

Blindsided

Excerpted and adapted from a *shiur* by Rav Ari Stauber

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https://baishavaad.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/DEV82_007_Ki_Savo_Obstacle_Course-Fundamentals_of_Lifnei_Iver.mp3

...Do not place a stumbling block before a blind person, and you shall fear your G-d...

Vayikra 19:14

Cursed is he who misleads a blind person on the way...

Devarim 27:18

Rashi interprets these *psukim* to refer to both causing another to sin and giving bad advice. Some *Acharonim*, including the Minchas Chinuch and the Mizrachi, infer from Rashi that the prohibition does not include literally tripping a blind man. This approach is also taken by the Rambam, Sefer Hachinuch, and Smag, who define the mitzvah as offering bad advice but do not mention physical tripping.

The Minchas Chinuch asks why these *Rishonim* ignored the simple meaning of the *pasuk*, despite the principle that *ein mikra yotzei midei pshuto* (a verse doesn't depart from its simple meaning). The Kli Yakar answers based on the conclusion of the *pasuk*—"and you shall fear your G-d"—which suggests that the deed in question is not something that is plain to see. The Tzeidah Laderech answers that the Torah uses the word *titein* (give) rather than *tasim* (place), indicating that the subject is something given, like advice, and not placed, like a physical stumbling block.

The Mishneh Lamelech holds that the prohibition in Kedoshim does not include tripping, but the curse in Ki Savo does.

Many *Rishonim* and *Acharonim*, including the Ba'al Haturim, Sforno, Torah Temimah, Chazon Ish, and R' Moshe Feinstein, understand that tripping is indeed included in the prohibition.