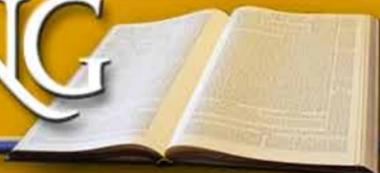


HALACHICALLY SPEAKING

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{ TOPIC }

OPENING ONE'S MOUTH TO THE SATAN



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► Halachically Speaking is a monthly publication compiled by Rabbi Moishe Dovid Lebovits, a former *chaver kollel* of *Yeshiva Torah Vodaath* and a *musmach* of *Harav Yisroel Belsky zt"l*. Rabbi Lebovits currently works as the Rabbinical Administrator for the KOF-K Kosher Supervision.

► Each issue reviews a different area of contemporary *halacha* with an emphasis on practical applications of the principles discussed. Significant time is spent ensuring the inclusion of all relevant *shittos* on each topic, as well as the *psak* of *Harav Yisroel Belsky, zt"l* on current issues.

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Opening One's Mouth to the Satan

People frequently quote the phrase, “*Al tiftach peh l’satan,*” not to open one’s mouth to the *satan*. What is this about? Why do people have reservations about making certain comments? To whom does it apply? Are there halachic issues regarding this concept? We will delve into this commonly used phrase and discuss the ramifications.

Different Phrases

In some places, *Chazal* use the phrase of, “Don’t open your mouth to the *satan*,”¹ and in other places they say, *Bris krusa l’sefasayim* – “A covenant has been made with lips.”² Some question what the difference is between the two phrases.³ The Maharsha⁴ explains that the first phrase applies when one includes himself in the discussion, but not when one is talking about someone else.⁵ Some explain that the words not to open your mouth to the *satan* applies to something which is bound to happen.⁶

In Chazal

The Gemara⁷ says that when a mourner says *tziduk hadin*,

1. *Maseches Brachos* 60a. See *Charedim Mitzvos Lo Sasei* 4:21; *Shlah Osios shin-shtikah*:27; *Maharil Diskin on Bereishis* 46:30; *Sefer Chassidim* 479.

2. *Maseches Moed Kattan* 18a. Refer to *Migadim Chadashim Maseches Moed Kattan* 18a if this applies even if one did not do an action with one’s lips but with hand movements, etc.

3. *Tosafos Maseches Moed Kattan* 18a “*v’istaya*.”

4. *Maseches Moed Kattan* 18a.

5. This is why the Gemara in *Moed Kattan* brought a different *pasuk* and the concept of opening one’s mouth to the *satan* (*Dibros Tzvi* 7:48:page 180).

6. Refer to *Migadim Chadashim Maseches Moed Kattan* 18a.

7. *Brachos* 19a.

איננו לוחצים את המילה "אל תפתח פה ל'שטן" (ברכות טז)



he should not say, “I was not punished even one-thousandth of what I deserve,” since one should not open his mouth to the *satan*.⁸

Similarly, one should not state when going into a bathhouse that if something happens, his death should be an atonement for his sins, since one should not open his mouth to the *satan*.⁹

The Gemara¹⁰ rules that when comforting mourners one should not say that many will drink (the cup of sorrow), but rather many have drunk (the cup of sorrow), since one should not open the mouth to the *satan*. The Chasam Sofer¹¹ asks what is so bad about saying this, since we all die. He answers that perhaps they are discussing whether there will be death when Mashiach comes. Those who hold one should not say it hold that there will not be death when Mashiach comes.

The Gemara¹² records that Pinchas suffered the loss of a family member. When his brother Mar Shmuel came to console him, he noticed that his nails were untrimmed and asked him why he had not cut them. Pinchas replied, “If this happened to you, would you have cut them?” Later, Shmuel also suffered the loss of a family member. When Pinchas came to comfort him, Shmuel took his nails and placed them in front of his brother. “Don’t you hold of the saying, ‘A covenant has been made with the lips’?”¹³

8. *Shulchan Aruch*, Y.D. 376:2; *Chachmas Adam Sha’ar Hasimchah* 163:2; *Aruch Hashulchan*, Y.D. 376:5. The *Kitzur Shulchan Aruch* 207:3 says this applies to all people. This applies as well to *vidui* which some say before going to sleep (*Magen Avraham* 239:7; *Elyah Rabbah* 3; *Aruch Hashulchan*, O.C. 239:7).

9. 60a.

10. *Kesubos* 8b.

11. *Maseches Kesubos* 8b.

12. *Moed Kattan* 18a.

13. Refer to *Ran*, *Maseches Moed Kattan* 18a. See *Divrei Shalom* 1:48 on this Gemara.

כל השומה הלכות בכל יום מובטח לו שהוא בן עולם הבא... (תדה עב.)

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The Gemara¹⁴ says that if one finds his own lost object he should take it first before he returns the lost object of his father or *rebbe*. The reason is that he should not become poor if he neglects his own possessions. However, the Gemara says if one is always concerned about this and takes his things first because he does not want to become poor he will become poor.¹⁵ The Maharsha¹⁶ says that if one verbalizes that he is keeping his item since he does not want to become poor, he is opening his mouth to the *satan* and he will become poor.

What Does It Mean

This entire concept requires an explanation. The Maharsha¹⁷ explains that saying negative material is like one hundred people are admitting that he is deserving of ill tidings.¹⁸

Some maintain that this concept only applies in times of danger,¹⁹ such as an *avel* and when entering a bathhouse (*Maseches Brachos*),²⁰ or in a time of pain.²¹

One should be careful about opening his mouth to the *satan* when he talks about himself, but it does not apply when talking about others.²²

Speech has such an impact that it can change the

14. *Maseches Bava Metzia* 33a.

15. *Shulchan Aruch*, C.M. 264:1. Refer to *Rashi*, *Maseches Bava Metzia* 33a "kol".

16. *Maseches Bava Metzia* 33a.

17. *Maseches Kesubos* 8b.

18. *Ein Yaakov*, *Maseches Brachos* 19a. See *Dibros Tzvi* 7:48. Refer to *Korban Eidah*, *Maseches Shabbos* 2:6.

19. *Aruch Hashulchan*, Y.D. 376:5. See *Shiurei Brachah* on Y.D. 376:2.

20. *Dibros Tzvi* 7:48. According to this we can understand why the phrase of opening one's mouth to the *satan* was not mentioned by the story of Shmuel above (see *Dibros Tzvi* 7:48).

21. *Ein Yaakov*, *Maseches Moed Kattan* 18a.

22. Refer to *Divrei Sofrim*, Y.D. 376:12.

איזן על להקב"ה בעולמו אלזי יאמות של הלכה בלביד... (ברכות ח)



outcome of matters. People have the ability to use their godly power of speech to curse and bless in supernatural ways. In addition, they can cause bad things to happen by opening their mouth to the *satan*.²³

Careful What We Say – *Aveilus* – Sick Person – Other Cases

The Gemara²⁴ records that one is obligated to stand in honor of a *Nasi*, except for an *avel* and a sick person. An *avel* does not stand, as it is not a proper show of honor, and the sick person is not capable of standing. One may say “*shev*” (sit) to anyone, except a sick person and an *avel*. This is brought in halachah as well.²⁵ The reason is that *shev* can also mean “return,” as if the speaker is wishing that the *aveilus* should return.²⁶ This is opening the mouth to the *satan*.^{27,28}

Chazal mention many situations where we learn that we need to be careful about what we say.²⁹

The Ohr Hachaim says that when Rochel told Yaakov, “If I have no children I am dead,” Yaakov got angry since Rochel mentioned death.³⁰ After the sin of the *eigel*, Moshe Rabbeinu said that his name should be removed from the Torah, and his name was removed from *Parshas Tetzaveh*.

23. *Rashba* 1:408. See *Chinuch* 231, *Migadim Chadashim Maseches Moed Kattan* 18a.

24. *Maseches Moed Kattan* 27b.

25. *Maseches Moed Kattan* 27b; *Rambam, Hilchos Avel* 13:5; *Shulchan Aruch, Y.D.* 376:2; *Chachmas Adam Sha'ar Hasimchah* 163:2; *Kitzur Shulchan Aruch* 207:2; *Gesher Hachaim* 20:5:8.

26. *Shulchan Aruch, Y.D.* 376:2; *Chachmas Adam Sha'ar Hasimchah* 163:2. See *Levush* 376:1; *Birchei Yosef, Y.D.* 376.

27. *Aruch Hashulchan, Y.D.* 376:4. Some maintain although one should not say *shev* if an *avel* or a sick person stand, they may stand if one does not say *shev* if an old person or a *talmid chacham* walk in (refer to *Yabia Omer, Y.D.* 3:27).

28. *Shevus Yaakov* 1:26.

29. Refer to *Avnei Levi* 1:9.

30. *Ohr Hachaim Bereishis* 30:1-2.

כל השווה הלכות בכל יום מובטח לו שהוא בן עולם הבא... (תדה עב)



One should not scare a child by saying a dog or cat will take him, since one's lips can be a covenant (as mentioned above) and it may come true.³¹

Kaddish – Aleinu

A mourner should say Kaddish after *Aleinu* is recited,³² since *Aleinu* has *pesukim* and Kaddish should be recited afterwards.³³ If there are no *aveilim*, then someone else should say it even if they have parents, if their parents are not concerned³⁴ with their child saying Kaddish while they are still alive.³⁵ The reason some people refrain when the parents are alive is because it is as if the child is hinting that he wants the parent to die.³⁶ If one parent died and the living one does not want the son to say Kaddish for whatever reason – such as the parent thinks saying Kaddish for the deceased will have a negative effect on the living parent, one should listen to the parent and not say Kaddish.³⁷

In any case, one should make sure that someone recites Kaddish after *Aleinu*; either an *avel* or someone who knows his parents don't care (there is no difference between *nusach Sephard* or *Ashkenaz*).³⁸ However, if the custom is to recite Kaddish after *Ein K'Elokeinu* for *nusach Sephard*, then there is no need to say Kaddish after *Aleinu* if there is no *yasom* present.³⁹

31. *Shulchan Aruch Harav, Hilchos Shemiras Haguf V'nefesh* 12; *Kitzur Shulchan Aruch* 33:14.

32. *Shulchan Aruch, O.C.* 132:2.

33. *Levush* 132:2. See *Likutei Maharich* 1:page 205 (new) which says it depends if *Ein K'Elokeinu* is recited.

34. See *Mishnah Berurah* 11.

35. *Shulchan Aruch, O.C.* 132:2. See *Pri Hasadeh* 4:92; *Tzor Yaakov* 2:4 (end); *Avnei Yushfei* 8:24:1; *Halichos Shlomo Tefillah* 11:page 141:footnote 19. Refer to *Az Nidberu* 13:33:3.

36. *Levush* 132:2. See *Avnei Yushfei* 8:24:1.

37. *Yabia Omer, Y.D.* 3:26. See *Tzitz Eliezer* 7:49:6.

38. *Avnei Yushfei* 8:24:5-6.

39. *Nishmas Yisrael* 31:page 654.

איך ללמוד להקדיש את ה' בעולמו אלא יד אמותו של הלכה בלבד... (ברכות ה')

כל השנה הלכות בכל יום מובטח לו שהוא בן עולם הבא... (גדה עב)

It seems the custom is not to be concerned regarding the Kaddish after *Aleinu*, and it is omitted if there is no *yasom* available.⁴⁰

There is no concern for someone who has parents to serve as *shliach tzibbur* and recite Kaddish.⁴¹

If one's grandparent died and his parents request of him to say Kaddish, it is permitted for the grandson to say Kaddish for his grandfather (in a situation where the parent does not want to say Kaddish for whatever reason).⁴²

The Kaddish after *leining* belongs to an *avel* and not the one who got the last *aliyah* or the *ba'al korei*.⁴³

Other Kaddish – *Kaddish D'Rabbanan*

Aside from *Kaddish yasom*, there is a Kaddish⁴⁴ which is recited after at least ten⁴⁵ men learn words of *Aggadah*,⁴⁶ as well as after reciting Rabi Yishmael⁴⁷ and *Ein K'Elokeinu* at Shacharis.⁴⁸ The custom is that after one learns in public, the mishnah of Rabi Chananiah is recited since we only say the

40. Ibid.

41. *Mishnah Berurah* 132:11.

42. *Avnei Yushfei* 8:24:3-4.

43. Refer to *Yabia Omer*, Y.D. 3:26:4.

44. It is called *Kaddish D'Rabbanan* since this Kaddish can technically be said after learning *Torah shebal peh*, which is Rabbinic Torah (*Elya Rabbah*, O.C. 155:1).

45. See *Even Hashoham* 19; *Oraisa* 20; pages 121-127. Refer to *Divrei Chamudos Maseches Brachos* 8:40, *Minchas Elazar* 2:72.

46. *Rashi* on *Maseches Avos* 6:11; *Shulchan Aruch Harav* 54; *Mishnah Berurah* 54:9. Although an argument can be made that it should be recited on all *Torah shebal peh* (*Magen Avraham* 54:3; *Pri Megadim Eishel Avraham* 54:3; *Birchei Yosef*, O.C. 55:1; *Aruch Hashulchan* 55:5. Refer to *Likutei Maharich* 1:pages 202-203 [new]), *Vayevarech Dovid* 1:11. See *Be'er Sheva Maseches Sotah* 49a.

47. Refer to *B'tzel Hachachmah* 4:16 which says that this Kaddish may be recited by an *avel* or anyone in shul. If there was no *minyán* until after *Hodu* some suggest to say the regular Kaddish then before *Baruch She'amar* (*nusach Sephard*) and not the *Kaddish D'Rabbanan* (*Halichos Shlomo Tefillah* 6:9).

48. *Aruch Hashulchan*, O.C. 133:4.

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Kaddish after words of *Aggadah*.⁴⁹ Some places are careful about this, while others just end a *shiur* without anyone reciting Kaddish.

The reason why it is said after *Aggadah* is because words of *Aggadah* inspire people.⁵⁰

There is a discussion in the *poskim* if one who did not learn among the group may recite this Kaddish after learning.⁵¹ The custom is that he may.⁵² Some maintain that this is only if this was a *shiur* which is not part of the shul, but a small group got together to learn.⁵³

The custom is to say the mishnah of Rabi Chananiah after each chapter of *Pirkei Avos*.⁵⁴

Some question why this is needed, since *Pirkei Avos* itself is *Aggadah*.⁵⁵ Perhaps the Kaddish is only recited after this specific mishnah, and not after other *Aggadah*.⁵⁶

If one comes late to a *Pirkei Avos shiur* in a shul he may recite the *Kaddish D'Rabbanan* after the *shiur*.⁵⁷

Some maintain that if parents are concerned then one

49. *Mishnah Berurah* 55:2; *Birchei Yosef*, O.C. 55:1. See *Magen Avraham* 54:3.

50. *Birchei Yosef*, O.C. 55:1.

51. Refer to *Aruch Hashulchan* 55:5, 9; *Ketzos Hashulchan* 16:footnote 7; *Minhag Yisrael Torah* 54:2; *Ohr Yisrael* 61:pages 92-93; *Tzitz Eliezer* 18:23.

52. *Biur Halachah* 155 "v'yikva"; *Igros Moshe*, Y.D. 4:61. Refer to *Aruch Hashulchan*, O.C. 55:5 which frowns upon those who learn for a *yahrtzeit* alone and recite *Kaddish D'Rabbanan* afterwards. Even if 2-3 people learn and there is a *minyan* present, *Kaddish D'Rabbanan* may be recited (*Mishnah Berurah* 54:9). See *Mishnah Berurah* 55:2.

53. *Igros Moshe*, Y.D. 4:61:8.

54. *Rashi* on *Pirkei Avos* 6:11; *Shulchan Aruch Harav* 54; *Piskei Hasiddur Pirkei Avos*; *Mishnah Berurah* 54:9.

55. *Ketzos Hashulchan* 16:footnote 6.

56. *Ibid.*

57. *Igros Moshe*, Y.D. 4:61:8.

איך ללמוד להלכה... (ברכות ח')



should not say this Kaddish either,⁵⁸ while others say there is no concern.⁵⁹

Obviously a *yasom* may recite this Kaddish as well.⁶⁰

One who finishes a *masechta* and makes a *siyum* (who is not an *avel*, or has a father and mother)⁶¹ should say the Kaddish, not an *avel*.⁶²

Actions

One should not prepare for someone's death until the person dies, since this is opening the mouth to the *satan*.⁶³

While learning the *halachos* of *shechitah*, one should not demonstrate how it is done by placing the knife on his neck since it is opening the mouth to the *satan*,⁶⁴ or even with placing his hand on his neck to show how one kills.⁶⁵

The question is discussed if one can say, "Can you do a *chessed shel emes* for me," which usually refers to burying someone, but here he means it in a different context. Is this considered opening his mouth to the *satan*? One who does *chessed* usually does not intend to get paid back, so the term "*chessed shel emes*" does not refer to death activities per se. Nevertheless, since this phrase is generally used regarding dead people one should refrain from saying it.⁶⁶

Some avoid walking around the house without shoes

58. Yabia Omer, Y.D. 3:26; Sha'arei Halachah U'minhag 80:page 179. See Matei Ephraim 602:43.

59. Pischei Teshuvah, Y.D. 376:4; Tzitz Eliezer 7:49:6; opinion of Harav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach zt"l quoted in Halichos Shlomo Tefillah 6:page 78:footnote 24. See Yad Yitzchak 3:80.

60. Maharshag, O.C. 1:52:7; Nishmas Yisrael 31:pages 653-654.

61. Rivevos Ephraim 1:365. See Halichos Shlomo Tefillah 1:footnote 48 which says to refrain from this since it mentions in the Kaddish about death. Refer to Yoma Tova L'Rabannan page 107:3.

62. Yoma Tova L'Rabannan page 28:5.

63. Levush, Y.D. 339:1.

64. Darchei Teshuvah, Y.D. 20:1.

65. Maharsha Maseches Gittin 57b. See Haklalah L'vrachah page 101:footnote 15.

66. Gam Ani Odeicha 35:page 100.

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(while wearing socks) since mourners act this way, and there is a concern of opening the mouth to the *satan* and becoming a mourner.⁶⁷

In addition, since two people put on the *tachrichim* of a dead person, some do not allow two people to dress a living person at one time so as not to open one's mouth to the *satan*.⁶⁸

Tachanun in a Beis Avel

Some mention that since in *Tachanun* we say the word “*chatsi*” (I sinned), we don't say *Tachanun* in a *beis avel* in order not to place the *din* on us.⁶⁹

Yearly Calendars

Harav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach *zt”l*⁷⁰ took issue with calendars that contain the phrase, “May the curses end and the blessings begin,” since we hint that there should be curses which should end.

Starting Masechta Right Away

In order that the *satan* should not have claims on our behavior, we start another *masechta* right after we finish one.⁷¹

Yizkor

The custom is that during *Yizkor*⁷² those who have parents leave the shul.⁷³ Some explain that if they stay they may say

67. *Shemiras Haguf V'hanefesh* 1:page 92. See *Levusha Shel Torah* page 776.

68. *Shemiras Haguf V'hanefesh* *ibid*.

69. *Aruch Hashulchan*, Y.D. 376:5.

70. *Halichos Shlomo Moadim* 1:1:footnote 35.

71. *Ibid*. 2:14:footnote 38. See *B'Torasos Yehegeh* 3:pages 109-110.

72. Refer to *B'tzel Hachachmah* 4:120 regarding when a person who lives outside Eretz Yisrael and is visiting there during Yom Tov should say *Yizkor*.

73. *Sha'arei Chaim* on *Sha'arei Ephraim* 10:40. See *Natei Gavriel*, *Yom Kippur* 56:2. An *avel* does

איננו נפתחים את פה לנושא של הלכה בלבד... (ברכות מ)



Yizkor, and this would be hinting that they wish that a family member would die.⁷⁴

Buying a Grave While Alive

There is a popular custom of buying a grave for oneself during one's lifetime.⁷⁵ Many buy burial plots on Har Hazeisim and other places.⁷⁶ There is no issue of opening one's mouth to the *satan* by doing so, and some even maintain that doing so is a *segulah* for long life.⁷⁷ Some explain⁷⁸ that this helps one remember the day of death, as it says in *Maseches Avos*⁷⁹ that one should repent one day before he dies (although one does not know when he will die) so one will repent all his days.⁸⁰

Some posit not to acquire the grave before it is necessary, and one should just mention where he wishes to be buried.⁸¹

Preparing Shrouds

One who is healthy can prepare his shrouds, but one

not say *Yizkor* in the first year (*Kitzur Shulchan Aruch* 133:21; see *Natei Gavriel Yom Kippur* 56:4:footnote 4). On this topic see *Techumin* 17:pages 54-58 in depth. In regard to a *shatz* saying *Yizkor* while he has parents, see *Yad Yitzchak* 3:80.

74. *B'tzel Hachachmah* 4:120:4. See *Otzer Kol Minhagei Yeshurun* pages 379-380; *Tzitz Eliezer* 12:39. For additional reasons, see *Pischei Shearim* on *Sha'arei Ephraim* 10:32; *Gesher Hachaim* 31:7; *Nishmas Yisrael* page 673; *B'mareh Habezek* 1:page 137:footnote 1; *Hilchos Chag B'Chag Sefiras Ha'omer V'Chag HaShavuvs* page 142:footnote 98; *Otzer Kol Minhagei Yeshurun* 71:27. See *Ta'amei Haminhagim* 590:page 247; *Tzitz Eliezer* 12:39.

75. *Beis Moed* pages 276-277; *Tzohar* 12:pages 148-149; *Da'as U'sevunah Bereishis* 23:13:page 206; *Teshuvos V'hanhagos* 2:604. See *Chashukei Chemed Maseches Avodah Zarah* pages 342-344.

76. *Yaskil Avdi, Y.D.* 8:32:1.

77. *Orchos Rabbeinu* 4:page 108:38; *Doleh U'mashkeh* page 370; *V'harachta Yamim* pages 335-336; *Yaskil Avdi, Y.D.* 8:32:1.

78. *Sha'arei Tzedek, Y.D.* 24.

79. 2:10.

80. *Maseches Shabbos* 153b.

81. *Aprakasisa D'anya, Y.D.* 3:221.

כל השווה הלכות בכל יום מובטח לו שהוא בן עולם הבא... (מדה עב)

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who is sick and in danger should not since it is opening the mouth to the *satan*.⁸²

Adding to a Cemetery

If a cemetery needs to be expanded, there is no issue in regard to opening one's mouth to the *satan*. Waiting until someone dies before expanding the cemetery is opening one's mouth to the *satan*.⁸³

Child Saying *Brachah* of *Hagomel*

A child under bar mitzvah does not recite *birchas hagomel*. Since a child is not punished for his sins, the *nusach* of "*chayavim*" that we recite in *hagomel* does not apply to him.⁸⁴ Some explain that if he would say "*chayavim*," he is saying that he deserved to suffer a terrible fate, but Hashem saved him. This is considered opening one's mouth to the *satan*. Others posit that it is not an issue since the language is said for *tzaddikim* as well when they are saved from misfortune, and we are thanking Hashem for all things, whether we are deserving or not.⁸⁵

Simchas Torah

We finish the reading of all the *parshiyos* of the Torah on Simchas Torah instead of Rosh Hashanah. This is in order to mix up the *satan* so that he does not know when Rosh

82. *Aruch Hashulchan*, Y.D. 339:5. See *Chashukei Chemed Maseches Niddah* pages 315-316.

83. *Natei Gavriel Aveilus* 95:7.

84. *Elyah Rabbah* 219:3; *Magen Avraham* 219; *Be'er Heitiv* 1; *Seder Birchos Hanehenin* 13:3; *Sha'arei Ephraim* 4:28; *Chai Osher* 41; *Chessed Lalafim* 219:10; *Mishnah Berurah* 3; *Aruch Hashulchan* 6; *Kaf Hachaim* 2; *Yalkut Yosef* 219:3; *Chinuch Yisrael* page 90; *Doleh U'mashkeh* page 126; *Minchas Shlomo* *ibid.*; *Tzitz Eliezer* 14:20, 18:22; *Ohalecha B'amisecha* 23:17; *Lehoros Nassan* 4:11-12; *Hakattan V'hilchosav* 16:1; see *Rav Akiva Eiger* 219:1; *Sha'arei Teshuvah* 1; *Sedei Chemed* "*brachos*" 12; page 345.

85. *Har Tzvi*, O.C. 1:113:1. Refer to *Mor U'ketziah*, O.C. 219; *B'shvilei Birchos Hagomel* 8; *Brachos V'hoda'os* pages 64-66.

איז ער לאהב'ה בעולמו אלא די אמתו של הלכה בלבד... (ברכות ה')

כל השנה הלכות בכל יום מובטח להשתדל לא עולם הזה... (תודה ענ)

Hashanah will be, so he should not have complaints against us.⁸⁶ We wait until Simchas Torah in order not to make a *hefsek* with all the Yom Tov *leinings*.⁸⁷

Upon the completion of the reading of the Torah with *V'zos Habrachah* on Simchas Torah, we immediately start with *Bereishis* as not to open the mouth to the *satan* for him to have complaints against us by saying that we don't want to read from the Torah anymore.⁸⁸

Rosh Hashanah

We do not *bentch* Rosh Chodesh Tishrei in shul in order to mix up the *satan* that he should not know when Rosh Hashanah will be.⁸⁹

During the days of Rosh Hashanah one should refrain from mentioning sin so as not to open his mouth to the *satan*.⁹⁰ One should make sure to say *Krias Shema* and *daven Shemoneh Esrei* within the proper time, since one does not want to open his mouth to the *satan*.⁹¹

Leining

Certain *parshiyos* are read at specific times. For instance, *Bamidbar* is always *leined* before Shavuos. Since *Bechukosai* contains curses, we want *Bamidbar* to make a separation between the curses and the day of judgment on fruits (Shavuos). If we were to *lein* the curses in proximity to the

86. *Levush* 581:1; *Kaf Hachaim* 668:15.

87. *Ibid.*

88. *Radvaz* 4:208; *Yam Shel Shlomo Maseches Bava Kamma, drush to siyum masechta; Avudraham Yom Shemini V'Simchas Torah; Tur* 669; *Beis Yosef, O.C.* 282; *Maharsha, Megillah* 31b; *Mishnah Berurah* 668:10; *Aruch Hashulchan* 7; *Kaf Hachaim* 14, 147:44, *Natei Gavriel Shavuos* 7:1; see *Vayitzbar Yosef Bar* 2:6; *Yalkut Yosef Moadim* page 246:footnote 29; *Rivevos Ephraim* 5:213; *Igros Moshe, O.C.* 1:101; *Yabia Omer, O.C.* 4:22; *Mishpatei Uziel, O.C.* 3:16.

89. *Levush* 581:1.

90. *Shelah, Maseches Rosh Hashanah, Perek Ner Mitzvah*:18.

91. *Levush, O.C.* 584:1.

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day of judgment, it would open the mouth to the *satan* to have complaints against us.⁹²

Similarly, we *lein Nitzavim* before Rosh Hashanah to create a buffer between the curses of *Ki Savo* and the *yom hadin* of Rosh Hashanah.⁹³

Motza'ei Yom Kippur

During Ma'ariv on Motza'ei Yom Kippur, one must be careful not to *daven* too quickly as if he is running away from school. On the other hand, it should not be recited too slowly, since one may be opening his mouth to the *satan* by indicating perhaps he was not forgiven for his sins.⁹⁴

Passing Bread

Bread should not be handed directly to the recipient; rather, it should be placed on the table.⁹⁵ The reason is that handing the bread directly is a sign of *aveilus*,⁹⁶ and if one does so it is like opening his mouth to the *satan*.⁹⁷ In practice, however, we are not concerned with this issue. Some explain that the halachah only applies when every person has his own small table. Others say that if the recipient reaches out with his hand there is no issue,⁹⁸ and indeed some chassidim

92. *Tosafos Maseches Bava Basra* 88b "v'klalam"; *Levush*, O.C. 428:4; *Biur Halachah* 428 "v'lolam"; *Kaf Hachaim* 428:16.

93. *Levush* *ibid.*, *Magen Avraham* 4; *Kaf Hachaim* *ibid.* See *Maharsha Maseches Megillah* 31b "kedei."

94. *Yalkut Yosef, Kitzur Shulchan Aruch* 624:1.

95. *Shulchan Aruch* 167:18.

96. *Ibid.*; *Rema*; *Levush* 14; *Shulchan Aruch Harav* 21; *Ben Ish Chai Emor* 1:11; *Mishnah Berurah* 167:88; *Aruch Hashulchan* 31; see *Hisorerus Teshuvah* 1:132.

97. *Nishmas Shabbos* 2:182. See *Mishnah Berurah* 167:90. This is not an *issur*, just a good thing to avoid (*Aruch Hashulchan* 31).

98. *Nishmas Shabbos* 2:182.

איננו להחזיקו אלא יד אמות של הלכה בלבד... (ברכות מ)

have the custom not to be concerned with passing the bread from hand to hand.⁹⁹

This is not an issue on Shabbos since we do not show signs of *aveilus* on Shabbos. Although private observance of *aveilus* does apply, this would be an open show of *aveilus*.¹⁰⁰

Life Insurance

Many people fear that buying life insurance is considered opening one's mouth to the *satan*. Others maintain that it is a lack of *bitachon* in Hashem. Regarding the first concern, it is not an issue since we all know that people die, and one has to do his utmost to ensure he leaves money for his family's well-being. When one buys life insurance he thinks about death and this is a *segulah* for long life. One should do his *hishtadlus* in life. Just as he has to work and not rely on miracles, so too buying life insurance is justified.¹⁰¹

Regarding *bitachon*, there is no difference between insurance and any other business investment. Therefore, life insurance is a good thing.¹⁰²

The purpose of life insurance is to ensure that the widow need not rely on the public for financial assistance. The *kesubah* states that the husband's real-estate holdings may be used to cover the husband's debt to the wife.¹⁰³ Since many people do not invest in real estate today, the widow may collect from all the husband's possessions. The fields in the time of *Chazal* are the equivalent of today's life insurance

99. *Nemukei Orach Chaim* 167:3; *Piskei Teshuvos* 167:footnote 154; *Nishmas Shabbos* 2:182.

100. *Mishnah Berurah* 167:89.

101. *Miyum Hahalachah* 2:85.

102. *Igros Moshe, O.C.* 2:111; *Yechaveh Da'as* 3:85; *Miyum Hahalachah* 2:85; *Noam* 20:pages 272-277.

103. See *Maseches Kesubos* 78b.

כל השומה הלכות בכל יום מובטח לו שהוא בן עולם הבא... (מדה עב)

policy.¹⁰⁴ One should purchase an insurance policy to make sure his family is protected.¹⁰⁵

This is not a lack of *emunah* or *bitachon*,¹⁰⁶ because this is the way in which the Torah taught us how to act. A *ba'al bitachon* may make his own personal choices, but not when they affect his family and the public, which will need to contribute for the family's welfare.¹⁰⁷ Also, we find that a living person may prepare his own grave and shrouds.¹⁰⁸

The Chazon Ish¹⁰⁹ was against life insurance, as it is possible that the only reason one is granted life is because his family needs his financial support. Once this point is nullified by insurance, there is no longer any reason to keep him alive.¹¹⁰ In any case, the opinion of the *poskim* is to get life insurance.¹¹¹

Some say that buying a life insurance policy is a *segulah* to long life, since one who is responsible in life has *hatzlachah* and his *mazal* causes that nothing will happen to him.¹¹²

104. See *Miyum Hahalachah* *ibid*.

105. Harav Yisroel Belsky zt"l in *Shulchan Halevi* 1:pages 212-213.

106. See *Pri Hasadeh* 2:44; *Igros Moshe* *ibid.*; 4:48.

107. *Shulchan Halevi* 1:pages 212-213; *Teshuvos V'hanhagos* 4:325; *Be'er Moshe* 8:118. See *Nezer Hachaim* page 215.

108. Refer to *Beis Yosef*, Y.D. 339.

109. *Massei Ish* 3:page 181. See *Alei Siach* page 277:25; *Even Yisrael* 9:161; *Dvar Torah Bereishis* page 284.

110. See *Teshuvos V'hanhagos* 4:325. Some mention if one is living day to day and can't afford it then he does not have to go out of his way to buy life insurance (*Teshuvos V'hanhagos* 4:325). The policies where one gets money back after a number of years, which is return of premium, is for sure allowed (*Teshuvos V'hanhagos* 4:325).

111. *Lechem Shlomo* 68; *Habayis Hayehudi* 10:page 302:19; *Tiv Haparshah* 1:page 246; *Miyum Hahalachah* *ibid.*; *Asei Lecha Rav* 6:92, 100; *Kav Chaim* 26; *Az Nidberu* 13:78; *Be'er Moshe* 8:118; *Yalkut Yosef*, O.C. 156:footnote 2:page 335; *Kochvei Yitzchak* 1:22:1; *Yechaveh Da'as* 3:85; *V'ya'an Dovid* 2:265; *Shevet Halevi* 4:1:2. In regard to using *ma'aser* money to buy a life insurance policy, see *Massei Tzedakah* page 165-166. See *Igros Moshe*, O.C. 4:48 which discusses different kinds of life insurance policies.

112. *Kochvei Yitzchak* 1:22:1.

אין על להקדיף"ה בעולמו אלא יד אמות של הלכה בלבד... (ברכות ח')

Learning *Inyanei Aveilus*

Some people avoid learning *Maseches Moed Kattan* because it talks about *inyanei aveilus* and one is scared because he does not want to open the mouth of the *satan*. The *Sefer Chassidim*¹¹³ comments that before learning this *masechta* one should *daven* to Hashem that nothing bad will happen to him. He continues and maintains that *Maseches Moed Kattan* is a *meis mitzvah* since some people don't learn it for fear that something bad will happen, so if one wishes to learn it he is doing a great mitzvah. The *Knesses Hagedolah*¹¹⁴ says the whole concern is if one learns it with a group of people, but if one learns it by himself it is permitted. This *masechta* is included in the *Daf Yomi* cycle so it would seem that one may learn it. Furthermore, most *Rishonim* have a *pirush* on this *masechta*.¹¹⁵ When one learns this *masechta* he should not go so deeply into it like he does with other *masechtos*, but he should learn it quickly.¹¹⁶

Names

One should not give a child a name which has a negative connotation, such as *Yimus* (death) for a girl.¹¹⁷ Some mention not to use the name Meira since there are some indications that it means a curse.¹¹⁸

113. 261:pages 225-226; see *Yosef Ometz* page 270; *Minhag Yisroel Torah, Y.D.* 246:29; *Asei Lecha Rav* 8:66. Refer to *Yehudah Ya'aleh* 2:248 on why some do not learn it. Refer to *Kovetz Zera Yaakov* 14:page 190:33-34, page 191:37. The *Yalkut Yosef* intro to vol. 7 pages 2-3 says if one is learning *inyanei aveilus* for the needs of the *tzibbur* he has nothing to worry about (quoting the opinion of Harav Ben-zion Abba Shaul *zt"l*).

114. *Y.D.* 245:3.

115. *Shearim Metzuyanim B'halachah*, beginning of *Moed Kattan*.

116. *Sefer Chassidim* *ibid.*; *Kaf Hachaim* 116:189; *Tov Yehoshua* 2:18:4; *Shemiras Haguf V'hanefesh* 89:1.

117. *Keser Shem Tov* pages 420-421.

118. *Ibid.* pages 422-423.

כל השוטה הלכות בכל יום מובטח לו שהוא בן עולם הבא... (גדה עב)

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Living Until 120 Years Old

Many times, when one has a birthday people give him a *brachah* that he should have many more until 120 years old.¹¹⁹ However, it is reported that Harav Moshe Feinstein *zt"l*, Harav Yaakov Kamenetsky *zt"l* and others did not like this since it is in essence a curse, because one can live longer than this.¹²⁰ There are *Rishonim* which indicate that Moshe Rabbeinu, who lived until 120,¹²¹ is the standard and a person from his days and onward cannot live more than 120 years.¹²² The *pasuk* in *Bereishis*¹²³ says that the days of man should not be more than 120 years old. However, we learn from this that Hashem was telling this to Noach in reference to the generation in his times doing *teshuvah* only for 120 years.¹²⁴

119. *Ohr Yisrael* 45:page 251, 46:page 251:3. Harav Chaim Soloveitchik *zt"l* was against doing this (*Meged Givas Olam* 1:pages 100-101).

120. *Meged Givas Olam* *ibid.*; *Aleinu L'shab'each* 5:page 732; *Sichas HaSaba M'Slabodka* page 457. Refer to *Haparshah Hamachkima Bereishis* pages 53-54.

121. Which is referenced by Hashem showing Moshe Rabbeinu the burning bush. *Hasneh*, which is "the bush" in Hebrew equals 120 (*heh, samach, nun, heh*) (*Midrash Rabbah Shemos* 2:5).

122. *Malbim Bereishis* 3:6. See *Ibn Ezra* *ibid.*

123. 3:6.

124. *Rashi Bereishis* *ibid.*; *Sforno* *ibid.*; *Rabbeinu Bachaye* *ibid.* See *Torah Temimah Bereishis* 6:3:6 which says that the 120 years is in reference to the longest amount of time the body will stay intact before it rots after death.

איזן על להקב"ה בעולמו אלזי יאמור של הלכה בלביד... (ברכות ח)

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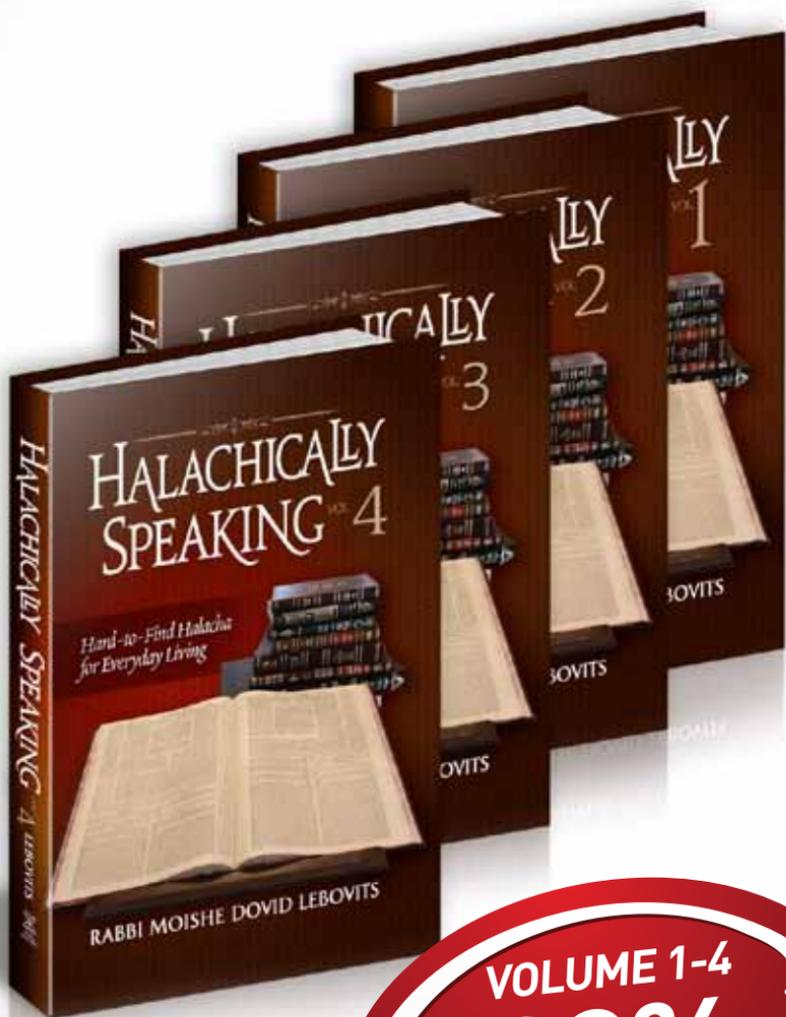
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