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## Getting to Know Your Home - 012 The Lesson of Marriage

### ***Marriage - A Parable To Our Relationship with Hashem***

Throughout *sefer Shir HaShirim*<sup>[1]</sup>, the relationship between Hashem and the Jewish people is compared to the relationship between a *chosson* and *kallah* (groom and bride). The “*moshol*” (parable) described there applies as well to our own lives.

Hashem created the world with a goal – that we should all become attached to Him. All of Creation is really a tool that we can use to attach ourselves to Hashem. Marriage, especially, resembles our relationship with Hashem.

The *moshol* (parable) is the love between a young husband and wife, but the *nimshal* (lesson) is the relationship between Hashem and the Jewish people. By realizing that our life and our marriage is all a *moshol* \parable to our relationship with Hashem, we can come to the *nimsha* \lesson, which is how we form our closeness with Hashem.

When we reflect deeply on the purpose of marriage, it is because through marriage, one can reach an intimate bond with the Creator. Through the parable, you can arrive at the lesson. We need to see the home as a parable of a greater lesson: how we must have a strong and loving bond with the Creator. And the *moshol* \parable should not just be seen as a *moshol* that one merely knows about, but as a tangible lesson in life that can be palpably felt, which teaches us the profound meaning of our life.

Life on this world is all a *moshol*, a parable, of a greater lesson. If a person does not see the *moshol* \parable of life, he will not get to the *nimshal* (lesson) of it all.

It is for this reason that if a man does not marry, he is called a “*palga d’gufa*”, “half a body”. The *Shechinah* (Hashem’s Presence) will not dwell upon him. The depth of this is because he is missing the *moshol* of what life is about, and therefore he does not either have the *nimshal*.

A couple that has a loving bond with each other is the *moshol* (parable), and the *nimshal* (lesson) of it is the bond of man with the Creator. If one does not have the marriage bond, he cannot have *Shechinah* either, because marriage is parallel to man’s bond with the Creator; if he is missing the *moshol* (parable) in the *nimshal* (lesson), he will not be able to get to the *nimshal*.

However, just because the *nimshal* is the purpose, this does not mean that the *moshol* is not of importance. To the contrary; we need to feel how tangible the *moshol* is, and through that, we can get to the *nimshal*. All of marriage must be seen as the *moshol* to the *nimshal*, and the *moshol* needs to be learned about and examined in all its details - all the way down to the last detail.

The *moshol* of marriage is not just something to know about, but something to experience; when we try to experience the *moshol*, we can get to the *nimshal* - by trying to align our experiences of the *moshol* with that of the *nimshal*.

We will give a few examples of how we can see the correlation between marriage and our bond with Hashem, and you can add on your own. It would be impossible to list all the details here; we will only give a few fundamental examples, and each person on his own can come up with his own lessons as well.

### ***Bonding and Talking With Each Other***

One of the well-known pieces of advice which marriage counselors advise is that a couple must find time every day to spend with each other. For example: to eat dinner every day together for 30 minutes; to be alone with each other, and to talk with each other during this set time, every day. During this quality time together, they should disconnect themselves from the rest of the world. No picking up the home phone, and no cellphones one. They need to have this “alone time” with each other, and they must have conversations during this time.

Not every couple can do it exactly like this, but all couples need to have some “alone time” with each other. The husband must make sure that his wife is his only focus now during this time, and so must the wife focus solely on her husband during this time. That should be all that is going on, and nothing else.

The custom by a wedding is that after the *chuppah*, the *chosson* and *kallah* go into the “*yichud* room”, where they are alone. [There are differing customs between the Ashkenazic and Sephardic customs on how to do this]. If someone else is in the room, it’s not regarded as *yichud* (privacy). It can only be *yichud* if they are alone together, and no one else is with them. Even if the door is ajar and someone can see into the room, it’s already not considered *yichud*.

If a husband is sitting with his wife during breakfast and the phone rings, and he picks up the phone in middle of the conversation, and she’s also picking up the phone in middle of their conversations, it won’t take long for the marriage counselor to get down to the root of their problems when they go for counseling. They never make time for each other; they are never alone with each other, which means that they are not really spending special time with each other.

Any marriage counselor advises a couple to spend a half hour every day of being alone with each other. That time they spend with each other should be regarded as the main part of their day. After they spend time together, each of them can go about their various activities, but they *absolutely must* have quiet time every day with each other! It is not always possible to have quiet time every day with each other, but they should strive to make it a fixed part of their schedule.

### ***Talking With Hashem Every Day***

This is a big part of the parable of how marriage resembles our relationship with Hashem: we need to actually talk and communicate with Hashem, just like a couple needs communication in order to have a good marriage. Just like a *chosson* and *kallah* “meet”, so does each Jew need to “meet” with Hashem, and be alone with Hashem, for a fixed time of the day.

Therefore, a person has to think: “Do I have a half hour a day in which I talk to Hashem, and I do nothing else then except spend time with Him and talk with Him?”

Imagine a husband who eats supper with his wife and she is talking to him, and he opens up a *sefer* and he begins to learn in middle of the conversation. It’s a beautiful thing to learn Torah, but not now!

He cannot tell her, "I cannot do anything else right now. It is only the Torah which is called '*aishes chayil*' (woman of valor)." Any normal person understands that now is the time to talk to his wife.

So, too, when a person is talking to Hashem, now is not the time to open up a *sefer*. Chazal say that the time to learn Torah and the time to pray are separate times. When talking to Hashem, that should be the only activity you are doing. *What* you speak about with Hashem is another issue, but the first point is to realize, that you are setting aside time to speak with Hashem; and it is not the time for *anything* else.

It should be like when you're in the desert - there are no stores there, no restaurants, and there is not even another soul to talk to.

Just as a couple needs to have time alone every day with each other to talk, so does a person need to have time alone every day with Hashem to talk! He needs to set aside a half hour of his day for quiet time, where he can be allowed to form a bond with Hashem.

### ***Marriage: An Exclusive Relationship***

Let's think into another outcome of how marriage is a parable to the relationship between man and his Creator.

The *halachah* is that a woman cannot be married to two men. A married woman is reserved exclusively for her husband. Since this is so, her thoughts should only be about him. She should not be looking outside of her marriage for a relationship. If she does so, it destroys the home, G-d forbid. The foundation of a home is for a woman to understand: "All I have is my husband! I have nobody else in my life."

Chazal warned a man not to overly converse with a woman; it was said regarding one's own wife, and surely towards another's wife. Another person's wife is foreign to him; that woman is designated only for her husband. No husband would be able to handle it if he would see his wife talking fondly with another man. It is unbearable in a marriage. It damages the essence of their bond.

That is very clear.

### ***We Should Love Hashem More Than We Love Any Person***

Now let's compare this as well to our relationship with Hashem: the Creator is called our *chosson*, and we are His *kallah*. When we stood at Har Sinai, it was our wedding with Hashem; Hashem took us as His wife, so to speak. We were first betrothed by Him, and then we were officially married.

Being that we have a status of a "married woman" towards Hashem, we are not allowed to have any other "relationships" with others that come close to it.

Maybe a person will counter, "What do you mean? What about *Ahavas Yisrael*, to love other Jews? And what about loving the rest of the world?"

The answer to this is that *Ahavas Yisrael* to others must be stemming from the knowledge that we are all part and parcel with Hashem, "a portion of G-d, from above", or else it is not true *Ahavas Yisrael*. We see that there are people who are willing to forego the entire Torah, G-d forbid, all in the name of *Ahavas Yisrael*. True *Ahavas Yisrael* can only be possible when a person is aware that all Jews are one at their root. It is to love all Jews because we realize that all Jewish souls are unified by Hashem.

Ever since we stood at Sinai and Hashem forced us to accept the Torah, we have become forever

married to Hashem, and there is no way for us to leave the bond. Unlike in marriage, where there is a possibility of divorce, in the bond between Hashem and the Jewish people, there is no such thing as divorce.

The *possuk* describes how after the destruction of the *Beis Hamikdash*, the Jewish people were sent into exile, and we are considered “like a widow” to Hashem<sup>[2]</sup>. Our Sages explained this to mean that we are only “like” an estranged wife from Hashem, “as if”, but that we are not actually widowed from Hashem. This is because in the deeper dimension of reality, we can never become totally separated from Hashem.

Thus, just like we understand that having a relationship with another is damaging to a marriage, so must we understand that in our relationship with Hashem, we must not betray this bond by having close relationships with others which are stronger than how we feel towards Hashem.

### ***Love For Others Must Be An Extension Of Our Love For Hashem***

How, then, should we view our relationships with others? We need to view our bond with others as an extension of our bond with Hashem, and not as a purpose until itself.

Compare this to two people lifting a table. Each of them cannot lift it on his own, because it is heavy. They are carrying the table together, and that is how the table is able to be lifted.

We have to love all people, but what is the reason? It is not simply because we should be people-lovers, but because “*Man is precious, for he was created in the image of G-d.*” Every person is created as a *tzelem elokim* (in the image of G-d), and that is why we must love every person. Sometimes people realize this concept and sometimes they don’t, but this doesn’t matter as far as you should be concerned; you need to love all people, and for what reason? Just for being a *tzelem elokim* [regardless if others realize it or not]!

### ***The Exclusivity of Marriage***

Marriage shows a person that he is capable of being in an exclusive relationship with another person. Betrothal is called ‘*eirusin*’, from the word ‘*assur*’, “forbidden”, because it forbids her to the rest of the world now that she is designated to this man. Betrothal is called ‘*kiddushin*’, which means to “designate.” When a man betroths a woman, she is now separated from the rest of the world, and designated to him.

But this is not imprisoning. It is a good kind of limitation. When a woman knows that she is now betrothed to a man and forbidden to the rest of the world, does she feel like she’s now in a prison? No. To the contrary, she derives vitality from the fact that she has become designated to a certain man. There is *menuchah* (serenity) that a wife finds when she finds a husband.<sup>[3]</sup>

So a basic fundamental understanding towards marriage is, that there should be no other bond in a married woman’s life, other than with her husband. Even a superficial relationship with another person is damaging to the marriage (Unless it is necessary for her to speak with a man, like if she has to ask him a question about something; it should not be more than that!). As for having a close relationship with another person – she must know that it is forbidden.

### ***We Have No One But Hashem***

Marriage is really the deepest lesson about life. Just like a husband and wife have no one but each other, so must we realize that we have no one but Hashem. “*Ain Od Milvado*”<sup>[4]</sup> – “There is nothing else besides for Hashem.”

Hashem revealed this to us at Har Sinai, when all of our 600,000 souls were present, and He revealed there that there is nothing else besides for Him. Why did Hashem reveal His oneness specifically when all 600,000 souls were present, together? There are many reasons to explain it, but along the lines of our discussion, it was because Hashem was showing us all that the bond we share with all other Jews, all 600,000 souls, is all for the sake of realizing one recognition alone: Hashem.

There is no other purpose to connect with other Jews, other than this reason. We must all have one bond, and one bond alone: our bond with Hashem. All other relationships that we have are to be viewed as tools that help us get there.

Although there is no sensible person who will think that in marriage it is okay to have a close bond with others, when it comes to our bond with Hashem there are those who make the mistake of thinking that it's fine to have a close bond with other people. A person thinks, "What's so bad about this? Am I supposed to think all day about Hashem? There's nothing else in life? Don't I have a wife, children, and friends??"

Yes, there is nothing wrong with being close with others. The problem is, though, that a person usually doesn't see his close relationships with others (his wife, his children, and his friends) as being an extension of his bond with Hashem....

### ***A Wife's Nature To Find Favor By Her Husband***

The goal of what we are saying here is not to simply ponder these points we have said, but to see how our life is all a "parable" to our relationship with Hashem, and that we need to get to the "lesson" of the "parable".

Another example of how marriage parallels our bond with Hashem is as follows. There is a *mitzvah* to rejoice on Yom Tov, and the Sages said that it is a *mitzvah* for man to rejoice his wife on the festivals by buying her new clothes in honor of the festival<sup>[5]</sup>. We also know that there is a concept of beauty in the Torah: "This is my G-d, and I will glorify Him" - "a beautiful *sukkah*, a beautiful *lulav*, a beautiful *shofar*, beautiful *tzitzis*, a beautiful Sefer Torah."<sup>[6]</sup> Moshe Rabbeinu was praised for his beauty; he was given a 'klil tiferes' - a "crown of beauty." There is something about external beauty, which is given credence by the Torah.

Why does Hashem care for beauty? Why should physical appearance be of any status to Him? Why is there a concept of looking 'beautiful' in front of Hashem?

The answer is, because since our relationship with Hashem is like a *kallah* towards her *chossan*, He wants us to look beautiful to Him.

With marriage, we can see this nature ingrained in a wife. The nature of a wife is that she wants to dress up and appear beautiful to her husband; this nature is very much instilled in her. That is how Hashem has designed her, and if the husband does not acknowledge this, she is insulted. She is waiting for him to look interested in her, for that is the nature with Hashem has instilled in her. It is even brought in *halachah* that a *kallah* can wash her face on Yom Kippur, (which is normally forbidden according to the Torah), so that she will still be dear to her husband.

So the nature of a wife is to beautify herself to her husband. Now we will explore the lesson we learn from this: to beautify ourselves to Hashem.

Sometimes a person will wear nice clothing, from head to toe, but not out of a desire to appear

attractive to others; it is because he was dressed by another. For example, a Bar Mitzvah boy is dressed up by his mother, and he is usually not that interested in what he's wearing. (It doesn't bother her that he's not interested – all she's concerned about is that he looks good for the guests and for the pictures. She will pay a nice amount of money to dress him up nice and make him look very presentable.) He's not dressing up for others because he wants to impress others. If it was up to him, maybe he would have preferred to show up in the hall in sandals.

But sometimes we find a *bar mitzvah* boy who is concerned with how he will look, and it occupies his mind a lot. He is very specific about how he wants to look, and which particular kind of hat he wants; its color, its design, its interior design, its length, etc. He realizes the meaning of the words of Chazal, "Clothing is honor."

The first kind of boy we mentioned is not personally concerned of how he will look. He has no choice in the matter, so that's why he dresses up. But the second type of boy we mentioned is concerned about how he looks, because he is connected with the concept of appearing good.

The fact that a wife likes to dress up for her husband is not a superficial matter of what she will wear. It is solely because she wants him to think good of her.

Now, if a person doesn't understand why a person would want to wear nice clothing, he won't understand the concept we are describing. Even if someone understands why some people enjoy fashion, he doesn't necessarily understand the concept of spiritual beauty. (If a person doesn't understand why people like to look good, he's probably the type to mistreat his *Tzitzis* and other holy articles too.)

When a wife dresses up for her husband, it is not just about what to wear. It is an internal need of a wife, to find *chein* (favor) in the eyes of her husband. Part of finding *chein* is when the personalities attract, and another factor of *chein*, which is no less important, is the physical appearance. Yes, physical attraction in marriage is important, according to the Torah! A wife's clothing is meant to increase her *chein* in the eyes of her husband, both in the external sense as well as in the inner sense.

In terms of our relationship with Hashem, we also have a *mitzvah* to look beautiful to Him, through doing the *mitzvos*. Doing the *mitzvos* is meant to increase our yearning to "look good" in front of Hashem.

Of course, when physical appearance is mainly emphasized over inner beauty, this is evil. But there is definitely a prominence given to physical appearance. The *Kohen Gadol* wore eight garments and the regular *Kohen* wore four garments, *I'kavod ul'tiferes*, for honor and for beauty. If the *Kohen* does the *avodah* without the garments, he is deserving of the death penalty. This is because clothing symbolizes the dignity and honor which must accompany one who is trying to be desired.

The lesson we can learn from this is that when a wife dresses up for her husband, she should know that this is not simply about looking good. That is not the purpose, because if it were, the husband could see external beauty by looking at a nice picture of scenery. Rather, the reason why a wife dresses up for her husband, ideally, is to find *chein* (favor) in her husband's eyes.

### ***Finding Favor By Hashem***

Applying this to the greater lesson – our bond with Hashem – just like a wife wants to find *chein* by her husband, so should we always be trying to find *chein* in Hashem's eyes.

Why do we need to find *chein* in Hashem's eyes?

It is because it is not enough to do the actions that Hashem requires us to do. The bond with Hashem is formed only when we truly want to become desirable to Him, through those actions. Similarly, Rabbeinu Yonah writes in *Shaarei Teshuvah* that it is not enough for our sins to be forgotten by Hashem; we have to become desirable to Him again. It's possible that a person did *teshuvah* over his sins and he was even forgiven by Hashem, but he still hasn't tried to find *chein* in Hashem's eyes.[\[7\]](#)

We can see from this from our own world as well. When someone hurts his friend and then apologizes, he might be forgiven afterwards, but he loses his *chein* by his friend. It's not the same anymore. His friend might say to him, "I forgive you. But, do me a favor. I don't want to ever see you again. I don't want to have to be reminded of what you did to me." He forgave his friend, but the *chein* his friend once had with him is gone.

When it comes to marriage, what does a wife want from her husband? She wants to know that she is finding *chein* by him always, and she needs to know that her husband loves her. (The Steipler zt"l wrote that when a wife feels unloved by her husband, her life is close to being endangered, because her life depends on his love).

The same goes for our relationship with Hashem: we should be very concerned all the time if Hashem loves us; if we are doing anything to endanger Hashem's love for us. If we don't feel Hashem's love, this should feel frightening to us, no less than how an unloved wife feels.

There are so many people who live their whole life never feeling that Hashem loves them, and they don't even know that they are missing something in their life. As an example, there are many people who delay marriage until they're older, yet they don't feel that they are lacking anything in their life. They have hardened themselves so much that they don't even feel a need to want to connect to someone.

Marriage shows a person that he must feel a need to connect. There are many factors needed in marriage in order for the spouses to connect to each other. We must realize that just as these needs exist in marriage, so do these needs exist in our relationship towards Hashem.

If a week goes by and the wife does not see any signs of love from her husband, she finds this unlivable. [Applying this to our relationship with Hashem], if a person goes by a week without feeling how Hashem loves him, this should feel unbearable to him! It should feel just as difficult as losing a job that week, or if the price of food goes up, etc. A person must be able to see Hashem's love for him, and if he doesn't see it, it should feel bothersome to him.

Maybe one will ask, "How can I tell if Hashem loves me? If I win the lottery, then I'll know that Hashem loves me; otherwise, how do I know Hashem loves me?" But feeling Hashem's love is not limited to rare events. It can be felt on a daily basis, if one looks to see it.

When one has a keen sense of reflection, he can see Divine Providence in his life [and that is how he can feel Hashem's love for him]. But it is marriage which can give a person an idea of what it means to be in a loving relationship with Hashem. The Rambam[\[8\]](#) says that one has to pursue Hashem out of a love for Him, just as lover pursues his beloved, which is a constant pursuit.

We can all identify this from the period of engagement. When a *chossan* is engaged, he usually cannot stop thinking about his *kallah*. These days, through cellphones, the *chossan* and *kallah* can talk all day, for hours an end.

A young couple's excitement for each other dies down a little after the wedding, where the routine of

life takes over and they get used to each other. But even though this is true, at least there was a bond of love that had begun between them. The engagement period (usually about three months long) is usually full of excitement and warmth for each other, and the *chosson* and *kallah* will even feel like they have a deep bond with each other. A *chosson* (usually) feels like the happiest person; that he has found what he has been looking for his entire life; that there is no one as happy as him.

This provides us with a powerful lesson about our relationship with Hashem. One should ask himself: Did I ever feel that way toward Hashem? Was there ever a period in my life where I couldn't stop thinking about Hashem for three months straight, just like a *chosson* is always thinking about his *kallah*? Did we ever feel that since we have Hashem is in our life, this is no greater reason for happiness, and that there is no happiness like it in the world?

When a person deeply understands how marriage is all a parable that serves as a lesson, to how we need to have an intimate bond with Hashem, it begins to dawn on him that he simply has never started to have a relationship with Hashem! He never became 'engaged' yet with Hashem. If he would have, he would feel excited about Hashem no less than how much he is excited when he gets engaged to his *kallah*.

It is written, "*My soul is sick with love over you.*" When there is love, the lover is 'sick' with love toward his beloved. "*On my bed at nights, I sought that which my soul loved.*" Love for Hashem is something that a person is ideally supposed to long for and think about all the time.

But we see the opposite taking place. Not only is a person missing feelings for Hashem; even in one's marriage, most of the time, the feelings are missing. A few months after the wedding, the routine of life takes over, and the relationship between the couple become somewhat monotonous. When this is the situation of the marriage, a person will act the same way towards Hashem.

Therefore, learning how to build the marital bond is really a lesson of how we build our relationship with the Creator. We can find that deep bond reflected in our own home, and we can understand that the marriage is entirely a parable of how we must relate to Hashem.

If a person has ever experienced a deep relationship with another in his life, he already can conceptualize the idea. Even if it was partially imagined, a person can still have some idea of what it means, to have a deep bond. A person has to take that idea of a deep bond in his mind that he knows of, and translate it into his relationship with Hashem.

### ***The Lesson of Children***

Here is the following additional point to think about, which is also brought out through marriage.

There is no person who wants to remain childless in his marriage. Every person wants children, because children perpetuate our legacy and enable us to be remembered.

If a person understands that marriage is a parable to our bond with Hashem, the next step for him to understand (intellectually speaking, and not practically speaking) is that just as a marriage between husband and wife results in the birth of children, so must there be "results" that are born out of our relationship with Hashem.

Children usually look like their parents. Sometimes the child looks exactly like one of the parents, and sometimes there is less of a resemblance, but there is always some kind of resemblance. Why is this so? It is meant to show us that we should give birth to "children" from our relationship with Hashem: doing good deeds. "The main offspring of the righteous is their good deeds." Our good deeds are the "children" that result from our bond of marriage with Hashem.

How can a person know if he is having a successful marriage? A good sign is when he sees that he is revealing Hashem in his life toward other people. Avraham Avinu revealed *emunah* onto the world; he had a bond of marriage with Hashem. The “children” that resulted from this were his good deeds – his revelation of Hashem upon others.

Thus, besides for marriage itself, there is also what results from the marriage. When a person wants there to be a continuation that results from his marriage, this is a sign that his marriage is good. The lesson from this is that in our relationship with Hashem, besides for the relationship itself which we must strive for, we must also want that relationship to bear results upon the world [that other people should also be taught a relationship with Hashem].

### ***Practically Applying These Concepts***

We will conclude with the following fundamental point.

There are two different aspects of our life. There is the material side of our life, which is concrete and thus palpable to us. There is also the spiritual side to our life, in which we are aware of certain concepts that we attain through our intellect.

There are those who only live the material side of life, and they are far removed from the realm of the intellectual\spiritual. The wisdom about life doesn't concern them that much. In contrast, there are others who are mainly interested in the wisdom about life, but they are disconnected from the material side to reality.

[Either of these ways is incorrect]. The true way is to understand that the material side to life can enable our spiritual world to take hold and become tangible. We are comprised of a soul and a body. Our soul is in the realm of the intellectual\spiritual, while our body is materialistic. But we are not entirely a body or entirely a soul. Our task is to reveal the spiritual within the physical.

Many people hear about deep or spiritual concepts, and view them as Heavenly matters which we cannot relate to. The truth is, our soul does come from Heaven; and it needs to be sustained through learning about the spiritual. But we are not found in Heaven right now. Our soul is right now in our physical body.

All of the parables we explained in this chapter, [which serve to show us how marriage resembles the ideal relationship with Hashem], teach us how we can infuse the spiritual into the physical. The ongoing theme throughout all of the parables was that there is a *chosson* and *kallah*, a groom and a bride, a man and a woman; the lesson it represents is the relationship between the Creator (the “*chosson*”) and the Jewish people (the “*kallah*”).

If a person doesn't see how marriage reflects our bond with the Creator, then the physical reality he lives with on this world is disconnected from the spiritual reality.

All of the deep, spiritual concepts described here are meant to be applied to day-to-day living. The purpose of all physicality we recognize is leading towards something greater. It is leading towards the spiritual.

Sometimes it is hard to see it at first, and it seems very far away. But we are meant to clothe the spiritual within the physical. This is the entire idea of man, who is a soul from Heaven, clothed in a physical body.

If a person only seeks practical action in marriage, he is focusing solely on the physical aspect of marriage, and such a marriage will be a union of two bodies; even two animals can have such a

relationship. It cannot be the ideal marriage, which incorporates soul within body.

In this *sefer*, it was discussed lofty and spiritual concepts. But they are concepts that can be incorporated into our physical world, practically speaking. If we look at spirituality as being merely lofty and esoteric ideas which cannot become actualized in the practical sense, this is the root of all destruction. It would be tantamount to denying that we have a soul. Although it is true that the co-existence of body and soul together is called a “wonder”, it is still the reality which we must live and grapple with.

We must be able to take even the deepest, spiritual concepts that we have learned about and recognize, and apply them practically in our physical world, into our daily living; to be able to *act* upon these matters we have learned about here. If not, then we remain with the “parable” alone, and we will be missing the lesson; and our purpose in Creation will be lost with it.

### ***Connecting The Parable With The Lesson***

The *moshol* (parable) and *nimshal* (lesson) described throughout this chapter are not meant to remain as two distinct matters that are apart from each other. The *nimshal* is found only through the *moshol*. The *nimshal* cannot be fully reached unless we have the *moshol*. And the truth is, that the *nimshal* is not too far from the *moshol* – it is found within it...

To illustrate, when Esther spoke to Achashveirosh, she addressed him as “the king”, and the Sages say that she was really thinking about the Creator as she said so. In other words, she realized how the *moshol* and *nimshal* were intertwined.

A superficial person will think that it is a form of disconnection for one to always see the spiritual clothed in the physical. Indeed, this may be the case, when this concept is misunderstood. But when seen correctly, a person understands well how the spiritual can be clothed in the physical reality that we see.

He doesn't see the physical and spiritual dimensions as being *apart* - rather, he sees how the spiritual layer of reality is *clothed* through the physical layer of reality.

### ***Bringing The Spiritual Into The Physical***

To conclude, what we discussed here is not meant to remain as spiritual matters alone that cannot be actualized. They *can* be actualized in our daily life. We can live both the spiritual and the physical at once. We will explain.

Let's think about the following example. A person is sitting and eating a piece of chicken, or fish, or whatever food he's engrossed in. Does he think about it for 10 minutes straight, as he's eating his meal? If his meal is taking 2 hours, does that mean he thinks about his food for 2 hours straight, and nothing else? Of course not. The average person will think a little about what he's eating as he's eating, but his thoughts are floating all over the place, so he's not entirely focused on his food. Even if a person is eating a piece of schnitzel for 10 minutes straight, that doesn't mean he does not stop thinking about his schnitzel.

The point that we see from this is that a person has the ability to *do* “A”, yet he's *thinking* about “B”. His thoughts are not 100% focused on what he is doing. When it comes to the case of food, even the most gluttonous person in the world wouldn't be able to focus his thoughts for 10 minutes straight on the food he is eating. His thoughts will always be elsewhere.

Thus, a person has the ability to redirect his thoughts to think about something else, as he is in the midst of doing something.

Now that we have understood that, let's proceed to the next point. If a person can think about something else other than he's food – even while he's actually eating – why can't he also steer his mind to think about lofty concepts...? We have free choice to decide where our thoughts will go to.

In the home, a man is busy with his wife and children, and vice versa. If he's home for 3 hours, let's say, does that mean that he's thinking for 3 hours straight about his wife and children, without interruption? His thoughts are all over the place. He is not thinking the entire time about what he is doing. So a person has free will to decide where his thoughts are. He is able to choose if he will think about materialistic matters or spiritual matters, as he's amidst his day-to-day tasks.

If a person isn't used to focused thought, then his actions and thoughts are disconnected from each other. He is in his house, while his thoughts are floating somewhere outside the house. To become more inward, a person can learn how to settle his thoughts, becoming connected to what he is doing at the moment, and to be *there*.

Therefore, it would be recommended for a person to get used to avoiding doing two things at once. This is because it is impossible for a person to think two things at once. If one is doing two things at the same time, at best, he is thinking about at least *one* of the things he is doing, but not the other; the other alternative is that he is not thinking into *anything* he is doing, because his thoughts are thinking about something else entirely than what he is doing.

He gets used to fracturing his focus: his actions and his thoughts become disconnected from each other. This leads to all destruction, and it is especially detrimental to a Jewish home.

### ***In Conclusion***

Man's task on this world is to unify body and soul together. Just as our soul enters one body and it cannot be in two bodies at once, so too must we be focused in our thoughts on one thing at a time, and not do two things at once. In this way, the lofty thoughts we learn about can become incorporated into how we act.

Why is it that most people do not succeed in internalizing all of the lofty concepts that they have learned about and to make them practical? There is a very clear answer: it is because the person is used to doing actions without enough deep thought involved. There is minimal thought sometimes, but not deep thought.

If we want to succeed in the system of life in general, and marriage specifically, the rule is: there must be 'one' man and 'one' woman! In other words, we need to *bring* ourselves into what we are doing. In this way, the lofty concepts that we learn about can then become manifest in how we act.

This is the deepest secret of the home: to have one 'light' per 'container' - to have 'one' thought within every 'one' action that we do. Through this, we can merit, with *siyata d'shamaya*, to the meaning of "*And they shall become one flesh*"; to become the complete vessel that can contain the [light of] Individual One of the world.

[2] Eichah 1:1

[3] Rus 1:9

[4] Devarim 4:35

[5] Pesachim 109a

[6] Shabbos 133b

[7] See **Tefillah #0135 - Finding Favor Again By Hashem**

[8] Hilchos Teshuvah 10:3

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**Source:** <http://bilvavi.net/english/getting-know-your-home-012-lesson-marriage>