

## STORY

## THE MEETING



My meeting with Mrs. Karot was scheduled a good week in advance. She

was in charge of operations and many important decisions were contingent on this meeting. It was now minutes before the meeting.

The *Hilchos Yichud* aspect was a hundred percent Ok; glass doors, unlocked, off of a heavily traveled hallway etc., It was fine. But still, a one-on-one ninety minute meeting with someone not known for her refined dress was a challenge. I made sure to do my *seder halimud* before work today for reinforcement.

On the way into the meeting, I *davened* to Hashem. I didn't even know what I was asking for. The meeting had to happen. I just asked for some kind of a miracle.

We had hardly started our meeting when there was a big commotion coming from the floor below. Then the smell of smoke reached us and we raced out to join the pandemonium. A small fire, already extinguished, was the cause.

It was well over an hour until everything

returned to normal. Actually not everything. Our very important meeting was transformed to resemble more of a huddle than a professional conference. Mrs. Karot had to get on to her next appointment. We crammed our issues, came up with decisions and made conclusions all in a harried ten minutes.

One conclusion I made was that when you hold on, even at the last minute, and just daven for help, you'll likely see nissim (miracles), the likes of which you never would have imagined.

**FOR THOSE WHO STRUGGLE WITH SHMIRAS EINAYIM, NOW IS HARDER THAN EVER!**

Being confined to home without work, feeling anxious and stressed, as well as constantly checking our computers and phones, are breeding grounds for the Yetzer Hara.

Sign-Up to GYE's Viral Chizuk during these trying times by email and Whatsapp:

GUARDYOUREYES.COM

## SMILE! IT'S CONTAGIOUS

I always say "Morning" instead of "Good Morning" because if it was a good morning I would still be in my bed and not talking to people.

It's now 7 months since I joined the gym and nothing has changed. Maybe it's time I go there personally and find out what's wrong.

I can't get over the fact that the word gullible looks like a cat upside down. (Turn over your screen to see for yourself!)

Today I'm doing nothing because I started doing it yesterday and I wasn't finished. I'm no quitter!

Is it safe yet....



## Avraham Avinu's Filter



As Avraham Avinu approached Mitzrayim the Torah writes he noticed Sarah's beauty. Until now, Rashi says, he never noticed her beauty, but as a result of an incident (Avraham saw her reflection in

the water, as Medrash writes) he saw her. Was this because Sarah was a Tzanua? Rashi says it's not. Rather, it's because of the Tznius of BOTH OF THEM.

עד עכשיו לא הכיר בה מתוך צניעות שבשניהם (רש"י, בראשית יב:יא)

How many times did I tell myself if only women would dress more Tznius I wouldn't be drawn to look at them? If only I had the right filter on my computer, I wouldn't have a problem. Well, Sarah was absolutely Tzanuah, according to all standards, but that wasn't enough for Avraham to respect that Tznius. Avraham himself had to be Tzanuah as well. A filter on Sarah was not enough; Avraham needed a filter on Avraham too. He knew that one cannot rely on everything around him changing. Protection meant protecting himself from within.

Avraham's filter was on Avraham, in his mind and heart, built from a constant connection with HKB"H. He's the only reliable filter, and that filter is installed within us.

I know people who've used every filter on their computer, and hoped for every filter on their surroundings. But they've broken through them all. If we want to lust, there's nothing that can stop us. The only answer is to decide to be a Tzanuah ourselves, to install a filters on our hearts and mind, and that only HKB"H can do for us. May He give us all that gift soon!

## Lech Lecho: Bad Company is Bad for Recovery



By Rabbi Abraham J. Twersky

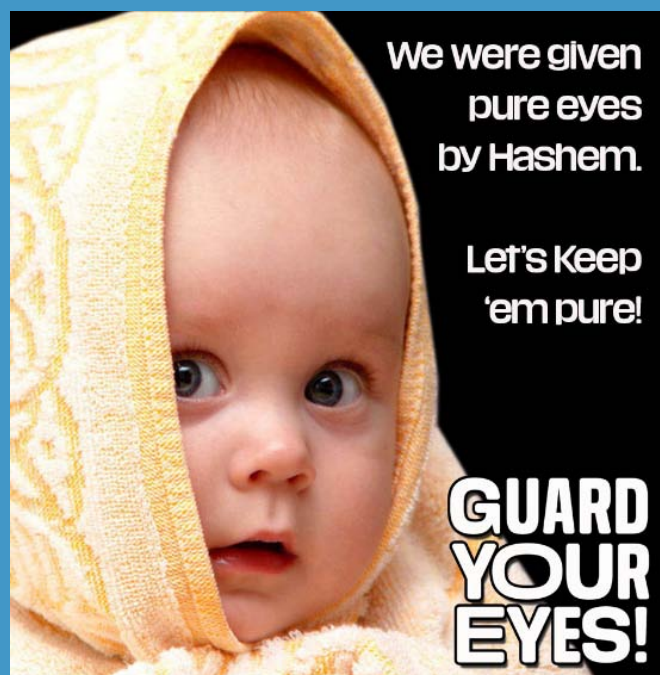
The Torah says that Hashem spoke to Abraham after Lot had separated from him. Lot was not a spiritual person, and as long as Abraham was in his company, he did not receive any Divine communication.

There is no question that Abraham retained his piety and integrity even in the companionship of Lot. Hashem related to Abraham in this manner to teach us that regardless how strong a person is in his convictions, the association with immoral people is hazardous.

In addiction recovery we are told to avoid "people, places and things" that can jeopardize our recovery. The Talmud says, "Do not trust in yourself (that you are beyond corruptibility) until the day of your death" (Ethics of the Fathers 2:4). We must use utmost caution to safeguard ourselves.

SOME OF THE MOST POISONOUS  
PEOPLE COME DISGUISED AS  
FRIENDS AND FAMILY.

## INSPIRATIONAL IMAGE OF THE WEEK



## The Pollution of Sodom

### A Holy Letter from the Kalever Rebbe Shlit"a - Parshas Lech Lecha



Shalom u'Brachah, to our dear Jewish brothers and sisters,

Hashem created people with five senses: sight, hearing, taste, smell, and touch. Our task in this world is to choose

good. We must use the five senses to serve the Creator by performing mitzvos and good deeds which sanctify Him, and resist using them to violate mitzvos by following evil lusts which profane Him.

Four of the senses are located in specific parts of the body. Sight is centered in the eyes, hearing in the ears, taste in the mouth, and smell in the nose. The only sense that covers the entire body is the sense of touch. This demonstrates the tremendous influence the sense of touch has on every person; it has the power to defile and destroy the entire body.

The Holy Zohar explains that using the sense of touch for forbidden lusts brings poverty, including poverty of the mind, ignorance, which is the worst form of poverty. Indulging in lustful behavior confuses the mind and curtails its attention and concentration span for important matters, since all of one's thoughts become occupied with lust.

Becoming addicted to this impulse, the mind loses its rational sense, and doesn't stop to think that it must forego other pleasures to pursue lust. A person thus obsessed can even destroy his own life or the lives of others.

Some fifty years ago, permissive society spawned a horrible and destructive "Permissive Revolution", which urged people to fulfill their lusts publicly in all types of ways. The Satan is clearly waging an all-out war, using every means possible to cause people to fail in these most central areas of human behavior.

We must all take precautions not to be dragged down into this destructive lust. Regarding this, Chazal taught a general rule from our Holy Torah, "if one starves it, it is satisfied; if one satisfies it, it remains starved" (Sukkah 52b). Specifically, when one tries to feed this lust, one feels hungrier for the lust. It becomes uncontrollable, leading to the pursuit of more and more lust.

We see today the nations of the world becoming more and more embroiled into these lusts, to the point where the most important and respected people in these societies, do not stop

to think about the destructive outcomes of their actions. They then enact laws to support their lusts, and forbid opposition or protest against it.

This phenomenon occurred in Sodom. Their society crumbled as they ran after the abomination known to the world as "Sodomy". Thus, it is written, "the men of Sodom were evil and sinful to Hashem very much" (Bereishis 13:13), because this sin is a very grave sin, which defiles the entire human body. The fire of desire for this sin causes one to be cold to mitzvos, and destroys all good character traits.

Scripture tells us (ibid. 19:4-5), that when two men came to lodge at Lot's home, the "Men of the city" (Anshei Ha'Ir) surrounded his home. It is taught that whenever the term "anshei" appears in Scripture, it refers to the most important leaders of the community. They demanded that Lot bring out these men to be violated by them, as this was the law of their city to be done to every guest so that no one in the city would be clean of this sin or stand in opposition to it.

Thus, the city was punished with extreme harshness; Hashem caused fire and brimstone to rain from the sky, totally burning it away and uprooting it from the world.

At that time, when the Sodomites polluted the world with their abominations, Hashem commanded the mitzvah of Bris Milah to Avraham and all his children thereafter in order to help them always overcome the powerful temptations of lust. As Rambam writes (Moreh Nevuchim 3:49), a reason for the mitzvah of Bris Milah is to lessen the power of lust that is increased by the orla.

Hashem also added the letter "hei" to Avram's name, becoming Avraham, to symbolize that Avraham Avinu gained control at that time over all five of his senses, the letter "hei" being the number five in Gematria.

Similarly, Yosef Ha'Tzaddik followed the ways of his ancestors and maintained himself in holiness, even among the Egyptians who were embroiled in impure lusts. As a result, he merited wealth and honor at the end of his life, as the Holy Torah tells us in Parshas Vayeshev and Parshas Miketz. Yosef, too, had the letter "hei" added to his name, as he is sometimes referred to as "Yehosef", as we see in Tehillim (Psalm 81:6), "edus b'Yehosef" – "testimony to Yehosef", hinting that he had self-control over all five senses.

May it be Hashem's Will that every Jew follow in the ways of our holy ancestors, remaining protected within the bounds of holiness, thus meriting long life and good years with good and easy Parnassah, as the Holy Zohar teaches in Parshas Yisro.



## The Bright Colors of Sedom

by Rabbi Pinchos Lipschutz



The posuk relates that Lot saw that the Kikar Hayardein was blessed with fertile abundance and chose it as the area where he would settle. He was looking for a quick fix. He left the company of Avrohom, the holiest and kindest man alive, to go live among the most wicked and selfish people ever to walk the earth.

We are all affected by outer appearances. Promises of instant gratification tempt many people. The things we chase after may not be good for us, but we don't admit that. We rationalize and fall prey to the lure of Sedom. The glitter dazzles us and blinds us to what lies beneath the veneer.

We look out at the beautiful foliage and comment on how gorgeous the trees are. All summer long, they seem bland; they are all the same color. But with fall, the trees change to brilliant red, bright orange and yellow. Warm brown hues emerge and we are all taken by the blast of beauty. But it doesn't last long. The colorful exhibition is a signal that the end is coming. The brilliant red means that the leaves are about to die, fall off and be swept away to eternal oblivion.

As long as the leaves are green, we know that they will live and endure. The bright colors are a sign that they are about to meet the fate of Sedom and all of Lot's friends and neighbors there.

Let's not fall prey to the bright colors and glitter of Sedom!

## PRACTICAL TIP OF THE WEEK

### Staying out of the boxing ring



When walking outside in challenging areas, try to keep your eyes down within your 4 Amos. We need to tell ourselves that we are not out on

the street as tourists, but rather on the way somewhere to get something done. We don't have the luxury to just look around and take-in the sights all around us.

Not looking around makes the struggle so much easier, because once we see something it is so much harder to turn away. But if we don't look around and keep our eyes down, it's like staying out of the boxing ring when the opponent is way stronger than you (instead of getting in the ring and trying to fight him head-on).

## DESIRES ARE AN ILLUSION

### This crosswalk was painted on the street to appear as if it's floating in the air (to get drivers to slow down)

Our eyes are a tremendous blessing that allow us to perceive the world around us. However our eyes can trick us as well, making us believe that we need things that in reality it may be very bad for us. Let's train ourselves to use our eyes for good and not let them trick us to turn after our hearts desires!

