The SMARTCHOICES N E W S L E T T E R

SMART CHOICES

INSPIRATION INFORMATION IAWARENESS

732.200.2812

IN-DEPTH COVERAGE OF TODAY'S TECHNOLOGY CHALLENGES & TRIUMPHS

NISSAN 5780 // ISSUE 2 COVID-19 ISSUE

INSPIRATION | INFORMATION

AWARENESS

Rav Asher Arieli Shlit"a Delivers a Rare, Moving Address Regarding the Coronavirus

SPECIAL CORONAVIRUS ISSUE



Rav Asher Arieli Shlit"a, the famed maggid shiur at the Mir Yeshiva of Yerushalayim, delivered a heartfelt call in

response to the current Coronavirus pandemic. He stressed that while each individual must undertake to do *teshuvah* on a personal level, nevertheless, there are certain areas where we, as a *klal*, must focus.

To hear this speech (Yiddish), call the **Smart Choices Hotline at 732.400.9003**, **option 1 - 1 - 45**.

18.

FOR THE LONGEST **EREV** PESACH

Smart Choices presents hundreds of hours of inspirational speeches to hear from the comfort of your home!

For a full list of speeches, see pages 4-5.

For a list of Coronavirus speeches & other hotline numbers, see back page.

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STATE OF THE ART 'KOSHER' PHONE' VENDING MACHINE COMES TO LAKEWOOD



Purchasing a kosher phone has never been so easy!

A self-service vending machine, fully stocked with kosher phones & cell phone accessories has been installed in Yeshiva area, on Private Way & 7th Street (in The Willows apartment building, with the other vending machines).

Very cheap rates!

For more information, call (866) 444-5404

Service provided by K connext

EDITORS NOTE

As we find ourselves in very challenging times, facing new *nisyonos* from many directions, Klal Yisroel, as always, is shining in many ways. The *gemilus chasadim* that organizations and individuals are providing in unique and special ways is truly amazing! The spread of Torah learning via countless teleconferences, featuring thousands of new *shiurim* and *chizuk* speeches on timely topics, are helping us strengthen our levels of *avodas Hashem* in *teshuva u'maasim tovim*.

One of the many areas of improvement where many have taken concrete steps is in the challenges of technology. Individuals have taken steps, each on his own level, thousands have joined public *kabbalos* in this area, and day by day, *Yidden* are being *mischazeik* even as the challenges get harder and harder for many reasons.

Before Makkas Bechoros at the time of Yetzias Mitzrayim, Hashem told Bnei Yisroel: (שמחת ביתו עד בקר") (שמחת יביבט"). No Yid may leave the threshold of his home on that night. We find that Makkas Bechoros is considered not only the last of the ten makkos, but also the beginning of the Geula. Seforim explain (see 'Ohr Hamoed') that Hashem set up the whole stage of Makkas Bechoros: All the Yidden staying in their homes eating the Korban Pesach and putting the dam Pesach on their doors. All of this was a way of showing that the Yidden live in their sacred homes of kedushah without outside influences, and in that zechus of keeping their homes separate, with kedushas Yisroel, they were zoche to the Geula of Yetzias Mitzrayim.

As we stand in Nissan, the month of *Geula*, just a few days before the *Yom Tov* of Pesach, accompanying us are the thousands of *kabbalos*, *chizukim* and upgrades of *Klal Yisroel* strengthening and upholding the *kedusha* of our homes. May we be *zoche* that this should herald the ultimate *Geula* that we all so longingly await! Smart Choices

AWARENESS LETTER PUBLICIZED BY TAG IN LIGHT OF THE CURRENT SITUATION



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SHAILA HOTLINE

For technology questions relating to the current situation, please call the TAG Corona Response Hotline at 347-9SHAILA

CHIZUK SPEECHES

For speeches please call the regular TAG number 732-730-1824 and select option 1

Due to the current situation, many people will need to work from home. This may compel people who were מוסר נפש not to have internet in their home until now, to introduce it for the first time. Aside from the basic פסק הלכה for this מיעת הדחק for this מיעת הדחק is also a serious מיעה that once people have "tasted" the convenience of using internet in the home, it will be hard to remove it after the מונס has passed.

The following guidance is intended to assist in minimizing פרצות which may הדחק arise from this שעת הדחק

- Employers who have the ability to keep work which requires an internet connection outside of homes, are encouraged to do so, if they can bear the expense.
- People who can suspend work without undue financial hardship should do so rather than bring internet into their home.
- People whose *parnassah* is at risk if they don't work from home over the internet, may install an internet connection in their homes only with the following conditions:
 - The internet connection must be properly filtered with a *mehadrin* filter. It is the obligation of the employer to ensure that devices that he provides to his employees are properly filtered. Additionally, all efforts must be made to ensure that work computers being accessed remotely are filtered in a manner suited to a home environment.
 - Wherever possible a whitelist must be employed. Similarly, a whitelisted hotspot (provided by Yeshivanet) is preferred to unprotected internet connections.

The internet connection may only be used by the person in the home who has the *parnassah* necessity (their spouse and children may not use it).

- The internet connection may only be used for the specific *parnassah* necessity for which it was introduced.
- It is proper for both spouses to be מקבל בפה that once the שעת הרחק has passed they will terminate the internet from their home.
- Parents must make clear to their children that internet doesn't belong in their homes, that they have it temporarily for limited *parnassah* usage, and will get rid of it once the necessity
- There should be no relaxation of technology standards with regard to children. Children should never go online for recreation, study or even Torah purposes (e.g. Torah Anytime). This includes video conferencing apps such as Zoom.
- Especially during a time of חשבין הנפש about their use of technology. People must constantly reevaluate their practices and the safeguards that they have in place to ensure that they represent the highest Torah values.

As we prepare to take extreme measures in many areas of lives due to our current situation, it is important to remember what is in our hands and what is not.

The need to bring internet into a home may be due to circumstances which are beyond our control; but the precautions that we take to protect ourselves and our *mishpachos* when it's in our home are in our hands. It is within our means and it is our responsibility to ensure that aside for the precise *tzorech parnassah* created by this severe סער החדש our home remains internet free.



שפאל ביומאן שראל ניומאן



דוד מוסטאל 173 אום אל

ירוחם אלשין ירוחם

THAT SHOOK MANCHESTER

A TRUE STORY, AS TOLD TO SMART CHOICES

Manchester, England

The court date was looming and the outlook was not promising.

A young real-estate investor with no experience in the field of law would be going to court —against his own lawyer.

Mordy Greenfield* had invested months of time and energy working on a huge business deal — the purchase of a building in Germany. Finally, everything was set and buyer and seller were ready to close the deal. Mordy gave the command, and the nearly three and a half million pounds waiting in his bank account were transferred to the seller — or so he thought.

Unaware of any discrepancies, Mordy was sure that the transaction had been carried out as ordered, but, to his dismay, the seller insisted that he had not received the money. What neither Mordy nor the seller knew was that a hacker had been closely following their interchange of emails as the transaction was taking form. At the last minute, when the transfer order was given, he cleverly intervened and switched the digits of the wiring information, routing the funds to a different account.

When Mordy and the seller went back and reviewed the transaction details, they were shocked to discover the fraud that had transpired. In a flash, Mordy had lost millions.

Mordy didn't know where to turn. Then he realized that he had a lawyer, and it had been the lawyer's responsibility to review all details related to the transaction before it was finalized. He decided to file a claim against his lawyer, demanding that he repay the full sum that was lost due to his negligence.

A date was set for the court case. It was the talk of town: Who would prevail — the hapless real-estate investor or the polished lawyer?

As the court case approached, each side meticulously prepared his case. Finally, the day came and the two sides were brought to court. With brash confidence, the lawyer turned to the judge and said, "Why are you holding me responsible for letting the email go through with the wrong information? The owner himself got the email, too, and he also let it go through. It was a minor discrepancy, very difficult to discern, and he made the same mistake as I did."

Mordy promptly countered: "Not so. I never saw that email"

The judge said, "Such an important email — you surely saw on your smartphone."

Mordy proudly answered, "I do not have a smartphone.

I can't see emails on my phone, as I only own a simple flip phone." He removed the flip phone from his pocket and showed it to the judge, adding, "That is precisely why I hired a lawyer to check every email — because I don't have constant access."

Manchester

Courthouse

The astonished judge announced the verdict on the spot: "The lawyer is responsible for the entire sum, to the last pound. Mr. Greenfield cannot be held accountable, as he does not own a smartphone to see his emails at all times."

The verdict shook Manchester to the core. It was crystal clear that Mordy's uncompromising shemiras hamitzvos had turned out to be his financial protection.

Why is it that a businessman dealing in high-level real-estate transactions should possess only a basic flip phone?

The truth is that three months earlier, Mordy Greenfield did possess a smartphone, just like many others in his field. But his wife was growing increasingly uncomfortable with it. They were a young, growing family looking to raise true bnei Torah, and she felt that their children's growth would be threatened by the presence of a smartphone in their home.

For his part, Mordy agreed with her sentiments, but he didn't see that they had a choice, as he felt he needed the smartphone for his business. Nevertheless, he agreed to speak to the rav and clarify the issue. The couple met with their rav, who ruled that since the smartphone was necessary for business and was properly filtered, Mordy may keep it. The matter was settled.

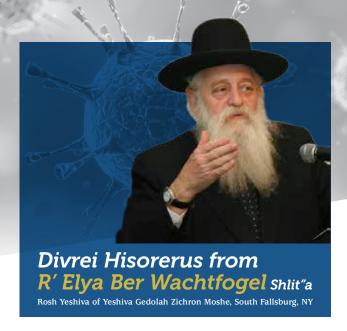
That night, at supper, Mr. Greenfield received a phone call. He pulled out his smartphone to answer it, but was startled to see his wife burst into tears.

"What's wrong? Didn't we already settle it with the rav?"

"Yes, we did," she admitted, "and I know that means it's permitted. But, still, I just don't see how our children will turn out the way we would hope if their father has a smartphone."

Nothing was more important to Mordy than his family's Yiddishkeit. He decided to follow his wife's intuition and swap his smartphone for a basic phone.

Three months later, that basic phone was his defense.



Unprecedented Tzarah

he world today is going through a tzarah the likes of which has never occurred in history. There has never been a plague that affected every corner of the world simultaneously. This has brought about an equally unprecedented situation: In the past, whenever there was any sort of churban in Klal Yisrael, chadarim and yeshivas in one place would have to close down, but those in other places would remain open. This is the first time that every makom Torah in Klal Yisrael — all chadarim and yeshivos across the entire world — have been forced to close their doors.

Everything that happens is midah k'neged midah, and it is obvious that this unprecedented tzarah is the result of chata'im committed on an unprecedented level. A hundred years ago, if a person sinned, the act affected only his immediate locality. If someone spoke lashon hara, it was nearly impossible for more than a hundred people to hear it. But today, a person can post a bit of lashon hara on the Internet and it travels instantly across the globe. One can show something inappropriate, a breach in tznius, on one end of the world, and the image can be seen at the other end of the world.

The nature of the punishment reflects the nature of the cheit.

Technology - Nisayon of Our Generation

t is *pashut* that this *tzarah* is the result of the catastrophe of the Internet, which began with the goyim and has crept steadily into our midst. All the gedolim of the present and the recent past have identified technology as the nisayon hador, the challenge of our generation.

The Message of CORONAVIRUS

This is the last battle we have to wage before the coming of Mashiach.

True, there are heterim for Internet use, such as for parnassah. But the yetzer hara has manipulated that heter, enabling Internet to invade the houses of Klal Yisrael, through the invention of the smartphone. Instead of limited use of Internet at work, the "need" evolved to be connected to the Internet 24 hours a day. No longer is it enough to have Internet on one's computer in the office; now people feel they need to see every email as it comes in. WhatsApp groups and social media have become necessities. The yetzer hara convinces us that once we have a smartphone, it would be very convenient to also get some apps that are not related to parnassah.

The heter to use Internet for parnassah has created a very grey area. It demands that we ask ourselves some frank questions: How much use does the heter really allow? Does it mean I can have Internet access constantly? And does it justify my having every app available? The answer is clear: The smartphone is something that you don't need and it causes a churban norah to every bayis that has it.

Old to Young, Young to Old

Perhaps Internet access may not be so damaging for some of the older people, who use it strictly for parnassah, banking, etc. But for the younger generation, it is immeasurably destructive. So, we could say, the older people, though not strongly affected, are carriers, leading the younger people to be "infected" by the Internet, and for those younger people it is a terrible churban. So, midah k'neged midah, Hashem sent a virus that doesn't seriously affect most of the younger people, but they act as carriers bringing the disease to the older people, for whom it is a frightening sakanah.

It is a clear message from Hashem. Anyone who thinks about it will realize that it is so. We have to do teshuvah of course. But what is the teshuvah that we must do? First and foremost, we must get rid of this nisayon.

May Hashem help rid us of this terrible plague, so that we can once again learn, daven, and do mitzvos in good health, for a long life.

Introducing: NetFree

It all began when a group of graphic designers found themselves in a serious predicament. On the one hand they wanted to follow the guidelines set forth by their Rabbanim and use only a very strict filter, but on the other hand, the nature of their work as graphic artists made pictures an indispensable part of their work.

All sites for sourcing images were blocked by their filters, and if they requested the sites to be opened, they were completely accessible, including pictures they would rather not see. These graphic designers got together and saw solving this problem as their mission.

This led to the creation of NetFree. They hired non-Jewish workers to filter all pictures in real time. Every time you open a site on NetFree, these workers look over every image and only allow permissible ones, while all others remain blocked and unavailable.

This technique picked up really fast, and something that was originally created for a small group of 20-30 people, started spreading until it was established as an organized operation with employees who work around the clock. Today, NetFree has tens of thousands of users in Israel and thousands more around the world, including in the USA!

How it works

etFree is different in that it is not just a filter, but in fact, an extensive white list. This means that access to the internet itself, with its billions of websites, is initially blocked. They are constantly unblocking sites as they are requested by their users. These are added to the white list, for the benefit of all users. By now they already have more than a quarter million sites open, with more sites added constantly as they are requested.

When NetFree comes across a site that is useful but inappropriate for any reason, the professionals and technicians at NetFree will make sure to open it in a way that's acceptable for all users. If they are not able to make it kosher, it remains locked and gets added onto a 'blacklist'. Unlike other filters, where a user who needs a questionable site gets an exception and it is opened for that user (obviously every community has their rules and procedures how that's done), with NetFree there is no such thing.

On occasion, a client's request to open a site needs to be declined if there is no way to make it kosher. In that case, NetFree tries to help with alternative options.

With this approach, every single site gets thoroughly combed through. This ensures that no uncalled-for content slips through the cracks.





the NetFree option in both locations:

- A 398 CLIFTON AVE. # 200 (on top of Bagel Nosh)
- & WESTGATE (Womens Office) P 732-503-9699



A Higher Standard Internet Filter Now Available in USA

How does NetFree filter pictures?

As mentioned above, NetFree is revolutionary with its innovation to filter pictures in real-time by actual humans. Every time a user opens a page, all pictures on that website are automatically sent to a live staff of non-Jewish workers - who were trained to quickly identify which pictures are okay and which are objectionable - and they go through every picture. They then either block or open the picture. The user can actually see for himself how some pictures open and others get blocked if there is a problem. All this takes just seconds! Once a picture is approved it remains open for all other NetFree users who might come across it.

Every picture that is approved remains open for all users. For example, if someone before you searched for this model vacuum cleaner on Amazon, you will see the picture immediately. If, however, you want to check out a unique product that no one looked at before - it will take a second or two before the picture loads.

Text Filtering by NetFree

Another important function that NetFree provides is text filtering. Every website that is opened quickly goes through a special "search" by a sophisticated robot that scans the entire text of said website, and if it finds any text or words that are problematic for a frum Yid, it simply blocks out the offensive text. If the robot sees too many words that need to be erased the entire page will be blocked.

Different Levels on Whitelist

As mentioned previously, NetFree essentially works like a massive whitelist and they keep on opening sites as they are requested by users. Once a site is approved and opened, it is automatically available for all users.

Every user who joins NetFree has the option to choose to limit themselves to different levels of access according to their needs. You can either have access to all sites that are opened by NetFree, or you can limit yourself to a select few categories that you want open, and keep everything else locked. You can also set it up to have "email only".

At this point the filter only works on computers. In the near future, a version for android devices will be made available as well.

This filter is available at TAG. For more information, about the NetFree filter you can reach NetFree via phone 718-400-8838 or email info@netfree.link.



ENGLISH | YIDDISH | HEBREW

Over 150 English Speeches!

SYSTEM INSTRUCTIONS

Press * any time to Return to the previous Menu

Press 2 to Pause & Resume

During pause mode: press 5 to hear the current location of speech, and its total duration

Press 8 to save a Bookmark & 0 to retrieve it when you call back

During a speech: Press 1 or 3 to Rewind or Fast Forward 15 Seconds, 4 or 6 to Rewind or FF 1 minute, 7 or 9 to Rewind or FF 5 minutes

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SMART CHOICES

GORONAVIRUS

SPEECHES

HOTLINE #: 732-400-9003

מי כעמך ישראל

Even during time of crisis, כלל ישראל yearns to grow!

Since the outbreak of the Corona Pandemic, many gedolim and roshei yeshiva have voiced their Daas Torah regarding the message of these challenging times. During this period, over 2,000 listeners have called the Smart Choices Hotline daily in search of guidance and inspiration!

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732-806-8139

Bnei Torah Shiurim: 732-363-6713

Kol Haloshon: 718-906-6400

Bitachon Hotline: 732-719-3898

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Torah Any Time: 718-298-2077