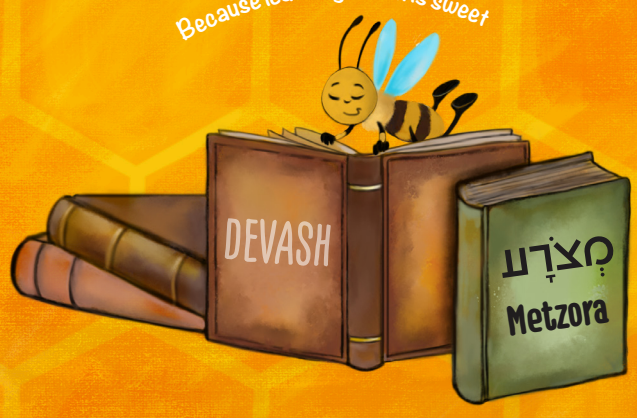


Because learning Torah is sweet



- VAYIKRA
- TZAV
- SHEMINI
- TAZRIA
- **METZORA**
- AHAREI MOT
- KEDOSHIM
- EMOR
- BEHAR
- BEHUKOTAI

ו' - י"ב ניסן תשפ"ד April 14 - 20, 2024



קה בַּפָּרָשָׁה • In This Week's Parashah

If you lived in the time of the Torah, and you had the skin disease צָרַעַת (tzara'at), you'd become טָמֵא (tamei, impure). After you healed, there's a two-part process to become טָהוֹר (tahor, pure):

Part One

The כֹּהֵן (kohen, priest) would take two birds and slaughter one of them. He would sprinkle the blood on you and on the other bird. That bird would be released. It would fly off, as if it were taking your טִמְאָה (tum'ah, impurity) far away.

You would bathe in a מִקְוֵה (mikveh, ritual bath). Then, one week later...

Part Two

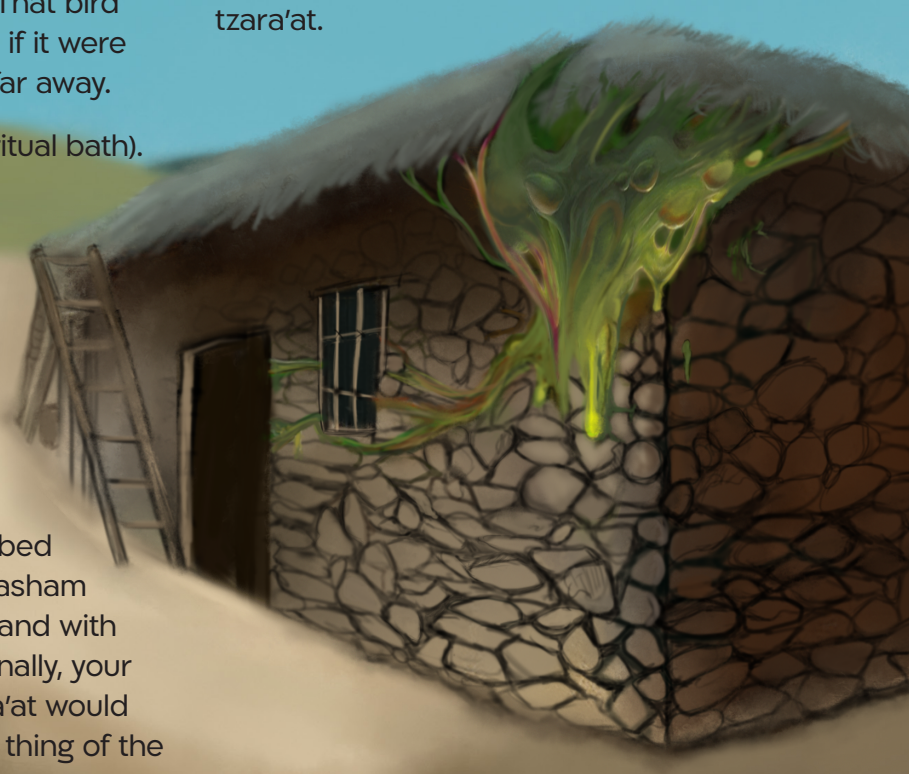
You'd bathe again. You would bring a bunch of korbanot: אֲשָׁם (asham), חַטָּאת (hattat), עֹלָה (olah), and מִנְחָה (minhah).

You'd be dabbed with the asham blood and with oil. Finally, your tzara'at would be a thing of the past.



House Tzara'at

In Eretz Yisrael, if your home had something greenish or reddish growing on it, it might be tzara'at. Sometimes, the house would have to be taken apart, or a blood sprinkling ritual might make it tahor again, like a person who had tzara'at.





בואו נדבר על זה • Tell Me More About This!

Who actually gets the skin disease צָרַעַת (tzaraat)?

In the Tanakh, we hear about seven cases:

1. Moshe



When Moshe is uncertain about whether he can actually lead Benei Yisrael out of מִצְרַיִם (Mitzrayim, Egypt), God makes some miracles to convince him. One of the miracles is that God causes tzara'at to appear on Moshe's hand, and then disappear from it, just by having Moshe put his hand in his cloak. (Shemot 4:6-7)

2. Miriam talks about Moshe and his wife behind their backs, and her punishment is that she gets struck with tzara'at. (Bemidbar 12:1-16)

3. Na'aman

A general from Aram, Na'aman, hears from his Jewish servant that the prophet Elisha can heal him of his long-term tzara'at. When Elisha tells him to bathe in the Jordan River seven times, Na'aman thinks this is ridiculous. But one of his advisors convinces him to try it out—and he's healed! Na'aman agrees to pray only to God in the future. We read this story last week, as the haftarah for Parashat Tazria. (Melakhim Bet 5:1-19)

4. Gehazi

As Na'aman was going home to Aram, Elisha's assistant Gehazi pretends to ask for money from him on behalf of Elisha. Na'aman happily pays, and Gehazi keeps the money. Gehazi's punishment is tzara'at. (Melakhim Bet 5:20-27)



5. People of Shomron

Shomron is under attack! Four people sitting at the city gate have tzara'at. When there isn't enough food in the city, the four people decide to go to the camp of their attackers to try to find food. They find the camp totally deserted and tell the king of Shomron that the attack had ended—God had scared their enemies away! (According to R. Yohanan (Sotah 47a), these four were Gehazi and his three sons.) This story is the haftarah for Parashat Metzora (although we don't read it this year). (Melakhim Bet 7:3-16)



6. King Azariah

This king of Yehudah tries to help people worship God, but he doesn't completely stop them from worshipping other gods. Because of this, God gives him tzara'at. (Melakhim Bet 15:5)

7. King Uzziah

Uzziah is a great and famous king who is loyal to God—but he gets arrogant and decides to offer incense in the *בֵּית הַמִּקְדָּשׁ* (Beit HaMikdash, Holy Temple). Only *כֹּהֲנִים* (kohanim, priests) are supposed to do that! The kohen Azariah tells King Uzziah to get out. Uzziah gets angry, and then God gives him tzara'at. He has it for the rest of his life. (Divrei ha-Yamim Bet 26:1-21)

- ◆ What tends to cause tzara'at and why?



דְּקָה שֶׁל דִּיּוּ • One-Minute Debate

Debate: If you don't have something nice to say, don't say anything at all.

Maybe both?



How to play:

- ◆ Here are some arguments to get you started, but try to come up with your own. Then debate someone!
- ◆ For a true one-minute debate, give each side 30 seconds to make its best case.

Agree



Agree!

- ◆ This got Miriam into trouble.
- ◆ Words can really hurt people.
- ◆ It's easy to say nice things if you try.

Disagree



Disagree!

- ◆ Sometimes hard truths have to be said. Not all words can be nice.
- ◆ Not saying anything at all is a bit extreme. Maybe there's a middle ground?



שאלות השבוע • Parashah Scavenger Hunt

The answers to the first seven questions can be found in the matching numbered aliyah in the Torah reading. **The answers to questions 8 and 9 are harder and can come from anywhere in the parashah.** **The answer to question 10 is in this week's haftarah.**

aliyot:

- 1) Vayikra 14:1 to 14:12
- 2) 14:13 to 14:20
- 3) 14:21 to 14:32
- 4) 14:33 to 14:53
- 5) 14:54 to 15:15
- 6) 15:16 to 15:28
- 7) 15:29 to 15:33

Haftarah for

Shabbat Ha-Gadol:
Malakhi 3:4 to 3:24

Good luck!



1 When a person is becoming טָהוֹר (tahor, pure) after having צָרַעַת (tzara'at), what kind of hairstyle do they have to wear?

2 In which hand does the kohen put the oil?

3 After the kohen does his specific oil sprinkling tasks, what does he do with any leftover oil in his hand?

4 What do you have to do before the kohen checks a נִגַּע (nega) on a house?

5 What happens to a wooden vessel touched by a זָב (zav)?

6 How many times does the word וְאִשָּׁה (ve-ishah, and a woman) appear?



7 When you bring two birds as a קֶרְבָּן (korban, sacrifice), they are always part of two kinds of sacrifice. Which ones?

8 If you double some Hebrew letters, you can make a two-letter word. There are five of these two-letter words in the Torah (not including words with prefixes and suffixes). One of these is in our parashah. What word?

9 Two words in our parashah in a single verse are spelled identically and have almost opposite meanings. What are they?

10 **From the haftarah:** The prophet Eliyahu will bring peace between two groups of people. Who are they?

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*
Look for the answers on page 8!



There's an idea that we are waiting for מְשִׁיחַ (mashiah), a person who will eventually come and save us, and bring about a more perfect world. **When will mashiah come?**

In this story in the Talmud (Bavli Sanhedrin 98a), R. Yehoshua ben Levi tries to find out!

The story goes that R. Yehoshua ben Levi bumps into אֵלִיָּהוּ הַנָּבִיא (Eliyahu HaNavi, Eliyahu the Prophet). One of the questions R. Yehoshua asks Eliyahu is, "When will mashiah come?"

Shockingly, Eliyahu responds, "Go ask him yourself!"

Eliyahu tells R. Yehoshua that mashiah is with a group of sick people outside the gates of the city. Mashiah, and the people with him, are suffering from a sickness that's similar to the skin disease צָרַעַת (tzara'at)!

R. Yehoshua asks mashiah, "When will you come?"

Mashiah responds, "Today!"

Later, when R. Yehoshua crosses paths with Eliyahu again, he says, "Mashiah lied to me! He said he would come today!" Eliyahu explains that mashiah was actually referring to the word "today" in this pasuk:

תהילים צה:ז

כִּי הוּא אֱלֹקֵינוּ וְאֶנְחֵנוּ עִם
מְרַעִיתוֹ וְצֹאן יָדוֹ
הַיּוֹם אִם בְּקִלּוֹ תִשְׁמָעוּ:

Tehilim 95:7

For this is our God,
and we are the people
being cared for—the flock
tended by God's hand.

Today, if you listen to
God's voice.



Mashiah wasn't lying. Mashiah could come today, but is waiting for us to listen to God's voice.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE >>

- ◆ What do you think the pasuk means when it says “listen to God’s voice”?
- ◆ What’s the role of tzara’at in this story? What could it mean that mashiah and the people with him have this kind of sickness?
- ◆ Why do Hazal want to teach us that it’s possible for mashiah to arrive any day?



הַפְּטָרָה • Haftarah

Pesah is next week, and that means that this Shabbat is **שַׁבַּת הַגָּדוֹל** (Shabbat Ha-Gadol, The Great Shabbat). Here are two ways that the haftarah for Shabbat Ha-Gadol is connected to the holiday coming up.

1. Redemption

On Pesah, when we remember how God saved the Jewish people from slavery, we also think about people who still need to be saved. Malakhi talks about this in our haftarah when he describes a future redemption, when the **נְבִיא** (navi, prophet) Eliyahu will come.

Malakhi 3:23-24

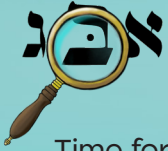
God said, “I will send Eliyahu the navi to you before the coming of the great and awesome day of God. He will bring the heart of parents back to their children and the heart of children back to their parents, so that, when I come, I do not strike the whole land with utter destruction.”

מלאכי ג:כג-כד

הִנֵּה אֲנֹכִי שֹׁלֵחַ לְכֶם אֶת אֵלֵיָּהוּ
הַנְּבִיא לְפָנַי בּוֹא יוֹם הַגָּדוֹל
וְהַנּוֹרָא: וְהִשִּׁיב לֵב אָבוֹת עַל
בָּנִים וְלֵב בָּנִים עַל אָבוֹתָם כִּן
אָבוֹא וְהִבִּיתִי אֶת הָאָרֶץ חֵרֵם:

- ◆ How might these pesukim connect to Pesah?
- ◆ According to these pesukim, what seems to be an important part of the final redemption?





דקדוק • Grammar

Time for another vowel pair! This week, we will look at a pair of vowels that are almost exactly the same, and you can see them in this single word from our parashah:

The dot without a vav after it is considered a short vowel, and it's a **חִירִיק חָסֵר** (hirik haser, hirik that's missing something). **תְּמִימָם** (ויקרא יד:י) The dot plus a vav after it is considered a long vowel, and it's a **חִירִיק מְלֵא** (hirik malei, full hirik).

This word is pronounced te-mi-mim, and it means something like "perfect." It describes how קֶרְבָּנוֹת (korbanot, sacrifices) should come from healthy animals that have no strange-looking marks on their bodies. The letter mem appears twice in this word, and each time there is a single dot underneath. Both vowels are two slightly different forms of חִירִיק (hirik).

There are a few words in Tanakh in which hirik appears three times, like in Parashat Toldot, **הַגְּמִיאֵינִי** (hag'mi-i-ni). Keep your eyes open for this vowel, with and without a yod!

When a word ends in a hirik, it must end in a hirik malei, like in this word you might recognize from Kiddush: **הַשְּׁבִיעִי** (ha-shevi-i).

2. Tithing

The Torah frequently tells us to give one tenth of what we have to people in need. This is called **מַעְשֵׂר** (ma'aser, tithing). In our haftarah, Malakhi tells the people to donate all their ma'aser, and then God will provide blessings (Malakhi 3:10).

Our Rabbis might have chosen this haftarah for this week because it's important to make sure you've donated all your ma'aser before Pesah (see Rambam Hilkhos Ma'aser Sheni 11:3).

Today there's also a custom to give **מַעוֹת חֲטִיִּים** (ma'ot hittim) before Pesah. These are gifts to charity that are meant to make sure that everyone—even people having money trouble—has what they need to celebrate Pesah. Our haftarah can also be a reminder to donate to ma'ot hittim, if you haven't already!



Devash is a weekly parashah magazine that makes Torah learning sweet. By engaging directly with texts and taking kids seriously as Jews, Devash helps children (ages 7+) and grown-ups discover the weekly Torah portion.

Parashah Scavenger Hunt Answers:

1. They have to shave all the hair on their head and beard and eyebrows (14:9)
2. The left, so the right hand can be used to sprinkle and place it (14:15-16)
3. He pours it on the head of the person becoming tahor (14:29)
4. Move everything out of the house (14:36)
5. It must be rinsed (15:12)
6. Three (15:18, 15:19, 15:25)
7. חַטָּאת (hattat) and עֹלָה (olah) (15:30)
8. רָר (rar) (15:3)—the others are דָּד (dod), חָח (hah), שֵׁשׁ (sheish), and תֵּית (teit)
9. הַמְטַהֵר (hametaher, someone making someone else pure) and הַמְטַהֵר (ha-meetaher, someone becoming pure themselves) (14:11)
10. Parents and children (Malakhi 3:23)



תּפִּלָּה • Prayer in the Parashah

We read about a bunch of cases of צָרַעַת (tzara'at) on pages 2 to 3. Perhaps the most famous of these is Miriam's. She gets tzara'at right after she speaks about Moshe and Moshe's wife behind their backs. Based on this story, tzara'at is often considered a punishment for לְשׁוֹן הָרַע (lashon hara, gossip and slander).

We know that we're not supposed to use our mouths to say bad things about other people. But what **should** we use our mouths for?

The Magen Avraham (Poland, 350 years ago) says that there's a specific spot in daily tefillah when we're supposed to think about the right way to use speech. This is during the paragraph אַהַבַּת רַבָּה (Ahavah Rabbah), which we say just before שְׁמַע (Shema) during Shaharit.

Magen Avraham 60:2

In a kabbalistic text, it says that... when we say the phrase "lehodot lekha" ("to thank You") in Ahavah Rabbah, we should be thinking about how the mouth was created only to give thanks—and not for lashon hara. We're supposed to remember what happened to Miriam while we say this prayer.

- How might thinking about what happened to Miriam help us be careful about what we say?
- **Try it!** When you're saying these words in Ahavah Rabbah, think about some ways to use your mouth for the reason it was created: to give thanks to God. Can you think of some things that you should be more thankful for? What's it like to say "thank you" for those things?

מגן אברהם ט:ב

אֵימָא בְּפִינֹת...
"לְהוֹדוֹת לְךָ"—הַפֶּה לֹא
נִבְרָא רַק לְהוֹדוֹת, וְלֹא
לְדַבֵּר לְשׁוֹן הָרַע. וְזֶהוּ
זְכוּרֵת מַעֲשֵׂה מִרְיָם.

Thank you

