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[Home](#) > 48 Ways - 005 Connecting Mind & Heart

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“Sichlus Halev” - Connecting The Details And Seeing The Whole Picture

The sixth *kinyan* to acquire the Torah is called “*sichlus halev*” - the “intellect of the heart.” The *Tiferes Yisrael* explains that this means that one has to be able to explain what he learns, when he is learning Torah. What exactly is this ability?

Many Details That Make Up One Picture

Let’s say a person sees a painting. What does he see in it? Does he see the number of trees and houses in it? That is not what he is focused on. He is focused on what all the details in the picture forms - the complete picture.

What is the way that the painting of a person learning Torah is supposed to look?

The Torah is supposed to build the structure of the person. A person has a brain, heart, hands and feet. When all the parts of the person are combined together, he is a complete person. Just like we understand this concerning the physical, so can we understand that a person without a structured soul is missing the way that his life is supposed to look like. When a person’s structure looks like the true design of life, he has a connection between his the body and soul.

The Torah is not just a bunch of random details. It is one connected unit.

Let us try to explain this concept more. In *Sefiras HaOmer*, a person counts fifty days until Shavuos. Is counting the second day of the Omer just another separate detail in *Sefiras HaOmer*, or is it connected to the first day? It is connected to the first day. Many *Rishonim* write that each day of the Omer is considered all part of one mitzvah of *Sefiras HaOmer*. The Ramban even says that *Sefiras HaOmer* is the *Chol HaMoed* of *Shavuos*.

Sefiras HaOmer is not just 49 separate days - it is all one unit. They are connected through *Shavuos*, which makes them all into one.

When a person learns Torah, he sees that there are many details. There are a vast amount of *chiddushim* (original Torah thoughts) that have been produced throughout the generations. The question is: Does a person look at all these details as just “details”, or does he see how they all connect into one unit?

Sichlus HaLev - Connecting The Details

What is "*sichlus halev*"? We know that the *seichel* (intellect) is not the *lev* (heart). So what is the "*seichel*" of the "*lev*"? Furthermore we can ask, the *Mishnah* earlier listed the quality known as "*binas*" *helev* (understanding of the heart); what is this next *kinyan* that is called "*sichlus*" *halev*?

There are two abilities in a person: the ability to grasp general rules (*kelalim*), and the ability to grasp details (*pratim*). Both of these are necessary to prepare for the Torah.

Let's think: Is preparing for the Torah an intellectual matter, or is it a heart matter? It is both. Preparing for the Torah requires both our *seichel*\intellect and our *lev*\heart. These should not be two 'separate' subjects we are we strive to improve upon; rather, we should connect our mind and our heart as one. We need to have our heart connected to our mind. in order to be ready for Torah.

That is *sichlus halev* - it is the **connection** of our "intellect" to our "heart" - when we connect our mind with our heart.

The Difference Between Details and The General Whole

To give an example of the concept we are describing, when a person loves someone, does he love his personality, or does he love the person himself?

If a person loves someone else for his personality, then it can be said that he loves various "details" (*peratim*) about the other. This isn't real love, because it is based on certain random details about the person.

But if a person loves his friend simply because he loves his friend - it can be said that he loves the "general rules" (*klal*) of his friend, and this is true love.

That is *sichlus halev*; it is essentially when one's intellect is connected to his heart, because this enables one to connect details together and see the general picture.

When a person just uses his heart alone and he doesn't make use of his intellect, he loves others just in an emotional way, and thus he only connects with his emotions to another person, which is shallow. But when a person's intellect and heart are connected together, he is able to love his friend for whom he really is - it is a love that comes from a mind and heart fused together.

There are two attitudes one can have when he views people. Either a person sees "details" alone - he sees people as separate entities. Such a person will love one kind of person, but he won't love a different kind of person. His love for others is based on personal taste, which is superficial. But if a person sees how all the details connect together - which is the exact idea of "*sichlus halev*" - he sees how he must love everyone equally. And that is exactly the *mitzvah* of *Ahavas Yisrael* (to love all Jews).

Ahavas Yisrael (love of the Jewish people) is called the "*klal gadol*" (great rule) of the Torah, because in order to truly love other Jews, you shouldn't see other Jews as "details" in your life, but as rather you should view every Jew as many parts of a whole. There are 600,000 souls in the Jewish people, but they are also all connected into one.

Preparing For The Torah: Seeing Each Jew As A Part of A Greater Whole

Since *sichlus halev* (to connect our intellect with our heart) is one of the 48 ways to acquire Torah, this shows us that the way to prepare for the Torah is through connecting the 'details' as part of the 'whole'. The way to prepare for the Torah is to reveal how all of the 'parts' in the Jewish people are of one '*klal*' - parts of a general whole - and along with this, to view all of the details in Torah as being

many parts that form one *klal*.

What indeed is the "*klal*" (rule) that unifies all of the details of Creation together? That "*klal*" is our common purpose on this world, which is that we all have to reveal Hashem upon the world. Unifying all the details of Torah and the Jewish people together essentially brings the revelation of Hashem onto the world. This fact - that we must reveal Hashem upon the world - is what binds every fact in Creation together.

We must reveal Hashem in every detail in Creation. That is "*sichlus halev*" - to connect our heart with our mind, to reveal the "*klal*" through every "*prat*". To see how all the details in our life are really all part of one whole.

Connecting Our Knowledge

Every person has so much knowledge. Chazal say that even wicked people are full of *mitzvos*. But that is only through the attitude of seeing details; the details aren't necessarily connected. A person can know a lot of information, but that doesn't mean he knows how to connect all the details together.

Only through acquiring "*sichlus halev*" - to integrate our knowledge into our heart - can a person unify all the details of his knowledge together, and reveal the one *klal* that binds it all together: to reveal Hashem in Creation.

Let's say a person is learning Torah all day. He learns Chumash, Gemara and Halacha throughout the day; he is learning a lot details here, but what binds it all together? What is connecting all this knowledge together? If a person only considers the Torah to be a bunch of random details he learns and he doesn't see how the details really connect, such Torah is not the kind of Torah which was given at Har Sinai!

The Torah which was given at Sinai was a Torah of unity - as Chazal say, that each person stood together with one heart. If a person learns Torah but he can't explain it, he is lacking the quality of "*sichlus halev*".

Hashem revealed Himself at Har Sinai, and He also revealed the *Aseres Hadibros*. Why did Hashem have to reveal Himself at Har Sinai? Why couldn't He just give it to Moshe to give to us? The explanation of this is because Hashem was showing us that He is only revealed through the Torah. A person has to realize that all our learning is to reveal Hashem.

There are six orders of *Mishnayos* and over sixty *Masechtos* of Gemara, but they all reveal one thing alone: Hashem. All of the Torah is a "*mikshe achas*" - "one piece." It is all one. The 248 limbs and 365 sinews in our body parallel our 248 negative commandments and 365 mitzvos. Our whole body reflects one thing - that we live our entire existence to fulfill the Torah.

Every part in the Torah we learn is like a preface to revealing Hashem. This is the attitude to have towards each part of Torah you learn.

Connecting To Torah and To Its Giver

The way to prepare for the Torah is to connect to the One who gave it.

Some people are mistaken and think that since the main thing is to connect to Hashem, it is enough to just attempt closeness to Him without having to learn the Torah. But this is mistaken, because if Hashem gave us the Torah, this shows that the way to connect to Him is through the Torah.

But if a person takes the other extreme, and learns Torah without trying to develop a connection to Hashem through it, such learning is like the broken *Luchos* - it's a false form of Torah learning without Hashem in the picture.

The souls of the Jewish people left them when they heard Hashem's voice. If they wouldn't have been at that level of attachment to Hashem, they wouldn't have heard His voice in the first place, and their souls wouldn't have left them. This shows us that there has to first be a longing for Hashem, in order for the soul to experience His voice.

The Mind and Heart Connection

In order for one to be at the level in which his soul is leaving him out of longing for Hashem, he has to learn Torah, together with a desire to be close to Him through it. The mind and the heart must be connected.

Preparing for the Torah means that you have to be prepared to accept it. If a man wants to marry a woman, she has to accept the offer in order for the marriage to happen. If we are to receive the Torah, we need to be prepared to accept it.

"Sichlus halev" means to take all the details and connect it all into one: Hashem.

Striving Towards 'Lishmah'

The words here are really simple.

When a person only lives for himself and only for what he can get out of everything, then he learns Torah in this way also. He is all about *shelo lishmah* (ulterior motivations). But when a person learns Torah because he wants to connect to the One who is giving it, such a person has *lishmah* (pure desires) in his life.

May Hashem merit us to accept the Torah in a way that we will have *d'veykus* in Him - and not simply from a desire to take it all for ourselves.