



RE'EH ESSENCE OF THE 3 FESTIVALS

Different Terminologies of the Three Festivals

[At the end of *Parshas Re'eh*, the Torah discusses the *Shalosh Regalim*, the Three Festivals – Pesach, Shavuot, and Succos.]

We find different terms used by our *Chazal* (holy Sages) in describing the festivals. Our festivals are called *zmanim*, *chagim*, *moadim*, and *regalim*.

They are called *zmanim* and *moadim*, since they are established at certain times of the year. They are called *chagim* from the word *machog*, which means to “cycle”, because the cycle of the festivals repeats itself each year.

They are also called *moadim* from the word *vaad*, which means “meetings.” Three times a year we would trek to the *Beis HaMikdash* and bring a *korbon*; we would all gather together and ascend upon the mountain of Hashem, the site of the *Beis HaMikdash*. This was not just a “*vaad*” in the sense that we were all gathered together. It was our “meeting” with Hashem, for we would appear “in front of Hashem”.¹ It was a *vaad* in that we were all gathered together, and it was a *vaad* because we were all meeting with Hashem.

Another term to describe the three festivals is “*regalim*.” The simple meaning of this is “feet”. We would all walk by foot to Jerusalem for *Yom Tov*. The *Gemara*² deduces from the word “*regalim*” that a person is only obligated in the *mitzvah* if he has normal feet (*regalim*) to walk with, but if he limps, he is exempt from the *mitzvah*.

Regel/Walking – Going From One Place To Another

Let us reflect on the “*regalim*” aspect of the *Yom Tov*.

*Chazal*³ state that the world stands on three “pillars”: Torah, *avodah*, and *chesed*. These are like three “feet” which the world stands upon. The world stands on three “pillars”, and so does time. Time stands on the three festivals of Pesach, Shavuot and Succos. These are the three “pillars” that uphold time.

The word *regel* (רגל) besides for its simple meaning of

“foot”, can also mean “because of”, like when Yaakov told Lavan, “*And Hashem blessed you, because of me.*” It is also written, רגלי חסידיו ישמור, “*The feet of His pious ones are protected* [because they are pious].”⁴

In other words, the three festivals are not a purpose unto themselves; they exist “because” of a greater goal. The festivals take us and lead us to a certain point.

If a person is unaware that the *Yomim Tovim* serve a greater goal, then he does not experience *Yom Tov* through his soul; he only experiences it through his body. The festivals are given to us so that we can use them to reach a higher place than we were at until now. A festival moves us from one point to the next point.

We have so far mentioned two aspects of *Yom Tov*. One aspect of *Yom Tov*, we mentioned, is that it upholds a person. The second aspect of *Yom Tov* is that it leads us to a higher point. Thus, meeting with Hashem three times a year was not just to travel there with our feet. The purpose of *Yom Tov* was that we should ascend to a higher [more spiritual] point. That is the deeper implication of *regalim*.

Yom Tov is a time to ascend spiritually. Just as we ascended to a certain place in the world on *Yom Tov* – the site of the *Beis HaMikdash* – so must we ascend, in our very soul, to a higher place than the one we are at now.

Holy Habits

How do we ascend in our souls through *Yom Tov*?

The answer lies in the following: there is another meaning of the word “*regel*”. It can also mean to “search”, as we find in the word *meraglim*, “visitors” of the land, who really come to search out the land. This hints to us that the way we ascend through *Yom Tov*/the *regalim* is by “searching” for something. The first *regel* is Pesach, which we begin by searching for any *chometz*.

Yom Tov is a “*regel*”, and this implies that we need to search for something on *Yom Tov*. *Chazal* say that “It is better had man not been born, and now that we have been born, we need to examine our deeds.”⁵ Thus, we need to search inside ourselves. What is it that we need to search for?

1 Devarim 16:16

2 Chagigah 4a

3 Avos 1:2

4 Shmuel I 2:9

5 Eruvin 13b

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The word “regel” can also come from the word “hergel”, which means “habit.” We ask of Hashem, “*Shetargileinu B'Torasecha*”, that “we should become accustomed in Your Torah” – we want to develop a habit for the words of Torah. Doing things out of habit is usually not a good thing [this is called *melumadah*, doing things by rote]. But there are times in which we find that doing things out of habit is a good thing [and then *hergel* is being used for holiness]. On *Yom Tov*, we need to search inside ourselves and see which of our habits are good, and which are not good.

We count 50 days of the Omer until we get to the giving of the Torah, in which we have hopefully become accustomed to the Torah, when we have reached our aspiration of “*And we should become accustomed in Your Torah.*” At first we search for ourselves on the night before Pesach. This is the beginning aspect of the *regel*. In between Pesach and Shavuot, we have hopefully become more accustomed to going to the *Beis Midrash*, so that our feet are naturally taking us to towards the *Beis Midrash* [as Dovid *HaMelech* describes in *Tehillim*]. On Shavuot, we ideally reach the apex of getting used to holiness, which is the purpose.

This is the first aspect of the three *regalim*, which begins with Pesach – at first we search inside ourselves to see what our habits are, if they are holy or unholy. If we find habits in ourselves that are not for holiness, we need to destroy it, just as we destroy the *chometz* we find in any nooks and crannies. Along with this, we need to gain good kinds of habits – to become used to learning Torah, which is how we use the power of *hergel*/habit, for holiness: “*Shetargileinu B'Torasecha.*”

First Step: Inner Order To Our Soul

When we search inside ourselves to

discover what our habits are, we must proceed in steps. It is written of the Jewish people when they would travel to Jerusalem, “*How beautiful are your steps.*”⁶ When we would travel to Jerusalem by foot, it was with “steps” – in other words, our *avodah* needs to be practiced in steps. We must give ourselves some inner order to our soul. As the *Mesillas Yescharim* says, we cannot acquire the various levels of piety all at once. Spiritual growth is a gradual, step-by-step process.

So when we search ourselves inside, we must do this in steps. It must be done with a carefully planned notion (“*sof maaseh b'machshavah techilah*” – “The end of actions is first with thought”⁷).

Thus, we need to gain a clear perception of what our soul's abilities are. As one of the Sages said, “You see a clear world.”⁸ We should become clear in what our soul's abilities are, from the lowest point to the highest point, and be aware of the many parts in our soul.⁹ Then we should search our entire soul, in an orderly fashion [beginning from our lowest point of the soul, all the way to the highest point of our soul] and discover what our habits are leading towards. Then, one should write down all of one's habits that are holy, and all the habits that are unholy. The goal is to prepare oneself for the holiest “habit” of all: to become accustomed to learning the Torah, *Shetargileinu B'Torasecha*.

This is the first step of how we grow from *Yom Tov*.

Second Step - See Where We Are Going

6 Shir HaShirim 7:2

7 from the “Lecha Dodi” prayer of Friday Night

8 Pesachim 50a

9 Editor's Note: The Rav explains the structure of the soul in “Da Es Nishmatecha” (Torah Way To Enlightenment)

There is an inner *avodah* that we have on *Yom Tov* as well. This is contained in another term for the word *regel* – the term “*aragah*”, which means “thirsty.” We find this in the *possuk*, “*Just as a deer thirsts over the banks of water, so does my soul thirst for You, G-d.*”¹⁰ The feet of a person lead him toward something he wants and longs for. *Yom Tov*, which is called *regel*, leads a person to what he is thirsty for, to what he has “*aragah*” (thirst) for. *Yom Tov* reveals to a person what his aspirations are. It shows what we really want, what we are really getting pleasure from in life.

So the first part of our *avodah* is that we need to search inside ourselves and discover what our habits are, and after that, we need to discover where we are actually heading. If we discover in ourselves that we are heading towards habits that are bad, we need to destroy them.

When we left Egypt, we were “redeemed from a house of slaves”; we were not just redeemed in the physical sense from Egypt, but we were redeemed in our souls. There were “seventy souls” who went down to Egypt, connoting that the exile in Egypt was taking place in our souls as well. The redemption from Egypt was essentially an inner redemption, a redemption from the exile upon our very souls. Hashem took us out from there and instead “brought us closer into His service.”

We became close to Hashem because we gained inner clarity within our souls. The redemption showed us what we really wanted and enjoyed and longed for.

Defining The Joy of Yom Tov

The unique *mitzvah* of all three festivals is that we have a *mitzvah* to rejoice on *Yom Tov*. Chazal state that the *mitzvah* of *simchas Yom Tov* (joy on the

10 Tehillim 42:2

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festival) is fulfilled through meat and wine.¹¹

Yom Tov is a revelation of our happiness, and it also shows us **what** makes us happy. The meat and wine only satisfies our *nefesh habehaimis*, the lower and animalistic part of our souls, but this is not the entire *simcha* of *Yom Tov*. It is only needed so that we can give something to our *nefesh habehaimis* to satisfy it, because if we don't satisfy it, our *nefesh habehaimis* will rebel and get in the way of our true, inner happiness.

Therefore, if a person thinks that *simchas Yom Tov* is all about dining on meat and wine, he only satisfies his *nefesh habehaimis*, and he only knows of an external and superficial *Simchas Yom Tov*. Woe to such a person, if this is his entire *simchas Yom Tov*!

What is the real happiness of *Yom Tov*? The *posuk* says, “*And you shall rejoice in your festival.*”¹² Our true happiness on *Yom Tov* is the happiness we have in *Yom Tov* itself. It is to rejoice with Hashem, for Whom our soul is thirsty. It is from this that we derive the depth of our happiness, on *Yom Tov*.

It is written, “*The righteous rejoice in Hashem.*”¹³ When a person lives a life of truth, when he lives a very internal kind of life, his entire happiness is “in Hashem.” He is happy “in” his feeling of closeness with Hashem and with His Torah – the place where true happiness is derived.

So *Yom Tov*, the time to rejoice, is the time in which we discover the happiness we are used to. It is a time to discover if our main happiness is coming from externalities such as meat and wine (for the men) jewelry and clothing (for the women) and candy (for the children) – or if our happiness is coming from an inner place. It is only inner

happiness which satisfies our spiritual needs – our *nefesh Elokus* (G-dly soul).

Yom Tov is thus not just the time in which we rejoice, but it is a time in which we clarify to ourselves what our soul is really rejoicing in. On *Yom Tov*, we do not just attempt to ‘connect’ ourselves to happiness, as if happiness is somewhere on the outside of ourselves. The festivals are called *regalim*, which implies that we reveal from within ourselves where we are habitually drawn towards, and where we really are.

When a person never makes this internal clarification – when he never bothers to search himself on the inside, and he never discovers what truly makes him happy – he is like a dove who cannot find any rest. *Yom Tov* to him will feel like a time of confusion; he is like the dove who could not find any rest from the *mabul* (the flood), which is from the word *bilbul*, confusion.

A person should cleanse himself from the desires for this world's pleasures and instead reveal his thirst for true happiness.

Assessment

When *Yom Tov* arrives, the first thing one needs to clarify with oneself is if *Yom Tov* truly makes him happy. You should know that most people are not really happy on *Yom Tov* – not even for one second do they really experience *Simchas Yom Tov*!

This is not just because the Vilna Gaon says that the most difficult *mitzvah* to keep is *Simchas Yom Tov* (due to the fact that it is for a 24-hour period lasting for seven days). We are referring to a much simpler and basic level of *simchas Yom Tov*, which most people also do not reach.

Most people enjoy some moments of relaxation on *Yom Tov*, but they nev-

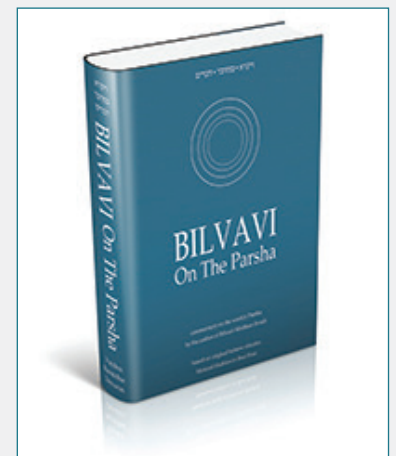
er reach one moment of true *simcha*. If someone experiences even one moment of *simchas Yom Tov*, he has begun to touch the spiritual light of *Yom Tov*.

In order to reach true *simchah* on *Yom Tov*, we need to remove the various bad habits we have towards the many ambitions we have that are not about holiness. We must remove any “thirsts” we may have for things that are not truthful sources of pleasure. When we begin to feel our soul's thirst for its source – Hashem – we will find our source of happiness there.

A person needs to discover: “What makes me happy?” If one's entire happiness on *Yom Tov* comes from eating meat and drinking wine, then, on a *halachic* level he has certainly fulfilled the *mitzvah* of *simchas Yom Tov*. He has made his *nefesh habehaimis*¹⁴ happy, but he did not reach the goal of *Yom Tov*! He did not reach “*And you shall rejoice in your festival*” on the true, inner level. He hasn't even touched upon the real happiness of *Yom Tov*.

The three festivals have the power to awaken us to spiritual growth, and to know what is making us happy. From knowing that, we are able to continue that very same happiness and extend it into the rest of the year.

[from BILVAVI ON THE PARSHAH]



14 animal level of the soul

11 Pesachim 109a
12 Devarim 15:15
13 Tehillim 97:12

SINCE THIS IS A SEFER CURRENTLY BEING TRANSLATED WE HAD TO FEATURE CHAPTERS 1, 12 AND 13. STARTING LAST WEEK WE SHARED THE UNEDITED CHAPTERS IN THEIR ORDER

Starting From The Nefesh HaBehaimis (Animal Soul)

Thus, the first step in self-recognition is to begin by recognizing our lowest layer – the nefesh habehaimis (animal soul), which is the outermost part of the soul. Only afterwards can one progress to recognizing the rest of the soul's parts – beginning from the soul's lower levels and progressing to learning about the soul's higher levels.

What is the nefesh habehaimis? The Torah mentions several times that when Hashem created the animals, He made them with a 'soul' of some sort – a nefesh chayah (living spirit). This soul-level is a spiritual energy that sustains the body of the animal. Though it is spiritual, it is not lofty or pure. It is a low level of life-spirit, and it merely keeps the animal alive. This soul-level bears certain properties to it, which are similar to an animal's way of sustaining itself. Thus Chazal call it the nefesh habehaimis, the animal soul.

Now, a person's soul is his very intrinsic aspect (as explained in the beginning of this chapter) while the body is merely a circumstantial aspect escorting him in order for him to reach his purpose. But in order for the body to do its work and serve the soul, it needs a source of vitality. That vitality-source is: the soul. To say it more accurately, the body needs to get its vitality from the lower level of the soul. The soul's lowest levels sustain the body, and the body serves the soul. Just as an animal's life-spirit enables the animal to live, so does the lower level of one's soul keep the body alive. However, the lower level of the soul is different than an animal's soul. Just as a person's body is more exalted than an animal's body, so is the lowest level of a person's soul more exalted than an animal's soul.

Had Adam never sinned, the world would be so repaired that a person's body would completely serve the soul, and the soul would also be perfected, clearly being revealed as a portion of G-d from above. There wouldn't be any lower, animalistic aspects in one's soul.

The physical world which we live in now would have been solely the domain of animals, and not for people. That is why Hashem placed certain characteristics in the souls of animals, in order for them to manage well in this world. The world which had originally been designed for people would have become a spiritual world, and man would have been involved solely in spiritual pursuits, and the body would have merely served as a tool to help the soul. Even the lowest aspects of the human soul would have been spiritual.

But now that we live after the first sin, everything became altered. The world, the soul, and the body all became adversely affected from the sin. In addition, we live in a world where the degree of being connected to materialism is overdone (to say the least). Because of this, the lower part of the soul became strongly attached with the body, receiving many physical aspects from the body, to the point that Chazal refer to the nefesh habehaimis as "partner with the body". As long as we live in the impaired world, there are resemblances between an animal's soul with the lowest aspect of a person's soul (nefesh habehaimis). Both are connected to a physical body, and both are materialistic. And since this physical world in front of us was really made primarily for animals, Chazal use a borrowed terminology to the lowest level of one's soul as the nefesh habehaimis, animal soul.

Yet, although the lower level of the soul has greatly descended in its level since the first sin, to the point that Chazal call it the "animal soul", it is still an intrinsic part of the person. The relationship between the soul and the body – between the intrinsic aspect and the circumstantial aspect of one's being – still remains, even after the sin. Therefore, if a person wants to know himself well, he has to first learn about his nefesh habehaimis- for it is an intrinsic part of him – unlike his body, which is only his circumstantial aspect.

Beginning To Recognize Our Basic Soul-Level

For one to start recognizing the lowest level of the soul – the nefesh habehaimis – he has to analyze it the way it is now (as opposed to its ideal design). Meaning to say, as long as we live in the impaired world, the lower level of our soul retains animalistic (unrefined) aspects, and

SELF-RECOGNITION & SELF-ACTUALIZATION CHAPTER 2-3

therefore, we need to recognize it. We cannot pretend that these unrefined aspects of ourselves don't exist.

At the start of this, let us not fool ourselves into thinking that our soul is entirely spiritual, refined, and exalted – as if our “animal soul” is really the “G-dly soul”. Rather, we must see the unrefined and materialistic aspects of our animal soul, seeing it for what it is, and to realize that it is precisely these unrefined and materialistic parts comprise our animal soul.

We do not mean at all that our animal soul doesn't contain any good parts to it, and that we have to start looking for the bad, negative aspects of our character. There are actually many good, constructive aspects within our animal soul. The way to begin recognizing our soul, most of the time, is to begin precisely by analyzing our good, positive qualities, and not by looking at our unrefined aspects. Rather, what we mean is that both the good, positive qualities as well as the negative, unrefined aspects will always be somewhat materialistic in their nature. So whenever we are analyzing of our soul-aspects, we should just take notice of the inevitable materialistic aspect that is in it.

At a later stage, we can begin to recognize our G-dly soul. As long as we are still at the stage of trying to recognize the lowest part of our soul, we need to try and recognize this part as a soul that is attached to physicality – it is our nefesh habehaimis, the animal soul within us.

CHAPTER 3 – THE WAY TOWARDS SELF-RECOGNITION

(Summary: In the previous chapter we learned that self-recognition means to recognize your intrinsic aspect – which is your soul. In order to recognize our soul well, we have to recognize its generalities and details – the soul's general purpose and the tools which bring about that purpose. It was also explained that a person has to begin the work of recognizing the soul by first learning about the lowest level of the soul: the nefesh habehaimis (animal level of the soul). In this chapter we shall explain, with siyata d'shmaya, the way to self-recognition. Now that we have the goal, we need to know the way of how

to get there. The topic that will be explained in this chapter is not only relevant for self-recognition – but for all areas of life, without exception. But since one of the most important areas of life is self-recognition, it will take on much greater meaning in the context of this chapter, and from there we can apply it to other areas.)

The Ingredients That Comprise Our Soul

If a person wishes to know anything well, he needs to recognize it in both its **whole** and in its **parts** (as explained in previous chapter). First, one needs to see the general whole by itself, the parts on their own, and then one needs to connect them together into one unit [a unified view of both the whole and its detailed parts].

(There is no need to work in that order. Sometimes it is even better to start with recognizing the details and only later to identify the general whole. Either way, in order to gain a clear picture of something, one needs to see each part by itself and then connect it all into one picture.)

One way to recognize each part by itself is, by looking at it as one complete thing, as it is. For example, a cake is one piece of food, but if we analyze its details, it is made of several ingredients. If we want to know the nutrition facts of the cake, we first need to consider each of the ingredients on their own. Each ingredient is contributing to the calories and fat. Then when we add up the total of all the ingredients, we can know the nutrition facts of the entire cake.

With regards to recognizing our soul, there are 10 main ‘ingredients’ that comprise our soul (according to one system, as mentioned in the previous chapter): The faculties of (1) will, (2) wisdom, (3) contemplation, (4) love – kindness, (5) strength, (6) compassion, (7) victory, (8) admitting, (9) connection, and (10) lowliness. In order to recognize the soul well, we first need to understand each of these soul-faculties, and then we can combine together all this knowledge. That is one way – to learn about each part of our soul.

But there is also another way, which goes to a more fundamental level. Everything is comprised of certain

ingredients to it. When we know the ingredients in it, we can know what it is. To give an analogy, we can only know the nutrition facts of the cake if we think about all the ingredients and their nutritional value. So too, if we wonder how our Sages knew which particular soul-aspects and character traits are found in each soul-faculty, the answer is that they thought about the ‘ingredients’ that comprise each soul-faculty, and concluded what the particular aspects and traits were.

So there are two ways to recognize each thing- to know it as it is, and to know it based on its ingredients. Certainly we will benefit more from knowing the ingredients in something, because that will bring us to recognize the roots of its different aspects, as well as enabling us to recognize it as it is.

The 4 Elements In Creation

From a superficial perspective, there are many ingredients which comprise Creation. One can find many different ingredients in each thing. But from an inner perspective, Chazal taught us that there are 4 fundamental elements which comprise each thing – the elements of earth, water, air, and fire. When Hashem wanted to make His world, He created these four elements alone, and arranged them in many different ways in order to create the world.

These 4 elements are not ethereal – they are not one-dimensional¹ – they are rather complex. They were each comprised of several elements to them, having gone through many different stages until they became the elements as they are. Their complex makeup involved 4 ingredients only – the 4 elements. The many stages that they underwent were all to serve as the founding bricks of the entire Creation. The 4 elements at their highest root are the 4 letters of Hashem’s four-letter name of *HaVaYaH*. Rav Chaim Vital said that all of the upper worlds were created from the 4 spiritual elements, which are the four letters of *HaVaYaH*.

However, Hashem wanted each world to be different.

¹ See Ramban on Beraishis 1:1, and Gra on Yeshayahu 11:1

Thus each world has different characteristics to it, as needed for that particular world. The 4 elements therefore appear differently in each world, depending on the world that they are combined in. In our world, the 4 elements appear as the 4 physical elements of earth, water, air and fire, each of them with their own physical properties. The Rambam says that fire is hot and dry, air is warm and moist, water is cold and moist, and earth is dry and cold. Earth is the heaviest element, water is lighter, air is even lighter, and fire is the lightest of the elements.²

The 4 Movements Of The Soul

The body was created from the lowest of all the worlds – the element of earth, comprised of the four physical elements. But the soul comes from the upper worlds, possessing purified and refined aspects to it. The fundamental perspective of viewing the four elements – in relation to how they comprise the soul – is, very briefly, as follows.³ When Hashem created the world, He essentially created a moving reality. Getting more specific, there would now be a reality with four different movements taking place. These four movements are the root aspects of the four elements in the soul.

Each of the 4 elements therefore has a distinct “movement” to it. Air moves in order to upkeep existence. Fire moves in order to destroy. Water moves in order to expand. Earth moves by contracting.⁴

² Rambam Hilchos Yesodei HaTorah 4:1

³ The approach that will be explained in this book is mainly centered on recognizing our branching abilities. The roots of those abilities, however, are only being mentioned here, and briefly. In the series on “4 Elements – Root Movements of The Soul” (numbering 48 classes) these “root abilities” are explained more extensively.

⁴ Note that the order listed here is air, fire, water, and earth. This is different than the usual order, and this is because we are explaining the root movements of the soul (which begins with air/existence). The 4 elements are divided into 2 “pairs” – the pair of air with fire, and the pair of water with earth. In other words, everything in Creation will always have in it a movement of either existence or destruction, and it will also have a movement of either expansion or contraction. Understandably, there are 4 root movements in everything, the only issue is in what order of dominance the movements are, depending on the intensity of each movement.

These four movements can also produce many different **soul-faculties**. Each faculty in the soul is a result of a certain combination of the four root movements. Every soul-faculty is comprised of four movements, and the way they are organized and balanced together is what gives unique personality to it.

Generally, the soul-faculties are all stemming from the four elements are examined in two fundamental different ways: The soul's movements, and the soul's character traits. These two different perspectives can be compared to the relationship between the soul and the body. The movements are the very "soul" of all the faculties, while the character traits are like their "body".⁵

Through the first perspective – focusing on the soul's movements – there are many soul-faculties that come from each of the elements, and the very persona behind all these soul-faculties is the root movements behind them, which they are stemming from. Thus, we can look at each of the soul-faculties and then identify their root movements.⁶

In every soul-faculty, there is one movement that is strongest, a second movement which is almost as strong, then a third-to-strongest movement, and finally the

movement that's weakest.⁷

But through the second perspective – viewing the character traits – from each element come many soul-faculties, whose movements and capabilities are very measured and defined. We can think about the different soul faculties, identify their character traits (or their defining boundaries, that is, the extent of their movements), and how they are expressed outwardly. This view of the soul is called *middos* – seeing our character traits.

According to this second perspective, the element of earth (which moves by contracting) produces the specific traits of sadness, laziness, dryness, heaviness, etc. Water (which moves by expanding) produces desire, dragging, envy, jealousy, etc. Air (which moves to upkeep existence) produces mercy, leadership, scattering, unifying desires together, etc. Fire (which moves by destroying) produces the traits of conceit, anger, honor, etc.⁸

According to either perspective of viewing the soul (movements versus character traits), every soul-faculty without exception is always a combination of the 4 primary movements (existence, destruction, expansion, contraction⁹). In other words, the 4 primary elements are the roots – the ancestral parts of the soul – while the soul's faculties are the branches, the offspring of 4 elements.

מהספר הכרה עצמית והעצמת הנפש

5 The topic of the soul's movements and character traits is deep and complex, and it cannot be covered here fully in these few words, which are a mere taste of the topic. The soul's movements are explained in the series 4 Elements – Root Movements of the Soul (currently available in audio format only) while the soul's character traits are explained in the series Da Es Middosecha ("Working On Your Middos"). The practical work of balancing is discussed in the "4 Elements" series (Fixing Your Earth, Fixing Your Water, etc.) while the practical work of building the soul's character traits is discussed in other parts of the 4 Elements series.

6 From the element of air stems certain soul-faculties which are personified by the movements of existence. These include movement, speech, connecting to the root, aiming towards a purpose, and more.

From the element of fire stems certain soul-faculties that are personified by the movements of destruction. These include death, silence, suffering, separation, and more.

From the element of water comes certain soul-faculties personified by the movements of expansion. These include love, renewal, pull, vitality, and more.

From the element of earth stems certain soul-faculties that are personified as the movement of contraction. These include stability, humility, patience, serenity, and more.

7 However, there is not much a difference between the strongest movement and second-to-strongest movement. For example, when a person is conceited, this stems from two different movements – the movement of destroying a previous level (the movement of fire) and the desire to expand one's I (and expansion is the movement of water). The movements can sometimes be equal in their intensity, but it can also be different with each person. There are those who are conceited not because they have a lot of fire [a drive to destroy others in their path] but because they have a lot of water (a desire to expand their self).

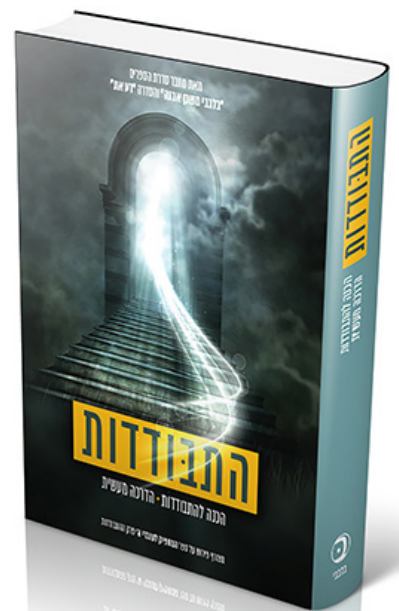
8 When it comes to doing practical inner work, without a doubt the art of recognizing the soul's movements is a more advanced stage of self-awareness that must come only after one has recognized well his middos (character traits). This is because the proper way to recognize our soul is by beginning with the branches (the character traits and various soul-faculties) before we recognize the roots (the soul's movements), as explained earlier.

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