

Value of Time

The Chafetz Chaim, zl, knew how to value the gift of time. He knew the infinite value of every single moment. Once, when the Rosh Yeshivah of Radin, Horav Naftali Trop, zl, was gravely ill, the students of the yeshivah prayed fervently for his return to health. Alas, the situation did not improve. Out of love for their revered rebbe, each student donated a part of his own individual life to their rebbe. One gave a day; another, a few days; yet another a week. They decided to ask the saintly Chafetz Chaim to join in their endeavor. How much would he contribute? How many hours would he spare for the Rosh Yeshivah? The Chafetz Chaim sat down and made an accounting of the time he had expended, to determine how much he could "spare." He thought long and hard, as the students stared in awe and consternation while he seemed to wrestle with himself for a figure. Suddenly, he turned to them and said, "I will give you one moment!"

How startled and shocked they were from his answer. They had just witnessed an individual of unparalleled piety demonstrate to them the value of time. One moment of life was an eternity! It was invaluable. Here was an individual who never wasted a moment! It was G-d's gift. How could he squander it? When word of the Chafetz Chaim's reply spread through the yeshivah, it engendered an unprecedented inspiration and arousal for learning b'hasmadah, with great diligence. Indeed, it was later related that the hasmadah in the yeshivah that year surpassed that of any previous or following year. The students now understood the value of a moment.