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Reaching The Deepest Part of the Soul: Now What?

In the previous chapters, we have described the ladder of steps in how we can grow. If a person gets to the top of ladder and he “falls”, though - he will have a very hard fall - may Hashem have mercy upon him in such a situation.

The innermost point of the soul, because it is so lofty, can cause a person to have a very dangerous fall if he does not know how to use it properly. We have described here the inner point in our soul as being a point of complete tranquility within. The danger of it, though, is that if a person is too immersed in his inner tranquility, he simply will stay there and he won't move; he won't act.

If we ask a person why reaching his inner point of the soul is not causing him to act better in life, he might give all kinds of excuses. He might claim that his inner voice is telling him that he should just have “*Bitachon*” and trust in Hashem without having to act upon his depth; or he might claim that his inner voice is telling him that he doesn't have to do anything. Sometimes, it is indeed very possible that the inner voice in a person is telling a person that he doesn't have to act properly!

However, even if his claim is true, and his inner voice is indeed telling him so [that he doesn't have to do the *mitzvos*], we can't tell a person to simply ignore the inner voice, because the inner voice is indeed there. Rather, it just shows that the person hasn't really yet connected to his inner point [even though he is aware of it], and therefore, what the person needs to do is to truly connect himself to his innermost point of the soul, whereupon he will hear the right messages and discover how to act properly.

Inner Serenity vs. Lethargy

When a person identifies his innermost point of the soul, which is really his point of *menuchah* - inner serenity - this will manifest with how he acts on the holy Shabbos, which is the time in which we reveal our *menuchah*. Shabbos is when we return to our root, to our source. Most people, though, think that Shabbos is about finding *menuchah* from the action of the weekday. It is true that Shabbos is the time to rest from the weekday, but, that's not all there is to Shabbos.

How do people understand the *menuchah* of Shabbos? By many people, it is: to get up late on

Shabbos morning, to eat *cholent*, and to rest on Shabbos afternoon, and when Shabbos ends, the person says, "Ah, Shabbos is over."

What is the *menuchah* of Shabbos? How are we experiencing it? Do we feel on Shabbos how it connects us to our root? Or do we just feel our body taking it easy because it wants some physical rest from the week?

Yissocher is compared in the Torah to a donkey, which bears a heavy burden and then finds rest. Chazal say that this is referring to bearing the yoke of Torah – because the tribe of Yissocher is known to bear the yoke of Torah, therefore, he finds *menuchah*. When a person is really connected to the *Yechidah* of his soul, upon that he will have the true *menuchah*. How can we know if it's real *menuchah*? If his exertion is matching up to his *menuchah*.

We have two parts to our soul. Our *Yechidah* is our inner point, the point of deep serenity, while the outer part of our soul is the actions that we do. If we do too much action and we don't try to attain serenity, we will lose our inner serenity. That is one problem. But if we become too calm, we won't act at all, and this is evil. True *menuchah* is when a person is willing to bear the burden of the Torah's actions that the Torah requires, and it is only then that it can be applied, "And he saw that *menuchah* (rest) was good" - because a person is willing to bear the yoke of Torah, only then does the Torah consider his *menuchah* "good" when he seeks it.

If a person's *menuchah* is causing him to refrain from having any action in his life, part of this is stemming from his *menuchah*, but part of this is stemming from the evil trait of *laziness*, which is rooted in the element of earth, the element in the soul that is known to weigh a person down and prevent him from spiritual progress. In order to have true *menuchah* \inner serenity, a person's actions must match the amount of serenity he has. If one reaches his point of deep *menuchah*, he needs to match it with actions that are equal in strength to the depth of the *menuchah* that he has reached, or else all the *menuchah* becomes translated into laziness, and thus it is not real *menuchah*.

We see something amazing. Moshe would go out from Pharaoh's palace and saw the people suffering, to see their pain; he involved himself with actions towards them. Then he had to run away to Midyan, where he lived a life of being a quiet shepherd. What did Hashem tell him after that? "Go back to Egypt" - lead the people. First he did actions, then he went into calmness, and from there, he was able to go back to action with a renewed perspective. When he reached his calmness, he became worthy of prophecy. But it didn't end there. Hashem made him go back to Egypt and lead the people, and the depth behind this was, that Hashem was really telling him: "If you have reached such *menuchah*, then you need to act upon it. Therefore, you need to go back and lead."

He needed the *menuchah*, but after that, he has to build upon that and be able to act properly from all that he achieved from his *menuchah*. Here we see that *menuchah* is only worthy when a person is able to act afterwards upon it.

Hisbodedus: Finding Time For Solitude With Hashem

After a person reaches high levels, he is apt to lose his spiritual gains. In Kelm, they would have self-introspection for every ten days after Yom Kippur and check themselves to see if they were still keeping to their resolutions. This custom was called "*Asirei Kodesh*". We see from here that when a person reaches very high levels, he has to make sure afterwards that he is acting upon that depth he has reached.

The *sefer Chareidim* writes that if a person wants to purify himself and to do *teshuvah*, he should

meditate once a week, in solitude (*hisbodedus*) and connect himself to Hashem. He writes that a person should have one day a week in which you are cut off from the world so you can connect with Hashem.

Hisbodedus In The 21st Century

This *hisbodedus* should be done only once a week, and not every day of the week. If *hisbodedus* is so crucial, why can't we spend the whole week in *hisbodedus*? There is a simple, practical reason. We all have a family to take care of; it's impossible to live a life of total serenity and solitude. If a man were to spend his entire week in *hisbodedus*, his wife would want a divorce; he has children to support, and he has a job that he can't just leave.

But although these reasons all make sense, there is also a deeper reason why such behavior would be evil. We can't spend so much time being alone, because we were not created in order to separate ourselves from society and become alone. Chazal say that one has to be *daato me'ureves im ha'beriyos* (his mind should be pleasantly mixed with others - that he should get along with others). In addition, we see that Moshe Rabbeinu had to leave the camp in order to receive prophecy, but he did not pitch his tent outside the camp. Moshe Rabbeinu dwelled in society, and he had times in which he entered into solitude in order to reach his high levels, but he did not remain all the time in his solitude.

People who live in deserts are acting incorrectly, because they are misunderstanding the concept of serenity. On the other hand, people who only live in civilization and never get away to spend some time alone are also missing the purpose of life. Hashem created quiet places, such as deserts and forests, and He also created cities and towns; why? It is to show that part of our life needs to be spent around people, and part of our life needs to also be spent alone. This is because serenity needs to be balanced with a life of action, and our actions need to be balanced with serenity.

And what does a person need to reflect about when he indeed has quiet time? He has to check himself and see if he is acting properly in his life, so that his actions are just as prominent in his life as the *menuchah* that he has reached; he has to become aware if he is acting balanced in his life, or if perhaps he is being extreme with either the 'action' side to his life or the 'serenity' side to his life.

Yaakov *Avinu* had already been secluded already for 14 years, in the yeshivah of Shem and Ever, before he went to Charan to build his family. We see from this that only after reaching his inner serenity did he acquire the strength to build his great family. After that, he was able to fight with an angel "alone". We learn from this that the point of acquiring serenity is so that one will be able to carry out his responsibilities in a truer and deeper way, and from that, his power of "alone" becomes deepened as well, whereupon the person keeps repeating the cycle: Alone, back to society, alone, etc.

The true way to live life is to live a life of *rotzoh v'shov*, "running and retreating", a cycle of progressing and pulling back from progress, back and forth. We are ideally meant to live in society, then leave it temporarily so we can get back our serenity, and then return to society, and repeat the cycle.

There is a sefer written by Rav Moshe Kordovo called *Sefer Gerushin*, "The Book of Divorce." No, it's not a sefer about names of people who got divorced. It is the *chiddushim* (Torah thoughts) that he wrote when he was in seclusion and away from society, in which he was temporarily "divorced" from the world. The serenity that he reached there enabled him to write his *chiddushim*. However, he

didn't stay there. He came back to town and continued on with normal life, because the purpose was not to leave society. The purpose was to gain serenity from the seclusion and then return to society renewed with the serenity that he acquired.

Why is it that most people are not succeeding in life? It is because most people are too involved with their obligations they have to take care of in civilization: taking care of their families, visiting their parents and grandparents, working at their jobs...and they end their life at the "obligation" level.

There is also a minority of people who have the opposite problem - they are not involved at all with society. They don't get married, and they wish to be like the Sage Ben Azai, who never got married because he was always learning Torah. These kinds of people love to be alone; there are even people who live in caves because they do not like to be in society. They don't like to do anything at all and would prefer to spend all their time in solitude. *Baruch Hashem* these people know of inner serenity, but...

Either of these lifestyles is not truthful. If someone is too involved with his life obligations and he never has time to himself, he has no time to reflect about truth, and he will definitely never grow in life. The other kind of person, who spends too much time alone, will also not get to the truth, because he is not doing Hashem's will in life. Hashem wants a person to radiate himself outwards towards other people and give to others; if a person spends all his time alone, he never reaches the intended purpose in life that Hashem created the world for.

Shabbos - A Missed Opportunity

In the ideal state of life, when Hashem first created man, the plan was to enter Shabbos forever, where we would have had eternal rest. But look at how we spend Shabbos. People on Shabbos are busy with their families, with meals, and there is almost no time for anyone to think on Shabbos about priorities. And understandably, they surely don't attain any serenity as a result.

Someone once met me on a Sunday and told me he's been completely exhausted since Friday. I asked him, "You didn't get to rest at all over Shabbos?" He told me, "Shabbos? Shabbos is the hardest day of the week for me!"

People on Shabbos aren't arriving at any serenity, tied up with eating and conversation, and often they don't even get to rest. Even when people do get their rest on Shabbos, it's just sleep on their beds, and they don't reach a deep feeling of inner serenity. Shabbos is really the day in which we can find solitude and become totally serene in our soul. But in our generation, this is almost unheard of.

The Decision That Will Change Your Life

So what should we do? If we are not getting any serenity on our Shabbos, we will have to get it from somewhere. We need a practical way to get serenity.

We all have responsibilities during the week; there is no time to ourselves. We are either out shopping or taking care of family members. What we need to do is live in civilization and take care of our responsibilities, but we also need some time during the week to get away from civilization so that we have time to reflect with ourselves, alone.

Some people will counter that we don't need to get away from civilization in order to be serene, and

that we can become serene in our house. This is a nice idea, but it doesn't really happen. There are always noises in the house, such as the telephone and the neighbors, which do not allow for serenity.

What it all boils down to is: If a person is willing to **actually set aside some time in his life** in which he can have some solitude, to be totally alone from society. The way of our earlier Rabbis, and before that, our prophets and our forefathers, was to spend time in solitude. We need to go in their footsteps and also have solitude; once a week, find a day of solitude, in which you are totally separate from society. This advice is written about by the Ramchal in *sefer Derech Eretz Chaim*, where he writes that this is easy to follow advice that bears tremendous results.

Without doing this weekly *hisbodedus*, it is impossible to succeed in life nowadays. It is **impossible** to succeed in life without setting aside this time for *hisbodedus*! Life today is noisy and it bombards us. If we never try to get some serenity, the noise of life will prevent us until the end of our life from ever seeing success in our life.

There is no one to whom this doesn't apply; we are all very busy from life. If we are too busy from life, we won't succeed in life, so what is the solution? The answer is that you have to realize that all of our lives are filled with constant strain from all the hard work. Life is not easy; if we work hard and we have a livelihood, that means that we have a hard life from working hard, and if we don't work hard enough and thus we don't have enough livelihood, then our life isn't either easy. So either way, our life is not easy – whether we are making money, or not.

So what should we do about this? The curse of hard work is something we can all relate to. Because we are so bombarded with life, we have no time to ourselves. How do we get out of this 'Egyptian slavery' kind of life that we are forced into? It's simple: take a bus or a taxi and get away from this civilization [once a week]!

So the question is if we can have this incorporated to our daily schedule. I've never met anyone yet who is willing to give up his sleep and do *hisbodedus*; it's too hard to do this. It's way too pressurizing, and the person will end up skipping it altogether. However, you can definitely give up some of your sleep for it – you don't have to cut out an entire night's sleep. Chazal say that it is impossible to go three days without sleep, so we all need our sleep. The question is how much sleep one really needs, though. You can definitely give some of your sleep for *hisbodedus*.

What we need to do is incorporate some *hisbodedus* into our day, and then we can build upon that. That is the basis for everything.

If we don't have this basis, I can talk and talk and talk about spirituality, but all the words here will simply enter one ear and leave the other. It's like trying to put something into a cup with a hole at the bottom; everything you put in will simply fall through the hole. There must be a basis to hold the contents of the cup together, or else everything will fall out through the bottom.

If a person makes sure to **set aside time, every day** during the week for *hisbodedus*, he has the firm basis which he can use to get to an inner kind of life. But if a person never has this time set aside, he might always be running after higher spiritual levels, trying to grab onto more and more spirituality, but spirituality cannot be grabbed. If a person really wants spirituality, he needs to acquire it with patience, slowly, and with *yishuv hadaas* (a settled mind). In order to have that, a person needs to practically set aside time every day for *hisbodedus*.

Returning To Our Nature of Being “Alone”

Chazal say, “Man was created individual”. What is the meaning behind this concept? To show us that man has to reach his *Yechidah*, the “individual” aspect in his soul, his innermost point. When Adam was first created, there was no Chavah yet, no other person in the world to talk to, to show us that man has a point in himself which is alone and individual.

For a person to reach his *Yechidah*, he has to find a quiet place and attain total quiet there, and to be alone. In this place, he can quiet himself down more and more. When he reaches the inner silence – and there are many levels to this inner silence – he can begin to reach his inner point at least minimally, and from that, he will be able to build upon that and implement all of the knowledge that we have described until now.

When a person reaches his inner silence he can return to his inner state of “alone”, which is the natural state of man, since we were originally created individual. When Adam was alone, before Chavah, there was no one else to talk to; he was completely alone. That was his pure state, and thus there was no possibility to sin. The possibility of sin only began with the creation of Chavah, who spoke to Adam to eat the fruit. As soon as Chavah was created, there was no more a state of “alone”, thus the Snake was able to come speak with her and tempt her. The natural, pure state of mankind – our very nature – is to be alone.

However, as essential as it is to return to our state of “alone”, being “alone” is not the purpose. It can’t be, because if it were, then why did Hashem create Chavah? Obviously, Hashem intended that man to marry woman. So our life is a double-sided coin; there are two different facets to our life. There is a part of us which needs to relate with others and is responsible for others – and these are the side of our responsibilities in life, in which we deal with people - and there is a part in us which is “alone”, which we use for *hisbodedus*.

According to the Arizal, the avodah of Adam *HaRishon* was to attain the state of *Yechidah*; he already had the levels of *Nefesh*, *Ruach*, *Neshamah*, and *Chayah*. After the sin, he fell many levels.

How indeed does a person have the power to reach his *Yechidah*, in a generation like this, where we are so far from the pure state of Adam before the sin? It is because man was created alone, and therefore, it is our nature to be alone. All we have to do is get back to our nature, and then to some degree, we can return to our *Yechidah*. We not might be able to reach the “all-inclusive” level of *Yechidah*, but each of us will at least be able to reach our own “private” revelation of *Yechidah*.^[1]

We need to return to the root state of Creation, which was a pure world, unlike the world today. There was no “noise” then in the world. When we speak about *hisbodedus*, we can’t reach the total *hisbodedus* that Adam had, in which there was no “noise” at all, for there was no sin yet. We live in a very, very noisy world; it’s so noisy that people aren’t even aware how noisy it is, because we are so used to it. This world is like one giant alarm clock; constant noises that are saying “Go, go, go out into the world.” As much as the noise is, we need to counter it all with a deep, inner silence. If we have *hisbodedus* that counters the noise, the noise won’t be able to drag us down with it. And the kind of *hisbodedus* we need is no less of a need than air for the body.

Epilogue

Baruch Hashem, everyone coming here to these classes has more or less grown in their spirituality. (We aren’t giving out awards here; maybe in the near future we will.) But each person here has come

to some inner understanding, each according to his own respective level.

If the words here would just be for the purpose of having a lecture, and not about really making them practically affect our life, then those who are interested in the lectures would come, and those who aren't interested in a lecture will not come. But I think that all of you came here not because you simply wanted to hear a lecture. I think that all of you are searching how to really grow from this series of lectures, and that is why you came here to hear these words.

But now that we are at the end, let's ask ourselves: What are we really coming out with over here? What are we practically walking away with from these lectures?

If you have a will to put these words into action, you can do it. If so, you need to think about how you can make all these words practical: How do we put this concept into practice? How do we actualize our *Yechidah*? How do we internalize these last 15 chapters and make them practical?

The First Condition: Review and Understand From Within Yourself

The first thing you need to know - I think this part should come pretty simple to you - is that hearing these lectures just once in your life will not do anything for you. It will simply go into one ear and leave the other ear. Chazal say that it takes four times to learn something. It is tried and proven that people hear new things the second time they review the same words, and they hear new things the third time. There are two reasons for this. People simply don't hear all the words the first time when they hear something, because it's hard to pay attention to every word. Even if you did hear every word here, you still need to hear it another two or three times simply for the sake of understanding these words.

After hearing this four times, the next step is to see all the ways brought here in how to reach the *Yechidah* and to really *think* about the words over to yourself, and the reason why you need to do this is for the following reason. It is not enough to hear these words and know about them. They have been told to you from an outside force, thus you need to come to an understanding of these concepts from *within yourself*, after you have heard it. These concepts have to be experienced from within yourself, and not because it was told to you.

Compare this to a taxi driver who is told by his passengers to get to a certain destination. Does he know the way only because he's listening to the directions that the passengers are giving him, or because he is already familiar with the roads by now? He knows the way a lot better if he already knows how to get there, because he recognizes how to get there from within himself, rather than being told how to get there.

Thus, if you just hear and believe in these words because they are based on the words of our Sages, that's wonderful, and it shows that you have *emunah* in the words of the Sages. But it still won't be enough to really understand the concepts here. Of course, first you need to be told how to get there, but eventually, you need to understand the matters from within yourself. Compare this to a child, who first has to be taught things, but later at some point, he needs to recognize information from within himself, and it is then that he really understands the information we have taught him.

To illustrate, once a year on Sukkos, we read *Sefer Koheles*, which was written by Shlomo HaMelech, in which he writes that this entire world is futile. Reb Chatzkel Levenstein zt"l would say that each person needs to write his own *Sefer Koheles* - in other words, each person needs to write his own journal in which he recognizes how vain this world is, and he shouldn't just believe in Shlomo HaMelech's words. It's not enough for a person if he reflects once a year on Sukkos when he reads

Koheles on how this world is futile. Rather, each person needs to understand that from the viewpoint within himself, from his own life experiences, and come to that understanding on his own.

Therefore, you need to take all these words of the last 15 classes and experience them for yourself, because in order to understand these matters, it's not enough if you just hear them and believe in them. If you don't try to make this experiential, then even if you try to do all the different ways of *avodah* described here on how to reach the *Yechidah*, it will be almost pointless. First you need to **keep reviewing these words** so that you absorb them, and after that, you must **experience these concepts from within yourself**, to have an inner understanding of these matters. Your inner world can be reached only from understandings that you have reached within yourself - it cannot be reached through anything you have heard, which comes from outside of the self.

Many times I hear all kinds of questions from people about how to reach spirituality, but they are all the same kind of question: People want someone else to come and give them some spiritual light that will open up their inner world. I am very bothered by these kinds of questions, and therefore I don't like to answer questions of this sort. Why? Because you are a soul, and you need to experience yourself, who you actually are! It can't be told to you. You can only understand yourself from within yourself! Feel who you are, *realize who you are!* It's almost worthless to get any "spiritual illuminations" from outside of yourself.

Of course, Chazal tell us that a person needs to have a *Rebbi* (teacher) in order to be saved from doubt. But does that mean that the *Rebbi* has to live every aspect of the person's life? Must one ask a *Rebbi* about what time he needs to leave his house in the morning? We all understand that a person does not have to ask his *Rebbi* for every nitty-gritty issue. Why? A question has to come from within yourself that you have thought about; the point is not that as soon as a person has a problem, he immediately calls his *Rebbi*. There must be questions, but they must be questions that are formulated from within yourself.

To illustrate, children cannot cross the street by themselves. An adult, who is mature, can cross the street by himself, because he knows how to think for himself.

Thus, in order for a person to actualize the matters here, he has to first hear\study the words of these 15 classes **at least four times**, and then, he must seek to make this knowledge experiential, and the way he can know this is by seeing if he identifies with these concepts from within himself.

If the reader isn't identifying the concepts of these chapters *within himself*, then the reader must seek a different path - a different *avodah*. If you feel that these words don't speak to you, if you don't feel that you are connecting with these words after you have reviewed them, it shows that the path here is not meant for you to take. It could be that at this point in your life you are not meant to take this path; or it could mean that the paths delineated here are not meant for you at all to work with, no matter what stage you are at in life. If you find yourself identifying with the words here, then you can succeed on implementing these concepts. If not, then forcing yourself to try to agree with these concepts will not work either, and it will be pointless to try any of the *avodah* that was said here.

The Second Condition: Times of Quiet Every Day

In addition to this, in order for a person to actualize these concepts, a person needs quiet time every day. Once a week, a person should set aside one day in which he spends even more time in *hisbodedus*.

During this time, realize that you are leaving the noise of the world. Besides for this, realize that this

is the time of the day in which you can feel your inner point. You need *yishuv hadaas* in order to reach it, thus you must have quiet time every day.

It should be like when Yaakov left Beer Sheva and he went to Charan. He left for two reasons. He ran away from Esav, and he need to find a wife. In other words, there is reason to leave the noisy world, and in addition, there is reason to enter inward. During this time, you enter your soul – and focus on this thought alone: **remember that you exist!**

There are people who have forgotten that they exist; they live their life as if they are a leaf. They don't feel their existing self. Without time of *yishuv hadaas* every day, a person simply never sees himself at all! He doesn't see himself! Of course, he will still have emotions, but he doesn't feel himself as an existing reality. He is not aware of the true meaning of his existence; he doesn't feel it.

When a couple seeks help in how to have marital peace, many marriage counselors advise that couples need to spend time with each other. When they have quiet time, a lot can be accomplished. Some couples spend too much time together and that's why they have so many problems, but with most couples, the problems are because they don't spend enough quiet time with each other; each spouse is immersed in his\her various activities, and that is the root of all their quarreling. When they have quiet time, they remember that they are married to a spouse, and they remind themselves that the other exists.

To put it sharply, many married people don't even remember they are married. Of course, everyone is aware that they are married; but the husband or wife can be so busy with taking care of the home and the kids that they forget about their own relationship with each other. They are so busy taking care of the home, but there is no home! But the problems started even before that. The spouses forget about their own existence. They won't remember that the other one exists either.

If you ask anyone if he knows he exists, the answer of course will be "yes". We will know we exist, but a person can still be forgetting that he exists, because he is so bombarded from life. If each of the spouses would begin to have quiet time to him\herself, they would be able to remember that the other one exists also, and then all of their problems would vanish.

If we really want to have an inner understanding of ourselves in a way that will practically affect us, we need to have times of quiet every day, and have one time a week in which you have a longer time of quiet. During this quiet time, **remind yourself that you exist**. Remember that you came onto this world so you can grow.

This is the basic starting point that everyone needs; from that, each person grows in his own individual way, and we will not discuss this now. The basis is: have times of quiet and silence your soul. There are four lower parts to the soul – *Nefesh*, *Ruach*, *Neshamah* and *Chayah*. Those are the layers in our soul which involve action. The innermost point of our soul, the *Yechidah*, is your actual essence. Our entire inner avodah can only come from our essence, and such avodah is considered to be the kind that is alive. It is emanating from depth and truth. If our avodah is not coming from our essence, it's like having branches of a tree with no root.

So before we know how to act properly, we need to come to our essence, our place of deep inner silence, and all actions we do after that will then be coming from that deep and truthful place. The actions we then do will be alive. Everything we do has to ultimately pass through all the layers of our soul. If we want to get to the lowest layer of our soul, which is action, we have to traverse our innermost point of the soul, our essence. This is reached by silencing your soul.

Where Should One Start?

To conclude, we have described here in this series how to reach the *Yechidah*. The map of how to get there, though, differs with each person.

Most people have to go in the order of *Nefesh*, then to progress to *Ruach*, then to *Neshamah*, then *Chayah*, and then *Yechidah*. Therefore, this series, which explains the *Yechidah*, can only be actualized after a person has reached the four elementary layers of the soul – *Nefesh*, *Ruach*, *Neshamah*, and *Chayah*; these were explained in a previous series [*Da Es Atzmecha*] *Getting To Know Your Self*].

Three Exceptions Who Can Start Their Avodah With “Yechidah”

However, there are some people who were born with natural inner strength to penetrate straight into their *Yechidah*, without having to traverse the first four layers of the soul; these people are able to absorb very clearly the ideas here, without having to work on the first four layers of the 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.

There are also people who, although they were not born with great inner strength of their soul, they 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 layers 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 clarify more what their inner point is and to connect themselves in the proper way to it; these people can begin to enter their work with the soul by starting with this series, which explains the *Yechidah* 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, 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, by making sure to go in the order of first working with 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*.

Having The End Goal In Mind

However, it is still beneficial for most people to at least hear the words of this series and be 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 up your soul, even though you can't act upon these matters right away.

It is important for you to 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.

In Conclusion

In these 15 classes, we have tried to explain what the *Yechidah* is. The next classes will be about the depth of Shabbos Kodesh^[2]. They will be very deep classes, as in all areas of the Torah. The purpose of these classes is meant to give us greater depth of Shabbos Kodesh. May we all merit the future Shabbos, which will be eternal. Amen.

[1] The Rav explains elsewhere that there are two levels to the Yechidah: There is a "private" Yechidah that each person can reach individually, and there is the collective Yechidah of the entire Jewish people, which will not be revealed until the future. See the shiurim of **Sukkos #007, #008, and #009** (*A Jew's Inner Self, Parts 1-3*).

[2] See ***Bilvavi Mishkan Evneh: Shabbos Kodesh Anthology***.

Source: <http://www.bilvavi.net/english/reaching-your-essence-015-actualizing-your-innermost-point>