



SHABBOS MENU

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TRUE OR FALSE

You hear something about an acquaintance that startles you. If it's true, you might run into some serious trouble. How do you protect yourself in the event that it's true, while not falling into the aveirah of believing it fully?

THE DILEMMA

The Steinberg family seems like a nice bunch. They've just moved into town and they want to rent a house that you own. You'd love to rent it to them, but you have to be careful. Taking on a tenant is a big commitment that's difficult to undo if it doesn't go well.

They give you three references from their hometown. The first two references sing the Steinbergs' praises. The third spills out, "You don't have to worry about them. They're as honest as the day is long. They even took out a loan to pay their back rent before they left."

This is vital news! The last thing you need is a tenant who falls months behind in his rent. But is this report enough for you to refuse to rent to them? May you tell other landlords what you heard so they can protect themselves as well?



THE HALACHAH

You can suspect that this report is true and on that basis, refrain from renting to the Steinbergs until you verify it. [If you confirm that the information is true, you may refrain from renting to them.]

Sefer Chofetz Chaim
Hilchos Loshon Hora 6:11



NO REGRETS

When people look at the calendar this week, they might be alarmed. Elul is more than half gone! It's alarming because often, we realize that we haven't gotten anywhere near the half-way mark on what we hope to achieve before we stand before Hashem on Rosh Hashanah.

In fact, when you spell Elul backwards (lamed-vav-lamed-alef) it spells the word lulei—if only. But by grabbing the golden opportunity to take part in the Shabbos Table Machsom L'fi, you don't have to feel that regret. You're taking a giant step forward and bringing others along with you, and in that merit, may the new year bring you only good health, parnassah and nachas!

— Rabbi Ephraim Eliyahu Shapiro

FOR QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS, EMAIL

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"The Satan is

powerless
to prosecute
when there is *peace*."

— Sefer Chareidim, Mitzvas Asei
Hateluyim B'Dibbur, ch.4

'I WILL BE THERE'

Rabbi Dov Fuchs, a *rebbe* in Yerushalayim, got a call from his own *rebbe* asking for a favor. The *rebbe* was attending a family *chasunah* and needed a ride home. Rabbi Fuchs gladly agreed to provide the ride, but his *rebbe* set one vital condition: "Can you have me home by 9?"

Rabbi Fuchs assured him that the timing would be no problem. He would arrive at the wedding hall at 8:30 with plenty of time to bring the *rebbe* to his door. Still, the *rebbe* reiterated, "I must be home by 9. Are you sure it's enough time?"

That night, to ease the *rebbe's* mind, Rabbi Fuchs showed up a bit early. He offered to wait outside until 8:30. The *rebbe* wondered if perhaps they should leave as soon as possible, Rabbi Fuchs assured him that 8:30 would be more than soon enough. When the relatives saw that the *rebbe* was leaving they asked him to stay longer, but he answered firmly that he must be home by 9. They danced him to the door and bade him a good night.

On the way to the *rebbe's* house, Rabbi Fuchs asked why it was so important to be home by 9. He knew there would be a valuable lesson in the answer, and there was. Someone had asked the *rebbe* for an appointment to discuss an issue and the *rebbe*, forgetting that there was a family *chasunah* that night, had set the time at 9.

"When someone needs to talk," he explained, "you cannot turn them away... You can never know what is plaguing a person's heart, and sometimes just hearing them out is more important than



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" אלול תשע"ז
ה.ת.צ.ב.ה.

sage advice

MAKE THE RIGHT CALCULATION

Eight-year-old Binyamin was poking aimlessly around his living room one day when he noticed a quarter at the bottom of a vase and reached in to grab it. He tried to pull his hand out again, but it was stuck inside. "Ma! My hand is stuck!"

"Oh, Binyamin!" his mother said. "You shouldn't be touching that. Let me get your hand out." His mother pulled, but the hand stayed stuck. She applied soap and water, but still, somehow, his hand would not emerge. Then she tried some vegetable oil, also with no success.

"I'd give \$10 to get your hand out of there!" his mother exclaimed.

"Really?" asked Binyamin, and he slid his hand out.

"How did you do that?" his mother asked.

"I let go of the quarter," he said. "If you're going to give me \$10, I don't need it."

Rabbi Tzvi Sytner uses this story to describe the choice we make when we opt to hold onto a grudge or a personality trait that erodes our relationships with others. Someone who holds on to a grudge is standing in the way of his family's shalom. Someone who holds on to perfectionism prevents others from thriving.

When we realize that we're giving up \$10 to hold on to a quarter, we can easily let go. We are then amazed at how quickly we can slide out of the situation that traps us in unhappiness, and reap the far bigger rewards of shalom.

TALK ABOUT IT

How can we judge whether something is worth fighting for?

anything else."

The *rebbe* knew well the life-changing power of giving someone a listening ear. We all have that power, but we may not all recognize how very valuable it is.

Adapted from An American in Yerushalayim, Hamodia

TALK ABOUT IT

How does listening to someone's problem, without even providing a solution, help the person?



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