

Menachem Mendel of Horodak
Pri Ha'Eretz
Parshas Tazria - Metzora

<p>Rabbi Simlai said: Just as the formation of man came after all the animals, beasts, and birds, so too his Torah was explained after their Torah.</p>	<p>אמר רבי שמלאי: כשם שיצירתו של אדם אחר כל בהמה חיה ועוף, כך תורתו נתפרשה אחר תורתם.</p>
<p>Behold, the Baal HaAkeidah wrote in a clever way regarding what Rabbi Yannai proclaimed: "Who desires the elixir of life?" until he said, "Guard your tongue from evil."</p>	<p>הנה הבעל עקידה כתב דרך צחות על מקריזו רבי ינאי. מאן בעי סמא דחיי, עד שאמר נצר לשונך מרע.</p>
<p>And the wise man of blessed memory said, that the matter has been forgotten among people to the extent that it requires a proclamation, like a lost object, similar to what our Sages said regarding the verse, "Is it indeed silence that you speak righteously" — what is the profession of man in this world? He should make himself mute; one might think even in matters of Torah, etc.</p>	<p>ואמר החכם הנזכר לעיל, שהענין נאבד מבני אדם עד שיצריך הכרזה פאבידה, פענין אמרם זכרונם לברכה האומנם אלם צדק תדברון, מה אומנותו של אדם בעולם הזה, יעשה עצמו אלם, יכול אף בדברי תורה. כו.</p>
<p>And behold, from the matter of "yachol" ("could it be") in the Gemara it is understood that not study is the main thing, for the concept of speech is a language, one thing for a generation, meaning leadership and drawing forth and connecting many through one,</p>	<p>והנה מענין היכול שבגמרא מוכן כי לא המדרש הוא העקר, כי ענין הדבור הוא לשון, דבר אחד לדור שהוא לשון הנהגה והמשכה והתקשרות רבים על ידי אחד.</p>
<p>like the matter of a king, that all are conducted according to his word, for he is the lowest level that unites the higher with the lower, and he is the intermediary between them, grasping and comprehending both,</p>	<p>פענין המלך שכלם מתנהגים על פי דבורו, כי הוא המדרגה התחתונה המיחדת עליונים עם תחתונים והוא הממוצע שביניהם המושג ותופס את שניהם.</p>
<p>therefore speech is called awe, for awe and fear are because of something above oneself; thus awe is the union of the higher and the lower.</p>	<p>לכן הדבור נקרא יראה, כי היראה והפחד הוא מפני דבר שלמעלה הימנו, נמצא שהיראה הוא יחוד העליון עם התחתון.</p>
<p>And so too, speech is the awe of the letters and the speaking power within it, as it is stated: "Who placed a mouth for man?" (Exodus 4:11),</p>	<p>וכן הדבור הוא היראה מן האותיות וכח המדבר בו, כמאמר מי שם פה לאדם.</p>
<p>for this is the matter of awe of the kingship due to the power of speech within it, and one is not in awe of it when the king is asleep.</p>	<p>שהרי זהו ענין יראת המלוכה מפני כח המדבר בו ואינו ירא ממנו כשהוא ישן.</p>
<p>And since awe is what connects between the king and the people, and the king rules because of the awe that is drawn from him—and all of this is through speech,</p>	<p>ולזהו היראה הוא המסבך בין המלך והעם, והמלך מולך מפני היראה הנמשכת ממנו והכל בדבור.</p>

Menachem Mendel of Horodak

Pri Ha'Eretz

Parshas Tazria - Metzora

<p>for thought is not grasped by the people, therefore awe and speech are called "Kingship," which rules over all, as it is stated: "A righteous one rules through the awe of God" (II Samuel 23:3).</p>	<p>שְׁהָרִי הַמְחַשְׁבָּה אֵינָה מוֹשָׁגָת לְעַם, לְכֵן נִקְרָאִים הַיְרָאָה וְהַדִּיבּוּר מְלָכוּת שְׁמוֹשֵׁל בְּכָל, כְּמֵאמֶר צְדִיק מוֹשֵׁל בְּיִרְאָת אֱלֹהִים.</p>
<p>And behold, speech together with awe — because of the power of the speaker — connects through speech and awe with the Master of all powers; this is called "one who speaks" and "man" (adam).</p>	<p>וְהִנֵּה הַדִּיבּוּר עִם הַיְרָאָה מִפְּנֵי כַח הַמְדַבֵּר וּמִתְקַשֵּׁר עַל יְדֵי הַדִּיבּוּר וְהַיְרָאָה עִם בְּעַל הַכַּחוֹת כָּלָם, הוּא הַנִּקְרָא מְדַבֵּר וְאָדָם.</p>
<p>For speech and awe are the end of the higher level and its externality, which clothes the lower as well,</p>	<p>שְׁהָרִי הַדִּיבּוּר וְהַיְרָאָה הוּא סוּף מְדַרְגַת הָעֲלִיוֹן, וְחִיצוֹנִיּוּתוֹ, הַמְלַבִּישׁ אֶת הַמִּתְחַתֵּן גַּם כֵּן.</p>
<p>as it is stated: "And it clothes him with humility and awe," which is like a garment and a spreading of wings over him, drawn from above in order to save him from others and to elevate him upward through the wings of awe, called "wings" — love and awe, as is known.</p>	<p>כְּמֵאמֶר וּמִלְבָּשְׁתּוֹ עֲנוּה וְיִרְאָה, שֶׁהוּא כְּעֵין לְבוּשׁ וּפְרִישׁוֹת כְּנָפַיִם עָלָיו הַנִּמְשָׁךְ מִן הָעֲלִיוֹן בְּכַדִּי לְהַצִּילוֹ מֵאֲחֵרִים וּלְהַעֲלֵתוֹ אֵלָיו עַל יְדֵי גְדַפֵּי הַיְרָאָה הַנִּקְרָא כְּנָפַיִם, אֲהַבָּה וְיִרְאָה כְּפִדּוּעַ.</p>
<p>And through such speech one is called "man" (adam), for he resembles the Higher and elevates all things,</p>	<p>וְעַל יְדֵי דִיבּוּר כְּזֶה נִקְרָא אָדָם, שֶׁמְדַמֶּה לְעֲלִיוֹן וּמַעֲלֶה הַכֹּל.</p>
<p>for the entire world was created through speech, as it says: "By the word of the Lord the heavens were made" (Psalms 33:6), and it is written, "In the beginning God created" (Genesis 1:1), that everything was created for the sake of the beginning.</p>	<p>שְׁהָרִי כָל הָעוֹלָם כִּלּוֹ נִבְרָא בְּדִבּוּר, כְּמֵאמֶר בְּדִבְרֵי ה' שָׁמַיִם נִבְרָאוּ, וְכַתִּיב בְּרֵאשִׁית בְּרָא, שֶׁהַכֹּל נִבְרָא בְּשִׁבִיל רֵאשִׁית.</p>
<p>And it is stated: "And God made so that they should fear before Him" (Ecclesiastes 3:14),</p>	<p>וּמֵאמֶר וְהֵאֱלֹהִים עָשָׂה שִׁירָאוּ מִלְּפָנָיו.</p>
<p>thus, awe — which is the end of action — was first in thought; therefore, through awe all creations are united and they have elevation through the speech of the Jewish person,</p>	<p>נִמְצָא שֶׁהַיְרָאָה שֶׁהוּא סוּף הַמַּעֲשֵׂה בְּמַחְשַׁבָּה תְּחִלָּה, לְכֵן עַל יְדֵי מַתְיַחֲדִים כָּל הַבְּרִואִים וְיֵשׁ לָהֶם עֲלִיָּה עַל יְדֵי דִיבּוּר אָדָם יִשְׂרָאֵל.</p>
<p>for every word is letters, and through letters the heavens and the earth and their offspring were created and continue to be created similarly.</p>	<p>שֶׁכָּל דִּיבּוּר הֵם אוֹתִיּוֹת וּבְאוֹתִיּוֹת נִבְרָאוּ שָׁמַיִם וָאָרֶץ וְתוֹלְדוֹתֵיהֶם כְּיוֹצֵא בָהֶם.</p>
<p>For the matter of letters is the comprehension and revelation of the desire, whereas before letters there is no revelation at all;</p>	<p>כִּי עֲנֵן הָאוֹתִיּוֹת הוּא הַשְּׂגָה וְהַתְגַּלּוּת הַחִפְזִי, מֵה שְׁאִין, כֵּן קִדְּם אוֹתִיּוֹת אֵין שׁוֹם הַתְגַּלּוּת.</p>
<p>thus, all creations were revealed through letters according to their familial root and their combinations according to the order of their creation,</p>	<p>נִמְצָא הָרִי כָל הַבְּרִואִים נִתְגַּלוּ בְּאוֹתִיּוֹת לְבֵית אֲבוֹתָם, וְצִירוּפָם כְּסֹדֵר בְּרִיאָתָם.</p>
<p>and this is what our Sages said, that the world was created with the Holy Tongue, for every name in the Holy Tongue corresponds to the order of its creation, its formation, and its drawing forth from the higher holiness and life;</p>	<p>וְזֶהוּ אָמְרָם זְכוֹרֵנָם לְבִרְכָּה שֶׁהָעוֹלָם נִבְרָא בְּלִשׁוֹן הַקֹּדֶשׁ, שֶׁכָּל שֵׁם מִלִּשׁוֹן הַקֹּדֶשׁ הוּא סֹדֵר בְּרִיאֹתוֹ, וְצִירוּפוֹ וְהַמְשִׁכְתּוֹ מִן הַתַּיִם וְהַקֹּדֶשׁ הָעֲלִיוֹן.</p>

Menachem Mendel of Horodak

Pri Ha'Eretz

Parshas Tazria - Metzora

however, a man who uses his speech and the breadth of his mouth according to his own will, and for ways of self-gratification in physicality,	מה שאין פן אדם המשתמש בדיבורו והרחבת פיו, כרצונו, ואופני הנאת עצמו בגשמיות
in such a person the words and names are not true within him, but only a borrowed name from the truth of his root and the unity of the worlds and the order of their creation;	אין במלת דברי השמות אמתים בו, כי אם שם מושאל, מאמתת שרשו ויחוד העולמות וסדר בריאתם
and such speech is not called "speech" at all, but rather a chirping of birds, and the speech and conduct of evil and of the klipah (husk), their vitality and their unity.	ודיבור כזה אין נקרא דיבור קלל, כי אם צפצוף עופות, ודיבור והנהגת הרע, והקלפה וחיותם ויחודם
And this is "Guard your tongue from evil" (Psalms 34:14),	וזהו צד לשונך מרע
and this is the matter of a "metzora" (leper), for plagues come upon one who brings forth an evil name and speaks lashon hara (evil speech).	וזהו מצורע שהנגעים באים על המוציא שם רע ולשון הרע
And this is what our Sages said, that a metzora is considered as dead,	וזהו אמתם זכרונם לברכה מצורע חשוב כמת
as the verse states: "And man became a living soul" (Genesis 2:7), and its Targum (Aramaic translation) is "a speaking spirit,"	כמאמר ויהי האדם לנפש חיה, תרגומו לרוח ממללא
thus, the translation of "life" is "speech" — meaning speech is the life;	הרי שהתרגום של חיים הוא ממללא שהוא הדיבור, שהוא החיות
and if the speech is not proper, then he brings forth evil and plagues come upon him, for he is not a living soul, but rather a leper, as if dead,	ואם אין הדיבור בתקונו, הרי הוא מוציא רע ונגעים באים, כי אינו נפש חיה כי אם מצורע כמת
as it is said: "Please do not let her be as one dead" (Numbers 12:12).	שנאמר אל נא תהי כמת
And this is "Just as man's formation was after all beasts, animals, and birds," because the end of action was first in thought, and this is the unification of all,	וזהו כשם שיצירתו של אדם אחר כל בהמה חיה ועוף, ומפני סוף מעשה במחשבה תחלה, והוא היחוד לכלם
so too his Torah was explained, for the Torah is the letters of His speech and the order of His formation,	כך תורתו נתפרשה, כי התורה הם האותיות דיבורו, וסדר יצירתו
and "was explained" is an expression of "spreading out the garment," which is the unification and connection.	ומתפרשת הוא לשון פרישת שמלה שהוא היחוד והתקשרות

[NOTE: Summary

This discourse explores the profound role of **speech (דיבור)** and **awe (יראה)** in human identity and the unity of creation.

Menachem Mendel of Horodak

Pri Ha'Eretz

Parshas Tazria - Metzora

- **Letters (אותיות)** are the revelation and actualization of divine intent. Without letters — there is no revelation.
- Every created being was **formed and revealed** through the holy letters in their specific arrangement, which mirrors their divine source.
- The **Holy Tongue (לשון הקודש)** is not just a language — it is the very **medium of creation**; every Hebrew word corresponds to the essence and structure of what it names.
- **Proper human speech** should mirror the creative divine speech — expressing **truth, holiness, and connection** to the source of life.
- However, when a person **uses speech for self-gratification** or **corrupts it** (e.g., through lashon hara, gossip, or selfish chatter), his speech **no longer mirrors divine speech**. Instead, it becomes like the **chirping of birds** — hollow, disconnected, and sustaining the forces of **evil (קליפות)**.
- Such misuse of speech leads to **spiritual decay** symbolized by **leprosy (צרעת)** — physical manifestation of spiritual sickness.
- A **metzora** is called "dead" because life is defined by **speech**, and when speech is corrupted, one's spiritual life is severed.
- This ties back to the order of man's creation: Man was created after all other creatures because his function — to **unify creation through holy speech** — is the final and highest purpose of creation.
- Similarly, the Torah, which is the map of divine letters and creation, was explained last — symbolizing that the ultimate revelation and connection happen through proper human speech and awe.

Practical Takeaway

- **Guard your speech:** Understand that every word you utter **builds or destroys worlds**. Speaking truth, holiness, and kindness literally **upholds the universe**.
- **Avoid idle or harmful words:** Gossip, slander, and meaningless chatter not only damage relationships but also **separate you from your own soul's vitality**.
- **Engage with reverence:** When you speak — especially words of Torah, prayer, or encouragement — **infuse them with awe and awareness** that you are using the power that mirrors Divine creation.
- **Work on inner alignment:** The purer your **intentions** and **speech**, the more you become a **true אדם** — a person who brings blessing, unity, and life to the world.

Chassidic Story

The Baal Shem Tov and the Power of a Word

Menachem Mendel of Horodak

Pri Ha'Eretz

Parshas Tazria - Metzora

It is told that the **Baal Shem Tov** once revealed to his students a breathtaking vision:

He showed them how **one careless word** uttered by a simple villager **created a disturbance** in the upper worlds — a swirl of confusion among the angels.

In contrast, **one pure, heartfelt word of prayer** from another humble Jew caused **great rivers of light** to pour down from Heaven, nourishing entire spiritual realms.

The Baal Shem Tov explained:

"When a Jew utters a word, that word becomes a living being. If it is good and pure, it ascends and brings light. If it is corrupted, it descends and brings darkness. A true Jew realizes he is building or destroying universes with every word."

From then on, his students **weighed each word** they spoke with **deep care and reverence**, understanding that their speech was **a ladder to the Infinite. END NOTE]**