



# TORAH WEEKLY

A project of the Denver Community Kollel



Parshas Metzorah

April 8, 2022

## A Taste of Torah

### The Good and the Bad

by Rabbi Yitzzy Melamed

Why should we avoid sin? Of course we must do the mitzvos, but why can't we enjoy life and do *teshuva* (repentance) later? After all, we proclaim in one of the blessings of *Shemone Esrei* that Hashem desires our repentance. Our Sages also teach (Bava Kamma 38b) that Hashem does not hold back reward from anyone who is deserving of such reward. The *Sefer Kad Hakemach* explains that this is even so for the wicked who have performed some good deeds, as the verse says (Psalms 145:9), "Hashem is good to *all* and His mercy is upon *all* of His creations."

In this week's parsha, the Torah states (Vayikra 14:34) "And it shall be when you enter the Land of Canaan that I am giving to you as an inheritance, and I shall place a *tzara'as* affliction upon the house of the land of your inheritance." The Torah then proceeds to discuss the procedure to be followed, which includes emptying the house of all possessions and, if the affliction is determined to be *tzara'as* and persists, partially or even completely dismantling the house.

If we pay attention to the wording of the verse, we will notice that the Torah does not state "...if I [Hashem] will place an affliction of *tzara'as*," but rather states it as a matter-of-fact, that Hashem will place the affliction upon the home. Rashi cites the *Toras Kohanim* that explains that when the Canaanites heard that the Jewish People were coming to conquer their land, they hid their precious items in the walls of their homes. When a Jewish person would have to dismantle an infected house, he would uncover those treasures.

The Talmud (Erachin 16a) enumerates a number of spiritual shortcomings that can bring *tzara'as* upon a person or upon his garment or home. The implication of the Talmud is that *tzara'as* on one's

home is a punishment, not a positive experience; this seems to contradict the *Toras Kohanim* which indicates that Hashem brings *tzara'as* upon the home to allow the treasures hidden within its walls to be discovered.

Rabbi Moshe Feinstein (1895-1986) explains that ideas both are true. Hashem desires to bestow goodness and *bracha* (blessing) on all of His creations. However, the way we will receive the good that Hashem wishes to bestow depends upon our choices and behavior. If one sins along the way to receiving Hashem's blessings, then he must first be cleansed of those sins before he can be worthy of Hashem's *bracha*. On the other hand, if one remains focused on avoiding sin along the way, he can avoid much heartache and trouble that is caused by those sins.

Imagine a toddler playing in the mud. His mother comes home and wishes to pick him up and give him a big hug and kiss. Of course, the child desires the same (despite his muddy preoccupation), and stretches out his arms longingly. The mother picks him up and holds him at arm's length while she carries him to the bath for a wash and change. The poor little boy starts to wail all through the bath, wondering when he will receive his loving embrace. However, only once he is clean does his mother hug and kiss him. Now, if the bath was so bad and the wait was long, why play in the mud in the first place? Obviously it is because the toddler lacks the ability to see past the present and recognize the consequences of his choices. However, we as adults do have the ability to recognize the results of our actions and the consequences they bring - we must simply choose to act accordingly.

When we sin, we dirty ourselves spiritually, and the sins separate between

*continued on back*

## Stories for the Soul

### You Can Never Know

One day in Jerusalem, two old friends encountered one another on the bus. Excited at the opportunity to catch up with one another, the two young women sat down together and began talking. In the middle of their conversation, one of them casually mentioned the name of an old friend. The other replied, "You didn't hear? She just got engaged last week to so-and-so!"

Hearing this news left her friend both elated and shocked. "That's so wonderful that she finally got engaged, but to him!? Who would have ever thought that she would settle for a person with so many problems?" Taking the bait, the one who had shared the news agreed and proceeded to list problems not only with the boy, but also with his family's reputation. The conversation went back and forth, with each of them heaping more and more question marks on the match.

After five minutes, a woman who was sitting behind them noticed her stop approaching and started to get up. Turning to the two young gossipers, she remarked, "I know you didn't realize this, but I'm the aunt of the girl you've been discussing. We obviously didn't know about these serious allegations against the boy and his family. As soon as I get home, I'm going to call my niece to convince her to break the engagement."

Aghast at the unexpected turn of events, the friends begged her not to do so. They explained, "We were just innocently chatting about recent events. We didn't mean many of the things we said, and most of them were exaggerated. Please don't break up this match because of our poor judgment."

As the bus reached her stop, the wise

*continued on back*

## Kollel Happenings

### CHOL HAMO'ED LEARNING IN WEST AND SOUTHEAST DENVER

The Kollel's Chol Hamo'ed Learning Program resumes this Pesach at the Kollel Torah Centers. In West Denver, shacharis at 8:15 followed by breakfast and a shiur. In Southeast Denver, shacharis at 8:15 followed by refreshments and a shiur. For more info and sponsorship opportunities, email [info@denverkollel.org](mailto:info@denverkollel.org).

### SPRING-SUMMER AVOS UBANIM CONTINUES THIS SHABBOS

The Kollel's spring-summer Avos Ubanim program continues this Shabbos afternoon at the West Denver Kollel Torah Center from 5-6 pm. Avos Ubanim at the Southeast Kollel Torah Center TBD. For sponsorships and more info, email [info@denverkollel.org](mailto:info@denverkollel.org).

### BUILD YOUR LEGACY AND SECURE THE FUTURE OF TORAH WITH LIVE ON/LIFE & LEGACY

The Kollel is part of Rose Community Foundation's Live On/LIFE & LEGACY program, which focuses on creating financial stability for the future through planned giving. Think it's not for you? Think again! Anyone can make a planned gift, no matter the amount. Visit [www.denverkollel.org](http://www.denverkollel.org), email [rmh@denverkollel.org](mailto:rmh@denverkollel.org) or call 303-820-2855 for more information.

## Halacha Riddles

**Last week we asked:** Two adult Jewish males attending a meal with many people washed for bread at the start of the meal. One of them is permitted to *bentch* without a *mezuman* and leave, while the other may not. What is the difference between them?

**Answer:** In a situation where one is unable to wait for the others to *bentch* with a *mezuman* due to a pressing need (e.g., he is at a wedding and cannot wait for the *bentching* at the end of the wedding, which

will take place late at night), he may *bentch* early without a *mezuman* if he verbally stipulates when beginning his meal that he is not joining with the rest of the group (Igros Moshe 1:56). In the case in question, one person stipulated and may *bentch* on his own, while the other person failed to make the stipulation and cannot leave.

**This week's question:** What is unique about a *mezuman* held at the Seder?

## Lives of Our Torah Leaders

### Rabbi Meir Shapiro - Part XLVI

Besides the grandeur of the building, Rabbi Shapiro filled it with a number of unique features. He had a model of the second *Bais Hamikdash* built and placed it in the yeshiva. Rabbi Shapiro hired a craftsman by the name of Chanoch Weintraub to create the model. Reb Chanoch studied the

sources extensively to create a product that was an accurate reflection of the actual *Bais Hamikdash* based upon the Torah sources. This included small chambers, gates, pillars and the like. The model took four years to build, and measured four meters by six meters.

## A Taste of Torah

*continued from front*

us and Hashem. In order for us to be worthy of the *bracha* He wishes to bestow, we need to remove those barriers and cleanse ourselves of our sins. Thus, *teshuva* isn't always sufficient - it may not be sincere or powerful enough to wipe away the grime, the sin may be too severe for *teshuva* alone to accomplish a full cleansing, or there may be other factors involved - and one may require a "bath." The bath can be full of pain and bitterness, but necessary all the same. If we were to stay on track and keep away from sin in the first place, we would save ourselves the pain of the cleansing process.

This is why the Torah, in the verse mentioned above, can be seen as the bearer of good tidings, for one will come upon treasures buried in the walls of his home. However, it will be at the expense of having to empty one's house of all its contents and maybe even having to partially or completely dismantle the structure. On the other hand, if one avoids sin, he can merit Hashem's *bracha* without such pain. Even though Hashem loves us and wants to shower us with *bracha*, it is up to us to determine how we will receive His blessings.

## Stories for the Soul

*continued from front*

woman paused before exiting and taught the young women an invaluable lesson. "You have nothing to worry about. I'm not really her aunt ... but I could have been!"

This week's parsha discusses the purification process for one afflicted with

*tzara'as*, a spiritual skin affliction brought on by, among other shortcomings, the sin of *lashon hara* (slander). We often don't appreciate just how detrimental our words can be, but *tzara'as* reminds us that *lashon hara* is, indeed, a most egregious sin.

To sponsor Torah Weekly, delivered weekly in print and via email to thousands of Jews worldwide, email [info@denverkollel.org](mailto:info@denverkollel.org)  
Denver Community Kollel | 5080 W. 14th Ave., Denver, CO 80204 | 303-820-2855

[info@denverkollel.org](mailto:info@denverkollel.org) | [www.denverkollel.org](http://www.denverkollel.org)

To receive Torah Weekly by email, email to [info@denverkollel.org](mailto:info@denverkollel.org)