**\*Miller’s Musings מְּצֹרָע**-**תַזְרִיעַ**  **פרשת\***

**\*How Low Should You Go?\***

The concoction produced to purify the person afflicted with tzaraa’as comprised of, amongst other ingredients, wood from a hyssop and cedar tree.  One cause for this spiritual ailment being brought upon a person, was for an unhealthy dose of arrogance.  The hyssop, a humble tree amongst other far grander ones, was brought in order to intimate to a person a need to lower oneself so as to rectify the character fault that had led to the current regrettable situation. The cedar, on the other hand, is a tall, regal tree that suggests grandeur and superiority.  This then begs the question why this was also included in a mixture intended to imply a need for humility in the one it was created for?

The requirement for humility is something spoken of often and with great reverence throughout Chazal.  Yet there is a danger that goes along with humility, which is in belittling oneself to the point whereby one has no respect for oneself or is unable to achieve anything significant due to a lack of self-worth.  It may also lead to an inability to behave with the dignity required when in a position of influence or power.  The Avnei Ezel therefore explains that the cedar is there to remind us that the humility required does not necessitate being bent over in deference to everything and everyone.  Rather it suggests that even when we do need to stand tall and be counted and even when a situation demands us to exhibit signs of the prominent standing we may hold, within us, in our hearts, we must still be as humble as the modest hyssop, fully aware of Who is truly responsible for so much of what we are.

At the root of so many of today’s psychological and spiritual issues lies a lack of regard for one’s own value.  To not appreciate the greatness within oneself and the tremendous good that each one of us is capable of, leads to discrediting one’s purpose in this world and all the damage such notions carry.  This is of course not to undermine the essential need for humility and therefore a balance is required so that appreciation of one’s gifts and strengths does not negate a recognition of the Source of their being a part of us.  We must be proud of our achievements and feel morally compelled to utilise our talents for good, all the while maintaining our humility.  Ultimately the message is to know our true worth, fully cognizant of how much of it we owe to Hashem.

**\*May the serenity of Shabbos help us find ourselves and our place\***

לעילוי נשמת לאה בת אברהם

לרפואה שלימה:  שרה יעל בת ברכה אסתר