



SHABBOS MENU

PART OF THE CCHF SHABBOS TABLE MACHSOM L'FI PROGRAM • SHABBOS PARSHAS BESHALACH 5784 • ISSUE 375

“YOU’VE GOT TO HEAR THIS!”

Rechilus stirs up ill feelings between people. But what if you repeat your negative information to someone who has no interest in the matter? Is that permitted?

T H E

DILEMMA

“How’s the new customer-service rep working out?” Dina asks her sister Chava.

Chava, in fact, is amazed at the audacity of the new customer-service rep. Chava sits one desk away from her, and sees clearly that her new coworker is none too eager to tend to customers. She is busy on the phone arranging summer camps for her five children, and on the computer shopping for their wardrobes. She does tremendous *chesed* as well, tending to the details of an upcoming fundraising event for Bikur Cholim.

Chava wants to tell Dina all about her coworker’s non-existent work habits. Since Dina has no connection to Chava’s employer, the information will not cause the coworker any harm. May Chava tell the tale?

T H E

HALACHAH

She may not. There is surely no *to’eles*, since Dina has nothing to do with Chava’s workplace or colleagues. Furthermore, once spoken, *rechilus* could easily make its way back to the subject of the comment and stir enmity between her and Chava.

*Sefer Chofetz Chaim,
Hilchos Rechilus
9:9*



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.

*This week is Shabbos Shirah, when the Yidden sang shirah to Hashem after Kriyas Yam Suf—a shirah that we will once again sing in the future. In order that we be worthy of once more singing shirah to Hashem when He redeems us, we must do our utmost to make our mouths pure vessels for this purpose. Our commitment to *shmiras haloshon* is what will help get us there.*

FOR QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS, EMAIL

Shabbosmenu@cchfglobal.org

“Speech is more than a
series
of physiological processes
—inhale, exhale, vibrate
the vocal chords; it is
meant to be a precious

conduit
of kedushah.”

- From a lecture by
Rav Matisyahu Salomon

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MALKA BREINDEL A"H BAS SHMUEL FISHEL YLCH"Y

Rabbi Yehoshua Cooper, *menahel* of Mirrer Yeshiva K'tana in Brooklyn, learned in Kollel Aram Zoba in Mexico in the 1990s. A group of Sephardic *baalei batim* attended a night *sefer* there, and Baruch Halabah* was a member of this group.

Mr. Halabah had a severely mentally handicapped daughter. One day, he asked Mr. Cooper for some advice. A medical seminar that could provide information very helpful to his daughter was to take place in Philadelphia later that year. But before he undertook such a trip, Mr. Halabah wanted to know if it was worthwhile.

Rabbi Cooper, who had been a *talmid* of the Philadelphia Yeshiva, called the *Rosh Yeshiva*, Rav Shmuel Kamenetsky, to find out if he knew of the seminar. Indeed, he did know about it. The event was scheduled for May, seven months in the future, and was to be presented by knowledgeable professionals.

Mr. Halabah and his wife traveled to Philadelphia when the time came. Meanwhile, Rav Shmuel, who had noted the date seven months earlier, called Rabbi Cooper in Mexico to find out where the couple was staying. Rabbi Cooper was unable to find out the information, so Rav Shmuel and his Rebbetzen opened the Yellow Pages and called every hotel in Philadelphia's center city, asking for the Halabachs. At last they found the right place.

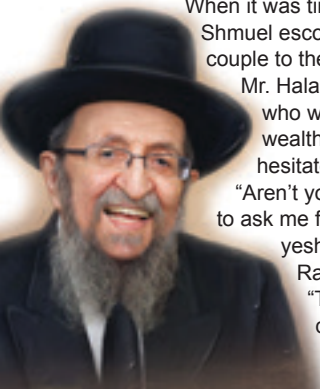
On Friday morning, Rav Shmuel took a taxi to the hotel. When Mr. Halabah came down to the lobby, Rav Shmuel introduced himself and insisted that he and his wife come to the Kamenetsky home for Shabbos. Mr. and Mrs. Halabah agreed, and enjoyed a Shabbos saturated with warmth and *kedushah*.

When it was time to leave, Rav Shmuel escorted the couple to their taxi.

Mr. Halabah, who was a wealthy man, hesitated.

"Aren't you going to ask me for a donation to your yeshiva?" he asked. "No!"

Rav Shmuel answered. "This isn't about a donation. It's about a Yid who needed a place to stay for Shabbos!"



JUST ONE MOTIVE

Most of us, though we try to be helpful, usually act with at least a tinge of ulterior motive. "He'll like me if I help him." "He'll be angry if I don't help him." "Hashem will reward me." But for

Rav Shmuel, reaching out to a Jew in need—even going out of his way to find him—is nothing but pure *ahavas Yisrael*.

*Name has been changed.

Adapted with permission from an article by Rabbi Yitzchok Hisiger in *Yated Ne'eman*

sage advice

THE LANGUAGE TO FORGET

Reb Chaim Pinchas Schiller was a Holocaust survivor who lived to a ripe old age. At his shivah, his family related a strange episode from his life:

Reb Chaim Pinchas was taken as an 11-year-old boy to the Buchenwald concentration camp. Miraculously, he was one of very few children who survived. But when the war was over, he was no longer able to speak Polish, his native language. He could not remember a word. Doctors explained that the trauma of the war had caused that part of his brain to shut down. It was a coping technique that somehow helped him survive.

Reb Chaim Pinchas's story proves that a language can be completely erased from a person's conscious mind. And that gives a great dose of confidence to everyone who is working to delete *loshon hora* from their lives.

Loshon hora is indeed a language. Just as *Loshon Kodesh* expresses the ideas and worldview of the Jewish people, French expresses the worldview of the French, and American English captures the essence of Americans, *loshon hora* captures and expresses the worldview of negative people.

The *yetzer hara* lulls us into thinking that *loshon hora* is nothing more than normal human nature. But if we look at it closely, we see that it is something far more toxic. It's the "national language" of people whose outlook is critical, negative, small-minded, and envious.

Once we see the ugliness of the language of *loshon hora*, we're on our way to developing a powerful distaste for it. We find ourselves wanting to block it from our minds, and keep it out of our ears and out of our mouths. Just as Reb Chaim Pinchas Schiller forgot Polish, we can forget the *loshon hora*.

Heard from Mr. Michael Rothschild, on a Live Life Better video presentation.

TALK ABOUT IT

When a person is dressed in special clothes, he feels special. When he's surrounded by elegant surroundings, he feels elegant. What happens when he speaks with kind, respectful words?



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TALK ABOUT IT

For Rav Shmuel, doing a *chesed* for a Jew he didn't know was an event marked on his calendar—much as we might mark an upcoming *simchah* to attend! Would you mark your calendar many months ahead to remember to do a *chesed*? What else might you do?

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