



Volume 6. Issue 36

Hesger

What is *hesger*? We have learnt that the term refers to a specific period or a status of an unconfirmed *metzora*. For example, regarding a skin *nega*, this term has been applied to one that has a *nega* that has not yet developed two white hairs, a *michya* or spread. But what does *hesger* mean?

Translations offered in previous articles have been isolation or quarantine. Such translations, taken at face value can lead to confusion. Particularly as one *Mishnah* learnt this week (13:12) discusses ways in which a *metzora* can come to shul while not causing other congregants to become *tameh*. Clearly the *metzora* is not literally locked away in this period.

Indeed the *Rosh* explains that it is not the *metzora* that is quarantined, but rather the *nega* (cited by the *Tur*, *Vayikra* 13:5). The *kohen* draws a mark around the *nega*, which is later used to discern whether the *nega* has spread. Indeed, this explanation fits with the simple wording of the *pasuk* (*Vayikra* 13:5): "... and the *kohen* quarantines the *nega* for seven days."

The *Minchat Chinnuch* however points out that the *Rambam* does not seem to agree with the *Rosh*: "...If the *kohen* who initially inspected the *metzora* died or fell ill, another *kohen* cannot rule that the *metzora* is *tameh* due to the *nega* spreading, because only the first *kohen* knows whether the *nega* has spread or

not." (*Tumat Tzaraat* 9:4) Had the *nega*'s original size been marked, this would not be a problem.

Furthermore the *Ktav Ve'Kaballa* cites the *Mishnah* learnt in the ninth *perek* regarding a case of doubt regarding which of two *negaim* had spread. If they were initially marked, what could possibly be the doubt? The *Ktav Ke'Kabbala* suggests with difficulty that perhaps the *Mishnah* is only referring to a case where the markings on both *negaim* rubbed off.

In contrast to the position of the *Rosh*, *Rashi* (*ibid.*) explains *hesger* as follows: "He shall shut him up in one house, and he shall not see him again until the end of a week." With this understanding of *Rashi* the original question is ever stronger.² If the *metzora* is enclosed in his house, how can the *Mishnah* be discussing the possibility of him coming to shul?

The *Ktav Ve'Kabbala* suggests *Rashi* is not to be understood as maintaining the *metzora* is locked up in his house never to leave. Instead the doors of the *metzora*'s house are to be closed and kept that way. He sits in the house alone.³ This is in contrast with the regular manner in which the doors were left upon for people to come and go as they pleased. That is the situation that is being prevented.⁴

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¹ The solution provided by the *Mishnah* is to make partitions 10 *tephachim* high in an area (according to the *Rambam* at least) 4 by 4 *amot*. The *metzora* should then enter and leave when there is no one else in the shul. The *Terumat HaDeshen* (2:95) explains that the even though everyone would be under one roof, the *tumah* of *tzara'at* is not as extreme as *tumat ha'met* (see for example the end of 13:12). Consequently partitioning off the *metzora* in the manner would be sufficient to contain the *tumah*.

² The *Ktav Ve'Kabbala* explains that this understanding can indeed be gleaned from the simple reading of the verse as we regularly find that a person is referred to by his actions. He continues that when the *Torah* refers to *hesger* with respect to a *michva* it still uses the masculine tense, thereby supporting the position of *Rashi* that *hesger* must be referring to the person.

³ The *Daat Zekeinim* explain that it is important for the *kohen* not to see the *metzora* for the week as gradual change is not noticeable if it is seen observed regularly.

⁴ Also see the *Minchat Chinnuch* who appears to maintain that *hesger* only refers to the *metzora*'s *halachic* status, i.e. in contrast to a *metzora* *muchlat*. He is not locked up in a room, nor is the *nega* marked.

Revision Questions

נגעים י"ג ח' – י"ד ט'

- How much of one's body must enter a *bayit menuga* for them to be *tameh*? (י"ג: ח')
- How much of a *tallit* must be inside a *bayit menuga* for it to be *tameh*? (י"ג: ח')
- How much of a *tallit menuga* must be placed inside a house for the contents to be *tameh*? (י"ג: ח')
- What is the difference between when one is wearing or carrying cloths when entering a *bayit menuga* regarding when they become *tameh*? (י"ג: ט')
- What is the law regarding the ring in the case where one is standing inside a *bayit menuga* and he extending his hand with the ring outside the house? (י"ג: י')
- Explain the debate regarding a ring in a case where one extends his hand with a ring inside a *bayit menuga*. (י"ג: י')
- Explain the debate regarding which *keilim* become *tameh* when a *metzorah* enters a house. (י"ג: י"א)
- Explain the debate regarding the time it takes for those *keilim* to become *tameh*. (י"ג: י"א)
- What is the law regarding a *metzorah* that wants to enter shul? (י"ג: י"ב)
- Explain the debate regarding the similarities between *metzorah* and *tumat ha'met* regarding *ohel* and *tzamid patil*? (י"ג: י"ב)
- Describe the purification process of a *metzorah*. (Include all four stages.) (י"ד: א-ג')
- Which detail in the process is debated? (י"ד: א')
- What is the *metzorah's* status after the first, second and third stage of purification? (י"ד: ב-ג')
- For which three people is "shaving" a *mitzvah*? (י"ד: ד')
- What is the law if the two birds are not the same monetary value? (י"ד: ה')
- What is the law if the first one was slaughter and: (י"ד: ה')
 - Found not to be *dror*?
 - Found to be a *treifah*?
 - The blood spilled?
- What are the requirements of the *etz erez? Ezov*? (י"ד: ו')
- What sacrifices are brought on the eight day? (י"ד: ז')
- What sacrifices are brought instead by a poor person? (י"ד: ז')
- What sacrifices was slaughtered first and what was done with the blood? (י"ד: ח')
- Where was the *metzorah* standing at this time? (י"ד: ט')
- Explain the debate regarding the purification of a *metzorah* that does not have a right hand. (י"ד: ט')

Local Shiurim

Sunday -Thursday

After maariv
Mizrachi Shul

Friday & Shabbat

10 minutes before mincha
Beit Ha'Roeh

Next Week's Mishnayot...

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	שבת קודש
25 th October ז' חשוון	26 th October ח' חשוון	27 th October ט' חשוון	28 th October י' חשוון	29 th October י"א חשוון	30 th October י"ב חשוון	31 st October י"ג חשוון
Negaim 14:10-11	Negaim 14:12-13	Parah 1:1-2	Parah 1:3-4	Parah 2:1-2	Parah 2:3-4	Parah 2:5-3:1

