

מִלְכָה of the Week

~ שְׁמִירַת הַלְּשׁוֹן ~

לְשׁוֹן הָרָע that is Common Knowledge

Many people mistakenly think that repeating well-known derogatory information is not considered לְשׁוֹן הָרָע. However, many rabbis do not consider there to be any difference between לְשׁוֹן הָרָע that is well known and לְשׁוֹן הָרָע that is not well known.

There is a lenient (not strict) opinion that says that if someone speaks in the presence of three or more people (אַפִּי תְּלַת), and those people then go and repeat what they heard, then they are not guilty of לְשׁוֹן הָרָע. Of course, the original speaker of the לְשׁוֹן הָרָע has still sinned.

The Chafetz Chaim teaches us, however, that it is very difficult to rely on this lenient opinion, since

1. it depends on many conditions being fulfilled, and
2. according to many opinions there is no basis for this ruling.

Therefore, even לְשׁוֹן הָרָע that is well-known should not be repeated.

פָּרָקִי אֲבוֹת of the Week

פָּרָק ה
כֵּן בֶּן בֶּג אֹמֵר, תְּפַק בָּה ותְּפַק בָּה, דְּכַלְא בָּה. וּבָה תְּחִזֵּי, וּסְבֵּי וּבְלָה
בָּה, וּמַנְה לֹא תַּזְעֵע, שְׁאֵין לְךָ מִזְהָה טוֹבָה הַיְמָנָה:
בֶּן הָא הָא אֹמֵר, לְפּוּם צַעֲרָא אָגָּרָא:

Ben Bag Bag taught:

Explore it [the Torah] and continue to explore it, for everything is in it. Look deeply into it; grow old and grey over it, and never move away from it, for there is nothing in the world that is better than the Torah.

Ben Hei Hei taught:

Your reward [for doing mitzvot] will be equal to the effort you put in.

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