

# BITACHON WEEKLY

BY: RABBI YEHUDAH MANDEL SHLITA

פרשת תזריע מצורע חשפ"ו

## The Privilege of Being “Touched” By the Finger of Hashem

*Nega'im* are a punishment for speaking *Lashon Hara*. RSRH *Zatzal* says that the word “*Negga*” is similar to “*Nagga*” (touch), meaning that this *Metzora* was “touched” by the finger of Hashem. Why must the *Chet* (sin) of *Lashon Hara* have to be punished with a direct involvement (“touch”) of Hashem? It says in *Parshas Tzav* that any food that “touches” the meat of a *Korban*, has the same *Halachos* as the *Korban*. If the *Korban* was kosher, the food must be eaten with the same holiness as the *Korban*. If it was *Passul* (disqualified), the food becomes *Passul* (forbidden).

A connection causes a similarity. When the wife of *Lot* turned around to look at *Sedom*, she died instantly just like them. Being touched by the finger of Hashem is actually a great privilege. Abusing the most precious part of a human (i.e., speech) is extremely dangerous. A human is a *Tzelem Elokim* because of his speech, and the *Targum* defines him as a: רוח מְמַלְאָא talking creature.

The *Metzora* is a: מוציא רע meaning “one who brings out the evil” by speaking *Lashon Hara*. מְדָה מְדָה טוֹבָה מְרֻבָּה How much more is this true in a positive way! **Imagine a person who says good and is: מוציא טוב “brings out the good” of others; how much Nisei Nissim of goodness L'maala Min HaTevah he deserves!**

Someone once brought to the *Chofetz Chaim Zatzal* a whole list of names of all the: נְצַרְכִּים (people who needed *Yeshuos*) of his small townlet. The *Chofetz Chaim* just waved his hand and said “they’ll be okay”. When the person came back home, he saw *Yeshuos* all over the place!

There are many great *Mutzlachim* (successful people) in the world, in *Ruchaniyus* and/or in *Gashmiyus*. Check out their *Shmiras HaLashon*. That might be the true reason for their success. The *Rambam* advises to keep away from the low-life “*Tip'shim* and *Reshaim* and *Baalei Lashon Hara*” since he can get caught in their “net”, *Chas V'shalom*. Hashem “touches” this person since He wants him to come back and connect with Hashem who is total goodness; a human is actually a: חֵלֶק מְמַלְאָא piece of Hashem, and it's appropriate to connect with your *Shoresh* (root).

### Truly Happy People Do Not Speak Lashon Hara

He is a happy person who has no time for petty babbling and putting others down. Truly happy people do not speak *Lashon Hara*. They have no need to put others down in order to make themselves feel important, and they like to see only good, just like Hashem loves to see only good. *Dovid HaMelech* once said (after the war with *Avshalom*): אִישׁ טוֹב מְבַשֵּׂר טוֹב “Good people only report good news”, and he meant *Achimatz HaCohen*.

Notice how only a *Cohen* has to officiate with the *Metzora*. *Chazal* say that the *Metzora* caused a separation: בֵּין אִישׁ לְאִשְׁתּוֹ between a person and his friend, between man and his wife. This is the exact opposite *Lashon* used by *Ahron*, upon whom it says: מְרַבֵּה שְׁלוֹם בֵּין אִישׁ לְרֵעֵהוּ he brought peace between man and his friend, a person and his wife. The *Metzora* needs *Davka* a *Cohen* in order to work on his *Middos*, which require going in the extreme opposite direction.

Also, by *Ahron* it says: וַיִּדַם אֶהָרִן he was silent. *Ahron* knew how to keep quiet. And although the reason for those bitter *Baalei Lashon Hara's* actions is because they are angry and dissatisfied with the world; now they have a *Cohen*: מְזַרְעֵ אֶהָרִן from the descendants of *Ahron* who faced the most disastrous pain, when he lost his two beloved sons very suddenly when they were burned alive. With: וַיִּדַם אֶהָרִן the silence of *Ahron* he was *Zoche* to become one of the greatest *Baalei Bitachon* in the history of mankind.

Total acceptance; he was *M'vatel* his *Ratzon* to the *Ratzon* of Hashem. Now the *Metzora* has whom to learn from in order to improve himself!

From the fact that Hashem gets personally involved by “touching” the *Baal Lashon Hara* we see two things. 1. The urgency and emergency-situation of not speaking *Lashon Hara* since he is meddling with his basic noble reality, i.e., that he is a *Tzelem Elokim* and not a *B’heima* (animal), *Chas V’shalom!* And 2. How Hashem is so full of goodness, and He gets personally involved and makes a direct contact (and people become similar to whom they are in contact with). Being touched by Hashem is a message: “Come back to your original *Tzelem Elokim* and speak nicely.”

The *Rambam* in *Hilchos Teshuva* calls a *Baal Teshuva* an: אָהוּב, beloved, a: יָדִיד friend, and: קָרוֹב relative, etc. So just like Hashem has a special love for a *Baal Teshuva*, Hashem wants this *Baal Lashon Hara* to think positive about himself, and thereby be *M’kayem*: וְהִלַּכְתָּ בְּדַרְכֵי תוֹבָא כַּחַט following the ways of Hashem. If Hashem actually touched him, imagine how close he can become to being like Hashem. He is actually becoming a *Baal Bitachon*, which the *Meshech Chochma* defines as: וְבוֹ תִדְבֶק עִקְבֵי יָכ “one who clings to Hashem”. The *Baal Bitachon* is all the way up there, always swooning in the pleasure of positive thoughts and being close (“stuck”) to Hashem.

## Novardok

### A Person Who Works on His *Middos* Is Respected by His Wife

A *Chashuva* eyewitness saw an old *Novardoker* baking matzos in the Polish Shteibel Matza bakery. Those days, they used forks to put holes in the matzos, and this was important for air to enter the matzos. His *Rebbetzin* decided to get involved, and she became “*Ah Gantzer Macher*”, commanding like a sergeant: “Do it this way!” “Do it that way!”. When her husband tried to say his opinion, she screamed at him and told him to go back to the *Bais Medrash!*

This *Novardoker* was not a push-over. He had been in Siberia, and he was one of the *Rosh Yeshivos* in the Pinsk Yeshiva together with the Steipler. But with his wife he acted like a wimp. I was once on the telephone on a conference call with a *Novardoker* and his wife on the other end. He was telling me a story, and his wife constantly interrupted; he always backed down and allowed her to dominate.

He wasn’t a pushover either. He was a *Chashuva Menahel*, and he had been R’ Galinsky’s chavrusa in Bialystok. But in his wife’s presence he turned to mush! The son of a *Novardoker* told me how his mother would scold his father, and the father would lower his voice and apologize with *Hachna’a*. She kept pouring her wrath, and he kept apologizing like a broken record.

This same person once disappeared from home for about 8 months since he felt he needed *Chizuk* in *Bedidus* (seclusion). His wife was totally behind him. A person who works on his *Middos*, in the long run is respected by his wife, and he can get away with such an outrageous disappearance.

### The Importance of Learning *Mussar*

R’ Nekritz *Zatzal* was one given a ride by a famous *Seforim* dealer in Monsey. He asked the *Seforim* dealer what he does all day? He answered: I’m a: חֲמוֹר נוֹשֵׂא סְפָרִים (donkey carrying *Seforim*). R’ Nekritz *Zatzal* said: In *Novardok*, you’re not a: חֲמוֹר נוֹשֵׂא סְפָרִים (donkey carrying *Seforim*). Do you know who is one? A person who learns all day but doesn’t learn *Mussar!* That’s a: חֲמוֹר נוֹשֵׂא סְפָרִים (donkey carrying *Seforim*)!

A group of *Novardoker Bachurim* once went to the Chofetz Chaim *Zatzal* with a *Shayla* about a person who loves his relatives, and they need him at home, but he needs to learn during that time. The Chofetz Chaim *Zatzal* said that the *Torah* is like: אֵשׁ fire, and relatives are like a pot on the fire, which comes off and on. The main thing is the fire. A while later the *Novardokers* had to leave Russia (when communism forbade *Limud HaTorah*) and they couldn’t tell their parents that they were leaving (since they would stop them, *Chas V’shalom*).

R’ Nekritz *Zatzal* loved his family, and he felt that the words of the Chofetz Chaim *Zatzal* were meant for him with *Hashgacha Pratis* to make it easier to learn. Hundreds of *Novardokers* crossed the border safely and arrived in Poland to rebuild the *Novardoker* network.