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Two Stages Of Understanding - Picture and Intellect

The Faculties of the Mind

To continue our discussion about the thoughts, we will give a basic introduction – the makeup of the human mind, as described by Chazal and our *sefarim hakedoshim*.

The Gemara^[1] describes the physical makeup of the brain. The Ramban^[2] writes that there are four compartments within the brain\mind: *Machshavah* (thought), *Zoicher* (memory), *Binah* (contemplation) and *Daas* (knowledge).

Generally speaking, the mind is divided into three parts: *Chochmah*, *Binah* and *Daas*. These three functions of the mind are written explicitly in the Torah of Betzalel when he made the Mishkan (Shemos 31:3), “*And I will fill him with a G-dly spirit, with wisdom, understanding and knowledge.*”

That is the general description of the mind.

To be even more specific, the Vilna Gaon writes of seventy forces that describe more clearly the mind. He writes that there are actually five different parts to our thoughts: imagination (*medameh*), combining information (*markiv*), protecting the information (*shomer*), thinking (*choishev*) and memory (*zoicher*).

How does a person’s thinking process work? Your imagination first pictures a concept. This information then gets combined together. Then it gets retained (“*shoimer*”), and then it is thought about. Finally it is remembered (“*zoicher*”). These are the five forces of the mind that make up the

thinking process.

In addition to the actual thinking process, there are more factors that affect how one thinks. There are five senses which are part of the brain, and there are also “thirty-two pathways of wisdom” which come from the brain. In addition, to this, there are also seven pipes which come from the brain.[\[3\]](#)

This is the general description of the mind and its abilities, brought in the words of our *sefarim hakedoshim*. There are many more details, but we have said what the roots are.

The Difference Between Thought and Imagination

Let us return to the purpose of this discussion. The Vilna Gaon writes that there are five parts to the thinking process: imagination, combining the information, protecting the information, thought, and memory.

Generally speaking, these five parts of our mind are split up into two parts: our thoughts and our imagination. What is the difference between our real thoughts and what we imagine? That is what we must try to understand.

When a person learns, there are two possibilities how he understands something: either through his thoughts, which are from his intellect, or through picturing it, which comes from his imagination. We will first speak about this in a simple way and then we will deepen the discussion.

When a person learns, he reads letters. For example, when he reads the word *Beraishis*, he sees a word combined of six letters. He uses his intellect to understand that *Beraishis* means the beginning of creation.

How does one remember this? Does he remember what it means because he remembers the letters, or does he remember the letters by remembering what it means? What causes one to remember something?

Sometimes a person doesn't understand what he reads and thus he only remembers the letters of the words. For example, a child can be tested on *Mishnayos* by heart and repeat it word for word, even though he never learned it. He doesn't understand its content and only knows the words. How is he able to remember it? He obviously doesn't remember it based on his intellect, because he doesn't understand it. He only remembers it based on a certain picture he has formed in his head.

So we can see that there are two ways to remember something – either through really remembering it, or through “protecting” the information. They are not the same thing. A person uses his memory for something he understood, and a person uses his power to retain the information on something he pictured\imagined.

We are used to thinking that imagination is only when we have a dream at night, or in a more extreme case, to daydream. Actually, all of us daydream, and the only question is how much.

But on a more subtle understanding, imagination is also a way we perceive something. This is when we picture something. Without being able to picture something we wouldn't be able to imagine.

In our soul, there are two ways how we perceive something: either through intellectualizing it or picturing it.

To give an example of this, Chazal^[4] give two meanings for the term “beautiful woman.” One meaning given is that she behaves beautifully, and the other meaning is that she is physically beautiful. The first meaning is through the lens of intellect, while the second meaning is through the lens of picture\imagination.

Another example is evil desires. All evil desires that a person has comes from his ability to picture something, and they do not come from one's intellect. The intellect of a person can't have a desire. Chazal say, “The eye sees, the heart desires, and the active tools in the body completes the act.” Sin begins with the eyes' power of sight. What does the eye see? If the eyes would see intellectual information, the heart and the rest of the body would not follow suit. The eye sees a certain image and it remembers the image, with no intellectual information involved.

The intellect sees only wisdom, while the eyes see a picture. The real power of memory in a person is only what he has seen with his thoughts and intellect; the *Chovos HaLevovos* calls this “the eyes of the intellect.”

However, sometimes a person sees something through his intellect and is able to remember it based on the ability to picture it, and sometimes what a person sees with his physical eyes can be remembered through his intellect.

Beginning To Grasp Information

Based On Intellect Or Picture

Whatever a person perceives, there are always one of these two ways how he perceives it: either through his imagination (which the mind is able to protect and hold on to), or through his thoughts (which are stored through one's memory).

When a person sees something, it enters his mind as a picture. If a person just visualizes what he saw and thinks that this is the essence of what he is seeing, he is thinking about it through his imagination; he isn't really thinking about the actual essence of what he sees, just how it appears. But when a person uses his real power of thought, he sees something in front of it in an intellectual way; he sees information here.

This brings out the difference between a Torah scholar and an ignoramus. A Torah scholar views through his eyes based on his intellect; what he sees in front of him is perceived through his actual thoughts. An ignoramus only sees something as it is, a picture; no intellect is involved in his perception.

This is the question we must ask ourselves: how do we first grasp information - through intellectualizing it, or through picturing it?

If a person begins to grasp information by first picturing it, on one hand he receives information, but on the other hand, he is understanding it only superficially. But if a person first understands something using his intellect, he begins to understand it, slowly. Thought doesn't come so fast; ever since Adam sinned, a thought only comes slowly. But when the thought is understood, it is the real, deep perception of something

There are people who grasp things very quickly, but their understanding is superficial. There are people who need more time to grasp something, but when they finally understand it, they have the inner perception.

So there are two inner forces in our understanding of anything we see. The question is, in our own learning, which of them do we use to learn with first? When a person is reading a *possuk* in Chumash,

or a Mishnah or a Gemara, is he reading it based on his intellect or how he is picturing the information?

Of course, it is possible that a person can go from his intellect to picture something, and he can also arrive at the intellectual understanding of it by picturing it. We are not speaking about someone who doesn't understand at all what he reads. We are speaking about someone who can understand; when he first learns it, how does he grasp it – through the power of intellect, or the power of picture? It is a very deep question that one has to ask himself.

A child tends to follow his imagination; a child doesn't naturally use his power of thought. The power of thought in a person is more subtle, while imagination is a more base kind of power. When a person is young and immature, he tends to be more materialistic, so he is closer to imagination than to thought. People are therefore naturally inclined to follow the understanding of their imagination – their ability to picture something – rather than to listen to their thoughts.

We can see this clearly from children. A child loves pictures. He wants something as soon as he sees it in front of him; he doesn't think into what's behind it, he just sees the picture in front of him and wants it.

People start out in their life using their imagination to understand something, and they do not naturally follow the intellect. What happens when a person gets older and he begins to learn Torah and enter the world of the intellect? Does he only know how to picture something in his mind, or does he ever think into what he sees?

We are not talking about someone who doesn't learn and never thinks deeply. We are speaking about who does learn in-depth; each to his own. In the beginning of the winter season in yeshiva, someone sits down to learn a *masechta*. Is he learning it through his intellect or through picturing it?

To give an example, let's say a *yeshiva bochur* is sitting and learning, and sometimes he learns by himself and listens to a recorded *shiur*. When he listens to the *shiur*, he is just listening, but he isn't learning. When he is learning, he is reading the Gemara. When he reads the Gemara, he sees letters in front of him, but when he hears a *shiur*, he doesn't see anything in front of him; he is just receiving thoughts. The question is: what does he find easier – to read the Gemara (which involves his imagination), or to listen to a *shiur* (which involved his thought)?

Another similar scenario: a person is sitting and listening to a *shiur*. Is he looking at the *Rebbi* who is giving the *shiur*, or would he rather listen to the tape? Some people are stronger with their sense of vision and gain more from seeing the *Rebbi* give the *shiur*, while some are stronger in their sense of hearing and gain more from listening to the recording.

There are people who need to look at the person talking to them in order to concentrate on what the person is saying. What is the reason for this? It is really because such people have a hard time just using their intellect to grasp what they're hearing. They need to see the person talking, because this gives them some kind of "picture." They need a "picture" in order to understand something.

When a person understands something based on picturing it, he needs to have the page of Gemara in front of him in order to learn. But if a person uses his intellect to understand something, he doesn't need the Gemara to be in front of him in order to think, because he is able to enter the information wherever he is. A more thinking person would rather listen to a *shiur* than read a Gemara - not because hearing the *shiur* clarifies the *sugya* more than when he reads the Gemara. Even if he is able to repeat the Gemara word for word, he's rather hear about it then read it.

Others, by contrast, would rather read Gemara than listen to a *shiur* on it, because he feels that he remembers it better when he reads it. This is not because he verbalizes what he reads, but it is because seeing the actual words of the Gemara helps him remember it better than hearing a *shiur* on it. This is because he mainly understands something based on picturing it, which uses the power of *shoimer* (protecting the information).

So there are two kinds of ways how people understand something. People who need to give a concept a certain picture in order to understand it are the type to see someone walking by them and wonder, "This person looks like someone else I know." He looks at every person who walks by him and thinks how each person he sees is similar looking to someone else he knows. When he sees a baby, he immediately analyzes if the baby looks like his father or mother.

This is really because such a person bases his understanding on how he can picture something. He limits his intellect to whatever he can picture.

He also combines different pictures in his mind in order to be able to understand something; this is called *markiv*, which is a power in the mind that combines one imagination to another imagination.

Let us repeat that it is impossible to have intellect without picture or to have picture without intellect. These are two forces which we all need to make use of, just each person relates to them differently. The more desirable kind of thinking we should have is to understand something based on our intellect, not on how well we can picture it. On a deeper note, before the sin of Adam the natural perception was intellect before picture, and after the sin, this became altered and now the natural perception is picture before intellect.

Real Memory Is Not Used For Imagination

There are two ways how one's mind holds onto information; one is called protection of the information (*shoimer*) and the other is remembering the information (*zoicher*). In the beginning of this chapter, we brought the words of the Vilna Gaon that a person's imagination is stored in his mind's ability to protect, while a person's thoughts are stored in one's memory. They are two different ways to hold onto information; the power of memory is not what holds onto imagination -- memory is only used to remember a person's real thoughts.

Only memory can enable a person to become close to Hashem, because it stores the real thoughts of a person. A person who only sees through being able to picture something is seeing based on his imagination, which will not necessarily bring him close to Hashem.

How do we see this?

Before Adam sinned, a person would think of a fact and then remember it, and the thought was stored in the mind through the power of memory (*zoicher*). After the sin, the order changed: imagination precedes thought. This we can see from the fact that Chavah desired the tree because she "saw" that it was good; in other words, first she pictured it, and only after that did she think about it.

When a person acts upon a picture he saw, this can be a cause for sin. The Jewish people sinned with the Golden Calf because they saw a picture of Moshe's coffin in the sky. When a person's thinking is based on picture\imagination, such thinking is off.

These are two abilities we make use of in our soul: picturing something, which uses our power of *shoimer* (protection), and thought, which uses our power of *zoicher* (memory).

The ideal situation is to have both of these - "*Remember and keep the Shabbos.*" But since in our times this is not possible, we need to make sure that whatever we are picturing is based on our thoughts, and not the other way around. We need to ask ourselves how we are thinking.

Sometimes we can use our power of imagination to reach a real thought, such as seeing *tzitzis*. Chazal say that seeing *tzitzis* (with techeiles) reminds a person of the blue color of the sky, which reminds a person of the *kisei hakavod*^[5]. Here a person uses the power to picture something to arrive at a certain reality that exists.

But with learning Torah, a person can't base his thinking on a picture. To act based upon a picture is the kind of thinking that came after Adam's sin; if a person learns based on how he pictures a fact, he

is connecting all his knowledge in Torah to that state. Such learning will not allow a person to really understand the depth of the Torah.

When a person learns Torah based on his ability of picture, even if he thinks about the facts afterward in an intellectual way, his whole thinking is tied to the picture he thought of before; the thinking becomes narrowed to fit the picture he has formed in his head.

But if a person gets used to first understanding something on an intellectual level and only after that to picture it, he will be able to reach the inner understanding of the Torah he learns.

Having Time To Think

Now that we have explained the roots of this discussion, we can give many simple examples that make this concept practical.

There are people who learn Torah a lot and can always be seen with a sefer in their hand; wherever they go, they take a sefer with them and always learn from it diligently. Such people are thinking based on their ability of *shoimer*, not their ability of *zoicher*. They need to have something to picture in front of them in order to be able to think.

Reb Yeruchem Levovitz zt"l said a very sharp statement once: "Nothing comes from a *masmid*." Why? The reason behind his statement is because if a person just reads Gemara a lot but he never thinks, he doesn't grow in his learning.

By contrast, someone who thinks based on his ability of *zoicher* and not on his ability of *shoimer* doesn't just read the Gemara, he thinks into it. This doesn't mean he never reads any *sefarim*; he does, but he doesn't base his thinking upon his ability to read. He is more concerned about seeing the intellect behind what he learns. His whole day revolves around real thinking.

Recently, new organizations have come up with Torah tapes to listen to whenever a person is on the go. When Rav Shlomo Wolbe zt"l heard about this, he remarked, "It used to be that people would think as they traveled, but now, no one will ever think again."

There are two points contained in this. Firstly, the problem is that a person reads when he could have been listening; listening makes you think more than when you read. The second problem is that people don't think on their own.

It all boils down to this: Is a person always reading Torah, or does he have any time to himself to think and reflect on his own?

This is not an issue about how to act. What we are saying is that it's not enough to learn - a person has to think also. In the words of this chapter, we are explaining the concept in terms of two different abilities in our soul. When a person always reads *sefarim* but he never thinks, his thinking is based on his ability of *shoimer*; but if a person bases his thinking on *zoicher*, he finds time to think by himself.

Of course, a person can't just think on his own without using something to stir on his thoughts. We aren't philosophers, nor are we Avraham Avinu who was able to reflect and conclude on his own that there is a Creator. We need to read something in order to think about it - we need to see the letters of a word, which are a kind of picture. But we are just trying to describe an ability in a person in which not all his thinking comes from what he pictures.

Reviewing By Heart Vs. Reviewing *Shakla V'tarya*

Throughout the generations, there are different methods to learn which have always been accepted and given over to us by our teachers.

When learning *Mishnayos*, the method is to remember the letters and words; for this reason, children are trained to memorize *Mishnayos* by heart. Gemara - Talmud Bavli - works differently. With Gemara, the method of our teachers, which is also brought in the name of the Vilna Gaon, is not to remember each word by heart, but rather to remember the *shakla v'tarya* - the back-and-forth discussions of the Gemara. The *shakla v'tarya* is the basis content of the Gemara; the emphasis here is not on memorizing each word by heart.

From a superficial attitude, memorizing *Mishnayos* was beneficial for thinking, because "letters enlighten the mind", while learning Gemara is meant just to focus on the intellect of the discussion because it's too hard to see and remember all the letters.

But on a deeper note, these two different learning methods are the two different abilities in our mind, *zoicher* and *shoimer*. When a person memorizes the words of *Mishnayos* by heart, he is using his ability of *shoimer*, because he is thinking based on picturing the letters. When a person repeats over the *shakla v'tarya* of the Gemara, he is using *zoicher*, and although he needs to first see the actual letters of the Gemara in order to think about it, his grasp of the material is based on intellectualizing it.

A person needs to examine his thinking and see how he thinks – is he first using *zoicher* or *shoimer*?

Diyuk and Sevarah

In the previous chapter, we listed three methods how to think when we learn: *sevarah*, *diyuk* and *cheshbon*. A person needs to figure out which of these three abilities he is the strongest in. Which is the strongest of these three? Each person is stronger in one area than in another.

Some people's strong point is in their ability of *diyuk*. They analyze the letters and words of the Gemara very well and from this, they form their understanding. Others excel more when it comes to *sevarah*; they need to make sure that their logic also fits into the words, and on a more subtle note, they know how to produce a *sevarah* from a *diyuk*. But the point is that such people excel in their ability of *sevarah*.

The power of *sevarah* is the strongest way to think; this is where one can think from his soul. We can find this hinted to in the statement of the Gemara that says, "Why do I need a *possuk* (verse in the Torah)? It's a *sevarah* (logic)." When the understanding is based on a *possuk*, it's being based on picture, which is *diyuk*. The *diyuk* can come and show what the *sevarah* is. But if it can be deduced by *sevarah*, then it comes from the intellect of the matter, and this is stronger than the *diyuk*.

These are different abilities in our soul – we must be aware which one we use more. Of course, when you are a child, you think of something based on picturing it; a child's thinking is based on his ability of *shoimer*, not *zoicher*. The question is when we are adults: has our thinking changed since how we thought as children?

There is a story told about the Brisker Rov zt"l that once a father and son came to him. The Rov was learning in a room and there were barely any *sefarim* on his shelves. The child whispered to his father, "Why doesn't the Gadol have any *sefarim*?"

The Brisker Rov, who was known to be a very truthful person, overheard the child's question and turned to the child and said, "A person's greatness is not measured by how many *sefarim* he has in his house."

This is a whole new take about life. *Sevarah* is rooted in *sevarah yesharah* (straight logic).

Intellect Cannot Uproot The Picture

A deep point is hidden here. Until now, with the help of Hashem, we have elaborated on two distinct abilities of the mind – the power of thought, which uses *zoicher* memory, and the power of imagination picture, which uses *shoimer* protection. Let us now bring out the difference.

If a person sees a crooked building that is about to fall, what picture does he have in his mind when he sees it? He protects the image in his mind, and that is how he sees the crooked building.

What happens if a person hears a crooked kind of logic? The mind cannot accept it. Why not? It is because the mind is made up of three parts: *Chochmah*, *Binah* and *Daas*. What are these abilities? The Ramchal (in *sefer Derech Tevunos*) explains that *Chochmah* is what a person thinks, *Binah* is what a person produces from the thoughts, and *Daas* is what a person decides to accept it or not.

Thought involves the three abilities of *Chochmah*, *Binah* and *Daas*. The *Chochmah* is the knowledge that a person receives from others, the *Binah* is what a person thinks on his own (based on that knowledge) and the *Daas* is what a person decides – if he decides to accept what he had heard or not.

The power to decide is only with the real intellect of the mind. The ability to picture something does not involve any deciding – you don't decide if you accept the image or not. A picture is a picture – it is imprinted on the mind, and you cannot change what you have seen.

This is a deep point about our soul.

Women are more easygoing and believe others' thinking more readily than men do. What is the reason for this? It is because women first make use of their ability to picture the facts before they comprehend it intellectually. Because a woman's thinking is based on her picture imagination, women are less scrutinizing of the information they receive. A woman's thinking doesn't pass through the scrutiny of the *Chochmah*, *Binah* and *Daas*. They follow the image in their head and don't question it – a picture is a picture.

When a person's thinking is based on what he has pictured, the thoughts cannot uproot the picture, because the picture has already been imprinted onto the mind.

What then can a person do to get rid of the picture he has formed in his head?

The only way is to change the thinking patterns. The person has to change the way he thinks; he has to realize that he mustn't base his thinking on what he has pictured. This is the only way to remove

the image that has been imprinted onto the mind.

But if a person just tries to use his thoughts to think over the image, he won't succeed in uprooting what he has seen, because the image has already been carved into his mind.

Correcting Mistakes In Learning

When it comes to learning, this discussion has big implications.

Chazal^[6] say that once a mistake enters the mind, it stays there. When a person makes a mistake, it is because he has used his ability of *shoimer* instead of *zoicher* – he has formed his thinking based on a certain picture he has in his head

Many times a person gets a certain picture in his head about something, and he isn't even aware that he is being misled. Even when he realizes that he is mistaken, he continues to think mistakenly, because once he got this picture in his head, it is carved into his mind and difficult for him to ignore it.

When a person learns based on how well he pictures something first, he thinks superficially, and all his thinking afterward will be based on that picture in his head. Even if he hears from someone else something that makes more sense than how he thought, or even if he does think afterward in the right kind of way, the whole structure of his thinking is superficial, and all his thinking will be based on superficiality.

Even if a person thinks it through afterward and realizes he made a mistake, and even if he remembers his mistake the second time around when he learns it again, his thinking will still be mistaken! Many times he remembers that he was mistaken, but he doesn't remember what the correct approach was, and because he can't remember the real solution, he just goes back to his original misguided thinking. Even if a person isn't aware of this, that is how his mind thinks.

By contrast, if a person first makes sure to intellectualize the information before he pictures it, his thinking is based on his real mind, and he is able to disagree strongly with someone who says something that doesn't make sense to him. His thinking has *yashrus* to it.

Rav Chaim Volozhiner zt"l wrote that "The entire praise of the earlier generations was that they had *sevara yeshara* (straight logic)." What is the depth to this matter?

What is relevant for our discussion is that if one has straight logic, his thinking is based on his real mind, not on his imagination. When a person bases his thinking on how he pictures it, his thinking doesn't come from logic, and it definitely doesn't come from a straight way of thinking. Such a person always has to make corrections to how he thought, because he has accepted whatever he pictured.

Chazal says that when a person learns, he should be like one who writes on a new piece of paper, not like one who writes on an old piece of paper. This is the difference between one who understands based on picture to one who understands based on intellect. A person who understands something based on what he has pictured is like someone who keeps using the same old piece of paper; if he wants to write on it, he will have to keep erasing what he has written...but if someone understands something based upon his intellect, he is able to have a new kind of thinking each time, like a fresh new piece of paper.

Learning Something The Second Time

Having understood this, we can sharpen the discussion even more.

Let's say a person, for example, learned *Maseches Kiddushin* before and now he sits down to learn it for the second time. How is he now approaching it? Is he learning it based on how he remembers it from last time, or he is starting fresh, as if he never learned it before?

When a person learns it now based on how he remembers it from last time, he is starting now from the original way he thought. If he's starting now based on the original picture he had in head from the *sugya*, his whole thinking will definitely have to fit the picture in his head. But even if he learns it now based on how he originally **remembers** it, he limits his thinking. Don't be limited to how you originally thought - your thoughts instead are supposed to become more true. Begin to learn the *sugya* again anew - it should be a new beginning.

When a person learns based on how he pictures it, then even if he refines his intellect as he goes on, the picture in his head still remains the same picture, and all he is doing is refining the picture. But if a person begins to learn again now based on thinking, then how he thinks now is different than how he thought last time. It is a pitiful situation if a person still thinks the same now as he thought last time; your thinking is supposed to change since a while ago.

There is a difference between the very first time you learn something to the second time you learn it. The first time you learn something, you need to make use of your ability to picture the facts, and the only question is if you are mainly using your picture or your intellect. But the second time you learn something and you know it already, you already have a certain picture in your head about it. On one hand, you will be inclined to follow the picture in your head, because it has been retained in your

mind through the power of *shoimer*. On the other hand, you already have the picture in your head on it, so all you have to do now is think of it on an intellectual level.

The first time you learn a sugya, forgetting the material is normal, and it is impossible to start thinking first about the *sugya* through your intellect; you have to first make use of your ability to picture the information. But the second time you learn it, how do you start learning it? A person who thinks superficially learns it based on how he remembers it from the last time. He remembers how he concluded and now he just checks his previous conclusions. But the correct approach which we are describing is that when one learns it again, he should start fresh, as if he is learning it for the first time.

The Higher Kind of Memory

To complete this discussion let us add on another point.

There are two ways how we remember something. To give a simple example, if it is night time and you ask someone if it is night or day, he answers, "It is night." How does he know it is the night? He sees it with his eyes, but who told him that being dark is called nighttime? The answer to this is because ever since he was a child, he was told that when it's dark outside it means that it is night time. Slowly this fact became imprinted onto his mind, and that is how he knows that darkness means nighttime.

But if let's say you ask someone about the sugya he learned today, and he remembers it well, is that the same kind of memory as the person who remembers nighttime? It's not the same kind of memory as before. What's the difference?

Remembering if it is night or day has to do with your consciousness and your sub-conscious (this was explained by Reb Yisrael Salanter). These are simple facts which do not use our mind, because they are so well-known. But there are some things which we remember that are a whole different kind of memory. These are things which we definitely remember, but they involve the use of memory, as opposed to our sub-conscious which does not utilize our memory.

The sub-conscious facts stored in our mind are really a deeper kind of memory. They are imprinted onto the mind; we will explain this.

When a person uses memory, his memory is powered by the thoughts. When a person retains an image in his mind, this is something else - this doesn't pass through the faculty of thought. It is an

image. The sub-conscious is also a picture in our mind, but it is above the regular kind of picture in the mind. It is a kind of thought that has become a part of who we are.

The sub-conscious is really a higher kind of memory. The lower kind of memory is when we just remember all kinds of things, such as remembering all the numbers. Anyone can feel that there is a huge difference between remembering why nighttime is nighttime to how he remembers the sixteen digits on his credit card – they are being remembered from two totally different places within himself. When you remember that when it's dark outside it means that it is nighttime, that is in your sub-conscious. It is a much deeper kind of memory than memorizing your credit card number.

Sometimes this kind of memory has evil outcomes, like “*sins which become imprinted onto a person's bones*”^[7]. But in its holy use, we find this by how the words of the Torah became imprinted onto the Jewish people when they stood at Sinai. This isn't just memory – it is an imprint upon our souls.

In this chapter, we discussed the abilities of *shoimer* and *zoicher*, and how a person must grow from the level of *shoimer* to the level of *zoicher*. Now we have concluded the discussion by describing a power even higher than *zoicher* – the higher kind of *zoicher*, which is the kind of knowledge that is imprinted onto our sub-conscious.

If someone reaches this kind of thought in his learning, he is in essence on the level of standing at Sinai to receive the Torah. Such a level is impossible to reach perfectly, but everyone can reach it somewhat, each to his own. There, a person will find that Hashem, the Torah and the Jewish people are one.

^[1] Chullin 45a

^[2] Derush HaChasunah, printed in Kisvei HaRamban.

^[3] Raavad to Sefer Yetzirah.

^[4] Yalkut Shimeoni, Bamidbar 738.

^[5] Sotah 17a

^[6] Pesachim 112a

[\[7\]](#) Yechezkel 32: 27

Source: <https://bilvavi.net/english/getting-know-your-thoughts-005-picture-and-intellect>