

## A Yerushalmi Woman's Near Death Experience

בס"ד

[The following is a free translation of a sheet written in Hebrew that has been circulating in Yerushalaim. We make no claim about the reliability of the information contained here; any practical questions should be directed to a qualified Rav. Still this is a very powerful statement and deserves serious attention.]

I have been asked to write for the public an account of an experience I had some years ago, in Tammuz 5746. Before I start to relate this very frightening and inspiring story, however, I would like to describe myself as I had been before.

Up until then I had always considered myself to be an entirely respectable and modest woman, just like every other Yerushalmi woman. I was very careful never to get out of bed in the morning without stockings on, I wore a *tichel* and never allowed my hair to be exposed (and indeed I always kept my head shaved). I was very diligent about my children's upbringing, with great dedication on my part. Even so, I now see that in those days I didn't really know what true modesty and *yiras Shamayim* meant:

I didn't appreciate the great importance of never letting strange men hear my voice (since *Chazal* have said that hearing a woman's voice has as much power to cause improper thoughts as seeing the immodest parts of her body).

Nor did I appreciate the great severity of the *aveiros* of *lashon horo* and *rechilus* (even though I was careful not to speak *lashon horo*).

Nor did I appreciate how important it is to honor parents (I always thought I did pretty well in this area).

Nor did I appreciate the great importance of making a *brocho* on everything I ate with great *kavana* (and I confess that this was an area I didn't really make such great efforts in).

In any case, Hashem showed me how much *teshuva* I had to do for each and every one of these things.

**Ribono shel Olam, help me write my story in the best way I can so that it will be a tikkun for me and a tova for Klal Yisroel!**

On Friday night of *Parashas Pinchos*, while I was sitting at the Shabbos table I started to feel unwell, so I got up and went to my room. Suddenly I saw before my eyes a gigantic terrifying sword and part of a monstrous black angel (the *yetzer horo*), and I felt like my end had come! A horrible fear came over me, an indescribable terror, and in great panic I started to say goodbye to my children but I fell onto my bed in a faint. Not realizing just what was happened to me, my husband finished his Shabbos *seder* as quickly as possible and came in to see how I was doing. When he found me I was in a deathly coma and he did everything he could to revive me, but to no avail.

As soon as I saw the angel of death I started to say *Shema*, but the black angel, the *yetzer horo*, wouldn't let me say the holy *Shema* and at each word he tried to snatch my soul away and to strike me with indescribably terrifying blows. It was so hard just to look at that black angel, I would rather have had to look at the most horrible ferocious beasts in the world than to have to look at the *yetzer horo* for one instant, and he was giving me all kinds of terrible *nisyonos*. For one thing, he showed me an incredibly desirable fruit, so attractive that I wanted to eat it even without making a *brocho*. I sensed that it was forbidden to eat that fruit but I felt such a strong desire for it, even though I knew it wasn't *kosher*. The *yetzer horo* tried to tempt me with all kinds of persuasive arguments, claiming that if I ate it I could stay alive. It was a terrible battle and every moment I held out without eating it and kept on saying *Shema*, I felt what it's like to die, to be killed!

But, *boruch Hashem*, just at the last moment, while the *yetzer horo* was trying to tempt me, the *yetzer tov* came along and helped me to keep saying *Shema* and to withstand

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the temptation to eat the fruit. I saw then how my body appeared to my *neshomo*, and I could also see everything that had happened to me ever since the day I was born, as well as all the *aveiros* I had done, both big and small. For each *aveira* there was a black angel with gigantic terrifying eyes, and each eye was as big as the whole world, from one end to the other. I also saw *klipos* that were so terrifying and so mortifying that just looking at them made me want desperately to run away, but from there there was nowhere to run to -- that's the world of truth and there you have to confront reality.

In the distance, however, I could see beautiful white angels that had been created from the *mitzvos* I had done, and far away I saw a great light. I wanted to cry but I also felt a great fear, because there you realize Who you're really crying to.

The black angels were hitting me with enormous clubs and each one screamed at me in a deafening, bloodcurdling voice which *aveira* had created him. Their enormous eyes were staring at me with penetrating, contemptuous looks that made me feel so ashamed, and the *klipos* were screaming at me that I was guilty of everything, and I had absolutely no excuses to give them.

While these voices were all screaming at me, I came to feel a lot of *rachmonus* for one *neshomo* there that was screaming in terror, and suddenly I heard that this *neshomo* was going to be subjected to *kaf ha-kele* (being dragged from one end of the world to the other with terrible contempt). The angel of death asked me gleefully if I wanted to watch this *kaf ha-kele* and I answered "yes," but then my grandmother came to me and told me to tell them right away that I didn't want to see it. *Boruch Hashem* that I didn't see it.

Afterwards they came and removed my eyes to see if ever in my life I had coveted anything. The experience of having my eyes removed was terrifying, and I had to go through it even though I was very confident that I had never coveted anything. There in heaven it's the World of Truth, up there they know everything and they're very exacting about everything, big or small, about every *aveira* or lack of modesty that happens in this world. I was very confident that I had done pretty well in this area, but in the world of truth each person gets to see the truth about himself, which is why they were hitting me with such powerful blows. (When I came back to our world I still hurt from those blows and had black and blue marks from them. My sister nearly fainted when she saw the marks on my legs. She said that a whole lifetime's worth of blows for a whole lifetime wouldn't leave marks like that.)

I was given those blows over four main things:

1) I wasn't careful to limit my conversations with strange men (i.e. anyone other than my husband and family), since each and every unnecessary word was counted against me.

2) I wasn't careful not to speak too loudly in the street, and I sang to myself in the house when I could be heard from outside.

3) I really enjoyed wearing jewelry and nice clothes, and I really didn't know that I was doing an *aveira* with this. I tried to argue in *Beis Din shel Maaleh* that I always dressed more nicely in the house than outside, but this excuse was not accepted at all.

4) Concerning *lashon horo* and *rechilus*, I was confident that I wasn't doing anything so wrong, but in the world of truth I saw that this was the biggest *aveira*. When I saw how big an *aveira* it really was, however, and the enormous punishment I would get for it, I decided that when they gave me back my *neshomo* I wouldn't say even good things about anyone so that I wouldn't ever come to do that *aveira*.

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For each *aveira* they gave me a particular punishment there, and one moment of punishment there was worse than seventy years of the biggest and hardest punishments and diseases in this world. Apart from the incredible pain, which simply cannot be described in writing in a physical world, there is also the intense shame, which is far worse because there it's the world of truth. This spiritual shame is a very real thing, and in the World to Come there's not just the fear and anxiety about pain and punishment, there's also enormous shame over even the smallest *aveira* a person ever did, because there in heaven they know everything and even the smallest things have tremendous importance, and nothing is forgiven.

Especially with *tznius* the punishments are so great and terrifying -- *boruch Hashem* that I was always careful in this area and always went with long and broad garments, like a woman is supposed to. However, because I have a loud voice I could be speaking in the street and a man passing by would hear me and look at me (even though I didn't want that). The *klipos* that were created by that man's thoughts also attacked my *neshomo*, since I had caused him to be attacked by that *klipa* and those *klipos* caused me to suffer terrible blows, marks from which stayed with me even after I returned to this world.

*Klipos* don't try to figure out which one is more powerful, they all attack as hard as they can and scream in all kinds of horrible and terrifying voices: "**Why did you create me?**" Each one says what he was created by and who he was created by, and they follow a person around, and the sensations are terrible because every moment in that world feels like seventy years, and every hour feels like thousands of years.

Oy oy oy! Any Jewish woman or girl who doesn't act modestly, for every second that she thinks about making some man sin, or wants to make someone sin, she'll suffer bitterly for it in the World to Come because the *klipos* she creates accompany her there and every instant more and more *klipos* are created. If she wears a see-through garment or leaves a button open, or wears short sleeves, or goes without stockings or anything like this, all these things create myriads of *klipos* and black, destructive angels that attach themselves to the *neshomo* in her body. If she goes around all day not *tzniusdik*, black angels follow her around in this world and try to harm her, even if she doesn't feel them and doesn't realize the damage that's being done and thinks everything's going well for her, she's wrong and she doesn't realize what she's missing. Suddenly she gets angry and things don't go right for her or don't go the way she wanted, and it's not always that she's sick, sometimes it happens because of her sins. (This applies just as much to men also.)

Hashem doesn't send us everything we deserve in this world, but when it comes to a *tzaddik* or a *tzadekes*, Hashem does them the *chessed* of letting them suffer all the punishment they deserve in this world because the pains they would suffer in the World to Come, even just a moment of them, are far worse than a whole lifetime's worth of pains here.

If a woman might ever think or say, "My husband wants me to go in a way that isn't *tzniusdik*," in the World to Come they'll tell her, "Did you really do it for your husband's sake, just in the house, or did you do it to get other men to look at you, and if you did it for your husband, couldn't you have bought a dress that he would have liked that would have been attractive and *tzniusdik* at the same time?" This and other questions that she wouldn't have answers for because there in the world of truth they say only the truth.

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The punishment is so great that it can't be described in writing, and if a woman goes around dressed totally immodestly, then not only are there the punishments, there's also the *kaf ha-kele* which is horrendously frightening.

Everything I'm describing is only before a person reaches the *Beis Din shel Maaleh*, because after he gets there there's a decision between Gan Eden and Gehennom. *Boruch Hashem* I didn't go through that, *Boruch Hashem* for a lot of things I didn't have to go through, because what I did go through was more than enough. It's impossible to bear other things, the pains and fears and punishments, and the humiliations, none of which can be escaped. What did happen was that I was extremely glad I had cut my hair completely, because that way the *tichel* was totally *tzniusdik*, especially since I always went with a *tichel*.

I was also glad that I had always been very strict on *hechsheirim*, and they told me there in heaven that I certainly should be very glad about that, since the punishment for eating forbidden foods is having one's teeth ripped up. *Boruch Hashem* also that I had a lot of *mesiras nefesh* in bringing up my children and that's why I was given my *neshomo* back so that I could continue in *kedusha* and *tahara*. They gave me three conditions that I would be required to keep after I came back to life.

I want everyone who reads this account to know that this is zero percent of what I experienced there, because it's simply impossible to capture the things that happen up there here in our *gashmius* world.

**Ribono shel Olam, in the merit of my confessing my sins and feeling shame over them, I ask that I, my husband, my children, and the whole Jewish people, receive atonement for our sins and that we have the merit to do teshuva. May our souls be pure without any klipos surrounding them. May we serve You with pure hearts without jealousy or hatred towards each other, and without machlokes, lashon horo, or rechilus. May we merit to be truly tzniusdik, and may we all come out together to greet Moshiach Tzidkeinu bimheira b'yameinu, amen.**

For those who want to help me and themselves, we are told that whoever *davens* for someone else when he needs the same thing himself will be answered first. Therefore I ask people to *daven* that I be saved from the *yetzer horo*, which hasn't given up trying to trick me into doing *aveiros*, especially "*mitzva-aveiros*" and *aveira-mitzvos*." Even since the Friday night my *neshomo* was given back to me, the *yetzer horo* has been trying to persuade me that none of it really happened and that I have to strengthen myself, but *Boruch Hashem*, Hashem didn't abandon me and did me the kindness of letting me remember what happened there. When people *daven* for me, they shouldn't mention my name because I don't want to put my name in this. Hashem will know who they're *davening* for.

As long as I'm writing about *Beis Din shel Maaleh*, I have so much to say and I can't write it all, but I'll try. In *Beis Din shel Maaleh* there are *heichalos* (halls) but I didn't go into any of them; if I had I wouldn't have been able to return to this world. I was only in the waiting areas of *Beis Din shel Maaleh* and while I was there I couldn't bear to hear the sounds coming out in the *heichal* of the *beis din*. Terrifying screams were coming out: "**But I didn't want to! I didn't think about it!**" They answered, "**You didn't want to and you didn't think about it, but the aveira was yours and so the punishment is yours too!**" Just hearing such things is so terrifying that a person is filled with panic. It's not for nothing that there's an expression "screams from heaven" that describes terrible, frightening

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screams (and really I never understood what that saying meant until I was there, and then I understood).

The terror there is so great that even *tzaddikim* tremble at the thought of going there, but the difference between a *tzaddik* and an ordinary person is that a *tzaddik* comes escorted by *tzaddikim* while an ordinary person has to cope by himself. In *Beis Din shel Maaleh* all the *aveiros* are counted and he suffers very great mortification over them.

The three pure *tzaddikim* who sit in judgment in *Beis Din shel Maaleh* are very merciful and it hurts them to punish people, but they have to perform their function without any favoritism, and that's terrifying. The greatest terror in the world is nothing compared to the true terror there.

When people go through *Beis Din shel Maaleh* Hashem has real pain because the *Shechina* has to watch everything that's done to a person and it cries bitterly, but nothing can be done since the person himself created all the destructive forces and the black destructive angels with enormous monster eyes that extend from one end of the world to the other. For bigger *aveiros* there are also frightening beasts and even worse things that cause horrible pains, and with still more serious *aveiros* every blow from one of those black angels is worse than a hundred years of the worse pain and suffering in this world. There they know the truth and a person sees even the smallest *aveira* he did as if it were a very serious one.

In this world a woman who goes *tzniusdik* can't know what happens to a woman who doesn't go *tzniusdik*, but there in the World of Truth you can know since the white angels created from the *mitzva* of *tznius* escort the woman and tell her how much she has to rejoice over this *mitzva*. They also tell her what would have happened to her if she hadn't behaved properly since Hashem wants a woman who goes *tzniusdik* to feel a lot of joy in her portion. This is true of all *mitzvos*, and also, *chas v'shalom* of *aveiros*. When a person does an *aveira* they show him what he could have achieved if he had done a *mitzva*, and at the same time the destructive forces are so happy to hurt him, and every blow they give him feels like it was thousands of years of pain.

When they gave me back my *neshomo* I felt like I was thousands of years old, until I *davened* to Hashem and asked Him for mercy, because I'm so young and why do I have to feel like I'm thousands of years old. I asked Him to forgive me and *boruch Hashem* that pain has left me, but I still feel connected to the World of Truth and I can't forget everything I went through there. I was so happy that they gave me back my *neshomo* so that I can correct what I did wrong, and what's especially important is to keep *tznius*, because if a woman *davens* to Hashem in clothes that aren't *tzniusdik* there's a big accusing force against her in heaven. How can a Jewish woman not be ashamed to stand like that before the King of the world when she's offending His honor. It's so vital to keep *tznius* every moment, even when there's no one looking and it doesn't cause anyone to sin, still it offends Hashem's honor, and He sees everything!

It's especially important to keep the head properly covered because that's an important thing in *Yiddishkeit*, especially today when there are all kinds of cosmetics women put on their faces and long earrings they wear. But women will have to give an accounting there over everything, without any possibility of escaping (and it's better to know the truth and fix things here rather than find out there where the only way to fix anything is through terrible suffering and harsh punishments that cleanse the soul and correct it).

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One of the merits that allowed me to come back to this world was the fact that I really did go *tzniusdik* from head to toe. However, there was just that little bit that I wasn't careful enough about, that I didn't even know was forbidden, but there in heaven I could see everything that was in store for me without having to have it explained to me, and that's the way it is with everyone. If a woman wants to have mercy on her *neshomo* and go *tzniusdik*, she has to make sure that the *tichel* she wears is really suited to the spirit of *tznius*, and check whether the knot she uses is *tzniusdik* enough and doesn't attract attention. She also has to think about whether her dress is too tight, or too short, or whether her clothes are at all transparent, heaven forbid. If a woman really pays attention to these things and genuinely wants to be *tzniusdik*, she'll be given help from heaven, and Hashem helps a person not to slip because from heaven they help every Jew to go in the way he wants to go.

A mother has to watch over her children, especially concerning *tznius*. Woe unto her if she doesn't give them a good upbringing, because that is the main thing she's alive for.

Even if she tries to claim in the next world that she had to provide a livelihood for her family because her husband was learning in *kollel* and they didn't have any money, that won't excuse her for not bringing her children up properly. Fathers are also responsible for their children's upbringing, and if they really devote themselves to this then they'll have the merit of seeing the truth they devote themselves to carry on to future generations.

May Hashem help all children, and all men and women, to go in the way of *Yiddishkeit* because eventually everyone will have to give an accounting, both in the next world and when *Moshiach* comes, because in *Beis Din shel Maaleh* there is a *Gehennom* for every *aveira*. Just like there are many kinds of *aveiros*, so there are many kinds of *Gehennom*, but let us hope that we will all merit to do *teshuva* and to rectify our souls and merit to all good things, amen!