



Volume 3. Issue 27.

Head-shaving of a Nazir

During the last week we learnt about the three prohibitions placed on a *nazir* – a *nazir* may not come into contact with dead bodies (*tameh met*), shave his hair (*tiglachat*) or consume any grape product. These three prohibitions however differ in respect to how they affect the *nazir* if transgressed. In general a person becomes a *nazir* for a fixed period (more commonly for a thirty day period). If a *nazir* becomes *tameh met* he must restart the entire count as all the previous days are forfeited (*Bamidbar* 6:12). Conversely, if a *nazir* drinks wine, despite transgressing a negative commandment, he does not restart his count, but rather continues being a *nazir* without losing a day. The interesting case however, is if a *nazir*'s head is shaved. The *Mishnah* (6:3,5) explains that a *nazir* forfeits (*soter*) thirty days. One must understand what this means and if it disturbs his *nezirut* period, why it does not disturb it all together causing him to restart.

The *Gemara* (*Nazir* 44a), after asking why drinking wine should not also forfeit thirty days like shaving hair (from a *kal va'chomer*), explains that the reason why head-shaving forfeits thirty days is “to satisfy the requirement for a growth of hair”.

The simple explanation of this *Gemara* is that head-shaving does not disrupt his *nezirut* period; rather there is a technical obligation that his hair must be grown by the end of his *nezirut* period. The *Tosfot* (*Nazir*39a) appear to understand the *Gemara* in this way. He explains that this technical requirement is that by the end of a *nazir*'s period, he must have the equivalent hair growth of standard *nazir* of thirty days. Consequently, they explain that if a *nazir* of sixty days had his hair shaved on the thirtieth day then he would not forfeit any days and still completes his period on the sixtieth day. The *Mishnah* must therefore be understood as explaining that head-shaving can cause a *nazir* to forfeit a maximum of thirty days.

The *Rambam* (*Nezirut* 6:1-2) and *Meiri* have a very different understanding. They explain that if a *nazir*'s hair is shaved, then he stops his count for a period of

thirty days while still observing all the laws of a *nazir*, then continues his count after that. The *Rambam* provides the following example: if a person vows to be a *nazir* for one-hundred days, and after twenty days his head was shaved, he must wait for thirty days until his hair grows, after which he would count another eighty days.

The *Rambam* appears difficult. Initially it seems that head-shaving does indeed disrupt the *nezirut*, which appears to run against the simply understanding of the *Gemara* sighted above. (This is indeed the question posed by the *Lechem Mishneh*.) This understanding is however inconsistent with the example provided by the *Rambam*. If head-shaving caused the *nazir* to forfeit thirty days that he had already experienced, then he should have just said that the *nazir* restarts his count from the beginning like in the case of *tameh met*. Instead after the *nazir*'s head is shaved, he is effectively a *nazir* for another 110 days – an apparently more strict outcome then if he became *tameh met*!

One can perhaps understand the *Rambam* based on an explanation of the *Meiri*. When explaining the *Mishnah* the *Meiri* writes that head-shaving forfeits thirty days from the designation (“*torat*”) of hair-growth. Perhaps one can explain that *Rambam* agrees with the understanding of the *Gemara* presented earlier. Indeed, head-shaving does not disturb the *nazir*'s period in the same way the *tameh met* does. Also the *Rambam* would agree that the forfeiting of thirty days is to satisfy the technical requirement of having significant hair growth for the shaving process. However the *Rambam* may not understand, like the *Tosfot*, that this requirement can be satisfied at the end by the *nazir* having thirty days of hair-growth. Instead the *nazir*'s hair must have a designation of hair growth for the entire *nezirut* period. If at any point his head is shaved, he is still a *nazir*. However, in order that his hair can regain this designation, it must be left to grow for a period of thirty days.

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Revision Questions

נזיר ה' - ה' - ו' י"א

- Explain the three opinions regarding who are indeed *nezirim* in the following case: A group of six people sees someone approaching from a distance. One says "I am a *nazir* if that is *Ploni*". The second says "I am a *nazir* if that is not *Ploni*". The third person says, "I am a *nazir* if one of you two are a *nazir*". The fourth says "I am a *nazir* if none of you are *nazirs*". The fifth says (to the first two) "I am a *nazir* if both of you are *nazirs*". The sixth says "I am a *nazir* if all of you are *nazirs*". (ה' :ה')
- Regarding the previous case, what is the law if they were never able to clarify if the person approaching was *Ploni*? (ה' :ו')
- Regarding the previous case, what if they were not arguing about the identity of a person, but rather arguing about whether a *koi* is a *chaya* or *behema*? (ה' :ו')
- What are the prohibitions placed on a *nazir*? (א' :ו')
- How many grapes must a *nazir* eat in order to be liable to lashes? (א' :ו')
- What are *chartzanim*? (ב' :ו')
- What are *zagim*? (ב' :ו')
- If bandits forcibly shaved a *nazir*'s hair, must he restart his count? (ג' :ו')
- Is a *nazir* allowed to wash his hair? (ג' :ו')
- If a *nazir* drinks wine for the whole day, when is he liable to multiple sets of lashes? (ד' :ו')
- Does the previous law apply to the other two prohibitions? (ד' :ו')
- How is the prohibition of consuming grape products more strict than the other two prohibitions? And how is it more lenient? (ה' :ו')
- Regarding the other two prohibitions, how are each more strict than the other? (ה' :ו')
- Describe the process of *tiglachat ha'tumah* for a *nazir*? (ו' :ו')
- According to *R' Tarfon* how does *tiglachat ha'tumah* for a *nazir* differ from that of a *metzora*? (ו' :ו')
- Describe the process of *tiglachat ha'taharah* for a *nazir*? (ו' :ו')
- What was done with the *nazir*'s hair once it was shaved? (ז' :ו')
- Explain how the *nazir*'s *shlamim* was offered? (ז' :ו')
- From what point would the *nazir* once again be allowed to become *tameh met*? (ז' :ו')
- What is the law if after the *tiglachat*, one *korban* is found to be *pasul*? (Be specific) (ח' :ו')
- Explain the debate regarding a *nazir* that became *tameh* after the *korbanot* were offered, yet prior to the *tiglachat*. (ח' :ו')

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Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	שבת קודש
11 th February כ"ג שבט	12 th February כ"ד שבט	13 th February כ"ה שבט	14 th February כ"ו שבט	15 th February כ"ז שבט	16 th February כ"ח שבט	17 th February כ"ט שבט
Nazir 7:1-2	Nazir 7:3-4	Nazir 8:1-2	Nazir 9:1-2	Nazir 9:3-4	Nazir 9:5 – Sotah 1:1	Sotah 1:2-3

