

April 23, 2020

Parashat Tazri'a

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Leviticus 12:1-15:33

<https://miowitztorahreading.weebly.com/tazria.html>

<https://www.sefaria.org/Leviticus.12.1-15.33?lang=bi>

SUMMARY

SNIR: This week there is a double *parasha!* Although both *Parashiyot Tazri'a* and *Metzora* are scheduled to be read this *Shabbat*, today we will be reading just from the first of these two *parashiyot--Tazri'a*. Today we will read *Vayikra* (Leviticus)--chapter 12, verses 1-3. In our *parasha* God tells *Moshe* to teach the Israelites how long a woman will remain in a state of *tumah* (ritual impurity) after giving birth.

GAVI: Ritually impure people are not allowed to enter holy spaces or touch certain holy things. They are quarantined from the community in certain ways for a limited period of time.

SNIR: At the end of this time the woman who has given birth is responsible for bringing a “closeness offering” or sacrifice to the *kohen*. The *kohen* then offers it to G!d in the *Mishkan*--the holy place in the Israelite camp where God is present.

GAVI: *Moshe* and *Aharon* learn how to recognize and treat *tzara'at*--a disease that could infect a person's skin, clothing, or home and make people or things *tameh*--or ritually impure. Someone whose skin looks unhealthy and thinks that they might have this disease is supposed to see a *kohen*. The *kohen* can tell them if they have the disease.

SNIR: Anyone or anything that catches *tzara'at*, needs to go into quarantine for a while. The *kohen* has to check in every so often about their health. A person who has the skin disease called *tzara'at* is called a *metzora*. *Metzora* is the name of the second of this week's two *parashiyot*.

QUESTIONS

1) **GAVI**: One thing that's interesting about this week's Torah portions is that they talk a lot about quarantine. We know that quarantine can be used to slow down the spread of sickness, but this week's *parasha* starts by talking about a short time of quarantine that an ancient Israelite woman would have after giving birth. How do you think that being quarantined after giving birth would feel different from our quarantine? What might be the purpose? *Please write your answers in the chat.*

SNIR: While we're in our quarantine some people might be nervous about catching or spreading a sickness. After giving birth, a mom might not feel as nervous. It might be a time where she is happy that she has some time to recover without having to see anybody.

2) **SNIR**: In this week's *parashiyot* we learn that, when it comes to the mysterious disease of *tzara'at* the *kohen* has many important jobs, including checking people, clothing, and homes to see if they have become sick with *tzara'at* and visiting people who have *tzara'at* when they are in quarantine to check on them. Why do you think it might be important for a *kohen* to visit someone with *tzara'at* while they are in quarantine? *Please write your answers in the chat.*

GAVI: The *kohen* is a little like a doctor. The Torah says that he can tell if a person is sick with *tzara'at* and if that person has gotten better. It is important that the *kohen* visits the person with *tzara'at* in quarantine so that they can come back to the community as soon as it is safe. Also the point of having a *kohen* visit and not just everyone from the community, is that it limits the spread of the sickness.

3) **SNIR**: We're also in quarantine right now and we noticed that some people we know are acting a little like *kohanim*. Who do you know who is acting a little like a *kohen* right now?

Please write your answers in the chat now.

GAVI: Before we were in quarantine my mommy and daddy used to visit to check on people in hospitals and now sometimes we call or Zoom or Facetime people who are in quarantine to check in on them. Even though it is important not to visit for real--because we don't want to spread the disease--it is also important to check on people because when people are in quarantine--whether they're sick or not--it can sometimes feel lonely.

SNIR: I think our teachers are also a little like *kohanim* because *kohanim* help people answer their questions, connect them with God, and help spread wisdom from generation to generation that can help them stay healthy.