

ELUL ANYONE???????

Posted by dovidfg - 23 Aug 2021 23:09

Im just wondering how in the world am I/we supposed to go through elul? I should work on what? Reb shlomo zalman said he was mechazek in meah berachos, but is there a point when i watched porn in between the beracha rishona and achrona. Should i try to work on kavanah betfillah when theres so much going on in my head. I mean every sefer i learn is talking about reaching lofty heights in elul but how can we even start if were stuck in this horrible situation of lust? maybe we should drop every other chizzuk and just work on shmiras eneiym and bris? But the sefarim say lots of other important things to work on? If anyone can help me out here it would be greatly appreciated

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Re: ELUL ANYONE???????

Posted by YeshivaGuy - 25 Aug 2021 01:30

[dovidfg wrote on 25 Aug 2021 01:13:](#)

[wilnevergiveup wrote on 24 Aug 2021 04:48:](#)

You ask if there is any point on working on other things if you anyways masturbate? I am not sure I understand the question. Are you asking that you are working on this and don't have the strength to work on anything else at the same time? Or that anything you do will be tainted my masturbating so what's the point anyways? Or your asking that you are not working on this so should you work on this more than say 100 berachos?

To make it more clear i understand that hashem still commands us to mitzvos after we do aveiros, and if you masterbate ten minutes before shkiyah before mincha hes still telling us to go daven to him. Im just talking about actually reaching change and becoming a new person in a certain area. is it possible? Or should i just try each Beracha/Teffilah/Middah as it comes despite the fact that i cannot possibly change it for good like im supposed to?

Sorry for interjecting here.

Throughout life a person encounters many mitzvos, situations where they choose how they react and to what extent they will nullify their will to the Torah.

And in every situation one is in they should try doing their best.

Regarding this concept of becoming a “new person.”

Obviously there is a hischadshus that takes place.

But a Person is not simply their middos.

YOU are affected by your middos, the way you act affects YOU, but if I grow in one midda I'm not a completely new person.

I am the same person who has grown a little bit, thereby fulfilling the Ratzon HaShem.

You mention “changing for good like I'm supposed to.”

I personally think that thats fundamentally the wrong way to approach Avodas HaShem.

Our Avoda is not to become perfect in this world

(and if you'll ask, but isn't the tachlis Ha'Adam to become ??? like ??? ?????? ????? ?????! The answer is, that that is the ultimate tachlis, but there is a process. As the Ramchal says in Derech HaShem, everyone must die, absolutely everyone regardless how much of a tzadik they were. Why? Because the ultimate ?????? can't be attained in this world and requires ?????? ????? etc.

So even the biggest tzadik leaves this world not 100% absolutely complete....).

Or job is to try as much as we can while we're here.

Nothing too crazy.

Sorry if I'm completely missing your point, it could be I am...

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Re: ELUL ANYONE???????

Posted by YeshivaGuy - 25 Aug 2021 01:46

[bego wrote on 24 Aug 2021 13:58:](#)

I really relate to this question and am grateful you've brought it up.

When I have done something wrong, the overall feeling can be very depressing which in turn makes me do worse.

Definitely not the right approach.

However, and for me this is really important, I also can't ignore the reality. I think that my Brochos ARE tainted by my masturbation as I am a whole person, meaning all my different parts make up the whole. Does that mean i should give up? For sure not. Does it mean my Brocho is worth less? Maybe.

Let me say it like this: If I can masturbate / hold myself / look at women and then say Hashem's name, it does indeed show i don't give Hashem's name the kovod He deserves.

But I'm not perfect. I am still giving some Kovod, just not an ideal level. i need to acknowledge that and work with it.

Agreed.

I'll make one point, and if I am misunderstood, then please let me know and I'll try explaining more (I'm quoting my Rebbi in Yeshiva, no need to be mekabel, just thoughts).

It seems from the tone in your post (though it's hard to pick up on it in writing) that you think perhaps that brachos you make while also Masterbating, is somehow worth less in Hashems eyes.

Here's a Klall, Man is Flawed. God is perfect.

God the Perfect created Man the Imperfect.

If God wanted to be served by perfect beings, then He would have made Man perfect.

Instead though, God made Man flawed.

Because HaShem wants us to serve Him with a struggle, with downs and ups. The struggle is exactly why we were created flawed and not perfect.

You make a point that by Masterbating etc, one is clearly not giving proper Kavod to HaShem, and that though it Imaaseh is still a little bit, it's not the "ideal kavod."

I would absolutely disagree. If you are trying your best on the level that you are currently on, then your Bracha, despite it not being 100% objectively perfect- IS THE "IDEAL KAVOD" THAT HASHEM WANTS FROM YOU.

So when you make a bracha and you try having kavona, even if you're struggling in other inyanim-

Chas v'Shalom to say it's worth less in front of HaShem Yisborach.

God does not measure mortal Man against perfection.

One's job is to do their best, to operate within the confines of one's personal Nekudas

HaBechira.

And if one is doing that, then even without absolute objective perfection, they are fulfilling their tachlis.

Let me know if more explanation is needed.

YeshivaGuy

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Re: ELUL ANYONE???????

Posted by wilnevergiveup - 25 Aug 2021 05:29

[dovidfg wrote on 25 Aug 2021 01:13:](#)

[wilnevergiveup wrote on 24 Aug 2021 04:48:](#)

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Here is how My Rebbe explained it to me. When choosing what to work on during Elul, some people look for the things that they are struggling with the most and make goals in that area. The reason why they do is may be because they want to grow, but it may also be because they feel guilty, or because they want to prove themselves that they can overcome it. Others choose the easiest smallest things. Here too it may be because these things are what they know for sure they can handle, but it may also be that they are scared to push themselves.

My Rebbe told me that when choosing what we want to work on, we should try to find something that we *want* to improve in. Don't pick something that you have to do, rather something that you want to. For example, I know that I have to have more kavana in my berachos but what I want to work on is davening with a minyan. Now, when I work on what I want to, it's me doing what I want and I can accomplish much more. I can even push through very difficult situations because when I do, I feel more of me.

I feel that this is where people get lost during Elul, they focus on what they *have to* do or on the things that they feel guilty about but ignore their own voice. They get tired out because they are working against themselves. Find something in avodas Hashem that you really want to work on just because, not to prove anything or because you feel guilty. It feels so good that it will give you energy to do many of the other things that need to change.

With time and some work, anything can become something that you really want but in the beginning try to work with your strengths and natural pulls. Don't fight yourself, rather work with yourself.

So to answer your question, no, you are not supposed to change your life around in one day, but at the same time, you do want to work on things that you are on the level of keeping long term. In every area of avodas Hashem there are levels, whatever you feel like you want to work on, try to find the level you are on and see if you can take just one more step.

I think that in the "all or nothing" mentality, we feel that unless we do the highest level we didn't work in that area. In my case, working on davening, I was compelled to set a goal and push myself to daven in a minyan that I "should" be davening even though davening there causes me a lot of resentment, anything less would just not really be it. I needed to someone else for him to tell me that even if that was a goal, I am not there yet. Now it's about finding the minyan that I enjoy davening in.

So I find that when we pick things that we really are interested in, and don't jump steps, change can actually be long term.

I home this makes sense.

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Re: ELUL ANYONE???????

Posted by bego - 25 Aug 2021 13:56

[YeshivaGuy wrote on 25 Aug 2021 01:46:](#)

[bego wrote on 24 Aug 2021 13:58:](#)

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Agreed.

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Let me know if more explanation is needed.

YeshivaGuy

Hiya

i hear what you're saying, but my Mesorah doesn't agree necessarily with this. L'maaseh, Hashem puts us here to achieve and while Rav Dessler was mechadesh nekudas habechira, it isn't quite the mehalech of the Rishonim.

In the end of the day, we all agree we are holistic people. Hence, i am not sure there is a massive difference anyway.

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Re: ELUL ANYONE???????

Posted by bego - 25 Aug 2021 13:59

Just a thought....

I think there are two points running side by side here. There's the practical "how do i get better at this" and the theoretical, "I'maaseh i'm still doing this and i feel like a fraud" (I might even be a shtickle a fraud - see my original post on this thread)"

But they don't contradict. I'm takka a fraud. Nu, nu, arent we all. Call it YeshivaGuy's "this is what Hashem want's from me" call it my "I am a fraud but I'm going to try hard anyway" it doesn't make a difference.

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Re: ELUL ANYONE???????

Posted by dovidfg - 25 Aug 2021 22:58

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YeshivaGuy

I agree with what your saying that this is the ideal kavod that this the kind of bracha that hashem wants from me now. What i mean to say is that if someone were to chas veshalom struggle for thirty years straight with these inyanim all the while trying to strengthen his berachos, if his berachos are at the same level as 30 years ago. then ein hachi nami he for 30 years said his berachos in the ideal situation that he was able to at that point, but isn't a person supposed to grow and get higher? and its practically impossible

In short: I was just wondering if its possible for a person to actually grow and become different in

certain areas which are a direct contradiction or is he forced to stay on that same level despite the fact that hes serving hashem and hashems happy with it.

Hope im being clearer

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Re: ELUL ANYONE???????

Posted by Hashem Help Me - 26 Aug 2021 05:04

The typical fellow on GYE is a nice guy. He learns, davens, puts on tzitzis and tefillin, is careful with Shabbos, kashrus, and inyonim bain adam l'chaveiro. His "chart" in shomayim is looking good. Comes Elul, and he asks himself - Can i learn and daven better/more? Can i be mekayem mitzvos better? Can i improve my hanhaga with other people? Shmiras HaLashon? Polite and clean speech? Can i learn hilchos Shabbos/kashrus more in depth and make sure i am up to par? Can i make brachos better? etc.....

This same fellow has a side challenge. He picked up as an innocent youngster some bad habits. Pornography, masturbation, and all that comes along with it. He was basically an onais. Nobody really prepared him for this challenge, so his curiosity got him hooked before he realized how assur and habit forming this stuff is. Once he did realize, he had nobody to turn to. No lines of communication about this embarrassing stuff were ever offered to him, and he was too ashamed to reach out. Onais material.

He listened to the yetzer hara and started measuring himself totally based on these actions. It didn't matter that he did so many wonderful things and stayed away from other aveiros. All his good actions were tainted by his being impure and hated by Hashem. On a day that he didnt fall, he still had terribly negative feelings due to his (mistaken) knowledge that he has to fall soon anyway...Every good action was discounted to the barest minimum.

Now he comes to GYE. Courageous. As a mature adult he is willing to put that shame on the side and post, call, and maybe even meet. There is no doubt that this causes great simcha in shomayim. Our friend is making changes. His Elul for this stuff, is to do something, anything, to show himself and Hashem that he is in truth loyal - ne'eman, albeit struggling with this bad habit.

The two issues may not merge. He should not dare look negatively or even discount his Torah/davening **even if he masturbated that day**. He should daven an Elul davening and learn on an Elul standard. His "regular" issues have nothing to do with his "onais" issue. He dare not have a depressed Shabbos seuda even if he fell a few hours before. He should sing zemiros with geshmak, **knowing that Hashem loves him and is proud of his attempts**.

In actuality, our chaver has two sepearte avodos this Elul. All the "regular" stuff, where he should do the best he can to clean up his act. And then these issues. He should turn towards the right direction. Post, call, meet, get a filter, avoid triggers... (yes, iyh a few years down the road when he is in a healthy place, and has learned to truly accept himself, with proper guidance he will do teshuva for his past. But now as a still - even partially - broken depressed fellow, it is not the time).

Iyh when one really picks up this mindset, he attains the menuchas hanefesh necessary to get better. He begins to rewire his brain about sexuality, starts to internalize that there is never a need to masturbate, and learns how to self soothe in healthy kosher ways. His pride in himself grows and helps create a loving home, where the bedroom is an extension of a thriving 24/7 marriage - in a dwelling where the Shechina feels invited in. And if chas v'shalom there are occasional slips and falls until he develops this confidence, he has the wherewithall to contact a chaver to help him get refocused and back on track.

Truth to be told, our chaver does have one more important thing to do teshuva for this Elul. He listened to his yetzer hara when he told him "Nothing you do is really good because you masturbated today". Nothing could be further from the truth. In reality, "everything you do is good because you are a mesiras nefesh yid! someone who is doing what it takes to walk against this tsunami of filth, even if today you unfortunately fell."

How do you do teshuva for that? Go to the mirror each remaining day of Elul, and look deeply ito the eyes of the fellow looking back at you, and tell him "You are a great fellow. Hashem loves you!" After a few days, change the word "you" to "i". "I am a great guy and Hashem loves me!" May Hashem guide us all to utilize Elul and the yemei HaRachamim V'HaRatzon properly.

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Re: ELUL ANYONE???????

Posted by i-man - 26 Aug 2021 07:57

Wow powerful message, send it out to the masses...

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Re: ELUL ANYONE???????

Posted by Hashem Help Me - 26 Aug 2021 12:25

[i-man wrote on 26 Aug 2021 07:57:](#)

Wow powerful message, send it out to the masses...

Not sure how to do that, but you have my full permission to publicize it.

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Re: ELUL ANYONE???????

Posted by wilnevergiveup - 26 Aug 2021 14:07

[Hashem Help Me wrote on 26 Aug 2021 12:25:](#)

[i-man wrote on 26 Aug 2021 07:57:](#)

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Not sure how to do that, but you have my full permission to publicize it.

We can put it on the email.

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Re: ELUL ANYONE???????

Posted by dovidfg - 27 Aug 2021 13:47

Thank you HHM this really gave me lots of chizuk. Sometimes a beautifully written post by someone who understands and cares goes into your heart more than any sefer.

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Re: ELUL ANYONE???????

Posted by mggsbms - 27 Aug 2021 14:06

Thanks HHM for this amazing post, toras emes, may we live up to it.

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Re: ELUL ANYONE???????

Posted by the.guard - 28 Aug 2021 18:29

Yasher Koach!

guardyoureyes.com/articles/torah/item/elul-on-guard-your-eyes

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Re: ELUL ANYONE???????

Posted by Tzafon1 - 29 Aug 2021 19:18

Thank you HHM! This is an amazing message, and you have articulated it incredibly.

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