



April 12–18, 2026 כ"ה ניסן – א' אייר תשפ"ו



בואו נדבר על זה • Tell Me More About This!

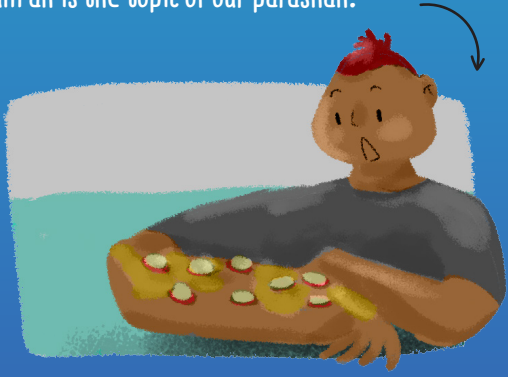
In the Torah, people can be either טָמֵא (tamei, impure) or טָהוֹר (tahor, pure). This can mean many things. It can be a way to describe a person's character, like if a person is kind and good, we sometimes call that person "pure of heart" or we say they have a pure character.

But purity and impurity can also be something much more technical, triggered by something outside a person, and unrelated to a person's heart or character. For example:



- You could become tamei by coming in contact with a dead body. Our Rabbis call this אָבִי אַבוֹת הַטְּמֵאָה (avi avot ha-tum'ah), "the granddaddy of all impurity."

- You could also become tamei through certain things happening in your body, like having a kind of skin disease called צִרְעַת (tzara'at). This kind of tum'ah is the topic of our parashah.



- You could even become tamei by coming in contact with someone or something tamei (like someone else who's tamei or a dead animal).

In the מִשְׁכָּן (mishkan, sanctuary for God), כֹּהֲנִים (kohanim, priests) had to be extra careful not to become tamei, because no one tamei could enter the mishkan. (This was also true later in time, in the Beit Ha-Mikdash.)



Does this all still apply today? Yes, but because there's no Beit Ha-Mikdash, it's not like it was in the Torah. Still, we do have some halakhot that are connected to טְהוֹרָה/טִמְאָה (tum'ah/taharah, impurity/purity) practices. One example is נְטִילַת יָדַיִם (netilat yadayim), handwashing before eating bread.



קַה בַּפָּרָשָׁה • In This Week's Parashah

- ◆ It's a double parashah this week! We combine Tazria and Metzora.
- ◆ If you lived in the time of the Torah...
- ◆ You would become טָמֵא (tamei, impure) if you had tzara'at. You would have to stay alone, outside of the community, with your hair uncovered and clothes torn.
- ◆ The כֹּהֵן (kohen, priest) would determine whether you had tzara'at or not, based on the rules in our parashah.
- ◆ A נֶגַע (nega, wound) on your body could be tzara'at, if it was white and the hair on the nega turned white, and it appeared deeper than your skin. But if your body was covered in this kind of white all over, you would actually be טָהוֹר (tahor, pure)!
- ◆ A נֶתֶק (netek) is the name for tzara'at that appeared in your hair or beard.
- ◆ **Clothing and houses** (in Eretz Yisrael) could get tzara'at, too. It would look like red or green staining on the fabric of your clothes or on the stones of your home.
- ◆ After your tzara'at healed, there's a two-part process to become tahor again. First the kohen would take two birds and slaughter one of them. He would sprinkle the blood on you and on the other bird. That bird would be released. It would fly off, as if it were taking your טִמְאָה (tum'ah, impurity) far away.
- ◆ Then you'd bathe in a מִקְוֵה (mikveh, ritual bath). You'd bathe again one week later, bring a bunch of korbanot, and be dabbed with some of their blood and with oil. Finally, your tzara'at would be a thing of the past.





פְּשֵׁט הַפְּסוּקִים • Understanding the Verses

The Torah describes a period of isolation for a person with צָרַעַת (tzara'at).

Vayikra 13:45-46

A person with tzara'at, who has a nega (wound)- their clothes shall be ripped, their head shall be left bare, and their upper lip shall be covered over. They shall call out, "Tamei! Tamei! (Impure! Impure!)"

The person shall be tamei for as long as they have the nega.
They are tamei, they shall sit alone outside the camp.

ויקרא יג:מה-מו

וְהִצְרוּעַ אֲשֶׁר בּוֹ הַנֶּגַע
בְּגָדָיו יִהְיוּ פְרָמִים
וְרֵאשׁוֹ יִהְיֶה פְרוּעַ וְעַל שָׂפָם יִעֲטֶה
וְטָמֵא טָמֵא יִקְרָא:

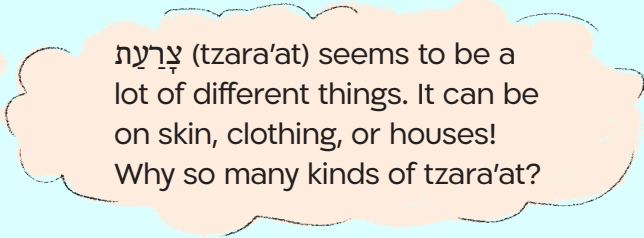
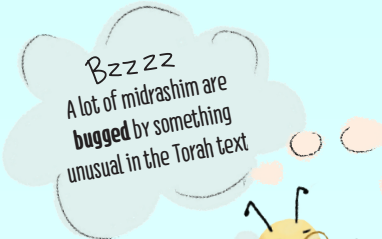
כָּל יְמֵי אֲשֶׁר הַנֶּגַע בּוֹ לְטָמֵא
טָמֵא הוּא בְּדָד יֵשֵׁב מִחוּץ
לַמַּחֲנֶה מוֹשְׁבוֹ:

- ◆ What do you notice here? What are the big ideas?
- ◆ The ripped clothing, bare head, and covered up lip are things people would do when they were in mourning. Why might a person with tzara'at be in mourning?
- ◆ How do you think it might have felt for a person with tzara'at to announce publicly that they were tamei? How might other people have reacted to the announcement?
- ◆ Why do you think isolation was important for a person with tzara'at? (See פְּרָשְׁנוֹת / Commentary, p. 5, for a few possibilities!)
- ◆ Have you ever felt isolated from the people around you? Can you think of ways to help other people who might be isolated, either physically or emotionally? Are there times when you prefer to be alone?



Before or after Shabbat, scan to listen to a discussion of these pesukim on the Tazria-Metzora episode of TORAH TIME!





Tanhuma Tazria 10

The Holy Blessed One is not eager to punish a person directly. So what does God do?

God warns a person first and then strikes them, as it says: "And I will give a nega (wound) of tzara'at in the home where you live" (Vayikra 14:34). So at first God strikes the person's home (as a warning).

If that person does teshuvah (repents), that's good. If not, God strikes that person's clothing (as another warning), as it says: "And clothing that has a nega of tzara'at" (Vayikra 13:47).

If that person does teshuvah, that's good. If not, God strikes their body, as it says: "A person who has (a nega) in the skin of their body..." (Vayikra 13:12).

תנחומא תזריע י

קִשָּׁה לְפָנֵי הַקָּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא לְפָשֵׁט יָדוֹ בְּאָדָם הַזֶּה. וּמָה הוּא עוֹשֶׂה?

מֵתְרָה בּוֹ תְּחִלָּה וְאַחַר כֵּן מִלְקָה אוֹתוֹ, שְׁנֵאָמַר: "וְנָתַתִּי נֶגַע צָרַעַת בְּבֵית אִרְצָךְ אֲחֲזַתְכֶם" (ויקרא יד:לד). בְּתְחִלָּה מִלְקָה בֵּיתוֹ.

הִזָּר בּוֹ, מוֹטֵב. וְאִם לֹא, מִלְקָה בְּגָדָיו, שְׁנֵאָמַר: "וְהִבְגַּד כִּי יִהְיֶה בּוֹ נֶגַע צָרַעַת" (ויקרא יג:מז).

הִזָּר בּוֹ, מוֹטֵב. וְאִם לֹא, בְּאִיִּם בְּגוּפוֹ, שְׁנֵאָמַר: "אָדָם כִּי יִהְיֶה בְּעוֹר בְּשָׂרוֹ" (ויקרא יג:יב).

One of the things this midrash notices is that God uses the word וְנָתַתִּי (ve-natati, and I will give) to describe the way God would place tzara'at on a house. Ve-natati is a surprising word to use here, because it seems to mean giving with kindness, like giving a gift.

According to the midrash "ve-natati" teaches us that tzara'at on the house is actually a type of gift. The gift is that the punishment comes in gradual stages, so that a person has opportunities to change.



- ◆ Why is that a gift?
- ◆ Why is it important to warn someone before they get punished?
- ◆ What is this midrash teaching us about God?



פְּרָשְׁנוֹת • Commentary

Why was it necessary to isolate a person with צָרַעַת (tzara'at)? Here are two ways to understand it.

Rashi (France, 1,000 years ago)

The person with tzara'at spoke lashon hara (gossip and slander), and that caused families and friends to separate from each other. So now they deserve to be separated from others too.

רש"י

הוא הַבְּדִיל בְּלִשׁוֹן הָרַע
בֵּין אִישׁ לְאִשְׁתּוֹ בֵּין אִישׁ
לְרֵעֵהוּ, אַף הוּא יִבְדָּל.

Talmud Bavli Niddah 66a

A person with tzara'at calls out "Tamei! Tamei! (Impure! Impure!)" in order to announce their pain to everyone, and then everyone will pray for mercy on their behalf.

תלמוד בבלי מסכת נדה דף טו עמוד א

"וְטָמֵא טָמֵא יִקְרָא" - צָרִיךְ לְהוֹדִיעַ צָעֲרוֹ
לְרַבִּים וְרַבִּים מְבַקְּשִׁים עָלָיו רַחֲמִים.



Rashi sees the isolation of someone with tzara'at as a fair punishment. It fits what this person did to others in the first place.

The Gemara says that the isolation of someone with tzara'at was designed in a way that it would create sympathy and mercy. That was the purpose of having the person with tzara'at cry out, "Tamei! Tamei!" (Vayikra 13:45).

- ◆ What words in the pesukim are evidence for Rashi's interpretation? (See the pesukim that appear in **הַפְּסוּקִים**/Understanding the Verses, p. 3.)
- ◆ What lesson can we learn from the Gemara about how to treat people who have done something wrong, or people who have been punished?
- ◆ Can both Rashi and the Gemara be true at the same time? How?



דְּבָרֵי דֵּינָא • One-Minute Debate

Debate: נִגְעִים (nega'im, wounds) in our parashah are scary.

How to play:

- ◆ Here are some arguments to get you started, but try to come up with your own. Then debate someone!
- ◆ For a true one-minute debate, give each side 30 seconds to make its best case.



Agree!

- ◆ They can make you טָמֵא (tamei, impure).
- ◆ You might have to spend weeks in isolation.
- ◆ It's creepy to have rashes growing on your body.



Disagree!

- ◆ The כֹּהֵן (kohen, priest) helps you every step of the way.
- ◆ They're one way that God communicates with you. That makes them really special opportunities.
- ◆ The Torah lays out all the ways to become טָהוֹר (tahor, pure) again, so we totally know how to deal with them when they come up, and that makes them not so scary at all.





שאלות השבוע • Parashah Scavenger Hunt

The answers to the first seven questions can be found in the matching numbered aliyah in the Torah reading. **The answers to questions 8 and 9 are harder and can come from anywhere in the parashah. The answer to question 10 is in this week's haftarah.**

aliyot:

- 1) Vayikra 12:1 to 13:23
- 2) 13:24 to 13:39
- 3) 13:40 to 13:54
- 4) 13:55 to 14:20
- 5) 14:21 to 14:32
- 6) 14:33 to 15:15
- 7) 15:16 to 15:33

haftarah for Shabbat

Rosh Hodesh:

Yeshayahu 66:1 to 66:24



Good luck!

1 When are you considered טָהוֹר (tahor, pure), but you just have to wash your clothing?

2 What colors appear in this aliyah?

3 What new color appears in this aliyah, that wasn't in the previous one?

4 When a person is becoming tahor after having tzara'at, what kind of hairstyle do they have to wear?

5 After the kohen does his specific oil sprinkling tasks, what does he do with any leftover oil in his hand?

6 What do you have to do before the kohen checks a נֶגַע (nega) on a house?

7 How many birds are brought to the door of the אֹהֶל מוֹעֵד (ohel mo'ed, tent of meeting)?

8 What liquid is described as being "alive"?

9 How many times does the word תּוֹרָה (Torah, teaching) or תּוֹרַת (Torat, the Torah of) appear in Tazria-Metzora?

10 **From the haftarah:**
How will people bring their gifts to God in Yerushalayim?

*
Look for the answers on page 11!

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רָגַעַ שֶׁל עִבְרִית • A Moment of Hebrew

Vayikra 13:12

ויקרא יג:יב

If the tzara'at **spreads** out over the skin so that it covers all the skin of the person with the nega (wound), from their head to their feet, wherever the priest can see.

וְאִם פָּרוּחַ תִּפְרַח הַצָּרַעַת בְּעוֹר וְכִסְתָּהּ
הַצָּרַעַת אֶת כָּל עוֹר הַנִּגַּע מֵרֹאשׁוֹ וְעַד
רַגְלָיו לְכָל מְרֵאָה עֵינֵי הַכֹּהֵן:



Find the Word!

אֶפְרוֹחַ
A young bird, chick (efroa'h)

This שָׁרֵשׁ (shoresh, root) is pretty rare in the Torah, but it's frequent in this week's parashah. How many times can you find it in Vayikra chapter 13?



הַלְכָה • Halakhah

Are you a righty or a lefty? Did you know that about 1 in 10 people are lefties? (And about 1 in 100 people are ambidextrous—they can use either hand for tasks like writing.) Should being a righty or a lefty matter for performing mitzvot?



Learn one way the parashah practically impacts our lives

In the middle of our parashah's many rules about צָרַעַת (tzara'at), the כֹּהֵן (kohen, priest) is given the following instruction:

Vayikra 14:16

The kohen should dip his **right** finger in the oil in his **left** hand...

ויקרא יד:טז

וְטָבַל הַכֹּהֵן אֶת אֶצְבָּעוֹ הַיְמָנִית מִן הַשֶּׁמֶן אֲשֶׁר עַל כַּף הַשְּׂמָאלִית...

What do you think a left-handed kohen was supposed to do? Act like a righty, using his right hand? Or use his stronger hand? The answer might surprise you, but left-handed kohanim were not allowed to do the main jobs in the Beit Ha-Mikdash at all! (See Tosefta Bekhorot 5:8.) Basically, it was important for all kohanim to do things in exactly the same way.

That might be a possible way to run things in the Beit Ha-Mikdash, where there were always more kohanim than there were jobs, but what about other mitzvot that everyone is expected to do?

Well, with tefillin, in general they are placed on the arm you don't use for writing. For most people, that is the left arm, but lefties are supposed to do the opposite and put tefillin on their right arm!



With lulav and etrog, there is a tradition in the Talmud that the lulav, which is bound together with the hadassim and the aravot, should be held with the right hand, and etrog in the left. Is that the same for lefties? Sefaradim have generally said yes—everyone holds the lulav and the etrog in the same way. Ashkenazim have generally said no—lefties are supposed to reverse things: etrog in the right hand and lulav in the left! (See Shulhan Arukh and Rema Orah Hayyim 651:3.) But some lefties shake the lulav and etrog twice—once each way (Nitei Gavriel based on the Kaf Hahayyim).

Sometimes, we each do mitzvot a little differently based on the way God created us!



הַפְּטָרָה • Haftarah

This Shabbat is also Rosh Hodesh; we're celebrating the beginning of the month of Iyyar. When Rosh Hodesh falls on Shabbat we read a special haftarah. It's the final chapter of the Book of Yeshayahu.

This is a haftarah we read pretty frequently! Every year there are at least two Shabbatot that are also Rosh Hodesh, and some years there are three. (Though sometimes Shabbat-Rosh Hodesh falls on Hanukkah, and then we read a Hanukkah haftarah. But still, the haftarah for Shabbat-Rosh Hodesh comes up a lot!)

It can be divided into three parts, with three different themes:

1

**The Beit Ha-Mikdash is not enough.
No Temple on earth can really contain God.**

הַשָּׁמַיִם כִּסְאִי וְהָאָרֶץ הִדְמִי רַגְלִי
אֵי זֶה בַּיִת אֲשֶׁר תִּבְנֶנּוּ לִי וְאֵי זֶה מְקוֹם מְנוּחָתִי

The heaven is My throne, and the earth is My footstool.
Where could you build a house for Me, what could really be My resting place?

2

**God will bring renewal and joy
(and some punishments for the bad guys).**

כְּאִישׁ אֲשֶׁר אָמוּ תִנְחַמְנוּ
כֵּן אֲנִי אֲנַחֲמְכֶם וּבִירוּשָׁלַיִם תִּנְחַמוּ

As a mother comforts her son, that's how I will comfort you.
You shall find comfort in Yerushalayim.





Parashah Scavenger Hunt Answers:

1. After two rounds of seven-day quarantines, if you have a נִגַע (nega, wound) that begins to fade and hasn't spread (13:6)
2. Reddish white and white (13:24), yellow (13:30), black (13:31)
3. Greenish (13:49)
4. They have to shave all the hair on their head and beard and eyebrows (14:9)
5. He pours it on the head of the person becoming tahor (14:29)
6. Move everything out of the house (14:36)
7. Two (15:29)
8. Water (14:5)
9. Seven times (12:7, 13:59, 14:2, 14:32, 14:54, 14:57, 15:32)
10. On horses, chariots, wagons, mules, and camels (Yeshayahu 66:22)

3

**In the future all nations will gather together
to serve God in Yerushalayim.**

**וְהָיָה מְדִי חֹדֶשׁ בְּחֹדְשׁוֹ וּמְדֵי שַׁבָּת בְּשַׁבָּתוֹ
יָבוֹא כָּל בָּשָׂר לְהִשְׁתַּחֲוֹת לִפְנֵי**

**And month after month, and Shabbat after Shabbat,
all people shall come to bow down before Me**

Rosh Hodesh is a monthly opportunity for renewing our connection to God.

- ◆ How can these three themes from the haftarah be part of how we celebrate Rosh Hodesh?
- ◆ When you say Musaf for Rosh Hodesh, can you find words or phrases that connect to these themes?





תפילה • Prayer in the Parashah

The skin disease צַרַעַת (tzara'at) is more spiritual than the illnesses we're used to. But you can still pray for people who have tzara'at. We know this from Moshe, who prayed for Miriam when she got tzara'at (Bemidbar 12:13).

R. Alexander Ziskind of Grodno wrote that spiritual healing is actually the main thing we're supposed to be thinking about when we pray for someone who is sick:

Yesod Ve-Shoresh Ha-Avodah

In the Amidah prayer, when you say "Heal us God... grant full healing to all our afflictions," you should focus your mind on asking for healing a person's spirit more than healing their body... this way you observe the positive mitzvah in the Torah: "Love your neighbor as yourself" (Vayikra 19:18).

יסוד ושורש העבודה חלק א, שער ה', ברכה ח'

"רפאנו ה' ונרפא... והעלה רפואה שלמה
לכל מכותינו" זכור במחשבתו על רפואת
הנפש יותר מרפואת הגוף... ויקים בזה
מצות עשה מן התורה: "ואהבת לרעך
כמוך" (ויקרא יט:יח).

R. Ziskind notices the words שְׁלֵמָה (shelemah, full) and לְכֹל (lekhoh, to all). He suggests that full healing from all of our illnesses means that there is more to think about than just what's physically wrong.

- ◆ Why is that? Why is it important to pray for spiritual health? Why is it as important as physical health?
- ◆ **Try it!** How does it change the way you pray for people who are sick if you have in mind their spiritual selves as well as their physical selves?

