



SHABBOS
CHANUKAH

FOOD FOR
THOUGHT
TO SPARK
CONVERSATION

SHABBOS MENU

PART OF THE CCHF SHABBOS TABLE MACHSOM L'FI PROGRAM • PARSHAS VAYEISHEV 5781 • ISSUE 220

'WHAT KIND OF JEW DOES THAT?'

Your neighbor presents himself as a Torah-observant Jew, but you saw him with your own eyes disregarding a mitzvah. Shouldn't you take a stand for Hashem and His Torah?

THE DILEMMA

The rabbis in your community have recently posted a letter informing everyone that an ice cream shop that was always under kosher supervision has lost its *hechsher*. So you're surprised when you see your neighbor emerging from the store one hot summer day with a three-scoop cone in his hand.

"Didn't you read the notice?" you ask him.

"It's all political," he tells you. "They haven't changed a thing in the store. Same ice cream, same owner, same menu. If it was kosher last week, it's kosher this week."

"I can't believe how Moshe could just fly in the face of all the *rabbanim* in town and put something in his mouth that they've said isn't kosher!" you tell your friend. Have you spoken *loshon hora*?



THE HALACHAH

Except under specific conditions, in matters that are *bein adam laMakom* (between man and Hashem), when there is no *toe'eles* in telling anyone, we are not permitted to report an incident to others – even if we've seen it firsthand and it happened recently – if it will demean the subject.

Sefer Chofetz Chaim,
Hilchos Loshon
Hora, 4:1

BE THE LIGHT

It's hard to imagine that one family could single-handedly raise the level of Shmiras Haloshon for an entire community. Yet just one family, the Chashmona'im, turned the Hellenist tide and brought about the miracles of Chanukah. And in our time, one family – maybe your family – can stimulate the growth of a whole community by taking on the Shabbos Table Machsom L'Fi. Soon you'll be encouraging your friends to see for themselves the beautiful, upbeat Shabbos table this tool inspires. Your guests will see it too, and will want to emulate you. Soon Shmiras Haloshon will have its place at the Shabbos table – and from there, in everyday life – among your neighbors and friends. You can make the difference.

Happy Chanukah!

FOR QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS, EMAIL

Shabbosmenu@cchfglobal.org

"How great is

peace!
For Hashem began
Creation with
nothing
other than the
Light of Peace."

– Menoras HaMaor, Gadol HaShalom, amud 546

Reviewed by Rabbi Moshe Mordechai Lowy. For discussion only; actual halachic decisions should be made by a rav or halachic expert on a case-by-case basis.

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MALKA BREINDEL A"H BAS SHMUEL FISHEL YLCH"Y

THE VERY IMPORTANT BAKER

The *sherut* (shared taxi) was idling at the curb, about to receive two prestigious passengers – the great Rav Avrohom Genichovsky, zt”l, and another respected Rosh Yeshivah who happened to be traveling in the same direction. The Rosh Yeshivah was thrilled; he would have the entire duration of the ride from Yerushalayim to Bnei Brak to speak to Rav Avrohom in learning.

Before the *sherut* could leave, however, Rav Avrohom noticed a neighbor and his wife scanning the block for a taxi. He got out of the *sherut* and signaled for them to come with him. The neighbor, who was the local baker, was also thrilled to be sharing a ride with such an illustrious Torah leader.

As the *sherut* driver pulled out onto the road, the Rosh Yeshivah asked Rav Avrohom a question about a point in Torah, to which the *gadol* responded briefly. Then Rav Avrohom addressed the baker. “How do you make your donuts so fluffy?” he inquired. The baker explained his process and the Rav followed up with more “shop talk,” exuding interest in every facet of the baker’s craft. The Rosh Yeshivah tried a few more times to spark a conversation in learning, but each time the spark was left to die out.

When Rav Avrohom and his companion emerged from the cab, the Rosh Yeshivah asked the Rav about his sudden fascination with baking. “If we had spoken in learning for an hour, the baker would have been left out,” he explained. “His wife would have thought, ‘My husband can’t learn like that,’ and she would have felt bad. I didn’t want to make her feel bad.”

Rav Avrohom Genichovsky gave up an hour of Torah discussion because he understood that every human being wears an invisible sign that says, “Make me feel



TALK ABOUT IT

What are some practical ways to make another person feel important?

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sage advice

WHAT'S FOGGING UP MY GLASSES?



In the Age of Coronavirus, the new must-have accessory is the face mask. Public health experts tell us that these masks will help prevent the disease from spreading. The price of this protection for a person who wears glasses is that his breath rises up and fogs his lenses. It seems like a nuisance, but based on a fascinating concept from the Chazon Ish, it is also a powerful reminder, like the mask itself, to watch our words.

The Chazon Ish explains that there's more in our clouds and rain than H₂O. The way the water cycle works is that water evaporates, the vapors rise upward, and then, through condensation, it rains down on the earth. When trees and vegetation soak up the rain through their roots, it becomes part of the food we eat. The Chazon Ish explains that the vapors rising from the earth contain the *ruach* – spirit, whether pure or tainted – of the words we speak. *Loshon hora*, cruel words, words spoken during *tefillah*, rise up to the clouds, rain back down, enter the food we eat and become part of our bodies, where they further coarsen us. On the other hand, our positive words elevate us.

When the impurity we were absorbing became overwhelming, says Rabbi Menachem Nissel in his poem “Foggy Glasses,” Hashem sent the Coronavirus to stop it. He sent us into isolation. Alone with family members, we learned to get along. Away from shul, we learned to *daven* with concentration and cherish this opportunity. Torn apart from friends, we realized their value. But what will keep these lessons fresh in our minds until new, lasting habits are formed?

The fog. Rabbi Nissel says that this serves as a visible reminder that our words are real. The vapor they create, normally invisible to our eyes, now clouds our vision. But as the poem concludes, our foggy glasses “help us see clearer than ever before.”

TALK ABOUT IT

What are some lessons about relationships that you have learned during the Coronavirus crisis?

important.” If it was worth an hour of Rav Avrohom’s learning, it’s certainly worth a few encouraging words from us.

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