

Chuf Ches – 28 – Aspects of Physical & Emotional Closeness in This World:

1. We have clarified that there are two types of closeness in this world:
 - Closeness of space
 - Family closeness that spawns a emotional closeness and connection
2. Let us further reflect: are these two types of closeness dependent on each other? It is obvious that **closeness in space does not necessitate family closeness and that family closeness does not necessitate closeness in space.**
3. i.e. A person can be standing next to another person – literally joined to him; but that does not necessitate that he is close to him at all in an emotional way. Moreover, sometimes close proximity creates an emotional distancing, as different opinions can foster strife between the two people.
4. The opposite is also true. Family closeness that spawns emotional closeness or emotional closeness by itself, does not necessarily come with physical closeness.
5. Sometimes a person’s closest relative, like a father or son, or a very close friend can be in a very far away place; and this does not at all contradict their emotional closeness.
6. There is a Basic difference between physical closeness and emotional closeness: **Physical closeness – when we say that something is close, it is actually close the entire time when it is physically close. However, emotional closeness – even though there is emotional closeness between the two, it does not necessarily mean that this closeness is revealed at all times.**
7. A person may love his relative or friend and have a strong connection with him; but that connection is not revealed in the soul at all times. There are times when this closeness is revealed, such as Simchas or tragedies. People feel more connected at those times with these ‘krovim.’

Chuf Tes – 29 – Do We Know or Feel G-d’s Closeness to Us?:

1. Let us now reflect on closeness to G-d – does it have any comparison to the type of closeness that we are familiar with in this world?
2. **Physical proximity:** we have already mentioned that there is nothing as close to a person as G-d since “there is no place that is devoid of G-d.”
3. In terms of physical proximity in this world, there is nothing that a person is constantly close to. Even if they are close to him, they are not actually in the same identical place. Not so regarding G-d. **A person and G-d are constantly close with one another. There is nothing else in this world that compares to this high level of closeness.**
4. **Family or Friendship Closeness:** The texts say: “You are children of G-d, your Lord” and “Do not leave your friend and your father’s friend.” We see from the texts that we are G-d’s children and friends.
5. In conclusion: Man is close to G-d in 3 ways:
 - Physical proximity – “There is no place which is devoid of G-d.”
 - Family closeness – “You are children of G-d, your Lord.”
 - Friendship closeness – “Do not leave your friend and your father’s friend.”
6. If that is the case, then what is lacking in this closeness? “The main thing is missing from the text!”
7. i.e. In this world, when a person is close to a specific thing, he feels with his senses that he is actually close to it. When a person is related to someone else, be it a father, son, uncle, or

cousin, he feels the closeness of family. He feels that he is a son, father, or uncle! When a person has a friend, he feels that he has a friend, and the soul feels this very clearly!

8. However, when we deal with these three aspects in closeness vis-à-vis G-d, **the big question is: Do we feel the same way that G-d is close to us in all three categories?**
9. When we say “There is no place which is devoid of G-d,” do we *know* that there is no place devoid of G-d or do we *completely sense and feel* that there is no place devoid of G-d, and G-d is actually found amongst us in every place? [The Shulchan Aruch starts with the words “I have set G-d before me always.” This emphasizes how G-d is with us everywhere and how we should feel that His presence is always there – even in private.] If the latter is true, we should feel Him at all times, since G-d is found amongst us at all times!
10. Family closeness: Do we *know* that we are called children of G-d or do we *feel clearly in our heart* that we are children of G-d, and our love to Him is firmly rooted like the love of a son to his father?
11. Friendship closeness – “Your friend”: G-d is called our friend. Do we *know* that we are his friends or is this friendship *openly felt in our soul*?

Lamed – 30 – We Do Not Feel G-d’s Closeness to Us :

1. In conclusion: **We have every kind of closeness to G-d, but we only know that we are close.**
2. What is lacking in most people’s closeness to G-d, is that we only know that we have this closeness. We lack the clear feeling that we are close to G-d in these three ways:
 - To sense that we have a physical proximity to G-d. To sense that G-d is standing next to us and inside us at all times
 - To sense that we are really children of G-d
 - To sense that we are G-d’s friends
3. **Indeed we are close, but we lack this feeling in a real sense.**
4. In the physical realm, the closeness we have is felt and sensed; but in the spiritual realm, we know that we are close, but we don’t always feel it so much.

Lamed Aleph – 31 – The possibility of not seeing things that are physically close to us in this world:

1. To make this concept more tangible, let us reflect and see how even in the physical realm of this world, that not every closeness is a closeness that can be felt. Let us give two examples of closeness: physical closeness and family closeness; and how it is possible that these types of closeness can not be revealed to a person.
2. If we would ask a person, before the microscope was invented, “Are there many small living creatures [bacteria] close to you [within centimeters]?” He would emphatically respond and even swear to the fact that there are no small creatures inside of him.
3. Even though it is now clear to us that the person is mistaken and that there are bacteria inside of him; but since the naked eye can not process this information, as the person thinks and doesn’t see anything – he is certain that it does not exist! Truly this is an obvious mistake!
4. So we have an example that a person can be very close from a physical perspective, and he has no idea at all that he is close to it!

Lamed Beis – 32 – The possibility of not feeling emotionally close to someone who is your relative:

1. Let us give another example – this time regarding family closeness.
2. Many Holocaust survivors came to Eretz Yisroel with practically no family. The loneliness of not having family was depressing. There were people who made great efforts to find any trace of family members.
3. Let us give an example. A Holocaust survivor lives in a building and has a neighbor living on top of him. Mildly put, they have no bonds of friendship between each other. Each one is searching for years to find missing relatives.
4. After twenty years, by sheer accident, they find out that they were related to each other as cousins. Besides each other, they have no relatives in the country, and for that matter, in the entire world.
5. We see here an example of a person who can be actually next to his only relative in the world, know the person very well, and live close by to him; yet since he lacks the knowledge that he is related to him, he lacks the feelings of emotional closeness to a relative towards that person.
6. We have before us two clear examples of physical proximity and closeness of being a relative where the person can be actually very “close” –yet so distant, since he does not know that he is so close.

Lamed Gimel – 33 – The possibility of not feeling all 3 levels of closeness to G-d:

1. This is the same situation when we deal with the many layers of closeness of man to G-d. Since a person does not actually see G-d, as the verse says, “For no person can see me and live,” he does not feel physically close to the Creator of the world.
2. **A person knows that G-d is his father, but he does not feel that emotional closeness in his heart.**
3. **A person knows that G-d is his friend, but he does not feel it in his heart.**
4. If we would suddenly tell a person, who mistakenly thought that his father was dead for many years, that his father is still alive, and that he has the possibility of seeing him; his heart would be filled with joy over the possibility that he still had the opportunity to see and recognize his father, who he had mistakenly thought he would never see again!

Lamed Dalet – 34 – Intense Effort is Necessary to Feel the Depths of What it Means to be a Child of G-d:

1. **Anyone who has not labored greatly to recognize G-d, his true Father, simply does not recognize his Father.** [i.e. this pursuit of recognition must be the biggest project of your life.]
2. Perhaps he knows that G-d exists, but he does not recognize his Father.
3. This would be similar to a person who knows that he has a father living outside of Eretz Yisroel, but never saw him. Similarly, a person who has not labored greatly to recognize his Creator [we are not referring to intellectually investigation, but an emotional awareness of G-d’s presence], is a person who knows that he has a Father, but he almost does not recognize his Father at all!
4. A person who truly labors and finally merits to recognize his Creator, his Father in heaven; has proven that not only has he not felt G-d’s proximity up until now, but that until now he has not known at all what his Father in heaven was! Up until now he had no instrument to understand:
 - what is G-d
 - what the words, “You are children of G-d” are really expressing

- What is hidden in the term “child of G-d.”
5. This is not an issue of intellectual understanding, but one of emotional intelligence.
 6. **Any analogy of “a father and son” that is used when describing our relationship to G-d, can not adequately bring out and capture the depths of the essence of the feelings of what it means to be a son to Hashem.** This feeling is beyond human intellectual definitions – rather it is an emotional recognition that the soul has for one’s Father.
 7. We need to understand that when the Torah says that “You are children of G-d”, and a person absorbs these words on a simple level, that we are his children; and just like I have a physical father I have a spiritual Father [We should merit to at least feel that G-d is like our physical father!], he is only superficially grabbing hold of the concept – not its inner truth.
 8. A person can only understand the inner depths of what a “child of G-d” is, only when he feels it in his soul – not when he tries to explain it with definitions.

Lamed Heh – 35 – Our feelings Towards Our Father in Heaven Can Always Be Greater Than Even the Feelings That Yosef Had When He Met His Father:

1. Let us reflect on the meeting of a father and son, Yaakov and Yosef, that is described in Bereishis 46;29 : “Yosef harnessed his chariot and went up to meet Yisroel his father in Goshen. He appeared before him, fell on his neck, and he wept on his neck excessively.”
2. Let us reflect how long did this picture of Yosef “falling on his neck” take? Our Rabbis teach us that during that time Yaakov did not fall on Yosef’s neck and did not kiss him because he was reading the Shema.
3. How long did it take Yaakov to say the Shema? A half hour? An hour? Perhaps more. No matter how long it took, this great feeling of closeness as described in the words “falling on his neck”, even though they had been away from each other for such a long time, was only for a brief time.
4. They did not leave for the next 17 years with that type of feeling. Certainly they felt close for all those years, but they could not sustain that powerfully explosive moment which they briefly felt during that first meeting
5. This analogy explains the connection between a human and his Father in Heaven. **However, when a son is next to his Father in Heaven, the son can always be in a situation of “falling on His neck”.** This is the way of his life that he is attached to and connected to the Almighty (although there are naturally some lower times, in general this can be the case).
6. With our physical father, it is impossible to hold him all the time and to “fall on his neck.”
7. However, with the Almighty, our Father in Heaven, it is really possible to connect with Him at every moment, every hour.
8. When a man merits to reach the level of “And I will dwell within them”, that is to say that the Almighty dwells in him in his heart in a truly revealed way, he is tied to the Almighty all the time in a way that is similar to what we have m
9. This is the internal connection of the soul to Hashem. This is the life of a Jew who lives a truthful, deeper life.

Lamed Vav – 36 – The Inseparable Relationship Between Man & G-d:

1. Let us picture for ourselves at the time when Yosef met Yaakov: If his cell phone would have rung, would he have answered it? Or would he totally ignore the call?
2. Yosef has been alone for many years as a stranger in Egypt, and he reaches the moment where he leaves that lonely state and meets his father. Does he have time to engage in other affairs when he is meeting his father?
3. This is the picture of a true living Jew; he is really attached to G-d at all times. **Even though he is living in this physical world and must engage minimally with some business activity; but his soul is always connected to the Creator.** [i.e. he does not get distracted by the physical world]
4. Regardless if he is engaged in spiritual or physical affairs, the soul is never detached from the Creator. Even when he is speaking on the cell phone he is attached to the Creator, and he does not get distracted from his inner connection to the Creator at all times. This is the picture of how a Jew should live.
5. This is the only true connection that a person has in the world. One day a person leaves his family and remains alone. **The only connection that a person can hold onto in this world and in the next world, the only connection that he can never be detached from, is his connection to G-d.**
6. There is no certainty that a person will sit with his father, son, or uncle in Gan Eden. He can only be certain of sitting with G-d.
7. This is the connection that a person must picture for himself in this world and in the world to come. A person can have a connection with his family, but one day it can be broken. But the connection that a person has with G-d is eternal, and will never break.
8. If someone wants a true friend, he should pick G-d to be his friend. This friend – G-d – will be his friend in every place: in this world, in Gan Eden, in the world to come. He will never leave him for even a minute.

Lamed Zayin – 37 – Feeling Physical Proximity to G-d Depends on Feeling Emotionally Connected to G-d :

1. As long as a person does not have a true connection to G-d, similar to the type of closeness to family, which we have mentioned above; he is also not able to properly feel the closeness of physical proximity. [i.e. That G-d is close to him in physical proximity and is standing next to him.]
2. **The more that a person is connected to G-d in the depths of his heart, the more he is able to really feel inside his soul that G-d is really standing next to him everywhere and at all times.** [contrast to section 28]
3. The more that a person's soul feels closer to G-d, and the more the person is very deeply connected to Him with every fiber of his heart; the more a person will feel that G-d is standing next to him. G-d forbid, the opposite is also true.

Lamed Ches – 38 – The Decision of Wanting This Kind of Lifestyle and the Need to Pray for it:

1. After we have clarified 1) that the purpose of life is closeness to G-d, and 2) approximately how the lifestyle of a person, who is connected to G-d, manifests itself, and 3) this attachment is not just a minor point of life, but one's entire life is a pathway of connection to G-d; **it is incumbent upon a person to clarify for himself if he wants to live such a lifestyle.** [It would appear that a relationship with G-d as described above is very intense and will affect everything

else in our lives. It may be hard to want such a lifestyle. For most of us, we would think that such a lifestyle would be intimidating.]

2. Perhaps it is easier for a person to continue living a fantasy life that appears to be a tranquil life without the being bothered with having to cleave to G-d.
3. It is incumbent upon each and every person to clarify for himself if he truly is interested in cleaving to G-d his entire life.
4. If a person has clarified for himself that he wants such a life – he is fortunate.
5. **If a person has clarified for himself that he does not want such a life – he should pray to G-d for this that He should help him to want such a true lifestyle; and that He should help him leave his anarchistic lifestyle that only appears to be life, and to want to entire a true life,** which is referred to us “And you are attached to G-d, your Lord, you are all alive today.” [Only the giver of life can define what life is. The giver of life says that, for a Jew, the definition of life is being attached to G-d. Any other definition of life is merely a delusion!]
6. [This prayer should be compared to a person who is starving to death, is so close to food, but has no strength to reach the food. What would he do? Scream out for help! The same thing over here. If a person is not living close to G-d, and the ability to live that way is so close, but he does not have the strength to live that way – what should he do? Scream out to G-d for help!]
7. We have not yet speaking about the path of how to become close and attached to G-d, rather if there is a desire to be close and attached to G-d.

Lamed Tes – 39 –The Way You Lived Your Life in This World is How You Will Live in the Next World :

1. Let us attempt to bring the person closer to this that he will want to be closer and attached to G-d.
2. Each and every one of us knows that the day will come when we will leave this world, as it says: “The end of all mankind is death.”
3. Everyone also wants to escape Gehinom after his death and to merit entrance into Gan Eden.
4. What does a person do in Gan Eden? The Ramchal [Luzzatto] explains in the beginning of his work “Mesilas Yeshorim” that, “Mankind was only created in order to delight in G-d and to take pleasure from the radiance of His Divine presence.” This is the primary pleasure of Gan Eden.
5. **We can surmise that if a person is not truly attached to G-d, he will also not have much to do in Gan Eden.**
6. [Slonimer Tzaddikim teach that a person who never experienced true Oneg Shabbos in this world, even though he acted like a good Jew and will go to Gan Eden, he will sit in Gan Eden ‘like a piece of wood.] Next to him will be a person enjoying himself immensely, and the first person is going to wonder what is going on. He will feel like he is not included in this experience.]
7. [The Yismach Moshe wanted to know what the next world was like. So G-d sowed him a vision of it: Old Tzaddikim learning with old Seforim, learning on broken tables and chairs. He felt disheartened as the world to come appeared to just be a continuation of life in this world. G-d responded that, “The World to Come is not that the righteous live in Gan Eden – rather Gan Eden lives inside the righteous!” This is something that is nurtured in this world and continues into the next world, with the following difference: In the next world you can fully delight in G-d because all the obstructions are removed.]
8. **The true concept of Gan Eden is attachment to G-d. If a person, G-d forbid, does not want attachment to G-d, what will he do in Gan Eden?**

9. A person may contend that in this world he wants to enjoy this world; and when he leaves this world, then he will want to be attached to G-d.
10. You should know that this is a thought of emptiness! The Holy Seforim write that **where a person's thoughts and heart are fixed in this world, so it will really be in the World to Come!** [Story of simple wagon driver who helped the Chidushei Harim arrive in Kotzk on Erev Shabbos and his reward in the "Fantasy World." Also see a story in the introduction to Sefer Lev Eliyahu.]
11. In conclusion, if a person's thoughts and heart were not attached to G-d in this world, but to other things; so it will really be in the World to Come.
12. **Even if he will then want to be attached to G-d in the World to Come, he will not be able, because he will be forced [he won't be able to help himself] to be attached to what he clinged to in this world.**
13. **i.e. A person is not able to differentiate between the two things, that in this world he will not be attached to G-d, and in the World to Come he will be attached to G-d.**
14. Either he is attached to G-d both in this or the next world or he is not attached to either one. [Certainly there is a way for a person to "correct" his failure of not making proper use of his life, but this is not the place to discuss that.]
15. A person must understand that if he is not connected to G-d while still in this world, he will definitely not be connected to G-d in Gan Eden or the World t Come; and will, therefore, have nothing to do there.
16. A person must reflect a lot about this: that he will lose his eternal existence by mot clinging to G-d in this world.
17. The World to Come is called "A world that is entirely good." What is the "good" which is there? Ramchal has already written, "And for me, closeness to G-d is good. Anything besides this which people deem good is nothing but emptiness and deceptive worthlessness."
18. There is no other "good" but closeness to G-d; and if a person is not close and connected to G-d, he can not relate to a world that is "entirely good."
19. **Therefore, in order to merit the good of Gan Eden and the World to Come and to the "Closeness to G-d, is good for me," it is necessary that a person must live with this good of "Closeness to G-d, is good for me" and attachment to G-d even in this world.**

Mem – 40 – Necessity of a "Spiritual Inventory" Regarding the Goal of Closeness to G-d:

1. Just like a person, who has a business, will close his business in order to conduct a full inventory in order to know what he has, and has not sold; so too must a person do the same thing for himself.
2. Not a "spiritual accounting" that lasts fifteen minutes, half an hour, or an hour; but he must stop his life's journey and inspect if he wants to be close and connected to G-d or not?
3. And if the answer to the question is "yes," then he must find out if he is traveling on a pathway that brings him closer to feeling closeness to G-d. Perhaps he is on a pathway of intellectual Torah learning and Mitzvah observance with some inspiration, but that Torah learning and Mitzvah observance is not bringing him to true closeness to G-d.
4. A person must come out with a clear recognition that he wants true closeness to G-d. It may take some time to achieve this goal, but he must resolve that he has a clear recognition and desire that his entire life is closeness and attachment to G-d.
5. Once it is clear to him that closeness and attachment to G-d is the entire reality of his life, then his job is to search and clarify a clear path on how to merit achieving it.

Mem Aleph – 41 – Closeness to G-d Is Not Something You Just Fall Into By Torah Learning & Mitzvah Observance:

1. Once it is absolutely clear to a person that the whole purpose of his life is to be close to G-d and that he feels a true desire to live a lifestyle of closeness to G-d, now it is proper for him to understand and reflect the pathway that will lead him to merit such a lifestyle.
2. A person might think that since he is immersed in Torah study and Mitzvah observance, then automatically the day will come and instantly he will feel closeness to G-d in his heart. However, this is a big mistake that many people fall into!
3. **They think that closeness to G-d falls into the heart of the person who learns Torah and observes Mitzvos; but this is truly not so!**

Mem Beis – 42 – People Can Be Filled With Mitzvos But Still Empty:

1. Our Rabbis have said that “Even the empty ones of them are filled with Mitzvos like a pomegranate.” [Talmud Brachos 57a]
2. Why are they called “empty ones” if they are actually not empty, since they have many Mitzvos like a pomegranate?
3. R’ Dovid Povarsky zt”l gave a wonderful answer. He said that **it is possible for there to be a person who has many Mitzvos such as Torah study, kindness, etc, but he can still be defined like an “empty one.”** Why?
4. **A pomegranate does have many seeds, but each one stands alone.** It is not like an apple or a pear where the fruit is one solid mass; rather each small seed is by itself.
5. The same thing can be with the Mitzvos that one does. **A person is able to learn a lot of Torah and perform a lot of Mitzvos, but it can all be in an “empty” aspect; since each activity is separated from the other, and there is no true connection between one Mitzvah and its’ neighboring one.**
6. Torah and Mitzvos need to be on a pathway of “one solid mass,” a pathway of building; not in a world of separate Torah and Mitzvos.
7. A person is capable of engaging in Torah his entire life and performing many Mitzvos, and he can still be on the pathway of “the empty ones of them.”
8. **The reason is because he has not merited to the inner focal point that unites all his Torah and Mitzvos. What is that inner focal point that unites all his Torah and Mitzvos? Attachment to G-d!**
9. Torah learning must be learned on a path of “G-d, His Torah, and the Jewish people are one,” and through Torah learning a person needs to be attached to his Creator.
10. The Mitzvos come from the word “Tsavta,” which means “connection” and attachment to G-d, as is well known.
11. Consequently, **both Torah and Mitzvos have a one inner central focus – closeness and attachment to G-d.**
12. **So all Torah and Mitzvos are tied into each other, since they all bring a person to the same goal.**
13. However, if the Torah and Mitzvos are not bringing the person to closeness to G-d, then there is no focal point that is unifying all his Torah and Mitzvos; and G-d forbid his Torah and Mitzvos are considered as separate entities.
14. **When a person’s heart is “empty” from the Creator and the “And I will dwell in their midst” is not inside a person’s heart, that proves that the unifying point of everything is missing.** There is Torah and there is Mitzvos, but there is no unified heart to our Father in heaven. There is no inner focal point in the heart which is attached to G-d.

15. Each and every person must make a **spiritual accounting** for himself and inspect the following: **Is the process of the ebb and flow of my life – the learning of Torah, observance of Mitzvos, etc. – a process that will bring me to a true attachment to G-d that can be felt; or perhaps, G-d forbid, my actions is a process of “the empty ones of them’ which is lacking the inner unifying focal point of all my Torah learning and Mitzvah observance?**
16. [This is an important issue for all Jews and especially the Ba'al Teshuva. The Ba'al Teshuva gives up everything in life for a new religious lifestyle hoping to find a better life. He is excited during the first few years as he encounters new and interesting experiences through the yearly cycle of events. However, he does not necessarily feel closeness to G-d. If he does not find a correct pathway to feel closeness to Hashem, he will sense the emptiness of his newly found religious life. He will become bitter and resent this new lifestyle, because he did give up something else that he thinks was better. He will either go back to his old lifestyle or will regress to a more comfortable, less intense form of Orthodox Judaism that allows him to have some of the old pleasures in life albeit in a different venue.]

Mem Gimel – 43 – Avoid Excuses & Re-evaluate Your Pathway in Life:

1. Great caution must be exercised regarding this point.
2. Many people are of the opinion of and are certain that their pathway in life is a true path; and after many years this pathway will have them merit closeness to G-d.
3. However, this is not always true. **Often this argument is used as an excuse to avoid the more difficult truer path; and it is easier for a person to think that his proper path will bring him to feel closeness to G-d.**
4. What will a person do if at the end of his life, it becomes clear to him that his path was not a proper one, and he has not merited achieving closeness to G-d that can be felt?
5. It will then be too late; and the person will not have the ability to turn the clock back and attempt to live a new lifestyle.
6. **It is certainly not easy to prove to someone that his path will not necessarily lead him to feel closeness to G-d.** (There certainly are many paths that can lead a person to feel closeness to G-d. We are only referring to people who are on incorrect paths – not true paths.)
7. Therefore, **a person should re-evaluate himself well and be very suspicious that perhaps he is not on the correct path.**
8. He should not rationalize for himself by saying that he is on the same path that many others are also traversing and have been successful with. He needs to scrutinize each pathway carefully from a person that has great insight in these areas, and not to rely on what he hears from others.
9. Rather every person needs to deeply introspect on his path and plead very much before G-d that:
 - G-d should help him by directing him to the truth, so that he should merit being on a true path which will bring him closer to G-d.
 - Even if he already is on a true path, that he should merit understanding it properly.
10. Because often the pathway is true, but the person does not understand it properly.
11. In conclusion, every person must:
 - Choose for himself a clear pathway which will lead him to a condition of attachment to G-d.
 - Pray very much to G-d that he merit to be on the proper path that is suitable for himself.