

The Nazirite Vow

Numbers 6.1-8

February 8, 2020

Introduction

Where does all this information come from?

Ashley, Cole, Wenham, and Gane.

Numbers 1 - the faithfulness of God

Numbers 5 - the call to holiness

Famous Nazirites: Samuel, Samson, John the Baptist

It was regarded as something of high honour

Royalty participated - Queen Helena.¹

A Nazirite vow was a call to...

1. Abstain

- From wine, etc.
- Evidence of Yahweh's great blessing upon the land (Isa 5:1-2, 7a; Jer 2:21).
- In the New Testament limitations regarding wine consumption are listed among the requirements for overseers and deacons, and drunkenness is the antithesis to being filled with the Spirit (Eph 5:18; 1 Cor 6:10).
- Being connected to Christ - John 15.1-8; I Am the vine...

2. Restrain

- the urge to cut your hair
- Nothing external was to disturb the hair, representing as it did the power and life of the dedicated human being, until the accomplishment of the vow.
- Both the high priest's diadem and the Nazirite's hair are called *nēzer* (lit., "consecration"). Both the diadem and the hair are special marks of the wearer's consecration to Yahweh.
- The prime example of this is Samson
- How do we understand this in light of what we read in 1Corinthians 11?
 - The point is that hair, once it is cut, dies. While the hair is still connected to the head, it grows
- Christ is the head of the church (Colossians 1.18) - stay connected

3. Disdain

- Absolute commitment to life over death -- The exceptional holiness of the Nazirite is again underlined by the rules governing his re-consecration should he contract pollution through contact with a corpse.
- Jesus alludes to this aspect of the dedication of his disciples when he admonished them to "Follow me, and let the dead bury their own dead" (Matt 8:21-22).²
 - This is something picked up on in Luke 9.57-62; c.f. 1Kings 19.19-21.

God is the God of life...

- **Genesis 2.7** - God breathed life into man
- Genesis 2.9 - the Tree of Life // Revelation 2.7
- **Deuteronomy 30.20** - God is your life
- 2Kings 5.7
- Isaiah 38 - Hezekiah gets an extra 15 years
- **John 10.10** // John 3.16 // **Romans 6.23**

How does this apply to me?

- Stay **connected** to Jesus
- In Christ we experience the **power** of life over death

Amen.

¹ Helena was queen of Adiabene, a small kingdom on the border of the Parthian Empire (modern-day Iraq) that was semi-independent before the first Jewish revolt against Rome (AD 66–73). The royal family of Adiabene were Gentile converts to Judaism who are remembered in rabbinic literature for their benevolence to the needy in Judaea. Josephus recorded that Queen Helena visited Jerusalem during the famine of AD 46 (Acts 11:28; compare Suetonius, *Claudius* 18.2; Tacitus, *Annals* 12.43; Cassius Dio, *Roman History* 40.11). Upon seeing the severity of the famine, she sent her attendants to Alexandria and Cyprus to secure grain and figs for the hungry. Josephus wrote that Helena's son Izates likewise sent a large sum of money during the famine (Josephus, *Antiquities* 20:49–53) -- García, J. P. (2016). [Sepulchre of the Kings](#). In J. D. Barry, D. Bomar, D. R. Brown, R. Klippenstein, D. Mangum, C. Sinclair Wolcott, ... W. Widder (Eds.), *The Lexham Bible Dictionary*. Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press.

² Cole, R. D. (2000). [Numbers](#) (Vol. 3B, p. 123). Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers.