

## DEBAR TORAH by RABBI ROHDE

### Spring Thoughts: Time's Passage Regenerates, Purifies, and Heals

What connections are there between the first chapter of Parashat Tazria, about the impurity and purification of the birthing mother, and the following sections, about צרעת ("tzara'at"), the famous "scale disease" (often misleadingly translated as "leprosy") which follow? Well, one thing both sections have in common is the precise counting of a standard period of days before purification. The Torah seems to leave the counting of days for a birthing mother to the woman and presumably to her family themselves.

For "tsara'at," the period of time is marked by the Priest. Although scale-disease may be suspected, it is left to the Priest to make a determination whether the lesion is deep enough and shows symptoms to be classified as "scale-disease" at an initial consultation. If not, it is simply classified as an ordinary wound. If the symptoms are present and the lesion is deeper than surface-level, then that depth and also the area extent of the lesion are noted. Following this a period of quarantine is counted, the seven-day period of a week, at the conclusion of which there is a second consultation with the Priest. If at this second consultation the lesion is seen to have spread to a more extensive surface area (the text uses the rare verb פשה ("pasa") meaning "to spread"), the case is confirmed definitively as "scale disease" and definitively declared diseased/contaminated and "impure," with quarantine and expulsion from the community until further notice. It was recognized, however, that the passage of time would be a deciding factor in making this assessment; one visit would not be enough to judge. Time is a crucial factor in healing, and time can make all the difference between an entrenched case and a minor injury.

Many purificatory rites mentioned here involve the counting of passages of time. This "counting days for purification" theme further connects these Parashiyot to the spring season in which we read these Parashiyot, a connection I noted in last year's Debar Torah. Spring signifies Time's capacity to heal and bring rebirth after Autumn's death and Winter's latency. This year, these Parashiyot are read in the midst of the Counting of the Days of the Omer, which is also considered a purificatory period. This year we read this section on Shabbat Rosh Hodesh Iyar, and a month is also a cycle of growth, death and rebirth. The Spring Season signifies the capacity of Time to bring about regeneration, rebirth, and healing. And the Spring always recurs cyclically, after precise passages of time and days we can count. The days of the year almost equal the precise number of degrees in a circle, which bring us back to the same point from which we started. To number our days is to know the secrets of knowing how to heal, regenerate, and purify. The passage of time regrows, restores potency and strength, and thereby heals.



CONGREGATION SHEARITH ISRAEL  
The Spanish & Portuguese Synagogue

### Shabbat Rosh Hodesh, Tazria-Metsora

April 22-23, 2023 | 1 Iyar 5783

#### SCHEDULE

**Candle Lighting** | 7:24 pm

**Friday Evening Services** | 7:00 pm | Main Sanctuary

**Zemirot** | 8:15 am

**Shahrit** | 9:00 am | Main Sanctuary

**Youth Program** | 10:00 am | Fidanque Youth Room

**Kiddush** | following services

**Shabbat Afternoon Class** | 6:35 pm | Rabbi Soloveichik

**Evening Services** | 7:20 pm | Main Sanctuary

**Habdala** | 8:21 pm

*Yom HaZikaron begins on Monday night,  
and Yom HaAtzmaut begins on Tuesday night.*

#### Weekday Service Times

##### Mornings:

Sunday: 8:05 am

Monday-Friday: 7:05 am

##### Evenings:

Sunday-Thursday: 6:30 pm

*If you can help out and attend minyan, please contact Z. Edinger.*

## 2023 SPRING FUNDRAISER

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It's not too late — sign up now! 6 lectures to go!

### **WORTH A THOUSAND WORDS:**

**Seven Iconic Images in the History of Israel,  
and the Stories Behind Them**

*An Important 7-Part Virtual Series by Rabbi Meir Soloveichik*

**Session #2: THIS Tuesday, April 26**

“Declaration of Independence:

The Tale of an Event Two Thousand Years in the Making”

Sign-up levels from \$250 to \$18,000

All prior registrants will receive the Zoom link on Monday, and it will be in the confirmation email for new registrants when you sign up.

***Special Offer for Series Underwriters (\$3,600 and up):***

*Don't worry about missing a livestream; a recording of the lectures will be made available to you.*

*All sponsors will be recognized in a beautiful content-rich commemorative booklet that will be mailed out after the series.*

*Sign up at [shearithisrael.org/giving/SpringFundraiser2023](https://shearithisrael.org/giving/SpringFundraiser2023)*

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### **Young Women & Girls' Book of Ruth Reading on Shabu'ot**

**In-person only | Shabbat, May 27**

**Rehearsals on April 30 at 9:30 am & May 14 at 10:00 am**

New readers are warmly invited to participate!

Any girls or young women (through college age) who are interested in participating should **contact Mrs. Lisa Rohde ([lirohde-csi@yahoo.com](mailto:lirohde-csi@yahoo.com))** as soon as possible for an assignment.

With the audio available on the Synagogue's website, learning a part is made very mobile and accessible.

## COMING UP

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*Limited ticket availability - DON'T MISS OUT!*

### **CSI Youth Mets Game Outing**

**Sunday, April 30 | 1:40 pm | Citi Field | Fun for all ages!**

***Highly subsidized tickets:*** Members \$18 | Non-members \$25

(Face Value: \$46)

Great matchup - two leading teams: Atlanta Braves vs. New York Mets.

*Reserve your highly subsidized tickets at [shearithisrael.org/mets2023](https://shearithisrael.org/mets2023).*

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BOOK EVENT:

### ***One Hundred Saturdays:***

#### ***Stella Levi and the Search for a Lost World***

**with author Michael Frank and Shearith Israel member, Isabelle Levy**

**May 4 | 7:00 pm (following 6:30 pm Evening Services)**

Isabelle Levy and Michael Frank will have a lively conversation about the process of writing, researching, and above all learning how to listen to the story of Stella Levi, who is one of the last remaining survivors of the Sephardic Jewish community of Rhodes.

*Register at [shearithisrael.org/hundred-saturdays](https://shearithisrael.org/hundred-saturdays).*

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### **5th Annual Smash The Stigma Event**

*Presented by Shearith Israel's Caring Connection*

***Held annually during Mental Health Awareness Month and co-sponsored by a consortium of neighborhood synagogues and Jewish institutions***

**May, Date TBA**

*Stay tuned for registration and details.*

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## COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

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Mazal tob to **Alexander Daar**, upon his marriage to **Sofi Porter-Zasada**.

Congratulations as well to his parents, our Segan, **Karen & Jack Daar**.

Mazal Tob to **Naomi & Peter Neustadter** upon their grandson, Noah Goldstein, becoming a Bar Mitzvah. Noah is the son of Elana Neustadter and Dr. Daniel Goldstein of Raanan, Israel.