

## "All the days wherein the plague is in him, he shall be unclean." (13:46)

This *pasuk* seems superfluous. Obviously, if the disease still plagues the individual, he is deemed unclean! The *Netziv* explains that one might assume that after performing the ritual of cleansing oneself and observing the rites of the *metzora* (leper), he would now be permitted to return to a state of purity, even though the disease is still in him. Indeed, one is not viewed as a true *baal teshuva* (penitent) until after he has altered his offending previous habits. Superficial acts of penance, going through the external motions of performing *teshuva*, are insufficient. True *teshuva* begins with acknowledgment of one's mistakes, remorse and regret for these actions, followed by a definite change from one's previous lifestyle. Thus, the *Torah* hereby declares that as long as the disease remains, the repentance is not complete and the *metzora* remains unclean.