

Adass Aish Kodesh

Rabbi: Harav Y. R. Rubín Shlita
Prestwich – Manchester
36 Bury Old Road



עדת אש קודש

בהנהגת מוה"ר י. ר. רובין שליט"א
פרסטוויטש – מנטשסטער
נוסד חשון תש"ע

בס"ד

The Rhythm Of The Heart

By Rabbi Yitzchak Reuven Rubín

Tehillim - Chapter 52

Page | 1

There are moments when long dormant memories float back into your consciousness. They can be triggered by anything - a word, an overheard comment; it makes no difference, it's there for the savoring.

Early this morning I had just such an experience. I was studying a new *sefer* someone had kindly sent me, and mention was made of water lilies. Bang - my memory bank hit me: *Water lilies - do you remember the water lilies? Sure you do - summer camp, when we would go row boating and schlep the water lilies out.*

For the uninitiated, let me explain. Water lilies are lovely large flowers that sit amidst huge green leaves on the surface of lakes. They seem to float upon the surface on their own volition, but in fact they are anchored to the lake's bottom by a long stem that reaches to the deepest depths. When you pick a water lily, you get this long root in the bargain.

The act of destroying others through one's words cuts one off from the very roots that keep us attached to our Source, Hashem.

Excuse me, you may now be asking, what does this botanical insight have to do with *Tehillim*? Good question, and the answer is in the root. Things can only be thriving and lovely on the surface if they are well connected to their source. It makes no difference how far away it may be, the connection must be there or the lovely flower withers and dies.

In our times, it is all too easy to buy oneself the look of all that is proper and good. However, the veneer must match the core, and that core must be attached to our source of true energy, Hashem. The Sfas Emes tells us, "There are commandments that deal with the relationship

For more inspirational articles from the Rov Shlita please check out our website theinformalproject.com

To Sponsor a week Please contact us on aakletter+sponsor@gmail.com

between man and G-d, and others that deal with man's relationship to man. Although rooted in social mores and so-called civilization, they too are equally Hashem's laws from Har Sinai. By behaving with utmost care toward mankind, one is able to understand the Torah laws even deeper. The more one understands, the more respect he has for his fellow man. This is a spiral that continues upward without end."

Do we hear what the tzaddik is saying? Understanding Torah is contingent upon respecting one's fellow man. The more you work on this, the more the Torah is understood. It is a symbiotic relationship; one aspect needs the other to flourish. And yet, and yet - we see fine and upstanding folk become embroiled in viscous and malicious talk that often leads to the shedding of innocent blood!

I am not being melodramatic with these words. I have been in communal work long enough to have witnessed such horrific acts. People have actually and totally been destroyed through rumor and insinuation, and for what? So that those speakers of scandal could find some perverse joy or power.

How can we be attached to our source of spirituality if we are able to destroy others with our tongues? This is a question that every age has asked and every rav has had to grapple with. There are those who will allow themselves to use evil talk (and all such mutterings are evil) with a sense of righteousness. We all seek to make that which is reprehensible more palatable by bringing a dynamic of holiness into play. Soon the worst slander is used "*leshem shamayim,*" in the name of all that is holy and pure. It's as if Hashem can't run His world, *chas veshalom*, without our sticking in some sensational tidbits. The *yetzer hara* has so many ways to capture us, and the use of evil talk is one of his more exciting and soul-destroying ones.

Evil talk destroys not only the one spoken of, but the speaker and his listener are also corrupted. The long nourishing root that attaches us to Hashem becomes rotten with each such act. The speaker becomes enamored by the sound of his own wickedness, and soon the very reason for such actions is forgotten in the quest for ever-greater destructive talk.

There is an expression used in the military known as "the fog of war" which intimates all this. On a battleground there is often chaos which forms a fog, a mist that denies the combatants all ability to discern what is really going on. Many times this is the case as well when people become embroiled in communal disputes, or even disputes closer to the family unit. We soon see what is called "collateral damage" (another military term), which is a euphemism for the destruction of innocent bystanders.

How often do we find this in our own unheroic lives! People get embroiled in a disagreement, and soon the rumors are flying thick and fast. Innocent people are dragged in, and all is seen as "fair" in a war that really has no purpose.

Friends, I have seen families broken, marriages crushed and good lives made intolerable with just a few words of evil content.

In this *kapitel* David speaks openly about his own experiences. He too was the victim of slander, and as a result a whole city of innocent souls was destroyed. He leaves us this psalm as a *maskil*, an instruction, so that we can learn from what he went through and see what angry jealousy often reaps.

First, a small history lesson is in order so we can fully understand David's words.

David was forced to flee because of the jealousy of his father-in-law, Shaul. Starving and unarmed, David came to Nov, a city of *kohanim* and the place where the Tabernacle was then situated. He asked Achimelech the *kohen* for some bread and a sword. The *kohen* thought that David was on some mission for King Shaul and gave him whatever supplies he could. His deed was witnessed by Do'eg, who was in the city on a spiritual retreat in the Tabernacle. Achimelech's act of innocent kindness was reported back to Shaul in such a manner that the insecure king was certain it was a conspiracy. He ordered the entire city to be destroyed, a horrific act carried out only because of the treacherous slander.

Bevo Do'eg Ha'adomi..., "When Doeg the Edomite came and told Shaul, and said to him, 'David has come to the house of Achimelech.'" The lesson is boldly spoken, there are no poetic devices used. The sin is spoken of openly so that we know what is involved.

Mah tis'hallel bira'ah hagibor..., "Why do you pride yourself with evil, mighty man? The kindness of Hashem is all the day." Rumormongers feel proud of their seemingly powerful words. They get a charge of energy just by using their mouths for destruction. David reminds us all that it is Hashem who rules this world, and His is a kindness that can transcend all plots of destruction.

Havos tachshov lishonecha..., "Your tongue devises wickedness, like a sharpened razor, working deceitfully." You may have talked yourself into thinking that what you have done is a good deed. This in itself is part of the wickedness. Just as a razor cuts without thought, your words spread deceit and can never be acceptable, even when you pretend that the cause is for the good.

Ahavta rah mitov..., "You love evil more than good, falsehood more than speaking righteousness." Beneath the veneer of your righteousness, the reality is that you truly love the power of your falsehood. Evil can come in many forms, and the scandalmonger loves them all.

Ahavta kol divrei bala..., "You love all the devouring words and the deceitful tongue." This is the heart of the problem - those who handle with deceit and words of hate want them to devour others. They relish the pain that they cause.

Gam Kel yitzcha lanetzach..., “Likewise, Hashem will shatter you forever, He will break you and pluck you from the tent and uproot you from the land of the living.” Chazal tell us that Do’eg is one of the few who forfeited any share in the World to Come. This is the worst punishment possible.

We are all too human and susceptible. We commit many unfortunate acts during our lifetime. However, the act of destroying others through one’s words cuts one off from the very roots that keep us attached to our Source, Hashem. Although it may not be apparent at the time, when one chooses to take this route, he will ultimately be lost. There can be no place in the land of the living, the land sustained by Hashem's living Torah, for one who so corrupts the atmosphere.

This sentence ends with the word *selah*, a word that intimates a sense of solidness. This is what will become of such evildoers. Their punishment will not be just for the moment, but just like a pillar of stone, it will be forever.

May we all be spared from such evil, and even more, may we stay well clear of becoming part of the problem to begin with.