

SCHEDULE

שבת קדש

Mincha Erev Shabbos	7:00 PM
Shacharis— Followed by Kiddush	8:30 AM
<i>Sof Zman K"ס מ"א 8:48 א"ג 9:24</i>	
Avos Shiur	7:40 PM
Mincha- Followed by Shalosh Seudos	8:15 PM
Maariv	9:26 PM

Sunday

Shacharis	8:30 AM
-No Shiur This Week	
Mincha / Maariv	8:25 PM

Weekday Minyanim & Shiurim

Monday—Friday

Gemarah Shiur (No Shiur M-TH)	6:00 AM
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Maseches Avodah Zarah with Rabbi Teichman

Shacharis

Mon, Thurs. 6:40AM	Tues, Wed, Fri. 6:45AM
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Dirshu Halacha Prog (FR Only this week)	7:30AM
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Additional daily minyan (Mon - Fri)	8:10AM
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Mincha	1:45 PM
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Mincha / Maariv	8:25 PM
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Open Beis Hamedrash	7:00 PM
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Shiur (TH Only this week)	9:30 PM
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Nightly Maariv (Mon-Thur)	9:45 PM
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Thursday Night Shiur, Rabbi Teichman

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Volume #47

RABBI'S MESSAGE

The Art of "Tipesh"try

There are three classical episodes of לשון הרע reported in the תורה where the sin of slander and its consequences are described for posterity.

The first story is that revolving around the tension that existed between יוסף and his brothers and that infamous report that יוסף brought to his father that resulted in the descent of מצרים and all its repercussions. The second event is the misunderstanding that took place between משה רבינו and his loving sister מרים and her mistakenly accusing him of abandoning his wife צפורה. This led to her being afflicted with צרעת and forever memorialized by a מצוה עשה demanding of us never to forget the effects of this transgression. Finally the tragedy of the spies and their slandering of the promised land whose results we are still suffering today as we wait for the ultimate redemption from our bitter גלות.

Ironically in each of the accounts the severity of the sin is somewhat tempered by the circumstances prevalent in each case. יוסף sensing the mistreatment of the בני השפחות at the hands of בני לאה feels a sense of duty to report to his father, לתועלת, what to all appearances seems as failings on the part of his brothers. מרים, the dutiful and devoted sister sympathetically reaches out on behalf of her sister in law, צפורה, in questioning her brothers behavior. According to some opinions she was only speaking to herself without any intention to harm משה.

The גמרא points out that the תורה castigates the מרגלים for merely being "הארץ"; those who libeled the "land", the אבנים and עצים, but not for the more heinous statement claiming, "כי חזק הוא ממנו"; for they (the inhabitants) are stronger than Him, referring to השם!

If not for the terrible nature of what was said what then were they all being accused of?

The רמב"ם at the end of the laws of צרעת describes the evolution of slander. He says that it all begins with the wicked "טפשים"; fools, who gab grandiosely leading them to eventually bad mouthing not only each other but their leaders and ultimately השם. Indeed in our וידוי we confess שחטאנו בטפשות מה. What is this emphasis on טפשות?

In each of the stories cited the תורה alludes to this "foolishness. יוסף is referred to as "נער", as in והוא נער את בני בלהה, on which רש"י elucidates, עושה מעשה נעורו, he acted immaturely and foolishly. The בעל הטורים points out that the word נער is the numerical equivalent (320) of שוטה!

יוסף begs forgiveness after accepting מרים's לשון הרע about him, by confessing ואשר חטאנו; for we have been "foolish" and we have sinned.

The מדרש in our פרשה speaks of the כסיל (משלי יח) and מוציא דבה הוא; he that utters a slander is a fool, as referring to the מרגלים, prominent people who "made themselves into fools".

There are different types of fools. The נער, the impetuous foolishness of youth, who thinks he knows it all when he has yet so much yet to learn and experience in life. The אביל, אשר עאלע, a fool who has lived and possesses intelligence but is too secure in his knowledge unwilling to submit that perhaps he is missing something. The כסיל, whose subconscious corporeal desires and instincts cloud his objective thinking and allow him to make foolish choices. (Based on מלבים and R' S.R.Hirsch)

The first step in the process of the sin of slander begins with poor and foolish judgment and the lack of properly valuing the people and entities we benefit from. יוסף, מרים and the מרגלים all exhibited an aspect of "טפשות" in their succumbing to לשון הרע. It was the immature exuberance of his youth that prevented יוסף from properly assessing his brothers' greatness. It was מרים's self assuredness that led her to foolishly judge משה on her own justified level. It was the instinctive fear of the מרגלים that they might lose their leadership roles upon entering ארץ ישראל that crippled them from appreciating the magnificent gift that השם handed them.

Every negative characteristic has a positive side. Anger is poison unless it is used to stand up for the honor of השם. Pride can be indicative of arrogance except when it is the pride in being אביל. And so with every trait. What is the plus side of טפשות; foolishness?

It is attributed that the great sage Reb Chaim Ozer זצ"ל responded, that one must employ the מדה of טפשות when it comes to judging others!

Too often we jump to conclusions in assessing so many situations in life resulting in foolish conclusions and disastrous consequences. We would be "wise" to be "foolish" in assuming we are not that smart, thereby saving our relationships not only with our fellow man but ultimately our most treasured relationship, that with השם!

באהבה,

צבי טייכמן

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