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# KINDER TORAH®



For parents to share with children at the Shabbos table  
Parshas Emor

## Chilul Hashem

**"Y**ou shall not desecrate My Holy Name" (Vayikra 22:32). This is a mitzvah *diorayssa* (from the Torah) whose importance should not be underestimated. The Gemora (Yuma 86a) states that one who has committed a *chilul Hashem* (desecration of Hashem's Name) has no salvation in this world. Neither *tshuva* (repentance) nor Yom Kippur nor suffering will cleanse him of this sin. What did he do to cause such a terrible punishment? We usually understand *chilul Hashem* as a public desecration of Hashem's Name. However, Rav Zeidel Epstein, shlita, in his sefer, *Heoros*, broadens the definition. What example of *chilul Hashem* does the Gemora cite? Rav says, "If I would buy meat from a butcher and not pay him immediately." Rashi comments that when Rav does not pay, the butcher will say that he is a thief. The butcher will learn from this to steal himself. Only one individual is affected by this *chilul Hashem*. The sin (stealing) is not one that we are commanded to give up our lives for. Still, it is considered a *chilul Hashem* because it causes a Jew to be lenient in his observance of one of Hashem's holy mitzvos, which lowers Hashem's honor. Rav Eliyahu Dessler zt"l in his commentary on the Yom Kippur prayer "*Al Chet*" broadens the definition even further. He explains that the main desecration caused by *chilul Hashem* is the desecration in the sinner himself. The sinner causes himself to take Hashem's mitzvos lightly and thereby distances himself from the Holy One.

**Kinderlach . . .**  
*We have heard about big scandals and large scale aveiyros (sins) that have caused massive chilul Hashem. We are speaking about correcting our own private aveiyros that cause chilul Hashem. We feel pressured, so we rush through a beracha. We get upset so we say something not nice to our friend. We play carelessly, and we break something that belongs to someone else. If we do not take these things seriously, it is a chilul Hashem. Even if only one friend sees us. He learned from us not to take his mitzvos so seriously. Even if no one sees us, it is still a chilul Hashem.*

*according to Rav Dessler. We have caused ourselves to be less serious about our mitzvos. As we said, there is no kapora (atonement) for chilul Hashem. We must be very careful about this.*

## Kiddush Hashem

**"I** shall be sanctified among the Children of Israel" (Vayikra 22:32). This is the mitzvah of *Kiddush Hashem*, sanctifying Hashem's Holy Name. The Gemora (Yuma 86a) tells us that making people love Hashem is our way of sanctifying His name. How do we do this? One who learns Tanach and Mishna, serves Talmidei Chachomim and is careful that his relationships with people are pleasant, sanctifies Hashem's name. People who know him will say about him, "Fortunate are his father and his teacher who taught him Torah. Oy to those who do not learn Torah! Look how his ways are delightful, his deeds are refined." On the other hand, if we behave the opposite, we cause people to say not so nice things about Hashem and His Torah.

**Kinderlach . . .**  
*People are watching us. We are representatives of Hashem. On the bus, they are watching to see if we give up our seat for an older person. At the store, they are watching to see if we wait patiently for our turn. At the playground, they are watching to see if we play nicely and do not litter. They look to see if our clothes are neat and clean. When they speak to us, they notice if we listen and answer politely or not. You have many opportunities to be a shining example of how Hashem and His Torah can refine a person. Let us take turns around the Shabbos table trying to think of other examples. Maybe we can even ask Abba to give out a prize to the one who thinks of the most examples.*

## Rebbe Akiva's Students

**"W**hat a terrible tragedy! Twenty four thousand people killed!"  
"What was it? Mudslides in Chile?"  
"No."  
"Earthquake in China?"  
"No."

"Please tell me. I must know."  
"The Gemora (Yevamos 62b) tells the story. Rebbe Akiva had 12,000 pairs of students from the city of Givas to Antripas who all died suddenly because they did not give the proper respect to one another. The world was void of Torah until Rebbe Akiva came to the south of Israel and taught five new students; Rebbe Meir, Rebbe Yehuda, Rebbe Yosi, Rebbe Shimon, and Rebbe Elazar ben Shamua. Those new students disseminated the Torah. The others all perished between Pesach and Shavuous from a painful disease called 'ascora'."

"Oy va voy, 24,000 yeshiva students died! So many students! Was their sin so terrible?"

"The Maharal explains that the time between Pesach and Shavuous is a time to prepare ourselves to receive the Torah. This preparation involves perfecting our character traits. One of the crucial aspects that we must work on is honoring Torah and those who learn it. It is so important that the Maharal calls honoring ones fellow man the essence of life. Those who did not value the essence of life were not permitted to continue living. They died from 'ascora', a disease of the throat. Speech comes from the throat, and 'Life and death are dependent upon one's speech' (Mishle 18:21)."

**Kinderlach . . .**  
*We should use the wonderful gift of speech that Hashem gave us to honor each other and to learn His Torah. Listen to what your Rebbe is saying. Let your chavrusa finish speaking before you comment on what he is saying. If you feel that he is incorrect, tell him in a respectful way. This is the proper way to speak. B'ezras Hashem, we will all honor each other and merit living long lives, filled with blessing.*

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