

קונטרס

# ההתפעלות

מאת כ"ק אדמו"ר דובער נבג"מ זי"ע

## ON DIVINE INSPIRATION

Commonly called Kuntras HaHitpaalut  
Or the Tact on Ecstasy

By

Our Master, Teacher and Rabbi

The Holy Rabbi Dovber of Lubavitch

The Mittler Rebbe

Second Edition

Translated and adapted into English by

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# Section One

[An introductory open letter to all the Chassidim,  
published in the year 5574-1814]



TO my dear brothers and friends, beloved comrades and attentive colleagues whose minds and hearts have been touched by the words of the Living God.<sup>1</sup> To those whose spirits are sometimes moved to revert from the confusion and tempest of the times - this being preoccupation with earning a livelihood. Such worries have become so greatly magnified in our times, that the spirit of preoccupation with livelihood looms large in people's minds and hearts.

The situation has become so aggravated, to the point that the verse, "Therefore, hear this now, O afflicted one, who is intoxicated, but not by wine,"<sup>2</sup> has literally come to pass, or the verse, "All their wisdom has become swallowed up,"<sup>3</sup> or "Their souls abhor all manner of nourishment"<sup>4</sup> – "Oh how the sacred stones have been scattered outside on every street corner."<sup>5</sup>

Even worse, habit has become second nature to them, so that they do not at all groan from the labor, but rather consider it to be pure. This being the case, every God fearing and sensitive person, whose innards, to whatever degree, have been touched by the fear of God from his youth and who desires

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<sup>1</sup> The teachings of Chassidus are traditionally called, "The words of the Living God.

<sup>2</sup> Isaiah 51:21

<sup>3</sup> Psalms 107:27

<sup>4</sup> Psalms 107:18

<sup>5</sup> Lamentations 4:1

closeness to HaShem within his soul, rather than to be cast aside, heaven forbid, should take it to heart to lay down counsel within his soul. That is, he should set times to contemplate how to arouse his soul, to prepare his heart and mind to receive the words of the Living God.

However, upon thoroughly examining this, in general and in particular, everyone should recognize that many have fallen ten steps backward in regard to arousal in Chassidic matters, compared to how it was in former times. This is so much so, that there is cause for a person to fear that since he is prone to falling, he may very well fall, God forbid. He could, thereby, despair of his soul altogether.

Truth should guide his path. Every person is capable of truly recognizing in his soul, that even though he has become distant from matters of Chassidus for quite some time due to preoccupation with livelihood or the like, nonetheless, no negative change has actually come about in his essential self. Rather, only his mind and heart have had a dimming of the illumination of Divine light, because his mind and heart have been entirely preoccupied with many distractions etc.

Actually, this may be compared to sleep. During sleep it cannot be said that one's life force completely withdrew from his mind and heart. He certainly is alive, because when we rouse him, he immediately awakens and is just as alive as he was before sleeping, literally. Only that during sleep the vitality was concealed in his mind and heart; that is, the Neshamah and Ruach levels of the soul were hidden. When he is roused, the consciousness of the soul which was hidden during sleep

becomes revealed once again. This indicates that in actuality, no new phenomenon has taken place.

Likewise, preoccupation with matters of livelihood, which is called, “The exile of the Shechinah” is also called “Sleep,” as scripture states, “When HaShem<sup>6</sup> will return the captivity of Tzion we will be like dreamers.”<sup>7</sup> Similarly, this has been explained at length on the verse, “I am asleep – in exile – but my heart is awake etc.”<sup>8</sup>

If HaShem will grant me the time, I shall send a special pamphlet dealing with fundamental Chassidic teachings that everyone, whether great or small, should know regarding the manner of how to conduct oneself in matters of livelihood. I feel compelled to do this because doing one’s work in a way which is alien to Torah has come to be regarded as permissible etc. Unfortunately, no one takes to heart what it is that causes both physical and spiritual ruin in the world. Is it not because they have left the “Torah of HaShem,” which is imbedded in each person according to his capacity?

Rather, in all their ways each person goes in his own direction, without taking the Torah and service of HaShem, which is imbedded in their souls, into account. Instead, they have departmentalized everything - setting the time for Torah and for heeding matters of Chassidus on one side and setting

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<sup>6</sup> The word HaShem literally means “The Name” and refers to the ineffable four-letter proper name of God. For a lengthy explanation of the Name of HaShem and His primary titles, see Ginat Egoz of Rabbi Yosef Gikatilla, translated as HaShem Is One.

<sup>7</sup> Psalms 126:1

<sup>8</sup> Song of songs 5:2

the time for physical bodily occupation on the other side. In their mind the one is not connected to the other; just the opposite, they regard them as two diametric opposites etc.

This evil has thus caused lacking even during the time of prayer and Torah study, for through this the enemy<sup>9</sup> is strengthened to enlarge his foothold and encroach outside of his sphere and to dull the heart and mind even during a time that should be propitious for spiritual arousal, so that one's soul is not illuminated by the radiance of the words of the Living God that he hears<sup>10</sup> or that he contemplates during prayer<sup>11</sup> or the like. Rather, his prayers are merely uttered with the lips, but his mind and heart are distant, being distracted with other thoughts and swallowed by them, as scripture states, "Israel is swallowed up etc."<sup>12</sup>

Albeit, no one should ever despair of his soul, because the essential nature of his Divine soul, that he is always capable of becoming excited about HaShem, has not at all changed in essence – each person according to his capacity. Even a person who is prone to falling does not ever have to fall, for Israel is not widowed from the Living God. I know this faithfully according to what I have received from my beloved father,

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<sup>9</sup> The enemy is a reference to the Yetzer HaRa- The inclination toward evil.

<sup>10</sup> The Mittler Rebbe refers to the learning of Chassidus as "hearing" or "listening" throughout this work, because the teachings of Chassidus are primarily transmitted orally by the Rebbe to his followers at Chassidic gatherings or the like. Also, whereas insight (Chochmah) is called "seeing," contemplation and analysis (Binah) is called "hearing."

<sup>11</sup> According to Chassidus, the primary time for the contemplation of Godliness is during prayer.

<sup>12</sup> Hosea 8:8



master, teacher and rabbi of blessed memory, whose soul reposes in Eden.

He spoke endearingly to me almost daily for several years concerning the essential natural reaction to the words of the Living God amongst all the members of our Chassidic brotherhood. This was transmitted in all its detailed forms, including all the guidance needed for each individual, so that he not err and delude himself, but rather, so that he will be wise in all his ways, neither veering to the right nor to the left etc.



And now the time has come that, of necessity, I feel duty bound to properly explain matters upon which the foundations of Chassidus depend; matters about which most, if not all people, whether they are great or small, delude themselves, thus following twisted paths in which the light of the Living God does not dwell under any circumstances.

The cause and reason for this error and confusion comes about because of two things:

The first is because one is far from practicing matters of Chassidus during prayer. Even if a person has heard many Chassidic teachings, nonetheless, because of little practice, coupled with preoccupation in worldly affairs, the result is that his soul and heart cannot properly receive and absorb the teachings truly, to the point that he knows not what to do with them. Even many wise and understanding people often ask what to do during prayer with all the words of the Living God that they have heard and understood. This shows that there is a total disconnection between the Chassidus that he heard and understood and its practical application.

Moreover, even those who know how to apply them in practice may err and delude themselves with all sorts of mistakes and foolishness, until they totally leave the true path. We find an example of this in the widespread confusion throughout our Chassidic brotherhood on the subject of

Hitbonenut meditation,<sup>13</sup> so that even if one successfully deepens the focus<sup>14</sup> of his mind upon HaShem, he will absolutely forbid himself from becoming emotionally excited at all. Rather, he will treat it as if it is forbidden meat. This, because of some general rationalizations that he has imagined based on hearsay; that excitement thwarts insight.<sup>15</sup>

Thus, he also regards intellectual excitement as totally forbidden to him, until he ends up thinking all sorts of external thoughts during prayer or falls asleep. All this is known to anyone who admits the truth. Why should we deny these truths, especially nowadays when we lack a father and mentor etc. If each man does only that which is right in his own eyes, it will not be long before those who are prone to falling will fall, without hope of ever rising again, heaven forbid.

Consequentially, in lieu of tranquility, I am very embittered to have seen with my own eyes and heard with my own ears such error and folly which is the diametric opposite of the teachings of Chassidus. The very principles and fundamentals of Chassidus, which are more precious than fine gold etc. is that they be established in the soul, the mind and the

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<sup>13</sup> Contemplation is called Hitbonenut, which is the intellectual examination and analysis associated with the intellectual faculty of Binah. Binah is the innate ability to analyze a subject. For a discourse on the methodology of Hitbonenut contemplation, as well as the explanation of what one is to contemplate upon, see Shaar HaYichud of the Mittler Rebbe, translated and elucidated under the title The Gate of Unity, and also known as a Tract on Contemplation (*Kuntres HaHitbonenut*).

<sup>14</sup> Focus of the mind is called Daat, which is the intellectual interest, concentration and focus on a subject. This is associated with the intellectual faculty of Daat, which is the innate ability to connect the mind to a subject.

<sup>15</sup> Insight is called Haskalah, which is associated with the intellectual faculty of Chochmah. Chochmah is the innate ability to have insight into a subject.

heart, specifically in an aspect of excitement, whether in regard to intellectual excitement, which is called, “Listening well” or whether in regard to the emotional excitement that follows it, as scripture states, “And you shall set it upon your heart.”<sup>16</sup> This, literally, is the meaning of, “My God within me”<sup>17</sup> - within each person according to his capacity.

This is known to every novice in the teachings of Chassidus! Therefore, I am terribly embittered at seeing people walking to and fro, from corner to corner during prayer, preoccupied by thoughts that are arid and empty of any aspect of excitement in HaShem. In my opinion, it is clear that the light of HaShem has never touched them! This does not even fall within the category of “A good thought that is connected to deed.”

That is when the truth of HaShem is so greatly realized in one’s mind that, at the very least, it affects an excitement which brings about a state of non-awareness of self, known as “Acknowledgment.” However, this only comes about through **comprehending** this, not by merely thinking it.

This may be compared to the contemplation of mundane matters, being that deep analysis into them, which is called, “Adhesion of the thought,” draws the soul so fully into the subject matter of that particular thought and no other, that he becomes unaware of anything other than it. This state of “Adhesion of the thought” can become so intense that it spreads

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<sup>16</sup> Deuteronomy 4:39

<sup>17</sup> Deuteronomy 31:17

over his entire being until it becomes altogether impossible for him to tear himself away from it to a different subject.

In regard to Chassidus this is found in rare individuals whose souls are truly bound to the teachings of Chassidus to the degree that it becomes the very life of their souls. They know that intellectual excitement is not forbidden! On the contrary, they realize that it is the very root and foundation of the truth of Chassidus!

Those who err have also prohibited emotional excitement and consider it as if it were a neveilah.<sup>18</sup> They regard anyone who becomes so emotionally excited during prayer, as to let out a spontaneous cry, whether a cry of bitterness or a cry of joy, as having committed an abomination in Israel! Everyone looks askance at him, in shock, and the youth deride him, until, out of embarrassment he fully repents, resolving to restrain from ever letting his voice be heard again. Instead, he sits languishing in his thoughts until he falls asleep.

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<sup>18</sup> A neveilah is an animal that has either died or has not been slaughtered in the proper fashion and is therefore forbidden to consume.

Now my friends, who is to blame for this; for discouraging many from emotional arousal toward the One God, whether it is an arousal of repentance in an aspect of bitterness of the heart, or certainly, a Divine excitement in the heart resulting from some matter of contemplation, whatever it may be, each person according to his capacity? Does not the blame fall upon the congregational heads of the nation who think they are more expert in matters of Chassidus and thus qualified to prohibit excitement altogether etc.?

The heart of my father, master, teacher and rabbi of blessed memory, whose soul reposes in Eden, grieved over this all the days of his life, for this folly has slain multitudes and a tremendous number of its victims have had a great fall, descending lower and lower until they totally despair of their souls etc. This is sufficient for those of understanding.

Therefore, my beloved, my brothers and friends, all those who tremble from these words of truth: put it upon your hearts to revert from this evil straying way that causes a person to wander off little by little. For they walk in darkness because they have veered away from the ways of truth, heaven forbid.

By the living God and by my life! All who know and are acquainted with me from my youth, in whose soul all the concepts of the teachings of Chassidus are imbedded like nature. I am very familiar with each of you and am adept in all the particular ways of the members of our Chassidic

brotherhood. All my days from my youth, words of endearment were never removed between me and my beloved friends in every city and congregation, who I love as myself. I ask you now, did you ever see or hear this evil thing which ruins and destroys everything, issue from my own mouth!?!

On the contrary, the whole goal of my heart has always been for the words of the living God to be firmly established, specifically through emotional excitement, since **that is the chief aspect of Divine inspiration within the community of Israel. Moreover, it is the foundation and root that will bring about the ultimate perfection of the era of Moshiach,** may it be speedily in our days. All this is known to the faithful; that the Merciful One specifically desires the heart and that HaShem seeks all hearts etc. as it states in Psalms, “I sought you with all my heart etc.”<sup>19</sup> and “My flesh and my heart yearn for you etc.”<sup>20</sup>

The cause of this error only comes upon those who are ignorant and foolish in matters of Chassidus and from lack of knowledge. Through one person transmitting hearsay to another they are familiar with the general principle that physical excitement which is felt in the heart is from the ways of a discredited Chassidus,<sup>21</sup> which, because it is an undesirable corruption, is absolutely prohibited. However, in truth, they

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<sup>19</sup> Psalms 119:10

<sup>20</sup> Psalms 73:26

<sup>21</sup> This is a reference to the practices of the Chassidim of Rabbi Avraham of Kalisk, which led to turmoil, fueled the opposition of the opponents of the Chassidic movement and were ultimately rejected by Chassidism at large as valid Chassidic practice.



have committed a grave error and are incapable of seeing the huge fundamental distinction between undesirable excitement and Godly excitement. The difference is like the difference between light and darkness!

Truly, about excitement felt in the heart with a physical cry altogether devoid of any inner intent except to raise one's voice, scripture states, "She has set upon Me with her voice, therefore I despise her."<sup>22</sup> The reason is because in this kind of cry one's heart is not at all involved. When scripture states, "Their heart cried out to the Lord"<sup>23</sup> or "They cried out to HaShem,"<sup>24</sup> it certainly is not referring to this kind of excitement. This is not at all a calling out to HaShem. Rather, he just wants his raise his voice or to dispel alien thoughts or the like.

Even when a person comes to actual heartfelt excitement by overheating his heart through intentionally whipping his emotions into a froth, this is not for HaShem, but only for the thrill of activating and thus exposing his emotions. Any honest person who is habituated to this will acknowledge this truth. But how they have turned light into darkness, saying that the two are comparable!

In actuality, heartfelt Godly excitement is the true crying out to HaShem, as scripture states, "They cried out to HaShem."<sup>25</sup> This is so, whether it comes about because one contemplates the unity of HaShem and how completely distant

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<sup>22</sup> Jeremiah 12:8

<sup>23</sup> Lamentations 2:18

<sup>24</sup> Psalms 107:6

<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

from HaShem he is, which immediately causes his heart to become embittered within him with repentance and weeping until he cries out spontaneously, without intending to cry out, because this is true repentance with all of one's heart. Such a cry comes out specifically from the depths of the heart, as stated, "I have called you from the depths HaShem"<sup>26</sup> – meaning from the depths of the heart. This cry is the very root and foundation of repentance and prayer and is called, "The pouring out of the soul," as known.

Furthermore, this is so whether it comes about because one contemplates the transcendence of HaShem<sup>27</sup> or His imminence,<sup>28</sup> even for a short while. He will immediately become excited with heartfelt love in his heart of flesh, with a desire to adhere to the One God with joy and happiness or the like. This, then, is the essential fulfillment of the mitzvah of loving HaShem and constitutes the light of Divine inspiration within the hearts of the community of Israel - which is the ultimate goal. This is as scripture states, "And you shall set it upon your heart etc.,"<sup>29</sup> - through intellectual excitement. This matter, that intellectual excitement stimulates emotional excitement, is well known to every novice in the teachings of Chassidus who seeks closeness to HaShem with all the desire of his heart etc.

All this being the case, how can these people call light darkness and substitute goodness for evil? On the contrary, the

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<sup>26</sup> Psalms 130:1

<sup>27</sup> This is called Ohr Sovev – "The light that encompasses all worlds."

<sup>28</sup> This is called Ohr Memaleh – "The light that fills all worlds."

<sup>29</sup> Deuteronomy 4:39

very opposite is true! The more the **right** kind of excitement is felt in a physical cry, the more certain that one has truly received and assimilated Divine light into his heart - so well that he cried out! This is called, “Intellectual fear and love in the brain and heart” and “Natural fear and love.” About this scripture states, “But I was brutish etc.” “I was as a beast with you.”<sup>30</sup> Though it is lower than knowledge, nonetheless “I was with you,” specifically, in a wondrous state of adhesion to HaShem, rather than the above-mentioned excitement of an overheated heart which is not at all for HaShem. This is sufficient for those of understanding.

Obviously, all the above includes many vastly different modes and categories, as known to all those who have gained insight through much occupation in the study of Chassidus. This being the case, truly, it has long been my duty and obligation to toil and labor in speaking to the heart of each individual in private audience, in a way that is specifically tailored to his capacity. My purpose has been to enlighten them in all the ways of Chassidus as well as I can and to correct each one according to his personal shortcomings and errors.

In addition, many of those who understand and know all the concepts of Chassidus clearly, lighten their own burden out of laxness and out of literally throwing off the yoke, in that they are not sufficiently mindful of their own souls to earnestly labor in matters of Chassidus. Rather, they just fulfill their obligations to the public by merely preaching to them, which is

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<sup>30</sup> Psalms 73:22

tantamount to boasting and self-aggrandizement and the like. This is so shameful that it should not be written about openly.

In addition, amongst the above, are those who are God fearing and sincere, but are handicapped either because they are too preoccupied with earning a living or because they have personal shortcomings or bad and ugly character traits that obstruct and separate them from goodness.

From my youth I have accustomed myself to introspect concerning this with open eyes, so that I fully know what ails the members of our Chassidic brotherhood and all their afflictions etc., and am able to address each one according to the inner point of his soul, whether he is the smallest of the small or the biggest etc. This has been my obligation and my mitzvah – to speak to each one in private audience. This revives his soul in a true and straightforward manner, each person according to his way and level, more than if he would hear a hundred sermons without being uplifted by any of them. Moreover, if this applies to those who are very knowledgeable and toil and labor in matters of Chassidus, it applies all the more so to those who have little knowledge or who throw off the yoke, whether they do so against their will or whether they do so willingly and intentionally.

However, my dear friends, because I am constrained by a great lack of time and by preoccupation with other pressing matters, how very physically difficult this great task is upon me! If HaShem will grant me a tranquil soul, strengthening my heart and mind from the pressures of the times that have befallen us and if we merit that the holy spirit of my father, master, teacher and rabbi, of blessed memory, whose soul reposes in Eden, will come to my aid and strengthen me (for “who am I” etc.), then I will willingly take this pure service upon myself, especially at this time when we have neither father nor mentor and each man throws off the yoke, going his own way.

Every person, whether great or small, knows the negative changes that have occurred within his soul in matters of Chassidus since the passing of the light of Israel, the breath of our nostrils, my father, master, teacher and rabbi, of blessed memory, whose soul reposes in the supernal treasure houses, in that the fear of God is no longer before our very eyes - each person according to his capacity etc. It is clearly observable from the greatest to the smallest, that arousal in matters of Chassidus has become weakened and diminished. This is also due to great preoccupation with business matters.

May HaShem have mercy upon his people and bless them with success and sustenance in all their endeavors and may He triple His blessings upon them in every way. However, if anyone should find success in his endeavors, let not his heart

become haughty saying, “My own power and the strength of my hand accomplished all this greatness for me.”<sup>31</sup> His heart should not be buoyed up by all the goodness, thus forgetting the service of the heart, heaven forbid. About this scripture states, “Give me neither poverty nor riches etc.”<sup>32</sup> God willing, I shall send a special pamphlet on this subject, as mentioned above.

Therefore, I have resolved in my soul to consider the ultimate consequences and results of all the above, rather than only the spiritual condition that people stand on now, lest, heaven forbid, they descend further, until the teachings of Chassidus become altogether forgotten, heaven forbid. Consequently, there is very great pity and compassion upon them, more than words can be express.

I speak for myself only. My nature is faithfully known from my youth that I do not desire to make myself great or to acquire the title of “Rav,” for I recognize my place all too well; nor will I wrap myself in a mantel that is unbecoming of me, all the days of my life. Rather, I speak out of love for their souls, which were always bound to the holy soul and spirit of my father, master, teacher and rabbi of blessed memory, all these many years, lest the cords of their hearts become severed from the ways of HaShem that he led them on for many years etc. This is sufficient for those of understanding.

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<sup>31</sup> Deuteronomy 8:17

<sup>32</sup> Proverbs 30:8

Subsequent to these words and truths, I said to myself, “Can I conceal from those who love my soul and my heart, what has arisen in my mind to do on their behalf; this great mitzvah and obligation which has been placed upon me for the above reason?” Though, admittedly, it is a very difficult burden for me to bear, for I am presently weak and not in full health because of the wrath of the oppressor, due to many difficult troubles, bitterness of the soul overriding them all etc.

This is especially difficult since the main concern, mentioned above, particularly involves those who are remote (and have never had the opportunity to travel to Liadi – as I myself have witnessed in most of the distant towns that I passed through). Only four or five out of an entire town or congregation make the trip, so that there are only close to two or three quorums that are on the level of truly and sincerely being occupied in matters of Chassidus in their minds and hearts. They are hungry and thirsty. Their souls are faint and greatly yearn for the words of the Living God.

I openly wondered about this and they answered that the poor are unable to leave their meager source of income and pay the expense of such a trip. Those of average income are also concerned over the cost, principally about the loss of time in neglecting their financial concerns and income. In addition, though the expenditure is of no concern to them, the wealthy are also reticent to find the time to take three weeks out of their

many pressing business dealings, this, notwithstanding the fact that the hearts of all the above, may be pure and they may truly desire the words of the Living God very much, and are even proficient in them and understand them.

Thus, I have met many people who are occupied in the study of Chassidus and are God fearing and very thirsty for the words of the Living God, but their only weakness is due to the great distances involved. Because of this they may not make the trip for several years, until a decade can go by and the whole matter becomes forgotten from their heart.

In my estimation only a tenth go, the remaining nine tenths remaining at home, bereft of everything. Actually, in many cases, the ones who stay behind are men of truth whose hearts have been touched by the fear of HaShem, more than those who make the trip and then, on their return, boast that they have heard Chassidic discourses, which they repeat. Furthermore, for the most part, this in itself causes people's hearts to become estranged from each other, in that only small groups of two or three people venture to travel, rather than arranging for the entire community to travel together. This causes divisiveness in people's hearts in that some may look down on others. No more need be said.

Furthermore, and this is essential; in truth, the foundation of Chassidus is that for it to truly become established in people's souls all their days, they must be very occupied in contemplating it, speaking it and reviewing it even a hundred times. Moreover, this should specifically be done with a friend. In this way each one will strengthen his friend's



heart, by reviewing the teachings of Chassidus together, all their days. It is specifically this practice which creates complete unity and awakens a resolve to strengthen the practice of Chassidus amongst the congregants in general so that it should not be forgotten and neglected by them due to preoccupation with earning a livelihood and other hindrances etc. However, this is only effective if they are united as one man, rather than if people set themselves above those who come to seek their counsel in such matters.

Nor should anyone cut themselves off from the ways of Chassidus by forming small cliques of two or three, in which they separate themselves from others of the Chassidic brotherhood. This evil practice causes much divisiveness amongst our Chassidic brotherhood, as I well know. However, I do not wish to dwell on this at length. Rather, I would like to emphasize that everyone should set it upon their souls to bring about a great strengthening of Chassidic practice by agreeing that the majority of the congregation should travel together. In this way, they will all speak and review the words of the Living God together, as one group. Thus, each person will strengthen his fellow and this will bring about a more permanent unity.

Also, they should resolve to be alert to always try to set a time for the congregation to travel together, when it is equally convenient for each person etc. Wise and understanding as they are I need not lengthen about how they should give counsel on how to save souls from spiritual collapse, heaven forbid. This is sufficient for those of understanding.

Now, therefore, I see that for the good of the remote members of our Chassidic brotherhood, I must take a responsibility upon myself that is greater than my strength. Let the distant communities appoint a designated place or town that is close to all the surrounding communities and let them also set a convenient annual time for themselves. They should inform me of this (through the messenger who bears this letter) and I hereby take it upon myself to travel to that town and to stay there for one month out of the year, during which time I will fulfill all their requests in matters of Chassidus.

I will occupy myself in studying Torah with them as much as I can, to the fullest of my ability, for as long as my strength holds out. I take this upon myself even though this toil will be a very heavy burden on me, for I feel compelled to do so out of compassion for them.

Let all the remote communities throughout the land schedule a set time in a central place in each area. However, the entire area should be informed of the time, place and hour so as not to cause confusion, as will be explained by the messenger who bears this letter. I have given over to him that the people should be notified in writing. If this is publicized to the general Chassidic community residing in the three or four places in the country that have scheduled it, each area in its own time and place, then all those in these remote areas of the land can come at their leisure to the designated place in the designated time. In this way, no one will become totally cast aside and removed from the teachings of Chassidus, heaven forbid. This is sufficient for those of understanding.

I have taken the original idea for this from the source and root of the life of our souls, my father, master, teacher and rabbi of blessed memory, whose soul reposes in Eden. Before he passed away, he made a firm resolve to provide for the shortcomings and blemishes of the remote members of the Chassidic community by staying in three or four places that are close to them, and to be occupied in teaching them HaShem's Torah and mitzvahs, as I hinted at in short, above in this letter. The messenger who bears this letter will explain everything thoroughly etc.

From the core of my heart, which has always and forever been faithful to them, I look forward to their response (concerning all the above-mentioned matters).

From one who speaks with tzedakah, the tzedakah of HaShem. May there be grace upon each and every one, from the greatest to the smallest. Amen, Selah.

Dovber, the son of my father, master, teacher and rabbi, the Godly genius, our teacher and rabbi, Schneur Zalman of blessed memory, whose soul reposes in Eden.



## Section Two

# On Divine Inspiration

(The main corpus of Kuntras HaHitpaalut-sent as an open letter to all the Chassidim in the year 5574-1814)



# Part One





## 6

AS I explained in my first letter, many in our Chassidic brotherhood, whether old or new, are confused and have lost their way due to several kinds of errors regarding the ways of how to receive the words of the Living God in light of Torah and the service of the emotions and the heart, to the point that their understanding of it is literally the diametric opposite of the truth. Because of lack of knowledge and little occupation and practice in these matters they call light darkness and darkness light.

However, mainly, these ruinous ramifications have resulted from an overabundance of expositors that make themselves out to be wise, by boasting and professing, “I have the secret etc.”<sup>33</sup> claiming that there are secrets to true worship that they are privy to. They thus delude themselves and others, so much so that a total error has fallen into their thinking, which is the diametric opposite of the truth.

I am very greatly distressed over this because they attribute it all to me, so that many of our Chassidic brotherhood ask me advice regarding how to apply this error into practice! I find it impossible to tolerate and bear their erroneous words which have become so established in their mind, as if they are the rule of law! This is the result of students who teach before sufficiently mastering the subject, who have branched out to

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<sup>33</sup>This is based on a play on words in Isaiah 24:16.

drink of evil waters that kill and destroy the soul, removing it from light to total darkness etc.

Therefore, I say that the mitzvah and obligation specifically falls on me to properly explain and clarify all the different matters of the service of the mind and heart, each thing in its place, level and mode in great detail. This is so that he who is prone to error will not err and will not thereby mislead his fellow. It is also to erect a firm structure in his soul, in light of the Torah he receives, so that it should all be planted and rooted with a permanent root and bond that will never falter etc.

The matter may be compared to a person sitting before a bowl full of delightful healthy foods which revive the soul, but who lacks a spoon to bring it to his mouth. He could expire from longing solely because he lacks a utensil with which to hold it etc.

So it is regarding the true teachings on Hitbonenut Meditation and the knowledge of the Divine which my father, master, teacher and rabbi of blessed memory, whose soul reposes in Eden, bequeathed to us, each person according to his capacity. This may be so even though a person is fluent in all the teachings of Chassidus. Nonetheless, since he knows not how to assimilate it into his soul, he remains hungry and thirsty, lacking all light and vitality, until, after learning and understanding it all, he wonders of what benefit it is to him.

Likewise, the exact opposite kind of person exists. For him learning and understanding dispassionately from a distance, is the essence of Chassidus, whereas assimilating it into his soul, whether through intellectual excitement, or more

so, through emotional excitement, is absolutely forbidden. Thus, he seeks and requests advice on how to rid himself of any spontaneous excitement that comes unwillingly upon him, for he considers it to be “Awareness of self” which, to him, is a cardinal sin that destroys the soul, similar to the ways of the discredited Chassidus, mentioned above.<sup>34</sup>

Behold, two extreme opposites such as these, and between them, several types of intermediates of assorted levels and kinds, all of which possess errors that literally transform light into darkness! This even includes several different levels of veteran Chassidim who are expert, experienced and wise in their own eyes, as to the ultimate goal of the teachings of Chassidus. They too are totally lost! All this being the case, it is so very important to explain and clarify everything, so that they will not “hang empty pitchers upon me etc.”<sup>35</sup>

Of essential importance is to establish and affirm the principal theme and holy intention of my father, master, teacher and rabbi of blessed memory, whose soul reposes in Eden, in light of the teachings he revealed to us for thirty years. For the sake of all who are beloved to me and truly seek the words of the Living God, from my youth my sole aim has been that to the fullest intended extent, the illumination of the “Life of the World” be established in their souls, this being the matter of the revelation of Godliness within their souls, each person according to his capacity, as known.

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<sup>34</sup> This is a reference to the Chassidic practices of the Kalisker Chassidim.

<sup>35</sup> This is a Talmudic idiom that means, “attribute false teachings to me.” See Baba Basra 7a.



## Chapter 7

Let now my opening words shed light on the general differences between the discredited Chassidus and the Chassidus that my father, master, teacher and rabbi of blessed memory, whose soul reposes in Eden, bequeathed unto us to illuminate our path in the light of his teachings. From the very beginning of his holy work, his principal goal, which I heard from the holy breath of his mouth, not once and not twice, was that the chief aim of all his labor on behalf of the Chassidim, to which he literally devoted his life, was solely that **the revelation of Godliness be revealed within their souls**.

This means to say that their souls should specifically be excited with Godly excitement **only**, rather than the excitement of bodily life, which is not Godly excitement at all. This, in short, is the essential intended theme, which differentiates those who serve HaShem with their souls, from those who serve HaShem with their bodies. Within this general principle are many varied details.

Though it is well known, it is important to first properly explain the root of this general principle, because most people do not fully understand it. The matter may be understood by prefacing with the well-known explanation of the verse, “And you who adhere to HaShem your God are all alive today,”<sup>36</sup> from which it is understood that if not for this adhesion (Deveikut), they would be considered to be dead rather than

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<sup>36</sup> Deuteronomy 4:4

alive. A different verse also states, “To love HaShem, for He is your life.”<sup>37</sup>

Now, we cannot say that, “He is your life” refers to “to love HaShem,” in other words, that the love itself is your life. If that were the case, since the word Ahavah (love) is feminine, the verse should have read, “For she<sup>38</sup> is your life.” This being the case, why does it say “He is your life?” Certainly, the meaning of this verse is easily understood by all, that the words, “For He is your life” gives us the reason for this love. In other words, why should you love HaShem? The reason is because He is your life.

However, this being the case, we could ask; why is it necessary to actively bring about an excitement of love of HaShem if, because of this adhesion to Him, He already is your very life, literally?

However, as known, there is a difference between the love of HaShem and adhesion to Him. The general difference is only in this; that adhesion is the vitality and bond of the soul to the “Life of all Life,” the essence of the Limitless Light of the Unlimited One (Ohr Ein Sof),<sup>39</sup> *HaShem* Himself, blessed be He, who is called “The Source of the life of all souls.” As known, this is the meaning of, “For He is your life” – that is, **literally!** Therefore, in regard to the matter of adhesion it says, “You who adhere.” This means that just as a person clings to life, “You who adhere to HaShem, do so as a matter of course -

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<sup>37</sup> Deuteronomy 30:20

<sup>38</sup> Ahavah, the word for love in Hebrew, is in the feminine form

<sup>39</sup> Ohr Ein Sof is a Kabbalistic term meaning “The Limitless Light”

because of the root of your soul, which has an essential and permanent bond to HaShem, rather than just an aspect of intermittent excitement of love of God. Thus, Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai stated, “We are bound with one bond. I am unified in Him etc.”<sup>40</sup> (As will be explained shortly concerning the fifth level of the Divine soul, which is the aspect of the Yechidah etc.)

As known, this essential bond exists in the souls of all Israel, including a person whose spiritual source is only in the aspect of Nefesh of Asiyah. This is why we specifically recite the “*Shma Yisrael*-Listen O Israel,”<sup>41</sup> the purpose of which is to give over one’s soul to HaShem in the first verse, with the word “*One-Echad*.”

The mitzvah, “And you shall love HaShem your God,”<sup>42</sup> only comes afterwards, in the next verse. This is the aspect of the excitement of the soul which requires the commandment for the soul to labor in the kind of meditation that arouses love of HaShem, which is called, “The labor of love.”<sup>43</sup> This is clear and known to all. However, the main theme here is the general matter mentioned above, that the excitement should chiefly be specifically an excitement of the Divine. As mentioned above, two levels are included here – adhesion to HaShem and love of HaShem.

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<sup>40</sup> Zohar, Idra Zuta, Haazinu 288a, 292a.

<sup>41</sup> Deuteronomy 6:4

<sup>42</sup> Deuteronomy 6:5

<sup>43</sup> Zohar BeShalach 54b, Zohar VeEtchanan 267a.

Now, the explanation of the matter is as follows: As known, there are five levels in the Divine soul – Nefesh, Ruach, Neshamah, Chaya, Yechidah, the highest of which is the aspect of Yechidah.<sup>44</sup> The Yechidah is the aspect of the essential bond and adhesion of the soul to HaShem in that one permanently adheres to and is bound to HaShem, as Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai said, “I am unified in Him. I am aflame in Him etc.”<sup>45</sup> This level also exists in every Jew, each one according to his capacity.

This needs proper explanation and clarification: We clearly observe that when any Jew - even one of humble station who has a low and inferior soul in regard to comprehending matters of Godliness and possessing good character traits - hears an explanation of any concept within the subject of Divine contemplation, such as the transcendence or imminence of HaShem etc., his soul becomes very excited.

The source of this sense is the root of his soul, which is the Divine aspect of his soul. This is the Yechidah level which is higher than the soul’s faculty of insight. This is the matter and aspect of a Jew’s essential bond with HaShem which is called by the term, “Adhesion,” in that the soul adheres and is drawn to HaShem because of the essential Godliness in the essence of his soul. It therefore is drawn and adheres to HaShem of its own accord, just as a spark is drawn to the bonfire or the like. It is this which is called actual excitement in Godliness.

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<sup>44</sup> For a full explanation of the five levels of the soul see our book “The Knowledge of God” or our commentary on “Shaar HaYichud” of the Mittler Rebbe.

<sup>45</sup> Zohar, Idra Zuta, Haazinu 288a, 292a.



However, apparently, an extreme error can fall into the understanding of the above explanation, because, an aspect similar to this type of adhesion can actually be easily found in everyone. However, it is the exact opposite of it, since it altogether is not within the definition of Divine excitement.

It is readily observable that the excitement of the great mass of people is external excitement resulting from false delusions in their souls and hearts during prayer which manifests itself in the external cry of their heart of flesh - devoid of any inner illumination or vitality.

Such excitement is not directed to HaShem at all. This is because, during that time, there is no excitement and contemplation into Godliness at all, except in a most general way etc. and even that is not at all in a manner of the above mentioned “listening” and inner drawing of the soul to HaShem. This general manner of contemplation does not at all even include an aspect of “listening.”

This is so, even though common usage in the world is to also consider this to be “Adhesion” or “Enthusiasm.” However, it is a totally false adhesion, literally the opposite of the true adhesion which is called, “Divine Excitement.” Actually, it does have similarities to true adhesion, except that it is not at all adhesion directed to HaShem. Any adhesion which is not to HaShem is of no real value, as the verse states, “You who adhere to HaShem – specifically – are alive.” Only

such a person is called alive, whereas the above-mentioned external adhesion, which is not to HaShem, is actually considered to be dead.

This is because his soul does not at all receive its vitality from the source from which it was hewn in Godliness etc. Instead, it is called “self-worship” rather than worship of God. It does not even fall into the category of “Those who serve HaShem with their bodies.”

Those who serve HaShem with their bodies, at least are still called, “Those who serve HaShem.” That constitutes an excitement of love for HaShem that specifically is a natural physical love; in that a person’s natural, animalistic soul also loves etc. This accords with the simple understanding of the verse, “And you shall love HaShem your God with all your heart.”<sup>46</sup> The word for heart here is *levavcha*-לבבך rather than *lev*-לב. The sages stated that the two letters בב of *Levavcha*, mean with both your inclinations,<sup>47</sup> the inclination to do good and the inclination to do bad – the good inclination being a function of the Divine soul and the bad inclination being a function of the animalistic soul.

Though this does not constitute the essential bond of the Divine soul, mentioned above, it nonetheless is called serving HaShem with the body. After all, his physical heart and flesh do become excited specifically about HaShem, the Life of lives, as is written “My heart and my flesh will sing out to the Living

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<sup>46</sup> Deuteronomy 6:5; See Rashi there.

<sup>47</sup> Mishnah Brachot 9:5; The inclination for good is called the Yetzer Tov and the inclination for bad is called the Yetzer HaRa.

God.”<sup>48</sup> The words “My flesh” mean the heart of flesh, literally. Through the excitement of the heart of flesh with a physical pleasure, he delights in HaShem in his physical heart.

(There also is a higher level of this that reaches the aspect of “love of delights” which is in an aspect of the above-mentioned essence of the Yechidah, as will soon be explained.)

The reverse of this, literally, is the matter of externally exciting the heart of flesh, in which one ignites and heats a strange fire within himself. This comes about solely through whipping his emotions into a froth and causing his blood to boil. This is not at all the fire of HaShem. Rather, it is solely for the sake of exposing the innate emotions of his heart and flesh with a heat of flaming fire; to overheat himself into feeling the thrill of excitement. This is an extremely great error that ultimately leads to delusions, misconceptions and very erroneous falsehoods. As known, even in worldly matters, when one gets carried away by his emotions it can lead to terrible consequences, especially when they are self-induced.

(By way of jest, this is like what has been said<sup>49</sup> on the verse, “Do not eat over the blood”<sup>50</sup> - “Do not pray over your blood,” which implies that one should not pray with his blood alone, but rather, with the soul that is in the blood etc.) About this it states,<sup>51</sup> “A fool does not desire understanding, but rather, only to expose the emotions of his heart.” This is well known to all. It is superfluous to lengthen on this, because it is self-

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<sup>48</sup> Psalms 84:3

<sup>49</sup> Talmud Berachos 10b

<sup>50</sup> Leviticus 19:26

<sup>51</sup> Proverbs 18:2

understood to anyone who has truly tasted the words of the Living God once or twice.

His soul will greatly despise this false, mistaken path. He will find it utterly intolerable because of the coarseness and overall shallowness that eventually branches out from this alien adhesion, until the person who succumbs to it finally says,<sup>52</sup> “I am and there is none besides me.” This is because he becomes very aware of himself. As a result, he enters the category of arrogance and pride, similar to those who are proud of physical matters of this world, literally! Furthermore, a person who is prone to fall to this, will also fall into self-love etc., and may even be drawn into a completely strange fire, as known regarding the various kinds of pitfalls that many have fallen into etc. The greater the attachment and adhesion of a person to the above-mentioned true aspect of Divine excitement, the greater will be his disdain for this strange fire that literally opposes it.

This subject is extremely subtle, having many different subtle categories of levels. Even most understanding men of knowledge cannot distinguish between all the specific categories to their ultimate depth. Rather, they can only distinguish in a general way, between the physical feeling of the heart, as mentioned above, and actual Divine excitement, such as in the verse,<sup>53</sup> “My heart and my flesh will sing out etc.,” which refers to the fact that the physical heart can be aroused to emotional feelings as a result of Divine contemplation and can also become excited about HaShem, as mentioned above. This

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<sup>52</sup> Isaiah 47:8, Isaiah 47:10

<sup>53</sup> Psalms 84:3

is so, even though it comes as a very tangible feeling and is actually similar to the external feelings of excitement of the physical heart when it becomes excited in and of itself, without any of the above-mentioned Divine excitement.

Now, the discernment of how they constitute two diametric opposites etc. is understandable to anyone who knows the teachings of Chassidus well. However, in regard to its many details, this is hidden from most understanding men of knowledge, even the great amongst them, so much so, that they literally confuse darkness for light and light for darkness. I clearly know that there are many who delude themselves by imagining that the physical excitement of their heart of flesh is a Divine feeling, when in truth it is nothing more than a bodily feeling. However, without their being conscious of it, it does contain a tiny admixture of extremely concealed Divine light, which, as known, is called 'The Residue of Contemplation.'



Let me explain myself, for my intent here is not merely to expound, but to bring to light the ultimate goal of truly revealing Godliness within our souls. To preface, I must bring out an example of this concept found in manuscripts that are in my possession; these being the excellent words of innerness and sweetness – the teachings of my father, master, teacher and rabbi, of blessed memory, whose soul reposes in Eden, which explain the statement in the holy Zohar,<sup>54</sup> on the verse in Ezekiel, “And behold a man whose appearance was like that of copper and a flaxen cord and a measuring reed were in his hand etc.”<sup>55</sup> The Zohar comments, “The first covering of holy colors which covered the Mishkan;<sup>56</sup> its number came up to 32 (Its length was 28 and its width was 4). The second, outer covering which covered this one, came up to the number 34 (The goatskin curtains were 30 in length and 4 in width etc.) This was lesser but higher and this was higher but lesser etc.”

See the copy of the explanations on this which I have in manuscript form. This entire matter can essentially be understood from them, in all the particulars of its categories, literally, because through them the distillation of the subject may be understood. That is, that the essential difference between the side of Holiness and the side of Nogah is that in

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<sup>54</sup> Zohar Pekudei 233b

<sup>55</sup> Ezekiel 40:3

<sup>56</sup> The Mishkan was the portable Temple that travelled with the children of Israel for forty years in the wilderness.

Holiness, the aspect of the vessel, which is the “somethingness” of the light, is in an aspect of total self-nullification, whereas in Nogah, the vessel is a tangible “somethingness,” with much more in excess of the principal. However, this gain is actually a loss etc.

The explanation of this matter may be understood from the matter of, “The kindness of the nations is sin.”<sup>57</sup> This is because, in the nations, the good light of kindness is separate from HaShem, therefore, its vessel, which is its “somethingness,” spreads out to a greater degree than the aspect of its light. Actually, this gain is a loss, so much so, that it is called “sin.” Similarly, the sages said,<sup>58</sup> “The righteous speak little and do much.” The explanation is that “speaking” is the aspect of the vessel that reveals. “Speaking little” is the aspect of self-nullification etc. However, “they do much.” On the other hand, the opposite is true of the wicked. They say much, in an aspect of arrogance and the spreading out of the “somethingness”<sup>59</sup> of the vessel. But they do little, because of the loss of Divine illumination etc.,<sup>60</sup> as mentioned above.

We literally see a similar thing in the whole matter of the excessive exaggeration that is observable in the external, delusionary excitement of the external heart of flesh, mentioned above. This comes about from the aspect of the spreading of

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<sup>57</sup> Proverbs 14:34

<sup>58</sup> Talmud Baba Basra 87b

<sup>59</sup> In the wicked there is a sense of being a “Something” In other words, there is a sense of self-importance.

<sup>60</sup> To the degree that a person has a sense of self-importance, to that degree he suffers from a diminishment of Divine light. God does not dwell in a place of arrogance.



the “somethingness” of Nogah, which is an utter loss of inner illumination, to the point that it turns from good to bad, heaven forbid etc.

The opposite is true of the Divine spark on the side of holiness; Even the aspect of “somethingness” felt in the heart of flesh, mentioned above, comes in a way of utter self-nullification, that is, with a total absence of awareness of self etc. Furthermore, the degree of how great the absence of self-awareness is, comes about according to the gain of additional light and vitality etc. This general distinction is clearly observable to all those who know the words of the Living God well, and is the root of the above-mentioned general distinction.

Now, to know all the indicators of how to recognize these characteristics within one’s self to the finest details of levels and their categories, so that one will not delude himself; it is necessary to first understand the root cause of the matter of the total absence of self-awareness during true Divine excitement which is felt in the heart of flesh etc. At first glance, it seems impossible to believe that a feeling which is the absolute absence of feeling, such as this, could exist, since this would entail two opposites existing simultaneously in one thing!

To understand this, we must preface with the subject of what “melody” is. The adage that Moses, the faithful shepherd,<sup>61</sup> used to sing all kinds of melodies during his

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<sup>61</sup> The Faithful Shepherd is the term by which Moses is called in the holy Zohar.

prayers,<sup>62</sup> is well known etc. He did this because his soul included all six hundred thousand souls of Israel and each soul, when it ascends into the root source from which it was hewn, does so specifically through song. This is the aspect of the above-mentioned essential excitement, with a love of delights, according to the manner of its root above in the supernal delight. That person who included all six hundred thousand souls was Moses, the faithful shepherd. As explained elsewhere, this is why he sang all kinds of melodies.

Firstly, we must understand what is meant here by the “excitement of melody.” This is specifically a **spontaneous activation** of melody without any intellectual choice or will altogether. It is an excitement that is simultaneously felt and not felt within him, since it does not come from his intending to bring about excitement. Rather, it is reflexive and automatic, in that he is not conscious of it. Since, at that very moment, it is as if he altogether does not feel or is conscious of it, therefore it is considered to be the total absence of feeling one’s self-being. Nonetheless, it is a felt excitement.

By way of example, this may be understood from the spontaneous excitement of great joy that a person has when very good news and the like, reaches him. Certainly, the excitement could be so strongly felt in his heart that he may make strong automatic and involuntary gestures, such as clapping his hands, as well known. This takes place without choosing or intending it. Rather, he claps involuntarily and

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<sup>62</sup> Zohar Mishpatim (Raaya Mehemna) 114b.

automatically and this, itself, is the indicator that he is not at all aware of himself being excited, though it is felt in the heart. However, it is as if he is totally unaware of it. This is because it is genuine excitement resulting only from the good thing itself that his soul is bound to. He then does not at all feel his excitement, because he never intended to become excited. Rather, the excitement is automatic, so much so, that he can be completely unaware of it. This is also similar to what we observe in the opposite emotion; that when a person is angry, he is neither aware of nor does he feel his excitability etc.

The opposite is true of excitement that results from intending it first, such as one who belabors himself with much contemplation until he becomes excited. Here, his principal intention is solely for this excitement and he anticipates and hopes for it, wondering when it will come about. (He will be anguished if it does not) and will rejoice when it does come, if it is felt well, with heated passion, as he desires – and he will be anguished if it is not as passionate as he would have liked etc.

Now, most members of our Chassidic brotherhood are very confused in this regard. One will state this opinion and another will state the opposite etc. One will completely prohibit excitement and another will completely permit it. Furthermore, there are intermediate opinions, between these two extremes. It therefore is necessary to properly explain and clarify this subject, because it is the general axis and foundation for receiving the words of the Living God during prayer etc.



# Part Two



Now, apparently there are five levels here, one above the other, each one of which will be explained in its place, so that no one should err etc. The first level is the worst one of all. This is when a person's principal desire in Divine contemplation, is wholly just to become excited, in order to feel alive. In comparison to the other levels, this is the least of them, so much so, that it can almost be compared to the above-mentioned external excitement of the heart of flesh brought about solely through intentional self-arousal of feeling, totally divorced from Godliness.

This is not Divine excitement at all, because he does not desire or intend any aspect of Godliness whatsoever. His intention and goal is not that Godliness dwell in his soul or that his soul be bound to Godliness etc., but rather to have something of a thrill, so that he can be aware of his self-existence.

Nonetheless, there is some hidden admixture of good here, which comes from the aspect of the concealed love of HaShem within his heart. That is, it is hidden within the alien garment of his revealed desire. Nevertheless, all this notwithstanding, in a hidden way, his essential desire is specifically to become excited about HaShem and if it would not be about HaShem, he would have no desire to pursue it altogether.

This is so, even though, in a revealed way, this is not the case. Rather, the inner content of the matter (that there should be a revelation of Godliness in his soul because he really only desires Godliness, rather than just pleasuring himself), never consciously enters his mind. About this true, underlying desire, the verse states,<sup>63</sup> “And as for me, closeness to God is good for me,” as known.

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<sup>63</sup> Psalms 73:28



Now, the second level, which is above this, is the above-mentioned matter of listening from afar. He specifically listens to and contemplates Godliness and understands it well, until he realizes the truth of it and accepts it as absolute truth, at least intellectually (it is firmly established in his mind). However, the matter is still distant from him, so that he questions what benefit his soul will derive from it.

This is because though the matter of contemplating Godliness itself is very precious in his eyes and he accepts it in a manner of “acknowledgement,” so that the matter of Godliness is very great and lofty in his mind and heart as being utterly sublime, however, he still only wishes and longs that this Godliness be established in his heart and soul in a revealed and felt manner, rather than being hidden and distant, (the matter is still very distant from him, does not belong to him, and does not relate to him at all) as known.

This level is better than the previous one because, at least, it is close to arriving at actual Divine excitement. This is because, after all, contemplation of Godliness is important to him. He greatly desires it and his chief goal and desire is to approach it. Only that, though he occupies himself with it, he does not affect Divine excitement from it in his heart and mind at all. However, it is not for his selfish pleasure, but solely for Godliness, since his only desire is that closeness to HaShem be firmly established in his soul. In essence, this level is the

beginning of those who seek HaShem in truth and purity,  
specifically with a motive that is accepted by HaShem.

The third, higher level, is called “A good thought that joins with deed,” this being love and fear of HaShem as they relate to action only. The explanation of the matter is that being that in the above mentioned, second level, though his motive is specifically accepted by HaShem, in other words, his only desire is to be close to HaShem, rather than far from Him and furthermore, this desire comes about because the matter of HaShem’s greatness is precious in his mind, however, as of yet, no excitement has been activated in his mind, since the matter is still utterly distant from him. He just wants to be close, but as of yet, is not close. Being that this is only an aspect of intellectual “acknowledgement,” it is not called by the name “good thought,” but simply “thought.”

This may be understood by an example in worldly affairs. We observe that there are two types of thought: The first one is when a person thinks about some good or splendid thing which he regards as very great, such as magnificent wealth, but which belongs to another, or the extraordinary greatness and glory of a king or prince and the like. This is called “dispassionate thought” because it neither affects nor relates to him altogether. Neither the money nor the glory is coming to him, only that he thinks about it because of its preciousness and importance in his eyes and he wishes very much that such a good and splendid thing would come to him etc.

The second type of thought is when he thinks about something good that affects him personally, such as when he profits from a good business deal or when he receives honor and greatness or when he personally acquires great fortune. Such thought comes to him in a manner of excitement to whatever degree his soul is drawn to it, meaning that he is moved by it.

As known by experience, when a person receives some news about a good business deal which will greatly affect him, the whole power of his mind becomes engrossed in it and he positively adheres to this thought with an excitement called “adhesion of the thought” (strong attachment of thought in that he is greatly affected and moved by it). The indicator for this is that he becomes preoccupied and moved (absorbed and engrossed).

This is similarly understood to be the case in regard to contemplating Godliness with such thought, in that he adheres strongly to it, like something that directly affects him, as mentioned above. This is called “A good thought that – at the very least - joins with deed.” This is to say that, at the very least, the resultant ramifications produced by it are love and fear that apply to deed.

However, in regard to the “dispassionate thought,” mentioned above; though he desires to come close and truly be excited, as of yet, he has not become excited even in the aspect of “listening within thought.” Rather, his acknowledgement is only from a distance, as mentioned above. The only result born of it is the shame that he feels. In other words, shame falls into his heart over how distant from Godliness and how spiritually

deficient he is, which includes the matter of the inferiority of this physical world in general, compared to the upper, spiritual ones. This is because he has absorbed the contemplation of the Divine until he sighs with shame and the like (His estimation of himself and of the world falls greatly). Its only result is the resolve to desist from evil and do good etc. In other words, since this is so, that HaShem, blessed is He, is infinitely great and this world is very, very low, therefore the right and proper thing, is to do HaShem's will by desisting from evil and doing good, very, very much.

This is the least of spiritual levels, but after all, since it contains an aspect of Godliness, he can enter the lower Garden of Eden due to his Divine contemplation. However, it is not considered to be actual love and fear of HaShem, with any degree of excitement (This is in contrast to the worst level of all, mentioned above, in which there is no aspect of Godliness whatsoever. As mentioned above, there all he seeks is excitement, rather than any Godliness, and whatever desire for Godliness he may have, is very concealed etc).

However, regarding the above mentioned "good thought," it says, "Listen O Israel etc.,"<sup>64</sup> in addition to being followed with "and you shall love etc."<sup>65</sup> As mentioned above, here, the essential thing is only the "excitement of hearing" in this thought, from which love is born. Nevertheless, it must be pointed out that, as of yet, there is no heartfelt excitement at all. The excitement is only intellectual. Furthermore, this love only

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<sup>64</sup> Deuteronomy 6:4

<sup>65</sup> Deuteronomy 6:5

relates to action – to turn away from evil etc., and not at all to the inner aspect, as it is with heartfelt excitement.

Albeit, it is higher than the “resolve” born of the above mentioned “dispassionate thought,” in which his love comes about only because it is the right thing to do, rather than being an actual excitement of the intellect. However, here the love comes as an aspect of intellectual excitement. For example, to desire with complete longing, at least in thought, for the revelation of Godliness in the good deed that he does, and to be very far from its opposite, which opposes Godliness.

All this is called fear and love of HaShem, even though it only relates to actions. But they are invested with great intellectual light and vitality (similar to thought that very much relates to oneself in worldly affairs), in which there at least is intellectual love for Godliness with the stimulation of the mind and fear of its opposite, similar to the fear of damage or destruction etc., as mentioned above. This is sufficient for those of understanding.

Now, the fourth, higher level is that due to one's Divine contemplation, in which his intellect becomes very excited, this brings about an immediate and spontaneous emotional excitement in his heart, in an aspect of an excitement that is felt with a greater and more inner vitality than the intellectual excitement mentioned above.

(However, this is not actual Divine excitement which the heart also feels in addition to the feelings of the Divine soul. That level of excitement takes place specifically in the Divine soul and subsequently also spreads to the physical body. However, that is a level which is even higher than the fifth level being explained here. The levels of excitement of the Divine soul will be explained later. Here we are still only dealing with the levels of excitement of the intellectual, natural, animalistic soul.)

About this the verse states, "And you shall love" – specifically – "with all your heart" – meaning, with both your good inclination and your bad inclination, as mentioned above. This is the essence of the commandment to serve HaShem with the heart – which means to toil intellectually to such an extent that the heart, specifically, becomes excited. This is called, "A Labor of love," because it actually is laborious and involves much toil.

This is because in regard to matters of the world, as soon as a good thing arises in thought and excites the mind, this

excitement affects the emotions of the heart, in that the heart immediately becomes excited with flaming desire or its opposite – bitterness from something bad, which is despised in thought etc. However, in regard to the service of HaShem, excitement of the heart is not easily drawn from excitement in thought. The reason is because the aspect of the Godliness within this contemplation is not drawn to the heart in a revealed way, but rather as an encompassing light in the intellect of the brain etc.

There are very many different levels of how the heart is activated. One person may become more excited in the heart than in the brain, while another may become excited with great joy etc. All in all, this level is considered to be actual fear and love of HaShem, though generally, it is considered to be “natural fear and love.” (Nonetheless, as stated above, none of this is considered to be actual Divine excitement at all. That is the sole domain of the Divine soul, as will be explained later.) About this scripture states, “Closeness to God is good for me”<sup>66</sup> – for me, literally. This is also called, “My God within me,”<sup>67</sup> which is also the matter of the verse,<sup>68</sup> “to love HaShem” – specifically with the heart – “for He is your life” – which is from the Divine soul, as mentioned above.

Now, the aspect of the love and fear of HaShem which is born in the revelation of the emotions of the heart on this fourth level etc., manifests as inner light and tremendous

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<sup>66</sup> Psalms 73:28

<sup>67</sup> Deuteronomy 31:17

<sup>68</sup> Deuteronomy 30:20



vitality toward the action of desisting from evil and doing good etc. In other words, one does the positive commandments with tremendous love and eagerness, in that the action is invested with inner light and vitality. Likewise, the opposite is also true. He will be embittered with active resentment over anything that opposes it, in that he will distance himself from all evil and guard himself from it, with the same level of excitement.

This is literally similar to a person who is enthusiastically occupied with his business dealings. Because he loves amassing wealth, he will do everything that benefits the business with eagerness and zeal. Moreover, he will distance and guard himself from anything that is detrimental to the business, with the same degree of zeal.

This, then, is the foundational root of the 248 positive commandments, which are specifically drawn from love, in that love of HaShem is the motivational root of the 248 positive commandments. Fear, on the other hand, is the motivational root for desisting from doing the 365 negative commandments. Together, they comprise the aspects of kindness and severity of the heart [Chesed and Gevurah]. This is the meaning of the verse, “To love and serve Him,”<sup>69</sup> as known.

Behold, this level is higher than the excitement of intellectual love and fear of HaShem of the third level of “Good thought,” mentioned above. This is sufficient for those of understanding.

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<sup>69</sup> Deuteronomy 11:13



Now, the fifth, higher level is the matter of the intent of the heart, which is even higher than the excitement of the heart. In explanation; as known, when as a result of Hitbonenut Meditation, a person becomes fully excited in his heart, with eagerness and joy, or conversely, with bitterness etc., then simultaneous to the excitement of the heart, the entire length of the Godly matter that he contemplated, which caused the excitement in the first place, becomes abbreviated in his mind, so that all that remains of it is only what is directly pertinent to the emotional excitement of the heart.

In other words, what arises from the distillation of the subject that he focuses upon, is an abbreviation of the entire subject of his contemplations, such as the imminence or transcendence of HaShem and the like. This distillation is the intended essence and motivational root of his contemplation, that is, to realize that “before HaShem, everything is as nothing” and the like.

The tremendous excitement of the heart that comes about as a result of this abbreviation is miniscule relative to the essential intent of the heart in the full length of the Godly matter when it was still under contemplation. There, it was focused upon in his mind and heart with a length and breadth that, as of yet, was above being brought into the category of heartfelt excitement.

By way of example from worldly affairs; when a person directs the inner point of his heart with deep concentration into the extraordinary opportunity of a certain good business venture, though his entire soul will be drawn after it, he still will be incapable of bringing out excitement for it in his heart, because his mind and heart are so fully occupied only in contemplating how good it essentially is. This is called, “The expanded intellect” of Chochmah, Binah and Daat [Insight, Comprehension and Concentration] etc. This is so, even though in a hidden way, love and fear do exist there. Nonetheless, they are only called, “Intellectual fear and love” which is higher than the natural fear and love mentioned above.

(The difference between the above mentioned “natural fear and love” and the above mentioned “intellectual fear and love” is that the “natural” ones are separate and apart from the contemplation itself. This is called the “Therefore” – that is, since such and such is the case, therefore so and so. In other words, the “Therefore,” which is the ramification of the contemplation, comes after its conclusion and results from it.)

On the other hand, “Intellectual fear and love” is not at all separate from the contemplation itself. Rather, it comes about involuntarily and automatically by force of logic, without choice and will at all. Moreover, when it filters down into the emotions of the heart, this fear and love also come about spontaneously, such as the example of involuntarily clapping the hands, mentioned above. The indicator for this is the constancy of the excitement in this kind of focus of the mind, in that it never ceases, as does “natural fear and love.” There,

the fear and love fall away and then return to reawaken. It is because of this that the term “Toil” does not so much apply to “Intellectual love and fear.” This is as explained elsewhere on the verses, “God, do not keep your silence etc.”<sup>70</sup> and “So that my soul will sing to You and not be stilled”<sup>71</sup> and “The lower fire calls out constantly to the upper fire.” This is sufficient to those of understanding.

Even higher than this is the aspect of the simple desire which is totally higher than the aspect of contemplation. Rather, it is just an essential and simple desire, and is the cause of its product and ramification, which is the intellect etc., as known. This is sufficient for those of understanding.

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<sup>70</sup> Psalms 83:2

<sup>71</sup> Psalms 30:13



From all the above, the particulars and categories of this general principle are clearly understood. It is the excitement of the mind and heart which, foremost, is specifically the product of preparation; this being Hitbonenut Meditation until the fifth level, which itself is the intention of insight and comprehension [Chochmah and Binah] that subsequently also illumines the emotions of the heart.

Now, the first level mentioned above, in which one only desires excitement, devoid of Divine contemplation altogether, is close to the alien fire, mentioned above. This level is not the fire of HaShem and cannot be enumerated as part of the five levels.

As known, the five levels correspond to the five levels of the soul, Nefesh, Ruach, Neshamah, Chaya and Yechidah. The aspect of Nefesh relates to action. This is the aspect of the resolve to act in accordance to HaShem's will alone. It comes about from the aspect of "Acknowledgement" and is simply called, "Thought," as mentioned above. Thus, it is only considered to be on the Nefesh level.

The aspect of Ruach, which has greater vitality, is the aspect of the excitement of the "Good Thought" mentioned above, as in the verse, "HaShem examines the spirits."<sup>72</sup> This is the aspect of "Listening well" in thought, as mentioned above, and as in the verse, "But in truth, it is a spirit in man."<sup>73</sup>

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<sup>72</sup> Proverbs 16:2

<sup>73</sup> Job 32:8

However, the aspect of the Neshamah is the aspect of the illumination of the brains of Chochmah and Binah [Insight and Comprehension] in the emotions of the heart, thus exciting the heart with a greater degree of illumination and vitality, as mentioned above. About this the verse states, “The soul that is of the Almighty gives them understanding.”<sup>74</sup> Binah (Understanding) specifically corresponds to the heart etc. This is also the meaning of the verse, “HaShem examines the hearts etc.”<sup>75</sup>

The aspect of Chaya is within Chochmah and Binah [Insight and Comprehension] themselves, as they are, before having spread out into the excitement of the heart, which is caused by them, as mentioned above. This is called “Intention” etc.

Lastly, the aspect of the Yechidah is the true fifth level. This is the aspect of the “essential simple desire” which is totally higher than reason and intellect. This is because, “A desire has no reason” at all, as known.

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<sup>74</sup> Job 32:8

<sup>75</sup> Proverbs 16:2



# Part Three



However, all five levels mentioned above are levels of the “Intellectual Soul” which is called “The Natural, Vivifying Soul,” in that it too must agree and acknowledge, with acknowledgement and excitement of the mind and heart, and ultimately include the intent and simple desire etc. Nonetheless, this is all called, “One who serves God with his body,” rather than, “One who serves God with his soul.”

This is because, in and of itself, the Divine soul is literally a Divine power. All its five levels; Nefesh, Ruach, Neshamah, Chaya and Yechidah are all in a state of Divine rather than physical excitement – literally, except that it is invested in the physical brain and heart, so that its illumination and the spreading forth of its influence likewise come into the physical brain and heart in an aspect of five levels too. The lowest level is that the heart senses the Divine excitement of the soul, as mentioned above.

To explain this, we must first have a proper understanding into the matter of the Divine excitement of the soul in a general way, as mentioned above concerning the general categories between actual Divine excitement and the excitement of the life of the flesh. This is because Divine excitement is the principle aim and true basis for true Divine inspiration, which is the ultimate goal in contemplating the words of the Living God. This is the above-mentioned matter of “Adhesion” (*Deveikut*) which is called, “Essential Life,” as

in the verse, “You who adhere to HaShem your God are all alive today.”<sup>76</sup> This is also the meaning of the verse, “For He is your life etc.”<sup>77</sup>

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<sup>76</sup> Deuteronomy 4:4

<sup>77</sup> Deuteronomy 30:20

Now, this statement needs to be explained and clarified. We observe an astonishing phenomenon in the matter of the listening ear of the human intellect in regard to the words of the Living God. That is, Chassidus causes great intellectual excitement. Now, it cannot be said that this is because the concepts of this subject are deeper than concepts of other Torah subjects, for there are other deep Torah concepts of greater breadth.

We further observe empirically that one person's intellect will become very excited when he hears Chassidus, whereas another will not become excited at all – similar to what was explained above on the matter of “listening from afar” in which the matter does not at all affect him, only that he accepts it as being true, as mentioned above. (He barely hears.)

At first glance, we could attribute this to proficiency in the service of the heart – this one serves with proficiency while the other does not. However, this is not the case, because a person could be God fearing and pure in his service with all his heart, but in this he has no talent to listen at all. All this is known and fully tested.

This being the case, we can only say that this comes from the potentiality of the soul itself – that it possesses Divine potential and that when it is activated, it is defined as Divine excitement – that is, this is caused solely due to the Godliness of the soul. Therefore, when he hears an aspect of Godliness,

the Godly soul will become excited with Divine excitement solely because of the source it was hewn from. However, in this there are separate levels. There are those who are only from the aspect of Nefesh. Such a person will, therefore, not become as excited as someone from the aspect of Ruach, who becomes more excited and so on.

However, we must first understand the fundamental difference between Divine excitement that stems from the Divine soul and the excitement of the intellectual, natural soul in the brain and heart. At first glance, what difference is there here?

Now, in short, the explanation is as follows: In regard to the Divine soul's excitement about Godliness, though the person becomes excited through comprehension and the like, nonetheless, it all is an actual aspect of Godliness, including the comprehension itself. After all, it is actual Godly comprehension.

On the other hand, the comprehension of the intellect of the natural soul cannot be compared to this at all, for though when the natural soul becomes excited with intellectual comprehension, the essential thing is also only the Godliness within the comprehension, because he would not become excited by comprehending a different concept unrelated to Godliness; nonetheless, this is a comprehension from the "Garment of Nogah"<sup>78</sup> that conceals the essential Divine illumination. This is because the place from which this natural soul was hewn, including its ten powers: Desire, intellect, emotions, thought, speech and action, in essence, is all from the

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<sup>78</sup> For a full explanation of "The Garment of Nogah" see our book "The Knowledge of God" or our commentary on "Shaar HaYichud" of the Mittler Rebbe.

aspect of the “Garment of Nogah” which is a composite of good and evil etc.

This is in accordance to the well-known statement of our sages, of blessed memory, that there are three partners in the birth of a child;<sup>79</sup> the father and mother draw down the natural soul, such as human emotions and intellect etc., whereas the Holy One, blessed be He, contributes the Divine soul, as in the verse, “You blew it into me etc.”<sup>80</sup> This is in accordance to the statement in Etz Chaim that the Divine soul, in and of itself, does not need repair because it is from the world of Repair [Olam HaTikun<sup>81</sup>] that is, from the world of Atzilut.

(Even in the Nefesh of Asiyah, a glimmer from the external vessels of Zeir Anpin radiates there. As known, the thirty vessels of Zeir Anpin become the Nefesh, Ruach and Neshamah of the worlds of Beriyah, Yetzirah and Asiyah etc. Therefore, even in an unlearned Jew who only possesses a Nefesh of Asiyah, a glimmer of the aspect of Atzilut is present there. However, it is only called Atzilut of Asiyah etc.)

The Divine soul descended into the natural soul for the sole purpose of clarifying the garments of Nogah which were drawn down by the father and mother. This is the foundation of service of HaShem in this world through fulfilling Torah and mitzvot [commandments] with love and fear of Him. This is to say that it all is contingent on the excitement of the natural soul,

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<sup>79</sup> Kiddushin 30b

<sup>80</sup> Berachot 60b

<sup>81</sup> For a full explanation of “Olam HaTikun” and “Olam HaTohu” see Shaar HaYichud of the Mittler Rebbe, translated and elucidated as The Gate of Unity, or our adaptation thereof entitled The Knowledge of HaShem.



as mentioned above in regard to the particular categories of its five levels; Nefesh, Ruach, Neshamah, Chaya and Yechidah etc.<sup>82</sup> However, the Divine soul, in and of itself, in the place from which it was hewn, that is, in the aspect of Atzilut of Beriyah, Yetzirah and Asiyah, is not in need of repair.

Now, we need to understand all this. For does not the Divine soul also become excited with desire, intellect and emotions? This being the case, what, essentially, is the difference between the excitement of the Divine soul when it comprehends Godliness and the excitement of the natural soul when it comprehends Godliness? Certainly, in both of them the excitement is only from the Godly aspect within the comprehension or the emotions etc.

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<sup>82</sup> For a full explanation of the five levels of the soul, see Shaar HaYichud of the Mittler Rebbe, translated and elucidated as The Gate of Unity, or our adaptation thereof entitled The Knowledge of HaShem.



Now, what the excitement of the Divine soul is when its comprehension is invested within the comprehension of the natural soul, may be understood from the following example: We find that the souls in the Garden of Eden<sup>83</sup> delight from the radiance of HaShem's "Indwelling Presence"<sup>84</sup> there.

(This is so, even though the souls there are invested in the garment of Nogah. Nonetheless, this is after Nogah has become purified. This is called, "Pure Garments" and is from the Nogah of the Chashmal of Beriyah or Yetzirah etc.)<sup>85</sup>

The ten powers of the soul; desire and pleasure, intellect and emotions etc. are included there too. Certainly, the illumination of comprehension and delight in the Divine radiance itself that the Divine soul perceives in the Garden of Eden, comes about because of the revelation of the Divine light within the Divine soul, as it is, in and of itself, unfettered by any concealment or diminishment at all. This being the case, this certainly is an actual aspect of Godliness – only, that it radiates through the medium of "comprehension" of the Divine.

This comprehension of the Divine is totally devoid of any awareness of self-being and is rather an aspect of Divine

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<sup>83</sup> "Heaven" or "Paradise."

<sup>84</sup> The Shechinah.

<sup>85</sup> For a full explanation of Nogah, Chashmal, and the worlds of Atzilut, Beriyah, Yetzirah and Asiyah see Shaar HaYichud of the Mittler Rebbe, translated and elucidated as The Gate of Unity, or our adaptation thereof entitled The Knowledge of HaShem.

non-awareness of self. Albeit, it is still considered to be comprehension – similar to the comprehension of Godliness that the soul experiences here, in the physical world, while it is still invested within the physical comprehension of the natural soul. Its pleasure too, is Divine pleasure devoid of any awareness of self-being, but rather, only spiritual, Godly pleasure, literally. This being the case, the excitement of this Divine comprehension is considered to be Divine excitement, in an actual aspect of Godliness. The same holds true of the excitement of pleasure. It is excitement of Divine pleasure.

(A well-known example of this is the difference between physical pleasure, such as the pleasure in wealth or food, compared to the pleasure in honor, which is more ethereal. This is why people are willing to give up all manner of physical pleasure for honor. Likewise, the pleasure in honor may be considered physical compared to the Divine pleasure in the Comprehension of Godliness of the soul while it is in the body. Furthermore, this pleasure too, may be regarded as being physical compared to the pleasure of the soul as it is in the Garden of Eden. This analogy holds true of the comprehension of the Divine as well etc.)

In like manner, there are ten powers of the soul as it delights in the Divine radiance of the Garden of Eden: Godly desire, Godly intellect, Godly emotions etc. - all in an aspect of Godly non-awareness of self-being. Since these soul powers exist from the Divine non-being of the Divine soul, like a spark from the flame, and it itself is literally a part of God, therefore, it can delight from the radiance of HaShem's Indwelling

Presence – the Shechinah. This is in accordance to what is written elsewhere, “I am unified in him etc.”<sup>86</sup> – in the aspect of the Yechidah of the Divine soul etc.

Through this example we can also understand the matter of the descent of the Godly Neshamah of Briyah or the Ruach of Yetzirah etc. into the garment of the natural soul within the physical body, in that, even in this low state, it is still not cut off from its potential and the source from where it was hewn, which is called the “Tzelem”<sup>87</sup> or the “Mazla,”<sup>88</sup> as in the matter of the verse, “Only in the image of HaShem does a man walk etc.,”<sup>89</sup> as known.

In a person who possesses a Ruach of Yetzirah: in this aspect of Ruach as it is invested in the body there radiates a glimmer of its root in the Ruach of Yetzirah as it exists in the Garden of Eden of Yetzirah etc. The same principle holds true of the Neshamah of Briyah or the Nefesh of Asiyah.

In summary, according to this we understand that even when the Divine soul is invested within the natural soul, there is a glimmer of similarity to how it experiences the radiance of the Indwelling Presence of HaShem in the Garden of Eden. This is in a manner of the Divine excitement of its desire, intellect and emotions, in that it too is an aspect of Godliness,

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<sup>86</sup> Zohar 288a

<sup>87</sup> Image

<sup>88</sup> For a full explanation of “Tzelem” and “Mazla” see Shaar HaYichud of the Mittler Rebbe, translated and elucidated as The Gate of Unity, or our adaptation thereof entitled The Knowledge of HaShem.

<sup>89</sup> Psalms 39:7

literally. This is because the Divine soul is called “a part of God” even once it has had such a great descent.

The explanation of the matter is that its Divine light is not as concealed and hidden as it is in the soul of Nogah. This is because, in essence, Nogah is the aspect of a separate garment. It is like an illumination of light as it radiates through a filter or the like. Though it too radiates light, nonetheless, it is not the original light itself. Rather, it is a secondary, acquired light, because it only receives from the essential light by means of the filter.

Similarly, this is how it is above in the spiritual realm in regard to the aspect of the garment of the Chashmal of Nogah, as known. On the other hand, in its spiritual root, the Divine soul receives from the essential Divine light without concealment and without the filter of a garment. (The only reason every soul in the Garden of Eden has a garment from Nogah is so that it will not be obliterated out of existence by the overpowering radiance of HaShem’s presence etc.)

Likewise, even when it is invested in the natural soul which acts as its garment, this causes no concealment or hiddenness in the Divine soul at all. This being the case, there is no change in the manner of the excitement of its powers. They all remain as Godly excitement, literally, to which the excitement of the powers of the natural soul are not comparable at all, as will be explained. This is because the Divine soul is essentially different from the natural soul. It is only grasped by it, solely in a manner of being grasped and enveloped, as known.

We now need to understand the difference between the excitement of the Divine soul within the comprehension that the natural soul comprehends, and the excitement of the natural soul itself etc. It was explained above in regard to the intellectual comprehension of the natural soul into a Godly matter that someone hears from another, that, as of yet, he does not at all become excited etc. Only afterwards, through effort, he may become excited from the summary etc.

The very fact that a minute or two transpired in which he did not become excited from the comprehension itself, indicates that the Godliness in this comprehension is very hidden in it. He therefore only possesses the matter of hearing the concept, in and of itself, without it being related to him, because the Divine light in this comprehension is distant from him. This is so much so, that specifically with effort a tiny glimmer of it may radiate to him. Moreover, this glimmer is only an abbreviation and distillation of the concept, in that his excitement is merely an acknowledgement, as mentioned above. (Moreover, the essential light is distant here, since the excitement comes in the form of a “Therefore,” as mentioned above.)

Even if he becomes excited in thought from the comprehension itself, such as the above mentioned “Good Thought” (and even higher than this, the above mentioned

intention itself, which is called the “Intellectual fear and love of the natural soul,” which is an excitement that results from the essence (rather than what is called the “Therefore,” in which comprehension without excitement has already subsided, as mentioned above) but immediately when he comprehends the concept itself, not only does he become excited, but the excitement is not at all separate from that which is being comprehended etc.) all of which indicate that Godliness is not so hidden in this comprehension – nonetheless, it all is an aspect of Godliness hidden within the garment of Nogah, specifically within the comprehension of the Binah of this soul of Nogah etc.

This is in no way comparable to the aspect of the essential Divine illumination that radiates in the Binah and comprehension of the Divine soul invested in the comprehension of the natural soul. This is because it has a glimmer of the essential Divine light of the comprehension of Binah of the Divine soul as it delights in the essential Divine radiance in the Garden of Eden, without any filter or concealment at all, as mentioned above. Because of this the excitement in this comprehension of the Divine soul is actually also called by the term “Divine Excitement,” rather than the excitement of something separate which is other than Godly, such as the excitement of the natural soul when it comprehends.



Now, we must first preface with an astonishing observable phenomenon. When two people hear a specific matter on the topic of Godliness, there are different types of excitement that take place in the Divine soul when the natural soul comprehends it. One person may have the talent of listening and be moved by the comprehension itself (that he understands) due to the explanations of the concept itself. This is to say that he is moved to excitement because of the vast explanation of the many components of the topic; explanations that are very rational and in accordance to human intellect, so much so, that they are grasped and assimilated by his mind very well. Here, his excitement essentially only comes from the explanation.

One the other hand, the other person may be immediately moved to excitement by the Godliness in the concept. Here the talent is greater, because the entire explanation is included in it, so much so, that he can anticipate the whole vast explanation by himself. This is because he is immediately moved by the distillation of the Godliness in the concept, thus bringing about an automatic understanding of the vast explanation with immeasurably greater length, breadth and depth.

(However, there is a level that is very inferior in this regard. This is when a person is only moved to excitement by the, so called, “spirituality” of the concept, but, in truth, it is

only a delusion from the power of imagination in the understanding<sup>90</sup> of his soul. This is far lower than comprehension and is the source cause of the potential to have false imaginations. In other words, it is either because of confusion of the mind or because of the overheating of the passions of the blood, until a person can lead himself very much astray, exchanging light for darkness and darkness for light, turning truth on its head and confusing and mixing truth and false with each other. This error is very common amongst the members of our Chassidic brotherhood. They imagine this to be the above-mentioned Divine excitement that stems from the explanation of the concept being comprehended, which is higher than the comprehension itself. However, in reality, the distance between the two is like the distance between one extreme and the other, like the difference between day and night, literally. This is sufficient for those of understanding.)

The indicator of excitement of the Godliness of the concept is that he will have great discernment into the distillation and most inner depth of the concept being comprehended, which arises from all the details of the explanation through analogy or the like. Specifically from this, he will arrive at an aspect of length, breadth and depth and will be capable of understanding one thing from another with a tremendous expansion of the concept - many times greater than the words of explanation that he heard or saw written.

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<sup>90</sup> Binah

Such is not the case with someone who only has what he intellectually grasped of what he heard or saw written. In him, it all remains as it was. Moreover, these concepts remain as raw material without form, and over time, they slowly recede and become distant to him, until they totally dissipate and all that remains of them is just the general idea, minus its essential core. More so, all that remains is the external aspect alone.

In such a case, even if he remembers the general idea because he reviews and accustoms himself to it daily, nonetheless, it literally will be devoid of any vitality of Divine light illuminating his soul through its comprehension. Rather, it will be similar to a person who remembers worldly matters. This is because he never felt the illumination of Divine light in his soul from this comprehension.

(There is also an additional error common in the Chassidic brotherhood. There are those who immediately become excited over the distillation of the essence within the comprehension of the explanation and they imagine that this is from the Godliness of the comprehension. Such a person will therefore not tolerate any further explanation and will have no desire for it. Many people fall into this false imagination, when in reality, this is not at all the result of comprehending Godliness. Rather, it is because of the nature imbedded in the Divine soul of Jews (natural piety) – that without any reason or knowledge they become excited about Godliness. This is the smallest aspect of the Nefesh, which is the lowest level of the Nefesh, Ruach, Neshamah, Chaya and Yechidah of the Divine soul, as will be explained. However, the above-mentioned talent

to feel the Godliness in the comprehension, is the Chassidic talent of the comprehension, which is aspect of its Heyulie<sup>91</sup> (the distilled essence). It is similar to a liquid made of many ingredients which are distilled into an essence that many drinks may be poured from, as known. This is called “Simple Matter” or “Heyulie matter,” as known. This is sufficient for those of understanding.)

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<sup>91</sup> For a fuller explanation of the “Heyulie” see Shaar HaYichud of the Mittler Rebbe, translated and elucidated as The Gate of Unity, or our adaptation thereof entitled The Knowledge of HaShem.

Now, from the example of the distance between the “excitement in the explanation” as compared to the “excitement in the Godliness of the explanation,” mentioned above, we may now understand the even greater distance there is between the Divine excitement in the “comprehension of the natural soul” as compared to the Divine excitement in the “comprehension of the Divine soul.”

The excitement in the comprehension of the natural soul is merely like a garment that hides and conceals the excitement of the comprehension of the Divine soul. Likewise, the desire and pleasure of the natural soul are garments for the desire and pleasure of the Divine soul. (An example of this is the difference between physical pleasure and comprehension, in comparison to the spiritual pleasure and comprehension of souls in the Garden of Eden, as mentioned above).

We find that because of its essential preciousness, certainly, even the lowest level of the Divine soul (which constitutes its most diminished aspect and is the excitement of the essence of the Divine soul in an aspect of action; is drawn after Godliness without reason, similar to the exodus from Egypt, about which it is written, “That you followed Me in the desert”<sup>92</sup> - like a child who follows his father etc.) This lowest level of the Divine soul still is from the aspect of the essence of the soul of the Jew and is far greater than even the highest level

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<sup>92</sup> Jeremiah 2:2

of the natural soul. In other words, it is even higher than the “Simple will” which is called “Intention,” mentioned above.

Even so, the ten powers of the Divine soul are invested within the ten powers of the natural soul; the pleasure of the Divine soul is invested in the pleasure of the natural soul, its desire is invested in the desire of the natural soul, its intellect in the intellect and its emotions in the emotions etc., as known.

Accordingly, the Binah of the Divine soul is invested within the comprehension of the natural soul itself, which is its Binah. This being the case, the Divine excitement in the understanding and comprehension of the Divine soul is also invested within the Divine excitement in the understanding and comprehension of the natural soul. This principle holds true all the way to its root within its comprehension and understanding as it is when it delights in the illumination of the “Indwelling Presence of HaShem” in the Garden of Eden.

This is as mentioned above concerning the matter of “Only in the image of God does a man walk.”<sup>93</sup> As known, this refers to the soul as it is invested within the body. The difference is like the difference between essential light and filtered light, as explained above, or like the above-mentioned excitement of the Heyulie aspect that is hidden within the excitement of the explanation. This is sufficient for those of understanding.

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<sup>93</sup> Psalms 39:7

However, we still need to understand what, in essence, is this Divine excitement in the comprehension of the Divine soul which is qualitatively different than the excitement in the comprehension of the natural soul, as mentioned above. To understand this, we must first preface with the general principle of what the excitement of the Divine soul is.

Since it is literally a “part of God,” therefore, we are literally forced to say that the excitement of the Divine soul is totally different than what the excitement of the natural soul is. This is solely due to the fact that its excitement is an aspect of the excitement of the Divine itself, rather than an excitement that is separate from the Divine, similar to the verse, “All my bones declare ‘HaShem, who can be compared to You.’”<sup>94</sup> This is because to the Divine soul, Godliness is natural and essential, since it is from there that the essence of what it is was derived.

(Divine excitement, rather than human excitement; the soul becomes excited, rather than the body. This is called hearing, meaning that the soul hears. Generally, it is called hearing with the soul or the like.)

This may be compared to the excitement of the angels called “The Sons of God.”<sup>95</sup> Certainly their excitement is

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<sup>94</sup> The word for “my bones” is “*atzmotai*-עצמותי” and shares the same root as the word for “essence-*Atzmoot*-עצמות.” With a slight variation of one vowel from “*atzmotai*” to “*atzmootai*,” the meaning of the verse becomes, “My whole essence declares, ‘HaShem, who can be compared to you.’”

<sup>95</sup> Job 1:6

nothing but Divine excitement. Just as the natural soul becomes excited about physical matters in an essential and natural manner, because that is its source, so too, the Divine soul becomes excited about matters of Godliness in all their details, in an essential and natural manner.

We are compelled to say this, because it would certainly make no logical sense to think that the Divine soul could get excited about matters involving physical lusts, such as the desire for food, or the like. This is because it is totally unrelated to bodily lusts.

(In like manner, the natural, physical soul is far removed from getting excited about matters of Godliness, except by way of very great effort. Nevertheless, as mentioned before, it is possible for it to become excited about these things. This is because Nogah, which is its source, also has a root to receive sustenance from the Godly power that brings everything into being. However, the sustenance comes there in an extremely hidden manner, as mentioned above.)

This being the case, it is certain that how the Divine soul becomes excited is totally removed from the physical manner that the natural soul becomes excited, except that the Divine soul is invested and enveloped within it in a way of investment in a garment only, as mentioned above.

Though we observe the excitement of the Divine soul simultaneous to the natural soul's excitement about matters of Godliness, whether in thought, acknowledgement and resolve, or love, fear, intention, desire and pleasure, nevertheless, the essential difference between them is that the excitement of the



natural soul is totally separate from the essence of Godliness. On the other hand, the excitement of the Divine soul in matters of Godliness is essential to it. This is because the essence of Godliness is rooted and embedded in it, literally as its nature.

Since the Divine soul also includes the levels of Nefesh, Ruach, Neshamah, Chaya and Yechidah and is invested in the Nefesh, Ruach, Neshamah, Chaya and Yechidah of the natural soul, (in other words, it generally possesses desire, intellect, emotions and the three garments of thought, speech and action etc.) therefore, though it experiences Divine excitement in an essential manner, nonetheless, it undergoes various levels of diminished or expanded consciousness, similar to the observable division of levels in the natural soul in its desire for closeness to HaShem, mentioned above.

However, generally speaking, the whole gamut of Divine excitement stemming from the Divine soul is called “Those who serve HaShem with their souls,” rather than “Those who serve HaShem with their body.” About this it states, “You who adhere to HaShem are alive etc.”<sup>96</sup> – meaning that they adhere “automatically,” in an essential and natural manner, as was explained above concerning the general distinction between Divine excitement and physical excitement.

Therefore, even Nefesh of Asiyah of the Divine soul contains a glimmer of the Yechidah of the Divine soul, which is the aspect of its essential bond to HaShem. This is in accordance to the statement of Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai, “We

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<sup>96</sup> Deuteronomy 4:4

are bound together with one bond etc.”<sup>97</sup> Now, his statement refers to the highest level of attachment. However, there are many categories of levels in this. The Divine soul becomes invested on these levels according to the condition of its garment, which is the natural soul etc.

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<sup>97</sup> Zohar, Idra Zuta, 288a, 292a

# Part Four



Now, it was explained above concerning the natural soul that apart from the level in which there is no Godly aspect at all, in that one's only desire is excitement devoid of any revealed intention for Godliness, (and the desire for Godliness is only a concealed, subconscious desire) there are five general levels. When the Divine soul is in its most diminished level of consciousness, it too has a similar level of great concealment.

First, we must clarify what the diminished aspect of the soul is. It is a general principle that in every Jew, whether great or small, doing good through fulfilling the positive commandments and turning away from evil by desisting from doing the three hundred and sixty-five negative commandments, certainly depends on the free choice of the Jew to choose goodness and to despise evil, - each person according to the station and level of love and fear of HaShem he has achieved as a steady level of service. (This is called piety. Its opposite is frivolity and throwing off the yoke.) This matter applies to the type and category of service that pertain to the precept of loving and fearing HaShem with great toil and the yoke of serving Him through the study of Torah and the fulfillment of His commandments.

But in addition to this, every single Jew possesses something which is literally like a nature to him, even relative to his actual desisting from evil and doing good. This nature is rooted in his Divine soul in an essential and natural way, rather

than being a matter of choice and toil at all. In this, a person who serves and fears HaShem is equal to one who is frivolous and throws off the yoke.

An example of this is not profaning the Sabbath, not worshipping false gods and all other severe transgressions, such as forbidden sexual relations and murder or the like. This also includes many positive commandments, such as eating matzoh on Passover, dwelling in a sukkah on the holiday of Sukkoth, donning Tefillin and wearing tzitzit and the like. All these are done as if by nature, even amongst the most ignorant and worthless of Jews, without reason or knowledge.

Moreover, they are not at all done by rote, merely as a matter of habit. Rather, they are done out of the essential Jewishness of the person. For example, Jewish women and ignorant folk take the utmost care to guard their souls from anything that is forbidden or impure, including even the lightest prohibitions of our sages.

Now, there are many that lighten their own burden by being truly lax, transgressing the forbidden and being careless in fulfilling the positive commandments properly. However, this characteristic comes about as a result of the evil within the natural soul that overcomes the nature of the Divine soul in such cases. Notwithstanding this, the nature and essence of the Divine soul is literally the opposite. Its essence and nature is that it greatly desires HaShem's goodness through fulfilling the positive precepts and it greatly despises evil.

Since this matter only applies to the category of action, it therefore is the lowest level of the Divine soul. This is the

aspect of its Nefesh which is only the aspect of action. (This is similar to the matter of the resolve of the natural soul that results from the above mentioned “dispassionate thought,” except that there it is in a way of separation from HaShem, rather than the essential, natural resolve of the Divine soul etc.)

If not for this essential and natural aspect of every Divine spark in the Jewish people to desist from evil and do good, in other words, if it was only up to their service and fear of HaShem alone (piety) without this essential ingredient, this service would have ceased long ago etc.

Still and all, the toil in the service and fear of HaShem, (each Jew according to his abilities) strengthens this essential power of the Divine soul in observing all the details of desisting from evil and doing good, strengthening it to be established and unchanging, so that a person should not be lenient with himself or transgress and delude himself by finding loopholes to permit the forbidden etc.

In this regard there can be a huge difference between one Jew and another, so much so that in matters of deed, one could be perfectly righteous and another perfectly wicked. (In a person who is perfectly wicked, even the lowest power, which is the action level of the Divine soul, has withdrawn. This is due to the overpowering strength of absolute evil of his natural soul, as in the verse, “May the flame of the wicked be extinguished”<sup>98</sup> – totally, including the aspect of deed etc. Albeit, even the sinners of Israel are full of good deeds like a

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<sup>98</sup> Proverbs 24:20

pomegranate is full of seeds.<sup>99</sup> Because of this, “All Israel have a share in the world to come.”<sup>100</sup> This is sufficient for those of understanding.

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<sup>99</sup> Chagiga 27a

<sup>100</sup> Talmud Sanhedrin 90a



Now, certainly, the aspect of being occupied in deed by desisting from evil and doing good due to the influence of the Divine soul, begins with thought. This is the desire for Godliness within one's thought – at least to do HaShem's will in deeds and not to actually transgress it etc. However, on this level, the thought lacks all inner illumination and vitality. Rather, it is dispassionate, similar to what was mentioned above about the level of dispassionate thought in the natural soul in contemplating Godliness. That is, he regards it as being precious and sublime, but from a distance, like something that does not at all belong to him, but that he very much wishes were his. Because he truly accepts it as the "truth of reality," therefore, he desires that it be established in his soul etc. This gives birth to the aspect of "resolve," at least in deed etc.

Similarly, in the Divine soul, the cause that produces the essential "resolve" in deed to resist evil and do good, is the resolve within thought, which is the aspect of "faith." However, it is still very distant from him because the imperative to fulfill HaShem's will has no inner vitality of closeness to HaShem for him. This is because the Godly aspect here comes in a very hidden manner.

For example, the name of Heaven is fluent in all mouths, including women and ignorant folk. They mention HaShem's name at every opportunity; that HaShem is blessed, that He saves and aids (He is praised). But there are no inner feelings

at all in these praises because, at the very same moment the same person could do something which is literally the opposite of HaShem's will, such as the statement in Talmud, "When a burglar stands at the opening of a breach in the wall, he calls out to the Merciful One"<sup>101</sup> – to aid him in the burglary etc. But if he believes that HaShem comes to his aid, why does he transgress His will by committing theft!

The reason is only because, to him, these are two separate things. On the one hand, the faith that HaShem comes to everyone's aid is firmly established in his Divine soul in a natural and essential aspect, because He created everything and He is a simple unity etc. The theft, on the other hand, comes about because of the lusts of his natural soul etc. This being the case, it is quite possible for a person to truly pray for HaShem to help him with success during a burglary etc.

This is evidence that even in a case where Godliness is extremely concealed in one's faith, it is natural to him. As known, the word for faith-*Emunah*-אמונה, is related to the word *Uman*-אומן-a skilled craftsman. This is an inherited trait from our ancestors, Avraham, Yitzchak and Yaakov, and has become like a natural trait in their descendants etc. It is this aspect of the natural and essential resolve of the Divine soul that produces the specific deeds of desisting from evil and doing good, because one greatly believes in the One God, so that it is like nature for him not to transgress HaShem's will etc.

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<sup>101</sup> Berachot 63a

(The proof of this is the act of giving up one's life for the sanctification of HaShem's name, in which the power of this faith radiates in an inner way, to the point that he actually chooses to give up his life for HaShem's sake, rather than to forsake Him). This is so even though there can be an admixture of good and evil in the good deed etc., such as a person who gives charity solely for the purpose of self-aggrandizement or for some other ulterior motive. Nonetheless, the sages said, "One who says, 'I give this coin so that my son should live,' is perfectly righteous."<sup>102</sup>

This is because from the angle of the Divine soul he naturally desires to give charity, whereas the fact that he says "Only that my son should live" comes from the natural soul which covers over and conceals the Divine soul etc. The same principle applies to giving charity for self-aggrandizement or the like.

(Which is not the case regarding the idolatrous nations. Whatever they do is to benefit themselves. This comes from the root of their souls. With the exception of the righteous of the nations and the like, their souls are from the aspect of the three impure shells).

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<sup>102</sup> Pesachim 8a



SO far, in regard to the levels of the Divine soul, we have spoken about the level of deed. This is the essential quality of the Divine soul to desist from evil and do good. The aspect of revealed Godliness shines there in simple faith, at least within the resolve of thought and desire, as mentioned above.

However, there is a lower level than this. An example may be found in the mixed multitude of peoples that departed from Egypt with the Jewish people. In and of themselves, their motivation was not a proper one by virtue of their souls. Rather, they were motivated as a result of the miracles they beheld etc. As a result, as soon as they realized that they were apart from the Jewish people they made the golden calf etc.

Likewise, there are also many Jews whose primary motivation in doing good deeds is from selfish motives, such as solely to acquire a good reputation, as Raaya Mehemna<sup>103</sup> comments on the words of the verse, “Men of repute.”<sup>104</sup> Such people greatly delude themselves in considering themselves to be perfectly righteous when, in reality, the main thing for them is just to think, “For the sake of my reputation” - specifically - “will HaShem be glorified.”<sup>105</sup> These people are called, “Your brothers who hate and shun you”<sup>106</sup> etc., as known.

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<sup>103</sup> Zohar Bereshis 25b

<sup>104</sup> Numbers 16:2

<sup>105</sup> Isaiah 66:5

<sup>106</sup> Isaiah ibid.

Moreover, there are those who are in the categories of hypocrites, flatterers and liars etc., in whom there is no proper motivation that stems from the essence of the Divine soul in a revealed way, albeit, there is something of the Godliness of the Divine soul in them, in an aspect of great concealment only. Evidence of this is that when great rebuke, troubles and suffering befall such a person, the light of the soul descends upon him and he weeps tears of regret over his sins (this will soon be explained in relation to penitents on the day of Atonement). None of this is true of idolaters.

Other evidence is that when Moshe rebuked them and said, “Turn and go on your way<sup>107</sup> etc.,” they repented and confessed, saying, “We have sinned.” Further proof is that a Jewish bill of divorce is valid even when given under duress, when it is done under the compulsion of the Jewish rabbinical court. Additional proof comes from the fact that the court can compel people to give charity and that it may be taken by force of lien and the like, as explained elsewhere.<sup>108</sup>

(Similarly, in the future, both Jews and idolaters will be tested on this point through the precept of Sukkah. HaShem will cause an unbearable heat wave which will make it impossible to stay in the Sukkah. The idolaters will kick their Sukkoth out of frustration, whereas the Jews will not. The reason is because the sole desire of the Divine soul, in and of itself, is just to do HaShem’s will, as mentioned above. Since

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<sup>107</sup> Deuteronomy 1:7

<sup>108</sup> These two cases regarding the rabbinical court are only possible because, deep down, in his Divine soul, a Jew desires to do HaShem’s will as ruled by the rabbinic court.

one is exempt from performing the precept of Sukkah when it becomes unbearable to do so, the Jew will not kick it out of frustration at all, because he realizes that it is not HaShem's will, which is his only concern. On the other hand, the only motivation of the idolaters is gratification of their own desires, as in the verse, "For the sake of my reputation" – specifically – "will HaShem be glorified etc."<sup>109</sup> This is sufficient for those of understanding). There are very many distinctions here which will not be committed to writing because they are self-evident. Since each person knows his own soul best, it is altogether unnecessary to address this.

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<sup>109</sup> Isaiah 66:5





The second, higher level of the Divine soul is a more inner aspect, higher than the above-mentioned aspect of Nefesh, which is merely the practice of doing good deeds through the precepts. This is the aspect of Ruach which is higher than the aspect of Nefesh, corresponding to what was said above concerning the second level of the natural soul, which is the excitement of the “Good Thought” (listening very well).

This may be understood by way of example from what we find in regard to the exodus from Egypt. The entire people, including women and children, departed as a result of the simple faith in their souls and trust in HaShem. Though at first, due to impatience, they did not listen to Moshe, nonetheless, once they calmed down, they believed with an inner illumination of vitality, through the essential Divine spirit that was embedded and rooted in their Divine souls, as mentioned above. When they all left Egypt, it was with full enthusiasm, with inner thought and desire (listening strongly).

This is called, “Being profoundly moved,” corresponding to what was said above concerning the aspect of a “Good Thought,” like the example of something that very much relates to him, mentioned above. The result is that it comes in a way of inner excitement with much more illumination and vitality than the “Dispassionate Thought” hidden in the act of desisting from evil and doing good, without

any vitality - even though this “Good Thought” only applies to action - in their case, to leaving Egypt.

About this the verse states, “I will recall for you the kindness of your youth”<sup>110</sup> – meaning the “love” of your youth when you followed Me from Egypt, even though it was in an aspect of the diminished awareness of simply leaving the darkness of Egyptian impurity and entering the great light etc. But the fact that “you followed Me,” though it was beyond reason and knowledge, came from the essence and nature of your Divine souls. This is similar to a toddler who follows his father around with such intense enthusiasm that no one can separate him from his father etc. The only reason for this is the Divine spirit within the community of Israel which causes them to be drawn to pursue the Divine source from which they were hewn, literally like a nature etc.

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<sup>110</sup> Jeremiah 2:2

This may be understood with another similar example, that is, with the matter of the actual reawakening and ingathering of the sparks of holiness that fell into the levels of impurity through the “Shattering of the vessels.”<sup>111</sup> For many centuries and eons these sparks have been sunken amongst the idolaters and then they literally revert back and reawaken. These are the proselytes who convert to Judaism.

This is very astounding - (that a person who has been sunken in all kinds of evils from birth and for many generations of ancestors) can have such an incredible longing to convert! It can only be that a Divine spirit stirs within him without his even knowing it, like the proselytes in the time of Abraham, such as, Aner, Eshkol and Mamreh (and their like in every generation) etc.

(Albeit, converts are as bothersome as scabs<sup>112</sup> because they have come up from the impurities of Nogah, so that there is a severe admixture of negative character traits in them, which they need to overcome. Therefore, except for very high sparks, such as righteous proselytes like Shemayah, Avtalyon and Onkolus or the like, they are as bothersome as scabs.)

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<sup>111</sup> For a full explanation of the “Shattering of the vessels” see Shaar HaYichud of the Mittler Rebbe, translated and elucidated as The Gate of Unity, or our adaptation thereof entitled The Knowledge of HaShem.

<sup>112</sup> Talmud Yevamos 47b

This may be further understood through the matter of Baalei Teshuvah.<sup>113</sup> We observe that even the spirit of a person who has sunken into the worst kinds of lusts and severe transgressions can be roused and return to HaShem. There are even those who return with such depth of heart that their soul expires with weeping, such as Rabbi Eleazar ben Durdaya. When his soul expired from weeping, Rabbi Yehudah the Prince envied him and said, “One can acquire his share in the world to come in one moment.”<sup>114</sup>

Even those who do not repent with such depth of heart that their soul expires, nevertheless weep with great bitterness of the soul. This is especially true of the ten days of repentance from Rosh Hashanah through Yom Kippur. As well known, even the most frivolous people and even atheists who transgress the whole of Torah, become aroused on Yom Kippur, so that they truly weep. As known, this is not at all a matter of choice, since the whole rest of the year he runs after the lusts of his heart, doing evil all day long<sup>115</sup> etc.

It is only because on Yom Kippur HaShem becomes revealed to every Divine spark that seeks Him, as written,<sup>116</sup> “Seek HaShem while He is available”<sup>117</sup> etc. The sparks are automatically drawn to HaShem and roused to spontaneous weeping in a natural and essential manner. This is solely due

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<sup>113</sup> These are sinners who have truly repented and returned to full Jewish observance.

<sup>114</sup> Talmud Avodah Zara 17a

<sup>115</sup> Genesis 6:5

<sup>116</sup> Isaiah 55:6

<sup>117</sup> Talmud Rosh Hashanah 18a

to the essence and nature of the Divine soul. However, at first, they are hidden because of the concealing effect of sins, but through repentance they become revealed. He therefore weeps.

(This is so, even though it is explained elsewhere that this comes about from the Yechidah level of the soul, which is above action. However, this level also acts as a rousing spirit in the matter of desisting from evil and doing good within action, so that he earnestly states during the confession service of Yom Kippur, “We have acted abominably” etc.) He feels remorse and reverts from acting wickedly, to doing good. This accords with what was said above that the “Good Thought” joins with the deed, at least in an aspect of intellectual excitement of love and fear of HaShem.

(The reason why the wicked, the atheists and the frivolous do not revert from their wicked ways, is only because the aspect of the Yechidah of their souls only radiates temporarily, during Yom Kippur which is a propitious time for Divine revelation. Even then, it does not radiate within the faculties of their soul at all, but only in the way of an encompassing light from above, as scripture states, “May the flame of the wicked be extinguished”<sup>118</sup> – totally! In the case of someone who is not quite as frivolous or wicked, there will be an illumination in his soul in connection to the matter of deed. Moreover, it will be with greater inwardness. Likewise, every single day a heavenly voice proclaims, “Return O rebellious children,”<sup>119</sup> as known.)

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<sup>118</sup> Proverbs 24:20

<sup>119</sup> Jeremiah 3:14, 3:22

The highest state of this level is when the deed becomes illuminated as a reaction to opposition. This is specifically observable in the matter of actually giving up one's life for the sanctification of HaShem's name. Rabbi Akiva was anguished over this and said, "When will I have the opportunity to fulfill this"<sup>120</sup> – specifically in actuality! This is the innermost light of the Divine soul from the inner aspect of the "potential for what" in his soul. It is the aspect of the Yechidah that shines downward into the aspect of action, of not forsaking his faith specifically in deed. If an attempt is made to compel him to completely separate himself from the One God, the most inner and essential potential to be willing to actually give up his life for the sanctification of HaShem's name, awakens within him, whereas, if no one compels him to forsake his faith, he can actually fall into committing many transgressions, because this potential remains dormant.

Now, it cannot be that this phenomenon, of self-sacrifice, is the result of toil and effort at all. It is rather because of the essential bond of the Divine soul to the "Source from whence it was hewn" that a Jew finds it impossible to separate from HaShem under any circumstances. The moment he is faced with the supreme test of giving his life up for the sanctification of HaShem's name, the essential bond with HaShem that was hidden, suddenly shines openly.

In truth, if this potential would always illuminate one's soul in a revealed way, a person would never transgress even a

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<sup>120</sup> Berachot 61b

light prohibition etc., as the verse states, “So that the fear of HaShem shall be upon your faces, so that you shall not sin.”<sup>121</sup> From all these examples we understand the general matter of the essential excitement of the Divine soul in its inner aspect. This is the aspect of Ruach. As mentioned above, it is higher than the aspect of Nefesh which is limited to the action itself. This is sufficient for those of understanding.

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<sup>121</sup> Exodus 20:16





The third, higher level of the Divine soul is the essential excitement of the Neshamah level, as in the verse, “Let the whole Neshamah praise God etc.”<sup>122</sup> And the verse, “If He were to set His heart toward him, He would gather his Ruach and Neshamah unto Himself.”<sup>123</sup> There are other similar verses.

The explanation of the matter corresponds to what was mentioned above in regard to the excitement of the natural soul as a separate entity, this being the excitement of the “Good Thought” as it enters the emotions of the physical heart. It manifests as excitement that is felt as fiery flames of longing etc.

In regard to the Divine soul, this comes in an aspect of an essential excitement within the physical heart, stemming from actual Divine comprehension of the Divine soul, as it is invested in the comprehension of the natural soul. This is in accordance to the verse, “My heart and my flesh shall sing out to the Living God.”<sup>124</sup>

This is similar to the excitement of melody, mentioned above. When it illumines the physical heart, it comes spontaneously and automatically, free of choice or effort altogether, solely due to the essential excitement of the Divine soul, as mentioned above concerning the statement that Moshe,

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<sup>122</sup> Psalms 150:6

<sup>123</sup> Job 34:14

<sup>124</sup> Psalms 84:3

the faithful shepherd, would sing all kinds of melodies during his prayers etc.

This is the aspect of the excitement of the Neshamah through song – that is, the essential automatic movements of the voice in response to several kinds of emotion, each of which is composed of various proportions of joy, bitterness and the intermediate emotion of compassion and the like, as a spontaneous response to the Divine intent of the soul, specifically when it comprehends Godliness.

Nonetheless, it is felt in the heart with much heartfelt emotion, being that the melody and movement of the voice are literally produced from the “vapors” of the excitement of the heart, so to speak. However, because it is automatic and spontaneous, he is not at all conscious of it. This accords with the verse, “My heart and my flesh shall” literally “sing out,” specifically “to the Living God,” - which refers to the essential excitement about Godliness of the Divine soul.

This then, is the difference between the excitement of the natural soul and the Divine soul. The excitement of the natural soul is a felt excitement, in which the person himself is conscious and aware of being excited. As a result, the aspect of Godliness must surely be remote and hidden here, because of the self-awareness of the person who is excited. He thus grasps himself as having significance. Consequently, the excitement itself takes on primary importance to him, rather the Godliness, as mentioned above concerning the excitement of the physical heart when it is not at all directed to HaShem, but rather for the self-gratification of exposing the emotions of his heart etc.

Such is not the case with the excitement of the essence of the Divine soul. Even though it is felt in the heart, nonetheless it is not excitement that one is conscious of at all. This is because he is not aware of it, in and of himself, so much so, that at the moment he experiences it he is not conscious of it at all. His soul is not aware of itself.

This is similar to a child whose heart is excited with longing for his father. Since this is an essential, natural excitement, he is not aware of the excitement, in and of himself, so much so, that he is barely conscious of feeling it. The same principle holds true regarding the excitement of a father toward his child and so it is with every essential excitement.

An example of this is the excitement of the essence of the natural soul for a physical lust. We observe that a person whose heart is excited towards some pleasant thing in an essential and natural manner, will not at all be aware of it. Even though the excitement is felt very strongly in his heart, it is not considered to be self-awareness. On the contrary, this excitement is the absence of self-awareness. Furthermore, and this is an important principle: The deeper the essential excitement is, such as innermost love, desire and pleasure in Godliness, the less will one's awareness of it be, as will be explained with HaShem's help, concerning the fourth level of the Divine soul.

This level is found in most people whose Divine soul has not become impure or soiled to any extent by the bodily impurities of strange lusts of the external heart of flesh. This is in accordance to the verse, "He who has clean hands and a pure

heart.”<sup>125</sup> Since here the intent of the brain illumines the heart, the verse comments, “I seek You” specifically “with all my heart.”<sup>126</sup> Also, the verse, “My flesh and my heart expire for You, the Rock of my heart.”<sup>127</sup> Yet another example is the verse, “My heart and my flesh shall sing out etc.”<sup>128</sup>

This level is the true beginning of the matter of Divine inspiration within the heart of every Jew. About this the verse states, “Because God is not within me”<sup>129</sup> – specifically within me! About this it also says, “The whole Neshamah shall praise God.”<sup>130</sup> This is the aspect of the Neshamah, which is the aspect of the brains of insight and comprehension [Chochmah and Binah] as they excite the heart, as mentioned above concerning the third level of the natural soul. When the natural soul is in a state of excitement as a separate entity, this essential excitement of the Divine soul becomes invested within it. This is sufficient for those of understanding.

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<sup>125</sup> Psalm 24:4

<sup>126</sup> Psalm 119:10

<sup>127</sup> Psalms 73:26

<sup>128</sup> Psalm 84:3

<sup>129</sup> Deuteronomy 31:17

<sup>130</sup> Psalms 150:6

The fourth level of the Divine soul is the aspect of the intentional point of the mind, which as yet, is higher than the felt excitement of the heart; similar to what was mentioned above concerning the fourth level of the natural soul, in which one's mind and heart are engrossed to their full depth in the essential awesomeness of the good thing etc. In such a case his entire soul is so drawn after it that it does not yet manifest as excitement within the heart etc. This is called, "Intellectual fear and love" which is excitement of the concept itself, rather than excitement from the brief summation of the concept (which is called, "The Therefore").

Now, the essential excitement of the heart, mentioned above, must come about spontaneously and without premeditation, just as, for example, the excitement of joy that causes the reflexive clapping of the hands comes about spontaneously etc. Likewise, this "singing out" of the heart of flesh, comes about automatically, as does every essential excitement, for spontaneity is the primary indicator of essential excitement. Moreover, excitement of the heart has a more inner level too, when it is drawn specifically after the distilled intention of the mind, this being the aspect of the depth of intention within the comprehension.

(In Kabbalistic terms, this is known as the aspect of the Yesod of Abba within the Yesod of Zeir Anpin,<sup>131</sup> which is called, “The intention of the heart” because it originates in the potential intent of the illumination of Abba within one’s mind. It is also called, “Love of delights.” This refers to the hidden delight within the depth of the concept being comprehended etc.)

Albeit, the excitement of the heart is not comparable to the essential excitement of the inner intent of the mind, in which the intention, which is the conceptual point itself, becomes excited.

(As explained elsewhere, this is the “voice of Moshe,” which is higher than the singing of the Levites. Their song was according to the length of the comprehension, in which the melody comes arranged according to contemplation, with a lengthy development of the explanation, in which many different modalities are arranged into the movements of the melody. Such is not the case regarding the voice of the movements of the melody that results from the inner Heyulie point of the concept itself. This sound is only an indicator for the distillation of the concept and the delight hidden within it. At such time it does not come arranged and with a development of a length. Rather, it is one very spontaneous movement. It is called, “The unheard voice,” meaning that it is altogether impossible to feel it and it never ceases. About this the verse

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<sup>131</sup> For a full explanation of the terms “Atik,” “Arich,” “Abba,” “Ima,” “Zeir Anpin” and “Nukvah,” see Shaar HaYichud of the Mittler Rebbe, translated and elucidated as The Gate of Unity, or our adaptation thereof entitled The Knowledge of HaShem.

states, “So that my soul will sing to You and never be stilled, HaShem my God, I will acknowledge You forever.”<sup>132</sup> This, then, is the level of song that Moshe, the faithful shepherd sang etc.)

This intention is higher than the aspect of the length and breadth of the comprehension of Binah, but is rather only into the essence of the Divine light, in and of itself, rather than one’s comprehension and understanding of it. Nevertheless, it does subsequently spread down into the aspect of comprehension. The Zohar generally calls it, “The duplicate song” of Chochmah and Binah, which is the aspect of the ascension of the soul that is in the brain when it delights in HaShem within the depths of “the concept that includes all the particulars of the chaining down of the worlds” etc.

This intention contains the essential and simple delight of the essence and simplicity of the Divine soul and is the root of the matter of the Shabbat prayers, as written, “Then shall you delight in HaShem,”<sup>133</sup> this being higher than the weekday prayers.

Generally, the principal purpose of prayer is to clarify and purify the natural soul. This is called toil and clarification. However, this only applies when the radiance of the Divine soul reaches the physical heart, because the principal abode of the Ruach and Nefesh of the natural soul is in the left chamber of the heart of flesh etc.

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<sup>132</sup> Psalms 30:13

<sup>133</sup> Isaiah 58:14

However, the brain, which is the abode of the Divine soul, is where the aspect of the service of the Divine soul itself takes place, as it ascends to the source from which it was hewn, by means of a simple and essential song within the Chochmah and Binah of the soul. This song is called, “The duplicate song.” Similarly, every day of the week, a glimmer of the light of Shabbat glows during the recitation of the “*Shma*.”

It is because of this that there is a profound difference between the excitement of love during the recitation of the “*Shma*,” compared to the excitement of love when reciting the verses of Psalms during the morning service. This is because in the Psalms of the morning service the love comes from the brain to the heart in a manner that is felt. This is similar to the excitement of the angels when they proclaim, “Holy, holy, holy”<sup>134</sup> in a tumultuous voice. Regarding this the verse states, “Exaltations of God are in their throats,”<sup>135</sup> - specifically in their throats – because the throat connects the brain to the heart, so that the excitement is felt etc.

During the recitation of “*Shma*,” on the other hand, we say, “Listen O Israel.”<sup>136</sup> This is a directive to the Divine soul to give its life up for HaShem with the word, “One-*Echad*-אחד.” The following word, “And you shall love,”<sup>137</sup> is a transitional verb – meaning that we are to bring this love into the natural soul too, as our sages commented that it is incumbent upon us

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<sup>134</sup> Isaiah 6:3

<sup>135</sup> Psalms 149:6

<sup>136</sup> Deuteronomy 6:4

<sup>137</sup> Deuteronomy 6:5



to love HaShem with both inclinations [the Yetzer Tov and the Yetzer HaRa].

However, this all is an essential excitement of the intentional point of the mind, whereas the felt excitement of love in the heart, which is called, “The Palace of Love,” is merely included in it. As known, the love of the heart is compared to a palace or a vessel, because it is sublimated to the essential excitement of the intentional point, in which one’s mind becomes totally engrossed, to its length and breadth. This is similar to what was mentioned above concerning the fourth level of the natural soul etc.

Since this level is more inner and essential than the previous levels, therefore it comes in a way that is even less felt, so that he has even less awareness of self. All this is known by experience to anyone who has tasted the essential delight of Divine depth of comprehension during prayer. This level is a more inner degree of Divine inspiration.

Generally speaking, this is the Chaya level of the Divine soul. It is the “Potential for what” of Chochmah of the Divine soul, which, in turn, is illumined by a glimmer from Mazla and Tzelem, which are altogether above intellect, even above Chochmah. This is the aspect of the encompassing light of Chaya, within which the additional Shabbat soul rests. This additional soul is the aspect of the encompassing light of the Yechidah and is the highest level of the Divine soul. It spreads down as far as Zeir Anpin. However, it does not radiate in a revealed way at all; only in a remote, hidden fashion. It is the inner aspect of the fifth and highest level of the Divine soul and

is called, “The Simple Song,” as will be explained with HaShem’s help. This is sufficient for those of understanding.

The fifth level of the Divine soul is the Yechidah. This is the very essence of the Divine soul, literally. It is called, “The Simple Song,” - that is, the essence of the soul itself ascends in song. Because of this it is considered to be a simple, essential and unduplicated song. The above-mentioned duplicated song is an essential delight that comes by way of particulars, such as a particular depth of Divine comprehension. This is like the statement that the souls in the Garden of Eden delight in the ray of HaShem’s presence, this being the aspect of the supernal ray of Atik Yomin of Malchut of Atzilut.<sup>138</sup> The depth of comprehension of each soul determines his level of pleasure in the essential delight of the Divine. In this, souls are not equal.

However, the “Simple Song” comes from the aspect of the Heyulie delight - the source of all the particular pleasures from which the ultimate inclusion of the entire essence of one’s soul comes. This is as Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai stated, “With one bond” – referring to the one essential bond in the essence of the Yechidah – “I am unified in Him, I am aflame in Him,”<sup>139</sup> - literally! As is written, “My soul is glorified in HaShem,”<sup>140</sup> and “My soul, glorify HaShem” – literally! This is also called,

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<sup>138</sup> For a fuller explanation of these terms see Shaar HaYichud of the Mittler Rebbe, translated and elucidated as The Gate of Unity, or our adaptation thereof entitled The Knowledge of HaShem.

<sup>139</sup> Zohar, Idra Zuta 288a

<sup>140</sup> Psalms 24:3

“The one simple and essential desire” that is beyond perception or division into opposite desires, even the “Kindness and severity of the ‘Hidden Reason for the Desire,’” which is called, “Love of delights” – in the plural, meaning two types of delights; the delight of joy and its opposite, and the like.

Rather, it is a single desire that all desires are included in and dependent on. By way of example, this may be understood in the case of a person who is engrossed in saving himself from death, literally! The full focus of his desire, to the core of his being will be awakened in him. This is because his very existence is threatened, literally! At this point, all desires that are distinct from the actual essence of his being, such as love of sustenance or love of his wife and children, become as nothing to him, because they become included within the essence of the desire to live. This touches the whole essence of his being.

This is called, “The excitement of the essence” (He is extremely moved, to the very core of his being). In other words, his entire being is drawn into it, so that nothing else is left of him, to the point that he is altogether unaware of himself. (He is so deeply engrossed in self-preservation with all his soul that he “goes out” of the vessels of his brain and heart, so to speak).

This fifth level of the Divine soul is the level of loving HaShem “with all your might”<sup>141</sup> – meaning without limit and higher than the levels of Nefesh, Ruach and Neshamah. More so, it is higher than the aspect of the “Potential for what” of the

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<sup>141</sup> Deuteronomy 6:5

soul that becomes invested in the intent of the mind. Rather, it is totally and completely beyond reason and knowledge, because this simple Heyulie desire and delight has no reason altogether, even a hidden reason within the source of the Heyulie intellect etc.

Since this level is not commonly found amongst most people altogether, therefore it is superfluous to lengthen on it. But nonetheless, every spark of Israel has a hidden glimmer of it on Shabbat, in the soul that is called, “The additional soul,” which is the aspect of the “encompassing light of the Yechidah,” as mentioned above. Also, at the moment that one gives up his life for the sanctification of HaShem’s name, this power shines forth in the aspect of “expiring.”

It shines within perfect Tzaddikim and true Baalei Teshuvah in a revealed way; in Tzaddikim it does so due to the powerful sweetness of the essential delight in the aspect of Yechidah, as in the verse, “You who adhere”<sup>142</sup> – meaning, who actually adhere, and like the statement, “I am unified in Him.”<sup>143</sup> In true Baalei Teshuvah it comes in an aspect of the withdrawal and expiration of the soul because of the opposing side, like Rabbi Eleazar ben Durdaya, whose soul literally left him in weeping, and the like.

Furthermore, this level shines in every single Jew in a concealed fashion. This is why it is observable that when any Jew hears a Godly matter, even if he does not understand it at all, his Divine soul adheres to it and is automatically drawn to

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<sup>142</sup> Deuteronomy 4:4

<sup>143</sup> Zohar Idra Zuta 288a

it. This is only due to the aspect of the Yechidah within him that, at least, shines in a hidden way. This is above intellect. Therefore, in this respect the ignoramus and the wise man are equal – literally! This is sufficient for those of understanding.

(An example of this is the fact that when the Torah was given at Mount Sinai, the souls of all Jews flew out of their bodies equally. Furthermore, this is the reason they all equally said the verse, “Everything that HaShem has spoken, we will do.”<sup>144</sup> This is sufficient for those of understanding.)

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<sup>144</sup> Exodus 19:8

# Part Five





After all these words of truth on the many different categories understandable to any beginner who has started to taste the words of the Living God (each according to his intellect, knowledge and understanding and according to how much he has accustomed himself in the service of the heart<sup>145</sup> from his youth), each person should recognize and discover his own place and level. He should discern all the categories of errors he has fallen into. If he is pure of soul and his heart is truly directed toward HaShem, he should always be diligent to keep his mind's eye properly opened concerning this, so as not to delude himself.

For it appears that the chief cause of the present state of ruin – this being that the light of Torah and the service of the heart is diminished even amongst those who seek and desire closeness to HaShem, is only due to delusion; that each person deludes himself. This happens because he is lax and does not put his whole heart into it to the fullest extent. He only desires closeness from afar, but his heart is not with him. Concerning this the verse states, “Why does a fool have money in his hand to acquire wisdom, but his heart is absent?”<sup>146</sup>

The important thing is to set one's heart properly to the ultimate truth of the words of the Living God. This is what he should devote his soul and his heart to all the days of his life.

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<sup>145</sup> Prayer is called, “the service of the heart.”

<sup>146</sup> Proverbs 17:16

Why should a person infect his soul with emptiness and falsehood, thus distancing himself from HaShem, rather than coming closer, heaven forbid? (Do not fool yourself!) As well known, the main cause for the admixture of good and evil is self-delusion etc.

Truth be told, all this applies specifically to those who truly seek and desire closeness to HaShem. However, this is not found amongst most of our Chassidic brotherhood. Therefore, I am compelled to approach them with open rebuke that is motivated by hidden and revealed love. My purpose is to reveal and to teach each one about his malady and affliction. Though a person's soul may weep in secret and he may truly grieve over it, nonetheless, pride and attachment to self-love covers over everything, to the point that he will be incapable of seeing any faults in himself at all, as known that all of a person's ways are pure and upright in his own eyes. For such a person there is no hope of correction etc.

Now, actually, the error of self-delusion, due only to ignorance, is not the main problem. Rather, the problem comes mainly because one's heart is generally discouraged from occupying himself and desiring matters of Chassidus.

For the most part, those who are completely preoccupied with business affairs, with all the Nefesh, Ruach, Neshamah, Chaya and Yechidah of their natural souls; if occasionally, at certain periods or during the time of prayer their spirit revives in them, they will be incapable of bearing the laborious yoke of depth of concentration in their mind on the subject of HaShem's imminence or transcendence, not in a

general way and certainly not in a way of particulars, to the point of having the above mentioned “Good Thought.” At most, it will be in the category of a “Dispassionate Thought” from a very great distance, in which the matter does not affect him altogether. All this is well known to anyone who acknowledges the truth and does not wish to delude himself, heaven forbid.

Now, the resolve that results from this is extremely dispassionate. Therefore, its positive effect is only temporary; that is, to learn Torah for only a short while after his prayers. Furthermore, within an hour or two, even this low level of commitment vanishes and becomes as if it never was. Instead, he occupies himself in his business and other physical needs with the aspect of the Yechidah of his natural soul, as if they are matters that literally touch his soul to the core and are the apple of his eye, similar to the aspect of, “All my bones shall declare, ‘HaShem who is like You’”<sup>147</sup> mentioned above in regard to service of HaShem.

Even when he hears or sees the words of the Living God, he hears and sees them from a great distance, and when he understands them well, he merely acknowledges them etc. He soon forgets it all as if it never was, like the verse, “You cast your eyes upon it and it is not, for it grows wings and soars to the heavens like an eagle.”<sup>148</sup> This cannot be considered to be a state of a “listening ear” at all.

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<sup>147</sup> Psalms 35:10

<sup>148</sup> Proverbs 23:5

However, his essential, natural Jewishness actually remains intact within him. This is the aspect of the Nefesh of the Divine soul, which is the matter of desisting from evil and doing good, with, at least, a residue of his original dispassionate resolve. But here too, there is great laxity. He will readily find leniencies for himself as far as fulfilling his religious obligations, because of all kinds of hindrances, such as the materiality of the body, business worries and the fact that the essence of his natural soul is drawn to matters of this world.

Finally, he descends to the level of an inanimate object, which is called, “The dulling of the brain.” At this stage he does not even hear from afar, so that he loses all talent to understand or absorb matters of Godliness in his mind altogether. This is so much so, that questioning the benefit of Chassidus no longer applies to him, because he is no longer within the category of hearing altogether. All this is known to anyone who acknowledges the truth.

Nevertheless, from an entirely different angle these two categories also possess a good and praiseworthy thing. That is, that when such a person realizes that he is not a receptacle to hear and become excited by Godliness, even with intellectual acknowledgement, not to mention heartfelt excitement, this will bring him to an aspect of simple repentance. He will feel embittered and lowly to the very core of his being over the grossness of his physical body. Similarly, he will remember the sins of his youth and the like, and will cry out spontaneously. This will come about without contemplation upon Godliness altogether. Rather, it will be in a general manner, similar to the verse, “Their heart cried out to HaShem,”<sup>149</sup> specifically with repentance from the depths of the heart, with tremendous bitterness or great submission.

What comes out of the above-mentioned categories is that HaShem beholds the heart of the penitent who cries out to Him, if it is sincere. Since this comes about because of the arousal of the Divine soul, HaShem takes notice of it even if it is not accompanied by any contemplation. This is because it results from the arousal of the Divine soul. As mentioned above, it is possible for a Baal Teshuvah to have an arousal of the Yechidah of his Divine soul, to the point that the soul may expire. At the very least, he can have an arousal to repent from the aspect of the Ruach and Neshamah, which is a spontaneous

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<sup>149</sup> Lamentations 2:18

cry during his prayers, as in the verse, “They cried out to HaShem in their distress,”<sup>150</sup> or the verse, “Their heart cried out to HaShem.”<sup>151</sup>

This type of excitement is part and parcel of Divine excitement, except that it comes about as a reaction to the opposing side and because of the great sense of remoteness from matters of Godliness etc. On the other hand, when the Divine soul is in a state of closeness and adhesion to HaShem, it also becomes excited with a spontaneous cry in the heart of flesh, as in the above-mentioned verse, “My heart and my flesh shall sing out to the Living God.”<sup>152</sup> We find that the two cries are identical, except that one comes from opposition and distance and the other comes from closeness etc. This is sufficient for those of understanding.

Now, there are many who erringly deride such a cry. However, in truth, they fail to see that this literally is what the statement in Tanya – Likutei Amarim<sup>153</sup> is referring to when it says, “Weeping is lodged in my heart from this side and joy is lodged in my heart from that side”<sup>154</sup> etc. Joy is the intellectual delight in Godliness as it comes into the heart as heartfelt emotion etc. It is the “closeness” part of the Divine soul. Now, within the same level itself, the Divine soul is embittered and weeps, because of its remoteness from the One God etc. That

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<sup>150</sup> Psalms 107:6

<sup>151</sup> Lamentations 2:18

<sup>152</sup> Psalms 84:3

<sup>153</sup> Tanya, Sefer shel Beinonim, Ch. 34; Also see Shaar HaYichud of the Mittler Rebbe, Ch. 6, translated and elucidated as The Gate of Unity.

<sup>154</sup> Zohar II 255a

is, there is simultaneous weeping from one side and joy from the other etc. In other words, the joy on one side and weeping on the other must exist together at every moment etc.

However, actually, in the two above mentioned categories, only the second part, which is the matter of weeping, exists. This is an inner excitement of the Divine soul that is very pleasing to HaShem, as scripture states, “HaShem is close to the brokenhearted”<sup>155</sup> etc. This is broken-heartedness due to one’s unworthiness and remoteness from HaShem, as known. This is sufficient for those of understanding.

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<sup>155</sup> Psalms 34:19





The third category is comprised of those people who have excitement in thought (intellectual comprehension), as mentioned above. The result is intellectual desire of longing for Divine revelation in good deeds etc. As mentioned above, this is so even though, as of yet, it is not heartfelt excitement. Now, very powerful rebuke is warranted here. We clearly observe amongst most people - even those who are educated, proficient, truly desire the words of the Living God and have “a listening ear” (which is the talent to understand Chassidus) and yet, it all turns to dross - literally into the diametric opposite etc.

This is because when a person such as this listens to Chassidus and properly absorbs the details of the Godly matter in his mind, he becomes excited and says to himself, “Wow! I’m inspired. I have seen the light.”<sup>156</sup> But this is where the matter ends for him, even if he reviews it two or three times etc. Thus, it is nothing more than a flash or a glance upon the mind and heart. Ultimately, everything remains very hidden and concealed within his soul, until it totally dissipates, literally!

This is because he reverts immediately afterwards and his bodily preoccupations reawaken. He does not cultivate the Chassidic insight diligently, to establish it firmly in his soul by contemplating the full ramifications of its length, breadth and depth, thus reviving his unfortunate soul. Though Chassidus is literally the life of his soul, he sets it aside. After all, he learned

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<sup>156</sup> Isaiah 44:16

it and he understood it and he even became excited by it! He feels he has already fulfilled his obligation and can now be called a “Chassid.”

Obviously, now he is permitted to contentedly attend to his other needs. Add to this his holiness in his own eyes, until he altogether confuses everything and greatly deludes himself. When the time for prayer comes, it all remains as a hidden and encompassing aspect for him. Even if he exerts himself and achieves intellectual excitement, he does not recognize its value or what good can result from it. This is well known to all men of understanding in this matter.

All this is due solely to the sickness of the natural soul, because of its great addiction to gratifying all the body’s material wants. How then, can it bear to absorb true feelings in the above-mentioned matter of “listening” to the words of the Living God? It is also due to laxness and expending a minimum of toil and effort in matters of Chassidus, merely in a passing way in order to fulfill one’s obligations, like someone passively listening to songs or music etc.

Moreover, there are many levels of the above-mentioned talent to listen. Some listen with greater depth, while others listen and become excited, but easily and quickly (in a very superficial way). That is, their intellectual excitement too is altogether external rather than being inner. All this is known to those who acknowledge the truth and do not wish to delude themselves. Therefore, one who is prone to falling could quickly fall from this level of excitement with just a bit of hindrance and opposition, such as preoccupation in business

matters, or he may fall into self-gratification with great coarseness and the like. Ultimately, his talent to listen could cease altogether. This is known to the knowledgeable. This is sufficient for those of understanding.



However, after thoroughly contemplating the causes of this sickness that infects most people, we must conclude that, for the most part, it comes from a different place of origin, this being that in essence many people are not truly brokenhearted. This is because from their youth they were not receptive to the teachings of Chassidus in the first place. They never accepted it out of true repentance from the inner depths of their heart, but rather, only in a passing way. Therefore, the effect was only temporary, so that by now, even its residual effect has vanished and gone. This is so much so, that they regard themselves as flawless individuals. (He feels fine about himself, without any sense of brokenness.) Therefore, the teachings of Chassidus on attaining this perfection will not readily be accepted and absorbed in the inner depths of their heart and mind at all. It will only be in a passing way, like a person who hears or sees something outside of himself. Though he may temporarily become excited about it, it immediately starts to dissipate, until finally it is as if it never was etc.

Whoever has a broken heart by his essential nature because of his remoteness from HaShem, should know that it is mostly due to his Divine soul, which is called, “The embittered soul imprisoned in the materiality of the body.” Though this broken-heartedness appears to be part of human nature, it is only so because the melancholy of the Divine soul is invested within the melancholy of the natural soul, which is called,

“Natural Melancholy.” However, in truth, the natural soul is not the cause of this melancholy at all. This is because the nature of the natural soul is to be melancholy only about physical lacking or the absence of something, rather than a lacking of Divine light etc.

(Because of this, the sages stated concerning those who receive the secrets of the Torah, that only a person whose heart is always anxious within him is worthy of it. This is the matter of the “natural” melancholy of the natural soul and the “essential” melancholy of the essence of the Divine soul. Without this melancholy the light of the secrets of Torah would not illuminate his soul and would not endure at all. On the contrary, he would enter the darkness of arrogance and casting off the yoke, as well known from experience.)

I personally heard this matter from my father, master, teacher and rabbi, of blessed memory, who heard these same words from the Rav, the Maggid of Mezerich; that a person cannot truly attain receiving the secrets of Torah and true depth of understanding in Ohr Ein Sof<sup>157</sup> to the point that it is literally established in his soul, without having a natural and essential melancholy that is rooted in him specifically from his youth. Moreover, this melancholy must specifically be in the aspect of its general Heyulie (the essence), specifically to its true depth (In other words, true broken-heartedness by nature, to the point that he literally despises his physical life at every moment on a constant basis).

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<sup>157</sup> Ohr Ein Sof is a Kabbalistic term meaning “The Limitless Light.”

Only then will the Source of all life, the Source of all existence, dwell within him to revive the spirit of the despondent, as scripture states, “With whom do I dwell? With the despondent and the lowly of spirit”<sup>158</sup> In everything he does, such as contemplating the secrets of Torah, they will be given over to his soul in a truly revealed way, on condition that his heart is anxious within him. (Whereas, if the opposite is true, nothing is given over to his soul, even if he knows and understands the simple meaning etc.) Also, in all the particulars of Divine service, he will be desirable to HaShem.

Then all of his sighs and natural melancholy will be transformed into joy and delight, all because of the Godliness that literally rests upon his soul. But without this, especially if he has the opposite, frivolous nature of natural gaiety, even if he is a vessel prepared to receive all secrets etc., it will not endure in his soul. Rather, he will always walk in darkness, completely deluding himself, since in no way will HaShem be with him etc. Thus far is the content of the Maggid’s words.

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<sup>158</sup> Isaiah 57:15





This may likewise be understood in regard to Beinonim;<sup>159</sup> that this is the chief cause of the above-mentioned sickness in their souls. If only they would open their eyes with pity upon their souls. They then would not destroy themselves through the self-love of never seeing faults in themselves etc. This is sufficient for those of understanding.

All the more so, in our generation, regarding the new followers who have lately come to the ways of Chassidus. They did not at all start off by cultivating the above-mentioned aspect of a broken heart in themselves from their youth. Rather, their eyes were immediately opened to the Divine wisdom, listening and comprehending everything at once, like one of the great, as known. Because of this, they feel perfect in all that they are, like children free of blemish. They recognize no evil in themselves and are very easy on themselves. This is because they are so overjoyed by their great comprehension and knowledge, that they are blinded by it - but the chief cause is self-love.

Moreover, the tiny amount of broken-heartedness that they may naturally possess is regarded as alien to them and unworthy of deep consideration. They consider it to be a low level, which is called (Natural Piety). This is what they received

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<sup>159</sup> This is an intermediate person who has perfected his thought, speech and actions, but is incapable of bringing about profound change in the actual characteristics of his soul. For a full explanation of the level of a Beinoni, see Tanya-Sefer shel Beinonim, of the Alter Rebbe.

from the expositors who make themselves great over them, saying “I have the secret” etc. This is a most extreme error.

By my life! Many of the great ones of the new followers have fallen into this error, with the exception of a few of the more seasoned ones who know the truth; and they too have left the path through falling into matters of this world etc. Unfortunately, even when they hear many words of Chassidic discourse on this subject, in the light of the true teachings of my father, master, teacher and rabbi, of blessed memory, whose soul reposes in Eden, they declare that this is only for the benefit of low-level people, such as Baalei Teshuvah and the like.

By my life! I declare that the greater people are in far more need of this than the lesser people! On the contrary, this is the principal cause of their slow descent, falling little by little without even noticing it in themselves. All this is clearly known. This is sufficient for those of understanding.

Besides this, the main reason for the terrible sickness, mentioned above, is that very little effort and labor is expended into the teachings of Chassidus with the specific intent of bringing them into one’s soul in practice. Though there are very many people that labor and occupy themselves in understanding the material and in reviewing it often until they attain proficiency and can respond to questions fluently, nonetheless, in and of itself, this cannot be defined as being occupied in Divine service altogether. This is nothing more than external study, without putting one’s heart and soul into it at all. The reason is because one is not occupied in the teachings of Chassidus as a Divine service; firmly affixing them into his

soul, with the intent of literally living by them with a strong and powerful bond (which is called liveliness of the soul. Its opposite is called deadness).

The words of the Living God are actual life to those who seek them, as the verse states, “You who adhere to HaShem your God are all alive today.”<sup>160</sup> And the opposite is considered to be dead. Even in the study of worldly matters, there is a great difference between one whose whole involvement in the subject is with enthusiasm (the subject is alive for him, very alive) and one who lacks all vitality in the subject (the subject is very dead). This is well known; that the aspect of the vitality of the soul for the words of the Living God can only come about by being occupied in Divine service and by putting great effort into prayer and into the analytical study of its teachings and of the holy Zohar and other books of Kabbalah, by delving into them and by truly attaching oneself to them, heart and soul (A strong attachment, truly from the soul) until his soul is revived with new vitality, literally.

Now, this needs to be put into practice on a constant and steady basis until it becomes established in one’s soul, so that his soul will live forever, without any weakening and without its light becoming dimmed. At such time, if he will desire to seek the word of HaShem, it will be affixed in his soul forever and HaShem’s light will break forth like the dawn for him. His soul will thus be satiated with tangible satisfaction, adding Divine light with great abundance, with a root and foundation

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<sup>160</sup> Deuteronomy 4:4

that will be established forever and he will become like a tree planted near water, that spreads its roots along the stream etc.<sup>161</sup> All the evil winds in the world will be unable to move him etc. This is sufficient for those of understanding.

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<sup>161</sup> Jeremiah 17:8

The fourth category constitutes those people that are men of “heart that results from the talent of listening,” mentioned above. This is the “listening ear” that enters the heart and causes it to become emotionally excited, rather than a mere listening of the ear etc. Now, here there are many different types. With one type, as soon as the person becomes excited in his heart, the talent of listening with expansiveness immediately recedes (whether this is in regard to his contemplation or whether it is in regard to what he sees in manuscripts and holy books). Because of this he does not delve into the ultimate length, breadth and depth of the subject to the extent that he should. Rather, he bases it all on one angle of understanding in a form of a summary that is readily acceptable to him.

Now, this evil sickness causes him to lose everything. Ultimately, he is left with nothing. Not only does he lose the essential point, but more so, he loses his gain with his loss, in that he will even lose the little that he retained. It can never endure, since, as known, it is impossible to have the emotional vitality of the heart without the influence of the intellect. In the end he is left with heart minus intellect.

Therefore, surely, anyone who truly desires closeness to HaShem in his soul should see to it not to become impressed by the excitement of his heart, taking no notice of it at all. On the contrary, by not doing so, the resulting excitement will actually strengthen his power of contemplation to delve to the ultimate

breadth and depth of the subject. Nor should one err by invalidating and prohibiting this excitement, heaven forbid. Rather, he should see to it that its depth and length are not diminished. This is defined as “The heart being drawn after the mind” (the heart is into the mind).

This is similar to a person who is emotionally excited about a good business deal or the like. Though the emotions of his heart ascend into the thoughts of his mind, he is unaware of it. Quite the contrary, it actually strengthens his mind to think about the business with greater breadth and depth etc. (However, this is not yet the above-mentioned aspect of the intention of the mind itself. Rather, the excitement of the heart becomes included and unified with the mind.)

However, this specifically applies to those people who are quickly aroused to excitement after contemplating or listening to something that is good in their eyes etc. (This could be to such an extent that the excitement could overpower the contemplation without his being aware of the source of the excitement, as known.) As mentioned above, for such people it is very easy to bring the excitement of the heart completely to the mind.

However, within this type there could be an opposite sub-category. That is, that even during intellectual excitement, there is somewhat of a delay, at which time the excitement has yet to be drawn down to the heart until it undergoes proper gradation and settling of the mind, as known. In such people, some difference between the mind and heart develops, in that they do not dwell together as one. Rather, when excitement

reaches the heart, the excitement of the mind almost comes to a complete halt. The result is that the heart alone becomes excited, just that it was born of the mind (This is called the “Therefore” etc.) Conversely, when their intellect becomes excited there is an absence of heartfelt excitement.

Because of this it is possible for there to be intermediate levels within this sub-category, in which there is a greater degree of heartfelt excitement than intellectual excitement or, vice versa, a greater degree of intellectual excitement than heartfelt excitement. (Other than the fact that it is in summary form, the advantage here is that one recognizes what caused his excitement, unlike the above-mentioned people who are quick to having heartfelt excitement. In their case, one could become so emotionally excited with flames of burning fire that he will become incapable of recognizing what it is that caused his excitement etc.) Either way, all these are in an aspect of excessive revelation of excitement, which is heartfelt excitement, only that in one he is not so aware of self because it ascends to the heart, whereas in the other he has a greater awareness of self. In truth, the one is unlike the other etc.

Herein we have true counsel on how to maintain the natural love and fear of HaShem that result from the “Therefore” of the intellect, in an enduring way. It is specifically when it comes in an inner aspect, from the depths of the heart, with true love and desire and great attraction to HaShem or with the excitement of longing for Him with many flames of burning fire. Likewise, this can come about from the opposite emotions of powerful heartfelt bitterness over that

which opposes Godliness. All this is not the case when the excitement is in a passing way (very superficial and deluded). Then, the excitement totally dissipates and passes in little more than a moment. All this is tried and tested, as known to those who have sought counsel concerning this. This is sufficient for those of understanding.



A further reason for this sickness called “Weakness of heart” that lacks all strength, thus making it possible to fall from excitement in Godliness within a short moment after the excitement, is the lack of doing those actions that branch out of love and fear of HaShem. As known, the illumination of Divine inspiration can have no hold or grasp except when it is invested within a vessel. Moreover, the more expansive the vessel, the greater will be the expanse of the light, like a spark in a burning flame etc. This is the matter of deed, which is the aspect of many different vessels of expression within which the illumination of love and fear of God is invested. This is the fact that a person should accept the yoke of the kingdom of heaven upon himself - to adhere to HaShem with love, by adhering to His Torah and mitzvoth and conversely, to distance himself from evil etc. Furthermore, he fulfills them immediately, with alacrity in actual deed. As known about this matter, it is good to contain the illumination within a vessel of expression. Only then can it endure, whereas without a vessel it cannot endure at all.

The rebuke here is well known to all, because this evil sickness has felled many victims etc. This being that after prayer or being occupied in the teachings of Chassidus with excitement, people immediately do the opposite, including things that are too terrible to relate here. Therefore, whatever gain they achieved is depleted by their loss, even in regard to

the future. This is because a vessel that is empty of inspiration cannot hold any illumination. Even if some light of excitement will shine in his heart, it will be like a flame floating midair, unattached to the candlewick. It cannot endure. Or it will be like a flash-fire of burning straw, which at first appears to roar with great force, but quickly dies out etc.

Such is not the case concerning excitement from the depths of the heart. This is like the example of cooking physical meat. When it is fully cooked it becomes soft and edible (it is good and well cooked). This kind of excitement is called, “A heart of flesh.” On the other hand, when meat has not been sufficiently cooked it remains tough etc. (raw flesh). As known, Rabbi Akiva tested his students in this regard. This is sufficient for those of understanding.

There is an additional reason which is more common. This is the fact that besides the problem of the heart being distant from the mind, there is also a lack of broken-heartedness (he does not feel broken). When a person is naturally brokenhearted, the vitality of his heart and soul, which resulted from the contemplation, is very strong. It is tried and tested that to the degree that someone is brokenhearted and lowly of heart (he feels like a total nothing), to that degree will his heartfelt excitement be truly established all the more, to illumine and enliven whatever he desires in the service of HaShem all day long, through Torah and mitzvoth and the like.

Also in matters of Chassidus itself; to the degree that a person is lowly and despicable in his own eyes (and even more so, specifically in his heart) to that degree his heart becomes a

prepared vessel to contain a greater degree of the Divine excitement that results from contemplation. About this the verse states, “The lips of truth are established forever”<sup>162</sup> and its opposite is “but a lying tongue is only temporary.”<sup>163</sup> This is the aspect of the above mentioned Heyulie melancholy (which is called, “A Good Essence”).

This extends to all the details of the above-mentioned matters, whether in regard to contemplation, heartfelt emotions or desire and delight etc. Everything follows that which sets and establishes it, which is the aspect of true broken-heartedness, as mentioned above. This is known and it is as clear as the sun that this also applies to the great personages of the world. The Mishnah thus rules that one should only pray specifically out of a serious frame of mind and a submissive heart,<sup>164</sup> “because HaShem is exalted and He takes note of the lowly”<sup>165</sup> – specifically. This is sufficient for those of understanding.

(There is yet another reason for the quick withdrawal of illumination from the heart. This is because the wicked lusts of one’s heart bring about a stifling atmosphere, for example, a flame will not burn well in stale atmosphere, whereas, the opposite is true of pure atmosphere in the heart. This comes about from having a pure heart and separating oneself from the materiality of this world and also from boastfulness and frivolity and the like. The foundation of this is the above-

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<sup>162</sup> Proverbs 12:19

<sup>163</sup> Proverbs, Ibid.

<sup>164</sup> Brachoth 30b

<sup>165</sup> Psalms 138:6

mentioned matter of broken-heartedness. This is sufficient for those of understanding.)

# Part Six



Now, the fourth category constitutes those people who have attained a deeper level in the teachings of Chassidus through great assiduity, so that it is greatly established in their souls in an aspect of the inner intent of the mind. This was mentioned above concerning the fourth level of the natural soul. As mentioned above, the essential excitement of the Divine soul, which is called, “The duplicated song,” is invested within the natural soul. This is the aspect of the essential delight, in which one delights in HaShem with depth of intent in Godliness. His entire soul becomes so fully engrossed in this that he does not come to be excited in the heart, as mentioned above at length. (He has a profound pleasure in his mind with very powerful concentration into the essential depth of comprehension, specifically due to the subject in and of itself; until he actually loses himself in non-self-awareness. As known, this is the essential non-awareness of self<sup>166</sup> of the “potential for what” of Chochmah.)

Now, here there are many different types of distinct levels, one higher than the other. About the category of new Chassidim who have not developed natural melancholy (the above mentioned profound broken-heartedness) the sages stated, “If there is no fear of God, there cannot be insight into Godliness”<sup>167</sup> Certainly, they greatly delude themselves

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<sup>166</sup> Bittul

<sup>167</sup> Pirkei Avos 3:17

regarding this. Immediately upon having excitement from the intellectual depth of the subject, they imagine that it is from the Godliness itself, in the aspect of essential delight (known as “great pleasure”). However, it is altogether external rather than inward (extremely superficial and delusional). The indicator for this is that as soon as the excitement dissipates and passes, he feels a sense of self, resulting specifically from the excitement itself. (He becomes over-flowingly full of himself due to the excitement itself).

As a result, he looks down on others and literally compares them to beasts, setting himself above them. However, he does this in an inner, innocent manner, without realizing the truth of what he is doing. This is because it appears to him that he is despicable in his own eyes and he honestly believes that he has attained humility and non-awareness of self, as mentioned above.

Rather, the very opposite is true. In truth, this is the epitome of arrogance! (In reality, he thinks very highly of himself and is incapable of making nothing of himself.) The sign for this is that if people rebuke him with insults, he takes it very personally and becomes extremely upset, to the point that he may actually become ill etc.

Observe. The opposite of the desired intent came about. He sought to reach the level of non-awareness of self (as if that was all he was lacking etc.), but even at the very moment of the excitement he was in error and in the opposite state of being than his goal. The ramification of this in young people is an increased lust to be a “Rabbi” and influence others. However,



this is misguided because one deludes oneself to think that he is acting solely out of altruism, for the good of his fellow etc.

This sickness is mostly found amongst the young, that is, in the pampered and tender, who have not tasted the true bitterness of natural melancholy (broken-heartedness). As known, it also is the result of advancing in too short a time with the goal of attaining the ultimate extent of the Divine wisdom. However, it is mostly due to the harsh admixture of good and evil within one's natural soul which was drawn to him by his father and mother at the time of conception. This is the root cause of his strong egotistical tendencies, which, as known, is the portion of evil in Nogah. This being the case, in every activity, even a Godly one, he will have difficulty escaping this nature. This is the general cause for the above difficulty.

(Now, it could happen that a person could have a Divine soul that is higher than others, whereas his natural soul itself is from a very low place. The result is that he will have a greater degree of essential Divine excitement. However, this will be through the medium of the garments of Nogah, in which he will have a greater awareness of the physicality of his body.

The opposite is also possible. A person could have a low level of Divine soul. Therefore, he will have greater difficulty attaining Divine excitement, compared to others. On the other hand, his natural soul itself may be more refined, in the sense that he does not have such a heightened sense of self-awareness and ego as others. The indicator for this is that in financial matters or any other matters that involve self-interest, he will be quite capable of abandoning his self-interests.

Moreover, when he does any good deed, he does not at all feel that he did anything extraordinary etc.

On the other hand, a person whose soul and body are both from a very high place will be successful in all matters of Divine goodness. HaShem will be with him because he is a receptacle ready for all Divine goodness. This is because all his vessels are in a state of non-self-awareness, which is the essential thing in matters of Godliness.)

The highest level of this category are seasoned Chassidim that have received every bitter taste into their very souls with regard to the words of the Living God. Furthermore, they have no intention of attaining any level in intellectual excitement or benefitting themselves whatsoever. On the contrary, all they wish is closeness to HaShem, in and of itself. When they contemplate Godliness, to its depth and to its breadth, it is only to reach ultimate Truth (totally without delusions). This is called “Divine Delight” with true intent. Here HaShem dwells in each person according to the purity of the depth of his intent for Godliness (truly profound absorption).

The indicator for this is that afterwards one comes to true humility (Nothingness; He essentially is a nothing – not that he makes himself into a nothing by considering his unworthiness etc.) Therefore, under no circumstances is he affected by insults nor does he notice them altogether. This is because he truly is despicable and loathsome in his own eyes, because he realizes that, in and of himself, he has nothing. This is the opposite of self-aggrandizement. (However, since, after all, he does have a body, he will therefore be somewhat affected by simple embarrassments. As known, this does not at all contradict this matter).

Here too, there are many different modes that are distinct from each other depending on how deeply humble one

is, for there are those who lessen their self-importance by only imagining themselves to be truly humble etc. If each person takes care to know and examine himself, he will discover his personal shortcomings, on condition that he desires to view himself honestly, without excusing himself out of self-love (deluding himself).

Another reliable indicator of true non-self-awareness and delight in Godliness with the above-mentioned intent (great pleasure) is the aspect of how drawn one's soul is to closeness to God throughout the day, specifically through action. Such a person will disdain the vanities of the world (of going about empty-headed and empty-hearted), so that he will be greatly distressed about wasting time in idle chatter and frivolity, which are so common nowadays. (He will constantly be very attached and attracted to Godliness through deep thought or to the study of the revealed and hidden levels of Torah in speech and the like).

Yet another indicator is how little importance he places on the pleasures of this world, such as honor, fine clothes, good food or other similar coarse lusts or animalistic behaviors. (He realizes that the world is not the ultimate purpose in life.) (As the Zohar expresses it, "He casts the matters of this world behind his shoulders etc.") (For him, the ultimate purpose of life is closeness to HaShem in the light of the inner and external levels of Torah.) Even in his business dealings he is not in a rush to amass wealth, but rather only to meet his needs. He does not invest the whole depth of his heart into his business dealings, so that it is equal to him whether a business deal is

culminated or not. Rather, “he casts his burden upon HaShem,”<sup>168</sup> (as will be explained in a special tract on the matter of how one should be occupied in earning a livelihood etc.)<sup>169</sup>

The opposite is true of a person who is superficial in the above-mentioned intention. As soon as he concludes his contemplations and involves himself in business matters, he arrives at the very opposite. Thus, he invests himself into his business dealings, to the same extent as he did to his contemplations and more so, with absolute and deep devotion with all his soul. Because of this, when he later returns to reawaken his devotion to HaShem, it is very remote for him and he has to expend great effort to have a sense of closeness etc.

It is pointless to address the subject of true non-self-awareness at length because it is a rare level and not commonly found. Even amongst people that could have been worthy of it, many have fallen due to several reasons and causes; whether it is because their hearts are greatly immersed in preoccupation with earning a livelihood, reaching the very depth of their souls until it causes decay in everything,<sup>170</sup> to the point that, “Their souls abhor all manner of nourishment,”<sup>171</sup> in other words, they become so distant from matters of Godliness that they no longer have the talent of a “listening ear,” or whether it is because of extreme arrogance and throwing off the yoke, until the illumination of Divine light turns to darkness. This happens

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<sup>168</sup> Psalms 55:23

<sup>169</sup> See Derech Chayim of the Mittler Rebbe, translated as The Path of Life.

<sup>170</sup> Chullin 64b

<sup>171</sup> Psalms 107:18

because they greatly sense their own self-importance which, amongst the expositors of Chassidus who pretend to be wise, is caused by the desire to be honored as “Rabbi.”

Or it could be that from the very outset an admixture of the evil called “fraud” and “arrogance” motivated them to delve into matters of Torah and Chassidus, so that from the very beginning their inner drive was only to become “Great.”

This evil sickness is hidden and concealed in many layers of concealment, even amongst those who seem to be clothed in many beautiful garments of pious conduct before the eyes of others. However, HaShem peers into the heart and one’s end proves his beginning. When he finally falls, he reverts to what he truly is. This is clearly known to any thinking person and is tried and tested in the case of people who rose and then fell to the lowest, unspeakable depths. This is sufficient for those of understanding.

(It can also be due to falling into carnal cravings that completely dull the heart and mind, until one becomes so coarse that his heart becomes as unfeeling as a rock towards matters of Godliness.)

Another cause may be natural impudence. Such people are called, “the belligerent of the generation” (they feel very powerful in themselves). This is the very opposite of non-self-awareness. Therefore, from the outset, such a person was never moved by Godliness (because he feels totally self-reliant), and, as known, whoever has never been moved or has never experienced true non-self-awareness, can never come close to HaShem with true closeness.

His end proves this. He is left empty of everything but his brazen impudence, like a king without a crown,<sup>172</sup> until all he can do is attack and despise everything, including others etc. (This is the meaning of the statement in Zohar, Parashat Shelach,<sup>173</sup> on the verse, “a tested stone,”<sup>174</sup> that when the righteous suffer, the Divine light rests upon them, whereas when the opposite kind of people suffer, they revile and blaspheme God etc.) How one responds to suffering is the true test of the complete authenticity of the above-mentioned matter. This is sufficient for those of understanding.

As, known, this kind of person is very commonly found. It is therefore necessary to diligently guard against them from the very beginning of their rise, so that they will not harm others etc. He who guards his soul will stay far from them.

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<sup>172</sup> Sanhedrin 99b and 105a

<sup>173</sup> Zohar 168a

<sup>174</sup> Isaiah 28:15





The fifth category constitutes those for whom the aspect of Yechidah illumines their souls. This is the aspect of the simple essential delight and desire which is beyond the intent and reason of the mind. This is similar to what was mentioned above regarding the fifth level of the natural soul, within which the essential excitement of the Yechidah of the Divine soul is invested. This accords with the statement of Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai, “I am unified in Him.”<sup>175</sup> About this the verse states, “You who adhere”<sup>176</sup> – meaning automatically, as explained above at length.

Now, though this level is so rare that it is not even found within “one of a city or two of a clan,”<sup>177</sup> nonetheless, because of a spark of illumination of the Yechidah in every Jew, a tiny revelation of it can occasionally come about during the above-mentioned excitement of delight in HaShem (called intellectual pleasure). This makes it possible for him to attain this essential simple delight that is totally beyond reason. However, it has no permanency within his soul. Rather, it is a momentary experience that immediately evaporates. This is because, due to the gross materiality of his body, he lacks the appropriate receptacle to retain this level of light.

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<sup>175</sup> Zohar 288a

<sup>176</sup> Deuteronomy 4:4

<sup>177</sup> Jeremiah 3:14

There are a great many people who delude themselves in this matter, by imagining that they have easily attained this simple essential delight etc. Unfortunately, it is altogether useless to discuss these people, because they suffer from utterly vain imaginations brought on by hot bloodedness<sup>178</sup> and an essential flaw in the vessel of their mind known as, “falseness in essence” (a person who is deluded by nature). As known, there is no cure for this.

The ultimate ramification of this folly is that one becomes so given to delusions and false imaginations that he imagines his soul leaving his body (expiring), until he falls and cannot stand his body up etc. He may also behold frightening and awesome visions, all of which are hallucinatory. However, it is pointless to speak of such lunatics.

However, there is a condition commonly found even amongst men of understanding and knowledge who do not generally delude themselves. This occurs when a person becomes excited about Godliness from the core of his heart in a way that is above reason and this emotional excitement of his heart then becomes confused with the simultaneous but tiny revelation of delight of the Yechidah, mentioned above. He can then imagine that he has truly attained the excitement of simple essential delight etc. The indicator for this is that it comes in a manner that is felt in the physical heart. He will therefore imagine that this must be what is written, “My flesh and my heart expire for You.”<sup>179</sup>

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<sup>178</sup> passion

<sup>179</sup> Psalms 73:26

However, a very great error is mixed into this. This is the fact that in almost all people, including him, the physical heart has an admixture of good and evil from the aspect of Nogah. This being the case, except if his heart has been fully cleansed of gross materiality, how is it possible that his heart is a ready vessel for this essential Godly delight? Such a level is extremely rare and hardly ever found. Therefore, what he imagines it to be cannot be the absolute truth. Rather, there must be some admixture of error here (delusion).

However, from another angle, it is possible for a person to have a revelation of the simple essential delight as it is connected to the excitement of the heart, in actual complete truth. As known, there can be an excitement of the emotions of the physical heart that is also from the core of the heart, but in a way that is below reason, the root of which is above reason. This is the aspect of “a beast,” as scripture states, “I was a beast with You, but I am always with You.”<sup>180</sup>

Those who are knowledgeable in Chassidus tend to frown on this, but their eyes are too blind to see that here lays the above-mentioned root of essential delight, free of all negative admixture. This is because it comes in an aspect of a truly innocent heart, as the verse states, “Be innocent.”<sup>181</sup> This innocence is specifically in the aspect of the Yechidah, which illumines the inner core of the heart. However, the true indicator and essential precondition for this is, specifically, that the

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<sup>180</sup> Psalms 73:22-23

<sup>181</sup> Genesis 17:1

excitement of his physical heart too must be innocent. That is, it must specifically be devoid of any self-awareness.

By way of example, this may be compared to a person suffering terrible tortures. His heart of flesh will cry out spontaneously from the inner core of his heart and soul, literally reaching the very depth of the soul. Certainly, there is no disingenuous admixture here at all, but just a genuine cry, as it is in the Heyulie essence of his soul, literally.

The same is true of tremendous delight, which is the opposite type of feeling. For example, if someone is informed that his death sentence has been commuted and that his life is saved or the like, his physical heart will literally come to life with overpowering emotions from its essential source, similar to the scriptural statement, “And the spirit of Yaakov their father came to life”<sup>182</sup> from the news that Yosef still lived, because he loved him like himself.

Similarly, with a true Baal Teshuvah, it is possible for him to let out a spontaneous cry of tremendous bitterness over his past, from the depths of his physical heart: such a cry that literally touches the Yechidah level of his soul. An example of this is the case of Rabbi Eleazar ben Durdaya, whose soul expired through weeping. The opposite feeling is tremendous joy in HaShem.

From all these cases we observe that the vitality of physical joy or any other type of excitement mentioned above, reaches the essential joy or excitement in the Yechidah. This is

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<sup>182</sup> Genesis 45:27

the excitement of the physical heart as it exists below reason, as in the verse, “I was a beast etc.”<sup>183</sup> However, this is all with the precondition that it must specifically be in an aspect of “innocence.” Only then is it free of any self-awareness. Then, the materiality of his body will not overshadow it. All this is well known in regard to the truly innocent, who are faithful to HaShem, heart and soul, to the point that their soul expires without their even being aware of anything, in and of themselves.

Actually, this matter is more readily found amongst the simple folk, who are more capable of simple, unadulterated faith than men of understanding and wisdom who are more prone to over sophistication, which is the very opposite of simplicity. However, even amongst the simple folk, there are various different levels of authenticity. He who thoroughly contemplates this will discover all the above to be as clear as daylight etc. This is sufficient for those of understanding.

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<sup>183</sup> Psalms 73



**Subsequent** to all these words of truth on all the various categories of spiritual levels found within our Chassidic brotherhood, each person should recognize his own place and level and take care not to delude himself by going after that which is too great for him, as written, “Who will ascend the mountain of HaShem etc.”<sup>184</sup> Obviously, if he does not try to live up to levels that are beyond him, he will not fall from them.

Also, a person should neither take account of the evil of his fellow, nor envy his goodness and level of spiritual achievement, because each person has his own special place and mission. Rather, each person should behave according to the essence of who **he** is (He should be natural, rather than mimic others).

If time permits, there is much to be said in a way of open rebuke concerning bad habits common amongst our Chassidic brotherhood that have developed over time out of error. “The whole people have sinned in error.”<sup>185</sup> May HaShem atone for the remnant of survivors to be found, who still seek closeness to HaShem.

There is also much to be said concerning the principle of fulfilling the mitzvah of studying Torah for its own sake in several different ways. This too is concealed, even amongst most men of understanding and knowledge, not to mention the

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<sup>184</sup> Psalms 24:3

<sup>185</sup> Numbers 15:26

youth and the newer Chassidim. Other subjects that need clarification are the matter of mitzvot in all their details and the general principles of the mitzvot of tzedakah and acts of loving kindness. Another matter that needs clarification is whether it is permissible to be occupied in earning a livelihood to the depths of one's heart, so that one spends all his days totally sunken in vanity; this being the main cause for the spiritual fall of most of our Chassidic brotherhood, whether they are great or small, new or old (until a spirit from above shall be poured upon them to revive their souls and to awaken them from their slumber etc.) This is the chief reason for the exile, which is known as "sleep," as the verse states, "We will be like dreamers."<sup>186</sup> This is sufficient for those of understanding.

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<sup>186</sup> Psalms 126:1



**N**OW, my beloved brothers and friends; all those who are fully with me to the very depths of their souls and attentively heed the words of the Living God in truth and faithfulness; in whose hearts there is no “root producing gall and wormwood”<sup>187</sup> nor view my words in a negative light, heaven forbid. I speak especially to you who have known and been familiar with me from my youth. Please believe that all these words have been said from the very core of my heart, as they actually are in my heart and soul within the essential nature of my being, just as I was trained from my youth with the daily guidance of my father, master, teacher and rabbi, of blessed memory.

No one should, God forbid, say that there are matters here that are still hidden, that are only revealed to the discreet few or that many matters were only written on a surface level, in order to make it possible for novices (who have yet to be familiarized with the truth of the matter) to have some understanding etc. For these are the evil words of people who desire to be arrogant and to acquire fame for themselves by saying, “I have the secret” and that, “Not everyone can know these matters” etc. Worse, they attribute it all to me!

By the life of my soul, I swear in truth and honesty: In everything that I have explained to you, there is not even half

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<sup>187</sup> Deuteronomy 29:17

an utterance that did not come out of the core of my soul. All my words are readily accessible and understandable to anyone who has experienced the flavor of the teachings of Chassidus from his youth. It all is in accordance to how I was trained from my youth, for more than twenty years, in the holy sanctuary of my father, master, teacher and rabbi, of blessed memory.

He enlightened me concerning all the detailed afflictions of the members of our Chassidic brotherhood. Furthermore, I have personally examined the heart of each one and the error of each one, to the limit of my power of perception. It is upon this foundation that I have built these words. Whosoever wishes to heed them, should listen attentively. I await your response through our distinguished friend (the messenger of this letter). If all these words of truth that are for your eternal good are willingly accepted, my soul will have been revived.

The words of your friend, who truly seeks goodness for your souls with all my heart and soul, all the days of my life,

Dovber, the son of the Rav, my father, master, teacher and rabbi, the true Godly genius, the crown and glory of Israel, our master and teacher, Rabbi Schneur Zalman of blessed memory, whose soul reposes in the supernal heights. May his merit shield us. Amen.











