

Torah Portion #36: Beha'alotcha (בהעלותך) "When you set up"

Torah ~ Numbers 8:1-12:16 | Prophets ~ Zechariah 2:14-4:7; 2 Kings 5:1-14 | New Covenant ~ James 3:6-10; Rev. 11:1-19

Evil Speech

In this Torah portion, Miriam learns a very valuable lesson that we need to apply to our lives on a daily bases. Miriam learned in *Numbers 12:1-15* just how easy it is to sin with the words that we speak. The Hebrew word for leprosy is "tzara'at". The symptoms of tzara'at is not like modern day leprosy or any other illness.

It is believed that tzara'at was an outward disease of the flesh that revealed the spiritual inward condition of the leper. The words that we say is just like tzara'at in that they speak outwardly of our inward condition.

Tzara'at being a spiritual sickness would explain *Leviticus 14:2-4* where it says that a leper had to be examined by a Priest instead of a doctor. This also explains *Matthew 8:2-4* where Yeshua healed a leper and then told him to show himself to the Priest just like they was commended to do in *Leviticus 14* in order to be declared healed.

The Consequences of our Speech

Miriam also learned that there is consequences that comes from the sin of evil speech. Miriam had to suffer the consequence of being separated from her community. Today, when we use evil speech we suffer many consequences, including separating ourselves from people that don't want to hear our evil speech. The most obvious evil speech is cursing, but evil speech is also lying, complaining, gossip, slander, divisive words, or speaking bad things about your life.

Psalm 12:3 "The Lord will cut off all flattering lips, and the tongue that speaks proud things" MEV

Proverbs 18:21 "Death and life are in the power of the tongue, And those who love it will eat its fruit." NASB

Deuteronomy 30:19 "I have set before you life and death, the blessing and the curse. So choose life" NASB

1 Peter 3:10 "The one who loves life, wanting to see good days, must keep his tongue from evil" TLV

Proverbs 21:23 "Whoever keeps his mouth and his tongue keeps himself out of trouble." ESV

James 5:9 "Don't grumble against one another, brothers, so that you won't come under condemnation" CJB

1 Corinthians 10:10 "Nor should we complain as some of them did, and were killed by the destroyer." HCSB

A Believers Speech

Just as a believer's actions are to be set apart from the world, so to are the words that we speak. As believers we are to speak as Yeshua spoke which is words of love, grace, mercy, compassion and uplifting.

Psalm 34:13 "Keep your tongue from evil And your lips from speaking deceit." NASB

Psalm 39:1a "I will guard my ways That I may not sin with my tongue" NASB

Psalm 71:24a "All day long my tongue will speak of your righteousness." CJB

Psalm 119:172 "My tongue will sing of your word, for all your commandments are right." ESV

Proverbs 15:2 "The tongue of the wise treats knowledge correctly, but the mouth of fools spouts folly." TLV

Proverbs 15:4 "A soothing tongue is a tree of life, but when it twists things, it breaks the spirit." CJB

Ephesians 4:29 "Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up" ESV

Ephesians 4:31 "Get rid of all bitterness, rage, anger, harsh words, and slander" NLT

Philippians 2:14 "Do everything without grumbling or arguing" TLV

In Closing

Galatians 5:16 "let the Spirit direct your lives, and you will not satisfy the desires of the human nature" GNT

One of our human desires is to say whatever we want to say and whenever we want to say it.

James 3:10 "From the same mouth come blessing and cursing. My brothers, these things ought not to be so." ESV

James 1:26 "If anyone thinks himself to be religious, and yet does not bridle his tongue but deceives his own heart, this man's religion is worthless." NASB