



Friday, April 12

7:00 Shacharis

7:45 Candlelighting
7:50 Mincha / Maariv

Shabbos, April 13

8:45 Shacharis.
*Kiddush is available
for sponsorship*

6:40 SHABBOS HAGADOL SPEECH

7:40 Mincha
*Shalosh Seudos is
available for
sponsorship*

8:54 Maariv

Sunday, April 14

8:00 Shacharis

7:30 HEBREW READING
CLASS

10:00 Maariv

Monday, April 15

7:00 Shacharis

10:00 Maariv

Tuesday, April 16

7:00 Shacharis

8:00 Pirke Avos (Stoll)
10:00 Maariv

Wednesday, April 17

7:00 Shacharis

8:00 "The Prophets Still
Speak" (Stoll)
10:00 Maariv

Thursday, April 18

7:00 Shacharis

10:00 Maariv

Parsha: Metzora

After discussing the nature of the *tzara'as* disease and its contamination, the Torah now describes the purification process. This involves a few stages, beginning after the *tzara'as* sores are healed.

As a first step, the kohen prepared two birds, a piece of cedar wood, a piece of crimson-dyed wool, and a clump of hyssop, a low-growing plant. One of the birds was slaughtered, and its blood mixed with running water and the other materials. This mixture would be sprinkled on the contaminated person. The second bird would then be set free. The person then immersed in a mikveh, the ritual bath; counted seven days; shaved off his hair; and then immersed again. The *metzora* then brought two sacrifices to complete the purification and atonement process.

Each of these materials symbolizes one facet of the person's sin and atonement. The chirping birds serve as a reminder of the idle chatter that tends to lead to slander and gossip, the main cause of *tzara'as*. The cedar wood, a very tall tree, is a reminder of the speaker's arrogance, another common factor leading to speaking negatively about others. The red wool, which is produced from

a worm's blood, and the lowly plant too, both serve as a reminder to be humble.

The Torah also introduces other types of *tzara'as*, one that affects a person's clothing, and another that affects the stones of one's house. This condition, if it spreads, could result in having to tear down the entire house. These types of *tzara'as*, too, are meant to deal with the person who misuses his tongue.

The Midrash points out that when a person would first sin, G-d would send the *tzara'as* to the stones of his house, merely causing an inconvenience, and perhaps a financial loss. Sometimes, this inconvenience would be a blessing in disguise, for when tearing down the house they would often find treasures hidden there by the original Canaanite owners. If this did not succeed in improving the person's behavior, G-d would cause his clothing to become affected with *tzara'as*. If this too did not succeed, the person's own body would be affected, until he would learn to be more careful with his speech.

The laws of *tzara'as* are meant to impress upon us the severity of *lashon hara*, and the importance of using one's tongue properly and constructively.

Insights: Pesach

... you shall relate to your son on that day. (Exod. 13:8) A student posed the following question to Rav Yerucham Levovitz. He had the opportunity to spend the Seder with the Chafetz Chaim, and he was unsure if he should grab the chance or rather spend the Seder with his parents. Rav Yerucham advised him to go to his parents. As proof he cited a Midrash that relates how Gideon complained to G-d, "Yesterday at the Seder, my father recited in Hallel how the Jews left Egypt. Why have You forsaken us now? If our fathers in Egypt were righteous—save us in their merit. And if they were wicked—save us like You saved them!" Rav Yerucham suggested that Gideon was a judge at the time, and was already forty years old. He certainly knew about the Exodus without his father reciting it at the Seder. We see that there is something special about sitting at a father's Seder. In the same way that cow milk does not compare to a mother's milk, a father's words have a greater impact than those of any other person.

Did You Know?

There is a Torah obligation for every man and woman to eat a minimum amount of matzah at the Seder. After reciting the blessing over the matzah, one may not make any interruptions until the proper quantity is swallowed. If it is necessary to drink water to assist in swallowing, it is permitted to do so. Similarly, for the four cups of wine, the cup must hold a minimum amount of wine (or grape juice), and be filled to the top of the cup. One may not interrupt until most of the cup has been drunk. There are different opinions regarding the minimum amounts to be eaten and drunk, depending on the health of an individual and the density of the food. Please consult a competent rabbi.

Thought for the week: We must learn not only to answer the questions but also to question the answers. (A Candle by Day)

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