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certain that *Hashem* has put it in the heart of that person to forgive you. As a result, you need not carry that burden around with you any longer." Only after hearing the words of the Gaon, did R' Zalman finally feel relieved.

TORAH GEMS

Ùéàá ùúàð÷à 'à óà Ìùòè ¢à éé àì çìŋ 'à äááé àì
(èè-èè) íéìùä úçúí àìù úà 'à äçîä ... àäää

The *posuk* details the mindset of the person of whom it may be said "אֵין צֶמֶח" - "*may his name be blotted out.*" The **Chofetz Chaim, R' Yisroel Meir Kagan ZT"l** described one such person.

At age 9, young Yisroel Meir was recognized for his quick and sharp mind, diligence, and fervor of his prayers. At that young age he was already spoken of as a future leader. Word of the young prodigy reached the ears of A.D.M. HaKohen, leader of the Vilna *maskilim*, who was determined to do everything in his power to win the boy over to his evil ways. He struck up a friendship and sent his cohorts to attempt to draw him into their group, with all kinds of promises and flattery. Even at that tender age, however, Yisroel Meir firmly rebuffed all their enticements. He even moved to a different town in order to avoid any possible temptation.

Of these and other such attempts to lead Jews astray, the Chofetz Chaim used to say, "If someone sins alone, there is room to judge him favorably and assume that his *yetzer hara* got the better of him, tricking him into indulging his base desires. Chazal say: *"Who is mighty? Someone who conquers his desire."* (à-ã úäää) The one who sins was weak and did not stand up in the face of his trials. But why should anyone want to make other people sin with him? How does he benefit?

"It must be that he's totally in the power of the *ἀρχαὶ ἀϑεῖ*, and it's appropriate to say about him *ἂν ἴη ὡς ἴε*" - "*may his name be blotted out.*" Indeed, this is the goal of all our prayers - that the name of such people be expunged from the world, along with the evildoers and all their forces, just as all

forms of evil will ultimately disappear like smoke."

'âââ é"ďá úà äãî ðéá ...úàä äøéùä úà äùî áúëéá

The requirement to learn *Torah* is very clearly stated: "אֵלֶּיָּא יִיָּחֵ אֵא וְעָאָא" - "*And you shall toil in it day and night.*" A cynical question has been asked: If everyone is sitting and learning all day and all night, how can the world ever continue to exist? Who will perform the chores that need to be done and who will provide for everyone's needs?

R' Yosef Chaim Sonnenfeld ZT"L answered this question with a question of his own. The drive to earn more and more money - the תאוה לאוצר - *Desire for money* - is apparently so strong that people will sacrifice almost everything for it. Religion, family, moral values, etc. fade in comparison to the need to make as much money as one can. But here again, we may ask the same question: If everyone in the world became rich, how would the world continue to exist? Who will perform the menial chores and who will take precious time away from acquiring wealth to see to the good of mankind?

The simple answer is when people are making money, they don't worry about this "problem." No matter how many people become rich, there will always be a percentage of poor people to balance things out. The bakers, shoemakers and peddlers will never go out of style and if G-d-forbid everyone became rich, not to worry: the poor and downtrodden will always be there right behind them, serving them and providing for them.

The same may be said of *Torah* learning. Sit and learn and don't worry about the "problem" of everyone else in the world learning night and day!

- "iɔɕɔɔà" iéɔiē uáíéɔɔá áíéɔà u áɔ iéáá ɔáá í uɕɔ
 ò éíŋ ɔɔàè ?áí áíéɔáá àí - uáíéɔ u á"è+u ááééáá
 áéuáíéɔɔú ɔáŋ áééɔá í÷ ɔááá áéá u éúíáí áɕé
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 uáééɔá ááá uɕ áíé áɔ iáéí ááííí áééí iéíá
 á u÷áá áíéɔá uá iááá íáúá uáɕáí iéá éé ,áíéɔá
 àí è"éòá ,ɔááí éɔááá ɔááúí ɔɔáé áíí ííóúé àíá
 .á"á÷á ééíí í ÷éé ááúé

[illegible]

מעשה אבות... סימן לבנים

(á-ì) 'áěă í áéă êâö î éëðà øùà ìëë àìá÷á úóî ùă êé÷là 'ă ãö úáùă

When **R' Zalman of Vilna ZT"l** was young, he was unable to contain himself and uttered a remark which embarrassed someone. He soon realized that he had done a terrible wrong, and wished to apologize, but that person had already walked out and couldn't be found. R' Zalman immediately began searching for the man. He sought him tirelessly, going to every *shul* and *Beis Medrash* in Vilna and through the market place day after day, but to no avail. Apparently that person was a visitor to Vilna and had left town. R' Zalman was beside himself with anxiety and regret and could not forgive himself for having embarrassed another Jew.

R' Zalman's father-in-law could not tolerate his son-in-law's suffering. It was consuming him night and day. Assuming that R' Zalman had not really looked closely at the stranger, he engaged a man to act as though he were that person. The plan was for this man to appear before R' Zalman and allow R' Zalman to apologize once and for all, ridding himself of his terrible feelings of angst. Thus, a few days later, while walking in the street, the "hired" man made it his business to run into R' Zalman. "*Sholom Aleichem*, R' Zalman," he said.

R' Zalman looked closely at the man. "*Aleichem Sholom*," he replied. Then he added quickly, "I'm sorry but I don't recognize you. Who are you?"

"Don't you remember?" the man said with a big smile, "I met you when I visited Vilna a few months ago. We were talking then and I can even remind you of the wisecrack you made that day." R' Zalman was shocked - and delighted. Here was his opportunity to apologize. But he quickly suspected a ruse, it was all too convenient. After talking to the man for a bit, he convinced himself that this was not the person whom he had insulted. "I'm sorry," he said after a while, "I don't believe I've ever met you before." His distress was not relieved.

This went on for some time until finally R' Zalman's father-in-law brought the matter before the great **Gaon of Vilna, R' Eliyohu ZT"L** and explained the situation. The Gaon asked that R' Zalman come to speak with him. When he came in, the Gaon sat him down.

He said to R' Zalman, "My child, when a person does wrong, he must do everything in his power to set things right. That is the *mitzvah* of *Teshuvah*. You have left no stone unturned in your quest to accomplish this. You have done everything possible to find the person whom you've insulted and apologize to him. *Hashem* only asks that which is within our means to do. More than that is impossible. Inasmuch as you were sincere in your efforts to make amends to that person, you can be absolutely