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## Fixing Your Fire [Honor] - 007 Breaking Rules

### ***Honor Stemming From Wind-of-Water-of-Fire: Breaking Bounds In Order to Enter Into a New, Unbridled Realm***

Let us continue with the help of Hashem to discuss the element of fire and the trait of honor. Here we will discuss the particular root of honor that is **wind-of-water-of-fire**.

Honor is rooted in the element of fire, and “water”-of-fire specifically is when a person is “dragged” after honor; **“wind”-of-water-of-fire** is when a person “moves” after the pleasure of honor.

As mentioned earlier, honor is essentially an experience of leaving the normal bounds and limitations that one is used to, and to instead enter into a different world with different rules, where the limitations are broken. Honor is called “*kavod*” in Hebrew from the word *k’veidus*, “heavy”, because since honor is a force that is drawn down from the higher, spiritual realm and into the lower realm, it is called “heavy”, just as a heavy thing descends from a higher place to a lower place. A person runs after honor when he connects to the honor as his own honor, instead of connecting to its higher source. That is a brief summary of the idea explained in the previous chapter.

In the particular kind of honor that stems from **wind-of-water-of-fire**, a person will pursue honor in a way that breaks bounds of his current reality, and enter into new realms.

### ***The Power of Malchus (Royalty)***

This is also known as the trait in the soul of “*malchus*”, royalty.

*Malchus* (royalty) is connected with *kavod*\honor, as in the term “*Melech HaKavod*”, “King of honor”. The Gemara speaks about “*kavod melachim*”, honoring kings. *Malchus*\royalty is the main area where *kavod*\honor is revealed. Of course, there are many other manifestations of *kavod*\honor as well. The *Kohen Gadol* wore special priestly clothing that was for the purpose of *kavod*\honor, and there was also *kavod* accorded to the *nasi* (prince), which is also the same *kavod* that must be given to one’s parents. And on a general level, there is honor that must be accorded to the Sages. But the main area where *kavod* is revealed is when there is *malchus*\royalty.

Chazal state that “A king can break fences, and no one may protest him.”<sup>[1]</sup> What is the depth behind this, that a king can break fences and no one can protest him? One of the reasons behind this is because it is the *kavod*\honor that lays in *malchus*\royalty, which can break through boundaries.

The Torah says that the Jewish people may appoint a king over them who will be “upon you”, whom

you will fear and respect. The king is above the people and he is on a higher plane than the rest of the people; he is part of a different realm than they. Honor, the inner force behind royalty, descends from the higher realms and into the lower realms, and this is why a king can break bounds with no one protesting him. It is specifically the *kavod* (honor) within the *malchus* (royalty) that has the power to break bounds, because it is a power that comes from Above.

That describes the holy power of *malchus*, but there is also an evil, impaired use of this power to “break fences”. Chazal say about the Serpent that it “broke the fence of the world”, which refers to the evil power to break the rules and limitations we have on this world.

There are two ways in which a person breaks limitations and rules. One of the ways is when a person breaks the rules and limitations with which Hashem has created the world with, which is clearly evil. In order for a person to develop the idea of keeping to boundaries, he needs to develop the element of earth in the soul, which stabilizes the soul and keeps it within proper bounds. When a person is breaking the rules and limitations which Hashem has created the world with, this is actually the evil power of the Serpent. When a person uses this power in a holy manner, it is *malchus* (royalty).

### **Royalty vs. Rebelliousness**

What is the difference between the Serpent’s use of this power, with the power of *malchus*? When the Serpent broke the rules of the world, it didn’t want to accept Hashem’s rule over the world. It didn’t want boundaries altogether.

On a very deep level, there is also a holy use of this power: the desire in the soul to resemble Hashem and become connected to the Infinite, which enables the soul to transcend all boundaries. But here we are describing the simpler manifestation of this power, which is evil. Usually, when a person wants to break boundaries of this world, it is evil.

Specifically, it stems from an impaired element of fire in the soul. Fire jumps and skips from place to place, and it will burn through anything in its path which contains it, and then continue on its path, unbridled.

This evil power is also known as rebelliousness (*meridah*), or opposition (*hisnagdus*), or brazenness (*azus*). Here we will not get into the subtle differences between each of these terms, but the common denominator is that it is all describing the human nature of the soul to rebel.

It begins to become manifest in young children, usually around the age of three years old, where a child will begin to show signs of rebelling and not listening to rules. When a child is rebelling, this is not because he has a deep feeling of enjoyment in breaking rules (which would be the adult level of this power). A child isn’t yet capable of this mature kind of emotion. It is simply a desire to rebel and oppose rules, to do the opposite than whatever the reality demands. This evil nature is what we will explain about in this chapter.

The desire to break rules stems specifically from the element of water in the soul. Water can pull and drag things with it. When water drags something, it brings the item past where it is and it doesn’t let it stay in place. Therefore, one of the deep roots of the nature to break rules is the element of water. **Wind-of-water-of-fire** specifically is a desire to break rules in the form of honor.

The idea of breaking rules stems from the traits of evil brazenness (which is an impaired form of the element of earth), whereas the holy use of breaking rules (*malchus* (royalty)) is when one moves after the pleasure which results from expansion beyond the normal bounds. This idea can be seen in honor, which stems from a higher realm and is revealed in the lower realm. Honor (when it is holy) reveals the holy use of the power to break bounds.

Now let us see, with *siyata d'shmaya*, how we can go about using these powers of the soul.

### ***A Deeper Understanding of The Power To Break Bounds***

What is the deep root of the holy power to break bounds?

Let us clarify that we are interested now in learning about the holy use of the power to break bounds, and not the evil use. The evil use of this power, *azus* \brazenness, is not what we are dealing with right now. First let us analyze the holy power of breaking bounds. What is this power, and what is its deeper root?

We will first give the definition of it, which will be difficult to grasp at first, and then we will go on to the simpler and more fundamental definition of it, which will be of more practical relevance.

The bounds on this lower realm do not exist in the higher realm. The power to break bounds, at its holy root, is when one has reached a higher realm, and then he is no longer bound to the rules of the lower realm; on a more subtle level, the rules don't exist by him at all. He has reached a higher realm, where the rules of this realm do not exist. This power can be used for holiness, when a person overcomes his current reality and limitations.

### ***Transcending Your Current Reality***

Even more so, there is a deeper understanding of this concept (this is only true when using this power for holiness, where one breaks the limitations of his current reality when those limitations are confining him and not letting him achieve higher; as opposed to simply trying to break the rules that Hashem has placed us in, which is forbidden). How is the power of breaking bounds used for holiness?

Every person has a point in his life where he realizes that he is no longer at the beginning of his life, but at the current point he is in. One realizes that he is at a middle stage of his life; he is not at the beginning of his life, nor is he at the end. That is his reality, and he cannot move past it or go back in time; he can only move within it, and adhere to all the rules there. He will never be able to go past the bounds he is found in.

This is indeed how life looks like for a person who lives in a very organized way. He follows all the rules and never has an aspiration to escape the bounds he is in. However, if a person remains at this level, he loses the entire beginning stage of his life! In his childhood, he did not have *daas* (understanding), so that doesn't count as the beginning part of his life; he has rather begun from somewhere in the middle, so where is the "beginning" part of his life? He has "begun" from the middle of his life, but he has no actual "beginning" of his life, and he continues to live from there, without a beginning. Then he will be forever confined to whatever reality has happened since then - this life of his that has no solidly developed beginning.

For this reason, most people do not identify with any "beginning" part of their [mature] life. The beginning part of a person's life is out of the person's radar, because the person is unaware of it taking place, and by the time he becomes aware of it, he is no longer there, because it is now many years later, so he does not relate to it. As a result of this, a person has no solid 'base' to continue from. He is only starting his life from the middle of his life, but not from its beginning.

In contrast to the above, the truer way to live is to keep going back to a beginning, to always begin again anew, and on a regular, ongoing basis. This is also known as the power of "Avraham Avinu" in the soul, for Avraham began a new beginning on this world; he was an individual on this world who began a new path, which the entire world then did not have.

The world keeps becoming renewed, and this is the inner point in Creation. One can keep accessing the renewal in his soul, and to keep beginning again anew. In this sense, the “rules” can keep becoming renewed as well. This power in the soul allows a person to keep entering a place where there will be “new” rules. It means that one isn’t dependent on the surroundings and on the generation that preceded him. Instead, he can forge his own new path.

This concept is only to be used with regards to holiness, and not towards rules that are forbidden to break, whether by the Torah or as ordained by the Sages. We are speaking of a holy power in the soul, which can break bounds and form new bounds and new rules, as a way to move past one’s current limitations that are not allowing him to achieve higher levels. It is only holy when used to break the rules and bounds which should be uprooted, not the rules which need to be kept, such as the rules of the Torah and the Sages.

### **Example of “New Beginning” When Learning Torah**

This perspective in the soul, when reached, causes a deep change in the soul, and all of one’s life. The following is an example of how it is manifest.

When a person begins to learn a *sugya* of Gemara, instead of remaining limited in his thinking to understanding the information in front of him – the words of the Gemara, *Rashi*, *Tosafos*, the *Rishonim* and *Acharonim*, and then thinking about their words – he can instead think originally, from an entirely new beginning. Just as the Sages in the Gemara thought in an original way, so can a person think originally. This does not mean to argue on the words of the Mishna or Gemara, *chas v’shalom*; that is just being foolish. Rather, the idea here is that just as the Sage in the Mishna or in Gemara thought, so can you think, from an entirely new place to begin your thinking.

The superficial perspective towards learning Torah is, that after one has seen the words of the Gemara and the *Rishonim* and *Acharonim*, he then thinks of what he understands in their words, what questions he can ask, and what he can answer, etc. But the deeper perspective is to think originally about the topic being learned about. For example, he can ask himself: “What is the logical understanding here?” One might find a verse that he knows of, as an answer. But the point is that he can begin to think about a matter from a new beginning place of thinking.

In actuality, it takes a long time to develop this ability, and it cannot be used immediately when learning every *sugya* of Gemara. When learning Tractate *Yevamos*, a person cannot think, “What would be, theoretically, if there wouldn’t be a *mitzvah* of *yibum*?” If there wouldn’t be a *mitzvah* of *yibum*, there is nothing to think about when it comes to *yibum*. The same goes for the *mitzvah* of *orlah* – a person cannot think anything about *orlah* if there is no *mitzvah* of *orlah*. But when it comes to the laws of stealing, let’s say there it’s possible to think originally, with theoretical thinking.

### **Example 2 - Thinking About A New Life**

Here is another example of how this idea can be worked upon. Let’s consider the creation of Adam HaRishon. One can imagine: What would I be like if I was Adam HaRishon? What would I do, if I was the only person in the world, with no friends, no wife, no obligations to anyone on the world?” This is a very deep thought to think into.

Another example is that a person can think, “What would I do if I was born again, with a whole new life? How would I begin my life, as well as the rest of it?”

Getting used to this thinking helps a person acquire the ability to think anew, from a new beginning, and it enables a person to forge new beginnings for himself.

Here is another example. If a person would go back in time, what would he choose to do differently? Which habits would he choose to get rid of? Which gadgets would he choose not to buy? How would he begin his home differently, and how would he raise his children differently? This kind of thinking helps a person free himself from the unnecessary bounds that he has brought upon himself throughout his life, which tie him down and which limit him.

The following is a more dramatic example of this idea. A person can think: "What would I do if I would be born to a non-Jewish family?" Would he wish to remain as a gentile, or would he want to start his life over being Jewish?

There are many different examples of this kind of thinking, but the point is to begin thinking from an entirely new beginning. We can do this in spite of being at the middle of our life, which almost all of us find ourselves in. We can go back to a new beginning, by thinking from an entirely new beginning place to think. We don't have to think about our life from the way it began - rather, we can think of a whole new way to begin it.

### ***How To Use This Power Correctly***

While this is certainly calming to think about, it can also lead to delusions, if a person goes too far with this kind of thinking. But if done correctly, a person can see what his beginning has led to, how his current point is affected by that beginning, and then he can reconstruct the beginning as it should be.

This ability to begin again anew does not mean that a person can undo the past and act as if it never happened. It just means that there is an inner light that exists which enables one to transcend one's current life and its limitations, by forming new beginnings for himself.

This is the holy use of **wind-of-water-of-fire**: to expand one's current bounds, to make new rules, enabling a person to reach higher levels. This is also the understanding of the concept explained earlier that *kavod* (honor) is an imprint from the higher realm into the lower realm: by overcoming the bounds of the current realm, a higher realm can be accessed even within this lower realm; limitations can be broken, and new rules are formed.

This concept is not just a mere thought to intellectually consider. Going back to a new beginning point in the soul, by thinking from a new start entirely, awakens an inner flow of life ("*ruach chaim*") that is deep in the soul, allowing for endless and expansive possibilities.

Understandably, using this power requires much sensible thinking, and much prayer for assistance from Heaven, in order to use this power correctly.

### ***Practically Working On This Idea***

Practically speaking, in whatever situation a person finds himself in, such as in a particularly difficult situation, a person should make quiet time for himself and contemplate: "How would I begin my life again anew? How would I do things differently? How would I want things to happen, after doing so?" Observe how you would want to act, in that different possibility.

### ***In Conclusion***

Most people would not care about this "theoretical possibility", because they cannot see past their current reality. They remained confined to their current reality, with all its limitations and all that this places upon them, because in their minds, that is the reality and there is no way around reality. But this is actually an erroneous attitude. By thinking of how you want to do things differently, you can

see better where you stand now, and you can then gain creative solutions on how to approach your current issues.

Those who know how to use this power well are those who realize the meaning of “There is no light except from darkness” – they see how their past failures show them how to succeed now. They view the past failures as pure inspiration of how to improve in the now.

This is an inner way of living, a way of constantly accessing new beginnings, and it allows for a person to have a deep connection to Hashem, the Torah, and to oneself. It is a very fundamental way of living, and it is about how a person can connect himself to his own personal, rightful portion in the world.

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[\[1\]](#) Tractate Bava Metzia Chapter Six

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