

אָמַר רַבָּא: בְּשַׁעָה שְׁמַכְנִיסִין אָדָם לְדִין, אוֹמְרִים לוֹ: נְשֵׂאתָ וְנָתַתָּ בְּאִמוּנָה? קִבַּעְתָּ עֵתִים לַתּוֹרָה? עָסַקְתָּ בְּפִרְיָה וּרְבִיָּה? צָפִיתָ לְיִשׁוּעָה? פְּלַפְלַתָּ בְּחֻכְמָה? הִבְנַתָּ דְבָר מִתּוֹךְ דְּבָר? וְאַפִּילוּ הָכִי, אִי יֵרָאֵת ה' הִיא אוֹצְרוֹ — אֵין, אִי לָא — לָא. מְשַׁל לְאָדָם שְׂאֵמַר לְשְׁלוּחוֹ: הֲעֵלִיה לִי כּוֹר חִיטִּין לְעֵלְיָהּ. הֲלָךְ וְהֵעֵלָה לוֹ. אָמַר לוֹ: עֵירַבְתָּ לִי בְּהֵן קָב חוֹמְטוֹן? אָמַר לוֹ: לָאו. אָמַר לוֹ: מוֹטָב אִם לֹא הֲעֵלִיתָהּ.

With regard to the same verse, **Rava said:** After departing from this world, **when a person is brought to judgment** for the life he lived in this world, **they say to him** in the order of that verse: **Did you conduct business faithfully? Did you designate times for Torah study? Did you engage in procreation? Did you await salvation? Did you engage in the dialectics of wisdom or understand one matter from another? And, nevertheless, beyond all these, if the fear of the Lord is his treasure, yes, he is worthy, and if not, no, none of these accomplishments have any value. There is a parable that illustrates this. A person who said to his emissary: Bring a *kor* of wheat up to the attic for me to store there. The messenger went and brought it up for him. He said to the emissary: Did you mix a *kav* of *homton*, a preservative to keep away worms, into it for me? He said to him: No. He said to him: If so, it would have been preferable had you not brought it up. Of what use is worm-infested wheat? Likewise, Torah and mitzvot without the fear of God are of no value.**

A discussion on **The Six Questions** based on **Shabbat 31a**

Some Textual Questions to ask Chanichim:

- Do you think there is significance to the order of the questions?
- What do you think of the translation of “emunah”?
- Do you think there is anything that groups the first three and last three questions together?
- What is the parable (mashal) supposed to show?
- Is “fear of God” a good translation of “yiraa hashem”?
- Why does it say “salvation” instead of moshiach?

Some General Questions to ask Chanichim:

- What broader characteristics do these 6 questions show about Judaism? Why do you think they are valued so much?
- Why do you think fear of heaven is held above the other five?
- Why does Judaism hold procreation in such high regard? What about people that can't have kids?
- What do you think the difference between “Torah” and “chachma” is? What kind of educational process do you think “Pilpul” describes?

Some Personal Questions to ask Chanichim:

- Is this Gemara shocking to you? Do you think it should be taken literally?
- Can you think of ways it could be easy to slip up when it comes to conducting business and being Jewish?
- How much Torah do you think people should learn? Do you think people should learn daily?
- What questions do you have about the coming of Moshiach? Do you await him faithfully?
- What do

Other sources and quotes to bring into discussion:

Rashi on Gemara:

Did you set times - because one needs to deal with Derech Eretz [normal life, such as work], if there is no Derech Eretz there is no Torah. Therefore, one needs to set specific times for Torah study lest he be pulled into Derech Eretz for the whole day.

Did you expect salvation - according to the words of the prophets.

Chafetz Chaim:

The Torah did not require a plain man to learn day and night and not ply an occupation at all, but to ply an occupation and to set aside times for Torah study. And, indeed, the Torah commanded that this be done with faith and without deceit, as our sages of blessed memory have said (Shabbath 31a): "A man is asked [when he is brought to judgment]: 'Were you honest in your dealings? Did you set aside times for Torah study?'"

Midrash Eichah Rabbah 2:13:

“yesh *chochma* bagoyim taamin; yesh *Torah* bagoyim al taamin” – that there is wisdom by the nations believe; that there is Torah by the nations, don't believe.

R'Yitzchak Breitowitz:

“How we conduct ourselves in business is not only a test of our love for God and our moral character; it is “the acid test of whether religion is simply relegated to an isolated sphere of human activity,” “It is business ethics, one could posit, above all, that shows God coexists in the world, rather than God and godliness being separate and apart.”

Quotes: “Set the times to Torah and not Torah to the times...”

“In looking for people to hire, you look for three qualities: integrity, intelligence, and energy. And if you don't have the first, the other two will kill you.”

A Related Story: Life is like a postcard

Don't kill time and don't waste time, because when it's gone, we can never get it back. The revered Hafetz Haim wrote that life is like a postcard.

On one side of the card is a picture; the other side has a space for an address and comments. At first, we write in large handwriting, but as we get near the bottom of the postcard, we see that there is 34 AUGUST 23, 2013 IN PLAIN LANGUAGE STEWART WEISS hardly any space left, so we write in tinier letters, trying to cram as much as we can into the space left. In life, too, we think we have all the time in the world, but when we get older, we realize how much we have left to do, and how we must squeeze it all into the remaining time that is left to us.

In addition to the crime of wasting time, there is also the need to spend our time profitably. At a subway station in Washington, several years ago, a man with a violin played six Bach pieces for about 60 minutes. During that time, approximately 2,000 people went through the station, most on their way to work. After about three minutes, a middle-aged man noticed that there was a musician playing.

He stopped for a few seconds, and then he hurried on to meet his schedule.

About four minutes later, the violinist received his first dollar; a woman threw the money in the open violin case and, without stopping, continued on her way. At 10 minutes, a three-year-old boy stopped, but his mother tugged him along hurriedly, like other parents who forced their children to move on quickly. At 45 minutes the musician played continuously; only six people stopped and listened for a bit, while 20 gave money but continued to walk at their normal pace. The man collected a total of \$32.

After an hour, he finished playing and silence took over. No one noticed; no one applauded. There was no recognition at all.

No one knew then, but the violinist was Joshua Bell, one of the greatest musicians in the world. He played one of the most intricate pieces ever written, with a violin worth \$3.5 million. Two days before, he had sold out a theater in Boston where the seats averaged \$100 each to sit and listen to him play the same music. Bell's playing incognito in the DC Metro station was organized by The Washington Post as part of a social experiment about perception and people's priorities.

It raised a crucial issue: In our daily life, do we perceive beauty? And if so, do we stop to appreciate it? If we do not have a moment to stop and listen to one of the best musicians in the world, playing some of the finest music ever written, with one of the most beautiful instruments ever made, then how many other things are we missing as we rush through life? The message here is that life has an expiration date; we had better enjoy it while we can.

Some Interactive Resources:

[Article](#) – “In Plain Language” – Jerusalem Post

[TED](#) - What really motivates people to be honest in business | Alexander Wagner

[Poem about Parenting](#): “Lullaby” by John Fuller:

Sleep little baby, clean as a nut,
Your fingers uncurl and your eyes are shut.
Your life was ours, which is with you.
Go on your journey. We go too.

[Youtube](#) - Bar Kochba: The Worst Jewish Hero Ever – BimBam

[Activity](#) – Get Chanichim to write down their conceptions of the afterlife anonymously then mix and read each others out. What are some misconceptions and conceptions we generally have about what happens after death? Maybe make a big chart together. Are they significant? Could some misconceptions radically change the way we are living our lives?