

Sex for pleasure

Posted by BitzlBitzl - 22 Dec 2022 08:58

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I apologize for the catchy title.

I have a thought experiment I sometimes put forth with friends or fellow conversationalists. I believe answering sincerely has potential to shed light on our core values and philosophical outlook.

The question is posed as follows:

**Were we humans capable of doing away with only one element of our nature, something that inherently makes us human, which behavior would you shed?**

While I know this question flies in the face of traditional Judaism, the one religion that seeks to incorporate our nature into a holy life-style, I still believe there may be something to this. Take a moment to think about how you would answer. What do you think humans, even Jews, would be better off if it didn't exist at all? Share your thoughts.

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My answer, as you may have guessed from the title, is our need and capacity to have sex for pleasure. I believe humans would be a better species, more able to focus on our divine pursuits, less corrupted and confused in a tango of status and power games, were we to preserve copulation for the occasional child-bearing context, say 5-10 times in a lifetime. Given where I am today, addicted and frustrated with how much of my mental capacity is fixated on this one aspect of my existence, I am confident in making the trade-off. I would gladly give up on sex drive and all related creative outlets for the pragmatic betterment of mankind through asexual ambitions, such as good, truth, nature's beauty, etc..

PS.

I have another answer that comes from deeper down, but it's even more extreme than the one I've shared here.

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Re: Sex for pleasure

Posted by jackthejew - 22 Dec 2022 10:51

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This is a theological question, and in my opinion, this isn't really what GYE is made for. However, to give an answer as I understand it:

G-d is infinitely smarter than anyone else can ever be. If something was created, that is because it is the ultimate expression of what was best for the world. (Rabbi Aryeh Kaplan makes this point very well in his book: *If You Were G-d*)

Humans are created in the form of G-d, what that means is that all aspects of our physical existence offer parallels to our relationship with and appreciation of G-d.

The sexual drive is no different. The connection and closeness we are meant to enjoy with our wives climaxes with the apex of the sexual connection, as stated in Genesis (2, 24) "Therefore, a man shall leave his father and his mother, and cleave to his wife, and they shall become one flesh." Becoming one is a unique concept of closeness and giving that must be done right. I do not "become one" with a steak that I eat. I consume it, and nothing remains of it.

For 2 entities to join to become something greater requires that an action not just of taking for pleasure, but an act born of a devotion and a desire to give. If I eat a steak to serve G-d and appreciate the beauty of his creation and the fact that there is incredible flavor in all each bite, and at the same time that the sustenance from the proteins miraculously gives me the strength to carry in my service of G-d, that steak now becomes a vehicle towards closeness to G-d, and in the grand scheme of things, can now be viewed as a significant contributing factor having worked with me to bring awareness of G-d to me and the world. (Not saying I've ever had this perfect of a mindset when eating steak, just giving an example)

Closeness to G-d is the ultimate pleasure, since G-d himself is the source of all goodness, therefore, the sexual act is a parallel of drawing close to the apex point of closeness and the ultimate giving. G-d is the ultimate giver, and therefore man by paralleling that ultimate act of

giving (Just as G-d "gave forth of himself" in creating man, [See Genesis 2,7] so too man, in the ultimate context of love and connection brings forth new life)

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Re: Sex for pleasure

Posted by jackthejew - 22 Dec 2022 11:40

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The idea that pleasure is a problem is also much more based in Christianity than Judaism. From Rabbi Noach Weinberg Z'L: Human beings are pleasure seekers. The point of life is to have the best time, and physical pleasure is the lowest of them all. So if you'd like to spend your whole life chasing physical pleasure, you can do it. But why do that to yourself when you can experience the more sublime pleasure available through recongnition and service of G-d.

(In Mesillat Yesharim [from Dafyomireview.com] )Behold, what our  
 sages, of blessed  
 memory, have taught  
 us is that man was  
 created solely to  
 delight in G-d and to  
 derive pleasure in the  
 radiance of the  
 Shechina (divine  
 presence). For this is  
 the true delight and the  
 greatest pleasure that  
 can possibly exist. The  
 place of this pleasure  
 is, in truth, in Olam  
 Haba (the World to  
 Come). For it was  
 created expressly for  
 this purpose.

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CS - *"the place of this pleasure is, in truth, in the afterlife"* - he added the term *"in truth"* to indicate that only in the afterlife can this pleasure be attained completely, in true perfection, without any deficiency... But this light shines also on a man in this world, according to the degree of clinging to G-d he attains through his service in Torah and mitzvot and according to his standing up to trials.

After I posted, I just saw this in an old CDC briefing (whatever): life is a sexually transmitted

condition which is 100% fatal.

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Re: Sex for pleasure

Posted by Vehkam - 22 Dec 2022 13:11

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what jtj said...

also

hashem gave us our challenges to help us grow. the greater the challenge, the greater the opportunity for growth.

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Re: Sex for pleasure

Posted by connected - 22 Dec 2022 21:08

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[BitzlBitzl wrote on 22 Dec 2022 08:58:](#)

**Were we humans capable of doing away with only one element of our nature, something that inherently makes us human, which behavior would you shed?**

The tendency to be stuck in the past and worry about the future - while allowing the present to slip away.

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