

Reputation - Gone in 60 Seconds

Case Study - Part I

Mr Frank Lord, Chairman and founder of Lord Group plc receives an invitation from the government to head their Advisory Committee on Ethics in Financial Services. He is in the process of deciding whether or not to accept their invitation but has the following issue to consider:

His brother-in-law (who happens to be a journalist) with whom he had recently had lunch, has been convicted of insider trading.

- **Does the possibility for public scrutiny mean that he should decline the invitation to head the Committee?**

Sources

1 Sefer Netivot Olam – Netiv Tsniyut; Ch. 1

In the Book of Mishlei (Ch. 11) "When pride comes, then comes disgrace, but with humility comes wisdom." King Solomon states that one who is arrogant is without reserve and lacks the sensitivity to be aware of others. This is referred to as arrogant of heart. To such a person comes disgrace and degradation in equal measure because he is distant from respect. However, those who are humble attract wisdom, as wisdom is appropriate to the modest.

בספר משלי (י"א) בא זדון ויבא קלון
ואת צנועים חכמה, שלמה המלך רצה
לומר כי עם הזדון דהיינו מי שאינו צנוע
והוא נקרא זדון שאין לו בושה להיות
מתפעל מן הבריות וזה נקרא זדון לב,
וכאשר האדם הוא כך בא קלון וחרפה
אליו, כפי מדתו אשר נמשך אחריו
שהוא רחוק מן הכבוד ולפיכך ויבא
קלון. ואת צנועים חכמה כי מי שהוא
בצניעות נמשך אחריו החכמה, כי
החכמה ראוי לה הצניעות

2 Kohelet, Chapter 7: Verse 1

A good name is better than precious oil.

טוב שם טוב משמן טוב.

Rashi comments: Fine oils are for the moment, a good name is forever.

3 Pirkei Avot, Chapter 4:17

"Rabbi Shimon said, there are three crowns: the crown of Torah, the crown of priesthood, and the crown of kingship. And the crown of a good name is superior to them all."

רבי שמעון אומר: שלשה כתרים
הם: כתור תורה, וכתור כהנה, וכתור
מלכות; וכתור שם טוב עולה על גביהן.

4 Melachim 2 Chapter 12 Verse 16

No accounting was demanded of the men given the silver to pay the workers, for they worked on trust.

ולא יחשבו את האנשים אשר יתנו
את הכסף על ידם לתת לעשי
המלאכה כי באמונה הם עושים.

5 Radak on Melachim 2 Chapter 12 Verse 16

From here our sages derive that we do not audit those responsible for communal funds. For when we appoint people to take responsibility we appoint worthy individuals and we do not audit them for we do not suspect the upright.

6 The Ma'ari on Talmud Baba Batra 9a

A community should only appoint those worthy and of recognized uprightness...so that we do not come to suspect those who are blameless.

Case Study - Part II

In his second year in University, nearly thirty years ago, Frank received a police caution for use of cannabis.

- Does it matter; it was after all a long time ago!
- Does it matter if he did not inhale!
- Would it make a difference if the appointment was as the Trustee of a healthcare charity?

Sources

1 Rambam Hilchot Teshuva Chapter II:2

What exactly is repentance? Repentance involves forsaking sins and removing such thoughts from one's way of thinking and resolving firmly never to do it again, as it is written, "Let the wicked man forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return to the Lord". One should also be remorseful over what one has done, as it is written, "For after I had returned away I repented". One also has to testify to God that one will never return to that sin, as it is written, "...nor shall we say any more to the work of our hands". All of these three declarations have to be made out loud.

ומה היא התשובה הוא שיעזוב החוטא
חטאו ויסירו ממחשבתו ויגמור בלבו
שלא יעשה עוד שנאמר יעזוב רשע דרכו
וגו' וכן יתנחם על שעבר שנאמר כי
אחרי שובי נחמתי ויעיד עליו יודע
תעלומות שלא ישוב לזה החטא לעולם
שנאמר ולא נאמר עוד אלהינו למעשה
ידינו וגו' וצריך להתודות בשפתיו ולומר
עניינות אלו שגמר בלבו:

2 Masechet Avot; Chapter 3 Mishnah 11

However, if one has repented...nothing stands in the way of repentance

אבל אם חזר בתשובה...אין לך דבר
שעומד בפני התשובה

3 Rambam, Hilchot Deot, Chapter 5

Just as a wise man is recognized through his wisdom and attitude so too he should be recognized through his actions, speech, way of going, his dress, personal financial management, business dealings and all these acts should be exceedingly pleasant and proper. The business dealing of the wise should be with honesty and trustworthiness. He states clearly no and yes.

An individual who does all these things and their like, of him the scriptures says, "And He said to me, 'You are My servant, Israel, through whom I will be glorified.'"