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בלבבי חלק ה. תפלה. עמ' לד-לט

1.

Why do we *daven*? Is it so that we can get our physical needs? Is it so that we can get our spiritual needs? Or is it so that we can strengthen our *emunah*?

Although it is true that we can get our physical needs, our spiritual needs, and more *emunah* by davening, there is still a deeper meaning to our *davening*. It is the whole purpose of why we *daven* – and even in this, there is depth within depth.

2.

What is the inner meaning to our *davening*?

The *Mesillas Yesharim* (chapter 19) writes that upon reflection, one can see how all of life is meant to be spent with Hashem.

For all our life, we are partners with Hashem – not just partners every here and there like with friends, but partners for life. The way life is supposed to look is that we live with Hashem, as if He's right in front of us – and thus, we can talk to Him in first person.

This closeness comes to us through *tefillah*. By getting used to always talking to Hashem about everything – big or small – a person is able to really feel that Hashem is next to him, at all times.

3.

Thus, the purpose of *davening* is not to get our needs, not even to get our spiritual needs. It is not even so that we should get *emunah*. The purpose of our *davening* is so that we can actually **talk to Hashem**, to feel that Hashem is next to us like a friend!

These words are written as well by the Chazon Ish^[1], “Prayer is a lofty service, in which one can picture vividly how Hashem is listening to his words.” This is the main purpose of *tefillah*: to reach the recognition that Hashem is actually next to us, “*nochach*” (opposite us), for we live with Him, every second.

4.

The Chazon Ish^[2] elaborates on this even more: “I know of one piece of advice that can apply to every person. The existence of Hashem is everywhere and constant, but He is hidden from those who are caught up in the flow of life. Anyone has the ability to direct his heart for Heaven. Anyone who wants to escape falsehood can picture vividly that Hashem is here. Through one’s thoughts, he can connect to the One Above, and “*Hashem is close to all who call out to Him.*” (He is not close to us simply because we are asking things of Him when we daven, but rather from the mere fact that we *davening* to Him, we draw ourselves closer to Him). This gives satisfaction to the Creator (because this is not an intellectual matter, but a soul matter – that the soul can sense the Creator actually next to it)....

“How amazing this is, that a person has the ability to pour out all his worries before the Master of the world as if he talks to a friend, and Hashem nourishes him like how a father caresses his child.”

5.

Understand that the entire concept and purpose of *tefillah* is to live with the Creator, to feel Him next to you – and to be able to speak to Him just as when you speak to a friend next to you. When you talk to Hashem, you are able to feel toward Him that He is your trusted friend, whose only interest is to be a good listener and help you.

This is written by both the Ramchal (*Mesillas Yescharim*) and the Chazon Ish – that when we talk to Hashem, it can feel like talking to a friend.

This is the true way to *daven*.

If a person davens to Hashem and even believes sincerely that Hashem can help him – but he doesn't feel as if he's talking to a friend who is next to him, he's missing the whole point of *davening*. In order to really *daven*, a person needs to open up his soul. He needs to have a real feeling that he is talking with the best friend he can ever have – Hashem; and this should not be in his imagination, but a real feeling. It is pleasant to speak with Him – and when a person truly feels this way, he is *davening* in the right way.

6.

Now we will try to explain how one can indeed feel that Hashem is next to him, *nochach* – so that when one *davens*, he will be able to feel as if he's talking to a trusted friend.

If a person is disconnected from Hashem throughout the rest of the day, and it is only during *davening* that he speaks to Hashem – during *Shacharis*, *Mincha* and *Maariv* – he will never be able to feel that *davening* is like talking to a friend. The essence of *tefillah* is really to talk to Hashem all day, as one of the Sages said^[3]: “If only a person would pray all day.”

Is it really possible to pray all day? No, we don't daven *Shemoneh Esrei* all day. But what the Sages meant was that our entire day has to reflect the *possuk*, “*And I am prayer.*” In other words – we need to talk to Hashem all the time throughout the day. (Someone who is on a higher spiritual level talks to Hashem all the time mentally, and then there is an ever higher level, *d'veykus*, in which one is actually feels connected to Him all the time, without even having to think about this).

For example, a person wakes up in the morning. He can immediately begin to speak to Hashem and say, “*Ribono shel olam*, You woke me up, and I am getting up to serve You, to come close to You, to give You a *nachas ruach*. Please merit me that my day should be spent properly, that I should serve You the entire day.”

Then, as he's walking to shul, he can say, “*Ribono shel olam*, please merit me that I should be able to

concentrate during *davening*, that I should feel You next to me, and that distracting thoughts shouldn't enter my head when I *daven*."

After he leaves shul, he can say, "*Ribono shel olam*, please ensure that I don't see anything forbidden on the street as I walk, and that I should get to where I have to on time, without being rushed."

A person sits down to learn, and he can say, "*Ribono shel olam*, I am going to learn Your holy Torah so I can come close to You and give You a *nachas ruach*. Please merit me that I should be able to learn properly, without distractions, and that I should merit to understand what I learn."

In middle of learning, when one comes across a difficulty and he can't come to an answer, he can say, "*Ribono shel olam*, I know that it depends on You if I will understand what I learn or not. Please merit me that I should understand your holy Torah." (The Chazon Ish would practice this too).

The point is that before anything, talk to Hashem about it and ask Him for help. Talk to Him no less than how you talk to a friend. Don't forget about this as the day goes on - keep remembering this point.

At first, this will be difficult, and a person will keep forgetting to do it. But as you get used to it, it becomes second nature, and slowly you will be able to naturally talk to Hashem throughout the day.

This is a very fundamental point in how we become closer to Hashem. Be very stubborn to work on this - be willing to pay any price for it. Work on it in steps, patiently. But don't forget it. If someone truly seeks Hashem, he will be shown the way to get there.

7.

There is another fundamental point about *tefillah*: one should pour out everything that's on his heart to Hashem, even his failings. Tell Hashem about all your difficulties, all your doubts, all your frustrations. Include Hashem in every part of your life! Don't be embarrassed.

It is hard to express this point more than what we have said, but the main thing is to absorb one point: include Hashem in everything in your life - every thought, every feeling, anything you went through in your life. Do this all from a simple, natural way how you talk to a friend - like when you want to tell a friend about all that's going on in your life.

This point needs to be absorbed very well – without it, the main part of one’s bond with Hashem will be missing.

(We do not mean to say that only talking to Hashem counts and that thinking about Him in solitude is pointless, because a person has to also feel “alone with Hashem” as well, even without talking to Him. But that is the first part of one’s avodah. Eventually, one has to talk to Hashem about everything in his life. This is the constant two-step process: first, be in solitude and feel alone with Hashem. You don’t have to talk to Him yet in this first stage. Then, talk to Him – about everything going on in your life.

There are some exceptions to this rule. Some people need to think about Hashem and talk to Him at the same time, instead of going through it as a two-stage process. If someone is searching for the truth, he will be shown what the proper path for him to take is. Refer back to the Preface for this).

There is also a higher way to *daven* than what we have described until now: instead of davening for so many things, a person can *daven* for the one, innermost point of everything – to reach a close connection with Hashem. This is a very deep matter, however, and we will not discuss it here.

8.

Another fundamental point about *tefillah* is that it’s possible that a person is very close to Hashem, yet he’s making mistakes in his Avodas Hashem – and there is no one pointing out to him his mistakes.

Therefore, a person should always daven and beg Hashem that he be shown his mistakes, and what he has to fix. A person has to keep *davening* for this, from the depths of his soul, and he should always feel that he’s making some mistake which he doesn’t know about, and that he needs Hashem to show him the truth. If a person doesn’t daven for this, he might go his whole life mistaken, *chas v’shalom* – and the errors he’s making will be very grave.

Hashem wants us to always feel that we depend on Him, and that we cannot trust ourselves at all. We need Hashem all the time to show us what the truth is. If a person never thinks that perhaps he’s making a mistake, his whole life will be a haughty kind of life – his whole life will all be one giant mistake.

We have to daven to Hashem and beg Him that we be shown the truth, that we be shown our

mistakes, that we be shown how we can work on ourselves and what it is exactly that we need to work on. The problem is that there are some areas in which a person thinks he's acting 100% correct - "This is how it's done." But the more a person matures in his spirituality, the more he understands that there is no such thing as relying on oneself, and that he has to search himself inside about he's acting in everything. A mature person realizes that he has to always daven to Hashem that perhaps he's making a mistake in his Avodas Hashem, and that Hashem should show him the light.

This point, when not realized, holds back many people from truly growing in their Avodas Hashem. One has to be very careful about this and make sure he realizes it.

[\[1\]](#) *Kovetz Igros Chazon Ish, Vol I, Letter 23*

[\[2\]](#) *Kovetz Igros Chazon Ish, Vol. IV, Letter 2*

[\[3\]](#) *Berachos 31a*

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