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Simple Connection to Hashem Is Nothing New!

When the Jewish people stood at Har Sinai, they were warned, *“For you shall not see any image on the day that Hashem speaks with you at Chorev.”* Every person has to be totally for Hashem, and there cannot even be a slim divider between a person and Hashem; that is already considered like “an image.” In a true connection with Hashem, there must be no dividers whatsoever between the person and Hashem.

Anything other than Hashem is supposed to be used as a way to reveal the will of Hashem, but the actual connection one has with Hashem is directly with Hashem, and nothing can come in between. Thus, anything which gets in the way of bond with Hashem must be removed.

The three-day preparation for Har Sinai was really a means to remove all obstacles that got in the way between one and Hashem, and thus no “image” whatsoever was allowed for at least three days before standing at Har Sinai.

Connecting with Hashem is an inner point that cannot really be grasped, because it cannot be defined. If a person thinks that there is connection to Hashem as well as something else involved, that itself holds back the connection with Hashem. In order to allow the connection with Hashem, nothing else, no other intermediary, can be in the equation.

Anything we know, which is limited, is merely a tool to serve Hashem. The universe is a tool to serve Hashem. Time is a tool to serve Hashem. Our soul is a tool to serve Hashem. The very connection with Hashem, however, is not a tool, and it cannot be grasped or understood, nor can it be reached in any other way other than closeness with Hashem. Even the *middos* of Hashem which we identify are just a tool we use to get to Him, but they only reveal our connection with Him. The actual connection we have with Hashem involves no tool whatsoever.

This point is the most difficult point for any created being to grasp. We as creations seek to understand everything, and there are many ways how try to do this: either through a certain person who can explain it to us, or by doing certain actions to arrive at that understanding, or to study it intellectually; each person has his own means of trying to understand what it means to connect with Hashem. Sometimes people connect only to the tools in getting there, and sometimes people actually are connected to Hashem. All people seek to connect to Hashem through various tools of understanding.

But we must know that we must connect to Hashem, not to His middos. Of course, Hashem wants us to keep the Torah, which run according to His middos, and thus we must connect to His Middos also. We definitely have to be connected to His ways. But this is not the depth of our connection with Him; the depth of our connection with Hashem is the connection itself we have with Him, and we mustn't lose sight of this.

This is the deeper meaning behind why Shlomo HaMelech said that all of Creation is *hevel havalim*, "futility of futilities." All of Creation is really nothing, in comparison to Hashem. When a person understands that everything, even the middos of Hashem, are like *hevel havalim* compared to Hashem Himself, it is then that he can truly receive a connection to Hashem.

People by nature like to hear new things, and those who are spiritual look forward to always hearing a "new" way how to serve Hashem. But the truth is "I am Hashem, and I do not change." The innermost point of all our Avodas Hashem is that point of simple connection with Hashem, and there is no explanations involved in it. There is the simple reality of Hashem's existence, and no thought can comprehend Him. It is not possible to explain Hashem; even our connection with Hashem is impossible to really explain and comprehend. What, then, is our mission? Our mission is to **be very involved with thinking about His existence**, until one reaches a point in which Hashem merits him that He resides inside him. It is then that a person receives the true connection.

The real, simple connection with Hashem is a point that is nothing new.

It is written, "*This month shall be for you, the head of all the months.*" It is only "for you", us as human beings, that we need new things to keep us interested. But from Hashem's perspective, we know that "I am Hashem, and I do not change." Hashem isn't new, nor does He change.

Thus, whenever we speak of Hashem's viewpoint, we are referring to the depth of our connection with Hashem.

Using Your Soul To Get To The Innermost Point

This matter needs a lot of clarification. We have to be very sure about what this means.

For already 5764 years, our souls have been revisiting this world as *gilgulim* (various lifetimes). We were all once part of the soul of Adam, and after that, his soul split up into many souls. But all of our *gilgulim* are basically one giant clarification process, and they all exist to clarify one point alone: if each person is prepared to clarify who he is and realize that he lives only for Hashem, and for no other reason.

No one reaches this understanding perfectly, as we are only humans and thus limited. The *Mesillas Yesharim* has written this in the end of his sefer. The job that is upon us is to establish in ourselves the point that all of life is all about Hashem, and that there is nothing else besides this to live for.

Throughout each *gilgul* we have gone through, there is always one small spark that remains with us from the last *gilgul*. Slowly, as each *gilgul* of all our souls adds up, all these sparks will gather together. That spark that is in every single soul - the part in us that is only concerned for living a life for Hashem, and for nothing else - will add up together with the spark that is from every soul, and all of this together will complete the collective soul of the Jewish people.

The part in us that seeks other things other than Hashem needs to be fixed, and they will achieve their rectification at *Techias HaMeisim* (the revival of the dead). The revival of the dead will actually be as follows: the part in our soul which seeks only Hashem will be the only part of our soul that will get revived at the resurrection, and the rest of our soul, which contains motives other than a life for

Hashem, will fall away.

We have already been through most of the 6,000 years of this physical world, and as a rule, “most is like the whole.” The point in our soul which seeks only closeness to Hashem is found in every Jew’s soul, but it is hidden. The mission of our generation is like *makeh b’patish* – the “final-hammer blow”; what we are trying to achieve, in this generation, is to reveal our hidden point out into the open. We are trying to sift out the parts in our soul which aren’t directed toward Hashem.

The fact that people search for anything else other than Hashem is a problem that has already been around for many generations. It has been a mistake that all the generations have made: people erroneously think that we need to connect to something other than Hashem. This has been the downfall of every generation.

When a person is in pain, he becomes desperate, and he seeks a *tzaddik* or a miracle-worker to help him, but alas, he still has problems. He then has no other choice other than to turn to Hashem directly. This is really the entire vitality of a Jew – and there is no other vitality other than this: connecting directly to Hashem.

There Is No Place That Is Empty From Hashem

Here comes the point of clarification that each soul must go through: “Do I really want to turn to Hashem and no one else (not even a *tzaddik*)?”

This clarification has to be considered truthfully. A person might naturally think that to connect to Hashem, as opposed to others, means that he should be spiritual and seek *tzaddikim*, and not to be involved with seeking help from non-Jews. But this isn’t enough. The *sefarim hakedoshim* state that all the forces in our soul need to be directed toward Hashem and toward nothing else.

Hashem never changes. When people want something “new”, it is basically saying, “I want something else other than Hashem.” Our mission is to accept the truth as it is, and to live that truth.

A person might approach this point superficially and think that this is called “*Avodas Hashem*” or “*Mesirus Nefesh* (altruism)”. Everyone has his own way of talking. But the truth is that it’s very simple. It’s not an *Avodah*, and it’s not *Mesirus Nefesh*! It is a simple awareness of reality – to realize, *Ain Od Milvado* – there is nothing besides for Hashem.

Our job, then, is to remove all the various feelings and views in us that are erroneous. “*Avodas Hashem*” is actually not an *Avodah* (work), but it is really a gift. It is to recognize reality as it is. Just as you see a table and you know it’s reality, so is it possible to feel Hashem as a reality, to the effect that when a person turns to Hashem in prayer, it’s not out of a feeling of despair or desperation for help, but out of a recognition that there is nothing else in our life besides Him.

There is nothing else we need other than to realize this! When we want this new thing or that new thing, it’s just a desire to receive more information, but this has nothing to do with connection to Hashem. We shouldn’t want anything else other than the simple connection to Hashem, which is to realize that in reality, there is nothing in life besides Him.

“There is no place that is empty from Him.” Not only is there no place which Hashem doesn’t fill, but even our in our own soul, there is no place where He isn’t found.

These words are essentially a description of reality, of what it means to be a human being, a creation of Hashem. This is nothing new; it is just a revelation of reality. When a person merits to live by these words, his entire soul is full of Hashem’s presence; and when a person feels a need for something new

to full his emptiness, he can know that this really stems from the fact that it's because he hasn't yet revealed Hashem entirely in his soul, and if he wants to be satisfied, he has to allow Hashem to fill his entire soul, instead of looking for something new. (This does not include our body, though, which needs new things to keep it going).

In fact, the entire need for renewal is rooted in the moon, which gets renewed each month; the moon was punished when it wanted to be the same size as the sun, that it would be made smaller and renew itself once a month. This shows how renewal is rooted in sin.

It is only after the sin of Adam that there became a need for renewal. After the sin of Adam, his soul was split up, which caused the separation between Jews and non-Jews. Rosh Chodesh, which is the root of renewal, was given only to the Jewish people, but if not for the sin, there would be no differentiation in the first place between Jews and non-Jews. From here we can see again how renewal is rooted in sin, and in the perfected state of mankind, we are supposed to do without it. We need to reach this state of non-renewal. When a person feels a need to give himself something new, it really comes from a deep emptiness – and it is a message that he needs to fill this emptiness by letting Hashem to fill his entire self.

True Perfection - Bringing Hashem Into Every Part of Our Life

This is everything. When a person lives these words, he has everything, because when a person has Hashem in him, he really has everything, because Hashem has everything. Any other thought or feeling detracts from this perfection. Hashem is supposed to fill every part of our soul.

In other words, a person might desire more and more spirituality, it's not necessarily a desire to cleave more to Hashem. It's just about having "more" (although it's commendable that the person has at least spiritual goals). All of our souls have already gone through much from all our lifetimes, and we have heard much, but has this contributed to bringing the redemption? Does all the new knowledge we keep hearing bring us to perfection? It brings partial perfection, but it doesn't bring the total perfection we need. The true perfection is only when we succeed in bringing Hashem into every aspect of our life. All other ideas, even if they contain truth, don't bring us to that perfection.

Will We Get There Through Our Self, Or Through Hashem?

What we need to do is truly connect ourselves to Hashem.

Hashem gave us a time of 6,000 years on this world, and each soul will eventually reach the innermost point we are describing. The only question that remains is: Will a person reach it just through "himself", or by connecting to Hashem? Will a person realize that he needs to turn to Hashem for this, or does he think he will get to that point on his own?

Each generation has its unique struggle which is tailored to help each person come to the understanding that he must turn only to Hashem for help. In the End of Days, Hashem will show each person that he ultimately must turn to Him. We will all reach our goal, but the only question is: how will each of us get there, exactly? We have the power of choice as we live, now, to realize that we need Hashem for everything; if we don't choose to believe this now, then eventually Hashem will show us the truth, but we can choose to know it even now. This is a unique test for each individual person on this earth.

It's a simple, clear-cut goal: to ask ourselves if we are using each thought or feeling directed toward becoming close to Hashem, or for other things...? If indeed a person does discover that he is totally directing himself toward closeness with Hashem – every fiber of his being and psyche – then he can still work on this point even more and ask himself if he is doing so with vigor to connect with Hashem.

If a person discovers that he still has some agendas other than being close to Hashem, he has to learn how to detach from such thoughts and instead redirect his thinking process about Hashem.

It's easy for people to talk about the mitzvos, such as how to shake a lulav and put on Tefillin. It's easy to talk about Kabalistic concepts such as "illuminations" and the names of Hashem. This comes much easier to a person than to connect to Hashem. But we must realize that all of this has to be about trying to connect to Hashem, and we should not get caught up in any other concepts.

Repeating the Truth

We have explained at length about how much implication these words have, but we need to always review them throughout life. Even if one does a lot of personal reflection and hears a lot from other people, he has to make sure he never falls from the goal.

Of course, the mitzvos are important as well, and we must keep to them, but we must never lose sight of the goal, which is to come to *Ain Od Milvado*.

Thus, we have to always bear this in mind - every day, and every second. This is life itself - to connect to Hashem.

If the words here don't appeal to the reader, it shows a need for something "new" in life, which reflects a lack of a deep connection with Hashem.

We aren't trying to cause any depression with these words. Although the words here seem to contradict who we are as humans (because we feel like we cannot survive without something new all the time, and we might feel it's impossible to connect to a concept of non-renewal), know that Hashem is capable of anything, and He can give you the power to be able to go above your human nature. Just as He created the heavens, which are made up of fire and water - two contradicting elements - so can He give a person the ability to connect himself to the point that is non-changing.

Adding on to our knowledge alone is really a subtle way of losing sight of our goal. We need to review the point that we are supposed to be directed entirely to Hashem and not to anything else. If we are learning about the middos of Hashem or about the abilities of our soul, it's all so that we can use them to reach Hashem, and we must not get caught up in the study of these matters for their individual sake alone.

The truthful words here are the inner attitude to have about life. Any divergence from this point is like running away from what life is about - which is Hashem. Any point in our life has to be directed and connected to this inner point - that life is all about connecting to Hashem.

There are many parts in the soul, and each part in the soul can actually be a deterrent from the innermost point. The *Mesillas Yesharim* writes that everything on this world - even good things - can be a test for us that drive us away from reaching our goal. It is not only this world that makes us forget about our goal - our very soul can make us forget about our goal.

The "Yechidah" In Us

The kind of connection with Hashem we have described in this chapter is essentially a description of how our "Yechidah" (our actual essence) connects to Hashem.

The lower parts of our soul - *Nefesh, Ruach* and *Neshamah* -- actually make us forget about our innermost part of our existence, our *Yechidah*, which is the part in us that only knows of connection with Hashem. The lower parts of our soul are active in our performance of the 613 mitzvos, which can

make us forget about connection with Hashem.

One must understand that his very self holds him back from connecting with Hashem, simply speaking. But do not be discouraged at this. If Hashem made you that way, He also gave you the power to overcome this selfish existence. We all feel in us a natural opposition to having the utter connection with Hashem, but all of us still have to get this connection.

The factors which hold us back from achieving this differ with each person, but the inner point remains the same for each person. Anytime a person wants “new” things other than a connection with Hashem, he awakens the lower parts of his soul which take his mind even further off than the goal. If a person is only connected to the mitzvos alone, which are called “advice” by the Zohar, he’s only connected to the “advice”, but he’s not connecting to the goal that all that advice leads up to. A person’s mission is to become close to Hashem, and there is “advice” to get there – the mitzvos – but one must make sure he isn’t caught up in the “advice” and losing sight of the goal, Hashem.

These words need to be clarified within the depths of your soul: direct yourself only to Hashem. You can go over this hundreds and thousands of times – maybe even a million times – until it internalizes. Any fact that we know of can be a deterrent from realizing the innermost point. Even spiritual pursuits can make one forget about the goal, when he loses sight of the goal. Hashem has given us this test, and we must all realize that everything is integrated with Hashem. Nothing has a purpose unto itself, because since Hashem and His will are all one, everything is a part of Hashem.

In these words, we have explained the deepest point possible – the true, utter connection that one must have with Hashem. Each person will sometimes need specific advice to get there and learn how he can avoid losing sight of the goal, whether this involves overcoming sin or making sure that he’s not caught up in either the good parts of himself, because this too detracts from our connection with Hashem. Each person has his unique situation. But the innermost point to each person is always the same and it never changes: Connect to Hashem!

Removing The Barriers That Conceal The Truth

We have said these words here just to establish one simple point: Hashem has placed us on this world, and He wants us to totally return to Him. There are two kinds of *he’elam* (confusion) that people have. One kind of *he’elam* is when people don’t know the truth. The other kind of *he’elam* is when people know the truth, but that it’s hard to get to the truth, due to certain obstacles.

We have thus come here in this chapter to clarify the point which must be clear to every person. Much confusion that people have is: “What new thing should I add onto my situation? Should I add on this, or maybe that?”

But we must know this one point: we must be directed only toward Hashem. Although the Gemara says that one must go to a sage and ask him to pray for him, that is only half the job; a person must also turn to Hashem, directly. Just as Esther turned to Achashveirosh for help and secretly prayed to Hashem for help at the same time, so must we must understand that even when we have to turn to a *tzaddik* to help us, we have to turn to Hashem as well.

So when a person is davening and requesting that Hashem use His 13 “*Middos of Compassion*”, it’s not about the *Middos*; it’s about Hashem. Yes, we need the *Middos* of Hashem, but why are we turning to His *Middos*? It is only because we are turning to Him directly, as we turn to His *Middos*. When we involve ourselves with the *Middos* of Hashem, our thoughts should be entirely about Hashem, connected to Him. Torah, the words of Chazal, and the *Middos* of Hashem are all a part of Hashem, because they are all the will of Hashem, and one must understand this. They are not a purpose unto

themselves.

More than this, it is too hard to say. It just cannot be expressed any more than the way we have said it. We need get to the inner point of it all, the point that is behind everything – we must designate ourselves entirely for Hashem. We have tried to express this as much as we can in this chapter. When a person purifies himself as much as he can and he receives the inner point from Hashem, through working to get it.

Don't think that our tests end with this world. The tests keep coming. Even as a person is taking leave of this world and his soul is leaving him, and the souls are escorting him to the next world – he still has to remember: I must only turn to Hashem for help, and not to anyone or anything else.

Even if you know another person who gives the best advice possible, there should still be nothing more important to you in your life than your deep connection with Hashem. There were many great *tzaddikim* who were at the level of receiving astounding revelations from Heaven, such as revelation of Eliyahu HaNavi, yet they refused, because they wanted to hear the knowledge from Hashem Himself, not through an in-between. Of course, much clarification is needed in this matter, but one thing should always be clear: we have to turn to Hashem. Even after death, or even if any of us ends up in *she'ol* (the lowest abysses of Gehinnom), *chas v'shalom*, a person still has to be entirely focused on Hashem. Even in Gan Eden, we have to turn to Hashem. The only search we need, the sole desire of our soul, is to integrate with Hashem – *“And as for me, closeness to Hashem is good.”* Our soul wants to become totally bound up with Hashem, and with Hashem alone.

It seems as if we keep repeating these words over and over again. But the truth is that there is nothing that we have besides this.

This is life, this is reality as we know it!

This is, in a sense, all that Hashem has given to us as His creations – to be able to integrate with Him. We cannot comprehend it, we cannot grasp it, but we believe in this. *“For Hashem is part of His people.”*

May Hashem give each member of the Jewish people – and all Creations as well – the ability to receive the most complete connection with Him, until we reach the time in which *“And it will be that Hashem will be king over the whole earth, on that day Hashem will be One and His Name will be One.”*

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