

Section 5: Fear of G-d:

Koof Lamed Ches – 138 – Fear of Suffering in Gehinom is Difficult to Grasp:

1. The root of the structure of a person is the fear of punishment which is called in our Holy Books “the lower level of fear” (as opposed to the awe of His majesty which is called “the upper level of fear”).
2. Fear of punishment is divided into 2 parts:
 - a. Fear of the punishment in heaven [from Gehinom]
 - b. Fear of suffering on earth.
3. First we will talk about the first kind - the suffering in Heaven - in Gehinom. **When a person tries to acquire the fear of the punishment in Gehinom, he comes upon a problem. The problem is that he cannot physically see Gehinom and, because of this, he does not fear it. For it is the nature of the body not to fear something that it cannot see.** [That is why people smoke even though they know it is bad for them, because they don't actually see the sickness before them. We would be able to succeed if we were like the main character in the book “The Picture of Dorian Gray” who would see the picture of himself grow old and ugly after each time he did something wrong.]
4. If a person was pure and would merit that his soul could see the punishments in heaven, through this he would be able to reach the level of fear of Gehinom.
5. But only a few are privileged in this way to have their souls see what is happening in the next World, and they were only able to merit this *after* they acquired the level of fear of punishment, **so we see that this is not the way to actually acquire this fear.** [So there must be a way of acquiring a healthy fear of punishment without seeing Gehinom.]
6. **Really the foundation of grasping the fear of punishment is through our intellectual powers, the power of imagination. With these powers, we can imagine how Gehinom appears and, through this, we can come to fear.**
7. The trouble is that there are few in our generation who have strong imaginary skills, who are able to imagine with such strength that it can influence their hearts to fear punishment. This is why it is hard for us to grasp this fear: because the body cannot see it; the soul which can see it, is hidden from the person; and the power of imagination is weak.
8. For this reason, many of our Rabbis in recent generations believed they should stop speaking at great lengths about the subject of fear of punishment. In opposition, there were those who believed that we cannot move from the foundation of building the structure and continued to deal with this at length, even with the difficulty that many had in grasping this concept. For the most part, they spent their entire lives involved in this approach and still were unable to acquire the concept completely, because of its difficulty to grasp.
9. **The truth is that both ways are dangerous.** For if a person skips over the concept of Fear of Punishment, and continues, he is missing a basis, and, G-d forbid, during times when a person has “a small level of awareness” [when you do not feel an attachment to G-d] and is failing, and when the fire of love isn't burning in his midst, he has no strength to stop himself from sinning, because the fear of punishment has not been acquired by him. [It is a spiritually dangerous time for a person when he feels that ‘Judaism isn't doing anything’ for him.]
10. However, the other side also has risks, since Fear of Punishment is so difficult to acquire, G-d forbid, a person can toil all his life only in this issue and will not continue further for the rest of his life and can leave this world with only this tiny bit.
11. [The foundation of America's relationship with G-d is based on fear of punishment. This was evidenced from the Puritan preachers such as Jonathan Edwards's famous ‘Sinners in the hand of an angry G-d’ which he delivered in 1741, where he said that ‘G-d abhors you,’ and that he holds you like a spider over a candle which He will drop into the flame any second! Their whole idea of serving G-d was out of

fear of punishment. Today, most people believe in G-d, but mostly are unobservant wanting to have little to do with an angry G-d. So we need to further clarify how Judaism views fear of G-d.]

קל"ט

Koot Lamed Tes – Gehinom Was Created and Is Run By G-d In Order for Us to Get Close to Him:

1. First of all, we must explain the inner point of fear of punishment. Just as we have repeated many times up until now that it is a solid rule that **one must see Hashem in everything and find a way to come close to Hashem through every single situation, so it is with Fear of Hashem.**
2. In other words, **we first must find Hashem Himself in our Fear of Punishment, and afterwards we must understand how it is possible to come close to Hashem through fear of punishment.**
3. We must ponder: Who is it Who created Gehinom? Hashem! Gehinom is the fruit of Hashem's creation. In addition to this, we must ponder: Who is it Who punishes in Gehinom? Does Gehinom have its own power, and is led by its own powers? Definitely not! Only Hashem who is singular and special, Who creates and renews Gehinom at every moment (as it says "He Creates light" - in the present sense, and everything that was created is renewed at every moment by Him), and He alone is the One who punishes a person in Gehinom.

ק"מ

Koof Mem – 140 – We Get Close to G-d By Gehinom Removing the Barriers of Sin Which We Created in Our Lifetimes:

1. We must understand **why He Created Gehinom?** Is it that He wants to harm people? Certainly not! It is clear that His Will is that we should be close to Him. **However, when there is a barrier made up of our sins which prevents a person from being close to and clinging to Him, then one of the ways to bring this barrier down is through the punishment of Gehinom.**
2. **Thus, Gehinom is nothing more than the venue that will enable a person to come close to Hashem.**
3. Therefore, if a person is afraid of Gehinom in and of itself **and does not remember and live with the reality of Who Created Gehinom, and Who Punishes there, and why He punishes, he is missing the entire purpose of the punishments of Gehinom.** Such a person is afraid of the superficiality of Gehinom and does not touch upon the reason of why this fear was created.
4. [People get upset and say, "If G-d loves me, why does he want to hurt me so much?" Therefore, the thought of this suffering causes us to move far way from G-d. That all comes from an external understanding of Gehinom. If we really understood the purpose of Gehinom, then the knowledge of the benefits of this suffering would cause us to love G-d. The problem is that the modern idea of "love" is: "If you love me, give me everything that I want; and if you don't, then I can not love you!" We don't want to get punished, so we choose to not love G-d. Parents often fall into this trap of wanting their children to love them, but it comes with an unreasonable and unhealthy price tag – giving your children everything they want! Not only is this not in the best interest of the children, it produces the opposite effect – the children end up hating the parents, because the children end up being unhappy as insatiable desires can never be satisfied. Only later do the children realize that they would have benefited more from less presents and more disciplined structure in life – and ultimately blame and hate the parents for not providing it for them!]

קמ"א

Koof Mem Aleph - 141 – The fear of Gehinom is in Order for Us Not to Sin, Thereby Not Distancing Ourselves From G-d:

1. Just as Gehinom exists, so too does the Fear of Gehinom exist. We must understand what the purpose of this fear is. Does Hashem want to cause suffering for a person and to scare him? It is obvious that that is not the case.

2. [We usually view “fear” as a negative thing, and we usually run away from things we are afraid of. So it can’t be that G-d would create something that would cause us to run away from Him.]
3. Rather, since the whole purpose of a person’s life is to get him closer to Hashem, and when a person sins, G-d forbid, this creates a barrier between himself and his Creator, **this is the purpose of the creation of Gehinom: that a person should fear it and, through this fear, not distance himself from Hashem through his sins.**
4. [Just like you want a child to be far away from walking onto a busy highway. Not that you want the child to merely be afraid of the highway – you want him to fear death and want to stay alive!]
5. Therefore, the fear of Gehinom is not the purpose in and of itself, but the whole idea of this fear is that through it, a person will never distance himself from his Creator, and will merit closeness to Him.
6. This means that if a person is afraid of Gehinom in and of itself without the inner memory of what the purpose of the fear is, then “the fundamental is missing from the book” - he is missing this fundamental point entirely.
7. **It is imperative to remember that Gehinom, its punishments and the fear of its punishments, is only in order to cause a person to come close to and cling to his Creator, and not a subject that stands alone.**
8. **Therefore, if a person toils to acquire this fear of punishment, first and foremost he must remember from whom is he afraid? From Gehinom or from Hashem who punishes in Gehinom?** (Of course, he is afraid of the punishment, but he must remember Who is punishing and this is a deep matter that is spoken about by R’ Yechezkel Levenstein, may he rest in peace). **He also must remember what the purpose of this fear is** [The real fear we should have is to not have barriers between us and G-d.]

קמ"ב

Koof Mem Beis – 142 – Fear of Gehinom Should be Focused on Bringing Us Closer to G-d and Not Focused on Thinking About What Is Best For Us:

1. When a person toils to acquire the fear of punishment in the manner described above, all of his effort takes on a new face. **Without this form, G-d forbid, a man can toil for years to acquire a fear of Gehinom and it is possible to forget Hashem throughout all these years of effort. In other words, he is involved in the fear of Gehinom alone, and forgets Hashem.**
2. However, when a person goes in the path described, then the fear of punishment is the means to get towards towards his Creator, and not, G-d forbid, the opposite.
3. The bottom line is: a person must constantly be checking if, through the fear of punishment he remembers Hashem more, feels that he is coming closer to Him; or G-d forbid through this fear he so immerses himself in worry for himself, fear for himself that he should not be harmed or punished, **that through this, the “me” grows bigger and bigger, and his forgetfulness of G-d is also growing.**
4. [An unhealthy ‘fear of G-d’ gets you more worried about yourself, as opposed to enhancing your relationship with G-d, which is what Judaism is based on. True service of G-d is not focused on what it does for the individual serving G-d. It is focused on the fulfillment of the will of G-d. We must be careful that ‘fear of G-d’ does not become the tool to make us focus on making ourselves bigger.]

קמ"ג

Koof Mem Gimel - 143 – The Appropriate Use of Basic Fear of Punishment In One’s Service to G-d:

1. There is something else that is important to know. Fear of punishment is not something only for “after the fact”, that is only applicable to “those of small minds and little sense”. It is true that in our Holy

Books fear of punishment is told to “those of small minds and little sense”. **What the Holy Books mean when they say this is that those people can only relate to fear of punishment and nothing else.**

2. **However, it is clear that even the greatest of people need to acquire fear of punishment.** [according to their level] As we have already explained, when these people go through a period of “a small level of awareness” [when you do not feel an attachment to G-d], when their mind fails them and their knowledge is weak, they must be able to fall back on a solid, strong fear of punishment. [As a person in that position is liable to sin.]
3. For when almost all of a person’s mental grasping is not being revealed in his heart, at that point the only thing that guards a person is his fear of punishment.
4. [That is why it has been suggested by rabbinic leaders that the only way to curb the dangers of the internet is to have a “partner” that can check you out at any time during the day. One needs to have a basic fear of being caught by someone they respect, in order to stay ware from things they should not be viewing.]
5. **This is why it is important to know right from the beginning, from the time when one starts to toil in his fear of punishment, that it is the Will of Hashem for him to toil thus. While he is toiling to acquire this fear, he is doing the Will of Hashem.** [i.e. He is doing a Mitzvah of not doing anything that is displeasing to G-d. ‘Fear of G-d’ is one of the six constant Mitzvos – so it must be for everyone. Anytime you resist doing a sin, you fulfill this Mitzvah as well.]
6. **Thus we have another point that will tie a person to the Master of the World,** that the reason for his work and toil to acquire the fear of punishment is that this is the Will of Hashem [G-d loves us and does not want us to create barriers between Him and us.] (Of course there will be times when he toils also simply because he is afraid of the punishment, and he may be afraid that he is not afraid enough of the punishment, and is afraid lest he G-d forbid, has transgressed and will get punished. So he is serving out of fear itself, and not only because it is Hashem’s Will. **Still, he can toil [to acquire this fear] for 2 reasons**
 - a. Fear of the punishment of Gehinom and
 - b. Because it is the Will of Hashem that he acquire this fear of punishment.)
7. **So we see that, even through fear of punishment, which is made up entirely of worry that the “me” should not get punished, we still can even use this path to connect to Hashem.** [Here the 5 positive steps of ‘Fear of G-d’:
 - a. When a person remembers Who created Gehinom and continues to create it.
 - b. When a person remembers Who Punishes in Gehinom.
 - c. When a person remembers the purpose of the *punishments* of Gehinom, and that through them one becomes close to Hashem. [This is hard for us to believe. We as parents have difficulty in disciplining our children only for their benefit. Often there is a lot of selfishness and revenge on the parents’ part. Additionally, if a parent does not shower a child with love at other times, it is hard for the child to believe that the punishment is only out of love. Therefore, it is hard for us to see all the love of G-d when He disciplines us.]
 - d. When a person remembers that the purpose of the *fear* of punishments of Gehinom is that, through this fear, he will not sin, which would bring him to distance himself from Hashem.
 - e. That even the reason for toiling to acquire this fear of punishment (at least part of the reason) is because this is the Will of Hashem.
8. **Thus we have 5 steps of fear of punishment through which to connect to Hashem.** Through these ways, even when a person is toiling to acquire the fear of punishment, **he will not be immersed in himself and in worry for the “me”, but will remember his Creator as is fitting, and will even remember to come closer to Him through this toil.**

9. [You will also worry that other Jews will not have this problem; so you will 'reach out' to bring other people closer to G-d.]

קמ"ד

Koof Mem Daled - 144 – Read Books Which Describe These Punishments; Pray to G-d to Help You Develop Fear of Punishment in General & in Specific Situations:

1. Therefore, when a person remembers all five parts mentioned above, now it is appropriate to begin toiling to acquire Fear of Punishment.
2. Clearly, **first a person should read books that deal with this subject, which describe it, like chapters about Gehinom and the suffering of the grave, in the Holy Book "Reishis Chochmah" (The Gate of Fear) and the like.** He should continue to read from the books of tzaddikim who described what happens there. As an example, the book "Minchas Yehuda Haruchos Misaparos" from the great Kabbalist R' Yehuda Petayah, may he rest in peace, and others. He should try to imagine everything according to his ability. [One must be careful not to confuse the physical imagery use to describe it, with their actual reality. They are all metaphors of something much deeper in spirituality.]
3. The Piesetzner Rebbe has many practical exercises using guided imagery to visualize the suffering a person goes through after his death.]
4. The main thing is that, throughout the time that he is toiling to acquire Fear of Punishment, he should pour out his prayers before the Almighty, in his own language. [i.e. The main thing is to pray to G-d for help in this area.] For example: *"Master of the Universe, You created the world, and You commanded me to fear You, to fear punishment. Why did You do this? You did it in order that I not distance myself from You and that I will merit to come close to You, etc. etc."* as we have already explained. *"And You have given me a mind, and the power of imagination and yet, even with the tools You have given me, it is difficult for me to merit to acquire fear of this punishment. And so, Master of the Universe, from my part I will try to do all that is in my power to fear You. But it is clear to me that, from my own powers, I will not merit to acquire this. Please, Hashem, have mercy on me and implant in my heart Your fear. Help me fear You all the days of my life that, through this fear, I will not come sin and I will merit to come close to You throughout all my days"*
5. A person should go on in this vein according to the clarity of his speech from the depths of his heart. He should detail his request, the reason that he is toiling to acquire fear of punishment and the particular difficulties that are preventing him. He should request that Hashem should help him.
6. **All this should come from a clear understanding from the part of the person that, without Hashem's help, even more than 1,000 years of toil will not enable him to acquire true fear of punishment.** One should know, understand and feel that all of his service is dependant only on Hashem's help.
7. **In this manner he must pray about fear of punishment in general and in all its detail.**
8. As an example: **A man is about to go out into the streets and he is afraid that he won't be able to guard his eyes against seeing things that are not proper. Before he goes, he should pray and ask for help from Hashem to help him to guard his eyes during this trip.**
9. [There is a story about a teacher who took his class of young Gerrer Chasidim students for a hike in the country forest. They got lost and the teacher was afraid that the children would get dehydrated. They found a small town. The teacher would need to go into the store, and could likely see things that are forbidden. So he asked the students to say Tehilim before and while he went into the store, so that he should not stumble in guarding his eyes. He came back and told the students that successfully accomplished the mission. They did a short celebratory dance and then drank the liquid refreshments that he bought in the store. We should not look at this as bizarre,

super religious behaviour. This is what a Jew, who cares to not sin, should always be doing. Similarly, wives should pray to G-d that their husbands should not stumble, when they are at work, to not have the wrong thoughts, etc. (husbands also need to pray!) They should be praying that their children not stumble when they sit in front of the computers.]

10. In every area where fear is a relevant factor, one should preface the action with a short prayer relating to the situation.
11. He should still pray in a general way that Hashem should help him acquire Fear of Punishment, but also in each situation that comes his way where he is afraid that he might fail, he should pray for the specific situation.
12. [We all find ourselves in circumstances with tests, whether in situations between man-and-G-d or man-and-man (such as with in-laws, etc.), where we should pray to G-d to help us not sin. For example, there are parents who are protective of their children and are concerned of they come home late, but are not worried about their children's' spiritual welfare. Prayers of parents are very special, and should not be treated lightly.]

קמ"ה

Koof Mem Hey - 145 – Develop Fear of Punishment of Suffering in This World By Looking At Those Who Are Afflicted Already:

1. Until now, we have dealt with fear of the punishments of Gehinom. Now we will deal with the fear of afflictions of this world, such as sickness and pain.
2. **Firstly, a person must observe around him, seeing all the sick people who are surrounding him, may Hashem help them. This person has heart problems; this person has trouble with his legs, etc.**
3. **A person should think: why are people sick like this? Is it possible that they are sick for no reason? Obviously this cannot be the case, since there is no such thing as suffering without sin.** We know that with every limb that a person used to sin, that limb will be punished. Therefore, whenever a person sees people with particular limbs that are damaged, it is known that the person has blemished and sinned with that limb. Thereby, the fear of sin should enter his heart.
4. [However, we should not judge specific people based on only what we see; as things can come for other reasons, such as sins in a previous lifetime, etc. A person should look at the specific affliction of another person to only for the purpose of arousing himself not to sin with a particular limb.]

קמ"ו

Koof Mem Vav - 146 – Practice These 2 Types of Fear of Punishment So You can Make Use of It During Times of Spiritual Descent:

1. In addition to this, he should feel these things in a concrete way.
2. For example: **A person should stand in a place near an object that belongs to his friend. He should be where no one else sees him and say (first to himself and then to Hashem): "Right now It would appear that I could steal this object, since no one else can see me at all. Why should I not do this? Because I know that if I, G-d forbid, would steal, I would be punished. If I use my hand to steal, definitely this hand would be punished, whether with a wound or with paralysis or would have to be amputated, G-d forbid."**
3. He can do the same with his legs, saying: "I am able to go to this place to which I know I am forbidden to go, for example a place of licentiousness. Why do I not go? Because I know that my legs will, G-d forbid, be punished". He should do similarly with his eyes and ears, etc., again and again, feeling these matters in all sorts of ways in many different forms.

4. Whenever he comes across a different kind of illness, he should take advantage of the opportunity to think with fear (obviously only at a time when he is trying to acquire this fear, because one always must think about a situation with the matter that he is involved in).
5. **This kind of fear is easier to capture than the fear of Gehinom, since the afflictions of Gehinom are not obvious to the eye, whereas the afflictions of this world are recognized by a person with total clarity and he is afraid of them.**
6. **Still, there is a problem, as there are many people that sin and we do not see that they are punished at all. This is why a person (sometimes consciously and sometimes subconsciously) fails to recognize and fear that sin brings about afflictions. It is apparent that many times the opposite is true!**
7. Truly, there are sins that a person gets punished with afflictions in this world and there are those where he is punished in the Upper Worlds, and all of the Heavenly calculations are deep. [In addition, we never know what private issues of suffering that people have, while outwardly things look good to the casual observer.] **Therefore, it is difficult to acquire complete fear in this manner. That is why it is so important to acquire the fear of 'punishment in Gehinom' and also fear of 'the punishment in this world', each person according to his ability.**
8. Clearly, we will have to pray a lot as we have explained above. Let us repeat and emphasize: **Just as a person has times of elevation and times of descent, so do we have paths for times of elevation and for times of descent.**
9. [A person has to be very careful to know how to appropriately live in the different times he is in. R' Bunim of Psishcha explained why a Jew has 2 pants' pockets. In one pocket he should put in a note that says "The world was created for me," and in the other pocket he should put a note that says "I am but dust and ashes." He said that, "The whole wisdom of living properly as a Jew is to know when to reach in each pocket."]
10. **The path for times of elevation is the Supernal Awe of G-d's majesty, Love of Hashem and the like. The paths for the times of descent [where we need to focus on damage control.] are fear of punishment and this is the way Hashem created things. [i.e. this is the way that G-d made human beings.]**
11. Therefore, all of these ways are precious to Him as long as they are done in the proper way.
12. **Clearly, during a time of descent is not the correct time to begin to acquire the fear of punishment, for during that time, it is difficult to acquire anything at all. Rather our meaning is that the main use of the fear of punishment happens during a time of descent.**
13. [This can best be explained using an analogy of the Baal Shem Tov about a king and two sons. The king prepared a meal for them. One so ate a full meal while the other son ate some of the food and put the rest away in a bag. After the meal, the king followed the second son and saw that he put the left-overs into a storage area which had an abundance of food. he king questioned this strange behaviour. The son responded: "Right now things are good, but who knows what the future can bring. Empires come and go. So if things get bad later on, I will still have some food stored up." The Baal Shem Tov explained that this parable is true for spiritual things as well. There are times of spiritual ascent where one grows a lot. One must save some of it to be used during the times of spiritual descent.]
14. (In the deepest way, there is an inner correction which comes from Love of Hashem and an external correction, a bodily correction, which comes from fear. This is why a person must have true fear of punishment even for external matters and not only fear from punishment that comes from Hashem. This is why a person must understand that acquiring fear of punishment is essential and not just after-the-fact. Of course, all of this is so as long as its done with an understanding that this is the Will of Hashem and not worry about himself. Then a person will merit joy along with his fear, for he is happy that he is doing the Will of his Creator. And this is the true inner form

of fear. “And they rejoiced in their trembling” our Sages say. “In the place where there is joy there will be trembling”. This is when a person toiled and acquired fear for the sake of Heaven and, along with that fear, he is happy to do the Will of his Creator. **So here we have fear together with happiness that results from closeness to Hashem through this fear.** Understand that this is a very deep concept.)

קמ"ז

Koof Mem Zayin - 147 – Even Fear of G-d and Being Disciplined by G-d Should Bring You Close To Him:

1. It is written: “As a father disciplines his son, so does Hashem, your G-d, discipline you.” **This says that all the suffering and punishments are in the aspect of “Your son”, with love.** And the person, who merits entering the deepest internal understanding of fear, truly merits finding through this fear, Hashem’s love towards him. Through this, he will come to cling to Hashem through fear.
2. **“Fear of G-d” is a positive, biblical mitzvah and “mitzvah” comes from the language “tzavah” (connection) which shows us that even through fear a person can connect and cling to his Creator. This is something that is hidden from many people who think that “yirah” is merely pachad (being afraid) and since no one wants to live in fear, they have an aversion towards dealing with it.**
3. Of course, all of this comes from a lack of recognition of the internal essence of “yirah”, whose true form is “and be joyous in trembling”, and “in the place where there is joy, there you will find trembling”. Through this internal fear, one merits to love Hashem and to cling to Him, and there is no room at all for sadness.
4. Fear that does not bring a person to love Hashem and to cling to Him, signals that the person is still engaged in the external aspect of fear and has not merited entering the deepest internal aspects of the world of “yirah”.
5. For this reason, a person must first acquire this fear, from the recognition that he is looking for ways to love Hashem, through this fear, and to cling to Him, and to be happy through Him.
6. This is the depths of what our Sages meant when they said: **“happy in their suffering”.** This means that **the essence of suffering brings them to love, happiness and clinging to the Holy One, blessed be He.** [This explains why righteous people are concerned when a long time passes without experiencing some kind of suffering, as they are concerned that G-d is not purifying them.]
7. Once Rav Shach, zt”l, expressed himself saying that a person can cling to Hashem even when he is in Gehinom, and this is exactly what we have been saying. [Since Gehinom is a place where you are near to G-d. Although it may be a painful experience, but that experience is bringing you closer to –d.]
8. **There is no path which should separate a person from Hashem, but rather, from everything that happens in life, a person must find a way to come close and cling to Him.** It is clear that a person can achieve closeness and attachment to G-d even from the fear of punishment. When a person merits understanding these matters, then in the same manner that he attempts to acquire the love of Hashem with joy, he will also attempt to acquire the fear of punishment with joy. This is because the internal aspects of both are the same: for a person to come close and cling to his Creator.
9. **“Closeness to ‘Elokim’ is good for me” . Even the Name we use, ‘Elokim’, is the name that reflects the aspect of judgment, “is good for me” because whether through one way or another, whatever manner, a person can acquire closeness and clinging to Hashem.**

קמ"ח

Koof Mem Ches – 148 – It Is Best to Work on Acquiring Fear of Punishment & Fear of Losing One’s Wholesomeness:

1. Until now, we have been dealing with fear of punishment, whether from the sufferings in Gehinom or the sufferings in this world.
2. However, in truth, there are 5 levels of fear:

- a. Fear of punishments and suffering (which is what we have been discussing)
 - b. Fear associated with honour, since a person is afraid to be embarrassed. [as we are very worried what other people think of us.] As our Sages have said *“everyone will be scorched from the canopy of his friend.”*
 - c. Fear associated with wholesomeness. This level is achieved when one recognizes that wholesomeness is clinging to Hashem and is afraid that, through sin, he will not achieve this aspect of clinging to Hashem. (These first three aspects are written in “Mesillas Yesharim” in the chapter of “vigilance”.)
 - d. “Majestic Fear” - this aspect is achieved when a person, at the time that he is doing a mitzvah, is afraid that he will not do it properly and will impair the King’s honour.
 - e. “Fear of sin” - this is achieved when a person fears, every moment, every hour, that through his actions [any kind of activity] he will impair the honour of the King of the Universe (these two aspects are written in “Mesillas Yesharim” in the chapter of “Fear of Sin”).
3. Until now, we have discussed fear of punishment. In regards to fear associated with honour, we will not deal with this since most people do not naturally feel the honour given in the upper World, for this is something that only the soul can grasp. Therefore, we would once again have to resort to using our imagination, just like with fear of punishment, and since this is so difficult for most people, we will not elaborate. However, for those who chase after honour, this becomes easier. Without this a person would sink many times.
 4. It seems that, for the majority in our generation, it is preferable to discuss fear of punishment, fear associated with wholesomeness and not the fear associated with honour, for “the time is short and the work is plentiful” and, in regards to most people in our generation, the investment in this area is great.

קמ"ט

Koot Mem Tes - 149 – Doing a Sin Diminishes One’s Wholesomeness, which is an Attachment to G-d:

1. Therefore, we will now discuss fear associated with wholesomeness. This is the fear that, through sin, a person will lack some aspect of his wholesomeness, which is clinging to Hashem. [Which is the goal of life, and should be the most important thing to a person which can be diminished by one’s sins.]
2. First of all let us review and write again: “True wholesomeness is clinging to the Holy One, blessed be He”, as is written in the language of the Ramchal. **Every sin prevents a person from coming close to Hashem and clinging to Him.**
3. If this is so, the first aspect of a person’s service is to understand what “shlaimus”, wholesomeness, means and this is clinging to Hashem. A person must then know that doing a sin contradicts and diminishes this attachment to G-d.
4. Next, a person must desire greatly to cling to Hashem. When he does this, then he becomes afraid that perhaps his desire will not be fulfilled. **If a person does not have this strong desire to be close to Hashem, there can never be a strong fear of a lack of closeness.**

ק"נ

Koot Nun - 150 – Fear of Sin Depends on How Much You Value Wholesomeness:

1. Let us give an example: A person leaves his house and has in mind to go to his friend’s wedding, which is called for 6:00 p.m. While he is walking towards the bus, he sees the bus pass by. **To the degree of the strength of his desire to be at the wedding of his friend, so too will the pain of missing that wedding be.** So in reverse: to the degree that this desire to be at the wedding is weak, to that degree he will have less sorrow if he is prevented from going.
2. **Our issue is exactly the same. To the degree that a person’s desire to come close and cling to the Creator of the Universe, is weak and it is only an intellectual knowledge, to this extent his fear from sinning will also be weak.**

3. There is a fundamental difference between intellectual knowledge and feeling something in the heart. Every person that learned Ramchal knows that the goal of life is coming close to Hashem and he knows that sin prevents him from reaching this goal. However, this is merely an intellectual knowledge and from this kind of knowledge there is almost no fear.
4. It is the service of every person to see to it that his heart wants to achieve this closeness to G-d. To the extent that this desire penetrates into his heart, so too will he fear sin which prevents him from achieving this goal of closeness and clinging to Hashem.
5. Here is another example: Many people know that it is very important to know the entire Sha"s (unwritten portion of the Torah). Even with this knowledge people are capable of wasting so much time. This is because they only have acquired the intellectual knowledge and it is not the desire of their heart. Their heart is full of many desires.
6. A person must reach the level where his entire heart longs to come close to Hashem and through this, the great majority of his day (with the exception of the time that he is learning Torah) will be occupied with this thought and desire.
7. Therefore, he will attempt to remove every obstacle in his way. This will cause him to truly fear sin appropriately.
8. *We see that there are three levels:*
 - a. *A person knows that the goal of life is closeness to Hashem*
 - b. *This knowledge fills his heart and is the desire of his life*
 - c. *He knows that sin prevents him from attaining this goal and through this knowledge, he fears sin greatly.*

קנ"א

Koof Nun Aleph - 151 – The Challenge of Feeling that Sin Prevents Closeness to G-d:

1. (In the matter above,) One is not necessarily dependant on the other. It is possible that the person's desire to be close to Hashem is great and even so, he doesn't feel that the sin he's committing contradicts this. This is because, even though the sin prevents closeness to Hashem, it is not evident physically, or felt by everyone, but is merely a piece of knowledge.
2. [Similarly, one spouse can love the other spouse and not realize how their behaviour is causing a distance between the two of them. Indeed, sometimes a spouse will inform the other spouse of the consequences of their behaviour. However, that does not generally happen when one sins against G-d.]
3. **Therefore this too requires toil.** In addition to the fact that the focus of his longing should be directed towards being close to G-d, **a person must feel that sin prevents and contradicts this longing of his life and the goal of his life.**
4. **This itself is a person's challenge** since, if he really felt at the moment of sin that, through this sin he is losing the closeness to Hashem that he has, it would be so easy for him to guard himself from sin. **It is the Will of the Holy One, blessed be He, that a person toil to achieve this, and that it is not something that his soul grasps naturally.**

קנ"ב

Koof Nun Beis - 152 –The Beginning of Man's Service is to Strengthen His Desire to Be close To G-d:

1. Now we will go to the service of acquiring these things. The first point is already familiar to us - that the purpose of a person's life is coming close and clinging to Hashem. Now we will attempt to explain how a person should toil in order to merit that this knowledge will live in his heart in a consistent, concrete manner and, slowly, will fill a great portion of his heart. **This service is the root point of acquiring true desire. When there is a true, strong desire, it is said "there is nothing that stands in the way of desire".** When the desire is weak, the foundation of the entire building is missing.

2. Therefore, one must toil in order that he will truly desire to be close to Hashem, and he cannot just say this by rote, in an external manner. (Truthfully, a person must truly acquire this desire with any subject that one is working on. However, we are now involved with the root of desires, which is the general desire to become close to and to cling to Hashem).
3. We don't mean that this person does not desire at all to be close to Hashem, but the urgency of this desire is not sufficiently strong within him. **The entire structure is dependent on this point. If he does not truthfully desire this, but only desires to desire , the foundation of the building, which is called "desire" is missing, and through this the building is weak.**
4. **The failure of most people is stuck in this lack of strong desire to continue and to go forward.** (Truthfully it is this way with every person, at whatever point that person is stuck and is unable to progress, that he is stuck there because his will was not strong enough to progress past this point).
5. **Therefore this is the beginning of every person's service - to awaken his will more and more.**

קנ"ה

Koof Nun Hey - 155 – Strengthening the Desire Through True "Hisbodidus":

1. How can one strengthen his will? We learn in the Holy Zohar "A body that does not shine, must be smashed" [like a coal that is not flaming, needs to be stoked.]. **This means that the reason for the hidden aspect of will comes from the materialism and the dominion of the body over the soul. As such, we must smash [i.e. discipline the body] and purify the body.** However, this aspect of fasting and mortification is not relevant to most of the people in our generation, as it is written in the Holy books, and thus we will limit our discussion in this area.
2. Another way is "hisbodidus" - seclusion, a custom among many Tzaddikim, where during this time of seclusion the Tzaddikim would scream and rebuke themselves, about their lack of true desire to come close to Hashem, rebuke upon rebuke, until they would open their hearts slightly. This is not a simple way, since first you must understand how to scream out, screaming from within your heart, not from your mind. [Rebbe Nachman of Breslov says that one should scream so "loud" so that no else can hear it. It is a scream that comes from such a hidden place – the heart. However, when it comes from the intellect, people can hear it.] Additionally, this requires inner resolution and inner strength in order to truly scream at himself. [i.e. A healthy, strong person knows how to criticize himself properly.] If someone is not strong in these ways, and yells at himself, either his screaming isn't done in truth [as he does not address the real 'monsters' in his life – like bad characteristics, etc.], or, G-d forbid, he will experience a spiritual fall from this and he will begin a descent into depression and bitterness. Certainly in this way it is impossible to grow through depression and an animalistic descent.

קנ"ו

Koof Nun Vav - 156 – Pray to Have This Desire of Being Close to G-d:

1. The closest way to our souls is for a person to set aside a place that is empty and quiet with no other people. There, he should speak to Hashem in his own words. For example: *"Master of the Universe, You know that I want to be close to You and to cling to You. However, my desire is weak. Master of the Universe, I know that it is the entire purpose and goal of my life to be close to You and to cling to You and everything hinges on the fact that I truly desire this. Please, Master of the Universe, help me and implant in my heart the true desire to come close to You, that I will desire this truly."*
2. **In this way each person should spend time in his own words, to his own ability, every day. There is, in this, a great level from two aspects:**
 - i. Through the reality of the speech, the body awakens the desire.
 - ii. Since he is praying for this, and Hashem is listening to his prayers, He will help him to truly desire to be close to Him.

3. If a person will stubbornly and consistently do this over a period of time, consistently asking to desire to come close to Hashem, He will definitely help him and the desire will be a true desire.

קנ"ז

Koof Nun Zayin - 157 – Observing How a Tzaddik Speaks:

1. If a person cannot even do this, then he must consistently listen to a tzaddik who speaks from his soul, and continuously do this until he himself is awakened. [One must review the vision of the Tzaddik talking and go it over and over in his mind.] However, he must come to a pathway where he has experienced an independent awakening, for an awakening that only is external, will never exist.
2. We have 3 possibilities:
 - a. An awakening through mortification, fasting, or screaming at himself about his lack of true desire to be close to Hashem.
 - b. Praying to Hashem every day for help in achieving this true desire.
 - c. Listening to a tzaddik speaking about this matter, until he can awaken his own desire.
3. Each person should choose the path that suits him and awaken his soul to truly desire to be close to Hashem. As long as his desire is not a true desire there cannot be an establishment of the true building in service to G-d. And the foundation of the whole building is dependant on the fact that, if there is a true desire to be close to Hashem, we have a foundation. If there is not a true desire, G-d forbid, the foundation is faulty and the entire building is in danger. In this point, we must be very cautious.

קנ"ח

Koof Num Ches - 158 – True Desire Precedes the Fulfillment of This Desire:

1. Let us give an example: A true eved Hashem (servant of G-d) tries to not even waste a minute, as his whole being is occupied with Torah, Service and acts of kindness. A person who is standing on the side, cannot believe that this is even possible. How can someone live under such pressure? However, the answer is that, as long as one's desire is not true desire, this kind of life is truly pressure since it is against that person's desire. However, when this is truly his desire, then this is fulfilling his desire and there is no room for pressure whatsoever.
2. The rule is: First of all, a person must work on truly desiring to come close to Hashem, and that this desire is strong and real.
3. When a person merits entering this internal aspect of desire, then he also merits rejoicing in the fulfilment of his desire.
4. However, these are two separate levels:
 - a. Firstly, one must truly want a true and strong desire, but he still has not had this wish fulfilled, since he still has not merited rejoicing through Hashem.
 - b. Afterwards, he merits the fulfilments of this desire, which is the rejoicing, referred to in the Pasuk: "To rejoice through Hashem".
5. However, first a person must pass the earlier level of a wish that has still not been fulfilled. And when this becomes a true desire, almost every minute, he will ultimately enter the internal aspect of desire which is rejoicing - to rejoice through Hashem.

קנ"ט

Koof Num Tes - 159 – True Fear of Sin Is Established Only After You Truly Feel Closeness to G-d:

1. After a person merits having a strong desire to be close to Hashem, only then is it possible for the true fear of sin to be born within him, since it coming from a fear of distancing himself from his Creator.
2. This form of service is as we have already stated above:
 - a. An abundance of praying that he will merit to feel this fear and abstain from sin

- b. Physical service, standing next to an item of his friend and speaking out (at first to himself and then to Hashem): "It is in my power to steal this item. Why do I not steal it? Because through that act I would, G-d forbid, distance myself from my Creator and my desire is to be close to Him".
3. Thus he should continue with all sorts of thoughts and accustom himself to inspect all his actions and ponder in his mind, and afterwards speak out with his mouth: "Does this action bring me closer to Hashem or, G-d forbid, the opposite?" **This should be the entire scope of his day, reflecting on and checking everything he comes in contact with determining if this will bring me closer to Hashem or ,G-d forbid, the opposite.** After he continuously examines himself in this manner, slowly these things will become firmly established in his heart and the whole manner of his life will be that of searching for ways to come close to Hashem, and from that naturally will come a revulsion and fear of anything that will distance himself from his Creator. If a person continuously thinks in this way, he can merit through this that most of his heart will be occupied with searching for ways to come closer to Hashem.

ק"ס

Koof Samach - 160 – Behaviours That Help One to Acquire Fear:

1. Another foundation for acquiring this fear is that **a person should be pure, quiet, and not speak with a loud voice**, for these are areas which contradict shame and fear. [i.e. that natural sense of humility, fear, etc.]
2. As well, a person should accustom himself to be refined, and his actions should be calm, not rushed nor loud for these, too contradict acquiring fear. This is a vast subject, however.

קס"א

Koof Samach Aleph - 161 – Other Levels of Fear Can Only Be Acquired After One Has Love of G-d:

1. After one acquires wholesome fear, there is the supreme fear and the fear of sin. **For this, one should feel that he is standing before his Creator. Before he can do this, he must work on his love.** This is the order given in Mesillas Yesharim - first the level of Chassidus and then the level of fear. Because of this, we will now engage in the Love of Hashem.