

לזכר נשמת האשה החשובה יוכבד בת ר' יצחק ע"ה ח' אייר תרנ"ט - ד' אייר תשנ"ג

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Learning From The Trup

The Torah states (*Vayikra* 15:13) that after a zav counts his seven clean days, he must purify himself by immersing his clothing and himself in fresh spring water. While many types of contamination can be cleansed through immersion in a mikvah, in this case, purification requires immersion specifically in fresh spring water. The *mefarshim* discuss why the *passuk* places the purification of the zav's clothing next to the purification of the zav himself (וכבס בגדיו ורחץ בשרו במים חיים).

The Mechilta explains that this connection equates the purification process of clothing to that of the zav himself. Just as a person must ensure that no obstructions (הציצה) exist between his body and the water during immersion, so too must one ensure that contaminated clothing is free from any obstructions before immersion. However, while the proximity of these two *halachos* creates a parallel, it does not mean that all *halachic* aspects of their purification are identical. The Torah requires the zav himself to immerse in fresh spring water to achieve purification, whereas his clothing may be purified in a mikvah.

The Malbim notes that this distinction is embedded in the wording of the *passuk*. He points out that while the Torah often uses the phrase "and he will wash in water," there are eight instances in *Vayikra* where the Torah adds the word "בשרו" ("his flesh"), between the words "and he will wash in water," each time teaching a unique *halachic* insight. Here, the inclusion of "בשרו" emphasizes that only the zav himself must immerse in fresh spring water, whereas his clothing may be purified in a mikvah. This is because the "extra" word means that only "בשרו" ("his flesh"), requires immersion in fresh spring water. ורחץ בשרו במים חיים but the

zav's clothing does not have this same requirement.

The *Sefer Shem Olam* highlights a fascinating nuance in the *trup* that reinforces this distinction.

Whenever the Torah places the phrase "יכבס בגדיו" ("he shall wash his clothing") next to "ורחץ במים" ("he shall wash in water"), the musical notes never include an *asnachta* (a wishbone-shaped mark, similar to a semicolon) under "בגדיו"—as seen in *pessukim* 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, and 11 of this perek. However, in this *passuk*, the *trup* under "בגדיו" does include an *asnachta*.

The *Sefer Shem Olam* explains that the *asnachta* serves to separate and divide the *passuk*, signaling a distinction between the zav's immersion and the immersion of his clothing. The former requires fresh spring water, while the *asnachta* indicates that this requirement applies only to the zav himself, not to his clothing, which was mentioned before the *asnachta* and is not directly linked to the zav's personal immersion. His clothing, therefore, may be purified in a mikvah.

He writes: See how wondrous the musical notes (*trup*) are, and how by using them correctly, one can understand so much more of a *passuk*. Praiseworthy is the one who delves into the simple *pshat* and always gives attention to the *trup*, which has been passed down to us as an inheritance from our ancestors.

Summary: While the proximity of the immersions creates an equivalence, the added word "בשרו" and the musical note under "בגדיו" teach us to limit the equivalence.

