

LISTEN TO BILVAVI ON KOL HALASHON ISRAEL 073.295.1245 USA 718.521.5231 (2&gt;4&gt;12)

PURPOSE OF BEIN HAZEMANIMQUESTION

I understand the importance of “Bein HaZemanim” from a deeper place in my heart. However, can the Rav elaborate on the true need for Bein HaZemanim, from the Torah’s perspective?

Also, if a person works, does he need a longer vacation time?

ANSWER

Creation is designed in a way that we need action and serenity. We awake and we go to sleep. All of the creations – whether inanimate, organic, animal, or human being – need rest. Just as the body needs rest, so does the soul. The soul’s emotions and thoughts need to have rest. The soul is constantly in movement, whether it is expanding or contracting. This idea was explained in “Da Es Atzmecha”.

Therefore, whether a person learns Torah all day or works all day, there is no person who doesn’t need to take a break. The purpose of the break is so that the soul can cease from action and thereby have the strength to expand.

However, it is clear that the amount of time needed for this “break” is a factor that is relative to the individual. The length of time needed for Bein HaZemanim is not equal for all people. Also, the way that this break is spent, and what to do during this time, is a deep, subtle matter to know.

By definition, a “break” is about having time to calm down. Sometimes a person returns to his previous

place after having this quiet time, and at other times after having this quiet a person does not go back to his previous place as before, and instead he becomes involved with something else, and at a later point one can return to his previous place as before. Therefore, the purpose of Bein HaZemanim is for a person to take a break when he needs it, and as much as needs it. At the start of Bein HaZemanim, a person needs to calm himself. After that, sometimes a person will return to his original place [to resume what he was learning before], and at other times he will become involved with learning something else, which continues his “break”.

For one kind of person, a “break” means learning a different sugya. For another person, a break means learning at a different pace, such as learning bekiyus [superficially] instead of iyun [in-depth], or by focusing on halachah as opposed to iyun or bekiyus. Others, instead of learning Gemara, can take a break by learning mussar and Aggadta – instead of exerting the mind, they exert the heart. Instead of learning in a system, one can learn in a way that is more tailored to his unique soul, such as by studying other areas of Torah that are more appropriate for his soul to be immersed in. Each person needs to clarify where his main part of Torah is, and how can learn in a more relaxed manner.

Also, it should be noted that sometimes Bein HaZemanim arrives and a person may not have actually have a need such a long break. Or, a person may not need Bein HaZemanim at all. If that is the case, one should continue to learn, on his own level, as if he is continuing the zman.

Bein HaZemanim is also a time to acquire more inner

achievements that one does not ordinary reach during the regular routine of the year.

Therefore, the idea that Bein HaZemanim has been turned into a time to seek a wide array of enjoyments and materialistic, sensual pleasures is simply a hedonistic lifestyle, which originates from the gentile nations. It has no place in the life of any sensible person.

To conclude practically, it is up to each individual to figure out what relaxes him. Examples may include listening to songs (*which are of a pure source*), observing a scenic view, going to a new place, reading something light (*as long as it contains meaningful content*), etc. One also needs to determine which area of Torah learning and avodas Hashem is more “relaxing” for him.

## TESHUVAH & CLARIFYING MY 4 ELEMENTS

### QUESTION

After listening a lot to different shiurim of the Rav, and due to personal experiences I had from previous years, when trying to prepare for the Yom HaDin [Rosh HaShanah], I have come to the following conclusion. Although it is commonly accepted practice that a person should take on a “resolution” of improvement for the coming year, and those on a higher level make cheshbon hanefesh [self-accounting], I realized that none of this involves working on my middos and on balancing my “four elements.” This year, I am accepting upon myself to learn about the “four elements”, with their practical applications in my life. This will be in place of taking on specific resolutions of certain actions to do or any specific kind of self-accounting. As I explained, this is because from my personal experience, I am seeing that problems with middos can prevent a person from truly growing at this time of the year.

I want to hear from the Rav if my thinking is correct, or if the Rav doesn't agree with this. These thoughts are particularly on my mind during my avodah at this time of the year of the Yomim Noraim.

### ANSWER

1. For any sins committed this year, you need to write down a self-accounting on them, and see how you can fix those sins. You cannot wait to do this until you understand yourself better [rather, you need to do this even if you have not reached deep self-recognition of yourself].

2. In addition to learning about the “four elements” and how you can apply them practically in your life – which is a very good direction to take – you should also take upon yourself a small resolution to do a certain action of improvement, according to your current level. Pick something that is currently appropriate for you to improve on. This is because you also need to implement the power of “action”, even if it is only a little.

So there are three parts for you to do: Make a self-accounting about any sins you committed this year, and write down how you can repair them. Learn about the “four elements” and how they can apply to your practically. Accept upon yourself to do a small action of improvement, which you are able to do on your current level.

## CONNECTING TO THE TZADDIK OF THE GENERATION

### QUESTION

I want to ask several questions.

1) It is brought in sefer Likutei Moharan (299) that it is not possible to truly become close to Hashem unless a person connects to the true tzaddik of the generation. I have also heard that the view of the great leaders of Bresslev is that whenever the Likutei Moharan writes about the “true tzaddik” of the generation, he is referring to himself – Rabbi Nachman of Bresslev. Apparently we can see that many Gedolim throughout the generations, whether Lithuanian, Chassidic, or Sephardic, who were close to Hashem and to His Torah, were able to reach such high levels even though

they had nothing to do with Rebbi Nachman of Bresslev's path. How are we to understand this? Also, what does it mean that a person should connect to the true tzaddik of the generation?

### ANSWER

1) In sefer Tanya it is explained that there are those who are spiritually nourished by the tzaddik [of the generation] and they are consciously aware of it, while others are nourished by the tzaddik without being aware of it – this is called derech achorayim, “from behind”. A person connects to the tzaddik through connecting to the full spectrum of the soul of the tzaddik – by connecting to the tzaddik's actions, middos, words, thoughts, and will, etc.

### QUESTION

2) Also, are there other ways to connect to the true tzaddik, such as by learning his Torah, his wisdom, his advice, etc.?

### ANSWER

2) Yes – as explained above.

### QUESTION

3) Does each person have a different way of connecting to the tzaddik, since each person has a different soul root?

### ANSWER

3) Yes.

### QUESTION

4) In Likutei Tefilos, Rebbi Nosson of Bresslev composed prayers on how to find the true tzaddik. What does this mean, being that he himself was a student of the Rebbi Nachman [who, according to the view of great Bresslev leaders, was the true tzaddik]? Does he mean that a person can attain a more inner understanding in the words of the true tzaddik?

Much thanks to the Rav for all of the responses, and for his immense dedication for Klal Yisrael, for all of

the help in our ruchniyus and by giving us sage advice, with such wisdom and strength.

### ANSWER

4) Yes. In addition, a person should also find the “tzaddik” within his own soul [as explained in sefer Tanya].

## WHAT SHOULD I WORK ON FIRST?

### QUESTION

I want to ask a question which has been bothering me for some time, throughout learning all of the different variety of Torah from the Rav. The Torah of the Rav is all-encompassing, both in amount and in quality. Each series of the Rav demands a certain kind of deep inner work, both in terms of learning and in terms of acting upon the concepts. I'll give an example from my own personal learning experience, and I would be happy if the Rav can advise me about this. In the past, I learned in-depth the Rav's series on the 4 Elements, specifically the series on Fixing Your Earth, because earth is my dominant element. Then I stopped, because I wasn't seeing progress with myself. As the Rav himself says in that series, when a person doesn't see progress, he recedes backwards. Because I was feeling unsuccessful at working on myself in these areas, I felt that avodas Hashem just wasn't meant for me.

Currently I am learning the second volume of Bilvavi Mishkan Evneh, and I set aside daily study time for it, including time for self-reflection, as the Rav says to do. Recently I found a series of the Rav that was more realistic for me to implement, which was “Getting To Know Your Inner Redemption.” But even that I stopped, because I wasn't finding time to continue learning it.

I want to point out that I am very careful to deeply analyze the Rav's words and to also act upon them, and I am not simply looking for an intellectual experience. I aim to make my learning meaningful and effective in

my life. I feel that I am simply absorbing meaningful material [without it becoming actualized in my life]. I also want to learn the Rav's derashos on the festivals, which are each so meaningful to self-development. But in the meantime, the days are going by, and I am not getting anywhere.

I would like to know the Rav's advice for my situation, and I feel that this is a life-and-death issue for me, because my soul is in danger, since I am not reaching any growth, due to all the different troubles of life that come up. I also want to point out that in the last year or so, my health isn't the greatest, and this takes its toll on my time and on my emotional energy. I would be happy to receive the Rav's guidance on this matter.

### ANSWER

It is recommended that you figure out what your strengths are and what your weak spots are. Even within your weak spots, analyze which of your weak spots are stronger, and which of them are weaker. Try to figure out what your greatest weakness is, which is preventing you from further growth. Then you should learn about it and make practical changes, by seeing what you will need to do. Gather a lot of knowledge, and you will slowly go from one achievement to another, from one avodah to another avodah, and keep going higher.

## MAZAL VS. 4 ELEMENTS

### QUESTION

It's known that a person is comprised of the 4 elements, and each person has a dominant element in

his personal soul. I have a few questions about this.

1) Is a person's dominant trait/element dependent on the mazal (zodiac) in which he was born in? (*The month I was born in, Sivan, which has the mazal of "twins", corresponds to the element of wind. And indeed, I feel that this is my dominant element*). If a person, let's say, was born in the month of Adar, which has the mazal of "fish", and which corresponds to the element of water, is it still possible for him to have a different dominating element, which doesn't correspond to that month's mazal? Does a person born in the month of Adar (*the mazal of "fish"*) automatically have a dominant element of water?

In other words, does a person need to identify what his strongest element is, or can a person just assume that his dominant element corresponds to the mazal of the month that he was born in?

### ANSWER

A person's soul is comprised of its actual essence (*atzmus*) as well its outer garments (*levush*). The atzmus/essence of one's soul is always rooted in one particular element which is its primary element (*fire, wind, water of earth*). In addition to this factor, a person also has a levush/garment for his soul, which is called the mazal (*zodiac sign*). The word mazal is from the words "Yizlu mayim", "The water shall flow." With the Jewish people, the primary factor of the soul is the very essence of a Jew's soul, for the Sages state, "There is no mazal [dictating] over the Jewish people". Therefore, our main relationship with our soul is to relate to the very essence (*atzmus*) of our soul, and to relate only a little to our mazal. Therefore, a person needs to clarify

המשך סדרה

יום שני כ"א תמוז תשפ"ג 10/07/2023

20:30

רח' הרב בלוי 33 ירושלים

צורת אדם