

A New Approach to the 90-Day Journey

Posted by BEHS - 29 Mar 2016 19:17

I'm a baseball fan and a numbers guy. And the numbers we discuss in baseball are typically percentage-based: Batting average, OBP, slugging percentage,... The numbers that represent actual occurrences are typically noted only when they are outliers. Hank Aaron's homeruns, Ricky Henderson's stolen bases, (don't tell the MLB that I'm mentioning this next one) Pete Rose's hits,... These are monumental feats that seem superhuman. In that second category would also be Joe DiMaggio's hitting streak, Orel Hershisier's scoreless innings streak, and Cal Ripken Jr's consecutive games played. These are superhuman feats that we never expected to happen and will probably never happen again. (See where I'm going with this yet...?)

I know I have trouble with lust. I'm a proverbial red-blooded male. It's been a problem with me for longer than it hasn't been. For me to have a significant streak would require superhuman strength which I don't have. But that doesn't mean I can't try to hit for average. I can't keep beating myself up over losing my streak when I don't have the *koach* in me to maintain it. That's up to Someone Else to give me that superhuman power. If He chooses to, I'll be tremendously grateful, but if not, I'll do what I can to get on base and bring in a few runs.

It's with this mindset that I'm changing my approach to the 90-day challenge. While I do hope to one day reach that tremendous milestone that currently seems so far out of reach, I have to begin by focusing on my batting average. And while I'll continue to track my streak, it's better for me to focus on percentages to keep upbeat about my progress.

I plan on updating this thread daily to track my ongoing "batting average" and welcome all to call me out if I begin skipping days. I may also reset the count every 90 days to test myself and see if I can hit better in subsequent periods and to give myself a target to beat.

As always, I welcome input from the *olam* as to whether this is a good idea that may need tweaking or if I should scrap it altogether.

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Re: A New Approach to the 90-Day Journey

Posted by BEHS - 10 Apr 2016 01:33

12/12 *Be'ezras HaShem*.

Yesterday, we finished the first *perek*, where the *Ramcha"l* summarizes that the only purpose of being in *olam ha'zeh* is to do *mitzvos* and stand up to *nisyonos*. And he also says that the joys and pleasures one can have in *olam ha'zeh* are only there to help you serve *HaShem* properly with *yishuv hada'as*. *shiur* from R' Akiva Tatz where he compares the spiritual pleasures of *olam ha'bah* to a salary that one earns after working hard, and the physical pleasures we get in *olam ha'zeh* are comparable to an expense account given by an employer. One doesn't work for the expense account, but without it, he wouldn't be able to take potential clients out to lunch, stay at hotels when on the road,...] However, our focus here is to cling to *HaShem* and remain close to Him.

In the second *perek* we move onto the steps of the *braisa* of R' *Pinchas ben Yair* upon which the rest of the *sefer* is built. The first step is *zehirus*, vigilance. The goal of vigilance is to constantly be aware of one's actions and refining them. We don't want to just go through life without direction and do everything by rote. As we are creatures with *sechel*, we must use that so we don't get "lost". Even animals, who lack *sechel*, know to save themselves from danger. If we don't protect ourselves from the dangers of *olam ha'zeh*, we are no better than "a blind man on the edge of a river".

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Re: A New Approach to the 90-Day Journey

Posted by markz - 10 Apr 2016 01:40

BEHS, I love these posts!!!

btw, has your lust dissapeared

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Re: A New Approach to the 90-Day Journey

Posted by BEHS - 10 Apr 2016 02:01

Thanks for the encouragement. I was actually wondering if people are really reading them. Does one's lust ever disappear? I'm not really expecting it to. I can certainly tell you it hasn't yet. But if

it ever does, I think that'll be a bonus.

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Re: A New Approach to the 90-Day Journey
Posted by abie - 10 Apr 2016 03:51

[BEHS wrote on 08 Apr 2016 04:13:](#)

I'm sorry to announce that I made a mistake yesterday. The 27 consecutive scoreless innings of the Dodgers to start the season was only a franchise record, not an MLB record. And unfortunately, that streak ended in the bottom of the 5th inning today, snapping the streak at 31, just 1 shy of the MLB record of 32.

hmm.. this shiur is too deep for me, i'll stick to mesilas.

But in happier news, I'm still going strong at 10/10!! Not a record, but nothing to scoff at either.

keep climbing... (sorry, truckers)

mechayil el choyil

But it seems to me that the point he is making is that we are building a bridge of sorts between *olam ha'zeh* and *olam ha'bah*, and that bridge is made of *mitzvos*. The more carefully we mold those *mitzvos*, the stronger and more sturdy they will be. That results in a better bridge that we know won't collapse before it's time for us to cross.

Not a bridge, but ????? ??? itself. Olam habbah, (?????? ??????, ??????) etc. is produced from the ingredients called *mitzvos* (maybe not exactly, but..). The more stale or spoiled the ingredients, or if your measurements are off, the product will be so much off. The more precious the stuff that you're dealing with, the more each minute deviation will affect the final product.

I was actually wondering if people are really reading them.

I am, and enjoying it, too! I'm subscribed to this thread.

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Re: A New Approach to the 90-Day Journey
Posted by BEHS - 11 Apr 2016 00:37

13/13. A baker's dozen.

The *Ramcha"l* continues about the importance of *zehirus*:

Yirmiyahu stressed the importance of being vigilant throughout one's life. He lamented the fact that his generation would go through life blindly without taking time to reflect on their actions. They allowed their habits to guide them and that lead them to fall. (Awesome related article. <https://guardyoureyes.com/articles/tips-suggestions/item/the-science-of-habit-change>) That is one of the key strategies of the *yetzer hara*. It keeps you so busy with life that you don't take the time to think about what you're doing. You go about life by rote and fall time and again over the same obstacles. Whereas if you took a second to think about why you do what you do, you'd be able to overcome the difficult situations.

The *Ramcha"l* points out that this was the tactic used first by *Paroah*. He made us work so hard that we had no time to think about a rebellion. By the end of the day, we went home and collapsed. Personally, I know that's how I am after a long day of work. But we must overcome that urge if we want to advance in our *avodah*.

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Re: A New Approach to the 90-Day Journey
Posted by BEHS - 12 Apr 2016 00:09

[abie wrote on 10 Apr 2016 03:51:](#)

[BEHS wrote on 08 Apr 2016 04:13:](#)

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I stand corrected. Abie, you're 100% correct. Our actions build olam ha'bah itself. No question.

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Re: A New Approach to the 90-Day Journey
Posted by peloni almoni - 12 Apr 2016 00:46

[BEHS wrote on 12 Apr 2016 00:09:](#)

[abie wrote on 10 Apr 2016 03:51:](#)

[BEHS wrote on 08 Apr 2016 04:13:](#)

But it seems to me that the point he is making is that we are building a bridge of sorts between *olam ha'zeh* and *olam ha'bah*, and that bridge is made of *mitzvos*. The more carefully we mold those *mitzvos*, the stronger and more sturdy they will be. That results in a better bridge that we know won't collapse before it's time for us to cross.

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I stand corrected. Abie, you're 100% correct. Our actions build olam ha'bah itself. No question.

that is why it is called olam "haba" and not olam hahoo (the natural contrast to olam "hazeh").

haba does not even mean "to come" as commonly misinterpreted "world to come". then it would be olam ha'asid lavo, or olam she'yavo.

rather, haba means coming. by each action, positive thought, it is being formed. coming into existence.

(rabbi leff on mesilas yesharim)

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Re: A New Approach to the 90-Day Journey
Posted by BEHS - 12 Apr 2016 05:48

14/14.

The *Ramcha*"I continues to list a few examples from *tanach* and *gemara* of places where we are warned to pay attention and not to go around sleepwalking. And even if we are conscious of our surroundings and don't just allow habit to take over our lives, we still obviously need *HaShem* to help us overcome the *yetzer*. But the two go hand-in-hand. If we don't take responsibility for our lives by being alert to any dangers that cross our paths (at the very least like animals do), why should *HaShem* help us?

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Re: A New Approach to the 90-Day Journey
Posted by BEHS - 13 Apr 2016 03:54

15/15.

The *Ramcha"l* explains that in order for one to be vigilant, you must first determine what is good and what is bad. If you don't have an objective scale against which you measure actions, what is the goal of the vigilance? (See *Michtav Me'Eliyahu*, *chelek* 1, page 52, "*Shoresch Hamussar*") Once you've determined the objective scale [namely what is appropriate [i]al pi halacha[i] and what isn't], you must see how your actions measure up to that scale. And you must be measuring constantly: before, as, and after you act. [The [i]Ramcha"l[i] lumps the first two together.]

As you are about to act, if vigilance is your goal, you must think about what you are about to say or do. And at the end of the day, you must reevaluate your actions. Were they proper or not? How could you have done better? What would you hope your actions will be the next time a similar situation comes along? Were there bad actions that you'd like to get rid of completely? Is there any fine-tuning that you can do on the good actions in order to make them even better?

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Re: A New Approach to the 90-Day Journey
Posted by BEHS - 14 Apr 2016 02:40

16/16

The *Ramcha"l* continues that measuring our actions must be a daily exercise. We must set aside a time for it like businessmen who are constantly going over their inventory and books. *Chaza"l* tell us the importance of performing a sort of profit/loss analysis on all of our actions. How much did/will this cost me and how much will I gain?

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Re: A New Approach to the 90-Day Journey
Posted by nefeshpashut - 14 Apr 2016 19:10

That's brilliant, BEHS. You are 100% right about the passivity. I fear that I am being too passive too, in my career, college professor, this is also a crazy time (end of the year), but just keeping up with the 90-day count and "listening in" isn't going to cut it. I hope that every moral fiber in my person can strain in this direction, keep me on the derekh.

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Re: A New Approach to the 90-Day Journey
Posted by BEHS - 15 Apr 2016 06:49

17/17. And just in case anyone's not sure, that's still batting 1.000!!! *Be'ezras HaShem!!!*

The *Ramcha*"I states that if we don't do a proper weighing of our actions regularly, we will be blinded by the *yetzer* and we will live our lives as if in the dark. The *gemara* compares *olam ha'zeh* to night, and the darkness of night provides two possible dangers: either you won't be able to see where you're going, or you'll think you are seeing one thing when in reality it is something completely different. So too in *olam ha'zeh*. We sometimes walk around blind to the obstacles that prevent us from serving *HaShem* properly and we stumble without even realizing it, or worse, we think that what we are doing is correct when in fact it is highly problematic. This leads us to continue down the wrong path since we are convinced that we are doing the right thing.

The only way to save ourselves, is to turn on the lights. And to learn how to do that, we must turn to those who have succeeded before us.

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Re: A New Approach to the 90-Day Journey
Posted by BEHS - 15 Apr 2016 06:53

[nefeshpashut wrote on 14 Apr 2016 19:10:](#)

That's brilliant, BEHS. You are 100% right about the passivity. I fear that I am being too passive too, in my career, college professor, this is also a crazy time (end of the year), but just keeping up with the 90-day count and "listening in" isn't going to cut it. I hope that every moral fiber in my person can strain in this direction, keep me on the *derech*.

I have found that this thread is the best way for me to stay on the *derech*. I'd suggest you start one of your own. Get out there, tell your story, and interact with us. I've found tremendous *chizuk* in knowing that people are reading my posts and that they care. It's no longer me against the world. It's me and all of these people who are interested in my success, against a few moments of false and fleeting pleasure.

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Re: A New Approach to the 90-Day Journey
Posted by inastruggle - 15 Apr 2016 17:07

In that case I'm going to pipe in to say that I'm reading your thread even though i haven't said anything

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