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L'ILLUI NISHMAS RAV MOSHE BEN RAV YISSOCHOR BERISH AND MARAS YENTA BAS YISROEL CHAIM

PARASHAH

WORDS ARE A WAY OF LIFE

Living the Parashah by Rabbi Shimon Finkelman

זאת תהיה תורת המצורע ביום טהרתו...

This shall be the law of the metzora on the day of his purification... (Vayikra 14:2).

The Midrash links the metzora to the verse from Tehillim, "Who is the man who desires life..." by telling of a peddler near Tzipori who offered a "potion of life." When Rav Yannai asked to buy it, the peddler showed him the end of that verse which states: "Guard your tongue from evil...". Rav Yannai exclaimed, "All my life I read this verse and I did not perceive its simple intent until this peddler came and made it known."

What did the peddler say that Rav Yannai did not already know?

Rabbi Mordechai Yehudah Lubart explained: When the peddler referred to *shemiras halashon* as a "potion of life," he meant that this quality has the power to change a person's life in a very real sense. The life of a habitual *lashon hara* transgressor revolves around a horrible sin that destroys the unity of the Jewish people. And he derives satisfaction from this — or so he thinks.

Conversely, someone who is careful with his words and uses his speech to heal and praise, derives spiritual "sustenance" from his wholesome, positive use of the gift of speech. His days are filled with true accomplishment as he uses

his gift of speech to spread peace, lift spirits, and bring joy to his Creator by focusing on the good in his fellow Jews.

Rabbi Yitzchak Scheiner, revered Rosh Yeshivah of Yeshivas Kamenitz in Jerusalem, related the following true story.

Night was falling as Mordy Gewirtz stepped off the bus at the stop near his home in Ramat Eschkol. As he stepped onto the gravel path leading to his front door, two armed men jumped out from the shadows.

"Your money or your life!" they threatened.

Mordy froze. At that moment, he had in his pocket several thousands of dollars in cash but then he forced himself to calm down enough so that he could think.

"Uh, gentleman," he began, "please don't do anything rash; I assure you that I will cooperate fully. But I just want to say one thing."

"Make it snappy," one barked.

"I just want to say that you don't impress me as being bad people. I am a good judge of people and I can say with certainty that

deep down, you are both decent, good-hearted individuals

who want to do the right thing."

The two bandits looked surprised, as if they were hearing something very strange, something that they had never heard before and which they had never expected to hear.

Mordy continued, "Now, why should two fellows such as yourselves do this?"

It is beneath your dignity to make hold-ups like this! You need some money, some food? I'm willing to help you. But don't resort to stealing — it's not the kind of life for good people to lead.

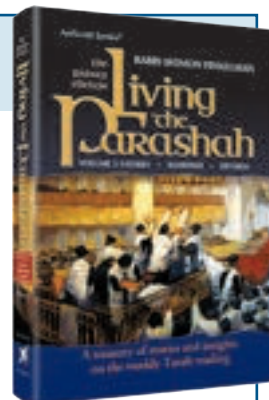
"So tell me, my friends, how can I help you?"

The bandits stood quietly for some time, digesting what they had just heard. Finally, one said, "Just give us \$100 so we can buy a good breakfast in the morning."

Mordy replied, "I'll do better than that. Here is \$100 for each of you."

The two accepted the money, turned around, and left.

The next night, there was a knock on the



Rabbi Yitzchak Scheiner

אָפּוֹרְט — *praiseworthy is she who bore him. (Pirkei Avos 2:II)*

There can be no nicer words in the dictionary that one can tell a parent in regard to their child than these two words the *mishnah* states here about R' Yehoshua. Rashi explains that these words describe a person who is highly accomplished in both his Torah learning and interpersonal abilities. Rabbeinu Yonah expounds on how we find throughout Scripture that the word “*ashrei*” signifies an all-encompassing title of the finest character traits man can attain. In short, R' Yehoshua was someone any parent would be proud to call their son.

The *mefarshim* go on to explain that it was actually the great merits and sacrifice of R' Yehoshua's mother that enabled her to raise such a model child. Even before he was born she would go from *beis medrash* to *beis medrash*, pleading with the Rabbis to please pray that the child she was carrying in her womb would grow up to be a *talmid chacham*.

Additionally, the *Yerushalmi* (*Yevamos* 1:6) recounts that when R' Yehoshua was a young child still in a carriage, his mother would wheel him to the study halls where the *chachamim* were learning so that the sounds of the holy words of Torah would enter her young child's ears.

What a powerful lesson! *Chinuch* does not begin when our child displays his ability to pronounce the *alef-beis* for the first time. It starts way before then — even before he is born! It is only with parents' consistent and

uncompromised commitment to do everything in their power to ensure that their children are being brought up with the utmost care and *kedushah* that, with Hashem's help, they will ultimately succeed in raising their children to be the best they can be.

The following few paragraphs were adapted from the *sefer*, *Relevance*, written by my dear friend, R' Dan Roth. They are well worth the read as the penetrating message they contain is a crucial and ever-so-relevant key to creating a true Jewish home:



Rabbi Nosson Muller

A young child might be unable to talk, walk, or behave appropriately, but these are all aspects of his physical immaturity. His soul, however, is not limited by these physical constraints and discerns every bit of *kedushah*, benefiting from even the smallest pinpoint. Similarly, it discerns every bit of impurity and is impoverished accordingly.

Hosting a shiur, learning with a chavrusah, or having father and son learn aloud together in one's home creates an atmosphere that is literally contagious and impactful beyond the actual minutes the learning lasts. It can be life altering. Unfortunately, the opposite effect can happen as well. People really convince themselves that no harm can be done when the children see or hear things when they are very young.

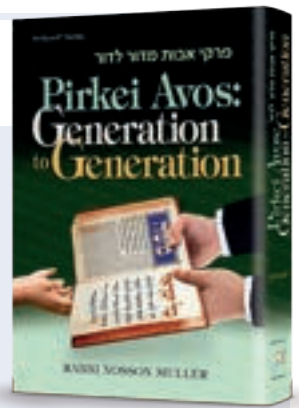
Yet Chazal clearly teach us otherwise, as the harmful impact that is cemented into a child during his adolescent and most crucial developmental years is immense and everlasting. Everything a child sees and hears affects him eternally.

Researchers are just beginning to discover what *Chazal* have known all along: that fetuses are affected by outside influences. Read on.

Anthony Casper, a psychologist at the University of North Carolina, had expectant mothers read aloud Dr. Seuss's classic book, *The Cat in the Hat*, twice a day to their unborn child. A few days after their birth, the newborns were given the opportunity to hear a different Dr. Seuss story from their mothers in addition to *The Cat in the Hat*. The babies were outfitted with a special feeding contraption that measured their familiarity and attention through the rhythm of their sucking.

As demonstrated by their sucking speed, the newborns 1) remembered *The Cat in the Hat* 2) liked it better than the second story 3) adjusted their sucking upon hearing the familiar story over the newer story 4) preferred to hear the story when it was read to them by their mother 5) showed preference when it was read to them in order rather than backward.

Need we say more? 📖



WORDS ARE A WAY OF LIFE continued from page 1

Gewirtzes' door. One of the bandits was standing there holding some money. “We treated ourselves to a royal breakfast. It was \$70 for both of us. We're returning \$130.”

An amazed Mordy Gewirtz accepted the money. His visitor, with tears in his eyes, then said, “No one ever spoke to me like you spoke to me last night. It's true, ever since I was a kid, I was no good. I guess that's why people have always been barking at me, shaming me, making me feel that I was worthless.

“But you're different. You said that I was good-hearted, that deep down I wanted to be good to people, that it is beneath my dignity to steal. You made me feel that despite all the bad that I've done, there still is hope for me, that I can turn my life around. Thank you.”

Rabbi Yitzchak Scheiner concluded: *If you simply speak decently, nothing eloquent, just words that come from the heart, words that make a person realize his own self-worth, you can re-make that individual.* 📖

NEW!



One for the Books by Rabbi Yechiel Spero

In the hallowed halls of Yeshivas Etz Chaim, Rav Aryeh Levin, the tzaddik of Yerushalayim, stood out — not just in Torah and chochmah, but also in his boundless care for every child. Each morning, he would stand at the yeshivah's entrance, a warm smile upon his face, his eyes scanning the talmidim. Rav Aryeh wasn't looking to see who had done their homework or who had arrived on time. He was looking for something more. Which child seemed burdened? Whose face was clouded with sadness? Who needed a kind word or a boost that day?

If he saw a boy with torn shoes, he discreetly ensured that money was sent home to buy new ones. If a child carried an empty knapsack, Rav Aryeh understood it meant an empty lunch bag — and an empty pantry at home. Inconspicuously, he would see to it that food arrived for the boy's family. Rav Aryeh's heart was so full of love for every Yiddishe neshamah that no detail escaped his attention.



Rav Aryeh Levin

The following story stands out as a shining example of genuine chesed — a moving glimpse into Rav Aryeh's deep and constant drive to help others, regardless of how hard it may have been.

When Yehoshua was in fifth grade, the yeshivah administration decided to split the class into two groups. The brighter *talmidim*, referred to as *baalei kishron*, who were, in this case, more motivated, were placed in one class. The weaker boys, those who struggled with their learning, and who, in this case, showed less enthusiasm, were assigned to another. Included in the second group was Yehoshua.

This decision troubled Yehoshua's mother. As the daughter of Rav Shlomo Tzvi Atik, a man whose home was filled with a reverence and love for Torah, the thought of her son being placed in the weaker class was unbearable. She feared it would affect not only his learning but also his self-worth, his future. In her mind, Yehoshua belonged in the higher class, among the boys who were thriving in their studies.

Determined to advocate for her son, Mrs. Kozlick approached Rav Aryeh Levin, the mashgiach of the yeshivah and the one responsible for these decisions. She presented her plea, describing her aspirations for Yehoshua and her desire for him to be in an environment that would

challenge and motivate him.

Rav Aryeh listened intently. He didn't interrupt, allowing her to express every concern, every hope. When she finished, he nodded thoughtfully. "Leave it to me. I will take care of it."

Mrs. Kozlick left the meeting with hope. Surely, Rav Aryeh would move Yehoshua to the stronger class. After all, how could he refuse such a request?

Rav Aryeh had other plans, plans that no one could have anticipated.

Instead of transferring Yehoshua to the higher class, Rav Aryeh made a bold and unexpected decision. He chose to move his own grandson, Avraham Dov Levin, out of the advanced class and into the weaker one. It was an extraordinary move, one that demonstrated Rav Aryeh's wisdom and commitment to the growth of every *talmid*.

By placing Avraham Dov in the weaker class, Rav Aryeh achieved something remarkable. His grandson, a capable and motivated boy, became a source of strength and inspiration for the others. His presence elevated the entire class, turning the dynamic from one of perceived inadequacy to one of potential and possibility; they no longer saw themselves as second-tier. They began to rise, their confidence growing, their learning revitalized. Rav Aryeh did not simply rearrange students, he infused the class with a sense of purpose and pride.

For Yehoshua's mother, this decision brought reassurance and relief. Rav Aryeh's action was a clear statement: *Your son matters; his growth and success are important*. And though Rav Aryeh had not done exactly what she had asked, he had found a way to address her concerns while ensuring that the entire class, including Yehoshua, would benefit.

Decades later, Yehoshua would speak about this moment with admiration. "Rav Aryeh didn't just solve problems, he elevated people. He found ways to uplift everyone, to make each person feel valued, important, and capable of achieving greatness."

One talmid at a time. 📖

YOMI SCHEDULES FOR THIS WEEK:

	SHABBOS MAY 3 ה' אייר	SUNDAY MAY 4 ו' אייר	MONDAY MAY 5 ז' אייר	TUESDAY MAY 6 ח' אייר	WEDNESDAY MAY 7 ט' אייר	THURSDAY MAY 8 י' אייר	FRIDAY MAY 9 יא' אייר
BAVLI	Shevuos 2	Shevuos 3	Shevuos 4	Shevuos 5	Shevuos 6	Shevuos 7	Shevuos 8
YERUSHALMI	Eruvin 45	Eruvin 46	Eruvin 47	Eruvin 48	Eruvin 49	Eruvin 50	Eruvin 51
MISHNAH	Avodah Zarah 4:4-5	Avodah Zarah 4:6-7	Avodah Zarah 4:8-9	Avodah Zarah 4:10-11	Avodah Zarah 4:12-5:1	Avodah Zarah 5:2-3	Avodah Zarah 5:4-5
KITZUR	80:61-67	80:68-76	80:77-86	80:87-81:2	81:3-82:2	82:3-8	82:9-83:2

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Parashah for Children

פרשת תזריע-מצורע

What Material Can Get Tzaraas?



Only clothing, fabric, or other things made of sheep's wool, linen, or animal leather can become tamei from tzaraas. Even thread that is wool or linen can get tzaraas.

When you look at a piece of fabric, it looks like one solid piece. It is actually made up of many, many, threads, some going across, others going up and down. These threads are brought together in a process called "weaving," using a machine called a "loom."

The threads that go up and down are called שְׁתִּי, shesi, in Hebrew, and "warp" in English. The threads that go across are called עֶרֶב, erev, in Hebrew, and "woof" in English. The warp threads are usually thicker than the woof threads. Both these types of thread can get tzaraas if they are wool or linen.

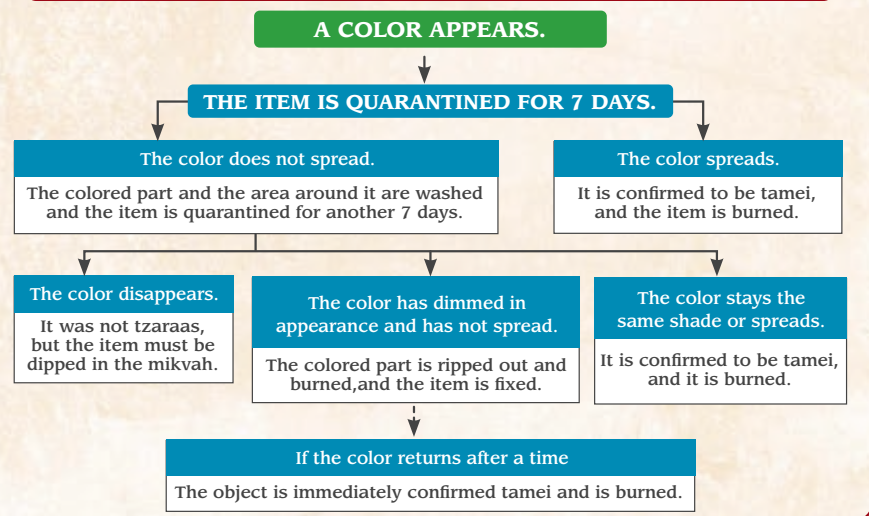
The Laws of Fabric Tzaraas



Only fabric or thread that is still its natural white color can become tamei. Leather can become tamei as long as it is its natural color, whatever color that is.

If the fabric, thread, or leather, or part of it, turns either dark red or dark green, a Kohen is called. If it seems to be tzaraas, the Kohen has the owner quarantine the item for seven days. If it is partially red and partially green, the same law applies. What happens next is described in the chart.

TZARAAS ON WOOL, LINEN, AND LEATHER



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THE WEEKLY QUESTION

Question for Tazria-Metzora:

If a bris is performed on the eighth day and a week only has seven days, how come a baby usually has a bris on the same day of the week that it was born?

Kids, please ask your parents to email the answer to shabbosquestion@artscroll.com by this Wednesday to be entered into a weekly raffle to win a \$36 ARTSCROLL GIFT CARD! Be sure to include your full name, city, and contact info. Names of winners will appear in a future edition. HINT: The answer can be found in *The Jaffa Family Edition Weekly Parashah*.

Winner for Terumah: AKIVA GOLDGRAB, Boca Raton, FL

Question for Vayakhel: What was the name of the animal needed for the Mishkan that came on its own to Moshe?
Answer to Vayakhel – The tachash.



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