

The Weekly Farbrenge



MERKAZ ANASH
מרכז אנאש

669 • לחען ישמעו • קדושים תשפ"ב
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SENSITIVE SIGHT (II)

STANDING GUARD

The *Midrash* tells of the *kedusha* of Yosef HaTzaddik who vigilantly controlled his eyesight. Potiphar's wife tried to entice him to look at her, even putting an iron rod under his neck, but despite whatever she did, he refused to look. Later, when Yosef was chosen as second to the king and was escorted throughout Mitzrayim, the local princesses endeavored to look at his face, yet he did not glance at any of them. He therefore merited success in *Olam HaZeh* and *Olam HaBa*.

(בראשית רבה פ"ז י"א, ילקוט שמעוני ויחי רמז קס"א)

The *Midrash* says that whoever restrains himself in the area of *tznius* is called *kadosh*, holy. Elisha HaNavi was described by the woman of Shuneim as holy, for throughout the time he was there, he did not gaze at her.

(ויקרא רבה כ"ד ו')

The wife of On ben Peles was determined to prevent her husband from joining Korach's campaign against Moshe Rabbeinu. She positioned herself at the entrance of her tent and uncovered her hair, saying to herself, "Now I know they will not approach the tent, for even these evildoers are careful to guard their eyes."

(סנהדרין ק"ט סע"ב)

HOLY EYES

One day, as Rashi was leaving his beis midrash, he saw a minister's wife riding towards him and was greatly disturbed that his holy eyes had to witness such a scene. Later on, when he wrote his *peirush* on the Torah and had to describe the ephod of the kohen gadol, he understood that this was why he had seen that woman.

(לקו"ש חכ"ו ע' 198)

An early *chossid* called Reb Yitzchak of Yanovitch used to do business with a German Yid who would deliberately ask him heretical questions to challenge his *emuna*, but Reb

Yitzchok answered them all.

Seeing his lack of success in angering Reb Yitzchak with his questions, he decided to make him stumble with lusts. "We've been doing business together for a number of years," he said, "so why don't you come over to my home for a friendly visit, at least for a cup of tea?"

Reb Yitzchok agreed, and when he arrived and sat down by the table, his host had the refreshments served by his daughter, who was dressed in an insolently immodest manner. Immediately upon seeing her, Reb Yitzchok vomited, being unable to handle her insolent immodesty.

(רשימות דברים ח"א ע' רל"ז)

CONSIDER

Why is holiness especially attributed to one who protects his vision?

What type of blindness is caused by harmful sights? Why is it called blindness?

THE POWERFUL IMPACT

The Rebbe Rashab writes: Those who care for their *neschama*, and want to safeguard it from becoming impure, should monitor their vision and not look at everything around them, especially forbidden sights. Even if this is difficult and one may be ridiculed for it, he should strengthen himself like a lion and know that it is vital for his *neschama*. Without this, all his *avoda* is worthless and will have no effect. For one's physical health, one overlooks nothing; how much more should this apply to the life of the *neschama*.

(קונטרס העבודה פ"ב)

The Rebbe writes in a letter: One who looks where he should not, is misusing his eyes. He is considered blind for the moment, and a blind person is considered to be lacking in life.

In another letter the Rebbe adds that the mere sight of something negative, even without conscious thought, has a negative effect on the onlooker.

(אג"ק חי"ט ע' שד"מ, אג"ק ח"כ ע' פב)

When Shaul HaMelech asked some girls for directions while searching for his donkeys, they gave him a lengthy response. *Chazal* say that they did not do so because they wanted to gaze upon his handsome appearance, "for just as it is forbidden for a man to gaze upon a woman, it is forbidden for a woman to gaze upon a man."

The Mitteler Rebbe writes that when a woman does so, this can affect the health of the children that she will bear.

(ילקוט שמואל א' פ"ט, פוקח עוריים)

A German Yid once traveled to the noted student of the Baal Shem Tov, Reb Pinchas of Koritz, to request a *bracha* for his daughter, who had suddenly become blind. "The reason," said Reb Pinchas, "is that her father is also blind, and this disease is hereditary."

The Yid protested, "But my eyes are perfectly healthy! I don't even wear glasses!"

The *tzaddik* explained that it is a sinner who is truly blind. He warned the Yid that his entire family was in danger of losing their vision, for "if one gazes upon the face of a *rasha*, his eyes grow dim."

Hearing this, the Yid wept and resolved to begin conducting his life according to Torah, and indeed, upon his return to Germany he made his home *kosher* in all respects. When his daughter was cured, she traveled to Koritz to see the *tzaddik* and donated money for the writing of two *sifrei Torah*.

(סיפ"ח זוין תורה ע' 97)

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art gallery

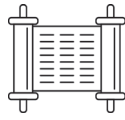


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HATING A FELLOW JEW

What is the correct response if I feel someone wronged me?

The Torah instructs us, "You may not hate your brother in your heart." It is common for people to disguise their hatred and pretend to be friendly, but inside their hatred brews and plots revenge, as the *posuk* says in Mishlei.¹

According to some Rishonim, one transgresses the prohibition of "lo *sisna*" specifically when one keeps the hatred in his heart and does not inform his friend. Although there could be other prohibitions associated with revealed hatred, such as *nekima* and *netira*, or the failure to have Ahavas Yisroel, concealed hatred is more severe and is therefore singled out. This type of bottled-up emotion causes serious interpersonal problems, places a "sword" between them, drives people to do *mesira* and even bloodshed.²

A barometer for hate includes if one specifically refrains from speaking with him over three days' time or hopes for misfortune to befall him and is happy when it does happen.³

If a fellow Jew wrongs you, or is at odds on a particular issue, you should not make as if all is good while harboring resentment inside. Rather, you should confront them respectfully and discuss what is bothering you. As the *posuk* of "lo *sisna*" continues to say, "Hochei'ach tochiach... You shall certainly reprimand him and not bear a sin."

You should ask the other person, "Why did you do this to me?" and be ready to forgive them if they express remorse. In this way, they can make amends and restore a healthy relationship. Indeed, often the animosity is based on mistaken notions that could easily be cleared up through a productive dialogue.⁴

Another choice is to decide in your heart to forgive the offender for his ill-actions. This is indeed the preferred course of action if you are able to truly forgive and not harbor a grudge.⁵

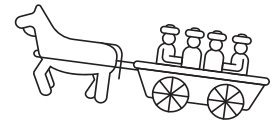
A positive approach to ill feelings against another is to judge them favorably, *daven* for the other person, and to even make a special effort to help them out.

You are allowed to hate a *rasha* — one who sins — after he was properly reprimanded and still refuses to change his ways. While the Sefer HaChinuch holds that in this case you may even hate him in your heart, the Minchas Chinuch seems to disagree and holds that you may not hide it and act as if you like them.⁶

The Alter Rebbe emphasizes that it is simultaneously a *mitzva* for you to love them — the hatred due to the evil within them and the love due to the spark of G-dliness within them. In addition, you must awaken compassion for this G-dly soul that is in exile within *kelipa*, and the compassion will overwhelm the hatred and stir up the love.⁷

1. ויקרא י"ט ט"ז. וראה רמב"ן עה"פ. וראה 4. רמב"ם הל' דעות פ"ו ה"ו. רשב"ם עה"פ. ספרא פ"ד פ"טקא ח'. משלי כ"ו כ"ד. וראה ספר החינוך מצווה רל"ט.
2. ספר החנוך מצווה רל"ח. ראה רש"י דברים 5. רמב"ם שם ה"ט.
3. כ"ב י"ג-י"ד. 6. ראה מנחת חינוך מצווה רל"ח סק"א.
4. ראה סנהדרין כ"ז ע"ב. 7. תניא פל"ב.

לע"נ מרת ציפא אסתר בת ר' שלום דובער ע"ה



R. NOCHUM THE CHOIZER

A chossid of the Mitteler Rebbe in his youth, R. Menachem Nochum Chanin was the main *choizer* for the Tzemach Tzedek. He was known for the great precision of his *chazara*. He passed away on 18 Kislev, 5629.

After an incident with the previous choizer, the Mitteler Rebbe chose R. Nochum to replace him. R. Nochum was not a *maskil* in Chassidus, he just had an exceptional memory and would chazer every detail, including the Mitteler Rebbe's cough and "sha sha" (which he would sometimes say to slow his train of thought).

One Shavuos morning, on the way to the mikvah, the Rebbe Maharash met R. Nochum and asked him how many times he *chazered* the Tzemach Tzedek's recent *maamar*. R. Nochum replied that this was his 60th time. He could be seen repeating the *maamar* to chassidim in the middle of the marketplace.

(סה"ש קי"ח ת"ש ע' 101, רשימות הרב"ש ע' פה)

R. Nochum once told the Tzemach Tzedek that a certain local doctor was suspect of adultery. The Tzemach Tzedek told him, "Your not being sufficiently careful with *netilas yodayim* is worse than his immorality."

(ליקוטי רשימות ומעשיות ע' 12)

Once, the Tzemach Tzedek asked R. Nochum to sleep the night in his room. R. Nochum told the Rebbe that he would not be able to sleep in the Rebbe's presence and then he won't be able to learn the next day. The Rebbe then promised him "*imi bimchitzosi*," to be with him in Gan Eden, and R. Nochum acquiesced.

(R. Boruch Shalom, the Rebbe's grandfather related this story on 19 Kislev 5729, the day after R. Nochum's passing, and concluded that we can only imagine how great R. Nochum is and the level at which he is now.)

(ליקוטי רשימות ומעשיות ע' 39)

R. Nochum would relate: "The first time that I was in *yechidus*, the Mitteler Rebbe concluded with instructing me to learn Agaddah and 'thereby you will recognize the One who spoke and the world was.'

"When I joined the '*kodesh hakodoshim tentzil*' after *yechidus*, the Rebbe's words rang in my ears, and his final words about learning Agaddah penetrated my mind and heart.

That night, I began learning both Midrash and Ein Yaakov from the beginning."

(דברי ימי החוזרים ע' 16)

A Moment with The Rebbe



TO GROW EVERY DAY

It was a recurring theme in *sichos* and in correspondence: one is obligated to grow every day in his service of Hashem, reaching higher than yesterday.

In the early years, the Rebbe once explained this idea to a reporter:

"Every day that we are granted by Hashem is in order that we add in goodness, more than we have done the previous day. For if we would do today

only as much as we did yesterday, that would be a waste of a day that Hashem has given us."

A woman once approached the Rebbe on the dollars line with a request for a *bracha* on a personal matter.

The Rebbe guided her, "Add in your daily *tzedaka*. And every day, add one penny more than the day before."

(As Heard from Reb Leibel Groner)