



# דרכים בפרשה

מצרע



**זאת תהיה תורת המצרע ביום טהרתו והובא אל הכהן (יד:ב)**

***This shall be the law of the metzora on the day of his purification; He shall be brought to the Kohen (14:2)***

This week's parsha continues with the halachos of tzara'as. Tzara'as is not a simple physical illness but rather the physical manifestation of a spiritual malady.

The Kli Yakar (13:2) writes that this is inherently contained in the word metzora itself. He explains that metzora is a combination of two words: motzee-to take out, and ra-evil. In other words, it reveals in an external manner the evil which had been lurking inside the person.

Which evils are revealed through this tzara'as? Although lashon harah is the most well-known reason that is talked about, the gemara in Eruchin (16a) actually lists seven reasons: א"ר שמואל בר נחמני א"ר יוחנן על שבעה דברים נגעים באין על לשון הרע ועל שפיכות דמים ועל שבועת שוא ועל גילוי עריות ועל גסות הרוח ועל הגזל Lashon Hara; 2. Shfichas Damim –Murder; 3. Shavuas Shav -Swearing in Vain; 4. Giluy Arayos -Illicit Relationships; 5. Gasos HaRuach – Haughtiness; 6. Gezel -Stealing and 7. Tzarus Ayin –Stinginess.

From this list, there are three that are a constant battle for each person on a bein adam lechaveiro level: Lashon Hara, Gasos HaRuach and Tzarus Ayin. The Mishna in Avos (5:22) states this very succinctly: כל מי

שיש בידו שלשה דברים הללו, מתלמידיו של אברהם אבינו. ושלשה דברים אחרים, מתלמידיו של בלעם הרשע. עין טובה, ורוח נמוכה, ונפש שפלה, מתלמידיו של אברהם אבינו. עין רעה, ורוח גבוהה, ונפש רחבה, מתלמידיו של בלעם הרשע - Whoever possesses these three things, he is of the students of Avraham Avinu; and [whoever possesses] three other things, he is of the students of Bilaam, the rasha. A good eye, a humble spirit and an undemanding soul he is of the students of Avraham Avinu. An evil eye, a haughty spirit and a very demanding soul he is of the students of Bilaam, the rasha.

What is unique about these three bad midos is that they break through a person's physical guf and publicize the true nature of their bearer. This demonstrates what we mentioned earlier from the Kli Yakar that metzora is actually motzi- ra. He first sins by exposing the bad that was within, and then the Torah prescribes steps of purity to help him extract the evil within in order to rid himself of it, ultimately coming to a state of purity.

Upon looking through our parsha and the previous parsha, the following question can be asked: Why is this parsha called "Metzora"? If anything, in Parshas Tazria, we discuss most of the laws of tzara'as, including the tzara'as that is found on a

person. On the other hand, this parsha discusses the tahara/purification process. Perhaps the parsha should have been called Parshas Tahara?

The meforshim explain that yesod/foundation of tahara is for a person to recognize who he is and what he has done wrong. Once a person can acknowledge this and come out of denial of any wrongdoing, only then is he finally able to begin his process of tahara. Our parsha of tahara specifically calls upon us to first remember how we got to this low in the first place, thus calling the parsha “Metzora”.

The Mishna in Avos (3:1) tells us: עקביא בן מהללאל אומר, הסתכל בשלשה דברים ואי אתה בא לידי עברה. דע מאין באת, ולאן אתה הולך, ולפני מי אתה עתיד לתן דין וחשבון: Akavia the son of Mahalalel would say: Reflect upon three things and you will not come to sin. Know from where you came, where you are going, and before Whom you are destined to give a judgement and accounting.

If someone wants to effectively battle the yeitzer hara, he needs to be equipped for the challenge. This can only be accomplished by a great awareness of the past. As the well-known expression goes, “Those who are unaware of the past are destined to repeat it.”

Vechein letovah- and so it is with good things as well. One of the requirements of the night of the seder during the recital/discussion of the Hagadda Shel Pesach is to be מתחיל בגנות ומסיים בשבח- we

begin by first discussing the "derogatory", and only afterwards do we discuss the great praises.

There are many reasons that have been given to explain why Chazal required this. The Vilna Gaon writes in his Hagadah Shel Pesach (found in Siddur HaGra), that this is actually the secret to being a true makir tov to HaShem Yisborach!

If we truly wish to appreciate all the good that HaShem has bestowed upon us, and continues to shower us with, we can only accomplish this by first reviewing the bad times that we went through. Upon a complete review, we come to fully appreciate the good, thus enabling us to thank HaShem, while wholeheartedly meaning what we are saying.

Can I really say “I’m sorry” when I don’t know why I am saying it or what I did wrong? Can I say “thank you” when I don’t really grasp what was done for me?

The metzora sinned by not using his lips to stop his slanderous words from emitting from his mouth. Let us take care not to utter meaningless words of apology and thanks, merely offering HaShem “lip service”. It is only through our past that we can get to the future!

Good Shabbos, מרדכי אפפעל



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