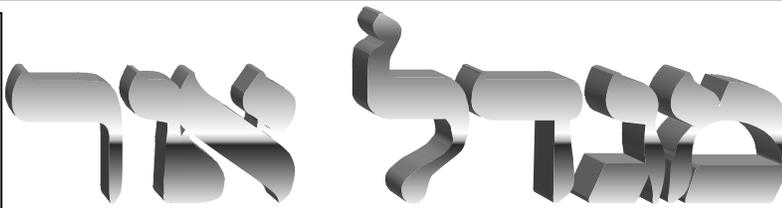


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Zmanim for שבת

Wesley Hills, NY

- 7:06 - הדלקת נרות
- 7:24 - שקיעה
- 9:04 - זק"ש מ"א
- 9:46 - זק"ש גר"א
- 10:50 - סוף זמן תפילה
- 7:26 - שקיעה
- 8:08* - צאת הכוכבים
- 8:38 - צאת 72

* Based on Emergence of 3 Stars
Times Courtesy of MyZmanim.com

Did You Know?

One of the types of tzara'as that can occur is a growth on the wall of a home. When one sees it, he is to go to the Kohain and say, "I have seen something that looks like an affliction of tzara'as on my house."

He does not say, "I have seen an affliction of tzara'as on my house." It is not because were he to say so it would be impure. That power is reserved for the Kohain and it is by his mouth that a house is declared pure or not.

Rather, one does not definitively say it was an affliction for it may not be so and he would thereby be saying an untruth.

Even if he were wise and an expert in the laws of tzara'as, the Kohain may render it pure by mistake and it will be so, so he might unwittingly say something false.

Rashi discusses that when the Jews came into the Land of Israel, the frightened Canaanites hid treasure in their walls. Sometimes, when Jews' homes were afflicted with tzara'as, it was so they would be forced to tear down the wall and in doing so find the treasure. In such a case, the tzara'as was not an affliction but a blessing.

Similarly, in life, we face many challenges and hardships, but we can never definitively say "this is an affliction" for it may very well be G-d's way of providing us a blessing in a way we would never imagine.

Thought of the week:

Perspective matters. What you see depends not only on what you're looking at, but on how you look at it.

...וראה הכהן והנה נרפא נגע הצרעת מן הצרוע. וצוה הכהן ולקח למטהר... (ויקרא יד:ג-ד)

"...the Kohain shall look, and behold, the tzara'as has been healed from the Metzora. The Kohain shall command and for the person being purified shall be brought..." (Leviticus 14:3-4)

The laws of tzara'as are so numerous, and perhaps, because the sins that bring it about are so commonplace, that the topic spans two parshiyos in the Torah. At the beginning of Parshas Metzora, which continues the laws from Parshas Tazria, we find a discussion of the purification process. It begins with the Kohain going out to look at the afflicted person who has been quarantined and isolated.

The Torah says that the affliction has been healed from the "Metzora," one who had received the spiritual punishment of tzara'as. The very next verse no longer calls him a Metzora but refers to him as the "person being purified," a much more respectable title.

Not only is the change of terms puzzling, but the Torah in many places discusses not reminding someone of their ignoble past. For example, the Mishna in Kesubos refers to the "convert" who converts, not to the "Gentile" who converts, and the commentaries explain that once she has converted, it is insensitive to refer to her in her previous state even when simply discussing a halachic matter and not referring to a specific person.

Here, when it is clear that the person has repented from his evil ways as evidenced by the fact that the lesion has healed, why would the Torah remind him of his previous failure? Should it not call him, "the person being purified" as soon as the tzara'as has gone away?

The answer is that there is a big difference between the two cases. When a person is born a Gentile, he has done nothing wrong. He is created as G-d wishes him to be and he can live a proper life according to the Torah by following the laws applicable to him. When he chooses to accept more obligations and become a Jew, we do not refer to him in his previous state for he has grown so much.

The Metzora, however, became that way through his own actions. It was his sin that contaminated his soul and brought the disease on him. He is unable to reach the level of "one who is becoming purified," until he recognizes where he went wrong and corrects it. As the Rambam writes in Hilchos Teshuva, admission of the sin is one of the integral steps to repentance. In that case, referring to him as a Metzora even once his skin has healed is not insensitive, but on the contrary, it shows that he has recognized his failures and understood what must be changed. That recognition is part and parcel of the purification process and therefore he must be referred to as such.

Immediately thereafter, however, and when others are concerned, he is viewed as the one who wishes to become holy. He is upwardly mobile and growing closer to HaShem. This is how the rest of the world must look at him for it is how G-d, Himself, now looks at the person.

R' Chaim Friedman z"l was a master of Bitachon, faith that G-d has a plan for whatever comes our way. But he didn't get that way overnight; it took a lot of hard work.

When he was younger, and newly married, he found himself one Thursday night with just ten dollars to his name and no way of buying what he needed for Shabbos. He began to get despondent and lament the difficulty of his situation.

Then he stopped himself. "Depression isn't going to help me," he said to himself. "This is the Yetzer Hara (evil inclination) who is trying to stop me from learning Torah by making me upset."

With that, he took the ten dollars and went to a local deli. He bought two corned beef sandwiches and brought them home. "I don't know what will be with Shabbos," he told his wife, "that's up to HaShem. But tonight, we're eating good sandwiches."

The next day, he received a \$100 check in the mail and they bought what they needed. He had recognized that this was an opportunity to grow from his experiences, and he took it.