

A New Approach to the 90-Day Journey

Posted by BEHS - 29 Mar 2016 19:17

I'm a baseball fan and a numbers guy. And the numbers we discuss in baseball are typically percentage-based: Batting average, OBP, slugging percentage,... The numbers that represent actual occurrences are typically noted only when they are outliers. Hank Aaron's homeruns, Ricky Henderson's stolen bases, (don't tell the MLB that I'm mentioning this next one) Pete Rose's hits,... These are monumental feats that seem superhuman. In that second category would also be Joe DiMaggio's hitting streak, Orel Hershisier's scoreless innings streak, and Cal Ripken Jr's consecutive games played. These are superhuman feats that we never expected to happen and will probably never happen again. (See where I'm going with this yet...?)

I know I have trouble with lust. I'm a proverbial red-blooded male. It's been a problem with me for longer than it hasn't been. For me to have a significant streak would require superhuman strength which I don't have. But that doesn't mean I can't try to hit for average. I can't keep beating myself up over losing my streak when I don't have the *koach* in me to maintain it. That's up to Someone Else to give me that superhuman power. If He chooses to, I'll be tremendously grateful, but if not, I'll do what I can to get on base and bring in a few runs.

It's with this mindset that I'm changing my approach to the 90-day challenge. While I do hope to one day reach that tremendous milestone that currently seems so far out of reach, I have to begin by focusing on my batting average. And while I'll continue to track my streak, it's better for me to focus on percentages to keep upbeat about my progress.

I plan on updating this thread daily to track my ongoing "batting average" and welcome all to call me out if I begin skipping days. I may also reset the count every 90 days to test myself and see if I can hit better in subsequent periods and to give myself a target to beat.

As always, I welcome input from the *olam* as to whether this is a good idea that may need tweaking or if I should scrap it altogether.

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Re: A New Approach to the 90-Day Journey

Posted by BEHS - 01 Apr 2016 02:30

3/3 so far so good!!

I've been learning through *mesilas yesharim* according to the *luach yomi* in the back of the green Feldheim edition (starts on *Rosh Hashana* and goes through the *sefer* twice throughout the year) and we just finished the *hakdama* today. Just to keep a topic going for conversation in case anyone wants to chime in, I'll probably write a little thought based on the learning for the day along with my updated score going forward. There's only so much interesting conversation that can be had based on a fraction, even for my fellow number lovers out there.

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Re: A New Approach to the 90-Day Journey
Posted by markz - 01 Apr 2016 02:34

You learn it with a Nigun?

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Re: A New Approach to the 90-Day Journey
Posted by BEHS - 01 Apr 2016 02:44

I don't learn it with a nigun. Any suggestions?

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Re: A New Approach to the 90-Day Journey
Posted by markz - 01 Apr 2016 02:58

[BEHS wrote on 01 Apr 2016 02:44:](#)

I don't learn it with a nigun. Any suggestions?

Check [this](#) niggun suggestion out

Raise the volume and **Keep on Trucking**

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Re: A New Approach to the 90-Day Journey
Posted by BEHS - 01 Apr 2016 03:07

I primarily post from my phone so I can't access this right now, but *im yirtzah Hashem* I'll listen to it soon. Don't be shy to check back with me in case I forget.

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Re: A New Approach to the 90-Day Journey
Posted by BEHS - 03 Apr 2016 06:59

5/5 as of tonight, *Baruch Hashem*.

The last two nights we've started the first *perek* of *Mesillas Yesharim*, (*yesod hachasidus...*) and I was reading some of the notes that I have written on the side of the text. It seems to me like most people who learn *Mesillas Yesharim* or give a *shiur* on it tend to delve into the minutiae. What's the difference between *yesod* and *shoresh*? Why does the *Ramcha*"I use double-*leshonos* essentially throughout the entire *sefer*? And while it's more than worthwhile to be *me'dayaik* in his *leshonos*, I feel like that has to take a back seat to first just reading the words and understanding them simply.

I had a *chavrusa* once and I read the first sentence and continued on. He stopped me and said, "We just read the most famous line in all of *mussar* and we're not going to elaborate?" And my answer today would be yes. Understand what he's trying to tell you on a basic level. Once you've completely internalized the message that our only purpose in *olam hazeh* is to do *mitzvos* so that we can deserve *olam habah*, then you can go back and try to figure out what exactly is the difference between *mabato* and *magamato*. But if you just focus on the minutiae at the start, you lose the message completely. You're too focused on each individual word that you don't really notice what you're reading.

Perhaps that's why his introduction says that you shouldn't be finding *chiddushim* reading

through the *sefer* once. You can find *chiddushim* if you're looking for them, but the *Ramcha*"I explicitly states that we should learn it many times, and throughout those repetitions you can focus on the *diyukim*. But first start simply with understanding the concepts.

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Re: A New Approach to the 90-Day Journey
Posted by BEHS - 04 Apr 2016 05:09

6/6. So far batting 1.000

I don't want to make this about our porn/masturbation/sex addiction since it is indeed an addiction which many on GYE point out is different than a *yetzer hara*. For some (I imagine most) it started out that way, but now it's much more and requires a much different approach to handle.

That being said, today's portion of *Mesillas Yescharim* deals with the constant fight that we have in *olam hazeh* against the *yetzer hara*. Yesterday, the *Ramcha*"I explained that we are in *olam hazeh* to do *mitzvos* in order to cling to *HaShem* and be *zocheh* to *olam habah*. Today he discussed that while we are here, we must constantly fight the *yetzer hara* in order to transform ourselves into an "*adam hashaleim*" who can deserve to cling to *HaShem*.

(I find it somewhat interesting that he presents first the *asei tov* of doing *mitzvos* before he discusses the *sur meirah* of beating the *yetzer hara*. But based on what I wrote yesterday, I'd says that's more of a topic for discussion after having first read the *sefer* a number of times and understood the concepts on a basic level.)

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Re: A New Approach to the 90-Day Journey
Posted by abie - 04 Apr 2016 06:51

[BEHS wrote on 01 Apr 2016 02:30:](#)

There's only so much interesting conversation that can be had based on a fraction, even for my

fellow number lovers out there.

So far batting 1.000

I don't see any fractions..

(I don't think ".000" qualifies)

Keep it up!

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Re: A New Approach to the 90-Day Journey

Posted by BEHS - 05 Apr 2016 04:05

Only whole numbers
It may be able to be simplified, but technically 7/7 still counts as a fraction. That's a whole week!!

In today's piece, the *Ramcha*"I points out that the various objects one finds in *olem hazeh* are there to be used by man. If we use them properly, we bring ourselves and the objects/world closer to *Hakadosh Baruch Hu*. If we use them improperly, we ruin the world and ourselves along with it. When He created *Adam harishon* (possible that the last name Harrison is *min hatorah*?) He gave *Adam* a tour of *gan eden* and pointed out all of the beauty that was created just for *Adam*. And He warned him, don't destroy it.

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Re: A New Approach to the 90-Day Journey

Posted by BEHS - 06 Apr 2016 04:00

8/8. *Be'ezras HaShem*, we're now venturing into areas that are *le'ma'aleh min ha'tevah*!! But as we pointed out in the beginning of this thread, that's the point of the whole journey. Any great and memorable streak or accomplishment must be *le'ma'aleh min ha'tevah*. *Be'ezras HaShem*, it should continue that way.

Today's learning was relatively short and the *Ramcha"l* even points out that it's essentially repetition as he says, "In summation..." He reiterates that we are only here in *olam ha'zeh* as a way of gaining *olam ha'bah*. He points out that this is why there are many *ma'amarei chaza"l* that compare *olam ha'zeh* to a place of preparation and *olam ha'bah* to a place of enjoying that which was prepared.

[I've heard that the [i]Ramcha"l[/i] didn't use any extra words in the entire *sefer*. This just begs the question why he uses so many double-*leshonos* throughout, and especially why he would ever say, "*Klalo shel davar...*" If what follows is just a summation, by definition it isn't necessary to getting the point across. It only serves as a review. But as discussed earlier, the way I'm reading the *sefer* this time through is how I believe the *Ramcha"l* intended for it to be read, at least the first time through (although this isn't my actual first time). Feldheim translation of the introduction: "For it is possible that, after just one reading, the reader will find that he has learned little that he did not know before." The first time through, you're not supposed to find *chiddushim*. The first time through is to remind yourself of these lifelong principles. Once you've understood the basic messages and internalized them (which is probably never in most cases, certainly my own) then you can move on to dissecting each word.]

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Re: A New Approach to the 90-Day Journey
Posted by BEHS - 06 Apr 2016 04:10

[markz wrote on 01 Apr 2016 02:58:](#)

Check [this](#) niggun suggestion out

Raise the volume and **Keep on Trucking**

Markz,

It's a beautiful niggun for sure, but it's one that I'm going to have to listen to many times before I can truly get into it. Do you use it for other parts of the sefer or just this line?

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Re: A New Approach to the 90-Day Journey
Posted by markz - 06 Apr 2016 04:14

I was composed only for that line

I personally found a big chizuk from Mesilas Yescharim - when someone / a Sefer says I'm not going to tell you any chidushim, he's someone worth listening to

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Re: A New Approach to the 90-Day Journey
Posted by BEHS - 06 Apr 2016 04:31

Agreed 100%. I was introduced to it in *yeshiva* and I read it a few times after, but I haven't really picked it up again until this past *Rosh Ha'Shana* when I remembered that it had a *limud yomi* chart in the back. Most days take about 2-3 minutes. Some are a little longer, but never more than 10 and more than 5 is pretty rare. You learn through the entire *sefer* twice in the year. I suggest anyone who sees this should follow along with this schedule. It's in the back of the green Feldheim edition, and if you need the English, this version is super-simple and easy to understand. While I'd like to think that you can follow this thread and get the gist of the *sefer* from my summaries, the truth is that reading my understanding of the *Ramcha*'s genius (and he was just that) is probably not even a *ta'am* of what one can get from reading the actual *sefer*.

[Never thought this would turn into an advertisement, but I really love this [i]sefer[/i]. Maybe I can start charging for ad space on my threads....]

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Re: A New Approach to the 90-Day Journey
Posted by BEHS - 07 Apr 2016 04:31

9/9 (plus the Dodgers just swept their opening series with 27 consecutive scoreless innings, which is a new MLB record to start a season). It's a good day.

In today's section, the *Ramcha"l* points to the obvious reality that *olam ha'zeh* can't possibly be the purpose of being created. It's full of hardships and suffering. Rarely do you find anyone who's truly happy throughout his life. And your body slowly deteriorates as you get older.

Furthermore, if you are created for *olam ha'zeh*, why would you need a *neshama*? Your *neshama* certainly doesn't appreciate even the best that *olam ha'zeh* has to offer. The *Ramcha"l* brings the *mashal* of the princess who marries a regular person. No matter how much he tries to impress her, she's used to the palace life. Nothing he can provide will ever compare. Any not only is it not impressive, the *neshama* is repulsed by *olam ha'zeh* and it actually comes down to your body kicking and screaming.

Rather, it's obvious that we are created to reach *olam ha'bah*. That is why we were given a *neshama*.

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