

HUMILITY MAKES A PERSON WORTHY OF ALL BLESSINGS

(BY RABBI DAVID HANANIA PINTO SHLITA)

When the Holy One, blessed be He, asked Moses to return to Egypt in order to save the Children of Israel, he refused by saying: "Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh and that I should take the Children of Israel out of Egypt?" (Exodus 3:11). He then added, "I am not a man of words, neither yesterday nor the day before" (ibid. 4:10), and capped it off by telling Hashem, "Send, please, through whomever You will send" (v.13).

This refusal by Moses to carry out Hashem's mission to save the Children of Israel from Egypt needs to be explained, for it is quite surprising. The Jewish people had reached the very limits of spiritual and material subjugation, having endured 210 years of cruel exile. Yet now, when Hashem asks Moses to save them, he distances himself and indeed refuses to undertake this mission, using various pretexts as an excuse! He should have immediately gone to save the Children of Israel. Let us attempt to explain. The Holy One, blessed be He, revealed Himself to Moses on Mount Horev, which is Mount Sinai. It was precisely there – and from within a bush – that He ordered Moses to save the Children of Israel. By doing so, G-d was telling Moses by allusion that the essential purpose of saving them was to bring them to that mountain to receive the Torah, as it is written: "When you take the people out of Egypt, you will serve G-d on this mountain" (Exodus 3:12). What does "this mountain" mean? Since they were used to bowing their heads and being subjugated in Egypt, how much more should they be subjugated to the Holy One, blessed be He, Who would give them the Torah. Only in this way could the Torah endure with them.

This is alluded to by Mount Sinai itself, for it merited the giving of the Torah because it was a lowly mountain. It considered itself unworthy for the Holy One, blessed be He, to reveal Himself on so low a mountain, which is precisely why He chose it. By then Mount Sinai was already sanctified, as it is written: "Remove your shoes from your feet, for the place upon which you stand is holy ground" (Exodus 3:5). Its holiness was due to the fact that it completely humbled itself before Hashem. Such is the way of the Torah, for it endures only with those who humble themselves before it (see Taanith 7a), and who are called holy. Yet Moses, when he heard the words of Hashem, understood the greatness of Israel's service of Hashem, for they had merited turning Egypt into an immense tikkun, such as had never been. Now they were about to receive the Torah, a privilege that no man or woman had yet earned. Moses knew very well just how tremendous the giving of the Torah would be, for the descent of Hashem upon Mount Sinai would occur amid thunder and lightening, and the soul of any person who witnessed it would take flight. However Hashem wanted this giving of the Torah to occur through him!

Therefore in his humility, Moses was overcome with fear. He was afraid that he was unworthy of being sent to save the Jewish people, which had reached such a lofty spiritual level because they had merited to elevate the 288 sparks of holiness in Egypt. The Children of Israel were submissive and humble, which was appropriate for receiving the Torah. Moses therefore refused his mission by saying, "Send, please, through whomever You will send." In other words: Aaron is worthier than I, so he should save the Children of Israel from Egypt; the Torah should be given to Israel through him.

Moses' reaction was due to the fact that he considered himself unworthy of such an honor. This is especially true since the Children of Israel had almost merited to restore the initial holiness of the first man's soul, and because the time had come for them to be saved. There was therefore no reason to worry that they would breach

the fiftieth gate of impurity, for they possessed numerous good middot and positive things, and the tribe of Levi was free to study Torah (see Shemot Rabba 5:16). Therefore it was better for someone else to rescue them.

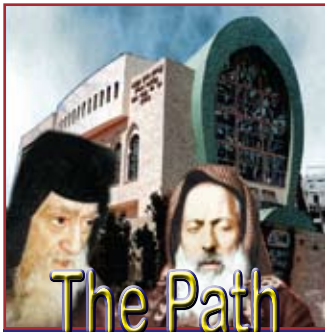
However it was precisely because Moses refused to be sent to Egypt that Hashem loved him even more, for this demonstrated his humility. Although Hashem became angry with him, He still did not punish him because He knew that Moses was still very humble and his intentions were good. That is, Moses had negated himself like a desert, having reached Mount Horev in order to feed his flock (Exodus 3:1). He was therefore worthy of feeding Hashem's flock, the Children of Israel.

It was for another reason that Hashem was upset with Moses. He did not want to reveal the secret ways of Aaron the Priest, who had reached the level of "when he sees you, he will rejoice in his heart" (Exodus 4:14). This is because the Holy One, blessed be He, does not usually reveal the secret ways of the righteous who serve Him. It was only because Moses feared for the honor of his brother that Hashem revealed Aaron's greatness to him. Not only would Aaron not become jealous of Moses, he would rejoice in his greatness, and not only would he be happy on the outside, he would rejoice and harbor no grudges or feelings of jealousy in the depths of his heart (unlike flatterers, who demonstrate joy on the outside but harbor misgivings within). Indeed, Aaron would be completely happy for Moses, just as Hashem testified of him: "When he sees you he will rejoice in his heart."

Hashem therefore joined Aaron to Moses in order to carry out his brother's orders and set a tremendous example for the Children of Israel. That is, if Moses' older brother completely humbled himself before him, then Moses should feel even more humility with regards to him. From here we must all learn a lesson, namely that when someone wants to deal with matters of the community, he should pray at great length for success, not rush out to perform this task immediately. This is especially true if his intention is to become famous and sing his own praises, which is certainly wrong. He must simply present himself in reverent prayer before Hashem and ask for success. He should pray to be a faithful messenger and that nothing bad should happen through him.

Above all, a person must rejoice in the greatness of others. For example, when several people are appointed as leaders or dayanim, sometimes one of them is greater than the others, and he receives more respect from the community. In such a case, the others should guard against feelings of jealousy, and on the contrary they should rejoice in his success. In that case they are all considered his associates. That is, since they rejoice in his success, they are necessarily associated with his work.

Similarly, there are times when great Torah figures are worthy of being dayanim and leading the community, yet people still heed the authority of the local rav. In such cases, if these Torah figures rejoice in the success of the local rav and do not oppose him, then the Holy One, blessed be He, will rest His Shechinah upon them. They will then be considered as associates in the administration of this rav, and their merit will greatly increase.



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GUARD YOUR TONGUE!

In the Shadow of the Chafetz Chaim

One year during Purim a youngster came to the Chafetz Chaim and asked for a promise that he would be with him in Gan Eden. The young man followed the elderly sage until the time for the holiday meal, at which point he told the youngster, "I don't know if I'll merit Gan Eden, but one thing gives me the feeling that I may: From the day I became an adult, I have never spoken or heard Lashon Harah. If you promise me to do the same, I can say that you will be with me in Gan Eden." The youngster, who didn't feel that he was up to the task, did not agree to the Chafetz Chaim's condition. The Chafetz Chaim then asked him to be removed, saying: "One who finds himself next to the gates of happiness, yet fails to enter, should be removed from there." The Chafetz Chaim felt that if this youngster had agreed not to speak Lashon Harah, he would have been given help from Heaven and succeeded in keeping his word.

The same applies to us, for if we agree not to engage in this sin, we will merit Heavenly assistance and succeed in keeping our word.

MUSSAR FROM THE PARSHA

I Don't Know How to Sound the Shofar

It is written, "Moses said to G-d, '... [If] they say to me, "What is His Name," what shall I say to them?' The L-RD answered Moses.... He replied, 'O L-rd, send, please, through whomever You will send' " (Exodus 3:13-14; 4:13).

Concerning one of the great rebbes, it is said that every year he would select one of his students to sound the shofar in his Minyan. The Rebbe would personally teach this student about the proper intentions he should have, according to Kabbalah, when sounding the shofar on the holy day of Rosh Hashanah.

In keeping with this custom, one year the Rebbe chose one of his students and taught him for a few days about the intentions behind the shofar blasts, until he fully understood them. However shortly before Rosh Hashanah, this student went to the Rebbe and excused himself because he could not do what was asked of him.

The Rebbe was surprised. "Why?" he asked. The student replied, "The Sages have said that the sounding of the shofar is about wisdom, not technique, and I haven't merited this wisdom. I just don't know how to sound the shofar!" The Rebbe's surprise only grew, and he asked him: "If you knew this before I started teaching you, why didn't you tell me? There's not enough time left to teach someone else what I taught you!"

The student gave a pertinent response: "Please forgive me, but I understood that this could be my only chance for you to teach me what I learned. This is Torah, and I had to understand it. That's why I decided not to tell you anything until now. I learned this from Moses, for when Hashem revealed Himself to him and told him to deliver the Children of Israel, he replied: '[If] they say to me, "What is His Name," what shall I say to them?' Hashem then gave him the honor of teaching him His Name. Yet in the end, when it was time to take action, Moses refused to go. He said, 'O L-rd, send, please, through whomever You will send.' This is surprising, for why did Moses want to know Hashem's Name if, in the end, he didn't want to undertake this mission? From here we learn to take full advantage of every opportunity we have to attain all we can in the holy Torah. We must not pass up any opportunity."

Sometimes the Holy One, blessed be He, wants to present us with a gift. This can be, for example, new Torah insights (as in the above story), such as when new Torah classes begin in our community, or it can be the opportunity to help support a Torah institution or individual. We must realize that just as Moses and the student in the above story did not let such an opportunity pass them by, so too must we not let such an opportunity, such a gift, pass us by. Otherwise we may not be able to find it again. If we take full advantage of every such opportunity, the Creator will send us an abundance of blessings from Heaven, bestowing success and goodness upon us.

A Pearl From the Rav

It is written, "A new king arose over Egypt, who did not know Joseph" (Exodus 1:8).

The Sages have said, "He made himself as if he did not know Joseph at all" (Shemot Rabba 1:8). That is, in order to carry out all his projects and dark plans, Pharaoh pretended not to know him. Therefore if he were asked how he could harm Joseph's family, he would say that he never even heard of him.

In his book Pahad David, Rabbi David Pinto Shlita asks why Pharaoh decided to repay Joseph's children with evil, despite the good that their father had done for him, and why did he demonstrate such ingratitude? The answer is that Pharaoh's ego had been bruised. If he acknowledged the good deeds of Joseph, or if he showed an interest in him, his status in the eyes of the Egyptian people would have greatly suffered, for Pharaoh was nothing compared to him. Pharaoh therefore wanted to turn the Egyptians' attention away from the greatness of Joseph. Hence he chose to demonstrate his ingratitude, for it was his ego that pushed him to do this. From here we must learn a life lesson, a lesson in morality:

If we do not acknowledge the kind acts of others, or if we fail to reflect on what others have done for us, we will end up becoming completely ungrateful. We will even end up repaying evil for good, deciding that others serve us no purpose and that the good they do is really our own doing.

The Sign of the Psalms

It is written, "And these are the names of the Children of Israel who came" (Exodus 1:1).

The last letters in the expression Ve'elieh shemot bnei Israel habarim form the word tehillim ("psalms"). This alludes to the fact that for every calamity or trial we face, we must turn to the Psalms, for deliverance will come in this way.

– Ma'yana Shel Torah

An Alternative to Hard Labor

It is written, "They embittered their lives with hard labor in mortar and in bricks" (Exodus 1:14).

"Hard labor" (avodah kasha)– this is the proposed question (kushiah). "Mortar" (chomer) – this is the logical inference (kal vachomer). "Bricks" (levanim) – this is the clarification (libun) of the Halachah (Zohar, Raaya Mehemna).

The children of Levi, who were not enticed by the things that attracted Pharaoh's heart, and who continued to learn in the Beit Midrash, were rewarded by not being enslaved in Egypt. They accomplished their "hard labor" (avodah kasha) by the efforts they put into explaining a question (kushiah) raised by the Gemara; by "mortar" (chomer), the work they did in making a kal vachomer (logical inference) and the other middot by which they explained the Torah; and by "bricks" (levanim), by striving to clarify (lelaben) the Halachah. It was by this merit that they were discharged from actual work in mortar and bricks. So too over the course of the centuries, anyone who takes upon himself the yoke of Torah frees himself from every other yoke.

What's the Difference Between Pharaoh and Laban?

It is written, "He said, 'When you deliver the Hebrew women and you see them on the birthstool, if it is a son you are to kill him, and if it is a daughter she shall live' " (Exodus 1:16).

In the Passover Haggadah we read, "Consider what Laban the Aramean attempted to do to our father Jacob. While Pharaoh decreed only against the males, Laban attempted to uproot everything." Why must we recount Laban's plans, since by contrast they seem to diminish Pharaoh's wickedness?

We see Pharaoh's wickedness in this too, for Heaven promised us that Abraham's descendants would never cease to exist. Therefore if Laban planned on uprooting everything, it would have been impossible to achieve. However Pharaoh decreed the death of the males only, meaning that the females would have remained. Therefore if they went on to marry Egyptians, the descendants of Abraham would not cease to exist. However their spiritual decline would have been unimaginable, for such descendants would have assimilated among the Egyptians. Therefore we have to thank Hashem for having saved Israel's purity in Egypt.

– Torat Chaim

The Woman Who Fears G-d, She Will be Praised

It is written, "The midwives feared G-d, and they did not do as the king of Egypt spoke to them, and they caused the boys to live" (Exodus 1:17).

The gaon Rabbi Yehudah Tsadka Zatzal said, "Which woman would have obeyed Pharaoh? None actually, for only an incredibly cruel woman would have obeyed him. However the Torah stresses that the midwives refused to obey Pharaoh because they feared G-d. Therefore the reward they received was on account of this fear of Heaven. They did not obey Pharaoh's orders, as we said, but this was not due to feelings of compassion or pity. Rather, it was because they feared G-d.

– Esh Dat

The Focus of Our Prayers

It is written, "Now you will see what I shall do to Pharaoh" (Exodus 6:1).

Up to that point, when the only issue was the pain and suffering of the Children of Israel, accusations could have been made against them, for it may have been argued that the Children of Israel were not worthy of being delivered. Yet when Pharaoh demonstrated enormous arrogance with Hashem by declaring, "I do not know the L-RD, nor will I send Israel away" (Exodus 5:2), this slighted the honor of Heaven and caused pain to the Shechinah. At that point there was no reason to make accusations against the Children of Israel, and their deliverance was sure to come. The Chozeh of Lublin and the Maggid of Koznitz said that when a Jew prays during a time of tragedy, he should primarily address the pain of the Shechinah, not his own. As long as his pain is the only issue he prays about, there is room for accusations to be made against him. However when he prays for the sake of the Shechinah, which suffers in the misfortune of every Jew, every accuser is forced to close its mouth. – Ma'ayana Shel Torah

In the Footsteps of the Patriarchs

When the Children of Israel were in Egypt, they gathered together as one, for everyone was united and bound by a mutual agreement. This pact stipulated that they must demonstrate kindness to one another, guard the covenant of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in their hearts, serve Hashem only, not abandon the language of the house of Jacob their father, and not learn Egyptian because of idolatry.

How so? When the Children of Israel were in Egypt and only worshipped their Father in Heaven, without changing their language, the Egyptians said to them: "Why don't you worship the gods of Egypt, for your work will be lightened?" The Children of Israel replied, "Did Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob refuse to forsake G-d just so we could come along and do so?" When the Egyptians said no, the Children of Israel added: "Our fathers did not forsake G-d, Who abides in Heaven, nor will we!"

– Tanna D'vei Elyahu Rabba 23

Overview of the Parsha

The book of Exodus deals with the formation of the Jewish people, which carried G-d's Sanctuary in its midst, from its birth in the crucible of Egypt until it received the Torah and built the Sanctuary, where sacrifices brought the people closer to Hashem.

From Jacob's children, who descended into a strange land, a people are formed in Egypt that would be persecuted by Pharaoh and his people. At an early stage in the life of Moses (who was born into the house of Levi, devoted to Israel's deliverance), he rescues some of his brothers as well as the daughters of Jethro. Remembering His covenant, Hashem reveals Himself to Moses in a burning bush, and there He appoints him to deliver Israel. After a great deal of discussion, Moses agrees to go to Pharaoh and there he declares, "Let my people go." Pharaoh then increases the workload of the Children of Israel, which prompts Moses to ask G-d, "Why have You done evil to this people?" G-d replies, "Now you will see what I shall do to Pharaoh, for with a strong hand will he let them go."

EISHET CHAYIL

The Clothesline

Finally, after several hours of work, the lady of the house had finished hanging two entire clotheslines with clothes! In the afternoon, however, one of her neighbors came by and decided that they were blocking her way. She therefore cut both lines, and all the clothes fell to the yard's bare earth with a thud. The owner of the clothes controlled herself, and then she cleaned the soiled garments and hung them out to dry elsewhere. She didn't tell anyone what had happened, and even when the same thing occurred a few days later, she kept silent.

The whole incident would have remained a secret, had this neighbor not come by afterwards asking for forgiveness. She said that her son suddenly developed a high fever that evening, which she considered a punishment for her sin.

The tzaddeket wholeheartedly forgave her, and everything was forgotten. Yet nothing was forgotten in Heaven, and a few years later this woman gave birth to a son who became one of the greatest Poskim of our time, Rabbi Elyashiv Shlita.

– Tiferet Nashim

REASONS FOR THE MITZVOT

He Will Rejoice in His Heart

It is written, "He said, 'Is there not Aaron your brother, the Levite? I know that he can surely speak. Also behold, he is going out to meet you, and when he sees you he will rejoice in his heart' " (Exodus 4:14).

Rashi states, "He will rejoice in his heart. Not as you think, that he will resent your attaining a high position."

Let us think about this for a moment. On one hand the Children of Israel were enslaved in Egypt, their offspring were being sealed in mortar, the people were descending to the depths of impurity, and yet the opportunity existed to save them from all this misery. On the other hand there was Aaron, who up until that point had been the leader of the people. He was the one who supported the people during its exile, and he was the one who suffered along with them. Hence there existed a possibility that if Moses came to save them, Aaron's feelings would be hurt. Therefore Moses didn't move! How could this be?

The Holy One, blessed be He, personally implored Moses: Please, be My messenger to save your brothers the Children of Israel. Yet Moses didn't budge. If this mission implied a remote possibility of resentment, even the slightest trace of it, he wasn't going to move!

From here we learn that deliverance is not to come at the price of offending others. No leeway is given here, for this is not the way to proceed. Moses held his ground and said: If You, Master of the universe, want to deliver the Children of Israel, then please find another way, for this way isn't good.

Perhaps it is from here that the great Torah figures of every generation have learned not to undertake important tasks at the expense of others. For example, a great Torah figure wanted to give a letter of recommendation to a certain institution whose principles Rav Shach Zatzal did not agree with.

When Rav Shach went to see this Rav, his Rebbetzin was also seated at the table. Rav Shach was speaking about one thing or another, and when he saw that the Rebbetzin was still there, he bid farewell to this great Rav and left. The Rav didn't exactly know why Rav Shach had come to visit him, but after speaking with members of his household he learned why. The Rav therefore immediately made his way to Rav Shach and excused himself because he didn't know that he disagreed with his letter of recommendation. He told Rav Shach that he would immediately forgo the whole thing.

However he asked Rav Shach why he didn't want to tell him this when he was at his home. After all, he had visited him for that very purpose! Rav Shach replied, "What could I do, since your Rebbetzin was also there?" The Rav said that Rav Shach could have very well spoken in her presence. However Rav Shach replied, "What are you saying? What kind of peace would you have in the home, and how impolite would it have been for me to say, in front of the Rebbetzin, that I disagreed with you?"

YOUR EYES SHALL BEHOLD YOUR TEACHER

Rabbi Shemuel of Sochatchov – The Shem MiShemuel

The Rebbe of Sochatchov, Rabbi Shemuel Borenstein Zatzal, was born in the small town of Kotzk on Heshvan 4, 5615. His father, Rav Avraham Borenstein, served as the Rebbe of Sochatchov and authored the books *Avnei Nezer* and *Eglei Tal*. Rav Avraham was also the son-in-law of Rabbi Menachem Mendel of Kotzk, who was known as the Seraph.

From his youth, everyone could see that Rabbi Shemuel was born for greatness. When all his friends were playing, the tiny Shemuel was hidden away in his room and learning about every facet of Torah. This is why his grandfather, the Seraph, was particularly fond of him. Although Rabbi Shemuel was only four years old when his grandfather died (Shevat 22, 5619), he would recount remarkable stories and Torah insights that he heard from him, repeating his teachings as if he had heard them on that very day.

Rabbi Shemuel studied with his father as well as with the Chiddushei HaRim of Ger. He also drew close to Reb Chanoch Henich of Alexander. Rabbi Shemuel received lessons in Torah and Chassidut from them, and they infused him with Chassidut and a fear of Heaven that purified him.

After the passing of his father on Adar 11, 5670, Rabbi Shemuel took upon himself the yoke of leading the community. Thousands of people gathered in his shadow to learn the ways of Torah, Chassidut, and good middot. He was known to be a fiery individual, and he fought with all his strength against those who tried to destroy Judaism. Nevertheless his home was open to all, and he welcomed everyone with kindness. He served as the Rebbe of Sochatchov for only 16 years, and on Tevet 24, 5686 he departed for the celestial academy. Rabbi Shemuel is buried next to his father in the small Polish town of Sochatchov. May his merit protect us all.

IN THE LIGHT OF THE HAFTORAH

Nothing But its Mother's Arms

It is written, "Thus said the L-RD: I recall for you the kindness of your youth, the love of your nuptials, your following Me into the desert, into an unsown land" (Jeremiah 2:2).

This verse does not mean that the Children of Israel followed Hashem into the desert in order to die there. On the contrary, their greatness lay in the fact that they went there precisely because they wanted to live. The fact that men, women, and children went into a "great and awesome desert, of snake, fiery serpent, and scorpion, and thirst without water" (Deuteronomy 8:15) means that they did not feel threatened in any way. In fact they ignored everything around them and felt as if they were walking in an inhabited land. Their confidence in the oneness of G-d was so great that they felt they were walking amid gardens and parks. That is what constituted "the kindness of your youth, the love of your nuptials," for their natural reactions did not exist at that point. They had only the Holy One, blessed be He, before their eyes. They went wherever He told them, and they paid no attention to the natural conditions of their surroundings. They were just like a baby carried in the arms of its mother. Even when she carries it to a place with wild animals and thieves, her baby does not sense any danger, for it feels nothing but its mother's arms around it.

– Sichot Mussar 5733

A TRUE STORY

Go to Meet Moses!

It is written, "Go to meet Moses" (Exodus 4:27).

During the Second World War, Rabbi Aharon Kotler lived in the Far East along with other Roshei Yeshivot and yeshiva students fleeing from Nazi-occupied Europe. At the time, he hesitated between going to America or joining his father-in-law, Rabbi Isser Zalman Meltzer, in Eretz Israel. Rabbi Aharon's goal was to save the largest number of European Jews that he could, as well as to spread Torah. Where should he go? Which continent should he travel to? As was his custom whenever he needed to make an important decision, Rabbi Aharon used the Goral HaGra, the "lottery" of the Vilna Gaon, which was based on kabbalistic principles handed down by the Gra. It was used by great Torah figures only in exceptional cases, when all other means had failed to reach a decision of capital importance. The result of this procedure was a verse that answered Rabbi Kotler's question. The verse he received was, "Go to meet Moses, to the desert."

For Rabbi Aharon, this clearly meant that he should go and join Rabbi Moshe Feinstein in the United States, which at the time was known to Jews as a spiritual "desert."

THE DEEDS OF THE GREAT

Lashon Harah that Led to Bloodshed

A man had difficulty marrying off his three daughters. One was lazy, another stole, and the third spoke Lashon Harah. One day this man's friend came to him and said, "I have three sons. If you're willing, you can give your three daughters to them in marriage." The man replied, "My daughters don't deserve your sons," and he proceeded to list their faults. The man's friend said, "All the same, I want my sons to marry your daughters." Weddings were therefore quickly arranged, and they all got married.

What did the father of the three sons do? For his lazy daughter-in-law, he provided servants and maidservants, and he instructed them not to let her do anything. For his daughter-in-law who stole, he gave her a large sum of money and said, "You will succeed in everything you do." As for his daughter-in-law who spoke Lashon Harah, he would wake up early each day to ask her what was new. He said to her, "If you want something from your husband, tell me and I'll let him know. He'll do whatever you want." Since she got everything she wanted in this way, she didn't say anything about her husband.

One day the father of these women came to visit them. He asked the lazy one, "My daughter, how are things going with your husband?" She replied, "Father, may a blessing come upon you for having given me a husband who provides me with servants and maidservants who don't let me lift a finger!" The man then went and asked the same question to his daughter who stole, and she gave him a similar response. Finally he went to see his daughter who spoke slander, but she began to cry. She said to him, "Father, you gave me over to two men – the father and the son! If you don't believe me, hide in my room and see for yourself!" The man immediately hid himself in her room, and when her father-in-law came to ask her what was new, as he normally did, she said to him: "Don't touch me! Don't put me to shame!" Her father-in-law said, "Have I ever harmed you? The thought never even entered my mind!" When the woman's father heard this, he left the room and killed her father-in-law. Those living in the house then killed him, and since the woman was screaming and weeping over her father, they killed her too. From here we see that Lashon Harah kills three people: The speaker, the one who accepts it, and the person spoken of.