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## Corona - Revealing Your Individuality

### ***The First Redemption Was About The Collective, The Final Redemption Is About The Individual***

The Gemara says that “If there is a plague in the city, bring your feet inside the house” which the Gemara brings from the verse “Go my nation, come into your rooms, close the doors behind you.”

It is known that the Sages state that the final redemption will be like the first redemption. Just as there were miracles and wonders when we left Egypt, so will there be miracles and wonders in the final redemption. The Baal HaTurim says that just as in Egypt we left with chaburos (groups) to bring the korban pesach, so this will also happen in the time of the final redemption.

Note carefully that the Baal HaTurim’s words are that the final redemption will be “similar” to the first redemption, not exactly the same. The difference is that in the first redemption, when we left Egypt, the korban pesach could only be done in chaburos, with groups of families or with others who join- it was not brought by a yachid (individual). But in the final redemption, there will not be chaburos. Instead, each person as an individual will bring the korban.

The verse “Come into your rooms” implies that the final redemption will not only require us to be secluded in our homes, but in our rooms, which is more private. A chabura can eat the korban pesach in the house because the house isn’t yet the most private place possible and therefore groups of people may be found there. But in your room, there is utter privacy, with no other people there, where no chaburos may enter. Because the room is a place for the individual to be alone in privately. That is the implication of the words of the verse “Come into your rooms.” Don’t just enter into your homes, seclude yourself in your room and reveal your holy individuality there.

A prime example of this was the Beis HaMikdash. There was the Har HaBayis, the Ezras Nashim, the Ezras Yisrael, the Ezras Kohanim, where all people were allowed. The innermost room was the Kodosh Kodashim where only one person was allowed, on one day of the year, where one stands before Hashem. In terms of our own souls, there exists an inner place in our own soul where there can be only one person: the individual himself.

The difference between the first and last redemption is that in the first redemption there were mainly chaburos, groups of people, but in the last redemption, it is mainly each person by himself.

For everything that Hashem created, He created a corresponding power to oppose it. The Gemara says that on Tisha B’Av, Moshiach is born. On Tisha B’Av when we read Eichah, we say, “We sit

alone". At that time we are like individuals who sit alone in mourning. This is the power of individuality being revealed on the "fallen" side, on the side of devastation, which came as a result of sinning. But on that very same day, Moshiach is born! At the very time where we become individuals as a result of a ruined state, we are also able to reveal the "holy individuality", represented by Moshiach. Through revealing the power of holy individuality, one can reveal the very inner reality of life, a kind of life where a person can become a yachid, an individual.

Let us see the roots of this and then let us see how to act practically, with siyata d'shmaya.

### ***Our Essence Is To Be An Individual***

On the first day of creation there was evening and then morning- one day. At first there was Hashem alone. On the sixth day Hashem made man. Chazal explain that the angels said, "Hashem is yachid (Individual One) in Heaven and now there is a yachid (individual) down below (man)." Chazal said, "Therefore, man was created individual." The inner essence of man is to be created alone.

Man (Adam HaRishon) was originally one, and later he became two, when Adam requested a helpmate, Chavah. But in essence, he was created to be an individual. A fetus is usually born by itself, as an individual. Sometimes twins are born at once, and in Egypt it was six babies born at once. That is also why when we left Egypt we left in chaburos. But this was not our root design. At our root, each person is alone- man was created to be alone. We can exit our individuality and join with others, we can become two, just as by Egypt when we left in chaburos, but in our essence, each person is an individual.

Moshe's soul is equal to all of the souls of Klal Yisrael, and this is the power of the klal, the collective whole. The Shechinah (Hashem's Presence) resides only on Klal Yisrael, and the Gemara says that the Shechinah is present when there are 10 people. This is the power of a tzibbur, a congregation of Jews, the power of the collective whole of Klal Yisrael.

There are two different pathways which we are seeing before us now on the way to the final redemption: The power of the klal, the power of being part of a collective whole, and the power of a yachid, the power to be individual.

There is a concept of 10 and a concept of 1. The concept of 10 is that the world was created with 10 expressions, and this is reflected by what we see now since no more than 10 people are allowed in a room. That is a return to our root creation of 10. But each person also needs to be an individual now, secluded in his home. This corresponds to the concept of 1, which is the fact that man was created individual. This is the more inner approach.

As mentioned, at first man was individual, and later man gained a helpmate, Chavah. The fact that Adam exited his individuality is what led to his downfall. The Serpent saw Adam and Chavah together and became jealous of them and enticed them to sin. This was only because Adam had allowed himself to become two. Adam allowed himself to become Adam and Chavah, and Chavah communicated with the Serpent, which led to disaster.

Ever since we became infected by the "daas of the Serpent", as Chazal teach. "Yesterday you had My daas, and today you have the daas of the Serpent." This caused our power of daas (which is essentially our power of outward connection) to fall into a ruined state. When Adam later connected to Chavah (as the Torah says, "And Adam knew Chavah his wife"), his power to connect was affected by the impurity of the Serpent. And since then, whenever one connects outward with others, his power of connecting to others is affected by the Serpent.

## ***The Power of Connection***

There were times in history when we repaired the power of connection: when we left Egypt in groups; when we stood together at Har Sinai; and when we rejoiced together in the times of Purim. We re-accepted the Torah out of love for Hashem because of the miracles, which occurred since we all joined together as Esther decreed to gather all Jews together.

But, as the generations continued, especially in the times of ikvesa d'meshicha (the generations directly preceding Moshiach's arrival) and especially in our generation, the entire world uses the power of connection towards others. People became more and more centered around this social scene, with having friends, because we have a need for companionship. Chazal teach that a human being needs companionship, which is a legitimate need, ever since Adam requested a helpmate to live with. But this need for companionship became greatly exaggerated and overblown, in recent times, ever since social media and mass communication entered our lives.

It used to be that a person's social circle was very small. He had a few friends and that was it. But in recent years, with social media, a person can have a lot of friends and connections with others. A person can now be connected all the time to people. It became the total and absolute antithesis to our power to be individuals. There was never a time where people have been so connected to others, However, it is not the refined connection like when everyone stood together at Sinai to receive the Torah, and it is certainly not like the complete unity that will be in the times of Moshiach and Olam HaBa. At Har Sinai everyone was unified to hear Hashem. But in our times people are very connected to people through social media and one feels their entire sense of existence through their connection with others. One doesn't have any individuality.

We are not even speaking now about the actual content that's found on these social media sites. (That is the 49th level of tumah and it goes all the way until the 50th!) The entire lifestyle of Creation today has become a lifestyle of connecting to others and communicating with others. If someone uses this power of companionship for kedushah, he connects to Hashem and realizes that Hashem is his true companion. But today this power of companionship is generally not being used for kedushah, it is instead found in the 49th level of tumah, and even at the bottom of the 50th level, where people are using it in social media by feeling a sense of companionship with the whole world. Very few people have no connection to the social media, but it is the reality for the rest of the world.

This power of connecting outward to people has reached its total and absolute level. There is a concept that whenever something reaches its total and absolute level, it self-destructs. It hits its breaking point and then it is finished. The power of connection to people has reached its breaking point. Connecting to other people has now become one's very identity, to the point that many people feel that if they cannot communicate with others, they feel like there is no point to their life. Simply put, this is the shaarei maves, the gate of death. It is a kind of living that feels like death.

This overwhelming power of connection is resulting in the Creation reaching its breaking point. This destruction leads to the next stage which is our redemption. In the exodus from Egypt, we left in chaburos (groups of people joining with each other to bring a korban pesach). There was true connection between people. When our exile has reached its breaking point and we are redeemed from it, we gain true connection and true unity with others.

The Gemara says that the exodus from Egypt is only secondary to the miracles that will accompany us in the final redemption. However, this refers to the outer aspect of the exodus, where there is a holy power of connection by joining together in chaburos. Right now, people cannot be found in

groups more than 10, while with others it is not more than 2, and with those who are contaminated [by the virus] they have to be alone.

There is a rule that “the end is reflected by the beginning”. The ending period of the world is like the beginning point of the world. When we don’t reveal how the end reflects the beginning, we are left with just the end. Right now, we are at the end of the world- each person has become alone from others, separated from everyone else. It resembles death, which separates people from each other. This separation is all the lower use of the power to be alone, it is the power of alone in a state of devastation, which is even worse than the ruined state of connection when people connect too much. The ruined state of being alone resembles heresy, which is the root of serving other gods.

But to counter all of this ruination, there is also the light of kedushah which penetrates into Creation, known as the “light of Moshiach”. The original light at the beginning of Creation where man was created alone comes back again at the end. Now there is also a holy power to become alone, to return to the beginning state of man at the beginning of Creation.

Connection between people has two stages. At first, a person is drawn after his environment, as the Rambam teaches. People are easily drawn after the daas of others. Ever since Adam listened to the Serpent, after man became infected by the “daas of the Serpent”, people are drawn after the daas of others. But with the explosion of technology and communication, everyone else’s opinion is shaped by others. Because of social media, no one has their own opinion, and instead people are thinking entirely based on how others think. (Some people have their own thinking because they like to go against everyone else’s thinking.) The lifestyle of almost everyone is based on herd mentality. Most people simply buy new clothes or new tech gadgets based on what others have.

### ***Examples of Following The Crowd***

In the past decade, people are entirely following the thinking and opinions of others and people have stopped being individuals who have their own daas. Although Chazal say that each person has his own de’os (ways of thinking), people today are not thinking for themselves and instead they formulate their thinking and their behavior entirely based on how others think and behave. If others are buying something, then others want to buy it also.

As an example, vacations became much more popular in recent years. It began with the Gentiles and it slowly spread to the frum world, where people go on trips and vacations to exotic locations, just because they see others are doing it. It first affected those who were not frum and then it eventually spread to the frum and eventually even to the bnei Torah. People slowly became drawn into it, following what others are doing simply because others do it. It is “in style” because they want to be seen in a certain way by others. Of course, people try to keep it all within the boundaries of halachah with all of these vacations, but the guidelines which they make for themselves are a big compromise to their ruchniyus. It is simply in order to copy how others act.

Another example is when people walk around talking with a bluetooth in their ear. It became the style. Slowly people began copying it. A person may have all kinds of reasons why they do it and there can be all kinds of arguments if it’s the right thing or the wrong thing, if it’s right for some people and wrong for others, but that’s not the issue. It’s all being done because others do it and because people are drawn after what others are doing.

This is all the outcome of the ruined power of connection with others. It is really the power of being in a chaburah for korbon pesach that is being misused. It is a kind of chaburah that is not from chibbur-

connection, but from the word cherev-destruction, and a kind of chaburah which connotes a makkah, a wound. It is the 50th gate of tumah, which connects everyone together to a state of destruction to the 50th gate of tumah.

The “50th gate of tumah” surrounds most people in the world today. Most of the world is now in the depths of the 50th gate of tumah. Anyone connected to all of the media are buried, rachmana litzlan, in the 50th gate of tumah. But, there is a small percentage of bnei Torah who, with siyata d’shmaya, are not connected to the depths of the 50th level of tumah.

### Separating From The World and Discovering Your Individuality

However, leaving this exile does not only depend on not being connected to the innermost level of the 50th level of tumah. It also depends on the step that proceeds falling to the 50th level of tumah. People need to avoid simply following what everyone else is doing.

Now the reality has become the verse, “Go my nation, come into your rooms, close the doors behind you...” This does not only apply to those who are quarantined to their homes or who are staying home because they think they have symptoms. The inner reality behind all of this is that we are at the end, and since the end of the world is like the beginning, we are going back to the beginning state of the world where man was alone.

The words here mainly apply to bnei Torah who aren’t connected to the media, who are not connected with the 50th level of tumah. The avodah for these few bnei Torah is to re-think their life and begin life over again from the start. Access your individuality! Begin life again anew! Become an individual again, to know what your personal cheilek (share) is. Differentiate between one’s own personal cheilek and with what one has gained from others!

### ***Know how you are unique!***

In the privacy of your house, you can now discover your uniqueness, as Chazal teach, that each person has his own de’os. The personal avodah now is to clarify how you are unique from others and how no one else can do what you can do and no one else has your exact middos and your exact avodah.

### General Mesirus Nefesh vs. Private Mesirus Nefesh

At the exodus from Egypt the Jewish people separated themselves from the Egyptians through mesirus nefesh, by putting the blood of the korbon pesach by the doorpost. [The Egyptians worshipped sheep and by using the blood of the sheep on their doorpost they were angering the Egyptians and they risked being killed. But they did it anyway because they had mesirus nefesh.] Now, a person's mesirus nefesh to disconnect from the world totally and reveal his individuality, to be a yachid (individual).

At the time directly before our final redemption, every person needs to reveal his true self, his individuality, his own private mesirus nefesh. In Egypt everyone had the same mesirus nefesh, by putting the blood on the doorpost, but today the mesirus nefesh is not just to close the doors and be at home, it is to find your own individuality, to find how you are unique from all other people, to become alone, to become a yachid.

No creation is exactly similar to another, and we each have our own individuality to uncover. The verse of “Close the doors behind you” really means to enter into your heart, as the Nefesh HaChaim

says, that there is a Kodesh Kodashim in your heart. This is not just inspiration or hispaalus (emotion and amazement). That is just the first stage. It means to enter within into your individuality. To the extent that you reach your individuality and uniqueness, you can find the Yechidah in your own soul, which is called the inner "house".

During this time where the world has become alone in the external sense, there is a deep avodah for every yachid.

There was once an event of Matan Torah where we all stood together. There was the decree in the times of Purim when we were all decreed for destruction. Now when there is an epidemic, we can daven along with others, we can be together somewhat, and people can still see each other. The main factor in this mageifah (pandemic) is that we cannot be together now. This is the true mageifah! Some people are being moser nefesh to somehow be together and daven in a minyan while standing distanced from each other, and this is mesirus nefesh of a tzibbur. And that is one part of showing mesirus nefesh which is mesirus nefesh on the level of the tzibbur.

It cannot be emphasized enough that the main part of how we will be saved from this mageifah will not come through being together (though some are being moser nefesh to daven together anyway, and there is certainly a place for this). The main point now is for each person to become a yachid and to reveal his own, private mesirus nefesh.

When Hashem sent the prophet Yonah to get the people of Ninveh to do teshuvah, they all needed to daven together and reveal mesirus nefesh on the level of a tzibbur (congregation). But today, every yachid has to call out to Hashem from his own individuality, to call out to Hashem from his own inner place in his soul, to call out from his own private "yachid" in himself, to call out from his own place. Each person has to call out, according to his heart, according to how much he recognizes G-dliness. There is a verse, "All who call out to you in truth", and that is one level of closeness to Hashem, where the general tzibbur is calling to Hashem. But there is also a deeper and more inner level, the level of calling out to Hashem that must come from the innermost place of the heart of each yachid.

The final redemption depends on each individual calling out to Hashem come from the innermost place of their heart.

### ***Now Is The Time To Access Your Innermost Level of Closeness To Hashem***

Chazal say that in the future, Hashem will make a machol (a circle) for the tzaddikim and Hashem will be in the center, and each one will point with his finger to Hashem and say, "This is G-d that I hoped for". They will all be connected together. But they are pointing with their finger, and a finger is only a part of the body. The Gemara says that not every finger is equal. So each person will also will have his own recognition of Hashem.

If a person lived his life in the 50th level of tumah, it will chas v'shalom be like the words of the Gemara in Rosh HaShanah that those who are not worthy will become "the dust under the feet of tzaddikim". But, even if one lived a life of kedushah, a personal recognition of Hashem in the future will be possible only if he reached his own individuality. Copying others prevents one from reaching their own private and personal avodah.

Hashem is preparing the world where each person can become a yachid, to disconnect from media and communication, but even more so, for a person to become a yachid in the depths of his soul! From there one can connect in the depths of his soul to Hashem, from his Yechidah, which is called Yechidah l'yachdecha, a "Yechidah, to declare Your Oneness", to become a kli (vessel) for the

Individual One of the world.

One who is overwhelmingly involved with "the world" and is thinking constantly about what is happening and will happen tries to relieve his boredom through various means that are all part of the alma d'shikra, the world of falsity.

But one who lives inwardly in this time, discovering his own individuality in the privacy of his home and in his room, will merit the words of the Sefer Chovos HaLevovos that a person is able to love being alone and secluded, because in seclusion a person can connect to his innermost depths and connect on the deepest level to Hashem.

### ***In Conclusion***

May Hashem merit all of Klal Yisrael that each person should connect to Klal Yisrael at this time, to feel a deep connection to the whole of Klal Yisrael at this time, but also, and even more so, that each person should find his own individuality, to find his Yechidah, a Yechidah L'yachdecha, a "Yechidah to declare Your oneness", to find one's own uniqueness where one can recognize Hashem and be close to Hashem in his own unique way which no one else can, to find the light of Moshiach, and to merit that which is said, "And upon you, the light of Hashem shines." ■

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**Source:** <https://bilvavi.net/english/corona-revealing-your-individuality>