

## A "PURE" Person

There are many words in our vernacular that do not carry a clear understanding, but are often nonchalantly thrown into conversation. Some words appear in ancient books written in Hebrew, Latin or Greek, and although thousands of years have elapsed since they were first spoken or written down, the words remain somewhat illusive to us.

This is particularly true with regard to the language of the scriptures and the Hebrew language as a whole. Words such as "Kadosh", "Tahor" and "Tzadik", are used and although they are sometimes translated as "sacred", "pure and righteous, respectively, they do not accurately capture the full richness of their meaning when used in colloquial terms.

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

In this week's Torah portion we read about a physical blemish that was the manifestation of a spiritual defect. The Scripture writes that when a person spoke negatively about a fellow human being, a remarkable thing would occur. We are told that light spots would appear on his skin which were known as leprosy (tzarrat). 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) and what the Torah terms, "spiritually contagious."

It is from this, that we are able to gain a profound insight into the Torah's definition of what it considers to be "pure". The word pure is attributed to someone or something when it is in its unadulterated state. Judaism sees this as a person who does not feel inclined to undermine others. A person, who undermines another Jew by speaking of him in a derogatory way, is essentially highlighting a defect in his own character which is a reflection of a spiritual flaw in him. When negative words are spoken about something or someone else, it is really a deeper reflection of one's own spiritual state.

When we become aware of this, we can begin the process of teshuvah, whereby we spiritual cleanse ourselves so that not only do we become more pristine beings, but the way in which we view the world and others become more pristine. When we bring ourselves to a state of purity, we return our souls to their natural state of holiness, because essentially every Jewish soul is pure at its core.

*Warm Regards,  
Rabbi Yosef Vogel*

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28th March – **Tazria**

Shabbat Begins: 6:12pm  
Shabbat Ends: 7:16 pm