

To what extent do we fight?

Posted by starting - 21 Jan 2022 14:42

I'm having trouble with an idea that I've come across a lot on the forums, the chizzuk emails and it's probably 1 of the steps, dissected The idea is this 'if you try to fight the yetzer hara, give up now. He is a Malach, much stronger than you, don't even try. You have to give your fight to God and let him take over'What and how?Is it like, 'hashem, you fight with the taavah, in the mean time I'll watch, lmk when you win'?Am I supposed to be passive?Is there no active fight?Or are you just trying to get me distracted, that I should pretend I have no temptations?In general, how do I properly trust that Hashem will help me?I've been in similar situations in the past and have ended up with problemsShould I just trust He does and will do what is best for me, even if it will sometimes hurt?That is not like actually believing that he will help, it's just kinda shifting the blameIn short, how do I surrender in a way that will make me feel that there is a battle, but I'm not actively involved?In a way that can stop me from falling in to the hands of this mighty, powerful Malach?Any clear explanation would be appreciated but I especially would like to hear from someone who has mastered 'surrendering' in the 12 stepsThanks

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Re: To what extent do we fight?

Posted by DavidT - 21 Jan 2022 14:57

There's a lot of confusion in this topic.

Hashem is indeed the source of free-choice, but ultimately, it is HE who fights this battle for us. Jewish Hashkafa agrees with the 12-Steps. Rabbi Twerski has a whole book showing how the 12-Steps is similar to the Torah approach ("Self Improvement? I'm Jewish!"). It says in the holy books that Hashem wants us to try our very best to break the Yetzer Hara. When we see we can't, he steps in and does it for us. But he only steps in if we have tried **everything humanly possible** and still cannot succeed. At that point, we have a true realization that we need him and that only HE can do. And when we have that true realization, we have a true "vessel" for his help, and that is when he steps in and **does it for us**. This is the Jewish approach, and this is also the core of the 12-Steps as well. "Admitting powerlessness and surrendering to Hashem" means, we have tried everything and cannot succeed on our own. At that point, we are READY for Hashem to help us.

One explanation can be found in the Ohr Hachayim (Acharei Mos, 18:2)

" It is known that all the Mitzvos that Hashem commanded his holy nation are Mitzvos that a man can stand by and cause himself a desire to do, besides for the Mitzva of staying away from arayos (illicit sexual relations) which is something that a person craves and his desires forces him to act, unless one makes an effort to stay far away from two things: 1) Seeing with the eyes, 2) Thinking about it. **However, if a person does not keep away from these two aspects (sight and thought), a man will not be able to control himself and rid himself of it.**

And if one should ask, "How can a natural person be in control of his desires which "force" him to act? After all, it does not make sense that Hashem would obligate all men equally to guard themselves in this area, only people who can stand up and have the will power to deny this desire! And these are people who never came into the tests of seeing improper sights and thinking lustful thoughts. Only for such people did the Torah command these Mitzvos. But for people who already fell into these things, it is naturally impossible for a man to control himself and hold back from this craving that forces him to act!"

To counter this claim, Hashem wrote in the Torah with pleasant words of life, and the Parsha of Arayos starts out with the words "Speak to the Children of Israel and say to them, I am Hashem your G-d". For it is true that in the human race, besides for the Jewish people, they can claim this complaint and say that they did not find it in their strength to deny the power of this intense desire from themselves. However, with you, the Children of Israel, because I am Hashem your G-d - that is, you can achieve understanding and awareness of G-d - and **through this G-dly strength, you will win over the natural physical drives.** "

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Re: To what extent do we fight?

Posted by Trouble - 21 Jan 2022 15:07

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i have trouble reading, especially when the first sentence troubles me - it is not god who fights the battle (whatever fighting even means) for us; this world was given to us, and we fight (again that word). yes, ultimately, who gives us the power to succeed/fail? god, but he is a bystander watching us plan, strategize, implement, decide, etc. is there a time when we can throw up our hands and let god do? probably, but that would require someone who is on an extremely high level.

hiking in the woods in topside, boe, the raised plateau (closer to god) in the middle of nauru

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Re: To what extent do we fight?

Posted by clean830 - 21 Jan 2022 15:39

Hi Starting, I'll just offer some perspective based on my experience in the SA program and working the 12 steps. Just for some background I'm in SA since October of 2020 and have been sober with the help of Hashem since 8/30/20 after over 20 years of acting out.

One of the biggest motto's in SA is "it's a program of action". And "faith without action is dead". In other words you are 100% right that the concept of surrender is NOT that I do not have to do anything just let God do it for you and you do not try... Taking that approach will likely lead to chronic relapse and no serious sobriety. From my experience and from what I've learned in the program, surrender means the realization that I CANNOT do this alone by myself. Simply fighting the Yetzer Hora and "being strong" will not work for an addict. You need to come to the realization that alone you will not succeed as you are powerless over lust, but with allowing God to take care of your life you will be able to stay sober. This in NO way gives you a "free card" and dispensation from taking SERIOUS action to stay sober - through working the program and doing whatever you can "at all costs" to stay sober, it's just a mindset shift and realization you NEED God to help you in order to stay sober. If you take the action with the realization that He is ultimately the One who will keep you sober you will gain freedom with His help over this disease and addiction. But if you sit back and say "God - do your thing I'll just sit and wait" pretty much a guarantee to keep slipping... There's a whole chapter in the white book of SA dedicated to tools how to deal with lust triggers. You NEED these tools!! It is not in any way a contradiction to surrender! They go hand in hand.

Feel free to pm me or connect with me through the partner program to discuss further. Wishing you much Hatzlocha with the help of Hashem on your journey and your road to true recovery!!! And remember you are never alone!!!

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