

# Toronto Torah

## Beit Midrash Zichron Dov

Parshiyot Tazria-Metzora

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This issue of Toronto Torah is dedicated anonymously  
in loving memory of Matzliach Haddad ז"ל מצי"ח בן בנימין ז"ל

This issue of Toronto Torah is dedicated by Ricky and Dianna Zauderer and Family  
in memory of our dear father and grandfather, Alfred Zauderer ז"ל לע"נ אליעזר בן יונה ז"ל

### Tear Down This Wall!

### Rabbi Baruch Weintraub

The Torah describes three types of *tzaraat* (lesion afflictions) – one which attacks humans, one which afflicts clothes, and finally, one found in houses. This last one is separated from the first two, which appear together. Furthermore, the laws of the house-affliction are prefaced with a proclamation which seems to limit the existence of this *tzaraat* to the Land of Israel alone: "When you come to the land of Canaan, which I am giving you as a possession, I shall place a lesion of *tzaraat* at the house in the land of your possession". (Vayikra 14:34) This stands in contrast to the *tzaraat* of persons and clothes, which can happen outside of the Land as well. [The possibility of these forms of outside of Israel is the view of Don Isaac Abarbanel; but, see Ramban for a different position.]

Why would the house-affliction exist only in the Holy Land? One answer is suggested by Rashi, quoting from a midrash: "The Amorites had hidden away treasures of gold inside the walls of their houses during the entire forty years that the Israelites were in the desert. Because of the lesion, he will demolish the house and find them." (Rashi to Vayikra 14:34)

A different explanation may be glimpsed from a story recorded in the Talmud. (Bava Batra 7b) The Talmud tells us about a certain pious man, with whom Eliyahu the prophet would frequently speak. One day, the pious man built a gatehouse to his garden, and from then on Eliyahu ceased his

visits. Rashi there explains that, although the pious man's motivations for building the gatehouse were good and legitimate – he wanted to guard his modesty and privacy – the gatehouse nonetheless served as a blockage to the poor people from coming and asking for money. Thus it was also an impasse for Eliyahu himself.

This story carries a particularly important lesson. Many times we build walls to prevent ourselves from being seen, but the same walls also prevent us from seeing outside. Chazal connected the occurrence of *tzaraat* with the sins of gossip and slander, or put differently, with speaking **about** someone instead of speaking **with** them. Rather than seeing each other, we stare at one another; the walls are erected to prevent the meeting of the eyes, and the other is looked upon as an outsider.

This danger, while present everywhere, is especially threatening in our own land, "the land of your possession". (Vayikra 25:24) It is more likely there for one to see his house as his fortress, and therefore to build walls around this fortress. The feeling of ownership and entitlement may be much stronger when you feel you are on your own land, and consequently you may obscure the very presence of another human being and make him into an object to be talked about. The *tzaraat* then appears in the house and forces the residents to open a hole in the walls they encircled themselves with – and

thus to meet the people outside on equal terms. Of course, the Torah acknowledges the need for privacy and obligates the keeping of modesty; nonetheless, these should be kept in ways which do not cause an emotional separation from society.

In the last year, due to the pandemic, we were forced to close ourselves behind walls and fences. In the yeshiva where I teach, we had to use plastic partitions to separate the different groups, to prevent the disease from spreading, G-d forbid. The separation did indeed prevent infections, but it also severely impinged on our feeling as one body. Last week, Baruch Hashem, as more than ninety percent of our students were vaccinated, we were allowed by the government to tear down those partitions. The transformation was nothing less than magical. The whole place was suddenly washed in light, and the students were able to speak with one another freely. For those of them who only came this year, it was the first chance to make the people behind the plastic into real friends. It was, indeed, a sweet cure.

May we be able to carry this experience with us, and learn to find not only the treasures hidden inside the walls, but also those hidden in the people behind them.

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**Summary**

King Shlomo achieved extraordinary levels of wealth and power. His kingdom stretched from the Euphrates river to the land of the Philistines and all the countries he ruled over paid tribute to him and served him. Shlomo adorned his royal table with an abundance of flour and meat every day. He had forty thousand troughs to feed the horses of his royal chariot, and twelve thousand horsemen. King Shlomo appointed prefects to collect provisions for him and all his royal guests and to sustain his royal chariot. Under his rule, the Jewish people enjoyed peace and prosperity. (5:1-8)

Hashem imbued Shlomo with astonishing wisdom. He composed several thousand proverbs and poems. Shlomo spoke of all the trees, animals, birds, and fish. Shlomo became a world-renowned sage and people from all over the world sought his wisdom. (5:9-14, Metzudat David ad loc.)

Chiram, King of Tyre, an ally of Shlomo's father King David, sent his servants to Shlomo to extend his blessings to the young king. (5:15, Malbim ad loc.) King Shlomo told

Chiram of Hashem's directive to his father that he should not build a temple for Hashem because of the wars David had to fight. Instead, Hashem had promised David that his son Shlomo would build a house for Him instead. Therefore, since Shlomo enjoyed a peaceful and secure kingdom, he informed Chiram of his desire to begin the project of building a sanctuary for the name of Hashem. Since Chiram's nation was known for expertise in the art of woodcutting, Shlomo asked Chiram to command his servants to cut cedars of Lebanon for the construction project, and he promised to pay his servants for the job. Chiram eagerly agreed to supply Shlomo with all the lumber he needed. (5:15-25)

King Shlomo levied a tax upon the people of Israel, and used the funds to hire thirty thousand workers to build the Temple. (5:26, Rashi ad loc.) Shlomo also hired seventy thousand porters and eighty thousand quarriers to hew stones and appointed three thousand three hundred officers to supervise their labour. Shlomo instructed the workers to transport large blocks of precious stones to use

as a foundation for the Temple. Shlomo and Chiram's masons worked together to shape the stones and prepare the wood for the construction of the Sanctuary. (5:26-32)

**Insight**

The chapter describes King Shlomo's prodigious scholarship, and references discourses he delivered about the cedars of Lebanon and "the hyssop that emanates from the wall." (5:13) Rashi (commentary to 5:13) first suggests that Shlomo's discourse on the trees focused on how to utilize the plants for medicinal purposes, and where to plant each tree. However, in his second approach, Rashi quotes a midrash which argues that Shlomo actually inquired why the Torah requires both the tall cedar tree and the short hyssop as part of the purification process of one who contracts *tzaraat*. Perhaps the Sages felt that any description of Shlomo's greatness must also include his quest to delve into the depths of Torah.

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**The Israeli Farmer: Letting People in During Shemita****Rabbi Jonathan Ziring**

A neighbour of mine finally had fruit grow from the trees in his yard. He commented that he is getting his sign ready for shemita, declaring the produce ownerless. This is a relatively common phenomenon in Israel. The halachic basis for this follows, based on Rabbi Yosef Zvi Rimon's presentation. (*Halachah m'Mekorah*, pp. 104-109)

During shemita, one is obligated to allow others to take his produce. This is either because the produce automatically becomes ownerless, or because one is obligated to make it so. [Some rule that ideally one should verbalize the relinquishing of one's rights, even if it is automatic. See, for example, Rabbi Shlomo Zalman Auerbach cited in *Dinei Shevi'it* 14:3.]

Does this abandonment apply only to the produce, or to the land itself? A mishnah and ensuing gemara (Nedarim 42a) rules that one who forswears benefit from his friend's property may eat the produce that extends out of the property during shemita, but may not enter the property. The Talmud challenges this by arguing that both the land and the produce are ownerless during shemita, and thus this does not qualify as benefit from the friend! The Talmud offers two responses:

- 1) This mishnah applies only to trees on the property border, where it is not necessary to enter the property to reach the produce.
- 2) In principle, one may enter the property to reach the produce, but he must not tarry. Rabbinically one may not enter at all, lest he tarry. (ibid. 42b)

Tosafot and Rabbeinu Asher argue from here that the land is not actually ownerless, but rather the owner loses the right to the land only insofar as this is necessary to allow others to

access his produce.

A midrash (Mehilta, Mishpatim 20) rules that people should be obligated to break their fences to make it clear that the produce is for all to enjoy during shemita. However, the rabbis decreed that they need not do this; the Chazon Ish (14:4) explains that this is so that wild animals don't enter. Some entrance should be made for all to reach the produce. (Rambam, Hilchot Shemita v'Yovel 4:24) However, if one is worried that people will enter and cause damage, the Chazon Ish permitted leaving the door locked. The owner must, however, leave a sign that says that anyone who wants the fruit is allowed to take, as it is ownerless, and provide a key for those who want to take advantage of this. This is true despite the inconvenience it may cause. (Derech Emunah to Shemita v'Yovel 4:24 note 297, and elsewhere)

It is worth noting that there is a further dispute as to whether one must ask permission before taking the produce; the Chazon Ish seems to rule it is not necessary (13:23, Derech Emunah 6:122), but Rabbi Avraham Yitzchak Kook (*Shabbat Ha'Aretz* 6:15) rules that one should.

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**Biography**  
**R' Yehoshua Ehrenberg**  
Rabbi Chaim Metzger

Rabbi Yehoshua Menachem Ehrenberg was born on December 20, 1904, in Kemece, Hungary. In his youth he was taught by Rabbi Naftali Hertz Bumbach, the Av Beit Din of Sambur, author of the Responsa Givat HaLevonah, and later by Rabbi Meir Arik, the Av Beit Din of Tarnów, Poland. At the age of 20 he married Hinda Leah Birnbaum of Krakow, one of Sarah Schenirer's first students from Bais Yaakov.

During the Holocaust, Rabbi Ehrenberg was in the Bochnia ghetto. Fortunately, he was able to escape to Slovakia and then Hungary, before ultimately being saved via the "Kastner Train", with his wife and two daughters. When he arrived in Caux, Switzerland in 1944, they were placed in a hotel that had turned into a refugee collection area. He eventually made aliyah to Israel in September 1945, and lived in Jerusalem.

In 1947, Rabbi Yitzchak Herzog, the Chief Rabbi at the time, asked Rabbi Ehrenberg to serve as Chief Rabbi of the Displaced Person camps in Cyprus. While there, he helped people find their way back to life, established a yeshiva there and dealt with many complicated marital issues and matters of agunah due to the Holocaust.

Upon the dissolution of the camps in 1949, Rabbi Ehrenberg returned to Israel and was appointed Av Beit Din of Tel Aviv. He also served as a close advisor to Chief Rabbi Yehuda Unterman. He became quite close with Rabbi Aharon Rokeach, the Belzer Rebbe, and joined the Belzer Chassidim. He passed away at the age of 77; his funeral was held in the Belz Yeshiva in Jerusalem, with the Belzer Rebbe leading the service.

His halachic works included the Responsa D'var Yehoshua, and the commentary Roshei Besamim on the Rokeach; his wife edited his writings. He wrote on a wide range of topics, notably permitting dancing on Shabbat (as is Chassidic custom), recommending lighting Chanukah candles inside one's house even in Israel, and forbidding the return of land conquered by Israel.

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**Torah and Translation**  
**Sending a Telegram "Into" Shabbat**  
Rabbi Yehoshua Ehrenberg, D'var Yehoshua 2:77  
Translated by Rabbi Chaim Metzger

מכתבך היקר גם שאלות מחוכמות קבלתי.

ע"ד שאלתך בדבר הטעליפרינטר המשמש לשלוח מברקים לחו"ל, שע"י פעולה כאן נכתבים אותיות במקום אחר, אם מותר לשלוח מברקים ע"י מכשיר במקום שכבר מוצש"ק למקום שבזמן הזה עוד שבת, והנה בשאלה כעין זה כבר האריכו האחרונים אך שאלתך היא חדשה.

ונלע"ד פשוט -- מבלי להכנס לעצם הדבר אם יש בו משום מלאכה או גרמא בעלמא - דכיון דבמלאכת שבת העיקר בשביתת גופו תליא מילתא דמהאי טעמא כתב הבית מאיר והסכים עמו החת"ס באו"ח סי' פ"ד וח"ו"מ סי' קפ"ה דבענין איסור שבת לא שייך שליחות, אפילו למ"ד יש שליח לדבר עבירה דעכ"פ גופו נח עיי"ש, וה"נ כיון דעכשיו אין אצלו חיוב שביתת גופו אע"ג דבמקום שנעשית המלאכה על ידו יש חיוב שביתת גופו כיון שאין גופו שם לאו מידי קעביד, וכן להיפוך אם עומד במקום שעדיין שבת ופעל כתיבה במקום שעכשיו חול הו"ל מחלל שבת דגופו לא נח במקום שהיה צריך לנוח.

Your precious letter, and the enlightening questions therein, I have received.

Regarding your question about using a teleprinter that is used to send telegrams outside of Israel, such that through an action here, letters are recorded at another location. Is it permissible to send messages using this machine when it is after Shabbat in the location where you are using the machine, but in the place to which it is being sent it is still Shabbat? Behold your question is similar to a question that has already been discussed at length by latter-day halachic commentators, but your question itself is new.

In my humble opinion it appears obvious - without getting into the question of whether your action of using the teleprinter is considered a prohibited act or is merely indirect causation of a prohibited act - that since performing *melachah* on Shabbat in essence is tied to refraining from physically performing prohibited actions, for this reason the Beit Meir (Rabbi Meir Pozner) agreed with the Chatham Sofer (Rabbi Moshe Sofer, in Orach Chaim 84 and Choshen Mishpat 185) that regarding violation of Shabbat, in such an instance the concept of [considering the machine your] agent does not apply, for even within the view that there is liability when sending an agent to perform a prohibited act, in this instance your physical body has not performed a prohibited action. Here, too, since right now [as Shabbat has ended] you have no requirement to refrain from prohibited physical actions, even though in the place where your action ultimately takes effect there is an obligation to refrain from prohibited physical actions, you are not physically there and you have done no [prohibited] action. And the converse is true, that if you are in a place where it is currently still Shabbat and you cause writing to take place in another location where it is not currently Shabbat, you have violated Shabbat, since your body is not at rest in a place where it should have been at rest [because it is Shabbat].

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All times ET. Classes are free & open to all, unless otherwise noted**

**SPECIAL PROGRAMMING**

**9:30-11:00 AM Sunday April 18: Medical Ethics**

**Rabbi Mordechai Torczyner, Taking Call on Shabbat**

**CME accredited; Laypeople welcome; Free, but please register at <https://torontotorah.com/cme>**

**10:00 AM Wed. Apr. 21: Biblical Battlefields of Israel, a 5-part series**

**Rabbi Mordechai Torczyner, Week 1: Jericho**

**Register at <https://torontotorah.com/battle>**

**8:00 PM Wed. Apr. 21: Jewish Art, a 5-part mini-series**

**Rabbi Chaim Metzger, Week 1**

**DAILY**

**Mon-Thu 10 AM to Noon, with Rabbi Moshe Yeres, via ZOOM (men)**

**Mon/Wed: Gemara Succah, Orot haTeshuvah**

**Tues/Thurs: Parshah, Tanach: Shemuel**

**WEEKLY**

**Shabbat Apr. 16-17**

**After minchah at Shaarei Shomayim, Groundbreaking Responsa, R' Sammy Bergman (not this week)**

**Sunday Apr. 18**

**9:20 AM Contemporary Halachah: COVID-Related Refunds, Netanel Klein**

**10:00 AM Gemara Shabbat, Rabbi Aaron Greenberg (University)**

**7:30 PM Ketuvot, Rabbi Mordechai Torczyner (men)**

**Monday Apr. 19**

**8:30 PM Gemara Shabbat, Chap. 15, Rabbi Moshe Yeres**

**Tuesday Apr. 20**

**1:30 PM Megilat Ruth, Rabbi Mordechai Torczyner**

**7:30 PM Shemuel Ch. 1, Rabbi Mordechai Torczyner (men)**

**Wednesday, Apr. 21**

**6:15 AM Talmud Eruvin, Rabbi Sammy Bergman**

**7:00 PM Religious Zionism: What is it?, Rabbi Sammy Bergman**

**7:30 PM Pirkei Avot, Rabbi Alex Hecht**

**Thursday Apr. 22**

**8:30 AM Daniel, Rabbi Chaim Metzger (University)**

**1:30 PM Shemuel Ch. 19, Rabbi Mordechai Torczyner (women)**

**8:00 PM Gemara Beitzah, Rabbi Eitan Aviner (men, advanced)**

**8:15 PM Gemara Bava Metziah, Rabbi Sammy Bergman (University women)**

**Friday Apr. 23**

**8:30 AM Parshah, Rabbi Sammy Bergman (University)**

**11:30 AM Shemitah! with Rabbi Sammy Bergman and Rabbi Mordechai Torczyner**

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