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ISSUE 101

SHABBOS PARSHAS NITZAVIM - VAYELECH 5786

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

Can She Give Her Sister the Lay of the Land?

My older daughter, Malky, has just finished high school. She had about 15 different teachers, each with unique expectations, rules, and preferences. Some teachers like a livelier, more informal class, while others prefer a quieter one. Some don't mind students eating in class or going to the restroom without asking, while others don't allow it.



My younger daughter Nechamy, who is a more sensitive girl, will be starting at the same school. Malky would like to prepare her by describing the various teachers' dos and don'ts, their personalities, and their styles, so that Nechamy will not start off on the wrong foot with the more demanding teachers.

Can Malky tell Nechamy about the teachers at school?

—Faigy, an Aderaba participant

What's the Psak?

Do you know the halachah?

A Yes.
It's a *to'eles* for Nechamy.

B No.
It's *loshon hora* that could be avoided.

C Yes,
but only what she really needs to know.

NEW!

What Does She Really Need to Know?

Malky wants to help her sister avoid future problems. Doing so is a great mitzvah—a real *to'eles*! However, one of the rules of *to'eles* is that we may only reveal information that is necessary.¹ Therefore, Malky must not talk about all the teachers. She must only tell Nechamy about the teachers whom she really needs to know about—those who might be intimidating to her more sensitive sister.

She needs to be careful to meet all the conditions of *to'eles*, and she should not label any teacher. Rather, she should simply inform Nechamy about particular teachers' preferences for certain behaviors. Malky's intention must be to help Nechamy only—not to vent a grudge against any teacher.

On a practical note, Malky must be careful to speak to Nechamy privately. She should not speak to her in front of other people, because that would likely lead to a broader discussion of the teachers, which would be *loshon hora* without any *to'eles*.

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.

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CHOFETZ CHAIM

HERITAGE FOUNDATION

Reuven and Pinchas were close friends and antique dealers living in Baghdad during the time of the Ben Ish Chai.

One morning, they heard about an incredible estate sale at bargain basement prices. They hurried there together. On the way, someone ran out of a *beis medrash*.

"Please! We only have nine men. We need a tenth for Kaddish!"

Reuven just kept walking. "C'mon Pinchas! We have to go! **Nothing will be left if we're late!**"

Pinchas hesitated. He knew Reuven was right. But Pinchas also knew something else:

The incredible reward of answering *Amein, Yehei Shmei Rabba*.

What was worth more? The bargain—or the *Amein*?

The Treasure He Almost Missed

Pinchas made his decision. **He walked into the *beis medrash*.** He answered *Amein, Yehei Shmei Rabba*—knowing it might cost him the best business opportunity he had seen in a long time.

When davening ended, Pinchas decided to go to the house even though he knew Reuven was right that there would be nothing of value left. And Reuven had been right.

Nothing was left. Nothing but a few worthless odds and ends.

Pinchas bought them anyway, including an old, beat-up cushion. At home, he decided he could at least salvage its feathers. He took a

knife and slit open the cushion. Feathers exploded into the air.

And then—something sparkled. Pinchas reached into the feathers. He froze.

A magnificent pearl.

He rushed to a jeweler. The offer? **Fifty gold coins.**

Pinchas thought he had given up a treasure to answer *Amein, Yehei Shmei Rabba*. Instead, his *Amein* led him straight to one.

TRY THIS

Next time you answer *Amein, Yehei Shmei Rabba*, imagine that the moment you finish, a precious pearl appears on the table in front of you.

Imagine yourself picking up that pearl and putting it in your pocket. **Because every single *Amein, yehei shmei rabba* is precious beyond measure.**



Every one of us has a locked gate in our lives. *Parnasah*. A *shidduch*. Health. A child. A relationship that needs healing. We try. We daven. We hope. But sometimes, the gate just seems to stay locked.

There are locked gates in *Shamayim*, too. The *Zohar* reveals that there are barriers that can stand in the way of our *tefillos*. And then he tells us something extraordinary: **There are words powerful enough to break the locks and open the gates.**

אמן. יהא שמה רבא מברך לעלם ולעלמי עולם

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Why are these words so powerful?

Rav Yosef Yehuda Leib Bloch explains: There is a moment when a Jew rises above himself. He isn't thinking about what he needs. His deepest desire is simply: **Hashem, let the world recognize You. Let Your Presence be revealed.** At that moment, he is incredibly close to Hashem. And Hashem judges him for who he is at that moment. **That can change everything.** Because when Hashem's Presence is revealed, His goodness can pour into the world—into our lives, our families, and all of Klal Yisrael.

Dedicated by Moshe and Doreen Mermelstein לע"נ רכיל בת יוסף ע"ה, רבקה בת יואל ע"ה

In honor of the birthday of Hinda Esther bas Yisrael • לע"נ בתשבע רחל ע"ה בת ר' שמעון יבלח"ט • לע"נ חיים יחיאל מיכל בן רפאל פיוועל שניאור ז"ל