

Control

Posted by battleworn - 29 Dec 2009 14:34

The Gemoroh says in B"K ???? ?? ???? a person is ratzon. Hashem -who controls absolutely everything, gave us one thing: RATZON, that and nothing else. The more ratzon you have [for ex: to stay clean for 90 days] the more you are living. But if you think that YOU have the ability to control the y"h, then you're in trouble. Letting go doesn't mean c"v to cool off your ratzon. Rather it means to rely totally on Hashem that HE will give you hatzlochoh!

The result of that is -like the Chovos Halvovos says, ????? ?? ???? -total calmness. The y'h and especially the addiction thrives on stress. But once you have bitachon he's a goner, because not only does the stress disappear but you actually automatically get the siyata dishmaya that you need.

If you were to hear about a person that wants to run the world (yes, I mean exactly what I said, he simply wants Hashem to step aside and let him run the world instead) what would you say? Maybe you would say that he's so far-gone that there's no way to describe it? [The truth is, that it's so utterly ridiculous that you might not even know what to say.]

Well, a person is an olam koton and just as complicated. If you want to control your own life then you are being no different, than the hypothetical fellow that wants to run the world. Think about that. Then think about it some more.

It's very important to realize that "Im ein ani li mi li" does not contradict this at all. Im ein... is referring only to "Ratzon" (will/desire) and to "hishtadlus" (effort)- inasmuch as hishtadlus is the manifestation of ratzon and it solidifies and defines ratzon.

[This is a great and deep yesod and is not really for crushing in to a few sentences. But because it's so crucial I have to do what I could. In Shir Hashirim it says "Im to'iru vi'im te'oriru es ha'ahava ad she'techputz" Tzadikim explain that "she'techputz" can also mean "that you make for it an object, meaning a vessel to hold it. Any "awakening" that we have in our relationship with Hashem, must be "clothed" in something concrete.

For example Pesach is coming. On Pesach and especially by the Seder we can experience a tremendous awakening. But C'V if we don't do something with it, then not only will we lose it but we also will feel "let down" afterwards. We can make a "Cheifetz" either by making a kaboloh or by learning Torah on the Yom Tov and after it. (R' Tvi Meir always says in the name of the Ramban and also the Kedushas levi that the posuk "Kol chafotzecha lo yishvu bo" -which is referring to Torah, means even "Cheftzei shomayim". In other words the best way to make a "vessel" is by learning Torah, nothing else can compare to it.)]

Getting back to the point, every ratzon (at least in ruchnius) must be manifested in hishtadlus which is the cheifetz-the vessel for ratzon, otherwise it's not the real thing. (The Zohar says that no ratzon is lost, but that doesn't mean it has the power of real ratzon. Real rotzon -which is real powerful, is only that which is backed by action.) **That, is what Im ein ani li mi li means. Not -Chas Ve'shalom, that I can actually have any control at all on my life. Control belongs only to Hashem.**

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Re: Control

Posted by Dov - 29 Dec 2009 23:46

Shalom again, R' Battleworn! Been wondering when you'd be back and hope all is well with you and your family.

By "control", in the last sentences, I presume you specifically mean "control over *outcomes*". Is that what you are referring to?

BTW, it's uncanny how what you write here parallels AA on the third step (AA, bottom of page 60 to middle of page 63, if you are interested).

All the best,

Dov

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Re: Control

Posted by battleworn - 30 Dec 2009 15:13

Hi Reb Dov, thank you for your warm welcome! I do mean control over outcome even in your hishtadlus in ruchnius.

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Re: Control

Posted by Dov - 30 Dec 2009 17:56

Kapeesh, Habibi! Eguamente', Si!

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Re: Control

Posted by Ykv_schwartz - 31 Dec 2009 08:26

Battleworn,

This is Amazing! I walk away from the forum for a few days only to come back and see that Guard has renovated once again. What a beautiful addition he made. A big mazel tov to you on your new home. I am really looking forward. I am sure you have shovavim shiurim you will share with us in the coming weeks.

Now I want to add to the beautiful yesod you began with. Firstly, I would like to explain that for me this yesod was the most basic necessary yesod that I needed for recovery. We need to realize what my role is and what Hashem's role is and then take the responsibility to activate our role.

I have a lot to say about this topic, but for now I hope you do not mind if I add a few important maareh mekomos.

Chovos Halevovos

Perhaps, the most important source for this idea, in terms of rishonim, can be found in **chovos halevovos**, shaar bitachon, perek 4, chelek 4, where he discusses what is the role of bitachon in mitzvos/aveiros and general ruchniyus. He explains very clearly that the results in these areas is from hashem, and we must have bitachon that whatever resulted in HIS realm. Learning how to make decisions and acting on our ratzon is in our ballpark.

However, to have bitachon in the ratzon and the right to choose is FOOLISH. I like to call this the "**magic carpet syndrome**". What this means is that some people mistakenly think(as I once did) that with enough inspiration, they will just begin to fly. But in truth they have to take the inspiration and then make a conscious decision to change and put that into actions. Battleworn, you quoted avos, "Im Ein ani Li mi Li". The **Rabeinu Yona** (end of shaar 2, I forgot if he also mentions this in his perush on avos, I have no seforim with me now) explains very clearly the pshat in the mishna is the yesod of not relying of external inspiration, even if it is from the worlds greatest darshan. At the end of the day we have to do something about it and it won't happen automatically.

I highly recommend the olam to read the above mentioned chovos halevos, as it really clarifies what our role in avodas hashem and growth is. I see lots of confusion on the forum about this topic, and I feel if not properly understood, internalized and implemented, a person can make terrible mistakes (as I have done for 15+ years) regarding recovery. When I am around my seforim, I will translate it.

Rabeinu Yona

The other important maareh makom from the rishonim is the **rabeinu yona** in shaarei avodah towards the end. I made reference to that Rabeinu Yona back in April where I discussed briefly the yesodos from Rav Chaim Shmulevitz. Here is the Post([click here for the original](#)):

Rav Chaim Shmulevitz

"...Yes, indeed, he mentions this idea a few times throughout his sichos. It can be found in 1971, sicha 21; 1972, sicha 13 and 1972,sicha 28. Each time he focuses on a a slightly different angle. However, the idea is not quite the way you quoted in terms of ratzon. Ratzon alone is not enough. His main focus is in terms of actions. However, the truth is, that is just technicalities. A person who wants, tries. A person who does not try, does not really want, he only wants to want[b]Rav Noach Weinberg zt"l[/b] used to comment that he knows he could do MORE for the Jews. The only reason why he is not doing enough, is because he does not want enough. He said about himself, kdargarso, that he only wants to want. He would then turn to

Hashem and say "at least I want to want. So at least answer my prayer and help me want"]. The **Rabeinu Yona** (towards the end of shaarei avodah) writes that the yesod of bechira is the ratzon, but then adds that a person who really wants, tries. So, I guess the two are tied together. But to be fair, R' Chaim Shmuelevitz z"tl's emphasis was on trying and defining the a gibor and what it means to be zariz.

R' Chaim Shmuelevitz z"tl explains how a person is expected to put all his efforts into everything in life. A true Gibor is someone who utilizes all his strength. This is what he emphasizes in the first sicha I mentioned. However, in the second sicha he elaborates on the idea of success. He points out how success in life, both in gashmiyus and ruchniys does not come from man but from Hashem. Hashem wants us to try, but the results come from Him. In the last sicha I mentioned he focuses how this is true for a kovesh B'yitzro. When Chazal say that a strong person is someone who conquers his nature, it means that a person fought with all his might. True, the results are from Hashem , but the efforts are from man.

In all three sichos he draws upon the medresh from Moshe Rabeinu who was called a gibor for putting up the mishkan (based on the Rosh in nedarim, 38a). Even though it was done by a nes, but since Moshe Rabeinu tried with all his might, Hashem gave him success and it was called by his name, as me explained. And on top of that he is considered a Gibor for trying.

I have what to add to this wonderful principle. Perhaps another time.

Rav Yitzchal Isaac Sher writes towards the end of his ?????? ?????? to cheshbon hanefesh: "This is known to everyone, that help from Hashem is in proportion to his efforts to purify himself" [a bit out of context]"

Practical Implementation From my Recovery Process

The Yesod of control has been a primary focus for my recovery. I have mentioned this on the forums a few times. Below is a post that I wrote after 8 weeks(March 26, 2009) of recovery explaining how I have been implementing and growing in this area. I plan to write an article giving the reader practical advice, based on my own experience, on how to properly take control of ones life and most importantly, learn how to make decisions. It will be called, "Learning How To Make Decisions". I have the format ion my head, but never committed it to writing yet.

For now, please read my post after 8 weeks of recovery([Click Here for the original](#)).

"beginning the 8th week.

B"H, all is well. I continue to work on myself in all areas. My main general avodah has been focusing on appreciating Hashem in all my life.

My midos refinement has been focused on self-control and desires (how appropriate). B"H, I have had no urges to act out, but I focus on why I have had lack of control in the past. And I look into my life on a day to day basis and realized that in a very subtle way, I do not have total control. Control over my eyes was a process, but at this point I stopped looking at any woman. And I realized with a bit of determination a person can really have control (just ask Hashem for help and then do hishtadlus). I do not consider it a difficult task at all. From the start of my journey I have been focus on controlling my mind. This means that when a bad thought would enter, a person should not let it linger. He needs to dispell it right away. And B"H, my only "unclean" thoughts were only in reference to my own wife. Those are not "unclean" thoughts I did not consider an issue. But now I realized that all sexual thoughts are not healthy and are all stemming from man's lusting physicality. And indeed I began controlling my mind in this area as well. And it has changed my life and my marriage. This was something I could never do in the past. Self control of the mind has become relevant to me in other areas like anger and frustration. In the past, when someone would do something that would get me angry, my anger would only build up. I have now realized that I can control my thoughts. After the thought enters, just dispel it. "

Practical Implementation In My Current Avodah

In the last post I had mentioned the idea of control over the mind, where we learn how to take control on our emotions and reactions. This, as I mentioned, has been a new yesod to me, and I was inspired from the **cheshbon hanefesh**, where he discusses our avodah in sexuality (last chapter in the sefer) and the gemara in **shabbos 105b**.

One of the most difficult things for me in this area, was a situation where my wife would cancel an onah night. What is more difficult is when it then get s pushed off one more night only to be canceled again until finally a whole week has gone by. My frustration and inner turmoil was so intense. I would become cold to wife and angry. And B"H, step by step I have been taking practical steps to work on this and I have seen major progress in myself. Recently, this cycle has set into motion. For various reasons, we were not able to be together. My wife took notice to my calm reactions and commented appropraitely. The trick is learning how to localize the problem and NOT globalize it.

Ending Comments

We need to constantly believe in change and learn how to believe in ourselves and not just focus believing in Hashem. We have to know what *our* role is and what *HIS* role is. And by constantly clarifying for ourselves all the roles, we can appropriately put our efforts in OUR roles. We then have to learn the tricks of the trade to activate our role. I included examples from my own avodah where I believed in change in myself and activated it, all while believing the results of my efforts are in the hand of Hashem.

I hope this was helpful to someone.

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Re: Control

Posted by 7yipol - 31 Dec 2009 11:44

My new private BM

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Re: Control

Posted by battleworn - 31 Dec 2009 12:02

My Rebbe Reb Yaakov, thank you so much for your help!

The point of this board is not for my thoughts, but rather for all those who want to work together on the Torah approach/Teshuva. You are way ahead of me, both in knowledge and in action, so I think you can add a lot more than I can. [And your first post proves this very clearly.]

By the kumzitz, I saw that many people are looking for clarity and I am hopeful that on this board we can attain a large degree of clarity. I hope that many many others join us and together

we can light the way out of the darkness.

I recall that R' Tzadok in Tzidkas Hatzadik spells out very clearly that bechira is only in ratzon (and it's a davar poshut that that includes hishtadlus/action) but I don't know where it is.

I also want to invite anyone who has any questions, to post them on this board. Anyone can start a thread or post a comment or question on any thread.

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Re: Control re-Gaining it

Posted by shemirateinayim - 17 Feb 2010 23:17

I learnt the following pshat in a a gemara in -mybe it was sukkah-. I posted it on the forum, and was looking to hear what people thought of it. Feel free to shlug it up using sevara.

Mybe this may help you: The gemara in ?kedushin? brings pesukim that call the Yetzer hara, firstly a heilach, oreish, and subsiquently an lsh. The context of those pesukim are repesenting the YH as a foreigner who happens by your home, your turf, and then he gets comfortable and become your guest, whom you readily serve. And before you have finnished serving him, he is the 'Man' of the house.

So how does one use this peice of information? My chavrusah gave me a look for saying it, but being a bachur, I think it may be true! If you knew of a woman who needed a get, and it was highly advisable for her to get one, lets say. How would you advise her to get her stubborn and controlling husband to free her? Simple, make shalom bayis issues! In that he is presently the "man of the house", she must batttle him on that level. She must denounce his rule and conroll over her finances, nedarim, and chores. And then when he is merely a guest in his own home, she can now refuse to serve him, in theose areas that a guest deserves. And when he is subsiquently not welcome in "her" home, she must reduce him to a wanderer with no connection to her abode. This is how we must treat our yetzer hara. We must battle him within this spectrum of his shlita over us. For those who are dealing with intimate and interpersonal aspects of the addiction, wrok on reducing it to the next level, the occasional guest, but minus the intimacy. And for those who's P___ veiwing is an occasional guest in their home of kedusha, they must reduce it to an unwelcome intruder (k9 even fits in the mashal as a "beware of dog

sign...pun intended). And for those of us to whom the Yetzer Hara ihas no welcome in our homes, and is a total foreigner, we must be carefull to keep him like that. And not to Chas Veshalom buy our children an itouch or iphone, PSP, Blackberry, Laptop, or any other Wifi connected device!

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Re: Control

Posted by Ykv_schwartz - 18 Feb 2010 10:29

[sHeMiRaTelNaylm wrote on 17 Feb 2010 23:17:](#)

Mybe this may help you: The gemara in ?kedushin? brings pesukim that call the Yetzer hara, firstly a heilach, oreish, and subsiquently an lsh. The context of those pesukim are repesenting the YH as a foreigner who happens by your home, your turf, and then he gets comfortable and become your guest, whom you readily serve. And before you have finnished serving him, he is the 'Man' of the house.

Thank you very much for bringing this precious gemara. It is a gemara in succa 51b, which is the sugya dealing with yetzer hara. I had mentioned this on my succa thead, [click this link to see it](#), section #12. See also section #11 and section #13. This was a project that I never fully finished. But B"H, I was able to at least lay out the entire sugya in a very clear fashion so that anyone can understand it, if one so chooses.

I liked what you said about how to regain that control. Basically, what you are pointing out is that we can slowly reverse the process of control. So instead of continuing to allow the y"h to gradually take control, we take the same steps he did, but only backwards, and gradually take control of the y"h. In order to do this, we have to BELIEVE it can be done. In my own process of recovery, I can relate to what you said, and I actually consciously did precisely what you described. I knew my life was totally out of control and began choosing parts that control was still in reach. The more I grew and began taking control, the more I was able to grow and take control of parts of my life that I thought I would NEVER have control. I mentioned this briefly in my post above. But the yesod is exactly what you are referring to.

The other important yesod to realize is that the yetzer hara for the most part is controlling more

psychologically than physiologically. What this means is that he blinds us into thinking we have no control over our body, while in fact we have complete control. His manipulative ways prevents us from exercising our rights as human beings. Part of recovery is learning to expose the tricks of the yetzer hara and realizing that just because we have impulses, does not mean we have to act on our impulses. We have to realize that nothing harmful will happen to us if we do not give in to the temptations. This should be internalized constantly. The more we internalize this, the more protected we are from the yetzer hara's attacks. He can't actually harm us. He can't make us do things. He can only manipulate us and trick us the same way a con artist gets you to do things you would otherwise not have done. So, in short there is a lot of mind over matter. What I tell you here is something that I live by. These are some of the basic yesodos that I required for recovery. And I am over a year sober will close to no nisyonos.

Another important yesod to realize regarding control is that the more physical we are, the farther we are away from Hashem. One of the reasons the yetzer hara is able to take control over us despite the fact that we know what is right is because our inspiration from Hashem is weakened due to the barriers we place between us and Hashem. The more it is weakened the harder it will be to overcome the yetzer hara. We need that inspiration from Hashem to overcome the yetzer hara. This is known as the orlah of the heart. This orlah blocks us from Hashem and drives us more and more to physicality. The ONLY way to remove this is ultimately from Hashem. Rabeinu Yonah towards the end of shaarei avodah explains, based on the pesukim, how this idea works. So we need to constantly daven and daven to Hashem to remove this orlah. We need to put in our actions as I described above and make a decision to take actions, but the result of the removal of this orlah will come from Hashem. The Rambam makes this principle very clear in hilchos teshuvah, perek 6, where he explains that once the yetzer begins taking hold of you and controlling you, the ultimate victory is from davening to Hashem. He explains how even Dovid Hamelech and all the great chassidim of klal Yisroel would always daven to Hashem because of this blockade. Because even the most minute amount of orlah can prevent us from fully performing Avodas Hashem.

Once again, thanks for bringing this discussion back to forefront.

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