



Parashat Metzora

12 Nisan 5784 – April 20, 2024

King Solomon states in the Book of Mishlei (Proverbs) that death and life are in the power of the tongue. A person must know that the tongue is the most potent weapon, more powerful than the sword. Similarly, the same is said of the pen being mightier than the sword. What both are covering is a certain way to disseminate information.

Word of mouth is the best advertising there is. Television, media et.al. may get to more people with flashes of information; however people, in my humble opinion, pay more attention to word of mouth. Lawsuits for slander and defamation can back up this simple reason.

The prohibition of slander and defamation can affect many people involved. The speaker(s), the listener(s), and the person/people involved all have a “negative” vested interest. They are all hurt in the soul.

One may ask; what about background checks or references? It is important to filter fact from opinion. The simple law is, that speaking “Rechilut” (gossiping) is forbidden. It applies to ones gossiping about Jews or non-Jews. It is so dangerous that the Gemara says it metaphorically kills three people, the speaker, the listener, and the subject.

The reason for this Mitzvah (commandment) is that G-d wants peace among G-d’s children, not animosity. It applies to men and women at all times. By speaking forbidden words, one’s desire to do mitzvot is lost.

Good Shabbos!

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