

# תַּזְרִיעַ

## Tazria (*Shall conceive*) Vayikra (Leviticus) 12:1-13:59

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This week's Parshah begins with a short chapter on the status of an Israelite mother after she gives birth, the basic instructions for circumcision, and the commands for her purification. As is often true, it will be helpful for us to take a look at the Hebrew so that we can increase our understanding and gain valuable insights. The following verse is probably close to what you read in your English version:

**Vayikra 12:2** "Speak to the children of Israel, saying: 'If a woman **has conceived**, and borne a male child, then she shall be unclean seven days.....

A word for word translation reads:

**Vayikra 12:2:** Speak to the children of Israel, saying: "A woman that **shall be caused to seed** (תַּזְרִיעַ), and has given birth to a male child, then she shall be unclean seven days.....

It's kind of an odd way of putting things, don't you think? Rabbi's have pointed out that there is a **redundancy** to the way this is worded. The phrase "**has conceived**" in the first translation is the phrase "**shall be caused to seed**" in the second. Obviously if **birth** occurs, then why mention "**conception**"?

There are no **unnecessary words** in the Bible. If we go back to the **first usage of "seed"** as it relates to **man**, we find amazing connections:

**Genesis 3:14** So יהוה (Yahwey) Elohim said to the serpent: "Because you have done this, you *are* cursed.....<sup>15</sup> And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and **between your seed and her Seed**; He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel."<sup>16</sup> To the woman He said: "I **will greatly multiply your sorrow and your conception; in pain you shall bring forth children....**

Verse 16 points to one of the **results** of that first sin in the garden....**pain in childbirth**. Now instead of the painless and joyful experience that יהוה originally intended, **childbirth** would be full of **pain and struggle**. There was **another consequence** of the **fall**:

**Genesis 2:17** "but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, **for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.**"

Adam and Eve did not die in the "**first day**" that they ate of the fruit, but when you consider that the Scriptures tell us that "**a day is like a thousand years**", they **did die in that "first day"**. Plus because of the sin they committed, they became clothed in **flesh that would die (corruptible flesh)**, and as a result were no longer able to live in the garden. Now they were faced with their **mortality** and a **tendency toward sin**.

I would like to include a few paragraphs from **Rick's Spurlock's** commentary on **Tazria**:

“Something took place in the Garden. Man sinned for the first time. In so sinning, man clothed himself in **corruptible flesh**, and was subsequently driven from the Presence of the Almighty. In the day that we first sinned....*we surely died*. Even though Adam and Eve did not immediately die physically – **the stench of death was all about them**. Everything regarding their mortality was offensive to the Holy One, blessed is He. The “seed” sown in the Garden bore fruit. Yes, later Eve conceived and bore a son, Cain. **In pain she birthed Cain**. The very **act of giving birth revealed mortality**, and hence **death – blood is present at birth**. **The very act of bringing forth new life, displays death and corruption.**

“But it is not only blood that represents death. It is the very material of conception that represents death – because **man does not bring forth immortality, but frail mortality** just like himself. Both the physical material from father and mother also represent death – at the same time that conception brings about life. Such is **the irony of the state of man: living in a dying state, from the moment of conception.**

“What was conceived in the Garden, because of sin, was death. Death is the antithesis of the Living Creator of the Universe.

“Also in the Garden **something else** was made evident: **the Seed that was sown for a man's redemption from the state of living death**. That Seed is alluded to in Genesis 3:15. **It is Messiah Himself, the ultimate Seed**. He is the same Seed promised to Abraham. The same Seed promised to King David. **He is the seed that brings life.**”

So....**eating the fruit** of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil caused **childbirth to become a reminder of the sin that Adam and Eve committed**. **As a result, a sin offering is required after the birth of a child**. The offering does not speak of any **specific sin** that the parents committed in **conceiving** the child, or point to **sin** in the **newborn**. **The sin offering is for Eve's sin**, the results of which affect us all since we are all **Eve's descendents**. It reminds us now that we have **ALL sinned** and fallen short of the glory of יהוה.

So what about **Yeshua**? He was born of a **woman**. Was He born with a **sin nature**? Messiah is the **only one** born of a woman who **DOES NOT have Adam's blood flowing in His veins**. He has **the undefiled blood of the heavenly Father**. יהוה has created **woman** in such a way that because **she contributes no blood to her fetus**, she is able to bring forth a “**another Adam**”:

**1 Corinthians 15:45** And so it is written, "The first man Adam became a living being." **The last Adam became a life-giving spirit.**

Okay, we could continue on with this down a few “rabbi trails”, but let's return to the Parshah.

**Vayikra 12:2** "Speak to the children of Israel, saying: 'If a woman has conceived, and borne a **male (זכר) child**, then she shall be **unclean seven days**.....

The verse is referring to the birth of a **son**. But instead of using the normal Hebrew word for **son** (ben - בֵּן), it uses the Hebrew word **zakar** (זָכַר)...which by removing the vowel points is also the word for “**remember**” (זָכַר). The verse therefore points to a “**remembrance**” that there will be “**seven days**” (**seven thousand years**) of **history** before the “**8<sup>th</sup> day**”. Until that time, there will be **sin** (referenced by “**unclean**”) on **earth**, even during the millennial period, evidenced by those who battle with satan in Revelation:

**Revelation 20:7** Now **when the thousand years have expired**, Satan will be released from his prison<sup>8</sup> and will go out to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, **to gather them together to battle**, whose number *is* as the sand of the sea.

The **8<sup>th</sup> day** is the day of **circumcision**:

**Vayikra 12:3** 'And on **the eighth day the flesh of his foreskin shall be circumcised**.

**Circumcision** had originally been given as a **physical sign** of the **covenant between יהוה and Abraham**. Abraham **believed in the promises of Elohim** and became **circumcised as a sign of the righteousness he had by faith**:

**Genesis 17:11** "and **you shall be circumcised in the flesh** of your foreskins, and it shall be a **sign of the covenant between Me and you**.

By **circumcising** a son, parents make a commitment to raise their child as a part of **יהוה's covenant with Israel**. It becomes a **permanent remembrance** of the **covenant** right in his own **flesh**. It is even **reflected** in the **procreative organ** from which comes the **seed**! Now because circumcision occurs on the **8<sup>th</sup> day**, every baby boy will live through one **Sabbath** before having this procedure. In other words, **seven days of flesh** as a symbol of **the world (7,000 years of man)** is **cut away** so that what remains is **eternal (8<sup>th</sup> day)**. The **world** as we know it **will pass away** to make way for the **eternal**:

**Revelation 21:1** Now I saw **a new heaven and a new earth**, for the **first heaven and the first earth had passed away**. Also there was no more sea.<sup>2</sup> Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from Elohim, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

Now just a little interesting side note....the **8<sup>th</sup> day** is when vitamin K and prothrombin (immune and blood clotting factors) are at their all-time highest levels in a boy's life, making it the very best time to promote healing! Okay, let's go on:

**Vayikra 12:4** 'She shall then continue in **the blood of her purification thirty-three days**. She shall not touch any hallowed thing, nor come into the sanctuary until the days of her purification are fulfilled.

Jewish commentator **Baruch A. Levine** points out that the above phrase “**blood of her purification**” could be literally translated “**pure blood**”. He suggests that the discharge of blood that occurs in the **final 33 days** is somehow different than the discharge of the **first seven days**. Could there then, be an allusion to something more here?

Normally we know that **blood outside of the body** (with the exception of inside the tabernacle) is a thing of **impurity**, but here it is called “**pure blood**”. **What blood purifies?** We know that **the blood used in the tabernacle rituals** was used for **atonement** or a “**covering over**” of **sin**. Then of course there is the **blood of Yeshua...the only blood that actually takes away sin and the only blood that truly purifies**.

Now we’re talking about a **period of 33 days**. I don’t know if it’s a parallel, but **Yeshua’s time on earth** was also **33 years**. Most of the blood loss that occurs after childbirth, happens during the first **week**. So this **blood which “purifies” for 33 days....could it be linked to the tiny amount of blood shed during the circumcision of the son?**

**Colossians 2:11** In Him you were also circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, by the circumcision of Messiah,<sup>12</sup> buried with Him in baptism, in which you also were raised with Him through faith in the working of Elohim, who raised Him from the dead.<sup>13</sup> **And you**, being dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, **He has made alive together with Him**, having forgiven you all trespasses,

If **circumcision** represents **the cutting away of the “sins of the flesh”**, then Messiah definitely **became this for us**:

**2 Corinthians 5:21** For He made **Him who knew no sin to be sin for us**, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

With those concepts in mind, we can see why the placement of **chapter 12** precedes **chapter 13**. After the cutting away of the **unclean flesh**, the very next thing to be discussed in chapter 13 is **problems of the flesh!**

The word **leprosy** (צָרַעַתְּ tza'ra`at) is repeated **21 times** in chapter 13. The translation of **leprosy** is **not** at all **correct**. **Leprosy is Hansen’s Disease**. Most think that when people get this disease that their fingers and toes rot and fall off. Actually, it is a disease of the **nervous system**, where people lose **feeling**. As a result of being unable to feel, people unknowingly sustain **burns, breaks, and other injuries**. This disease is **NOT the plague** (נֶגַע nega`) being described in Vayikra 13. Also, the word for **plague** is repeated **46 times** in Vayikra 13.

The sages teach that this **plague** in Vayikra 13, specifically the **tzara’at**, is not a **conventional physical ailment**, but a **spiritual chastisement for sins of arrogance, lashon hara (speaking evil of others), pride, greed, etc.** For this reason, when someone develops **tzara’at**, a **spiritual leader (priest)** is sought out rather than a **doctor**. The physical malady is a **wake-up call** for the person to **turn from his error**. It actually becomes a **blessing**, because the person has an opportunity to **repent** before his sin takes him down further.

According to Jewish Midrash, **Moses was the first person to get tzara’at**. When יהוה told him that He wanted to rescue Israel from bondage in Egypt, **Moses was said to have spoken evil of Israel!**

**Exodus 4:1** Then Moses answered and said, "But **suppose they will not believe me** or listen to my voice; **suppose they say, 'יהוה has not appeared to you.'**..... יהוה said to him, "Now put your hand in your bosom." And he put **his hand** in his bosom, and when he took it out, behold, his hand **was leprous, like snow.**

Other Biblical cases of **tzara'at** indicated **slander and anger** preceding the plague:

**Numbers 12:1** Then **Miriam and Aaron spoke against Moses** because of the Ethiopian woman whom he had married; for he had married an Ethiopian woman.<sup>2</sup> So they said, "Has יהוה indeed spoken only through Moses? Has He not spoken through us also?" And יהוה heard *it*.<sup>3</sup> (Now the man Moses *was* very humble, more than all men who *were* on the face of the earth.)<sup>4</sup> Suddenly יהוה said to Moses, Aaron, and Miriam, "Come out, you three, to the tabernacle of meeting!" So the three came out...Then He said, "Hear now My words..... Why then were you not afraid to speak against My servant Moses?"<sup>9</sup> So the anger of יהוה was aroused against them, and He departed.<sup>10</sup> And when the cloud departed from above the tabernacle, **suddenly Miriam became leprous, as white as snow. Then Aaron turned toward Miriam, and there she was, a leper.**

And in 2 Chronicles we see this disease come upon King Uzziah:

**2 Chronicles 26:16** But when he was strong his heart was lifted up, to *his* destruction, for he **transgressed** against יהוה his Elohim by entering the temple of יהוה to burn incense on the altar of incense.<sup>17</sup> So Azariah the priest went in after him, and with him were eighty priests of יהוה -- valiant men.<sup>18</sup> And they withstood King Uzziah, and said to him, "*It is* not for you, Uzziah, to burn incense to יהוה, but for the priests, the sons of Aaron, who are consecrated to burn incense. Get out of the sanctuary, for you have trespassed! You *shall have* no honor from יהוה Elohim."<sup>19</sup> Then **Uzziah became furious**; and he *had* a censer in his hand to burn incense. And **while he was angry with the priests, leprosy broke out on his forehead**, before the priests in the house of יהוה, beside the incense altar.<sup>20</sup> And Azariah the chief priest and all the priests looked at him, and there, on his forehead, he *was* leprous; so they thrust him out of that place. Indeed he also hurried to get out, because יהוה had struck him.<sup>21</sup> King Uzziah was **a leper until the day of his death. He dwelt in an isolated house, because he was a leper; for he was cut off from the house of יהוה.**

A person with **tzara'at** was **banished** from the camp of the Israelites. The Levite priest could offer **no physical cure**, but I wonder if this kind-hearted **servant** offered **spiritual advice** to a person **broken** by this **ailment**. It was a spiritual problem after all that was manifesting itself. How many times have **we** been **guilty of gossip, pride, or having a critical spirit about others?**

**Ephesians 4:29** Let **no corrupt word** proceed out of your **mouth**, but **what is good** for necessary edification, **that it may impart grace to the hearers.**<sup>30</sup> And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of Adonai, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.<sup>31</sup> **Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice.**<sup>32</sup> And **be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as Adonai in Messiah forgave you.**

In Matthew we find a story of Yeshua reaching out to a man with **leprosy (tzara'at)**, physically healing him and making him "**clean**". We also see Yeshua following the commandments of Torah in sending him to the Priest and making an offering:

**Matthew 8:1** When He had come down from the mountain, great multitudes followed Him. <sup>2</sup> And behold, a leper came and worshiped Him, saying, "Adonai, if You are willing, You can **make me clean.**" <sup>3</sup> Then Yeshua put out *His hand and touched him*, saying, "I am willing; **be cleansed.**" Immediately **his leprosy was cleansed.** <sup>4</sup> And Yeshua said to him, "See that you tell no one; but go your way, **show yourself to the priest, and offer the gift that Moses commanded, as a testimony to them.**"

Isn't it interesting that it is **by the touch of Yeshua** that this man is made **clean**? In our study so far of Vayikra, we have learned that if a **clean person touches something unclean**, He also will **become unclean**. Yet **Yeshua's touch** makes the **unclean, clean!** Remember that the word **plague** (נִגַּע *nega*) was used 46 times in Vayikra 13. The **same three Hebrew letters** are also translated as the word **touch** (נָגַע *naga*)! The Bible teaches us to be **aware** of what we **touch**:

**Genesis 3:3** "but of the fruit of the tree which *is* in the midst of the garden, Elohim has said, '**You shall not eat it, nor shall you touch** (נָגַע *naga*) **it, lest you die.**' "

**Exodus 12:22** "And you shall take a bunch of hyssop, dip *it* in the blood that *is* in the basin, and **strike** (נָגַע *naga*) the lintel and the two doorposts with the blood that *is* in the basin. And none of you shall go out of the door of his house until morning.

**Vayikra 11:39** ' And if any animal which you may eat dies, he who **touches** (נָגַע *naga*) its carcass shall be **unclean** until evening.

It was **the touch of the Master that brought healing**:

**Mark 3:10** For **He healed many**, so that as many as had afflictions pressed about Him to **touch** Him.

**Unclean** is not a state that a believer faces any longer. The **blood of Messiah** is so **powerful** that it **cleanses** us. As a **believer, you become clean and holy**. It is our job, however, to **act out holiness...to BE holy**. Otherwise, we may find ourselves **separated from intimacy** with the **Holy One**.

**2 Corinthians 6:17** Therefore "Come out from among them and be separate, says Adonai. **Do not touch what is unclean, and I will receive you.**"

Here is one more connection between **touch** (נָגַע *naga*) and **plague** (נִגַּע *nega*). The sages teach that **one of the names of Messiah** will be the "leprous one". Friends, the reason why we no longer suffer this tzara'at is because **Yeshua has been "touched" by this "plague"**. He has taken on our **sin, our leprosy**. Because of His love for us, we are **healed by His touch!**

**Isaiah 53:4** Surely He has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed Him **plagued** (נָגַע *naga*), smitten by Elohim, and afflicted. **5** But **He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities**; the chastisement for our peace *was* upon Him, **and by His stripes we are healed**.

Not only are we healed, but look who CAN'T touch us!

**1 John 5:18** We know that whoever is born of Adonai does not sin; but **he who has been born of Adonai keeps himself, and the wicked one does not touch him.**

Okay, so what can we learn today from all these skin ailments in Vayikra 13? **Plenty! Grace** has not given us **a license to continue with the sins that at one time caused tzara'at:**

**Romans 6:1** What shall we say then? **Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound?** <sup>2</sup> **Certainly not!** How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it?

Let's see if we can identify with a few of these. **Hebrew thinking caps will be required.** The following verse concerns **a sore on his skin** which appears to be **more than skin deep**. Let me suggest an example...**lust**, which was **pursued** and became **a full blown sin (deeper than the flesh)**.

**Vayikra 13:3** "The priest shall examine the **sore on the skin of the flesh**; and if the hair on the sore has turned white, and the sore appears *to be* **deeper than the skin of his flesh**, it *is* a leprous sore. Then the priest shall examine him, and pronounce him **unclean**.

The next example could be lust which was checked and did not become a sin deeper than the flesh (enter the heart):

**Vayikra 13:6** "Then the priest shall examine him again on the seventh day; and indeed *if* the sore has faded, *and* the **sore has not spread on the skin**, then the priest shall pronounce him clean; it *is only* a scab, **and he shall wash his clothes and be clean**.

How about a little tougher example? In the next verse, the person is actually brought to the priest by someone else. The presence of "**raw flesh**" (**literally living flesh**) **is trouble**. Here we have some kind of **old problem** that is manifesting its ugly head once more. The victim has not properly dealt with something. There are even **white hairs (new problems)** sprouting in the **white patch...dead things feeding on this dead place**.

**Vayikra 13:9** "When the **leprous sore** is on a person, then **he shall be brought to the priest**.<sup>10</sup> "And the priest shall examine *him*; and indeed *if* the **swelling on the skin is white, and it has turned the hair white**, and *there is* a **spot of raw flesh in the swelling**,<sup>11</sup> "it *is* an **old leprosy on the skin of his body**. The priest shall pronounce him **unclean**, and shall not isolate him, for he *is* unclean.

The next one is really tough:

**Vayikra 13:12** " And if **leprosy breaks out all over the skin**, and the **leprosy covers all the skin of the one who has the sore, from his head to his foot**, wherever the priest looks,<sup>13</sup> "then the priest shall consider; and indeed *if* the leprosy has covered all his body, he shall pronounce *him* clean *who has* the sore. **It has all turned white. He is clean**.

Hmmm...what is this about? It definitely seems like **backwards logic**. How could he be **clean** when he's **full of leprosy**? I think the clue to this lies in the sentence – **It has all turned white**. If

this is true, there is **no longer any flesh showing**. This person has “been through the ringer” so to speak and **come to the end of himself**. He has “**died to self**”. With this perspective, consider the following verses:

1 Peter 4:1 Therefore, since Messiah suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves also with the same mind, for he who has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin,

**Isaiah 1:18** "Come now, and let us reason together," Says יהוה, "Though your sins are like scarlet, They shall be as white as snow; Though they are red like crimson, They shall be as wool.

Unfortunately we have a big “**but**” in the next verse:

**Vayikra 13:14** "**But** when raw flesh appears on him, he shall be unclean.<sup>15</sup>" And the priest shall examine the raw flesh and pronounce him to be unclean; *for the raw flesh is unclean. It is leprosy.*

The word for **raw** is **cha** (חַי) and it means “**living**”. This person has stopped “**dying to self**” and is now “**living**” in the “**flesh**” again. It’s a sad situation when a person who has gone through so much, hit rock bottom, turned to Adonai, and then **chooses to go back to his old ways**. Then again, because of the grace of יהוה you see more chances for this fellow:

**Vayikra 13:16** "Or if the raw flesh changes and turns white again, he shall come to the priest.<sup>17</sup> "And the priest shall examine him; and indeed *if* the sore has turned white, then **the priest shall pronounce him clean** who has the sore. He *is* clean.

Can you identify with this?! **One minute, faithful....the next minute, not**. Then **faithful again! Praise Him for His grace!** Yet, let us pursue **holiness**, for we know there is an **ultimate end to His patience!**

As believers, we will again be **judged by our High Priest**. **Yeshua** is not the High Priest of the Levitical order, but **of the order of Melchizedek**. We will not be judged for our **salvation**, but for our **words, thoughts and motives**. These were the **same things** the **Levitical priests were judging**. Because the **priests** were not able **to see the intents of the heart**, or **hear every word** said, **negativity** manifested itself in a **physical way called tzara’at**. Thus they were able to make a **judgment**.

**1 Corinthians 4:4** For I know nothing against myself, yet I am not justified by this; but **He who judges me is Adonai**.<sup>5</sup> Therefore judge nothing before the time, until Adonai comes, who **will both bring to light the hidden things of darkness and reveal the counsels of the hearts**. Then each one's praise will come from Elohim.

**2 Corinthians 5:9** Therefore we **make it our aim**, whether present or absent, **to be well pleasing to Him**.<sup>10</sup> For we must all appear before **the judgment seat of Messiah**, that **each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad**.

**Galatians 6:4** But **let each one examine his own work**, and then he will have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another.

Shabbat Shalom!

**Ardelle**