

YOM KIPPUR: TESHUVAH & BEYOND

YOM KIPPUR – THE ROOT OF TESHUVAH, & BEYOND TESHUVAH

The Ten Days of Repentance are a time of *teshuvah* for all, and it concludes with the tenth day, Yom Kippur, the holiest day of all of them – which is hinted to in the verse, “*And the tenth shall be holy*” - the root of all repentance.

But there is a rule that every concept contains its opposite as well. Therefore, if Yom Kippur is the root of *teshuvah*, it also includes the opposite aspect of *teshuvah*. According to the opinion of Rabbi, “Yom Kippur atones for those who repent, as well for those who do not repent.” Thus, Yom Kippur helps even for those who don’t do *teshuvah* – those who are at the point where there is no *teshuvah*.

The sage Rabbi Elisha ben Avuya, who became known as “Acher” (lit. “Other”, in reference to his evil ways), became a heretic. He heard a *bas kol* (heavenly voice) emanating from the Holy of Holies, which said, “Return, wayward sons – except for Elisha ben Avuya, who knows My strength and rebels against Me.”¹ Acher was at the point where he could not do *teshuvah*.

In our own souls as well, there is this point which is like “those who do not repent” – there is a point in the soul which is like the situation of Acher, where we are being told that we cannot do *teshuvah*.

Thus, according to the opinion of Rabbi, that Yom Kippur atones even for those who do not repent, it is because Yom Kippur contains a point that is “above” the realm of *teshuvah*. Yom Kippur atones even for those who don’t repent because “the essence of the day atones”, and this point is “above” the point of *teshuvah*.

The verse “*The mikveh of Yisrael, is Hashem*”, which the Sages say refers to Yom Kippur, is the aspect of *teshuvah* on Yom Kippur. But the fact that “Yom Kippur atones for those who don’t repent” reveals a higher aspect in Yom Kippur, that there is a deeper point than *teshuvah*.

There is a “*teshuvah*” aspect in the Ten Days of Repentance, which is the strongest at its climax, Yom Kippur. On the other hand, Yom Kippur also contains an aspect that is totally unrelated to the nine days of repentance that preceded it: it atones even for those who don’t repent, even for those who are like Acher, who are beyond *teshuvah*. In that sense, Yom Kippur is totally unrelated to the Ten days of Repentance, which are in the realm of *teshuvah* [for Yom Kippur has an aspect that is above the realm of *teshuvah* entirely].

MOVEMENT/TESHUVAH & BEYOND MOVEMENT/NO NEED FOR TESHUVAH

Creation is entirely movement. *Teshuvah* is part of the “movements” of Creation; with *teshuvah*, a person returns to his root, which is a kind of movement. When something has been returned to its root, it has undergone *teshuvah*. But there is a higher point, which is beyond movement [and hence, beyond the limits of Creation] – the point where there is no movement.

The second set of *Luchos* was given on Yom Kippur, and they were given discreetly. As opposed to the first giving of the Torah, where we all “received” the Torah from its Giver and we thereby had a “grasp” on the Torah, in the second set of *Luchos*, we had no “grasp” on it, for it was given privately, to Moshe. The second set of *Luchos* was about a higher,

deeper point: to become integrated with the Creator.

This is the secret contained in Yom Kippur, which contains the point that is above the Ten days of Repentance – and “above” *teshuvah*.

This point also represents a whole different kind of connection to Hashem through the Torah. Through the first set of *Luchos*, there was a giving and receiving of the Torah to all of the Jewish people together; through the second of *Luchos*, we, the receivers, became integrated with our Giver. When a person reaches Torah through integrating his being with Hashem, through recognizing the wisdom of the Torah as being one with Hashem – he is connected to the Torah not through being a “receiver” of it, but because he is “integrating” himself with the Creator; and as a result, he becomes integrated with His wisdom, with His Torah.

The Sages said that Torah scholars are always in movement [and therefore they have no serenity on this world]. They are always encountering revelations of wisdom, and this is part of the sphere of *chochmah* (wisdom) that becomes revealed to them. The revelations there are unlimited. But there is a higher point: “No thought can grasp Him” – there is nowhere to go from there, and the only place to be is to stand with Hashem, as in the verse, “*And you, here, stand with Me.*”

Acher was told that he cannot do *teshuvah*. His mistake was that he thought he is forever destined never to enjoy the World To Come, as the Gemara explains; therefore, he felt he had no choice but to indulge in this world. He reached the point of no movement, where he felt that he had nowhere else to go – but he reached this in the side of

¹ *Yerushalmi Chagigah 2:1*

evil. If he would have used this concept in the side of holiness, he would have revealed the point of standing only with Hashem, of “*And you here, stand with Me*”, with nowhere else to go other than being with Hashem. The *bas kol* was therefore really telling him that he should stay where he is, with Hashem, for there is nothing besides Hashem – *Ain Od Milvado*. From the perspective of “*Ain Od Milvado*” (“There is nothing else besides for Hashem”) there is nowhere else to go, other than Hashem.

Yom Kippur atones even “for those who don’t repent”, and the deeper meaning to this is that it reveals the state of *Ain Od Milvado*. “Those who don’t repent” refers to the point beyond *teshuvah*, where there is no movement – for there is only *Ain Od Milvado*, nothing besides for Hashem.

THE DAY OF HAKADOSH BARUCH HU

Yom Kippur is also called “Day of *HaKadosh Baruch Hu*.”² It is the day where the perspective of the “*Yechidah*” part of the soul is revealed, which is: *Ain Od Milvado*, nothing else besides for Hashem. When there is *Ain Od Milvado*, there is no concept of *teshuvah*, because there, there is no need for it.

This is the innermost point contained in Yom Kippur: it is to reach the point where all the creations are attached with Hashem, integrated with Him, for there is simply nothing else besides for Hashem; and therefore, there is no *teshuvah* in this point.

[We each have a “limited” aspect as well as an “unlimited” aspect, and our *avodah* is to connect to both of these points.] *Teshuvah* is within our “limited” aspect, [where we acknowledge our limitations and we take responsibility for them]. The point beyond *teshuvah*, where there is *Ain Od Milvado*, is our “unlimited” aspect.

They are both true, and they do

not cancel each other out. The “*Ain Od Milvado*” aspect, the point beyond *teshuvah*, is not meant to nullify the idea of *teshuvah*, G-d forbid, which includes regret, confession, and resolve not to commit the sin again. Rather, a person needs to become connected to both points. On one hand, one needs to connect to our “limited” aspect, and to do *teshuvah* with all of its requirements. On the other hand, one must also connect to the “*Yechidah*”, the unlimited aspect, where there is no *teshuvah*.

Shame over sin only exists in the sphere of *chochmah* (wisdom), which is parallel to the “*Chayah*” level of the soul. But above the *chochmah**Chayah*, in the “*Yechidah*” level of the soul, there is no shame, and hence no *teshuvah* there, for there is nothing there but the *atzmiyus* (essence) of Hashem, where there is only attachment with Hashem (*d’veykus*) and integration (*biskalelus*) in Him.

A DEEPER UNDERSTANDING OF NE’ILAH

The day of Yom Kippur concludes with *Ne’ilah*. [The following gives us a deeper understanding into *Ne’ilah*.]

The wicked king Menashe, at the end of his life, began to do *teshuvah*. The angels sealed the heavens from him, so that his supplications should not be heard. They said to Hashem, “Master of the world, a man who erected an idol in the Sanctuary – shall You accept his repentance?” Hashem responded to them, “If I do not accept his repentance, I would be closing the entrance for all penitents.” Hashem dug a tunnel directly underneath His throne of glory, a place where no angel could control [so that Menashe’s prayers could reach Him].

The word “*Menashe*” is the word “*Moshe*” combined with the letter *nun*. This is a hint that the “*Shaar HaNun*”, the “Fiftieth Gate”, which even Moshe did not reach, was reached by Menashe, in the side of evil, that is – and therefore

the gates of the heavens were sealed from him. Hashem dug a tunnel underneath His throne of glory, which symbolizes a point that is above *teshuvah*.

This is the secret of *Ne’ilah*. The time of *Ne’ilah* resembles the situation of Menashe, when all the gates of the heavens were closed to him, and it was not possible for him to do *teshuvah*. How could this be, if the climax of the atonement on Yom Kippur is at *Ne’ilah*? How can it be that by *Ne’ilah* there is no possibility of *teshuvah*? But this is the secret of Yom Kippur. When the gates of heaven are closed, and there is no possibility of *teshuvah*, it is precisely then that “*Ain Od Milvado*” is revealed – and then there is no need for *teshuvah*, for it is the point “above” *teshuvah*. It is the point of *Ain Od Milvado*, simply put – and no “movements” are possible, hence, there is no *teshuvah* there; there are no concepts of distance or closeness there. There is just the attachment and integration with Hashem.

The secret of *Ne’ilah* is that it is where everything is closed and sealed, and it is not possible to move there. When there is no movement, a person can stand with Hashem alone. There, there is nowhere to go, and there is no need to go anywhere. That is the point of total integration with Hashem.

Ain Od Milvado “closes off” everything, and doesn’t allow for any movements; it is the full realization where Hashem’s Presence fills everything, and there is nowhere else for a person to go from there; when a person is at that point where there is no movement, he understands that it is not possible to be distanced, nor come closer. That is the secret behind *Ne’ilah*.

During *Selichos*, we recite the 13 traits of *rachamim* (mercy). That is in the point where sin is possible. But when a person connects to the point of *Ain Od Milvado*, he is in a realm where there is no *teshuvah*, of “those who do not repent” – to enter the world of

Hashem, before sin existed, where there was nothing lacking in Creation. [One must do both, as will be explained soon].

When we understand that there is a point of “*You, here, stand with Me*”, which is integration with Hashem - there is no need to go anywhere else, because everything is complete there. This is the innermost point of *teshuvah*, which, as we have clarified here, is really a point beyond *teshuvah*.

MASHIACH BEN YOSEF (TESHUVAH) AND MASHIACH BEN DOVID (AIN OD MILVADO)

The two Messiahs, Mashiach ben Yosef and Mashiach ben Dovid, are parallel to these two points. Mashiach ben Yosef is parallel to the concept of *teshuvah*. The Ten Martyrs were killed in order to rectify Yosef’s sin [according to the Sages, for accidentally spilling ten droplets of seed, as he was escaping the wife of Potiphar], and Mashiach ben Yosef’s work will be to bring the world to do *teshuvah*, and to hasten the redemption. Mashiach ben Dovid, though, will reveal the point beyond *teshuvah* [the perspective of *Ain Od Milvado*].

Chazal say of Dovid HaMelech, “Whoever says that Dovid sinned, is mistaken.”³ On the other hand, *Chazal* state that Dovid brought a *korbon* in order to do *teshuvah*.⁴ This is an apparent contradiction. If he did not sin, why did he do *teshuvah* for it? The answer to this is because that is exactly the secret that Dovid HaMelech revealed [as follows].

The concept of *teshuvah* was not introduced by Dovid HaMelech, but by Kayin; after Kayin did *teshuvah*, Adam HaRishon learned from this and also did *teshuvah*. Dovid HaMelech took 70 years of Adam’s life, and the inner meaning of this is that he actualized the potential of Adam, and he revealed to the world the

concept of *teshuvah* which Adam had done – not the *teshuvah* which Adam learned from Kayin, but the *teshuvah* which Adam did even before Kayin.

“Whoever says that Dovid sinned, is mistaken” - how is this possible, if there are verses that state explicitly that Dovid sinned? It is because it refers to the point where there is no possibility of sin. When Dovid brought a *korbon* to do *teshuvah*, it was from the point of above *teshuvah*. The simple level of *teshuvah* is learned from Kayin, but the “higher” level of *teshuvah* was revealed to the world by Dovid HaMelech [and on a private level, with Adam HaRishon]. This is actually the root of the revelation of Mashiach ben Dovid.

When the points of “Mashiach ben Yosef” [*teshuvah*] and “Mashiach ben Dovid” [above *teshuvah*] become integrated with each other [in the future], the points of *teshuvah* and beyond *teshuvah* will become integrated, and this will reveal the secret that is *Ain Od Milvado*.

There is the point of movement, and the point of non-movement, which are parallel to *teshuvah* (movement) and non-movement (*Ain Od Milvado*, above *teshuvah*), and the complete level is when these two points become integrated together [when one does *teshuvah* for his sins, from the recognition that there is nothing besides for Hashem, *Ain Od Milvado*].

Thus, from a deep understanding, the entire possibility to return to Hashem after sinning, is only enabled when one is aware of the point where there is no sin. In other words, there is a [spiritual] light where there is no possibility of sin, which radiates even into our own dimension, where sin is possible; and that light is actually the root that enables a person to do *teshuvah* in our realm where there is sin.

TESHUVAH FOR THE SIN OF DAMAGING THE HOLY COVENANT

The *Zohar* states that there is no *teshuvah* for one who damages the Holy Covenant. Elsewhere, the *Zohar* states that *teshuvah* can rectify this sin. This apparent contradiction is resolved by the Sages, who explained that there are two levels of *teshuvah* – “lower *teshuvah*”, which is on the level of *chochmah* (wisdom), and “higher *teshuvah*”, which is on the level of *binah* (“understanding”). It is explained that the words of the *Zohar* that *teshuvah* doesn’t help for this sin is only referring to “lower *teshuvah*”, but if one does “higher *teshuvah*” - on the level of *binah* - it can rectify the sin.⁵ Let us understand the depth to this.

Yosef’s sin was in damaging the Holy Covenant, of which it is said that there is no *teshuvah* for. Here we can see the point where “Mashiach ben Yosef” and “Mashiach ben Dovid” will integrate with each other: In the level of “Yosef” (and, by extension, Mashiach ben Yosef), there is *teshuvah* for all sins, except for the sin of damaging the Holy Covenant. But if there is no *teshuvah* for this sin, what is the higher *teshuvah* that can atone for this sin, as the *Zohar* mentions?

The “higher *teshuvah*” that helps for the sin of damaging the Holy Covenant is when the point beyond *teshuvah* is accessed. Within the realm of *teshuvah*, one who damages the Holy Covenant cannot rectify this sin, because he has created disparity, through separating his seed and causing it to become scattered throughout the world, and he cannot return all of the branches to their root. But when one reveals the point where disparity isn’t possible, where it is retroactively revealed that there was never a disparity at all – for there is nothing that exists other than the unity of Hashem – in this point, the sin of

3 *Shabbos 56a*

4 *Moed Katan 16a*

5 *Editor’s Note: The sefer Keser Rosh (a student of the Vilna Gaon) explains that through learning in-depth Torah study, one does “teshuvah on the level of binah” and rectifies the sin of damaging the Holy Covenant.*

damaging the Holy Covenant can be rectified.

Within the “49 Gates of Understanding”, there is sin, and there is also *teshuvah* for sin. But in the “50th Gate”, there is no possibility of sin, and hence no need for *teshuvah*. The “49 gates of understanding” are parallel to Yosef, or Mashiach ben Yosef, who represents *chochmah* \wisdom, where there can be sin, and which requires *teshuvah* to fix.

But it is really impossible to do *teshuvah*, from the perspective of This World alone. For this reason, *teshuvah* had to precede Creation, for *teshuvah* is really a power that comes from above the limits of Creation. If *teshuvah* preceded the world, that means it is impossible within our world to reach *teshuvah*, for it is of a higher dimension entirely. So we must reveal the point where there is no necessity for *teshuvah*.

This is the meaning of how *teshuvah* “preceded” the world. As long as a person tries to reach complete *teshuvah* within this world, he will never reach it, because *teshuvah* is a point that is above this Creation, and hence unattainable as we are on this world. Therefore, how do reach *teshuvah*? Only through connecting to the point that precedes the Creation. When one is connected to there, where “No thought can grasp Him”, he can then understand that there is no necessity for *teshuvah*, because there is no sin there.

“*Teshuvah* preceded the world” – when a person progresses throughout *teshuvah*, he may finally reach the 49th gate, the final gate within the realm of *teshuvah*, and there he will find that he cannot rectify every sin, for the sin of damaging the Holy Covenant cannot be rectified. What, then, is *teshuvah*? It means to access the point that precedes the world, to connect oneself to this point – and that, itself, is *teshuvah*!!!

Thus, *teshuvah* does not mean simply to “return” [from sin], but to connect oneself to the point that precedes

Creation, where there is no possibility of sin.

THE INNER, SILENCING VOICE OF THE “YECHIDAH” IN THE SOUL

This is the meaning of how Yom Kippur is the “day of *HaKadosh Baruch Hu*”. It is one day of the year where it is revealed that there is a point where there is no necessity for *teshuvah*. This is the deeper understanding of why Yom Kippur atones for “those who do not repent” - Yom Kippur repents of course for those who do repent, and for this, we are given the ten days of repentance; but the deeper point is the point where there is no need for *teshuvah* – “those who do not repent”.

In spite of this, a person must keep the entire Torah, because just as the unlimited point exists, so is our limited point existing and true. Within our “limited” point, we can become either closer or distant from Hashem. But in our “unlimited” aspect, where everything is unified [under the oneness of Hashem, where Hashem rules alone] because there it is entirely “*Ain Od Milvado*” – there is no “closeness” or “distance” from the Creator there. The “*Yechidah*” part of the soul is that point which is so connected to Hashem that no separation can occur there.

From the realm of *chochmah* (or “*Chayah*”) and below in the soul, there are varying levels; there is a need for intimacy, there are levels of closeness, and there, it is possible to either be closer or distant, from Hashem. But in the “*Yechidah*” point of the soul, one is integrated with Hashem – and this is true even in the worst person in the world, who sins in order to anger Hashem. The “*Yechidah*” cannot ever be distanced from Hashem; it cannot be destroyed.

It is the inner, silent voice in the soul, which silences all of the senses of the soul, and which gives a person the ability to hear the true perspective that calls out

from deep inside him, which says: *Ain Od Milvado*. This inner voice is being sound all the time, but when a person leaves his connection to Hashem, he will not hear this voice. But when a person attunes his thoughts to it - through the five areas of physical discomfort on Yom Kippur, which enable one to shut out the entire perspective of This World – he will then hear the perspective of the *Yechidah* in his soul, which listens attentively to the fact of *Ain Od Milvado*.

There is no way to express this; there are no words for it. But it is the grasp on *bavayah* [the deeper, spiritual dimension of reality]), the way to perceive Creation through the *Yechidah* in the soul, which sees that all is *Ain Od Milvado*. It is reached during the time of *Ne'ilah*, when everything becomes closed off, where there is no movement, for there is nowhere else to go then – it reveals the presence of Hashem, the state of *Ain Od Milvado*.

Of the fiftieth gate, it is said, “*All those who come to it, shall not return*” – there is no *teshuvah* there, there is no movement there, because it is nothing else other than being unified with Hashem. In the point above *teshuvah*, it is revealed the actual meaning of *Ain Od Milvado*. A person’s *avodah* [in doing *teshuvah*] is thus to “return” himself from the realm of *teshuvah*, to the realm where there is no need for *teshuvah* – and when he becomes integrated into that realm, he reveals the actual meaning of *Ain Od Milvado*.

This is the secret of Creation: that there is nothing that separates a person, and anything in the creation, from Hashem. When the soul grasps this point, it becomes integrated with Hashem.

“*Praiseworthy is the man, who does not forget You*”!

Q&A

QUESTION

I once heard the Rav say in one of the *shiurim* that a person is able to hear an “internal voice” in himself, or to use guided imagery, in order to connect to the mind’s intuition. Is this correct? How can this be reconciled with what the Rav has said that it is possible for a person to hear the wrong internal voices?

ANSWER

The voice of Hashem, which spoke the Ten Expressions and the Ten Commandments, is still existent today, in its original strength. The Sages also said that every day, a *bas kol* (Heavenly voice) goes out each day from Har Sinai and announces that people should do *teshuvah*. This refers to the voice of Hashem. The voice of prophecy, which used to be revealed in the past, is also the voice of Hashem – but it has ceased. Besides for this, though, there is the voice of a Jew’s personal *neshamah* (Divine soul), which can be heard at all times.

However, since the soul is covered with a body that is coarse and indifferent to the spiritual, the soul’s voice is usually not heard. Even if a person does hear it, the coarseness of the body prevents a person from hearing a totally spiritual sound, and the person will hear a voice that is a mixture of the spiritual and the material, an unclear sound. Therefore, as long as a person has not yet purified his being, hearing the internal voice contains a danger, because it will be an unclear and imprecise sound, and if one follows it, it can trip him on his path.

Many people in our generation have tried to hear the internal voice, through various means, and what they heard was not only unclear, it was mixed [with spiritual and material messages intermixed with each other], which caused them

to mislead themselves as well as others, with messages that were an intermixture of truth and fantasy together.

QUESTION

What is the source that our purpose on this world is to feel and sense a closeness with Hashem on this world [as the Rav describes in *sefer Bilvavi Mishkan Evneh*]?

ANSWER

The *Chovos HaLevovos* elaborates about the concept of *hakarah*, recognizing Hashem, which is to feel and sense Hashem. The *Mesillas Yesharim*, in the level of *chassidus* (piety), says that one needs to talk to Hashem “as a man talks to his friend.” And there are many other such terminologies as well.

QUESTION

What does it mean to have deep *ahavas Yisrael*?

ANSWER

To love them without based on any calculations. Above logical reasoning. Each person is different at how much they feel and recognize love for others. Until they can connect to the source of all souls where everyone is actually one.

QUESTION

How do I love someone with deep *ahavas Yisrael* if they have been very bad to me? For example I don’t understand how others can act mean or cruel or hurtful to others and to enjoy hurting others. I was raised not to be judgmental so I don’t know why they act that way, maybe it’s because these people are abused so they take out their abuse on others... How can I love them properly? Do I need to recoil from what they do

while at the same time loving them?

ANSWER

Learn *Da Es Amcha* and *Da Es Reiacha*, where the fundamentals of this *avodah* are explained,

QUESTION

Do I need to separate between the person and what they do, to recoil from what they do but to love them as people?

ANSWER

Yes. And sometimes you should not think about it at all, “I do not see sin in Yaakov.” You should continue to love the person, unless they are evil in all of their character. And even very evil people have good parts to them, because even *Erev Rav* souls have good parts in them.

QUESTION

Should I just not try to understand others since that’s not my job?

ANSWER

Same as above.

ANSWER

Excellent. Don’t start judging and seeing if you can judge them favorably, because Chazal said Do not judge your friend until you reach his place, and the Kotzker said that you will never reach his place, so don’t judge him.

QUESTION

What is the *ohr* of Hashem *Yisbarach*? What is this term that is called Hashem’s “light”?

ANSWER

The root of Hashem's light, which is called the *ohr Ein Sof*, the Infinite Light, implies 2 things. (1) It reveals that Hashem exists. This very revelation is referred to as Hashem's "light". This does not mean *chas v'shalom* that we are able to Hashem. It is just that we are able to know of His existence, and when we become aware that He exists, this is called *ohr*, the light, the revelation, of Hashem. (2) It also implies that Hashem has no end. This revelation is called *ohr*, "light". Hence, *ohr (light)* implies revelation.

QUESTION

2) Is *ohr Hashem (Hashem's light)* the same thing as *ohr Eloki (the G-dly light)* or *nit-zotz Eloki (the G-dly spark)* that is found in each thing?

ANSWER

Yes. Every dimension has a level of Hashem's light in it, because there are different levels of revelation of Hashem, depending on the level of the dimension that one is found in.

QUESTION

I understand from the Rav's approach that *emunah* must be coming from our heart, that we must be able to feel our awareness of Hashem, as opposed to merely knowing of Him in our intellect, because we cannot base our *emunah* in Hashem on our intellect, since our intellect is limited and we can become mistaken through it. So how indeed do we reach *emunah* of the heart? I don't mean to ask about how to internalize our intellectual *emunah* into our heart, rather I mean to ask: How do we start directly with *emunah* in our heart?

ANSWER

The depth of our soul's power to have

emunah is from the same place in you where you recognize your own existence, the truth of your *havayah*. It is from your own *havayah* that you can recognize the absolute *havayah*, which is the truth of His infinite existence. For a Jew is an actual "portion of G-d from above". Understand that well. When a person penetrates into the depth of the truth of his soul, after he has purified the soul's outer layers, he then reaches his very *havayah*, and then he can recognize the absolute *havayah*, the truth of the Infinite. This is the root way of recognizing our Creator, by recognizing our own existence and from that very same place of self-recognition we can recognize that the existence of all creations is only allowed due to the truth of His *havayah*, His infinite existence.

When one is beginning to surround this perception, it is called *ohr makif*, where his awareness of Hashem is called *emunah (belief in Hashem)*. When one internalizes it, it is *ohr pnimi*, and it is called *hakarah (recognition)*. In these short lines, we have written the *pnimiyus*, the inner depth and the truth, of all of life!!!

QUESTION

Powerful clashes seem to be happening between people more and more. It seems to me that when two wills clash, the discussion reverts to bashing each other rather than constructive listening and problem solving. I think we are all seeing this. On a personal level, if a person does not wish to bash yet wants another to be less self-absorbed because the other has neglected proper respect for the first, the one who feels the lack must turn only to Hashem to complete this feeling of lack. Otherwise the one "rebuked" will simply shame or blame the first for their lack. Thus if turning to Hashem is not something people comprehend, the only alternative is to learn how to deliver a "check" that causes the other to feel ashamed or blamed, lacking

in some way, and now the discussion is on the footing of hatred rather than mutuality in serving Hashem.

- 1) Am I describing baseless hatred?
- 2) Is unifying Hashem's Name the solution to baseless hatred?

ANSWER

- 1) Yes.
- 2) When one agrees that we are all *echad (one unit)* which became split into two, and that each person is really another revelation of oneness, that is the inner perspective that repairs unwarranted hatred.

QUESTION

I want to know: If a person has total *emunah* that everything is from Hashem, does that mean he never cries and never feels pain? If physical pain causes a person to cry does that mean he doesn't have *emunah*? Or does it least mean his *emunah* isn't perfect? Do we need to get to a point where we never cry because we have total *emunah* that everything is good?

ANSWER

There is no person whose *emunah* is perfect. Only Hashem is Perfect. So, inevitably, a human being cries. And there are spiritual reasons that make a person cry: A person cries when he joins with the pain of the Shechinah. And that is not a lack of *emunah*.

QUESTION

I have gone through so much challenges and suffering in my life and I am continuing to go through so much. I might know that it's all from Hashem and that it's all for my good, but how do I know that Hashem still loves me?

ANSWER

It would be worthwhile for you to sit down and write everything that's going good in your life, all the good parts of your life. Then think into it, about what Hashem has given you. Think about it, then verbalize it. Then, start thanking Hashem for each detail. From then onward, your avodah is to have emunah without understanding how everything that happens to you is all for your good. We can partially see and understand how certain things were for our good, but there will always be parts of our life in which we cannot see and understand how they are for our good too. In order to 'digest' that everything that happened to you is for your own good, it won't help if you try to understand it intellectually. You need to strengthen and internalize the emunah, the belief, that everything Hashem does is good!

QUESTION

It is now 10 years after the stabbing of Baba Elazar Abuchatzairah zt"l. The Rav gave a derasha then that this was not merely Hashem talking to us, it was Hashem screaming at us, it is a new language in which Hashem screams at us, which does not speak to our logic but which goes straight to our heart – for just as we scream when someone's life is in danger, and someone who doesn't get awakened today from Hashem's messages is being given the final choice, through the scream, and if one doesn't listen to that scream, he will fall into oblivion forever, and if we are zocheh, this will be the last time Hashem screams at us.... Now that we are 10 years later, are we still found amidst that 'scream'? Or are at a step after that time when Hashem screamed at us?

ANSWER

At that time, the scream was coming from a specific direction. Today, the entire Creation is screaming. Every

living being, every animal, every plant, every inanimate creation, are all screaming, from every direction. But because they are all screaming, we cannot hear the mixture of all these screams coming together, because they all drown out each other: "Two voices cannot be heard at once." And certainly we can't hear two screams at once. We can only hear it amidst reaching an inner silence in our souls, where we can hear the voices of Creation.

In our times, the "blood of your brother screams to Me from the earth". Everything today is screaming. The word "scream" is *tzarach* (צרה) from the word *ratzach* (רצח), murder. Everything is about to undergo bittul (nullification), which is like murder, and that is why everything is screaming now. It will be this way until Mashiach comes.

Q&A – OUR AVODAH BEFORE MASHIACH COMES**QUESTION**

1) The *Sfas Emes* says that the hatred of the nations for the Jewish people actually doesn't stem from the nations, but it begins from within the separateness within the Jewish people. Based on this, would it make sense that instead of blaming the evil people in the world and instead of just assuming that our avodah is to daven to be saved from them, our avodah is really to fix ourselves?

ANSWER

Yes, that is very true.

QUESTION

2) What is the main *tikkun* and the main teshuvah that Klal Yisrael needs now? Certainly as the Rav has been saying, the root of all the tragedies today is because of the "50th gate of *tumah*" (non-kosher internet use) that's all over the place, and the Rav always says that our avodah in

the era preceding Mashiach is to separate ourselves from the 50th level of *tumah* (internet) but what would be the avodah for those who don't have internet-devices and who are already separate from it? What is their avodah and what is the teshuvah that Hashem wants to see from them? Understandably everyone knows what they need to work on but are there any general *aveiros* that every person needs to focus now on fixing, i.e. *sinas chinam*, *lashon hora*, jealousy, etc.? Or saying *Tikkun Kelali*? There isn't enough time and energy to start fixing every *aveirah*. Is there any tikkun we can do that will take care of all the problems? Or should we just daven for the Geulah?

ANSWER

The 50th level of kedushah is where opposites are integrated. It is the innermost root of *ahavas Yisrael*: loving another Jew even when he's the opposite of me (as long as this stays within the parameters of kedushah). That is the inner root of the *tikkun*. The branches of it are all the other parameters of the Torah.

QUESTION

3) In these times where Mashiach's arrival is so close, should a person just be immersed in in-depth Torah learning and not be reactive to anything that goes on in the world? After all, when a person learns Torah he can forget about the world as if it doesn't exist, and the Torah is where our life is, the Torah is what reveals Ain Od Milvado, the true reality. Would it make sense to say that all the fear and suffering of the birth-pangs before Mashiach are all to awaken those who aren't immersed in Torah, but those who are immersed in Torah learning don't need to be afraid of *chevlei Mashiach*?

ANSWER

During the time that one is learning To-

rah, that is possible. But every person has times in which he must be involved with the world around him [so he also has to have the proper perspective on how to view the times we are in].

QUESTION

4) I found in the Rav's writings that in our generation the tzaddikim are like Noach who don't lead the generation and don't daven for them. Is that true about the Torah world as well [that even the Torah world doesn't have a tzaddik today who leads them and davens for them]?

ANSWER

That is a very subtle and sensitive matter which not everyone will be able to understand.

QUESTION

5) Does every person today have to be a *yachid* (individual) because there are no leaders of the generation to turn to? Or are we certainly able to find tzaddikim in our times whom we can turn to for advice on what to do in these End of Days?

ANSWER

One needs to very much build himself as an individual, and in addition one should also join with tzaddikim.

QUESTION

6) If this is the generation that is going to greet Mashiach – with Hashem's help may that happen quickly – what does that tell us? The souls of this generation are called the "heels" and most of the generation contains Erev Rav traces in their souls, yet the Geulah is going to come precisely through us, meaning that even the lowliest generation, the generation on

the lowest possible level, is going to be the generation in which Mashiach will come?

ANSWER

"Their end is wrapped in their beginning." The Maharal says that the final generation will be completely in a state of *heb-dair*, "emptiness", and there is always a *heb-dair*, an emptiness or an absence, which precedes the *havayah*, the existence of something. Thus, the *heb-dair*, the emptiness which precedes the existence of something, is really the beginning of the *havayah*/existence of that thing. Thus **it is the lowliest generation which is entirely *heb-dair*/empty which is the generation that will quickly be *zocheb* to Mashiach – Amen and may Hashem will this to be.**

QUESTION

Is a relationship with Hashem mainly built on asking Him for everything even the small things, or is a relationship with Hashem mainly built on desiring to speak with Him and just talking to Him? Also, our lives are designed in a way that we need so many things from Hashem, so how are we supposed to just approach Hashem and simply desire to bond with Him without any desire for Him to fulfill our requests? It seems like something only a person on a high level can do....

ANSWER

Bonding with Hashem has several facets to it. It is reached through our soul itself, as well through our soul's garments, which are: thought, speech, and action. Since man is called a *medaber*, a social being, the faculty of speech is therefore a big factor in how a person connects to others in general, and to HaKadosh Baruch Hu especially. Speaking to Hashem

includes several parts – thanking Hashem, praising Hashem, and asking things from Hashem.

Chazal said there are ten forms of *tefillah*. Asking for Hashem for each and every little thing we need is a very important aspect of our relationship with Hashem, because it connects a person to Hashem throughout the entire day when a person keeps turning to Hashem for everything he needs, for everything big and small, whether through asking Him verbally for it or through mentally communicating with Hashem through our heart (as the *Gemara* calls *hirbur b'lev*). It is proper that as soon as a person gets something he wanted, he should thank Hashem for it immediately. This is the proper and inner way to live life and it connects a person very much with Hashem.

If a person trains himself to ask Hashem for everything he needs and to thank Hashem for everything he receives, with the awareness that the purpose is not his requesting or his thanking Hashem – rather, the purpose of it is to speak with Hashem, and even more so, the very connection that one has with Hashem – through training oneself to get used to this for 2 weeks or a few years, one's inner connection to Hashem will become opened up, and it is a bond that transcends all that one is lacking or not lacking, and it is above all of one's requests to Hashem.

