

And he shall call, "Unclean, unclean." (13:45)

The *metzora* is spiritually contaminated. He is to remain secluded from society, calling out to others not to come close to him. "*Tamei, tamei*," he calls out, notifying people of his present state. The *Shelah Ha'Kadosh* extends the interpretation of this *pasuk* by placing a "comma" between the first and second "*tamei*." The *pasuk* would now read, "*V'tamei - tamei yikra*." One who disparages others, who calls others *tamei* is generally projecting his own blemished character. In other words, the model behind most *lashon hora* is none other than oneself. He who has a character flaw will knowingly and unknowingly project this deficiency on to others. He will look for it, and if he does not find it, he will fabricate it.

An individual sees himself reflected in his friends' behavior. The *Baal Shem Tov* says that one who is inherently good perceives good wherever he goes. One who is flawed sees flaws in everyone. Moreover, whatever we see is essentially a message for us regarding our own behavior. Nothing is coincidental. Indeed, we should look for Hashem's message throughout our every endeavor.