

A Taste of Torah On Guard

By Rabbi Moshe Heyman

Two girls sat on a bus, sharing the exciting news of the engagement of a mutual friend. One girl gushed, "Can you imagine that Sara got engaged to that guy!!!" The other replied, "I can't believe it. She's a nice girl, but what a slob!" "Yes," replied her friend, "and she is so lazy and never willing to help out anyone else." The girls continued to denigrate their recently engaged friend.

In the midst of their conversation, a woman who had been seated behind them interjected, "I am an aunt of Sara's chassan (groom). Thank you for all this information, I will make sure to pass it on to my family."

Horrified, the two girls tried to back track and correct the image that they had painted. But it was too late. A few minutes later, the chassan's aunt gathered her items and disembarked from the bus. As she exited, she turned to the two girls and told them, "I don't really know the chassan, but I certainly could have." Lesson learned.

Upon being made aware of the potential damage caused by negative speech, one may feel that silence is the best way to avoid errors in speech. After all, the Talmud in Makkos says, "All those who sit and avoid sins are given a reward

as though they have done the mitzvah." By avoiding speech - any speech - and thereby staying away from speaking improperly, one will be safe and get reward. This may be true in many cases, but *loshon hora* is different, as the great Rav Yannai learned. The Medrash tells the story of a peddler who came to Rav Yannai and asked him, "Who wants to purchase a potion of life?" The peddler then continued to quote the verse from Tehillim that tells that if one desires life, one needs to guard his tongue from evil. The term "guard" indicates that one should not make himself mute. On the contrary, one can talk, and one should talk, but it should be guarded.

The work of *shmiras haloshon*, guarding one's tongue, is to be social and talkative, but, while doing so, speaking properly and avoiding putting down other people. The Chofetz Chaim, who was careful about *loshon hora* all his life, was involved in many conversations that were vital to the affairs of the Jewish world.

That is the potion of life: the ability to live as normal members of society, while guarding what we say. This is the ultimate goal of a Jew in this world. May we merit to use this potion of life in this world and in the time of Moshiach.

Ask the Rabbi Flour Power

Debbie wrote:

Dear Rabbi,

A woman in synagogue told me

that I need to give "kimcha d'pischa" (or something like that). Rabbi, would you tell me what she was talking about? Thanks a million.

Stories For The Soul

The Lesson of the Coat

A poor man and his elderly father once fell into a dispute. They lived in a shack with no heating, and had only one coat. The father felt that he should wear it since he was a frail old man, stuck in a house with no heat. The son felt he should get it since he worked outdoors to support them.

They couldn't settle their dispute so they went to a rabbi. The rabbi asked them to return in two days and he would render his decision.

On the way home, the son started thinking, "What sort of 'Honor thy father' is this? How can I deny my own father this coat? If I get cold, I can light a fire at the work site."

At the same time, the father started thinking, "What am I doing? My son is working hard to support me. If I get cold, I can put on a sweater or a blanket or drink a glass of hot tea. He should get the coat."

Each man now insisted that the other wear the coat. Neither could convince the other, so they went back to the rabbi to ask him to rule on their new dispute. The rabbi thought for a moment and said, "I have a spare coat. Why don't I lend it to you and then you each can have a coat?"

"I do not mean to be disrespectful, but I am burning with curiosity," said the son to the rabbi. "If you have a coat to offer us, why did you not offer it the first time we came here?"

The rabbi replied, "The first time you came, you each said, 'I must have the coat' so without thinking, it made me feel, 'I must have my coat.' The second time you came, you each said, 'I don't need the coat; I want the

Kollel Happenings

'SEDER PLATE MEANING' APRIL 12 AT SUNFLOWER MARKET

Join the Kollel on Tues., April 12, for a special Passover class, "Secrets of the Seder Plate", at 7 p.m. at Sunflower Market, 4700 W. 38th Ave. Rabbi Levi Lebovits will discuss the different aspects of the traditional Seder plate and their meaning for today. The program is free of charge. Reservations preferred. For information or to RSVP, call 303-820-2855 or email info@denverkollel.org



EGYPTIAN EXILE EDUCATION AT APRIL 12 BAIS YAAKOV FOR ADULTS

"Egyptian Exile Education" a Bais Yaakov for Adults class for women, will take place on Tues., Feb. 12. The class, led by Ms. Dasi Indich will be held at Aish Ahavas Yisroel, and will take a closer look at the lessons of the Jewish exile in Egypt. Cost is \$5. To RSVP, contact Mrs. Esti Schwab at 303-668-1878 or estischwab@denverkollel.org



TUESDAY NIGHT TORAH AT AISH KODESH IN BOULDER

Join the Kollel for a dynamic one-on-one and small groups Torah encounter. Maariv will be held at 8:15 followed by Torah study at 8:30. Program will be held at Aish Kodesh, 1805 Balsam Ave. For information, contact Rabbi Moshe Heyman at 303-820-2855 or rmh@denverkollel.org or Charles Fried at 917-499-4307 or charlesfried@gmail.com.

Interpersonal Issues It Won't Work

Taking anything, such as pens or pencils, from an employer without permission is theft.

Furthermore, using an employer's equipment for personal use is also theft if it is something that an employer will generally object to.

For example, an employer usually doesn't mind if an employee makes an infrequent copy or two, or if he makes a short phone call on occasion,

assuming they don't interfere with normal business activities. However, an employer generally objects to lengthy personal phone calls.

Therefore, an employee must ascertain what his employer allows and does not allow.

Adapted with permission from "The Halachos of Other People's Money" by Rabbi Pinchas Bodner (Feldheim Publishers)

Ask the Rabbi

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Dear Debbie,

Kimcha D'pische means "flour for Pesach." This refers to the age-old custom of giving charity before Pesach to the city's poor so they will be able to afford all their Passover needs.

This custom is first mentioned in the Jerusalem Talmud. The idea behind it is that it was hard to find "Kosher for Passover" flour to buy during the holiday, and truly poverty stricken individuals were simply unable to afford the steep expense. Hence began the custom to distribute flour before Pesach.

Today, most people don't bake their own matzos, so kimcha d'pische has been adjusted to meet the needs of the poor people of today. All over the world Jewish communities give money to the needy before the holiday so they can prepare. In many communities food supplies are distributed for free or at great discount.

It is said that before Pesach there are two types of people: Those who

give kimcha d'pische and those who get. In other words, anyone who can is obligated to help the needy meet their holiday expenses.

You should make a donation to the kimcha d'pische organization in your community if possible. If there are no needy in your city, you can choose to help out the poor of Jerusalem.

A woman once approached the Rabbi of the city of Brisk, Rabbi Yosef Dov Soloveitchik, with a strange question. She wanted to know if one could use milk instead of wine for the four cups of the Seder. He answered her by giving her a large amount of money. Asked the Rabbi's wife, "I understand you gave her money because she can't afford the wine, but why so much?"

Answered the Rabbi, "If she wants to drink milk at the Seder, it is obvious she has no meat for Pesach. So I gave her enough to buy wine and meat for the entire holiday."

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Stories for the Soul

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other one to have the coat,' so I felt 'I don't need the coat; I want the other one to have the coat.' (Heard from Rabbi Paysach Krohn.)

The Torah prohibits speaking lashon hara. When we denigrate others, we not

only cause them harm and loss, but we create a negative environment that affects the listener and even the speaker. Attitudes affect and infect others, both consciously and subconsciously.

Adapted with permission from Shul-Week by Rabbi Boruch Lederman.