

הַלְּכָה of the Week

~ שְׁמִירַת הַלְּשׁוֹן ~

לְשׁוֹן הָרָע

Someone who only speaks **לְשׁוֹן הָרָע** occasionally is guilty of a serious sin. However, those who habitually gossip about the faults of others are guilty of a much more serious sin, since they deliberately and repeatedly disregard one of Hashem's **מִצְוֹת**.

Habitual offenders can often be found sitting around making disparaging remarks about others:

“Reuven is a good-for-nothing; just the other day he...”

“Don’t think that Leah is so special; she comes from a family that...”

“Do you know what I just heard about Shimon?”

Our Rabbis have labelled these people **בָּעֵלי לְשׁוֹן הָרָע** (Ba'alei Lashon Hara - habitual speakers of Lashon Hara). The Talmud (Erchin, 15b) states that someone who constantly speaks **לְשׁוֹן הָרָע** commits sins greater than idolatry and murder. The **בָּעֵלי לְשׁוֹן הָרָע** of constantly speaking evil of others is so enormous that a **עֲבָרָה** **תִּשְׁוֹבָה** loses his share in **עוֹלָם הַבָּא** (the World to Come) unless he does **תִּשְׁוֹבָה**. (Yerushalmi Paiah 1:1)

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*Beware of **לְשׁוֹן הָרָע** when speaking on the telephone. If the person with whom you are speaking insists on speaking **לְשׁוֹן הָרָע** you should rebuke him (tell him off).*

*If this is not possible, find an excuse to hang up: “Excuse me, something has just come up,” (it has - the **הָרָע**!) **לְשׁוֹן הָרָע** and end the conversation.*

פָּרָקִי אֲבוֹת of the Week

פרק ה

טו ארבע מזות בנותני צדקה. הרוצח שיתן ולא יתנו אחרים, עינו רעה בשל אחרים. יתנו אחרים והוא לא יתנו, עינו רעה בשל. יתנו יתנו אחרים, חסיד. לא יתנו ולא יתנו אחרים, רשע:

There are four types of donors to **צדקה**:

- a) one who wishes to give, himself, but wants others not to give: he begrudges others;
- b) one who wants others to give but does not want to give himself: he begrudges himself;
- c) one who wants to give and wants others to give is pious;
- d) one who does not want to give and does not want others to give is wicked.

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