

emunas chachomim

Posted by lavi - 26 Nov 2014 11:19

post by dov

This is what you get for saying that a long post is worth it!

One related thought for Cordnoy:

You seem to be saying that some people here care about the quality of my sobriety or about me staying sober and that it may be demoralizing to some if I really screwed up badly after all these years (really not that many), or if they saw the holes in my sobriety, etc.

So I will just say that I expect not a single person to lose their sobriety if I threw in the towel today. And if I lost my sobriety today c"v, I would not hide it for a minute from GYE's forum. I'd rather have honesty than sobriety, anyway! For sobriety alone can still allow a person to descend and get sicker - until they lose it of course. But honesty and realness are always the key to getting better.

When my first sponsor (for 15 years) disappeared from meetings and stopped returning my calls, my sobriety took no 'hit' whatsoever. Sure, my growth was harder for a while till I found a new sponsor...but discouragement? No way. I never even thought, "How could it happen?!", so it never shook my faith in recovery. I had been through too much already and come too far - as so many here also have.

None of you really need anybody else on this forum. Sure, they help...but you'd all find someone else. Patton (a colossal jerk but great soldier) said everyone is expendable, especially himself. Ok, a little weird, but he had a point.

Another mentor of mine decided to leave SA recovery altogether (after about 15+ years sober) at the age of 75 and was fully honest with me about it. He was an important AA and SA member, a wise man, and I really looked up to him a lot. Calling him opening up about stuff that I was going through 'in the field' (sometimes daily) helped me a great deal in my early years in SA and we had grown to be recovery buddies. But he dropped sobriety about 8 years ago and decided to engage in behaviors that he previously considered very ill. It didn't shake anything for me or affect me in any bad way. I know he is free to do what he pleases...the great law of the universe (RMB" M writes Hashem/His Torah definitely allows us to sin, to be reshaim, etc. That's what bechira is - but there are consequences for denying the truth, that's all. People get confused when they say "You're not allowed to do that," for of course we are! That's why He says not to do it - for He allows us to and asks us to choose not to!).

In the same way, some here have had rabbis who sexually molested them, R"l. Sadly, they were very weak people and it destroyed their faith - who can blame them? But it really shouldn't shake ours to hear about it! Rabbis screw up, too! Why give them so much power to destroy our faith?? One such rabbi I knew very well, and worshipped him when I was 18-22 years old in yeshiva (brought him toast for breakfast, was his water-boy, etc). He never tried to mess around with me, bH and I had no clue about that chicanery. Since he was exposed by gedolim and others, I felt shaken, sure...but instead of losing my yiddishkeit (as some indeed did), I learned a very important thing: People are just people, they try the best they can.

Even my parents fit into this category! There were things I could not forgive them for, from my childhood...till I was asked by a therapist to consider that just maybe, they tried as best they could with the limited understanding and skill-set they possessed. When I considered that, it became obvious that they were the same as I am now! 99% of us people are trying the best we can - when we truly know better, we do better. Now I rarely blame, I mostly just pray for people who get on my nerves or look for an act of love by which I might actually help them grow instead of hate or belittle them. It is very rare that I ever beep at anyone for their screwy driving. Beeping and yelling will not teach them anything - it will just make them angrier, and will definitely make me angrier. My son and I smile at each other when someone honks and hollers at us for a driving mistake I make - we know they are just hurting themselves (and that I need to learn to drive a little better!). AA's told me that "raging at someone is like taking poison and expecting it to kill the guy you are angry at!" Real irony.

And finally (at some risk of controversy), I will share here that I am friends with Lubavitchers who nearly lost their faith in Torah and Chassidus when the Rebbe zt"l died. They felt absolutely certain that he was moshiach and that he would do whatever moshiach is really supposed to do and the world would finally be OK. When he was niftar, they freaked out. Like any faith crisis, it led the addicts among their ranks to act out even more.

I trust the tzaddikim and learn their Torah with complete trust that they have it more right than i could ever figure out. But people are...well, people. They make mistakes and can change their minds, die, grow, and fail. I do choose to guide my life by chachmei haTorah, emulate them as best i can, and hope i'd always be willing to even lay down my life for the chachomim and the tzaddikim of any dor - even ours - if (R"l) necessary. But living with people has taught me that sanity and basic maturity accept only Hashem as perfect.

Ultimately, that is humility. For the attractive fantasy of pretending there is true perfection in other people stems from pride. For it means that the club of which I am a member (the human race) can be 'gods'. For me, that's just a way to pretend I myself am indeed close to perfection.

And I do not believe any of this is at variance with R' Akiva's chiddush that "ess" is l'rabos talmidei chachomim, nor against Emunas Chachomim. If I am wrong, educate me please.

Whew...hope none of that stepped on anybody's toes!

Admin put these lines here cuz he likes 'em:

thank you dov, for your great post [as usual].

i think that this topic deserves it's own thread.

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Re: emunas chachomim

Posted by lavi - 26 Nov 2014 12:00

i can relate very much to what dov wrote.

and i think that it takes a big balancing act, to get it right [like everything good;)]

on one hand the gemara says in shabbos [112b?] that our view of the previous generations determines what we are, if they are malachim, we are men, if they are men we are donkeys.

and as well as our rebbe/leader,

see chagigah [15b?]" if he is compared to a malach Hashem....then seek torah from him.. if not, don't.

so we definitely do have some kind of way to look up to our teachers in a above human way.

on the other hand we see how Hashem hid the holocaust from the gedolim, so they weren't able to help us...maishiv chachomim o'choir [gittin..56b.]

and on "al ma ovda ha'aretz" nobody knew...

[for the chassisher breeder] in degel machaneh efraim, it says, don't ask your rebbe advice b'shas katnas hamoichin....

my take is that the truth IS what dov says. BUT being that we are human, we have to look at some like angels, in order for us to grow,

[just like we MUST dream of great things in order to get SOMEWHERE. because if we DON'T dream we WON'T get anywhere.

i heard this is the "roishoi magia hashomayimam"- our ambitions/hopes/dream are supposed to be sky high- although our actual battle plan -" sulam mutzav artza" down to earth - one step at a time -.]

and a human must look up to his rebbe/teacher as such, in order to be mekabal from him.

but it doesn't necessarily mean IDOL WORSHIP, where someone replaces Hashem with someone else, some say this was the chait ha'agel, the yidden wanted a go in between, but made too much out of it.

i have more to say...but outa time...

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Re: emunas chachomim

Posted by lavi - 28 Nov 2014 16:47

hmhhh. 22 views. no replies. no thank-you.

guess i better pick topics that interest people more....

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Re: emunas chachomim

Posted by cordnoy - 28 Nov 2014 19:51

Ya' know the sayin'?

Warning: Spoiler!

sells!

even on GYE!

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Re: emunas chachomim

Posted by dms1234 - 29 Nov 2014 00:51

Careful what you write. That triggered me.

Warning: Spoiler!

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Re: emunas chachomim

Posted by Shakeitoff - 04 Jan 2015 07:57

Just found your posting. I'm intimidated because I don't know enough to quote Gemara, or much else.

This evening, in a long bout of web-surfing, I found a story that disturbed me tremendously. It was about someone who claims to be the "hidden son", born in 1953 to a non-Jewish mother, of a Lubavitcher leader. I don't want to use the name, to avoid lashon hara. Maybe the story is true, although being on the Internet is certainly no guarantee. But I don't believe that's the point. I suggest that it doesn't matter. Either we want to be better in our own way, just like Reb Zushe, or we don't. We can't reasonably (I can't reasonably) try to be like someone else, even a gadol. I'm not them. They're not me.

There's a famous (?) old cartoon by Saul Steinberg, originally published in the New Yorker, that still speaks to me on your point. In the cartoon is a cube. Now, the cube is not geometrically correct. Its sides are a bit wavy. Its angles are a bit bent. This cube is dreaming. In the wavy bubble above it that indicates a dream is...a perfect cube. I guess this is a geometric solid aiming for perfection.

I don't believe I'll ever "not" be an addict. Maybe that's not the point either. Maybe the point is that if I keep working on my middos I'll be a better person, not a good person maybe but at least a better person...addict or not.

Thanks to you and all the other knowledgeable and kind people who post here.

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Re: emunas chachomim

Posted by serenity - 04 Jan 2015 08:26

Well this is a great post! Thank you for putting it up. I didn't see it originally, so thanks to Shakeitoff for bumping it up.

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Re: emunas chachomim

Posted by lavi - 05 Jan 2015 22:04

thank you fellas for acknowledging my posts....

as you can see from above i really despaired of anyone reading this thread again.

wise king shlomo said" cast thy bread upon the waters, and thou shall find it after many days".

whereas modern convention wisdom says "cast thy bread upon the waters, and you will have soggy bread".

part and parcel of a connected jew, is a link to someone greater.

we all should be zoicheh.

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