

## On the day healthy flesh appears in it, it shall be contaminated. (13:14)

On some specific days, the *Kohen* does not view a *nega*, plague. A *chassan*, bridegroom, who has a suspicious *nega* is allowed the *Shivas yimei hamishtah*, Seven days of celebration following his wedding. Likewise, one whose plague appeared at the onset of *Yom Tov* is permitted for the seven days of the Festival. Why is this? *Horav Chaim Zaitchik, zl*, offers a practical explanation. The purpose of the *metzora's* punishment is to knock him down a notch in his arrogance and in the way he treats his fellow man. He has an obnoxious manner of treating people, because he has convinced himself that he is better than they are. His punishment is commensurate with his actions. He created rifts among people with his malignant tongue; he will be locked up in solitude, so that he will experience a taste of his own medicine. Perhaps the seclusion and ensuing loneliness will spur him to think about the strife that he is causing. The loneliness will teach him what he has caused to happen to others. This might motivate a change in his attitude toward himself and others.

This is why he is not quarantined during his *Sheva brachos*, a time when joy permeates his life and worry has great difficulty creeping in. A person who is at the apex of joy or engrossed in the celebration of the Festival is not likely to condescend to the Heavenly punishment of *tzaraas*. He will ignore the lesson, because his mind is on something else. Indeed, during the festivities, he may even audaciously laugh off the punishment.

Thus, he is given his seven festive days – both nuptial and Festival, so that he can clear his mind, have his fun, and now confront the reality of his sins, their harmful effect on others – and on himself. With nothing to motivate insolence, he will hopefully confront his issues and repent.