

Parshas Tazria | April 12, 2024 | Volume 25 | Issue 25

## Say What?

By: Rabbi Ari Jakubowicz (Originally Published 2005)

This week's Parsha, Tazria, deals primarily with the laws of tzora'as. Tzora'as is a type of skin affliction for which the Gemara enumerates seven causes, the most well-known being lashon hara, evil slander. One who has tzora'as has to live in isolation and his situation is publicized to everyone. (Tzora'as no longer exists today.)

The sin of lashon hara is very grave and has severe ramifications. Although lashon hara is translated as evil slander, it has many other forms. This includes even a slightly derogatory comment made without any evil intentions about a person, a family, or even an institution. In addition, one may not speak of someone's shady past, even if he has since mended his ways.

Rabbi Yisroel Meir Kagan, better known as the Chofetz Chaim, was one of the great European rabbis of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. He wrote a lengthy sefer, entitled "Chofetz Chaim," dedicated solely to the laws of the prohibition of speaking lashon hara.

In the introduction, he writes about the terrible effects of lashon hara. The destruction of the Beis Hamikdash, Holy Temple, was due to baseless hatred among Jews. This hatred, explains the Chofetz Chaim, was brought about through lashon hara. When people speak badly about their friends and neighbors behind their backs, they create rifts in the nation of Israel.

The Chofetz Chaim exhorts us to work on improving ourselves in this area to rectify this sin. By doing so, we can effect the coming of Moshiach and the rebuilding of the Beis Hamikdash.

We are now approaching the month of Nissan. Nissan is the month of geula, redemption. It is the month in which Hashem freed us from the bondage of Egypt, and it is a month in which we should redouble our efforts to bring about the redemption from our present exile. Let us take the lesson of Parshas Tazria to heart and be extra careful regarding the words that come out of our mouths.

(One very effective way of distancing ourselves from this and all other sins is by studying their laws. Studying "Sefer Chofetz Chaim" for just a few minutes a day is a very simple step that all of us can take. It has been made even simpler by the availability of the sefer in English and other English-language books on this topic. For information, call the Chofetz Chaim Heritage Foundation at 1-800-867-2482.)

## Alumni Focus Rabbi Ari Jakubowicz

PAST



Rabbi Jakubowicz, teaching in Kollel, 2010

## 2003-2010

Years as a Denver  
Kollel Scholar

PRESENT



Rabbi Jakubowicz, teaching in 2023

## REBBI

4th Grade,  
Scranton Hebrew Day School

## Kollel Happenings



On Rosh Chodesh Nissan, the Kollel scholars elected to be tested by Rabbi Yosef Fund, Bochen BMG on hilchos muktza. Group photo taken at the siyum celebration that followed their excellent performance.