

# SICHA SUMMARY

PROJECT LIKKUTEI SICHOS | 5783 - YEAR OF HAKHEL



## Likkutei Sichos, Vol. 19

*Iggeres Hateshuva, Sicha 4*

### The Tanya:

In the fourth chapter of Iggeres Hateshuva, the Alter Rebbe explains how the ineffable four-letter Divine name alludes to the ten sefiros, the building blocks of the Divine creative process:

"The yud, which is a simple point, indicates G-d's wisdom, [the sefirah of chochmah]....

(The "thorn" above the yud indicates the supreme will, which transcends by far the level of supernal wisdom)."

When the concept or feeling is amplified, "it is contained and represented in the letter hey," whose breadth and length implies an unfolding of the idea. When this idea is then articulated to the outside world, it is "represented in the [final] letters vav and hey."

### The Notes:

In his commentary to the Tanya, the Rebbe's father points out a few textual anomalies:

1. When discussing the letter yud and its adorning "thorn," the Alter Rebbe changes the form of the verb "indicates." For the letter yud and its allusion to Divine wisdom, he uses a more emphatic Hebrew form of "indicates." For the "thorn" and its allusion to Divine will, he uses a less emphatic form.
2. Regarding the yud and its thorn, the Alter Rebbe says that the letter alludes to the Divine faculties of wisdom and will. But when it comes to the other three letters, the Tanya inverts the equation, saying that faculties of expansion and articulation (binah, zah, and malchus) are included within and alluded to in the letters.

In order to understand the significance of these anomalies, we must preface with a general question: The Tanya goes on to say that the four-step process alluded to in the Divine name is a metaphor for the human soul which possesses the same attributes. But the "thorn" of the yud does not have a corral in the human soul. Why, then, does the Alter Rebbe specify the thorn in his breakdown of the Divine name?

## The Explanation:

The theme of the chapter is that sin corrupts the ten faculties of the Divine soul (the Divine name within the person). Repentance, however, has the power to restore wholeness to those faculties. The mechanism of repentance is that it touches the core desire and will of G-d which is constant and unaffected by human choice. G-d's transcendent will desires the soul of the Jew no matter its blemishes. This dimension is alluded to in the "thorn" of the yud. By including the thorn in his breakdown of the Divine name, the Alter Rebbe is alluding to its central place in the process of repentance. For it is through arousing this thorn of G-d's desire that wholeness is restored to the actual letters of the Divine name, the conscious dimension of the human soul.

But this may prompt a further question: If the "point" of the yud can restore wholeness to the conscious faculties of a person, that implies that the point is not wholly transcendent from the person, it has some connective tissue that allows it to influence the person. If so, how does it remain intact in the face of sin? How is it, too, not affected by human behavior?

To explain this, the Alter Rebbe employs the textual variances noted by the Rebbe's father:

When describing the three final letters of G-d's name, the Alter Rebbe says the Divine faculties are included within and alluded to

in the letters. This implies that these faculties are defined and shaped by the "letters," they have a particular expression that is alluded to in the shape of these letters. In the human soul, these faculties, of comprehension, emotional definition, and communication, are "fully shaped" and can therefore be harmed and "misshaped" by sin.

Regarding the yud and its thorn, however, the Alter Rebbe says that the letter alludes to the Divine faculties of wisdom and will. Meaning, that the faculties are themselves independent from the letters, and the letters have a tenuous relationship with the Divine wisdom and will. They are not "trapped" within the letters, the letters merely suggest the idea of the Divine faculties.

More specifically, the varying emphasis of the verb "indicates" used by the yud and its "thorn" convey the idea that the thorn is even less connected to the Divine will it purports to allude to. The yud itself, however, is more related to the Divine wisdom which has more of a definition than the transcendent will has.

Thus, this language conveys how the Divine will and wisdom are able to remain aloof from the person and not be soiled by their actions, and yet retain enough of a connection with the conscious dimension of the soul to restore wholeness and purity in the event of a corrupting sin.

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