



The Community

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Boruch Hashem

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Rabbi's Article

A Reward for Minimizing Another's Pain

The Torah tells us (-Numbers 12:1-14) of how Miriam, "spoke against (her brother) Moses," and of her punishment for this being, "Miriam was afflicted with tzara'at (a supra-natural form of leprosy)," for which, "She shall be confined for seven days outside the camp, and afterwards she may enter." Then the verses (-15-16) tell us, "And the people did not travel until Miriam had entered. Afterwards (after Miriam reentered the camp) the people departed." Rashi comments, "And the people did not travel": This honor was accorded her by the Omnipresent because of the time she remained with Moses when he was cast into the river, as it says (-Exodus 2:4), "His sister stood by from afar to know what would be done to him." Rashi's source¹ is Tractate Sotah (-9b, Mishna), which states, "Miriam waited for Moses for one hour, as it is stated: 'And his sister stood afar off.' Therefore the Jewish people delayed seven days for her, as it is stated: 'And the people journeyed not until Miriam was brought in again.'"

Firstly, the reason why Rashi (whose sole concern in his commentary is (-Genesis 3:8), "I have come only [to teach] the simple meaning of the Scripture and such Aggadah that clarifies the words of the verses.") comments at all is because, being that the next verse (-16) states, "Afterwards (after Miriam reentered the camp) the people departed," why does our verse (-15) have to tell, "And the people did not travel until Miriam had entered"? Thus, Rashi tells us that the verse's extra telling us so is to teach us, "This honor was accorded her by the Omnipresent...." However, Rashi specifically changes the language of the Mishna from, "the Jewish people delayed," to, "This honor was accorded her by the Omnipresent." The simple reason would be because when the Jewish people would travel or camp was only decided by G-d (-ibid 9:17), "According to the cloud's departure from over the Tent... the children of Israel would travel... the cloud settled, there the children of Israel would camp." Nevertheless, the Mishna also knew this! Therefore, we must say that the Mishna is telling us that the Jewish People also wanted to wait for Miriam to reenter the camp, meaning that Rashi's changing the language is to teach us that the Jewish people had no specific want to wait for Miriam!? Why would Rashi say so, and especially when the words of the verse are, "And the people" (rather than, "And G-d commanded...") did not travel"?!

Additionally: (i) Why does Rashi (unlike the Mishna) state, "when he (Moses) was cast into the river," when all that is important to us is, "she remained with Moses," which was the reason for the, "And the people did not travel"? (ii) Likewise, why does Rashi quote from the verse (in Exodus), "From Afar," when it is not subsequential to us here? (iii) And in addition to the, "From afar," Rashi writes, "etc.," alluding to the continuation of that verse?!

The *Explanation*: Simply speaking, if the Jewish People would not have waited for Miriam to reenter the camp, Miriam would have been left alone in the desert², which is not a matter of *honor*, but of a *life-threatening situation*?! Hence, the verse's distinction of, "*honor*" (of the people not travelling until Miriam reentered the camp) was specifically about there being the camp, which only existed when the Jewish people were not traveling. The reason for this is, G-d's directive of, "She shall be confined for seven days outside the camp, and (only) afterwards (of being outside the camp) she may enter," tells us that (besides the tzara'at's healing) Miriam must be seven days outside the camp in order to be able to be purified of her tzara'at! This, in turn, can only happen when the Jewish people are camped (not traveling!). Otherwise, Miriam would have to wait until the people camped for at least seven days for her to (i) be purified from her tzara'at, (ii) without having to start counting over, if there were no consecutive seven days of camping. This was the *honor* that G-d bestowed upon Miriam, in, "And the people did not travel," so that Miriam can immediately go through, "shall be confined for seven days outside the camp," and immediately, "afterwards she may enter."

From this, we can understand concerning all other *metzoram*, including in our times³: The *metzora's* laws of (-Leviticus, Chapter 13:46), "All the days the lesion is upon him... he shall dwell isolated; his dwelling shall be outside

1. Even though we could say that Rashi's source is the *Sifri* (-on this verse) or the *Mechilta* (Exodus 13:19).

2. Additionally, the Rebbe here points out: (i) Why would Miriam necessarily stay there in the desert, and not travel along, outside of the camp? An answer offered is, maybe due to the weakness of the disease. (ii) Being that the law mandates that when travelling with a caravan that won't stop for Shabbat, the Jew travels on with them due to remaining alone would be *life-threatening*, hence the same here for Miriam (and any *metzora*). (iii) From Rashi's commentary (-Numbers 5:2), "To banish from the camp: 'At the time of their encampment,'" it is clear that Rashi's opinion is that the *metzora* does not remain outside of the camp when the Jewish people travelled! Hence, clearly, the, "And the people did not travel," was only an issue of, "*honor*," for the reason now explained.

3. See Maimonides (-Laws of Impurities of Tzora'at, 11:6) "Tzara'at is carried out in Israel and in the Diaspora, while the Temple is standing and in the era when the Temple is not standing."

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FRIDAY, JUNE 9, 2023 כ' סיון תשפ"ג

Shabbat Candle Lighting: 7:51 PM · Kabbalat Shabbat: 7:45 PM

SATURDAY, JUNE 10, 2023 כ"א סיון תשפ"ג

TORAH READING: Behalotecha (Numbers 8:1-12:16) · HAFTORAH: Zachariah (2:14-4:7)

Shacharit: 9:30 AM · Mincha: 7:45 PM · Shabbat Ends: N. Miami: 8:51 PM

This Week...

the camp," are not a "side obligation" of the metzora --(that as long as he is a metzora he must be alone, outside the camp, so that (-Numbers 5:3), "They not defile their camps, in which I dwell among them," but not that this is part of the process through which he is purified)--, but rather, is an obligatory part of the process, which without he cannot be purified!

Note: In the verses concerning (-Leviticus Chapter 13) there are, (i) "The kohain shall quarantine the [person with the] lesion for seven days," and sometimes even twice, in deciding if the lesion is in fact a tzara'at. And (ii) once the kohain proclaims the person a metzora, then (-ibid, verse 46), "All the days the lesion is upon him... he shall (a) dwell isolated; his dwelling shall be (b) outside the camp." The Talmud (-Megilla 8b) rules, "With regard to the matter of expulsion (from the camps)..., and the ritual impurity, both, this (the "quarantined metzora"), and that (the "confirmed metzora"), are equal." Therefore, the, "shall quarantine the [person with the] lesion for seven days," of the, "quarantined metzora," (1) has to also be seven consecutive days, and (2), "outside the camp"⁴.

However, concerning the, All the days the lesion is upon him... (a) he shall dwell isolated; (b) his dwelling shall be outside the camp," there is to contemplate as to what is the main directive of this verse. Is it (a), "he shall dwell isolated" (even outside of the camp)," however, as long as he is sitting alone, it is not imperative that (there be a camp, so that) he is outside the camp, or (b), "his dwelling shall be outside the camp," it is imperative (hence, that there be a camp, so that) he is outside the camp? So too, concerning the "quarantined metzora" in his days of quarantine (-See Note above, and Footnote #4).

This has its implications for us today, whether a metzora can be purified after the destruction of the Holy Temple⁵. If we say that the only obligatory directive is that, "he shall dwell isolated," but the, "his dwelling shall be outside the camp," is not obligatory, then this can exist today as well. However, if we say that, "his dwelling shall be outside the camp," is obligatory, hence (according to the opinions (Rava"d, Laws of Beis HaBechirah 6:14, and others) that the laws and the holiness of the camps and of Jerusalem doesn't remain⁶), the metzora cannot be purified today⁷, as we do not have the camps⁸ to sit outside of!

Now that we understand that the honor was that Miriam immediately began her purification process of, "confined for seven days," we can now understand why Rashi doesn't say, "the Jewish people... waited for her," but rather, "This honor was accorded her by the Omnipresent." The honor had nothing to do with, "the Jewish people... waited for her," but only that, "the Omnipresent," commanded that her purification be contingent upon, "confined for seven days," and therefore, "This honor was accorded her by the Omnipresent," that this be possible immediately!

Nevertheless, one can ask, where is the (-Sanhedrin 90a), "Measure for measure," of the reward for Miriam's action, when Miriam's action was about saving a life, while the reward was only a matter of honor?! On the other hand, of what greatness was Miriam's saving the life of a three-month old baby? Anyone would do this?! This is why Rashi quotes from rom the verse, that Miriam stood, "From afar," and hence, it was not about saving her baby brother's life (but as the verse itself states "to know what would be done to him"). This does not however answer how G-d's reward was one of, "measure for measure," even if it wasn't about Miriam's saving a life? This is why Rashi adds on the word, "etc.," telling us to see what the "measure" of Miriam's action truly was: The verses tell us that Baby Moses was crying, but refused to be nursed by any of the Egyptian women. Hence, Miriam's being there allowed for her to swiftly bringing a Jewish wet-nurse (Moses' mother), which brought a swift end to Baby Moses' pain. So too, was the "measure" of G-d's reward, that the people not travel, so that there be camps, so that Miriam have a swift purification process, and end her suffering!

Rashi's "Wine (esoteric) of Torah": Rashi definitely is of the opinion that the people wanted to honor Miriam, as well, as the verse itself states, "And the people did not travel"! Thus, Rashi reveals to us that esoterically, even when the Talmud rules (-Brochos 33b), "Everything is from Heaven, except for 'Fear of Heaven," for which Man's Service is necessary, nevertheless, ultimately, even for this, we must first be empowered, "by the Omnipresent"!! The Mishna, on the other hand, as part of the revealed teachings, is confined to the simple meaning that anything to do with "Fear of Heaven" (waiting for Miriam) can only come from our arousing ourselves. On a deeper level, we are saying that esoterically speaking (Rashi), the empowerment from Above, for a Jew to do the right thing comes from, "by the Omnipresent," which is far higher than only, "from Heaven"!

What remains to explain is as to why it is specifically by the portion of metzora that Rashi teaches us that

4. Rashi (-Megilla 8b), "Expulsion: outside of the walls of the city (Jerusalem)." However, see Rashi in Tractate Moed Kattan (-7b) that the "quarantined metzora," is not expelled from the camps, and see Tosfos in Moed Kattan, that Rashi retracted what he said in Megilla (-8b).
5. i.e. One who converts must bring an offering to the Holy Temple, and nevertheless, today, even though the convert cannot bring this offering, nevertheless, this does not disqualify his conversion. So too, concerning the metzora, his not being able to bring the metzora's offerings does not disqualify the purification of the, "All the days the lesion is upon him... he shall dwell isolated; his dwelling shall be outside the camp."
6. We can ask this question even according to the opinion that the metzora must be expelled from a walled city, being that we can say that within the, "outside of the camps," there are two dimensions: (i) The issue concerning the courthouse and the community that, "they not defile their camps," which only applies when there is the laws and holiness of the camps and of Jerusalem, and (ii) the issue, "outside the camps," concerning the metzora in his purification process, in which, all we need is the Jerusalem (camps) in which Jewish people live, with or without the laws and purity.
7. Even more so, if, "outside the camp," is an obligatory part of the, "dwell isolated," then there is no reason to obligate the metzora to, "dwell isolated," when there are no camps to sit, "outside the camp"!
8. And even if we are to say that because from the very beginning of the impurity there were no camps, and therefore, there is no need for camps in his purification process. However, what about the one who became impure before the Temple was destroyed, and during his days of impurity the Temple was destroyed, can he be purified?

The Parsha

Parshat Behalotecha

Aaron was instructed to arrange the six lamps of the Menorah so that their lights projected towards the central stem.

The Levites were inducted for service through special rites and sacrifices. They were conscripted at the age of twenty-five for training and served from thirty-to-fifty.

On the fourteenth of Nissan the Jews observed Pesach (Passover). Those who were impure and could not partake in the Pesach offering approached Moses asking; "Why should we be deprived?" Consequently G-d offered a second chance and designated the fourteenth of Iyar as the second Pesach for those who may have been impure or too far from Temple on the first Pesach.

A cloud hovered above the Tabernacle throughout the day and a ball of fire appeared during the night. Whenever the cloud lifted and began to move, the Jews traveled in a corresponding pattern until the cloud halted. This signaled the spot where they were to camp. Moses was commanded to make two silver trumpets that were used to assemble the Jews. Using a code ordained by G-d, they signaled public assembly, a conference of princes, travel, and combat. They were also sounded in celebration of the festivals.

After spending a year at Mount Sinai the Jews began to travel. Moses encouraged Yithro to accompany the nation in their travel to Israel, however he chose to return to his family.

During the journey some people began to rebel against G-d. The instigators were punished and through the intervention of Moses a plague was averted. Some people continued to complain about the lack of meat saying, "We are tired of the Manna." Moses felt that he could no longer respond to the demands of the nation and turned to G-d in despair. Thus G-d instructed him to select seventy elders who would be endowed with a spirit of prophecy and help Moses lead the nation.

Responding to the demands of the rebellious, G-d covered the camp with quail, which they gathered in heaps, only to cause their death while they indulged.

Miriam with the best of intentions defamed her brother Moses and was punished with leprosy. Aaron pleaded with Moses to pray on her behalf. In merit of her good deeds the entire nation was detained for a week until she recovered.

Inspiration

A Reward for... -cont. from page 3

everything, even that which comes through our work, comes from Above.

The all-encompassing concept of the *metzora* is that he is sent out of all the three camps (Tabernacle, Levites and Israelites), being that he has stepped out of the boundaries of holiness. Hence⁹, *his dwelling shall be outside the camp.*" Therefore, it is here that Rashi reveals to us that "Fear of Heaven" comes from Above.

Concerning the purification of a *metzora* we are taught (-Liku"Sh, Vol 7, p106), on the verse (-Leviticus 14:2), "And he shall be brought (forcefully) to the Kohain," that the *metzora* has fallen so low out of holiness, that it is extremely difficult for him to arouse himself to purify himself. Hence, his purification must come from Above ("shall be brought (forcefully)")! *Metzora*, therefore, is the clear case of even man's service coming from Above, simply because G-d promised (-Samuel II 14:14), "He devises means that he who is banished be not cast from Him."

9. This is the reason why a main issue by the *metzora* is to specifically be, "outside the camp". For when there are no camps, it is not apparent that he has brought himself to a state of being outside of the boundaries of holiness.

Occasions

Birthdays

24 Sivan	Mayra Lichter
24 Sivan	Elena Salomon
25 Sivan	David Lazar
26 Sivan	Michelle Amselem

Yahrtzeit

21 Sivan	Yechial Michel Dror Father of Shmuel Dror
21 Sivan	Avrohom Lechter Father of Roberto Lechter
24 Sivan	Nathan Zeifman Great-grandfather of Joseph Weinberger