

# שיחות SICHOS YISROEL ונזרות

ספר שמות



Maslovsky Family Edition

תרומה



BRING THE SHECHINA INTO YOUR HOME



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## NOT JUST A HOME

We find in many places in *Chazal* that building a home is compared to building a *Beis Hamikdash*. However, most people look at a home as the opposite of a *Beis Hamikdash*. Everybody is aware that when you go to a *Beis Hamikdash* you're stepping up. You're going for a visit with Hashem. You're going to a place where Hashem's presence is felt. You're going to a place where Hakadosh Baruch Hu wants His presence to be felt. Many people view their home, on the other hand, as a place of escape, a place to relax, a place to let their hair down, a place to chill. People say, "I work all day," or "I learn all the time," and they forget that just like the *Beis Hamikdash* was established to broaden the boundaries of *kedushah* and bring the presence of Hashem to this world, so, too, a home is a place where you want to bring the *shechina*. The *gemara* (*Sotah* 17a) says: **איש ואשה** - "if a man and woman merit to have a faithful marriage, the Divine Presence rests between them."<sup>1</sup>

Now, Hakadosh Baruch Hu gave us a reminder of that. We are commanded to place a *mezuzah* on every single doorway as a reminder of Hakadosh Baruch Hu's presence, of our attachment to His presence, and to increase His presence in a home. (Incidentally, many of the modern people think this commandment only applies on the front door and it's for insurance to put up a *mezuzah*.) If a person conducts his house in the proper fashion, you have no idea of the greatness that is in a Jewish home.

I was once speaking to somebody who said to me, "Do you know of a good place to go *daven*?" I said, "Sure. Find a good Jewish home. The *Beis Hamikdash* was a *beis tefilah*. It was of such a magnitude that it was a *beis tefilah lechol ha'amim*. But the reason why a Jewish home is a *beis tefilah* is only because it's a place where the *shechina* is *shoreh*, where the *shechina* resides, so you have to make sure that the *shechina* resides in your home. Otherwise, it's tragic. It's not a building of a *Beis Hamikdash*. It's the destruction of a *Beis Hamikdash*."

## RAV SHLOMO ZALMAN'S IMPORTANT MEETING

There is a wonderful story related by Rav Yisrael Gantz. He's the *rav* in Mattersdorf. He said that one time he was talking to Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach, zt"l, who was on his way home. As they were walking, Rav Yisrael noticed that Rav Shlomo Zalman was constantly cleaning off his jacket, looking at his *kapote*, to see if there were any little threads and pulling them off. He got a little dirt off and he did it more than once. Rav Gantz was sure that Rav Shlomo Zalman was in a rush to get home but Rav Shlomo Zalman told him that he's not in a rush and he can continue talking and asking his questions.

<sup>1</sup> רש"י שם: זכו - ללכת בדרך ישרה שלא יהא הוא נואף ולא היא נואפת; שכנה ביניהם - שהרי חלק את שמו ושיכנו ביניהן יו"ד באיש וה"י באשה

Rav Gantz was wondering what's going on. You're not filthy. You didn't roll in the mud. "What's going on?" He asked him what's the *psht*.

"I'll tell you," Rav Shlomo Zalman said. "I'm going now to a meeting with the *shechina*. Chazal tell us איש ואישה זכו שכינה ביניהם, 'the *shechina* is *beineihem* (among them).' You hear that? It's not *raoy*, it's not befitting to be פני השכינה with an unclean coat." You understand that? He saw his going into his house as a *ma'aseh* of greeting the *shechina*.

## RAV SHACH'S ADVICE ON BUILDING A HOME

There was a *bachur* who was a *yasom* (orphan), who once came to Rav Shach to ask him, "I'm going to begin to build my home now. Can you give me some *eitzah* about building a home?" Rav Shach looked at him with endearment and said to him, "My son, let me give you an *eitzah*. Make sure whenever you leave and whenever you come to your house you come *besimchah*." That's what he told him. That's the *yesod* that everything is founded upon!

But you have to know Rav Shach himself wasn't just giving *eitzos*. A lot of people give *eitzos* to other people but they themselves are not in the habit of doing them. My *rebbe* (Rav Meir Halevi Soloveichik) once mentioned that there was a certain *beis din* who gave out a whole list of *kabbalos* that people should take in light of the *matzav* that was going on in Eretz Yisrael at the time. My *rebbe* said, "I wonder how many of the signatories on this letter are doing any of the *eitzos*. It's only *eitzos* for other people."

Rav Shach was known that whenever he came to his house he always came in with a warm "good morning," a *gut morgen*. One of his *talmidim* pointed out that he was once walking home with Rav Shach, and it was after his *rebbetzin* was already *niftar*. There was nobody in the house but Rav Shach. When Rav Shach walked in, he said, "A *gut morgen*" with a *shmeichel* (smile) as he came into the house!

A person has to know happiness in the home is not just a good thing. Happiness in the home is a *tanai* (condition) for the *shechina* to be in your home. The *shechina* detests *atzvus* (sadness).

## RAV WOSNER REVIVES MAN'S SPIRITS

I want to tell you another story on this topic. Chazal tell us in *Shabbos* (30b): אין השכינה שורה על האדם מתוך עצבות - *the shechina doesn't rest on a person who's in the state of sadness*.<sup>2</sup> You want the *shechina* to be with you? Make sure you're not sad. Hashem does not like depressed people. Even if they think they have a valid reason to be depressed. Hashem likes smiling folks. When there's *simchah* in the *bayis*, that is a condition for the *shechina* to be in the *bayis*, and if the *shechina* is going to be in the *bayis*, there's going to be *brachah* in your *bayis*.

Listen to this amazing story that the Rav from the city of Brachfeld, in Eretz Yisrael, said in a *hesped* for the Shevet Levi, Rav Shmuel Halevi Wosner, zt"l (1913-2015), a *gevuldige posek, rav, tzaddik*. The Ba'al Shevet Halevi. This *rav* from Brachfeld was

<sup>2</sup> "ושבתתי אני את השמחה" [קהלת ח:טו] - שמחה של מצוה. "ולשמחה מה זה עושה" - זו שמחה שאינה של מצוה. ללמדך שאין שכינה שורה לא מתוך עצבות ולא מתוך עזילות ולא מתוך שחוק ולא מתוך קלות ראש ולא מתוך שיחה ולא מתוך דברים בטלים, אלא מתוך דבר שמחה של מצוה, שנאמר: "ועתה קחו לי מנגן והיה כנגן המנגן ותהי עליי יד ה'". אמר רב יהודה: וכן לדבר הלכה. אמר רבא: וכן לקחום טוב

part of the group of *rabbanim* who were in charge of overseeing the Bnei Brak hospital known as Mayanei Hayeshua Hospital, and they would take turns being *mevaker cholim* in the hospital.

One day this *rav*, Rav Zicherman, comes to the hospital. Somebody says to him, “Go to this bed. There’s a *yid* there in a very, very serious *matzav*. *Nebach*, he had a stroke and most of his body is paralyzed. He could barely move, and he is very, very down.”

So Rav Zicherman comes to his bedsides and this man says, “I want to ask the *rav* a *shaylah*. I want to know if I still have to make one of the *birchos hashachar* in the morning.” Rav Zicherman inquired which *brachah* this *yid* was referring to. The man answered: “The bracha of *לִי כָל צְרֻכֵי שַׁעֲשֵׂה*, that Hashem provides me with all my needs to fulfill my *tafkid* in this world. Right now, I don’t have any *tafkid* to fulfill in this world, so perhaps I’m exempt from making this *brachah*.” This was an unusual *shaylah*, so Rav Zicherman said, “The one in charge, the *rav* in Bnei Brak, is going to come to the hospital shortly. I’m going to present your *shaylah* to him.”

### RAV MEIR SHAPIRO IS ASTOUNDED BY BOCHUR’S SIMCHA

A little while later Rav Wosner came to the hospital. They told him about this *choleh*. He was very moved by his *shaylah*. He said, “I want to speak to this man.” They took him to the room, and Rav Wosner put his hand on his hand to create a *varmkeit* to him. He said, “I heard you have a *shaylah*.” He said yes and he repeated his *shaylah*. Rav Wosner said, “I’d like to tell you a story. When I was a *bachur* I learned in the *yeshivah* of Chachmei Lublin. That was a *yeshivah* under the helm of the great Rav Meir Shapiro, the Lubliner Rav. One time one of the *bachurim* in the *yeshivah* became very sick, and the situation was hopeless. The *bachur* was laying there without any physical strength left. He was in tremendous pain, but, incredibly, he was in a very elevated *matzav*. He was in a very special place. He was *mamash besimchah*, and his *matzav ruach* was good. I was accompanying my *rebbe*. He went to visit this sick *bachur*. Rav Meir heard about the *bachur*, and he was *nepael*. He was amazed. How is it possible for a *bachur* to get such *kochos hanefesh* at such a young age, when his life is hanging by a thread?! Rav Meir Shapiro asked this *bachur* *לִשְׂמֵחָה זֶה מָה הִיא עוֹשֶׂה* - “what’s the source of this *simchah*?” What are you *besimchah* about?’ It was a valid question. Most people would be happy that a patient like that is *besimchah* and figure the guy is delirious and go *vaiter*. But my *rebbe*, Rav Shapiro, wanted to know what’s the *pshat*.

### “A VORT FOR THE AGES”

Listen to what this *bachur* answered. The *bachur* said, “The condition that I’m in right now is terrible. I’m not capable of doing anything. I began to think what in the world is my *tafkid* now. (Now, just as a quick background - to get into Chachmei Lublin Yeshivah you had to be a *metzuyan*.

You had to know two hundred *blatt shakla vatarya*, *gemara*, Rashi and Tosfos! That was just the entrance exam. And this *bachur* was a *chashuve bachur* in that *yeshivah*). He was thinking: ‘What’s the reason that Hashem is keeping me around? How come I’m not gone yet?’

So I thought about the *gemara* in *Shabbos* (12b) that says, שְׂכִינָה לְמַעַל מִמְרָא שׁוֹתֵיו שָׁל, חוֹלָה, *the shechina rests above the head of a sick person*. And I heard *vus shtait* in this *gemara* - is that the *tafkid* of a *choleh* is to bring the *shechina* to the world! If there is no *choleh*, there is no special presence of the *shechina*. If there is a *choleh*? Now there's a special presence of the *shechina*! So that's my *tafkid*. That's a very wonderful *tafkid*. I could bring the *shechina* to this world.

But there's another *gemara* I thought of. The same *mesechta*, *Shabbos* (30b): אִין הַשְׂכִּינָה שׁוֹרָה מִתּוֹךְ עֲצוּבוֹת, that whenever a person is down, a person is depressed, there's no *shechina* that rests on him. So, I try with all my *kochos* not to be down because every time I get down I know the *shechina* is kicked out of the room. הַשְׂכִּינָה מִסְתַּלְקֶת, the *shechina* goes away. If I am sad, I'm undermining my *tafkid* to bring the *shechina*. Hashem wants to be here with me. Hashem wants to be in the room.”

(Do you ever go to visit a sick person and they say, “It's overwhelming. Everybody out of their room!” I've seen that. They want Hashem out of the room also).

So this borchur said, “That's why you're seeing *simchah* on my face. I constantly think that I'm bringing the *shechina* here. I'm keeping the presence of the *shechina* here.”

Rav Meir Shapiro heard that *vort* and he was blown away. A *bachur* in such a *matzav* should come up with such a *shtickel Torah*, *aza vort*?! He said, ‘*Aza vort*, needs to be safeguarded *ledoros*, for future generations.’”

So the Shevet Halevi, Rav Shmuel Vosner, turned to this sick man, who had the stroke, and he said, “How could you say you have no *tafkid* in the world? On your shoulders is a very big *tafkid*, to bring the *shechina* here. To bring the *shechina* to the world.” The *choleh* heard this. They didn't know how he was going to react, but within a short time his whole *matzav ruach* changed. His whole outlook changed, and he began to be *besimchah*. Rav Zicherman was in the hospital. He used to go visit this fellow. He said it got to the point where he recovered, *lema'aleh miderech hateva*.

## BRINGING THE SHECHINA INTO MARRIAGE

You have to realize that everybody who gets married also has the *tafkid* of keeping the *shechina* between him and his spouse. If a person fights with his wife, and people often do, or let's even say he's not fighting with his wife, but he's a depressed person, you should know - there's no *shechina* in his house. Now, granted, sometimes it's hard. You have a *shlechte matzav*, a serious *matzav*. Somebody is sick. People get overwhelmed for other reasons as well. They sit there twenty four hours waiting for the guillotine to drop. It's terrible. You should know that the *shechina* is not present. So you undermine your own self. Your *tafkid* is to realize that you have an *achrayus* to bring the *shechina*.

So the guy tells me, “Do you know my wife? You want to meet my wife and tell me if you can get the *shechina* going with her?” Or a wife tells me, “You know my husband? Do you want to hear stories about my husband?” No. I don't want to hear stories about your husband. You don't want *brachah* in your house? Fine. You want to complain about your husband? Fine.

You want to be sad there's no *shechina* in your house? Wonderful. No *brachah* in your house. Everybody is looking for that person who got *bizyonos* (disgraced or offended) from somebody and didn't respond and hopefully that guy can give you a *brachah*. You want a *brachah*? Keep the *shechina* in your house. By being *besimchah*, you're bringing the *shechina* into your house *mamash*. It's unbelievable!

### DON'T SAY "GOOD-BYE" TO THE SHECHINA

That's what a *Beis Hamikdash* is. It's not automatic. You have to do the *avodah*. In Yerushalayim it was very important to be *besimchah* because you were in the presence of the *shechina*. The *gemara* says financial *cheshbonos* were not allowed to be made in Yerushalayim because usually, when a guy makes his financial *cheshbon* and he sees his checkbook is down and his bills are piling up, it puts him in a bad mood. And that drives away the *shechina*. That's why they would take care of this business outside of Yerushalayim.

Did anybody think of this? A guy gets angry at his wife. He has no problem getting angry at his wife. Boom! Bam! Bye-bye *shechina*. The wife gets angry at the husband and starts to *shrei* like a banshee. That's all. No *shechina* in the house!

I know a lady who was very emotional. She had no *bushos*. When she got angry or upset, she would scream like you never heard in your life. They lived in a *kollel* apartment house. Her husband would say, "You've got to keep quiet. You've got to lower it. If you don't stop, I'm going to have to leave." He would walk out the door. What would she do? She would open the door and she would scream in the hall on the top of her lungs. Not *stam*. I would get involved, and I would tell her, "You want to speak to a *rav*? Do you want to get a *brachah* from a *rav*? You prevent yourself from getting any *brachah* because you drive the connection between you and Hashem away. You have no business screaming so loud. If a person would go into the *Beis Hamikdash* and scream, you know what they would do? Throw him out the window. They wouldn't care that you have problems. You have problems - go see a therapist. The guy has the same problems. Share your problems with him or with her."

A *mentsch* has to know that he has to think about this. This is a *mitzvah* and something that a person could accomplish on his own any time.

### A GADOL TAKING OUT GARBAGE

I saw another amazing story along these lines. One Motzei Shabbos a *yungerman* was walking past an apartment house where a *gadol beYisrael* lived. He noticed that the *gadol* was carrying a bag of garbage to the garbage dumpster. He was very surprised to see *aza mentsch* carrying the garbage. He went over to him and said, "*Shalom aleichem rebbi umori*." The *gadol* turned to him, "Since when are you my *talmid*?" So the guy said, "From right now," and smiled.

The *gadol* asked him, "What do you mean from 'right now'?" The *yungerman* replied, "Yes. Right now. When I see you taking out the garbage, that to me is *mamash a ma'aseh pelah*, to see a *talmid chacham* like yourself doing this. So I see from you that *bemakom* where you want to help your wife you don't have to make a *cheshbon* in how great in Torah I am or how old I am. When you have to do something, you take care of business, you take out the garbage."

The *gadol* looked at this *yungerman* and said, “What are you thinking? I’m being *mevazeh* myself by taking out the garbage? Is that what you think? Let me tell you something. Let me explain to you why I’m taking out the garbage and why it’s not a *pechisas kavod*. Do you know what the first *avodah* in the *Beis Hamikdash* was? The way they used to divvy up the *avodos* in the *Beis Hamikdash* was by making a *payis*.

They made a *goral*, they drew lots. Do you know what the first lot was drawn for? Who is going to take out the ash. Who is going to take out the *terumas hadeshen*. Nu, what was the *terumas hadeshen*? What was it? To take out the pile of ash that was leftover on the *mizbeach* from yesterday. Do you think this a *pechisas kavod*?”

The *yungerman* said, “Rebbi, *ich farshteit nisht*. What’s the *dimyom* (similarity) between the two things? How could you compare a *pach zevel*, a bag of garbage, to *terumas hadeshen lehavdil elef havdalos*?! What *shaychus*? The *Beis Hamikdash* was a place where everything was *kodesh*.”

The *gadol* said, “*Ein hachi nami! Du zugt gut*. You should know that our *avodah* all our days is that our home should be *bebechinas Beis Hamikdash*. My *rebbe* planted that thought into us, and when you’re *zocheh* and Hashem is in your house, the *bayis* turns into a *Beis Hamikdash* and the carrying out the garbage is also *avodas Hashem*. That’s how I look at it.” The fellow said that he was so blown away from such an unusual approach.

#### PLAYING WITH AN ELECTRIC SOCKET IS NOT A GOOD IDEA

A person has to give this thought. Without thought it’s not going to happen. A person should think, would he pull out his cellphone, his smartphone in the *Beis Hamikdash*? I hope not. People pull it out in *shuls* today. It’s very common. Maybe he’s just checking up the *zmanim*. “I just want to see which *Kohanim* are on duty today.” You have to develop this sensitivity, and when you read the *parshiyos Terumah, Tetzaveh* until the end of the *chumash, Vayakhel, Pekudei*, you have to get yourself in touch with this *yesod*.

Now, what if a person is going to say, “What if I am in a bad mood? I’m an emotional person and if I get in a bad mood, it takes me days to get out of it.” A husband told me: “I get upset. I can’t get out of it. It will take me a few days.” I told him, “If you only understood that every time you get into your funk, you get into your down, you get into a bad mood - it’s like putting your finger inside an electric socket. I haven’t seen people who get emotional go over to an electric socket, lick their finger, or dip their finger in water and try to stick it in. Who wants to kiss the electric and get a shock on their mouth and get their mouth closed up.” I have a friend who did that when he was 4 years old. He was drooling and it drooled into the electric socket and he got a connection and his mouth was sealed. All his life. I remember growing up with him. He was a classmate and a friend of mine. He always walked around like this. I don’t know why he never could open it up 100%. He always had that *siman*. I used to look at him every day and think, “I’m not getting near the electric socket!” I used to wonder how it sealed it up. The electricity is such a force. Boom!

But a person has to ask himself, “Would you do that?” No. You wouldn’t knowingly do that. But people lose their mind when they get angry, or down. They do strange things sometimes. If they would only think about it. No one wants to be like that. You want to

get out of it, but you focus on the negative and on whatever you're lacking.

### A REALLY BIZARRE STORY

Somebody called me yesterday and told me that they're having an extremely difficult time suffering at the hands of a neighbor. I mean, crazy stories. The person had called me before asking for me to help them. I said, "I want to tell you something.

If you're going through such *tza'ar*, Hashem is giving you a message." The woman said, "Let me tell you what else the neighbor does." It was almost fantastic. I couldn't believe half the story but I trusted the person. The husband corroborated it.

I said to her, "Do you get along with your mother?" She said, "Oh, that's another story. Don't bring that up." I said, "And your mother-in-law?" "Oh, that's another story. Don't bring that one up either." I said, "I have some news for you. There is a reason why this neighbor is bothering you in such an abnormal way. (I never heard of a story like this, and trust me, I've heard lots of stories). Her neighbor, a 42-year-old woman, puts human feces on the outside of this woman's air conditioner in the summer, so that it blows right into their house! Could you imagine that?! I mean crazy stuff! Dirty diapers on the handle bars! Nutty things. I never heard of such stories! I said, "Hashem is talking to you."

She said, "You want to hear more?" I said, "I don't want to hear anymore. I heard enough. I can tell you, you must have a relationship with somebody that's awful. It must be your mother." She said, "Oh, do you want to hear about my mother now?" I said, "I don't want to hear about your mother. I'm telling you this is what the problem is. This is where the dog lies buried, or like they say in Yiddish, *dos is vu di hunt iz bagrobn.*" I said, "This is where the problem lies. Fix this up." She said, "Oh no. It's been too many years. I've been suffering from my mother since I was 2.5 years old." I said, "If Hashem started giving you messages at such a young age, you must be a very smart person. That's amazing. Hashem should start giving children messages at 2.5 years old?!" "I'm abused. I'm this. I am that." I'm telling you, this person sounded like a very nice person. *Bnei Torah*. Good people, fine people! They didn't sound like they were retarded people at all. Far from it. But they were so baked in their problem that they didn't understand that their problem was the way out of the problem.

### A SOLUTION TO THE PROBLEM

I told her to write a letter. "Write a letter to your mother." "Oh no! Don't go down that road." I said, "Do you want the problem with your neighbor to go away or not? Write a letter to your mother. Just say to your mother, 'Dear mother. I have a challenge. I've come to the awareness that challenges are from Hashem to make people learn from the challenges. I hope going forward we could build a relationship from our challenges.'"

It took about a week and a half of arguing with her about every word in the letter. "It's just too much. That's over the top. My mother is going to misunderstand this."

The husband called me to explain to me why I'm missing the boat. I told him, "Buddy, I'm not missing the boat. Just write a letter. Write it. I'm trying to save you from this

*tzarah*.” It was so baked in. He told me, “We saw therapists already and we saw all kinds of people already.” I said, “I’m giving you a cheap, easy way out. I should charge you a million dollars for this. No! Free job! And if I’m right, it’s going to work instantaneously. If I’m not right, it won’t work.”

She called me yesterday. “It’s working. Instant change. But do you think I need to continue with this? I don’t want to do it anymore. I want to stop it right here.” I said, “You’ve got to build a relationship. Hashem could wake up the ‘sleeping dogs.’ Hashem put them to sleep. It’s the same neighbors, trust me.” Her husband thinks she’s whacked. The husband said, “I suffer from her too.”

He must also have some issue with somebody that he has to suffer from his wife.

## THE GOAL OF THE JEWISH HOUSE

It’s very hard for people to accept this, but it’s so important to understand that even if you have somebody that’s really not well, this is not normal. Hashem is giving you a message. You’ve got to get that message. You have to bring the *shechina* in your life. If you live with Hashem then you have no doubt that every second Hashem is giving you a message. I don’t care how hurtful, how painful, how doubtful, how much you don’t want it, how much you think you don’t deserve it. It’s all from Hashem. And if Hashem gives you this message, you must wake up and you have to keep the *shechina* in your life. Never drive the *shechina* away. That’s the goal for a *bayis ne’eman beYisrael*.

There were many *yungerleit* back in the day when they got married, who started taking liberties. I remember when *yungerleit* got married, about forty years ago, some would start buying a newspaper once in a while. Some bought a newspaper every day. When they were in the *yeshivah* they couldn’t bring in newspapers. If you brought a newspaper, the *mashgiach* gave you a piece of his mind. They would throw you out. They would warn you. It wouldn’t get past anybody. But now you got married. Ah! *Baruch Hashem*. Now I could buy a newspaper, take it home and sit in my house and read the newspaper. And today, it’s a computer. You don’t have to carry any paper. We live in a paperless world. So you have a computer. The guy sits at his wife’s computer. Oh, it’s always the wife’s computer, and he’s checking out the news. I told the wife, “Do you realize you’re being *machshil* your husband.” She said, “Oh, my husband doesn’t know my password.”

## A VERY NAIVE MOTHER

Just last night I got a call from a couple who have a young child, maybe 9½, 10, and the kid was using his mother’s cellphone. I was speaking to the guy in Lakewood who is behind this whole cellphone tumult. He said, “99% of the problem is the mother. Fathers always keep their cellphone on their hip or in their pocket. They’re *mechabev* their cell phones with such a *chavivus*. He doesn’t *go daled amos* without being *mashmish bekiso*. You never see a guy go anywhere without a cellphone, but ladies, they didn’t yet make a *minhag* to wear it on their hip like a holster. They usually keep it on the table so the kids have access to it.” He told me, “In Lakewood, you should know this is where it starts and this is where it ends. The mothers themselves are *pashut* feeding their kids.” But these mothers don’t understand. They don’t even think that their kids are doing anything wrong. “He’s just a baby.”

So maybe once in a while he goes with his mother and he plays a game. Maybe he looks at sports. Yesterday the father decided, "Let me check this phone." The wife's phone is sitting there. He takes the wife's phone and checks it out. The things he saw. He went into the history, and in the very recent history what he saw this little baby *yinglele* looking at was stuff that a mature adult shouldn't look at. That's because she had nothing to answer. She has nothing to answer so you have to defend yourself and say at least it's not who knows what. The guy was blown away.

A person has to know you can't get away with anything. I had a *bachur* in *yeshivah* who once told me, "I can't go home, Rabbi, because we have computers." I said, "Aren't they 'locked'?" "Of course they are locked." I called the mother up. I told the mother.

"Can you do me a favor please? Do you need the internet? Are you an internet freak, one of these people who surfs?" She said, "No, I don't need it." I said, "Can you take it off your phone and take it off your computers?" She said, "No, we need it for some shopping," this and that. I said, "It's very dangerous for your kid." She said, "Which kid?" I said, "Your kid who learns in my *yeshivah*." She said, "No, he doesn't have a problem! His brother had a problem. This one doesn't have a problem. We took care of that." I said, "How is that?" She said, "I put a password in. It's password protected."

I went back to the *bachur*. I asked the *bachur*, "How many passwords does your mother have?" He said, "A total of ten." I said, "Can you tell them to me?" He said, "Sure." I wrote them all down. Then I called her back and said, "Excuse me, do you recognize these numbers?" I read one. She said, "Hey, that's my password!" Two, three, four, five, six. She said, "What's going on here?!" I said let me finish until ten. I said, "These are the passwords your son 'doesn't know' about. I don't have *ruach hakodesh* yet. This came straight from your kid. Trust me. Get this thing kosher." "Oh okay. I'm going to look into it. I'll talk to my husband about it."

This is what we talked about today. You want to know where the *shechina* is? You want to know where the *shechina* is in your house? How could the *shechina* get near your house? You have to put the whole house in the *mikveh*. Hakadosh Baruch Hu should help us be *mekadesh* our homes, make them a place with the presence of the *shechina*.

### ✧ THE BOTTOM LINE ✧

When reading these *parshiyos* about the Beis Hamikdash, we should pause and think about the similarity of the Beis Hamikdash and our homes, and about our *avodah* for bringing the *shechina* into our homes, to make our house a small replica of the Beis Hamikdash. This process is, of course, not automatic, as it requires constant effort, awareness and introspection of what invites the *shechina* into our marriages, relationships and homes, and what drives it away. As we saw from a number of stories, with Rav Shach and other *gedolim*, having *simchah* in our homes is the ultimate prerequisite and the main condition for the *shechina* to be present. Conversely, we have to be vigilant not to drive the *shechina* away from our homes, by working on shalom within our families and keeping our homes "clean" of harmful influences and technology. This coming week, before I enter my house, I will stop for a moment and consciously look at my mezuzah, to remind myself that I am walking into a place where *shechina* dwells. This will help me leave my own struggles and challenges outside the house and to retain my sense of *simcha* for, at least, the first 5 minutes after I come home. In the *zechus* of committing myself to this *avodah*, I hope to increase these minutes to hours and, in the process, transform my home into a mini Beis Hamikdash, IY"YH.

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