

Parsha QA



Parshas Tazria/Metzora

For the week ending 29 Nissan 5758 *6 Iyar outside Israel
24 & 25 April 1998 *1 & 2 May outside Israel

Parsha Questions

TAZRIA

1. "Any holy thing she shall not touch." (12:4) In this context, what does "touch" mean?
2. After a woman gives birth she is required to offer two types of *korbanos*. What are they?
3. Who determines whether an affliction of *tzara'as* is impure or pure?
4. How many hairs in a suspected area must turn white before the *kohen* can declare a person *tamei*?
5. What disqualifies a *kohen* from being able to give a ruling in a case of *tzara'as*?
6. In areas of the body where collections of hair grow (e.g., the head or beard), what color hair indicates *tumah*?
7. What is the name for *tzara'as* of the scalp or beard area?
8. What signs of mourning must a *metzora* display?
9. Why must a *metzora* call out, "Tamei! Tamei!"?
10. Why is a *metzora* commanded to dwell in isolation?

METZORA

1. When may a *metzora* not be pronounced *tahor*?
2. In the *midbar*, where did a *metzora* dwell while he was *tamei*?
3. Why does a *metzora* require birds in the purification process?
4. In the purification process of a *metzora*, what does the cedar wood symbolize?
5. When the *metzora* was presented "before Hashem" (14:11) in the *Beis Hamikdash*, where did he stand?
6. Toward what direction does the *kohen* sprinkle the oil from the *metzora's korban*?
7. How was having *tzara'as* in one's house sometimes advantageous?
8. When a person enters a house that has *tzara'as*, when do his clothes become *tamei*?
9. A *zav* sat or slept on the following: a) a bed; b) a plank; c) a chair; d) a rock. If a *tahor* person touches these things, what is his status?
10. What does the Torah mean when it refers to a *zav* who "has not washed his hands" (15:11)?

Rashi never just comments; something in the text always impels him to do so. Rashi's comments are answers to unspoken questions and difficulties arising from a thoughtful reading of the Torah. Therefore, anyone who wants a true understanding of Rashi's classic Torah commentary must always ask

"What's Bothering Rashi?"

"And the garment which was washed and from which the affliction departed, it shall be washed again and will be pure." (Vayikra 13:58)

Rashi: "It shall be washed again": This expression refers to immersion in a *mikveh* (ritual purification pool).

The word "washed" appears twice in this verse. Why does Rashi insist that the second "washing" refers to immersion in a *mikveh*? What's wrong with explaining the second "washing" the same as the first one; simply that the garment is washed? What's bothering Rashi?

Answer: The verse has already stated that the garment was washed and the affliction has departed. What purpose could there be for a second washing? If laundering is part of the purification process, this has already been achieved by the first washing. Therefore, the second "washing" — if it is to make sense as part of the purification process — must refer to something other than mere laundering. Hence, it must refer to immersion in a *mikveh*, a ritual purification pool.

Concept based on Dr. Avigdor Bonchek's new book
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Parshas Tazria/Metzora — 29 Nissan 5758, 24 & 25 April 1998

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I Did Not Know That!

“If he is poor and his means are not sufficient... (14:21)

Regarding other sacrifices, there is a dispute among the Sages whether a rich man who brings a sacrifice prescribed for a poor man has, post-facto, fulfilled his obligation. All agree, however, regarding the sacrifice of a person afflicted with *tzara'as* that his obligation has not been fulfilled under such circumstances. The affliction of *tzara'as* comes as a punishment for miserliness. If a rich person brings the sacrifice that a poor man should bring, it shows that he is not yet cured of his affliction. He is still a miser! Therefore he has not fulfilled his obligation.

Rabbi Yaakov Landau, son of the Noda b'Yehudah

Recommended Reading List

TAZRIA

Ramban

- 12:2 Procreation
12:7 The "Sin" of Childbirth
13:47 The Greatness of *Tzara'as*

Sefer HaChinuch

- 167 Respect for *Kedusha*
168 A Gift of Thanks

Sforno

- 12:8 Self Involvement
13:47 Garments

METZORA

Ramban

- 14:2 Compulsive Cleanliness
15:11 The *Zav*

Sefer HaChinuch

- 174 Purification and Rebirth
175 Cleansing Waters

Sforno

- 14:12 The *Asham* of the *Metzora*
14:36 The Reason for Waiting
15:2 The *Zav*

Answers to

this Week's Questions

All references are to the verses and Rashi's commentary, unless otherwise stated

TAZRIA

1. 12:4 - Eat.
2. 12:6 - An *olah* and a *chatas*.
3. 13:2 - A *kohen*.
4. 13:3 - At least two.
5. 13:12 - Poor vision.
6. 13:29 - Golden.
7. 13:30 - *Nesek*.
8. 13:45 - He must tear his garments, let his hair grow and enshroud his face.
9. 13:45 - So people will know to keep away from him.
10. 13:46 - Since *tzara'as* is a punishment for *lashon harah* (evil speech) which creates a rift between people, the Torah punishes *mida k'neged mida* (measure for measure) by placing a division between him and others.

METZORA

1. 14:2 - At night.
2. 14:3 - Outside the three camps.
3. 14:4 - *Tzara'as* 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.
4. 14:4 - The cedar is a lofty tree. It alludes to the fact that *tzara'as* comes as a punishment for haughtiness.
5. 14:11 - At the gate of Nikanor.
6. 14:16 - Westward, toward the Holy of Holies.
7. 14:34 - The Amorites concealed treasures in the walls of their houses. After the conquest of the Land, *tzara'as* would afflict these houses. The Jewish owner would tear down the walls and find the treasures.
8. 14:46 - When he remains in the house long enough to eat a small meal.
9. 15:4,5 - Only a type of object that one usually lies or sits upon becomes a transmitter of *tumah* when a *zav* sits or lies upon it. A *tahor* person who subsequently touches the object becomes *tamei* and the garment he is wearing also becomes *tamei*. Therefore: a) *tamei*; b) *tahor*; c) *tamei*; d) *tahor*.
10. 15:11 - One who has not immersed in a *mikveh*.

What do You do
with parsha Q&A?

Aviva Gelberman - 6th, 7th & 8th Grade teacher - Shaar Shomayim Afternoon School - Windsor, Ontario Canada wrote:

My classes really enjoy discussing the Weekly parsha. This Q&A forum has made it challenging for them and it opens up discussions on many more interesting topics related to *yiddishkite*, thanks.

What do YOU do with Parsha Q&A? Fax, E-mail, post, even Fedex your responses — we'll share them with all the Q&A readers!

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Parshas Tazria/Metzora

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