



LIKKUTEI TORAH • PARSHAS BAMIDBAR • MAAMAR 2

ביאור הדברים הנה אית רצון ואית רצון כו'

Explanation of the matters:
“There is will and there is will”



The soul has two wills: a lower will, a longing for G-d born of understanding how His greatness spreads forth to create and enliven the worlds, and a higher will, rooted in the soul's source and shining in Yechidah as nullification before His essence, which no thought can grasp. “Lift up the head ... by their skulls” means raising the lower will to the higher, a bond that the Giving of the Torah joined to the soul's powers.

DEDICATED IN HONOR OF

מוקדש לכבוד הגאון המקובל רבי לוי יצחק שניאורסאהן זצ"ל

Dedicated in honor of the Rebbe's father, Reb Levi Yitzchok



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THE BIG IDEA

The soul has two wills: a lower will, a longing for G-d born of understanding how His greatness spreads forth to create and enliven the worlds, and a higher will, rooted in the soul's source and shining in Yechidah as nullification before His essence, which no thought can grasp. "Lift up the head ... by their skulls" means raising the lower will to the higher, a bond that the Giving of the Torah joined to the soul's powers.

Each section: the Hebrew, then the translation, then a short explanation under a gold rule. Small numbers in the Hebrew are the notes at the end.

THE MAAMAR IN BRIEF

This short maamar explains the preceding one: there is will and there is will. The lower will is a longing for G-d born of contemplating the spreading forth of His greatness in bringing the worlds into being and giving them life. Because the mind rules over the heart, the heart feels it, each person according to what he "measures in his heart," so it is small or great. The higher will is rooted in the soul's source and shines in Yechidah as nullification before G-d's essence. The outer heart cannot hold it: it is the love "with all your might," equal in every Jew but encompassing the body from above. "Lift up the head ... by their skulls" means raising the lower will to the higher. The Giving of the Torah joined that encompassing level to the soul's powers, for the Torah is one with G-d's wisdom, yet it is enclothed in physical laws the mind can grasp. When the Mishkan, "the fallen sukkah of David," descends, the Levites raise it: Gershon subdues evil, Merari's bitterness turns darkness into light, and through Kehas sins become merits. The Kohanim hold G-d Himself, not the Torah alone, until He is brought into the soul's powers.

OUTLINE

- 1 The will born of understanding** ¶1
The lower will is a longing born of contemplating how G-d's greatness spreads forth to create and enliven the worlds; the mind rules over the heart, and each person knows G-d according to what he "measures in his heart."
- 2 The higher will of the soul's root** ¶2
The love of understanding has degrees, but the will rooted in the soul's source shines in Yechidah as nullification before G-d's essence: the love "with all your might," equal in every Jew yet encompassing the body from above.

3 “Lift up the head ... by their skulls”

¶3

The lower will is lifted to the higher. The Giving of the Torah joined the encompassing level to the soul's powers, for the Torah is one with G-d's wisdom.

4 The Torah's light and the Levites

¶4

Enclothed in physical laws, the Torah's light returns a person to the root of the good. When the Mishkan falls, the Levites raise it as Gershon, Merari and Kehas.

5 The Kohanim: “I held him”

¶5

One must hold fast to G-d Himself, not to the Torah alone, until He is “brought” into the soul's powers.

KEY CONCEPTS

The lower will רצון תחתון

A longing for G-d born of understanding His greatness as it spreads forth into creation; it grows with the depth of one's intellect and is felt in the heart.

The higher will רצון העליון

The will rooted in the soul's source, above intellect: nullification before G-d's essence, beyond all grasp and equal in every Jewish soul.

Yechidah יחידה

The innermost, “single” level of the soul, in which the higher will shines.

The encompassing (makif) מקיף

A level that is not enclothed within a vessel but encompasses it from above; the soul's root stands so in relation to the body.

Self-nullification (bittul) ביטול

Here, the nullification of one's own understanding, and of all creation, before G-d's essence: the mark of the higher will.

Gershon, Kehas and Merari גרשון קהת ומררי

The three Levite families, read as three ways of raising what has fallen: subduing the evil, bitterness over the descent, and the transformation of darkness into light.

SECTION 1 • 11

The will born of understanding

1 ביאור הדברים הנה אית רצון ואית רצון כו'. רצון הנולד מן הדעת וההשכלה לפי העמקת שכלו שתופס ומשיג עד"מ איכות ההטבה שיהיה לו מן הדבר ככה תתגדל התשוקה כו'.

Explanation of the matters: Now, there is will and there is will, etc. A will born of Daas (knowledge) and intellectual understanding: according to the depth of his intellect as it grasps and comprehends, for example, the quality of the benefit he will have from the thing, so will the longing grow, etc.

The heading, "Explanation of the matters," marks this as a short explanation of the preceding maamar on "Lift up the head," which turned on the saying "there is will and there is will." The first kind of will is born of the intellect: the more deeply a person grasps how much good a thing holds for him, the stronger his longing for it grows.

והנה לית מחשבה תפיסא ב¹ אלא בהתפשטות גדולתו מהוה מאין ליש ומחיה עליונים כו'. ודבר זה כאשר נתפס בשכלו ובהעמקת הדבר נולד מזה התשוקה בלב בחיצוניותו

Now, "no thought can grasp Him," except in the spreading forth of His greatness, [as He] brings into being from nothing to something and gives life to the higher [worlds], etc. And when this thing is grasped in his intellect, and through delving deeply into the matter, there is born from this the longing in the heart, in its outer dimension (chitzoniyus),

Applied to G-d: His essence is beyond all thought, but the mind can grasp the "spreading forth of His greatness," His bringing the worlds into being from nothing and giving them life. When a person contemplates this deeply, a longing for G-d is born in the outer dimension of his heart, the level of feeling a person can sense.

כי הלב יכול להיות כלי לקבל אור זה המתפשט בשכלו כי המוח שליט על הלב²

for the heart can be a vessel to receive this light that spreads forth in his intellect, since the mind rules over the heart.

This is possible because the heart can receive what the mind understands: the mind rules over the heart, so a felt love can grow out of contemplation.

(וזהו נודע בשערים בעלה³ שבעלה דמטרוניתא הוי' נודע בשערים כו') ואהבה זו בא מלמעלה בבחי' השתלשלות רבות בהתפשטות גדולתו ושם אתה מוצא ענותנותו⁴ כו'.

(And this is [the meaning of] “Her husband is known in the gates”: that the Husband of the Matronita, Havayah, is known in the gates, etc.) And this love comes from above, at the level of many [stages of] the chain of descent (hishtalshelus), in the spreading forth of His greatness; and there you find His humility, etc.

The parenthesis ties this to the verse “Her husband is known in the gates” (Proverbs 31:23), read as G-d, the “Husband” of the Matronita (the Queen, a Zohar name for the Shechinah), becoming known. Such love comes from above through many stages of descent, in which G-d’s greatness spreads down to where a person can grasp it; and as the Sages say, wherever you find His might, there you find His humility, His lowering Himself so as to be known.

וזהו נודע בשערים בעלה לכל חד וחד לפום מה דמשער בלבא⁵ ושכחא דקב”ה איהו בעלה דמטרוניתא שהוא נודע כו'.

And this is [the meaning of] “Her husband is known in the gates”: to each and every one according to what he measures in his heart; and the praise of the Holy One, blessed be He, is that He is the Husband of the Matronita, in that He is known, etc.

The Zohar reads “known in the gates (she’arim)” as “according to what each one measures (meshaer) in his heart”: each person knows G-d according to the depth of his own understanding. G-d’s praise as the “Husband of the Matronita” is exactly this, that He makes Himself known.

SECTION 2 • 12

The higher will of the soul’s root

2 והנה בתשוקת אהבה זו יש בה בחי' קטנות וגדלות לפי גדלות וקטנות השכל כי הקטן אוהב כו'.

Now, in the longing of this love there is the aspect of smallness and of greatness, according to the greatness and smallness of the intellect; for a child loves, etc.

The love born of understanding has degrees, smallness and greatness, because it follows how great or small the person’s understanding is. The text gives only the start of an analogy, “a child loves, etc.”: what a person loves matches the stage of his mind.

ולכן נק' רצון תחתון שהוא המתפשט מכחות הנפש שכל ומדות. אבל אית רצון לעילא בשרש הנשמה במקור חוצבה בכל העולמות אבי"ע.

Therefore it is called “the lower will,” for it is what spreads forth from the powers of the soul: intellect and emotive attributes (middos). But there is a will above, in the root of the soul, in the source from which it was hewn, in all the worlds of Atzilus, Beriah, Yetzirah and Asiyah.

Because this love spreads from the soul’s powers, its intellect and emotions, it is called the “lower will.” Above it there is a will rooted in the source of the soul, the place from which it was “hewn,” throughout the four worlds of Atzilus, Beriah, Yetzirah and Asiyah.

ובהארתה למטה בבחי' יחידה שבנפש⁶ הפרטי בביטול מערך השגתו והשכלתו מפני עוצם רוממותו ית' דלית מחשבה תפיסא ב'י וביטול כל הנבראים לגבי עצמותו ומהותו ית' דכולא קמ'י כלא ממש חשיב

And in its shining below, at the level of Yechidah within the individual soul, [it is] in the nullification (bittul) of the measure of his comprehension and understanding, because of the immensity of His exaltedness, may He be blessed, for “no thought can grasp Him”; and [in] the nullification of all created beings in relation to His essence and being, may He be blessed, for “all before Him are considered as truly nothing.”

This higher will shines below in Yechidah, the innermost, “single” level of the individual soul. It shows itself as nullification: the person’s understanding counts for nothing before G-d’s exaltedness, which no thought can grasp, and all creation is as nothing before His essence.

(הגם דלית מחשבה תפיסא במהותו ית' מ"מ היינו במהות עצמו אבל בגדולת מהותו לגבי נבראים שאין ערוך אליו ית' כל הנשמה תהלל⁷ ולגדולתו אין חקר)⁸ ועיי' תתעורר הנפש לצאת מנרתיקה זה הגוף.

(Although “no thought can grasp” His being, may He be blessed, nevertheless that refers to His very being itself; but as to the greatness of His being in relation to created beings, that there is no comparison to Him, may He be blessed: “Every soul shall praise,” and “His greatness is unsearchable.”) And through this the soul will be aroused to go out of its sheath, this body.

The parenthesis explains what can be contemplated here: G-d’s essence itself is beyond thought, but one can reflect on how far His greatness surpasses all created beings, as the verses “Every soul shall praise” and “His greatness is unsearchable” say. This contemplation stirs the soul to go out of its “sheath,” the body, toward G-d.

והנה לזה אין חיצוניות הלב כלי להיות האהבה ויראה מורגשת בו כי גבהו ממנו אלא תתבטל הנפש מכחותי והיה כלא היה

Now, for this the outer dimension (chitzoniyus) of the heart is not a vessel, for the love and awe to be felt in it, since they are higher than it; rather, the soul will become nullified from its powers, and it will be as though it had not been.

The outer dimension of the heart, where ordinary feelings are sensed, cannot hold this love and awe, for they are higher than it. Instead the soul is nullified, out of its own powers, as though it did not exist.

וזהו ובכל מאדך⁹ והוא מאיר בהשוואה גמורה לכל נפש מישראל אלא שהמונע הוא שאין התלבשותה בגוף אלא עומדת בבחי' מקיף.

And this is [the meaning of] “and with all your might.” And it shines in complete equality to every soul of Israel; only, what prevents [it] is that it is not enclothed in the body, but stands at the level of the encompassing (makif).

This is the love “with all your might” (Deuteronomy 6:5), a love beyond the measure of the soul’s powers. It shines equally in every Jewish soul; what holds it back is only that it is not enclothed in the body but stays above it, as an encompassing light (makif).

SECTION 3 • 13

“Lift up the head ... by their skulls”

3 וזהו שאו את ראש¹⁰ שהוא הרצון התחתון הנולד מהתפשטות החיות בנבראים לגבי רצון העליון שהוא לגולגולת בחי' שרש הנפש ובחי' יחידה הנולד מהתכוננות ביטול ערך הנבראים לגבי עצמותו ומהותו לכן מ"ש בענין כריתות כו'.

And this is [the meaning of] “Lift up the head,” which is the lower will, born of the spreading forth of the life-force in created beings, toward the higher will, which is “to the skull”: the level of the root of the soul and the level of Yechidah, born of contemplating the nullification of the worth of created beings in relation to His essence and being. Therefore, what is written on the matter of being cut off, etc.

Now the verse “Lift up the head ... by their skulls” (Numbers 1:2) is explained: the “head” is the lower will, born of contemplating G-d’s life-force spreading through creation, and it is to be lifted to the “skull,” the higher will of the soul’s root and Yechidah, born of contemplating that created beings are nothing before His essence. The words “therefore, what is written on the matter of being cut off, etc.” break off, and a note in Likkutei Sichos observes that something seems to be missing here.

כי הרשעים מלאים חרטות מבחינת יחידה והמחבר בחי' מקיף הזה להתפשט בכחות הנפש המתלכשים בגוף הוא מ"ת בשבועות שעל כל דבור פרח נשמתן שהדיבור המשיך מעצמותו ית' אנכי מי שאנכי

For the wicked are full of regrets, from the level of Yechidah. And what joins this level of the encompassing (makif) so that it spreads forth into the powers of the soul that are encloded in the body is the Giving of the Torah on Shavuot, when at each utterance their souls flew out; for the utterance drew down from His essence, may He be blessed: "I" (Anochi), "I am who I am."

Even the wicked are "full of regrets" because their regret comes from Yechidah, the soul's innermost level, which is present even in them. What joined this encompassing level to the soul's powers in the body was the Giving of the Torah on Shavuot, when the souls flew out at each utterance, for each utterance drew from G-d's very essence: the "I" (Anochi) of the first commandment, "I am who I am."

וכן כלל התורה הוא וחכמתו אי' וטעמי תורה לא נתגלו¹¹ דאנת הוא חכים ולא בחכמה ידיעא¹² כו'.

And so too the Torah as a whole: He and His wisdom are one, and the reasons of the Torah were not revealed; for "You are wise, but not with a known wisdom," etc.

The Torah as a whole is likewise one with G-d: "He and His wisdom are one." That is why its reasons were not revealed, for G-d is "wise, but not with a known wisdom," as the Tikkunei Zohar says.

SECTION 4 • 14

The Torah's light and the Levites

4 ומ"מ שכל אדם תפיסא בה בחיצוניותו כי נתלבשה בדברים גשמיים זרעים מועד כו'. וכאשר האדם מדבק בה שכלו ומחשבתו הרי המאור שבה שהוא הוא עצמותו ומהותו ית' המלוכש בה מחזירו למוטב.¹³

Nevertheless, human intellect grasps it in its outer dimension (chitzoniyus), for it became encloded in physical matters: [the orders of] Zeraim, Moed, etc. And when a person attaches his intellect and thought to it, then the light within it, which is His very essence and being, may He be blessed, encloded in it, brings him back to the better (mutav).

Though the Torah is one with G-d, the human mind can grasp it in its outer dimension, because it is encloded in physical matters, the laws of the orders of the Mishnah such as Zeraim (Seeds) and Moed (Festivals). When a person attaches his mind to it, the "light within it," which is G-d's very essence, "brings him back to the better," in the words of the Midrash.

פ"י כי טוב הוא זיו ואור הגנוז לצדיקים¹⁴ שנהנין¹⁵ כו' ומוטב הוא מקור הטוב הגבה למעלה בשרשו.

That is: "good" (tov) is the radiance and the light stored away for the righteous, who take delight, etc.; and "better" (mutav) is the source of the good, high above in its root.

The Alter Rebbe distinguishes "good" from "better." "Good" (tov) is the hidden light stored away for the righteous, whose radiance they will enjoy in the time to come; "better" (mutav) is higher still, the source of that good in its root, and it is there that the Torah's light brings a person back.

אך הנה ובחנות המשכן¹⁶ כו' שהוא סוכת דוד הנופלת¹⁷ כו' רגליה יורדת¹⁸ כו' יקימו אותו הלויים ג' בחי' גרשון קהת ומררי.

But now, "and when the Mishkan encamps," etc., which is "the fallen sukkah of David," etc., "her feet descend," etc., "the Levites shall set it up": three levels, Gershon, Kehas and Merari.

Yet there is also a descent: "when the Mishkan encamps, the Levites shall set it up" (Numbers 1:51). The Mishkan's encamping is read as a fall, like "the fallen sukkah of David" and "her feet descend," and the Levites, in their three families Gershon, Kehas and Merari, raise it up.

בחי' גרשון לאכפייא לסט"א ולבער הרע כו' ותשליך במצולות ים¹⁹ כו' מררי להתמרמר על ירידה זו ועל ידי כן אתהפכא חשוכא לנהורא.

The level of Gershon: to subdue the sitra achra (the other side) and to eradicate the evil, etc.: "And You will cast into the depths of the sea," etc. Merari: to feel bitterness over this descent; and through this, darkness is transformed into light.

Gershon, whose name suggests garesh, "drive out," stands for subduing the sitra achra and removing the evil, as in "You will cast all their sins into the depths of the sea." Merari, from merirus, "bitterness," stands for feeling bitter over this descent, the fall just described, and that bitterness turns darkness into light.

בחי' קהת ולו יקחת עמים²⁰ ולילה כיום יאיר כחשכה כאורה²¹ זדונות נעשה כזכיות²² וזהו עבודת הלויים להקימה מנפילתה.

The level of Kehas: "And to him shall be the gathering of the peoples"; "and the night shall shine as the day; the darkness is as the light"; deliberate sins become as merits. And this is the service of the Levites: to raise it up from its fall.

Kehas is read through "and to him shall be the gathering (yikhas) of the peoples," the stage at which "the night shines as the day" and deliberate sins become like merits. This is the Levites' service: raising the fallen Mishkan up from its fall.

SECTION 5 • 15

The Kohanim: "I held him"

5 ועבודת הכהנים ובא אהרן ובניו²³ כו' כי האומר אין לי אלא תורה²⁴ כו' אלא כמ"ש אחזתיו ולא ארפנו עד שהבאתיו²⁵ כו'

And the service of the Kohanim: "Aharon and his sons shall come," etc. For one who says, "I have nothing but Torah," etc.; rather, as it is written, "I held him and would not let him go until I had brought him," etc.

The Kohanim's service is introduced by "Aharon and his sons shall come" (Numbers 4:5), the verse in which they cover the holy vessels. It is explained through the Sages' saying about one who says "I have nothing but Torah," and through the verse "I held him and would not let him go until I had brought him" (Song of Songs 3:4).

אחזתיו דייקא אלא דלית מחשבה תפיסא ביי²⁶ וא"א להתגלות ולהתפשט בכחות הנפש עד שהבאתיו כו' וד"ל:

"I held him," precisely; only, "no thought can grasp Him," and it is impossible for it to be revealed and to spread forth in the powers of the soul "until I had brought him," etc. And this suffices for one who understands.

The stress is on "I held him": one must hold fast to G-d Himself, not to the Torah alone. Yet since no thought can grasp Him, this hold cannot be revealed and spread in the soul's powers "until I had brought him," and the text leaves the rest to the one who understands.

IN ONE'S AVODAH

A person should contemplate G-d's greatness deeply, for the love born of it grows with his understanding; yet he should not rest with that love but lift it to the higher will of the soul's root, nullification before G-d's essence. When he has fallen, the Levites' service raises him: subduing the evil and feeling bitter over the descent until darkness turns into light. And in his Torah study his hold must be on G-d Himself, not on the Torah alone.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. How do the lower will and the higher will differ in where they come from and in how they are felt?
2. Why can the love born of understanding be small or great, while the higher will shines equally in every Jewish soul?
3. What does it mean that the Giving of the Torah joined the encompassing level of the soul to its inner powers?
4. How do Gershon, Merari and Kehas form an ascent in raising what has fallen?
5. What is lacking in "I have nothing but Torah," and how does the stress on "I held him" answer it?

SOURCES AND REFERENCES

Notes

PARAGRAPH 1

1 לית מחשבה תפיסא ביי

From Elijah's prayer (Patach Eliyahu) in the introduction to the Tikkunei Zohar: "No thought can grasp You at all." Here it sets G-d's essence beyond the mind, in contrast to the spreading forth of His greatness, which the mind can grasp.

Tikkunei Zohar 17a:10-12 ב"י א"י: י"ב

אנת הוא עלאה על כל עלאין סתימא על כל סתימין. לית מחשבה תפיסא בך כלל. אנת הוא דאפיקת עשר תקונין. וקרינן לון עשר ספירן. לאנהאג בהון עלמין סתימין דלא אתגליין. ועלמין דאתגליין. ובהון אתכסיאת (נ"א אתכסיא) מבני נשא. ואנת הוא דקשיר לון ומיחד לון. ובגין דאנת מלגאו. כל מאן דאפריש חד מן חבריה מאלין עשר. אתחשיב ליה כאלו אפריש בך.

Constantinople, 1740 (CC-BY-NC)

2 המוח שליט על הלב

The Zohar (Pinchas) says that the brain, which is "male," rides upon and rules over the heart. Here this explains why the heart can become a vessel for the light grasped in the mind.

Zohar, Pinchas 39:209 ט"ז ר"י: פנחס

3 "Her husband is known in the gates, when he sits among the elders of the land," from the Woman of Valor. Here the "husband" is G-d, who becomes known to the soul.

Proverbs 31:23 ג"כ: משלי

נוֹדַע בְּשַׁעְרִים בְּעֵלָה בְּשִׁבְתּוֹ עִם־זִקְנֵי־אֶרֶץ:

Her husband is known in the gates, When he sitteth among the elders of the land.

Miqra according to the Masorah (CC-BY-SA) • JPS 1917 (Public Domain)

4 ושם אתה מוצא ענותנותו

Rabbi Yochanan: "Wherever you find the might of the Holy One, blessed be He, there you find His humility." The Alter Rebbe applies it to G-d's greatness descending through many stages so that He can be known.

Megillah 31a:12-13 י"ב-י"ג: מגילה

אמר רבי יוחנן: כל מקום שאמרת מוצא גבורתו של הקדוש ברוך הוא, אתה מוצא ענותנותו. דבר זה כתוב בתורה, ושנוי בנביאים, ומשולש בכתובים. כתוב בתורה: "כי ה' אלקיכם הוא אלקי האלקים ואדוני האדונים", וכתוב בתורה: "עושה משפט יתום ואלמנה". שנוי בנביאים: "כה אמר ה' ונשא שוכן עד וקדוש וגו'", וכתוב בתורה: "ואת דבא ושפל רוח", משולש בכתובים, דכתיב: "סולו לרוכב בערכות בקה שמו", וכתוב בתורה: "אבי יתומים" ...

Yohanan said: Wherever you find [mentioned in the Bible] the power of the Holy One, blessed be He, you also find his humility. This fact is stated in the Torah, repeated in the Prophets, and stated a third time in the [Sacred] Writings. It

is written in the Torah, "For the L-rd your G-d, He is the G-d of gods and L-rd of lords," and it says immediately afterwards, "He executes justice for the orphan and widow" (Deuteronomy 10:17). It is repeated in the Prophets: "For thus said He who ...

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5 לכל חד וחד לפום מה דמשער בלבא

The Zohar on this verse: "Her husband" is the Holy One, blessed be He, who is known and cleaved to by each one according to what he measures in his heart, as far as he can cleave to the spirit of wisdom. The preceding maamar cites this passage (Vayera 103).

Zohar, Vayera 9:153-164 ד"ק-קס"ג: וירא ט' קנ"ג-קס"ד

But of a truth the Holy One makes Himself known to every one according to the measure of his understanding and his capacity to attach himself to the spirit of Divine wisdom; and thus "Her husband is known", not "in the gates" (bishe'arim), but, as we may also translate, "by measure", though a full knowledge is beyond the reach of any being.'

The Zohar; London, Soncino Press, 1933 (Public Domain)

PARAGRAPH 2

6 בכחי יחידה שבנפש

The Midrash: the soul is called by five names, nefesh, ruach, neshamah, yechidah and chayah. Yechidah, the "single one," is here the level of the soul in which the higher will shines.

Bereshit Rabbah 14:9 ט"ז: בראשית רבה

חמשה שמות נקראו לה: נפש, רוח, נשמה, יחידה, חיה. נפש, זה הדם, שנאמר (דברים יב): כי הדם הוא הנפש. רוח, שהיא עולה ויורדת, שנאמר (קהלת ג): מי יודע רוח בני האדם העולה היא למעלה. נשמה, זו האופיה, דברייא אמרין האופיתא טבא. חיה, שכל האברים מתים והיא חיה בגוף. יחידה, שכל האברים משנים שנים והיא יחידה בגוף. הדא הוא דכתיב (איוב לד) אם ישם אליו לבו רוחו ונשמתו אליו יאסוף. רבי יהושע בר נחמיה ורבנן. רבי יהושע בר נחמיה אמר: אם ישם אלקים לבו על האדם הזה, רוחו כבר היה בידו, ...

It [man's soul] is called by five names: nefesh (Genesis 2:7), ruah (Ezekiel 37:14), neshama (Genesis 2:7), yehida (Psalms 22:21), haya (Psalms 143:3). Nefesh - this refers to blood, as it is stated: "For blood is the soul [nefesh]" (Deuteronomy 12:23). Ruah - because it ascends and descends, as it is stated: "Who knows the spirit of the sons of man? Does it ascend upward?" (Ecclesiastes 3:21). also means wind, which ascends and descends. Neshama - this refers to man's intellect, as people say: Intellect is good. Haya - because ...

Daat Bereshit Rabbah (Public Domain) • The Sefaria Midrash Rabbah, 2022 (CC-BY)

7

כל הנשמה תהלל

The closing verse of the Book of Psalms: "Every soul shall praise." Here it expresses the soul's praise of G-d's greatness as it towers over all created beings.

Psalms 150:6 ק"י:ג:6

כל הנשמה תהלל קה הללויה:

Let every thing that hath breath praise the L-RD. Hallelujah.
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8

ולגדולתו אין חקר

"Havayah is great and highly praised, and His greatness is unsearchable." The soul contemplates that G-d's greatness has no measure in relation to anything created.

Psalms 145:3 קמ"ה:ג:3

גדול ה' ומהלל מאד ולגדולתו אין חקר:

Great is the L-RD, and highly to be praised; And His greatness is unsearchable.
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9

ובכל מאדך

"And you shall love Havayah your G-d with all your heart, with all your soul and with all your might." The Alter Rebbe identifies "with all your might" with the love that transcends the soul's powers.

Deuteronomy 6:5 ו:ה:6

ואהבת את ה' אלקיך בכל לבבך ובכל נפשך ובכל מאדך:

And thou shalt love the L-RD thy G-d with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might.
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PARAGRAPH 3

10

שאו את ראש

"Lift up the head of all the congregation of the children of Israel ... every male, by their skulls." The preceding maa-mar opened with this verse; here "the head" is the lower will and "the skull" the higher will.

Numbers 1:2 א"ב:1:2

שאו את ראש כל עדת בני ישראל למשפחתם לבית אבתם במספר שמות כל זכר לגלגלתם:

'Take ye the sum of all the congregation of the children of Israel, by their families, by their fathers'houses, according to the number of names, every male, by their polls;
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11

טעמי תורה לא נתגלו

Rabbi Yitzhak asks, "Why were the reasons of the Torah not revealed?" Here the Alter Rebbe connects it to the Torah's oneness with G-d's wisdom, which is beyond revealed understanding.

Sanhedrin 21b:16 ט"ז:ב:21b

ואמר רבי יצחק: מפני מה לא נתגלו טעמי תורה? שהרי שתי מקראות נתגלו טעמן, ונכשל בהן גדול העולם. כתיב: "לא ירבה לו נשים". אמר

שלמה: "אני ארבה ולא אסור". וכתב: "ויהי לעת זקנת שלמה נשיו השו את לבבו".

William Davidson, Vocalized Aramaic (CC-BY-NC)

12

דאנת הוא חכים ולא בחכמה ידיעה

From Elijah's prayer (Patach Eliyahu): "You are wise, but not with a known wisdom." G-d's wisdom, with which the Torah is one, is not a wisdom that can be known.

Tikkunei Zohar 17b:3-4 ד"ב:ג:3-4

אנת חכים ולא בחכמה ידיעה. אנת הוא מבין ולא מבינה ידיעה. לית לך אתר ידיעה אלא לאשתמודעא תוקפך וחילך לבני נשא. ולאחזאה לון איך אתנהיג עלמא בדינא וברחמי דאיןון צדק ומשפט כפום עובדיהון דבני נשא. דין איהו גבורה. משפט עמודא דאמצעיתא. צדק מלכותא קדישא. מאזני צדק *תרין סמכי קשוט. הין צדק אות ברית. כלא לאחזאה איך אתנהיג עלמא.

Constantinople, 1740 (CC-BY-NC)

PARAGRAPH 4

13

המאור שבה שהוא הוא עצמותו ומהותו ית' המלובש בה מחזירו למוטב

On "They have forsaken Me and not kept My Torah" (Jeremiah 16:11), the Midrash says: would that they had forsaken Me and kept My Torah, for by occupying themselves with it, the light within it would have brought them back to the better. The Alter Rebbe identifies that light with G-d's essence encloded in the Torah.

Eikhah Rabbah, Petichta 2' פתיחתא ב"ב

... רבי הונא ורבי ירמיה בשם רבי חיא בר אבא אמרי, כתיב (ירמיה טז, יא): ואתי עזבו ואת תורתי לא שמרו, הלאו אותי עזבו ותורתי שמרו, מתוך שהיו מתעסקין בה המאור שבה היה מחזירן למוטב. רב הונא אמר למד תורה אף על פי שלא לשמה שמתוך שלא לשמה בא לשמה. אמר רבי יהושע בן לוי בכל יום יום בת קול יוצאת מהר חורב ואומרת אוי להם לבריות מעלבונה של תורה. שמואל תני לה בשם רבי שמואל בר אמי, אימתי המלכות ...

Rabbi Abba bar Kahana began: "Who is the wise man who will understand this..." (Jeremiah 9:11). Rabbi Shimon ben Yohai taught: If you have seen towns uprooted from their place in the Land of Israel, know that they did not provide the salaries of the Bible teachers and the Mishna teachers, as it is stated: "For what reason did the land perish.... The L-rd said: Because they have forsaken My Torah" (Jeremiah 9:11-12). Rabbi [Yehuda HaNasi] would dispatch Rabbi Asi and Rabbi Ami to go out and establish [educational programs] ...

Midrash Rabbah -- TE (Public Domain) • The Sefaria Midrash Rabbah, 2022 (CC-BY)

14

טוב הוא זיו ואור הגנוז לצדיקים

The light G-d created on the first day, by which one could see from one end of the world to the other, was hidden away for the righteous in the time to come; and the

Gemara adds that “good” means the righteous. Here “good” is that hidden light.

חגיגה י"ב א:י"א-י"א:10-11 Chagigah

ולמי גנוז — לצדיקים לעתיד לבא, שנאמר: "וירא אלקים את האור כי טוב", ואין "טוב" אלא צדיק, שנאמר: "אמרו צדיק כי טוב". כיון שראה אור שגנוז לצדיקים שמח, שנאמר: "אור צדיקים ישמח".

William Davidson, Vocalized Aramaic (CC-BY-NC)

15

לצדיקים שנהנין

In the World to Come there is no eating or drinking; rather, the righteous sit with their crowns on their heads and enjoy the radiance of the Shechinah. The words “who take delight, etc.” allude to this.

ברכות י"ז א:י"ב-י"ז:17a Berakhot

מרגלא בפומיה דרב: לא כעולם הזה העולם הבא. העולם הבא אין בו לא אכילה ולא שתיה ולא פריה ורביה ולא משא ומתן ולא קנאה ולא שנאה ולא תחרות, אלא צדיקים יושבין ועטרותיהם בראשיהם ונהנים מזיו השכינה, שנאמר: "ויחזו את האלקים ויאכלו וישתו".

It was a favourite saying of Rab : Not like this world is the world to come. In the world to come there is neither eating nor drinking; no procreation of children or business transactions; no envy or hatred or rivalry ; but the righteous sit enthroned, their crowns on their heads, and enjoy the lustre of the Shekinah; as it is said, "And they beheld G-d, and did eat and drink" (Exod. xxiv. II).

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16

ובחנות המשכן

“When the Mishkan sets out, the Levites shall take it down, and when the Mishkan encamps, the Levites shall set it up.” The Mishkan’s encamping is read as a descent that the Levites raise up.

במדבר א:י"א-י"א:15 Numbers

ובנסע המשכן יורידו אתו הלויים ובחנת המשכן יקימו אתו הלויים והזר הקרב יומת:

And when the tabernacle setteth forward, the Levites shall take it down; and when the tabernacle is to be pitched, the Levites shall set it up; and the common man that draweth nigh shall be put to death.

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17

סוכת דוד הנופלת

“On that day I will raise up the fallen sukkah of David.” The fallen sukkah stands for the state of descent that is to be raised.

עמוס ט:י"א-י"א:9 Amos

ביום ההוא אקים את־סכַּת דָּוִד הַנִּפְלֶתֶת וְגִדְרֹתֶיהָ אֶת־פְּרֻצֶיהָ וְהִרְסֹתֶיהָ אָקִים וּבְנִיתֶיהָ כִּימֵי עוֹלָם:

In that day will I raise up The tabernacle of David that is fallen, And close up the breaches thereof, And I will raise up his ruins, And I will build it as in the days of old;

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18

רגליה יורדת

“Her feet go down to death.” It is brought beside the fallen sukkah of David to describe how far the descent reaches.

משלי ה:ה'5-5 Proverbs

רגליה ירדות מות שאל צעדיה יתמכו:

Her feet go down to death; Her steps take hold on the nether-world;

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19

ותשליך במצולות ים

“He will again have compassion on us, He will subdue our iniquities; and You will cast all their sins into the depths of the sea.” The Alter Rebbe links it to Gershon, the subduing and removal of evil.

מִיכָה ז:י"ט Micah

ישוב ירחמנו: כבש עונתינו ותשליך במצולות ים כל־חטאותם:

He will again have compassion upon us; He will subdue our iniquities; And Thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea.

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20

ולו יקהת עמים

Jacob’s blessing of Judah: “The scepter shall not depart from Judah ... and to him shall be the gathering of the peoples.” The name Kehas is read through yikhas, “gathering.”

בראשית מ"ט:10 Genesis

לא־יסור שבט מיהודה ומחלק מבין רגליו עד כִּי־יבא שילה ולו יקהת עמים:

The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, Nor the ruler’s staff from between his feet, As long as men come to Shiloh; And unto him shall the obedience of the peoples be.

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21

ולילה כיום יאיר כחשכה כאורה

“Even darkness is not dark for You, and the night shines as the day; darkness is as light.” This is the level of Kehas, where darkness itself becomes light.

תהילים קל"ט:12 Psalms

גַּם־חֹשֶׁךְ לֹא־יִחְשֶׁךְ מִמֶּךָ וְלֵילִית כַּיּוֹם יֵאִיר כַּחֲשִׁיכָה כְּאוֹרָה:

Even the darkness is not too dark for Thee, But the night shineth as the day; The darkness is even as the light.

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22

וזונות נעשה כזכיות

Reish Lakish: great is repentance, for through it deliberate sins become for a person like merits; the Gemara explains that this is repentance out of love. Here it describes the highest stage, Kehas.

יומא פ"ב ב:3 Yoma

אמר ריש לקיש: גדולה תשובה שזונות נעשות לו כשגגות, שנאמר: "שוכה ישראל עד הי אלקיה כי כשלת בצונת", הא "עון" — מזיד הוא, וקא קרי לקה מכשול. איני?! והאמר ריש לקיש: גדולה תשובה

שְׁדוֹנוֹת נַעֲשוֹת לוֹ כְּזִכּוּת, שְׁנֵאמַר: "וּבְשׁוּב רָשָׁע מִרְשָׁעוֹ וְעָשָׂה מִשְׁפָּט וּצְדָקָה עָלֵיהֶם (חיה) יִחְיֶה!" לֹא קָשִׁיָּא: כָּאן מֵאֲהָבָה, כָּאן מִיִּרְאָה.

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PARAGRAPH 5

23 ובא אהרן ובניו

"Aharon and his sons shall come when the camp sets out, and take down the screening curtain and cover the Ark of the Testimony with it." This is the Kohanim's part in the Mishkan's journeys, here a model of their service.

במדבר ד':ה' 4:5 Numbers

וּבֹא אֶהְרֹן וּבָנָיו בְּנֹסַע הַמַּחֲנֶה וְהוֹרְדוּ אֶת פֶּרֶכֶת הַמִּסְכָּה וְכִסּוּ-בָהּ אֶת אֲרוֹן הָעֵדוּת:

when the camp setteth forward, Aaron shall go in, and his sons, and they shall take down the veil of the screen, and cover the ark of the testimony with it;

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24 האומר אין לי אלא תורה

A teaching of Rabbi Yosei, as the Gemara explains it: one who says he has nothing but Torah does not even have Torah. The Alter Rebbe uses it to show that one must hold fast to G-d Himself, not to the Torah alone.

יבמות ק"ט ב' ד' 109b:4-5 Yevamot

עֲרֵבִי שֶׁלְצִיּוֹן — דְּעֵבְדִּי שְׁלוֹף דּוּץ. תּוֹקֵעַ עֲצָמוֹ לְדַבֵּר הִלְכָּה — דְּתַנְיָא, רַבִּי יוֹסִי אוֹמֵר: כָּל הָאוֹמֵר אֵין לוֹ תוֹרָה — אֵין לוֹ תוֹרָה. פְּשִׁיטָא! אֵלָּא: כָּל הָאוֹמֵר אֵין לוֹ אֵלָּא תוֹרָה — אֵין לוֹ אֵלָּא תוֹרָה. הָא נִמֵּי פְּשִׁיטָא! אֵלָּא דְּאִפִּילוּ תוֹרָה אֵין לוֹ. מַאי טַעְמָא? אָמַר רַב פֶּפְא, אָמַר קְרָא: "וְלִמְדַתֶּם וַעֲשִׂיתֶם" — כָּל שֶׁיִּשְׁנֹו בַּעֲשִׂיָּה יִשְׁנֹו בְּלִמְיָדָה, כָּל שֶׁאֵינוֹ בַּעֲשִׂיָּה אֵינוֹ בְּלִמְיָדָה.

William Davidson, Vocalized Aramaic (CC-BY-NC)

25 אחזתיו ולא ארפנו עד שהבאתיו

"I held him and would not let him go until I had brought him into my mother's house, into the chamber of her who conceived me." The Alter Rebbe stresses "I held him": the hold is on G-d Himself.

שיר השירים ג':ד' 3:4 Song of Songs

כַּמְעַט שֶׁעֲבָרְתִּי מֵהֶם עַד שֶׁמָּצֵאתִי אֶת שְׁאֵהָבָה נִפְשִׁי אֲחֻזְתִּיו וְלֹא אֲרַפְּנוּ עַד-שֶׁהֵבִיאתִיו אֶל-בֵּית אִמִּי וְאֶל-חֲדָר הוֹרְתִי:

Scarce had I passed from them, When I found him whom my soul loveth: I held him, and would not let him go, Until I had brought him into my mother's house, And into the chamber of her that conceived me.

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26 דלית מחשבה תפיסא ב'

Elijah's prayer in the introduction to the Tikkunei Zohar: "No thought can grasp You at all." This is why the hold on

G-d Himself cannot by itself be revealed in the soul's powers.

תקוני זוהר י"ז א' י"ב-10:17a Tikkunei Zohar

אנת הוא עלאה על כל עלאין סתימא על כל סתימין. לית מחשבה תפיסא בך כלל. אנת הוא דאפיקת עשר תקונין. וקרינן לון עשר ספירן. לאנהגא בהון עלמין סתימין דלא אתגליין. ועלמין דאתגליין. ובהון אתכסיאת (נ"א אתכסיא) מבני נשא. ואנת הוא דקשיר לון ומיחד לון. ובגין דאנת מלגאו. כל מאן דאפריש חד מן חבריה מאלין עשר. אתחשיב ליה כאלו אפריש בך.

Constantinople, 1740 (CC-BY-NC)



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THE CHASSIDISHE PARSHA

About this edition

This edition contains the Hebrew text, the English translation, our explanations, and the notes.

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The Rebbe asked that the maamarim of the week's parsha, the "Chassidishe Parsha," be learned during that week, spread over its seven days (Sichah of Shabbos Parshas Vayakhel 5725 · Toras Menachem vol. 42, pp. 306-309). Why learn it, and the Rebbe's brachos: likuteitorah.com/about/the-chassidishe-parsha/

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DEDICATED IN HONOR OF

מוקדש לכבוד הגאון המקובל רבי לוי יצחק שניאורסאהן זצ"ל

Dedicated in honor of the Rebbe's father, Reb Levi Yitzchok