

Today's Chitas is talking to us!

Posted by Lamplighter - 23 Dec 2009 17:58

Holy Yidden, there is a Chabad custom to learn a daily cycle called Chitas, which is an acronym for Chumash, Tehillim, and Tanya. The way it works is you learn an aliya a day with Rashi (Sunday- Rishon, Monday- Sheni) from the weekly parsha, then say that day's Tehillim portion to finish in a month, and then learn a passage of Chassidus from Tanya to finish it in a year. The new Tanya cycle began on 19 Kislev and I joined the bandwagon this year. The Tanya for today, 6 Teives, discusses pogem habris. He explains that in a certain sense masturbation is worse than actual forbidden relations even though the Torah itself doesn't explicitly mention it. The Baal HaTanya also says that an effective time to do teshuva for this is by Krias Shema Al HiMita. I'm copying and pasting today's Tanya, for 6 Teves, below, taken from Chabad's official site:

Likutei Amarim, end of Chapter 7

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However, the vitality in the drops of semen that one issued wastefully, even though it has been degraded and incorporated in the three unclean kelipot, can nevertheless ascend from there by means of true repentance and intense concentration and devotion (kavanah) during the recital of the Shema at bedtime, as is known from the teachings of our master, Rabbi Isaac Luria, of blessed memory.

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This is implied in the Talmudic saying:¹ "He who recites the Shema at bedtime is as if he held a double-edged sword..."

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meaning, one edge wherewith to slay the bodies of the “extraneous forces” (the kelipot) that have become garments for the vitality in the drops of semen, and another edge by which the vitality ascends from them (from the kelipot), as is known to those familiar with the Esoteric Wisdom (the Kabbalah).

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Therefore the sin of wasteful emission of semen is not mentioned in the Torah among the list of forbidden coitions,

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even though in one respect it is more heinous than they, and [the individual’s] sin is greater with regard to the enormity and abundance of the impurity and of the kelipot; he begets and multiplies them to an exceedingly great extent through wasteful emission of semen, even more so than through forbidden coitions. I.e., when measured by the “quantity” of kelipot that sin creates, this sin is graver than the forbidden coitions.

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It is only that when measured qualitatively this sin is different. For in the case of forbidden coitions one contributes additional strength and vitality to a most unclean kelipah, from which he is powerless to raise up the vitality by means of ordinary repentance,

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unless he repents with such great love that his willful wrongs are transformed into merits.

Since the sin of wasteful emission of semen can be rectified even without “repentance out of love,” the Torah does not include this sin with the related sins of forbidden coition. Concerning this sin, all that is necessary to elevate the degraded vitality to holiness is proper repentance with true intent and devotion, during the recitation of the bedtime Shema.

In the note which follows the Alter Rebbe explains why forbidden coition requires greater repentance than wasteful emission.

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NOTE

The reason is that through forbidden coitions this vitality has been absorbed by the level of Yesod in the “female” element of kelipah, which receives and absorbs the vitality from holiness — just as the physical semen is absorbed within the female, in the case of these sins.

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Not so with wasteful emission of semen, where there is no “female” element of kelipah;

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Only its (the kelipah's) power and forces garb (i.e., encompass) the vitality of the semen, as is known to those familiar with the Esoteric Wisdom.

END OF NOTE

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From the above explanation, that the vitality of the forbidden coitions can be released through “repentance out of love,” we will understand that which our Sages say:² “Which is³ ‘a fault that cannot be rectified’? — Having incestuous intercourse and giving birth to a bastard.”

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For then, once the bastard is born, though the sinner undertakes such great repentance as “repentance of great love,” he cannot cause the vitality to ascend to Sanctity,

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since it has already descended into this world and has been clothed in a body of flesh and blood.

Even “repentance of great love” cannot rectify this. Still, it is explained elsewhere that if the repentance is powerful enough it can actually effect the death of the bastard; and once it ceases to be a body of flesh and blood its vitality can ascend to holiness.

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FOOTNOTES

1. Berachot 5a.
2. Chagigah 9a.
3. Kohelet 1:15.

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