

BILVAVI

**SEEING
A
CLEAR
WORLD**

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A WORLD OF MIXTURE

Hashem appeared more clearly to Moshe than He did to the *Avos*. He appeared to the *Avos*, with the name *Kel Sha-kai* (G-d Almighty) but to Moshe He appeared with the Name of *Havayah*. וַיְדַבֵּר אֱלֹקִים אֶל-מֹשֶׁה וַיֹּאמֶר אֲלָיו אֲנִי ה'

The prophets saw visions of Hashem through an unclear vision, while Moshe saw through an illuminating, clear lens. The prophets said “So said Hashem”, but Moshe said “This is what Hashem commanded.”

The *Eitz HaDaas* was good and bad together. It wasn't simply that there was a good part of the tree and a bad part of the tree, as if the right side was good and the left side was bad (just as the right side of the heart contains the yetzer tov and the left side of the heart contains the yetzer hora). Rather, in the *Eitz HaDaas*, good and bad were mixed with each other. The bad in the *Eitz HaDaas* created a mixture. The word mixture, *eiruv*, contains the letters *ra*, bad, to hint that it was bad mixed with good.

When Adam ate from the tree, he ruined the world. Hashem showed him the entire *Gan Eden* and said “Look at these beautiful trees I made. Do not destroy My world.” So when Adam ate from the tree, not only did he destroy his own perfection but he destroyed every soul, and the entire world. The destruction of the world and every soul meant that now everything in Creation contains evil in it, which really means that everything in creation contains a mix of good and evil in it.

Ever since then, a person understands things from a mixed perspective, in which good and bad is mixed into his perspective. Before the sin, Adam could grasp something as it is with nothing else mixed in. After the sin, everything changed, and now man would understand the world and himself and everything else with a mixed perspective, in which good and evil are mixed together in his mindset.

Even good things contain bad mixed into it. For example, the words of Torah are spread all over the place, poor in one place and rich in another place (*Yerushalmi Rosh HaShanah* 3:5). A *sugya* of *Gemara* is mixed with many different concepts together and it has to be sorted out. Shulchan Aruch is arranged according to four orders, but Shas isn't arranged according to Shulchan Aruch. The laws of Orach Chaim are not only contained in Berachos and Shabbos, they are spread all over Shas. The laws of

Choshen Mishpat are not only found in Bava Kamma through Bava Basra, they are spread out all over Shas. The Torah is presented to us in a way that it's all mixed together. Even in the *Chumash*, the verses are not always in chronological order. The words of Torah are presented to us in an unorganized, mixed manner, and all of this is a result of Adam's sin. Creation changed ever since the sin, and therefore even the way the Torah is revealed to us is on the level of after the sin. Our entire perspective is from a world where good and bad are mixed together. Even in a mixture of two good things, where it's entirely good, it's two different kinds of good mixed together. The words of Torah are all good, and there is no good except Torah, but because everything is mixed, two good things are mixed together and it's still a mixture.

The outcome of this concept is, that not only does a person meet bad elements when he wants to look for something good, but even when he analyzes something good, it is unclear to him, because we do not live in a clear world. Hashem looked into the Torah and created the world – He looked into a world of clarity from the Torah. After the sin, our current world, everything is mixed, so that even when a person learns Torah, he doesn't see it all organized in front of him, everything is mixed together.

When we want to sort out a mixture and separate the elements from each other, this act is called sifting. In the laws of Shabbos, it is prohibited to sift out a mixture. In the act of sifting, we sort out all the different elements, either separating bad from the good or the good from the bad. But it is even more than this. It is to take a mixture of many parts and show how each element is separate. When everything is mixed together, it is not sifted – it is not clear to us. Through sifting it, we can put each element in its proper place, and even more so, we can return each element to the root that it came from, before it got mixed.

In our world, everything is mixed together. But in the higher world, everything is in its proper place. It is called the "clear world". The *Gemara (Bava Basra 10a)* says that one of the Sages got deathly ill and his soul left his body, and later his soul returned. His father asked him, "What did you see?" He said to him, "I saw an upside-down world. The higher ones are below, and the lower ones are above." His father said to him. "You saw a clear world." In the clear world which he had seen, he saw a world where there were no mixtures.

Moshe was on a higher level of prophecy than all other prophets. The other prophets said “So said Hashem” while Moshe said it more clearly: “This is what Hashem said.”

OUR AVODAH TO GAIN CLARITY

Now we shall see how all this applies to our own *avodah*.

The prophets saw through holy imagination, meaning that their imagination could take two things mixed together, see if there was a comparison or not, and then they would infer a holy comparison between the two things. But even though it was holy, it was still at the level of a mixture. The Gra and Sforno both explained that the *Eitz HaDaas* was the imagination. There is either holy or impaired imagination, but either way, imagination is always a mixture of several elements. The prophets deemed it fit to compare two different things that they saw in their vision, but their vision was all within the mode of mixtures. But Moshe could see further. In Moshe’s visions, he could take different elements and separate them, putting each one in their proper place, so that each thing was as it is without a mixture, and this was a clear world.

Moshe *Rabbeinu* took the *Erev Rav* out of Egypt. Since he had the power of holy *daas*, he wanted to bring the *Erev Rav* into holiness, and the *Erev Rav* is equal in *gematria* to *daas*. The *Erev Rav* represents the entire concept of mixture, *taaruvos*. They were not just a mixture, but a completely mixed entity, as implied by their name, *Erev Rav*, a great mixture. This was an absolute mixture, which could only be sorted out by Moshe, the only one who was capable to taking a mixture and separating it, returning it to a clear world. Thus, it was Moshe who tried to repair the *Erev Rav*.

But what happened in the end? Moshe was told to go down from Har Sinai because the “nation” was behaving destructively. When Moshe came down, he asked Aharon what great sin has this nation done? It was that nation, the *Erev Rav*, which ruined *Klal Yisrael*. Moshe had the ability to sort out each thing and return every mixture to a clear world, and who had tried to sort out the *Erev Rav*. The only possibility to sorting out the *Erev Rav* was through Moshe’s power.

We are not on the level of Moshe, nor the prophets. We cannot say “This is what Hashem said” nor do we even have the holy imagination of the prophets who could

say “So said Hashem”. But these two abilities are two different paths which exist in each person’s soul. There are things which we can be certain about, and things which are uncertain but which we can guess.

We can know for certain if it is day or night right now. But if it is in middle of sunset, the answer isn’t clear. In middle of the day, with the sun above our heads, it is clear that we are in the day. Every person has a line of where certainty ends and where uncertainty begins. At the point where uncertainty begins, things are mixed and unclear. *Chazal* said that “if a matter is as clear to you as your sister” means that just as you know that it is prohibited to marry your sister, then you can say it. If not, then don’t say it.” The way to learn Torah is to turn uncertainty and guessing into clarity and certainty. Although this was taught about learning Torah specifically, it is really a principle for all of life. We are found after the sin, where everything is mixed, where everything is uncertain and we have to guess. Our *avodah* is take all the uncertainties and be clear about them.

The first step in this is in learning Torah. In every *sugya* of Torah learned, one has to see to it that he is becoming clearer about concepts, and that unclear concepts are getting lesser and lesser, because his clarity is growing. Contradictions found in the *Gemara* and in the Rishonim and Acharonim are all a mixture, and if we return each matter to where it belongs, there is no contradiction. In every *sugya* that one learns, one has to make sure he ends it with clarity. And if one is unclear about something, it should be clear to him that a certain concept is unclear. Know what you are clear about, and know what you are not clear about. Never continue to the next *sugya* if there is nothing clear to you. You have to take leave of the *sugya* only when you are clear about certain concepts (and you also know what you are unclear about). Then, with this ability, one can approach all of life through a “clear world”. The root of this power is gained from clarity when learning Torah, and it has to be extended to all of life as well – to see all of life through a clear lens.

In most areas of life for most people in this generation our perspective is very far from that clear world of certainty. If a person has never gotten used to learning Torah in a manner of clarity, he has never seen a clear world, and when he encounters various parts of life, from where will he get clarity? He has never gotten used to the idea of gaining clarity in matters. When he will learn *sefarim* that explain the principles of Torah life - from our Rishonim and later - he will certainly get

information and fundamental knowledge, but he won't see a clear world. Everything will be cloudy to him. When one is unclear about fundamentals, his entire life will be lived with uncertainty and he is not able to be clear about anything.

When Mashiach comes, Hashem will make a circle for the *tzaddik* and He will sit amongst them in *Gan Eden*, and each of them will point with His finger and say "This is Hashem, we hoped for Him." But **a person who lived without clarity won't be able to point with his finger and say "This is Hashem", because he never lived in clarity, so even when he recognizes Hashem in the future, it will be cloudy and unclear to Him.** If we never try to clarify the important matters of life, we will certainly be far from clarity. But even if we are involved in trying to clarify things, if we don't arrive at clarity then we cannot apply the fundamentals of the *sefarim* and *Chazal*.

Most people who have not clarified these matters enough don't live in a clear world. But even if one tried hard to clarify the matters, he needs to sift out the matter with '13 sieves' – he needs to work very hard at refining it - until he gets to a very refined level of clarity. When learning a *sugya*, he has to know what all the steps are, and what is agreed upon by everyone, and where the arguments are, what the main points in the discussion are - and to make it all clear.

When a person doesn't have a clear world, he lives in a perspective of mixtures. Not only will words of Torah be unsorted to him, but he will also live in a mixture of good and bad.

The *Erev Rav* Today – and How It Affects Us

The *Erev Rav* is essentially mixing everything together. The *Erev Rav* can take the greatest holiness on one hand and the depths of depravity (*tumah*) on the other hand and mix it all together! And that is the depth of what's taking place in our generation.

We live in a world where everything is mixed in such a frightening way. The superficial way to understand the matter of the *Erev Rav* is that there are souls of the *Erev Rav* today, and that is true, but it is more than that. The level of the generation today is the very way that the *Erev* thinks. The *sefarim* revealed that in the final generation, most of the generation will be the *Erev Rav*, but this doesn't only mean people, it means a certain way of thinking, a generation that thinks like the *Erev Rav*. Any sensible person can see clearly how everything is mixed together.

Certainly there are many people who are of the *Erev Rav*, simply speaking. There are 70 nations of the world, with the root of all of them, the *Erev Rav*, who are the root of all destruction. They are the souls of the *Erev Rav*. But the very level of the generation is the *Erev Rav*!

At Har Sinai, a separation was made. The impurity of the Serpent had not invaded us yet and we were entirely good, with evil separated from us. But with the sin with the golden calf, good and bad became mixed together again, through the *Erev Rav*, who caused that sin. The *Erev Rav* causing everyone to sin essentially meant that they returned everything back to a mixture. But that was only the beginning of the mixture, when good and bad were still separated from each other, and the mixture was only minimal.

As history continued until today when we are at *ikvesa d'Meshicha*, the mixture has gotten more and more. This is the way to define the *kelipah* of the *Erev Rav* which is found in the Final Days.

The depth of the *avodah* in our generation is to go in the opposite direction of the *Erev Rav*. It is to live in a clear world, where there are no mixtures.

It is very understandable why it is hard to live today in a clear world. Since everything is mixed together, it is hard to see a clear world. When things are so mixed together, anyone with a bit of holiness can see how it's all mixed, and how this mandates us to enter into a clear world.

It can be compared to a person on a cloudy day. He thinks he can see good, but he doesn't see that clearly. Yet, he can see. But if it is so cloudy that he can barely see in front of him, and certainly if he is being careful when he walks because any moment he can fall, he knows that he can't see well. This describes our situation today. We are found in a world, in a place, and in a situation of our souls, where most of the people today have the perspective of the *Erev Rav*, mixing everything together.

FROM MIXTURE TO CLARITY

But it is precisely from amidst the mixed perspective of this generation, that the light of the clear world will emerge. The way of a true *Talmid Chochom* is that whenever he analyzes a matter, he first clarifies it by seeing all the parts that comprise

it, and then he puts each matter where it belongs. He sees a clear world. He learns *Chumash* and sees a clear world in it. He learns *Gemara* and sees a clear world. And when he lives in this generation, he sorts out everything.

It was always true for all the generations that people needed certainty, but all the more so in the final generation. The *Erev Rav* can mix everything together, and that necessitates us to sort out everything.

Our goal has to be that when we walk out of the Final Days, we can point to Hashem and say “*This is My G-d, I hoped for Him.*” How will we be so certain and say “This is My G-d”? It is only because if we lived in this final generation, we had to become clear about it.

In previous generations, this clarity was only the *avodah* of Moshe *Rabbeinu* [and *tzaddikim* who had a spark of Moshe *Rabbeinu* of that generation]. In the past, the mixture caused by the *Erev Rav* was only just beginning. But in the current generation where the entire way of thinking follows the *Erev Rav* what was once Moshe *Rabbeinu’s* *avodah* has now become the *avodah* of today’s generation. That is why it is indeed a difficult *avodah* for us. For this, we need to make use of the words of the Rambam, that anyone can become a *tzaddik* like Moshe. This means that any person today can become a *tzaddik* like Moshe, *mamash* (in the actual sense)! And as Reb Elchonon Wasserman *zt”l* taught, “Any person on his level and according to his capabilities is able to become a servant of Hashem like Moshe *Rabbeinu*, according to what he’s capable of.” To become like Moshe essentially means, when we gain the perspective of living in the “clear world”.

To the extent that every individual today is *zocheh*, and all of *Klal Yisrael*, to come out of the mixture and to live in a “clear world” – becoming clearer and clearer, until we can see very clearly similar to how Moshe saw his vision clearly – that is how we will be *zocheh*, speedily in our days, to “Each person will point with his finger and say, “*This is My G-d. I hoped for Him.*”¹

TRANSLATED FROM THE ORIGINAL HEBREW SHIUR: שיחת השבוע_051_וארא תשע"ח

¹ *Making This Practical: The Daily Hisbodedus* To actually do this you can connect to an inner kind of life in which you feel solitude in your soul, apart from this world. How? Deep hisbodedus to connect yourself to Hashem, to His Torah, and to His mitzvos. (from the Rav’s shiur Tefillah - 048 Mixed Up with the Mixed Multitude)