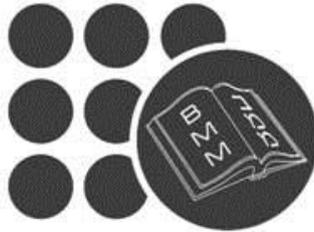


# How Could Yaakov Kiss Rachel?

(And can I also kiss people I'm  
not married to?) Part 2



Beit Midrash Morasha  
@ Arthur's Road  
בית מדרש מורשה

## Opening Quote: John Dryden

Better shun the bait, than struggle in the snare.

## Source 1: Bereishit 29:10-11

And it came to pass, when Jacob saw Rachel, the daughter of Laban, his mother's brother and the sheep of Laban, his mother's brother, that Jacob drew near and rolled the rock off the mouth of the well, and he watered the sheep of Laban, his mother's brother.

וַיְהִי כַּאֲשֶׁר רָאָה יַעֲקֹב אֶת רַחֵל בַּת לָבָן אַחֵי אִמּוֹ  
וְאֵת צֹאן לָבָן אַחֵי אִמּוֹ וַיֵּגֶשׁ יַעֲקֹב וַיִּגְלֹל אֶת הָאֶבֶן  
מֵעַל פִּי הַבְּאֵר וַיִּשְׁק אֶת צֹאן לָבָן אַחֵי אִמּוֹ:

And Jacob kissed Rachel, and he raised his voice and wept.

וַיִּשַׁק יַעֲקֹב לְרַחֵל וַיִּשָּׂא אֶת קוֹלוֹ וַיִּבְרָךְ:

## Source 2: Rabbi Moshe Feinstein Even HaEzer 2:14

There is no prohibition where [physical contact] is not done in a way of desire – according to all opinions. And therefore it is not relevant to worry about going on the subway or busses when you're going to work and men and women will be touching and pushing each other, because this is touching without intention, since it's impossible to prevent it, this is not the way of desire or physical pleasure at all.

But if he knows that he will come to lewd thoughts, he should refrain from going unless he needs to – and if he needs to travel by bus to get to work, we still shouldn't prohibit it in this situation, and he should be strong to remove his mind from this and to think about matters of Torah, as per the advice of the Rambam, and he should rely on this and go to work. And if he knows that he has a bad nature and will be physically aroused in this situation, it is forbidden to travel in this way even to work – but *chas veshalom* for a person to be in this state, because it only comes from doing nothing productive as the Gemara in Ketubot 49 says regarding a woman who does nothing [that she becomes promiscuous] and the same applies to a man, and he needs to engage in Torah and work and not be like this.

ליכא איסור שלא בדרך תאוה לכוי"ע, ולכן  
לא שייך לחוש מללכת בסאבוויי ובאסעס בשעת  
הליכה לעבודה שדחוקים ודחופים אנשים ונשים אף  
שלא יוכל ליוזר מנגיעה ודחיפה בנשים, דהנגיעה  
בלא מתכוין מחמת שא"א לו ליוזר אין זה דרך  
תאוה וחבה.

אבל אם יודע שהוא יבוא לידי הרהור יש לו  
למנוע מללכת או אם אין נהגין לו, ואם מוכרח לילך  
או ג"כ לעבודתו אין לאסור לו אף בכה"ג, ויתחזק  
להסיח דעתו מהן ולהרהר בדברי תורה כעצת הרמב"ם  
שם הי"ם וע"ז יוכל לסמוך ולילך לעבודתו, ואם  
יודע שסבצו רע ויבוא מזה לידי קישוי אבר אסור  
לו לילך או גם לעבודתו, אבל ח"ו לאדם להיות כן  
דבא זה מבטלה כדאיתא בכתובות דף ג"ט על האשה  
זה"ה על האיש וצריך לעסוק בתורה ובמלאכה ולא  
יהיה כן.

## Source 3: Rabbi Shimshon Rafael Hirsch to Bereishit 29:11

It is repeated three times in this verse that Lavan was the brother of Yaakov's mother. For in everything that Yaakov did here, he was moved by the thought of his mother who appeared living before him in the person of her nearest relative We are told at once that Yaakov kissed Rachel. Without this marked repeated reference to being reminded of his mother, Yaakov's whole behaviour might have been taken as a piece of gallantry towards a pretty shepherdess... Although Rachel was beautiful, he only saw a relative in her. That is shown by his tears...

#### Source 4: Rabbi Chaim Paltiel there

This is bewildering that he kissed a woman whom he had never seen before in his life! And why would you cry when you kiss someone? Therefore [what the verse actually means is not that he **kissed** her but that he **desired** her] as in the verse [Bereishit 3:16] "And towards your husband will be your desire".

תימ' הוא שנשק אשה שלא ראה מימיו, ועוד שבכה ואין נשיקה ע"י בכיה, לכן י"ל שהוא כמו ואל אשר תשוקתך

#### Source 5: Rikanti there

The secret of the kiss is hinted to through our words: It hints to the connection between the Holy One, blessed is He, and the Shchinah of His strength.

סוד הנשיקה הוא רמז מכלל דברינו, הרמז לחיבור הקדוש ברוך הוא עם שכינת עוזו

#### Source 6: Rabbeinu Bechayei there

She was a child and not yet fitting for marriage, and therefore Lavan sent her out with the flock and not with her older sister Leah, because she was already attractive to men so stayed at home. Or we could say that this kiss was a kiss on the head or shoulder, because the Torah doesn't tell us: "He kissed her on the mouth".

קטנה היתה, שלא היתה עדיין ראויה ליבעל, ועל כן מסר לבן הצאן בידה ולא מסר ביד לאה הגדולה ממנה, כי היתה ראויה לאיש ויושבת בבית. או נאמר שהנשיקה הזאת היתה נשיקת הראש או הכתף, כי לא אמר הכתוב בפי רחל

#### Source 7: Rabbi Yaakov Mecklenberg, Haketav vehakabalah there

And according to the opinion that a kiss of a relative is also forbidden, I would explain that the "Neshika" here refers to mental attachment and emotional commitment, such as (Tehillim 85) "Righteousness and Shalom kissed"; this is an analogy for their being connected, that righteousness will be unified and connected to Shalom and never separated... This is why the Gemara Megilah 13b explains: "Yaakov said to her: Will you marry me?" She said "Yes".

ולשון זה דנשיקה של קורבה ג"כ אסור נראה לפרש נשיקה דכאן, התחברות מחשבי והתדבקות רצוני כענין צדק ושלוש נשקו (תהלים פ"ה) שטעמו ע"ד מליצה דבקות מחשבי, שהצדק יהיה מדובק ומתאחד עם השלום ולא יפרדו. וטעם וישק יעקב לרחל שהתחבר עמה במחשבתו ורצונו, כדאמרינן (מגילה י"ג ב') אמר לה יעקב מינסבת לי אמרה לו אין

#### Source 8: Rabbi Shlomo Aviner, Yeshivat Ateret Yerushalayim – SMS Q&A

*If a secular woman puts out her hand, can I shake it?*

No. Politely apologize: Forgive me, this is saved for my wife... We should not embarrass anyone, but here she is causing herself embarrassment. Ha-Rav Ovadia Yosef declined to shake hands with Prime Minister Golda Meir when he received the Israel Prize. And Rav Mordechai Eliyahu did not shake hands with the Queen of England. In both cases, apologies were issued to the Rabbis that very night for putting them in that situation.

#### Source 9: Rabbi Gil Student article: Shaking Hands with Women

I would add that this certainly varies based on culture and in some places a handshake might, indeed, be intended to demonstrate affection or closeness. In that case, it would also be forbidden. In this vein, R. Yosef Hayim of Baghdad (*Od Yosef Hai Shofetim*) permits a woman kissing a man's hand but not shaking it, because in his culture the latter was considered an affectionate embrace.

#### Closing Quote: TLP

Truth hurts, me hearties, or so the saying goes but in your case not so much, the only truth that matters is what you believe in and that won't ever hurt you... the problem is you. It is always you. And unless you change that thing first, everything else will be futile.