

## **Name Calling**

**Excerpted and adapted from a *shiur* by Rav Moshe Zev Granek**

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[https://baishavaad.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/BER82\\_003\\_Lech\\_Lecha\\_Giving\\_Back\\_Fundamentals\\_of\\_Giving\\_Maaser.mp3](https://baishavaad.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/BER82_003_Lech_Lecha_Giving_Back_Fundamentals_of_Giving_Maaser.mp3)

*And the people of Sdom were wicked and sinful toward Hashem, exceedingly.*

Bereishis 13:13

Rashi comments that Chazal associated with this *pasuk* the idea that “*vesheim resha'im yirkav*” (the name of the wicked shall rot—Mishlei 10:7). Chazal also say that one should not name a child after a *rasha* (Yoma 38b). Tosafos, Tosafos Yeshanim, and the Ritva appear to understand this as an actual *issur*, and they ask how the *tana* R' Yishmael was named after the *rasha* Yishmael.[1]

Tosafos (Ksubos 104b) asks how a *tana* in the Mishnah could be named Shevna, a *rasha* in the time of Yeshayah (as evident from the Gemara in Sanhedrin). Rabeinu Tam answers that the Mishnah should read Shachna, not Shevna. But the Ri (Tosafos, Shabbos 12b) answers based on other *psukim* that there was a different Shevna who was a *tzadik*.

The Hafla'ah writes (Ksubos 104b) that Rabeinu Tam agrees that one may give a child a common name even if a *rasha* was among those who bore it, he just maintains that an uncommon name originally borne by a well-known *rasha* should not be given to a child.

[1] Some of the answers given to this question are that Yishmael did *teshuvah*, and that because Hashem gave Yishmael his name, we may use it. Rabeinu Chananel says there is no prohibition; the Gemara is only recommending not to use the name of a *rasha*, because it may cause a person not to have good *mazal*.