

LISTEN TO BILVAVI ON KOL HALASHON ISRAEL 073.295.1245 USA 718.521.5231 (2>4>12)

PRACTICALLY SANCTIFYING THE PHYSICAL

QUESTION

The Rav has said that most people are heavily attached to the materialism of This World because of all the different luxuries and physical desires which they pursue, and this causes most people to be distant from Hashem. Only a few rare individuals on this world are really close to Hashem. It seems that the rest of us have no hope! How can we be close to Hashem when most of our being is immersed in the materialism and physical desires on this world?!

ANSWER

Disconnect on an emotional level from all of the attachment to materialism, like the Gemara says [regarding marital intimacy], "As if a demon forced him to do it" (*Talmud Bavli Nedarim 20b*). But this should not be done out of any feeling of pressure. Rather, it needs to come from a place of inner calmness in you that isn't attached to the materialism.

OVERDOING SELF-RECOGNITION

QUESTION

What would the Rav say if a person has a lot of emotional problems and imbalances in his personality and he requires a lot of "therapy", but, instead of going to a therapist (*who uses secular approaches and reads all the goyish psychology books*), he instead listens to the Rav's shiurim for many hours of the day, in order to heal his soul and to learn how to balance out his soul?

It seems that there is more of a place for this kind of person to spend a lot of time analyzing his soul (*for example,*

by listening to the Rav's shiurim about the soul). And we know that just as a person needs to go to the doctor when he's not feeling well and it's not considered wasting time from Torah study, certainly when it comes to illnesses in our soul, such as when there are imbalances in one's personality, it seems that a person would need to spend much more time learning about himself and doing "therapy" with himself for a longer amount of time, until he becomes emotionally healthy. There are probably many people like this, who have gone through all kinds of turbulence and rough situations and experiences in their life, and perhaps we can say that this is the situation of most people today (*whether they are consciously aware of their issues or not*).

So, it seems to me that even a man, whose main obligation is Torah study, would need to spend more time today in learning about his soul and how to balance himself out, by understanding about the 4 elements in his soul, and the 4 elements of his spouse, children, and parents, etc.

ANSWER

A man may spend a bit of his time of the day learning about the soul, but not most of his day. First of all, for most people, spending a lot of time learning about themselves would make them confused and they wouldn't attain clarity anyway. Even more so, however [this would be an imbalanced approach, because] a person always needs a balance between his actions, words, character traits, and thinking, etc. For most people, this [spending so much time on learning about the soul] would not create a proper balance in their lives. Even for someone who has a much bigger need to learn about the soul and to balance out his personality, it would throw him off balance if he would spend too much time learning about his personal soul.

This is the approach that most people need to take.

HOW DO I KNOW IF MY BITACHON IS REAL?

QUESTION

How can a person know if his relaxed and worry-free attitude about doing hishtadlus (*making effort*) when things aren't going well for him is really coming from truly having bitachon in Hashem, or if it's just his yetzer hora fooling him and causing him to run away from reality and just be lazy? Maybe he's really supposed to be doing more hishtadlus...?

ANSWER

The better a person can "listen" to what's going on in the different parts of his soul, the closer he is to acting truthfully, and the further he will be from being deluded by fantasies. Generally, one's bitachon depends on how well he is doing in other areas of his avodah. If a person is being realistic and responsible in all other areas of his avodah, then he will be more realistic and responsible when it comes to his bitachon. There are always elements of truth and fantasy that are affecting a person, and the only question is, how much. But a person cannot know the percentages so perfectly. It is a "holy doubt" that we have [which we need to be at peace with]. We need to always daven and cry to Hashem that He should guide us towards the truth.

CHILDREN – HOW A CHILD CAN ACCESS THE ALONE

QUESTION

I have gained tremendously by learning how to calm my negative feelings (*as explained in Getting To Know Your Self*). Is it possible to teach this as well to children, and is this

recommended? And how can I teach it to children? Also, when children begin to mature, they have a greater need for social connection and having a group of friends. At that stage, is it appropriate to explain to them of the need for silencing their negative feelings [and to learn how to become "alone" in the soul], and bring them to this inner point?

ANSWER

A child should be taught about the "inner world" in the form of girsa d'yankusa, "the learning on a child's level". It's like when we teach children to daven, make berachos, honor their parents, etc. and to do all these things on a "general" level. We learn Mishnayos with a young child on a "general" level, teaching him about general concepts, without trying to get him to understanding.

In addition to this, it's good to get our children used to thinking about intellectual questions, as explained in "Getting To Know Your Children." And every so often, it's recommended to take our child to a quiet place and discuss intellectual thoughts with the child. Gradually, and according to the child's current capabilities, we can allow a child to have some thinking time, observing him from a distance, and giving the child a point to think about. We can also provide a child with a pleasant, relaxing song to listen to. And every so often, the child can be trained to do this while sitting in the dark.

In this way, we can gradually train a child to have some access to the power of being "alone", in a calm, relaxing manner, accompanied by listening to a relaxing song. Like this, the child learns about the power of "alone" in a pleasant manner.

These are the practical actions we can teach a child, and this is besides for all the other matters of hashkafah that we need to teach a child about.



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