

The Weekly Farbrenge



לחצן ישמעו • עקב תשע"ח • 473
EDITOR - RABBI SHIMON HELLINGER

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 *neshama*, 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 *neshama*. 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 *neshama*.

(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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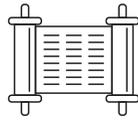


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CHITAS AT NIGHT

May I study Chitas after nightfall?

The ideal time for studying Chitas is adjacent to *shacharis* – Tehillim at the conclusion of *shacharis* and the portions of Chumash and Tanya should be studied soon afterwards¹ – but it can also be studied throughout the day. (If one fixes his schedule to study Chitas at that time, he may not push it off, as Halacha states that one may not pass up on his fixed times for learning—which should ideally include some learning right after *shacharis*—even if he can earn a large profit. Yet, in unavoidable circumstances, he can make them up later.²)

Although with regards to most *halachos* the day ends by *shkiah* (or *tzeis hakochavim*), Chitas for that day may be completed at night, as it is compared to a *korban* which was often completed at night.³ In fact, *birchas hatorah* recited in the morning extends into the night, indicating that the night is a continuation of the day with regards to Torah study.⁴ Yet, one should not rely on this from the outset since burning the *korban* at night was considered “making up” for the day, and they would try not having to resort to this.⁵

There is a further concern with reciting Tehillim and studying Chumash at night, for *poskim* record that one should not study *Torah shebichsav* at night. Basis for this is Moshe’s study schedule on Har Sinai, where Hashem taught him *Torah shebichsav* by day and *Torah sheb’al peh* at night. Moreover, Kabbalah teaches that night is associated with *dinim* (severity), thus it is appropriate to study only *Torah sheb’al peh* which corresponds with *chesed* and “sweetens” the *dinim*.⁶

Although some don’t say *Torah shebichsav* the whole night, *minhag Chabad* limits this until *chatzos*. Thus, one shouldn’t say Tehillim (including the daily *shiur*) from *tzeis*⁷ until after *chatzos*. While this doesn’t apply on Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, *minhag Chabad* is not to recite Tehillim on Friday night, although many allow it.⁸ Some allow reciting Tehillim at night for an ill person, *R”L*.⁹

While Chumash is also *Torah shebichsav*, the Rebbe writes that learning it with a commentary (such as Rashi) changes its status to *Torah sheb’al peh*. Hence, *minhag Chabad* is that Chumash with Rashi may be made up at night when needed.¹⁰ Some say that *Shnayim Mikra V’Echad Targum* said along with *Targum Unkelus* is likewise considered *Torah sheb’al peh* and permitted.¹¹

קפ"ד) שרבינו הורה לאחד בשבת מברכים להתחיל באמירת תהילים מחצות, ושם עוד מענה עד"ז. וצ"ע אם הוא בסתירה ש"ל שנא רק בכללות.
9. אשל אברהם או"ח סי' רל"ח, וכן נוהג עלמא. אמנם ראה שמו"ס ח"א עמ' 83 שאמרו תהלים להרבנית רבקה רק אחר חצות.
10. תו"מ חמ"ח ע' 122 (שבפועל לומדים חומש של חת"ת בלילה). וראה אג"ק ח"ח ע' לב.
11. מנהג רבותינו להתחיל שמו"ת בליל שישי (היום יום ד' טבת), ובלוח 'התקשרות' גל' רנ"ג ע' 19 שרבינו העביר הסדרה בליל שבת. י"א שביחד עם תרגום נחשבת כתושבע"פ (ראה בירורי מנהגים שבת ע' 97 הלהלן). י"א שילולת שישי וש"ק הם זמנים מיוחדים, וי"א שמנהגינו הוא רק בתהלים ולא בחומש.

1. בהקדמה להיום יום ובאג"ק ח"ז עמ' קמו.
2. משנ"ב סי' קנ"ה סק"ד ע"פ עירובין ס"ה ע"א. וראה שו"ע אדה"ז שם ס"א-ב.
3. חולין פג, ע"א. לקו"ש ח"ח עמ' 435 ותו"מ תשמ"ט ח"ב, ע' 209.
4. שו"ע סי' מ"ז ס"ב.
5. רמב"ם הל' מעשה קרבנות פ"ד הל' (חביבה מצווה בשעתה).
6. פדר"א פרק מ"ו, באר היטב או"ח סי' רל"ח סק"ב.
7. ראה אג"ק חכ"ב ע' רצא ולקו"ש ח"ח ע' 435 (משקיעת החמה). לאידך, באג"ק ח"ח ע' לב ובספה"נ ע' 20 (מצאת הכוכבים).
8. ראה שו"ת חיים שאל ח"ב סכ"ה, ובנוגע לר"ה ויוה"כ - סהמ"ג עמ' 20 ואג"ק ח"ג עמ' קס. וראה בס' הליכות ומנהגי שבת (עמ' 112).



R. YONA POLTAVER

R. Yona Kahn of Poltava came from a *frum* family, though they were not *chassidim*. As a young *bochur*, the local *shochet* R. Pinye Rakshiker advised him to go learn in Lubavitch, where he studied diligently, especially the *maamorim* of the Rebbe Rashab.

happened, he responded, “I just received a letter from a *cheder* stating that the children stopped coming to learn, and possibly will not continue. That is why I’m saying Tehillim.”

(כפר חב"ד גליון 150)

In 5696 (1936) he was appointed by the Frierdiker Rebbe (then in Riga) to be in charge of all the underground branches of *Tomchei Temimim* in Russia. Where each *bochur* should learn, the teachers, the fundraising – everything was on his shoulders. In 5708 (1947), on 19 *Kislev*, he was arrested, and he passed away a short time later in prison.

R. Mendel Futerfas was very involved in arranging the rescue of Lubavitcher *chassidim* from Russia after World War II using forged Polish passports. He once related:

During the escape of Lubavitcher *chassidim* from Russia after the war, we were in the city Lvov and the work was very hard. Things were tense and I had no more strength to continue. Moreover, I feared for my safety and the safety of my family. I therefore decided to leave with my family on the next train, along with a large group that was scheduled to depart to Poland. I turned to my good friend R. Yona Kahn and told him about my thoughts and my decision.

Reb Yona listened and then said, “Look me in the eyes, Mendele; look at me in my eyes. Are you saying that *mesirus nefesh* also has a limit?” His words pierced my heart and I remained. (R. Mendel sent his family out, but remained behind in Russia for another 17 years.)

(ר' מענדל ע' 832)

A Moment with The Rebbe



THE HOLY SME”H

During the 5700’s (1940’s), before the Rebbe’s *nesius*, a certain non-*chassidish* *maggid shiur* taught Gemara at the 770 *yeshivah*. The Rebbe would often stop outside the *yeshivah Zal* and listen in to his *shiur*.

records a question and answer that he had heard in a dream.

The *maggid shiur* dismissed the question, and jokingly remarked, “He himself writes that it was a dream...”

One day, as he was presenting his novel approach to the Talmudic *sugya* that they were learning, this *maggid shiur* quoted the SME”H (Reb Yehoshua Falk - 17th century), who

From then on, the *bochurim* noticed that the Rebbe ceased to listen in to his *shiur*.

(As heard from Reb Meilach Tzveibel)