

עדת אש קודש Adass Aish Kodesh



OF BUTTONS AND DREAMS

Harav Y. Reuven Rubin Shlita

Ok so you go out and buy a new suit. Breathe in the clean aroma, feel the cloth, experience that ever so momentary glow within as you slip into the sleeves for the first time. You walk out of the shop, feeling very happy with yourself. Then, well you see the thread. It's the one that every suit comes with. That little bit of thread that just just winks out from the top button coaxing you do pull it. Days go by, the thread taunts you, it is despoiling the perfect look of the fresh new suit. Ever so slowly that thread seems to be growing, your perfect look is being challenged, there is nothing worse than a button limply dangling off, so you do the inevitable. You pull on that thread, hoping that the button will behave itself and get in line with the others. The thread is longer than you imagined, it spools out as the button flies off into oblivion. It is amazing how this everyday nuisance is so common yet irritating. One other thought, did you ever wonder why the inside cleaning label never gets loose, never falls off? Right, I know, that's a bit too much for one day, we can revisit the scourge of the threads on another occasion.

Life is filled with layer upon layer of small irritants. They cram into your mind, keeping you unfocused and ever so unsettled.

The Peasetzna Rebbe Zt"l spoke often about the constant conversation that goes on in our minds. He challenges us to just stop for a moment and listen to what madness passes for the fleeting thoughts that congest our brains. He explains that if we do so we will be astounded how disturbing they are.

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All this static keeps us from focusing on what is important, especially when it comes to our avodas Hashem.

In Parshas Vayetzei we find Yaakov Avinu leaving Be'er Sheva and going to Haran. "He encounter the place and spent the night there". Rashi notes that chazal explain that in Hebrew the word for "encounter the place " indicates the act of prayer and that Yakov davened Maariv at that moment.

The Yismach Yesroil understands that the word for night, "arvis" is rooted in the word for "darkness". At the same time the word also can mean "confused." When A Yied is confused with all the conflicting thoughts and worries, when he can't focus and despairs.

Says the Rebbe Zt"l of Alexander, Yakov Avinu created this unique prayer, Maariv, for all generations, as a moment of calm in the day, a time we can seek release from all the thoughts that crash into our conscience. No matter how far we have drifted, how confused and suffused with darkness, we may become, there is the prayer of Maariv, anointed by our forefather Yaakov Avinu, who understood the complicated human condition, after all, he was running from a murderous brother.

Threads may unravel, annoyances plague our lives, but then, we have Maariv, a gift from our ancestor Yaakov. In the darkest moment, we can turn to Hashem, step back from the chaos, and just as Yaakov, find a ladder reaching up to the Kisa Hakovod. We are all prone to suffer some anxiety at times, the little things that make up the annoyances of the daily grind. Hold the dream of that ladder, let the merit of Yaakov, who suffered so many trials, give you courage to focus on what is true to our souls.

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