

**STORY**

**Hashem doesn't deny anyone's reward**

One Shabbat, a man came to the synagogue of Rabbi Berel Wein in the Rechavia section of Jerusalem, accompanied by his three young sons. Even with their long *peyot*, they didn't look Jewish with their stunning blond Aryan hair and shining blue eyes. Additionally, the boys were unusually well behaved, not running out of their seats and around the shul like many little children do.

After the prayers, Rabbi Wein greeted the father and asked him where he was from. The guest said he was from Rechovot. When Rabbi Wein next asked where his family originally came from, the man became uncomfortable. Rabbi Wein apologized, and asked if he was perhaps a baal *teshuva*, a returnee to Torah-observant Judaism.

The man explained that he was really a Ger, a convert to Judaism, and that he had been born in Germany. With that off his chest, he continued to tell of how he embarked on his unusual and fascinating spiritual journey to *Yiddishkeit*. Not only was he a German, but his father was a dedicated Nazi and war criminal who had spent 10 years in prison after the Second World War.

In Germany he had learned about that sordid chapter of his nation's history in which his people brutally mistreated the Jews, and he could never understand why people like his father could so hate the Jews who in his eyes were such nice good people. He moved to Israel, began to study with some rabbis and converted to Judaism, breaking all contact with his father who as an officer of an SS Storm Troopers brigade had been responsible for the murder of many thousands of Jews.

Shortly before he met Rabbi Wein, the man had received a phone call from his mother informing him that his father was dying and that he should come and see him one last time. The convert spoke to his rabbis and they told him that one had to have a sense of gratitude to his biological

father, even if he was a despicable Nazi war criminal.

So he boarded a plane with his three young sons and landed in Germany. He went to the hospital where his father was being treated. His father could barely look at his beautiful offspring because they all looked so Jewish and religious. After exchanging greetings and some small talk, the son, unable to control himself, declared firmly: "Clearly you must have done some good deed that you merited three such wonderful grandchildren. What is it that you did?" he asked his father.

The grandfather at first was unable to think of any good action of his that might have resulted in what happened. Finally he recalled that once he led a group of murderous SS troops into a Catholic orphanage in Warsaw Poland in 1942. They were looking for Jewish children hiding as Catholics. Towards the end of inspection he noticed three boys whom he was positive were Jewish. But for some strange reason, which he himself to the end of his life could not understand, he felt a sense of pity for them and turned his eyes as they quickly escaped from the danger he represented.

The son shouted, "Father, why couldn't you have found a fourth or fifth child to save? Neither my wife nor I have infertility problems, yet since the birth of our youngest child five years ago we haven't been able to conceive and bear any more children. I now realize that the three sons we are blessed with are due to that one sole good deed you did!"

**Hashem doesn't deny any reward owed to a person, even if that individual is a despicable Nazi war criminal! So if a Nazi can get such a reward as having three righteous grandsons for such a small deed, can we even imagine just what He will give as a reward to those of us who have served Him with *messiras nefesh* by turning away from bad even when it's hard?**

**SMILE!  
IT'S CONTAGIOUS**



If you see my kid on Zoom wearing the same outfit for the last 5 days, mind your business, our school has a uniform.



Sometimes you might feel like there is no one there for you, but you know who's always there for you? Laundry.



Tip: if your phone is out of storage, you can delete "Waze" for the time being.



It's been a blessing being at home with the wife these last 4 weeks. We've caught up on everything I've done wrong in the last 15 years.



**THIS IS EXACTLY HOW MUCH PERSONAL SPACE MY KIDS ARE GIVING ME AT THE MOMENT 🙏🙏**



A man walks into a library and asks the librarian for books about paranoia. She whispers, "They're right behind you!"

## Focusing On Who We Are



The Pasuk says, “*Kedoshim Tih’u, Ki Kadosh Ani*” - “You shall be holy because I, Hashem, am Holy”:

The ultimate peak of holiness is the conscious recognition that we are an extension of Hashem

and we were created in His image.

You’re a prince and son of His Highness, the Royal King of the entire existence.

Modesty and morality not about not doing this or not doing that, they’re to help us understand who we are and what our connection is to Hashem. Guarding our eyes and thoughts are an external manifestation of this, because internally we know who we are and what we mean to Hashem.

Only when we realize where we come from and who we are, can we understand how it doesn’t behoove us to be slaves to our animalistic impulses.

Perhaps this is the deeper connection between this week’s parsha and this week’s *pirkei Avos* (3rd Perek). “*Reflect upon three things and you will not come to the hands of transgression. Know from where you came, where you are going, and before whom you are destined to give a judgement and accounting*”

## HOLY YOU!

“*Daber el kol adas bnei yisroel v’amarta aleihem kedoshim tiyhu ki Kadosh ani Hashem Elokeichem*” - “Speak to the entire gathering of Bnei Yisroel and tell them to be holy, for I Hashem your G-d, am Holy.”

In the environment that we live in, HOW is it at all POSSIBLE to attain holiness? The answer lies in the pasuk: “*KI KADOSH ANI*” Hashem says, “I am holy, and I have enough kedusha to share in ANY situation...”

Chazal say: “*Hamikadesh atzmo me-at, Mikadshin oso harbeh*” “One who is Mekadesh himself a little, they are mekadesh him a LOT” As much as previous generations had less opportunities to sin, that is how much holier **we** can be!

So let us be *Mechazek* ourselves and say: “Wow, we have so many opportunities to be *mekadaish* ourselves a little bit!” Yes, we are *Yidden*. We can do it! **KEDOSHIM TIHIYU!!**

## Setting Boundaries

Rashi: “*Kol makom she’ata motzei geder ervah, sham ata motzei kedusha*”.



Every place that a person sets for himself a boundary & a fence before the *ervah*, that is where he will find *kedusha*. It is the small steps that a person takes to keep himself pure and holy that make Hashem proud.

Every time we perform a *mitzva* we say: *asher kideshanu b’mitzvosav*, who sanctified us with his *mitzvos*... Installing a filter on a computer, signing up with an accountability software and other such steps that we take, bring upon us a MUCH GREATER level of *kedusha*! Even before it restrains us from an *aveira*, the step itself is an act of placing a “*geder ervah*”, a fence for *aveiros*. That is where you will find *Kedusha*!

**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:

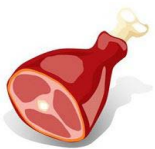
**GUARDYOUREYES.COM**

### “I am Hashem your G-d”

**This week’s parsha enumerates the forbidden sexual relations. There’s an elementary piece from the holy Ohr Hachayim (Acharei Mos, 18:2) that gives a clear perspective on the powerful nature of carnal desire, and helps us understand how Hashem expects us to remain holy in spite of it being against human nature. Below is an approximate translation of this eye-opening piece:**

It is known that all the Mitzvos that Hashem commanded his holy nation are Mitzvos that a man can stand by and bring himself to a desire to do, besides for the Mitzva of staying away from arayos (illicit sexual relations) which is something that a person craves and his desires forces him to act, unless one makes an effort to stay far away from two things: (1) Seeing with the eyes (2) Thinking about it. However if a person does not keep away from these two aspects (sight and thought), he will not be able to control himself and rid himself of it.

Even if one stays away from thinking about it, as long as he does not stay away from looking, he will not be able to control himself and rid himself of the inevitable desire. As we can see from the story of R’ Amram, the Rebbe of all Chassidim (Kidushin 81a), that even though he was far from thinking about these things, he was won over by the aspect of “sight”. And we also see this from the story of Reb Masya Ben Charash (Yalkut Shimoni; Veyechi) who chose to blind himself when he felt that he would be forced to come to bad deeds through the sight of his eyes, even though he was surely far from thinking of these things - as is clear in the story.



And if one does not distance himself from thinking about these things, his thoughts will also force him to seek out and lust after the act. As we can see from the story in the Gemara (Avodah Zara 22b) of a non-Jew who bought a thigh of meat in the market place, cut into it, used it to pleasure himself, and then cooked and ate it. This comes from being steeped in the aspect of “thought” which coerced him to do these deeds even without seeing anything (triggering).

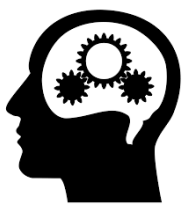
So we see from this, that with either one of these two aspects, sight or thought, it becomes close to impossible for a person to control himself in this area. And it goes without saying that if one looks AND thinks about these things, he will be very weak when faced with this desire. And it also goes without saying, that if one actually begins to taste from the bad, he will be completely given over into the hands of his desires.

The only way that a man can wage war with this powerful desire is by removing from himself these two aspects (1. improper sights and 2. lustful thoughts). And by doing this, one instills within himself that he should not lust after this, and he will be able to control his natural desires. And this is the reason that Chaza”l say (Brachos 34b) “In the place that Balei Teshuvah stand, even the completely righteous cannot stand”. For the natural good will of the completely righteous wins over their desires without great effort, which is not the case with a Ba’al Teshuvah.

Translation of the Ohr Hachayim continued on next page...

### Inspirational Image Of The Week





And if one should ask, "How can a natural person be in control of his desires which "force" him to act? After all, it does not make sense that Hashem would obligate all men equally to guard themselves in this area, only people who can stand up

and have the will power to refrain from this desire! And these are people who never came into the tests of seeing improper sights and thinking lustful thoughts. Only for such people did the Torah command these Mitzvos. But for people who already fell into these things, it is naturally impossible for a man to control himself and hold back from this craving that forces him to act!"

To counter this claim, Hashem wrote in the Torah with pleasant words of life, and the Parsha of Arayos starts out with the words "Speak to the Children of Israel and say to them, I am Hashem your G-d". For it is true that humanity in general, other than the Jewish people, can claim this complaint and say that they did not find it in their strength to deny the power of this intense desire from themselves. However, with you--the Children of Israel, because I am Hashem your G-d--you can achieve understanding and awareness of G-d--and through this G-dly strength, you will win over the natural physical drives.

(The Ohr Hachayim has touched here on the "core" of the 12-Step program, that we are powerless to overcome this powerful desire without the help of our Higher-Power).

The mind can control the matter. So when a Jewish person accepts upon himself to be "one" with Hashem his G-d (di'veikus), he will be in control of his nature. As Chaza"l say, "The hearts of the Tzadikim are given over in their hands, but the hearts of Resha'im control them". The meaning of this is, that desire and lust are in the heart of a man, yet his "will power" is in his mind. And these are the two levels that the Master of the World has given man (to work with). And when a person sees something of a sexual nature, his heart will crave it, but this is not the end. The "will power" in his mind can deny himself the desire and he will not act upon it, even though he covets it... And that is the meaning of the words "For I am Hashem your G-d" (in the Parsha of Arayos). This means to say, that since Hashem shines the light of his Shechinah into the soul of a man, through this,

one has the strength to win over his desires with his will power...

So to return to what we were saying... The aspect of thinking about sexual matters strengthens the desire. And one cannot win over this desire unless he distances his mind and thoughts from these things and does not look upon these things. But should his eyes gaze upon them, he is in grave danger, like the story of David Hamelech A"H, that when circumstance brought him to see what he saw, his heart, which had been empty of desire (as the Pasuk says "and my heart is empty inside me") was aroused and he acted.

And even if one just "begins" to think about these things, it will cause a strengthening of his natural desires. And therefore the wisest of all men, Shlomo Hamelech A"H, wrote in Mishlei (1); "My son, if the sins will persuade you, do not listen" - meaning, do not even enter into negotiations with your Yetzer Hara, for the longer you think about it, even in a negative light, the more the desire is strengthened and will turn his will towards it.

And this is also why Hashem says; "Tell them that I am Hashem their G-d", because (those who guard the Bris) are on the level that Hashem wants to unify his great name upon them. For he who guards his Bris is on a great level. Indeed, there is no greater level than this.

### ILLUSION **Are the lines straight?**

Our eyes trick us. Let's train ourselves to see reality and not let our eyes lead us after illusionary pleasures.

