

## THE NAZIRITE VOW

By Keith Greer

"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. "{Numbers 6:3}

The Nazirite vow was an oath taken before God to abstain from certain worldly influences and dedicate oneself to the Lord. Who could take the vow? What were the requirements? Please read carefully Numbers 6:4-7.

First, abstaining from all intoxicating grape and alcohol products. Second, a refusal to cut one's hair. Third, avoiding any contact with the dead men or animals. Last, refusing to eat food which was regarded as unclean. The period of time the vow could be taken for was a short interval or even the lifetime of an individual. If the vow was taken for a short period of time the Nazirite could then present himself before the priest for a ceremony of release. Nazirites who failed to keep their vows could only be restored by observing special restoration rites, Numbers 6:9-20.

Many Bible characters are associated with this vow. Most notably, Samuel, Samson, and John the Baptist. In the case of Samson, his parents were instructed by an angel of the Lord. "And He said to me, 'Behold, you shall conceive and bear a son. Now drink no wine or similar drink, nor eat anything unclean, for the child shall be a Nazirite to God from the womb to the day of his death. "{ Judges 13: 7} Hannah dedicated her son, Samuel even before he was born. "Then she made a vow and said, "O LORD of hosts, if You will indeed look on the affliction of Your maidservant and remember me, and not forget Your maidservant, but will {five Your maidservant a male child, then I will give him to the LORD all the days of his life, and no razor shall come upon his head. "{1 Samuel 1:11}

This vow should always serve to remind us that our God desires His people to live holy and consecrated lives before Him and men. We need not take a special vow upon our obedience, we have done that by the commitment we have made to Christ. All lives of Christians need to be disciplined to allow our lights to shine in a dark world! \*\*\*