

## Torah Portion: Tazria/Metzora (Leviticus 12:1-15:33)

[The focus of this Torah portion series is family structure and function as revealed in Scripture. I.e., headship, patriarchy, marriage, etc, graduating to understanding the community and Israel as a whole. If you have not read other portions up to this point, you may want to, as parts build on previous lessons in Torah, available at: <https://natsab.com/torah-portion-series/> ]

Next week's Portion is packed with a load of detailed matters related to headship and patriarchy. This week, however, is again a light week in our particular area of focus.

**Leviticus 12** Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, <sup>2</sup>“Speak to the sons of Israel, saying:

‘When a woman gives birth and bears a male *child*, then she shall be unclean for seven days, as in the days of her menstruation she shall be unclean.

The Lord begins an extended section of instruction regarding cleanliness, leprosy (technically, tza'arat), and emissions, both seminal and menstrual with the command to Moses, ‘Speak to the sons of Israel...’ This quickly and pointedly highlights a matter we have considered multiple times: God expects the man, the head of the house, to teach and enact the commandments in his home. Each man is held accountable for those in his care. Chapter 12 especially, is very precise. The sons of Israel are given the commandments regarding what a woman is to do after delivering a baby.

Consistently, throughout Scripture, God adheres to the order spelled out by Paul in I Corinthians 11:3. God => Messiah => man => woman. By teaching and insuring the implementation of the commandments in his home, a man is being obedient to Ephesians 5:22-32, partially quoted below.

**Ephesians 5:**<sup>22</sup> Wives, *be subject* to your own husbands, as to the Lord. <sup>23</sup> For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is the head of the church, He Himself *being* the Savior of the body. <sup>24</sup> But as the church is subject to Christ, so also the wives *ought to be* to their husbands in everything.

<sup>25</sup> Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her, <sup>26</sup> so that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, <sup>27</sup> that He might present to Himself the church in all her glory, having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that she would be holy and blameless. <sup>28</sup> So husbands ought also to love their own wives as their own bodies. He who loves his own wife loves himself; <sup>29</sup> for no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ also *does* the church,

Man and woman are to be a picture of Messiah and the qahal (congregation). Just as Messiah sanctifies His bride by washing in the Word in order to present her to Himself, so also the man is to do the same with his bride. Her sanctification is his responsibility and privilege. This is the calling of fathers for daughters and husbands for wives.

These two portions, Tazria and Metzora, are both all about cleanliness and purity. The instructions involve both men and women, but are specifically directed at the sons to know, understand and implement in their respective families. Besides Leviticus 12:2, there are two more places that make this clear,

**Leviticus 15** The LORD also spoke to Moses and to Aaron, saying, <sup>2</sup> "Speak to the sons of Israel, and say to them, 'When any man has a discharge from his body, his discharge is unclean.

**Leviticus 15:**<sup>31</sup> "Thus you shall keep the sons of Israel separated from their uncleanness, so that they will not die in their uncleanness by their defiling My tabernacle that is among them." <sup>32</sup> This is the law for the one with a discharge, and for the man who has a seminal emission so that he is unclean by it, <sup>33</sup> and for the woman who is ill because of menstrual impurity, and for the one who has a discharge, whether a male or a female, or a man who lies with an unclean woman.

Plan ahead for a big portion next week as multiple major pieces dealing with our focus area will be discussed and brought to the fore. It will be exciting, informative, challenging, and interesting!

Shabbat Shalom!!