



Parshat Tazria

By: Rabanit
K. Sarah Cohen

PARSHA

HALACHA

STORY

Q&A

SHIURIM

JOKE

RIDDLE

QUOTES

DAVEN FOR

PARSHAT TAZRIA

There is a fascinating paradox that relates to the laws of tzora'at, the spiritual ailment, a skin discoloration that affects those who gossip. On one hand, only a Kohen can either pronounce a state of impurity or purity.

On the other hand, the afflicted man is in control of his own destiny. The Gemara tells us that if, for example, the afflicted man removes the negah, whether it is hair or skin, then he is no longer tamei. Therefore, this affliction which is purely spiritual in nature, a heavenly exhortation to repent from gossiping ways, is basically toothless. If the man wills it, he can refuse to go to the Kohen and not be declared tamei. And if he so desires, he can even remove the negah before anyone declares its potency.

Another amazing dimension is applicable after the afflicted man is declared tamei. The Torah Hakedoshah tells us "that he is sent out of the camp, where he sits in solitude" (Vayikra 13:46). His departure from the camp of Yisrael is surely not due to a contagious nature of the nega.

After all, if that were the case, he would be sent away even before the Kohen's declaration of tumah.

Why then send the man to confinement where no one will monitor his reaction to the nega on his being, a place where he could remove the nega, or adulterate its appearance? Why not have him locked in a cell under the supervision of a guard who would insure the integrity of the purification process? The answer can be explained with a story.

In the early 1900s, a simple religious Russian Jew decided that he could no longer stand the Czar's persecution. He would leave Russia to join his son who had settled in Houston, Texas, some 20 years earlier. The son, who had totally assimilated and was a successful oilman, was thrown into a panic.

"Of course, you are welcome, Pa," he cabled, "I'll arrange a visa, your tickets and fares. But you must realize that I have a wonderful reputation here as an oil man. When you arrive, you must adapt to American culture or I'll be destroyed."

Upon arrival at the train station, the old man, dressed in his long coat and up-brimmed hat, was whisked to a haberdashery, where he was fitted with the latest style fedora and a modern-cut suit.

But still, his father looked too Jewish.

"Pa it's not enough. I'll take you to the barber."

The first thing that came off was the beard.

REFUAH SHLEIMAH
&
HATZLACHAH

Yonah bat Henya
 Michael ben Yonah
 Ro'ee ben Rachel
 May bat Ilana
 Ben Tzvi ben Ilana
 Gidon ben Esther
 Esther bat Mazal
 Yosef ben Devorah
 Yaffa bat Rivka
 Baruch Chai ben Zoya
 Rivkah bat Malkah
 Nissan ben Liza
 Gavriel ben Toviyo
 David ben Liza
 Baila Chava
 bat
 Sorka
 Freida Leah
 bat
 Pesha Rachel
 Yehoshuah Mordechai
 ben
 Leah Gita
 Chaim Yehudah
 ben
 Aidel
 Efrat
 bat
 Shifra

The son looked on and said, "It's not enough Pa. The pe'ot, they'll have to go."

The barber cut off the right pe'ah. While the son looked on proudly, his pa was becoming a real American. Then the second. And the old man began to weep.

"Why are you crying, Papa?" the son asked incredulously.

The father, resigned to his fate and simply answered. "I am crying because we lost the Alamo!"

Rabbi Yaakov Kamenetzky (a"h), in his sefer Emet Le'Yaakov, explains the concept of sitting in solitude, reflecting in unadulterated honesty about one's true feelings. There comes a time in one's life where the message from heaven can only be without the influence of others and the will to impress them. How often do we act because of the influence of friends and relatives? How often do we gossip due to peer pressure?

We must make choices in life. Honest choices. We have to do what the neshamah wants us to do. And we cannot alter our true emotion due to social, peer, or monetary pressures. Henny Youngman, a classic comedian, used to speak about his wonderful doctor. "If you can't afford the operation," he would say, "he'll touch up the x-ray!"

The afflicted man is sent away from anyone who may have influenced him to act in his terrible ways. He can reflect on his true feeling and his honest perceptions of life and his role. But this decision must be made when he is impervious to anyone who was normally in his sphere. And he has a choice. He can pull out the hair, he can scrape off the nega. He can fool the Kohen. He can fool his family and his friends. But when he returns to the camp, the only one fooled is himself.

HALACHAH CORNER

QUESTION: Can a man or woman eat or drink prior to making Kidush on Shabat morning?

ANSWER: The obligation to recite Kidush on Shabat morning takes effect only after the tefilah of Shacharit. Therefore, before one prays on Shabat morning, he is permitted to drink tea, coffee and water - those beverages that are allowed before the morning prayers.

Since the Kidush obligation descends upon a person only after Shacharit, the prohibition against eating or drinking before Kidush **does not** apply **before** he prays; hence, he is allowed to drink whatever is permissible to be consumed before one prays in the morning generally.

The question arises as to whether or not this halachah applies to women, as well.

According to the Ben Ish Chai (a"h), women become obligated to recite Kidush immediately when they awaken Shabat morning and therefore they may not eat or drink anything until they recite Kidush. Others, however, including the Kaf Ha'Chaim (a"h) and Chacham Bentzion Abba Shaul (a"h), distinguish between women who normally pray Shacharit in the morning, and those who do not.

If a woman normally prays Shacharit, then her status is no different from that of a man with regard to this halachah, and her obligation to recite kidush does not take effect until after she prays Shacharit. But if a woman does not normally recite Shacharit, and she recites only the morning blessings and the like, then her Kidush obligation takes effect immediately when she arises in the morning, and she may not eat or drink anything until she first recites Kidush.

In such a case, when a woman must recite Kidush in the morning, if she finds it difficult to recite the entire text, she may recite from "Ve'shamru," or even from "Al Ken" or just the berachah itself.

UPWARD

Glad that I live am I;
That the sky is blue;
Glad for the country lanes,
And the fall of dew.

After the sun the rain;
After the rain the sun;
This is the way of life,
And the work is done.

All that we need to do,
Be we low or high,
Is to see that we grow
Nearer to the sky.



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SPECIAL NEWSLETTER DEDICATION

It is with great sadness that we publicize the passing of Rabbi Nisson Wolpin a"h.

He was a noted pioneer in the world of Torah journalism who had a colossal impact on the religious world at large.

I remember him as one of the most amazing teachers I had in seminary and wish to extend our condolences to his family and all of his talmidot.

This newsletter is dedicated in his memory. May his neshamah have an Aliyah and may all the his teachings be a zechut for him in shamayim.

Ha'Rav Nisson ben Efraim (a"h)

QUOTES

** "Ships don't sink because of the water because of the water around them; ships sink because of the water that gets in them. Don't let what's happening around you get inside you and weigh you down."

** "The best part about life is that every morning you have a new opportunity to become a better version of yourself."

** "Today is a blank canvas. What picture will you paint?"

DEDICATION

The Israeli Chief Rabbinate used to have a policy of publicizing the names of engaged couples that appeared on their register. One day, they received a phone call.

"Tzippy Shabtai's name was on your list yesterday," the man said. "Well, she can't marry the man she's engaged to because she's already married to me!"

The Dayanim told him that he couldn't just besmirch her name. "If you have witnesses that what you're saying is true - then come down to the Bet Din, otherwise please remain silent."

The next day, he arrived with his witnesses. One of them said that the marriage had taken place on the 19th of the month and the other one said it had taken place on the 20th.

After deliberating, the Dayanim led by Rav Elyashiv (a"h) decided, that being off by a day invalidates the witnesses. Still, Rav Elyashiv said it was enough to force the young lady to take an oath that she was not married to the man who was making the claim.



The young lady refused to swear, on the grounds that she was afraid of suffering a curse for doing so. Rav Elyashiv explained to her that a curse is only the consequence of a false oath and therefore she has nothing to worry about if she is telling the truth. The young lady then broke down crying and admitted that she was indeed married to the man.

"About four years ago, we were at a party and he gave me a cracker in front of witnesses and said, 'Harei aht mekudeshet li.'"

Upon hearing this confession, the Dayanim were convinced that the couple was indeed married and that she could not marry the man she currently wanted to.

Upon further deliberation though, the Dayanim raised the question of whether a cracker is worth a perutah, the minimum

amount needed to effect a valid halachic marriage. To find a clear answer, Rav Elyashiv and other Dayanim went to the cracker factory to ascertain how much a cracker is worth.

Their investigation resulted in the disclosure that a cracker is NOT worth a perutah. So all was fine, right? Wrong! Someone pointed out that when a cracker is sold, value added tax is added to the cost, and that pushes the price up to over a perutah. So now it became a question of whether or not VAT is taken into account when trying to determine the price of a cracker.

Citing a proof from the Gemara, Rav Elyashiv deemed that VAT is taken into account and the woman may therefore not marry the current suitor unless she receives a Jewish divorce (Get) from the first husband.

There is a great deal of dedication to halachah evident in this story. Of course, nothing that appears here should be even remotely used in any form of practical application. Any question in this area of life must go to a competent halachic authority.

LAPS

It was a bright Sunday morning and the young man dashed across the street towards the shul. He always made it a point to pray with a minyan and Sundays were no different. In fact, on his day off from work he made sure to pray at an early hour so that he could get in some extra Torah learning which his busy weekday schedule did not allow. When he was done, he headed home to pick up his kids to go to the park.

The sunshine lured all kinds of people out of their homes and into the park - and everyone found a way to enjoy the fresh air. The grassy areas and lakes were encircled by a road, usually open to vehicular traffic, which was closed to traffic on Sundays - so that park-goers could enjoy bicycling, jogging, rollerblading and walking. It seemed as if hundreds of urban dwellers were doing laps around the park.

Life was not created for going around in circles. The gift of life was created to give people an opportunity to grow and achieve. Doing laps may be healthy for the body, but it may be hazardous to the neshamah.

Over the years you have probably developed certain routines that you follow every day. Very often, you do something simply because it is what you always do. Consider whether what you do out of habit is really just going around in circles or are you moving forward towards a worthwhile goal? It takes a little more mental exertion but it is much more productive to set a course towards improvement rather than comfort. Learn to use that minute of assessment and you will benefit for years to come.



RIDDLE

A man was found dead, out in a field of snow. The only tracks that were left was a set of footprints between two parallel lines.

Who should the police be looking for?

Answer on page 9



JOKE

There were four expectant fathers in a hospital waiting room, waiting for their babies to be born. The nurse came out and told the first father, "Congratulations! You're the father of twins!"

He said, "Wow! I'm the manager for the Minnesota Twins and my wife gave birth to twins."

A few minutes later, the nurse comes out again and tells the second father, "Congratulations you're the father of triplets!"

He said, "That's amazing! I work for 3M and my wife gave birth to triplets!"

Ten minutes later, the nurse came out and told the third father, "Congratulations! You are the proud father of quadruplets!"

He said, "I can't believe it! I work for the 4 Seasons Hotel and my wife gave birth to quadruplets!"

The fourth father ran to the window and jumped! The nurse asked, "Why did he just jump out the window?"

One of the other fathers said, "Because he works for Century 21."

THOUGHT OF THE DAY

If one spends a lot of his time accumulating wealth, it is quite possible he will not grow in wisdom.

(Pirkei Avot 2:5)

**ATTENTION LADIES**

Call us to host a learning group in your community.
(347) 430-5700

Rabanit K. Sarah Cohen will be speaking on the following dates:

Date: April 26, 2017
Time: 8:15pm
Place: 902 Ocean Prkwy #6D, Bklyn, NY

Date: April 29, 2017 - Shabat
Time: 5:00pm
Place: 1364 E7th - Bklyn, NY

Date: May 7, 2017
Time: 7:30pm
Place: 1100 Trafalgar St. - Teaneck NJ

Date: May 10, 2017
Time: 8:15pm
Place: 902 Ocean Prkwy #6D, Bklyn, NY

Date: May 21, 2017
Time: 7:45pm
Place: 275 Taft Court, Paramus NJ

Date: May 24, 2017
Time: 8:15pm
Place: 902 Ocean Prkwy #6D, Bklyn, NY

Date: May 27, 2017 - Shabat
Time: 5:00pm
Place: 1364 E7th - Bklyn, NY

Date: June ?? - To Be Announced
Time: 7:45pm
Place: Teaneck NJ

Date: July 1, 2017 - Shabat
Time: 5:00pm
Place: 1364 E7th - Bklyn, NY

Date: July ?? - To Be Announced
Time: 7:45pm
Place: 1288 West Laurelton Parkway
Teaneck, NJ 07666

Date: August 26, 2017 - Shabat
Time: 5:00pm
Place: 1364 E7th - Bklyn, NY

Date: August ?? - To Be Announced
Time: 7:45pm
Place: 115 Addison Rd.
Bergenfield, NJ 07621

INTRODUCING...

A SPECIAL PROGRAM FOR LADIES

The Rabanit will now be offering INDIVIDUAL, one-on-one classes on the phone for women who wish like to learn ONE topic in depth.

The advantage of the private classes is the ability to learn the subject of your choice in a deep and detailed manner - and the opportunity to ask questions and receive undivided attention.

HOW THE PROGRAM WORKS:

1. Choose a topic from the list below
2. Call our office and schedule your appointment for the time and day that best suits you
3. Depending on the topic you choose, an email with any materials you require for the lectures will be sent to you so you can follow along as you learn together with the Rabanit.
4. Payment for the series is made at the commencement of your classes.
5. You are now ready to begin your enlightening journey!!

Below is the list of topics:

**SHABAT
EMUNAH & BITACHON
THE SECRET OF THE MIKVEH
SHALOM BAYIT
TEFILAH
THE PARSHAH IN DEPTH
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Kineret Sarah Cohen

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Shiur To Post Wednesday, April 26
B'eizat Hashem

Parshat Tazria-Metzora
Self Destruction

Log on and enjoy the live lectures and be inspired.

THIS WEEK IN JEWISH HISTORY

30 NISAN

YAHRTZEIT OF RAV CHAIM VITAL (1620)

The 30th of Nisan 30 is the yahrtzeit (anniversary of the passing) of the famed Kabbalist Rabbi Chaim Vital (1542?-1620), author of the mystical work *Eitz Chaim*.

Rav Chaim was the leading talmid of Rav Yitzchak Luria (the "Holy Ari," 1534-1572) and the transcriber of his teachings, which form the "Lurianic" Kabbalah.

The Ari Ha'kadosh declared that he had come down to this world if ONLY to teach the mysteries of the world and creation to Rav Chaim and that he was the only one in his generation that merited this great wealth of knowledge.



Q & A

Dear Rabanit,

I am not sure if you know, but there's a famous Disney song called, "Let It Go!" I kept listening to that song because that's one of my problems. It's very hard for me to let go of friendships or relationships. I am a very loyal person and once I become connected, I can't let go. I have no problem making new friends; I just don't want to let go of the old ones. I get hurt and angry when people sever relationships, and I can't understand why they aren't as loyal to me as I am to them. How do I get out of this mode of resentment?

RESPONSE: Thank you so much for writing in. I will do my best with the help of Hashem to address your question.

First and foremost, I have heard the song, "Let it go!" But not because of Disney, rather because (sadly) many of my talmidot were

smitten with the song and they could not stop singing it.

I will begin answering your question by informing you that friendship is addressed in several places in Jewish sources. In the Gemara of Taanit, Choni Ha'Meagel (a"h) cries: "Either a friend or death." In Pirkei Avot (2:9) it states: "Rabee Yehoshuah says that a good friend is the path a person should cling to." And Rabee Yehoshuah ben Perchya advises us (1:6): "Acquire for yourself a friend."

Interestingly, in all three quotes, "friend" is in the singular.

The Torah has very few descriptions of friendship. The archetypical example of a good friend is the friendship between David and Yehonatan, the son of his adversary to the throne and later, his brother-in-law. They had a covenant of friendship. Their loyalty and love for each other was pure and perfect. There is nothing one would not do for the other.

There are very few true friendships that are like life bonds and covenants of friendship.

We often confuse acquaintances, friendliness, neighborliness and circumstantial company as friendship.

A story is told about a young man who claimed to have many friends. His father said he had only two true friends, and one was closer than the other. He doubted his son's friends were really true. They tested the father's theory.

The son killed a goat and hid its bleeding carcass in a sack. He went from friend to friend, telling them he had killed a government official and begged them to hide him. They all closed and bolted the door in his face.

Then the father sent him to his second-closest friend.

Continued on page 9

RESPONSE

Continued

The friend, hearing he was the son of his good friend, said: "Well, I probably shouldn't do this, but I'll hide you."

The son returned to the father, admitting he had been right, but asked him why he called the friend who was ready to hide him the lesser true friend. His father replied: "The other one wouldn't have said, 'Perhaps I shouldn't do this.' "

Don't try this at home! What the story illustrates, however, is that what we overuse the word "friend." Our 600 Facebook "friends" are not friends. A friend is someone you have a very close relationship with over a long period of time, with whom you can feel secure in being yourself, who knows you deeply, and who truly loves and appreciates you. It's a friend with whom you feel a lifelong bond that goes above time, place and circumstance—a true soul sister or brother.

The other kinds of friendships are part of the ebb and flow of life. You gain a few and unfortunately lose others as part of change and growth and new circumstances and opportunities. It is counterproductive to try and force people to stay friends with you if they no longer want to.

Continued Below

ANSWER TO RIDDLE

A man in a wheelchair



RESPONSE

Hashem brings the people who are necessary to our life's journey into our lives and takes them out of our lives when they are no longer needed as part of the cast of players to help us achieve our life's purpose. Is it not paradoxical, an oxymoron, to try to hold onto friends?

Ask yourself who among your friends are your real true friends, like sisters - the ones who have and would be with you through thick and thin, the ones you have acquired and have saved you from emotional death, the ones who would help you in your time of need - a truly good friend? These should be rare, just a few. Maybe even only one. And those are the friendships you should value and continue to nurture.

As far as the others, you can gently let go of them if you feel that are not helping you grow in any spiritual way. And spend more time with your real true friends.

Newsletter Dedication

Sara Bat Mimon Ha'Kohen (A"H)

Ohel Sara is named after this tzadikah (my grandmother). May the inspiration that women draw from this weekly newsletter benefit her neshamah in Gan Eden and may we all be redeemed as a result.



Ohel Sara wishes all it's readers a Shabbat Shalom u'Mevorach!



Candlelighting Time

7:31PM
NY TIME



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