



Parshat Tazria: Looking Ahead

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5784 / 2024

The opening of Parshat Tazria, which details the laws governing purity and impurity following childbirth, focuses primarily on halakhic technicalities. Yet the Torah's mention of childbirth gives our Sages a unique opportunity to marvel at the wonder of bringing children into the world.

In Vayikra Rabbah, the Sages voice their amazement at the miraculousness with which mothers can carry a pregnancy and create new life.

Rabbi Levi said: The way of the world is that if a person deposits a purse of silver in private and [the other individual] returns a *litra* of gold in public, does he not feel a debt of gratitude toward him? So it is with the Holy One blessed be He: people deposit a putrid drop in private and the Holy One blessed be He returns completed, high quality human beings in public. Is this not worthy of praise? That is, "I will project my opinion afar, and I will ascribe righteousness to my Maker." ([Job 36:3](#)) ([Vayikra Rabbah 14:2](#))

Rabbi Levi takes as his point of departure the words of Job, who 'looks off into the distance,' reflecting on what the future holds. Here, it is the birth of a child that calls for forward thinking, holding onto hope that what begins as an embryo will successfully grow into a healthy baby to be born at the proper time, and the fulfillment of that hope gives us reason to praise the Almighty. It is only by Divine grace that this long, at times agonizing process of human fertility can bring about a child, and it is in this Divine wonder that we place our hope.

And it is no different once a child is born. At a Brit Milah, a *mitzva* similarly discussed in Tazria, the traditional liturgy declares our hope that *zeh hakatan gadol yihyeh*, 'this small child shall yet be great.' For all our children, we hope from the moment they are born that, at times against all odds, they will persevere through the challenges that will come their way, transform the world around them, as we look off hopefully into the distance to a better tomorrow than the world of today.

If ever these were the feelings held in parents' hearts, they are all the more amplified in the hearts and minds of every new Israeli parent and grandparent. Think of all the babies born in Israel since October 7th – approximately 90,000, based on the most recent [official data](#). What a world they've been born into: a period marked by crisis and tragedy, of lives lost, innocents held hostage, communities in ruin, and a nation simultaneously grieving and fearful yet fiercely showing courage and resolve.



With what hope can these children, many of whom bear names such as [Nova, Be'eri, and Oz](#) in commemoration of the massacres of Simchat Torah, be raised under these challenging circumstances? What will Simchat Torah look like when they enter the portals of the synagogue and then the portals of the IDF?

Yet the Torah teaches us not to get locked into any particular moment, but rather to look onwards to what lies ahead. We are charged not to lose hope in our mission, to believe that we can still build a society and a world in which our children will thrive, and one that they, too, will take part in building.

R, Levi, the famous Amoraic aggadist, uses this verse from Job to remind Jewish parents throughout the ages to look off into the future and prepare our children for the bringing of the Messianic era. It is the same R. Levi who reminds us of our responsibility to dream for a bright future, confident that, with God's help, there will be better days down the road, and that our dreams will eventually be fulfilled ([Berakhot 55b](#)).

All these little ones will grow, and with them our people and our world will find ways to heal.