

With thanks to Rabbi Zelig Pliskin for kindly giving me permission to use extracts from his book, "Guard Your Tongue" (based on "Chofetz Chaim").

הלכה of the Week

~ שמירת הלשון ~

Rabbi Pliskin said he will be pleased to know these halachot are being publicised more widely, especially in view of the fact that his own father was a talmid of the Chofetz Chaim, who went to great lengths to make these laws better known.

True and false derogatory statements.

You are forbidden to relate anything derogatory (negative) about others. If a derogatory statement is true, it is לשון הרע. If it is false, even partially, it is called מוציא שם רע (literally, 'giving someone a bad name,' or *defamation of character*) and the offense is much more severe.

It is so important to remember and can not be repeated often enough that **true** derogatory statements are considered לשון הרע. The most common defense to a rebuke for speaking לשון הרע is,

"But it is true!"

That is exactly what makes the statement לשון הרע!

פירקי אבות of the Week

פרק ה

יד ארבע מדות בידעות. נוח לבעוס ונוח לרצות, יצא שפרו בהפסדו, קשה לבעוס וקשה לרצות, יצא הפסדו בשפרו קשה לבעוס ונוח לרצות חסיד. נוח לבעוס וקשה לרצות רשע:

There are four types of temperament:

- One who is angered easily and pacified easily, his gain is offset by his loss;
- One who is hard to anger and hard to pacify, his loss is offset by his gain;
- One who is hard to anger and easy to pacify is pious;
- One who is easily angered and hard to pacify is wicked.