

Pardes Yehuda

Weekly Torah Journal By Yehuda Z. Klitnick
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פרשת קדושים (ח'ל' טשע"ז

Gossip and love of fellow Jews cannot coexist

בצדק תשפוט עמיתך: לא תלך רביל בעמיה: (י"ט ט"ו ט"ז)
You shall judge your fellow with righteousness. You shall not go around as a gossipmonger amidst your people. (19:15-16) These two cardinal interpersonal mitzvos are closely linked. Their juxtaposition strongly hints at this connection. Rashi provides the first step in our understanding by teaching that בצדק תשפוט עמיתך implies -- *"judge everyone favourably"*, i.e. by giving the benefit of the doubt, even if seems far-fetched. The Tiferes Shlomo cites the Holy Barditshever as the leading exemplar of this trait. The Kedushas Levi was known as the "defender of Klal Yisroel", who was so taken by Yisroel's national holiness, that he refused to acknowledge any faults or shortcomings among Yidden. The tzaddik Rav Fishel of Strikov embodied the same approach: owing to his overarching ahavas Yisroel, he simply refused to accept that any Yid could ever commit an aveira – period. Further, the Sefer Yesod veShoresh HaAvodah (chapters 6 and 7) states bluntly that the two mitzvos of 1) ואהבת לרעך *Love your neighbor as yourself* and 2) הוי דן את חברך *judge each person favourably*, (which, following Rashi, flows directly from בצדק תשפוט עמיתך) must coexist equally within every Yid, absent which one cannot serve Hashem properly. These sources point to only one possible conclusion: the true ohev yisroel always "judges favourably", and views each fellow Yid as a tried and true friend who can do only good. This directly supports our scriptural juxtaposition: It would be inconceivable to go "Peddling gossip" if one is busy "judging everyone favourably" and viewing each Yid as his good friend. (שמח זבולון)

A textbook case of justifiable talebearing

לא תלך רביל בעמיה לא תעמד עליהם רעה אני ה' (י"ט טז)
You shall not go around as a gossipmonger amidst your people. You shall not stand by if your fellow's blood is shed. I am Hashem. (19:16) As above, we analyze the immediate proximity of the two precepts. And additionally, how does "I am Hashem" fit into the equation? Look into Bereishis (27:42) for the answer where Hashem revealed Eisav's evil intentions to Rivkah. Ideally, disseminating negative information about someone is forbidden. But when it comes to saving a life, the picture changes. At that point, we apply "Do not stand idly in the face of your fellow's bloodshed." The validation? "I am Hashem" -- the very One who informed Rivka of Eisav's malfeasance. (בגדי אהרן)

Don't get trapped by the yetzer hora

הוכח תוכיח את עמיתך ולא תשא עליו חטא: (י"ט י"ז)
You shall surely rebuke your fellow, but you shall not bear a sin on his account. (19:17) Tzaddikim teach that the Yetzer HaRah is an expert at distorting reality to concoct new mitzvos and new aveiros out of thin air. "What do you mean? It's an absolute mitzvah to torment that no-goodnick!" "Stop what you're doing! It's an outright aveira to waste any tzedaka money for that organization [needy man, worthy cause etc. etc.]" In practice, it can happen that you see someone doing something which, while, not an actual aveira, is not in keeping with what we consider to be "the" (i.e. OUR) proper minhag or practice. So of course we zealously and self-righteously rebuke the "perpetrator". Of course, our intention is pure: to fulfill the Torah's exhortation in the most perfect way. But No! warns the Torah: ולא תשא עליו חטא, הוכח תוכיח את עמיתך. Don't be quick to fabricate an aveira where there really is none. If you do, the aveira will be yours, and not the other person's. (שמח זבולון)

Rebuking a sinner in the proper way

לא תשנא את אחיך בלבבך הוכח תוכיח את עמיתך ולא תשא עליו חטא: (י"ט י"ז)
You shall surely rebuke your fellow, but you shall not bear a sin on his account (19:17). There is a triad of precepts presenting here in one posuk . How do they interrelate? The key lies in the degree of certainty you have as to whether someone has transgressed willingly or accidentally, and the action you take in response. It is surely a mitzvah to rebuke a sinner. But the sinner can be bemeizid (a willful transgressor) or he can be beshogeg/unintentional. But if you are certain of his purposeful guilt, then rebuke serves no purpose. We assume he will not accept the mussar/rebuke and Chazal rule that it is better to refrain from rebuking someone who you know will not accept the advice to mend his ways. In the case of someone whose status (meizid vs. shogeg) is unclear, it is wrong to assume that since he may be a meizid/purposeful sinner, then you are exempt from reproving him since he will not listen in any case. In a case like this, the admonition לא תשנא את אחיך בלבבך comes into play. Don't condemn him in your heart as a willful sinner. Rather, apply בצדק תשפוט

אחריהם we categorize him favourably – as a shogeg/involuntary or accidental

sinner. (See earlier Torah from Semach Zevulun) And then, sincere rebuke can play its proper role. (קול יבשר – קירשבוים)

STORY OF THE WEEK (By Yehuda Z. Klimick and translated by David Pinchas Rose)

*** *The Rebbe harnesses the Pure Emunah of a boy and his father -- and the boy walks!* ***

HaRav HaKodosh Reb Gershon Chanoch of Radzin, son of *Beis Yaakov*, author of *Orchos Chayim*, *Sod Y'sharim*, *Tiferes Hachanochi*, and *Dalsos Shaar Ha'ir*, among many other seforim. The Rebbe is referred to by Radziner Chasidim as the *Orchos Chayim*, based on his phenomenal work on the Tzava'ah - the will - of the Tana Rabbi Eliezer HaGadol. This work was written by the Rebbe basically without any open books to his advantage, in only 12 days, during his trial on a libel fabricated against him by his adversaries. When the Rebbe published this work, he commented to his chasidim that he's happy that he got to print his Tzava'ah. In the larger world the Rebbe is better known as the *Ba'al HaTecheiles*. Died 4 Teves 5651 (1890). Buried in Radzin.

He was also a powerful "poel yeshuous"--, an achiever of salvations for Jews in need. There was once a Yid from Romania who showed up in Radzin one day and headed straight for the shul to get his bearings. One of the locals greeted him and engaged him in conversation, but soon discerned that while the visitor had trouble expressing himself well, he was a man of sincerity and simplicity, free of guile. He enlisted the aid of several young chasidim who made it a group project to help their brother Jew any way they could. They gathered around him and listened to his tale.

He made the trip from Romania because he heard that the Radziner Tzadik was a "Wunder Rabbiner," who could help him in his bitter plight. The poor man had a son with him who at age ten had never walked a step. The most prominent doctors had no way of helping and the boy seemed destined to spend his life in his wheelchair. The chevra were naturally very sympathetic and offered to accompany the man into an audience with the Rebbe and promptly wrote out a kvittl for him. When their turn to enter the Rebbe's chamber came, they helped push the boy inside for the Rebbe to see and waited with baited breath to see his reaction. When the father beheld the Rebbe's holy visage, he threw himself at his feet and wailed uncontrollably about the bitter plight of his ten-year-old

son and his seemingly desperate future life. Without even reading the kvittl, the Rebbe, to all-around astonishment, ordered everyone, including the attendants, to clear the room, leaving him alone with the father and son. This was wholly unexpected. The room emptied out as the Rebbe directed, and the gabboim tried to disperse the crowd of chasidim. They refused to leave before seeing the outcome of the episode. When the door opened some time later an entirely different countenance reigned on the face of father and son. It was clear that the boy's condition had been turned on its head. The Rebbe advised the boy to continue riding in his wheelchair for several blocks away from the house, after which he could then rise and walk. When the chasidim witnessed this miracle, they broke into song and dance, with the father and son in the middle of the circle. After celebratory drinks and cakes, they pressed the father to tell them what had happened in the Inner Sanctum. He related how the Rebbe had immersed himself in lengthy supplications, amidst holy Yichudim [kabbalistic meditations] until, with a smile, he took out a bag of candies from his desk. "Come and take these candies, my dear boy!" said the Rebbe. As if it were the most natural thing in the world, the boy stood up and walked over to the Rebbe. The chasidim were dumbstruck by the story,

Later the Rebbe became aware that a great miracle was being attributed to him. In the self-effacing way of tzaiddikim, he sought to dispel that notion by explaining that no merit of his had been at work. He merely had a firm tradition that in the face of pure, unsullied Emunah, the usual ways of the natural world could yield and melt away. When he detected the pure faith of the father, he cleared the room so that only it could prevail. The onlookers could not be thought to share that lofty level, and their presence was detrimental. Within that environment of pure Emunah Peshuta, the Rebbe's tefillos accomplished their purpose, but not due to any miracle. For the Radziner Rebbe, this was merely a case of nature taking its course -- by overturning the usual nature of the world!

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This week's editorial work should be a zchus for the refuah shelaima betoch shaar cholei yisroel of Fraida Esther bas Rivka Peril. פריידיא אסתר בת רבקה פערל