TO LOVE EACH DAY

The verse from Tehillim (34:13) which delineates the virtues of one who is careful not to speak leshon hora refers to him as one “who loves days to see good”. What is meant by the phrase “who loves days”?

This merchant spends his days always waiting for time to pass.

Yet, the purpose of life is to utilize each day as it comes and to appreciate the present for the great treasure that it is. When a person understands the value which each day represents for Torah and the service of God, he is one who “loves each day”, as he “sees the good” inherent in every opportunity. In this manner, he becomes satisfied in living every day to its ultimate.

THE MIGHTY CEDAR WITH THE LOWLY HYSSOP

The Gemara points out that it is quite appropriate for the metzora who is performing his purification rites to use branches from the lowly hyssop bush and the cedar tree. This is because he originally sinned by considering himself haughty, seeing himself as above everyone else and in a position to speak disparagingly about others. Now, as he humbles himself, he should take the branches of the lowly hyssop as an indication of his having learned his lesson.

Rabbi Yaakov Yosef of Polonoye notes, however, that this message is one which the metzora should have considered earlier in the process, when he begins to reflect upon his error, and as he realizes his mistake. Now, as our verse discusses the outcome of that teshuva process, and as he brings the offerings to purify himself, the lesson should have been learned long ago. Why, then, is the hyssop introduced into the procedure only at this late stage? Furthermore, what purpose does the cedarwood play in this context? The cedar was a high and mighty tree, and its usage seems to be contradictory to the humble and lowly theme of the purification of the metzora.

The Ba’al Shem Tov illustrated a parable which would serve to explain this situation. A king wished to merit longevity and that his reign extend for many decades. His advisors recommended that he conduct his affairs with a quiet and humble manner. In this way, he would attract few enemies and arouse less controversy. As the king implemented their advice, although his actions were quiet and unassuming, and surprisingly uncharacteristic for a king, his inner image became bloated. He commanded that his chariot be prepared, and as it was led through the main thoroughfare of the city, the king ran behind it screaming, “I am so humble! Who else is as wonderful a king as I?” One of the wise men observed this absurd spectacle
and he explained to the king that the best advice would be to conduct himself outwardly as a proper king, but to remain humble in his heart, not with his legs. This balance would result in others’ recognizing his character as being refined.

The lesson of the atonement of the metzora is that after bringing an offering where he displays outward humility, he must come to learn what true humility really is. He can conduct himself even as the cedar, outwardly, as long as he remains lowly and humble in his heart.

************************************************************************

A DELICATE SENSITIVITY

In Oznayim LaTorah, Rabbi Zalman Sorotzkin explains that the beginning of Parashas Metzora lists the detailed process of how a person would become pure after having been tamei as a metzora. From Verse 2 through Verse 30, the entire process seemingly flows along, and all the different procedures combine to comprise one effort, with every verse beginning with the connecting letter ה - “and”, to show that every step follows the one before it. The exception to this is Verse 6, which does not begin with a connecting letter ה. The verse introduces how “the live bird shall be taken...and dip it...and he shall set the live bird free upon the open field (v. 7).” The fact that this verse is set off from the rest of the episode in this manner is to indicate that the live bird must not witness the fact that the other bird which was also chosen was slaughtered in Verse 5. First of all, there is an element of הקיסר: יושב על ברכי ים - causing anguish to animals - when one animal sees another slaughtered. The halachah (Yoreh De’ah 36) discusses the reason why an animal might suffer a collapsed lung, and one reason mentioned is if it suffers fright after seeing another animal killed. Pischei Teshuva (ibid.) notes that this phenomenon can also occur with birds. In either case, the animal or bird with a collapsed lung would be rendered a treifa, whose status is no longer among the vibrant and healthy. Our verse describes that we are to take “the live bird”, indicating that we do not want it to be a treifa. Therefore, the verse begins without a connecting letter ה, to teach that the previous event of slaughtering the first bird should be an event which is shielded from the sight of the bird which is left to live.

************************************************************************

A BLESSING IN DISGUISE

All of Hashem’s punishments are, in reality, blessings in disguise. This can be seen from the example of spots of tzara’as appearing on houses.

The Midrash (Vayikra Rabba 17:6) tells us that when the Canaanim learned of the eventual entry of the Jews into the Land, they took great pains to bury all their treasures so that they should not fall into Jewish hands. Hashem said: “I promised the forefathers a land filled with precious things, and I will fulfill that promise.” Hashem therefore caused spots of tzara’as to break out on the walls of a certain house so that it had to be demolished. To the owner’s despair, its walls were torn down. Suddenly, glittering piles of gold and silver revealed themselves to the eye. The owner unexpectedly found himself in possession of wealth which he had never dreamt possible.

This Midrash seems surprising, for a person’s house was stricken with tzara’as because of sin. Why, then, did he deserve to find a treasure? However, the tzaddikim discovered the fortune in store for them with ease. Hashem caused them to settle on property on which the Canaanim had hidden their money in easily detectable places, such as in the fields, where they dug up the treasures as soon as they tilled. Other Jews, however, did not deserve an immediate blessing. It was only after experiencing the shock of tzara’as spots appearing on their walls due to their sins, after having to humiliate themselves to report this to the Kohanim, and having been shaken by the tragedy of seeing their homes broken down, that they did teshuva. If they proved worthy to become owners of a fortune, God then allowed them to find the treasure destined for them.

All of Hashem’s doings are intended for our benefit even if we do not realize it.
A person should therefore accustom himself to enunciate concerning all events which befall him, whether they seem good or evil, that “whatever is effected by Heaven is for the best”. (Brachos 60b)

*****************************************************************************************************************************************

**HIDDEN TREASURES**

This was an announcement to them that these plagues would come upon them because the Emori concealed treasures of gold in the walls of their houses during the whole forty years when Bnei Yisrael were in the wilderness in order that Bnei Yisrael would not possess them when they conquered Canaan. Thus, as a consequence of the plague, Bnei Yisrael would pull down the houses and discover them. -- Rashi

As the Jews continued their journey through the desert, they were now told that they were to find many treasures hidden within the walls of the homes they were to inherit. When the spies returned from their expedition, they reported (BeMidbar 13:28) that they had noticed that the cities were “very well fortified”. There, Rashi points out that the term "בְּהַמֵּרָה" - “fortified” - means that the defenses were strengthened. Furthermore, Rashi cites the translation of Onkelos which tells us that the spies specifically reported that the outer walls of the cities were circular. What significance is there to the shape of the walls, that the spies would choose to speak about it as an integral part of their presentation?

Rabbi Moshe Yitzchak HaLevi Segal of Ponovizh notes that the Mishnah (Nega'im 12:1) determines that the laws of plagues of houses only apply to a structure that has four walls and is rectangular. This is ascertained from the repetition of the phrase "כֶּסֶר יַסְדִּיק תֵּקָף" (see Verses 37 and 38). A structure that is circular does not contract ritual impurity, and these laws would not apply even if certain discoloring appears on the walls. When the spies told the people that the cities were surrounded by large walls, the people might have rejoiced, knowing that although it may be a challenge to battle against such a city, yet, with the help of Hashem, they would prevail and then secure the added bonus of discovering the hidden treasures within the walls when they would be stricken with tzara’as. Yet, the spies wanted to totally discourage and dishearten the Jews with their report. They emphasized that the walls of the cities were rounded, and, accordingly, the laws of ritual impurities would never apply to them. This hopeful advantage was now lost, and there remained no consolation to the cities’ being fortified.

*****************************************************************************************************************************************

**Halachic Corner**

According to the Gaon of Vilna

Krias Shma - Sat. Tefils - Sat. Shabbos - Sat. Sunset

According to the Magen Avraham

Shabbos HaGadol

Zmanim for Parashas Metzora 5779

Krias Shma - Sat. Tefils - Sat. Shabbos - Sat. Sunset
8:57 10:15 7:28 6:14 7:29

When Bedikas Chametz, the search for chametz, has been completed, whatever chametz has been found must be put away in a safe place to be burned in the morning. The chametz that has been set aside for supper and breakfast must also be kept safe so that no crumbs from it will be dropped on the floor. One should also be careful not to let babies or pets get at it. Once the house has been searched, after each meal or snack, the whole eating area has to be thoroughly cleaned for crumbs, including all the dishes and utensils.

Immediately after searching the house comes the mitzvah of nullifying any remaining chametz that might not have been found. We must have two things in mind: one, that the rabbis made it a mitzvah this night to nullify remaining chametz in order to keep us from transgressing the mitzvah of not having any chametz in our possession during Pesach; and two, that this is also part of the special mitzvah of getting rid of chametz on Erev Pesach. The head of the family should say the nullification while the rest of the family stands by and listens, and they, too, should have in mind that they are nullifying any chametz that they privately own. If one of the family was not there when the nullification was pronounced, then he must say it for himself, just in case he has some chametz of his own which he may have forgotten about.

It is best for each family head to nullify the chametz himself and not have someone else do it for him. Even if he happens to be out of town when the time comes, he can say the nullification wherever he is and it will take effect. But if he is out of town when the time comes, and his wife is not sure that he will remember to nullify the chametz where he is, she should say the nullification herself. In that case, she should say: “All the sourdough and chametz in my husband’s possession that he does not know about and has not eradicated is hereby nullified and made like the dust of the earth.” Similarly, a son above the age of bar mitzvah can do the nullification, provided he is still supported by his father.

Someone who has more than one place to search (such as an office, store, or shul), need only recite one bracha on all of them, even if there is some distance between them, since walking from one place to the other is not considered an interruption, provided he does not talk to anyone or do anything else that would take his mind off of his duty.

---

Halachic Corner is dedicated by Benyomin Freeman in memory of his father, Gedalia Freeman, ז"ל, whose dedication to quality education for his family began their eighteen-year relationship with HTC. May his memory be for a blessing.

*****************************************************************************************************************************************
Questions for Thought and Study

1. How do we know that (if we understood it properly) the concept of קֵ֫ם הַמַּעֲרֹצֶר (spiritual disease) would even apply today? See Ha’amek Davar 14:2

2. Why does the Torah tell the metzora to take קֵ֫ם הַמַּעֲרֹצֶר ("two birds") when just using the plural form of קֵ֫ם הַמַּעֲרֹצֶר would have implied that two birds are needed? See Malbim 14:4

3. Which words indicate an ingredient that can’t be part of the purification waters of the metzora? See Ba’al HaTurim 14:5

4. Why does the instruction to clean the house of items inside before it is declared impure start in singular form then switch to plural? "ףִּי הָאָרֶץ," - "And the Kohen shall command and they shall clean the house." See Ibn Ezra 14:36

5. How does the purification of a house with קֵ֫ם הַמַּעֲרֹצֶר indicate the sins that caused the impurity? See Meshech Chochmah 14:51

6. How do we know that a garment that is stained with impure substances has to be completely purified and not just washed in the place of the stain? See Malbim 15:7

************************************************************************

This Week Likutei Peshatim is Sponsored

- By Hebrew Theological College wishing mazal tov to HTC Board of Regents member Eric Rothen and his wife Gale on the Bar Mitzvah of their grandson, Joseph Aiden Rothen.

- Hebrew Theological College’s Gourmet Torah at Shallotts Bistro will resume after Pesach, on Thursday, May 2nd. For more info: Rabbi Joshua Zisook at 847-982-2500 or jzisook@htc.edu.

- Deadline for Application to The Israel Experience Program is April 30! This important program benefits students going to Seminary or Yeshiva in multiple ways. 1) Students receive 30 recognized HTC credits upon successful completion of classes. 2) Students are nurtured & advised by HTC & Blitstein leadership throughout the year. 3) Eligible students can receive federal & state grants & loans in Israel by going through an accredited U.S. program. Info: Rabbi Zisook 847-982-2500 or Mrs. Mann 773-973-0241.

- Summer Semester at Blitstein Institute begins June 24th. Students can gain a semester’s worth of credits in the abbreviated summer term. Join us for 6 weeks of learning, growth and advancement toward your baccalaureate degree. For more information, call Dr. Chani Tessler at 773-973-0241.

- Returning next year! HTC’s Rabbi William Z. and Eda Bess Novick Bigdei Yisrael would like to inform the community that our clothing drop-off will resume this very important clothing drive next year.

- Fasman Yeshiva High School currently has openings for a part-time guidance counselor, a full-time or part-time learning services coordinator, and a full-time (residential) dormitory supervisor. For more information, please contact careers@htc.edu.

- Yeshivas Hakayitz 2019 enrollment is open for campers who will be entering 6th through 11th grades. Dates: July 2nd - July 29th. For application and all related camp information, please visit ykh.hctc.edu. To reach Rabbi Yosef Polstein call 847-982-2500 ext. 1125, or ykh@hctc.edu.


- Are you downtown? Got 5, 15, 30 or 45 minutes? Learn & daven at M. Geller, Ltd. 29 E. Madison, Ste 1805. 1:05 PM, 30 minute shiur; 1:35 Mincha; 1:47, 5 minute dvar Torah. Shuirim led by: Monday- Mikor/HTC- Rabbi Moshe Schechter; Tuesday- South Bend Hebrew Day School- Rabbi Yakov Kreisman; Wednesday- YUTM Kollel- Rabbi Yaakov Frankiel; Thursday- TBD. For more information, please visit 312-984-1041.

- Park Plaza Senior Living Community enriches the quality of life for our residents through daily shiurim, live music, exercise classes, lectures, outings and much more. Park Plaza also has beautifully furnished apartments for rent: daily, weekly and long term or for your simcha. For more information, visit our website at www.park-plaza.org or contact Adina at adina@park-plaza.org.

- TAG Chicago is here to help! Offering filtering solutions for smart phones, tablets and computers. We offer free volunteer assistance to keep your devices safe. Visit tagchicago.org, call 847-920-8245 or email Help@TAGChicago.org to book your appointment. 8150 Central Park, Skokie. Remember - “Call before you buy!” We will help guide you.

- Don’t miss out! Apply today and be among applicants from over 18 different cities for an unforgettable summer at Maayan Midwest! Just over two hours away from Chicago. Our brand new air conditioned bunkhouses, completely renovated campus, beautiful lake, customizable programming and experienced staff are just a part of what makes Maayan Midwest the premiere sleep away camp for girls in the Midwest. For more info or to apply, check out maayanmidwest.com or call 847-440-4940.

- This year’s Chicago Rabbinical Council Pesach Fair will be this Sunday, Apr. 14, 2-5:30 PM, at Hebrew Theological College, featuring kashering of keilim, live demonstration of Romaine lettuce checking (2:30-3:30), shatnez testing, knife sharpening by professional sharpener. Sharpening by Dave, available 3:30-5:30, & FAQ booth. Last orders accepted at 5 PM. For questions, call 773-250-5476 or email info@crcweb.org. Please note, items being kashered must be clean and must not have been used within 24 hours.

- Agudath Israel of Illinois Pesach Services: Hag’olos Kailim: Sunday & Monday, April 14-15. 7:30-9 PM. 3535 Foster (big orders must reserve 773-727-5241). Pre-Pesach Garbage Pickup: Go to 50th Ward office, 2949 Devon, by Friday, April 12; 39th Ward residents come to Agudath office, 3542 Peterson, to get a sticker. Be’ur Chometz: April 19, 8:00-11:00 AM, JDBY 3200 Peterson corner parking lot, and YOB, 2828 Pratt parking lot – enter off Pratt. MBH Halachot Hotline 773-539-4141.

- Burning of Chometz will be available at F.R.E.E. of Chicago – The Bellows Center on Erev Pesach, Friday, April 19, 8:00-11:00 AM. Bring your chametz during this time to have it burned while you say Kol Chamirah. Do you know someone looking for a seat at a Seder? There will be a community Seder at F.R.E.E. of Chicago – The Bellows Center on April 19th at 7:15 PM. Anyone who wants to participate or is looking to celebrate Pesach with friends is welcome to join us!

- Pesach Treat for Little Kids: What? Fun show and craft; For whom? Children ages 5 and under, and their grownups; When? This Sunday, April 14, at 2:00 PM; Where? Barnes and Noble, Old Orchard Mall, downstairs; Who is doing this? Mrs. Zeesey Posner of Junior Gan Israel and Skokie Chabad.
• Congregation KINS invites the community to our Annual Banquet, Sunday, May 19, honoring Lev and Orah Katz, remembering Rabbi Barry Robinson 5779, and thanking Rabbi Dov and Miriam Lerner. The deadline to place an ad is Friday, May 10th. To place an ad or make a reservation, visit our website at www.congkins.org or contact the shul office 773-761-4000.

• Congregation KINS invites the entire community to our Shabbat HaGadol Drasha, delivered by Rav Yona Reiss, רביה של יונה רייס אפי משיח, and Rabbi Zev Cohen, מנהל המרכז-Length, his exploration of “Who Really Knows One?”. There will also be a Women's Shabbat HaGadol Drasha by Rabbi Robinson at 5:45 PM.

• Pre-Pesach Camp at HSBY is back! Boys ages 3-5, girls ages 3-8, 9:30-1:30, Sunday, April 14; Tuesday, April 16; Wednesday, April 17; and Thursday, April 18 (till noon). New this year—extended hours Sunday - Wednesday. Email seniorfundraiser19@gmail.com or text/leave a message 773-398-5803 to register or for more information. Limited space so reserve now!

• Bike the Drive with Chai Lifeline Midwest is back for the 11th year! On May 26, you can bike on Lake Shore Drive without any cars, enjoying the gorgeous lakefront and downtown views, while raising money for families here in Chicago. Register with Chai Lifeline at www.chailifeline.org/bikethedrive and receive a complimentary T-shirt, delicious breakfast for after the ride, and lots of fun activities at Grant Park. For any questions, please email kbider@chailifeline.org.

• Join our teaching team! Yeshiva Ohr Boruch Veitzener Cheder is growing, and our General Studies Teacher at Apachi Rogers Park and Sr. & Jr. Counselors, Sports, Drama and Dance Specialists at Apachi Skokie/Evanston! Learn more and apply online at https://www.jccchicago.org/about/careers/.

• JCC Chicago seeks outstanding Early Childhood Lead and Assistant Teachers for Fall 2019. Be part of a team of educators, social workers and specialists who support the whole child through a developmentally-appropriate curriculum-embracing Jewish life and complementing the home. We’re looking for those who are enthusiastic about guiding each child to their potential towards future success. Visit www.jccchicago.org/careers for more information and to apply online.

• Yachad had a wonderful event this past Sunday, when our Rayim division (23 y/o+) traveled to meet with students at the University of Chicago Hillel, JLIC program. Everyone enjoyed a pizza dinner & played a fun round-robin game of ‘Getting to Know You’. We look forward to developing this new partnership, as a great time was had by all! We’re looking forward to our Juniors division (7-14 y/o) Mock Seder Program this Sunday! You can register at Yachad.org/Chicago or email Elana Lipman @ lipman5@ou.org.

• Bike the Drive with Chai Lifeline Midwest is back for the 11th year! On May 26, you can bike on Lake Shore Drive without any cars, enjoying the gorgeous lakefront and downtown views, while raising money for families here in Chicago. Register with Chai Lifeline at www.chailifeline.org/bikethedrive and receive a complimentary T-shirt, delicious breakfast for after the ride, and lots of fun activities at Grant Park. For any questions, please email kbider@chailifeline.org.

• Hanna Sacks Bais Yaakov High School wishes mazal tov to our talented students, Meira Tova Cohen, Sarah Feinberg and Elishева Saltzberg, First Place Winner and also Spirit of Botball Winners at the 2019 Botball Regional Tournament. The girls competed against teams from the Greater Chicago area by designing and programming two robots to perform a series of tasks on a game board.

• Mikor Hachaim is proud to announce that this Shabbos, at 4:45 PM, it will host its annual Women’s Shabbos HaGadol Drasha by Rabbi Robinson. Topic: “Who Really Knows One?”. There will also be a drasha by Rabbi Schechter before Mussaf and back-to-back drashos from Rabbi Friedman and Rabbi Robinson at 5:45 PM.

• Who can bring a smile to a child’s life? Who can help change the world? Whose work lasts a lifetime? Who will be the 2019 Hartman Family Foundation Educator of the Year Awardee? Help decide—user friendly Online Nomination Form! To complete & submit go to www.att.org→For Teachers→Hartman Family Fdn. Educator of the Year Award. For paper nomination forms & more info, visit Associated Talmud Torahs, 3531 Madison St., Skokie or www.att.org or call 773-973-2828. Submission deadline: Tuesday, May 14, by 5 PM.

• Our popular learn-to-swim program at Bernard Horwich JCC in West Rogers Park is managed by British Swim School, an international leader in water safety and survival skills. British Swim utilizes small group lessons to build on the fundamentals of water safety for infants through adults. Learn more at www.jccchicago.org/swim.

• Pre-Pesach Camp at HSBY is back! Boys ages 3-5, girls ages 3-8, 9:30-1:30, Sunday, April 14; Tuesday, April 16; Wednesday, April 17; and Thursday, April 18 (till noon). New this year—extended hours Sunday - Wednesday. Email seniorfundraiser19@gmail.com or text/leave a message 773-398-5803 to register or for more information. Limited space so reserve now!

• Second Time Around pickup times for the upcoming week: Find anything you didn’t need when Pesach cleaning? Donate unused items and help a family out! Monday, April 15: north and south of Pratt; Tuesday, April 16: Peterson Park, Lincolnwood, Skokie and Evanston; Wednesday, April 17: north and south of Pratt; Thursday, April 18: Peterson Park, Lincolnwood, Skokie and Evanston. For more information, please visit SecondTimeAroundChicago.org.
Answers:
1. The word “קנאת” (“shall be”) is extra and is used here regarding the concept of קנאות, indicating that it is an everlasting mitzvah.
2. The extra word “משה” (two) indicates that the two birds needed to be similar in appearance and value, and need to be purchased together.
3. Salt cannot be part of the purification waters of the metzora. The words “מים של מים” - “on spring water” - are numerically equivalent to י”ם של י’ם (“not in salt water”).
4. The cleaning of the house before the Kohen could possibly declare it מים had to happen quickly. The Kohen made the command, many people came to empty the house.
5. The water is sprinkled “on the house”, indicating that this was the house that Hashem preordained for that person and that he should not be jealous of other houses. It is also done on the doorframe, so once the Kohen made the command, many people came to empty the house.
6. The Torah says - “and all of the garment and all of the leather” - indicating that the entire garment must be purified.

~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~

Likutei Peshatim is endowed by Les and Ethel Sutker in loving memory of
Max and Mary Sutker and Louis and Lillian Klein. May their memory be for a blessing.

Prepared by Rabbi Ben-Zion Rand, Editor, and Mrs. Naomi Samber, Managing Editor
Details listed in the Sponsorship Section are the responsibility of the sponsors and not of Hebrew Theological College
To sponsor Likutei Peshatim for a future Shabbos, call Naomi Samber: 847-982-2500, Fax 847-982-2507, email samber@hctc.edu
Please do not send Likutei Peshatim during the Torah reading or during the repetition of the Shemoneh Esrei
LIKUTEI PESHATIM HAS TORAH CONTENT - PLEASE TREAT IT RESPECTFULLY

A partner with the Jewish United Fund in serving our community.