



Adapted from the sefer חמין במוצאי שבת a collection of maamarim on
תנא דבי אליהו given by the Tolner Rebbe shlita at Melave Malka

Melave Malka Parshas Tazria/Metzora 5759

In Parshas Tazria we learn about the טומאה of the Metzora. In Parshas Metzora, the Torah describes the טהרה of the מצורע, introducing the process by describing the interaction between the מצורע and the כהן.

"זאת תהיה תורת המצורע ביום טהרתו והובא אל הכהן. ויצא הכהן אל מחוץ למחנה (This will be the Torah of the Metzora on the day of his טהרה, he will be brought to the Kohen. And the Kohen will go outside of the camp and see that the צרוע נגע of the צרוע has been healed.)

The Chizkuni provides two peirushim. The first explains the phrase, "והובא אל הכהן", to mean that the matter of his טהרה will be brought to the kohen. The Metzora himself cannot come into the camp. This now clarifies the continuation, ויצא הכהן אל מחוץ למחנה.

In his second peirush, he explains that the Metzora himself is brought from his place of isolation outside the camp, to the very edge of the camp. The Kohen then comes to meet him.

I would like to analyze this second peirush. If the phrase והובא אל הכהן, means that he is brought to the edge of the camp to meet the kohen, why does the posuk continue to say that the kohen goes out to meet him? The posuk could simply say והובא אל הכהן...וראה הכהן.

Also, the word ויצא implies that the kohen is leaving one location and going to another. According to the second peirush of the Chizkuni, the kohen never leaves his own camp, he simply goes to the outer edge.



[1]

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In order to understand this, we have to realize that the Metzora, in his state of affliction, is viewed as a lowly, disgusting creature. Anyone who sees him, retreats as far as he can. The Torah's commandments that the Metzora live alone outside of the מחנה, and call out טמא טמא for all to hear, add to his state of degradation. As a result, it is virtually impossible for someone to see a מעלה or זכות in the מצורע.

However, in שמים it is clear that every person has מעלות. This מצורע certainly has מעלות and זכויות. His current repulsive state, prevents others from seeing those positive aspects.

This is why Torah doesn't simply tell the מצורע to go to the boundary of the camp, where the kohen can examine him. The Torah commands the kohen who is responsible to purify the מצורע, to leave the קדושה of the Beis Hamikdash, where he is surrounded by fellow kohanim who are טהורים וזריזים. He has to take off his בגדי כהונה, and go out to a fellow Jew, the מצורע, who has been banished to dwell alone outside the מחנה.

When the kohen leaves his familiar surroundings of קדושה, he is able to realize that not everyone grew up surrounded by kohanim serving in the Beis Hamikdash. He begins to realize that his advantages in life weren't a reward for his good deeds, but simply a gift from שמים.

He will be able to understand that, as the Gemara explains in the case of the Sotah, "Wine, levity, childishness, and bad neighbors all greatly influence people's behavior." It suddenly becomes clear that if the מצורע had grown up in the kohen's environment, he may have reached higher levels than the kohen himself. Conversely, the kohen realizes that if he had experienced everything the מצורע went through, he may have descended to a lower level than the מצורע who stands before him.

The words ויצא הכהן, instruct the kohen to leave his own world, and enter the world of the מצורע. When he does this, he will be able to discover מעלות and זכויות, even in the מצורע.



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This teaches us a vital lesson about the fundamentals of Yiddishkeit. Every Jew, even the most assimilated, has נקודות זכות and מעלות טובות. It could very well be that if he had enjoyed the benefit of our circumstances, he would have surpassed all of us. It is also possible that if any of us had lived in his world, we would have descended to deeper levels of depravity than he did.

One of the most fundamental principles of Toras Hachasidus is the obligation to always view yourself as an “equal among equals” with any Jew. The Mishna in Pirkei Avos teaches, “אל תדון את חברך עד שתגיע”, (Don’t judge your friend until you reach his place). In order to truly understand someone else you need to enter every aspect of his life. The Sfas Emes explains, “The Mishna means to tell us that since people’s דעות are never identical, it is never possible to truly reach the place of your friend. Therefore, don’t judge them at all.”

This was the way of my grandfather זי"ע throughout his life. He never felt superior to others. He always viewed himself as less worthy than those around him. I would like to share something that I heard from my brother אהרן. Once he and my grandfather travelled by bus to Teveria. My grandfather went over to a group of soldiers, and sat with them ובאהבה ובאחווה. He spoke with them and taught them a nigun that Karliner chasidim sing when they travel. When he finished this avoda, he put on his Rabeinu Tam tefillin, and invited the soldiers to put on his Rashi tefillin. No one could resist his invitation and eventually, everyone on the bus put on tefillin. He only achieved this by joining them and sitting with them as an “equal among equals”. This opened their hearts, and this is the secret of ויצא הכהן אל מחוץ למחנה.

Unfortunately, in our times, many behave in exactly the opposite manner. They make lists of applicants to Yeshivos and Seminaries, deciding who is “worth more” and who is “worth less”. They embarrass and mistreat נשמות טהורות, simply because they receive low scores on some exams, even if they have מידות טובות. We must



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remember that this is not a legitimate path. Our ancestors never looked down on someone because he lacked knowledge. They valued true **יראת שמים**, and **אמונה פשוטה ותמימה**, more than spiritual knowledge. Similarly, some people look down on anyone who doesn't share their hashkafa, or doesn't belong to their community, even if he is a talmid chochom, imbued with midos tovos and yiras shomayim. I had the **זכות** to hear a story about this from my Rebbe the Pnei Menachem **זי"ע**. He said that his father the Imrei Emes **זי"א**, never got upset about anything. There was one incident, however, that caused his father to get upset.

It was the night of Rosh Hashona, after the Imrei Emes had settled in Yerushalayim. His chasidim had all wished him a **שנה טובה**, and the Rebbe went into his house for the Seudas Yom Tov. A group of Karliner chasidim, returning from davening at the Kosel, wanted to receive a brocha from the Imrei Emes. When they knocked on the door, the Gabai, out of concern for the Rebbe's frail health, refused to let them in. When he returned, the Imrei Emes asked him who had come to the door. He responded, "**פרעמדע אידען**", (outsiders), i.e Jews who were not Gerer chasidim.

The Rebbes face turned colors, and he said "**ס'דען דא פרעמדע אידען?**" (Is there any such thing as Jews who are "outsiders"?). He commanded the Gabai to bring them in for a brocha. After that incident, he no longer allowed that Gabai to attend to him. Only when the man cried bitterly, and promised never to do such a thing again, was he allowed to resume his duties.

This holy place was founded by my grandfather **זי"א**, who was **מקרב** everyone. We should commit ourselves to seeing the **מעלות** of others, even when those **מעלות** are not obvious, and to viewing everyone with **עין טובה**. If we follow the path of Chasidus, by combining the realization of our own lowliness, with the understanding of the preciousness of every Jewish soul to Hashem, **נזכה לביאת גואל במהרה בימינו, אכי"ר**



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