

Bais Peretz Synagogue

# JLC NEWS & Upcoming Events

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## SHABBOS INFORMATION

Parshas Tazria / Hachodesh  
Shabbos Mevorchim  
19th - 20th Adar Beis, 5774  
March 21st-22nd, 2014  
Candle Lighting: 7:17pm



### Shabbos Schedule Bais Peretz Synagogue

Friday, March 28th, 2014

Mincha / Maariv: 7:30pm

Shabbos, March 29th, 2014

JLC Kid Tehillim Club: 9:00am

JLC Kids Brochos: 9:45am

Shacharit: 10:00am

Kiddush / Lunch: 12:00pm

Mesibos Shabbos: 6:15pm

Mincha: 7:10pm

Shabbos Ends: 8:10pm

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## daily davening schedule:

shacharit 9:15am  
(sunday-friday)

**JLC Shabbos  
Kiddush/Lunch  
is still available  
for sponsorship**



**JLC Kids Program  
is sponsored by  
Sonya Filink  
in memory  
of her mother  
Klara bat Rafael  
obm**



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## This Week at The JLC

*Shabbos: Tanya study  
in the Bais Peretz Synagogue  
from 9:25am*

*Tanya is the fundamental, classic  
work upon which all concepts of  
Chabad Chasidism are based.*

*Sunday Morning:  
Womens Class with  
Rabbi Michoel Lozenik  
9:30am at the JLC,  
2nd Floor in the  
Blima bas Pinchas Library*

*Tuesday: Mini Torah & Pizza  
2nd Floor from 5:00-6:00pm*

*Tuesday: Torah & Pizza |  
Pre-Teen Scene for Girls  
2nd Floor from 6:00-7:15pm*

*Wednesday: Mini Mishmar  
2nd Floor from 5:00-6:00pm*

*Wednesday: MISHMAR  
2nd Floor from 6:00-7:15pm*

## next shabbos parshas metzora

friday, april 4th, 2014  
candle lighting: 7:20pm  
mincha: 7:35pm

# Parsha in a Nutshell



*The Parshah of Tazria continues the discussion of the laws of tumah v'taharah, ritual impurity and purity.*

*A woman giving birth should undergo a process of purification, which includes immersing in a mikvah (a naturally gathered pool of water) and bringing offerings to the Holy Temple. All male infants are to be circumcised on the eighth day of life.*

*Tzaraat (often mistranslated as "leprosy") is a supra-natural plague, which also can afflict garments. If white or pink*

*patches appear on a person's skin (dark red or green in garments), a kohen is summoned.*

*Judging by various signs, such as an increase in size of the afflicted area after a seven-day quarantine, the kohen pronounces it tamei (impure) or tahor (pure).*

*A person afflicted with tzaraat must dwell alone outside of the camp (or city) until he is healed. The afflicted area in a garment is removed; if the tzaraat spreads or recurs, the entire garment must be burned.*

## *The Weekly Haftorah:*

*This week's haftorah describes how a prophet miraculously cured an Aramite general of his tzara'at ailment. The bulk of this week's Torah reading discusses this skin disease and its related impurity.*

*The haftorah begins with a brief mention of one of the prophet Elisha's miraculous feats. He received a paltry gift of twenty loaves of bread and a sack of grain. At Elisha's insistence, this gift was shared amongst his hundred students. The food was enough for all—and there was even leftovers.*

*Naaman, general of the powerful Aramite armies, contracted tzara'at. A young captive Israelite maid advised him to seek the assistance of the "prophet in*

*Samaria." Acting on this suggestion, the king of Aram dispatched a message to the king of Israel, "Behold I have sent Naaman my servant to you, and you shall cure him of his tzara'at!"*

*The king of Israel panicked, until Elisha sent him a message: "Why have you rent your garments? Let him come to me now, and let him know that there is a prophet in Israel!"*

*Elisha advised Naaman to immerse in the Jordan River. Despite his initial reluctance to do so, Naaman carried out the prophet's orders, and was immediately healed.*

*Elisha refused to accept any gifts from Naaman. The general promised Elisha that he would no longer serve any deity other than the One G-d, and he departed.*

## *Healthy Selfishness*

*By Rabbi Zalman Posner*

*In this week's Torah reading we have the description of afflictions which may beset man, the examinations by the kohen, and the laws of the quarantine, if necessary. The Mishnah teaches that "all afflictions one sees, except his own." No man examines his own afflictions; another must do this. The Torah describes physical disease, but the physical meaning does not exhaust the implications of these laws. The Mishnah's teaching is especially apt.*

*Afflictions, moral shortcomings, are obvious and readily condemned in another. We are sensitive to the grossness of another's poor manners, repelled by arrogance, shocked by niggardliness, dismayed by that fellow's*

*insufferable complacency. We are struck with the full force of the repulsiveness of his poor character traits and moral deficiencies. Our clarity of vision, our objectivity, our courage and candor in denouncing shortcomings "right to his face" is a source of considerable pride to many of us. No fault escapes detection and forthright denunciation. "All afflictions man sees . . ."*

*But must we carry the burden of constantly correcting everyone's failings on our shoulders? Will we be forgiven if we ignore others' afflictions for a while as we examine our own? May our spiritual ministrations be directed toward ourselves, just for a while? This selfishness may be exercised with impunity. Let's be selfless, if we must, in more mundane affairs.*

# The Rules of Judgment and Constructive Criticism

## What The Rebbe Taught Me By Rabbi Mendel Kalmenson

There's an intriguing anomaly inherent in the laws of Tzara'at—the biblical skin disease that affected gossipers and slanderers in ancient times, rendering them ritually impure.

On the one hand, any sage well-versed in the laws of Tzara'at, including those who were not Kohanim (priests), could analyze a skin condition to determine whether or not it was in fact Tzara'at.<sup>1</sup>

On the other hand, only a Kohen could actually render impure a person afflicted by Tzara'at.<sup>2</sup> That is to say, a person could be walking around with Tzara'at and even have their Tzara'at confirmed by an expert and yet not be ritually impure until a Kohen uttered the words, "You are impure."

In other words, there were two phases to the process of impurification. The first was an abstract diagnosis; the second was a concrete ruling. The former could be made by any expert in the field; the latter, which actually brought on spiritual illness, could be made only by a Kohen.

What is highly unusual about this law is that the pronouncement of impurity by a Kohen could be made even by a Kohen who was a minor,<sup>3</sup> and even by a Kohen who was mentally challenged, both of whom (for obvious reasons) are usually disqualified from participating in legal matters.

Also puzzling is the law that a Kohen

who was totally ignorant of the laws and thus could not possibly verify the Tzara'at diagnosis, could also declare someone impure.

Clearly then, conferring this type of impurity on someone was an intrinsic power of the Kohen—one that stemmed from his essence rather than from his mental prowess or expertise.

And here's the huge irony.

The Kohen is generally seen as the paragon of ritual purity. In Temple times, it was he who served as the facilitator of purification, helping the Jewish people achieve atonement and spiritual cleansing. Indeed, for this very reason Kohanim were governed by a set of strict regulations aimed at keeping them pure at all times!<sup>4</sup>

So if there is one thing in the world that is antithetical, even anathematic, to the character of the Kohen, it would be impurity. And yet, not only was the Kohen the only one who could initiate impurity, but this function of his was related to his very being!

Another curiosity is the fact that the law excluding all non-Kohanim from rendering impurity was limited only to the impurity of Tzara'at. There is something, then, specific to Tzara'at that must be activated by the Kohen.

### **Solitary Confinement**

While any form of ritual impurity was deeply isolating for the person afflicted—as it called for their temporary separation from family,

friends and community—the impurity of Tzara'at was especially isolating.

Not only was the Metzora (the one with Tzara'at) removed from all three camps of Israel,<sup>5</sup> he was separated even from those who shared his condition.<sup>6</sup> He was an outcast among outcasts.

The pathos of his segregation is captured in the verse: "He shall dwell in isolation; his dwelling shall be outside the camp..."<sup>7</sup>

And herein lays the first clue to solving the mystery of the Kohanic paradox.

### **Kohanic Empathy**

While purity was vital to the Kohen, there was another facet of his character that was equally, if not more,<sup>8</sup> essential to his identity.

In biblical and mystical literature<sup>9</sup> the Kohen is referred to as "Ish HaChesed," "the man of kindness." This aspect of his moral fiber is expressed through his role as the Blessor of Israel, by means of the priestly blessings.

Amazing to note is the telling language employed in the blessing recited by Kohanim prior to the priestly blessings: "Blessed are You G-d . . . Who has commanded us to bless your nation with love."<sup>10</sup>

Indeed, so essential are feelings of love and brotherhood to the Kohen and his blessings that, according to Jewish law, failure to infuse the

priestly blessings with genuine affection can negatively affect the Kohen's health, G-d forbid!<sup>11</sup>

Clearly, heartfelt kindness—that is, feelings of love and not just acts of kindness—was central to the Kohen's spiritual and even physical makeup.

And precisely because of the Kohen's heightened sense of other were the keys to Tzara'at-impurity entrusted him. Who could possibly be more suited to utter the crushing verdict of "You are impure" than these men of compassion? Who better to administer a sentence of solitary confinement?

Consider the (unconscious) patient whose specialist doctor deems him in need of surgery, and yet, without the consent of his closest family member, he cannot be operated on.

There is a rationale governing the legal structure that accords superior authority to family over doctor, even though the doctor knows best.

The doctor sees things objectively and in the abstract, basing his analysis and diagnosis on studies and statistics. At the end of the day if the procedure fails he could (theoretically) walk away unaffected. At worst, it's just another day at the office, one more case-study, another statistic.

A close family member, however, feels things subjectively because they see their child, spouse, parent, or sibling as an extension of themselves. They are as petrified to have the knife wielded on their beloved ones as they would be to have it wielded on themselves—which often explains their hesitancy to consent to surgery. There can be no room for mistake.

The same is true of the Metzora who cannot be rendered impure based only on the diagnosis of an expert on Tzara'at but requires the consent of the compassionate Kohen in order to set impurity and

isolation into motion.

### What's in it for me?

In our capacity as parents, teachers, leaders or friends, many of us will inevitably find ourselves in situations that call on us to pass judgment on others, and sometimes even to take action based on our findings.

Sometimes creating distance between ourselves and the other will be called for, the result of which will be some degree of isolation. The same is true regarding

constructive criticism and necessary rebuke, both of which potentially effect distance and isolation.

At those times, it is absolutely critical that, like the Kohen "Ish HaChesed," we view the person in question from the perspective of an invested defense lawyer rather than an objective and impartial judge, as a family member and an extension of ourselves and not, G-d forbid, as a stranger.



And perhaps we could add that just as in Temple times when no Kohen could be found, the individual considered "impure" based on the analysis of experts could nonetheless not be rendered so in practice, so too, if we aren't able to "find" or access the Kohen within us, we are in no position to judge, isolate or criticize, no matter what the person in question may have done.

Based on Likutei Sichos volume 27, pp. 88-91.

### FOOTNOTES

1. See Maimonides Laws of Tzara'at, Chapter 9:1.
2. Ibid. 9:2.
3. See *ibid.* regarding a minor, mentally-challenged, and blind Kohen.
4. See beginning of Parshat Emor.
5. See Rashi to Leviticus 13:46.
6. See Rashi *ibid.* and Likutei Sichot, volume 22, p. 74, note 49.
7. See Leviticus, 13:46. According to Rashi (Arachin, 16b) the severity dealt the Metzora i.e. the unique degree of his isolation was a punishment for the fact that the Metzora created isolation between husbands and wives and friends.
8. Interestingly, by Divine Providence, due to the destruction of the Holy Temple, the purity aspect of the Kohen's character is currently less manifest than his kindness, which continues to be expressed daily, weekly, or Holiday-seasonally (depending on one's custom) through the priestly blessings.
9. See Deuteronomy 33:8. See also Zohar, volume 1 in the omissions p. 256b and volume 3 p. 145b.
10. See Prayer Book.
11. See the Alter Rebbe's Code of Jewish Law, Or Hachaim, chapter

# On The Lighter Side

Rachel Rosenberg was visiting her mother in Florida when they bumped into Ethel Epstein whom they knew from back home.

"Is this your daughter?" Mrs. Epstein asked. "I remember her when she was this high. How old is she now?"

Without pausing, Rachel's mother said, "Twenty-nine." Rachel, 45, nearly fainted on the spot.

After everyone had said their good-byes, Rachel asked her mother why she'd told such a fib.

"Well," she replied, "I've been lying about my age for so long, it suddenly dawned on me that I need to start lying about yours too."

Adella Steinfeld was nearing the end of her long life. Her daughter Malka took the opportunity to discuss many things, including how Mrs. Steinfeld envisioned her last days, and even her funeral.

"Oh, honey," Mrs. Steinfeld said, "I really don't care about the details."

Later Mrs. Steinfeld woke from a nap and grasped her daughter's hand. Malka leaned forward, and Mrs. Steinfeld said urgently, "Just whatever you do, don't invite Cousin Arlene."

A Frenchman, an Irishman and a Jew are walking through a sweltering hot desert. The Frenchman says 'I'm so tired, I'm so thirsty- I must have a glass of wine.' The Irishman says, 'I'm so tired, I'm so thirsty- I must have a glass of beer'. The Jew says, 'I'm so tired, I'm so thirsty – I must have diabetes!

A Jew walks into the bakery and orders a bagel. The man behind the counter

says: "A bagel? That's 20 dollars." "20 dollars?! Are you mad!?" "Well, its 1 dollar for the bagel, and 19 dollars for Israel." "Fine. Money for Israel?"

How can I say no?"

The next day the same guy comes in to the bakery, and orders a challah. The man behind the counter says: "Challah? That's 40 dollars."

"Are you insane?!"

"Sir, its 5 dollars for the challah and 35 dollars for Israel."

The man shrugs his shoulders but he pays the money.\*

The third day, he comes in and orders a cheesecake. "Cheesecake? 70 dollars."

"What?! This is absolutely crazy."

"Sir, 10 dollars for the cheesecake, and 60 dollars for Israel."

At this point he had had enough. "You are completely mad! This is absolutely absurd and unethical."

"Sorry sir, I am just following the rules."

"I demand to speak to the owner of the store!"

So the clerk goes to the door and calls out: "Hey Israel! Someone wants to talk to you!"

It was lunchtime at the Jewish nursery school and all the children were lined up by the teachers. Then, as usual, they were led into the canteen.

Little Moshe quickly noticed that at one end of the dining table was a large pile of apples with the message, "Take ONLY ONE apple each, God is watching."

At the other end he noticed was a large pile of kosher chocolate chip cookies.

Moshe then whispered to his friend Sarah, "We can take all the cookies we want. God is watching the apples."



## **Blood Drive in Memory of Susan Stone**

**(Shoshana bat Reuven), obm**

**Thursday, April 3, 2014**

**5:00 PM - 9:30 PM**

*The bloodmobile will be parked on the south side of  
Beyond by Shemtov's located at  
514 Arthur Godfrey Rd., Miami Beach 33140.*

*For more information and/or to make an appointment,*

Contact Allison Stone at [Loristar1955@gmail.com](mailto:Loristar1955@gmail.com)



Photo ID required.  
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# What is "The Perfect Jew" By the Avner Institute

**What exactly is Chassidus? A "supplement" to Torah observance? Or the essence of Jewish belief?**

**The Avner Institute presents the Rebbe's response to the role of Chassidus as a mere aid to religious study and practice – rather, the catalyst for spiritual force and a mind-altering world view.**

**"A Deep-Felt Experience"**

By the Grace of G-d  
7 Adar 5731  
Brooklyn, NY

Blessing and  
Greeting:

I am in receipt of your letter of Rosh Chodesh Adar, containing the good news that things are progressing satisfactorily. I trust you received my acknowledgment of your previous correspondence.

May G-d grant the fulfillment of your heart's desires for good, especially that you should go from strength to strength, as you write.

In reply to the two points which you raise in your letter:

Regarding Chassidus, it is not correct to say that it is a "supplementary aid" to the proper fulfillment of the mitzvot, for it is that element which permeates the fulfillment of all the mitzvot. For example, it is possible to fulfill a mitzvah without any kavanah [inspiration] whatever, it is

possible to fulfill a mitzvah with the general kavanah of fulfilling G-d's command; and it is possible to fulfill a mitzvah with inspiration, enthusiasm and joy, as a deep-felt experience pervading one's entire being, although the mitzvah is a part of one's being.

Spiritual vs. Material

By way of illustration: when taking challah, one can be permeated with a great, joyous feeling of dedicating the first part of the dough, even before



partaking from it, to kedushah [holiness], although in our time it cannot be given to a kohen [priest], and must therefore be burned. At the same time, as explained in Chassidus (in Sha'ar Hayichud vеха'Emunah), on the subject of the continuous renewal of Creation, one can realize that G-dliness is the actual reality of all things, except that it was G-d's will that the spiritual should be hidden in a material frame.

But the Jew, by the capacity of his intellect, kavanah and knowledge, can reveal the spiritual through the

predominance of form over matter, the spiritual over the material, the soul over the body, until he can see with the eyes of his intellect how the material is being constantly brought into existence as in the Six Days of Creation. Permeated with this knowledge, he realizes that the first of everything should be dedicated to G-d, and only then can he partake of all the things which G-d has given him.

In the light of the above, one can appreciate that Chassidus is not something supplementary, but the

very soul of the mitzvah, or, as you also mention it, it creates a new dimension in the fulfillment of every mitzvah.

Deeper Aspects

In the above, there is also a reply to those who claim that Chassidus looks askance on, or rejects, other Jews, chas veshalom [Heaven forbid]. This is not so,

for basically the Jew who fulfills a mitzvah even without any kavanah, and even without knowing the original source of the commandment in the Torah, is nevertheless fulfilling the mitzvah, and has to make a bracha [blessing] and so forth.

Similarly, the woman who does not know the posuk [verse] in the Torah which speaks of challah, and knows nothing of the deeper significance of the mitzvah, etc., is also fulfilling the mitzvah. On the other hand, it is indeed a very great pity if one does not try to learn and understand the

deeper aspects of the mitzvah. For very often even a minor detail in a mitzvah has profound significance and implication, and even in a small piece of dough taken as challah, there can be hidden a profound world outlook.

Share & Share Alike

With regard to your other question, whether when talking to a person who knows nothing about Torah and mitzvah, one should bring in Chassidus too, or only discuss the immediate matters – it is self-understood that if the person is capable of grasping the matter in the Chassidic way, there is the mitzvah of v'ahavta l'reacha komocha [loving your fellow Jew as yourself], to share a good thing with another person to the fullest extent. On the other hand, if that person is not yet capable of grasping the inner aspects of the mitzvah as explained in Chassidus, one can only talk to that person in basic terms and according to that person's level of understanding.

This is what is meant by the verse "Instruct the lad according to his way," as explained at length by the Moreh Nevuchim [Guide of the Perplexed], the true "guide" of all generations, namely the Rambam, in his introduction to his commentary on Mishnayoth. For, just as it is necessary to teach a child gradually, in accordance with his grasp and capacity, so it is necessary to teach adults who are "children" insofar as knowledge and understanding is concerned.

Wishing you a happy and inspiring Purim,

With blessing,

[signature]

P.S. I trust that you have seen my talk to Jewish women on the subject of challah. No doubt it is available in the library of the Seminary.

## Barrels on a Riverbank – A Story

*Editor's note: One of the central figures in the history of Chassidism was the famed "Seer of Lublin," Rabbi Yaakov Yitzchok Horowitz (1745-1815), who presided over the spread of Chassidism in Poland and Galicia; many of the great Chassidic masters of the time were his disciples. This story, however, is not about the "Seer" but about his maternal grandfather, Rabbi Kopel of Likova; in fact, it happened many years before the Seer's birth.*

*Reb Kopel earned a living by purchasing barrels of vodka and beer from the local distillers and selling his wares to the taverns in and around his native village of Likova. It was not an easy life, with the heavy taxes exerted by the government and the hostile environment facing a Jew in 18th-century Europe. Yet his faith and optimism never faltered.*

*Each year, on the morning before Passover, Reb Kopel would sell his chametz to one of his gentile neighbors. Chametz is "leaven" -- a category that must famously include bread but also all food or drink made with fermented grain. The Torah commands the Jew that absolutely "no leaven shall be found in your possession" for the duration of the Passover festival, in commemoration of the leaven-free Exodus from Egypt. In the weeks before the festival, the Jewish home is emptied and scrubbed clean of chametz; on the night before Passover, a solemn candle-lit search is conducted for every last breadcrumb hiding between the floorboards. By the next morning, all remaining household chametz is eaten, burned or otherwise disposed of.*

*What about someone like Reb Kopel who deals in leavened foods and has a warehouse full of chametz? For such cases (and for anyone who has chametz they don't want to dispose of) the rabbis instituted the practice of selling one's chametz to a non-Jew. Reb Kopel's neighbors were familiar with the annual ritual. The Jewish liquor dealer would draw up a legally-binding contract with one of them, in which he sells all the contents of his warehouse for a sum equal to their true value. Only a small part of the sum actually changed hands; the balance was written up as an I.O.U. from the purchaser to the seller. After Passover, Reb Kopel would be back, this time to buy back the chametz and return the I.O.U. The purchaser got a tip for his trouble -- usually in the form of a generous sampling of the merchandise that had been legally his for eight days and a few hours.*

*One year, someone in Likova came up with a novel idea: what if they all refused to buy the Jew's vodka? In that case he would have to get rid of it. Why suffice with a bottle or two when they could have it all?*

*When Reb Kopel knocked on a neighbor's door on the morning of Passover eve, Ivan politely declined to conduct the familiar transaction. Puzzled, he tried another cottage further down the road. It did not take long for him to realize the trap that his gentile neighbors had laid for him. The deadline for getting rid of chametz -- an hour before midday -- was quickly approaching. There was no time to travel to the next village to find a non-Jewish purchaser.*

Reb Kopel did not hesitate for a minute. Quickly he emptied the wooden shack behind his house that served as his warehouse. Loading his barrels of chametz on his wagon, he headed down to the river. As his neighbors watched gleefully from a distance, he set them on the river bank. In a loud voice he announced: "I hereby renounce any claim I have on this property! I proclaim these barrels ownerless, free for the talking for all!" He then rode back home to prepare for the festival.

That night, Reb Kopel sat down to the Seder with a joyous heart. When he recited from his Haggadah, "Why do we eat this unleavened bread? Because the dough of our fathers did not have time to become leavened before G-d revealed Himself to them and redeemed them," he savored the taste of each word in his mouth. All his capital had been invested in those barrels of vodka and beer; indeed, much of it had been bought on credit. He was now penniless, and the future held only the prospect of many years of crushing debt. But his heart was as light and bright as a songbird. He had not a drop of chametz in his possession! For once in his life, he had

been given the opportunity to truly demonstrate his love and loyalty to G-d. He had removed all leaven from his possession, as G-d had commanded him. Of course, he had fulfilled many mitzvot in his lifetime, but never at such a cost -- none as precious -- as this one!

The eight days of Passover passed for Reb Kopel in a state of ecstatic joy. Then the festival was over, and it was time

to return to the real world. With thoughtful steps he headed to his warehouse to look through his papers and try to devise some plan to start his business anew. Clustered in the doorway he found a group of extremely disappointed gentiles.

"Hey, Kopel!" one of them called, "I though you were supposed to get rid of your vodka. What's the point of

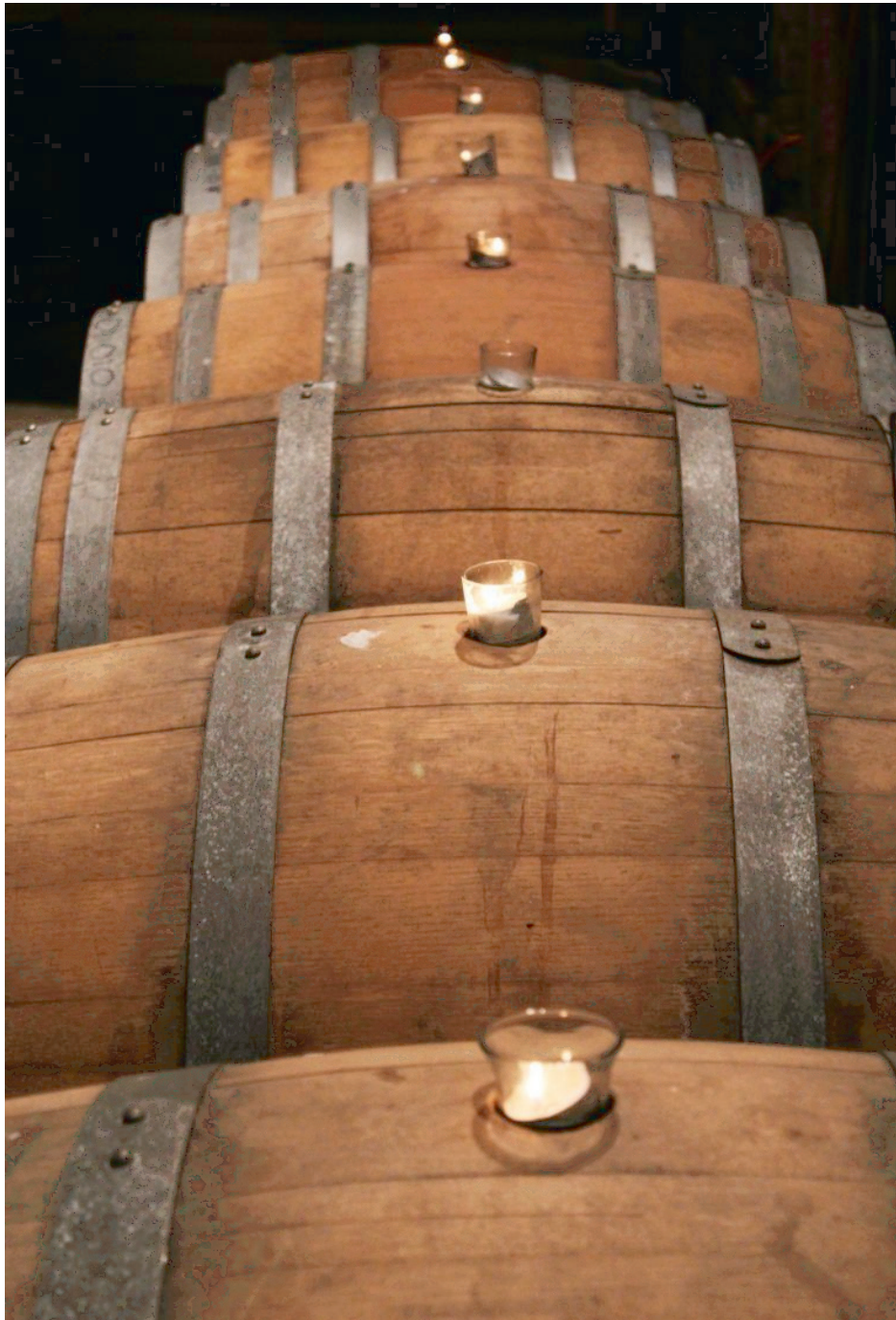
announcing that it's 'free for the taking for all' if you put those watchdogs there to guard it!"

They all began speaking at once, so it took a while for Kopel to learn the details. For the entire duration of the festival, night and day round the clock, the barrels and casks on the riverbank were ringed by a pack of ferocious dogs who allowed no one to approach. Reb Kopel rode to the riverbank. There the barrels stood, untouched.

But he made no move to load them on his wagon. "If I take them back," he said to himself, "how will I ever know that I had indeed fully and sincerely relinquished my ownership over them before Passover? How could I ever be sure that I had truly fulfilled the mitzvah of removing chametz from my

possession? No! I won't give up my mitzvah, or even allow the slightest shadow of a doubt to fall over it!"

One by one, he rolled the barrels down the riverbank until they stood at the very brink of the water. He pulled out the stops in their spigots and waited until every last drop of vodka and beer had merged with the river. Only then did he head back home.





# Thoughts That Count

from the Kehot Chumash

**An insight by the Rebbe on why the priests (the Kohanim) were chosen, in the case of the ritual defilement of tzaraat, to be the ones to declare when a person is impure and when they are free from defilement--excerpted from parshat Tazria in the Kehot Chumash.**

If a person develops a lesion of tzara'at, he must be brought to Aaron the priest, or to one of his sons. For only they are authorized to pronounce someone or something defiled. (Leviticus 13:2)

It is the priest's pronouncement--rather than the appearance of qualifying symptoms per se--that render the person ritually defiled.

This fact puts considerable onus on the priest, especially in light of the consequences of his pronouncement: the ritually defiled individual must be banished from society, even from the company of

other ritually defiled people. This total ostracism is not required in the case of any other type of defilement.

The Torah therefore specifically requires a priest to make this pronouncement. The priests are all descendants (and therefore spiritual heirs) of Aaron, who embodied the ideal of brotherly love and promoted brotherly love among the people. G-d therefore refers to the priests as His men of loving-kindness and grants them the privilege of blessing His people daily. Moreover, the blessing tradition requires them to recite before pronouncing this blessing is "Blessed are You, G-d, our G-d, He who has sanctified us with the holiness of Aaron and commanded us to bless His people, Israel, with love."

Imbued with this love for their compatriots, the priests--while remaining objectively true to the Torah's directives

for determining if a given outbreak of symptoms renders the sufferer defiled or not--will make all efforts to ensure that the law indeed requires them to pronounce the sufferer defiled before doing so. Furthermore, their inherent love for their fellows will compel them to do whatever it takes to declare them undefiled at the earliest possible opportunity.

The lesson for us here is that when we encounter someone whose behavior makes us judge him or her to be unfit to be included with us or befriended by us, we should not rush to declare him or her so. Rather, we should first examine ourselves in order to determine how well we exemplify the ideals of brotherly love. If we are in any way lacking in this regard--if we are not emulating a "priest, a descendant of Aaron"--we have no right to pass such judgment, for it could well be that our perception is

skewed by our unrefined sentiments rather than grounded solidly in the objective laws of the Torah.

Moreover, anyone who is less than a "priest"--an embodiment of brotherly love--is not qualified to ostracize another Jew, and if one

presumes to do so, the pronouncement is no less than an outright lie, for as stated, it is only the pronouncement of the priest that renders the individual defiled (and therefore subject to exclusion from society), not the symptoms themselves.

It thus follows that someone who utters such an unauthorized judgment has slandered his fellow, which results in him or being afflicted with tzara'at, rather than the person he sought to stigmatize.

Therefore, in order to purify himself of this defilement, the judgmental person should isolate himself from social contact until he trains himself to see only the positive in his compatriots, and learning how to love our fellows "unwarrantedly"--i.e., positively, regardless of their objective behavior.



# Why Is Elijah the Prophet Invited to the Seder? By Naftali Silberberg

After the conclusion of the Seder's Grace After Meals, there is a universally accepted custom to pour a cup of wine (the "Cup of Elijah"), open the front door of the home, and recite several verses (mostly from Psalms) wherein we beseech G-d to pour His wrath upon our persecutors and oppressors.

According to tradition, at this moment our homes are graced by the presence of Elijah the prophet. There are multiple reasons and meanings behind this age-old tradition. Here are some of them:

Opening the Door for Elijah

1) The Torah describes the night of Passover as *leil shimurim*,<sup>1</sup> a "guarded night." It is the night when long ago G-d protected the Jews from the plague which slew all the Egyptian firstborn, and the night when G-d's protection over His chosen nation is most apparent. Opening the door expresses our trust in G-d's protection.

2) When opening the door, we take the opportunity to invite in the prophet Elijah. Elijah is the one who visits the

circumcision ceremony of every Jewish child, and testifies that the Jewish people are scrupulous regarding the mitzvah of circumcision.<sup>2</sup> Males were permitted to partake of the paschal offering only if they were circumcised. Thus, Elijah comes to the Seder to "testify" that all present are indeed circumcised. Additionally, according to the Midrash, on the night prior to the Exodus, the Seder night, the entire Jewish male population circumcised themselves—in order to be eligible to eat from the paschal lamb. Thus the clear connection between circumcision, and Elijah, and Passover eve.

Cup of Elijah

1) There is an open question in the Talmud whether we are obligated to have four or five cups on the night of Passover. Since the issue was never resolved, we pour a fifth cup, but do not drink it.

After heralding the coming of the Messiah, one of Elijah's tasks will be to resolve all hitherto

unanswered halachic questions. Thus, this fifth cup whose status is in doubt is dubbed "Elijah's Cup," in anticipation of the insight he will shed on the matter.

2) The four cups correspond to the four "expressions of redemption" promised by G-d: "I will take you out from the suffering of Egypt, and I will deliver you from their bondage; I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great judgments. I will take you to Myself as a nation . . ."

<sup>3</sup> The fifth cup corresponds to the fifth expression of redemption, which comes in the following verse: "I will bring you to the Land . . ." This expression, however, is an allusion to the future messianic redemption, which will be announced by Elijah. This is also why we do not drink, "enjoy," the fifth cup—as we have not yet experienced this redemption.

The timing of the pouring of the "Cup of Elijah" is also apropos, right before we start reading the Hallel, whose focus is on the future redemption (see Why do we divide the Hallel into two at the Passover Seder?). After commemorating the very first redemption of the Jewish people from Egypt we express our hope and firm belief in the coming of Moshiach, who will usher in the new and final redemption very very soon.

## SALE of CHAMETZ FORM

Please return this form to the Jewish Learning Center, 411 41<sup>st</sup> Street, Miami FL 33140 by 4/10/14

**To avoid having any leaven *Chametz* in our possession during the eight days of Passover, it is permitted to place all such foods and drinks out of sight and sell them to a non-Jew. After Passover, the *Chametz* returns to your possession.**

**I\*, the undersigned, fully empower and permit Rabbi Aron Rabin to act on my behalf to sell all Chametz/mixtures of Chametz owned by me, as defined by the Torah and Rabbinic Law, particularly at the address/es listed below, and elsewhere. This power is in conformity with all Torah, Rabbinic and Civil laws.**

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**City** \_\_\_\_\_ **State** \_\_\_\_\_ **Zip** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_

\* Must be filled out by head of household.

# TAZRIA

# CROSSWORD



- WORD BANK:**
- Mikva
  - Milah
  - Burned
  - Kohen
  - Metzarah
  - Loshon Hora
  - Seven
  - Hair

- Down**
1. All boys are circumcised at 8 days old; this is called a Bris....
  2. If clothing has Tzoraat that spreads, the clothing is....
  4. If the kohen isn't sure that it's tzoraas, the person needs to wait by himself for \_\_\_\_\_ days
  5. A person with Tzoraat is called a....

- Across**
3. A person could get tzoraas because of how they behave. If they have too much gaava or talk....
  5. A person who is impure goes in a special body of water called a....
  6. It is the job of the \_\_\_\_\_ to tell someone if he has Tzoraat and is impure.
  7. A Metzarah has to tear his clothes and not cut his....

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