Points to Ponder

Tazria/Metzora 5781

**אִשָּׁה֙ כִּ֣י תַזְרִ֔יעַ וְיָֽלְדָ֖ה זָכָ֑ר When a woman produces seed and gives birth to a male (12:2)** - While in regard to the issue of the birth of a boy, we mention that she produces seed, we do not do the same when we mention the birth of a girl. Why the difference? **Rav Dovid Feinstein ztl.** explained that the son remains associated with his parents’ family forever. His name and status will always be connected to the family tree he comes from (hence he is a seed). The daughter passes into the family of her husband and thus the title of the woman’s seed is connected to her son -- not her daughter.

**כֻּלּ֛וֹ הָפַ֥ךְ לָבָ֖ן טָה֥וֹר הֽוּא It all turned white, it is Tahor (13:13)** - Usually Tumas tzoraas is indicated (on the body) with a white color. Why the, if EVERYTHING turns white, it is Tahor? **Rav Pinkus ztl.** explains that like with the situation when setting siege on a city where we are obligated to leave one side open so that the people can retreat, and if we do not Hashem will be upset with us and side with the helpless, the Metzorah who is totally Tamai also has no recourse and we allow him to be Tahor since Hashem is watching out for him too.

**וּבְי֨וֹם הֵֽרָא֥וֹת בּ֛וֹ בָּשָׂ֥ר חַ֖י יִטְמָֽא On the day healthy flesh appears it shall be Tamai (13:14)** - Rashi cites the Mishna that explains that for certain days -- Yamim Tovim or a Chosson’s Sheva Berachos, the Kohein does not look at potential Negaim. **Rav Yaakov Bender Shlita** highlighted the incredible sensitivity expressed by the Torah here -- the right of every Jew to enjoy a Sheva Berachos or a special Yom Tov highlighted in the absence of taking away his simcha. The Baal Lashon HaRa took that away from someone else but we do not want to take that sensitivity away from him.

**בְּגָדָ֞יו יִֽהְי֤וּ פְרֻמִים֙ וְרֹאשׁוֹ֙ יִֽהְיֶ֣ה פָר֔וּעַ וְעַל־שָׂפָ֖ם יַעְטֶ֑ה His clothes shall be torn and his head covered and hair grown long (13:45) - Rav Schachter Shlita** would often note that the style of the Metzorah is that of a person who is in mourning for himself while still alive. It is the same as the one who is in Cherem who also acts inappropriately and therefore also observes Aveilus as a dead man walking. Today, Rav Schachter notes that it is no Mitzvah to declare a Metzorah if there is no way to reverse his status. Simply putting the pressure with no way out is not likely to bring the people closer to Hashem, it is more likely to take them away.

**זֹ֤את תִּֽהְיֶה֙ תּוֹרַ֣ת הַמְּצֹרָ֔ע  This will be the Torah of the Metzorah (14:2) - The Rambam** (Hil. Tumas Tzoraas 16:10) notes that Tzoraas does not apply to the non-Jews. Why? **Rav Kook** ztl. explained that there are two types of speech. The mundane which is the hallmark of the speech of the non-Jew which has no room for elevation and holiness and the holy, which is our language which has the potential for Kedusha. When opportunities for Kedusha are wasted, we are left bereft and Tumah sets in. Hence, Tzoraas is a quality for Jewish speech only.

**וְאֵזֹֽב And an Eizov (14:4)** - According to Rashi the use of the Eizov is to remind us of humility. **Rabbi Dr. Abraham J. Twerski ztl** noted that the person who speaks Lashon HaRa usually suffers from vanity -- a lack of humility. The use of the Eizov instead of a Schmooze on Lashon Hara is because humility is not something that can be instructed, it must come from inside There are many opportunities that may stimulate the insight but the ultimate responsibility to look inward is ours and we will find it if we look.

**כְּנֶ֕גַע Something like a Nega appeared in my house (14:35)** - Who cares if the ba’al habayis says “nega” or: “kanega? **Rav Aryeh Leibowitz Shlita** suggested that humility is inherent in the act of questioning. Speaking with a sense of overconfidence is inappropriate and goes against the very act he’s doing. We’ve all had the experience where we ask questions and got answers that seemingly made no sense, but then we figured out we just had it all wrong. He added that **Rav Mordechai Willig Shlita** has pointed out on many occasions that “I don’t teach halacha; I teach ratzon Hashem. When we approach a Shailah we need the humility to ask to figure out that Ratzon.

**Haftara**

**וּמְצָאָ֣נוּ עָו֑וֹן And we will be found to be sinful (Melachim II:7:9)** - What was the big sin? **Rashi** in Divrei HaYamim(I:21:8) explains that the use of the extra vavs shows us that not reporting things to the king is considered a MAJOR sin. The **Mussar HaNeviim** adds that when we consider that the Metzoraim in this story are Geichazi and his sons, who got Tzoraas because of their stinginess, Preetzus and was interested in money but sinning against Hashem’s nation is considered an even MORE egregious sin than those. Geichazi would not cross THAT line.