



Bilvavi Part 8 - 03 Heaven On Earth

1.

As we have begun to mention, in the End of Days, the spiritual light of the future *achdus* (unification of the universe) has begun to shine, and it is becoming more revealed.

The superficial understanding of this is that all the “bricks” have piled up from all the previous generations, and therefore we are starting from the point where they left off, which is a higher point, since we are at the top of the bricks that have piled up. That is why we are able to access the great spiritual light called *achdus* – the unification of the universe. This is the simpler way to understand it.

Creation is entirely a microcosm of the universe, and our world has been downsized from all of the higher universes. This is known as the concept of *hishtalshelus* - the Heavenly “chain”, that all of Heaven gets channeled down through all of the higher realms, until it reaches our earth. There are upper layers and lower layers in the universe; man on earth is found in the lower layers of the universe. Our mission, generally speaking, is to ascend higher and higher, and the more we ascend, the more we draw forth all of the emanations from the higher realms (as much as Hashem allows it) to the lower realms.

That is the simple understanding of our avodah – that we must work our way up in spirituality, ascending to the higher realms and thus drawing forth Heavenly sustenance onto this world.

However, there is a different understanding of our avodah, which is deeper: that one can begin from the uppermost realms and channel all of its spiritual light down onto the lower levels.

When the Snake enticed Adam to sin, it said, “*You will be like G-d*” if you eat from the forbidden tree. Rashi explains that the Snake was telling him, “Just as Hashem can create worlds, so will you be able to create worlds”, if you eat from the tree. The deeper understanding behind this matter is that man, before the sin, really has the power to “create worlds.” In others, man can draw the Heavenly plane down onto his earthly existence, and this is his power to “create worlds”. [The Snake therefore had a very argument, because there was some truth to what he was saying].

Now that we are after the sin, our task has been reversed, and instead we start our avodah from below, on this earth, and we attempt to climb upwards toward Heaven, as we progress in our spiritual growth. If we reach the ultimate level, we merit to leave our earthly layer of existence, and enter into the Heavenly state of existence.

However, in the deep recesses of our soul, we also have the state that existed before the sin, which is to begin from the Heavenly level and channel its emanations onto our earthly existence. The Vilna Gaon writes that before the sin, the physical world which we see and recognize in front of us – “*Asiyah*”, the “world of action” – did not exist. Adam existed on a purely spiritual plane, called “*Yetzirah*”, a realm higher than the current realm. Yetzirah means “creation”, alluding to how he was able to create our current world, *Asiyah*, as we mentioned before; that he could begin his avodah from Heaven and channel Heaven’s light downward onto earth.

This concept totally novelizes all of our Avodas Hashem!

2.

A person is comprised of a body and a soul. The rule is that “the peel comes before the fruit” (*kelipah kodemes l'pri*), and therefore, our body is tangible to us, while our soul isn't as easily felt. Our soul is hidden from us - and this applies to every person, accordingly.

The basic way in serving Hashem, the well-known approach, is that a person first has to recognize his bodily strengths, then he has to shatter the body by purifying it, and then the soul can become revealed, slowly but surely. This path is called *misata l'leila* - “from below to above” - because the person starts his avodah from below, which is the body, and he ascends to above, which is the realm of his soul.

But the path being described in this sefer is *m'leila l'lisata* - “from above to below” - and it is an opposite path. It is to begin with our soul, which is above, and end with our body, which is below.

Let us explain the depth of this two different paths.

During this 6,000 year period - as the Daas Tevunos writes - our body is more revealed to us than our soul, and our soul is hidden from us. After the year 7000, our soul will dominate, while our body will only be secondary. This will go on until the year 10,000 [in which our existence will become totally sublime, as we will become completely integrated with Hashem].

The depth behind Adam's test was that he essentially had to choose if he let his soul be in charge, or if he would let his body be in charge. Had he passed the test, he would have entered straight into the eternal Shabbos, which we will enter into at the year 7000. Right now, we are in the End of Days, and we are very close to the eternal Shabbos. If so, we are at the end of “Friday afternoon”, and we are nearing Shabbos - just like Adam's first day of his life.

We therefore have two methods in how to serve Hashem. Either we serve Him through the perspective of the current 6000 year era, which is that we need to remove our physicality and reveal our soul. Or, we can have a “taste of Shabbos” and “taste some of the Shabbos food on Friday afternoon” - in other words, our soul's light has begun to shine stronger, and therefore we can begin our avodah by accessing our soul, and the endpoint will be to subjugate our body.

4.

For this reason, the Baal Shem Tov wrote that a person has to “mainly reside in the upper realms.” Our general avodah is, “*rotzoh v'shov*”, “running and then retreating” - we must undergo a descent into our lower, earthly existence and then return to our main home, which is Heaven.

To be even clearer, there are two kinds of *rotzoh v'shov*. We are either returning to our Heavenly state or our earthly state, depending on the form of Avodah we use. This concept affects our entire Avodah in a very novel way.

We must realize that we are describing here the general outline of the inner layer to reality (*pnimiyus*). The details that result from this concept are many, but the concept we are describing here is one of the general rules from which all of the details branch out from.

5.

We have said thus far that there are two paths in Avodas Hashem: *m'lisata l'leila* (from below to

above), and *m'leila l'lisata* (from above to below).

We are now in the End of Days, and it is the lowest spiritual level in history. Yet, there is a rule that "the beginning is wrapped in the end", and therefore, there is a paradox taking place: the "end" of days is really the start of a new beginning! There is a certain great spiritual light, the light of the future *achdus* unity, which has begun to shine now, in the End of Days.

6.

Here we come to yet a deeper point.

Since the End of Days is not really an end, but a beginning – due to the great spiritual light and opportunities available in our current era – then it follows that soul matters are really more accessible than ever, and our soul is not as hidden from us as it used to be in previous times!

The original spiritual light which existed on the first day of Creation has returned to shine during the End of Days, enabling us to access soul matters; so our soul is not hidden from us anymore. If anything, our soul is more accessible than it ever was – it can become more easily revealed!

To be even clearer with this concept, there was a point in time in which man did not exist yet. This was during the first six days of Creation, before Adam existed. This implies to us that the first six days of Creation – which reflect our current 6000 year period – contains a point that is beyond any possibility of sin, for man had not yet been created. If so, during this 6000 year period we are in, we have in us a deep place in our soul in which there are no sins – and thus no dividers between us and Hashem.

7.

In the works of *Chassidus*, it is brought in the name of the Arizal that after the sin of Adam, some souls of the Jewish people descended into the lowest abysses in Creation, while some souls merited to stay within the uppermost realm in Creation, and thus these souls were unaffected by the sin. There were even some souls who merited a higher level than this, and they managed to escape Adam before he sinned, so they were never inside him to begin with as he sinned. There were yet souls who merited an even higher level, and they were never in existence at all at the time of the sin; they will come into existence only after the year 7000.

It is accepted amongst the works of *Chassidus* that the soul of the Baal Shem Tov was one of the souls who flew out from Adam's body before Adam sinned. Let us explain the depth behind this matter.

The souls "who were not part of the sin" essentially meant that a sin cannot become a barrier to prevent these souls from connecting with Hashem. It is not simply that these souls weren't present in Adam when he sinned and thus these souls were not part of the sin; it is rather that the sin could not prevent these souls from connecting to Hashem.

This is essentially the secret behind the teachings of the Baal Shem Tov – that our soul is so powerfully connected to Hashem, than sins cannot hold it back from having a relationship with Hashem.

The concept being described here is essentially the great spiritual light that has begun to shine in our days, the End of Days. It is for a person to have the attitude that sins cannot prevent us from having a bond with Hashem.

8.

Concerning the End of Days, it is written, “*And I will remove the spirit of impurity from the land.*” (Zechariah 13:2). Simply speaking, Hashem will erase the concept of sin in the future. But the deeper meaning of this is that there will be such a great spiritual light in the future that people will become very close to Hashem, to the point that all sins and impurity will vanish as a direct result.

9.

We are describing here the avodah of *m'leila l'lisata* - “from above to below”. It is also known as the avodah of *rotzoh v'shov*, which is that a tzaddik descends onto this world in order to radiate Heavenly light onto it, and then he returns to Heaven.

Although this great spiritual light exists and it has begun to become revealed in our days, most people are not connected to it, and therefore most people perceive themselves as “dwellers of the earth”, rather than “dwellers of Heaven.” This is reflected in the fact that people often view sins as part of their actual essence.

The avodah of *m'leila l'lisata* is to transcend this low self-worth; for a person to tap into the spiritual light of before the sin - utter connection with Hashem - and to shine that light upon one's sins. This is essentially our inner mission in the End of Days, and it is reached by those who indeed access this inner light of before the sin.

The avodah of *m'leila l'lisata* is for a person to view himself as a Heavenly being, and that his mission is to radiate Heaven onto earth; it is for a person to view himself as descending from Heaven down onto this earth so he can elevate his earthly existence. As we explained, it is called *rotzoh v'shov*, because the person “runs” by coming down onto this earth, and then he retreats back to Heaven after he has fulfilled his mission.

The big question is: How do we ascend upward in the first place, if we are first down here on this earth??

10.

To know the answer, we have to know the answer to another issue: what, essentially, is holding us back from feeling Hashem in our life?

It is written, “*All of them, You made with wisdom.*” (Tehillim, 104). The Arizal explains that after the sin, the main way how we connect to Hashem is through our Chochmah\wisdom. Our power of Chochmah\wisdom tells us that one would have to be a fool to deviate from Hashem's will. As Chazal say, “A person does not sin unless a spirit of folly enters him” (Sotah 2a). That is true.

But there is an avodah higher than this thinking, and it is the avodah of *m'leila l'lisata*. The higher perspective, *m'leila l'lisata*, is that one should begin from his Heavenly existence - the state of the soul before the sin. It is an essentially for a person to reveal his pure state - the way the soul was before Adam sinned.

The Ramchal explains in sefer *Adir B'Marom* that although we are after the sin, it is possible for us to access the state of before the sin. To be even clearer about this concept, this is not just a way of avodah. It is the hidden essence of our soul.

Since it is a state hidden deep in our soul, we are able to access it - and the way to access is through **Emunah!!**

In other words, first, a person has to believe that deep inside himself is a place that is as utterly connected to Hashem as possible. Let us explain what we mean.

If you ask a person who is seeking to feel Hashem in his life: “Are you connected to Hashem as much as you can be?” he will likely answer, “No, but I want to. I wish I was closer to Hashem than I am now.” The real implication of his answer is that because he doesn’t feel Hashem at all times in his heart, he indeed feels that he isn’t that close to Hashem.

This is where the secret of *Emunah* comes in. (*Emunah* here is referring to a palpable kind of belief in Hashem that one can sense, and not intellectual belief). A person has to believe that he is already united with Hashem! Maybe he doesn’t **feel** this connection, but that doesn’t mean it’s not there. We only need to **believe** that we have this connection with Hashem deep down. If a person believes in something only if he can feel or sense it, then everything will depend on what he’s feeling; a person with this kind of *emunah* will only feel close to Hashem when he feels close to Hashem, and when he can’t feel the closeness, he will think that he’s not close to Hashem. This is the misconception.

11.

According to the Arizal, the downfall that occurred to humanity after the sin of Adam (and as we brought before, it only affected certain souls, as there were souls who departed Adam’s body before the sin) was that our *emunah* grew weak. After the sin, people initially believe that in truths only if they can sense it, and thus our *emunah* is limited to how much we can sense it. Instead of believing that we can feel, people have to feel in order to believe! Really, it is supposed to be the other way around – we are first supposed to believe in Hashem, and then we can come to feel Hashem. But the sin caused that we first need to feel Hashem in order to believe in Hashem.

The truth is that all of Creation is already unified with Hashem, but we don’t feel it. The Sages said “There is no place that is empty from Him.” If a person would just believe that he is already unified with Hashem, if he would truly believe this, then he would feel completely the intrinsic unity with Hashem!

If so, our avodah is not try to “get close to Hashem.” Our avodah is rather to believe that it is not possible to ever be disconnected from Hashem. This is the avodah of *m’leila l’lisata*.

In the lower avodah, *m’lisata l’leila*, a person believes that he is far from Hashem, and that he must try to become close to Hashem. But the higher avodah, *m’leila l’lisata*, is for a person to believe, “I am really found above in Heaven. I exist in Heaven, and thus I am totally unified with Hashem.

“Although I don’t feel this, that is only because the “body of a dead person cannot feel” (a term used by our Sages). As soon as Adam sinned, he was cursed with death, and thus all of mankind is kind of dead, in that we don’t feel our intrinsic unity with Hashem.”

By contrast, the lower perspective, *m’lisata l’leila*, is that a person believes that he has to “try to become close to Hashem.” The higher perspective, *m’leila l’lisata*, is that a person believes that **he is already close to Hashem**, for there is no place that is empty from Hashem’s presence. In fact, even the souls who have fallen to the lowest abysses in Creation [due to their sins] are still not disconnected from Hashem, and Hashem is found within these souls no less than how He is found within the highest souls. [If only they would become aware of this].

When reveals this perspective of *Emunah* within his soul, he is essentially found in Heaven. He has revealed his Heavenly existence, and he can now begin the avodah of *m’leila l’lisata*.

12.

The following outcome is the result of this discussion.

Are we inevitably bound to this world of constant “ups and downs” in our spirituality? Or is it possible for us to ascend all the “ups and downs”?

If we think that we can either be close to Hashem or far from Him, then we are basically confining ourselves to the turbulent movements of this physical world, and then our spiritual growth will be limited and restrained. All of Creation is moving, since all of Creation is constantly yearning to return to its Source, Hashem. In fact, every single movement in Creation that takes place is either an expression of closeness or distance from Hashem. A sin “distances” us from Hashem, while doing teshuvah will bring us closer to Hashem; so the whole possibility of either closeness to Hashem or distance from Hashem is basically an expression of the world’s movements.

But in the avodah of *m’leila l’lisata*, we can transcend all the movements of Creation. It is essentially when we believe, with our *Emunah*, that it’s really not possible to be far from Hashem. It is an avodah to be above all the ups and downs!

13.

The inner secret to Avodas Hashem is to access the state of, “*And you are with Me, here, on this day.*”

The words here are very subtle and deep, and they affect our Avodas Hashem in an entirely novel way. We have really described here the “light of Friday afternoon [Erev Shabbos] which has begun to shine, as we nearing the eternal Shabbos of the future. It is accessible in our own souls. If we completely and utterly believe in this concept, then it will be able to affect us; its light can then come and remove our sins, enabling our soul to be in control, so that our body won’t get in the way.

If we achieve this, then we will be able to totally integrate with Hashem.

Source: <https://bilvavi.net/english/bilvavi-part-8-03-heaven-earth>