

Part 4:
With All My Heart I Seek You
(Psalms 119:10)

Seeking God with all our hearts is the essence of Jewish meditation. The objective of Judaism in general, and that of Jewish meditation in particular, is to find God and reveal Him in this world.

God placed us on earth and concealed His presence in order to play with us a holy game of "hide and seek." By consciously seeking Him, we bring Him joy, as it were, and thereby fulfill His desire in creation. Our deepest need is to reveal God in our lives and this is God's will as well.

The story is told of Rabbi Baruch of Mezhibuzh, the grandson of the [Ba'al Shem Tov](#), that once, his children and their friends were playing hide and seek, and one of his children came running to him in tears. When he asked why he was crying, the child responded that in the middle of the game, while he was hiding, his friends lost interest in the game and left him. He waited and waited until he realized that no one was looking for him! And again the child broke down in tears.

Rabbi Baruch learned from this how God feels, as it were, when we stop the holy game of hide and seek in the middle, either in despair of finding Him or because we lack sufficient interest to keep searching for Him.

But where do we find Him? Where do we even go to seek Him?

God reveals to us His ways--the roads along which He Himself walks--in the Torah. The sages teach that God Himself abides by the principles of the Torah (*Shemot Rabbah* 30:9). By giving the Torah to us, He shares with us His ways, teaching us how to make our ways His. Therefore, the commandments of the Torah are the "ways of God," the "place" to go when seeking God. If we wish to discover and sense God's continuous revelation to us on earth we must therefore meditate on those precepts of the Torah that are unrestricted by the barriers of time and space. For this reason, the most fundamental Jewish meditation is based on the six constant commandments of the Torah, as will be explained.

Point, Line, Area

Kabbalah and Chassidism emphasize meditation as an essential technique in communication with God. With regard to meditation, as with

regard to any growth process, they outline three stages of spiritual development: "point, line, area."

Defined in the narrow sense, a "point" is zero-dimensional, a "line" is one-dimensional, and an "area" is two-dimensional. In human consciousness, the state of the zero-dimensional "point" is the experience of remaining static, not moving ahead, the sense of possessing zero velocity. The state of the one-dimensional "line" is the dynamic experience of motion at constant, unchanging speed (mathematically, this type of constant velocity is linear). The state of the two-dimensional "area" is the experience of acceleration, ever-increasing speed (mathematically, acceleration is represented as a quadratic expression).

Stages of Spiritual Development		
"point"	zero-dimensional	static
"line"	one-dimensional	motion at constant unchanging speed
"area"	two-dimensional	acceleration, ever-increasing speed

Defined in a broader, more profound sense, the "point" is not meant to be taken literally as zero-dimensional, nor is the "line" meant to be understood as one-dimensional, nor the "area" as two-dimensional. These three progressive stages are meant to be understood in relation to each other. The "point" is the point of departure on our spiritual journey ahead; the "line" is the consciousness of actually progressing toward our goal; the "area" is the experience of reaching the goal, possessing it and becoming possessed by it. Here, paradoxically, the ever-increasing state of acceleration comes to rest while we continue to experience the vital dynamic of motion. In other words, motion and rest paradoxically exist simultaneously in our consciousness.

Appplied to meditation, the starting "point" is focusing on the objective, which is the search for God (as in "with all my heart, I seek You").

The "line" of meditation is its well-defined direction and includes the parameters of its orientation. These parameters are the six spatial directions surrounding us (*above-below, front-back, left-right*), each of which corresponds to one of the six constant commandments of the Torah meant to insure our constant awareness of God. (We will examine these commandments in detail shortly.)

The full "area" of meditative consciousness is becoming so engrossed in the depth of the meditation, on both the intellectual and emotional planes, that we transcend our own limited state of self-consciousness and undergo a metamorphosis, becoming one with the Divine truth embodied in the meditation.

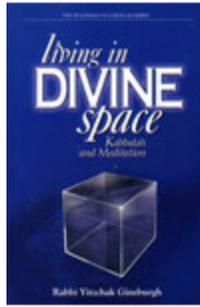
Stages of Spiritual Development in Meditation			
"point"	starting point	focusing on objective	search for God
"line"	progressing toward goal	defining direction and parameters of orientation	six constant commandments
"area"	reaching goal	transcending self-consciousness; metamorphosis	oneness with Divine truth

The Service of the Heart

The sages refer to prayer as "the service of the heart." Since the initial point of meditation is "with all my heart, I seek You," meditation may also be understood as "the service of the heart." Thus we see that there exists an intrinsic relationship between meditation and prayer.

Indeed, prayer is the culmination, the consummate expression, of meditation. The initial "point" of focus creates Divine structure; the final "point" within, prayer, reflects our inner experience when we enter the consciousness of "Living in Divine Space." Prayer, as the "point" of the six directions of Divine space, converts the meditative "line" into a living, pulsating Divine "area."

As will be explained, prayer is the striving of the soul to transform the meditative state into Divine life, to metamorphose out of a state of *self-consciousness* into one of *Divine* consciousness.



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2 Hausner St. • Jerusalem 96431 • tel.: 972.547.533770 • info@gpsociety.org