



The Greater Washington Community Kollel

SHABBOS DELIGHTS

TORAH MINUTE

IN MEMORY OF RABBI KALMAN WINTER ZT" L

This shall be the law of the metzora on the day of his purification: he shall be brought to the priest (14:2).

A metzora, someone afflicted with a leprosy-like spiritual malady, was sent out from the Jewish camp upon confirmation by a Kohein. The afflicted resided there in isolation to contemplate the behavior that led to his ailment. Once the Kohein confirmed that the tzara'as had subsided, an elaborate purification process was undertaken with special rites and offerings. Through the procedures, the metzora's purification would be complete and he would rejoin the community once again, as a full-fledged member.

The commentators note that the Torah introduces the commencement of the purification process with the description: "*he shall be brought to the Kohein*" (14:2). Why does the verse employ language that conveys an attitude of reluctance on behalf of the metzora? It is likely that the metzora would be eager to undertake the process that gains his re-admittance to the community.

The Ibn Ezra answers that, contrite as the metzora had been during the presence of the tzara'as, once the ailment recedes, and he is given a clean bill of health, he can become disinterested in carrying out the remaining obligations.

This powerful insight has great application to our lives. It is easy for us to be humble in our failures and misfortune; but how about in our success and triumph? It is common for us to be grateful during our illness and infirmities for the health we once had; but are we appreciative while we are actually experiencing the blessing of good health? Are we properly thankful for our loved ones so long we are surrounded by their tenderness and warmth, or do we fall prey to taking them for granted?

Fickleness of spirit is a prevalent human condition. We can, however, rise above it. With a little thought and contemplation, we can be humble and grateful for God's blessing in the good times, as well as gracious and introspective in the challenging times.

***Have a wonderful Shabbos,
Rabbi Menachem Winter***

TABLE TALK

POINTS TO PONDER

K'nega (Something like an affliction) has appeared to me in the house... (14:35)

A man or woman in whom there will be nega (an affliction)... (Tazria 13:29)

If there will be tzara'as nega (affliction) on a garment... (Tazria 13:47)

Why does the Torah use the word "like a" in reference to the tzara'as of the house?

PARSHA RIDDLE

What do the Seder and the house with tzara'as have in common?

Please see next week's issue for the answer.

Last week's riddle:

What do Rosh Chodesh Nisan and Rosh Chodesh Tishrei have in common?

Answer: They are both Rosh Hashanas.

HATORAH V'HAMITZVAH

HALACHA INSIGHTS FROM THE PARSHA

A central theme of the laws of *Tzara'as*, appearing repeatedly throughout the *parashiyos* of *Tazria* and *Metzora*, is the crucial role of the *kohein's* diagnosis. The *halachic* status of the afflicted individual (or building or garment) hinges entirely upon the *kohein's* pronouncements: he becomes *tamei* (ritually impure) when the *kohein* declares him *tamei*, and *tahor* (ritually pure) when the *kohein* declares him *tahor*.

The *Mishnah* (*Negaim* 2:5) declares that a person may rule on anyone's *nega* (affliction) except his own. The *mishnah* continues with two more parallel rules: a person may annul anyone's vow (via the procedure of *hataras nedarim*) except his own, and a person may examine any first-born animal (i.e., to ascertain that it has a defect that neutralizes its *kedushah* [status of holiness] and allows it to be treated less restrictively) except his own. This *mishnah* is usually understood to imply that only in these three cases (which are exceptional for reasons that are not entirely clear) is one barred from ruling for himself, but one may in general issue a *halachic* ruling even on a matter in which he is directly interested, financially or otherwise (*Tosafos Nidah* 20b s.v. *kol yoma*, *Shut. Rivash* #406, *Shut. Re'em* #70, but see *Rash Negaim ibid.* and *Meiri Nidah ibid.*). This is in stark contradistinction to the judicial context, where we disqualify judges and witnesses who stand to gain from their participation in the case "even in a remote and amazing way" (*Rambam Edus* 16:4). The reason for this distinction between the ritual and judicial contexts is also not entirely clear (see *Emunah U'Bitachon* 3:30). It should be noted, however, that in general, the *halachah* holds those in positions of public trust to judicial standards (*Pilpula Charifta Sanhedrin* 3:17 [*shin*], *Aruch Ha'Shulchan Choshen Mishpat* 9:1).

PRESENTED BY

RABBI YITZHAK GROSSMAN, ROSH CHABURAH

KIDS KORNER

WHO AM I?

#1 WHO AM I?

1. I am big, not really.
2. I precede the spring holiday.
3. Say "Telling".
4. Sheepish celebration

#2 WHO AM I?

1. I am a mitzvah of Pesach.
2. I can cause tzara'as.
3. I am the namesake of the Yom Tov.
4. I do not mean to jump over.

Last Week's Answers:

#1 Tzara'as (I cause a treasure hunt; visit the barber; wash your clothes; I lock you up.)

#2 Giving Birth (I cause 7 and 33; I cause 14 and 66; I require a Korban; Mazal Tov!)

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

Win a super prize

Mazal Tov to

Avraham Graham, newest winner of a pair of portable camping lantern flashlights! Stay tuned for details on the next raffle date and prize!

Congratulations to Shaya, Sara, & Rivky Scher and others for answering last week's questions correctly!

Visit gwckollel.org to submit your answers.

Answer as many as you can - each correct answer will entitle you to another raffle ticket and increase your chances of winning.

KOLLEL BULLETIN BOARD

THE KOLLEL INTERSESSION BEGINS FRIDAY, APRIL 15TH.

ALL PROGRAMMING RESUMES ON SUNDAY, MAY 8TH.

WE LOOK FORWARD TO SEEING YOU
FOR THE SUMMER SEMESTER!