

## **THE HOLINESS OF THE EYES BULLETIN 2**

IS YOUR RABBI ORTHODOX OR REFORM?  
THE TRUTH ABOUT LOOKING AT WOMEN

### **THE RAMBAM: LOOKING AT WOMEN MAKES IT DIFFICULT TO DO TESHUVAH**

And there are five things that the one who does it finds no strength to do Teshuvah for them because these things are taken lightly by most people and the person transgresses them and he thinks that it is no sin...The one who looks at women thinks that there is no sin involved in this and he says: Have I had sexual relations with her or did I get close to her?" And he doesn't know that the sight of his eyes is a great sin that leads to the sin of forbidden relations. (The Rambam, Hilchot Teshuvah 4, 4)

### **LOOKING AT WOMEN IS A GRAVE PROHIBITION FROM THE TORAH**

My dear friend you should know that a majority of people think that this prohibition is only words of Chassidut and are not careful to refrain from looking at women, You should know my friend that this is a grave prohibition from the Torah, and the ones who treat lightly this prohibition woe to their souls because they cause great evil for themselves. We have a verse that we repeat three times a day: "And do not go astray after your hearts and after your eyes" And it is written in the Talmud: "Why is it written (Kohelet 6:9) "Better is the sight of the eyes than the wandering of the soul" Because it is more pleasurable looking at a woman than the actual sexual act. And Rashi commented: For the Yetzer ha Ra it is better to make a person sin through the sight of his eyes than to make him sin through the actual sin. (Derech Pikudecha)

### **NO LENIENCY OR PERMISSION TO TRANSGRESS THIS PROHIBITION**

See dear friends how far this thing reaches that even when a person knows that he will not transgress by looking at women, even so when his heart desires to look, from that moment he is transgressing the words of the Torah and the word of the Sages, and if he indeed looks G-d forbid, then his sin is too great to bear. And the wise will have this in front of him always, that it is strictly forbidden to look at women and that there is no permission or leniency to transgress this prohibition.

(Sefer Tikkun ha Brit)

## **WOE TO HE WHO LEADS OTHERS TO SIN**

He who leads others to sin and particularly on this sin of mingling men and women or in leading men to look at women, this person is not given the chance to do Teshuvah and he is worse than the one who kills his fellow for he takes the life of those he leads to sin not only the life of this world but also the life of the world to Come. And this person that brings many to sin has no share in the world to Come (See Rambam Hil. Teshuva, Chap. 3) And if he is the cause of mixing men and women in one place he transgresses also the prohibition of Not to walk in the ways of the gentiles. (Sefer Tikkun ha Brit)

## **LOOKING AT WOMEN IS LIKE WORSHIPPING IDOLS**

"You fill their belly with tzefuncha (that which is hidden with you) ... [they leave their yeter (abundance; remainder) to their babes.]" (Psalms 117:14) Avoid gazing at material things that are attractive. How much more so avoid gazing at the beauty of women to indulge your desire. For that sort of looking is self worship, which is like worshipping idolatry. Moreover that thought leads, Heaven forbid, to nocturnal sin. Thus you will add strength to kelipah (husks, the forces or realm of evil), impregnating it. (Tzaavat ha Rivash of the Baal Shem Tov, 90)

## **LOOKING AT WOMEN INCREASES THE STRENGTH OF THE KELIPOT**

This is the meaning of tzefuncha, i.e., that which you tzofeh (observe) for your sake, such as the beauty of a woman. By looking for self-indulgence you add power to [kelipah]. Moreover, if you do so before giving birth to a child, your child will be rooted in the power [of the kelipot]. R. Isaac Luria, of blessed memory, thus explained [the ruling] that "Honor your father," (Exodus 20:12) includes [the obligation to honor] your elder brother (Ketuvot 103a): The older brother is like the major branch of a tree. As another branch grows from that major branch, it draws vitality from the major branch. So, too, the younger brother draws vitality from the older one. Thus it follows that when first infusing strength into kelipah and then begetting a child, that child will be like the smaller branch. The principal strength is [given] into [the forces of evil], and the child is like yitron, something additional. This is the meaning of 'they left their yitron to their babes.'" (Psalms 17:14)

(Tzaavat ha Rivash of the Baal Shem Tov, 90)

MAYBE YOU NEVER HEARD YOUR RABBI TALKING ABOUT THESE THINGS FOR IT MAY NOT BE IN HIS BEST INTEREST TO TELL YOU. SO EVEN IF YOUR RABBI RIDICULES YOU FOR KEEPING THE SHULCHAN ARUCH YOU SHOULD BE STRONG AND GO AHEAD FOR IT MAY BE THAT YOUR RABBI BELONGS TO THE EREV RAV AND HE JUST DOES NOT WANT YOU TO KEEP THE TORAH AS IT SHOULD BE FOR MAYBE HE WOULD BE EXPOSED AS A FAKE IN THE EYES OF THE OTHER CONGREGANTS WHEN THEY SEE THAT A COMMON PERSON KEEPS THE SHULCHAN ARUCH TO A GREATER EXTENT THAN THE RABBI. AND WE ARE NOT TALKING ABOUT PIOUS PRACTICES BUT WE ARE TALKING HERE ABOUT KEEPING THE SHULCHAN ARUCH, SPECIFICALLY CONCERNING THOSE AREAS WHERE THE RELIGIOUS LEADERS OF OUR TIME ARE LAX ABOUT. FOR EXAMPLE, TALKING IN THE SYNAGOGUE IN THE MIDDLE OF PRAYERS, DURING THE KADDISH, GIVING TORAH LESSONS TO MEN AND WOMEN WITHOUT A MECHITZA, HAVING A DEFICIENT MECHITZA IN SHUL, LOOKING AT WOMEN WHICH IS SOMETHING FORBIDDEN, ETC