

# TAZRIA {תִּזְרִיעַ} (She Bears Seed)

## Laws of Purification

Leviticus 12:1-13:59, 2 Kings 4:42-5:19, Luke 7:18-35

A Messianic Jewish commentary by Hannah Neshet

[www.voiceforisrael.net](http://www.voiceforisrael.net)

**“The LORD spoke to Moses, saying, “Speak to the people of Israel, saying, If a woman conceives (bears seed) and bears a male child, then she shall be unclean (tameh) seven days. As at the time of her menstruation, she shall be unclean (tameh).” (Leviticus 12:1-2)**

The word Tazria, is related to the Hebrew root word, **zarah, זָרַע**, meaning ‘seed’; therefore an alternative translation of Tazria is, ‘She bears seed’. While the last Parashah (Shmini) dealt with Biblical dietary regulations<sup>1</sup>, this study instructs us in the laws of purification after childbirth, purity in marriage (niddah)<sup>2</sup>, and leprosy. These regulations regarding ritual purity (tahorah) and impurity (tumah) may be understood in purely hygienic terms, or they may be interpreted to have religious significance; but in all likelihood they are both.

Teaching people the difference between the ‘clean and unclean’ (tahor and tameh); between holy and common (kadosh and hol) was one of the primary functions of the Jewish priesthood.

**“You are to distinguish between the holy and the common, and between the unclean and the clean,” (Leviticus 10:10)**

In fact, one of the reasons that God’s wrath fell upon the people of Israel was because the priests did not teach people the difference – a negligence which profaned the Lord.

**“Her (Israel’s) priests (Cohanim) do violence to My law (Torah) and profane my holy things; they do not distinguish between the holy (**kodesh קֹדֶשׁ**) and the common (**hol חַל**); they teach that there is no difference between the unclean (**tameh טָמֵא**) and the clean (**tahor טָהוֹר**); and they shut their eyes to the keeping of my Sabbaths, so that I am profaned among them.” (Ezekiel 22:26)**

Are we teaching people the difference between the holy and the common; the clean and unclean? Do we teach these things to our children? Do we know that the Bible tells us there is a time when sexual relations even between husband and wife is considered ‘unclean’? Do we treat the seventh day Sabbath as holy? Or is it another day to go shopping and run errands? It may be time to ask ourselves these important questions.

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<sup>1</sup> See [A Messianic Jewish View of Kashrut](http://www.voiceforisrael.net) available by mail or through our website: [www.voiceforisrael.net](http://www.voiceforisrael.net)

<sup>2</sup> See next parashah study, Metzora [www.voiceforisrael.net/parashot](http://www.voiceforisrael.net/parashot)



## Havdalah

The Hebrew word used for ‘difference’ is ‘**hevdel**’ **הַבְּדִיל**, from which arises an ancient Jewish custom to end the Sabbath with a beautiful ceremony called ‘**havdalah**’ **הַבְּדִלָה**. At the end of Shabbat, on Saturday night (called Motzei Shabbat in Hebrew) before entering into a new week, special prayers and blessings are recited.

Observing the Havdalah ritual, 14th-century Spain

The following paragraph is the main blessing of the havdalah ceremony:

*"Blessed art thou, God, our Lord, King of the Universe  
Who distinguishes  
Holiness from the everyday,  
Light from dark,  
Israel from the nations,  
The seventh day from the six workdays.  
Blessed art thou, God,  
Who distinguishes holiness from the everyday."*



[Hasidic rebbe](#) reciting Havdalah

The havdalah ceremony involves all five senses: tasting the sweet kosher wine from the kiddush cup; seeing the light from a special multi-wick havdalah candle; feeling the heat of the flame; smelling the sweet fragrance of the spices (bosem)<sup>3</sup> which are passed around so all can partake of the fragrance; and hearing the blessings.

Usually at the conclusion of havdalah, we sing songs and bless one another with the words, “*Shavua tov!*” (good week). It is a wonderful way of gathering our family together to officially end our day of holy rest. It is as if we come to say goodbye to a beloved guest who has visited us for a short time and who will come again.

By committing the coming week to the Lord, we strengthen ourselves to enter into the next six days of work, chores, duties, appointments and everyday responsibilities; knowing God will be with us to help and guide us throughout the week.



Silver Havdalah set<sup>4</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Bosem also means perfume in Hebrew. Spices used can include cinnamon, cloves, nutmeg or other sweet spices

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.thejerusalemgiftshop.com/havdala-set-jerusalem.html>

## Purification after Childbirth

A question naturally arises as to why a woman who has just given birth is ritually impure. Being fruitful and multiplying is the very first of all commandments to humankind, and a woman giving birth to a child is fulfilling this God - given mitzvah. Why is there a need for an offering?

**“When the days of her purification for a son or daughter are over, she is to bring to the priest at the entrance to the tent of meeting a year-old lamb for a burnt offering and a young pigeon or a dove for a sin offering. He shall offer them before the LORD to make atonement for her, and then she will be ceremonially clean from her flow of blood.”**

(Leviticus 12:6-7)

Some rabbis claim that her offering is not related to sin but is one of thanksgiving that she and the child have survived the pain and risk of childbirth. According to Jewish thought, life begins for a Jewish male child on the eighth day when he undergoes the rite of circumcision.

The mother’s period of ritual impurity is two weeks for a daughter - double that of one week required if she bears a son:

“Then she shall continue for thirty-three days in the blood of her purifying. ..But if she bears a female child, then she shall be unclean two weeks, as in her menstruation. And she shall continue in the blood of her purifying for sixty-six days.” (Leviticus 12:4-5)

There is no explanation given for why the period of uncleanness (tameh) is double for a woman who gives birth to a female child versus a male child. Perhaps some laws are given and God expects us to obey simply because ‘He said so’. It is believed by some commentators that it takes twice as long to recover from the birth of a girl, but this has not been medically proven.

After the period of uncleanness (as in the menstrual period), the woman customarily visits the mikvah (ritual water immersion) before resuming sexual relations with her husband.



A medieval mikveh in Besalú, Spain.

Instead of the prescribed offering that was to be made in the Holy Temple, a Jewish mother in our day will customarily visit the synagogue in order to give thanks to God for her recovery and for the birth of her child. This is when the female child is given her Hebrew name. The male child is named at his brit milah (circumcision) on the eighth day, as was Yeshua the Messiah in keeping with the Law of Moses.

## Purification from Leprosy (Tzara'at)

Leprosy is, in Hebrew, called 'tzara'at', but this condition may not actually correspond to the modern day affliction of leprosy, which is accompanied by swelling of organs and rotting of the limbs. Neither of these symptoms are mentioned here in regards to tzara'at. Also, leprosy is normally an incurable disease, whereas tzara'at is considered curable and may refer to something like skin cancer or vitiligo.

The Hebrew word, 'tzara'at' צרעת, derived from the Aramaic 'segiruta' (isolation), is a collective term for various skin diseases such as eczema, and psoriasis which can show up on the skin of the body but also on clothing and even on walls. This disease not only causes physical problems; but also spiritual defilement. This requires purification and a time of isolation to prevent the spread of ritual contamination.

Judaism considers slander a type of 'moral leprosy'; and the rabbis regard tzara'at as an affliction from God as punishment for slander or gossip. We can see evidence of this interpretation in the account of Miriam (Moses' sister) after she and her brother Aaron dared to speak evil of Moses and his Cushite (African) wife.

**“Miriam and Aaron began to talk against Moses because of his Cushite wife, for he had married a Cushite. ‘Has the LORD spoken only through Moses?’ they asked. ‘Hasn’t he also spoken through us?’ And the LORD heard this.”** (Numbers 12:1-2)

Because of their malicious 'gossip', God's anger was kindled and He struck Miriam with this skin condition of tzara'at. **“Why then were you not afraid to speak against my servant Moses?” The anger of the LORD burned against them, and he left them.**

**When the cloud lifted from above the tent, Miriam's skin was leprous – it became as white as snow. Aaron turned towards her and saw that she had a defiling skin disease (tzara'at).”** (Numbers 12:8-10)

This should be enough to give us a healthy 'fear' of speaking slander or gossip against anyone – especially those anointed of the Lord to serve Him in a position of public leadership or ministry.

How would the community of Israel deal with those afflicted by tzaarat? Like Miriam, the 'leper' needed to be isolated from the community in order to prevent defiling and infecting others by contact. The leper would be put outside the camp until he or she is healed.



Miriam Shut Out from the Camp (watercolor circa 1896–1902 by [James Tissot](#))

**“And the leper in whom the plague is, his clothes shall be rent, and the hair of his head shall go loose, and he shall cover his upper lip, and shall cry: ‘Unclean,, unclean (*tameh, tameh*),’ All the days wherein the plague is in him he shall be unclean; he is unclean; he shall dwell alone; without the camp shall his dwelling be.”** (Leviticus 13:45-46)

### ‘Alone Time’

Time alone, however, was not restricted in the Torah to physical or contagious conditions; but was also as seen as a necessary time for prayer, devotion, and communion with God. As the Chassidic saying goes, “*A person who does not have an hour to himself or herself every day is not a person.*”

Moses isolated himself on Mt. Sinai while receiving the Ten Commandments; and Abraham isolated himself from his former idolatrous environment in Ur of the Chaldees. An isolated, lonely cave seemed to be the only place where the Prophet Elijah could hear God’s ‘*kol demamah dekhah*’ (still, small voice).

Even Yeshua made sure that despite all the people demanding his attention, he took time to isolate himself from the crowds in order to pray and spend time with His Father. **“And early in the morning, while it was still dark, He arose and went out and departed to a lonely place, and was praying there.”** (Mark 1:35) **“But He Himself would often slip away to the wilderness and pray.”** (Luke 5:16)

Surely if the Lord needed to slip away from everyone’s demands in order to have time alone, then we also have this crucial need. Of course all things must be in balance. The Word of God warns us against excessive isolation which can cause a focus on one’s own desires. **“A man who isolates himself seeks his own desire; He rages against all wise judgment.”** (Proverbs 18:1)

What is the remedy for our uncleanness that causes isolation and separation? Ever since the exile of Adam and Eve from the Garden of Eden, we have all been infected with the venom of the serpent; and all are born into sin that separates us from God<sup>5</sup>. Even our righteous acts are like filthy rags to a perfect, holy God.

**“All of us have become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous acts are like filthy rags; we all shrivel up like a leaf, and like the wind our sins sweep us away.”** (Isaiah 64:6)

Only the blood of the Messiah, Yeshua, can cleanse us from our defilement and uncleanness to serve the living God. Just as Yeshua made the lepers pure and whole once again, so too can Yeshua cleanse us and present us holy and without blemish to the Father.

**“Lord, if You are willing, You can make me clean.” Then He put out His hand and touched him, (the leper) saying, “I am willing; be cleansed.” Immediately the leprosy left him.”** (Luke 5:12c-13)

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<sup>5</sup> Isaiah 59:2

## Unsanctified Mercy

A question arises within congregations and even families, especially within the context of grace: What do we do with the ‘lepers’ in our midst? I’m not speaking of those outside the ‘kehila’ (community) of God; but those who may very well sit next to us in the congregation. These ‘lepers’ are defiled, rebellious, and unrepentant. When not dealt with in an appropriate, Biblical way, they may freely go about defiling and infecting others with their uncleanness.

Of course we must have mercy and grace with others, that we may also find mercy and grace to help us in our times of need; however, I believe it would be appropriate here to mention the aspect of ‘*unsanctified mercy*’. God may be wanting to deal with someone’s sin by allowing them to suffer the consequences of their actions; but we cover for them to such an extent that they do not reap what they have sown and therefore do not learn or change their ways. In modern psychological linguistics, we now call this behavior ‘enabling’ and ‘co-dependency’.

Someone with a lack of discernment applies mercy beyond the boundaries of wisdom and allows someone with ‘*moral leprosy*’ to remain within the camp (family, congregation, community). I am speaking here of drug addicts, alcoholics, adulterers, abusers, sexual perverts, etc. The Bible tells us not to fellowship with those who call themselves a brother or sister in Yeshua while committing these sins - not even to eat with them!

**“But now I have written to you not to keep company with anyone named a brother, who is sexually immoral, or covetous, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or an extortion – not even to eat with such a person...Therefore ‘put away from yourselves the evil person.”** (1 Corinthians 5:11-13)

In Biblical times, the lepers would isolate themselves from the community and warn others of their uncleanness until healed, by calling out, “*tameh, tameh!*” (*defiled, defiled*). How many ‘tameh’ people are sitting right beside us in our congregations who are hiding their defilement - their secret sins - under a veneer of religiosity rather than being open and honest about their struggles with temptation and sin?

We are told to confess our sins to one another and pray for one another that we may be healed.<sup>6</sup> But that he who hides and covers up his (or her) sins will not prosper. **“He who covers his sins will not prosper, but whoever confesses and forsakes them will have mercy.”** (Proverbs 28:13)

The purpose of separating ourselves from fellowship with those who call themselves Believers but engage in serious, ‘keep-you-out-of- heaven’ type sin (especially sexual immorality) is twofold:

- 1) It protects the innocent and pure from being defiled by their spiritual leprosy
- 2) It brings the offending person to real, true, deep repentance, so that their soul may be saved. This can only happen when we turn them over, even with fear and trembling, into the hands of the living God (without our meddlesome enabling and rescuing).

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<sup>6</sup> James 5:16

**“You are to deliver this man over to Satan for physical discipline that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Yeshua.”** (1 Corinthians 5:5)

We have swung so far out of balance to the side of grace that there are instances in which church leadership refuses to deal with the ‘lepers’ in the community. In the first church that I attended after receiving Yeshua as Savior, one such ‘leper’ attached himself to me and my children, causing terrible trouble and devastation for my family.<sup>7</sup> A wolf in sheep’s clothing had crept into the congregation and the shepherd did not cast him out but allowed him to prey upon the baby lambs.

The book of Jude warns us to watch out for this dangerous situation,

**“For certain men have crept in unnoticed, who long ago were marked out for this condemnation, ungodly men, who turn the grace of our God into lewdness...”** (Jude 1:4)

So what about grace then? Aren’t we supposed to forgive and extend mercy? Most definitely! Yeshua told us that we must forgive seventy times seven<sup>8</sup>; however, an attitude of forgiveness versus the act of allowing someone back into our bosom may be two entirely different matters. Forgiveness does not necessarily mean a close, ongoing relationship with the offending person. In fact, the Word of God is clear and insistent that we must be careful who we choose as close companions, since we will likely become like them.

**“Do not be misled: "Bad company corrupts good character."** “ (1 Corinthians 15:33)

The Word of God instructs us to go to someone who has offended us with their behavior once and if he (or she) doesn’t listen, we are told to bring two or three others with us; and if he still doesn’t listen, take it to the elders of the church. If this person still doesn’t listen, we are to treat him as a tax collector and heathen (non-Believer/pagan) (ie. break fellowship).<sup>9</sup>

I don’t want to get into here the whole issue of marriage and covenant, which is an entire topic in itself; but I do want to say that leprosy, if left within the camp, is contrary to scripture and will defile and infect all those who come into contact with it.

## Naaman the Leper

“Now Naaman, the general of the king of Aram, was a prominent man before his lord and respected, for through him had the Lord given victory to Aram; and the man was a great warrior, but he was a metzarah<sup>10</sup>. Now the Arameans went out in bands and captured from the land of Israel a young girl, who ministered to Naaman's wife.”

—Melachim II, [2 Kings 5:1-2](#)

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<sup>7</sup> You can read about this in my book of personal testimony, [Hannah Grafted in Again](#), [www.voiceforisrael.net](http://www.voiceforisrael.net)

<sup>8</sup> Matthew 18:22

<sup>9</sup> Matthew 18:15-17

<sup>10</sup> "[mezorah](#)" (מְצֹרָה), a person affected by the skin disease [tzaraath](#) (תְּצַרְעָת, tzara'at)

In this week's haftarah Na'aman, captain of the army of the King of Aram, was a mighty man of valor but also a leper (metzarah). Sometimes the 'buts' of our lives can be so heart-breaking. Naaman was captain of an army, a mighty man of valor (gibor hayil), *but*...he was a leper.

We may have so much going for us, *but*...Maybe our 'but' is a physical handicap; maybe a private sorrow; perhaps an emotional problem from past trauma or abuse, or a physical malady; maybe a marriage in trouble; or a child gone astray.

What is your 'but'? – that one thing that causes you continual pain and sorrow; that threatens, on a daily basis, to steal the joy from your heart and the light from your eyes?

God knows. He cares. He sees our struggles and He has a plan for our redemption. Will we trust the Lord enough to cover our 'buts'? We need not think that all our troubles are because of sin. When the people asked Yeshua about a man born blind – whether it was his own sin or the sin of his parents that caused his blindness, Yeshua answered, **“Neither this man nor his parents sinned, but that the works of God should be revealed in him.** (John 9:3)

The very thing that handicapped and hindered and caused great pain to this man would be used to reveal the glory of God! God can turn our 'mess into our message'; our 'scars into stars', our problems into opportunities. Our 'but' may be the very thing that God uses to reveal His power and glory on this earth. Halleluyah!

Na'aman's Israelite servant girl, captured during an Aramean raid on Israel, advised Na'aman to go to the prophet in Israel for healing. This unnamed Israelite servant girl is, in a sense, like Joseph – captured and sold against their will into slavery in a foreign land; but both Joseph and the little slave girl keep an attitude of faith and look for opportunities to serve.

They determine to 'bloom where they were planted' - to make the best of the worst of situations - and God gave them favor, even in their less than perfect circumstances. Why would Naaman listen to an Israelite slave girl? Because of God's favor. We may not like where we find ourselves today; it may not be our choice to be where or how we are presently living. We may even feel like 'slaves' to the people around us; but if we have a right heart attitude, God will favor us and use us for His great plans and purposes.

Elisha did not appear personally to Na'aman (the first insult) but sent a messenger to instruct him to 'dip' seven times in the Jordan River. At first, Na'aman was offended. He expected the prophet to come out to him personally, wave his hand over him and heal him. And then, to add insult to injury, Elisha told him to wash in the insignificant Jordan River!



**Jordan River** (**Hebrew:** נהר הירדן, *Nehar haYarden*)  
**Arabic:** نهر الأردن, *Nahr al-Urdun*)



## Descending to the Jordan

“Aren’t the rivers of Damascus better than all the waters of Israel?”, Naaman asked incredulously (and obviously offended) before turning and leaving in a rage!<sup>11</sup>

Thankfully Naaman’s story did not end here. His faithfully servants came to talk some sense into him. To his credit, this great warrior – leper had the humility to calm down and listen. The very origin of the Hebrew name of the Jordan River, (Yarden ירדן) comes from the root word ‘yored’ ירד which mean ‘to go down or descend’.



Baptisms (ritual water immersions) at Yardenit site on Jordan River

Our healing may require that we descend in an attitude or position of humility. Christian pilgrims who come to the Jordan River to be immersed (baptized) are those who humble themselves beneath the mighty hand of God and say, “*I want to submit to the God of Israel.*”

Obedying the word of the prophet, Naaman dipped seven times in the Jordan and his flesh came back like the flesh of a little child (Na’ar katan in Hebrew). Instantly he was healed and made clean (tahor).

This word, ‘tahor’, means more than clean – it represents purity. It is what King David asked from the Lord when he repented from his sins with Batsheva - a lev tahor (a clean/pure heart).

**“Create in me a clean heart (lev tahor לב טהור), O God; and renew a steadfast spirit within me.”** (Psalm 51:10)

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<sup>11</sup> 2 Kings 5:12

## The Mikvah – Ritual Water Immersion

The Hebrew word for what Naaman was required to do is **‘yitbol’**. It is the word for *‘immerse’*; therefore Naaman was being ‘immersed’ or ‘baptized’ in the Jordan River. He was undergoing the rite of water immersion called the ‘mikvah’.<sup>12</sup>

Most Christians who practice the rite of baptism, do not connect this with the Jewish custom of the mikvah; but that is actually where baptism originates. It is both a process of ritual purification and the last stage in the process of a Gentile who desires to convert to Judaism – or more accurately - to a lifetime of devotion and worship of the God of Israel.



Christian Baptisms at the Jordan River Yardenit site

Why did Naaman have to dip seven times in the water? Seven is the number of perfection, of rest, of completion and wholeness - as in the seventh day Sabbath. Therefore, when Na’aman entered the mikvah, being immersed seven times, he essentially turned from his paganism to faith in the God of Israel. Through this act of humility, he arose whole, pure and healed.

Naaman became a follower of the God of Israel. He admitted, **“Behold now, I know that there is no God in all the earth, but in Israel;”** (2 Kings 5:15)

This is the true meaning behind baptism – a formerly ‘pagan Gentile’ becomes wholly converted to devotion, worship and faith in the God of Israel – God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Wow – what an amazing paradigm shift!

Naaman’s healing came easily and effortlessly, by simply obeying the word of the man of God; but he almost missed it because of his preconceived expectation and because of offense. I wonder how many blessings we miss because we become offended or because we had some kind of pre-set expectation that someone failed to meet?

We must be open to whatever the Lord tells us to do in order to receive our healing. It may not be as hard as we thought it would be; it may only require humility and obedience. Yeshua asked some people to do some pretty weird and wild things as well – he even put mud mixed with spit on their eyes... and yet when they obeyed they were healed.

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<sup>12</sup> See article on Mikvah (Ritual Water Immersion) [www.voiceforisrael.net/articles](http://www.voiceforisrael.net/articles)

May God send us men and women of God (prophets, who will speak words of truth) in order that we may also be healed and made ‘tahir’ from our uncleanness. May we be those prophets of God with the courage to speak the truth in love<sup>13</sup>. How I wish that someone would have had the courage to tell me the whole truth about the ‘moral leper’ who was pursuing me and endangering not only me but also my children. Unfortunately, many people (especially us ‘Canadians’) try so hard to be ‘nice’, even if it means hiding the ugly truth.

An Israeli woman who was studying English with me told me that she noticed people in Canada will not correct her when she makes a mistake in her English; whereas Israelis (even young children) think nothing of correcting my Hebrew grammar or pronunciation. Humbling but helpful ☺. May we all have people in our lives who will risk being seen as ‘not very nice’, in order to tell us the truth and even correct us when necessary. David had a Nathan; but we all need someone like this in our lives. Let’s not hate those who try to correct us with truth.

The world is crying out for a cure to our moral leprosy!

We live in a crazy world these days where life has been set on high-speed mode. The prophet Jeremiah said that we should “**ask for the ancient paths and walk upon them that we may find peace for our souls.**”<sup>14</sup> Mankind may only find healing from moral leprosy in the ancient teachings of the Word of God - in the rivers of ancient Jewish inspiration. The waters of India, Greece, and Italy (Rome) may initially look greater, stronger, clearer; but they cannot restore our moral health or heal the ailing soul of man. People may turn to Eastern mysticism and New Age religions; but to find true healing for our souls, we must turn back to the same Hebraic rivers of the Jordan where Yochanan (John) immersed Yeshua.



Possible Site of Yeshua’s mikvah

## Bowing in the House of Rimmon

After Naaman’s conversion ceremony and healing, he asked Elisha about a matter that troubled him. When he took his master into the house of Rimmon to worship, and his master bowed to a foreign god, Naaman remembered that he must also bow as if to worship, as his master leaned on his arm. Would this sin be forgiven, he wondered?

The phrase, ‘*to bow in the house of Rimmon*’ has become a term indicating dangerous or dishonest compromise. Elisha neither approved or disapproved of Naaman’s compromise; but simply sent him away with a blessing of peace (shalom), perhaps not wanting to place too great of a strain on the faith of a new convert.

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<sup>13</sup> Ephesians 4:15a

<sup>14</sup> Jeremiah 6:16

Similarly, many who come to faith in the God of Israel want to worship Him in a more Biblical way than in the present-day mainstream Christian Church which still incorporates many pagan elements into their lifestyle and worship.<sup>15</sup> While new in their faith and making changes, there may still be aspects of their lifestyle and worship that they come to realize are not pure or wholly pleasing to the Lord.

New Messianic believers have many questions: “*What about Easter and Christmas? What about Sunday meetings?*” I believe that this haftarah shows us that while these things are not necessarily one hundred percent correct, our walk with God is a journey and that we can walk it out in peace, even as we are making changes ‘*l’at, l’at*’ (slowly, slowly). Change does not always have to be radical (although it may be at times); but there is also room for gradual growth and change as we are transformed from glory to glory.<sup>16</sup>

A Rabbinical commentary on this haftarah states that Naaman’s leprosy may have come as a punishment from God for capturing and enslaving the Israelite girl. Genesis 12:3 declares, “**I will bless those who bless you and curse those who curse you.**”

How many people may be afflicted right at this very moment because they in some way have mistreated an Israelite or a person of Jewish descent? Some people don’t even realize what they are doing. They tell ‘*Jewish jokes*’ that they think are harmless or make racial slurs against the Jews (yes, even some ministers of the gospel do this) and then wonder why their churches die or split or fail to prosper.

We went to a seminar called ‘From Curses to Blessings’; but very little emphasis was placed on this very important source of cursing in our lives –anti-Semitism. It may not even be us personally who are anti-Semitic; but perhaps in generations prior, somewhere in our ancestral line someone may have brought a curse or affliction upon us personally through their anti-Semitic words or actions. We can repent on their behalf (or on our own behalf) asking for the blood of Yeshua to cover this sin and break the curse or affliction over our lives.

Notice, however, that even though Naaman mistreated the Israelite girl, she was responsible for leading him to salvation. Though in exile and in less than favorable circumstances, this Israelite girl maintained her faith in God and pointed her master towards Him for healing. Rather than return evil for evil, she overcame evil with good.<sup>17</sup>

In a twist of fate, Naaman becomes like the servant girl – living in exile from the Land of Israel, but with faith in the God of Israel. Na’aman’s very name in Hebrew means ‘*faithful*’. He is now forced to live out his faith on his own, surrounded by heathens who bow in the house of Rimmon and worship other gods. The very life he forced upon the Israelite girl is now the life that he will have to live. God says to the nations that whatever you do to Israel, you will bring back upon your own head, whether for good or for evil (Obadiah 1:15).

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<sup>15</sup> See book, [Come out of her, My People, Flee Babylon](http://www.voiceforisrael.net), by the author [www.voiceforisrael.net](http://www.voiceforisrael.net)

<sup>16</sup> 2 Corinthians 3:18

<sup>17</sup> Romans 12:21

When Naaman emerged from the waters of the Jordan, in Hebrew it says his flesh became like that of a **little boy (na'ar katan)**. This is the same term used to describe the Israelite slave girl (in feminine terms) – **(na'arah k'tanah)**. Now the na'ar and na'arah will live out their faith in the one true God, the God of Israel, together in exile.

May we walk away from our immersion in the waters of the Jordan healed, whole and complete – with Shalom (peace) - and with faith in the God of Israel and His son, Yeshua Hamashiach, the Messiah, healer of lepers. Amen.

**“Lord, if You are willing, You can make me clean.” Then He put out His hand and touched him, (the leper) saying, “I am willing; be cleansed.” Immediately the leprosy left him.”** (Luke 5:12c-13)

### Tazria Study Questions

1. Do you have any kind of rituals to distinguish between holy and common in your week?
2. Did you observe any kind of spiritual ceremony after the birth of your children? Explain.
3. Do you see gossip or slander as a serious sin justifying being afflicted by leprosy?
4. Why is time alone important? Do you feel that you get enough alone time? If not, how could you carve out that quiet time for yourself? If yes, share your strategies.
5. What is the biblical remedy for our spiritual uncleanness?
6. Does your congregation have a way of dealing with ‘spiritual lepers’ in the community?
7. Have you experienced instances when you tried to help someone and later realized it was interfering with God’s dealings with that person (unsanctified mercy)? Share & discuss.
8. Do you think there is a difference between forgiveness and reconciliation? Has there been a time when you had to set boundaries to separate yourself from a defiled person?
9. Like Naaman, is there some handicap or issue that seems to hold you back in life? Do you have faith that God can work, even through this hindrance?
10. Do you see the relationship between the Jewish custom of the mikvah and the rite of Christian baptism? Have you ever been immersed in the mikvah? Would you like to?
11. Is there perhaps some act of humility that someone has suggested for your healing that you may even have rejected as being too simplistic?
12. Have you ever prayed to break any generational curses brought about by anti-Semitic attitudes or behaviors in your ancestral line? Now may be a good time.

About the Author:

Hannah Neshar grew up in an Orthodox Jewish home and received her education in a religious Hebrew school in Canada. During a crisis pregnancy, she came to know Jesus (Yeshua) as her Messiah and Savior. She now lives in Israel with her children and grandchildren, teaching the Jewish roots of the Christian faith.

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