

Britt's Beyond

Posted by briut - 02 Feb 2010 18:00

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Dear Friends: Sorry I've been off in my own mind these last couple of days and not posting.

I've had a very very emotionally busy couple of days as I approach the end of a 20-day kaballa to be clean. Here's an update, and I'm hoping for your insights/comments.

That kaballa ends this evening. I've learned a lot. I want to express my thanks to all of you for jumping in to post, even in the face of some pretty long rambling posts without clear message. It means a lot.

And to the author of many insightful PMs, your direct, almost brutal comments scared away a lot of delusional thinking and brought me a tremendous sense of clarity. Saying thank you doesn't even come close to my gratitude for your time. I'd love to hear from the decades of accumulated wisdom here on the forum.

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Re: La-Briut and Beyond!

Posted by briut - 07 May 2010 13:50

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[Briut wrote on 07 May 2010 05:03:](#)

[...] Why am I running SO FAST away from shmutz, from fantasizing, from acting out? Why do I think I can take on so much, so quickly? Maybe I'd do better with a week of R&R. [...] A week to integrate the work I've done, to stew in a little Torah learning, to make a plan for the next chapter....

[silentbattle wrote on 07 May 2010 13:30:](#)

R&R meaning a plateau (as you mentioned, a chance to integrate what you've done, learn, etc)? Or a chance to fantasize and fall?

OKAY, SB, I'll 'fess up. I'm talking about a week of R&R... to fall. Basically acting out, not more. Just let all this Hercules Superman perfection resistance stuff go away for a few days, and come back with both a little perspective and a little relief (psychological & physical).

I know there's unlikely to be ANYONE on the Forum who'd say "go ahead," but I'm looking for help in remembering some compelling reasons \_WHY\_ to hold back!

(I do remember some support here for the concept of taking one step at a time, like 90 days without p\*\* before tackling 90 days without m\*\*. So maybe my ideas aren't so crazy after all, as long as I keep my eyes on the prize.)

On this Q, I can't be objective right now when it's so difficult to tell the Y'H to "go away for a few minutes; I'm on a conference call; please call back and I will (possibly, haha) listen later." And I'm SO tired of seeking perfection, even perfection in the art of surrendering to H'.

HELP! Thanks.

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Re: La-Briut and Beyond!

Posted by hoping4change - 07 May 2010 13:56

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I'm looking for help in remembering some compelling reasons \_WHY\_ to hold back!

Please, I hope you accept this comment in the spirit of humility it is given since I do not feel that I can offer any guidance other than what I have learned for others, but the reason to "hold back" in this regard is the same for being Torah observant - because that is why you were created, to turn away from evil and do good, e.g. turn away from sins and do mitzvot.

Pirkei Avot - "Remember three things ..."

I hope this helps a little.

kol tuv

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Re: La-Briut and Beyond!  
Posted by briut - 07 May 2010 16:51

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I suppose I should 'fess up that my consulting work has taken a HUGE upward swing over these past few days.

I don't want to think that Hashem is trying to send me this little gift as a wake-up call or incentive or message or anything. That's not what I expect my relationship with Him is supposed to look like. ("You Stay Clean, I'll Make You Rich. HUH??!") But I'll confess it's crossed my mind.

Still, it also makes me wonder whether this upward swing isn't supposed to compensate for holding back in er, other... upward swings (am I allowed to say that, Guard?). Middah k'neged middah?

And I know, if I were willing to take this message in, in exchange for a few measly thousand dollars, wouldn't I feel COMPELLED to take the same message in exchange for something more ruchnius-dik than money? (I'm not ready to answer that yet.)

I can think about it over Shabbos. And a good one to everyone.

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Re: La-Briut and Beyond!

Posted by the.guard - 08 May 2010 21:40

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Follow your heart... I have seen it's beauty.

It knows what Hashem wants... Just make sure nothing is covering it over, and you'll know how

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Re: La-Briut and Beyond!

Posted by briut - 09 May 2010 16:03

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[guardureyes wrote on 08 May 2010 21:40:](#)

to continue your upward swing

Follow your heart... I have seen it's beauty.

It knows what Hashem wants... Just make sure nothing is covering it over, and you'll know how to continue your upward swing.

Guard, I'm trying to take your advice to heart but in the meantime I'm taking it into my brain.

The Navi (is it Zecharia? Nechemia? Not so bucky, sorry) says, And "I" will circumsize your heart of stone into a heart of flesh. So when you say the heart must be uncovered, I move [eventually, after some improper interpretations of undressing] to how to peel away the stone-like shell covering that's inhibiting my heart.

I believe Hashem must be inspiring you to make reference to moving my heart of stone into a heart of flesh. And using a bris milah to accomplish it.

I can think and think again on this concept and still not reach the full depths of its brilliance. My heart feels like a rock right now, in terms of the heaviness of giving up lustful thoughts and actions. Yet like anyone, I'd prefer my heart to be flesh and blood -- a heart open not just to loving Hashem and loving this world and loving my life -- but to loving as a heart should love: unconditionally.

And moving from a heart of stone to a heart of flesh and blood requires, in the words of the Navi -- bris milah. Not just a random cut to get at what's inside, but a kosher bris milah performed with kedusha and precision. And I'd suggest that perhaps a bris milah of the heart must be linked somehow to bris milah of the "other" flesh. The one that obsesses our eyes, then our hearts, and then causes us to prostitute (zonim) ourselves.

Perhaps if impure images of our eyes reach into a CIRCUMSIZED heart, those images can be processed and purified at that stage. Yet if we fail in circum sizing our rock-hard hearts into a holy organ of flesh-and-blood, then the images might escape and move on to another (circumsized) organ.

I'm still processing this raw thought as I hear it from you, but I can see there's a lot there. Maybe the term "love replacing lust" is really more like "by your blood shall "I" save you." Save us, l'avdecha b'emes.

Worth more thought. Thanks for this latest diamond, Guard.

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Re: La-Briut and Beyond!

Posted by the.guard - 09 May 2010 19:32

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I have seen it's beauty.

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Re: La-Briut and Beyond!

Posted by briut - 10 May 2010 01:40

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[Briut wrote on 09 May 2010 16:03:](#)

The Navi (is it Zecharia? Nechemia? Not so bucky, sorry) says, And "I" will circumsize your heart of stone into a heart of flesh. [...] how to peel away the stone-like shell covering that's inhibiting my heart.

[...] I'm still processing this raw thought as I hear it from you, but I can see there's a lot there.

Well, I've continued "processing" this thought [see below a couple of posts]. It sounds beautiful. Except I think it's built on a false premise. I had THOUGHT the possuk spoke about "I will circumcise your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh." But the only similar possuk I've found so far talks about TAKING your heart -- Yechezkel 36:26 says, "I will take (ha'siroshi, as in hosser, a lack) the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh."

So this possuk speaks of the heart of stone into flesh, but no milah. Chumash speaks of heart and milah, but no stone (Dvarim 30:6). So if there's a place that puts heart, stone, flesh, and milah into one possuk, I HAVEN'T FOUND IT.

I had really thought it was there. Anyone able to help me out here (one way OR the other) before I move on? (Life's too short to change your life based on a false Torah premise....)

Thanks, everyone. Lemme know if there is such a possuk, after all.

PS: As much as I wanna take a break and just 'fall' for a while, so far it's not in the schedule. Tonight starts yesod sheb'yesod, so acting out is simply not attractive. Tomorrow night I might be at some risk, but by Tuesday morning I'll be scared that Tuesday's client \$\$ might be related to my success in this area so I'll stay clean. Tuesday night is the night before mikveh night so I'll try to stay clean in preparation. Once we're back together, the scene is more manageable. So I guess I just can't see a time for falling. But I gotta confess -- it's not that I don't want to, though, it's just that I can't find the time. Ending Day 63.

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Re: La-Briut and Beyond!

Posted by Chazak Amenu - 10 May 2010 02:37

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wow i am really mad! i wrote a whole long message and it did no let me post! wow... maybe i will try again soon but after all that hard work i am really mad! hope you are doing well Briut.

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Re: La-Briut and Beyond!

Posted by silentbattle - 10 May 2010 03:24

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Sorry to hear that, Reb Chazak!

Briut - I'm curious - do you really think that acting out will help you, or do you think that deep down, it's the yetzer hora just trying to trick you into giving up for a little while? To prevent you from growing even more than you already have?

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Re: La-Briut and Beyond!

Posted by briut - 10 May 2010 03:43

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[silentbattle wrote on 10 May 2010 03:24:](#)

do you really think that acting out will help you, or do you think that deep down, it's the yetzer hora just trying to trick you into giving up for a little while?

Thanks, SB, it's a fair question and I appreciate your jumping in.

I struggle with this, because I can be such a perfectionist and beat myself up at the first little sign of being imperfect, I mean lazy, er I mean NORMAL.

I'm going through a LOT of changes, and want to keep the pace SUSTAINABLE. If I go for 'perfection,' I might burn out and end up with NOTHING to show for it. Instead, I know myself that an occasional admission of IMperfection can help move things toward a PERFECT outcome.

So, the quick answer is, NO, I'm not planning to act out right now. But I'd rather allow myself a little break along the road than risk some compulsive addiction to saying "never." For me, THAT's where the YH sets his trap. One day at a time. Just moved into Day 64.... Thanks for keeping me on the ball, SB.

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Re: La-Briut and Beyond!  
Posted by Dov - 10 May 2010 04:20

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[Briut wrote on 10 May 2010 01:40:](#)

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First off, Mazal Tov for 63 days!

OK, so the Zh"K talks about the orla of the lev being associated with orla (of the milah) d'chafyah bris. It explains that Avraham Avinu had a totally different depth of awareness (Da'as) of Hashem's Will after the (minimal) orlah of his milah was removed *because* that removes his hearts cover, in turn. I think it's related to yesod being the main receiver from (and later the main mashpiyah on) Tiferes, which is the chitzoniyus of Da'as (Shabbos Shacharis). Does that help you any?

OK, whatever, but on a more practical level - though saying this might make some of the more delicate GYE-ers vomit - I guess that if I *could* get away with it, I'd still be acting out, too. I did not start recovery for Hashem's Honor, much as I recognize it's value... I got sober because my life was unmanageable with lust in it, period.

So, far from offering you remonstrations about using lust, my concern is whether our lives are manageable with it. If they are, then I do not know how any addict is expected to get sober and recover. Yetzer Hora, cheshboinos pro/con? What does that have to do with Lust - a gun to my head, a feather up my nose - however you choose to see it - it drives me crazy and always ruins everything! **I** need to be as free of it as possible.

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Re: La-Briut and Beyond!

Posted by strugglingyid - 10 May 2010 06:08

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Briut, keep hanging in there you are fighting the good fight!

I could make up a story about a man who was floating over a pit filled with stakes. When people asked him how he stays afloat, he answered that he does not try to stay afloat only he is trying to not land on the stakes. Falling is not an option for us. It is not an escape no matter how hard it is to stay afloat.

Perhaps this may help. It is okay if you fall but it is not okay to fall. The difference is sublime in that our attitude has to be that we are not going to fall, but if we do happen to fall we will not let it keep us down.

In case none of this means much well here is a smiley just in case :D

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Re: La-Briut and Beyond!

Posted by briut - 10 May 2010 14:23

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I think part of this issue is... when I feel like the battle is forever and with no option for falling, I start to think that the battle is all on my OWN shoulders. For that, I feel the need to take a break and regain strength using any means necessary.

But when I feel like the battle is for today (just, now) and I'm able to fall whenever I feel the urge, that helps me put it all into Hashem's hands and I don't exhaust myself with effort. Maybe, sorta, like: I can't do this; You can; if You're not here I'm gonna act out RIGHT NOW so stick with me here....

Something like that. Make sense?

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Re: La-Briut and Beyond!

Posted by silentbattle - 10 May 2010 14:34

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First of all, I feel like on some level at least, i do understand your feeling. Especially as a single guy, with everything I "gave up," I have a feeling like I don't know when I'll ever have a kosher outlet. It might be months, years...I mean, if I knew I had to wait 5 years, could I wait that long? That's a lot of pressure!

But I don't see it as "I'm going to stay clean for today, but I can fall whenever I want." I remind myself that all those arguments about pressure are just the yetzer hora talking. The only thing I have to worry about is today. Tomorrow? Not my problem right now. I'll deal with it when it comes.

That can be hard to do sometimes, but I think it's absolutely necessary.

As far as admitting your imperfection, I think it might pay to admit it to yourself without acting out...which is the whole point, anyway, isn't it? To admit your imperfection by failing isn't much growth, The key, for all of us, is to admit it even when we're succeeding. We can grow to our full potential, knowing all the while that we're not perfect - but we're going to do our best anyway!

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