**Virtual Congress - 3/22-23/2019**

**Lesson 3: Prayer**

**1. Rabash. article 36. “Who Hears a Prayer”**“Hears a prayer.” There is a question: Why is prayer written in singular form if the Creator hears prayers, as it is written, “For you hear the prayer of every mouth of Your people Israel with mercy”? We should interpret that we have only one prayer to pray—to raise the Shechina [Divinity] from the dust, and by this all the salvations will come.

**2. Rabash. Letter 217 “Run My Beloved”**
It is a great rule that the person himself is called “a creature,” meaning only he alone. Other than him it is already considered the holy *Shechina. It follows that when he prays for his contemporaries, it is considered that he is praying for the holy Shechina, who is in exile and needs all the salvations. This is the meaning of eternity, and precisely in this matter, the light of mercy can be revealed.*

**3. Rabash. article 217 “Run My Beloved”**
*It is impossible to receive anything without equivalence. Rather, there must always be equivalence. Hence, when he evokes mercy on himself, it follows that he is engaged in reception for himself. And the more he prays, not only is he not preparing the Kli [vessel] of equivalence, but on the contrary, sparks of reception form within him.* It turns out that he is going the opposite way: While he should prepare vessels of bestowal, he is preparing vessels of reception. “Cleave unto His attributes” is specifically “As He is merciful, so you are merciful.” Hence, when he prays for the public, through this prayer he engages in bestowal. And the more he prays, to that extent he forms vessels of bestowal, by which the light of bestowal .. can be revealed.

**4. Rabash. Article No. 15 “A Prayer of Many” (1986)**If there are a few people in the collective who can reach the goal of Dvekut with the Creator, and this will bring the Creator more contentment than if he himself were rewarded with nearing the Creator, he excludes himself. Instead, he wishes for the Creator to help them because this will bring more contentment above than from his own work. For this reason, he prays for the collective, that the Creator will help the entire collective and will give them that feeling—that they receive satisfaction from being able to bestow upon the Creator, to bring Him contentment. And since everything requires an awakening from below, he gives the awakening from below, and others will receive the awakening from above, to whomever the Creator knows will be more beneficial for the Creator.

**5. Baal HaSulam. Shamati 5. “Lishma Is an Awakening from Above, and Why Do We Need an Awakening from Below?”**

One must do every possible thing in the world to attain “for the sake of the Creator.” Then one can pray from the bottom of the heart, and then the Creator hears his prayer.However, one must know, when exerting to attain the Lishma, to take upon himself to want to work entirely to bestow, completely, meaning only to bestow and not to receive anything. Only then does one begin to see that the organs do not agree to this view.From this one can come to clear awareness that he has no other choice but to pour out his heart to the Creator to help him so the body will agree to enslave itself to the Creator unconditionally, as he sees that he cannot persuade his body to annul itself completely. It turns out that precisely when one sees that there is no hope that his body will agree to work for the Creator by itself, one’s prayer can be from the bottom of the heart, and then his prayer is accepted.

**6. Baal HaSulam. Shamati. 19 What Is “The Creator Hates the Bodies,” in the Work?**

One must not be angry when he has work with the will to receive, that it obstructs him in the work. One would certainly be more satisfied if the will to receive were absent from the body, meaning that it would not bring its questions to a person, obstructing him in the work of observing Torah and Mitzvot [commandments].However, one should believe that the obstructions of the will to receive in the work come to him from above. One is given the force to discover the will to receive from above because there is room for work precisely when the will to receive awakens.Then one has close contact with the Creator to help him turn the will to receive to work in order to bestow. One must believe that from this extends contentment to the Creator, from his praying to Him to draw him near in the manner of Dvekut [adhesion], called “equivalence of form,” discerned as the annulment of the will to receive, so it is in order to bestow. The Creator says about this, “My sons defeated Me.” That is, I gave you the will to receive, and you ask Me to give you a desire to bestow instead.

**7. Rabash. article 16 “Concerning Bestowal” (1984)**The sages said about that (Kidushin, 30), “Man’s inclination overcomes him each day and seeks to kill him, as it is said, ‘The wicked watches the righteous, and seeks to slay him.’ And if the Creator did not help him, he would not overcome it, as it is said, ‘The Lord will not leave him in his hand.’”This means that first, one must see if he has the strength to come to be able to act with the aim to bestow contentment upon the Creator. Then, when he has already come to realize that he cannot achieve it by himself, that person focuses his Torah and Mitzvot on a single point, which is that “the light in it reforms him,” that this will be the only reward that he wants from the Torah and Mitzvot. In other words, the reward for his labor will be for the Creator to give him this strength called “the power of bestowal.”

**8. Rabash. article 5 “What Is, “The Good Deeds of the Righteous Are the Generations,” in the Work?” (1991)**

We say, “Our Father, our King, do for Your sake.” We ask the Creator to give us the strength so we can perform all our actions for You, meaning for the sake of the Creator. Otherwise, meaning if You do not help us, all our actions will be only for our own benefit. That is, “If not,” meaning “If You do not help us, all our actions will be only for ourselves, for our own benefit, for we are powerless to overcome our will to receive. Therefore, help us be able to work for You. Hence, You must help us.” This is called “Do for Your sake,” meaning do this, give us the power of the desire to bestow. Otherwise, we are doomed; we will remain in the will to receive for our own sake.

**9. Baal HaSulam. Letter 52**

“While they speak, I listen,” meaning the measure of the Creator’s listening depends precisely on the measure of the longing that appears during the saying of the prayer. When one feels excessive longing, he should know at that time that the Creator is listening to him attentively. Clearly, when he knows this, he pours his heart out even stronger, for there is no greater privilege than the King of the world being attentive to him. This is quite similar to what our sages said, “The Creator longs for the prayer of righteous,” for the Creator’s desire for a person to draw near Him awakens great power and longing in the person to crave for the Creator, for “As in water of the face to the face, so the heart of man to man.” It follows that the saying of the prayer and the hearing of the prayer go hand in hand until they accumulate to the full measure and he acquires everything.

**10. Rabash. Letter 18**
When we hear the voice of the Creator speaking to the heart, as in “He who comes to purify is aided,” and it was interpreted in the holy Zohar that he is aided by a holy soul, meaning that the heart hears the voice of the Creator and then specifically the voice of holiness receives the governance over all the desires, meaning the desire to bestow. And naturally, they will not turn back to folly, meaning he will not sin again because all the desires of reception have surrendered under the desire to bestow.At that time all the good pleasantness appears on the heart, for then there is room in the heart for the instilling of the Shechina (Divinity), and the gentleness and pleasantness, and flavor and friendship spread, and fill up all of man’s organs.This applies specifically when hearing the voice of the Creator. At that time the whole body surrenders and enslaves itself to holiness.

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