

A DEEP CONVERSATION BETWEEN RAV ITCHE MEYER MORGENSTERN & RAV ISAMAR SHWARTZ

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PARSHAS VA'ESCHANAN 5770 (SUMMER 2010)

By the Kiddush following davening on Shacharis Shabbos morning of Parshas V'Eschanan in 5770 (14 years ago), Rav Morgenstern honored Rav Isamar Shwartz (author of "Bilvavi Mishkan Evneh" to speak.

PART 1 – CONCERNING MOSHE RABBEINU'S REQUEST TO ENTER ERETZ YISRAEL & "THE MODE OF FREE GIFTS THAT IS ABOVE THE SYSTEM OF JUSTICE"

RAV ISAMAR: When Moshe asked Hashem to allow him to enter Eretz Yisrael due to a "free gift" (*as Rashi brings in beginning of Parshas Va'Eschanan*), doesn't this contradict the purpose of Creation which is that Hashem wants us to feel rewarded for all our efforts so that we won't feel the "bread of shame", so that we don't feel embarrassed that we are getting a free gift from Him that we don't deserve?

The answer is that it's precisely after we have done all of our avodah that we can be elevated from the mode of reward and punishment, justice, to the higher mode, of free gifts (*matnas chinam*) which is really Hashem's mode of compassion that's higher than the system of "justice", of reward and punishment. But tzaddikim have already merited to rise to this higher mode of getting a free gift from Hashem, now that they have done their avodah (*and as the Sifrei teaches, the tzaddikim with their good deeds are able to feel deserving of something from Hashem, and even so they do not ask Hashem for a free gift. The tzaddikim with their good deeds are indeed able to do what they want, but they choose to let Hashem deal with them with His higher mode of free gift that comes from His compassion. Thus it's not bread of shame for them to ask Hashem for anything.*) Since Moshe reached the level of *matnas chinam*, he reached the complete level of *tefillah* where he could rise above the normal rules of *tefillah*, above all "vessels" (*keilim*), the level of the Ohr Pashut (*undifferentiated Infinite Light*) and at that level, Moshe entered Eretz Yisrael in his *neshamah* (*soul*) just not with his *guf* (*body*). Thus Hashem told him "Raise your eyes and see the land", meaning he entered Eretz Yisrael with the rest of Klal Yisrael, through reaching the light of Eretz Yisrael. Had he entered Eretz Yisrael with his body as well, with the "vessels", he would have built the Beis HaMikdash there, a vessel that would hold the light of the Shechinah forever (*as the sefarim hakedoshim explain*).

RAV MORGENSTERN: This doesn't really answer the question. In the end, he only received his reward from the "treasury of free gifts", which he could have received from even if he wouldn't have done any avodah. Therefore what did his avodah help that it shouldn't feel like bread of shame, if he is only receiving a free

gift here and not because of his avodah, then his avodah didn't aid him at all in the reward he received?

The answer to the question posed is rather that although in the future all of Klal Yisrael will return to the Infinite Light the way it was before Creation (*before Hashem contracted the Infinite Light*), as the Arizal teaches in Eitz Chaim, Hashem will then bestow the greatest possible good He can bestow on us even though the creations are no longer doing any avodah to serve Him, and the sefer Tanya (*ch.36*) teaches that Hashem gives tzaddikim the ability to receive their reward, meaning that in the future there will remain an "added adornment" which was made through the avodah of Klal Yisrael throughout all the generations – this is in the secret of "reachable but unreachable" which will be when the Infinite Light is revealed and going hidden and being renewed every moment, so that even when the Infinite Light, the "free gift" is revealed to us, still, there will remain an "added adornment" which will be through the avodah that all of us did throughout the generations, which will renew a bliss in the Infinite Light so that it won't be the same constant pleasure but rather a renewed pleasure every moment, through going hidden and then being renewed, keeping the Infinite Light reachable yet unreachable. This will be the added adornment, which will be through our avodah precisely.

RAV ISAMAR: That is all relevant to the secret of the "perception of Mashiach ben Yosef and perception of Mashiach ben Dovid", for Mashiach ben Yosef reveals Chochmah (*wisdom*) and perception of an added renewal through the avodah, which had not been through any preceding avodah. According to that perception, we need to answer your question that even after we reach the Infinite Light, still our avodah accomplishes the added adornment. But according to the perception of Mashiach ben Dovid, who reveals Keser, the human being's success in becoming elevated from his capabilities and free will to the high place of "free gifts" (*matnas chinam*) will mean that there is no more concept of "bread of shame", since he has used his free will correctly, though now he is receiving his reward from the place above his free will. And although we can't understand this logically, still at the level of Keser "the purpose of knowledge is to know that we do not know" and therefore at that level we can't understand this with Chochmah, with human perception.

RAV MORGENSTERN: And we can also add that there is a higher level within Keser, which is the "inner level of Chochmah is Atik", the Atik within Keser, where understanding and not understanding are fused together as one. When the word Dovid is spelled with a yud (“ ”) it hints to the "Yosef within Dovid", the level where it is said that the purpose of knowledge is to know that we cannot know.

PART 2 – AFTER THE KIDDUSH, WALKING TO RAV MORGENSTERN'S DIRAH

(Rav Morgenstern asked the Rav to walk him home. As they walked, they conversed about deep matters pertaining to how to repair all souls of Klal Yisrael and rectifying all of Creation. Here are some of the highlights of the discussion.)

RAV MORGENSTERN: What can do to enable Moshe Rabbeinu to enter Eretz Yisrael with his body?

RAV ISAMAR: This was the question of the Baal Shem Tov to Mashiach, who is really Moshe himself. The Baal Shem Tov asked, "When will the master be coming?" In other words, when will you enter Eretz Yisrael in your body as well – which will be the Redemption itself, when all vessels will be repaired?

And on that Mashiach answered, "When your wellsprings will spread outward", meaning that we have to rise to the place where everything in the inner dimension becomes turned outward, which in terms of Kaballah is to rise from the lights of ACha"P [*the ears, nose, and mouth levels of Adam Kadmon*] which the Arizal describes as lights that go outward and which form the vessels – and to rise from the lower worlds where surrounding light gets turned into internal light – when reaching the lights of ACha"P which are lights that spread outward from all of Atzmus (*His Essence so to speak*) and from all vessels and from all inner lights, spreading to the surrounding Light, which is Emunah – this will be when all of the Baal Shem Tov's teachings will spread outward, meaning that all of the lights and revelations of the Baal Shem Tov (*which are inner lights*) need to be turned into a way to rise to the lights of ACha"P, the lights that spread outward – meaning that we need to transform all of the revelations of the Baal Shem Tov into the ways of Emunah, the surrounding Light, and these ways of Emunah will become the vessels. Meaning, we need to mainly live in the light of the higher Knowledge, the emunah peshutah, which is above all divisions, and that is our main avodah.

RAV MORGENSTERN: How is it possible to live in that light of Ohr Pashut, which is really Surrounding Light (*ohr makif*), since emunah surrounds us and we don't have enough vessels now to hold onto that Light?

RAV ISAMAR: The main avodah is to clothe this light within all of the teachings of the Arizal that explain all the contractions and parts that the Infinite Light became divided into, and to explain all of those teachings of the Arizal in a way that it won't conceal this Supernal Light (*the Ohr Pashut*) but rather make vessels to hold this Light. But the vessels have to be made nullified to the Light, until it seems to us as if there are no vessels at all anymore. With this we can also answer a contraction asked by the commentaries on the Arizal's Eitz Chaim, who wondered if there will be vessels to hold the lights of ACha"P or if there won't be vessels to hold the light of ACha"P. We can now answer that there won't be regular vessels then which contract the Light into the vessels, rather they will be vessels that are nullified to the Light, and all the vessels then will just be for the purpose of grasping the Surrounding Light, the Supernal Light, which surrounds those vessels.

...In my shiurim that I teach, I am trying to explain all of the writings of the Arizal in an organized way to fit the above description, just as the Sulam explained all of the Arizal's writings with an orderly system of the "3 lines" (*right line, middle line, and left line*). So too, there is a way to explain all of the Arizal's writings in the aforementioned way – and the teachings of Chassidus alone do not suffice. Though Chassidus began the way, especially the Chassidus of Chabad, it never got explained yet in an organized way, of going through every level of the cosmic system (*hishtalsheilus*).

Although I try very hard to explain this, there are some listening to the shiurim who understand the

depth of what's going on here and still they haven't found anyone who is writing the material correctly. This is not a new way, since Chassidus revealed by the Baal Shem Tov already opened it up, but I use certain words, which are really "vessels", as revealed by Chassidus, which we can use in order to connect to the very soul of the tzaddik who is above all those words of his Torah teachings. And with this we can connect to the very Supernal Light that is above all vessels.

As an analogy, someone learns sefer Likutei Moharan and connects so much to the hidden Light there until he is divested from all vessels of the Torah and he can rise to the level of binding to the light of the soul of Rabbi Nachman, how it shines above all vessels and letters of the Torah, and then all letters and vessels of the Torah becomes nullified into this higher light.

RAV MORGENSTERN: And we can add that certainly it is impossible to reach this Supernal Light without the introduction of the way of the students of the Baal Shem Tov, who explained the secret of Miskala and the secret of the three lines, for only through these revelations can we afterwards rise to the secret of yichud which is in the secret of the inner level of Chochmah is the inner level of Atik – the secret of the letter Aleph which is the secret of Achdus (*Hashem's Oneness*), for the letter Aleph is comprised of three lines – yud, vov, and yud. Through those three lines we rise to the Radla, where all the lines are unified in one unification, but without the three lines it is impossible to rise to the secret of yichud.

We need to really wonder if this higher way is for all souls of the Jewish people, because it seems to only be a way for tzaddikim to go in. The one single way for all souls to receive a connection to the above is only through binding and nullifying oneself to the rare individual tzaddikim of the generations who reached the Radla through their avodah.

RAV ISAMAR: Yes but we can add to that it's not enough to simply bind ourselves with the tzaddikim but to bind ourselves with the tzaddikim through a soul-to-soul connection, nishmasa b'nishmasa, meaning that we need to understand the way of learning the sefarim of the tzaddikim, to become connected to their very souls, and not just to simple connect to the words that those tzaddikim taught (*which would only be a connection of rucha b'rucha, to connect to the "Ruach" level of their souls – but to connect to the Neshamah level of their souls, which is to connect to the very soul itself of the tzaddik who is teaching the words*).

And, if we are zocheh to that, then the Geulah will be in the category of a "generation that is entirely worthy", but now most people are not on that level, and if chas v'shalom the Geulah will be a "generation that is entirely guilty", then the way to get to the aforementioned Light is, through the way of "smashing the body", and that will cause the souls of the Jewish people to shine forth from them and then they will be able to bind themselves with the souls of the tzaddikim, on a level of nishmas b'nishmasa (*binding to the very soul of the tzaddik, and not just to the tzaddik's words*).

Geulah - Transforming Pain Into Song

KUMZITZ WITH THE RAV IN WOODMERE SIVAN 5783

What is a song? Every song takes opposite musical notes and sounds and harmonizes them together. In a marriage, there is the voice of the husband and the wife, the chosson and the kallah, and they are opposites, and when they are not worthy, the sounds do not harmonize and there is instead the sound of war in their home. But if the husband and wife are worthy, their different voices come together and harmonize into the sound of a melody, a Niggun.

Why is a person pulled after a Niggun? Any person knows what it's like to be pulled after a sweet melody. What is the secret to this? Simply it's because a sweet song allows us to leave behind the painful reality of life which is filled with struggles, challenges, oppositions – everyone has their own personal "wars" they are fighting. Sometimes you can walk by a house and you hear sounds of war coming from the house. But when we hear a sweet sounding melody, our soul immediately feels a yearning for all problems to become transformed into a melody, Niggun, a song, a Shirah.

The Torah is called a Shirah, a song: "And write for you this song", All of Shas is filled with questions and contradictions that the Gemara asks, but when we reach the inner level all of these contradictions are turned into song. The "war of Torah" becomes turned into the Song that is the Torah. It is there that all our souls yearn for. We want all of the wars to become turned into a song. When a person is at the level of Song, he can feel how there are no wars in the worlds, everything is joy, everything is calm and serene. A song is where we feel that there are no wars in the world. When a person sings a song and connects to the song, he leaves the world of wars and difficulties and opposition and it all becomes turned into one big song.

The root of all the songs in the Torah is the song of Moshe Rabbeinu, Az Yashir, which was sung at a time of war when they were leaving Egypt, when they had been opposed and challenged by Egypt and now that they had won, it all became turned into a song. Not only did it become a song from now on but even the sounds of their pain from Egypt had now turned into sounds of song. Chazal said that Moshe's song was about the future. That is when all the sounds of pain that we have heard throughout all of history, all of the cries of agony and cries of war, will all join together to become turned into a reality of Song. It will be the joyous sounds of the Chosson and His Kallah [*Hashem and the Jewish people*]. The sound of the Chosson and Kallah are the sound of those joining together, everything in Creation becoming turned into one sound. This will be the sound of the Shirah, the Song.

The highest level of Shirah that we have ever known of was in the Beis HaMikdash when the Leviim would sing their Shirah. But when Mashiach comes in our times, all the sounds of the world, all of the agonizing sounds of pain that each of us has groaned, all of these cries and groans will become transformed into the Shirah.

This is called the Geulah, in which the entire world becomes transformed into the Song.

"AIN OD MILVADO"

ACCESSING THE STATE OF BEFORE CREATION

One's Avodas Hashem is complete only when he attaches himself to the state that existed before the creation of the universe.

"Olam", which means universe, has the same letters as the word "he'elam", which means "confusion". Before the world, there was no "confusion" - just perfect emunah.

This is actually what "Ain Od Milvado" means - there is nothing besides Hashem, simply put.

AIN OD MILVADO: NO SENSE OF SELF

"Ain Od Milvado" essentially is for one to nullify his "I" - it is to erase the ego entirely. Your "I" is not limited to any place, as we know. Your "I" is something that can be sensed. When a person erases his senses - that itself is how he nullifies his "I."

When a person gets rid of his "I", he then comprehends how there is simply nothing besides for Hashem. Any doubt about the concept of Ain Od Milvado is only possible when a person is still confined to his "I"; it is always a person's "I" that holds back one's perception of Ain Od Milvado.

We find many times that Chazal have to explain to us many concepts about Emunah, but it's not because there are really questions; there are only "questions" from our point of view, who are only at the receiving end of the information. This is explained by both the Ramchal and the Maharal.

When a person nullifies his senses, he nullifies his "I", and he is then able to understand Ain Od Milvado. He goes from ani, "I", to ayin, "nothing".

HOW TO NULLIFY YOUR "I"

How do you nullify your senses, the sense of your "I"?

The way is through emunah. This is when you realize that your senses are not the end; it is only part of the big picture. There is more to life than what you sense - a whole new kind of inner depth to life. When a person connects himself to emunah and he is aware that there are things which are above his comprehension, he leaves the view from his senses and instead is attached to the Ein Sof (*Infinite*) of Hashem.

ROOM RESERVED IN HEAVEN FOR THOSE WHO HAVE REACHED "AIN OD MILVADO"

Know that there is a chamber (*beichal*) in Heaven called "Ain Od Milvado". In this room, there are souls who have merited to leave all their "garments" on this world, and their entire desire is to be integrated with Hashem. They think and live only "Ain Od Milvado", and this is their whole desire.

On a more subtle note, these souls have arrived at the belief that there is only One whose existence is true – that not only is there no one else besides Him, but the focus is on Him, that He alone exists.

There is a well-known statement of the Baal Shem Tov, that "the purpose of knowledge is to realize that you don't know anything." First, we need to need realize that there is only Hashem, and then we can realize that there is nothing else besides Him. We keep passing through these concepts in a cycle, until we finally reach the ultimate level, which is to integrate totally with Hashem. There are times, however, where we sometimes experience "Ain Od Milvado", and the more we experience it, the more permission we gain in being able to enter the high chamber of Heaven that is entirely about "Ain Od Milvado."

This chamber is the highest of all the Heavenly chambers. The other chambers in Heaven are devoted to the "garments" of Hashem, but this chamber is all about Hashem Himself. It is essentially a longing to become integrated with Hashem, and it intensifies with the more a person realizes "Ain Od Milvado."

YOU CAN'T GET THERE BY "THINKING" ABOUT THIS

However, chas v'shalom should one attempt to actually try to enter this chamber by trying to think about it and concentrate on it; the sefer Nefesh HaChaim has already warned about this. It is d'veykus (*attachment to Hashem*), and d'veykus is a soul experience; it is not something we can "do" with even our mental powers.

This chamber is actually called "the inner chamber of Moshiach". The outer layer of it is essentially the Torah that Moshiach will reveal, while the inner layer of it is Ain Od Milvado.

(The Torah is the "garment" that cloaks Ain Od Milvado, because Ain Od Milvado is at the core of Torah. It is the inner essence of the Torah!)

The inner layer of this chamber is only about Ain Od Milvado, and it is nothing that can be comprehended intellectually. It is the revelation of the ultimate reality as it is – the simple truth of Ain Od Milvado.

בלבכי חלק ז'. "אמונה - אין עוד מלבדו"

Q & A: PROTECTION OF EMUNAH

QUESTION: How can emunah protect us?

ANSWER: There are various mystical ways brought in sefarim hakedoshim which explain how to protect oneself from harm. But there is one kind of protection which is higher than all of these ways – and it is through emunah.

Sefer Nefesh HaChaim (3:12) writes that there is an amazing segulah one can do to be protected from harm: when one firmly believes in his heart that Hashem is in control of everything, and that there is nothing besides for Him who can do anything: "Ain Od Milvado" (*"There is nothing else besides Him"*).

There is actually an even higher level than what is described in sefer Nefesh HaChaim, however.

Sefer Nefesh HaChaim is speaking about someone who wishes to save himself from harm, so he uses the power of "Ain Od Milvado" as a way to protect himself. But there is a higher level, and that is, for a person to nullify his ratzon (*will*) altogether. It is for a person to accept that "If Hashem wants to me to get hurt, so be it – I'm ready to accept the blow with love."

This is known as hishtavus, "equilibrium" – to be at peace with a situation.

A person is able to come to this when he establishes a deep emunah in his heart, a belief in "Ain Od Milvado" – that only Hashem is in charge, as the Nefesh HaChaim describes. And he can reinforce this belief by thinking: "So what if I get hurt? If I get hurt, that is Hashem's will, and I do not want to oppose Hashem's will. Hashem knows what is best for me. If it is good for me to get hurt, then I am accepting it with love. It's the same will of Hashem whether I get hurt or whether I don't get hurt. I am a tool in the hands of my Maker, and He can do with me whatever He pleases."

Understand this well, because this is a truthful and inner matter. It is the perfected level of emunah one can reach; it is to nullify oneself to the Creator.

בלבבי חלק ז' עמ' טו-יז (אמונה - ככה שמירה וככה לשינוי הטבע)