

NCYI Youth Groups Parshat Metzora

(http://www.headcoverings-by-devorah.com/HebEngTaNaKh_TorahSummary.htm)

Parsha Outline

- Purification from the diseases of the skin
- Laws of the diseases on houses
- The laws of bodily discharges

Parsha Summaries

http://www.chabad.org/parshah/article_cdo/aid/381767/jewish/Metzora-Roundup.htm

Metzora Roundup

A *Metzora* is a person who has *tzaraat*. This person is impure and has to leave the camp (or city) and wait there until the *tzaraat* goes away. When the kohen visits him outside of the camp and see that he no longer has *tzaraat*, he does a special procedure with two birds, spring water, a cedar stick, a strip of red wool, and a bundle of the herb hyssop. Then the person washes his clothing, shaves his hair and immerses in the mikvah. He is now purified and may return to the camp.

Houses can also be afflicted with *tzaraat*, and again it is the kohen's job to identify it. If he detects *tzaraat* in the walls of the house, he locks up the house and it is left alone for seven days. If the *tzaraat* then disappears, the house is fine, but if nothing happens, or if the *tzaraat* has spread, the afflicted stones are removed and replaced, the walls are replastered, and the house is locked up for another seven days. If after the second week the kohen sees that the *tzaraat* has spread, he declares the the house *tameh* and it is burned or destroyed.

Garments can also be afflicted with *tzaraat*. The treatment of an afflicted garment is similar to that of a house.

The end of the parshah discusses three other types of impurity, and how someone can be purified from each one.

http://www.chabad.org/parshah/article_cdo/aid/501034/jewish/Aliya-Summary.htm

Metzora Aliya Summary

General Overview: This week's reading, *Metzora*, discusses the purification process for one who contracts "*tzara'at*" (skin maladies which are contracted as a result of engaging in forbidden gossip), and the symptoms and laws of "house *tzara'at*," indicated by certain brick discolorations. Following is a discussion of various ritual impurities, including the laws of the menstruating woman.

First Aliyah: The Torah reading begins with a description of the purification procedure for a person who contracted *tzara'at*. After the priest determines that the *tzara'at* has been healed, a ceremony involving two birds, a cedar plank, a scarlet thread and water from a live stream, is used for the initial stage of the purification. The individual also shaves his entire body. After a seven day wait, the person shaves again, and brings three animals and an oil offering to the Temple.

Second Aliyah: The priest processes the offerings in the manner prescribed in this section. With this the purification process is completed.

Third Aliyah: If the individual suffering from *tzara'at* cannot afford the above sacrifices, two birds can be substituted for two of the animals. This section describes the slightly different purification process reserved for the impoverished person.

Fourth Aliyah: Homes, too, can be afflicted with *tzara'at*. If bricks on a home become discolored -- acquiring a strong red or green pigment -- a priest is summoned. If indeed the discoloration seems to be *tzara'at*, the priest quarantines the home for up to three weeks. Depending on the spread of the discoloration, the home is either declared to be pure, or the specific bricks are removed from the house, or, in the most extreme situations, the house is demolished. The Torah then describes the purification process for such a home -- which is very similar to the initial stage of the purification of the human afflicted with *tzara'at* (described in the First Aliyah).

Fifth Aliyah: After concluding the subject of *tzara'at*, the Torah discusses the ritual impurity of a man who issues a sickly and unnatural seminal discharge, as well as the method by which this person attains purity when the condition passes.

Sixth Aliyah: This section discusses the ritual impurity contracted by a man who issues a (normal) seminal discharge, the ritual impurity of a menstruating woman, and of a man who cohabits with her. All such people must immerse in a *mikvah* (ritual pool) in order to be purified.

Seventh Aliyah: Under certain circumstances a menstruating woman was required to bring to the Temple two bird offerings in order to attain purity. These sacrifices are described in this section.

<http://ohr.edu/yhiy/article.php/3472>

The Torah describes the procedure for a *metzora* (a person afflicted with *tzara'at*) upon conclusion of his isolation. This process extends for a week and involves *korbanot* and immersions in the *mikveh*. Then, a *kohen* must pronounce the *metzora* pure. A *metzora* of limited financial means may substitute lesser offerings for the more expensive animals. Before a *kohen* diagnoses that a house has *tzara'at*, household possessions are removed to prevent them from also being declared ritually impure. The *tzara'at* is removed by smashing and rebuilding that section of the house. If it reappears, the entire building must be razed. The Torah details those bodily secretions that render a person spiritually impure, thereby preventing his contact with holy items, and the Torah defines how one regains a state of ritual purity.

Parsha Songs

[The lyrics are supplied here. For the tunes, please click on the link]

http://www.chabad.org/parshah/article_cdo/aid/573745/jewish/Parshah-Song.htm

Lyrics:

Speaking badly of others is not a kind act
For once you hurt someone, you can't take it back

As punishment for lashon hara a terrible deed
The sickness of tzoroas, was then decreed

If a white spot was found on the body or neck
A man had to go to the kohain to check
If it was tzoraas beyond any doubt
From the camp of Yisroel, he had to go out

Seven days completely alone were spent
For the things he did wrong, he had to repent
If his t'shuuah was honest and real
At the end of the week he was totally healed

In eight more days if his skin was still clear
After bringing korbonos and serious prayer
He then returned to his family and friends
And was careful not to speak lashon hara, again

Parsha Questions & Answers

Selected from the following websites:

http://www.chinuch.org/item_details.php?mid=2977

http://www.chinuch.org/item_details.php?mid=382

http://www.chinuch.org/item_details.php?mid=1917

<http://ohr.edu/yhiy/article.php/889>

http://www.chinuch.org/item_details.php?mid=7076

The following are a selection of questions obtained from the above mentioned websites.

K-2

Questions

1. What is a metzora?
2. Why did someone get tzoraat?
3. What is lashon hara?
4. What happened when a metzora noticed that his tzoraat went away?
5. Where does the kohen go to check the metzora?
6. What does the metzora do after this?
7. Why does a metaher (a person who had tzoraat but is now purifying himself) bring birds?
8. What did they do with the birds?
9. What must be done as soon as one suspects his house might have tzoraat?

10. Why was tzoraat on a house a good thing?

Answers

1. A person who has tzoraat
2. For doing aveirot like lashon hara
3. When we say something bad and true about a person.
4. He called a kohen to come check him.
5. Outside the three camp
6.
 - a. He immersed in a mikveh on the seventh day
 - b. He brought karbanot on the eighth day
7. Birds chatter as he did
8. One bird is shechted and the other is sent away.
9. Everything in his house must be removed before the kohen inspects it; otherwise, it could become tameh if the kohen says the house has tzoraat.
10. It disclosed buried treasure.

3-4

Questions

1. What is a metzora?
2. Why did someone get tzoraat?
3. What is lashon hara?
4. What happened when a metzora noticed that his tzoraat went away?
5. Where does the kohen go to check the metzora?
6. What does the metzora do after this?
7. After the tzoraat went away and a kohen checked the metzora, on which day was he able to return to his family?
8. Why does a metaher (a person who had tzoraat but is now purifying himself) bring birds?
9. What did they do with the birds?
10. What must be done as soon as one suspects his house might have tzoraat?
11. Why was tzoraat on a house a good thing?
12. If a *zav* (a man who experiences a flow) sat or slept on a bed or chair, what is the status of a tahor person who touches these things?
13. If a *zav* sat or slept on a plank or rock, what is the status of a tahor person who touches these things?
14. When may a *zav* immerse in a *mikveh* to purify himself?
15. What is the status of someone who experiences a one-time flow?

Answers

1. A person who has tzoraat

2. For doing aveirot like lashon hara
3. When we say something bad and true about a person.
4. He called a kohen to come check him.
5. Outside the three camp
6.
 - a. He immersed in a mikveh on the seventh day
 - b. He brought karbanot on the eighth day
7. The eighth day.
8. Birds chatter as he did
9. One bird is shechted and the other is sent away.
10. Everything in his house must be removed before the kohen inspects it; otherwise, it could become tameh if the kohen says the house has tzoraat.
11. It disclosed buried treasure.
12. Tamei (these objects transmit a zav's tumah since a person usually lies or sits upon them).
13. Tahor (these objects do not transmit a zav's tumah since a person does not usually lie or sit upon them).
14. After seven consecutive days without a flow
15. He is tamei until evening

5-6

Questions

1. What is a metzora?
2. Why did someone get tzoraat?
3. What is lashon hara?
4. What happened when a metzora noticed that his tzoraat went away?
5. Where does the kohen go to check the metzora?
6. What does the metzora do after this?
7. After the tzoraat went away and a kohen checked the metzora, on which day was he able to return to his family?
8. What must a metaher (a person who had tzoraat but is now purifying himself) bring once he has done teshuvah (repentance) and is healed?
9. Why does he bring birds?
10. What did they do with the birds?
11. What must be done as soon as one suspects his house might have tzoraat?
12. Why was tzoraat on a house a good thing?
13. When a person enters a house that has *tzara'at*, when do his clothes become *tamei*?
14. What is the status of a man who is *zav* (sees a flow) on two times or two consecutive days;
15. What is the status of a man who is *zav* (sees a flow) on three times or three consecutive days?

16. If a *zav* sat or slept on a bed or chair, what is the status of a tahor person who touches these things?
17. If a *zav* sat or slept on a plank or rock, what is the status of a tahor person who touches these things?
18. What does the Torah mean when it refers to a *zav* who "has not washed his hands"?
19. When may a *zav* immerse in a *mikveh* to purify himself?
20. What is the status of someone who experiences a one-time flow?

Answers

1. A person who has tzoraat
2. For doing aveirot like lashon hara
3. When we say something bad and true about a person.
4. He called a kohen to come check him.
5. Outside the three camp
6.
 - a. He immersed in a mikveh on the seventh day
 - b. He brought karbanot on the eighth day
7. The eighth day.
8. He must bring two birds.
9. Birds chatter as he did
10. One bird is shechted and the other is sent away.
11. Everything in his house must be removed before the kohen inspects it; otherwise, it could become tameh if the kohen says the house has tzoraat.
12. It disclosed buried treasure.
13. When he remains in the house long enough to eat a small meal
14. He is tamei for the day
15. He is tamei for seven days and he is also required to bring a karbon
16. Tamei (these objects transmit a *zav*'s tumah since a person usually lies or sits upon them).
17. Tahor (these objects do not transmit a *zav*'s tumah since a person does not usually lie or sit upon them).
18. One who has not immersed in a mikveh
19. After seven consecutive days without a flow
20. He is tamei until evening

Parsha Stories

http://www.chabad.org/parshah/article_cdo/aid/662780/jewish/Living-with-the-Parsha.htm

Living with the Parsha: Hidden Jewels

Sara awoke with a scream. "No don't do it! Don't destroy my bedroom walls—I just got them painted... NOOOOOO!!!"

Sara's mother rushed to her daughter's bedroom, but not before glancing at the clock on the wall: 4:12 am. Why on earth was her daughter screaming in the middle of the night?!

As soon as she opened the bedroom door, she realized her daughter was having a nightmare. "Shhh...Sara...it's just a dream. Don't worry, you're home, lying in your bed, shhh..."

"Oh Mummy!" Sara sobbed. "It was so real! Just like we learned in the weekly Torah reading class today! One of the walls of the house inside was covered in spots. It was terrible. Mr. Cohen from next door came and looked at it, and said the wall has to be knocked down!"

Her mother sat down next to her on the bed and began to stroke her hair. "Shhh darling...it's okay...that only happened thousands of years ago, that sort of thing does not happen nowadays..."

"Mummy! You don't understand," Sara cried. "We learned in class yesterday about a thing called *tzara'at*, spots and patches. It can come on someone's skin, or on their clothes, or on the walls of their house. One reason why it came was because of speaking badly about people, *lashon hara*. If the person didn't stop, it would get worse and worse. Even the walls of his house would become covered in spots. Then, he would have to destroy his home to get rid of them. Imagine, his very own home!"

Sara's mother looked at her daughter with a tired smile. "Sara, it seems that you only heard half of the story. Life sometimes does that—what appears to be so strange and even scary really ends up to a person's benefit."

Sara rubbed her eyes in confusion. "I don't get what you are trying to say..."

"Before the Jews came to settle in the Land of Israel, the Canaanites lived there. The Canaanites knew that the Jews would conquer the land, so they hid their jewels in the walls of their homes. Knocking down the walls was actually a way that the buried treasure would be discovered."

Despite the late hour Sara gave a huge grin. "My dream does not seem so scary anymore! I can just imagine—this poor man, feeling so bad about his sin, having to destroy his own home....Lo and behold, he finds treasures hidden inside the wall! What a great ending!"

Exhaustion was rapidly affecting Sara's mother, but not before she got her last word in. "You know Sara, the jewels hidden in the walls tell us something about people. Some people seem very negative, like a wall covered with spots. But in fact, there is always something positive and beautiful hidden inside them. The Torah is always hidden inside their soul—like the precious jewels."

Sara laughed. She looked up at the clock: 4:30 am. She had forgotten her bad dream. "I can imagine helping everyone uncovering their treasure inside—but just not at this early time in the morning!"

<http://ohr.edu/yhiy/article.php/Parshat-Metzora.pdf?docid=3466&ie=1&showobject=1>

LESSONS FROM THE PARSHA

KEEP THE SHECHINA WITH YOU

How was school today, Chaim?" "Great, Abba. We learned about parashas Metzora." "It is a fascinating parasha, Chaim." "The Rebbe sent us home with a kasha (question) Abba. The metzora brings different korbonos as part of his purification process. One of them is a korbon oshom. What is an oshom and why does he bring it?" "That is a fascinating question, Chaim." "The Rebbe told us to look in the Ramban at the end of parashas Vayikra, and the Sforno on parashas metzora to find the answer." "Let's take a look, Chaim. Here is the Ramban. He explains that the name of the korbon reveals its essence. Oshom is similar to the words shomom (desolate) and ne'evad (lost). The person committed a very serious aveyra. He truly deserved to be shomom and ne'evad. Instead, of suffering that terrible fate, he does teshuva and subsequently receives his kapora (atonement) from the korbon oshom." "Fascinating, Abba. Why does the metzora bring a korbon oshom?" "The Ramban explains that the metzora is like a dead man. Because of his aveyra, he should be dead – shomom and ne'evad. That is why he must bring an oshom." "I am in suspense, Abba. What is his aveyra?"

Let us look in the Sforno, Chaim. He shares with us a fascinating insight into the nature of the oshom. The principal aveyra that requires an oshom is meilah bi'kodesh – misuse or desecration of the holy things. The metzora's main sins are loshon hora (slander) and gasos ruach (haughtiness)." "How are they meilah bi'kodesh, Abba?" "The Sforno adds that most loshon hora is a result of gasos ruach. The speaker feels superior to the other

person. Therefore, he feels that he is allowed to put him down by speaking loshon hora about him. Furthermore, he usually speaks loshon hora secretly to his close acquaintance. A person who commits an aveyra in secret ‘pushes away the legs of the Shechina (Divine Presence).’ By sinning in a private place he is making the statement, ‘The Shechina is not here. Hashem does not know about this place and my sin here.’ There is no greater desecration of Hashem’s holiness than this. About such a person Dovid HaMelech writes, ‘He who slanders his neighbor in secret – him I will cut down; one with haughty eyes and an haughty heart, him I cannot bear.’ (Tehillim 101:5). The Targum explains that the slanderer will be stricken with tsoraas. The haughty one and Hashem cannot co-exist. The Metsudas Dovid adds that Hashem hates his deeds. Therefore, the metzora pushes away the Shechina and desecrates the Holy Name.”

“I never realized that loshon hora was so serious, Abba. It is like meilah bi’kodesh. That is truly horrible.” “It is, Chaim. Let us all make a renewed effort to never speak it again!”

Kinderlach . . .

Close your eyes, sit quietly for a few minutes, and feel the Shechina next to you. Hashem is everywhere. He is always with you. He is always there to help you and protect you. With one exception. If you speak loshon hora, you push Him away. Can you imagine that? The Almighty, Creator of the Universe is at your side, ready to help you, comfort you, and protect you. What do you do? Push Him away. What a terrible thing to do. That is the metzora, and that is his korbon oshom. Don’t do it kinderlach! Keep your speech pure, and keep the Shechina with you!

THE CHOICE IS YOURS

Life and death are dependent upon one’s speech” Mishle (18:21). The Medrash (Vayikra Rabba 33:1) relates the following story. Rabban Shimon ben Gamliel said to Tuvi his servant, “Go to the market and buy me a delicacy.” Tuvi went to the market and bought tongue. The Rav then sent Tuvi to buy plain food. He came back with tongue. “What is going on here?”

I asked Rabban Shimon. “I ask you to buy a delicacy and you buy tongue. I ask you to buy plain food and you buy tongue.” Tuvi replied, “There are good and bad tongues. When a tongue is good, there is nothing better than it. And when a tongue is bad, there is nothing worse than it.” Rabbeinu Bechaye explains that a good tongue is one that speaks Divrei Torah and encourages others to learn and do mitzvos. A bad tongue is one that speaks loshon hora and rechilus (tale-bearing). The Medrash continues, telling us about a festive meal that Rebbe Yehuda HaNassi made for his students. He served both soft and hard tongues. The students selected the soft tongues and discarded the hard ones. Rebbe said to them, “Just as you prefer the soft tongues, so too others prefer to hear you speak softly and not harshly.”

Kinderlach . . .

We can all think of examples of beautiful speech. “I love you Imma.” “Thank you so much Abba for helping me with my learning.” “That is a beautiful dress you are wearing Chani.” These words of appreciation make a person's heart sing. Unfortunately, harsh words of criticism or discouragement can hurt a person very badly. Kinderlach, when Imma comes back to the Shabbos table, let us all tell her how delicious the meal is. What a big mitzvah!

Parasha Questions:

□ Name the ways that a zov can make things or people tomei. (15:4-10)

□ Which birds, trees, and wool must a metzora bring for his purification process, and what does he do with them? (14:5-7)

□ Which korbonos does the metzora bring on the eighth day, and what does he do with them? (14:10-32)

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<http://www.aish.com/torahPortion/pArchive.asp?eventType=28&eventName=Metzora>

There are other stories available as well at the above website.

http://www.aish.com/torahportion/family/A_Good_Home.asp

Metzora (Leviticus 14-15)

A Good Home

From this week's Torah Portion

How we choose to act at home has a big effect on how our home is going to feel. In this week's Torah portion, we learn that in the times of our ancestors, when a person would behave in a negative way, it would not only affect them, but even show up as a stain called a 'negah' on the very walls of their homes. Today, we can use this lesson to inspire us to act in a way that will help turn our homes into positive places that make people feel good.

Story

In our story, some kids learn the true secret of fixing up their house.

HOME IMPROVEMENT

Every spring, around Passover time, the Kline family would turn their house upside-down, cleaning, rearranging furniture and generally getting to all those projects they had put off during the cold winter months.

The Kline twins, Danny and Matt, also got caught up in the 'spring fever' frame of mind...

"Mom, Matt and I don't like sharing our room so much. So we decided if we make the room nicer - you know, change around all the furniture and decorate and stuff - we'll like it better."

"Yeah," Matt said, "by the time we're done, our room is going to be so comfortable and look so cool, that we're never going to want to leave it - well maybe to eat, but that's it!"

"Go right ahead," Mrs. Kline said. "But maybe you'll also consider coming out occasionally to go to school and take baths, as well?"

The boys laughed and enthusiastically dove into the task. First they decided that they would clear out all the junk in their room they didn't need.

"Where are you going with that box of good stuff?" Danny asked.

"Good stuff? This is just a bunch of my old baseball cards."

"So if you don't want them - I do."

"Um, never mind ... I want them after all," Matt smirked. "But I see you're throwing out your old football helmet, can I have it?"

"Sorry - I just changed my mind," Danny snipped back. And so it went, back and forth, until they finally began moving furniture.

But that went even worse.

"You want to move the *good* lamp onto *your* side of the room? Forget it, jerko!" Matt yelled.

"Why shouldn't I?" Danny bellowed back. "After you suckered me into having the bed next to the window so you get all the sun!"

By the time they finished arguing and got to decorating, there was nothing to talk about - because the boys weren't talking to each other. Each of them was sitting with arms crossed angrily on their own beds, silently staring in opposite directions, until after a few minutes, Danny burst out laughing.

"Hey, what's so funny?" Matt couldn't help asking.

"We really did it, didn't we?"

"Did what?"

"Made the room much more nice to be in."

"Huh?"

"I mean, we started doing this whole project so we'd like being in our room more, but now we're even more miserable."

"That's only because we're fighting right now."

"Exactly" Danny said. "But not only now - we're always fighting and *that's* why we don't like being in here."

"Right." Matt had to agree.

"So maybe..." Danny said softly, "we can start changing that. Here ... I decided I really don't need my old helmet, after all." He handed it to his brother.

"Wow, thanks!" Matt exclaimed. "And, um, you know you probably need this lamp more than I do," he said. "So go ahead and take it back..."

A little while later, the guys came down for lunch - all smiles.

"How did the redecorating go?" she asked.

"Great!" the boys said. After lunch their Mom poked her head into their room. "You guys seemed so happy with your redecorating job that I just had to take a look ... hey, the room looks like always - did you change your minds?"

"Well not exactly, Mom." Danny and Matt smiled "But instead of making the room nicer, we decided to make ourselves nicer and now the room's a whole lot nicer - just the way it is."

Discussion Questions

Ages 3-5

Q. How did the boys feel about their room at first?

A. They felt that if they made their room nicer, they would be happier there.

Q. How did they feel in the end?

A. They saw that what would really make them happier in their room was to treat each other nicer.

Ages 6-9

Q. What life-lesson do you think the boys learned that day?

A. They had thought that they weren't happy in their room because of the room itself - the furniture, etc. But they realized that how they treated each other affected how they felt at home more than how things looked or were arranged.

Q. What could people do who wanted to make their home a more pleasant and enjoyable place to be?

A. One of the most important things is to try hard to treat each other right. That includes speaking respectfully toward one another, refraining from fighting and trying to find ways to help each other out. While it might take time, after a while they would almost surely see and feel a big difference.

Ages 10 and Up

Q. There is a teaching, that if two people are in harmony they could feel comfortable living together on something as thin as the edge of a sword - and if they are not, the whole world will feel too small to share. How do you understand this?

A. More than our physical environment, it is our relationships with those around us, that determine our level of comfort. Therefore, a person who seeks comfort and happiness, shouldn't invest in decorator furnishings, but should invest in trying to bring harmony to their relationships.

Q. Does a person's physical environment have any bearing on their happiness?

A. Obviously, unless a person has a certain basic level of cleanliness and comfort, it is going to be difficult to feel positive. Even more, our sages teach that pleasant surroundings can expand our minds and lift our spirits. However, none of this will make a person happy unless he or she works to maintain a positive attitude and healthy relationships with the people around them.

Parsha Games

<http://www.aje.org.uk/harayon/>

K-2

The Torah tells us not to speak Lashon Hara - saying mean and nasty things about someone to other people

Middah/ Jewish Value

- **Being careful what we say**

Activity

We all know that saying nasty things and listening to nasty things is wrong. First establish what 'nice' and 'not nice' things to say might be. Ask the children, using examples:

1. Your house is dirty
2. You've got a pretty garden

Now play this game with them. The leader makes a statement. If it's 'not nice' the children cover an ear with one hand and their mouth with another, to reinforce not listening to or speaking Lashon Hara. (If this is too hard just ask them to cover their ears. If the statement is 'nice' the children can clap their hands.

3-4

The parashah tells us more about 'Tzara'at' - a special kind of skin disease that we can't identify today - which was the punishment for speaking Lashon Hara

Middah/ Jewish Value

- **Being careful how we talk**

Activity

Last week, for Parashat Tazria, we played Chinese Whispers' to show how the details of things we tell each other can be changed, distorted or even end up as complete fabrications. This week we will talk about the ways that Lashon Hara may be spread. Ask the children:

How else, apart from speaking, might Lashon Hara be spread?

Some ideas for the Leader:

1. Through writing

2. Through an expression on someone's face
3. Through giving hints
4. Through drawing attention to someone's faults

5-6

Last week in Tazria we learned about 'Tzara'at', the punishment the Bnei Yisrael got for speaking Lashon Hara. Amazingly Tzara'at first affected people's homes, then clothing and then their bodies. These stages in the appearance of the Tzara'at were warning signs

Middah/ Jewish Value

- **Being aware of warning signs and taking appropriate action**

Activity

Think of examples from everyday life where heeding the warning signs will make you do something, stop doing something or change something.

Examples

- Road signs
- Reverse warning signal in car-
- Someone begins to look embarrassed during a conversation

Discuss these and other examples that you have thought of.