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CONVERSATION

SHABBOS MENU

PART OF THE CCHF SHABBOS TABLE MACHSOM L'FI PROGRAM • SHABBOS PARSHAS VA'ESCHANAN 5780 • ISSUE 201

BETWEEN YOU AND ME

You have a complaint against someone. If you just tell one person about it – someone who's not even close to the subject of your grievance – is that loshon hora? After all, the words very likely won't go any further than his ears.

T H E

DILEMMA

Your highschool age daughter hasn't had much academic success; and today there's a big, cumulative Chumash test. "I can't go to school," she tells you when you urge her out of bed.

This launches a discussion, which becomes a conflict, which becomes an angry conflict. After much heat and agitation, as well as a missed bus, you drive her to school and head home. That's when your mother calls and innocently asks, "Hi, how was your morning?"

At that moment, you want nothing more than to complain about your underachieving, angry teen. After all, your mother cares about you and about her granddaughter, too. May you describe all the drama you've endured? May you tell her about your daughter's angry, hurtful words? It's not as if you're telling everyone you know – you're telling just one person.



T H E

HALACHAH

Speaking negatively about someone, even to just one person who will not spread it, is loshon hora. In this case, the mother's complaints might taint the relationship between grandmother and grandchild. If the grandmother is in a position to influence the granddaughter, then under certain circumstances a discussion might be *l'toeles*.

*Sefer Chofetz Chaim,
Hilchos Loshon Hora,
Klal 2:1*

PARTICIPANTS SPEAK

We started the Shabbos Table MACHSOM L'FI after Tisha B'Av two years ago, and it has become a staple in our home. Our children take turns reading it aloud and figuring out the halachah. We know we have been learning the topic well when we can come up with the right answers ourselves. Many guests to our home adopt the practice in their own homes.

Thank you for enhancing our Shabbos, our Shmiras Halashon, and our lives!

Rabbi Rafi Draiman
Boca Raton, FL

FOR QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS, EMAIL

Shabbosmenu@cchfglobal.org

"[Like] kindling to coals, and

Twigs to fire, [so is] the
contentious man to kindling strife."

– Mishlei 26:21

BOCA RATON

THE EMBARRASSED CHASSAN

Rabbi Elimelech Biderman addressed a gathering at the Vizhnitzer yeshivah, Yeshuos Moshe, in Kiryat Sefer, that took place toward the end of the month of Shevat.

He told the group of *bachurim* that the previous Wednesday, 18 Shevat, a man approached him. A year earlier, the man said, his brother had become engaged and was celebrating his *aufruf* in a central Vizhnitz *beis medrash* in Kiryat Vizhnitz. Nine other *chassanim* there were celebrating their *aufrufs* as well.

The shul's custom was to let each *chassan* know ahead of time which *aliyah* he would be getting so that his female relatives would be ready to throw candy at him, as is the tradition.

"My brother was called for his *aliyah*," the man recalled. "His friends began to sing for him, but for some reason, the women weren't ready to throw the candy. My brother was so embarrassed that he pulled up his *bekeshe* (long coat) to cover his face.

"After the davening, my sister went over to my brother to apologize and ask him to forgive the women for inadvertently embarrassing him. This sister had been married a few years, but didn't yet have any children. So she asked my brother to forgive, and with the merit of that mitzvah, to give her a *brachah* to have children. Right away my brother agreed to put the incident behind him, and he gave her a wholehearted *brachah*."

"Last night, on 18 Shevat," Rabbi Biderman concluded, "exactly one year since the *aufruf*, the *chassan's* sister made a *vacht nacht** for her son."

*a tradition in which young children recite the *Shema* near an infant on the night before his *bris*.

—Adapted from a report in *B'Chadrei Chareidim*



TALK ABOUT IT

Why is it sometimes difficult to forgive? What can we tell ourselves to make it easier?

sage advice



3 Shalom Strategies Also Together

A man came from America to visit Israel. He had a longing to see the legendary city of Tzfas, so he took a trip up north. Arriving at his destination, he found it as beautiful and mystical as he had imagined, with its ancient winding streets, pastel-painted houses adorned with heavenly blue accents, and a sky that itself seemed to be painted a perfect sapphire hue.

As he took in the breathtaking scene, he noticed an elderly man with a long white beard. As the man came closer, walking with the help of his cane, the visitor was fascinated by his appearance. The elderly man seemed to have walked out of the pages of Jewish history.

"*Shalom*," the visitor said to the old man. "I'm visiting here from America."

"*Shalom*," the man responded. "Can I help you with something? Are you lost?"

"Well, I actually just wanted to ask you a question," the visitor answered. "I'm wondering if you have some words of wisdom you could share with me."

"I do," said the man, "and if you follow them, you will be successful in your life. You know that there is a verse in *Tehillim* that says, '*Hinei ma tov u'ma na'im sheves achim gam yachad* — Look how beautiful and pleasant it is when brothers sit also together.' The word *gam* in this verse, which means also, seems to be unnecessary. We could just say that it's beautiful when brothers sit together. It's what gives Hashem the most pleasure. Why do we say *gam*?"

"It's because the word *yachad*, which means together, is actually an acronym. It stands for '*yesh chilukei dei'os* — [even when] there are differences of opinion.' This is what it means to sit together as brothers. It's not just when we agree, but *gam* — also — when we disagree. Remember, no matter what your brother thinks, even if his opinions are the opposite of yours, he is still your brother and you are still bound together."

— Adapted from a presentation on *Aish.com*

TALK ABOUT IT

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