



1. Vayikra 10:6, 21:8

2. יחזקאל פרק כד, טז-יז

(טז) בְּדֹאֲדָם הִנְלִי לִקְחַ מִמֶּךָ אֶת־מִחְמַד עֵינֶיךָ בְּמַגְפָּה וְלֹא תִסְפֹּד וְלֹא תִבְכֶּה וְלֹא תִבּוֹא דְמַעַתְדֶּךָ: (יז) הֲאֵנְקָא דִם מִתִּים אֲבָל לֹא־תַעֲשֶׂה פְאָרְדִּי חֲבוּשׁ עֲלֶיךָ וְנִעְלֶיךָ תִשִּׂים בְּרַגְלֶיךָ וְלֹא תַעֲטֶה עַל־שִׁפְפֹם וְלַחֵם אֲנָשִׁים לֹא תֹאכַל:

3. רש"י ויקרא פרק יג פסוק מה

ועל שפם יעטה - כאבל:

4. תלמוד בבלי מסכת מועד קטן דף טו עמוד א

אבל חייב בעטיפת הראש... מנודה מהו בעטיפת הראש... מצורע מהו בעטיפת הראש

5. Who would the metzora be mourning for? Himself?

a. Pale white skin, deeper than skin

6. תלמוד בבלי מסכת נדרים דף סד עמוד ב

ותניא, ארבעה חשובין כמת: עני, ומצורע, וסומא, ומי שאין לו בנים

7. במדבר פרק יב, יב

(יב) אֶל־נֶאֱתָהָהּ כַּמֶּת אֲשֶׁר בְּצִאתוֹ מִרְחֹם אִמּוֹ וַיֹּאכַל חֶצְיִי בְּשָׂרוֹ:

8. Rabbi Yoni Grossman – distance from schina – mourning that distance.

9. Rabbi David Fohrman – mourning for social aspect of self. Mourner loses a relative. The one who dies loses all relatives. The metzora?

10. תלמוד בבלי מסכת ערכין דף טז עמוד א

א"ר שמואל בר נחמני א"ר יוחנן על שבעה דברים נגעים באין: על לשון הרע, ועל שפיכות דמים, ועל שבועת שוא, ועל גילוי עריות, ועל גסות הרוח, ועל הגזל, ועל צרות העין.

11. רמב"ן ויקרא פרק יד

ועץ ארז ושני תולעת ואזוב - אמר ר"א, הוא הגדול והקטן במיני הצמחים, והעד מדברי חכמת שלמה (מלכים א ה ג). והנה המצורע ותורת הבית המנוגע וטומאת המת קרובים, והנה הם כדמות פסח מצרים.

12. Tie to Yoledet. The Jews were born that night, from bloody doors. Other firstborns died.

13. **Rabbi Elchanan Samet:** A. We find no discussion of the sins in Torah B. Not all tuma connects to sin.

14. Rav David Zvi Hoffmann (Vayikra 219-223)

"Tzara'at does not generate tum'a because it results from the sin [for this is not always the case; other illnesses also result from various sins but do not generate tum'a]. Rather, tzara'at generates tum'a because the outward appearance of the disease is the symbolic image of the sinner." (p. 220)

"In general, every tum'a symbolizes sin. By distancing themselves from the symbol of sin and carefully ensuring its distance from the Temple and everything sacred, Israel remembers at all times its ultimate destiny. The observance of the laws of tahara brings one to purity of thought and action."

15. R. Samet

In other words, tzara'at and the laws of tum'a related to it are not a punishment, but rather a symbolic system. Tzara'at serves as a symbol of a certain type of wrongdoing. The tum'a is intended to establish the appropriate attitude towards these sins, whereas the tahara process symbolizes the process of ridding oneself of these spiritual ills. Through this slight deviation, Rav Hoffmann transforms tzara'at and its laws from an ethical expression of reward and punishment to an educational, symbolic system expressing the proper attitude towards sin and repentance...

16. Rabbi Hoffman

When we consider the phenomena that serve as a source of tum'a, we find three categories of tum'a:

- the tum'a resulting from the death of human beings and animals - human corpses, animal carcasses;

- tum'ot resulting from bodily emissions, which we may perhaps refer to as 'sexual tum'ot': ba'al keri, zav, zava (various forms of emissions), menstruation, and the childbearing woman;
- the tum'ot of negaim (i.e. forms of tzara'at).

All the teme'im (impure people) must leave certain regions. The first category of teme'im leave only the Temple grounds, meaning, the 'camp of the Shekhina.' Those in the second group leave even the second camp, meaning, the camp of the Levites 'who are near the Lord.' Those in the third category are expelled even from the camp of Israel, meaning, from the camp of the nation of God. If we also recall that the sin that causes the Shekhina's departure from among Israel is also referred to by the title 'tum'a,' and that the annual atonement ritual on Yom Ha-Kippurim serves to atone for the Temple, which 'dwells among the impurities of Benei Yisrael' ([Vayikra 16:16](#)), it will become clear to us that the various types of tum'a symbolize the various sins, which God despises to a lesser or greater extent, and that they must remain at a distance from the sacred territory.

We therefore cannot be mistaken if we list the three types of tum'a according to the three categories of transgressions:

- transgressions against God;
- transgressions against the individual himself;
- transgressions against one's fellow or against society.

With regard to the first category of sins and tum'ot... a person is meant to serve God, to cling to Him, to love Him and obey His word. The punishment for betraying God is death... One who touches a corpse may not enter the camp of God that exists eternally, for he has become a symbol of the betrayal of God... And so the purity laws of the first category remind us of the mitzvot towards God, the fulfillment of which brings us closer to that which exists and lives forever...

With regard to the second category of sins and tum'ot... Am Yisrael... is obligated to be a 'sacred nation'... distant and apart from sensual desires and striving towards elevation... We may view the tum'ot of the second category as symbols reminding us of the opposite of this sanctity... One who descended to this level [of a life of desires and frivolity] must stay away not only from the camp of the Shekhina, but also from the camp of 'those near to God,' who yearn to resemble Him...

Finally, regarding the third category of sins, which tum'at tzara'at parallels, ... the tzara'at infection symbolizes transgressions between man and his fellow... [Tzara'at] serves as an example of those sins which appear on the surface of the country that has been stricken with them and which gradually destroy its entire social structure... The person afflicted must therefore distance himself from societal life and dwell in isolation outside the camp... The appearance of nega'im reminiscent of sins might occur on garments and homes, as well. Clothing symbolizes the person's character, and the home symbolizes his possessions. Nega'im on a garment or home allude to and symbolize the corruption of one's character and the illegality of his possessions, requiring their removal from societal life."...

We find clear proof to the fact that tum'a is but a symbol of sin from the use made by the prophets while speaking of the purification from sin of the same expressions employed by the Torah to express purification from tum'a: 'Wash yourselves clean' (Yeshayahu 1:16); 'I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and you shall be clean from all your impurities' ([Yechezkel 36:25](#)); 'Purge me with hyssop until I am pure' ([Tehillim 51:9](#)). These expressions prove as clearly as possible that the prophets viewed tum'a as symbolic of sin, and purification from tum'a as symbolic of purification from sin."

17. R. Samet

I believe this proof is far from clear. The verses cited by Rav Hoffmann (and other similar verses) do not compare tum'a to sin (as Rav Hoffmann does), but rather compare sin to tum'a... Living in the Biblical period, tum'a was not an abstract, theoretical concept difficult to comprehend, as it has become for modern commentators. Situations of tum'a and purification played an important role in day-to-day life. A person's life swayed constantly along the pendulum between tum'a and tahara. By contrast, sin and its contaminating effect on the person, and the need to repent, were less clear to the people of the time. The prophets and poets of Tanakh therefore likened the abstract, ethical-religious world of sin and repentance to the more tangible world of tum'a and tahara.

18. Rabbi Yehuda Halevi: Death As The Source Of Tum'a

I will say that tzara'at and abnormal discharges are related to the spiritual impurity related to death. Death is the absolute spiritual deficiency, and a limb afflicted with tzara'at is like a corpse in this respect. Similarly, an abnormal discharge also represents death, in that the discharged material had a certain life-force, which gave it the ability to become an embryo that would eventually develop into a human being. The loss of this material, then, is in opposition to the property of life and the spirit of life. Because this spiritual deficiency is very ethereal, it can be detected only by people with refined spirits and significant souls, who strive to attach themselves to Divinity... Most of us feel different when we come close to the dead or to a cemetery, and our spirits become confused for a while when we enter a house where a dead person has been. Only one whose nature is coarse will not be able to detect any of this."