

INSIGHTS IN THE PARSHA

זאת תהיה תורת המצורע

"This shall be the law of the Metzora"

תורת מצורע – the Torah of he who received Tzara'at – the first letters of each of those spells **תם** – comple/pure. He who keeps a pure mouth, one free of evil talk, becomes deserving of completeness/wholeness. For he who speaks badly of others, the inverse is true. Of him it says **מת** – he is considered dead in this world, and this is symbolized by the tzara'at.

MINUTE LASHON HARAH

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"This shall be the law of the Metzora"

The word **זאת** is another expression of the name for the Shechina. What separates the **מצורע** from the Schechina? That he should have engaged in Torah and failed to do so. Had he learned Torah, he would have been more sensitive toward sins of his mouth and would have avoided this sin.

FORGIVENESS FOR LASHON HARAH

ולקח למטהר שתי צפרים חיות

"And the person to be cleansed shall take two live, clean birds"

Rashi explains this passuk based on the Gemara in Erachin that Tzara'at comes to a person because of Lashon Harah, because you "tweeted" away about other people, now you must bring two birds, whose nature it is to "tweet" all day.

Now the Gemara in Nedarim writes that a person struck with Tzara'at is considered dead. This is based on the comparison between the two pesukim **נצר לשונך מרע** – *watch your tongue for evil speech*, and **להציל ממות נפשם** – *to save their souls from death*. These two pesukim share the same beginning letters.

Finally, the Mishlei says **מות וחיים ביד הלשון** – *death and life are in the hands of speech*. This is because Lashon Harah brings about Tzara'at, and a Metzora is considered dead. Clinging onto proper speech is the key to life.

THREE BIG SINS

יגלח את כל שערות ראשו ואת זקנו ואת גבת עיניו

he shall shave off all his hair: [that of] his head, his beard, his eyebrows

Why is it that a metzorah has to shave his head, beard, and eyebrows? The answer is that Tzara'at comes by virtue of three sins, a) arrogance, b) fowl speech, and c) stinginess (litt. narrowness of the eyes). Therefore the metzorah must purify himself in these three areas. The hair on his head represents arrogance, as it serves as the

"crown" of his appearance. His beard, representing his speech, but also his intellect, as it hovers around his mouth, and must also be purified of lashon harah. His eyebrows, as the hebrew expression **העין צרות** goes, represent his stinginess. This too must be purified.

FOOLPROOF TIP – A JOKE

An ad in a newspaper once read: You want to become rich? send me a check back of \$5.00 and I will mail you a foolproof trick to become rich. One guy decided to respond, so he mailed a check of \$5.00 and three days later he gets his response in the mail. It read: If you want to get rich...

*Do what I did!!!***FASTER – A JOKE**

There's one place in the world where the speed of sound is faster than the speed of light. Where is it?

*In Israel, where cars are honking even before the light turns green!!!***ONEG OR NEGAH**

The word **נגע** and the word **ענג** share exactly the same letters, but mean completely opposite things. Oneg is pleasure and Negah is pain. Furthermore **צרעת** and **עצרת** are the same exact letters, but they too mean opposite things. **עצרת** is a celebration, and **צרעת** is solitude: the absence of celebration. What is the lesson. He who failed to celebrate (**עונג**) on the **עצרת** holidays will find himself in solitude stricken with Tzara'at.

THE BEST OF DOCTORS GO TO GEHENOM

Chachamim teach us in the Gemara that even the best Doctors in the world go to Gehenom. Once, Dr. Wallach, a Tzadik, who founded the Sha'arei Tzedek hospital in Jerusalem, asked Rav Yosef Chaim Zonenfeld, does this statement apply to him as well? The Rav responded to him in good humor, "Of course, In Gehenom everybody needs you, because everyone needs healing in Gehenom. In Gan Eden, it's so serene that nobody there needs a doctor! Who would you heal there?"

A SPECIAL MARRIAGE - A MIDRASH

The Midrash says: He who speaks Lashon Harah will be plagued with **צרת**, for one must not read **המצורע** rather **המוציא רע**, he who speaks nasty things. This, too, teaches us that Lashon Harah is worse than even murder, because murder kills only one, but Lashon Harah kills the teller, the listener, and the person who was spoken about.

The Midrash continues: There was once a story of a man who had three daughters, one was lazy, the other was known to steal, and the third spoke lots of Lashon Harah. All three of them grew old in his house and never got married. No one wanted to marry them because of their reputation. Once, a dear friend of his came to spend Shabbat at his house, and suggested to him that the three daughters should each marry one of his three sons. The father responded, "My daughters aren't qualified to marry your sons."

"Why not?"

"Because they are not well mannered."

"In what sense?"

"One is a thief, the other lazy and the third a gossiper."

"Still, allow my sons to marry them."

Immediately, the three weddings were arranged. What did each of the husbands do for their new brides? The first hired all the best servants in town and instructed his wife to just stay in bed all day and do as little work as possible, because he hired servants to take care of all that needed to be done. The second made all his money available to his wife and said, "anything you want in the world, just buy it" so that she need not steal. The third one's husband instructed his father, her father in law, to greet her every morning and to say, "Whatever you need, instead of asking your husband, just ask me, and I'll speak with him and make sure it gets done" so that she not speak Lashon Harah about him.

In due time, the man came to visit his three daughters to find out how they were doing in their marriages.

He asked his lazy daughter how she was doing, and she responded excitedly that her marriage was wonderful, because her husband hired all the help necessary and she doesn't have to do any housework at all! He was thankful to the almighty over this blessing.

He then went to his second daughter and asked how things were going in her marriage, and she too responded with great joy how wonderful her husband was because she has access to whatever she wants, and can buy it without even asking him. Over this, too, he was grateful.

He went to visit his third daughter. As soon as she saw him she began to cry. She said, "Father, the way of the world is that a woman is supposed to be a helper to her husband alone, and I have been made not a helper but a servant, and not to one person but to two people! And if you don't believe me, hide in the room and see what is about to happen." The father agreed and hid in the closet.

A few minutes later the father in law entered the room and asked her how she was doing today. Immediately she started crying about how exhausted she was and fed up with all the housework she had to do!

Enraged, the father emerged from the closet and killed the Man! Upon seeing this, the houseworkers killed the father. The woman was crying hysterically, and in the chaos, they killed her too.

From here we learn, says the Midrash, that Lashon Harah kills three, the teller the listener and the person about whom it is said. So said our sages: Nothing is worse than Lashon Harah.

TEACHING BY EXAMPLE

There was once a Darshan who came to visit a Hassidic Rebbe. He observed as Hassidim came in to greet the Rebbe, seek advice and a Bracha, and on their way out, they left large sums of money to donate to the Rebbe. He was astonished by this phenomenon. When he approach the Rebbe he told him. I too travel from city to city preaching words of Torah and Beracha, and I ask people to leave donations, but they aren't nearly as big as yours! The Rebbi responded. "Maybe its because I don't care much for money, and I teach my followers not to care for money, so they give generously. You, on the other hand, seem to care a little too much for money! You too then, teach by example, and your listeners learn to care for their money just the same, and they are too stingy to leave a nice donation!

רציתי לברך אתכם ביום שמח, שפרנסתכם
פורח. בריאותינו תתמיד ולא כאורח. חיוך תצמח כעצינו
לא יתאדה כריח על שפתינו כאור זורח, וכספנו
ונזכה לראות בביאת משיח
אמן ושבת שלום

Shabat Shalom!!! - Rav David Yaacov

ד"ת לעילוי נשמת המנורה הטהורה

מ"ר הגאון רבי שמעון גבאי בן רחל זצ"ל