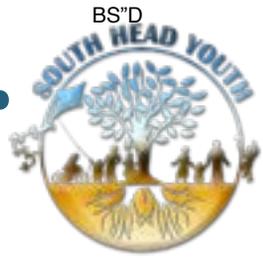




SOUTH HEAD YOUTH PARASHA SHEET

PARASHAT TAZRIA



BS"D

Parashat Tazria discusses the laws of ritual impurity and purity. The Parasha opens with the Mitzvah of Brit Milah. All the Jewish people are reminded that every Jewish boy must be circumcised on the eighth day following his birth. This Mitzvah is a sign of the covenant between Hashem and Avraham. The Mitzvah of Brit Milah is so special, that if the eighth day falls out on Shabbat, you are allowed to perform the Brit on Shabbat, even though we are not usually permitted to operate on Shabbat.



The Parasha also tells that after a woman gives birth, she is commanded to bring a sacrifice to the Mishkan. She is required to bring a sacrifice whether the baby was a girl or a boy. This is because the new mother must show gratitude to Hashem for helping her throughout the pregnancy and childbirth.

The laws of Tzara'at are also mentioned in Parashat Tazria.

Tzara'at is a skin condition a person would get as a consequence of speaking Lashon Hara (bad talk about another person), gossip (talking about others but not saying anything bad) and slander (spreading rumours about others that are not true). Tzara'at is usually translated as leprosy, however this is not an accurate translation. Tzara'at is a disease which only Hashem is able to give. The Torah discusses many different types of Tzara'at: It can look like a rash, a blister or a discolouration of your skin. It can appear in a hairy spot or a bald spot. It can appear on healthy skin or on skin that was previously burned or inflamed. The reason why Hashem sends the Tzara'at is to arouse the person to do Teshuva and repent for his sin. If a person sees the Tzara'at on his skin, but does not immediately repent, then the Tzara'at can spread to the person's clothing and even his house. Tzara'at also comes in four different shades of white, each representing a different degree of Tzara'at.

A person who has Tzara'at is called a Metzora. A person can only be declared a Metzora by a Kohen. When a person sees a white circle on his skin, he must go to the Kohen immediately and get it checked out. The Kohen can either declare him a Metzora, or if the Kohen does not see all the signs of Tzara'at, the man is quarantined. He is then double checked a week later to ensure that he definitely does not have Tzara'at. If he does, the Kohen advises the Metzora to do Teshuva. This person is then declared to be Tamei (impure) and he must stay alone outside the city. He is not allowed to live together with the rest of the Jewish people. This is because Tzara'at is a disease which spreads like wildfire. If a Metzora touches another Jew, whether it be an adult or even a child, that person becomes impure. (It even goes so far that if a Metzora walks into a home, all the dishes in that home become impure and must be purified)! The purification process of the Metzora is discussed in Parashat Metzora.



The laws of Tzara'at only applied in the time of the Mishkan and Beit Hamikdash.

Nowadays, we must take special care not to speak Lashon Hara, gossip and slander even though we do not get Tzara'at anymore. These types of speech are a very serious. They are like a contagious disease that spreads like wild fire. Every time they are spoken, three people are hurt: The person who speaks the Lashon Hara, gossip or slander, the person who

listens to the Lashon Hara, gossip or slander, and the person about whom the Lashon Hara, gossip or slander is spoken. Through not repeating the Lashon Hara, gossip or slander, the listener is the one who can ensure that the Lashon Hara, gossip or slander does not continue to spread like wild fire. Hashem created all of us and we are all His very special creations. Hashem loves each and every one of us and He does not want us to get hurt. If Hashem loves us all, then we too should love everyone and make sure to only say nice things.



PARASHAT HACHODESH

Parashat Hachodesh is the fourth of the four special Torah readings read during or immediately before the Jewish month of Adar. Parashat Hachodesh is always read on the Shabbat leading into the Jewish month of Nissan. The portion begins with Hashem commanding Moshe concerning the Jewish calendar. Hashem tells Moshe that Nissan should be regarded as the head of the Jewish year. Hashem also tells Moshe that the Jewish calendar should be determined by the new moon, therefore being a lunar calendar. As we all know, the secular calendar goes by the solar year. Therefore the Jewish calendar often synchronizes the lunar year and solar year to ensure that the Jewish festivals fall out at the right time of the year.

Moshe did not understand Hashem's definition of a 'new moon' and so Hashem was required to show Moshe exactly what a new moon looked like in the sky. The new moon does not occur when the moon is a full sphere, but rather it occurs when the moon is a mere sliver in the sky. This seems quite interesting. After all, one would think that it makes most sense for the new month to occur when the moon is full and complete. However, Hashem declared the new moon to be when the moon is simply a mere sliver in the sky is because the new moon represents growth. Although it may be tiny now, it will grow each night until it becomes a complete and full moon. This contrasts to the complete and full moon which begins to wane until it becomes so small that it is completely out of sight.

We are told by our Sages that the Jewish people are likened to the moon. Like the moon cycle, the Jewish people have had a history of ups and downs. (We just celebrated the festival of Purim. The story of Purim occurred in one of the happiest eras in the history of the Jewish people. Yet it was during this time when the Jewish people felt so secure that the harshest decree ever proclaimed against the Jewish people was declared!)

In addition, just like there are two moons there are also two types of Jews. There is the rich Jew who is complete in knowledge. This Jew is content. However he is on the verge of decline because he has already experienced it all and is now tired and uninspired. Then there is also the fledgling Jew who, like the new moon, is small and tiny, but has recently just discovered the beauty of Judaism. Like the new moon, this Jew is aiming for growth. He wants to be inspired and learn more. He is excited and wants to be inspired and increase his knowledge in the Jewish faith. It is this 'new Jew' who represents hope. It is the new Jew who will illuminate the world and spread the light of the Torah.

Mission of the week: If you have something nice to say, say it! This week, look for a chance to say something nice about someone.

**It was great seeing you in Shule!
We hope you enjoy reading this Parasha Sheet and quizzing your family!
Shabbat Shalom from Brookie and the South Head Youth Crew**

