



Parshat Tazria-Metzora, April 16 2021

The Week in Review

by Megan Glajchen

Livingston, NJ

Rae Kushner Yeshiva High School

We started off by having our final 'in-in' shabbat of the year in the Lindenbaum building (yay!) with Rav Eitan, Rabbanit Sally, and their daughter Ruti, thanks for coming to spend shabbat with us.

Then, on Sunday, we heard a moving speech by Rav Ohad Taharlev, head of the Hadas program, about his son Elchai Teharlev z'l. Elchai was killed in a car ramming attack while on guard duty at the Ofra junction in 2017.

On Monday we also had the opportunity to hear from a Hadas parent who works at Mobile Eye, a company working on creating self-driving cars, to give us a sense of technological innovation in Israel.

Next, on Tuesday, we woke up bright and early to daven Rosh Chodesh tefillah with Rav Dov Zinger, in memory of Elchai Teharlev z'l.

Tuesday night, Yom Hazikaron began, and over the course of the evening and Wednesday day, we attended Tekasim at the Midrasha and in Kibbutz Ramat Rachel, and sang in memory of those who lost their lives defending Eretz Yisrael, or were killed in terrorist attacks.

Finally, we celebrated Yom Ha'atzmaut! We began the celebration with a spirited davening and chagigah with the Hadas students, before heading out to a late night barbeque at Rav Brown's house! Then we once again headed out early on Thursday morning to attend a Tefillah Chagigit in Neve Daniel with Rabbanit Sally's community, which was followed by brunch and an Aliyah panel at her house. Finally, we finished up our Midrasha-wide celebrations by hiking Derech Haavot with Merav Em Bait, ending at the iconic Alon Shvut tree, and dropping off food for soldiers at Pina Chama.

Thanks to all the teachers who organized, hosted (and translated) to help us have such a meaningful week!



Siyum Masechet Shekalim



Tekes for Yom HaZikaron



Yom HaAtzmaut!





D'var Torah from our Students

Mairav Diamond

Washington, DC

Melvin J Berman Hebrew Academy

The main focus of this week's double parsha, Tazria/Metzora, and its haftarah which comes from Melachim Chapter 7, are all about the infamous tzaraat. The parashot mainly go through the steps of diagnosing and curing someone of tzaraat. It also includes the famous story of Miriam who, after speaking badly about Moshe and his wife Tzipora, is afflicted with tzaraat. As this week is a double parsha, we will be reading the haftarah for Metzora which tells us the story of four men with tzaraat, who save Israel from famine by being cast out of the city due to their condition. However, I would like to reference the haftarah that would be read for Tazria if it were not a double parsha. This haftarah can be found in Melachim Chapter 2, where we find an interesting story of someone not from the Jewish people, but from Aram, who has tzaraat and goes to the prophet Elisha to be cured. He seeks a quick potion or a wave of the hands and for the problem to be resolved, but Elisha simply gives him the tools to fix it himself. The Armean is then cured of his tzaraat and returns to Elisha to give him a gift of thanks and to tell Elisha that he is changing his ways and will no longer serve other gods. Elisha promptly rejects the gift, glosses over the second statement, and simply says "go in peace."

It is quite fitting that this week's double parsha and haftarah are about a disease like tzaraat: a disease that removes someone from the community. After Yom Ha'atzmaut, a day of such great simcha, joy, among the Jewish people and the celebration of a holiday that is all about community and family, we see the importance of not forgetting ourselves within all the brachot and happiness that we have. Nechama Leibowitz, in her book on the parsha, draws our attention to the fact that the haftarah uses the word "ye'esof", or to gather together, to describe someone being cured from tzaraat. She asks: why should a word meaning to gather together be used in regards to curing someone from tzaraat? I think it makes a lot of sense. Tzaraat takes someone away from the community and their family and puts them in quarantine (a concept we are now all too familiar with), so when they are finally cured, they are able to rejoin the community and return home. We learned in class with Rav Leibtag that the purpose of tumah is for one to leave so they can return. The point is not to kick the person

out, but to make the person able to come back and be a functioning member of society.

We see this same concept regarding Yom Ha'atzmaut and our receiving Israel as a Jewish homeland. Israel is the land of our ancestors, forefathers, and foremothers. After forty years of wandering in the desert, Bnei Yisrael settled in Israel and Hashem's shechina rested in the Beit Hamikdash. For two thousand years Israel has been our place of both comfort and pain. Seventy-three years ago we got it back as a country for Jews, a day I personally don't remember (seeing as I was not born yet), but from what I've been told, there had never been a celebration quite like the first Yom Ha'atzmaut. Everyone gathered together from the four corners of the Earth to take their place among the Jewish people returning home. There was singing and dancing in the streets, children dancing with the elderly, religious with non religious people - everyone who had sacrificed to make their dream of a homeland a reality. This immense happiness came a few years after the Holocaust, one of the most devastating events in Jewish history. Six millions Jews died and the world saw us as the downtrodden minority that we were. Yet, we turned it around, proving time and time again - from the War of Independence, to the Six Day War, to the Yom Kippur War, to the two Lebanon wars - that Israel is not a condolence prize for our six million brothers and sisters whom we lost, but She was always meant to be. Israel is our central place to gather, לאסוף, and hopefully She always will be.

Shabbat Shalom!

