

Go say to them: "Return you to your tents." (5:27)

Prior to the Giving of the *Torah*, the prohibition against intimacy between husband and wife was emphatically expressed: "*Do not go near to a woman*" (*Shemos 19:15*). Now, however, when they are permitted to resume their family relationship, it is alluded to with the words, "*Return to your tents*." Ostensibly, if one applies himself to the statement, the message that the *Torah* is conveying is apparent. We may wonder why the message is clear and emphatic when the goal is to prohibit, while only hints are provided when the purpose is to give permission. *Horav Zalmen Sorotzkin, zl*, explains that the *Torah* is addressing human nature. People tend to listen better to a *heter*, permission/dispensation. We look for *heteirim*, opportunities that permit us to perform activities that heretofore have not been allowed. Our ears are finely tuned to any form of *heter*. When it comes to *issurim*, prohibitions, we suddenly become hard-of-hearing. The prohibition must be spelled out, clearly placing emphasis on every aspect. It must give a reason for the prohibition, not allowing for any excuse or dispensation that will allow one to escape the issue. Would it only be that people would listen to *issurim* that are clearly articulated the way they acquiesce to *heteirim* that are only hinted.