

*THE HOLINESS OF THE EYES*  
*BULLETIN 22*

IS YOUR RABBI ORTHODOX OR REFORM?  
THE TRUTH ABOUT LOOKING AT WOMEN

**THE RAMBAM: LOOKING AT WOMEN MAKES  
IT DIFFICULT TO DO TESHUVAH**

And there are five things that the one who does it finds no strength to do Teshuvah for them because these things are taken lightly by most people and the person transgresses them and he thinks that it is no sin... The one who looks at women thinks that there is no sin involved in this and he says: Have I had sexual relations with her or did I get close to her?" And he doesn't know that the sight of his eyes is a great sin that leads to the sin of forbidden relations. (The Rambam, Hilchot Teshuvah 4, 4)

**LOOKING AT WOMEN IS A GRAVE  
PROHIBITION FROM THE TORAH**

My dear friend you should know that a majority of people think that this prohibition is only words of Chassidut and are not careful to refrain from looking at women, You should know my friend that this is a grave prohibition from the Torah, and the ones who treat lightly this prohibition woe to their souls because they cause great evil for themselves. We have a verse that we repeat three times a day: "And do not go astray after your hearts and after your eyes" And it is written in the Talmud: "Why is it written (Kohelet 6:9) "Better is the sight of the eyes than the wandering of the soul" Because it is more pleasurable looking at a woman than the actual sexual act. And Rashi commented: For the Yetzer ha Ra it is better to make a person sin through the sight of his eyes than to make him sin through the actual sin. (Derech Pikudecha)

MAYBE YOU NEVER HEARD YOUR RABBI TALKING ABOUT THESE THINGS FOR IT MAY NOT BE IN HIS BEST INTEREST TO TELL YOU. SO EVEN IF YOUR RABBI RIDICULES YOU FOR KEEPING THE SHULCHAN ARUCH YOU SHOULD BE STRONG AND GO AHEAD FOR IT MAY BE THAT YOUR RABBI BELONGS TO THE EREV RAV AND HE JUST DOES NOT WANT YOU TO KEEP THE TORAH AS IT SHOULD BE FOR MAYBE HE WOULD BE EXPOSED AS A FAKE IN THE EYES OF THE OTHER CONGREGANTS WHEN THEY SEE THAT A COMMON PERSON KEEPS THE SHULCHAN ARUCH TO A GREATER EXTENT THAN THE RABBI. AND WE ARE NOT TALKING ABOUT PIOUS PRACTICES BUT WE ARE TALKING HERE ABOUT KEEPING THE SHULCHAN ARUCH, SPECIFICALLY CONCERNING THOSE AREAS WHERE THE RELIGIOUS LEADERS OF OUR TIME ARE LAX ABOUT. FOR EXAMPLE, TALKING IN THE SYNAGOGUE IN THE MIDDLE OF PRAYERS, DURING THE KADDISH, GIVING TORAH LESSONS TO MEN AND WOMEN WITHOUT A MECHITZA, HAVING A DEFICIENT MECHITZA IN SHUL, LOOKING AT WOMEN WHICH IS SOMETHING FORBIDDEN, ETC