

Can I really become 90-Days clean?

Posted by quixorbl - 02 Jan 2014 23:39

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Dear G-d,

It's me. I know we haven't been on very good terms these past few years. You completely stripped my life of any recognizable meaning and left me screaming in agony begging for the sweet release that only death can bring. (For anyone else reading this, you can read my story [here](#).) I've cursed You daily...multiple times a day...ever since. You're always there to make sure whatever I try to accomplish either blows up in my face or succeeds in such a way as to enable something far worse to happen such that I retroactively regret succeeding. Making any attempt to be clean for 90 days (or more) will undoubtedly result in You messing everything up as usual. However, despite all that, I'd like to offer You a deal. I'll do my best to ignore all the pain You've caused in the past, all the pain that what You've caused in the past continues to cause in the present and will yet cause in the future, and that every time I've turned to You for help has always ended badly for me. In exchange, I will try to surrender my lustful desires to You. All You have to do is not mess everything up again. In truth, this is a win-win for You. If You actually help me succeed (and not in the something-far-worse-happens-so-now-I-regret-succeeding way), I might actually be able to trust You in other areas, too. And if You continue to help me further, I might be able to trust You further. I know what You are thinking. You are thinking, "But I really enjoy making you scream in agony. What kind of agony will helping you succeed cause?" Well, You can't hurt me as much as You used to be able to because I've been on to Your game for the past few years now. If You really help me so much, I might just be lulled into a false sense of security. When that happens, You can cause me far more pain by messing everything up then! All You have to do is hold off on that impulse to make my life even more miserable, meaningless and agonizing then it already is for a little while. Will You hold off on hurting me more now in exchange for hurting me far more later? If so, I'm ready to work with You to achieve 90 days of sobriety. The ball is in Your court now.

Sincerely,

Me

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Re: Can I really become 90-Days clean?

Posted by bennystep12 - 03 Jan 2014 11:07

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Hi fresh boarder,

You must be having a hard time I assume, and the useless empty feeling must be devastating I assume, I wish you the very best.

as far as I know if you'd like to ever get free of these stuff, working a 12 step program thoroughly and honestly really was my last try and I'm still working it and it works better then anything else I tried on my own best knowledge and strongest will power.

Bless you

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Re: Can I really become 90-Days clean?

Posted by quixorbl - 03 Jan 2014 18:43

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Day 3: So far You have kept up Your end of the deal. I might yet be lulled into that false sense of security. Here's hoping!

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Re: Can I really become 90-Days clean?

Posted by quixorbl - 04 Jan 2014 20:53

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Day 4: Shabbos...the most accursed day of the week. It combines being family-oriented (and thus, more pain for me) with being unable to escape my miserable reality via computer games. (Technically, I can still escape with lust via fantasizing but I'm trying to be clean for 90 days so that's out.) My two highlights of this accursed day are as follows:

1) Right after Friday evening kiddush when I would bless my child if she were here to be blessed -- and why should she be here? After all, I'm only her father and she's only my daughter!

2) Shabbos lunch we ate out at a family we've never been to before. They have five children! Five! G-d must really not love them. I wish G-d didn't love me similarly. Then I, too, might be able to raise a family. Alas!

(Note: Entirely unrelated but I searched the website and didn't find an answer: What is karma? What should prompt me to increase or decrease another poster's karma?)

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Re: Can I really become 90-Days clean?  
Posted by chesky - 05 Jan 2014 03:36

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Hi and welcome,

Thank you for sharing your story on your other thread which is really very painful to read.

Your anger and frustrations are very understandable, and being open about them with G-d (and yourself) as you are doing here is crucial to recovery.

G-d is quite capable of answering all your questions Himself. In SA I constantly meet people in situations which they felt were as hopeless as yours and who were as angry and frustrated with G-d, and whom today are thankful for where they are today, and - believe it or not, are thankful for all the pain they went through to get to where they are today.

i hope and pray that G-d should grant you and all of us here serenity, sobriety and sanity - one day at a time.

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Re: Can I really become 90-Days clean?  
Posted by quixorbl - 06 Jan 2014 00:56

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Day 5: Today was the weekly appointment with the therapist. We spent the entire time talking about how G-d is evil and will stop at nothing to ruin my life. The only "good" part of today was I got my weekly Skype call with my stolen daughter. This week's chat was only 25 minutes long

but that's better than nothing...if not by much. ::sarcasm:: How wonderful G-d is to let me talk to my daughter once a week. :/sarcasm:: It's not that I don't spend any time with my daughter every week. It's that I don't spend an amount of time statistically significant from any time with my daughter every week. Maybe G-d will be in a less evil mood next week and I'll get to talk to her for a whole hour!

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Re: Can I really become 90-Days clean?  
Posted by chesky - 07 Jan 2014 02:57

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[quixorbl wrote:](#)

We spent the entire time talking about how G-d is evil and will stop at nothing to ruin my life.

That must be really therapeutic!

[quixorbl wrote:](#)

:/sarcasm::

More like blasphemy if you ask me.

A couple of questions, if you don't mind:

1) Since it is so obvious to you that G-d "stole" your daughter, why isn't it equally obvious that He gave you her in the first place?

2) If G-d to you is so much part of your life as you seem to spend your time obsessing about

Him, presumably you agree that He is a force to be reckoned with. In which case does it really matter whether He is in your eyes, bad or good? at the end of the day, he is there and He calls the shots.

3) Practically speaking, where is all your rant going to take you? It will not get your daughter back nor is it helping you emotionally?

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Re: Can I really become 90-Days clean?

Posted by quixorbl - 08 Jan 2014 18:13

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Day 8: G-d has deigned to enable me to be sober for a whole week and nothing has horribly backfired...yet. I'm trying to remain vigilant for the inevitable drop of the Sword of Damocles. I hope it doesn't hurt too much more than it does already.

To answer the three questions posed by "chesky":

[chesky wrote:](#)

1) Since it is so obvious to you that G-d "stole" your daughter, why isn't it equally obvious that He gave you her in the first place?

It is obvious He gave her to me in the first place. He gave her to me in order to cause me pain by immediately taking her away through nothing but lies. He did this because he enjoys listening to me scream and beg Him for death.

[chesky wrote:](#)

2) If G-d to you is so much part of your life as you seem to spend your time obsessing about Him, presumably you agree that He is a force to be reckoned with. In which case does it really matter whether He is in your eyes, bad or good? at the end of the day, he is there and He calls

the shots.

It makes a huge difference. How much time do you spend thinking about what you would do if you were as monetarily wealthy as Bill Gates? I'll bet you spend little to no time thinking about this. Why? Because it's completely outside the realm of reasonable possibility for you to waste the time thinking about it. Knowing that G-d is out to get me, for whatever reason(s), completely changes the calculus with regards to what I want to do, what I think can be accomplished, etc.

[chesky wrote:](#)

3) Practically speaking, where is all your rant going to take you? It will not get your daughter back nor is it helping you emotionally?

I don't think anyone, or anything, can help me because nobody, and nothing, can stop G-d from causing me even more pain than He has already. However, the whole idea of this forum is that sharing whatever is going on in our lives will supposedly help us stay sober. What would you prefer I write in my 90-Day posts? "Day X: Still clean?" Should I pretend that I think G-d is all wonderful and totally going to help me stay sober? Would you prefer I lie to anyone reading my posts so that others can respond with advice and/or chizuk that is completely useless to me because of the truth of the situation? I choose to post what I'm really feeling and thinking and I don't care whether it's blasphemous, thoughtful, useful, funny, etc. to anyone else. If others benefit from reading my posts/rants, fine. If others don't benefit from reading my posts/rants, that's fine, too.

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Re: Can I really become 90-Days clean?

Posted by chesky - 08 Jan 2014 21:10

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[quixorbl wrote:](#)

What would you prefer I write in my 90-Day posts? "Day X: Still clean?" Should I pretend that I think G-d is all wonderful and totally going to help me stay sober? Would you prefer I lie to anyone reading my posts so that others can respond with advice and/or chizuk that is completely useless to me because of the truth of the situation? I choose to post what I'm really

feeling and thinking and I don't care whether it's blasphemous, thoughtful, useful, funny, etc. to anyone else. If others benefit from reading my posts/rants, fine. If others don't benefit from reading my posts/rants, that's fine, too.

Thank you for your honest and open reply. What i wrote was not supposed to be judgmental in any way. I was not trying to criticize or ask you to pretend anything. I asked what I felt and you replied what you felt.

I would just like to point out that in your replies you mentioned a number of times that everything you are expressing are feelings you have, which is justifiable, especially in your circumstances, and I cannot possibly imagine the pain you are going through or judge you.

At the same time from an objective point of view, it sounds like you have some serious prejudices, which may or may not be correct.

In this respect you do have a lot in common with other addicts, myself included(albeit I had other issues with G-d).

In SA I learnt where I had gone wrong (It took a long time, and I am still learning).

As we say in SA, the three things you need for recovery are; honesty, openness and willingness. I hope and pray that you find these and that you merit serenity from the torture you are going through.

With love

Chesky

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Re: Can I really become 90-Days clean?  
Posted by yehoshua - 09 Jan 2014 15:30

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quixorbl I read you story, uf....

I also want best for my child and I did this mistake at the very beginning, I thought someone else can do a better job. Someone can teach me, cos i have no idea + i am a porn addict,...

I don't know how we did it. And I don't know how we are doing it!? But it is not easy, one day at a time I guess...

I admire your strength. I don't know how, but I hope you get your kid back.

All the best to You.

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Re: Can I really become 90-Days clean?  
Posted by quixorbl - 12 Jan 2014 00:18

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Day 11: Shabbos again... I keep hoping it'll never come back but it always does. This time, at least, we ate all of our meals at home so I didn't have to see some other parents being allowed to raise their kids because G-d doesn't love them as much as He loves me. Maybe one day I, too, will be allowed to raise a family. Maybe one day the truth will be some form of defense against the next round of evil G-d has in store for me. If that day ever comes, I hope the souls in Gehinnom aren't too inconvenienced by the freezing temperature.

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Re: Can I really become 90-Days clean?  
Posted by skeptical - 12 Jan 2014 10:26

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[Rabbi Simmons \(Aish.com\)](https://www.aish.com)

## Question

My cousin was murdered last month. He was working the late shift when someone came in and stabbed him.

I know G'd gives us the free will to commit evil, but why does he let people murder other people?

## Answer

My sympathies for the murder of your cousin. It is an unfathomable tragedy and I share your grief.

Your question is a complex one, and the answer contains many variables. I will present them all for you here. I hope that something I have written helps to console you and your family.

First, we have to clarify what question we're actually asking. When we say "Why do bad things happen to good people," this can mean one of two things. If you listen to the question carefully, it's assuming God's existence. People say: I know there's a God, but I want to understand: Is this God good? And if he is good, then why do bad things happen to good people?

Alternatively, the question "Why do bad things happened to good people," may really be asking "I'm not sure that God exists." That's a completely different question. The question of God's existence has nothing to do with the issue of suffering. It has to do with creation, revelation at Sinai, world history, etc. So we should be clear that the question we are dealing with here is not

"Does God exist?" It's "Why do bad things happen to good people?"

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## **THE GENERAL AND THE SPECIFIC**

In order for us to be able to "judge God," we have to be able to look at what are God's "ground rules" for existence. Using this premise, it becomes very difficult to judge God. Why? Because we are stuck in a finite perspective of time and space, and we can therefore never be sure which rules God is employing at any given moment.

In discussing this issue, we're not going to give an answer as to why particular things happen in a particular situation. Only a prophet can do that and it's been a long time since God spoke to me! What we can do is look at general approaches that Judaism offers, to at least get a general sense of what the possibilities are for why things happen.

Here's an analogy: A physicist can tell you why a leaf will fall in a particular place - it has to do with the aerodynamics of the leaf, the force of gravity, and the direction and velocity of the wind. But if you ask that physicist where a certain leaf is going to fall, he is not going to be able to tell you, because he can't precisely quantify the different forces that make a leaf fall in a particular place. He can give you the general principles, but he can't give you a precise analysis of a specific situation.

It's the same idea here. We won't be able to say why specific things are happening in a specific situation, but we will be able to speak about general principles that can lead us to understand the workings of a good God.

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## **CHOICE AND CONSEQUENCES**

One crucial idea to get us started:

The Torah tells us: "God created man in His image, in the image of God He created him" (Genesis 1:27). What does it mean that man was created in God's image? Human beings are finite and corporal. So how are we created in God's image?

Obviously the "image of God" is dealing with the non- physical part of us - the soul. Where do we get our drive for morality and meaning, our drive to make a difference? That drive is from the soul which is in the "image of God."

But there's more to it than that. Just as God has independent choice, so too does each human being have independent moral choice. The image of God means that we have the ability to choose.

Why is choice the essential issue of what makes us special? Because if you think about it, life only becomes meaningful because of our ability to choose. For example, the difference in being "programmed to love" and the choice to love, is precisely what makes love significant. Similarly, if I don't have the choice to do good, but am programmed to do good, then there's nothing meaningful about it. Whereas if I have the ability to do good or evil, then good becomes significant.

But it goes deeper still. For choice to be authentic, there have to be consequences. If every time I get in trouble, dad comes to bail me out, that's not really choice. Choice means consequences. Think about it. All of history - whether in our personal lives or from a global perspective - is based on the decisions that human beings have made - and the consequences that flowed from that.

So now we can understand that "image of God" means that God created beings who have the ability to make decisions, and those decisions will create consequences that will make this being a co-partner in the development of the world. This has many ramifications as far as "why bad things happen to good people" and certainly you can start seeing it already.

Now I think we're ready to examine eight ground rules which Judaism spells out for how God

interacts with the world.

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## **GROUND RULE #1 - THE POSSIBILITY OF EVIL**

For free choice to operate, it's obvious that evil has to have the possibility of existing. If every time someone chooses to do evil, God is going to interfere, then there's no moral choice. If every time the gun is pointed, the turret points backwards, after a few times you get the message. If you eat pork and get struck by lightning, then you're not "morally choosing," you just see it doesn't work. It simply becomes pragmatic not to do evil.

If the lives of the righteous were obviously perfect, that too would destroy the possibility of choice. Pragmatically, we'd figure it pays more to be righteous because look at the millions of bucks that come my way! That's not choice. That's not becoming God-like.

A world where a human being can create himself into a Moses, also carries the possibility of a person creating himself into a Hitler.

Sometimes God does make a miracle, but it is always in a way that is not obvious, that enables us to retain free choice.

After the Exodus from Egypt when the Red Sea split, it was obvious to everyone that God had performed a miracle. Yet the Torah tells us "that a strong east wind blew all night" (Exodus 14:21). Why was there a strong wind blowing? Because God had to leave open at least the possibility for someone to say, "No, there was no miracle. It was a fluke of nature and the wind split the sea."

In the recent Gulf War, 39 Scud Missiles rained down on Israel and only one person was killed. What would it take for that to happen? Guaranteed you would have told me it would take a miracle, but it happened and we still have doubt.

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## **GROUND RULE #2 - INTERVENTION**

In Genesis 15:13, God tells Abraham, "Know that your descendents are going to be enslaved in a land they don't know," which of course ends up being Egypt. So the Jewish philosophers ask: "If God wanted the Jewish people to be enslaved in Egypt, why did he punish the Egyptians?" Tough question!

Nachmanides explains: "All God said is that they would be enslaved. He said nothing about torture and murder. God only said that he wanted a certain something to happen, but the Egyptians took it beyond that."

Now the question is, "Do the Jewish people deserve intervention or not?" Different story.

In Deuteronomy, Moses says that the fate of people depends on our relationship to God. The more we move closer to Him, the more He moves closer to us. The more we move away from him, the more He does the same. The language used is "God hides His face." And when that happens, this leaves us open to the free will decisions of human beings. At times God does not intervene.

We have to appreciate that in the Holocaust, it was not God who built the crematoriums, it was the Nazis. It is not God who is massacring Moslems in Bosnia, it is the Serbs. Which of course raises the question: Why isn't God interfering? But do you see the difference between "God doing this" and "why is God not interfering?"

King David said, "God, I'd rather have direct punishment from you than to fall into the hands of a human being." Because that's dangerous stuff. Will you merit to have God intervene?

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**GROUND RULE #3 - ETERNITY**

The question of "why do bad things happen to good people" has a lot to do with how we look at existence. The way we usually perceive things is like this: A "good life" means that I make a comfortable living, I enjoy good health, and then I die peacefully at age 80. That's a good life. Anything else is "bad."

In a limited sense, that's true. But if we have a soul and there is such a thing as eternity, then that changes the picture entirely. Eighty years in the face of eternity is not such a big deal.

From Judaism's perspective, our eternal soul is as real as our thumb. This is the world of doing, and the "world to come" is where we experience the eternal reality of whatever we've become. Do you think after being responsible for the torture and deaths of millions of people, that Hitler could really "end it all" by just swallowing some poison? No. Ultimate justice is found in another dimension.

But the concept goes much deeper. From an eternal view, if the ultimate pleasure we're going after is transcendence - the eternal relationship with the Almighty Himself, then who would be luckier: Someone who lives an easy life with little connection to God, or someone who is born handicapped, and despite the challenges, develops a connection with God. Who would be "luckier" in terms of eternal existence? All I'm trying to point out is that the rules of life start to look different from the point of view of eternity, as opposed to just the 70 or 80 years we have on earth.

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**GROUND RULE #4 - THE BIG PICTURE**

I heard a cute story I'd like to share. There once was a farmer who owned a horse. And one day the horse ran away. All the people in the town came to console him because of the loss. "Oh, I don't know," said the farmer, "maybe it's a bad thing and maybe it's not."

A few days later, the horse returned to the farm accompanied by 20 other horses. (Apparently he had found some wild horses and made friends!) All the townspeople came to congratulate him: "Now you have a stable full of horses!" "Oh, I don't know," said the farmer, "maybe it's a good thing and maybe it's not."

A few days later, the farmer's son was out riding one of the new horses. The horse got wild and threw him off, breaking the son's leg. So all the people in town came to console the farmer because of the accident. "Oh, I don't know," said the farmer, "maybe it's a bad thing and maybe it's not."

A few days later, the government declared war and instituted a draft of all able-bodied young men. They came to the town and carted off hundreds of young men, except for the farmer's son who had a broken leg. "Now I know," said the farmer, "that it was a good thing my horse ran away."

The point of this story is obvious. Life is a series of events, and until we've reached the end of the series, it's hard to know exactly why things are happening. That's one reason the Torah commands us to give respect to every elderly person - because through the course of life experience, they have seen the jigsaw puzzle pieces fall into place.

The Torah itself makes this point very clearly. Jacob is raising the next generation of the Jewish people, bringing to the world the message of Ethical Monotheism. And the key character in that picture is his son Joseph, who is kidnapped by his own brothers and sent down to Egypt. Imagine you would come to Jacob at that point in time and ask him about a good God. What's he going to answer?

In Egypt, Joseph became Prime Minister, and when a grave famine hits the entire world, Joseph is in a unique position to rescue his family.

When we look at the whole story in retrospect, everything that happened to Joseph was for the good. It set into motion a chain of events where he ended up saving and building the Jewish people.

It is interesting that one of the weekly Torah portions, "Miketz," ends on a bad note, and is then resolved at the beginning of the following week. Why didn't the Torah simply extend "Miketz" a few verses and have it end good? Because the Torah wants to communicate the lesson that we don't always see the whole picture. Sometimes you have to wait to see how "things turn out good in end."

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## **GROUND RULE #5 - OPPORTUNITY FOR GROWTH**

Sometimes what we perceive as punishment is really an opportunity for growth. In the story of the "Binding of Isaac," the Torah says that "God tested Abraham." The question is: Doesn't God know what Abraham is capable of? So who's the test for? It can't be for God. It must be for Abraham.

What does it mean to be tested? You have potential. Now the question is can you actualize your potential? We grow when we have to extend ourselves. The Hebrew word for test - "Nisa," is the same as one of the Hebrew words for flag - "Nes." What's the connection? You hoist a flag; so too through being tested, we become hoisted to higher and higher levels. Was this test a "punishment" for Abraham? Of course not. It was an opportunity for growth. The Abraham before the test is not the same Abraham after the test.

Imagine a track coach training an athlete in the 110- meter high hurdles. The coach would start with the hurdles low, and then raise them steadily as the athlete progressed. Raising the hurdles is not a punishment; rather it shows the coach's increasing confidence in the athlete's ability.

As a rabbi, I hear this over and over again: "When this event happened in my life, it seemed so negative; now I understand why it was there and how I grew from it."

Three years ago, a very dynamic woman I know almost died. Her heart stopped on the table. She tells me it was the best thing that ever happened to her. "I was in overdrive, running and

doing. That event got me to think: What's it all about?" And what this woman has accomplished in the last few years in personal growth is unbelievable. She's convinced that her suffering was integral to the growth process.

In Judaism, we look at life as "I'm here for growth, so how does this situation help me to change and grow?" When God is telling you to sacrifice your only son, can there be any greater punishment? Yet it changed the whole future of the Jewish people. "Tests" can change your future, too.

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## **GROUND RULE #6 - BORN TO SUFFER**

The Talmud (Yoma 35) tells the famous story of the sage Hillel. At the time, the head of the yeshiva wanted to make sure that the people who came to study Torah wanted it for the right reasons, and not for self-aggrandizement. So in order to test people's motivation, he charged money to enter the yeshiva.

Hillel was as poor and impoverished as they come. In the winter, he wanted so much to study that he climbed up to the roof by the skylight, and then became so enraptured with his studies that he didn't realize he'd become frozen in. The next morning it was dark in the study hall. So they looked up and saw a person's body. They brought him down and thawed him out.

The Talmud states: "Hillel obligates the poor." That means that Hillel takes away the excuse that we didn't accomplish what we were supposed to in life due to lack of money. Hillel serves as a beacon that even in poverty, one can still become the greatest of the great (which Hillel was).

Was Hillel punished or was this his reason for being here? The Talmud tells us this was his reason for being here. You don't know why a particular situation might be happening. We each have our own package. Each one of us is put here for a particular purpose. Sometimes "suffering" may actually be the reason we were put here. Maybe this is, so to speak, our glory, our unique contribution.

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## **GROUND RULE #7 - INDIVIDUAL & COMMUNITY**

We are living in a very complex world and in a complex world, God doesn't only deal with individuals, he also deals with nations.

When God decided to destroy Sodom and Gomorra, Abraham complained. He asked God, "If I can find 50 righteous people in Sodom and Gomorra, will you spare the cities?" God said, "No problem, I won't destroy it." Abraham bargained with God until he got down to 10 righteous people and God said, "Okay, if you can find 10 righteous people I won't destroy it."

Why did Abraham stop at 10? Why didn't he go down to one?

Because Abraham knew if there's a group of people who are righteous, then society might turn around - you can't destroy them. Ten is still a group, under 10 is just individuals. A few righteous individuals is not enough to save Sodom and Gomorra.

Another question: Now that God decided to destroy it, do these righteous individuals merit to be spared themselves? The answer is that while these individuals were not the catalyst for the disaster, but now that the disaster is going to happen, you need a tremendous amount of merit to be saved from it in a miraculous way. God deals both on a national realm and on an individual realm. And that complicates our understanding of the equation.

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## **GROUND RULE #8 - THE BENEFITS OF PUNISHMENT**

Unfortunately, the way a lot of Jews relate to punishment has been very heavily influenced by

Christianity, which is that God is always ready to get me with "fire and brimstone." No offense, but the Jewish idea is much different. God is our merciful Father. He's an infinite being that has no needs. Punishment cannot mean that He's "getting something." And this is the key to understanding the concept of chastisement.

When you think about it, all relationships are based on reward and punishment. When I bring my wife flowers, she smiles. If it's her birthday and I don't bring her flowers, I get punished, either by a burnt dinner, cold shoulder, etc. Relationships that are based on love always play themselves out in terms of reward and punishment. When I do what's right, I receive positive reinforcement, when I do what's wrong I receive "punishment."

What happens if my wife would always react the same regardless of whether or not I bring her flowers? That's the worst possible thing in a relationship - indifference.

Judaism says that punishment exists because God is reacting to the fact that I've done something wrong and He wants me to change. Hopefully I'll hear the message and learn from that. God is not out for revenge. He's doing this for my own good. If He wouldn't react to my negative behavior that would be the worst punishment of all - because that would mean indifference. This is why King David says in Psalms (23:4): "Your rod and your staff comfort me." Even though I may get "hit" once in a while, I know it is ultimately for my own good.

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## **PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER**

Remember our original premise? That it is very difficult for us to "judge" God because we are stuck in time and space. And because our view is so limited, we are therefore limited in terms of knowing which ground rules God is employing. When "bad" things happen, there are so many possibilities of why it's happening. "Is this a challenge in life that was given to me so I could become an example to inspire others? Or is this to get me to fix a wrong I've done? Or is this due to historical/national forces that are affecting me as an individual? Or is what's happening to me now through a choice that I've made? Or that I'm on my own because I've distanced myself?"

The fact that there are so many possibilities makes it easier to come to terms with the question, to be more comfortable realizing that if I had God's infinite view I would understand.

In Exodus 33:13, Moses asks God, "Make Your ways known to me." The commentators explain that there are "50 Gates of Wisdom," and Moses had reached the 49th Gate. This means that only one aspect of existence was still unknown to him. And which was that? The issue of "why bad things happen to good people." So what was God's answer? "I'm sorry, but this is the one thing that no human can ever comprehend." (see Exodus 33:20)

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## **ATTITUDE**

I've seen so much suffering, and it seems to me that the key is "attitude." How people deal with it depends on what attitude they have. I have seen people whose attitude was of anger or hurt to such an extent that they never got beyond a particular event - which then became the defining moment of their lives. In a certain sense, life stopped at that particular moment.

On the other hand, I have seen people who have gone through the most horrendous things, but their attitude was a positive one of believing that there is an ultimate good, of asking how I can learn and grow from this. It was incredible to see their sense of dignity, and the inspiration they gave to others. How they moved on with their lives. The contrast is so unbelievable between these two attitudes. Living with the concept of a good God is so much more uplifting and gives a person the ability to remain joyful and hopeful and have the strength to go on and fight.

Some people that have suffered similar tragedies have found some degree of solace by setting up some time of a fund or organization to help people, in memory of the departed one. This enables them to channel some of the great emotion that have into an area that offers them some degree of comfort.

I want to share a story that I heard from a friend who experienced the following incident. If you've ever ridden a bus in Israel, you know how people enter the bus from the front door and pay the driver, and people exiting the bus do so from the back door. Sometimes the crowd is so great that people will also enter from the back door, and then pass their money up front to pay

the driver. Well, this one time the driver decided he wasn't going to allow that. So he announced that whoever had entered from the back door, must now get off the bus and walk around to the front. Everybody complied grumpily, except for one very old man who could barely walk in the first place. Well, the driver stuck to his guns and announced that the bus would not move until this old man came on through the front door. So slowly slowly, one small step at a time, the old man got off the bus and walked around. And all the while, the people on the bus were shouting at the driver for not only his insensitivity to the old man, but for wasting everyone else's time!

Finally, the old man managed to make it up through the front door and pay the driver. And then he turned toward the bus full of angry people and told them: "Please, don't be upset. We should be grateful that my legs still work and I still have the strength to walk. Thank God!!"

I want to conclude with the following poem I once read:

I asked for strength and

God gave me difficulties to make me strong.

I asked for wisdom and

God gave me problems to solve.

I asked for prosperity and

God gave me brawn and brain to work.

I asked for courage and

God gave me dangers to overcome.

I asked for love and

God gave me troubled people to help...

My prayers were answered.

With blessings from Jerusalem,

**Rabbi Shraga Simmons**

**Aish.com**

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Re: Can I really become 90-Days clean?  
Posted by yehoshua - 16 Jan 2014 13:18

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Divine intervention always reminds me of Jules going straight in Pulp Fiction.

JULES

That was...divine intervention.

You know what divine intervention

is?

VINCENT

Yeah, I think so. That means God  
came down from Heaven and stopped

the bullets.

JULES

Yeah, man, that's what it means.

That's exactly what it means! God  
came down from Heaven and stopped  
the bullets.

VINCENT

I think we should be going now.

JULES

Don't do that! Don't you \*\*\*  
do that! Don't blow this \*\*\*\* off!  
What just happened was a \*\*\*  
miracle!

VINCENT

Chill the \*\*\*\* out, Jules, this  
\*\*\* happens.

JULES

Wrong, wrong, this \*\*\* doesn't  
just happen.

VINCENT

Do you wanna continue this  
theological discussion in the car,  
or at the jailhouse with the cops?

And the best line ever:

If you wanna play blind man, then go walk with a Shepherd. But me, my eyes are wide \*\*\*' open.

Jules could just stop killing people and it made him a better man. Holy moly, Jules the big Tzaddik. And what can Hiob do? But we are not Hiob. How do we wrestle with His angels, we are not Yaakov. It all sounds so great, but in actual situation things are different.

Perhaps you need a lesson from Jules and stop killing. Stop killing yourself. Even if it is the only thing that you know how too, just use the 12 and stop killing. Then perhaps you can find strength to fight for your baby, for your wife and for yourself...

Still I think Tarantino said it way better.... Sorry for my mumblings and wild ideas, I have no idea what you are going through, I do not wish to offend you...

*Serenity Prayer*

*Hashem grant me the serenity*

*to accept the things I cannot change;*

*courage to change the things I can;*

*and wisdom to know the difference.*

*Living one day at a time;*

*enjoying one moment at a time;*

*accepting hardships as the pathway to peace;*

*taking this world as it is, not as I would have it;*

*trusting that He will make all things right*

*if I surrender to His Will;*

*that I may be reasonably happy in this life*

*and supremely happy with Him*

*forever in the next.*

*Amen.*

One day at a time... But for me, 15 minutes at a time (I actually have to set my phone to ring

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Re: Can I really become 90-Days clean?

Posted by quixorbl - 16 Jan 2014 18:52

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Day 16: I've been lazy about posting here recently so I'll try to make up for it now. I'm still having a very hard time surrendering, despite the promises made in my first post in this topic, because I continue to have this fear that G-d is somehow going to make me regret ever getting sober. The post from Aish.com was interesting. However, the main problem is not intellectual...it's physical. I can understand, purely from an intellectual standpoint, that this unending horror can somehow be for the best. However, the physical/emotional/spiritual agony is too intense for me to bear. I can't handle it. Similar to my addiction, I'm completely powerless over the pain and anger. Sadly, no amount of intellectual exercises about how it may, or may not, be for the best will ever be able to address that powerlessness. Perhaps my purpose in this world is to suffer so much for whatever spiritual reasons. But I can't overcome my natural aversion to pain to willingly attempt to fix things just so G-d can cause me more pain thereby.

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Re: Can I really become 90-Days clean?

Posted by chesky - 16 Jan 2014 19:00

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Thank you for sharing and your honesty.

Think about this:

Nochum Ish gam Zu used the term ?? ?? ?????

Rabbi Akiva used the term ?? ?? ?????? ?????? ??? ?????

Were they saying the same thing (just in different languages) or are they different messages?

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