

BILVAVI

THE EVIL INFINITE

A KABALISTIC, ESOTERIC UNDERSTANDING
OF THE INTERNET CHALLENGE,
FOLLOWED WITH THE "ONLY SOLUTION"

Adapted from the hebrew shiur
of the author of Bilvavi Mishkan Evneh
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A KABALISTIC, ESOTERIC UNDERSTANDING
OF THE INTERNET CHALLENGE,
FOLLOWED WITH THE "ONLY SOLUTION"
WITH FOOTNOTES OF ADDITIONAL MATERIAL
FROM THE RAV, INSERTED AFTER THE SHIUR
OFFERING KABALISTIC BACKGROUND
OF THESE CONCEPTS
WITH Q&A

TRANSLATED FROM THE ORIGINAL HEBREW SHIUR

דרשות 138 מדיה קליפה לאין סוף תשפ"ב

EVIL - THEN AND NOW

Let us think a bit with *siyata d'shmaya* to understand the design of Creation which Hashem has created. He created light (good) and darkness (evil). What is the root of evil, and how is it revealed especially in the final generation - which is our generation?

Chazal said that there are two tools for sin: “the eyes see and the heart desires”, and that the evil inclination can only have any power when someone sees with his eyes. If one doesn't lay his eyes on something, the evil inclination has no power. When the eyes see good, it is called “good eye” and when the eyes see evil, it is called “evil eye”. The root of evil comes from this “evil eye”, the characteristic of the students of Bilaam.

But Chazal revealed that there is also a more inner root to evil, which is even when a person can't see something. It is the simple cajoling of the evil inclination itself which tries to convince a person to sin. Reb Yisrael Salanter said in the name of Reb Itzele Blazer that the “animal soul” of a person contains an angel which is given the task to convince to person. An example of this as the Gemara says how a person would sin just by mentioning the name of the harlot Rachav [this was before she did *teshuvah*]. From this we learn that just mentioning a sinful act or sinful person can bring one to sin, even if he doesn't actually see it. This reveals another deeper layer to the power of evil.

The eye can only see what's in front or to the side, but it can't see what's behind a person. However, there is another force that convinces a person to sin. Reb Nachman of Bresslov said that in the later generations a person is able to see even what's behind him. He looks behind him to see what it is. He senses there is something bad here and he is dragged after it out of curiosity. This is another stage of evil, and through it a person goes after what's even behind him.

So there are three levels to evil. There is seeing evil, or even just mentioning something that's sinful and evil, and finally, a person can also be dragged after what he sees, out of curiosity. First he was curious and looked all over, but later it's in front of

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him, bringing even what's behind him to what's in front of him, and keeping it in front of him.

All of the creations are known as *tzuras adam* (the design of the human being), as Reb Nosson of Bresslev explains at length, how the whole design of Creation is really the design of the human being. Until the later generations, evil was within the design of man, and evil would attack man at that level. But in the later generations, when we are in the period of the end of days, evil attacks man at a level that is beyond the human design.

In previous times, the temptations of the *yetzer hora* was that a person could look at where he shouldn't, and "the eyes see and the heart desires" what it sees. The *Mesilas Yesharim* says that a person is surrounded with evil from in front and behind, and therefore a person is always at war with it is. But until today's generation, there was a limit to how much a person could see. In the last generation, evil becomes unlimited, with the closer we get to Mashiach's sudden arrival when evil will break forever and Hashem's Infinite Light becomes fully revealed.

As a kindness of Hashem to empower us to face the unlimited evil in the last generation, Hashem allowed a hidden light, called the illumination of Mashiach, which shines in the end of days (though it won't shine completely until Mashiach comes), and this is an endless light, a light that is above our Creation, to help us counter the level of evil now which transcends the limits of Creation. It is the hidden light which Hashem created on the first day, which enabled man to see from one end of the world to other, and Hashem put it away for the tzaddikim in the future. And there is an illumination of this light that becomes available in the end of days with the closer we get to Mashiach, when the light will shine completely. After Mashiach comes, this endless light will fill all of Creation. "In the future, Hashem will remove the sun from its sheath which will burn the wicked and sustain the righteous"¹, which is essentially the revelation of this endless light.

¹ Talmud Bavli Succah 3a

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Until the last generation, evil was limited, it was within the design of man, it challenged the design of man, but in the last generation it becomes unlimited and goes beyond the design of man, and it is given the seeming power to block Hashem's infinite light (though it is not actually blocking Hashem, because there is nothing that can really block Him, still Hashem gives it power to make it seem as if it is indeed blocking His infinite light, *kivayachol*, "as it were").

Hashem allows an equal counterbalance between good and evil [because of the rule of *Zeh l'umas zeh*, the equally warring forces of good versus evil, in order to allow people to have free will] which makes it seem that His Infinite Light is being blocked. Until our generation, there were limits, and people (limited beings) could conceal the infinite light.² But in the end of days there is a new power given to evil which allows it to "block", as it were, the Infinite Light of Hashem – where there is an unlimited power to block the infinite light, an evil version of the infinite, as it were.³ That is the depth of the awesome, cosmic spiritual war that we are in the midst of, which we are found in, in this final generation.

INTERNET-DEVICES VERSUS HASHEM'S INFINITE LIGHT

There are many angles of how to understand the term "Infinite Light" (*ohr EinSof*) and in turn that is how we can understand how there are corresponding forces of good and evil today.

(To clarify, *ohr EinSof* is not describing Hashem Himself, because nothing can describe Him, and it is just a revelation of Hashem, as the *Leshem* explains, meaning that it is how Hashem is revealed to us so we can perceive of Him).

Hashem's Infinite Light implies several things. It implies "one single *havayah* (reality)", an all-inclusive reality. It also implies endlessness, as it simply sounds – the

² This is the first limitation that blocks Hashem's Infinite Light (as it were), and in Kabbalistic terms, is rooted in the breakdown of the "primordial kings of Edom" which quarreled before Creation [leading to the "shattering of the vessels"].

³ Kabbalistically, this is rooted in the concept of *tzimtzum* (the constriction) in which Hashem constricted His Infinite Light, as it were.

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idea that something just keeps continuing with no end to it. It also means a power that connects together all of Creation.

In the end of days, there is a *kli* (vessel, container, or device) that connects together all of Creation in it, from one end of the world to the other, and it is the nemesis (counterfeit and *kelipah*-evil) to Hashem's Infinite Light that connects together all of Creation, and blocking Hashem's infinite light (as it were), by offering an alternative way for everyone to become connected together (and with evil outcomes of this concept).

Its main novelty is that it can bring people close together who in previous times would be far apart from each other, when a person could only see and hear what's next to him, whereas in this last generation, through this device, people can see all of the world. Anything that couldn't be seen until now can now be seen right in front of a person's eyes, bringing every evil "behind us" right up close to "in front" of us.

This device is also a power of oneness – a oneness on the side of evil that counters (as it were) the holy Oneness (Echad) which is Hashem's Infinite Light⁴ and it also enables a person to see something endless. It is a device that takes a person beyond his bounds and limitations, beyond his intellectual capacity, beyond the actual capacity of a human being. It is the evil version of the infinite and covers over the real infinite light. It is the concept of "I will resemble the Creator" on the side of evil – the attempt of the side of evil to become as endless and unified as the Creator, and in turn, blocking (as it were) Hashem's endlessness.

Just until a few years, how did evil spread? A person got hold of harmful material and passed it on to someone else, people kept things in their pockets, and it went from one hand to another. But in our generation, every person inserts any information he wants into the internet, and since everyone can do this, the internet is the storehouse of an infinite amount of information. No one on earth can hold all of the internet's

4 Certainly, the "oneness" that internet-devices offer are an imitation and not true oneness, for it is merely attempting to resemble the Oneness of Hashem but of course it cannot be true oneness. Internet-devices are combining millions of words and images together into one place, but all of this information is really separate from each other. The only true oneness that exists is the Oneness of Hashem, which reveals how everything is intrinsically connected as one single unit.

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information in his head, both in the amount of it as well as in the content of it – the human being’s brain simply cannot hold all of this information. It is beyond human boundaries.

Another way how it imitates the Infinite is that, just like Hashem’s infinite light which doesn’t stop continuing and producing, the internet/media keeps producing new information, more and more things keep coming out from it every second. (This is more than just Binah, which creates one detail from another. It is an evil form of “extra Binah”, to produce new information which has no end to it.) The level of the generation today has fallen into this device that offers us a one single source for everything, and beyond our limitations and capacity, beyond the human being, producing more and more information constantly. Until now it was only an influx of information coming in, but it had a limit to it. But in recent years, this inanimate object can give birth to new information, which is a novel concept, and allowing for infinite information with no limits.

This is the depth of the forces we face in the last generation. It contains every single evil since the start of Creation, all in one single device, and it also contains infinite information. Since it is beyond the limitations of man, it also destroys the design of man, causing a person to lose any sense of human morale. It is one device containing all evil which counters and destroys the entire design of man. That is one way of how it blocks Hashem’s infinite light.

Yet, that is only the external problem of it - the fact that it contains all evil and every sin that a person can commit, and understandably since it contains all evil, any person who uses it will also be brought to every single sin in the world, in the actual sense - on varying levels, each person on his own level. But this is but the external issue it presents us.

There is a deeper and more profound aspect to its evil – it offers endlessness. It is a device that offers people an endlessness, and therefore, people feel a pull towards something that feels unlimited and endless. It talks to the higher aspect of the human

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being which longs to become connected to the unlimited. It is the unlimited aspect of this device which is pulling people in.

On the side of holiness, a person is able to feel an endless pull towards Hashem, like an “iron stone attracting a magnet”, as the *Mesillas Yesharim* says, and an illogical pull of love towards Hashem, as described at length in *Shir HaShirim* – a love and a pull towards Hashem which overwhelms our senses and pulls us beyond logic. An endless love for Hashem which pulls him beyond logic, due to the light of the Infinite that shines in him.

But the side of evil has its own force to counteract that very holiness which pulls towards us Hashem, by offering us a force that pulls us endlessly after something that’s infinite. It pulls people beyond the limits and boundaries of the human being, beyond what their minds can actually comprehend. We can see how it is endlessly time-consuming and how it encompasses every kind of information. The pull that people feel towards it is simply beyond the limits of a human being, taking a person from the limited to the unlimited.

THE ONLY, SINGLE TOOL – ACCESSING OUR SOUL-POWER OF “YECHIDAH”

The one, single power that can counter this device in the last generation, is the power of the *Yechidah*.

All of the advice and strategies to deal with the challenges of technology can certainly minimize the challenges, but they cannot help fully. There is one thing that can save a person completely from the pull towards this device, because it is the only thing that is complete and all-inclusive. It is the light of the *Yechidah*, which is called the revelation of the Infinite Light of Hashem in our soul. ⁵

5 There are two ways of connecting to the Infinite Light. One way is through “holy complexity”, to combine together all areas of Torah on a topic. This is the “combining” aspect of the Infinite Light. There is also a higher way, which is to connect to the Undifferentiated Infinite Light (as it was before the tzimtzum-constriction) which is by integrating oneself into the Simplicity of the Infinite Light (this is the “oneness” aspect of the Infinite Light). The power to win over this device is by connecting to the Infinite, For His Essence is above any power that this device has, for the entire oneness that this device offers is built upon its complexity, but the Infinite Light is the Simplicity that’s above – and hence more powerful - than all complexity.

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I want to emphasize again that this is the only thing that can truly counter this device. In order to be saved from the pull, we have to reveal the power that comes from the depths of our souls, where Hashem's Infinite Light is revealed there. It is the only, single power to aid us against this device.

All of the advice and psychological analysis of how to limit technology use and the like can only be partially helpful, and they do not save a person totally from it. Only the light of the *Yechidah*, which is complete and all-inclusive, can help us against this device.

The test that we face in the final days is very clear. It is the test of, which side do you want to be on? Do we want to be pulled after the Truthfulness of Hashem's Infinite Light, or to the other kind of endlessness, which the devices of internet offer? Which side does one want to place himself on? It is the test for every person in the final days.

ACCESSING THE YECHIDAH – THROUGH ACQUIRING “MESIRUS NEFESH”

One of the ways to access the *Yechidah*'s power is through *mesirus nefesh* – “giving our souls up” to do Hashem's will. When we go beyond our normal capacity, which is when we have *mesirus nefesh*, we reveal a connection to the Holy Unlimited, which counters the pull that we feel towards the devices that offers us the unlimited. It is only Hashem's Infinite Light that can help us win against the *yetzer hora*. Chazal said, “If not for Hashem helping the person, a person cannot overcome it (the evil inclination)”⁶, meaning that it is only through Hashem's infinite light that gives a person the unlimited power to overcome the unlimited power of the evil inclination.

One should get used to regularly having *mesirus nefesh* for Hashem. He should be ready to ‘die’ for Hashem's will, giving himself up for Hashem - meaning that he should be ready to withstand ridicule and his image being destroyed by others, which is a form of death, and in this way one is regularly having *mesirus nefesh* and accessing the *Yechidah* power, and then he can succeed against all of the evil found today.

⁶ Talmud Bavli Succah 52a

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These words may have sounded far from our level when we first hear them. But against all of the strength of intensified evil that is found today, we must have a ‘tool’ of our own to counter all of it. That tool is essentially the one single light, a light that has no end to it.⁷

It is revealed in the Torah, which is endless, for the Torah is “longer than the earth and wider than the sea”, and therefore when one is attached to Hashem Who is Infinite, and when he is also attached to the Torah with the understanding that the Torah is endless, he will merit to be saved from all the evil in the final days – and he will do his part in subjugating the final evil, and to shine this light more and more onto the world - until it is revealed fully, when Yanun (Mashiach) will come, when the Infinite Light will be revealed completely, which will smash the “head of the Serpent” – the root of evil – revealing His absolute Truthful Existence throughout all the worlds.

7 Since the light of Mashiach (the holy Infinite Light) is shining strongly in our generation, this aids a person into naturally uncovering his power of mesirus nefesh, which is a degree of the Infinite Light – and it is therefore easier for one to do it in this generation as opposed to the previous generations. Thus, this avodah is even more applicable to this generation, even more than the previous generations.

EDITOR'S SUMMARY

(1) All of Creation is in the design of man, created from the Torah which has 613 mitzvos to help the human being reach his ideal design. This is really the “limitations” which Hashem introduced after making the tzimtzum (constriction) to His Infinite Light. This was all from light that Hashem created on the first day, which man could use to see from one end of the world to the other. Yet the Creator’s first revelation which preceded this, His Infinite Light before the tzimtzum, is an endless light that is not restricted at all.

(2) Throughout history there has always been the ability to see from one end of the world to the other (this is the light of Adam Kadmon), but in the End of Days when the purpose of Creation is being revealed, through the light of Mashiach which reveals Hashem’s Infinite Light, the light which the “tzaddikim will be called by the name of their Creator”, this illumination shines bit by bit, and when it will shine completely, all tzimtzum will be removed and the Infinite Light will shine endlessly.

(3) Since Hashem made equal forces of good and evil, there is a counterforce to the design of man, which is the power of evil that comes to block the design of man and to instead reveal evil within the design of man. And, corresponding to the illumination of Infinite Light that is revealed in the later generations through the light of Mashiach, a new force of evil comes which wants to block that illumination. (This is besides for the limitations that Hashem made which have been around since the beginning of history with the role of blocking the Infinite Light).

(4) Evil in the last generation is from all directions, enabling one to see all evil from in front and behind him. Evil can now be seen easily (this is the evil that counters the holiness of Atik), and this is to counter the light that sees from one end of the world to the other. In addition, the devices of the final generation are countering the ideal design of man by showing mankind how low man can sink to, by bringing mankind into every sin possible.

(5) There are three aspects to the revelation of the Infinite, countered by three equal forces of evil. The Infinite Light is one complete unit which connects together all

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creations. It is countered by one device that connects the entire world together within it in every way (This is the Keser d'kelipah, the evil that counters the holiness of Keser). Though of course it is not truly infinite, it mimics the infinite and it is the most unlimited thing that mankind has ever known.

(6) It contains a storehouse of knowledge and information that is beyond the limits of the human mind. It makes mankind think that they now have something infinite, and this blocks mankind from realizing what the true Infinite is. (This is all the Chochmah d'kelipah, the evil that counters the holiness of Chochmah).

(7) It also can produce new information every second from within the already existing information that it stores, and this computer-thinking is running the generation. (This is Binah d'kelipah, the evil that counters Binah).

(8) Another aspect of how internet-devices counter the Infinite is through its strong pull. There is an illogical attraction which the world feels towards this device, and this counters the endless and illogical love that one can have towards Hashem. That is the kelipah to the kav ohr EinSof – the evil that counters the “ray of the Infinite” which pulls man illogically after an endless and loving connection to Hashem. This is why there has never been anything as addictive and attractive to mankind as this device.

(9) The only power to withstand it is to reveal the Infinite within our soul. That will save us inwardly and completely from the danger that the pull this device has on mankind. In our generation, the yetzer hora is trying with endless ways to destroy mankind, and if a person tries to withstand the yetzer hora with the ways of the past, he will be too limited and he doesn't have the tools to fight with the evil infinite. Only through mesirus nefesh (giving up our will by separating completely from these devices) which can take us beyond our own human limits and which connects us with the Infinite and to be pulled after Him with a magnetic pull, only then can we be saved from the kelipah to the Infinite Light – and thereby reveal our part in weakening this final kelipah.

Q&A

QUESTION 1) *Since part of the problem with technology is that it does our thinking for us (imitating the concept of Binah), does that mean we need to separate from this device more than from other things, or is there is a need to separate equally from all means of technology?*

ANSWER The device is the concept of *echad*, one. If the device would be designed in a way that it's made of different parts, then it would be a discussion of how much we need to separate, but since it's designed in a way where it's always one single unit, the fact that it has computer-thinking to it is more of a blockage to the Infinite Light. But the entire concept of this device is that it is always "one".

QUESTION 2) *What does the Rav mean by calling it a "kli" (device)? Does the Rav mean a certain device, or the power of technology in general?*

ANSWER The very fact that it has the power to connect the entire world together means that it goes beyond the capabilities of any other tool that has ever been made, but it is just that it happens to be clothed in the form of this device. To separate from all the Wi-Fi radiation in the world is something that's impossible to do, because it's everywhere, and that is the depth behind this war. When one has the device, then this [impurity] is actually attached to him and he has a *mitzvah* to destroy it ("*And you shall destroy the evil from your midst*") and a Torah prohibition not to bring it into his house ("*Do not bring an abomination into your house*"), but even if a person does not have the device, the air is still filled with Wi-Fi, so even if a person doesn't have an internet-device in his hands, he still cannot be saved from it totally. Actively separating from it is to separate from this device, but the inner separation we must have from it is what obligates us to separate from its very concept (this evil imitation of endlessness and all-inclusivity), and for this we need the revelation of the "Infinite Light" to counter it.

QUESTION 3) *How is one moser nefesh? How can every single act be done with mesirus nefesh?*

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ANSWER To live every movement with *mesirus nefesh* is a very high level. Every person needs to find a place in his soul where he's open to *mesirus nefesh* for Hashem, and then he can expand his *mesirus nefesh* more and more. But he also has to do so sensibly, by making sure that he's still building up his soul step by step, because if one simply has *mesirus nefesh* and goes overboard with it, he will break himself. Many did this and fell - they lost their minds and their inner peace, or they lost their ability to act stable. So there must always be a deep balance between building oneself step by step along with building the power of *mesirus nefesh*, and one should go back forth between these two areas of the soul.

QUESTION 4) *Does the revelation of this light come in stages or as one revelation?*

ANSWER The deeper one is shining forth his ability of *mesirus nefesh*, until his soul is totally immersed in *mesirus nefesh*, to that degree will the Infinite Light shine with him completely. That is what a person should aspire for. Then a person has to return to building his soul, because there are parts of the soul that he hasn't yet purified, and when he returns to working on himself after he has accessed the Infinite Light then those parts of the soul gain from the light he has received.

QUESTION 5) *The Rav mentioned the terms of mesirus nefesh and also "above logic and reasoning", which sounds like the concepts of emunah and temimus – did the Rav mean specifically mesirus nefesh?*

ANSWER 6) The goal of all these terms is the same. When we speak of *mesirus nefesh* we are referring to what we need to do in the active sense, but the root of being able to have *mesirus nefesh* comes from the ability to go above our logic and reasoning. The test with the Akeidah wasn't just that Avraham had to tie Yitzchok, it was that he had to resist questioning Hashem, by going above his logic and reasoning. When one is *moser nefesh*, this is called *emunah*, for he is being loyal to Hashem.

QUESTION 7) *How should a person apply the power of mesirus nefesh, in which areas? How can does mesirus nefesh in learning Torah counter the evil Infinite?*

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ANSWER There is *mesirus nefesh* at every level. The Infinite light has a power of oneness and it is also infinite, and the Torah which is Hashem's revelation to the world includes the oneness of the Torah as well as the endlessness of the Torah, and both of these are revelations of the Infinite that are in the Torah.

QUESTION 8) *The Rav explained that both the power of limitations and the power of imitating is what opposes the Infinite Light. Will this "imitating" aspect end in the end of the 6th century? What is holding back the Infinite Light of the 7th century from being revealed – the limited aspect or a different aspect?*

ANSWER In the end of the 6th century all evil will be destroyed, and that is what it means that Hashem will destroy all impurity from the world and remove all evil, and only the "light" and "vessel" of holiness will remain [a process that is explained in *sefer Daas Tevunos*]. But the completion process of how the "light" purifies the "vessel" is a process that goes until the 10th century when there won't be a concept of evil at all, and that is all a process of purification, for the vessel.

QUESTION 9) *"Coarseness of the vessel" - is that not evil?*

ANSWER Anything is evil in relation to a level higher than it. But there is the root of evil and then there is active evil. Active evil is any of the sins of the Torah, and the root of evil is the "coarseness of the vessel" which doesn't allow the light to be clearly revealed. A person can serve Hashem earnestly and he is G-d fearing but in relation to a *tzadik* or to a *tzaddik* higher than him, he is coarser in relation to that higher level, even if he's not sinning at all and he does Hashem's will, if he doesn't have the clarity of the one on a higher level than him. He can be holy, but there is still some "coarseness" that has to get refined.

QUESTION 10) *Why is this device evil – is it because it is an "endlessness" of the creations which does not have the endlessness of the Creator in it?*

ANSWER That is the lower aspect of its evil, but its higher aspect of evil is that *it presents itself as the Infinite*.

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QUESTION 11) *So if it would be an endlessness that reveals the Infinite of the Creator, then it wouldn't be evil...?*

ANSWER This is touching on the purpose of all creations, which is: to reveal how the Infinite is revealed among all the creations. That will be the complete revelation of the Infinite, and of this it is said “In the future the *tzaddikim* will be called by their Creator.”

QUESTION 12) *So the reason this device is evil is because it disconnects one from the Infinite of the Creator?*

ANSWER

Yes, and this is not merely a disconnection but a device that's making itself seem as if it's the very Infinite.

QUESTION 13) *Can a person develop mesirus nefesh during time of quiet and will that enable a person to reveal this light?*

ANSWER *Mesirus nefesh* and *sheket* (internal quiet) are opposite powers of the soul, because *mesirus nefesh* is a “movement” of the soul which nullifies, and that creates a noise, like a fire which destroys and creates noise. But from inner quiet, one can reach *mesirus nefesh*.