

English

בסייעתא דשמיא

# Zera Shimshon

Profound Divrei Torah culled from the writings of the Gaon and Mekubal Rav Shimshon Chaim ben Rav Nachman Michael Nachmani zy"z, author of Sefer Zera Shimshon on Chumash and Toldos Shimshon on Pirkei Avos, who promised that all who study his words will be blessed with an abundance of good, wealth and honor, and will merit to see children and grandchildren thriving around their table.



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## אמרות שמשון

### How Far Must a Kohen Go In Order to Tend to The Metzora

כל ימי אשר הנגע בו יטמא טמא הוא בך  
ישב מחוץ למחנה מושבו: (יג מו)

All the days that the infliction is upon him he shall remain impure; he is impure. He shall stay in isolation; his dwelling shall be outside the camp.

The Torah commands the metzora to remain in isolation outside of the camp as long as he is impure. The metzora is required to remain outside of the camp even during the course of the purification process, as the Torah clearly establishes that instead of the metzora going to the Kohen, it is the Kohen who must go out to the metzora. ויצא הכהן אל מחוץ למחנה. The Kohen shall go forth to the outside of the camp; the Kohen shall look, and behold! the tzara'as affliction has been healed from the metzora. Rashi explains, חוץ למחנה. אל מחוץ למחנה. The Kohen shall go forth to the outside of the camp: To the area outside the three camps, which is where he was sent to during the days of his impurity.

In view of this, it is hard to understand the Passuk that describes the commencement of the purification process. For the Passuk says, זאת תהיה תורת המצרע ביום טהרתו והוא אל הכהן - This shall be the law of the metzora on the day of his purification; he shall be brought to the Kohen. How is that possible?! How can the metzora be brought to the Kohen, as long as he is still prohibited from entering the camp? Moreover, it is indeed for this very reason that the Torah commanded the Kohen to 'go forth to the outside of the

camp', in order to take a look at the inflicted metzora.

During their dwelling in the desert, the Jewish People's encampment consisted of three camps. The innermost was the camp of the Shechinah, where the Mishkan dwelled. The second camp was the camp of the Leviim; this camp surrounded the inner camp and is where the Leviim dwelled. The third and outermost camp was the camp of the Israelites; where the other Tribes resided.

Once the Jewish People entered Eretz Yisrael and built the Bais Hamikdash, the three areas which corresponded to the three camps were as follows. The Bais Hamikdash and all its surrounding courtyards corresponded to the innermost 'camp of the Shechinah', the Temple Mount corresponded to the 'camp of the Leviim', and the remainder of Yerushalayim, as well as any other walled city, corresponded to the outermost 'camp of the Israelites'.

Just as while in the desert the metzora was instructed to leave the three camps, so too in Eretz Yisroel was he instructed to leave Yerushalayim as well as any other walled city; which corresponded to the dwelling camps of the desert.

Since the metzora was able to settle in any location across the great Land of Eretz Yisrael, as long as it was outside Yerushalayim and any walled city, there was a great possibility that the metzora would settle in some far outlying village, very far from the dwelling of the nearest Kohen. And because the Rambam (פ"ט טומאת צרעת ה"א) instructs the

Kohen to meet the metzora immediately, and to tend to him without any delay, therefore when the Torah commands the Kohen to 'go forth to outside of the camp' in order to



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see the metzora, it may have seemed that no matter how far, the Kohen was obligated to immediately drop all his personal and business affairs, and to set travel in order to tend to the metzora.

In view of this we can explain that when the Torah stated that the metzora 'shall be brought to the Kohen', it wasn't suggesting that the metzora should come all the way to the Kohen, but rather that the metzora should come as close as permitted to Yerushalayim or any walled city in which the Kohen resided. This was because although the kohen was indeed instructed to tend to the metzora immediately, nevertheless the Kohen was not obligated to travel far; rather the metzora must travel to the outskirts of the city, and once there the Kohen was only obligated to 'go forth just to the outskirts of the camp'.

(זרע שמשון פרשת תזריע אות ח)

**זאת תהיה תורת המצרע ביום טהרתו והובא אל הכהן  
(יד, ב):**

***This shall be the law of the metzorah...***

The Midrash (ויקרא ט"ז ב') cites this Passuk and expounds on it as follows. This shall be the law of the metzorah, thus it is written, 'Who is the man who desires life and loves days that he may see good? Guard your tongue from evil and your lips from speaking deceit'. The Medrash continues and relates an incident which teaches us the significance of this message.

An incident took place with a peddler who would make his rounds in the towns which were in the vicinity of Tzipori, and announce; "Who wishes to acquire a life-giving drug?" Whenever he would make this announcement, people would cling to him, anxious to hear more about this drug. One time when R' Yannai was sitting and studying in his reception room, he heard this peddler making his announcement. R' Yannai promptly called the peddler over and asked to purchase this drug. The peddler replied, "Neither you nor any like you have any need for that drug which I have to sell". Nevertheless, because R' Yannai persisted, the peddler came close to him, and showed him the Passuk in Tehillim, אהב ימים לראות, מי האיש החפץ חיים - 'Who is the man who desires life and loves days that he may see good?' The peddler then showed R' Yannai what is written thereafter, נצור לשונך מרע, 'Guard your tongue from evil'. This Passuk indicates that guarding one's tongue from speaking ill of others is the key to preserving one's life and to seeing good days. R' Yannai then said; Shlomo Hamelech proclaimed similarly in Mishlei (כ"א כ"ג) and said, שומר פיו ולשונו שומר מצרות נפשו, 'One who guards his mouth and tongue, guards his soul from troubles'. Subsequently, R' Yannai

said; All my life I have read this Passuk, yet I never knew how it is to be understood, until this peddler came and made known to me the importance of 'Who is the man who desires life'.

We need to understand what it was about this Passuk in Mishlei that at first R' Yannai didn't understand, and why only after hearing the words of the peddler, who seemingly did nothing other than show R' Yannai a Passuk in Tehillim, did the meaning of the Passuk in Mishlei become clear to him?



The Midrash Tanchuma brings the Passuk in Mishlei, שומר פיו ולשונו - One who guards his mouth and tongue, guards his soul from troubles, and modifies it, as if it were to say, שומר פיו ולשונו - One who guards his mouth and his tongue guards his soul from tzaraas. What R' Yannai did not understand about this Passuk before the peddler came along, was why the Passuk would say, שומר מצרעת נפשו, - he guards his soul from tzaraas, when it should have said, שומר מצרעת גופו, - he guards his body from tzaraas, for tzaraas inflicts the person's body and not the person's soul?



When the peddler announced, "Who wishes to acquire a life-giving drug?" and then went on to show R' Yannai the Passuk, מי האיש החפץ חיים - 'Who is the man who desires life and loves days that he may see good? Guard your tongue from evil', this caused R' Yannai to reflect and realize that the tzaraas that inflicts the slanderer isn't a tzaraas that merely inflicts the slanderer's body, rather it endangers the slanderer's life, too. Accordingly, the Passuk would be understood as follows; 'One who desires life' [and doesn't want to endanger it with the tzaraas that can endanger the slanderer's life], and also 'loves days that he may see good' [and doesn't want to ruin his days with the tzaraas that inflicts the slanderer's body], should 'guard his tongue from evil'.

As a result of this new understanding of the Passuk in Tehillim, R' Yannai also gained an understanding of the Passuk in Mishlei. The Passuk says, שומר פיו ולשונו שומר מצרות נפשו - One who guards his mouth and his tongue guards his soul from troubles, and while the Tanchuma does modify the Passuk to read, שומר מצרעת נפשו, - guards his soul from tzaraas, nevertheless it still wouldn't read שומר מצרעת גופו, - guards his body from tzaraas, for although, in truth, the tzaraas is only found on the slanderers body and not on his soul, nevertheless the tzaraas doesn't merely inflict his body, rather it also inflicts him in a way which is a danger to his life, and thus, the tzaraas is indeed an infliction to the slanderers soul, as well.

(זרע שמשון פרשת מצורע אות ז)

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