



Jewish Community Center of Paramus

A Home, A Family, A Spiritual Community



Metzora

VaYikra (Leviticus) 14:1 - 15:33

As *parshat Metzora* begins, G-d instructs Moses regarding the ritual for a leper who has been declared *tahor* (ritually fit). Two birds are to be brought to the Kohan. One is sacrificed and the other is set free. After a week, the person to be purified shaves off all their hair and bathes. Finally, they are to bring a guilt offering and a sin offering, and may then rejoin the community after their period of separation.

The *parshah* next deals with a house, which appears to be infected with a plague. If a certain type of mold or rot that resembled the skin disease (the subject of so much attention in last week's Torah reading and the beginning this week's reading) was present, the affected stones of the house are replaced and the walls scraped and replastered. If the eruption does not reappear, the house is declared *Tahor*. If the plague does reappear, the house is torn down. The purpose of this law is to remind us that just as we human beings are expected to maintain a state of ritual purity, so too must our homes be kept to similar high standards.

The final laws of the *parshah* deal with personal impurities, which might prevent people from coming into contact with anything pertaining to the sanctuary. They also deal with sacrifices and offerings related to those impurities. On the eighth day after the cessation of the flow of bodily secretions, and after the appropriate sin-offerings and burnt offerings were made, a man or woman regained the state of *tahara* (ritual cleanliness).



Jewish Community Center of Paramus

E. 304 Midland Ave., Paramus NJ 07652

Phone: (201) 262-7691 Fax: (201) 262-6516

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