

## SCHEDULE

שבת קדש

Mincha Erev Shabbos → 7:00 PM

Daf Yomi— By R' Teichman 7:30 AM

Shacharis— Followed by Kiddush 8:30 AM

—Sof Zman K"Z— גר"א 9:33 < 8:57א"מ

Pirkei Avos - 6:55 PM

Mincha - Followed by Shalosh Seudos 7:45 PM

Maariv - 8:55 PM

### Weekday Minyanim & Shiurim

 Sunday 

Daf Yomi— By R' Teichman 7:30 AM

Shacharis  8:30 AM

Mincha / Maariv 7:50 PM

Monday - Friday

Daf Yomi— By R' Teichman 5:45 AM

Shacharis

Monday ב'ה"ב 6:35 AM

Thursday  6:40 AM

Tues, Wed., Fri. 6:45 AM

Mincha (Mon—Thur) 1:45 PM

Mincha/Maariv 7:55 PM

Maariv (Mon-Thur) 9:45 PM

Rabbi Teichman's Thursday Night  
Shiur After Maariv

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### Baruch Dayan Emes

Our deepest condolences go to the Dickstein Family on the recent passing of Aryeh's father, Rabbi Lenny Dickstein. Shiva will be observed through Sunday morning

1005 Highland Drive, Silver Spring, MD

Shacharis: Sunday 8:00 AM

### Shul Contacts

@OhelMosheBaltimore.com

### Rabbi Teichman

410-570-3333 or ravzt@hotmail.com

### Gaboin:

Naftali Miller (Rishon) & Yossi Frydman (Sheni)- Gabbai@

### Laining Schedule:

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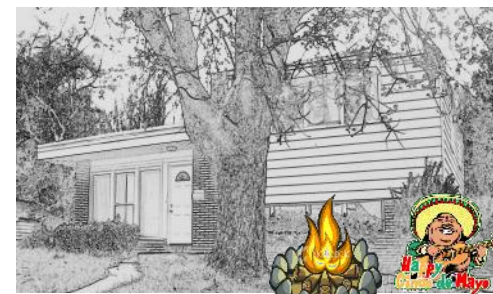
CONGREGATION OHEL MOSHE

שבת קודש

פרשת אחרי מות-קדושים

י"ג אייר

# אהל משה



Rabbi Zvi Teichman

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Issue#232

# RABBI'S MESSAGE

## Who's in Control?

Have you ever banged your thumb accidentally while using a hammer? What was your immediate reaction? Did you simply scream out in pain? Or maybe you cursed the hammer, the person you were hammering for, or swear at life in general, throwing in an expletive or two.

Why do we express ourselves that way? What compels a person to lash out in frustration with profanities instinctively with no real purpose or gain?

(ויקרא טו ד) **לא תקלל חרש** לפני עור לא תתן מכשל וראת מאלקך אני ד (ויקרא טו ד) **You shall not curse the deaf, and you shall not place a stumbling block before the blind; you shall fear your God- I am Hashem.**

This verse would seem to be simply expressing the Torah's concern to protect the disadvantaged, warning us not take advantage of the handicapped.

In the first half of the verse we are prohibited from cursing someone who is incapable of hearing the invective hurled at him. While in the second part of this directive we are forewarned from capitalizing on someone's infirmity, in this case a blind man, in order to harm him.

Truth be told, as Rashi informs us, neither the injunction not to curse is exclusive to a deaf victim nor is the admonition not to place an obstacle in front of another human limited to a blind person.

We may not curse any person nor even just give bad advice to an otherwise intelligent and healthy sighted individual if he is "blinded" to the reality of the situation at hand. In essence then the terms "deaf" and "blind" are merely being used figuratively.

You shall not curse another even when the recipient of your good wishes is totally unaware of your "kind" words.

You should never supply misleading information to those who are "blinded" to your selfish intentions that are not in their best interests.

Additionally we interpret this verse to forbid us from assisting in providing prohibited material to others who choose to indulge in sin, "blinded" by their passion for illicit pleasures.

If this is true, then these two components of the verse are quite distinct in their applications, and are not integrally related whatsoever, as we might have otherwise thought were the Torah merely looking out for the disabled.

What is the common thread in these two commands that warrant their placement together in one verse? Why is it indeed prohibited to curse if it will never be heard by the object of one's wrath?

The Sefer HaChinuch (רמא) elaborates about the metaphysical power of negative words to affect those they are aimed at. Sticks and stones will break our bones but words may be even more harmful, he teaches.

He adds that underlying this injunction is the fear that a "little bird" may inform the individual that was otherwise unaware until now of someone having cursed him.

According to the Chinuch then the Torah would be emphasizing in placing these two directives together, the need to refrain not only from physically attacking someone but to even hold back from assaulting others with powerful words and poisonous advice.

The Rambam (סנה"ג ל"ח שיז) however, takes a different tack and reveals a most fascinating understanding of this *mitzvah*.

The Rambam discusses the human instinct for anger and revenge.

There are times when one might feel compelled to totally do away with one's enemy in order to placate one's need for revenge. At times physically harming the perpetrator might suffice to calm one's anger.

In a lesser offense the directing of insult and deprecating words might be adequate to diminish and reduce his foe. The Rambam then goes on to describe man's need sometimes to simply vent.

Even when the object of one's rage is not listening to one's ranting, one often finds solace in merely letting off steam in isolation.

The Rambam continues, that contrary to what one might have thought that venting in private is harmless or perhaps even healthy, the Torah comes to allay that notion.

One may never grow accustomed to anger.

It is for that objective that the Torah instructs us here in not cursing "deaf ears". It matters not that no one is being harmed, what concerns us more is that man never allow himself to indulge in "comforting" rage. It is ultimately all about self control.

What is so calming about the process of venting, especially when it is "colored" with foul language? When others get the better of us we feel a loss of control. The natural reaction is to strike back, reasserting "our" control. When a physical response is not possible, we affirm a level of control by verbally afflicting our adversary.

At the very least, even while our object of rage is out of hearing distance, we find some aspect of "self preservation" and regained stature, by defining our antagonist in the most derogatory of terms, even if just in our own mind and emotions, that places us once again superior to him.

Animals when attacked and finding themselves cornered, emit a deep cry of self assertion in a last ditch effort to maintain their stance. Is it a wonder that "cuss words" often evince the most visceral and crass aspects of our being.

Think about it, the times we are most agitated is when things don't go the way we "expected".

How do you react when another car suddenly cuts you off? What's the first word out of your mouth when the computer unexpectedly crashes? What is our response to losing "service" in the middle of an important business call?

Venting is *treif!*

It is an artificial device we use to delude ourselves to being in control. It goes counter to the very basis of our relationship with God.

If only we could master this base instinct that we share with the animal kingdom, that is so far removed from our noble soul, that blocks our *neshama* from perceiving God's constant presence and control in every moment and circumstance of our lives.

This blemish stems from the same selfish drive that compels us to give others bad advice to our own advantage. When we "misdirect" others we are seeking to claim "turf" and "dominion" over them. There is something satisfying in exercising "control" over others. It is a pleasure however, rooted in our primitive side, far removed from the great potential of our soul and the elevated pleasure that comes from "self control".

These two commands, not to vent in a frustrated and futile attempt to gain control nor to assert our rule by taking advantage of "blind" others, are then actually two sides of the same coin.

The Holy Sefas Emes informs us that although the last part in this verse that encourages us to "fear God", is often explained to mean that in matters of the "heart", where only the transgressor knows his own true intentions, it is vital to maintain a fear of God to prevent him from sinking in these areas, the reverse is also true.

If one masters this level of self control, and maintains an awareness of God as the sole controlling force in our life, it will breed an increased fear of Heaven naturally.

It is our addiction for the need to "control", that prevents us from perceiving truth and His presence. The Sifted Sifsei Cohen interprets our verse in a most unique fashion.

*You shall not curse the deaf, and you shall not place a stumbling block before the blind.*

The Satan is euphemistically referred to as the blind one, as the Talmud teaches he is מלא עינים, "filled with eyes" (ג"ז כ), for he seeks every opportunity, not missing anything, to ensnare us in his clutches. He is for this reason called a מכשול, a "stumbling block" (סנה"ג ב).

Perhaps the Torah is teaching us that we shall not "curse the deaf"; not vent in frustration and anger when things go awry.

If we do, we are merely fueling the evil inclination by enforcing the falsehood of control in our live's circumstances, becoming addicted to a false notion of self determination, constantly stumbling over our own feeble and angry methods to maintain control.

The Sifsei Cohen adds, that חרש is an acronym for, חרשים רעים שךך, *your bad life*.

*לא תקלל חרש, You shall not curse "your difficult life"!*

We must see our lives, no matter how difficult the obstacles, as opportunities to control that which we were ennobled to control fully, our emotions.

We are assured that if we can attain that, we will be infused with an ever greater sense of God's presence in our lives and the joy and true pleasure that accompanies it.

בארבע,  
צב"ט תשפ"א



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To the following celebrating birthdays this week

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Info provided by YOU through our new member database

ON-TIME SHABBOS MINYAN

(Aka "Late" Shabbos)

From Shabbos Mevorchim Sivan (5/19)

To Shabbos Nachamu (8/4)

There will be an additional Friday Evening  
Mincha/Kabalas Shabbos Minyan starting at  
Candle lighting time.

This is in addition to the 7:00pm Minyan.