

פרק א · משנה יא

**אֲבֹטְלִיּוֹן אֹמֵר, חֲכָמִים, הִזְהָרוּ בְּדַבְרֵיכֶם, שְׁמָא תְּחֻבּוּ חֻבַּת גְּלוּת וְתִגְלוּ לְמָקוֹם מַיִם
הָרָעִים, וְיִשְׁתּוּ הַתְּלִמִּידִים הַבָּאִים אַחֲרֵיכֶם וְיָמוּתוּ,
וְנִמְצָא שָׁם שְׁמִים מִתְחַלֵּל**

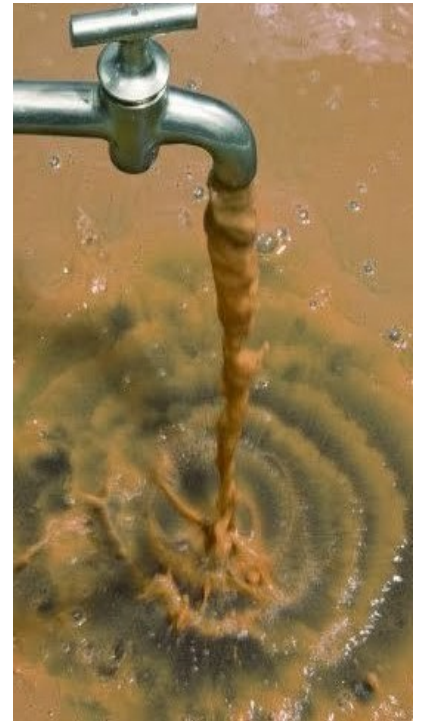
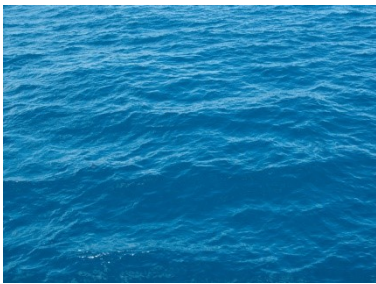
**Torah scholars, be careful with your words, for someday, you may be forced to leave your city to live in a place that has "bad water". When your students follow you there, they may drink that bad water and die.
This will cause a חילול ה'.**

Torah is compared to pure water that sustains life!

אין מים אלא תורה

(בבא קמא פב ע"א)

In this משנה, "bad water" refers to אפיקורסות and מינות - serious distortions of the Torah. These bad waters have the opposite effect of Torah; they are toxic and deadly to one's רוחניות!!



A person, especially a teacher, must make sure to choose his or her words very carefully, so that no one can come and distort what they've taught!

As Jews who represent Hashem's Torah, our words carry great weight! The more we are perceived as representing authentic *Yiddishkeit*, the more our words are taken seriously. If our words are distorted, there is more potential for people to be negatively influenced by them, thereby causing a חילול ה'.

An example of the importance of teaching clearly is learned from what happened in the story of ספר שופטים in פסל מיכה.

לעולם ישכיר אדם עצמו לעבודה זרה ואל יצטרך לבריות (ב"ב קי): משה רבינו

Loosely translated, it means that it's better for a person to do work that is uncomfortable for him to do, rather than to take צדקה from others.

משה רבינו - משה בן גרשום בן יהונתן 's grandson) misunderstood the advice that משה רבינו taught. He misunderstood the words "עבודה זרה" here to mean idolatry! He thought that it is preferable for a person to work for עבודה זרה, rather than to ask for handouts! Oy!! And so in order to support himself, he worked for מיכה in the "עבודה זרה-business". This was a terrible עבירה, even though he personally did not believe the idol that he serviced had any power.

**Let's make every effort to create a קידוש ה'
through our words and actions!**