

Evoking The Narrative Of The Past To Live It In The Future



YadAvNow.com Weekly Video Series: Metzora

Rabbi Yosef Kalatsky

Weekly Video: As Officiant, The Cohen Determines Life & Death

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Unwavering When Rooted by Torah Intellect

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Intense But Not Degeneration

Detachment from the Source As Cause for Demise

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Cause & Effect: Destructive Speech & Inexorable Exile

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The Blueprint Designed to Accommodate Man

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1. The Torah discusses the laws of purity pertaining to a woman who has given birth to a male or female.
2. This follows the previous delineation of the kosher and non-kosher species.
3. Midrash: Just as the animals and birds were created before man, so too their laws were stated before man.
4. Rabeinu Bachya: Man as final act of creation indicates: all that preceded him was created to accommodate his purpose and objective.
5. Analogous to one who builds a residence; the blueprint is designed to address all amenities to be needed by the occupant.
6. All that was created prior to man was to address his material and spiritual needs.
7. The physical makeup and infrastructure of existence parallels the spiritual needs of man.
8. This is shown through the sequential order of the laws that pertain to species of animals and birds followed by the laws pertaining to man.

G-d Gives EVERYONE A Chance

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1. Isaiah: G-d wants to vindicate man rather than find him guilty and condemn him.
2. Midrash: Adam was told "From this you may eat from that you may not; the day you will eat, you will die."
3. Adam ate of the tree: G-d alluded to him two times he could repent and be absolved.
4. Adam did not repent and was driven from the Garden. Why didn't he repent?
5. R' Yisrael Salanter: When Jews hear the Shofar blast before Rosh Hashanah it causes stirrings of repentance.
6. During the First Temple, however, when the Prophet instructed them to repent, they said they could not.
7. They believed they were beyond spiritual reinstatement and couldn't undo the wrong.
8. We understand transgression on a superficial level knowing we did wrong but not appreciating its destructive ramifications.
9. Adam, as G-d's handiwork, grasped the level of catastrophic destruction of his sin and he could not repent- thus being subject to death.

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Pre-Pesach Video Series from YadAvNow.com

Rabbi Yosef Kalatsky

Why Not Extinguish the Fire for Illumination?

A Medium For Full Reinstatement

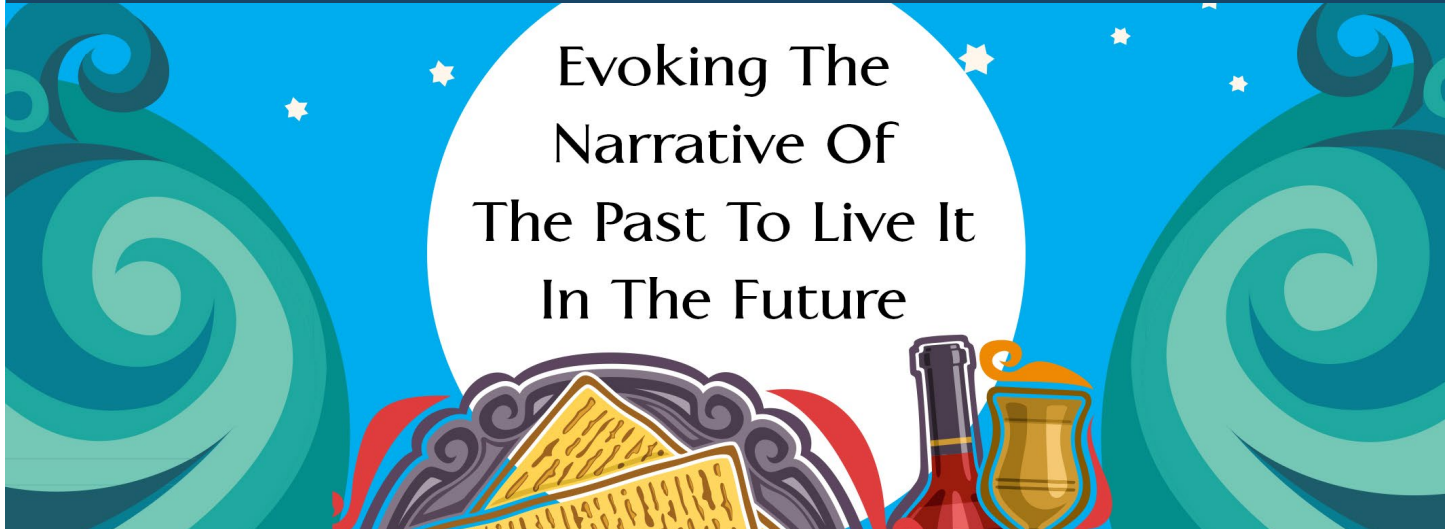
Unleashing the Forces Of Creation Through the Seder

1. Jewish Holidays and Festivals are re-enactments of those original moments.
 2. The initial energies & influences of these events & miracles are re-released at those particular times.
 3. At the Seder we do many things that are only rabbinic:
 4. Reclining to demonstrate freedom, eating bitter herbs to commemorate the embitterment of the bondage, the 4 cups of wine.
 5. Ancient custom to provide for the poor: wheat for matzo and the means to purchase wine for the Seder.
 6. The custom has been expanded to provide food for the Holiday for the needy.
 7. Shalah Hakadosh: The Jews were not worthy of redemption because they were pagans in Egypt.
 8. Due to G-d's indiscriminate kindness they were redeemed.
 9. Becoming a Jewish People is equivalent to the beginning of existence.
 10. Psalms: "The world was created due to G-d's Chesed."
 11. Nissan: The month of redemption. G-d unleashed forces that brought about redemption due to G-d's Chesed.
 12. The Jew during the Month of Nisan displays Chesed to emulate and activate G-d's unlimited kindness.
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Tracing Our DNA To Our Most Special Patriarch

1. Yaakov: The most special of the Patriarchs.
2. He fathered the 12 Tribes.
3. Midrash: Yaakov was given his name by G-d; the spelling contains 4 letters.
4. Each letter corresponds to a level of distinction.
5. Yud (10) corresponds to 10 commandments.
6. Ayin (70): the 70 elders.
7. Kuf (100): the height of the covered sanctuary in the Temple.
8. Beiz (2): the two tablets.
9. In the merit of Yaakov the Jews were redeemed from Egypt.
10. Avraham was redeemed from the kiln due to Yaakov.
11. The unique traits Jews possess – Compassion, Shame, conscience, and acts of loving-kindness – are attributed to Avraham.
12. We are beneficiaries of Yaakov for redeeming Avraham from the kiln.

Weekly Torah Commentaries Series: Tazria

A decorative graphic with a blue background, white stars, and green swirls. In the center, a white circle contains the text "Evoking The Narrative Of The Past To Live It In The Future". Below the circle, there is an illustration of a scroll, a bottle, and a chalice.

Evoking The Narrative Of The Past To Live It In The Future

Prosecuting the Jewish People

Chofetz Chaim explains that regarding certain negative behavior patterns, the *Torah* is not explicit in addressing them. However, there are specific negative commandments that address the wrong of *lashon hara* (negative speech). The *Torah* in the Portion of *Kedoshim* states the negative commandment, "You shall not be a gossipmonger among your people (*Lo telech rachil b'ameicha*)...."

There are two classification of negative speech. Firstly, *lashon hara* is when one speaks negatively about his fellow, although it may be true it is without any constructive value or purpose. The second classification of negative speech, included in this negative commandment, is "*recheilus* (tale bearing)." This is when one conveys information to an individual regarding what another had said about him, although it may be true. Because it evokes negative feelings when shared, it is a *Torah* violation.

The Babylonian *Talmud* tells us that baseless hatred among Jews (*sinaas chinam*) is the equivalent of the Three Cardinal Sins (murder, idolatry, and forbidden relations). The Jerusalem *Talmud* tells us that *lashon hara* is the equivalent of the Three Cardinal Sins. *Chofetz Chaim* explains that in fact, there is no argument between the Babylonian and Jerusalem *Talmud*. The only reason one speaks negatively about his fellow is because of his baseless hatred toward him. If one truly loved his fellow, he would not speak negatively about him. Why is *lashon hara* regarded as such a grave sin?

The *Gemara* states regarding *lashon hara*, "Negative speech kills three people: the one who speaks it, the one who listens to it, and the one about whom it was spoken about." *Doeg Haadomi*, the antagonist of King David, went to King Saul and informed him that *Nov* the city of *Kohanim*, was harboring David. As a result of *Doeg's* transmission of this information, *Doeg* (the one who spoke *lashon hara*) was killed, King Saul (the one who listened to it and

gave the order to destroy the city of *Nov* (about whom it was spoken about)) and his children were killed in the war with the Philistines.

Chofetz Chaim in the introduction to his work, *Chofetz Chaim* writes that satan, continuously approaches G-d to allow him to bring prosecution against the Jewish people because their spiritual record is far from perfect. It is not in accordance with the *Torah*, which is the Will of G-d. Despite the blemished record of the Jewish people, G-d does not allow satan to prosecute. He says to satan, "I do not want to hear any negative speech about My children." Thus, satan's prosecution is silenced.

However, when the Jewish people speak negatively (*lashon hara*) about one another, satan can approach G-d with a claim that he has a right to prosecute them. Satan says, "If Your children are speaking negatively about one another without any constructive purpose, I should be allowed to speak about their record to prosecute them." G-d allows satan to bring prosecuting, which brings about untold tragedy. When the Attribute of Justice is in effect, the level of suffering that comes upon the Jewish people is severe and it does not differentiate between the devoutly righteous and the evil. This is the reason the sin of *lashon hara* is considered to be even more severe than the Three Cardinal Sins.

G-d endowed man with the power of speech in order to study *Torah* and engage in other verbalization of spirituality. The *Gemara* in Tractate *Sanhedrin* cites a verse from *Eyov*, "Man was created to toil..." The *Gemara* asks, "To toil in what?" It answers based on the verse, "To toil in *Torah*." Man toils in *Torah* through its verbal articulation. G-d Created existence for man to be able to perfect himself and existence through the study of *Torah*. If one utilizes his speech, which was given to him to perfect himself and the world in a spiritual context, if he chooses to putrefy it though *lashon hara* it is considered an abuse and desecration of the ultimate that was given to mankind.

The *Gemara* in Tractate *Niddah* tells us that the children of *Yehudah* were taken by G-d because they wasted seed. The *Gemara* asks, "What was

one of the failings of the generation of the Great Flood? They were considered to be slaughterers of children (*shochtei yeladim*) (based on a verse in Prophets)." The *Gemara* explains that the letter "shin" in the word "shochtei" could also be read as "sin" which would read as "sochtei yeladim." Meaning, they had the ability to bring about children with their seed, but because they wasted their seed, they wasted potential lives. Thus, the *Gemara* concludes that one who wastes seed is the equivalent of the generation of the Great Flood.

G-d gave man the ability to procreate and bring about life (which is the ultimate potential) through semen. If one chooses to destroy it by wasting seed rather than bringing about life, it is a desecration of the ultimate endowment given to man. Thus he is liable to be taken as the Generation of the Flood. This is similar to the abuse and desecration of one's power of speech, which was endowed to man to fulfill his objective in existence. If one chooses to desecrate something of the ultimate value, to bring about destruction rather than creation by speaking *lashon hara*, the liability is the equivalent of the Three Cardinal Sins. Thus, he deserves to be taken by G-d.

The Miracle of Leprosy

The *Torah* states that after the leper recovers from his leprous state, "The *Kohen* shall command; and for the person being purified there shall be taken two live, clean birds, cedar wood, crimson thread, and hyssop." *Rashi* explains, "What is the symbolism of these three items? The cedar tree, which is something that is majestic, represents arrogance. The crimson thread (which is referred to as *tolaas shani* 'the red worm'), represents a lowly creature. The hyssop is a lowly grass, which represents humility. The individual initially became a leper because of his arrogance and haughtiness. What is the remedy for his arrogant posture? He must lower himself from his exalted state of haughtiness to the level of a worm and lowly grass. Only then the leper will recover from his spiritual illness, which was an outgrowth of his lack of humility."

After the leper is declared to be contaminated by the *Kohen*, he is sent outside of all the camps where he remains in solitude. He is the equivalent of a pariah and no one is permitted to associate with him. He remains in this state of solitude so that he can reflect and introspect on the wrong that he had done. When he comes to the realization that only the Mercy of G-d could take him out of his leprous state he can begin the process of recovery. If he does not introspect and repent, he may remain in a leprous state his entire life. He should thus also tell others that he is a leper so that they may pray on his behalf. Although the leper may intellectually understand the wrong that he had done, he needs to remain in a helpless state of embarrassment being separated from the Jewish people until he internalizes the wrong that he had done.

Sforno in his commentary on the Portion of *Tazria* explains regarding the contamination of leprosy, "The leprosy that affects a garment or the walls of one's house is not similar to any deterioration of these items...These lesions and discolorations are intended to open the ears of the owner of the garment or the house to the sin that he has committed. As the Gemara tells us regarding engaging in the produce of the Sabbatical Year in a commercial manner..." The *Torah* tells us that it is forbidden to derive financial benefit from the produce of the Sabbatical year.

The *Gemara* in Tractate *Kiddushin* states that if a person engages in commercial transactions with produce of the Sabbatical Year he will face many severe consequences which will evolve over time. This person will have to initially sell his movable assets and subsequently his fixed assets (properties and house). Eventually because of his financial difficulties, he will need to sell his daughter into slavery, and ultimately be forced to sell himself as a slave (not only to a Jew but even an idolater). The *Gemara* tells us that when one initially is confronted with these difficulties he should appreciate that it is because he had transgressed and thus should be motivated to correct his wrongdoings. However if he glosses over the problem and remains oblivious to his circumstance, G-d will further complicate his financial state and ultimately cause him to lose everything (including his freedom).

Sforno continues, "The human being is the ultimate purpose of existence because he is the only one who could reflect G-d in his understanding and actions. As it states, 'Let us make man in Our image, after Our form...' Man's intellect is a reflection of G-d's Image and his free choice is a reflection of G-d's Form...This value and reflection only has relevance to the Jew...Those who are in a trance and will not be awakened or aroused whatsoever are considered to be under the influence of the Zodiac. They are affected by the natural order as any animal...However, when the Jew chooses to reflect upon his actions and repent, he has relevance to G-d and is thus taken beyond the influence of the Zodiac...Unfortunately, since the generations have not achieved this level of awareness and status, there has not been the occurrence of the leprosy mentioned in the *Torah*."

The leprosy discussed in the *Torah* is not a physical ailment but rather it is a physical manifestation of a spiritual failing. It is intended to awaken the individual and cause him to reflect upon the wrong that he has done. Thus, it is a miracle that is an alteration of the natural order. G-d however does not bring about a miracle if it will not be heeded. He will not alter nature if man will not notice the miracle. Since the generations are in a state of trance to such a degree that they do not have the capacity to recognize the miracle of leprosy or be moved spiritually by its occurrence, G-d does not bring it about.

The *Gemara* in Tractate *Berachos* tells us that there is an iron curtain that separates man from G-d that is brought about by sin. As a result of this blockage one's prayers are not able to ascend to be heard by G-d because the individual is entombed in sin. To be able to respond and react to a miracle, one needs to have some degree of spiritual sensitivity. However, since we are in such a removed state, we do not have the capacity to appreciate the miracle of *tzaraas*. The only way one is able to achieve a level of sensitivity is to have G-d open our hearts to have a sense of reverence for Him through our study of *Torah*, which is the only antidote to the entombment of sin.

Nissan, the Month of Kindness

The *Torah* tells us that on the eighth day of the inauguration of the *Mishkan* Aaron and his sons were installed as *Kohanim* and the *Mishkan* assumed a permanent status. This occurred on the first day of the month of *Nissan* (*rosh chodesh*). Why did this take place on this day and not any other month? The *Gemara* in Tractate *Megillah* tells us that the joy that G-d had experienced when the *Mishkan* was inaugurated and the Divine Presence entered into it was no less than the joy He experienced at the time of Creation.

The initial intent of Creation was for G-d's Presence to dwell in the physical realm with Man to be His Officiant. G-d endowed man with the ability to choose and gave him a prescription by which to live, namely the *Torah*. By adhering to His Will man was given the opportunity to perfect himself and existence to merit the ultimate relationship with G-d. G-d created existence with the intent that man should be able to interact with Him on the same plane of existence and not to be separated from him. However, because *Adam* had failed by eating from the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, physical existence was no longer fit for the Divine Presence. By sinning, *Adam* putrefied the world that was created to be a pristine setting for G-d. As a result G-d removed His Presence from existence and thus created a separation between Himself and man.

After the Jewish people had sinned with the Golden Calf, G-d forgave and reinstated them through *Moshe's* supplications. Consequently, G-d said, "Build for Me a Sanctuary, so that I may dwell in your midst." The *Mishkan* was the location in which G-d would dwell in the physical world. The *Mishkan* was a replication of the original setting of existence to accommodate G-d's Presence. Therefore, when the *Mishkan* was completed and the Divine Presence entered into it, G-d experienced the same level of joy as He had at the time of Creation because through the *Mishkan* the initial intent of Creation could be fulfilled.

There is an argument in the *Gemara* between *Reb Eliezer* and *Reb Yeshua* regarding the time of

Creation. One opinion is that G-d Created the world in the month of *Nissan*, while the other opinion is that He Created it in *Tishrei*. *Chazal* tell us that every aspect of the *Mishkan*, which was completed on rosh chodesh *Nissan* reflected every aspect of Creation. This is the reason the *Gemara* tells us that we learn from the building of the *Mishkan* all of the creative activities from which one must refrain on *Shabbos*. Just as G-d refrained from creative activity on *Shabbos* in His Creating the existence, so too should the Jew refrain from creative activity as it is defined by the building of the *Mishkan*, since it is a replication of Creation. Thus, just as the world was initially created in *Nissan*, when the *Mishkan* was inaugurated in *Nissan* it was a reenactment of the completion of Creation.

King David writes in Psalms, "*Olam chesed Yibaneh* – Through kindness the world was created." Meaning, the basis for the Creation of Existence was His Attribute of Kindness. Each of the holy Patriarchs chose to emulate a particular Attribute of G-d and perfect that characteristic within themselves. *Avraham* our Patriarch chose to emulate G-d's Attribute of Kindness (*Chesed*). *Yitzchak* chose to emulate G-d's Attribute of Justice by being exacting in every aspect of his service. *Yaakov* our Patriarch, chose to emulate G-d's Attribute of Mercy. Why did *Avraham* choose to emulate the Attribute of Kindness?

Before G-d brought existence into being, there was no need to create it, other than doing Kindness. Prior to Creation, because nothing existed, there was no being that was worthy of reward. Thus there was nothing compelling G-d to bring about existence other than His Infinite Kindness. G-d wanted to create a setting that would allow man to have the opportunity to make choices. If he should choose correctly, he would be worthy of the ultimate Goodness, which is cleaving to G-d Who is the source of all Good.

Since *Avraham* was the first person to introduce G-d to mankind, his era was the equivalent of the beginning of Creation. This was the first opportunity for man to again make a choice to believe in G-d or not. Therefore, *Avraham*, following the sequence of existence, chose to emulate the Attribute of

Kindness, which was G-d's first expression of Himself to mankind.

The *Gemara* in Tractate *Rosh Hashanah* states, "In the Month of *Nissan* our forefathers were redeemed, in *Nissan* (in the future) they are destined to be redeemed." If the Jewish people were not redeemed from Egypt, existence would have no value. Thus, they were redeemed from Egypt out of the Infinite Kindness of G-d. Just as Creation was brought about through His Kindness in *Nissan* so too did He redeem His children to become the chosen people in *Nissan*. *Nissan* is the beginning of the establishment of the Jewish people, who give meaning to the world.

Shaloh HaKadosh writes that the Jewish people were not actually worthy to be redeemed from Egypt. The only reason they were redeemed was because G-d had promised *Avraham* that his children would be redeemed. Out of G-d's Kindness He gave the Jewish people the *mitzvos* of circumcision and the Pascal offering to give them some worthiness to be able to extricate them from Egypt. He performed revealed miracles on their behalf which is a further demonstration of His Kindness.

It was obvious from the exodus of the Jewish people from Egypt that there is Divine Providence and G-d is involved with creation on a continuous basis. *Ramban* explains that every aspect of nature is a concealed miracle, which further demonstrates G-d's Hand in existence. It is only because G-d Wills nature does it function as it does. It is no different than the splitting of the Sea.

At the time of the splitting of the Sea, the angels said to G-d, "Why are you sparing the Jewish people and destroying the Egyptians? These are idolaters and these are idolaters." The angels were saying, since the Jewish people are idolaters no less than the Egyptians, why are the Egyptians considered to be more culpable? The Jewish people deserve to perish in the Sea as the Egyptians do. G-d responded to the angels by telling them that there is no comparison between the two of them. The Egyptian masters worshipped idols willingly.

However, the Jewish people, who were their slaves and under their control were vulnerable to the

influences of their masters. They thus only became pagans under duress and coercion. They thus cannot be held culpable to the same degree as the Egyptians. Once again G-d demonstrated His Unlimited Kindness towards the Jewish people as He had expressed His Kindness in the act of Creation.

Since *Nissan* is a month of Kindness and G-d demonstrated His Kindness in the month of *Nissan* in a revealed manner, the Jewish people as His people need to reflect G-d's characteristic of Kindness. The *Zohar* writes that if a Jew behaves in a kind manner, it will activate G-d's Kindness from above. Before *Pesach* it is customary for one to give charity so that those who cannot afford the needs of Passover should be able to enjoy the holiday. By giving generously, we should merit G-d's Kindness to come upon us.

Speaking Negatively, the Origin of Death

The *Midrash* tells us that the first one to speak *lashon hara* (evil speech) was the original snake in the Garden of *Eden*, who spoke negatively about G-d. The *Midrash* states, "G-d said to the snake, Because you spoke *lashon hara* you will be smitten with leprosy. As it states, 'You will be more cursed than all of the animals...'. What is the curse of the snake? It shall be afflicted with leprosy...The rings that are skin of the snake is a representation of its leprosy. At the end of time all blemishes will be healed; however, the snake shall not be healed. As it states, 'You will be more cursed than all of the animals...'. From here we learn that at the end of time every creature will recover from its deficiency, but the snake will not. As it states, 'The lion will eat straw as the cow...'. However, the snake will continue to eat earth. The fact that it will continue to be sustained by earth is an indication that it will not be healed ever. Why is this? It is because the snake brought all existence into the ground. It was through the snake speaking *lashon hara* that death was introduced into the world."

Earth, which is the fodder of the snake, is something that has no life. Because of the impurity of existence, which came about through the

lashon hara of the snake, everything must die and its life source departs from it. The body is thus left as lifeless earth. *Adam* was meant to be an eternal being, but because of the snake, he became an earthy being that has relevance to death. Since the snake took something eternal and transformed it into a material and limited entity, its affliction will be eternal.

The *Gemara* tells us that *lashon hara* is the equivalent of the Three Cardinal Sins. It was because of *lashon hara* that the world has relevance to death. Speaking *lashon hara* has such severe consequences because when one does so, he engages in a behavior that brought about the destruction of existence.

Based on Jewish law, if one speaks negatively about a non-Jew, one does not violate the prohibition of *lashon hara*. It is only when a Jew speaks *lashon hara* about his fellow does he violate. Why is that so? The *Gemara* in Tractate *Yevomos* cites a verse from *Yechezkel* that indicates that the classification of the Jewish people is “*adam* (man).” The inference of the verse is that the nations of the world are not classified as “*adam* (man). As it states, “You (the Jewish people) are called *adam* (man)...” *Adam* was the handiwork of G-d and had the potential to perfect himself and existence.

However, because he sinned, which was a consequence of the snake speaking *lashon hara*, he putrefied himself and all existence, thus introducing death into the world. At *Sinai*, the Jewish people achieved such an advanced dimension of spirituality that they were reinstated to the level of *Adam* before the sin. They no longer had relevance to death. As *Chazal* tell us regarding the spiritual status of the Jewish people at *Sinai*, “*Puska zuamason* (their contamination ceased).” Meaning, the original contamination that came about from the sin of *Adam* was removed from them.

The non-Jew on the other hand who did not receive the *Torah* at *Sinai* continue to be affected by the original contamination that came upon existence as a result of *Adam*’s sin. *Lashon hara* has relevance to death and the original intense contamination that came into the world. Thus, when one speaks

lashon hara about a non-Jew who continues to be affected by the contamination of the snake’s *lashon hara*, one does not violate. In contrast, if a Jew speaks negatively about his fellow, he is introducing contamination and death upon one who was extricated from the effects of the snake’s *lashon hara*. Therefore, one is in violation of the prohibition of *lashon hara* only when one speaks it about a Jew.

The *Gemara* tells us that G-d has a schedule of His activities during the day that is divided in groups of three hours. During the third three-hour division of the day, G-d sustains all existence. He provides sustenance to every creature from the largest to the smallest. Every species is sustained by what is found in its habitat with the exception of the snake. Since the snake was cursed to be sustained by eating earth, it can find sustenance wherever it is. One would think that this is a blessing and not a curse.

Chazal explain that the greatest curse is to be detached from G-d. Every species has an ongoing relationship with G-d because He provides sustenance for them every day. The snake on the other hand has no relationship with G-d because it sustains itself by eating earth. Thus, the snake is more cursed than any creature, although it can sustain itself in every context. *Chazal* explain that earth is something that is completely removed from spirituality. When one becomes more “earthy” it is an indication that his spirituality is in a state of decline because he values and engages in the material to a greater extent. By being sustained by earth, the snake is the most cursed creature because it lives on a substance that is the antithesis of G-dliness.

The *Torah* states, “*Amalek* was first among the nations, but their end will be utter destruction.” *Amalek* was the first nation to attack the Jewish people after they left Egypt despite the miracles that were performed on their behalf. The rest of the world stood in awe of G-d’s chosen people while *Amalek* were unaffected to any degree. At the end of time *Amalek* will need to be obliterated. As G-d’s says, “My Throne will not be complete until the name of *Amalek* is obliterated.”

Although other nations have perhaps victimized the Jewish people to a greater extent than the *Amalekites* they will not be obliterated at the end of time. It is because *Amalek* is a species unto itself and not part of the rest of the nations of the world, similar to the snake that is separate from all other creatures. Both the snake and *Amalek* have no hope of redemption because of their level of evil.

Reinstating G-d's Presence in Existence

The *Torah* in the Portion of *Metzora* tells us the laws that pertain to the woman who is a menstruant (*niddah*). The *Midrash* cites the *Mishna*, "There are three sins that cause a woman to die during childbirth: not being careful in the laws regarding menstruation, tithing the dough, and kindling the candles of *Shabbos*. Why should they be subject to death during the time of childbirth? Because it is a time when one's life is in danger." The *Gemara* in Tractate *Shabbos* tells us that satan prosecutes when one is in a state of danger. It is only if one has sufficient merit will one survive and live.

The *Midrash* continues, "...From where do we learn that one needs to light the *Shabbos* candles with meticulousness and zeal? It is stated in *Yishaya*, 'You must declare the *Shabbos* as a day of joy...'" The *Gemara* in Tractate *Shabbos* tells us that if one only had enough money to either purchase wine for *Kiddush* or candles for lighting, one should purchase the candles because "peace in the home takes precedence." One cannot function in a state of darkness.

The *Midrash* continues, "Why is the woman obligated in the lighting of the candles? It is because G-d said, 'Since she extinguished the light of the world, the woman needs to kindle the *Shabbos* candles.'" By lighting the *Shabbos* candles, the woman is correcting the wrong that was done by *Chava* at the time of Creation when she offered the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge to *Adam* her husband.

The *Midrash* tells us that before *Adam* sinned, he radiated to such a degree that the angels had mistaken his radiance for G-d's radiance and thus

mistakenly sung praises to him. However, after he had eaten from the Tree he became minimized and his radiance was diminished. This is how the woman extinguished the light of the world. Kindling the *Shabbos* candles is to accommodate the *Shabbos* being a day of joy. How could the kindling of the *Shabbos* candles be a correction for *Chava's* extinguishing the light of the world?

After *Adam* ate from the Tree of Knowledge, he went into hiding because he was ashamed of his nakedness. Prior to sinning, *Adam* was at an exceptionally advanced spiritual level; however, as a result of eating from the Tree, he was diminished to such a degree that it is the equivalent of a healthy person becoming severely debilitated and non-functional. After eating from the fruit of the Tree, the transition that had taken place within *Adam* was so drastic that he had fallen from the heights of spirituality to a level that had no semblance of his original state. Thus, he became ashamed because of his disgraceful state of being.

As a result of *Chava's* causing *Adam* to eat from the Tree, she caused the representation of G-d's Presence in existence to be diminished. The *Torah* tells us that G-d created *Chava* for *Adam* so that he should not be alone. As it states, "It is not good for man to be alone..." *Chazal* explain that since *Adam's* representation of holiness had a semblance of G-d's radiance, there was a concern that people would say that just as there is One above who is alone, so too is there one below who is alone. Therefore, G-d created the woman to be a helpmate to establish a differentiation between *Adam* and Himself. However, G-d's initial intent was that *Adam* should be a reflection of Him in His form and image.

When one kindles the lights of *Shabbos*, it is a representation and acknowledgement that the Divine Presence enters into existence on *Shabbos*. The *Gemara* in Tractate *Beitzah* tells us that since the beginning of existence, the sanctity of the *Shabbos* is set and fixed in place, regardless of the existence of the Jewish people. It is a time when the Divine Presence enters into existence. However, the sanctity of the Festivals and other Holidays are determined by the declaration of the *Sanhedrin*.

Since the woman undermined the representation of G-d in the world by causing *Adam* to be diminished, she can correct this wrong by kindling the *Shabbos* candles because it is an acknowledgment of G-d's Presence in the world. *Chazal* tell us that *Shabbos* has a semblance of the world to come. Just as in the world to come one will be close to G-d because he will be in a spiritual existence, so too is one close to G-d because He enters into existence.

The *Midrash* states, "Since the woman shed *Adam's* blood by giving him to eat of the Tree (eating from the Tree introduced death into *Adam* and the world) her correction will come through her blood. This is the menstrual blood."

There is a Positive commandment, "You shall walk in the way of G-d." Meaning, the Jew must emulate His ways. As the *Gemara* in Tractate *Shabbos* states, "Just as I am Merciful, you should be merciful. Just as I am gracious, you should be gracious..." In order for one to have a relationship with another, he must have some commonality with him. If they are not compatible in this manner, they will not have a relationship.

Chofetz Chaim explains that since G-d Created man in His image and form, then man must behave accordingly. By emulating G-d one is not trying to have a commonality with Him, but rather, one is behaving in a manner that is consistent with him being created in the image of G-d. *Ramak* writes in Tomer Dvora that if one does not live in a manner that reflects G-d's Characteristics, then one is living in a false state of existence because his form is not consistent with his image. It is similar to a human being behaving as a monkey, which is a disgrace. Before the sin, *Adam* was the image and form of G-d, but because *Chava* gave him to eat from the Tree of Knowledge, he diminished himself and thus disgraced G-d through his diminishment.



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