



בלבבי משכן אבנה

Bilvavi

Mishkan Evneh

UTILIZING YOUR BECHIRAH

In *Parshas Bo*, Hashem said to Moshe, “Come to Pharaoh, for I have made His heart and the heart of His servants stubborn.”

Hashem “hardened” the heart of Pharaoh. Just as Hashem hardened the heart of Pharaoh after Pharaoh persisted with his attitude, so does every person experience this on some degree.

Even if a person is not on the level where he is doing *teshuvah* after every time he falls into an *aveirah*, he must make sure not to stifle his inner voice that tells him to do good. If one can do this, he is constantly “erasing” the “Pharaoh” within.

As long as a person can sense the inner voice in him telling him to choose right over wrong, when a person is later tempted with something improper, he will at least be **aware** that it is not good., and even if *chas v’shalom* he succumbs to the *aveirah*, he can still be fixed, for his heart hasn’t been hardened yet.

If a person has fallen very low and he wants to come out of the situation, as soon as he falls into an *aveirah*, he must not let himself feel any despair or helplessness. Rather, he needs to let himself feel the pain of listening to the inner voice of good inside

him, the voice of his *yetzer tov*, which is telling him that he has gone against the will of Hashem.

Sadly, most people, at a certain point in their life, have taught themselves to silence their inner voice of good. They continue to follow their *taavos* and do whatever they wish, having long ago silenced their inner conscious, so that they don’t have to feel the pain of their guilt, of what their inner voice of good has to say to them.

But if a person makes sure to keep listening to the inner voice of good that always rings within him, then even if he falls many times to an *aveirah*, he is at least aware of his situation. And the pain that he feels, which is a result of becoming aware of that inner voice of good in him, is part of the process of *tikkun* for him. And it will be a guarantee that his heart will never become hardened.

And, to the extent that one continues to listen to that inner voice of good even after he falls, a person becomes closer and closer to being those who are a *HaBa L’Taher*, “One who comes to be purified, is assisted by Hashem” ■ *excerpt from the sefer Bilvavi on the Parshah*

Close students of the Chazon Ish recall that when he would converse with others, he would start the conversation with something humorous, in order to create a jovial atmosphere between him and the students. Similarly, Rav Shlomo Wolbe zt”l would advise married men to humor their families with saying something funny, in order to create a light, relaxed atmosphere in the home.¹

The depth behind the above approach is because man is a combination of a *guf* and *neshamah*, and while one’s task is to have a serious attitude about life so that he can reveal the *neshamah*, the *guf* cannot handle a serious approach all the time. Therefore, the *guf* needs to be calmed, by having a dose of humor every so often. When a person relaxes from the humor, he has given the *guf* its basic emotional needs, and now he is free to pursue *ruchniyus*.

Bringing humor into the home is a matter that is hinted to in *Chazal*: “It is forbidden for man to fill his mouth with laughter on this world”². From this teaching, we learn that man should have a serious attitude towards life, and to stay away from frivolousness. But we also learn from here that one should not fill his mouth with laughter”, meaning that too much laughter is not forbidden - but a little bit of laughter is permitted. Not only is it permitted, but it is advised. We find that the sages in the times of the *Gemara* would begin teaching their students with a *milsa d’bidichusa*, a humorous word.³

1 “*Alei Shur*” Vol. II, p.242-243

2 *Berachos* 31a

3 *Shabbos* 30b

However, humor is only constructive when one is balanced with a serious approach towards life. When one is cognizant that life has a purpose to it, one can then gain from humor, which calms the body and allows it to go free a little from the stresses of life. Therefore, only when one is aware of the *neshamah* and he views himself as such, can he benefit from a little dose of humor.

So while we must be aware that *chinuch* on our children means to raise them in the areas of action, emotion, and thought, we also need to know that while there is a very serious side to life, namely that our life’s work is to reveal our *neshamah* - which requires us to have a deep approach towards *chinuch* and to be serious, to have deep emotions and analytical thinking – simultaneously, parents must also remember that every child also has a physical body, which has its various physical needs. Besides for certain rare individuals, a person cannot handle always being in a serious atmosphere that resembles *Erev Yom Kippur*. Besides for the body’s need to eat, drink, and be clothed, it also needs to go free a little, from the seriousness of life.

Therefore, every so often, a parent must make sure to throw a joke into the atmosphere of the home, the kind that puts a smile on all the children’s faces (understandably, this should not be done in a way that transgresses *halachah*. It should not be a kind of joke that is insulting, or which comes at the expense of another’s feelings, etc.) in order to create a calm, pleasant atmosphere in the home. ■ Chapter Six - printed for the first time from the hebrew sefer *דע אמת ילדך*

QUESTION How do I acquire *bitachon*?

ANSWER You can learn sefer *Madreigas HaAdam*, especially the chapter about *bitachon*, and also sefer *Shomer Emunim*. Practically speaking, each day, practice having *bitachon* in Hashem when it comes to a small thing, and don't do any *hishtadlus* (effort) when it comes to that area. Or, at least minimize your *hishtadlus* in that area, from an awareness that you are trying to work on your *bitachon*. Furthermore, it is appropriate to clarify the entire spectrum of this subject. Learn all the sources for *bitachon* in Chumash, Mishnayos, *Gemara*, Rishonim and Acharonim, as much as you are able to. Organize all the material in a notebook, as if you are trying to prepare for print as a *sefer*. This will help you become immersed in it, consistently and fundamentally, as you study this part of Torah and apply it to your *avodah*. It will also give you increased clarity on the topic, and it will also give you the gain of both learning and practicing it together.

QUESTION *Yasher Koach* to the Rav for the advice about *bitachon* which I asked the Rav for, which I have started to practice. The Rav advised that each day I should practice having *bitachon* in Hashem when it comes to a very small thing and not to do any *hishtadlus* (effort) in that area. I have a couple of questions. Does this mean that if I have *bitachon* and I don't do any *hishtadlus*, then I will get what I'm having *bitachon* about? For example, if I want something small and I have *bitachon* that I will get it, will it definitely come to me, simply because I am having *bitachon* in Hashem?

ANSWER There are two approaches about *bitachon*. One approach is that one can have *bitachon* that a certain thing will definitely happen, when he trusts in Hashem that it will happen. Another approach is that one can have *bitachon* that whatever happens is only what Hashem wants to happen, and that everything that happens is for a person's good. Generally a person needs to begin having *bitachon* with the second approach.

QUESTION Can the Rav give examples of having *bitachon* when it comes to a "small" thing?

ANSWER An example of having *bitachon* when it comes to a small thing is: (1) I have *bitachon* that I will make the bus (that is, if I leave with enough time to get to the bus stop on time). (2) I have *bitachon* that I will fall asleep and get the right amount of sleep that I need so I can have enough energy for tomorrow and to do what I need to do.

QUESTION Is this approach of having *bitachon* when it comes a small thing and not doing any *hishtadlus*, a matter which depends on how to understand *bitachon*? Is the Rav following a certain approach of *bitachon* or is this according to all views on *bitachon*?

ANSWER Same answer as the 1st question.

QUESTION What do I need to think when I am having *bitachon* about a small thing that I want? And how can I avoid falling into delusions from this?

ANSWER Have *bitachon* that only Hashem runs every single last detail, and that everything He does is for my good.

QUESTION If Hashem didn't allow a person to get what he wanted, is it because he didn't really need it and he was only imagining that he needed it?

ANSWER Either this happened because (1) He didn't have complete *bitachon*, or (2) because he wasn't on the level to do so, or (3) It's because Hashem knows that it wasn't good for him to get what he wanted, and therefore he was prevented by Heaven from having complete *bitachon*.

QUESTION Why does it take so long for my *tefillos* to get answered? How can a person take all of this in stride and not give up from *davening*, when he's not being answered? Is a person supposed to keep *davening* and just never give up, or does there come a point where one is allowed to stop *davening*, because he understands that his requests from Hashem for a certain thing are not just being answered...?

ANSWER There are several reasons [why a person's *tefillos* aren't being answered] and I will mention a few of them. (1) It may be because [by not getting answered] he is acquiring more *emunah* (faith) in Hashem. (2) It may be because [by not getting answered] he is acquiring more and more depth to his *davening*. (3) It may be because he needs to go through a certain amount of pain which is purifying him more, and one needs to learn how to accept this with love. (4) It may be because it's not the right time now to get answered, and it will not be good for him if he

gets answered now. (5) It can all be a test that he should learn how to not despair. (6) It can all be a test that he isn't supposed to be turning so much to doctors [and instead he should be turning more to Hashem for help]. A person always needs to daven, unless he requires a miracle, because the *Gemara* at the end of Tractate Berachos states that it is pointless to pray for a miracle. Prayer should always be accompanied with *emunah* and accepting the painful circumstances with love, and then returning to prayer, in a cycle.

QUESTION What is the *avodah* of both boys and girls when they are in *shidduchim*? How can one be *mechazeik* himself/herself if a long time has passed already and they haven't yet found their *shidduch*?

ANSWER One needs to examine if he/she is truly looking for what he/she really "needs", or if they are merely looking for what they "want", in a *shidduch*. This is a very fundamental aspect which needs to be examined.

In addition, one needs to *daven* from the depths of his or her heart, with simple *temimus* (earnestness). One also needs to keep reviewing the idea of *emunah peshutah* (simple, unquestioning belief in Hashem) with herself. One needs to be aware that all of our life is meant to be used a means to ingrain more and more *emunah* into our being. This is unlike the prevailing superficial attitude about *shidduchim*, which tends to view *emunah* purely as nothing but a means to attain one's *shidduch*... ■ *from the Bilvavi Q & A archive*

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