

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 abie - 21 Apr 2016 04:26

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[BEHS wrote on 21 Apr 2016 04:02:](#)

(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.)

In that case, "Hi".

If the whole post is just a fraction/percentage, I don't think people will stay interested for very long.

So the thread can't just be a fraction. There has to be something more to keep it (and me) alive.

Good "chap". Do you work for an advertising company, by any chance?

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Re: A New Approach to the 90-Day Journey  
Posted by BEHS - 21 Apr 2016 04:29

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[abie wrote on 21 Apr 2016 04:26:](#)

Good "chap". Do you work for an advertising company, by any chance?

No, I'm just a typical, boring, Jewish accountant.

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Re: A New Approach to the 90-Day Journey  
Posted by abie - 21 Apr 2016 04:31

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[BEHS wrote on 21 Apr 2016 04:20:](#)

I should probably start taking off my glasses.

Coulda, shoulda, woulda. Take a page out of Nike's book.

Be'ezras HaShem, He'll put me back into it.

Into what?

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Re: A New Approach to the 90-Day Journey

Posted by BEHS - 21 Apr 2016 04:43

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"I must be out of my mind."

If I've gone out of my mind, maybe the cure is to have *HKBH* somehow put me back into it.

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Re: A New Approach to the 90-Day Journey

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Posted by BEHS - 22 Apr 2016 05:44

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24/24

The way to motivate the masses, says the *Ramcha"l*, is through the concept of reward and punishment. The lowest common denominator is the fear we all have of being judged. He then goes on to explain that even the righteous aren't immune from being punished. This should scare even someone who has no interest in self-improvement into some form of vigilance.

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Re: A New Approach to the 90-Day Journey

Posted by BEHS - 25 Apr 2016 05:57

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27/27

The last few days, the *Ramcha"l* has been bringing examples of how *HaShem* rewards and punishes. He has discussed the concept that *tzaddikim* are judged more strictly, and in today's piece, he mentions that *HaShem* takes every little detail into account. If you feel that He will overlook some of the little things that you do which are improper, what's to stop Him from overlooking the little things that you do which are good?

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Re: A New Approach to the 90-Day Journey

Posted by abie - 25 Apr 2016 06:45

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Re: A New Approach to the 90-Day Journey  
Posted by BEHS - 26 Apr 2016 03:12

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28/28. Four weeks in a row. Baruch Hashem.

If we are judged strictly on the smallest things and nothing is overlooked, the *Ramcha*"I wonders how we deal with the concept of *middas harachamim*? He answers that if the world was only run with *middas hadin*, we would be punished immediately for our actions, the punishment would be done with anger, and there would be no hope for *teshuvah*.

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Re: A New Approach to the 90-Day Journey  
Posted by abie - 26 Apr 2016 03:25

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Re: A New Approach to the 90-Day Journey  
Posted by BEHS - 27 Apr 2016 04:35

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29/29

The *Ramcha*"I continues that it is the *midas harachamim* that delays punishment, lessens the punishment, and allows *teshuva* to take effect. If one truly does *teshuva* and regrets his

actions, it's as if he never did them.

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Re: A New Approach to the 90-Day Journey

Posted by BEHS - 28 Apr 2016 02:37

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30/30. Still batting 1.000 and that's a month streak too!!!

To summarize the *perek* dealing with acquiring vigilance, there is always a reason for us to be vigilant about our actions. For some of us (not me, yet), it's because we understand the importance of *shlaimus*. For others, it's to ensure our place in *olam ha'bah*. For the rest, it's simply a question of *schar ve'onesh*.

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Re: A New Approach to the 90-Day Journey

Posted by abie - 02 May 2016 22:59

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I'm missing my daily dose.

How were the second days?

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Re: A New Approach to the 90-Day Journey

Posted by BEHS - 03 May 2016 00:27

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Abie, kudos for reaching out. Truth is I've had a rough few days and I fell today. While that's a little upsetting in that I was at a 34-day streak, which is my record, at the same time it finally gives me a chance to see if this new approach works for me. While I was always utilizing the fraction and percentage, I was essentially tracking my streak which was not what this thread was supposed to be about.

34/35 = 0.971

As for the *Mesillas Yescharim*, we have a few days to catch up on, partially because I couldn't post on *yom tov*, and partially because I haven't posted since (possibly a reason for my fall). We're essentially going to be covering the entire 5th *perek* between today and tomorrow. I'll do half today and half tomorrow, *be'ezras HaShem*.

There are 3 things that can cause us to lose our vigilance: our involvement with the physical world, joking around, and bad friends. In terms of being overly involved in the physical world, the more you focus on your job and the pressures of making a living, the less time you have to focus on your actions, and the less time you have to devote to *Torah*. It's not that we shouldn't work, but it shouldn't consume our lives to the extent that we lose focus on what really matters in *olam hazeh*. Especially when we consider the fact that *Torah* leads to vigilance, focusing too much on our jobs and too little on being *koveah itim* will certainly cause us to lose our vigilance. And not only does *Torah* bring us to vigilance, it is the cure for the *yetzer hara*. So we see that without *Torah*, we won't be vigilant in our actions which will lead us to wander through life "like a blind man on the bank of a river", and we won't have the *koach* to fight the *yetzer hara*.

[I'm going to continue today's piece later since my wife is due home any minute...]

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Re: A New Approach to the 90-Day Journey  
Posted by BEHS - 03 May 2016 03:58

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As the *Ramcha*"l points out, a lack of *Torah* leads to a lack of vigilance and a rejection of the medication that *HaShem* has prescribed for the *yetzer hara*. But learning *Torah*, and at specified times, leads one back onto the proper *derech*. That is the remedy to the first difficulty of vigilance: make *Torah* and a *cheshbon hanefesh* central in your life and the focus of your day, and then you won't become overly involved in the physicality of the world.

The second difficulty we find with vigilance is joking around too much. If one takes things too lightly, it's very difficult to put him on the proper path. This person doesn't appreciate the severity of making the wrong decisions in life. Furthermore, his frivolity causes him to slowly lose his inhibitions. What once seemed like a clear *aveira* which he would never transgress eventually becomes something doable, *chas ve'chalilah*. This is because frivolity is the exact

opposite of vigilance. Whereas vigilance is about being aware of your actions and their severity, frivolity is about clearing one's mind from that which is important.

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