



Ohr Yerushalayim News

כ"ז אדר ב תשע"ד – פרשת תזריע – 29th March 2014 - Volume 6 - Issue 37

T NEWS ... LATEST NEWS ... LATEST

מזל טוב

Mazel Tov to Mr and Mrs Levi Goldman on the Bar Mitzva this Shabbos of their son Benzy. The Kehilla is invited to a Kiddush after Davenning in the hall.

Mazel Tov to Mr & Mrs Bernard Levey on the birth of a grandson, born to Mr & Mrs Eli Baron in Yerushalayim.

Ladies Pesach Shiur

The first of two pre-Pesach Shiurim for ladies takes place this Tuesday and 8.30pm at the home of the Rov, 48 Waterpark Road.

Daf Yomi

Rabbi YCD Cohen's Daf Yomi Shiur will be starting Maseches Beitzah on Monday at 6.45pm. New and old members are welcome to attend.

Clocks Moving

A reminder that the clocks go forward an hour on Motzei Shabbos. The late Maariv Minyan moves to 10.00pm.

מעות חטים

Donations can be made to the Rov for מעות חטים for distribution to needy local families to help cover Pesach expenses.

מכירת חמץ

The Rov is available for the sale of Chometz either at his home by prior arrangement, or in Shul after Davenning.

T NEWS ... LATEST NEWS ... LATEST

The Ban on Tumah

Dani Epstein

My mind goes back to the halcyon days of my childhood, when my mother's frustration at my inability to read was alleviated by the strategic purchase of several literary classics which captured my imagination and springboarded my flight into the realms magical and enchanted.

One such publication was Paddington Bear, who aside from sharing a birthplace with my brother (Peru) had, on one memorable occasion, composed his address as:

32 Windsor Gardens, London, The United Kingdom, Europe, The Earth, The Milky Way, The Universe.

In his case, the superfluosity was a literary device which the author employed for comic effect.

When we come across apparently superfluous words in the תורה, however, it is not merely the Author's literary style, but a signal to examine the words or phrase for an additional or extended meaning.

This week's sedrah starts off with a classic phrase: ...ידבר ה' אל משה... which we know from many previous occasions is a very specific instruction to משה to pass on the message that he is about to receive to

כלל ישראל. This makes the opening of the following verse all the more puzzling.

"...דבר אל בני ישראל לאמור," There is nothing fundamentally wrong with the additional phrase, but what possible role could it play? We already know that משה has been instructed to pass a message on to כלל ישראל, in which case why the additional phrase דבר אל בני ישראל? Who else might he have been planning to pass this message onto?

This is the question that the Malbim poses at the beginning of the sedrah, and observes that since in many places the תורה does not use this phrase דבר אל בני ישראל we have to assume that every time it does appear its purpose is to narrow the scope of the following statement.

As a rule, this phrase appears in order to exclude three categories of individuals from a specific מצוה: goyim, converts or women.

In our case, however, excluding women would be rather implausible since the very same sentence continues: "...a woman who gives birth." So there is no question that here the תורה is including women in the מצוה.

This in turn automatically rules out goyim since the laws of טומאה and טהרה do not apply to them. Furthermore, the פסוק goes on to mention the מצוה of ברית מילה as well as the מצוה of bringing a קרבן after a birth; this, too, does not apply to goyim.

The last category that could possibly be excluded would be גרים, converts.

We do find instances when the phrase בני ישראל literally refers to "sons of Israel", such as when the שבטים entered the land of Egypt. There the פסוק says: "ויבואו בני ישראל לשבור בתוך הבאים" - the sons of Israel arrived amongst the comers to procure (food)". There is no question that men only are implied here, and specifically the actual sons of יעקב.

The Week Ahead

פרשת תזריע

פרשת תזריע	פרשת החדש, מברכין ניסן
Candle Lighting	6.21pm
Mincha & Kabbolas Shabbos	6.26pm
Seder HaLimud	8.40am
Shacharis	9.00am
סוף זמן ק"ש	9.02am
Mincha 1st Minyan	1.30pm
Rov's Mishnayos Shiur	5.38pm
Mincha 2nd Minyan	6.08pm
Motzei Shabbos	7.28pm
Sunday	7.15am / 8.20am
Monday / Thursday	6.45am / 7.10am
Tuesday ראש חודש	6.30am / 7.00am
Tuesday / Wednesday / Friday	6.45am / 7.20am
Mincha & Maariv all week	7.30pm
Late Maariv	10.00pm
Mincha & Maariv Next Shabbos	7.30pm (Shabbos 7.34pm)

as opposed to any of his daughters, descendants or גירים. In our case, however, the term בני ישראל clearly does not literally mean "sons" to the exclusion of women. Now since the phrase is being used in a more generic form, it will perforce include anyone that is not implicitly excluded. So, women including converts are in, goyim are out. The phrase here, therefore, means "the Nation of Israel" as opposed to a more literal "sons of Israel", much in the same way we find the phrase ובני עמון and בני שם refers to the entire nation as opposed to simply the men.

As the Sforno on this פסוק says: בני ישראל אין לי אלא בני ישראל. מנין לרבות את הגירות ואת השפחה, בין משוחררת בין אין משוחררת? ת"ל. Scripture writes "Sons of Israel". From this one would only infer those of Jewish descent. From where can we infer the convert and slave, freed or indentured? Scripture writes "a woman".

So now we are aware of the scope of this phrase בני ישראל, we are still left with the task of explaining the presence of this phrase altogether.

To this the Malbim answers that it serves to expand the scope of this מצוה.

Halfway through פסוק a מצוה is mentioned almost en-passant: בכל קדש לא תגע ואל המקדש לא תבא עד מלאת ימי טהרה - all sanctified she may not touch, and to the Sanctuary she may not come, until the completion of her purification days. This is a מצוה לא תעשה - a proscriptive command, forbidding a woman from entering the temple in a state of impurity.

Now, were we to search around the תורה for a similar injunction that would apply specifically to men, male slaves freed or indentured, unmarried girls and so on, we would be rather stuck, since in fact this parsha is the source for these laws. The closest thing we would find is in ולא ימתו בטמאתם where the Sforno states inter-alia: בטמאתם את משכני אשר בתוכם - and they will not die when they defile my Mishkon that is amongst them, which is not terribly specific however.

Let us suppose for a moment that the phrase we are examining דבר אל - לא ימתו בטמאתם had not appeared in our verse. It would be perfectly reasonable to argue that the laws of purity with regards to the מקדש would apply solely to women, allowing everyone else to turn up in a state of impurity.

Now that we have this phrase דבר אל בני ישראל לאמור this serves to include everyone, men women and children, converts or slaves alike.

And it goes even further. We have just seen the posuk at the end of פרשת מצורע where we have the following warning concerning people who are טמא and wish to enter the Mishkon. Don't enter when you are טמא and that way: ולא ימתו בטמאתם בטמאתם את משכני אשר בתוכם - and they will not die when they defile my Mishkon that is amongst them.

This would appear to forbid even touching the outside of the Mishkon or בית המקדש.

In order to prevent us from assuming this, the תורה continues in our sedrah here and says ואל המקדש לא תבא - she should not enter the Sanctuary - that is to say that only entering is forbidden. Touching the outside of the מקדש is not the issue.

Given all this one might easily assume that all these directives and specifications, whilst applying not only to women but everyone, must only apply to the types of טומאה that are in some way similar to the טומאה that is instantiated by birth; i.e. only one that is the result of a physical issue, which would include things like a זב. Only they would be forbidden to enter the מקדש in a state of impurity, but everyone else would be welcome.

Here is where that פסוק from the end of פרשת מצורע comes into play again. It is there to inform us that every type of טומאה is included in the ban.

The upshot of all this really is not so much the ins-and-outs of the הלכות of טומאה although of course this is the central purpose of those verses. What I'm trying to bring out here from this explanation of the Malbim is just how every part of the תורה is interconnected.

A well-known principle of Rashi is that he rather strangely assumes that the reader has already learned the whole תורה, which at first glance

appears to be a bit of a dichotomy. How can we be expected to learn the תורה only once we have learned it already?

From here, however, we can understand what this involves. We actually do need to learn the whole תורה first in order to be familiar with all the content, because on the next "round" so to speak we will be equipped to understand the way every הלכה is constructed out of multiple verses spread right across the תורה, just as we have seen here. May we soon to implement the הלכות of טומאה and טהרה soon in our days.

Eyeing the Eye

Rabbi Naftali Reich (Torah.org)

In this week's Torah portion, the Torah deals with various types of tzoraas, commonly mistranslated as leprosy. Tzoraas is a Heavenly affliction that strikes a person for various transgressions he committed, most commonly for slandering a friend.

Embedded in this form of Divine retribution are miraculous properties, one of which is that it targets not only a person but his belongings-his house, clothing and possessions.

The verse at the end of this week's Torah portion instructs the kohein how to treat tzoraas when it afflicts clothing. The posuk uses a singular expression; "vehinei lo hofach hanega es eino." If the kohein sees that the garment even after being washed remains unclean-still contains signs of tzoraas-it must be destroyed.

The language vehinei lo hofach hanega es eino is laden with symbolic meaning. Ayno, literally means "its eye," which means the blemish [tzoraas] has not changed its eye. This unusual choice of words contains profound insights into human nature, and the working of Divine justice, explains the saintly Chidushei Harim.

He notes that punishment of tzoraas is brought about by tzoras hoayin, literally narrowness of the eye. [Note the similarity between tzoraas and tzoras.] Narrowness of the eye refers to a person's tendency to view another through negative, critical lenses. His is not the benevolent, charitable gaze of a tov ayin, who sees the good in others, who hopes and prays for his neighbor's well-being. The "tzar ayin" perceives only another's shortcomings and flaws; he begrudges his neighbor's good fortune and is preoccupied with his own ego.

The Chidushei Harim explains that when the verse says 'vehinei lo hofach hanega es eino,' the tzoraas did not change its appearance, a double meaning is implied. The affliction didn't change because the ayin, (eye)-the person's negative outlook -did not change. Since the person failed to do teshuva for his callous view and behavior toward his fellow Jew, the tzoraas continues to attach itself to his clothes.

We explain that the word "nega" (affliction) is really the same word as "oneg" (pleasure), and is spelled with identical Hebrew letters except for one difference-the location of the ayin. In oneg, the ayin is at the very beginning of the word; in nega, the ayin is at the end.

Everything is dependent on our hofach es eino, changing the eye. If we have a "good eye," taking a positive approach to others and to life, life then becomes a pleasure and a delight. We are connected to the Divine for we see the innate goodness and Divine energy within one another. However, the metzora who continues to demonstrate mean-spiritedness remains with the nega; he has not been able to change his "eye." He is preoccupied only with himself and therefore, is appropriately afflicted.

Most of us have a bit of tzar ayin in our nature. A Jew's responsibility is to convert that trait and become a tov ayin, a person with a benevolent eye.

In Biblical times, only when the metzora succeeded in uprooting his negativism toward others did the affliction disappear. Today, we do not have that powerful incentive to spur us to change. Yet it is still incumbent on us to try to improve our character. When we have "a good eye," we are happy with our lot and judge others charitably. We walk with a spring in our step and uplifted spirit. We are at peace.

If we harbor feelings of being shortchanged and look at others begrudgingly, however, then we are truly afflicted. Although highlighting others' shortcomings may be temporarily gratifying, keeping a jaundiced eye will prove toxic in the end-to ourselves.