

DAF HASHAVUA

תזריע-
מצרע

TAZRIA-
METZORA

SHABBAT ENDS:

London: 8.53pm
 Birmingham: 9.02pm
 Bournemouth: 9.01pm
 Cardiff: 9.09pm
 Dublin: 9.23pm
 Edinburgh: 9.22pm
 Glasgow: 9.27pm
 Hull: 9.07pm
 Leeds: 9.06pm
 Liverpool: 9.15pm
 Manchester: 9.09pm
 Nottingham: 9.06pm
 Sheffield: 9.09pm
 Southend: 8.49pm
 Southport: 9.17pm
 Jerusalem: 7.48pm

Shabbat Rosh Chodesh Iyar

Yom Hazikaron is on Tuesday

Yom Ha'atzmaut is on Wednesday

 **The
United
Synagogue**

*"He shall purify him, and he shall
set the live bird free upon the
open field"
(Vayikra 14:7)*

SIDRA BREAKDOWN

תַּזְרִיָּע-מִצְרָע TAZRIA- METZORA

4th & 5th Sidrot in: ויקרא VAYIKRA

By Numbers:
157 VERSES
2,444 WORDS
8,364 LETTERS

Headlines: LAWS OF "TZARA'AT" AND PURIFICATION

TAZRIA-METZORA:

Artscroll p.608
Hertz p.460
Koren Sacks p.723
Soncino p.674

MAFTIR (SHABBAT ROSH CHODESH):

Artscroll p.890
Hertz p.695
Koren Sacks p.1067
Soncino p.944

HAFTARAH (SHABBAT ROSH CHODESH):

Artscroll p.1208
Hertz p.944
Koren Sacks p.1641
Soncino p.1188

SIDRA SUMMARY

1ST ALIYA (KOHEN) – VAYIKRA 12:1-13:23

After childbirth, a lady would wait several weeks before bringing an elevation offering (*olah*) and a sin offering (*chatat*). This completed her post-birth purification process. God told Moshe and Aharon that someone who had the appearance of a particular type of skin disease (*tzara'at*) would have to show the white blemish to a *Kohen*. The *Kohen* would evaluate and decide if the affliction was clearly *tzara'at*, thus rendering the person impure (*tameh*). If the case was unclear, the *Kohen* would quarantine the person in a house for seven days, after which the *Kohen* would re-inspect the afflicted area and declare whether the person was *tameh* or *tahor* (pure).

2ND ALIYA (LEVI) – 13:24-39

It was also possible for *tzara'at* to develop from a burn. *Tzara'at* could erupt on the scalp or on the beard area, causing a loss of hair.

3RD ALIYA (SHLISHI) – 13:40-54

A slightly different form of *tzara'at* is detailed, which caused a more substantial loss of hair. A *metzora* (one who has been contaminated with *tzara'at*) was sent outside of the camp and had to tear his/her garments. *Tzara'at* could also infect clothing. A suspected garment was quarantined before the *Kohen* made a decision about whether it was *tameh*. If it was declared *tameh*, the garment was burnt.

4TH ALIYA (REVI'I) – 13:55-14:20

The Torah details the process through which a *metzora* purified himself/herself after the period of isolation and the healing of the affliction. This involved a *Kohen* taking two birds, cedar wood, a crimson thread and hyssop. The *Kohen* would slaughter one of the birds and – using the wood, thread and hyssop together in a bundle – sprinkle its blood seven times on the *metzora*. The *metzora* would also bring three animal offerings and three meal offerings.

Point to Consider: *What is the significance*

of the cedar wood, crimson thread and hyssop?
(see Rashi to 14:4)

5TH ALIYA (CHAMISHI) – 14:21-32

A *metzora* who could not afford three animal offerings could instead bring one animal offering, one meal offering and two birds.

6TH ALIYA (SHISHI) – 14:33-15:15

Tzara'at also affected houses. The house owner would report the suspicious signs to a *Kohen*. The house would be evacuated before the *Kohen's* arrival. If the *Kohen* saw a deep green or deep red 'affliction', he would order the house to be quarantined for a week. He would then re-inspect the house. If the affliction had spread, the infected stones would be removed and replaced. If the affliction nevertheless returned, the house would be demolished. However, if replacing the stones solved the problem, the *Kohen* would declare the house *tahor* (pure). The Torah lists specific discharges that would cause a man to be considered *tameh*, and details the purification procedure.

7TH ALIYA (SHEVI'I) – 15:16-33

A similar set of laws is listed for a lady who has specific discharges, as well as the laws of *niddah* (menstruation), which form the basis of the laws of family purity.

MAFTIR – (BEMIDBAR 28:9-15)

The reading for Shabbat Rosh Chodesh is taken from *parashat Pinchas* and details the additional Shabbat and Rosh Chodesh offerings in the Temple.

HAFTARAH (YESHAYA 66:1-24)

The special haftarah for Shabbat Rosh Chodesh is the last chapter of the Book of Yeshaya (Isaiah). The world is God's "throne and footstool". Trying to appease God with insincere offerings will be punished, yet one who is truly "zealous regarding God's word" will be rewarded. Those who love and are loyal to Jerusalem will enjoy the messianic future, in which they will rejoice in the rebuilt city.



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WHEN BODY MEETS SOUL

BY: **SHIRA JACKSON**

US Education

“אִשָּׁה כִּי תִזְרֶיעַ וַיִּלְדָּה זָכָר” “When/ If a woman conceives and gives birth to a male...” (*Vayikra* 12:2)

And just a few verses later:

“וְיָאֵם נִקְבָּה תִלְדֹּ” “And if she gives birth to a female... (*ibid.* v.5)

In the first quote, the Torah uses the word ‘כִּי’ which could either be translated as *when* or *if*. Perhaps the use of ‘כִּי’ is deliberately ambiguous, highlighting the fact that we grow up assuming that pregnancy is inevitable, when in fact the Torah contains many stories of the struggle to conceive.

Because it seems so natural, its absence can be devastating. Those who struggle with infertility often carry a silent grief – the pain of feeling out of sync with what the Torah seems to promise. *Tazria* invites us to pause and remember that nothing about conception or childbirth is guaranteed. Nothing is automatic. The fact that it ever works “naturally” is astonishing.

And then the Torah does something surprising. Immediately after describing the wonder of childbirth, it speaks of *tumah* - ritual impurity. It’s a jarring juxtaposition: new life followed by spiritual distance.

Vayikra Rabbah (14:3) teaches that childbirth is holy but can be dangerous. When a woman gives birth to a healthy baby that is in itself miraculous. She could have encountered mortality but

instead has brought forth life. She must now reorient herself toward sanctity.

After days of recovery and reflection, she brings a *korban* - a gift to God. Rabbi Ovadia Sforno (1475-1550) notes that this offering is expressive of her change in mindset. Until now she has been preoccupied with all the physical aspects of childbirth, and now she can re-engage with spiritual life too.

Halacha (Jewish law) gives the new mother words for this moment. The *Shulchan Aruch* (*Orach Chaim* 219) teaches that a woman who has safely emerged from childbirth recites *Birkat Hagomel*, the blessing of thanksgiving: ‘*Hagomel lechayavim tovot, shegemalani kol tov*’, Blessed are You... who bestows kindness upon the undeserving and has bestowed goodness upon me.”

After childbirth, it is customary in many communities to recite *Tehillim* (Psalms) - especially Psalm 121, *Esa Einai* - as a personal prayer of protection and thanks. The mother will say this psalm during labour as well.

The *Talmud* adds a dimension to our understanding:

“There are three partners in the creation of a person: God, the father and the mother.” (*Niddah* 31a)

Parents are not merely biological participants - they

“ A heavenly spark enters a fragile vessel, and a new life begins.

are collaborators in creation along with God, who breathes in the *neshama*, the soul. Indeed, the root of the word *neshama* is *neshima*, breath. A heavenly spark enters a fragile vessel, and a new life begins. Eternity takes on skin when a woman becomes a conduit for the *neshama*. A man and woman, together, become partners with the Divine. To bring a child into the world is to encounter the infinite. To hold a newborn is to cradle something that was, moments ago, in the hands of Heaven.

Judaism honours the parents - not only for their strength, but for their sanctity. For forming the most intimate partnership with God. For bringing a soul from the highest realms into a human home, and taking responsibility for nurturing both the body and soul with which they have been entrusted.





"SWIFTER THAN EAGLES, MIGHTIER THAN LIONS" - OF THE BODY AND THE SPIRIT!

BY: **REBBETZEN NECHAMA DAVIS**

Israel, Daf Hashavua Editorial Team

"How the mighty have fallen!" cried David on hearing the tragic news of the death in battle of his beloved friend, Yonatan (Jonathan), and his father, King Shaul (Saul).

"Beloved and pleasant in their lives...Daughters of Israel, weep for Shaul...I grieve for you my brother Yonatan" (See II Shmuel 1).

These haunting verses give expression to the huge losses Israelis have sustained since Simchat Torah, 7 October 2023. Here we pay tribute to a few Jonathans and Sauls lost in this war.

Col. Yehonatan Steinberg, 42, was killed on Simchat Torah while battling Hamas terrorists near Kerem Shalom. From Kibbutz Shomria, Yehonatan was known as a symbol of stability and security – exceptionally organised, modest and humble despite his senior rank. He is survived by his wife, Yisca, their six children, his parents and siblings.

His father, Dani, spoke of a devoted husband and father who fell while fulfilling his mission, urging loved ones and soldiers to carry forward his legacy - steady courage and moral clarity.

Sgt. First Class Yonatan Chazor, 22, of Katzir, a soldier in the Israeli Air Force's elite Shaldag unit, killed fighting Hamas terrorists in the northern Gaza Strip on 7 November 2023, is survived by his parents and older brother. On 7 October, Yonatan was on vacation in Sri Lanka, but immediately returned to

Israel to rejoin his unit, writing to his comrades, "I'm getting ready... I want to contribute".

Yonatan was an extremely gifted artist and accomplished at karate. His father, Avner, eulogised him: "despite your many talents, you were never arrogant, you had a quiet inner confidence, without hubris".

Capt. Yonatan (Johnny) Keren, 22, fell in combat in Gaza on 29 October 2023, together with three comrades. Hundreds attended his funeral, remembering a spirited young man known for his kindness, joy, and dedication to Israel's values. Johnny had a strong sense of mission, serving his community from a young age and completing a year of national service. He had recently completed an officer's course, fulfilling his aspiration to lead a team of soldiers in his unit.

Shaul Greenglick, 26, a combat soldier from Ra'anana, was killed in the northern Gaza Strip on 26 December 2023. Before the war, Shaul had auditioned for *The Next Star*, hoping to pursue his dream of representing Israel at Eurovision. Then came the war.

He wrote, "I will fight for this country that I love so much, and also for my future dreams. Meanwhile I will fight in this darkness till the light comes back." In one of his final photos from Gaza, Shaul is seen pushing an elderly civilian in a wheelchair to safety, a quiet act of compassion

amid war. Even in darkness, he remained a source of light.

IDF reservist Shaul Moyal was killed in October 2024 while fighting Hezbollah terrorists in Lebanon. He was 47-years-old and left behind his wife, Smadar, and their ten children.

Shaul was a science and technology teacher at Midrashat Noam Ort, Kfar Saba. The school's principal described him as "a dear and beloved teacher, creative and honest, and was an inspiration to students and staff."

"Beloved and pleasant in their lives", we truly grieve for all the lost soldiers and civilians. May their memory be for a blessing.



At Shaul Moyal's funeral, his students wore t-shirts with his picture and the words he always told them: "I love teaching you".



A PSALM FOR INDEPENDENCE DAY*

BY: **RABBI BARUCH DAVIS**

Editor-in-Chief, Daf Hashavua

In Israel, Yom Ha'atzmaut is a public holiday. Shuls, parks, gardens and nature trails are filled with people of all ages, and families gather to celebrate together.

This year, beneath the optimistic and cheerful façade, there is a swirl of complex emotions. We rejoice in the return of the hostages – a truly miraculous development given the circumstances. We are inspired by the way the nation has united to defend our homeland since October 7, particularly the courage of our young people. We give thanks to God for the many miracles witnessed since the beginning of the war, including the lack of coordination between Hamas, Hizbollah and Iran on October 7, and the war with Iran last June, during which not a single pilot was injured and all aircraft returned safely.

At the same time, the price has been devastating. We have lost many outstanding soldiers and civilians. We endured the worst attack on Jews since the Holocaust. Hostility toward the State of Israel, and toward Jews worldwide, appears to be at its highest level since 1948. How do we reconcile this reality with the belief that we are witnessing the *first flowering of our redemption*?

To address this, we turn to Psalm 107, recited in many synagogues in Israel at the beginning of Maariv on Yom Ha'atzmaut. This psalm

describes the ingathering of the Jewish people to the Land of Israel¹:

"Give thanks to God, for He is good; His lovingkindness is forever.

Let those whom God has redeemed say this, those He gathered from the lands, from east and west, from north and south." (v. 1–3)

The psalm describes the obstacles encountered along the way. Those who "lost their way in desert wastelands" (v. 4) recall the aliyah from Arab countries in the 1950s and from Ethiopia in the 1980s and 1990s. Those who "sat in darkness and the shadow of death, bound in affliction and iron" (v. 10) evoke the Nazi death camps and the Soviet gulag. Those "who go to sea in ships" (v. 23) remind us of the ships turned back by the British as Jews struggled to reach the shores of Eretz Yisrael.

This psalm does not describe the final redemption, the coming of *Mashiach*, or the rebuilding of the *Beit Hamikdash*. Those themes appear elsewhere. Here, redemption refers to the return of the exiles "to their desired haven" (v. 30), the Land of Israel.

The psalmist then describes blessings that are strikingly familiar:

"He turns the desert into pools of water...

They sow fields and plant vineyards that yield a fruitful harvest;

“ Yom Ha'atzmaut is our opportunity to recognise Israel's achievements, to give thanks for God's kindness, and to acknowledge the immense good we have been privileged to witness.

He blesses them and they increase greatly." (vv. 35–38)

Yet the psalm also hints at renewed suffering: "They were brought low by oppression, adversity and sorrow" (v. 39). Still, it concludes with perspective and faith: "Whoever is wise will reflect on God's lovingkindness" (v. 43).

Redemption, the psalm teaches, is a process—marked by struggles as well as blessings. Looking back over 78 years, we see extraordinary growth, including the increase in the Jewish population from 650,000 in 1948 to well over 7 million today.

Yom Ha'atzmaut is our opportunity to recognise Israel's achievements, to give thanks for God's kindness, and to acknowledge the immense good we have been privileged to witness.

Based on an essay by Rabbi Yoel Ben Nun, Yeshivat Har Etzion, Israel.

* This article was written in February 2026, before the latest war with Iran and Hizbollah.

¹ See Daf Hashavua Parashat Tzav, *The Thanksgiving Offering*, Rabbi Sacks refers to Psalm 107 as the source describing our obligation to give thanks.



BRIT MILAH AS COVENANT

BY: **RABBI DR LESLIE SOLOMON**

Community Mohel

A *Brit* is a physically and spiritually important moment in the young life of a Jewish baby boy. As the child enters the covenant of Avraham, the father recites the *beracha* (blessing) proclaiming his duty to bring his child into the *Brit* (covenant) of Avraham Avinu, Avraham our father.

But what is the nature of this covenant?

Before Avraham, humanity on the whole had been a failed experiment. God had to press a "reset button", with the Flood destroying almost every human being. Post-diluvian human beings reverted to their old ways, creating a pagan culture. Along came Avraham Avinu, who recognised and developed a relationship with God. Avraham was tested with unimaginably difficult challenges. Rashi (1040-1105) tells us that God was invested in the ability of Avraham to rise to these challenges, so that He could say that Avraham was "the real deal". God wanted the mission of the world to be fulfilled

“ God wanted the mission of the world to be fulfilled through Avraham and his family, the Jewish people, and He invited Avraham to enter into a covenant.

“ God has assured us that if we keep our end of the bargain by performing *Brit Milah*, He will guarantee the special relationship between Him and ourselves, and we will have our Homeland. It's an eternal promise.

through Avraham and his family, the Jewish people, and He invited Avraham to enter into a covenant.

There are, in fact, two interwoven elements of the covenant made between God and Avraham – the eternal relationship between the Jewish people and God, as well as the relationship between the Jewish people and the Land of Israel (see *Bereishit* 17:7-10).

If we keep the mitzvah of *Brit Milah*, God will faithfully remain our Father in heaven, as well as keep the Land of Israel for the Jewish people.

In the second *beracha* in *Bircat Hamazon*, we thank God for giving us the Land of Israel and its food, and we mention the mitzvah of *Brit Milah* (*ve'al britecha shechatamta bivsareinu*), because our observance of *Brit Milah* is so clearly linked to our right to live in the Land of Israel (see Talmud Bavli, *Berachot* 48b).

This is also why the very first mitzvah performed by *Bnei Yisrael*, the Israelites, on entering the Land with Yehoshua (Joshua) was *Brit Milah*. "Do you think", said Yehoshua,

"that you could enter the Land uncircumcised? This is what God said to Avraham: 'I will give you – and your offspring after you – the Land, provided you keep My covenant.'" (*Bereishit Raba* 46:7)

So, this is our covenant, *Brit Milah*. God has assured us that if we keep our end of the bargain by performing *Brit Milah*, He will guarantee the special relationship between Him and ourselves, and we will have our Homeland. It's an eternal promise.

In the second *beracha* the father makes at a *Brit*, he invokes Avraham, not as a historical figure but rather as *Avinu*, our Father. We are his legacy and we can step into his shoes and rightfully take our place as the guardians of the covenant.

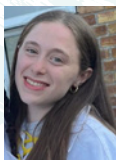


THE TRIBE WEEKLY

TAZRIA-METZORA

17-18 APRIL | 1 IYAR

SPEECH FOR GOOD!



BY: **SARA COHEN**

Tribe gap year student

The *parashiot* of Tazria-Metzora describe in depth the laws of *tzara'at* (a skin disease similar to leprosy), and the subsequent purification process. We learn what someone must do if they, their house or their possessions have *tzara'at*. Our Sages explain that *tzara'at* comes as a punishment for the sin of *lashon hara* - gossip. But why is such a harsh punishment given for

gossiping? When we speak, words may seem pretty insignificant, but they are much greater than we think.

To illustrate this, Rabbi Sacks *zt'l* told a story of a man who loved to gossip, and one day shared the latest gossip with his rabbi. Immediately, his rabbi gave him a pillow and said "Rip it up!" The feathers were scattered far and wide. Then the rabbi asked him to go and pick up all the feathers. The man replied that this is of course impossible! The feathers have been scattered far away, and some deformed and destroyed. The rabbi then explained that this is exactly

what happens to our words - our gossip can be carried far in all different directions, and be changed to become more hurtful than intended. This is why *lashon hara* receives such a harsh punishment - the impact of hurtful speech is so much stronger and more painful than one could imagine.

Language is something that is holy, and can be used to do so much good. However, if used in the wrong way, to diminish someone else, we also diminish ourselves.

By avoiding *lashon hara*, we can keep language holy and use it to improve the world around us.

Parasha Wordsearch

Find these words in the grid. The words can go in any direction and can share letters as they cross over each other.

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|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| G | S | M | W | R | N | F | F | B | K | T | B | I | A | O |
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| C | A | R | A | I | U | R | L | J | I | A | T | S | A | M |
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| O | E | S | R | P | R | A | I | R | Z | A | T | B | U | Y |
| L | T | R | H | J | S | A | T | Y | P | T | W | V | L | Y |
| N | Z | S | U | Y | V | A | H | S | A | R | A | P | L | S |
| A | O | K | O | P | V | P | C | N | M | Q | I | H | M | X |
| E | R | N | O | Z | M | C | J | R | O | U | H | E | H | L |
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| D | E | E | T | Z | B | R | U | N | B | G | P | C | L | B |
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SHABBAT

IMPURE

LEPROSY

TAZRIA

PRIEST

METZORA

TZARAAT

PARASHA

SACRIFICE

LASHON HARA





THE TRIBE SCRIBE

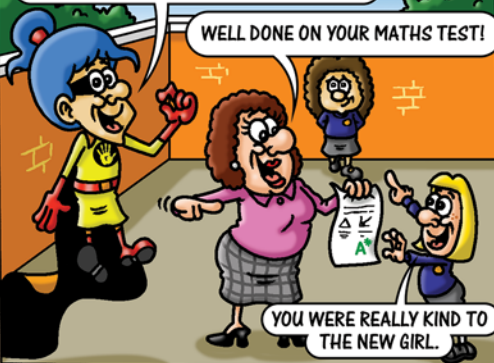
TAZRIA - METZORA: POSITIVELY POSITIVE!

THIS WEEK'S **PARASHIOT** SHOW US THAT SPEAKING BADLY ABOUT PEOPLE, **LASHON HARA**, CAUSES SERIOUS PROBLEMS. WORDS ARE POWERFUL! THEY CAN REALLY HURT!



THE ANTIDOTE TO **LASHON HARA** IS **LASHON TOV** - POSITIVE SPEECH. **RABBI LORD SACKS ZT"l** EXPLAINED THAT WE CAN FIGHT **LASHON HARA** WITH **LASHON TOV** - SPEAKING KINDLY AND POSITIVELY ABOUT OTHERS.

IT'S SO EASY TO DO! JUST A FEW WORDS CAN MAKE SOMEONE FEEL PROUD AND HAPPY.



WELL DONE ON YOUR MATHS TEST!

YOU WERE REALLY KIND TO THE NEW GIRL.

Researchers found that when someone receives a compliment, the brain lights up in the same way it does when someone gets money or a reward. Making someone feel good about themselves is the best present you can give - and it's absolutely free!



A COMPLIMENT DEFINITELY BRIGHTENS SOMEONE'S DAY. BUT DID YOU KNOW, **LASHON TOV** HAS THE POWER TO CHANGE THE OUTCOME TOO?



IN OUR STUDY, PEOPLE LEARNING A NEW SKILL DID BETTER THE NEXT DAY IF SOMEONE HAD PRAISED THEM THE DAY BEFORE.

NICE PASS!



SO, TELLING A FRIEND 'NICE PASS!' MIGHT ACTUALLY HELP THEM PLAY EVEN BETTER.

Positive words aren't only for others. The way we talk to ourselves matters too!

INSTEAD OF SAYING 'I'M TERRIBLE AT THIS,' TRY, 'I'M STILL LEARNING - I'LL GET BETTER.'



CHALLENGE OF THE WEEK: SPREAD **LASHON TOV**! CAN YOU GIVE THREE GENUINE COMPLIMENTS? START WITH YOURSELF, THEN TRY FRIENDS AND FAMILY, OR EVEN YOUR TEACHER! YOU MIGHT BE SURPRISED BY WHAT YOUR WORDS CAN DO.



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Tribe is the Young People's Department of the United Synagogue: Creating a future for our community through engaging, educating and inspiring the next generation.