

BILVAVI

**MY
HEART
ASKS**

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

PARSHAS BEHAALOSECHA 5782

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ACCESSING A SERENE STATE

I wanted to know more about what happens when I fall into a deep sleep and I don't even remember what I dreamt about or I simply lost all consciousness – where does my awareness go to? When I am in that space, I feel like there's nothing wrong with anything and I love to be in such a space, not because I feel despair from life and because I don't want to exist, but because I just love feeling like I am fulfilled and have everything. I wanted to know if there really is such a space like this in my soul, in which a person can love to be unconscious from everything, and if yes, is it constructive or not to enter and enjoy such a space.

ANSWER

There are four levels of creations – *domem*, the still lifeless creations (i.e. rocks), and *tzomeiach*, the plants, and *chai*, the animals, and *medaber*, the human being. [And these levels are also states in the soul to access]. The creations that are *domem* – the still, lifeless creations - have a very low level of awareness. The human being has aspects of all these levels of creations within his soul, so a person

also has a *domem* aspect within him – a still, silent state where one can disconnect from all pressure and stress on his soul, and he can rest in an inner silence.

Sometimes the soul finds this space so pleasant and serene because it is the *domem* aspect of the soul, where there is barely any awareness of any kind of deficiency nor any desire to have things perfect and complete, and this is because at the level of *domem* there is very little awareness. There is barely any movement of *domem*, unlike the other levels of creations which are plants, animals, and people. The word *domem* is from the word *demamah*, silence. When a person enters into the silent space in his soul, his *domem* aspect, of this it is said **אך לאלוקים דומיה נפשי** “*Only to G-d, my soul is silenced*”, where one [can feel that he is] completely given over in Hashem’s hands, and it is the state where one can feel **כגמול עלי אמו** “*like an infant on the lap of his mother*”, a state where there is no *daas*, no awareness, just like an infant who is simply drawn after its mother because he is in a state of *t’mimus* (earnestness).

PURIFYING THE MIND

I’ve tried learning Mishnayos (Seder Nezikin) for 2 years already but I still don’t feel that my mind is becoming more purified from dirty thoughts. Should I continue to learn Mishnayos? Should I switch to Kodshim or Taharos? And if not, is there any alternative approach I can take, to purify my mind and Bris Kodesh?

ANSWER

Try 1 more year learning Seder Taharos. If that doesn’t help, then the fundamental path is to immerse your mind deeply in in-depth Torah study.

CHANGING A STUBBORN PERSON

What can we say to a person in order to help him take a different course of action, when the person thinks he is doing the right thing and really he is not?

ANSWER

First we need to get the person to open up his inner world and to help him become aware that not all actions that people do are true to who they are. The first step is to get him to simply become aware of this, and then we can further work with him.

CHOOSING A MESIVTA FOR A YESHIVA BOCHUR

How do we choose a Mesivta (yeshivah high school) for our son?

ANSWER

There are certain general rules [besides for private needs which this answer won't address]. The general rules are:

- (1) What is the level of learning compatible with your son? Also, will the style of learning there be appropriate for him?
- (2) What is the level of *ruchniyus* of the group of boys that will be there? Also, what type are they?
- (3) Does the principal there understand how to run in a yeshiva in general, and what is his approach in relating to each boy – can he work with the boy according to the boy's specific abilities?
- (4) Will it be a place that your son will enjoy lingering in, emotionally? Does it have a pleasant atmosphere or a stressful atmosphere (the latter is not good). And will he be happy with the physical conditions that are there? Will it be compatible with his level and with his personality?
- (5) It should be a yeshivah that places emphasis on the personal development of each boy, as opposed to simply pushing a certain level of learning. It should be a place that develops the *yiras shomayim*, *ahavas Hashem*, *middos*, and other important abilities of the *nefesh* (soul).
- (6) If he is not going to be in a dorm and he will be coming home every day, see if he looks calm when he is coming home and going back, if he is calm emotionally and if he looks settled in his *ruchniyus*. If he will be in a dorm, try to discern if he is okay with this, and if the place where he's sleeping is good or not for his *ruchniyus*.
- (7) It is very important that he should really desire to go this yeshiva, because a person doesn't learn good in a place that his heart has no desire for. Is he going to this yeshiva only because the parent(s) want him to go there, even though this place is not appropriate for him? If the boy has no desire to go to this particular yeshivah, the parents should never send him to that yeshiva. However, you can try to convince him why he should go there, if you do so with wisdom and subtlety, so that he will want to go on his own accord.

Understandably, not all the above conditions can always be met, but choose the yeshivah that meets most of these conditions, and be prepared to give up one or some of these factors if everything else is fine.

Every single case must be thought about carefully, to weigh in all of these factors. It should not be decided based on how far or close the yeshivah is to home. Rather, all of these factors have to be weighed in and considered.

DECISIVENESS

How can a person become more decisive and be able to make decisions?

ANSWER

Generally, for this a person needs to build up his element of earth, by being more organized and consistent.

Getting more specific, there may be specific issues that are preventing a person from coming to a decision about anything. He may have (1) failures from his past which are getting in his way, (2) a low self-image of himself, (3) a lack of ability to take apart an issue (3) laziness, (4) a lack of ability to take responsibility for his decisions, (5) a habit of getting used to others deciding for him (6) a feeling that he is losing out on something if he decides one way, (7) a lack of emunah in Hashem, (8) he has attempted in the past to decide at something which wasn't really in his control to decide, and because of this he got weak in his ability to decide things when he saw that he's not fully aware of the reality it entailed.

So he has to know which factor or factors are holding back his ability to decide, and then he can see where the issue is coming from and fix it.

FREE WILL & THE SUBCONSCIOUS

1) Is the "subconscious" synonymous with one's true *bechirah* (free will)? The Rav describes that one's subconscious contains the personality makeup which one receives from one's parents, and that it contains memories from previous lifetimes, and from one's past. Are these factors which cause a person to choose certain things in his current lifetime? It would seem that these factors are not the deepest part of the person, and that they are closer to the physical side of one's life.

2) What about the concept of going “above” one’s conscious (as the Rav describes) – is this the beginning of the revelation of one’s *neshamah*? Does it include all of one’s lifetimes, one’s comprehension in Torah, and one’s ability to see patterns on the forehead?

ANSWER

1) In one’s “subconscious”, all one’s past is contained, and it consists of the many complex factors of the reality that is in one’s soul. When one uses his power of *bechirah* (free will), on a very basic level, he is using a power contained in the “animal” level of the soul, no less than how an animal chooses to do something. There is a more inner motivating factor behind one’s *bechirah*: the G-dly “spirit” contained in the soul. Even if a person is not conscious of it, it influences his free will.

2) When one goes “above” one’s conscious, this is the free will of the *neshamah* which is choosing to do the will of its Creator, as it was made to do at the time of its inception and when it stood at Sinai. Ever since then, the power of free will is experienced on the “Ruach” level of the soul. It can be experienced either in (1) the “Ruach” level within the “Nefesh” of the soul, or in (2) the “Ruach” within the Ruach of the soul, or in (3) the “Ruach” within the Neshamah of the soul, or in (4) the “Ruach” within the Chayah of the soul, or in (5) the “Ruach” within the Yechidah of the soul.

In every person, according to his level, there is a conscious and a subconscious level within one’s comprehension. Above one’s comprehension is the area “above” the conscious. Every person, on his own level, has *bechirah*, on a conscious level as well on a subconscious level.

HEALING THE BODY THROUGH THE SOUL

Shalom u’berachah (peace and blessings). I am a family doctor. I have had the great opportunity to listen to some of the Rav’s lectures on the topic of healing [the series *דע את רפואתך*], and I enjoyed it very much. From these lectures, I have understood the Torah Jew’s perspective on the nature of people. I have never seen material like this in any other place.

I very much want to know if the Rav can share with me any practical tools which can help me in healing others. What I want to know is: Is there any sefer, or any guidance the Rav can give, in the medical field, which I can use in healing others, so that I can see beyond Western healing, which does not use the Torah’s view in healing people?

I want to emphasize that I am NOT asking about “Alternative Medicine”, but about something else. Here is an example of what I mean. A person comes to me complaining of various symptoms.

According to the Western approach to healing, there is no connection between the various symptoms he is having. But according to the Torah's approach [as the Rav has explained in the lectures] there is always one root issue which is causing all of the seeming unrelated symptoms. If I can identify the root issue, I could accomplish two things. Firstly, by discovering the root issue, I can discover additional issues that the sick person wasn't aware of. Secondly, I would be able to deal with the root of his symptoms and thereby heal all of the symptoms together.

I would be very happy to hear the Rav's view on this.

ANSWER

In order to know this, you need to have a very clear understanding of the soul. This is explained in the series on the Four Elements. Besides for this, you also need to recognize the relationship between the body and the various abilities of the soul. This is explained about in *Sefer Yetzirah* chapters 3, 4, 5 [refer to the Rav's shiurim on *Sefer Yetzirah* in those places]. A clear knowledge of the relationship between the body and soul will give you an approach on how to connect the body and soul together.

When it comes to any physical symptoms, you need to see where its root is in the soul. Then, accordingly, you can also see how it relates to other areas of the body and soul, and vice versa. From an understanding of issues in the soul, you can reflect on how an issue in the soul is affecting the body. In order to understand this, one needs an in-depth study of it, and to date, there is no *sefer* yet on this topic, and there are no lectures yet either about it. A few classes on this topic were given in the series called **דע את גופך** (Getting To Know Your Body), but due to all sorts of reasons, this series was discontinued. If the Creator wills it, the time for it [the completion of this series] will come.

INTRUDING INTO ANOTHER'S PRIVACY THROUGH ESP

I want to know if it's "permitted" for a person who has "spiritual powers" [of ESP, extrasensory perception] to penetrate into another's privacy [i.e. reading his thoughts and feelings and seeing into his spiritual level]. Assuming that we are talking about a person who has indeed been gifted with a spiritual ability to "see" certain things in others, is such a person allowed to make use of his ability to "see into" others, without asking their permission first? There are some people who are able to leave their physical body, which is called "teleporting" – are such people able to have some kind of control over others or harm others? Does G-d approve of such behavior, and will such a person be punished by Heaven for doing such a thing? Are these people "allowed" to do this

because they possess a high soul level? And, how can a person protect his privacy from being invaded by such people (since he can't see them)?

ANSWER

In our world of action, we are obligated in the 613 *mitzvos* of the Torah and in the 7 primary Rabbinical *mitzvos*, and in all of the commandments which we have received through tradition, as well as in all of the decrees and prohibitions that the Sages have enacted. The more a person grows spiritually, the more “obligations” he will discover, which are on a more spiritual level, in addition to all that he is obligated in from the perspective of this lower world, the realm of action. In the lower world, the world of action, it is forbidden for us to enter into another person's property without permission- it is forbidden because it is stealing. It is the same in the more spiritual dimensions: Whenever a person enters into another's “privacy”, this is called stealing, on a spiritual level. As an example, a person gains spiritual merits as a result of doing mitzvos and positive deeds on this world. These become his spiritual acquisitions. Therefore, if a person is genuinely spiritual and he is truthful, he will not enter into another's private “world”, and he will only do so within the context of *halachah*, integrity, and kindness to another.

However, there are some people who are found in the spiritual dimension, but they are only in the lower realm of the spiritual dimension, where there is a mixture of good and evil. In the language of the Sages, this is referred to as “the world of exchanges”. In such people, the “animal” layer of their souls (their *nefesh habehaimis*) is mixed into their spiritual powers [which causes their spirituality to be unrefined and lacking in truthfulness]. They have two problems: They are found in a spiritual dimension which is unrefined, because they are at a dimension where there is a mixture of good and evil. In addition, their very souls are unrefined: the “animal” layer of their soul has not yet been refined, so it is mixed into their spiritual world, and this causes them to be misled, according to their various interests.

Just as it is possible in the physical world to steal from another person, so is it possible to “steal” on a spiritual level from another person, by intruding into his privacy [i.e. entering into another's thoughts and feelings without permission], when one is living at an unrefined spiritual place of existence. And just as in the physical world each person has his own boundaries and capabilities, according to his own level, so does a person have emotional boundaries and limitations, physical boundaries and limitations, and financial boundaries and limitations. And just as a person in the physical world can be harmed by another, so can a person be harmed by another, in the unrefined spiritual plane of existence.

However, the more that a person becomes attached to the Creator and believes in His total Divine Providence, to that extent, no created being can harm him on his own accord. A person can only be harmed if G-d wills it. The power of free choice that is given to a person is essentially if he will choose to connect or not to the lowly and unrefined forces in Creation, entering into a world where the “Destroyer” [the destroying angel, Satan] is given permission to destroy as it wishes. For this reason, it is possible for a person to be harmed by one who has unrefined spiritual powers. The other choice that a person has is the choice to connect himself to the Creator, and to have the pure belief in Him that “only He can do, has done, and will do, all actions”.

MAZAL & AVODAS HASHEM

QUESTION 1

I have heard most of the Rav’s *shiurim* on the topic of “Rosh Chodesh” (the series of *Rosh Chodesh Avodah*, the series *Mahut*-Essence of *Rosh Chodesh*, the series *Mazal Rosh Chodesh*, and most of the series on *Shevet*-Tribe of *Rosh Chodesh*). I want to know what the purpose of these *shiurim* is.

I also want to know if this is a specific ladder of spiritual growth to take (and if it is, then it seems that a person should begin from the month of *Nissan*, which is called the ‘head’ of the months).

If someone was born in a certain month, does this mean that his main *avodah* is reflected by the essence, *mazal* and tribe, and personal *avodah* represented by that particular month? For example, if someone was born in the month of *Sivan*, does this mean that his main *avodah* is more closely connected with the *mazal* of *Sivan*, which is “twins”, and to the tribe of that month, which is the tribe *Reuven*?

Also, are these *shiurim* a specific order for one to take, one step after the other, or is there no particular order to this series?

ANSWER 1

There is a unique *mazal* for every day, a different *mazal* every hour, and a different *mazal* for every month. Each *mazal* is a “garment” of the soul. There is a way to serve Hashem through the very essence of the soul, and this is primary spiritual level of the Jewish people, for the Sages state that “There is no *mazal* governing the Jewish people.” There is also a way to serve Hashem through the garments of the soul, and that is by way of the *mazalos*.

These *shiurim* [on *Rosh Chodesh Mahut*, *Mazal*, *Shevet*, and *Avodah*] were given according to the order of the Hebrew months, but one does not need to go in this order specifically. It is rather a

possible method of *avodah* for one who seeks to serve Hashem based on the *avodah* of the particular month, which is according to the system of *mazal*. There are many different systems within Creation, and therefore there are many different systems of *avodas Hashem*. Therefore, the way to serve Hashem according to the monthly *mazal* is only one of these many systems.

QUESTION 1

What is the special significance of being born on a certain festival (Yom Tov)? Does it mean that the person's soul is meant to learn more Torah regarding about that particular festival?

ANSWER 2

The *Gra* in the end of *Safra D'Tzniyusa* says that the concept of being born at a certain time means that this particular time is a “vessel” and “garment” for the soul. This doesn't mean that a person bears an intrinsic connection with the time of the year he is born in, but the time he is born in should certainly be viewed as a tool and garment for one's soul [it can aid a person in reaching his purpose]. So it is proper for one to learn the words of Torah about the time period that he has been born in [i.e. if he was born in Nissan or on Pesach, he should spend more time learning about Nissan and Pesach, etc.] but it should only be viewed as a vessel and garment for one's soul [so it should not be turned into one's main learning], in the proper amount which the garment requires [if for example he has been born on Pesach, he should learn properly about Pesach, and if he has been born on Purim, he should learn about Purim as much as is necessary for this learning, etc].

SEEING FAULTS IN MY SPOUSE & IN OTHERS

1) I have heard in the name of the Arizal that a wife is a “mirror” of her husband, meaning that he can identify his own faults when he sees his wife's faults. What is the source for this? 2) Also, what's the proper way to go about this, how does one see his own faults in his wife's faults?

ANSWER

1) *Arizal Shaar Hakdamos* 47a and 81a, *Shaar HaPesukim: Shemos, Otzros Chaim shaar Zu”N, Shaar HaYichudim* 1, *Eitz Chaim* 6:5, 8:5, 28:4, 29:81, 47:6. And in many other places as well.

2) The Baal Shem Tov taught a rule that any fault which one sees in his wife specifically or in others in general is really a sign that the person himself either has that fault or has something similar to the fault which he notices in the other person.

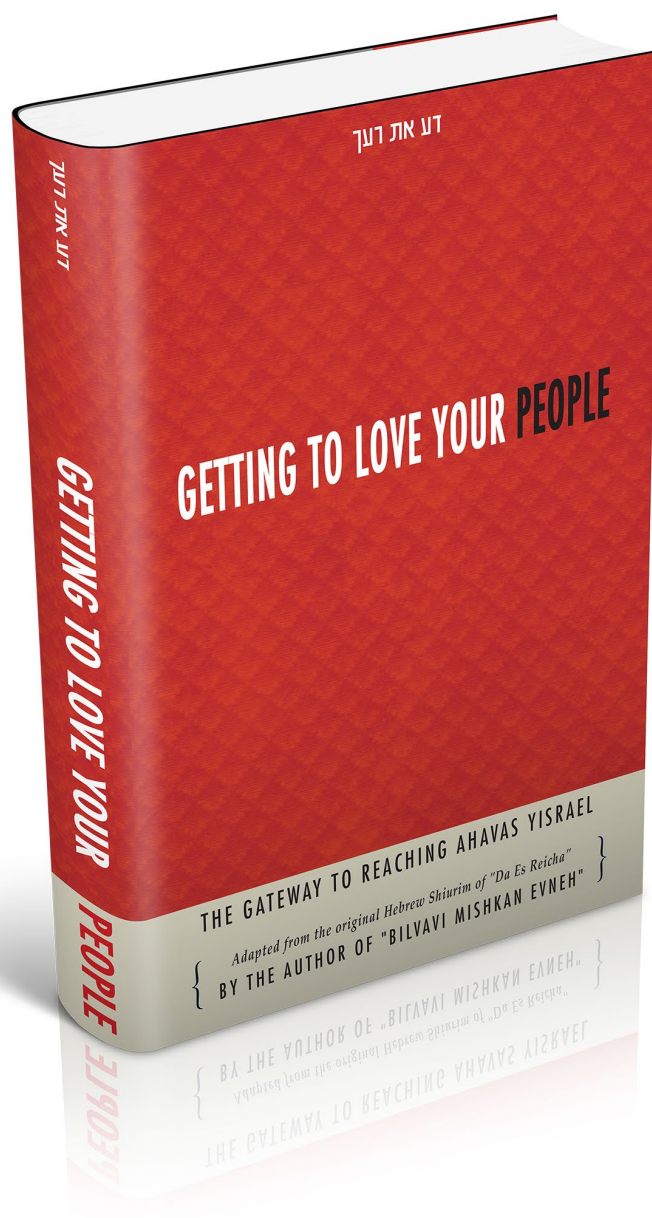
However, if a person is looking all day and all the time at others' faults, then he will only see the faults of others and he won't see his own faults. So a person should only limit this kind of thinking only to very big faults that he notices [and to realize that he either has that fault or has some issue similar to that fault], or, to only think about the fault he sees in others if there's a particular fault that he's currently trying to improve in [and by seeing the fault in others which he is trying to work on, he will be motivated to work on himself in that area].



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