

Hagiga 16a

Posted by shomerbris - 14 Feb 2012 06:42

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I haven't posted here in ages, but there's something I really wanted to ask.

"If a man sees that his urge is prevailing upon him, let him go to a place where he is not known, and put on black garments and let him do what his heart desires, but let him not profane the name of God publicly." --Hagiga 16a

Okay, so when I read this, I immediately thought of how it might apply to internet pornography--no one knows I do it, so the excerpt above suggests that it's really not such a big deal? Thoughts, anyone?

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Re: Hagiga 16a

Posted by TheJester - 14 Feb 2012 08:21

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Great point!

A few answers:

(1) This is a mitigation for someone who has already lost/is in the process of losing his battle, not a "*lechatchila*". It can be viewed similarly to "if one [insert crime here], then he must [insert remedy/mitigation here]". It is not a "how to legitimately sin".

(2) Rashi explains that it is actually a wonderful psychological tool; by doing all these things (traveling, dressing in black, etc.) he will lose his impetus to sin. Consider a child who wants to do something - if you say "no", the child will moan and wail, and possibly try to do it behind your back. If you say "not yet", then the child will have a lot more control. Then consider a football match - there is such a thing as a "home advantage" - the familiar ground and people make the home team more aggressive. In contrast, an away team is at a disadvantage. This is the effect that Rashi explains is intended here, not C"V that this is how a person should be permitted to sin.

According to this understanding, by watching porn and masturbating in your bedroom, you are not actually following the advice; you are in fact doing the exact opposite - you are still in your comfortable "home" environment.

Furthermore, it is not a license to misbehave whilst "on holiday", or "anonymous" - the key is that **once you have lost**, you then need to say to the Y"H, "fine, I've lost - but you'll now have to wait for me to change my location and my clothing". You cannot simply use this advice to **go somewhere to lose**. So you can't say "It is alright for me to lose on the Internet where I am anonymous".

**PS** - My own personal take on this:

This must be talking specifically about a brazen person who does not fear the people around him. This is clear both from the passage, which implies he will do it publicly anyway, and Rashi's explanation, that he needs to be "humbled".

One of the most powerful tools against sinning is other people watching. This is a potential remedy for when that has broken down.

If you feel the need to hide from people in the first place, this might not be particularly helpful. After all, what is the point of going from your bedroom in (say) New York, to a motel in New Jersey?  
Help any?

So, perhaps it cannot be applied to the Internet in the first place.

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Re: Hagiga 16a

Posted by tehylimzugger - 14 Feb 2012 13:02

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You are not the first one to ask, this gemara was brought up numerous times throughout the ages by various enemies of "the talmud" who referenced this, together with "hezek she'eino nikar lo shmei hezek" to prove the "immoral" values of the talmud.

There are two ways in the Rishonim:

A. Until the guy finally gets around to doing it he'll have lost the initial enthusiasm [this is what Yossi said, and is similar to the Gemara about Yefas Toar]. (there is a story in Menachos about a guy that travelled a very long way and spent a lot of money in order to meet a certain prostitute and when he finally got onto her bed he saw his tzitzit and it stopped him...)

B. [This is the majority opinion] That this isn't referring to actual aveiros but "naval birshus hatorah" type of aveiros.

P.S. In defense of these pshatim see Maharsha Kliddushin 40a

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Re: Hagiga 16a

Posted by shteighecher - 14 Feb 2012 15:32

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same gmara in Kidishin 40a

see tosofos there

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Re: Hagiga 16a

Posted by Gevura Shebyesod - 14 Feb 2012 15:53

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i don't remember who says this but "yaase ma shelibo chofeitz" can be taken to mean that he will do what his heart truly desires i.e. to do the ratzon hashem. By taking himself out of his familiar environment it will be easier to overcome his YH. Similar to Yossi's second pshat.

sorry for the bad typing i'm on my phone.

Gevura!

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Re: Hagiga 16a  
Posted by jack - 14 Feb 2012 16:30

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here we go again - another gemara on our inyan! in moed katan 17a tosfos says yes, but this is ONLY to avoid a chilul hashem if you absolutely cannot hold yourself back-then you do whatever you want, but dress in black, maybe by dressing that way you'll remind yourself that you're doing the wrong thing. it sounds strange though, it does.

jack

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Re: Hagiga 16a  
Posted by Gevura Shebyesod - 14 Feb 2012 19:28

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Re: Hagiga 16a  
Posted by gibbor120 - 15 Feb 2012 15:55

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[shomerbris wrote on 14 Feb 2012 06:42:](#)

"If a man sees that his urge is prevailing upon him, let him go to a place where he is not known, and put on black garments and let him do what his heart desires, but let him not profane the name of God publicly." --Hagiga 16a

Okay, so when I read this, I immediately thought of how it might apply to internet pornography...

... nuff said. Join the club of twisting gemarrahs, chazal, whatever. I think this is what ??????? ?????? ?? means. An addict sees a heter in every chazal.

These types of gemarrahs and chazal should have an issur of histaklus on them... for us. :-[ . They are really no help at all, just a distraction.

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Re: Hagiga 16a  
Posted by ZemirosShabbos - 15 Feb 2012 16:17

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[gibbor120 wrote on 15 Feb 2012 15:55:](#)

I think this is what ??????? ?????? ?? means. An addict sees a heter in every chazal.

well said.

additionally, some stories in tanach, chazal, halacha, teshuvos etc. can be read for the wrong reasons as well. talking from experience.

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Re: Hagiga 16a  
Posted by shteighecher - 15 Feb 2012 19:43

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Well what would you say, when we see advice, "if you anyway go for suicide jump in the water, please dont take along your kids" would you consider it as a reccomendation for suicide and maybe file a lawsuit from the world above against the adviser?

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Re: Hagiga 16a  
Posted by trying to change - 15 Feb 2012 21:12

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[shteighecher wrote on 15 Feb 2012 19:43:](#)

Well what would you say, when we see advice, "if you anyway go for suicide jump in the water, please dont take along your kids" would you consider it as a reccomendation for suicide and maybe file a lawsuit from the world above against the adviser?

true if you do it then at-least don't make a ????? ? but it is not in any way a heter.

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Re: Hagiga 16a  
Posted by shomerbris - 29 Feb 2012 14:54

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Oh wow, thank you SO MUCH everyone for the replies! I don't really have anything to say in response, but I read them all and your replies are very helpful.

Thank G-d, recently I've been doing okay. You can see my name on the online 90day chart now--it's been off the chart for so long...

And another thing--yesterday my computer got a rather nasty virus (trojan horse, actually), so I think I'm going to just turn off my computer and let it collect dust for the time being. I'll do the repairs over spring break, which is in four weeks (I'm in college). Being in college, I DO need internet for my coursework, but I think that for four weeks I can get by with just the student computer labs--with the added benefit that there are usually other people present and so I'm safe there, if you know what I mean--using my fear of basar v'dam to aid my much weaker fear or shamayim.

If it matters, there ARE girls in the computer labs here, but it really won't make any difference to me--there are also girls in my classes. And this is going to sound so beyond pathetic, but real live girls have never been the problem for me anyway.

If anyone's curious, I really don't know how I got this computer virus, but I know that it wasn't from porn, since I just got this virus yesterday and I haven't looked at porn in 9 days.

I'll still be able to access this forum while I've stowed away my computer.

I think this is going to be a good four weeks. Thank G-d that I got this computer virus, as weird as that sounds.

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Re: Hagiga 16a  
Posted by tehylimzugger - 29 Feb 2012 16:28

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[shomerbris wrote on 29 Feb 2012 14:54:](#)

Being in college, I DO need internet for my coursework, but I think that for four weeks I can get by with just the student computer labs--with the added benefit that there are usually other

people present and so I'm safe there, if you know what I mean--using my fear of basar v'dam to aid my much weaker fear or shamayim.

I'll still be able to access this forum while I've stowed away my computer.

I think this is going to be a good four weeks. Thank G-d that I got this computer virus, as weird as that sounds.

I think it'll be a good four weeks too!

I got by on GYE access using library computers for about the same amount of time and you don't seem to be an as frequent poster so you should be okay

GUITAR!

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