

# TAZRIA - LEVITICUS

- *The Conceives* -

Dan Stolebarger - Holy Ground Explorations  
Chapters 12-13

# INTRODUCTION



PARASHAT TAZRIA - 'And She Conceived'

# 12

Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, <sup>2</sup> "Speak to the children of Israel, saying: 'If a woman has conceived, and borne a male child, then she shall be unclean seven days; as in the days of her customary impurity she shall be unclean. <sup>3</sup> And on the **eighth day** the flesh of his foreskin shall be circumcised.

On the eighth day of life a boy must be circumcised.

# 12

- 6 'When the days of her purification are fulfilled, whether for a son or a daughter, she shall bring to the priest a lamb of the first year as a burnt offering, and a young pigeon or a turtledove as a sin offering, to the door of the tabernacle of meeting.
- 7 Then he shall offer it before the Lord, and make atonement for her. And she shall be clean from the flow of her blood. This *is* the law for her who has borne a male or a female.
- 8 'And if she is not able to bring a lamb, **then she may bring two turtledoves or two young pigeons**—one as a burnt offering and the other as a sin offering. So the priest shall make atonement for her, and she will be clean.' "

After the mother's "period of impurity" had ended, she was required to bring a yearling sheep as a burnt offering and a dove for a sin offering (if she is poor, two doves sufficed for both offerings). Mary, the mother of Jesus brings the offering of a poor person.

# 13 - SYNOPSIS

The portion next describes certain afflictions, collectively called **tzara'at**, that caused the affected person (or thing) to be both ritually impure and in a state of uncleanness.

**Note that tzara'at is not to be identified with "leprosy" (as some English translations claim)**, since the symptoms of tzara'at included not just the afflicted person's skin, but sometimes his clothes, pottery vessels, and house.

When applied to people, tzara'at was a sort of a spiritual affliction that could only be diagnosed by a kohen (priest), not a doctor.

# 13

The afflicted person was quarantined and required to perform teshuvah (repentance). If a second evaluation indicated that the spot(s) had grown larger in size, the person was declared unclean and was subject to being put “outside the camp” until the person was completely healed.

If someone was diagnosed with tzara’at, they were forced to leave the community and live in a state of exile. He had to tear his clothes like a mourner, put a shroud over his face (descending to his upper lip) and remain alone. If anyone came near, the metzora was required to cry out: “Unclean! Stay away! Do not become impure because of me!” (no one was permitted to come within eight feet of him). While so isolated, the person would have opportunity to perform teshuvah (repentance) and seek spiritual “rebirth”.

# 13

There is some ambiguity surrounding the case of a person afflicted with tzara'at. In physical terms the person afflicted was quarantined from the camp, but in spiritual terms this impurity made them unfit for fellowship with the community.

Unlike other entirely natural causes that rendered someone impure, the sages associated this affliction with the phrase "one who brings forth (or speaks) evil", and thereby concluded that evil speech (i.e., lashon hara) was the principal cause of the disease itself.



# LASHON HARA

Lashon hara is traditionally defined as saying something bad about another person *even if it happens to be true*. In other words, “evil speech” involves spreading evil (even if true) reports, or expressing a negative or critical spirit about others.

Yeshua told us that “out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks” (Matt. 12:34), and further warned us about the unthinking use of our words: “But I say unto you, that every idle word that men shall speak, they shall account for in the day of judgment. For by your words you shall be justified, and by your words you shall be condemned” (Matt. 12:36-37, see also Matt. 5:37).

Life and death are in the tongue (Prov. 18:21). Since words are the result of our thinking, discuss how negative thinking can create sickness and tsuris in your own life...



# LASHON HARA

The Rabbis said some severe things about *lashon hara*. It is worse than the three cardinal sins - idolatry, adultery, and bloodshed - combined. It kills three people: the one who speaks it, the one of whom it is spoken, and the one who receives it.<sup>2</sup> Joseph received the hatred of his brothers because he spoke negatively about some of them. The generation that left Egypt was denied the chance of entering the land because they spoke badly about it. One who speaks it is like an atheist.<sup>3</sup>

I believe we need the laws of *lashon hara* as rarely before. The social media are awash with hate. The language of politics has become ad hominem and vile. We seem to have forgotten what Tazria-Metzora are meant to remind us: that evil speech is a plague. It destroys relationships, rides roughshod over people's feelings, debases the public square, turns politics into a jousting match between competing egos and defiles all that is sacred about our common life. It need not be like this.

# EDIFICATION

“Therefore let us pursue the things which make for peace and the things by which one may edify another” (**Romans 14:19**).

“So encourage each other and build each other up, just as you are already doing” (**1 Thessalonians 5:11**).

Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers. (**Ephesians 4:29**)

I will never forget the 10 to 1 principle





# COUNTING THE OMER

As the holiday of Shavuot became associated with the giving of the Torah, and not only with a celebration of agricultural bounty, the omer period began to symbolize the thematic link between Passover and Shavuot.

While Passover celebrates the initial liberation of the Jewish people from slavery in Egypt, Shavuot marks the culmination of the process of liberation, when the Jews became an autonomous community with their own laws and standards. **Counting up to Shavuot reminds us of this process of moving from a slave mentality to a more liberated one.**

# COUNTING THE OMER

With the mitzvah of counting the 49 days, known as Sefirat Ha'Omer, the Torah invites us on a journey into the human psyche, into the soul. There are seven basic emotions that make up the spectrum of human experience. At the root of all forms of enslavement, is a distortion of these emotions. Each of the seven weeks between Passover and Shavuot is dedicated to examining and refining one of them.

The seven emotional attributes are:

Chesed — Loving-kindness (W1-7)

Gevurah — Justice and discipline (W8-14)

**Tiferet — Harmony, compassion (W15-21)**

Netzach — Endurance (W22-28)

Hod — Humility (W29-35)

Yesod — Bonding (W36-42)

Malchut — Sovereignty, leadership (W43-49)

**HARMONY - internal calm; TRANQUILITY; an interweaving of different accounts into a single narrative; unity**

<sup>8</sup>Now, this is the goal: to live in harmony with one another and demonstrate affectionate love,<sup>[a]</sup> sympathy,<sup>[b]</sup> and kindness toward other believers. Let humility describe who you are as you dearly love one another. **1 Peter 3:8**

<sup>19</sup>So then, make it your top priority to live a life of peace with harmony in your relationships,<sup>[a]</sup> eagerly seeking to strengthen and encourage one another.

**Romans 14:19**

**COMPASSION - literally means "to suffer together."**

This is what the Lord Almighty said: 'Administer true justice; show mercy and compassion to one another. **Zechariah 7:9**

Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you. **Ephesians 4:32**