

# YOUR YETZER HARA!

*by Rabbi Label Lam*

And Yaakov remained alone and a man wrestled with him until the break of dawn. And he saw that he could not defeat him so he grabbed him in the hollow of his thigh and he dislocated the hollow of Yaakov's thigh with his wrestling with him. And he said, "Send me because the dawn has broken." (Breishis 32:25-27)

**Because the dawn has broken:** I must go sing Shira; Song by day! (Rashi)

How odd that Yaakov's opponent- the "Yetzer Hara"- needs to go and sing in a celestial choir by day! Can it be he has a wholesome day job?

The following is excerpted, with permission of Mr. Avi Shulman, from his book "Thoughts to Build On". It is written in the persona of the Yetzer Hara by an older brother for his struggling younger brother:

*To my star pupil,*

I am writing this letter to let you know what I think of you. Up here in Heaven things are not like they are down on earth. There, people only know what they can see. If they see a person who is "successful", they think that he is the greatest guy. When they see somebody struggling, they think 'he might be one of the weaker elements. Let me tell you something. HASHEM gives every person certain abilities that nobody knows about down there where you live. Some people are capable of tremendous things while others were put there for much smaller purposes. Only HASHEM in His infinite wisdom is able to give every person exactly what he needs to reach his potential. The problem is that in your world, people sometimes become so comfortable with their small successes that they don't try hard enough to reach the plateau that HASHEM knows they were created to reach.

That is where I come in. My job is to make sure that they succeed in reaching their true potential. I am very misunderstood. Most people hate me, and I don't really blame them. Most people think that my job is to make sure they fail in all aspects of Mitzvos, and that I rejoice every time they sin. This is the farthest thing from the truth. Did you ever watch a boxing coach train a beginner? It is a really funny sight. The coach will put on gloves to fight against the student. At first, he won't hit his hardest or throw his best punches. But as the student gets better and better, the coach will fight harder and harder. He does this so the student will improve his skills and become the best boxer he can

be...when the coach has thrown everything he has at his student, and not only does the guy withstand the beating, but he knocks the coach down, nobody in the world is happier than the coach.

...Sometimes my job is very disappointing. I see a person with a lot of potential, and I start right in on him. He fights back for a while, but when the fight gets too tough, he quits, and just remains on whatever level he was on. (And he usually ends up going down!) I feel like yelling at him, "Get up, you fool! Have you any idea how much more you could be accomplishing!?" But I am not allowed to do so. I just leave him alone and go find another promising candidate. If I have chosen you to be the target of my most fierce battles, it was not for no reason! You have tremendous ability!

...I am writing to you now because I have a very serious request to ask of you. Please don't stop fighting! Don't give up! I have been beating too many people lately, and I am losing patience. Believe in yourself, because I would not be involved with you as much as I am if I didn't think you could beat me. Know what your strengths are! A great Rabbi once said, "Woe to he who does not know his weaknesses. But oy vavoy to he who does not know his strengths- for he will not have with which to fight."

Always remember one thing: You have a secret weapon at your disposal. I shouldn't really be telling you- but I will anyway. HASHEM Himself is watching our "training" sessions very closely. I am pleased to inform you that He's rooting for you! If things should ever get tough, too tough to bear, just call out to Him with a prayer, and He will immediately come to your aid. I wish you the best of luck, and I hope that after 120 years when your time is up in that world of falsehood, you will come up here to the World of Truth, where I will be waiting for you with open arms, to congratulate you on your victory, and I will personally escort you to your place next to the Kisei HaKavod.

Sincerely and with great admiration, I remain,

**Your Yetzer Hara!**

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