

Five Dimensions of the Soul--Like a Flame

We are taught in the Talmud that on Shabbat eve G-d gives each person an "Additional Soul." At the conclusion of Shabbat, it is removed. What exactly is this "Additional Soul?" It is not something that comes from outside a person but is a revelation from the deepest part of a person's essence.

We are taught in the Midrash that the soul is called by 5 names: Nefesh, Ruach, Neshamah, Chaya, and Yechidah. These names refer to 5 different levels and types of revelation within the soul of a person, with the highest level being Yechidah.

Before we begin Havdalah, let us explore these 5 dimensions of the soul. We will be using a flame and singing part of our Havdalah melody in between each description.

Now, look at the flame. Judaism likens the soul to a flame. Focus on the blue core of the flame at the bottom. This represents **Nefesh** that is the 1st level of the soul. This refers to our awareness of physical body and physical world where our soul and body connect in terms of thought, speech, and action.

Concentrate on the blue part of the flame as we sing our Havdalah melody once. La, la.....

Concentrate on the inner flame just above the blue core. The band of flame represents **Ruach**, our next level of consciousness. This refers to the human spirit or to one's uniqueness, emotions, or general disposition.

Focus on the inner flame as we sing. La, la.....

Now, focus on the outer luminous band of flame that comes to a point at the top. This represents the **Neshamah**, the next dimension of soul. Due to the abundance of the spiritual light at this level, the emotions of love and awe are aroused to a greater extent than in Ruach.

Concentrate on the brightness of this part of the flame as we sing. La, la.....

This next part of the flame is more difficult to see, as this consists of the very small black flecks that fly off into the air as the flame burns. This represents **Chayah**, the aspect of the soul that knows what is beyond articulation. It is the seat of will, desire, commitment, and faith. This level communes with G-d as a Divine Energy.

Focus on the outer fringes of the flame as we sing. La, la.....

Now, focus on the heat and light of the flame that continue far beyond the physical flame itself. This represents **Yechidah**, the highest level of the soul. At this level is the essence of the soul, its unity with its Source, the merging of the human soul with G-d.

Look at and around the flame, and maybe squint your eyes, to see the heat and rays of light emanating from the flame as we sing. La, la.....

Allow your new insights to linger with you as we begin our Havdalah service.