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## Reaching Your Essence - 000 Editor's Intro

This series, **Reaching Your Essence**, (דע אַת הויתך), is an adaptation of the series “Da Es Havayesecha”, a course consisting of 15 classes in which the Rav explains the essence of Jewish spirituality and several ways of how one can identify and access the deepest part of the Jewish soul: *havayah* (the essence of our reality), also called the “*Yechidah*” (the place of “oneness” in the soul).

This series was given immediately after the original series of the author on self-actualization which was entitled Da Es Atzmecha, “Getting To Know Your Self.”

The original audience who attended the classes of Da Es Atzmecha felt that it greatly clarified to them the meaning of their identity; however, now that they had gotten to that point, they wanted to hear something a bit more spiritual. They had also heard about the concept of the “*Yechidah*” and they wanted to know all about it, what it is, and if there is any way to have some access to it at our current level. The Rav agreed to give this special series, titled “Da Es Havayesecha” (lit. “Getting To Know Your Essence”), which we have decided to more appropriately name as “*Reaching Your Essence*.”

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It would be helpful to be aware of the following quote from the words of the Rav at the very end of the series:

“Generally speaking, the proper path for most people to take [in working with the soul] is to work their way upwards, starting from the lower levels of the soul and progressing to the higher levels of the soul. In this path, one cannot attempt to reach his *havayah* point [the *Yechidah*] unless he has acquired the lower levels of the soul, which are the areas of the soul known as *Nefesh*, *Ruach*, *Neshamah* and *Chayah*. We have explained these levels of the soul in previous *sefarim*.[\[1\]](#)”

“However, there are certain types of people who may begin their inner work by first trying to reach the *havayah* point in the soul. This includes any of the following:

“Some people were born with the power to naturally access this deep place in themselves, but they do not clearly understand it, and they would like to become clearer about what it is and how they can fully reach it. (Even in such people, there are also times where their innermost point becomes hidden from them.)

“There are also people who, although they were not born with great inner strength of their soul, were still were able to penetrate very far into their deeper self, because they went through certain experiences in life that uncovered great depth to themselves. Either they went through a very

traumatic experience, or they went through a deeply joyous one, which enabled them to penetrate straight into the deepest layer of their existence.

“These kinds of people cannot be told to ignore their inner point; they live with it as an existing reality. To tell them to ignore their inner point and to instead work with the lower parts of the soul would be like asking the person if he minds if his leg would be cut off. For such people, their *avodah* is to receive further guidance in how to use their *havayah* point, to clarify more of the ways of how they can properly connect to it.

“Similar to the above category are those who are born with great inner strength in their souls, who have the ability to easily and quickly penetrate deep into their soul.

“There are also people who have entered very deep within themselves, but they used methods from impure sources that came from strange places of the world.[\[2\]](#)

“Any of the people in the above four categories can begin their inner work by starting to implement the ideas in these chapters which explained the “*Yechidah*” level of the soul. As for most people, who are not any of the above three exceptions, they will need to start to understand their soul through the previous series[\[3\]](#), and **only after reaching their layers of *Nefesh, Ruach, Neshamah, and Chayah* can they attempt to do any of the *avodah* that was described in this series.**

“We are emphasizing this so that you will be aware of this and save yourself from damage. If you are like most people (who are not of the above three exceptions we described), you need to make sure that you begin with working on your *Nefesh*, then with your *Ruach*, then with your *Neshamah*, then with your *Chayah*, and only after that should you begin to try to get to your *Yechidah*, as described in this series.

“However, even if you cannot begin implementing any of the ways of *avodah* explained in these chapters, it is still beneficial for most people to hear the words of this series and to simply become aware of these concepts, because even if you cannot absorb it fully at this point, it is still important to know the goal of where you are supposed to end up at.

“When a person hears about concepts he needs to work on, the initial reaction is that he has to act upon them afterwards, but there is another way to hear: even though you will not be able to implement these matters right after hearing them [if you are not one of the three exceptions listed], you can still hear it just for the sake of building your soul, by absorbing these concepts. There is a purpose in just hearing concepts so that you can build your soul, even though you can't act upon these matters right away.

“It is important for you to at least hear about these concepts, even if you can't work on actualizing them yet, because it is good for you to know what your eventual goal is. “*Sof maaseh b'machshavah techilah*” (The end of action if first preceded with thought). When you hear about the goal, that itself is constructive. First of all, it gives meaning to your current level of *avodah*, because you know where you want to end up at eventually, even though you're not there yet.

“In addition, it builds your aspirations. There are people who only act with what is in front of them; they live for the moment, and they never try to develop themselves for the future. A deeper kind of person will build himself up each day with the goal in mind that he wants to form a certain path that will lead him to his goal. This does not mean that a person should become a dreamer, immersed in his fantasies of the future. A person needs to be involved with the here and now, but along with this, he also should expand his future, by building himself a path that will lead him into his future goal.

“When a person hears a *shiur*/Torah lecture solely so that he can arrive at the practical conclusions

from it, he is limiting himself in the process. It is detrimental to a person when he needs to know what has to be done as a result of what he has heard, and when he wants to know the practicality of it right now, immediately. Rather, the sensible approach is to hear about concepts even if they won't be immediately applicable in your life, so that you can at least absorb the end goal and be aware of the goal you will eventually head towards.

“So if you have absorbed these concepts, even if you aren't yet at the level of actualizing them, that itself is a great accomplishment, because it helps you acquire a deeper perspective and know where you want to get to.”

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It is our hope in releasing this English adaptation of *Da Es Havayasecha* that our life's task on this world gain greater meaning to it; that we serve the Creator genuinely and wholesomely with the awareness of our soul; and that the study of these chapters should help us relate better to the vast endless space of G-dliness that is present deep in our soul, the place in ourselves which is fully aware of truth – the point in our soul which is already at “one” with G-d and is part and parcel with His reality. And may the awareness to this deep place in ourselves be allowed to fully penetrate our entire being, in our own lifetime, and even more so, in the time of the imminent Redemption - where the view from our *Yechidah* will be fully revealed to all, where we will all gain the “collective” *Yechidah* of the entire Jewish people.

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**[1]** Refer to the Rav's *Da Es Atzmecha (Getting To Know Your Self)*

**[2]** Refer to the Rav's derasha entitled “The Void”

**[3]** Refer to the Rav's sefer *Da Es Atzmecha (Getting To Know Your Self)*. Editor's Note: Refer also to the Rav's series “*Da Es Nishmasecha*” (*Torah Way To Enlightenment*), which explains how to expose the five layers of the soul (*Nefesh, Ruach, Neshamah, Chayah and Yechidah*).

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