

The Hidden Light

"Gentlemen, let's begin this meeting."

"But someone is not here, sir."

"Who is missing?"

"Mr. Goldstein."

"What?!? Goldstein?!? I've told him a hundred times not to be late for meetings. When he walks in that door, I'm going to let him have it."

Sure enough, Mr. Goldstein walks in the door. His boss vents the full fury of his anger on the unsuspecting Mr. Goldstein. He began screaming.

"Goldstein you ingrate! Do you know how many times I've told you not to be late for meetings! Everyone is waiting for you! You are wasting valuable company time . . ."

Mr. Goldstein's face begins to redden. He is very embarrassed in front of the entire board of directors. He had tried his best to get to work on time today. However, he was stuck in traffic for half an hour. He opens his mouth to try to explain himself.

"Don't you dare say a word Goldstein, or you will be fired on the spot!"

It was no use. Mr. Goldstein knew his boss by now. When he was upset, nothing could calm him down. At first, he thought that it was not fair. Why should he suffer such humiliation in front of people? Then he remembered something that he learned last week. "Each and every minute that a person seals his mouth he merits to see the ohr ha'ganuz (hidden light) that no angel or living being can fathom" (Alim Li'trufa from the Vilna Gaon). Slowly, Mr. Goldstein felt an inner calmness and warmth. "I'm getting the ohr ha'ganuz" he thought. "I'm getting an unfathomable reward for holding my peace. This is fantastic."

What is this ohr ha'ganuz? It is the great spiritual light of Hashem's presence that filled the world during the six days of creation. We cannot even begin to describe its magnificence. When Adam HaRishon sinned, that light was hidden away. Only tsaddikim will merit to see it (Bereshis Rabba 12:6). When a person refrains from speaking forbidden words, he earns a merit, which will enable him to see that light. If he has a great desire to speak *loshon hora*, yet

he keeps quiet, he gets the ohr ha'ganuz. If he wants to answer angry words which will cause an argument, yet he seals his lips, he gets the ohr ha'ganuz. If he does not answer back when he is being humiliated, he gets the ohr ha'ganuz.

This week's parsha speaks about the disease of *tsoraas*. It was a spiritual disease brought about by speaking *loshon hora*. Now we also learn about the great reward is in store for those who guard their tongue.

Kinderlach . . .

"Do you see that? It's the most beautiful thing I've ever seen in my life." "No, I don't see it. Where is it?" "It's right there." "Can you describe it to me? Maybe I can spot it." "Spot it? It's huge. How can you miss it? It is the most beautiful light you ever saw in your life." "I still can't see it." "Poor guy. You don't know what you are missing. It is fantastic." "Oh I wish I could see it." Kinderlach, don't let this happen to you.

The Trickster

"Please, my friend, come. You look like a stranger in town."

The stranger was very happy to be welcomed by such a friendly individual. He indeed was visiting in town and needed a place to eat and stay. Little did he know that his "friend" was really a trickster.

"Come, please let me show you around town and help you get settled. I will arrange a place for you to sleep tonight. But first, I am sure that you are hungry. Please, come with me for a bite to eat."

The trickster proceeded to take the stranger to a fancy restaurant. They entered and were shown to their seats.

"Please order whatever you like," said the trickster. "I will pay for everything." We will work out the bill some other time.

The items listed on the menu all sounded delicious and were very expensive. "This man is very generous," thought the stranger. "It is my good fortune that I met him." The two men proceeded to order a

sumptuous meal, complete from soup to nuts. The food was served in all of its courses, and they enjoyed themselves tremendously. As they finished eating and drinking, the trickster excused himself for a few minutes. He slipped away out the back door of the restaurant. The waiter then came and presented the guest with a huge bill.

"Yes, just a moment. My host will be returning to pay this."

They waited and waited, but the trickster was nowhere to be found. The owner of the restaurant came to help the waiter.

"But, but, my friend was supposed to pay this bill," the man pleaded. "Your friend is not here, but you are. You ate this food and must pay for it."

The guest, realizing that he had been tricked, sadly took out his wallet and paid the expensive bill for the meal.

Kinderlach . . .

*This is a parable from the Chofetz Chaim zt"l. What is the message? While the guest was eating, he thought the trickster was his friend. It was only after the meal that he realized that he was only out to harm him. So too with *loshon hora*. Someone may want to tell you the deepest secrets that he knows about other people. How honored and flattered you feel to be so close to a person who will share secrets with you. However, after 120 years we will see that your closeness to such a person caused you to hear *loshon hora*. That "friendship" just like the meal at the restaurant, will cause you a great loss. Be smart, kinderlach, and stay away from "friends" like the trickster in the story.*

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