

A New Approach to the 90-Day Journey

Posted by BEHS - 29 Mar 2016 19:17

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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 - 17 Apr 2016 02:24

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19/19. The true test really starts tonight as it's now *niddah* time. I definitely appreciate everyone who's reading this thread. It gives me great *chizuk* to continue (especially when I know you exist).

In Friday's piece, the *Ramcha*"I says that if we want to be successful in our battle against the *yetzer hara*, we must learn from those who have already succeeded. To illustrate this concept, he provides a *mashal* about a garden maze. The walls are made of trees and if you're in the maze you can't see the path. The goal of the maze is to get to the tower in the middle, but unless you are an expert in the maze and have been through it many times, you can't find the proper path since all of the walls look the same. However, if someone has beaten the maze many times and knows it well, or if someone is standing in the tower looking down on the maze after having succeeded, then they can direct those who are trapped inside. From the tower, they can see all of the twists and turns and can point out which path will lead to the middle and which may lead you astray, no matter how good it might look from inside the maze.

In today's section, he says that the same concept applies with our fight against the *yetzer*. If we want to succeed, we must listen to those who have been successful before us. And what is their advice? Do a *cheshbon ha'nefesh*. *Bava Bastra 78b*: "Come and evaluate the balance sheet of the world: the loss of a *mitzvah* versus its gain, and the gain of an *aveira* versus its loss."

The *Ramcha*"I ends the third *perek* with a summary: We must always keep in mind what is the proper path according to the *Torah*. Once we've established that measuring stick, we must use it to evaluate our actions. Are we measuring up to that standard or not? Where are we going wrong, and even with the things that are going right, what can we fine-tune?

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Re: A New Approach to the 90-Day Journey  
Posted by abie - 18 Apr 2016 05:04

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[BEHS wrote on 17 Apr 2016 02:24:](#)

19/19. The true test really starts tonight as it's now *niddah* time. I definitely appreciate everyone who's reading this thread. It gives me great *chizuk* to continue (especially when I know you exist).

Don't worry. You've already got 20 under your belt, chances are she'll be coming 'round in less than that.

???", together with the oilam, you'll do fine. ??? ????

??? again for keeping up the ??".

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Re: A New Approach to the 90-Day Journey  
Posted by BEHS - 18 Apr 2016 05:12

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20/20

The *Ramcha*"I begins the fourth *perek* detailing how one goes about gaining vigilance. He explains that it first comes from studying *Torah*. Specifically, by contemplating the gravity of our obligations towards *HaShem*. But there are different types of people that are motivated differently.

Firstly, for the wise people, they only need to understand that our main goal in life is *shlaimus* and there is nothing worse than lacking *shalimus*. Once they understand this goal and that the *mitzvos* are the means through which it can be accomplished, they will grab onto these means and strive for that goal. They understand that any lack in their pursuit of the means will ultimately result in a lack in attaining the goal. Just understanding this reality leads them to be vigilant in their deeds.

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Re: A New Approach to the 90-Day Journey  
Posted by markz - 18 Apr 2016 11:35

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[BEHS wrote on 18 Apr 2016 05:12:](#)

20/20

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I always tell myself that I'm from that group, can anyone relate?

The [lies we tell ourselves](#)

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Re: A New Approach to the 90-Day Journey  
Posted by abie - 18 Apr 2016 19:29

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Re: A New Approach to the 90-Day Journey  
Posted by BEHS - 19 Apr 2016 04:03

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21/21

The *Ramcha*"I explains the quality of *yiras chait* as someone on this level that he just described. It's when someone is focused on achieving *shleimus* and knows that any sin will keep him from that reaching that level.

The people on the next level down will be motivated toward vigilance in proportion to the honor that they are chasing. They understand that their stature in *olam ha'bah* will be based on their actions in *olam ha'zeh*. In order to ensure their honor there, they will strive to do *mitzvos* here. This thought process leads them to be vigilant about their actions.

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Re: A New Approach to the 90-Day Journey  
Posted by BEHS - 20 Apr 2016 07:18

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22/22 Had a little slip today, but not a fall. We're still going strong.

The lowest level that the *Ramcha"l* discusses are people who tell themselves that they don't need to be the greatest *tzaddikim* in the world. They are fine with just being average Joes. Maybe they won't get the best seats in *olam ha'bah*, but they won't get the worst either. However, even these people can be convinced to practice vigilance in their lives.

All you have to do is ask these people how they feel in *olam ha'zeh* when someone has things that they want. What do they feel when someone else gets the court-side seats and they are halfway up? Of course they are jealous in *olam ha'zeh*. It's human nature to want that which someone else has. We always want to be the ones up on the dais.

If that is how one feels in *olam ha'zeh*, where everything is *hevel* anyway, how will he feel in *olam ha'emes* which is the true reality? Especially when those who have the court-side seats are the ones who he felt so much better than in *olam ha'zeh*? How embarrassed will he be then? With this in mind, he will work on his vigilance to avoid that embarrassment later.

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Re: A New Approach to the 90-Day Journey  
Posted by markz - 20 Apr 2016 07:26

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BEHS

Thanks as always

You mentioned your wife's new dress comes with a **little slip**, and you need to buy her replacement, or you meant something else but was very vague

Could you be more specific...

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Re: A New Approach to the 90-Day Journey  
Posted by BEHS - 20 Apr 2016 07:33

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I'm going to be honest, I'm not sure if you're hinting at something deeper here or not. I just had a slip today in looking at some pictures I shouldn't have, but I caught myself quickly and I'm not counting it as a fall.

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Re: A New Approach to the 90-Day Journey  
Posted by markz - 20 Apr 2016 07:36

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I'm not such a deep guy, but I have a small point to share

In the "free towing" section below there's an 'important link' to the 3 second rule. I assume you unfortunately slipped and looked for more than 3 seconds. Correct?

Another tiny question - Are you posting Mesilas Yescharim daily as a support for breaking free from lust addiction

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Re: A New Approach to the 90-Day Journey  
Posted by Workingguy - 20 Apr 2016 13:46

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[BEHS wrote on 20 Apr 2016 07:33:](#)

I'm going to be honest, I'm not sure if you're hinting at something deeper here or not. I just had a slip today in looking at some pictures I shouldn't have, but I caught myself quickly and I'm not counting it as a fall.

I don't know if he was referring to something else or not, but I think the point is that honesty and taking the struggle out of the shadows and out of the shame is very important.

So if you had a little slip no one needs the specific details but just share in general what it is so there's nothing you're keeping secret or having shame about. I know that me, and a lot of people, find it much easier to share the good news than any of the struggles, and it's important to feel comfortable sharing those as well.

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Re: A New Approach to the 90-Day Journey  
Posted by BEHS - 21 Apr 2016 04:02

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[markz wrote on 20 Apr 2016 07:36:](#)

Another tiny question - Are you posting Mesilas Yescharim daily as a support for breaking free from lust addiction

Let's go back to the beginning. I've found that if I'm just focusing on my streak, if I fall, I lose sight of the previous days that I was clean. The streak is gone so what could I possibly have gained? Personally, for me, I found that to be a very unhealthy way of approaching the 90 days. If I was clean for 10 days, who cares that I fell on day 11? I just had 10 great days!!! And I should celebrate that!!! That's the real point of this thread. It happens to be I've been

standing strong for 23 days now since I started this mindset, but if I fall tomorrow, I'm still going to focus on the fact that I had 23 amazing days. Maybe my batting average went from 1.000 to 0.958, but that is still much better than it was a year ago.

So the point of this thread is for the fraction/percentage at the beginning of my daily posts. And as you asked, where does *Mesilas Yescharim* come into play?

If the whole post is just a fraction/percentage, I don't think people will stay interested for very long. And if the thread is just my posts without anyone commenting, I'm going to assume nobody is reading it and I'm probably going to just stop rather quickly. I'll probably get depressed about how nobody is interested in my success here and that will lead to a downward spiral (...and if you give him some milk, he'll want to look in a mirror to make sure he doesn't have a milk-mustache...). So the thread can't just be a fraction. There has to be something more to keep it (and me) alive.

This past *Rosh Hashana* I began learning *Mesillas Yescharim* daily according to a schedule that completes the *sefer* twice each year. As I was starting this thread, I noticed that we were starting the *sefer* for the second time this year, so I figured it would be a good project to summarize the *Ramcha*"I to go along with the daily percentage. It would keep it interesting and hopefully keep others engaged, which in turn keeps me on the right page. (Which is again why I love seeing other people having some input or even just saying "Hi". It really encourages me that there are those out there who care and are rooting for my success.)

I still consider myself a beginner with GYE, but from what I've read from others, we can't really compare our addiction to other types of *yetzer hara*, and our work here is fundamentally different than our work in other areas of Jewish life. So in that regard, these posts are not my antidote to a sexaholic. If they happen to help someone with their addiction, great. If not, we can still use the lessons of the *Ramcha*"I in the rest of our *avodas HaShem*.

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Re: A New Approach to the 90-Day Journey  
Posted by markz - 21 Apr 2016 04:08

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You explained it quite well



But pray tell me, what is keeping you sober from day to day

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Re: A New Approach to the 90-Day Journey  
Posted by BEHS - 21 Apr 2016 04:20

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23/23. Now that it's getting warmer outside it's getting harder to keep my eyes to myself while walking through Manhattan. I should probably start taking off my glasses. I don't understand these people, do they have no shame that they can walk around the way they do? Don't they realize how demeaning it is to who they are as a person? Don't they realize that nobody will take them seriously? Why would they diminish their tremendous inner potential to something so superficial? I guess more importantly, why would I look at something so ridiculous? I must be out of my mind. Be'ezras HaShem, He'll put me back into it.

I'm not really sure what the Ramcha"l is saying in today's portion (at least I'm not understanding the connection to what he was just talking about), but I'll try to summarize anyway. The yetzer hara has a way of convincing us to lighten our load in olam ha'zeh despite the fact that this is the only place to work on ourselves. If we wait, we will eventually be in the grave where there is no bechirah and nothing can be done there to improve upon ourselves.

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