



## Tazria

(has conceived seed)

### Vayyiqra 12:1-13:59

#### Leprosy

The Hebrew word for leprosy is “tzara’at” (צָרַעַת); literally, a “burning” or a “scorching.” In Vayyiqra 13:1-59, this word is found twenty times (in nineteen verses).

This chapter deals with every conceivable place, in which tzara’at could be found on the human body, or in articles of clothing of any kind, or type of fabric. The examination and separation process that the person goes through, in being examined by the kohen, is for the protection of the individual, as well as for the entire nation of Israel. YHWH does not want this disease spreading through His people. As we will see below, the root cause of tzara’at is of such a nature, that YHWH wants it completely isolated to keep it from spreading.

It is by sight that the kohen is to determine whether the tzara’at is only on the skin, or if it appears deeper than just on the surface of the skin.

The kohen has two choices in his ruling that he makes. He is either going to rule that the person with tzara’at is clean, which means the tzara’at is only on the surface of the skin; or else he will rule that he is unclean. This means that the tzara’at is deeper than just being on the surface of the skin.

If the kohen is not sure, then he can quarantine that person for seven days, and then reexamine the sore before making his ruling.

#### Wages

When we examine this chapter of Vayyiqra and find it contains the word “tzara’at” twenty times, then we ask, why twenty?

Please consider carefully the following passage.

***B'reshit [Genesis] 31:38***

***These twenty years I have been with you; your ewes and your female goats have not miscarried, nor have I eaten the rams of your flocks.***

Also, the Levi'im and the Kohenim were to be on active duty for twenty years before they were to retire and begin training the upcoming generation of Levi'im and Kohenim.

What this shows to us, is that the number twenty is closely related to the concept of wages.

When we live in His Land as His people, then we need to be very careful to do and to observe everything that He commands us to do. If we do not, then we can expect things such as what is described in this chapter to come upon us as our rightful wages.

## **Miriam**

***Bemidbar [Numbers] 12:1, 8-10***

***1 Then Miriam and Aharon spoke against Moshe...***

***8 "With him [Moshe] I speak mouth to mouth, even openly, and not in dark sayings, why then were you not afraid to speak against My servant, against Moshe?"***

***9 So the anger of YHWH burned against them and He departed.***

***10 But when the cloud had withdrawn from over the tent, behold, Miriam was leprous, as snow. As Aharon turned toward Miriam, behold, she was leprous.***

What Miriam did, was to open her mouth against the leader which YHWH had appointed as the earthly head of His Nation. What resulted from this, was Miriam's being overcome with tzara'at (leprosy).

Consider carefully this passage.

***Ya'aqov (James) 3:6***

***And the tongue is a fire, the world of iniquity; the tongue is set among our members as that which defiles the entire body, and sets on fire the course of life, and is set on fire by Gehinnom.***

What this strongly indicates to us, is that the sin of the mouth is something that YHWH will not tolerate in His Land, for He will cause tzara'at (leprosy) to fall upon those who are so guilty.

The root cause of tzara'at is what is known as "lashon hara," or "evil speaking." This can consist of gossip (whether true or false), slander (lies), tale bearing, insults, and anything else that will stir up strife between people, causing hatred, enmity, and discord.

Tzara'at does not now exist as a disease. However, as YHWH restores His people back to the land, it is possible that this disease could reappear. A person that develops this disease on his skin is the result (wages) of his previous actions of speaking against his brother or neighbor. It is a physical symptom of a malady in the *spirit* of the person. It can be compared to a person who has jaundiced skin. When he goes to the doctor with his yellow skin, the doctor will not treat the skin, but rather, he will treat the cause of the problem, perhaps either the liver or the gall bladder. Likewise, tzara'at is only a symptom of a problem in the heart or spirit of the person.

To treat tzara'at properly, then one first needs to understand this, in order to repent in order for YHWH to heal him.

### **"No Deeper Than the Skin"**

This phrase occurs 4 times in this Parasha. The word for "no" in this text, is the Hebrew word "ayin" (אין). What this word means is "nothing" or "naught".

When the kohen looks at a sore on the skin, and it does not appear to be any deeper than on the surface of the skin, then it is nothing to be concerned about, and the kohen declares (rules) that the person is clean.

Why does this phrase, "no deeper than the skin" appear four times? The number four is the number of the four corners of the earth and the number associated with the wind. It is the number associated with the earth (eretz, also translated as "land").

When a person has a sore on the surface of his skin, and it turns out to be nothing, then he is still a part of the people of the Land (eretz).

### **"Deeper Than the Skin"**

In this Parasha we find the phrase "deeper than the skin" four times (verses 3, 4, 25, 30). We also find the phrase "lower than the skin" in verse 20. The principle of each is basically the same: it is under the skin.

This gives us a total of five times that this appears. There are five books of Torah. The Torah determines whether a person is part of His people or not part of His people. Since five is the number of division, this illustrates that the person showing the signs of

tzara'at is to be separated from the rest of the nation as unclean until the tzara'at is healed.

It is because of the separation which his evil speaking has caused between neighbors, that this disease has come upon him; and he is now separated from the rest of the nation until such time that he is healed. When he has been healed, and properly examined by the kohen, then he can be included in the life of the nation once again.

The phrase "deeper than the skin," is kind of like a code pointing out that there is an internal problem. Let us examine this more closely.

## **A Matter of the Heart**

***Matthew 15:18***

***"But the things that proceed out of the mouth come from the heart, and those defile the man."***

The heart of man being the very center of his being, dictates what the person does or does not do.

Yeshua is teaching us, that whatever comes out of our mouths, is what is already in our hearts. It is what is in our hearts, that is the cause of the defilement.

In this week's Parasha, what we see is this same principle being spelled out in a language that only His true followers will understand. It is somewhat like a parable, like those parables that Mashiach gave.

There are many people today, who claim to be one of His people. If a person makes this claim, and then engages in the despicable act of speaking against a fellow Israelite, he should be very cautious lest the disease of tzara'at come upon him, and he be an outcast from the people of Elohim. YHWH expects us to be in control of our tongues and the words which come out of our mouths. In fact, this is part of the fruit of the Spirit: that of self-control. When a person's emotions take control of what is coming out of his mouth, then the Spirit is not in control and the person is in danger of this disease.

## **One Final Thought**

***Vayyiqra 13:45***

***As for the leper who has the infection, his clothes shall be torn, and the hair of his head shall be uncovered, and he shall cover his mustache and cry, 'Unclean! Unclean!'***

If a person is found to have a genuine outbreak of tzara'at anywhere upon his body, then that person is to tear his clothes, uncover his head, cover his mustache and cry out that he is unclean.

So my question to all reading this is, "If you are making the choice to not cover your head, are you saying that you are unclean? Are you crying out to all that you have tzara'at?" It was normal for the head to be covered, and the commandment here is to uncover the head when tzara'at was diagnosed.

According to this Parasha, and in particular this verse, a person uncovering his head is unclean due to tzara'at. If a person does not have tzara'at (leprosy), then he is to remain with his head covered and continue as a vital part of the Nation.

ABBA YHWH, teach us Your ways and give us wisdom to carefully guard the words that come out of our mouths at all times; in the name of Yeshua our Mashiach. Amein.

Shabbat Shalom

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