

ארבעה צריכים חיוזק (ברכות לב:) – שיתחזק אדם בהם תמיד בכל כחו (רש”י)

From the *Sichos* of Maran Rosh HaYeshivah Rav Gershon Edelstein ztvk”l • *Devarim* 5785

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## A Sichah Delivered in Yeshivas Meshech Chochmah L’Tzeirim Sunday, 7 Menachem Av, 5777 (2017)

### Every Single Person Always Has Nisyonos

It’s known that every single person has *nisyonos*, and there are always *nisyonos*. For example, there are *nisyonos* of *bittul Torah*, of davening with *kavanah*; and there are also *nisyonos* in the realm of *bein adam l’chaveiro*.

It’s natural that when a person experiences difficulties, he blames it on someone else; he thinks it’s Person A’s fault, or Person B’s fault... And he forgets the truth that everything is in Shamayim’s hands, and Shamayim decreed that he deserved it. And we’ve already discussed this.

### “Toil in It Day and Night” Includes Bein HaZmanim

But what’s really most important for now is the following: you shouldn’t think there’s any time a person is exempt from learning Torah — there is no such thing! As the *pasuk* states (*Yehoshua* 8:1), “And you shall toil in it day and night.” And “day and night” obviously includes *bein hazmanim* as well.

### Necessary Rest Is Avodas Hashem

However, resting during *bein hazmanim* is a need, after a full *zman* of learning. Sometimes, learning is difficult because a person is only learning because feels forced to learn, and not because he enjoys learning. This causes tiredness. However, even when someone enjoys learning and the learning interests him, after learning and straining himself too much, he needs to rest. His body needs rest.

You should know that when a person rests, it’s considered being “engaged in a mitzvah.” The Rambam writes in *Hilchos Deios* (3:3) that if a person goes to sleep so that he’ll have strength the next day to fulfill all his duties in *avodas Hashem*, he is serving Hashem even as he sleeps. It depends on his intent, *kavanah*. If he keeps this in mind as he rests, then even his sleep is considered *avodas Hashem*.

If so, the same can be applied to *bein hazmanim* — the rest and relaxation of *bein hazmanim* is *avodas Hashem*! Because he’s resting so that he’ll have strength and *koach*

to continue further during the next *zman*. Since that is the main purpose of the rest, it is *avodas Hashem*.

### No Exemption from Learning in Bein HaZmanim

But it’s not a time of being exempt from, or of a *hesich hadaas* from, Torah. If a person takes his mind off Torah or forgets about it, that’s called *prikas ol* — when one

## Preparation for Learning Perek “Tamid Nishchat”

Beginning this Elul, Ponevez Yeshivah and other *yeshivos* will be learning *perek tamid nishchat* in *Maseches Pesachim*, which deals with *inyanei Kodshim*. What follows is Rabbeinu’s *hachanah derashah* from the last time the yeshivah learned this *sugya*. The *sichah* was delivered at the end of the summer *zman*, on 7 Menachem Av 5779 (2019).

In Elul, we will be learning *perek tamid nishchat*, which deals with *inyanei Seder Kodshim*, real *inyanei kodshim*, and it really is very important to gain knowledge in *Seder Kodshim*. We’ve spoken about this before: if a person wants to know *inyanei kodshim*, he should learn *Maseches Zevachim*; learn the *mishnayos*, a few *perakim* with the Bartenura. He should specifically learn the first four *perakim*, which are the foundation of *kodshim*.

Some people already learned the *Mishnayos*, and they know it already. Anyone who didn’t, it’s a good idea for him to learn it — the first four *perakim* in *Maseches Zevachim* along with the fifth *perek*, *Eizehu Mekoman*. That’s five *perakim* — they include all the main foundations of *kodshim*, of *korbanos* and all the *avodahs*. It’s very important to know it, especially know that we’re about to learn *tamid nishchat*, that’s the preparation.

The truth is, you will be hearing *shiurim* on this, and before the *shiur* you have to prepare the Gemara well. It’s important to prepare the Gemara twice, over two days, once on the day of the *shiur* and once the day beforehand. And after the *shiur*, review what you heard. It would be best to review it at the beginning of second *seider*, as has been done in yeshivah over the years.

forgets his obligations. The Torah tells us about this (*Devarim* 8:11), “Beware, lest you forget Hashem your G-d.” And they said (*Avos* 2:1), “Know what is above you, an eye that sees, an ear that hears, and all your deeds are inscribed in the book.” You must remember, and not forget, the truth.

And this is applicable not only to adults, but also to young people! Anyone who is already bar mitzvah is obligated to observe all the *mitzvos*, just the same as an adult. There is no difference.

### Practical Advice for Bein HaZmanim

We definitely need *siyatta d'Shemaya* for this, but we also have to do *hishtadlus*, as they say (*Avos* 1:14), “If I am not for myself, who will be for me?”

The only solution is to set up a schedule before *bein hazmanim* and plan how to utilize *bein hazmanim* so that there will not be any *prikas ol*.

First decide **what** you'll be learning, which *masechta* or which *perek*, and decide on **where** you'll be learning too. Choose a good place to learn, where you won't have interruptions. Decide on a **time**, you should have a set time for learning, and a time for resting whenever you need to rest, because a person needs rest. Those are the main principles, in short.

### Learn Mussar During Bein HaZmanim

And there's another good *eitzah*: if a person learns *mussar*, a little bit every day, he won't have *hesich hadaas* from his obligations in this world, and he will fulfill his obligations.

As we said, even young people are obligated in all the *mitzvos*. *Adaraba*, it's much easier for the young people, and when you get used to behaving as you should already at a young age, it's not hard afterward either. When you get older, habit becomes second nature. So it's really very worthwhile.

There are some very interesting *mussar sefarim*. Every person can choose a *mussar sefer* that interests him and engages him. Things that are interesting have a profound influence.

### Be Included Among the Tzaddikim

It's a few days before Tishah b'Av, the time of the Churban. Chazal say (Yerushalmi, *Yoma* 1:1), “Any generation in which the Beis HaMikdash is not rebuilt in its days, it is considered as if it was destroyed in its days.” That is, the generation is to blame for the fact that the Beis HaMikdash is still in ruins.

The Rambam tells us the reason for this (*Hilchos Taaniyos*): if they would have corrected the sin that led to

the Churban, the Beis HaMikdash would have been rebuilt. The sin caused the absence of the Beis HaMikdash, and the rectification will cause the presence of the Beis HaMikdash. If so, if the Churban is continuing, that is a sign that the sins that caused it are continuing.

Since the Churban took place due to the sins of *sinas chinam* and *bad middos*, those deficiencies apparently are continuing. Of course, the entire world doesn't have bad *middos* and there are many *tzaddikim* in the world — and the *tzaddikim* aren't to blame, but the generation in general is guilty, because the *tzibbur* in general still hasn't rectified themselves in these areas. Every single one of us can be included among the group of *tzaddikim* who are not to blame for the Churban, who are not the cause of its perpetuation.

And how can we do that? By paying attention and through thought, and especially by maintaining a daily *seder* in learning *mussar sefarim*. *Mussar* increases our awareness to refrain from *bittul Torah*, to make sure our davening is with greater *kavanah*, and to improve our *middos* and act with *middos tovos*.

### Kibbud Av v'Eim When You Are Home

Especially during *bein hazmanim* when you are home with your parents, remember that *kibbud av v'eim* is one of the *Aseres HaDibros*. It's a very great, important matter.

### Caution About Shemiras HaLashon

And especially be careful about *shemiras halashon*. Be very careful not to speak *lashon hara* about others, because the *yetzer hara* of *lashon hara* is very strong. We daven every day “*netzor leshoni mei'ra*, protect my tongue from evil.” Mar the son of Ravina (*Brachos* 17a) wrote this *tefillah*, he would daven this *tefillah* three times a day, because the *yetzer hara* for this is very strong. It's so strong that we have to daven three times a day to be protected from it, and on Shabbos, we say the *tefillah* to be saved from *lashon hara* four times, since we say it in *Mussaf* as well. We see that we have a set *tefillah* in which we daven for this. It is a very difficult *nisayon*, but Chazal have already told us (*Yoma* 38b), “One who comes to be purified is helped.” When you do *hishtadlus*, you have *siyatta d'Shemaya*!

*Yehi ratzon* that every single one of us merits *siyatta d'Shemaya*. May we be *zocheh* to fulfill all our obligations, and that will really be a rectification of the sin of the Churban, and the Beis HaMikdash will be rebuilt speedily in our days.

## כל המתאבל על ירושלים זוכה ורואה בשמחתה"ס

“Whoever Mourns Over Yerushalayim’s Destruction Will Merit to See It in Its Rejoicing”

### Cry That We Aren’t Crying

The *poskim* say (*Mishnah Berurah* end of *siman* 551, in the name of the Ari) that during Bein HaMetzarim, one must cry for about a half hour every day over the Churban. We are very far removed from this *madreigah*, of crying over the Churban. It’s a very high *madreigah* that we are lacking, and we need to cry over that very fact, over the fact that we don’t have these sensitivities and we are not moved to tears and crying. We have to cry over that! And this is the right feeling that we should have, a feeling of pain over the Churban.

### Feeling the Churban in the First Few Generations

We see that the closer a generation was to the Churban, the more intense their feelings of mourning were. The *pasuk* (*Ezra* 3:12) relates, “And many of the Kohanim and Levi’im and the heads of the fathers’ house, elderly men who had personally seen the first Beis HaMikdash when its foundations were laid, were weeping in a loud voice, and many [others] with a shout of joy, to raise their voice.” When the second Beis HaMikdash was built, there were some *kohanim* and *levi’im* who remembered the first Beis HaMikdash, because only seventy years had passed since they went out to Galus Bavel. Some of the exiles to Bavel came back to Yerushalayim and they remembered the first Beis HaMikdash. And when they saw the second Beis HaMikdash being built, they wailed loudly, because they felt what was lacking in the second Beis HaMikdash, which was not the same as the first Beis HaMikdash.

Even though during the second Beis HaMikdash, all the *avodahs* were done and all the *korbanos* were offered, and they fulfilled all the obligations of *korbanos* as there were during the first Beis HaMikdash, it still wasn’t like the first Beis HaMikdash. Indeed, Chazal tell us (*Yoma* 21b) that five things were present during the first Beis HaMikdash that were not present during the period of the second Beis HaMikdash. Similarly, there was less *kedushah* and less *hashra’as haShechinah* in comparison to what there was during the first Beis HaMikdash. And even though all ten miracles that occurred in the first Beis HaMikdash were probably present during the second Beis HaMikdash too, since those five things were missing, and the *kedushah* was not on the same level as it had been in the past, anyone who had seen the first Beis HaMikdash experienced a sense of great pain, to the extent that they raised their voices and wept!

The next *pasuk* in *Ezra* continues: “And the nation did not recognize the voice of the shout of joy because of the voice of the people’s crying.” There was a *tzibbur* who was happy, who raised their voices in joy; they were so happy about the rebuilding of the second Beis HaMikdash, as the *pasuk* states, “And many [others] with a shout of joy, to raise their voice,” but on the other hand, there was loud wailing of those who had seen the first Beis HaMikdash. The voice of joy belonged to those who hadn’t seen the first Beis HaMikdash, “And the nation did not recognize the voice of the shout of joy because of the voice of the people’s crying.” The sound of the wailing and crying was so powerful that no one could hear the shouts of joy. The sound of crying was stronger than the sound of joy!

That’s how deep the feeling was, the feeling of the deficiency of *kedushah* and *ruchniyus*, and the lack of the closeness of “sons who were exiled from their Father’s table,” they were missing the level of *kirvas Hashem* that should have been. They felt it so profoundly that it made them cry so bitterly. And even though it was already seventy years later, and apparently most of the *tzibbur* did not see the first Beis HaMikdash, the sound of crying that rose from that small group of people who had seen the first Beis HaMikdash was the overpowering sound. This is a high *madreigah*! **All of a person’s *madreigos* depend on his *hergeishim***, how much does he feel the *kedushah*, and what *hergeishim* of *kedushah* does he have.

(Excerpted from a *sichah*, Av 5761/2001)

## Woe to the Sons Who Were Exiled from Their Father's Table

The Gemara tells us (*Brachos* 3a) that after the destruction of the Beis HaMikdash, every day a *bas kol* announces, “Woe unto the sons who were exiled from their Father’s table.” We must understand that we are in the same situation now, we are sons exiled from our Father’s table. Imagine how people feel if they have a father, but their father banishes them, distances them from his table and does not want to see them; that’s the same feeling the Churban should evoke in us — the feeling of children who have a father, but they have been exiled from their father’s table! And we are very far removed from this feeling.

The Gemara also tells us (*Taanis* 29a) that during the Churban Beis HaMikdash, groups of *pirchei kehunah*, young *kohanim*, gathered together and climbed up to the roof of the Heichal. They were holding the keys to the to the Azarah and they threw them upwards and said, Ribbono shel Olam, since we did not merit being faithful treasurers, these keys will be delivered to You. And it says that something similar to a part of a hand came out and accepted the keys from them. We can explain this statement as follows: Shamayim told them: You should know that your *hargashah* is desirable and it rose up to Shamayim like *korbanos*, which are a pleasant fragrance to Hashem.

This is an indication of the feelings that young *kohanim* felt during the time of the Beis HaMikdash. The Gemara then goes on to say that afterward, they jumped and fell inside the fire. It’s understood from the Gemara that this was mentioned as a *maalah* — it was not considered suicide; it was actually Kiddush HaShem. Anyone who throws himself into fire as a result of such feelings, that is Kiddush HaShem. These are the feelings people felt, and that we should be feeling too, but we are very far away from them.

(Excerpted from a *sichah*, Av 5760/2000)

## Minhagei Aveilus Arouses Our Feelings

Therefore, in order to strengthen these *hergeishim*, we have *minhagei aveilus*. There are *halachos* that are from the Gemara, there are *minhagim* that are just customs. These customs are also a *chiyuv*, obligatory, but they are customs that we added in later generations. For example, some of these are the *halachos* that are specific to the Three Weeks, and refraining from eating meat or drinking wine throughout the Nine Days. These are *minhagim* that are not *halachos* and are not mentioned in the Gemara.

In the first few generations after the Churban, this was not necessary. The *halachos* and *chiyuvim* that the Chachamim instituted were enough for them, and served to arouse their *hergeishim* to feel the Churban and to properly mourn over Yerushalayim. However, in the last generations, since there has been a decline in *hergeishim*, we needed other things that would strengthen our *hergeishim*. That’s why additional *minhagim* of *aveilus* were added.

For example, the custom to recite *Al Naharos Bavel* or *Shir HaMaalos* at every meal was added so that we’d remember the Churban. The *Mishnah Berurah* writes (1:11), “And the main thing is that he should know what he is saying, and to have *kavanah* in his heart.” That is, the main thing is to feel, and not just to say the *pesukim*. Feel the lack of the Beis HaMikdash.

## The Beis HaMikdash Is the House of Our Lives!

On Monday and Thursday after Krias HaTorah, we say, “*Yehi ratzon*, May it be the Will of our Father in Heaven to establish the House of our lives.” That is, the Beis HaMikdash is called “the House of our lives,” and it is a house of life! Because when we don’t have the Beis HaMikdash, there is a lack in our lives, and there’s a lack in our vitality. **This is the truth; this is what our *hergeishim* should be.** We are so far removed from these feeling, but this is the reality and the truth.

And anyone mourns over Yerushalayim’s destruction will merit to see it in its rejoicing (*Taanis* 30b). “Mourning over Yerushalayim” means that a person should feel pain over the fact that he is lacking the *kedushah* and all the *sheleimus*. He feels he’s lacking the *sheleimus* that he should have received from the *kedushah* of the Beis HaMikdash. The higher *madreigah* of *kirvas Elokim* a person has, the more he will feel the lack of *ruchniyus* and *kedushah*, and the more he will mourn over it! The level of joy he will feel with the Geulah — “he will merit to see it in its rejoicing” — will be commensurate with amount of mourning and pain he felt over the Churban.

(Excerpted from a *sichah*, Av 5763/2003)

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*Dedicated by the Kroll Family, Los Angeles*

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בתורה וביראת שמים