



מוקדש לחיזוק ההתקשרות
לכ"ק אדמו"ר

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שוחאט

Daytime Purification

IN HONOR OF 60 YEARS SINCE THE REBBE INTRODUCING HIS REVOLUTIONARY APPROACH TO UNDERSTANDING RASHI, 5725—5785, THIS MONTHLY COLUMN FEATURES AN ADAPTATION OF ONE OF THE REBBE'S "RASHI SICHOS."

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זאת תהי' תורת המצרע ביום טהרתו וגו' (ד,ב)

“זאת תהי' תורת וגו': מלמד שאין
מטהרין אותו בלילה.” (רש"י)

This shall be the law of the person afflicted with *tzora'as*, on the day of his purification.

“This shall be the law of the person afflicted with *tzora'as*: This teaches [us] that [one afflicted with *tzora'as*] is not [pronounced] pure at night.” (Rashi)

We need to understand:

1. Understood simply (and as *meforshim* indeed explain), Rashi derives this *din* from the word “*beyom*,” which implies that the purification happens specifically by day, and not at night. Why, then, is the *dibbur hamaschil*: “זאת תהי' תורת,” when, seemingly, it would make more sense for it to be: “ביום” טהרתו?

2. Why does Rashi write the ruling in the negative, שאין

“מטהרין אותו בלילה” (that one is not pronounced pure at night), and not in the affirmative “שמטהרין אותו ביום” (that one is pronounced pure during the day); similar to the way *Chazal* say it: “וטהרתו ביום” (his purification should be by day)¹; or “כל היום כשר... לטהרת המצורע” (the entire day is fit for purifying a *metzora*)²?

The explanation is as follows:

According to Rashi, the word “*beyom*” is not sufficient proof that the *posuk* is specifically talking about daytime. The word “*yom*” refers to a full twenty-four hour day—which includes both day and night (for example: יהי ערב ויהי בקר יום—there was nightfall, and [then] morning, [constituting] one [full] day”).

Therefore, Rashi bases his words (not on the word “*beyom*” but rather) on the (seemingly unnecessary) words which lead up to “*beyom*”:

“זאת תהי' תורת.”

Each of these three words connotes precision, telling us that one must observe these laws following the narrower, more precise meaning of the *pesukim*. Hence, the conclusion of the *posuk*—“ביום טהרתו”—must also be understood in its



narrowest sense: the *metzora* is to be declared pure in *daytime*.

This is also why, in the *dibbur hamaschil*, Rashi adds the word "וגו'" (etcetera) after the words "זאת תהי' תורת": To hint that his source for this ruling is the word "*beyom*" as it is understood in light of the preceding words — "זאת תהי' תורת".

According to this, we can understand the difference between the Rashi's terminology, which uses the negative approach, focusing on when we do *not* pronounce him pure ("שאינן מטהרין אותו בלילה"), and the affirmative language of *Chazal*, focusing on when we *do* pronounce him pure ("וטהרתו ביום"):

The above-mentioned quotes from *Chazal* are in the context of Halacha. Contrary to Chumash, whenever the word "*Beyom*" appears in Halacha it usually refers to "daytime." Therefore, *Chazal* immediately interpret "*Beyom*" in our *posuk* to mean daytime. And since they learn the ruling directly from the word "*Beyom*," they phrase it in the affirmative "וטהרתו ביום."

Rashi, on the other hand, is commenting on a *posuk* in Chumash. And since the word "*Beyom*" by itself is not enough (as explained earlier), we need the introductory words of "זאת תהי' תורת" to reduce "*Beyom*" to its narrowest meaning and thereby *negate* the idea of the *metzora* being purified at night. Hence Rashi's language, "שאינן מטהרין אותו בלילה."

There is a practical difference in Halacha between Rashi's way of arriving at this ruling versus that of *Chazal*; namely, with regard to the following question: Can a *metzora* be purified during *bein hashmashos* (twilight), a time which—according to one opinion—is neither day nor night?

Since *Chazal* learn from the word "*Beyom*" that the purification needs to take place specifically during the day, it *cannot* be performed during *bein hashmashos* since it is not day. But according to Rashi, who arrives at the ruling by (limiting the meaning of "*Beyom*" and thereby) excluding *nighttime* purification, it would, indeed, be permissible to do it during

bein hashmashos since it is not yet night.



The Alter Rebbe says in *Likkutei Torah* that since the *metzora*'s misdeeds brings negative energies into the world ("names of *kelipa*"), his *tikkun* is to throw himself into Torah study, being that "all of Torah is names of Hashem."

This is why, when describing the purification process of the *metzora*, the Torah begins with the words "זאת תהי' תורת המצורע", since his primary *tikkun* happens (not by being brought to the *kohen* etc. but rather) through studying Torah; he is then able to transform the "impure names" into "pure names."

But in order to ensure that his Torah learning will be with *bittul*—for only then will it bring his needed *tikkun*—he must come to the *kohen* ("והובא אל הכהן"), since the *kohen* is the one who can instill this *bittul* in him.

Takeaway:

It is possible to learn Torah and forget that it is *Hashem's* Torah. True, one must become one with the Torah he learns until it becomes one's *own* Torah ("תורתו"). But this can only happen after prefacing the first part of the *posuk*—"בְּתוֹרַת ה' הִפְצוּ": Once one has a feeling of *bittul* and recognition of the fact that Torah is *Hashem's* wisdom and will, he can then study Torah in a way that he becomes one with it.

(*Likkutei Sichos* vol. 12, p. 78)

1. Toras Kohanim 14:2.
2. Megillah 21a.
3. Tehillim 1:2.