

STORY

Mesirus Nefesh in Parnassa



My job was on the finishing line of a large printing company that printed magazines for various publishers. Occasionally they would run a Jewish kuntress but most of the time it was the kind of material I would not let into my home.

I was never at ease with my job, but I had to support a family. Every once in a while I would think of my grandfather who had to go job searching every week because he wouldn't work on Shabbos...

But then again, this wasn't chillul Shabbos. One day, the boss excitedly announced that he just signed a contract with a large magazine company. The inappropriate content of this new magazine surpassed anything we dealt with before. It was time to take the plunge.

That night, my wife and I had a very long discussion. She understood but had one concern, "was it right for us to do this, if we may end up having to accept charity afterwards?" We asked our rav- who gave

us the green light. I gave in my resignation as of the end of the month. I would have loved to end the story with details of a new job offer popping up from nowhere, but I have no such ending.

I just keep thanking Hashem for giving me - no us - the courage to do this. I daven for parnassa and that we always be happy with the step we've taken.

For now, that's a pretty good ending.

Shortly after this story came my way and it's impact was still resounding in my mind, a choshuva magid shiur asked me where he could go for a brocha in Lakewood or anywhere else. With my heartstrings pulsating with awed emotions I blurted, "Believe me you have plenty of people here in Lakewood, if you only knew of their mesirus nefesh, you would go to THEM for brochos.

Looking for Volunteer

Occasionally we get a request for a sponsored filter (because a bochur is too embarrassed to ask his parents to pay for it). We have some sponsors but we are looking for a volunteer to oversee the process. It's probably only about 2 hours of work per week. Ideally someone who is tech savvy and has experience with filters.

Please write to eyes.guard@gmail.com

SMILE!

IT'S CONTAGIOUS



I used to just crastinate, but I got so good, I went pro.



The Pros and Cons of making food:

Pros: Food

Cons: Making



A man who is suing an airline for misplacing his luggage unfortunately lost his case.



People will say anything to get off the phone: "Let me close the refrigerator real quick and I'll call you right back".



I just bought my co-worker a 'get better soon' card. They're not sick. I just think they could do better.



Va'Yigash vs. Sh'giah

ויגש vs שגיא



I learned something beautiful in R' Yitzchak Ginsburg's "Living in Divine Space":

He says that the Baal Shem Tov taught us that we mustn't let humility prevent us from serving Hashem. However unworthy we may feel we are, if we approach serving Hashem with such feelings, we'll lack enthusiasm and zest - and these are things we need when serving Hashem. But on the other side of the coin, once we've achieved something - we learned, davened, whatever, then we need to have humility to acknowledge that it was really all a gift from Hashem.

He connects this to the words "Sh'giah" (to make a mistake) and "Va'Yigash" (to come close - as used in this week's parsha). The root of both words are the two letters Shin and Gimme. In the word for mistake, sh'giah, the shin comes before the gimme. In the word 'to come close', hagashah, the gimme precedes the shin.

He says that the gimme stands for gaavah, arrogance, and the shin for shiflut, humility. The way to "come close" to Hashem is to first have arrogance - to approach Him and serve Him despite our faults, but then afterwards to have humility, to know that whatever we achieved is all a gift from Him. ויגש - first the gimme then the shin.

But if we put the shiflut first, so that we don't serve Him with

enthusiasm and zest, and then put the gaavah afterwards, taking credit for whatever we did achieve, then we're on a mistaken path.

However, when it comes to שגיא - a sin, it's the other way around. The shin comes before the Gimme. Before the sin, we need shiflut, the knowledge that only Hashem can help us. But if a person falls, he needs to push aside depression and guilt and 'be haughty' to serve Hashem with renewed diligence, despite his faults.

The Beginning of the End



Asara b'Teves is the only fast that even if it happens to fall on Shabbos, we'd have to abstain from eating. The Rabbis understood that would be untenable, so they pre-set the calendar so that it never falls on a Shabbos.

In what way is asara b'teves different from all other fasts?

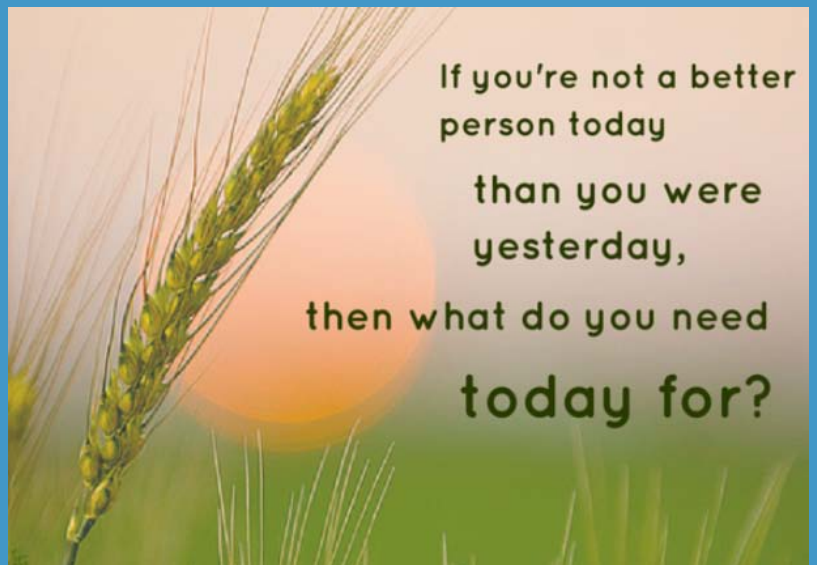
On this day, we recall the first opening steps which began the destruction of G-d's home on the Temple Mount. The Jewish people were still going strong, but since it's the beginning, it's the most significant. It was downhill from there...

What's the lesson for us?

The beginning is the most significant.

And this applies to good as well. Often the initial jump into Shmiras Einayim is the hardest. But once we've made the decision and taken the jump, it's uphill from there!

INSPIRATIONAL IMAGE OF THE WEEK



Like a Camel ואנכי אעלה גם עליה



The Gemara in Brochos, perek 9, says, "One who sees a gamal (camel) in a dream should know that it was decreed he should die, but he was saved from the decree." It brings

from this week's parsha Va'Yigash perek 46 pasuk 4, "Hashem tells Yaakov: 'I will go down with you to Mitzrayim and I will also come back up with you.' The lashon kadosh words used for "also come back up" are "gam aloh" which is similar to "gamal." What exactly is the limud and does this pasuk about Yaakov have any deeper connection with a gamal other than some similar letters?

The camel is the only mammal that can traverse a desert. Hashem made the camel with extra storage space for water, flat wide feet that don't sink in the sand, eyelashes and eyelids designed to keep sand out, amongst other protections from dehydration, heat, and sand. However, a camel placed in a desert is doomed to eventually die. For it is not in the capability of a camel to know how to get from one oasis to another, nor how to exit the desert. Without a master guiding it, the camel loses all sense of direction. So a camel alone will eventually dehydrate, overheat, and die. Thus he is a symbol of one that was decreed to die. However camels do not enter the desert alone, and therefore the camel actually is a symbol of one saved from death thanks to his guide.

This is what Hashem told Yaakov. I understand your fear of going to Mitzrayim. Under normal circumstances, it is a death sentence - physically and spiritually. However, I will accompany you down to Mitzrayim and I will come back up with you, too. I will guide you through the "desert." You, like the camel, have the innate kochos to survive as long as the guide is with you.

You and I are camels in a desert. Hashem has given us the ability to survive in the desert. We B"H have tools that we have learned to use to help keep our eyes, minds, bris, and hands clean. We B"H don't sink, and we keep the sand out of our eyes. We stay hydrated and cool with Torah and mitzvos. However, we dare not forget for a moment that we need our guide, Hashem, who is leading us from one water hole to another as we journey through the dunes of sand.

The sforim tell us that the havtacha Hashem gave to Yaakov was said with the word "gam" - to include future generations. His promise is that He will escort each of us out of our personal "Mitzrayim." Let's just hold His hand!

Vayigash: "We Will Not Regret the Past..."

By Rabbi Abraham J. Twersky



After Joseph revealed himself to his brothers, he said, "Now, do not be angry with yourselves. This was Hashem's design."

These were comforting words, but although it was Hashem's design, they acted as free agents when they sold him into slavery. Hashem could have done it in other ways. There is no way they could escape their guilt. How could they not be angry at themselves?

The answer lies in the word "now." The Talmud says that the word "now" denotes teshuvah. Appropriate repentance for the wrongs one has done, by resolving not to repeat them and by trying to eliminate from one's character those defective traits that made the wrong deeds possible, can lift the heavy burden of the past off one's shoulders and allow one to deal with the "now," with an unencumbered present.

If we do proper teshuvah, there is no need to be angry with ourselves for our mistakes

PRACTICAL TIP OF THE WEEK

Seemingly Irrelevant Decisions



If you're been clean for a while, don't let your guard down! Sometimes without realizing it, we may do things that lead us in the direction of a slip. For example, we might convince ourselves that we are already strong enough to look at borderline material. The next day we may go a little bit further and before we knew it, we could have a slip or fall.

Experts call this AIDs (Apparently Irrelevant Decisions). In Chazal (Shabbos 105b) it's considered one of the tricks of the Yetzer Hara, "Today it tells him 'do this', and tomorrow it tells him 'do that', until it tells him 'worship idols' and he goes and worships idols."

The point is that since you're clean for so long, hopefully slips won't happen out of the blue. And if you watch out



Counting Each Day כְּמֹה יְמֵי שָׁנִי חֲיִיד



“Kamoh yemei sh’nei chayecho?”


- Paroh asked Yaakov Avinu: “how many are the days of the years of your life?” Rav Shimshon Rephoel Hirsch says that Pharaoh understood the importance of each individual day.

He was, therefore, asking Yaakov, “How have you utilized each day? How many days really counted?” To which Yaakov, in his anivus, answered: “Few and nothing compared to my forefathers.”


We can apply that to our struggles. Each day counts, that means if I messed up yesterday - so what?! Today is a completely new day! Conversely, if yesterday was great, that doesn’t mean today is gonna be good as well. Each day has its own unique potential and that’s the way we need to live life -

ONE DAY AT A TIME!

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

DESIRES ARE AN ILLUSION

These circles seem to be connected somewhere, but they're not!

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!

