



SHABBOS MENU

PART OF THE CCHF SHABBOS TABLE MACHSOM L'FI PROGRAM • SHABBOS PARSHAS HAAZINU SHABBOS SHUVAH 5784 • ISSUE 359

FAMILY LOYALTY

We understand the damage of telling one person what another said about him, but what if the subject of the negative remark is your own parent?

T H E

DILEMMA

Rabbi Vogel is the long-time principal of a small Jewish community's one yeshivah elementary school. He's proud of his son, Yechiel, who has been a beloved first grade *rebbe* in the school for the past four years.

One day, Duvi Goodman, the father of a difficult student, comes to speak to Yechiel about his son. "I've had boys in this yeshivah for more than a decade," he says. "This is my fourth son here. And every last one of them has the same problem. They need more time for recess. I've spoken to your father a dozen times about it but he's too stuck in his ways. He doesn't understand what kids need nowadays. He thinks it's still 1965, when he was in yeshivah."

"My father runs a very successful yeshivah," Yechiel replies indignantly. "Not all children fit the same mold, that I understand. But the fault is not in how my father runs the school."

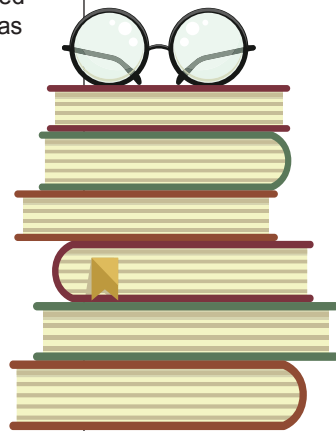
Later that day, Rabbi Vogel sees Yechiel. "I noticed Mr. Goodman was here to see you today. Did everything go OK?" Yechiel, still indignant at Mr. Goodman's desire to blame Rabbi Vogel for his hyperactive children's behavior, is burning to let his father know what was said about him. Does he have any allowance, as the son, to do so?

T H E

HALACHAH

Yechiel may not repeat the conversation to his father. The prohibition against *rechilus* is the same even when the subject is a parent or other close family member

*Sefer Chofetz Chaim,
Hilchos Rechilus 7:1*



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.

Tefillah Zakkah, which many people recite before Yom Kippur, expresses our regret for misusing the body Hashem has given us to serve Him. In the final paragraph, we declare our forgiveness of anyone who has hurt us, and pray that nobody suffer punishment on our account. We also ask to be forgiven for any hurt or damage we may have inflicted on others. So vital is this to our personal welfare and that of Klal Yisrael that the Chofetz Chaim requested that the last paragraph be moved to near the beginning of the prayer, so people would be less likely to forget or omit it.

Open up the stream of forgiveness and let it wash away your grievances against others, while others cleanse their hearts of their grievances. Help a new year begin with a wide-open channel of blessing.

FOR QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS, EMAIL

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Rabbeinu Yonah writes that those mitzvos that are disqualified because of a person's sins, stand by; the

moment

he does *teshuvah*, all his *mitzvos* come flooding back to

defend him

before the Throne of Glory."

— Shaarei Teshuvah 1:41

The same applies to Torah and tefillah that have been contaminated by loshon hora!

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MALKA BREINDEL A"H BAS SHMUEL FISHEL YLCH"Y

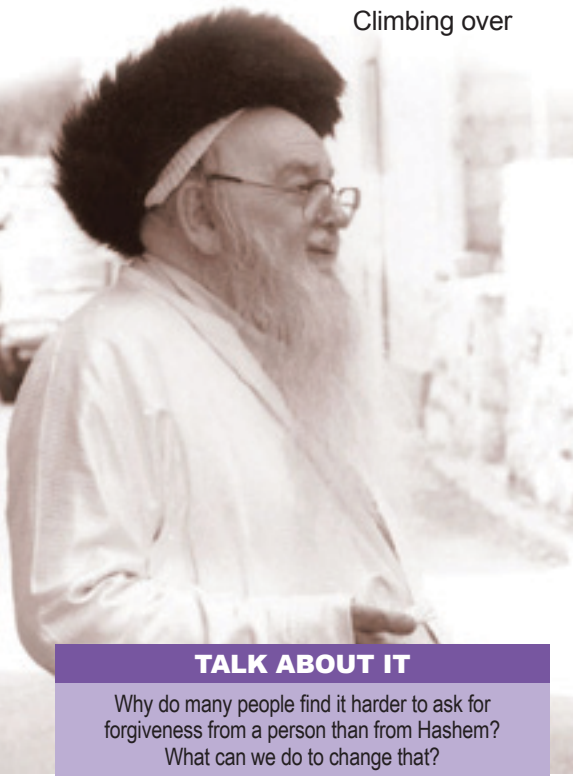
FORGIVEN

As a boy, Rabbi Shalom Schwadron was playing with friends in the schoolyard when he noticed the tall, gangly head of the burial society loping up the stairs of the shul next door. Shalom imitated him, evoking raucous laughter from his friends. The man started after his mockers, but they dispersed quickly.

Shalom couldn't stop thinking about the man's humiliation. He decided to find him and apologize. Finally, he spotted the man entering another shul. "I'm the one who made fun of you," he shouted. "Please forgive me." Then he ran.

This time, the man quickly caught him and carried him into the shul. Holding him high, he kissed him and exclaimed: "Have you ever seen a mere child ask forgiveness?" Shalom left the shul forgiven, cleansed and happy.

Asking forgiveness is, for most people, a barbed wire fence spiked with humiliation.
Climbing over



TALK ABOUT IT

Why do many people find it harder to ask for forgiveness from a person than from Hashem? What can we do to change that?

לע"נ
שמואל חיים בן אברהם יוסף ז"ל
דבורה בת ישראל ע"ה
Dedicated by Uri & Riki Sklar

sage advice

STRICTER THAN HASHEM?

Some things seem unforgivable. You see a friend you admire texting as the Torah is read one Thursday morning. You overhear a woman you thought was a great mother lashing out at her daughter. You spot your son's beloved *rebbe* cutting in front of another car to grab an empty parking space. In situations like these, our estimation of the other person tends to plummet. Even if they regret their act, we don't forget it.

In this way, we judge people with far less mercy than Hashem shows to even the worst Jew. The *Gemara* brings an interesting scenario that illustrates the point: A person is spending the last moments of Yom Kippur eating – not just eating, but eating something *treif*. As soon as Yom Kippur ends, he draws a ring from his pocket, places it on a woman's finger, and says, "You are sanctified to me on the condition that I am righteous."

Placing the ring on the woman's finger with this declaration is enough to make her his wife. However, what about the condition? Can a man who eats *treif* food on Yom Kippur be considered righteous? The *Gemara* holds that he has met the condition. He has performed a valid wedding ceremony because perhaps he had a thought of *teshuvah*, a spark of inspiration, before he placed the ring. In that case, he is no longer considered a sinner.

Most of the Jews we know are not eating ham sandwiches on Yom Kippur, but they might occasionally be impatient, inconsiderate, or impulsive, leading them to do the wrong thing and most likely regret it. If they've had their moment of *teshuvah* and Hashem has forgiven them, how can we not do the same?

it is a terrifying prospect. Yet, as Rabbi Schwadron already knew as a young boy, only one who surmounts the fence can bask in the pure, clean light on the other side.

Adapted from "The Gift of Speech," by Rabbi Shimon Finkelman, with permission from Mesorah Publications

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