

Can an addict be a Chazan for the Yomim Noraim???

Posted by ovadia - 17 Aug 2010 09:01

I have been asked to be a Shliach Tzibbur on the Yomim Noraim. As would be expected this is because in my "normal" life I am a respected member of the community and my level of Yiras Shomayim is not in doubt.

But underneath I am an addict and if I would be given the chance to decline on those grounds I would. The problem is that I can't say "Sorry, I can't do it because I am nichshal in m*** and I look at p*** when I can!!"

So, my question to the oilam here is, how would you feel if you knew that the Shliach Tzibbur is a lust addict?

Please, although here at GYE everyone is giving chizuk and being positive, please try and respond to this truthfully. My personal opinion is that, even though this addiction is an illness, and can be regarded as almost an oines, still these are serious aveiros and I am unworthy of the position.

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Re: Can an addict be a Chazan for the Yomim Noraim???

Posted by trying123 - 03 Sep 2010 16:26

[frumfiend wrote on 03 Sep 2010 14:52:](#)

I think we should finally learn something from what was for most of us a very shocking response. We are messed up and we have lost the proper prospective on the severity of these sins naase lo keheter. A addict is powerless but he has bechira. Besides the fact that he has free choice now he definitely had it at one time. If someone commits suicide by jumping through the window. when he is flying through the air he also has no more free choice .

The great [Jewish] philosophers established bechira as the cornerstone for the whole

Torah.... But from this resulted a common misperception among the masses; that all

people actively choose their every act and every decision. This is a grievous error. (Ale

Schur, Vol. 1, p. 156)

What, then, is bechira? To answer this question, Rav Wolbe² refers us to Rav Eliyahu Dessler's "phenomenal essay on

bechira." In this essay³ Rav Dessler explains that bechira is not a theoretical concept that can be applied to any

circumstance where a person can hypothetically choose between two options. Rather, it only applies to moral conflicts

where the two opposing forces are of approximately equal strength, the person is aware of the internal conflict, and he

makes a conscious decision in one direction. When a person does something over which he does not experience

conscious conflict, or if the compelling force on one side is significantly stronger than the other, the fact that he is

theoretically able to decide either way does not qualify his act as an expression of bechira.

A Jew who is growing up in a family devoid of Yiddishkeit does not experience conflict over driving on Shabbos. The

fact that he is physically able to refrain from driving does not qualify his act of driving as reflecting bechira. Likewise, a

tzaddik does not experience conflict over driving on Shabbos. The fact that he is physically able to drive, does not mean

that he was bochr (chose) not to drive. He never even considered the option of driving.

Rav Wolbe⁴ makes a similar point. True bechira requires a deliberate and thoughtful decision-making process. When a

child does the right thing because of fear of punishment or even to please his parents, that is not true bechira.⁵ It is not

surprising, therefore, that Rav Wolbe concludes that for most people exercising bechira is not as common an event as

they might like to believe.

-From DrSorotzkin.com

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Re: Can an addict be a Chazan for the Yomim Noraim???

Posted by frumfiend - 05 Sep 2010 12:55

Thank you very much for introducing this important source necessary for understanding the inyan of bechira.

Unfortunately this mamar of rav dessler is very deep also the actual sefer wasn't written by him rather by a talmid. In addition the quote of Dr sorotzkin is a translation from the original.

I would therefore like to present my understanding of the maamar of rav dessler .

Suppose I was born not frum and I eventually became frum. According to the maamar of rav dessler there probably was a time were kiyum kol hatorah was beyond my nikudas habechira. This reality is reflected in the psokim of contemporary poskim to tell prospective baale teshuvos to take it slow.

Although I had no free will to keep the whole torah, being that I had eventually become a baal teshuva it was obviously within my nikudas habichira to become frum. If I hadn't made the right decision to become from than I would be punished for all the mitzvos and averos since I had bechira to get myself to the point of shmiras hatora

This is the tricky part of rav desslers maamar. He isn't addressing the idea of bechira in a absolute sense but rather addressing the present reality that as of this moment the person does not have bechira.

As far as our unfortunate situation is concerned. A real addict may not have bechira to desist at the present moment but if he could have gone to therapy groups etc and gotten out then in truth he does have bechira to put himself on the path of bechira.

This is the situation of most regular people that there may be areas that at the time are virtually impossible for them. They are still obligated to continue growing until they are able to be mekayam.

All this however wasn't my original point. I believe that rav desslers explanation was from the view point of avoda. In realty we do have ways of stopping we can chop our hands or other appendages. We can poke out our eyes. If this is to gruesome or assur we can tie our hands and blindfold our eyes. Who says that that isn't considered that we still have free will. Another

point is that if someone right now would point a gun even the biggest addict in the middle of the biggest lust would stop. So we technically are able to stop . Why isn't that free will.

Rav Leib Mellen used to have his hands tied overnight so he shouldn't sin. We aren't animals we have free will.

I still maintain that Hashem understands how hard it is for us. Every small effort of ours may be gorem unbelievable tikunim. We probably aren't worse than most people struggling with different issues. However in a absolute halachic sense we are sinners just as someone born not frum is a sinner even if shmiras hatorah is at this point beyond his the infamous nekudas bechira we still can't give him a aliya.

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With great love

Frumfiend

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Re: Can an addict be a Chazan for the Yomim Noraim???

Posted by briut - 05 Sep 2010 14:15

[frumfiend wrote on 05 Sep 2010 12:55:](#)

... someone born not frum is a sinner even if shmiras hatorah is at this point beyond his the infamous nekudas bechira we still can't give him a aliya.

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FF, AMUSH:

While I'm sure that someone could find sources (probably from another era, continent, culture, etc) to support this last position of yours, I wonder if you've checked in with the Roshei Yeshiva of various Baalei T'shuvah institutions or other outreach organizations before being maskim such a psak.

I cry at the thought that in your read of the halacha, someone on a path upward (Baal T'suvha in training) has so far a hurdle to clear just to be considered part of the tzibbur reading from the

Torah. If a Reform rabbi (who's arguably going nowhere in his Yiddishkeit) can get an aliya in an Orthodox shul, or a holocaust survivor at his grandson's bar mitzvah even though he said (R'L) he's going to stop praying to the One who allowed "that" to happen... then not a sincere Jew From Birth who isn't all the way "there" yet?

Is ANY of us "there" yet? Where IS "there," and how do we get "there" enough to get an aliyah.

Sorry for the harsh tone, it's not really intended, I just didn't know how else to make this point. Obviously, you hit a nerve. I'd appreciate some add'l thoughts from you or others.

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Re: Can an addict be a Chazan for the Yomim Noraim???
Posted by frumfiend - 05 Sep 2010 22:00

Stand corrected about a mechalel shabboss being a chazan or getting a aliya. Reb Moshe permits it . I an not going to continue this discussion for as Mr trying pointed out this discussion is for me a say nerve. I feel the Rid building up and i an beginning to take long looks at all the women . I see that these discussions are poison for me . So i will stop now and hope ford the best and not try to teach the whole world .

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Re: Can an addict be a Chazan for the Yomim Noraim???
Posted by briut - 05 Sep 2010 22:07

[frumfiend wrote on 05 Sep 2010 22:00:](#)

... this discussion is for me a say nerve. I feel the Rid building up ...

Yes, a raw nerve for me, too. I will repeat my apologies for sounding a little sharp before. I meant no harm. Getting to the truth, whether halacha or psychoanalytical or whatever, is always a force that drives me hard. Sometimes too hard. I hope you can forgive me for the raw nerves I hit.

So take your time, rid the RID, have a beautiful yomtov (with a beautiful chazan with a pleasant voice and just enough pain hiding in his heart that he'll know how much we all feel wounded somewhere). Hashem wants you to have a great year, and I'll repeat that wish. I'shana ha'baa b'yerushalayim ha'benuya -- what could be more 'tova' than that!

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Re: Can an addict be a Chazan for the Yomim Noraim???
Posted by trying123 - 06 Sep 2010 02:54

"RID Free Zone"

K'shem shein Partzofehem shovim koch ein Deyosehem shovim!!!

May we all have a Kesiva V'chasima Tova!!!!

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Re: Can an addict be a Chazan for the Yomim Noraim???
Posted by Yosef Hatzadik - 06 Sep 2010 16:34

Disclaimer:

One of the most chashuve members of GYE pointed out to me that I should not have posted a psak in these matters since the ruling in each case may depend on personal circumstances. Everyone affected ought to ask the shayla for himself!

[ovadia wrote on 31 Aug 2010 08:44:](#)

BTW the reply you received from the other Rav you asked was entirely different.

Well, this comes to show the truth of the above disclaimer! :D

having said all that, i will brazenly add that even though this does not pertain to me personally (Nobody would want **me** to be their Baal Tefila!) This weekend I posed the shayla again. This time to a Chasidishe Rebbe/Posek. He concurred with Harav Aharon Feldman Shlita, that we are not *merutza leKahal*.

In response to these follow-up questions:

[Ovadia wrote on 31 Aug 2010 08:44:](#)

Is there a difference between being the Chazan for Mussaf or the other Tefilos?

What about being the Baal Koreh?

He replied that on Rosh Hashana they are all the same. We shouldn't be doing any of the public positions.

[Ovadia wrote on 31 Aug 2010 08:44:](#)

Should an addict abstain from being the Chazzan during the rest of the year?

The rest of the year is no problem. Anyone can 'daven before the omud'.

Again, this is not being posted as a definitive psak that everyone must abide by. Each potential shliach tzibbor may judge his specific circumstance based on the opinion of his Rabbi.

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Re: Can an addict be a Chazan for the Yomim Noraim???
Posted by 14 - 06 Sep 2010 17:41

I have NOT read this thread propaly, but I thought I'd share the way I feel.

I find it very hard to daven, infact i barely do daven, I think that it's because I feel like I don't mean what I'm saying I'm just liying, but I imagain that if I was a chazan for a tzibbur I would be much better off, because I'm not davening for myself I'm devening for the tzibbur, so I don't feel like a lie b/c I'm not talking about myself.

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Re: Can an addict be a Chazan for the Yomim Noraim???
Posted by Yosef Hatzadik - 06 Sep 2010 18:24

I also find that the kavanh is **much** easier when I am the Baal Tefila (Only in the weekdays ;D)

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Re: Can an addict be a Chazan for the Yomim Noraim???
Posted by ZemirosShabbos - 06 Sep 2010 19:20

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Re: Can an addict be a Chazan for the Yomim Noraim???
Posted by Yosef Hatzadik - 06 Sep 2010 19:24

[Zemiroshabbos wrote on 06 Sep 2010 19:20:](#)

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Re: Can an addict be a Chazan for the Yomim Noraim???
Posted by Zemiroshabbos - 07 Sep 2010 15:08

almost
[Yosef Hatzadik wrote on 06 Sep 2010 19:24:](#)

[Zemiroshabbos wrote on 06 Sep 2010 19:20:](#)

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if you are the gabbai of the shul and the lights are out in the ezras nashim on friday after the zman things can get sticky if you are davening at the amud...

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Re: Can an addict be a Chazan for the Yomim Noraim???
Posted by Eye.nonymous - 07 Sep 2010 20:25

...putting all that aside

...I hope you all have a great Rosh Hashana!

--Eye.

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Re: Can an addict be a Chazan for the Yomim Noraim???
Posted by ZemirosShabbos - 07 Sep 2010 20:34

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