



## ROOT OF HONORING EVERY PERSON

### THE ABILITY TO HONOR EVERYONE

Normally, Beis Hilel is lenient and Beis Shamai is stringent, except for a few exceptional instances. The word “Shamai” has the words aish and mayim, fire and water – two opposite elements - which is a hint that Shamai contains the power to integrate opposite views.

Chazal said that the halachah always follows the view of Beis Hilel, because they would always show respect to Beis Shamai by first quoting Beis Shamai’s view before stating their view. Simply speaking, this showed the humility of Beis Hilel. But the deeper reason for this was because Beis Shamai’s view should really take precedence since it is opposites integrated together. Shamai’s view creates a situation of humility which enables Beis Hilel to gain from Beis Shamai’s illumination of integrating opposites together. This is really the concept of wind-of-fire-of-fire. Simply speaking, Beis Shamai’s element is fire, but when fire can connect with its opposite, this is wind-of-fire-of-fire. This is the level that depicts what true honor is.

The Throne of Glory is the one root that binds together all 600,000 souls, which integrates all opposites together. The Throne of Glory is the epitome of kavod (honor) because true kavod is to be able to integrate all opposites together, to unify every division and part into one unit.

With honoring parents, each child is honoring their specific parent, so this does not show the unity of every soul, but when respecting one’s Torah teacher, it is possible for a person to be connected to a Torah teacher who combines and unifies all opposites together, if he is a “man of spirit”, the prime example of this being the Rebbe of the entire Klal Yisrael, who is Moshe Rabbeinu, who unifies together every soul. Moshe received the Torah and was able to grasp onto the Throne of Glory, meaning that he could connect to the level where everything is unified. Thus the honor shown to such a Torah teacher is like honoring all of Klal Yisrael.

Thus, holy honor is about including everyone in one unit, unifying opposites together and showing honor to everyone.

How indeed is it possible to integrate everyone together, if everyone is so different from each other? Chazal said, “Just as their faces are not the same, so are their ways of thinking not the same” - how then it is possible to harmonize together all the different and opposite kinds of people?

The answer to this is the true meaning of the teaching of Chazal, “All who run away from honor, honor chases after him”. The simple understanding of one who runs away from honor is because he understands that he is being accorded false honor so he runs away from it, and even more so, when he runs away from honor that suits him. It’s simpler to understand that a person should run away from honor that has nothing to do with him, but a person should also run away from honor even when they are honoring him for something he does have, because he needs to learn how to run away from the trait of honor, since honor is one of the traits that remove a person from the world.

But the deeper meaning of running away from honor is because that is how one finds the true, holy honor – by running away from honor, that is, by running away from one’s personal honor and connecting to the unit where all opposites are integrated. One can run away from his own personal honor only because he is found at the level of wind-of-fire-of-fire, and he has suffering in his soul (which is the “suffering of Torah scholars”) when he only has his own way of thinking which can’t include opposite ways of thinking in it.

If one has reached his own way of thinking according to his soul-root and according to his personal share in Torah – but he can’t incorporate an opposite way of thinking into his own - then he can’t be like Beis Hilel who precede their words with Beis Shamai, and he will feel the “suffering of Torah scholars”, because he is not using his power to combine together with op-

# ROOT OF HONORING EVERY PERSON

posite ways of thinking, and instead he remains only with his own thinking.

## COMBINING DIFFERENT VIEWS TOGETHER

Everything that exists in Creation has a spark of truth in it, but most things that we see are mixed with falsity. “Falsity has no feet”, falsity has nothing to hold it up, and if there is no spark of truth in the falsity then the falsity ceases. But there is always some spark of truth that accompanies the falsity. One who can combine together all the sparks of truth found in Creation is the one who is truly wise.

There are two abilities of excelling in Torah learning – the ability of asukei shmaatsa (knowing the Gemara) and aliba d’hilchasa (knowing the final halachah). When it comes to aliba d’hilchasa, each Torah scholar has to rule according to his “soul-root”, which is clear – but the root of Torah learning is asuki shmaatsa, which is really the power to combine together everyone else’s way of thinking.

There are two ways to combine everyone’s thinking together. The lower way is the power of “Dan, who gathers together all the camps”, which is the ability to gather everything together that one finds at the end. Chazal taught that Dan was on the lowest spiritual level of all the tribes. Dan’s ability to combine everyone together is only when everyone reaches their end. Dan could gather together anyone whom the Clouds of Glory removed, those who were too spiritually weak who lagged behind and who were vulnerable to Amalek.

But there is also a higher ability to gather everyone together – the higher root which gathers everyone together, which is “wind-of-fire-of-fire”. The truly wise person knows how to incorporate all ways of thinking of other people.

In our generation, there are many people who can combine together different opinions of people, but it’s like Dan gathering together all the camps. There are those today who are gifted with the ability to collect all the halachos on a topic into one sefer, and there are authors of sefarim who can collect together every halachah of all Poskim into one sefer. Some also decide what the conclusive halachah is, and some are simply gathering together all the views. But in any case, it is the power of Dan to gather together all the camps. This is not gathering together all of them in essence, it is just gathering together all of their words.

The higher ability than this is to combine together all of them in essence – to not merely combine all the words and opinions together into one place but to harmonize them and integrate them all together, seeing how the opposing views are not really opposing each other but rather how they are each completing one another. This is the power of wind-of-fire-of-fire, the power of the wise person, the power of daas which Moshe Rabbeinu excelled in.

## ERRONEOUS CONCLUSIONS

This is a subtle concept, because if a person is not truly at this level and he tries to combine every view together, he will become very confused and he will formulate conclusions that won’t make sense. As an example of this, people today will gather together every opinion that’s not true, and they will try to fit them all into reality.

## SEEKING EVERY POSSIBLE WAY OF HONOR

A person who does not use this power (wind-of-fire-of-fire) properly, a person will seek honor in every direction possible – he will try to incorporate into him every possible way of getting honor. Chazal said that “From the times of Rebbi (Rabbi Yehuda HaNasi) we do not see Torah and opulence in one place”, we don’t find Torah wisdom and physical wealth in the same person, but if a person is using wind-of-fire-of-fire improperly, he will try to spread himself all over every area in order to attain honor.

## USING WIND-OF-FIRE-OF-FIRE PROPERLY

When the power of wind-of-fire-of-fire is used properly, one is able to combine together all levels and find common ground between each opposing way, seeing how all the different opposing views were all taught to Moshe at Har Sinai. It was Moshe who reached the complete level of this power (wind-of-fire-of-fire), of integrating together all the different views.

When one rises to the highest level, he rises to the root where all opposites are integrated together – the power of wind-of-fire-of-fire, the level of Moshe Rabbeinu who contained everyone and who could integrate every different view together.

NEXT WEEK HEBREW SHIUR/WOODMERE 2022

דע את מידותיך הדרכה מעשית אש כבוד 016 אש דאש דאש

# INTERNALIZING YOUR KNOWLEDGE

## LEAVING EGYPT – AND THEN RECEIVING THE TORAH

First we left Egypt, and then we came to Har Sinai to receive the Torah. It is written, “And you shall know today, and you shall return the matter to your heart.” Our avodah is always first to know the facts, and then to internalize our mind’s knowledge into our heart.

The Egyptian exile deterred us from receiving the Torah. As long as we were in Egypt, we could not receive the Torah; we have to leave it in order to become purified at Har Sinai and receive the Torah. In Egypt, we would not have been able to internalize the Torah had we received it. In Egypt, there was “bricks and mortar”, and this personified the exile. What exactly are these “bricks and mortar” that held us back from receiving the Torah? It wasn’t just that we had cruel physical labor. It was a spiritual kind of bricks and mortar – a blockage that held us back from receiving the Torah.

There were two layers to the redemption. There was a physical redemption, which took place when we actually left Egypt, in the physical sense. But there was also a spiritual layer to the redemption: the redemption that took place in our souls, enabling us to receive the Torah.

Although the physical redemption happened a long time ago, the spiritual redemption to our souls happens every year. Let us learn how we can merit to have the yearly spiritual redemption during this time – to reach the level of receiving the Torah, the level of internalizing our knowledge.

## REMOVING THE “BLOCKAGE OF THE HEART”

In the Haggadah we express, “By your blood shall you live” – which the Sages explain this to refer to the blood of the korban pesach (paschal sacrifice) and the blood of bris milah (circumcision). What is the connection between korban pesach and bris milah? Simply it is because in order to eat the korban pesach, one had to be circumcised, as the Gemara says. But the deeper meaning is that one has to circumcise his “orlas halev” – the blockage that is on his heart.

There exist two kinds of orlah (blockages) which we remove – a physical blockage which exists in the part of the body that is circumcised by bris milah, and a spiritual kind of blockage, which is present on the heart. This is called orlas halev. When our heart is blocked, the Torah knowledge in our mind isn’t able to penetrate into our heart.

On Pesach, we were commanded to become circumcised; the simple meaning of this, as we said, was because we need to undergo bris milah in order to eat from the korban pesach. But the deeper meaning is that we had to remove our orlas halev, “blockage of our

heart” that was on us – as it is written, “And you shall circumcise the foreskin of your hearts.” We must remove the barrier between our mind and heart, so that our mind’s knowledge can settle in our heart. And it has to be “in” our heart, not just on our heart.

In order to eat the korban pesach, we had to have a bris milah. As we explained, the deeper meaning of this is that we had to remove our “orlas halev” in order to eat the korban pesach. In Egypt, we removed some of the blockage as we began to cry out to Hashem from our heart, but this process was not yet complete until we left Egypt, when we actually received bris milah – which was not just a physical act of circumcision, but a removal of the blockage on our heart.

## HOW WE CAN ACCOMPLISH INTERNALIZATION

How do we internalize the knowledge of our mind into our heart? We get to know the Torah by learning it well, but how do we internalize it into our heart? In the works of our Rabbis, there are two general ways described in how we can accomplish it.

### THE FIRST WAY: DA’AS

One way is as follows. In our brain, we have three “minds” going on – three different mental abilities: Chochmah, Tevunah, and Daas. Chochmah is what one learns from his teacher. Tevunah is when we think on our own, and Daas is when we connect to our knowledge. Daas is when a person is always thinking about Torah, because he connects to the knowledge of his mind. Daas is an inner kind of thinking, not a superficial kind of thinking.

When a person merely intellectualizes about his learning, he’s either using Chochmah or Tevunah, but this isn’t yet Daas. Daas is only when a person thinks all the time about his learning because he is truly connected to his learning; from his deep connection to the Torah, he thinks about it as a result.

When a person uses his Daas, he is connected all the time to his learning as he thinks constantly of Torah – and in this way, his mind’s knowledge enters his heart. This is when a person learns Torah along with emunah in Hashem in his life. The Torah then penetrates into his heart.

### THE SECOND WAY: VERBAL REPETITION

The second method brought by our Rabbis on how we can internalize is by making an direct imprint on our heart, and this is accomplished when we review matters repeatedly using our simple emunah. As it is written in the possuk, “I believed, for I spoke.” When we constantly repeat a fact, it eventually settles into our heart, where it becomes internalized knowledge.

Pharoah knew that Hashem existed, but he didn’t internalize this information. Pharoah means peh rah, “evil mouth.” In other

# INTERNALIZING YOUR KNOWLEDGE

words, he didn't use his mouth in the right way, and thus he didn't internalize his mind's knowledge. So one way to internalize is to use daas, which is by learning Torah in a way that we connect to it; and this is accomplished when we learn Torah together with having emunah in Hashem. The second method to internalize is to use our power of speech, to affect our heart.

## THE THIRD WAY: REPEATING THE FACTS OF OUR DA'AS TO OUR HEART

But there is also a third way, which is deeper than the above two ways, and it combines the two methods together: to speak to ourselves facts that we know from our daas, with the intention that it should affect our heart.

This is also the deeper meaning behind why we count Sefiras HaOmer for 49 days. It is because by repeating to ourselves that today is another day towards Shavuot, it eventually internalizes in our heart; through the power of constant verbal repetition, the facts of our brain settle into our heart and become internalized.

Most people when they learn Torah are only using the lower power of Chochmah, which is located in the brain. This is mere intellectual knowledge, and it doesn't always affect a person. But the higher, deeper kind of Chochmah is called Chochmas HaLev – the wisdom of the heart – and it is rare. It is accessed when we verbalize our mind's knowledge to ourselves and we repeat the facts, over and over again, until it penetrates our heart. It then becomes Chochmas HaLev.

## FEEL THE CONTRADICTION BETWEEN YOUR MIND & HEART

First we must realize, though, that our mind and heart are in vast contradiction with each other. There are many contradictions going on between our heart and mind, and therefore, our mind and heart are very far from each other. Our heart is full of various desires that are evil, even though our mind knows that it's wrong.

Desires, jealousy and honor-seeking are negative emotions that are present in our heart. These negative emotions contradict what we know in our mind. Feel the contradiction going on between your mind and heart – and let it bother you! When you feel very bothered by the great contradiction going on between your mind and heart, you can then realize that you must work to internalize your mind's knowledge into your heart.

It is not enough to simply ignore these negative emotions that pass through us and hope that they will go away on their own. Rather, we should seek the truth, and instead we should seek to change our heart, by repeating our mind's facts to our heart, through repeated verbalization.

In today's generation, our heart is for the most part negatively affected, and we often don't feel at all how it's affected. But our heart is being affected more and more, for the worse, as our life goes on.

If we don't seek to change our heart, our heart only gets worse and worse as we get older, and we will only continue to get negatively influenced by our surroundings.

In order to survive the dismal situation of today's times, we must continuously attempt to internalize our mind's knowledge into our heart. We have to go through a constant purification process within ourselves. Our heart has to literally burn for Torah, for mitzvos, for love and fear of Hashem, for a bond with Him. It has to burn like a fire, or else we get worse and worse as our life goes on. Every Jew needs to have a heart that is actually burning for a bond with Hashem and for His Torah and mitzvos.

Unless a person develops a burning desire in his heart to internalize the facts he knows, he will remain his whole life and end it with his initial level of orlas halev.

We must bring our life to a halt (at least once) and seek how we can internalize our knowledge, how we can acquire a heart that burns for Hashem. A person might go his whole life and know a lot of Torah, but in his heart, he is a total ignoramus, and not only that, but his heart is evil from his youth. Even if he's a prominent person when it comes to Torah knowledge – even if he gives shiurim and wrote sefarim – it doesn't mean he has internalized the Torah into his heart...

If a person seeks to change his heart constantly, he will be much less affected by society. A person needs to realize that our surroundings place us in grave danger. We can't become complacent! If we let ourselves become complacent in today's times, we are in mortal danger.

To summarize: We must each seek to internalize our mind's knowledge into our hearts – through our daas, and through repeating the facts with our mouth. And we must set aside time to reflect about important matters, (as Reb Yisrael Salanter would do, to go over one statement of Chazal and repeat it numerous times, passionately).

We need to do this all the time, not just once in a while: we must always seek to internalize the facts into our heart, by repeating to ourselves the facts that we know. Hashem created us with a lev tahor, a "pure heart" – and when we feel our pure heart, we will feel as if we have just converted anew to Judaism.

(Of course, we need a brain too, and not just a heart. We cannot live with just our mind or just our heart – we need to connect them both together.)

We need to have a life brimming with Torah, mitzvos and emunah. This is the true redemption from Egypt.

May we merit to leave the blockage on our hearts, and instead come to "know" Hashem – and to internalize the knowledge about Him in our heart.