Nasso 2015

1.

Idolatry

Nachlas Tzvi page 339

"Command the children of Israel that they shall expel from the camp everyone with tzaraas" (5, 2)

"צו את בני ישראל וישלחו מן המחנה כל צרוע וכל זב וכל טמא לנפש."

Why does the pasuk use the word 'command/צו' instead of the word 'daber/speak'? Also why is the metzora (one who has tzaraas) expelled from all three camps unlike the other cases of those who were impure?
The Gemara in Sanhedrin and the Zohar (22) say the word 'command' connotes idolatry. The Medrash Rabba asks how this tzaraas affliction came upon him. Rav Yehuda answers the tzaraas came upon the Jews as a result of the sin of the golden calf (idolatry). Therefore, God invokes the principle of 'measure for measure' (Mida Kneged Mida) by punishing the idolaters by expelling them from the three sacred camps which is similar to destroying idolatry. Therefore the pasuk says 'command' which alludes to idolatry to show that because of the idols they worshiped, they were stricken with tzaraas and therefore they were sent out of all three camps.

2.

No delaying performing mitzvos

Lekach Tov page 72

"The leaders of Israel, the heads of their fathers' household, brought offerings; they were the leaders of the tribes, they were those who would stand at the counting's." (7, 2)

"ויקריבו נשיאי ישראל ראשי בית אבתם הם נשיאי המטת הם העמדים על הפקדים."

Rashi (pasuk gimal) asks, what made these leaders donate immediately unlike regarding the Mishkan where they didn't donate immediately? At the time of the construction of the Mishkan they said, whatever necessities the congregation doesn't donate, we will. Once the congregation donated everything they had nothing else to donate. Therefore they learned from their previous mistake and donated first this time.

The sefer Zichron Meir discusses the importance of not pushing off matters that need to be accomplished. This concept is stated in the Gemara. The Gemara in Suka (56) states a small gourd is better than a big gourd (בוצינא טבא מקרא). Rashi explains that if someone says to their friend 'you have one of the following two options; either I'll detach and give you this small gourd immediately or you can wait until it turns into a big gourd.' The smarter decision is to take it immediately, even though the gourd is smaller, because maybe you will not need this gourd

later. So too regarding the Kohanim and their different shifts for the avoda (service). They should perform their avoda as soon as possible and not push it off until a later shift, in order that they will perform this important mitzvah.

The Ramchal (Mesilas Yesharim perek 7) discusses the importance of this as well. The Mechilta says, a mitzvah that comes to your hands don't leaven it (מצוה הבא לידך אל תחמיצנה). Meaning, don't delay performing a mitzvah.

Similarly, the Gemara in Pesachim (4a) says that we should act quickly to perform a mitzvah (זריזין מקדימין למצוות). This is precisely how the leaders erred; they didn't act quickly enough, until it was too late and there was nothing else to donate. The Mishna in Avos says one shouldn't say when I have time I will learn, because maybe he will not have time to learn (אל תאמר לכשאפנה אשנה, שמא לא תפנה). The Chafetz Chaim (Toras Habayis) says nowadays the text of this Mishna should be changed to: he certainly will not have time to learn.