

BEHAALOSCHA – PASSIONATE HEART AND TORAH MIND

THE SOUL – THE INTERNAL FLAME OF MAN WHICH DESIRES THE SPIRITUAL

In the beginning of *Parshas Beha-loscha*, Rashi brings the statement of Chazal that “the flame should rise on its own.” The Gemara compares the *neshamah* (the Divine soul of a Jew) to a *ner*, a flame, for it is written, “*The flame of G-d, is the soul of man.*” Just as the *menorah* was kindled in the *Beis Ha-Mikdash*, where the flame would then rise on its own after it was lit, so must the soul of man, which is compared to a flame, rise on its own.

In the early stage of life, the soul is for the most part concealed, covered over, and hidden. Man has the task to inspire himself and awaken the passionate spiritual desires of his soul, to reveal his *neshamah*. At first, one must exert himself to acquire this spiritual passion, but eventually, his “flame must rise on its own” – it should come to him as natural. The soul of man is an inner flame, and just as a fire gets bigger and bigger, so must a person increase his spiritual desire.

As long as the soul\inner flame of man isn't yet revealed, and it remains in its concealed state – either totally or for the most part – the deep spiritual desire in man will remain dormant.

THE FIVE LEVELS

There is a sharp statement of the

Chofetz Chaim, who said that this world is not at all like the heavenly world. In this world, there are all kinds of people with different opinions and tastes and mannerisms, which all make up this world of falsity. But in the upper worlds, in heaven, in Gan Eden, there are only five levels – those who had a heart that was either spiritually:

- 1) Frozen [completely callous and indifferent].
- 2) Cold [mostly callous and indifferent].
- 3) Lukewarm [a bit of feeling].
- 4) Warm\Hot [enthusiastic].
- 5) Boiling [very passionate].

Those are the five levels – a person either has a heart that is frozen, cold, lukewarm, hot, or boiling.

FROZEN AND COLD

The frozen or cold heart is what is known as a “heart of stone”. In the future, Hashem will erase the “heart of stone” amidst people and introduce a new heart. When the heart has become spiritually frozen, it is like when water freezes. It becomes hard as stone. The element of earth, according to one opinion of Chazal, was formed from frozen water [snow]. A frozen heart is like frozen water, which has become a “heart of stone” [callous to the spiritual].

A level that is a little better than the above, but still cold to spirituality nonetheless, is when the heart of a person is

simply cold. This is also called “Amalek”, the paradigm of being cold and callous to the spiritual; Chazal compared the nation Amalek to a person who jumps into a scalding hot bath and cools it off, hence, Amalek is personified as the cold.

In the generation we are in, there is not only Amalek, but there is also the Erev Rav¹, who are worse than cold souls – they are totally frozen, so their hearts are “hearts of stone”.

LUKEWARM, HOT, AND BOILING: PASSION TO SERVE THE CREATOR

But when one merits to grow a bit spiritually, his heart becomes lukewarm, and when he merits further, he can gain a heart that is warm to spirituality; and, finally, he may gain a heart that is burning strongly for the spiritual. The heart can burn within him, as a great burning desire to serve Hashem – a desire for Torah, mitzvos, fulfilling Hashem's will, for purity and holiness.

THE LEVEL OF ONE'S HEART INFLUENCES HOW WELL ONE SEES REALITY

From a simple, superficial perspective, it appears that having a spiritual heart means to have spiritual feelings, and that there are varying levels of feelings – frozen, cold, lukewarm, hot, or boiling; that there are some who have hearts that are more sensitive to the spiritual, and some have less, with vary-

1 the Mixed Multitude; refer to *Erev Rav Talks*

ing levels. But if the Chofetz Chaim said that there are these five levels in Gan Eden, it is clear to any sensible person that this is not just about having passionate feelings. It is important of course to have passionate feelings, but this is not all there is to spirituality. There is much more than that.

The level of one's heart determines how one views the reality in front of him. If one has a frozen heart, a "heart of stone", he will not see the depth of reality in front of him. If his heart is only a bit cold, he will see a little better into reality. If his heart is lukewarm, he will see deeper, and if his heart is hot, he sees a different reality. And if his heart is boiling, he will see an altogether different reality than the above views.

These five levels of the heart, which are degrees of a person's spiritual level, are five different perspectives on reality – therefore, one with a colder heart cannot view reality as deeply as one whose heart is more warm and alive to the spiritual.

In the current world we live in, of *ikvesa d'meshicha* (the footsteps heralding Mashiach's arrival), where there is *tum'ah* (spiritual defilement) that has infiltrated into even the most sheltered of our society, surrounding us on all sides, on the outside and on the inside (*Rachmana litzlan*) – with a heart that is only lukewarm [towards Torah values], and certainly if it is cold or frozen [towards Torah values], a person will not be sensitive to the situation of today. It will appear to him that there are simply some problems, some issues we have to deal with today, but nothing

more than that to be concerned about.

But if one's heart has become "warmer", more receptive to the spiritual, then he will see a different world. We all live in the same world, but two people can see two totally different views in front of them, depending on the spiritual level of their hearts. Shlomo HaMelech said, "*My heart has seen much wisdom*", the heart can see wisdom. The level of one's heart determines how well one will see reality.

A person may view a certain matter and it will not seem like a problem to him, because it does not contradict *halachah*, while another person will see it as totally forbidden and against all of *halachah* – even though they are both looking at the same exact reality. This is not a question of whose logic is correct if it's permissible or forbidden. Rather, it is an issue of how one sees, and when reality is seen a certain way, the logic of the mind will then fit that reality, and vice versa.

A PASSIONATE HEART FOR TRUTH IS NEEDED FOR SPIRITUAL SURVIVAL TODAY

In the era we live in of *ikvesa d'meshicha*, where the world is filled with *tum'ah* – which Hashem has arranged in His wisdom, in His great plan – as long as one's heart is not burning for truth, one will not see the reality he is found in. When he doesn't see the reality he is in, it almost indefinite that he will fall into the *tum'ah* which surrounds him, "as a dog laps up its vomit".

Only with a heart that burns for

truth can a person absorb the reality he is in, realizing that he is in a world where almost of all of Creation, without exception, lives contrary to the Torah and to Hashem's will. He will see things that others who are less sensitive to the truth won't see. One person will think that a certain matter is permissible *l'chatchilah*, while another person will see it as unquestionably forbidden, because his heart burns for the truth.

There was a story that when the Chofetz Chaim attended the *Knessiah Gedolah* (gathering of all Jews to hear messages from the Gedolim), there was a dispute about how high the *mechitzah*² should be, to separate the men from the women. They asked the Chofetz Chaim to decide, and he ruled that the height of the *mechitzah* should be raised. They asked him: What is the source for this ruling? He responded: "It is written here in this verse: "*Write it on the calendar of your heart.*"

When the heart burns for truth, a person sees reality differently and he sees things that other people don't see. That is why an *adam gadol* may render certain halachic rulings and decisions that others don't understand.

As the *tum'ah* increases with the further we enter into *ikvesa d'meshicha*, the hearts of people have slowly become more and more indifferent – more lukewarm, colder, and more frozen. There is a lack of feeling for the spiritual, for the issues at hand today, especially in those who are born into homes where there is a lukewarm or cold attitude towards truth. Children are being born into homes where they are like "captured children", born into

a cold and apathetic attitude towards true *Yiddishkeit*. What was once clear to our fathers and grandfathers as totally contradictory behavior to the Torah, has now become totally *l'chatchilah* for many.

What Hashem is asking from people in this generation is that the heart should be burning for His truths, His Torah, to fulfill His will. This was always the task throughout all generations, but in previous times, there were varying levels in spiritual greatness; the more one's heart burned for truth, the higher of a level he attained. But in the time we live in today, if the heart is not burning for truth, he will simply following the environment around him, and the environment today is found in the 50th gate of defilement, and even worse.

In our generation, what Hashem asks of us is that our hearts should be warm and passionate towards the truth. When the heart is burning for truth, a person will feel the contradiction between Hashem's will with the reality in the world today. That burning passion will serve to separate him and distance him from the entire defiled world that is found in our generation today.

We should understand clearly that there is a need for our generation to have a passionate heart which burns for truth, and that this is not a high spiritual level to reach. Without that passion, a person will become captured by his physical senses today, even if he is in the world of those who strictly observe Torah and mitzvos; because while something may seem permissible on a "*halachic*" level, a person who is sen-

sitive to the truth will see a different reality in front of him, and he will see how it is *tum'ah*, the depth of this difficult exile which we are found in.

Understandably, we must deal with the exile by making use of our power of free will to choose correctly, to put up a fight against all that isn't true, and to *daven* and beseech Hashem to be saved. But when the heart burns for truth, one will do even more – he will separate himself entirely from the world of evil today.

Thus, having a warm, passionate heart that burns for the truth is absolutely necessary today in order to have a basic spiritual survival.

TOO MUCH EMOTION CAN WEAKEN THE MIND

However, the following point must also be clarified. When the heart becomes warmer and more receptive towards feeling the truth, sometimes this can be problematic for those who are weak in their intellectual abilities.

There are two kings in man: the mind and the heart. When the mind\intellect is the dominating force in man, usually, the heart\emotions are less activated, and the vice versa: when the heart\emotions are more dominant, usually the mind's intellectual abilities are weakened. Too much emotional passion may be a problem for those who were weak in their intellect to begin with, and sometimes, too much emotional passion can also lead to a weakened intellect.

The *Mesillas Yeshtarim* says that there

are people who think that those who are into serving Hashem are people with weak minds [because they have a very emotional nature]. Indeed, strong emotions and feelings can weaken the intellectual abilities of the mind, or it may come from a weak intellect.

There are four elements in the soul: earth, water, wind and fire. The mind works like cold water – its "coldness" enables it to think rationally and objectively, without getting sidetracked by an emotional feeling about something. The heart, though, works like a fire. It is a warm, passionate force which sees an emotional perspective in something. In fact, Chazal state that if not for the lungs which blow air and cool the heart's heat, a person would become burned on his inside, due to the immense heat of the heart.

When the heart's emotions overpower the intellect, whatever is found in his heart will "go to his head." There are two negative character traits which stem from the element of fire: conceit and anger. When a person is conceited, he rises [in his mind], meaning that the element of fire in his heart "goes to his head". The conceit goes from the heart to the mind\head, and this weakens the mind's intellect.

We also see this with anger. The Gemara³ says that a person when he is angry loses his wisdom, and the *Nefesh HaChaim*⁴ explains that this is not a punishment – it is due to the workings of the body and soul. Since the element of fire is in the heart, and anger stems from the element of fire, the anger from the heart rises to the mind, overpowering the coldness of the mind

3 Pesachim 66a

4 Nefesh HaChaim: Perakim: 1

and overtaking it with its heat. This causes the mind to lose its rational abilities, thus, his wisdom leaves him.

We see from the above two examples (conceit and anger) that when the emotions are too strong, the heart will overtake the mind, which weakens the intellectual abilities of the mind. In the cases of conceit and anger, a person will lose his ability to rationalize. But in fact, even if a person's feelings are holy, if these emotions are stronger than his mind, this can also weaken the intellect.

Here is a clear example. When a person has very strong feelings and reactions towards anything holy, he may act without thinking things through enough, and he will do things that contradict *halachah*. He may be impulsive and react too quickly, without thinking first of what needs to be done. His heart becomes enthused and he becomes so emotional that it overtakes his mind, and he loses his ability to see things more objectively. Then he may do certain acts which, while stemming from a pure feeling for holiness, are still incorrect. His mind has become weakened from the intense feelings of his heart, and when the intellect is hampered, it cannot think properly and he will come to err.

Going further with this, the depth of the inner task of man, and the deep wisdom about our entire task in life is, that on one hand, we need a very passionate heart that burns for truth – not just lukewarm or hot, but “boiling”, as the Chofetz Chaim said - but on the other hand, we need to counter our passionate feelings with a strong amount of intellect, which will keep us in balance.

Without a strong intellect, the intellect becomes weakened and the emotions will be too powerful, and a person will not see objectively. For example, there are people who have such powerful spiritual feelings that they don't have the mental energy afterwards to learn Torah in-depth.

Torah learning requires subtle analysis, scrutinizing, and paying attention to nuances, which all requires a refined mind. Some people have a hard time with learning Torah in-depth because they have weaker intellectual abilities to begin with, or because their minds are elsewhere so they have a hard time focusing on the information in front of them. But in cases where a person often experiences powerful emotions, the intellect simply cannot function as it should.

To illustrate, the Chasam Sofer said that after Rosh HaShanah and Yom Kippur, he became so emotional with feelings for the spiritual that he could not concentrate on learning Gemara in-depth, so instead, he wrote liturgies and poetries of praise to Hashem. He was aware that his heart had overtaken his mind for this bit of time. This was only for a small amount of time [but the rest of us may struggle with this problem on a daily basis!].

MAINTAINING THE BALANCE BETWEEN INTELLECT AND EMOTION

In order to live correctly, if one wants to live a life of truth in this generation, firstly, he must have a heart that burns for truth. If not, he is indefinitely in spiritual danger. One must yearn for truth, for purity, for holiness, for sweetness in Torah, for closeness to

Hashem and doing His will.

But on the other hand, one must balance this with a strong, powerfully developed intellect, so that the strong emotions in his heart shouldn't overpower his mind. One needs the “cold water” of intellect, which will enable him to think calmly and objectively and to learn Torah in-depth, together with the “fire” of the heart's emotions, which will enable him to be sensitive to the spiritual and to burn for the truth.

A true, inner life of the spiritual is to have this balance, of in-depth Torah learning combined with deep feelings for the spiritual and for truth. When one has the balance between these two extremes, he can live a true life. His mind will be connected to where it should be, and his heart will be connected to where it should be. Such a person will be able to maintain objective thinking even as his heart is passionate with emotion.

THE MIND\INTELLECT VS. THE HEART\EMOTIONS

This leads us to a subtle point of life. There are different soul roots which Hashem has created. When one has both a strongly developed intellect (through Torah learning) and a strongly developed heart (passionate feelings for the spiritual), which of these will be more powerful? Will one's strong intellect overpower his strong heart, or will his strong heart overpower his strong intellect?

If one of these forces is totally dominant over the other, there is a lifelong task of maintaining a balance between them. But let us ask a different question: When one has a strongly devel-

oped mind as well as a strongly developed heart, which of these will be more powerful?

The mind and heart are compared to the “two great luminaries”, the sun (represented by the mind’s intellect) and the moon (represented by the heart’s emotions). The sun and the moon were at first the “two great luminaries” in Creation, two kings, just as the mind and heart are the “two kings” in man. The sun and moon said to Hashem: “Can two kings share one crown?” Hashem then made the moon smaller and lowered its status. That is why a person’s mind needs to be more powerful than the emotions, in order for him to act correctly.

Chazal said that “one’s wisdom needs to be stronger than his actions”. The Alter of Kelm said that the distance between the mind’s understanding and the heart’s understanding is like the difference between the heavens and the earth. Since the moon was lessened, the emotions generally play less of a role in the personal development of man, and for this reason, most people have greater thinking\ rational abilities and generally show less emotional development.

But when one merits to enthrone his heart with feelings for the spiritual, it is like a return to the state of before Creation, when the moon was still king and it was prominent. Together with a strongly developed mind, he can have the “two great luminaries” – a sun\mind, and a moon\heart that are both equal in size. He will have these “two kings” to lead him and guide him.

Which of these will be more powerful, when one has both of them? It

will not overpower the other in the sense of totally disabling the other force from working properly, as in the case of one who hasn’t yet developed either of these abilities. Rather, a person will be slightly and subtly drawn towards either one of these forces.

For this reason, our great leaders throughout the generations had different leanings towards either the mind or heart, depending on their soul root. A discerning eye can see which of our leaders were drawn more towards intellect, and which were drawn more towards the heart. It is a matter that depends on the different roots of souls.

The deep power of free will which each soul can choose is not about choosing which is a “better” approach, either the mind\intellect or the heart\ emotions. Rather, the deep power of choice given to each soul is for one to reach one’s “unique share” in the world, and that is where a person will either be more drawn towards either the mind or the heart. But this can only be determined only at the end of one’s spiritual ascent, and it is far from most people to reach.

DEVELOPING OUR MINDS AND HEARTS THROUGH TORAH-STUDY AND MUSSAR-STUDY

The main kind of *avodah*, which is the one applicable to most people is, on one hand, to awaken the depth of the heart, more and more; Reb Yisrael Salanter developed a path that develops the feelings for the spiritual, by learning *mussar* (ethics), with in-depth study of the words of the Sages that are meant to awaken self-improvement, along with a passionate

verbal review of the words. And while mussar requires in-depth analysis, the need for in-depth analysis is mainly to be used with the study of Gemara, the main area of the development of the mind.

When one has in-depth study of Torah on a regular basis, together with a heart that burns for truth, he lives the true Jewish life, the life that he should live, the way it’s supposed to look like. When one lives in this way, it resembles lighting the *Ner Tamid* (the constant flame) in the *menorah* in the *Beis HaMikdash*, where the flame would rise on its own after it was lit. A mind that always thinks about Torah thoughts, together with a heart that constantly burns in its passion to serve the Creator, is the complete balance.

In the future, both the mind and the heart will be completely rectified, when they will again become the “two great luminaries”, equal in status. One can also have these “two great luminaries” even now, when he has a strongly developed mind (through Torah study) and a strongly developed heart (feelings for the spiritual).

IN CONCLUSION

May we merit, with the help of Hashem, to awaken in ourselves a love for Hashem, and to build our minds through the study of Torah in-depth, and to fuse them both together, so that we can have perfected service to the Creator.

שיחת השבוע 029. בהעלותך - לב בוער

Q&A

HOW DO I OPEN MY HEART

How can I open my heart more?

ANSWER:

You can try to do so by learning and working on the steps laid out in sefer “Bilvavi”, Part One.

IRREGULAR HEARTBEAT FROM REALIZING THE TRUE REALITY

I was reading material of the Rav and in middle of the reading I had the clear awareness of the spiritual world and that it is the true place and the true world, and that the reality in front of us on this world is not the true reality and that we are not living in the true reality. Then my heart was pounding quickly and I had to go to the hospital to check it out, and after some medication my heart stabilized. But there may have been other factors that may have caused this, because I know that the Rav says that people who remain with Internet won't be by the Geulah and once I asked the Rav about what to tell people who don't want to give up their Internet use and the Rav told me that I can't say anything to people who don't want to hear anything about this. As a result of that I cannot be relaxed at all, because I see my friends going to their eternal destruction chas v'shalom and I am helpless to stop it. (1) *[Since I had irregular breathing and had to be hospitalized]*, do I need to do teshuvah? And if yes, how? (2) Can the Rav daven for me? My name is....

ANSWER:

Strengthen yourself with the emunah (*faith*) that Hashem is

running His world according to His understanding, as it were, and not according to the way we understand. We cannot comprehend logically all of the evil that is found in our world today, and all of the profound, encompassing knowledge that it involves. The possuk says, “Your faith at nights”. Only from pure and clear emunah can we be calmed and feel reliant on HaKadosh Baruch Hu that He is doing everything according to His infinite thoughts. Refuah shelaimah! *(May you have a speedy recovery!)*

WHAT IS THE HEART?

1) What is the “heart”? 2) Where can I learn about the “70 soul faculties”?

ANSWER:

(1) The heart is the product of the extension of Binah. The Binah faculty of the mind extends into the body, where it becomes a new creation: the heart. This is explained by the Arizal. The concept of the heart is hakarah (*recognizing*), and a more external level of the heart is hargashah (*feelings*), and the most external level of the heart is hispaalus (*reactiveness*). You may learn about this in the series “Getting To Know Your Heart”. Refer to the Arizal's words in Eitz Chaim, shaar 31:4.

(2) Refer to the series “Getting To Know Your 70 Soul Faculties” and also the sefer Shivim Kochos HaNefesh L'Gra by Rav Greenwald zt”l who was a student of the Steipler zt”l, which explains the 70 soul faculties listed by the Gra.

HOW TO REACH HEART-RECOGNITION OF HASHEM:

I understand from the Rav's approach that emunah must be coming from our heart, that we must be able to feel our awareness of Hashem, as opposed to merely knowing of Him in our intellect, because we cannot base our emunah in Hashem on our intellect, since our intellect is limited and we can become mistaken through it. So how indeed do we reach emunah of the heart? I don't mean to ask about how to internalize our intellectual emunah into our heart, rather I mean to ask: How do we start directly with emunah in our heart?

ANSWER:

The depth of our soul's power to have emunah is from the same place in you where you recognize your own existence, the truth of your havayah. It is from your own havayah that you can recognize the absolute havayah, which is the truth of His infinite existence. For a Jew is an actual “portion of G-d from above”. Understand that well. When a person penetrates into the depth of the truth of his soul, after he has purified the soul's outer layers, he then reaches his very havayah, and then he can recognize the absolute havayah, the truth of the Infinite. This is the root way of recognizing our Creator, by recognizing our own existence and from that very same place of self-recognition we can recognize that the existence of all creations is only allowed due to the truth of His

havayah, His infinite existence.

When one is beginning to surround this perception, it is called ohr makif, where his awareness of Hashem is called emunah (*belief in Hashem*). When one internalizes it, it is ohr primi, and it is called hakarah (*recognition*). In these short lines, we have written the pnimiyus, the inner depth and the truth, of all of life!!!

EASILY HEARTBROKE

I easily feel others' pain, every painful event that happens in the world bothers me to no end and I can't think straight from it. Is this a good middah or a bad middah?

ANSWER:

Feeling another's pain is a good middah, mainly when it stems from your nefesh Elohis (*G-dly soul*). However, if feeling others' pain makes you unable to function afterwards meaning that you can't return to being happy afterwards, and slowly your pain for others is controlling you, then it is not feeling another's pain anymore because now it has turned into depression and it is a sign of being emotionally imbalanced.

HOW TO RELATE TO OUR SON WHO GAVE UP YIDDISHKEIT

About 10 years ago, for various reasons our son left yeshiva. He was a very emotional and good-hearted type of child and he had been very talented. His ruchniyus began to spiral downward until he left Yiddishkeit totally. He had kept up with us though very minimally. About 3 years ago, though, he totally severed his connection with us. He says that no one understands or feels him (*as a*

mother would to her child). Recently he has severed himself completely from Yiddishkeit and from the Creator, Rachmana Litzlan (*may Hashem save him*). As his parents, what should be our relationship with him? And how can I, as his mother, give him the mother-to-child bond that he feels I've let him down in?

ANSWER:

Give him genuine love and help whenever he needs it, without thinking about how he acts. Help him in anything he needs, except if it's for something that's forbidden to help him with. Having pure motivations to help him and with being open towards him will, with assistance from Above, touch his heart. And if there is a zechus, this will even become the path for him to return to his root.

CHRONIC SADNESS

Ever since I was a child I have had such difficult emotional suffering. I never felt serene in my mind for even one day of my life. I had it very well though from others and pretend that I'm not suffering inside, because my life is enough of a Gehinom (*purgatory*) and I don't need to add to it but turning off other people with my negativity which would make them avoid me and then I would be living a double Gehinom on this world. So many times I feel so discouraged that even when I daven it's all just on autopilot. I can't find the calmness to just sit down and learn. It's also very hard for me to separate even a bit from permitted taavah (*physical desires*). My life is basically on autopilot, I live like a robot. Yet my heart is sick inside me because I know all that's bothering me is all worthless and imaginary,

and still even though I know this, I can't find any inner peace.

ANSWER:

Every day, do at least one thing amidst a feeling of simchah (*joy*) and chiyus (*energy*), and from being deeply connected to what you are doing. And, with any moment of the day when you do feel serenity in your mind, be happy with each of these serene moments.

ABOUT THE ROLE OF TEFILLA

Rebbi Nachman says that many tzaddikim reached all that they reached through tefillah, while he reached everything through hisbodedus together with tefillah. Does every person need to do this? Does a person need tefillah in order to gain self-recognition?

ANSWER:

A: Statements of Rebbi Nachman are the "illumination of Mashiach", and Mashiach is linked with tefillah, because Mashiach is from the word masiach, "to converse", to talk to Hashem through tefillah. So there were tzaddikim who built their avodas Hashem largely through tefillah. But it makes perfect sense that other tzaddikim did not begin with tefillah, though they did make use of tefillah. There was no tzaddik who ever reached anything without tefillah, but does that mean that every tzaddik's main aspect was tefillah? Certainly there were tzaddikim who didn't. For example, the Chazon Ish. The Chazon Ish didn't mainly reach his growth through tefillah. Did he not daven? Of course he davened. He himself writes that a person has to daven before he wants to understand anything. But did he base

everything on tefillah? It's hard to say that tefillah was his main aspect. He based everything on working hard at learning Torah, with mesirus nefesh, and along with this he also davened from the depths of his heart. But he didn't base everything on tefillah, he didn't make everything hinge on tefillah alone.

Q: But perhaps we can say that the Chazon Ish reached mesirus nefesh in Torah only because he davened so much. Especially because someone said that the Chazon Ish emphasized tefillah even more than learning Torah, and in addition, the Chazon Ish wrote in a letter, "I put more effort into tefillah than into my Torah learning."

A: That is true, but it was only a result of something else. The reason why he put more effort into davening than learning was because he testified on himself that because he is so immersed in his learning, he can't focus as much on his davening, because his mind is immersed in whatever area of Torah he was learning about, and therefore he had to overcome his love for the Torah in order to be able to daven properly.

All of his davening and crying were a result of his Torah learning. Did he have a very strong ability of davening? Yes. And it seems that as the years continued, he davened even more. But what was it all based on? His Torah learning. Why did he have to put more effort into his davening than into his learning? It was because his Torah learning came natural to him, it was more his nature to learn than to daven, and therefore he found it difficult to daven. That is why he had to put in more effort to his davening,

but not because tefillah was more important to him than Torah.

Sometimes people read stories of the Gedolim, and not always are the stories accurate. Even when the story is accurate, it is hard to understand the meaning of the story, and it is this lack of understanding which changes the whole picture.

Q: But he would often cry with tears when he davened. It seemed that this was because of his feelings and d'veykus, not because he had difficulty concentrating on his davening due to his learning.

A: His power of thinking was even stronger than his emotions. It's true that he davened and cried, but his strong point was his power of thought and being immersed in learning, much more than his power of davening.

GETTING PAST OUR GUF & REVEALING OUR NESHAMAH

What should a person do if he has already tasted some ruchniyus, he feels a tremendous burning desire to grow higher in ruchniyus, as if he's found the light, and he connected to his neshamah – but afterwards he finds that this experience is gone, because his guf (*body*) has taken over again? How do we get past our guf and subjugate it to our neshamah?

ANSWER:

The sefarim hakedoshim say, "Smash the body". This is by (1) Developing pure, unquestioning emunah in Hashem. (2) Connecting to the depth of the Torah's wisdom. (3) Crying out to Hashem for help, both externally and internally (*"their hearts cried out to Hashem"*). (4) Through hisbodedus (*solitude and reflection*),

until a person reaches a place of inner silence in his soul. (5) And finally, it entails improving one's middos.

HOW CAN WOMEN DEAL WITH CHALLENGES

How can women and girls deal with the hardships of life, especially when they don't see any hope on the horizon? If men can deal with the pressures of life through learning Torah, which gladdens the heart, what can women do since women don't have Torah learning?

ANSWER:

They need to learn and understand how all chiyus (*inner energy*) comes from emunah. Not just to believe in Hashem, but that our entire chiyus comes from emunah.

And by extension, we should get chiyus from just doing Hashem's will.

Besides for this, every bas Yisrael must find her strongest ability (*as explained in the sefer Hakarah Atzmis, Self-Recognition*) and to actualize her strongest potential. That will be the source of her chiyus! And besides this, chiyus can also be gained from smaller things as well.

HOW DID THE RAV BECOME A TZADDIK?

How did the Rav become such a tzaddik and reach such high levels??

ANSWER:

"The heart knows the bitterness of his soul" that I am no tzaddik !