Tanna* began the *Mishnah* by stating the *halachah* of substitute terms, and yet, he first explained the *halachos* of a handle to a vow (*a partial declaration*); why was it done in that manner?

Rava said, or some say that this was said without attribution: It is as if some words were omitted from the *Mishnah*, and it should read as follows: All substitute words for nezirus are effective just as genuine nezirus, and all handles to nezirus are effective just as genuine nezirus. The following is an example of handles. If someone says, “I shall be,” he becomes a *nazir*.

The *Gemora* asks: But the *Tanna* should illustrate the *halachah* of a substitute term before illustrating the *halachah* of a partial declaration?

The *Gemora* answers: The *Tanna* explains the *halachah* that was most recently mentioned (*even though it was taught second*).

The *Gemora* cites other examples of this. A *Mishnah* in Shabbos (20b) states: With what (type of wicks) may we light (the Shabbos candles), and with what may we not light them (for they do not hold the flame well)? We may not light with etc.

Another *Mishnah* in Shabbos (47b) is cited as proof: With what may we insulate (hot foods for Shabbos), and with what may we not insulate them (as the substance adds heat

to the food, and it doesn’t merely maintain the heat)? We may not insulate with etc.

Another *Mishnah* in Shabbos (57a) is cited as proof: What can a woman go out with on *Shabbos* and what may she not go out with on *Shabbos*? [*The Sages decreed that a woman should not go out with certain ornaments on Shabbos, because she may come to remove it to show a friend, and she will then carry it four amos in a public domain.*] A woman may not go out with etc.

The *Gemora* asks from several other *Mishnahyos* where the opposite is evident; the *Mishnah* begins with one *halachah*, then mentions another, and then returns to explain the first *halachah* first?

A *Mishnah* in Shabbos (51b) is cited as proof: With what accessories may an animal go outside with on *Shabbos* and with what accessories may it not go out on *Shabbos*? And the *Mishnah* explains: A camel may go outside with the following etc.....first!?

A *Mishnah* in Bava Basra (108a) is cited as proof: There are those who inherit and bequeath, and there are those who inherit and do not bequeath. There are those who bequeath but do not inherit, and there are those who neither inherit nor bequeath. And the *Mishnah* explains: There are those who inherit and bequeath..... first!?! [*We see that the first topic is sometimes explained first!*]

The *Gemora* answers: The *Mishnah* will sometimes explain the first topic first and sometimes will explain the second topic first. But there (in the three *Mishnahyos* mentioned, where the second topic is explained first), where there is a potential prohibition for the person himself, it deals with the personal prohibition first (*for the prohibited situation is of greater interest than the permitted one*). However, where the prohibition is caused through his animal (and is not viewed as serious as when the person actively violates the prohibition), the permitted side is explained first.



Regarding the Mishnah of those who inherit, the Tanna explains the basic law of inheritance first (which is someone who inherits and bequeaths; this is in contrast to the exceptions, where one bequeaths but does not inherit, or inherits but does not bequeath).

The *Gemora* asks: But here, why didn't the *Tanna* teach the laws of substitute terms first?

The *Gemora* answers: The *Tanna* explains the *halachah* of *yados* (partial declarations) first since it is derived through a Scriptural exposition and is therefore precious to him.

The *Gemora* asks: So why didn't the Mishnah start with them first?

The *Gemora* answers: The *Tanna* presents the laws of the basic sacrifice first (as to how one becomes a nazir, and the substitute terms are included in this). However, with regards to explaining, it explains the laws of the partial declarations first. (2a2 – 2b1)

Partial Declarations

The Mishnah had stated: If someone says, "I shall be," he becomes a *nazir*.

The *Gemora* asks: Perhaps he is saying, "I shall be in a state of fasting"? [Why should we say that it is referring to becoming a *nazir*?]

Shmuel answers: The *Mishnah* is referring to a person who sees a *nazir* passing by before him.

The *Gemora* notes: It would seem that Shmuel maintains that a partial declaration which is inconclusive (*in respect to its meaning*) is ineffective (*and is not a valid yad, for although his declaration leans more towards nezirus than fasting, it is only valid for nezirus if a nazir is passing by before him*). [The reason why the expression leads more toward nezirus than fasting is because the expression, "I

shall be" indicates some change in his personal status, and there is a status change only by nezirus.]

The *Gemora* disagrees (with this inference): They said: When a *nazir* is passing by in front of him, there is no reason to be confused with another matter. However, definitely if a *nazir* was not passing by in front of him, we would say that it is possible that he is saying, "I shall be in a state of fasting" (and that is why the Mishnah needs to be explained that it is referring to a case where a nazir was passing by before him). [The *Gemora* changes from its initial assumption and now holds that if one says, "I shall be," it is equally assumed that he is referring to fasting just as to nezirus.]

The *Gemora* asks: Perhaps (*in the case where a nazir is walking in front of him*) he means that he will exempt that *nazir* from his *korban* obligations (*meaning that he will pay for his sacrifices*)?

The *Gemora* answers: The case is where he said afterwards that he intended with his statement to become a *nazir*.

The *Gemora* asks: If so, what is there to say (*this is obvious that in such a case he becomes a nazir*)?

The *Gemora* answers: You might have said that (to make a valid vow to effectively become a *nazir*) his words must coincide (*and be as clear*) with his thoughts. Our *Mishnah* teaches us that this is not the case (and his expression, "I shall be" is a sufficient oral declaration to become a nazir). (2b1 – 2b2)

Handsome

The Mishnah had stated: If he says, "I shall be handsome," he is a *nazir*.

The *Gemora* asks: [Why does the Mishnah assume that 'handsome' means the acceptance of nezirus?] Perhaps he meant as follows: I shall be beautiful before God, as I perform the *mitzvos*? As it was taught in a *Baraisa*: It is said:

This is my G-d and I will beautify Him. The *Gemora* interprets this verse to mean: I shall beautify myself before Him when I observe the *mitzvos*. This can be accomplished through the following: I shall make before Him a beautiful *sukkah*, a beautiful *lulav*, beautiful *tzitzis*. I shall write before Him a beautiful *sefer Torah*, and I shall wrap it in beautiful silks.

Shmuel says: The Mishnah is referring to a case where he is holding onto his hair and says, "I shall be handsome." (2b2)

INSIGHTS TO THE DAF

Beautifying the Tallis

The *Gemora* states that one should beautify himself before Hashem in the observance of *mitzvos*. This means to make a beautiful *sukkah*, *lulav*, *shofar* and *tzitzis*, amongst other *mitzvos*.

Rashi elsewhere explains that one is required to make a beautiful *tallis* and beautiful *tzitzis*.

The Dvar Avraham questions this, as we can understand that the *tzitzis*, i.e. the strings, should be beautiful because the *tzitzis* are the essence of the *mitzvah*. The *tallis*, however, is merely a four-cornered garment that requires one to place *tzitzis* on it.

Why is there a necessity to beautify the *tallis*? The Acharonim explain that in Talmudic times, there was a requirement to beautify the *tzitzis*, but there was no need to beautify the *tallis*, as the obligation to place *tzitzis* was on a four-cornered garment. Nowadays, however, that people seek to perform the *mitzvah* of *tzitzis* by purchasing specifically a four-cornered garment, the garment itself has a status of a *mitzvah* object and one is required to beautify the garment also.

The Aruch Hashulchan opposed those who wore an *atarah* (literally crown) of silver on their *tallis*. This adornment appears to lend prestige to the portion of the *tallis* that is

placed on the head, as that is where people place the *atarah*, when in truth, the *mitzvah* of beautifying the *tallis* is specifically on the portion of the *tallis* which covers the body.

DAILY MASHAL

Distancing Oneself from a Sotah

The *Baraisa* states that whoever sees a *sotah* when she is being degraded should restrain himself from consuming wine.

The Alter from Kelm said that it is evident from the *Gemora* that even the extremely righteous people, upon seeing the adulteress in her disgrace, can be effected by this. Even though it is highly improbable that they will succumb to sin, perhaps a semblance of desire will penetrate their thick armor, and they, therefore, should abstain from wine as well.

One may ask: If the *sotah* is seen in her disgrace, wouldn't this be a motivation for people not to sin?

It would seem evident from our *Gemora* that just being in the vicinity of immorality, even while the adulteress is being humiliated and punished, can induce a person to sin.

Reb Chaim Kanievsky adds: The verse: *ki yafli lindor neder nazir l'hazir* is the same *gimatriya* as "*kol haroeh sotah b'kilkulah, yazir atzmo min hayayin.*"