

I'm NOT fasting this Tisha B'av

Posted by cominghome - 14 Jul 2011 21:25

There was a group of Ethiopians that were brought to Israel close to one of the Shalosh Regalim. An Israeli soldier was set up to educate the young Ethiopian children and began to teach them of the ancient rituals we're no longer able to do due to the fact that we no longer have a Beis HaMikdash. Surprisingly, the soldier had to teach these children that we no longer have a Temple! The "shocking" news lead to sincere mourning over our Temple which was destroyed over 2000 years ago, a very unique site to see. (See full story: www.aish.com/jw/s/48893337.html)

What I always wonder is what the follow-up to this story is. I imagine the dialogue would be something like this:

Soldier: We don't have the Temple because it was destroyed years and years ago.

Ethiopian: So why don't we rebuild it?

Solider: Because there is a mosque on the Temple Mount.

Ethiopian: So? The entire civilized world, represented by the UN agreed that this is Jewish land in 1948. Shouldn't we treat it like Jewish land?

Soldier: Well, yes, but there is "World Opinion" and -

Ethiopian: You're telling me if all the Jews got together to rebuild the Temple, the other countries would still stop us?

Solider: Well, that's the problem, we can't get all the Jews together...

The way I see it, the only thing that will bring Moshiach and prevent us from having to fast in a little over three weeks from now is relationship. And we know that by giving in to our teiva, we are destroying relationships - with ourselves, with Gd, with our family, etc. We are, in essence, destroying all chances of rebuilding our Beis HaMikdash. I'm not speaking about the spiritual demons created when we spill seed - the concept of those beings doesn't do much for me emotionally - what I am talking about is that when we spill seed, we cut ourselves off. We're no longer able to care for our family or friends. We're no longer able to reach out and be a "Light on to the Nations". We're isolating ourselves, and in doing so we're pushing away those bricks that will one day sit on Har HaBayis.

In the same light, I had a thought about "Im Eshkachei Yerushalayim, Tischkach Yimini", "If I

forget Jerusalem, my right hand will forget (it's task)". Our goal should be to rebuild Yerushalayim. For those of us who are not yet able to find a way to Eretz Yisroel, the concept of Yerushalayim can still be seen internally - we are here to build a place for Gd in our hearts and our lives, we're here to build a Yerushalayim inside ourselves spiritually, as well as physically in it's proper place. When we allow our hands to wonder to the wrong place and do the wrong thing, it's only because we've forgotten our goal.

If we forget Yerushalayim (either our own Yerushalayim or the real one), our important hands will wonder aimlessly, south, to a place that will inevitably kill us.

We should all be zocheh to build healthy relationships with everyone around us, set our hands and minds on the right course, and together we should wine and dine this Tisha B'av.

P.S. Hopefully by this Tisha B'av this forum will no longer be necessary, at which point you're all invited to my house for a BBQ.

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Re: I'm NOT fasting this Tisha B'av
Posted by alexeliezer - 15 Jul 2011 15:42

Well said.

As I've posted in "We Love the Heiliger Guard," this site has done as much as anything today to bring the geulah closer.

And each of us must continue to do his part by staying clean.

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Re: I'm NOT fasting this Tisha B'av
Posted by Dov - 17 Jul 2011 04:27

Does that mean that if Hashem sends us Moshiach before this Tish'a b'Av then people here will drop the usernames? It would be kind of funny if you'd openly share your home address with all of us but we'd *still* have to refer to you as "cominghome"?

Personally, I am sure your real name is *much* nicer. Another great reason for me to look forward

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Re: I'm NOT fasting this Tisha B'av
Posted by nezach - 17 Jul 2011 13:02

Important message. thank you for your post.

~~to Hashem sending Moshiach.~~

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Re: I'm NOT fasting this Tisha B'av
Posted by cominghome - 20 Jul 2011 19:52

Heheh, yes, Dov, I think that when Moshiach is here I will gladly open up with my name and home address. I'll go from being a fighter/soldier to a survivor/warrior. I will be able to say, "This is what our generation faced, and with the help of GYE, I won the battle!" - it will be a different world when Moshiach is here, people will view our battles differently, all they will see is a group of people TRYING.

As someone said in the forum (I forget who), all HaShem wants is for us to TRY - at the end He determines what actually happens.

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Re: I'm NOT fasting this Tisha B'av
Posted by Dov - 21 Jul 2011 11:56

And what if I told you that the main entrance fee to getting well is for each of us to quit the

playing around and at least use our real names here? What if I told you that if I wait to be honest with others until Moshiach comes, then I will have to be left outside the room, because the admission price to sobriety and freedom from lust is opening up about the true me - and that means almost nothing if I am only 'open' when first being well-hidden behind a username?

Have you ever heard about Captain Kirk?

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Re: I'm NOT fasting this Tisha B'av
Posted by Yosef Hatzadik - 21 Jul 2011 21:21

Why only be open with first names?

How about using you first name AND last name?

Are you hiding on the hidden internet? Give us your address, please?

Your Social Security number might help you break your secrecy COMPLETELY!

"Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities."

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Re: I'm NOT fasting this Tisha B'av
Posted by Dov - 21 Jul 2011 23:21

OK, so you are making a point that divulging all aspects of our identity is the only way to make a full disclosure of self and be truly honest with others.

But we all know that is not true. We all know that we do *not* have to tell a friend *all* about us, in order to be close with him. There are other ways to get truly intimate.

So you are trying to be *docheh* my words with straw. Intimacy is not what I am talking about here, at all.

Please bear with me and I'll tell you about Captain Kirk in a minute.

First, I will share that I have seen dozens of guys who have had the hardest time just saying their right name on a phone call. I have heard the hesitating, quiet voice on the other end of the line finally admit that "yes, my name - the one the real people in my everyday life know me by - is Pinchas". It is a terrible strain for some - and I hear myself in their trembling. That same hesitancy - fear mixed with shame. It's mine, too. It's just that in my case it is behind me - in theirs it is still in front of them.

What is really going on here?

I have seen frum guys *finally* drag themselves into live meetings and start off the first few meetings using a 'fakish' name - their English name that no one who knows their frum persona really uses. *Only to later change their names in the meetings to the Hebrew name that their wife and friends use* - cuz they began to see the perverts in the room *are* like they are, that *they* need what the guys in the room have been given just as desperately as they do. No difference in that respect. That is when the walls go down and the real juicy work can finally begin. *Until then, they are still unattached to what goes on in the meeting, for on some level [b]it is not really Pinchas who is sitting there, but 'Robert' (the bad guy who is subject to porn worship).* [/b]

How to bring them together?

Which brings me to Captain Kirk.

There was once an episode of Star Trek in which there was a time travel shtick, and the Kirk of the present, went 10 years into the past. Now, there was another Kirk then, too, right?

That was a big problem. The scientists told him that normally two of the same people cannot coexist. It just does not happen. But as this was an exception (it was a TV show and they were getting paid \$15,000 per episode) as long as the old Kirk did not actually meet the present Kirk, all would be fine. However, if they *actually met each other*, the entire Time-Space Continuum would be 'ripped asunder' (chas veSholom). Under no circumstances could they be allowed to meet!

I do not remember what actually happened to Mr Shatner, but everything turned out OK for there were another few seasons of the show (and also we are all still here, no?). But my point is just this:

How does a frum guy get all drawn into his very private porn, admitting by his actions its awesome, sweet power for him, and privately have sex with himself (masturbate) with such intensity and imaginative pleasure and power? OK, so he has shame, self-loathing, and sadness afterward. But how does he do both tefillin, teaching Torah, being mekareiv and really davening for others hard and really crying for the churban, and really working on his middos....**and** masturbating himself with a fantasy that could *only* mean he (secretly) also worships the beauty and power of those naked shiksas and the act of sex? **How does such a contradiction survive in him?**

How does it survive in *us*?

My answer to myself is simple. We learn to lie a little. We lie to others and we lie to ourselves. We'll quit really soon. We won't do it any more when we are twenty....or fifty. Never on Shabbos. Never with masturbation. Etc. All lies, to ourselves. And over time, we learn to lie more and more without even noticing it, just as you cannot see yourself grow.

When we are being *good*, we feel good about ourselves and we wish we could forget the bad

stuff we did last night - we call that a *hirhur teshuvah*. Really it is just so we do not hate ourselves so badly, but that's OK. We learn not to face it *right now* by pretending that we are 'forgiven' by Hashem. That way, one persona does not invade the other so much. It gets put off till the next time, if we are lucky.

When we are being 'bad', we wish we could forget how devoted we are to Hashem and His Torah and to our wives and children and to honesty with society - because it just feels so good to do the porn and we really see no way out of it. We know we need it and do not in a million years believe there is really an alternative for us, in the end. We end up 'ignoring' our kedusha during the act. That is lying to ourselves, and again, one persona does not see the other simultaneously. Pretending we are really rotten to the core is a much more comfortable way to act out. Nu. Who wants to hurt so much?

We walk about for years and are tortured inside, for we know the dichotomy we are hiding - we *are* the dichotomy. But we do not really know what to do. We fight to make one side gain mastery over the other and call that *hisgabrus al hayeitzer*. And we fall. Then we assume we are horrible Jews, and assume that Hashem agrees with us about that. That mistake is a hard one to shake...(see step 2)

So now about the time-travel dilemma.

When we open up to others under a username (or fake English name in a meeting) and share the entire truth (which most rarely do) about our addiction, we are still *hiding our 'good' persona - the real me*. It's OK to let them know the horrible dirt - yeah, all of it - as long as they do not know the 'good' persona *too* well. The two are just incompatible.

Thos who got caught by their wives or children know exactly what I am talking about. They understand why they getting caught was so effective for a time - the desire to use the porn left them as a result of getting both personae dragged into the room at the same time. The horror of getting caught with my pants down by a co-worker, son, daughter, or wife is truly intolerable to anyone who has experienced it. Why?

Because the hypocrisy is mercilessly forced to come to a bitter end. The Time-Space Continuum has ripped asunder. We look frantically for a place to bury ourselves. It's hell.

It is the two Kirks being forced to see eachother by a third party - ***and only a party who knows***

both personae can possibly do that. Till that happens, we are all players. Lying a bit about the '*real*' us' to ourselves and to others.

Some of us insist on solving our problem without bringing the two personae together. Perhaps they are just avoiding the terribly painful end of their hypocrisy, perhaps not. I do not know what is best for another. But in my own case, I got caught, and it still didn't help. After a few weeks I was back at it and it got worse and worse until I couldn't take it any more. I was begging for someone to rip off my cover and get me real! My wife could not do that, for she does not understand what I am talking about when I describe the desperation to get the sweet porn in my mind and heart and does not understand the allergy to it that I have.

So I needed real meetings - with real addicts. Perverts for decades who chose the path of sobriety *because they had no choice*. Just like me. People who can hear both sides of me. And I use my real name, wear my normal Jewish outfit, and talk with them freely about my real life.

And that flows out into being real with everybody else in my life, whether they know about my problem, or not.

And that is why so many of us are OK with *goyim* in meetings, but shrink into a corner when they meet a frum yid. There is a common strong desire to avoid and evade. And I do not blame them, for I had that, too. Here is a guy who can bring them even closer to the true full self! It's more pain to go through. But more healing, too.

Interestingly, I have seen newly recovering program-guys meet people from the meeting in public places just 'out of the blue' and *totally ignore them*, as if they didn't know them at all. Those guys did not remain sober. I think they may have been shocked by the cross-over from their 'meeting life' into their 'real life'. They were not willing to smile discreetly and say a polite "Hi" to the other guy. Instead, here was trouble - "so get away from me quick." Oy vavoi.

This is *precisely* why AA has a strong tradition of real anonymity. We do *not* reveal the identity of anyone *else* we meet in the rooms to non-members. Ever. But it's not about shame, at all. It's because sharing the secrets of ***others*** will not help *their* recovery at all! Only the truth that ***they*** want to share will help them.

Those who just get caught and stay clean out of fear of further humiliation never, ever stay better. Getting humiliated into sobriety does not work, until there is some humility added. Humility (in *hachno'oh* to the truth) is the underpinning of the steps.

And that is why 'accountability groups' are nice but will ultimately fail, as long as they are based on avoiding shame - which they can easily become all about.

And that is why opening up to the wife (and remaining consistently open with her) is so very powerful - when done at the right time. It is powerful medicine for my recovery and powerful medicine for the marriage. Honesty there removes yet another layer of hiding **from ourselves** that has to go to the boards for true freedom.

Sharing my credit card number and address would not do *any* of these things for me, and neither would pulling up my pant-leg. It's not about compromising my *security*, nor my anonymity. It's not about getting hurt nor for the sake of being punished for all my wrongs until I can finally be good. This is not Teshuvah and it is not sigufim. It's all and only about being the real me with everyone that I *can* be, to the extent that I can be without violating the health of my family and others. We do the best we can in that, and ask Hashem to make it work right. And it works, period.

Do you get what I am talking about?

(Really I know you were just playing devil's advocate, YosefhaTzaddik, but I humored you to get it all out there be"H. May it be helpful to someone, Amein.)

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Re: I'm NOT fasting this Tisha B'av
Posted by ZemirosShabbos - 22 Jul 2011 16:53

thank you Dov, that was mahhhhvelous

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Re: I'm NOT fasting this Tisha B'av
Posted by Yosef Hatzadik - 27 Jul 2011 16:01

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But why is it any more real to introduce yourself as **Dov** to a bunch of anonymous strangers who have no idea who you are than 'hiding' behind the name **Bear**, or **Bear Jew** or **Bearded Jew** ??
OK, so don't give us your credit card numbers. (Now, how am I gonna pay my bills...

I have shared my name with quite a few trusted GYE friends (I hope it is not misplaced trust!!!), but still feel that I have multiple personalities. I am one person to my family, friends, & acquaintances that don't know about my GYE connection & another to those that do. There is practically no difference to my GYE personality between using the name Yosef Hatzadik in my conversations or using my real name.

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Re: I'm NOT fasting this Tisha B'av
Posted by Dov - 27 Jul 2011 17:51

You are probably right. Here, in this context, the fake name thing is probably not as much a hot-button item as it would be in live meetings (where I have witnessed guys - *especially frum guys!* - use fake names).

In a more real relationship, any fakeness is magnified, of course - as it should be. In virtual land, what big recovery do you expect? The entire thing is so non-committal and lends itself to as much faikerei as chat-rooms do! In chat rooms almost all of us use fake names, fake looks, and fake identities bichlal.

But to me, all that stuff begs the question:

What do we want? Real recovery or just virtual recovery? Do we still believe that our problem is just virtual? Or do we hold that our problem is as real as the nose on our faces yet?

As my father zichrono livrocha would remind me, you usually get *what you **pay** for*.

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Re: I'm NOT fasting this Tisha B'av
Posted by Yosef Hatzadik - 27 Jul 2011 19:49

Rebbe Reb **Dov** Shlita,

It has been said around this forum numerous times (but I haven't seen it in the past while):

For those whom their 'acting out' was virtual, Recovery can be virtual too:

For those who did the wrong thing 'live' might need Recovery to be 'live' too.

If your addiction consisted in actually seeking out human beings, you are in an entire different league than those who lusted over the internet only..... The 'medicine' for such addicts may quite likely be much milder dose than what was/is needed for you.....

There are **many** GYE success stories!

Many members attained complete sobriety for a (relatively) lengthy period of time through the anonymous & virtual world of GYE!!! Some via the forum & other via DC & Co's 12 Step Phone Groups.

Let's use our Rebbe Reb **Bardichev** for an example. **Steve** the Pickle, **Shlomo** who leads the Night Calls, & **ZemirosShabbos**. They did not go to Live SA Meetings & "they have what we want"....

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Re: I'm NOT fasting this Tisha B'av
Posted by Dov - 28 Jul 2011 17:03

Agreed. I was just sharing, not demanding. What I wrote is exactly the way it works for me.

There are plenty success stories in GYE, and many who were and will be steered away from the wrong kind of giving up: giving up on themselves.

But to those who find themselves perennially hoping to wake up one day and finally be another GYE success story **yet are not**....I say, "If you really want to live clean, then for G-d's sake try something *e/se*! If your nice but failing plan is relatively comfortable for you, then it is high time you quit making convenience and 'respectability' your first priority."

Of course, patience is indispensable in *any* kind of recovery. And all recovery takes time, is imperfect, *and* is not perfect along the way, either (mine was - and still is - *very* imperfect). But if you have a clear and firm bottom line (as SA does), then you should be able to see pretty clearly whether your situation is really manageable for you, or not.

When people keep mixing Yiddishkeit into their recovery, they often see the goal as perfection. That sounds innocent enough - what's so bad about striving for perfection? Well, for normal people it's great. Actually, striving for perfection is even great for addicts - as long as it is in areas other than their addiction. But for addicts in recovery from their insanity and addiction itself, striving for perfection is suicide, and therefore, very silly, and I would say k'neged haTorah. And if it does not work and only makes things worse, it is certainly against Hashem's Will to keep using the lust and gayvoh of needing perfection.

Enough out of me.

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Re: I'm NOT fasting this Tisha B'av
Posted by Yosef Hatzadik - 28 Jul 2011 17:22

Our Good Guard is VERY smart!!!

He authored the [GYE in a Nutshell](#) for this exact purpose!

For the Newcomers to try to gauge the extent of his problem and try to work the appropriate solution. *Im natzcho, mutav* - if he succeeds, great!!!

If not, then it is time to take a more intensive (& sometimes drastic) step....

MANY MANY guys arrived at GYE, tried some of the other methods & then saw that THEY need to attend live SA Meetings. Does that mean they were fooling themselves all along??

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Re: I'm NOT fasting this Tisha B'av
Posted by Dov - 29 Jul 2011 02:23

Here we go.

We are all fooling ourselves. If we were fully aware and faced the whole truth right now, we'd probably be paralyzed by as simple a thing as: our deaths. The typical course of our lives is that we slowly lose most of what we have - including lots of things we really love including our parents, our strength, our health, our families, all our earthly relationships, and eventually - our lives here as we know them. Why do we not walk around going crazy about it?

Hashem makes us forget the facts, and programmed us with a safety valve for sanity, called 'ignorance'. It's sort of like denial.

So. We deny things we **need** to deny. Until we are ready to face certain things, we are protected from them. If they are very unpleasant to face, Hashem may do us a favor and let us onto the truth gently.

I came to see my own failure at controlling lust without ever getting divorced - we only had to *almost* get divorced (a few times). I never had to get arrested - I only had to *almost* get arrested (twice). I never had to die - I only had to *almost* die (by falling fast asleep at the wheel driving home from acting out in the wee hours and crashing into a parked car at 30 mph). Finally, I had enough - a miracle, really. I call that 'gently'.

I have friends who only came to recovery *after* they were divorced as a direct result of their faithful allegiance to lust (more than once); friends who only came to recovery *after* they were arrested or lost jobs as a result of their unquestioning faith in lust; and as we all know, many people have died of disease and suicide as a result of acting out their lust. I call that the 'ungentle' way.

Surely only some of us need SA, as surely only a few of us are actually addicts. I believe that most Yidden with serious lust problems are not addicts, but simply like the way that porn and masturbation make them feel. Nu. That's a 'guy' thing.

On the other hand **addicts** mess their lives up for lust - first in small ways like having to lie and isolate in order to protect their habit (and we tell ourselves that "if only they left us alone and let us struggle with it privately and beat it, we'd eventually succeed with this bitter teshuvah"), and later (unless the small pain is enough) in big ways (like getting fired, divorced, etc.).

We also tend to expect that it will be the severity of **the aveiros** that will drive us frummeh yidden to finally do teshuvah. We say to ourselves things like, "Well, all I did was look at porn. That's really bad, but I can't seem to stop doing it. **Surely** when I see that I am actually about to sleep with a goy, *then* I will be forced to quit! If not, then it might unfortunately take me to actually mess up *that badly* for me to *really* want to give it up."

All shtuyot.

For addicts, 'spiritual (religious) cost' is apparently *not* the kind of pain that will bring us to truly give up and really get the help we need. I think that it is for normal yidden, but not for addicted yidden.

That is very hard for people to face.

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