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פרשת נשא

WITH

R' AVIGDOR MILLER ZT"l

BASED ON HIS BOOKS, TAPES & WRITINGS OF TALMIDIM

The Nazir and Shabbos

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Part I. The Uncluttered Mind

The Exceptional Nazir

אִישׁ אוֹ אִשָּׁה בִּי יִפְלֵא לְנָזֵר נֶזֶר לַיהוָה לְהַזִּיר לַיהוָה – When a man or woman will 'yafli' by taking upon themselves a vow of a nazir, to separate himself for Hashem (Bamidbar 6:2). That's how the parsha of nazir is introduced in this week's sedrah.

Now the word *yafli* is an unusual *lashon* in the Torah and although it's usually translated as "to clearly utter" a vow, (Nazir 34a) when we look into the Ibn Ezra we see that he understands that this is only a secondary meaning and that the original translation is something altogether different. The Ibn Ezra tells us that the word *יִפְלֵא* derives from *פְּלֵא* which means something out of the ordinary, something remarkable. And so we'll translate the *possuk* now according to the *peirush* of the Ibn Ezra: When a man or woman will do something exceptional and take a vow to become a Nazir for Hashem (ibid. 2-3).

What's So Remarkable?

Now, we have to study that for a moment because if someone would ask us, we don't see anything so special in the *parsha*. What is it about a *nazir* that makes him so remarkable? All we know about him is that he has to be aware of coming in contact with certain kinds of *tumah* that would cause him to profane his *nezirus* – it means he can't go wherever he wants. He also couldn't drink wine or eat grapes. Some other restrictions he has too but there's no special service that he does for Hashem; nothing is stipulated in the Torah about the *nazir* doing this or that. And so it's a big question – what's so remarkable about the *nazir*?

So the first thing we'll have to understand is that merely abstaining from the permissible, that's already a *peleh*. To a great extent most of us follow our passions and instincts and so when someone takes up a program of contradicting his desires and separating even from the permissible, from things he wants to do, that's so out of the ordinary that the Torah considers it a remarkable thing.

Especially in those days when wine was a part of the daily menu – everybody drank wine at their meals; it was like water – so anyone strong hearted enough to swim against the tide and accept upon themselves a program of saying no, of building up their “no muscles”, was worthy of Hashem's especial praise: “אִישׁ אִו אִשָּׁה כִּי יַפְלֵא – A man or woman who do a remarkable thing ...”. You're not merely *yafli*, “uttering a vow,” but you're “doing something remarkable.”

Keeping Far From Sin

Now, when you look into the *seforim* that speak about this quality we call *prishus*, you'll see that in general they are urging us to exert ourselves to gain the quality of self-control *in order to be able to abstain from forbidden things*. You're expected to train yourself to keep away from temptations, even from permissible things, because that's how you'll be protected from coming into contact with forbidden things.

For instance if a person is in the habit of yielding to the desire to eat whatever is available to him in the refrigerator, so he becomes a slave to the passion of eating and he becomes constrained to eat anything his eyes see. And so, because he never developed his self-control muscles, if he's ever faced with a food of doubtful *kashrus*, sometimes his passion to eat overcomes his scruples and he finds a reason to eat it.

That's why the Alter of Slabodka when his wife served him a dessert, so he would eat some of it and tell her how delicious it is, but then before

finishing it completely, he would shove it away. The Alter also would never taste delicatessen; he said delicatessen means yielding to passion because you can get the same benefit without the extra spices.

Habitual Talking and Reading

When it comes to talking, same thing. If a person hasn't trained himself to keep his mouth closed, he'll never be able to hold back when faced with a test of saying *devarim assurim*. Many people have a habit of talking on the telephone; they sit on the phone and talk. They talk and talk and talk. And even if you're saying nothing wrong but there's no *prishus*; there's no self control, and once you don't have self control, who knows what people say on the phone to each other?! Who knows what type of wicked words are exchanged?! And so, if you can train yourself to be a *porush* from speaking even when it's permissible, you can consider yourself a *pelehdikeh* person – you're already remarkable.

Even a *porush* when it comes to reading is something exceptional! Now, reading is one of the best things to do if done properly but when people have a habit of reading, they read anything. A man is sitting in the waiting room in the doctor's office and on the little table there's a stack of newspapers. It's worse than a pile of horse manure but he picks it up and reads it anyhow because he never says no to himself – and then when he's confronted with a *nisayon*, he's at a loss. He's too weak to deny himself.

The Nazir Keeps Away

That's why it pays to practice self-control in everything so that your mind should be in control of your body and when it comes to a question of Torah and serving Hashem, you won't yield to the passions of the body because your mind is in control.

Now, to a great extent that was the life of a *nazir*; he was a *porush*. The word *nazir* comes from the word *zar*, separate, because that was the important element of his *nezirus* – he abstained from superfluous things.

Of course he lived a normal life. He worked, he had *chaveirim*. In most cases he was married too – in those days everybody was married. But to a certain extent he lived a life of abstaining. He couldn't drink wine so he couldn't go to parties, to banquets. Even regular meals, he had to avoid sometimes. He couldn't go to funerals and to the cemeteries. He couldn't even go into a building where there's a dead body. And therefore, in many ways the *nazir* was limited in his contacts with the world; he couldn't be too convivial; he couldn't associate with people and so

wherever he went he was the odd man out – he was separated; he stayed to himself.

The *nazir* lived a life of what all the *seforim* teach us is the great quality of *prishus*, of abstinence, in order *lihistracheik min ha'aveira* – to distance himself from sin. The more a person allows himself to enjoy a certain thing, the more he is enslaved to that thing and the greater danger he's putting himself in. That's why it's recommended to work on this *middah* of *prishus* – you become a person of self control – and it's one of the reasons why we consider the *nazir* a remarkable person.

A Different Type of Prishus

However, when we study the subject a little more deeply we'll find that there is another reason why the *nazir* separates himself from involvement in this world. It might be a new idea to many of you, what we're going to say now, but actually it's primarily because of this new element that the Torah considers a *nazir* to be so exceptional.

The *Chovos Halevavos*, when he talks about the quality of *prishus*, he approaches it in a different way than what we've been speaking about. Not that he disagrees with the other *seforim* – everything that we heard up till now is Torah which is accepted by everybody who understands what Torah is, but the *Chovos Halevavos* introduces us to something else. *Prishus*, the *Chovos Halevavos* tells us, means to *abstain from things that fill your mind with extraneous thoughts*.

The Expensive Space

The *Chovos Halevavos* explains that a person comes into this world in order to fill his mind with Hashem. That's your most important function in life and the more room you make for Hashem in your mind the more remarkable you can be because the greatness of a person is measured by how much of his mind is taken up with thoughts of Hashem.

It's a glorious ideal, and it's paraphrased in *Mishlei* (24:4) as follows: **וּבִרְעֵת הַחֲדָרִים יִמְלֵאוּ כָּל הוֹן יָקָר וְנִימִים** – *With knowledge the chambers of your mind can be filled with all precious and pleasing furniture*. It means that your mind is the most valuable apartment that you'll ever find and therefore every inch of that real estate must be available for important things. If you rent a place for ten thousand dollars a week, you cannot take up any of that valuable space with superfluities. And so, our minds must be uncluttered and free of any kind of unneeded furniture in order to put our valuables there.

Valuable Furniture

What valuables? There's no end to the valuable furniture a frum Jew must move into his head. The first piece of furniture should be a clear picture of the beginning of the world. In your mind you have to have a picture of the creation of the universe, a glorious picture that's described in the beginning of the Torah, how everything came out of *nihilo* – from nothing. It's a pity that people don't realize that – even when you're learning Bamidbar or when you're learning Devarim, you should have that picture in your mind because the whole Torah is based on keeping in mind those first sentences that describe the creation of the universe.

But that's only one of many pieces of furniture. You have to move in a picture of *Yetzias Mitzrayim*. לָמַעַן תִּזְכֹּר – *In order you should remember, אֶת יוֹם צֵאתְךָ מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם כָּל יְמֵי חַיֶּיךָ* – *all the days of your life* (Devarim 16:3). Now I understand people who do lip service are satisfied to fulfill their obligation and say the words morning and evening and then forget it, but if one wishes to build up a mansion full of delightful objects, he tries as much as possible to fix that as a permanent fixture in his mind. He's always aware of *Yetzias Mitzrayim*.

Matan Torah is another very valuable piece of furniture. The Rambam says that you should make *Ma'amad Har Sinai* the most important of all things in your thoughts: גְּדֹלָהּ עַל כָּל גְּדוּלָה – *Make it greater than any other great idea*. Not only on Shavuot. On a regular Tuesday afternoon you should keep in mind the picture of how Hakodosh Boruch Hu's voice thundered from Har Sinai.

Declutter the Space

And because there are so many pictures, so many ideas and ideals that we have to move into our minds, that's why it's so important to remove the clutter from your head. If you don't create room to move in expensive furniture, there's no extra space, no space to move in the thoughts that are truly valuable.

So imagine now that on the way out of this room tonight you want to get started on this project – you want to be a person of higher nature so as you walk out the door you make a decision: "From here to the corner, I'm going to spend that one minute in picturing the creation of the universe." Now, one minute of thinking is not the most expensive piece of furniture but it's a good start.

But what happens? As soon as you walk out the door you're already thinking about what's going to be for supper tonight. Or you're thinking

of some other puny thing, of some argument you had with someone, let's say. And that cheap furniture in your thoughts prevents a beautiful picture from entering your brain – it's the law of physics that two objects cannot occupy one space at the same time.

The Remarkable Nazir

And so, says the *Chovos Halvovos*, that's the most important element of *prishus*. Abstaining from superfluous things is the function of clearing the mind of things that are not necessary. Because if you're head over heels in some hobby or in some interest – if you haven't trained yourself to abstain from the permissible in this world – then it's certain that you won't be able to concentrate on the great ideals of life.

And so we come back now to the **אִישׁ אוֹ אִשָּׁה כִּי יִפְלֵא**, to the man or woman who does something remarkable. The *nazir* undertakes a program of abstaining not only because he wants to learn self control and stay far away from sin. That's important but that's not it. The greatness of a *nazir* is because he begins now to clear his mind from all of the extraneous furniture that is cluttering his mind, making it too crowded for perfection. As a result of abstaining from many things he is able to do something remarkable – he's not only a *nazir* but he's a *Nazir laHashem*, his mind was separated for Hashem. He is making his mind available now to think of the most important matter in life, Hakodosh Boruch Hu.

Part II. The Cluttered Mind

Two Problems

The *Mesillas Yesharim* when he discusses some of the difficulties in this world that keep a man off track, off the path of *shleimus*, he says that there are three main problems that we all have to contend with.

One is *chevrah ra'ah*, bad company. You have to watch out with whom you associate. If you grew up in the wrong environment, it's a pity on you. If you marry the wrong person then the influence is going to break you. If you sit in the synagogue next to the wrong person, he'll ruin you there too. In the *yeshivah*, if you sit next to a *chavrusa* that wants to waste your life by talking, watch out. Environment is very important – it's one of the three things that make problems in life. Whom do you associate with? That's very, very, very important.

Another problem in life is *haschok vehalatzon*, to be a *kibitzer*, a joker; not to take anything seriously. You're always fooling around, always

talking too much. Or like the fools who walk around with music machines all day long, to hear music all day long. People who are always running around looking for good times.

In America they gave it a fancy name, “the pursuit of happiness” in order to give it a *hechsher*, but the truth is it's the pursuit of *ha'schok v'halatzon*. America is *schok v'latzon*. That's why you walk down the block and everybody is laughing at the same time. The whole block! All of the fools are watching the same television show and they all burst out laughing at the same time. A whole block of foolish people hearing the same joke at the same time. *Haschok vehalatzon*, laughter and joking! Especially in America we suffer from this. Everybody is laughing all the time and they're laughing their lives away with nothing.

The Third Problem

Now he says as difficult as these two problems are, there's a third problem that's even more difficult. You know what that is? *Hatipul vekatirdah*, being too busy. Being too busy to think, that's the biggest problem in life. Why is it the biggest? What makes it the most dangerous of all three obstacles to perfection?

And the answer is, the problem with being busy is not because it keeps you busy, but because it keeps *your mind* busy. And a busy mind, busy with *Olam Hazeh*, will never become great. Life has to be a career of understanding, of thinking. A person has to be free from *tipul v'tirdah* if he's going to make something of himself.

Now, when we talk about clearing our minds from being busy with life; we're not talking about becoming a loafer, someone who doesn't want to work, a man who lives, let's say, in the basement, and gets welfare from the government. No. I'm not talking about these loafers. A man who is not working, a loafer, that fellow his mind you should know is not empty. It's full – his mind is the most occupied of all. He's occupied with all his frustrations, all his desires. His mind is filled with all kinds of things that he shouldn't have there.

Don't you see walking down the street a bum with a music machine playing loudly or those riding in the cars. All day long they hear nothing but empty music, because their minds are empty of the valuable interests of life, and therefore it's full of all the garbage. They listen all day to music that comes from the radio stations, from filthy people, low characters without principles who sing about females all day long. Is that

life? Is that the furniture that belongs there? And so, foolish ideals are taking up his mind all the time.

This and That Takes Time

But we're not talking about loafers – we're talking now about the good ones, the *frum* men and women, the yeshiva boys, the Beis Yaakov girls. We're concerned about ourselves and our biggest concern is that we have to be thinkers. You need time, you need a place in your head to think.

It's of the utmost importance to be a thinker, but when you don't have any place in your head, your life is washed. Let's say you're working from nine to five then you run home right away to eat. On the way home your mind is thinking about this or that, useless things, and then you eat and as soon as you finish eating you're busy doing something else. You have to tinker with the car or maybe you look in the Sears-Roebuck catalogue – you need a new watch or a better power drill. So many unimportant things to think about! And finally you have to go to sleep. Mazel tov! You killed another day. When did you have an opportunity to stop and think about what's really important?

Davening To The Siddur

I'm sure you're busy *davening* every day too, but what's the purpose even of your *davening*? You have to know what you're *davening* about. Everybody is so busy *davening* there's no time to think of Hakodosh Boruch Hu!

I always tell the story of how Rav Levi Yitzchak Berditchever once told his *shamash* to walk over to the *bimah* and bang on the table and make an announcement. So the *shamash* went over and banged. Everybody stopped *davening* and the *shamash* said, "The Rebbe wants everyone to know that there is a Borei. There is a G-d." That was the announcement.

Don't laugh! It's a very important announcement to make in all the synagogues. In middle of *davening* you have to announce that we're davening to Hashem. Because we're too busy *davening* to think about that. People are *davening* and they don't think about what they're saying, they wouldn't dream what it's all about.

Serenading Sunlight

I'll show it to you now. Did you thank Hashem today for the sunlight? Sunlight?! You don't remember now. Sunlight?! What's he talking about?

I'll tell you, the biggest *brachah* in the *siddur* is on sunlight! *Yotzer ohr* after *borchu* up until *yotzer hameoros*. The longest *brachah* is about sunlight. Sunlight? It didn't even enter his mind. So it means they don't know what they're saying. You have no chance to think; you're too busy *davening* and shaking to stop for a moment to think what you're saying.

Damaging Diversions

Outside of the shul, certainly everybody is being side tracked. It's remarkable how people's minds are being diverted from their real purpose in life. If you talk to hundreds of people like I do, you'll see how each one has some worry or worries that take him off the track. In almost every case, it's not an important matter, but it's sent by Hakodosh Boruch Hu to test him.

Here is the thruway. This is the main road. But by the side of the road there are all kinds of attractions to get you off the road of life, get involved with this. Get involved with this girl. Get involved with money. Get involved with adventures. Get involved with your car, with shopping, with worries. Get involved in fighting with people. Get involved in drugs *chalilah*. All kinds of involvement are standing by the side of the road of life in order to get you to stop and make a detour from the thruway.

There are bargains here, good times here. Somebody, a third cousin, sends you an invitation for a wedding and the wedding is way out, miles and miles out in Long Island. Do you have to go there? Forget about it. He wouldn't even know you were absent. Don't get sidetracked!

Keep Your Eyes On the Road

The wise man knows he has to make this trip straight to his destination and so he holds onto the steering wheel and keeps his mind on his business; he keeps his eyes on the road and he ignores all the distractions beckoning from the side. Because if you're interested in stamp collecting, if you're interested in coin collecting or in travel, then your mind is distributing its interests in various different channels and that means that the most important matters in life are being neglected.

You know some people take courses in music appreciation; they learn to appreciate music. Before, they didn't care much, but now they learn to appreciate music. You're learning to appreciate something you don't need. You can get along very nicely in life without music appreciation. Despite the fact that it's being taught everywhere, I'm telling you it's a waste. They teach many things in the schools but it

doesn't mean that these are things we should know. It's just another thing to clutter your mind with.

Overcoming The Clutter

The lesson is don't become involved. In good things, yes. Become involved in all good things but as much as possible keep your mind separate from extraneous things. As much as possible leave out all the elements that are not essential. Don't get involved. Stay clear of additional interests, of extraneous things that will fill your mind with unimportant things.

And therefore, *hatipul vevatirdah*, to be too busy to think, that's the greatest difficulty in life that we have to overcome. And that, the Chovos Halevavos explains, is the most valuable result of *prishus* – you're making room in your head for what's most important. You're making space for Hashem.

That's what the *nazir* was doing and it's what made him so remarkable – he made a program of overcoming this main problem of mankind and by means of that he made room in his head to become remarkably great.

Part III. Day of the Decluttered Mind

The Modern Day Nazir

Now the question is what can we do today? We can't become *nezirim*. Don't try it today because you'll be stuck – you can't bring a *korban nezirus* today so you'll be stuck forever. So what can you do? Where is our opportunity to do something *pelehdig*, to be remarkable like a *nazir* by creating an uncluttered mind that is available for greatness?

And so we come now to an aspect of our lives which is a supremely important fulfillment of this principle and you wouldn't guess what it is. It's Shabbos! On Shabbos the Am Yisroel is given the opportunity to become *nezirim* – one day every week the entire nation separates from the world; we empty our heads from what's not important and we get busy becoming extraordinary.

Day of Abstinence

You know, if it was me or you, we might have thought that to celebrate the Shabbos we should have all kinds of excitement. After all, we're celebrating the biggest *neis* the history of the world – the creation

of something from nothing – so we should go all out! We should come together and shoot off fireworks maybe. We could have big games, races, things that will make a big demonstration in public. Shabbos should be a day of activity, of excitement.

But you see that Hakodosh Boruch Hu has other plans – He planned Shabbos to be a day of *menucha*. On Shabbos – you're homebound. You can't go to your office. You can't be busy with the bills and the tax collector; you can't even be busy with the leak under the kitchen sink. All the things that make people's minds occupied are off the table on Shabbos.

What is Shabbos? Shabbos means abstinence. That's the translation of Shabbos – to abstain. It means we were given Shabbos so that it should be a *menucha shleima*, an opportunity to develop our minds.

Of course it will take a great deal of reflection and practice if we're going to start utilizing the Shabbos the way Hashem intended – you have to know what to think about – but that's what we're expected to do. All of the things that you were too distracted to think about during the week, now is your opportunity to be a *nazir*.

Thinking at The Meal

While you're walking to the *beis hakenesses* think. While you're sitting in the *beis hakenesses*, there are plenty of opportunities. At the *seudah* too. It's not healthy to talk while you're chewing your food – you know that, don't you? Many times people swallow the food down the wrong way when they're talking and then somebody has to grab hold of you and pound on your back to save your life. People pass away because they talk during eating.

And so, while you're chewing your food at the Shabbos table, it's a golden opportunity to think. Your wife is talking to your children, your children are talking among themselves, and you have your ideas that you already said many times and the family is already tired of hearing them probably, so review them in your own mind and more deeply each time. You're thinking about *Yetzias Mitzrayim* or about the Creation – those are two big themes of Shabbos – there are so many things to think about.

The mother too. She's thinking about *mann*, that's why there are two *challots* on the table, to remind you of the miracle of the *mann*, which came in a double portion for Shabbos. Even though she spent hours in the hot kitchen preparing all the tasty food, she's thinking about the lesson of the *mann*, that all of the food – the *challah* and the fish and the

chicken – it's all from the Hand of Hashem. After two minutes she switches to thinking about Olam Habo, Shabbos is *mei'ein olam habo*. If she hadn't prepared before Shabbos there would be nothing to eat – that reminds her to prepare for Olam Habo. So she's sitting and enjoying the meal but at the same time she's creating a mind for herself.

A Gantz Vuch Shabbos

Now, one of the most important benefits of Shabbos thinking is that it's intended to be a model for all week – the *menuchas hanefesh* of Shabbos has to extend out in the week. Hakodosh Boruch Hu says, “One day of the week you can't do this and you can't do that but I want that day to be a preparation for the rest of the week. And so when you go back on Sunday to your shop, when your one day of *nezirus* comes to an end after twenty four hours, you go back into the week with the spirit of Shabbos, of *nezirus*, in your mind.”

And so the question is, of all the thinking you do on Shabbos, what thoughts are most important for taking the *menucha sheleima* of Shabbos with you into the rest of the week? How do you take the Shabbos Mind into the next six days?

Weak Eyesight

The Gemara says in one place (Brachos 43b) that “A hasty step takes away 1/500th of your eyesight”. It means walking fast; when you're nervous and worried – you're afraid you'll miss your appointment for instance, or you'll miss the bus, so you rush. And the Gemara is telling you that for every hasty step you take, it takes away some of your eyesight; it means it weakens your eyes. In a way that's true; it's a well known fact that nervousness is bad for the eyes. Ask an eye specialist. He'll tell you.

Now, all week long people are busy running around. Everything is an emergency: “I have to catch this customer,” or “I have to make a phone call.” They're worried about their *parnassah*, other things, and they're rushing around with anxiety. Every time you sit down to accomplish something in *ruchniyus*, another thought pops into your head – there's so much to do! Everybody is in anxiety and it causes a certain physical effect on people, it weakens your eyesight a little bit.

Eyesight here means more than eyesight; it weakens your *ruchniyus* eyes too. You don't see the truth anymore; you're so confused that you just see phantasmagorias. You're blinded by all of your hasty steps and worries and you think you're in control – your mind is filled with Olam Hazei and it's overwhelming.

The Remedy

So, *mai takantei*? What's the remedy? That's the Gemara's question there. How can you repair the damage that is caused by the week's frantic efforts to make a living?

So the *gemara* says: *Lehadar lei bekedusha devei shimshi* – you bring back your eyesight with *kiddush*. When you sit down and hear *kiddush* or you stand up, whatever your *minhag* is, that's what will restore your eyesight.

Now at first glance that's a queer remedy. How does it work? You know some people have a *minhag* to look at the *kiddush* cup or the candles – very good, excellent. But you have to know what you're doing. What is it about *kiddush* that brings your eyesight back?

Leave The Worries

And the answer is this; Shabbos reminds us of the fact that once there was no universe; it was just a great void; it was one big zero and Hakodosh Boruch Hu created everything out of nothing. *Vayomer Elokim yehi* – Hashem said and it came into being. It's one of the great principles that Shabbos teaches us – there's nothing in the world except *devar Hashem*, the word of Hashem.

Every second the world only exists because Hashem wants it to continue to exist. He didn't make it and then let it remain. No. Every second it exists because He says it, "Let it continue to be!" And if He would withdraw His word everything would collapse into one great void of nothingness again. It means there's nothing in the universe except Hakodosh Boruch Hu!

And therefore Shabbos, when you put these ideas of *kiddush* into your head, *vayichulu hashomayim*, the world was created, so you're getting a new mind already. You begin to understand that very important principle that everything came out of nothing and that's how you restore your eyesight. Hakodosh Boruch Hu created everything and He is now conducting all the affairs of the world. Nothing happens without His supervision so why should we worry? "Leave the worrying to Me," says Hashem, "You sit back and enjoy the ride."

He's In Charge

Of course, when people live with the current of the day, and they run *b'merutzas hergeilam*, they run like horses in a race. Horses don't stop to think when they're running. And people live all week that way, running

and running, so it seems to them that the world is all accidents, it's cause and effect. Their minds are too filled to stop to see that the Hand of Hashem is constantly guiding everything in their lives.

And so Shabbos comes along and the Jew restores his eyesight. On Friday night, the Jew learns *bitachon*. Of course, if you don't practice up, nothing will help. But the more thought you put into it, the more you'll understand the truth that Hashem made the world, and He's making the world right now and so it's under His control. There's nothing to worry about. Everything is under His control.

You're just acting like you're making a living, but He's the one who is supporting you. He is steering the steering wheel of history; every detail of our lives is under His control and if something is destined to be, it's going to be whether you worry about it or not. Nothing in the world is without Hashem, so what are you worried about? What are you excited about? It will all turn out well because Hakodosh Boruch Hu is in charge.

Work Only With Your Body

Of course, we don't rule out the necessity for people to forestall any dangerous things that might happen. Certainly a person must exercise caution. Hakodosh Boruch Hu wants you to do things, even insurance. It's a good idea to take out insurance. And be careful, don't put any toys on the steps where people could trip. Don't be reckless! Don't touch your eyes and your mouth unless you wash your hands with soap and water. And keep away from people who have colds – they shouldn't cough their germs into your face. Certainly you have to do all these things.

Parnassah too! Nothing wrong with being a hustler. But hustle with your body; your mind shouldn't be confused. Do your thing but don't get excited. Stick to your business and don't worry. Don't worry unnecessarily about things that are out of our control! Hakodosh Boruch Hu says, "My child, *hashlech alai yehavecha*, cast your burden upon Me. I'll take care of your worries."

Wearing the Crown

And therefore when we utilize the Shabbos to live calmly and sensibly we're using that day as a model for the rest of our lives. We're not keeping Shabbos only one day of the week. It's "*zachor es yom haShabbos*" every day of the week. By living a *shabbosdike* Shabbos, we learn to live every day like that. We're always calm and composed in order to be able to keep in mind the purposes of life, the purposes of creation, the purposes of our existence. The *menuchas hanefesh* of Shabbos extends

out into the weekdays and you wear the crown of the *nazir* all the days of your life.

That's what the *possuk* says about the *nazir*: נָזִיר אֶלְקִינוּ עַל רִאשׁוֹ – he carries the crown of Hashem on his head (Bamidbar 6:7). What kind of a crown? The *nazir* whose head is clear of all foolish things – and even things not so foolish but they're not essential – so he carries the crown of his G-d on his head because he's carrying the thoughts of Hashem *in* his head.

That's the *peleh* of a Nazir – he trained himself to raise himself up from everyone else and achieve greatness by means of his mind. And to a certain extent that opportunity is available for everyone – anybody who wants can wear the crown of Shabbos all the days of his life and have the *neizer Elokav al rosho*.

Have A Wonderful Shabbos

LET'S GET PRACTICAL

Becoming a Nazir Every Day

From now on, every Friday night before kiddush I will take thirty seconds to prepare myself for the great opportunity of becoming a “nazir” in this world. I'll remind myself of the principle that Shabbos is teaching me, that Hashem is in full control and that there's nothing to worry about.

And so, besides for spending as much time as possible on Shabbos thinking about Hashem, I will also take this lesson into the week by reminding myself once a day of this principle and trying to find something in my life that is causing my mind to be filled with unnecessary thoughts and I'll make it my goal to abstain from those thoughts going forward and create room for the more important furniture of the mind.

— This week's booklet is based on tapes: —

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QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

שאל אביך ויגדך זקניך ויאמרו לך

Q:

The Rav mentioned earlier that a parent should use the word “please” when speaking to a child. But doesn’t saying the word “please” imply that the fulfillment of the request by the child is really only going to be a favor on the part of the child?

A:

No. When a parent says “please” to a child, but he says it firmly, and the parent insists that the child do it, then the child gets the idea that he must do it, and he learns from his parents to say “please.” It depends on the tone of the “please.”

Now, if you say “please” and the child ignores you, then you are a failure. You are remiss in your duty as a parent. Either don’t ask the child to do that thing, or if you do ask, it must be carried out. Your request must be carried out. And therefore, before you ask, you have to judge whether it’s feasible.

A certain great man once told me, “Do you know why I have a reputation of being a man of power?” And he was a man who wielded a lot of power. He told me, “Because I never tried anything that I couldn’t carry out.” He only attempted things that he knew he could carry out. So he had a reputation that he was successful in everything. He always won! He always succeeded! Because he never tried anything that he would lose.

And therefore, if you want to be a successful parent, insist on things that you know you can win. Watch out! Watch your step and don’t make a request regarding things that you won’t win, things that won’t be fulfilled. Because then you’re going to become a loser in the eyes of your child.

TAPE # 498 (March 1984)

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