



Mordekhi's Drash for Shabbat April 12, 2008 / Nisan 7, 5768

Parashah #28

Torah: M'tzora (Infected one), Vayikra (Leviticus) 14.1-15.33

Haftorah: M'lakhim Bet (2 Kings) 7.3-20

Suggested Messianic Writings: Mattityahu (Matthew) 23.16-24.2, 30-31

Shalom,

I have the privilege of presenting a "guest drash" today, written by my wife Yisraela.

A simple contemplative drash to share from Yisraela at this late hour of the week:

This week's Torah reading – Leviticus 14:1-15:33 – is a continuation of instruction regarding "leprosy," personal uncleanness, and household "mold" – and the remedies for separation, cleansing, healing and restoration. In our congregational Shabbat service on April 5th, the entire 2.5 hours undergirded this theme of the power of the cleansing blood of Yeshua our Great High Priest who cleanses, heals, delivers and restores, all the while honoring Torah by instructing the healed one "go and show thyself to the priest (cohen) and let him examine you and offer the sacrifice that Moshe commanded." Yeshua – who came **not to abolish but to fulfill Torah** – in this passage did the "both-and" in that He performed a miracle while still honoring the Torah instruction which came to Moshe through Adoni; "for the earth is the L-rd's and the fullness thereof" (Ps 24:1) reminds me our G-d is sovereign over all the earth, and He is Adoni over both the secular and the sacred. From this, I also see the emphasis placed upon regarding the respect of designated authority, which requires accountability, which requires transparency, which requires humility.

Rabbi Shmuel has an important message regarding last week and this week's Torah portions. Pray that Adoni will release the appropriate timing for this word to come forth.

Much research and rabbinical opinion regarding this passage lends (figuratively) to the opinion that the unclean and potentially contagious disease here is that of an unbridled tongue – the sin of l'shon hara, which is negative and harmful and downright unnecessary speech, way more than gossip. Leviticus 14:4 speaks of the cedar-wood, scarlet yarn, blood of the bird, and of hyssop. Psalm 51: 7(9) says, "Purge (sprinkle) me with hyssop, and I will be clean; wash me (washing with the water of His word/the power of His blood), and I will be whiter than snow." The two passages are correlated.

Hyssop has great healing properties for both the internal and external body. When I was sick in November and December, hyssop tea was one of the remedies prescribed to me. Hyssop can be used in cooking recipes and it has many medicinal properties. Interesting to consider: an essential oil made from hyssop is believed to increase alertness and is a gently-relaxing nerve tonic suitable for treating nervous exhaustion (ever had an outburst or talked too much under such a condition?), also for anxiety and depression (vain imaginations can birth out of these conditions). A final example for now is that hyssop attracts bees, hoverflies and butterflies. Perhaps being purged with hyssop causes our words to become sweet like honey, thereby being blameless of l'shon hara. Selah!

Psalm 51, known as the great prayer of repentance from King David after Natan the prophet came to him regarding his affair with Bat-Sheva. Here is a prayer of confession, repentance, then praise, then intercession from the one known as "the man after G-d's own heart." Could this very prayer be one to offer to Adoni when we fail with our tongue? "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks." The rabbis say that evil talk harms three people: the one who is spoken about, the one who hears the comments, and the one who utters them.

Some key words in this Torah portion are listed here for contemplation; as you seek time to further develop, consider:

- Outside the camp (excommunication, separation, removal from social contact)
- Inside the camp (in the community but still outside the tent, from the place of intimacy)
- Outside the tent (still outside the place of intimacy)
- Personal infection – only the offender afflicted
- House(hold) infection – all within the home (our family) affected by the disease
- Removal of infected stone – offender removed, placed outside the camp – no community

- Purify with blood, wash with water (hygiene, protocol, humbleness, submission) Remember that Naaman experienced this in 2 Kings 5:15, from last week's drash.

What would our communities be like today if the sin of l'shon hara were treated as seriously as the sin of adultery's consequences? Who would be able to stand? Reading aloud Psalm 51 personally before Adoni with the sin of an unbridled and boastful, prideful tongue sheds new light on our utter hopelessness without the intervention of our Messiah Yeshua and the love our Abba Father. I think of Jessica Wedekind's song she sang before the Lord and us on Shabbat: how we come to Him unclean and in need of healing; how, as far as the east is from the west, He takes our filthy rags, our shame, blame, sickness, punishment, and He crowns us instead then with His lovingkindness. And we sing to Him a new song of praise and intercession! In the Haftorah section, 2 Kings 7:3-20, the lepers saw a hopeless situation that in the end caused them to offer sacrifice and praise.

Leviticus 14:7, "and sprinkle the person to be purified from the tzara'at seven times. Next he is to set the live bird free in an open field." Freedom to fly like a bird set free! Freedom comes from our Great High Priest Yeshua who turns our mourning into dancing.

How pure, lasting, remaining and sweet will be the fruit produced from cleansed lips which is evident of cleansed hearts, who are submitted to the Living Word of G-d, Yeshua our King and G-d.

A couple more thoughts I would like to share from contemplating these passages:

Could the plan for the best timing for impregnation have been laid out in the passages which tell when for a woman to be set apart "until such time"? (a study of ovulation and niddah required)

The conditions of health described in these passages could cause us to be afraid of the "what-ifs" in life, and instead of fearing our life and the effects of the sin of fallen man upon our bodies, we can instead desire a holy fear of our Creator G-d. A fear that will cause us to love Him so much we would not desire to stray from His instruction, rather we would desire to love Him more, know Him through knowing His word and His Son, the living word, Yeshua.

שְׁאַלְוּ שְׁלוֹם יְרוּשָׁלַם – *Sha'alu shalom Yerushalayim* – Pray for the peace of Jerusalem!

B'rakhot v'todah rabbah

(Blessings & thank you very much)

Mordekhi (v'Yisra'ela)

This Yeshua, who has been taken away from you into heaven, will come back to you in just the same way as you saw him go into heaven.

(Acts 1.11 CJB)