

At the start of a journey

Posted by hoping4change - 07 Apr 2010 19:39

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I was able to "break free" during the Hag - thank G-d. I also installed a filter, and made the messages of chizuk my homepage and am forcing myself to read ten before going on to check email, or what else I planned to do online. It has helped very much.

Five days and counting ...

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Re: At the start of a journey

Posted by briut - 08 Jun 2010 16:29

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I can't recommend highly enough... laughter. Twice a day, or more. (read Norman Cousins on curing yourself; know that his daughter is now a famous frum author!)

Laugh at comedy. Laugh at books. Laugh at ourselves. Whatever. Just get the endorphins flowing. Helps everything. At least for me.

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Re: At the start of a journey

Posted by hoping4change - 10 Jun 2010 18:38

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*The Path of the Just* is a well known book, and the following few posts I plan to make may of be little interest to those people who have studied it, but I'd like to contribute some thoughts as I go through it and hope it is not too bothersome for those who know the book well.

The book takes as its basic structure the teaching from **Rabbi Pinchas ben Zair** (Avodah Zarah 20b)

"From here Rabbis Pinchas ben Zair said: Torah brings one to vigilance, vigilance brings one to alacrity, alacrity brings one to cleanliness, cleanliness brings one to abstinence, abstinence

brings one to purity, purity brings one to piety, piety brings one to humility, humility brings one to fear of sin, fear of sin brings one to holiness, holiness brings one to divine inspiration, divine inspiration brings one to the resurrection of the dead."

but each quality in that list forms a group of chapters where the Ramchal explains the basic idea of the trait, and those things which either enhance or undermine it.

The first two sections (each with 4 chapters) deal with **vigilance** and **alacrity** - he points out that vigilance generally constitutes a *turning from evil* and alacrity being involved with *doing good*, or more literally, running to perform a mitzvah.

So, that's quite a lot of bringing

As I go through the 90 day journey, it started out 100% of turning from sin, but now as I am approaching 70 days, I am finding that turning from sin requires less effort, B"H, and now I sense the luxury to run to the mitzvot, or at least consciously have that in the front of my mind more than normal.

I have no illusions that after 90 days I will be a new person, and that this is the first stage in a marathon lasting the rest of my life, but it has boosted my confidence, lowered my sense of depression over the sin, and allowed me to dig deeper down and find more energy for positive behaviors as well as turning away from evil.

Again, I hope this is not going over too familiar ground for most of you - but for me, even though I have read the book before, this time it seems to resonate much more, and I'm finding it more relevant than I did previously.

kol tuv,

h4c

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Re: At the start of a journey

Posted by allaloneontop - 10 Jun 2010 22:33

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h4c,

Thanks for the chizuk...I hope to pick it up tonight and learn b'zchus you and your battle my friend.

You words emanated from your heart right into mine...as I approach the completion of day 32...all I can think about is how awesome this feeling of relief is over me.

I can fight this battle.

I will fight this battle...but ultimately it will be HIM who assists me in winning the war.

Hatzlacha Rabba, my friend!

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Re: At the start of a journey  
Posted by hoping4change - 22 Jun 2010 14:34

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In today's portion of the *Tanya* reference is made to the Arizal's guidelines for the number of fasts for sins, specifically, the number of fasts for wasteful emission of seed is 84 for each instance. But the author also comments that Chazal have stated that after three instances of the same sin our souls have received the most tumah possible. The author writes that this would seem to imply that if someone wished to fast in order to help rectify the sin of m\* that  $84 \times 3 = 252$  fasts would be the amount for all previous sinning.

It would only make sense to commence these fasts once a person felt they had a good handle on their YH and could feel confident that repeating the sin was a very low probability.

I'm assuming these fasts would be a series of Bahav fasts with breaks in between, e.g., M-Th-M; week off; M-Th-M, week off, etc. 252 fasts might take as long as four years, but I have not seriously looked at a calendar to figure it out, and there would be of course be weeks when fasting were not possible, i.e. Yomim Tovim, weeks when a public fast occurred or the entire month of Nissan.

Has anyone ever done this?

What is the feeling from some of the more experienced members of GYE about the idea of fasting?

I still have a ways to go before I'd even consider something like this - but say, after being clean for a year, I might.

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Re: At the start of a journey  
Posted by teenagehelp - 22 Jun 2010 16:07

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correct me if i'm wrong, but i know at least the Lubavitcher Rebbe if not the Alter Rebbe supported giving extra to tzedakah instead of fasting. as for details, i'm not sure how one can replace another but i remember learning that tzedakah is also very important when trying to correct the past. but at the same time, if you feel strong enough for fasting (it seems like in the future...), then as long as you're safe...

Hatzlocha!

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Re: At the start of a journey

Posted by hoping4change - 23 Jun 2010 13:36

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[Shlomo wrote on 22 Jun 2010 16:07:](#)

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Hatzlocha!

You are correct, in fact, in today's portion this is exactly what is taught: that doing many fasts is not recommended for most people, and tzedakah is the suggested substitute (18 coins for each fast, which I guess would translate to \$18/per).

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Re: At the start of a journey  
Posted by teenagehelp - 23 Jun 2010 20:24

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it seems like a lot of people might prefer fasting 8)

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Re: At the start of a journey  
Posted by hoping4change - 24 Jun 2010 14:59

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In today's portion of the Tanya, the author does suggest that it is good for a Jew to complete the series of fasts once in his lifetime. It is something to do over a long period of time, but is meritorius.

Also, in reading Rabbi Arush's book he talks of breaking the power of lust being the most important thing a husband (or for any Jew married or not) can do in order to improve his relationship with his wife and Hashem.

He suggests going to the mikva everyday, or at least once a week, never looking at inappropriate images, or women in your surroundings, and not even looking at your wife lustfully. He quotes from Genesis saying that the wife should desire her husband (not the other way around) and this desire is kindled by the husband not lusting after his wife - which repels her - but by his breaking the power of his lust in general, and specifically towards his wife.

I imagine fasting helps in this regard as well.

Also, fasting or tzedakah is a way to make the price for falling so high in physical or financial terms that I will think twice before casually allowing myself to succumb to the YH.

In a little over a week I'll be at 90 days. The first landmark on a journey that will be for the rest of my life. But for now, I am only concerned with today - and today I'm feeling good. Baruch Hashem.

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Re: At the start of a journey  
Posted by hoping4change - 02 Jul 2010 13:55

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Not that I consider this a huge accomplishment, just a milestone that was picked by the GYE team as something to aim for to begin, hopefully, a new direction.

The Rabbi Arush book is fantastic and has been a big help. I don't think I've ever looked at

things in the way he suggests, although after reading little over half the book, what he's saying makes perfect sense - it's just not so easy to do and requires an eradication of selfishness. That is something that is certainly possible to accomplish, but it's a slow process, for me, requiring daily reminding and striving to implement Rabbi Arush's way of life - which is just the Torah way of life.

A few posts back I indicated that I was going to be posting about Path of the Just, but when I got to the chapter on Cleanliness, I knew that level was well beyond my current reality and put the book down to come back to it at a later time when I've made more progress.

For now, Rabbi Arush's book, the Chofetz Chaim and regular Torah study are what I'm finding the most beneficial for me at the level I'm at right now.

I am very grateful for finding the GYE site - none of the positive things I'm experiencing would have happened without the information provided by GYE.

Shabbat Shalom.

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Re: At the start of a journey  
Posted by Ineedhelp!! - 02 Jul 2010 15:35

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Wow amazing H4C!!!

Mazal Tov! I would tell you to throw a party but we are now in a period of mourning the Beis Hamikdash. Do something special on Shabbos and keep it up!

Have a great Shabbos!

-Yiddle





bardichev

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