



BEING SURE AFTER YOU HAVE BITACHON

QUESTION

The Rav cited the Chazon Ish's words that sometimes there is a ruach hakodesh which escorts a person who has bitachon that he will certainly get his wishes fulfilled. Was the Chazon Ish only referring to having bitachon in spiritual needs or even when it comes to having bitachon about physical needs?

ANSWER

When it comes to physical needs that are needed in order for one to bring out his intrinsic potential, it is also possible for one to feel a sense of ruach hakodesh that he will certainly have his needs filled. When Chazal said "The One who gives life will give food", it is also referring to physical needs that are needed to upkeep the basic needs of one's soul.

QUESTION

If a person is satisfied with something he got which he wanted, does that mean that this was something he really needed for his soul? Or was it simply because he wanted a burst of vitality, or because he wanted a subtler pleasure? If he got something he wished for, does that mean that this wish was a deep need that he had?

ANSWER

If a person does not sense the feeling of *ruach hakodesh* which the Chazon Ish described (of a person who has total bitachon), the fact that he got what he wished for doesn't necessarily mean that he had true bitachon that he would certainly get what he wants. He may have gotten what he wanted for several other reasons and not because he had bitachon.

QUESTION

What about if a person feels a wish for something that's a deep need for his soul but he can survive without it? For example, if a person feels that he needs to have a lot of money and be wealthy, is this a deep need that's true or false?

ANSWER

There are certainly needs which are luxuries for most people but which are necessities for a few people – who need it for their soul. In the particular case of desiring wealth, Chazal say that if a person used to be wealthy and have someone chauffeur him, and then he became poor, we are allowed to support him with tzedakah money to have someone chauffeur him, because he became accustomed to this need. These are his needs.

However, every case needs to be judged sensibly – A person has to check really well, by advising with a great person who understands the human soul with clarity, and to see if he really needs certain things, to make sure that he isn't simply desiring something that's not a true need he has. Furthermore, one of the main reliable signs of knowing if a person truly needs something or not is, if he can sense a ruach hakodesh escorting him after he has bitachon that he will certainly get what he wishes, as the Chazon Ish describes.

QUESTION

Chazal say that blessing can only come to the world if a person davens for it. Is it enough just to have bitachon and you don't need to daven for it?

ANSWER

If you learn well the words of Chazal and the sefarim on this topic, we see that Chazal teach us how tefillah and bitachon are two different levels. When it comes to filling whatever we need and gaining blessing in our life, there are two powers to accomplish it – either tefillah or bitachon. Bitachon is a higher level than tefillah. If a person is at the level of bitachon, he doesn't need to daven specially for what he needs, because he has bitachon that he will certainly get what he needs. Whereas if a person is at the level of tefillah, he hasn't yet reached the level of bitachon, so he needs to daven a lot for what he needs, because he doesn't have bitachon that Hashem can give him everything he needs without making additional effort. When we stood at the sea and the Egyptians were chasing us, Hashem said to Moshe, "Why do you scream to Me? Say to the children on Yisrael and journey on." Chazal explained that Hashem was telling Moshe that now is the time to graduate from the level of tefillah to the level of bitachon – stop crying out to Me and just plunge into the sea even when the water is coming up to your neck.

QUESTION

If bitachon is a higher level than tefillah, can we say then that if a person has total bitachon, he is exempt from davening?

ANSWER

Since there is no person on this world who is at a total level of bitachon, there is no person who is exempt from davening.

QUESTION

But the Avos had complete bitachon, so they should have been exempt from davening. Why then did the Avos establish the three tefillos?

ANSWER

If you examine the Torah's stories of the events of

the lives of the Avos, you will see that all the tefillos which they established were done before they reached their total level of bitachon. But after they reached their total level of emunah and bitachon, they didn't need to daven anymore.

QUESTION

But Rabi Shimon bar Yochai mainly learned Torah yet he was exempt from davening.

ANSWER

Over there, he was exempt from davening for an entirely different reason, not because of bitachon. It was because he was involved completely in the eternal, in Torah, and therefore he was exempt from all that was transient and temporary.

QUESTION

The concept that we can draw any blessing we want just by having bitachon [the "higher mode of bitachon"] as long as it's something we need intrinsically for our soul [as the Rav explained] - if we need that thing so much for ourselves, then how are we able to survive right now without it?

ANSWER

There are things which we need for our intrinsic existence yet we aren't in immediate danger if we don't get them right now. We get these needs over the course of time in a continuous, ongoing process. For example, Chazal said that one who has no children is like a dead person. Now, is a 2-year old child also like a dead person, since he doesn't have children? He will certainly need to have children, but only after he's of marriageable age and he is eligible to have children. But it is true that there are certain needs which, once a person feels the need for those things, he gets a feeling that he needs it right now. If he waits too long, he suffers in the meantime, full of worries and concerns. We need to understand that a certain need can arise now since a person will need it eventually. Yet that doesn't mean that a

person can't go on right now just because he doesn't have that important thing which he's missing. He is missing something essential for his well-being, but the nature that Hashem has designed Creation with is that a person fills his needs only gradually and through a continuous process. So as soon as a certain need will arise and the person feels that he is missing something that he needs, it bothers his menuchas hanefesh (serenity of the soul).

Really he feels pained and bothered as a result of an absence of bitachon. He doesn't know if he will get what he's missing. Even if it seems to him that there's a chance of his need getting filled, the lack of certainty and lack of clarity of "When? How will it happen?" is troubling to him and weighs down on his heart.

Now is the time to use the approach of the Chovos HaLevovos on bitachon – "If something is good for me, then it will certainly come to me. If it's something not good for me, then it won't come to me." To say it in other words: Strengthen your emunah (belief in Hashem) and then access your bitachon. "If what I'm missing is something that I'm truly lacking and I really need it, then I'm certainly going to get it. And if what I'm missing is not a true need, then I'm not missing out on anything by not getting it."

To the extent that a person feels the ruach hakodesh escorting him upon having bitachon that he will get what he needs (as the Chazon Ish describes), the anxiety that a person has due to his doubts (about his void getting filled or not) gets removed, allowing him to be serene again. This is because the ruach hakodesh escorting him allows him to feel the bitachon that everything will work out.

But when a person does not have this sense of ruach hakodesh escorting him (after having bitachon), coupled with the fact that his emunah and bitachon in Hashem hasn't penetrated enough

into him (and this is the case of most people, who do not have complete emunah and bitachon), the person suffers inside while he's waiting for his need to get fulfilled. And when a person is in such a situation, instead of using the approach of the Chovos HaLevovos ("If something is good for me then it will certainly come to me"), he will usually imagine, according to his perception, that he is missing something which he truly needs. He will suffer very much internally until he gets what he feels he's missing.

QUESTION

The concept that a person is not able to have bitachon for something additional that he doesn't really need – can we say that whenever we are afraid [about not getting what we want] we are always being afraid about not getting something additional that is not an intrinsic need?

ANSWER

Correct! Being afraid [about not getting what we wish for] can only be about [not getting] anything "additional" that I'm missing which I am wishing for. If something is an intrinsic need, then a person has no reason to fear not getting that need.

QUESTION

This concept the Rav spoke about - of doubts that plague a person when a person isn't sure of why he feels a certain need, and therefore he's not sure what kind of bitachon he should use – and in the example the Rav gave of a father who has a daughter trying to find her shidduch and it's taking time, or a couple who are having difficulty bearing children – let's say they aren't sure about how to have bitachon in these situations. But we see that the way of the world is that people get married and they have children. So doesn't that mean it's always good for a person to get married and it's always good for a person to have children? How can you apply here bitachon of "If it's good for me, then

yes, and if it's not good, then it won't happen?" Shouldn't a person instead have bitachon that "It's certainly good for me to be married, so I will have bitachon that it's going to happen. It's certainly good for me to have children, so I have bitachon that it will certainly happen"?

ANSWER

While it's true that the way of the world is to get married and have children, as most of the world does, there is a reality that a few people don't get married and a few people don't have children born to them. This small percentage does exist. Certainly if a person ended his life and he never got married or never had children, it was a decree from Above that this was the best thing for that person and it was good for him/her to be in this situation. Since there are a few people who never end up getting married or having children, that creates a possibility for all those who are currently trying to find their shidduch or who are in the midst of trying to bear children – they can be doubtful and worry that maybe they will end up in the group of those few people in the world whom it's good for them that they never got married or had children. And therefore, there's always an issue of what kind of bitachon to have (and a person can't just say "It's certainly not good for me if I won't end up getting married or having children).

QUESTION

But it's only a few people in the world who don't end up getting married or having children, so why should that create a valid doubt for all those who are waiting for their zivug or for children? And since it's only a few people who end up like that, why do we conclude that this was good for them, why don't we instead say that they messed up? Unless a person has ruach hakodesh that it's somehow good for him to remain single or infertile, we should conclude that since the way of the world which Hashem runs the world in is that most people get married and have children, then it's certainly good for all people to get married and have children. Therefore, shouldn't

a person always have the bitachon that "Since it's good for me to get married and have children, I have bitachon that it's certainly going to happen"?

ANSWER

That doesn't mean that there is one right way that's good equally for all people in the world. Rather, for the the few people in the world who don't get married and don't have children, it is good for those people. Although for most people in the world it is good for them to get married and have children, there are a few people in the world who have a different "good".

QUESTION

If a person is hungry and needs food, does he need to have bitachon that his food will certainly come to him?

ANSWER

Very good question. But even in this classic example, it is not necessarily true that a person has to use the power of "higher mode of bitachon" [of making anything happen], because who says that this person wasn't decreed on Rosh HaShanah to be among those who were decreed to die from hunger?

QUESTION

So then even if something is necessary for one's survival, can we say that he's necessarily going to get it, since perhaps it was decreed by Heaven that he won't be able to get right now (and therefore he won't survive)?

ANSWER

That seems to be true, but the exceptions to those are those who can feel a sense of ruach hakodesh after they have bitachon, as the Chazon Ish spoke about, which is an indicator that such a need is necessary for the person's very survival, where it is certain that the person is going to get what he needs.