



Gazing at Women – Introduction

Note: Although we typically do not elaborate upon the *hashkafah* and fundamentals related to *halachos* – and rather focus upon practical *halachah* implications – we will elaborate more than usual on the background of *shemiras einayim*, protecting one’s eyes from gazing at women.

The reason for this is that we all know that this is among the greatest challenges of our generation, especially for those in the workforce: in the office, while commuting, meeting prospective clients, etc. It is readily apparent that the prohibition of “*Lo sasuru acharei levav’chem v’acharei eineichem* – Do not pursue the temptations of your hearts and eyes,”

must be kept in mind at every moment. Indeed, this is one of the six constant mitzvos (as mentioned by the Beur Halachah in OC 1 s.v. hu klal).

We will therefore take this opportunity to elaborate on this mitzvah in particular, and this will, *be"H*, aid us in fulfilling it.

Special note to the *nashim tzidkanios*! It is important to note that while many of these *halachos* are more applicable to men than women, it is essential for women to learn these *halachos* as well. One reason for this is to remind them of the *halachos* which also apply to them, as will be discussed. Additionally, women must be vigilant not to lead men toward sin, *chas v'shalom*.

The Greatness of Guarding One's Eyes

The *Beis Yosef* (EH 21:1) relates the words of Rabbeinu Yonah (*Iggeres HaTeshuvah* 19:20): "One who gazes at women weakens the power of his *Yetzer Tov*."

"However, one who restrains himself and does not gaze upon women merits that his eyes will see the sweetness of Hashem, as *Chazal* teach us (*Sanhedrin* 92a) that one who keeps his eyes from gazing at women will merit to greet the *Shechinah*!"