

Torah: Vayikra (Leviticus) 12:1 – 15:33
Haftarah: M'lakhim Bet (2Kings) 7:3-20
B'rit Hadashah: Mark 1:35-45

	<i>Yr. 3 14:33 – 15:33</i>
1	14:33-38
2	14:39-47
3	14:48-53
4	14:54-15:7
5	15:8-15
6	15:16-28
7	15:29-33

and HaShem spoke to Moshe and to Aharon saying / when you come into the land [of] Kena'an which I [am about] to give to you to possess / and I put an infection of tzara'at in a house [in the] land you posses	<p><i>va'yedaber ADONÁI el-Moshéh v'el-Aharón le'mor</i> <i>kiy tavó'u el-éretz Ke'ná'an</i> <i>ashér aniy noten la'kém la'akhuzah</i> <i>ve'natatiy néga tza'rá'at be'veyt éretz akhuzat'kem</i></p>	<p>וַיְדַבֵּר יְהוָה אֶל-מֹשֶׁה וְאֶל-אַהֲרֹן לֵאמֹר: כִּי תָבֹאוּ אֶל-אֶרֶץ כְּנָעַן אֲשֶׁר אֲנִי נֹתֵן לָכֶם לְאֻחֻזָּה וְנָתַתִּי נֶגַע צָרַעַת בְּבֵית אֶחָדֵיכֶם:</p>
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This week we read two portions discussing ritual purity regarding childbirth and associated bodily fluids, and a lesser understood function of the priesthood regarding the affliction call *tzara'at* (צָרַעַת), often erroneously translated “leprosy” (affects clothes, buildings, etc.)

The Haftarah tells of four men who suffer from *tzara'at* and their story.

Highlights

- Le. 14:33-38** Applies in the land and to the possessor (*a-khu-zah* – אֲחֻזָּה) – the one who takes hold of, seizes, grasps – with its rights and duties. HaShem is The Giver of the land (and perhaps the existing Kena'ani houses wherein treasure lies?), and The Infector (*'né-ga* – נֶגַע -lit. to touch). It is the responsibility of the homeowner to present the evidence to the priesthood – the observers/diagnosticians – who first orders precautions to prevent possible spread, then inspects, and then acts if necessary.
- Le. 14:39-47** After the 7-day waiting period, a second inspection is done, and appropriate action taken, including behavior of the occupants.
- Le. 14:48-53** If inspection shows no spread after repairs, cured! Purification rites for *tzara'at* in a person or a house are the same (vs. 1-32) except oil and blood is replaced with water and blood on the house.
- Le. 14:54-15:7** The formula, *zot ha-Torah* (זֹאת הַתּוֹרָה) – this is the torah – (v. 14:2) is the oft-used concluding statement that summarizes the topic of these two chapters as presented: in humans, leather/fabrics and houses. It emphasizes the priestly task: inspect, diagnose and monitor *tzara'at*, and not to heal – that comes through the process. Required procedures for discharge from sexual organs is set forth. This may be understood as classifying illness and disease as forms of impurity which classifies them as religious concerns. Note that in ancient world cultures sexuality played a major role in religious cult/ritual.
- Le. 15:8-15** Context now shifts to contact initiated by the affected person – spitting, sitting on and touching objects with emphasis on the hands. Contaminated earthen vessels to be destroyed, those made of wood rinsed. After counting seven clear days two doves/pigeons, one as a sin offering (rectifying threatened purity of the sanctuary), the other as a burnt offering (in restored relationship with HaShem) for atonement.
- Le. 15:16-28** This sequence of verses emphasizes seminal emission, forbidding sexual activity within sacred precincts, distancing the process of procreation and tabernacle/temple practice. This is opposite the practice of other Near Eastern religions where fertility was a major focus of religious rites. Similar process for females.
- Le. 15:29-33** Impurity is not necessarily an offense to HaShem. But not taking it seriously IS. Eighth-day offerings by the priesthood. “This is the torah...” (Le. 7:37, 14:54)

Thought Focus

Cedarwood, two birds and yarn: Biblical *tzara'at* is connected to *lashon hara* – evil/destructive speech, not just lying – but damaging speech, even if it is true. It is connected to Miryam and her punishment for criticizing Moshe in Nu. 1:1-16. Sages suggest that the two birds symbolize idle or harmful talk (Ps. 34:14). The slaughter of one bird symbolizes ending the evil behavior. The release of the second bird symbolizes purification and a new chance to behave righteously. Likewise, the cedar wood represents haughtiness while the hyssop and the scarlet (Is. 1:18) (from a worm) represent humility, all brought together to bring atonement. Beyond behavior, arrogance of the heart must be replaced with humility. This imagery represents not only the movement from impurity to purity, but also exclusion to reintegration. It reflects not only the process of changing behavior but of transforming the soul. Further, it emphasizes the power of the tongue, the danger of arrogance, and the redemptive possibility of humility and repentance. (See Ya'aqov [James] chapter 3)

The Eighth Day (Le. 15:14, 29): The eighth day represents an eternal/spiritual covenant – a physical sign of a spiritual reality.

Daily Devotional questions for reflection and application

1. (12:2) What do you learn from observing the process of “birth?” What happens when man’s activity and God’s timing intersect? (Job 10:12, Isa 66:9, Jer 29:11, Psa 40:1-3, Act 1:6-8)
2. (13:6) Have you ever been given a second chance? Have you given someone a second chance? (Joh 18:18, Joh 21:9, Isa 1:18, Mic 6:2-8, Rev 7:13-17)
3. (13:30) What is difference between discernment and judgment? What standards do you apply when discerning situations? (Deu 19:15-21, 1Ti 5:19-20, Isa 3:10, Mat 8:4, Mat 7:1, Mat 7:15-20, Gal 5:22-23)
4. (13:38) Is a determination of *tzara'at* final? Can God reach through and cleans areas of your life? The lives of others? (2Ki 5:9-14, Psa 144:5-7, Mat 14:35-36, Mat 8:2-3)
5. (13:55) The Hebrew word for “washing” (*soE;bA;kUh*) indicates repeated, frequent washing - the owner has tried over and over again to remove the stain. How does this apply to sin in our lives? (Isa 1:18, 1Jo 1:7, Heb 9:22, Rev 7:13-15, Zec 3:3-5, Rev 22:14, Mat 22:11-14)
6. (14:13) Much attention to detail is given in regard to this ritual. What does this tell you about who God is? (Mat 21:1-17, Amo 3:6-7, Acts 2:23, Rev 13:8)
7. (14:35) Are you aware of what appears to be sin in your life? Are you dealing with it on your own, or have you brought it to Yeshua, your High Priest for determination? (Jam 3:6, Mat 15:18, Mat 12:36-37, Luk 12:3, Psa 120:2, Rom 12:19, Mat 18:7, Psa 34:5, 2Pe 3:14)
8. (14:54) There are many different manifestations and intensities of this “affliction” that were to be distinguished, yet a “black and white” determination was to be made. Do you classify sin this way? (Gal 5:19-21, 1Co 6:9-10, Rom 6:23, Rom 7:24, Joh 1:29, Joh 5:28-29, 2Co 5:16-19)
9. (15:16) Thought (heart) and action (hand) are a reflection of each other. Are you washed clean in all the different areas of your life? (Psa 24:3-4, Psa 51:1-4, 1Co 6:11, Eph 5:25-27, Joh 13:4-10, Mat 12:25, Mat 12:30)