

## Nazarites

A Nazarite or Nazirite was a Jewish male or female who separated himself or herself for the Lord their whole life or for a period of time.

> **“He shall separate himself from wine & similar drink; he shall drink neither vinegar made from wine nor vinegar made from similar drink; neither shall he drink any grape juice, nor eat fresh grapes or raisins. All the days of his separation he shall eat nothing that is produced by the grapevine, from seed to skin.” (Numbers 6:3-4)**

Nazarites' were forbidden to shave their heads or approach a dead body, even that of his closest relatives.

“And if anyone dies very suddenly beside him, and he defiles his consecrated head, then he shall shave his head on the day of his cleansing; on the seventh day he shall shave it. Then on the eighth day he shall bring two turtledoves or two young pigeons to the priest, to the door of the tabernacle of meeting; and the priest shall offer one as a sin offering and the other as a burnt offering, and make atonement for him, because he sinned in regard to the corpse; and he shall sanctify his head that same day.” (Numbers 6:9-11)

At the end of the vow, the Nazarite offered a yearling male lamb as a burnt offering, a yearling ewe lamb as a sin offering, and a ram as a peace offering, along with “a basket of unleavened bread, cakes of fine flour mixed with oil, unleavened wafers anointed with oil, and their grain offering with their drink offerings.” (Numbers 6:15)

The Nazarite also shaved his head and burned his hair with the peace offering. The priest took an assigned part of the offering. If the Nazarite wished, he could offer anything else beside the burnt, sin, and peace offerings and the cakes and wafers.

There were a couple examples of Nazarites in the Old Testament. One example was Samson. When the angel announced to Samson's mother the birth of Samson, he told her that no razor shall come upon Samson's head because he would be a Nazarite and that she should not drink wine or similar drink (Judges 13:4-5).

The other Nazarite in the Old Testament was Samuel. Samuel's mother, Hannah, was miserable because her husband's other wife, Peninnah, mocked and despised her because she had no children. Thus, she prayed to the Lord that, if he granted her a son, he would be consecrated to the Lord and no razor shall come upon his head- a Nazarite (1 Samuel 1:11).

There were also a couple examples of Nazarites in the New Testament. St. Luke said about St. John the Baptist that he “shall drink neither wine nor strong drink”(Luke 1:15) and the Lord Jesus said about him “For John the Baptist came neither eating bread nor drinking wine”(Luke 7:33), which indicates that St. John the Baptist was a Nazarite.

Moreover, St. Paul took on a Nazarite vow for a period of time in order to convince the Jews that he keeps the law so they would not be against him (Acts 21:23-24).

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