

The Kohen shall command; and for the person being purified there shall be taken two live, clean birds....(14:4)

Ibn Ezra contends that the *Kohen* "takes" from his own money to supply the necessary components for the purification process. This is a bit unusual. When a person goes to a doctor to be healed, the physician expects the individual to pay for services rendered. Is the *Kohen* any different than a doctor? Why should he, the spiritual physician, pay for the healing process? The *Torah* should be as sensitive to the *Kohen's* money as it is to the *metzora*!

Al HaTorah identifies a practical reason for this distinction. The person who is stricken with *tzaraas* is an individual who has a loose tongue, who disparages others with ease. He is also selfish, filled with envy, never willing to share or help another Jew. Regrettably, the focus of much slander are the spiritual leaders, Rabbi's, *Torah* scholars, teachers etc. In an attempt to punish the slanderer therapeutically, the *Torah* places him in the position to be the beneficiary of the *Kohen's* gift. Imagine, he will receive a gift from the victim of his disparaging speech! Now the same tongue that has spoken evil will speak good. He will laud the person whom he has ridiculed.

Furthermore, if the *Kohen* desires to succeed as a spiritual healer, he must possess a good heart, an open heart. He must want to share his with others, so that he serves as a role model for the people he seeks to help. When we open our hearts to others, they will one day reciprocate.