

לעילוי נשמת
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בת משה מנחם הלוי ז"ל



עַלֵּי דֵשֶׁה

AL EI DESHE

Weekly Torah Insights and inspiration on the Parsha from the Rosh Yeshiva Shlit"a of Gur

Man vs. Animal

אִשָּׁה כִּי תִזְרִיעַ וַיִּלְדָה זָכָר

When a woman conceives and gives birth to a male. (Vayikra 12:2)

Rashi cites Chazal:¹ "Said R. Simlai: Just as man's creation followed that of animals, so is his Torah written after the Torah of animals."

'The Torah of animals' refers to the *parshiyos* in Shemini that describe which animals may and may not be eaten. Why is that considered the Torah of animals? It wasn't

After six days of preparation, the world was ready for mankind, the crowning jewel of Creation

commanded to donkeys and camels, but to the Jewish people. Also, the *parshiyos* of *korbanos* – unquestionably 'Torah of people' – are written in Vayikra and Tzav. This precedes the 'Torah of animals' of Shemini.

Why indeed was man created last? The greater something is, the more one prepares for it. After six days of preparation, the world was ready for mankind, the crowning jewel of Creation. But each person must seek to elevate himself further and rid himself of all evil. This

takes hard work. The Gemara (Chagigah 16a) states that man resembles animals in three ways and *malachim* in three ways. Only after long, hard work can one elevate his animal attributes to be like attributes of *malachim*. At that point, after a person has surpassed and elevated the 'Torah of animals,' he reaches the 'The Torah of man.' In this way, the Torah of animals precedes the Torah of man.

The Midrash² states that if a person merits, he is told, "You preceded all of Creation." If not, he is told, "A *yitosh* (flying insect) preceded you." Why specifically a *yitosh*?

One of the characteristics the Gemara says that man shares with animals is the function of excretion. This is not meant to be taken at face value. It means that a person has the ability to diminish his physical nature. Chazal say (Yoma 75b) that *mann* is the food of *malachim*; when a person ate it, it would absorb into him entirely and he would not need to excrete. The Gemara (Gittin 56b) states that a *yitosh* does not excrete. This may be taken as a positive attribute, as similar to a *malach*.³

A person who does not merit being recognized as the first of Creation, is told that a *yitosh* precedes him – in superiority. This person did not elevate his animal characteristics to resemble a *malach*, while even a *yitosh* has a quality in common with *malachim*.

(בנאות דשא – פרשת תזריע - החודש תשפ"ב)

Setting it Straight

The Midrash⁴ cites the pasuk (Tehillim 139:5) אַחֹר וְקֵדָם צָרַתְנִי – *Back and front You have restrained me*. "Said R. Simlai: Just as man's *יצירה*, creation, followed that of animals, so is his Torah written after the Torah of animals. First is written (Vayikra 11:46), זֹאת תֹּרַת הַבְּהֵמָה, and afterwards (12:2), אִשָּׁה כִּי תִזְרִיעַ."

The *sefer Teshuos Chein*⁵ asks: Why does the Midrash employ the word *יצירה* for man's creation? Typically, the word *בריאה* is used. Also, what is the connection between man's creation and man's Torah?

Teshuos Chein explains: Chazal say (Pesachim 6b) אין מוקדם ומאוחר בתורה – *There is no chronological sequence in the Torah*. How can it be that the Torah, the symbol of perfection, is written without meaningful sequence?

The answer is that this phenomenon began with the sin of the *eitz hada'as*. Since Klal Yisrael is one with the Torah, when they were in their perfect, pre-sin state, the Torah was ordered to perfection, as well. Man was the foremost of all Creation, and so his Torah was written before that of animals. עָשָׂה הָאֱלֹקִים אֶת הָאָדָם יֵשָׁר – *Hashem created man straight* (Koheles 7:29), so his Torah was well-ordered, too. וְהָמָּה – *But [man] sought many* (cont. on page 3)

1 Vayikra Rabbah 14:1

2 Ibid

3 See Chasam Sofer, Gittin 56b, *mahadura kama*, sv. *Nidon*; *Derashos Chasam Sofer*, 8 Teves 5556, end of p. 73, column 2

4 Vayikra Rabbah 14:1

5 R. Gedalyahu of Linitz, a disciple of the Baal Shem Tov

Tazria Tidbits

– והסגיר הכהן את הנגע שבֵּעַת יָמִים – *The kohen shall quarantine the affliction for seven days.* (Vayikra 13:4)

Rashi explains that the person afflicted with *tzara'as* must quarantine for seven days, until the *kohen* can check its *simanim* and determine its status. The *Peirush HaTur* cites his father, the Rosh,¹² who maintains that there is no indication in all *Maseches Nega'im* that the person must quarantine at this point. Rather, the *tzara'as* itself must be “quarantined.” The area around it is shaved, leaving only a small buffer of two hairs around the *nega*. This way, the *kohen* can tell at the end of the week whether the *nega* has spread.

Let us mention several points on this topic:

1. In *Me'or Yaakov*, Rav Yaakov Meir Biderman notes that the Midrash¹³ seems to support Rashi's position. The Midrash states: “Just as men of flesh and blood imprison people, so does Hashem imprison people. As the pasuk states, *The kohen shall quarantine the affliction for seven days.*” However, *Mishnah Acharonah*¹⁴ notes this proof and then refutes it.¹⁵

2. After this initial *hesger* of seven days, the *kohen* inspects the *tzara'as*. If it did not spread, there is another week of *hesger*, as the pasuk states (13:33), וְהִתְגַּלַּח וְאֵת הַנֶּסֶק לֹא יִגְלַח וְהִסְגִּיר הַכֹּהֵן אֶת הַנֶּסֶק שְׁבַע יָמִים שְׁנִית – *he shall shave himself, but he shall not shave the nesek (tzara'as), and the kohen shall quarantine the nesek for a second seven-day period.*

One might ask: Following the position of the Rosh, that the initial *hesger* mentioned by the pasuk is to shave around the *nega*, why does the Torah only mention shaving around a *nega* in regard to the second *hesger*?

The answer is that the Rosh holds that the halachah of shaving for *hesger* is extrapolated from the second *hesger* to the first.¹⁶ This is one of the thirteen *middos she'haTorah nidreshes bahen: Davar halamed mi'sofo*, a matter learned from what is written at its end.

Why indeed does the pasuk only state this halachah regarding the second *hesger*? Perhaps because initially, the person does not need to shave the whole surrounding area, so he can easily mark the *nega's* boundaries by cutting some hair around it. This does not need to be spelled out by the pasuk. But during the second *hesger*, when he needs to shave the entire surrounding area, he must take special care to stop just short of the *nega*, leaving a space of two hairs unshaven around it. Thus, the pasuk makes special mention of it, saying, *he shall not shave the nesek.*

3. According to the Rosh, the *hesger* mentioned in our pasuk refers to shaving around the *nega*; thus, this mitzvah also protects the person from violating the prohibition of cutting off *tzara'as*. If so, why is *hesger* prescribed only for a *metzora musgar* (one with *tzara'as* of undetermined status), and not also for a *metzora muchlat* (one with *tzara'as* that is determined to be impure)? A *muchlat*, too, is forbidden to remove his *nega*.

We may suggest that only a *musgar*, whose status is yet undetermined, is suspect of removing the *nega*, to prevent himself from becoming a *muchlat*. But a *muchlat*, who has already been pronounced *tamei*, is expected to make peace with his situation, and is not suspect of cutting off his *tzara'as*. Thus, he does not have the halachah of *hesger*.



*Mishnas HaDa'as*¹⁷ considers whether a *nega's* strength of appearance defines its level of severity; or perhaps every *nega* within each of the categories of *nega'im* is of equal significance?

There may be an allusion to this in the pasuk. The pasuk states about Uziyahu (Divrei Hayamim II 26:19), וְהִצְרַעַת זְרָחָה בְּמִצְחוֹ – *tzara'as shone on his forehead.* Why does the pasuk mention that it shone, and not simply that it appeared? Perhaps, the stronger an appearance of *tzara'as*, the greater harshness it represents. Because of the gravity of Uziyahu's sin, committed in the Beis Hamikdash, he was punished with *tzara'as* that shone, which reflected a great severity.



וְאֵת הַנֶּסֶק לֹא יִגְלַח

But he shall not shave the nesek (tzara'as). (13:33)

Toras Kohanim states: “What is the source that if one pulls out hairs of *tumah* from his *tzara'as*, he transgresses an *asei*? from his *tzara'as*, he transgresses an *asei*? וְאֵת הַנֶּסֶק לֹא יִגְלַח – *But he shall not shave the nesek.*”¹⁸

12 See *Tosefos HaRosh*, Mo'ed Kattan 7a

13 *Vayikra Rabbah* 18:5

14 Beginning of *Nega'im*

15 See *Chazon Ish*, *Nega'im* 3:10

16 See *Tosefos HaRosh*, *ibid*, ילמד סתום מן המפורש”

17 1:11, *Be'ur Halachah* 23

18 See *Minchas Chinuch*, 170

Setting it Straight

cont. from page 1

calculations, veering from the Torah's directives, and so the Torah, too, lost its proper sequence.

Teshuos Chein cites *Megaleh Amukos* who says that if the *pesukim* of וַיְהִי בְּנִסְעֵ הָאָרֶץ (Bamidbar 10:35-36) were in their proper place in the Torah, death would end. There is a source for this in the Midrash. The Midrash⁶ states that if the *parshiyos* of the Torah would be in their proper order, anyone who would read them could perform miracles and *techiyas hameisim*. Therefore, the proper sequence was hidden.⁷

Just as there was no death before Adam's sin, when the Torah was in its proper order,

she'haTorah nidreshes bahen. Once they sinned, corrupting themselves together with their connection to the Torah, they needed these *middos* to grasp the Torah. The Sfas Emes concludes with the same pasuk cited by *Teshuos Chein*, עָשָׂה הָאֱלֹקִים אֶת הָאָדָם, וְיִשְׂרָאֵל וְהִמָּה בְּקִשּׁוֹ חֲשֻׁבֹת רַבִּים.⁸

The Gemara qualifies the rule of אין מוקדם ומאוחר בתורה: it applies only regarding בחד עניינא, two different matters; regarding one matter, the chronology is as the Torah writes it. Perhaps 'one matter' alludes to the period before man sinned, when all of Creation was uncorrupted and in unity with Hashem. Then, the Torah was in its proper order. 'Two matters' refers to after man sinned, breaking apart Creation's unity with Hashem; the Torah, too, lost its order at that time.

The Gemara (Kiddushin 30a) states that the early *Chachamim* were called *Sofrim*, counters, because they counted the letters of the Torah, and noted the mid-points of the Torah in letters, words, and *pesukim*. The *mefarshim* note that in our *Sifrei Torah*, these points are not the middle of the Torah. *Teshuos Chein* explains that these early *Chachamim* were privy to the Torah's proper sequence. In such a *Sefer Torah*, these points would be the middle. They are not the middle of our *Sifrei Torah*, only because אין מוקדם ומאוחר בתורה.

Teshuos Chein then cites the Mishnah (*Avos* 2:1), which states: רבי אומר, איזוהי דרך ישרה שיבור לו האדם, כל שהיא תפארת לעושיה ותפארת לו מן האדם – *Rebbi says: Which is the straight path that a person should choose? Whichever is a glory to its doer, and brings him acclaim from man.* What does the Mishnah mean with ותפארת לו מן האדם,

and what is added by this? It means that by treading the straight path, one repairs the damage of Adam's sin, so that one's Torah becomes as it was before the sin of the *eitz hada'as*. It is thus a straight path, a דרך ישרה, with the Torah sequenced properly – just like man's original state of creation: עָשָׂה הָאֱלֹקִים אֶת הָאָדָם יִשְׂרָאֵל.

This Mishnah was stated by Rebbi – R. Yehudah Hanasi. Rebbi contained the *neshamah* of Yaakov Avinu;⁹ *Megaleh Amukos* states that הנשיא is an acronym for נשמתו של יעקב אבינו, "the *neshamah* of Yaakov Avinu." Chazal say (*Bava Metzia* 84a) that Yaakov's beauty resembled that of Adam Harishon before his sin. This was because Yaakov repaired the damage of Adam's sin. Rebbi, bearing Yaakov Avinu's *neshamah*, instructs us to choose the straight path in life, which will bring תפארת לו מן האדם by leading us to repair Adam's sin.

"Just as man's יצירה, creation, followed that of animals, so does his Torah." Why the expression יצירה? Because בריאה is a higher level of creation, according to which man precedes animals. Since man sinned, lowering him to follow the creation of animals, the term יצירה is employed. In this state of affairs, man's Torah follows that of animals. This depends on each individual. To the extent that a person purifies himself and his actions and repairs Adam Harishon's sin, he merits Torah in its proper order, as it was before the sin of the *eitz hada'as*.

Based on this, we may explain the end of the Mishnah: והסתכל בשלשה דברים ואין אתה בא לידי עבירה, דע מה למעלה ממך, עין רואה, – *Look upon three things, and you will not come to*

By treading the straight path, one repairs the damage of Adam's sin, so that one's Torah becomes as it was before the sin of the *eitz hada'as*

so too, if a person would know the correct order of the Torah, he could bring the dead back to life.

The Sfas Emes⁸ relates in the name of *sefarim* that the thirteen *middos* by which the Torah is expounded are rooted in the thirteen *middos shel rachamim*. The *middos* of *rachamim* were given after the *cheit ha'eigel*, and so were the *middos she'haTorah nidreshes bahen*. Before the *cheit*, Bnei Yisrael were so deeply attached to the *Aseres HaDibros*, the root of the Torah, that they did not need the medium of the *middos*

6 *Yalkut*, Tehillim 625

7 See *Tosefos Rabbeinu Peretz*, Pesachim 6b

8 Ki Sisa 5656

9 *Teshuos Chein* speaks of the sin of the *eitz hada'as*, while the Sfas Emes speaks of the *cheit ha'eigel*. Nonetheless, the concept is the same.

10 See Yerushalmi, Kilayim 9:3

cont. on page 4

Setting it Straight

cont. from page 3

sin: Know what is above you – a seeing eye, a listening ear, and all of your actions written in a book. What difference does it make that our actions are recorded in a book? What does this detail add, once Hashem sees and remembers everything anyway?

וְכָל מַעֲשֵׂי בְּסֵפֶר נִכְתָּבִין means that one's every act contributes to his personal *Sefer Torah*. Based on a person's actions, his *Sefer Torah* will be sequenced properly, to a greater or lesser extent. As much as he lives up to עֲשֵׂה הָאֱלֹקִים אֶת הָאָדָם יֵשֶׁר, by mending and straightening his ways – his Torah, too, becomes straighter. This is what one must remember, to keep him away from sin.

The Gemara (Zevachim 90a) states that a *Korban Chatas* always precedes a *Korban Olah*. Although in our *parshah* the pasuk states (12:8), וְלִקְחָהּ שְׁתֵּי תְרִים אוֹ שְׁנֵי בְּנֵי יוֹנָה אֶחָד לְעֵלָה, וְאֶחָד לְחֻטָּאת – she shall take two turtledoves or two young doves, one for an *Olah* and one for a *Chatas*, placing *Olah* before *Chatas* – the Gemara says, לְמַקְרָאָהּ הַקְדִּימָה הַכְּתוּב, the pasuk precedes it only to be read in this way. Rashi explains that in practice, the *Chatas* was performed before the *Olah*. The *mefarshim*¹¹ ask the obvious: Why, then, is it written out of order?

We may suggest that it is meant to impart an important lesson. One must know as he enters this world, that the order need not be *Chatas* first and then *Olah*. Before Adam Harishon sinned, there was only *Olah*, since sin did not yet exist. The only reason for the order of *Chatas*-then-*Olah* is because of the corruption of sin. Man's purpose in this world is to become יֵשֶׁר, straight, just as he was created. In this way, his Torah as well will take its proper form, the form of לְמַקְרָאָהּ הַקְדִּימָה הַכְּתוּב.

(פרשת תזריע מצורע - בדר"ח אייר תשפ"ג - ס"ג מאמר א)

11 See *Tosafos* there, and *Mizrachi* and *Gur Aryeh* to *Vayikra* 12:8.

Tazria Tidbits

cont. from page 2

Similarly, the pasuk states (Devarim 24:8) הַשְּׂמֶר בְּנִגְעַת הַצָּרַעַת – *Be careful of a tzara'as affliction*. Citing Chazal, Rashi explains this to mean that one should not uproot signs of *tumah*.

Let us consider several scenarios where this prohibition may or may not apply:

1. Based on the pasuk (Mishlei 17:22), וְרוּחַ נִכְאָה תִּיבֶשֶׁת גְּרָם – *a broken spirit will dry out the bone*, the Gemara (Gittin 56b) teaches that looking at one's enemy can cause one's bones and body parts to shrivel.¹⁹

In order for a *nega* to be pronounced *tamei*, a *kohen* must be able to see it in its entirety with one look.²⁰ May one specifically behold an enemy so that his body parts should shrink, by which his *nega* will no longer be visible with one look?

If this is permissible, may one abstain from eating for the same purpose? Although he is causing the *tzara'as* to be rendered *tahor*, he is not actively removing it.

In regard to *nigei batim* (*tzara'as* on a house): The halachah is that a dark house cannot be pronounced *tamei*.²¹ Perhaps blocking the windows of a house so no light can enter renders it a "dark house." If so, may one do so intentionally, so that his house will be pronounced *tahor*? Or is this a transgression of removing *simanim* of *tumah*?

2. May one burn an article of clothing or destroy a house that has a *nega* on it,

thereby eliminating the *tzara'as* before a *kohen* has a chance to pronounce it *tamei*? To phrase it differently, does the prohibition of removing a *nega* apply only to excising it from its host location, or to every form of eliminating it?

3. It would seem that *tefillah* would not be a violation of this prohibition; one may daven that *tzara'as* should disappear.

*Kli Chemdah*²² points out that Moshe Rabbeinu did not daven for Miraim's *tzara'as* to be healed until Aharon instructed him to do so. This was because Moshe was not a *kohen*, so he needed to wait for a *kohen's* instruction before taking any action, as the pasuk says (Devarim 24:8) הַשְּׂמֶר בְּנִגְעַת הַצָּרַעַת לְשֹׂמֵר מְאֹד, וְלִעֲשׂוֹת כְּכֹל אֲשֶׁר יוֹרֶה אֶתְכֶם הַכֹּהֲנִים – *Beware of a tzara'as affliction, to be very careful and to act according to everything that the kohanim shall teach you*.

Similarly, *Hilchos Eretz Yisrael*²³ writes that nowadays, one should daven for a *metzora* to be healed, as one would for any ill person. In his glosses,²⁴ the *Kli Chemdah* explains that 'nowadays' refers to when no *kohen* will inspect the *tzara'as*, and thus 'act according to everything that the kohanim shall teach you' does not apply – even though the prohibition of removing a *nega* still applies. Following this interpretation, davening for *tzara'as* would violate 'act according to everything that the kohanim shall teach you' when it applies, but is not considered an act of removing a *nega*.

(בנאות דשא – פרשת תזריע - החודש תשפ"ב)

19 See *Melo Ha'omer*, *Vayikra* 13:33

20 Rashi, 13:14, citing *Toras Kohanim*

21 *Nega'im* 2:3; *Chullin* 10b

22 *Tazria*, no. 4, p. 88

23 Attributed to R. Yaakov Ba'al HaTurim. *Din Kedushas Ha'aretz*, no. 3.

24 No. 9

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