

## STORY

## WHO RUNS THE KOLLEL

By a young Lakewood bochur



At 15 years old, I found myself in yeshiva away from home. My yeshiva didn't have a mikvah and since I try to toivel every morning, I started using the mikvah at the kollel down the block, six o'clock in the morning to be exact. Seder in Kollel started at 6:30, one hour before Shachris.

The first day, the mikvah was full of people belonging to the kollel upstairs. I'm embarrassed to say, but my eyes needed help. They were not where they should be.


I wouldn't talk to anyone about it, it was too embarrassing. But when a Jew needs to talk to someone and can't – he looks up-wards and talks to Hashem. And that's what I did. I actually found myself crying to Him. I told Him my dilemma and that I needed help. The

next day, at 6:00 am, the mikvah was empty – not a soul there. Only later in the day would I find out why.

The kollel "decided" that instead of having a seder halimud from 6:30-7:30, they will make it from 7 to 8. As a result, all those kollel yungerleit came half hour later.

Everyone thinks the Rosh Kollel runs the kollel, after all he gives out the checks. But in reality, it's Hashem, who takes into account even the teffilos of a 15 year old bochur!

**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

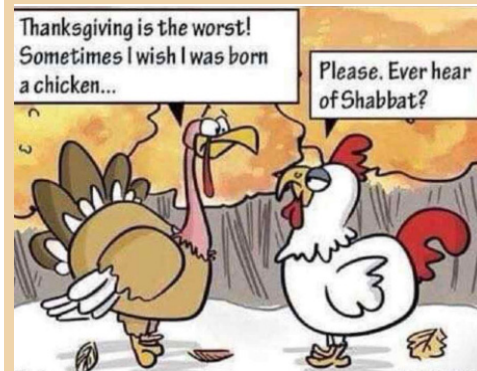
Yankel from Williamsburg puts up a sign "BOAT FOR SALE". "But Yankel, you only own a house and a car" says Yoily. "Dats right" Yankel responded. "And dey are boat for sale."

After our old trampoline broke, my 5 year old son asked me if we'll buy a new one, so I responded: "Im Yirtza Hashem"... He replied: "When is Im Yirtza Hashem?"

According to a recent study, 7 out of 10 people don't notice when a word in a sentence is replaced by a musical instrument.

Therapist: Your wife says you never buy her flowers. Is that true?

Him: To be honest, I never knew she sold flowers.



## I am with you.

כי לא אעזבך עד אשר אם-עשיתי את אשר-דברתי לך.

*"For I will not leave you, until I have done that which I have spoken to (about) you."*

Rashi on the words "spoken to you" says that means "about you" since this was the first time that Hashem had spoken with Yaakov. If you think about this, Yaakov was 77 years old at the time, he spent the last 14 years learning day and night without sleep and yet this is the first time Hashem is speaking to him.

We often think that oh we've been clean for x amount of time (like three days or even three years), and things are still looking glum, my life hasn't turned around. "Does Hashem love me? How much does he want from me?"

If we would expect Hashem to show his presence to anyone it would be Yaakov, yet Hashem did not appear to him right away.

But know that even if you don't see "Hashem" in your daily lives, Hashem says "אנכי עמך" - I am with you.

## Removing the rock - together!



וְנִאֶסְפוּ-שָׂמָּה כָּל-הָעֶדְרִים, וְגִלְלוּ אֶת-הָאֶבן מֵעַל פִּי הַבְּאֵר

*"And all the flocks gathered; and they rolled the stone from the well's mouth."*

Every one of us walks around with 'wellsprings' in our hearts. But there's a problem. There is a huge rock on top and we cannot remove it by ourselves. Individuals who can single handedly remove the stone are few & far between. Only someone of the caliber of Yaakov Avinu can accomplish that feat!

We must enlist the help of others. As the pasuk says, they did it together! When we are out of isolation, when we gather together, we can move it.

Join GYE's forums, chatrooms and phone conferences to join together and remove the rock from our hearts. And then we will finally be able to drink the sweet waters that were deep inside us the entire time!

## Cuban Cigars for the Rebbe



וְהִנֵּה אֲנֹכִי עִמָּךְ וְשָׁמְרְתִּיךָ בְּכֹל אֲשֶׁר תֵּלֵךְ

*"And behold I am with you and I will guard you wherever you go."*

A Gerrer chasid took leave from his Rebbe before departing on a business trip to Paris.

The Rebbe had a request for him, can he please buy some Cuban cigars for him in Paris? The Chasid gladly agreed, thrilled at the chance to be of service to his Rebbe! While in Paris though, he was so preoccupied that he completely forgot about his intended purchase. He only remembered when he was already on the train returning home.

Upon disembarking in Warsaw, he immediately set about searching for a cigar shop and bought imported Cuban cigars. Even though they were more expensive than they would've been in Paris, he was glad that he could fulfill his Rebbe's wishes.

When he proudly presented the cigars to the Rebbe, the Rebbe inquired exactly where he bought them, and the chasid was forced to admit that he forgot to buy them in Paris.

"Do you really think that I needed cigars from Paris?" the Rebbe asked. "All I wanted was that while YOU ARE IN PARIS you should keep in mind that you have a Rebbe in Ger, but you forgot..."

וְהִנֵּה אֲנֹכִי עִמָּךְ = IF WE HAVE HASHEM 'WITH' US CONSTANTLY  
וְשָׁמְרְתִּיךָ בְּכֹל אֲשֶׁר תֵּלֵךְ = WE CAN STAY SAFE NO MATTER WHERE WE GO!!!

## INSPIRATIONAL IMAGE OF THE WEEK

**GUARD  
YOUR  
EYES!**

*So you can look  
your children  
in their eyes...*



## Getting Out of His Way

By Yaakov Nadel



We all know the story of Yaakov and the shepherds from Parshas Vayetze. Did you ever wonder how Yaakov Avinu single handedly removed such a large rock from on top of the

well? If he was an “Ish Tam Yoshev Ohalim” how did he have this kind of super-human strength?

To answer this, perhaps an introduction is in order. Hakadosh Baruch Hu has a plan for each and every one of us. Ultimately, this plan is for our own good and the reward will be immense, but as far as we’re concerned, the plan is not about us per se. It’s about how Hashem wants to use us in His world in some way for Tikkun Ha’olam. Before we were born, Hashem already had a precise plan of how He wanted each of us to serve in this effect, and where exactly we fit in to fix/help His world come closer to perfection.

So in essence, Hashem needs each and every one of us, Kaviyachol. He wants to work through us to do something special in His world. But the problem is, we keep getting in His way. We’re more concerned with ourselves and our petty needs than His plan for us, and time and time again our character defects and desires don’t let Hashem use us for what He has planned.

It follows from the above that the “name of the game” is really about staying out of Hashem’s way. If we change our perspective and begin to understand the immense honor that we were given to be of use to the great and Almighty Hashem, then it can become a lot easier for us to overcome our desires and work on our character defects.

Let’s take shmiras einayim for example. Most of us struggle with this for years with ups and downs. Why is it so difficult? Perhaps it is because we are used to seeing our lives as being about “us”. As much as we believe that it would be in our best interest to guard our eyes, when it comes down to the heat of the moment, the spiritual benefits are abstract and the physical gratification is instant. It is very hard to overcome these desires through Emunah alone.

However, if we begin to understand and internalize that Hashem needs us for a greater purpose, and by looking at what I shouldn’t I am actively pushing Hashem away and

not ALLOWING Him to use me for what He wants to do with me in His world, then psychologically it can be much easier to overcome.

Let’s try to explain it a little better. If it’s just about me, it’s very hard to see how turning AWAY from desire is better for ME right now. It takes a lot of Emunah and strength to do this. However, if I internalize that Hashem needs me for His great plan and by looking at things I shouldn’t I am actively pushing him out of my life and not allowing Him to use me to make His world a better place, then for the sake of this great honor I feel of being of service to Hashem – I can much more easily “surrender” the desires. I will just let it go it and pray, “Hashem, help me be yours so I can fulfill the plan you have for me and be of service to You... Help me not to get in your way of using me for your honor because of my silly desires”.

When we develop that kind of attitude, it becomes much easier because it’s not about us. It’s no longer a matter of weighing the abstract long-term benefits against the immediate gratification. Instead, we allow ourselves to become a conduit to Hashem for His great plans in the world, and He begins to take control of our lives. We can suddenly begin to accomplish things we never dreamed we could. We become a מרכבה לשכינה – a Chariot for the King.

Perhaps this is how our holy Forefathers like Avraham Avinu and Yaakov Avinu were able to accomplish superhuman feats, like win over the four kings or a push a huge rock off the well singlehandedly. They had completely surrendered their inner-selves to Hashem and didn’t get in His way in the slightest bit. And because Hashem had big plans for them, He worked through them and they were able to do far more than is normally humanly possible. It wasn’t them acting in their lives, it was Hashem.

We can all accomplish superhuman feats if we stay out of Hashem’s way and allow Him to work through us. קוּי ה' יחליפו כח.



**Rabbi Abraham Twerski responds to this article:**

Dear Reb Yakov, My lawyer was a recovering cocaine addict. He said, “I never could have done this. Hashem did it. I just got out of his way.”

Incidentally, your article made me look up old records. In 2011 I started a book entitled “I’ve Gotta Get Out of My Way.” I’m going to try to finish it.

### Yehudah: Gratitude and Humility

Leah knew through prophecy that Yakov would father 12 sons from his 4 wives, and so she assumed that she would have only 3 sons. When Leah delivered a fourth son, she realized that Hashem has blessed her beyond measure. And so she said "This time I will praise Hashem" and she named this son - Yehudah - which the Sforno tells us is the root of the word "thankfulness."

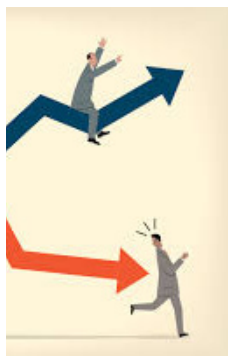
The Chiddushei HaRim notes that Jews have come to be called "Yehudim" after Yehuda because it is Jewish character attribute to always BE GRATEFUL to Hashem, with the ATTITUDE that He has given us more than our rightful share!

In Yehuda's name is also found the attribute of being "Modeh" to ADMIT! In front of all those people, Yehuda admitted "Tamar is right, I am the father of the child!"

These two attributes of thankfulness and the humility to admit our failures, is in the spiritual DNA of every Yehudi - Jew. These midos are vital for anyone striving to rid themselves of addictive behaviors (as is well known in the 12-Step groups).

### PRACTICAL TIP OF THE WEEK

#### Abstinence Violation Effect (AVE)



One setback often leads to more. Some people feel so disillusioned after they have a temporary setback, that they get unnecessarily stuck. It can take them days, weeks or even months until they try again...They start thinking, "Oh well, I guess I messed up today anyway, so I may as well continue for another few

minutes". "I'll start fresh tomorrow." "This week is messed up already, I'll start again on Sunday..." This is also known as the Abstinence Violation Effect (AVE) a phrase coined by addiction researchers Alan Marlatt and Judy Gordon back in the 1980s.

To counter this, remind yourself that setbacks aren't evidence that you won't be able to change. You'll always have some ups and downs, but if you keep on going and learn from your mistakes you will ultimately prevail!

## DESIRES ARE AN ILLUSION

### Do the lines appear to be moving?

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!

