



Ohr Yerushalayim News

ה' אייר תשפ"ה - מצורע - תזריע - 3rd May 2025 - Volume 17 - Issue 37

News This Week

מזל טוב

Mazel Tov to Noach and Shoshi Fletcher on Ari's engagement to Leah Flax (London)

Mazel Tov to David and Eunice wolfson on the engagement of their granddaughter Tsippy Moller (Edgware) to Matthew Lichtig (Melbourne)

Chaim Aruchim

The Sheloshim for Tony Levinson ע"ה takes place on Monday 5th May.

There will be a Siyum and Lechaim following the 8.10 Shacharis

We wish Chaim Aruchim to the following who have Yahrzeits this week:

Mon, 7th Iyyar - Elana Shapiro for her father

Thurs, 10th Iyyar - Jonny Berkovitz for his father

Don't Make False Comparisons

Rabbi J Rubinstein

The Chafetz Chaim used to say; some people Davven and learn, and although they don't do it properly, they console themselves by saying, "There are many people, who do far less than I do" The Chafetz Chaim commented, they often are ignoring the fact that they have been better educated than the other people. In terms of knowledge and education, they are rich and the others are poor.

He connected it to the Verses in this week's Parshah where we are told, a poor person who had recovered from Leprosy could bring offerings of one sheep and two birds instead of offerings of three sheep which a wealthier person had to bring; and with this, the poor man had fulfilled his duty. However, the Mishna tells us (Negaim, 14:13), a wealthy person who brought the poor man's offering was not considered to have fulfilled his duty. If a person is wealthy in any area, be it in knowledge talents or any particular abilities, he must make a greater contribution using his "wealth", than the person who is "Poorer" in that respect.

A classic example, is the story of נבות היזרעאלי (Novos from the area of Yezreel). The king of the northern kingdom of Israel who was called אחאב (Achoh), had a summer palace in the area of Yezreel. Nearby there was a vineyard owned by נבות. The king took a liking to the vineyard and asked נבות to sell it to him. נבות refused, and אחאב was extremely upset about it. His wife איזבל (Jezebel) said she would take care of the matter. She concocted a whole story that the people of the area had to engage in a day of fasting, and anybody who broke the fast would receive the death penalty. Then she hired two witnesses to testify that they had seen נבות eating on the fastday. נבות was put to death and איזבל turned to her husband and said, the vineyard is now available for you to take. The whole appalling episode is described in Kings 1 Chapter 21. We are also told there, of the awful punishments which were brought on אחאב and איזבל. But there is still another side to the story; why did נבות deserve that such a thing should happen to him? The Midrash (Yalkut Shimoni on Nach Par. 221) tells us, נבות was blessed with a beautiful voice. He used to go up to Yerushalayim on the three pilgrimage Festivals, and the people used to gather to hear him serve Hashem with his wonderful voice. On one occasion he decided not to go. That, says the Medrash, is the reason he became vulnerable to the plotting of איזבל. As long as he went up to Yerushalayim to serve Hashem, he was protected by the verse, which says about people who went up to Yerushalayim, ולא יחמוד איש את ארצו בעלותך לראות פני ה' אלקיך "And no man shall desire your land when you go up to be seen before Hashem your G-d". But as soon as he failed to go, he was bereft of that protection.

That Paragraph of the Medrash, begins with the quotation from מטלי (Proverbs, 3:9), כבוד את ה' מונוך "Honour Hashem with your wealth"

and comments, this means whichever kind of wealth Hashem gives you. For example, if you have a good singing voice, use it for leading the congregation in prayer. In conclusion, whenever a person has a special talent, ability, or knowledge, -his particular wealth; that gives him a responsibility to make a unique contribution.

Hoping For Tzaraas

Rabbi Aron Tendler (Torah.org)

Was Tzaraas a good thing or a bad thing? Was it a punishment or could it have been a reward? For the most part we view Tzaraas as a punishment. Granted, the Talmud states that Tzaraas on a building could have been a good thing. The Talmud relates that the Canaanite population, fearful of the Jewish invasion, hid their wealth in the walls and foundations of their homes. By infecting the walls the building would be demolished and the treasure discovered. However, for the most part, Tzaraas was a form of punishment.

If we consider the amount of attention and detail given by the Torah to this "affliction," we have to wonder why? Where the Jews of those earlier generations so bad that Tzaraas was a constant in the norms of Jewish life? Assuming that Tzaraas was a punishment for speaking Lashon Harah – slander, it would seem from this week's Parsha that they were speaking a lot of Lashon Harah! By contrast, the complex laws of how to properly slaughter an animal are contained in a single Pasuk! (Divarim 12:22) Why does the Torah spend so much time on this topic? Let us first take notice of the placement of these laws in Sefer Vayikra. Vayikra and Tzav focused on the basic laws of Korbanos – offerings. It makes sense that the first topic addressed in the book called Toras Kohanim – the way of the Kohanim, should be the "how to" of Korbanos. Shimini dealt with the inauguration of Aharon and his sons into the priesthood and the dedication of the Mishkan – Tabernacle. That too makes sense. After establishing how to communicate with G-d the Torah moved to put it into affect. The Mishkan was built, the Kohanim were chosen and trained, and the Mizbeach was burning to get started.

All of a sudden the Torah interjected the laws of Tzaraas. What it was, how it was diagnosed, its various forms and occasions, and the place of the Kohain in diagnosing the disease and prescribing the treatment protocol. With everything in place to properly communicate with G-d, the laws, the Kohanim, and the Mishkan, why did the Torah focus on Tzaraas? And why in such detail?

What should the Torah have presented instead? We are told that the Kohanim were the designated teachers of the nation. They were the preeminent role models of the integration of G-d into daily living. It was a special mitzvah to appoint worthy Kohanim to the august body of the Sanhedrin. They were both the administrators of the Temple as well as the protectors of G-d's word. It was into their care that G-d had

Davening Times

Mincha & Kabbolas Shabbos	7.30pm
Candle Lighting	7.42pm-7.55pm
Shacharis	7.25am / 9.15am
סוף זמן ק"ש	9.18am
Ovos uBonim	5.00pm
Mincha	6.00pm / 8.37pm
Motzei Shabbos	9.42pm
Sun	7.15am / 8.20am / 9.30am
Mon Bank Holiday	7.10am / 8.10am / 9.30am
Thurs	6.45am / 7.10am / 8.00am
Tues / Wed / Fri	6.45am / 7.20am / 8.00am
Mincha & Maariv	7.40pm
Late Maariv	10.00pm

entrusted the holiest of all objects, the Luchos. It would have made perfect sense to go from the inauguration and dedication in Parshas Shimini to the laws of Torah study and chinuch – education.

Maybe the Torah should have turned our attention to the vast body of social laws recorded elsewhere in the Torah. The lessons of Vayikra were never intended to be purely ceremonial and devotional. Their real value was in the lessons to be learned and applied outside of the purified environment of the Mishkan and Temple. They were practical directions in how to integrate G-d into the personal and public arenas of life. Why not point our attention in that direction rather than to the limited application of Tzaraas?

I would like to suggest that the Torah spent the most time and detail on those occasions where G-d's presence is most manifest. Being that G-d's presence was most manifest in the Bais Hamikdash and Mishkan; therefore, the laws concerning Kohanim, Korbanos, purity and impurity and the workings of the Bais Hamikdash must be presented in great detail. They are by far the most extensive of all sets of laws presented in the Torah. Social laws, such as Tzedaka, marriage, or education are by comparison far less extensive. Please keep in mind that I refer to the presentation of laws as they are recorded in the Torah itself. I am not comparing the extensiveness of any of the laws elaborated upon in the Talmud.

Therefore, the extensive treatment of Tzaraas as presented in Tazria and Metzora must mean that the laws of Tzaraas were a special occasion of G-d's manifestation.

During the 40 years in the desert, the Bnai Yisroel were subject to an intense revelation of G-d's constant power and control. They were subject to the immediacy of G-d's judgment and its attendant reward and punishment. At Kriyas Yam Suf, the Egyptians were punished and the Jews were saved. In their first encounter with Amalek, the Jews were miraculously victorious while Amalek was defeated. When the various defections and rebellions took place in the desert, G-d's wrath was swift and direct. At the same time, G-d sustained the Jews with water from rocks, food from heaven, a glorious cloud cover to protect them from the elements, and a pillar of fire to light the way. In many ways, this proved to be the nation's greatest challenge. Would they be able to live under such intense divine scrutiny? Would they display the strength and courage of being a nation of free willed humans created in the image of G-d? (Meaning, wherever they looked they would see G-d!)

One of the examples of G-d's intense, manifest presence in the desert was the daily Maana. Every day G-d gave each person and family the exact amount of food needed for that day. On Friday, G-d gave two times that amount because Maana deliveries were suspended on Shabbos. We are told that a person's own level of sanctity and righteousness determined the proximity of the Maana to his or her home. The more righteous the person the closer the Maana would fall, the less righteous the person the further they would have to go to collect their daily ration of Maana.

Consider the social ramifications of this system. It meant that every day every person was publicly judged. One day it was close and everyone whispered about your righteousness. The next day it was further away and you can imagine the Lashon Harah!

The manifestation of G-d in the giving of Maana was far more invasive than the other public displays of power. Compare it to the cloud cover and the water. Regardless of a person's righteousness, or lack thereof, the clouds protected one and all. The same was true for the water. To the best of my knowledge I do not remember the Medresh ever describing hot and cold indoor plumbing for the righteous and outdoor cold showers for the less righteous! However, the proximity of the Maana was personal and private, yet publicly revealed. It was among the clearest expression of G-d's overt involvement in the private lives of the nation.

Tzaraas was an affliction that was unique to Eretz Yisroel. We are told that if a similar condition would occur outside of Eretz Yisroel it would be referred to a doctor, not the local Kohain. Only in Eretz Yisroel, the holiest country on earth, the country where G-d's presence is felt "from the beginning of the year to its end," did the laws of Tzaraas apply.

Tzaraas was intended to bring the individual and the nation back to G-d. It was intended to motivate Teshuva. According to the Gemara, Tzaraas was a punishment for Lashon Harah. Slander is an anti-social and destructive act. It insidiously harms its victim as well as all those involved in the sharing of the slander. However, the aim of all punishments is to rehabilitate. It is not to exact vengeance. Therefore, if it was possible for the same aim to be accomplished without the trauma and public shame

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מחנה קדושה
אור ירושלים

Ohr Yerushalayim invites all
boys and their fathers/grandfathers
to join us for the Summer season of
אבות ובנים
starting this Shabbos תוריע מצורת

Treats

5-6pm followed
by Mincha

Weekly OJ raffle
to win vouchers to
Glida

אבות ובנים

(think maana) Tzaraas was not necessary.

We know that the Kohanim would not diagnose Tzaraas during the time of Aliya L'regel – Pesach, Shevuoth, and Succos. The diagnosis would wait until after the Yom Tov.

With Pesach a recent reality it behooves us to imagine what we missed out on because Mashiach hasn't yet arrived. The power of the crowd is well documented. Large multitudes of people gathering for any purpose, good or bad, has a primal influence that moves individuals to do great good or unfortunately great evil. The hundreds of thousands, if not millions of Bnai Yisroel who traveled to Yerushalayim to be Oleh Regel cannot be described. The power of the moment cannot be calculated. It was the greatest public display of devotion to G-d and His Torah imaginable. It was the greatest Kiddush Hashem.

What affect did such a scene have on a sinner waiting to be declared a Metzora? Most of us can recall the power of the most recent world wide Siyum Hashas or Birkas Kohanim. Multitudes of Jews gathering for the glory of G-d and His Torah are occasions that propel us to greater heights of commitment and devotion. They challenge our assumed understanding of power and purpose and redirect, if only for the moment, our minds and hearts. That was the experience of Aliya L'regel that enveloped and embraced the potential Metzora.

The Kohanim would not diagnose Tzaraas during the Yomim Tovim because they hoped that the experience of the holiday would motivate the sinner, especially the slanderer, to repent and avoid being declared a Metzora.

Tzaraas was a public display of G-d's presence. When the Jews merited such an overt display of G-d's displeasure, Tzaraas applied. When the Jews became distant from G-d and were exiled from their land, Tzaraas ended. Therefore, in this way Tzaraas was more positive than negative. G-d's presence is manifest in how He rewards and equally manifest in how He punishes. The key is to recognize G-d's power in all its manifestations.

The daily events here and in Israel should be constant reminders that this truly is G-d's world. He suffers our presence and rewards or punishes accordingly. We just borrow time for the chance at glimpsing the Creator.

As funny as it sounds, may we once again be worthy of G-d's manifest presence, even if it means Tzaraas.