

BS"D #329

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WEEKLY PARSHA
ARCHIVE Q&A

BILVAVI

BO 5784

[The first two letters of a word tell us about the essence of the word.]

The word *bitachon* (*trust in Hashem*) starts with *beis* and *tes*, which is the root of the word *habatah* – to look at or to have a certain perspective.

When we look at the world today, the world is filled with impurity, with *arayos* (*immorality*) everywhere, and it is known from *Chazal* that a time of war arouses the evil inclination for the three cardinal sins of idol worship, murder, and promiscuity (*arayos*) – and especially the latter (*arayos*).

Today, when a person looks at the world it ruins their spiritual sense of sight and that is why it is very hard for a person to guard their eyes today from seeing what they shouldn't. The world always was a place that is mostly evil with little good, but in the end of days where all the evil is unleashed, in particular the evil of immorality (*because the word "evil" is ra, which is the root letters of arayos (promiscuity), the letters ayin and reish.*)

But the root letters of the word *bitachon* are *beis* and *tes*, the root letters of the word *habatah* – which means to see into the internal dimension behind our external dimension. At the internal dimension, everything is the “world that is entirely good”. **We need to keep our internal focus on the good that is behind everything.**

No one knows what this year will bring, no one knows what's going to happen soon and certainly no one can know what's going to happen in a while from now. There are certainly going to be things happening this year in which Hashem is arousing everyone to *teshuvah*. That is true, but there is more to it. We have to keep focusing on the good that is behind this all, on the fact that the inner dimension behind it all is “the world that is entirely good”.

This is the root of having *bitachon*. Externally, *bitachon* means I trust that Hashem will give me everything I need, but the internal root of

bitachon is to be focused on how everything is good, since at the inner dimension the world is entirely good.

The transition from this world to the next world is a transition from a world that is mostly and almost entirely evil, into the world that is entirely good. Therefore, we need to be preparing for the next world already now, by having the perspective of being connected to the world that is entirely good, to see the good in everything, to see that behind all of the evil is a world that is entirely good.

This is a delicate concept because we cannot allow ourselves to connect with the world today that is evil, but we have to be aware that behind it is all is a world that is entirely good, and the more we connect to this perspective the more we are preparing for the new stage that will be the next world.

As a hint that our soul needs to be connected to this perspective of the world that is entirely good, the word “*Nefesh*” (*soul*) in the system of *Atbas”h* (where *Aleph* equals *Tav*, and *Beis* equals *Shin*, and so forth) the letter *Nun* equals *Tes*, the letter *Pei* equals *Vov*, and the letter *Shin* equals *Beis* – spelling the word “*Tov*” (*good*) so it is

ט	=	נ
פ	=	ו
ש	=	ב

Thus, the word soul (*Nefesh*) in the system of *Atbas”h* is equal to *Tov*, “good”. Even though in our consciousness today the world is evil, we are able to connect our soul to a realm where everything is good – the world that is entirely good, to the perspective of the Next World.

[אינצקלופידיה עבודת ה' ב-ט בטח]

QUESTION

When I hear about tragic news, for example when I heard about... I easily become depressed for many days. I keep remembering these tragic stories, until the next tragedy comes, and then I keep thinking about the new tragedy...What is the perspective I need to have, whenever I hear or read about tragedies? How can I come out of the trauma that I get from bad news which I heard or read about?

ANSWER

(1) [You need to have] *emunah*, faith in G-d. (2) Think about the spiritual suffering that there is today, which is far worse, considering the great spiritual destruction that is taking place in our generation. (3) Think about what you can generally do to act kinder towards others. (4) Connect to the inner good that is within you. (5) Immerse yourself in a world of inner thought. (6) Be happy about the fact that you are able to feel others' pain. (7) Accept the suffering that you feel, with love. (8) Reflect and conclude that part of the makeup of Creation is that it entails "evil" [anything we perceive as not being good], and that the result of this is all of the suffering in Creation. (9) Connect to a holy kind of joy – in action, and in emotion. (10) In general, it is worthwhile to be aware that it's better for a person when he doesn't know that much about any news that happens in the world. This is how the Chofetz Chaim conducted himself. Therefore, one should avoid reading the newspapers and etc. (*This is besides for other reasons why a person shouldn't read the newspapers, but let this reason suffice*).

QUESTION

Can the Rav give a few examples of how we can feel like a "*tamim*"¹ towards Hashem and realize that He's in control of everything?

ANSWER

We are in a world being dominated by attacks from all kinds of forces, such as Islamic extremists, wicked people who are constantly contemplating ways of how to kill. If one tries to think logically of what causes terrorism, either

¹ For a definition of *temimus* see Bilvavi Part 4 - Chapter 09 *Temimus = Simplicity*

he'll conclude that it's Arabs from Syria or from Iran, or from some other place in the world. But you can realize that they are all messengers of Hashem, and Hashem is using them to carry out His will – it is really not possible to handle them using our puny human logic. Hashem is leading them, and this is above the understanding of our human intellect.

The wisest people in the world perhaps can wonder of how to deal with them, but do they know what's enabling them to act? No, because it is Hashem Himself who is letting them act. The wise people in the world can try to think and think of what to do about them, but Hashem lets them act as He wills, and all of their rationalizations are for naught.

A person can see that all that he does understand is but a drop of understanding in the incomprehensible. We don't even understand the tiniest detail of Hashem's ways. Reb Noach of Kobrin *zt"l* said that without *emunah*, it's not possible to leave the house, and with *emunah*, one can conquer everything. Most people though are leaving their homes each day without *emunah*, out of immaturity towards life. But when a person has true understanding, and he thinks, he can see how the entire world is being led by Hashem, and that we have no comprehension of anything, and we can't predict even the next moment. So how do we survive in this world? Only through using the depth of the power *temimus*²!

QUESTION

If a person has *emunah*, can he understand terrorism today?

ANSWER

There is some small amount of comprehension we can have in Hashem's ways, but to know all of His ways is above our understanding.

QUESTION

If a person has *emunah*, will he be protected from the terrorism of today?

ANSWER

² Editor's Note: As the Rav has explained in other places, *temimus* is essentially a deep kind of *emunah*, and it is the subject of many talks of the Rav shlit"l. An entire sefer, *Bilvavi Part 9*, was written devoted to this deep concept and bring it closer to our hearts. It is also discussed in *Bilvavi Part 2 Chapter 28*, *Bilvavi Part 4 Chapters 9-11* and *Bilvavi Part 5 – Author's Introduction*.

The Rambam³ says in *Moreh Nevuchim* that a person will receive individual protection by Hashem the more *emunah* he has. The more a person has *emunah*, the more he can prevent the forces of evil from breaking loose upon this world. We can't stop it totally, because Hashem has His ways that we don't understand, but yes, to a certain extent, we can definitely lessen the terrorism in this world by strengthening our *emunah*.

QUESTION

Are there things today we are doing which prevent us from having *temimus*?

ANSWER

All that we see with our physical eyes can take away our *temimus*. For example, you see your house, and you naturally think that some contractor built it. You get used to thinking that people do everything in this world. When a person reads and hears the news all the time and he keeps hearing/reading the opinions of other people, how each person understands things, and this makes us think that people are in charge of this world. It is the opposite of *emunah* which is to believe that Hashem runs the world, and the only thing which we can do is to use our power of free will. All of the news outlets – secular media, Jewish newspapers, and even the most *Chareidi* newspapers border on heresy. They all are indicating that people run the world. The more a person lives a life of *temimus*, the more he views the world through different lenses. He is aware that whenever a person does something, he is merely a messenger of Hashem. But when we get used to reading [or hearing] the news on a set basis, we get used to thinking that people run this world which is the opposite of a *temimus* kind of life. If someone can hear the news all the time and tell himself that Hashem is running the world even after all that he hears, then it would be a point open for discussion. But if a person regularly listens to the news, he probably isn't reacting that way, and it gets a person used to heresy on a regular basis!

QUESTION

How can a person feel how Hashem is doing everything when we feel all

³ see *Moreh Nevuchim*: Chapters 51-53

the time that we live in the real world and that it is we who do everything?

ANSWER

This is a very good question. I have to do what I need to do, but after I do what I do, I must tell myself that it's not up to me, and that only Hashem does everything and let everything happen. On a more subtle note, this deep awareness can also bring one to *bittul* (*self-nullification*) and humility towards Hashem.

QUESTION

How can we feel calm and that Hashem is doing everything when there are so many troubles surrounding us?

ANSWER

This question goes against all our *emunah*. The Kotzker Rebbe *zt"l* said, "If I could understand Hashem, I would not want Him to be my God." We do not understand Hashem or His ways. We do not understand His good ways and surely when He has to inflict pain upon us we don't understand.⁴ There is a little we do comprehend but for the most part, we don't comprehend His ways, so we must not question Him.

QUESTION

What can I do to actually calm myself down, in the meantime?

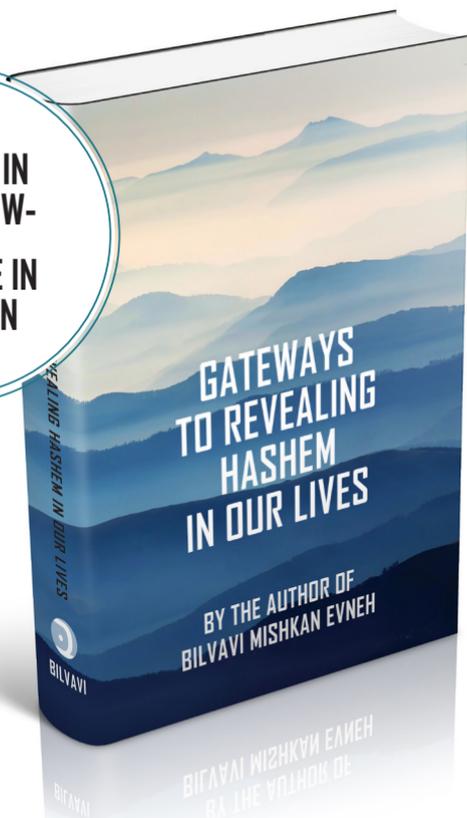
ANSWER

When you truly believe that Hashem is doing it all, then you will be calmed. On the contrary, if you believe that "this bad person" did this and "that bad person" did this, then indeed, everything seems bad. But tell yourself that no one is running this world but Hashem Who is endlessly merciful – all that He does is good. If you truly come to feel that Hashem is really doing everything in this world, not people, you will be calmed which is the depth of using your *temimus*. Perhaps one can try to "explain" the troubles we face today as an "atonement for our sins" or because "*Moshiach* is coming", etc.. However, the way of our *emunah* is to simply believe that Hashem is behind it all, therefore all is good.

⁴ See Tefillah 075 for an in-depth analysis of suffering.

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This *sefer* is a collection of three gateways to revealing Hashem in our lives:

Gateway to Yourself
Gateway to Others
Gateway to Hashem's Glory

A section of Q&A has been added on the topics of relationships, *avodas* Hashem, finding guidance and the media.

It is our hope that all those who read this book will be able to use it as a tool to get through the “end of days” period we are in, and to truly grow and come closer to Hashem as we prepare for the times of Moshiach, when awareness of His Presence will fill the world.

575 PAGES