

Many forms of Pesach Cleaning

Many people do "spring cleaning" as Pesach approaches. How much of that cleaning is necessary for Pesach is the topic of many talks this time of year, but to be kind, let's say that with Pesach being Chag HaAviv, the Spring Festival, the idea of spring cleaning is not totally out of place.

Many others have finally become able to focus their energies on the cleaning that fits better into the definition of chameitz removal - which is a mitzva among TARYAG.

Do people go overboard? Yeah, usually. But that's not bad, per se. Just, whatever you do, try not to let it spoil the joy of Yom Tov - which is also a Torah mitzva.

But there is another kind of cleaning and cleansing to which our attention is called, in this pre-Pesach period. Two weeks ago we read the special maftir for Shabbat Parshat Para. That is seen as a serious preparation for Nisan and Pesach, since ritual purity (TAHARA) is a pre-requisite to bringing and eating the Korban Pesach. (Yes, there are situations in the time of the Mikdash when the KP can be brought in a state of TUM'A, ritual impurity. But that is not an ideal situation, so we'll leave it out of this presentation.)

Undergoing the "treatment" of the Para Aduma Potion is the only way to rid oneself of TUM'AT MEIT - the impurity contracted from contact with a dead body. And it can be done any time of the year, but was most commonly done as Pesach approached and Jews came to Yerushalayim for Pesach. Side point - only TUM'AT MEIT (and not other types of TUM'A - see further) could be part of the situation mentioned (and pushed out of the discussion) above.

cont. p.4

Jerusalem in/out times for METZORA

6:27pm / 7:41pm Summer time (see page 3 for other zmanim)

Checked and double checked for Shabbat Parshat Metzora

Moshiko

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Word of the Month As you might have noticed, the molad of Nisan was Sunday noontime and Rosh Chodesh was not until Monday night, Tuesday. This means that the first opportunity for Kiddush L'vana this month, according to Minhag Yerushalayim is Wednesday night, the eve of the 3rd of Nisan. Some people mistakenly think that is too early because it is not after the third day of the month. But it is after 3 full days from the molad - and that's what counts for KL - not the day of the month. Motza'ei Shabbat will be a popular time for KL this month. People who wait until seven days after the molad will have their first op on SUN night, April 10th.



Candles (earliest)	Metzora	Havdala	next week
6:27 (5:44)	Yerushalayim	7:41	6:32 / 7:46
6:45 (5:46)	S'derot	7:43	6:49 / 7:48
6:43 (5:44)	Gush Etzion	7:41	6:47 / 7:46
6:44 (5:45)	Raanana	7:43	6:49 / 7:48
6:43 (5:45)	Beit Shemesh/RBS	7:42	6:48 / 7:47
6:44 (5:46)	Netanya	7:43	6:49 / 7:49
6:44 (5:45)	Rehovot	7:43	6:49 / 7:48
6:42 (5:45)	Be'erSheva/Otniel	7:42	6:46 / 7:47
6:43 (5:45)	Modi'in/Chashmona'im	7:42	6:48 / 7:47
6:27 (5:45)	Petach Tikva	7:43	6:32 / 7:48
6:27 (5:43)	Maale Adumim	7:41	6:32 / 7:46
6:43 (5:45)	Ginot Shomron	7:42	6:48 / 7:47
6:42 (5:44)	Gush Shiloh	7:41	6:47 / 7:46
6:43 (5:44)	K4 & Hevron	7:41	6:47 / 7:46
6:43 (5:44)	Giv'at Ze'ev	7:41	6:47 / 7:47
6:44 (5:45)	Yad Binyamin	7:43	6:49 / 7:48
6:45 (5:46)	Ashkelon	7:44	6:50 / 7:49
6:32 (5:43)	Tzfat	7:41	6:37 / 7:47
*** (5:45)	Zichron Yaakov	***	*** / ***

Rabbeinu Tam Havdala - METZORA - 8:18pm

Ranges are 10 days. WED-FRI
2-11 Nisan • April 6-15

Earliest Talit & T'filin	5:31-5:20am
Sunrise	6:23-6:12am
Sof Z'man K' Sh'ma (Magen Avraham: 8:55-8:48am)	9:32-9:25am
Sof Z'man T'fila (Magen Avraham: 10:04-9:58am)	10:35-10:30am
Chatzot (halachic noon)	12:41 $\frac{3}{4}$ pm-12:39 $\frac{1}{4}$ am
Mincha Gedola (earliest Mincha)	1:14-1:12pm
Plag Mincha	5:42 $\frac{1}{2}$ -5:46 $\frac{3}{4}$ pm
Sunset (based on sea level: 7:01-7:07pm)	7:06-7:12pm

ZICHRON YAAKOV - please note:
Pursuant to an email received from a
TTreader in Zichron informing us of a
discrepancy in times between TT and the
local religious council, we will be
investigating the issue for next issue

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LEAD TIDBIT cont. from front page

- of bringing Korban Pesach in TUM'A when the majority of the people are TAMEI. People with a different form of TUM'A cannot bring KP - even if all the people are TAMEI.

Back on track.

Kohanim and Leviyim on duty in the Beit HaMikdash, obviously had to carefully watch themselves to avoid becoming TAMEI. And if and when they became TAMEI, they had to undergo whatever steps were necessary to become TAHOR.

In addition, there were people in the time of the Mikdash who strove to avoid becoming TAMEI in their day-to-day lives, even without plans to visit the Beit HaMikdash or eat sacred foods.

The majority of the people would only concern themselves with becoming TAHOR when they came to Yerushalayim for ALIYA L'REGEL or if and when they came to Jerusalem with korbanot to offer and/or Maaser Sheni to eat (or its redemption money to spend on food and drink).

Again, this is why Parshat Para is right before HaChodesh, which is right before Nissan (or on Rosh Chodesh Nisan).

This year - as in all 13-month, 2-Adar years, the sedras of Tazri'a and Metzora are read around this same "Pesach is coming soon" period. And that gives us further pause to ponder

the TUM'A and TAHARA issues that we usually don't pay much attention to. [Kohanim today are more aware of their need to avoid contact with TUM'AT MEIT than most of the rest of us. A non-kohein about to enter one of the hospitals in Israel might or might not notice a warning posted that entrance is forbidden to kohanim. Maybe it will cause a momentary hesitation, but that's all. A conscientious kohein will stop in his tracks and about-face when seeing that sign posted.]

And this leads us to one further kind of cleaning and cleansing and purifying that we need think about at this time of the year - if not always.

In addition to chameitz and actual ritual impurity, we must examine and inspect - and clean up - our deeds, our words, our thoughts. As Jews and as people.

Expressions that pop into one's head - dirty mind, dirty language, and a whole range of foul habits - all point in the direction of a challenge that goes beyond removing chameitz from our possession before Pesach, and beyond immersion in a mikveh and purification - in the time of the Mikdash (past and future) with the Para Aduma Potion.

We have ourselves to clean up. This includes personality traits and social and religious behavior.

Spring cleaning has a wide and deep meaning for us and presents challenges that go way beyond the physical.

M'tzora

28th of 54 sedras;

5th of 10 in Vayikra

M'tzora begins the second half of the sedras

Written on 159 lines in a Sefer Torah, ranks: 40

6 Parshiyot, 3 open and 3 closed

90 p'sukim, ranks 42nd (5th in Vayikra)

1274 words, ranks 39th (4th in Vayikra)

4697 letters, ranks 39th (4th in Vayikra)

M'tzora's p'sukim are longer than average, hence its rise in ranking for words & letters

MITZVOT

11 mitzvot - all positive (of 6 sedras that have only positives - B'reishit, Lech L'cha, Chukat, Pinchas, Vayeilech - this is the most by far)

Aliya-by-Aliya Sedra Summary

[P> X:Y (Z)] and [S> X:Y (Z)] indicate start of a parsha p'tucha or s'tuma respectively. X:Y is Perek:Pasuk of the beginning of the parsha; (Z) is the number of p'sukim in the parsha.

Numbers in [square brackets] are the Mitzva-counts of Sefer HaChinuch AND Rambam's Sefer HaMitzvot. A=ASEI (positive mitzva); L=LAV (prohibition) - Rambam counts positives (248) and prohibitions (365) separately. X:Y is the perek and pasuk from which the mitzva is counted.

Kohen - First Aliya

12 p'sukim - 14:1-12

[P> 14:1 (20)] The afflictions presented in Tazria are immediately dealt with by the procedures described in M'tzora.

The main theme of M'tzora is the "ritual purification" of the one afflicted with Tzora'at. These procedures constitute a positive mitzva [173, A110 14:2]. Two birds are to be taken, a ceremony is performed with them, one bird is slaughtered, and the other is set free. The person immerses in a mikve, he cleans his garments, and he shaves all the hair on his body [174,A111 14:9]. The rules of ritual immersion in general, come from this context [175, A109 14:9].

A long SDT... The 12th and final chapter of Mishna Chulin deals with the mitzva of Shilu'ach HaKen (the sending away of the mother bird who is on her nest of eggs or fledglings). The final mishna in that chapter deals with the situation when that mitzva might clash with the purification of the

In loving memory of our
beloved father, grandfather
and great-grandfather
משה בן יוסף זעליג ז"ל
Murray Minkoff z"l
on his 17th yearzeit, ה' ניסן
from the Minkoff and Leff families

M'tzora. What if the only bird available to the M'tzora for his atoning offerings is a mother sparrow hovering over her nest? Do we say the positive mitzva of Taharat HaM'tzora overrides the prohibition of taking the mother bird? This would seem to fit a general rule: a positive commandment overrides a prohibition (Asei docheh lo taasei). Yet this is not the case. Even for a mitzva, and even when the bird will be released alive(!), as is the case of the second of the M'tzora's two birds, one may not violate the Shilu'ach HaKen prohibitions. There are technical reasons based on the wording in the text of the Torah for this. And, Shilu'ach HaKen is not a "simple" prohibition, but involves an attached positive command.

But there might be another concept here. Shilu'ach HaKen is a "show-case" mitzva. It is one of the rare mitzvot for which a reward is specified - Arichat Yamim (length- ening of life, the exact meaning of this is not clear - does it apply to this world or the next or both? - but the reward is expressed). The mitzva defies



common logic and reasoning. It contains enigmatic qualities of a CHOK - a Divine imperative, not readily explainable. And its reward is implied for many other mitzvot by reasoning of a Kal VaChomer - if this mitzva is rewarded thusly, then certainly the more difficult mitzvot must carry with them great reward. (Although we are cautioned not to act in order to receive reward, and although we cannot compare one mitzva with another since we "don't know how G-d keeps score", we do have a sense of the truth of the logic expressed by the mishna.) Be that as it may, we can possibly learn that the pursuit of personal improvement may not be at the expense of others, be they human or animal. [Note: this is only food for thought, which might not even be "correct" for this issue. Certainly, one should not generalize to other areas of mitzva.]

Last week's Torah Tidbits carried a full-page memorial notice on the Sh'loshim of
Karen Singer נ"ע
with the names of those who contributed towards the notice (and a plaque of some sort - as yet to be determined). The following people have also contributed since "press time" last week
Devorah Chaya Shem Tov
Susan & Danny Taragin • Yaffa Meir
Lila Eisenberg • Deena Sattler
Yitty Kaplan • Miriam Essris
Tzvi & Menya Honickman

BTW (that's by the way), the "rule" mentioned earlier whereby a positive commandment (sometimes) pushes aside a prohibition, does not operate when it is possible to satisfy the command without violating the prohibition. Since there is no requirement to take specifically a mother bird that is hovering over her nest, then the positive commandment of TAHARAT HAM'TZORA cannot override the LO TIKACH HA'EIM AL HABANIM prohibition of Shilu'ach HaKen. Additionally, Shilu'ach HaKen is not a pure prohibition because of the positive command to verily chase away the mother bird - SHALEI'ACH T'SHALACH... But the original point is still something to ponder.

Levi - Second Aliya 8 p'sukim - 14:13-20

The purification process is completed after bringing various korbanot, following a seven day period and the other procedures, as mentioned above [176, A77 14:10].

*Mazal Tov to
Rabbi Aharon & Miriam Adler
and family on the marriage of their
daughter Moriya to Yair.
Mazal Tov to the grandparents
David & Sonja Adler and
Fred & Gertrude Halberstadt*

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SDT: Notice how the M'tzora is isolated from others during the time he is ritually unclean. That gives him time to examine himself, his deeds, his thoughts. But as part of the process of purification, as part of the process of having a second chance in the world, he is ministered to by a kohen who becomes the first contact in his renewal procedure. There is a significant psychological factor at work in the area of NEGA'IM.

On another note... Notice the use of the blood of the korbanot as well as the oil that the purifying M'tzora brings. Many of the same things are done to both - sprinkling, dabbing the right earlobe, right thumb and right big toe.

Zot Tihyeh or S'gira

Shlishi - Third Aliya 12 p'sukim - 14:21-32

[S> 14:21 (12)] A person who cannot afford the animals for the sacrifices, is to bring one sheep and two birds as his offering. The Torah describes the rituals involved in these offerings.

It is not important how much the sacrifice is worth on a dollars and cents basis (shekels and agorot), but what is relative to the means of the atoner.

Thus ends the section of the Torah dealing with afflictions to the individual. ZOT TORAT... this is the body of law of one afflicted who cannot afford the full set of korbanot.

R'vi'i - Fourth Aliya 21 p'sukim - 14:33-53

[P> 14:33 (25)] The Torah next discusses Tzora'at that can afflict a person's house. This can only be in the Land of Israel, in a house made of specific materials, and under specific conditions [177, A103 14:35]. Once again, it is the kohen who makes the determination as to whether Tzora'at does

*Mazal Tov to
Tzvi & Menya Honickman
on the marriage of their
granddaughter*

exist, or a professional house painter should be consulted. In the case of a "house plague", there are procedures to be followed and purification processes, including korbanot to be brought.

SDT: Not only does a person's body contain elements of spirituality, but even his home - specifically in Eretz Yisrael. Although we do not "practice" this whole topic today, the lessons of the bridge and connection between the physical world and the spiritual one cannot be overlooked. A person whose home is a meeting place for Torah scholars, a launching pad for acts of charity and kindness, a training ground for a new generation of sensitive, feeling, enthusiastic Jews, such a home cannot be infected by spiritual plague. A home devoid of spirituality is a prime target for Nig'ei HaBayit. In this case, it is not the anti-rust and anti-mold paint that makes the difference. It is the values that a Jew lives by and their effect on the next generation.

It is worthwhile to point out that the manifestation of a NEGA and some kind of rot, mold, fungus, or whatever can be EXACTLY the same. If a kohen sees it and declares ritual impurity, then it is a NEGA HABAYIT. And if he doesn't see it (and say it!), then it isn't. Even if a non-kohen expert in the field identifies it as a NEGA. And it is possible that a

*Mazal Tov to
Batya & Joseph Neppe
on the birth of a grandson*

kohen was about to declare a house TAMEI and he finds out the the homeowner is a CHATAN in his first week of marriage, then he won't make the declaration and there is no TUM'A. It is all "the way a kohen sees it".

Let's contrast this kind of TUM'A to that of TUM'AT MEIT. If a person dies in a tent, let's say, then anyone in the tent becomes TAMEI. Same for objects that are subject to contracting that TUM'A. No one declares them TAMEI. They are automatically TAMEI by virtue of the fact that they were under the same roof as a dead body. But with NEGA HABAYIT, we find different rules. People and personal possessions are removed from the house before the kohein comes in to inspect. When he declares the house TAMEI, then it is and so are certain objects in it. An object that was in the same house minutes before - and nothing physically changed with the house in the meantime - but was removed before the declaration by the kohein, is TAHOR. Maybe we can say that TUM'AT MEIT is objective while the TUM'A of these N'GA'IM is subjective. There's a lot to ponder here.

GIMATRIYA based on L'ORA SHEL TORA

by R. Yaakov Auerbach ז"ל

Our sources clearly state that the (main) cause of Tzora'at is Lashon HaRa. This idea is reflected beautifully in the following Gimatriya. The numeric value of NEGA TZORA'AT is 883. The prohibition of gossip and "evil tongue" is LO TEILEICH RACHIL B'AMECHA, "do not be a talebearer". Its numeric value is 883. Punishment for violating the 883-prohibition of

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Lashon HaRa is the 883-affliction of Tzora'at. more...

In loving memory of our dear & beloved
(Dr.) Clara חיה Hammer
ע"ה
on her first yahrzeit, י"א ניסן,
May her memory be
a blessing to Am Yisroel
Clara Hammer Chicken Fund
POB 18602 • Jerusalem 91185

The proper way to avoid both the violation and its punishment is with MIDOT TOVOT (good personality traits) = 883. And if we all can avoid Lashon HaRa and its punishment by developing those good traits, then TIZKU L'GEULA SHLEIMA (you shall merit the Complete Redemption) = 883.

Ed. note: L'Ora shel Tora was the main inspiration for our searches for "Treasures in the Sand" Gimatriya Matches.

Chamishi 5th Aliya 19 p'sukim - 14:54-15:15

This portion begins with a summary of different types of NEGA'IM.

The smallest p'sukim in the Torah have 3 words each. There are only 13 in the whole Torah. Here in M'tzora are two 3-word p'sukim back-to-back - unique. Is there anything special about these 3-word p'sukim? Perhaps - in some Sidurim there is the list of the 3-word p'sukim (plus some "special" p'sukim from elsewhere in Tanach) in the Motza'ei Shabbat readings (after Z'mirot). It is probably Kabalistic.

Mazal Tov to
Annette & Peter Orrelle
on the birth of a granddaughter
first daughter for
Avigal & David Sidman

[P> 15:1 (15)] Next the Torah speaks of the status of a man with an "unnatural discharge" (probably a form of venereal disease). In such cases, the Torah view matters as a combination of physical symptoms with spiritual causes - in the case of "Zav" and

יהי רצון מלפניך ה' אלהינו ואלהי אבותינו
שתשלח מהרה רפואה שלמה מן השמים
רפואת הנפש ורפואת הגוף לחולים

מרדכי בן לאה
שרה ביילע בת עדינה הנדלא
אביגיל אסתר בת אפרת צפורה
יהושע משה בן ריסל
אנשל אשר בן שפרינצא
ישעיה שלום בן מלכה גיטל
חיים אברהם חנינא בן בלימה
יהודה לייב בן הענא
נתנאל יוסף בן שמחה סימה
דוד יוסף בן פייגי פרל
רוני רבקה בת רחל
רבקה בת יעל
עדי בת ליבה איטה
יהודה יורם בן קרון אור
איילנה מיכל בת אלישבע מלכה
רחל שירה בת יפיה דבורה
אברהם ישעיהו בן אביבה
ציפורה בת חנה מנוחה
משה שלמה בן חנה לאה
חנה רבקה בת רייזל
שמחה בת רחל
חיה מאירה מינדל בת חוה גאלדא
Menya Leba bat Yitta Chaya
Hinda Molly bat Zelda
Shoshana Abra bat Chaya Beila
Chedva bat Chaya
בתוך שאר חולי ישראל.

"Zava", most probably attributable to sexual misconduct. (As such, there is a close relationship between the different themes of the sedra. Interesting, is it not, that there are doctors and clinics today that specialize in dermatology and venereal diseases. Interesting combination of specialties in light of this week's sedra.)

The one afflicted is himself "Tamei" as well as causing other people and objects to become "ritually impure" through contact, both direct and indirect [178, A104 15:2]. The one afflicted, must bring special korbanot after a purification process [179, A74 15:13].

We've done this. We've been there!

Shishi - Sixth Aliya 13 p'sukim - 15:16-28

[S> 15:16 (3)] There is also a "ritual impurity" (of a lesser degree - one-day type) in cases of normal seminal emissions [180, A105 15:17]. A woman who has relations with a man also contracts this one-day Tum'a. A menstruating woman is "ritually unclean". This is counted as a positive mitzva [181, A99 15:19]; its negative counterpart is in the next sedra.

[P> 15:19 (6)] A woman with an unnatural discharge has a specific set of rules. In the case of a Zava, there are differences in her status depending upon how many

sightings of blood there are, and how frequent. These rules and procedures constitute a mitzva [182, A106 15:19].

[S> 15:25 (9)] The longer-term Zava is presented in its own parsha, a S'TUMA that can be seen as a sub-parsha of the previous P'TUCHA that introduced the topic of ZAVA. These rules and procedures constitute a mitzva [182, A106 15:19].

Sh'VII - Seventh Aliya 5 p'sukim - 15:29-33

The requirement of the korbanot at the conclusion of the period of impurity constitutes a positive commandment [183, A75 15:29]. The people of Israel have a great potential for attaining spiritual heights. They have an equally great potential for descending to low levels of spiritual impurity.

Generally, when there is a rich man's korban and a poor man's korban for the same situation, if a rich man brings the less expensive version of the korban, he fulfills his obligation, after the fact. Tzora'at is an exception. If a rich man brought a poor man's

offering, he has not fulfilled his obligation. The son of the Nodeh B'Yehuda beautifully explained why this is so. One of the causes of Tzora'at is stinginess. Even the term in our Vidui can be seen as a play on words - TZAROT AYIN. If a rich man brings a poor person's korban, in this case it is an indication that he hasn't healed. The korban cannot bring atonement.

The last 3 p'sukim of the sedra (which are reread for Maftir) serve as a summary to the topics of ritual purity and impurity and present the challenge to the Jewish People to rise above mundane physical existence by scrupulously avoiding "impurity".

SDT: Commentaries note that the laws pertaining to human beings (the sedras of Tazria and M'tzora) follow the laws pertaining to animals (Vayikra, Tzav, Shmini). This corresponds to the sequence of creation - animals were created before humans. If a person behaves in an improper manner, he is lower than an animal. And is reminded that "the mosquito preceded him". If however, he behaves properly, keeps the Torah and mitzvot, rises to the challenge

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of being holy, then he is worthy of having been created in the image of G-d.

Haftara 18 p'sukim M'lachim Bet 7:3-20

The Haftara tells the story of four M'TZORA'IM (lepers, not the greatest translation) who decided to enter a Syrian camp to find food. They found that the Syrians had fled. They reported the status of the enemy camp to the guards of the Jewish city.

As Elisha had prophesied, the famine ended on the following day and grain and food was found.

Rabbi Jacobs z"l in A Haftara Companion says that aside from the obvious, but seemingly shallow connection between sedra and Haftara - both mention TZA'RA'AT - there is a deeper lesson to be learned from the haftara. Four people who were outcasts, no one would touch them, they were isolated from their society, they were on their own during very difficult times, nonetheless embarked on the path of spiritual improvement by being concerned with their fellow Jews and reporting the condition of the enemy camp so that others would be able to obtain food and be saved. If, as mentioned earlier in the previous SDT, one of the causes of TZA'RA'AT is stinginess, then the intrepid four of the Haftara are indeed on the mend.

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The Gift of Leprosy in the Land

The laws of NIGEI BATIM, leprosy which afflicts a house, are prefaced with the introduction, "When you come into the land of Canaan which I give to you as a possession, and I put the affliction of leprosy in a house in the land of your possession..." (Vayikra 14:34)

Rashi quotes the words of the Midrash (Vayikra Rabba 17) regarding the connection between leprosy on a house and Eretz Yisrael. "This was an announcement to them that these plagues would come upon them because the Amorites concealed treasures of gold in the walls of their houses during the forty years that Bnei Yisrael were in the wilderness. As a result of the plague, the houses were smashed and the treasures were discovered."

At the same time, while we see the words of the Midrash here relating to NIGEI BATIM as a gift which enables the inhabitants of Eretz Yisrael to discover hidden treasures, we also find sources in Chazal which view NIGEI BATIM as a punishment for different types of sins (Arachin 16a).

The common denominator between the two is the fact that in the land of

Israel we are more clearly directed towards the inner message of Hashem's supervision of the world. As the Ramban writes, this phenomenon of leprosy is unique to Eretz Yisrael because of the high spiritual level of the land. Whether Hashem is calling our attention to areas which need improvement or He is rewarding us for our actions, His word is transmitted more clearly in Eretz Yisrael.

Rabbi Ari Waxman, Yeshivat Sha'alvim

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In the Footsteps of our Forefathers

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Thursday, April 28th

Divrei Menachem

Parshat Metzora describes the ways by which an individual struck by Tzara'at was cured. One form of Tzara'at - a spiritual malaise with a physical manifestation - affected an individual's body. Once the kohen identified the disease, followed the progress of the ailment, and finally declared that the symptoms had disappeared, he would be ready to instigate a number of procedures that would purify the stricken individual.

The kohen conducted a ceremony that included two live birds, cedar wood, crimson thread, and hyssop, designed to appraise the person guilty of anti-social gossip to lower his pride. Then, after a degrading session whereby the guilty person shaved his entire body and immersed himself and his clothes, there followed a period of isolation during which the offender reflected on his wrongs to society. Finally, the miscreant was to bring a number of sacrificial animals and several meal offerings as atonement for his mistakes.

An impoverished individual could bring but one sheep and two doves (for sacrifices) and a much lesser contribution for one meal offering. He is described as, "poor and of insufficient means" (Vayikra 14:21). But why the redundant expression, "of insufficient means"? Rav Yaakov Landau suggested that there are people who are really poor and there are the miserly who act like they are destitute. In that case, if they bring a poor man's portion they are not exonerated (Archin 15). Indeed, such people did not really learn their lesson because they continued to cheat the very society they had already wronged!

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VEBBE REBBE

QUESTION: *Should one follow the minhag to put out ten pieces of bread before bedikat chametz? I have heard people question the minhag's logic.*

ANSWER: The minhag is old, mentioned (and rejected) by the Ra'avad over 800 years ago as a safeguard that the b'racha on the bedika should not turn out to be l'vatala (in vain) if nothing is found. The concern seems to assume that the b'racha is for finding chametz. There are at least four explanations of this b'racha, which is AL BI'UR (on the destruction or the removal of) chametz, which is strange because it is made before the b'dika, not the burning, which is the next day:

- 1) This is the beginning of the preparations for the main event, the next day's bi'ur (Taz 432:4);
- 2) The b'racha is primarily on the mitzva (perhaps rabbinic) to search for chametz (see Rosh, Pesachim 1:10);
- 3) The b'racha includes the bitul (nullification) done after the b'dika (see ibid.);
- 4) The b'racha is primarily on the

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removal of the chametz from one's mind, which happened before the bedika started (Rambam, B'rachot 11:15).

The problem of b'racha l'vatala if no chametz is found (but known chametz will be disposed of tomorrow) is only according to the second approach and assuming that the search must turn up something. Yet, it is reasonable for a minhag to deal with a possible problem even if the concern is based on a minority opinion, and this is the simple reading of the Rama (Orach Chayim 432:2).

Some Acharonim reject the rationale and the practice of the minhag. The Taz (op. cit.) says that not only is it unnecessary but it is detrimental because one might not find everything that was put out. This concern is mitigated by the usual care of whoever puts them out to know the number (traditionally, ten) and location of the pieces. Irrespective of this minhag, it is always possible that chametz will be missed and after doing bedika and bitul, one is not culpable (see Living the Halachic Process, vol. I, D-16). Some suggest to make pieces of less than a k'zayit so that if he misses one, there will not be enough to violate the prohibition of possessing chametz (Zera Emet I, 48; Yechaveh Daat V, 31). An interesting practical dispute is whether people will take bedika more or less seriously due to the presence of the ten pieces, and it may depend where they are placed (see Chok Yaakov 432:14, Ish Matzliach I, OC 37).

Other reasons are given for putting out

the pieces of bread. The Mahari Weil (193) cites the gemara's concern that something prompt one to do bitul, and says that the best reminder is to finish bedika by putting everything found away for the next day's burning and then doing bitul. Another factor makes the minhag particularly appropriate in our times. Classically, people had much smaller houses and less property, and bedika was the main Pesach cleaning. Now people spend weeks cleaning seriously in a manner that makes the bedika (almost) a formality, in which they do not look for real chametz. (See Ask the Rabbi, Vayikra 5766 for a discussion of whether this is justified.) Without the pieces of bread, then, the bedika is neither a preparation for burning nor a serious search, and the b'racha is more problematic (**Emek Halacha, cited by Kaf Hachayim 432:31**). There are also Kabbalistic reasons, attributed to the Ari, for the minhag. (See the Tzitz Eliezer's (IX, 17) **proof that looking for something that you know is there is considered searching in our context.**)

Although there have been, over the centuries, poskim who thought that this minhag is superfluous or detrimental, one should follow it unless he has specific reason not to. (**Minchat Yitzhak VIII, 35 says that the minhag does not apply to one who is doing a "pre-14th" bedika, as he does not make a b'racha**). An old minhag that is still in practice by the overwhelming majority of religious Jews deserves the phrase "the minhag of Israel is Torah", all the more so when the logic behind it is readily understandable, even if arguable.

Rav Daniel Mann, Eretz Hemdah Institute

Ask the Rabbi Q&A is part of Hemdat Yamim, the weekly parsha sheet by Eretz Hemdah. You can receive it by sending an email to info@eretzhemdah.org with the message: Subscribe/English or Subscribe/Hebrew - leave subject blank. Ask the Vebbe Rebbe is partially funded by the Jewish Agency for Israel.

PARSHAT PARA, PARSHAT HACHODESH, SHABBAT HAGADOL [3] by Dr. Meir Tamari

The Shabbat before Pesach, Shabbat HaGadol, is an additional part of the preparation for the Chag in the same way as the Shabbat during Aseret Y'mei T'shuva, Shabbat Shuva, is to Yom Kippur. It is customary on Shabbat HaGadol, as part of our preparation, to read the Haggada until the end of Magid, "Rabban Gamliel said", which begins the meal.

There is a special haftara (Malachi 3:4-24) for this day, which is not only the end of the booklet of Malachi, and not only the end of Trei Asar, but the final chapter of NEVI'IM. Malachi concludes all their prophecies with a clarion call for this festival of our freedom: "Behold, I [G-d] send you Eliyahu HaNavi before the great and awesome day of Hashem". From this verse came the tradition that Eliyahu will be the forerunner of the coming of Mashiach, which is one of the reasons for Eliyahu's Cup at the Seder. This tradition of Eliyahu's role has been exploited by all sorts of false messiahs, Jewish and otherwise; Nachum of Gaza in the case of Shabbtai Tzvi is only one example of many.

"The Tur (Orach Chaim 430) writes that the Shabbat before Pesach is called Shabbat HaGadol because a great miracle was performed for Israel. Each family took a lamb, the god of Egypt, and tied it to their bedposts and kept it there for four days. They told the Egyptians that they were going to

slaughter it on the fourteenth of Nisan and eat it. Despite the insult and provocation, the Egyptians were powerless to do anything to Israel.

That year the tenth of Nissan was a Shabbat, yet we call the Shabbat before Pesach Shabbat HaGadol, even though in some years it does not fall on the tenth of Nissan. It seems that we should rather call the tenth of Nissan, irrespective of what day it falls, Ha'asiri HaGadol. Furthermore, there were many miracles done for Israel in Egypt before they were commanded to take the Pascal lamb. Those miracles were very great ones in which the

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forces of nature were radically changed. Therefore those days should be known as HaGadol. If one argues that the conclusion is the important factor, then surely the miracle at the end was the greatest one and therefore the day of Makat B'chorot, the killing of the firstborn, should be known as HaGadol.

In the verse: "Yours, HaShem, is the greatness and the strength" (Divrei HaYamim Alef 29:12), the greatness refers to the Creation and the strength to the Exodus from Egypt (B'rachot 58). The Creation was an act of pure Chesed as there was nobody or nothing in the world that was entitled to it. God did everything in the world a Chesed, an act of righteousness, in that He diminished Himself to create the world and all that is in it. "The World is built on Chesed"; chesed is known as 'greatness'. However, all the plagues that were visited on Egypt were only a judgment on the Egyptians, and Israel had no benefit from them. So Justice, Midat HaDin, demanded that before they were redeemed, the people had to have performed some obligations, otherwise they would deserve no better treatment than the Egyptians. Therefore, God gave Israel circumcision and the offering of the lamb, the mitzvot of Brit Mila and Korban Pesach, so that their redemption would not be mere Chesed, but rather an act of justice, Din, as reward for Israel's acts.

These two attributes, Chesed and Din are contradictory. In the first Ten Commandments (Shmot 20:11) the reason given for Shabbat is the Crea-

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tion. The second Ten Commandments (D'varim 5:15) give the Exodus as the reason for Shabbat. So Shabbat has the ability to be both Chesed and Din simultaneously; it has the ability to contain these two contradictory and opposing merits. That is why the first time that Israel took the Pascal lamb, the tenth of Nissan, had to be on Shabbat; and that is why we call the Shabbat before Pesach Shabbat HaGadol, irrespective of whether it is the tenth day or not" (Shem MiShmuel).

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Rabbi Weinreb's Weekly Column:

Metzora A Time for Silence, a Time for Speech

He did most of his writing and public speaking almost exactly one hundred years ago. He had no secular education, and it is doubtful that he even read the newspapers of his day. Nevertheless, he had insights into the problems of his era that were astounding, even prophetic.

His diagnosis of the ills of the early 20th century holds true even now, a century later. He understood the power of words. He knew how written and spoken language could be used as weapons to destroy humanity. How incredibly relevant his words are in our age, when words can be communicated electronically!

He based his teachings and preaching upon the verse in Psalms which reads:

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*"Who is the man who is eager for life,
Who desires years of good fortune?
Guard your tongue from evil,
Your lips from deceitful speech."*

(Psalms 34:13-14)

He took this biblical advice seriously and urged all who would listen to guard their tongues and speak no malice and no falsehood.

His name was Israel Meir HaKohen, and he named his first major work "Chafetz Chayim", "Eager for Life", after the above verse in T'hilim. He is now part of Jewish history and forever known as the Chafetz Chayim.

His teachings have a special connection to this week's Torah portion, Metzora (Vayikra 14,15), and to its Haftara (Melachim Bet 7:3-20). Note that there is no explicit reference in the text of our parsha to the theme of the negative powers of language, nor is there any such reference in the Haftara.

Our text this week deals, rather, with the detailed laws of the metzora, usually translated as "leper", and the selection from Melachim Bet tells the story of the four lepers who dwelled outside the gates of Jerusalem, who were the first to discover the abandoned camp of the Aramean army that had laid siege to the city.

Rabbinic tradition, however, looks to understand why the metzora has been afflicted with his disease. The Talmud in the tractate Arachin understands the word metzora as a contraction of the phrase "motzi

shem ra", "one who spreads a 'bad name'" about his fellow. And so the metzora has come to symbolize the person who is guilty of malicious gossip (lashon hara), or other abuse of words - deception, profanity, verbal assassination.

Interestingly, another early 20th century rabbinic sage, Rabbi Baruch HaLevi Epstein, author of Torah Temima, points out that the Talmudic rabbis had the license to thus interpret the word metzora. This is because the usual term for the leper is "tzarua", not "metzora". The use of the unusual term suggests another, in this case, homiletic, meaning - he who speaks evil.

When the Chafetz Chayim urged us all to "guard our tongues" and "speak no evil", was he suggesting that we adopt silence as a guide to

our behavior, avoiding speech and self-expression entirely?

The answer to this is a resounding "No!", and this is illustrated in a fascinating story about Rabbi Israel Meir and his son-in-law, Rabbi Hershel Levinson. I found this story in a Yiddish language biography of the Chafetz Chayim, written by Moshe Meyer Yashar. An excerpted edition of this book is available in English, but without some of the more interesting and personal anecdotes.

Rabbi Hershel, the son-in-law, was a very pious man who spent his days in the study hall who seldom spoke at all. Many believed that he was even more saintly than his revered father-in-law. After all, his father-in-law spoke all over the place and taught and preached, and even joked, at every opportunity.

However, the Chafetz Chayim did not entirely approve of his son-in-law's avoidance of speech and devotion to almost complete silence about worldly matters. Rather, he insisted that one must use his gifts of speech, and use them widely and frequently, yet wisely and carefully.

Silence, for the Chafetz Chayim, was not the preferred way of life.

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Speech that carefully avoided gossip, insults, and profanity was the preferred behavior.

Today, there are groups of very well-intentioned individuals who emphasize the evils of lashon hara. Sometimes, I am afraid, they do so by avoiding to speak negatively when such speech is necessary. They sometimes refrain from protesting criminal behavior out of fear that, in doing so, they are maliciously gossiping about a criminal.

This was not the Chafetz Chayim's way. In the book mentioned above, by the title of which he is known to the ages, he emphasizes that there are opportunities when one must use speech to warn against sinful or dangerous individuals, or to protest breaches of Torah or of universal moral law. When negative talk has a beneficial objective, it is no longer to be considered negative, but actually becomes a mitzva.

The four lepers who are described in the narrative contained in this week's Haftara were stationed outside the gates of Jerusalem because such was what the Torah required of lepers. They were to have no contact with the residents of the city, perhaps because of the fear that their condition was contagious.

They were thus doomed, in a sense, to silence. They could not communicate with their friends and family within the city's gates. And so it is no

Sometimes it's big

wonder, then, that when they found that the Aramean camp besieging Jerusalem had been abandoned overnight, their first inclination was to keep that secret to themselves. But then, in Melachim Bet 7:9, they came to their senses, and their sound consciences prevailed:

"Then they said to one another, 'We are not doing right. This is a day of good news, And we are keeping silent! If we wait until the light of morning, We shall incur guilt. Come, let us go and inform the king's palace.'

They went and called out to the gate keepers of the city And told them..." Words can harm, but they can also heal.

This was the teaching of Rabbi Israel Meir HaKohen. It is perhaps best encapsulated in the words of Kohelet:

*"There is a time for all things...
A time for silence
And a time for speaking"* (Kohelet 3:7)

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P'sukei d'Zimra: ASHREI

Recounting Hashem's Greatness

אֲשֶׁרִי יוֹשְׁבֵי בֵיתְךָ, עוֹד יְהַלְלוּךָ
סִלָּה. אֲשֶׁרִי הָעַם שְׂכַכְה לּוֹ, אֲשֶׁרִי הָעַם
שֶׁה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ.

Meaning: translation...

Happy are those who dwell in Your house; may they always praise you, Selah. Happy is the people for whom this is so, happy is the people whose G-d is Hashem...

Theme:
An essential concept of the prayer

Recognizing the Object of Our Praise

Contemplating Hashem's greatness and benevolence is required to properly praise Hashem.

Insight: Deeper meanings...

Praising Before Praying

The Gemara (B'rachot 4b) explains that the essential text of ASHREI is Psalm 145 - T'HILA L'DAVID, a psalm of praise by King David. It contains twenty-one verses that follow the order of the alef-bet, the letters of the Hebrew alphabet. Each verse offers a

different praise for Hashem's sustenance of the world, climaxing with the verse POTEI'ACH ET YADECHA UMASBI'A L'CHOL CHAI RATZON (You open Your hand and satisfy the desire of every living thing), which refers to Hashem's daily sustenance of every living creature.

Despite this emphasis on the material bounty with which Hashem endows the world, ASHREI does not begin with T'HILA L'DAVID, but rather, with the words ASHREI YOSH'VEI VEITECHA OD Y'HAL'LUCHA SELA, (Happy are those who dwell in Your house; they will continue to praise you, Selah.) The Mishna (B'rachot 30b) teaches that from here we learn that one should only rise to pray (Sh'moneh Esrei) with an attitude of reverence, as Rama (98:1) states: "Before praying (Shemoneh Esrei), one should consider the loftiness of G-d, may He be exalted, and the lowliness of man..."

The Gemara (B'rachot 32b) states that the pious men of earlier generations would spend an hour before prayer contemplating these thoughts, and the source for this practice is the verse ASHREI YOSH'VEI VEITECHA...

Praiseworthy are those who dwell in Your house, they will continue to praise you, Selah. Rashi expounds that these pious men understood this verse to mean that before beginning the tefila (Shemoneh Esrei), one must be YOSH'VEI VEITECHA, sit and meditate in Your [Hashem's] house.

Then one can Y'HAL'LUCHA, properly praise Hashem. In fact, the reason we recite ASHREI before Mincha is in order to fulfill our obligation of waiting in contemplation before reciting Shemoneh Esrei.

ASHREI presents a unique opportunity to awaken to Hashem's attributes of greatness, focus upon the unbounded goodness Hashem gives us every day, and nurture a sense of gratitude in our hearts. Despite the fact that in our times, we may be unable to contemplate for one hour before we pray Shemoneh Esrei, the custom of the pious ones is reflected in the Shacharit prayer, which provides much time for thoughtful meditation from the beginning of P'sukei d'Zimra until Shemoneh Esrei is recited.

(Pri Megadim, Eishel Avraham 93:1).

Visualize:

Images that bring the prayer to life

Open the Package!

Dovid's wealthy uncle from Israel, whom he had never met, arrived at his

nephew's home in America. He entered the house carrying a large bag filled with giftwrapped boxes. "This is all for you, my nephew, Uncle Shmuel told Dovid. "You're the only relative I have, and I want you to have all these gifts."

Dovid said "Thank you! You're the greatest uncle in the world!" Then he set the bag aside, planning to open each gift later on, in private. Uncle Shmuel responded, "Open the packages, Dovid! How can you say thank you when you don't even know what's in there?" And so Dovid obliged.

With each new gift, his gratitude toward his uncle and his admiration for him and his generosity grew stronger. Each package was a treasure, and it was all for him. Now when he said "thank you," it was a response overflowing with emotion.

Like Dovid in the story, each of us receives a vast endowment of gift packages every day from Hashem. If we do not stop to consider the contents of these packages, our gratitude is only a shadow of what it could and should be. Our recognition of Hashem's kindness is stunted. P'sukei d'Zimra is our way to open our packages every day, so that our love and awe toward our Benefactor can arise from the deepest, sincerest place in our hearts.

Think about the joy of receiving a gift you especially wanted. Picture and feel the feeling. That is the "happy" you can connect to when you say the word ASHREI throughout this tefila.

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Why Yizkor on Yom Tov ?

Guest article by **Rabbi Ephraim Sprecher** Dean of Students, Diaspora Yeshiva

On each of the last days of the Shalosh Regalim, it is traditional that the Yizkor service be recited. Even those who, for one reason or another, have not been in regular attendance at the Synagogue, gravitate to it at this time. There is a feeling of responsibility and respect for our departed parents which impels us to participate in this service.

It seems strange and paradoxical that a service of mourning and tears be included in the ritual for these joyous festivals. Yom Kippur, which is certainly a very solemn occasion, is an appropriate moment for the Yizkor service. The serious mood of the Day of Atonement and the emotions of guilt evoked by Yizkor blend well together. But how are we to understand the Yizkor service as part of the ritual of the Shalosh Regalim, which are holidays of joy? Pesach, Shavuot, Sukkot - though each has a different motif, are similar in the underlying feeling of gratitude, thanksgiving and joy. Why, then, is the solemn and mournful service of Yizkor incorporated into the Shalosh Regalim ritual?

In considering this matter, let us examine another occasion which is perhaps the happiest moment in one's life. That occasion is the moment of marriage when bride and groom pledge their undying loyalty and love to each other. This is truly a time of great joy. Yet there too we find a strange

paradox. At the conclusion of the marriage ceremony, we break a glass. There are some who give as the reason for this strange custom, the commemoration of the destruction of the Temple. But in tractate B'rachot 31a, we find another reason given. The Talmud relates that Rabbi Ashi had arranged a great wedding celebration in which everyone participated. Suddenly at the height of the festivities, Rabbi Ashi appeared carrying in his hands a priceless glass vase. In full view of all present, he hurled the vase to the floor and it was shattered into smithereens. The entire gathering was suddenly saddened at this spectacle and a hush fell over everyone. When the celebration was resumed, it was in a more quiet and subdued tone. Tosafot comment: "This is the basis of the custom for the breaking of a glass at the wedding ceremony." What did they mean to imply?

This is indicative of the approach of Halacha to the conflicting experiences of life. It is precisely this approach which is emphasized at this solemn moment of Yizkor and commemoration. Judaism has never tried to escape from life. The Jew is required to face up to life with all its joys and sorrows. In life, both experiences are to be found. They are frequently interwoven. Yet since we are only human, we tend to be overwhelmed by our experiences at the moment and the emotions which

we feel as a result. At the moment of joy, we tend to forget that there is such a thing as sorrow. And conversely, at the moment of sorrow we tend to forget that there is such an experience as joy. Our religion wanted to develop within us the capacity to withstand the overwhelming character of either of these powerful emotions; to be able to carry on in life on an even keel without being overturned and destroyed; to be involved in life and yet to stand above it and survey it from the plane of eternity and sobriety.

"Face life without being overwhelmed by it." This is what Judaism teaches us. It is therefore precisely at the moment of one's greatest joy that one is reminded of the fact that there are experiences of the other kind as well. That is why at the moment of one's greatest sorrow, at the freshly dug grave of a loved one, the Kaddish is recited as a reminder to the mourner that life must continue. Though the mourner is shattered and crushed by the loss which he has sustained, though he may be filled with bitterness and accusation, he is commanded to stand up and recite the Kaddish, praising G-d and affirming his faith in the meaningfulness of life. There will yet

be joy and there will yet be fulfillment. All is not over, though it may seem so at the time of the burial. "Do not be overwhelmed! Carry on!".

This is symbolic of Yizkor. At the conclusion of the holidays of joy, when we are in a happy mood, we are reminded that there are sorrows in life, as well. Just as the breaking of the glass takes place at the conclusion of the wedding ceremony, so does the recital of the Yizkor take place on the last day of the holiday. Both of these occasions, the wedding and the Shalosh Regalim, are moments of joy and should be observed as such. But there is ever constant reminder of the possibility of the other kind of experience.

Just as Yizkor teaches us to temper our jovial moments, with solemnity; may G-d help us tone down the sorrowful occasions of life with overtones of faith and confidence.

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Aiming for Greatness

Adapted from Olat Re'iyah vol. 1, pp. 219–220

We are charged to sing out in joy - God answered our prayers and rescued us from the bondage of Egyptian slavery:

"I am HaShem your God Who raises you up from the land of Egypt. Open your mouth wide and I will fill it. (T'hilim 81:11)

What is the connection between our redemption from Egypt and "opening our mouths wide" to receive God's blessings?

Ongoing Elevation

A careful reading of this verse will note two peculiarities about the word HA-MA'ALCHA, "Who raises you up". First of all, it does not say that God "took you out" of Egypt, but that He "raises you up." It was not merely the

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act of leaving Egypt that made its eternal impact on the destiny of the Jewish nation, and through it, all of humanity. The Exodus was an act of elevation, lifting up the souls of Israel.

Additionally, the verse is not in the past tense but in the present - "Who raises you up". Is it not referring to a historical event? We may understand this in light of the Midrash (Tanchuma Mikeitz 10) concerning the creation of the universe. The Midrash states that when God commanded the formation of the RAKI'A, the expanse between the upper and lower waters (B'reishit 1:6), the divide between the heavens and the earth began to expand. This expansion would have continued indefinitely had the Creator not halted it by commanding, "Enough!"

The Midrash thus explains the Name Sha-dai ("Almighty") as echoing the Divine cry of "Dai" ("Enough") to the universe, preventing it from expanding indefinitely.

In other words, unless they are meant only for a specific hour, Divine acts are eternal, continuing forever. So too, the spiritual ascent of "raising you up from Egypt" is a perpetual act of God, influencing and uplifting the Jewish people throughout the generations.

There is no limit to this elevation, no end to our spiritual aspirations. The only limitations come from us, if we choose to restrict our wishes and dreams. But once we know the secret of HA-MA'ALCHA and internalize the message of a Divine process that began in Egypt and continues to elevate us, we can aim for ever-higher spiritual goals.

It is instructive to note the contrast between the Hebrew word for "Egypt" - Mitzrayim, literally, "limitations" - and the expression, "open up wide". God continually frees us from the confining restraints of Mitzrayim, enabling us to strive for the highest, most expansive aspirations.

Now we may understand why the verse concludes with the charge, "Open your mouth wide". We should not restrict ourselves. We need to rise above all self-imposed limitations and transcend all mundane goals and petty objectives. If we can "open our mouths wide" and recognize our true potential for spiritual greatness, then "I will fill it" - God will help us attain ever-higher levels of holiness.

Vladislav Tretiak, Gilles Gratton,
Steve Buzinski, Michel Belhumeur

From **"OzTorah"**
by **Rabbi Dr Raymond Apple**
AO RFD, Emeritus Rabbi of
the Great Synagogue, Sydney
www.oztorah.com

M'TZORA THE METAPHOR

Leprosy was once a terrible scourge. Our tradition interprets it on two levels – literal and metaphorical. The rabbis said in the Talmud, "Leprosy comes because of evil talk and slander" (Eruchin 16b). If we examine some Biblical examples, we find that time after time leprosy was indeed associated with moral turpitude.

Miriam slandered her brother and was immediately punished with leprosy.

Naaman, the Syrian general, was already suffering from the disease and was told by Elisha to bathe in the Jordan, which taught him humility.

Elisha's servant Gehazi rebuked his master for not accepting payment for his advice and because of his impertinence was stricken with the disease from which Naaman was cured.

A king of Judah named Uzziah had become puffed up with arrogance and argued with the Temple priests when he interfered with the sacred service; he became a leper until the day of his death.

The sages were certain that these Biblical lepers had to be stricken with

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serious consequences to teach the people a lesson in how to conduct themselves.

In relation to Uzziah, the Tanach (Divrei HaYamim Bet 26) says that because of his sin "he dwelt in a house set apart" - which warns us that if a person becomes impossible to live with, he can no longer remain a member of normal society.

*Mazal Tov to
Rabbi Nathan & Leah Weiss
and Rabbi Yitzhak & Chanie
Baror and family on the
marriage of their grand/son*

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Rabbi Shmuel Eliyahu shlit"a, who recently visited Itamar, said, "Our Sages have said that [building] a mikveh precedes [building] a shul, since purity is the basis of sanctity. Therefore, anyone who aids in building the mikveh on the hilltops of Itamar should be blessed with all types of goodness."

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Rabbi Apple - OzTorah - was asked about the shape of matzot - round and square. Here's his answer...

Machine-made matzah is easier to bake and pack if it is square, though hand-baked matzah follows the traditional round shape. The Biblical verse, Sh'mot 12:39, referring to UGOT MATZOT - cakes of unleavened bread - has often been explained as meaning circular cakes, because the root UG means to be round or to draw a circle, and hence round matzot are probably what our ancestors ate when they left Egypt. Some suggest that the round shape denotes eternity, since God and His providential care of the people of Israel are without end or limit.

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Our tiyul continues on to the Joe Alon Center which is located in the heart of the Lahav Forest. Here you will see the museum of Bedouin Culture with an audio-visual presentation as well as models of ancient caves from different periods. • You will be a guest in the tent of a Bedouin Sheikh - watch him make coffee, and listen to Bedouin folklore.

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Maaleh Adumim (Red Heights): one of the most well kept and cleanest cities in Israel with a population of 34,000. Close to Jerusalem, on the highway to the Dead Sea, it is home to religious and secular, Israelis and Russian immigrants, the city attracts more and more olim from English speaking countries as well. Hear the story of Mayor Benny Kashriel and get to know how a small settlement became a prominent city.

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Castel - a Crusader fortress with a commanding view of the road to Jerusalem, you'll hear about the battle for this key site and why it was and still crucial today.

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ParshaPix explanations

☞ The two birds are part of the purification process of a M'TZORA. Pictured in the Parsha-Pix are sparrows. Neither bird of the two required is a korban (sacrifice) and is therefore not necessarily a dove or turtledove - those being the only two birds eligible for the Mizbei'ach. They only have to be kosher birds.

☞ Also pictured are the other objects that were used in the ceremony for the M'tzora: a branch from a cedar tree (EITZ EREZ),

☞ the hyssop plant (EISOV),

☞ and a red wool thread (SH'NI TOLAAT).

☞ The M'tzora is required to shave the hair of his body (razor), including, as is mentioned in the Torah, the eyebrows. In the picture, one eyebrow has already been shaved.

☞ The 2+1 on the lamb are for 2 male sheep and 1 female - part of the procedure of purification.

☞ The sack of flour and the oil can represent the meal offerings of the purifying M'tzora, as well as the oil applications described in the sedra.

☞ In the lower right are the three recipients of the blood and oil of

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the purification process - the earlobe (one opinion - others hold the top of the outer ear, or the middle ridge of cartilage), thumb, and big toe - of the right ear, the right hand, and the right foot.

☞ Above that is a left palm, mentioned many times in the sedra - KAF HAKOHEIN HAS'MALI - as where the kohein put the blood and then the oil from which he took on his right index finger in order to apply to the MITAHEIR.

☞ AB-- represents a type of blood - AB negative, negative - like the blood in the sedra that rendered a man or woman TAMEI.

☞ The house in the picture is frowning. It is sad that it is afflicted with NIG'EI HABAYIT.

☞ The four guys with N'GA'IM on their foreheads and strange coloring in their hair are standing around a soccer goal, so they represent the opening of the haftara of M'tzora - V'ARBA'A

ANASHIM HAYU M'TZORA'IM PETACH HASHAAR... SHAAR in the context of the haftara is the gate of a city. In TTriddlese, it is a soccer or hockey goal. In fact, although they are not named in the haftara and are only referred to as people and M'tzora'im, the Gemara tells that they were GEICHAZI and his three sons. After Elisha the Navi cured Naaman of Aram of Tzoraat and refused to take a reward for it, Geichazi (Elisha's assistant) went to Naama and told him that Elisha had sent him to collect a reward. When Elisha heard of Geichazi's behavior, he cursed him with Tzoraat (which apparently was incurable).

☞ Upper-right is a picture of a set of Lincoln Logs. Suggestion: older generation explains to the younger generation what Lincoln Logs are. As to ParshaPix, a log represents the Hebrew word LOG (with a long O, as in lone, rather than the short O of the English word log), which is a Biblical measure mentioned several times in the sedra as the amount of oil that was used in the purification process of a M'TZORA. Therefore, the Lincoln Logs go with the oil can below them in the ParshaPix to stand for LOG SHEMEN. By the way, a LOG is equivalent to 345.6ml according to the measures of Rav Chaim Naeh to 597ml according to the Chazon Ish - with other opinions between those two. Of significance for us today is the measure called a

R'VI'IT, which is a quarter of a LOG (in contrast to the Torah's R'VI'IT which is a quarter of a HIN - a HIN is 12 LOGIM. A R'VI'IT of a LOG is the minimum amount of wine that a Kiddush cup must contain, etc. The R'VI'IT ranges from 86.4-149.25ml.

☞ The bullets for these ParshaPix explanations are/is Woodstock, avian best friend of Snoopy (who just happens to be one of the dogs in the footers this week - no special reason; the other dog being Peabody), who is pictured in a birdbath, loosely representing the live bird of the two which is immersed in (see the beginning of the sedra for further details).

☞ In the lower-right corner is a picture of a Garage Sale. Its connection to the sedra is the kohein's instructions to the owners of a house which might be afflicted with NEGA'IM to empty the house of its furnishings and vessels, lest they become TAMEI if he (the kohein) declares the house TAMEI. Who knows? Some people might have used the opportunity to have a garage sale of those items they would like to get rid of.

*Dear newest (second) cousin, Micha'el HaLevi,
Because you entered the Covenant of Avraham
Avinu on my first birthday, I was chosen to
welcome you into the family on behalf of myself,
my brother Shoham, and my (first) cousins Dvir,
Lavi, Roni, Naveh, and Elad. Our parents send
their love as well. May you go on to Torah,
Chupa, and Maasim Tovim. Love, Renana*

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Lesson # 558

Laws of Sales (1)

The laws of sales are based on the Torah verse, "When you make a sale to your fellow or make a purchase from the hand of your fellow; one man should not defraud his brother" (Vayikra 25:14) In halacha, such defrauding is known as ona'ah. The law is not merely of fraud in a moral sense or even in a business sense. The monetary results are the same in each case whether the discrepancy in price results from intentional fraud and overreaching or from honest mistake. The laws of discrepancy in price generally deal with a situation where a product is sold in most stores, including the store where the sale is taking place, within a certain price range. The price is not marked on the item the customer wishes to purchase. The buyer asks the seller how much the item costs, and the seller realizing that the buyer is entirely unfamiliar with the price of the item, quotes a price higher than the market price he charges other customers. Or the buyer who has priced the item in other stores knows the price but the seller has not had a request to sell the item for a long time and does not remember the price. The seller does not realize the normal price and quotes a price lower than normal. Or as may

sometimes be the case, both parties make an honest mistake as to what the price should be, and later discover the normal market price. For example, a clerk in a clothing store places an erroneous price tag on a suit, whether higher or lower than the market price in that store, and the price as marked is paid by the customer. Later, the buyer and/or the seller discovers the error.

Halacha sets up three categories of discrepancy in price depending upon the level above or below the normal market price that was charged. The laws of fraud, overreaching and discrepancy in price are based on the Torah verse quoted above. The command is part of the large class of negative commandments "not to rob". There is no punishment administered when this commandment is violated since it lends itself to rectification by returning the overage or underage charged or by rescinding the transaction. The commandment is not to overcharge or benefit by any undercharge by any Jew, male or female, whether in buying or selling. The command includes items that are not included as being subject to the laws of restitution or rescission because of discrepancy in price, such as real estate. The law is violated if there is a discrepancy in price whether in favor of the seller or the buyer. There is an obligation on each of the parties to notify the other if he is aware of the discrepancy in price. The buyer must tell the seller that he is undercharging; the seller must notify the buyer that he is overpaying. If one failed to do so he violates the Torah commandment.

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TTTRIDDLES

Last issue's (**TAZRI'A**) TTriddles:

Some of these TTriddles are actually answered in the Sedra Summary or elsewhere in last week's TT. If you found the answers, then the particular TTriddle was not very challenging, but at least it shows that you read and make the connection. And that's something, because not everyone does and because not everyone is "into" TTriddles.

[1] Perek 13 in Vayikra has 13 of them. And there is one more in Perek 14. And that total of 14 is it for the whole Tanach

As mentioned in last week's TT, the phrase V'RA'A HAKOHEIN occurs 13 times in Perek 13, once more (the 14th time) in Perek 14 (beginning of this week's sedra, Metzora - and nowhere else in the Torah or the rest of Tanach. The strong message received from this repeated phrase is that the status of ritual purity or impurity (from NEGA'IM) depends completely on the decision of the kohein according to what he sees and what he declares. This is in sharp contrast to many other forms of TUM'A, that are subject to emperical fact, not the "reading" of a kohein or anyone else.

[2] Sarcophilus harrisii suri

This one is a variation on previous TTriddles for Parshat Tazri'a. *Sarcophilus harrisii* is the scientific name for the Tasmanian Devil, "extremely voracious, carnivorous, nocturnal marsupial (pouched mam-

mal)... now found only on the island of Tasmania... about 60cm long, plus a 30cm tail... large head, powerful jaws, weak hindquarters. Its blackish fur is marked with white patches on the throat, on each side, and on the rump... fierce appearance... very strong for its size and preys on animals larger than itself, such as small kangaroos, as well as on rodents, lizards, and other small animals..." Looney Tunes created a cartoon character of the Tasmanian Devil, known "affectionately" as TAZ. The largest bird in existence is the Ostrich of Africa. Second to it is an Australian bird that resembles the Ostrich - the Emu. Third largest bird is another one that resembles the Ostrich - this one is from South America and is known as the Rhea. In the Quechua language (spoken in part of South America to which the Rhea is native, the name of the bird is Suri. Hence, *Sarcophilus harrisii suri* is TAZRI'A.

[3] 350 double Adars

Double Adars occur in SHANA M'UBERET, 13-month years. They occur 7 times in a 19-year cycle. Do the math. 350 double Adars would occur in a span of 950 years, 950 being the issue number of last week's Torah Tidbits.

[4] So different from its anagram!

Main theme of Parshat Tazri'a is NEGA'IM, afflictions of the skin, head, and other parts of the body, certain clothing - and, in Parshat Metzora, in certain types of houses in Eretz

Yisrael. NEGA is an anagram of ONEG, pleasure or enjoyment - so different from its anagram.

[5] Flashback

One of the early p'sukim in Tazri'a brings us back to the previous sedra. UVAYOM HASH'MINI, and on the 8th day. The previous sedra is SH'MINI, as in VAYHI BAYOM HASH'MINI. We've got another UVAYOM HASH'MINI in this week's sedra of Metzora. In fact, we find Either BAYOM HASH'MINI or UVAYOM HASH'MINI in Mishpatim, Sh'mini, Tazri'a, a few times in Metzora, Emor, Naso, and Pinchas, and in four different books in NACH.

[6] Her children and I, Avidan

Her children = BANEHA = BET+NUN+YUD+HEI = 67. And I = VA'ANI = VAV+ALEF+NUN+YUD = 67. AVIDAN = ALEF+BET+YUD+

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DALET+NUN = 67. Number of p'sukim in Tazri'a? 67. Avidan b. Gid-oni was the NASI of Binyamin, who presented his gifts to the dedication of the Mishkan on day 9 (of 12).

[7] From V-12 to Ba-7 (T117-119)

V-12 is Vayikra, perek 12. It is the shortest perek in the Torah (8 p'sukim). Ba-7 is Bamidbar, perek 7, which is the largest perek in the Torah (89 p'sukim). In parentheses is the range for Tanach. T117 is T'hilim KUF-YUD-ZAYIN (from Hallel) with 2 p'sukim. KUF-YUD-TET, on the other hand, is the longest perek in Tanach with 176 p'sukim. (And, as is well-known - to those who know it - Parshat Naso is the longest sedra in the Torah - 176 p'sukim. And Bava Batra is the longest Masechta of Gemara, with 176 (double) pages.)

[8] Hints at Norelco's three heads

This was a gut-feeling TTriddle rather than an accurately researched one, so we are just assuming that Norelco was the first with a tripleheader shaver. (Side point - Norelco's reported and advertised super-close shave raised halachic questions about a possible razor-like shave that would be questionable or forbidden. It was determined that the shaver still used a scissors method of cutting the facial hair and not blade against skin. Today, you can buy electric shavers with a hashgacha attesting to their halachic acceptability.) Back to the TTriddle. The word in Tazri'a which tells us that the person quarantined with certain skin afflictions was to have the area shaved, but not the NETEK itself, and then another 7-day quarantine period follows - is V'HITGALACH. The GIMEL in the word is written in a Torah scroll extra large. GIMEL is three, and shaving with three brings to mind the Norelco tripleheader. (Note: that when the Torah requires shaving off one's hair - a METZORA or NAZIR, for example - the shaving is done with a razor; electric shaver would not be acceptable for the same reason - in reverse - as the permission we have to use it in normal shaving of one's face.)

[9] MazalPic

As our expert in MazalPics H(S)M correctly emailed us, the MazalPc is one of the emblems for Nissan cars. We would not be so obvious as to use the standard Nissan emblem, which contains the word Nissan, but we

found other emblems and chose the Z you see in the Word of the Month box. Correct solution also received from AW/Cranford.

Disease or Divine Reckoning?

Context: The bulk of the parshiot of Tazria and Metzora deal with a description of the dramatic effects of tzara'at, often defined (for want of a better term) as biblical leprosy.

The Torah delineates in fine detail the specifics of this mysterious affliction - which affects individuals, clothes and dwellings - and the steps to be taken under the guidance of the Kohanim towards its diagnosis and treatment.

Questions: What exactly is tzara'at, biblical leprosy? Is this affliction a natural, physical illness or a supernatural phenomenon?

Given the myriad diseases that affect humankind, why does the Torah devote so much text to a description of this specific malady, its diagnosis and treatment?

Approaches:

The mystery of tzara'at gives rise to a wide-ranging series of observations among the commentaries.

A. At one end of the spectrum lie those scholars who view tzara'at as a contagious physical illness with dangerous potential for spread to the entire population.

The Avrahanel, for example, explains the Torah's concern for "afflicted" clothing in distinctly natural terms. Unlike strong

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materials such as metal, clothing will readily absorb bodily decay upon close personal contact. The Torah is, therefore, concerned that tzara'at will spread from a metzora (an individual afflicted with tzara'at) to his garments. To prevent further contagion, therefore, all suspicious stains and growths on clothing must be examined by a Kohen.

For his part, the Ralbag interprets the puzzling phenomena of clothing and dwelling afflictions according to scientific theory of his day. Foreign moisture or heat entering an item, he claims, causes an imbalance in that item's natural stasis and leads to the item's disintegration. This destructive process is evidenced at an early stage through the appearance of red or green growth (colors associated in the text with tzara'at).

Although the Meshech Chochma initially categorizes the theme of tzara'at as one of the "secrets of the Torah", he then avers: "Nonetheless, one can say that these afflictions are contagious diseases." The treatment of the illness

itself, this scholar maintains, is ample evidence of its communicable nature. The metzora experiences enforced isolation and is required to actively alert others to his condition. Any physical interaction with infected individuals is extremely dangerous. The Torah, therefore, assigns the task of such interaction (the diagnosis and treatment of the ill) to the sons of Aharon who, in their role as Kohanim, are separate from the rest of the people and are granted extraordinary divine protection.

Finally, Rabbeinu Bachya discerns concern for communicable disease in the Torah's mandate that the metzora, at the end of his period of isolation, let loose a bird offering "on the face of the field." The release of the bird into a place absent of human habitation, he maintains, represents an implicit prayer that the metzora's erstwhile contagion should not spread to others.

B. At the opposite end of the spectrum are those commentaries who eschew any natural explanation for the tzara'at afflictions discussed in the parshiot of Tazria and Metzora.

These scholars point to a number of details of tzara'at outlined in the Written and Oral Law that are clearly inconsistent with the characteristics of communicable diseases, including:

1. The Kohen diagnoses tzara'at based only on examination of those parts of the body which he can readily see. No

careful examination is required in the folds of the body.

2. When tzara'at is suspected in a dwelling, the Torah orders the Kohen to remove everything from the house before conducting his examination. If tzara'at is a communicable disease, such a procedure would expose the public to potentially infected material.

3. Examinations of potential tzara'at are not performed by the Kohanim on Shabbat, holidays, or upon a bridegroom during the seven days of celebration following his wedding.

4. The laws of tzara'at only apply to dwellings in the Land of Israel and only after the land has been divided into individual holdings. These laws do not apply to homes owned by non-Jews or to dwellings of any ownership in the city of Yerushalayim.

5. The laws of tzara'at do not apply to non-Jews. A lesion contracted by a convert before his conversion to Judaism is of no consequence.

6. Under certain circumstances, if lesions cover an individual's entire body he is not considered contaminated.

7. After the nation's entry into the land, a metzora is only to be excluded from walled cities (as determined by the city's status at the time of the conquest of the land). He is to be allowed to remain in unwalled cities and to roam freely through the rest of the countryside.

According to Rabbi Shimshon Raphael Hirsch, these and other details "show the absolute folly" of any attempt to interpret Torah laws as rules and regulations created for health or sanitary purposes.

C. If the afflictions described in the

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parshiot of Tazria and Metzora, however, are not natural diseases, what exactly are they? What message is God sending the people through the visitation of these frightening supernatural phenomena? What crimes perpetrated by individuals within the nation could possibly trigger such severe divine reckoning?

The Talmud lists, in the name of Rabbi Yonatan, seven sins that cause the affliction of tzara'at: evil or damaging speech, murder, perjury, sexual immorality, arrogance, robbery and miserliness. Of these associations between crime and punishment, however, only one seems to capture the rabbinic imagination completely. Over and over again, the rabbis link the punishment of tzara'at to the related crimes of motzi shem ra, slander (literally, the bringing out of a "bad name"), and lashon hara, evil or damaging speech.

Rabbi Yitzchak Arama offers a brilliant insight in an extensive discussion on Parshat Metzora. While man's intellect sets him apart from the beast, his intellect is only fully revealed and

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actualized through verbal communication. Speech is the God-given tool through which an individual's heart and mind are reflected to an outside world.

Because speech is so reflective of man's unique character, the obligations associated with verbal communication carry great significance. An individual who misuses his power of speech degrades himself through the very skill meant to mirror his greatness.

From this perspective, the sins of motzi shem ra and lashon hara acquire another, devastating layer of significance: the perpetrator himself. Created in God's image - granted reason, intellect and the ability to actualize that intellect positively in the surrounding world - the perpetrator diminishes his own stature and demeans his human essence.

God, therefore, specifically punishes sins committed through speech with the plague of tzara'at, an affliction that mirrors what the perpetrator has done to himself. Through his grave actions, the metzora has fallen from his place at the pinnacle of God's creation. No longer a "living being", no longer a "speaking spirit", he suffers from an illness so severe that the rabbis claim, "A metzora is considered dead." ❖

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Is Medicine an Exact Science?

Last time we noted that one is obliged to use the scientifically tested methods of modern medicine. But is one permitted to use natural remedies instead?

The simple answer to this question should be "no". Medicine has been tested and tried and cures people. The same cannot be said for non-conventional methods and thus they cannot be proven to heal and cannot be relied on.

But the picture is much more complex, since medicine is far from an exact science. We see this in medical trials and conferences where the data and the experts are often careful to give limitations to their findings and conclusions, saying "we think" and "it appears" and not "we know" and "it is a fact". In Puah we often tell couples that if a doctor promises you 100% success then he is not telling the truth, since we cannot promise such things. Medicine does all that it can but it can never have total success.

We find several halachic sources that concur with this conclusion. The Torah says "and you shall surely heal" from where the Gemara deduces that the doctor is given permission to heal. Why does the Talmud call it permission and not an obligation? Surely the commandment to save life and the sanctity of life

would force a doctor to practice medicine. But maybe the idea is that since medicine is not exact the doctor is permitted to practice but not obliged to.

If a person feels so ill on Yom Kippur that he needs to eat but a doctor says that there is no medical necessity for him or her to eat, then the halacha is that the person is permitted to eat. In fact, even if the doctor says that eating will endanger the person still there are opinions that the person is permitted to eat despite the good advice of the doctor. The rationale for this is that a person knows their own capabilities and we follow them more than we follow the doctor. However if medicine was an exact science then we would be obliged to follow the doctor's instructions and we would ignore the person's wishes. Since we ignore the doctor and listen to the person we can deduce that the halacha did not view medicine as an exact science.

So it is not so simple to claim that one must always follow conventional medicine and this gives some leeway to possibly permit one to rely on non-conventional medicine.

However what about a case where natural treatments involve transgressing some prohibition? Is one allowed to consume a natural remedy that contains a non-kosher ingredient? Can such tonic be taken on Shabbat?

We will discuss this next week

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Maharal on the Sedra

Esther's Finger Speaks the Truth

Vayikra 14:35 - And the owner of the house shall come and tell the kohen, saying, "Something like a plague appeared to me in the house."

Rashi: Even if he were wise and knew for certain it was a plague, he would not clearly decide the matter, to say "a plague appeared to me". Rather, he says "something like a plague."

Gur Arye: Even if he would declare his house impure it would be meaningless, for only a kohen can make it impure by his declaration. So why does the Torah have him say "something like a plague?" It is because at the moment he says it, it is not a plague, for the kohen has not declared it yet. The Torah does not want him to utter an untruth, as King David said [T'hilim 101:7], "He who speaks lies will not be established before my eyes." The rabbis explained [Sota 42b] that from this we learn that liars do not receive the face of the Divine Presence, for liars hide the letter VAV from Hashem's name. The VAV in Hashem's name stands for Tiferet [glory], Hashem's attribute of truth.

The verse appears again in connection with Esther [Megila 16a], when she identifies Haman as her people's oppressor [Esther 7:6] - "a man who is an adversary and an oppressor" and

she points to the king! She knew the king to be responsible, and she knew the redemption could not come through a lie, as it is written, "He who speaks lies will not be established before my eyes." Our verse accomplishes this message with a single letter KAF.

Column prepared by Dr. Moshe Kuhn

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Portion from the Portion

The Message of the Four Metzora'im

This is the second of two portions in a row that talk about the TZARAAT affliction. Last week's portion listed lots of Halachic details related to TZARAAT. These include (13:45-46) that while he is impure with TZARAAT he must have a tear in his clothes and go without a haircut like a mourner, he must cover his head down to his lips and he must call out "Unclean, Unclean". While he is impure he must remain alone outside of the camp.

This week's portion explains how the person stricken with ZARAAT can become pure again.

We might think that the Haftara would be related to becoming pure, and yet this week's Haftara (from MELACHIM Bet 7:3) includes a story of four METZORA'IM who were PETACH HASHAAR - outside the gates of the city, because they were still covered with ZARAAT.

The story takes place during the time of Elisha and the siege by Aram on the city of Shomron, capital of the Kingdom of Israel. Because of the siege, the condition in the city of Shomron is terrible. There is no food to eat - people are starving.

What is interesting is that the Navi tells us a story how these four people

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who are living on the fringe of society are actually the ones who bring the message to the Jewish nation of G-d's saving them from their enemies.

At first, the four just worry about themselves. They say to themselves why should we just sit here and die? If we go into the Jewish city we will die of starvation. Let's try our luck in the city of Aram. They go and find that the city had been abandoned, because Hashem made them hear noises as if a great army was

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attacking them and they ran away. The four took the opportunity of having the whole city to themselves to quench their hunger and loot some money and clothes for their future (ibid. 7:8) but once they have taken care of all their needs they begin to worry about the rest of the nation. Or are they still worrying about themselves. Verse (7:9) - "We do not behave correctly: this day is a day of good tidings, and we hold our peace. If we tarry till the morning, punishment will come upon us..." It looks like they go back to tell the king what happened because they fear that if they don't, he might be angry at them and harm them. This seems like a selfish reason.

But the MALBIM has a different interpretation of the verse. He says they are worried about PIKUACH NEFESH of their fellow Jews. If they wait and only go back to Israel in the morning a few more Jews might die of starvation. This story from Melachim actually shows how these four MEZTORAIM, who were themselves suffering and forced to live outside the Jewish community, were able to put aside their own needs and went to care for their brethren.

This is something we can all learn from - no matter what our position in life, we can always help someone else. With the Pesach holiday coming upon us we must think of those who

*Mazal Tov to
Zev & Dassy Fuchs and family
on the Bat Mitzva
of their granddaughter*

might not have a place for Seder or for other holiday meals and invite them to join us, whether it's an elderly couple with no family here, or a bunch of singles who would like to hear some kids sing Ma Nishtana or a Baal T'shuva who has never really experienced a traditional Seder. There is always a way to include others without jeopardizing the mitzva of V'HIGADTA L'BINCHA.

Since TZAARAT can afflict the skin, here is a recipe for potatoes with white skin. It has parsley as well so it is a recipe that you might want to use on Pesach with your leftover Karpas.

PARSLEY WHITE SKIN POTATOES

2½ lb. white skin potatoes

3 Tbsp. oil

1 Tbsp. chopped fresh parsley

¼ tsp salt (optional)

⅛ tsp pepper

Place potatoes in pot with water cover and heat to boiling; reduce heat. Cook 20-30 minutes or until tender; drain. Add remaining ingredients, stir gently. Serves 4.

*Mazal Tov to
Dr. Pinchas & Malky Ackerman
and family
on the wedding of their son*

Taking Shabbat Early?

Similar to last year, we have decided not to publish a full guide to Early Shabbat in the hard copy of TT - with the OU Israel Kashrut Guide this week and the Pesach material in what will probably be a Tripple issue next week, there is just not enough room.

Instead, we will have the full guide on www.ttidbits.com (it is not "up" yet - hopefully, during the coming week) and present here this page and the chart with times on the next page. We hope this too will prove useful. Remember, full details will be downloadable soon.

The chart

...on the next page "runs" from last Shabbat - the first of "Summer Time" until Shabbat Shuva. We change the clocks back an hour on the Shabbat before Yom Kippur. Many shuls with an early Leil Shabbat minyan will start after Pesach, but we include the pre-Pesach Shabbaton, just in case you need the times.

The times are correct for Jerusalem. (Aside from candle lighting, the other z'manim are pretty close.)

These are the explanations of the times from the columns in the chart...

PLAG • Mincha before this time, highly preferred. Candle lighting, etc. MUST be after this time. (PLAG time was rounded to the next minute. It is recommended to "pad" this time with 1-2 minutes on either side.)

REG • Regular candle lighting time (Jerusalem). This is 40 minutes before the sunset calculated for an elevation of 825m (and only 35 minutes before the sunset time which does not take elevation into account).

NST • Near Sh'ma Time. Kiddush should (preferably) be said before this time. This time is 30 minutes after regular candle lighting time, i.e. 10 minutes before the later sunset time and 5 minutes or so before the earlier sunset (as referred to in the previous paragraph).

SHMA • Recommended to say Shma at this time or soon thereafter. (Then count the Omer.) 25 minutes after the later sunset. (This is earlier than Shabbat-out time, but usable as Stars-Out for Sh'ma recitation.)

P • Chapter of Pirkei Avot

[Remember, taking Shabbat early should be a way of adding to and enhancing Shabbat... but without compromising on the halachic issues.]

Friday	PLAG	REG	NST	SHMA	P	ליל שבת
April 1	5:40	6:22	6:52	7:27		תזריע-הזודע
April 8	5:44	6:27	6:57	7:32		מצרע
April 15	5:47	6:32	7:02	7:37		אזרי-הגדול
April 22	5:51	6:37	7:07	7:42		שחור-מ' עומר
April 29	5:54	6:42	7:12	7:47	1	קדשים עומר
May 6	5:58	6:47	7:17	7:52	2	אמור עומר
May 13	6:02	6:52	7:22	7:57	3	בהר עומר
May 20	6:06	6:57	7:27	8:02	4	בוזקתי עומר
May 27	6:09	7:01	7:31	8:06	5	במדבר עומר
June 3	6:13	7:05	7:35	8:10	6	נשא עומר
June 10	6:16	7:09	7:39	8:14	1	בהעלתך
June 17	6:18	7:11	7:41	8:16	2	שלז
June 24	6:20	7:13	7:43	8:18	3	קרוז
July 1	6:20	7:13	7:43	8:18	4	זקת
July 8	6:20	7:13	7:43	8:18	5	בלק
July 15	6:18	7:10	7:40	8:15	6	פינזוס
July 22	6:16	7:07	7:47	8:12	1	מטות
July 29	6:13	7:03	7:33	8:08	2	מסעי
August 5	6:08	6:57	7:27	8:02	3	דברים חזון
August 12	6:03	6:51	7:21	7:56	4	ואתוונן נחמו
August 19	5:57	6:43	7:13	7:48	5	עקב
August 26	5:50	6:35	7:05	7:40	6	ראה
September 2	5:43	6:27	6:57	7:32	1	שפטים
September 9	5:35	6:18	6:48	7:23	2	כי תצא
September 16	5:27	6:08	6:38	7:13	3&4	כי תבוא
September 23	5:20	5:59	6:29	7:04	5&6	נצבים-וילך
September 30	5:12	5:50	6:20	6:55		האזינו שובה

מזל טוב
 לירדית קלימן ומשפחתה על
 נישואיה לירידיה
 שתנצבו לבעת בית מאן בישראל

The Avrom Silver Jerusalem College for Adults and OU Israel's Project YEDID are the educational components of the Seymour J. Abrams Orthodox Union Jerusalem World Center and include the classes & lectures of the OU Israel Center
Rabbi Sholom Gold, Dean • Phil Chernofsky, Educational director

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"Regular" classes & lectures - 25₪ members, 30₪ non-members, 5₪ maintenance fee for life members. Special rates for mornings with two or more shiurim: 40₪ members, 50₪ non-members. 10₪ for life members.
No one will be turned away for inability to pay.
Yearly membership 360₪ couple, 275₪ single. Life membership, call us.
Programs of the Center are partially funded by the Jewish Agency for Israel

Yom R'vi'i • 2 Nisan • WED April 6th

XXX *Rabbi Macy Gordon* resumes IY"H, April 13th

9:45am **Parshat M'tzora** with **Reuven Wolfeld**

10:45am **PARSHAT HASHAVUA R' Yosef Wolicki**

various **MINI-SHIUR/DIVREI TORAH WHILE YOU FOLD**

12:00pm WED, April 6 • **Exploring Israeli culture, history and society: American Israelis and other Anglos in Israeli society...**
Interactive lectures with **Gabriella Licsko**

12:30pm Dr. Maurice E. Joseph Jewish Video Resource Center presents...
VIDEO in the LIBRARY: Rabbi Aharon Adler
"Exploring Pesach Themes in Talmudic Sources"

12:45pm **TAICH FOR HEALTH** with **Avi Hirsch**

1:30pm **MEDICAL CHI KONG** with **Avi Hirsch** 050-7671-722

2:15pm *Women's Beit Midrash* - **Pearl Borow**

XXX **RABBI CHAIM EISEN'S SHIUR** resumes after Pesach

Wednesday, April 6th • 8:00pm

A SEDER WITH SIZZLE AND PESACH
WITH PIZZAZZ by **Rabbi Elan Adler**

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Yom Chamishi • 3 Nisan • THU April 7th

Exercise Class for Women Thursdays, 9:00-10:00am
Given by **DR TOVA GOLDFINE** Chiropractor/Rehabilitation
FOR WOMEN OF ALL AGES AND EXERCISE FITNESS LEVEL
Contact Dr Tova 052-420-1201 chirodivine@gmail.com

9:00am **Rabbi Raymond Apple on T'hilim**

This week: **T'hilim 118 (A) - end of Hallel**

10:30am (to 12:30) Midrash HaShavua - **Dr. Hayim Abramson**

various **MINI-SHIUR/DIVREI TORAH WHILE YOU FOLD**

THE KNITTING GROUP IS ALIVE AND WELL
THURSDAYS AT 1:30PM IN THE LIBRARY WITH DVORA ZIPPOR
- NEW "MEMBERS" WELCOME - KNITTING OR CROCHETING

Thursday night, April 7th • 7:30pm • [<http://lowellgallin.com>] • regular fees

Root & Branch Association, Ltd. presents...

"Jews, Israel and the Vatican: Where are We Heading?"

Talk by **Moshe Aumann**, Former Consul-General and
Minister-Counselor for Church Relations, Israeli Embassy, Washington D.C.;
Author, "Conflict and Connection: The Jewish-Christian-Israel Triangle"

Yom Shishi • 4 Nisan • FRI April 8th

8:30am (to 9:45am) **Kollel Yom Shishi Shiur B'iyun in Makot**
by **HaRav Eliav Silverman**, Shoel U'meishiv of the RIETS Israel Kollel
Friday mornings • Coffee and cake will be served

11:00am **RCA Daf Yomi**

Shabbat Parshat Metzora • April 9th

5:00pm Shiur by **Rabbi Yaakov Moshe Poupko**
Preview & Insights into the Hagada

6:00pm **Mincha** These times stay fixed until Rosh HaShana

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Sun-Thu in the *Ganchrow Beis Medrash* (first floor)

10:00am	SUN/TUE/THU Rabbi Jeff Bienenfeld - Brachot - 4th perek
11:15am	RCA Daf Yomi by Rotation (and Fri. at 11:00am) in tribute to Rabbi Yitzchak Botwinick ז"ת
1:20pm	Mincha (this time stays the same throughout the year)
3:15pm	Rabbi Chaim Sendic will be teaching the topic of KASHERING KEILIM next Tuesday and Wednesday (April 12 & 13) and then will recess until after Pesach, when he will start a new topic - Hilchot B'rachot
4:30pm	Gemara Kesuvos with Rabbi Hillel Ruvell is in recess until Rosh Chodesh Iyar

Yom Rishon 6 Nisan • SUN April 10th

- 9:30am *Let's Study Hagada - Tonia Frohwein* (for women)
- 10:30am 'While on my journey I told a story...' Rabbi Nachman's Stories
New series with **Golda Warhaftig** women
- 12:00pm **Hebrew for Beginners** resumes IY"H on Sunday, May 8th
- XXX Alan Romm resumes IY"H, May 1st

Sundays 1-2pm **Dr Tova's Exercise Class**
Towards stronger bones and a stronger spine
Call or email Dr Tova: 052-420-1201 • chirodivine@gmail.com

- 2:00pm **Rabbi Ephraim Sprecher** (April 10th)
Pesach Lessons: You can take it with you!
- XXX *Pri Chadash Women's Writing Workshop* (2 hrs)
in recess until after Pesach • Contacts: 628-7359 and 054-569-0410
- XXX **Rabbi Chaim Eisen** resumes IY"H after Pesach

The shiurim of **Rabbi Mordechai Machlis** on **Mishlei** and of **Rabbi Dr. Joseph C. Klausner/Yedidyahu** (tel. 99-333-45) on **Shmuel Bet** will resume IY"H after Pesach (specifically, on Sunday, May 1st)

More Sunday...

Sunday, April 10th • 7:30pm • [<http://lowellgallin.com>] • regular fees
Root & Branch Association, Ltd. presents...
"Ongoing Problems in Holocaust Reparations"
Talk by **Yitzchak Kerem**, Historian of Sephardic Jewry,
Hebrew University of Jerusalem; Editor, "Sepharad, the Sephardic Newsletter"

TORAH VIDEO
regular fee

Exploring Jewish Values and Concepts using Trigger Videos, source sheets, discussion...
with **Rabbi Nachum Amsel**
This week: Sunday, April 10th • 8:00pm
"Do we really have Free Will?"
with a movie clip from "Minority Report"

Yom Sheini • 7 Nisan • MON April 11th

N'SHEI LIBRARY: 10:00-12:00

MOMMY & BABY MUSIC CLASSES with Jackie
Resumes IY"H on Monday, May 2nd • Call Jackie: 999-5524 / 054-533-9305

Pre-Pesach Yesha Fair Monday April 11th • 10am - 6pm!
Handmade shmura matza from Chevron (Hechsher Harav Machfud)
3 pieces 40₪, One kilo box 120₪
You must order this by phone in advance to make sure to get yours on Monday.
Malka: 052-597-8866 or Avi: 052-233-0081 for questions and phone orders.
On sale: cakes, cookies, spices, wines, honey, dried fruit, games, cosmetics, wipes, etc.
Anyone can go into a supermarket to shop. Make your Pesach special by buying and using Yesha products. You are doing a mitzva by supporting and providing a parnasa for the farmers and settlers of Yesha when you shop at the Israel Center!

More Monday...

XXX EXCURSIONS INTO THE BOOK OF YESHAYAHU
Note **Pearl Borow**'s new topic when she resumes
IY"H on Monday, May 2nd

XXX **Rabbi Zev Leff** will resume IY"H after Pesach

10:00am **One week to Erev Pesach!** - Phil Chernofsky
Review of various halachot and minhagim of Pesach
Hagada Insights and Highlights to "arm" you with good things
to share with your Seder participants

11:35am **Who's Who in Israeli Orthodox Communities**
Mitnaged, Litvish, Yeshivish: "To learn or not to learn, that is the
question!" Yeshiva and kollel lifestyle and cities of avreichim in Israeli
Litvish communities. The origins and supporters of the idea of full time
learning, and their reactions to the tragedies of WW2. The quality and
quantity. Why the yeshivish world developed so differently in the USA?
Interactive lecture with pictures - **Gabriella Liesko**

XXX **FIT FOREVER:** Exercise for women of all ages
Resumes IY"H after Pesach • Call Sura Faecher 993-2524

12:30pm Dr. Maurice E. Joseph Jewish Video Resource Center presents...
VIDEO in the LIBRARY: Rabbi David Derovan
- "A Tale from the Haggadah"

Women's Beit Midrash resumes IY"H after Pesach

7:30pm **Lesser-studied Tanach personalities**
Rabbi Francis Nataf • This week (April 11th): **Natan**

XXX **Rabbi Dr. Elie Assis, Book of Melachim** (in Heb.)
resumes IY"H after Pesach [Sam Finkel 052-469-1263, finkels2@zahav.net.il]

MASK - J'lem Chapter at the Israel Center • maskjerusalem.cjb.net • 050-754-2717
NEXT MEETING: **Monday, May 2, 7:30-9:30pm** with **Dr. Judy Belsky**

Yom Sh'lishi • 8 Nisan • TUE April 12th

The Israel Center and the **Old City Free Loan Association**
21st year • well over 5500 loans granted
Gemach - Free Loan Society
to provide interest-free loans for people in financial distress (living in the Jerusalem area).
Interviews at the Center on Tuesdays from 10:00-12:00 and 19:00-20:30 • Please bring ID

9:00am **Rabbi Aharon Adler - Hagada**

10:15am **Rabbi Sholom Gold - Parshat HaShavua**

XXX **Jewish History - Dr. Henry Goldblum** (in recess until May 3rd)

XXX **Esther Sutton's** classes will resume IY"H after Pesach

12:30pm Dr. Maurice E. Joseph Jewish Video Resource Center presents...
VIDEO in the LIBRARY: Dr. Avivah Gottlieb Zornberg
"I Know Their Pain: Cruelty and Compassion in the Pesach Narrative"

CLASS with **Avital Levin, LMSW Relationships in Tanach:**
Their Significance to Relationships of Today For Men & Women • No Charge
Resumes IY"H after Pesach

XXX **Parsha through the Eyes of the Meforshim:**
with **Rabbi Yonatan Kolatch** resumes IY"H after Pesach

Tuesday, April 12th • 8:00pm [(02) 623-6368 • www.IsraelBehindTheNews.com]

An Audio-Visual Presentation by David Bedein

Latest investigative reports:

- What do the newest Palestinian school books look like: Reading, Writing and Retzach
- Will US, Canadian & EU trained Palestinian forces turn on Israel?
- Will initiatives of US Congress, Canadian Parliament & European Parliament reform UNRWA?
- Will the proposed Palestinian State threaten the Ben Gurion Airport?

Yom R'vi'i • 9 Nisan • WED April 13th

9:20pm *Rabbi Macy Gordon* is BACK!

Special Pre-Pesach Shiur

9:45am **Parshat Acharei** with **Reuven Wolfeld**

10:45am **PARSHAT HASHAVUA R' Yosef Wolicki**

various **MINI-SHIUR/DIVREI TORAH WHILE YOU FOLD**

12:00pm WED, April 13 • **Exploring Israeli culture, history and society:** "Russians" in Israeli society. The Refuseniks struggle for Jewish identity and Zionism in the USSR. The new and huge wave of Russian aliyah, from 1991. Integration and segregation. Culture and culture-heroes and place in Israeli politics. Askenazis (Russia, Ukraine, Beloruss etc) and Eastern communities (Georgians, Bukharis etc)

Interactive lectures with **Gabriella Licsko**

12:30pm Dr. Maurice E. Joseph Jewish Video Resource Center presents...

**VIDEO in the LIBRARY: Rabbi Zev Leff -
"The Importance of a Proper Seder"**

12:45pm **TAICH FOR HEALTH** with **Avi Hirsch**

1:30pm **MEDICAL CHI KONG** with **Avi Hirsch** 050-7671-722

XXX *Women's Beit Midrash* resumes IY"H after Pesach

XXX **RABBI CHAIM EISEN'S SHIUR** resumes IY"H after Pesach

Yom Chamishi • 10 Nisan • THU April 14th

Exercise Class for Women Thursdays, 9:00-10:00am • see BackPage B

9:00am **Rabbi Raymond Apple on T'hilim**

This week: **T'hilim 118 (B) End of Hallel**

various **MINI-SHIUR/DIVREI TORAH WHILE YOU FOLD**

Shabbat HaGadol Shabbaton

Friday-Shabbat, April 15-16

We'll be taking Shabbat early - Mincha (before Plag) at 5:35pm
Candle lighting not before 5:47pm

See the inner color page for further details

People in walking distance are invited to daven with us
and attend shiurim - full schedule in next week's TT

With Rosh Chodesh Nisan just past, we remind you to look for fruit trees in blossom (preferably, at least two) to be able to say the once-a-year bracha (which we featured in last week's Torah Tidbits). This is a special bracha. It says an extra thank you to G-d for the "chuparim" (bonuses) of His Creation. A fruit tree "earns its keep" in our perception because of the delicious fruit we enjoy from it. Fruit trees need to be nothing further. But they are so much more. The sight and fragrance of their flowers are delightful. This, our Sages saw, as a cause to say the extra "thank you" to HaShem. The bracha can be said alone, but it is so much more meaningful to say it with family and friends!

Do you speak English?

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