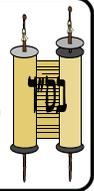




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Parashas Mattos Masei



Camcorder

“**S**halom, dear. Welcome home. How was your day at Yeshiva?”

“Very exciting.”

“Oh, that’s wonderful! Did the Rosh Yeshiva deliver a brilliant shiur?”

“As a matter of fact, he did. However, I was not referring to that.”

“Oh. Did your *chavrusa* come up with a new understanding in the Rambam?”

“He actually did. My dear wife, you are wonderful! When I say that something exciting happened, you immediately think of spiritual accomplishments, which are the true excitement. I must take a lesson from you.”

“Thank you, my dear husband. Please tell me what exciting event happened today?”

“They captured a *ganif* (thief) in the Yeshiva.”

“How did they do that?”

“They used the new security system. The Yeshiva is a very big place where hundreds of people come to learn. Many people, including workers and repairmen, enter the building every day. It is impossible to keep track of everyone and everything. Therefore, they set up a network of camcorders throughout the entire building. Everything that everyone does in the Yeshiva is recorded. One of the students went to get his briefcase, and discovered that it was missing. He proceeded to the office and reported the theft. He told them that he had left the briefcase in the coat room. They replayed the recording of the coat room, saw the man taking the briefcase, identified him, and apprehended him.”

“**W**ow! That is really exciting! Camcording a *ganif* in the act of stealing is a truly thought-provoking event. It can change a person’s whole life!”

“My dear wife, I have a feeling that your statement is a bit deeper than it sounds.”

“Perhaps it is. The Yeshiva’s camcorder system is the key to a great spiritual elevation.”

“I am in suspense. Please tell me what you mean.”

“I am referring to the first Mishna in the second *perek* of Pirkei Avos. We read it this week after Mincha on Shabbos. Rebbe says, ‘Look at three things, and you will not come to *aveyra* (sin). Know what is above you: a seeing eye and a hearing ear, and all of your deeds are written in a book.’ Until the advent of modern technology, it may have been difficult for us to imagine an eye above us that sees everything, an ear that hears everything, and a method of recording all of our deeds. Now Hashem has given us . . . the Yeshiva’s camcorder system! An

electronic eye and ear that see, hear, and record all of our actions! That is truly wonderful. We need only to think of the camcorder, and we will not come to sin.”

“What an insight!”

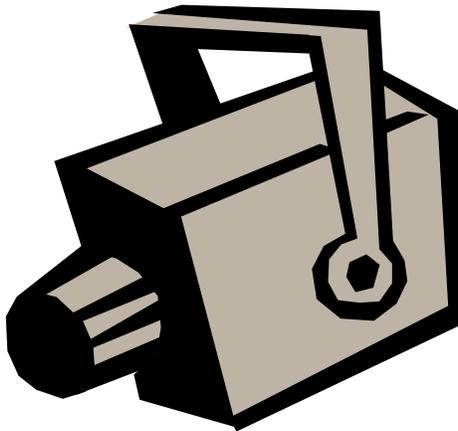
“Thank you my dear husband. I just have one question for you. How does this actually prevent us from sinning?”

“We have to think about the playback of the recording. When will it be played back, and who will be watching it?”

“Let’s see. I assume it will be played back after 120 years, when we leave this world.”

“**C**orrect. When our life is completed, the recording comes to an end. Hashem brings us to Olam Habbo. He gathers together all of our family, friends, neighbors, co-workers, Rabbonim, and all of those who appear in the recording. He then begins the screening.”

“Do you mean that everyone I know sees



and hears everything that I did in my entire life?”

“Yes.”

“They see when I secretly took my brother’s piece of cake?”

“Absolutely.”

“My friend hears the *loshon hora* that I spoke about her behind her back?”

“Every word.”

“Oy vey.”

“We’re not finished yet. There is more. Hashem’s camera is more sophisticated than our puny camcorder. He is recording our thoughts.”

“**O**h no! Everyone will see that I was daydreaming during the Shemoneh Esray prayers?”

“They will see what you were thinking.”

“They will see that I hated someone in my heart? That I held a grudge? That I gave him bad advice?”

“Everything.”

“How painful! A person will regret every wrong thing that he did in his entire life. However, there is a bright side. After another 120 years, the video is over.”

“Not really. It goes on playing forever and ever and ever. The story of your life is part of Olam Habbo. It lasts for eternity. The shame and embarrassment of seeing your *aveyros* over and over and over again are part of the punishment for committing them.”

“Oy vey vey vey. I am beginning to feel weak. I am beginning to regret my mistakes already.”

“**T**hat is great! Regret is the most important part of *teshuva* (correction of our sins.) That is exactly what the Mishna is saying. If you keep the camcorder in the forefront of your mind at all times, you will never come to sin. You will always be thinking about Olam Habbo, and the beautiful masterpiece that you are producing entitled, ‘Your Life.’”

“I understand that the mitzvos are recorded also.”

“Definitely. You will enjoy seeing them and all of the good things that came from them forever and ever.”

“Ahhhhhh. That’s nice. Well, my dear husband, the Yeshiva’s camcorder system caught a lot more than a *ganif* today. It caught a whole bunch of potential *aveyros* and prevented them from happening.”

“We should all enjoy such wonderful insights . . . for eternity!”

Kinderlach . . .

*Smile for the camera! Make sure your face is clean, your hair is combed and your shirt is tucked in. Everybody please speak clearly into the microphone. Your voice is being recorded. We surely choose our words carefully when we know that they are being recorded. Don’t fight in front of the camera. Don’t say bad things. We always take the trouble to look good for a photograph or a video. Why? Because we know that people will watch it and see us. Kinderlach, Hashem is making a super video-sound-thought recording of our entire lives. Therefore we have to be on our best behavior. We want everyone, including Hashem and ourselves, to see and know what truly good *tsaddikim* and *tsidkanios* we are, inside and out. Smile for the camera!*

Parasha Questions:

- Which kingdoms did the Bnei Gad, Reuven, and half of Menashe receive? (32:33)
- What were the terms of the *tanai* of these 2½ tribes? (32:20-23)
- What was the north-western border of Eretz Yisrael? (34:6,7)
- How big was the field surrounding the cities of the Leviim? (35:4,5)

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