

Numbers 6:1–21

¹Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, ²“Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: ‘When either a man or woman consecrates an offering to take the vow of a Nazirite, to separate himself to the Lord, ³he shall separate himself from wine and 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. ⁴All the days of his separation he shall eat nothing that is produced by the grapevine, from seed to skin.

⁵‘All the days of the vow of his separation no razor shall come upon his head; until the days are fulfilled for which he separated himself to the Lord, he shall be holy. Then he shall let the locks of the hair of his head grow. ⁶All the days that he separates himself to the Lord he shall not go near a dead body. ⁷He shall not make himself unclean even for his father or his mother, for his brother or his sister, when they die, because his separation to God is on his head. ⁸All the days of his separation he shall be holy to the Lord.

⁹‘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. ¹⁰Then on the eighth day he shall bring two turtledoves or two young pigeons to the priest, to the door of the tabernacle of meeting; ¹¹and 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. ¹²He shall consecrate to the Lord the days of his separation, and bring a male lamb in its first year as a trespass offering; but the former days shall be lost, because his separation was defiled.

¹³‘Now this is the law of the Nazirite: When the days of his separation are fulfilled, he shall be brought to the door of the tabernacle of meeting. ¹⁴And he shall present his offering to the Lord: one male lamb in its first year without blemish as a burnt offering, one ewe lamb in its first year without blemish as a sin offering, one ram without blemish as a peace offering, ¹⁵a basket of unleavened bread, cakes of fine flour mixed with oil, unleavened wafers anointed with oil, and their grain offering with their drink offerings. ¹⁶‘Then the priest shall bring them before the Lord and offer his sin offering and his burnt offering; ¹⁷and he shall offer the ram as a sacrifice of a peace offering to the Lord, with the basket of unleavened bread; the priest shall also offer its grain offering and its drink offering. ¹⁸Then the Nazirite shall shave his consecrated head at the door of the tabernacle of meeting, and shall take the hair from his consecrated head and put it on the fire which is under the sacrifice of the peace offering. ¹⁹‘And the priest shall take the boiled shoulder of the ram, one unleavened cake from the basket, and one unleavened wafer, and put them upon the hands of the Nazirite after he has shaved his consecrated hair, ²⁰and the priest shall wave them as a wave offering before the Lord; they are holy for the priest, together with the breast of the wave offering and the thigh of the heave offering. After that the Nazirite may drink wine.’

²¹“This is the law of the Nazirite who vows to the Lord the offering for his separation, and besides that, whatever else his hand is able to provide; according to the vow which he takes, so he must do according to the law of his separation.”

Separated unto God

Main idea: Not only the corporately, but each individually, saints are separated unto God as those who delight in Him, and in whom He delights, especially in/for worship.

Introduction: Holiness is corporate, but also individual.

1. For Each Believer

1. Man or woman, v2
2. People or priest, v7 (cf. Lev 21:2, 11)
3. Poor (v10) or Rich (v21)

2. Delighting in the Lord: no grape seeds or skins

1. Many products of the land, but wine especially for joy and binding fellowship (analogy to bread for happiness, strength, and fellowship).
2. Conclusion to the ceremony is the drinking of wine in v20. The joy and fellowship in the Lord, of the time of the vow, is to carry on into the rest of life.
3. The Christian is given not temporary abstinence from wine, but weekly sacramental use of wine, for the same purpose.
3. **Delighted in by the Lord: the hair**
 1. Though temporary, this is more extended than bread fasting.
 2. Not just no razors, but letting the hair to itself: focus on the appearance of the heart to God.
 3. Our Father Who sees in the secret place!
4. **Always ready for worship**
 1. Same death/uncleanliness rules as for the High Priest for the same reason.
 2. Priority over God's house over their own house.
 3. Uninterrupted readiness for worship (e.g. end of v12)
 4. Live as ready for worship! (especially as those who now enter the Holy of Holies, cf. Heb 10)

Conclusion: Christ separated Himself unto God, so that you who are His might be separated unto God.

(The following is a machine-generated transcription. Please be aware of—and patient with—transcribing errors. If there is something confusing or obviously erroneous, you are invited to listen to the audio recording via hopewellarp.org)

Numbers chapter 6. These are God's words. Then he always spoke to Moses saying, speak to the children of Israel and say to them. When either a man or woman. Consecrates an offering to take the vow of an azerite to separate himself to Yahweh. He shall separate himself from wine and similar drink.

He shall drinking either vinegar made from wine or 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. All the days of the vow of his separation.

Knew no razor shall come upon his head until the days are fulfilled for which he separated himself to Yahweh, he shall be holy. Then he shall let the locks of the hair of his head grow. All the days that he separates himself to Yahweh, he shall not go near a dead body.

He shall not make himself unclean, even for his father or his mother. For his brother or his sister, when they die. Because his separation to God. Is on his head. All the days of his separation, he shall be holy to Yahweh. 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 save it then on the eighth day he shall bring two turtle doves or two young pigeons to the priest to the door of the Tabernacle of meeting So offer one, as a sin offering and the other is 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, he shall consecrate to Yahweh the days of his separation. And bring a male lamb in its first year as a trespass offering. But the former days shall be lost. Because his separation. Was defiled. Now, this is the law of the Nazarite.

When the days of his separation are fulfilled, he shall be brought to the door of the Tabernacle of meeting and he shall present his offering to Yahweh. One male lamb in its first year without blemish. As a burnt offering one, you lamb in its first year without blemish as a sin, offering one Ram without blemish as a peace offering.

Basket of unleavened bread. Cakes of fine flour. Mixed with oil unleavened wafers, Anointed with oil and their grain offering with their drink offerings. Then the priest shall bring them before. Yahweh and offer his sin offering and his burnt offering. And he shall offer the ram as a sacrifice of a peace offering to Yahweh with the basket of unleavened bread.

The priest shall also offer its grain offering and its drink offering. Then the Nazarite shall save his consecrated head at the door of the Tabernacle of meeting. And shall take the hair from his consecrated head and put it on the fire which is under the sacrifice of the peace offering.

And the priest shall take the boiled shoulder of the ram, one unleavened cake from the basket and one unleavened wafer. And put them upon the hands of the Nazarite after he has shaved his consecrated hair. And the priest shall wave them as a wave offering before, Yahweh? They are holy for the priest together, with the breast of the wave offering and the thigh of the heave offering.

After that, the Nazarite major inquiry. This is the law of the Nazarite who vows to Yahweh the offering for his separation and besides that whatever else His hand is able to provide according to the vow which he takes. So he must do. According to the law. Of his separation.

So far, the reading of God's inspired and inert word. Last week in chapter five, we heard instruction on. The Lord communicating to his people. What it meant. To dwell in the camp or to have him dwell in the camp with them and the need therefore, For a corporate Holiness and cleanness in the camp for Holiness in their relationships and therefore, restitution when sin is committed between among men, that this would be first seen, remember as unfaithfulness to God.

And that, that is the reason that resolution between, Men and the offense. That was committed between them was so important. And also the necessity of maintaining a holy heart. Uh, that they would not permit jealousy to remain. Uh, in the heart, particularly the Who found himself jealous of his wife?

And so forth, but as the Lord communicated to his people, the necessity of Holiness. Among them corporately as people. Among whom God dwelt. He now in chapter six and these these 21 verses actually gives them something in the ceremonial law that enables any one of them. To make one of these extraordinary, vows the the word that is translated here consecrates an offering.

In verse 2 is actually the Hebrew word for working a Wonder. As you as you probably are not surprised to hear it is usually used of God. He is the one who works wonders. And so this is something that he gives to his people that they may do. That would be an extraordinary vow.

This of course, would only be by Free Will. No one was compelled to be an Nazirite but it was an opportunity for his people to experience and to dwell upon and to grow in the knowledge of their Holiness to God for any individual. Uh, to have this opportunity by particular Val.

As a vow of the Nazirite. Now, the word Nazirite is just a A noun form. A personal noun form. That's built upon the word for separation Nazar. So, as you see, throughout the passage, He separates himself or his separation to God. You can also it may help you to look at and read and think of the word Nazirite here as separated one.

Because it will, it has the The same consonants and you would then be getting the gist of the text, the way that it is written now. Praise God in Christ. He has brought us so near, he has given each of us a Holiness unto God. That this idea of an extraordinary vow above something that is required.

It doesn't really apply to us anymore. For the ceremonial law has been said, completely fulfilled, so, completely obsoleted, by the Lord Jesus Christ. It is actually impossible. Uh, to, to go above and beyond what it already requires of us. Because Christ has fulfilled it and he is What is required of us?

Although it continues for us to vow unto God, those things that he has commanded those things that are already our duty. And so there is a right use of religious, Oaths and religious vows now, but God was here. Uh, giving his people an opportunity within his moral law within the statutes that he not moral within his ceremonial law within his statutes for what he has prescribed for Israel.

For. For the whole body of the religious worship, the religious things that they could offer this special vow of separation, this vow of separation, and we'll see in the first place that it was a vow. That could be taken by any believer. In the second place that it was a vow especially for delighting in the Lord and the third place that it was a vow in which we hoped to be and aimed at being delighted in by the Lord, which is to say it was done for the Lord's eyes, not for others eyes.

And in the last place, it was a vow of consecration or Holiness. Uh, in which the person was always to be ready for the worship of God. And there's much for us to learn. But in those things. So first that is for each believer, a second that it's for delighting in the Lord.

And there we'll deal with the from seed to skin. Uh, nothing from a grape. Not even this. The new wine that new King James for whatever reason. Uh, translated grape juice. Um, but the lighting in the Lord and then being delighted in by the Lord and there, we will deal with the instruction about the hair.

And then to be always ready for worship, be consecrated, especially for the worship of God, where we will deal with the requirement of cleanliness in the dead bodies and having to start over and And so forth. So first, this was for each believer, notice That, uh, that following the end of Numbers, Chapter five.

In which we we noted that It was an instruction for when the husband is jealous. But the wife, if she were to be jealous, she is under her husband and she did not have access to the same process. Although she had to live by the same principle and give up any jealousy that she might have to the Lord.

Hear a woman does have access to the same process. Either a man or a woman may work. This wonderer or commit this extraordinary. Vow take this extraordinary vow in verse 2 and so

So the the vow of separation or the vow of the nazrite was something that a man or a woman could do In the second place, it's not.

It allows the people to enter into a, a consecration that imitated or was analogous to that of the high priest himself this will think of a little bit more, When we get to, Always being ready for worship. But in verse 7, it says, he shall not make himself unclean even for his father or his mother, or his brother, or his sister.

Now, if you remember back to Leviticus 21 and we had regulations, concerning the priesthood, the priests the ordinary priests the other, the sons of Aaron, or the sons of the high priest, whoever was not the high priest, Uh, they were actually permitted to make themselves unclean. For immediate family, for father or mother or or brother, or an unmarried sister who had not gone to be part of someone else's household, but it was the high priest.

The only the high priest had this regulation that we have here in verse seven. And there you can compare Leviticus 21 verse 2, for the ordinary priests to the That was the regulation that was specific to the high priest in verse 11. And so, what's being described, here is a consecration that requires high priest level cleanliness And so you have man or woman in verse two.

You have people or priest in verse 7 and then very subtly, even poor or Rich Some of the other offerings would be difficult. For the poorest person in the places, where, or in the place where, Uh, he deals with the The sin off or the Ascension and the sin offering.

In the case of his being accidentally defiled and having to reset to Uh, to day one, you notice in verse two, it prescribes, sorry. Not verse 2 verse 10. It prescribes two turtle doves or two young pigeons. And so the the lowest The lowest cost offering for the Ascension and for the sin offering, Are on the sliding scale.

And so there's an implication here. That that this is to meant to be put Within Reach, not just of the wealthiest Israelite but of the common Israelite as well. So this law of Separation is something that is optional but it's offered to any believer. He didn't have to be a levite, didn't have to be the house from the house of Aaron.

Didn't have to be wealthy, didn't even have to be male? To take the vow of separation to take the the vow of Anazarite. Now, the nazrite This law of separation, very similar. Now, to what we have been thinking about and hearing about in terms of fasting and the Lord's day.

The Lord's day is not about what it is consecrated from, but what it is consecrated to fasting is not about what you're fasting from, but unto whom you are fasting. Well, so also, here, there are these separations, which are a little bit odd even unique, they're even unique in Scripture and in the, the Mosaic law of a ceremonial law, And so, The, the Oddity attracts our attention but it shouldn't be.

What has the attention of the separated one? They're separated unto Yahweh. Separated unto Yahweh. Holy unto Yahweh. That's Throughout the text, the emphasis. And so, if you're taking this vowel separation, the the vow of an azerite, the point was to spend time devoted to and meditating upon the Lord, And in particular, how the Lord is your joy, how the Lord is your joy and how the Lord is your fellowship?

Now, there are a number of things in the land. That they were going to that. That would have been great blessing and that they would have enjoyed the richness and the goodness of God's Provision. And we have thought a little bit about even this morning about fasting from bread.

And therefore, Finding in God, our strength and finding in God, our happiness, but it is especially wine that the Lord singles out here and indeed not just wine. But anything to do with the fruit of the vine for the, the wine. Was designed, especially for. And especially not just for Fellowship the way that you Would break bread together.

And, and have Fellowship over bread or Fellowship over meal. But the sharing of a cup was, especially covenantal It was a more intimate, more binding. Sort of an expression, a fellowship then merely breaking bread together. And so, The, a covenant ceremony would be sealed. With this with a cup of wine with the drinking of wine together.

So, he takes that particular thing. Which in which, which is so symbolic of, or Which was so. Most clearly communicates, joy and binding, Fellowship, binding relationship, and he says, for a time that he is to separate himself from the wine and now not only From wine from seed to skin as as he says in verse 4.

But lest, someone enjoy that aspect of the wine that is most for communicating this joy that is most for communicating this Fellowship. They weren't permitted, even to drink anything Alcoholic. And so, the main thing here is, is the, the Vine itself as that, which the Lord had given them in the land for joy and for Fellowship and for binding relationships, and for a time, then they were to have these things only in the Lord himself immediately not using the particular means that is a good means and a right means He had given them given them for joy and for binding Fellowship.

But without the means very similar to The, the bread fasting. And God, giving bread for strength and bread. Uh, bread for happiness and we even have for instance in Psalm 104. The Lord's, providential care for all of his creatures. And then he mentions three things in Psalm 104 that we're especially features of the land.

Bread to strengthen the heart and the land was full of grain. Oil to make his face shine. And the land was full of The, the Olive and the Olive Tree, and the olive oil, And then wine to Gladden his heart. And the land was full. Of. Of the Grapevine.

And so as the Nazarite would spend this extended period of time, not using that particular means that particular provision that God had put in the land. That was an instrument of Joy from him and an instrument of binding Fellowship from him. They would be the one who had taken this Nazarite vow.

Develop separation would be dwelling upon how God himself is immediately. The joy of the soul that that our belonging and our fellowship. Although we have belonging and fellowship with one another in various relationships. The the great belonging for which we were created, is that to be bound to God and again, immediately in the soul.

And so, There would be this season then the separate the Nazarite vow, was the season of being consecrated to the Lord for delighting in him. And then in the, in the third place, It was this season for being delighted in by him. Uh, verse 5. And this has to do with the hair, all the days of the vow of his separation.

No razor. Shall come upon his head. Until the days are fulfilled for which he separated himself to ye always shall be holy. So he shall let the locks of the hair of his head grow. So here we have that although this is intended to be a temporary vow. It is not a, as a particularly brief time, you remember?

That a husband and wife who were to refrain from who wanted to refrain from knowing one. Another, the one reason that they could do that First Corinthians 7 was to fast and pray

together But there were the two stipulations, it could only be for fasting in prayer and it had to be for a brief period of time there in First Corinthians 7.

This is a little bit longer. A period of time, that is described here and that's implied by the fact that instead of not eating bread, Uh, we're not eating food, which you need to live, they're refraining from Whatever is from seed to skin on the the vine and also by the fact of the hair in order for you to grow a substantial amount of hair, it takes a while it takes longer than you would for an ordinary food fast.

And and so there's length of time applied here, but there's also an instruction really to let yourself go. In scripture, it was In the culture into which this was given the The. Managing of the hair, the carefulness and dignity of outward appearance. Was part of maintaining your dignity, your name your reputation before, others?

Uh, this is why children. Sometimes we have a little bit of this in our culture, although it is disappearing quickly, but you all have good mothers. And so when you ask if you can come to the store she might say not with your hair looking like that and you'll be sent to run a comb through it or a brushed.

Through it or whatever. Well the person who is taking the Nazarite vow was supposed to be doing, not that which was for uh for others esteem. But that which was for the Lord They care, they would care to make themselves to compose the heart before God instead of the hair before men.

And so, the the part at the beginning of verse 5, when the razor come upon his head, is actually joined to the end of verse 5. Letting the locks of the hair of his head. Grow letting the hair, Himself go as we say with respect. To the, to the And so, the Of the Nazarite was not just delighting in the Lord, finding his joy in the Lord, but he's especially focusing on.

On this vow of separation is something that was unto God, not, not focusing on the appearance of his hair to men. Or her hair to men. But focusing on the appearance of the heart to God. Finally we've already noted that that it was the same rule there in verse 7.

That was especially for the high priest and it's also for the same reason. The high priest as it were was Was always on duty, he needed to always be ready to go and perform his Priestly act. And so he couldn't permit himself to be unclean. Even for father or mother or brother, or sister now, taking a valve separation, taking the valve of the Nazarite, didn't give you access to the holy of holies.

It didn't mean you could go where the high priest went and do what the high priest did, but it did mean that you should maintain in your heart. This continual Readiness to draw as near unto God, as he has given you to do in worship at any time. There's a priority then of God's house even over their own house.

That they would not for their own household. Defile themselves if during the time of the days of Separation. A an immediate family member. Were to Die. They would prioritize Readiness to participate in the Tabernacle worship ceremonial cleanliness, that they would be ready to participate in the public worship at any time.

Now there are applications of each of these things for us as Christians. The Christian is not given in the change of law that has come when the change in priesthood where there's a change of priesthood. There is a change of law. We are not given vows of temporary abstinence from mine in the New Testament.

In fact, it would be wrong to do so because we are given in the New Testament, the weekly sacramental use of wine for the same purpose for much the same purpose as the nazrite vow. Does that, when you come to the table and you drink the wine at the Lord's table, you're not drinking so much wine that it can physically affect, or produce the the gladness.

It's not even as much as you would use at a toast in a wedding. Where Some other covenanting ceremony in which you're being bound? No the the wine in the cup is being used sacramentally To communicate to you. And it has the taste and it has the feel and it has the smell.

And those are important things because they are communicating to you. That Christ is your joy before God. And especially that Christ, is your Covenant with God. You have been bound to God. Not because you, and God have drunk wine together, but he gives you the wine at the Lord's table because you are bound to God because God the son became a man and has bound you to God by his own blood.

And so Christ has sealed the Covenant and he has given to you. Has given to you as a sign and as a seal unto your faith, the use of the wine for that purpose. So just as an azarite might voluntarily occasionally take this vow of separation for in order to not drink wine in order to find in the Lord, their joy.

And in the Lord, their binding Fellowship, the almost the opposite as far as method is true, but the same substance Is employed. The Christian is given wine in the worship of God at the table week by week to find joy to, to Have communicated to us that our Joy is to be in the Lord, and our binding Fellowship is with the Lord.

Now, also very similarly. And here we have heard just this morning we are not. To continue on a religious vow. Uh, leaving or letting ourselves go? As far as appearance goes and praise God in his Mercy, he knows our hearts, doesn't he? An azarite was not supposed to think about or dwell upon how they looked such a mess to their brother and sister Israelites, but if you had taken the vow of separation, wouldn't that have been a temptation to you?

To wonder if your hair has gotten so big and so messy, that everybody else was impressed that you had taken this vow of separation, how subtle is the the sin of pride in our hearts and spiritual Pride, And so thankfully, the Lord Jesus has come to us, even in the passages that we have had the last two weeks in God's Providence, and the Lord, Lord today, morning preaching, in Matthew 6, and reminded us.

Actually several weeks, if you go back to the beginning of Matthew chapter 6, that all of that which he has given us to do religiously, whether works of Mercy or whether prayer or whether fasting, it's for the eyes of our father who sees in the secret place of the heart and even as we heard this morning, Not just our father who sees in secret but praise God, our Lord Jesus too, our bridegroom.

It's not just man but also God and sees in the heart and so we too are to Delight in the Lord. We too are to seek that the Lord would be delighted in us. We do Those things that he has given us to do. Especially for his eyes and you too are always to be ceremonially ready for worship.

And here, we're thinking especially, uh, inter in the same terms as in First Corinthians 5. Which warns against 11. And if we, If we don't read, Um, in the context correctly, you might end up Making the mistake of saying oh well Christians should never have any leaven you know Christ.

Our Passover has been sacrificed and therefore no leaven ever in the house of a Christian all you people with With your sourdough starter or incin? No, that is not what First Corinthians 5 is talking about. Sin is the leaven that must not be permitted. Why? Because Christ having been once, for all sacrificed and we being invited into heaven itself, every single week, to pass through the veil, by the new and Living Way, that is the Flesh of Christ.

We should always be maintaining a heart and mind towards God. As we would not need. You might need to, to wash up to be presentable in the assembly, but as far as repentance and cleanliness of heart and cleanliness of mind. With a clear conscience before God, you should always be ready for the worship of God.

You know, this is one of Um, you know, one of the things that's mentioned a couple of times. Burroughs is wonderful. The gospel worship. Book, the that. As far as preparation for worship or preparation for the table goes, those things are fine, those things are good, we should do those things but it should be the aim of a Christian.

So to live before God, and so to live unto him all day, every day that we would always be able to come to worship that if we were summoned. Our hearts would be ready to worship God. This is a real challenge. Isn't it for the sorts of things that we would indulge ourselves in that we would never enjoy the sort of entertainment that would defile our heart?

That not even for immediate family would be be willing to do anything. That would bring our heart to an unclean condition, where we would have to be reconciled with God. Before we were able to come into the public worship of God. Although this was an extraordinary vow for the Nazarite, we can see how the applications to the Christian Life actually, apply to every ordinary Christian.

And to the entire ordinary life of the Christian. That we would find our joy in the Lord, our belonging in him. That all of our religion would be unto our father for not not focused on how we appear to men, but how the heart truly appears to God. And that we would always be ready to enter into the worship of God, because we have been given in our great high priest.

Common to the holy of holies. Every single week. Through the new and the living way that is His flesh Christ separated himself unto God, consecrated himself unto God so that you who are his, you who are Christ's Apostrophe s. Might be separated unto God as well. Amen. Let's pray.

We thank you, Father for this portion. Of number six, we thank you for your help. That we might understand it and that we might not only understand what it meant in your mercy, to Uh, few Israelites whoever took you up on this. But even that we might understand how The Lord Jesus having come and the difference that he has made with his new priesthood.

That you have given us to be able to live these separated consecrated lives. Without even an extraordinary vow, we do pray that your spirit would Lay hold of our hearts to know you as our joy and our great belonging that he would make use of the wine. And also the bread that has been commanded at the table for those for that sacramental purpose and That he would help us, then to To take the worship of God, and the fellowship with you at the table, into the rest of our life, the way Nazareth would have Would have taken what they learned and grew in, in their Devotion, to you.

In that time of Separation, how they would have taken that or ought to have taken that into the rest of their lives? Grant that your spirit would do that for us. Particularly as Your day. Uh, winding down. And we're going to return now to the rest of our lives beginning.

Tomorrow, we pray Lord that that which we have enjoyed with you and experienced of you, and from you on this day, your spirit would keep applying to our minds and to our hearts in the week to come, grant that we ask in Jesus name, Amen.