



Tiferet

ת פ א ר ת



TIFERET HASHABBAT

This Week in Tiferet

Tiferet spent our final Shabbat before the Nisan break in the holy city of **Chevron**. We were inspired by the beautiful davening on Friday night and Shabbat morning in Me'arat Hamachpela and by the words of local residents **Rav Simcha Hochbaum, Rabbanit Malka Chaikan** and Hebron Community Spokesman **Noam Arnon**. A spirited Oneg Shabbat was led by Mrs. Karen Hochhauser and our madrichot and lasted well into the night. Their energy and inspiration continued throughout the day with an amazing tour of Chevron led by Rav Simcha Hochbaum. The tour included Bet Hadassa, Kever Rut and Yishai and many other historical sites.

תורת תפארת

The One behind the Seven Rav Yeshoshua Landau Parashat Metzora

The Gemara in Masechet Erchin (16A) states that the spiritual disease of Tzaraas comes on account of seven possible sins. (*Lashon hara* is one of the seven). We also find in the Tosefta on Masechet Negaim (6:6) that the Cohen tells the "spiritual patient", "Go and introspect in order to improve yourself. For Negaim only come due to haughtiness". How do we reconcile these two sources?

Rav Yaakov Galinsky answers based on a principle of Rav Chaim Vital. When we want to engage in self-improvement, we have to focus on our midot even more than our actions. Someone with refined midot will have an easy time observing the mitzvot. A person deficient in his midot will find difficulty in general in observing the mitzvot.

Based on this, Rav Galinsky explains that both sources are true. There may be seven different sins that bring on Tzara'as. But as the Tosefta explains, the Cohen is teaching the person that at the root of them all is a problem of haughtiness.

Even the sin of *lashon hara*, the most common cause for negaim throughout the teachings of Chazal, can be traced to some degree of haughtiness. Only a certain type of person will feel entitled to judge, conclude and make remarks about a fellow Jew. It is through his haughtiness that he thinks that he is worthy of retelling the mistakes of others.

We all would like to internalize the lesson of this statement of Chazal. While we certainly would like to improve in many ways, if we work on our humility, we can fix many problems.

The Mighty Have Fallen **Batsheva Feldman (5773)**

This week's parsha, Metzora, discusses the purification process of a Metzora, someone who had Tzara'at (which was discussed in last week's parsha, Tazria.)

In 14:4 it discusses what the Kohen is supposed to bring with him when he goes outside the camp to purify the Metzora. The Kohen is commanded to bring two live birds, a cedar branch, a strip of red wool, and hyssop to the Metzora. After the birds were sacrificed, the cedar branch and the hyssop were tied together with the wool and dipped together into the blood.

One is triggered to wonder what is being displayed by the use of both the cedar wood and the hyssop. This is discussed by Rashi who mentions that the hyssop is a lowly moss while a cedar tree is one of the tallest trees there is. The point of the combination is to teach the Metzora, who was similar in haughtiness before his tzara'at to a Cedar tree but after his Tzaraat and cherm is humbled like a Hyssop. He is given a reality check that in actuality he is as lowly as grass.

Although this makes a lot of sense, the point seems like it could be proven with only the use of Hyssop. The idea of humility of the hyssop can be made without bringing in the cedar branch and the height the metzora once was at. So why is it necessary for the Cedar branch to be brought in? A response to this relates how essential the cedar branch is.

For many people the definition of humility is viewed as a lowly experience with a need to push themselves down. Chassidic masters relate how the true meaning of humility is not to be broken, but rather to be standing straight and tall. Being humble should not mean that one should feel lowly. Rather to be humble should be understood as having a clear perspective, and therefore respect one's own place in context. One needs to know who they are and what they are able to do with the abilities that HaShem gave them. To confuse what constitutes being humble is a misdemeanor to oneself and one's avodas Hashem.

When someone takes the (sometimes) easier route of minimizing their G-d-given abilities and not utilizing what they have the potential and ability to do - they are wasting their potential and their capability to influence the world. There is an idea said by Rav Bunim of Peshischa, that a person should have two pieces of paper in his pocket, on one it should say "I am but dust and ashes" and on the other "For my sake was the world created." One needs to realize that despite the fact she is "But dust and ashes" HaShem chose her to have to a Neshama to sanctify the physical and spiritual.

Even the Metzora, who faltered, is able to learn and utilize the message that he has been given potential from HaShem and it is up to him whether he will use it as a downfall or as a way to reach greater heights.

Mazal Tov!

Mazal Tov to Chani Colton (5773) on her marriage to Joshua Gildin! May they be zochim to build a bayit ne'eman b'Yisrael!



Tiferet is pleased to be able to provide our students who are remaining in Israel for the Pesach vacation with exciting, enjoyable and inspiring optional tiyulim throughout the break.

We look forward to telling you about these tiyulim in detail in our next newsletter, which will be sent out after Pesach.

חג כשר ושמח!