

A "PURE" Person Rabbi Yosef Vogel

There are many words used in conversation which are not clearly understood. Some words appear in ancient books written in Hebrew, Latin or Greek and though thousands of years have passed, the words remain somewhat enigmatic.

This is particularly true with regard to the Bible and the Hebrew language. Words such as "*Kadosh*", "*Tahor*" and "*Tzadik*", although sometimes translated as "sacred", "pure" and "righteous", respectively, do not accurately capture the full richness of their meaning.

What does the word "*Tahor*" (pure) really mean? And when we attribute this word to a human being what exactly do we have in mind?

In this week's Torah portion we read about a physical blemish caused by a spiritual defect. If a person were to speak negatively about a fellow man, a remarkable thing would occur. We are told that light spots would appear on one's skin. As a result of this, the person affected would not be allowed to enter the temple and in addition would also be sent out of all three camps in which the Jewish people lived. The reason for this is because the person was *Tameh* (impure)

Here we can gain a profound insight into the Torah understanding of whom it considers "pure". The word "pure" is attributed to someone in their original unadulterated state. Judaism sees this as a person who does not feel inclined to undermine others. A person, who does undermine another Jew by speaking of him in a derogatory way, is in fact highlighting a defect in his own character which in turn is a reflection of a spiritual flaw. For it is not merely words spoken negatively about someone else, but a deeper reflection into one's own spiritual state.

As a result one needs some time out to seriously reflect and attempt to repair the flaw, bringing oneself to a state of "purity", which is the natural state of every Jew.

24 April

Parshah Tazria-Metzora

Shabbat Begins: 7.59 pm

Shabbat Ends: 9.16 pm