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[Home](#) > Fixing Your Earth [Sadness] - 007 Masked Pain

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## Fixing Your Earth [Sadness] - 007 Masked Pain

*Sadness Which Comes From "Wind-of-Water-of-Earth": Sadness That Comes From Being "Scattered"*

With *siyata d'shmaya* we are continuing to learn about the element of earth, and the trait of sadness. In this lesson we will learn about sadness that comes from **wind-of-water-of-earth**.

As explained in previous chapter, it is the dryness in the element of earth which causes sadness. Water causes a person to become dragged after something, and wind can move in any of the four directions. Wind is different from the other elements because there are four different kinds of wind, because the wind can split into four different directions. We pray in *Shemoneh Esrei* that our wayward ones be gathered together from all "four corners of the world". The wind scatters anything into the four directions of the world. Wind is one element which splits into four different directions, whereas the earth itself is a scattered element to begin with. Earth is a scattered element, just like the wind, but it cannot gather everything into one place like the wind can. Only the wind can unify and bring everything thing.

**Wind-of-water-of-earth** is when a person is 'dragged' into different directions, and as a result, he is sad.

*Joy Comes From Being Unified, Sadness Come From Being Separated and Scattered*

It is written, "*Pull me after You*",<sup>[1]</sup> [1] and this is the holy use of being "dragged". This is the holy kind of *taavah*\desire, and unlike evil lusts, which cause separation and scattering, the holy desire of being pulled after closeness with Hashem is a desire that causes unity.

**Wind-of-water-of-earth**, when impaired, is sadness that comes from being dragged into different directions, where he becomes scattered. One of the main aspects of sadness is that it comes from the aspect of "scattering" in earth, besides for the dryness of earth. Sadness comes from contraction, a deathlike state, and after a person dies, his body becomes part of the earth and his body separates into many pieces. This is another root for sadness: becoming scattered.

Joy comes from being unified, whereas sadness comes from separation and scattering. When a person is sad, he sits alone, and when he is joyous, he connects to others. When a person makes a joyous occasion, he includes others in it. When one is sad and in mourning, the fact that others are visiting him and joining with him in his pain, is comforting. This is the depth of comforting a mourner. It is because the joining of others rectifies the pain of the aloneness which accompanies mourning.

Another example of this idea is Succos, which is called *chag ha'assif*, when the harvest is gathered,

and which is also the *zman simchaseinu*, time of our joy. The joy on Succos is because there is gathering together, joining, and unity. Joy comes from unity and joining together. It is not simply a joy over the gathering of harvest, which is a superficial joy, but a gathering of all spiritual power from the entire year. It is the point which gathers together the three festivals, as well as the *Yomim Noraim* and Succos.

As proof to this, the Four Species on Succos correspond to four different types of people, and they are all bound together. On the time of our joy, we bind together the Four Species and wave them in all four directions of the earth, to remove harmful winds, and the depth of it is to use the *lulav*, one species (all four species are called under the general name 'lulav'), which connects together the four directions of the earth. The *chag ha'asif* also "gathers" together all kinds of Jews on Succos to ascend to Jerusalem.

There are many other explanations as well, as to what the joy of Succos is and how this is related to *chag ha'asif*. In summary, joy comes from togetherness, while sadness comes from separation and scattering.

### *Pizur - Scattering of the Soul*

When one is scattered over different directions, he becomes sad. The *Chovos HaLevovos* says, "May the Merciful One save us from "*pizur hanefesh*", scattering of the soul." When one acts from clear *daas* [awareness], he is closer to living a more focused kind of life, which enables him to live in the inner, spiritual world, which is a world of oneness (*Echad*). But when one acts from a place of desire, or from his various other unfixed *middos*, he will become 'scattered' in any of the directions. He will have *pizur hanefesh*, a scattered soul.

**Wind-of-water-of-earth** is when a person has the nature to become dragged into being scattered all over many different directions. Here we are studying the sadness that comes from this scattering. *Pizur hanefesh* is a concept that has far-ranging effects, and here we are only addressing how it results in sadness. When a person has a nature of **water-of-wind**, he often seeks a lifestyle of *pizur hanefesh*, of being scattered between many different activities, and this leads to sadness.

One who is living a lifestyle of *pizur hanefesh* will often be sad, though he is not always conscious of it. He involves himself in many different activities, and as a result, he has constant *hesech hadaas*, he is always 'taking his mind off' his bothersome issues, and this actually makes him become sadder. And he doesn't even know why he feels sad deep down.

What does a person do when he's sad? There are many different things people do, in order to take away their sadness. Some people, when they are sad, cannot have any joy at all, not even a tiny bit. Others will allow themselves to be dragged after the desire for food, and others will get involved in some activity, so that they will get busy and avoid thinking about what is bothering them. However, this is just a way to have *hesech hadaas* (a removal of *daas*), and it does not actually remove the sadness. The person is merely avoiding any thinking about his sadness. Deep down, they are still sad, even though they are involved in various activities.

Of course, *hesech hadaas* can definitely ease the sadness. The Sages state that if one has a worry in his heart, he should speak of it to another, so that he will ease some of his anxiety. But it does not take away the sadness, it merely eases it.

If a person commits a sin, *chas v'shalom*, he is really bothered by it and saddened by it. But he doesn't want to deal with this unpleasant feeling, so he will try to have *hesech hadaas* from it, and he will take his mind off it in various ways. Just because he has forgotten about it, does that mean that

Heaven has forgotten about it and he won't be punished? No, it doesn't help that he is having a *hesech hadaas*. In his subconscious, he is really sad about the sin, but he manages to push his sadness deep into his subconscious, placing it into hiding, away so that he won't think about it and be bothered by it. He is still sad, and it is just that he has pushed it away into a place where he can't feel it.

### *Masked Pain*

If we meet someone who has a nature of **wind-of-water-of-earth**, it is hard to tell that he is sad deep down, because he hides it very well. This is because he has a nature to 'scatter' himself by throwing himself into many different activities, in order to take his mind off his troubles. He may come across to as unorganized or a bit chaotic from all the different things he does, but it doesn't look to us like he's sad from all of this.

Deep down, this kind of person is sad, because he is so scattered. He doesn't even know that he's sad, though, because he is 'dragged' after many different things, in order to take his mind of his troubles. He is always the kind of person who always manages to be "busy", and he has "no time to be sad" - but just because he doesn't show it, that doesn't mean he's not sad. It's just that he's pushing away his sadness deep into his subconscious.

To give a good example of this, when a person has a family member or parent who passes away, and he has to take care of the funeral and the burial. Usually he is not so sad before the funeral has taken place, because he is busy making the arrangements for the funeral and burial, he has to call a lot of people, and he has no time to think about his sadness. He isn't processing his grief yet. Only after the funeral and the burial does the grief begin to settle in, now that he has the time to think about what has happened. Now he is calm, and now he can think about his sadness.

We see from this that being busy enables a person to avoid his feelings of sadness. Deep down a person can be very sad, but he can make himself appear to others to seem as if he is happy, by always being busy, involved, helpful, useful, productive, etc.

When a person is 'scattered' in his soul all the time, from being involved with many different activities and pursuits, although he has 'no time to be sad', that is only true in the external sense. Deep down, in his internal world, the person with a nature of **wind-of-water-of-earth** can be full of a deep kind of sadness. He is just covering it very well, through his many different activities. He might even know that he is sad deep down, and he wants to calm his sadness, so he throws himself into various activities so that he can have a *hesech hadaas* and thereby avoid the painful feelings of his sadness. In doing so, he's trying to fool his own subconscious.

There are people who are consciously trying to remove their mind from their sadness by involving themselves in other activities, and certainly this is a valid way to ease sadness, and it can be somewhat healing to them. This is a sensible thing to do, and it can help - as long as a person is consciously aware that he is doing so for the purpose of having *hesech hadaas* from his troubles. But if a person isn't consciously trying to ease his sadness, and he simply throws himself into other activities so that he can have *hesech hadaas* - for the sake of taking his mind off the sadness, and not because he is trying to heal his sadness - then this is detrimental.

When a person is busy all of the time - even if he is known to others as a kindly, helpful person who is known for his good deeds - if he never has time for himself, it shows that he is out of touch with his own inner world. He has no inner calm in his life, because he never has time alone for himself. Therefore, he is constantly trying to calm himself down by throwing himself into other activities, such as by helping others, etc. He always has time to help others - but he will never be with himself.

It is really because he has a fear of being alone with himself. He is afraid to be alone with himself because he has a deep-seated fear that he may discover the depth of his sadness which he knows is laying in his subconscious. This kind of person also loves to be around people all the time, and he will never want to be alone with himself.

Often, this kind of person has difficulty with the mitzvah to go to a house of mourning and comfort the bereaved. He will make up all kinds of excuses why he doesn't want to go, and he will claim that it's too depressing to be in the company of a mourner. If you tell them that there is a verse, "*It is good to go to a house of mourning, and the living will take to heart*", he will reply that he doesn't get a good feeling out of going to a house of mourning (even though the *possuk* is clearly refuting his argument). The truth is that he really has a fear of meeting his own sadness. He is afraid that thinking about death will remind them of their own sadness, so he chooses instead to run away from this kind of situation.

When it comes the Three Weeks, the Nine Days, and Tisha B'Av, which is a period of mourning for the Jewish people, this kind of person will look for all kinds of different ways to take his mind off thinking about anything to do with sadness and mourning. He might delve into the 'intellectual' aspect of this period, by immersing himself in the *Midrashim* or the any of the relevant parts of Gemara and halachah that are relevant to Tisha B'Av, but it is all a way of running away from feeling any actual sadness about Tisha B'Av. This avoidance only causes him to become sadder and sadder, with the more he tries to take his minds off the sadness that he knows he's supposed to feel. When people act like this, they are really running away from their own selves.

A person with a nature of **wind-of-water-of-earth**, when left impaired, will try to run away from himself, within himself [by trying to fool his own subconscious]. A person with this nature can often feel a deep sadness, a feeling of bitterness that wells up from inside of them, and they don't know where it comes from.

Wishing to relieve themselves of this unexplainable sadness, they will try to remove the feelings of sadness in any possible, by drinking alcohol or any other means of 'medicating'. There can be several reasons for this mysterious kind of sadness, but one of the reasons is because of what we have described here: it is because they are "scattered" in their souls, by always involving themselves in different activities, so that they can take their minds off their sadness. All they know how to do about it is to run away from their pain. They can become conscious of the bitterness inside of them, but they don't know where it's coming from, and what to do about it.

### *The Fake Smile*

We are talking here of a sadness which usually cannot be detected by others. In most scenarios, people cannot tell on the person that he is sad. This is because he comes across as a busy, useful and productive person to others. He may be a very helpful or kind person, who is known for having a "good heart", and everyone has only the best to say about him, but in reality, his constant involvement with helping people is really a way for him to run away from himself.

He appears to others to always seem fine, he looks basically happy. And he may always be smiling at others, making sure to always give others a pleasant countenance (as the Sages state, that one should give a pleasant, smiling countenance to others), but this is all a mask he is wearing, for the terrible sadness that he is really feeling deep down, which others cannot see.

The Sages praise the act of smiling at others and showing others a pleasant countenance, but this kind of person who smiles at others isn't smiling out of any inner joy in his heart, because he has none. He may be smiling at others because he read in the *Chovos HaLevovos* says that "A pious one

has a shining face, even though there is mourning in his heart". [2] [2] When these words of the *Chovos HaLevovos* are understood simply, it seems to imply that a person can be sad and mournful in his heart, but he doesn't show it outward to others, and he makes sure to smile at others even though he is sad deep down.

Just because a person is smiling at others all the time, that doesn't mean he is happy. He can still be terribly sad, in his heart. But even more so, by smiling at others and misleading them into thinking that he's happy, when he's really not, he is projecting a false, happy image to everyone that he meets. And this is how he lives his life.

The words of the *Chovos HaLevovos*, that one can be mournful in his heart yet show a happy face to others, is only speaking about a person who also has some joy in his heart, who isn't entirely sad in his heart. With such a person, the smile that he shows others is emanating from the inner joy that exists in his heart, in spite of the fact that he also may have things to mourn about and be sad about in his heart. Even though he has some sadness and mourning in his heart, he chooses to let the joy in his heart come out also, and that is what he lets people see. He shows others a happy face because he is showing others the inner joy that is also present in his heart.

It does not make sense that the words of the *Chovos HaLevovos* should be understood simply, that a person who is sad in his heart should smile at others anyway and fool them into thinking that he is joyous, when the reality is otherwise. That would be an entirely fake smile, and it is misleading to others. We do find that when it comes to anger, one is allowed to show an angry face at others when they act incorrectly, but he must not feel actual anger in his heart. But this was not said about joy. If one shows others that he's joyous, when in reality he's not, he is fooling them into thinking that he is happy. On his outside, he projects a happy image to others, while on the inside, things are complete different. It is a false way of living.

If a person thinks that the *Chovos HaLevovos* means that one should smile at others even when he is not happy at all inside himself, he is not being truthful. He is one way on the outside, and a different person on the inside. It is falsehood! People who smile at others all the time, when they are not really happy at all, may get much reward in Heaven for all the broken hearts that they have healed with their smile - but they are not living truthfully! It creates a contradiction between one's outer world and his inner world. The person projects a happy image outward to others, but on his inside, he is sad, and he will become sadder and sadder, with the more that he gives the 'fake smile' to others.

As it was explained here, it can be difficult to notice the sadness in a person if his sadness is coming from **wind-of-water-of-earth**, because such a person tends to throw himself into various activities so that he can take his mind off his sadness, and therefore he appears to be a busy, productive person to others, who likes to be around people, and that is why it's hard for people to notice his sadness. That is why such a person suffers greatly inside, because he is usually suffering and no one knows about it.

Now let us see how to repair this issue.

### *Coming Out of Disparity and Entering Into Oneness*

Since the sadness here stems from the problem of becoming "scattered", it is clear that the way to fix this issue is: through the power of focus. One should refer to the series of "*Fixing Your Focus*", where we elaborated much about this point.

To be brief, all "scattering" comes from the perspective of our outer, external world, where there is "a lot" in front of us [seemingly], whereas the power of focus is a perspective that comes from the inner

world, which is “oneness”. The more a person enters into the inner world, the more “oneness” he will see. He will see more and more that everything is really one, for everything is ultimately unified through *echad*, the oneness, which binds all the details in Creation together.

This is a hard concept for people to grasp at first. A person starts out learning about the letters of the *Aleph Beis*, and he sees that there are 26 letters, and that each letter can be pronounced in many different ways. Then when he gets older and he learns Gemara, he sees that there is an endless amount of details in Torah. He sees that there are so many different points in the Torah, and it seems that there is a myriad amount of points in the Torah, to learn about and remember. It seems, then, that the more one enters into the Torah, he discovers more and more information. It does not seem that the inner world is oneness, and that everything can be unified into one point.

But that is really a superficial perspective. The inner perspective is the very opposite of this. Here is a clear example. The Creator is one, so to speak. He created one creation, the Torah, and the nation Yisrael is a part of the Torah. This is all one unit. After the creation of the nation Yisrael, the 70 nations were formed, and then the endless amount of creations after them. But at the root, all of the creations are one. The deepest point in the soul, which is called the *Yechidah*, is one unit, and it contains the entirety of the soul. The lower layers in the soul – the *Nefesh*, *Ruach*, *Neshamah* and the *Chayah* – contain many different points. But the very root of the soul, the *Yechidah*, is only one single, point which is all-inclusive of all the details in the soul.

The inner world is one unit, while the outer world contains many details. However, it only appears that there are many different details to the outer world. At the root, everything is one. The inner perspective in learning Torah is to see how all details are all one, and to keep unifying the details. A person needs to aspire to unify all details, and the highest level of this unity is when one connects all details to the true One, *HaKadosh Baruch Hu*.

This perspective must be made into the initial perspective for our souls. It must become our main viewpoint towards everything. This is depth of having *emunah shelaimah*, the complete level of faith in the Creator: when we grasp that there is a oneness of the entire Creation, which unifies everything together. Our goal throughout whatever work we do should always be: to reach this viewpoint of *Echad*, the oneness which binds together all details in Creation. In the series of *Fixing Your Focus*, we elaborated about the power of focus, and how to unify our actions, emotions, and thoughts. But our goal in life should be to reach more and more oneness, for the purpose of the Creation is that there should be a unity of all creations.

The deep joy in the future is that everything will be unified. But even now, we should be living our lives with the soul’s deep perspective of oneness, to keep unifying all the details in life and to see them all as one point.<sup>[3]</sup> <sup>[3]</sup> The more we unify the many details together, the more joy we will discover.

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<sup>[1]</sup> <sup>[4]</sup> *Shir HaShirim 1:4*

<sup>[2]</sup> <sup>[5]</sup> *Chovos HaLevovos: Shaar HaPerishus (Duties of the Heart: The Gate of Abstinence): 4*

<sup>[3]</sup> <sup>[6]</sup> *Editor’s Note: The Rav explains more about “unifying” in Bilvavi Mishkan Evneh, Part 8*

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[2] file:///D:/DATA-ACTIVE/BILVAVI/UPLOAD%20TO%20WEBSITE/need%20to%20place%20on%20site/TO%20UPLOAD/Fixing%20Your%20E arth%202.0%20-%20Sadness%20007.%20Masked%20Pain.docx#\_ftn2

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[5] file:///D:/DATA-ACTIVE/BILVAVI/UPLOAD%20TO%20WEBSITE/need%20to%20place%20on%20site/TO%20UPLOAD/Fixing%20Your%20E arth%202.0%20-%20Sadness%20007.%20Masked%20Pain.docx#\_ftnref2

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