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## Torah Way to Enlightenment - 013 Bonding With The Creator Through Speech

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ספר דע את נשמתך - פרק יח - חוש דיבור

### **Introduction: Using The Soul's Power of Speech**

We have merited until here, with Hashem's help, to explain how to use the senses of sight, hearing, and smell [in *hisbodedus*]. In this chapter, with the help of Hashem, we will explain how to use the sense of speech [in *hisbodedus*].

In the previous senses that we explained, we divided the use of the senses into three stages: in relation to revealing the self, in relation to revealing man's bond with his Creator, and in relation to revealing the Infinite (so to speak). With speech, however, there will be five applications of this power:

1. Speaking with oneself (like we find by Channah, mother of Shmuel HaNavi, when she spoke "with her heart").
2. Speaking to another.
3. A teacher who is speaking to his students, or a leader speaking to a gathering of people.
4. Speaking to the Creator.
5. Speaking about the very revelation of the Infinite (so to speak).

As in the past, we will explain how these modes of talking are expressed through the five dimensions of the soul: the *Nefesh*, *Ruach*, *Neshamah*, *Chayah* and *Yechidah*.

### **1- Using The Sense of Speech to Reveal the Self: Talking with Oneself**

#### **1a) Speaking from the "Nefesh" level of the soul**

The "*Nefesh*" level of the soul is about perceiving reality as it is. The role of the *Nefesh* is to know: What is the reality? What is the conceptual definition?

Speech on the level of "*Nefesh*" is when one [is speaking from a perspective in which he] perceives the reality of man as being a creature of speech (*medaber*).

There are four levels of creations - *doimem* (the "still" - i.e. rocks), *tzomeiach* (growing organisms,

such as plants), *chai* (living beings, such as animals), and *medaber* (social creatures – human beings). When one perceives the very concept of man as being a social creature, this is the speech of the “*Nefesh*” level of the soul.

Let’s be clear about this definition. This is not a superficial understanding in which a person simply views himself as a “*medaber*”, (social creature). It is a rather a more inner understanding, in which one perceives that the very essence of man is to be a *medaber*, a being that is meant to utilize the power of speech [for spiritual purposes], and he is speaking from that inner attitude. It is when one is speaking with the realization and understanding that his very reality is to become a “*medaber*”.

Perceiving oneself as a *medaber* is also linked with the concept that man is a creature of movement (*tenuah*), which we discussed in the previous chapter. Speech is in the category of movement, for it is the force by which a person leads and guides. The rocks and the land, the plants, and the animals do not lead and guide Creation from beginning until end. Only man - the “*medaber*”, the being capable of speech - can lead and guide the Creation from beginning until end. For one to perceive himself as a *medaber*, he must realize that he has the power to lead, guide, and move things [to his human and limited extent, of course].

Before the sin of Adam HaRishon, man was mainly a creature of movement, and after the sin, man is mainly defined as a creature of speech. Movement corresponds to the “*Ruach*” level of the soul, as explained in the previous chapter; the primary mode of man before the sin was movement\ *Ruach*, and after the sin, the primary mode has become speech.

We can see both of these modes apparent even now: we breathe in and out through the nose (in Hebrew, nose is “*af*”, and the term for “breath of the nostrils” is “*ruach apeinu*”, thus the breathing through the nose corresponds to the “*Ruach*” level of the soul), as well as through the mouth (corresponding to speech). We find two forms of movement, which are each primary aspects in man – movement through the nose (breathing), and movement through the mouth (speech).

Thus, before the sin, where the “*Ruach*” level of the soul was more apparent, man could connect to the Creator through the mere act of breathing in and out. This *avodah* is explained extensively in the *sefarim* of Rav Abulefia, and it was later mentioned in other *sefarim* that are not so well-known. Through breathing in and out, man can connect to the root of all creations: movement. Now that we are after the sin, we perceive the force of movement in man as the power to lead, which is personified by the power of speech.

Thus, both speech and breathing are expressions of movement, but there are two levels of perception: there is a perception where man connects to his movement aspect just through breathing (this was the level before the sin), and there is a perception where man connects to his movement aspect through speech. When I have the understanding that speech personifies the reality of man as a moving force, this is the “*Nefesh*” level in speech.

In the previous chapter, we explained the concept of defining our reality as constantly being in motion, as well as the understanding that our reality is always being guided [by Divine Providence of the Creator]. The first level of perception is the “*Ruach*” level. This level is reflected by the personal *avodah* of focused breathing, of concentrating on the inhale and exhale without doing anything else; on a deeper level, it is to connect oneself to our very reality of movement. In the second level of perception, in which we perceive reality as constantly being moved and led by a guiding force [the Creator], it is speech which personifies this perspective. Through speech, a person guides and affects Creation.

Thus, the “*Nefesh*” level in speech is when one has the deep understanding that man is a *medaber* –

a social creature – in the sense that his speech is a guiding force in Creation. As the *Mesillas Yesarim* says, when one elevates himself spiritually, he elevates the entire world with him, and when he ruins himself spiritually, he ruins the entire world with him. A person moves, leads, and guides the Creation.

Moshe Rabbeinu was told on the final day of his life that he will not be able to “leave and enter” Hashem’s Presence. This is the movement aspect of man. Up until his day of death, his role was to “leave and enter” whenever he chose. This personified the leadership role of Moshe Rabbeinu, who guided the entire people. Every person as well, on a private level, has the power to lead and guide himself, and this is the aspect of “Moshe” within the soul.

In summary, the “*Nefesh*” level when using the power of speech is when one realizes his power to lead, guide, and thereby affect the direction of Creation, through his words. It is when one speaks from the understanding that not only is the entire Creation a moving system, but that man is a guiding force of the entire universe.

### **1b) Speaking from the “Ruach” level of the soul**

How does one guide his power of speech in the proper direction? After one understands that he is a *medaber* (social creature) who affects the direction of Creation through the movement of speech, the next point is to use his *bechirah* (free will) in how he will guide his speech. His words may either lead to expansion or contraction, ascent or descent, joy or sadness, zeal or laziness.

As a person is talking, he can feel which direction his speech is going in – what kind of emotion it is evoking in him. This is true whether a person is speaking with himself, or with another. One should identify if his talking is awakening joy, love, sadness, etc. Any of these emotions can be awakened either by the content of what is talking about, or by the person he is talking about, or by the place he is in, or any other factor. In any case, speech is always activating some emotion in the person, and a person should become aware of it.

We mentioned that there is a mode of talking in which one speaks with himself, and there is a mode of talking in which a person speaks with another.

**When a person talks with himself**, this is called “inward conversation”. There are several parts to a person – the five layers of the soul, which are the *Nefesh*, *Ruach*, *Neshamah*, *Chayah* and *Yechidah*, as well as the physical body. A person has the ability to speak with himself through any of these parts of himself, addressing a higher part of himself through a lower part of himself. Just as a person can talk to another, so can a person talk with himself. A person may talk to the body, or to the lowest level of the soul, the “*nefesh habehaimis*” (animal level of the soul), or to the higher parts of the soul.

We find that by Channah, it is written, “*And Channah spoke on her heart.*” She “spoke on her heart”, meaning, she spoke with herself. Speaking with oneself is essentially a way for a person to guide and conduct oneself.

When a person talks to himself, if he is doing so because he is drunk or insane (G-d forbid), such speech is not bringing him anywhere. This is what Eli HaKohen thought of Channah when he saw her talking to herself. He assumed she was drunk, because it is the way of drunken people to talk to themselves. But when a person is aware that he is a *medaber* and that he can use his speech to guide himself, he uses the power of talking to himself as a way to guide himself and somewhere with this talking. This is all the “*Ruach*” level of speech.

Where does a person want to bring himself to, through speaking to himself? Each situation may be different. He may want to talk to himself in a way that disciplines his *nefesh habehaimis*, or he may talk to himself in a way that inspires the “G-dly” layer of the soul, his *nefesh Elokis*. He uses the

speech with himself to move, guide, and conduct himself on an inward level.

The same applies to speaking with a friend: one may speak to his friend with the intention of bonding with him. When speaking to another person, a person is guiding and conducting the bond between them. On the most external level, a person is guided by another when he asks for directions and his friend shows him the way to go. On a more inner level, one speaks to another in order to have an emotional bond with him.

Speaking to oneself can only be beneficial on condition that it is not random, superficial babbling to yourself, which resembles the chirping of the birds.

Chazal state that there are conversations between the birds, as well as conversations between the palm trees.<sup>[1]</sup> Why then is man called *medaber*, if these things can talk also? If animals and plants can converse with each other, what then is the unique quality of speech that man possesses? The *sefarim hakedoshim* explain that the conversations of the animals, birds and plants cannot guide or conduct anything through their words. Only man has the power to guide and conduct through his words, both in relation to conducting himself and in relation to conducting and affecting his relationships with others.

Thus, in summation, speech is an ability of movement. When one is simply aware that his speech is a force of movement, this is the “*Nefesh*” level of speech, and one is guiding the direction of the speech, whether in relation to conducting himself or his relationship with others, this is the “*Ruach*” level of speech.

### **1c) Speaking From the “Neshamah” level of the soul**

The Ramban writes in a letter to his son, “Think about the words you will say, before you release them from your mouth.” The thinking that precedes one’s words is the “*Neshamah*” aspect of speech, for thought and reflection corresponds to the *Neshamah* level of the soul.

A person thinks about what he will say before he talks, to prepare his words. But speaking itself is also an expression of thought. The Zohar states, “*Daas ganuz b’pumei*”, “Understanding is hidden in the mouth.” When a person is speaking about a certain topic, he will first think about what he will say, and as he is talking, he will notice more details about the topic. Any person can try this with himself and see that as he is talking, he gains new insights of understanding about what he’s talking about, while talking about it.

Sometimes a person gets an idea, and he tells it over to his spouse or to a friend, and as he is talking, he begins to absorb what he is saying in a way that he did not have when he originally thought of the idea. The words release the potential of the idea. (On a mystical level, this is because speech reveals “lower wisdom”, *chochmah tataah*, which corresponds to “*Malchus*”, which corresponds to the Oral Torah.<sup>[2]</sup>) As a person speaks, he activates the wisdom within the words.

Thus, the “*Neshamah*” level in speech is when a person reveals thought and wisdom contained in the words. The initial level of this is when a person thinks before he talks about the words he will say, and in this stage, the thought in the words is only in its potential state. When the person says his words and he gains more insight into what he’s talking about, the “understanding hidden in the words” is activated, which gives him further understanding into his own words.

As with the other levels of the soul, this concept applies whether speaking with oneself, with others, or with the Creator.

### **1d) Speaking from the “Chayah” level of the soul**

It is written, "And man became a living spirit", which the Torah calls "nefesh chayah". The *Targum Onkelos* says that this means *ruach memalelah*, a "talking spirit" [the ability of speech]. It is also written, "My soul leaves at His word."

[The "Chayah" level in speech is when one is speaking from his inner *chiyus* (vitality).]

The *Chovos Halevovos* wrote that the lightest part of the body is the tongue [implying that speech flows freely from a person], whereas the Chazon Ish said about himself that he finds that the tongue is the heaviest part of his body. The Chazon Ish was not arguing, *chas v'shalom*, on the words of the *Chovos Halevovos*, who was one of the *Rishonim*, which are considered to be on the level of angels. Rather, it depends on how a person is talking.

If a person is talking superficially, without putting his soul into the words, then the tongue is the lightest part of the body. That was what the *Chovos Halevovos* was talking about – when one talks superficially. When a person does not think that much about what he is saying and he isn't investing that much energy into his words, he has no problem chattering naturally and freely. But the Chazon Ish was speaking about a deeper level of speech, where a person is investing his energy into his words. Such talking requires more energy, and that is why the Chazon Ish had a hard time speaking, because his speaking used up his energy.

The average person will not lift a 70-pound package on his shoulders, unless he has a very good reason to, because this requires a great amount of strength and energy. When a person is speaking, he is usually not using that much energy, because he is not speaking from his inner *chiyus* (vitality), and therefore he does not feel any difficulty with talking as much as he wishes. After he is done talking, he does not either feel that he has used up his energy, since he was only talking superficially and he did not put that much energy into his words.

A person may have a hard time talking, but this does not always mean that his speech comes from the "Chayah" level of the soul. For example, he may have a dry throat, or he might have a more inner reason, such as not wanting to waste time with chatter. But it is not because speaking drains him from his energy. In contrast, when a person is connected to the "Chayah" level of the soul in his speech, he wants to speak from an inner place in himself. He speaks from his inner *chiyus*, and such speaking uses his energy. When he is done speaking, he is drained from energy, and that is why he lessens his amount of talking.

Thus, when the Chazon Ish said about himself that he finds his tongue to be the heaviest part of his body, this was not because he was simply trying to guard his speech, as explained in the laws of *sefer Chofetz Chaim* (which, of course, is a precious *avodah* in and of itself). It is rather because since "Death and life are in the hands of the tongue", speech releases the *chiyus* (energy) of a person, and the more one speaks on an inner level, the more he can feel that he is losing his energy as he is talking. The Chazon Ish spoke from his *chiyus* and therefore his speaking left him drained afterwards, thus he found his tongue to be "heavy" on him and that is why refrained from talking whenever possible.

Talking on the "Chayah" level of the soul is when a person invests his energy into what he is saying, and his words leave a mark. Such words will be "Words that come from the heart, enter the heart."<sup>[3]</sup> This applies both when speaking to oneself as well as when speaking to others. When such a person a person speaks to others, his words enter their hearts, and when he speaks with himself, the words enter his own heart.

The more a person speaks from his *pnimiyus* (innerness), the more of a difficulty he will have with talking, because his talking requires more energy. In contrast, the more superficial that a person

talks, the less energy his talking requires, and he will be able to talk much more. But his speaking will be on the same level as the chirping of the birds, which lack any inner, deep content.

If a person wishes for his words to “ascend to above”, he must put his inner *chiyus* (energy) into his words. In prayer as well, one needs to infuse *chiyus* into the words he is saying, and if not, his words do not result in anything. When one is praying on a level of “*My soul leaves at His word*”, and as Channah said, “*I will pour out my soul before Hashem*”,<sup>[4]</sup> such words will make their mark and ascend to above.

The Gemara states that if a person forgets his Torah learning, it is because he did not verbalize the words when he was learning it, and therefore the Torah learning didn't settle in his heart.<sup>[5]</sup> The inner reason of this is because when a person does not verbalize his Torah learning, his *chiyus* remains only in potential form and it was not actualized.

When a person is speaking from his soul, he is actualizing his inner *chiyus* from its potential state. Man is called *medaber*, the being capable of speech, and he is also called *adam* (man) from the word *adamah*, earth, which actualizes the potential of the seeds placed into it; the connection between these two aspects of man is that one must activate the potential of his speech, by speaking from within himself, from his soul. In this way, he infuses inner *chiyus* into his speech. Such words are truly alive, as the Gemara says, “For they (the words of Torah) are life to those who verbalize it with their mouth.”<sup>[6]</sup>

Speech activates the power of the soul within man. When one is speaking from within his soul, he is speaking from the point of the “*Chayah*” within him, and this is the implication of the “*medaber*” aspect, which defines man. It is the “*nefesh chayah*”, the “living soul” within man that is alive with inner *chiyus*\vitality, which expresses this inner *chiyus* through speech, where one's speech is infused with aliveness. This is what it means to talk from the “*Chayah*” level of the soul.

### **1e) Speaking from the “Yechidah” level of the soul**

One of the Sages said, “All of my days I lived amongst the Sages, and I did not find a better body than a silent one.”<sup>[7]</sup> Earlier we brought the concept that for every concept in Creation, there is always an opposite concept. Thus, if one wants to make the full use of the power of talking, he also has to develop its opposite power, which is silence.

If someone only knows how to talk and he does not know how to be silent, any silence he does have is only superficial; he is either silent when he's tired of talking, or because he doesn't have what to say anymore. This is not true silence. If one does not know the art of silence, even his speech is superficial, because since he doesn't know what the opposite of speech is, he won't be able to properly develop his power of speech.

Chazal say that “the world hangs on silence”<sup>[8]</sup>, which refers to one who is silent during strife.<sup>[9]</sup> When a person wants to answer back his oppressor and he restrains his urge, this is the kind of silence which upkeeps the world.

On one hand we find that the world thrives on speech, because Hashem created the world with Ten Utterances<sup>[10]</sup>, and the Ten Commandments were another verbal expression of these original Expressions, which upkeep the world. On the other hand, Chazal state that silence (during an argument) is what upkeeps the world. So in order for speech to be real speech, one needs to have a mouth that knows how to be silent sometimes.

Before Hashem created the world, there was a silence. The world began with His utterances, but

before Creation, Hashem was silent, so to speak. There is a power as well in the soul to speak from a place of silence. The *Yechidah* is essentially the power in the soul to be silent. A person's *chochmah* (wisdom) comes from his *Yechidah*, which is called *ayin*, "nothingness." *Ayin* is mentioned in the verse, "*Wisdom, from where (ayin) is it found?*"<sup>(11)</sup>

When one's speech is only coming from his speech, he is missing the source of the speech. He has "*chochmah*" (inner wisdom), he has the "*Chayah*" level of the soul, and he can speak from this deep place in himself - but he is still missing the very source of his speech, "*ayin*" - which is represented by silence.

Earlier, we mentioned the words of the Ramban wrote that one should think before he talks. When one speaks after first being silent, he knows how to be silent even as he is talking, and his words are more truthful, for they are stemming from the maturity of knowing how to be silent if need be it. But when a person talks and he can't stop himself from talking, such talking is not connected with silence, and then he is missing the ability to draw forth speech from its source.

A person's words are only effective on another if he is prepared to be silent as he's talking. If one would rather talk than be silent, his words do not come from his inner source, and then the words are missing the root of speech, which will not be that effective on others. A person has to stop sometimes in middle of talking. He should talk, then be silent, then continue the conversation, etc. He has to know how to silence himself in middle of talking. On a deeper note, he has to be prepared not to talk at all, if need be it.

If he has that awareness before he opens his mouth to talk, his talking afterwards will then be coming from an inner place in himself. Of course, when it is a *mitzvah* to talk, such as to talk words of Torah, a person should talk, and he should not be silent. He should also talk a little with other people in order to relieve himself of his troubles, for the Vilna Gaon says that one of the ways to acquire the Torah is with little speech, and this means for one to make sure that he talks a little bit with others (as opposed to not talking at all). But even when a person does talk, he should be prepared to be silent in middle. When he is in middle of talking, he should silence himself sometimes.

There are two kinds of this silence. One kind is to refrain from talking in a certain context and to instead talk in a different context. For example, on Shabbos, one may not talk mundane matters<sup>(12)</sup>. The person is silent from mundane talking and must only speak matters of holiness. That is one kind of restraint from talking. Another kind of restraint from talking is when simply silences himself at times in the midst of talking.

So far, we have explained how to use the power of speech in the soul in relevance of talking to oneself and to others. Those two kinds of speech (to oneself and to others) were covered here together at once and it was not explained much about the differences between them, because they both share the same root.

## **2 - Speaking In Order To Influence Others**

An intermediate level of speech is when one speaks in order to lead others, when he must be *manhig* (leader) of others, in various ways. The absolute level of this is the one who is a *manhig* of the generation, but there is also a partial level of *manhig*, where one is in a position of leading others. This is also a use of man's role of being a *medaber* (a being of speech).

A king's word has the power to lead others. Normally, when a person speaks, his speech does not obligate anyone him to do anything, except in the cases of *hekadesh* (consecrating property for Temple use), and accepting a *neder* (vow) upon oneself. Although a person must no go back on his

word, his speech does not create any tangible obligation to fulfill. However, when a king says something, his words obligate him to fulfill what he says. The Gemara says that a king does not retract his word.<sup>[13]</sup> His ability of speech is a true word which carries weight.

## **2a) Influencing Others from the “Nefesh” level of the soul**

We explained earlier that the “Nefesh” level of speech is to be aware of the reality of speech, which leads and influences reality. A king or anyone in a position of power is even more aware of his ability of speech to lead and influence. His entire essence is to lead others, which is an expression of the “medaber” aspect of man.

We can subtly divide this into three levels: **(1)** The lowest level - when one is simply aware of reality, and that reality can be moved and guided. **(2)** The intermediate level - when one is aware that his very reality is movement, which can influence reality. **(3)** The highest level - when one is aware that the reality itself is a force of movement.

After the sin, man perceives the reality with the understanding that it can be moved, changed, and influenced. A king or ruler is very aware of this, realizing that his individual reality is to only to lead and guide the existent reality in front of him. Before the sin, though, man perceived that all of reality is in movement, regardless of how man is influencing it or not.

The “Nefesh” level in leading and guiding others is when is aware that he is a “*manhig*”, a leader, of others. Sometimes Hashem places a person into a position where he must be a “*mashpia*” (an influence) to others, but the person may not be able to influence anyone, because he is unaware of his role to be a *mashpia*. There are people who have an ability to be *mashpia*, but they feel too humble to lead others - they are using the worthy trait of humility in the wrong place. This was the mistake of Shaul, who was exceedingly humble and didn’t want to be king, and the prophet Shmuel reprimanded him by saying to him, “*Are you small in your eyes? You are a leader of the tribes of Yisrael, and Hashem has anointed you as king over Yisrael.*”<sup>[14]</sup> Surely if Hashem has given a person the ability to be a *manhig* over others, he should not allow himself to become conceited. But at the same time, he must also recognize that he has the power to lead, and that this is the reality that Hashem has placed him in.

There are many ways to lead others. One may be a teacher in a school, which is one kind of leadership role. A father in his home is also in a position of leading his home, for the Rambam says that a wife should view her husband as a king. Thus, the father has the role of a *manhig* in his home.

Every person must recognize the reality that he is in a position of leading others, and all of us at some point in life have to realize the reality of our power. All of us have areas in our life where we are in charge and in control of something, but it is not enough to just be in charge - one must recognize his role of being leader. When one is aware that he is *manhig*, he can then be responsible. We must know, of course, that we have received this ability of control from the Creator, and it does not come from our own power. One must realize, “Part of the task that has been placed on me here on this world is that I am a *manhig*.”

There are people who are not regarded as the authority figure in their homes, and often this is because they aren’t aware that they are supposed to be the one in charge. If you are a father and you have a wife and children, you must realize that the role of leading the home has been placed on you. A father needs to understand that his word must be listened to, and that his judgment is to be adhered to. Without getting into the exact details of this, the general rule is that when the father says something, his words must be regarded. Whether in his home or whether he is a teacher in a school, he must recognize his role as *manhig*.

There is one mode of living in which one is focusing on his own individual development, and there is another mode of living, in which one recognizes his leadership role, when he is in charge of something, where he is aware of his role as *manhig*. This awareness is the “*Nefesh*” level of the soul with regards to speech, in the area of leading others.

## **2b) Influencing Others from the “Ruach” level of the soul**

As explained earlier, when a person speaks with others and he is aware of the direction which he wants to lead the words in, this is the “*Ruach*” level of speech, and it is the same when speaking in order to lead and influence others.

Hence, when one is in a position of influencing others and he is aware of the direction he wants to lead his words in, this is the “*Ruach*” level of speech when it comes to leading others.

## **2c) Influencing others from the “Neshamah” level of the soul**

The “*Neshamah*” level in leading others through speech is when one thinks and reflects about what he will say, in order to guide others through carefully choosing his words. For example, when a *rebbe* is teaching a *talmid*, he needs to think before he talks, about how he will convey the thought.

Chazal state that even in an ordinary conversation, where two friends are talking to each other, “Who is wise? One who learns from every person.”<sup>[15]</sup> But this does not mean I should speak to my friend as if I am teaching him. Nobody can tolerate a person who is always trying to “teach” people whenever he speaks to people. But if a person is in a role where he has to lead, such as a *rebbe*, teacher or *rav*, he needs to understand that his purpose in having this role is to be able to teach others. This does not mean that this is the only *avodah* he has, but it is certainly a part of his *avodah*, to understand that it is his duty to teach people.

When he speaks to them with this awareness, this is the “*Neshamah*” level in leading others through speech, and from this awareness, he will limit his speech to the exact words that his listeners need to hear. This is the concept mentioned in the *sefarim* of *Chassidus*, that a *rebbe* places a *tzimtzum* (constraint) on his Torah thought when teaching a student, so that the receiver can understand it on his level.

## **2d) Influencing others from the “Chayah” level of the soul**

Many times people go to a certain speech, lecture, or *shmuess* (inspiring talk) and they will hear the speaker talking, and even if they do not understand any of what he is saying (like if he is speaking in a language they don’t know, or if he is speaking about a lofty concept that they cannot relate to), they will leave the speech feeling more alive and invigorated, from the words they heard. This happens when the person has spoken from a more inner place of himself, which contains his inner *chiyus* (vitality). When the listeners hear words that are emanating from this inner place, they can feel the *chiyus* that is flowing from the speaker, even though they did not actually understand anything he said.

If the one speaking is only talking from a superficial place in himself, even if the listeners understand what he is saying, it is ‘dead’ speech, and it is on the level of the chirping of the birds. But the more inner of a place one speaks from within himself, the more “alive” the words are. Such speech is the implication of the “*nefesh chayah*” aspect in man [which corresponds to speech], and this is especially applicable when one is speaking to others in order to bestow *chiyus* upon the listeners, which is beyond the plane of their intellect.

There are people who feel more alive from going once a week to hear a certain Rav speak, and they

receive *chiyus* from this for the entire week. The person may not even be able to tell over precisely what he has heard, but he can feel more alive from listening to this rav speak once a week. You can meet thousands of people like this. They feel more alive simply from hearing a certain person speak, and why?

It is not due to any mystical reason. It is because the speaker is speaking from a more inner place in himself, from his *chiyus*, and it flows onto the listeners, who receive this *chiyus*. It is not about the words that are being said. The mere listening to a person who speaks from his "*nefesh chayah*" - or the "*Chayah*" point in the soul, which contains one's inner *chiyus* - is what enables those listening to receive a *chiyus* from the speaker and his words.

## **2e) Influencing Others from the "Yechidah" level of the soul**

The Sages said that the "*maaseh merkavah*" [the description of "the holy chariot" in *sefer Yechezkel*, as well as other Kabbalistic matters] should only be taught to "a wise one who understands on his own." [16] A teacher cannot explain everything to a student; he can give him the general outline of the information, and the student has to come to the understanding of the matters from within himself.

The simple meaning of this that a student hears the information and expands upon it on his own. This is true. But the depth of the matter is that a teacher has to give over three things to his student: The understanding of the information, the energy contained in his words, and the root of the information. The root of the information is the part where the teacher is "silent".

When a teacher is speaking from an inner place in himself, he speaks from his silence - from the "*Yechidah*" point in his soul. This is the inner meaning of the term of "A wise one who understands": It is when a student learns from what his teacher omits. Silence can "speak" and convey a lot to a person. When the teacher is silent, the student can learn a lot from the silence - he can understand that there is a reason why his teacher isn't explaining something, and thus a person learns even from silence.

The simple reason of why a *rebbe* needs to pause in middle of a *shiur* is to give time for the students to understand and absorb. That is definitely true, but there is a deeper reason as well: it is because silence also teaches an understanding to the students. When the *rebbe* is silent in the midst of his words, the silence is implying certain information.

Sometimes a *rebbe* can teach his student very well, but deep down, the *rebbe* may want the students to remain at the level of being "students". He doesn't really want the student to grow to the *rebbe's* level. Such a *rebbe* who is "silent" isn't trying to teach something with his silence - he's simply holding back information from his student, because he wants his student to remain his student...

But if a *rebbe* wants his student to become as wise as him - when he wants him to become a *talmid chever* (a "student colleague"), then the *rebbe* "speaks" from his silence, in order to teach his student from his silence. Such a *rebbe* speaks from the "*Yechidah*" level of the soul, to the student. He teaches the student what silence is, and in that away, the student can truly become a *talmid chochom* (Torah scholar) - a student who "understands", because through the silence, the student can then get to the root of the knowledge that is being imparted.

This is not information that can be given over in the superficial sense. It is a transferal of information from the soul of the teacher to the soul of his student - an inner processing.

We have discussed how a person talks and influences others through the five layers of the soul. Now we will move on to the next step, which is connecting how one uses his power of speech to bond with the Creator.

### 3. Bonding With The Creator Through Speech

Using the power of speech with regards to man's bond with the Creator is the kind of speech that we are familiar with as "*hisbodedus*." In the beginning of this *sefer*, we began to explain the very concept that is *hisbodedus*. Throughout these chapters, it has been explained that *hisbodedus* is much deeper than the way people simply understand it. Although there is only small percentage of *hisbodedus* which involves our faculty of speech - conversing with the Creator - it is still a central and very important part of *hisbodedus*.

At this point, now that we have seen the parts of how we develop the structure of *hisbodedus* - in terms of the revelation of the soul - we have seen the general picture. We can now move on to explaining the stage of how we use our faculty of speech in *hisbodedus* - the stage where man converses with his Creator.

#### 3a) Speaking with the Creator through the "Nefesh" level of the soul

The "*Nefesh*" level of the soul [when speaking with the Creator in *hisbodedus*] is, firstly, the understanding that the **bond between oneself and the Creator is built upon using the power of speech.**

Many people do not see this part as the central aspect of bonding with the Creator, and instead, they view speech as nothing but a means of expressing requests to Hashem, but without regarding speech as a power to connect. But one must know that speech, itself, is what forms a bond between man and the Creator. This is the "*Nefesh*" level of speaking with the Creator in *hisbodedus* - the basic understanding that speech should be seen as the power that connects man with the Creator.

We see that in a marriage, there are various forms of connection between husband and wife which are formed, but part of their bond is formed by the very act of speaking to each other. By speaking to each other, not only do they get to clarify things, but their very sitting down together and conversing with each other is a kind of connection. Of course, they should not remain with just that level of connection. But the very act of talking to each other, in and of itself, is a kind of connection with each other.

That is what we can use as an example to understand the "*Nefesh*" level of connecting to the Creator, via speech: It is essentially when a person has the understanding that "When I speak with my Creator, this is a way to develop the bond."

Understanding this deeper, we find several places where Chazal state, "The Torah speaks in the language of people." What is the reason of this? It is explained, especially in the *sefarim* of *Chassidus*, that a person must know that his own speech comes from a higher, heavenly "realm of speech". Meaning, a person should not simply view his speech as his own ability - rather, one should view his own speech as a power that comes from a heavenly realm.

When a person speaks to himself, or to his friend, or when a teacher is speaking to his student, from a simple and superficial perspective, the speaker is speaking from his own power of speech. But the deeper perspective is when a person views his speech as coming from the heavenly realm, and, as is well-known, the *Shechinah* is called the "*dibbur*", the "word", of Hashem. Thus, not only when a person converses with the Creator does he create a bond through speech - even when talking to a friend, which seems like a simple act of talking, this ability to speak is also coming from a higher realm.

Let's notice the subtle difference between these two levels of talking. There is one kind of speech, in which a person converses with the Creator and the very act of talking creates a bond between him

and his Creator. But there is another kind of talking [a deeper level], in which a person realizes that his speech is coming from the speech of the heavenly realm. When a person views his speech as an ability coming from a higher, heavenly perspective, this itself creates a bond between him and the Creator.

Compare this to a person who steps onto a carousel, where there are many different seats to sit on. He chooses one of the seats, and when the carousel begins to move, all of the seats are moving, not just the seat he is sitting on. Or, if a person enters a car with five passenger seats, and he picks one of the seats, the other four seats will arrive at the same destination.

When I speak to the Creator, my speech must be seen as a part of the general whole that is the “world of speech”. When that is the perspective, my speech is coming from a connection to the general “world of speech”, to the speech of the heavenly realm, and I will thereby be connected to my Creator.

Surely this is not yet the absolute level of bonding [with the Creator], but it is certainly a kind of bonding. It is the awareness that man’s ability to speak is what connects him to the Creator. That is why man is called *medaber*, a social creature, for man is called “*adam*” (man) from the term, “*adameh l’Elyon*”, “I will resemble the Above”, in the sense that his power of speech comes from the speech of above.

The highest level of this was reached by Moshe Rabbeinu, of whom the Sages said, “The *Shechinah* speaks from within his throat”, and this was because he truly recognized that his speech was not his own, but from above. (Later, when we will discuss the level of “*Neshamah*”, we will explain more about this.)

## **2b) Speaking with the Creator through the “Ruach” level of the soul**

When a person speaks with the Creator, the words are leading in a certain direction. One may speak words of gratitude to the Creator, words of prayer and supplication to the Creator, words of appeasement to the Creator, or, he may sing. Whatever the tone of the speech is when talking to the Creator, this is all the kind of speech that is from the “*Ruach*” level of the soul.

This leads us to a very practical application about *hisbodedus*. If a person enters into *hisbodedus* by starting immediately to sing to the Creator, or to thank the Creator, or to ask for forgiveness about something, or to request something, he has already skipped the first step of *hisbodedus* (explained earlier). First, before a person starts talking to the Creator about anything, he must realize that talking to Hashem *is* the actual connection!

### ***The Common Mistake People Make When Speaking With The Creator In Hisbodedus***

When people aren’t aware of this, it leads to a common error in *hisbodedus*. A person may have a general, intellectual understanding about *hisbodedus*, through reading holy *sefarim* about it, in which it is explained that most *tzaddikim* reached their high levels from talking to the Creator; so a person who reads about this may think that as soon as he starts *hisbodedus*, he should immediately start talking to the Creator. But in doing so, he is skipping over the first, basic stage [for he didn’t yet internalize that his very act of talking to the Creator is what bonds him with the Creator].

In any form of *hisbodedus*, in which a person begins to talk to Hashem, one first needs to actually feel that his power of speech is what connects him to his Creator. That is the basis. After we have developed this basic soul perspective – which is the level of “*Nefesh*” – we can then progress to the next stage, which is the level of “*Ruach*”.

The “*Ruach*” level of the soul, when talking to the Creator, begins with speaking words of love (*ahavah*), and then we can progress to speaking words of awe (*yirah*), words of praise (*hispaarus*), words of gratitude (*hodayah*), words of victory (*netzach*), words of connection (*hiskashrus*), and, finally, words of recognizing man’s lowliness (*shiflus*). These are the seven main *middos* (traits) explained in our mystical teachings. Through these seven areas of speech, a person connects himself throughout all of the seven realms, to the Creator. But all of this must be built upon the basic perspective in which a person is aware that his power of speech connects him to the Creator.

After I perceive speech as being the power that connects me to the Creator, the question will be: Where I should begin? Should I begin with words of gratitude, or words of praise, or words of appeasement, or prayer, or supplication? Truth be told, there are no general rules for this, because each soul is different.

A person may be in a very difficult situation where it will not be practical for him to start thanking Hashem for his entire past, and in his case, he will need to first unload everything that is bothering him, and only after that can he start thanking Hashem. Of course, in the ideal situation, first a person should thank Hashem for the past, and after expressing his gratitude, he should then make his requests from Hashem.

Thus, any of the emotions that a person may express in *hisbodedus*, when speaking to the Creator, are only effective if they are preceded with an understanding that it is the very act of speaking to the Creator which creates the bond. As a result, the person understands that **the main part of talking to Hashem is not about what you say - it is mainly about the very act of talking to Him!**

Many times people complain that they are having a difficult time doing *hisbodedus* on a practical level, because they find it hard to spend so much talking to Hashem; they feel that they keep repeating their words, and it gets tedious. They have a good argument. But in a large percentage of cases, this complaint stems from the fact that they don’t feel how the very act of talking to the Creator is a kind of bonding.

To illustrate, a father talks to his child many times, and he usually keeps repeating the same thing over again to his child: “What did you learn today? What did you do today?” Why doesn’t he get bored of this? It is because the father knows that the talking itself creates a bond with his child, and it is irrelevant to him what kind of content is in the conversation.

True, this will not work in a school, where the staff repeats the same words every week and keeps coming to the same conclusions and decisions. This is because the staff members cannot run a school together through bond-orientated conversation; they need goal-oriented conversations, which will enable them to run the place smoothly. When they speak with each other about what to do and they reach their conclusions, they can stop the subject right there and move on. But when talking is a way to form a connection [such as a father conversing with his son, or when talking to the Creator in *hisbodedus*], it is precisely through repeating the same words again and again which creates the connection.

Each day, we *daven* the same three prayers, where we speak with the Creator. As we know, the prayers are repetitive, and are almost the same every day. Here we have a bond with the Creator which is based on repeating the same exact words every single day, the same *nusach*, and for all the days of our life! Why is it this way? If a person understands that the talking itself is a bond with the Creator, he then connects himself to the Creator through all of this speech. But if one only uses talking as a means of expressing the content or topic in what he’s saying, he has lost the root, and he will find it difficult to talk so much.

Understandably, our aim here is not to belittle the actual content of what a person talks about to with the Creator. Rather, our point here is to explain that all of the content in the talking must be built upon the perspective that the very talking to Hashem, in and of itself, is a form of bonding. After a person has solidly acquired this perspective, he can then develop what kind of talking he wishes to have with Hashem, the content of what he would like to discuss. He can then guide the direction of the conversation. But it should become a given to the person that even if he would keep repeating the same words over and over again, the very fact that he is speaking with the Creator is a form of connecting to Him.

The Sages state that if a person does not talk to a person for three days (out of enmity towards the person), he has the title of “enemy” towards him. From this we learn that talking itself is a form of connection. So when people are more concerned about the actual content of their conversations with Hashem, and they are busy with questions such as “What should I speak about with Hashem?” – that is where most of the issues are. Why? Because then it means that they aren’t speaking from a *natural* place in themselves.

In a similarly related issue, there are those who also have this problem in their own homes, when they have a hard time “finding what to talk about” with their family members. In the normal situation, where a person is emotionally healthy, he can speak naturally about his experiences with others. But if he cannot talk that naturally to his family, he finds that the conversations stop short, he clams up, and other such issues, and then he feels that there’s nothing to talk about. What is the reason for this? It is because he is missing the ability to talk naturally. The more natural a person allows himself to be, the more he will have what to talk about. The less natural he is being, the more guidance he will need: What to say first, what to This is like trying to teach a person how to walk up a bunch of steps, and we say to him, “Listen! Do not first try to reach the seventh step and then the fourth step, then the fifth step and second step. First, go up the first step, then the second step, then the third.” If someone needs guidance like this, he must be in a very severe situation....

The lesson from this is clear. If a person understands that talking to the Creator is a form of bonding with Him, the conversation will flow more openly, just as when you talk to a friend. The *Mesillas Yesharim* says that when one talks to the Creator, he can talk to Him “as a man talks to a friend.” It should be like when you meet a close friend, where you don’t need to prepare a list of every word you will say to him, and the conversation just flows freely and naturally.

If you have to prepare the conversation before you talk to your friend, the more you try to get the right words to come, the more you lose the naturalness of the conversation - and the bond with it. It is the same with talking to the Creator! Although there is a perspective that speaking to the Creator should be seen as “speaking with the King”, you first need to reach the “*Ruach*” level in the soul of talking to Hashem, which is to talk to the Creator naturally - as natural as you can be.

To illustrate what we mean, if a person feels that he is paying too high of a property tax, he has no problem calling up the company and explaining to him what bothers him. If a person has problems with the gas, he picks up the phone and speaks naturally to a representative of the company, explaining to him exactly the issues with gas in his home. No one needs guidance in how to do this, of how to say each word and how to present himself, because any person knows how to act and speak from their natural feelings.

Therefore, the approach here is not to come and guide communities in how exactly to talk to the Creator. For if someone needs such guidance, it means he has a deep problem in the soul. There is only one point which needs guidance, and it is the basis: **one must speak with the Creator as if he is speaking to a good friend.**

If you are not succeeding at it, speak with the Creator about this and ask for help from Him, that you be should be able to relate to Him as a close Friend, in order that you able to feel like you can speak to Him. But do not try to receive exact guidance about *what* to speak about with the Creator.

**Even if a person speaks to the Creator after having received guidance in how to talk to Him and how to state his requests, he is talking from a very superficial place in himself,** and not from his deeper essence. To illustrate what we mean, there are couples who need to learn exactly how to communicate with each other. The husband is taught how to talk to the wife, and the wife is taught how she must talk to the husband. The husband is told: “Don’t say it like that to your wife. Instead, tell it to her like this. And before you speak, think it over three times.” But this is totally not a natural way of talking!

The truth is that if a person is at a point where he needs such guidance, he really does need the guidance, of how exactly he needs to communicate with his spouse: which tone of voice to use, what to say, what not to say, etc. Surely some simple guidance can help their home situation. But it must be natural! Obviously, there are also some minor mishaps a person may make if he speaks naturally in the home. But if we uproot a person’s natural way of talking, we have basically uprooted him from the source of his life.

Many people sincerely wish to serve the Creator and to do *hisbodedus* so that they can speak to the Creator, and they seek advice from experts on how exactly to enunciate all of their problems when talking to the Creator during *hisbodedus*. But the root of most difficulties with *hisbodedus* comes from the fact that they are not speaking naturally. Since they are not speaking naturally when they talk to the Creator, they have a whole chain of questions: “Is it permitted to ask about this and this? And how exactly do I state my request? Did I say it the right way, or should I have preceded my request with a different request?”

We need to understand that it is not like a bus which comes precisely at the expected time of arrival, and that if you miss the expected time by even a second, you have missed the bus. Similarly, when you meet a friend for five minutes, you will converse with him during those five minutes about as much as you can get in, but if a man lives with a spouse at home, he is not limiting his conversations with her to five minutes. If he doesn’t finish what he’s saying to her today, he’ll continue talking about it with her tomorrow.

In the same vein, the more a person naturally speaks to the Creator, the more his questions all fall away. But the less natural a person is when he is speaking with the Creator, the more he will need an entire *sefer* that explains to him every possible issue a person may have and how to deal with it.

Let us explain, then, what the proper approach should be.

### ***The Proper Attitude When Speaking To The Creator In Hisbodedus***

When a person is about to begin speaking with the Creator, he must first reach a recognition that “I am speaking with my Creator, Who is called “Your Friend”, for there is a verse, “*Your friend and the father of your friend, do not abandon*”,[\[17\]](#) and Chazal state that “Your friend” refers to *HaKadosh Baruch Hu* (the Holy One, Blessed is He).[\[18\]](#)”

When a person approaches the Creator like this, with the perspective of the soul that he is talking to his truest “Friend”, he can then guide the words accordingly to whichever direction he wants it to go in (this is the “*Ruach*” level of the soul in talking to the Creator), from the awareness that the act of the talking itself is a form of bonding to the Creator; and, as mentioned, he should be talking in his natural way of talking.

Compare this to the following. If two people schedule a flight together that will take 12 hours, do they prepare their conversations beforehand? They will have no problem talking to each other for the duration of the entire flight. Why? It is because a person directs his conversation naturally. If we lose our naturalness in our talking, we have essentially lost the root of bonding with the Creator through our speech. But if we build the bond through talking to Him in our natural way of talking, there will be less questions about how to speak with the Creator, and often a simple answer will satisfy. But we must properly build the basis.

In summary, the first step in talking to the Creator is to be aware that talking to the Creator is a way of bonding with Him. With Whom am I talking? With the Creator of the world, Who is called the "Friend" of man. With this awareness, I can let my conversation with Him flow naturally.

We should remember that just as when you talk to a friend, the conversations with him are sometimes more successful and sometimes they are less successful, it is the same with talking to the Creator: sometimes we have a more successful conversation with Him and sometimes there is less success. But [that is the way it should be, for] it is all natural.

Whenever a person feels bothered by something, he should be able to speak about it naturally to the Creator. It is like when a child comes home to his parents and exclaims: "Someone fought with me today!" or "The teacher punished me in the corner", or "I got a prize today!" He just speaks naturally to his parents about whatever's on his mind. If we have understood this point that we need to just speak naturally with the Creator, we have understood the entire matter - and, if do not understand this point, then we will need an entire series of lectures explaining how exactly one should do *hisbodedus*.....

We have so far explained the levels of "*Nefesh*" and "*Ruach*" in man's bond [through speech] with the Creator. Now we will explain the level of "*Neshamah*".

### **3. Speaking With The Creator Through The "Neshamah" Level of the Soul**

There are two angles to explore in the "*Neshamah*" level of the soul. There is a way to go from the bottom up (*m'sata l'eila*), and a way to go from above to below (*m'leila l'sata*).

From the bottom up (*m'sata l'eila*) - When we go "from the bottom up" (*m'sata l'eila*), this is the external level of the *Neshamah*, in which a person brings words of the intellect into his speech with the Creator. In the teachings of Bresslev, this is called "turning Torah into *tefillah*". A person can take a matter of the intellect and transform it into prayer. He can speak with the Creator after intellectually studying the words of the Creator's wisdom [the Torah]. In this way, one turns Torah study into a form of prayer. The Torah study can bring him to a certain inner recognition, which can lead to prayer.

From above to below (*m'leila l'sata*) - The other way to talk to the Creator from the *Neshamah* level of the soul - from "above to below" (*m'leila l'sata*) - is when a person merits receiving a flow of thoughts emanating from Heaven. This is called a "little bit of *Ruach HaKodesh*" (the holy spirit). An example of it is as the Gemara says, that "When a person wakes in the morning and his mouth suddenly utters a verse, it is a small level of prophecy".<sup>[19]</sup> Even when a person is talking regularly, many times he is talking about a certain topic and suddenly his words take him in a different direction, and he can begin to feel that his mind is steering his words to discuss a totally different topic, and he can clearly feel that it is not coming from him.

This is what it means to bond with the Creator through the speech of the *Neshamah*, "from above to below", for it is a level in which a person receives enlightened understanding as he is in the midst of talking, and his words continue to follow the stream of thoughts that is entering him.

There is also a deeper level than this which is described in the *sefarim hakedoshim*: there were *tzaddikim* who would start talking, and they were not even consciously aware that they were saying anything. They would connect their words to their Heavenly source, to the Supernal Wisdom above, and from there they would derive their own speech. Afterwards, these *tzaddikim* would ask those around them, "What did I say?" They would then study the words that they had uttered. This kind of speech is like the verse, "*Iyov does not speak with daas* (human understanding)." [20]

Let's explain this further. In the normal kind of speech, a person verbalizes what is on his mind. "*Daas* is hidden in the mouth." Of this kind of talking, the Ramban said, "Think about the words before you release them from their mouth." Normally, when a person talks, he must think about what he is saying. But there is a higher mode of talking in which a person connects his mouth to Above, and then speaks from a higher place of understanding which is not coming from himself, and then he learns about what he has just said. There is also a more subtle level, where a person learns about the words he is saying even as he is in the midst of talking.

There were some *tzaddikim* who would only speak words after having thought beforehand what they would say, and this is a kind of speech that emanates from *daas* (human understanding). Other *tzaddikim*, many times, would speak from a point that was above their *daas*. Let us explain what the advantage and disadvantage there is to each of these modes of speech.

Speaking From Above The *Daas*: The advantage to this mode of speech is, that when the *tzaddik* would attach his speech to the speech of Above, he would connect his mind to Above and his speech was entirely being 'written' from these higher thoughts. He did not have to think about what he was about to say, for he was speaking from a Heavenly source, from above his own understanding. His own speech was a "garment" for the Supernal wisdom of Above. The disadvantage to this mode of speech, though, was that since this speech wasn't passing through his own *daas*\understanding, those hearing him talk were receiving a spiritual light that was way above their level, which they could not perceive and which could not settle in them. The listeners were not able to be "containers" to receive the "light" that was coming from Above.

Speaking From *Daas*: The advantage to this mode of speech is clear, in contrast with the disadvantage mentioned above. Since the *tzaddik* in this mode of speech would speak to others from his own *daas*, he would speak in a way that was understandable to those listening, and bring it down to their own level of understanding. The "light" could then settle in the "containers". The disadvantage here, however, was that since the *tzaddik* was speaking from his own *daas*, the speech could not go beyond the *tzaddik's* actual level of understanding.

In summary. Thus, there is an advantage to speaking from above the *daas*, in which a person doesn't know what he is saying, and there is a different advantage when one speaks from *daas*, in which he knows what he's saying. The proper path for a person to take is to first speak from above the *daas*, and after that, to then speak from one's *daas*. We will not elaborate much on this, because this is a very deep matter of its own.

In summation, the level of "*Neshamah*" (when speaking with the Creator), from the "bottom up" (*m'sata l'eila*) is when a person turns words of Torah into prayer [a deeper level of recognition of the Creator, after studying Torah or contemplating any of Hashem's wisdom], and "from above to below" (*m'leila l'sata*), it is when there is a degree of *ruach hakodesh* that descends on a person's words [when one connects his speech to its upper source, which is usually only a level for *tzaddikim*, but which can sometimes happen to ordinary people as well].

### **3d) Speaking With Hashem from the *Chayah* level of the Soul**

The “*Chayah*” level of the soul, when speaking with the Creator, is also accessed on two levels – from the “bottom up”, and from “above to below”.

From The Bottom Up (*M’sata L’leila*) – The “*Chayah*” level of the soul is when a person uses the power of speech as is meant by the verse, “*And man became a living spirit*” – a *nefesh chayah* – which the *Targum* translates as “*ruach memalelah*”, a “talking spirit.”

When speaking with the Creator, the “*Chayah*” level of the soul is to speak with one’s *chiyus* (vitality or energy). It is written, “*My soul leaves, when I speak with Him.*” This is when one speaks with the Creator in a manner which expends his own *chiyus* energy.

It is explained in *Chassidic* teachings that it is a miracle for a person to stay alive while *davening* (praying). This is referring to a person who speaks to Hashem with the “*Chayah*” level of the soul. Why is it miraculous? It is because such a person is really exhausting all of his speech into his prayers, and all of his emotional energy, which should really cause him to die! When one speaks to the Creator through the “*Chayah*” level of the soul, it means that he is investing all of his *chiyus* (vitality) into this.

From Above To Below (*M’leila L’sata*) – When one is connected to Above, he receives *chiyus* energy from the “Ten Expressions” which Hashem created the word with. The Ten Commandments as well are from the same root of these Ten Expressions, which were both “soft expression” (external) and “strong speech” (internal) at once.

The entire Creation stems from the Ten Expressions and Ten Commandments – thus, these Ten Expressions and Commandments are the root of Creation. A person may derive *chiyus* either from “branches” – or from the “root”. When one is connected to the Creator through the “*Chayah*” level of the soul, he is connected to the beginning state of Creation, which, as *Targum* states, refers to *chochmah* wisdom (on the word “*Beraishis*”, “In the beginning”, the *Targum* translates it as “*b’chochmasa*” – wisdom). Meaning, one can be connected to the root kind of speech that is on High, and from there he can derive *chiyus*.

It can be compared to a person who draws water from a spring. When you draw water from the spring, you are drawing directly from its source, whereas if you get the water from other places, the water is from a place that is far from the source. The further the water is from the source, the dirtier the water will be, and the closer the water is to its source, the purer and cleaner the water will be when you draw it. In the same vein, when one recognizes that the speech on High is his own source, he is not drawing forth vitality from his own speech, which is only a “branching” level of speech, but from the very “roots” of all speech, which is the speech on High – the “Ten Expressions” that the Creator used to create the world.

The entire world “moves” through the Ten Expressions and Ten Commandments which Hashem uttered. When one connects to the “*Chayah*” level of the soul, which is to connect to the concept of “*chochmah*” (wisdom) to “*beraishis*” (beginning point) – it is when he connects to himself to the root of all the created beings, which are the Ten Expressions. He is then connected to the innermost root within Creation – to the “Infinite Light” (the *ohr EinSof*) which is clothed within Creation.

### **3e) Speaking With Hashem From The *Yechidah* level of the Soul**

In a previous chapter, we explained that Hashem was first silent before He created the world. Creation began with ten Utterances, but before that, there was no speech, just a silence of the Creator.

The *Midrash* states, “The ministering angels gathered together next to Hashem and said, “You existed

before the world was created, and You exist after the world was created.”<sup>[21]</sup> — There is an *avodah* we have to cleave to the state of “after creation”, which is through our power of speech; and we have an *avodah* to cleave to the state of “before creation”, which is to connect through our silence to the silence that was before creation.

This is how the “*Yechidah*” level in our soul connects itself to her Creator: through its silence, to the silence of the Creator, as it were.

Man is called “*adam*” from the word “*demamah*”, silence, because man has the deep power to silence his speech and connect himself to the silence that came before the created state of this world. It is accessed when a person connects himself to the reality of the Creator, before creation, as it were.

This is parallel to the concept of the *Shaar HaNun D’Kedushah*, the “Fiftieth Gate of Holiness”, which the Ramban says is “a creation that is not a creation.” The very creation of the world, the *Beraishis* (beginning point), is the bridging point that connects the point before Creation with the point of after Creation. Thus, the act of creation, “*Beraishis*”, contained both the aspects of speech [represented by The Ten Utterances, which was used to create the world – the state of “after creation”] as well as the aspect of silence [represented by the state of before creation]. Its external layer was the speech that Hashem created the world with, and its inner layer was the silence that came before it.

This is essentially a deep power in man to silence all of Creation [within himself] and he enters the state of *chalal* [the holy ‘void’, in which he recognizes that there is nothing in creation except for Hashem alone]. It is the secret behind the concept of silence.

#### **4. Revealing The Presence of The Creator Through Silence From Speech**

Now we will proceed to explain one last point about the sense of speech in the soul, in which a person uses speech to reach the “endlessness” (the *EinSof*-Infinite) of the Creator, so to speak.

##### **4a) Silent, Speechless Recognition of The Creator Alone, With No Thoughts About Creation:**

There are two roles of silence: with regards to being silent from speech, and silence in and of itself, which is the absolute level of silence. To try to conceptualize this, we will use an example from the human soul (and we can learn from our soul about G-d, for it is written “*From my flesh I see G-d*”). There are two reasons why a person would be silent. One reason is because the person is simply immersed in his thoughts and therefore he’s not interested in talking right now. Another reason could be because he really would like to talk, but he consciously makes the decision to be silent and restrain from talking, as in the case of one who does not respond to insult.

So too, there are two kinds of silence, in relevance to connecting ourselves to Hashem’s endlessness. One kind of silence, as we explained, is to attach ourselves to a silencing of Creation. This is called the state of *chalal* (void); here, the silence is used a ‘tool’ to “silence” Creation. But there is an even higher kind of silence: to be silent in recognition of the endlessness of the Creator, regardless of how this affects Creation. This is the absolute level of the concept of “silence”.

In both kinds of silence, one is silencing Creation [recognizing that there is nothing in Creation except for Hashem alone], but the difference between them is, that in the first kind of silence, a person is still relating to Creation, and although he is disassociating from it, he is still acknowledging the creations. So it is not yet the absolute level of “silence”. The second kind of silence is the absolute level - when a person only thinks of Hashem, and nothing else other than this. It is to temporarily ‘let go’ of Creation. Your silence here is not trying to erase Creation from existence - rather, your silence here is just

focusing on the single thought that there is a Creator, regardless of how this affects anything else.

#### **4b) Focusing On Existence of The Creator Alone, With No Thoughts About Creation:**

Another way of describing this “silence” of Creation is in terms of the concept of “*Ain Od Milvado*”, “There is nothing besides for Hashem.”

The *Nefesh HaChaim* [22] writes that from Hashem’s perspective, there is nothing at all in Creation besides Him. When we recognize that perspective, we are silencing Creation from our own perspective, allowing Hashem’s perspective to take over, telling ourselves that there is nothing besides Him.

Yet, this is the “lower” level of the deep silencing of Creation, because it is ultimately using the silence as a way to silence Creation, and therefore one is still relating to Creation in this perspective. But there is deeper kind of silencing than this: **to simply focus your thoughts on the existence of Hashem** - and you don’t think of how this will relate to the rest of creation. This is the absolute level of silence, because in this level, we are not thinking at all of how the meaning of “*Ain Od Milvado*” affects all of Creation - that is not the emphasis here. Here, we are just focusing on the very fact of Hashem’s existence alone....

These final words here are very, very, deep matters of the soul. We have been brief about it. May it be the will of Hashem that all of us integrate ourselves with the endlessness (the *EinSof*-Infinite) of the Creator, and completely.

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### ***Epilogue***

With *siyata d’shamaya* (Heavenly assistance), we have merited to conclude the description of *hisbodedus* (meditation) and *hisbonenus* (reflection), in which it was explained how one meditates and reflects in order to reveal the self, to bond with the Creator, and then to reveal the Infinite (*EinSof*).

It is our hope that after we have explained all of these matters, the concepts of *hisbodedus* and *hisbonenus* now take on much greater meaning than how we perceived it at first.

It is impossible to give exact practical guidance on how to implement all of these steps, but if we want to define what the end goal is, we can definitely say that the ‘end’ is ‘endless’ (*Ein Sof*)!

Some people have a stronger sense of sight in the soul, while others are stronger in their souls’ sense of hearing. But each person, no matter what his strengths are, needs to experience all of these steps, or at least most of them. It is just that the order of the steps differs with each person, and it could also depend on the particular time that a person is in. But all those who wish to serve Hashem need to exert their minds in studying all of these steps that were presented throughout this *sefer*; first a person should simply know the material here, and then one can choose what the order of the steps should be.

May Hashem allow us to know these matters in our minds and then to let them internalize in our hearts, and that the inner point in ourselves should be revealed – which is to recognize the reality of the Infinite, Blessed Is He.

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**[1]** Succah 28a

**[2]** Pesichas Eliyahu

**[3]** Sefer HaYashar: 13 (also cited also in the name of the Chozeh of Lublin)

**[4]** Shmuel I:15

**[5]** Eruvin 53b-54a

**[6]** ibid

**[7]** Avos 1:17

**[8]** Iyov 26:7

**[9]** Chullin 89a

**[10]** Avos 5:1

**[11]** Iyov 28:12

**[12]** Shabbos 113b

**[13]** Bava Basra 3b

**[14]** Shmuel I: 15-17

**[15]** Avos 4:1

**[16]** Chagigah 11b

**[17]** Mishlei 27:10

**[18]** Shemos Rabbah 27

[\[19\]](#) Berachos 55b

[\[20\]](#) Iyov 34:35

[\[21\]](#) Yalkut Shimeoni, Devarim: 6

[\[22\]](#) Refer to Nefesh HaChaim Shaar III

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