

הלכה of the Week

~ שמירת הלשון ~

לשון הרע that is Common Knowledge

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

There is a lenient (not strict) opinion that says that if someone speaks לשון הרע in the presence of three or more people (אפי תלת), and those people then go and repeat what they heard, then they are not guilty of לשון הרע. Of course, the original speaker of the לשון הרע 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 לשון הרע that is well-known should not be repeated.

פירקי אבות of the Week

פירק ה

נו בן בג בג אומר, הפך ביה והפך ביה, דכלא ביה. ובה תחזי, וסיב ובלה
בה, ומנה לא תזוע, שאין לה מדה טובה הימנה:
בן היא היא אומר, לפום צערא אגרא:

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.