

Is Having One's Wife in Town a Heter for Yichud?

Question: Reuven the electrician has a job in someone's house where only the wife is home and the husband is out-of-town. As we discussed previously, the *heter* of *Ba'aloh b'ih* does not apply. However, Reuven's wife is in town so he assumes this will eliminate the problem of yichud. Is he correct?

Answer: He is not correct.

The *heter* of *Ba'aloh b'ih* is only when a woman's husband is in town, not when a man's wife is in town. A woman would be naturally averse to sin while her husband is in town, but a man does not have the same apprehension; therefore, the *heter* does not apply in such a case.

We do find a halacha that a wife can act as a guardian for her husband if she is with him. This would apply, for example, in a case where a frum therapist sees female patients in his home office. If his wife is with him in the house, there would be no problem of *yichud*.

Furthermore, she doesn't actually have to be in the house at all times. If she goes out shopping and could come home at any minute, she also can serve as a protection for her husband; however, if she goes out shopping and her husband knows that she won't be back for a while, then he will have no natural apprehensions and there would be a prohibition of *yichud*.