

Rational Recovery (RR) and Torah

Posted by Tomim2B - 04 Jan 2010 23:50

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Re: Rational Recovery (RR) and Torah

Posted by battleworn - 06 Jan 2010 16:02

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[guardureyes wrote on 06 Jan 2010 15:12:](#)

[Rage ATM wrote on 06 Jan 2010 14:47:](#)

Answer: Shabbat. We make the emmunah concrete. Like the married man that makes his love concrete (and no longer has to sing i love you i love you i love you to his girlfriend (or i love jesus i love jesus i love jesus). Hence, mechalel shabbat befarhesya dinno kegoy. this is not a punishment (too draconian to be a punishment) but rather it is a definition of your commitment to god.

A nice vort, but try explaining that to an Arab...

Why would you want to explain it to an arab? It's not a nice vort, it's the essence of Torah. The Torah is about ACTION. Emunah WITH action. Christianity doesn't believe in action. That is

what sets us apart from them.

Normal Torah living in this free and fun day and age just does not demand that we really take Hashem seriously.

I agree with Dov 100% that -in this pathetic generation- you can be considered an upstanding frum Jew without taking Hashem seriously. But, lemaan Hashem, how can one call that Torah living? Do you think that's what Hashem meant when He said **???? ???? ?? ????? ?????? ???? ???? ?** Anyone can see that it says very clearly in the Torah that at the end of the galus we will finally realize that we need to return all the way to Hashem and we will do just that!

I assume that Dov just meant - what's accepted as Torah living. **We should be more clear on this, because this exact issue has been the source of a whole lot of trouble on the forum in the past.**

The bottom line is that we all agree that if an addict does not or can not ask Hashem regularly in his own words to save Him from lust and turn his heart to Hashem, then he's in big trouble. I think that the same is true for any Jew that is living in this world-that is addicted to znus, lust and superficiality. I also want to let you know that there are probably tens of thousands of Jews that do do it.

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Re: Rational Recovery (RR) and Torah  
Posted by the.guard - 06 Jan 2010 16:24

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I assume that Dov just meant - what's accepted as Torah living.

Yes, for sure that's what he meant, reb battle...

"what is in our hearts" and "how you love your lord" is cristian bullsh\*\*

Of course, only action can awaken the heart. And the whole AA is based on that. As they say "ours is a program of action". And they say, "We can't **think** ourselves into a new way of living, we can only **act** ourselves into a new way of **thinking**". It seems that they *chapped* this emes that the Torah gave us 3000 years ago. They finally realized that without "action", you can't have real INNER change. But at the end of the day, it's the inner change that **really** counts, as it says "and you shall love your Lord with all your heart and all your soul".

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Re: Rational Recovery (RR) and Torah  
Posted by battleworn - 06 Jan 2010 16:34

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Rabeinu, it's not nessecarily the same action. To us action means Torah and Mitzvohs (like Shabbos). The action that they are referring to is not that at all. They are talking about acting the steps even if you don't understand them. It's more an issue of trust than of action. To a yid Emunah means responsibility to dvar Hashem. To them it doesn't.

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Re: Rational Recovery (RR) and Torah  
Posted by Tomim2B - 06 Jan 2010 16:41

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From the sound of this, it seems Battleworn is also pointing at AA's distinction between spirituality and religiosity.

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Re: Rational Recovery (RR) and Torah  
Posted by the.guard - 06 Jan 2010 16:46

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I don't know exactly what "action" they mean, as I have never been in a 12-Step group, but if I understand Dov correctly, it means "living for Hashem" and being Useful to Him and living for others... (maybe I'm wrong).

**In a discussion on dating and "whether those with attractive wives have it any easier with their addiction" (see [this thread](#)), Dov posted a beautiful reply that can really open our eyes to what recovery is supposed to be all about. Dov writes:**

I feel that this entire discussion is nice in theory, but the missing "context" is very loud in its absence.

Please bear with me on this...

A Rebbe of mine, who was a great gadol b'yisrael (and my mesader kiddushin) told us in a shmuz that being in Yeshiva is all about self-development, improving your learning ability and your knowledge, your quality of kiyum hamitzvos, learning how to be a real y'rei Shomayim, and doing Teshuva.

In other words, it's basically a self-centered endeavor. Right? He didn't say it's bad, mind you, just that it is self-centered, because it has to be.

Even working on your anivus is basically a self-centered activity (all Novardok jokes aside)... but what else are we to do? The job needs to get done somehow! "im ein ani li mi li"!

Now it seems to me that for a normal person, the "system" should work just fine. But just about every addict that I have met is a "self-absorbed" person, and that is the root of their problem. Therefore, I think that the Yeshivishe system - which I would not replace for anything - has an inherent problem for addicts. It stokes the flames of self-absorption and self-centeredness tremendously, by telling us that these are wonderful things. Not being selfish, but being basically totally self-centered and self-absorbed.

So while the points being raised in this thread make for interesting moral, mental, and Torah hashkofa exercises, the elephant in the room is: When will you turn from being all wrapped up in what you need and want, and open yourself up to making your main focus in all your avodah to become the man that ***your future wife will need and want?***

All the great gems that the folks here have dropped for us will likely remain useless tools, as long as they are all about "finally" satisfying ourselves. Your context is far more important than your facts or knowledge. And context is real hard to measure. Only Hashem, and you - in your own heart - can tell. It's what the Shulchan Aruch is referring to when it says "kol ma'asecha yihi'yu l'Shem Shomayim". And that mainly means not l'shem us. Simple.

And it's what addicts call the Third Step.

("We made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him").

Once we get that right, what concerns us will change to matters that ***really*** have a solution.

Hatzlocha

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Re: Rational Recovery (RR) and Torah  
Posted by the.guard - 06 Jan 2010 16:51

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A wealthy and learned Chasid came to the Bal Hatanya complaining that his business was going bad and he was losing all of his money fast. He told the Rebbe that if Hashem wills him to be poor, he accepts it with love, but he can't bear the pain of all the people he owes money to. Many poor people, orphans and widows had entrusted him with their money, and he can't even pay them back! The Rebbe was leaning on his arms listening, and finally said "you seem to be worried about what you need, but you haven't perhaps considered what ***you are needed for?***" The Chassid fell into a dead faint. When they revived him, he left the Rebbe's office and went straight to the Beis Medrash where he sat for days on end, completely ignoring this world and any past worries of his... Finally the Rebbe called him and told him that Hashem wants us to

serve him through this world, not by ignoring this world, and the Rebbe blessed him and sent him home. From that point on, he saw much success and recovered all his fortune...

What I found beautiful about this story is that although it is true that this Yid had very valid reasons to be worried and feel tremendous pain - and we would even go as far as to assume that it was his "Yetzer Tov" who was making him worry (after all, he was feeling the pain of others, to whom he owed money) - still, the Rebbe's reply to him was not to focus on what HE NEEDED, even for the good (i.e. yetzer hara, struggle, reward, nachas ruach, etc...) and instead focus on what he is needed for, i.e. being useful to HASHEM. And when a Jew succeeds to make this paradigm shift in his thinking, he ends up seeing success anyway

It's a subtle but MAJOR distinction. This is that "nekudah" that is spoken about in Chassidic Sefarim... the difference between Chametz and Matza, between Lishma and Shelo lishma. (But as Dov will surely tell you, the only things that matters to him is that it's the ultimate difference ... sometimes, that's what it takes to get us where we need. Dov says he was "thrown at Hashem"... And he once wrote that he was dragged into honesty "kicking and screaming" ... but now that he's there, we're all eating the fruits of it :D).

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Re: Rational Recovery (RR) and Torah  
Posted by battleworn - 06 Jan 2010 17:28

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I actually saw that post from Dov and I have no idea what he means. The question that was being discussed was, "Is this something that can help me remain sober?" It was a pretty pathetic question and everyone knows that the answer is NO.

But if hypothetically the answer would have been yes, then I'm 100% sure that Dov would agree that it's an important issue to take in to account.

between sobriety and insanity, life and death  
I happened to have seen that Dov himself had posted exactly that, on an earlier occasion. The issue was about posting on the Women's section and Dov wrote that watching his sobriety comes even before helping other people. It seems to me that Dov didn't really see the whole discussion.

It's plainly obvious that the Yeshiva system is largely self-centered, but I strongly disagree that this is o'k for regular people. It may be o'k for teenagers who are naturally super self centered, but then we are expected to grow up!

And every sane person agrees that when you are looking for a spouse, you have to look for someone that you can grow with. Of course it's a two way street and if she's can be good for you then you can be good for her.

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Re: Rational Recovery (RR) and Torah  
Posted by the.guard - 06 Jan 2010 17:39

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I brought this post from Dov - less in relation to the issue of a "spouse" and more in relation to the AA attitude of "action" which translates into "being useful to others" - "others including, of course, Hashem. Getting out of the "me" focus... And even "**me** giving Nachas Ruach to Hashem" can sometimes be "me" centered. The focus of an addict needs to be only on doing Hashem's will for me today, and being useful to Him.

Like one Gabai carries his Rebbe's bag because he feels great about how he is able to do something for this great man - this makes HIM great too! But the humbler and greater Gabai simply worries to be useful to his Rebbe. He is completely not in the picture. This is very subtle... But makes a huge difference in our avodah. That's why I love Dov so much. I've never seen this in real life so clearly before. And he only got this because for him it was life and death. And it seems that when it's life and death, even a goy can get this yesod (although for them I believe it's more like "enlightened self-interest", while for a yid I believe it's more close to real "lishma")... Anyway, Halevai we should internalize it without having to fall first so hard.

All the talk of doing "great things" for Hashem and Bringing Moshiach and lighting up the darkness and giving Hashem great Nachas Ruach is very nice, but how is one to know if his kavana is doing this because it makes him feel good about HIMSELF? In which case, as Bardichev wrote before so beautifully:

*If a person wants to do it alone because of his EGO, that person is still toast!!*

*Why?*

*Because today Mr. Anochi wants to be the "shayner yid" the "shoimer aynayim", but tomorrow Mr. Anochi has new more powerful desires, like the need for shmutz!*

I would not be mentioning all these things dear Reb Battle, if I didn't think you were holding there. Most people are not ready to hear these things yet.

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Re: Rational Recovery (RR) and Torah  
Posted by Dov - 06 Jan 2010 17:41

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[Rage ATM wrote on 06 Jan 2010 16:01:](#)

what? you need both the "i love yous" and the concrete action, i.e., the marriage...you need both to "believe in hashem" and show it through shabbat....dov, maybe aa can get you to the real "believe in hashem" portion or maybe not...i dont really know the answer to taht and im not saying its not necessary

and next time i quote a gemara or a mishna or a rishon and i get in return a late achron im gonna scream...

shabbat matters. "what is in our hearts" and "how you love your lord" is cristian bullsh\*\*

Rage, I agree with you on all counts here. I am not saying that all you need is "feeling", or "love".

Quite the contrary, I'm saying that the reason "what's in our hearts/loving your lord" is bull\*\*\* is that our actions are **the only thing** that *really* talks. And by "actions", I mean the *totality* of our actions. Hashem loves us in our imperfection as His avodim. But He sees our true priorities as they are, based on **all** that we choose to do and not do.



All I am saying about your post is that just because a married man is married, tells his wife "ILY" (and he *believes* it), and does lots of normal basic good husband behavior, he is still ***not proving a thing if he is also secretly sowing his "extra" wild oats on the side.***

Just ask the wife after she finds out the truth, and *she'll* tell you that, I guess.

It's why the first luchos *had* to be broken, even though we wanted to stay with Hashem.

As R' Yisrael Salanter (or a talmid of his) was quoted as saying (I closely paraphrase): "A person can be a tzaddik, onov, and chochom, and still be a rosho, ba'al gayvo, and shoiteh."

Are we on the same page here?

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Re: Rational Recovery (RR) and Torah

Posted by Dov - 06 Jan 2010 17:49

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[battleworn wrote on 06 Jan 2010 16:34:](#)

Rabeinu, it's not necessarily the same action. To us action means Torah and Mitzvoths (like Shabbos). The action that they are referring to is not that at all. They are talking about acting the steps even if you don't understand them. It's more an issue of trust than of action. To a yid Emunah means responsibility to dvar Hashem. To them it doesn't.

Actually, my roman catholic sponsor would be the *very* first person in line to remind me that if I do not do me best to keep the Torah K'halocha and try to grow and develop as a good yid, I will lose my sobriety.

And, since he understands sobriety as the condition for an addict's usefulness and survival, he'd suggest that I'd better be fully ready to *die* for Hashem, lest I die for lust.

He is straight-as-an-arrow AA, by the way.

Does that fit with the quote?

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Re: Rational Recovery (RR) and Torah  
Posted by battleworn - 06 Jan 2010 17:53

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That's great, Reb Dov!

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Re: Rational Recovery (RR) and Torah  
Posted by the.guard - 06 Jan 2010 17:55

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*Az nidbiru yirei Hashem, viyakshev Hashem Ve'yishma... vikasev besefer zikaron lifanav.*

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Re: Rational Recovery (RR) and Torah  
Posted by battleworn - 07 Jan 2010 11:41

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Reb Dov, let me tell you why I think it's great. If I understand you correctly, you are saying that according to your sponsor, responsibility to dvar Hashem is an integral part of the program. I assume that you agree with him. That is great!

Furthermore, I could assume that if you are committed to dvar Hashem, then you agree that improvement in Torah and Mitzvoths is an integral part of strengthening Emunah. That's also great! (I whole-heartedly agree that quality is the thing to stress, much more than quantity.[You can see that in all my posts.]

I may further assume that you agree that a self-centered Jew is **not** a Torah Jew, since he is definitely not being faithful to dvar Hashem. That's also great.

I can likewise assume that since self-control is an integral part of being responsible to dvar Hashem, you would agree that building up your self-control is crucial to succeeding. That's wonderful.

I might also assume that you would agree that being responsible to dvar Hashem includes everything in the Torah, including Ahava, Yirah, knowing how much Hashem loves us, staying away from temptation because He commanded us to, doing complete Teshuvah etc... That's also great!

*Lechoira*, you would also agree that a group, sponsor or therapist that is antagonistic towards religion or that tells every bachur that comes to him to act out twice a week or that says that our thirst for Hashem is coming from our need to control and we need to become more passive, is unrecommended. If you agree with that, I'm overjoyed.

By the same token, I can conclude that you are committed to the Torah's guidelines on how to be selfless (among other things). That's also great!

If we really agree on all these things, maybe we do have a common language after all. And that's super!

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Re: Rational Recovery (RR) and Torah  
Posted by battleworn - 07 Jan 2010 14:43

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Reb Dov, once we are agreeing on things, just maybe you would agree about a few more things.

Like: If Torah didn't work for someone, maybe it's because he needs the real thing and didn't have it [IE: His Torah and mitzvohs were a [i]guf[/i] without a *neshomoh*). It doesn't necessarily mean that Torah doesn't work for addicts.

Or: Instead of choosing to isolate the problem and consider it a disease, you might as well recognize the truth that the Torah tells us. Namely, that the whole Torah is our life and not about religion or being "good with Hashem." (In "Chok Liyisroel" todays Zohar is about this.)

Or to take that a bit further; to except the Torah truth that there is no such thing as my good vs. ratzon Hashem.

[Reb Tomim, would you like me to split the thread and get all this stuff out of your way?]

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