



LIKKUTEI TORAH • PARSHAS BECHUKOSAI • MAAMAR 4

אלה החוקים והמשפטים והתורות אשר נתן ה' בינו...

These are the statutes, the
ordinances and the teachings



The blessings and curses of Bechukosai belong to the commandments themselves: the blessings reveal G-dliness to Israel and the curses remove the forces that hide it. They are given “between Himself and the children of Israel” because the curses deal with a screen that sin has already made.

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 blessings and curses of Bechukosai belong to the commandments themselves: the blessings reveal G-dliness to Israel and the curses remove the forces that hide it. They are given “between Himself and the children of Israel” because the curses deal with a screen that sin has already made.

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

The maamar asks why the blessings and curses of Bechukosai are called “statutes, ordinances and teachings,” though they command nothing, and why they were given “between Himself and the children of Israel.” It turns to the parshah’s opening verse: walking, keeping and doing are thought, speech and action. Walking is contemplation of G-d’s greatness, rising level after level and lifting the world along; the careful study of halachos is such a going. Keeping is the spoken study of Mishnah and halachah, which fixes faith in G-d’s oneness even within one who cannot climb, for the Shechinah stays with every Jew even in his lowest exile. Doing is action, which alone draws down the light that encompasses all worlds, as a gesture conveys more than words; charity brings the peace that holds every blessing. The blessings are revealed closeness to G-d, while the curses fall on the external forces, never on Israel’s essence. This explains why Yitzchak wished to bless Esav, why the blessings went to Yaakov, and Yaakov’s “Rise, please, sit and eat” as the path from contemplation to revelation. Blessings and curses both flow from the commandments; only the curses deal with a screen that sin has made.

OUTLINE

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|----------|---|------|
| 1 | The questions; walking as thought | ¶1-3 |
| | Why the blessings and curses are called statutes, and why “between Himself”; “walking” is the contemplation of G-d’s greatness, rising level after level with the world, and the careful study of halachos is its path. | |
| 2 | Keeping as speech | ¶4-5 |
| | Even one who cannot climb keeps faith in G-d’s oneness fixed within him by speaking and repeating halachah, for the Shechinah is with him even in exile and even when he sins. | |
| 3 | Doing as action | ¶6-7 |
| | Action alone draws down the light that encompasses all worlds, like a hint to the wise; the act of charity brings the peace that holds every blessing. | |

4 The blessings and the curses

¶18-10

The blessings are revealed closeness to G-d; the curses fall on the external forces, and even “the stranger in your midst” is read as the Shechinah rising within while the body sinks.

5 Yitzchak, Esav and Yaakov

¶11-12

Yitzchak meant to subdue Esav through the blessings, but Esav is wholly evil; the blessings went to Yaakov, and “Rise, please, sit and eat” describes how evil is subdued and revelation drawn down.

6 The answer

¶13

Blessings and curses flow from the commandments themselves; they are “between Himself and Israel” because the curses remove a screen that sin has made.

KEY CONCEPTS

Thought, speech and action מחשבה דיבור ומעשה

The three verbs of “If you walk in My statutes, keep My commandments and do them”: contemplation that rises, Torah study spoken aloud that keeps, and the deed of a mitzvah that draws down.

The light that encompasses all worlds (sovev kol almin) סובב כל עלמין

Divine light beyond all thought and speech, drawn down only through action, the way a gesture conveys what words cannot.

My pledge (mashkona) משכונא דילי

The Zohar’s reading of “My Sanctuary in your midst”: the G-dliness G-d leaves within every Jew, which stays with him even in exile and even while he sins.

The stranger in your midst הגר אשר בקרבך

Read as the Shechinah, source of the hidden love in every Jewish heart: a stranger in the body that rises through contemplation of G-d’s greatness while the body and the external forces sink.

From his side (mitzido) מצדו

Foreign thoughts in prayer: a person’s own past thoughts, neither wholly against his will nor fully willed, drawn after him as he rises, like mud on the hem of a long garment.

The chariot (merkavah) מרכבה

The Patriarchs, wholly nullified to G-d’s unity, who needed no revelation drawn down below; so Yitzchak saw no need to bless Yaakov.

SECTION 1 • 11-3

The questions; walking as thought

1 אלה החוקים¹ והמשפטים² והתורות אשר נתן ה' בינו ובין בני ישראל. הנה לכאורה לא שייך לומר חוקים ומשפטים ותורות על הברכות וקללות הכתובים למעלה בפ' זו שאין בהם ציווי דבר חוק ומשפט.^{3,4}

“These are the statutes, the ordinances and the teachings which Havayah gave between Himself and the children of Israel.” Now, at first glance it is not fitting to say “statutes, ordinances and teachings” about the blessings and curses written above in this parshah, since they contain no command of any matter of statute or ordinance.

The maamar opens with the verse that closes the blessings and curses of Parshas Bechukosai. It raises a difficulty: “statutes, ordinances and teachings” are words for commandments, yet the blessings and curses just listed command nothing; they only promise reward and warn of punishment.

2 וגם להבין מהו בינו ובין בני ישראל⁵ והל"ל אל בני ישראל וכו'. אך הענין דהנה בפ' שלמעלה כתיב אם בחקותי תלכו ואת מצותי תשמרו ועשיתם⁶

Also, [we need] to understand what “between Himself and the children of Israel” means; it should have said “to the children of Israel,” etc. But the explanation is this: in the parshah above it is written, “If you walk in My statutes, and keep My commandments, and do

A second question: the verse says the Torah was given “between Himself and the children of Israel,” as though speaking of two sides with something between them, rather than simply “to the children of Israel.” To answer both questions, the Alter Rebbe turns to the opening verse of the parshah: “If you walk in My statutes, keep My commandments and do them.”

אותם וג' בחי' אלו תלכו תשמרו ועשיתם אותם הם כנגד מחשבה דיבור ומעשה, בחקותי תלכו הוא ענין המחשבה בעיון והשגת גדולתו ית' שיש בה כמה מדרגות זו למעלה מזו

them.” These three levels, “walk,” “keep” and “do them,” correspond to thought, speech and action. “Walk in My statutes” is the matter of thought, in contemplating and comprehending His greatness, may He be blessed, in which there are many levels, one above the other;

The three verbs match a person's three faculties of service: walking is thought, keeping is speech, doing is action. Thought is called “walking” because contemplating G-d's greatness has many rungs, each above the last, and the mind moves from one to the next.

ולכן נק' בשם הליכה כמ"ש ילכו מחיל אל חיל⁷ והוא ענין מ"ש הליכות עולם לו⁸ פי' שהולך ונעתק מזה העולם לו לבדו ליבטל אליו ליחודו ית' בהשגתו בגדולתו מדרגה אחר מדרגה

and therefore it is called by the name "walking," as it is written, "They go from strength to strength." And this is the meaning of what is written, "The goings of the world are to Him (halichos olam lo)": that is, one goes and moves away from this world to Him alone, to be nullified to Him, to His unity, may He be blessed, through his comprehension of His greatness, level after level;

The Psalm describes those who "go from strength to strength," rising without rest. The Alter Rebbe reads Habakkuk's halichos olam lo as "the goings of the world are to Him": in contemplation a person leaves the frame of this world and goes toward G-d alone, nullified to His unity, rung after rung.

וגם הליכות העולם עצמו לו שגם העולם עצמו הולך ומתעלה עם האדם ליחודו ית' מאחר שהאדם הוא בתוכו⁹ ונק' הליכות לשון רבים כמארז"ל אל תקרי הליכות אלא הלכות.¹⁰

and also the goings of the world itself are "to Him," for the world itself also goes and rises with the person to His unity, may He be blessed, since the person is within it. And it is called halichos, in the plural, as our Sages, of blessed memory, said, "Do not read halichos (goings), but halachos (laws)."

The world itself also rises: a person lives within the world, so when he ascends, the world ascends with him. The plural halichos leads to the Gemara's reading, "do not read halichos but halachos," which the next paragraph develops.

3 וכמ"ש ועלמות אין מספר^{11,12} ודרשו רז"ל אלו הלכות¹³ שלכן נקראו בשם הלכות שע"י העיון בהם להשיגו היטב על בוריו

And as it is written, "and maidens (alamos) without number," and our Sages, of blessed memory, expounded: "These are the halachos." This is why they are called by the name halachos: because through contemplating them, so as to grasp it well and thoroughly,

The Tikkunei Zohar reads "maidens (alamos) without number" in the Song of Songs as the halachos, which have no number. The Alter Rebbe explains why laws are called halachos, a word of "going": studying them closely, until each one is understood clearly, is itself a way of rising.

זוכה האדם לילך ממדרגה למדרגה בהשגת גדולת א"ס ב"ה וקרבתו אם קרבת אלקים יחפץ באמת ויבקשנה ככסף¹⁴ כו' ויגעתי ומצאתי¹⁵ כו' ולאפוקי מי שאינו כו'.

a person merits to go from level to level in grasping the greatness of the Infinite One (Ein Sof), blessed be He, and closeness to Him, if he truly desires closeness to G-d "and seeks it like silver," etc., "I have toiled and I have found," etc.; which excludes one who does not, etc.

Through such study a person climbs from level to level in grasping the greatness of the Infinite One and comes close to Him. This holds only if he truly wants closeness to G-d and searches for it as one searches for silver; "I toiled and I found" teaches that finding comes through toil, which excludes one who does not search in this way.

SECTION 2 • 14-5

Keeping as speech

4 ואת מצותי תשמרו הוא ענין הדבור כמארז"ל שמור זו משנה^{16, 17, 18} שהוא הדבור בד"ת מלשון ושננתם לבניך.¹⁹ והענין כי אף מי שמוחו קטן להשיג בגדולת ה' ולילך בה ממדרגה למדרגה.

"And keep My commandments" is the matter of speech, as our Sages, of blessed memory, said, "Keep": this is Mishnah," which is speech in words of Torah, from the language of "and you shall teach them diligently (veshinantam) to your children." And the explanation is: even one whose mind is too small to grasp G-d's greatness and to go in it from level to level,

The second verb, "keep My commandments," is speech: the Sages read "keep" as the study of Mishnah, which is learned by saying it over and over, and the word Mishnah is related to veshinantam, "teach them diligently." The Alter Rebbe introduces this way of serving for one whose mind is too small to climb in contemplation from level to level.

הנה אעפ"כ יש בכל א' ואחד מישראל בחיי אלקות ודבר ה' השוכן בתוכו וכמ"ש ונתתי משכני בתוכם²⁰ ופי' בזהר²¹ משכונא דילי²² והוא עד"מ כאדם שנותן משכון לחבירו שהמשכון אינו מרצונו הטוב כך כביכול

even so, in each and every one of Israel there is the level of G-dliness and the word of G-d dwelling within him, as it is written, "And I will place My Sanctuary (mishkani) in your midst," which the Zohar explains as "My pledge (mashkona)." And this is, by way of analogy, like a person who gives a pledge to his fellow, where the pledge is not of his own good will; so too, as it were,

Even such a person has within him a G-dly level, the word of G-d dwelling inside him. The Zohar reads mishkani, "My Sanctuary," as mashkona, "My pledge": a pledge is handed over out of obligation rather than as a free gift, and so too, as it were, G-d's Presence stays with Israel even when their conduct does not call for it.

הנה ארז"ל גלו לאדום שכינה עמהם^{23,24} פ"י אף כי ידע אינש בנפשו איה מקומו שהוא בתחתית המדרגה בגלות אדום וישמעאל כו'

our Sages, of blessed memory, said, "They were exiled to Edom: the Shechinah (Divine Presence) is with them." That is: even though a person knows within himself where his place is, that he is at the very bottom level, in the exile of Edom and Yishmael, etc.,

The Sifrei teaches that wherever Israel were exiled, to Edom as well, the Shechinah went with them. Applied to the inner life, a person may know in himself that he stands at the lowest rung, in the exile of "Edom and Yishmael."

שהם המה מדות הרעות תאוות וכעס ודומיהן מכל מקום לא יפול לבו בקרבו לאמר אבדה תקותי which are the evil traits, lusts and anger and the like, nevertheless, let his heart not fall within him, saying, "My hope is lost."

The Alter Rebbe reads these exiles inwardly as the evil traits: lusts, anger and the like. Even one who finds himself there must not lose heart and say that his hope is gone.

כי האמת אינו כן שאפילו בגלות שכינה עמהם הנותנת לו חיות אלקות אפי' בעודו עובר על For the truth is not so: even in exile the Shechinah is with them, giving him G-dly life-force even while he is transgressing

Despair is mistaken, because the Shechinah is with Israel even in exile, and it keeps giving a person G-dly life-force even at the very moment he is transgressing G-d's will.

רצונו ית' שיוכל לקבוע במוחו ומחשבתו ענין אמונת אחדותו ית' האמיתי כי בשמים ממעל²⁵ ועל הארץ מתחת אין עוד וכולא קמ"י כלא חשיב.²⁶

His will, may He be blessed, so that he is able to fix in his mind and thought the faith in His true oneness, may He be blessed: that "in the heavens above and on the earth below there is nothing else," and "all before Him is accounted as nothing."

Because that life-force is always present, a person is always able to fix in his mind true faith in G-d's oneness: that in the heavens above and on the earth below there is nothing else, and that, in the Zohar's words, all before Him is accounted as nothing.

5 וזהו אני ה' אלקיכם כי הו'י הוא בחי' היה הוה ויהי ואני הו'י לא שניתני²⁷ הוא יכול להיות שורה וקבוע במוחו להיות לנו בבחי' אלקיכם וכמ"ש במ"א.

And this is [the meaning of] "I am Havayah your G-d." For Havayah is the level of "was, is and will be," and "I, Havayah, have not changed"; [yet] He can rest and be fixed in his mind, to be for us at the level of "your G-d" (Elokeichem), as is explained elsewhere.

The verse's words "I am Havayah your G-d" express this. Havayah is G-d beyond time, "was, is and will be" as one, Who never changes; yet this very level can rest and be fixed in a person's mind, so that He becomes "your G-d" (Elokeichem), G-d as He relates to each of us.

אך צריך שתהי' בחי' זו שמורה וקבועה בו בתוכו ממש שלא יהי' רק כמו שעומד

But this level must be kept and fixed in him, truly within him, so that it is not merely as though it stands

But this faith must be kept and fixed truly inside a person, not left merely hovering over him.

על שכלו מלמעלה ואינו נתאמת ונתפס בשכלו היטב כמ"ש ונתתי משכני בתוכם דייקא והשמירה לזה ארז"ל שמור זו משנה שהוא הדיבור והשינ ון בד"ת

over his intellect from above, and is not verified and well grasped in his intellect; as it is written, "And I will place My Sanctuary in your midst," specifically. And the keeping of this is [what] our Sages, of blessed memory, said, "'Keep': this is Mishnah," which is the speaking and repetition (shinun) of words of Torah;

Faith that only stands above the intellect is never confirmed and grasped by it; the verse says "in your midst" precisely, within the person. Its keeping is "'keep': this is Mishnah," the speaking and repeating of words of Torah.

כי דבר ה' זו הלכה²⁸ וכמארז"ל השונה הלכות²⁹ שהוא רק בחי' שמירה להיות משתמר בקרבו מה שכבר ניתנה לו אף

for "'The word of Havayah': this is halachah," and as our Sages, of blessed memory, said, "Whoever studies (shoneh) halachos." This is only the level of keeping: that what has already been given to him be kept within him; even

The Gemara reads "the word of Havayah" as halachah, so speaking halachah brings G-d's own word into a person's mouth, and the Sages praise "whoever studies halachos." This mode is only "keeping": it does not climb, but it guards within a person what he has already been given.

שאִינוּ יִכּוּל לִילֵךְ וּלְהִתְעַלּוֹת מֵעֵלָּה מֵעֵלָּה בְּהִשָּׁגַת גְּדוּלָּתוֹ וּקְרִבְתּוֹ יְיָ מִיָּמ עֵי הַמִּשְׁכַּת עוֹלָם הַדְּבוּר בְּתוֹכּוֹ כַּמִּי שֶׁוּתּוֹרֵתָךְ בְּתוֹךְ מַעֲיָ³⁰ וְכָתִיב וְאִשִּׁים דְּבָרִי בְּפִיךָ³¹ כִּי

though he cannot go and rise higher and higher in grasping His greatness and closeness to Him, may He be blessed, nevertheless, through drawing the world of speech within him, as it is written, “And Your Torah is within my innards,” and it is written, “And I have put My words in your mouth,” etc.,

Even one who cannot rise ever higher in grasping G-d’s greatness can draw the “world of speech,” the divine word of the Torah, into himself as he says it. The verses “Your Torah is within my innards” and “I have put My words in your mouth” describe the Torah’s words entering a person.

נִתְפַּס וְנִתְאַמַּת אֲצִלּוֹ עֵינֵי אֱמוּנַת אַחֲדוּתוֹ יְיָ בְּאֵמֶת לְאִמְיִתּוֹ וְלֹא בְּדִמְיוֹנוֹת שׁוֹא כַּמֶּאֱרָזִ"ל אֵין הַגְּלוּיֹת מִתְכַּנְסוֹת

the faith in His oneness, may He be blessed, is grasped and verified for him in absolute truth, and not in empty imaginings. As our Sages, of blessed memory, said, “The exiles are not gathered in

By this, faith in G-d’s oneness becomes grasped and confirmed for him as the real truth, not as an empty fantasy. The Midrash on the ingathering of the exiles is brought in support.

אַלֵּא בְּזִכּוֹת הַמִּשְׁנָיוֹת³² שֶׁהוּא בְּחֵי הַדְּבוּר בְּתִ"ת שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר גַּם כִּי יִתְּנוּ בְּגוֹיִם³³ עֵתָּה אֶקְבֹּצֶם מִיָּי שֶׁאֲעִ"פ שֶׁהֵם בְּבִחֵי גְלוּת שְׂכִינָה עִמָּהֶם וְזֶהוּ שֶׁאֲרָזִ"ל עַל פְּסוּק עַל מֶה אֲבָדָה הָאָרֶץ³⁴ עַל בִּיטוּל תּוֹרָה^{35,36}

except by the merit of the Mishnayos,” which is the level of speech in Torah study, “as it is said, ‘Even though they study (yisnu) among the nations, now I will gather them.’” That is: although they are in a state of exile, the Shechinah (Divine Presence) is with them. And this is what our Sages, of blessed memory, said on the verse “For what is the land lost?”: “For the neglect of Torah.”

The Midrash reads Hosea’s yisnu as “they study”: by the merit of Mishnah studied in exile, G-d will gather Israel in, since the Shechinah is with them there. The Sages also answer Jeremiah’s question, why the land was lost, with the neglect of Torah.

כִּי עֵי בִיטוּל תּוֹרָה שֶׁהוּא בְּחֵי דְבַר ה' אֲבָדָה הָאֱמוּנָה³⁷ שֶׁהִיא בְּחֵי הָאָרֶץ הַדּוּם רַגְלֵי שֶׁאִינוּ נִתְפַּס בְּמוֹחוֹ אֱמוּנַת יַחֲדוֹ יְיָ.^{38,39}

For through the neglect of Torah, which is the level of “the word of Havayah,” “faith is lost,” which is the level of “the earth, My footstool”: meaning that the faith in His unity, may He be blessed, is not grasped in his mind.

The Alter Rebbe identifies “the land” with faith, which is the level of “the earth, My footstool.” When Torah, the word of G-d, is neglected, faith in His unity is no longer grasped in the mind, and so, in Jeremiah’s words, “faith is lost.”

SECTION 3 • ¶6-7

Doing as action

6 ועשיתם אותם זה המעשה שהוא ענין המשכת אלהותו ית' מבחי' סוכ"ע ע"י המעשה כמארז"ל לא המדרש הוא העיקר⁴⁰ אלא המעשה⁴¹ וארז"ל גדול תלמוד שמביא לידי מעשה⁴² מכלל שהמעשה הוא עיקר התכלית

“And do them”: this is action, which is the drawing down of His G-dliness, may He be blessed, from the level of the light that encompasses all worlds (sovev kol almin), through action; as our Sages, of blessed memory, said, “Not study is the main thing, but action”; and our Sages, of blessed memory, said, “Great is study, for it leads to action,” which implies that action is the main purpose.

The third verb, “and do them,” is action, and action reaches higher than thought or speech: it draws down G-dliness from the light that encompasses all worlds, the light too great to enter them. The Sages’ sayings that action is the main thing, and that study is great because it leads to action, show that action is the goal.

והיינו כי א"א להמשיך גילוי אלהותו ית' מבחי' סוכ"ע ע"י שום השגה וכח המחשבה ודיבור דלית מחשבה תפיסא ביה כלל⁴³ ואפילו השגות עליונים כו'⁴⁴

That is: it is impossible to draw down the revelation of His G-dliness, may He be blessed, from the level of the light that encompasses all worlds through any comprehension, or the power of thought and speech, for “no thought can grasp Him at all,” not even the comprehension of the supernal beings, etc.,

This encompassing light cannot be drawn down by any comprehension, thought or speech, for, as the Tikkunei Zohar says, no thought can grasp Him at all, not even the understanding of the highest beings.

רק ע"י בחי' המעשה וקיום המצות כענין לחכימא ברמיזא,⁴⁵ והוא כמשל האדם שאינו יכול לדבר ולהסביר כל לבו לפני חבירו האיך יעשה רק ע"י שרומז לו בתנועה כל שהוא.

but only through the level of action and the fulfillment of the mitzvos, like the matter of “to the wise, by a hint.” And this is like the analogy of a person who cannot speak and explain all his heart before his fellow, how he should act, except by hinting to him with some slight movement.

It is drawn down only through deeds, the fulfillment of the mitzvos, which work like a hint to the wise. A person who cannot put all that is in his heart into words can still show his friend what to do by the slightest gesture; a gesture conveys what speech cannot.

כך כביכול הנה באתעדל"ת צריך להיות אתעדל"ע יש מהן דתליא בעובדא וע"י מעשה המצות וקיומן נרמז ונמשך מלמעלה מעלה מאד וממקום גבוה יותר כעין רמז ולמשל

So too, as it were: with an arousal from below there must come an arousal from above; some of them depend on action, and through the doing of the mitzvos and their fulfillment it is hinted and drawn down from very, very high above, and from a higher place, in the manner of a hint. And for example,

So too, as it were, an arousal from above follows an arousal from below, and some of these depend specifically on action. The physical act of a mitzvah is like that gesture: it hints to a very high place and draws a flow from there, higher than thought or speech can reach.

כמו מעשה הצדקה שע"י שמשפיע חיות לזולתו רומז למעלה למקום מקור כל ההשפעות להשפיע חיים וחסד לכל העולמות.

like the act of charity: by imparting life-force to another, one hints above, to the place of the source of all flows of influence, to bestow life and kindness on all the worlds.

Charity is the example: by giving life to another person, one signals above, to the source of all giving, to give life and kindness to all the worlds. The act below is the hint that calls forth its counterpart above.

7 וכן ענין כל המצות ואפילו מצות ת"ת שבדבור דעקימת שפתיו^{46, 47, 48} הוי מעשה. וז"ש והיה מעשה הצדקה שלום⁴⁹

And so it is with all the mitzvos, even the mitzvah of Torah study, which is in speech, for "the moving of his lips counts as an action." And this is [the meaning of] what is written, "And the act of charity shall be peace,"

This holds for every mitzvah, even Torah study done through speech, since halachah counts the moving of one's lips as an action. Isaiah's "the act of charity shall be peace" leads to the next point.

כי ענין השלום הוא שמחבר שני הפכים ועושה שלום ביניהם,⁵⁰ כך א"א לעולמות לקבל שפע וחיות מן הבורא ית' שהוא מובדל מהם מהקצה כו'

for the nature of peace is that it joins two opposites and makes peace between them. So too, it is impossible for the worlds to receive abundance and life-force from the Creator, may He be blessed, Who is separated from them from one extreme [to the other], etc.,

Peace joins two opposites and lets them coexist. The worlds and their Creator are such opposites: He is utterly removed from them, so the worlds could not receive His abundance and life-force on their own.

כִּי־א בְּבַח־י שְׁלוֹם, וְזֶהוּ וְנָתַתִּי שְׁלוֹם בָּאָרֶץ⁵¹ כִּי מַלְכוּתְךָ מַלְכוּת⁵² כָּל עוֹלָמֵי וְכָל־הֵם בַּח־י אֶרֶץ לַגִּבִּי הַקִּבִּי־ה.

except through the level of peace. And this is [the meaning of] “And I will give peace in the land”: for “Your kingship is the kingship of all worlds,” and all of them are the level of “land” relative to the Holy One, blessed be He.

They can receive it only through “peace,” a bond that joins the opposites. Thus “I will give peace in the land” refers to all the worlds, for G-d’s kingship is over all worlds, and all of them, compared to Him, are only “land.”

וְזֶהוּ לֹא מִצָּא הַקִּבִּי־ה כָּל־י⁵³ מַחְזִיק בְּרָכָה לְיִשְׂרָאֵל אֵלָּא הַשְׁלוֹם⁵⁴ כִּי הַשְׁלוֹם הוּא הַמַּחְזִיק בְּרָכָה וְהַמְשָׁכּוֹת חַיּוֹת אֱלֻקוֹת בְּהַתְּגַלּוֹת לַמַּטֵּה:

And this is [the meaning of] “The Holy One, blessed be He, found no vessel that holds blessing for Israel except peace”: for peace is what holds the blessing and the drawings-down of G-dly life-force in revelation below.

So the Mishnah’s closing teaching, that G-d found no vessel to hold blessing for Israel except peace, means that peace is what holds the blessing and the flow of G-dly life-force when it is revealed below.

SECTION 4 • ¶8-10

The blessings and the curses

8 ב וְזֶהוּ עֲנִין כָּל הַבְּרָכוֹת שֶׁבְּתוֹרָה כְּמוֹ דִּמּוּם וְאֶכְלָתֶם לַחֲמֶכֶם לְשׁוֹבַע⁵⁵ פִּי שִׁיְהִיָּה בַּח־י שׁוֹבַע שְׂמֵחוֹת אֶת פְּנִיךָ⁵⁶

2. And this is the meaning of all the blessings in the Torah; for example, “And you shall eat your bread to satiety”: that is, there will be the level of “satiety of joys in Your presence,”

Section 2 applies this to the blessings of the Torah. The promise “you shall eat your bread to satiety” is read spiritually as the “satiety of joys in Your presence,” the joy of G-d’s revealed closeness.

וְכַדְכְּתִיב עֹז וְחִדּוּהַ בְּמִקְוָמוֹ⁵⁷ וְהַקְלָלוֹת הֵם עַל הַמַּסְתִּירִים וּמוֹנְעִים אֶת הָאָדָם מֵעֲבוֹדַת ה' שֶׁהֵם הַחִיצוֹנִים

and as it is written, “Strength and gladness are in His place.” And the curses are upon those that conceal and hinder a person from the service of G-d, which are the external forces;

The verse in Chronicles likewise ties strength and gladness to G-d’s place. The curses, by contrast, are aimed at whatever hides G-d and holds a person back from serving Him: the external forces, the powers that oppose holiness.

כי ישראל מצד עצמם עלו במחשבה^{58,59} שאין שם שום הסתר פנים ורצונם לדבקה בו ליחודו ית' ומאמינים בני מאמינים⁶⁰ ואין

for Israel, in themselves, “arose in thought,” where there is no hiding of the Face whatsoever, and their will is to cleave to Him, to His unity, may He be blessed; and they are “believers, the sons of believers.” And no

In their essence Israel “arose in G-d’s thought” before creation, where there is no hiding of G-d’s face at all. Their deepest will is to cleave to Him, and they are “believers, the sons of believers.”

שייך שום קללה ח"ו מצד עצמי ולעתיד יתהפכו כל הקללות לברכה רק הקללות הם להעביר רוח החיצונים והטומאה שנדבק בהם בהתערבם כו'.

curse whatsoever, G-d forbid, applies to them in themselves. And in the Time to Come all the curses will be transformed into blessing. Only, the curses serve to remove the spirit of the external forces and the impurity that clung to them when they became intermingled, etc.

So no curse can touch Israel’s own essence, and in the future every curse will be turned into blessing. The curses exist only to drive out the spirit of the external forces and the impurity that clung to Israel when they became intermingled.

9 וז"ש הכתוב ונתן ה' את כל האלות⁶¹ האלה על אויביך ועל שונאיך אשר רדפוך. וכמ"ש ונשא השעיר עליו⁶² את כל עונותם שהוא בחי' עשו איש שעיר^{63,64,65}

And this is [the meaning of] what the verse says: “And Havayah will put all these curses upon your enemies and upon those who hate you, who pursued you.” And as it is written, “And the goat (sa’ir) shall bear upon itself all their iniquities,” which is the level of Esav, “a hairy (sa’ir) man.”

Moshe’s words in Deuteronomy show that the curses are meant for Israel’s enemies, those who hate and pursue them. The goat of Yom Kippur that carries the people’s sins away is, in the Midrash and the Zohar, Esav, “a hairy (sa’ir) man”: the sins are placed on the forces of evil and carried away from Israel.

וזהו פ"י ענין כל הקללות שהן ברכה באמת על ישראל מצד עצמם והקללה הגדולה שנאמרה במשנה תורה הגר אשר בקרבך⁶⁶ וכי היא אינה רק על חיצוני הנדבקות בהם.

And this is the explanation of all the curses: that they are in truth a blessing for Israel as they are in themselves. And the great curse stated in Mishneh Torah [Deuteronomy], “The stranger who is in your midst,” etc., is only upon the external forces that cling to them.

So all the curses, as they relate to Israel themselves, are truly blessings. Even the great curse of Deuteronomy, “the stranger in your midst shall rise above you,” is aimed only at the external forces that cling to Israel.

10 ופי' הגר אשר בקרבך היא השכינה אשר ממנה באה האהבה מסותרת אשר בלב כאו"א מישראל אשר היא בבחי' גלות בתוך הגוף ונק' בשם גר

And the explanation of "the stranger who is in your midst": it is the Shechinah (Divine Presence), from which comes the hidden love that is in the heart of each and every one of Israel, which is in a state of exile within the body; and it is called by the name "stranger" (ger)

The Alter Rebbe reads "the stranger in your midst" as the Shechinah within a Jew, the source of the hidden love for G-d in every Jewish heart. It is in exile inside the body, and that is why it is called a stranger (ger).

שהיא בארץ לא לו⁶⁷ שהוא ניצוץ אלקות המחיה את נפשו וכמארו"ל גלו כו' שכינה עמהם יעלה עליך מעלה מעלה⁶⁸ שיהא בבחי' עילוי רב ועצום

because it is "in a land not its own," for it is a spark of G-dliness that gives life to his soul; as our Sages, of blessed memory, said, "They were exiled, etc.; the Shechinah is with them." "Shall rise above you higher and higher": that it will be in a state of great and mighty elevation,

It is a stranger because it lives "in a land not its own": it is a spark of G-dliness that gives life to the soul, yet it dwells in the body, as the Sages said that the Shechinah goes into exile with Israel. That it "shall rise above you higher and higher" means that it will reach great and mighty elevation.

דהיינו שיעמיק במחשבתו גודל גדולתו עד אין חקר⁶⁹ וכמ"ש אני הוי' אשר הוצאתיך⁷⁰ מארץ מצרים וגו' פי' שלא יהיה בבחי' מצרים וגבולים כ"א כמ"ש ואתהלכה ברחבה⁷¹ וגו'

that is, that he delve in his thought into the vastness of His greatness, to the point where it is beyond searching. And as it is written, "I am Havayah Who brought you out of the land of Egypt (Mitzrayim)," etc.: that is, that he not be in a state of straits (meitzarim) and limits, but rather as it is written, "And I will walk in a broad place," etc.

This rising comes when a person contemplates deeply the vastness of G-d's greatness, which has no end. To leave Egypt (Mitzrayim) is to leave straits (meitzarim) and limits and to "walk in a broad place."

שאז ואתה דהיינו מה שהוא אתה שהוא בחי' הגוף וחיצונים תרד מטה מטה וכן כל ענין הקללות הם על החיצוני המונעים להעבירם ולהכריעם.

For then "and you," that is, what is "you," which is the level of the body and the external forces, "shall go down lower and lower." And likewise, the whole matter of the curses is upon the external forces that hinder, to remove them and cut them off.

Then "you," the body and the external forces, a person's outer self, "shall go down lower and lower." So this curse, like all the curses, is aimed at the hindering forces, to remove them and cut them off.

SECTION 5 • 11-12

Yitzchak, Esav and Yaakov

11 ובזה יובן כוונת יצחק אע"ה שרצה לברך את עשו ולא את יעקב, ⁷² כי הנה הברכות

And with this we will understand the intention of Yitzchak our father, peace be upon him, who wanted to bless Esav and not Yaakov. For the blessings,

This explains a puzzling episode: Yitzchak wanted to bless Esav, not Yaakov. The answer begins with what blessings are for.

וכן כל מצות התורה שהם המשכת גילוי אלהותו ית' למטה אינם אלא לאכפיא לסט"א ולהכניעם תחת הקדושה

and likewise all the mitzvos of the Torah, which are the drawing down of the revelation of His G-dliness, may He be blessed, below, are only to subdue the sitra achra (the other side) and to humble them beneath holiness.

The blessings, like all the mitzvos, draw G-d's revelation down into the lower world, and their purpose is to subdue the sitra achra, the forces opposed to holiness, and bring them under holiness.

ולכן לא ניתנה תורה עד אחר יצ"מ משא"כ בזמן האבות שהן הן המרכבה ⁷³ ובטלים ליחודו ית' לא היו צריכים להמשכת גילוי למטה

Therefore the Torah was not given until after the Exodus from Egypt. Whereas in the time of the Patriarchs, who "are themselves the chariot (merkavah)" and were nullified to His unity, may He be blessed, they did not need the drawing down of revelation below.

That is why the Torah, the great drawing down of revelation, was given only after the Exodus and not in the days of the Patriarchs. They were the "chariot" of G-d, wholly nullified to His unity as a chariot has no will apart from its rider, so they needed no revelation drawn down below.

לכן לא רצה יצחק לברך את יעקב כי הי' בבחי' מרכבה אך דעתו הי' לברך את עשו ולהכניעו ולקרבו אל הקדושה

Therefore Yitzchak did not want to bless Yaakov, for he was at the level of a chariot; rather, his intention was to bless Esav, and to humble him and draw him near to holiness.

Yaakov too was at the level of a chariot, so Yitzchak saw no need to bless him. He meant to bless Esav, to subdue him and bring him near to holiness.

ולכן אמר בברכותיו שהי' סבור שהוא עשו עומד לפניו ויתן לך האלקים⁷⁴ מטל השמים ומשמני הארץ ורוב דגן ותירוש.

And therefore, in his blessings, since he thought that it was Esav standing before him, he said, “May G-d give you of the dew of the heavens and of the fat of the earth, and an abundance of grain and wine.”

So, believing that Esav stood before him, Yitzchak blessed him with the dew of the heavens, the fat of the earth, and plenty of grain and wine.

מטל השמים זו תשב"כ ומשמני הארץ זו תשבע"פ ורוב דגן⁷⁵ אלו הלכות שהן לרוב מאד כמ"ש ויצבור יוסף בר⁷⁶ הרבה מאד עד

“Of the dew of the heavens”: this is the Written Torah; “and of the fat of the earth”: this is the Oral Torah; “and an abundance of grain”: these are the halachos, which are exceedingly abundant, as it is written, “And Yosef heaped up grain, very much, until

Echoing the Midrash, which also reads this blessing as parts of the Torah, the Alter Rebbe reads these blessings as parts of the Torah: the dew of heaven is the Written Torah, the fat of the earth the Oral Torah, and the grain the halachos, as countless as the grain Yosef stored up.

כי חדל לספור⁷⁷ וכמ"ש ועלמות אין מספר⁷⁸ ודרשו רז"ל⁷⁹ עלמות אלו הלכות⁸⁰ ותירוש אלו רזין דאורייתא כמ"ש נכנס יין יצא סוד⁸¹ ורצה כל זה ליתן לעשו ולהכניע ולאכפיי לסט"א.

he ceased to count”; and as it is written, “and maidens (alamos) without number,” and our Sages, of blessed memory, expounded, “Alamos: these are the halachos.” “And wine”: these are the secrets of the Torah, as it is said, “Wine enters, a secret comes out.” And all this he wanted to give to Esav, to humble and subdue the sitra achra.

So too the Tikkunei Zohar reads the “maidens without number” as the halachos. The wine is the secrets of the Torah, since the Gemara says that when wine goes in, a secret comes out; Yitzchak wished to give all this to Esav, to subdue the sitra achra.

אך באמת לא הי' באפשרי להכניעו ולקרבו תחת הקדושה מחמת שהוא רע גמור וצריכים להעביר הסט"א לגמרי ולהכריתה בכל הקללות

But in truth it was not possible to humble him and bring him near under holiness, because he is utterly evil; and the sitra achra must be removed entirely and cut off through all the curses.

But Esav could not be subdued and brought near to holiness, because he is utterly evil; evil of that kind must be removed entirely and cut off by the curses.

רק הברכות ניתנו ליעקב ולהכניע הס"א שנתערב⁸² בזרעו כמ"ש ויתערבו כו' וכמ"ש ועשו אחיו בא מצידו⁸³ אל תקרי מצידו⁸⁴

Only, the blessings were given to Yaakov, and [they serve] to humble the sitra achra that became mixed into his seed, as it is written, "And they mingled," etc.; and as it is written, "And Esav his brother came from his hunt (mitzeido)": do not read mitzeido,

Instead the blessings were given to Yaakov, and they also serve to subdue the sitra achra that became mixed into his descendants, as the Psalm says, "they mingled." The verse "Esav his brother came from his hunt" is then read in a new way.

אלא מצדו שבעמידת האדם בתפלה ורוצה לידבק בקונו נופלים לו מחשבות זרות שלא ברצונו רק כאלו הן באים מן הצד מאליהן וממילא

but mitzido, "from his side": that when a person stands in prayer and wants to cleave to his Maker, foreign thoughts fall upon him not by his will, only as though they come from the side, of themselves and of their own accord.

Mitzeido, "from his hunt," is read mitzido, "from his side." When a person stands in prayer and wants to cleave to G-d, foreign thoughts come to him unbidden, as though from the side, on their own.

אך מ"מ הן הן מחשבותיו שחשב בהן ברצון שלא בשעת התפלה וכיוצא בהם אלא שבשעת התפלה הם נופלים לו שלא ברצונו

Yet nevertheless they are his very own thoughts, which he thought willingly when not at the time of prayer, or ones like them; only, at the time of prayer they fall upon him not by his will.

Yet these are really his own thoughts, ones he thought willingly outside prayer, or ones like them. Only during prayer do they come without his wanting them.

ולכן נק' מצדו שהן אינן בחי' אחוריים שהוא בחי' דבר שהוא בע"כ לגמרי שהוא אינו חפץ בזה כלל ולא בחי' פנים

And therefore it is called "from his side": for they are not the level of the back (achorayim), which is the level of something that is entirely against one's will, which he does not desire at all, nor the level of the face (panim),

That is why they are called "from his side." They are not "back" (achorayim), something wholly against a person's will that he does not want at all, and, as the next part completes, they are not "face" (panim) either.

שהוא רצון וחפץ גמור ונופל לו בשעת התפלה מפני שרוצה לעלות לדבקה בו ממילא הם נמשכים אחריו כמשל אדם הלובש בגד ארוך ונגרר בטיט וחומר

which is complete will and desire. And it falls upon him at the time of prayer because he wants to rise and cleave to Him; of themselves they are drawn after him, like the analogy of a person wearing a long garment that drags in mud and clay;

“Face” would be full will and desire. They come during prayer precisely because he wants to rise and cleave to G-d, and his own former thoughts are pulled along after him, like mud clinging to the hem of a long garment.

וכשרוצה לעלות בסולם גם הבגד עם החומר וטיט עולה עמו וכדי להכניע את הרע בחי' עשו ולהשפילו אמר ליצחק אביו שהיה בחי' מרכבה להקב"ה קום נא שבה⁸⁵ וכי'

and when he wants to climb a ladder, the garment too, with the clay and mud, rises with him. And in order to humble the evil, the level of Esav, and to lower it, [Yaakov] said to Yitzchak his father, who was the level of a chariot for the Holy One, blessed be He, “Rise, please, sit,” etc.

When the wearer climbs a ladder, the garment rises with him, mud and all. To humble this evil, the level of Esav, Yaakov said to Yitzchak, who was a chariot for G-d, “Rise, please, sit” and eat, words the next paragraph explains.

כי א"א להמשיך הברכות שהוא גילוי אלקות בעוד שהרע בתקפו וגבורתו כי לא יגורך רע⁸⁶ כתיב ועמ"ש בזה בביאור ע"פ במדבר סיני.⁸⁷

For it is impossible to draw down the blessings, which are the revelation of G-dliness, while the evil is in its strength and might, for it is written, “Evil shall not dwell with You.” And see what is written about this in the explanation on the verse “In the wilderness of Sinai.”

Blessings, which are the revelation of G-dliness, cannot be drawn down while evil is at full strength, for “evil shall not dwell with You.” For more on this the Alter Rebbe refers to his explanation on “In the wilderness of Sinai.”

12 והעצה לזה קום נא וגו'⁸⁸ ע"ד מ"ש כי גאה גאה⁸⁹ ותרגמו ארי אתגאי על גותניא⁹⁰ ופי' שמתרומם ומתנשא עליהם ועי"ז מתרחק מהם ומסלק חיותו מהם ואין להם יניקה וחיות ממנו

And the remedy for this is “Rise, please,” etc., in the manner of what is written, “For He is exalted, exalted,” which the Targum renders, “For He exalted Himself over the haughty.” That is: He rises and is lifted above them, and through this He becomes distant from them and withdraws His life-force from them, and they have no nurture or life-force from Him.

The remedy is in Yaakov’s words “Rise, please,” understood through “for He is exalted, exalted,” which the Targum renders as G-d exalting Himself over the haughty. When G-d rises above the forces of evil, He distances Himself from them and withdraws His life-force, and they lose the nurture by which they live.

וכן הוא למטה בעבודת האדם דהיינו להעמיק דעתו ומחשבתו בגדולת ה' איך הוא ממכ"ע וסוכ"ע וכולא קמיה כלא

And so it is below, in a person's divine service: that is, to deepen his mind and thought in the greatness of G-d, how He fills all worlds (memalei kol almin) and encompasses all worlds (sovev kol almin), and "all before Him is accounted as

The same happens below, in a person's service of G-d: he deepens his mind and thought in G-d's greatness, how G-d fills all worlds from within and encompasses them from beyond, and how all before Him is as nothing.

חשיב⁹¹ ולגדולתו אין חקר⁹² וממילא אין להחיצונים יניקה כ"כ וממילא נופלים כל המונעים שהן המדות רעות ומחשבות זרות כי ישראל מצד עצמם עלו במחשבה⁹³ כו'

nothing," and "His greatness is beyond searching." And as a result the external forces do not have so much nurture; and as a result all the hindrances fall away, which are the evil traits and foreign thoughts, for Israel, in themselves, "arose in thought," etc.

As a result the external forces lose much of their nurture, and the hindrances, the evil traits and foreign thoughts, fall away by themselves, for in their essence Israel arose in G-d's thought.

ולכן אמר אח"כ שבה דהיינו לישראל עצמן בישיבה שהוא ירידה והמשכת גילוי למטה להיות לו דירה בתחתונים^{94,95} וכמ"ש וישב ה' מלך לעולם⁹⁶ למשל

Therefore he said afterwards, "sit": that is, to Israel themselves, by way of sitting, which is a descent and a drawing down of revelation below, so that He may have a dwelling place among the lower realms; as it is written, "And Havayah sits as King forever." By way of analogy,

After "rise" comes "sit": a descent, the drawing down of revelation to Israel themselves, so that G-d has a dwelling place among the lower realms. The verse "Havayah sits as King forever" uses sitting for G-d's presence settling below.

כמו האדם היושב שמרכין א"ע למטה ואכלה מצידי שכל ענין דבור ומעשה התורה והמצות הם בחי' ציד שנצודים ניצוצות שהיו בגוף ונפש החיונית ונתהפכו לקדושה ובחי' האכילה הוא ע"ד ישראל מפרנסין⁹⁷ לאביהם שבשמים כו'

like a person who sits, who lowers himself downward. "And eat of my game (mitzeidi)": for the whole matter of the speech and action of the Torah and the mitzvos is the level of game (tzayid), in which the sparks that were in the body and the vital soul are caught and transformed into holiness. And the level of eating is in the manner of "Israel sustain their Father in heaven," etc.

Sitting is like a person lowering himself. "Eat of my game" refers to Torah and mitzvos, in speech and action, which "hunt" the sparks of holiness in the body and the vital soul and turn them into holiness; G-d's "eating" is the Zohar's teaching that Israel sustain their Father in heaven.

בעבור תברכני נפשך הוא בחי' פנימי' וחיות כל העולמות הנמשכת מחיי החיים א"ס ב"ה ומלובשת ומוסתר ומתעלמת בהם להחיותם בנפש המסותרת בגוף והברכה הוא יציאתה מהעלם

"So that your soul may bless me": this is the level of the inner dimension (pnimiyus) and life-force of all the worlds, which is drawn from the Life of all life, the Infinite One (Ein Sof), blessed be He, and is clothed, hidden and concealed in them to give them life, like the soul hidden in the body. And the blessing is its coming out from the concealment

"So that your soul may bless me": the "soul" is the inner life-force of all the worlds, drawn from the Infinite One, the Life of all life, yet hidden in the worlds as a soul is hidden in a body. The "blessing" is its coming out of concealment.

והסתר האור אל הגילוי וההשגה להיות נגלה כבוד⁹⁸ ה' ויחודו אל ישראל במחשבתם ושכלם ומוחם בעוה"ז ובכל העולם לעתיד כמ"ש במ"א ויהי בבחי' ברכה והמשכה בעוה"ז בהתגלות למטה.

and hiding of the light into revelation and comprehension, so that the glory of G-d and His unity be revealed to Israel in their thought, intellect and mind in this world, and in the whole world in the Time to Come, as is explained elsewhere; and it will be in a state of blessing and drawing down in this world, in revelation below.

Blessing means that the hidden light becomes revealed and grasped, so that G-d's glory and unity are revealed to Israel, in their thought and mind, in this world, and to the whole world in the Time to Come.

SECTION 6 • ¶13

The answer

13 וז"ש אלה החוקים והמשפטים והתורות⁹⁹ על הברכות וקללות שהן הם גילוי אלהותו ית' למטה לבחי ישראל והעברת וביטול המסתירים ומונעים אותם מעבודתם שהן המה נמשכים מבחי מ"ע ול"ת ודוגמתם ממש

And this is [the meaning of] what is written, "These are the statutes, the ordinances and the teachings," about the blessings and curses: for they are the revelation of His G-dliness, may He be blessed, below, to the level of Israel, and the removal and abolition of those that conceal and hinder them from their service; and these are drawn from the level of the positive commandments and the prohibitions, and are truly like them,

Now the opening question is answered. The blessings are G-dliness revealed to Israel, and the curses remove and abolish what hides G-d and hinders them; both flow from the positive commandments and the prohibitions and are truly of their kind, so they are rightly called "statutes, ordinances and teachings."

רק שהם בינו לבין בני ישראל מחמת שהקללות הן אחר שיש מסך מבדיל ועונותיכם מבדילים¹⁰⁰ וכבר עבר על הל"ת וכיוצא

except that they are "between Himself and the children of Israel," because the curses come after there is a separating screen, and "your iniquities separate," and one has already transgressed the prohibition, and the like;

The difference is that they are "between Himself and the children of Israel," because the curses come only once a separating screen already exists, as in "your iniquities separate," after a prohibition has already been transgressed.

ולכן צריך להכריתו ולהעבירו משא"כ שס"ה ל"ת הם שמירה מן החיצונים שלא ינקו ולא יהיה מסך מבדיל כלל ולכן כתיב בינו ובין בניי ולא אל בניי:

therefore it must be cut off and removed. Whereas the 365 prohibitions are a guarding against the external forces, so that they draw no nurture and there be no separating screen at all. Therefore it is written "between Himself and the children of Israel," and not "to the children of Israel."

Then the screen must be cut off and removed, which is what the curses do. The 365 prohibitions, by contrast, guard in advance against the external forces so that no screen forms at all; that is why the verse says "between Himself and the children of Israel" and not "to the children of Israel."

IN ONE'S AVODAH

Even one whose mind cannot climb in contemplation must never despair: the Shechinah is with him even at his lowest, and by speaking and repeating halachah he keeps faith in G-d's oneness firmly within himself. The deed of a mitzvah, charity above all, reaches higher than thought. When foreign thoughts come during prayer, they come because he is rising; the remedy is first to deepen his contemplation of G-d's greatness, so that evil loses its nurture, and then to draw that revelation down through Torah and mitzvos.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Why does the maamar match “walk,” “keep” and “do” to thought, speech and action, and what does each accomplish that the others cannot?
2. How can the spoken study of halachah keep faith in G-d's oneness inside a person who cannot rise in contemplation?
3. Why can action draw down the light that encompasses all worlds when thought and speech cannot, and how does the parable of the gesture explain this?
4. In what sense are the curses really blessings for Israel, and how does the reading of “the stranger in your midst” show this?
5. What does the reading mitzido, “from his side,” teach about foreign thoughts in prayer, and how do “rise,” “sit” and “eat” answer them?

SOURCES AND REFERENCES

Notes

PARAGRAPH 1

1 אלה החוקים

The note cites this list for the maamar's having been said in 5557 (1796-97).

KEHOT'S NOTE

נאמרה בשנת תקנ"ז — ראה רשימת המאמרים שבס"ס מאמרים קצרים ע' תריח הערה 90. ובשנת תקס"ט — ראה אגרות קודש דכ"ק אדמו"ר מוהרריי"צ נ"ע ח"ד ע' רמד. כ"ק אדמו"ר הצ"צ סיפר: שבת פ' בהוי"ב שנת תקס"ט האט דער זיידע — רבנו הזקן — געזאגט דעם מאמר אלה החוקים והמשפטים והתורות, הנדפס בלקוטי תורה. — בהרשימות — כותב כ"ק אדמו"ר (מהוריי"צ) נ"ע — יש אריכות גדולה בתוכן מאמר זה, ובטעם הדבר מדוע אין עליו הגהות וצינונים ומראה מקומות, כמו שישנם על שארי המאמרים בלקוטי תורה, כפי שסיפר דבר זה הוד כ"ק אאזמ"ר הרה"ק מוהר"ש לבנו כ"ק אאזמ"ר הרה"ק בשם הוד כ"ק אביו אאזמ"ר הרה"ק צמח צדק וצוקללה"ה (ספר המאמרים קונטרסים, תו, א).

2 אלה החוקים והמשפטים

“These are the statutes, the ordinances and the teachings which Havayah gave between Himself and the children of Israel at Mount Sinai, by the hand of Moshe.” The verse closes the blessings and curses of Bechukosai, and the whole maamar explains its wording.

ויקרא כ"ו:מ"ו Leviticus 26:46

אלה החוקים והמשפטים והתורות אשר נתן ה' בינו ובין בני ישראל בְּהַר סיני בְּיַד־מֹשֶׁה:

These are the statutes and ordinances and laws, which the L-RD made between Him and the children of Israel in mount Sinai by the hand of Moses.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

ויקרא כו, מו.

3 הנחת כ"ק אדמו"ר האמצעי נדפס במאמרי אדה"ז — פרשיות בחקותי ע' תקצט (ומתחיל)

The note records that the Mittlerer Rebbe's transcript (hanachah) of this maamar is printed there; it opens, “To understand the matter of ‘If you walk in My statutes.’”

KEHOT'S NOTE

לה"ע אם בחוקותי תלכו). וראה להלן בהוספות להערות וצינונים השוואות לד"ה זה.

4 Kehot's note points to II Kings 17:37 for these words.

מלכים ב י"ז:ל"ז II Kings 17:37

וְאֶת־הַחֻקִּים וְאֶת־הַמִּשְׁפָּטִים וְהַתּוֹרָה וְהַמִּצְוָה אֲשֶׁר כָּתַב לָכֶם תִּשְׁמְרוּן לַעֲשׂוֹת כְּכָל־הַיְּמִים וְלֹא תִירָאוּ אֱלֹקִים אֲחֵרִים:

and the statutes and the ordinances, and the law and the commandment, which He wrote for you, ye shall observe to do for evermore; and ye shall not fear other gods;

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PARAGRAPH 2

5 Kehot's note points to Leviticus 26:46 for these words.

ויקרא כ"ו:מ"ו Leviticus 26:46

אלה החוקים והמשפטים והתורות אשר נתן ה' בינו ובין בני ישראל בְּהַר סיני בְּיַד־מֹשֶׁה:

These are the statutes and ordinances and laws, which the L-RD made between Him and the children of Israel in mount Sinai by the hand of Moses.

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6 “If you walk in My statutes and keep My commandments and do them.” The opening verse of Bechukosai; its three verbs, walk, keep and do, structure the first half of the maamar.

ויקרא כ"ו:ג' Leviticus 26:3

אם־בְּחֻקֹּתַי תֵּלְכוּ וְאֶת־מִצְוֹתַי תִּשְׁמְרוּ וַעֲשִׂיתֶם אֹתָם:

If ye walk in My statutes, and keep My commandments, and do them;

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7 ילכו מחיל אל חיל

“They go from strength to strength; each appears before G-d in Zion.” It shows that “going” means ascending from level to level.

תהילים פ"ד:ח' Psalms 84:8

יֵלְכוּ מִחִיל אֶל־חִיל יֵרָאֶה אֶל־אֱלֹקִים בְּצִיּוֹן:

They go from strength to strength, every one of them appeareth before G-d in Zion.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

תהלים פד, ח.

8 הליכות עולם לו

In Habakkuk's vision, “the everlasting hills bowed down; the ways of the world are His (halichos olam lo).” The Alter Rebbe reads it as “the goings of the world are to Him.”

חבקוק ג'ו' Habakkuk 3:6

עֲמַד וַיִּמָּדֶד אֶרֶץ רָאָה וַיִּתֵּר גּוֹלִים וַיִּתְפָּצְצוּ הָרִי־עַד שָׁחוּ גְבָעוֹת עוֹלָם הַלִּיכּוֹת עוֹלָם לוֹ:

He standeth, and shaketh the earth, He beholdeth, and maketh the nations to tremble; And the everlasting mountains are dashed in pieces, The ancient hills do bow; His goings are as of old.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

חבקוק ג, ו.

9 פ"י שהולך ונעתק . . מאחר והאדם הוא בתוכו

The note records that this explanation, from “that is, one goes and moves away” to “since the person is within it,” is

quoted in Or HaTorah on Vayikra.

KEHOT'S NOTE

מובא באוה"ת ויקרא-ב ע' תרפ.

10

א"ת הליכות אלא הלכות

The school of Eliyahu taught: "Whoever studies halachos is assured that he is destined for the World to Come, as it says, 'halichos olam lo'; do not read halichos but halachos." Here it explains why the "goings" are in the plural: they are the many halachos.

Megillah 28b:17 מ"י: ב"ח

תנא דבי אליהו: כל השונה הלכות, מוכטח לו שהוא בן עולם הבא, שנאמר: "הליכות עולם לו", אל תקרי "הליכות" אלא "הלכות".

It was taught in the house of Eliyahu: Whoever repeats halakoth is assured of the world to come, as it says, "His goings [halikoth] are to eternity" (Habbakuk 3:6). Read not halikkot but halakoth.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

מגילה כח, ב. ושי"נ.

PARAGRAPH 3

11

ועלמות אין מספר

"There are sixty queens and eighty concubines, and maidens without number." The Tikkunei Zohar reads the countless maidens as the countless halachos.

Song of Songs 6:8 שיר השירים ו' ח"ז

ששים המה מלכות ושמונים פילגשים ועלמות אין מספר:

There are threescore queens, And fourscore concubines, And maidens without number.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

שהשי"ן, ח.

12

The Tikkunei Zohar expounds the verse: the sixty queens are the sixty sections of the Mishnah, the eighty concubines the books of Aggadah, "and maidens without number: these are the halachos, which have no number or count."

Tikkunei Zohar 144b:5 תקוני זוהר קמ"ד ב' ה"ז

דבר אחר ראשון עליה פכרמל, רישא דילה פלה, על כלהו תיילין סלקא, (שם) על ששים המה מלכות דאינון שתי סדרי משנה, וסלקין לשית מאה, ולששים רבוא, ושמונים פלגשים דהוו תמנין ספרי דאגדתא, ועלמות אין מספר אינון הלכות דלית לון מספר וחושבן, דאינון נימין דשעריין דכלה דלית לון חושבנא, ונאנת פלה סליקת על כלהו, הדא הוא דקתיב (משלי לא כט) רבות בנות עשו חיל ואת עלית על כלנה.

Tikkunei Zohar - Vocalized (Public Domain)

13

אלו הלכות

KeHOT's marei makom for these words (its note is below).

KEHOT'S NOTE

ת"ז (ת"ו) קמד, ב — ד' זיטאמיר. [כ].

...אלה החוקים והמשפטים והתורות אשר נתן ה' בינו

14

ויבקשנה ככסף

"If you seek it like silver and search for it like hidden treasures." The Alter Rebbe uses it for the longing with which one must seek closeness to G-d.

Proverbs 2:4 משלי ב' ד"ד

אם-תבקשנה ככסף וכמטמונים תחפשנה:

If thou seek her as silver, And search for her as for hid treasures;

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KEHOT'S NOTE

משלי ב, ד.

15

ויגעתי ומצאתי

Rabbi Yitzchak said: "If someone tells you, 'I toiled and did not find,' do not believe him; 'I did not toil and I found,' do not believe him; 'I toiled and I found,' believe him." Ascent in understanding comes only through toil.

Megillah 6b:3-4 מגילה ו' ב' ג' ד'

ואמר רבי יצחק, אם יאמר לך אדם: יגעתי ולא מצאתי — אל תאמן. לא יגעתי ומצאתי — אל תאמן. יגעתי ומצאתי — תאמן. הני מילי בדברי תורה, אבל במשא ומתן — סיעתא הוא מן שמיא. ולדברי תורה לא אמרו אלא לחדודי, אבל לאוקמי גירסא — סיעתא מן שמיא היא.

R. Yitzchak also said: If one says to you, I have toiled and not found, do not believe him. If he says, I have not toiled but still have found, do not believe him. If he says, I have toiled and found, believe him. This is true in respect of words of Torah, but in respect of business, all depends on the assistance of heaven. And even for words of Torah this is true only of penetrating to the meaning, but for remembering what one has learnt, all depends on ...

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KEHOT'S NOTE

מגילה ו, ב.

PARAGRAPH 4

16

שמור זו משנה

There (10a) the Alter Rebbe asks how even the performance of the mitzvos receives its "keeping," and answers with "'Keep': this is Mishnah": the keeping comes through the study of the Oral Torah.

Deuteronomy 4:6 דברים ד' ו' ז'

ושמרתם ועשיתם פי הוא חכמתכם ובינתכם לעיני העמים אשר ישמעון את כל-החקים האלה ואמרו רק עם-חכם ונבון הגוי הגדול הזה:

Observe therefore and do them; for this is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the peoples, that, when they hear all these statutes, shall say: 'Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people.'

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KEHOT'S NOTE

ת"כ אמור ט, ב (הובא ברש"י ויקרא כד, לא. דברים ד, ו). ספרי ראה פנ"ט. ועלי"ק בואתחנן (י, א). ושי"נ. [כ].

17

שמור זו משנה

On "These are the statutes and the ordinances which you shall keep to do" (Deuteronomy 12:1) the Sifrei says: "which you shall keep": this is Mishnah; 'to do': this is action." "Keeping" is the spoken study of Mishnah.

Sifrei Devarim 59ט

18

שמור זו משנה

On "And you shall keep and do them," Rashi comments: "You shall keep": this is Mishnah."

Rashi on Deuteronomy 4:6 י"ע דברים:

ושמרתם. זו משנה: ועשיתם. כְּמִשְׁנָה (שם): כי הוא חכמתכם ובינתכם וגו'. בְּזֹאת תִּתְּשְׁבוּ חֻקִּים וְנִבְוִנִים לְעֵינֵי הָעַמִּים:

AND YE SHALL BE ON THE WATCH [TO DO] — This refers to the study of the laws (Sifrei Devarim 58), and this must be explained according to what it implies: AND YE SHALL DO. FOR THIS IS YOUR WISDOM AND UNDERSTANDING [IN THE EYES OF THE PEOPLES] — i.e. through this ye will be accounted wise and understanding men in the eyes of the peoples.

Pentateuch with Rashi's commentary by M. Rosenbaum and A.M. Silbermann, 1929-1934 (Public Domain) • Pentateuch with Rashi's commentary by M. Rosenbaum and A.M. Silbermann, 1929-1934 (Public Domain)

19

ושננתם לבניך

"And you shall teach them diligently to your children and speak of them." The Alter Rebbe links Mishnah, study by repetition, to veshinantam.

Deuteronomy 6:7 דברים ו':

וְשִׁנַּנְתָּם לְבָנֶיךָ וְדִבַּרְתָּ בָם בְּשֹׁכֶבְךָ בְּבִיתְךָ בְּדֶרֶךְךָ וּבְשֹׁכֶבְךָ וּבְקוּמְךָ:

and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thy house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

דברים ו, ז.

20

ונתתי משכני בתוכם

"And I will place My Sanctuary in your midst, and My soul shall not reject you." One of the blessings of Bechukosai; the maamar reads it as the G-dliness present within every Jew.

Leviticus 26:11 יקרא כ"ו:

וְנָתַתִּי מִשְׁכְּנִי בְּתוֹכְכֶם וְלֹא־תִגְעַל נַפְשִׁי אֶתְכֶם:

And I will set My tabernacle among you, and My soul shall not abhor you.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

ויקרא כו, יא.

21

ופי בזהר

Kehot's marei makom for these words (its note is below).

KEHOT'S NOTE

22

ונתתי משכני בתוכם ופי בזהר משכונא דילי

The Zohar on Bechukosai: "My Sanctuary" (mishkani): My pledge (mashkona dili). "G-d leaves His pledge with Israel, and even in exile it stays with them."

Sf. Zohar, Bechukotai 7:26-9:36 ל"ו ט"ו-ט"ז:

AND I WILL SET MY TABERNACLE AMONG YOU. My tabernacle" (mishkani) means the Shekinah; the word can also be rendered "my pledge", which was taken back for the sins of Israel. Once a man was very fond of a friend of his and said to him: I am so fond of you that I am going to stay with you. Said the other: How do I know that you will stay with me? So he took all his most precious belongings and brought them to him, saying: Here is a ...

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

23

גלו לאדום שכינה עמהם

There too the hidden love in the soul is described as being in exile within the body and the animal soul, "like the saying of our Sages, 'They were exiled to Edom: the Shechinah is with them,'" the Shechinah being the spark of G-dliness in the soul, just as in paragraph 10 here.

KEHOT'S NOTE

ספרי מסעי לה, ד. ע"ק כי תצא הבי פ"ב [לה, ד]. וש"ג. [כ].

24

גלו לאדום שכינה עמהם

The Sifrei lists Israel's exiles, to Babylon, to Elam and to Edom, and says of each, "the Shechinah is with them," and that when they return the Shechinah is with them. The Alter Rebbe applies it to the soul's inner exile.

Sifrei Bamidbar 161:5 ה"א קס"א:

... גלו למצרים שכינה עמהם, שנאמר (שמואל א ב) הנגלה נגליתי אל בית אביך בהיותם במצרים לבית פרעה; גלו לבבל שכינה עמהם, שנאמר (ישעיה מג) למענכם שולחתי בבלה; גלו לעילם שכינה עמהם, שנאמר (ירמיה מט) ושמתי כסאי בעילם והאבדתי משם מלך ושרים; גלו לאדום שכינה עמהם, שנאמר (ישעיה סג) מי זה בא מאדום חמוץ בגדים מבצרה. וכשהם חוזרים שכינה עמהם, שנאמר (דברים ל) ושב ה' את שבותך ורחמך. והשיב לא נאמר, אלא ושב ה' אלקיך. ואומר (שיר השירים ד) אתי מלבנון כלה אתי מלבנון תבואי תשורי מראש אמנה מראש שניר ...

(Bamidbar 35:34) "in whose midst I dwell": Beloved are Israel, for even when they are tamei the Shechinah reposes among them — (Vayikra 16:16) "who dwells with them in the midst of their uncleanness," and (Ibid. 15:31) "... when they defile My sanctuary which is in their midst," and (Bamidbar 5:3) "and they shall not make unclean their camps in whose midst I dwell." (Ibid. 35:34) "for I the L-rd dwell in the midst of the children of Israel." R. Nathan says: Beloved are Israel, for wherever they are exiled ...

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25

בשמים ממעל

"Know this day and take it to your heart that Havayah is G-d in the heavens above and on the earth below; there is

nothing else.” This is the faith in G-d’s true oneness that every Jew can fix in his mind.

דברים ד:39 ט”ל

וידעת היום והשבת אל־לִבְכָּךְ כִּי ה' הוּא הָאֱלֹקִים בְּשָׁמַיִם מִמַּעַל וְעַל־הָאָרֶץ מִתַּחַת אֵין עוֹד:

know this day, and lay it to thy heart, that the L-RD, He is G-d in heaven above and upon the earth beneath; there is none else.

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KEHOT’S NOTE

דברים ד, לט.

26

וכולא קמי' כלא חשיב

The Zohar speaks of fearing G-d because He is the great Ruler, the root of all worlds, “and all before Him is accounted as nothing.” Nothing has existence beside Him.

Zohar I, 11b, כ”א י”א

KEHOT’S NOTE

זח”א י”א, ב.

PARAGRAPH 5

27

אני ה' לא שנית

“For I, Havayah, have not changed; and you, sons of Yaakov, have not ceased to be.” Havayah is unchanging, beyond time.

Malachi 3:6 י”ג

כִּי אֲנִי ה' לֹא שֵׁנִיתִי וְאַתֶּם בְּנֵי־יַעֲקֹב לֹא כָלִיתֶם:

For I the L-RD change not; and ye, O sons of Jacob, are not consumed.

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KEHOT’S NOTE

מלאכי ג, ו.

28

דבר ה' זו הלכה

On “They shall roam to seek the word of Havayah and shall not find it” (Amos 8:12), the Gemara says: “The word of Havayah’: this is halachah.” Speaking halachah is speaking G-d’s own word.

Shabbat 138b:11-12 י”א-י”ב

”דָּבָר הִיא” — זו הַלְכָּה, ”דָּבָר הִיא” — זֶה הַקֵּץ, ”דָּבָר הִיא” — זו נְבוּאָה. וּמֵאֵי ”שׁוֹטְטוֹ לְבַקֵּשׁ אֶת דְּבַר ה'”? אָמְרוּ: עֲתִידָה אִשָּׁה שֶׁתִּטּוֹל כֶּכָּר שֶׁל תְּרוּמָה וְתַחֲזוֹר בְּכַתִּי כְּנִסְיוֹת וּבְכַתִּי מִדְּרָשׁוֹת לֵידַע אִם טְמֵאָה הִיא וְאִם טְהוֹרָה הִיא, וְאֵין מִכִּין.

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KEHOT’S NOTE

שבת קלח, ב. עליק פ' ברכה בדי"ה תורה (צד, א). [כ].

29

וכמארו"ל השונה הלכות

“Whoever studies halachos is assured that he is destined for the World to Come.” The repeated study of halachah is the “keeping” described here.

Megillah 28b:16-18 ט”ז-י”ח

אָמַר לָקָה: נִיחָא לִי דְאַשְׁמַעִיָּה לְמַר. אֵי הָכִי, גְּמוֹר מִינִי הָא מְלִתָּא דְאַמַּר רַבִּי זִירָא: בְּנוֹת יִשְׂרָאֵל הֵן הִתְמִירוּ עַל עֲצָמֵן שְׁאִפִּילוּ רוּאוֹת טִיפַת דָּם כְּתָרְדֵּל יוֹשְׁבוֹת עָלֵיו שְׂבָעָה נְקִיִּים. תִּנָּא דְבִי אֱלִיהוֹ: כָּל הַשּׁוֹנָה הַלְכוֹת, מוּבָטָח לוֹ שֶׁהוּא בֶן עוֹלָם הַבָּא, שְׁנֵאמַר: ”הַלִּיכוֹת עוֹלָם לוֹ”, אֵל תִּקְרִי ”הַלִּיכוֹת” אֱלָא ”הַלְכוֹת”. תְּנוּ רַבְנֵינוּ:

He replied: I would rather you teach me something. If so learn from me this statement that was said by R. Zera: The daughters of Israel were stringent upon themselves that even if they saw [on their garments] a spot of blood no bigger than a mustard seed, they waited for seven clean days [before taking a ritual bath]. It was taught in the house of Eliyahu: Whoever repeats halakhoth is assured of the world to come, as it says, “His goings [halikoth] are to eternity” (Habbakuk 3:6). Read not ...

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KEHOT’S NOTE

מגילה כח, ב. וש”נ.

30

ותורתך בתוך מעי

“To do Your will, my G-d, I desire, and Your Torah is within my innards.” The Torah’s words enter a person and become part of him.

Psalms 40:9 ט”ז

לַעֲשׂוֹת־רְצוֹנְךָ אֱלֹקֵי חֲפָצִי וְתוֹרָתְךָ בְּתוֹךְ מַעִי:

I delight to do Thy will, O my G-d; yea, Thy law is in my inmost parts.'

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KEHOT’S NOTE

תהלים מ, ט.

31

ואשים דברי בפך

“And I have put My words in your mouth and covered you in the shadow of My hand.” G-d’s words are placed in the mouth of one who speaks them.

Isaiah 51:16 ט”ז

וְאִשְׁם דְּבָרֵי בִּפְיָךְ וּבְצֶל יָדִי כְּסִיתִיךָ לְנֹטַע שָׁמַיִם וּלְיֹסֵד אֶרֶץ וּלְאִמַּר לְצִיּוֹן עֲמִי־אַתָּה:

And I have put My words in thy mouth, And have covered thee in the shadow of My hand, That I may plant the heavens, And lay the foundations of the earth, And say unto Zion: ‘Thou art My people.’

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KEHOT’S NOTE

ישעיי נא, טז.

32

אין הגליות מתכנסות אלא בזכות המשניות

Rav Huna said: “All these exiles are gathered in only by the merit of the Mishnayos, as it says, ‘Even though they

study (yisnu) among the nations, now I will gather them.”

Vayikra Rabbah 7:3 ויקרא רבה ז:ג

KEHOT'S NOTE

ויק"ר ז, ג. עלי"ק במטות (פ"ג סע"ג) ב' מאדמו"ר. [כ].

33

גם כי יתנו בגוים

In its plain sense, “even though they hire [allies] among the nations, now I will gather them”; the Midrash reads yisnu as “they study,” from the word Mishnah.

Hosea 8:10 הושע ח:י

גם כִּי־יִתְּנוּ בְּגוֹיִם עֵתָּה אֶקְבָּצֶם וְיִחְלוּ מִעַתָּה מִמַּשָּׂא מֶלֶךְ שָׂרִים:

Yea, though they hire among the nations, now will I gather them up; and they begin to be minished by reason of the burden of king and princes.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

הושע ח, י.

34

על מה אבדה הארץ

“Who is the wise man who will understand this...? For what is the land lost, laid waste like a wilderness?” The next verse answers: “And Havayah said: Because they forsook My Torah.”

Jeremiah 9:11 ירמיהו ט:יא

מִי־הָאִישׁ הַחֲכָם וְיָבִין אֶת־זֹאת וְאָשֶׁר דִּבֶּר פִּי־ה' אֵלָיו וַיִּגְדֶּה עָלֶיָּהּ

אֲבָדָה הָאָרֶץ נִצָּתָה כַּמְדָּבָר מִכְּלִי עֵבֶר:

Who is the wise man, that he may understand this? And who is he to whom the mouth of the L-RD hath spoken, that he may declare it? Wherefore is the land perished And laid waste like a wilderness, so that none passeth through?

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KEHOT'S NOTE

ירמיה ט, יא.

35

על ביטול תורה

Kehot's marei makom for these words (its note is below).

KEHOT'S NOTE

פתיחא לאיכה רבתי. ב"מ (פה, סע"א). [כ].

36

על מה אבדה הארץ על ביטול תורה

The Gemara relates that this question was put to the sages and the prophets, who could not explain it, until the Holy One, blessed be He, explained it Himself: “because they forsook My Torah.”

Bava Metzia 85a:22-23 בבא מציעא פ"ה א:כ"ב-כ"ג

כל תלתין יומי הוה בדיק נפשיה: שגור תנורא סליק ויחביב בגייה ולא הוה שלטא בקה נורא. יומא חד יהבו בקה רבנן עינא ואיחרכו שקיה, וקרו לקה "קטין חרירי שקיה". אמר רב יהודה אמר רב: מאי דקתיב "מי האיש החכם ויבין את זאת ואשר דבר פי ה' אֵלָיו וַיִּגְדֶּה עַל מַה אֲבָדָה הָאָרֶץ", דבר זה

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37

אבדה האמונה

“This is the nation that did not heed the voice of Havayah its G-d...; faith has perished and is cut off from their

...אלה החוקים והמשפטים והתורות אשר נתן ה' בינו

mouth.” The Alter Rebbe links this loss of faith to the loss of “the land.”

Jeremiah 7:28 ירמיהו ז:כ"ח

וְאֶמְרַתְּ אֲלֵיהֶם זֶה הִגּוּי אֲשֶׁר לֹא־שָׁמְעוּ בְּקוֹל ה' אֱלֹקָיו וְלֹא לָקְחוּ מוֹסָר אֲבָדָה הָאֱמוּנָה וְנִכְרְתָה מִפִּיהֶם:

Therefore thou shalt say unto them: This is the nation that hath not hearkened To the voice of the L-RD their G-d, Nor received correction; Faithfulness is perished, And is cut off from their mouth.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

ירמיה ז, כח.

38

אני ה' אלקיכם

“I am Havayah your G-d, Who brought you out of the land of Egypt, from being slaves to them.” The Kehot note gives this verse, near the close of the blessings, for the words the Alter Rebbe explains here.

Leviticus 26:13 ויקרא כ"ו:י"ג

אֲנִי ה' אֱלֹקֵיכֶם אֲשֶׁר הוֹצֵאתִי אֶתְכֶם מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם מִהֵיטָב לָהֶם עֲבָדִים וְאֲשַׁבֵּר מִטַּת עַלְכֶּם וְאוֹלֶךְ אֶתְכֶם קוֹמִמּוּת:

I am the L-RD your G-d, who brought you forth out of the land of Egypt, that ye should not be their bondmen; and I have broken the bars of your yoke, and made you go upright.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

ויקרא כו, יג.

39

הארץ תדום רגלי

“Thus says Havayah: The heavens are My throne, and the earth is My footstool.” Faith is the level of “the earth,” the footstool.

Isaiah 66:1 ישעיהו ס"ו:א

כֹּה אָמַר ה' הַשָּׁמַיִם כִּסֵּאִי וְהָאָרֶץ הֶדְם רַגְלִי אֵי־זֶה בֵּית אֲשֶׁר תִּבְנוּ־לִי וְאֵי־זֶה מְקוֹם מְנוּחָתִי:

Thus saith the L-RD: The heaven is My throne, and the earth is My footstool; where is the house that ye may build unto Me? And where is the place that may be My resting-place?

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KEHOT'S NOTE

ישעיה סו, א.

PARAGRAPH 6

40

לא המדרש הוא העיקר

Kehot's marei makom for these words (its note is below).

KEHOT'S NOTE

אבות א, יז.

41

לא המדרש הוא העיקר אלא המעשה

Shimon, son of Rabban Gamliel, said: “Not study is the main thing, but action.” The Alter Rebbe brings it to show

that action is the goal.

Pirkei Avot 1:17: "משנה אבות א': ייז"

שמעון בנו אומר, כל ימי גדלתי בין החכמים, ולא מצאתי לגוף טוב אלא שתוקה. ולא המדרש הוא העקר, אלא המעשה. וכל המרבה דברים, מביא חטא:

Shimon, his son, used to say: all my days I grew up among the sages, and I have found nothing better for a person than silence. Study is not the most important thing, but actions; whoever indulges in too many words brings about sin.

Torat Emet 357 (Public Domain) • Mishnah Yomit by Dr. Joshua Kulp (CC-BY)

42 גדול תלמוד שמביא לידי מעשה

The sages in Lod asked whether study is greater or action; Rabbi Tarfon said action, Rabbi Akiva said study, and all concluded: "Study is greater, for study leads to action." Since study is praised for leading to action, action is the purpose.

Kiddushin 40b:8-9: "ט"ז-ח"ב

וכבר היה רבי טרפון וזקנים מסובין בעליית בית נתנה בלוד. נשאלה שאילה זו בפניהם: תלמוד גדול או מעשה גדול? נענה רבי טרפון ואמר: מעשה גדול. נענה רבי עקיבא ואמר: תלמוד גדול. נענו כולם ואמרו: תלמוד גדול, שהתלמוד מביא לידי מעשה. תנאי, רבי יוסי אומר: גדול תלמוד שקדם לחלה ארבעים שנה, לתרומות ולמעשרות חמשים וארבע, לשמישים ששים ואחת, ליוכלות מאה ושלש.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

קדושין מ, ב. ושי"נ. ראה לקמן פי' ראה לג, א ואילך.

43 דלית מחשבה תפיסא ביה כלל

In Eliyahu's prayer in the introduction to the Tikkunei Zohar: "You are the Highest of all the high, the Hidden of all the hidden; no thought can grasp You at all."

Tikkunei Zohar 17a:10-12: "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. לאנהגא בהון עלמין סתימין דלא אתגליין. ועלמין דאתגליין. ובהון אתכסאית (נ"א אתכסיא) מבני נשא. ואנת הוא דקשר לון ומיחד לון. ובגין דאנת מלגאו. כל מאן דאפריש חד מן חבריה מאלין עשר. אתחשיב ליה כאלו אפריש בך.

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44 דלית מח' תפיסא ב' כלל

Kehot's marei makom for these words (its note is below).

KEHOT'S NOTE

ת"ז בהקדמה.

45 להכימא ברמיזא

The Zohar uses the saying "to the wise, by a hint" (lechakima birmiza) for a matter conveyed by allusion rather than

...אלה החוקים והמשפטים והתורות אשר נתן ה' בינו

spelled out. The Alter Rebbe uses it for the way action "hints" to a level beyond words.

Zohar I, 26b ב, זח"א כו,

Zohar III, 280b רפ, זח"ג רפ,

KEHOT'S NOTE

זח"א כו, ב. זח"ג רפ, ב.

PARAGRAPH 7

46 דעקימת שפתיו הוה מעשה

Kehot's marei makom for these words (its note is below).

KEHOT'S NOTE

ב"מ (ד, סע"א). סנהדרין (סה, ב). כריתות (ג, סע"ב). [כ].

47 דעקימת שפתיו הוי מעשה

Asking what action there is in blasphemy, which is only speech, the Gemara answers: "The moving of his lips is an action." So even Torah study, which is speech, counts as an action.

Keritot 3b:21-22: "כ"א-כ"ב

בעל אוב, מאי מעשה אית בקה? הקשת זרועותיו הוי מעשה. מגדף, מאי מעשה אית בקה? עקימת שפתיו הוי מעשה. קא סלקא דעתין: הקשת זרועותיו הוי מעשה זוטא אפילו לרבנן. מיתבי: בעבודה זרה אינו חייב אלא על דבר שיש בו מעשה, כגון שזיבח, וקשר, וניסר, והשתתהו. וקשיא לו, השתתהוה לית בה מעשה!

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48 דעקימת שפתיו הוי מעשה

The Gemara records Rabbi Yochanan's view that "the twisting of the mouth is an action," against Reish Lakish.

Sanhedrin 65b:4-6: "ד'ר-ד'

רבי יוחנן אמר: חייב, עקימת פיו הוי מעשה. ריש לקיש אמר: פטור, עקימת פיו לא הוי מעשה. אלא אמר רבא: שאני עדים זוממין, הואיל וישנו בראיה. תנו רבנן: בעל אוב - זה המדבר בין הפרקים ומבין אצילי ידיו. ידעוני - זה המניח עצם ידוע בפיו, והוא מדבר מאליו.

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49 והי' מעשה הצדקה שלום

"And the work of righteousness (tzedakah) shall be peace, and the service of righteousness, quiet and security forever." The Alter Rebbe reads tzedakah as charity, whose act brings "peace."

Isaiah 32:17: "י"ז-י"ז

והיה מעשה הצדקה שלום ועבדת הצדקה השקט ובטח עד-עולם:

And the work of righteousness shall be peace; And the effect of righteousness quietness and confidence for ever.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

ישע"י לב, ז.

50 ענין השלום . . ועושה שלום ביניהם

On "He makes peace in His heights," the Midrash says: Michael is all snow and Gabriel all fire, yet they stand side

by side and do not harm each other. Peace joins opposites.

דברים רבה ה':י"ב Devarim Rabbah 5:12

KEHOT'S NOTE

ראה דב"ר ה, יב.

51

ונתתי שלום בארץ

"And I will give peace in the land, and you shall lie down with none to make you afraid." The Alter Rebbe reads "the land" as all the worlds.

ויקרא כ"ו:6 Leviticus 26:6

ונתתי שלום בארץ ושכבתם ואין מחריד והשבתי חיה רעה מן הארץ וחרב לא יתעבר בארצכם:

And I will give peace in the land, and ye shall lie down, and none shall make you afraid; and I will cause evil beasts to cease out of the land, neither shall the sword go through your land.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

ויקרא כו, ו.

52

מלכותך מלכות כ"ע

"Your kingship is the kingship of all worlds, and Your dominion is in every generation." All worlds stand under G-d's kingship and are "land" before Him.

תהילים קמ"ה:י"ג Psalms 145:13

מלכותך מלכות כל-עלמים וממשלתך בכל-דור ודור:

Thy kingdom is a kingdom for all ages, And Thy dominion endureth throughout all generations.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

תהלים קמה, יג.

53

לא מצא הקב"ה כלי המחזיק ברכה

Kehot's marei makom for these words (its note is below).

KEHOT'S NOTE

סוף עוקצין.

54

לא מצא הקב"ה כלי מחזיק ברכה לישראל אלא השלום

The last words of the Mishnah, said by Rabbi Shimon ben Chalafta: "The Holy One, blessed be He, found no vessel that holds blessing for Israel except peace, as it says, 'Havayah will give strength to His people; Havayah will bless His people with peace.'"

Mishnah Oktzin 3:12 משנה עוקצים ג':י"ב

אמר רבי יהושע בן לוי, עתיד הקדוש ברוך הוא להנחיל לכל צדיק וצדיק שלש מאות ועשרה עולמות, שנאמר (משלי ח), להנחיל אהבי יש ואצריהם אמלא. אמר רבי שמעון בן הלפתא, לא מצא הקדוש ברוך הוא כלי מחזיק ברכה לישראל אלא השלום, שנאמר (תהלים כט), ה' עו לעמו יתן ה' יברך את עמו בשלום:

Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi said: In the world to come the Holy One, Blessed be He, will make each righteous person inherit three hundred and ten worlds, for it is written: "That I may cause those that love me to inherit yesh (numerical value of; and that I may fill their treasures" (Proverbs 8:21. Rabbi

...אלה החוקים והמשפטים והתורות אשר נתן ה' בינו

Shimon ben Halafta said: the Holy One, Blessed be He, found no vessel that could contain blessing for Israel save that of peace, as it is written: "The L-rd will give strength unto his people; ...

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PARAGRAPH 8

55

ואכלתם לחמכם לשובע

"And you shall eat your bread to satiety and dwell securely in your land." A blessing of Bechukosai, read here as the satiety of joy in G-d's presence.

ויקרא כ"ו:5 Leviticus 26:5

והשיג לכם דיש את-בציר ובציר ישיג את-זרע ואכלתם לחמכם לשבע וישבתם לבטח בארצכם:

And your threshing shall reach unto the vintage, and the vintage shall reach unto the sowing time; and ye shall eat your bread until ye have enough, and dwell in your land safely.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

ויקרא כו, ה.

56

שובע שמחות את פניך

"You make known to me the path of life; satiety of joys is in Your presence, pleasantness at Your right hand forever."

תהילים ט"ו:11 Psalms 16:11

תודיעני ארח חיים שבע שמחות את-פניך נעמות בימיך נצח:

Thou makest me to know the path of life; In Thy presence is fulness of joy, In Thy right hand bliss for evermore.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

תהלים טו, יא.

57

עוז וחדוה במקומו

"Majesty and splendor are before Him; strength and gladness are in His place." From David's song when the Ark was brought to its tent.

I Chronicles 16:27 דברי הימים א ט"ז:כ"ז

הוד והדר לפניו עז וחדוה במקומו:

Honour and majesty are before Him; Strength and gladness are in His place.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

דה"א טז, כז.

58

ישראל... עלו במחשבה

Kehot's note points to Bereshit Rabbah 1:5 for these words.

Bereshit Rabbah 1:5 בראשית רבה א':ה

ר' הונא בשם בר קפרא פתח (תהלים לא, יט): "תאלמנה שפתי שקר וגו'" אתפרכן אתחרשן אשתתקן. "אתפרכן אתחרשן" - היך מה דאת אמר (שמות ד, יא): "או מי ישום אלם או חרש או פקח או עור הלא אנכי ה'" ואומר (בראשית לז, ז): "והנה אנחנו מאלמים אלומים בתוך

השדה והנה קמה אלומתי "אשתתקן" - כמשמעו. "הדברות על צדיק" חי העולמים "עתק" שהעתיק בבריותיו בגאווה אתמהה בשביל להתגאות ולומר אני דורש במעשה בראשית "וכוז" אתמהה מבוזה על כבודי דא"ר יוסי בר חנינא כל המתכבד בקלון חבירו אין לו חלק לעולם הבא ...

Rav Huna began in the name of bar Kapara: "May they be silenced [te'alamna], those lying lips [that speak harsh words against the righteous one with arrogance and contempt]" (Psalms 31:19) - may they be bound up, may they become mute, may they be silenced. can have all these three meanings, as the Midrash goes on to show. May they become mute - as it says: "Who gives a mouth to a person, or who renders one mute [ilem] or deaf, or sighted or blind? Is it not I, the ...

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KEHOT'S NOTE

ב"ר א, ה.

59

ישראל מצד עצמם עלו במחשבה

"Six things preceded the creation of the world: some were created, and some arose in thought to be created"; the Patriarchs and Israel are among those that arose in thought.

Bereshit Rabbah 1:4:ד"ד: רבה א'

... "ה' קנני ראשית דרכו" כסא הכבוד מנין דכתיב (תהלים צג, ב): "נכון כסאך מאז וגו'". האבות וישראל ובית המקדש ושמם של משיח, עלו במחשבה להבראות האבות מנין שנאמר (הושע ט, י): "כענבים במדבר וגו' ישראל מנין שנאמר (תהלים עד, ב): "זכור עדתך קנית קדם" בית המקדש מנין שנאמר (ירמיה יז, יב): "כסא כבוד מרום מראשון וגו' שמו של משיח מנין שנאמר (תהלים עב, יז): "יהי שמו לעולם וגו' [לפני שמש ינון שמו]" רבי אבהו ברבי זעירא אמר אף התשובה שנאמר (שם צ, ב) "בטרם הרים יולדו" ואותה השעה (שם, ...

"In the beginning, G-d created" - six items preceded the creation of the world; some of them were [actually] created, and some of them G-d contemplated creating, [though He did not actually do so]. The Torah and the Throne of Glory were created. Torah, from where is it derived? As it is stated: "The L-rd made me at the beginning of His way" (Proverbs 8:22). The Throne of Glory, from where is it derived? "Your throne stands firm from earliest time, [You are from eternity]" (Psalms 93:2). The patriarchs, Israel, ...

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60

ומאמינים בני מאמינים

When Moshe said, "they will not believe me," G-d answered him: "They are believers, the sons of believers."

Shabbat 97a:4-5:ה"ד: א"ד: שבת צ"א

אמר ר' יושן לקיש: החושד בכשרים — לוקה בגופו, דכתיב: "והן לא יאמינו לי וגו'", וגלגל קמץ קודשא בריהו הוא דמתימני ישראל. אמר לו: הן מאמינים בגי מאמינים, ואתה אין סופך להאמין. הן מאמינים, דכתיב: "ויאמרו העם". בגי מאמינים — "והאמין ביי". אתה אין סופך

...אלה החוקים והמשפטים והתורות אשר נתן ה' בינו

להאמין, שנאמר: "וען לא האמנתם בי וגו'". ממאי דלקה, דכתיב: "ויאמר ה' לו עוד הבא נא ידך בתיקה וגו'".

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PARAGRAPH 9

61

ונתן ה' את כל האלות

"And Havayah your G-d will put all these curses upon your enemies and upon those who hate you, who pursued you." Moshe's own words show where the curses are directed.

Deuteronomy 30:7:ל"ז: דברים

ונתן ה' אלקיך את כל האלות האלה עליאריך ועלישנאריך אשר רדפוה:

And the L-RD thy G-d will put all these curses upon thine enemies, and on them that hate thee, that persecuted thee.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

דברים ל, ז.

62

ונשא השעיר עליו

"And the goat shall bear upon itself all their iniquities to a land cut off." The goat sent away on Yom Kippur.

Leviticus 16:22:כ"ב: ויקרא ט"ז

ונשא השעיר עליו את כל עונותם אל ארץ גזרה ושלח את השעיר במדבר:

And the goat shall bear upon him all their iniquities unto a land which is cut off; and he shall let go the goat in the wilderness.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

ויקרא טז, כב.

63

עשו איש שעיר

Yaakov says to Rivkah, "Esav my brother is a hairy man, and I am a smooth man." The word sa'ir, "hairy," is also the word for "goat."

Genesis 27:11:י"א: בראשית כ"ז

ויאמר יעקב אל רבקה אמו הן עשו אחי איש שער ואנכי איש חלק:

And Jacob said to Rebekah his mother: 'Behold, Esau my brother is a hairy man, and I am a smooth man.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

בראשית כז, יא. כמ"ש בב"ר [פס"ה, טו]. ובוח"א (חקל, ב). [כ].

64

ונשא השעיר עליו את כל עונותם שהוא בחי עשו איש שעיר

Rabbi Yitzchak: "And the goat (sa'ir) shall bear upon itself: this is Esav, as it says, 'Esav my brother is a hairy (sa'ir) man.'"

Bereshit Rabbah 65:15:ט"ו: בראשית רבה ס"ה:ט"ו

... כי ביום הזה יכפר. רבי יצחק אמר: לא שאול הוא לה, ולא שאולה היא ליה, אלא, ונשא השעיר עליו, זה עשו שנאמר הן עשו אחי איש שעיר. את כל עונותם, עונות תם, שנאמר (שם כה): ויעקב איש תם. אולי ימושני אבי והייתי בעיניו כמתעתע, כמת וכתועה, וכעובד עבודת כוכבים. והבאתי עלי קללה וגו', אפילו ברכה אחת, שהוא עתיד ליתן

בסוף, אינו נותנה לי. ותאמר לו אמו עלי קללתך בני רבי אבא בר כהנא אמר: אדם שחטא, לא אמו נתקללה! שנאמר (בראשית ג): ארורה האדמה בעבורך. אף אתה, עלי קללתך, ...

“Jacob said to Rebecca his mother: Behold, Esau my brother is a hairy man, and I am a man of smooth skin” (Genesis 27:11). “Jacob said to Rebecca his mother: Behold, Esau my brother is a hairy [sa’ir] man” – a demon-like man, just as it says: “Demons [se’irim] will dance there” (Isaiah 13:21). “And I am a man of smooth [halak] skin” – just as it says: “For the L-rd’s portion [helek] is His people” (Deuteronomy 32:9). Rabbi Levi said: This is analogous to one with a full head of ...

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65 ונשא השעיר עליו את כל עונותם שהוא בחי עשו איש שעיר

The Zohar on Toldos explains the Yom Kippur goat: “‘And the goat shall bear upon itself all their iniquities,’ and they explained that this is Esav, who is sa’ir.”

ספר זוהר, תולדות ד:ל-ט:ע”ג:4:30-9:73 Zohar, Toldot

Observe that Jacob knew that Esau was destined to ally himself to that tortuous serpent, and hence in all his dealings with him he conducted himself like another tortuous serpent, using all cunning devices; and so it was meet. The same idea was expressed by R. Simeon when, in expounding the verse, “And G-d created the great fishes, and every living creature that creepeth” (Gen. 1, 21), he said: “The ‘great fishes’ are symbolic of Jacob and Esau, and ‘every living creature that creepeth’ symbolises all the intermediate grades.” Verily ...

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

66 הגר אשר בקרבך

“The stranger who is in your midst shall rise above you higher and higher, and you shall go down lower and lower.” One of the curses of Ki Savo, explained in the next paragraph.

Deuteronomy 28:43 דברים כ”ח:מ”ג:28:43

הגר אשר בקרבך יעלה עליך מעלה מעלה ואתה תרד מטה מטה:

The stranger that is in the midst of thee shall mount up above thee higher and higher; and thou shalt come down lower and lower.

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KEHOT’S NOTE

דברים כח, מג.

PARAGRAPH 10

67 גר . . בארץ לא לו

G-d tells Avram, “Your descendants will be strangers in a land not theirs.” The same words describe the soul’s spark of G-dliness, a stranger in the body.

Genesis 15:13 בראשית ט”ו:13:15:13

ויאמר לאברהם קדע תדע כי גר יהיה זרעך בארץ לא להם ועבדים וענו אתם ארבע מאות שנה:

...אלה החוקים והמשפטים והתורות אשר נתן ה' בינו

And He said unto Abram: ‘Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years;

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KEHOT’S NOTE

ראה בראשית טו, יג.

68 יעלה עליך מעלה מעלה

“The stranger who is in your midst shall rise above you higher and higher, and you shall go down lower and lower.” The Alter Rebbe reads the “stranger” as the Shechinah within and “you” as the body.

Deuteronomy 28:43 דברים כ”ח:מ”ג:28:43

הגר אשר בקרבך יעלה עליך מעלה מעלה ואתה תרד מטה מטה:

The stranger that is in the midst of thee shall mount up above thee higher and higher; and thou shalt come down lower and lower.

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69 גדולתו עד אין חקר

“Great is Havayah and highly praised, and His greatness is beyond searching.”

Psalms 145:3 תהילים קמ”ה:3:145:3

גדול ה' ומקלל מאד ולגדלתו אין חקר:

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

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KEHOT’S NOTE

ראה תהילים קמה, ג.

70 אני ה' אשר הוצאתיך

“I am Havayah your G-d, Who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.” The Alter Rebbe reads Mitzrayim as meitzarim, straits and limits.

Exodus 20:2 שמות כ”ב:2:20:2

אנכי ה' אלקיך אשר הוצאתיך מארץ מצרים מבית עבדים:

I am the L-RD thy G-d, who brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.

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KEHOT’S NOTE

ראה שמות כ, ב.

71 ואתהלכה ברחבה

“And I will walk in a broad place, for I have sought Your precepts.” Contemplation of G-d’s greatness frees a person from limits.

Psalms 119:45 תהילים קי”ט:מ”ה:119:45

ואתהלכה ברחבה כי פקדתי דרשתי:

And I will walk at ease, for I have sought Thy precepts;

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KEHOT’S NOTE

תהלים קיט, מד.

PARAGRAPH 11

72 כוונת יצחק . . ולא את יעקב

The words here quote Genesis 27:21; the passage is shown below.

בראשית כ"ז:כ"א Genesis 27:21

וַיֹּאמֶר יִצְחָק אֶל-יַעֲקֹב גֵּשׁ-נָא וְאֶמְשָׁךְ בְּנִי הֲאֵתָה זֶה בְּנִי עֲשׂו אִם-לֹא:

And Isaac said unto Jacob: 'Come near, I pray thee, that I may feel thee, my son, whether thou be my very son Esau or not.'

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KEHOT'S NOTE

ראה בראשית כז, כא.

73 האבות שהן הן המרכבה

Reish Lakish said: "The Patriarchs, they are the chariot," as it says, "And G-d went up from upon Avraham." A chariot is wholly given over to the will of its rider.

בראשית רבה מ"ז:ו' Bereshit Rabbah 47:6

ויכל לדבר אתו - תני, הנפטר מחבירו בין גדול בין קטן, צריך ליטול ממנו רשות. ממי את למד? מאברהם. פעם אחת היה אברהם מדבר עם הקב"ה, באו מלאכי השרת לדבר עמו. אמר להן: נפטר מן השכינה, שהיא גדולה מכם תחלה, אחר כך אני מדבר עמכם. כיון שדבר עם הקדוש ברוך הוא כל צרכו, אמר לפניו: רבון העולמים! צריך אני לדבר. אמר לו: הפטר בשלום, הה"ד: ויעל אלקים מעל אברהם. אמר ריש לקיש: האבות הן הן המרכבה, שנא: ויעל אלקים מעל אברהם. ויעל מעליו אלקים. (בראשית כה) והנה ה' נצב עליו:

"He concluded speaking with him, and G-d ascended from upon Abraham" (Genesis 17:22). It is taught: One who departs from another person, whether of greater or lesser stature, must take his leave from him. From whom do you derive this? From Abraham. On one occasion, Abraham was speaking with the Holy One blessed be He, when the ministering angels came to speak with him. He said to them: 'Let me first take my leave from the Divine Presence, which is of greater stature than you, then I will speak with ...

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Zohar III, 252a

KEHOT'S NOTE

ב"ר מז, ח. זח"ג רנב, א.

74 ויתן לך האלקים

"May G-d give you of the dew of the heavens and of the fat of the earth, and plenty of grain and wine." Yitzchak's blessing, given to Yaakov while Yitzchak thought he was Esav.

בראשית כ"ז:כ"ח Genesis 27:28

וַיִּתֵּן-לְךָ הָאֱלֹקִים מִטַּל הַשָּׁמַיִם וּמִשְׁמַנֵּי הָאָרֶץ וְרֹב דָּגָן וְתִירֹשׁ:

So G-d give thee of the dew of heaven, And of the fat places of the earth, And plenty of corn and wine.

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

KEHOT'S NOTE

...אלה החוקים והמשפטים והתורות אשר נתן ה' בינו

בראשית כז, כח. כב"ר פס"ו [ג]. ילקוט תולדות [רמז] [קטז] עה"פ. ועי' ר"פ האוינו הגי' [כ].

75 מטל השמים זו תשב"כ ומשמני הארץ זו תשבע"פ ורוב דגן

Among its readings of the blessing, the Midrash says: "'Of the dew of the heavens': this is Scripture; 'and of the fat of the earth': this is Mishnah; 'grain': this is Talmud; 'wine': this is Aggadah." The Alter Rebbe gives a parallel reading.

בראשית רבה ס"ו:ג' Bereshit Rabbah 66:3

... רבון העולמים! הוי, זוכר לי אותה הברכה שברכני אבא, יתן לך, ויתן לך אלהותא. מטל השמים, זה המן, שנאמר (שמות טז): ויאמר ה' אל משה הנני ממטיר לכם לחם מן השמים. ומשמני הארץ, זה הבאר, שהיתה מעלה להם מיני דגים שמנים, יותר מדאי. ומשמני הארץ, אלו הקרבנות, כדכתיב (תהלים סו): עולות מחים אעלה לך. ורב דגן, אלו הבחורים, דכתיב (זכריה ט): כי מה טובו ומה יפיו דגן בחורים. ותירוש, אלו התולדות, דכתיב (שם) ותירוש ינובב בתולות. דבר אחר: מטל השמים, זו ציון, שנאמר (תהלים קלב): כטל חרמון, שיוור על ... "May [G-d] give you [veyiten lekha]" - He will give, and give you again.. He will give you blessings and He will give you a hidden place. 3:12) that the vessel which can retain blessings is peace (Maharzu). "May [G-d] give you" - yours, and "may [G-d] give you" - your father's. "May [G-d] give you" - yours, and "may [G-d] give you" - your brother's. Rabbi Aha said: May [G-d] give, "and may G-d give you" divine aid. When? It will be when you need it. That is what ...

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76 ויצבר יוסף בר

Yehot's marei makom for these words (its note is below).

KEHOT'S NOTE

שם מא, מט.

77 ויצבור יוסף בר הרבה מאד עד כי חדל לספור

"And Yosef heaped up grain like the sand of the sea, very much, until he ceased to count, for it was beyond number." The grain stands for the countless halachos.

בראשית מ"א:מ"ט Genesis 41:49

וַיִּצְבֹּר יוֹסֵף בָּר כְּחוֹל הַיָּם הֵרֶבֶה מְאֹד עַד כִּי-חָדַל לְסַפֵּר כִּי-אֵין מִסְפָּר:

And Joseph laid up corn as the sand of the sea, very much, until they left off numbering; for it was without number.

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78 ועלמות אין מספר

"There are sixty queens and eighty concubines, and maidens without number," read as the countless halachos.

Song of Songs 6:8 שיר השירים ו:ח

ששים הֵמָּה מַלְכוֹת וְשִׁמְנִים פִּילָגִשִׁים וְעַלְמוֹת אֵין מִסְפָּר:

There are threescore queens, And fourscore concubines, And maidens without number.

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79 ודרשו רז"ל

The note points back to 48d, paragraph 3 of this maamar, where "maidens without number" were first read as the

halachos and the name halachos was explained as “going” from level to level.

KEHOT’S NOTE

ת”ו (קמוד, ב). וע”ל (מח, ד). [כ].

80 ועלמות אין מספר ודרשו רז”ל עלמות אלו הלכות

“And maidens without number: these are the halachos, which have no number or count.”

Tikkunei Zohar 144b:5 חזקוני הוזהר קמ”ד ב:ח”

דבר אחר ראשון עליה כפרמל, רישא דילה כלה, על כלהו תיילין סלקא, (שם) על ששים המה מלכות דאינוו שתי סדרי משנה, וסלקין לשית מאה, ולששים רבוא, ושמינים פלגשים דהוו תמנין ספרי דאגדתא, ועלמות אין מספר אינוו הלכות דלית לון מספר וחושבון, דאינוו נימין דשערין דכלה דלית לון חושבנא, ואנת כלה סליקת על כלה, הדא הוא דכתיב (משלי לא כט) רבות בנות עשו חיל ואת עלית על כלנה.

Tikkunei Zohar - Vocalized (Public Domain)

81 נכנס יין יצא סוד

Yayin, wine, has the numerical value seventy, and so does sod, secret: “wine enters, a secret comes out.” So wine stands for the secrets of the Torah.

Eruvin 65a:19-20 ח”ט-כ”ט:א: עירובין ס”ה

אמר רבי חייא: כל המתעשר ביינו — יש בו דעת שבועים זקנים. “יין” ניתן בשבועים אותיות, ו”סוד” ניתן בשבועים אותיות. נכנס יין — יצא סוד. אמר רבי חנין: לא נברא יין אלא לנחם אבלים ולשלם שכר לרשעים, שנאמר: “תנו שכר לאובד וגו”.

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

KEHOT’S NOTE

עירובין סה, א.

82 ויתערבו

“And they mingled with the nations and learned their deeds.” The evil mixed into Yaakov’s descendants is what the blessings come to subdue.

Psalms 106:35 תהלים ק”ו:ל”ה

ויתערבו בגוים ולמדו מעשיהם:

But mingled themselves with the nations, And learned their works;

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KEHOT’S NOTE

תהלים קו, לה.

83 ועשו אחיו בא מצידו

“As soon as Yitzchak had finished blessing Yaakov... Esau his brother came from his hunt.” The Alter Rebbe reads mitzeido, “from his hunt,” as mitzido, “from his side.”

Genesis 27:30 בראשית כ”ז:ל”

ויהי כאשר כלה יצחק לברך את־יעקב ויהי אה יצא יצא יעקב מאת פני יצחק אביו ועשו אחיו בא מצידו:

And it came to pass, as soon as Isaac had made an end of blessing Jacob, and Jacob was yet scarce gone out from the

...אלה החוקים והמשפטים והתורות אשר ה' בינו

presence of Isaac his father, that Esau his brother came in from his hunting.

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KEHOT’S NOTE

בראשית כו, ל.

84 אל תקרי מצידו

Kehot’s marei makom for these words (its note is below).

KEHOT’S NOTE

ע' וז"א (קמד, א) ול"מ כמ"ש כאן ות"ל מצאתי בלקו"ת מאריז"ל ס"פ ויהי [ד"ה בנות]. [כ].

85 קום נא שבה

Yaakov says to his father, “I am Esav your firstborn... Rise, please, sit and eat of my game, so that your soul may bless me.” Each phrase is explained in the next paragraph.

Genesis 27:19 בראשית כ”ז:י”ט

ויאמר יעקב אלי־אביו אנכי עשו בכרך עשיתי כאשר דברת אלי קום־נא שבה ואכלה מצידו בעבור תברכני נפשך:

And Jacob said unto his father: ‘I am Esau thy first-born; I have done according as thou badest me. Arise, I pray thee, sit and eat of my venison, that thy soul may bless me.’

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KEHOT’S NOTE

בראשית כו, יט.

86 לא יגורך רע

“For You are not a G-d who desires wickedness; evil shall not dwell with You.” The blessing of revealed G-dliness cannot dwell where evil is strong.

Psalms 5:5 תהלים ה:ה

כי לא אלי־הפֿפֿז־רשע אַתָּה לא יגורך רע:

For Thou art not a G-d that hath pleasure in wickedness; Evil shall not sojourn with Thee.

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

KEHOT’S NOTE

תהלים ה, ה.

87 בביאור ע”פ במדבר סיני

That explanation treats Midbar Sinai and the Tent of Meeting as two stages of Malchus of Atzilus: an ascent from below (mayin nukvin), which in prayer is the part up to Ahavas Olam, and then a drawing down from above.

KEHOT’S NOTE

לקו”ת במדבר ג, ג.

PARAGRAPH 12

88 קום נא וגו’

“Rise, please, sit and eat of my game, so that your soul may bless me.” The Alter Rebbe now explains it phrase by phrase as the path of divine service.

Genesis 27:19 בראשית כ”ז:י”ט

ויאמר יעקב אלי־אביו אנכי עשו בכרך עשיתי כאשר דברת אלי קום־נא שבה ואכלה מצידו בעבור תברכני נפשך:

And Jacob said unto his father: 'I am Esau thy first-born; I have done according as thou badest me. Arise, I pray thee, sit and eat of my venison, that thy soul may bless me.'

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89

כי גאה גאה

"I will sing to Havayah, for He is exalted, exalted; horse and its rider He cast into the sea."

Exodus 15:1: שמות ט"ו

אֶזְיִיר־מִשָּׁה וּבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת־הַשִּׁירָה הַזֹּאת לַהֲבַיָּה וַיֹּאמְרוּ לְאֹמֶר אֲשִׁירָה לַהֲבַיָּה כִּי־גָאָה גָאָה סוֹס וְרֹכֵבוֹ יָמָּה בְּיָם:

Then sang Moses and the children of Israel this song unto the L-RD, and spoke, saying: I will sing unto the L-RD, for He is highly exalted; The horse and his rider hath He thrown into the sea.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

שמות טו, א.

90

ארי אתנאי על גותניא

Onkelos renders: "for He exalted Himself over the haughty, and exaltation is His." G-d rises above the proud forces and so withdraws from them.

Onkelos Exodus 15:1: שמות ט"ו תרגום אונקלוס

בְּכֵן שִׁבַּח מֹשֶׁה וּבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל יְתִשְׁבַּחְתָּא הָדָא קָדָם יְיָ וַאֲמָרוּ לְמִימָר נִשְׁבַּח וְנוֹדִי קָדָם יְיָ אַרִי אֶתְנַאי עַל גּוֹתְנִיָא וְגֵאוֹתָא דִּילָּהּ הִיא סוֹסִיָא וְרֹכְבָּהָ רָמָא בְּיָמָּה:

Sifsei Chachomim Chumash, Metsudah Publications, 2009 (CC-BY-NC)

91

וכולא קמיה כלא חשיב

"...and all before Him is accounted as nothing." This is the contemplation that makes the external forces lose their hold.

Zohar, Introduction 20:188-22:199: ספר זוהר, הקדמה כ"קפ"ח-כ"קצ"ט

The genuine type is that which makes a man fear his Master because He is the mighty ruler, the rock and foundation of all worlds, before whom all existing things are as nought, as it has been said: "and all the inhabitants of the earth are as nought" (Dan. 4, 32), and place his goal in that spot which is called yir'ah (fear).

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

92

ולגדולתו אין חקר

"Great is Havayah and highly praised, and His greatness is beyond searching."

Psalms 145:3: תהילים קמ"ה

גָדוֹל ה' וּמְהֻלָּל מְאֹד וְלֹגְדָלְתּוֹ אֵין חֶקֶר:

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

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93

ישראל מצד עצמם עלו במחשבה

Israel are among the things that "arose in thought" before the world was created; so the evil that hinders them is not

...אלה החוקים והמשפטים והתורות אשר ה' בינו

their own essence.

Bereshit Rabbah 1:4: בראשית רבה א"ד:ד

... "ה' קנני ראשית דרכו" כסא הכבוד מנין דכתיב (תהלים צג, ב): "נכון כסאך מאז וגו'". האבות וישראל ובית המקדש ושמו של משיח, עלו במחשבה להבראות האבות מנין שנאמר (הושע ט, י): "כענבים במדבר וגו'" ישראל מנין שנאמר (תהלים עד, ב): "זכור עדתך קנית קדם" בית המקדש מנין שנאמר (ירמיה יז, יב): "כסא כבוד מרום מראשון וגו'" שמו של משיח מנין שנאמר (תהלים עב, יז): "יהי שמו לעולם וגו' [לפני שמש ינון שמו]" רבי אהבה ברבי זעירא אמר אף התשובה שנאמר (שם צ, ב) "בטרם הרים ילדו" ואותה השעה (שם),

...

"In the beginning, G-d created" - six items preceded the creation of the world; some of them were [actually] created, and some of them G-d contemplated creating, [though He did not actually do so]. The Torah and the Throne of Glory were created. Torah, from where is it derived? As it is stated: "The L-rd made me at the beginning of His way" (Proverbs 8:22). The Throne of Glory, from where is it derived? "Your throne stands firm from earliest time, [You are from eternity]" (Psalms 93:2). The patriarchs, Israel, ...

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94

להיות לו דירה בתחתונים

Kehot's marei makom for these words (its note is below).

KEHOT'S NOTE

ראה תנחומא בחקותי ג.

95

למטה להיות לו דירה בתחתונים

On "I will place My Sanctuary in your midst" the Midrash says: "The Holy One, blessed be He, desired that just as He has a dwelling above, so He should have a dwelling below."

Midrash Tanchuma, Bechukotai 3:1: מדרש תנחומא, בחוקתי ג'א'

... וְיָדְעוּ כִּי אֲנִי ה' אֱלֹהֵיהֶם אֲשֶׁר הוֹצֵאתִי אֶתְכֶם מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם לְשִׁכְנִי בְּתוֹכְכֶם (שם פסוק מו). וְאֵם יַעֲשׂוּ רְצוֹנִי, אֵין שְׂכִינְתִּי זֹה מְבִינֶיהוּ. לָמָּה, אָמַר רַבִּי אָמִי, נִתְאַוָּה הַקְדוּשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא, כְּשֶׁם שֵׁשׁ לוֹ דִּירָה לְמַעְלָה, שִׁיְהֵא לוֹ כֶּה דִּירָה לְמַטָּה. שֶׁכֶּה הוּא אוֹמֵר לְאַדָּם הָרִאשׁוֹן, אִם זָכִיתִי, כְּשֶׁם שְׂאֵנִי מִלֶּךְ עַל הָעֲלִיּוֹנִים, כֶּה אַעֲשֶׂה אוֹתָהּ מִלֶּךְ עַל הַתַּחְתּוֹנִים, שְׂנֵאָמֵר: וַיִּקַּח ה' אֱלֹקִים אֶת הָאָדָם (בראשית ב, טו). אֵין לְשׁוֹן וַיִּקַּח אֶלָּא לְשׁוֹן עֲלוֹי, כֶּמָּה שְׂנֵאָמֵר: וַתִּקַּח הָאִשָּׁה ...

(Lev. 26:3): "If you walk in My statutes." This text is related (to Prov. 1:20), "Wisdom shouts for joy in the street; in the squares she raises her voice." R. Samuel bar Nahman questioned R. Johanan ben Eleazar, when he was standing in the market. He said to him, "Recite one chapter (of Mishnah) for me." He said to him, "Go to the house of study, and I will recite it for you there." He said to him, "Rabbi, did you not teach me (Prov. 1:20), 'Wisdom shouts for joy ...

Midrash Tanchuma -- Torat Emet (Public Domain) • Townsend 1989 translation of Midrash Tanhuma, S. Buber Recension, edited and supplemented by R. Francis Nataf (CC-BY)

96

וישב ה' מלך לעולם

"Havayah sat at the Flood, and Havayah sits as King forever." "Sitting" describes G-d's presence settling and abiding below.

Psalms 29:10:י"ט:י"ט תהילים

ה' לַמְבוּל יֹשֵׁב ה' מֶלֶךְ לְעוֹלָם:

The L-RD sat enthroned at the flood; Yea, the L-RD sitteth as King for ever.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

תהלים כט, י.

97

ישראל מפרנסין

The Zohar on Vayikra: the King's meal waits for the meal of His servants, the aroma of the offerings, and therefore "Israel sustain their Father in heaven."

Zohar III, 7bז, זח"ג

KEHOT'S NOTE

זח"ג ז, ב.

98

נגלה כבוד ה'

"And the glory of Havayah shall be revealed, and all flesh together shall see that the mouth of Havayah has spoken." This revelation to the whole world is the blessing of the Time to Come.

Isaiah 40:5:ה'י"ח:י"ח ישעיהו

וְנִגְלָה כְבוֹד ה' וְרָאוּ כָל־בָּשָׂר יַחְדָּו כִּי פִי ה' דִּבֶּר:

And the glory of the L-RD shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together; for the mouth of the L-RD hath spoken it.'

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KEHOT'S NOTE

ישעיי מ, ה.

PARAGRAPH 13

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אלה החוקים והמשפטים והתורות

"These are the statutes, the ordinances and the teachings which Havayah gave between Himself and the children of Israel." The verse the maamar set out to explain.

Leviticus 26:46:ו"מ:י"ז ויקרא

אַלֶּה הַחֻקִּים וְהַמִּשְׁפָּטִים וְהַתּוֹרֹת אֲשֶׁר נָתַן ה' בְּיַד מֹשֶׁה בְּהַר סִינַי בְּיַד־מֹשֶׁה:

These are the statutes and ordinances and laws, which the L-RD made between Him and the children of Israel in mount Sinai by the hand of Moses.

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ועונותיכם מבדילים

"But your iniquities have separated between you and your G-d, and your sins have hidden His face from you." This is the separating screen that the curses remove.

Isaiah 59:2:י"ט:י"ט ישעיהו

כִּי אִם־עֲוֹנוֹתֵיכֶם הָיוּ מַבְדִּילִים בֵּינְכֶם לְבֵין אֱלֹהֵיכֶם וְחַטָּאוֹתֵיכֶם הִסְתִּירוּ פָנָיו מִכֶּם מִשְׁמוֹעַ:

But your iniquities have separated Between you and your G-d, And your sins have hid His face from you, That He will not hear.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

ישעיי נט, ב.



LikuteiTorah.com
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