

Yom Kippur Text and Discussion

A story for children of all ages

Once there was a kid, named Chuck, who loved to tell stories about his friends. Sometimes the stories were true, and sometimes the stories were not quite so true. The other kids in Sunday school did not like Chuck, and one day decided to talk to their Rabbi for some advice. They went to the Rabbi and told her all about Chuck. She said 'thanks for sharing this with me, I think I'll talk to Chuck myself,' and called Chuck into her office.

"Why do you make up stories about your friends?" the Rabbi asked Chuck.

"It's only talk," Chuck replied, "I can always take it back."

"Perhaps you are right," replied the Rabbi, and she began to talk about other things.

As Chuck was getting ready to leave, the Rabbi asked: "Chuck, I wonder if you could do something for me?"

"Of course," replied Chuck.

The Rabbi took a tube of toothpaste and handed it to Chuck. "Before you leave," she asked, "will you squeeze this entire tube of toothpaste out onto this plate?"

"Sure," replied Chuck. He sat down on the couch and squeezed the entire tube of toothpaste out. "I'm done!" replied Chuck.

"Great!" replied the Rabbi. "Now I want you to put all of the toothpaste back into the tube."

Chuck gasped. "But that's impossible!"

"You are right," said the Rabbi. "It's also not possible to take back all the untrue and unkind things you said about the other people in Sunday School. Be careful with the words and stories you spread. Once you have said them, they too cannot be gathered and taken back."

1. How does it make you feel when someone says something mean about you or to you about someone else?
2. If that person apologizes to you how do you feel then? How does that, or doesn't it, change that they said something that wasn't nice about you?
3. Have you ever talked meanly about another person, how did it make you feel after? Do you think like Chuck, that you can just take it back and it is like it didn't happen? Why or why not?
4. What does this story teach us about Yom Kippur?
5. What are some ways we can be better people in the coming year?