

The Quantum Academy



The Power of the Tongue

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Taking control of your tongue

If there is one thing that the LORD has really been dealing with in my own life the past year it is the power of the tongue! I have been so convicted by His Spirit to become mindful of the words I speak, not only over my own life and circumstances, but the words I dare to speak over others.

There are so many Bible verses that spring to mind; of which Proverbs 18:21 is probably the most famous, and the Amplified phrases it so eloquently:

Proverbs 18:21

Amplified Bible

***"Death and life are in the power of the tongue,
And those who love it and indulge it will eat its fruit and bear the consequences of their words."***

I have wondered often in the past year how many of my own disasters and misfortunes were in fact self-inflicted, due to my own negative words? How bitter have the fruit been that I have had to eat of words sown in anger, bitterness and fear?

It is one thing to eat the fruit of your own negative words, but how awful that we speak negative words over others, and the thought that the enemy would agree with our words and use it to hurt someone else? That is just heart-breaking! One of the passages that have really been haunting me is Psalm 15:1-3 that says:

Psalm 15:1-3

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Complete Jewish Bible

" (0) A psalm of David:

(1) ADONAI, who can rest in your tent?

Who can live on your holy mountain?

² Those who live a blameless life,

who behave uprightly,

who speak truth from their hearts

³ and keep their tongues from slander;

who never do harm to others

or seek to discredit neighbours;"

Our spirits yearn to be close to Him, to experience His presence. But these verses would suggest that we may be the cause of our own separation from Him through our words of slander, discredit and lies. I have found in the past months that when I struggle to study the Word, to pray, or when I feel so far from God and I just cannot seem to experience Him, it is often due to sin I committed with my own tongue.

Because life and death are in the power of the tongue, there is a direct correlation between ***Proverbs 18:21*** and the sixth commandment in ***Exodus 20:13***:

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Amplified Bible

¹³ “You shall not commit murder (unjustified, deliberate homicide).”

You may be thinking “well thank goodness I can stop reading, this is not applicable to me!” But hold onto your hats! We know that each of the 10 Commandments are just a summary of the 613 Commandments God gave to Moses. If we delve deeper into this Commandment about murder, we note that it not only deals with the deliberate and unjustified killing of another person, but also with the concept of “lashon hara”, better known as evil speech.

“Evil speech or lashon hara (lah-shone ha-rah): Be careful with what you say, don’t be verbally abusive, don’t embarrass someone publicly, don’t lie, and know that words can be cruel weapons.”

Let us take a little “rabbi trail” and drive this concept home with a story, we all love a good story, right?

One man spread a rumor about another. He later felt regret and went to the rabbi to ask how to make amends. “Go to the store and buy a bag of seeds,” said the rabbi, “then go to a big open field and scatter the seeds into the wind. Do so and report back to me in a week.”

The man did as he was told and came back the next week to find out what to do next. “Now,” said the rabbi, “go back to the field and pick up all the seeds.”

“But” the man protested, “those seeds have scattered far and wide! I’ll never find them all. Many have even already taken root!”

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“Exactly,” explained the rabbi. “Now you understand. When we speak badly about another person, the effect is far and wide. And it is damage that can never be fully undone.”

What makes mankind unique above all the animals? We are not the strongest, fastest, some would even suggest not the most intelligent. Yet man possesses something that no other creature on earth has; the ability to creatively communicate. When God breathed into Adam’s nostrils the breath of life, we were gifted with the same creative gift that the whole universe was formed from: speech.

Speech is a tool of creation (just like our Creator created and formed the universe through speech), so can our speech build up or tear down. Bring life or bring death.

Genesis 1: 3, 6, 9, 11, 14, 20, 24

³ And God said, ^[d]“Let there be light”; and there was light

⁶ And God said, “Let there be an ^[h]expanse [of the sky] in the midst of the waters, and let it separate the waters [below the expanse] from the waters [above the expanse].”

⁹ Then God said, “Let the waters below the heavens be gathered into one place [of standing, pooling together], and let the dry land appear”; and it was so.

¹¹ So God said, “Let the earth sprout [tender] ^[i]vegetation, ^[i]plants yielding seed, and fruit trees bearing fruit according to (limited to, consistent with) their kind, whose seed is in them upon the earth”; and it was so.

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¹⁴ Then God said, “Let there be light-bearers (sun, moon, stars) in the expanse of the heavens to separate the day from the night, and let them be useful for signs (tokens) [of God’s provident care], and for marking seasons, days, and years;

²⁰ Then God said, “Let the waters swarm and abundantly produce living creatures, and let birds soar above the earth ^[k]in the open expanse of the heavens

²⁴ Then God said, “Let the earth bring forth living creatures according to (limited to, consistent with) their kind: livestock, crawling things, and wild animals of the earth according to their kinds”; and it was so [because He had spoken them into creation].

Beyond just the destruction that comes in the person’s own soul who falls into the trap of evil speech, think of the destruction that comes with the power of gossip and vicious rumours – it tears apart relationships, families, communities.

There is an old rabbinic tradition that says that lashon hara kills three people:

- 1) The one who is spoken about, the person who is being gossiped about or whose character is being attacked behind their back. It kills them, because it ruins their reputation (think of the story about the seed that was spread all over and could never be recovered).
- 2) The one who speaks the lashon hara, because he is the one who is transgressing the Commandment not to murder, even with your mouth, and he lowers himself spiritually by doing so.
- 3) The one who listens to lashon hara, because he is providing the speaker with the opportunity to transgress, and his opinion of the one who is spoken about is ruined.

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We often end up justifying our words that fall under evil speech with the below excuses, beware of this, it is a crafty trap that the enemy cannot wait for you to step in and transgress:

1. "But it's true!"
2. "But I didn't even mention his name!"
3. "I wouldn't care if someone said the same thing about me."
4. "Everyone knows about it already, anyway."
5. "He wouldn't mind."
6. "I'd say it even to his face."
7. "Just kidding!"
8. "There he goes again..."
9. "It's all in the name of business / ministry competition."
10. "This may be Loshon Hara, but..."
11. "C'mon, you can tell me..."

We have all been guilty of this, and so the real question is, how do we avoid gossip and slander?

Matthew 7:3
Amplified Bible

³ Why do you look at the [insignificant] speck that is in your brother's eye, but do not notice and acknowledge the [egregious] log that is in your own eye?

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- ✓ Recognize your own faults and commit to improving them.
- ✓ Try not to focus on someone's flaws but on their virtues.
- ✓ Judge others favourably.
- ✓ Practice Self-Control (one of the fruits of the Spirit)

May the LORD work in each of our hearts, to not only refrain from killing with our tongues (or fingers in the era of the Internet and social media), but to not become complicit to murder by lending out our eyes and ears to malicious words.

May our ears be for the hearing of God's word and the doing of His commandments:

Deuteronomy 6:4-6
Amplified Bible

⁴ "Hear, O Israel! The LORD is our God, the LORD is one [the only God]! ⁵ You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and mind and with all your soul and with all your strength [your entire being]. ⁶ These words, which I am commanding you today, shall be [written] on your heart and mind.

In an attempt to bridle my tongue, to commit it to the speaking of life and truth, I have made it a habit now to start my prayers by asking for the LORD's help with the below:

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- Lord forgive me for words of slander, gossip and judgement
- Forgive me for the negative words I have spoken over myself and others, and silence those words with the blood of Yeshua
- Create in me a clean heart
- Bridle my tongue
- Circumcise my tongue
- Fill my mouth with Your wisdom and truth

This message is not one of condemnation, we all fall short of the Glory of God. This message is one of hope, and of knowing that each of us have the ability through His Holy Spirit that empowers us, to use our tongues for good and not for evil. I hope this message will inspire you to become mindful of how you use your tongue, and of the words you speak over yourself and others. It is exactly as James said, this small little organ has the ability to move our entire destiny! Be careful how you use it! I leave you with the words of James, may each one of us receive the help of the Holy Spirit to empower us to bridle our tongues!

James 3:4-16
Amplified Bible

⁴ And look at the ships. Even though they are so large and are driven by strong winds, they

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are still directed by a very small rudder wherever the impulse of the helmsman determines. ⁵ In the same sense, the tongue is a small part of the body, and yet it boasts of great things.

See [by comparison] how great a forest is set on fire by a small spark! ⁶ And the tongue is [in a sense] a fire, the very world of injustice and unrighteousness; the tongue is set among our members as that which contaminates the entire body, and sets on fire the course of our life [the cycle of man's existence], and is itself set on fire by hell (Gehenna). ⁷ For every species of beasts and birds, of reptiles and sea creatures, is tamed and has been tamed by the human race. ⁸ But no one can tame the human tongue; it is a restless evil [undisciplined, unstable], full of deadly poison. ⁹ With it we bless our Lord and Father, and with it we curse men, who have been made in the likeness of God. ¹⁰ Out of the same mouth come both blessing and cursing. These things, my brothers, should not be this way [for we have a moral obligation to speak in a manner that reflects our fear of God and profound respect for His precepts]. ¹¹ Does a spring send out from the same opening both fresh and bitter water? ¹² Can a fig tree, my brothers, produce olives, or a grapevine produce figs? Nor can saltwater produce fresh.

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