

הרי מושבע עליו מהר סיני!

He is already sworn<sup>N</sup> and obligated about it from Mount Sinai, i.e., he is obligated by Torah law to keep the *halakhot* of naziriteship, and therefore it is obvious that he may not drink wine from *kiddush* or *havdala*, as drinking the wine is required by rabbinic law (Rambam).

אלא כי הא דאמר רבא: "שבועה שאשתה וחזר ואמר 'הריני נזיר' אתיא נזירות חילא על שבועה.

Rather, it is like that<sup>N</sup> which Rava said: If one said: I hereby take an oath that I will drink wine, and he then said:<sup>H</sup> I am hereby a nazirite, the naziriteship comes and applies<sup>N</sup> to the subject of his oath. Although drinking wine is a mitzva for him due to his oath, his naziriteship supersedes the previous oath and renders it prohibited for him to drink wine.

ורבנן נמי, הא מיבעי ליה לאסור מן מצוה כמין רשות! אם כן לימא קרא "מין". מאי "ושכר" – שמעת מינה תרתי.

The Gemara asks: And according to the Rabbis also, isn't the verse needed to prohibit to a nazirite wine that is consumed as a mitzva, just like wine whose consumption is optional? The Gemara answers: If that is so, let the verse say only "he shall abstain from wine" (Numbers 6:3). What is the purpose of the additional phrase "and strong drink"? Learn from it that the verse teaches two *halakhot*, that one is a full-fledged nazirite even if he accepted only one of the prohibitions of naziriteship, and that a nazirite is prohibited from drinking wine even when its consumption is a mitzva.

ורבי שמעון: היינו טעמא דכתב "שכר" – לאלופי "שכר" "שכר" למקדש. דכתבי "מין ושכר" אל תשת אתה ובגין אתך, מה גבי נזיר מין הוא דליתסר, אבל שאר משקין – לא. אף גבי מקדש נמי, מין הוא דליתסר, אבל שאר משקין המשתבין – לא.

The Gemara explains: And Rabbi Shimon could respond to this argument as follows: This is the reason that the verse writes "strong drink": It is to teach a verbal analogy between "strong drink" written here and "strong drink" written with regard to entering and performing service in the Temple, as it is written that Aaron the priest was commanded: "Do not drink wine or strong drink, you nor your sons with you, when you go into the Tent of Meeting" (Leviticus 10:9). This teaches: Just as with a nazirite, it is wine alone that is forbidden<sup>H</sup> but other beverages are not forbidden, so too, with regard to the Temple,<sup>N</sup> it is wine that is forbidden to priests, but other intoxicating beverages are not forbidden to them.

#### HALAKHA

An oath that I will drink wine, and he then said, etc. – שבועה שאשתה, וחזר ואמר וכו': If one takes an oath that he will drink wine today and subsequently takes a nazirite vow, the nazirite vow takes effect and supersedes the oath, and it is therefore prohibited for him to drink wine (Rambam *Sefer Hafla'a*, *Hilkhot Nezirut* 7:1).

It is wine alone that is forbidden – מין הוא דליתסר: It is prohibited for a nazirite to consume wine or any product that contains grape derivatives. However, it is permitted for him to drink strong drinks made from figs or other produce (Rambam *Sefer Hafla'a*, *Hilkhot Nezirut* 5:1).

#### NOTES

He is already sworn, etc. – הרי מושבע וכו': This version of the Gemara text is difficult. The plain meaning of the Gemara seems to indicate that one is obligated from Mount Sinai to drink the wine from *kiddush* and *havdala* (Commentary on *Nazir*). This fits well with the version of the *She'iltot* that states that there is a mitzva by Torah law to mention Shabbat over wine at its beginning, in *kiddush*, and at its end, during *havdala*. According to this opinion, the Gemara refutes the possibility that the verse teaches that a nazirite is prohibited from drinking *kiddush* and *havdala* wine, and the early authorities of Ashkenaz ruled accordingly. A different interpretation, also based on this version of the text, is that just as the Gemara states that a nazirite cannot be viewed as beautiful if his naziriteship involves a transgression (2b), the Torah would likewise have refrained from praising a nazirite if his vow meant he could not drink the wine of *kiddush* and *havdala* (*Tosefot Rabbeinu Peretz*).

However, most commentaries reject these opinions, since it is evident from other sources that although *kiddush* is a mitzva by Torah law, the use of wine is by rabbinic law. This is certainly the case with regard to reciting *havdala* over wine. Furthermore, since one can recite *kiddush* over bread or fulfill the mitzva by listening to the *kiddush* of another individual, the drinking of *kiddush* wine cannot be seen as an act that is incumbent on one from Mount Sinai and that should therefore be permitted to a nazirite. Consequently, many commentaries accept a different version of the text, attributed to Rabbeinu Tam, according to which the Gemara asks rhetorically: Is he already sworn from Mount Sinai? In other words, it is obvious that a nazirite may not

drink the wine from *kiddush* or *havdala*, as there is no mitzva by Torah law to drink this wine. The Rosh and most commentaries explain the text in this manner.

The Rambam, in his Responsa (120), explains the Gemara differently: It is obvious that the mitzva of *kiddush* over wine is by rabbinic law. The words: He is already sworn about it from Mount Sinai, refer not to the mitzvot of *kiddush* and *havdala* over wine, but to the prohibitions of naziriteship. The Gemara is then saying: If you say that this *halakha* teaches that a nazirite is prohibited from drinking *kiddush* wine, that is not a novelty, since *kiddush* is a rabbinic mitzva, whereas a nazirite is sworn by Torah law to uphold his vow of naziriteship.

Rather it is like that, etc. – אלא כי הא וכו': This version of the text does not make sense according to the commentaries who explain that the nazirite is considered to have sworn from Mount Sinai to perform *kiddush* and *havdala* with wine. The Rosh explains that according to that opinion, the word: Rather, should be omitted, as Rava's statement is a continuation of the previous argument. The Gemara is then providing proof that the prohibitions of naziriteship take precedence over the mitzva wine of *kiddush* and *havdala*, by demonstrating that the prohibitions of naziriteship take precedence over an oath to drink wine. However, others explain that according to these commentaries, although a nazirite is not prohibited from drinking the wine of *kiddush* and *havdala*, he is prohibited from drinking wine that he took an oath to drink (Meiri, citing Rashi; Commentary on *Nazir*; see Rashba).

Naziriteship comes and applies, etc. – אתיא נזירות חילא וכו': The Rashba, in his Responsa (4:109), explains the Gemara in the following manner: A nazirite vow prohibits the nazirite from consuming wine, and also takes effect with regard to the wine itself and causes the wine to be considered a forbidden item vis-à-vis the nazirite. In this regard, a nazirite vow is similar to other vows, which render an item forbidden. By contrast, oaths create an obligation or a prohibition that applies to the person who took it (see *Nedarim* 2b). Consequently, even if the individual has already obligated himself to drink wine, since the wine itself becomes a forbidden item due to his nazirite vow, he may not fulfill his oath by drinking the wine. However, it is explained in the Meiri that a nazirite vow is like an oath in that it applies only to the individual, prohibiting him from consuming wine, but does not affect the status of the wine itself. The verse teaches that naziriteship overrides one's earlier oath, as it is more inclusive and powerful than a regular oath.

So too with regard to the Temple, etc. – אף גבי מקדש נמי – וכו': This does not mean that a priest is permitted to perform the service when he is drunk from some other intoxicating beverage, since the Torah's prohibition applies to all intoxicating drinks. Rather, one who drinks other beverages and proceeds to serve in the Temple is not liable to death at the hand of Heaven, which is the punishment reserved for one who performs the Temple service while drunk from wine (*Shita Mekubbetzet*).

**אָכַל דְּבִילָה קַעֲלִית וכו' –** A priest who becomes drunk from any intoxicating beverage is prohibited from entering the Temple. If he performed service in the Temple after drinking an intoxicating beverage other than wine, he is liable to receive lashes, though his service is valid. If he performed a service after drinking wine, his service is invalid and he is liable to death at the hand of Heaven. The *halakha* is in accordance with Rabbi Yehuda (Rambam *Sefer Avoda, Hilkhot Biat HaMikdash* 2:1).

The verse taught that the prohibitions of a nazirite combine with each other – **לִימַד עַל אִסוּרֵי נְזִיר שְׁמֻצְרָפִים זֶה עִם זֶה**: All of the different types of grapes that are forbidden to a nazirite combine with each other to make up one measurement. For example, if a nazirite ate moist grapes with dried ones, unripe ones, grape seeds, or grape skins, and if he ate a total volume of an olive-bulk, he is liable to receive lashes. Similarly, if a nazirite drank a quarter-log of a mixture of wine and of vinegar made of wine, he receives lashes (Rambam *Sefer Hafla'a, Hilkhot Nezirut* 5:3).

BACKGROUND

**A dried fig from Ke'ila – דְּבִילָה קַעֲלִית**: This refers to dried figs from the town of Ke'ila in Judea. Apparently, the figs in this area contained a high level of sugar. Other places in the Talmud tell of how honey would drip from the figs and ferment, turning into alcohol.

Even without fermentation, ingesting a large amount of sugar can cause mild poisoning. This may be due to an inability of the liver to process a large amount of sugar fast enough. This causes feelings of nausea and dizziness similar to what one might feel after drinking hard liquor.

וְלֹא פוֹקֵי מִדְּרַבֵּי יְהוּדָה. דִּתְנֵינָא, רַבִּי יְהוּדָה אָמַר: אָכַל דְּבִילָה קַעֲלִית, וְשָׁתָה דְּבִישׁ וְחֵלֶב, וְנִכְנַס לְמִקְדָּשׁ – חַיִּיב.

אֵיבְעִית אֵימָא: רַבִּי שְׁמַעוֹן לִית לִיה אִיסוּר חָל עַל אִיסוּר.

דִּתְנֵינָא, רַבִּי שְׁמַעוֹן אָמַר: הָאוֹכֵל נְבִילָה בְּיוֹם הַכִּפּוּרִים – פָּטוּר.

וְלִרְבִּנָּן נִמְי, הִכְתִּיב "מִכֹּל אֲשֶׁר יַעֲשֶׂה מִגִּזְפוֹ הַיּוֹם!" אָמַר לֵךְ רַבִּנּוּ: הֲתָם לִימַד עַל אִסוּרֵי נְזִיר שְׁמֻצְרָפִים זֶה עִם זֶה.

וְרַבִּי שְׁמַעוֹן לִית לִיה צִירוּף. דִּתְנֵינָא, רַבִּי שְׁמַעוֹן אָמַר: כָּל שֶׁהוּא לְמַכּוֹת, לֹא אָמַרוּ כְּזֵית אֱלָא לְעֵנֹן קִרְבָּן.

And this is to the exclusion of the opinion of Rabbi Yehuda, as it is taught in a *baraita* that Rabbi Yehuda says: If one ate a dried fig from Ke'ila,<sup>HB</sup> and similarly if one drank honey or if one drank milk, which can dull the senses, and entered the Temple, he is liable for violating the prohibition against strong drink.

The Gemara suggests a different reason for the inclusion of the term "strong drink," according to Rabbi Shimon. **If you wish, say instead that it is necessary because Rabbi Shimon does not generally accept the principle that a prohibition takes effect upon a preexisting prohibition.**<sup>N</sup>

As it is taught in a *baraita* that Rabbi Shimon says: **One who eats an animal carcass<sup>N</sup> on Yom Kippur is exempt from the punishment of *karet* for eating on Yom Kippur.** It is prohibited to eat an animal carcass, and therefore the additional prohibition against eating on Yom Kippur does not take effect with regard to it. The inclusion of the term "strong drink" alludes to the fact that with regard to naziriteship, a second prohibition does take effect. Consequently, if one took an oath not to drink wine and afterward vowed to be a nazirite, both prohibitions apply.

The Gemara asks: **And also according to the Rabbis, isn't it written: "Anything that is made of the grapevine"** (Numbers 6:4), which seems to indicate, as stated by Rabbi Shimon, that one becomes a nazirite only if he vows to accept all the prohibitions of a nazirite? The Gemara answers: **The Rabbis could have said to you: There the verse taught that the prohibitions of a nazirite combine with each other.**<sup>H</sup> In other words, if a nazirite eats less than an olive-bulk of both grape skins and grape seeds, but together they amount to an olive-bulk, he receives lashes for transgressing a Torah prohibition.

The Gemara explains: **And Rabbi Shimon does not interpret the verse in this manner because he does not hold that there is a need for the combination of quantities of different foods in order to render one liable to receive lashes, as it is taught in a *baraita* that Rabbi Shimon says: Even the smallest quantity of forbidden food is sufficient to render one liable to receive lashes.** The Sages stated the measurement of an olive-bulk only with regard to the obligation to bring an offering. Consequently, in the case of a nazirite, who is not obligated to bring a sin-offering if he inadvertently eats grape products, there is no need for a special verse to teach that the different foods add up to the measurement of an olive-bulk. Therefore, the purpose of the verse must be to teach about the nature of a nazirite vow.

NOTES

Does not generally accept the principle that a prohibition takes effect upon a preexisting prohibition – **לִית לִיה אִיסוּר חָל עַל אִיסוּר**: The commentaries struggle to account for the relevance of this principle to the discussion. The Rid even concludes that the text of this entire section has been corrupted.

It is explained in the Commentary on *Nazir* that the discussion in the Gemara is referring to Rabbi Shimon's opinion in the mishna. The Gemara is explaining that once one is prohibited by a vow from eating grape seeds, then a nazirite vow, which also prohibits him from eating such seeds, cannot take effect.

*Tosafot* maintain that the Gemara is offering an alternative explanation as to what Rabbi Shimon learns from the term "strong drink." According to this explanation, although Rabbi Shimon generally holds that a prohibition does not take effect where another prohibition already exists, the extra term in the verse indicates that naziriteship is an exception to this principle. Consequently, if one took an oath not to drink wine, and then

took a nazirite vow, and then drank wine, he is punished with lashes twice (Rabbeinu Peretz and Rabbeinu Azriel, cited in *Shita Mekubbetzet*).

The Rosh attributes an opposing explanation to Rabbeinu Tam: Rabbi Shimon learns from the term "strong drink" that if a nazirite drinks wine on Yom Kippur he is liable only for transgressing his vow of naziriteship but not for eating on Yom Kippur. This serves as the source for Rabbi Shimon's opinion that one prohibition does not take effect when there is a preexisting prohibition.

**One who eats an animal carcass, etc. – הָאוֹכֵל נְבִילָה וכו' –** The commentaries explain that this *halakha* applies only if the animal died before Yom Kippur, in which case the prohibition against eating an animal carcass took effect before the prohibition of eating on Yom Kippur took effect. If, however, it died on Yom Kippur itself, then he is liable for eating on Yom Kippur (*Shita Mekubbetzet*).

הָרִינִי כְּשַׁמְשׁוֹן וְכוּ' – I am hereby like Samson, etc. – If one says: I am hereby a nazirite like Samson, or: I am like Delilah's husband, or: I am like the son of Manoah, or: I am like the one who tore the doors off Gaza, or: I am like the one whose eyes were gouged out by the Philistines, he is a nazirite. Some authorities (Commentary on *Nazir*; *Tosafot*; *Likkutei Halakhot*) claim that one becomes a nazirite only if he said: I am like Samson, or: I am like Samson ben Manoah, and added a modifier, for example: Like the one who tore the doors off Gaza (Rambam *Sefer Hafla'a*, *Hilkhot Nezirut* 3:15).

נָזִיר עוֹלָם – Permanent nazirite – One who vowed to be a permanent nazirite may shave his hair once every twelve months if his hair gets too heavy. He then brings three animals as offerings. If he becomes impure he must bring an offering for his impurity and shave his head like a regular nazirite (Rambam *Sefer Hafla'a*, *Hilkhot Nezirut* 3:12).

מתני' הָרִינִי כְּשַׁמְשׁוֹן "בְּבִן מָנוּחַ".  
כְּבַעַל דְּלִילָה "כְּמִי שֶׁעָקַר דְּלִתוֹת עֲזָה"  
כְּמִי שֶׁנִּקְרוּ פְּלִשְׁתִּים אֶת עֵינָיו" – הָרִי  
זֶה נָזִיר שַׁמְשׁוֹן.

**MISHNA** If one said: I am hereby like Samson,<sup>H</sup> like the son of Manoah, like the husband of Delilah, like the one who tore off<sup>N</sup> the doors of Gaza, like the one whose eyes were gouged out by the Philistines, he is a nazirite like Samson, whose *halakhot* are explained in the next mishna (see Judges, chapters 13–16).

גַּמ' לָמַד לִי לְמִיתְנָא כָּל הַלֵּיזִין? צְרִיכִי:  
דְּאִי אָמַר "הָרִינִי כְּשַׁמְשׁוֹן" – הָיָה אָמִינָא  
שַׁמְשׁוֹן אַחֲרֵינָא, קָא מְשַׁמַּע לֵן "בְּבִן  
מָנוּחַ".

**GEMARA** The Gemara asks: Why do I need the *tanna* to teach all these cases? It should be enough to state only the *halakha* where one says: Like Samson. The Gemara answers: These specifications are necessary because if one said only: I am hereby like Samson,<sup>N</sup> I would say he was referring to another Samson, and this is not a nazirite vow. The *tanna* therefore teaches us that he adds: Like the son of Manoah, which shows he is referring to the biblical Samson.

וְאִי תְנָא "בְּבִן מָנוּחַ" – הָיָה אָמִינָא:  
אִיכָא דְּמִיתְקָרִי הָבִי, קָא מְשַׁמַּע לֵן  
"כְּבַעַל דְּלִילָה" וְ"כְּמִי שֶׁנִּקְרוּ פְּלִשְׁתִּים  
אֶת עֵינָיו".

And if the *tanna* had taught that he said he would be: Like the son of Manoah, I would say there is some person who is called that name, Samson, son of Manoah, and this is not a reference to the biblical Samson and is not an acceptance of naziriteship. The *tanna* therefore teaches us that he adds: Like the husband of Delilah, or: Like the one who tore off the doors of Gaza, or: Like the one whose eyes were gouged out by the Philistines. It is therefore clear that he is referring to the biblical figure and that his statement is a vow of naziriteship.

מתני' מה בין נזיר עולם לנזיר שמשון?  
נזיר עולם – הכביד שערו מיקל בתער,  
וימביא שלש בהמות, ואם נטמא – מביא  
קרבת טומאה.

**MISHNA** What is the difference between a permanent nazirite<sup>N</sup> and a nazirite like Samson, both of whom remain nazirites forever? In the case of a permanent nazirite,<sup>H</sup> if his hair grows too heavy for him, he lightens it by cutting some hair with a razor,<sup>N</sup> and he then brings three animals<sup>N</sup> as a sin-offering, a burnt-offering, and a peace-offering, like one who completes his term of naziriteship. And if he becomes ritually impure, he brings the offering for impurity brought by a regular nazirite who became impure.

נזיר שמשון – הכביד שערו אינו מיקל,  
ואם נטמא – אינו מביא קרבן טומאה.

By contrast, in the case of a nazirite like Samson, if his hair grows heavy he may not lighten it, since he is entirely prohibited from cutting his hair. And if he becomes impure, he does not bring an offering for impurity.

## NOTES

Like the one who tore off – כְּמִי שֶׁעָקַר – *Tosafot* explain that one who says that he will be like Samson or like the son of Manoah must add an additional identifying feature in order to clarify that he is referring to the Samson of the Bible, such as: The husband of Delilah, or: The one who tore off the doors of Gaza, or: The one whose eyes were gouged out by the Philistines. Rabbeinu Tam slightly emended the text of the mishna to reflect this point.

Because if one said only: I am hereby like Samson – דְּאִי אָמַר הָרִינִי – כְּשַׁמְשׁוֹן: This indicates that one who says: I am like Samson, or even: I am like Samson, son of Manoah, without further specification, is not a nazirite unless he identified the biblical figure beyond any possible doubt. One doesn't have to mention all the examples listed in the mishna; any one of them suffices (Commentary on *Nazir*; Rabbeinu Tam).

According to the Rid, if one simply said: I am like Samson, he is a nazirite like Samson. However, if he then explains that he had another Samson in mind, the court cannot compel him to adhere to the *halakhot* of a nazirite, whereas if he clearly identified the Samson of the Bible, then he is definitely a nazirite. The Rambam's ruling indicates a similar understanding. By contrast, the Meiri slightly adjusts the text of the Gemara and explains that anyone who intended to become a nazirite and employed any one of the terms mentioned in the mishna has thereby taken a nazirite vow. This opinion is supported by the Jerusalem Talmud, where it is explained that not only does the explicit mention of Samson [*Shimshon*] entail naziriteship, but the same is true even of substitute languages of his name, e.g., *Shimshor* and *Shimshutz*.

What is the difference between a permanent nazirite, etc. – מה – בין נזיר עולם וכו': The early commentaries point out that the *tanna*

could have added another difference, i.e., that a vow of a nazirite like Samson cannot be dissolved, as explained below (14a). *Tosafot* explain that the *tanna* did not mention this difference because he was dealing with differences that apply specifically to nazirites, and a nazirite whose vow has been dissolved is not a nazirite (see Rabbeinu Todros, cited in *Shita Mekubbetzet*).

He lightens it by cutting some hair with a razor – מִיקַל בְּתַעַר – Some commentaries explain that a permanent nazirite may trim his hair but may not completely shave it off. Their proof is the fact that Absalom, who is the paradigm of a permanent nazirite, was hung by his hair. This shows that his hair was not shaved off (*Tosafot*; *Shita Mekubbetzet*; Meiri). The Meiri adds that he may use only a razor but not scissors, so that he cuts it in an unusual manner. However, Rabbeinu Todros, cited in the *Shita Mekubbetzet*, says, citing Rabbi Eliezer of Metz that he may even shave his hair entirely, and the Rambam seems to agree. Needless to say, he must be careful not to transgress the prohibition against rounding off the corners of the head. Some commentaries hold that he may trim his hair once every thirty days (Commentary on *Nazir*), but the Rambam rules that he may do so only once every twelve months.

And he then brings three animals – מִבְּיַא שְׁלֹשׁ בְּהֵמוֹת – *Tosafot* explain that a support for this *halakha* can be seen in the case of Absalom, as it is written that Absalom said that he was going to Hebron to "pay my vow" (II Samuel 15:7), which implies the sacrifice of offerings. However, the *halakha* itself was transmitted to Moses from Sinai. Other commentaries write that this *halakha* cannot be derived from Absalom, since the verses can be explained in a manner that has no connection to naziriteship.

BACKGROUND

The mishna is incomplete and is teaching the following – חסורי מיחפרא, והכי קתני: האומר "הריני נזיר עולם" – הרי זה נזיר. מה בין נזיר עולם לנזיר שמשון? נזיר עולם – הכביד שערו מיקל בתער, ומביא שלש בהמות, ואם נטמא – מביא קרבן טומאה. נזיר שמשון – הכביד שערו אינו מיקל בתער.

NOTES

One who says: I am hereby a permanent nazirite – האומר: הריני נזיר עולם: Some commentaries add that one is also a permanent nazirite if he says that he will be like Absalom, son of David. The Gemara does not mention this case because not everyone knows that Absalom was a permanent nazirite, whereas Samson is famous for his naziriteship (Rabbeinu Azriel, cited in *Shita Mekubbetzet*; see Meiri).

Perek I

Daf 4 Amud b

NOTES

The prohibitions of naziriteship apply – נזירות חיילא: A similar question appears in the parallel discussion in the Jerusalem Talmud. The Gemara there infers from the mishna that although a nazirite like Samson does not have to bring an offering if he becomes impure from a corpse, he is liable to receive lashes.

HALAKHA

A nazirite like Samson is permitted to become impure from a corpse – נזיר שמשון מותר ליטמא למתים – It is prohibited for a nazirite like Samson to drink wine and to cut his hair, but he may become impure from a corpse. This halakha is learned by tradition, in accordance with the opinion of Rabbi Yehuda (Rambam *Sefer Hafla'a, Hilkhot Nezirut* 3:13).

גמ' נזיר עולם מאן דכר שמייה? חסורי מיחפרא, והכי קתני: האומר "הריני נזיר עולם" – הרי זה נזיר. מה בין נזיר עולם לנזיר שמשון? נזיר עולם – הכביד שערו מיקל בתער, ומביא שלש בהמות, ואם נטמא – מביא קרבן טומאה. נזיר שמשון – הכביד שערו אינו מיקל בתער.

GEMARA The Gemara asks: Who mentioned anything about a permanent nazirite?

Since the mishna has not yet mentioned this concept, how can it analyze the differences between it and a nazirite like Samson? The Gemara answers: The mishna is incomplete and is teaching the following:<sup>8</sup> In the case of one who says: I am hereby a permanent nazirite,<sup>9</sup> he is a permanent nazirite. What is the difference between a permanent nazirite and a nazirite like Samson? In the case of a permanent nazirite, if his hair grows too heavy for him, he lightens it with a razor and he then brings three animals for offerings. And if he becomes ritually impure, he brings the offering for impurity. In the case of a nazirite like Samson, if his hair grows heavy he may not lighten it with a razor,

ואינו מביא קרבן טומאה.

but he does not bring the offering for impurity.

קרבן הוא דלא מיימי, אבל נזירות – חיילא עליה.

The Gemara comments: From the words: But if he becomes impure he does not bring an offering for impurity, one can infer that it is the offering that he does not bring. However, all of the prohibitions of naziriteship apply<sup>10</sup> to him, and it is prohibited for him to become impure from a corpse.

מני מתניתין? לא רבי יהודה, ולא רבי שמעון. דתניא, רבי יהודה אומר: נזיר שמשון מותר ליטמא למתים, שגן מצינו בשמשון שנטמא. רבי שמעון אומר: האומר "נזיר שמשון" – לא אפר בלום, שלא מצינו בשמשון שיצאת נזירות מפיו.

This leads to the following question: Whose opinion is expressed in the mishna? It is not the opinion of Rabbi Yehuda and not the opinion of Rabbi Shimon, as it is taught in a baraita: Rabbi Yehuda says: A nazirite like Samson is permitted to become impure from a corpse<sup>11</sup> ab initio, as we find with Samson that he became impure. Rabbi Shimon says: One who says he will be a nazirite like Samson has not said anything, since we do not find with Samson that an utterance of a vow of naziriteship left his mouth. Samson never took a vow to be a nazirite. He received his status from the angel's instructions to his mother (see Judges 13:5). Consequently, Rabbi Shimon holds that one who vows to be a nazirite like Samson is not considered to have taken a nazirite vow.

מני? אי רבי יהודה – האמר אפילו לכתחילה, ומתניתין קתני "אם נטמא". אי רבי שמעון – האמר לא חיילא עליה נזירות כלל!

The Gemara explains the question: Whose opinion is expressed in the mishna? If it is the opinion of Rabbi Yehuda, didn't he say that it is permitted for a nazirite of this kind to become impure from a corpse even ab initio, but the mishna teaches: If he becomes impure, which indicates that he is prohibited from doing so ab initio? However, if you say that the mishna is according to the opinion of Rabbi Shimon, didn't he say that naziriteship does not apply to him at all?

לעולם רבי יהודה היא, ואידי דקתני גבי נזיר עולם "אם נטמא" – תנא נמי גבי נזיר שמשון "אם נטמא".

The Gemara answers: Actually, the mishna is in accordance with the opinion of Rabbi Yehuda, and a nazirite like Samson may become impure from a corpse even ab initio. And since it teaches with regard to a permanent nazirite: If he becomes impure, as it is prohibited for a permanent nazirite to become impure from a corpse ab initio, the tanna also taught the same expression with regard to a nazirite like Samson and used the expression: If he becomes impure.

This object is hereby prohibited to me like a firstborn – **יָרִי עָלַי כְּבֹכֹר**: If one declares an object forbidden to himself like a firstborn animal, it is permitted for him to use the object. The forbidden status of a firstborn cannot be extended to other items because its forbidden status is not initiated by man. This is consistent with the principle that the *halakha* is in accordance with Rabbi Yosei's opinion when he disagrees with a colleague (Rambam *Sefer Hafla'a*, *Hilkhot Nedarim* 1:13).

We require one to extend the forbidden status of an item rendered forbidden by a vow – **בְּעֵינֵי דְבַר הַמִּדָּר**: The basic vow stated in the Torah refers to a statement through which one renders an item forbidden to himself by extending to it the forbidden status of another item that is already forbidden by a vow. An example is in the case of one who says: This is forbidden to me like an offering, as the process of consecrating an animal as an offering is a type of vow (Rambam *Sefer Hafla'a*, *Hilkhot Nedarim* 1:9; *Shulḥan Arukh*, *Yoreh De'a* 204:1–2).

I include a sin-offering and a guilt-offering – **מִרְבָּה אָנִי**: If one says: This food is like a sin-offering to me, or: This food is like a guilt-offering to me, the food is forbidden to him. A sin-offering and guilt-offering are comparable to items forbidden by a vow. Although one cannot voluntarily vow to bring these offerings, he can render himself liable to bring them by vowing to be a nazirite. All the more so can one take a vow by extending the forbidden status of other offerings, such as a burnt-offering or a peace-offering, which one can volunteer to bring via a vow (Rambam *Sefer Hafla'a*, *Hilkhot Nedarim* 1:10).

When a firstborn animal is born in one's herd, etc. – **לְנוֹלָד**: It is a mitzva to pronounce one's firstborn kosher animal to be consecrated, in accordance with the opinion of Rabbi Yehuda HaNasi. However, if one failed to consecrate his firstborn animal, it is consecrated automatically (Rambam *Sefer Korbanot*, *Hilkhot Bekhorot* 1:4; *Shulḥan Arukh*, *Yoreh De'a* 306:1).

## BACKGROUND

Firstborn – **בְּכוֹר**: The firstborn male offspring of a cow, sheep, or goat belonging to a Jew is consecrated from birth. It must be given to a priest to be sacrificed on the altar in the Temple, and its meat is then eaten by the priests and their families (Numbers 18:17–18). If a firstborn animal develops a physical blemish that disqualified it from being sacrificed as an offering, it may be slaughtered and eaten like any other non-sacred kosher animal. Nevertheless, it still has to be given to a priest.

It is prohibited to intentionally inflict a disqualifying blemish on a firstborn animal, and it may not be used for any mundane purpose even if it is blemished. It is prohibited to work the animal, and its fleece may not be used. Since the destruction of the Second Temple, a firstborn animal continues to be considered consecrated. However, since it cannot be sacrificed in the Temple and it may be slaughtered only if it has a marked disqualifying blemish, various halakhic devices are employed to restrict the classification of animals as firstborn and to permit their slaughter as non-sacred animals after they acquire disqualifying blemishes.

## NOTES

That everyone agrees, etc. – **דְּבֹלֵי עֵלְמָא וְכוּ**: Two explanations of this passage are offered by the Meiri. According to one opinion, the term everyone includes all the Sages mentioned in this passage, i.e., Rabbi Yehuda, Rabbi Shimon, Rabbi Ya'akov, and Rabbi Yosei. This assumes that Samson is considered to have been rendered a nazirite through a vow (*Tosafot*; Rabbeinu Peretz; Rosh; Rabbeinu Azriel, cited in *Shita Mekubbetzet*). Alternatively, everyone includes only Rabbi Ya'akov and Rabbi Yosei. However, Rabbi Yehuda, who argues that a vow takes effect if one declares that he will be a nazirite like Samson, holds that one can extend the forbidden status of an item whose own forbidden status was not caused by a vow (*Shita Mekubbetzet*).

לִמָּא בְּפִלּוּגְתָא דְּהַנּוּ תַנְיָא קַמִּיפְלָגִי, דְּתַנּוּ: "הָרִי עָלַי כְּבֹכֹר". רַבִּי יַעֲקֹב אוֹסֵר וְרַבִּי יוֹסֵי מְתִיר.

§ The Gemara suggests: Let us say that Rabbi Yehuda and Rabbi Shimon disagree with regard to the issue that is the subject of the dispute between these *tanna'im*, as we learned in a *baraita*: If one says: This object is hereby forbidden to me like a firstborn,<sup>18</sup> Rabbi Ya'akov prohibits the individual from deriving benefit from the object, as he holds that a vow of this sort is valid. And Rabbi Yosei permits it, because the sanctity of a firstborn is not the result of a vow or sanctification. Rather, it is sacred of its own accord, and therefore its forbidden status cannot be extended by means of a vow to other items.

מֵאִי לָאוּ, רַבִּי יְהוּדָה סָבַר לָהּ פְּרָבִי יַעֲקֹב, דְּאָמַר: לֹא בְּעֵינֵי דְּבַר הַמִּדָּר, וְרַבִּי שְׁמַעוֹן סָבַר לָהּ פְּרָבִי יוֹסֵי, דְּאָמַר: בְּעֵינֵי דְּבַר הַמִּדָּר?

What, is it not the case that Rabbi Yehuda holds in accordance with the opinion of Rabbi Ya'akov, who said that in order for a vow to take effect, we do not require one to extend the forbidden status of an item rendered forbidden by means of a vow? Consequently, just as one can render an object forbidden by extending to it the sanctity of a firstborn animal, one can become a nazirite by accepting upon himself the status of Samson, whose prohibitions were not established by a vow. And Rabbi Shimon holds in accordance with the opinion of Rabbi Yosei, who said that in order for a vow to take effect, we do require one to extend the forbidden status of an item rendered forbidden by means of a vow. Consequently, one cannot become a nazirite by accepting upon himself the status of Samson.

לָא, דְּבֹלֵי עֵלְמָא בְּעֵינֵי דְּבַר הַמִּדָּר, וְשֵׁאִינִי גַבִּי בְּכוֹר דְּכִתִּיב בֵּיהּ "לֵה" לְרַבּוֹת אֶת הַבְּכוֹר.

The Gemara responds: No, it can be explained that everyone agrees<sup>19</sup> that we require one to extend the forbidden status of an item rendered forbidden by means of a vow.<sup>20</sup> And according to Rabbi Ya'akov, the *halakha* is different with regard to a firstborn, as it is written about this in the verse pertaining to vows: "When a man vows a vow to the Lord" (Numbers 30:3). This comes to include the firstborn and teach that since the firstborn is consecrated, its status is comparable to animals designated as offerings by means of a vow, and one can extend its forbidden status to another item.

וְרַבִּי יוֹסֵי אָמַר לָךְ: הֵהוּא "לֵה" מִבְּעֵי לֵיהּ לְרַבּוֹת חֲטָאת וְאֶשָׁם.

And Rabbi Yosei could have said to you in response that he needs that expression: "To the Lord," to include a sin-offering and a guilt-offering. One may not obligate himself to bring these offerings by means of a vow. They are brought only when one becomes liable due to a transgression. Nevertheless, one can take a vow by extending to another item the forbidden status of a sin-offering or guilt-offering.

וּמָה רְאִיתָ לְרַבּוֹת חֲטָאת וְאֶשָׁם וְלֹהֲצִיא אֶת הַבְּכוֹר? מִרְבָּה אָנִי חֲטָאת וְאֶשָׁם – שְׂכָן מִתְפָּסֵן בְּנֶדֶר, וּמוֹצִיא אָנִי אֶת הַבְּכוֹר, שְׂאִין מִתְפָּסֵסוּ בְּנֶדֶר.

The Gemara questions Rabbi Yosei's explanation: And what did you see that indicated to you to include a sin-offering and a guilt-offering and to exclude a firstborn? The Gemara answers: I include a sin-offering and a guilt-offering,<sup>21</sup> as one grants consecrated status to the animals designated for these offerings by means of a vow, i.e., the act of designating specific animals for these offerings is comparable to taking a vow. And I exclude a firstborn, as one does not grant it consecrated status by means of a vow.

וְרַבִּי יַעֲקֹב אָמַר לָךְ: בְּכוֹר נָמִי מִתְפָּסֵסוּ בְּנֶדֶר הוּא. דְּתַנְיָא: שְׁלֵב בֵּית רַבִּינּוּ אָמְרוּ: מִנּוּ לְנוֹלָד לוֹ בְּכוֹר בְּתוֹךְ עֵדְרוֹ שְׂמִצּוֹה עָלָיו לְהַקְדִּישׁוֹ – שְׂנֵאֵמַר "הַזֶּכֶר תִּקְדִּישׁ".

And Rabbi Ya'akov could have said to you in response: Also in the case of a firstborn, one grants it consecrated status by means of a vow, as it is taught in a *baraita*: The Sages of the house of our Rabbi, i.e., Rabbi Yehuda HaNasi, said: From where is it derived that when a firstborn male animal is born in one's herd,<sup>22</sup> there is a mitzva for him to consecrate it, although it is consecrated from the time it is born? As it is stated: "All firstborns males that are born to your herd and to your flock you shall sanctify" (Deuteronomy 15:19).

וְרַבִּי יוֹסֵי אָמַר לָךְ: נְהִי דְּמִצְוֹה לְהַקְדִּישׁוֹ, אִי לָא מִקְדִּישׁ לֵיהּ, מִי לָא קְדוּשׁ?

And Rabbi Yosei could have said to you in response: Granted that there is a mitzva to consecrate it. But if he does not consecrate it, is it not consecrated of its own accord? Since a firstborn is forbidden principally because of its inherent sanctity and not because of a vow, one cannot express a vow by extending a firstborn's forbidden status to another item.

With regard to a nazirite as well, etc. – **גְּבִי נְזִיר נָמִי** – זכור: The Gemara's question is as follows: Since the verse states "to the Lord," why is it necessary for one to extend the forbidden status of an item forbidden by a vow (Commentary on *Nazir*)? According to this opinion, the Gemara's question applies to both Rabbi Ya'akov and Rabbi Yosei. *Tosafot* explain that the question is referring to Rabbi Ya'akov's opinion, and just as he holds that the phrase "to the Lord," written with regard to a regular vow, includes a firstborn, here too, it should include a nazirite like Samson with regard to naziriteship.

I never ate the guilt-offering of a ritually impure nazirite – **לֹא אָכַלְתִּי אֶשֶׁם נְזִיר טָמֵא** – The reason for this policy was that he was concerned that many people who took nazirite vows did so impetuously. In the case of one who became impure and would therefore have to start his term of naziriteship from the beginning, there was even greater concern that he would regret his initial vow. Since regret can serve as a basis for nullifying a vow, Shimon HaTzaddik considered the nazirite vow as though it were almost nullified, in which case the offering would be unnecessary and invalid.

And sought to drive me, etc. – **וּבִיקַשׁ לְטוֹרְדָנִי וְכוּ'**: It is explained in the Meiri on tractate *Nedarim* (9b) that once the youth realized how beautiful he was, his evil inclination tempted him with lust for women. The explanation found in the *Arukh* is that the evil inclination tempted him to engage in homosexual relations. According to the Maharsha on tractate *Nedarim* (9b), when this person perceived his own beauty, he considered it beneath his dignity to continue working as a lowly shepherd, despite the fact that abandoning this work would cause dishonor to his parents. By contrast, some commentaries maintain that he was tempted to worship himself, as a form of idolatry (Rabbeinu Azriel and Ritz, cited in *Shita Mekubbetzet*).

And was Samson not a nazirite – **וְשָׁמְשׁוֹן לֹא הָיָה נְזִיר**: In other words, although Samson himself did not take a nazirite vow, perhaps his father understood from the angel that he must declare his son a nazirite, as the Gemara (28b) explains that one can take a nazirite vow on behalf of his son (*Tosafot*). Alternately, perhaps Samson decided to accept his naziriteship upon himself in the form of a vow (Rabbeinu Azriel, cited in *Shita Mekubbetzet*).

For the child shall be a nazirite, etc. – **כִּי נְזִיר אֱלֹהִים** – זכור: Some commentaries claim that Rabbeinu Azriel had a slightly different version of this text, in which the Gemara cites a verse spoken by Samson himself: "For I am a nazirite to God" (Judges 16:17). This indicates that he was a proper nazirite. These commentaries reject this explanation however, since here too, Samson is not uttering a vow but merely recounting what the angel said to his mother.

## BACKGROUND

The South – **הַדְּרוֹם**: This is a reference to the southern part of Eretz Yisrael. In the time of Shimon HaTzaddik, when most of the Jewish population of Eretz Yisrael was in Judea, the South was a term for the southern part of that region, south of Hebron and adjacent to the northern border of Edom.

**גְּבִי נְזִיר נָמִי, הַכְּתִיב "לָהּ".**

ההוא מיבֵּיעֵי לִיה לְכַדְתַּנְיָא: אָמַר שְׁמַעוֹן הַצַּדִּיק: מִיָּמַי לֹא אָכַלְתִּי אֶשֶׁם נְזִיר טָמֵא, חוּץ מֵאֶדָם אֶחָד שֶׁבָּא אֵלַי מִן הַדְּרוֹם, יָפָה עֵינַיִם וְטוֹב רוּאֵי, וְקוֹצוֹתָיו סְדוּרוֹת לוֹ תִּלְתָּלִים. אָמַרְתִּי לוֹ: בְּנֵי מִה רְאִיתָ לְשִׁחַת שֶׁעַר נֶאֱדָה זֶה?

אָמַר לִי: רוּעָה הָיִיתִי לְאָבִי בְּעִירִי, וְהִלְכִיתִי לְשָׂאוֹב מִיָּם מִן הַמַּעַיִן, וְנִסְתַּכַּלְתִּי בְּבֹאֵה שְׁלִי, וּפְחָז יִצְרִי עָלַי וּבִיקַשׁ לְטוֹרְדָנִי מִן הָעוֹלָם. אָמַרְתִּי לוֹ: רִיקָה. מִפְּנֵי מִה אֲתָה מִתְנַגֵּא בְּעוֹלָם שְׂאִינוּ שְׁלֶךְ, שְׁפוּפְךָ לְהִיִּת רָמָה וְתוֹלְעָה? הֲעִבּוּדָה שְׂאֵגְלָחְךָ לְשִׁמִּים.

עַמְדָתִי וְנִשְׁקַתִּיו עַל רֹאשׁוֹ. אָמַרְתִּי לוֹ: כְּמוֹתְךָ יִרְבוּ נְזִירִים בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל, עָלֶיךָ הַכְּתוּב אוֹמֵר: "אִישׁ... כִּי יִפְלֵא לְגַדֵּר נְזִיר לְהִזִּיר לָהּ".

וְשָׁמְשׁוֹן לֹא הָיָה נְזִיר הַהוּ? וְהַכְּתִיב "כִּי נְזִיר אֱלֹהִים יְהִיָּה הַנֶּעַר מִן הַבֶּטֶן"! הֲתָם מְלֹאָךְ הוּא דְקָאָמַר.

The Gemara asks: Both Rabbi Ya'akov and Rabbi Yosei agree that the phrase "to the Lord" indicates that one can take a vow by associating the object of his vow with an item whose prohibition does not stem from a vow. **With regard to a nazirite as well, isn't it written:** "Shall clearly utter a vow, the vow of a nazirite, to consecrate himself to the Lord" (Numbers 6:2)? Why doesn't Rabbi Shimon derive from this verse that one can become a nazirite by accepting the naziriteship of Samson, despite the fact that Samson did not accept his naziriteship by means of a vow?

The Gemara answers: **That phrase is required by him for that which is taught in a baraita: Shimon HaTzaddik<sup>p</sup> said: In all my days as a priest, I never ate the guilt-offering of a ritually impure nazirite,<sup>n</sup> apart from the offering of one man who came to me from the South,<sup>b</sup> who had beautiful eyes and a fine countenance, and his locks were arranged in curls. I said to him: My son, what did you see to become a nazirite, which would force you to destroy this beautiful hair, as a nazirite must cut off all his hair at the conclusion of his term?**

**He said to me: I was a shepherd for my father in my town, and I went to draw water from the spring, and I looked at my reflection in the water. And my evil inclination quickly rose against me and sought to drive me<sup>n</sup> from the world. I said to my evil inclination: Empty one! For what reason are you proud in a world that is not yours, as your end is to be maggots and worms when you die. I swear by the Temple service that I will become a nazirite and shave you for the sake of Heaven.**

Shimon HaTzaddik relates: When I heard his response, **I arose and kissed him on his head, and said to him: May there be more nazirites like you in Israel,<sup>h</sup> whose intentions are noble, and who would not regret their vow of naziriteship even if they became impure. With regard to you the verse states: "When either a man or a woman shall clearly utter a vow, the vow of a nazirite, to consecrate himself to the Lord" (Numbers 6:2).** The verse speaks of a vow that is not undertaken out of anger or spite, but purely for the sake of God. The phrase "to the Lord" in this context means: For the sake of Heaven. It cannot be used to teach that if one declares his intention to become a nazirite like Samson, his statement constitutes a nazirite vow.

The Gemara challenges the assumption that Samson's naziriteship was not accepted through a vow: **And was Samson not a nazirite<sup>n</sup> whose naziriteship was accepted by a vow? Isn't it written: "For the child shall be a nazirite<sup>n</sup> of God from the womb" (Judges 13:5)?** The Gemara answers: **There it was the angel who spoke.** Samson's nazirite status did not stem from a vow uttered by a human being.

## PERSONALITIES

Shimon HaTzaddik – **שְׁמַעוֹן הַצַּדִּיק**: Shimon HaTzaddik, or Shimon the righteous, is the first Sage mentioned in the chain of transmission in tractate *Avot* (1:2). He is described there as one of the remnants of the Great Assembly. According to Josephus, his full name was Shimon ben Hōnyo ben Yadua. Based on the few mentions of him in the Talmud, it seems that he was the High Priest during the beginning of Greek rule in Eretz Yisrael and was the one who received Alexander of Macedon when he came to conquer Eretz Yisrael. Several tales are told about him in Josephus's *Antiquities*, and he is praised at the end of the book of Ben Sira. It is possible

that ben Sira had contact with Shimon HaTzaddik. That book also describes how Shimon HaTzaddik came out of the Holy of Holies on Yom Kippur, a description later inserted into the liturgy of Yom Kippur. Ben Sira further relates how Shimon HaTzaddik rebuilt the ruins of Jerusalem and initiated the building of the walls of the Temple. He is lauded in the Jerusalem Talmud for his righteousness and piety, and the *Tosefta* (*Sota* 13:8) states that after him the priests in the Temple would no longer say God's ineffable name in the priestly blessing, since the Sages did not think that the people were worthy of it.

## HALAKHA

May there be more nazirites like you in Israel, etc. – **כְּמוֹתְךָ יִרְבוּ נְזִירִים וְכוּ'**: If one undertakes a vow in order to improve his character and correct his ways, it is considered praiseworthy. Examples of this include: A glutton who renders meat forbidden to him, a drunkard who takes a vow rendering wine forbidden to him,

and one who is proud of his beauty and undertakes naziriteship. However, it is inadvisable to take many vows. It is preferable to improve one's character without the use of a vow (Rambam *Sefer Hafla'a*, *Hilkhot Nedarim* 13:23–24; *Shulhan Arukh*, *Yoreh De'a* 203:7).

ומגלן דאיטמי למתים? אילימא מדכתביב  
"בלתי החמור בלתי אלהי" – דילמא  
גרוי גרי בהו, ולא נגע בהו!

The Gemara asks: **And from where do we derive that Samson became impure from corpses? If we say it is from the fact that it is written:** "And Samson said: **With the jawbone of an ass,<sup>N</sup> I smote a thousand men**" (Judges 15:16), **perhaps he thrust the jawbone at them<sup>N</sup> but did not touch them**, and he remained pure.

אלא מהכא "ויך מהם שלשים איש ויקח  
את חליצותם". דילמא אשליחין ברישא  
והדר קטלינן? "ויך... ויקח" בתיב.

Rather, it is derived from here: "And he smote thirty men of them, and took their garments" (Judges 14:19). Since he stripped the clothes off the dead he must have come into contact with them. The Gemara counters: **Perhaps he stripped them first and afterward killed them.** The Gemara responds: **It is written:** "And he smote... and took," in that order, indicating that first he killed them and then he took their clothing.

ודילמא גוססין שוינן! אלא, גמרא גמירי  
לה.

The Gemara asks: **But perhaps** he mortally wounded them and thereby **caused them** to be in the process of **dying,<sup>N</sup>** and he then took their clothes before they died so that he would not touch their corpses. **Rather,** it must be concluded that **it is learned as a tradition<sup>N</sup>** that Samson would become impure from corpses.

ונור עולם היכא בתיב. דתניא, רבי אומר:  
אבשלום נזיר עולם היה, שנאמר "ויהי  
מקץ ארבעים שנה ויאמר אבשלום אל  
המלך אלכה נא ואשלם את נדרי אשר  
נדרתי לה' בחברון". ומגלת אחד לשנים  
עשר חדש – שנאמר "ויהי מקץ ימים  
לימים".

**S** The Gemara clarifies a *halakha* taught in the mishna: **And where is the concept of a permanent nazirite written?<sup>N</sup> As it is taught in a baraita: Rabbi Yehuda HaNasi says: Absalom was a permanent nazirite, as it is stated:** "And it came to pass at the end of forty years, that Absalom said to the king: I pray to you, let me go and pay my vow,<sup>N</sup> which I have vowed to the Lord, in Hebron"<sup>N</sup> (II Samuel 15:7). **And he cut his hair once every twelve months, as it is stated:** "And when he polled his head, now it was at every year's [*yamim*] end that he polled it; because the hair was heavy on him" (II Samuel 14:26).

#### NOTES

With the jawbone of an ass, etc. – בלתי החמור וכו': The Rosh explains that this suggestion can easily be countered by saying that since Samson acted in self-defense, as the Philistines came to kill him, he was certainly permitted to become impure. He explains that the Gemara raises this possibility only as an introduction to the second, more persuasive answer.

He thrust [*garuyei garei*] the jawbone at them – גרוי גרי בהו: Samson did not kill them through direct contact but by throwing the bone at each one like an arrow, as the Aramaic word for arrow, *geira*, is very similar to the phrase here, *garuyei garei* (*Tosafot*). Others, following an alternative version of the text, explain that he cut them with the jawbone (*Commentary on Nazir*) or he struck them with it but did not touch them (*Arukh*).

Caused them to be in the process of dying – גוססין שוינן: Even according to the opinion that it is prohibited for a nazirite to touch someone who is dying, it is possible to explain that the Gemara here does not mean that the Philistines were actually in the final stages of dying when Samson touched them. It is also possible to differentiate between someone who is dying at the hands of a man and someone who is dying from natural causes, and perhaps a nazirite is prohibited from touching only the latter (*Rosh*; see *Tosafot*).

It is learned as a tradition – גמרא גמירי לה: *Tosafot* explain that it is a tradition that Samson actually killed the Philistines before removing their garments. Alternatively, the Maharatz Hayyut explains that there is a tradition that it was permitted for Samson

to become impure from the dead. This is also implied by the Rambam.

And where is the concept of a permanent nazirite written – ונור עולם היכא בתיב: The basic concept of a permanent nazirite does not require a source. Just as one can undertake a vow of naziriteship for a particular length of time, he can vow to be a nazirite forever. Rather, the verses cited by the Gemara serve to teach the details of the *halakhot* of this type of nazirite. It is explained in the *Commentary on Nazir* that the Gemara is asking about the source for the *halakha* that a permanent nazirite can cut his hair and bring offerings even while he is a nazirite. According to Rabbeinu Peretz, the Gemara is discussing the fact that a permanent nazirite may shorten his hair. This is different from a regular nazirite, who may not cut his hair at all during the term of his naziriteship, and when his term is completed he must shave off all of his hair.

My vow – אף נדרי: *Tosafot* explain that according to Rabbi Yehuda HaNasi, a generic vow refers to a nazirite vow, which is especially logical in light of the fact that Absalom grew his hair. Another explanation is that the Sages apparently had a tradition that this vow of Absalom's was that of a permanent nazirite (*Meiri*).

In Hebron – בחברון: The plain meaning of the verse is that he went to Hebron to fulfill his vow. The Gemara (*Temura* 14b) asks how he could have gone to Hebron to bring offerings. The conclusion of the Gemara there is that this was during the period when it was permitted to bring offerings on private altars.