

Return to Walmart - A short story from an FFBBT

Posted by Ben Moshe - 26 Jul 2009 14:39

Chevra--

Here's another short story for you to enjoy. If you like this piece you may also like my earlier posting ("Torah and Tefillah - Fresh perspectives from an FFBBT")

Return to Walmart

Your phone rings.

It's your wife.

"Can you stop off at Walmart to pick up some groceries?"

"Sure."

You take down the details, then draw a deep breath. Your delightfully clueless wife is sending you into the Gaza Strip, into Afghanistan, because Walmart on a hot and humid summer afternoon, will be full with unwanted stimuli and slippery distraction, not ben-Torah friendly, certainly not recovering ben-Torah friendly. However, you don't panic. You remind yourself that you know the drill, you have learned neat tricks, and have even learned to turn the tables to your advantage...

You are fortunately blessed with near-sightedness so, before you leave your car, you deliberately remove your glasses, then leave them in your car. You think back fondly to the first time you tried this. You remember the thrill you felt, as you trod those aisles, ten-feet tall, empowered by an enveloping haze which acted like a spiritual buffer. You had felt insulated and protected. You had felt holy, racking up points like a rapidly clacking Geiger counter. "Good work," you had said to yourself when you had completed your mission. You had given yourself a

pat on your back.

This time you are even better prepared. You enter the store with your mp3-player nestled in your shirt pocket, earpieces comfortably in your ears. You head over to the canned vegetable aisle. Rabbi Reisman is giving a *blatt* shiur. A fascinating *Ketzos*. Is *shavya naphsha a din in ne'emonus*, or is it *mita'am neder*? You peer (shortsightedly) at the canned corn. Sixty-eight cents a can? A *metzia*. You take a half dozen cans. Kesubos is too heavy to focus on the moment, despite your insulating fog, so you switch to something a little lighter. You switch to Rabbi Yisroel Brog analyzing the Steipler's letters on how to guide people with OCD affecting their performance of Halacha. *Geshmak!* You drool over the hortatory smorgasbord at your fingertips. You give your player a surreptitious kiss, then return it to your pocket. You are now in the cereal aisle, but notice that Krispies have just been reformulated with an OUD. Chalav Stam? You can't have that. That's *metamtem es halev!* Then you laugh at yourself: the foolish hypocrite that you are! Is there any part of your *lev* that is not *metumtem*? But you are thoroughly enjoying yourself. By the time you reach the checkout lane you have downed a Reb Simcha Bunim Cohen's Thursday night Chovas Halevovos shiur, and just begun a Kehilas HaGra shiur on copyright laws as applied to ripping CDs...

The magazines at checkout inform and inspire. The cover of one magazine tells you that Britney's ex says that Britney is cheating during rehab. You remove your earpieces. You now hear the store's music system. Synthesized Britney is belting out an important message. Britney says that she loves you. Just Britney and you. You feel romance in the air. Then, you think back to your forbears. Volozhin. Slabodka. In those days people had **manly yetzer horas**. Haskala. Socialism. Secular Zionism. You remember once reading how the Alter of Slabodka asked Reb Yaakov Kaminetsky to keep an eye on mail arriving for the young Reb Aaron Kotler (*zecher tzaddikim ukedoshim livracha*). The Alter wanted to make sure that Reb Aaron's relatives would not prevail upon him with their alien ideas. You giggled as you tried to imagine the Alter keeping tabs on what Reb Aaron was downloading to his cell phone. Oy! What yeridas hadoros!

You arrive home.

"Successful?" your wife asks.

"Yes."

She appears to be excited.

"Guess what," she says, "I have a new chicken recipe."

Bless her. The lovable, delightful, clueless fuzzball. She is blissfully unaware of the battles you have fought and the monsters you have slain. She proceeds to give you blow by blow details of her new idea for chicken and you smile at her warmly. But your mind is far away. There is something bothering you: How can *shavya naphsha* be a *din* in *ne'emanus* if *ein odom mesim atzmo rosho*?!

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Re: Return to Walmart - A short story from an FFBBT
Posted by bardichev - 26 Jul 2009 17:04

Ben Moshe

AHH IVDU ESS HASHEM BIYIRAHH ...IVDU ESS HASHEM BISIMCHA!!! ALLIN ONE NEAT PACKAGE

KEEP IT COMING!!

YOU REMIND ME OF A VORT FROM THE CHIDUSHEI HARIM

HE ASKS WHY DOES EVERYONE CRY ON ROSH AHASANA BY ADAM YESODO MEI-AFAR VISOSFO LI-AFAR

IB'T THIS THE NATURAL EVENTS OF MAN

THE TERUTZT IS

BINAFSHO YOVEE LACHMO ONE NEEDS TO GIVE AWAY HIS NESHAMA TO MAKE
PARNASSAH

TODAY IT IS EVEN JUST TO GO SHOPPING

YES WHIP OFF THE GLASSES OR DO THE bardichever SMUDGE TRICK BITE THE INSIDE
OF YOUR CHEEK CURL YOUR TOES.. SOUNDS WACKY RIGHT?? WHAT IS THE
ALTERNATIVE??

PNEI HADOR KIPNEI HAKELEV THIS GENERATION THAT WAS AND STILL IS BLESSED
WITH SO MUCH MATERIAL WEALTH AND TECHNOLOGY THAT CAN REALLY GIVE
PEOPLE A BETTER QUALITY OF LIFE

WHAT IS IT BEING USED FOR YES OF COURSE THERE ARE ADVANCES IN MEDECINE
ETC..

BUT BUT..IT IS USED FOR SHMUTZ SHMUTZ AND MORE SHMUTZ

WE SEE THAT OUR LITTLE CHABURAH OF HOLY WARRIOIRS ARE THE ONLY ONE THAT
GETS IT!!!

BEN MOSHE DID YOU THINK OF HOW MANY INDUSTRIES IT TOOK TO MAKE THAT
GLOSSY MAG THAT YOU SUCCSESSFULLY TUNED YOUR EYES FROM

PHOTGRAPHERS COMPUTER EXPERTS EDITORS DITRIBUTION HOW MANY PEOPLE
WENT TO COLLAGE JUST TO TURN THAT LITTLE SHIKSA INTO A STAR MILLION
BILLIONS

AND YOU TURNED AWAY BOOM! (I AM SCREAMING NOW!!!)

YOU ARE NOTEL SCHAR KINEGGED KULAM

YOU ARE NOTEL SCHAR KINEGGED KULAM!!!

KEEP IT COMING BEN MOSHE!!

bardichev

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Re: Return to Walmart - A short story from an FFBBT
Posted by bochur28 - 26 Jul 2009 17:59

ben-moshe - you really inspired me with that piece. You're a true warrior for hashem - tumah all around you, and not even one bad move - you're literally keeping the world in existence. I can place myself mamesh in your shoes (on a good day, when I actually try and beat the menuval) - no one else knows the wars we go through daily. With me it's not wal-mart; it's just walking down the street! On my street, there's a video store with a big banner saying 'pornography sale' - plus, there's this pritzusdige psychic fortune teller lady who keeps talking to me when I pass by that for some reason I keep thinking about. It's different with her because she's actually talking to me, making herself impressed on my mind more than an impersonal sight of a prutzah on the street - the social aspect of it makes it a lot harder, but that's what the yatzer hora feeds on, vulnerabilities - in my case I'm vulnerable in that I'm not too sociable; I don't have a lot of friends, and the ones I do have I'm not that close with - looking back on when I used to watch shmutz, I think it may have been more due to the excitement of the energy the prutzos expressed on the videos than anything - I craved excitement. But ketzosen are more exciting! I have no idea how I'll be able to talk to prutzos in work or something if I ever need to - I'm terrified. Baruch hashem I'm still in yeshiva!

Those magazines are ALWAYS at the check-out it's a good mussar haskel though - it's a reminder that even when we think we're done fighting, we always have to have our guard up. As my rebbe says, there's no word for 'fair' in lashon hakodesh. If you ever noticed little Israeli boys talking, they say 'ze lo fair!' since there's no word for it even in modern ivrit. What does this mean? It means the concept of 'fair' the way we see it doesn't exist, since if it has no word in Hebrew, it's meaningless. There's justice, yashrus, etc.. but no concept of fair, as in, fair by my own definition.

P.S. what's the problem of ain odom maysim atzmo larasha? All he wants to do is asser some

meat on himself, or his wife in the case of the gemora altz pesach pasuach - how is that making himself a rasha in beis din?

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Re: Return to Walmart - A short story from an FFBBT
Posted by Ben Moshe - 26 Jul 2009 20:59

bochur28-

Thank you for the compliment. I thoroughly empathize with you, your struggle and your victories. Chazak veyeematz! I think that today's generation suffers no less than, say, the generation, experiencing Polish antisemitism in the 1930's. We just suffer differently. And Hashem loves us in spades.

Of course, you are 100% correct: *Shavya naphsha* does not normally have any *shaychus* to *ein odom meisim atzmo*. I was actually thinking of the unique case they bring down whereby a *shliach lekidushin* claims that he did a *maasah kiddushin*. We apply *shavya naphsha* to *assur* him on her *krovim*, even though he did a *maaseh rish'us*... It made for a good story punchline

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Re: Return to Walmart - A short story from an FFBBT
Posted by Noorah BAmram - 26 Jul 2009 22:21

But your mind is far away. There is something bothering you: How can *shavya naphsha* be a *din* in *ne'emanus* if *ein odom meisim atzmo rosho*?!

LOL :D :D this is great- i think we have a new "star" on GYE

Shalom Aleichem my dearest *chaver* and welcome to this holy site or in *loshon*

hopedash 22222 22222 2222
your writing style is engaging and funny and deep what a punch line

I stopped shopping in Shop Rite and Wal mart during the summer months for the very reasons that u so beautifully stated - i recently paid in the hiemesha stores alot more for a big box of Tide and i figure that is the cost of this mitzvah - I will forward the bill to my Father

anyways keep posting, I eagerly await your next posts- but no pressure my dear friend -

Noorah Bamram

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Re: Return to Walmart - A short story from an FFBBT
Posted by Ben Moshe - 26 Jul 2009 23:51

Thank you for the warm welcome!

I actually have a few more story ideas.

bl"n I'll get to them over the next week or so, time permitting.

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Re: Return to Walmart - A short story from an FFBBT
Posted by hoping - 26 Jul 2009 23:53

Ben Moshe-

What a great post! I thoroughly enjoyed the way you accurately portrayed what I gao through on a stupid trip to walmart and at the same time caused me to laugh at myself. Please keep it coming.

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Re: Return to Walmart - A short story from an FFBBT
Posted by Chaim - 27 Jul 2009 08:30

Ben Moshe

(are family with Noorah bey amram - your uncle?)

I like your style, - If I may suggest keep it really personal instead of "you" say "I" when you mean it.

You have given all of us some eitzah on how to keep ourselves apart from the cesspool\whirlpool that seeks to suck us in.

With all due regard,

I take issue with the way you described your eishes chayil.

Fuzzball is not a compliment. It seems to me that she is unable to understand any of the lofty ideas you so beautifully described in writing.

I won't write about you, rather about me.

My wife isn't intellectual. She enjoys a good woman's shiur, and some short deep ideas that I manage to give over. But she is my partner in chinuch, and spiritual endavors.

Maybe she can understand more than I think?

She can certainly feel the lack of my interest when acting out, and lusting. She probably knows without telling her I you have gone through a lot.

She is probably sensitive to the way the pruzos dress, as she has been moser nefesh NOT to be like them, she has plenty of lofty ideals that come to play every time she gets dressed.

Chaval to lose the help of my Ezer kenegdo. Maybe I am just embarrassed, but can find a way to let her in on my feelings.

She might even agree to pay a bit more in order to save me the pain, the aveirahs etc. She may not agree this time - deeming it possible to refrain and guard my eyes. But she might give me the chizuk that I need: "you are a ben Torah, you are not going there in order to look, just to help bring home food. Stay strong and Hashem will be with you"

Wouldn't that be a better conversation than just about recipies?

Could it be possible to let her in on some of

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Re: Return to Walmart - A short story from an FFBBT
Posted by Noorah BAmram - 27 Jul 2009 11:00

Chaim HaTzadik,

U must be clairvoyant!! Ben Moshe and Noorah from the house of Amram are actually cousins :D :D

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Re: Return to Walmart - A short story from an FFBBT
Posted by Ben Moshe - 27 Jul 2009 12:59

Thank you for your suggestions, Chaim. I should have been more respectful towards the protagonist's *eshes chayil*, bless her.

The reason I write my stories in the second person is because I like readers to think about applying the lessons of these stories to themselves. We might just have to agree to disagree on

whether this device is effective or not.

Someone asked me, offline, where he could download the *shiurim* I reference in my story, so, *le'toeles harabim*, here are some *mar'eh mekomos*:

Rav Belsky discusses the permissibility of shopping at Walmart viz-a-viz *pritzus* (fast forward to 14 min; 36 sec):

matzav.com/audio-rav-belsky-answers-numerous-shailos-at-rayim-mesivta/

Rabbi Yisroel Brog:

www.kolhashiurim.com/Eng/ShowDownloadFiles/strSearchValue/brog/RavID/7117/strSearchLang/English/

Rabbi Simcha Bunim Cohen:

www.kolhashiurim.com/Eng/ShowDownloadFiles/strSearchValue/bunim/RavID/7077/strSearchLang/English/

Rabbi Yisroel Reisman:

www.mp3shiur.com/viewProd.asp?catID=20

Kehillas HaGra:

www.kehilla.org.il/audio.asp?T=ALL

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Re: Return to Walmart - A short story from an FFBBT
Posted by the.guard - 27 Jul 2009 15:20

Thank you Ben-Moshe for this beautiful anecdote. I shared it with 620 members in today's Chizuk e-mail! You should write a book :D

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Re: Return to Walmart - A short story from an FFBBT
Posted by 7yipol - 27 Jul 2009 16:21

Ben-Moshe; I LOVED it. PLease keep them coming!

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Re: Return to Walmart - A short story from an FFBBT
Posted by kutan - 27 Jul 2009 16:30

Ben-Moshe,

Thanks for the story, and even more, for the mareh mekomos... especially the kehilla.org site that I never was aware of before.

About Chaim's objections, I can relate to his being uncomfortable with the description of the wife. I personally have his type of relationship with my wife, basically her fault, but she discusses a lot of ruchniyus with me. She knows about my nisyonos, although not from me personally, and I really wish she knew more but am also too embarrassed to tell her openly.

She did find the GUI handbook (the attitude one) recently....

But, Chaim, a lot depends on the wife. I think that some are indeed the 'fuzzball' type and should not be involved. (Rebetzin 7Up, is this true?) I have several daughters b"H, and one is deep, one is superficial (a fuzzball), one is pure logic etc. They are little children... no issue of

bechira, just their nature.

And the men's attitude towards the wife is also a cultural thing. I personally know several men from a country 'down under' who all have this macho attitude toward women, so I assume that that is the norm in those countries, and most likely the women there are ok with it.

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Re: Return to Walmart - A short story from an FFBBT
Posted by Efshar Letaken - 27 Jul 2009 17:10

Wow! Ben,

I could have used this story this weekend while I was shopping at wallmart this past Friday.

Like Reb Guard said "Right A Book" or in one of the Jewish weekly Publications.

Your writing talent is Superior!

But Never Stop Posting Your Ideas & Stories.

I felt like I was live at wallmart a few steps behind you while I was reading the story.

The same is true for the Shalosh Shudos Post.

Waiting for the next post

E.L.

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Re: Return to Walmart - A short story from an FFBBT
Posted by Efshar Letaken - 27 Jul 2009 17:49

Another note,

This story is one of an Olam Hatikun!

Just imagine all Yiddin walking around in the world plugged into Torah & connected to Hashem every second of the day like Ben M. was doing.

The power of Kedusha is like Drano in the Sewer world of Tuma. Just wipes it out of existence & brings more of Hashem into the open.

May we be zoche to many more of Ben M.'s in this world so that "V'Hoiyoh Hashem L'Melech Al **Kol HaAretz** on all the Artziuos & Hashems name will be One again. Amein

E.L.

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