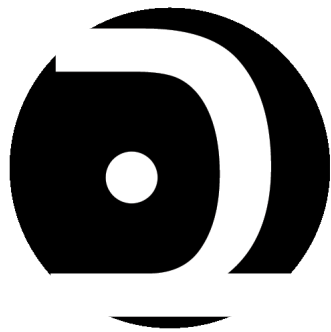


BILVAVI

**MY
HEART
ASKS**



QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

PARSHAS KI SAVO 5782

ISSUE 259



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UNDERSTANDING THE EVIL OF INTERNET

[דרשות_138_מדיה קליפה לאין סוף תשפ"ב From the new Hebrew shiur]

1) *Since part of the problem with technology is that it does our thinking for us (imitating the concept of Binah), does that mean we need to separate from this device more than from other things, or is there is a need to separate equally from all means of technology?*

ANSWER

The device is the concept of *echad*, one. If the device would be designed in a way that it's made of different parts, then it would be a discussion of how much we need to separate, but since it's designed in a way where it's always one single unit, the fact that it has computer-thinking to it is more of a blockage to the Infinite Light. But the entire concept of this device is that it is always "one".

QUESTION

2) *What does the Rav mean by calling it a "kli" (device)? Does the Rav mean a certain device, or the power of technology in general?*

ANSWER

The very fact that it has the power to connect the entire world together means that it goes beyond the capabilities of any other tool that has ever been made, but it is just that it happens to be clothed in the form of this device. To separate from all the Wi-Fi radiation in the world is something that's impossible to do, because it's everywhere, and that is the depth behind this war. When one has the device, then this [impurity] is actually attached to him and he has a *mitzvah* to destroy it ("*And you shall destroy the evil from your midst*") and a Torah prohibition not to bring it into his house ("*Do not bring an abomination into your house*"), but even if a person does not have the device, the air is still filled with Wi-Fi, so even if a person doesn't have an internet-device in his hands, he still cannot be saved from it totally. Actively separating from it is to separate from this device, but the inner separation we must have from it is what obligates us to separate from its very concept (this evil imitation of endlessness and all-inclusivity), and for this we need the revelation of the "Infinite Light" to counter it.

QUESTION

3) *How is one moser nefesh? How can every single act be done with mesirus nefesh?*

ANSWER

To live every movement with *mesirus nefesh* is a very high level. Every person needs to find a place in his soul where he's open to *mesirus nefesh* for Hashem, and then he can expand his *mesirus nefesh* more and more. But he also has to do so sensibly, by making sure that he's still building up his soul step by step, because if one simply has *mesirus nefesh* and goes overboard with it, he will break himself. Many did this and fell - they lost their minds and their inner peace, or they lost their ability to act stable. So there must always be a deep balance between building oneself step by step along with building the power of *mesirus nefesh*, and one should go back forth between these two areas of the soul.

QUESTION

4) *Does the revelation of this light come in stages or as one revelation?*

ANSWER

The deeper one is shining forth his ability of *mesirus nefesh*, until his soul is totally immersed in *mesirus nefesh*, to that degree will the Infinite Light shine with him completely. That is what a person should aspire for. Then a person has to return to building his soul, because there are parts of the soul that he hasn't yet purified, and when he returns to working on himself after he has accessed the Infinite Light then those parts of the soul gain from the light he has received.

QUESTION

5) *The Rav mentioned the terms of mesirus nefesh and also "above logic and reasoning", which sounds like the concepts of emunah and temimus – did the Rav mean specifically mesirus nefesh?*

ANSWER

6) The goal of all these terms is the same. When we speak of *mesirus nefesh* we are referring to what we need to do in the active sense, but the root of being able to have *mesirus nefesh* comes from the ability to go above our logic and reasoning. The test with the Akeidah wasn't just that Avraham had to tie Yitzchok, it was that he had to resist questioning Hashem, by going above his logic and reasoning. When one is *moser nefesh*, this is called *emunah*, for he is being loyal to Hashem.

QUESTION

7) *How should a person apply the power of mesirus nefesh, in which areas? How can does mesirus nefesh in learning Torah counter the evil Infinite?*

ANSWER

There is *mesirus nefesh* at every level. The Infinite light has a power of oneness and it is also infinite, and the Torah which is Hashem's revelation to the world includes the oneness of the Torah as well as the endlessness of the Torah, and both of these are revelations of the Infinite that are in the Torah.

QUESTION

8) *The Rav explained that both the power of limitations and the power of imitating is what opposes the Infinite Light. Will this "imitating" aspect end in the end of the 6th century? What is holding back the Infinite Light of the 7th century from being revealed – the limited aspect or a different aspect?*

ANSWER

In the end of the 6th century all evil will be destroyed, and that is what it means that Hashem will destroy all impurity from the world and remove all evil, and only the "light" and "vessel" of holiness will remain [a process that is explained in *sefer Daas Tevunos*]. But the completion process of how the "light" purifies the "vessel" is a process that goes until the 10th century when there won't be a concept of evil at all, and that is all a process of purification, for the vessel.

QUESTION

9) *"Coarseness of the vessel" - is that not evil?*

ANSWER

Anything is evil in relation to a level higher than it. But there is the root of evil and then there is active evil. Active evil is any of the sins of the Torah, and the root of evil is the "coarseness of the vessel" which doesn't allow the light to be clearly revealed. A person can serve Hashem earnestly and he is G-d fearing but in relation to a *tzadik* or to a *tzaddik* higher than him, he is coarser in relation to that higher level, even if he's not sinning at all and he does Hashem's will, if he doesn't have the clarity of the one on a higher level than him. He can be holy, but there is still some "coarseness" that has to get refined.

QUESTION

10) *Why is this device evil – is it because it is an “endlessness” of the creations which does not have the endlessness of the Creator in it?*

ANSWER

That is the lower aspect of its evil, but its higher aspect of evil is that *it presents itself as the Infinite.*

QUESTION

11) *So if it would be an endlessness that reveals the Infinite of the Creator, then it wouldn't be evil...?*

ANSWER

This is touching on the purpose of all creations, which is: to reveal how the Infinite is revealed among all the creations. That will be the complete revelation of the Infinite, and of this it is said “In the future the *tzaddikim* will be called by their Creator.”

QUESTION

12) *So the reason this device is evil is because it disconnects one from the Infinite of the Creator?*

ANSWER

Yes, and this is not merely a disconnection but a device that's making itself seem as if it's the very Infinite.

QUESTION

13) *Can a person develop mesirus nefesh during time of quiet and will that enable a person to reveal this light?*

ANSWER

Mesirus nefesh and *sheket* (internal quiet) are opposite powers of the soul, because *mesirus nefesh* is a “movement” of the soul which nullifies, and that creates a noise, like a fire which destroys and creates noise. But from inner quiet, one can reach *mesirus nefesh*. **The Avodah**

TO SEPARATE FROM THE INTERNET

1) What is the concept of the *tumah* of the Internet and how far-reaching is it?

ANSWER

The *tumah* of the internet does spiritual damage to a person at the deepest level, called the *kav ohrEinSof*, (the ray that extends from the infinite light) which connects together all of the creations.

QUESTION

2) What should we say to people who argue, “Our job now is not to separate from technology and smartphones, that’s not the main message that Hashem is sending us now, and instead of fighting the Internet and the use of smartphones, we need to learn how to use it wisely and in the most kosher way possible, especially because we can’t change the generation and it’s already a part of most people’s lives. Give up the fight against frum people using the Internet. It just makes people feel guilt and unnecessary shame when they hear such things, and speaking about this does nothing.”

ANSWER

Our words [about how we need to keep far away from the Internet] can only help individuals. However, it is not within our power to change the *tzibbur* (the general majority of the frum communities). It is Hashem Who is shaking up the *tzibbur* during these times, especially in Eretz Yisrael, and most recently with the tragedy that took place on Erev Shavuos. Hashem, in His compassion, wants the *tzibbur* to change their way of living.

QUESTION

3) When people don’t want to hear that they need to give up their Internet and smartphone in order to do Hashem’s will in these times where we are right before Mashiach, and they have all kinds of counterarguments that this is not the main thing Hashem wants from us right now, does this come from a lack of willingness to accept *emes* (truth), or is it because they can’t put their logic over their emotions and they are just following their emotions, or does it come from the “spark of Erev Rav” that can be present in the soul (or, even worse, can it mean that the person who refuses to hear anything about giving up Internet may have an actual “Erev Rav” soul, *chas v’shalom*)?

ANSWER

Our words about the severity of Internet use are based on the Gemara that says that if the generation isn't worthy of Mashiach because they are entirely guilty of sins, they need to be awakened to teshuvah so that the Geulah can come [and that process of teshuvah and Geulah is certainly going to happen, either willingly or forcibly]. That particular teaching of Chazal is the very depth of the Galus which we are found in right now. How can we make any compromises to use the Internet, which is something that goes against the entire Torah and all the foundations of Yiddishkeit??? It is a cold and spiritually insensitive attitude, and that coldness is the root of all tragedies today, and the results of it are the actual tragedies that have been happening, one after the other, like labor pains that quickly follow each other as the birth draws nearer. **The labor pains are coming quicker now and they are more difficult and sharper in their pain – and that is what we are found in now.**

QUESTION

4) What is the connection between media and Internet with the Persian-Median exile, which was called Galus *Madai*, which literally means “the exile of Media”? Was it because it was in Persia where the Jewish people sinned by enjoying the party of Achashveirosh, choosing pleasure and comfort over following the will of Hashem, and so too we can compare the Internet lifestyle to enjoying the party of Achashveirosh, of choosing a life of comfort and pleasure versus a life of doing *ratzon Hashem*?

ANSWER

That is all true, it is part of the matter. The words “Media” is from the word *medidah*, to measure, and the opposite of being measured is when something is unmeasured and it has unlimited use. That was the concept of Galus Madai, the Median exile, which was connected with Amalek, through Haman. Haman tried to break all measures by building a gallows 50 *amos* high, hinting to Haman's desire to release the 50th level of impurity and thereby destroy everything.

STRUGGLING WITH GIVING UP ALL INTERNET USE

It's already years since I'm learning the Rav's words of Torah. In any area of serving Hashem, I see the Rav as my central role model and I take the Rav's words very seriously, as I try to translate them always into real life. In light of this, I wanted to ask the Rav about a challenge I struggle with.

The Rav staunchly opposes using media/internet. The Rav says this again and again, that we need to remove ourselves from the Internet in all its forms, to instead become connected to the 50th gate of holiness, which is what the Rav has been explaining all these years in so many different ways. Yet, the Rav never demands from any of us to go way beyond our capabilities. Rather, the Rav always emphasizes how each person needs to act according to his level.

Regarding what the Rav says that we need to uproot all Internet use from amidst us, it's already a while that I've been struggling to find a solution that will calm my mind about this. In the way that the Rav is presenting this, it demands an overhaul. Yet, it seems that we have to go about this change sensibly in order for us to remain consistently with it. Me and my wife are baalei teshuvah Baruch Hashem and we removed our unfiltered internet from our home, and instead we remained with whitelisted internet, though of course it's not fool-proof. We also have a smartphone and we put the best possible filter on it. But it's getting really hard for us without our regular internet use in the home, plus we can't access Torah websites now. It's way too difficult to disconnect totally from the internet, especially since it's in our home. So I'm having a hard time with this. I saw that the Rav said that if a person gets rid of his internet use but his spouse doesn't want to, the husband should daven that she will join him in his change. I wish the Rav can bless us that we both be zocheh to this change, and if there are other any alternate routes we can take.

Also, having no internet in the home has made it so much harder for us because we can't shop online on the big shopping sites where it's so much cheaper and easier to shop and find what we need, and this had made our life so much easier. Ordering sefarim online is so much easier than looking in a store. What should we do? Also, I need internet at home for the job I work in, and I can't just quit my job.

Although I'm far from perfect, I've seen a lot of progress in this area, and each day I find that I'm minimizing my internet use.

ANSWER

“There is no advice and no understand against Hashem.”

This device is the root of every *tumah* [defilement]. We cannot take the ‘middle road’ with it [there's no way to use the internet in a balanced, healthy way]. It is like *avodah zarah* (idol worship) which must be totally destroyed, and it is like Amalek of which Hashem said “*I will surely erase Amalek.*” Shaul thought he should spare the animals of Amalek, and he was punished...

It is not possible to allow any individual to think and decide for himself of how to use this terrible device of destruction and to go about it based on his personal situation and affinity. Allowing an individual to use it as he sees fit is just not possible at all.

UNMOTIVATED CHILD WANTS A SMARTPHONE

We have a son who hates to learn Gemara or any kind of learning. He never felt any success until now and now he is no longer motivated at all to succeed. He wants a smartphone so that he can watch films and videos on it, and he wants to just live without any responsibilities whatsoever. He has other siblings who are learning and who are successful. We don't want to give him a smartphone and certainly we don't want him to watch movies, but we have heard that there are differing views about this matter. We aren't clear how to make boundaries and especially because there are so many different approaches when it comes to child education. Can the Rav make it clear for us?

ANSWER

If the child will find this helpful to him and he will only be minimally damaged from it, it can be permitted for him, within keeping to the Torah's parameters.

But if this will damage the other siblings a lot, then he doesn't come before the siblings. If that is the case, be passive and let Hashem do as He sees fit. In any case, though, parents should never buy a smartphone that is open to receive all media and internet connection.

May you merit to see much nachas, materially and spiritually.

TORN ABOUT GIVING UP INTERNET

I want to give up Internet, but my *yetzer hora* is challenging me about this. My *yetzer hora* is saying, "You are going to lose so much if you give up your internet. You won't have all the information you need. You won't be getting all the Torah that you need and which you gain so much from. You need it for your *ruchniyus!* You need it so that you can maintain a connection to *tzaddikim!*" My *yetzer hora* makes me feel that I am dependent on the Internet and that I need it. I want to give up internet but I keep pushing it off for another day and then another day. I feel like giving up the internet is the *yetzer hora's* way of keeping me away from Torah and *tzaddikim*, all in the guise of "protecting" my *ruchniyus* by convincing me to give up the internet. That's how I feel about the internet [that I need it

for my *ruchniyus* and that it's my *yetzer hora* telling me to give it up]. In my case, can I remain with internet since I feel that I need it for my *ruchniyus*?

I feel like I am walking down an endless path of darkness and confusion, I'm at a loss of what to do about this. Can the Rav give me a blessing that I should be *zocheh* to leave the internet totally, and do complete teshuvah? Can the Rav give any encouraging words to help me with this?

ANSWER

It is in your hands to succeed, and to separate from it. In the end, we all leave this world and we have to separate from everything. But the wise person makes sure to make that separation already in his lifetime, to separate from anything that is not truly beneficial to him. May you rise, and succeed!

COMPUTERS DIDN'T DESTROY JUDAISM SO WHAT'S WRONG WITH INTERNET ?

I identify very much with the Rav's opposition to Internet use, and that true Judaism (*Yiddishkeit*) cannot continue like this with everyone remaining connected to Internet use in their lives. However, my question is that people thought the same thing about computers/laptops [people thought that the dangers of using computers would be the end of Yiddishkeit, but it wasn't, and we are able to live with it in our lives], but today almost everyone has a computer in their home. [Internet is the way for the world to access Torah today, as we can see that] even the Rav's shiurim are online. So maybe we are indeed able to live with the internet in our lives and we will get used to it, just like we got used to living with computers in our lives?

ANSWER

We can compare this to an analogy, of a person who is told, "We will have to amputate your feet." Afterwards he can say "*Nu*, life has to go on", and he can continue his life. That's how we can compare the situation of living with computers. But using media [internet] and living it with it in our lives is like a person who is told, "We need to burn your heart out."

TECHNOLOGY & GEULAH

Is advancing technology in the world a sign that is informing the revelation of spirituality or prophecy that will be revealed to herald the Redemption, or is it preventing it?

ANSWER

It is informing the Redemption, but it is clothed [manifest] in the “50th gate of defilement”.

LAPTOP IN THE BEIS MIDRASH

Is it a problem to use a laptop in the *beis midrash* to type *divrei Torah* on it? Is it a lack of *kedushas beis hakneses*? Also, just seeing a laptop can cause others to have a desire for technology, especially children.

ANSWER

There are things which are desirable (*ratzuy*) to do and things which are commonly done (*matzuy*). Unfortunately, a computer in a *beis midrash* is commonplace. In a *beis midrash* or shul where it is common for people to use a laptop, an individual may be lenient with himself to use a laptop there to type *divrei Torah* if he gains in his *ruchniyus* from it [i.e. he uses it for learning or from typing *divrei Torah*]. However, this cannot become a general ruling for the public.

INTERNET AT HOME FOR WORK PURPOSES

1) For work purposes, my job requires me to have filtered Internet in my house. I know the Rav has told people that Internet should never be in the house, so I want to understand, why then does the Rav permit a person to use it outside of the house (in cases of necessity)? What is the difference between having it in the house versus using outside the house? If one is allowed to use Internet outside of the house for necessity, why then he can't he have it in the house for necessity (i.e. for *parnassah*)?

ANSWER

The mere presence of internet in the house is *tumah*. Besides for this, the fact that it is close within reach is very harmful to one's soul.

QUESTION

2) I realize that I am able to limit my internet use more, but doing so may infringe on me professionally and financially. Do I need to go off Internet (or at least limit it) even if it may cause me lose financial loss? Is this my obligation according to *halachah*?

ANSWER

Yes, that is what you should do, because that is what the *halachah* obligates one to do.

QUESTION

3) I noticed that when I improve my marriage, my wife can more easily handle my decision to disconnect myself from internet use. Is there a connection between my marriage and my internet use?

ANSWER

Yes.

CAN I KEEP MY “NET-FREE” INTERNET USE IN THE HOUSE?

Because of my practice, I need to have the “Net-Free” service in my house, and my wife also uses it sometimes for research. I need to read up on material that’s relevant for my practice so that I can be effective and professional enough for my clients, and also to be available for technical support. I try to work only through using e-mail, Google Drive, and Cloud, which stores my files for me.

This isn’t always possible, and sometimes I need to search the Web when something comes up in my practice that requires more research, and then I need to go onto the Internet to download files onto my computer or to print it out, so that I don’t have to view it on an Internet site which uses regular Internet connection. I prefer to work in my house and not at work, because in my house I have Net-Free, but at work it’s with a filter [and not nearly as kosher].

I thought about this a lot and reached the conclusion that it’s more kosher for me to work from Net-Free in my house rather than use the filtered internet at work (even though at work I can only get e-mail and pdf’s and read it there or print it out, and if I need to use the Web then I can use Net-Free in my house). Is this fine?

ANSWER

You can remain only with the sites that you seriously need, and only if the sites are not intrinsically bad sites. Besides for this, make sure to cut off all connection to everything else.

THE PNIMIYUS OF THE STRUGGLE WITH INTERNET

Is the Internet the klipah that opposes the Radl”a (reisha d’lo isyada)?

ANSWER

Yes.

QUESTION

Is the Internet covering the Radl”a and is it attracting the materialism aspect of people towards it?

Yes.

QUESTION

Is our mesirus nefesh to separate from the Internet a sign that we recognize and love the revelation of Hashem in the world, to reveal Him instead of fulfilling our subconscious desires?

ANSWER

Yes.

QUESTION

Does our pull towards the Internet come from the Radl”a?

ANSWER

It is coming from the “overturning, fiery sword” [which was placed at the entrance to Gan Eden].

QUESTION

Is this the reason why the internet is the final test, so that we can discern Hashem and want to reveal Him and request of Him to free our souls from the hold that the Internet has on us, so that we can be free from the Internet and be able to serve Hashem?

ANSWER

It is so that we can reveal the truest level of Hashem's Infinite Light, which is all-inclusive of everything.

QUESTION

Since we cannot understand the true source of soul through mere cause-and-effect thinking, are we able to seal the void in us and exchange our self-identification instead for our Nefesh Elohis (G-dly soul) so that we can bridge what was trapped and drawn after the Internet, through the emunah that all of us are a "letter" in the Torah, and that each of us was created to reveal His will and not our will?

ANSWER

Yes – through clear, palpable emunah.

QUESTION

Are we able to use cause-and-effect thinking by knowing that each of us is a "letter" in the Torah, so that we can be helped to "run and return" in this last test, the internet?

ANSWER

Yes.



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