

Haftarah Weekly

Shabbat Parshat Metzorah: M'lachim Bet 7:3 – 7:20

In order to understand this week's Haftarah we must understand a few things that happened beforehand. The Haftarah of Tazria, (that was only a couple of chapters before this in M'lachim and has not been read last week because of Shabbat Hachodesh), tells us the story of Na'aman. Na'aman was the general of the Aramean army, and he went to Elisha to ask to be healed from leprosy. He was healed using the advice of Elisha, and wanted to give Elisha a gift to thank him. Na'aman desperately wanted Elisha to accept the gift, but Elisha refused adamantly. Elisha wished him well and Na'aman left. Then Gehazi (Elisha's servant) went after Na'aman and made up a story claiming that Elisha wanted some money and two changes of clothes for guests that had just arrived. Na'aman happily agreed and gave him what he asked for. Gehazi then hid the money and clothes and went back to Elisha. Elisha knew what he had done (being a prophet), rebuked him for taking the money and clothes, and cursed him that Na'aman's leprosy should go to him and his children.

Then a bad famine strikes Shomron because of the siege of the Aramean army. The prices of products rose very high, and the famine was so bad that cannibalism was rampant with mothers eating their children. Elisha delivers the message that the next day the prices will go very low (he specifies the cost exactly.) A high officer responded to Elisha cynically: "Even if Hashem will have storehouses of food in Heaven, can this thing happen?" Elisha replies to the officer that he will see it happening but won't eat it.

Now we start our Haftarah. Chazal explain that the

four lepers in this story are Gehazi and his sons who were all cursed with leprosy. Knowing that whatever they will do they will die because of the famine, they decide to go to the Aramean camp; and if they will be allowed to stay alive by the enemy it will be good, but if not it doesn't matter as they will die anyway. So they get to the camp and to their surprise they find it empty, but all the enemies belongings and food are found abandoned in the camp. This happened because Hashem made the Aramean army hear a sound of a large army coming so they fled for their lives. They start to take the items and hide them. But they realise that what they are doing is wrong, and go to the city to pass the message to the king (through the gatekeeper as they can't enter) saying that lots of supplies are in the Aramean camp to be taken. Eventually, the king believes them and they discover the food. The prophecy turns out true as the prices dramatically drop (to the cost Elisha specified.) The Haftarah ends with the prophecy turning being completed as the officer who made fun of Elisha's prophecy was made in charge of the gate, but when many people went out to take spoils. He was trampled by the masses and died.

The obvious connection to the Sedra is the Metzora (leper). In this weeks Haftarah, we see the greatness of the lepers who went to share the information with the king, and didn't keep all of it for themselves. It was the complete opposite of their selfish display with Na'aman when receiving a gift from him. A Metzora with an act of Lashon Hara also displays selfishness when he only thinks of himself and not of the person who is being hurt. I think the message is that the way to eradicate our minor arguments is to think of the bigger picture that we are in Klal Yisrael.

Editorial Team: Adam Gaventa
Rafi Katten
Shimon Levy

Technical Editor: Jonny Fishel

Editorial Advisor: Rabbi D Rowe

Under the direction of: Rabbi D Meyer

You can pick up your copy of the Living Torah in school, online or by email.

Visit hasmonean.co.uk/livingtorah, where you can view all past issues online or sign up for the weekly email.

Email us at:
livingtorah@hasmonean.co.uk



לעלוי נשמת ר' אליהו רחמים בן מאיר דוד ע"ה ואחיו ר' עבדאללה פרג בן מאיר דוד ע"ה
No. 282 Parshas Metzora 5768 פרשת מצורע תשס"ח מס' רפב

Keeping on the Path

Perek 14 Posukim 4-5

The kohen shall command, and for the person being purified there shall be taken two live, pure birds, cedarwood, a crimson wool and hyssop. The Kohen shall command and the one bird shall be slaughtered into an earthenware vessel over living (spring) water.

Later on in posuk 7 we see:

And he shall set the live bird free upon the open field.

The above posukim describe a part of the purification process of the Metzora. The obvious question one can ask is what is the symbolism behind this procedure.

We will look into certain aspects of the procedure although all of it has a much deeper meaning.

The Metzora, by having spoken malicious talk and Loshon Horoh about others, has displayed that he wishes to live a life of freedom without restrictions. That he may speak badly about others at his will, not taking into account the possible repercussions of his actions which is why there is an Issur of doing so to start with.

As a result of this, in order for the Metzora to go through the purification process he must learn to change his ways and his basic understanding of how to live his life in order that his actions will not recur.

This is done by the process of one of the birds being killed in front of him. A bird represents freedom and life without constraints

exactly as the Metzora had previously acted. It is killed to show that this is not how one can live his life.

However, in order that the Metzora should not despair and think that his life will be oppressive and full of constraints and restrictions from the Torah we set the other bird free. This is done as a contrast that one can still be free and live a contented life within a religious framework. By living a life centred on Torah one will find that he actually really lives an even more meaningful life and is freer than previously. This is because through the restraints in the Torah we learn not to let our Taivos control our life, in turn giving us more control by using our actions-therby our own free-will.

We can also see this idea continued with the "Mayim Chayim" as a further emphasis of the message to the Metzora. There is a deeper Peshat of why call the water – "Chayim". Mayim as we often see is a symbol for Torah. One of the reasons being that, water is ever flowing just like Torah has forever more and more depth and meaning. We can explain "Mayim Chayim" to mean, "Torah is life". That by living a life through the framework Torah that is the best way to live. of

This message to the Metzora is equally important to us in our day-to-day lives. Life without any Heavenly command and rules will only satisfy us in the short term but in the long term we will be slaves to our desires and it will cause our downfall. The only solution is to realise that Torah enforcements are not meant to restrict our lives but to enhance it.

Contributed anonymously

M'lachah of the Week

Koreya – Tearing

Over a period of time, the cloth coverings of the Mishkan were prone to sustain damage from moths and similar creatures. To repair these holes it was necessary first to tear the holes wider to allow for a straight, even seam that could be concealed in the fabric.

The basic concept of Koreya may be described as the tearing of a single object into two parts, or the detaching of two objects that became combined as one.

One may tear a part food packaging, wrapping around bandages, napkins or medicines, provided that no letters or designs will be torn (Mochaik) and that no vessel is formed (Makeh B'Patish). However, toilet paper may not be cut on Shabbos – whether using the perforated edges or not. This is because it is a 'constructive' act of Koreya, since a useable sheet is produced. One must therefore prepare the paper before Shabbos.

Words of the Wise

Once R'Eliyahu Lopian was travelling around different countries that had Jewish communities, trying to raise funds for his Yeshiva. His contacts had told him of a completely secular Jew who always gave generously to Torah institutions. When he arrived at this man's house he was ushered inside and made welcome by the man's servant.

After a while R'Eliyahu was invited into the wealthy man's office. They started talking, and R'Eliyahu became more and more curious as to why this man supported Torah institutions around the world – he was obviously not religious and seemed to have no interest in Torah study.

The man smiled and related a remarkable story:

'I grew up in a religious family, and my parents decided to send their son to the Yeshiva of the Chafetz Chaim in Radin. Being a rebellious child, I resented this, and did all I could to avoid going to the Yeshiva. However, my parents were adamant.

A few weeks later I travelled to Radin to take an entrance test. I arrived at the Yeshiva and met the interviewer – one of the Yeshiva's Rabbis. This Rabbi was extremely surprised to see someone of my appearance there, as I did not look remotely like a potential student, but to his credit he agreed to interview me anyway.

I failed the test, but by that time it was quite late and I didn't want to start travelling home so late at night, so I asked the Rabbi if he minded me staying in the Yeshiva for the night.

He was obviously uncomfortable with me staying there any longer, especially with the students of the Yeshiva.

He excused himself from the room for a few minutes and returned behind the Rosh Yeshiva himself – the Chafetz Chaim. The Chafetz Chaim agreed with the Rabbi: I couldn't stay in the Yeshiva. He said 'A boy who does not stay in the Yeshiva for a year does not stay in the Yeshiva for a night.'

However, what he did next amazed me – he took me to his own house, where I was fed, allowed to take a bath, and given a comfortable bed to sleep in.

All this was remarkable – a young boy like me who was not interested in studying in his Yeshiva (or anywhere for that matter) treated like an honoured guest by the Chafetz Chaim.

The most astonishing event happened later that night. A few hours after everyone had gone to bed I heard someone pacing up and down outside the room where I was sleeping. I could hear the Chafetz Chaim's voice muttering: 'It's very cold tonight.'

Suddenly the door to my room opened and the Chafetz Chaim entered. He walked to my bed, took off his jacket and placed it onto me.

The memory of this selfless act still gives me warmth. That is why I always try to give support to Torah institutions.'

Adapted from Parsha Parables

Lashon Horo

זאת תהיה תורת המצורע

What is the **מדה כנגד מדה** (eye for an eye) with regards to someone who speaks **לשון הרע**, that he punished us with **נגעים** (plagues)?

The Gemoro in Arachin (15b) says:

"אמר ר" יוסי בן זימרא כל המספר לשון הרע נגעים באים עליו שנאמר **מלשני בסתר רעהו אותו אצמית**... אמר ר"ל מאי דכתיב **זאת תהיה תורת המצורע**? זאת תהיה תורתו של מוציא שם רע.

Rav Yossi ben Zimra says: Anyone who speaks lashon hora, plagues will come upon him as it says "One who slanders in secret about his friend, I will destroy him." Reish Lokeish says: What is meant by the words "This will be the law of the Metzora?" It means this will be the law of someone who brings about a bad name through slander.

What is the connection in the Gemoro between these two statements?

say in Chagigah (15a) that Hashem created **גן עדן** and **גיהנום** and **רשעים** and **צדיקים** and everyone has two portions, one in **גן עדן** and one in **גיהנום**. If one is meritorious, he will take his portion and his friend's portion in **גן עדן**. However, if he is not, then he will take his and his friend's portion in **גיהנום**. It is further explained in **תוספתא** and also in Rambam on Avos that one who speaks **לשון הרע** has no portion in **גן עדן**, as he receives the punishment for this transgression, and his friend takes his portion in **גן עדן**.

The Gemoro in Bava Metzia (58b) says that anyone who goes down to **גיהנום** comes up, except for three, one of them being a person who has a relationship with a married woman. Tosfos (59a) adds to this by bringing the case of Dovid HaMelech, who, after the incident with **שבע**, says to Hashem (Tehillim 35) that 'if my enemies were to tear my flesh, my blood wouldn't flow to the ground as it was drained from all the embarrassment.' Furthermore, when they were delving into difficult topics such as **נגעים** and **אהלות**,

they would say to Dovid – 'isn't the punishment for having a relationship with someone's wife the death penalty?' I would reply to them, 'his death is by strangulation, but he still has a portion in **עולם הבא**. However, someone who embarrasses his fellow in public does not!' This Gemoro with Dovid seems to say that someone who commits this particular transgression still has a portion in the world to come. However, this contradicts the earlier Gemoro which stated that someone who has a relationship with a married woman doesn't come up from **גיהנום**?

This question can be answered with the principles established earlier. Both the relationship with a married woman and embarrassing someone cause someone to lose their portion in the world to come. Dovid was saying that really he didn't deserve **עולם הבא**, however, since he was embarrassed by his friends, he would receive their portion in the world to come, and they would get his portion in **גיהנום**.

This also explains the **מדה כנגד מדה** aspect of the punishment of **נגעים** for someone who speaks **לשון הרע**. The Gemoro in Arachin (16b) asks **why מצורע** is different in that the Torah demands **ישב מחוץ** to the camp? The Gemoro answers that the reason why it adds this whole phrase is because one might have thought that one only has to separate from ones wife and not from the entire camp. The Gemoro further states that **נגעים** is also a punishment for immorality, so it comes out that one who speaks **לשון הרע** about a person who had committed a sin of immorality would receive this person's **אֵיִוֵרוֹ** – including this sin of immorality and therefore the **לשון הרע** receives **נגעים** as a punishment.

This clearly explains the connection between the two statements. **ר" יוסי** said that anyone who speaks **לשון הרע** receives **נגעים**, and **ר"ל** added that 'this will be the Torah of the one who speaks **שם רע**'. The actual **דיבור** which is punished with **נגעים**, so therefore the **מוציא מדה כנגד מדה** for the person who utters **מוציא שם רע** **נגעים** is **שם רע**.

Adapted anonymously from ים התלמוד

Gematria of the Week

The Gematria of "ורחץ במים את כל בשרו" – "And he should wash all his flesh in water" is the same as "ולא יהא בו חציצה בבשרו ושערו" – "and there shouldn't be an interruption on his flesh or hair". This teaches us that when one goes to Mikveh, one must ensure that the whole of his body – both skin and hair can be reached by the water.

(ויקרא טו:טז) - Based on Ba'al Haturim

Riddles of the Week

Why are women obligated in the mitzvah of drinking 4 cups of wine?
What is the reason behind Karpas?

Last week's riddle:

There is a famous Halochah that one should not give more than one fifth of one's money to charity.
Where is this Halochah learnt from?

Answer

It is learnt from the **posuk** **לך אעשרנו** - 'I shall repeatedly tithe it to you'. The Gemoro (Kesuvos 50a) explains that the second tithe is like the first tithe i.e. $1/10 + 1/10 + 1/5$, this is the correct way of doing it. However, if you were to take $1/10$ of what you had already taken, it would not be exact i.e. $1/10 + 1/10$ of $9/10$, would equal $19/100$ which is a little bit less than $1/5$ Therefore this is incorrect.