



BONDING WITH THE CREATOR THROUGH SCENT-MOVEMENT

TWO DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVES – BEFORE THE SIN OF ADAM AND AFTER THE SIN OF ADAM

In this chapter, we will explain, with the help of Hashem, the concept behind the sense of smell.

It is explained in sefarim hakedoshim (in sefer Bnei Yisrocher and in others), that “The sense of smell was not damaged by the sin of Adam HaRishon.” The Gemara also says that “What is something that the neshamah (the soul) derives pleasure from, which the guf (the body) does not derive pleasure from? It is the sense of smell.”¹

Since we are up to explaining about how to reveal the soul by way of the sense of smell, we can see from the above two statements in our Sages that it is the sense of smell where the soul is clearly revealed, because the soul enjoys smell. The sense of smell is therefore the area where we can more apparently reveal our soul, for it is the only sense that never received any spiritual damage from sin.

This is a puzzling matter, and it requires some explanation. There are four primary senses, which are sight, hearing, smell and speech. The sense of sight is the most elevated of all the senses, for it is in the eyes, which is in a higher place in the body than the ears (hearing), the nose (smell) and the mouth (speech). If anything, it is the sense of sight which shouldn't have become damaged through the sin. Why is it that only the sense of smell remained undamaged?

The sense of smell is the sense which the neshamah enjoys, and it is also the sense associated with Mashiach. The Gemara says that Mashiach will render judgment not through what he sees or what he hears, but from using his sense of smell.² He will be able to ‘sniff out’ the truth in everything, and based on this sense, he will judge. There is also a term of “breath”, ruach, associated with Mashiach, for it is written of Mashiach, “The breath of our nostrils, Hashem's anointed.”³

We will attempt here a little to explain this matter. Firstly, we should establish the fact that there are two abilities in our nose: the ability to breathe, and the ability of smell. In Hebrew, these words are similar: ruach (air), and rei-

ach (smell). There is also a close connection between air/breathing and smell, for Mashiach will possess “ruach” (for the term “ruach apeinu” is said of Mashiach) and he will also have the unique ability to “sniff out” the truth, which is smell.

The depth of this is lays in understanding the difference between two different ‘modes’ of the Creation – the level before the sin of Adam HaRishon, and the level after the sin of Adam HaRishon.

The simple understanding we are familiar with, which is after the sin, is to be aware that there is movement within Creation, but we do not perceive the entire reality of Creation as a force of movement. The higher understanding, which was the level of before the sin, is the awareness that all of Creation is a force of movement.

Generally speaking, we need to see in something what the perspective of “after the sin” is and what the perspective of “before the sin” is, and our avodah is to return [on some level] to the level of before the sin of Adam.⁴ Therefore, part of our avodah is to return to the perspective of before the sin of Adam, where not only does movement play a role in Creation, but that the entire the Creation is a force in movement.

We established in the beginning of this sefer that the avodah of man is to recognize that his very existence is movement. However, it is clear to me that not many of those who have heard (or read) these words will immediately understand the importance of this concept. Why is this concept so fundamental in our avodah? But now we have explained why. It is because our avodah is to return to the perspective of before the sin, where man perceives his very existence as movement. Only now that we live after the sin do we think that movement is just another one of the many forces within Creation.

This is the very first definition we should be aware of here, and it is a very deep one. We will try to explain it more and expand further upon this point, with the help of Hashem.

Let us now explain the difference between these two perspectives. The Torah says, “Six days you shall perform work,

1 Berachos 43b

2 Sanhedrin 93b

3 Eichah 4:20

4 Editor's Note: A source for this concept is in sefer Adir B'Marom of the Ramchal.

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and on the seventh day you shall rest.” What happens when we rest from movement? In the perspective before the sin, where all of the reality (havayah) is movement, the menuchah (serenity) of Shabbos was essentially a revelation of the point above our own havayah. But in the perspective after the sin, where all of our havayah has become movement, the revelation of menuchah/serenity means the revelation of the unmoving reality of Creation, where Creation ceases from movement. It is the point of the havayah itself, which exists regardless of movement or not.

This is also the difference between the level of Shabbos we have which came after the sin, and the level of Shabbos of the future. After the sin, Shabbos to us is the menuchah which comes after the six days of work. It is a Shabbos within the Creation, which is a reality of movement, but which still exists regardless of movement. When we rest on Shabbos from work, there is still the reality of this Creation, even though there is a cessation of movement. But in the Shabbos of the future, all of havayah will be movement, so when there is menuchah/serenity, it is a cessation of movement and therefore a cessation of the very havayah of Creation. When there is no havayah, there is nothing but the light of the Infinite. That will be the state of the Next World.

Thus, either we perceive the Creation as a reality defined as movement [the perspective of before the sin, and the future] or we perceive it as a moving reality [the current state, the perspective after the sin]. These two different perspectives are at the core of all our inner avodah, for we wish to bring our soul into a calm, serene state. The truth is that all paths of avodah have the ultimate purpose of bringing us to a state of settled mind (yishuv hadaas), balance, calmness, and serenity – no matter which “perspective” we are in, whether it is the six days of the week, or the holy Shabbos, or any of the oth-

er viewpoints. They are direct a person towards inner serenity, menuchah.

Based upon the above, let us now consider: Why should we wish to reach a state of calmness and serenity? What is it that can be revealed there?

If we view it from the perspective after the sin, where there is a moving reality, the reality can still exist regardless of movement [where there is non-movement]. Simply speaking, we regard non-movement as the trait of laziness, because if a person exists and he doesn't feel like moving, we call this laziness. But from the perspective before the sin, where the very reality is defined as movement, the point of non-movement is a “holy” kind of laziness. It is a state where I am not moving because there is no existence of an “I”, for it is the state of revelation of the light of the Infinite.

In summation, as long as there is an existent reality even when there is no movement, non-movement is regarded as laziness, but if reality is defined as movement, non-movement is a cessation of my reality, and then there is no possibility of laziness within Creation.

Thus, when a person reaches a state where his soul is not moving – which is really the depth of man's neshamah – how does he interpret this?

If he has the lower perspective, which is that movement is connected with havayah/reality (and that the reality can still exist independent of movement), this will mean that a havayah divorced from movement is a state of his own private havayah, for he perceives movement as an additional layer to his havayah, and in turn, when movement is removed, the person is left with his own private havayah. This serene state would only be a serenity within the dimension of This World.

In contrast, the serenity of the Next World stems from the higher perspective: I am defined by movement, and

when I am in a state of non-movement, that means that there is a cessation of the “I”. This state of serenity is the secret behind the revelation of the light of the Infinite, where there is no movement. It is an entirely different dimension of non-movement, than the non-movement of This World.

We have so far defined the two different perspectives towards the Creation: The perspective before the sin, where the very havayah/reality of the Creation is defined as movement, and the perspective after the sin, where there is a moving reality but where the reality can exist independent of movement. Now we will return to discussing the “Ruach” faculty of our soul, which is synonymous with our sense of smell.

Reality Is Movement: The “Breath of Mashiach” In the beginning of this chapter we explained that the nose is the seat of our sense of smell, which in Hebrew is “reiach”, which is related to the Hebrew word “Ruach”. We explained the connection. But we should now understand the deeper function of the Ruach's power of movement. If we view it simply as a power of movement, this is the perspective of after the sin. The deeper function of the Ruach is really the “ruach apeinu, mashiach Hashem”⁵ – “The breath of our nostrils, Hashem's anointed.” This is not the Ruach which we are currently familiar with. Rather, it is the perspective where the reality is defined by movement - by Ruach.

The Sages said that scent/reiach/Ruach is a power that reveals the neshamah, and this does not refer to the level of Ruach in our times. The air and wind that blows through the world today is not the “breath of Mashiach”. The Sages said that the “breath of Mashiach” is synonymous with the “spirit of G-d [which] hovered over the face of the water”.⁶ In other words, in the future, we will understand that the very hava-

⁵ Eichah 4:20

⁶ Beraishis Rabbah 1:1

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yah/reality is Ruach/movement.

When revealing the neshamah by way of the nose – the sense of smell – this is not referring to the current perception of “Ruach” which is the state after the sin. This cannot be, for our true sense of smell has become concealed ever since the sin, as well as the other senses. Rather, when the Sages said that the neshamah is revealed by way of the nose/scent, this is referring to the perspective in which our very havayah/reality is movement.

Thus, it is now clear that when we discuss the “Ruach” faculty of the soul here, it is referring to “ruach apeinu, mashiach Hashem”, to perceive the very havayah/reality as movement, and that this is a root of revealing the neshamah. The Vilna Gaon said that before the sin of Adam, the Creation was in a higher, more spiritual mode of existence, and after the sin, Creation descended to a lower existential level. After the sin, we now perceive everything from the view of the “Nefesh” part of the soul, with the “Ruach” level of the soul above it, and above that, the Neshamah. But before the sin, our primary view was from the Ruach level of the soul. Thus the Vilna Gaon wrote that when Adam was in Gan Eden, he lived in the dimension of Yetzirah, which corresponds to the “Ruach” level of the soul.

This is the depth behind the concept of before the sin, where Adam perceived reality as Ruach, movement, and after the sin, we now perceive reality on a lower dimension, with the “Ruach” level is esoteric to us and it is perceived by us as the hidden motivating force which powers our reality. Thus, in summation, when revealing the neshamah by way of the nose [the sense of smell], the first step is to understand this concept, that there is a higher dimension in which reality itself is movement – meaning that movement is the reality.

Connection Between Scent (Re’iach) & the “Ruach” level of the soul. Re’iach/smell corresponds to the “Ruach” level of perception, as follows.

When you see a table, you can only see the table when it is in front of you. If the table is removed, you can’t see it. The same goes for a sound you hear. You can only hear the sound as long as the sound can be audibly heard. But if you are not within audible reach of the sound, you will not hear it. The sense of smell is different. Long after you have smelled something, you can continue to smell it, even after the source of the smell is removed. For example, if a barrel of wine was in a certain place for a long amount of time, and then it is removed from there, the scent of the wine continues to linger in that place. (The depth of this is because a scent can exist even when there is nothing here).

An additional point about smell is that whenever we move a scented item, the scent becomes stronger. When we shake a bottle of besamim (spices), it gives off its scent. Thus, scent is connected with movement. The less we move it, the weaker the smell. The more we move it, the more we can smell it.

Thus, there are two aspects in smell: The smell continues to linger after its source has been removed, and smell is revealed through movement. This is connection between re’iach/smell and Ruach/movement. We have been explaining that movement is reality. So in order to “smell” properly, I must “move” something – and even if the source of the smell is removed, some of the smell still lingers. This is because the movement produces the smell. **Using The Sense of Smell To Reveal The Self**

Let us now explain how the sense of smell/movement can be used [in hisbodedus] throughout the five levels of the soul: the Nefesh, Ruach, Neshamah, Chayah, and Yetzidiah. **How The “Nefesh” Level of**

the Soul Perceives Movement When we discussed the “Nefesh” level of the soul in earlier stages of hisbodedus, we explained that it is the simple grasp of reality. What is smell/movement in the “Nefesh” level of the soul? It is to simply relate to this concept, that movement is reality.

When it comes to the senses of sight, thought, and hearing, this concept is on a simpler level. But when it comes to the sense of smell, which is linked with movement, the perception of the “Ruach” level of the soul, we are dealing with the level of the future. This is known as either the “light of Mashiach”, the “light of the World To Come”, the “light of before sin”, the “light above sin”. The most basic level of this perception, which is from the “Nefesh” level of the soul, is to relate to the fact that the very reality is movement. It is that there our reality is in movement – rather, it is that the very reality is movement.

This is unlike any of the perceptions through our “Nefesh” soul level which we have described until now. In the earlier chapters when we spoke about the “Nefesh” level of the soul, it was a perception towards reality which is after the sin. Here, however, we are speaking of a sense that directly reveals the soul, which is connected with the level of Mashiach, and it is a perception of before the sin, where the very reality is defined as movement. In this higher perception, reality is not just in movement – rather, the reality itself is movement.

We have had to repeat this several times, but, practically speaking, it will be difficult to absorb this concept. The truth is that we cannot absorb it fully, because we are currently found in the perception after the sin, in which we have become negatively affected by the Serpent. But with the more that the light of Mashiach shines in the world, the more it penetrates into our soul. First, we must at least become intellec-

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tually familiar with this concept, and to understand the difference between the two perspectives, even though we cannot absorb it fully.

We will continue to the next step, but all of the coming steps are based on the above perspective. **How The “Ruach” Level of the Soul Perceives Movement** The Ruach level of the soul is utilized when we understand different directions of movement. There are six general directions to move in (east, west, north, south, above and below). There is the eastern wind, western wind, northern wind, etc. We can discern these different directions of movement through the “Ruach” level of the soul. **How The “Neshamah” Level of the Soul Perceives Movement** The Neshamah level of the soul is used in order to understand the source of movement, the destination of the movement, and its purpose. The Neshamah level of the soul corresponds to understanding and intellect – to understand what is being presented by the information in front of us.

Thus, the Nefesh level of the soul grasps how reality is movement, the Ruach level of the soul grasps what kind of movement it is, and the Neshamah level of the soul thinks: “What is it for?” It is about knowing the reason of the movement. When the reason for the movement is understood, one can then determine which direction it is going in. When we know the reason for the movement, accordingly, we can direct the movement. **How The “Chayah” Level of the Soul Perceives Movement** The Chayah level of the soul perceives how life, itself, is movement – and to thereby derive chiyus, life-giving vitality, from movement.

Once a man came with his child to the Chazon Ish, and as the father was talking, the child was laughing, jumping, and being rowdy. The father was

uncomfortable that his child was misbehaving in front of the Chazon Ish. The father was about to tell his son to stop the wild behavior. The Chazon Ish said, “He is a child, and this is what he lives from. This is his childhood – don’t take it away from him!”

In other words, the child receives life-giving vitality from his jumpy movement. In adulthood, although we mature past this level, the concept of receiving vitality from movement must remain intact – we only have to refine it. Others become even more childish when they get older, which is not good. In either case, the idea of receiving vitality from movement is meant to carry into adulthood as well. A child becomes energized from playing games, from running after a ball, etc. There are also adults who become energized from merely running. However, even if an adult does not gain vitality from running, in the depths of the soul, he still feels more alive when he moves. This is true for all of us.

The root of the entire Creation is movement. It is explained in sefer Eimek HaMelech, and in other places, that the root of Creation began from a removal of Hashem’s Infinite Light – there was a movement. Without getting into the depth of this matter, which is certainly not a simple matter to understand, the basic definition is that movement is the root of Creation. Since movement is the root, it is also the source of our vitality in life.

In order to move, we need a space to move into. If a person is tightly squeezed into an amount of space that holds the exact width and length of his body, he cannot move. One needs some space in order to move; the bigger the space, the more he can move. The Hebrew word for “space” is chahal, which is also equal in value to the Hebrew word for “life”, chaim, because the quality of our life is based on how much space we have to move.

At the very beginning state of Creation, the Hashem’s Infinite Light filled all of existence. Afterwards, He removed His Infinite Light to the sides, which left an empty void in its place, where an imprint [of the Infinite Light] remained. What this meant for us is that our life is measured by how much space we have to move into. If we have no space to move into, we have no life – whether we are lacking in physical movement, emotional movement, or mental movement. Thus, we really live from movement.

The less a person is in touch with himself, the more he will deny this fact. The more inward one becomes, the more he realizes that he lives from movement. It is like the verse, “And the chayos (angels) run and retreat” – which is explained by early commentaries to mean that the angels receive chiyus (vitality) from the very act of running/advancing and retreating.

Thus, the Chayah level of the soul, when it comes to movement, is when I feel that I receive vitality from movement. Usually, though, a person receives chiyus/vitality from a different source: from the fact that he possesses things. He buys a new piece of furniture, or a new car, or a new house, and this gives him a greater feeling of being alive. However, this is because the person generally has the lower perspective – he acknowledges that reality is in movement, but he does not recognize that movement is reality – and therefore, he feels more alive from the fact that what he possesses. But if we realize that movement is reality, not only will I feel more alive from what I possess, but I will feel more alive even from the very act of acquiring it.

We understand clearly that movement and action is a sign of being alive. A dead person cannot move and he cannot do anything. But when it comes to our daily living, do we actually feel more alive from movement? Often, we

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are living life like a dead person. We generally will feel more alive from what we possess, but not from the movement and actions in our life. But the truth is that a person really does live from movement and action, and not just from what he has.

The Gemara⁷ brings a dispute if the land of Eretz Yisrael is inherited by those who left Egypt, or by those who entered the Land. According to one opinion in the Gemara, it is inherited by those who left Egypt, who were already deceased by the time the nation entered the Land, because there can be “inheritance in the grave”, whereupon the deceased person has an acquisition of his inheritance and now passes on the inheritance for his children. Without getting into the details of this discussion, the point we want to take out from this is that even a dead person can acquire something, at least momentarily. Therefore, acquisition or possession of something does not symbolize life, for even a dead person can acquire something.

What, then, is life? Life is only when there is action and movement. A person really derives vitality from the effort of trying to acquire something, and after he acquires it, he no longer derives vitality from it, and he is onto acquiring the next thing. It is like the verse, “Stolen waters are sweet” – from whatever I already have, I do not derive vitality from, and I only derive vitality from the act of the movement towards that which I want to acquire.

The truth is that even a dead person has some degree of vitality which keeps it intact. This is called *kista d'chiyusa*.⁸ It has this minimum degree of life, and without it, it wouldn't be here at all. Today, the *chiyus* (vitality) of people resembles this small degree of life that even the dead have. There is barely any genuine *chiyus* today.

However, the more a person learns how to derive vitality from movement, the more he can tap into this source of energy at every moment, and become revitalized from it. Even if you are physically still, but your emotions or thoughts are active, you can derive vitality from this kind of inner activity.

On a subtler level, even the physical body is always in movement. When a person is completely still, he won't be able to feel this, because the movement is so subtle. But from the act of breathing, one can feel his abdomen moving, and the like. This movement is the root of our *chiyus*.

This understanding, that we can derive *chiyus* from the mere act of moving, is really a perception which comes from before the sin of Adam. However, as with all other powers available in Creation, it can also be misused, such as when a person moves in order to do something evil, *chas v'shalom*. But the root of the perspective itself, of deriving vitality from movement, is a perspective which comes from before the sin. As emphasized, it is not a feeling of vitality derived from what we acquire and have, but from our acts of movement.

There are two kinds of movement [which we can derive vitality from]: a movement in order to acquire something, and a movement in order to negate something. The first kind of movement, which is about acquiring, is referred to as the power of “Kayin”, from the word “*kinyan*”, acquiring. The other kind of movement, which is for the purposes of negation of something, is called the power of “Hevel”, for the word “*hevel*” means “nothing.”

Before the sin, Adam HaRishon bore two sons, Kayin and Hevel. The children of a person are regarded as the revelation of all the potential forces in one's soul. Kayin and Hevel were thus the revelation of Adam HaRishon's inner potential. “The deeds of the righ-

teous are considered their offspring, and their offspring are considered their deeds.” Before the sin, the perspective of Adam HaRishon was all about movement – either for the purposes of negating (Hevel) or for the purposes of acquiring (Kayin). Thus, what is life? It is entirely about these acts of either acquiring or negating.

In summation, the “Chayah” level of perception towards movement is the deep understanding of our soul that we receive our *chiyus*/vitality from the mere act of movement.

This is what is meant by the verse of “The breath of our nostrils, Hashem's anointed.... under whose protection, we had said, we would live among the nations.” When we are found amongst the gentile nations, it is as if we have no acquisitions of our own, for today we are still in the category of slaves - “We are still the slaves of Achashveirosh” - and a slave does not own any possessions because all that a slave acquires is acquired by his master. If we try to derive *chiyus* from what we possess, we will have no true *chiyus*, for we really do not possess anything of our own. But if I derive *chiyus* from the mere act of moving, then even when I am found amongst the gentile nations, and I am bare and with nothing of my own, I can still move. That is only the source of vitality I can drive, which remains with me no matter how much I will lack.

מספר דע את נשמתך



⁷ Bava Basra 117a

⁸ Zohar Beraishis 83a

Summary: *The previous chapter explained that the inner world is not merely a random mix of scattered and separated parts of us that have been thrown together, but one complete structure comprised of many interlocking parts to it. One's task is to recognize this structure and connect all of its parts together, in order to continue the structure which Hashem began to build.*

There are many different kinds of structures that exist, each with its own characteristics, depending on how one desires to build it, and based on what the goals, planning, position, and height of the building. If we want to involve ourselves with any building we need to know its characteristics. So too when building the structure of our soul, we need to know its characteristics. We need a clear understanding of this structure if we want to familiarize ourselves with it and continue building it. That is the topic of this chapter.

The Book About "You"

The nature of the structure that is the human soul is called by the Torah, "This is the book of the offspring of man." From this verse, Raboseinu (our holy teachers) learned that the human soul is arranged like a book.

The Torah calls this book "the book of man". It has many chapters to it! And of each of those chapters contains one complete topic, which divides into other branching topics. But, it is not a book that gathers together many randomly arranged topics. Rather, each of the chapters are tied to each other and they are always about one complete thing.

To give an idea of this, the Megillas Esther contains 10 chapters, and each of the chapters contain many details. But the entire Megillah is only about one thing, with each of the chapters and details of the story being a part of it. It is the same with the human soul. The soul is like a book, com-

prised of many parts, which are all bound together to form one complete unit.

The Story That Your "Book" Tells

This "book of man" is not merely a collection of information. It reads like more a story – it is a 'book' that has an entire 'story' in it.

There are books which collect all the information on a topic, but which are not conveying a story through it, and there are other books which are telling a story. In a story, there is a certain chain of events and circumstances, with each part being an important piece of information in the story. When a person is reading a story, he encounters certain details and doesn't see the significance of them. But as he continues to read the story, or when he gets to the end, he can now understand how each detail in the story was a necessary piece of information to know, in order to better understand the story – and he can see how each detail was really an inseparable part of the story.

(Certainly this is not the case with every story that one reads, but it is true about any of the "stories" which Hashem conveyed to us in the Torah). Even seemingly random details end up being an important piece of information in the story, drastically changing the outcome of the story.

For example, the story of the Megillas Esther starts out with the event of Achashveirosh ordering Vashti to be executed. When you only see this part of the story, you cannot see the significance of this event yet and why this event is being recorded. It seems very circumstantial, as if it's just another random event – what does it have to do with the story of Megillas Esther? But when you continue to read the Megillah, you can see how this little event was a very important part of the story. If Achashveirosh hadn't ordered Vashti to be killed,

Esther would never have become his queen, and there would be no one to save the Jews from Haman.

Thus, the idea is that whenever you are reading a storybook, you have to pay attention to each detail and remember it. Later, you will be able to understand how each detail had its place in the story. Sometimes, a seemingly minute or random detail is later recognized as a valuable and central point in the story. It is the same when reading a book that describes our own soul – we need to read it as a ‘story’, paying attention to each ‘detail’ and remembering it, and later we will be able to understand how each ‘detail’ is very needed.

The “Book of Man” Filled With Wisdom & Orderliness

Many sefarim and books have been written by people. Sometimes there is a clearly recognizable wisdom and organization in them and sometimes it isn’t easily discerned, and sometimes it isn’t discernible at all. But the “book of man” is filled with wisdom and orderliness. It is a wisdom and orderliness designed by Hashem, Who wrote this book.

Just as the Shulchan Aruch is arranged according to topic, beginning with the laws of morning conduct, Tzitzis, Tefillin and so forth, with each topic dividing into several subtopics (for example, the laws of morning conduct are divided into the laws of arising from bed, dressing, relieving oneself in the washroom, washing the hands, etc.), so is the “book of man” divided into many topics and subtopics. It is all in Hashem’s wondrous wisdom and orderliness. The soul is even more orderly than the Shulchan Aruch. While the Shulchan Aruch is filled with wisdom and orderliness, gathering so many topics into one place, there is no story running through it. But the “book of man” – the story of our own souls – is not only filled with wisdom and orderliness, but it has an entire story inter-

woven between all of its topics, as if it’s materials of one building.

To give an example, this “book of man” – or, the story of our own souls – contains in it a chapter about the faculty of the will, a chapter about the faculty of thought, a chapter about the faculty of emotion, and a chapter about the faculty of action. These ‘chapters’ aren’t arranged randomly, but in an order that’s telling a certain story, with no less precision and orderliness than the story of the Megillah, where each chapter is built upon the chapter before it and each event leads to another.

How To Learn The “Book Of Man”

When a person is interested in learning a certain sefer, he needs to know “how to learn” it. For example, there are many sefarim where the words are very precise and calculated, and with other sefarim this is not the case. There are sefarim which are meant to be pondered intellectually and analyzed with questions, while there are sefarim which are meant to be learned earnestly and simply with no questioning. There are sefarim which we can read through superficially and then go back and understand it, while there are other sefarim where each chapter has to be studied very well before moving on to the next section.

Generally speaking, learning about the “book of man” – the study of our own souls – is comprised of 5 parts. (These parts are not an orderly progression, but stages which are acquired by default when studying our personal “book of man”):

- (1) Studying the contents of the book. (2) Studying the chapters of the book with a general understanding. (3) Studying well each topic that is in the book. (4) Seeing how each of the topics are all part of one story. (5) Studying the entire book as one complete story.

Therefore, when a person encounters details about his own soul which seem unimportant, he should still remember [and record] them. What seems like an extra detail at first will later be seen as important and an inseparable part of one's "story". And sometimes, it is the seemingly unimportant details which are later discovered to be a pivotal part which the entire structure was hanging upon.

Gathering Your Information

Usually when people wish to learn about internal subjects, they will usually pick one topic and try working on it for some period of time, then moving on to another topic and working on it. Someone who is action-oriented and needs to have practical exercises to work on for everything he learns about will be very content when he is given such exercises, so that he can make his learning practical.

But learning about the soul is like studying the parts of a story, so instead of immediately jumping to practical exercises for each concept learned, one has to instead get used to viewing each piece of information as a part of a story. He will need to remember each detail and patiently wait for a later time when he will be able to see how to use it.

Inner work is a process of slowly gathering together a lot of information. A person keeps writing down bit by bit of what he learns, and over time he will have a large collection of information that he has gathered together. When studying our soul, one becomes aware of another concept and then another, and slowly he can weave together all the topics into one tapestry that will be complete and beautiful.

Compare it to a person who walks into a room,

and he sees tables in there. If he is asked "What do you see?" He will answer, "I see tables." If he sees chairs, he will say, "I see chairs", and if he sees clothes, he will say "I see clothes." If he sees toys, he will say "I see toys." But if he walks into the room and sees the tables, chairs, clothes, and toys organized, he will say "I see here a family full of children with everything they need and all in their place."

Challenges When Studying Our Soul

Generally, the work of studying and coming to recognizing our soul entails the following challenges.

As mentioned, learning about our inner world (the soul) is comprised of 5 stages. The first 3 stages are easier, relatively speaking. But the last 2 stages are more complex, and they are also more fundamental. The second-to-last stage, which is to see how each detail of the soul is part of one story, is after a person has gained a 'general picture' of the soul. He now has to see where each part of the 'picture' belongs – and how each part of the soul works along with the other parts of the soul. The last stage is to see how all the parts connect together to form one picture – one complete story.

To illustrate the idea, when people study the body, they first get a general picture of the body and later they can learn about each part separately, studying the brain, the heart, the eyes, ears, nose, mouth, hands, feet, liver, etc. That is the 'easy' part of learning about the body. The next stage of that study, which is harder, is to learn about the role of each part of the body, and how they relate to the other parts of the body and work together as one interconnected unit. That is very complex to learn about, and it is also the most important.

NEXT WEEK: Seeing How Parts Of The Soul Are Interconnected