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Bonding With The Creator Through Scent-Movement

1. Two Different Perspectives - Before the Sin of Adam and After the Sin of Adam

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

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

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

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

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

We will attempt here a little to explain this matter. Firstly, we should establish the fact that there are two abilities in our nose: the ability to breathe, and the ability of smell. In Hebrew, these words are similar: *ruach* (air), and *reiach* (smell). There is also a close connection between air/breathing and smell, for Mashiach will possess “*ruach*” (for the term “*ruach apeinu*” is said of Mashiach) and he will also have the unique ability to “sniff out” the truth, which is smell.

The depth of this is laid in understanding the difference between two different ‘modes’ of the

Creation - the level before the sin of Adam HaRishon, and the level after the sin of Adam HaRishon.

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

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

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

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

Let us now explain the difference between these two perspectives. The Torah says, "Six days you shall perform work, and on the seventh day you shall rest." What happens when we rest from movement? In the perspective before the sin, where all of the reality (*havayah*) is movement, the *menuchah* (serenity) of Shabbos was essentially a revelation of the point above our own *havayah*. But in the perspective after the sin, where all of our *havayah* has become movement, the revelation of *menuchah*\serenity means the revelation of the unmoving reality of Creation, where Creation ceases from movement. It is the point of the *havayah* itself, which exists regardless of movement or not.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

In contrast, the serenity of the Next World stems from the higher perspective: I am defined by movement, and when I am in a state of non-movement, that means that there is a cessation of the "I". This state of serenity is the secret behind the revelation of the light of the Infinite, where there is no movement. It is an entirely different dimension of non-movement, than the non-movement of This World.

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

2. Reality Is Movement: The "Breath of Mashiach"

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

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

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

which our very *havayah*\reality is movement.

Thus, it is now clear that when we discuss the “*Ruach*” faculty of the soul here, it is referring to “*ruach apeinu, mashiach Hashem*”, to perceive the very *havayah*\reality as movement, and that this is a root of revealing the *neshamah*. The Vilna Gaon said that before the sin of Adam, the Creation was in a higher, more spiritual mode of existence, and after the sin, Creation descended to a lower existential level. **After the sin, we now perceive everything from the view of the “*Nefesh*” part of the soul**, with the “*Ruach*” level of the soul above it, and above that, the *Neshamah*. But before the sin, our primary view was from the *Ruach* level of the soul. Thus the Vilna Gaon wrote that when Adam was in Gan Eden, he lived in the dimension of *Yetzirah*, which corresponds to the “*Ruach*” level of the soul.[\[7\]](#)

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

3. The Connection Between Scent (*Re’iach*) and the “*Ruach*” level of the soul.

Re’iach\smell corresponds to the “*Ruach*” level of perception, as follows.

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

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

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

4. Using The Sense of Smell To Reveal The Self

Let us now explain how the sense of smell\movement can be used [in *hisbodedus*] throughout the five levels of the soul: the *Nefesh*, *Ruach*, *Neshamah*, *Chayah*, and *Yechidah*.

4a) How The “*Nefesh*” Level of the Soul Perceives Movement

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

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

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

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

We will continue to the next step, but all of the coming steps are based on the above perspective.

4b) How The “*Ruach*” Level of the Soul Perceives Movement

The *Ruach* level of the soul is utilized when we understand different directions of movement. There are six general directions to move in (east, west, north, south, above and below). There is the eastern wind, western wind, northern wind, etc. We can discern these different directions of movement through the “*Ruach*” level of the soul.

4c) How The “*Neshamah*” Level of the Soul Perceives Movement

The *Neshamah* level of the soul is used in order to understand the source of movement, the destination of the movement, and its purpose. The *Neshamah* level of the soul corresponds to understanding and intellect – to understand what is being presented by the information in front of us.

Thus, the *Nefesh* level of the soul grasps how reality is movement, the *Ruach* level of the soul grasps what kind of movement it is, and the *Neshamah* level of the soul thinks: “What is it for?” It is about knowing the reason of the movement. When the reason for the movement is understood, one can then determine which direction it is going in. When we know the reason for the movement, accordingly, we can direct the movement.

4d) How The “*Chayah*” Level of the Soul Perceives Movement

The *Chayah* level of the soul perceives how life, itself, is movement – and to thereby derive *chiyus*, life-giving vitality, from movement.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

We understand clearly that movement and action is a sign of being alive. A dead person cannot move and he cannot do anything. But when it comes to our daily living, do we actually feel more alive from movement? Often, we are living life like a dead person. We generally will feel more alive from what we possess, but not from the movement and actions in our life. But the truth is that a person really does live from movement and action, and not just from what he has.

The Gemara^[8] brings a dispute if the land of Eretz Yisrael is inherited by those who left Egypt, or by those who entered the Land. According to one opinion in the Gemara, it is inherited by those who left Egypt, who were already deceased by the time the nation entered the Land, because there can be “inheritance in the grave”, whereupon the deceased person has an acquisition of his inheritance and now passes on the inheritance for his children. Without getting into the details of this discussion, the point we want to take out from this is that even a dead person can acquire something, at least

momentarily. Therefore, acquisition or possession of something does not symbolize life, for even a dead person can acquire something.

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

The truth is that even a dead person has some degree of vitality which keeps it intact. This is called *kista d'chiyusa*.^[9] It has this minimum degree of life, and without it, it wouldn't be here at all. Today, the *chiyus* (vitality) of people resembles this small degree of life that even the dead have. There is barely any genuine *chiyus* today.

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

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

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

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

Before the sin, Adam HaRishon bore two sons, Kayin and Hevel. The children of a person are regarded as the revelation of all the potential forces in one's soul. Kayin and Hevel were thus the revelation of Adam HaRishon's inner potential. "The deeds of the righteous are considered their offspring, and their offspring are considered their deeds." Before the sin, the perspective of Adam HaRishon was all about movement – either for the purposes of negating (Hevel) or for the purposes of acquiring (Kayin). Thus, what is life? It is entirely about these acts of either acquiring or negating.

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

This is what is meant by the verse of "*The breath of our nostrils, Hashem's anointed.... under whose protection, we had said, we would live among the nations.*"^[10] When we are found amongst the gentile nations, it is as if we have no acquisitions of our own, for today we are still in the category of slaves - "We are still the slaves of Achashveirosh"^[11] - and a slave does not own any possessions because all that a slave acquires is acquired by his master.^[12] If we try to derive *chiyus* from what we possess, we will have no true *chiyus*, for we really do not possess anything of our own. But if I

derive *chiyus* from the mere act of moving, then even when I am found amongst the gentile nations, and I am bare and with nothing of my own, I can still move. That is only the source of vitality I can drive, which remains with me no matter how much I will lack.

4e) How The “Yechidah” Level of the Soul Perceives Movement

Everything in Creation contains the secret of “a thing and its opposite” (*dovor v’hipucho*). If a person wants to understand anything, he also needs to know what its opposite is. Only then will he truly grasp what he wants to understand. If a person only sees “one side of the coin” and he doesn’t see the other side of the coin, then he doesn’t really understand the side of the coin which he sees. This is a fundamental rule which is explained by our Sages, and which is brought by the Vilna Gaon in his commentary to *Mishlei*, and in other places.

For example, a person cannot enjoy wealth unless he knows what it’s like to be poor. Only after being poor can he truly appreciate what it means to be wealthy. If he only knows what it’s like to be wealthy but he has never been poor, he hasn’t truly tasted his own wealth. (Not that being wealthy has a good ‘taste’ to it; we are considering this matter from his perspective.....)

The same is true for a person who wishes to know what wisdom is. If you want to know what it means to be wise, you need to know how a fool thinks. Shlomo HaMelech, the wisest person ever, also understood what foolishness is. He knew what the opposite of wisdom is. This is the secret of *dovor v’hipucho*, a “thing and its opposite – since Shlomo HaMelech knew what a fool is thinking, he was able to understand what wisdom is.

So if we want to understand how all of our life is defined as movement, we also need to understand what **non-movement** is. The reason why we need to know what non-movement is so that we can better understand what movement is. If we were already living from non-movement, we wouldn’t need to understand both sides of the coin (movement and non-movement) – it would not be necessary for us to understand a “thing and its opposite”. The entire reason why we need to understand both sides of the coin in something, “a thing and its opposite”, is because we live from movement.

Thus, in order to what movement is in terms of our soul, we need to have some understanding of non-movement, and then we will be able to have a more genuine understanding of movement.

In terms of our own soul, the *Chayah* level of the soul draws energy from the *Yechidah* level in the soul. It is written, “*And wisdom, from where is it found?*” The wisdom comes “from where”, and in Hebrew, the Torah calls this by the term of *ayin* (nothingness). True wisdom is nursed forth from this source, *ayin*.

When a person does not get his wisdom from this source, *ayin*, he thinks that the wisdom itself is the source of life. He will not relate to a concept of non-movement, so he will not either fully understand what movement is. By contrast, when a person knows how to derive vitality even from the non-moving point of *ayin*, he can receive vitality in his movements from the source, non-movement. Then a person can reveal what movement is, and what non-movement is, and he can then see “both sides of the coin” clearly.

Based upon what has been explained here, we can now understand that the concept of the *Yechidah* is to reach the deepest, innermost point in the soul – which is unmoving. On a deeper level, one needs to go through a cycle of deriving vitality from non-movement, then movement, then non-movement, etc. Then a person will understand the secret of movement – its source, and how it is the true source of our vitality.

When one gains both of these perspectives in his soul – movement and non-movement – he appreciates how non-movement contributes to the vitality in his movement. He understands that if he receives vitality from non-movement, this will infuse his movements with vitality and vice versa. Non-movement must be seen as a way to appreciate movement. Otherwise, a person will try to only live from non-movement, and this is not possible in our current state.

Only when we become fully integrated with the Creator, can we live entirely from a non-movement. We will explain more about this later. The balance we need to have is to be able to derive vitality from both movement and non-movement, in a cycle. Since we are using non-movement in order to relate better to movement, that means we will never fully understand non-movement. Thus, when we are in [*the first stage of hisbodedus*] the stage of revealing the self as a *neshamah*, it is not possible to fully grasp what non-movement is.

4. Bonding With The Creator Through Movement

Until now, we explained the concept of movement through the five layers of the soul – *Nefesh*, *Ruach*, *Neshamah*, *Chayah* and *Yechidah*. This was all the first stage of *hisbodedus* – revealing the self – via [the means of the sense of scent, which we have defined here as] movement. It is now upon us to understand the next two stages of *hisbodedus* with regards to movement: the stage of bonding with the Creator, and after that, the stage of revealing the Infinite. In this higher stage, the non-movement is on the absolute level, whereas in the first stage, revealing the self, we cannot have total grasp of non-movement.

4a) Bonding With The Creator Through Movement of “Nefesh”

Earlier in this chapter, when we explained the first stage, revealing the self, we explained that the “*Nefesh*” level in this stage is to grasp the very concept that our reality is movement.

When it comes to the next stage – bonding with the Creator – this will mean that I perceive myself as a moving force by the One who is moving me. In the first stage, where the purpose is to reveal the self, I simply perceive that my existence is a moving force, as if “I” am moving myself. But in the second stage, where the purpose is to bond with the Creator, I acknowledge that my existence is movement as attached with the Creator: my existence is a force of movement that is being simulated by the Creator.

This concept is also known as “*Yediah*”, the perspective of “higher knowledge”, which is beyond the dimension of our *bechirah*, free will. From the point of our free will, I am a force of movement and I am also causing myself to move. There is an “I” here that is moving me. I can choose how I will move, I can motivate myself, etc. But from a higher perspective, my entire existence is being moved by the Creator. This higher reality is the *yediah* knowledge that is above my *bechirah* free will. Both viewpoints are true and existing – it merely depends on what which perspective of the soul I am viewing this matter from.

This is the “*Nefesh*” level of bonding with the Creator through movement: to understand that our reality is a moving force, which is motivated by the Creator.

4b) Bonding With The Creator Through The Movement of “Ruach”

The “*Ruach*” level in bonding with the Creator through movement is built upon the previous level, *Nefesh*. It is to identify which direction the Creator is moving me [or others] towards. For example, one realizes that Hashem is using His trait of kindness upon him [or on another]. He sees how Hashem is dealing with him *middah k'neged middah*, “measure for measure”, either meting out kindness to him, or judgment; or when one recognizes that Hashem is punishing the wicked.

So far, we have explained how reality itself is movement, it is being simulated by the Creator, and that there are different directions which Hashem moves us in. One should analyze the “movements” he comes across and see what kind of movement it is [i.e. if Hashem is using *midas hachessed*, the attribute of kindness, or *midas hadin*, the attribute of justice etc.].

4c) Bonding With The Creator Through The Movement of the “Neshamah”

We have defined so far that our reality is entirely a force of movement, and its Simulator is the Creator. The next step is to see: What is the purpose of a particular movement?

This is all explained at length in the *sefarim* of the Ramchal, who explained that the ultimate purpose of the entire Creation is “to reveal the oneness of G-d”. The Ramchal explains that the entire universe moves towards this one direction alone: the revelation of the Creator upon everything. This is the purpose of all the “movements” in Creation.

This is the “*Neshamah*” level in bonding with the Creator through movement: to recognize that all of reality is movement, it is being conducted by the Creator, and the purpose of all of these movements is to reveal His oneness upon the universe.

4d) Bonding With The Creator Through The Movement of “Chayah”

Earlier, when we explained the “*Chayah*” level of the first stage of *hisbodedus*, revealing the self, via movement, we explained that it is for one to understand that he is a being who receives *chiyus* (vitality) from his very movements. The stage after that was to bond with the Creator through the *Chayah* level of the soul, which is to derive vitality from the fact that we are being led and conducted by the Creator.

In the first stage, a person learns how to feel more alive from his very movements, for the purpose of developing his own private self. Since the focus in this stage is on the “I”, a person in this stage will have the understanding that it is his own “I” which gets him moving. It is a stage where one feels vitality from the fact that “I am the one who motivates myself.”

But in the next stage, bonding with the Creator, one must identify that his movements are being conducted by the **Creator**. Here, one receives vitality from a sense of self-nullification, a realization that “I” am not the motivating force of my own movements. Rather, the Creation, in His infiniteness, is the One who conducts all of my movements. The *chiyus* here is derived from the fact that **I am totally nullified to the Creator, for He leads me.**

Moshe Rabbeinu is called the “faithful shepherd.”^[13] A shepherd’s entire role is to lead and direct the flock. In the same way, Moshe led the entire Jewish people. It would seem that he was leading us due to his own power. But Moshe Rabbeinu is also called “trustworthy servant”^[14], for he sensed that all movement did not come from his own power. He was not just a “servant” in the sense of not owning anything for himself, but a “servant” in a manner of the soul, of being totally nullified to Hashem – meaning, he senses that his entire power to lead was not coming from himself, but from Hashem.

Moshe was leading the nation, but the “*Shechinah* spoke from his throat”, so who was truly leading the nation? Hashem! When one has the perspective that “Moshe” can lead the nation, this is really the perspective that comes from the “I”. But when one is aware that Moshe’s power to lead is entirely that the “*Shechinah* spoke from his throat”, he is aware that it is the Creator Who leads the nation.

A person may feel more energized from his movements, in the same way that a child becomes excited from running, without recognizing that it is the Creator Who is moving him. He experiences the movement purely as movement, without attributing the Creator as its source. But when one

reaches the inner understanding, the deep point in the soul, that man's movements are entirely conducted by the Creator – and along with this, he also feels a vitality from these kinds of movements – he is living from the Creator's movements of him.

Compare this to the following parable. A father takes his child and enables him to jump up and down, holding him strong so that the child can jump high. If the child would be jumping on his own, without the father's support, it would be with far less excitement. The child feels excited from the fact that his father is enabling him to jump.

This parable does not fully illustrate the lesson we are trying to convey here. In the depth of the soul, one can feel, "Like an infant on his mother's lap", [15] to feel alive from bond with the Creator. When one feels that his movements come from the Creator, there is certain pleasure that can be felt in this.

When we explained the level of "Neshamah" level of bonding with the Creator through movement, we defined it as being aware of the purpose of a movement, and that the purpose of each movement is the revelation of the oneness of Hashem. But in the "Chayah" level of bonding with the Creator, we are not focusing on the purpose of all movements; rather we are focusing on the fact that Hashem is causing me to move, and, as a result, we feel certain vitality from this awareness.

Understandably, in order to feel *chiyus* from the fact that Hashem is allowing all of your movements, you first need to have a feeling towards Hashem "as an infant on his mother's lap", or like a child riding on his father. The deeper of this feeling one has, the more he can revel in his movements when he is aware that they are all being allowed by the Creator of the world. Accordingly, the less a person is deriving vitality from his bond with the Creator in the first place, the less he will feel vitality from his movements even if he knows that they are empowered by Hashem.

4e) Bonding With The Creator Through The Movement of "Yechidah"

Earlier in this chapter, when we explained the first stage in *hisbodedus*, of revealing the self, we defined the "Yechidah" in terms of understanding "something and its opposite" (*dovor v'hipucho*). The *Chayah* level of our soul is within our movements, whereas the *Yechidah* level of the soul is the mode of non-movement. When we can understand something and its opposite, we can then understand what the absolute level of movement is.

In the stage of revealing the self (through movement), we explained that we cannot fully understand non-movement. This is because our entire experience of the "Yechidah" level of our soul, or our non-moving point, can only be accessed through moving from our "Chayah" level of the soul towards the *Yechidah* level of the soul, then from the *Yechidah* back to *Chayah*, and repeating the cycle. Therefore, our entire understanding of the "Yechidah" part of our soul is always viewed, on some subtle level, through a perspective that is within movement.

The unmoving Reality which exists – to use a borrowed terminology, for lack of a better description – is the existence of the Creator. All of the creations, in contrast, are in movement, and even more so, their very existence is a force of movement. The *EinSof* (Infinite) of our Blessed Creator has no physical properties, and there is no physical resemblance of Him. Even the spiritual form of our physicality – the inner makeup of man, which is called *Adam Kadmon* (Supernal Man), is in the category of movement. Thus, when we say that the Infinite has no resemblance in the physical, we mean that the Creator does not exist as a moving reality, but as a non-moving Reality.

A human being is imperfect, and he moves from completion, to incompleteness, then back to completion, etc., in a cycle. In contrast, the Infinite of the Creator is complete, with no "movement",

as it were – for movement implies that there is something here which needs to become complete, and this cannot apply to the Creator, Who is already complete.

Thus, if we are coming to reveal the non-moving point in our soul, the absolute non-movement is only in the light of the Infinite. All created beings are a force of movement, and only the Infinite of the Creator is, so to speak, non-moving. So, **if we want to reveal the non-moving point, the only way is to reveal the light of the Infinite.**

There are two stages to this. The first stage is to reveal the “*Yechidah*” level of the soul for the purpose of bonding with the Creator, which is the current, intermediate stage that we are explaining. The higher, deeper stage is to reveal the Infinite - for that very purpose, and for no other reason.

Let us reflect about these two stages: The stage of bonding with the Creator through the “*Yechidah*” level of the soul, and then the stage of revealing the light of the Infinite.

The first stage, revealing the “*Yechidah*” level of our soul in our bond with the Creator, is a kind of movement. There is my “I”, there is the Infinite of the Creator, and there is the bond between. This parallels the concept of, “The Holy Blessed One, Yisrael, and the Torah, are one.” There is the Jewish people and the Creator, and the point that connects them together is the holy Torah. We relate to this as “three” different points – Hashem, the Jewish people, and the Torah. Clearly, a system of “three” points is within the perspective of movement, for if there would only be one point, there is no movement. One point will not move, whereas three points will involve movement.

Thus, when bonding with the Creator through the “movement” of the “*Yechidah*” level of the soul, there is an “I” – otherwise known as my “*Chayah*” point of the soul – “I” am being moved by the Creator, and I move to form a bond with the Creator. There, I reach the level of absolute non-movement, as it were, since the Infinite is absolute non-movement. Then I can return from non-movement into the mode of movement, and vice versa, in a cycle.

5. In Summary of the Three Applications of Movement Through The *Yechidah*

In order to better understand these definitions, let us establish the single definition of the three different perspectives we explained so far which involved the “*Yechidah*” level of the soul, one by one:

1- Revealing the “*Yechidah*”, In Relation To Revealing the Self: In this level, I perceive my existence as my very “I”, and even in the “*Yechidah*” level of the soul, I perceive movement in terms of moving back and forth between my “*Chayah*” and “*Yechidah*” levels of the soul. This is not the total level of non-movement [because it is about my “I”].

2- Revealing The “*Yechidah*”, In Relation To Revealing My Bond With The Creator: In this level, to touch upon my *Yechidah* level of the soul means for me that I am touching upon the light of the Infinite (the ohr EinSof). Although I am relating to this Infinite Light from a perspective of movement, I am still somewhat “touching” upon a level (a spiritual light – the light of the Infinite) where there is no movement.

3- Revealing The “*Yechidah*”, In Relation To Revealing The Creator (Within The Presence of Created Being) – In this level, there is no identification with my “I”, for when the light of the Infinite Light is truly revealed to a person, it is not in relation to his “I”. It is a state where a person receives the spiritual light in which there is no movement at all. Although a person after reaching this state will still be returning to his “I” afterwards, this does not mean that he reached the light of the Infinite from any attempt to “move” towards it [rather, he has reached it because he has touched upon the point where there is non-movement].

Now we will review the above three definitions in detail, for they are each very subtle points of the soul.

[5a: Revealing The Yechidah - In Order To Reveal The Self]

Revealing the *Yechidah* level of the soul, for the purpose of revealing the self, contains *dovor v'hipucho*, a "thing and its opposite", because it incorporates both the concepts of movement and non-movement. However, it is all within the "I".

We can try to understand this with the following illustration from our physical world. Sometimes a person is walking, and sometimes a person is standing. But even when a person is standing, he is essentially a walking being. He is only "standing" with regards to the fact that he isn't walking. Even when one is standing still, he perceives his "I" as a moving force, for he knows that he is capable of movement. I connect outward to anything by moving towards it, and whatever I receive is all within my movement. Even if I am resting and I am totally still, it is only a rest with regards to movement - the fact that I am currently not moving. We see rest (*menuchah*) as a way to rest from movement, and this is not the true level of rest (*menuchah*).

This is why, when we are at the stage of revealing the self through the movement of *Yechidah*, it contains *dovor v'hipucho* - "a thing and its opposite". The *Yechidah* is the total opposite of the concept of movement, which means that the non-movement of the *Yechidah* [when it comes to revealing the self] is only in relation to movement.

Compare this to the difference between a person who is not walking, because he is standing, with a person who is not walking because he is paralyzed. They are both standing still, but we can we see that their stillness is on the same level? Certainly, the person who isn't paralyzed is only being still for the moment, whereas the paralyzed person is still because that is his natural state.

[5b: Revealing The Yechidah - To Bond With the Creator]

In the next level of *hisbodedus*, a person reveals the *Yechidah* for the purpose of bonding with the Creator. How can I connect with my Creator? From within my movements. But what is it that I am connecting with? To the light of the Infinite, which is non-moving.

This is the difference between the first and second stages when connecting to the point of non-movement. In the first stage, I am connecting to non-movement for the purpose of better understanding movement. This involves a "thing and its opposite", for in this stage, there is both the aspect of movement as well as non-movement. The non-movement here is only with regards to movement, and therefore, it is not the complete level of non-movement. In the higher stage, though, which is to connect to the Creator through the *Yechidah* level of the soul, I am connecting to a point that is non-moving, but I am not doing so through moving towards it. The light itself which I connecting with is a non-moving light, but my tool to get there is by way of movement.

[5c: Revealing the Yechidah - To Reveal The Infinite]

In this highest level, a person is not focusing on revealing his bond with the Creator. Instead, he is interested in one thing alone: to reveal the very reality of the Infinite, as it were. Here, a person has no sense of self. All he feels is the reality and presence of the Creator, the Infinite, Blessed is He - alone.

Here, a person is not connecting to the *Yechidah* level through movement - which would be through his "I" - because if he is trying to connect to there from his "I", he is "moving" from the *Chayah* level in the soul to the *Yechidah* level of the soul, and his entire connection would come about through a

mode of movement. Since the definition of recognizing the reality and presence of the Creator is not in relation to the self, the power to connect to this reality is not through the “I” at all. And since it is not a connection brought about by the “I”, the spiritual light which one can receive from this level is from a plane of non-movement. Hence, the only way to connect to this place is through a mode of non-movement.

6. “It’s Not About Me”

This is a matter which requires explanation, for we have defined the final level as a level that has no relation to the self of a person, but on the other hand, how can we ignore our own sense of self, when it is ultimately our *self* which must perceive and *feel* the light of the Infinite?

Thus, it is upon us to understand if this level is reached through our “I” or if there is “no I” here. In other words: We need to know when something is in the category of our “I”, and when something is in the category of “no I”.

The understanding of this matter is as follows. When I have a sense of self, of my “I”, and I am revealing any of the various levels, the definition is that I am revealing that level within the self, my “I”. Meaning, when I feel my bond with my Creator, I am feeling my Creator in relation to myself. But if I am only sensing my Creator without a sense for myself, on one hand, there is definitely an “I” here, because otherwise, there is no “I” here to feel anything; but on the other hand, this can be defined as a state where there is “no I” [for I am only feeling the presence of the Creator with no sense about myself.]

The more that a person purifies himself internally, the less he focuses on his sense of self, on his I, whereas the less purified he is, the more he identifies with the I, and he will not be able to go beyond the level of his personal bond with the Creator to the higher level - which is *reveal* the Creator, alone.

7. The “I” Is A Garment of the Infinite Light

While presenting these lessons, a question arose from one of the listeners in the audience: If the highest level is absolute non-movement, and it is reached through touching upon the point in the soul where there is non-movement, how then is it possible for us to define this is something we can “feel”, since feeling is an example of movement?

The answer to this is in the same way we can understand that a person can perceive that he exists, not because of any movement or feeling, but simply because he has the ability to perceive himself. Therefore, we use the word “feel” or “sense” simply because we have no better way of expressing this point. We can compare it to the ability in a person to sense his own existence, which is not due to any feeling per se, and not because he sees himself as a moving force. This is also the source of the ability of a person to sense the Infinite.

When one senses his existence, this does not elicit any movement from him, except if he is feeling his ego, which is connected to movement. The very sensing of your own reality, however, is unmoving, and it does not elicit any movement - for it is already built from within itself.

However, when a person senses the revelation of the light of the Infinite [the presence of the Creator], his very self becomes turned into movement. Let us explain how this works.

If we have a totally superficial perspective, we do not define man as a being of non-movement, but as a moving being. This perspective would be applicable to a person who has never revealed the light of the Infinite within him. But if a person has revealed the light of the Infinite, his very essence becomes that of movement, because as soon as he integrates himself into the light of the Infinite, he does not

feel any sense of self, and in that state, he reveals the state in which his entire existence is that of movement.

As long as a person views non-movement as the deepest point he can reach, he cannot reveal the state where he perceives his very existence as movement. When he can feel that his very existence as movement? The moment he reveals the light of the Infinite, he reveals that his "I" is but a "garment" of this Infinite Light - his "I" will sometimes be sensed, and sometimes it will not, so he has become an existence of movement.

This is the depth of what we explained in the beginning of this chapter, that it is the inner work of man to perceive his very existence as movement.

We first explained the difference between before the sin and after the sin. When we perceive movement within reality but we do not attribute movement as the very force of reality, this is the perspective of "after the sin", and when we perceive all of reality as being movement, this is the perspective of "before the sin".

Now we have just clarified that as long as a person has not yet reached the light of the Infinite, the deepest point he can feel in his soul is his very "I", and he will feel it constantly, and he will view "non-movement" as the very "I". In his perspective, he is a reality of non-movement, so he still has not yet perceived that his very reality is movement. He views himself as a being of non-movement, and he views movement only as a garment atop his very "I". But when a person reveals within him the light of the Infinite, he will sometimes feel the "I", and he will sometimes not feel it; as a result, he reveals his very "I" as non-movement, and he will then be able to view the very reality of all of Creation as movement.

[In Conclusion]

These words are very subtle and very deep. It is difficult to understand them at first glance and it requires a lot of thinking, until a person gets used to hearing or reading material of this sort. A person will have to review this chapter several times and then think and reflect about the material here, in order to understand the depth of the words.

It has been explained here that we need to view our very reality as a "garment" of the light of the Infinite, and not simply as a "reality" per se. Pharaoh thought he was a god, and the depth of his attitude was because he thought he is a being of non-movement. He thought that he had reached his very "I" and that he had discovered the very final point to reach, which he thought was the point of non-movement. When a person reaches the depth of the Infinite Light that is within him, he perceives his existence as a garment for the Infinite Light, whereupon he becomes an existence of movement. He can then understand and perceive his very reality and existence as being a force of movement.

Since there is a rule that "the end is contained in the beginning", we can learn that the endpoint of the soul, the "*Yechidah*", is really rooted in the perspective contained in the elementary level of the soul, the "*Nefesh*". When we explained the *Nefesh* level of the soul in regards to how we perceive movement, we explained that it means to perceive our reality as movement, and that this is the secret of the matter of Mashiach, who is also the most secret level of the *Yechidah*. The *Nefesh* level of the soul is rooted in the *Yechidah* level of the soul, because the *Nefesh* can only perceive our reality as movement if it has the perspective of the *Yechidah*, which is to view our reality as a garment of the light of the Infinite.

As long as we view ourselves as nothing but a "reality" that is not connected with the reality of the Infinite Light, we view our very essence as non-movement and we view movement as just another

force that plays a role in Creation. But when we perceive our reality as a garment for the Infinite Light, our soul will then sometimes feel a sense of self and sometimes it will not feel any sense of self. In that level, we become movement, which we are – and then we will perceive our very reality as movement.

May we all merit, with Hashem's help, to integrate ourselves with the Creator, completely.

[\[1\]](#) Berachos 43b

[\[2\]](#) Sanhedrin 93b

[\[3\]](#) Eichah 4:20

[\[4\]](#) Editor's Note: A source for this concept is in sefer Adir B'Marom of the Ramchal.

[\[5\]](#) Eichah 4:20

[\[6\]](#) Beraishis Rabbah 1:1

[\[7\]](#) Editor's Note: To give a brief description, there are four "worlds", or dimensions of existence, which are each parallel to the levels in the soul: "Asiyah" (lit. "Action", the level of deed), which corresponds to the Nefesh level of the soul (and our current initial mode of existence); "Yetzirah" (lit. "Formation", which also corresponds to middos, character traits and emotions), which corresponds to the Ruach level of the soul (this was the level of Adam in Gan Eden); "Beriah" (lit. "Creation", corresponding to thought), which corresponds to the Neshamah level of the soul; and "Atzilus" (lit. "Emanation", corresponding to life-source and closeness with G-d), which corresponds to the Chayah level of the soul. (A fifth, higher dimension than this is "Adam Kadmon", (Primordial Man), the sublime state of total integration with G-d, which corresponds to the "Yechidah" level of the soul).

[\[8\]](#) Bava Basra 117a

[\[9\]](#) Zohar Beraishis 83a

[\[10\]](#) Eichah 4:20

[\[11\]](#) Megillah 14a

[\[12\]](#) Pesachim 88b

[13] Zohar Beraishis 106a

[14] Bamidbar 12:7

[15] Tehillim 131:2

Source: <https://bilvavi.net/english/torah-way-enlightenment-017-bonding-creator-through-scent-movement>