



TORAH OHR • PARSHAS CHAYEI SARAH • MAAMAR 2

להבין ענין משארז"ל יפה שעה אחת בתשובה ומע"ט...

To understand the teaching of
our Sages, "Better is one hour..."



Torah and mitzvos are rooted in G-d's own will and wisdom, higher than the radiance of the Shechinah that souls enjoy in the World to Come; clothed in physical things, they become the garments through which a created soul can grasp that radiance, as Moshe was nourished through the cloud. So one hour of teshuvah and good deeds in this world is better than all the life of the World to Come.

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

Torah and mitzvos are rooted in G-d's own will and wisdom, higher than the radiance of the Shechinah that souls enjoy in the World to Come; clothed in physical things, they become the garments through which a created soul can grasp that radiance, as Moshe was nourished through the cloud. So one hour of teshuvah and good deeds in this world is better than all the life of the World to Come.

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

On the verse “And Avraham was old, advanced in days,” the maamar asks how one hour of teshuvah and good deeds in this world can be better than all the life of the World to Come, when their purpose is to be the soul's garments for enjoying the radiance of the Shechinah there. The divine life-force within the worlds is hidden, seen only in its effects, as the soul's life shows in the limbs; giving the worlds life is G-d's humility, not His greatness. In the World to Come that same life-force is grasped openly, in its very essence: this is the radiance of the Shechinah. A created soul grasps it only through a garment, as Moshe was nourished within the cloud. Torah and mitzvos, from G-d's will and wisdom, are higher than that radiance and clothed in parchment, wool and charity; so they surpass the World to Come yet are its garments. Then love: contemplating in the Shema how the worlds are nullified in their source awakens a longing to stay bound to G-d; since the body cannot hold that, he resolves in the Shema to study Torah, which unites the soul with Him. G-d separates the good in a person from the evil so long as he has not done evil in deed, and the bow of the blessings shows that nullification, which should reach the heart.

OUTLINE

- 1 The question** ¶1-2
On “And Avraham was old, advanced in days”: if teshuvah and good deeds are the soul's garments for enjoying the radiance of the Shechinah, how can one hour of them be better than all the life of the World to Come?
- 2 The hidden life-force and the revealed radiance** ¶3-6
The life-force in the worlds is hidden, like the soul's in the limbs, and unlimited though it takes the form of its vessel. “The whole earth is full of His glory” and “The heavens and the earth I fill” are both true; giving life to the worlds is His humility. In the World to Come the essence of that life-force is grasped openly: the radiance of the Shechinah.

3 The soul's garments, like Moshe's cloud

¶7-8

The soul descended, like seed drawn from the brain, to become a created being, so it cannot grasp G-dliness by itself. As the cloud let Moshe be fed by spiritual food, Torah and mitzvos, rooted in the Supernal Will and clothed in physical things, become the garments through which it grasps the radiance, and so they are greater than it.

4 Love in the Shema and Torah study

¶9-11

Love and awe are wings that lift Torah and good deeds. Contemplating how the radiance is nullified in G-d's essence, like the sun's rays in the sun, awakens a longing to stay bound to Him; since the body cannot hold that nullification, he resolves in the Shema to study Torah, in which the soul is truly united with G-d.

5 G-d separates good from evil

¶12-13

One who feels his evil is still whole within him should not despair: so long as he has not done evil in deed, G-d brings him out of Egypt, separating the G-dly soul from the animal soul. Even the wicked draw light through Torah study, but it does not reach their inner being.

6 The blessings and the dwelling below

¶14

"Blessed are You, Havayah" draws Havayah into revelation. Until the future the body conceals, so the bow shows the nullification outwardly and must reach the heart, for G-d's intent is a dwelling place among the lower realms.

KEY CONCEPTS

the radiance of the Shechinah זיו השכינה

What souls enjoy in the World to Come: a revealed grasp of the essence of the divine life-force that is hidden within the worlds. It is only a radiance, lower than G-d's will and wisdom.

garments (levushim) לבושים

What the soul's Torah and mitzvos make for it; like Moshe's cloud, they let a created being grasp G-dliness, which it could not grasp by itself.

the Supernal Will רצח"ע

The root of Torah and mitzvos, one with G-d through His wisdom; since it is higher than the radiance of the Shechinah, an hour of good deeds is better than all the World to Come.

His humility ענותנותו

G-d's lowering Himself to be clothed in the worlds and give them life; giving life to the worlds is praise of His humility, not of His greatness.

wings (love and awe) גדפין

Love and awe are not the main thing but the wings that lift it, Torah and good deeds.

self-nullification (bittul) ביטול

The worlds' being nothing within the source of their life, as rays are nothing within the sun. A person contemplates it in the Shema, and in the blessings shows it outwardly by bowing.

a dwelling place among the lower realms דירה בתחתונים

G-d's ultimate intent: to dwell in the lowest realm. It is "the end of the deed, first in thought," and so "the earth was created first."

SECTION 1 • 11-2

The question

1 שייך לפסוק ואברהם זקן בא בימים¹

Pertaining to the verse “And Avraham was old, advanced in days.”

A heading for a second, separate discourse, based on the opening verse of Genesis 24: Avraham grew old, “coming into days.” The Zohar reads “days” as the garments of the soul, and that reading is the key to what follows.

2 להבין ענין² משארז"ל [מה שאמרו רבותינו זכרונם לברכה] יפה שעה אחת³ בתשובה ומע"ט [ומעשים טובים] בעוה"ז מכל חיי עוה"ב [עולם הבא].⁴ וצריך להבין והלא תכלית תשובה ומע"ט [ומעשים טובים] הוא שמהם נעשו לבושים לנשמה⁵ שתוכל ליהנות מזיו השכינה בעוה"ב [בעולם הבא]

To understand the teaching of our Sages, of blessed memory: “Better is one hour of teshuvah and good deeds in this world than all the life of the World to Come.” And this must be understood: is not the purpose of teshuvah and good deeds that garments for the soul are made from them, so that it can enjoy the radiance of the Shechinah in the World to Come,

The Mishnah says that one hour of teshuvah and good deeds in this world is better than all the life of the World to Come. That is puzzling: the whole point of teshuvah and good deeds is that they become “garments” for the soul, which let it enjoy the radiance of the Shechinah in the World to Come. How can the means be greater than the goal?

כמאמר הזוהר ע"פ ואברהם זקן⁶ בא בימים באיננו יומין עילאין^{7,8} כו' ווי ליה לההוא גברא דגרע יומין לעילא דכד בעיין לאלבשא ליה באיננו יומין יומא דפגם חסרא ליה מההוא לבושא כנ"ל.

as the Zohar says on the verse “And Avraham was old, advanced in days”: “in those supernal days,” etc.; “Woe to the man who diminished days above! For when they come to clothe him in those days, the day that he blemished is missing from that garment,” as mentioned above?

The Zohar reads “Avraham came into days” as meaning he entered the World to Come clothed in his days, each day of good deeds becoming part of the soul’s garment. A person who spoiled a day finds that day missing from his garment. So the good deeds seem to exist for the sake of the World to Come.

SECTION 2 • 113-6

The hidden life-force and the revealed radiance

3 והענין דהנה ענין זיו השכינה⁹ בעוה"ב [בעולם הבא] אינו כמו התפשטות חיות אלקות בתוך העולמות. כמ"ש ואתה מחיה את כולם¹⁰ שהחיות אלקות המתלבש תוך עלמין אינו מושג ונראה.¹¹

The explanation is that the radiance of the Shechinah in the World to Come is not like the spreading forth of the divine life-force within the worlds, as it is written, "And You give life to them all"; for the divine life-force that is clothed within the worlds is not grasped or seen.

The answer begins by distinguishing two things. The radiance of the Shechinah enjoyed in the World to Come is not the same as the divine life that spreads through the worlds and keeps them alive, of which it is said "You give life to them all." That life-force, clothed within the worlds, is neither grasped nor seen.

כמשל התפשטות החיות של הנשמה תוך הגוף בהתחלקות האברים ובודאי בהחיות רוחני לא שייך כלל שיהיה בו ג"כ התחלקות החיות לחלקים כי אין ברוחניות שום תמונה וצורה.

As in the analogy of the spreading forth of the soul's life-force within the body, divided among the limbs; and certainly, in the spiritual life-force, division of the life-force into parts does not apply at all, for in spirituality there is no image or form.

An analogy: the soul's life spreads through the body and seems divided among the limbs, sight in the eye, hearing in the ear. But the soul's life itself cannot really be divided into parts, since something spiritual has no shape or form.

4 והנה התפעלות החיות באברים¹² ניכר ונראה. אבל מהות ועצמות החיות אינו נראה וניכר כלל.

Now the effect of the life-force in the limbs is recognizable and visible, but the essence and being of the life-force is not visible or recognizable at all.

What we see in the limbs is the life-force's effect, the movement and action it produces; the life-force itself, its essence, is not seen at all.

כמו כן חיות אלקות המחיה כל העולמות בע"ג [בעלי גבול / בעל גבול] ותכלית בודאי אין בהחיות הרוחני בחי גבול ותכלית ד"מ [דרך משל] חיות המחיה את עיגול כדור השמים¹³ בודאי לא יתכן לומר שגם החיות הרוחני הוא בתמונת עיגול כנ"ל

So too the divine life-force that gives life to all the worlds, which are bounded and finite: certainly in the spiritual life-force there is no aspect of limit and end. For example, the life-force that gives life to the round sphere of the heavens: certainly it cannot be said that the spiritual life-force too is in the form of a circle, as mentioned above;

The same is true of the divine life-force in the worlds, which are finite. The life-force itself has no limits. The life-force that animates the round sphere of the heavens, for example, is not itself round.

רק שהתפשטות החיות הוא לפי תמונת כלי המקבל החיות ואע"פ [ואף על פי] שהחיות מתלבש לתוכו מ"מ החיות עצמו אינו בגדר מקום וגבול:¹⁴

only that the spreading forth of the life-force accords with the form of the vessel that receives the life-force; and even though the life-force is clothed within it, nevertheless the life-force itself is not within the bounds of place and limit.

Its expression only takes the shape of the vessel that receives it. Though it is clothed in that vessel, the life-force itself is not bound by place or limit.

5 ובזה יובן דכתיב מכה"כ [מלא כל הארץ כבודו]¹⁵ ותרגומו זיו יקריה¹⁶ שהוא רק זיו והתפשטות הארה בלבד.¹⁷ וכתיב את השמים ואת הארץ אני מלא.¹⁸

And with this will be understood what is written, "The whole earth is full of His glory," and its Targum [renders], "the radiance of His glory," which is only a radiance, a spreading forth of illumination alone. And it is written, "The heavens and the earth I fill."

This explains two verses that seem to conflict. The seraphim in Isaiah's vision call, "the whole earth is full of His glory," and the Targum renders it "the radiance of His glory": only a radiance spreads through the world. Yet Jeremiah has G-d say "I fill the heavens and the earth," which speaks of G-d Himself.

והענין ששניהם אמת כנ"ל¹⁹ וזשארז"ל [וזהו שאמרו רבותינו זכרונם לברכה] במקום שאתה מוצא גדולתו²⁰ של הקב"ה שם אתה מוצא ענותנותו כו'.

And the explanation is that both are true, as mentioned above. And this is what our Sages, of blessed memory, said: "Wherever you find the greatness of the Holy One, blessed be He, there you find His humility," etc.

Both are true, in the way just explained: the radiance is what is clothed in the world, while G-d's essence fills it without being contained. This is what the Talmud means by "Wherever you find G-d's greatness, there you find His humility."

דהיינו לא כמו שהעולם סוברים שגדולת הבורא נק' מה שהוא ית' מחיה כל העולמות שאדרבה זו היא ירידה אצלו ית' שמשפיל עצמו ומתלבש תוך כ"ע [כל עלמין] להחיותם ולקיימם.

That is: not as people think, that what is called the greatness of the Creator is that He, blessed be He, gives life to all the worlds; for on the contrary, this is a descent for Him, blessed be He, that He lowers Himself and is clothed within all the worlds to give them life and to sustain them.

People usually think G-d's greatness lies in His giving life to all the worlds. On the contrary: that is a descent for Him, a lowering of Himself to be clothed in the worlds in order to give them life and keep them in existence.

6 ומ"ש ואתה מחיה את כלם אינו שבח בבחי' גדולתו ית' שלגדולתו אין חקר²¹ ולתבונתו אין מספר²² אלא השבח הוא בבחי' ענוה שלו שיוכל להשפיל עצמו וכו'.

And what is written, "And You give life to them all," is not praise in terms of His greatness, blessed be He, for "His greatness is unsearchable" and "His understanding is beyond number"; rather, the praise is in terms of His humility, that He is able to lower Himself, etc.

So the verse "You give life to them all" is not praising G-d's greatness, which Psalms calls unsearchable and beyond number. It praises His humility, His willingness to lower Himself.

אבל ענין עוה"ב [עולם הבא] שנהנין מזיו השכינה הוא השגת מהות ועצמות התפשטות החיות אלקות בבחי' גילוי:²³

But the World to Come, in which they enjoy the radiance of the Shechinah, is the grasp of the essence and being of the spreading forth of the divine life-force, in a manner of revelation.

The World to Come is different. There the soul enjoys the radiance of the Shechinah by actually grasping the essence of the divine life-force as it spreads forth, openly revealed, not just its effects.

SECTION 3 • ¶7-8

The soul's garments, like Moshe's cloud

7 ועתה צריך להבין איך תוכל הנשמה שהיא בחינת נברא יש ודבר בפ"ע [בפני עצמו] להשיג מהות ועצמות אלקות²⁴ שאינו בבחי' השגה וגבול

Now it must be understood: how can the soul, which is a created being, an existence and a thing unto itself, grasp the essence and being of G-dliness, which is not within the bounds of comprehension and limit?

A new question: the soul is a created being, a separate existence. How can it grasp the essence of G-dliness, which is beyond all comprehension and limit?

ואף שהנשמה היא חלק אלוה ממעל²⁵ הוא ד"מ [דרך משל] כענין טפת הזרע שנמשכה מן המוח שלא יתכן לומר שגם עודנה במוחו היתה טפת זרע גשמית שא"כ הי' [היה] נחסר מהמוח כו'.

And even though the soul is "a part of G-d above," this is, by way of analogy, like the drop of seed that is drawn from the brain: it cannot be said that while still in his brain it was a physical drop of seed, for if so, the brain would be diminished, etc.

True, the soul is "a part of G-d above." But that works like the analogy of the seed drawn from the brain: while it is still in the brain it is not a physical drop, or the brain would be diminished by its loss.

אך שבאמת התחלת המשכחה מן המוח הוא כח רוחני לבד אלא שאח"כ בהשתלשלות ירידתה דרך חוט השדרה נשתנית ונעשית טפה גשמית.

Rather, in truth, the beginning of its drawing forth from the brain is a spiritual power alone; only afterward, in the successive stages of its descent through the spinal cord, it is changed and becomes a physical drop.

Its source in the brain is a purely spiritual power; only as it descends through the spinal cord does it change and become a physical drop.

כן עד"מ הנשמה עיקר שרשה מבחי' אלקות ממש רק שנשתלשלה בירידתה להיות בחי' נברא יש ודבר בפ"ע [בפני עצמו] כו'.^{26, 27}

So, by way of analogy, the soul: its essential root is from the level of G-dliness itself, only that it descended step by step to become a created being, an existence and a thing unto itself, etc.

So too the soul: its root is G-dliness itself, but it came down in stages until it became a created being, a separate existence. As such, it cannot of itself grasp G-d's essence.

8 וא"כ איך תוכל להשיג מהות ועצמות אלקות. והענין דהנה כתיב ויבא משה בתוך הענן²⁸ ויהי שם ארבעים יום וארבעים לילה לחם לא אכל^{29, 30} כו'.

If so, how can it grasp the essence and being of G-dliness? The explanation: it is written, "And Moshe came into the midst of the cloud... and he was there forty days and forty nights; bread he did not eat," etc.

The answer comes from Moshe at Sinai: he entered the cloud and stayed forty days and forty nights without eating bread.

והי' [והיה] גופו הגשמי ניזון ממזון רוחני לבד כמ"ש לחם אבירים אכל איש וכו' ממש כמו המלאכים³¹ ואיך יוכל להיות זה שגשמי יקבל מזון וחיות מרוחני שמובדלים זמ"ז [זה מזה] בתכלית.

And his physical body was nourished by spiritual food alone, as it is written, "Man ate the bread of the mighty," etc., just like the angels. And how can this be, that something physical should receive food and life-force from something spiritual, when they are utterly separate from one another?

His physical body lived on spiritual food alone, like the "bread of the mighty," the food of angels. But how can a physical body be fed by something spiritual, when the two are utterly different?

אך זהו ענין הענן שהיה משה ע"ה [עליו השלום] מתכסה בו דהיינו שהיה הענן שרשו ממדרגת אלקות מאד נעלה.

But this is the meaning of the cloud with which Moshe, peace be upon him, was covered: the cloud had its root in a very exalted level of G-dliness,

The answer lies in the cloud that covered Moshe. The cloud's root was in a very high level of G-dliness.

אך שנשתלשל ונתגשם להיות לבוש למשה ע"ה [עליו השלום] שע"י יוכל להשיג אלקות והיה לו למזון כמשל אדם הרואה ומסתכל באור צה דרך יריעה.

only it descended step by step and became material, to be a garment for Moshe, peace be upon him, through which he could grasp G-dliness, and it was food for him; as in the analogy of a person who sees and gazes at a bright light through a curtain.

From there the cloud came down in stages and became material, a garment for Moshe through which he could grasp G-dliness, and that was his food. It is like looking at a dazzling light through a curtain: the screen lets you see what you could not look at directly.

כמו כן תורה ומצות מעשיות ששרשם מרצה"ע [מרצון העליון] מחכמתו ית' שהם מיוחדים בו ית' הוא חכים³² כו'

So too the Torah and the practical mitzvos, whose root is from the Supernal Will, from His wisdom, blessed be He, which are one with Him, blessed be He: "He is wise," etc.,

The Torah and the practical mitzvos work the same way. Their root is in G-d's Supernal Will and wisdom, which are one with Him, as Eliyahu's prayer in the Tikkunei Zohar says, He is "wise, but not with a knowable wisdom."

שהם למעלה מזיו השכינה שהוא רק התפשטות החיות כו' ונשתלשלו ונתפשטו ונתלבשו בעניני זה העולם הגשמי כמו קלף של תפלין וצמר של ציצית וצדקה כו'

which are higher than the radiance of the Shechinah, which is only the spreading forth of the life-force, etc.; and they descended step by step, spread forth and were clothed in the matters of this physical world, such as the parchment of tefillin, the wool of tzitzis, and charity, etc.

So they are higher than the radiance of the Shechinah, which is only a spreading forth of divine life. Yet they came down and were clothed in physical things: the parchment of tefillin, the wool of tzitzis, charity.

כשאדם עוסק בתורה ובמצות נעשה לנשמתו לבושים³³ שנתלבש בהם בגעה"ע [בגן עדן העליון] שע"י תוכל הנשמה שהיא בחי' נברא להשיג זיו השכינה עצמות אלקות.

When a person occupies himself with Torah and mitzvos, garments are made for his soul, in which it is clothed in the Upper Gan Eden, through which the soul, which is a created being, can grasp the radiance of the Shechinah, the essence of G-dliness.

When a person studies Torah and keeps the mitzvos, these become garments for his soul in the Upper Gan Eden. Like Moshe's cloud, they let a created soul grasp the radiance of the Shechinah, the essence of G-dliness.

וזהו יפה שעה אחת בתשובה ומע"ט [ומעשים טובים]³⁴ שהם שרשם מרצה"ע [מרצון העליון] ב"ה. מכל חיי עוה"ב [עולם הבא] שהוא רק זיו השכינה כידוע מ"מ הם נקראים לבושים שע"י תוכל להשיג זיו השכינה וד"ל [ודי למבין]:

And this is "Better is one hour of teshuvah and good deeds," whose root is from the Supernal Will, blessed be He, "than all the life of the World to Come," which is only the radiance of the Shechinah, as is known. Nevertheless, they are called garments, through which [the soul] can grasp the radiance of the Shechinah. And this will suffice for one who understands.

This answers the opening question. An hour of teshuvah and good deeds touches their root in the Supernal Will itself, which is higher than all the life of the World to Come, the radiance of the Shechinah. Only in relation to the soul are they called garments, since they are how it grasps that radiance.

SECTION 4 • 19-11

Love in the Shema and Torah study

9 ועתה צריך להבין ענין אוי"ר [אהבה ויראה] שהם רק גדפין לבד להגביה עיקר הדבר שהם תורה ומע"ט [ומעשים טובים]. ולהבין מהות האהבה מה היא. הנה בקי"ש [בקריאת שמע] צריך שימליכוהו למעלה ולמטה ולדי' רוחות העולם.³⁵

Now it must be understood what love and awe are, [given] that they are only “wings” to lift up the main thing, which is Torah and good deeds. And [one must] understand the essence of love, what it is. Now in the Shema, one must crown Him above and below and to the four directions of the world.

A new question: love and awe of G-d are called “wings” that lift up the main thing, Torah and good deeds. What, then, is this love in its essence? The Talmud says that when saying “One” in the Shema one must crown G-d above, below and in all four directions.

פ"י דכתיב מכה"כ [מלא כל הארץ כבודו] ותרגמו זיו יקריה³⁶ שהוא רק זיו והתפשטות והארה בלבד המתלבשת תוך כ"ע [כל עלמין] וכתיב את השמים ואת הארץ אני מלא³⁷ בבחי' עצמות אלקות שאינו נתפס תוך מדה וגבול.

Explanation: it is written, “The whole earth is full of His glory,” and its Targum [renders], “the radiance of His glory,” which is only a radiance, a spreading forth and an illumination alone, that is clothed within all the worlds; and it is written, “The heavens and the earth I fill,” in the level of the essence of G-dliness, which is not held within measure and limit.

The meaning of that crowning rests on the two verses discussed earlier: the “glory” that fills the earth is only a radiance clothed within the worlds, while “I fill the heavens and the earth” speaks of G-d’s essence, which no measure or limit can contain.

והענין ששניהם אמת כו'. כמשל בטול זיו השמש במקור השמש עצמה כידוע שבאמת עצמות אלקות מלא כל הארץ. אך מה שהוא מתפשט תוך כלי וגבול הוא בטל ונכלל במהו"ע [במהותו ועצמותו] אלקות כו'.

And the explanation is that both are true, etc., as in the analogy of the nullification of the sun’s radiance within the source, the sun itself, as is known; for in truth the essence of G-dliness fills the whole earth. But what spreads forth into vessel and limit is nullified and included in the essence and being of G-dliness, etc.

Both are true, like the sun’s rays, which inside the sun itself are nothing at all. G-d’s essence truly fills the whole earth, and whatever spreads out into a vessel and a limit, the worlds included, is nullified and absorbed in that essence.

10 והנה כשיתבונן אדם היטב בזה בפסוד"ז [בפסוקי דזמרה] ובק"ש [ובקריאת שמע] איך שבאמת הוא כן שהעולמות בטלים במקור חיותם רק מפני שהאדם הוא בכלי גשמי הגוף

Now when a person contemplates this well in Pesukei deZimra and in the Shema, how in truth it is so, that the worlds are nullified within the source of their life, only that because the person is in a physical vessel, the body,

A person should reflect on this carefully during Pesukei deZimra, the verses of praise before the Shema, and in the Shema itself. He sees that the worlds really are nullified within their source, and that he fails to see it only because he lives in a physical body.

שהוא משכא דחויא שמתגדל ומתרבה מגשמיות המסתיר ומעלים שלא יוכל לראות בעיני ראי' [ראיה] חושית אזי יתעורר בלב תשוקה שיהי' [שיהיה] קשור בהתבוננות זו כל היום ולא יפרד ממש כלל.

which is "the snake's skin," which grows and increases from physicality that hides and conceals, so that he cannot see [this] with the eyes of sensory sight, then a longing will be aroused in the heart to be bound up in this contemplation all day long and not to be separated [from it] at all.

This is the body called in Kabbalah "the snake's skin," which grows from physical food and hides the truth from his senses. When he reflects this way, a longing awakens in his heart to stay bound to this thought all day and never be parted from it.

11 וזהו קבלת מ"ש בפסוק ראשון ואהבת³⁸ שיהי' [שיהיה] הוי' אלקיך שיהא תמיד קשור בהתבוננות זו ביטול העולמות להמחי' [להמחיה] ומהווה אותם רק מפני היות

And this is the acceptance of the Kingdom of Heaven in the first verse. "And you shall love": that Havayah be "your G-d," so that he will always be bound up in this contemplation, the nullification of the worlds to the One who gives them life and brings them into being. Only, because

The first verse of the Shema, "Hear, O Israel... Havayah is One," is the acceptance of the Kingdom of Heaven, taking on G-d's sovereignty, and here that means taking on this contemplation. Then "And you shall love Havayah your G-d" means that Havayah, the transcendent G-d, become "your G-d": that a person stay bound always to the contemplation of how the worlds are nullified before the One who gives them life and being.

כי גופו הגשמי לא יוכל לקבל ביטול אמתי הנ"ל יגמור בדעתו בק"ש [בקריאת שמע] ענין לימוד התורה כאמרו ודברת במ.³⁹

his physical body cannot receive the true nullification described above, he should resolve in his mind, in the Shema, upon the matter of Torah study, as he says, "And you shall speak of them."

His physical body, however, cannot sustain that true nullification all day. So he resolves in his mind, in the Shema, to study Torah, as he says "And you shall speak of them."

דהיינו שנפשו האלקית בעסקו בתורה נעשה יחוד אמתי עם התורה ואורייתא וקוב"ה [וקודשא בריך הוא]
כולא חד⁴⁰ ממש

That is: as he occupies himself with Torah, his G-dly soul becomes a true union with the Torah; and the Torah and the Holy One, blessed be He, are all truly one.

When the G-dly soul engages in Torah it becomes truly one with the Torah, and the Zohar teaches that the Torah and the Holy One, blessed be He, are entirely one.

כי אורייתא מח"ע [מחכמה עילאה] נפקת^{41,42} ונתלבשה בעניני זה העולם וכשאדם מלביש נפשו האלקית
בעניני לימוד התורה שבזה העולם

For the Torah came forth from supernal Chochmah and was clothed in the matters of this world; and when a person clothes his G-dly soul in the matters of Torah study in this world,

The Torah came forth from supernal Chochmah and was clothed in the matters of this world. Here below, a person clothes his G-dly soul in studying it.

אזי גם שרש נפשו למעלה מתלבש ג"כ בתורה שלמעלה עד רום המעלות ונעשה שם יחוד גמור. וזהו
הקב"ה יושב ושונה כנגדו^{43,44} כנ"ל. וזהו ה' צלך⁴⁵ פי' כמו צל.

then the root of his soul above is also clothed in the Torah above, up to the highest heights, and a complete union is made there. And this is [the meaning of] "The Holy One, blessed be He, sits and studies opposite him," as mentioned above. And this is "Havayah is your shadow": meaning, like a shadow.

When he does, the root of his soul above is clothed in the Torah as it is above, up to the very highest levels, and a complete union takes place there. That is why the Midrash says that when a person studies, G-d sits and studies opposite him, and why the Psalm says "Havayah is your shadow": He does what we do, as a shadow follows one's movements.

SECTION 5 • ¶12-13

G-d separates good from evil

12 והנה כתיב אני הוי' אלהיכם אשר הוצאתי אתכם מארץ מצרים. פי' שלא יאמר האדם בדרך שפלות
האיך יגיע למדרגת היחוד בתורה ותפלה מאחר

Now it is written, "I am Havayah your G-d, who brought you out of the land of Egypt." Meaning: a person should not say, in a spirit of lowliness, "How will I reach the level of union in Torah and prayer, since

The Shema ends with "I am Havayah your G-d, who brought you out of the land of Egypt." Its message: a person should not say, in humility, "How can I reach union with G-d in Torah and prayer?"

שהוא עדיין אינו סור מרע גמור כו' והוא עדיין בשלימות אצלו. זאת ישיב אל לבו שהשם הוא המוציא אותו מארץ מצרים.

I have not yet completely turned away from evil, etc., and [the evil] is still whole within me?" This he should take to heart: that G-d is the One who brings him out of the land of Egypt.

He should not hold back because he has not yet turned completely away from evil and it is still whole within him. He should take to heart that G-d is the One who brings him out of "Egypt," out of his own limitations.

פ"י שהוא מבדיל ומפריש בנפשו הטוב מן הרע הנפש אלקית מנה"ב [מנפש הבהמית] כשהוא עדיין לא עשה רע בפו"מ [בפועל ממש].⁴⁶

Meaning: that He separates and sets apart, within his soul, the good from the evil, the G-dly soul from the animal soul, when he has not yet actually done evil.

That is, G-d Himself separates the good from the evil within him, the G-dly soul from the animal soul, so long as he has not actually done evil. His union with G-d does not wait for him to have finished refining himself.

13 ואפ"י [ואפילו] רשע גמור הוא ממשיך בנפשו האלקית⁴⁷ בעסקו בתורה רק שעליו נאמר ולרשע אמר אלקים⁴⁸ מה לך לספר חוקי.

And even a completely wicked person draws [light] into his G-dly soul when he occupies himself with Torah; only, concerning him it is said, "But to the wicked, G-d said: What have you to do with recounting My statutes?"

Even a completely wicked person draws divine light into his G-dly soul when he studies Torah. But the Psalm says of him, "To the wicked G-d said: What have you to do with recounting My statutes?"

פ"י שאין תועלת לנפשו האלקי מפני שעליו נאמר ותשלך דברי אחריו⁴⁹ שלא יוכל להמשיך בתוך פנימיותו וד"ל [ודי למבין]:

Meaning: there is no benefit to his G-dly soul, because concerning him it is said, "And you cast My words behind you," so that he cannot draw [it] into his inner being. And this will suffice for one who understands.

His study does not benefit his G-dly soul, because, as the next verse says, "you cast My words behind you": the light cannot enter his inner self. The phrase "this will suffice for one who understands" signals a deeper point left unsaid.

SECTION 6 • ¶14

The blessings and the dwelling below

14 והנה בענין ברכות. ברוך אתה הוי"י פ"י ברוך הוא המשכה ורבו"י שיהי"י [שיהיה] הוי"י שהוא בחי' צמצום והתפשטות כו' יהי"י [יהיה] בחי' אתה לנוכח התגלות כו'.

Now, concerning blessings: "Blessed are You, Havayah." Meaning: "blessed" (baruch) is a drawing down and increase, so that Havayah, which is the level of contraction and expansion, etc., will be in the level of "You," [addressed] face to face, revelation, etc.

Now blessings. "Blessed are You, Havayah": baruch, "blessed," means drawing down and increase. The Name Havayah, which contains both contraction and expansion, is drawn down so that it becomes "You," addressed face to face, openly revealed.

אך להיות כי הגוף הוא המסתיר ומחשיך רק לע"ל [לעתיד לבוא] יהיה התגלות אלקות וראו כל בשר⁵⁰ ויהי"י [ויהיה] בבחי' ביטול אבל עכשיו צריך להראות עכ"פ [על כל פנים] ענין הביטול בחיצוניות בכריעה והשתחוא' [והשתחואה] בראש הכורע כורע בברוך.⁵¹

But since the body is what hides and darkens, and only in the time to come will there be the revelation of G-dliness, "and all flesh shall see," and it will be in [a state of] self-nullification (bittul), now, [therefore,] one must at least show the bittul externally, by bowing and by prostrating the head: "One who bows, bows at 'Blessed.'"

Yet the body hides and darkens G-dliness, and only in the time to come will it be revealed so that "all flesh shall see" and be nullified. So for now one must at least show nullification outwardly, by bowing the head, as the Talmud says: one bows at "Blessed."

וענין רופא חולים וגואל ישראל ומברך השנים הם כלים לבחי' המשכה והתגלות אלקות כו' והכורע צריך שיראה איסר כנגד לבו.⁵²

And [the blessings] "Who heals the sick," "Who redeems Israel" and "Who blesses the years" are vessels for the level of the drawing down and revelation of G-dliness, etc. And one who bows must [bow until] an issar is seen opposite his heart.

The particular blessings of the Amidah, "Who heals the sick," "Who redeems Israel," "Who blesses the years," are vessels for this drawing down and revealing of G-dliness. The Talmud says one must bow until an issar, a small coin, is seen opposite one's heart.

פ"י עיקר המשכה יהי [יהיה] כמוח עד שיתפשט ג"כ בלבו אפי' [אפילו] מעט היינו בחי' איסר (ועמ"ש לקמן בפ"י אוסרי לגפן)⁵³

Meaning: the main drawing down will be in the brain, until it spreads also into his heart, even a little; this is the level of issar (and see what is written below on the explanation of "binding (osri) to the vine"),

This means the drawing down should be mainly in the mind, but spread at least a little into the heart. The word issar is related to osri, "binding," as Torah Ohr explains further on, on the verse "binding (osri) his foal to the vine."

שהוא בחי' חפץ כדכתי' [כדכתיב] הודו על ארץ ושמים⁵⁴ אפי' [אפילו] בבחי' זיו והתפשטות החיות המלוכש תוך כ"ע [כל עלמין] ותכלית הכוונה להיות לו דירה בתחתונים וסוף מעשה במחשבה תחלה נעוץ סופן בתחלתן^{55, 56} ולכן ארז"ל [אמרו רבותינו זכרונם לברכה] ארץ נבראת תחלה⁵⁷ כו':

which is the level of desire, as it is written, "His splendor is upon the earth and the heavens," even in the level of the radiance and spreading forth of the life-force that is clothed within all the worlds. And the ultimate intent is for Him to have a dwelling place among the lower realms; and "the end of the deed is first in thought," "their end is wedged in their beginning." And therefore our Sages, of blessed memory, said, "The earth was created first," etc.

This binding is desire: G-d's desire, "His splendor upon the earth and the heavens," reaches even the radiance clothed in all the worlds. His ultimate intent is a dwelling place among the lower realms. What comes last in action was first in thought, and the end is wedged in the beginning; that is why the Sages said the earth was created first.

IN ONE'S AVODAH

Value one hour of teshuvah and good deeds above all the life of the World to Come. In Pesukei deZimra and the Shema, contemplate how the worlds are nullified within their source until a longing awakens to stay bound to G-d all day; since the body cannot hold that nullification, resolve in the Shema to study Torah, "And you shall speak of them," which unites the soul with G-d. Do not say, out of lowliness, that one who has not yet left evil cannot reach that union: so long as one has not done evil in deed, G-d Himself separates the G-dly soul from the animal soul. In the blessings, show the nullification at least outwardly by bowing at "Blessed," and let what is drawn into the mind reach the heart, even a little.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. If Torah and mitzvos are garments for enjoying the World to Come, how can one hour of them be better than all of it?
2. Why is G-d's giving life to the worlds praise of His humility rather than of His greatness?
3. What does Moshe in the cloud teach about how a created soul can grasp G-dliness?
4. Why must the love awakened in the Shema lead to the resolve to study Torah, "And you shall speak of them"?
5. How does "who brought you out of the land of Egypt" answer one who feels he cannot reach union with G-d while his evil is still whole within him?

FOR CHILDREN • AGES 9-13

For the children at the table

One hour better than the World to Come

THE BIG IDEA

Torah and mitzvos come from G-d's own will, higher than the light of the World to Come, so one hour of teshuvah and good deeds in this world is better than all of it.

Our Sages said, "Better is one hour of teshuvah (returning to G-d) and good deeds in this world than all the life of the World to Come." But the mitzvos are the soul's "garments" for enjoying G-d's light there, so how can they be better? G-d's life is hidden inside every world, as we see a body move but not the soul that gives it life. In the World to Come the soul grasps that same life openly: that is the light it enjoys there. Yet a created soul needs a garment to grasp G-dliness, as Moshe, inside a cloud for forty days, was fed through it with spiritual food. Torah and mitzvos are such garments: from G-d's own will and wisdom, higher than the light of the World to Come, they are clothed in the parchment of tefillin, the wool of tzitzis and charity. When we think in the Shema about how all the worlds are as nothing before G-d, like the sun's light inside the sun, we long to stay close to Him, and Torah study truly joins our soul to Him. Even if the bad in us is still all there, we need not despair: so long as we have not actually done wrong, G-d Himself separates the good in us from the bad.

THE MASHAL

A person cannot look straight at a very bright light, but through a curtain they can gaze at it. So Moshe, inside the cloud, could take in G-dliness, and it was food for him. Torah and mitzvos are the soul's cloud and curtain: through them a created soul can enjoy G-d's light in the World to Come.

QUESTIONS FOR THE SHABBOS TABLE

1. If the mitzvos are garments for the World to Come, how can one hour of them be better than all of it?
2. Moshe was inside a cloud for forty days without eating bread. How is that cloud like the mitzvos we do?
3. What is one good deed, or one hour of Torah study, you can do this week, knowing it is higher than all the World to Come?

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SOURCES AND REFERENCES

Notes

PARAGRAPH 1

1 ואברהם זקן בא בימים

The Torah says Avraham was old, "advanced in days," plainly, well on in years. The Zohar reads "came with his days": he entered the World to Come clothed in his days, and the discourse builds on that reading.

Genesis 24:1: בראשית כ"ד:

וַאֲבְרָהָם זָקֵן בָּא בַּיָּמִים וְהָיָה פֶּרֶךְ אֶת־אֲבְרָהָם כָּל:

And Abraham was old, well stricken in age; and the L-RD had blessed Abraham in all things.

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

PARAGRAPH 2

2 להבין ענין

The note records that this discourse was delivered in 5557, citing the editors' note in the Alter Rebbe's short discourses.

KEHOT'S NOTE

נאמרה בשנת תקנ"ו, ראה מאמרי אדה"י הקצרים ע' תר"ז הערה 76. בכמה כתי"י: שקלאוו וישלח תקנ"ז. בכת"י א': מברכין חשון תקנ"ז. ראה לעיל בציונים לכ"ק אדמו"ר זי"ע. אוה"ת בראשית כרך ד תשפה, ב. תתפה, א. מאמר זה נזכר בלקו"ת ואתחנן ז, ב. שה"ש יח, ג. כב, ב. באוה"ת ויחי שסו, א מצ"י "בתור"א פ' חיי ענין ג"ע שבו גילוי הזיו בבחי' השגת המהות, משא"כ בעולמות בי"ע הרי עולם לי העלם" ע"ש. לכללות מאמר זה ראה בסה"מ תרכ"ח ע' נ ואילך. סה"מ תרל"ד ע' נט. סה"מ תרמ"ג ע' כ ואילך. ד"ה לך לך תרנ"ד ע' נ ואילך. ד"ה וטהר לבנו עזרי"ת ע' כו. ד"ה ואברהם זקן תשליח (נדפס בלקו"ש ח"כ ע' 315 ובסה"מ מלוקט ח"א ע' רפט). פלח הרמון בראשית קטו, ג.

3 יפה שעה אחת

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

KEHOT'S NOTE

אבות ד, יז.

4 יפה שעה אחת בתשובה ומע"ט בעוה"ז מכל חיי עוה"ב

Rabbi Yaakov teaches in the Mishnah that one hour of teshuvah and good deeds in this world is better than all the life of the World to Come. It is the teaching the discourse sets out to explain.

Pirkei Avot 4:17: מִשְׁנַּה אֲבוֹת דִּי־יִיזוּ:

הוּא הֵיזָה אוֹמֵר, יִפָּה שְׁעָה אַחַת בְּתִשְׁבּוּבָה וּמַעֲשִׂים טוֹבִים בְּעוֹלָם הַזֶּה, מִכָּל חַיֵּי הָעוֹלָם הַבָּא. וְיִפָּה שְׁעָה אַחַת שֶׁל קוֹרֵת רוּחַ בְּעוֹלָם הַבָּא, מִכָּל חַיֵּי הָעוֹלָם הַזֶּה:

He used to say: more precious is one hour in repentance and good deeds in this world, than all the life of the world to come; And more precious is one hour of the tranquility of the world to come, than all the life of this world.

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

5 שמהם נעשו לבושינ לגשמה

Iggeres HaKodesh 29 discusses the garments of the soul in the Garden of Eden made from Torah and mitzvos, the idea this paragraph assumes.

KEHOT'S NOTE

ראה אגה"ק סי' כט. אוה"ת בראשית כרך ד תשפו, א. סה"מ תש"א ד"ה זכרנו לחיים ע' 153.

6 כמאמר הזהר ע"פ ואברהם זקן

The Toldos passage brings the Zohar on "And Avraham was old, advanced in days," contrasting baalei teshuvah, who draw down an encompassing light beyond any vessel, with Avraham, who "came in days," with vessels and garments.

KEHOT'S NOTE

ח"א רכד, א. וראה שם קכט, א הלשון "יומין עילאין". וראה לקמן כ, ד. מו, ג. עה, ד. עט, ב. פב, א. לקו"ת שלח לח, ד. נא, ג. יוהכ"פ סט, א. שמע"צ פו, סע"ב. שה"ש טז, ג.

7 ואברהם זקן בא בימים באינון יומין עילאין

The Zohar reads "advanced in days" as Avraham entering in his supernal days, and warns that a blemished day is missing from the soul's garment. The Alter Rebbe uses it to show that good deeds are garments for the World to Come.

ספר הזהר, ויחי ל"ב:רצ"ד-ש"ג 32:294-303 Zohar, Vayechi

8 באינון יומין עילאין

The Kehot notes point here for the Zohar's phrase "supernal days."

ספר הזהר, חיי שרה ט"ו:ק"י-ד-ש"ג 15:114-16:121 Zohar, Chayei Sara

Hence we read that when Abraham was old he "came into days", i.e. he entered into those supernal days, the days familiar in the doctrine of true faith. Further, "the L-rd blessed Abraham in all things (ba-kol)", the region called kol (all) being the source whence issue all boons and blessings.

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

PARAGRAPH 3

9 דהנה ענין זיו השכינה . . השגת מהות

The note observes that the Devarim passage implies that even in the World of Beriah only the existence of G-dliness is grasped, not its essence, which is grasped only in the Garden of Eden.

KEHOT'S NOTE

ראה באוה"ת פ' בראשית כרך ג תקל, א. וראה גם באוה"ת דברים כרך ו ד"ה למען תירא ע' בירל, שכאן משמע שאפילו בעולם הבריאה אינו מושג המהות רק המציאות כ"א בג"ע מושג המהות, שלכאורה זה סותר למ"ש בלקו"ת פ' ואתחנן ז, ב אופן התהוות בי"ע מבחי' מלי. נזכר באוה"ת זכור ע' א"תשע.

10

ואתה מחי את כולם

"You give life to them all." The Levites' praise describes the divine life-force within creation, which the Alter Rebbe contrasts with the radiance enjoyed in the World to Come.

Nehemiah 9:6 ט"ו: נחמיה

אַתָּה־הוּא ה' לְבַדְךָ אֶתָּה עֲשִׂיתָ אֶת־הַשָּׁמַיִם שָׁמַי הַשָּׁמַיִם וְכָל־צָבָאם
הָאָרֶץ וְכָל־אֲשֶׁר עָלֶיהָ הַיָּמִים וְכָל־אֲשֶׁר בָּהֶם וְאֶתָּה מְחִיָּה אֶת־כָּל־וְצָבָא
הַשָּׁמַיִם לְךָ מִשְׁתַּחֲוִיִּים:

Thou art the L-RD, even Thou alone; Thou hast made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host, the earth and all things that are thereon, the seas and all that is in them, and Thou preservest them all; and the host of heaven worshippeth Thee.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

נחמיה ט, ו.

11

התפשטות חיות . . אינו מושג ונראה

A marginal gloss in Torah Ohr points to this Likkutei Torah discourse, which explains that the soul itself is not seen.

KEHOT'S NOTE

"ע"י בלקו"ת ד"ה ע"כ יאמרו המושלים אשר הנשמה אינו נראה" — הג"ה בתו"א על הגיליון.

PARAGRAPH 4

12

והנה התפעלות החיות באברים

A marginal gloss points to Likkutei Torah's explanation of the word hispa'alus, "effect" or "being affected," used here.

KEHOT'S NOTE

"ע"י לקו"ת ד"ה ונקדשתי סע"י א פ"י תיבת התפעלות" הג"ה בגיליון תו"א.

13

כדור השמים

This manuscript reads "the sphere of the sun" instead of "the sphere of the heavens."

KEHOT'S NOTE

בבוכ תקצ"ה: כדור השמש.

14

מ"מ החיות עצמו אינו בגדר מקום וגבול

A marginal gloss points to the opening of Likkutei Torah's explanation of "Sos Asis" for the point that the life-force itself is not bound by place or limit.

KEHOT'S NOTE

"ע"י בתחלת ביאור שוש אשיש בלקו"ת" הג"ה בגיליון התו"א.

PARAGRAPH 5

15

מכה"כ

In Isaiah's vision the seraphim call to one another, "the whole earth is full of His glory." The Alter Rebbe, with the Targum, reads "glory" as only a radiance of G-d.

ישעיהו ו'ג:3 Isaiah

וְקָרָא זֶה אֶל־זֶה וְאָמַר קְדוֹשׁ קְדוֹשׁ קְדוֹשׁ ה' צָבָאוֹת מְלֵא כָל־הָאָרֶץ
כְּבוֹדוֹ:

And one called unto another, and said: Holy, holy, holy, is the L-RD of hosts; The whole earth is full of His glory.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

ישעיהו ו, ג.

16

זיו יקריה

The Aramaic translation renders "His glory" as "the radiance of His glory," which the Alter Rebbe takes as proof that only a radiance fills the world.

Targum Jonathan on Isaiah 6:3 ו'ישעיהו על יונתן

וּמְקַבְּלֵי דִין מִן דִּין וְאֶמְרֵי קֳדִישׁ בְּשָׁמַי מְרֻמָּא עֲלָאָה בֵּית שְׁכִנְתָּיהָ
קֳדִישׁ עַל אֶרְעָא עוֹבֵד גְּבוּרְתָּיהָ קֳדִישׁ לְעֵלְמָא וְלְעֵלְמָא יְיָ צָבָאוֹת
מְלֵאָה כָּל אֶרְעָא זִיו יְקָרִיהָ:

And one cried unto another, and they were saying, Holy in the highest and exalted heavens is the house of His Shekinah, holy upon the earth is the work of His might, holy for ever, world without end, is the L-rd of hosts, the whole earth is full of the brightness of His glory.

Mikraot Gedolot (Public Domain) • London "Chaldee Paraphrase," 1871 (Public Domain)

17

שהוא רק זיו והתפשטות הארה בלבד

That maamar glosses the radiance as the light "drawn from the Infinite Light and clothed in all the worlds, to bring them into being and give them life from nothing," and "I" as the Infinite One's essence, not held within measure or limit.

KEHOT'S NOTE

"הנמשכת מאו"ס ומתלבשת תוך כל העולמות להוותם ולהחיותם מאין ליש" — ד"ה עטרת תפארת תרמ"ז ע' לה. מענין זיו השכינה — בלקו"ת האזינו עה, א מצוין לכאן.

18

את השמים ואת הארץ אני מלא

G-d says through Jeremiah, to prophets who think they can hide from Him, "Do I not fill the heavens and the earth?" Here G-d speaks of Himself, not of a radiance, which seems to contradict Isaiah.

ירמיהו כ"ג:24 Jeremiah

אִם־יִסְתֵּר אִישׁ בְּמִסְתָּרִים וְאֲנִי לֹא־אֶרְאֶנּוּ נְאֻמֵּי ה' הֲלוֹא אֶת־הַשָּׁמַיִם
וְאֶת־הָאָרֶץ אֲנִי מְלֵא נְאֻמֵּי ה':

Can any hide himself in secret places That I shall not see him? saith the L-RD. Do not I fill heaven and earth? Saith the L-RD.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

ירמיי כג, כד. "ואני הוא בחיי א"ס עצומה שאינו נתפס בתוך מדה וגבול" — סה"מ תרמ"ז ע' לה.

19

שו"ה והענין — כנ"ל

A marginal gloss reads "as mentioned below" in place of "as mentioned above."

KEHOT'S NOTE

"כנזכר לקמן" — הג"ה בגיליון התו"א.

20

במקום שאתה מוצא גדולתו

Rabbi Yochanan teaches that wherever Scripture mentions G-d's greatness it also mentions His humility. The Alter Rebbe reads it as saying that G-d's giving life to the worlds is humility, not greatness.

Megillah 31a:12-13 י"ב-י"א: י"ג-י"ב

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

Yohanan said: Wherever you find [mentioned in the Bible] the power of the Holy One, blessed be He, you also find his humility. This fact is stated in the Torah, repeated in the Prophets, and stated a third time in the [Sacred] Writings. It is written in the Torah, "For the L-rd your G-d, He is the G-d of gods and L-rd of lords," and it says immediately afterwards, "He executes justice for the orphan and widow" (Deuteronomy 10:17). It is repeated in the Prophets: "For thus said He who ..."

William Davidson, Vocalized Aramaic (CC-BY-NC) • Daf Shevui (CCO)

KEHOT'S NOTE

מגילה לא, א. ראה הערת כ"ק אדמו"ר זי"ע בספר המאמרים ת"ש ע' 40. תש"ד ע' 210 בדיוק גי' זו. ראה לקמן לא, ד, ס, א.

PARAGRAPH 6

21

שלגדולתו אין חקר

David's praise, "Great is Havayah and much praised, and His greatness is unsearchable." G-d's true greatness is beyond any relation to the worlds.

Psalms 145:3 ג"ה: תהילים

גדול ה' ומהלל 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

תהלים קמה, ג.

22

ולתבונתו אין מספר

"His understanding is beyond number." A second verse for the greatness that giving life to the worlds does not

express.

Psalms 147:5 ה'י: תהילים

גדול אדונינו ורב-כח לתבונתו אין מספר:

Great is our L-rd, and mighty in power; His understanding is infinite.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

תהלים קמז, ה.

23

אבל ענין עוה"ב . . בבחי' גילוי

A parallel discussion in Or HaTorah of the World to Come as a revealed grasp of the essence of the divine radiance.

KEHOT'S NOTE

ראה באוה"ת פ' ויצא כרך ד תשפח, א.

PARAGRAPH 7

24

איך תוכל הנשמה . . להשיג מהות ועצמות אלקות

A later discourse on how a created soul can grasp the essence of G-dliness.

KEHOT'S NOTE

ראה בסה"מ תרכ"ח ע' נד. סה"מ תרל"ד ע' נט.

25

חלק אלוה ממעל

Job asks, "What portion of G-d is there from above?", plainly, what lot G-d allots a person. Chassidus (Tanya, chapter 2) reads the words as "a part of G-d above," describing the G-dly soul, whose root is G-d Himself.

איוב ל"א:ב' Job 31:2

ומה חלק אלוה ממעל ונתת לי שדי ממרמים:

For what would be the portion of G-d from above, And the heritage of the Almighty from on high?

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26

ועתה צ"ל

The note says that a passage from here onward is quoted in Sefer HaMaamarim 5634.

KEHOT'S NOTE

קטע מכאן בסה"מ תרל"ד ע' נט.

27

כו' וא"כ איך תוכל להשיג מהות ועצמות אלקות

The gloss reports a manuscript reading that adds: therefore the soul can be subject to reward and punishment, able to act against G-d's will, as it says "a soul that sins."

KEHOT'S NOTE

"בכ"י מצאתי כו' לכן תוכל להיות בבחי' שכר ועונש שתוכל לעשות היפך הרצון כמ"ש נפש כו' תחטא, וע' בלקו"ת ביאור שבתותי אות ב' וא"כ." הג"ה בגיליון תו"א מחסיד.

PARAGRAPH 8

28

ויבא משה בתוך הענן

Moshe entered the cloud and ascended the mountain, and was there forty days and forty nights. The Alter Rebbe

reads the cloud as a garment for grasping G-dliness.

Exodus 24:18 שמות כ"ד:

ויבא משה בתוך הענן ויעל אל־ההר ויהי משה כהר ארבעים יום וארבעים לילה:

And Moses entered into the midst of the cloud, and went up into the mount; and Moses was in the mount forty days and forty nights.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

שמות כד, יח. לקמן לג, א. בלקו"ת ויקרא ז, א. שמע"צ פז, ב. שה"ש מט, א מציין לכאן. ראה אנה"ק סי' כט.

29

לחם לא אכל

Moshe was with G-d forty days and forty nights and ate no bread. The Alter Rebbe asks how a physical body could live on spiritual food.

Exodus 34:28 שמות ל"ד:

ויהי־שם עִם־יְהוָה אַרְבָּעִים יוֹם וְאַרְבָּעִים לַיְלָה לֶחֶם לֹא אָכַל וּמַיִם לֹא שָׁתָה וַיִּכְתֹּב עַל־הַלְחָת אֶת דְּבָרֵי הַבְּרִית עֲשֶׂת הַדְּבָרִים:

And he was there with the L-RD forty days and forty nights; he did neither eat bread, nor drink water. And he wrote upon the tables the words of the covenant, the ten words.

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30

לחם לא אכל

The Midrash says that on the mountain, where there is no eating, Moshe was like the angels: he ate no bread, but he ate the "bread" of the Torah. The Rebbe's note, cited by Kehot, draws on it to reconcile the two views of how Moshe was nourished.

Shemot Rabbah 47:5 שמות רבה מ"ז:

... וכי קלה היא בעיניך, שמכרתי דבר שנברא בששה ימים, וקניתי דבר שניתן לארבעים יום, עולם כולו ומלואו נברא בוי' ימים, אבל התורה ניתנה לארבעים יום. לחם לא אכל, אבל מלחמה של תורה אכל. ומים לא שתה, אבל מימיה של תורה שתה, והיה למד תורה ביום ופושט אותה בינו לבין עצמו בלילה. ולמה היה עושה כך? אלא ללמד את ישראל, שיהו יגיעים בתורה ביום ובלילה. ר' שמעון בן לקיש היה אומר לתלמידיו: בואו ולמדו תורה דשחרין, ודקרינן בלילה. ורבי יוחנן היה אומר לתלמידיו: בואו ולמדו תורה דאימטין, אלא אעפ"כ מודה ...

"He was there with the L-rd forty days and forty nights; he did not eat bread, and he did not drink water. He wrote upon the tablets the words of the covenant, the ten precepts" (Exodus 34:28). "He was there with the L-rd." Is it possible for a person to be forty days without food and without drink? Rabbi Tanḥuma says in the name of Rabbi Elazar ben Rabbi Avin in the name of Rabbi Meir: The proverb says: You went to the city, follow its conventions. Above, where there ...

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31

לחם אכירים . . כמו המלאכים

Asaph recalls the manna in the wilderness: "Man ate the bread of the mighty." Rabbi Akiva in the Talmud reads it as

... להבין ענין משארז"ל יפה שעה אחת בתשובה ומע"ט

the bread the ministering angels eat; the maamar compares Moshe, fed by spiritual food alone, to the angels.

Psalms 78:25 תהילים ע"ח:

לָחֶם אַבִּירִים אָכַל אִישׁ צִידָה שָׁלַח לָחֶם לְשַׁבֵּעַ:

Man did eat the bread of the mighty; He sent them provisions to the full.

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Yoma 76a יומא ע"ו א

Yoma 75b:11 יומא ע"ה ב:

תנו רבנן: "לָחֶם אַבִּירִים אָכַל אִישׁ", לָחֶם שֶׁמֶלֶאכִי הִשְׁרַת אוֹכְלִין אוֹתוֹ, דְּבָרֵי רַבִּי עֲקִיבָא. וְכִשְׁנֵאֲמָרוּ דְּבָרִים לְפָנֵי רַבִּי יִשְׁמַעְאֵל, אָמַר לָהֶם: צֹאוּ וְאָמְרוּ לוֹ לְעֲקִיבָא: עֲקִיבָא טְעִיתָ! וְכִי מִלֵּאכִי הִשְׁרַת אוֹכְלִין לָחֶם? וְהֵלֵא כֶּבֶר נֶאֱמַר: "לָחֶם לֹא אָכַלְתִּי וּמַיִם לֹא שָׁתִיתִי!" אֱלֹא, מָה אֲנִי מְקַיִם "אַבִּירִים" — לָחֶם שֶׁנִּבְלַע בְּמֵאֲתִים וְאַרְבָּעִים וּשְׁמוֹנֶה אֲבִירִים.

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

KEHOT'S NOTE

תהלים עח, כה. עפמ"ש בס' התמונה הובא בילקוט ראובני בשלח טז, ד. עמק המלך עד, ג. ראה יומא עו, א (הערות כ"ק אדמו"ר זי"ע בספר המאמרים תשי"א ע' 154). בלקו"ש חיד ע' 1037 שוה"ג להערה 19 כי וז"ל: במ"ש בדא"ח במקום א' שמשח רבינו ע"ה הי' ניוון ממזון רוחני, ובמקום שני מלחם אבירים לא ניוון, ה"ה מותיב לה והוא מפרק לה במכתבו, שבכל אחד מהנ"ל מבאר דיעה אחת אשר בש"ס (יומא עה, ב). ויותר נכון (כי בש"ס משמע דלרע"ק אכל איש — קאי על כל בניי) עפ"י הדיעה אשר בשמו"ר פמ"ז ה, ז שאלו ואלו דא"ח. ועואפ"ל לתווכ' בין הדעות — שנפק"מ במשה עצמו בין כשלומד מן הקב"ה או כששונה לעצמו, שאז הוא במדר"י מלאך, ודו"ק בתו"א ולקו"ת עכ"ל. ראה לקמן עד, א. פט, א. קיג, ג. וראה גם לקו"ש ח"ט ע' 19 ובהערה *36.

32

הוא חכים

In Eliyahu's prayer, G-d is wise but not with a knowable wisdom. The Alter Rebbe uses it for G-d's wisdom, the root of Torah and mitzvos, being one with Him.

Tikkunei Zohar 17a תקוני זוהר י"ז

33

עוסק בתורה ובמצות נעשה לנשמתו לבושים

That note explains that in general Torah and mitzvos are both garments, but in detail only the mitzvos are garments ("days"), while the Torah is "old" (zaken).

KEHOT'S NOTE

ראה בד"ה ואברהם זקן תשל"ז (נדפס בסה"מ מלוקט כרך ד ע' נה) הערה 27 שכ"ה גם בתו"א פ' משפטים עט, סע"ג. ובכ"מ. שבדרך כלל תורה ומצות הם בח"י לבושים אבל בפרטיות רק המצות הם לבושים ("ימים"), משא"כ התורה הו"ע "זקן" ע"ש. לקמן לג, א. מציין לכאן. וראה לקו"ת שלח לה, ד.

34

יפה שעה אחת בתשובה ומע"ט

The Mishnah the discourse opened with. Now it is answered: good deeds are rooted higher than the World to Come.

Pirkei Avot 4:17 משנה אבות ד':

הוא הָיָה אוֹמֵר, יָפָה שָׁעָה אֶחָת בְּתַשׁוּבָה וּמַעֲשִׂים טוֹבִים בְּעוֹלָם הָהָא, מִכָּל חַיֵּי הָעוֹלָם הַבָּא. וְיָפָה שָׁעָה אֶחָת שֶׁל קוֹרֶת רוּחַ בְּעוֹלָם הַבָּא, מִכָּל חַיֵּי הָעוֹלָם הָהָא:

He used to say: more precious is one hour in repentance and good deeds in this world, than all the life of the world to come; And more precious is one hour of the tranquility of the world to come, than all the life of this world.

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PARAGRAPH 9

35 שימליכוהו למעלה ולמטה ולד' רוחות העולם

The Talmud says that when one has crowned G-d above, below and to the four directions in saying "One," he need not prolong it further. The Alter Rebbe reads this crowning as recognizing that everything is nullified in G-d.

Berakhot 13b:15-16 ז"ג ב"ט"ו-ט"ז

רבי ירמיה הוה יתיב קמיה דרבי (חייא בר אבא), חזייה דהוה מאריך טובא, אמר לקה: פיון דאמליכתיא למעלה ולמטה ולא רבע רוחות השמים — תו לא צריכת. אמר רב נתן בר מר עוקבא אמר רב יהודה: "על לבנה" בעמידה. "על לבנה" סלקא דעתך? אלא אימא עד "על לבנה" בעמידה. מכאן ואילך — לא. ורבי יוחנן אמר כל הפרשה כולה בעמידה.

Jeremiah was sitting in the presence of R. Hiyya b. Abba, and noticed that he prolonged [the word ehad] exceedingly. He said to him : So long as thou hast proclaimed His Kingship above and below and the four winds of heaven, more than that is not required of thee. Rab Nathan b. Mar 'Ukba said in the name of Rab Judah : "Upon thine heart" [should be recited] standing. Dost thou imagine that applies only to the words "Upon thine heart"? No ; but say, [From the commencement of ...

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36 זיו יקריה

The Targum's "the radiance of His glory" shows that only a radiance is clothed in the worlds.

Targum Jonathan on Isaiah 6:3 תרגום יונתן על ישעיהו ו:ג

ומקבלין זיו מן זיו ואמרין קדיש בשמי מרומא עלאה בית שכןתיה קדיש על ארעא עובד גבורתיה קדיש לעולם ולעלמי עלמין זי צבאות מליא כל ארעא זיו יקריה:

And one cried unto another, and they were saying, Holy in the highest and exalted heavens is the house of His Shekinah, holy upon the earth is the work of His might, holy for ever, world without end, is the L-rd of hosts, the whole earth is full of the brightness of His glory.

Mikraot Gedolot (Public Domain) • London "Chaldee Paraphrase," 1871 (Public Domain)

37 את השמים ואת הארץ אני מלא

"I fill the heavens and the earth" speaks of G-d's very essence, unlimited by measure.

Jeremiah 23:24 כ"ג כ"ד

אמ"סתר איש במסתרים ואני לא אראנו נאם ה' הלא את השמים ואת הארץ אני מלא נאם ה'

...להבין ענין משארז"ל יפה שעה אחת בתשובה ומע"ט

Can any hide himself in secret places That I shall not see him? saith the L-RD. Do not I fill heaven and earth? Saith the L-RD.

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PARAGRAPH 11

38 ואהבת

Moshe commands, "And you shall love Havayah your G-d with all your heart." The Alter Rebbe reads it as the resolve to stay bound to the contemplation of G-d.

Deuteronomy 6:5 דברים ו:ה

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

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

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39 ודברת בהם

"And you shall speak of them." In the Shema this commits a person to Torah study, which carries his love into practice.

Deuteronomy 6:7 דברים ו:ז

ושננתם לבניך ודברת בהם בשבתך בביתך בדרךך ובשכבך ובקומך:

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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40 ואורייתא וקוב"ה כולא חד

That discourse explains the Zohar's "the Torah and the Holy One, blessed be He, are all one" as meaning G-d Himself, holy and utterly beyond the worlds, which even His radiance could not sustain, is present in the Torah and mitzvos.

KEHOT'S NOTE

נסמן לקמן בו, ג.

41 אורייתא מח"ע נפקת

The Zohar teaches that the Torah came forth from supernal Chochmah. The Alter Rebbe uses it to explain how studying Torah below unites the soul with its root above.

Zohar II, 85a זח"ב פה,

KEHOT'S NOTE

זח"ב פה, א. וראה שם קבא, ב.

42 אורייתא מח"ע נפקת

The Kehot notes point here as a further Zohar source for the Torah's origin in supernal Chochmah.

Zohar, Mishpatim 20:502-511א תקיב-תק"א

43 הקב"ה יושב ושונה כנגדו

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

KEHOT'S NOTE

ראה תדב"א רבה רפ"ח. יליש איכה רמז תתלה.

drawing down reaching the heart.

ברכות כ"ח ב"ט-כ"ט: Berakhot 28b:19-20

עולא אָמַר: עַד כְּדֵי שְׂרָאָה אִסָּר כָּנְגֵד לְבֹו. רַבִּי חֲנִינָא אָמַר: כִּיּוֹן שְׁנַעֲנַע רֹאשׁוֹ — שׁוּב אֵינוֹ צָרִיךְ. אָמַר רַבָּא: וְהוּא דִּמְצָעַר נִפְשִׁיהּ, וּמַחְזִי כְּמֵאן דְּכָרַע. הֲנִי תַּמְנִי סָרִי? תְּשַׁכְּרִי הוּיָן!

'Ulla said : [He must bow] until he sees a ring [of flesh formed] opposite his heart. R. Hannina said : If he lowered his head, more than that is unnecessary. Raba said : That is so, if it gives him pain [to bow low] and he appears like one making obeisance. As to those eighteen benedictions — there are nineteen !

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53

אוסרי לגפן

Yaakov's blessing of Yehudah: "Binding his foal to the vine." The Alter Rebbe refers to his explanation of this verse, further on in Torah Ohr, for issar as binding.

בראשית מ"ט:11 Genesis 49:11

אִסְרִי לִגְפֵן עִירָה וְלִשְׂרָקָה בְּנֵי אֶתְנֹו כֶּכֶס בִּיּוֹן לְבָשׁוֹ וּבָדִם עֲנִבִים סוּתָה: Binding his foal unto the vine, And his ass's colt unto the choice vine; He washeth his garments in wine, And his vesture in the blood of grapes;

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54

הודו על ארץ ושמים

"His splendor is upon the earth and the heavens." The earth is mentioned first, showing that G-d's desire is in the lower realm.

תהילים קמ"ח:13 Psalms 148:13

יְהַלְלוּ אֶת־שֵׁם ה' כִּי־נִשְׁאָב שְׁמוֹ לְבִדּוֹ הוֹדוּ עַל־אָרֶץ וּשְׁמַיִם:

Let them praise the name of the L-RD, For His name alone is exalted; His glory is above the earth and heaven.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

תהלים קמח, יג.

55

נעוץ סופן בתחלתן

That discourse explains "their beginning is wedged in their end" through direct light, where the higher is superior, and reflected light, where the lower is superior, so that the "foot" is called "head." It fills in why the earth, last in creation, is first in thought.

KEHOT'S NOTE

ס"י פ"א מ"ז. וראה לעיל א, ב ובמ"מ לשם.

56

נעוץ סופן בתחלתן

Sefer Yetzirah says the end of the Sefiros is wedged in their beginning. The Alter Rebbe uses it for the lowest realm being rooted in G-d's first intent.

ספר יצירה א':7 Sefer Yetzirah 1:7

עשר ספירות בלי מה נעוץ סופן בתחלתן ותחלתן בסופן כשלהבת קשורה בגחלת שאדון יחיד ואין לו שני ולפני אחד מה אתה סופר:

The decade of existence out of nothing has its end linked to its beginning and its beginning linked to its end, just as the

...להבין ענין משארז"ל יפה שעה אחת בתשובה ומע"ט

flame is wedded to the live coal; because the L-rd is one and there is not a second one, and before one what wilt thou count?

Sefer Yetzirah, Warsaw 1884 (Public Domain) • Sefer Yezirah, trans. by Isidor Kalisch. New York, 1877 (Public Domain)

57

ארץ נבראת תחלה

Beis Hillel say the earth was created first. The Alter Rebbe reads it as the earth being first in G-d's thought.

חגיגה י"ב א:ט"ז-י"ז Chagigah 12a:16-17

תנו רבנן, בֵּית שְׁמַאי אוֹמְרִים: שְׁמַיִם נִבְרְאוּ תַּחְלָה וְאַחֵר כֶּה נִבְרְאָה הָאָרֶץ, שְׁנַאֲמַר: "בְּרֵאשִׁית בָּרָא אֱלֹקִים אֶת הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאֶת הָאָרֶץ". וּבֵית הַלֵּל אוֹמְרִים: אֶרֶץ נִבְרְאָה תַּחְלָה וְאַחֵר כֶּה שְׁמַיִם, שְׁנַאֲמַר: "בְּיוֹם עָשׂוֹת ה' אֱלֹקִים אֶרֶץ וּשְׁמַיִם". אָמְרוּ לָהֶם בֵּית הַלֵּל לְבֵית שְׁמַאי: לְדַבְּרִיכֶם, אָדָם בּוֹנֶה עַלְיָהּ וְאַחֵר כֶּה בּוֹנֶה בֵּית? שְׁנַאֲמַר: "הַבּוֹנֶה בַּשָּׁמַיִם מַעְלֹותָיו וְאֶגְדֹּתָיו עַל אֶרֶץ יִסְדָּה". אָמְרוּ לָהֶם בֵּית שְׁמַאי לְבֵית הַלֵּל: לְדַבְּרִיכֶם, אָדָם עוֹשֶׂה שְׂרָפָרָה, וְאַחֵר כֶּה עוֹשֶׂה ...

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KEHOT'S NOTE

חגיגה יב, א.



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THE CHASSIDISHE PARSHA

About this edition

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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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מוקדש לכבוד הגאון המקובל רבי לוי יצחק שניאורסאהן זצ"ל

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