"Open my eyes so that I may see the **wonders** of Your Torah"

בס"ד

Wonders

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שַׁבָּת וָאֵרָא ❁ יג-יד טֵבֵת תשפ"ו



Reb Reuven the scribe said: "Your mezuzot were written with identical intentions as the Rebbe's. But the Rebbe insists that his mezuzot be written when the moon is full, which I did not do for yours."

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The Lubavitcher Rebbe to Rav Ginsburgh, Elul 5741

"…It would be proper to publish your classes in book form. With blessings for success…"



Wonders

An anthology from the shiurim and farbrengens
of Harav **Yitzchak Ginsburgh**

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BIBLE AND CHASIDUT

TYPES OF INTELLIGENCE AND THE BIBLE

Continuing our series on the Tanach (see issues 151, 152, 153, 157, and 158), we bring the final installment (for now) taught by Rav Ginsburgh in English and published here for the first time. This meta-analysis of the Tanach using Chasidic terminology provides us with general guidance on how to learn each part: the Five Books of Moses, the Prophets, and the Writings.

This is all meant to serve as an introduction to what will be a linear study of the Book of Proverbs to be published soon.

In this article, HaRav Ginsburgh focuses on the connection between the sefirah of knowledge and the Writings in general and the Book of Proverbs in particular.

In our previous teachings on the Bible, we explained that the Book of Proverbs, the second book of the Writings, is essentially a father speaking and teaching his son ethics, morals, and an overall positive way of life. We did not yet mention that there is another motif, a thread that runs throughout the whole Book of Proverbs: the relationship between men and women.

There are good men and not-so-good men in relation to women, and the same is true in the opposite direction. There are good, righteous women who are totally loyal to their beloved, and there are women who are not. Learning how to relate to women is a thread that goes together with the other principles the father is trying to convey and teach his son.

The relationship between men and women is associated in the Torah with the *sefirah* of knowledge (*da'at*), which in general is the *sefirah* associated with the Writings, the part of the Bible in which the book of Proverbs appears. Let us expand on this association based on our previous articles on the topic.

THE BIBLE AND THE INTELLECT

The Writings are the third of the three parts of the Bible. The first part, the Five Books of Moses, corresponds to the *sefirah* of wisdom, the first intellectual faculty, and the second part, the Prophets, corresponds to the *sefirah* of understanding, the second intellectual faculty. These two correspond to the right and left lobes of the brain, respectively. We explained that the Writings correspond to the *sefirah* of knowledge (*da'at*), the third of the intellectual faculties, which anatomically is situated in the middle and to the back. It rests at the top of the spinal cord. Since it is in the middle, it divides into two, a right side and a left side. In Kabbalah we are taught that the right side is the relatively masculine side and the left side is the relatively feminine side.

faculty	part of brain	part of Bible
wisdom	right lobe	Five Books of Moses
understanding	left lobe	Prophets
knowledge	right side of back lobe	Writings
	left side of back lobe	

In the Torah, the word *da'at* appears in the context of Adam knowing Eve and thus means to unite or cohabit with one's wife in order to bear children, which is the first all-inclusive commandment in the Torah, "Be fruitful and multiply, fill the earth and conquer it."[1] The secret of *da'at* is to know how to properly relate to one's wife. In general, men must know how to relate to women, and women must know how to relate to men.

TYPES OF INTELLIGENCE

There are four types of intelligence in the soul: intellectual, emotional, intuitive, and instinctive. There are two ways to correspond these four intelligences to the four intellectual faculties: wisdom, understanding and the two sides of knowledge (*da'at*).

According to the first model, wisdom is intellectual intelligence, because to properly study and learn the 613 commandments of the Torah, to which wisdom corresponds, one must use intellectual intelligence to properly comprehend what the Torah is really instructing us to do. Understanding is emotional intelligence following the statement that "understanding is the heart." Thus, the two sides of knowledge are intuitive intelligence and instinctive intelligence.

The second model follows the more common association of the right and left lobes of the brain with intuitive intelligence and intellectual intelligence, respectively, thereby leaving the third backside of the brain to the two sides of knowledge, which would then correspond to emotional and instinctive intelligence.

Between the two models, only the left side of knowledge remains the same and corresponds to instinctive intelligence. The other three intellectual faculties have two possibilities. We can deepen our insight into these three by considering how the two possibilities can be united in each. This, in turn, will provide us with a much clearer understanding of what the three parts of the Bible—the Five Books of Moses, the Prophets, and the Writings—are about and reveal more about the deeper meaning of the Book of Proverbs.

faculty	part of brain	part of Bible	type of Intelligence	vital Organ
wisdom	right lobe	Five Books of Moses	intellectual/intuitive	brain
understanding	left lobe	Prophets	emotional/intellectual	heart
knowledge	right side of back lobe	Writings	intuitive/emotional	kidneys
	left side of back lobe		instinctive	liver

THE DOUBLE INTELLIGENCES: INTUITIVE INTELLECT AND INTELLECTUAL EMOTIONS

Wisdom corresponds to both intuitive and intellectual intelligence. Combining them, let us call this intuitive-intellectual intelligence, which can describe someone who is an intellectual, because he thinks a lot, learns a lot, studies a lot, but above his intellectual intelligence he also possesses powerful intuition; intuition is always above intellect. Since wisdom corresponds to the Five books of Moses, that means that to really appreciate and integrate the commandments and the laws of the Torah appearing in the Five books of Moses, one must be an intuitive intellectual.

Both wisdom and understanding have a higher and lower aspect known as a *partzuf*. The higher *partzuf* of wisdom is the supernal father (אַבָּא עִילָּאָה). The higher *partzuf* of understanding is called the supernal mother (אִימָּא עִילָּאָה). The lower *partzuf* of wisdom is known as "Israel the elder," or "Israel the grandfather" (יִשְׂרָאֵל סָבָא), despite it being lower than the supernal father aspect of wisdom. The lower *partzuf* of understanding is called "comprehension" (תְּבוּנָה), which is almost synonymous with "understanding" (בִּינָה) since they are both derived from the same root but they obviously have distinct meanings. In the Bible, wisdom, understanding, and knowledge often appear as wisdom, comprehension, and knowledge[2] (חָכְמָה תְּבוּנָה דַּעַת).

The Kabbalistic example of "comprehension" (תְּבוּנָה) is the womb of the mother where the fetus that will be born develops, grows, and prepares to be born into reality. The fetus growing in the womb represents the emotions—the three basic emotions: love, fear, and compassion and the three lower emotions, which actively manifest through actions: confidence, sincerity, and verity (meaning that you verify, actualize, or fulfill your mission in life). Usually, the three lower emotions are more difficult to properly understand than the three higher emotions. Comprehension, depicted as the pregnancy of the emotions within the mother's womb, is thus the emotional intelligence associated with understanding in the first model. The supernal mother is the pure intellectual intelligence of understanding, the common way of understanding the intelligence of the brain's left lobe.

Even though the supernal mother is aligned with the supernal father and they are referred to as a pair that does not part, in some ways it reflects the lower aspect of wisdom (Israel the elder), which is the intellectual intelligence of wisdom (the supernal father is wisdom's intuitive intelligence). Still, viewing the supernal mother and father as intellectual and intuitive intelligence is the common approach to understanding the brains left and right lobes, respectively.

Applying this to the Bible, we can now say in a more detailed and sophisticated way that the wisdom and understanding required to learn and integrate the Five Books of Moses and the Prophets are intuitive intellectualism and intellectual emotion, respectively.

2. Exodus 31:3, 35:31, 36:1; 1 Kings 7:14; Proverbs 2:6.

Intellectual emotion is not simple emotional intelligence because what we are referring to is to the fact that within the intellect itself, there are emotions; our intellectual intelligence is pregnant with emotions. In Kabbalah and Chasidut this is understood in the context of a question regarding two great sages, both of whom have great minds—profound understanding and intellectual intelligence. Yet, these two sages do not agree; one tends to rule more permissively, a trait associated with the right axis, and the other tends to rule more prohibitively, a trait associated with the left axis. If they are equally smart, where does the leaning to the right or to the left come from? They are both intelligent. They both know the Torah from beginning to end, all the intricacies of the Torah. How can it be then that one tends, in general, in almost every case that appears before him, to permit and the other tends to prohibit? This is where the emotions present within the intellect come in.

These are not the emotions of the heart at all. These are identified as the emotions of the mind itself. The way that the mind tends, after knowing everything there is to know about a topic, can be in either of two directions. The two sages have the same facts before them. Objectively, they are equal. But there is something deep within the mind itself that tends either to permit or to forbid, and this is the emotional intelligence within the intellectual intelligence.

In discussing the meaning of intellectual emotion, we have also gained a clarification of the difference between understanding (*binah*) and comprehension (*tevunah*). Understanding is the purely intellectual side of the *sefirah* of understanding, also known as the supernal mother. Comprehension is the lower aspect of understanding, referring to the emotions within the intellect. But they are both part of the one *sefirah* known as understanding, which is why understanding can be described as the intellectual emotions with which the Books of Prophets should be studied.

In passing, let us note that the classic example of two sages who demonstrate the leaning to permit or prohibit are Hillel and Shammai. They are both great intellectuals, but Hillel almost always leans to the right and Shammai, his companion, because he has different emotions of the mind, almost always leans to the left.

KNOWLEDGE: INTUITIVE OR EMOTIONAL

Now let us turn to the two possibilities we have for the right side of the *sefirah* of knowledge, which can be either intuitive intelligence or emotional intelligence. In a previous discussion, we explained that the right side of knowledge corresponds to emotional intelligence because it is knowledge that actually gives birth to the emotions. Understanding is pregnant with the fetus. But the power in the soul that actually gives birth to the six emotive faculties (from love to verity) derives from the right side of the *sefirah* of knowledge.

In our previous discussion of these models, we explained that the power to give birth to the first three emotions (loving-kindness, might, and beauty) comes from the right side of knowledge and the power to give birth to the three lower emotions (victory, acknowledgment, and foundation), which are the active or pragmatic emotions, comes from the

left side of knowledge. In both models, the left side of knowledge corresponds to instinctive intelligence, which shines specifically to the liver while the right side shines its light primarily into the kidneys.

A straightforward and simple observation is that a person is born with one liver but with two kidneys. This reflects what we have found that the left side of knowledge can only be instinctive intelligence, but the right side can be either intuitive or emotional intelligence. The brain has three different lobes to it. And the heart also has two sides, each with an independent function.

So, once more, what does that mean to intuit emotion? It is like falling in love. Love is, of course, an emotion. But when I say love at first sight, I am referring to an intuition that manifests as emotion. Marriage is related primarily to the *sefirah* of knowledge, and as we said, they both correspond to the Writings of the Bible. In marriage, there are stories, most important stories in the Bible, of falling in love at first sight. The basic story, of course, is that of Jacob and Rachel, which demonstrates that marriage is an intuitive emotion that manifests, that reveals itself. Obviously, in marriage, instinct is very important. The Torah refers to this when, upon the creation of Adam and Eve, it says, "He [man] shall cling to his wife, and they will become one flesh." The Torah is not referring here to emotion. It is also not talking about intuition, but about instinct. Human beings, as well as animals, obviously have an innate instinct to cling to their wife. That is what the Torah is saying. That God has given man an instinct necessary for survival and growth, to cling to his wife and to become one flesh.

What is the meaning of becoming "one flesh?" There are two main interpretations: either "one flesh" refers to the baby that is born from the two parents—two become one, or "one flesh" refers to the physical union between man and woman; in that moment of union, they become one. In either case, to become one is an instinct. It is the most positive instinct, and it is so great that, in a certain sense, the instinctive intelligence to unite is probably higher than all other forms of intelligence, even above the intuitive intelligence. Once more, the instinct of union corresponds to the left side of knowledge, and the right side of knowledge is intuitive-emotional intelligence.

How can we say this in another, simple way? A person may rely on the spontaneous emotion that he feels. He intuits. This means that the way he feels about a certain situation is right, it is true. One must be very pure in one's soul to be able to intuit and to rely upon one's emotions.

What about intellectual intelligence? In choosing a spouse, does the intellect per se not play a part? Obviously, when one chooses a soulmate, one must also use their mind to evaluate the situation: whether he or she is the right partner for them. But relative to the other three types of intelligence—the intuitive, emotional, and the instinctive—intellectual intelligence plays an overview role, which in Kabbalistic terminology is called a *makif*. *Makif* literally means to encompass or surround and in the context of intelligence, *makif* means that the intelligence overviews and directs from above my emotions, intuitions, and instincts. Indeed, the intellect can

definitely play the determining factor in the making the decision about marriage.

The opposite of *makif* is *pnimi*, which means internal. So, when deciding on a spouse, what one feels inside are the intelligences associated with knowledge (*da'at*), particularly there is the intuition that is followed immediately by emotion, which as we have said appear together as an intuitive-emotional intelligence of the right side of knowledge. Following that, the innate drive of the couple to unite on the physical plane derives from the instinctive intelligence, which corresponds to the left side of knowledge.

THE PROPHETS AND INTELLECTUAL-EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

So now we have added depth to our understanding of the faculties of the mind, as well as the way that they correspond to the three parts of the Bible. The Five Books of Moses are the intuitive-intellectual, and the Prophets are the intellectual emotions.

The Prophets relate to the intellectual emotions because they received prophecy. What comes from God is a part of the intellect, per se, because what is being received is in the form of words; the prophet is like a student sitting before his master, his mentor, and receiving what is being told. To receive a message that is being conveyed to you, especially if you are meant to convey it further, is an intellectual act. Prophecy is not based on subjective emotions. The prophet could be told to prophesy good or prophesy bad, because he is nullified to the word of God, that which God teaches him. The prophets do at times argue with God based on their own emotions, especially when God tells them to prophesy bad for Israel. In these cases, God must coerce them to prophesy bad. This is especially apparent in the prophecies of Jeremiah and Ezekiel regarding the impending destruction of the First Temple. Still, prophecy comes from above and when receiving it, the prophet is not in control of his physical being.

This is not the case regarding the Writings. The Writings come from within the human soul itself. They rise from below above, from bottom up. The Writings take a human experience and thought and elevate it to the level of the Divine. The books of the Prophets originate from above and are then stated below, in human language.

With this we have concluded another important journey into our seeking to understand the mental faculties especially regarding the three parts of the Bible.

PATTERNS OF TEN IN THE TORAH

In a recent issue of Wonders (175) the article "The Kabbalistic Art of Creating Models and Correspondences" discussed the important role of models, paradigms, and structure in Kabbalistic thought. Indeed, much of Kabbalah is based on these hidden structures and paradigms: the three primary constructs being the ten *sefirot*, the twenty-two Hebrew letters, and the four-letter Name of God—the Tetragrammaton. Additionally, there is an entire interpretive stratum dedicated to employing mathematical

patterns to reveal hidden structures in the Torah. Among the mathematical patterns employed are *gematria*, the tabulation of the number of times letters and words appear in particular verses and sections (*parshiyot*) and where they are located in the text, the tabulation of the number of times a word appears throughout the *Tanach*, and the web of rich associations created by various words and concepts that share the same numbers. for instance, all concepts associated with the number 10.

The number 10 appears throughout the Torah and Jewish tradition. Beginning with creation which came into being through ten Divine Utterances, which are intrinsically connected to the ten *sefirot*, the channels through which God creates and maintains a finite reality.[1] The Torah describes ten generations between Adam and Noah and another ten generations from Noah to Abraham. Abraham himself was tested ten times.[2] Furthermore, God promised Abraham that he and his descendants would inherit ten nations.[3] This brings us to this week's *parashah*, *Va'eira*, where we begin to learn about the Ten Plagues. After Israel is freed from Egyptian bondage they travel to Mount Sinai where God gave them the Ten Commandments.

THE TEN PLAGUES

Why were there Ten Plagues and not five or six or some other number? In general, the number ten indicates major shifts in human consciousness and historical development. Abraham's ten tests enabled his growth in consciousness. The Ten Commandments marked a major transition in humankind's understanding of morals and ethics. The ten *sefirot* as well as the Ten Utterances of creation served as the transitional means for channeling God's infinite revelation into the finite vessels of creation. In this vein, the Ten Plagues represent a historical and psychological process the Jewish people underwent as they moved from slavery to freedom, from exile to redemption. Drastic changes such as these in the lives of nations or individuals rarely occur tranquilly; rather, they are more apt to take place through upheaval and radical change.

While a cursory reading of the Torah might lead the reader to assume that the plagues were intended solely to punish the Egyptians or to force them to free the children of Israel, the teachings of Chasidut clearly states that they were also intended to purify the Jewish people, to smelt out the negative dross of Egypt that had been integrated within the Jewish psyche. According to a Midrash cited by Rashi, four-fifths of the Jews perished during the plague of darkness as they were too entrenched psychologically to be able to leave Egypt.[4] The Ten Plagues symbolize the spiritual purification and growth Israel had to undergo to realize their potential. In this case, they had to go through the crucible of the Ten Plagues before they could receive the Divine will of God as revealed in the Ten Commandments.

TEN EQUALS SEVEN PLUS THREE

In addition to the rich number of associations revealed by the Torah's

1. *Avot* 5:1.
2. *Ibid.* 5:2-4.
3. Genesis 15:18.
4. *Mechilta* cited by *Rashi* on Exodus 13:18.

repetition of the number ten as a whole number, the number ten can also be interpreted as the sum of seven and three. According to Kabbalah and Chasidut, such an interpretive approach is warranted by the frequent division of ten into seven and three in many different Jewish contexts.[5] In the case of the Ten Plagues, the portion of *Va'eira* contains seven plagues and the next portion, *Bo*, has three, so this division is supported by the text itself.

Although the ten *sefirot* can be divided according to a number of different schemes, the most natural division is that of the three higher and the seven lower *sefirot*. In general, the number seven indicates complete cycles and inherent unity. This is manifest in scores of concepts and contexts: the Shabbat, the seven weeks between the holidays of Pesach and Shavu'ot, the Sabbatical year, the seven fruits the Land of Israel is blessed with, the seven lamps of the *menorah* (the Temple candelabrum), the seven shepherds of the Jewish people, the seven circuits a bride makes around the groom at a wedding, the seven matrimony blessings recited during the seven days after a wedding, the seven days of the holidays of Pesach and Sukkot, and many others, including the seven lower *sefirot*.

According to Kabbalah, on one level of interpretation the *sefirot* correspond to the human soul: the three upper *sefirot* are associated with the intellect and the seven lower ones with the emotions and habitual traits. One of the most popular diagrams of the *sefirot* portrays them in three vertical columns: two exterior columns and one interior, unifying, one. This diagram portrays the secret of balance and harmony. When counting the horizontal lines formed by the ten *sefirot* as they descend from above to below in their three vertical columns, we discover seven lines, another example of the connection between three and seven.

In *Sefer Yetzirah*, one of the oldest and most fundamental Kabbalah texts, each month is associated with a letter. These correspondences yield profound secrets of creation and primordial paradigms of energy that manifest on every level of reality. The third month of the year, Sivan, is associated with the letter *zayin*, the seventh letter of the Hebrew alphabet.[6] One of the main sources for the natural division of ten into three and seven is this association of the third month and the seventh letter, *zayin*. Intriguingly, when a scribe writes the letter *zayin* in the Torah scroll, he affixes three small crowns to its top.

Another beautiful hint to the intrinsic connection between three and seven is that the word for "pair" in Hebrew is *zug* (זוג)—a word whose two primary letters are *zayin*, the seventh of the Hebrew alphabet, and *gimmel*, the third. This indicates that three and seven are in a sense the quintessential pair!

The unique relationship between seven and three is also affirmed by the Torah having been given on Shabbat, the seventh day, during Sivan, the third month of the year. While all the sages agree that the Torah was given on Shabbat in the month of Sivan there is a disagreement over whether the

5. Many of the examples of the division of the number ten into seven and three discussed in this article were taught by HaRav Ginsburgh in a series of classes about the month of Sivan given in June 1981 in Jerusalem.

6. *Sefer Yetzirah* 5:7.

Torah was given on the sixth or the seventh day of that month.[7] According to Rabbi Yossi who argues for the seventh (and with whom Rashi agrees), it is especially clear that the day on which the Torah was given reveals the intrinsic connection between the Ten Plagues and the Ten Commandments, for the division of ten into three and seven is again recalled. Further supporting this connection, the Ten Commandments themselves reflect this division as three of the commandments are phrased in positive, prescriptive language while the other seven are phrased using negative, prohibitive language.

Not only do the "first" Giving of the Torah, when the first set of Tablets were given, reflects the seven-three division, so does the second Giving of the Torah, when the second set of Tablets was given. After the people sinned by worshipping the Golden Calf and Moses destroyed the Tablets, he prayed for God to forgive the people and descended from Mount Sinai after three periods of forty days with the second Tablets on Yom Kippur, the tenth day of the seventh month.

Another instance of the number ten in the Jewish calendar is the Ten Days of Repentance, beginning with *Rosh HaShanah* and culminating with *Yom Kippur*. Of these ten days, three are holidays—two days of *Rosh HaShanah* and one of *Yom Kippur*—and seven are not. The seven intermediate days form a transitional period between *Rosh HaShanah* and *Yom Kippur*, and the entire ten days serve as the transitional period between the old and new year. Fittingly, it is on the tenth day, *Yom Kippur*, that finite human beings perhaps more than at any other time of the year attempt through prayer and spiritual service to reconnect to their infinite source in God.

THE NUMBER TEN AND THE LAND OF ISRAEL

Ultimately, the division of ten into seven and three is also reflected in the Jewish people's inheritance of the Land and the coming of Mashiach. In the book of Genesis, as mentioned above, God promises Abraham that his descendants will inherit the Land of Israel from ten nations. Yet, after this promise is made, only seven Canaanite nations are ever mentioned. What happened to the other three nations? It is explained in Chasidut that through the rectifying energy of each of the seven lower *sefirot*, the power of the seven Canaanite nations was nullified, causing their defeat.[8] Additionally, due to the spiritual energy of the seven shepherds of Israel (Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, Aaron, Joseph and David), each of whom is associated with one of these seven lower *sefirot*, the power of these seven nations was nullified. Because the shepherds were able to conquer the opposing negative energy to each of the *sefirot* their descendants were able to conquer these nations. The three higher *sefirot* await the Messianic era when these three loftier energies relating to the intellectual *sefirot* will be completely purified and rectified. Only then will the last three nations (Edom, Moab, and Ammon) be conquered as well. This is yet another promise waiting to be fulfilled. When it is, then truly God will be one and His Name will be one.

7. *Shabbat* 86b-87a.

8. *Yain Yitzchak,* pp. 130-136.

STORY

REBBE SCHNEUR ZALMAN OF LIADI: IT'S JUST A FEVER

Rabbi Shneur Zalman Boruchovitch of Liadi, author of the Tanya and the Shulchan Aruch HaRav, was born on the 18th of Elul 5505 (1745) to his father Rabbi Baruch and mother Rivkah. Even in his childhood, he was known as a great Torah prodigy. In 5524 (1764), he became the primary disciple of the Maggid of Mezritch, and after the Maggid's passing, he took Rabbi Menachem Mendel of Vitebsk as his rebbe. When Rabbi Menachem Mendel made aliyah to the Land of Israel, and at his instruction, the Alter Rebbe became the leader of the chasidim in Russia and White Russia. He wrote the Tanya, a fundamental book in Chasidut in general and Chabad Chasidut in particular where it is known as "the Written Torah of Chasidut." Following denunciations by his opponents, he was imprisoned twice, and the day of his first release, the 19th of Kislev 5559 (1798), was established as a holiday and the New Year for Chasidut. On the 24th of Tevet 5573 (1812), while fleeing from Napolean, he passed away and was buried in the town of Haditch.

One of the *chasidim* of the holy Alter Rebbe was traveling by ship on the Dnieper River and felt himself becoming ill. He disembarked in the city of Shklov and turned to a renowned doctor. The doctor examined him and said that his illness was terminal. He advised him to travel home as there was no cure for his illness. The *chasid* decided not to travel straight home, for if his days were numbered, it would be better to travel directly to Lyozna, where the holy Alter Rebbe resided, at least to see his face before departing to the World of Truth.

The *chasid* arrived in Lyozna, entered the Alter Rebbe's presence, and related that the expert doctor had told him that his days were numbered. The *tzaddik* said: "Everything is fine, it's just a fever." The *chasid* replied: "But don't people who have a fever shiver?" The holy Alter Rebbe said: "Nu, if so, then shiver!" At that moment, the man was seized by trembling and shivers and his teeth began to chatter.

When his fever passed, he traveled home via Shklov and stopped by the doctor who had examined him before. The *chasid* said reproachfully to the doctor: "Why did you distress me so by predicting that my days were numbered? All I had was a fever, and the illness has already passed, and I am, thank God, alive and well!" The doctor replied, "It's true that you had a fever. But there are two types of fever: one type presents with shivers and trembling, and there are various remedies for it. But with fever of the second type, the patient does not have a high temperature, but feels his strength ebbing away, and doctors have no cure for this type of fever. You had the

second type, for which there is no cure! Please tell me, how did your fever become the simple type?"

The *chasid* related to the doctor how he decided to travel to his rebbe, and apparently, with his words, the holy Alter Rebbe transformed the terminal fever without shivering into a simple fever with shivering and by doing so completely healed him.

For each of the ten *sefirot*, especially the six *sefirot* of the heart, there is an associated angel that expresses its essence. The angel associated with the *sefirah* of beauty (*tiferet*), is the angel Raphael who is responsible for healing.

From the method of healing employed by the Alter Rebbe (which is also characteristic of other *tzaddikim*), we can learn the secret of the *sefirah* of beauty's power. *Tiferet* is also the attribute of mercy, and it can soften reality and draw compassion into a situation full of harsh judgment. This is not about completely transcending and uprooting the laws of nature, but rather about a transformation that occurs within a given reality. In our case, it is about turning a terminal illness into a mild one.

As many *tzaddikim* have already expressed, there is power in a story about a *tzaddik* to affect the action described in it. It is therefore fitting to remember this story and to tell it whenever a difficult medical diagnosis is received. Life-threatening? Nu, it's just a case of simple fever.

One of the *chasidim* of the holy Alter Rebbe, while in Lyozna or Liadi, needed to pass through Yanowitz and return shortly afterwards to the Alter Rebbe. The Alter Rebbe requested that when he passed through Yanowitz, he should stop by the scribe Reb Reuven and ask him to write *mezuzot* for the Alter Rebbe's use. On his return, he could receive the *mezuzot* from the scribe and bring them to Lyozna to the Alter Rebbe.

The *chasid* carried out the mission and asked Reb Reuven to write *mezuzot* for him as well. The scribe agreed, and when the *chasid* returned to collect the *mezuzot*, the scribe gave him two packages, saying: "This package is for the holy Alter Rebbe, and this package is for you." When the *chasid* came to the Alter Rebbe, he was curious to know why the scribe had divided the *mezuzot* into two packages. What was the difference between them?

Out of confusion, the *chasid* took the package that the scribe had given him for himself and gave it to the Alter Rebbe. The Rebbe examined them and said: "Why did he start sending me such *mezuzot*?" The *chasid* realizing there was a problem suggested, "Perhaps it is I who made a mistake, as he wrote *mezuzot* for me too, and I have another package!" The *chasid* gave the Rebbe the second package. The Rebbe examined them and said, "Yes, yes, this is good." The *chasid*, traveling again through Yanowitz on his way home, stopped at the scribe's house and complained, "Why didn't you write the *mezuzot* properly for me? I know because the holy Alter Rebbe did not want to accept the *mezuzot* you wrote for me." Reb Reuven the scribe said: "Your *mezuzot* were written with identical intentions as the Rebbe's. But the Rebbe insists that his *mezuzot* be written when the moon is full, which I did not do for yours."

The wondrous instruction revealed in this story, that *mezuzot* be written during a full moon, does not appear in any written halachic or Kabbalistic book. This is a unique practice instructed by the Alter Rebbe. Nevertheless, from the words of the Kabbalists about the moon and the *mezuzot*, we can trace something of this connection.

First, the moon is a symbol of the *sefirah* of kingdom (*malchut*). Second, numerical value of *mezuzah* (מְזוּזָה) is the same as God's Name *Adni* (אֲ-דֹנָי), the Name associated with kingdom. Third, the mezuzah is affixed to the doorpost of the house, associated with kingdom, which serves as the threshold of the door from the three lower Worlds to the World of Emanation. Thus, for several reasons, the moon is closely connected to the *mezuzah*. But what is the significance of the full moon specifically?

The *sefirah* of kingdom in the World of Emanation is the *Shechinah*, the Divine Presence that emerges from the doorway of its home into the three lower Worlds. When the moon is full, on the 15th night of the month, it alludes to the time when the *Shechinah*, which is also the source of the souls of Israel, is complete and full. This was the case in the time of King Solomon—whose name hints at completeness (*shlemut*) and who was the 15th generation from Abraham—and so it will be in the time of redemption, when the light of the moon shall be like the light of the sun. The people of Israel and the *Shechinah* will become radiant and illuminating like the Almighty without any shadow obscuring them. This is the light that the Alter Rebbe wants to feel in his *mezuzot—mezuzot* of a full moon.

CLASS EXCERPT

WHAT IS MEMORY AND HOW CAN WE STRENGTHEN IT?

In a class given on the 26th of Kislev, 5747 (1987), Rav Ginsburgh's delved into the question of how memory works. Based on a seemingly unremarkable comment by Rashi on Pharaoh's dreams, he uncovers one of the most important pieces of the puzzling question of why we remember and why we forget and whether or not we can strengthen our memory.

Over the years, the Rav has revisited this question, and many of his further insights can be found in his book The Twinkle in Your Eye: Kabbalistic Remedies for Preserving Youth and Memory. However, this particularly deep and revealing insight is being published here for the first time.

The Torah warns us against forgetting certain things—the Giving of the Torah at Mt. Sinai,[1] the Exodus from Egypt,[2] God Himself,[3] the war

1. Deuteronomy 4:9.

2. Ibid. 6:12.

3. Ibid. 8:11.

with Amalek[4]—and it commands us to remember others. The first time someone met the Ba'al Shem Tov, he would ask him, "What do you remember?"

Most people think that memory is just a function of whether we remember some past event. But as we will now see, according to the Torah, memory is more complex and involved.

PHARAOH'S DREAM

We are all familiar with Pharaoh's dreams, the dreams that catapulted Joseph to greatness. There is a very special Rashi regarding the first dream that holds an important key to understanding the way that memory works.

In his dream, Pharaoh's saw seven cows, beautiful and sturdy rising from the Nile. Then seven other cows came up, ugly and gaunt; they swallowed the seven sturdy cows and Pharaoh woke from his dream. Later, when Pharaoh related the dream to Joseph, he added some more detail, he says, "but when they had consumed them, one could not tell they had consumed them, for they looked just as bad as before. And I awoke."[5] The question that we want to ask is, what is the difference between the cows merely swallowing the other cows and Pharaoh's addition that after they had swallowed them, you could not see that anything had entered their stomachs?

On the initial description of the gaunt cows swallowing the sturdy cows, Rashi, who explains the plain meaning of the Torah, writes:

> And they ate: This indicated that all the joy caused by the years of plenty would be forgotten in the days of famine.

What then is the meaning of Pharaoh's addition that you could not tell they had swallowed anything? That simply means that the years of plenty themselves would not be remembered. There is no recollection left of the plenty.

A PLAY IN TWO ACTS

So, we see that the memory of the plenty goes through two stages before it is forgotten. The first stage, corresponding to the swallowing, is that the joy that was experienced during the years of plenty is forgotten. Only in the second stage are the years of plenty completely forgotten, corresponding to the swallowing being unrecognizable.

Let's illustrate this. Imagine that you are someone living in ancient Egypt during those years of plenty. Once the famine starts, after two years, say, you can still remember that just a couple of years ago there was plenty, but you can no longer remember the joy and happiness that accompanied them.

Rashi's comment teaches us an important principle about memory and forgetfulness. What Rashi is explaining is that the first step in forgetting is not to forget the event that happened, but to forget the feeling associated with that event. This is referred to as the swallowing. Only after the feeling has been swallowed do we forget the event itself.

IMPORTANCE OF PASSION WHEN LEARNING

Take another example. We all learn Torah, but how well do we remember

4. Ibid. 25:19.
5. Genesis 41:21.

what we have learnt? Suppose you sat in a class and learnt something new. How can you remember what you learnt? If you can recall the feeling you had while you were learning, then you can easily recall what you learnt! Within all knowledge that we learn there is an experience of acquiring the knowledge. When we forget knowledge, first we forget the experience and feeling we had while acquiring it, and only then do we forget the knowledge itself.

The corollary of this is that the more drive and passion you have to learn, the more easily you will retain and remember what you learnt. But if while sitting in a class you have no interest in what is being taught, you will almost certainly forget what you heard. We find this idea strengthened by the meaning of "knowledge" (יָדַע) in Hebrew. The first time this word appears in the Torah is with respect to Adam and Eve, "And Adam knew his wife Eve."[6] Knowing means connecting. Adam connected with his wife Eve. If there is no feeling connecting us to the event or to what we are learning, no knowledge of it will be retained.

PRIDE AND MEMORY

One might ask, what causes us to forget the drive and passion we felt for learning? The Torah tells us, "[if] your heart grow haughty [fill with pride] you will forget…."[7] Pride and self-centeredness cause us to focus on ourselves instead of on the experience and feeling of connecting to an event or a person. One of the foundations of Torah and all of Judaism is that we have a memory of not only the past, but of the future as well. As Rebbe Nachman teaches, every day we need to be able to remember the World to Come, even though this is ostensibly something that has yet to happen. But pride causes us to forget. Every memory is a connection and making a connection depends on passion and joy. Even if there were a drive and passion to connect in the moment, if later the person focuses on himself and feels prideful, he will forget the passion and the memory will be erased.

Returning to Pharaoh's dream. When he dreamt of the cows swallowing each other, there was no need for him to see that the swallowing was unrecognizable because if the feeling is lost, it goes without saying that forgetfulness will set in. Pharaoh implicitly understood that if the feeling—in this case, the joy of the years of plenty—is swallowed, the years of plenty themselves will necessarily be forgotten. But when Pharaoh shared the dream with Joseph, he assumed that Joseph did not know this, so he explicitly explained what he had felt during the dream: first came the swallowing which then led to the event being unrecognizable!

6. Genesis

7. Deuteronomy 8:14.


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