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We have been explaining the different ways how to rectify the sins of Shovavim, with the help of Hashem.^[1] However, we have only learned about it on a purely intellectual level, and now we have to act upon these matters as well. We must “learn in order to act.”^[2]

There are many well-known methods of how a person achieves a *tikkun* (soul rectification) on damaging the *Bris Kodesh*.^[3] There are various intentions one can have and recite (“*kavanos*”); there are methods of fasting, of giving *tzedakah*, of increasing one’s Torah learning, of abstaining from various desires, etc. Each method of *tikkun* has its proper time and place when it should be used, as is written in Koheles^[4], “*Everything in its time.*”

However, upon a deep understanding, we should know that there are two paths [in how we improve in our service to Hashem.] One path is to work with time, and the other path is to work with our soul.

The first method is that a person serves Hashem based on certain times of the year; he utilizes the Yomim Tovim as his plan to serve Hashem. But this is an incorrect approach, and of him, it cannot really be said “*He who sanctifies Yisrael and the times.*” We sanctify time through Yom Tov, but it is not because we are dependent on the times of Yomim Tovim to be able to serve Hashem; rather, it is because we are above time, and therefore, we are able to sanctify time. Our souls are above time.

When a person plans out his Avodas Hashem (serving the Creator, through self-improvement) according to certain “times” of the year [Yomim Tovim], he is actually lowering his soul in the process, because time is at a lower plane than our soul. [On an even more subtle note, he becomes lowered than time as well, because when he is dependent on certain times in order to serve Hashem better, he becomes a receiver of time, and then his growth will only be limited to those times].

The inner way to serve Hashem is to work with our soul. If a person doesn’t work with his soul, then what will happen is that when it comes Rosh HaShanah, he will work to better himself on a certain point, and then he will work on something else after Rosh HaShanah. Then he will work on a different point when it comes Sukkos, and then when it comes Chanukah, he will work on another point. Then comes Shovavim and he will try to now work on another point, and then when it comes Purim, he will try working on a different point, etc. To make things even more detrimental, the 30 days before each Yom Tov are already a time to begin working on the points of the upcoming Yom Tov, and often this coincides with other points he’s trying to work on. It then will get very confusing, as a person will be working to improve on different points at once.

We must realize that we cannot serve Hashem based on certain times of the year. That is a downfall

to our souls. (On a deep note, before the sin, Adam was above time, and after he sinned, he fell to the level of time). The various special times of the year [Yomim Tovim, and other auspicious times] are to be viewed as a bridge between our soul and our body – in other words, the special times of the year might be higher than our physical body, but they are still lower than our soul.

If a person doesn't work with his soul and only is focused on his body, then his Avodas Hashem will be dependent on certain auspicious times of the year. But if he uses the inner approach, which is to work with his soul, then he goes above time, and he won't be dependent on time in order to better his service to Hashem.

Therefore, it is not possible to give a plan for what to work on for each week of the month: "This week we will work on this point of our Avodas Hashem, and next week we will work to improve on another point in our Avodas Hashem..." [It doesn't work]. You can't try to reach a certain *tikkun* for your soul one week and then try working on a different *tikkun* the next week; and surely this is true with regards to how we serve Hashem on a daily basis, that we cannot work on *tikkun* today and on a different *tikkun* the next day. [Avodas Hashem doesn't work like that.]

Avodas Hashem really means to have a general plan. That plan is: Torah brings us to become more careful in keeping the mitzvos, and being careful will bring us to be more enthusiastic about mitzvos, etc. [5] When we learn about how to improve in this way, we must incorporate what we are learning into how we serve Hashem. But as we said, we cannot serve Hashem based on the auspicious times of the year, as we cannot jump around working on one point to the next.

Therefore, since the main way of serving Hashem is when we work with our soul, all souls are different, and there is thus no one method of *tikkun* which applies to all people. The purpose of these classes on Shovavim was so that each of us can take out lessons from it that apply to us on our own personal level; that from the knowledge contained here, each person should figure out which of the information should be carried out practically in his life. As the Sages say, "A wise person understands from his own." [6]

If a person just reads these *tikkunim* on Shovavim we have presented, without trying to figure out which of this can apply to him on a practical level, then maybe he'll get reward for learning this as Torah...but that's it.

May Hashem grant us that we should each merit to perfect ourselves on this world, that we should remove all the impurity from upon us and reveal our *neshamah*, which will in turn reveal Hashem within ourselves.

[1] This short segment is the conclusion of five classes given by the author on the topic of "Shovavim", based on *Aneinu L'Reshash*: they consist of the audio classes *Shovavim* 002, 003, 004, 005 and 006. The author gave different methods of *tikkun* (soul rectification) for each of the five sins that need to be repaired during *Shovavim* (the weeks from *parshas Shemos* through *Mishpatim*). The five sins (listed by the *Reshash*) are: sinful thoughts, adultery, homos-uality (this particular audio class has been adapted into English for the Bilvavi website, under the title "Shovavim Today"), wasted spittle, and prolonging one's *bris*.

[2] Kiddushin 40b

[3] “Damaging the bris”, *p’gam bris*, is the sin of spilling one’s sperm, *chas v’shalom*.

[4] Koheles 3:1

[5] The author is referring to learning *sefer Mesillas Yesharim*, which gives us a step-by-step plan for growth: Torah, *zehirus*, *zerizus*, *nekiyus*, etc.

[6] Chagigah 11b

Source: <https://bilvavi.net/english/shovavim-007-internalizing-shovavim>