

THE NAZARITE COVENANT

I found myself on my knees before the Lord, tears streaming down my face. My hands were held high to the heavens and my head hung down. Inside, I was broken. My whole being was crying out for a new level of dedication, a new level of devotion and honor, a new level of walking with the Lord.

My whole being needed that new level. I cried out for that new level and depth of commitment.

What I have previously attained meant little. It was as nothing, a wisp of mist that disappeared before my eyes. It had to be all or nothing. And by all, I meant ALL.

We are entering a new level of relationship, a new level of righteousness and commitment. There is a new covenant – actually an old covenant restored. The Nazarite covenant. One of purity, righteousness, dedication. Nazarite comes from the Hebrew word *nazir* which means “consecrated” or “separated”.

There were three things that distinguished a Nazarite:

1. Abstain from wine, wine vinegar, grapes, raisins, alcohol and vinegar made from alcohol
2. Never cut the hair on one’s head
3. Avoid contact with death...corpses, graves, even those of family members, or any structure which contains such

I pondered this to get some understanding. It is foreign to us now, it did not make sense to me.

1.The exact words from The Complete Jewish Bible, Numbers 6:4 : “As long as he remains a *nazir* he is to eat nothing derived from the grapevine, not even the grape-skins or the seeds.”

We are to be grafted into the vine. We are to be part of the vine, fed by the vine. The church in Psalm 80:8 is compared to the vine. Jesus calls Himself the vine in John 15:1. And Matthew 21:33 compares the church to the vineyard. Hosea 10:1 calls Israel a luxuriant vine.

Why would a *Nazir* have to abstain from eating anything derived from the grapevine...from the church, from Jesus?. The word *eat* comes from *’akal* which means to consume, devour, burn up.

The first part of the vow of a *Nazir* was to not devour, consume or burn up anything from the church. And because we eat with our mouths, we are not to devour, consume or burn up ANYONE from the church with our mouths. We must watch the words of our mouth. And I am as bad as the next person. It grieves me to say so. But how do we stop life-long habits? It is not easy. I have been caught by the Holy Spirit for even commenting in my own mind about someone’s shoes. I am warned when I go through a mall to keep my thoughts in check. Not everyone likes to dress the way I dress.

We are to step aside from the status quo of backbiting, complaining and judging, and stop devouring what God calls His church. And since we were all created to be part of His church, we must stop backbiting, complaining and judging everyone. We never know when a fallen or discarded branch from the ground will be grafted into the vine. A *Nazir* does not entertain or partake of attacking God’s people who are in Jesus. But let’s go to the proverbial next step and

say that a *Nazir* does not entertain or partake of attacking God's people who are not yet in Jesus. They are still branches lying on the ground waiting for the opportunity to be grafted into Jesus.

2. The exact wording found in NU 6:5 of The Complete Jewish Bible is: "Throughout the period of his vow as a nazir, he is not to shave his head. Until the end of the time for which he has consecrated himself to ADONAI he is to be holy; he is to let the hair on his head grow long."

Jewish men kept their hair short. It was considered shameful to let it be unruly. Not cutting their hair was something that overrode their vanity and brought them ridicule and mockery from those around. It forced them into humility as they set aside their pride to look unkempt.

The second part of the *Nazir* vow was humility. We are to be humble, not full of ourselves. We must not even have the appearance of being full of ourselves. There is no more "one man show" of yesterday. We are a people of unity, of oneness, of one thought and purpose. We are a people who are not out to make a name for themselves, establishing themselves ahead of the people, or indeed, the Lord.

3. The exact language used in The Complete Jewish Bible, Numbers 6:6-12 follows: "Throughout the period for which he has consecrated himself to ADONAI, he is not to approach a corpse. He is not to make himself unclean for his father, mother, brother or sister when they die, since his consecration to God is on his head. Throughout the time of his being a nazir he is holy for ADONAI. If someone next to him dies very suddenly, so that he defiles his consecrated head, then he is to shave his head on the day of his purification; he is to shave it on the seventh day. On the eighth day he is to bring two doves or two young pigeons to the cohen at the entrance to the tent of meeting. The cohen is to prepare one as a sin offering and the other as a burnt offering and thus make atonement for him, inasmuch as he sinned because of the dead person. That same day he is to re-consecrate his head; he is to consecrate to ADONAI the full period of his being a nazir by bringing a male lamb in its first year as a guilt offering. The previous days will not be counted, because his consecration became defiled."

Luke 9:59-62 says "...let the dead bury the dead."

What has life to do with death? We were dead but now we are alive and need to follow further into life.

If we are touched by death, then we need to be cleansed. If we go back from our *Nazir* vows and return to the old ways, then what we have done previously simply does not count. We need to recommit and begin again. We need to renew our vows, repent of our fall and begin again.

What is death? Everything of the world is death. That means everything we have become accustomed to (man's way), and was not created by God (nature), is death. Everything created by world standards for their benefit ie. governments, church governments, politics, the way we do business...everything not created by God is where we live. We need to make a decision to leave this realm that we have known all our lives and enter into one that is not familiar to us.

Luke 9:23 tells us "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me."

Jesus basically repeated the Nazirite's vow: deny themselves, take up their cross and follow Him. But I would like to take it one step further. Not to change the words of Christ, but to look deeper than our normal perception of these words.

1. We need to deny ourselves by not devouring others.
2. We need to wear the cross in humility and not to make a name for ourselves.
3. We need to follow life – Jesus – everywhere and leave death behind us.

We need to step into a new depth of an old covenant, not for 30 days or even 150 days, but for life.

It changes only as we take another step deeper into the water.

We will be known by our love, by the absence of attacking other people, by the absence of pulling others down in order to lift ourselves up in the race for more recognition or visibility. We will be known by our love, by our honor, and integrity. Stealing anything in order to supply ourselves with more at another's expense is even more than theft. It is not trusting God to supply all He wants for us at the time. It is saying we need to take matters into our own hands because we know better...selah.

We will be known by our love because we prefer someone else before ourselves.

There is a new movement afoot that will bring something new to the earth. There is rising a people who will be so unified that every choice they make will be in agreement. Their movement will be fluid, as was Jesus. He did what He saw, what He heard. He was one with the Father and Holy Spirit. They were fluid, moving as one... in purpose, in thought, in desire.

There is a people arising who will be one with the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and they shall be one with each other. No backbiting. No doubt. No self-promotion. They will be one, move as one, speak as one, a united front. And those people are on the move.

Even the apostles did not move as one. There were disagreements and division. The church was divided and in disagreement. There has never been the unity in a people as there was in Jesus with the Father and Holy Spirit.

But there is coming forth a people who will walk in that unity, one with another, unified in their purpose, no agendas in the way. They will be known for their love of each other and of the Godhead. They will be a force indivisible and unbendable. They will bring to the earth the thing that the Lord has been searching for...a 6,000 year search. They will bring in the millennium of Jesus' reign upon the earth and the earth will rejoice for the freedom and liberty that they will bring.

That people is being released from the wilderness of testing and training, from boot camp. Even now, they are waiting upon the Lord for direction and timing. They will bring us into a new age, a new season of walking with God – the way we were created to walk with Him.

We must be known by our love, not by the size of our ministry or congregation, but be known by the absence of self importance, by the absence of scrambling to make our own destiny happen. We will be known by the love of our place, our person, our position, our situation, our peace.

We will be known by our love of life, of Jesus, of all things good and whole, by our love of righteousness, sinlessness and holiness. We will be known for our love of a new life, the life with the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Our commitment and dedication is to a deeper level of *Nazir*. A *commitment* written on our hearts, not on our outward appearance.

There are 2 famous Nazarites in the Bible. The first was Samson who was set aside before his birth to be a Nazarite. But he was prideful. He thought he was better than the lowly Philistine or even his own Hebrew people. As a Nazarite, he should not have been led by his lust and pride. He despised how he was raised. He despised his own calling, except that he reveled in his fame and special abilities. Did cutting his hair cause him to lose his power, or did it just make him like everyone else? I wonder about that. His hair grew while he was a slave to the Philistines...but he was blind and lost.

Father God, my Lord and Savior, Holy Comforter...lovers of my soul, I cry out to You. I want to be one with You. I want to be part of that unity that the world has never known. I want to be part of that people who You have called out to bring in Your millennial reign. Father God, raise me up to be beneath the cross. We are entering a new age and I pray, dear Lord, that I be part of it. Let the cry for unity arise within my soul and escape from my lips that my heart may know the thing I desire most. Father, I want to be so one with You I see Your face, hear Your voice, know Your touch...and I, as Jesus did, do only that which I see and hear. Father, let me not only be one with You, but one with Your people. Lord, You will have to do a work in my heart for this to be so. Do that work. Lord, forgive me the destruction I have caused not only to Your cause but to Your people in word, thought or deed. Lord, God Almighty, Creator of everything and everyone, forgive me for getting in Your way and being part of the problem instead of the solution. Lord, I repent of every word, thought and deed that is contrary to Your will and Your way. Father, God Almighty, Holy One upon the throne, I am Yours and thus I belong to Your people. Let me feel that bond. Let me be one with You, the Son, Holy Spirit and Your people. Let me know Your heart and feel Your heart, the unbridled love and passion You feel for each one. Father, I bow my knee to recommit myself to You. Cleanse me with the blood of Jesus and let His righteousness cover me wholly and completely. Holy Spirit, teach me in every good thing and in every way I am to move and think. Let my voice be Your voice. Let my words be Your words. Harness my thoughts and words that they be Yours, one of unity and love for all that You are and Your people are. Let me extend others the same mercy and forgiveness You extend to me. Let me arise as Your child, Your bride, Your church. In Jesus' name, amen.

God bless you all
Jessica and Susan