

# Smart Phone Slavery!

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When Moshe is sent by G-d to inform the Jewish People that their redemption from slavery is near, he discovers that they have no time or patience for him. "And they did not listen to Moshe because of shortness of breath and hard and difficult work." (Shmot 6:9)

Pharaoh understood the dynamics of freedom and so he succeeded in creating the ultimate crushing slavery. Someone forced to work very hard can still remain internally free. A prime example of this concept is Natan Sharansky. He relates that when he was engaged in hard labor in the Gulag, he still felt that his soul and mind were free.

However, lacking the ability even to think about their dire situation, demonstrated that the Jewish People were truly enslaved both physically and emotionally. Pharaoh's game plan was to keep the Jewish People in permanent and perpetual slavery of body and soul.

Thank G-d, we do not know the physical slavery and persecution that previous generations of Jews did, but we too are losing a certain measure of freedom. According to the classic work

Mesilat Yesharim, our internal spiritual world loses its freedom in much the same way as Pharaoh's slaves did.

When we are constantly busy, and leave no time to reassess who we are and why we are, then we are not truly in full possession of ourselves.

We all have values, and want to live by them, but there is only one way to make that happen. We need to have enough time to consider whether what we actually do expresses our true values.

In the Pesach Hagadah we make a strange statement, "This year we are slaves, next year we hope to be free." Do you know any slaves? What is the meaning of this bizarre statement?

A person living in a democracy can also be a slave, because there is more than one type of slavery. Psychological and spiritual slavery still exist even today. For example, a person can be enslaved to money, fashion (torn jeans), or political concepts (the Two State Solution). On Pesach we have the opportunity to free ourselves from ALL types of slavery including Digital Slavery.

If our default option is to go online on Facebook whenever we have free time, we simply have no opportunity to truly think about ourselves. We all need a time-out when there are no smart phones, no dumb phones and no WhatsApp - say no to Digital Slavery!



Whether it is Pharaoh, Smart Phones, or Facebook, if we don't have time to think about who we are and where we are going, we become Digital Slaves. According to the Ramchal, this is the plan of the Evil Inclination (Yetzer Hara), to keep us so busy we have no time to reflect and think about our Eternity.

The good news is that we can free ourselves of Smart Phone Slavery, wherever we are, by just taking a few moments every day to think about our ultimate spiritual freedom from the Yetzer Hara. The way to accomplish this is as the Mishna in Avot states, "AIN BEN CHORIN ELA MI SH'OSEK BA'TORA." Which means, there is no one who is truly free, unless he occupies himself with the Torah.