

STORY

Shmiras Einayim and the Power of Tefilah



A man from a city in southern Eretz Yisroel had a daughter critically ill in the hospital. The doctors had all but given up on her. They advised that they will make the last-ditch attempt with a dangerous chemo - but the hospital was out of it. The father was sent to a pharmaceutical company in Tel Aviv to pick it up.

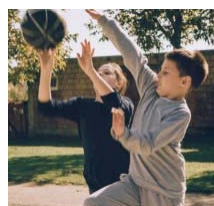
The area was extremely pritzusdik, and this man struggled with desperately wanting to look. He remembered hearing from Rav Yitzchok Zilberstein shlita in the name of Rav Aharon Roth ztz"l that when one is holds himself back in a nisayon of shmiras einayim, one has an incredible power of teffilah. He turned to the wall and asked Hashem for help in standing up to the challenge and that his daughter should get well.

Soon after, his phone rang with his wife telling him to come back. Inexplicably, even without this new medication, the doctors saw the daughter's condition improve. The seudas hoda'ah was 3 weeks later!

Eyes on the Ball

Member "betterthanyesterday" wrote: I wanted to share this since b'h this idea helped me very much:

In recent weeks I've been thinking about something I saw in one of Rabbi Noach Weinberg's books where he speaks about reaching our goals. He says that the most common reason we don't reach our goals is because it feels "heavy", "painful" or "hard", and therefore we don't end up doing enough to reach our goals. So he says, "Do you want to know what is the secret to reaching your goals even when it feels so hard? The secret is to "Keep your eyes on the ball". And he explains with an example. What would happen if you asked a bunch of kids to play basketball with you on a hot summer day, would they play? Of course they would! And, you'd probably have a hard time to get them to stop, even after a half hour!



But what would happen if you asked those same kids to run, stretch, jump, and to do all the things they do while playing Basketball, only without the ball? They'd probably beg to stop after 2 minutes!

So if you think about it, there isn't much difference between those kids and us. If we really yearn to reach whatever goal we're aiming for, then we're keeping our eyes on the ball and we won't feel the heaviness and difficulty in the process!

SMILE!

IT'S CONTAGIOUS



A computer once beat me at chess, but it was no match for me at kickboxing.



I am not a vegetarian because I love animals; I am a vegetarian because I hate plants.



Why is lemon juice made with artificial flavor, and dishwashing liquid made with real lemons?



Are part-time band leaders semi-conductors?



Did Noah keep his bees in archives?



If someone with multiple personalities threatens to kill himself, is it considered a hostage situation?



Chet Ha'egel: The Test Was Getting Back Up!



This week's Parsha is a very important one for us at GYE. It is the Parsha of "Falling and getting back up again". The Bnei Yisroel just left Mitzrayim. They saw Krias Yam Suf. They defeated Amalek. How could they possibly fall so far and so low as to worship the Egel?

There are many explanations as to what exactly they were trying to do. But either way, it was a grievous sin. The purpose of this Dvar Torah is not to analyze how they fell. It is rather to analyze what happened after they fell.

Moshe goes up to shamayim to beg for mechila. Rabbi Reisman points out that Moshe actually told Hashem that the Yidden were not at fault since they were an Oness. "You took them from slavery, gave them more gold and riches than they have ever seen in their lives, and then take away their leader? Of course they will sin!!" Now we can't say things like that. We are not on that level. But we do see that there is a concept of falling to a nisayon that we could not have passed!! Hashem said "Salachti Kidvarecha", which means that on some level He agreed to Moshe's claim.

If this is true in some cases, then why does Hashem test us in the first place?

The gemara says that K'lal Yisroel were not re'uyin le'oso ma'aseh, they were not really on such a low level as to commit a terrible aveiro as idolatry, elo lehoros teshuvah lerabim, but Hashem brought it about, so to speak, to teach everyone that even for such an aveira teshuvah is still possible.

Perhaps this may be understood as follows: They didn't really have bechira whether to do the aveiro or not. The actual aveiro was not the test that Hashem was testing them with. Rather, Hashem wanted to see what they would do after they fell. Will they just become depressed and dwell in their sorrow, or will they move on and move up?

Lehoros teshuva lerabim, every one of us can think about this point AFTER we slipped. (This is not an excuse to set out on the wrong path, chas ve'sholom.) We can think that maybe, in this case, I didn't really have a bechira in deciding not to guard my eyes. I strayed. I saw. I started slipping. I stumbled. I sank. Now what?? Am I worthless. Am I a lost case? Have I lost my connection to Hashem so I may as well do another aveiro? ABSOLUTELY NOT!!!!!! Hashem didn't close His eyes. He didn't stop recording. He sees me in my low moments and he sees me as I get up again. Maybe, just maybe, He is the one who pushed me down because He wanted to watch me get up. He enjoys seeing me get up from the depths even more than He enjoys it when I coast along at a high altitude without any bumps. So HE PUSHED ME DOWN. Now I'll give him what He wants. I will show Him how I can get back up with His help!

The above may be alluded to in the gemoro, bemokom she'ba'alei teshuva omdim ein tzadikim gemurim yecholim la'amod. Because Tzadikim don't give Hashem this specific nachas of getting back up from the depths.

And in conclusion, we find that when the Yidden did that, they were immediately given the instructions to build the mishkan so that "Veshachanti Besocham". When we commit to do it right and plow on towards our goal, Hashem doesn't just forgive us. He grabs us to Him and loves us like he did before

Ki Sisa: Don't Panic!

By Rabbi Abraham J. Twersky



This portion of the Torah narrates a tragic event. Within weeks of the greatest spiritual event of history, the Divine revelation at Sinai, the Jews, who had reached a level of angelic holiness, fell precipitously into the idolatry of the Golden Calf. How could so radical a change occur?

Rabbi Chaim Shmuelevitz explains that when Moses failed to return at the designated date, after forty days on Sinai, the people thought he had died. They were in a barren desert, with no evident source of water. Their only trust was that Moses could intercede for them with G-d, and if Moses was dead, they were trapped in the arid desert. They panicked, and in a state of panic, one may lose all ability to reason, and one may commit the most absurd acts.

This is a crucial teaching. Logical thinking can serve us well, but if we panic, we lose the ability to reason logically, and we may do things that are grossly out of line with our spirituality.

We may be subjected to severe stresses, but we must try to avoid panic.

Can It Be Worse?

וּבַיּוֹם פָּקְדִי וּפְקֻדָּתִי עֲלֵיהֶם חֲטָאתָם - פֶּרֶק לֵב, לֹד'

"And on the day I reproach, I will remember their sin (of the Egel)"

Rashi explains that any time Hashem brings a punishment on Klal Yisrael it includes partial punishment for the Chait Ha'aigel.

Rebbe Chanoch Henoch of Alexander zy'a (Siach Sarfei Kodesh) explained it this way:

Every time Hashem punishes klal yisrael He is telling them, look at the Chet Ha'aigel, look how terrible and disloyal it was, and even so, the Yidden did Teshuva and their Teshuva was accepted. Is what you did now any worse, that Teshuva cannot be done?

Overcoming Even a Small Fire



“זֶה יִתְּנוּ... מִחֲצִית הַשֶּׁקֶל”

“This they shall give... a half a Shekel”

Rebbe Moshe Kobriner zy'a in Toras Avos writes:

Rashi explains that Moshe Rabeinu had difficulty understanding what was meant until Hashem showed him a vision of a fiery coin.

What was so hard for Moshe to understand that Hashem needed to show him a fiery vision?

Moshe's question was how was it possible for a small coin to be a kofer nefesh: an atonement for a person's soul? A person would give everything he has to preserve his life!

Hashem showed him the fiery coin which symbolizes the fiery force of the Yetzer Hara, who works to keep us from giving even a small thing away. That is why even a small coin can be a kofer nefesh.

What we can learn from this is that when the fire of the Yetzer Hara is involved, even a small deed like turning away from looking at something we shouldn't, can be a Kofer Nefesh and great enough to save our lives!

Kol Hagadol Mechaveiro



It is brought down in many places, especially in the chassidish sefarim, that a person needs friends to help him in avodas Hashem.

Chazal say: כל הגדול מחבירו יצרו גדול ממנו.

The Beis Aharon of Karlin read this in the following way:

מחבירו - כל הגדול - Whoever is great, it's from his friend/s.

ממנו - יצרו גדול - If his Yetzer is big, it's from him.

In other words, when one remains isolated and not connected with friends who can help him in avodas Hashem, his Yetzer Hara will be much bigger.

So make sure to find a good friend you can be open with about your struggles, and use the power of GYE's forums, chat-rooms and phone conferences to reach out to others who can give you chizuk!

See you Tomorrow!

We find that when the Jews approached Aharon Hakohen to help them with their idol, he announced: “Chag LaHashem Machar - Tomorrow will be a holiday!”

What's going on? Was Aharon Hakohen helping them worship?!

Aharon Hakohen is teaching all of Klal Yisrael a great and effective tool how to deal with the Yetzer Hara.

Machar! Tomorrow! Not now! Shpeter!

Sometimes when we are so fired up, all logical answers fall on deaf ears.

We can take a lesson from Aharon Hakohen. Yes, you can at least push off the Yetzer Hara till tomorrow!!



"In my youth, I was considered a bright and diligent student. How did I accomplish this? I tricked my yetzer hara. Other children had great plans at the beginning of the school year for the whole year, but in the end they failed. I said to myself, 'I am going to plan just for today - and set goal for this day only'. The Satan, not being interested in a single day, left me alone. The next day, I again just made plans for that day, and so on until the end of the year."

- Klausenberger Rebbe



PRACTICAL TIP OF THE WEEK



The Mishna in Avos teaches that Torah study with Derech Eretz is "yafa" - beautiful - because the engrossment in both (continuously) makes us forget sin.

Most of us are not on the level of the saintly Rogatchover Gaon who said about himself that his whole life he was so busy learning, that he didn't have time to think of sinning. Many of us are involved in the more mundane to various degrees.

But we can all create a schedule of constant healthy productivity, be it in holy or relatively mundane matters, that keeps us so busy that we don't have time or mental ability to think of sinning.

This has been very effective for me. I simply make sure to have a full and productive ordered schedule, and do my best to keep to it. The yetzer can only get us if/when we create for ourselves "free time," which is a western and false idea anyway.

Why Does Hashem Test You?



Rabbi Avigdor Miller Transcript

Mesilas Yescharim says, "Kol inyanei haolam nisyanos heim l'adam -- All matters in this world, everything, are tests for man."

That's a sweeping statement! What does it mean tests? Hashem has to test you to know what you are? He doesn't know beforehand what you're going to do? What's the purpose of a test?

And the answer is when you put gold into a refining furnace and it melts and the dross swims to the surface and you ladle off the dross so only pure gold remains. You're not testing the gold, you're purifying the gold. And so everything in this world is for the purpose of elevating man.

- *Greatness Of Work* (#662)

DESIRES ARE AN ILLUSION

Which of the 3 roads looks different than the other two?

Answer: While it seems like the one on the right is different, the middle one is actually the different one. (The one on the right and left are identical).

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!

