

Beit Hamidrash Hameir Laarets | Issue 102

**Tazria-Metzora** | Bringing Out the Light of Your Soul



# MESILLOT

## *Pathways to the Soul*

Illuminating teachings and insights on the weekly parasha  
by **Rabbi Yoram Michael Abargel zt"l**

From the weekly lectures of his son,  
**Rabbi Israel Abargel shlita**

# ...PATHWAYS TO THE SOUL...

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

A Gift from Heaven .....	1
The King .....	5
Yeshayahu's First Prophecy .....	7
The Stumbling Block.....	9
The Creation of The Worlds .....	9
The Inner World .....	10
Don't Stand Still ! .....	14
Elevating Power – A Broken Heart....	15
Cheshbon Nefesh .....	18
One Answer to All Questions .....	19
What's the Connection?.....	20
Why Adam? .....	21
Awaken .....	22
<i>The Pathway</i> .....	25



**DONATE**

### Beit Hamidrash Hameir Laarets

Publisher and Distributer of the Teachings of  
Rabbi Yoram Michael Abargel zt"l

 500 Frank W Burr Blvd Suite 47  
Teaneck, NJ 07666

 [en@h-l.org.il](mailto:en@h-l.org.il)


 [www.hameir-laarets.org.il/en](http://www.hameir-laarets.org.il/en)

 HaKatzir 666, Netivot, Israel

 (954) 800-6526

 HameirLaaretsEN

 HameirLaaretsEN

 054-870-8737

Message Us to Join Our WhatsApp Groups

# Parashat Tazria-Metzora

## A Gift from Heaven

**One** day, Rebbe Avraham Yehoshua Heshel, the *Ohev Israel* of Apta, called the members of his Beit Din and told them, "I need to go to Warsaw to meet with a few government officials for the benefit of the community." His colleagues blessed him, and he set off...

**Rebbe** Avraham hired a wagon driver, opened a Gemara, and immersed himself in learning... After a few hours, the wagon driver suddenly stopped the wagon, turned to the Rebbe, and said, "Rebbe, there's a problem!"

**"What** happened?" asked the Rebbe.

**"I** just learned that tomorrow a very important state event is taking place in Warsaw. People from all over the country are traveling there. The roads are packed..."

**After** a long, arduous journey, they finally arrived in Warsaw.

**Rebbe** Avraham paid the wagon driver, entered an inn, and asked for a room. They answered, "There are no rooms available."

**"I'm** the Rabbi of Apta. Maybe there's something available nevertheless."

**The** innkeeper started laughing at and ridiculing him.

**Rebbe** Avraham left, ashamed, and went to another inn. But there, the same thing occurred. They too laughed at and ridiculed him...

**After** a few hours of wandering, he realized he had no choice. He went to a nearby soup kitchen, but there too, he ran into a problem. It was terribly crowded, and he barely received a slice of bread and a chair to sit on... His body ached from the harsh journey and the terrible cold that penetrated his bones...

**After** a short “rest,” he went to meet the government officials. But when he arrived, he was informed that he had to wait until the event was over...

**Since** he realized that he had to stay several days in the city, he approached the head of the Jewish community and told him that he was the Rabbi of Apta and that maybe he could arrange a comfortable inn for him...

**However,** the head of the community also disregarded him. Thus, he returned to the soup kitchen...

**Ultimately,** he managed to meet the people he wanted. He then set off on a long journey back home... However, his suffering wasn't over...

**Again,** the roads were jampacked because of a large pothole in the road that caused a standstill for many hours...

**Rebbe** Avraham's body was in agonizing pain, but he strengthened himself, saying, “Soon I'll reach the city of Pieterkov, which is close to Apta. There they must've

already heard about me and will receive me with a warm welcome. I'll finally be able to rest after the harsh, cold journey...”

**He** arrived at Pieterkov, entered an inn, and said to them, “I'm the Rabbi of Apta. Perhaps there's a room available for me?”

**They** started laughing at and ridiculing him...

**Once** again, he couldn't find a place to stay, so he entered the nearby Beit Midrash and ate a piece of bread dipped in salt...

**He** later found a wagon heading toward the town of Kielce, which is closer to Apta, and joined them. On his way there, he cheered himself up, “Now I'll surely feel at home.” But there too, the same thing happened...

**He** spent two days there in hunger and total lack of everything... He then found a wagon heading to Ostrowiec, which is about two hours away from Apta (by wagon), and joined them. On his way, he encouraged himself, saying, “Certainly in Ostrowiec I'll easily find a wagon

heading home, and even if I have to linger there for a while, at least they'll recognize me and give me a hot meal to eat..."

**Finally**, at five o'clock in the afternoon, he arrived in Ostrowiec. He immediately began to look for a wagon heading to Apta, but to no avail...

**Not** only that, but everyone who passed by looked at him as if he was a foreigner... He searched for hours to find a way to get back home, but night had already fallen...

**Suddenly**, he noticed a familiar face. A wagon driver from his city passed by with his wagon. The Rebbe caught up to him and asked in hope, "Perhaps you're going to Apta?"

**"Yes,"** the wagon driver replied.

**"Can** I join you?" asked the Rebbe.

**"Yes,"** answered the wagon driver.

**Rebbe** Avraham said to him, "Okay, but I'm hiring you on condition that you drive straight

there without making any stops. I'm so exhausted, and there's not that much room here. Don't worry. I'll pay you handsomely."

**The** journey began, and a few minutes later, the wagon stopped. Three hefty people climbed onto the wagon...

**Rebbe** Avraham said to the wagon driver, "But I made a condition with you!"

**The** wagon driver replied, "Rabbi, these are my good friends from Apta..."

**Rebbe** Avraham was filled with distress. There was no room to sit, and on top of that, two elbows stabbed him on both sides the whole way. But he had no choice. They had already distanced quite significantly from the city, and even if he'd return, he had nowhere to stay the night in Ostrowiec. He was compelled to continue his journey...

**Exhausted**, he raised his eyes to the heavens and impatiently looked forward to getting home...

**With** a heavy heart, he stood at the door of his home and knocked... The door violently opened, and his wife “attacked” him, shouting, “That’s how you arrive?! Suddenly, without any notice?! Can’t you notify me in advance?! I’ve had it! I’m going to sleep in the kitchen!”

**His** wife left him standing in the doorway, entered the kitchen, slammed the door behind her, and locked it with the key!

**Rebbe** Avraham sat down on a chair, his hands dangling at his sides, and stared blankly...

**Knocks** were suddenly heard at the door. The assistant came to wake the Rebbe for prayer. The Rebbe got up and went to the mikveh. He immersed; his soul almost flew out of him. The extreme cold nearly froze his blood vessels...

**After** the prayer, one of the Jews in the shul held a *yahrzeit* for his father and served cookies and vodka. Rebbe Avraham ate

and drank, and then dozed off. When he woke up, he felt that he had finally returned to himself. He then got up and entered a side room.

**There**, he began to contemplate why his journey went the way it did...

**He** realized that because he felt that he was important and that the whole world should think highly of him and listen to him, it was decided in heaven that he should be taught a lesson. In a crash course, they proved to him that he has no influence, not even in his own home...<sup>1</sup>

**Since** he received that gift from heaven, to know his place, he began to work on himself until he merited becoming one of the greatest tzaddikim in recent generations...

**Surely**, you must be asking yourself, why we call this “path” a gift...?

## The King

**The** tenth king of the Davidic dynasty was Uziah HaMelech, the son of Amatziah HaMelech.

**At** 16 years old, his father was murdered, and he was then crowned King.

**King** Uziah was a righteous king, as is said about him, “He did what was upright in the eyes of Hashem, just as his father Amatziah had done” (Melachim II 15:3).

**For** this reason, Hashem aided him in significantly benefiting Am Israel. In the Book of Divrei HaYamim II, an entire chapter tells about his deeds and his might.

**There,** it’s told about the wars he fought against Israel’s enemies and his devotion to the building of Jerusalem.

**Furthermore,** since he loved the land, he invested greatly in agriculture, as it says, “He built towers in the desert and hewed out many cisterns, for he had much cattle. He had farmers in the valleys and the plains, and vinedressers in the mountains and

in the fertile fields; for he loved the land” (Divrei HaYamim II 26:10).

**He** continued to perfect his kingdom until “his name spread far and wide, for he wrought wondrously until he became strong” (Divrei HaYamim 26:15).

**Then,** at his peak, everything collapsed...

**Uziah** HaMelech ceaselessly worked the land to the point that he didn’t learn Torah. That *bitul* Torah is what brought him to arrogance.

**One** day, he had to enter the Beit Midrash. When he entered, he asked the learners, “What are you guys learning?” They answered him, “The verse, “a stranger who approaches shall die” (Bamidbar 1:51) – That it’s forbidden for a person who isn’t a Kohen to work in the Temple.”

**Uziah** asked them, “I’m also forbidden?”

**They** replied, “Yes.”

**Uziah** said to them, “Why?! Hashem is a King, and I’m a

Parashat Tazria-Metzora - The King

king. It's fitting for a king to serve before a King and to burn incense before Him."

**Since** at that time he was at the height of his meteoric ascension, he decided to go and burn incense before Hashem, as it says, "But after he became strong, his heart grew haughty until he acted corruptly, and he trespassed against Hashem his G-d, for he entered the Sanctuary of Hashem to burn incense upon the altar of incense" (Divrei HaYamim II 26:16).

**He** entered the Temple, took the fire pan, and started walking towards the golden altar... The Kohanim started running towards him from all directions, "Our master, the king! What are you doing?! It's forbidden for you to do that!"

**Uziah's** face reddened with anger. He shouted at them, "Be silent, or I'll kill you!"

**At** that moment, all of creation trembled, and the

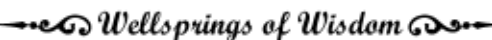
Temple was split into two, causing heavy damage...<sup>2</sup>

**The** earth came to Hashem and said, "Master of the world! Korach challenged the *Kehuna* (priesthood), and you gave me permission to swallow him alive. Give me permission now too, and I'll swallow him alive as well!"

**Fire** came to Hashem and said, "Master of the world! Two hundred and fifty incense burners challenged the *Kehuna*, and you gave me permission to burn them alive. Give me permission now too, and I'll burn him alive as well!"

**In** heaven, legions of angels came to Hashem and requested, "Please, give us permission..." Just then, a *Bat Kol* went forth, saying, "He won't be like Korach" (Bamidbar 17:5) – Even though his sin is equivalent to their sin, his punishment will not be the same!<sup>3</sup>

**At** that moment, Uziah HaMelech was plagued with



2. Midrash Tanchuma (Noach, Ch. 13; Tzav, Ch. 13).

3. Yalkut Israel (Bamidbar, p. 8).



Parashat Tazria-Metzora - Yeshayahu's First Prophecy

leprosy and was expelled from Jerusalem to live in the cemetery.

He lived there for twenty-five years until the day of his death...

### Yeshayahu's First Prophecy

**During** those moments when all of creation was shaken by the act of Uziah HaMelech, the prophet, Yeshayahu ben Amotz, was in an entirely different place.

**At** those very moments,<sup>4</sup> he merited to shed off all materiality and ascend to the upper worlds. There, he saw how all the hosts of heaven were in an uproar following Uziah's act.

**After** Yeshayahu entered the upper worlds and saw "Angels standing before Him... And one would call to the other and say: Holy, holy, holy is Hashem of Hosts! The whole earth is full of His glory! And the doorposts would shake at the sound of the call" (Yeshayahu 6:2-4), he saw

how awesomely the angles served Hashem, and he shouted, "Woe to me, for I imagined! Because I am a man of impure lips, and I dwell among a people of impure lips" (Yeshayahu 6:5).

**"Woe** to me, for I imagined" – Woe to me, that until now I imagined that I was virtuous and important, but now it became clear to me that until now I lived in an illusion, in a mistaken imagination. My *avodah* is insignificant, nothing!"<sup>5</sup>

**The** reason I was mistaken is "because I am a man of impure lips, and I dwell among a people of impure lips" – The environment around me caused me to live in such illusions!<sup>6</sup>

---

*~ Wellsprings of Wisdom ~*

---

4. Seder Olam Rabbah (Ch. 20).

5. Aryeh Shaag (Vol. 5, p. 119).

6. **Just** like the famous story about Yehuda...

**Yehuda** was the only person in his village who knew how to read Hebrew without vowels. Therefore, he was the one who read from the Torah every Shabbat, and he was the one who

Parashat Tazria-Metzora - Yeshayahu's First Prophecy

**Yeshayahu's** cry concluded... Hashem then said to him, "I'm looking for a man who will agree to go and bring Am Israel to do teshuva."

**Yeshayahu** replied. "Here I am! Send me!" (Yeshayahu 6:8).

**Since** then, he began prophesying continually, and he merited becoming one of the greatest prophets in history.<sup>7</sup> Additionally, he merited that most of his prophecies were about the salvations and consolations that await Am Israel.

...*~* Wellsprings of Wisdom *~*...

taught the community Halachot... From the Halachot written in the siddur...

**All** the residents of his village treated him with respect. Every Shabbat, they would call him up to the Torah, saying, "May our great teacher, the *gaon*, Rabbi Yehuda shlita, stand!

**Once**, he had to stay in the big city for Shabbat. When he got there, he saw sharp, knowledgeable *avrechim* learning with thunderous, intense fervor...

**Then**, oh then, he realized that all his imaginations stemmed from the fact that he lived in a remote village. Whereas in the city, he wasn't even fit to be the *gabbai* of the shul...

**7. Rebbe** Elimelech of Lizhensk zt"l writes...

**I** heard a wonderful parable from my teacher, the Maggid of Mezritch zt"l, that in our bitter exile, *Ruach HaKodesh* is attained much more easily than in the days of the prophets. In those times, they needed to bind angels with oaths and meditate at great lengths to attain prophecy and *Ruach HaKodesh*.

**He** said the following parable...

**When** the king dwells in his glorious palace, even his most beloved residents cannot invite him to dine at their homes. The king would scold them for even making such a bold request. It's beneath the king's honor to leave his palace to dine as a guest in another's home, even at the grandest of feasts.

**If** a person nonetheless wishes to do so, they must make the greatest possible preparations and ask the king's ministers to present his request according to the royal protocol so they may find favor in the king's eyes. Only then will the king consider their request.

**However**, when the king travels from his palace and is forced to rest on the way, he will dwell even in a simple village inn, provided that it is clean. When circumstances demand, even such lodgings are acceptable to the king.

**In** the times of the Beit HaMikdash, the Shechina rested in the Holy of Holies. If a person wished to draw *Ruach HaKodesh* or prophecy, they needed to invest the greatest of efforts to do

**But** why was it that only after his heart broke and crumbled to pieces, specifically then did Hashem appoint him as a prophet?

### The Stumbling Block

**The** Gemara says<sup>8</sup> that Rabba bar Rav Huna taught a Halacha that just as if one wants to betroth only half of a woman, she isn't betrothed, so too, a woman who is half a maidservant and half a free woman who was betrothed, her betrothal isn't a valid betrothal. However, after some time, it became clear to him that he was wrong. He then gathered the sages and informed them... Although the Sages said that one who wants to betroth only half of a woman, she isn't betrothed, however, a woman who is half a maidservant and half a free

woman who was betrothed, her betrothal is a valid betrothal.

**However**, before he announced his mistake in front of everyone, he began with the verse, "This stumbling block shall be under your hand" (Yeshayahu 3:6) – The Torah is called a "stumbling block" because a person doesn't fully understand the words of the Torah unless they stumble in them.

**But** why? Why must we go through the stage of shame?

**We'll** answer all of our questions, with the help of Hashem, and then we'll move on to this week's parasha...

### The Creation of The Worlds

**Hashem** decided to create a world in which His reality

would be concealed and to place within it human beings who

---

### Wellsprings of Wisdom

---

so, just as they did during the *Simchat Beit HaShoeva*, for they would draw *Ruach HaKodesh* from the Beit HaMikdash.

**But** now, in our bitter exile, the Shechina has been exiled along with us, and due to our sins, the Shechina is

forced to wander the earth, desiring only to find a clean place to rest. Upon finding a person who is simply clean from sin, the Shechina rests upon them...

- Noam Elimelech (Parashat Vayeshev).

8. Gittin 43a.

## Parashat Tazria-Metzora - The Inner World

would crown Him king over them.

**Rebbe** Avraham Yehoshua Heshel zt”l writes<sup>9</sup> that the primary reason Hashem desired to create the world was so that He would receive the title “King.”

**For** the title of “King” is relevant only when there are dependents under him, after all, “There’s no king without a people.”

**For** this reason, He *האציל* (“emanated” from Himself to create a world – the World of Emanation – *Atzilut*), *ברא* (“created” – the World of Creation – *Beriyah*), *יצר* (“formed” – the World of Formation – *Yetzirah*), and *עשה* (“acted” – the World of Action – *Asiyah*) all the upper and lower worlds, in order to

become known and to reveal that He alone is King of the entire world, and His kingship reigns over all.

**However**, since the intensity of the revelation of His Kingship is tremendous, and He knew that no creation has the strength to receive His immense, pure, infinite light...

**Therefore**, He contracted His light and illuminated His light in every world according to what it can bear for its existence and sustenance, and thus created four general worlds... *Atzilut*, *Beriyah*, *Yetzirah*, and *Asiyah*.

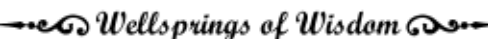
**And** in each world, there are numerous levels, one on top of the other...

### The Inner World

**The** concept of “level” appears many times in the realm of the inner aspect of the Torah. We’ll clarify it according to how it’s reflected in our daily lives.

A “level” is actually the person’s inner world. The higher the level,

the more powerful the revelation of one’s feelings of holiness are, for example, one’s love for Hashem, and the more their perception of the world around them will be true and refined, and the more they’ll be full of pure *emuna*.



**The** same goes for the other way around... When a person's inner world is full of materiality

and possessiveness, it's a sign that they're on a very low level, at the bottom of the world of *Asiyah*.<sup>10</sup>

—*~ Wellsprings of Wisdom ~*—

**10. Rabbi** Yaakov Emden writes (Introduction to his commentary on the siddur)...

**When** we contemplate our situation in the history of the world, we see that we are a nation exiled, like scattered sheep. After the thousands of years of hardship that we have befallen us, there is no nation as oppressed as ours. Our enemies are numerous. With their hatred and their jealousy, they have raised their heads to uproot and destroy us. Even so, they have been unable to fulfill their nefarious plans. The most powerful nations have risen against us and long ago fallen, their memory forgotten like a passing shadow, but we who cling to Hashem survive today.

**With** all the torments of the exile, we have not lost even one letter of the Written Torah, and the words of our Sages still stand strong. The Torah is impervious to the hand of time. What could the clever philosophers possibly say to explain this?

That it is merely a coincidence?

**By** my life, I swear that this is greater in my eyes than the miracles that Hashem performed for our forefathers in Egypt, in the desert and in Eretz Israel. The longer the exile lasts, the more the miracle becomes obvious, and

Hashem's might is further revealed. Everything that we undergo today was already overseen by the prophets, who groaned over the terrible length of the exile long before it started. Of all their words, not one has been disproven.

**He** who would dispute this, his words are like smoke and the passing clouds.

**After** every national tragedy, the Jewish people have risen anew, exhibiting the power of resurrection that is present in every generation, both in individuals and in the community as a whole. The miracle of resurrection can deliver us from death, from deathly illness, and from the many aspects of spiritual and physical destruction that exist in the world.

**For** example, *chazal* tell us (Brachot 18b) that the wicked, even in their lifetimes, are considered as dead. Their sensitivity to the fine points of holiness and the unique sanctity of the Jewish people has perished. Even so, they can still return through a process of teshuva that borders on the Resurrection of the Dead. Therefore, we must never despair of the spiritual state of any Jew. No matter how low he has sunk, he can rise up again from the depths of the abyss.

- Mevasser Tov (Techias HaMeisim, p. 13).

**In** order to make this more intelligible, we'll bring a story...<sup>11</sup>

**On** the way out of the synagogue, I encountered my friend, Yirmiah. "I have to tell you what happened to me just now during mincha," he said excitedly.

**At** the end of the prayer, I approached the *chazzan* to advise him about the pronunciation of a few words, because during the repetition of the Amidah, he made a few mistakes. I spoke to him very politely...

**"Yasher koach** on the prayer! You pronounce the words pleasantly and clearly. But, forgive me, I wanted to draw your attention to the fact that in the words "וּמִי דוֹמָה לָךְ" (who can be compared to You?) at the beginning of the Amidah, under the letter ך of the word "דוֹמָה" there's an accent symbol which indicates that this letter should be emphasized, meaning that the word must be read with emphasis on the first syllable."

**For** further clarification, I held a siddur in my hand and pointed to the accent symbol in question. It seemed to me that he understood, thus I wanted to continue on to the next word, that in "גּוֹאֵל חָזַק אֲתָהּ" (You are a Mighty Redeemer) under the letter א of the word "אֲתָהּ" there's an accent symbol, indicating that this word must also be read with emphasis on the first syllable.

**I** looked up at him to explain the matter, but I suddenly saw, to my astonishment, that his face was red, and his eyes flashed with anger. He screamed at me, "I said it perfectly fine! You... You don't hear well.

Your hearing is impaired!"

**He** took a deep breath to continue detailing my impairments, but from then on, I didn't hear a word he said. I immediately retreated...

**"You** deserve the punishment," I told him with a smile, "Because you didn't listen to the instructions of the wisest man in history, "Don't rebuke a scoffer, lest he hate you" (Mishlei 9:8)."

**“I** only wanted to help him,” my friend apologized, “I wanted to teach him something he doesn’t know and enlighten him.”

**“Yeah!”** I said, “But a “scoffer” doesn’t want to learn. He’s not at all interested in you enlightening him or expanding his knowledge. He doesn’t want to change anything from what he’s been used to in his fifty years of life, and he’s planning to continue to behave for the next fifty years as he has until now, without changing anything.”

**“Let’s** say you’re right,” he said, “But why did he have to insult me?”

**“Shlomo** HaMelech already answered your question,” I explained, “The verse doesn’t say, “Don’t teach a scoffer.” Anything you want to teach the scoffer is also called in the verse “rebuke” – “Don’t rebuke a scoffer!” Any teaching or wisdom that you want to bestow to the scoffer is perceived by him as a rebuke. If you tell him to change or fix something within him, you’re implying that he’s not okay. He

reacts to your “attack” with all his might and by all means possible, because your rebuke attacks his very being. This scoffer of yours is a gentle soul if he only told you that your hearing is impaired...”

**“You’re** exaggerating,” my friend told me, “You really think that a tiny grammatical mistake is his very being?”

**“Here** we get to the source of the problem,” I answered, “According to his feeling and perception, his very being encompasses everything that is connected to him. Not only his appearance and behavior, and not only every opinion he has ever expressed, but also every possession of his, and everything that has any kind of connection to him, everything is his very being. When he’s driving a car, and another driver dares to address him at a traffic light that it’s dangerous to drive in the middle of the road on two lanes, he reacts with wrath, and attacks the person who warned him about his driving in the loudest, most rude manner, down to the details of his parents’ family origins...”

**His** possessions are also included in his very being. Everything is welded together and is one with himself. He sees it as a personal attack on him even when you tell him that it seems to you that the heel of his right shoe is slightly higher than the left heel. Everything that belongs to him is identified with him as his very self. Try to tell him that his leather bag is fake and isn't made of real leather but only imitation plastic. He'll flare up with rage

and attack you in the most severe manner to the point of expressing an unflattering assessment of your level of intelligence.

**Any** comment that refers to his body, behavior, possessions, and everything that has a connection to him and which may imply something negative, is assessed in his feelings as an undermining to his very existence. The person making the comment thereby becomes his enemy, and the response is accordingly...

### **Don't Stand Still!**

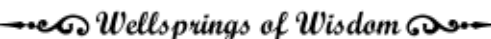
**Correct**, living in the inner world of the "scoffer" is truly *gehinom*, and we have to find him a way to get out of his "level" and elevate to a higher level.

**But**, in truth, not only him.

**Rebbe** Elimelech of Lizhensk zt"l writes,<sup>12</sup> "Man was created in this world only to break his nature! Therefore, one should hasten themselves to correct their *middot*..."

**Each** person lives their life in their own inner world that's unique to them and is built according to their nature and virtues. But they mustn't stop there, rather they must break their nature that they acquired at their personal level, and ascend to the next level, acquiring a more exalted nature, and so forth...

**Even** the greatest of *tzaddikim* who attained what they did





through the power of their *avodah*, must too not be content with their personal level, in their own unique inner world, but

must continue and climb to the next level...

**But** how does one elevate from one level to the next?

## Elevating Power – A Broken Heart

**The** sages of the Zohar<sup>13</sup> revealed to us that the way to rise to the next level is through a contrite, broken heart, submission, and thoughts of teshuva.

**This** is the secret of the verse, “The sacrifices that Elokim [desires] are a broken spirit; a broken, contrite heart” (Tehillim 51:19)... Through a broken heart,<sup>14</sup> the spirit of

---

### Wellsprings of Wisdom

---

13. Zohar (Pinchas 240a).

**14. Although** “sadness” stems from the side of *kelipat nogah* and not from the side of *kedusha*, for regarding the side of *kedusha*, it is written, “Strength and gladness are in His place,” and “the Shechina dwells only in a place of joy,” if the sadness arises because of reflections about spiritual matters, it comes from the good aspect of *kelipat nogah*.

(For *kelipat nogah* contains both good and evil – the evil being the source of depression. However, even the good within *kelipat nogah* is, after all, a *kelipah*. For the *kelipah* is connected to the feeling of egoism and self-centeredness. Therefore, the more one’s own reality is precious in their eyes, the more their sadness will increase over their lack of reaching further perfection. On the other hand, the side of *kedusha* is connected to *bitul* (nullification). Thus, when a person is nullified to Hashem, they don’t feel a lack at all, for “Strength and gladness are in His place”).

[**Thus**, the Arizal writes that even worrying over one’s sins is only appropriate during *vidui* (confession), but not during prayer and Torah study, which must be specifically performed with joy stemming from the side of *kedusha*]...

**In** truth, a broken heart and bitterness of spirit over one’s distance from Hashem... isn’t called “sadness” or “depression” at all in Hebrew. For “עצבות” (depression – which stems from the side of the *kelipot*) is when one’s heart is dull like a stone, and there’s no vitality in their heart (one is constricted within themselves).

**However**, regarding “bitterness” and a “broken heart” (which stem from the side of *kedusha*), on the contrary, the vitality within them is what moved them to be embittered [about their detachment from Hashem], except that this vitality stems from the *gevurot* of *kedusha* [and thus expresses itself as holy bitterness], whereas joy

**Parashat Tazria-Metzora - Elevating Power – A Broken Heart**

impurity, which binds the person deep within their level, collapses.

**HaRav** Yoram Michael Abargel zt"l writes<sup>15</sup> that the way to break the *kelipot* is by breaking the spirit of arrogance in one's heart and feeling bitterness over one's sins.

**Chazal** say that iron partitions that separate a Jew from their Father in Heaven are created by means of one's sins, and these partitions cause them to come to terms with the fact they're distant from Hashem.

**The** way to shatter these partitions is by having a broken heart and feeling bitterness over one's sins...

**It** isn't ideal for a person to be broken, but one kind of brokenness

is beneficial... A broken heart. For the heart is extremely powerful when it's haughty, which isn't good, but when the heart is broken, it is good. In other words, the most complete heart is the broken heart.

**But** one must do this in stages, step by step. If a person immediately dejects themselves with lofty things mentioned in the holy books that aren't explicitly written in the Shulchan Aruch, they won't achieve their *tikkun*, for who said those things concern them? And even if it concerns them in general, who said it concerns them at this stage in their life? One has to say the appropriate things to the appropriate person. It's very dangerous if one doesn't match the person with the appropriate *tikkun*.

—*~* **Wellsprings of Wisdom** *~*—

stems from the *chasadim* of *kedusha*, for the heart is comprised of both.

(Thus we find that sadness and depression stem from the side of the *kelipot*, from the feeling of egocentrism, that *they* didn't reach perfection, that *they* aren't good enough, whereas a broken heart is just the opposite, it stems from the side of *kedusha*, from *bitul* (nullification) to Hashem's will, that there is no *me*, only Hashem's will, and thus their heart is broken over the fact that *His* will isn't being

fulfilled, or from their distancing *Hashem's* Presence, the Shechina, from this world, for it is *His* will that He have a dwelling place in our world. Thus, they cry, "My father! My father! Have mercy on me that I not cast away Your light from two worlds! Should a Merciful King like You have to hide Himself with such concealments?!").

- Tanya (Likutei Amarim, Ch. 31).

**15.** Betzur Yarum (Vol. 3, p. 316).

**Just** as in the healing of the body, before a doctor gives the patient pills to take as their treatment, they warn them, “If this pill causes you side effects, you must immediately stop taking the pill and return to me so I can give you a different pill to continue your treatment.” So too, in the healing of the soul, not every *tikkun* is suitable for every person. There’s a *tikkun* that can harm one person and be beneficial for another. Therefore, it’s not advisable for a person to try to heal themselves.



**Hashem** created an expert for every issue. Every problem has a person who specializes in that subject and can thus fix the

problem. There’s a vision specialist, a hearing specialist, an orthopedic specialist, and so on. We need to go specifically to them so that they can take care of the problem in which they specialize.

**The** same goes for the soul. There’s a soul that has fallen ill because of one sin, and another soul that has fallen ill because of a different sin. Don’t try to solve the problems alone, rather consult with a chacham.<sup>16</sup>

**But** before that, before the consulting stage, we need to come to the realization that we’re “stuck” in our place. And the way to get to that realization is by doing *cheshbon nefesh*...

---

 *Wellsprings of Wisdom* 

---

**16. An avrech** once told me that he went to Bnei Brak to ask Rabbi Michel Yehuda Lefkowitz a question. Thus, he asked, “On the yeshiva’s bulletin board, there’s a note saying, ‘If possible, please learn Mishnayot *l’ilui nishmat* (for the elevation of the soul) of so and so, who just passed away.’ I wanted to ask, Rabbi, if I’m allowed to learn Mishnayot *l’ilui nishmat* that person? Isn’t it *bitul Torah*? I have a set study schedule, and if I take it upon myself to learn a *masechet* (Tractate) of Mishnayot for the

*ilui neshama* of that person, it may harm my studies somewhat...”

**The** Rabbi fixed his penetrating gaze on him and said, “I suggest you start learning Mishnayot *l’ilui nishmat* your own soul.”

**That avrech** didn’t understand his answer. Rabbi Michel Yehuda Lefkowitz then explained, “If you’re so distant from doing *chesed* (kindness), you’re considered dead! Thus, it’s a mitzvah for you to learn *l’ilui nishmat* your own soul!”

## Cheshbon Nefesh

**The** first condition for doing *cheshbon nefesh* is peace of mind. It's impossible to reveal the mysteries of the innermost

parts of the soul, and have all of one's shortcomings and negative *middot* surface, without true peace of mind.

---

...*~* Wellsprings of Wisdom *~*...

---

**I** think the words he heard from the Rabbi shocked him a little. If he had heard them from some chassid, he would've been able to wiggle his thumb and debate, but after he heard them from Rabbi Lefkowitz, he must've immediately done teshuva.

**You** have to always have Hashem before your eyes. Constantly asking yourself, what's Hashem's will? If at that moment Hashem wants you to take a minute and read Tehillim or a few chapters of Mishnayot for the *ilui neshama* of the deceased, then it's not *bitul* Torah, it's *kiyum* (fulfillment of) Torah. You're fulfilling Hashem's will! Isn't that the reason you're learning Torah?

**This** doesn't mean that from now on, every time someone brings cakes, almonds, peanuts, and drinks to the yeshiva or kollel so that people will make brachot for the *ilui neshama* of a person, you have to be the first to jump up and do "chesed" with the deceased... "*Talmud Torah Keneged Kulam*" (Torah study is equivalent to all the mitzvot). However, you do have to know what Hashem wants of you at every moment. And if you need to ask your rabbi to

know what Hashem's will is, and what He desires that you do in all different types of situations, then go and ask.

**I** once heard an *avrech* receive a phone call from his wife in the middle of *seder* (Torah study session). It was pouring rain outside. His wife told him that she was at the supermarket, her hands full of groceries, but she couldn't walk home because of the storm. She asked him if he could come pick her up with the car and take her home... I saw as he furrowed his eyebrows and said to her, "What? That's *bitul* Torah!" and then hung up the phone...

**Hashem** doesn't want that person's Torah study. He despises that person's Torah study. That *avrech* doesn't serve Hashem. He doesn't even think about Hashem. He only serves himself and his ego...

**Hashem** wants you to be a good person and stop thinking only about yourself. Many people will be shocked at where the reward for their Torah study is when they go up to *shamayim* after 120 years...

**In** order to achieve peace of mind, one needs to have a set time for when they disconnect from all the vanities of this world. A set time in which one completely leaves the rat race of life and allows themselves a couple of minutes of silence.

**It's** also very important to have a special place where one can be alone so that they can quickly bring themselves to calmness and peace of mind in order to accomplish a thorough *cheshbon nefesh*. Only through this will the person be able to truly reveal their shortcomings and correct them from the source.

**Then**, after setting a time and place and attaining peace of

mind, when one actually does the *cheshbon nefesh*, they will merit revealing the innermost depths of their soul, which will bring them to full recognition of their shortcomings as well as their negative *middot*, which are the root of all sins, and those resulting sins are what cause a barrier between man and his Creator, as it says, "Your sins are what separated between you and your G-d" (Yeshayahu 59:2).

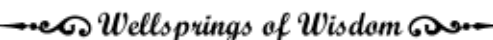
**Through** this *avodah*, one will merit leaving their level and ascending to the next level and revealing the light of Hashem that abounds within them. Not only that, but a true ambition to get closer to Hashem will burn inside them...<sup>17</sup>

### One Answer to All Questions

**So** far, it has been explained that doing a *cheshbon nefesh*, at a set time, is a very important part of *avodat Hashem*, and by doing so, one merits a broken, submitted heart, and genuine teshuva.

**Furthermore**, one merits getting out of their level and ascending to a higher level, a level where a more exalted, refined revelation of Hashem's reality shines.

**This** answers the three questions that he asked...



17. Chelev Haarets (Vol. 2, Ch. 7).

Parashat Tazria-Metzora - What's the Connection?

**Hashem** desired to grant Yeshayahu the level of prophecy. But in order to attain that level, Yeshayahu had to leave his previous level. Thus, Hashem raised him up to heaven and showed him the *avodah* of the angels, and when Yeshayahu saw the magnitude of their *avodah*, his heart broke, and he cried out, “Woe to me!”

**Then**, through the power of his submitted, broken heart, he was able to leave his previous level and receive the next level...

### What's the Connection?

**In** a discussion delivered by the Lubavitcher Rebbe, he said...<sup>18</sup>

**Parashot** Tazria and Metzora, when not a leap year (when there's no month of Adar II), are connected.

**There's** a close connection between these two parashot, for both parashot speak about afflictions (in Tazria – afflictions on a person's body and clothes, and in Metzora – afflictions on one's house).

**The** same was true for Rebbe Avraham Yehoshua Heshel, the *Ohev Israel* of Apta...

**And** so is the case with every Jew who learns Torah. Their mind is programmed for a certain type of understanding, but when they fail to correctly understand the Torah's words, and they thus feel submission before Hashem, they then merit attaining a new level of Torah...

**Now** let's move on to this week's parasha...

**Both** parashot collectively have a total of 124 verses, divided as follows...

**The** first 8 verses of parashat Tazria deal with the laws of a woman who gives birth to a male or a female baby.

**After** them, the Torah details all the laws of the different kinds of leprous afflictions and the way to purify them in 116 verses – 59 verses in parashat

Parashat Tazria-Metzora - Why Adam?

Tazria and 57 verses in parashat Metzora.

**But** whoever examines these two parashot is surely to bump into a question.

**The** first parasha is called Tazria... But why?! The vast majority of the parasha deals with matters of afflictions.

**Moreover,** not only does the word “*tazria*” (conceives) have nothing to do with afflictions, but

on the contrary, it’s seemingly the complete opposite!

**The** word “*tazria*,” as is stated in our parasha, “when a woman conceives (*tazria*) and gives birth” (Vayikra 12:2), is associated with the birth of new life, which is not the case regarding afflictions, for a *metzora* (leper) is considered dead!<sup>19</sup>

**If** so, why give a name that contains within it new life (*tazria*) to a reality of death and destruction (*metzora*)?!

### Why Adam?

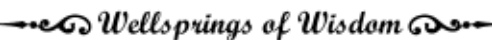
**HaRav** Yoram Michael Abargel zt”l writes...<sup>20</sup>

**In** *Lashon HaKodesh*, the human being has four titles, *Adam*, *Ish*, *Gever*, and *Enosh*. The highest title among them is the title “*Adam*,” which refers only to people with a high spiritual level.

**When** we look closely at our parasha, we notice that in the whole parasha, the only title mentioned is

“*Adam*!” But why does the parasha dealing with afflictions, which seemingly suits specifically people of a lower level, revolve around the title “*Adam*,” as it says, “*Adam* (a person), if there be in the skin of his flesh *se’et*” (Vayikra 13:2), and “An affliction of *tzara’at*, if it be in *Adam* (a person)” (Vayikra 13:9)?

**There’s** one answer to these two questions...



19. Nedarim 64b.

20. Imrei Noam (Tazria, Maamar 1).

## Awaken

**True**, when a person's body is covered with *tzara'at*, they're considered dead. However, the result of *tzara'at*, is new life.

**The** purpose of *tzara'at* is to tell a person... Recalculate your route !

**You** were on a good path, but you deviated from it. Now, see

how you get back on the right path. Do a genuine *cheshbon nefesh*, obtain a broken heart and humility, and do honest teshuva, and then you'll merit fulfilling the entire purpose of *tzara'at* – To bring a person to the yearning for a cure, to the regeneration of the *metzora*, to the correct new life.<sup>21</sup>

---

...*~* **Wellsprings of Wisdom** *~*...

---

**21. The** commentaries (Rabbeinu Bachye, Parashat Tazria; Rambam on the Mishna, Negaim 12:5) explain that *tzara'at* is a supernatural, spiritual affliction that demonstrates Hashem's direct intervention in a person's life, immediately rewarding and punishing them according to their deeds.

**Just** as the illness is supernatural, so too is its cure. The Halachic restrictions of a *metzora* (a person afflicted with *tzara'at*) are exactly the opposite of the standard procedures for healing a sick person. Whereas a sick person requires fresh air to recover, a *metzora* is forced to remain indoors. We see that the manner of their recovery is beyond the constraints of nature. It is contingent solely upon their teshuva...

**Their** only hope is the recovery that comes about through the Torah, a healing that borders on *Techiat HaMetim*. The Torah has the power to heal us, as *chazal* say (Pirkei Avot 6:7), "Great is the Torah. It

gives life to those who observe it, both in this world and the next. As the verses say, "They (the words of Torah) are life to he who finds them, and healing to all his flesh" (Mishlei 4:22). "It will be a healing to your body, and marrow to your bones" (Mishlei 3:8). "It is a tree of life to all who grasp hold of it, and its supporters are fortunate" (Mishlei 3:18). "Through me (the Torah) your days will be increased, and years of life will be added to you" (Mishlei 9:11). "Length of days are in its right hand, wealth and honor in its left" (Mishlei 3:16). "Length of days and years of life and peace will be added to you" (Mishlei 3:2).

**Similarly**, the Gemara states as follows (Eruvin 54a)...

**A** person whose head aches, should toil in Torah study, as it says, "It is a garland of grace for your head" (Mishlei 1:9). If one's throat aches, they should toil in Torah, as it says, "It is a necklace about your throat" (Mishlei 1:9). If one's stomach



**And** since the primary aspect of a matter is its purpose, it's therefore appropriate to give the title "Tazria" to the parasha speaking about afflictions.

**We** also understand why only the title "Adam," which refers to people with a high spiritual level, is mentioned throughout the parasha dealing with afflictions.

**Because** a Jew whose soul is imprisoned in a low level, where raging inclinations control them... anger, jealousy, lust, sadness, depression, anxiety...

**It's** not noble for them to yearn to get out of their level. It's not surprising that they go into the fields and cry out to Hashem, "Master of the world! Merciful Father! I have no feeling of joy or enthusiasm for anything! Even

when there is enjoyment in front of me, anxiety or anger overcomes me and prevents me from experiencing enjoyment... Please, Hashem, help me get out of my low level..."

**But** a person of a high level, whose life is full of spiritual satisfaction, and when putting on tefillin, he feels the fire of spirituality kindling within his heart, and a spiritual intoxication surrounds him...

**How** will he merit a broken heart and submission? How will he merit the desire and yearning to get out of his level and continue to rise?

**Thus,** in order to awaken him, he is sent from heaven all kinds of events that cause all lofty spiritual lights and passion to be taken away right before his eyes, and this brings him to a broken heart...

---

*~ Wellsprings of Wisdom ~*

---

aches, they should toil in Torah, as it says, "It will be a cure for your navel" (Mishlei 3:8). If one's bones ache, they should toil in Torah, as it says, "It is marrow to your bones" (Mishlei 3:8). If one's entire body aches, they should toil in Torah, as it says, "It is healing to all his flesh" (Mishlei 4:22).

**The** Gemara also states (Brachot 5b) that Rav Yehuda bar Rabbi Chiya said...

**Come** and see the difference between the attributes of Hashem and those of man. Man gives a treatment for an illness and it heals one symptom but irritates another. Hashem gave the Torah to the Jewish people and it heals all of our afflictions, as it says, "It is healing to all his flesh."

- Mevaser Tov (Techias HaMesim, p. 18).

Parashat Tazria-Metzora - Awaken

**Therefore**, and above all,  
precisely the “*Adam*” needs these  
reminders !

**May** it be His will that every  
day we merit eternally ascending  
from one level to the next !

**Shabbat Shalom !**



## *The Pathway...*

1. The concept of “level” appears many times in the realm of the inner aspect of the Torah. A “level” is actually the person’s inner world. The higher the level, the more powerful the revelation of one’s feelings of holiness are, for example, one’s love for Hashem, and the more their perception of the world around them will be true and refined, and the more they’ll be full of pure *emuna*. The same goes for the other way around... When someone’s inner world is full of materiality and possessiveness, it’s a sign that they’re on a very low level, at the bottom of the world of *Asiyah*.

2. Rebbe Elimelech of Lizhensk zt”l writes that man was created in this world only to break his nature! Therefore, one should hasten themselves to correct their *middot*. Each person lives their life in their own inner world that’s unique to them and is built according to their nature and virtues. But they mustn’t stop there, rather they

must break their nature that they acquired at their personal level, and ascend to the next level, acquiring a more exalted nature, and so forth...

3. Even the greatest of tzaddikim who attained what they did through the power of their *avodah*, must too not be content with their personal level, in their own unique inner world, but must continue and climb to the next level... But how does one elevate from one level to the next?

4. The sages of the Zohar revealed to us that the way to rise to the next level is through a contrite, broken heart, submission, and thoughts of teshuva. This is the secret of the verse, “The sacrifices that Elokim [desires] are a broken spirit; a broken, contrite heart” (Tehillim 51:19)... Through a broken heart, the spirit of impurity, which binds the person deep within their level, collapses.

5. HaRav Yoram Michael Abargel zt”l writes that the way

### *The Pathway...*

to break the *kelipot* is by breaking the spirit of arrogance in one's heart and feeling bitterness over one's sins. *Chazal* say that iron partitions that separate a Jew from their Father in Heaven are created by means of one's sins, and these partitions cause them to come to terms with the fact they're distant from Hashem. The way to shatter these partitions is by having a broken heart and feeling bitterness over one's sins...

**6.** It isn't ideal for a person to be broken, but one kind of brokenness is beneficial... A broken heart. For the heart is extremely powerful when it's haughty, which isn't good, but when the heart is broken, it is good. In other words, the most complete heart is the broken heart.

**7.** However, this must be done in stages, step by step. If someone immediately dejects themselves with lofty things mentioned in the holy books that aren't explicitly written in the *Shulchan Aruch*, they won't achieve their *tikkun*, for who said those things concern

them? And even if it concerns them in general, who said it concerns them at this stage in their life? One has to say the appropriate things to the appropriate person. It's very dangerous if one doesn't match the person with the appropriate *tikkun*.

**8.** Just as in the healing of the body, before a doctor gives the patient pills to take as their treatment, they warn them, "If this pill causes you side effects, you must immediately stop taking the pill and return to me so I can give you a different pill to continue your treatment." So too, in the healing of the soul, not every *tikkun* is suitable for every person. There's a *tikkun* that can harm one person and be beneficial for another. Therefore, it's not advisable for a person to try to heal themselves.

**9.** Hashem created an expert for every issue. Every problem has a person who specializes in that subject and can thus fix the problem. There's a vision specialist, a hearing specialist, an

### *The Pathway...*

orthopedic specialist, and so on. We need to go specifically to them so that they can take care of the problem in which they specialize. The same goes for the soul. There's a soul that has fallen ill because of one sin, and another soul that has fallen ill because of a different sin. Don't try to solve the problems alone, rather consult with a chacham.

**10.** Though, before the consulting stage, we need to come to the realization that we're "stuck" in our place. And the way to get to that realization is by doing *cheshbon nefesh*... The first condition for doing *cheshbon nefesh* is peace of mind. It's impossible to reveal the mysteries of the innermost parts of the soul, and have all of one's shortcomings and negative *middot* surface, without true peace of mind. This can be achieved by having a fixed time and place to do *cheshbon nefesh*.

**11.** Then, after setting a time and place and attaining peace of mind, when one actually does the

*cheshbon nefesh*, they will merit revealing the innermost depths of their soul, which will bring them to full recognition of their shortcomings as well as their negative *middot*, which are the root of all sins, and those resulting sins are what cause a barrier between man and his Creator, as it says, "Your sins are what separated between you and your G-d" (Yeshayahu 59:2).

**12.** Through this *avodah*, one will merit leaving their level and ascending to the next level and revealing the light of Hashem that abounds within them. Not only that, but a true ambition to get closer to Hashem will burn inside them...

**13.** And that's the secret of our parasha... When someone's body is covered with *tzara'at*, they're considered dead. However, the result of *tzara'at*, is new life. The purpose of *tzara'at* is to tell a person... Recalculate your route! You were on a good path, but you deviated from it. Now, see how you get back on the right path. Do a genuine *cheshbon nefesh*, obtain a broken heart and

*The Pathway...*

humility, and do honest teshuva,  
and then you'll merit fulfilling  
the entire purpose of *tzara'at* –  
To bring a person to the yearning  
for a cure, to the regeneration of

the *metzora*, to the correct new  
life.

**May** it be His will that every  
day we merit eternally ascending  
from one level to the next !





**WEEKLY ENGLISH ZOOM CLASS  
FOLLOWED BY Q&A  
EVERY SUNDAY**



with

**RABBI ISRAEL  
ABARGEL shlita**

**- Message us for a link -  
USA: (954) 800-6526  
IL: 054-870-8737**

**(Exact Time Of The Class Will Be Updated In Our Whatsapp Group)**

## Free distribution

Preserve publication sanctity  
by use of Genizah

1703

## Shabbat Times

### Tazria-Metzora

1st of Iyar, 5783



City	Candle Lighting	Shabbat Ends	Rabbeinu Tam
New York	7:23 pm	8:26 pm	8:55 pm
Miami	7:28 pm	8:23 pm	9:00 pm
Los Angeles	7:10 pm	8:09 pm	8:42 pm
Montreal	7:30 pm	8:38 pm	9:02 pm
Toronto	7:50 pm	8:56 pm	9:22 pm
London	7:51 pm	9:04 pm	9:21 pm
Jerusalem	6:56 pm	7:47 pm	8:37 pm
Tel Aviv	6:54 pm	7:44 pm	8:33 pm
Haifa	6:54 pm	7:44 pm	8:34 pm
Be'er Sheva	6:53 pm	7:43 pm	8:32 pm

### Pathways to the Heart

*From the Words of  
HaRav Yoram Abargel zt"l*

*It's not enough to just set an example for your children. You have to set the best possible example that you can for your children. Only then will they follow you in the path of Hashem.*



## Become a Partner!

For Donations:

American Friends of Netivot Inc  
Signature Bank

Account # 1504470357

261 Madison Avenue New York, NY 10016

Routing # 026013576

Or Visit: [Hameir-Laarets.org.il/Donate](http://Hameir-Laarets.org.il/Donate)

RECOGNIZED BY THE IRS AS A 501(C)(3)  
TAX DEDUCTIBLE ORGANIZATION



# Do You Enjoy Mesillot?

Want To Distribute  
Pathways to the Soul in  
Your Synagogue?

# Receive Mesillot Weekly Anywhere In The World!

- Free of Charge -

Join Now!



## Ask The Rabbi!



## Media

[www.hameir-laarets.org.il/en](http://www.hameir-laarets.org.il/en)

Hameir Laarets

(954) 800-6526

054-870-8737

[en@h-l.org.il](mailto:en@h-l.org.il)

