

## Mi Ha'ish

מי האיש הקפץ חיים, אוהב ימים לראות טוב  
נצר לשונה מרע ושפתיה מדבר מרמה  
סור מרע ועשה טוב, בקש שלום ורדפהו\*.

Mi ha-ish he-kha-feitz khai-yim,  
o-heiv ya-mim lir-ot tov.  
N'tzor l'shon-kha mei-ra us-fa-te-kha mi-da-beir mir-ma.  
Sur mei-ra va-a-sei tov, ba-keish sha-lom v'rod-fei-hu.

Who is the person who desires life, who loves days to see good. Guard your tongue from evil and your lips from speaking deceitfully. Turn from wrongdoing and do good—seek peace and pursue it.

## D'rash

**Who is the person who desires life, who loves days to see good?**—How do we recognize such people? We may know them by their unstinting commitment to honor and nourish life. **Guard your tongue from evil and your lips from speaking deceitfully**—When you are tempted to do lashon hara (evil tongue or gossip) or listen to the gossip of another, as if it were innocuous banter, imagine yourself to be its subject and consider the impact on your life. **Turn from wrongdoing and do good**—It is good to refrain from lashon hara; it is better to also refuse to passively accept the lashon hara of others; but it is best to also teach lashon hara's destructive consequences for the subjects of the gossip, the listeners, the gossipers, and the community. **Seek peace and pursue it**—The root of peace (shalom) is completeness or wholeness, “. . . the reverse of every kind of separation and fragmentation” (Or Hachayim), which is the inevitable result of lashon hara.

## Iyun Tefilla

### WORDS WILL NEVER HURT ME

You  
Who say the tongue  
Requires no guard,  
Watch out!  
Sticks and stones  
Never had it so good!  
And do not say  
You doubt its power!  
Or the weight  
Of your own  
Words, words, words  
Will surely  
Crush you.  
Try not to hurt yourself  
When tripping  
On your tongue.  
Try to remember:  
What's good for others  
Is also good for you.

The same rule applies:  
You may know me.  
I may know you.  
But none of us is known  
As God knows.  
I'm speaking to myself,  
Of course,  
I who persist in thinking  
I know the truth  
Of all things,  
And am compelled  
To say it.  
Let me acknowledge  
For once what  
I do not know.

\* Psalm 34:13-15.

Go to <http://www.gatherthepeople.org> for more congregational development and organizing tools.

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