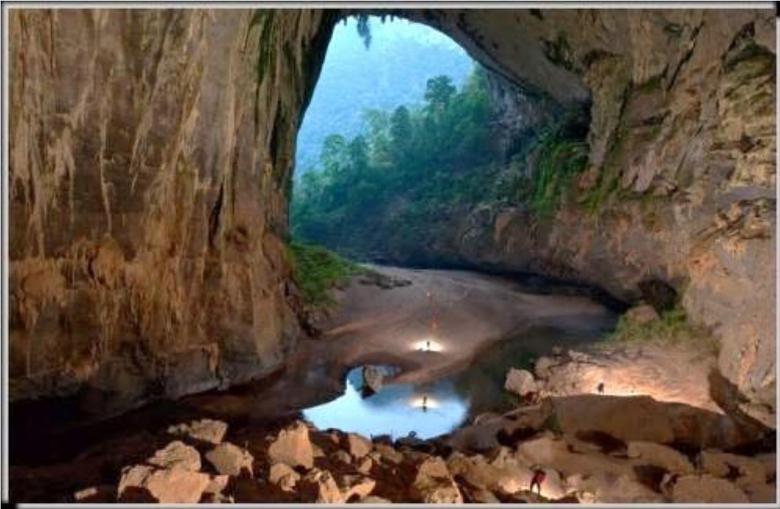


WHERE YOUR THOUGHTS ARE, THERE YOU ARE, ALL OF YOU



Rabbi Avraham Chachamovits



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To contact the author:

E-mail: contato@beitarizal.org.br

Sites: www.beitarizal.org / www.beitarizal.org.br

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לזכות ואריכות ימים

For the merit and long life

*Baruch Mordechai ben Avraham &
Chene bat Shlomo*



WHERE YOUR THOUGHTS ARE, THERE YOU ARE, ALL OF YOU



Eifo adam choshev sham hu nimtza, “Where your thoughts are, there you are, all of you”¹. Behold, when a person thinks on anything, he is immediately “swallowed” into the domain where this thought exists, so to speak. That is, in the observation of a mental construct’s “entrance” – the mere allowing to think on something – the person can already be enveloped by this metallization, thus actually living to a greater or lesser degree the newly formed mental reality. Moreover, immediately after “entering” this mental construct, the person’s wills and desires begin aligning to the domain of these thoughts. The person then receives, as it were, new desires and longings that vitalize his thinking and spiritually, giving life to this alternative reality *ma’amash*. This mental capacity and process has its roots on High, as it is written: “When thought [*chochmah*] illumines, though from what source is not known, it is clothed and enveloped in *binah* [‘understanding’], and then further lights appear and one is embraced with the other until all are intertwined”². This constant mental dynamics are the “movements of the

¹ See *Keter Shem Tov* 56, 208 e 75; *Tzavat Harivash* 69.

² *Zohar* 65a, Noah.

mind”, to wit, the states in which *chochmah* and *binah* are equal and together. To explain further, *chochmah* and *binah* have a “symbiotic” relationship. The insight of *chochmah*, if not processed by *binah*, will disappear and be forgotten, since it was not integrated into the individual’s mental structures. On the other hand, if *binah* is left to pursue its analysis unchecked, it is likely to stray far afield from the idea of the initial insight and arrive at spurious conclusions; it must therefore be – at least periodically – reviewed and compared with the original insight. The ideal condition, thus, is for *chochmah* and *binah* to be constantly in a state of “union”, a mutual cross-fertilization. In the imagery of the *Zohar* this is known as “the point [*chochmah*] in its palace/*heichal* [*binah*]”³.

Now, the mind reflects the *heichalot* (“celestial palaces”⁴), which are domains in distinct “spiritual heights”. Some are secret, others revealed; some modify, while others remain always the same, these being the memories. In the mind, these lofty domains are the product of innumerable spiritual forces: wills and desires, contacts with other levels of the spiritual reality, their entities and a myriad of psychic material from the subconscious – the spiritual domain of the Mind. However, in general, a stable degree of the rational and conscious intellect remains cohesive, like the

³ *Zohar* 6a, Prologue. In the *Likutei Torah* (*Bereshit*), the *Ari”zal* explains that this “point in the palace” is the *dagesh* inside the letter *beit* of *bereshit*.

⁴ Only “reflections”, for these palaces truly cannot be apprehended or glimpsed by the mind (see *Zohar* 65a, *Noah*).

firm “ground of a cave”, where the person mentally traverses its extension and depth. This cohesiveness is a benevolent light from YKVK that graces balance and stability to the mind, keeping it whole and within bounds⁵.

Moreover, during the “traversing of the cave” – the mind proper – inner chambers open with lights and aspects completely distinct, meaning, these are the thoughts that emerge and want attention from the conscious mind. This happens in a constant stream, like a river flow. Yet, these chambers have as their primary quality the fragmentation of normal consciousness – that deals with the external reality – so it can become absorbed in these mental constructs or “chambers” if any neglect of the conscious mind to focus externally occurs. This is how the mind can be drawn completely to these never visited far away palaces, or to others that are modified from previous visitations, or others still, that are amalgams of ideas and desires about the past, present and even the imagined future.

Yet, if the person does not make efforts and actually knows how to return to the firm ground of the “normative” reality, he can become “stuck” in these mental domains – albeit at different degrees – detouring from certainty of his path. Still, remnants of these mental explorations can stay

⁵ If it were not for this superior light (of *Keter*), the mind – acting in accordance to its essence – would seek only the *Ohr Ayin Sof*, causing it to fragment and ultimately obliterate itself in the impossibility of this search.

with the person as memories, further manifesting themselves through new wills and desires, indicating a connection to the domain of the *sitra achra*, which is nurtured by unholy yearnings. In deeper states, these mental experiences can occur just as much as the product of meditation⁶, of mental illness, and the illusions of the *sitra achra*. To distinguish which spiritual side – be it *kedusha* or *tumah* – the meditating person is connected to, requires techniques and understanding of deep *Torah* secrets. All comes from the mind and it is vital to rectify it. This is the reason it was said in an archetypal fashion: “When he entered in the *ParDeS*, *Ben Zoma* become mad”⁷. Regarding this sage, the same piece of the *Talmud* continues citing: “Have you found honey? Eat only so much as is sufficient for you, lest you be filled with it, and vomit it”⁸. The exhortation here is to be careful not to enter any one of these reflected palaces that greatly seduce the consciousness. Rather, the individual needs to keep his focus on the straight path of *Torah*, with the study of *Halacha* in particular, for this kind of study balances the mind. Know that this seduction is the *zehuma* (“impurity of the serpent”) that remains in humanity, for since the fall of *Adam* the mind exists in a state of constant seeking after its longings for *Gan Eden*. The palaces/chambers that open and close, so to speak, are all images of *Gan Eden* that the

⁶ At a the initial levels, this is true whether the meditation if holy or profane, for the process of “drawing in” the mind is similar.

⁷ *Talmud, Chagigah* 14b.

⁸ *Mishlei* 25:16.

mind searches strongly to connect. This is so for the rational side represents the “eating of the fruit” from the *Etz Da’at Tov Ve’Rah*. Now, the right side of the mind seeks “Hashem promenading in the *Eden*”⁹, that is, the *Etz Chayim*, the intuitive-psychic level of understanding. Since in our days, these two parts of the mind are separated in conscious/rational and subconscious/intuitive, and the left side/rational dominates in this stage of reality, the mind’s search is unbalanced. This causes more of these “chambers in the cave to open up”¹⁰, hence more opportunities for the conscious mind to be swallowed by them, furthering its imbalances. The rectification of the mind is its unification. When this happens, *Eden* will be reached, for its revelation depends on the unification of reality. Only through rectification, can reality reveals its hidden aspects.

Continuing, the person can instantly leave one of these palaces and enter another, a process that can occur innumerable times until he can again obtain *histavut* (“balance”). In my *de’ah*, it is a profound thing how a thought forms and immediately calls out the conscious mind’s “focus of attention” – or contrary, that the general

⁹ *Bereshit* 3:8. Incidentally, I have seen that the *gematria katan* of this *pasuk* בגן מתהלך קול יהוה אלהים מהלך בן, “And they heard the voice of the L-rd G-d walking in the garden...” is 281, the same *gematria* as ערוה *ervah*, “nudity” and העור *ha-or*, “the skin”. It is notable that the *pasuk* continues with *Adam* and *Chava* hiding themselves due to their newly found nudity, as their corporal light (*Ohr* with *alef*) degraded to a skin (*Ohr* with *ayin*) as it written there.

¹⁰ In an alternative metaphor, “reflections from the *heichalot* to shine”.

conscious mind creates thoughts in its errant stability – and it then completely absorbs the conscious mind. I believe this is the essence of *Eifo adam choshev sham hu nimtza*. Now, considering these mental dynamics and the thoughts spurring from them, it is miraculous we humans are able to communicate with each other. As such, we are more like galaxies apart from each other by enormous distances. Yet, we all live in a gigantic cluster of galaxies, as it were. The miracle of communication comes from His unfathomable mercy, from the Divine spark vivifying all things, allowing completely different human beings to comprehend and relate to basic elements of the same reality in a (hopefully) compatible mode of coexistence¹¹. The failures of recognizing the spark of Divinity in man's communication, degrades this power to the level of evil.

Now, the manner to maintain the balance of the mind, while seeking constant ascension, is to “follow Hashem”. As it is written: *אם-תיראו את-ה' ועבדתם אתו ושמעתי בקולו ולא תמרו את-פי ה' והייתם גם-אתם וגם-המלך אשר מלך עליכם אחר* *Im-tiru et-Hashem va-avadtem oto ushematem bekolo ve-lo tamru et-pi Hashem vihyitem gam-atem ve-gam-hamelech asher malach aleichem achar Hashem Elokeichem*, “If you will fear the L-rd, and serve Him, and listen to His voice, and not rebel against the commandment of the L-rd, and both you and also the king that reigns over

¹¹ I have the intention at some point y^H , to deal with the subject of thoughts/palaces and the evolution of complexity/sophistication in the world, a product of imagination.

you be followers of the L-rd your G-d"¹². More specifically, the phrase עליכם אחר ה' אלקיכם *Aleichem achar Hashem Elokeichem* (plus one for the *kollel* of each of the four words) has *gematria* absolute (*mispar hechrachi*) 515, the same as *Yesharah/Straight* (*yud-shin-reish-hei* = 10 + 300 + 200 + 5 = 515). One must be straight in the path of *Hashem*. Note that the *atbash* of this *pasuk* is 1476, the same as ראה וקללה וברכה היום נתן לפניכם *Re'eh anochi noten lifneichem hayom beracha ukelala*, "Behold, I set before you this day a blessing and a curse". This means that on the moment that choice is presented to you, be straight and choose the blessings of life. Now that we know how one should follow *Hashem*, being straight, and what it is expected from us, choosing life, it is greatly helpful to know that which will can guide us constantly as a safe path: visualizing of *YKVK* as often as possible¹³. This is *devekut*, meaning the traversing of the mind through its "extensions", always guided by *Hashem*. This will help avoid the dark chambers of the inner cave, these mysterious and dangerous palaces that can only cause harm to the mind and soul. They damage the understanding, because they disturb and distort the meaning of the straight path. In other words, allowing strange/unrectified thoughts to enter the mind disconnects the person from his "safe ground" – from *YKVK*. See, a

¹² I *Samuel* 12:14.

¹³ An hour should never pass without at least a visualization. There are more advanced techniques using *tserufim* (permutations) etc.

word for strange is נכר *nekar*¹⁴ and it has *gematria* 270, the same as *ra'ah* ("evil") and ההרס *ha-heres*, "the destruction"¹⁵. On another level, it is for this reason that all Kabbalistic learning is dependent on the *pshat* and the *halachic* observance. And all the desire to proceed in the esoteric teaching of the *Torah*, "Must first have knowledge of *Nigleh* [the revealed dimension of the *Torah*] and the relevant laws for a common daily life; otherwise, if the person is like one who looks at the stars, seeing all things above him, but leaving to be noticed the holes that are found immediately under his feet: at the end, he will fall in a deep cave"¹⁶. This is most clear for the initiated.

Baruch Adonai leolam amen ve'amen



¹⁴ In fact, *ben-nekar* "son of a stranger" (*Bereshit* 17:12; *Isaiah* 61:5).

¹⁵ *Isaiah* 19:18.

¹⁶ The *Ramak*, *Ohr Ne'erav* I, 6; See the *Rambam*, *Moreh Nevuchim* 1:31-34.

About the Rabbi Avraham Chachamovits



Rabbi *Chachamovits* is perhaps the foremost disseminator of *Torah* mysticism in South America, with hundreds of works in (books, audio and video *shiurim*, classes etc.). He idealized and directed the *Beit Ari"zal*, the first and only authentic kosher Jewish Mystical School (*kollel*) in South America. His path is of righteousness and *kosher* spiritual experiences and not merely "speaking from books read". His style is always deep and intense, and it is based on the *Tanach* prophets' schools and the teachings of the *Ari"zal* in particular.