Welcome to our next chabura on Shabbos and the higher avoda of shabbos through the melachos, both in refraining on Shabbos as well as performing the melachos positively during the week, with the higher goal of building oneself as a mini-mishkan to reveal the Shechina more potently on a weekly basis and help to bring the world to its higher perfection.

We are going to a minute review to show the continuity and today we will do a broad based overview of all 39 melachos asking fundamental questions on its overall structure. Next week we will go into defining a melachain halachic, spiritual terms and the fourth shiur will be on the details of the inner anatomy of a melacha and how it works. After that we start the first melacha, plowing and how we build ourselves as a Shabbos seven day a week avoda.

On the sheet we sent everyone we have the 39 Melachos broken up into four basic groups, each one having their own part in building of the Mishkan. Why does Chaza,l based on the seder of the mishkan itself, subdivide the melachos into four categories. The first is to prepare the showbreads and sacrifices, 1 through 11, plowing through baking. The next group is the melachos having to do with the fabrics for the curtains in the Mishkan, 12 - 24, shearing through tearing. The third set of melachos has to do with with building the mishkan, to prepare the coverings from the hides themselves. These are the special covers used for different parts of the mishkan, melachos 25 trapping through 31 cutting. The fourth group is to subdivided into four mini subgroups with the positive and negative expressions of melacha, 32-writing to 39 carrying.

Those are the four groups.

With that we are going to ask a few fundamental questions. Last week we said these melachas are referenced in the Mishna Gemara on Shabbos 73a and there it talks about 40 minus 1. we have to come back to answer that question a little more deeply.

Question 2 is are we having a pneumonic to memorize the 39 melachos, maybe a little more, the different processes of creation. some were used to create from the flour, to create bread, the curtain and the like...there is a certain kind of outcome that was used for the melachos themselves. It would seem somehow to have to be greater than that. If the melacho itself doesn’t mean an action of work, it means a creative action and ultimately we are going to see not just a creative action but an action of creation, which we are going to get to in a few moments, then these have to be something much greater than pneumonics, a process for achieving an outcome, or even acquiring physical items to be made in the mishkan for its functioning. what exactly is going on? Very unusual.

Ultimately if yidden around the world were praying to eretz Yisrael, Yerushalayim, the old city, and as we get into the old city, the outer walls, the inner walls, the ezras nashim, all the way to kadosh hakadoshim, we are getting to the epicenter of creation itself. The very mikdash, the metzias of the mishkan is the epicenter of creation, that somehow we are tapping into these creative energies, then it must be, and I am saying must be, can't be Shabbos is just about simply refraining like the shamor part of shabbos, but it also about performing during the week and not just performing the literal melachos of plowing, there has to be there are deeper creative energies involved and somehow it must be relevant, applicable and even directly applied to my life on a weekly basis. It must be. You can hear very powerful proofs and we will answer it up.

It goes as follows and it is really amazing. I am going to say it in a little higher way, a kabbalistic way, and then a creative way.

The Vilna Gaon brings down based on gemara on shabbos 49b that the word melacho fascinatingly is mentioned 40 times, except we count only 39 times. Interestingly itself the answer is that the melachos themselves were not acts, works, they were acts of creation, yeish meyeish, something from something in the physical world. but how about the 40th? it is yeish meayin, that is something only Hashem has access to and then blesses the world according to our toiling and how we create ourselves. Interesting. 40 already represents a higher number of shelamos, the yeish meayin, something from nothing itself. we have no access to that. Hashem does and He opens up that portal on Shabbos relative to how we create during the week. Very interesting way to look at it.

Another way - brought in a kabalistic format but it is the same thing. There are 10 utterances of the creation, 9 times shem elokim in bereshis, and the maimer tells that the first one that is the concealed realm of creation that is bereshis bara, tells us these utterances are the basis of creation. Ultimately the Rashbi and Arizal tell us there are four primary worlds, atzilus emanation, beriah creation, formation yetzera, and the world of action asiya. and each one of these worlds has the ten elements of creation that Hashem used to create the world so four times 10 is 40. The vilna gaon brings this as why 40 represents shelamos and the melachos are 40 minus 1 because Shabbos is the lower reality of the lower worlds folding into the higher world and all creation comes into a greater place of Divine unity. that is amazing. four worlds, 10 utterances is 40 and there are many endless references to 40 in the Torah. I will reference 2 that are tied to something special.

Aryeh Kaplan brings in a chapter on the mikvah and he talks about the mystery of the mikvah, why it is 40 units. He basically says that the mikvah is 40 units, 200 gallons of water, to teach us that when a person goes in, they are experiencing the toivel, tevila, tes, bais, lamed are the root letters. Turned around and it is bitul. Hisbadlus. And when we are going to the mikvah we are mevateling our own limited human existence, our own perceived independent identity, and we are going in and folding ourselves into HKB creation. We are saying, we don't want to disappear and not exist as we do when we hold our breath and dunk (we are in a mini state of …), but we are also in a spiritual womb and we are being recreated in His reality. The mikvah represents renewal, rebirth, the change of one's spiritual status, the transformation of one's spiritual being and from there, ideally it is going to the reality of intimacy and elevating something of the experience of joining together, a deep form of intimacy and connection, unification, to express the higher unity we have with Hashem. That is the 40 units of the mikvah.

Another fascinating one is that the Gemara in nidda, we are talking about the process of creation itself, creating a fetus, which from our point looks like something from nothing but it is really yeish from yeish, a seed and an ova coming together joining over three trimesters creating life

How long are the three trimesters? So fascinatingly, just as Hashem looks into the Torah and creates reality, He looks into the word pregnancy and creates pregnancy. Says the Gemara, the word for pregnancy is, hei reish yud vav nun, gematria 271 and then the gemara says that is the number of days of pregnancy. Then the seed can stay within the woman’s womb for three days, and hold potentcy for creating life. After that time the seed doesn't have koach anymore. So the most a pregnancy can be is 273 days.

If you divide 273 by 7, you get 39. Therefore, the gestation period of a woman creating new life is 39 weeks, which the midrashim in parshas tazria references the 39 melachos keneged the 39 weeks of pregnancy. why ispregnancy 39 weeks? Because of the melachos of Shabbos. Just as the woman is meant to create new life from nothing relatively speaking, and each week is to a specific week of development, so too each melacha is used to create spiritual life.

It comes out that another way of referencing, throughout the week we are using the 39 melachos to conceive of ourselves spiritually, the new you, to create a new spiritual status every week, 39 times 7 273, and in that, we create, and then comes Shabbos and we birth that new reality to the next world as it were, and we will see why 39 melachos are carrying, we are carrying ourselves from this limited world to a higher world and it is there that the dimension of 40 is born. That is yeish meayin, that is Hashem's ultimate reality.

What is going on with these melachos? It is not just a categorical way to create processes to see the desired outcomes. These melachos are the very elements of creation itself and the 39 weeks are the weeks of creating life and the 39 melachos are the spiritual dimension of creating spiritual reality in this world.

40 minus 1 means we have to do our part to create and when we stop and turn ourselves back to Hashem and ask Him to bring us to a higher dimension in yeish meayin says the Gaon, that is the 40th melacha, the 40th time the word melacho is said, but we don't count it, why? it is Hashem's job. We count 49 days and He counts 50. We do the 39 melachos and He brings the 40 - 4 worlds times 10 utterances...everything comes to its greater place of completion and divine unity. Everything gets lifted up to its root level and that whole process of creation is being recreated each week in and of itself. in a sense we are creating and recreating our spiritual identity.

wow. isn't that amazing? Who could not want Shabbos. Shabbos helps me to understand there is a highest purpose in creation and I habve a unique special role in the very fabric of creation itself to return it to its highest expression and by using the melachos positively to create ourselves as a mishkan, that is how we draw the shechina.

So what exactly are we creating?

So if we divide the relationships, there are three, to ourselves, to others and to Hashem. when we relate to ourselves the maharal the gaon, the chida, all reference a relationship to one's nefesh. what are we relating to? What are we creating anew and how are we changing our status on a regular basis.

This is the Arizal eitz chaim, 50 main gates, shar beis perek aleph it talks about hiskalelus and hishkasrus. there he explains a wonderous thing of bein adom lnafshim is made up of? - this the chaim vital brings in shaare kedusha and reb wolbe in ale shor, it is core. what does it mean, not just middos, it means the very core elements that make up the nefesh. reb chaim vutal calls it nefesh yesodos. You have the four primary elements, earth water wind and fire. These four primary elements are the constituent parts of one's unique spiritual identity on the level of nefesh. What essentially ben adom lnafish is you take the elemental parts of your identity and reconfigure them from the human expression to divine identity. It is a choice point, to reappropriate them from human expression to divine expression, and as we take those elements of fire, water wind and earth, we are taking the elements behind the middos and we are reshifting and recalubratug them back to the nefesh and using our choice point, our ability to actually choose our identity to realign our elements and to balance them – integrate them - to recreate the elokusdik identity to bein nafshi.

Where is that in the mishkan?

Tthe arizal says that all four levels of creation exist in our worlds. you have datzcham, inanimate, plant life, animal life, and speaking being a soul the human realm. datzcham is the acronym. The Arizal tells us that those four levels of creation in our world correspond to the four elements. Inanimate life is earth, physical stable world that does not move. Water, that corresponds to plant life that survives on water. animals that correspond to wind and finally the speaking spirit that using their seichel or the zohar says ohr seichel which is roshe teives aish, that is the fire. the speaking person is speaking truth into this world, it uses higher intellect, to perceive the divine reality. These four levels of creation, dfatzcham, are exactly parallel to earth water wind and fire. and therefore there is a symmetry between the elements of creation and the manifest levels of creation.

What does this have to do with the beis hamikdosh?

When we see the counting is already starting, in vayikra when we are starting shemos when we are starting the gathering for the mishkan, the 13 elements, the metals, is about the inanimate that build the vessels.

Then we have plant life, which is the first category, taking plants, breaking seeds, and using plant life for entire expression that we can sanctify and then mikadesh it on shabbos.

The inanimate is for the vessels to draw down the elokus. the plants are the first category of melacho.

 Categores two and three are the animal realm, using curtains that have the wool and combing and dying. and category 3 is using the inside part, the skins, tanning it, cutting it down to size.

And the fourth category are four sets of pairs that have to do with the koach of an adomto write and erase, the building and destroying, to ignite fire and to extinguish and then make bapatsh. speaking. So the final category is medaber.

So what is the mishkan? It is taking the four levels of creation, inanimate, vegetable, animal and speaking, putting it to a process, having that process be an act of creation. The creative elements are used to take the very physical expression in the world, and show that there is a divine creation in the creational process and each of the 39 is going into the four levels of creation and showing that the levels of creation really connect back to Hashem Himself.

Why datzcham?

We said the four elements of creation itself are tied to the four levels of creation. Earth water wind and fire parallel the four levels of creation at an elemental level . Therefore the categories of melacha correspond to the four levels of creation and have four primary categories of something that is creative and they also have four elements of creation in the creative process itself which means we are tapping into the very basis of the reality of creation and reconstructing creation, to go back from from yeish to ayin.

The mishkan was that ultimate place that we reconfigure the world, that it should be a perfect manifestation of Hashem's reality in this world and that we have our own role in creating ourselves as a mishkan.

The ultimate question what does this have to do with bein adom nafshe. Arizal says as follows. These four things, the four levels of creation, and the four elements of creation...do you know why that is? That is Hashem's name signed into creation, shem havaya, My name is written into the natural world so that when it comes through the elements it is earth wind water and fire. but when it comes to the four levels of creation it is damzam. but in that elemental creational process, you want to know what it really is? It is shem havaya aish is yud, ruach is first hai, mayim is vav and afar is final hei The medaber is yud, animal is first hay, vav is vegetable and inanimate is earth.

To partner with Hashem in creation and go to the four levels of the world and unlock the secrets to creation - go to the melachos. those are my channels of creation. You do 39 in creating yourself and I will fill you up and bring you shelamos to yourself, to the world and to creation. our job is to build bein adom lnafeshi, to build ourselves as tzelem elokim to build shem havaya and to take the elements earth water wind and fire and realign our limited middos and our outer expressions and capacities back to the elemental level and bring them back to Hashem's Name and go into various parts of creation in ourselves. such as wer have lethargy in ourselbes, ad we will get into that. The mind, the vitality, the ruach directional movement we go on our life, and aish the higher clarity and seichel, those air out. Hashem says go inside yourself, those levels of creation and find my shem havaya. that is bein adom lnafsho.

wow. You have to be kidding here. there is something called Sshabbos that is a seven day process. I gave you melacha. it is work, acts of creation, very elemental that I used to make creation itself and I am giving you the keys to that, to use during the week to create the nefesh yesodes, your elemental identity, your nefesh to eventually connect back to ruach all the way back. When you recreate yourself through your the activities, pursuits and challenges and difficulties during the week give us the reconfiduging your essential identity, realigning it elementally and structuraly and recreating shem havaya in you, yhashrus, proper inner alignment and the on shabbos we stop creating and we say I am giving my basic identity back to You, please fill up my spiritual identity, what I have toiled in during the week ,the 39 melachos and the 39 weeks of creation, the pregnancy. The 40th is ein olam haba, a taste of the future world where You revdeal from my neshama the higher part of the next world, the shelama base of what I create in this world. shabbos is the birthing of what we credated in vitro during the week through 39 elements of creation. that is bein adom lnafesh that is what we are toiling in during the week.

this gives the highest importance to yourself, the special purpose and mission you have in this world, how essential you are and how we are intimately connected to each other and how every week is truly important to the very fabric of creation. When we partner with Hashem, we want to be a mishkan, a place that You can dwell in us, we want to take our four levels of creation in us and we want to bring shem havaya in us and we are going to toil positively with the koach of pregnancy weekly and we will labor and birth ourselves when we mekable shabbos and go to the 40th realm where we experience the shelamos.

this is the secret to the overview of the four categories. The four categories are yud k vav k in reverse. The first category is the lower hai, seonc the vav, third upper hei and fourth higher yud. From lowest to highest, we are trying to reawaken Hashem's ultimate expression through us, and that means our identity is a choice between remaining human and becoming divine. That is what shabbos is, that is what melachos is.

One of the names of the temple is called bais behira, on a simple level, the place Hashem chose. On a drosh level it says, what is beis hamikdosh, the house of choice the place we go in to see the essence of creation to see it shine within and it awakens our behira to choose to be a nefesh elokis and align our elements directly back to You and I want to take all the levels of creation and shine it back to you and into the wolrd as tzelem elokim for You and for creation. That is what the beis hamikdosh was. Since we don't have that, we have Shabbos as a 7 day avoda, and the melacha are the very basis to labor in a gestational way, to labor. that is lechadodi, six paragraphs for six days of the week. then you go to shabbos, ten lechadodi's , six days of the week, 10 elements of creatoin, we are returning our soul to You in labor and delivery and Shabbos is the birth of our tzelem elokim anew for the week.

40 is we have an obligation and responsibility, an opportunity and a higher striving to renew and recreate and rebirth ourselves at the most essential level of our identity through our strivings and yearnings weekly, and to trade it up. That is how much Hashem loves us, that is the koach of behira, that is the holiness of the weekday transitioning to the holiness of Shabbos. May we be zocheh to striving to live as tzeleme elokim and to renew our spiritual status to 39 and ask Hshem to complete us weekly and then through shelamos we traded up to reconvert to a higher level on a weekly basis.

We should be zocheh to living this and we have to help each other. This is an upgrade way of living Shabbos and as we go through the next two hashkafik discussions, the conditions that make a melacha, then we are going to go slowly, one melacha a week to begin to understand Hashem's wonderful world of creation and our role of partnering in creation to return the world to its highest divine state and may we see and merit to have a hailic in the ultimate redempton. Thank you.

November 18, 2019

Shalom everyone. Welcome to our next chabura. On Shabbos. It is chof cheshvan. We are going to do a quick review of the first two shiurim on hashkafa of Shabbos and today we will get into more of the beginnings of the workings of the melachos itself.

Basically what we are working with is the following - it is incredible and geshmach - thank you Hashem for a haliicha Shabbos that we have every week and we are trying to look at the Shabbos as a seven day a week avoda, toiling in the process of becoming Gdly during the week in potential and then birthing that realith on Shabbos. six days a week in this world olam haze and the next world Olam Haba on shabbos. 39 mellachos during the week and the 40th yeis maayin on Shabbos Hashem is revealed to us. Everything that we have become in its actualized form. that is the rhythm in a general sense, we are trying to connect toand there are a lot of details in that. The question obviously becomes so what exactly is a melacha.

so very quickly we are going to dispel a few of the basic misconceptions and then jump right in.

What melacha is NOT, it is not employment or not, it is not putting in the right effort, less or more or shvitzing. and it is not about technology. It is not any of those because we can break a melacho with small or large amounts of efforts on one's own or someone else. Just because you refrain from technology that is not going to get you olam haba. it may help you avoid certain aveiras and the like.

so what fundamentally is a melacha. in simple terms we define melacha as a shinui chumrius, a physical change in the structure of something in the pysical world. if someone is meshana the chumrius, each of the melachos is a physical tangible concrete expression of the change in the physical world. at some level we are making an indelible imprint in the physical world. if it is not meshanus the chumrius, a physical change, it could be an action, it could be some work and the like but it is not a melacha. if melacha is about a shinui chumrius and we refrain from that, on shabbos, then we using melacha to create the phsycual structural change in the world. Is that as far as melacha goes? we like to take the higher approach and say in addition to doing a melacha, to create a structure, a structural change in the physiccal world, which obviously has its higher general purpose, we also want to look at melacha to create a shinui in one's chumrius.

What exactly does that mean? We have to really stay right to the letters, the letters chumrius are ches, mem and reish. write it out. see it physically. a chumri means donkey, chumrius means something physical, material. In ruchniistic terms, chumrius means the anochius part of oneself, the selforientation, the inward focus that says I am something. fundamentally independently of myself. that anochius is the chumrius of a person. why is it the chomer part? because it is the physical part that defines as external. ultimately, that chumrius shapes our body but it didnt go so far as to even shape our soul.

we said as follows. what is the chumrius of the soul? the chomer of the soul that we may be changing? rabbi chaim vital brings in shaare kedusha that the level of soul, the lowest level of soul that defines the anochius that we are trying to flip into elokus is the nefesh and the point of the nefesh that is based on free will, real free will, this is called the nefesh yesodes. what does yesodes mean? the elements. that is where aish ruach mayim and afar come in. these are the chumrius. they are the inner substance that makes up the nefesh yesodes, the place where our free will exists in our nefesh as rooted in our ruach. that is the chomer that we are trying to be mesharmem, trying to restructure and reorient from its physical appropriation to the body, the physical limbs that are also made of aish ruach mayam and afar and reappropraite them back to the nefesh elokis part, that is rooted all the way in ruach neshama all theway up to the Source of creation itself.

that chomer of the nefesh which we are going to call aish ruach mayam afar, arma, fire wind water and earth, those are the elemental chumrious of our soul taht we are trying to reconfigure. therefore a melacha on this level would be about trying to restructure the elemental basis of our nefesh through the four core elements, as expressed through our middos, and then restructure. restructuring that we redefine ourselve in a more gdly way through HKB , paralle yud k vav k, aish parallel to yud all the way down to afar, a straight alignment of shem havaya and we are trying to align our inner soul with HKB. it is an aazing thing, that is the ruchnius chumrius that we are going to work with IYH. that we are trying to be meshana through our torah, mitzvahs and chesed during the week. that is what we are trying to raise. it is amazing.

is that as far as it goes? didn't we talk aobut some spiritual stuff, about 39 weeks of pregnancy? yes, where is this in chomer? we take the letters and this is a mechalech brought down in kaballa specifically...it talks about turning around three root letters or four into different combinations of the words that are spelled by themselves have a very intimate relationship. take the letters ches, mem raish, chomer, and turn them around, we have the word rechem. what is rechem? rechem is the womb.in the womb is the chumrius of the four core elements, and that is the basis through which we are going to change, recreate and eventualy rebirth ourselves from potential to actual. it is like limbs and stuff like that, what is going on inside? all the 248 limbs and 365 sinews ...where is that here? turn the letters around again and it spells reish mem and ches, ramach, 248. In the womb, rechem, we have 248 limbs which are made of arma, building the nefesh because ruach doesnt come in right away. that is creating the physical chumrius, the basis for the spiritual chumrius.

but again, it is in the womb but the goal is to get the baby out. the goal is to have that new life revealed from its private domain into its larger? of course. bsha tova, it should be revealed at the right time as well as conceived at the right time. when we talk about that we are talking about the future world that this world, six days a week compared to shabbos are the relationship between olam haze to olam haba. an amazing thing.

so much so that the ARizal calls this world the melacha of carrying. the future is yom reshusa, your own private domain, your own private geule of elokus that will be revealed in the next world. that world is called the future world. we see another beautiful reference. If you look at the letters very carefully and turn them around they spell machar, mem ches and reish. machar is in the limited means tomorrow, but it is the ultimate tomorrow. that is olam haba.

so what do we have here so far? we have in the womb, rechem, that we are formulating the remache farim in the guf the limbs, we are creating the chumrius of this fetus, for our future. and that is what we are essentially doing through the shinu chumeres in ourselves. we as our nefesh have our chumrius, we have arma, we have the limbs of the body that are connected tot he limbs of the soul that we use the elements to give birth, we try to awaken our divine identity and in that very process, we are creating our future reality.

That all sounds very clean and straight and we should live with tremendous simplicity and yashrus with this. but we know we have a yetzer hara trying to take our middos off, the elements off, and to misappropriate. our nefesh elokis rooted in the nefesh yesodes back to its lower form and we have to make sure we use our bechira carefully to realign our actions and our capacities and our middos our character traits rooted in the elements that are rooted in our soul that are rooted shem havaya. we are trying to redirect these back to Hashem to serve Him in this world, to reveal His divine presence, to create our future reality. we always have to contend with the other side, and that means there is always a place to go off, and even when we go off, hopefully it is a yerida vsara aliya, a descent for a greater ascention. if we are not careful lwe realize we can take ourselves out of the very thing we are striving for which again is why shabbos is a weekly avoda. do your best, get as much completion as possible and move on.

where would that be referenced in these letters?

the final permutation is incredible - in one three letter root - kedusha ! ches, reish, mem charum, excommunication. they are temporarily detached from the community at large and set aside in a place of very purposeful structured isolation. and hopefully there, in that place of detachment, they will come to be rewoken and come to connect back to what we are striving for, the emes thing is to how to move forward in a proper way.

we see in the word shinui chumrius, to change the chomer of something - it is an incredible thing - in the one very word, that is what the definition of a melacha is. it is a creational energy to change the chumrious of one's soul. define the limbs based on the arma, in the womb which is this world olam haba, the world of rechem, HKB the Makomin which all life exists finite withiin infinite and we are each and every week developing gestationally our own spiritual potential reality. we stop the melacho we carry ourselves forward to a new connection and then yeish meayin, somethng beyond, is revealed to us, the future reality in the next world that is the machar, and then at the end of one reality is the new potential for something new and we create and start all over again, keeping mindfulness about charem, the possiblity from detaching ourselves from our core mission..

that is one mehala we are going to work with from chomer, and being shana the inner anatomy of our nefesh yesodes that has behira, with the elements and redirecting our middos and ultimately carving out our divine reality through behira. it is amazing.

we have to digest this.

now lets look at the word melacha itself, not just how it is found in shinus chumrius. mem lamed aleph chaf and hai. In many ways you can split it. we are going to split it to look at two other very fascinating things. the Baal Shem Tov tells us that whenever something needs an actual correction, we have to go through a three stage process, submission, separation and sweetening. a mashel that comes to mind is a nut. like walnuts.the outside shell, we take a nutcracker to crack it open. then extract out the nut, and then injest the nut saying a bracha and redirect that food back to HKB to its Source. that three step process is called submission separation and sweetening. cracking the shell is the something, the sheker of the something, that is submission, breaking extracting out the nut represents extracting out the kernel of truth in something, let's call it the tzadik and that is called havdala, and then the sweetening part is when that nut gets released and injested with a bracha and redirected back to HKB. that is sweetening. the three step process is how we transform sheker by submitting it, separating out the kernel of truth and then attaching that kernel of truth to its larger context of truth so that it becomes more emes in shelamos, that is a process how we fix our own spiritual makeup.

where do we see it in the words and then we will look at it further. in the word melacha you see three fascinating things. the first two letters are mal, like briss mila, where you cut off the external skin. that is the process of submission. the next letter the aleph is the spark of elokus that is trapped on the inside of the melacha, that is the aleph, and we want to separate that out. the chof hei kah, from the Shla in sefer shaare kuf, on the leter kuf, kaf hei is a kinui for shem havaya. chof hei 25 with the kolel is 26. the last kah is actually a reference to HKB's revealed reality.

melacha mem lamed, submission aleph separation, and chaf hei sweetening has embedded this three stage process of submssion separation and sweetening. on a nefesh level, how would that work? what is the falsehood of us? the submission part is you are submitting the anochius, the self orientation of oneself, whether it is self orientation of our will thoughts speech emotion or action that is laden with anochius to varying degrees. we want to do is submit that, subjugate the falsehood part of our selforientation. the awakening of that spark of elokus that is in the anochus, that we want to take out because utlimately that is what is driving it, we want to separate that out, that is behira, behira allows us to go into the shecker, extract out the kernel of truth which is in our nefesh , in the elements and in the elements is the human part and the Gdly part. and if we realign with the ksas emes and we go into actions and traits and eventually our identity, in that, in the four elements, is that spark of Gdliness. we use behira, that element of choice, select our identity at this moment in time i want to be gdly, we are creating ourselves as a Gdly being by taking the aleph out after the mal. then finally when you take that spark of gdliness that was trapped in the anochius part of ourself and we redirect it back to your nefesh elokis and it now has found its place properly lodged, that is the place that we are able to make the connection. and it is there, in that place of connection that you have the ultimate place to see your Gdliness in its sweetened form. that is the kah. alas kah. therefore in that three step process of mal aleph kah, the word of melacha, you have the three processes of a melacha, the three states of rectification, and what we are trying to do is transform our human beingness for a divine becomingness. and through behira and consciously and willfully and intentionally and purposefully shifting those elements thrugh our middos we are redirecting and reshaping ourselves back to a place of self orientation to Gd focusedness. it is there that we ultimately are creating in the rechem every week our future reality and building the limbs of ourselves and restructuring our chumrious back to HKB.

even there we see an amazing thing.

the final way I would like to suggest is that melacha has the letters mem lamed and chaf, that is the world melech. which has all sorts of interesting references. but as we have said before, melech is rosh yetevos of moach lev kavod, mind heart and liver. in there we said that parallels the three levels of soul, neshama, ruach and nefesh. the liver is the desires, the nefesh, dam hu hanefesh. In the melacha just like we said in the mal we take out the aleph to get kah, we are transforming our anochius to elokus and once we connect the nefesh for our four elements, what we are really doing is reconnectiong back to the hgher part of our nefesh and we would feel the lightness of being, a soul, not just having a soul, but your very identity is the soul. then to realign that back to ruach and the neshama is bringing in alignment of melech which is HKB the King. as opposed to backwards which is klum, starting with the desires first and we think our heart will conform to the desires and our mind will take on ways of seeing things according to our desires. then we have klum nothingness. therefore you see that in allt he various ways of aligning of melacha, simple level of its not employment effort or technology based, it is simply the elements and the characteristics of the actions that were used that were used in the building the functioning of the mishkan. but what is it really doing in the melacha practically? affecting the chumrius, the physical structure. during the week physically we are trying to fix the chumrius of our nefesh, the chomer is the four elements, tied to the middos which are the basis for our identity formulating the various limbs of our soul within the womb, creating our future world and being sure not to fall away from our true divine goal. and then the three step process of the melacha, the mem lamed, aleph, chof hai, is the way we break down and reconstruct our anochius to elokus from a very systematicly for each melacha. we will remove the sheker, extract the kernel of truth in the sheker, and then bringing it up to its four fuller form or more complete form and it is there that we go through elementally structuring identity, restructuring. and that is what a melacha is doing, it is creating you, restructuring creation in you and bringing shem havaya with the alignment of yud k vavk through the elements to have your own simplicity in mind heart and desire. that is what we are stirving for. and then the levels of soul neshama ruach nefesh createe that alignment and that is where the gilui is of elokus is in this world. that what we are doing every week. to go through yiddishkeit is not possible. you have to grow and grow systematically. grow methodically, grow purposefully, with intent to focus....you don't have to drive yourself crazy, it is very geshmach..but you have to grow in a way that you truly are coming to terms with an ultimate identity crises daily. who am I?

am I human being or a divine becoming? as we have said we are choosing between remaining human and becoming divine. that is using behira in our avoda weekly as we grow through the mitzvahs and go through the mundaneness of our weekday to show tehre is nothing mundane. with this perspective everything small becomes big because it is from Hashem, for a greater purpose, uniquely deisgned for you tin time and space. that is wow.

as the final wrap up we are bulding ourselves as a mishkan, mem shakein, shachein has the root letters to dwell and mem is forty. so there is 40th melacha on shabbos, yesih meayin, 39 weeks and 40th level of soul, the purity comes in. the mishkan is when all the elements of creation became properly in line. Yashrus, shem havaya was fully revealed from top down with straightness and purity and Hashem's divine presence shines brilliantly in this world where everything is interincluded in Him including you. which means we ultimately matter. Hashem has the most incredible love for us that is not limited or bound in any way. we have to connect our identity to that. perceive. Unlimited love for us. His Infinite value for us, in our central purpose, every week we are going through mini identity crises. But not in ways we get thrown off course. we get driven on course to come to understand more fully and truly simply who we are. No one wants to be in charum. Everyone wants to create their machar their future world, and everyone wants to see that their ultimate chumrius, and all we have to do is our best. we have to ultimately want the right things - ratza, choose the right things - behira - and hishtadlus put in the proper effort.

the roshe tevos for those three words, ratzon reish, behira beis, and hai hishtadlus is raba.this is our personal greatness. Our ability to systematically knock out our humanness, rework it into infinity through time and space through our week and daily activities and in that zechus we can use the koach of a melacha, to rework ourselves, transform ourselves, renew ourselves, rebirth ourselves weekly.

that is a weekly shabbos consciousness that we are trhying to create in ourselves that makes every little part of our life special important and essential and allows us to bring HKB into everyting because there is no place where He isn't and therefore He is everything. May we merit to truly bring hKB into every part of our lives and take every part of our lives and have a willingness to be connected back to Him then we are in the process weekly of constructing ourselves in the mishkan, and IYH we should have a beshanti besoca in the most beautiful way possible.

“The Bais Hamikdosh is the ultimate place in which the Shechina was received and then pipelined into the whole world. If you think about it, it is a physical structure.

We are building the capacity of our vessel within us called the tzelem elokim by shifting our consciousness from self-consciousness to consciousness that Hashem is doing everything. Hashem is the Source of all force, giving life, emanating life force to us. We can expand our consciousness and thereby be able to flow more and more of Hashem’s light into the world.

The part of thenefesh that has behira, free will, is in the four elements, called the daled yesodos. fire, wind water and earth.

He basically says that the shefa coming from above comes into the higher soul into the lower soul. And then through our behira reality into our body. It has a splitting mechanism. And if the shefa goes to the side of elokus, then it takes on the middos tovos (Yaakov), which then become the vehicle for our Torah and mitzvahs. If it goes to the side of our nefesh behema (Esav), it takes on the non-positive side, the lower part of the self, and in that, the middos ras come and they rise - the improper character traits - are the basis for the the teachings of the Torah and mitzvahs, to guide us to teshuva and proper conduct.

Your middos are coming through your core elements -- Hashem made up your inner constitution and that is your behira, your free will, in your nefesh.

The highest of the four elements is aish, fire. and Reb Chaim Vital says the core midda tova that comes from fire is humility. and the core midda ra from fire is gaiva. and it is a choice… to have the midda of fire as anava or gaiva.

A baal gaiva says you and everyone else revolve around me. There is nothing but me

The anava says I am nothing and there is nothing but Hashem and my reality is ein od milvado, nothing but Hashem

It is all Hashem. Our middos are all for us to be able to flow into the world an expression of Hashem. Our capacities and free will are all for You -- our energy, our actions and ability to move is all from Hashem, the ability to impose ourselves in the world is You, all good outcomes come from Hashem.

But our nature says,I have independence, I have power and self determination and the ability to take for self gratification. I am mashpia on the world. You are asking me to give up my atzmius to control direct and influence? What are you trying to kill me? What will I have? I am pushing back on that. I do my stuff and Hashem helps like a coach on the side, but really it is me in the end. and when things get difficult we hit the realm of impossibility where we say I can't do it, oh I see I will ask Hashem. if we think it is possible we think it is me, but if it is impossible then it is for Hashem to do. But if it is nature we think it is me. this inner tension is an identity issue

We build our divine vessel to be mashpiach on the world but every last bit of force comes from Hashem and through us. None of it is ours.

Gaiva says I am the source.

Humility says Hashem is the source of everything, it comes from Him through me.

Try this to help us change our perspective and consciousness of Hashem in our lives:

if we are eating food, like an apple, receive it, eat if feeling that Hashem is feeding me this apple. When we go to the bathroom experience it as Hashem is changing my diaper. Hashem wants us to be mindful as a receiver, and to acknowledge that we say a bracha. I received this.

Shabbos Chabura 4 Kislev Dec 2 2019 we are trying to acquire how the four elements of creation are embedded n the melachos of Shabbos as the basis for creating ourselves and revealing Hashem in this world. Last week we spoke about being a receiver of the blessings to build ourselves as divine beings each week and then ask Hashem to fill our divine capacities up in a more complete way on Shabbos according to what we create during the week.

today we will talk about the taanug of Shabbos and it sounds deceptively simple so I am going to caveat this . things that look deceptively simple like still waters run deep, that is what taanug Shabbos is. when we prepare for Shabbos, in anticipation for Shabbos, already waiting, so many days to go. as we go into Shabbos there is also the taanug of Shabbos. It means the light or ecstasy.

what oneg are we talking to, the simple taste of the food or the other kinds of pleasures? what exactly is the oneg of Shabbos and how does it relate to the week and using the melachos

we will speak from reb weinberg who talked at length about two core principles and how it relates to the element of water. Ultimately we are meant to be connoisseurs of pleasure. it sounds new age, funky, connoisseurs of pleasure. what is he saying?

He quotes the Ramchal in derech Hashem about Hashem's ultimate platform for conducting Himself is tov umaitiv. Hashem is the ultimate source of goodness and pleasure in this world and His bestowing that upon us is what we are meant to acquire. the five levels of pleasure correspond to the five levels of sou. physical, love, truth, creativity with an individualized mission and then love or devekus in Hashem.

It is true we want to receive the yoke of Hashem but it should not feel so heavy like an ox pulling a pack all day. it should feel light, energized. He is bringing this point to teach that we should focus on pleasure because Hashem's reality is tov umaitiv, and if we dont focus on the joy then the fear can be burdensome.

the pleasure itself should be reinvested into the energy to perform the avoda in the maximum way. Hashem creates all these amazing things for us acknowledge He is the Source and give it back. we go to truth and higher mission and to devekus in Hashem. Pleasure is not a sidebar thing we fit in when we can. Pleasure itself is absolutely essential to avoda because the avoda of growing spiritually systematically nullifying our human limited existence and connecting to our divine being, we are transforming ourselves weekly. that takes an enormous energy pack and is nuclear in the size of creation itself. it is an exhausting process. Hashem didn't say have a little pleasure on the side. He says you will need all the energy and vitality necessary to be charged and therefore it is essential to serve Hashem with that.

Chaim Vital in Shaare Kedusha talks about the four elements and when he speaks of water...fire wind water earth, water parallels the vav. on the side of not good, the middos ra are the taivas hataanugim, the desires that are on the midda ra side, the not good side of water. we just said pleasure is so important so central to serve Hashem, what is wrong with some desires, it is all good isn't it? Chaim Vital says it is but there is the side of holiness and purity and the side of tuma on each element. on water it is the taivas hataanug, lusting after the pleasure as opposed to going after the pleasure itself. what is the difference?

feel yourself, the self, in a limited way, connected and interconnected to creation in which you have a role in and tie it back to Hashem. that is taanug. Hashem puts the reality of pleasure versus limited bodily experience in front of us at all times. we can't live without pleasure because otherwise we are unmotivated, bored, apathetic because we are hardwired for pleasure. but in the body form of pleasure it is immediate gratification versus long term. it is ultimately counterfeit because it is self serving versus serving Hashem and reinforces the separation between Hashem and us. taanug unifies us to Him an to pleasure.

come Shabbos, we sample food before Shabbos. the arizal tells us that all the worlds ascend upwards three levels on Shabbos, including this world, all ascend up to the source point and when we see everything back to its source, that is called hishkasrus and then it is inter-included and bound up and that is the pleasure of Shabbos. comes the mitzvah of enjoying physical things, we say there is no reality of physicality. it is an expression of Hashem's creation and our place in it and our avoda is to give back creation to Him. unveil it. we have a part of that, in our toiling. that is the taanug of Shabbos. this is the important mitzvah of intimacy because when opposites come together and join and unify it is an expression of oneg, the ultimate feeling of arriving, where everything joins in sublime bliss . that is the extra layer of soul, telling us that when our radar, our spiritual senses, are up, we get a taste of the next world and we will perceive taanug. it is divine delight of the soul perceiving the interconnectedness and unified reality and our place in it tied back to the week.

Understand that taanug itself is the very basis of what Rabbi Weinberg is telling us. it is not about life being a party, although it is. it is about Hashem's essence is good and He is the bestower of blessing, the potential and the revealed. the more we see everything connecting back to Him, we know His reality in this world, we know our place and our own mission in this world.

how do we get there, to what Rabbi Weinberg and Chaim vital are saying. we want to choose between taanug divine pleasure and bodily temptations.

to the extent to which we live a mortal physical self serving existence during the week, Shabbos will reflect the human earthly physical existence and we naturalize Shabbos . but to the extent we subjugate the ego willfully giving up our perceived senses of separateness which physical pleasure is, then we come to see our soulful existence and we come to see the soul pleasure and we are excited when things come together, when things interrelate there is a wonderful surge that does not have a tangible quality. the fifth level of pleasure is feeling connected to Hashem, the joining together. it is a beautiful friendship. when you experience the sense of emes, as inherently truthful, we fundamentally are saying this is Hashem's creation and my soul was touched by that truth and everything is interconnected and it is all part of His oneness. when I affect others, wow it is Hashem's world . when we make kiddush and daven and learn and do mitzvahs of Shabbos and we let go of all the toiling and doing and becoming and turn our identity back to Hashem and say Hashem I am nothing I have nothing but You. there is no separate existence. every part of my life and everything I own in the world is only an expression and manifestation of You that I am to reveal and the bliss I feel on Shabbos is the pleasure of this oneness. what an incredibly beautiful experience.

reflect on this on Shabbos.

the key is to willfully and systematically want to limit human experience and nullify ego and this is anything but easy. when we nullify part of our ego in fire wind water and earth, we are nullifying the middos and the part of our identity, in this case pleasure. if we have pleasure for its own sake and reinforces me, the gratification of self. why would I want to reinforce what veils me from Hashem. I want to willfully give up parts of myself and even my pleasures, I am meant to have as taanug, the oneg is the basis to feel that surge in the soul, to feel the excitement of the interconnecting, the soul is touching taanug during the week then it will be more on Shabbos. that ultimately what the aspect of taanug and kavod are on Shabbos. taanug Shabbos kodesh. the pleasure of knowing Hashem's creation and the unity of it and how it relates to each other. we have a wonderful week shvitzing and systematically diminishing the ego done through pleasure because when we diminish the selfhood we are removing the veil of nature we are removing the natural elements. we are removing the water element and reappropriating it back to the soul knowing Hashem wants to give us good in the ultimate sense and to give it back into a mitzvah, the ultimate end goal, the world.

practically, what are some of the things we can do? the water is the element of vitality and nourishment, excitement and passion. Yaakov and Yitzchok dig the wells , the maayim, the wells, there are a lot of deep connections. Practically how do we embrace and embody the pleasure components of our lives. Hashem we want Your pleasure but I don't want it to be bodily pleasure. I want it to be oneg, delight in Your ultimate reality

what to stay away from...be careful of our taivas our own temptations and lustful pursuits whether eating, relations and intimacy, money and sleep. what are your desires and systematically use free will to reconstruct taiva into taanug. that is one area to consider. another area is the basis of touch itself. The power of touch is so powerful. it joins people together in exquisite ways. to the extent we give our touch away to others, we are giving part of our soul away to someone else. shomer nogea is protective. the sefer yetzira and arizal in eitz chaim, taanug and oneg, the letters are ayin nun gimel for oneg turned around is negia touch. it is also blemish, like on the skin or house that have to do with nega. it is the flip of oneg. when you touch someone for your own sake and it benefits you for your own sake and it is not tied to connecting yourself to the right people for the right reasons, if you are not shomer your nogea you can't be shomer your oneg. we protect nogea and protect the oneg. that is where the divine connection comes from. Hashem is giving us all the halachas to see the pitfalls where we give away our oneg and draw in inappropriate touch and that is part of the counterfeit part of pleasure, you are touched by that thing in a way that is now biased. when we are touched inappropriately we cannot truly see the oneg. we can talk about the laws of yechud of men and women being together. there is a perceived sense of togetherness that is the basis of intimacy, but even during the month when nidda, there is a mitzvah of yechud, that we are continuously connected to the spouse whether connected or not. we are never fully detached. that is built in. there is always some degree of togetherness. if the six constant mitzvahs are connection to Hashem, to always be connected we have to have the same with our spouse. that is a tremendous pleasure of oneg, a positive expression.

oneg Shabbos, it is important to take tremendous pleasure in Shabbos. not just body pleasure. we want to trade it up to soul delight, to listen to the inner voice of the soul that says I want to see HKB, to see every part of Hs World and be enraptured by His creation. I exist and have existence and I have a unique role that I toil in to reveal that. when I let go of my creative capacity and give that to Him for the fortieth, then the pleasure on Shabbos is the ultimate pleasure, all the levels of pleasure, the levels of the soul uniting with Hashem and our fellow Jews and our selves. may we live with ultimate delight in knowing Hashem and his ways in this world. we want to be a connoisseur, to delight in pleasure, in Hashem's world it is all light and all a delight.

We are continuing on the incredible journey of striving to become divine through Shabbos as a seven day a week avoda.

Last week we introduced something very fundamental. Just as we are supposed to have kavod for Shabbos we also have taanug Shabbos kodesh. On a very simple level, taanug means just basic enjoyment. When we look at it carefully, it goes even beyond the realm of pleasure and we call that spiritual delight. How do we essentially define taanug? We talked about oneg and taanug and we said as follows:

We said Hashem's reality is that He is good and does good and ultimately all bestowing of blessings in this world is good both in a hidden and revealed way. Our ability to receive that blessing, that which is good, is pleasurable, and that pleasure connects us back to HKB.

 So what is taanug? It has a funny dual split. One the one hand it gives us energy, energizes what we do, it gives motivation it gives us passion, it gives us striving in what we do, and it vitalizes our spiritual efforts, and at the same time that it is a means to something greater, it also has something fascinating - it has the end goal itself,. And what is the end goal? Using the pleasure and the ultimate root of the pleasure to unify creation, to see the interconnection of everything in a way that everything fits together, everything joins, and ultimately unifies.

that is what we said what taanug is and the time again is Shabbos.

So how do we personally relate to that. We are going to use distancing from evil, that is pursuing what is good, and then bringing everything together.

How do we relate to pleasure. and there is one more point, we are also looking at it in the context of the four elements, and taanug is water, the realm of desire, and Rabbi Chaim Vital says that taanug if we use it to the side of kedusha. there is physical pleasure in spiritual delight all existing and if we get to the root of what taanug is, what pleasure is, then we get to our inner character traits all the way down to the element of water in our spiritual makeup, where we see the source of taanug, what motivates us, and how to fix that realm of the soul through taanug, through pleasure. Pleasure is not just something we experience, it has a framework of meaning and purpose, truth and striving and at the highest level, it has the ultimate expression of nullification of self and being bound up in Hashem’s design. that is what taanug can bring a person.

We are going to take many sources, Reb Weinberg, Arizal and others. How does one relate to pleasure?

The first is that pleasure is not just an experience. It is something that has to do with choice. It is not just what I experience, it is an expression of choice. We will use the five gradations of pleasure, physical to love to truth to creativity, expressing one's Divine mission and purpose, and ultimately to love of Hashem. each one corresponds to the level of the soul. they are qualitatively upgrades of pleasure that has more Elokus and less self orientation, If we use gold as an analogy, ten karat, there is gold and other elements. It is the same with pleasure. even on the lowest level of pleasure, physical, ok I am having pleasure, but remember, pleasure is a choice. there is the real part of the pleasure and a counterfeit of the pleasure. the real is that part that is connected to the soul and the counterfeit is that part that is exclusively driven by the body. the soul wants that which is permanent, truthful connecting, even at the lowest level pleasure must vitalize us through connecting us to ourselves, others and Hashem. that is how we know if it is real pleasure. the counterfeit side, is quick fix, temporary, no higher focus, fleeting. it does not have to connect me to anything including myself and it is just pleasure for the sake of pleasure. that is the ego gratification, gratification of the ego itself, the pleasure is animating separateness. that is counterfeit. if the pleasure itself is for its own sake and just for your immediate gratification that is all counterfeit. so why does it feel so good? Hashem is telling us that pleasure has a spiritual component with wisdom in a way that says I am going to pursue the real pleasure. that is the important part of pleasure in relation to choice. It is saying I can be pulled by two forces ambivalence and I can be pulled by one way, I want to relate to the other, that means pleasure is about connection and it is about choice, about overcoming resistance, and overcoming temptation and ultimately it is about overcoming comfort and ease because it is much easier to have body pleasure than it is to have soul pleasure even on the lowest level of pleasure of physicality.

If there is food in front of you. Let's say you are not sure what the Bracha is. and you are hungry and we feel we have to have it now. I need to eat and it looks delicious but I am not sure of the Bracha. I will just say a shehakol, because that is an easy out, but I like to be truthful and I like to try to say the right bracha, to look it up, to ask a question, put the food to the side, say the bracha in place. but that struggle even at that level means am I eating just to have the pleasure because I want to satiate my body, to alleviate hunger because it feels so good? Or do I realize that pleasure can have a higher purpose even a physical pleasure, when attached to a bracha, connects us back to HKB and connects us to our soul. even this level of pleasure.

that is what Hashem wants He wants us to use the pleasures of this world to forge a connection to Him and ourselves in a divine way. When we do that, we are relating to the water element of our spiritual being. through the body. it is not that we are negating the body. we are using the body's pleasures to connect back to the soul even on a physical level. Pleasure is a choice, pleasure animates, pleasure connects, and ultimately pleasure unifies. but when we don't use pleasure that way, it is counterfeit. and Hashem created counterfeit, and He gave us the Torah to see through it, to use it correctly and ultimately to animate the divine reality in that moment. it is a means because it energizes us, gives us strength to do for that moment and beyond, and it also at a higher conscious level, it gives us the inner point. all of creation is to bring divine unity in this world. that is our job. that is our mission. and every moment has that potential stake as a divine stake to bring divine unity in this moment. that is our agenda. that is quite a lofty way of looking at pleasure but it is really on the ground. every time we partake of a physical pleasure, you can be smelling a fruit and say a blessing, fruit is to give a fragrant smell from fruit to flowers, every kind of pleasure in this world can be used to reconnect it back to HKB but also reconnect it back to oneself, to actually reveal your divine identity, in this case with the element of water, and connect to the other elements together. we said last time to do this and to take pleasure, seriously, means you can't be a baal gaiva. we have to not be an arrogant person. we do not have to be driven by ego gratification which means the gratification of the ego self. that's really hard. but if you take pleasure itself, get energized by it, it is so geshmach. You realize everything in this world is to reconfigure and reshape together and even the pleasure itself has purpose. that is physical pleasure.

then you go to the next level and Hashem says oh you want even greater pleasure, that means you will perceive my Divine Unity in a more refined way, in an upgraded way? Now you have to be willing to trade in the lower level of pleasure for a higher one. More truth, more meaning, more value and more purpose. will there be with these high level choices higher resistance, without a doubt and we have to expect the resistance and we will also feel the comfort and the ease of not wanting to strive to a greater level of pleasure. That is by the way the urge element. we have not talked about that but we will introduce it.

the afar part, the fire wind water and earth, the arfa is earth correspond to the name of Hashem. In afar earth there are many shades including laziness and comfort, ease, relaxation, non-striving, complacency, stagnancy and it goes into much more difficulty. that is earth based. we clearly see in trying to connect to the water part of pleasure we actually have to overcome the earth part at the same time. they are all interconnected. that means when we go, even in the level of pleasure itself, we have to work on this tendency to be comfort, relaxed and easygoing loving things. I know we like to use the words chill out, relax and these terms, but life is not meant to just chill. we must come over our natural resistances and our comforts such as the earth based part

now we go to a higher level of pleasure called love and there again we see that when we take time to truly emotionally experience the spiritual reality in another person, identifying and appreciating their virtues, we come to acknowledge the unique Gdliness through their traits and attributes that pleasure of love is immense...whether it is loving another person, loving Hashem and His Divine attributes and including and especially loving oneself. the pleasure of that love is immense, it fills our soul up in an incredible way that we just feel swollen with hope. Joy. exuberance. and that love is pleasure which is a means and an end. It connects us to things in a higher way, more divine striving, more divine purpose, more divine elevation and it fuels our efforts because to become divine on a regular basis is just an exhausting way. and we have to make sure our resources are properly filled up. Love is a tremendous quality to have. we have to also be sure that we are not talking about counterfeit love, like romantic love, in the physical sense, or we could also be talking about the misuse of the word love, when you talk about just ending. I love that food or I love that whatever.

when we use the word love frivolously and indiscriminately, what we are really doing is we are watering down the quality of love and say it is like anything you feel good about is called love. We may enjoy many things but we don't truly love many things. We love that which we truly acknowledge the virtues and fine qualities of another person, including and especially ourselves. that is very important to see through the counterfeit forms to what extent do we want to have true divine love with ourselves, others and Hashem? and in that expression of love it is tremendously energizing, it is euphoric, and it gives us the vitality to keep striving and reinvesting in our spiritual pursuit to keep connecting things in this world, keep joining things together, ultimately to keep trying to recreate Hashem's Oneness in this world, including within ourselves by bringing various elements of our identity together, various attributes of ourselves together, and now to feel the greater sublime-ness and inner peace of an integrated personality. that is what we want.

Now we go higher to the realm of truth. each one has its own much more depth. when we strive for truth, even greater than love, your level is the pursuit of truth, the ability to know that there is a divine truth, there is an absolute reality, and even we are willing to give up moment of love for something to give to the absolute truth of something. Sometimes we see that in what we have to give up in lower levels for something greater but it means to you, do you really take pleasure in that, for example learning? are you actually energized in a wonderous way when you hear a point of clarity and truth? You just feel like you want to soar because you know that truth is oxygenating your soul. and that taanug, vitality, is exquisite, and we want to take that very pleasure and put it back into our spiritual avoda for ourselves others and HKB, to keep striving, growing, and to connect to the right thing in the best way. at a higher level that truth is also unifying, in a moment of time when you are given this tremendous clarity where you see everything and how it all fits together, it is an inspiring moment, it is a moment of perceiving Divine unity, you want to hold onto it, you want to really understand it. that is what we are here to do and that is what truth brings us to. the counterfeit is to be very careful to not connect the things that are not truths or partial truths. very important to check out your truth that it really shtims with what Torah really is. it is very easy to go into the secular world to discover kernels of truth and then glorify them to be the whole thing. It is very easy to look in the Torah itself, and take an aspect of truth, and think it is the whole thing. we clearly know that the Torah is written in a way that you have to cross reference something in many places and interconnect it all to get a fuller picture because it is all about hishkasrus interconnecting and intercluding of Hashem's Torah to get a fuller aspect of truth. that itself is so pleasureful we have to thank HKB unbelievably when we say emes to emes, the energizing feeling of that pleasure is connecting it back to Him. that is what propels us forth.

the next level is creativity. We have our own unique purpose and mission in this world, our own special way to reveal Hashem's Shechina. It is not enough to have truth, we have to have our own truth that animates us to bring our own unique expression of Hashem's divine reality in this world. and that can come in many forms and much greater ways. and there is a great deal to talk about that.

the highest level, the ultimate pleasure, is the true love of Hashem, which means levels 5 4 3 2 all fold into level one we are talking all the physical pleasure, and all the love that we have for ourselves others and HKB in a limited sense, and our truth an dour divine creativity in this world and we are putting it back all to HKB saying the ultimate taanug in this world is to feel and see and experience only Divine unity, that all there is in the world is Hashem.

That level, as we move from ten karat gold to 24 karat gold, we are systematically using our free will to knock out various levels of ego from its more coarse, external forms, to its much more refined levels, overcoming our comforts, our resistances, our complacencies and our stagnation, to a place where we say we don't even want to live or exist for ourselves because all there is in the world is You . that ultimate taanug , we get a taste of that on Shabbos, when we make our whole existence back to HKB.

we see that when you go through those five levels of pleasure and the turn from evil is clear, what we do to knock out the comfort, the ease, the relaxation, the stagnation and the counterfeit parts of each of those five levels of pleasure, which has a lot more depth and breadth, we are knocking out the false element, the kernel of truth, the ase tov, is to pursue that pleasure positively that has meaning and purpose and truth, that uses our activities to energize and move us towards a spiritual striving, and then the bake shalom part is that you are not even doing it towards an avoda itself, you are feeling the end game, where everything comes together, you are experiencing the divine unity, that divine oneness, and you feel the end point in this world. that is the bake shalom. and that kind of pleasure is where bittul, self nullification, is drawn from. because it is both the means and the end. it is an incredible thing. it literally gives us the fuel to propel forward but paradoxically in propelling forward, and upgrading the levels of pleasure, action means less self more HKB, to bring you to the end game where all it is - is about HKB and everything is only Hashem of which we are part of HIs Reality.

and that is the pleasure converting into an avoda is driving us to, which means we have to be purposeful, and we can't say pleasure for pleasures sake because the very force that is meant to unify things in the world is actually being used to create separateness from ourselves because our ego separates us out from our divine identity, separation from each other because we feel more distant, and separating us from Hashem because instead of feeling more intimately bound up with Him we feel more fundamentally detached and entitled to what we want, how we want, and when we want on our own terms.

we clearly see the very basis of pleasure at that point is actually something that is working against us and not for us. In taanug ultimately there is this paradox of you are enjoying for the self to transcend the self to connect to HKB in His Everythingness and to see our part essentially of His Everythingness. and that is what the basis of converting physical pleasure into spiritual delight is all about, which is a rectification of water, and we will talk about how to use the creational energy of water, but at this level this is remarkable.

we have brought many areas so pick your own area, talk about your taiva of choice, what is your area of temptation or desire that is very strong, and how it is rooted ultimately in this midda in the element of water, in that part of the soul. we are not trying to kill it. Hashem wants you to have ultimate true pleasure. Emes-dik pleasure. purposeful pleasure. striving pleasure, not one of comfort and relaxation and chill, where it tunes you out of reality and it gets you into the self. that is not the basis for why He creates pleasure. He doesn't want us to abstain, He wants to have emes-dik authentic deeply real pleasure that creates connection, interconnection to ultimately tie everything back. that is what He wants.

It is fascinating, it is no coincidence, that when we talk about the power of touch, the word negiah, to touch, the fact that the laws are called shomer negia is something we have to take out very carefully. In whatever area of pleasure you have, you have to be a shomer, a guardian over your own area of pleasure. we said oneg turned around is nega, a plague or a spiritual blemish. we have to be careful to be shomrei, guardians, protectors of our own pleasure which is Hashem endowing it to us, making sure we use it wisely and not being tricked or deceived into using it for self serving purposes. and then use it for the sake of connecting to ourselves spiritually, others and Hashem. that is what we learn from being shomer negia whether it is with someone else even in oneself, you have to be a shomer over yourself. If you need other people as well you need other people too. it is perfect.

We spoke about yechud as well. it is easy to look at the mitzvahs in their negative form, like dont be together man and woman alone, private, secluded in a way that there could be a sense of perceived togetherness, but really that is our Tate saying neshamala, I want you to have the ultimate oneg, in yechud, to have pleasure of perceiving this divine togetherness. I want you to see this exclusivity, to see this sense of privacy and being encircled just between us and detached from everyone else. I want you to have that pleasure of yechud, not just in the negative form. I gave you the mitzvah to not be over in yechud, in private connecting to others so you could have that with Me you could have that with others in a meaningful way and with yourself, which means I want you to have as much intimacy and closeness and deep connections as possible because that is the oneg, that is what all oneg means, connection. when this connection is the opposite. so therefore, it is no coincidence that shomer negia isn't just in the negative sense. we have to be shomer guardians over ourselves in terms of our own pleasure, making sure we are striving towards divine connection and unity as much as possible, being mindful of our own traps that we caught in our own deceptions and trickery, the soton knows this is where all the money is at. the elements we are going to see, fire, wind, water and earth, the four elements, we are going to see has its koach, but there is a unique place that water has tied to taanug, very unique, that if it could blemish water, that would flow into all the others and blemish them all because water can then blemish in that it biases your perceptions, your fire, your wind, your movement. your directional forces and your earth, your strivings or comforts in this world. Maayim has the unique property of flowing into everything therefore we have to be very protective of our capacity for pleasure, to make sure it the least body oriented as an ends in itself and more soul oriented that works together with the body so that we use our pleasures to energize us and to lift us up and to connect because that's where Hashem is, Hashem IS in the places of connection and He goes into hiding in places of disconnection. so He says shomer negia, not because you can't touch this or have that. get over yourself. Hashem is NOT diminishing any pleasure at all. Chazal, gemara in chulin on kuf tes amud beis that says any pleasure in this world that HKB prohibits there is an equal parallel pleasure that He permits in this world.

The simple understanding is stay away from all those pleasures because you will get zapped. the deeper level is stay away from those pleasures because there is also pleasure on the other side, don't get caught in the trap. the deepest way to understand that is do you know that this is all about pleasure, energized vitalized, connect and unify? You have to know that is what pleasure is. but just in case you get derailed, be careful not to fall into the trap of the negative dimensions. Being driven by the positive pleasure and if you fall out, be careful not to be taken down to the negative side of pleasure. You have to understand this is an exquisite way that HKB says He is not doing us any favors. the reality of His Torah, to be a yid, to be connected to His Torah and mitzvahs, to have the emes and to strive, and to have divine service and to grow in each person at their own level. To realize it is all about pleasure, connection, it is all about truth and striving and that there is an end goal of unification in olam haba. amazing.

I don't want to wait till 120 - every week, and I can toil in that every single day of every week and I can suspend that toiling to get into Shabbos and have a taste of that ultimate oneg, the taanug of Shabbos, and feel that end in itself pleasure of having arrived, experiencing my own portion of divine unity every single week, who would want to go anywhere else.

the reality of Shabbos is the ultimate journey we have, every single week. If we truly focus on pleasure and understand the metaphysics and the practical side of pleasure and that we take pleasure seriously in knowing that we want to be mekabel, to receive Hashem's pleasure in a way, this is what He wants for us. You are not depriving yourself, you are trading up, lower things for higher things, and you are trading away counterfeit for real things.

My bracha to all of us is we should be truly meritorious to understand the awesomeness of what pleasure really means, body and soul and how to work together as a partnership and use the pleasure to give us the battery power necessary to run the whole 120 in divine service, day by day, week by week, moment by moment, all the way through and know in the end, Hashem is not depriving you of anything. anything that looks too difficult or tough or He is taking away, just look on the other side of this to see what is right in front of you waiting to be had and you will come to see Hashem is only good and does good. in every way, both what is real here and what is potential and hidden in the future and if we just hold onto that and we take that seriously, we will come to feel the elemental part of the water in us, which is the vav part of shem havaya, to connect to ourselves, back to others and to HKB and we can have a blissful life. that is what HKB wants for us, but the challenge is - dare to transcend the ego and trade it up to higher levels of divine identity and in that merit we should really merit to have the most blissful joyful incredible lives possible and really merit what the geula-dik reality is where all you would see is divine unity in the world, a veil of divine separateness would be knocked out completely. that is the kind of world we are meant to have. we should be zocheh to living that together. thank you.

Chanukah 25 Kislev Shabbos Chabura

May we be illuminating forces in Hashem's world to nullify the darkness.

Today we will have a macro orientation to Chanukah.

We will talk about the bais HaMikdosh past present and future and see another level in depth on the Shabbos chabura.

A few different angles.

Hashem is He was, He is, He will be.

Past, present and future look at Chanukah, lets take a wide angle view of the year and the position of chanukah and why it is situated in time where it is in the progressiion of the chaggim and we will see the fullness.

One question is that we we understand at Rosh Hashana aht the din is sealed, deliverd by Hoshana Rabba. There is a clause that says the fulllness of that delivery, until the ticket is fully delivered and received, does not take place until Chanukah. Why is it of all times that the din is not over by Hoshana Rabba? We have moved forward, the din should be sealed, delivered and done, but there is a dangling phrase that it is not fully done til Chanukah.

Question 2 about Chanukah is that a fundamental part is that it is tied to the zeman itself. If we like winter or not, some people who have winter blues, why specifically is Chanukah dangling...there is nothing the month before. Chanukah is an island in and of itself. Maybe that is the point but how does it relate to its own holiday, dangling from the earlier stage.

Question 3 is after Chanukah we seemingly don't have anything til Tu bSheevat, we have aseres bteves and is there a connection.

Where is Chanukah coming from , where is it in context and where is it going to.

I would like to share a beautiful daungting exquisite Chosom Sofer from Toras Moshe drash zion, zion adar, and the Chosom Sofor says on the third question, how is it connected. On the 10th of teves, we have this first of the few fast days tied to the destruction of the Bais HaMikdosh. The fast is abou the siege and the siege was just as it implies, a complete take over that cut the Jewish people off from their very life source of water and food in a way that they were drowning. this fast is coming to commemmorate and somehow make some kind of atonement for what is to come on the rest of the year.

how is it connected back to Chanukah? The Chosom Sofer says in every generation the bais hamikdosh is not actually built in that generation it is as fi the bais hamikdosh was destroyed in its days. a very hard thing to understand. The Chosom Sofer says something awesome, if it was destroyed in our geneation, it is literally destroyed, each and every year the destruction of the Bais HaMikdosh is renewed yearly and the mishmpat, the actual din of whether or not it will be built or burned actually is decreed uniquely on 10 teves.

He is telling us that the 10th of teves, between the high holidays and purim and pesach, there is a huge space and we have Chanukah. Chazal are telling us that each year the bais hamikdosh is not built,destroyed, it is as if we destroyed it in our generation. this we know on the three weeks, but on 10 of teves? the first of the fasts has to do with the breakdown of the bais hamikdosh, six months before. Chosom Sofer says it is not as if it is destroyed, it is destroyed each and every year, as if literally a bais din in shemayim is set up on 10 teves. Who hears about this?

It is an important Chosom Sofer that should be publicized amongst the Jewish people

how do we wrap our hands around this. This Chosom Sofer is really saying a bomb thing and say as follows. it is true the three weeks are the final completion of whether there is a building or a burning but the process of the building or burning is not an end result. it is a process that goes back to thr 10th of teves and already the jury will be activated in the higher worlds to watch us to see for those next six months and that is the significance of the fast whether the siege will reoccur or will break it at its core.

How Hashem can you put this decree when the majority of the Jews did not know?

If we look where we are right now, we have the answer. comes chanukah which is 8 days from 25 kislev to 2 teves, then seven says between 2 teves to the ninth and on the 8th day, the 10th of teves, begins that process of the jury from above setting into motion the process of whether we will have a building or a destruction this year.

How is it connected to Chanukah, nevermind Shabbos which we will tie in.

What is Chanukah really about.

It is true that when things go well we are happy, blessing is coming our way, everything is very straight. but when things don't go so well, or they seem to go backwards, inside out, so topsy turvy, it makes you so dizzy and disorienting, what is going on and we can get so confused on the chaos of things that it literally causing us to be disoriented from hashem and that is the test of Chanukah itself. the real test of how close you are to someone is not when thiongs are going well. when things are difficult or troubling, we stay connected, we are loyal in our path and there is an attempt to move forward. the right thing is the right thing and the straight path is the straight path. that makes us unshakeable. it is there that we are really tested to see where we are holding. that is the metzius of chanukah. yes it is the winter but if we have to rise a little higher to the soul of the matter and into the depths and the time when it is the most amount of darkness in the year, the exact opposite of summer, it is really a heavy repressive and depressing time. when we throw in all of this, Hashem wants to see the degree of loyalty we have, the extent of if Hashem is there or not and how much we reach out to Him with simplicity and that we are His unshakable people, on a path of straightness and truth, but we dont have to arise there all at once. we start with one light, there are eight days and that is the inner straightness of our souls. we start to move forward anew again. Last year's darkness is last year. If we do not see the Beis Hamikdosh, then it is the new potential. If we want to see the building, to have redemption and be in Israel, we have to start, to get on the straight path. Light each day and add incrementally. that is the renewal. tie it back to your starting point. all the way to the eighth day, zos Chanukah and then we have the full expression of inner renewal where we rededicate ourselves new, to our inner divine identity, to higher divine service and to serving Hashem in a higher more refined or elevated way within the choshech itself. that is where we are holding, where we are in the darkness, where are we holding.

when we feel the distance and we say Here too Hashem is found. There is no place in Creation that He is not and there is no place in my life or in time or space where He is not, in the intimate part of my life too. and I am using these 8 days to rededicate myself to being a mini mishkan. We are rededicating the mishkan for 8 days, the days we inaugurated the mishkan we are inaugurating ourselves. we want to be the mishkan. as we begin the future 8 days after Chanukah finishes, that will be the ikar preparation for 10 teves IS chanukah, how we shteig in the 8th days to declare at the depth of our being, it is a dark world, distance, pain, suffering, trouble and it is so easy to feel chaotic and I want clarity and straightness and inner joy and I want the depths of the light to come down to each place. in truth there is no place where you are not because You are in everything. each and every day of the Chanukah experience is to inaugurate ourselves through these days, and that segways to the 8 days preparing for 10 teves. will it be a siege by the outside forces that come from our inner vitality that is our inner ratzon or will our ratzon be burning so brightly and strong that we want Hashem so much. where are we going to strengthen our ratzon on 10 teves to know if it will be destruction or building? if we wait til then it is too late. the judicial process is chanukah, the preparation for 10 teves and the 10 teves is the activation of the judical process until tisha bav and that is when in actuality it is determined for building the temple this year. but that originates on 10 teves says Chosom Sefer. it is not as if it was destroyed. each and every year it is renewed again in its destruction. that means in its building. what createts that for us, to make ourselves an inner mikdhosh for Hashem.

chanukah is about the inauguration of the temple for 8 days, leading up to 10 teves. as you relate to Me in the darkness with a commitment to Me, a higher orientation no matter what, that is the preparation to awaken the inner ratzon on 10 teves and if that is strong indiviudally, collectively and nationally, the judicial process is started.

chanukah is the preparation, the main preparation, for the beginning of the judicial process on 10 teves and continues on 6 months culminating on 3 weeks and tisha bav.

what an unbelievable way to look at chanukah as the judicial process for building and recreation.

we want the ikar mishkan back.

right now, how we experience chanukah is the basis for the recreation.

how can signed on rosh hashana, sealed on Yom Kipur and sealed final on hoshana rabba...through the delivery of the decree, just like the delivery of mail, until it gets to our hands, it takes time. it comes out chanukah is that reality relative to the beginning of the year. Rosh hashana when we crown Hashem King, and Yom Kipur for atonement, and the simcha of simchas Torah. in the succah, we are on cloud 9. Now Hashem says this is momentum all the way to Chanukah. the place where you inaugurate, that new beginnig, that is where chanukah is.

chanuka is chanukas hamizbeach, the inauguration, capturing the new capactiy for a new beginning for a pathway for truth to serve Hashem.

Real chinuch means, from Reb Orlowick, from Pirke Avos, the mishnas teach us a specific midda a spiritual development, a time period, a point of origination, for the next period of time it is expanded to teach us the best way to captivate the process of chinuch, chanukah is to inaugurate. the incipient moment is to come within our capacity to grab it, put it into our new direction without any delay whatsoever.

comes chanukah which is the end of the holidays through marcheshvan, all the way to 25 kislev is where that capacity is being sealed for this year. the process of the deliverancde starts on Hoshana rabba but is only received by us on Chanukah. Until we can internalize that no matter where in my life I am, closer distant, higher, lower, chanukah will be the full deliverance because it is only then that we have created the full capacity for the coming year. that is how chanukah retroactively is the full completion of the din for this year retroactive to rohs hashana. then each day of chanukah, adding another aspect of connection to hashem of inner renewal of one's inner divinity, a greater purification. and to toil in that for 8 days and in that 8 day process of reworking ourselves we see it from the past to the present and from the dark of the present into the future of the 8 days into 10 teves and that activates the d=judicial process through which the bais hamikdosh is circumspect. is this the year of building or destruction each year a new judicial process like no other year.

this year the new reality in and of itself. you are a new reality in and of itself. you have a new divine capacity no matter what you did last year. as we shteig on chanukah we open up a capactity and it closes on zos chanukah.

why zos chanukah?

On Yom kipur we say three things remove an evil decree and over each of the three things..teshuva tefila and tzedakah. over each one of them we have fasting, kol and maim.. 136 is the gematria for all three. On Rosh Hashana Yom ipur and succos it is set into motion for delivery but it is not received til chanukah. 408 is zos, the summation of teshuva, tefila and tzedaka, the full capacity of everything we will be. on 8 days no matter what nothing is going to delay us. we will praise Hashem from a language of judgment and mercy. whether we feel closer or more distant we are always connected. at the end of that zos chanukah we feel the shelamos of that connection and that is our preparation for the din of the decree for the 10th of teves. we see chanukah as the preparation for 10 teves and 10 teves is the beginning of whether we will have bais hamikidosh.

chanukah is the connecting point between the high holidays to chanukah, the transitional point when things turn around. now it propels us forward to the judicial process that we should see the building of the temple.

chanukah is the transitional point bewteent he potential of what we could be and the inauguration of the activation of everything we are going to become starts by chanukah. it is the completion of the process.

Chanukah we are grabbing the beginning moment that everything generated on Rosh hashana, the giving over of the ticket is fully received and the activation - we see the chinuch process to dedicate ourselves to Hashem and the darkness is that pure potential of everything going forward.

9 months after chof hei kislev is chof hei elul. nine months of pregnancy.

once we are in that now we have to live that way, to dedicate ourselves for 8 precious days. don't let anything derail us. no matter what is sent to throw us off, He wants to see how loyal and stragith we are for Him. it is all hashem and how will we deal with that on the ground. when we bring that all the way down, that begins the inauguration of the new you, the new soulful capacity, rededicate yourself, yoru own defined being, that is what these 8 days are that now prepare us to go forward.

for all of klal yisrael are we going to see a building or destruction. what I dedicate myself for for this fast, I don't want a siege cut out from my ratzon, my innermost vitality. i want my ratzon to be a flame, to bring that out, and I don't want the siege to be for that. I want the ratzon to burst open.

we start with striving and perhaps this will be the year of the real decree. And it will propel me forward to receive the real bais hamikdosh and each one of us dedicating ourselves and help create the bais hamikdosh. we can live with ultimate illumination. then the 8 days are the days to inaugurate, for klal yisrael to be restored. that is the significance to connect the whole year together and that is the way we are to light and be oriented.

If we can begin to live this way we are found with chazal.

on the ground, when we light, light and anticipate the lighting, be energized and vitalized, not a place for downtime or crashing. be excited for the lighting, give tzedakah. come in with the right kavanas. realize what is happening. in those 30 minutes sit by the candles meditating and receiving hte ohr haganos, brought into the above, into our homes and our hearts, the extent to which we can let that light cut through all the kelipos in our heart, we can have a watershed and that awakening is our inauguration, our chanukia and then llive it, for 24 hours, each day and tie it back to the first day of origination. we are not just doing it for Chanukah but back to Rosh Hashana. Then we are setting the momentum forward whether it is this year or as soon as we merit to receive the lights well with gratitiude or joy. no matter what difficulties we have around us, here too Hashem is to be found. Hashem is everywhere to be found and we will rededicate ourselves and put our ego on the misbeach and Hashem You are everything and we are a part and we want the temple in a true way. we know din is going to come again and we are not going to be so frightful and get shut down several weeks from now. we are taking chanukah that we want this world to be complete, we want it more than anything and don't let any part of olam haze distract us. in that zechus we are dedicating ourselves to Hashem like no one ever has.

we should merit to see the real bais hamikdosh and be uplifted in a way we have never been before.

Shabbos Chabura Zos Chanukah

the shelamos to wholeness and completion for us all, may the light rise above all of it and see Hashem's Hand in everything.

Today we will address a situation and conceptually and then next week practically.

There is tremendous doing during the week. As the days move forward we separate from the previous Shabbos, Sunday through Tuesday bring out the past Shabbos and then Wed Thursday and Fri prepare for the next. The days of the week are about the shabbosims.

The spirit of urgency hits on Thursday night. We have only 24 hours to get all the preparations done, cooking, laundry, guests. There is hurriedness.

What can we learn from this hurriedness erev Shabbos.

How can we relate to it, running madly and trouncing others and being destructive in the process? Are we to run crazed? Is that getting ready for Shabbos? Is there a positive way to relate to it?

After we light candles all will be complete and good.

Let's talk about the element of wind, ruach, to connect to inner will. How to use the element of wind in the context of erev Shabbos to lift up one's hurriedness so that hurriedness takes on a whole different dimension on getting ready for Shabbos.

There are two ways to be rushing. Rushing means to rush aimlessly, moving quick fast and frenzied. Or moving with a goal, where are we going and what do we need to do to get there.

When we rush erev Shabbos we can rush the rushing itself, doing all we need to do to get ready for Shabbos. There is a special thing erev Shabbos. what would it mean to rush purposefully, directively with an ultimate inner goal. If we understand the element of wind on this topic, we can get exhiliration from the hurriedness but stay ahead of it.

What does that look like.

We are talking about wind ruach in the context of ratzon, will.

The wind is movement. Movement is the ability to go beyond stagnation and work towards something. the wind can go in six diretions forward, back, right left up and down and these six directions of movement are how we meander through this world. Are we moving with purpose or aimlessly. To know which at a soul level, look at the inner koach of will, ratzon.

why ratzon? Why not pleasure or emunah?

The Maharal in Pirke Avos says ratzon first two letters are ratz, to run. Inner will , an inner yearning for something, and that inner yearning createes movement, and that movement creates inner purpose with direction. And it is also connected to aretz, which also has to run.

This whole world is driven by movement. it means the act of moving. Ascent is about movement. What are we creating. There is a force around ruach to direct our movement in the six directions What does movement have to do with our existence and especially erev Shabbos.

What the Maharal is telling us that ratzon, with ratz in it, the way we will our selves to be is what we move towards. we move in the direection of that which we want. the very reality of ratzon shows the element of ruach. if we harness our ratzon we understand why we do it. what is the underpinning, the underlying motivation, the reason passion and yearning behind it. and that comes to a head erev Shabbos. it is time for preparing itself.

In the hashkafa class we had in the beginning, the whole 6 days of the week we exist to transcend ourselves in a limited way and work to santify ourselves for Hashem to bring out His Glory. In our own lives, the movements that I have are very significant and I have to reflect on that movement and we look at our inner ratzon for the basis of ratz.

Let's look at it on three levels. Who are we

What do we distance from , what do we work towards. What is driving us is avoidance of pain. Simple pains or deeper pains of anxiety or worry, sadness, depression, burdensomeness and on the heaviest level existentially we have our sense of aloneness and separateness in creation. In the ratz, we quell those pains and fears and hurts, to calm this existential aloneness, the pain and heartache we have of feeling alone, unfulfilled and empty. that can actually fix up erev Shabbos! That is one level of pain that drives us on some level.

how are you? I can't complain. but in that language, we are avoiding the pain, the troubles. that is what someone might say.

Upgrade is the pursuit of pleasure. Pleasure is a fundamental drive for motivation. the physical pleasures, the temporary and fleeting ones, the pleasure of truth, the pleasure of feeling loved and then loved by Hashem. that level is really seen as how we relate to creation and how everything works together. i am going after things, qualities, experiences that make me more whole, more complete and integrated in my being. it is drawing in things within me, things to refine myself, to make myself more complete. this is a deeper drive of ratzon.

 the highest level of pure taanig is to look at the wholeness of ourselves itself. to reclaim what is outside of me and bring them into me. we spoke about the taanug of the interconnectedness of the world. our deepest yearning is to unify creation in a way that we want to see the divine wholeness of everything and our place in it. that is ultimate taanug, it relates back to ratzon, the core drive of ruach with movement, because it is about knowing that is motivating it to move.

Is it to get away from pain, is to pursue pleasure. Healing ourselves and making ourselve whole is about fixing ourselves and building it back to us. Darke shalom is about connecting to Hashem, the Source of life itself.

Reb Yitzchok Isaac Hubb, in a commentary on Eitz Chaim, has a gematrai. Ratzon is gematria 346. what else has that gematria? Machor, Source. give me a source of something, what is a bonafide source ties back to the Torah. when we move from the realm of pain to go to a place where we see how evertyhign connects to everything, that is the origin of our being seeking the origin of Hashem. ratzon drives. Now tie in pleasure. ratzon is connected to pleasure because wind is a force of movement expressed through water or upward in fire. How do we mix these together to make ourselves more holy and refined.

we don't just have the four primary elements, they feed off each other. Ratzon, movement is the basis for all movement in six directions and three dimensions and we want to run purposefully and truthfully with high goals. be as mindful and as aware so that this three tiers - what pain do we avoid, what are we running towards to reclaim parts of ourselves and to draw in. This is the deeper ratzon to be more whole, to be more. And ratzon itself is connected to taanug, is it real or counterfeit. the marahal is telling us that we are running to elokus but to the left is nothing, non existence. why would we want to do that. that is why it is important to understand the elements, the movements that are linked to pleasure that motivates us and connects and unifies us. that is what drives us at the deepest levels that animates all the directions we go. all the elements have to be linked up together.

How does this relate to erev Shabbos. We are doing all week and then 24 hours before the rush begins. That creates a sense of hurriedness, urgency. that urgency, if we channel it to the neshama, the nefesh elokis, and we activate the element of ruach in it and we use the power of our inner movement to direct ourselves towards something purposeful, to get to a place where we stop all forms of becoming to get to a state of inner divinity relative to what we created during the week. that ability to release ourselves from all creative activity is the body's way of feeling that hurriedness and with mindfulness, then hurriedness is actually getting the body to conform to the inner will of the soul. we can feel the inner movement of the self and we can feel the inner source and say Hashem You know why we are in this world. we are getting ready for Shabbos. we are rushing to build our finite existence and then we release ourselves from the limitations of the physical world into the infinite dimenion of shabbos. so paradoxically the rushing, the inner will to become more refined, more spiritually integrated, then we use our mind to be more divine. come lighting candles we go from a state of limited finite existence to divine infinite existence. that moment we mekabel shabbos and we feel this ultimate inner peace, inner rest, inner menucha because the juxtaposition of hurrying with purpose and intent and then stopping and directing it back to Hashem. that allows the hurriedness to turn into inner tranquility. the ruach, wind with fire water and earth, then creates the tranquility. May the shabbos be completeness and restful that we are in Hashem's realm. we are not hurrying any more. we hurried with purpose and then we feel the ultimate release and that inner peace and tranquility comes. the paradox is the profundity of all that movement allows us to feel the stillness, we have arrived, there is no where else to go, we are nestled in Hashem's reality. all there is to do is have pure simple existence within His divine reality. it is full holy and it is relative to how much we move during the week, relative to the wind. then we pull away. lighting candles is when we leave our finite existence and enter the infinite realm. we are in this world for a limited period of time, using the rushing to go to total stillness. that is preparing us for the next world. we are prepared to confront our own mortality through the rushing and calmness and stillness.

Hashem gives us an ability to incorporate the hurriedness, the quick fast movement as our identity. the rushing is purposeful and focused and deliberate and we are getting ready to flip it at the end, and have tranquility.

If we begin to look at the rushing of erev shabbos as the wind within our nefesh and if we subjugate our ego, our rushing our food, if we diminish the powe rof the anochius, then the rushing is rushing not for myself or my own honor - we are afraid of our own annihilation and abandonment, everything has to be about how I am truly lovable - because in the end that is nega. we want instead to invest in our own inner elokus, which is what movement and purpose during the week is. we are not rushing for ourselves bur rather to convert our human existence to our own portion of infinity. when we light, when we mekabel and feel that inner peace , menucha of the soul and body, and it is from the hurriedness. it is the paradox to rush towards with purpose and not to avoid the pain of feeling I don't matter or that I am not cared for. we are trying to convert our own anochius into a divine reality and reinvesting it into a higher expression of elokus with hurriedness and focus and mindfulness and when it is built during the week and flipped, we elevate powerful wind within us, the koach of will ratzon to be complete and complete others and to turn ourselves over to Hashem. My very existence is being absorbed back into You. paradoxically the lack is what we are working for the whole week.

this is how we elevate the hurriedness to trranquility as nonbecoming as a state to be with Hashem's divinity. Shabbos is the ultimate vacation. we are returning back to the Source itself and that is our deepest week.

January 6, 2020 9 Teves 5780

Notes:

**REVIEW - Using the strength of the hurrying we do erev Shabbos to fix the element of wind in us by using it for a higher purpose**

A quick review. We spoke about alacrity and moving quickly erev Shabbos as the basis for preparing ourselves to get ready for Shabbos. we said to use the koach of hurriedness to move quickly to fix the element of ruach in the nefesh. we use wind to move for a higher purpose and we tied it into ratzon as the basis for movement.

**Practical ways to use wind – will for a higher purpose**

Now let's look at it practically. how do we work that so that we can use it erev Shabbos and through the week.

Pirke Avos says: 2nd perek 4th mishna: You should make His Will your will, that He should make your will HIs Will. You should nullify your ratzon for the sake of His ratzon. Why? In order that you should nullify other's ratzon to yours.

**Make His Will Ours – Why?**

Let's get practical. The first question is why do we make His Ratzon like our ratzon. Why not start with our will and make it His? The Mishnah says to start with His and make it like ours so that it will come that He will make His like ours.

When we do something not for the sake of Hashem but for self-interest, it is not so simple that it is lo lishma, because we may eventually come to doing it lishma, altruistically. Rabbi Dessler says that doing something lo lishma so that eventually we come to do it lishma only works if at the outset, before we start climbing the lishma ladder, that we focus on the end goal – which means that our will is for lishma, and that is our end point. Then our self-orientation that is involved naturally can come purer, closer to the lishma. The process is leaving the lo lishma to get to the lishma. But it only works if our end goal is lishma. The process is leaving lo lishma to get to lishma - the end goal is His ratzon first, as the driving force the end point, and that is the goal, to get to the top of the ladder.

Why start with Hashem's will first and make His like ours? If we are not driven by His Ratzon as the core basis of the Torah and mitzvahs and His operating system in the world,, it does not matter how much we work on ourselves. we cannot propel higher. It only works to get to a more pure form if His directive is the driving force, no matter where we are holding.

The Mishnah is telling us to make His Will ours, to seek lishma before we start, in order that we will make our ratzon His Ratzon. The lo lishma inherent in our will can then evolve into His Will.

Ratzon is the very source of one's being and yes we have to use our will as the basis to drive us during the week to get to Shabbos. we go lo lishma into lishma, using self-serving steps, slowly bypassing ego but that only works if we are seeking kiddush Hashem, that we are truly wanting His Will. If we are after our ratzon, cloaking and disguising it as His, it stays lo lishma.

**Moving ourselves from depending on nature to living as an emanation of Hashem**

If we give up our ratzon to Hashem by making Him the Source of everything and defining ourselves in relation to Him, then we can define ourselves back in relation to Him.

We start with His ratzon first. practically, we start with our less altruistic, our self-serving state, and slowly see it, understand it, identify the pure parts, see more of a mixture in both, and as we sift and work through it, increasing degrees and proportion of altruistic versus self-oriented. This works if we put His Will as the driving force even before we begin the work.

**The pleasure of experiencing divine Oneness - taanug**

The second example is based on the ten sefirot, the ten elements of creation, the highest is keter, crown, the realm of super-consciousness of Hashem's presence in creation. In keter there are three unknowable heads, but in simple terms these are the three levels of super divine consciousness, emunah, taanug and ratzon, faith, pleasure - divine delight, and will.

Will is an aspect of the super-consciousness that drives our yearnings and innermost will, the basis for our passions, our drives, including when we are not as passionate or motivated or if we have a mixture of passion or motivation. the emanation of that is in ratzon and comes from the highest sefira of keter.

Based on the first example, we use inner refinement to refine the will throughout the degrees of ego-centricity and increase the degrees of altruism and selfless activity. the bigger question is can we stay within will itself?

no.

The approach is that each level of the three unknowable heads is based on the one above. so will is based on pleasure. ratzon is wind, and taanug is water. So if we want to increase the passion of will, one way is to do it within itself as in pirke avos, and the second is to go to pleasure. The body's pleasure is ego based and the soul's pleasure is experiencing divine oneness.

if a person would go to the depths of why pleasure is so important, that it is the vitality energizing the force of creation and we renew the quality of pleasure during the week and on shabbos, then that itself creates a reservoir for new ratzon to fall into. Taanug spills down into the sefira. If we want to grow in inner ratzon, do a deeper examination of self, where are we holding in pleasure, from physical to divine pleasure. “Hashem I want to see every part of creation as an expression of You, I want to see not only Your Hand in my life but that every creation IS an expression of You and interconnects and my soul yearns to see that it is really all one and that divine unity is the depth of what pleasure is. The more I am committed to pleasure I can pass it back into my ratzon, and it has a higher level of lishma and that flushes out impurities of lo lishma

It is not just purifying within. we can draw taanug.

**Emunah -Hashem is the only Being that exists and having emunah renews our strength**

The third one is emunah.

Emunah is Hashem is all present, all good, for a higher good. but when you go to the root of your inner soulful capacity, that is the highest part of keter. That means emunah has to do with Hashem's reality is so great we cannot understand it because it is so high and refined we cannot go there and exist. The highest level of His will is not contained or confined in any way. So in our earthly terms, we work on emunah but our highest soul that wants to nullify our existence to Hashem, that I don’t know- He does know, and when I go to a place in my soul above taanug and I renew it and dedicate and go to self-nullification regarding existence being Hashem as the only thing that is real, we renew our koach.

Then we can emanate that renewed strength into our taanug, our core desire for pleasure, and our yearning to see how it all connects together.

Hashem is true existence and that will renew desire for pleasure, and once we strengthen pleasure, the innermost drive, the true soul pleasure, to see everything as Hashem - and I can only do that by experiencing His true existence of which I am an essential part - then that taanug goes back into ratzon.

The ratzon is renewed -the reservoir, of what we truly want, more inner purity, elokus, is all about negation of self. Emunah is the highest level of self-abnegation because it means the deepest inner commitment for Hashem's true existence and not to the “ me”.

Taanug brings it down a little to pleasure, the deepest pleasure seeing how everything joins together.

And when it comes to ratzon, that is the basis for generating movement. The highest part of my soul is seeking a purer expression of Gdliness and that goes into all our activities in this world.

**Summary of renewal**

The three unknowable heads, ratzon, taanug and emunah, going up and then down into our existence, is renewal.

Pirke avos is the same thing from a mussadik perspective.

Nullfy yourself for His Will. make the focal point all about Hashem, that He is all of existence, absolutely everything, in all of creation there is nothing where He is not everything.

When we can get more real with that, and our will conforms to His, His will can now be used to express to other people. This is the basis for how a person can begin to increase, deepen and nullify human existence and connect to nefesh elokis, connect to Hashem so His will can come through ours.

that is the basis for erev Shabbos, and for Shabbos - that all there is in the world is Hashem. I have arrived with my new portion.

The end point is that He is everythingness and I am experiencing a part of myself in His everythingness. that is the koach of ratzon.

**Practical activities during the week - make Hashem the source of all creation and nullifying that it is about me**

Let's say you start off with davening. Yehi ratzon milfonecha...Reb Shimon Schwab says may it be Your will Hashem. translate the words literally and we see May this will be from before You, meaning my will, my tefilla. it reflects in the tense to do to one's self. it is not just that I am making my request, advocating, that I have my own personal relationship. Hashem is saying your innermost being is tied to your ratzon and you are offering your ratzon in the amida and that new bracha will come down and actualize into you. Tate, where I am holding today and I now begin to connect to who I am and that I want to relate to You, what part of my ego do I want to suspend to give it up like an animal sacrifice. I am putting my ego on the offer and offering it to you. Here is my will may it ascend upwards, through four worlds, to the world of emanation and then drawn down after the 18 bracheas of praise, request and thanks and having it come back to us. that is the process of refining our inner will, we put it to Him. I want to make His will mine, so it is all about Hashem. It is not just about me or tate may I? I am trying to make Hashem the source of all creation and nullifying that it is about me. It is about making His existence the only real and true existence today as I see it. In order to do that, that is the first mechalich, make it all about Him. access my ratzon and make it about that.

Each section in davening is a level of refining our own individual orientation moving out ego through the four levels and then we have more refined ratzon, not just making requests. each one of the capacities is sourced in You, the source of all lfe. as we offer up each of those, it is saying I don't have self interest, I know YOu will give me everything I need. the source is rooted only in You because You are the only true existence. Then draw that consciousness down and bring it into this world as a more refined person, ego is upgraded, ratzon is the driving force and that is expressed more through mine.

In addition, I want to see what I am driven by. soul pleasure. and that is not even mine, it comes from keter, taanug of seeing Hashems everything of which I am a part of and the interconnectedness of which I am a part. The deepest desire to go into the world and see how it relates, with all the various activities and give that back to You, that is the pleasure i want today. I want to strengthen emunah. I dont need to know, I just need to pay attention and folow your lead and then I can have the deepest pleasure to give it back to You and that goes into my ratzon so that my ratzon will be more refined with G-dliness with less self-orientation , may my tefillos be higher so I can express your will.

In ashrei we say poseach es yodecha, open your hands and satisfy the will of every living thing. we can also read it may we open up the names of yud k vav k, adnus, and those names come together, 91. Yud of ykvk, the two yuds meld rachamim together to emanate everything according to the strength of will into the world. “Hashem emanate more will into me so the extent to which I can see Your will is the basis for everything, please emanate pure will into me so that I can express that through me.” We are davening for purified will, more divine oriented will, in line with ein od milvado. That is a tremendous way to say poseah es odecha.

Rochel's name is in the last letter of each word - the revealed shechina in us. The higher will of Hashem's ratzon should emanate to us and His will should come into the world through us. that is another entry point.

Thirdly, any time we are doing something, don't just get caught up with the results. Focus on your heartset, focus on your speech, focus on your mindset and if you go a little higher, what is driving me, what is my motivation, what is my compassion? is it fear based, love based? Find inner consciousness for ratzon and if you can grab hold of it.

Rabbi Pliskin says may it be your will that...may it be my will that it is an expression of Your will. Pick a mitzvah and express your soulful ratzon before you start. Hashem may it be your will that I perform this mitzvah with Your will and that expressed intentionality before you do something sharpens your innermost desire or yearning for why or how you do something. you consciously mindfully express that inner yearning for that, you are aligning yur will to His and that brings more purity for us.

Expressed intentionality from our inner ratzon, and then taanug and emunah is another way.

**10th of Teves Who do we want to be**

Finally for today, tonight is the 10th of teves, the first of the three fasts that express the beginning of the breakdown of the bais hamikdosh. the Chosom sefer tells us that there is a din, a judicial system that begins and extends through tisha bav whether this year it will be decreed it will be rebuilt. why does the decree start 10 teves? Because of ratzon. The siege means cutting off from inner vitality. cutting off from food and water does not mean you are cutting off from the world, you are cutting off from the source, they dont have access. It is appropriate to start today because our will is who we want to be.

Each one of us start the judicial process of our innermost ratzon and where we want to be. How much do we want the shehina in this world.

We can use any of the models today to go into this for the next 24 hours and make His will ours so we can go from my own self orientation to lishma and work on purifying it.

If you need to dig a little higher, how seriously do I take my pleasure, not just for me, I want others to have the greatest pleasure of knowing Him, seeing the ultimate of HIs creation , we are one unified people, and to unify His Creation and I want to up the level of taanug by going to emunah and drawing it back down to taanug and ratzon. my ratzon should be refined, more pure and expanded to express kavod shomayim.

it should be a meaningful fast. for a purpose. Hashem will scan the innermost ratzon of klal yisrael and we want to offer our ratzon to Him and we want to sweat so we can create more of an awakening. We want the building. Through taanug and emunah I want to refine the lo lishma. we are focusing on You. It is only about You and Your existence.

**We want our lives to express Hashem’s glory in this world**

We don't just want a great life, we want a life that expresses Your glory in this world what we want in some regards is to go deeper into ratzon and taanug and examine ourselves more honestly and bring up the ego to You and in davening poseach es yodecha, doing mitzvahs expressing our intentionality. we want to go to our inner source and give up ourselves to you. there is not really an us, we dont have independent existence, we want your ultimate truth, and we know the bais hamikdosh is being built and the judicial process is starting and we do not want korbon. No more suffering. we want the greatest joy, from the binyan.

May we be zocheh to do internal fasting and shteiging so that our ratzon can be part of the building and see and experience and know tangibly that the temple will be built this year. let's not make this a pipe dream.

 Let’s make this the real geula is coming and we need it now.

Shabbos chabura Jan 13

We are going through an indepth inner exploration not just from our successes but inwardly from our inner essence, our spiritual makeup, from the four elements of wind water fire and werath. that becomes the basis for our character traits that transforms our human expression into divine elements

We looked at fire for the basis for one’s higher divine wisdom, the character trait is humility or the negative form is arrogance. To work arrogance into humility we have to work on being mekabel. We spoke about mekablel shabbos. The timeperiod going into Shabbos is how we let go of the self in preparation to receive the pure potential..

Wind, we used alacrity, hurriedness, and the reality of movement as the basis for fixing that part of our ruach, as speech and other facets of wind.

Water, in the context of taanug, the importance of [hysical versus spiritual pleasure , that which separates verseus that which unites.

And afar, earth, afar going into the Shabbos,the shamor part of shabbos is to guard it. To cease doing melacha. The separation of doing melacha is the shamor part, is the part we detach from the spiritual harbor and go into the transcendant realm of zachor.

There is an opportunity to curtail or cease the Melachos in the context of kabbalos Shabbos. What is the real depth of the challenge. We spoke about alacrity, but there is something even more profound and grounded in a practical way.

If we go to fire, and we ask what is the core character trait, humily versus arrogance. In the mind’s eye, do we see ourselves as a physical earthly being or do we see ourselves fundamentally as a divine being. Then it migrates down to wind water and all the way down to earth.

That core conflict between self orientation versus divine essence reflecting Hashem is going to manifest itself at the level of earth

How does it come out? In all human relationships we want more than anything is that I truly matter to others and to be truly cared for. This is an expression of value and love. There are profound wisdoms there. Very simple earthly terms. When you strip all down, all the craziness and the fears down, we want to be valued or loved. But if it goes to our human orientation, then value and love are an expression of something external to us, an action, an accomplishment, something external that defines our value. and based on our perceived value from without, we think we should be loved.. Something that is external that we say defines our value.

Based on our perceived value from without, we think we should be loved based on our successes.

On the elokus side, if we break it down from wind water fire to earth, we still want value and love but it is intrinsic to my very being, to my inner elokus, my own elokus is Hashem’s divine presence rooted in my own personal divine essence. And the value in me is rooted back to Hashem. It is not tied to anything external.

This core conflict of value being defined inwardly or outwardly is the earthly expression of the conflict into Shabbos. When we know candlelighting is a certain time, and there is hurriedness, we can’t do anymore then, we can't accomplish. So what is wrong with that/ if I don’t do then I am not something which means I am a nothing and won’t be cared for. Doing something, getting the desired outcome, the final expression of something being manifest in this world is bound to the ego if we say in the elements. Our ego is on the line. So when Hashem says no more melacha, stop. Uh oh if I can’t accomplish I can’t acquire and then I am not. That is the depth of the challenge of earth and my perceived sense of somethingness is that I am a nothing. And I don’t have value and love and guess I don’t really matter. If I can’t do anything creatively, what am I worth, and what am I?

After six days, stop. Enough of your own hyuman existence. And if wind water fire and earth that we do externally are the basis for our feeling loved and value, then the cessation of Melachos are a mini-death.And shabbos might feel painful - Hashem is everything and I am nothing. But when we bring fire through wind into water and into earth and manifest in this world in a tangible way, we stop melacha to say we are partnering in our toiling in our divine service, but in the end, I am not valued or loved based on what is external to me, that only manifests what is inside.. My real true divine identity can only be liberated and redeemed when it is not bound up with Melachos.

Once we get to the point when we accomplish this, when we light, it is a mini redemption because my internal essence is not bound up and cannot be liberated by the body, with that higher elokus we get on Shabbos. Hashem is hiding less on Shabbos and the grerater revelation is I can come to my divine ideinty and I can experience my core identity being bound up with Him, with His everythingness. I am nothing independent of Him. That is the understanding of afer, earth. Earth is about solid, stable, but what is stability tied to? If it is tied to externality, then we get to the counterfeit sense of nothingness. ..if it is tied to something external then the 39 melachos are counterfeit sense of nothingness. When we go to anava, humility on the level of fire all the way down to earth, we experience positive nothingness that creates a healthy space in which Hashem can now reveal Himself proportionally in you in that space of nothingness relative to during the week. we need healthy nothingness to experience Hashem's everythingness.

In that we are truly something and that is where we find our core sense of value and love caught up in Hashem. That is our elokus brought down to afar. That is afar brought to earth. I am not caught up in self. That is the whole point of the melacha. create an elokus thing and subjugate the limited humanness. When we cease and desist the melacha from al lthe generals to specific, I am not independent existence, I am not truly autonomous, that allows Hashem’s everything to permeate us and our true somethingness can shine, as an expression of being bound up with Hashem’s realty. That is internalizing ein od. And that is what Shabbos is. That is what stopping the Melachos are. That is what we are doing, stopping creating.

What is the challenge? To challenge our false sense of self, that I am something to be reckoned with. We have to look deeply within. Where do we get our value In that place of groundedness, solid, in what we accomplish, go back to that innermost value to feel loved and is it coming from my actions. What are the net results, what truly is coming out. If I am defining myself, I am exposing a false sense of self. this way that is untrue. Our toiling, every week we are detaching from the physical reality of things, that is the reality of afar, and if we cannot let go, that is the overexaggerated sense of self, we think we are independence. That is the lethalness of afar . When humility and arrogance in fire comes into the level of earth in this way, that creates a sense of laziness, sadness, nervousness, and worry. All of that is expressed at the level of afar, it is worriness of the soul. It is nervousness of the soul.

That is the element of afar having perpetual worry, wanting ego expression.

If I can’t do it, then it can’t be done, then what is the point of me, I don't matter anywaym or all the pointsofanochius,why bother trying. When we go into Shabbos and our whole identity is based on doing, Hashem demands we let go of ego every week, willfully so that we don’t define ourselves this way but only as an expression of who we truly are. Every week we come back to who we truly are. When we feel we are not bound up by anything on the outside but I can feel and reveal the inner elokus in what I do, then I am serving Him and I don’t have to be sad about things. I don’t have to lack compassion or feel complacent or stagnant. It is all Hashem. I do my part.

RABA is an acronym

Ratzon, what we want and where we want to go to

Beis, behira, will

Hishtadlus, our effort

That is in our sphere of influence. We don't own it, we possess it. We have an ability to choose. Our effort, that is tied to existing, energy and movement is all a sense of Him.

We access inner greatness that is already there, hidden within us, bringing it to the surface every week. When we stop melacha, and we let go of the end point, the outcome, outward things that are stable because there is really only Hashem. Remember, zachor, through kiddush and davening, He is the Creator. The First, the conductor of every part of creation, soul time and space. He is in everything we are testifying to His Everythingness through our nothingness. We testify to His Everythingness by our nothingness.

We give up our independence through our toiling during the week in positive melachos and we create a vacuum to darw in His everything ness and it is there we feel that we are truly something as an extension of Him, a manifestation of Hashem. It is there we feel we are truly something as a manifestation of His Will.

Here is story

Rabbi was young and found a gold rock and thought that he had found real gold, thinking of all the candy he could buy. His mom asked what is in the bag and he told her it is gold and she said it is not gold. They did not agree. The next day his uncle who is a gemologist came in and he told Rabbi it is not gold. He felt so crushed on the inside, like he had this wealth and how could something that looks so real turn out to be not real, counterfeit. If this is fake, what else is fake?

The ego, hte human existence, is non-real. We swear by it and it feels so real in our experiences in every way and it is not reality. That is the positive sense of nothingness. We transcend the ego on Shabbos by ceasing the melacha. We really are nothing. Are we a true nothing or a false nothing that leaves us with non-existence? A true sense of nothing is systematically subjugating human existence opening a place to allow the divine and then we can experience His everytingness and that is how we become truly something.

The ego is counterfeit.

Hashem says every week, here is a positive way to let go of ego from counterfeit nothingness to true nothingness. Hashem directs all the results. Hashem is not just in fire and wind and water, I am in earth too.

It is all divine cloaked in the natural, and so are hyou. Divineness is our elokus cloaked in the human natural existence and we work on getting to ahealthier positive nothingness. Then we feel the all encompassing presence of Hashem in our life. Then we feel it intrinsically tied to our own elements, to our fire, to movement, into core desires in water, into action and toiling and actions and results and let go of frustrations of controlling the way I want. Otherwise we just give up or get sad. that is unrectified fire that convinces us we are nothing We have to get it from higher level of consciousness and into the ground level of outcome and results and let go of ego and control and power the way we want. If my anger and frustration get inflamed, that is all afar based. If we do this, we think we don’t matter, get sad and laziness. We convince ourselves we are nothing in a false way. We are nothing in a true way that we have intrinsic value and love in relation to Him. That is what we go through every week for Shabbos.

The outcomes we have is truly inner ratzon connected to Him, how much is reflected, and wise choices on a moment to moment basis. We become refined, that is the power Hashem has gifted us. On Shabbos we give it back , we have no ownership, we never did, we give it back and connect to our immortal existence, the immortalith of the next world that we taste on Shabbos, and that depends on how we cocreate during the week. Then we feel Hashem’s presence in our lives. The outcome is gifted from Hashem, that in that smallness is where we feel Hashem. That is reconciliation of afar. The positive midda of afar is a constant state of joy. As long as I know I am connected through the elements back to Hashem, my identity is not independent in any way but completely bound to Him, then no matter how close or distant, I am always connected and that is a constant joy. When I get very earth based and rigid and controlling, then my ego is weighty , it is all on me, and the burden of life feels crushing. I can’t I won’t or I am not able to.

May we merit to continue living six days a week giving up human existence so that we have true divine existence and on Shabbos to uncover the hidden treasures within and know Hashem in the greatest way and bring the elements as yud k vav k, integrated parts of our divine self, for us to reflect Him into this world. This is why we exist. This is our avoda let’s get to it.

Jan 20

The pracetical side of afar as it relates to going into Shabbos. This will give us the framework for looking into earth water wind and fire as the core inner constitution of our soul, as Reb Chaim Vital tells us, and we will use this framework and then go into each melacho positively as we create ourselves during the week.

Fire is strengthening our inner will to be a recipient, minimizes our gaiva.

Wind is the ability to move rapidly erev Shabbos, and the hurriedness is to move with purpose and focus and intensity. We are taking the direction of the wind and channeling the fire for Shabbos

Water is taanug, spiritual delight. The ultimate pleasure the soul has to experience different aspects of the world to interconnect and fold into each other, so see and experience Hashem’s oneness in the world and in my life

Earth is the physical manifestation of an end process, the outcome, the results, the external realization and actualization. It brings a core stability and security and a deeper rootedness in Hashem.

When we cease and halt by candlelighting of actions, we get out of an outcome oriented way of life to go to that ultimate state of submission where it is not us, He is the playing field and basis for everything to come out. When we stop the melacho we detach from the external expression. The world does not need us for it. It is all Hashem. That feeling of nothingness, sadness, laziness, worry and the like. In the soul, it produces rootedness in Hashem. Nothing has any independent separate existence. Everything has length and height, but we stop melacho but we are elevating the koach of the earth and our being is nothing of itself and directed back to Hashem’s everything, His presence in creating and sustaining and bringing Him to fruition. That is how we produce real simcha. We are rooted in Hashem and we are nothing in ourselves.

Let’s bring it out in a few applications as we go into Shabbos.

1. If that is the case, what is the point of it all for us, a lower world, revealing Him. Do we matter, do we have purpose? We clearly do. We have the koach of free will and redirect them back to Hashem. We are reformatting our internal identity. We are unmasking His Presence in the world. He reveals hImself on Shabbos to the extent each of us individually and collectively work on it during the week. We can come to see it is all Hashem. Our contribution is reish beis hai, inner will, free will and hishtadlus. As opposed to orienting toward outcome for defining ourselves and our worth, we internalize that we are living to journey along a path He is guiding us. We have to be inwardly collected to our ratzon, how to keep it sharpened, trying to refine it. That is what directs us during the day. We have to get on with what we do, we have to use behira, the battle of the yetzers, the side of truth. We are not living in a self oriented way. That has to be driven by will and then goes into action. Hashem produces results and is the end game. We are really saying it is all Hashem in a potential way, and we are nothing in effect. Our importance is how we manage the process, what we want, and how we superimpose it into our day and apply it to our efforts. He is the one endowing everything. The pure potential of who I am and what I want, my greatness is my soul and spiritual path and I want to reveal them through me as sourced in Him. I want Your greatness revealed in all the world including this world. That is the spiritual imperative. Within anochius, it is His greatness manifest through me. It is our strengths and capacities gifted to us. It is His greatness we can manifest for our greatness.
2. What if I am not such a growth oriented person? Everyone seeks value and love, that I matter and am loved. The soul wants to feel people care about us, that we have value and love. If in the end the outcome and results create external things, we feel empty and hungering for something more. We can just bring it all the way down to earth. The outcome is the manifesting of Hashem’s reality in this world through me but does not define my value or worth or my inner love. That is rooted in my soul and back to Him. When we stop the melacho we realize how exclusive we are with Him, rooted in Him and bound with Him in a way we are not reliant on the outside world in any way. We do not need any part of the physical world to see this. This is lifelong work. It is a commitment to seeing my value and love is less defined by external things and more defined by internal things. Then we are not justifying our existence. As it manifests we have to work and toil. we are going to see on the raba level to manifest Hashem in this world. Look at our inner woundedness to upgrade ego into divine realm, and to use Shabbos for our intrinsic value. As we stop acts of creation, we say we are giving our existence back to You, and all that I toiled is for You, I want to reveal something, as if I am leaving this world. We are not doing acts of creation and it is there we can feel the depths of our soul andinner spirit. That is what we want to create, this inner identity. We are mekabeling this divine spirit.
3. We spoke about the four elements with earth the end point, the result of a process. The end goal is to cross the finish line. Over time we see the interconnectedness is that we have all four elements in each, in our inner identity. We want the elements all working together. Otherwise it can fuel deficiencies in earthiness, laziness, sadness, habituation, not creating anything new. It is like the hei separated from yud k vav. We want to feel the depths of humility coming into the physical expressions, and then we see how these are spiritual expressions.

Beir mayim Chaim says: there is a deep paradox that express something physical rather than spiritual . Physical things like eating drinking and washing have the upper two letters of shem havaya. But if we look at..then it is vav hai. When it comes to a spiritual activity like torah and mitzvah we reveal it into the physical world as something divine, intrinsically divine. The toil is to superimpose on earth so it is luminescent of heaven. But if we start with physical like food or water or washing, there is a spiritual root to each of those activities. The physical self is actually rooted, to take shemayim and convert the physical world, and then the physical parts of the world and convert them back, we see it is all purely divine, masked in the molecular makeup. In reality, as we work on the elemental level, we see it is the misappropriation of the elements in the soul that is creating negative forces. We want to know the proper revelation of Hashem’s elements. That is how the very elements can be concealed. We want to unveil and reveal. Look at the elements as a combined unit to get into the realm of earth so earth is not stagnate.

EARTH has the word heart in it. When we bring heart into earth, we see something revealed in earth. HEAR is part of the word earth and heart. If we don’t listen from the inside and create this inner silence, we will get caught up and get very distracted with the loudness of olam haze, we can’t hear deeply in our mind and soul and how to reroute the elements. That is how we wil use the elements to build the mishkan so we can really experience being a soul bound up with the creator of all existence. That is how important we are, where we feel intrinsic value and love. Don’t get caught up in seeking those from this world. When we think self is everything, that is nothing.

Arizal says there is a hiddur mitzvah of washing our hands to rub the hands and hold them up. The hands represent action. We can think our actions are disconnected from our hearts and minds. We wash in the morning to remove the tuma, we wash for bread. The arizal says right side is chesed and left is gevurah, and rubbing them shows how they are connected and when we uplift them, we say we want our hands to be connected to a process, with our higher consciousness connected to You so that when You bring the results, You know we know it is You. There is a remez in al netilas yadaim. Netila is to lift up. We don’t want to just wash, we want to direct our actions to the root, from mind to heart to actions. If you look at ayin, nun yud, it is ani, someone completely dependent on something else. Our actions have no independent reality. Hashem animates our existence, He directs our hands towards something. We are so impoverished, we are nothing. It is all from You. When we lift our hands up, we are ani, and enriched, drawing from Him, but nothing of our own, receiving from His everythingness. We are washing our hands and are potentially changed forever.

The Chida says that acts of charity giving save us from death. On a simple level, we are going beyond self. There is something beyond, because death is a force that clings to self centered existence. Tzedakah is read from right to left in atbash, it spells tzedakah again. Tzedakah rectifies the din. Make it more about Him. We can see Hashem’s all encompassing power. If we take a coin, representing a yud, and the hand extending, that is the vav, and the receiver is a hei. Take from above, receive it, extend it, and give it to them, knowing you are the conveyoer of the blessing, you can understand Hashem’s Name in a way that brings in more elokus. Earth means I work hard, I do what I do, I hold onto my money – m -one -y, giving tzedakah connects us to the life force and we feel the fire water and wind going into the earth and manifest back to Him.

We are no body, a parallel manifestation of the soul, that is here to reveal the soul. We don’t need to hide any more. We don’t want Hashem to be hidden, we want Him to be found, revealed in practical ways on the ground. Everything in this world is a representation of something in this world. We will come to see in a more revealed way that all there is in the world is Hashem.

We want the positive expression of melacho to knock out self orientation and then revealing Him on Shabbos. Our lives are dedicated to reconstruction of the beis hamikdosh.

We can restructure our core identity. All the strivings are gifts from Hashem to reveal His divine presence in the greatest way.

Shabbos Chabura Rosh Chodesh Shevat

We have the puzzle framework of how to look at the four elements of creation, wind water fire and earth and how these are embedded in ourselves, to be awakened and refined through Shabbos. Both with Melachos and cessation on Shabbos.

Today we will explain nine thoughts. Moleches machsheves. When we talk about an act of creation, there is an internal process. There is precise language and a process and ordering through which the tabernacle is created. These steps, the inner processes that the mishkan was constructed are related to Shabbos.

We guard the Shabbos by not doing a melacho, an act of creation. We are adding it as something that changes the physical structure. The process through which the tabernacle was built has nine steps in three processes.

The mindset is the first three conditions, then in the actions, and then in the outcomes, the end point when we produce a melacho. There is a process of separation.

We are looking at the melacho on Shabbos when we don’t do creative activity. Now that we have created ourselves during the week we stop the earthly human existence to a taste of divine eternity. To access that on Shabbos we must refrain from the melacho.

If we don’t do the melacho with the nine conditions, it doesn’t take on a Torah prohibition but is prohibited rabbinically. There are three categories if we do the melacho with, it is severe.

These conditions make something prohibited, permitted. If a melacho is an act of creation and we refrain from it, and we do it six days a week, we are acknowledging that we do it, there is an element that is positively creating in each melacho, using it positively to create oneself spiritually, to draw down divine influence, to awaken soulful identity and break down human existence. What does a melacho mean? It is a creative action that changes the actual structure of something. We are trying to change our ego, our selforientation and make it more divinely oriented.

We want to awaken the various elements through the co-creative energy in the melacho and give birth to ourselves in a small way during the week and on Shabbos. This is a way to see melacho in a positive way spiritually where we are co=creating ourselves.

In the moleches machshavos, if it is a full prohibition, it includes each of the following nine conditions. So during the week, if we want to rework ourselves during the week we want to make sure we use each of the nine conditions as an essential part of creating ourselves.

Otherwise it is less potent. If we want to thrive and actualize our divine being, in potential and fullest form, we want to know each of the nine and activate them and see that they are working together in harmony to work together to create us spiritually.

Not only are we not going to look at this with reward and punishment but we will look at it during the week as a way to restructure the core identity as we live each day. We want to create in the most meaningful way, with maximum potency of what we are doing.

The first three are mindset:

Awareness: In terms of the negative a person has to be consciously aware that they are performing a prohibition on Shabbos. If a person is not aware, it just happened, not in consciousness, it is not a Torah prohibition. If a person is aware on Shabbos, that is one of the nine conditions. Awareness is a very important essential ingredient of the inner process of creating a mishkan. If we are doing without being aware, we are dropping the potency of creating during the week. We have to be aware of this struggle of being human versus being divine is the tension of our free will and how we apply it. If we are not aware, without consciousness, then we might be growing intuitively, or a random way. When we put this into the Melachos, it is an important part of the process. It is so fundamental, divine consciousness.

Intention: A person has to intend the net result they are looking for is what they want. If they do something and it is not what they intended it for, then it is not a Torah prohibition. The intention has to be specific of what we are focusing on. The expressed intention consciously is to serve Hashem with the mitzvah of…that is awareness and intention. That is a transcendant experience. These thoughts will be applied to the four elements and it is dynamic for growth, deliberately, methodically, systematically.

Purpose: We have to do the melacho for the sake of what we want to accomplish. The purpose means what is the actual thing we want to accomplish and not secondary benefits. We want to do things during the week with an underlying purpose, with intent, as the mindset before we do it.

These are the mindset basis, how focused to be as we do. We are purposefully and mindfully creating. We are releasing the divine sparks.

Now come the action itself. When we refrain from a melacho, there are three conditions to avoid Torah prohibition and then doing during the week to create ourselves. We are trying to awaken a process to create a mishkan to draw the Shechina into ourselves during the week and on Shabbos. We can appreciate the inner anatomy of creating.

Conventional: When we do it the normal way, that is conventional, as opposed to an unconventional atypical way. That takes it from a Torah prohibition to the rabbinic level. There are ways to do things. What is the ideal way to achieve something spiritually as the Torah tells us to. The same goes during the week on developing ourselves using the most wisdom given to us, to co-create ourselves.

Directly: In the straightest way means the shortest distance. When we do something in a very direct way, that is the most potent way. If we do it indirectly, that drops it from a Torah prohibition to a rabbinic prohibition. During the week, we can maximally create ourselves using these nine points to have the greatest impact.

Efficient: We can do something conventionally and directly but efficiency is important too. Efficiency means making good use of time. A week is 144 hours. Our time and resources are limited and bounded. We are accountable for the use of our time and resources. He gives us everything we need to create over our life time. We don’t want to waste opportunities, we want to maximize what we are doing, to grow through things.

The final three are regarding the outcome. We can have mindset and the active way of doing things, but what about results. Yes Hashem is in charge of results but He blesses our efforts. He blesses our free will with results because He wants us to reveal everything on high here in this world. He wants us to express it here and then He converts it to its spiritual reality. Otherwise we are not partnering with Him. We want results but we do our part, co-partnering with effort, and we can look for the results with mindfulness.

Constructive: If it builds something great. But if it is destructive, it doesn’t have a constructive purpose, it is not a condition. Many times we sabotage ourselves, that diminish what we want, what we are going after. We can push away the very thing we want, and push away what we are looking for. We have to look for what we want, the mishkan, the ultimate construction, a building meant to last. We want it constructive and not destructive. Are we constructing our divine identity or are we concealing it by putting the human front on it.

Permanent: Not only are we providing a place to reveal, but it is not temporary. By doing the Melachos during the week, we want to start, continue and finish. We want to generate something from nothing, move it forward, and to close it and wrap it up. Permanence when it comes to co-creating ourselves, just like each week of pregnancy, to have a lasting effect is self-sustaining. The first two Beis HaMikdoshim were four hundred years each. The final one is going to have true permanence. We appreciate when something is there in truth, permanence, lasting and enduring. We want to make sure that what is created will be lasting. Slow gradual incremental effects sustain the long-term way. We build it into ourselves. Praiseworthy is the one who comes to the next world with the Torah in his hands, a part of us that we can come to the next world with it. When we acquire things spiritually, we want to build it to a midda, to an inner elemental part of our identity to bring out the inner divinity we can see within ourselves. That is everlasting.

Quantitative: There is a certain amount of quantity. Everything has its minimal measurement for something to be permanent and lasting. Little results are good but we value incremental processes. We feel the incremental growth, we appreciate each little thing and the summation of each element of growth, of substantial quantity.

This is the general outline.

In summary, we see the very process of constructing the mishkan was exacting. Each of the nine thoughts was essential to reveal the Shechina in this world. We should see this within ourselves through the Melachos and see ourselves as creational partners with Hashem for a divine world in a here and now way, by converting our actions into Melachos, co-creative activities, to create our identities and become a makom to house the shechina.

Every single hour of every day can have this creative element.

We should be zocheh to learn and apply these to our daily lives and realize what we are doing in our lives and impacting on the whole creation that we are testifying to on Shabbos. We are partners in revealing Hashem as the Creator and know His will in the very best way.

