

"When you go forth in camp against your enemies, you shall guard against evil. " (23:10)

The *Torah* previously addressed the problems and challenges that abound during the course of warfare. The *Torah* here does not seem to be speaking of physical war, but rather of spiritual war. The term "*machane*" is different from the term "*milchamah*." We are referring here to one's own "*machane*," camp, one's peace of mind and spiritual values - not the enemy's. Hence, the *Torah* says, "You shall guard against evil." This suggests that the only time one needs *shmirah*, "protection" is when he goes out. This is obviously not true. *Chazal* state that the *Satan* is particularly active during times of danger. Thus, one should be extremely careful whenever he separates himself from the *Klal*, community.

In the *Yerushalmi*, *Shabbos 2:5* *Chazal* ask a noteworthy question: Why does the *Torah* emphasize the need for *shmirah* only when one leaves the camp? Is it not imperative to be on one's guard at all times? They respond that the *Satan* is overly active during times of danger. **Horav Moshe Swift, zl**, comments that the term *Satan* never refers to those who oppose us by aiming for our physical annihilation. The *Satan* takes a more subtle approach. He waits until the person is outside of the *Torah* camp, when his defenses are down, when his spiritual values are vulnerable, when his entire *Torah* lifestyle is at risk. The *Satan* strikes specifically at a time when one is not surrounded by the *Torah* community, when the support that encourages and maintains all of us is not accessible. The *Torah* addresses such situations and enjoins us to be ever vigilant, lest we fall into the clutches of the *yetzer hora*.

If one remains "within" the *Torah* community, if he is not exposed to the adversity and cynicism that permeate the social circles of the secular world, then the need does not arise. We are admonished to guard ourselves particularly when communal and social pressures demand that we must interface with the world "out there," when we must come in contact with a culture that is -- at best -- not in consonance with *Torah* dictate.

Probably one of the biggest problems is the orthodox Jew, who -- as a result of his insecurity - attempts to outdo his secular counterparts. We should realize that actions which are unbecoming a *Torah* Jew degrades orthodoxy and flaws the brand of Judaism - which our ancestors died for. It is unfortunate when the Jew who attends a *Minyan* in the morning and even goes to a *shiu*, proceeds during the rest of the day in a manner unbecoming his *Torah* orientation. This is blatant *chilul Hashem*! We must stand out as Hashem's emissaries to the world, as examples of integrity, as paragons of virtue and as models of a nation committed to a heightened spiritual/moral perspective.