

Vayeshev - Yosef - Us

Posted by Kollel Guy - 11 Dec 2009 11:38

(Copied from chizuk list 153/154)

How Yosef Hatzadik was tested

When speaking of holiness and guarding one's eyes from impure sights, the first name that springs to mind is of the paradigm of holiness, Yosef Hatzadik. This seventeen - year-old boy of unsurpassed beauty, newly wrenched away from all his righteous family, alone now in a land saturated with immorality, was bought as a slave by the prominent and wealthy Potiphar. He was quickly promoted to the position of managing all of his master's affairs and then... His master's wife saw him and became implacably determined to seduce him to sin with her. She put him through the most agonizing trials. This formidable temptress tried verbal persuasion. She would change her clothes three times every day. She made things successively harsher for him and threatened his refusal with the most fearful consequences. After having him thrown into prison for his unbending no, his problems were far from over.

She regularly visited him there and warned him 'So you think this is the last of your woes? If you persist in your obstinacy there are worse tortures coming. I will have you bound in iron chains, bent over and unable to stand erect. I will have you blinded,' and on and on.

Not only was she relentlessly working to making him yield to her advances, but her heart was also set on getting him to somehow to look at her. The Midrash tells us that she even positioned a metal pointed roasting spit at his neck to coerce him to look at her. But her efforts were in vain.

The Medrash makes the point in several places, that the severest of his trials was in fact to avoid looking at her. Yet he stood firm. That mighty hero, Yosef Hatzadik, never once glimpsed at her. After twelve years, his purity intact, he emerged from prison and was rushed to stand before Pharaoh.

As the newly appointed Mishneh Lemelech (viceroy) Yosef was driven through the streets of Mitzrayim in Pharaohs' royal chariot. The Medrash Raba describes how the daughters of the noblemen peeped at him from their windows and threw their fine jewellery, one piece after the next, into his carriage in the hope that he might look up at them. But no, Yosef would not raise his eyes. In Targum Yerushalmi we are further told how the daughters of the aristocrats

exclaimed to one another in sheer amazement: 'Oh, see this pious nobleman who so perfectly controls his eyes and his thoughts'.

In this Yosef was unique. Never did his eyes behold anything that they shouldn't. Until Hashem was moved to say: 'I must surely pay back those eyes that were shut fast'...

All of Klal Yisrael ultimately reaped from this rich harvest. The nascent nation descended to this land that was uncontested for its low morals. Nevertheless, every Jew retained his purity because each felt strengthened by the Kedusha of that saintly bochur who prevailed over all the forces of impurity and wickedness, and triumphed over whatever he was subjected to. And the influence of Yosef's sanctity shields us to this very day.

The Seforim say, why did Hashem engineer Yosef's coming down to Mitzrayim ahead of all his family? To empower a Merkava to the Shechina there in Mitzrayim, as explained in the Zohar, and to neutralize their overpowering evil and filth, by his going through all those trials.

They also ask: What noble deeds were performed to prepare the ground for the Jewish nation's arrival? None. No great deeds, no Kabbalistic Yichudim. Nothing. All that happened was that Yosef held out and did not once look at his seductress. And this non-action enabled the Jewish people to come and stay in Mitzrayim for the next 210 years!

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Re: Vayeshev - Yosef - Us- ME

Posted by shemirateinayim - 15 Dec 2009 22:24

On that weeks parshah I had the unfortunate need to communicate with medical staff, and sadly most of them are women, with too much skin exposed. So forget about histaklus, even 'reiyah' is gonna be problematic. I got through most of the conversations with a mix of thick skin, and chutzpah (i know the M"B says not to). Except for one nurse who had the guts/attitude to ask "do you always not look people in the eye when talking to them!?" and she didn't say it nicely. B'H now i don't have to avoid looking like I'm not looking, I can look totally away, she anyways thinks I'm....whel whatever she thinks I am. So one of the nearby nurses offered "It's because you're a woman" I'm thinking 'Hmm does this mean I'm off the hook' But with four nurses sizing me- and all frum yidden-up I offered an explanation. "In judasim we try not to see women as a peice of flesh to lust over. you know when they make biboards and they put a woman by the car, well she doeasn't come with the car..." I started to get too into my ranting and raving, so they cut me

off. but not before they exclaimed how 'I like it!' But before i could breath a sigh of releif at a terrible chilul hashem turned kidush hashem, the shiksah took a page out of Ashes potifar's 'book' and treid entising me to slip. i started craching up. not only was the parsha mashpiah on the week, but it was playing itself out (in my warped sence of humor this is called funny)!

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Re: Vayeshev - Yosef - Us
Posted by ovadia - 20 Dec 2009 12:39

Just read it now- a week late. Beautifully put. I was not aware of all the midrashim. It makes a very deep impression. Thank you

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Re: Vayeshev - Yosef - Us
Posted by the.guard - 20 Dec 2009 15:50

shemirateinayim, may Hashem reward you with true kingship, as the sefarim say, that one who masters middas hayesod is zoche to malchus! (this can be any type of true Jewish leader).

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Re: Vayeshev - Yosef - Us
Posted by shemirateinayim - 25 Dec 2009 04:47

Midaas heyeshod: deffinition. To take a bus to the local train station, with your eyes glued to the ground. And then you get that urge to look out of the window at every stop (b/c chas veshalom . Then you board the train only to find that although you walked 5 minutes to the end of the platform...there are no seats. Except for one between 2 women. So the hardest part about this is figuring out which option is my yetzer hara. I figured that standing by the door was the most kosher option of the two. Now with advertisements surrounding me on all sides, and pritzus everywhere else...I began my long journey.

So Somehow you master controll over yourself and take a sefer. now it's one thing to learn, but to glue your eyes to the crease of the sefer, you aren't even learning! And then the problem is that when you get to the top of the daf, you look at the ppl, and when you get the the bottom,

you see the exposed 'lower extremities' of the passengers standing next to you. So apparently the greatest chackmah to be oisek in is the fibers of the string that holds the binding together. So basically you space-out, and focus on staring at the page, while ppl walk in-out at every stop.

Finally we reach our destination. and a mob of a thousand passengers disembarks onto the platform. Now for some unexplainable reason the ratio of men:women in america is about 1:9. So there will always be enough women to surround you two on all sides. to run forward you merely see different women, to slow down you see the 'tnuas hiluach' of every woman. So the only eitzah is RUN! Did i forget to mention that the walls on both sides are plastered with absolute pritzus (legally it's called 'tasteful'), so you can only look up, down, and nowhere around!

After sitting on another bus, with the filth of america's mexican population, i finally arrive at my destination. on one hand it's a relief, on the other...looking at frum tzanua girls is also assur. So after waiting an agonizing 20 minutes for my ride to arrive, all while fighting not to look at passing traffic, and at the same time not let my ride pass me by, i was finally safe. i could breathe a sigh of relief, after just traveling through one of america's major cities, and not giving up the fight for 3 hours straight.....except for the trip back!!!!!! To cut the story short. An attractive young... who puts an emphasis on displaying herself, chooses to sit down next to me on the train. But this time the standing room was full of ever bigger nissyonos. (Apparently everyone else would rather stand for an hour than sit next to a yeshiva bachur, not that I'm complaining, just that the only people that end up sitting next to me are there lehachis.) But B"H somewhere during the trip that lady departed, and was replaced by a shiksah my age (dressed worse/less) whom I didn't realize until i had to get off.

it was a long day. But B"H I fought the whole time. but even that's not middas hayesod. only a big step in the direction.

(sorry for shopping up all my stories, ut I really don't have the time to type them up better. also if anyone wants I got a handfull of good chizuk stories in shmiras einayim, all firsthand)

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