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SHABBOS PARSHAS BEREISHIS 5787

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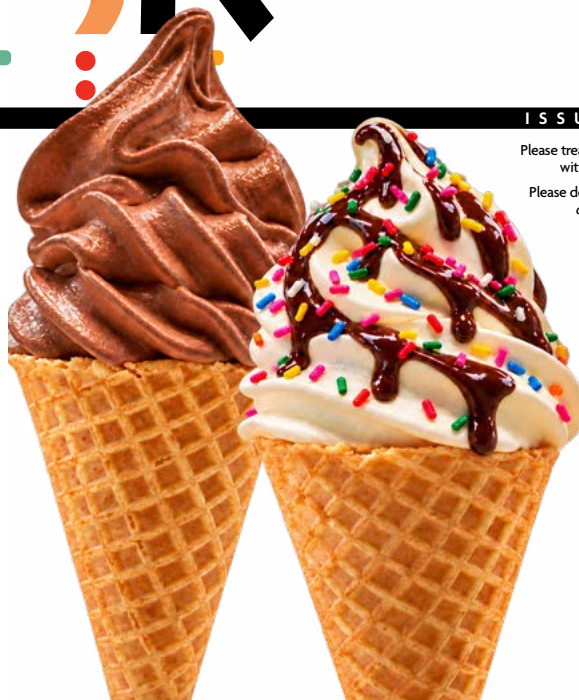
Please treat this newsletter
with proper respect.Please do not read during
davening or Krias
HaTorah.

He Just Sat There

A few days after Succos, I coaxed my sons to help me take down the succah—a job no one enjoys—by offering to take them out for ice cream when the job was done. My daughter Tehilla saw me going out the door with two of our sons, Avrami and Chaim. She asked me where we were going and I told her, “I’m taking the boys out for ice cream as a reward for helping me take down the succah.” She asked why her other brother, Yossi, wasn’t going and I told her that it was because he didn’t help.

Was it okay to tell Tehillah why Yossi didn’t deserve to come?

—Boruch



What's the Psak?

Do you know the halachah?

A Yes.
Yossi decided
not to help so it's
not loshon hora.

B Yes.
Saying that Yossi didn't help take
down the succah doesn't imply
that he's not helpful in other ways.

C No.
It's loshon hora to
say someone *didn't*
do something good.

When 'Not Good' Is Bad

There's no question that saying someone did a bad deed or that he is a bad person is loshon hora, unless there's a constructive purpose. But in this case, Boruch said nothing bad about Yossi; he just reported that Yossi *didn't* do something good.¹ Yossi opted out of helping his father and brothers with a laborious job. But even if Boruch wants to be truthful and ensure that he's giving a clear picture of what happened, he's not allowed to name Yossi as someone who didn't help, because this creates an image of him as self-centered or lazy. Also, in general, when people are eager to disclose who didn't help, it's often out of revenge, because they resent the person's unwillingness to

lend a hand. In that case, naming the names violates the Torah's prohibition against taking revenge.²

Boruch can answer the question honestly without speaking loshon hora about Yossi. He can just say, “I owe them an ice cream,” without saying why; this will preclude discussing Yossi.

Answer: The halachah is C.

Reviewed by **Rabbi Moshe Mordechai Lowy**

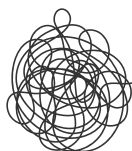
Rav Pam, zt”l, advised great caution when presenting halachic scenarios to the public, as each situation is unique. This *shailah* is for discussion only; actual halachic decisions should be made by a rav or halachic expert on a case-by-case basis.

The Shmiras Haloshon Shailah Hotline: 718-951-3696 2-3PM / 9-10:30 PM

1 Sefer Chofetz Chaim, Hilchos
Loshon Hora 5:1 2 Voyikra 9:18

My **אדרבה** moment

I wanted
attention—



Instead,
I gave it.

THANK YOU!



FAMILY POSEN FOR DISTRIBUTING
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Nothing like this had ever happened in the Jewish community of this small Polish town. It had split in half, and each side was filled with righteous fury against the other. There was a right way to do things and there was a wrong way! And when it came to the holy work of the town's burial society, there was no room for error.

So, when the two *gabbaim* of the town's *chevrah kaddisha* fell into a disagreement about official matters, neither was willing to give in an inch. Their rift was so great that the whole town picked sides. The *chevrah kaddisha* split, with each *gabbai* leading his own group. People would only let "their" *chevrah kaddisha* prepare their relatives for burial,

burying them in that *chevrah's* plot.

The town rav was distressed to see his *kehillah* splintered, with anger and *loshon hora* shooting back and forth, poised to destroy them all. He tried to make peace, but

his words didn't penetrate their hardened hearts. *Rabbanim* of neighboring towns tried to help, but they too were unsuccessful.

One day, the rav heard that the Chofetz Chaim would be stopping in town to sell his *sefarim*. Surely he

would be able to end the *machlokes*!

The Chofetz Chaim called the two sides together and gave each plenty of time to air their grievances. He listened carefully, but he didn't render judgment. Rather, he gave them his advice.

"My precious Jews," he said, "know that a town that has one *chevrah kaddisha* has one *Malach HaMaves*. But if you have two *chevrah kaddishas*, there will be two *Malachei HaMaves*. Is one not enough for you, that you want to bring to your town a second one?"

At last, the *gabbaim* saw reality. They sat down and hammered out a compromise, and the town's rift healed.

(Note: The Chofetz Chaim's comment does not apply to larger towns with multiple communities, where each community may have its own *chevrah kaddisha*.)



Adapted from
the Hebrew
sefer *Aderaba*,
by Rabbi
Yaakov Yisrael
Posen



Never ever be a delivery man, Dovid told himself. I knew I shouldn't have gotten involved. There's always confusion. Why don't I listen to myself?

Dovid was steaming. He was due at the hall in an hour for family pictures at his sister's wedding. He had driven in from Brooklyn to Lakewood, giving himself what had seemed like plenty of time, but now

he stood in front of a random house in a random development holding a gown for his sister's seminary friend.

He had been there for half an hour, calling the friend's cell phone number, knocking on the

door, waiting, and waiting some more.

He had agreed to deliver it from another one of his sister's friends in Brooklyn to this married friend, who lived

in a gray vinyl-sided house that was one among 300 identical houses in this neighborhood, poetically named Towering Oaks. At this point, he felt he had fulfilled his *shelichus*. "If she really wanted the gown, she would have made sure to be home and reachable!" Dovid concluded. Why was this woman so irresponsible?

Where on Earth Is She?

Can you Crack the case?



Adapted from
a submission
by *Aderaba*
participants,
the Stein
family
of Detroit

As Dovid left the development, he noticed someone standing on the sidewalk, anxiously peering down the street. Instantly, he knew who it was. He pulled over.

"Mrs. Siegal?" he asked. "Dovid Bauman?" she asked in return.

"Yes," he said. "The gown's in the back. I was waiting in front of your house for the past half-hour."

"This is my house," she said, pointing to the gray, vinyl-sided structure behind her.

"Oh, no!" said Dovid. "I misheard the voice note. It sounded like 255 Acorn Lane. But it was 265! Sorry to keep you waiting so long."

"Sorry you had to wait," said Mrs. Siegel.

Well, Dovid thought, there was waiting, and there was confusion, but this time, I caused it myself.

DEDICATIONS

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Dr. Harlan Daman לע"נ צבי הירש בן דוד אריה ז"ל. Dedicated by Carole Daman • In honor of Chana bas Yitzchok