

Contemplating G-d

What is to contemplate?

- **Definition**

- look thoughtfully for a long time at.
- think about.
- think deeply and at length.

- **Some details**

- It's not about **amount** of time.
- It's not about **different** ideas.
- Before prayer, you should think about the greatness of G-d and the lowliness of Man (Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chaim 98).
- What is the path [to attain] love and fear of Him? When a person **contemplates** His wondrous and great deeds and creations and appreciates His infinite wisdom that surpasses all comparison, he will immediately **love, praise, and glorify [Him]**, yearning with tremendous desire to know [God's] great name, as David stated: "My soul thirsts for the Lord, for the living God" [Psalms 42:3].
- When he [continues] to **reflect** on these same matters, he will immediately recoil in **awe and fear**, appreciating how he is a tiny, lowly, and dark creature, standing with his flimsy, limited, wisdom before He who is of perfect knowledge, as David stated: "When I see Your heavens, the work of Your fingers... [I wonder] what is man that You should recall Him" [Psalms 8:4-5].
 - Rambam, Laws of Foundation of Torah, 2:2.

How to contemplate on G-d?

Duties of the Heart - Portal of Contemplation

- **Why people don't contemplate on G-d?**

- A lot of occupation on worldly matters, passions etc. Therefore you don't realize the kindness of G-d with you
- You get used to G-dly kindness.

- **Should you contemplate?**

- Otherwise, what is your virtue over the rest of creation?
- Are better than the stone you step on?

- **What to contemplate?**

- Signs of G-dly wisdom within creation.
 - Movement of earth, sun, moon etc.
 - Body of Man.
 - Animals, Plants.
 - Craftsmanship.
 - Torah.

The heavens declare the
glory of G-d,
the sky proclaims His
handiwork.
(Psalms 19:2)

Lift high your eyes and see:
Who created these?
(Ishaia 40:26)

Think about yourself...

Portal of Contemplation (ch. 5)

- **Beginning of Man (Kindness of G-d)**
 - Womb – protected, food without effort.
 - Born – nobody knows why (time).
 - Food – easily in the mother, not much not little.
 - Doesn't recognize between good or bad.
 - Understand the body
 - Members.
 - Digestive system.
 - Memory, forgetfulness, shame, free will, intellect.
 - Discernment between good and bad.
 - Speech, writing.

Mind (according to *Chassidut*)

Tanya ch. 3

- **Wisdom (Chochma)**
 - The germinal point of an idea.
- **Understanding (Binah)**
 - The details of the idea.
- **Knowledge (Daat)**
 - Fixing your mind to the idea (make it yours).
- **Contemplation**
 - Itbonenut – Binah (Understanding).
 - התבוננות.

Let's go deeper

- **G-d fills the world**

- *Memale col almin.* (fills).
- Example of the soul (inner powers: sight, smell, hearing etc.).
- Direct understanding.

- **G-d transcends the world**

- *Sovev col almin* (surrounds).
- Example of the soul (transcendent powers: will, pleasure).
- Indirect understanding.
- It still has a relationship of transcending.
- All things are the same towards this level of G-dliness.

- **Everything in front of Him is insignificant**

- *Kulo kamei kelo chashiv.*
- The wonder (separation) of the Infinite.
- There is nothing you can say about Him and nothing you can negate from Him.
- He has power on the infinite just as on the finite (Avodat haKodesh Part 1, ch. 88).

From my flesh I will
perceive G-dliness
(Job 19:26)