"And Sarah laughed at herself saying, 'After I have withered shall I again have delicate skin? And my husband is old!' And Hashem said to Avraham, 'Why is it that Sarah laughed?'" (18:12,13)

Why did Hashem question Avraham concerning Sarah's behavior? Why did Hashem not speak directly to Sarah? Indeed, her level of prophecy was even higher than that of Avraham. One would assume that if Sarah had laughed, she should have to answer for it herself; not through her husband as the intermediary.

 Kehillas Yitzchak cites **Horav Yisrael Salanter, zl,** who clarifies this issue with an analogy. If one were to enter the kitchen of someone's home and find that the maid or cook is not particular about the laws of *kashrus*, he would conclude that the master of the house himself is not overly meticulous about the laws of *kashrus*. If the husband does not seem to be concerned with *kashrus*, the wife will probably be even more lenient. Is it then any wonder that the maid is lax in *kashrus* observance? If the master of the house would be meticulous in *kashrus* observance , the negative "domino" effect would not have a source. After all, from whom should the maid learn to disregard the laws?

When Hashem saw that Sarah had laughed, He placed the onus of guilt upon Avraham. Apparently, at one time Avraham must have been slightly permissive concerning his prophecy. This influenced his wife, who compounded the fault and laughed with disbelief upon hearing the prophecy concerning her bearing a child. The lesson is quite simple. We have a responsibility to be aware that every action we do can have a ripple effect upon others. This is especially significant if one holds a position of *Torah* leadership. People tend to render personal *halachic* decisions based upon the behavior of their peers and those who are more learned than they are. The overwhelming responsibility of our actions should increase our circumspection prior to performing particular deeds. Not only must we defend our actions, but we must also justify the effect they have on others.