

How am I supposed to put my trust/faith in G-d?

Posted by quixorbl - 01 Jan 2014 19:21

Note: Names have been changed for anonymity purposes.

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DYFS got involved at the recommendation of my wife's then therapist, Mrs. A. My wife had become very depressed during the course of the pregnancy and I had not noticed her depression. This was attributed to my high-functioning Aspergers. However, this was never a fair assessment of what happened. My wife, throughout the pregnancy, had been vomiting many times per day. I'd approximate the average number of times my wife would vomit to be 5 per day. There were some days with less but there were also days with many more (10+). She was also sleeping much of the day, which I attributed to exhaustion from vomiting so often every day. When I would go with my wife to her obstetrician, I would always ask if the vomiting was something to worry about. When I would not go with my wife, I would ask her to ask her obstetrician if the vomiting was something to worry about. If I would go, I would be told that though it was uncommon I should not be concerned. If I would not go, my wife would report having received the same answer.

Mrs. A, however, realized that she was very depressed and insisted that the best thing to do was put the child in foster care (through DYFS) until my wife recovered from her depression. So, when our daughter was born we called DYFS on ourselves. They met with us and concluded that our daughter would have to be placed in foster care. We requested an Orthodox household and, since there are so many Orthodox neighborhoods nearby, expected our daughter to be placed in one of those neighborhoods. (Unbeknownst to me at the time, DYFS has an obligation to try and place children no more than one county away from their biological parents.) Nevertheless, our daughter ended up in a town that was several counties away.

This distance was inevitably used against us in court to restrict how much weekly visitation time we could have with our daughter. We were evaluated by both a psychologist and a psychiatrist. The psychologist thought our daughter should be in foster care with the hope that, if we make sufficient progress, our daughter should be returned. The psychiatrist thought our daughter should be returned right away. Mrs. A was of the opinion that our daughter should be in foster care so the psychologist's evaluation was followed and the psychiatrist's evaluation was ignored altogether. Mrs. A was not a psychologist, though she had a Masters degree in psychology.

To help get us ready, DYFS arranged for us to take a basic parenting class run by an organization in a nearby town. Since that class wasn't going to start for another two months, I tried to find alternate classes to replace the class so that we could meet the requirements sooner so our daughter could be returned. All recommendations I presented were rejected because they were not run by the specific organization.

When we began the basic parenting class, our daughter was 3.5 months old. She was 6 months old when the class ended. However, the entire curriculum of the basic parenting class was designed for children at least 1.5 years in age and up. When I pointed this out to our case

worker she replied that the advanced parenting class was what would help us but that in order to take the advanced class we had to complete the beginner class. The advanced class ended up being a forum in which parents could voice whatever difficulties/challenges they may be having with their children and the other parents present could offer advice on how to cope. Of course, we could just as easily ask friends and family for advice. So, in the end, the basic parenting class was useless and the advanced parenting class was unnecessary.

Meanwhile, my public defender, Mr. B, had insisted that it was in my best interests to plead to neglecting my daughter...even though she was never in my care! I, figuring my public defender knew something I did not, went along and plead guilty to the neglect of my daughter. I later discovered that my lawyer advised me thusly because it would be easier for him to not have to bother proving that DYFS had no case to justify neglect. I eventually replaced him with a real lawyer, Mr. C, but that bit of damage had been done.

We were reevaluated seven months into the foster care process by the psychologist. The psychologist concluded that my wife and I were unfit to parent our daughter and that DYFS should proceed with terminating our parental rights. I spoke to the psychologist to ask her how she reached her conclusions and she was unable to provide any form of intelligent responses. (The psychologist later testified, during the trial that terminated our parental rights, that though she doesn't work with people with Asperger's, to the best of her knowledge people with Asperger's can't be parents!)

After DYFS succeeded in getting the judge to grant them permission to try to terminate our rights, the new case worker (who took over after the change from the "reunification" stage to the "terminate parental rights" stage) first tried to extra-legally reduce our visitation time with our daughter. Fortunately, my lawyer was able to stop this and, when DYFS tried to do this legally, the appeal was rejected by the same judge who, several weeks prior, had granted them permission to try and terminate our parental rights.

We were evaluated once again by a new psychologist, Dr. D. She made several conclusions. First, despite DYFS trying to terminate our parental rights, she demanded that, with the foster family's permission, the all future visits be relocated to the foster family's home. Second, she concluded that my wife and I are capable of parenting our daughter. Third, our daughter was exhibiting many signs of mental trauma. Therefore, our daughter should not be returned to us because she is too vulnerable. The foster family, around this time, arranged for our daughter to be evaluated by a children's neuropsychologist to see what was wrong. The appointment was made in January 2011 and scheduled for May. At the time, the foster family was convinced that our daughter had real problems and was worried about the results. However, almost all of the problems disappeared and the May evaluation found nothing notably wrong. A more detailed exam was done in July that confirmed that our daughter was just fine. The foster family concluded that the problem had been our daughter's commute from their town to our town and back to their town that was causing the problems. When those commutes stopped because we were allowed to go to them for our visits, our daughter showed continued improvements. (Back when the first case worker was still the case worker, I had asked about arranging for us to have visits down in their town but I was always denied by DYFS!)

So, in the end, my daughter's trauma, caused entirely by DYFS, was used against us to successfully justify terminating our parental rights. We do, however, still get to see our daughter

when our respective schedules can match up to allow for either them to come visit us or for us to visit them. We have even managed to spend shabbos together once or twice in our town at a third-party location (i.e. not at our apartment).

In sum, our rights to be parents of our daughter were taken based on what were prejudices against people with disabilities. Second, despite the report by a psychiatrist chosen by DYFS, they ruled in favor of a MA in psychology, who as it turned out, had been ill and dying from cancer, and thus may not have been practicing with her full faculties.

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You can be sure I begged and pleaded with G-d to return our daughter but it was all for naught. The SA literature describes how we, as addicts, reach out for lust to try to fill a hole in ourselves that's really meant to be filled in though a connection with G-d. Fine. But what is supposed to fill in the hole left by the theft of my daughter?

This all ended 2.5 years ago. All I have ever wanted is to raise a family. Look at how thoroughly G-d allowed/helped the forces of evil to completely destroy my life. This is not the first time G-d has intervened to ensure that I suffer for trying to make my life better. (More examples can be provided if people who respond to this post actually want to know about them.) All I can do now is make sure that this is the last time. And the only way I can do that is to stop trying altogether.

This is so painful that I can't help thinking that I'd be better off if my daughter had died. At least then I could mourn her through shiva. But this is an unending agony that only gets worse as more of her life is lost every moment. And I can't sit shiva because she is still alive. And, just as Rashi mentions with regards to why Jacob could not be consoled over the "death" of Joseph, I can't forget her because she is still alive.

If G-d will so openly interfere to make sure I can't raise my first child, on what basis do I casually assume he won't interfere with the next child? The only way I can stop G-d from stealing the next child of mine is to not have the child for Him to steal. But, since all I wanted to do was raise a family, my life now has no purpose.

The SA literature also mentions how we addicts are addicted to the unreal. This is certainly true for me. My reality is so agonizingly painful (and only getting worse since I continue to lose more and more of my daughter's life irrevocably) that the unreal is my only avenue of escape. And it's not just acting out on my lust. I also play lots of computer games, which are unreal almost by

definition, to escape my reality.

The SA literature also says that this disease will kill us...which sounds pretty good to me. Sure, I might be in for even more suffering in the next world but so what? I'll be put before the Heavenly Court and they will tell me my sins for which I must be punished...which means I'll know why I'm being punished (which certainly isn't true in this world). I'll agree with their judgement (which also isn't true in this world). I'll know how long I'm going to have to suffer (which again isn't true in this world). It certainly sounds like a vast improvement over my current situation.

The SA literature says we should let go and let G-d. To modify the Subject of this post, how am I supposed to put my trust/faith (let go) in such an evil G-d who will stop at nothing to maximize my misery (let G-d)?

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Re: How am I supposed to put my trust/faith in G-d?
Posted by gibbor120 - 01 Jan 2014 19:37

I can't begin to imagine your pain. :(

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Re: How am I supposed to put my trust/faith in G-d?
Posted by cordnoy - 01 Jan 2014 20:08

It is difficult to move away from this thread.

There is nothing I can say or advise.

Try to be strong.

If posting helps you, at least you should know that there are people reading and feeling your pain.

b'hatzlachah

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Re: How am I supposed to put my trust/faith in G-d?
Posted by Gevura Shebyesod - 01 Jan 2014 20:27

I don't have much to offer other than that I feel your pain and frustration and it's making me cry.

But know that there is a Plan, and when you get Upstairs you will also experience and understand the awesome reward for those who do His will under the most trying of circumstances. Don't give up!

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Re: How am I supposed to put my trust/faith in G-d?
Posted by Dr.Watson - 01 Jan 2014 20:44

I also don't have much to say.

Your pain helps you and klal yisroel more than you could possibly imagine.

Hashem should make everything work out for you very soon.

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Re: How am I supposed to put my trust/faith in G-d?
Posted by Lizhensk - 01 Jan 2014 22:25

Honestly, this story is heartbreaking. Im sorry that you had to go thru this. All i can say is that i love you, and you are an inspiration.

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Re: How am I supposed to put my trust/faith in G-d?

Posted by quixorbl - 02 Jan 2014 15:25

I was not raised observant. I became observant in college. That means, from a young age until college, I was not shomer shabbat, or shomer chagim, or making sure to only eat kosher food, or praying three times a day... Undoubtedly, my soul during that time did not like all the sins I was committing on a daily/weekly/monthly/yearly basis. Yet, perhaps because the connection between my body and my soul was so weak, I never felt any real physical/emotional pain from the damage I was doing to my soul.

The utter destruction of my family has not harmed me in any physical way. That is to say, I can walk/talk/see/read, etc., just as well as I could before my family was destroyed. The physical/emotional pains I experience are from hearing my soul scream out in agony, begging, in vain, to be allowed to raise my family.

The sins of the lust addict when acting out are serious Torah prohibitions. On the one hand, acting out will only damage my soul further (though at this point I might not be able to tell the difference) and thereby cause me more anguish. On the other hand, I have this undoubtedly vain hope that maybe...just maybe...if I sin enough I can revert to the point where I can no longer hear my soul scream anymore. And I would try anything...**ANYTHING**...no matter how far-fetched...to make this pain go away and never come back.

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Re: How am I supposed to put my trust/faith in G-d?

Posted by cordnoy - 02 Jan 2014 19:06

i am no expert in deep things, but I am an expert in logic and common sense, and believe me please when I tell you that your soul suffered minimal damage or staining (if any) during your non-observant days. your soul awoke when you made the commitment. that being said, I wouldn't worry so much about the sin of acting out even now for that matter. yes, it is a sin, and possibly a grave one, but that is why we are all here....not to worry about the sin, but to live again...by not being beholden to that power/desire/lust, etc. Now, you have it extra difficult, for the blow you have been dealt is a tough one, and for that I have no words...just that our thoughts and prayers are with you...know that God is with you although that is not an easy one to comprehend.

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