The Chicago Center
Digest
Mishna Berura
THE DAILY RESOURCE FOR MISHNA BERURA YOMI
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סימן תר״ו סעיף א׳-ב׳

Halacha Highlight

Asking forgiveness

Shulchan Aruch Siman 606 Seif 1
עבירות שבין אדם לחבירו וכו׳
Regarding sins between a person and his friend

Shulchan Aruch (סע׳ א׳) teaches that Yom Kippur does not atone for sins that one committed against another person. Additionally, Yom Kippur can only provide atonement if one first appeases his friend. There is a disagreement amongst the *Poskim* whether one is obligated to ask for forgiveness if it is evident from the offended's behavior that he has forgiven the offender. According to some *Poskim* it is necessary for one to humble himself to the offended and ask for forgiveness as that serves as part of the atonement for the transgression. Others maintain that as long as it is evident that the offended no longer harbors any resentment it is unnecessary for the offender to ask for forgiveness (חיי משה ד״ה יודע שמחל לו).

Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach (הליכות שלמה פ״ג סע׳ ו׳) writes about someone who spoke *lashon hora* about a friend but the friend is unaware of this *lashon hora*. The speaker is concerned that if he informs his friend that he spoke *lashon hora* about him when he asks for forgiveness it will cause that friend distress. In this case the speaker should not say anything about the *lashon hora* to his friend. This is in contrast with Chofetz Chaim's ruling (ספר חפץ חיים כלל ד׳ סע׳ י״ב) where he discusses the case of Reuven who spoke negatively about Shimon and thereby caused Shimon harm. Although Shimon does not know who spoke negatively about him causing him harm, Reuven is obligated to reveal that he was the source of that negative comment that caused Shimon harm if he is to be forgiven for his transgression. Rav Auerbach explains that in his opinion the dissenting view cited in the name of R' Yisroel Salanter seems more logical. R' Yisroel Salanter is cited as disagreeing with Chofetz Chaim about this point arguing that one may not cause a friend distress in order to achieve atonement.

Overview

Siman 606 Seif 1:

Yom Kippur does not atone for sins between man and his friend until he first appeasing him. Even if one merely teased his friend he must appease him. If the offended party is not appeased the first time the offender asks forgiveness the offender must return a second and third time and each time he should bring with him three people. If he is not appeased after three times the offender is no longer responsible to pursue the matter further. (However, one should declare before ten people that he asked for forgiveness) **If the offended is one's Torah teacher he must continue to ask for forgiveness until he is appeased.** The offended should not be cruel and refuse to forgive the offender unless his intention is for the benefit of the offender. If the offender gave the offended a bad name he is not required to forgive him.

- One should really appease the offended after the offense but during the year one could push it off if he doesn't have time but on *erev* Yom Kippur the matter must be addressed so that one will be pure from sin. Certainly if one has property that belongs to others it must be returned. (M.B. 1)
- If one is in possession of money that a friend claims is rightfully his, the matter should be presented to a *rov* to adjudicate since one should not rely on his own judgment when it comes to monetary matters. (M.B. 1)
- It is preferable for one to ask for forgives personally but if that is hard or if sending someone else will be more effective, one may send an agent on his behalf. (M.B. 2)
- Each time one asks for forgiveness he should ask in a different manner and he should specify the offense unless that will cause the offended more pain. (M.B. 3)
- One's Torah teacher is not limited to one's primary Torah teacher. (M.B. 7)
- If one does not forgive others he will not be forgiven. (M.B. 8)
- One may also refrain from forgiving others if he fears that he will be harmed if he forgives the offender. (M.B. 10)
- It is an act of humbleness to forgive even someone who has besmirched one's good name. (M.B. 11)

Siman 606 Seif 2:

If the offended died the offender must bring ten people to his grave and declare, "I have sinned against the G-d of Israel and this person against whom I have sinned." (The custom is to ask for forgiveness on *erev* Yom Kippur.)

- One should go to the grave barefoot. If the grave is more than three *parsas* he may send an agent to gather ten people to visit the grave on his behalf and ask the deceased for forgiveness. If one offended the deceased after their death he should ask forgiveness in the place where the offensive remark were made. (M.B. 14)
- After specifying the specific sin the people present should declare מחול לך three times. (M.B. 15)

Stories to Share

Between Man and His Fellow

ש״ע סי׳ תר״ו, א׳: ״עבירות שבין אדם לחבירו אין יוה״כ מכפר...״

The Beis Shaul explains the seriousness of sins between man and his fellow man discussed on today's amud. "The Chovos HaLevavos teaches that every sin בין אדם לחבירו also has בין אדם למקום element to it. חובות הלבבות, שער התשובה, פ״ט

When Miraim spoke against Moshe Rabbeinu, she deserved fourteen days punishment. When Moshe in his humility completely forgave her, Hashem relented His share of it. This left only the seven days of בין אדם לחבירו which, in Moshe's case, Hashem refused to leave unpunished. We can learn from here the severity of sins against our fellow man since there is double the punishment. It follows that the most important thing to work on is בין אדם לחבירו.

Once, the lay leaders of a certain group in Bnei Brak went to see Rav Aharon Leib Shteinman, zt"l, regarding a very serious matter. Several members of their community had become very ill and they wished to call for a community-wide gathering to strengthen the masses spiritually. Such gatherings are most successful when they focus on not more than one issue, yet they were unsure of what the focus of the gathering ought to be. They had narrowed it down to two possibilities: either strengthening learning, or improving interpersonal relationships.

Without hesitating an instant, Rav Shteinman, zt"l, replied, "Clearly you should focus on בין אדם לחבירו. We see this clearly from the well known gemara: 'ואהבת לרעך כמוך זה כלל גדול בתורה' —Love your fellow Jew as yourself; this is a great general principle of the Torah.' Clearly, the foundation and first subject to strengthen is this!"

עלינו לשבח, שמות, עמוד ע״ו