



THE RABBI BINYAMIN KAMENETZKY
TORAH LEGACY FOUNDATION
לזכרון של הרב בנימין קמנצקי זצ"ל

אמרי בנימן

דברי תורה, מחשבה וסיפורים מאנצרו של
הגאון רב בנימן קמנצקי זצ"ל

*A Dvar Torah from the writings of Rav Binyamin Kamenetzky zt"l,
transcribed by his grandson, Rabbi Shmuel Kamenetzky*

5779 - Parshas Metzorah - A Tall Order

Parshas Metzorah discusses the purification process of a metzorah - one who contracted the spiritual ailment of tzora'as. Part of the process is for the kohein to dip a cedar stick, a crimson wool string, and eizov (hyssop) grass into the blood of a slaughtered bird, and sprinkle it on the metzorah.

Rashi explains based on the gemara in Arachin, the reason for the Torah's requirement of these seemingly strange materials. One contracts tzora'as because he sinned out of haughtiness. He acted haughty - as tall as a cedar tree, **and now he must learn to be humble - as low as the hyssop grass and a woolen string.**

This seems like a tall order. This man is a sinner, in need of a full repentance. Shouldn't he take baby steps on his path back to righteousness? **Why do we expect him to immediately become as humble and low as a blade of grass?**

The Ponovezher Rav, Rav Yosef Sholom Kahaneman escaped the Nazi brutality and genocide in Europe, and arrived in Israel. He immediately got to work rebuilding the yeshiva he led in his home town of Ponovezh. After arriving in the barren Bnei Brak, then a barren suburb of Tel Aviv, he began building. He mobilized survivors and new residents, and began his yeshiva, which is thriving until this very day. While describing his ambitious plans for rebuilding all the yeshivas of Lithuania, his listeners told him, "Ponovezher Rav, you are dreaming!" He answered, "True, I am dreaming, but I'm not sleeping."

My grandfather Rav Binyamin Kamenetzky zt"l explains, that when it comes to spirituality, one must always strive for a higher level. **Just as one can stoop to the lowest level of sin, one can also climb the great heights of spiritual success.**

As the very moment that the metzora begins his repentance, he must realize that if he failed in his character, and acted as haughty as a tall cedar tree, **then he also must achieve the victory of the highest level of humility** - to consider himself as low as a blade of grass - he only has to open his eyes to see what he can achieve.

Good Shabbos!

Rabbi Shmuel Kamenetzky is the Director of Advancement at Yeshiva of South Shore - ישיבה תורת חיים - בית בנימן. He is currently compiling the vast storehouse of all the Torah thoughts from his grandfather. If you have any stories to share from his grandfather, you can email him at skamenetzky@yoss.org.