



Ticking Time

The word *zeman*, time, means *hazmanah*, preparation, which implies preparing for a future goal, as we see in the following examples.

1) *Hazmanah* where the gemara (Brachos 23b) says that *hazmanah* is a valid means to designate something for a specific need in the future.

2) The gemara elsewhere (Shabbos 153a) cites a parable of a king who invited (*zimein*) his servants for a meal. Meaning he designated his servants in preparation for their future admittance.

3) In the gemara (Moed Katan 9a), it uses the phraseology, "You are all *mezumanim* for a life in the next world." This means ready and chosen for entry into the next world.

4) The very concept of *zimun* at the end of a meal means enjoining and preparing towards one common goal.

5) Another example is where it says, "Be ready for a three-day period" (Shemos 19:15) and Onkolos translates *hevo zeminin*, be ready and prepared.

All these examples illustrate the point that *zeman*, time, refers to preparing for a future goal. This is the purpose of time — to use it in the right way which will lead us to the next world. It is to prepare for a future goal.

The Taamai Haminhagim (p. 102) relates that R' Shalom of Belz (1781-1855), the first Belzer Rebbe, recalled his younger years when he would smoke. Once when he was learning in the Beis Midrash, he saw one of his peers clean out his pipe and fill it. While he did this, R' Shalom learned a page of gemara. After observing this, he said, "If this object can take me away from a page of gemara, I cannot put it in my mouth anymore." From then on, he never smoked again. (Even if smoking wasn't dangerous to our health, we must realize what a waste of time it is. A person who smokes for a half hour a day wastes close to 200 hours yearly!)

The saying goes, "More important than adding years to your life, add life to your years." In the words of a different phrase: "It is not the years in your life that count. It is the life in your years that count." Many spend a tremendous amount of time trying to impress others. This may be in the clothes they wear, the house they live in, the car they drive or the subjects they talk about. There is a saying, "The more a person tries to impress, the less impressive he is." **The time people spend trying to impress others, they can spend doing things that others would be impressed by.**

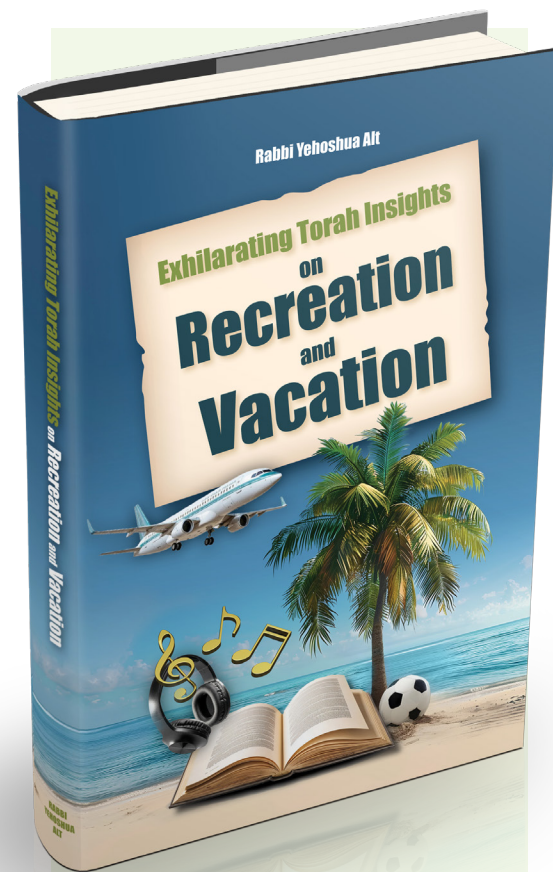
Imagine you wake up one morning with \$86,400 in your bank account which you couldn't invest or save. Whatever you would leave over at the end of the day would disappear. What would you do with that money? You would spend it all. Every day we are endowed with 86,400 seconds which are deposited into our bank account called life. And every day whatever we don't spend is lost forever. Time is infinitely more valuable than money! You cannot borrow time or trade for someone else's.

It has been said that the wealthiest place in the world is the cemetery. It is there that you will find dreams that were never pursued, ideas and inspiration never acted upon, music never composed, art never created, books never written, companies and organizations never built — endless potential never actualized. On a person's deathbed these dreams say, "We came to you and only you could have given us life but you didn't. And now we die with you."

R' Zelig Reuven Bengis (1864-1953), who was the Rav for the Eidah Hachareidis in Yerushalayim, once made a *siyum hashas* a few weeks after he had just made one. He explained that this *siyum hashas* was different and very dear to him, as this completion of *shas* wasn't part of his regular cycle. Being a Rav, he explained, he had many *simchos* among other events to attend. Many times these did not start promptly. Not letting these random few minutes slip through the cracks, he learned with this time. After 17 years of doing this, he completed *shas*, now making a *siyum* on it! Remember, "The key to time management is to see the value of every moment."

Adding up each moment we utilize can accumulate into something big. This is alluded to in the letter *alef*, which has a numerical value of one. However, when we spell it out, we get *elef*, 1,000. That is to say, by accumulating each moment we utilize, we can aggregate an abundant amount.

Let us compare a billionaire in time to a billionaire in wealth. That is, a young person who has billions of seconds remaining in his life (a million seconds is 11 days while a billion seconds is 31 years) but minimal money to someone who is elderly and has billions of dollars but not too much time remaining in his life. How much would these elderly wealthy billionaires pay to get some extra time? Time is priceless. Let's take advantage of the time we have in this world.



RABBI YEHOSHUA ALT

The newly released book "Exhilarating Torah Insights on Recreation and Vacation" is now available (as a paperback, hardcover and digitized version) for purchase and delivery on Amazon at <https://www.amazon.com/dp/B0DF4ZHPKJ> or by sending a WhatsApp to +972 54 849 5217.

Alternatively, you can call 054 849 5217 (Israel) or +1 917 732 2371 (United States) or send an email to yalt3285@gmail.com

Some of the questions discussed in this book are the following.

What role does recreation play in our service of Hashem?

What does the Torah teach us about music?

What lessons can we glean from specific types of recreation, such as sports?

Is there a mitzvah to take a vacation?

What does the Torah say about comedy and humour?

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