

Gaining A Pure Heart (before Chodesh Ellul)

Feeling Hashem In Front Of You At All Times

For whatever reason that this has happened, one of the elderly leaders of our generation has left the world today.¹ It was said of him that he was a person who saw the *Ribono shel Olam* in front of him at all times, even as he casually walked through the streets.

He kept the very first words of the *Rema*² in front of him at all times: “*Shivisi Hashem L’Negdi Tamid*” – “Hashem is opposite me, always.”

People have a hard time understanding the concept of *Shivisi Hashem L’Negdi Tamid*. If this was only the *mitzvah* we had, then perhaps it would be easier to fulfill this *mitzvah*; although we are very busy and we have to be involved with this materialistic world and with taking care of our household, our body can be on the earth while our mind and heart is focused on our inner dimension.

Depending on how much spiritual purity and holiness one has reached, a person can live this way and be able to handle these contradicting aspects of life.

But we are commanded to learn Torah, and to immerse ourselves in it day and night. Our mind and heart needs to be involved in it.

So if we always place Hashem in front of us at all times, how then can we concentrate on our Torah learning?

This is especially a question due to the fact that our main obligation [especially as *bnei Torah*] that we have on this world is to learn Torah and exert ourselves fully in it, with all our mental capacity.

Exertion In Torah Learning

Those who truly learn Torah with exertion are those who immerse their entire soul in it, in all aspects! It is a world to immerse oneself in, and when one is found there, he feels that this is his true place. When one is truly learning Torah and with dedication, his entire mind and heart is immersed in it, and he finds *Bein HaZemanim* to be difficult, because it is hard to leave the place you identify yourself with and go to another place. Those who aren’t that immersed in their learning don’t really feel this as an issue, but those who are truly immersed in their learning, with their entire being, are familiar with this difficulty.

But we must know that our main obligation on this world - totiling in Torah learning - **does not** mean that we are exempt from leading an inner kind of life – from reaching the depth of life. For there is depth to the life in front of us that we must uncover. We can go deeper and deeper into the meaning of our life. An inner kind of life means to live a life spent with Hashem, to feel that we are in front of Him and with Him.

¹ The Rav is referring to the late Rav Aryeh Finkel zt”l, the Rosh Yeshivah of Mir-Brachfeld.

² Orach Chaim 1:1

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The difficulty people have with this, however, is that if we are learning Torah all day and are totally applying ourselves to it as much as we can, then how do we always focus on placing Hashem in front of us at all times? How do you put Hashem in front of you all the time, when your task is clearly to place all your mental focus on in-depth study of the *Gemara*?³

The question, however, is really erroneous to begin with. It is because we need to understand how life is really supposed to look like, and then we won't see this as an issue.

The Opportunity of Bein HaZemanim

Firstly, in order to understand this, we need to know that Hashem has arranged the setup of the year with normal *zemanim* (times) of the year, as well as times where we are taken out of the normal routine, such as *Bein HaZemanim*. Both of them have their pros and cons.

During the *zman* (the normal routine of the year), there are pros and cons. The advantage of it is that it enables us to have a structure. The drawback, however, is that we are confined to time, which places certain limits on our time. We need to use all our time during the *zman* for Torah learning, and this leaves us with almost no time to enter deeper within ourselves and to discover our inner spiritual world.

Bein HaZemanim affords us the opportunity to have more time on our hands to enter our inner, spiritual world within us, and to search for the purpose of life, to wonder and reflect about it. It is essentially another kind of *zman* that Hashem gives us, though it is not the normal kind of *zman* that we know of from the rest of the year. The normal routine of the year doesn't allow for this deep soul-searching, whereas *Bein HaZemanim* was given to us to take a break from the normal routine of the year and we have more time to ourselves.

Although we must certainly learn Torah during *Bein HaZemanim* – and with exertion – we do not nearly have as much exertion in learning as during the *zman*. During the *zman*, our learning is much more intense, with 3 or 4 or 5 *sedarim* (learning sessions) a day, with very in-depth study. During *Bein HaZemanim*, although we must certainly learn Torah, we don't have these many *sedarim* that we have during the *zman*. It is intentional that it be this way. It is because *Bein HaZemanim* is given to us so that we can get in touch with an inner place in ourselves and become closer to Hashem. It is a time where one clarifies to himself how an inner kind of life should look like.

The Inner Kind of Life

How, indeed, is an 'inner kind of life' supposed to look like?

First of all, before anything else, a person has to make sure he is keeping all of *Halacha*. Those are the basics. But this applies universally to each Jew, whether he is living internally or not. So although keeping *Halacha* is unquestionably essential, one's adherence to *Halacha* does not yet mean that he is living a true, inner kind of life. It is rather the prerequisite to the inner kind of life.

Besides for making sure that we are keeping all of *Halacha*, and besides for our main obligation of exertion in Torah learning from morning until night and to grow in knowledge of Torah (each to his own, and as much as is

³ Refer also to 48 Ways of Torah_020_Feeling Hashem In Your Learning

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capable), we are taught by the Sages that there are certain qualities which our Torah learning must bring us to. The sage Rabbi Pinchas ben Yair taught: “Torah brings a person to *zehirus* (watchfulness), *zerizus* (alacrity), *nekiyus* (cleanliness from sin and evil motivations), *perishus* (abstinence), *taharah* (spiritual purity), *chassidus* (piety), humility, fear of sin, holiness, resurrecting the dead, and *Ruach HaKodesh*”.⁴

Torah brings a person to all of these high levels; but what if a person’s Torah learning is not causing him to have more *zehirus*/watchfulness and *zerizus*/alacrity? What if a person is learning Torah yet it is not causing him to become enthused to serve Hashem? What if a person is learning Torah yet it is not causing him to gain more *taharah* (spiritual purity), to at least some minimal level of *perishus* (abstinence from indulgence), to piety and love for other Jews (*chassidus*)⁵, to humility? What if a person’s Torah learning is not leading him to have more fear of Heaven, which means that one doesn’t forget for a moment that Hashem is in front of him?

If a person is learning Torah yet he is not reaching any of these levels of growth, it is all a sign that the person is not reaching an inner kind of life. This is because the inner kind of life remains hidden and concealed from many people [so long as they don’t search for it].

Of course, we do not doubt for a moment that it is Torah learning which brings a person to all of the qualities that one must acquire. Those are the unquestionable words of the Sages. The problem is not with the Torah. Rather, what we want to know is: why is it that a person can learn Torah yet he isn’t changing and becoming a more spiritual person? It is all proof that there must be an inner kind of life that exists, which is often hidden and not accessed by many people, even as they learn Torah. Indeed, not everyone who learns Torah reaches all of the qualities that Rabbi Pinchas ben Yair describes.

It is because one must know where he is going in his life; what *directs* his life. To be clearer about this, our actual time during the day must mainly be spent in Torah learning. But it is just that along with this, we must know, clearly, what *direction* we are going in.

The Importance of Having A Pure Heart

It is written, “*A pure heart you created me with.*”⁶ A person needs a *lev tahor*, a pure heart, in order to become strong in Torah and to become a *maayan hamisgaber* (mighty wellspring) in Torah.

A *lev tahor* is reached only when a person removes the various desires in his heart that are outside of Torah. A *lev tahor* refers to innermost will of the soul, which is the desire to do Hashem’s will (“It is our will to do Your will”).

However, the *yetzer hora* (evil inclination) gets in our way and prevents us from having this holy desire. As the Sages say, “It is our will to do Your will, but the ‘yeast in the sourdough’ (a reference to the evil inclination), and the subjugation to the government, prevents us.” The Sages also state that the *yetzer hora* resides in the left chamber of the heart, and the *yetzer tov* resides in the right chamber of the heart. So the *yetzer hora* is in our very heart and influencing our desires - until we remove its stronghold from our heart.

As long as the *yetzer hora* dominates within, a person has not yet reached what it means to have a “*lev tahor*” (pure heart). Therefore, one must become clear of what’s going on in his heart. There’s a lot going on in there,

⁴ Avodah Zarah 20b; these words form the basis of *sefer Mesillas Yesharim*

⁵ Refer to the *Bilvavi* on *Mesillas Yesharim*, in the section on *chassidus*

⁶ *Tehillim* 51:10

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desires that are both good and evil, until one sorts them out and removes all of the bad desires there. This is a difficult task, because overcoming the hold of the *yetzer hora* is different with each person. Some people have a stronger *yetzer hora* to deal with than others. This is because as the Sages say, “One who is greater than his friend, has a greater [stronger] evil inclination.”⁷

Step I: Becoming Clear About Your Heart's Desires

So the first thing one must do is to become clear of what is in his heart – all of the good parts and the bad parts that are in there. If one does not become clear of both the good and evil taking place in his heart, he will not be able to reach a *lev tahor*.

One must ideally set up his life in a way that enables him to reach a *lev tahor*. For this reason, we have the normal *zman* of the year, which enables a person to spend his entire day immersed in Torah study, which places a person in an environment that is ideal to rid himself of desires that are outside of Torah and to desire only Torah.

Aspiring For A Pure Heart

How does a person reach a *lev tahor*? One needs a *lev tahor* in relation to himself, towards the Creator, and towards other people. If one does not search for a *lev tahor*, he will certainly not reach it (unless he learns Torah *lishmah*, which purifies a person's being entirely; but few people are at this level. The Vilna Gaon says that if one is not learning Torah 100% *lishmah*, it is not yet *lishmah*. One cannot be sure of this and that is why he must assume that he is not yet learning Torah *lishmah*).

One needs to leave the world with knowledge of Torah, but in order to be truly changed from this, one needs to have gained a *lev tahor*. If one is not setting up his life in a way that enables him to gain a *lev tahor*, he will not reach it.

We must take the path that our great leaders taught us, and we shouldn't budge from it (and there is no one way – there are always many valid paths), but within the mainstream path that we take, we must also seek to gain a *lev tahor* along the way. We must wonder how we can reach a *lev tahor*. When it comes to our brains, we seek to fill it with knowledge of Torah. What about our heart? What do we want to put in it? The Sages say that the “two kings” of man are the brain and the heart. Our heart must be just as important to us as our brain is to us.

Even if we have spent the *zman* immersed in Torah, this does not mean that our heart was always affected. When it comes vacation time/*Bein HaZemanim*, it is the litmus test that shows what's really going on in the person's heart....

Each person's heart is different. Reuven's heart is not like Shimon's heart. But the common denominator with all people is that we all must have an aspiration to leave the world of materialism and to gain a pure heart. This is not referring to uttering certain words, inspiration in prayer, or to moments of passing inspiration that come and go (although it is certainly wonderful to experience inspiration).

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Just like a person can very much want to know a tractate of the Talmud and master it, so must a person have an aspiration to know what it means to have a pure heart; to be able to leave this world with a purified heart.

We must know this very clearly: As long as a person has not yet gained a *lev tabor*, his understanding in Torah is entirely superficial. Shlomo *HaMelech* said, “*My heart has seen much wisdom.*” Wisdom is not found in the brain, but in the heart. The knowledge contained in our brains is only superficial. Only when it reaches the heart is it real wisdom. A person with a *lev tabor* is able to absorb the wisdom that enters his brain/mind, and his heart becomes the deep source of his wisdom. The more a person purifies his heart, the sharper his understanding of wisdom/Torah will be.

This is not referring to mere ‘knowledge of Torah’; there are many people who have a good memory and they can amass much knowledge in Torah, because their memory can retain everything. But this is not proof that a person truly comprehends what he is learning. The quality of one’s comprehension in learning Torah is determined by how much he has purified his heart. The less a person has purified his heart (may Hashem have mercy on him), his comprehension of Torah does not get to the truthful meaning.

This is not something which others can always see. But Hashem sees straight into the hearts of each person, and He knows if a person is purifying his heart and, accordingly, who is learning the Torah more truthfully.

Removing The Layers Upon The Heart

If a person truly wants to become closer to Hashem, it is brought in *Halacha* that he should imagine the four letters of Hashem’s Name in front of him⁸; and there were *tzaddikim* of the past who did this. But not everyone agreed with this approach, and it is certainly not the path that works for all people. How, then, can a person reach a kind of life where he feels that Hashem always in front of him?

When a person has a *lev tabor*, he feels the simple reality, of Hashem’s presence. He feels it as a simple sense. Why is it that a person does not feel Hashem in front of him, when it is the most simple fact that exists, and He is clearly everywhere? It is because although He is found everywhere, He is also always hidden.

We cannot see Him with our physical eyes, but our soul can sense His presence, no less than how it can feel its own existence. We can always feel ourselves as existing, whether it is night or day, whether we are smart or foolish, whether we are happy or sad, whether we are thinking clearly or our minds are foggy, whether we are having a good day or a bad day. We always feel our existence. When one feels the truth of his existence – the fact that he is a soul, which is a “piece of G-d”, then he will feel the Creator no less than how he can feel his own existence. This is not a profound thought; it is a simple awareness.

But what prevents us from feeling this simple recognition? Why is it that this simple fact has no place in many people’s lives?

There are people who spent the entire day learning Torah and they feel that life is all about keeping *Halacha* and to know the whole Torah, yet they are not paying attention to the first line of *Shulchan Aruch*, which states that one must place Hashem in front of him at all times. This is all because a person is missing a *lev tabor*. When a person does not have a *lev tabor*, there is a thick blockage upon his heart (*orlas halev*) which prevents him from seeing even the simplest facts.

⁸ Mishnah Berurah 1:4

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When a person has not reached his *lev tahor*, he is feeling his existence through the external layers of the heart, which are impure and which conceal the heart's inner layer. All that he will feel in his heart is negative emotions such as jealousy, lust, and the desire for honor. This is not just an indicator of what he *wants* deep down; it is what he *senses*. When he feels a desire for honor, he is pulled after it. When he feels a lust, he is pulled after it. He is essentially pulled after his senses!

To illustrate, a two-year old child is not looking for honor; when he gets a bit older, the heart begins to open, the *yetzer hora* present in the heart begins to make its appearance, and he begins to sense different feelings now. He begins to feel what honor is, so he wants honor. He feels a lust, so he lusts after it. He feels jealousy, so he wants to be jealous.

But when a person purifies his heart, he removes the barriers that are upon it, and the simple sense of the heart (to feel Hashem's presence) is revealed. It was there all along, but it was just covered over and concealed, with various desires: jealousy, lust, honor, etc. That is what he sensed until he removed the obstacles from upon his heart. After removing the layers that were blocking his heart's inner essence, he is no longer pulled after his sensual desires and emotions. He can now feel the simplest and truest sense of all: the presence of Hashem. It is *known* to all people, but not everyone *feels* it, for this very reason.

Upon reaching this inner layer of the heart, one can truly connect to the Torah he learns after that. This is a far deeper connection to the Torah than what he has been used to as a child, if he has grown up in an environment of Torah. Growing up in a Torah environment and learning Torah as a child is all an opening to enter the world of Torah. One should not remain at that level, even though it was wonderful that he grew up learning Torah.

If one remains as an adult connected to the Torah because that is what he has been used to since he was a child and because he went to yeshiva, and this is what connects him to Torah even now as he in *Kolel*, this is called *katnus mochin* (small-mindedness; immaturity). Although there is such a concept as *girsu d'yankusa* (the way a person is used to from how he grew up as a child), that is only meant to serve as an opening which allows a person to grow further from there. It is an opening that allows a person to reach the 'simple point' of the heart, where one realizes that there is nothing in reality except Hashem and His Torah. That is where our life is found.

A person often feels very far from this point, but it is because there are many layers upon his heart which aren't allowing him to feel this. Those layers include his various desires and negative emotions.

As long as a person has not yet clarified to himself what goes on in his heart and he has not attempted to uproot the evil that lays dormant in his heart, even if he learns a lot of Torah and he does many mitzvos and he does a lot of *chessed*, he still will not reach the simplest sense which can be felt. He will think that feeling Hashem's presence is a high level that is only for *tzaddikim* and that it is not for us regular people. In a way, he is correct, because he is not connected to that place.

When a person is clear about this, he doesn't see purity of heart as a daunting task upon him. Instead, he sees it as a tool that is absolutely necessary to understand Torah.

Becoming Clear About Our Heart

The issue is: what kind of direction a person is heading towards in his life. How is a person living? Is he living life in a way that enables him to reach a *lev tahor*? Is he actively striving towards it?

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When it comes *Bein HaZemanim*, one can use these days to explore what's going on in his heart and thereby gaining clarity towards his heart, and he can wonder how he can lead his life in a direction that leads towards a *lev tabor*. Then his exertion in Torah will be coming from a much more truthful place in himself.

The words were just an opener that can help one begin to search for truth. Hopefully by the time it is Elul, you will have gained more clarity from these reflections, about the path you are taking in life and if it is enabling you to reach a *lev tabor*. This will enhance our Torah learning as well, for it enables us to have a true understanding in what we learn in the Torah. Of course, our understanding in Torah comes from exertion in Torah, but it also needs to be accompanied with a *lev tabor*: to feel the existence of Hashem, as a simple sense.

In Conclusion

Practically speaking, in order to prepare for the coming Elul, try to gain clarity in the direction you are taking in life, in the way you spend your schedule, and seek how you can make it more inner; so that the Torah you learn should be coming from a more truthful place in yourself. This will bring blessing to your Torah learning, and it will merit you to have true *d'veykus* with Hashem and with His Torah. ■ Translated from the original Hebrew shiur: 0105 דרשות תשע"ו – הכנה לבין הזמנים אב תשע"ו

Time for Reflection (before Pesach)

Gehinnom On This World

Chazal say that as the pit was swallowing Korach and his followers, the children of Korach did *teshuvah*, and a place above *Gehinnom* (hell) was formed where they ended up and where they continue to sing *shirah* today. We see from this a concept that there can be a place formed within *Gehinnom* that is **separate** from *Gehinnom*.

We must know that the world we are found in is really a *Gehinnom*.

One who hears this the first time might not be used to such harsh terminology, but this is the true definition. It is a very precise description. This is the reality which we are in. If a Torah scholar commits sins, G-d forbid, he goes to *Gehinnom*. What does he do there? He continues to sit and learn Torah. In this world too, one can learn Torah, but that doesn't change the fact that this world is still a place of *Gehinnom*.

It is *Gehinnom* due to many reasons. Most of the world lives a life of *hefker* (anarchy) - and as the *Gemara* says, a slave prefers to be *hefker* from any servitude. The whole lifestyle today is *Gehinnom*! As soon as a person wants to "stand up" and say something truthful, he is despised. The Sages predicted that in our era, those who fear G-d will be despised, the wisdom of Torah scholars will be regarded as rotten, and the truth will be very concealed (*Sotah 49a*).

If someone doesn't realize that the reality of the world right now is *Gehinnom*, he has already fallen into *Gehinnom* - and he probably thinks that he's in *Gan Eden*...

This is the truth, this is reality. This is not an extreme opinion – it is describing reality of the world we live in. It is a world of total *hefker* – anarchy.

Separating From The World Each Day

Within this world of *hefker*, though, we can still have some time of the day where we are separate from the *Gehinnom* around us. We need to have time every day where we feel totally separate from the world. The purpose of this time is not to learn Torah; rather, the point is to be separate from the world, and from there, to be able to continue learning Torah.

The Spiritual Danger of Bein HaZemanim

We will soon be entering a time where we are more involved with the world outside. So how do we conduct ourselves? We must realize that entering the outside world doesn't enable us to survive spiritually, at all. It is almost impossible to keep Torah and *mitzvos* when you are so out there in the world. We can't say it's totally impossible, but it is almost impossible.

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The world out there totally contradicts the Torah. It contradicts *halacha*, simply speaking - we are not referring to high spiritual levels. We are talking about the basics. Involvement in the outside world (and even the parts that are officially less connected with the outside world) doesn't allow a person to keep Torah and *mitzvos*; it is a total contradiction to our Shulchan Aruch.

The first difficulty we face is because we are going into a time where we are having more involvement with the world. Even if one learns many hours in the *beis midrash* [during *Bein HaZemanim*], if his soul is connected to the outside world, this itself is a painful situation. If one doesn't feel that pain, it means that he didn't he didn't acquire what he was supposed to acquire during the *zman* (season) spent in yeshiva. The very fact that we have to be more involved with the outside world should feel painful to anyone.

Surviving Spiritually: by Disconnecting

What indeed should one do about it?

There was a place above *Gehinnom* formed for the sons of Korach. In other words, even within *Gehinnom* itself, there is a place where one can be apart from *Gehinnom*.

In practical words, there is an inner place in our soul, where one can disconnect from all that goes on in the world. This is not referring to certain actions that one must do, nor is it referring to "talking in learning" or "thinking in learning". It means to acquire a place in the soul where one disconnects, and he does not feel anything that goes on in his surroundings. This is the inner advice that can help a person survive the spiritual dangers of a time where we leave yeshiva and we enter the outside world.

Each person needs to have inner place in his soul he can go to, a private place in himself, where there is only Hashem in his world, and he feels no one else there.

One must be able to connect to this place in himself and thereby disconnect from the surroundings. In fact, all of the exertion in Torah we are involved with during our time in yeshiva is meant so that we can be able to enter this inner place in ourselves, where there is nothing except you and your Creator - where you are alone with Him.

Becoming Spiritually Sensitive To The Situation

If one doesn't feel the painful situation of reality today, he doesn't know where he is. He does not recognize the situation right now. On the other hand, if he is aware of the painful situation, he might fall into despair, realizing that he is surrounded by *Gehinnom*. And then he might give up and just get used to it, making peace with the situation....

The truth is that we cannot totally escape the *Gehinnom* we are in on this world until the day of death. The only issue is how much of a *Gehinnom* our life is and what kind of *Gehinnom* it will be; it is in our hands to lessen the degree of the *Gehinnom* in our life.

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As long as a person remains oblivious to this reality that the world is *Gehinnom*, he won't feel the need to separate from it. He has learned to make peace with it and he feels like he can live with it. But this is a very callous and superficial attitude towards life.

If one sees reality as it is, he realizes that he lives in a world which is entirely *hefker*. Surely the Torah makes its mark on people, but the actual perspective which people are living life with is an attitude of *hefker*. To adapt to such a reality causes us inner suffering.

Compare this to walking by a chicken coop that is full of 50 chickens. Is anyone prepared to live in there? No person can handle such a thing. It is unbearable for anyone to live there. So too, the reality around us is really impossible to live in. It is too much suffering to anyone who is a bit sensitive to the spiritual. Anyone who lives a bit of a spiritual life sees this world as a contradiction to his life. The world outside of us totally contradicts our inner and spiritual side to life; there is no resemblance. They are, literally, "worlds apart".

I hope that you are getting the inner point of these words. It is essentially about how we view life. We must see the outside world as a total contradiction to our inner world. The problem is not simply that there's not enough Torah and *mitzvos* being performed in the outside world. It is a far deeper issue than that. To define the problem as only that would be totally ignoring our inner world. The point is because the life found on the outside world is in total contradiction with our inner world.

Reflecting Each Day During Bein HaZemanim

To internalize these words, one needs to seclude himself and reflect, deeply, into these words. One needs to reflect during specially set aside times for reflection, as well as learning Torah for several hours alone. This enables one to reach an inner place in himself. In this way, even when a person has to be involved with the world, he is able to keep returning to this serene place in his soul.

To practically work on this, one can take a particular Torah thought and keep thinking about it throughout the day. But the point is to enter a deeper and deeper place within oneself. Just as a house contains several rooms, and there can be doors within doors that lead to other doors, so are there rooms within the soul, where one can go deeper and deeper within himself. It takes hard work to get there, but we must know that without it, it is impossible to spiritually survive this world.

Each person, on his own level, is already in touch with the deepest part of himself. Each person needs to reveal it more and become more connected to it throughout this month. When we are in yeshivah, it is not as necessary to do this, because we are protected from the outside world. But when it's *Bein HaZemanim* and we go out into the world, we are in spiritual danger, so we must become more in touch with the inner place in ourselves.

To illustrate, when you *daven Shemoneh Esrei* and you know that you had a good *davening*, you feel like you are going deeper into yourself. That depth you have reached really needs to be accessed more often throughout the day; you need to live it. Obviously there is always more depth that can be reached. But the point is that you can live and be in that deep place in yourself you have accessed – as opposed to mere temporary inspiration.

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Some people think that *Bein HaZemanim* is the perfect time to learn every day, or learning *Shemiras HaLashon* all day, or to listen to speeches and receive inspiration about *shalom bayis* (marital peace) so that one should be able to avoid getting into domestic disputes in the home on *erev Chag*. Something is missing here. This is a totally superficial approach. It means that a person will be living totally superficially and then to try to somehow survive and to make the damage as least as possible.

There is no way to get by life successfully if we remain on the superficial side of life, especially in this generation we live in. What we have explained here is not 'advice' – it is an inner way to live.

Practically speaking, in order to actualize these words, take the time every day and meditate on the inner place in yourself, and protect it, by returning to it in your thoughts, throughout the day. To illustrate, a person knows that he comes home to his house at the end of the day, no matter what he has gone through that day. Our true 'house' is actually our own inner world.

The real place of refuge exists in a deep part of ourselves. You can keep returning to it throughout the day. When you have access to this place in yourself, your physical body can be involved with this world yet your soul remains in this place of refuge. This enables you to live on this world yet be separate from it at the same time.

This is a concept which at times you may strongly identify with at times, and at other times, it will feel like some high and lofty spiritual level. But you should know that this is the way we must live, and there is no other way to get by this world. There are many ways that can get you to this point, which are brought in the words of our Sages, and there is no one way for everybody. But the common denominator is that all people, in order to survive spiritually on this world, need to access this point - the deep place in the soul where one lives alone from the rest of the world.

It is a person's inner home and refuge, where the windows and doors are closed to the outside and there is not even a ray of sunlight from the outside coming in. Understandably, we have a family to take care of, and we must get along with others. But there are two sides to our life. There is a part of us which relates to others and lives with others, and there is a part of ourselves which is alone and private, and it can be separate and secluded from others.

Bein HaZemanim is a time to protect that which we have gained from during the *zman*, by having quiet time to enter deeper into ourselves. One can try setting aside an hour, two hours, or three hours (whatever he can do) and to enter deeper into himself.

I hope these words have been understood properly, and that it should be clear that *Bein HaZemanim* should be seen as a tool to return to our real "home": to the inner "home" in the soul. This is the inner kind of life for one who searches for it and he doesn't want his Torah to become like torn pieces to him. It is to have an orderly kind of life deep within the soul.

There are surely other external things which can protect our spirituality, but those things are only enough to make sure that our level [of *Yiddishkeit*] doesn't become too cold; it keeps us lukewarm. But those external things do not enable us to really keep it strong.

If the words here have spoken to you, try to actualize them on your own level, according to how you have understood them. ■ Translated from the original hebrew shiur: Translated from the original Hebrew shiur: דרשות 0114 – הכנה לבין