



The Greater Washington Community Kollel

SHABBOS DELIGHTS

TORAH MINUTE

IN MEMORY OF RABBI KALMAN WINTER ZT" L

The Torah continues to delineate the manifestations and procedures of the supernatural "disease" of Tzaraas. Not limited to appearing on a person's body, the Tzaraas could appear on homes and clothing. Depending on the situation, the Tzaraas could necessitate their destruction.

Rashi, based on a Medrash, explains that the Tzaraas and subsequent demolition of the home was a Divine gift. The Canaanites, perceiving the Jewish nation's imminent conquest of the Land of Israel, hid their treasures in the walls of their houses in order to conceal them from the eventual victors. G-d, in His love for His people, afflicted the houses with Tzaraas, ensuring that the valuables would be revealed upon their demolition. This explanation, however, seems to contradict the Talmud (Yoma 11b) that attributes the affliction visited upon the house to the selfish behavior of the owner. The owner had demonstrated an unwillingness to share his wealth and good fortune with others. He was therefore punished by his possessions contracting Tzaraas, thus reminding him of the true source of his blessing, and his obligation to help and support the less fortunate.

How could we resolve this contradiction? Was the Tzaraas a blessing or a punishment?

The author of the Moshav Zekeinim answers as follows: True, the Tzaraas came to punish the owner for his self-centered conduct. G-d, however, is demonstrating through the found treasures that His punishments are not rooted in hatred or retribution, but out of a desire to foster a close and loving relationship. The punishments are intended to inspire contemplation of one's behavior, leading him to reflect on his selfishness and to make amends to man and G-d. Through this process, he will once again attain G-d's grace and intimacy - the ultimate treasure.

In our lives, many of us encounter pain and suffering. We on this earth cannot know the reason and cause for this sorrow. We can be certain, however, that all that transpires emanates from G-d's deepest love for us.

Have a wonderful Shabbos!

Rabbi Menachem Winter

TABLE TALK

POINT TO PONDER

For the person being purified there shall be taken two live, clean birds... (14:4)

Rebbi Yehoshua ben Levi said, "Why does the metzora bring two birds? Since he spoke constantly, as a bird that is constantly chirping... (Eiruchin 16b)"

The metzora's sin was gossip, not endless talking. If one only speaks permissible matters there is no prohibition to be constantly speaking. So why does the metzora bring a bird to hint at constant chirping?

PARSHA RIDDLE

When did Tzaraas come as reward instead of punishment?

Please see next week's issue for the answer.

Last issue's riddle:

How does the month of Nisan affect our celebration of Purim?

Answer: Since Nisan must be in the spring, Purim gets pushed a month later, in order to delay Nisan until spring.

TIMELESS WISDOM

All the days that the affliction is upon him, he shall remain contaminated, he is contaminated. He shall dwell in isolation, his dwelling shall be outside of the camp (13:46).

Why is a metzora punished with being evicted from society and having to dwell in isolation? He spoke slander that caused husbands to separate from their wives and friends to separate from each other. It is therefore befitting that he be separated from others (Eiruchin 16b).

Just as the metzora revealed demeaning matters about others, he must reveal his status to all and proclaim, "I am contaminated" (13:45). In addition, tzaraas is white like snow, which symbolizes that he embarrassed his fellow man through his gossip and made him turn white. The rulings of the status of a metzora are dependant on the utterances of the kohen because he sinned through his utterances (Chofetz Chaim Shemiras Haloshon 2:16).

Hashem punishes in a manner that aligns the punishment with the sin that was committed (Sanhedrin 4a).

All the more so when Hashem rewards people He rewards them in a manner that aligns with a good deed they did.

Rav Avrohom Pam zt"l related the following incident: "In 1976, I was away from home. Suddenly I developed a very high fever, and I felt as if my end was drawing near. I called out to my wife, who went knocking on neighboring doors, to see if anyone had anything for me. She returned with a lemon. She instructed me to bite into the lemon and suck out the juice. With my last bit of strength I bit into the lemon and quickly devoured it. The juices in the lemon were enough to hydrate me and I recovered."

Rav Pam continued, "I was trying to think about this miracle and I remembered a strikingly similar story that took place twenty years earlier. I had gone to visit a relative who was in the hospital. I brought along some oranges to help heal him. The relative refused to take the orange, because he was too weak. I brought it to his mouth, and he quickly devoured it. At that point he regained some strength and began his path to a full recovery. Now I know why Hashem made available this lemon in the strange city. He was repaying me for the kindness I had done. From feeding an ill person an orange I was rewarded, when I was deathly ill, with a lemon."

KIDS KORNER

WHO AM I?

#1 WHO AM I ?

1. I could make you homeless.
2. I could destroy your house.
3. I could shave you.
4. I could ruin your clothes.

#2 WHO AM I ?

1. I am for the ear.
2. I am for the toe.
3. I am for the thumb.
4. I was bloody and oily.

LAST ISSUE'S ANSWERS

#1 Bris Mila (I am mentioned at the Seder; I take precedence over Shabbos; I was first for 99; I was also for 13.)

#2 The month of Nisan (I am the first and also the seventh; this year I am the eighth; I am for redemption.)

CONGRATULATIONS TO:

Yisroel Yaakov Walter

To see the complete list of those who answered correctly, visit the Kollel website.

Please see next week's issue for the answers to this week's questions.

All children 13 and under who answer a "Who Am I?" correctly will be entered into a raffle to

win a super prize

Please visit www.gwckollel.org to submit your answers.

The next raffle will be May 27th!

Answer as many as you can because each correct answer will entitle you to another raffle ticket and increase your chance of winning!

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See the Kollel website for more details.