

# KMS Family Parsha Sheet

בס"ד

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מצרע - Metzorah

## Parsha Questions

(Answers on the back)

- 1) Why is the leper called a Metzorah?
- 2) Why does a Metzorah have to offer birds as part of the Tahara process?
- 3) What action, usually forbidden, is part of the purification process of Tzaraat?
- 4) Why must the Metzorah shave "his head, and his beard, and his eyebrows." (14:9)
- 5) What do the Etz Erez and Sheni Tola'at that the Metzorah offers represent?
- 6) How was having Tzaraat in one's house sometimes advantageous?
- 7) Why does a house suspected of having Tzaraat have to be emptied before the Kohein examines it?
- 8) Which type of vessels cannot be made Tahor after they become Tamei?
- 9) Chazal teach that the Metzora is one of four people who are considered dead even while alive. Who are the other three?
- 10) Why is this Shabbat called Shabbat HaGadol?



## Words of Wisdom

Pesachim 50b

אמר רב יהודה אמר רב לעולם יעסוק אדם בתורה ומצות אף על פי שלא לשמה שמתוך שלא לשמה בא לשמה

Rav Yehuda said in the name of Rav: A person should always engage in Torah study and performance of mitzvot, even if he does so not for their own sake, as through the performance of mitzvot not for their own sake, one comes to perform them for their own sake.

## Did You Know?

Eliyahu HaNavi at the Pesach Seder  
([jewishaction.com](http://jewishaction.com))

A common custom is to take a large decorative cup, fill it with wine, and leave it on the Seder table for a part of, or according to some, for the entire, Seder (see Kitzur Shulchan Aruch 119:1). The cup is known as the Kos shel Eliyahu, Eliyahu's Cup. This custom is not found in the Talmud, the Rishonim, the Tur, or the Shulchan Aruch. The earliest source for the custom is in the writings of Rabbi Zelikman Binga (fifteenth century), the son-in-law and student of the Maharil. In his commentary to Pesachim (sec. 11; 5745 ed., p. 195), he reports witnessing individuals pour a cup of wine at the Seder and refer to it as Eliyahu's Cup. He surmises that the practice is probably related to our hope that Eliyahu will come on Pesach night—the night of redemption—to herald the arrival of Mashiach. Similarly, the Mishnah Berurah (480:10) says that the cup is called Kos shel Eliyahu to allude to the fact "that we believe that just as God redeemed us from Egypt, He will again redeem us and send Eliyahu to announce it." ...Where did the idea that Eliyahu comes to visit at the Seder come from? A confluence of factors makes it almost inevitable that such an idea would develop. Firstly, there is a direct link between brit and Pesach. Secondly, the Kos shel Eliyahu, according to many customs, is poured just before the door is opened. While the door is open, a series of verses with Messianic overtones is recited. Most likely the combination of these practices led some to conclude that the cup is poured for Eliyahu who secretly enters. The lack of a source did not prevent many, in particular Chassidim, from popularizing the idea that Eliyahu makes a furtive appearance, even drinks from the cup, and disappears again.



Pre-Pesach Protests



## Parsha Answers:

- 1) The Gemara (Arachin 15b) says that one of the ways to become a Metzora is through speaking Lashon Harah. The word מצורע is a combination of two words: מוציא רע - "one who brings out evil" [about another person].
- 2) Rashi 14:4 - Tzaraat comes as a punishment for Lashon Harah. Therefore, the Torah requires the Metzora to offer birds, who chatter constantly, to atone for his sin of chattering.
- 3) Normally, a person is forbidden to shave the hair off his entire body, which could involve the prohibition of cutting off the corners of the head and the corners of the beard. Despite this, the purification of Tzaraat involves shaving off all the hair on his body
- 4) Kli Yakar - Shaving his head reminds him never again to walk around with his head up, looking down at other people. Cutting the hair of his beard reminds him not to open his mouth to utter lashon hara. Removing the hair of his eyebrows, warns him to henceforth use his eyes to look at another Jew with kindness.
- 5) Rashi 14:4 - The Metzora acted haughty like a cedar tree and must humble himself like a worm.
- 6) Rashi 14:34 - Some of the Amorites had hidden gold coins in the walls of their house and Bnei Yisrael now found them.
- 7) Rashi 14:36 - Because otherwise the contents of the home will become Tamei as well.
- 8) Rashi 14:36 - Earthenware vessels.
- 9) Nedarim 64b - The poor person, the blind person, and the person without children.
- 10) During Yetziat Mitzrayim, on the 10th of Nisan, which was a Shabbat, Bnei Yisrael chose sheep for their Korban Pesach. Even though the sheep was considered an Egyptian God, the Mitzrim could do nothing to stop Bnei Yisrael.



## This Week In Jewish History

### Nisan 13

(Aish.com)

Yahrtzeit of Rabbi Yosef Karo (1488-1575), author of Shulchan Aruch, the standard Code of Jewish Law. Rabbi Karo was forced to flee Spain at the time of the expulsion, eventually settling in the holy city of Tzfat, Israel. His writings in Jewish law include Beit Yosef, an encyclopedic commentary on the Tur (written and refined over 30 years), and Kesef Mishneh, a commentary on Maimonides' Mishneh Torah. Yet Rabbi Karo is best known for his Shulchan Aruch, which covers the gamut of practical Jewish law; almost all Jewish legal discussions to this day stem from this code. Rabbi Karo also had kabbalistic leanings (he was a contemporary in Tzfat of the great Arizal) and he authored a book, Maggid Mesharim, in which he records his discussions with an angel. Rabbi Karo is affectionately referred to as the "Mechaber" ("the Author"), i.e. the rabbinic author par excellence.



## Tefilla Insights

### Bowing During The Amidah

(torah.org)

When Rabbi Akiva would pray by himself, he would bow down with such vigor that he would start his prayers in one corner of the room and finish in another" (Brachos 31a). Physically lowering oneself before Hashem shows humility, and is an integral part of prayer. Although intense displays are not appropriate for most situations, our Sages established that one should bow down during Shemoneh Esrei. When bowing down a person should bend his body quickly and pick himself up slowly, in order to show that bowing is not a burden. While bending over he should make sure that he moves every vertebra in his spine" (Shulchan Aruch 113: 4,6). Our Sages were very specific about how we should bow down in order to express appropriate humility, since excessive displays can in fact be a sign of arrogance. A person should bow down four times during Shemoneh Esrei, twice at the start and twice at the conclusion. ... A kohen gadol bows at the start and conclusion of each blessing, and a king bends down at the start of Shemoneh Esrei and does not raise himself up until he finishes" (Brachos 34a; Shulchan Aruch 113,1). The greater the Jew's spiritual status, the more bowing he needs to do to humble himself before Hashem.

## Key Number or Word In The Parsha

### Tzaraat - צרעת



The Septuagint translated this as Leprosy, but in truth this skin disease has little in common with Leprosy. Tzaraat did not result from natural causes at all. Rabbi Samson Raphael Hirsch points out many indications of this. If a person's entire body is covered with Tzaraat he is considered pure (13:13), although a disease which has spread so fully is presumably at its worst. In addition, a person who has signs of Tzaraat is sometimes allowed extra time before the Priest checks him if the timing is very inconvenient, such as the week of a festival or a groom during the week of his wedding - even though these are times when there is much more mingling between people than usual. And if a house has a potential signs of Tzaraat, its contents are removed before the house is examined so they do not become unclean together with the house (14:26) - although they have already been exposed to the "disease".