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SHABBOS MENU

PART OF THE CCHF SHABBOS TABLE MACHSOM L'FI PROGRAM • SHABBOS CHAZON, PARSHAS DEVARIM 5782 • ISSUE 302

SOMEONE'S GOING TO GET HURT

Speaking to a morally lax group about another person's misdeeds is unlikely to arouse their moral indignation. It probably won't do any good, but can it do any harm?

THE

DILEMMA

Daniel, proprietor of Dan's Diamond Deals, promoted himself as having the lowest mark-up in the wholesale business. In fact, his amazing prices were due to the fact that, mixed in with his natural, mined diamonds, were many lab-grown diamonds. Sam, owner of Sam's Stunning Stones, found out that Dan was cheating his clients. In hopes of galvanizing other dealers to rescue the reputation of the diamond business, he began spreading the news throughout the close-knit wholesale jewelry district.

Dan's competitors were outraged—not because he was dishonest, but because he had stolen so much business from them. Their own strategies, some honest and some not, had failed to bring them the success that Dan's ruse had achieved. The industry became a hotbed of *machlokes*. A few dealers threatened to take Dan to arbitration, but with their own hands not quite clean, they didn't dare.

"This isn't a case for arbitration," said one dealer. "It's a case for the cops. We should call the FBI!"
Is Sam responsible for this wildfire?

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.

THE

HALACHAH

Knowing that his colleagues were themselves apt to cheat and cut corners, there was no constructive purpose in spreading information. In doing so, Sam not only failed to help matters but sparked *machlokes* and even talk of informing the police.

*Sefer Chofetz Chaim,
Hilchos Loshon
Hora 10:4*



It's Erev Tisha B'Av and we are still here in galus! And we all know that sinas chinam got us here. That is why on the day we mourn the Churban, nothing can be more meaningful than learning how to erase this destructive trait from our hearts. This year CCHF brings you "Kavod Habrios: Discover the Priceless Value of Every Person," an array of thought-provoking lectures filled with practical steps to take to make real, lasting change, change that will bring us all the change we yearn for—bi'as go'el tzedek!

See local papers for showings in your neighborhood, or visit tishabav.global

FOR QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS, EMAIL

Shabbosmenu@cchfglobal.org

"Whoever

mourns

the destruction
of Yerushalayim
will

merit

to see its rejoicing."

— Taanis 30b

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MALKA BREINDEL A"H BAS SHMUEL FISHEL YLCH"Y

THERE WHERE HE WAS NEEDED MOST

Mitzvos must sometimes be weighed. Human beings can only do one thing at one time, and occasionally that means not being available to someone else who needs us. How do we make that choice? Rabbi Yitzchak Yaakov Sekula, former *Menahel Ruchani* of Mesivta Torah Vodaath, relates a story that illustrates Rav Pam's wisdom in determining the correct priority.

Rav Pam sat in the yeshivah's *beis medrash* each afternoon so that he would be available for *talmidim*, but as the years passed, more and more of his time was taken up by outsiders. People from all walks of life would come to discuss personal and communal matters with him.

One day, Rav Sekula approached Rav Pam and disclosed an issue that had arisen because of this constant flow of visitors. "The *talmidim* need the Rosh Yeshivah," he said. "A few of them have gotten together and volunteered to ask outsiders who enter the *beis medrash* to refrain from disturbing the Rosh Yeshivah during *sefer* (learning sessions)." Rav Pam replied that he would have to think the matter through.

A few days later he told Rav Sekula, "I have thought it over. No, I cannot agree to the suggestion. These people have no one to listen to them. **There are so many problems, Rav Sekula, and they need someone to hear them out! There is no choice; I must be available for them.**"

This was no easy choice, said Rav Sekula. "It pained him that he had to take time away from being available for *talmidim* and from his learning," he explained. "They were his life! For him, this was true *mesiras nefesh* (self-sacrifice), for his *nefesh* (soul) was bound to the Torah and to his *talmidim*."

Often, as Rav Pam's decision demonstrated, the right choice is the hard choice. Tremendous wisdom and self-awareness are needed when we have to decide between two ways of serving Hashem, because the deciding factor is not what each party wants, or what we want. It's what Hashem wants, which only our sincere reflection—or advice from a wise person—can reveal.

TALK ABOUT IT

What are some choices you must sometimes make between one mitzvah and another? How do you choose?

sage advice

SPEAKING THE SAME LANGUAGE

"Aryeh, hand me that bucket of tar," said Robert the roofer to his new assistant.

Aryeh looked around at the various implements assembled around him, perched on the roof of a two-story building. He had arrived from Israel only three weeks before. He spoke no English. However, his American cousin had gotten him this job with Robert and he was doing his best to keep the boss happy. Robert, whose ancestors hailed from Italy, knew no Hebrew at all.

Not wanting to appear ignorant, Aryeh handed Robert a hammer. Robert blasted his incompetence with such anger that Aryeh nearly blew off the roof.

Clearly, this arrangement could never work. It would only end up in anger, hurt, insult and loss.

This scenario mimics the one Rashi relates to illustrate the impact of Hashem's punishment of Dor Haflagah—the generation that tried to challenge Him by building the Tower of Babel. The Torah tells us that Hashem split society into 70 distinct languages and dispersed them around the world.

The effect of this variety of languages, said Rashi, was chaos. "One man would ask his fellow for mortar, and he would give him a hammer instead. He would become so angry that he would end up killing the man."

The geographical dispersion was the outcome of the change in languages. **People who cannot communicate cannot live together.**

Therefore, at its most basic level, speech is the glue that binds us into families, societies and humanity. If there were no speech, there would be no way to express ourselves to each other. We couldn't explain our feelings, apologize for our mistakes, give instructions, ask questions; our life as human beings would not be what it is. We would be worse off than animals, because those species that have a social organization know instinctively what to do. We don't.

Speech is what makes us human and allows us to live up to our human capacity. When we appreciate it, we realize how much we must treasure and protect this unique gift to mankind.

Adapted from the *Niflaos Haborei* hotline.
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TALK ABOUT IT

Have you ever spent time with someone who doesn't speak your language? How does that affect your ability to connect with that person?

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