

The Torah Sparks

SHABBOS COMPANION

PARSHAH OVERVIEW



Following the cosmic structure of creation, where man was created after the animals, the Torah highlights the laws of childbirth after its previous discussion of animals (last week's parshah). The Torah discusses the laws of defilement associated with human beings, including childbirth and the tzaraas affliction, which was manifested on human skin, garments, and homes.

QUICK VORT



The Torah tells us that when a person goes into isolation for his tzaraas affliction (caused by speaking Lashon Hara), he should call out (13:45) - טמא טמא - "I am impure. I am impure!"

Sometimes, the greatest setbacks we have in life result from the mere fact that we were not aware that we were amidst a setback.

The Yetzer Hara (see Likkutei Moharan 1, and Mesilas Yesharim 3) tries to cover up impurity and evil inside of good.

He tries to make us believe that what we are doing is great and wonderful, when in actuality, we are sinning and experiencing a setback.

The Torah tells a person who is enveloped in sin to call out, "I am impure. I am impure." Perhaps, because knowledge of the bad - knowing that what you are doing is not good - is a crucial step in honestly being able to leave its grasp.

When we know where we are holding, we can move on!

Have a holy Shabbos!

PARSHAH STATS



67/90	1010/1274	3667/4697	7/11
Pesukim	Words	Letters	Mitzvos

GEMATRIA



The numerical value of טמא טמא is 100, the same as לך לך - go for yourself.

Connecting with the "quick vort," when a person realizes he is in a state of impurity, it is then when he can truly leave the grasp of sin.

But if he doesn't know he is טמא, he will remain impure.

CHASSIDUS



The Rebbe MiKoznitz, in his Sefer Avodas Yisroel, says something fascinating pertaining to exile:

The lengthiness of exile (galus) and the fact that we don't know when Moshiach is coming, is what will enable us to feel so much joy and happiness when the geulah finally occurs!

May it be soon. Amen!

DID YOU KNOW?

Well before COVID-19 hit, there was a concept of quarantining, a concept that comes from the Torah, in particular, as it relates to the Metzora: someone afflicted with Tzaraas would need to sit בבית, alone in isolation. Others would come and bring him food. He would learn to appreciate others instead of speaking negatively about them, the very sin that caused his affliction.

♦ ♦ ♦ ♦

Paradoxically, if Tzaraas affliction is covering the entire body, it is considered pure!

INSPOGRAPHIC CORNER



"HISTORY DOES NOT GIVE RISE TO HOPE; HOPE GIVES RISE TO HISTORY."

(RABBI LORD J. SACKS ZT"L)

Dvar Torah for Parshas Tazria/Metzora

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Why the Metzora Calls Out His Impurity



The majority of websites or advertisements have something called a "Call To Action" button, often referred to as a CTA Button. Anytime you see a clearly readable/clickable button labeled with a message such as "Sign Up Now", "Buy Today", or "Learn More", that is, in digital terms, the CTA Button. Its entire purpose, function, and existence is to encourage you, the user, to take action; to click on it, and sign-up/read/purchase whatever is being presented.

If you think about it, the Torah is filled with "Call to Action" buttons. Every passuk, word, and even letter in the Torah, is filled with layers of meaning and profundity. Every mitzvah is a message, a call from Hashem to us, that is meant to inspire us to take action.

In this week's Parsha, the Torah primarily discusses the lengthy laws pertaining to Tzaraas, the physical affliction caused by a spiritual misalignment. Our Sages teach us that the Tzaraas affliction, which manifests on a person's skin, clothing, or home, is a result of Lashon Harah (gossip), which is a negative trait that stems from גאוה, haughtiness.

Aside from experiencing the Tzaraas affliction which required a person to be isolated from society for a certain period of time, the Torah tells us that the Metzora (the person afflicted) also needed to verbalize something. He had to call out for all to hear, טמא טמא - "I am impure! I am impure!" (see 13:45).

Why was this necessary? What is the point of having the Metzora call out his impurity? The two classic approaches to understanding this are as follows: a) When a person calls out "I am impure," that warns others to stay away so they do not become negatively affected (see Rashi 13:45), and b) When a person calls out "I am impure," others will hear his anguish and pray on his behalf (see Moed Katan 5a).

On a basic level, the point of the calling out is to inform others to stay away and pray for him. However, on a deeper level, we can suggest that the calling out of "I am impure! I am impure!" is also meant for the Metzora himself!

One of the greatest schemes and ploys of the Yetzer Hara is to get us to lose sight of the fact that we even sinned. If he can just convince us that what we did/said was not wrong, well, then he has surely achieved his goal of keeping us stuck in his clutch. To forget that what a person is doing is wrong is so dangerous because there will be no action of Teshuva.

When a Metzora calls out "I am impure! I am impure!" he's doing something so fundamentally important for himself. He is acknowledging that what he did was wrong, thereby enabling him to leave the clutch of the Yetzer Hara.

Rav Kook writes: כשאדם מכיר שהוא מתגאה הוא רפואה – לתיקון הגאווה – *when a person recognizes that he is haughty, that in and of itself is the very healing for the haughtiness.*

Not even realizing that he is being haughty is a major problem. Calling out "I am impure!" is a personal "Call to Action" button, a calling out that will lead to real action and growth.

Have a holy Shabbos,
R' Ori Strum

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