



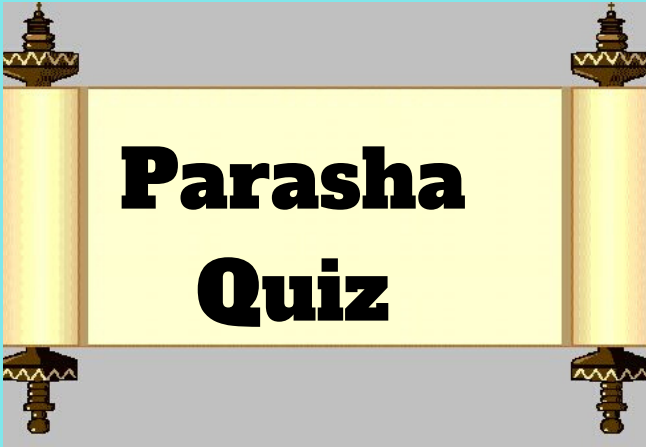
KMS Family Parasha

LEARN ABOUT THE PARASHA WITH THE KMS YOUTH DEPARTMENT

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Tazriah/Metzorah - תַּזְרִיעַ/מְצֹרָה

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Elementary:

- 1) What is Tzaraat and what does it look like on someone's skin?
- 2) Who do you go to to determine if it is Tzaraat?
- 3) For what sin does a person get Tzaraat? From what two stories in the Torah do we learn this?
- 4) What does a Metzora have to do in order to become Tahor?
- 5) What two other types of Tzaraat are there besides on the skin?

Middle/High School:

- 1) According to Rashi (13:46) why does a Metzora have to be isolated outside the camp (unlike other people who become Tamei)?
- 2) According to Rashi (14:4) why does a Metzora have to offer birds as part of the Tahara process?
- 3) According to Rashi (14:4) what do the עֵץ אֲרֵז and שְׁנֵי תוֹלַעַת that the Metzora offers represent?
- 4) According to Rashi (14:34) how was having Tzara'at in one's house sometimes advantageous?
- 5) According to Rashi (14:36) which type of vessels cannot be made Tahor after they become Tamei?

What would you do?

Discussion starter for your Shabbat table..

If a friend starts speaking Lashon Harah to you and you don't want to hear it, but you also do not want to embarrass them, how could you handle it?

Did You Know?

Rabbi Israel Meir Hakohen of Radin wrote an entire book about Lashon Harah. The book is called Chafetz Chaim (which caused the author to be known as the "Chafetz Chaim") too. The name is inspired by the verse in Psalms, "Whoever of you desires life (chafetz chaim) . . . guard your tongue from evil . . ." Nevertheless, here is a brief overview of some of the laws, mostly gleaned from Chafetz Chaim:

- 1) Lashon hara literally means "bad talk." This means that it is forbidden to speak negatively about someone else, even if it is true.
- 2) It is also forbidden to repeat anything about another, even if it is not a negative thing. This is called rechilus.
- 3) It is also forbidden to listen to lashon hara. One should either reprimand the speaker, or, if that is not possible, one should extricate oneself from that situation.
- 4) Even if one has already heard the lashon hara, it is forbidden to believe it. On the contrary, one should always judge one's fellow favorably.
- 5) If one has already heard the lashon hara, he is forbidden to believe it. Nevertheless, one may suspect that the lashon hara is true, and take the necessary precautions to protect oneself.
- 6) It is forbidden to even make a motion that is derogatory towards someone.
- 7) One may not even retell a negative event without using names, if the listeners might be able to figure out who is being spoken of.
- 8) In certain circumstances, such as to protect someone from harm, it is permissible or even obligatory to share negative information. As there are many details to this law, one should consult a competent rabbi to learn what may be shared in any particular situation. (Chabad.org)



Treasure House - Rabbi Ozer Alport (Aish.com)

"When you come to the Land of Canaan which I am giving to you for an inheritance, and I will put a plague of tzara'as in the houses of the land of your inheritance." (Lev. 14:34)

"It informs that plagues come upon them because the Emorites hid gold in the walls of their houses all the 40 years that the Jews were in the desert, and through the plague they break the houses and find them." (Rashi)

Parshas Tazria introduced us to the laws governing the different types of tzara'as which can afflict a person's body. Parshas Metzora begins by teaching the elaborate procedure which a stricken person must go through to purify himself. Afterward, we are introduced to a new type of tzara'as, one which afflicts a person's home.

Curiously, Rashi comments that in warning the people about the possibility of tzara'as striking their homes, God was actually conveying good news. Because the previous Canaanite inhabitants hid their treasures in the walls of their houses, the process of scraping a house with tzara'as would actually reveal to them valuable items. This concept seems difficult to understand. Although discovering the hidden treasures would certainly lessen their pain, why did God choose to give them reward in this peculiar manner?

Rabbi Mordechai Kamenetzky offers an inspiring answer to our question based on the following story. After the conclusion of World War II, Rabbi Eliezer Silver was active in visiting DP camps to give physical and emotional support to the survivors of the Holocaust. One day Rabbi Silver was organizing a minyan for Mincha, but one man refused to join. The man explained that when he was in a concentration camp, there was a religious Jew who managed to smuggle in a siddur. He "rented out" his siddur in exchange for a person's food rations. When this man saw how a religious Jew could take advantage of his siddur at such a time, he resolved that he would never pray again. Rabbi Silver gently suggested that instead of focusing on the actions of the man with the siddur, perhaps it would be more appropriate to recognize how many Jews were willing to give up their precious food rations in order to be able to pour out their hearts to God in prayer.

Rabbi Kamenetzky notes that one of the primary causes of tzara'as is lashon hara (negative speech), which comes from focusing on the shortcomings of others. To the gossip whose house is afflicted with tzara'as, the Torah hints to the importance of digging beneath the surface and not focusing on superficial deficiencies. Although the house may appear at first glance to be stricken with tzara'as, a deeper look will uncover the presence of valuable gems waiting to be discovered just beneath the surface. Upon contemplating this, he will come to understand that his fellow Jews are just the same. If he only takes the time to adjust his perspective, he will be able to dig deeper and discover the beauty which lies beneath the surface.

Rashi writes (Exodus 1:1) that the Jewish people are compared to stars. The Baal Shem Tov explains that to a person looking up into the night sky, each star appears very small. However, if a person could approach a star, he would find that the closer he gets to it, the larger it appears. Similarly, when viewed from a distance, it is easy to dismiss another Jew as invaluable and worthless. At times when we are tempted to do so, we should remember the lesson of Parshas Metzora and the stars: if we allow ourselves to get a little closer and look under the surface, there are valuable treasures waiting to be discovered.