



“Moshav Leitzim” – Wasting Time

8. There is a prohibition called “*moshav leitzim*” (a gathering of scoffers) which is derived from the *pasuk* (Vayikra 19:4) “*Lo sifnu el ha’elilim.*” This means that one may not engage in mockery of serious matters, a behavior which leads a person astray from Torah and *emunah*. The prohibition also includes squandering one’s time by speaking about worthless matters, doing pointless things, or viewing or reading material that contains no benefit or purpose.

Certainly, a person may engage in conversation with others or spend time reading if this benefits his health and frame of mind. Every person’s needs in this area are different, and a person should reach his own conclusion to determine the amount of time he needs to spend engaged in such activities. However, if a conversation or action provides a person with absolutely no benefit and is simply a nonsensical waste of time that could have been used for constructive purposes, it leads the person astray from Torah and pure *emunah*, and is prohibited. (*Avodah Zarah 18b; Shulchan Aruch OC 307:16 and 338:21; Mishnah Berurah 307:59 and 338:21; Maharal, Nesivos Olam, Nesiv Haleitzanus; Even Ha’azel, Hilchos Melachim 3:5-6; Shu”t Meishiv Nevonim 2:61*)