

Shaar HaYichud The Gate of Unity

By
The Holy Rabbi Dov Ber of Lubavitch

Translated and Annotated by Shimon Markel
Edited by Rabbi A. Markel
Copyright © 2004

Chapter One

הנה כבר מבואר באריכות בקונטרס מיוחד בפרטי אופני ההתפעלות במוח ולב, ומחשבה שנוגד מן ההתבוננות לפי סדר ה' מדריגות נרנח"י כו'.

We have already explained at length in a special pamphlet,¹ concerning the particular manners in which one may be aroused in his mind and heart, and the thought which is born of contemplation (*hitbonenut*), according to the five levels of the soul *NaRaN"ChaY*².

ומעתה יש לבאר היטב במהות גוף ענין ההתבוננות, מה היא בעצם ובמה יתבונן.

We must now clearly explain the matter of contemplation itself, [to understand] what it essentially is, and what one should contemplate.³

והנה מהות ההתבוננות בעצם הוא ענין ההסתכלות החזקה בעמקות הענין ולעמוד עליו הרבה עד שיבין אותו על בוריו בכל חלקיו בפרטי פרטיות

In essence, contemplation (*hitbonenut*) is the matter of gazing strongly into the depths of a concept, keeping [one's mind] upon it for long periods, until he understands it thoroughly in all of its particular parts and details.

והוא בחי' פנימיות בינה הנק' בלשון הגמרא בשם עיון, כמו שאמר במס' סוכה הא למגרס והא לעיוני

This is the inner aspect of the faculty of *Binah* (Understanding). In the terminology of the Talmud it is called by the term “*Iyun*” – עיון, (in depth study). This is as stated in tractate Sukka⁴, “There is *Girsa* – גירסא (surface study), and there is *Iyun* – עיון (in depth study)”.

¹ Referring to *Kuntrus Ha'hitpa'alut* – a tract on ecstasy, also authored by Rabbi Dov Ber of Lubavitch.

² This is an acronym for *Nefesh, Ruach, Neshamah, Chayah* and *Yechidah*. These are (in ascending order) the five general levels of the human soul. In *Kuntrus Ha'hitpa'alut*, the Rebbe explains at length how through contemplation a person is capable of arousing and revealing the higher levels of his soul. There, he explains the various resulting levels of arousal according to each level of both the animal and the Divine souls.

³ This book comes as a direct continuation of *Kuntrus Ha'hitpa'alut*. That is, in *Kuntrus Ha'hitpa'alut* the Rebbe explained that it is specifically through contemplation that one can arouse any emotions towards the Creator. Here though, the Rebbe informs the reader in regard to the methodology of contemplation itself, and the subject matter upon which one must contemplate in order to achieve the result of inspiration towards G-d. The first nine chapters of this book explain the methodology of contemplation itself, while chapters ten through fifty four explain the subject matter upon which one is to contemplate.

⁴ See tractate Sukka 28b.

פ"ה הגירסא הוא רק הבנת הדבר בהשקפה ראשונה, שהולכת ונובעת במהירות בלתי עכוב והעמדה כלל כידוע

The explanation of surface study is that one understands the subject matter only at first glance. That is, [he] flows quickly through the subject matter [which he studies], without restraining [himself] and pausing at all, as is known⁵.

עד"מ המביט בעינו על דבר מה ואינו מתבונן כלל על הדבר באיכותו ומהותו בכל חלקיו הפנימים וחיצונים, רק דרך מעביר בעלמא

For example, one may gaze upon a certain object without contemplating it at all, [to understand the nature of] how or what it is. [He does not investigate] all of its inner and outer parts, except in a passing fashion.

שבמשך זמן ודאי ישכח עליו לגמרי וגם לא יוכל לספר לזולתו רק כלליות ענין אותו הדבר שראה בהעברת העין ולא בטביעת עין כלל

Certainly, with the passage of time, he will forget about it altogether. Furthermore, he will only be able to relate the general matter⁶ of what he saw to his fellowman. [This is because his eyes only fell upon it] in a passing fashion, without keeping his eyes upon it at all.

וכן העברת עין השכל באיזה סברא בהשקפה ראשונה בלתי עכוב והעמדה לעיין בו היטב, ולא ידע בסברא זו לתכליתה כלל

This is likewise the case when the mind's eye gazes upon a specific logical construct in just a passing fashion. [Because he understands the concept] only at first glance without pausing and restraining [himself] to analyze and investigate it properly, he will not come to know the concept to its ultimate depth at all.

כי הנה ג' דברים הוא שיש בכל דבר מושכל. עומק ואורך ורוחב. הרוחב הוא בחי' הסבר המושכל לכל צד בפרטים הרבה כרוחב הנהר, ולא דברים כהווייתן לבד כנהר קצר.

Now, there are three matters in every intellectual concept. [These are:] depth, length and width. The width is the explanation of the concept from all angles, with many particulars. This is analogous to the width of a wide river. In contrast, the understanding of a concept simply, as it is⁷, is similar to a narrow river.

ואורך הוא עוצם ירידות ההשכלה להלביש את המושכל במשלים שונים עד להביאו בהשגות התינוק קטן כו', כנהר שהולך ומתמשך לאורך (וכמ"ש באריכות בכתבים בענין אורך היריעה כו')

⁵ This is a valid method of general study, generally used in Talmud study in order to gain a breadth of the knowledge of the Talmud, as opposed to a depth.

⁶ He will only be capable of explaining what he saw in the most general of terms, but he will be completely incapable of explaining its details.

⁷ In other words, "How it is" at first glance, it is only understood from a single angle, and even then not to its very depth. It is therefore "narrow". This is like one who is "narrow-minded" and can only see things in one way, and not from any other angle.

The length [of a concept] is the tremendous descent of the concept, to invest it into various different analogies so that it may even be brought within the reach of a small child. This is analogous to a flowing river which draws out to its length.⁸ (This concept is explained at length in [Chassidic] manuscripts⁹ in regard to the matter of the length of the hides.¹⁰)

והעומק הוא כעומק הנהר שמשם מתרחב ובעצמו אינו רחב כלל, אבל הוא עיקר עצם הנהר (הנרקא שטרונים)
שהוא עיקר מרוצת הילוכו ממקורו

The depth [of a concept] is analogous to the depth of a river. From [its depth the river] widens, but in and of itself it is not wide at all. However, it is the main essence of the river (which is called the “undercurrent”), for it is the main strength of its flow from its source.

ומים שעל גביו בגובה ולצדדי העומק טפלים אליו, שאינן רק בחי' התגברות התפשטותו בלבד, לצדדים ברוחב
ובגובה ובאורך ההילוך כו'

The waters which are above [the depth], to its height or to its sides and [even] to its length, are secondary to it, for they only represent the spreading forth of its strength.¹¹

כך עומק המושכל הוא בחי' עצם נקודתו כמו שהוא, ונק' עומק המושג

Likewise, the depth of the intellectual concept is the aspect of its essential point, as it is [in and of itself].¹² This is what is called “The depth of that which is comprehended” (*omek ha'moosag*).

שכל מה שנתפשט בהסבר ההשגה לכל צד, ברוחב גדול בכמה פרטים, וכן לאורך בעוצם הירידה, וגם בחי'
הגובה למעלה, להשכיל ממנו עוד למעלה ממנו הרבה, הכל נמשך מעצם עומק נקודתו כמו שהוא נובע מן
החכמה הנקרא אין, וכמ"ש ונהר יוצא מעדן כו'

Everything that spreads forth in the explanation of this concept, [either] the great width with many angles and details, and also the great descent of the length, and even the height above,

⁸ A river begins high up in the mountain peaks and is drawn out with great length until it reaches sea level. Likewise, the concept begins as a lofty or deep concept, in that it is removed from the understanding. Through the use of analogies, one brings the concept down from its loftiness and brings it close to his mind, so that it may easily be grasped.

⁹ See *Biurei Zohar* (of the Mittler Rebbe), Pekudei & Noach.

¹⁰ This refers to the length of the hides used to cover the tabernacle. In general, it is explained there that the length of a concept refers to the fact that it undergoes many changes along its descent, yet remains essentially the same. An example of this is how the automobile has undergone many drastic changes from the first automobile until the automobile of today. Nonetheless, they are still essentially the same thing. Likewise, when a teacher takes the way he understands a concept and lowers it down to the comprehension of a child, although it has undergone various changes and descents, it is still essentially the very same concept which is conveyed.

¹¹ The strength of the depth of the river is its undercurrent, the source of which is the strength of the flow of waters from the spring. According to the strength of this flow (i.e. its depth), will be the measure of its length, width, (and height). A river with a weak depth will be very shallow, narrow, and have a short length. In contrast, a river with a strong depth will be very deep, wide and have a great length.

¹² How it is in and of itself, before it is limited and defined through the spreading forth of a length and width etc.

to understand higher [concepts] through this [concept]¹³, are all drawn from the essential depth of the point [of the concept]¹⁴, which is how it spreads forth from *Chochmah* – Wisdom, which is called “*ein*¹⁵ - nothing”. This is as stated, “A river goes out from *Eden*”.

שהבינה נק' נהר והחכמה נק' מעיין, כידוע

Binah (understanding) is called a river, while *Chochmah* (insight) is called a spring, as is known¹⁶.

והוא הנק' עיון, שעומד על דבר המושכל ומעיין בו הרבה מאד, שהוא העיכוב היפך המהירות

¹³ Footnote of the Rebbe: (Through the aspect of “height” one’s understanding may reach) all the way until the depth of the heights, like the overpowering of the waters in the time of the flood (during the times of Noah). Likewise, there will be a spiritual flood (which refers to the spreading forth of the teachings of Chassidus) in the days of Moshiach, in the 600th year of the life of Noah (5600th year of the Jewish calendar which refers to 1840 of the common era). This is as stated in the Zohar that “the wellsprings of wisdom will open”. These are the springs of the depths of wisdom, “which will overpower and rise up and will cover all the mountains”. Then, “the reservoirs of the heavens shall open up”, and there shall be drawn down “the waters which are above the heavens”. This is called the depth of the height, which is dependant upon the depth below, because “the beginning is bound up with the end”, as in the verse, “Cast your questions to the depths or raise it on high” etc.

¹⁴ One who grasps the depth of the concept itself is certainly capable of explaining it from many angles (and even bringing forth new angles). He is likewise capable of bringing the concept down in length to the understanding of one who is of lesser intellectual capacities than himself. An example for this can be taken from the study of mathematics. Once a person has grasped the very depth and core of the concept of addition, he is now capable of adding any two numbers together, infinitely. This is true even though in school he was not given these particular two numbers to add together. Likewise, he is capable of explaining addition to someone else, and bringing the concept into allegories such as “one apple plus one apple equals two apples” etc. In contrast, one who has not grasped the depth will not possess this length and width. Rather, he will only be capable of regurgitating what he received in explanation, without a full understanding of its depth at all. We therefore observe that the width and length of the concept are dependant upon its depth. Another concept of “height” has also now been introduced. This means that once one has understood the depths of a concept, this concept may now be used as a building block to reach deeper depths, or “heights”. In the example given above, through first understanding the depth of arithmetic, one may then move on to “higher” mathematical concepts, such as algebra, geometry, trigonometry, calculus etc. Eventually he can reach great depths in mathematics, which would not have been possible had he not first grasped the depth of addition. One who cannot add can certainly not explain numbers theory. This is the explanation of the “height” of a concept.

¹⁵ See Tikkunei Zohar, and Maamarei Admor HaEmtza’I, Bereshit p.2

¹⁶ The river refers to the logical comprehension and grasp of a concept of *Binah*, whereas *Chochmah* is compared to a spring, from where there bubble forth flashes of insight and intuitive wisdom in the subject matter of one’s study. This verse states, “A river came forth from *Eden*”. The word *Eden* means “pleasure”. It will be explained in chapter 26 that pleasure is associated with *Chochmah*. The main reason for this is that the seminal flash of intuition which spreads forth into the river of comprehension of *Binah* is where the pleasure of understanding is located. Likewise, *Chochmah* is compared to water, while *Binah* is compared to fire. This is because it is the nature of water to descend, while it is the nature of fire to ascend. Likewise, it is the desire of *Chochmah* to descend into graspable comprehension, while it is the desire of *Binah* to ascend, with an upward yearning, to understand that which is not yet understood. This is applicable in this explanation here, for the foundation of water is the source of all pleasure, i.e. *Eden*. (See Tanya Ch. 1)

This, then, is [the mode of study] called *Iyun* (in depth study); that he keeps his mind on the concept¹⁷ and analyzes it greatly. This is [a] slow [in depth study] which is the opposite of [the] quick [surface level of study].

דהיינו כדי לבא לעומקו של המושכל כמו שהוא בעצם פנימיותו ותוך תוכו דוקא

The purpose of this is specifically to reach the depth of the concept, as it is in its innermost essential point.

כמו המסתכל על דבר מה בעינו ולא בהעברה בעלמא, אלא בפקוח וטביעת עינו בעיכוב גדול, עד שיודע אותו היטב בכל חלקיו הפנימים ותוך תוכו כו'

This is analogous to one who gazes his eyes upon a certain object, but not in a passing manner. Rather, [he keeps his eyes upon it] with great attention and scrutiny, taking his time until he knows it well, in all of its internal and innermost components.

והוא הנקרא התבוננות בנו"ן הכפול דוקא, דהיינו שמתבונן ומעיין בו הרבה וכמו שפרש"י: בעיוני, לעמוד על הדבר להבינו על בוריו כו'.

This [type of study] is called *Hitbonenut* – contemplation. [The word *Hitbonenut* (התבוננות) is] specifically spelled with two *Nuns* (נ – נ)¹⁸, to signify that one [is to] contemplate it and analyze it greatly. This is in accordance with the explanation of Rashi¹⁹ [on the word] *Iyun*²⁰, “To stand upon the subject, to understand it clearly”.

ונמצא בחי' העיון הזה הוא רק בחי' כלי לבחי' ההעמקה דבינה עצמה, כי לכאורה בחי' העיון הזה נק' העמקת הדעת בל' בעולם, ואינו כן, דהעמקת הדעת היינו בחי' כלי לבד לבוא לעומק של הענין ממש

We find that this aspect of *Iyun*²¹ is only an aspect of a receptacle for the delving of *Binah*²² itself. For, at first glance, this aspect of *Iyun* is called “the delving of the concentration”²³ in common usage. [In truth], this is not the case, for the delving of the concentration is only a vessel, [which allows one] to come to the actual depth of the concept.²⁴

¹⁷ In other words, one must study the known explanations and body of knowledge in such a manner in order to reach the depths of it. Once he has done this study and has reached the very essential depths, he may be capable of bringing out new explanations and insights, which were never previously explained.

¹⁸ It would have been just as proper for the word *Hitbonenut* (התבוננות) to be spelled with only one *Nun*, i.e. *Hitbonut* (התבונות). The extra *Nun* signifies and emphasizes that one is to contemplate the material greatly, going over it many times in a way of contemplation, in order to understand its depth.

¹⁹ Rabbi Shlomo Yitzchaki, one of the foremost and most authoritative commentators on the Tanach and the Talmud.

²⁰ See Rashi on tractate Sukka, 28b.

²¹ This refers to the keeping of one's mind upon a subject matter.

²² This refers to the actual logical investigation into the particulars of the subject matter, which is “the inner aspect of *Binah*”, as mentioned previously.

²³ In the original Hebrew it is *Ha'amakat Ha'da'at*, which literally means “the delving of the knowledge”. Later on in this chapter, the Rebbe will explain that the faculty of *Da'at* is the faculty of concentration.

²⁴ In other words, at first glance it would appear that what we have been describing is a faculty of *Da'at*, which is the faculty of concentration. It could be erroneously understood that through concentration alone one can arrive at the depth of the subject matter. Here, the Rebbe corrects an error which is prevalent amongst most methods of meditation. Many methods of meditation instruct one to activate his

ולמעלה מזה הוא נק' מעמיק, שמגיע למעלה גם מן החכמה עצמה, שהגם שהחכמה היא בחי' האין ממש של המושכל, קודם שבא לכלל עומק נקודת המושג שבבינה, כמעין לגבי נהר כנ"ל

[A] higher [level than the level of the “delving of the concentration” (*Ha'amakat Ha'da'at*)], is what is called “delving” (*Ma'amik*). [This method of delving allows one] to reach higher than even *Chochmah* itself.²⁵ Now, seemingly, *Chochmah* is literally an aspect of the intangible “nothingness” of the concept, [as it exists even] before it comes into the category of being the essential depth or point of the concept in the comprehension of *Binah*²⁶. As mentioned previously, it is like the waters of a spring in comparison to the waters of a river.

אבל בחי' העמקה בשרש של המושכל, שרשה מגיע בשרש הממשיך לנביעת מעיין דחכמה כו', ונק' עמקי החכמה או תעלומות חכמה, כי כמו שיש עומק ואורך ורוחב בבינה שנק' יש כנ"ל, כך יש עומק ואורך ורוחב במעיין דחכמה שנק' אין

Nonetheless, the aspect of delving in [this] source of the concept²⁷, its source reaches into the very source of the flow of the waters of the spring of *Chochmah*,²⁸ which is called “the depths of *Chochmah*” or “the hidden-ness of *Chochmah*”²⁹. For, just as there are depth, length and width in *Binah* which is called “*yesh*”³⁰ – something”, there is likewise a depth, length and width in the spring of *Chochmah*, which is called “*ein* – nothing”.

concentration on a single focal point or thought, while blocking out all other thoughts and shutting off the analytical and logical brain of *Binah*. They believe that through this one may attain a glimpse into the truth of reality. In contrast, what is explained here is that concentration alone is only a vessel for the analytical mind of *Binah*. That is to say, one who is incapable of concentrating on the subject matter will certainly be incapable of scrutinizing all its details. Nonetheless, concentration alone would be an empty vessel, and therefore not lead one to any truths. Therefore, although concentration is a necessary prerequisite, nonetheless, the main focus is on the analytical and logical investigation and study of the subject matter. This is more simply understood by the fact that if one meditates on the word “medicine”, even for ten years, he will still not become a doctor. Furthermore, if this person thinks that he possesses any knowledge of medicine solely through this, we can be sure that he is delusional. Although he has concentrated very strongly, he was lacking the subject matter upon which he should have been concentrating. His “vessel” of “knowledge” (*Da'at*) is therefore still empty.

²⁵ One is only capable of this level called *Ma'amik* – Delving, once he has already learned the entire known body of knowledge (of this subject matter), and grasped its depth. In this level a person delves into the depth itself, to understand deeper and deeper depths, and bring out new insights. In contrast, in the first level of *Ha'amakat Ha'da'at* – the delving of the concentration, the person has not yet received any explanations at all. Through concentrating he becomes a fitting receptacle to receiving the explanations.

²⁶ That is, it is like the waters of the spring of insight (*Chochmah*), before they have burst through the ground to become the depth of the river of the comprehensive grasp of *Binah*.

²⁷ The source of the concept referred to here is *Chochmah*. This is like the concealed waters of the spring which are the source of the waters of the river.

²⁸ That is, the spring also has a source, which is the aquifer. Furthermore, there are different depths within the spring itself, some levels being closer to “ground level”, while others are closer to the ultimate depth of “the aquifer”. Likewise, in *Chochmah* itself, one is capable of delving into the depths, and is capable of even reaching the very source of *Chochmah*.

²⁹ In the Hebrew it is *Omkei Chochmah* or *Ta'alumot Chochmah*. See also Job 11:6

³⁰ This can also be understood as “the tangible”. Whereas, “*Ein* – nothing”, can be understood as “the intangible”, as will now be explained.

ועומק המעיין היינו תחילת שרש מחצבו בעומקו, שמשם מתפשט נביעתו למעלה עד שבוקע ויוצא טיפין טיפין בגילוי מהעלמו, ותכלית העלמו הוא תכלית עמקו למטה, כמו מעיינות תהום נבקעו, דארעא הלחולי מחלחלא כו' בגידין שיש להם עומק ראשון, ובזה נאמר והחכמה מאין, מהעלם החכמה הנק' עומק החכמה

The depth of the spring is the beginning and source of its inception, at its very depth. From there its flow spreads upward until drops of water burst forth into revelation from their concealment [within the ground]. Its utmost concealment is in its ultimate depth below (in the aquifer), as [in the verse], “the wellsprings of the abyss burst forth”. For, the earth is riddled with fissures³¹ and veins [of water], which have a primary depth³². About this it is stated³³, “*Chochmah* is [found] from nothing”, i.e. from the concealed *Chochmah* which is called the depth of *Chochmah*.

והחכמה הוא המצאת שכל החדש שיוצא כברק כו' כידוע, שאינו רק העומק של ההשגה דבינה המורגש בבחי' יש בהבנת דבר מה בסברא נגלית, שעומק של הסבר ההשגה הוא בחי' אין של היש דהשגה בלבד, ואין לו ערך לגבי אין דחכמה טרם שבא לכלל השגה כלל, גם לא בבחי' העומק שבה, שהוא תמציתה

Now, *Chochmah* is the discovery of new insight which emerges like a bolt of lightning, as is known. [The source of its inception in its hidden depths is its innermost essence. This is similar to the previous explanation of the matter of the depth of the comprehended concept (*omek ha'moosag*) of *Binah*.] However, that was only in regard to the depth of the comprehension of *Binah* which is felt in a tangible way, with revealed explanations [on a subject]. The depth of this explanation of the concept³⁴ is only the aspect of the “nothing of the something” of comprehension. Therefore, its depth, which is its essential point, is of no comparison to the “nothing” of *Chochmah* before it comes into the category of comprehension altogether³⁵.

ואמנם עומק המושג נק' שער הנו"ן דבינה, גם שנמשך מאין דחכמה ליש, שרשו מגיע בעומק דחכמה הנ"ל, וכנראה בחוש שכל מעמיק רק בעומק המושג, הוא ממציא למקור ושרש המושכל, להמציא בחי' חדשות דאור החכמה בבינה, והוא הנק' מעמיק ל' מפעיל, שמפעיל לעומק דחו"ב

Nevertheless, although the depth of the comprehension, which is called the 50th gate of *Binah*, is drawn from the “nothing” of *Chochmah* to “something”³⁶, its source also reaches

³¹ Talmud Bavli, tractate Chagiga 22a

³² This refers to the aquifer.

³³ Job 28:12

³⁴ This refers to the tangible explanation of the concept in the comprehension of *Binah*. Its depth is called the *omek ha'moosag*, which is the essential point of the concept, as it “flashes” or flows from the spring of *Chochmah*.

³⁵ We now understand the progression of the concept from completely intangible to completely tangible. The concept begins in the “nothing of the nothing”, in the depths and source of *Chochmah* itself. There it is completely nondescript and intangible. From there it spreads forth to become the “something of the nothing”, where although it is still intangible, it takes on a certain form and tangibility. From there it spreads forth to “burst out of the spring”, and becomes the “nothing of the something”, the intangible source of the revealed and tangible concept. Here it already has a certain definite form, as pertaining to a certain field of study or a particular explanation etc. From this depth of the comprehension, i.e. the “nothing of the something”, all the tangible explanations spread forth with a length and width. The length and width of the tangible explanations themselves is the “something of the something”.

³⁶ Footnote of the Rebbe: This is like, “A spring will flow out of the chamber of the Holy of Holies; its beginning will be like the antennae of a grasshopper, and it will then widen into the expanse of a river”.

into the depths of *Chochmah* itself. It is clearly observable that the delving specifically into the depth of the comprehension (*omek hamoosag* of *Binah*) will bring one to the source and root of the concept, thus enabling him to bring new light of *Chochmah* (insight) into *Binah* (tangible comprehension). This, then, is what is called *ma'amik* – delving, which is an active verb, for he is activating the depths of *Chochmah* and *Binah*³⁷.

וּלפ"ז מ"ש הבן בחכ' וחכם בבינה שמבואר בכתבים, דהיינו ע"ב דס"ג חכם בבינה, שהוא רק להבין דבר חידוש אחר מתוך המושג דבינה, שזה אינו אלא ע"י בחי' העיון הנ"ל, שהוא המברר כל חלקיו על בוריו, ונק' בינה שבבינה

(According to what we have explained, we may understand the statement³⁸, “Understand with wisdom and be wise in understanding”. In [Chassidic] manuscripts it is explained that “wise in understanding” refers to *A”b* of *Sa”G*³⁹ (*Chochmah* of *Binah*). This is [the ability] to understand a new insight within the comprehension of *Binah*⁴⁰. This only comes through the aspect of *Iyun* – the analysis mentioned earlier, which clarifies all of the particular parts until they are clear. This *Iyun* (analysis) is what is called *Binah* of *Binah*.

ואח"כ יוכל להוליד ולהתחכם להמציא הבנה והשגה חדשה, אבל רק בהשגה זו עצמה שנק' חכמה שבבינה, אבל כתר דבינה הוא עומק המושג הנ"ל, המגיע שרשו בעומק החכמה כנ"ל.

After [a person has done this] he is capable of bringing new insight into understanding and comprehension, but only within the subject matter itself. This insight is what is called *Chochmah* of *Binah*. Now, *Keter* of *Binah* is the aforementioned depth of the comprehension (the *omek hamoosag*) whose source reaches into the depth of *Chochmah*, as explained above.

והבן בחכמה היינו ס"ג דע"ב, שהוא כח ההסבר בחכמה עצמ', שיוכל להביאו בפנים מסבירות הרבה, והוא למעלה מן ההשגה דבינה עדיין

See tractate Yoma 77b. [This gives insight as to how the flash of *Chochmah* begins as a seminal point, and becomes developed into a full blown “river” in the comprehension of *Binah*.]

³⁷ We may once again clearly note the difference between the “delving of the concentration” mentioned earlier, and this aspect of “delving”. See footnotes 24 & 25.

³⁸ See Sefer Yetzirah 1:4

³⁹ The four letters of the Tetragrammaton (*Havayah*) correspond to the ten *sefirot*. The thorn of the letter *Yud* (י) corresponds to *Keter*. The body of the letter *Yud* (י) corresponds to *Chochmah*. The first letter *Heh* (ה) corresponds to how the seminal point of the *Yud* of *Chochmah* becomes expanded into the length and width of the *Heh* of *Binah*. The *Vav* (ו) which has a numerical value of six corresponds to the six emotional *sefirot*. The last *Heh* (ה) corresponds to *Malchut*. This will all be explained later in greater detail. What is relevant here is that the four letter name can be expanded. In other words, instead of *Y* (י) the letter *Yud* would be spelled out as יוד. The same is done with the other three letters of the name. Now, when it is spelled out with *Yud*'s (i.e. יו"ד ה"י ו"י ה"י) it has a numerical value of 72 and corresponds to *Chochmah*, which is the name *A”b* – ע"ב (meaning 72). When it is spelled out with *Yud*'s and an *Aleph* (ה"י ו"י ה"י) its numerical value is 63 and corresponds to *Binah*. This is the name *Sa”G* – ג"ס, which equals 63. We may now understand the above statement that, “be wise in understanding” refers to *A”b* of *Sa”G*. In other words, it refers to the *sefirah*; *Chochmah* of *Binah*. Likewise, the aspect of *Sa”G* of *A”b* corresponds to *Binah* of *Chochmah*. The Rebbe will now explain this further. (The details of the expansions and names will be discussed later in the book.)

⁴⁰ In other words, he only has insight into the specific subject matter which he studies.

Now, “understand with wisdom” refers to *Sa”G* of *A”b* (*Binah* of *Chochmah*). This is the power of explanation within *Chochmah* itself, that he is capable of bringing it into many different explanations and facets⁴¹. Nonetheless, it is still higher than the comprehension of *Binah*.

ומה שאמרו נבונים לא אשתכחו, שהוא המבין דבר מתוך דבר דוקא

[This type of understanding may be understood from the explanation of] the statement⁴² [regarding Moshe], “He could not find ‘men of understanding’ (*Nevoim*)”⁴³. [This (*Navon*) specifically] refers to “one who understands one thing from another”⁴⁴.

היינו מצד שרש כח זה דהבן בחכמה שמגיע בעומק דחכמה הנ”ל, ע”כ יוכל להבין דבר חכמה אחרת לגמרי מתוך דבר חכמה זאת

The reason [he is capable of this] is because of the source of this power of “understand with wisdom” (*Binah* of *Chochmah*) which reaches into the depths of *Chochmah*, which was mentioned previously⁴⁵. For this reason, from one subject matter and wisdom he is capable of understanding a completely different wisdom⁴⁶.

שזהו למעלה במדריגה מן החכם, דהיינו מגופה של המצאות החכמה זו מאין, שאינו מבין ממנה חכמה ושכל אחר

This [aspect of understanding] is much greater in level than that of a *Chacham*⁴⁷. That is, [a *Chacham* only has] insights from “nothing” into the particular subject matter of [his] investigation, but he does not understand an entirely different wisdom from it.

(ומ”מ מה שבהשגה דבינה מבין השגה חדשה מתוך ההשגה זו, שרשה בהבן דחכמה, שמבין דבר מתוך דבר, רק שזה בהעלם מקור השכל כו’ וד”ל).

⁴¹ Since *Chochmah* is the source of all wisdoms, and not just a particular field of study, the power of *Binah* within *Chochmah* is the ability to explain all wisdoms and their essential relationship with each other. In contrast, the power of *Binah* of *Binah* is the capability to explain only a particular wisdom. This will be understood as the Rebbe continues.

⁴² See tractate Eruvin 100b

⁴³ The word used is *Navon* – A man of understanding. It is explained (Tractate Chagigah 14a) that this refers to one who understands one thing from another. In other words, it refers to one who can understand and have insight into one field of study, from another field of study. This is because he has grasped the essence of both these wisdoms in *Chochmah* where the two fields are essentially unified.

⁴⁴ See tractate Chagigah 14a

⁴⁵ In other words, this power reaches into the essential depth and source of all wisdoms, which is their essential unifying truth.

⁴⁶ Aside from the simple meaning of the above, this also has a deeper meaning. That is, one who truly possesses this power is capable of perceiving G-dliness (one thing), from within the physical (another thing). This indeed is the true purpose of *Hitbonenut*.

⁴⁷ A *Chacham* is on the level of “be wise in understanding”, whereas a *Navon* is on the level of “understand with wisdom”. Therefore, a *Chacham* is only capable of bringing insights into the particular subject matter of his study, whereas a *Navon* is capable of understanding an entirely different wisdom from the subject matter of his study.

(Nonetheless, the source of the comprehension of a new insight within [the field of] his comprehension is also the matter of “understand with wisdom” (*Binah* of *Chochmah*).⁴⁸ In other words, its source is in the ability to understand one thing from another. However, this remains concealed in the source of the intellect. This will suffice those of understanding.)

ונמצא סדר המדרגות כך הם, בחי' עיון הנ"ל לעמוד על בור'י כו' נק' בינה שבבינה, להבחין תכלית ההבחנה בפנימיות וחיצוניות

We find that the order of levels is as follows; [first is] the aspect of *Iyun* – analysis, mentioned earlier. [That is], to keep one's mind on [the concept, and investigate its particulars], until it is completely clear. This is called *Binah* of *Binah*; to clarify and distinguish between all the inner and outer specifics, with the utmost precision.

וגם מזה יוכל להיות בחי' האורך, להוריד ההשגה בלבושים רבים עד שתתגשם להשגות התינוק כנ"ל, אבל לא בחי' הרוחב בהסברים שונים לכל צד כו'

From this, it is also possible for there to be the aspect of a length, to lower the concept through many investments⁴⁹, until it is made tangible to the comprehension of a child, as explained previously. Nonetheless, [he does] not [yet have] the aspect of a width, with various explanations of all its angles.

ואח"כ מבחי' חכמה שבבינה, להמציא חדשות בהשגה א' כנ"ל, הוא הנק' רוחב, וממנו כח דבינה שבבינה העושה בחי' אורך

Following this is the aspect of *Chochmah* of *Binah*, which is [the ability] to bring forth insights, [but only] in the specific subject [under his investigation], as previously explained. This is [the aspect of] the width, from which the aspect of *Binah* of *Binah* creates a length⁵⁰.

אבל שיעור האורך והרוחב דחו"ב שבבינה, הוא תלוי בבחי' עומק המושג שנק' כתר דבינה, וכנרא' בחוש שלפי ערך העומק כך יהי' ערך הרוחב והאורך בכל השגת דבר מה וד"ל).

Nonetheless, the extent of the length and width of *Chochmah* and *Binah* is dependant upon the aspect of the depth of the comprehension, which is called *Keter* of *Binah*. It is clearly observable with any comprehension of any subject matter that according to the measure of

⁴⁸ In other words, the source of the power of the particular insight of *Chochmah* of *Binah* is also in *Binah* of *Chochmah*. The only difference is that in relation to a *Chacham*, the *Binah* of *Chochmah* remains concealed, while for a *Navon* it is revealed.

⁴⁹ Investments refers to analogies.

⁵⁰ Although we previously said that he is capable of having a length even before there is a width, it is actually from this aspect of *Chochmah* of *Binah* that there can be a whole new length. In other words, at first he only understands the subject from a single particular angle, and can explain a length of explanation according to this angle. When he has a flash of insight into the subject matter, and understands a whole new angle, he is now capable of explaining the very same concept from a whole new angle. That is, there are now two lengths drawn from the same depth. This creates the dimension of width. The more lengths of explanation that there are, i.e. more angles, the more of a width there is. These are both dependant upon the depth, as was previously explained.

the depth will be the measures of the length and width⁵¹. This will suffice those of understanding.)

ולפ"ז מה שקוראים העולם העמקת הדעת, אין זה גופה של העמקה, כמו עומק המושג דבינה, שלזה לא יש שייכות לדעת

According to what we have explained, what is commonly called *ha'amakat ha'da'at* – the delving of the concentration (or meditation), is not the actual delving into the depth of the comprehension (the *omek hamoosag*)⁵². This is because the faculty of *Da'at* has no relation to it.

אך הדעת הוא בחי' התקשרות הרגשתו במושג ביותר, והוא שמביא לידי בחי' העמקה במושג, אחר בחי' העיון הנ"ל, שהוא רק כמו בחי' כלי לעומק ההשגה כנ"ל.

Rather, the faculty of *Da'at* is the aspect of the strong connection of one's feelings to a concept⁵³. It [is this type of concentration which] brings one to the depth of the comprehended concept, [but only] after the aforementioned analysis (*Iyun*), which acts as a receptacle for the depth of the comprehension⁵⁴ (*omek hamoosag*), as previously explained.

וגם בדעת יש אורך ורוחב ועומק, כמו יש מי שדעתו קצרה ויש שדעתו ארוכה ויש שדעתו רחבה ולא ארוכה ודעת חזק או דעת קל כנשים שדעתן קלות, הוא בלתי עומק הדעת וממילא דעתו קצרה כו'

Now, *Da'at* – concentration, also possesses the three dimensions of length, width and depth. For example, there are those who have a short attention span, and those who have a long attention span. There are those who have a broad attention span, but not a long attention span⁵⁵. There are those who possess strong concentration, and those of weak concentration,

⁵¹ For example, a subject matter with a shallow depth, such as tic-tac-toe, will have a very short length, and not much of a width. There is a maximum of only one or two ways to explain it. In contrast, a deeper knowledge, such as medicine or mathematics, will have a great length of explanation (8-10 years of study) and many different facets and fields within it. An even deeper knowledge such as the Torah, which has an infinite depth, also has an infinite length and width.

⁵² In other words, concentration alone has no connection to the flash of insight or the depth of the concept, and it alone will not bring one to any insight. It is necessary to fill this vessel of concentration with the aspect of *Iyun* in order for any depth or insight to be reached.

⁵³ Concentration and interest

⁵⁴ What we have here is a sequence of receptacles. The first vessel which one must fashion in order to have insight into any subject matter is the aspect of concentration and interest. Now, this vessel is the receptacle for another type of vessel or tool, which is the actual analysis. If one has the concentration alone, he has an empty vessel, which will not lead him to insight. The analysis is the vessel and tool which leads one to the depth of the concept or subject matter. Only by having both of these two vessels (concentration and analysis) is insight possible.

⁵⁵ In other words, they are capable of holding their concentration over a multitude of particulars and points, but only for a short period of time. This is an example of a wide but short concentration. In contrast, a long but wide concentration would be the ability to concentrate for a long period of time. Nonetheless, as soon as there are a few too many particular details, the concentration is broken and he becomes confused.

like “women⁵⁶ who have a light *Da'at*⁵⁷. That is, because they lack the depth of concentration, subsequently their concentration is short.

והפרש זה בין קלי הדעת לעומקי הדעת, בין גדול לקטן ידוע, שהתינוק שדעתו קל היינו שאין בו כח המרגיש והתקשרות כלל לדבר זה שמבין או רוצה בו, רק בחיצוניות מאד

The difference between a weak concentration and a deep concentration can be understood by the difference between a child and an adult, as is known. A child has a weak concentration. This is to say that he only possesses a very external connection or feelings towards the object of his understanding or desire.

ע"כ יתפתה להיפוכו, משא"כ הגדול שדעתו עמוקה באותו דבר שמבין או רוצה בו, הוא הנק' העמקת הדעת, שממילא נמשך אורך הדעת ורוחב הדעת כנ"ל בבינה.

For this reason, a child can be easily seduced into desiring the very opposite [of his original desire]. In contrast, an adult has a deep connection to the object of his understanding and desire, which is called the depth of concentration (or interest). [Because he possesses this depth], this automatically draws out a length of concentration and a width of concentration, as we previously explained regarding *Binah*⁵⁸.

וסימן להעמקת הדעת הוא אשר נראה כענין צמצום וכיווץ כלי המוח, לעוצם עומק התקשרותו במושכל, שמזה דוקא בא עצם עומק השגה ע"י העיון דבינה

The sign for [this] deep concentration is that [because of the great depth of his connection to the intellectual concept the vessel of his ingfocusit appears as if he is contracting and ⁵⁹ brain⁶⁰. It is specifically through this deep concentration that he can come to an essential and deep comprehension of the subject matter, through the aforementioned analysis of *Binah*⁶¹.

שהוא היפך הצמצום והכיווץ, שהרי העיון דבינה, גם שעומד ומעוכב בצמצום וכיווץ בתחלתו, אבל מיד מתפשת לרוחב הרבה בכל פרטי חלקיו, בהבחנת פרטיות הרבה כידוע

[The aspect of analysis though], is the very opposite of contraction and focus (of all his mental capacities). Although, initially, [the analysis of *Binah*] begins with a focus and contraction, it nonetheless immediately spreads forth with great expansiveness, with the clarification of all the particular components and details, as is known.

⁵⁶ The Rebbe is not making a derogatory statement in regard to women, but is only pointing out a certain nature. While men have a stronger faculty of *Da'at* – concentration, women have an additional portion of *Binah*. They, therefore, have a greater capacity to notice many details, which a man may overlook.

⁵⁷ See Tractate Shabbat 33b

⁵⁸ It was previously explained that the measure of length and width is according to the depth.

⁵⁹ That is, because of the great depth of his connection to the intellectual concept, *to the exclusion of everything else*.

⁶⁰ For example, because of his deep concentration and mental investment in the concept, his face can appear to be contorted, like the wrinkling of the brows etc.

⁶¹ One who studies in only a superficial way, without a true and deep interest and concentration in the subject matter, will never reach its true depth.

משא"כ הצמצום והכיוון דהעמקת הדעת, אדרבה, הוא רק הצמצום, שהוא הקיבוץ והאסיפה מכל כח שכלו להתקשר רק במושכל זה

This is not the case with the contraction and focus of the delving of the concentration. On the contrary, [the concentration] is only the contraction and focus, the aspect of gathering all of one's mental capacities to connect only to this specific matter.

שזה היפך בחי' התפשטות העיון בהרחבת ענין המושכל, ואמנם ע"י העמקת הדעת בא לידי עמקות המושכל עד שרשו בעמקי החו"ב

This is the very opposite of the spreading forth of the analysis with a great breadth into the subject matter. However, it is through the delving of the concentration that one can come to the depth of the intellectual concept, until its very source in the depths of *Chochmah* and *Binah*⁶².

(עד בחי' דעת עליון דמזווג חכמה לבינה כמ"ש למעלה בענין עומק המושג דבינה, והיינו דדעת גנוז בפומא דאימא כו')

([Through the above he is capable of] reaching the aspect of the upper *Da'at*⁶³ which unites *Chochmah* and *Binah*⁶⁴, as was explained previously regarding the matter of the depth of the comprehension (*omek hamoosag*) of *Binah*⁶⁵. This is the meaning of the statement⁶⁶, “*Da'at* is hidden in the mouth of *Imma*⁶⁷”⁶⁸.

וכמו שאמר, משה שהוא הדעת, זכה לבינה שהוא שער הנון, כי הא בהא תליא, וכמה שכתוב בכתבים בכמה דוכתי וד"ל.

It is likewise stated, “*Moshe*, who corresponds to [the faculty of] *Da'at*, merited *Binah*”⁶⁹, which refers [specifically] to the fiftieth gate [of *Binah*]. These [two faculties] are

⁶² In other words, it is specifically through deep concentration upon the subject matter which one is studying that he will come to properly and truly understand it. It is only through this great investment that he can reach any true depth. Without this concentration, if he understands the subject matter at all, it will be in a completely general and external way, with no depth whatsoever.

⁶³ This refers to the aspect of *Ma'amik* – Delving, which was previously explained.

⁶⁴ The upper aspect of delving (*ma'amik*) is what arouses the power of insight (*Chochmah*) to enter and become “unified” with the power of comprehension (*Binah*).

⁶⁵ This refers to the aspect of the bubbling forth of insight from the hidden spring of *Chochmah* into the revealed river of the comprehension of *Binah*.

⁶⁶ See Zohar (Idra D'Mishkena) Mishpatim 123, 1.

⁶⁷ *Imma* – Mother, refers to *Binah*, while *Abba* – Father, refers to *Chochmah*. This will be discussed in much greater detail later in the book.

⁶⁸ In other words, the two faculties of concentration and understanding are interdependent. That is, understanding a subject matter clearly creates an interest in it. Likewise, an interest in a subject matter leads to the analysis and understanding.

⁶⁹ It is specifically because he had this faculty of *Da'at* (concentration and interest, and the aspect of “delving”) that he merited the depth of the comprehension, the 50th gate of understanding, which was previously explained.

interdependent⁷⁰, as is explained in various writings and [Chassidic] manuscripts. This will suffice those of understanding.)

End of Chapter One

⁷⁰ This is in accordance with the statement, “If there is no *Da’at* there is no *Binah*, if there is no *Binah* there is no *Da’at*”. This can be understood as follows. There must be the initial aspect of concentration (*Da’at*) in order for one to be capable of receiving the explanations (*Binah*). Following, there must be the analysis to understand all the fine details of the known explanations of the subject matter (*Binah*). Through this analysis and delving into the depths (*Binah*), he can grasp hold of the essential depth of the known explanations (upper *Da’at*). When this takes place, *Chochmah* and *Binah* become united, and he has a flash of insight and depth into the subject matter.