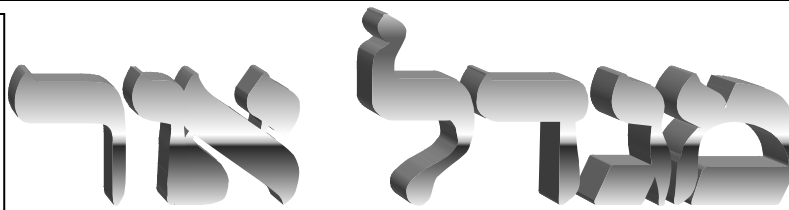


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This issue sponsored in honor of the marriage of **Ben and Bayla Marks** of Silver Spring/Baltimore, MD.
May you build a Bayis Ne'eman B'Yisrael and share many happy, healthy years together.

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A publication dedicated to Harbotzas Torah

Zmanim for שבת

Wesley Hills, NY

- 6:59 - הדלקת נרות
- 7:17 - שקיעה
- 9:11 - זק"ש מ"א
- 9:53 - זק"ש גר"א
- 10:55 - סוף זמן תפילה
- 7:18 - שקיעה
- 8:00* - צאת הכוכבים
- 8:31 - צאת 72

מולד ניסן - Monday 3:54:09 AM

Rosh Chodesh is Tuesday

* Based on Emergence of 3 Stars

Times Courtesy of MyZmanim.com and EzrasTorah.org

Did You Know?

This week we read Parshas HaChodesh, when HaShem showed Moshe and Aharon the form of the new moon, and explained how to sanctify the new month.

It goes on to discuss that Nissan should be the first month of our year, and that on the fourteenth day of that first month we are to celebrate Pesach.

This is the first Mitzva of the Jewish People, to be in control of time, and designate it according to our schedules, not the other way around. It is only after this that we are commanded to observe Pesach, the symbol and celebration of Freedom.

If we put these ideas together, we understand that time is not supposed to rule us, forcing us into last-minute decisions and deadline-induced choices.

Rather, we must control our time, make decisions with forethought and peace of mind, and that will enable us to be free.

Just as the Jews who left Egypt were finally able to make their own decisions about what to do with their time, no longer subject to their taskmasters and Pharaoh, so are all Jews commanded to be in control of their time and choose to use it constructively and for the glory of Heaven.

That was not only our first Mitzvah, for that time, but one that we are to continually fulfill, every day of our lives.

Thought of the week:

With great power comes great responsibility.

”דבר אל בני ישראל לאמר אשה כי תזריע וילדה זכר...” (ויקרא יב:ב)

“Speak to the Children of Israel saying: “When a woman conceives and gives birth to a male...” (Leviticus 12:2)

This parsha introduces human impurity arising from a variety of sources. It begins with a woman who becomes impure through childbirth, then goes on to discuss tzara'as, a skin disease caused by sins such as lashon hara (gossip/slander), immorality, murder, pride, false oaths, robbery and selfishness.

The word for conceived used here, 'tazria,' comes from the root of seed. Rashi says this tells us that even if the form of the fetus had dissolved until it is almost liquid, the woman becomes impure. The Ramban offers the caveat that the fetus must previously have had human form or it is not considered a fetus and not impure.

The common theme in the sources of impurity is status. The ability of something to impart impurity lies in its contrasting ability to achieve holiness. The greater the holiness when pure, the more severe the impurity can be.

In this case, the fetus must have looked like a human, or it is not considered such. The metzora, who contracts tzara'as, was arrogant and felt that he was more important than others. Whether it was murder because he felt the other person was less important than he, or gossip, feeling that he was better than the other and could speak ill of him, the arrogance that leads to sin is also a signal to the source of impurity. The higher one feels, the lower he may fall if he allows himself to become haughty.

The word tazria, referencing seed, teaches us a lesson in humility. Just as a seed put into the ground is not beneficial until it has disintegrated and rotted away, a person cannot properly bear fruit until he is willing to put aside his own personal desires and be of service to others. Just as the greatness of a seed lies in its ability to produce more fruit for others, the greatness of the human lies in our ability to achieve for others.

Further, all our actions are like seeds. No action remains by itself. It has an effect for either good or bad and that result can be magnified many times more than the initial act. A smile to someone may seem like nothing to us, but it may change the course of their entire day or even life. A scowl or mean word might have the same negative effect.

We must carefully think through our deeds because the choices we make will, no matter our desire or intent, bear fruit.

A certain Rov asked the Chofetz Chaim to accompany him on a tzedaka mission. On the way, they stopped at an inn. The hostess asked if the food was all right. “Delicious,” replied the Chofetz Chaim. “Yes,” agreed the Rov, “although the soup could use a bit more salt.”

The woman excused herself and the Chofetz Chaim turned to his companion with rage. “How can you be so insensitive? Do you think the hostess cooks herself? No, she undoubtedly has a cook. And if a woman is cooking for an inn, she most likely is a widow who is working to support her family. Because of your comment, the hostess is probably yelling at this widow and you will cause a widow pain and perhaps cost her her job, thus creating hardship for her orphans! I can't believe I accompanied someone so insensitive on this trip.”

The Rov replied, “I'm sure that you are over-reacting. That is quite a far-fetched chain of events.” “Am I overly cautious?” retorted the sage, “let us see.”

They went into the kitchen and it was exactly as the Chofetz Chaim had imagined. The Rov apologized profusely and begged the innkeeper to let the cook keep her job. “The soup was fine,” he cried, “It is I who have a poor sense of taste.” The reality of the situation was that only the Chofetz Chaim realized the great effect a simple, thoughtless, comment can have.