

# Kuntres Uma'ayon

**RABBI SHOLOM DOV BER SCHNEERSOHN**  
o f L u b a v i t c h

חנות ומוכס אינטרנט  
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ע"י חיים תשס"ז

Translated by Zalman I. Posner



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# Contents

TRANSLATOR'S INTRODUCTION	ix
GENEALOGY OF THE FOUNDERS OF GENERAL CHASSIDISM AND THE LEADERS OF CHABAD	xi
DISCOURSE ONE 4 CHAPTERS	1
Turning from the way of Torah is folly; types of pleasure; man, the chosen of creation; should take pleasure only in what is higher than he is; his deg- radation when he is attracted by material things.	
DISCOURSE TWO 2 CHAPTERS	8
Succumbing to sin caused by (a) strength of ani- mal soul through constant indulgence of desire for permissibles, and (b) misconception that he will not be sundered from G-d through sin, and it will be well with him; true vitality is G-dhood and the "side of holiness."	
DISCOURSE THREE 3 CHAPTERS	13
In the "side of holiness," the divine light illumi- nates; in the "other side," it is in exile; hence the "other side" is called idolatry, separated from His unity; sinning man is inferior to them.	
DISCOURSE FOUR 1 CHAPTER	17
The act of sin separates man completely from G-d; he is lower than the "other side"; sin dam- ages the bond of soul to G-d; caused only by the "spirit of folly" that misleads him.	

DISCOURSE FIVE 3 CHAPTERS 20

Optimism that he will prosper is merely the lure of the *yetzer hara*; "He will bless himself in his heart . . ."; *malchus* is *hai*, thirsty for its Creator, (a) to merge with its source, (b) because of its radical descent.

DISCOURSE SIX 3 CHAPTERS 26

Soul is also called "thirsty"; soul descends for eventual ascent; "sated" – animal soul, the "thirsty" – G-dly soul; "G-d will refuse to forgive him"; withdrawal of G-d's will.

DISCOURSE SEVEN 4 CHAPTERS 31

*Kelipos* and "other side" receive from the hinderpart; like casting over the shoulder; Torah, mitzvos, Israel are inwardness of G-d's will; the sinner can only briefly receive from the hinderpart; nurture inevitably ceases.

DISCOURSE EIGHT 3 CHAPTERS 38

Another source of nurture for the "external beings"—from the external aspect of the supernal "encompassing," transcending *chochma* called "calculation."

DISCOURSE NINE 3 CHAPTERS 44

Power of *chochma* embodied in a vessel; power of will has no designated vessel; similarly, *hishtalshelus* (the system of progression) is an inward revelation, calculated, limited; reasons for this; higher than the system of progression is "encompassing," without reckoning, limitless.

<b>DISCOURSE TEN 3 CHAPTERS</b>	<b>49</b>
<p>Interpreting the verse: "I shall have peace because"—reason given—"by what I see I go"; will receive from the encompassing, without limit; "G-d will refuse to forgive him," for Israel must receive from the inward; their source in the inward aspect of the encompassing.</p>	
<b>DISCOURSE ELEVEN 3 CHAPTERS</b>	<b>54</b>
<p>Inward cry attains inward of encompassing; thy cannot receive from the external; compelled to repent; optimism of sinner is delusion of <i>yetzer hara</i>.</p>	
<b>DISCOURSE TWELVE 1 CHAPTER</b>	<b>60</b>
<p>Hope to be undetected is vain; ultimately sinner's humiliation will be public.</p>	
<b>DISCOURSE THIRTEEN 2 CHAPTERS</b>	<b>62</b>
<p>Excusing one's sin because of intense passion is mistaken, for the "burden fits the camel"; G-dly soul in source higher than animal soul; capable of overpowering it.</p>	
<b>DISCOURSE FOURTEEN 2 CHAPTERS</b>	<b>67</b>
<p>"He" — divine soul, "is besworn" — empowered; blaming evil influence is a lie, for "do not befriend the wicked"; self-justification impedes proper repentance.</p>	
<b>DISCOURSE FIFTEEN 5 CHAPTERS</b>	<b>71</b>
<p>Man is central creature; unique manner of his creation; reason; service like warfare; worshipper</p>	

and scholar can both find elements of folly; the proud and smug are in many particulars inferior to the simple man; damage of arrogance.

DISCOURSE SIXTEEN 2 CHAPTERS 82

Arrogance and smugness are ridiculous, for what reason has anyone for pride; the folly of pride and smugness is worse than that of self-justification and of sin itself; folly may at times wrongly convince one that he need not strive or that the task is too difficult.

DISCOURSE SEVENTEEN 1 CHAPTER 86

Businessmen foolishly think they have no time for proper Torah and mitzvos, forgetting that G-d's blessing bestows wealth; the contradiction in the Rabbis' statements about man's sustenance and the judgment.

DISCOURSE EIGHTEEN 2 CHAPTERS 89

The beneficence drawn into *malchus* of Atzilus on Rosh Hashana-Yom Kippur is in generalized form; through the Five Severities of *atik* received at Ne'ila, it is divided into particulars; the "seal" insures that the beneficence attain its proper destination.

DISCOURSE NINETEEN 2 CHAPTERS 94

On Yom Kippur the beneficence evoked is in spiritual form; through the investment of *malchus* of Atzilus within the three lower worlds, a life-force for the physical evolves; "Six days"—their significance in terms of service; daily judgment of man determines whether beneficence shall become concrete, and it what form.

DISCOURSE TWENTY	1 CHAPTER	100
<p>The judgment of Rosh Hashana-Yom Kippur according to Rabbis Yose and Nassan.</p>		
DISCOURSE TWENTY-ONE	2 CHAPTERS	102
<p>Atzilus cannot be compared to the Infinite; Asiyah develops from Atzilus by downward progression; the Sages contend that the beneficence determined on Rosh Hashana-Yom Kippur as it is in Atzilus, contains the roots of the physical endowment.</p>		
DISCOURSE TWENTY-TWO	3 CHAPTERS	108
<p>Further discussion of the Sages and Rabbi Yose; all creatures composed of body and soul; creation of the body and the physical form are <i>ex nihilo</i>.</p>		
DISCOURSE TWENTY-THREE	2 CHAPTERS	114
<p>"Constellations" are like the woodsman's axe, a "garb" for the materialization of the Kindness.</p>		
DISCOURSE TWENTY-FOUR	2 CHAPTERS	119
<p>The allotment depends on the quality of his service during the past year; <i>Baal Shem Tov's</i> illustration; the concretization of the blessing is a divine kindness; purpose in fulfillment of Torah and mitzvos.</p>		
DISCOURSE TWENTY-FIVE	4 CHAPTERS	124
<p>Nature is G-dhood disguised; business and work are only "garbs" that should not interfere with Torah and mitzvos; faith of Israel is of essence.</p>		

<b>DISCOURSE TWENTY-SIX</b>	<b>2 CHAPTERS</b>	<b>133</b>
<p style="padding-left: 40px;">"Folly of holiness"; sin of the Tree caused intensified perception of the "natural"; folly of the "other side."</p>		
<b>DISCOURSE TWENTY-SEVEN</b>	<b>2 CHAPTERS</b>	<b>137</b>
<p style="padding-left: 40px;">Asserting the firmness of the essence of soul weakens the sensitivity to natural attractions and prepares man for divine intellectual awareness; interpretation of "A wellspring from th House of G-d shall go forth and water the valley of Shittim."</p>		
<b>DISCOURSE TWENTY-EIGHT</b>	<b>1 CHAPTER</b>	<b>141</b>
<p style="padding-left: 40px;">Summary</p>		
<b>SUGGESTED READING ON CHABAD-CHASSIDUS</b>		<b>143</b>

## Translator's Introduction

THE popular nostalgic picture of the idyllic *shtetl* of yesterday's Eastern Europe portrays a Jewish life beset by external problems, to be sure, but secure and unchallenged within, a utopia lost. No doubt, compared to the condition of Jewish life in contemporary America, it was a paradise of the spirit, with standards of scholarship, piety, and simple Jewish identification, infinitely superior to what we know. But Europe before the First World War was not impervious to the nineteenth-century, the culture of the West made incursions into the fastnesses of Czarist Russia.

Many forces contended for the allegiance of Russia's teeming Jewish populace, movements dedicated to reordering the social and economic systems, the secularization of Jewry. The now familiar chasm between generations already existed, ominous, a more than nascent threat.

The Torah community of Russia was not organized, but the community of interest was powerful. To preserve Torah, internal differences, however sharp and bitter, were submerged. Fiercely independent individualists united to strengthen the faltering. Under the banner of *Machazikei Hadas* (Society to Fortify the Faith) Chassid and Misnaged joined again\* against a common foe.

Rabbi Sholom DovBer Schneersohn, fifth in the dynasty of the Rebbes of Lubavitch, gave his full support and the weight of his immense prestige to this organization, as did revered Talmudic scholars and Rabbis of the Misnagdic community. In

\* This was not the first time that Chassidim and Misnagdim united. A half-century earlier the Czar convened so-called Rabbinical Commissions to "improve" Judaism. The Lubavitcher Rebbe, Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneersohn (grandfather of Rabbi Sholom DovBer), and the foremost Misnagdic scholar, Rabbi Yitzhak of Volozhin, worked together. The account has been published in "The Tzemach Tzedek and the Haskalah Movement," Kehot, 1962.

TRANSLATOR'S INTRODUCTION

his letters mobilizing loyal Jews, the Rebbe points out the imminent danger of assimilation, and—what may be of particular interest to the American Jewish community today—stresses the need for higher standards of personal devoutness and pride in Torah over the machinery of organization.

Rabbi Sholom DovBer's son and successor, Rabbi Joseph Isaac, kept a diary of the period and published selections as the *mavo* (introduction) to the Hebrew edition of this work (1943, Kehot). A translation of the *mavo* is being prepared for possible publication.

The *kuntres* here translated was written by Rabbi Sholom DovBer at the turn of the century as an indirect result of the establishment of the *Machazikei Hadas*. He weaves Chassidic doctrine, Kabala thoughts, Biblical and Talmudic texts and candid insights into human frailties into a document structured and systematic, yet informal and personal, a text for study and meditation. It has become one of the foremost ethico-philosophical works of Chabad.

The reader may find terms unfamiliar; he is referred to the footnotes. Until he has the opportunity to study the references, it is suggested that he skim the text at the point; less formidable territory lies just ahead.

ZALMAN I. POSNER  
Nashville, Tennessee  
6 Tishrei 5730

**GENEALOGY OF  
THE FOUNDERS OF GENERAL CHASSIDISM  
AND THE LEADERS OF CHABAD**

*Founder of the Chassidic Movement*

**RABBI ISRAEL BAAL SHEM TOV**

Elul 18, 5458-Sivan 6, 5526  
(1698-1760)

*Successor*

**RABBI DOV-BER, MAGGID OF MEZERITCH**

Date of Birth (unknown) - Kislev 19, 5533  
(?-1772)

*Founder of Chabad*

**RABBI SCHNEUR ZALMAN OF LIADI**

Elul 18, 5505-Teves 24, 5573  
(1745-1813)

*Second Generation of Chabad*

**RABBI DOV-BER (SCHNEURI)**

son of Rabbi Schneur Zalman

Kislev 9, 5534-Kislev 9, 5583  
(1773-1827)

*Third Generation of Chabad*

**RABBI MENACHEM MENDEL (SCHNEERSOHN)**

son-in-law of Rabbi Dov-Ber  
grandson of Rabbi Schneur Zalman

Elul 29, 5549-Nissan 13, 5626  
(1789-1866)

*Fourth Generation of Chabad*

**RABBI SHMUEL**  
son of Rabbi Menachem Mendel  
Iyar 2, 5594-Tishrei 13, 5643  
(1834-1882)

*Fifth Generation of Chabad*

**RABBI SHOLOM DOV-BER**  
son of Rabbi Shmuel  
Cheshvan 20, 5621-Nissan 2, 5680  
(1860-1920)

*Sixth Generation of Chabad*

**RABBI JOSEPH ISAAC**  
son of Rabbi Sholom Dov-Ber  
Tamuz 12, 5640-Shevat 10, 5710  
(1880-1950)

*Seventh Generation of Chabad*

**RABBI MENACHEM MENDEL SCHNEERSON**  
sixth in direct parental line from Rabbi Menachem Mendel;  
son-in-law of Rabbi Joseph Isaac  
Born Nissan 11, 5662 (1902) א"ת"ש



**KUNTRES UMA'AYON  
MIBAIS HASHEM**

## Discourse One

### CHAPTER 1

*“A wellspring shall go forth from the House of  
G-d and shall water the valley of Shittim.”*

—JOEL 4:18

The Midrash Rabba (Balak 20) interprets “Shittim” in the sense of *shtus*, folly.

*Shoroshim*,<sup>1</sup> on the root of *shitta*, interprets *Shittim* in the sense of “turning aside,” and cites parallels like “. . . if his wife turn aside” (Numbers 5:12), which Rashi explains as “turning from the ways of modesty.” The Targum on “he turned to her” (Genesis 38:16) renders it *v’satta*, similar to the interpretation of *Shoroshim*.

Utilizing the dual implications, folly and turning aside, we find the *yetzer hara* (man’s impulse to evil) called *Sattan*.<sup>2</sup> First it makes man foolish, turns him away from the proper path, and then it proceeds to accuse and condemn man in the Court Above, turning into a prosecutor. *Sattan*, of the same root as *shitta*, would then also have both connotations, turning aside and folly.

The two interpretations are complementary, not exclusive, for when the Midrash explains *Shittim* as folly, folly is a turning away from the path of truth. Our sages combine both concepts. The Talmud (Sotah 3a) on the verse, “if his wife turn aside,” declares that “No one commits sin unless the spirit of folly enters him.” Turning away and folly are one, turning from the way of truth and goodness. (See Maharsha in his Commentary on the above statement.)

We must understand what brings man to violate the ways of Torah and be drawn after his heart’s desires, indulging himself in physical delights. This “violation” includes even indul-

1 *Sefer Hasharaschim*, Berlin 1896, p. 508.

2 Bava Basra 16a.

gence in the permissible, when he seeks pleasure in enjoyments and luxury beyond the necessities of living. This too is inconsistent with Torah ways, for man is required to "sanctify himself even in what is permitted him."<sup>3</sup> The *Chinuch* describes this as a Biblical commandment, and *Tanya* (chapter 30) agrees.

Torah permits only what life demands, and even in this, man's intention should not be the physical delight in the food, say, but for the purpose of being able to serve his Creator with the vigor derived from that food. Similarly, man's intention in whatever he does should be "for the sake of Heaven." However, when man intends his gratification, and even more so when a pure luxury is involved, nothing more than sybaritic delight, then his pursuit of such pleasure is clearly contrary to Torah teaching. For that moment at least it is absolute evil . . . as we find in *Tanya* (chapter 7).

What causes man to be attracted to bodily desires and pleasures? It is the *yetzer hara* cajoling him, describing how desirable the pleasure is and how attractive. This is what happened at the sin of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil. "The woman saw that the tree was good to eat, and that it was desirable to the eye . . . and she took of its fruit and ate, and she gave also to her husband with her and he ate" (Genesis 3:6).

#### Summary

*Shittim* is from the root *shitta*, meaning (a) turning and (b) folly; pleasure, even in the permissible, is at variance with Torah ways, and comes through the *yetzer hara* that first turns man from the path of truth and then accuses him; the *yetzer hara* is the *Sattan*.

#### CHAPTER 2

It is in fact an incredible stupidity! Is this the sort of good toward which man should be attracted, man who is the "select of creation!" There are all sorts of pleasures. Enjoyment of de-

<sup>3</sup> Yevamos 20a; Sifre R'ay 17:21.

licious food is a gross form of pleasure, as is pleasure in physical things in general, for these are simply animal pleasures. An animal is attracted to whatever it instinctively considers satisfying, ignorant of any other form of good but this, and to this it is drawn.

There is a higher form of pleasure, the esthetic, like that in beautiful music, for this is of a more spiritual nature. Still higher is pleasure from traits of character, for example the favor one performs for another may bring profound satisfaction to a good person. This itself can be divided into categories. The act of kindness might be due to a naturally benevolent disposition without any intellectual discrimination. That is, he performs kindness to everyone regardless of merit, and without any inner purpose. The pleasure in this would be an "animal" pleasure, as it were, an impulse of natural love. It has been explained that the animal is primarily emotive alone without any intellect. When man conducts himself and derives pleasure from emotive acts alone, these "character traits" we mentioned like acts of kindness, without the guidance of intellect, then he is similar to the animal. All man's emotions and traits must accord with the dictates of intellect.

The trait of kindness, for example, must discriminate between good and evil. Under circumstances one must be kindly to the undeserving, but there must be a purpose, a benefit, from this act. Avraham Avinu, for instance, used to provide for pagan wayfarers in the desert, with the intention of proclaiming G-d's presence in the world, and to bring mankind closer to Him. The Talmud (Sotah 10a) discusses the verse, "He called there in the name of G-d."<sup>4</sup> Resh Lakish, through a variation in vowel pointing, renders the reading, "He caused G-d's Name to be called," and as Rashi notes, "There he taught men to call the Name of G-d, the L-rd of the universe." Resh Lakish goes on to describe Avraham's method of kindness. "After they had eaten and drunk they would arise to thank him (Avraham). He would say to them, 'Did you then eat of mine? You ate of

<sup>4</sup> Genesis 21:33.

G-d's. Give praise and thanks to Him who spoke and created the world.'"

This was his ultimate purpose in generosity. It was not mere instinctive kindness, but purposeful, to bring mankind close to G-d through such acts.

The Midrash (Vayera 49) describes how Avraham welcomed his guests. After their meal he asked them to offer Grace. When they asked how, he pronounced with them, "Blessed is the L-rd of the Universe of Whose bounty we have eaten." If the guest consented, he would eat and drink and go on his way. If he refused to thank G-d, Avraham would demand payment for the meal, demanding exorbitant payment for wine and meat and bread, calmly explaining, "Who else provides wine in the desert, or meat, or bread?" The guest, realizing his predicament, would thank G-d for His food, and leave.

This is an instance of the trait of kindness, but purposeful, deliberate. All traits must similarly be directed by intellect.

#### *S u m m a r y*

Pleasures may be classified as superior and lower; pleasure in delicious food and similar bodily enjoyments are the lowliest, simply animal pleasures; delight in music; pleasure ensuing from purposeful emotions, benefiting the worthy, and when appropriate, even to the undeserving.

#### CHAPTER 3

Superior to all these pleasures is intellectual delight; for example—there is a wondrous enjoyment in intellectual discovery. The soul delights in comprehension too, in thorough understanding of a subject under study. This is the finest, the truest, the most exalted of delights. (It is understood that the idea itself is good and valid, for if the study is evil *per se*, then it would be included among these things we are forbidden to engage in.) Man, the select of creation, should find his supreme delight in matters of the spirit, particularly in intellect. His soul ought to delight specifically in this, for this is his

unique quality above all creatures, the intellect that was given him alone. Indeed he possesses the "intelligent soul." Furthermore, he has a G-dly soul, deriving from the Supernal Wisdom, as we are taught. All the pull of his soul, all his wish, all his striving, should be toward the study of Torah, and this shall be his pleasure. Through this he will attain the heights of spirit that are his purpose in life.

Every creature in this world has its specific mission, its purpose. Its fulfillment is realized when it ascends to a state higher than its own. The vegetable becomes assimilated in the animal; the animal becomes one with the human; the human is fulfilled when his spirit ascends and becomes one with the spiritual that is above it. By illustration: Torah is the will and reason of G-d, and is indeed one with G-d. When man studies Torah, immersing himself in its profundity, seeking out the true meaning of its teachings, then he becomes one with G-d's will and intellect in an intense unity. Tanya, chapter 5, discusses this at some length.

In this manner the soul of man can ascend, through binding itself, through merging itself, with the Divine intelligence. This is true in whatever aspect of Torah he is occupied. The "revealed" Torah<sup>5</sup> is actually G-d's will and intellect, meaning that the Divine wisdom decrees that one thing is *kasher*, or fit, while another thing is *pasul*, or not valid. The novel contribution, the original thought of a conscientious Torah student, was given to Moshe on Sinai (i.e. it is all part of Torah, though it was articulated at a given time by a given person). All of the laws of the Oral Torah, all of the explanations and rationales offered, all are actually His wisdom. Man studying them becomes united, merged, with Torah, as noted.

The other aspect of Torah, the "concealed" or "inner," is the knowledge and comprehension of G-d. Our teachers, the Rebbes<sup>6</sup> of earlier generations, instructed us in this field, re-

<sup>5</sup> "On the Teachings of Chassidus"; Tanya I, p. 350, *Kabbalah*.

<sup>6</sup> Chassidic teacher-leaders are called "Rebbe," as distinct from "Rav" or Rabbi, the ordained and formal authority on Torah law, responsible for a particular community.

vealing to us the inward aspect of the Divine wisdom. Whoever studies this binds himself with the inwardness of His wisdom, which far transcends the external. There is another advantage in this knowledge of the inward aspect of Torah, and that is its effect on the person. Granted that man's knowledge of G-d is limited to knowledge of His existence, not knowledge of His character, nonetheless his mind does conceive and attain knowledge of the existence<sup>7</sup> of spiritual (as distinct from the familiar material world). The spiritual is palpable, as it were, within his soul, he becomes bound up with it, attached to it, and as a result he transcends his own physical nature, and attains a state of refinement, spirituality. This attainment is inward and personal, within himself, his soul, and also externally in reference to all his interests and activities. They all become refined, more spiritual, they are not totally bound up with the physical, they rise above awareness of self. (Whatever he does, study of Torah or performance of mitzvos, is done without grossness, without selfconsciousness, without being obvious, without complacency. It goes without saying that his piety is not evident to another, and by no means would he consider doing something to impress anyone.) His material affairs will of course be divested of their materialistic emphasis, for he will rid himself of any desire for them, his only desire being for G-dliness.

#### *S u m m a r y*

Man, possessing an intelligent soul and a G-dly soul, must find his pleasure in Torah study; the fulfillment of every being is its elevation to a higher stage; through study of revealed Torah man unites with G-d's wisdom and will; through study of Chassidus he binds himself with their inwardness, and becomes refined in everything.

#### CHAPTER 4

Another advantage accruing from study of the Inner Torah

<sup>7</sup> "On the Teachings of Chassidus," p. 21, note 6.

is that it leads to Love and Fear of G-d. "You shall know this day, and bring close to your heart . . ." (Deuteronomy 4:39). Knowledge of G-d leads to a wholeness of heart. The Alter Rebbe, in *Iggeres Hakodesh*, at the end of *Lehavin . . . Pri Etz Chaim*,<sup>8</sup> and in *Likutai Torah*, *Biur to Lo Sashbis*, expounds this, and we need not go into it further here. This is the sort of good toward which man should be attracted, this must be his desire and goal, this must be his soul's delight, for this good is appropriate to man's standing. Through this he fulfils G-d's intention, attaining the fulfillment for which he was created.

However if he pursues physical, bodily matters, then not only does he fail to accomplish his purpose in existence, on the contrary, he degrades his soul from its lofty qualities to the state of the animal, far inferior to what he truly is. This debasement is twofold. First, man acquires the characteristics of whatever he attaches himself to, and when he devotes himself totally to the inert or the vegetative or the animal, finding his delight in them, he becomes like them. (Actually he becomes inferior to them, for he receives from them, he derives pleasure from them.) In effect he descends from the human estate to their plane, a radical descent.

Second, since he is superior, for he is human, articulate, his degradation is more severe. When this person descends and is attracted to unworthy goals, and in them finds satisfaction for his soul, he is inferior to the brute animal that has no intelligence or awareness of any thing superior to itself and its affairs. Man has a mind, and when he acts like an animal, unguided by his mind, he is lower than the beast. Especially is this true in light of what we noted in chapter 1, that "sanctify yourself even with the permissible" is a Torah edict. While he engages in physical pursuits for his satisfaction and his pleasure, at that moment he falls into total evil, until he returns to the service of G-d and the study of His Torah, as explained in *Tanya*, chapter 7.

The heart's desires then, lead man to be lower than the unclean beasts. It follows that submitting to the blandishments

<sup>8</sup> *Tanya* V, p. 29.

of the *yetzer hara* is monumental stupidity. It turns him from truth and righteousness, misleads and deceives him. When the *yetzer* urges that something is good, he should immediately consider, "It is good for *me*, in terms of the greatness of the soul given me? Is this the purpose of my existence?" Quite the reverse, for when he is urged that something looks attractive, he ought at once be suspicious, shunning it thoroughly, to avoid demeaning himself. Good, for him, means the lofty, the spiritual, for they are the true good, and especially Torah study which is the ultimate good and delight, and fulfills the purpose of his being.

*S u m m a r y*

Man, in view of his superior endowments, has a goal of serving G-d with Love and Fear; man attracted to bodily pleasures demeans himself, binding himself to an inferior to receive from it; he is lower than the unthinking animal; lust turns even the permissible into evil for that moment; all this is the work of the *yetzer hara* that makes a fool of man.

*Discourse Two*

CHAPTER 1

Until now we have been discussing the permissible. However the *yetzer hara* will often urge man even to the forbidden, again by persuading man of the good and pleasure he will find there. The *yetzer* stimulates man's lust until he cannot restrain himself, and succumbs. What is the method of the *yetzer*? The Talmud (Shabbos 105b) describes the "craft" of the evil impulse within man. "Today he says, do so. Tomorrow he says, do thus. Then eventually he says, go and worship idols." The first urgings of evil are for permissible things, for leading man to such indulgences is not difficult. However, through indulgence man becomes coarsened, gross, the desires of the animal soul

grow and increase, reaching out for every pleasure without limits. His desire becomes intense; he fiercely desires every pleasure.

There are different sorts of nature of the animal soul. In some people it is not formidable at all. He wants some things, he is quite indifferent to others, and his desire is also rather tepid—if denied satisfaction he is not upset. Another's animal soul is vigorous. He wants whatever he sees. If he learns of a pleasure, he wants it at once. His desires are catholic, insistent, brooking no delay in indulging them, and aggressive.

It is possible that even when the animal soul is not particularly strong intrinsically, it may develop strength through indulgence of desires. It becomes gross to the core. Though it was initially flaccid, constant indulgence of its wishes invigorate it, to lust after everything, and to lust violently.

Vigor of the animal soul spells enervation of the G-dly soul. "Dominance of body is subordination of soul." Strengthening the materiality of the animal soul weakens the Divine soul. The effects take many forms. He becomes estranged from Torah study and "service of the heart,"<sup>9</sup> meaning worship. He is incapable of comprehending any concept of G-dhood. He cannot meditate and sense a G-dly concept in the depths of his soul, arousing his heart to cleave to G-d, to merge with Him. All this is absolutely irrelevant to him. But the effects go far deeper.

He ceases to fear G-d and becomes oblivious to G-d's wish and presence. He simply forgets Him. The fact that a certain act or object may be contrary to G-d's will does not deter him from doing what he wants. G-d and G-d's will are not felt within him that he might be affected by them. By no means does he deny G-d and His Torah; he knows that the Torah is truth and that what he wishes is forbidden by Torah. Nevertheless he fails to sense within himself that this is evil. He lacks an awareness that can prevent him from succumbing to evil, that can enable him to resist his lust.

What causes this? His constant indulgence of permissible

<sup>9</sup> Taanis 2b.

desires gives his animal soul inordinate vigor and correspondingly weakens his Divine soul. Hence, when the animal soul tempts him, urging the desirability of whatever it is, though it may be prohibited, he is drawn toward it and stumbles over this obstacle. We can now readily understand how it comes to pass that man deludes himself, persuading himself that evil is good. His soul suffers, for it becomes debased, as we will explain.

There is another factor involved in man's readiness to commit evil, to violate a clear prohibition, and that is the assumption that regardless of his conduct he will not sunder himself from G-d. It is an innate characteristic of the souls of Israel that they cannot tolerate being separate from G-d, because "You are our Father." For this reason even the most worthless, the deliberately sinful of Israel, is prepared to offer his life for the sanctification of G-d's Name. Even at the cost of his life he will not commit the sin of idolatry, betrayal of the faith, for this means cutting himself off from G-d, His oneness and unity. Now if he would only realize that his evil act does cut him off from G-d, he would be utterly incapable of such a deed. However, the *yetzer hara* convinces him that he will not be separated from G-d, that he is no different from any son of Israel loyal to his G-d. The *yetzer hara* reassures him about the consequences as well, as in the passage (Deut. 29:18), "He will bless himself in his heart, saying, 'It will be well with me, for in what my heart sees will I go.'" Even if he follows the dictates of his heart, his own wishes rather than Torah direction, still he is certain that it will be well with him. The result is disastrous, for he will be caught in so many pitfalls.

#### *S u m m a r y*

The animal soul may be feeble or aggressive, exerting every effort to attain every conceivable pleasure; even permissible delights may at times coarsen, if he lacks reverence and awareness of G-d; the blandishments of the *yetzer hara* include the prohibited, under the delusion that he will still be the same as every other Jew.

## CHAPTER 2

All of this clearly is part of the folly of the *yetzer*, turning man aside, concealing the truth. What the *yetzer* seductively describes as good and beneficial is in reality nothing less than death and evil, if it is prohibited by Torah. "Look, I have placed before you today the life and the good, and death and evil" (Deut. 30:15). He destroys his soul, hurling it down into the realm of evil, of impurities, of the three utterly impure *kelipot*,<sup>10</sup> and even lower. Tanya explains this at length. The *kelipot*, the "other side,"<sup>11</sup> also receive their nurture and existence from the "word of G-d and the breath of His mouth."<sup>12</sup> However, this is through concealment of His presence, through descent. For this reason they are called "other gods,"<sup>13</sup> since their nurture and life derive not from the state of "face"<sup>14</sup> but of the hinderpart of holiness. "Hinderpart" describes how one gives something to an enemy, unwillingly, casting it over his shoulder,<sup>15</sup> as it were, turning away from him because he despises him so.

The term "face" referring to Him describes the inward Divine will, His true wish, His desire to grant life to all who are close to Him, and to grant from the "side of holiness." In reverse, the "other side," the impure, is abominated by G-d, hated. He does not grant it life from His inner will, His true desire, as though He wanted it, but rather like one who hurls over his shoulder to his foe unwillingly (and only to punish the wicked and give ample reward to the righteous who subdue the "other side").

10 Lit. husk or shell; used as synonym for "evil"; for detailed discussion see *Introduction* to Tanya IV by J.I. Schochet, Kehot 1968, p. 91 *Kelipoth, Kelipath nogah*; Tanya I, p. 351, *Kelipath nogah, Kelipot*; Tanya III, p. 33, note 3.

11 The antithesis of the "side of holiness."

12 Psalm 33:6.

13 Deuteronomy 11:16, etc.

14 Numbers 4:25. This will be discussed below, Discourse VII, chapters 1 and 2, etc.

15 Tanya I, chapter 22.

Since the inwardness of the Divine will does not rest at all on the "other side", and even the hinderpart of His will is not actually invested within it, but rather hovers above it apart from it, therefore it is the site of death and defilement. True life is G-dliness, for He is the living G-d. "The L-rd our G-d is true; He is the living G-d" (Jeremiah 10:10). Since He is the true G-d, therefore He is the living G-d.

"True" means unceasing, constant. Whatever ceases, is interrupted, is called *kazav*, false, like the "false" rivers in the Mishna (Para 8:9), called "false" because their flow is occasionally interrupted. Truth never stops. This definition applies to "living" as well. The waters of those streams could not be used for sanctification purposes which required "living waters." Only something "true," never interrupted, can be called "alive." "The L-rd our G-d is true; He is the living G-d"—since He is the true G-d, impervious to destruction or diminution, He is the living G-d. Of His very nature He lives and exists eternally—"Blessed be He who lives eternally and exists forever."<sup>16</sup> Whoever adheres to Him is also considered "alive," for G-dhood is radiant within him, united with him, while he is as naught before the G-dhood invested within him and cleaving to him, as we shall see. He too is thus called "living."

Our Sages tell us (Avos d'Rabbi Nosson 34): "Ten are called living: G-d, as we find, "The L-rd our G-d is true; He is the living G-d"; Torah is called living, as we find, "It is a tree of life for those who seize it, and its supporters are fortunate" (Proverbs 3:18); Israel are called living, as it is said, "You who cleave to the L-rd your G-d are all of you alive this day" (Deut. 4:4).

Because they cleave to G-d, it is clear, they are called "living."

#### *S u m m a r y*

Holiness and goodness receive their sustenance from the inwardness of His will; *kelipah* and the "other side" receive their vitality from the externality of His will, that does not inhabit

<sup>16</sup> Prayerbook, *Baruch She'amar*.

them, but stands over them; forbidden objects receive their sustenance from them, and hence are death and evil; whoever cleaves to G-dliness is fully alive, for truth never ends.

### *Discourse Three*

#### CHAPTER I

All this refers to the holy, illuminated with G-dhood that invests it, and is in turn totally subservient and attached to G-dhood. But G-dhood does not enter into the "other side" inwardly, but hovers over it, as it were, external to it. The "other side" is an abomination to G-d, despised by Him, endowed with life grudgingly, as though G-d cast to it over his shoulder, reluctantly. There can be no inward investing in the "other side."

To illustrate: when man desires something he throws himself into it, "clothes" himself within it, binds himself to it, unites with it. A father or teacher instructing a son or pupil, imbued with love toward the youth, eager that he understand properly, will invest himself, bind himself to the lad, conveying to him all the knowledge he can absorb in the clearest, most elucidative manner. He will be concerned that the youth's mind assimilate the material properly, that he master the subject. In contrast, when man is not eager for the business at hand, he does not enter into it at all, he stands apart from it, aloof.

In the parallel, the holy is endowed with the "countenance" of the Divine Will. G-d's Will is revealed within it, permeates it, is one with it. The "other side," abhorred by G-d, is not permeated by G-d's Will, for it is merely external to it. It is removed from the "other side," at a distance from it, not at all involved with it. There can be no talk of any form of unity with it. The "other side," so completely estranged from G-dliness, is essentially a state of actual death. The minute amount of illumination and vitality it draws into itself from the hinderpart of the holiness above is in a state of literal exile within it,

the mystic "exile of the Shechina." For this reason too it is called "other gods." (In Discourse II, chapter 2, the reason for the term "other gods" is the nurture. Here the reason is the intrinsic nature of the "other side." The two reasons are complementary.) "Other gods" is a synonym for idols, denial of the unity of the Supreme Monarch.

Because the divine light, the vivifying force, is in a state of exile within it, it is not at all subservient to the holiness of G-d. Conversely the holy, illumined with the presence of G-d, are in a state of nullity before the divine light and life-force.

The soul is clothed in the organs of the body, and the physical organs are subservient to the soul, obedient to its every command. This is because the presence of the soul, its "light" and vitality, are palpable within the body's organs, so they are totally subject to the soul and its effects. But where there is no such palpability, no illumining, there is no subservience either. If a man is wrapped in sackcloth, that material is not null or subservient to the man. A human soul cannot be revealed in an animal body, hence that body is not subservient to the soul. It is not investiture but imprisonment, like the man in sack-cloth or jail. This is exile, no awareness, no revelation, simply incarceration, fetters.

This can help us to understand how the holy, where the divine light and vitality are revealed and who are aware of the Divine, are in turn null and subordinate to G-dhood. The "other side," where the Divine is not revealed but exiled, are not subordinate to G-dhood.

#### *S u m m a r y*

G-dhood clothes itself within the holy, inwardly, reveals itself palpably, as a father binds himself to his son while instructing him; G-dhood remains external to the "other side," above it, and the radiance that vitalizes it is forced and in exile, like a man tied in a sack.

#### CHAPTER 2

The reason that G-dhood does not reveal itself within the

"other side" is that they are not vessels, instruments for the G-dly. The holy are intrinsically appropriate vessels to G-dliness, so the divine light and vitality radiate within them. We have noted that the human soul is clothed only in the organs of a human body, for it is the vessel fit to harbor a human soul. The effects of the soul are evident within it, palpable. Since the soul is revealed in the body, the body is subject to the soul. The soul can be revealed and clothed in the body to the point of the body enjoying actual life. An animal body is inappropriate to the human soul; the soul is not revealed in it, so the animal is not subservient to it.

The holy, essentially vessels for G-dhood, enjoy true revelation of G-dhood within them, and are totally subject to Him. Because of their nullity before Him, the revelation is even greater within them, and the divine light clothes itself inwardly and unites with them. The "other side," essentially not at all vessels for G-dhood (because of their source and the manner of their creation, lacking any subservience or general preparedness for the divine light, as explained elsewhere. See *Torah Or* and *Supplements to Bereshis*, "*lehavin inyan habrachos*," (chapters 7 and 8), have no obvious illumination from the divine light, which is in a state of exile within them. The "other side" therefore is not subservient to G-d.

Quite the reverse—it raises itself like the eagle,<sup>17</sup> proclaiming, "I, and there is nothing more" (Isaiah 47:8), and "The river is mine, and I created myself" (Ezekiel 29:9). Our sages tell us (Sotah 4b) that arrogance is equivalent to idolatry. Basically, idolatry means considering something as an entity, independent of the Creator, and is not absolute denial of G-d. The Talmud says that "they do call Him the 'G-d of gods,'"<sup>18</sup> but they regard themselves as independent beings. In this they sunder themselves from the sacredness of G-d, for they are not null before Him. The Divine holiness rests only upon what is null before Him. Zohar calls them "mountains of separa-

17 Ovadiah 4.

18 Menachos 110a.

tion."<sup>18a</sup> This is denial of the true unity, that all are considered as naught in His presence, truly nothing before Him and His Will that gives life to all and constantly creates them from utter nothingness.

*S u m m a r y*

The human body, in composition and properties, is a vessel for the human soul and is subject and compliant to the soul; the animal body is inappropriate to the human soul; the holy are vessels for G-dhood, whose illumination is evident in them; the "other side," regarding themselves as entities, deny His Unity.

CHAPTER 3

What we described concerning the "other side" applies to the 365 prohibitions of the Torah and all the Rabbinic injunctions, for these are all contrary to His Will and reason, their antithesis. They are totally, completely, absolutely separated from His oneness and unity, precisely like the evil called idols and "other gods," because of the concealment of the Divine Will, as explained in Chapter 2.

The three garbs<sup>19</sup> of the souls of Israel deriving from *kelipat nogah*,<sup>19a</sup> namely thought, speech and deed, when they invest themselves in the 365 Torah prohibitions and the Rabbinic—and the soul itself, for that matter, that manifests itself through these three garbs—are completely united with the "other side" and evil called idols. More, they are null and subservient to "other side" and far more base and worthless. The "other side" is not invested in a physical body; it recognizes its Creator and

18a Zohar I, 158a.

19 "Garb" is not identical with what it clothes, but the subject is displayed by the garbs. Thought, speech, and deed are the "garbs" of the soul, through which it manifests itself. Garbs simultaneously conceal the subject, so that what appears, does so only in accordance with the garb. The divine radiance clothes itself in appropriate "garbs" so that its infinity be concealed yet its creative and sustaining power be active.

19a See above note 10.

does not intend to rebel against Him. It fulfils its task of visitation of evil only as a mission from G-d. Balaam declared, "I cannot violate the word of G-d" (Numbers 24:13). While they are called idols, they do call Him the "G-d of gods." They are incapable of violating His Will, comprehending fully that He is their life and existence. Their nurture is from the hinderpart of the hinderpart of the Divine Will that encompasses them, but is in a state of exile within them, since they consider themselves deities. While this is denial of His Unity, it is not quite a denial and rejection of G-d completely, a denial of His existence. He is "G-d of gods," the source of their existence and vitality which issues from His Will, and so they never defy His Will.

On the other hand, man who transgresses G-d's Will is far inferior to the "other side," the evil called "other gods." He is totally sundered from G-d's unity and oneness, far more than is the "other side." It is as though he denies G-d even more than the "other side" does.

#### *S u m m a r y*

The 365 prohibitions and the Rabbinic injunctions are separated from His Unity as is the evil called idols; the sinner then, his thought, speech and deed and his soul in general, are invested in the "other side"; he is inferior to it, for he denies G-d more than does the 'other side.'

### *Discourse Four*

#### CHAPTER I

It is obvious now that the urgings of the *yetzer hara*, persuading him that despite any evil deed he is not sundered from G-d's unity, are simply the "spirit of folly" that camouflages the truth. Our sages phrased it, ". . . if his wife turn aside' (using the word strikingly similar to the word for folly) —No one sins

unless the spirit of folly enters him" (Sotah 3a). Even an adulterous woman, flighty and foolish, could control her passions but for the spirit of folly that utterly conceals the innate love within her soul that would impel her to cleave to faith in G-d and in His unity and oneness and not be separated from G-d, even at the cost of her life, enduring martyrdom rather than submitting to apostasy.

(We have noted in Discourse II, chapter 1, that it is in the nature of the souls of Israel, that they are incapable of being separated from G-d, because of the innate love within them. For this reason, even the worthless will readily sacrifice his life for the sanctification of His Name.) Even for appearance's sake, she would not even go through the motions of kneeling, without any faith in the strange god she is forced to worship. Anyone capable of this sacrifice is certainly able to restrain the *yetzer hara*, the passion for this is far less a suffering than sacrifice is. How does she differentiate between the sin of adultery and the sin of idolatry? This is the foolishness of the evil that encumbers the Divine soul.

Briefly, we are dealing with the delusion that she is not sundered from G-d and that she retains her Jewishness. The truth is though that whoever violates even a minor commandment violates G-d's will, and is completely and utterly apart from G-d's unity and oneness. He is even further from G-d than the evil and *kelipah* called "other gods," more than idols, more than all those creatures that derive their nurture from them, (these last include whatever Torah forbids, like livestock and fowl that are prohibited).

The Talmud (Sanhedrin 38a) declares that the insect preceded man in creation, citing the insect that ingests but does not expel, representing the grossest *kelipah*, the most removed from holiness, for the characteristic of holiness is giving. Even this lowly insect has precedence over the sinning human in the descent of the life-force from the Divine will. (The life-force of the sinning man is far more concealed and far more distant from G-d than the life-force animating this insect.) The lowly brutes, the unclean animals, the rapacious beasts—all are su-

perior to sinning man. They do not pervert their functions; they keep His dictate. True, this is all unknowing, unconscious on the part of the animal. "Fear of you, awe of you, shall be upon all the beasts of the land" (Gen. 9:2). The Talmud comments on this (Shabbos 151b) that a wild beast cannot affect a man unless he seems to be an animal (to the beast); saints whose countenances testify to the image of G-d, find the wild beasts humble before them. This is how Zohar interprets the account of Daniel in the lions' den.

Now then, whoever transgresses against even a lesser commandment is at that moment utterly estranged from the supreme holiness, His unity and oneness. His state is far inferior to the beasts which derive their nurture from the *sitra achra* and the *kelipah* of idolatry. But something more than this is involved. Sin causes defect in the soul, and its bond with G-d is severed. In *Iggeres Hateshuvah*,<sup>20</sup> on the verse "Jacob, the cord of his possession," we learn that a "cord" binds the soul and G-d, one end bound Above, the other below. This represents the descent of the soul from its source in the "latter *hai*" of the Ineffable Name of G-d, down to this mundane universe where the soul inhabits a physical body of man.

A thick cord woven from 613 slender strands symbolizes the cord between soul and G-d, comprising the 613 commandments. Violating a commandment severs a strand, and weakens the entire cord. A sin of excision severs the cord completely, the soul is "cut off" completely. The blandishments that cause man to sin, then, are obviously a deception, a foolishness that obscures reason and makes man irrational. Were he to resist these urgings of the *yetzer hara*, and see the truth as it is—that an act of sin separates man from G-d so thoroughly that man falls to the lowest depths of the defilement of evil and "other gods" besides mutilating his soul—the concealed love within him, making it impossible to be apart from G-d, would inspire him, keeping him from the stumbling-block of sin regardless of the circumstances.

20 Tanya III, p. 30 ff.

*Summary*

The sinner is inferior to the meanest creature, for even wild beasts and the unclean animals fulfil G-d's charge to them even contrary to their instincts; too, he is separated from the Unity, harms the fabric of the soul by severing a strand of the cord; because of the dominant folly he isn't even aware of all this.

*Discourse Five*

CHAPTER 1

The *yetzer hara* assures man that even though he sins, all will be well for him, as the passage goes (Deuteronomy 29:18), "He will bless himself in his heart. . . ." This is part of the ensnarement of the *yetzer*, "Honey drips from the lips of the wanton . . . but her end is bitter as wormwood" (Proverbs 5:3, 4). Let us return to the earlier quotation.

"He will bless himself in his heart, saying, 'I shall have peace, for by what my heart sees I go, in order *sfos* (see further) the sated with the thirsty.'" The verse seems to imply: "by what my heart sees I go" is the reason for the earlier clause, "He will bless himself. . . ." Why shall he have peace?—because he goes by what his heart sees. This seems to be quite beyond understanding. How can anyone imagine that only if he follows the dictates of his heart, he shall have peace?

The word *sfos* is not clear. Rashi in Sanhedrin 76b uses it in the sense of "joining," as in Isaiah 29:1, "They have added a year to a year."

Radak interprets the word as signifying addition, as in Numbers 32:14, "To augment yet," and Jeremiah 7:21, "Your *olah* offerings are added to your sacrifices."

The words (here translated as) sated and thirsty, are interpreted by Rashi in Sanhedrin: "sated" refers to the nations of the world who are satiated and not thirsty for their Creator. "Thirsty" refers to Knesses (the Congregation of) Israel, thirsty

and longing for the Creator and to fulfil His commandments. The term "Knesses Israel" when applied above refers to the attribute *malchus*,<sup>21</sup> and applies to the souls of Israel below. It (Knesses Israel) is called "thirsty," because it thirsts for its Creator.

*Malchus* (generally rendered "Royalty" or some similar term) is the source that creates and maintains Creation, the "worlds."<sup>22</sup> We find (Psalm 145:13) "Your kingdom (*malchus*) is the kingdom of all worlds," all worlds finding the source of their existence in *malchus*.

"You (*ata*) give life to them all" (Nechemiah 9:6). The Hebrew word *ata* includes all the letters from *aleph* to *tav*, representing the articulations of speech and the state of *malchus* from whom the vitality of all creation issues. Elsewhere<sup>23</sup> we are told, "Do not read 'give life,' but rather, 'bring into existence.'" It is known that what we call the source that creates and maintains worlds is a mere reflection,<sup>24</sup> utterly incomparable to G-d's essential being. From G-d's Essence there could not be a finite world and creatures, for infinite and finite have no points of contact, as is explained at length elsewhere. Only from a reflection did the worlds come into being.

Therefore, *malchus* is commonly called "name," for a "king's

21 Tanya I, p. 346, *Malkhut*; Introduction to Tanya IV, p. 92, *Malchuth*; Tanya V, p. 14, note 7, etc.

22 "Worlds" are a common subject in Chabad literature. References include: Tanya I, Glossary on *Azilut, Briah, Yezira, Asiyah, Four Worlds*; Introduction to Tanya IV, Index II; Tanya III, p. 3, note 3; Translator's Explanatory Notes to "On Learning Chassidus"; etc.

23 *Pardes, "Shaar Vav,"* ch. 8. *Reishis Chochmah, "Shaar Hakedushah,"* end of ch. 7. *Shaloh "Shaar HaOsios,"* pp. 48b, 70a; Tanya II, p. 18-19, notes 3-7.

24 Chassidus elaborates on the difference between "essence" and "reflection," radiance, effulgence, etc. Essence is indivisible, inaccessible, remote, concealed, but the ultimate source. The radiance is an extension of the essence, active, effective. Sun is essence; its rays, warmth and light, are obviously radiance. We enjoy the rays, but they are not independent, self-generating. They issue from the source, the sun, and have no existence or power apart from it. The Tetragrammaton, G-d's ineffable Name, represents "essence," the source; *Elokim*, the Name that creates and vivifies, is "mere" reflection.

name applies to His kingdom and subjects." A name is no more than an extension, an effulgence, and not the essence. A person's name is not the person's essence. Similarly, the vitality that gives life to existence is merely a "name," a "reflection."

### Summary

The sequence of the passage "for by what my heart sees I go" indicates that this is a reason for the earlier statement, "I shall have peace"; what is "sfor the sated with the thirsty?"; sated-idolators; thirsty-Israel, whose source is the divine attribute called *malchus*, source of the worlds and creatures; *malchus* is a mere radiance, utterly incomparable to G-d's Essence, hence called "name."

### CHAPTER 2

The source of all existences is a mere reflection, a radiation, originally all absorbed within its source. In *Pirkai d'Rabbi Eliezer* we find, "Before creation, He and His Name were alone." This refers to the "name" and reflection as it was absorbed within the Essence of the Infinite, before creation took place. With creation, this effulgence separated from its source in order to vivify creation. Therefore this radiance is constantly in a state of *ratzo*,<sup>25</sup> surging, its desire and longing being to be absorbed and united with the Infinite Light, its root and source.

It is in the nature of things to wish to be absorbed in its source. Fire tends to rise to its source, the "fundamental flame," so without fuel and a wick or some other combustible it is impossible to contain fire. Even when it is held by oil and wick it constantly flutters, rising and falling. So too the radiance that gives life to all creation, being no more than a radiance, is in a constant state of *ratzo*, surging upward. Hence it is called "thirsty," always eager to rise higher. "In order that the soul<sup>25a</sup> shall sing to You, never to be silent" (Psalm 30:13). The

<sup>25</sup> Based on Ezekiel 1:14.

<sup>25a</sup> Refers to both man's soul as well as to the "soul" or life force of

Zohar<sup>26b</sup> comments on this verse, "The nether flame striving ever to the higher flame, and does not rest."

This is the meaning of *hatzeme'ah* (the thirsty) — *hai tzeme'ah*, the "hai thirsts." *Malchus* is the category of the latter *hai* of G-d's ineffable Name, the Tetragrammaton. Similarly, the Midrash Rabbah (Breshis No. 12) interprets "*B'hibar'am*" (as they were created) as *b'hai bar'am* (with the *hai* He created them). This letter *hai*, the creating force, is "thirsty," constantly longing and expiring to return to its pristine state of nothingness, to be absorbed within its source. Jeremiah declares, "Are not my words like fire!" (23:29) Just as flame naturally tends to rise, as we have noted, so too the word of G-d, "with the letter *hai* did He create them," always wants to be elevated.

The letter *hai* in its divine state, is not the same as mortal speech which has no independent will. Human articulation is inert, intrinsically devoid of will and wisdom. Words are merely vehicles for some power to be invested in them. Divine speech is of quite another order. The articulations of the divine speech are endowed with will and wisdom, for the supernal speech provides the source of Wisdom<sup>26</sup> of the Higher Gan Eden.<sup>27</sup> This is a paraphrase of *malchus* of Atzilus becoming *atik*<sup>28</sup> of Briah. In Midrash (Eicha, P'sichta, 24) we find, "The letters came to testify. . . ." In (the Introduction to) Zohar we find, "The letters appeared, from whom the universe was to be created." *Tikunai Zohar*, at the end of the Introduction, "The

the universe which is in a state of constant longing to be united with its source, expressed through song.

25b *Tikkunei Zohar*, Tikkun 5.

26 "Wisdom" is used here in the technical Chabad usage for *chochma*. Briefly, *chochma* is the initial revelation, the germ of the thought, amorphous, undeveloped, potential. The reader is referred to: *Introduction to Tanya IV*, p. 90, *Chachma*; Translator's Explanatory Notes to "On Learning Chassidus," *Intellect-powers*; etc.

27 *Tanya V*, p. 16, note 10.

28 *Introduction to Tanya IV*, p. 28 ff; the lowest state of the higher category becomes the highest state of the lower category, like links in a chain: *malchus* becomes *atik*. Here the process of development begins anew and is repeated in each successive category or World.

intelligent will shine,"<sup>28a</sup> comments, "these Letters have intelligence to go up before the King, each according to its bent." The *Kisai Melech* explains why letters are called intelligent, see there.

It is not fanciful then to state that the letter *hai* desires to rise and expire within its source. Zohar (III 171a) speaks of the *hai* becoming a *yud*, which represents merger with "nothingness."

*S u m m a r y*

Before creation He and His Name alone existed; the source of life for all creation was absorbed in its source; hence when it is manifest as a vivifying force it is always in the nature of surging, like the nature of fire to rise; *the* thirsty means the *hai* is thirsty; divine articulations possess will and wisdom.

CHAPTER 3

Another reason for the thirst of *malchus* is the descent, that was necessary for it to become a source for physical beings. This descent engenders the intense surge, the thirst to rise from its debasement. This also explains the Zohar just quoted that from the *hai* came the *yud*. "With the *yud* He created the Coming World."<sup>29</sup> The *yud* is the source of life for the souls but not for bodily life. Therefore, the letter *hai* which descended to become the source of life in This mundane World, longs to ascend from its descent to its source. This is of an order with our Sages' statement, "The nether waters weep, 'We want to be in the presence of the King.'" Water brings forth all sorts of delights. "Nether waters" are the source of the physical delights. This is a grave descent for the divine light, becoming a source for material pleasures. They "weep" over their descent, longing to be "in the presence of the King," to rise from their lowly state.

The letter *hai*, the life-force of all creation, is called *Shechinah*, the divine Presence that "dwells" among creation, for it

28a Daniel 12:3.

29 Menachos 29b.

descends to inhabit the three lower worlds. In Exodus 25:8 we find, "They shall make me a sanctuary and I shall dwell in their midst." The chamber of the Holy of Holies was the primary revelation and from there its radiance extended to give life to all creation.

By way of parallel, the soul vivifies the body, and is lodged primarily in the heart, from which it extends to all 248 organs. The chamber of the Holy of Holies is the "heart" of the universe, as Zohar states (III, 161b), therefore it was the site of the "dwelling" of the Shechina. Tanya, chapter 52, ascribes the same character to the chamber of the Holy of Holies of the latter three Worlds, Briah, Yetzirah, and Asiyah.

This is the understanding of "Go and diminish yourself"<sup>30</sup> in Chulin 60b. Diminution is descent, becoming a "head for jackals,"<sup>31</sup> descending into the three inferior worlds to give them life. It did not want to go down and become diminished, because the lower worlds are a mixture of good and evil. This is even more true with the physical world, Asiyah, where man is given a choice, and he can even choose evil, and thus bring down the G-dly life-force into everything. "Her feet go down to death" (Proverbs 5:5). "Who dwells with them in the midst of their defilements" (Leviticus 16:16). Hence, "He shall atone for the holiness for the impurities of Israel" (*loc. cit.*). "He has defiled the sanctuary of G-d" (Numbers 19:13). (See also Zohar III, 79a and 79b.)

This is the meaning of the "Exile of the Shechina" caused by the evil actions of man below. "For your sins was your mother expelled" (Isaiah 50a). This refers to the descent of the life-force of the letter *hai* as we described earlier, from stage to lower stage, lower and lower, until its flow was invested in

30 In Genesis 1:16 we find the "two great luminaries" and the next words speak of the "great luminary . . . and the small luminary." The Talmud explains that the moon protested that "two kings cannot wear one crown," so G-d "diminished" the moon. To console her He promised that saints would be called by her name, Shmuel the Small, etc.

31 Cf. Avos 4:15.

the Ten Sefiros (Attributes) of *nogah*,<sup>32</sup> that in turn issues flow and life-force through the "constellations" and all the hosts of the heavens and their superiors to each living physical being in This World. For this reason it did not wish to descend and diminish itself.

*Summary*

The letter *yud* is the source of life for souls; letter *hai*, source of life for the Worlds, is called Shechina; the chamber of the Holy of Holies is the "heart" of creation; "go, diminish yourself" by descending into the very lowest planes; this causes the intensity of the upward surge; evil acts cause the exile of the Shechina.

*Discourse Six*

CHAPTER 1

When G-d consoled her<sup>32a</sup> upon her loss of magnitude, He told her that "Saints would be called by your name—Shmuel the small, David the small." This is a parallel for the descent of the soul into the body and animal soul where it is liable to become debased, where all ways are suspect of danger, for "Sin crouches at the door."<sup>33</sup> Nonetheless, the descent is worth the risk, on account of the magnificent ascent that it brings about.

The saga of the soul<sup>34</sup> begins with being clothed in a body, in an animal soul,<sup>35</sup> risking defilement, and still withstanding every test in every detail, conquering passions, resisting the blandishments of the *yetzer hara*, scrupulous about "turn from evil and do good" in every conceivable facet of these strictures,

32 See note 10 above. The vitality proceeds through *nogah* before it descends into the three totally impure *kelipos*. On the Attributes, see: Tanya I, p. 351, *Sefrot*; Introduction to Tanya IV, p. 92, *Sefrah*.

32a See above note 30.

33 Gen. 4:7.

34 Tanya I, p. 347, *nefesh elokit*; infra, Discourse XIV.

35 Tanya I, p. 348, *nefesh ha-bahamit*.

not permitting worldly concerns to prevent Torah study and service—quite the contrary, whatever worldly activity man is compelled to engage in he directs to G-d's purpose. For example, food is not for satisfying an appetite but to maintain health and to derive vigor to be able to study and worship—and he does study and worship. This applies to business too. He is meticulous about his every act; he does not permit his business to distract him from Torah and worship through being completely immersed in it. His objective in business is to gain profit for *tzedaka*, to have the opportunity to study and pray.

All this results in ascent for the soul to heights far higher than its standing before it was clothed in a body and animal soul. Then it had coped with no obstacles; it had no awareness of the antithesis of holiness. There was no effort (note: the Hebrew term here is *avoda*, service; the Chabad connotation implies effort). Clothed in a body and still performing its service, humbling the body and the animal soul to be perfect in serving G-d, this causes a tremendous ascent for the soul and causes unbounded delight Above. "G-d (*Elokim*) has caused me laughter" (Genesis 21:6). Divine delight comes only through the name *Elokim*, that permits the existence of beings and all of the gross material world. "In the beginning *Elokim* created" (Gen. 1:1). The animal soul too derives from the name *Elokim*, as explained elsewhere. Through man's labor here below, subordinating the gross element of all material affairs, "turning from evil and performing good" in actuality, only this causes the Divine "laughter" and delight.

Let us apply this to *malchus*. Descending into the three lower worlds it purifies them. This is comparable to the soul's inhabiting the body, whereby it subordinates the body. Similarly, the investment of *malchus* in the lower worlds effects the requisite purifications there. "She gives spoils (Heb. *teref*) to her household" (Proverbs 31:15), *teref* being the numerical equivalent of 288, the number of the "sparks"<sup>36</sup> to be purified.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid. p. 348, *Nitzutzot, Birur, Orot v'kelim, Shebirat hakelim*; Introduction to Tanya IV, *Birur, Shebirath hakelim*, Sparks. (The "equivalent" in the text includes the "kollel," of course.)

Through its descent, *malchus* purifies the 288 sparks.

*Malchus* itself is the beneficiary as well, being granted additional divine illumination, until in the Messianic Era it will attain the position, "A woman of valor is the crown of her husband."<sup>37</sup> *Malchus* will bequeath to the higher attributes. "It shall come to pass on that day, living waters shall go forth from Jerusalem (meaning *malchus*), half to the eastern sea (the sea of *chochma*) . . ." (Zecharia 14:8). This shall be at the conclusion of the purifications, when the lower worlds shall have been purified.

#### Summary

The soul descends into a body and animal soul where it can be corrupted through the forbidden, but it resists temptation, utilizing all worldly affairs for Divine purposes, thus causing an elevation of the soul and delight Above; similarly with the attribute *malchus*—through purifications effected below, it is itself endowed with increased illumination.

#### CHAPTER 2

However at present the attribute *malchus* is "thirsty." Because of its descent and investment in the lower three worlds it is in a state of thirst, longing to rise from its lowly state to be united with its source. The same is true of souls. To inhabit the body and animal soul, the soul goes down from the plane it was before entering the body. There it was in a state of the ultimate spirituality, utterly removed from any self-awareness and corporeality whatsoever, incapable of becoming corrupted to be the antithesis of G-dliness. However upon entering the body, even while performing its service as we described, humbling the gross matter, nullifying "existence," still it is related to self-awareness, to the physical. After all it is actually clothed in an animal soul.

Its activities are on a physical plane. Its intellectual activity is in physical matters, which was alien to it before it was in-

37. Proverbs 12:4.

volved with the body. Then its intellect and comprehension were the ultimate of spirituality and abstraction. Its subjects were spiritual, refined. Physical matters, and by this I mean even intellectual matters that involve material things, were unknown to it. Upon descent into the body its comprehension became materialized, as it were. It now understands physical concepts. This results from its embodiment in the natural,<sup>38</sup> animal soul. The general affect is that the soul now is related to material existence and to physical affairs, a relationship that did not exist at all earlier. It is so involved now with the material world that it is susceptible to true descent, to corruption.

The descent brings about an intense thirst to rise, to merge with Above. Nor did this thirst exist before; it comes only as a result of the descent into the mundane. The intensity of the surge and thirst is directly caused by the descent into the physical body and animal soul.

This applies to *malchus* as well. Its own descent into the lower worlds causes its thirst to ascend ever higher.

"Sated" refers to man's desire to satisfy his physical lusts, while he has no desire or thirst for G-dliness. His longing, his passion, are primarily for physical delights, and these slake his thirst. Too, these desires can more readily be satisfied because they are at hand, while the longing of the G-dly soul is not so easily pacified. It desires G-dliness, and will not be content with bodily pleasure, therefore it is in a state of thirst in its descent and remains in that state constantly, unable to slake its thirst. We must remember that the presence of G-d is not truly revealed at present. At best we can attain knowledge of His existence, and not comprehension of His nature. Only in the millenium will the prophecy be fulfilled, "Your Teacher will no more be hidden" (Isaiah 30:20), for His true nature will be revealed then. But now, His nature is not revealed, so the soul is in a constant state of thirst.

However the animal soul cares and wishes only for physical

<sup>38</sup> See note 35. Animal soul, vital soul, vivifying soul, natural soul—are usually synonymous.

satisfactions, and these slake its thirst. Their very availability makes the satisfaction of the animal soul's desires a simple matter. Our sages remark (Shabbos 155b), "None is richer than the swine," for its food is offal, always at hand, easy to get, satisfying. It is so with the bodily pleasures, for they are the chaff of the "higher delights," readily available, and satisfying to the animal soul. Therefore it is called "sated."

#### Summary

As the attribute *malchus* descends, its longing to merge with its source becomes intensified; souls as they are above are in a state of ultimate spirituality, devoid of even the most profound concepts that are involved with matter; descending into the body it has a relationship with self-awareness and can become corrupted, hence its intensified thirst; the animal soul, primarily gross, is called "sated."

#### CHAPTER 3

Now we can understand the verse, "He shall bless himself in his heart, saying, 'I shall have peace.'" Even though "by what my heart sees I go," nonetheless, "I shall have peace, in order *sfos* the sated with the thirsty." *Sfos* has been defined as "joining"; to combine the sated with the thirsty, means to draw vitality from the thirsty to the sated, according to the mystic interpretation of "Her feet go down to death." Earlier (Discourse V, chapter 3) we have discussed that through a sinful act the life-force issuing from the letter *hai*, the same *hai* implied in the word *hatz'me'ah*, (the thirsty) is brought down to the Ten Attributes of *nogah*. Then the flow is invested within the Seventy Princes which is the state we have called "sated." From there the life-force continues even to the sinning person.

In *Iggeres Hateshuva* chapter 6 we find that after the Destruction of Jerusalem, when sin caused the life-force issuing from the latter *hai* to descend as we noted, even the sinful, the rebellious of Israel, can receive nurture for their bodies and animal souls precisely as do other living creatures. "They are compared to animals" (Psalm 49:13).

The truth is that it is possible that "he will have peace," but only the idolator, those who receive nurture from the hinderpart, like one who casts over his shoulder. But referring to Israel we find, "G-d will not wish to forgive him."<sup>39</sup> Forgiveness is bringing G-d's will, and we know that forgiveness is the evoking and turning of G-d's will toward the forgiven person. Here the statement is "G-d will not wish to forgive him," for on the contrary, "Then the fury of G-d will blaze, and His wrath." Upon such a person will be visited G-d's anger, meaning the withdrawal of G-d's will from him, G-d forfend.

Examining the cited chapter in *Iggeres Hateshuvah* we find that the sinner can also receive nurture, and the explanation at the end of the chapter is that since the sinner is the one who causes the "other side" to receive the life-force, therefore he takes his portion first. This is no contradiction to our thesis, for eventually that flow to the sinner must be terminated.

### *S u m m a r y*

He blesses himself in his heart, that though he goes as his heart sees, still he shall have peace—through joining the sated of the animal soul to the thirsty of the G-dly soul, which means bringing the life-flow of holiness into the Ten Attributes of *nogah*; he takes his portion from the "other side" first.

## *D i s c o u r s e   S e v e n*

### CHAPTER I

Idolators receive all their nurture from the hinderpart, whereas Israel receive theirs from the inward. The sinner who caused the withdrawal of G-d's will from himself, receives his nurture in the manner that the beasts do, and he acquires his portion first from what he brought down into the domain of

<sup>39</sup> Deut. 29:19.

the "other side." But this nurture will eventually be terminated.

This will be understood through our discussion (Discourse II, chapter 2) of the "face" and the "hinderpart" of the Divine Will. "Face" describes the inner will, the true desire, that He wishes, meaning everything of the order of holiness. But the "other side" receives only from the "hinderpart," meaning that He does not desire it, that on the contrary they are the "abomination of G-d that He despises" and grants their nurture "reluctantly," like one who casts over his shoulder.

An analogy will help us understand. A king made a royal feast for all his ministers and attendants, lavishing a fortune from the royal treasuries. His intention is surely not the squandering of wealth, but that his favored ministers and officials enjoy the bounty of the king. Others too will enjoy the royal feast, humble scullery maids and servants who will feast on the leftovers of the ministers. Too, bones will be thrown for the dogs. The king's intentions did not include the scraps—he does not intend to spend a copper for the delectation of the servants. When he gladly spends huge sums for a purpose close to his heart, the feast of his ministers, with his inner will, then there can also be beneficence of an external order, meaning the scraps for the servants. This is what we mean by nurture that comes from the external—incidentally, cast over the shoulder.

*S u m m a r y*

The "other side" and idolators receive their nurture from the hinderpart; for Israel, for sacred purposes, the flow is an inward one; hinderpart is like hurling over the shoulder; the inwardness of will and desire; analogy of the king's royal feast for ministers and ranking officials who represent his root will and desire; even humble servants enjoy the meal; incidentally, the scraps are enjoyed even by dogs.

CHAPTER 2

The parallel above can be understood. The state of the inward will radiates to Israel alone, as we find, "May G-d let

His countenance shine upon you" (Numbers 4:25), stressing *upon you*. This is effected through calling forth the divine will that illuminates only through Torah and mitzvos. Fundamentally, the wisdom of Torah is derived from the inwardness of the divine will. The nature of Torah ultimately is the wisdom of how to call forth the essence of G-d, the encompassing Light (the same as the divine will), from a state of concealment to revelation in the created worlds. Torah teaches in what manner the Infinite can be drawn forth. The decrees of His wisdom are articulated in the teachings of Torah, in the 248 positive commandments that alone can bring the revelation of G-d here below. The 248 positive commandments are 248 different elicitations of the Infinite, of the Divine will, to bring the illumination of the lights through various sorts of vessels, for example the mitzvah of tefilin is the instrument for eliciting the Divine will in the four "intellects," namely, *chochma* and *bina*, and then *daas* which is divided into *chesed* and *gevurah*. This is effected through the four paragraphs of the tefilin. The elicitation of the divine light is manifest in Atzilus and then in the three lower worlds, until it reaches and illuminates the mortal performing the mitzvah and donning the tefilin. The mitzvah of tzitzis bring the Light of G-d into the "Thirty-two paths of Wisdom."<sup>40</sup> Through the mitzvah of tzedaka the Infinite illumines the trait of *chesed*. Succah illumines the *makifim d'aima*; esrog illumines *malchus*, and so on.

All this can be accomplished only through the guidance of Torah, decreeing that we perform the rites of succah, tefilin, and esrog in only such manner as can bring about the revelation of the Infinite, while any other manner is ineffectual. Similarly, the wisdom of Torah decreed many particulars in keeping the 365 prohibitions, for they are the numerous individual obstacles to the revelation of G-d. These obstacles must be removed completely through the detailed laws of the prohibitions like "You shall not wear *shatnez*" (Deut. 22:11), "You shall not eat

<sup>40</sup> Cf. Shulhan Aruch Arizal "Hilchos Tzitzis." Rabbi Shneur Zalman, Likutei Torah "Parshat Korach."

suet,"<sup>41</sup> and other examples of the negative laws. Through energetic subordination, through restraint expressed in refraining from a prohibited deed, through the necessary caution in observance, man removes the *kelipot* and "other side" that prevent and conceal the revelations of G-d.

*S u m m a r y*

The inwardness of the Will is drawn to Israel, and that through Torah and mitzvos; every subject of Torah is an elicitation of the Light encompassing creation; 248 positive commands draw forth the Light into particular vessels, like tefilin, tzitzis, tzedaka, succah, esrog; prohibitions remove the *kelipot* and "other side" that obstruct the revelation of the Infinite.

CHAPTER 3

Another function of the prohibitions is that they prevent the Divine Light from being drawn to a despised end called an abomination of G-d. "For evil shall not dwell with you" (Psalm 5:5). Man fulfils this through separating himself from anything forbidden, anything bound up with the "external" that are incapable of being elevated, for they cannot harbor the Divine Light. "For My glory I shall give to no other" (Isaiah 42:8). Man who avoids evil becomes a vehicle for holiness.

It is understood then that the primary purpose of Torah wisdom is to teach how to elicit the revelation of G-d here below through the 248 positive commandments, and how to remove obstructions to that revelation, through observing the 365 prohibitions. This is the meaning of the inwardness of the divine will in general, that there be a revelation of the Infinite in the physical world through observing the 248 commandments and removing obstacles through the 365 prohibitions. This brings the fulfillment of the intention and wish, that "G-d desired to have an abode among the lowly."<sup>42</sup> In particular every

41 E.g. Lev. 3:17.

42 *Midrash Tanchuma, Nasso* 16.

mitzvah has an individual radiance of this general will. "May G-d's face shine upon you" (Numbers 6:25), specifically to Israel who fulfill the mitzvos that are the inwardness of the divine will, effecting a revelation of the Infinite below.

Now, when the inwardness of His will is drawn to Israel through Torah and mitzvos as we noted, the externality, the hinderpart, of the will called "nape and not face"<sup>43</sup> is drawn to the idolators, whose root is in the "seventy Supernal Princes" who receive their nurture from the state of hinderpart and externality. For this reason they are called "other gods," as we explained earlier (Discourse II, chapter 2). They receive their nurture incidentally, as it were, rather like the analogy of the royal feast in the last chapter. Since nurture is provided for those fit, those who embody the inner will, then others too have the opportunity to receive their nurture though they are unfit. But they receive from the "remains," from the externality of the divine will. But first there has already been radiance and inward flow from the inwardness of the Divine will to the "side of holiness," through bringing the Light into vessels by performing the mitzvos. This is the meaning of "May His face shine upon you."

It follows then that the nurture provided the "external" beings is from the hinderpart, precisely like hurling over the shoulder, without intention, incidental to a true purpose, specifically when He grants nurture to an "inward" being, a nurture offered in an inward manner. The nurture for the "externals" has no vestige of an inward radiance of the inward will. Therefore, they receive only the dregs that have fallen, and only after the flow issues from the inwardness to the "side of holiness" can they receive the trifles they do get. But when nothing is drawn manifestly from the inwardness to the holy (i.e. when the worlds ascend), then they receive no nurture at all. Only when the "side of holiness" receives from the inward state can the "other side" receive the dregs, chaff, and droppings.

43 Jeremiah 2:27.

## Summary

Prohibitions keep the divine light from being drawn to an undesirable end; the inwardness of G-d's will, Torah and positive commands and prohibitions are only for Israel; *en passant* a radiance of the externality of the divine will is drawn to the "seventy Princes" and then the dregs are provided for the "other side."

## CHAPTER 4

The core of what we have discussed until now is that the inward aspects of the divine will are brought, through Torah and mitzvos, only to Israel. The "other side" receives the barest dregs, the chaff, of the external aspect of the divine will. This explains why a sinful person brings increased vitality and nurture to the "other side," for basically he belongs with the inward aspect. Though he receives his portion first of the vitality he brought to the "other side," still it must inevitably be terminated, and indeed the "other side" will be avenged of him. Though he sinned he is a Jew nevertheless, and by virtue of his soul he is of the inner aspect of holiness, and through the mitzvos he performed before sinning he has elicited the inward will into the "side of the holy." When he sins he brings an increase of radiance from the inward to the *kelipot* and "other side." We find in the "Order of Rejection" that the "waters flowing from the house of G-d he rejected to a place of ordure." He takes his portion first of the physical beneficences for he is the one who brought the increase to them.

But everything has its time and season. When he has destroyed the portion of his soul, the portion of good within himself, then he can no longer receive his nurture from them. We must remember that essentially, because he is of Israel, he must receive his own nurture only from the inner will, from the state of inwardness of the divine will that is elicited into the worlds through Torah and mitzvos, as we have noted and shall elaborate upon later. It is only because he has fallen into the *kelipot* through sin that he receives by their hands of the in-

creased vitality that he himself had caused them to receive. This is only temporary, but then he receives no more through them. For it is inappropriate for him to receive from the hinderpart; that is for the idolators who always receive their vitality from there. But the sinning Jew only momentarily takes from them what he has brought to them. But later he ceases to receive his vitality from them, and the flow must cease.

Even if he studies Torah and performs mitzvos during the interim, justifying the Talmudic declaration (Berachos 57a) that "even the emptiest among you is as full of mitzvos as a pomegranate" (is full of seeds), still, until he repents, his Torah and mitzvos are not desired or acceptable Above. "To the wicked G-d said, 'Why do you recount my statutes and take up my covenant (Rashi: My Torah) in your mouth, while you have scorned admonition and have hurled my words behind you!'" (Psalm 50:16). In your heart you hate admonition and you have cast my words behind your back like a person who throws away something he cannot bear to look at! For this reason he cannot elicit a flow of G-dhood through study of Torah and performing mitzvos. *Reshis Chochma* (*Shaar Hateshuvah*, end of chapter 2): "Whoever is full of . . . sin, his Torah is no satisfaction to his Creator. The reason is that by Torah study man draws the Shechina upon himself, and when he is clean of sin the Shechina has found a throne, a seat, to sit and rest . . . but when man is soiled with the stains of his sins, the Torah cannot reside in him, for he has no throne to accommodate Torah or the Shechina." Since he is no vessel for the Light, it is understood that without *teshuvah* first his Torah study and mitzvah observance cannot elicit the revelation of Light from Above. Whoever gives himself over to the *kelipot*—they will avenge themselves of him, as Zohar explains at length (I, 148a and 148b, in *Sisrai Torah*). May G-d keep us from them, and inspire us to serve Him in truth and sincerity always, all our days.

#### *S u m m a r y*

All Israel by virtue of their souls and their fulfillment of

Torah and mitzvos are of the inwardness of the divine will; by sin man brings an increased Light from the inward and takes his portion first but this is terminated; before he repents, even his Torah and mitzvos are no pleasure Above, and he does not elicit a revelation of the divine light; if one gives himself over to the "other side," the latter itself will punish him.

## Discourse Eight

### CHAPTER I

We have noted the explanation of "in order to join the sated to the thirsty," that the attribute *malchus*, whose "feet go down" to the lower worlds, combines the "sated," meaning the "other side," with the "thirsty," meaning *malchus* itself, to receive additional nurture from the holy. This is according to Rashi's definition of *sfos*, joining, as noted in Discourse V, Chapter I.

The *Radak*, though, regards *sfos* as "increase." How does he explain the passage—that the thirsty increase the sated? The nurture of the "eternal" takes one of two forms. One method is receiving from the hinderpart, the external, by the numerous condensations of the external aspect of the vessels of *malchus*. The other method is receiving from the supernal encompassing light (and this too is of the hinderpart and external of the encompassing).

In Avos, chapter 5, we learn of the "Ten generations from Adam to Noah, and from Noah to Abraham, to indicate G-d's patience with the many generations that kept defying Him . . ." All these generations received their nurture from the state called *Erech Apayim* (patience, long-suffering). The Talmud (Eruvin 22a) asks, "Why does the Torah say *erech apayim* (in the plural) rather than *erech af* (the singular)? To show that He is patient with the saintly and patient with the wicked." Rashi explains that *apayim* implies *countenances*, whether cheerful or angry. *Erech* implies length, extension. Together

the words indicate that G-d's cheerful mien may be lengthened, postponed for the saintly, rewarding them in the future, and conversely, his angry mien may be lengthened, postponing the punishment of the wicked for the future.

The Infinite is completely removed from creation, as the word *kadosh*, holy, indicates. He is utterly out of the range of comparability with creation, not to be compared to them at all. Hence, "I, G-d, have not changed" (Malachi 3:6), being unaffected and unchanged before creation and after because all of creation is naught in His terms. In Job (35:6,7) we have, "If you sin, do you affect Him? If your transgressions are many, what do you do to Him? If you are righteous, what do you give Him, and what does He take from your hand?" This is true because all the works of man are naught before Him.

The Midrash (*Lech lecha* 44), "'G-d whose way is perfect, the utterance of G-d is pure, He is a shield to all who take shelter in Him.' If His ways are perfect, how much more so must He be! Rav said, 'Mitzvos were given only to purify His creatures through them. For what does it matter to G-d whether one slaughters through the throat or the nape? It is certain that the mitzos were given only to purify man.'" For G-d Himself, it does not matter at all.

In Exodus (23:25), "You shall serve the L-rd your G-d," and the explanation given elsewhere declares that the service is for G-d, apparently not in accordance with our explanation here. But this applies only in the *sefer hishtalshlus*, within the "System of Progression" in the Ten Attributes of Atzilus, beginning with *chochma*. There man's service does matter, as we shall soon explain. But G-d transcending *hishtalshelus* (Progression) is aloof from all man's works. The Mishna quoted above declaring G-d's patience for so many generations of wickedness points out that despite the evil of the times still they were granted vitality from the state called *erech apayim*, meaning the Infinite transcending "Progression." There the works of man are irrelevant, and everyone (even the wicked) may receive from there.

In Pesachim (118a), Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi said, "Why the twenty-six times *hodu* ("praise G-d" in Psalm 137)? For the twenty-six generations G-d created in His world without giving them Torah, yet He sustained them in His graciousness." Though they were idolators, as were the generations of Enoch, they were fed by G-d's kindness, the quality called "great kindness" that grants bounty even to those who violate His will. Rabbi Yehoshua connects their lack of Torah with their sustenance, for according to Torah they should not have been sustained, because "Torah issues from Wisdom," and Wisdom is subject to bounds, defining when kindness shall be bestowed and when withheld. The deserving, those who follow G-d's edicts, should benefit from His kindness, otherwise not. But those 26 generations, sinful as they were, received their bounty not by Torah standards but out of G-d's kindness, *rav chesed*, great kindness.

#### Summary

The nurture of the "other side," (1) from numerous condensations, (2) from the supernal encompassing light; ten generations from Adam to Noah and from Noah to Abraham, all fed by G-d's kindness; *erech apayim*; the transcendent Infinite untouched by mortals' works, granting nurture not by Torah measure but from His "great kindness."

#### CHAPTER 2

The beneficence granted from *rav chesed*, G-d's "great kindness," is a plenteous one. Hence some enjoy wealth and honor far out of proportion to their merit. "For there are no works, or reckoning, or knowledge, or wisdom in *sheol*" (Koheles 9:10), for they receive without any apparent reckoning. In *M'orai Or* (8:75) reckoning (Heb. *cheshbon*) is called Wisdom (Heb. *chochma*), related to thought. The Talmud (Bava Basra 78b) interprets the verse, "Therefore those who use parables say, 'Come to Cheshbon,'"<sup>44</sup> as 'Come, let us make

<sup>44</sup> Numbers 21:27.

reckonings of the world, the loss of a mitzvah against its gain, the profit of a sin against its loss.' ”

This reckoning is of the order of *chochma*, from which Torah derives,<sup>45</sup> the plane where standards and measures are relevant. From this plane we have the measure and definition of all beneficences, spiritual and material. Weighing and measuring is a coalescing of opposites, of *chesed* and *gevurah*, generosity and restriction. *Chochma* determines the manner of this coalescence, which of the two traits shall dominate, and from this comes the measure of manifestation of the appropriate trait. For example, in granting “children, life, and prosperity,”<sup>45a</sup> what shall be the amount granted and the manner. “Man’s sustenance is determined on Rosh Hashana” (Betza 16a). “Man is constantly judged” (Rosh Hashana 16a). The judgment is based on the works and service of the individual, and he is granted according to the scales of *chesed* and *gevurah*, whether kindness shall dominate or. . .

In Job (37:12), “(The cloud) by causes, alters itself by His discernments, according to their works.” Rashi explains this with a passage in Talmud (Rosh Hashana 17b), “If Israel were saintly on Rosh Hashana, and their verdict was for plenteous rainfall, and then they changed . . . the rains fall at the wrong time in a place that does not need rain. If Israel were unfit (for a good verdict) and little rain was fated for them, and then they changed . . . the rains fall when and where they are needed.”

Zohar (I, 109b) comments on this verse (see commentary *Or Hachama*), “He calls forth the generations, and creates them to endure, for example, the generation of the Deluge. They considered that they would endure eternally, and corrupted their ways. G-d destroyed them, changing existence to disappearance. ‘His discernments’ is spelled in the singular, not plural. This is the potter’s wheel that spins before Him. When men’s works are good, the spinning potter’s wheel turns to the right, and good effects are felt in the world, to man’s favor.

<sup>45</sup> Zohar II, 85a, 121a.

<sup>45a</sup> Cf. Moed Kattan 28a.

When men come to debase . . . the wheel swings to the left. He alters by these causes . . . and evil effects that harm man are felt in the world, until men return, to correct their works."

The "wheel" is *malchus* of Atzilus, the source of the beneficence flowing into the lower three worlds. It spins according to the deeds of men. When men are good, the wheel spins to the right, meaning then *malchus* receives from the "right line" of Atzilus, which includes the attributes *chochma-chesed-netzach*. Then kindness dominates; good and kindness are drawn forth into This World. If, G-d forbid, there is no "arousal from below,"<sup>46</sup> there are none who do good, then by their deeds men cause *malchus* to receive from the "left line." Everything depends on the works of mortals.

#### Summary

The beneficence of *rav chesed* is plenteous, not according to a measure; *cheshbon* (reckoning) is *chochma*; let us make the reckonings of the world; all beneficences are according to the standard of Torah; man is judged constantly according to his deeds; *malchus* receives and bestows according to this, whether to the right and good, or the left and evil.

#### CHAPTER 3

What moves and turns the wheel to be altered in consonance with the works of men—the "line of measurement" of *chochma*, turning the wheel according to the arousal from below. *Chochma* possesses the measurement, determining precisely what is appropriate, specifying the fulfillment of Torah and mitzvos, in the negative sense of avoiding the prohibited according to the 365 prohibitions and their offshoots, and in positive fulfillment of the 248 commandments with their offshoots, as we have discussed in Discourse I, chapter 2. This therefore controls the movement of the wheel. When Israel observe the mitzvos then *malchus* receives from the "right line" and be-

<sup>46</sup> Tanya III, p. 9, note 26, for explanation.

stows good, meaning that the conduct of the world will be of the order of kindness. When, unhappily, the generation is undeserving, the conduct will be of the order of *gevurah*, severity.

Their reckoning then is two-fold. First is the evaluation of the works of men. Are their deeds acceptable according to the standards of Torah? Second, the determination of the method of coalescence of kindness and severity, whether the right shall predominate with its concomitant kindness, or. . . .

The Mishna (Avos 4:22) declares that "Everything is according to reckoning." Rashi explains that penny<sup>47</sup> added to penny accumulate to a large sum. There is conversely a negative reckoning, as our sages say (Chagiga 5b, cited in *Midrash Shmuel* on Avos 4:22), referring to, "Telling man of his speech" (Amos 4:13), that even conversation between man and wife, even sins that man tramples underfoot, everything comes into account.

Another explanation of the Mishna is that if two people commit the identical sin, their punishment and defects are not identical. According to the magnitude of the soul [and souls are not of the same rank], is the magnitude of the defect.

All this account-taking, this reckoning, is within the order of *hishtalshelus* ("downward progression"), the calculation and judgment issuing from *chochma*, the first stage of *hishtalshelus*. But in terms of the transcendent Infinite there is no judging, for the puny works of man have no significance there. Beneficence may well flow in rich measure beyond all reckoning to those who transgress His will. For this reason the way of the wicked may be successful, for He is long-suffering, and they receive from the state of *erech apayim*, higher than the plane of reckoning. The beneficence does not discriminate against the undeserving, and it is unstinting rather than measured according to worth, for it is of the order of boundlessness, as we shall explain.

#### *S u m m a r y*

The movement of the potter's wheel to the right bestowing

<sup>47</sup> I.e. every detail is considered in the judgment.

kindness and to the left for severity, is precisely determined, (a) according to one's Torah and mitzvos, (b) in the degree of coalescence of kindness and severity; the reckoning of the fulfillment of Torah and mitzvos or its opposite, accords with the particular rank of each soul; the way of the wicked is successful for they receive from higher than "Progression."

## *Discourse Nine*

### CHAPTER 1

The root of the matter is as follows: *Hishtalshelus* (Downward Progression) may be understood as an inward illumination, meaning the investment of light into its consonant vessel. The first of the vessels is in *chochma*. With man too, his first power that finds an abode in a particular vessel and bodily organ is *chochma*. Will is higher than *chochma*, and it has no designated organ to harbor it; it pervades all the body equally. True, it is more obvious in the mind, for the intellect is aware of will in a far more penetrating manner than is the foot. But will *per se* lodges in the foot no less than in the brain. Thus, when one wills to move his foot, the reaction is instantaneous. If will is harbored in the brain, as is intellect, the movement should not be instantaneous. For example, when the mind exercises dominion over the foot, in a march say, or in a rhythmic dance movement, the foot's obedience is not instant; training and deliberativeness are required. This is because intellect proceeds by progression, indwelling in the manner of inward illumination. Intellect is actually clothed in the brain, and progresses from its abode in the brain from power to power (e.g. from intellect to emotion) until it reaches the power of movement in the foot, always being clothed in the particular power, the light of intellect actually clothed in the foot's power of movement. For this end, time and involvement and effort are necessary. Were will also lodged in some particular vessel, there would need to be some similar time lapse and involvement be-

fore it could act on the foot. But this does not occur, for will is not particularized; it lodges in the foot as in the brain. The first of the powers that does lodge in a vessel is the power called *chochma*, lodging in the brain. The brain is divided into three, paralleling the three intellectual powers, *chochma*, *bina*, and *daas*. Emotions lodge in the heart; so all the powers have particular vessels and organs.

#### *S u m m a r y*

The inner powers are clothed in individual organs and emerge progressively, the first being *chochma*; will is encompassing, found in all organs, and does not emerge progressively; intellect works through involvement and with time lapse; will works without involvement and is instantaneous.

#### CHAPTER 2

The parallel above can now be studied. The ten Sefiros or Attributes of Atzilus are illumination clothed in vessels, the first being the attribute *chochma*. It is called "first" because it is the first step in the order of downward progression, and the progression proceeds from *chochma* to the next attribute, *bina*. In soul powers, the "point" of *chochma* illuminates the comprehension of *bina*; *bina* is the "mother of the offspring" giving birth to emotions. So too the supernal Attributes or Sefiros. From *chochma* progression proceeds to *bina*, from intellect to emotion, always with the light inhabiting the vessel.

However the Infinite, transcending downward progression, is an Encompassing Light, not invested at all in any vessels. This is similar to what we said in Chapter 1 about will not having any particular organ, hence it cannot be an inward light, but must be encompassing. So too the parallel, the Infinite who transcends *hishtalshelus* is not encased within any vessel, but is a surrounding, encompassing Light.

Hence, within *hishtalshelus* (the system of progression) there is judgment and reckoning for the beneficence, while higher than this system, the beneficence bestowed is not by judging

and account-taking. Downward progression, inward light, lights within vessels, requires a vessel appropriate for the revelation of that light. Whatever is inappropriate for that revelation cannot harbor that light. The vessel fit to reveal G-d is self-abnegation, *bitul*. Whatever is null in the presence of G-d is a vehicle to accept the revelation of the Light. The Infinite lodges only in *bitul*, utter lack of self-awareness. (For this reason the primary sanctuary of the Infinite is *chochma*, for *chochma* is *koach mah*, lack of selfness, *bitul*, as noted in the Gloss in Chapter 35 of Tanya.)

But whatever is in a state of selfhood, consciousness of one's entity, "He and I cannot dwell together."<sup>47a</sup> He is no vessel for the revelation of the G-dly light and vitality. Only what has attained to *bitul*, loss of selfness, can be this instrument, and that includes all the "side of holiness." They are null; there G-d's holiness lodges, as Tanya chapter 6 explains.

Thus within the system of *hishtalshelus* there is judgment and evaluation, to determine if he is fit for the divine light and vitality. Whatever is not null before Him, but is a separate entity, cannot receive from the holiness of G-d (except from the hinderpart and externality, as noted in Discourse II, chapter 2, and VII: 1, in reference to the vitality received by the "other side" called "other gods"). Only he who is null in His presence, who fulfills His will, is fit for the bestowal of life from the Light of His holiness.

#### *S u m m a r y*

The Ten Attributes of Atzilus are inward illuminations that are clothed in their appropriate vessels, and come forth progressively; the first attribute is *chochma*, nullity; bestowal is by evaluation according to the degrees of nullity; loss of selfness is the vessel fit for the domicile of His holiness.

#### CHAPTER 3

The judging and evaluating is only on account of the system

47a Sotah 5a.

of orderly progression. The characteristic of progression is that precise judgment and calculation are imperative for four reasons. First, it is an inward, indwelling light. Second, order itself demands preciseness. Third, it is a light harbored within a vessel. Fourth, downward progression to the next lower stage requires it. Let us explain each of the four.

Every light, whatever it is, whether intellect or emotion, has its essence-nature. The light of intellect is characteristically placid, settled. The light of emotion is naturally deep-feeling, excitable. So too, inward light has its essential nature in its preciseness, in its deliberateness.

Order is characterized by evaluation and exactness, both quantitatively and qualitatively.

Lights harbored in vessels must be delicately tailored to the vessels. There is the general consonance of vessel and light, the physical brain and intellect, the physical heart with emotion. Nevertheless, there must be more precise measurement of the intellect indwelling in the brain, and so too with emotions. Without this exactness, the physical vessels, brain and heart, will be incapable of containing the overwhelming light of intellect and emotion, and the vessels will be harmed. There are so many who suffer incapacities, mental and emotional disorders, caused by overabundance of "light" and a paucity of "vessels," absorptive capacity.

Light whose purpose it is to descend to the next lower stage, our fourth reason, must be measured precisely according to the dimensions of the recipient vessel, if it is to receive the light. Indeed, the light may well destroy the vessel. By illustration, when a Master conveys a concept to his pupil, and he gives beyond the capacities of the student, the student will not learn the concept, and in addition his mental "instruments" will be completely confused. The reason is that any light that progresses to a lower stage must be proportionate to that stage.

The parallel can be understood in terms of the Attributes that descend progressively. But the Infinite, transcending the entire system of downward progression, is in an encompassing

#### KUNTRES UMA'AYON

state, not harbored in vessels. In these terms the question of being fit for the revelation of the light or vitality is irrelevant, for the Encompassing has no need of the vessels, and is as readily elicited into an inappropriate place (i.e. that is not a vessel or instrument for the Encompassing Light) as into a deserving place. Thus even the *kelipot* and "other side" and transgressors can receive from the Encompassing, though they are not fit vessels by any means. Since vessels are not needed in any event, the issue of order and system is irrelevant. The Encompassing bestows lavishly, because it is a state of boundlessness.

The light within the order of progression, being an inward light invested in vehicles, is dimensioned according to the vehicle, and the issue of order and progression is integral. But the Light transcending the system of progression, being an encompassing light, is not bounded, and bestows abundantly.

"If you rise like an eagle" (Ovadia 1:4). For like "The path of the eagle in the heavens" (Proverbs 30:19), thus do the *kelipot* and "other side" (*sitra achra*) elevate themselves to receive from the supernal Encompassing, for beneficence from there is not elicited with judgment and accounting. Even those not null before G-d, indeed those who completely reject His will, can receive from there—and the bestowal is extremely generous. For this reason idolators enjoy such success, with wealth and glory in This World, and they even dominate Israel. The source from which they receive is higher than the system of progression. The bestowal to Israel is by Torah and mitzvos and comes within the system of progression, while the bestowal to idolators is from above the system of progression, without reckoning, without limitations.

#### S u m m a r y

From the Attribute *chochma* and lower, reckoning is needed for four reasons: (1) inward light, (2) order, (3) investment in a vessel, (4) progress to a lower stage; above *chochma* means above the system of progression, and does not operate with account-taking; hence the "other side" elevates itself to receive from there, since it is without preciseness or limitations.

*Discourse Ten*

## CHAPTER I

Returning to the verse (Deut. 29:18) "He will bless himself in his heart saying, 'I shall have peace, for by what my heart sees I go.'" The transgressor reassures himself that he will "have peace," the bestowal of life and all that is good, indeed in a full and rich measure. "For by what my heart sees I go," because he does as he pleases, ignoring Torah. For this itself he imagines that he will receive an open handed bestowal from the supernal Encompassing, without any reckoning, as do the *kelipot* and "other side." The expression, "for by what my heart sees I go," is rather like a reason for his confidence that he "shall have peace," that he will receive from the Encompassing, higher than the order of progression.

"In order *sfos* the sated with the thirsty." "Sated" or *rava*, connotes plenty; the sated, i.e. the "other side," receives a far more bountiful bestowal (as above IX:3) than does the "thirsty," the "side of holiness," whose nurture is elicited from within the system of progression, meaning with limitations. The sated, receiving from higher than the system of progression, receives without reckoning and judgment.

"God shall not will to forgive him" (Deut. 29:19). Only the idolators can receive from the Encompassing, bypassing the system of progression, but not Israel. Israel are essentially inward. "For a portion of G-d (note: the Tetragrammaton is used here, G-d's Name of four letters) is His people" (Deut. 32:9). The Tetragrammaton indicates the order of progression: *Yud* is *chochma*, *hai* is *bina*, *vav* is the emotive attributes, the latter *hai* is *malchus*. The Ineffable Name invariably connotes inwardness. "You did G-d choose" (Deut. 14:2). "For G-d chose Jacob for Himself" (Psalm 135:4). Choice means selecting between alternatives, selecting and choosing this one deliberately. The Midrash (*Bamidbar Rabba* 20) offers a parable about a king selecting a portion, and continues, "Israel is his share, his por-

tion, his treasure, as we find, 'For His people is a part of G-d, Jacob is His possession' (Deut. 32:9), and 'You shall be my treasure' (Ex. 19:5)." This is the choosing, selecting Israel for Himself, which is a matter of inwardness.

Similarly, Israel chose G-d. "My portion is G-d, said my soul" (Lamentations 3:24). The Midrash on this verse comments quoting Rabbi Abuha quoting Rabbi Yochanan: A king entered a land accompanied by dukes and governors and high officials. The leaders of that land observed this. One exclaimed, "I shall take a duke to myself." Another said, "I will take a governor to myself." A third said he would take a high official for himself. One clever person there said, "I will take the king. Others change but a king is not changed." So too, some idolators worship the sun, and others the moon, and others wood and stone. But Israel serves only G-d, as in the verse, "My portion is G-d, said my soul."

Thus was Torah given us, to Israel. Torah derives from *chochma*. The nature of Torah and mitzvos is inwardness, reckoning, measurement, precise specification. Torah was given to Israel only because they too are inward.

#### *S u m m a r y*

The sinner presumes that if he follows his bent he will have peace, as do the "other side" that receive lavishly from the encompassing—but he errs grievously, for Israel are inward; both choices—Israel's selecting G-d and, as it were, G-d's selecting Israel—are due to inwardness,

#### CHAPTER 2

Let us proceed to the next step. Within the inwardness and the essence of the Infinite, those who perform mitzvos occupy first rank. All we have said before (IX:3) about all being able to receive from the Encompassing, even *kelipot* and the "other side," refers only to the external aspect of the Encompassing. However within the internal aspect of the Encompassing, there the intention is unequivocally for the fulfillment of Torah and mitzvos.

In Midrash (*Breshis Rabba 2*): "The world was formless and void" is the works of the wicked. "G-d said let there be light" is the works of the righteous. But I know not yet which He desires (*chafetz*), whether these works or these. "G-d saw the light that it is good" shows that He desires the works of the righteous and does not desire the works of the wicked.

*Chafetz*, desire, refers to inner will. Will, we have noted, is encompassing. In His inner will, the internal aspect of the encompassing, He *desires* only the works of the righteous. From the inwardness of the encompassing is drawn the root of the beneficence that is granted in an inward manner, in other words the system of progression. The system of progression that extends downward from *chochma* is indeed lower in category than the encompassing that is higher than the system of progression, but its source is higher than the supernal encompassing. Its source is the internality of the encompassing.

It follows then that Israel who receive through Torah and mitzvos from the inward light of the system of progression, ultimately receive from the source, from the inwardness and essence that is infinitely higher than the encompassing. The advantage here is that the light is drawn down inwardly and unites with Israel. The "other side" elevate themselves to receive from the supernal encompassing, but the light does not unite with them, for the sacred cannot merge with the profane. Particularly since this is an *encompassing* illumination, not an inward and permeating one, the light is totally distinct from the "other side" and they have no relation with the light in any form. But for the souls of Israel, the light vouchsafed them illuminates *inwardly*, becomes one with them. The source of the beneficence then is far higher than the encompassing.

"G-d shall not will to forgive him." Only idolators, of the hinderpart and externality, can receive from the externality of the encompassing, from where their beneficence is derived. Israel cannot receive from this hinderpart but from inwardness, and the inward demands a vessel fit to accept the light and vitality.

*S u m m a r y*

In the inwardness of the Infinite, those who perform mitzvos and Torah occupy first rank; *kelipot* and the "other side" receive from the externality of the encompassing, and the illumination is discrete from them; the beneficence to Israel is from the internality of the encompassing, and proceeds through downward progression; the illumination unites with them; the source of the beneficence to Israel is from the essence, higher than the encompassing.

## CHAPTER 3

For this reason Israel suffer exile, subservience, humiliation. This is caused by transgressions. When they "fulfilled the will of G-d" performing Torah and mitzvos, as in the days of the Bais Hamikdash, they were on an unusually high plane and enjoyed a generous beneficence in the material sense, "each man under his vine and each under his fig tree." In the exile they are denied all material good and are exceedingly oppressed and degraded, as a result of their sins, as all the exhortations of the Prophets keep stressing.

The question arises, why can they not receive from the encompassing where sin and transgression are not of any account, as we have learned? The reason is that Israel are essentially of an inward nature, and the bestowal of their vitality is from an inward illumination through performing Torah and mitzvos. "If you go in My statutes . . . I shall give your rains in their season and the earth will give its crops" (Lev. 26:3,4). All the material assignments are dependent on Torah and mitzvos which also bestow plenteous blessings. For the source of the inward light is the inwardness and essence of the Infinite. There can at times be the illuminating revelation of an unwontedly superior light, of the essence of the Infinite, into the system of progression. In Bais Hamikdash days there was more revelation of the transcendent into the system of progression through the service of Israel, particularly the sacrificial service.

Inevitably, the material bounty was also generous, but always from the internal.

When we speak of the inwardness of the Infinite this too is where the pain and afflictions of Israel are felt. "In all their afflictions He was afflicted" (Isaiah 63:9). Zohar (I, 120b) comments, "The scriptural version is with an *alef* (He was not afflicted) but the pronunciation is with a *vav* (He was afflicted), for G-d is with Israel in their affliction. The variation, He was *not* afflicted, refers to a most lofty 'place' known as *Atik* (see *ibid.* III, 292b). Though this place is beyond all perturbation and suffering, still to that exalted plane does the affliction of Israel attain."

Talmud (Chagiga 5b): "In the hidden places does my soul weep for your pride" (Jer. 13:17). G-d has a place and "hidden" is its name. What do the last quoted words mean? For the pride of Israel that was removed from them. Is there weeping in reference to G-d? Does not Rav Pappa declare that He knows of no melancholy? This is no contradiction, for one refers to inner chambers, the other to outer chambers.

Rashi explains that in the inner chambers there is weeping, as in the verse, "in the hidden places." We see that specifically in the inner chambers, meaning the inwardness and essence of the Infinite, there is weeping, as it were, for the lost pride of Israel. For Israel are related to inwardness, even in terms of His Essence. The inwardness of His desire is for those who fulfil His commandments and Torah.

For this reason the anguished cry of Israel in their tribulation arouses the profound mercies on their behalf. "The people of Israel groaned because of their labor, and they cried out" (Ex. 2:23), thereby effecting the beginning of the redemption. "They cried out to G-d in their trials" (Psalm 107:19). The stipulation is that the cry must come from the depths of the heart. Then it attains and arouses the inwardness and essence of the Infinite.

#### *S u m m a r y*

When Israel were unsullied in their fulfillment of Torah,

as in the days of the Bais Hamikdash, they received generous bestowal materially in addition to the G-dliness that illuminated them in a revealed manner; in exile, because of sins, Israel are degraded; in all their troubles He suffers, for their sufferings reach to His inwardness; through repentance from the depths of the heart, His inwardness is aroused.

## *Discourse Eleven*

### CHAPTER 1

"They cried out in great voice to their G-d" (Nechemia 9:4). What, we may wonder, is the meaning of "great voice?" The Talmud cautions us (Berachos 24a) that those who worship with loud voices are "small in faith," and whoever raises his voice in prayer is of the "false prophets!" Rashi supports this with "They called with great voice" (I Kings 18:28). Still it is customary to worship aloud on Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur, as Bais Yosef (*Orach Chaim* 101) states. In *Magen David* by Radvaz, No. 9, "Let me tell something wondrous I derived from our sages' words. Words man utters leave an impression in the atmosphere. They pierce the air and heavens to rise. If the words are good and proper, and are uttered in sanctity, they are presented to Him 'who spoke and created the world.' Therefore all Israel are accustomed, when crying out in distress, to call in strong voice, to make a strong impression, to pierce the atmosphere."

Utterances, or in Chassidic parlance—"letters," are revelation. "Morning has come" (Isaiah 21:12). First there was darkness, concealment, night, and with the morning, the light, he proclaims, "Morning has come," revelation has come.

There are numerous sorts of revelation. There is the revelation of the light of delight, of will, of intellect, of emotion that are intense revelations in terms of their nature, the revelations of the light of the garments of the soul—thought and

speech. All revelations are "letters" of the powers and garbs of the soul. The written letters of the Torah appear in three forms—large, intermediate, and small. In the Attributes each represents a different category, the large letters are *bina*, the intermediate are the emotive Attributes, and the small are *malchus*. The size of the written letter indicates that it is of a higher category, even though the shape of the letters is identical. This would apply to voice too, "great voice" indicating a higher category. This is true regardless of where the voice originates. There is the great voice addressed downward from Above, "The sound of the shofar was exceedingly mighty" (Ex. 19:16), and "A great voice, unending" (Deut. 5:19). Or man below addresses G-d, as in "They cried out in great voice," in Nechemia, and "They called out to G-d vigorously" in Jonah 3:8. The "great voice" attains greater heights for it comes from the depths of the heart. Because he is concerned deep within himself he cries out with a strong voice.

But the scornful strictures of the sages about prayers out loud? Rashi explains that it appears from the shouting that the worshipper is uncertain whether G-d can hear a whispered prayer, so he feels it is safer to shout, therefore the sages describe this person as "small in faith." Another simple reason is that loud prayers disturb others in worship. All this applies to regular worship which should be whispered. But in a time of distress the inward spark that binds man to G-d is revealed in every man in simple faith in G-d who works wonders. The fear of disturbing others is no concern here, for if anything, one's spirited and impassioned worship will move others, arouse them to repent as well. This sort of prayer must be with "great voice." Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur are designated to awaken the inwardness, the essence, as is explained elsewhere, and worship must then be with an inward awakening of the heart and great voice.

#### *S u m m a r y*

"Letter" is revelation; "morning has come"; manifestation of the powers and garbs of the soul is "letters"; written letters

in three magnitudes, large, intermediate, and small; same variations in voice; prayer must be with "great voice," from the depths of the heart, for then it is the revelation of the spark binding men to G-d, and arouses others to repent.

## CHAPTER 2

What is the reason that a cry with "great voice" awakens the inwardness and essence of the Infinite? The whole subject needs clarification. Is it not true that to Him all are equal, so what difference is there if he prays in a whisper or aloud? What merit is there in the "great voice?" Isn't the important thing the prayer?

The prayer is indeed what matters, and prayer is oneness and binding. Through prayer the soul is bound up with G-d. This compels the prayer to be with voice, indicating the arousal of his soul in its true attachment to G-d. True means maintaining one straight line from beginning to end. Every manifestation reveals only a certain part of what is concealed within. Truth means that the concealed inwardness manifests itself in its entirety, just as it is in its essence-state. Since this manifestation comes with deep feeling in the depths and inwardness of the heart, it comes necessarily with strong voice.

Zohar says that "Spirit evokes spirit and bestows spirit." Since he is touched so profoundly, he calls, and calls forth the inwardness and essence of the Infinite. The souls of Israel are rooted in the internal, so they can reveal the depths of the inward spark of their hearts, that it manifest itself as it is in the deepest recesses. Thus they are enabled to arouse the inwardness and essence of the Infinite, meaning to receive the beneficence from the internal aspect of the encompassing. But the souls of Israel simply cannot receive from the external aspect, for they have nothing to do with the external.

Only idolators can receive from the external because their entire nurture is from the hinderpart and external, while Israel are rooted in the inward from which they receive nurture, but not from the external. When Israel sin they are punished with

exile, with humiliation, until they return to G-d and cry out from the inner depths of the heart. Then they arouse the great mercies from the source of mercies, meaning the internal of the encompassing.

The Jew may "bless himself in his heart saying, he shall have peace for he goes by what his heart sees." He imagines that he will receive from the external aspect as do the *kelipot* and "other side" who elevate themselves to receive from there, and as do the idolators in this mundane world, and these do receive bounteously, without reckoning. He pictures himself like them. This is a lie. This is self-delusion. He fools himself imagining that he will receive from the external. Israel cannot receive from external of the encompassing, only from the internal of the system of progression (and in its source, from the internal aspect of the encompassing, as noted). From there nurture is with judgment and reckoning. What he does receive is doomed to be terminated. There are many wicked who succeed at the outset but their wealth and success are temporary, for all is with a reckoning.

The initial success of the wicked has two reasons. First, they are not devoid of good, and for some good deeds "man enjoys their fruits in this world and the principal is preserved for the Coming World."<sup>48</sup> Second, we have explained (VII:4) that so long as the good within him has not been destroyed, then the *kelipot* are nurtured with additional vitality from the holy, and he takes his share first. Hence he is granted material goods lavishly. But later the nurture is stopped, he becomes impoverished, afflicted physically, isolated from mankind. Many men of wealth have undesirable character traits, even repugnant ones, they are egocentric, arrogant. As long as he has his wealth, "many are the friends of the wealthy."<sup>49</sup> Certainly they are not deluded into forgetting that their wealth is honored not they themselves, yet they are so deceived about their own character that they are impudent to their Maker. But when the

48 Peah I:1.

49 Cf. Prov. 13:20.

wealth is gone and they are poor then they recognize their true nature, full of men's defects and failings.

Inevitably the prosperity of the wicked must end, for Israel's nurture is from the inward, with judgment, with reckoning. The exception is "He repays the wicked to his face, to destroy him" (Deut. 7:10), one who lacks all merit. But if he does have merit of some sort, he is included in the community of Israel, he cannot receive without a reckoning. Everything is according to accounting, because of the nature of inwardness, his source and root.

### Summary

Worship binds soul to G-d; when the manifest is like the concealed, that is truth; worship is with strong voice and arouses the essence; Israel receive only from the inward; those whose success does not accord with Torah, succeed for two reasons, (1) reward, (2) bounty bestowed on *kelipot*, and inevitably ends.

### CHAPTER 3

"What you intend shall not come to pass, that you say, we shall be like the nations (we shall cast off His yoke from our shoulders since He has repudiated us—Rashi) like the families of the lands, to serve wood and stone. I swear, says G-d, if need be by a mighty hand and outstretched arm and pouring wrath (to annihilate the wicked and rebellious—Radak) shall I rule over you" (Ezekiel 20:32, 33).

*Midrash Tanchuma (Nitzavim 3)*: When (Israel) desired to cast off the burden of the oath (of G-d) in Ezekiel's day, what is written? "Men have come from the elders of Israel to inquire of G-d" (Ez. 20:1). They asked of him, "If a *kohen* purchases a bondsman, may he eat *truma*?" He replied, "He may eat." They continued, "If the *kohen* then sells him to an Israelite, does he not leave his jurisdiction?" He replied, "He does" (leave the custody of the *kohen* for the Israelite's)." The elders concluded, "We too have already gone out of His custody.

Let us be like all the nations." The Prophet then spoke to Israel. "What you intend shall not come to pass . . . I swear, says G-d, if need be by a mighty arm. . . ." He explained to the people: "So long as the *kohen* has not sold him, the bondsman is still in his possession. You have not been sold for money. Isaiah has said (52:3), 'Thus said G-d, for nothing were you sold.' In Deuteronomy (29:12) we have, 'To establish you this day as His nation, and He will be your G-d, as He spoke to you and as He swore to your fathers Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.' G-d swore not to renege on what He swore to your fathers."

The idea that occurred to them to be like all the nations and receive their nurture from the "other side" through receiving from the encompassing, this shall not be. "I swear, says G-d, with a mighty hand will I rule over you." You are already bound to me by oath. Israel are G-d's portion, for He chose them, and they chose Him, and they are of the inwardness. They are incapable of receiving their vitality and beneficence from the externality as do all the nations. They must get from the inward, and through keeping Torah and mitzvos.

Because of the profound love from the inwardness, the essence, of the Infinite (the inward of the encompassing), He compels them to accept upon themselves the yoke of His kingdom. "If need be, by a mighty hand."

The Midrash (*Bamidbar Rabba* 2:16): Though "You are not My people" (Hosea 1:9), for you wish to separate from Me, still, "I shall not be with you," meaning I shall not agree with you, for by force will you be My people. This is the sense of, "What you intend shall not come to pass . . . if need be by a mighty hand . . . I shall rule over you." We learn here how beloved Israel are of G-d.

This is due to the inward love that is relevant to Israel alone. Because of this, the compelling may take harsh forms. Rabbi Nachman implored (*Sanhedrin* 105a), "If only we were visited 'with fury and with pouring wrath shall I rule over you,' that we be redeemed against our will, and that He rule over us. Let G-d be furious with us—and redeem us!"

The inward cry arouses the inwardness and essence of the

Infinite where the afflictions of Israel do reach.

What have we of all this? Anyone blessing himself in his heart saying, he shall have peace even if he commits sin, is merely the victim of the blandishments and deceptions of the *yetzer hara*, the evil impulse, that conceals and turns him from the way of truth. Whoever is the "man who desires life" must control his heart and not be deflected by the falsehoods of the *yetzer hara*. He must know his way well and what his duty is and then he will confidently pursue the path of fulfilling Torah and mitzvos, without turning aside to the right or the left according to the *yetzer hara's* urgings. He will ignore the *yetzer hara*, whose every word is founded on falsehood, whose intention is only to test him. His heart will comprehend the truth. He will serenely tread the path of Torah and mitzvos. Then he will live, a spiritual life, and a physical life.

*S u m m a r y*

Those who say, let us be like all nations, to receive from the external, are punished sternly, so they might return in repentance; because of the inward love for them, they may be compelled to do so through severe measures; let G-d be furious with us, but redeem us; one must understand the deceptions of the *yetzer hara* and be careful about Torah and mitzvos, and he will live, spiritually and physically.

*Discourse Twelve*

CHAPTER I

Another blandishment of the *yetzer hara* is that no one will see him, for the sinner does not want others to know of his failings. Rabbi Yochanan ben Zaccai blessed his pupils (Berachos 28b), "May your fear of Heaven be like your fear of flesh and blood." His pupils protested, "And no more?" He responded, "If it could be that strong, for then you will not

sin. When someone commits a sin (secretly, out of fear of other people, knowing that everything is revealed to G-d, yet he does not desist—Rashi), he says, I hope no one sees me.”

In this manner the *yetzer hara* deceives man, persuading him that no one will see or ever know of his misdeeds. But it isn't so. People do see and do know and do recognize him for what he is. Without fail he will do something to make people suspicious. In truth, he will indulge so many desires urged on him by the *yetzer hara* that he will do stupid things that no rational person could understand. It is only his *yetzer hara* that makes him go against his own reason and his Creator's reason, impelling him to stupidity. People then become suspicious. They become curious about his true nature. A word, a movement, and one betrays himself, revealing what lies deep within himself, and what he displays is not good. We are not discussing actual sinful speech, like lying, or malicious gossip, or slander, and vulgarity. We include an innocent story told casually, nothing more, it would seem, than idle chatter. But actually, this conversation could reveal the inner evil.

Even a look can reveal so much about a person. Sometimes one looks deliberately and eagerly at something he ought not, and with this he demonstrates the full degree of evil within him.

Even if men are not aware of his personal deficiencies, everything is known to G-d. “If a man hide in secret places, will I not see him” (Jeremiah 23:24). There is an expression, “All is open and known to You. Nothing is concealed from You, nothing is hidden from Your eyes.”<sup>50</sup> G-d, who does know, reveals his actions and makes them known. “Whoever defiles G-d's Name in secret is repaid in public” (Avos 4:4). Rashi defines “defiling G-d's Name in secret” as committing sin privately. (The definition here cannot be the literal one. Profanation of the Name must be public, else it is not “profanation.” The intention in Avos, Rashi makes plain, is simply commission of sin.) “He is repaid in public,” Rashi describes as public

50 Yom Kippur liturgy.

disclosure of his sname, as we find, "Hatred is covered with deceit, yet his evil will be revealed in public" (Proverbs 26:26). Rashi interprets this verse, "If one does his deeds in darkness, and conceals in the murky darkness this act despised by G-d, eventually G-d will disclose his evil publicly, that all may recognize that he is wicked. Why such stringency? So that the Name of Heaven be not desecrated through him. For if men would not know his true character, they would argue, So-and-so is so wise and does so much good, yet he suffers so."

His confidence that no one will see is just more nonsense of the *yetzer hara*. We know that those who are more refined, sensitive, and men of intelligence, are not as susceptible to foolishness as are coarser men. Emotional people, because they are impassioned and excitable, are more liable to be receptive to nonsense. They delude themselves more easily. The *yetzer hara*, being animal-like and emotive, misleads man in various ways. Whoever follows the guidance of the *yetzer hara* simply accepts its folly and misdirection. He imagines that no one realizes his misdeeds.

#### *S u m m a r y*

Man instinctively cherishes his privacy, and certainly wants no one to know his wrong-doing; fear of Heaven like fear of flesh and blood; man's speech and actions betray the degree of evil he harbors; G-d discloses his evil publicly; the *yetzer hara* impetuously accepts nonsense and misleads the person.

## *Discourse Thirteen*

### CHAPTER I

There is a debilitating element in this evil, and that is man's inveterate attempts to justify himself regardless of the act he actually performed. It is characteristic of man that no matter what is involved—whether good or bad, a matter of opinions or traits and conduct, a concern between man and G-d or some-

thing between man and man or something of purely personal nature—if it is good he attributes it to himself, and if it is unfavorable someone else is invariably responsible. The cause is simply natural self-love that so effectively conceals his every misdeed that he is blissfully unaware that he himself is culpable and even regards himself as virtuous.

It is indisputable that immaturity is the cause of shortcomings, and that the environment wields a powerful influence for ill. When they combine, the effects are even worse. But his own role is decisive, for he selects his companions and environment. At the very least he should not cast the full blame on someone else, and certainly not claim unsullied virtue for himself. But this is human nature; his high regard for himself harms him in this manner.

It is not unknown for *baalei teshuvah*, repentants, to have this fault. They are bitterly remorseful for the original misdeed, but still they find some exoneration for themselves, some excuse. It may be his passionate nature that was at fault, one may feel. It was so strong that he was unable to restrain his temper or his speech or thought from saying or thinking about something forbidden. If he sinned in a deed, he contends that he could not control himself, though he realized that it was forbidden, that it would destroy his soul and possibly even harm him physically, but alas, his passion was not to be denied. Or he might find another to blame, a tempter who led him off the path of righteousness, while of his accord he would have behaved properly.

This is all a self-delusion growing from self-love. That is the only reason he justifies himself. The excuse of uncontrollable passion is rubbish. His natural passion comes from his natural, animal soul. But he was given a Divine soul exactly for the purpose of overpowering the animal soul. The service of subduing the animal soul is the sole purpose in creating him; that's why he was born. There are angels who serve G-d with love and awe, who are in a constant state of *bitul*, of utter nullity in His presence, so why should G-d bother creating man? But angels have no *yetzer hara*; there is nothing novel in their serv-

ice of G-d; it is natural and inevitable, routine. But man was created with an impulse to evil and an impulse to good, so that the good within him might overpower the evil impulse. Thus man creates delight Above, since this is something original, novel, not inevitable by any means, as is elsewhere explained. When the natural soul is more gross, and the natural passion is more compelling, there is no question but his Divine soul possesses unusually potent powers. He is perfectly capable of controlling his natural desires. Man's burden never exceeds his strength. "The load is according to the camel" (Kesubos 67a). Since he has strong natural desires, he doubtless has equally strong spiritual powers, to use in overcoming his desires.

#### *S u m m a r y*

Man naturally blames his evil and shortcomings on others and takes credit for his qualities and virtues; self-adoration causes this error and is the root of defect; the excuse of uncontrollable desires is false; man's superiority over angels.

#### CHAPTER 2

But where does the Divine soul get the strength to dominate the animal soul? "The first is righteous in his quarrel" (Proverbs 18:17). *Metzudos* explains that the first to argue his side is deemed right, for he can flavor his words and be persuasive, there being none to dispute him. When two antagonists come simultaneously to plead their cases, each weakens the other. This is not the case where one comes to present his cause with no antagonist to argue the opposite and dissuade the hearers.

The animal and divine souls are antagonistic. The animal soul inhabits the body at birth. Sanhedrin (91b) says, "When does the *yetzer hara* rule man . . . from the time he leaves the womb." *Bereshis Rabba* (*Nouch* 34:12) interprets the word *min'urav* (from his youth, in Gen. 8:21) as "from the moment he is aroused to leave the womb." The divine soul inhabits the body at thirteen, the age of religious obligation. Midrash *Koheles* on the verse (4:13), "A lad, poor and wise, is better than

an old and foolish king," explains that the "poor but wise lad" is the *yetzer tov*, the impulse to good, that is called "lad" because he attaches to man from the age of thirteen, while the "old and foolish king" is the *yetzer hara*, called "old" because he attaches to man from childhood to old age. Similar thoughts are expressed in Zohar *Vayeshev* 179a.

To forewarn an objection—the Talmud, and also the cited Midrash *Noach* (see *Matnos Kehuna* there), do declare that the soul is given man at the time of conception, but this refers to "giving" the soul but not to its effectiveness, which begins at thirteen. The claims of the *yetzer hara* then do precede those of the *yetzer tov*.

This is true of the body as well. Bodily gratifications, like food, drink, and the like, are immediate to the child, he is accustomed to them, and the habit is deeply ingrained. If his environment encourages gross satisfactions, this is even more true, and his undesirable or evil habits become imbedded in him. "Habit becomes nature, or second nature,"<sup>51</sup> most difficult to escape.

The divine soul has not had an opportunity to settle within him yet. Small wonder that the animal soul is so much stronger than the divine, and is properly called "old king." His claims are earlier, he dominates in all the body's affairs, and is a veteran, experienced in persuading men to pursue gross physical matters. The divine soul is a mere stripling, compared to its opponent, and labors under another handicap, for which he is called "poor." His purpose is spiritual, while man, attracted to the material and accustomed to worldly grossness, regards spiritual matters rather contemptuously, as "poor." Material things matter to man; they are his wealth and importance. Of course the animal soul is stronger. Where then, we are baffled, does the divine soul get the vigor to overcome its formidable opponent?

The problem is even more involved when we explore the origins of the two souls. The animal soul is rooted in *tohu*

51 Cf. Tanya I, chapter 14.

while the divine soul is rooted in *tikun*, which is on a lower plane than *tohu*. "These are the kings who reigned in the land of Edom before a king ruled Israel" (Gen. 36:31). These represent the "seven primal kings of *tohu*" that preceded *tikun*. The ability of the divine soul to master the animal soul is all the more puzzling.

However, when we examine carefully what we learned earlier (X:2), we find that in their sources the divine soul does have precedence. The system of progression is rooted, on a plane higher than this system, in the *inwardness* of the encompassing. This is true too of *tohu* and *tikun*. In the essence of the Infinite, *tikun* is rooted higher than the roots of *tohu*. In this sense Jacob was the *bechor*, the firstling. Jacob and Esau are symbols of *tikun* and *tohu*. Esau was born first as *tohu* preceded *tikun*. But this refers only to birth, to revelation, but Jacob did have a precedence. Rashi observes on the verse, "His hand seizing the heel of Esau" (Gen. 25:26), that this is comparable to a tube—what enters first leaves last; Jacob was conceived of the first seminal drop. In his source Jacob, or *tikun*, is higher than Esau, or *tohu*.

Let us apply this to the animal and divine souls. The divine soul, in its source, is superior to the animal soul. This gives it the strength to overcome the animal soul. It derives strength from its source, and since its source is higher than that of the animal soul, it follows that it does possess the power to dominate the animal soul. The advantage of the animal soul lies in its earlier effectiveness and influence over the body, but since the divine soul has a higher source to draw strength from, it has the ultimate power.

#### *S u m m a r y*

The animal soul, rooted in *tohu*, comes to man sooner than the divine soul, rooted in *tikun*; it bases itself in physical habits that are naturally attracted to the gross; *tohu* appears before *tikun*, *tikun* is rooted higher than *tohu*; hence the divine soul can dominate the animal soul.

*Discourse Fourteen*

## CHAPTER I

We can now understand the Talmud (Niddah 30b), "He is besworn be righteous and do not be wicked." This oath is administered after he has been taught all the Torah. "I have made souls," (Isaiah 57:16), and in Tanya (chapter 1 and 2) we learn:

"The *neshamot* which I have made," (alluding to) two souls. There is one soul which originates in the *kelipah* and *sitra ahra*, and which is clothed in the blood of a human being, giving life to the body, as is written, "For the life of the flesh is in the blood." From it stem all the evil characteristics deriving from the four evil elements which are contained in it. There are: anger and pride, which emanate from the element of Fire, the nature of which is to rise upwards; the appetite for pleasures—from the element of Water, for water makes to grow all kinds of enjoyment; frivolity and scoffing, boasting and idle talk—from the element of Air; and sloth and melancholy—from the element of Earth. From this soul stem also the good characteristics which are to be found in the innate nature of all Israel. For example, mercy and benevolence are derived from it. For in the case of Israel, this soul of the *kelipah* is derived from *kelipat nogah*, which also contains good, as it originates in the esoteric "Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil. . . ."

The second soul of (the people of) Israel is truly a part of G-d above, as it is written, "and He breathed into his nostrils the breath of life," and "Thou didst breathe it (the soul) into me." And it is written in the *Zohar*, "He who exhales, exhales from within him," that is to say, from his inwardness and his innermost, for it is something of his internal and innermost vitality that man emits through breathing out with force.

So, allegorically speaking, have the souls of Jews risen in the (Divine) thought, as it is written, "My firstborn son is Israel," and "Ye are children unto the L-rd your G-d." That is to say, just as a child is derived from his father's brain, so—to use an anthropomorphism—the soul of each Israelite is derived from G-d's (blessed be He) thought and wisdom. For He is wise—but not through a knowable wisdom, because He and His wisdom are one.

Isaiah's statement about *souls* refers to the divine soul and the animal soul. The divine soul is taught all of Torah and it is besworn to be righteous and not to be wicked. But we should understand, how can the divine soul commit the animal soul? The capacity for evil lies in the province of the animal soul, for it is the source of evil traits like anger, arrogance, indulgence, frivolity, boastfulness, idle talk, sloth and melancholy. What is the meaning of the divine soul swearing about this?

The Hebrew word *shvuah*, for oath, is similar to *sovah*, satiety. *Sovah* represents the powers granted man from Above to enable him to perform his service of studying Torah and observing mitzvos. In the physical sense, when man's hunger is satisfied he is not only vigorous in body but in spirit as well. "We were sated with bread and fared well" (Jer. 44:17). The quotation from Niddah above, begins with *mashbi'in*, for oath, but also implies satisfaction, satiety, endowment of strength from his earliest source and root to be able to overcome the animal soul and refrain from being wicked.

This is also the simple meaning of the word oath. When one swears to do something, he will be compelled to fulfill his oath regardless of obstacles and difficulties. No excuse will be acceptable. He must perform. The pledge will help him call upon latent essence-powers. "Nothing can withstand will."<sup>52</sup> This is the significance of the oath administered the divine soul, that he call forth latent strengths he possesses by virtue of his origin. Then there will be no hindrance by the animal soul, for he will overpower it.

52. An illustrative story is in "On Learning Chassidus," p. 51 ff.

Man's excuse that his natural passion was too strong to restrain is punctured. His divine soul is superior and earlier in its source than the animal soul, and man has strength deriving from his source, so he does have the ability to dominate his animal soul, even if the latter is strong. The strength of the animal soul comes from its first source in *tohu* and because of its source in *kelipat nogah*. But the divine soul is rooted far higher than *tohu*, and has the greater force to overpower the animal soul. When the natural passions wax hot, it indicates that the divine soul is correspondingly more vigorous too.

But this is a matter for man's choice. If he truly desires not to be deflected from the path of G-d, he will arouse within himself the tremendous strength of the Divine soul and vanquish the animal soul. His inability to control his animal passions stems from his failure to call forth these powers. From Above he has been granted powers to resist the animal soul and conquer it. It depends on him to arouse this powerful force of the divine soul within him.

#### *S u m m a r y*

The animal soul is rooted in *tohu* and *kelipat nogah*, and from it derive the undesirable traits like anger, arrogance, indulgence, frivolity, scoffing, boastfulness, idle talk, laziness, moroseness, and traits of compassion and kindness; the divine soul is rooted higher than *tohu*, is part of G-d above literally; the oath is ability to arouse latent powers to overcome the animal soul.

#### CHAPTER 4

The second excuse, someone misled me, is no true defense, for by right he should avoid evil companions and not befriend the wicked. Influence of companions is potent, for whatever effect. Good companions bring benefit. Torah study requires companionship, as we find, "Two are better than one". (Koheles 4:9), and as the Talmud (Berachos 63b) comments on, "The sword is upon the *badim*" (Jer. 50:36). There is the

mutual encouragement that the reverent offer one another. Man is unable to recognize his own failings because of self-love, love conceals all sins, that he fails to admit his faults. But his comrade sees and knows more than he, and reproves him, and persuades him that his behavior was not as it should be, and that his purpose in life is to live in the proper manner. This can have a profound effect.

Conversely, evil companions have an evil effect. They persuade him to abandon the proper path and cause him to do things he never would of his own accord. This is quite common, that people intrinsically disposed to decency become evil purely because of the company they keep. Our sages caution us in Avos (1:6), "Acquire a comrade," obviously a desirable companion, for you will receive a great deal from him. Then, "Avoid an evil neighbor and do not befriend the wicked." In Succah (56b) we find, "Woe to the wicked; woe to his neighbor." Rashi makes a similar observation on the words, "Korach took" (Numbers 38:1). There is no doubt but an evil companion will have an evil influence. Man condemns himself by selecting harmful friends.

He attempts to justify himself by appealing to his first misstep as an excuse, his choice of companions, and this is no justification. It is only inordinate self-love that impels him to seek out some excuse, even a false one, even an instance of his own guilt. The effect of this attempt to find an excuse is that he will not feel remorse and repent his faults properly. There is "repentance of balance," enduring hardship to balance the pleasure derived sinfully. He will not exercise this degree of repentance, because he doesn't feel he has done so terrible a sin, so why torment himself unduly? But then the repentance itself will be profoundly affected by his self-exoneration. His remorse for the past and his resolve for the future will not be as penetrating. Remorse and resolve depend on the bitterness of his soul. When he is deeply anguished by his sin and wrong, then he will truly regret and uproot his desire from the sin, and his resolve for a better future will be a true one. But if he ex-

cuses himself then his remorse is less intense and the repentance and resolve are weaker.

His self-justification deprives him of so much good in the repentance proper and in his potential improvement. (Through true repentance he is radically changed, from wicked to righteous. His very character becomes different. He is alienated from whatever is contrary to G-dliness. When his repentance is not true then naturally he is not changed as much and is not as alienated from evil.)

This is similar to the folly that precedes sin. That folly leads him into sin, and the folly of self-justification prevents his repentance from being as effective as it ought to be. In one sense it is even worse than the first folly. When one has sinned, but repents from the very depths of heart, the Talmud declares (Berachos 34b), "Where the repentant stand the perfectly righteous cannot stand." This latter folly prevents him from attaining this height. It is more harmful even than his initial foolishness, for it is a barrier to incalculable good. It stands between him and the true repentance that would lead him to greatness.

#### *S u m m a r y*

A good companion helps discover defects of the spirit, aids in uprooting evil attitudes and traits and in acquiring good ones; an evil companion implants evil attitudes and traits; the excuse that friends misled him causes his repentance to be faulty; this folly is worse than the one that caused him to sin.

## *Discourse Fifteen*

### CHAPTER 1

Man as man must know, as indeed every thoughtful person does, that man is the chosen of Creation, the select of all G-d's works, not only of His physical creatures, but including the hosts of heaven as well. Man is the central of all creatures, of

the spiritual beings and the physical ones. Whatever G-d created, man included, are composites of body and soul, a trait held in common by the terrestrial hosts and the celestial. They are not identical by any means, for one is composed of physical matter while the other is ethereal, "He made His angels spirit, His attendants flaming fire" (Psalm 104:4). Still both possess body and soul. The celestial beings, ethereal as they are, possess bodies, and the physical beings, palpable as they are, possess souls. The fundamental difference is that for the celestial beings form<sup>53</sup> naturally has dominance over substance, while for the physical beings substance naturally has dominance over form.

Body and soul correspond and conform to each other. Though essentially they are opposites, soul being spiritual and body physical, and spiritual and physical are direct opposites, still the two do conform to each other and complement each other. This is another of the wondrous works of the "upright in thought" in His *creatio ex nihilo* and combining *thing* and *no-thing*. It is only in the province of the Creator to perform such works of joining spirit and body in such consonance and harmony that they seem to have been one in their essential characters from their creation. Hence the body and soul are called *or* and *keli*, "light" and "vessel," soul being light and body being vessel.

G-d created man's body differently from other physical bodies. All creatures were made by the fiat of G-d. With the appropriate command of G-d (i.e. "Let there be . . ."), the body was created, it was instantly invested with the soul, and both (body and soul) simultaneously appeared on the face of the earth. For example, on the third day G-d said, "Let the earth be covered with greenery, grass bearing seed, fruit trees bearing fruit according to its kind whose seed is in it, on the earth; and it was so" (Gen. 1:11). The earth gave forth grasses and trees, each in its form, with the vegetative soul within it. So too animals came forth from the earth as they are, alive. The waters swarmed with living creatures. In all these cases the crea-

53 "On the Teachings of Chassidus."

tures came into being, the body and the animating soul within it simultaneously.

The method of creating man was different. First He created the body of man by itself, dust of the earth, without any animating soul within it. "G-d formed man dust of the earth" (Gen. 2:7). First man was an inert clod, and then "He breathed into his nostrils the breath of life." Man's body did not come forth from the earth with the animating spirit in it as was the case with other creatures. First He made his body, creating it from the most gross matter, inert, "dust of the earth." Man was a lifeless mass. Compared to other beings, this is a lowly state. Granted, the others were also "of the earth," but their bodies and souls appeared as one. Man was lifeless at the outset and only later did he receive the breath of life.

It is an intriguing question—why indeed did G-d vary the method of creating man's body from that of other bodies? It would seem that this variation was not complimentary to man. The other creatures, formed from the earth as they were, never appeared in the crudeness of lifeless clods, but instantly were animated bodies. Man appeared at first in the base form of inert dust, and only later did G-d breathe into him the breath of life. Nonetheless, man is the choice of the creatures, the central creature of all Creation!

#### *S u m m a r y*

All creatures, celestial and terrestrial, possess body and soul; in celestial beings, ethereal in body, form naturally dominates substance; in terrestrial beings, physical in body, substance naturally dominates form; body and soul are vessel and light, in consonance; G-d varied the manner of forming man's body.

#### CHAPTER 2

This difference in the method of creation, whereby all creatures were formed in their character and structure while man was formed of the dust, first body and then was he given a soul, is not a debasement of man but indeed a quality. His very

creation from the dust indicates the lofty nature of the soul.

There are four grand divisions of creatures—inert, vegetable, animate, and articulate. The lowliest is the inert; the exalted is the articulate. Man's uniqueness as the chosen of the creatures led to the unique method of the creation of his body. The very stuff of which G-d formed his body, dust of the earth, the most gross of all matter, indicates that the soul is the loftiest of all.

There is a principle that the highest of all descends lowest of all. When a stone wall collapses, the lower stones fall close to the wall, while the topmost stones fall at the greatest distance from the wall. The higher the stone was, the further it falls from the base.

This applies spiritually as well, in reference to the souls of all living things. Since man's soul is loftiest of all, G-d gave it a body of the most gross sort of matter, for man is capable of refining and purifying this matter. The meanest crudeness and finest spiritual quality reside within man.

Some people have characters far worse than wild beasts of prey. They are clever in devising ways to oppress others, to make others uncomfortable, to harm them. They can rob, they can kill, in order to gratify their own desires. Generally this comes from the inclinations of the body, and the evil tendencies of the body have an evil effect on the soul. The body dominates the soul, exploiting the intellect to carry out criminal schemes. But the soul is intrinsically of the highest quality, and it is within man's grasp to attain the noblest heights of goodness and to rise to the most exalted summits of the spirit. There is a familiar account in *Reshis Chochma (Shaar Haahava 2)* of one who rose from the lowest degradation to spiritual peaks.

The Talmud observes (Chagiga 15a) that man is compared to the angels in three ways and in three ways to the animals. Man's bodily nature and tendencies are animalistic. A human who lives like an animal is lower than the beast, because it has no intelligence while man does. Man's soul with its nature and tendencies, are like the ministering angels', for he can attain the very loftiest spiritual heights. When man grows in intellect

he rises higher than the angels. The angels exist in a spiritual world, as Moses pointed out, "Have you any impulse to evil?"<sup>54</sup> But man in his mundane environment conceiving the most abstract of what we can know of G-d, whose intellectual achievements impel him with a thirst to cleave to G-d, this man towers above the angels. With his service he elevates the physical universe.

Now we can begin to unravel the conundrum of man's creation. He was created differently from all other creatures, and his body is of the most crude and gross matter, for his soul has the ability to bring light into the grossest darkness and to convert the darkness of the crude body to light. This indeed is the ultimate purpose in creating man and the descent of his soul into the physical world.

#### *S u m m a r y*

The higher falls lower; a stone low on a wall falls close to the wall, and one high on the wall falls far from the wall; man's bodily tendencies are more base than the beast's and his soul's tendencies are more exalted than the ministering angels'; man can convert darkness to light.

#### CHAPTER 3

There is a superior quality in the mundane world over the higher spiritual worlds, and a superior quality in the descent of the soul to invest itself in a physical body and natural soul over its previous status in Gan Eden in perfect *bitul* and unity with G-d. In Tanya Ch. 36 the Rebbe writes that the "ultimate purpose in creating This World is that G-d desired to have for Himself an abode among the lowly." This is the system of

<sup>54</sup> Shabbos 88b. When Moses ascended Sinai to receive the Torah, the ministering angels scornfully asked, "What is man that You consider him?" Torah is too sublime for lowly mortals. G-d told Moses to answer, and he pointed out that prohibitions like those against stealing and false witness, commandments like honoring parents, etc. are relevant only to mortals, not to angels, for, "Have you any impulse to evil?"

downward progression of worlds, the descent from stage to stage through numerous "garments" that conceal the Light and vitality issuing from Him. At the end of the descent we have the creation of this gross physical universe. It is the lowest stage, with none inferior in terms of concealment of His Light and of impenetrable darkness, so much so that this world is full of *kelipot* and the "other side" that are actually in opposition to G-d. They proclaim, "I, and there is none else."<sup>55</sup> This means that the goal of the descent of the spiritual worlds is for this lowly world, because such was His will that He derive gratification when the "other side" is humbled and darkness converted to light. For this purpose man was given the ability and strength to be able to overcome the animal soul.

The service of purifying and clarifying the body and animal soul is like warfare. Man must realize that the animal soul and *yetzer hara* are his implacable enemies whose aim is his spiritual death. They attack him with connivance, seducing him with smooth tongues. Ingeniously they ensnare him, to deflect him from the course of true life of observing Torah and mitzvos. A stratagem is use of permissible self-indulgence at first, and then imperceptibly he moves from the desirable<sup>56</sup> to the barely acceptable until he becomes accustomed to any number of desires. His ability to desire becomes so well developed and habitual that he cannot restrain himself from looking casually or even closely where one must not. The eye sees and the heart lusts, and his spiritual strength becomes enervated so he cannot resist the flood of physical desires, until he falls completely under the domination of the *yetzer hara* and animal soul.

The process of purifying the body, clarifying it, must be through aggressive combat with them. Whenever the *yetzer hara* says Yes, he must retort with a forceful No to himself. Whatever the *yetzer hara* refuses, he must vigorously affirm. This opposition on principle is the way to "inform" the *yetzer hara* that he is a despised foe and will be fought.

<sup>55</sup> As in Isaiah 47:8, etc.

<sup>56</sup> There are "preferred" methods or standards for performing certain mitzvos, and there are "acceptable" standards *ex post facto*.

Part of the strategy of battle is to pay careful attention to trifles. Victory is not determined by numerical superiority and weaponry alone but mainly by the use of intelligence to mislead the foe. Often a victory is attained by outwitting an enemy more than through larger forces and better arms. This holds true in battles of the spirit. Lusts and sins are the weapons of the *yetzer hara* and its valor. The nonsensical excuses man uses to console and justify himself are the clever deceptive tactics of the *yetzer hara* and animal soul to capture even those who are impervious to lusts and sins.

For this reason it is possible that a perfect *tzaddik* can discover in himself foolishness of this order. Though it is subtle, incapable of leading to actual commission of wrong, still these refined failings are of critical importance and can cause terrible harm. For example, one may study Torah "for its sake" and assiduously, and worship with devotion and *kavana* of the finest order, thirsting for the spirit so that the flesh is repugnant to him. Yet when he takes credit for his accomplishments, and particularly when he is touched with arrogance, then pride can cast him low, so far that he destroys all the good he had wrought.

#### *S u m m a r y*

Man must know that the animal soul and *yetzer hara* are his deadly enemies; the physical world is the goal of the system of progression; man's service of converting darkness to light must be like war, attending to trivia; worse than sin and lust is stupid self-justification; arrogance can wreck the most outstanding in Torah and mitzvos.

#### CHAPTER 4

The person who studies Torah and engages in devout worship, yet occasionally blunders in finding excuses for himself in the environment and influences of others, is inferior to the simple man who does not study Torah and has no conception about worship. There is exoneration for the simple man, for he is not a man of Torah learning and he did nothing to corrupt

himself. How could he vitiate any merit he has? By being born with a brain that cannot absorb Torah ideas? What he can, he does, whether in speech or deed. He acts with simplicity and sincerity, worshipping, in a simple manner, reciting Psalms even though he cannot translate them, listening to public study of Mishna, *En Yaakov*, and *Pirkai Avos*. What shall he do if his mind cannot grasp ideas?

The fact is that simple people have more qualities than those of simplicity and sincerity. Their prayers and Psalms, without knowledge of the meaning, sincere and unsophisticated, come from the simple faith implanted in the heart of every Jew at birth. But beyond this, there is a quality in the service proper that is unique, unshared by the scholarly, particularly by scholars who engage in the "service of the heart." The simple man, since he does not know the meaning of the words he utters, derives no pleasure. He prays dutifully, "accepting the yoke" of mitzvos. He doesn't even realize that one can get pleasure from understanding the words.

This cannot be compared at all to the learned who knows what he is saying and enjoys the concepts conveyed by the words of prayer and Psalm. This is even more true for one who engages in protracted worship, savoring every word, meditating profoundly on the subject matter of the prayers. He will achieve *dvekus*, a cleaving, an attachment, with the concepts he comprehends. This is characteristic of the intellectual—through pondering a concept profoundly he attains a remarkable *dvekus* with exalting pleasure. "The wisdom of man illuminates his countenance."<sup>57</sup> He is deeply pleased with the magnitude of his intellectual grasp. He is revered by men who laud him as a Torah sage, as an intellectual in the knowledge of G-d.

But the simple man cannot even divine the meaning of the words, to say nothing of his inability to draw pleasure from them. In fact he is painfully troubled that he does not know the meaning of the words. In his low self-esteem his heart is broken in humility. His ignorance is a shame for himself, for

<sup>57</sup> Koheles 8:1.

which he castigates himself bitterly. Occasionally he will make some mistake in his prayers or in some passage because of his ignorance, and there will be those present to humiliate him. Nonetheless he is determined to pray, to chant the Psalms out loud and with a sweet voice. This comes only from the sincerity and fear of G-d, for all he performs comes from of his acceptance of the yoke of Heaven.

### *S u m m a r y*

The quality of the simple man's method of serving G-d through "accepting the yoke"; its superiority over the learned man's, especially one who engages in the service of the heart; these enjoy their scholarship which brings them to *dvekus*; the simple man is anguished over his ignorance and humiliated.

### CHAPTER 5

The Talmudist studies Torah profoundly, examining each halacha in all its details systematically, thoroughly mastering the differing opinions of the commentators, creating novellae with rigorous reasoning. Similarly, one may engage in the "service of the heart," with prolonged meditation during the worship on the subjects of the "inner Torah" he has studied. The subject penetrates deep within him, he feels it and assimilates it. Through this sensitivity and assimilation the subject achieves *dvekus* in his mind and he becomes attached to the subject.

There are two methods of profound study of concepts. One may study some specific subject, whether in "revealed Torah" or in the "inner Torah," immersing himself in his study. Intellectual "immersion" is identical with *dvekus*, for while immersed he is united and attached to the concept he is examining. This is true only for the time he is engaged in this profound study. But when he has learned it well, and understood it properly, and has turned to some other subject, then the depths he had reached earlier are forgotten.

The other method of profound study is to achieve assimi-

lation of the concept. Then the *dvekus* is like that of "first insight," constantly brilliant. Attaining this is a formidable aspect of the "service of the heart," in prolonged contemplation during worship.

(Returning to the opening of the chapter) —When the scholar is smug in his choice of serving G-d through industrious Torah study and engaging in worship—to say nothing of preening himself for these virtues—then he digs a pit and falls into it. One who falls into a hole is lower than other people standing or walking on the surface of the ground. One who falls into arrogance similarly falls into a far lower and debased state than the simple man's, for he seems to have lost all reason. Not only is his Torah as naught, his contemplative and prolonged prayer cannot be compared to that of the ordinary man who prays and recites Psalms "accepting the yoke."

"Man's arrogance humbles him" (Proverbs 29:23), for pride degrades a man. The sin of arrogance impairs the first two letters of G-d's Name, the *yud* and *hai*. *Gaava*, arrogance, is the numerical equivalent of fifteen, the sum of those two letters, indicating that arrogance reaches to those letters. This can give us an idea of his fall, which is not at all in measure with his service. His service was through the faculties *chochma* and *bina* of his soul that also parallel the two letters, but here the letters are those of man's soul. But arrogance impairs the two letters in G-d's Name, which cannot be at all compared to man's intellect.

*Hishtalshelus* (the system of downward progression) was created from the final of the four letters of the Name, the latter *hai*. "The Coming World was created by the *yud*," the World that is the reward for pure service. The proud and boastful impair the *yud-hai*.

Even if he has not fallen to the low state of actually boasting, but regards himself with satisfaction, he is still far lower and meaner than the simple man we have discussed. Apart from the substance of what the simple man actually does, praying and reciting Psalms, he performs to the maximum of his abili-

ties. Since he does not understand, what more can he do? In addition, his very worship proper is by "accepting the yoke," a most sublime level of service. In the daily prayers, *Shema*, the acceptance of the yoke of Heaven, precedes *Vehaya*, the acceptance of the Commandments. For accepting the Heavenly yoke is the foundation and root of service. A building rests on its foundation, and "accepting the yoke" is the foundation of all service.

By self-satisfaction the learned shows that all his service of G-d was serving himself. It is precisely like all pleasures and desires that one pursues on his own behalf, like appetites for food and drink and so on. His complacency corrupts all the divine service into personal pleasure and self-love. Not only is his service no service at all, he impairs his soul and soils himself gravely. A stain on a precious garment is worse than on ordinary clothing. What would not be considered a sin or transgression for an ordinary person is criminal for a scholar who studies and worships with *dvekus*. The Talmud (Yevamos 121b) declares that "G-d is exacting to a hairsbreadth with those who surround Him," based on the passage, "Round about Him it storms" (Psalm 50:3).

This is readily understood. A common person can do all sorts of improper things simply because he doesn't know or understand, but the scholar knows well enough to beware. Anyone can understand that the punishment for the knowledgeable is far more than for the ignorant. In addition, there are many acts that performed by a simple man do not profane G-d's Name, while performed by a scholar become grave offenses. "If I take from the butcher . . ." (Yoma 86a).<sup>58</sup> So too with those matters that are between man and G-d. This is what the sages intended with, "G-d is exacting with those surrounding Him."

#### *S u m m a r y*

One who studies Torah profoundly, engages in prolonged

58 . . . without paying promptly (for he will call me a thief, and learn to trifle with dishonesty—Rashi).

worship meditating until he assimilates the concept, yet feels satisfaction with himself, is lower than the illiterate; the arrogant impairs the *yud-hai*; "accepting the yoke of Heaven" is the foundation of service.

## Discourse Sixteen

### CHAPTER I

The cause for the scholarly and the worshipper becoming arrogant and smug in his virtue is, again, folly. Arrogance is foolishness, for "the prideful are stupid." What is he so proud of? If for his intelligence, that is not his at all. It is part of what the sages meant in Avos (chapter 3), "Give Him of His, for you and yours are His." In the prayers we say, "You grant man knowledge," since it is something granted from Above. If he is proud of his assiduous study, that too might be natural for him, because he is an introvert. Even if he compelled himself to industrious study, G-d gave him the strength to achieve. His "service of the heart" with love and *dvekus* comes from strength given him. Why should a lowly mortal take pride in what is not his?

Therefore our Rabbis declare, "If you studied much Torah, do not claim credit for yourself" (Avos 2:9). The Mishna does give a reason there, "For you were created for this purpose," but this is an additional reason, if the first reason is challenged as insufficient. One might answer to the statement that since man's abilities to study and serve are not self-generated but given by G-d, therefore man should not claim credit for his achievements, but insisting that man is a free agent who is perfectly capable of choosing not to study Torah and worshipping with devotion, and in light of these options man might rightly feel proud of his positive decision. To this the Mishna continues, "For you were created for this purpose," the creation of man was precisely for this goal. To explain:

"*Breshis* (In the beginning, or as Rashi notes—for the *two* called *reshis*, beginning) G-d created," are the opening words of Torah. The sages interpret this as, "For the Torah called *reshis* and for Israel called *reshis* (G-d created . . .)." G-d intended for Israel to be elevated through Torah which is His intellect and will.

The Zohar declares, "Three are bound to each other. Israel are bound to Torah and Torah to G-d," for Torah is the instrument by which the souls of Israel are bound to G-dhood. Elsewhere (III, 11b) Zohar remarks on the verse, "Ten by ten were each spoon" (Numbers 7:86) that the Ten Commandments parallel the Ten Fiats by which the world was created (Avos 5:1).

The Talmud (Shabbos 88a) tells us that G-d made a condition with Creation. "If Israel fulfil my Torah, good. If not, Creation shall revert to chaos and void."

Midrash (*Shmos Rabba* 48) comments on "*Eleh* (these) are the accounts of heaven and earth as they were created." *Eleh* (these, meaning heaven and earth), by whose merit were they created and in whose merit are they maintained? In the merit of "*Eleh* (these) are the names of the children of Israel" (Ex. 1:1). And *Eleh* (these, meaning people of Israel), by whose merit do they exist? In the merit of "*Eleh* are the testimonies and statutes and judgments."

Therefore the Mishna<sup>59</sup> declares, "For you were created for this purpose." The primary purpose of man is Torah. "The end of the matter, when all is heard, fear G-d and keep His commandments, for this is all of man" (Koheles 12:13). In that case, when man does what he was created for, he has no reason for claiming credit. In references to his divine service too, when he attains *ahava* and *dvekus* (love and attachment to G-d), he has no cause for satisfaction, for this is the whole reason for his being in this world. Man's ultimate is that he rise through Torah and service, as we have explained (Discourse I:3 and 4) in reference to the purpose of all creation.

59 Avos 2:8.

On the contrary, his satisfaction with his Torah study and worship make it quite clear that his service did not effect a state of *bitul*, nullification, loss of self-awareness. He has, in this case, not attained the desired fulfillment. Instead of smugness he should properly be anguished that he has fallen so short of fulfilling his purpose in life, and if so, why was he created at all, and what has he achieved?

It is conceivable that he has not been perfectly meticulous in all matters, and even trifling matters are reckoned as significant for one of his stature, as we noted in Discourse XV: 5. And if these "trifles" entailed any "profanation of the Name," G-d forbid, then better had he never been born. Had he never engaged in Torah and worship it would have been better, for then at least the *hilul Hashem* would have been avoided. The cause of all this is that his divine service is not true. Were it true service it would have brought *bitul* to his soul, and it would never have occurred to him that he had done anything praiseworthy. It goes without saying that he would have been scrupulous about every least "trifle."

But when the "spirit of folly" sways him, he is arrogant in his learning; he regards himself as meritorious.

#### S u m m a r y

Arrogance is stupid; competence and understanding in Torah study, and the ability to worship properly, come from Him, and for this was man created; his self-satisfaction indicates that he has not attained true fulfillment; the arrogant profanes the Name.

#### CHAPTER 2

There are different types of the "spirit of folly." There is the folly of arrogance, of claiming credit for one's accomplishments, of self-justification, and finally, the folly that leads to sin. This last is in a class by itself. While the first three do not involve actual sin which may be critical, still these forms of folly may be more serious than the last, because they may have more damaging effects than sin itself.

"Man does not sin unless the spirit of folly enters him" (Sotah 3a). The folly is as various as men's natures, but he knows that he has done wrong and this troubles him. He is aware that he did what is forbidden and he is remorseful. This remorse, the sense of being troubled, is a movement of *teshu-vah*, repentance, or return. It is not true repentance yet, but he is uneasy about his past, and under the proper circumstances he will be aroused to full repentance. This might be through divine inspiration granted him, or at a propitious time, like Elul, Selichos, Rosh Hashana, the Ten Days of Repentance.

But one affected by the folly of justification will deny any wrongdoing. He will cast all blame on environment or other people. It will never occur to him to feel remorse, and indeed he incurs further wrong by unjustly accusing others for his failings. He chose this particular environment and these friends—it is his fault. The folly of self-justification is more grave, we see, than the folly of sin.

"Higher" than the folly of justification is that of appreciating one's own merits and virtues, self-satisfaction. Its baneful effects are worse than the earlier two. In justifying one's wrongdoing, there is recognition that the act itself is wrong and must be corrected, but he regards himself as blameless. The third form of folly leads man to feel that he is perfection personified, a man of unsullied virtues, who has surpassed possible improvement, and lacks only his appropriate reward.

The next higher folly is even worse than this, the folly of arrogance in his Torah and worship. The complacent is a fool, for he has failed to reach fulfillment at all, neither fulfillment of the purpose of his being created, nor fulfillment of his service proper, which is *bitul*, self-abnegation, utter humility. But arrogance is an actual sin. It impairs the *yud-hai* of the Divine Name, and harms him by ruining his abilities and the sensitivity of his soul. To illustrate:

Someone might be blessed with a rich mind, able to derive understanding in a new area from what he has mastered in a different field, say, and then the spirit of folly convinces him

of his brilliance, so why should he exert his mind unduly in Torah study? After all, for such an intellect, any amount of learning will be sufficient. But the truth, of course, is different. "If one claims, 'I have not striven yet I have discovered' do not believe him" (Megilla 6b). Without labor, without effort, it is absolutely impossible to comprehend. No matter how gifted and facile a mind, he must strive, and will not become a sage automatically. If he is truly gifted, then through great efforts he would achieve true heights of scholarship. If he gives only a minimum of time to his studies, he will achieve a minimum. And all this because of the spirit of folly that conceals the truth, so he "blesses himself in his heart," that with minimal time and minimal effort he will achieve what another must labor for mightily. Even if this were so, why should he forget that with more time at study he could accomplish so much more? But the truth is that he is mistaken. "I did not strive, but I found"—do not believe it!

There are more forms of foolishness. Some may plead physical infirmity that makes it hard to study, the mind tires easily, or the eyes are weak or something. These are feeble excuses. "If one's body bothers him, let him study Torah" says the Talmud (Eruvin 54a) based on "To all his flesh a healing" (Proverbs 4:22). We may say then that it is only his spirit of folly that leads him down undesirable paths until he acts contrary to reason completely, besides going against G-d's will. This after all is his purpose in existing, to occupy himself with Torah and worship, and with G-d's help, to attain his true fulfillment.

#### *S u m m a r y*

The sinner knows his guilt; his anguish is evidence of his remorse and his thoughts of repentance; one who justifies himself does not contemplate repentance, but does recognize that improvement is needed; the complacent does not recognize the failing that needs correction; the arrogant impairs the *yud-hai* and destroys his own abilities.

*Discourse Seventeen*

## CHAPTER 1

There are laymen who spend their lives in business, in commerce, and have no other interests. They are not beguiled by physical delights. Business activities are of themselves perfectly permissible and are necessary, as the Mishna states, "Torah study should be accompanied by a worldly activity" (Avos 2:2). Still, there may be any number of matters connected with business that are the works of the *yetzer hara*, foolishness that make man irrational and keep him from the knowledge of G-d.

Some are so completely involved in their business, by day and by night, that they are prevented from studying Torah and worshipping with the congregation and thinking at the very least of the simple meaning of the words of the prayers. They have some idea that prolonging worship by paying attention to the words and by worshipping with the congregation, in addition to spending time in studying Torah, will entail financial loss, for they will be unable to buy and sell during that time. This is arrant nonsense.

When one carefully considers his experience and what occurs around him, he will agree that frequently he will be meticulous about his business procedures, being prompt and energetic about his affairs, and doing a great deal of work, and will profit little or even suffer a loss. At other times, through a minimum of time and effort he might prosper greatly. How is he so certain then that being delayed because of Torah and worship will be costly for him? It might conceivably be wiser for him to occupy himself less, and with G-d's help he will profit more in less time, as we will discuss soon.

He should be aware of G-d who gives him the strength to achieve, and it is G-d's blessing that brings wealth. The occupation proper is a matter of making a vessel to contain G-d's blessing, an instrument for His blessing, but the blessing is

the critical factor in success. In that case he ought to be devoted mainly to G-d who maintains and sustains him, and must only fashion the instrument for His blessing, namely his business. But there is no need for his total involvement in his work.

"G-d will bless you in all you do" (Deut. 15:8). We may ask, why bother working at all, since the blessing flows from G-d, it can come without mortal effort? But the Torah says *in all you do*, clearly assuming man's work and effort. We may ask further. The Talmud (Betza 16a) says that "Man's needs are determined between Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur." In that case why must anyone busy himself with trade or labor to sustain himself? Will not the sustenance determined for him by G-d's grace be granted him, so why must he strive? Furthermore, there is an apparently contradictory statement in Rosh Hashana (16a) that "Man is judged every day." How can this be reconciled with the earlier citation? Rabbi Yose, who made the last statement, will no doubt subscribe to the annual determination of man's sustenance, so what does he mean by the daily judgment?

Every day, in the *Shmona Esrai*, we pray for health and prosperity. Isn't this already determined on Rosh Hashana? In Zohar (II, 62b), we find the venerable Rabbi Yaiva prayed daily before his meal that he be provided with food, at the moment that his food was on the table before him. Though he already had food he would not have it prepared until he had "asked of the House of the King in prayer." What is the meaning of this prayer?

#### *S u m m a r y*

Businessmen can be foolish by not establishing times for Torah; some even fail to worship with the congregation; they forget that the key is G-d's blessing that brings wealth; the contradiction of the statements about sustenance determined on Rosh Hashana and the daily judgment of man.

*Discourse Eighteen*

## CHAPTER I

The apparent contradiction and the Zohar we quoted indicate three categories. First our sages note that man's needs are determined at Rosh Hashana, then we find that man is judged daily, then Rabbi Yaiva prayed daily for his food, and the Zohar explains that he would not prepare the food before him before "asking of the House of the King in prayer." The general determination made on Rosh Hashana is one category; the daily judgment is another; even when the food is provided it was not enjoyed without the King's permission—this is a third category.

In *Pri Etz Chaim* we find that the period between Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur is for the *tikun*<sup>60</sup> (perfection) and construction of the attribute *malchus* when it reaches *dikna* of *arich anpin*. This attainment is far superior to what *malchus* ever attains, even on Shabbos when it reaches *abba*. Only *zeir anpin*, the six emotive attributes, ascend to *dikna* on Shabbos. At Ne'ila, however, it attains this height and receives from the Five Severities of *atik yomin*, which is the "seal" of Yom Kippur's Ne'ila. This influx of the Severities at Ne'ila seems to contradict the general understanding that Ne'ila is primarily a time of eliciting the unalloyed Mercies. Our sages say (*Psikta d'Rav Kahana on ulekachtem lachem*), "Forgiveness is in your charge from Rosh Hashana to Yom Kippur." Yom Kippur then is a time for unmixed mercies, and Ne'ila particularly is the ultimate degree of mercies and the time of G-d's acceptance, as is known. What, we may wonder, is the meaning of the Five Severities<sup>61</sup> at that time, and what is the meaning of the "seal?"

*Malchus* of Atzilus is the source of the three lower worlds,

<sup>60</sup> See notes 21 and 28; *Introduction* to Tanya IV, p. 90, *Arich anpin*; Tanya I, p. 346, *Keter*.

<sup>61</sup> Tanya V, p. 21, note 13.

Briah, Yetzirah, and Asiya. "Your kingdom (*malchus'cha*) is the kingdom (*malchus*) of all worlds" (Psalm 145:13), the origin of the existence of all worlds being in *malchus*.

*Malchus* is called *em kol chai*, the "Mother of all life" because it is the source of all living things and of all the beneficences that flow into all worlds. *Pardes* states that *Chava* is identified with *malchus*, called the "Mother of all life."

Every day this attribute (*malchus*) renews the flow of divine light and kindness into all worlds. In the Grace After Meals we acknowledge that He "sustains the entire universe with grace and kindness." In Avoda Zara (3b), "The third period G-d provides for the entire world, from the most huge to the most minute." These extremes include the World we call Briah, identified with the superior Gan Eden, through the lowermost of the humble mundane World we call Asiya. All creatures come within this range.

The "construction" of the attribute *malchus* can be understood in this manner. *Malchus* is different from the other attributes in that it emanated as a "point," and the other nine attributes contained within it enter into it rather in the manner of accretion. To illustrate: in the coalescence of attributes, where none exist in pristine isolation, *malchus* exists within *chochma*, and from this derives the state of *chochma* as it exists within *malchus*. *Malchus-within-bina* is the source for *bina-within-malchus*, and so on. The illumination and vitality within *malchus* is what it receives from the superior attributes. The source of all drawn into *malchus* is the Supernal *Kesser* (Crown identified with Will). The construction of *malchus* on Rosh Hashana refers to eliciting the attribute of the "Royal Crown," meaning the Divine will to rule. Hence Rosh Hashana is the specific occasion for eliciting illumination into *malchus* (namely the will to rule).

Every Rosh Hashana a fresh illumination issues from the Infinite into the attribute of *malchus* for the entire year, to grant life to all the three lower worlds, to provide for them, to sustain them. This illumination and vitality contains the

life-force for the "world, year, and soul"<sup>62</sup> of the entire year. However, on Rosh Hashana it is still in a state of *bakesse*,<sup>63</sup> concealment, obscurity. On Yom Kippur it comes forth in a state of revelation, but only on the "higher" planes, not fully revealed. Succos, the "day of our festivity," the revelation proceeds, but is still in a state of *makif*, surrounding, encompassing, not penetrating, internal. On Shmini Atzeres it comes forth into a state of inwardness, illuminating inwardly, which is the meaning of the "absorption" or "ingathering" of Shmini Atzeres. After this, the illumination and vitality issues through *malchus* day by day in a palpable manner in the three worlds.

This is the elicitation of the Supernal Kindness. From *kesser* there are drawn the kindnesses of *atik* into *malchus* on Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur, and from *malchus* into all the worlds.

#### Summary

The attribute *malchus* emanates as a root, a single "point"; Rosh Hashana is the construction of *malchus*, i.e. it receives from the higher nine attributes; the root of the flow is the "Royal Crown"; on Rosh Hashana it is still concealed, on Yom Kippur revealed, on Succos it is encompassing, on Shmini Atzeres integrated, and then drawn forth through *malchus*.

#### CHAPTER 2

The root of this flow elicited from the "Royal Crown" into the attribute of *malchus* on Rosh Hashana, meaning the light and vitality from kindness of *atik* drawn into *malchus*, is still in a generalized state that has not been differentiated into details at all at this point, and cannot yet be received by the intended recipients. In order that the light be capable of being received it requires the Five Severities of *atik*. The Severities divide the kindness into parts. In this way the true nature of the

<sup>62</sup> Time, space, person; see Discourse XIX:12 below.

<sup>63</sup> Psalm 81:4.

kindness can be realized, for only in this way are the creatures capable of receiving the kindness.

The "might of rains" that descend so powerfully are separated into individual drops, and this differentiation is the true meaning of the kindness, for only thus can the rain water the earth that it sprout forth.

The soul's powers too express this principle of differentiation. The voice as it issues from the heart's breath is unformed, and is divided into letters through the five organs of articulation, the throat, palate, etc. The Introduction to Zohar comments on "The cup of salvation will I raise"<sup>64</sup> as follows: The cup of blessing must rest on the five fingers, representing the Five Severities, and "These five are called 'salvations.'" The Ramaz, *loc. cit.* explains that these Five Severities issue from *yesod of atik*.

The comparison of the five fingers and the Five Severities is deliberate. The human hand, before it divides into fingers, contains in unitary form the hand's power, without differentiation. Where the hand divides into five fingers the power also divides to provide each finger the particular defined power appropriate to that finger. The Talmud in Kesubos (5a) explains the function of each finger. This division is the expression of the Severities.

But these Five Severities are the epitome of kindness. Were the hand not divided into fingers it could never perform or write. Its effectiveness comes from the fingers. The generality of the power resides in the hand, but if not for the Severities, the division into fingers, there could be no activity, no beneficence from the power in the hand. The Five Severities, then, perfect the workings of Kindness, again in the manner of the "might of rains" noted above.

*Gevuros*, might or severities, are called *yeshuos*, salvations, because the severities enable the salvation to be effective. This too is the reason why the "cup of blessing" must rest on the five fingers. In their source, in *atik*, the Five Severities are doubtless

<sup>64</sup> Psalm 116:13.

merged with the Five Kindnesses, for “there is no leftward in *atik*.”<sup>64a</sup> The “sweetening” or modification of the Severities below results from the condition of the Severities in their source, as *Pri Etz Chaim* on *Kavanos Shofar* notes—judgments can be assuaged only in their source. Withal, they are called “severities,” for they are the agents for the perfection of the effectiveness of the kindnesses through dividing the flow so that it may be received by the creatures. Too, they make it possible for the kindnesses to be drawn to each of the creatures individually.

On Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur, Kindness is elicited from the Five Kindnesses of *atik*, but this is a generalized Kindness for the universe in general. The Five Severities called forth at Ne'ila determine the flow granted each individual being, how much shall reach each being. The “seal” acts to prevent the flow from reaching inappropriate destinations, meaning that the “externals” shall not benefit from it. As the beneficence is distributed to individual beings through the Five Severities, the beneficence is in a state of dimension, limitation, so the unworthy will not be able to enjoy the bounty. Only when the light is unbounded can it spread too far and be drawn into improper sites. But when it is bounded it does not reach where it should not.

This too is part of the function of the Five Severities, that in terms of the individual as well, there be no nurture for the “externals” from the beneficence granted that individual. This is the “seal” of Ne'ila, the sealing of the decision to distribute the beneficence individually to each one.

#### *S u m m a r y*

The Five Severities of *atik* divide the beneficence drawn into *malchus*; the five articulations divide sound; the five fingers divide the generalized power and then the power acts through them; the “cup of salvation” rests on the five fingers; the “seal” insures that the flow attain the appropriate destination, and to each individual.

64a Zohar III, 129a.

*Discourse Nineteen*

## CHAPTER I

The Ne'ila "seal" has the function of insuring that the general beneficence drawn into the attribute of *malchus* attain its destined goal and to each individual. It also provides the general protection to prevent the nurture of the "externals" from the beneficence called forth. This is similar to the seal placed on an envelope to prevent the unauthorized from reading the letter. The "seal" of Ne'ila prevents the "externals" from benefiting from the flow. This is effected through the Five Severities of *atik* that *malchus* receives at Ne'ila. Through the agency of these Severities, the supernal Kindness of *atik* is apportioned to all the beings in the three lower worlds who receive from *malchus* of Atzilus.

"Man's sustenance is determined between Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur," said our sages, meaning that through the Five Severities is the allotment of how much beneficence shall be drawn forth for each individual. On an earlier plane, at a higher stage, the kindness was a generalized effusion and vitality to Creation in general. Through the Five Severities, the "seal," two simultaneous effects came about. First, no alien shall receive even a mite of this beneficence, and second the beneficence shall attain its intended destination, and establishing the allotment that shall be issued to every being and every person individually.

At Ne'ila, *malchus* of Atzilus receives (through the Five Severities) the effusion of the Kindness determined through the Severities for all the three lower worlds and each individual being. We must remember that the Kindness as it is in *malchus* of Atzilus is a state of perfect spirituality, utterly devoid of any form and characteristic of the beneficence and vitality of the physical realm; just as the vivifying force of our mundane world *Asiyah* has no basis of comparison with that of Atzilus.

Atzilus is removed from any comparative terms to relate it to the lower worlds. In general terms the Four Worlds parallel the four fundamentals, fire, wind, water, and earth. Atzilus would be the fundament of fire. "Your G-d is a consuming fire" (Deut. 4:24), comparing G-d to fire. Fire has no connection with the other fundamentals and has the tendency of constantly rising. Atzilus similarly has no common points with the lower worlds. Atzilus is G-dhood, no less, having no aspect of *yesh*, existence, thinghood.

The lower worlds, beginning with Briah, creation, are the first appearance of *yesh*, an existence. This is indicated by the word *bara* ("In the beginning G-d *bara-created*") as Ramban comments on that verse. Because of this unbridgeable gap, Atzilus is utterly removed from Briah, and it goes without saying that it has no contact with the mundane Asiyah. For this reason the beneficence as it is in Atzilus has no vestige of the physical form of kindness of This World. An effusion of kindness issues forth to Knesses Israel, it is divided through the Five Severities for the individual recipients, but it is all still in a state of *spiritual* kindness at this stage.

But this ethereal kindness must become life and beneficence in the material sense, in terms of children, health, and prosperity. This is effected by *malchus* of Atzilus investing itself in Briah, Yetzirah, and Asiyah. We find (Tanya V, p. 37) that even "on Holy Days when *chessed* of Atzilus which is completely clothed in *chessed* of Briah vivifies the physical world through passage by way of *chessed* of Yetzirah and Asiyah. This too is properly called investment for otherwise it could not effect the physical aspects of This World."

On ordinary weekdays it is by complete investment in *chessed* of Yetzirah and Asiyah, this also through the union of *zu"n*<sup>65</sup> of Yetzirah. The investment in *chessed* of Yetzirah is insufficient by itself, for the Minor Visage of Yetzirah is not in any category yet of being a source for the flow of *chessed* of Asiyah. Vitality for Asiyah could not issue from it. Rather the flow proceeds

65 Tanya V, p. 48, note 7.

through *malchus* of Yetzirah, and the very Light of the Minor Visage of Yetzirah becomes contracted.

In Asiyah too there must be the union of *zu"n* of Asiyah. The primary force for the emergence of a *yesh*, a totally discrete existence, must be from *malchus*, for "There is no king without subjects. . . ."<sup>66</sup> Then issues forth from these beneficences into the physical Asiyah here below, each beneficence in its day, through the attribute of that day, of the six boundaries<sup>67</sup> of the lower worlds of Briah, Yetzirah and Asiyah. All divisions come from the Five Severities of *atik*.

### Summary

The "seal" assures that the beneficence reach its appointed place and to each particular recipient; the general beneficence by *malchus* of Atzilus at Ne'ila is the spiritual *chessed* of Atzilus; Atzilus is removed from the lower worlds as fire is apart from the other fundamentals; only through the downward progression can there become—through the agency of the Five Severities—a kindness appropriate to creatures.

### CHAPTER 2

Now we can understand the daily judgment as noted in Rosh Hashana (16a) that man is judged every day. "Six days shall you labor and perform all your work" (Ex. 20:9), and "For (in) six days did G-d make heaven and earth, the sea and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day" (20:11). The Zohar mentions that "On every day its work was performed." So too man's labors, "six days shall you labor and perform all your work," meaning that every individual Jew has his work for which he was created and for which his soul descended.

There is a Chassidic interpretation of Psalm 139:16. "Days were formed, and (the reason is that) for Him, the One (be brought) into them." Man, through his service, is to call forth

<sup>66</sup> Bachya, *Vayeshev*, 38:30.

<sup>67</sup> I.e. four compass points, above and below.

the One. *Echad*, one, is an acronym. *Alef* represents the Infinite, Master of creation; *ches* represents the seven heavens and earth; *daled* represents the four directions. In general terms we find allusion to space. "Days" in the Psalm signifies time. Man's service then is to bring together time and space and unite them both with G-d. "Your work" (in Exodus, above) is the task imposed upon man, the purpose for his soul's descent.

This task must be performed day by day, vigorously, strenuously, with labor of flesh and labor of soul. "Six days shall you labor" means that every day must have its share of the divine service according to the nature of that day and its significance among the divine attributes. The first day parallels *chessed*, kindness, and in the divine service it would be the service of *ahava*, love. The second day is *gevurah*, severity, which represents awe or fear as a method of service. The third day is *tiferes*, beauty, or harmony, which transposed into terms of service means "contemplation of the glory of the King" by the coalescence of *chessed* and *gevurah*, of love and awe. The fourth day is *netzach*, victory, conquest, domination. In service it means aroused aggressiveness, to destroy and uproot even the most subtle of the undesirable. Our sages tell us that on the fourth day the luminaries were placed in position in the heavens. In a deeper sense this refers to the light issuing from the sun of G-d, that repels and destroys even the most subtle of the undesirable.

The fifth day is *hod*, magnificence, glory. There is a comprehension of the magnificence of the radiance of His kingdom, that man can achieve through meditation on "How numerous are Your works,"<sup>68</sup> and on "How great are Your works."<sup>69</sup> This apprehension is from what is evident in Creation. The sixth day is *yesod*, foundation, which in service means His Oneness in heaven and on earth, the unity of the Immanent and the Transcendent, *memaleh* and *sovev*.

It is known that the attributes, or traits, combine with each

68 Psalm 104:24.

69 Psalm 92:6.

other, and this is their perfection. In serving G-d too, coalescence of emotive traits is the perfection of the individual emotion. Love combines with awe, and awe includes love within itself, and so on. Nevertheless each "day" has its particular function according to its significance in the divine attributes.

"Man is judged every day." From the earlier discussion it will be understood that the beneficence allotted on Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur and drawn into *malchus* of Atzilus can assume a variety of forms of beneficence when it reaches the mundane Asiyah. *Chessed* in Atzilus is still without any configuration, any presaging of its eventual nature in Asiyah. It is abstract kindness at this stage, that is subject to being affected through its investment in the lower worlds, as noted. Through this investment it becomes physical kindness in this physical world in any number of ways.

This is the subject of the daily judgment of the beneficence destined for man. What shall be the purpose of the beneficence? Shall man be granted a rich measure of kindness in all three—children, health and sustenance, or possibly a generous measure of two or maybe even only one? This judgment is determined by the Court On High in the "chamber of merit," meaning in the chambers of Briah. If the verdict is that the beneficence allotted man on Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur cannot possibly be called forth in all three areas to this man, but only two, for example, then the judgment continues. In what area shall the kindness be granted? Shall it be for children and health, that he have sturdy children and a healthy household? Shall it be for prosperity and health, that he enjoy vigor and wealth?

Here the prayer of the saint can be effective, changing the decree from one particular to another. This will help us understand a story recounted of the Baal Shem Tov. It seems someone repeatedly implored him to pray on his behalf, that he be blessed with offspring. This man was quite wealthy. The Baal Shem Tov made no reply to the man's pleas. The man and his wife became most importunate, begging the Baal Shem Tov to

pray for them. He was touched by their deep sincerity, and told them that if they have children they will lose their wealth and become impoverished. The couple chose children and poverty, and that came to pass.

What happened in effect was that the beneficence elicited for that person through the Court On High for wealth, was altered by the Baal Shem Tov at its source, for children instead. The *chessed* allotted him was not for two forms, and prayer could change its form, children in place of wealth.

There is another aspect of the daily judgment, and that is to determine whether the person is deserving that *chessed* be elicited and drawn forth for him into this material universe, or perhaps on that specific day his actions make him unworthy of the beneficence. True, the kindness has been allotted him on Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur, but it can remain in its original spiritual state. Either he will receive the kindness in a spiritual form, not material, or he might claim his due in the World to Come.

We can now reconcile the two Talmudic statements. "Man's sustenance is determined on Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur" on the one hand, and "Man is judged daily." The daily judgment is for the material form of the beneficence, how it will be translated into physical, worldly terms.

In our daily prayers we ask for healing and prosperity. Though these have been determined at the start of the year, still this is only a general bestowal of kindness with no physical form. Daily we pray that the kindness allotted and elicited from *malchus* of Atzilus be translated into these material concerns. This will explain Rabbi Yaivo's prayer over his repast that was already placed before him. It is possible that this is not "his," and his prayer was that the *chessed* allotted him be invested in this food.

### *S u m m a r y*

Six days, their meaning in attributes and service; man's task of joining space and time and uniting them with G-d each day

according to its significance among the attributes; the judgment is whether the flow allotted him will be translated into physical terms or remain spiritual; too, whether it is to be for children, health, and prosperity, or only one; it is possible to change from one form of kindness to another; the Baal Shem Tov changed wealth for children.

## *Discourse Twenty*

### CHAPTER I

The statement about the daily judgment of man is Rabbi Yose's in Rosh Hashana 16a. Rabbi Nassan says that the judgment is "hourly," and supports his contention with, "You test him each moment" (Job 7:18). The question is posed, according to both Rabbi Yose and Rabbi Nassan, there is no difference between Rosh Hashana and every day of the year in terms of the divine judgment. How then will they explain the passage, "For it is a statute to Israel, a judgment of the G-d of Jacob" (Psalm 81:5), which refers to Rosh Hashana?

Furthermore, we find, "The eyes of your G-d are upon it from year's beginning" (Deut. 11:12), and based on this the Talmud states that Rosh Hashana is the day of judgment (Rosh Hashana 8a). Another difficulty is the three-part worship recited on Rosh Hashana, namely "*malchios, zichronos, shofros*." Why should this day be distinguished from other days? It is inconceivable that Rabbi Yose and Rabbi Nassan will hold that Rosh Hashana is not different from ordinary days.

We must conclude that there is no disagreement at all on this point. Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur are days of judgment. Indeed, *Asarah Maamarot* ("Chikur Din" 2:1,26) states that there is unanimity on the subject. Everyone agrees that the bounty destined for each creature is determined then. Hence we offer the particular prayers, *malchios, zichronos, shofros* on

Rosh Hashana, "that you might crown Me over you."<sup>70</sup>

The "construction of *malchus*" of Atzilus takes place between Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur, and then at Ne'ila *malchus* receives from the Five Severities of *atik*. This is the calling forth of the source of vitality for the three lower worlds for the entire year. On Rosh Hashana the bounty is elicited as it has been allotted for Creation in general. At Ne'ila there is the sealing and specific determination of the bounty allotted each one individually. All agree on this.

Nonetheless, Rabbi Yose and Rabbi Nassan contend that man is judged daily, constantly, with a full-fledged judgment for all his affairs, for health or illness, for life, etc. This repeated judgment is necessary because the bounty allotted on Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur has been brought down to *malchus* of Atzilus, but in an amorphous state, with no material prefiguration. The material world, *Asiyah*, has no terms of comparison, no common aspects, with Atzilus. Therefore, though all influences for the material world do issue from this allotted bounty as it is in Atzilus, they are not yet in a material form. On Rosh Hashana the judgment has not become explicit yet, what form shall the bounty assume, and shall the beneficence be for children, or for health, or for prosperity, or for all three, or for spiritual favor and for the Coming World. The final judgment, determining the form of the beneficence, is in the Court On High in the chambers of *Briah*, *Yetzirah*, etc. This is the daily judgment.

On Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur, the judgment is to determine the beneficence to be drawn into creation in general and to each individual being, how much is to be allotted to him. This is the core of the judgment and everything hinges on it. According to the generosity of the allotment will the blessing and goodness follow throughout the year, while if it is a limited allotment . . . We have noted (XIX:2) that when the beneficence is bounteous, there may be a full measure of kindness in children, health and prosperity. Otherwise it may not be pos-

70 Rosh Hashana 16a.

sible to grant all three, but only two or one of them. Even if all three are granted, there may be a generous or limited measure. This depends on the general determination of beneficence set at Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur for creation in general, and for the individual in particular, whether it is to be openhanded or restricted.

Still, there is a particular judgment daily, what form the beneficence shall take. For example, if his allotment permits two of the three areas of blessing, which shall these be, whether children and health, or prosperity and health, and so on. If all three can be accommodated, still the judgment will decide whether to grant the beneficence in spiritual terms or in the World To Come. The beneficence as it is set on Rosh Hashana gives no clue regarding the practical form in the material world, for this category does not exist on that plane at all. It is decided by the Court On High according to the works of man, such is the judgment in the chambers of Briah.

Both, then, are true. The essential judgment to determine the beneficence is made on Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur. The final determination is made day by day.

*S u m m a r y*

The allotment of *chessed of atik* on Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur has no intimation of its character in the material world yet; it is not established in terms of quantity and quality in children, health, and prosperity; this is the subject of the daily judgment according to Rabbi Yose, and the "hourly" judgment according to Rabbi Nassan.

*Discourse Twenty-one*

CHAPTER I

However we face a difficulty with the opinion of the Sages who dispute Rabbis Yose and Nassan. They contend that the decision about man's sustenance is made fully on Rosh Hasha-

na, including all his and his family's needs for children, health and prosperity. The decision is "sealed" on Yom Kippur. It is clear that in this opinion all the particulars of the individual's affairs for the year, for life or . . . , and all his experiences, are determined on Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur. We cannot say then that the decision does not include the configuration it assumes in the material world, for otherwise what is the meaning of the final decision? We must say that the beneficence allotted has intimations of the material form it will assume in the mundane world. This, though, is a problem, for the mundane world of Asiyah has no common elements with Atzilus, so how can *chesed* in Atzilus contain material dimension?

For this we must turn to *Torah Or (Vayera on Pasach Eliyahu)*. "More than the incomparability of Asiyah to Atzilus is the incomparability of Atzilus to His Essence, the Infinite Light." We did note above (XIX:1) that Atzilus is removed from the three lower worlds, but it is also a "world," and contains the Ten Attributes in the form of "lights and vessels." True, it is actually "G-dhood," but no more than that. "G-dhood" is not identical with "G-d"; it is an extension of the radiance alone, and not Essence. Hence, Atzilus can contain the Ten Attributes, including the "vessels" that have an "existence," a particular configuration, of the attribute of *chochma* or *chesed*. For this reason the Ten Attributes of Atzilus are a source for the Attributes in the lower worlds in the manner of downward progression of cause and effect, where cause and effect (the higher stage and the lower) do have common aspects, are comparable to each other.

The attribute of *chochma* in the mundane world Asiyah derives from the attribute *chochma* in the highest world, Atzilus, through the process of downward progression. "Every blade of grass below has its counterpart Above that impels it to grow" (Midrash *Bereshis Rabba*, 10:6). These counterparts are on all higher and higher planes. Whatever characteristics a grass blade or fruit have physically, are contained in the spiritual counterpart on all succeeding higher levels. A physical apple has phy-

sical sweetness. Must we then postulate that the vegetative power in the soil is also sweet? Obviously this is not so. Certainly the spiritual counterpart of the apple is devoid of any such characteristic. Yet the physical qualities like flavors of sweetness or bitterness do derive from their sources in the attributes of *chessed* and *gevurah*, kindness and severity, sweetness from *chessed* and bitterness from *gevurah*. These attributes are spiritual, how then can physical flavor be derived from them?

However, through the system of downward progression through subsequently lower categories they become materialized, until *chessed* is translated into sweetness. True, sweetness and *chessed* are incomparably distant, unrelated, but they do have qualities in common, they are of the same basic order. Spiritually too there are numerous forms of "sweetness." Pleasure in intellect is a form of "sweetness," as is pleasure in music, which is on a lower plane than intellect. Hence in the course of numerous descents, actual physical sweetness occurs.

*Chochma* too exists on any number of planes. *Chochma* on the Asiyah plane has a bond, a relationship, with *chochma* on the Atzilus plane. Through myriads of descents *chochma* of Atzilus becomes *chochma* of Asiyah.

Atzilus, the state of "proximity" to G-d and of inseparability from Him, and the lowest state, Asiyah, the world of "action," of physical being, are utterly removed from each other. How can there be a descent of orderly, step-by-step, downward progression of cause and effect? But this "progression" is not like that within Atzilus itself among its Attributes, or within Briah internally, or within the other worlds. The progression from Atzilus to Briah is through the "barrier." An illustration for this "barrier" is the relation of an illustration to the original idea it is to illuminate. The illustration is quite alien to the original idea. It conceals the original idea so completely, that some may not even realize that it is merely an illustration, that it represents something other than itself. When the idea emerges from the illustration it certainly is not the same as it was before it was clothed within the illustration, but neither is

it a new and different idea. It is the original idea that was embodied in the illustration, but now it has a different character and is in a different form than it was before.

This is the function of the "barrier." It conceals *chochma* of Atzilus. When *chochma* of Briah emerges through the "barrier," it is like the idea that emerges from the illustration. It is a derivative. It is "light" that became different, "new" in the world of Briah, for it is not at all similar to *chochma* as it is in the world of Atzilus. But it is not some new *entity*. It derives from *chochma* of Atzilus, but in a different *form*.

We have stated that the gap between Asiyah and Atzilus is not comparable to the gap between Atzilus and the Infinite. *Chochma* in Atzilus does not relate to the Infinite as *chochma* of Asiyah relates to *chochma* of Atzilus. In the Infinite, in His Essence, there is no state of *chochma* whatsoever, no category of that sort. *Chochma* of Atzilus then is completely and utterly incomparable to the Infinite. But in Atzilus proper there is a state called *chochma*, so the lower states, *chochma* in Briah and even in Asiyah, are not utterly and absolutely incomparable to Atzilus' *chochma*. The latter is removed from the inferior state of *chochma* in Briah. The states of *chochma* in the lower worlds emerge through the "barrier," meaning that they emerge as different from *chochma* in Atzilus, but they do have common terms of reference, some relationship, with *chochma* in Atzilus.

#### *S u m m a r y*

In Atzilus there are Ten Attributes in the form of "lights and vessels"; *chochma* of Asiyah to *chochma* of Atzilus is like physical sweetness to spiritual *chessed*, but the former descends from the latter; the descent of Briah, Yetzirah, Asiyah from Atzilus is through the "barrier," similar to the idea emerging from the illustration; Atzilus is removed from Briah, Yetzirah, Asiyah, but they have a relationship.

#### CHAPTER 2

To return to the Rebbe's statement we quoted, "More than

the incomparability of Asiyah to Atzilus is the incomparability of Atzilus to the Infinite." Within the Infinite there is no such thing as attributes. The Ten Attributes of Atzilus are like a new being, so they came about from the Infinite through the *tzimtzum*, the "contraction," and *makom panui*, the "vacuum," which is the complete concealment of the original Light. Then something could appear not at all on the order of the original (but now concealed) Light. But Asiyah does have a relationship with Atzilus since Atzilus too has an existence termed "*chochma*." *Chochma* in the lower worlds cannot be considered a truly "new" being, since there already is such a state in Atzilus. We must say that *chochma* of the lower worlds is included within *chochma* of Atzilus, since the latter is also a state of *chochma*, but only a higher form and category.

Every superior plane contains within it all that is inferior to it. The emergence of *chochma* in the three lower worlds from *chochma* of Atzilus is by way of downward progression of cause and effect. Still the former is called "derivative light" and a "new radiance." The reason is that *chochma* on the lower three worlds is of another order than *chochma* of Atzilus, and comes into being through the barrier. The barrier, as we have explained, is like an illustration that is quite different from the subject at hand. The barrier too is quite different from Atzilus and is the medium for the existence of *chochma* on the lower planes.

For this reason *chochma* is considered a new phenomenon. It comes into being through an alien element and is called "new." But in essence *chochma* is not truly new, radically different. It comes into being through the barrier rather than through *tzimtzum*, contraction. *Tzimtzum* is the disappearance, the concealment of the original light, while in the process of the barrier, the original light (meaning *chochma* of Atzilus) clothes itself and becomes concealed within the barrier to bring into being the state of *chochma* of Briah. In the case of the illustration, the subject is actually embodied within the illustration, and from it emerges a "new" thought for the recipient. Similarly, *choch-*

*ma* of Atzilus clothes itself within the barrier and from this comes, in a "new" form, the state of *chochma* of Briah. It follows that *chochma* of Briah has some common terms of reference with *chochma* of Atzilus. *Chochma* of Asiyah also shares some common terms of reference, because they are all part of the process of downward progression of cause and effect.

Just as *chochma* of Asiyah has a relationship with its supernal counterpart in Atzilus, so has *chessed* of Asiyah which is a product of the downward progression from the supernal *chessed* of Atzilus. *Chessed* of Asiyah then is actually rooted in *chessed* of Atzilus, as is—allowing for the incomparability of the two subjects—the sweetness of an apple rooted in its spiritual counterpart, and in its ultimate source, in the spiritual *chessed*. From *chessed* of Asiyah flow forth simple material matters, the physical life of the mundane universe. It follows then that in the *chessed* of Atzilus allotted each person on Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur, there are rooted all the physical beneficences drawn from *chessed* of Asiyah. Since *chessed* of Asiyah is rooted in *chessed* of Atzilus, then all that flow from *chessed* of Asiyah are rooted in *chessed* of Atzilus. *Chessed* of Atzilus then contains within itself the roots of all that is ultimately drawn from *chessed* of Asiyah.

This is the meaning of the judgment of man for *all* that will occur to him during the year on Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur. The *chessed* determined for him on Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur which is drawn into *malchus* of Atzilus includes within itself all its future ramifications.

#### S u m m a r y

Atzilus cannot be compared at all with His Essence, where there are no attributes as in Atzilus; the attributes in Atzilus come into being through *tzimtzum* and disappearance; the attributes in the lower worlds come into being from Atzilus through the barrier; within *chessed* of Asiyah are the roots of all material affairs, so they have a relationship to *chessed* and *chochma* of Atzilus.

*Discourse Twenty-two*

## CHAPTER I

Though we have explained that according to the Sages man's sustenance is determined on Rosh Hashana, and "sustenance" includes all man's needs in children, health, and prosperity, still they will agree that there is also a daily judgment. For this reason we pray daily, "Heal us" and "Bless for us." The Talmud does ask (Rosh Hashana 16a), "According to whom do we pray today for the ill? According to Rabbi Yose." Though it seems that the prayer is not in accordance with the Sages, the Tosafos do declare, "According to the Sages, don't we pray, 'Bless for us!'"

The explanation is that while the beneficence is determined on Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur it is still in the state of *malchus* of Atzilus as it is in Atzilus. *Malchus* of Atzilus as it is in Atzilus is far removed from comparison or relationship with the three lower worlds. The state of "Her feet descend unto death," applies to *malchus* of Atzilus that descends to the lower worlds. "She arises while it is yet night and gives spoils to her household" (Proverbs 31:15) refers to the externality of *malchus* of Atzilus that descends to animate the lower worlds. The three lower worlds, in comparison to Atzilus, are called "death," as we find, "See I have placed before you this day the life and the good, the death and the evil" (Deut. 30:15). The four terms, life and good, death and evil, are descriptions of the spiritual and material. The spiritual is life and good; the physical is death and evil.

"Her feet descend unto death," for Briah and Atzilus are not in the least comparable to each other. While the beneficence in children, health, and prosperity have been allotted on Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur, it is still within *malchus* of Atzilus. For it to be translated into material terms, it must go through the process of downward progression and embodiment in the

three lower worlds, each day's needs on its day. For this there is a daily judgment, a scrutinizing, whether man is worthy and deserving that the *chessed* be drawn forth and embodied in the material world for his benefit, that he may increase his study of Torah in tranquility, add to his fulfillment of mitzvos beyond the letter of the minimum. "This is my G-d and I will glorify Him" (Ex. 15:2), and as our sages comment, "Glorify yourself before Him with mitzvos" (Shabbos 133b). So too by virtue of the beneficence granted him, he will be lavish in bestowing charity. Conversely, the judgment may conclude that material blessing will be deleterious for him, in the manner of "He rewards His foe to destroy him" (Deut. 7:10), to deprive him of spiritual reward in the World to Come. This is the case with many of the sinful, who receive the reward for the good they have performed in this world, in success in children, health and prosperity. This is the reason why the "way of the wicked succeeds." But this is only in This World. They are bitterly punished in the Coming World.

It may be that the verdict is that the beneficence granted shall remain above in the spiritual realm, to be received in the World to Come. One might wonder, since the allotted beneficence already includes the material translation of the bounty and all its ramifications, it would seem that it must descend into the physical realm, so how can it remain spiritual? We shall take up this question in the following chapter.

In all this the Sages and Rabbi Yose are in agreement. Their difference is that according to the Sages the Rosh Hashana-Yom Kippur decision includes the effects of the Kindness, and the subsequent daily judgment regarding the implementation of that decision is not a new "trial." This is similar to what the Talmud says, that Rabbi Yose's statement about daily judgment is reconciled with "Each moment you prove him" (Job 7:18), explaining that the constant "proving" is a sort of scrutiny but not trial. The Sages who declare the Rosh Hashana-Yom Kippur judgment as final, will interpret the passage, "To judge . . . each day" (I Kings 8:59) also as a form of scrutiny, but in the form

of "calling to mind," in the manner of "You call him to mind every morning" (Job 7:18), and for this reason the Sages concur that one prays and pleads every day.

Rabbi Yose insists that every day has a full new trial. For him, "calling to mind" means full judgment, whereas the Sages equate the word "judge" in Kings with "calling to mind," something less than a full trial, something more than mere scrutiny. They agree that the verses in Kings and Job are complementary, both discussing the daily judgment. On the other hand, "For it is a statute to Israel, a judgment for the G-d of Jacob" (Psalm 81:5) refers to the Rosh Hashana-Yom Kippur judgment. The two judgments are necessary, for the Kindness in Atzilus has no intimation yet of the form it will assume in Asiyah and its effects in the material world. Therefore, in order that the Kindness contain the forms of the physical kindness, which is a new development, there must be a full judgment—shall there be any form of physical kindness, in what manner, or should it remain in the higher spiritual realm to be enjoyed in to World to Come?

#### *S u m m a r y*

The beneficence allotted man on Rosh Hashana-Yom Kippur is in *malchus* of Atzilus; *malchus* of Atzilus is radically removed from the lower worlds; life and good, death and evil; the daily judgment evaluates man's worthiness for his allotted good; the Sages and Rabbi Yose agree that the daily judgment is "scrutiny," but Rabbi Yose regards scrutiny too as a full trial.

#### CHAPTER 2

All this follows the opinion that Kindness in Atzilus does not portend Kindness in Asiyah at all, and certainly not the physical applications as they appear below. Actually, Asiyah has its own spiritual realm, and even there any concretization is irrelevant, to say nothing of the irrelevance of the physical in Yetzirah and Briah, and of course Atzilus. *Malchus* of Atzilus, as it is in Atzilus, is one of the essence-attributes of Atzilus, that extend

infinitely. *Chessed* of Asiyah as included within *chessed* of Atzilus has no prefiguration, and the judgment is to determine what figuration it should assume.

But there is another opinion, that since the roots of *chessed* in Asiyah are included within *malchus* of Atzilus, this *chessed* does indeed have the figuration of the beneficence issuing from the roots of *chessed* of Asiyah included within *malchus* of Atzilus. In this case, the beneficence drawn into the spiritual realm of Asiyah and its form are not "new," why then should there be a full trial since it has already been fixed during Rosh Hashana-Yom Kippur?

Every creature is a composite of body and soul, the body physical and soul spiritual, each coming into being in a different manner. The soul is called into being by downward progression. For example, the souls of animals descend through downward progression from the "countenance of the ox"<sup>71</sup> in the Chariot, the souls of beasts from the "countenance of the lion," the souls of birds from the "countenance of the eagle," and the soul of man from the "countenance of man" in the Chariot.

The four beings of the Chariot are found in each of the Worlds, descending through the stages progressively, from one spiritual stage to the lower one, for even on the lowest stage the soul is spiritual. But to bring about the existence of a physical being, like an animal or anything else, the system of downward progression of cause and effect is utterly inadequate. Despite myriads of stages of downward progression, physical matter could never evolve from the spiritual. Spiritual remains spiritual regardless of the number of downward steps. Physical from spiritual is *creatio ex nihilo*, something from nothing, creation not development.

In the mundane world we have body and soul, the soul from the process of progression and the body by *creatio ex nihilo*, and a parallel is found Above as well. For examples, angels are composites of body and soul. Ramban<sup>71a</sup> writes on "He made

71 Ezekiel 1:5 ff.

71a Shaar HaGemul.

His angels winds, His ministers flaming fire" (Psalm 104:4), that the bodies of angels are formed from the fundamentals fire and wind, so they do have both body and soul.

So too the attributes in the three lower worlds are composites of "lights and vessels." *Igeres Hakodesh XX* explains that the vessels of the Ten Attributes of the three lower worlds are "created," and were created *ex nihilo* from the state of "light" of their souls." There too the "soul" is by way of downward progression, while the vessels—and certainly the garbs, chambers, and angels of each world—came into being by *creatio ex nihilo*.

According to this, the earlier statement about Kindness of Atzilus containing within itself the roots of Kindness of Asiyah and its ramifications and descending through the process of downward progression, refers to the state of light and vitality, meaning the "soul" within each of the worlds. However, the vessels, and even more so the garbs of the three lower worlds, are by way of creation *ex nihilo*.

#### Summary

The Kindness allotted on Rosh Hashana-Yom Kippur is the root of the Kindness in Asiyah, included within *malchus* of Atzilus, contains the intimation of the physical beneficence—what then is the daily judgment?; every creature has body and soul; soul evolves through progression; body eventuates through *creatio ex nihilo*; similarly with the Ten Attributes with their "lights and vessels."

#### CHAPTER 3

We may now understand Rabbi Yose who contends that the trial is new each day. The beneficence destined to be translated into physical blessings in terms of children, health, and prosperity, must go through the vessels and garbs of the three lower worlds. Thus the kindness becomes formed until it assumes a physical form. This form is "new" for it comes about through

creation *ex nihilo*. *Chessed* of Atzilus did contain within itself the roots of *chessed* of the three lower worlds and it was drawn downward by progression, but this refers only to the vitality, the spiritual, the soul, the radiance of *chessed* of the three lower worlds. But the physical form of the vessels and garbs of *chessed* of the three lower worlds is not included within *chessed* of Atzilus, and is truly "new," created *ex nihilo*, and is subject to full judgment.

This will also explain how, according to the Sages too, it is possible that the beneficence will not actually descend into the realm of the physical. The question was, since kindness on the lowest plane is included within kindness of Atzilus, then it must be drawn down below, so why the possibility that it will not become physical kindness? Now we can understand that the physical configuration of the beneficence need not be determined in *chessed* of Atzilus, for it is not included within that stage. From Atzilus it may well be drawn forth only in spiritual form, like the revelations of the lower Gan Eden and the Higher Gan Eden (for these revelations are drawn from the "soul"), and not in physical form at all.

Rabbi Yose and the Sages, it may be stated, do not disagree but rather address themselves to different matters. The Sages speak of the spiritual beneficence, the illumination and vitality, to be drawn forth, and this is included in the judgment of Rosh Hashana-Yom Kippur, the beneficence called forth then including the spiritual aspect. This descends constantly by downward progression and is not "new." Thus, there is no judgment here, but merely "remembrance," scrutiny. Rabbi Yose concurs in this view. His own statement refers to the actual physical configuration which is the basic beneficence granted day by day in the form of material blessings. This material form of the beneficence is "new" and hence subject to full daily judgment, and in this the Sages concur.

Briefly then, the basic judgment is on Rosh Hashana-Yom Kippur, and the general beneficence of all the year depends on it, according to how much is allotted of the kindness on Rosh

Hashana-Yom Kippur to creation in general and each creature individually. It may be openhanded or otherwise. However, for the beneficence to be in physical form, the kindness must be embodied within kindness of the three lower worlds. At this point we have two elements. There is the spiritual vitality of kindness of the three lower worlds and there are the garbs and actual configuration of kindness of the three lower worlds. For this latter there is the daily scrutiny and judgment, that the beneficence might assume the determined form until it descends to the plane of granting life and material blessing in the literal sense.

*S u m m a r y*

Kindness in children, health, and prosperity is revealed through the vessels of the Attributes and through creation *ex nihilo*; for this there can be daily judgment according to Rabbi Yose, and according to the Sages the beneficence may remain spiritual; the Sages speak of spiritual life and Rabbi Yose speaks of the physical.

*Discourse Twenty-three*

CHAPTER I

We have noted that for the kindness to be effective in the physical universe it must pass through the Ten Attributes of Asiyah, through the vessels and garbs, so that the beneficence may acquire a physical form. We can now understand the verse, "G-d will bless you in all that you do" (Deut. 15:18).

Rabbi Chayim Vital in *Pri Etz Chayim*<sup>71b</sup> states that the numerical value of the word *tzav* is identical with the two divine names *Keil Adneh*. These divine names animate the world of Asiyah. Therefore the Sages say<sup>71c</sup> that *tzav* refers to

71b Shaar HaTefilah, "Kavanos HaTamid."

71c Sanhedrin 56b, Zohar I, 27b.

idolatry which receives its nurture from these names. But what does this mean? These two names are divine so how can they be identified with idolatry?

Idolatry as condemned in Torah is prostration before the sun and moon, or the like. The reason behind such worship is that they are the source of the bounty, of crops. "The delightful fruits of the crops of the sun and the delightful fruits of the yield of the moon" (Deut. 33:14). One who considers them the sources of the bounty will bow to them and worship them. This, needless to say, is gross error. The bounty of the fields is brought by their agency, but they are mere messengers, agents of the bounty, with no power to grant or withhold. They are like the axe in the hands of the woodsman. The tool can do nothing by itself. The craftsman builds through the tool. The forces of nature are no more than the tool; through them the bounty comes to pass. But who effects and gives the bounty—G-d, but acting through the "constellations," natural forces. They themselves have no ability whatsoever and are not to be considered at all. "Shall the axe boast over its wielder" (Isaiah 10:15).

In admiring an impressive building it would not occur to anyone to praise the tools for their magnificent achievement, or the building "built by the tools." The praise is due the craftsman and the structure is credited to him. He did use the tool of course, but the tool is not lauded, only the craftsman. So too with all the bounty of life and prosperity in the world. G-d grants the bounty but through the agency of the "constellations," processes of nature, for the reason we shall discuss later. G-d grants through them. He is the important factor and they are absolute naught, no more than the axe is considered an adjunct to the craftsman, are the "constellations" or natural processes reckoned even as subservient, for they are simply nothing. They are messengers, devoid of independent power, lacking all substance. At times this is demonstrated to man, showing him how natural law is basically powerless, as with the ten plagues Egypt suffered. The gods they revered were of no avail; on the contrary, "All the gods of Egypt shall I judge"

(Exodus 12:12). They are agents of the bounty; G-d grants through them.

*S u m m a r y*

*Keil Adneh*, the names animating *Asiyah*, are numerically equivalent to *tzav*; worship of sun and moon and "constellations" or natural law that are agents of the physical bounty but themselves powerless to grant or deny; they are like the axe wielded by the craftsman; G-d gives the bounty by His will.

CHAPTER 2

Let us go into the point about the physical beneficence going through the "constellations" a bit further.

We have noted two opinions about the nature of the beneficence as it is determined on Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur, as it is in *malchus* of Atzilus. According to one opinion the beneficence is still amorphous, devoid of any intimation of any form of physical beneficence. The second opinion holds that kindness in Atzilus includes within itself even the eventual kindness of *Asiyah* and all its ramifications, but this refers only to the illumination and vitality in a spiritual state, but not the physical matter itself.

In order to attain material beneficence in the form of children, health and prosperity, there must be the use of the vessels and garbs of the three lower worlds. These provide the physical form that the blessing assumes. Through the concealment of the illumination there comes about the existence of physical matter. Existence follows concealment. "In the beginning *Elokim* created." Actual creation comes from *Elokim*, the trait of severity and judgment, of limitation and concealment of the Light.

"Like the sun and its shield are *Havaya*<sup>72</sup> (and) *Elokim*" (Psalm 84:12). The "shield" conceals the sun proper, for otherwise its beneficiaries could not absorb its intensity. So too,

<sup>72</sup> Tanya II, p. 11, note 5; Ibid. chapter IV; Translator's Explanatory Notes to "On Learning Chassidus."

*Elokim* conceals the essence of the Light of *Havaya*, the ultimate Creator.

The reason is that when the Light radiates forth openly, there can be no "existences." Indeed, the revelation of the Light effects a state of *bitul*, nullification. When the Light is obscured then existences can come into being. The deeper the concealment, the greater the "thinghood," the sense of "existence," of being an entity, of independence.

As the *chessed*, the beneficence, goes through the process of descent through Briah, Yetzirah and Asiyah, it becomes more "existence" in each lower stage. First it is invested in the garbs of Briah, and becomes an "existence," a being, in terms of Atzilus. However, in terms of the next lower stage, namely Yetzirah, it is still "spiritual," and the Light must again be concealed in Yetzirah. This process is constantly repeated.

We can now understand the precision of the Rebbe's statement we cited earlier (19:1). There must be "passage by way of *chessed* of Yetzirah and Asiyah . . . properly called investment, for otherwise it could not affect the physical aspects of This World." In order that there be an effect in the mundane world, the "existence" of the World of Briah is insufficient, though it is considered "existence" in terms of Atzilus. In terms of Yetzirah, its next lower stage, it is still considered "spiritual." Even if the light of *chessed* in the form of existence it has developed on the plane of Briah were to descend by way of "passage" through the Ten Attributes of Yetzirah and Asiyah, there would still not be any actual physical benevolence.

This, the physical manifestation of beneficence, must come through investment within the vessels and garbs of Yetzirah that conceal more fully the divine Light of the supernal *chessed*. Then they become "existences" even more than before. Then the next step would be investment within the vessels and garbs of Asiyah, that conceal even more fully than do their counterparts of Yetzirah, and the kindness assumes a state of still greater "existence" and thinghood.

For this reason too the beneficence must invest itself within

the "constellations," in order that the beneficence attain more concretization. For the beneficence to be physical, there must be investment of *chessed* within the "constellations" too. Every garb conceals, and the lower the garb the more profoundly it conceals. Through investment within the "constellations," the *chessed* from On High comes to man in a physical form. The higher garbs, including those of the spiritual realm of Asiyah, are spiritual garbs, and of course cannot conceal so fully that they cause a materialization of the beneficence that it become physical. It is only by clothing itself within the "constellations" that are garbs that totally conceal the Light, that there can be a physical endowment of kindness.

It is clear that the function of the "constellations" is simply concretizing the spiritual beneficence. The beneficence itself issues from the supernal *chessed*, as we have stressed. In the Grace After Meals we say, "Who sustains all the world in His goodness, graciously, with kindness . . ." The root of the beneficence is the Five Kindnesses and the Five Severities of *atik*, as noted above (XVII:2). From that source the flow of kindness is drawn forth and divided to each individual on Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur, according to his manner of accepting His sovereignty over him on Rosh Hashana and according to his manner of *teshuvah*, repentance or return, with true contrition for the past and earnest resolve for the future fulfillment of Torah and mitzvos by "turning from evil and doing good" in actual practice.

On Yom Kippur the beneficence is drawn from the supernal *chessed* into *malchus* of Atzilus, and then each day it is drawn from that stage to be invested in the garbs of the three lower worlds according to the individual's daily worship and service of G-d. The supernal *chessed* descends from stage to stage, constantly entering into lower and lower garbs, making the beneficence all the more concrete and material. Finally it is invested in the garbs of the "constellations" where it becomes physical matter.

*S u m m a r y*

The beneficence allotted man on Rosh Hashana-Yom Kippur as it is in *malchus* of Atzilus is amorphous according to one opinion, and is spiritual according to the other; to become physical, it is not sufficient that it be invested in the vessels and garbs of Yetzirah and Asiyah, but must be invested in the "constellations"; the beneficence of the supernal *chessed* itself is from *atik*.

*Discourse Twenty-four*

## CHAPTER I

The light of the *chessed* and the vitality in the allotment determined for man on Rosh Hashana, in all the blessings of children, health, and prosperity, all derive from Him. The beneficence itself comes from the state called *atik*, the inwardness and essence of the Infinite. It comes through arousing the Ten Attributes of Atzilus, for man's service of Torah and mitzvos attains that height.

The light and flow allotted man on Rosh Hashana and sealed on Yom Kippur accords with his service in Torah and mitzvos over the course of the past year. "For it is a statute to Israel, a judgment to the G-d of Jacob" (Psalm 81:5). The statute (or portion) determined for Israel on Rosh Hashana depends on the judgment. The judgment is the evaluation of how much of the Light and revelation of G-d, which is the meaning of the words "G-d of Jacob" in the quotation, he called forth during the past year.

Another factor in determining the decision for the new year is the manner of repentance in the service of the month of Elul, the month of mercies. During Elul the Thirteen Traits of Mercy are luminous. It is a time of acceptance; *teshuvah* can be accomplished so much more easily then. The days of Selichos are even

more propitious than Elul. The Baal Shem Tov used to say that the Thirteen Traits of Mercy shine forth during Elul in order to arouse self-judgment and reckoning. He illustrated this thought:

A merchant on a large scale, who sells on credit, urges his customers to make an accounting at the end of the year, how much was sold, how much was paid, how much is still due, and demands payment of them. He himself is delighted with the business he has done and his generous livelihood. Now he demands that his customers pay what they owe, reminding them that their credit during the coming year depends on their alacrity in paying past debts. He grants them a period of, say, three weeks. His own mien of cheerfulness encourages his debtors to renewed efforts to fulfil their obligations. But then when the period of grace has passed the merchant makes his final accounting of outstanding debts, he finds that his debtors' efforts exceeded their success—they sincerely attempted to discharge their debts, but their poverty prevented that. He recognizes their earnestness, overlooks the past, and specifies a time to arrange for the new year's commerce.

This last is like the Selichos period. When the service of Elul is as it should be, with repentance from the depths of the heart, then during the Selichos days his repentance is willingly accepted for the future. According to the *teshuvah* of Elul and Selichos and the acceptance of the yoke of Heaven on Rosh Hashana, will be the determination of the benevolence allotted him in children, health, and prosperity on Rosh Hashana, and the subsequent sealing of the decision on Yom Kippur. But this benevolence is still disembodied, abstract, amorphous. Even the roots of the *chesed* of Asiyah contained within *malchus* of Atzilus is still spiritual. In order that it be translated into physical form in This World it must be invested in the vessels and garbs of the three lower worlds, and then in the "constellations." All these sorts of investment are expressions of His graciousness toward us, to grant to us a flow of vitality according to our measure and state, to our benefit. For this purpose the

*chessed* undergoes *tzimtzum* and investment in all these garbs.

A father who wishes to play with his child must "condense" himself, "invest" himself in trifling matters geared to the smallness of his child. He will play with nuts and even nutshells, for the little child is too small to realize the worth of the fruit, and for him the shells are simply enchanting, because, after all, they roll. The obvious parallel—out of G-d's goodness, His divine Light is "condensed" and clothed in numerous garbs until the gross garbs of the "constellations." All this ensued so that there could be physical benevolence in the measure appropriate to the creatures, for their welfare.

The inner purpose is that the souls of Israel through their service of Torah and mitzvos clarify the spark of good within the physical matter, purifying and elevating it to its root and source. This brings about a general purification in all of This World, which is the ultimate purpose of all worlds and downward progressions. For this reason the great bulk of Torah and mitzvos are embodied in physical things.

Fundamental to study of Torah is the goal of comprehending with the natural, mortal intellect. The Inner Torah, devoted to comprehending G-dhood, His Unity and oneness, His greatness as expressed in "How numerous are Your works" and "How great are Your works," the multiplicity of universe and divine "countenances"—even in dealing with these non-corporeal subjects it is necessary to explain and elaborate on them until one understands them with a full intellectual grasp.

In the field of mitzvos, there are those that are obligations of the mind, like knowledge of G-d, as Maimonides states, "To know that there is a first existence causing all other existences, and whatever exists in heaven and earth and between them exists only from His true existence."<sup>73</sup> There are obligations of the heart, love and awe of G-d. Central to these are the aim that the physical brain comprehend G-dhood and that love and awe be felt in the fleshly heart. All of these sorts of divine ser-

<sup>73</sup> *Mishne Torah*, "Yesodai Hatorah" 1:1; see "On Learning Chassidus," p. 33.

vice can be fulfilled only in This World, the world of physical existence.

For this reason the beneficences were given in physical form in the mundane world, so that man may utilize them in serving G-d according to the laws of Torah and mitzvah.

#### *S u m m a r y*

The flow of kindness is from *atik*, but through the arousal of the Ten Attributes of Atzilus, where the service of man attains and where man's needs are felt; according to man's service during the past year is the allotment for the coming year; importance of *teshuvah* in Elul, service of Selichos days, "accepting the yoke" on Rosh Hashana; illustration of the merchant; inner purpose of material blessings is for fulfillment of Torah and mitzvos.

#### CHAPTER 2

It is quite clear now that the root is the G-dhood, while the "constellations" are mere instruments, messengers of the beneficence without any intrinsic substance. Whoever serves them regards them as vital to the beneficence, as independent in granting. This is denial of Divine Providence and His being the source of life. Regarding the "constellations" as powers that grant, and as a result worshipping them, is simply idolatrous.

This is because the "constellations" are like a garment of sack-cloth thoroughly concealing the divine Light so that it does not illuminate. The Light is invested, through the beneficence it grants, in the garbs of the natural order. Because of this concealment there can be the illusion that the blessing flows from the "constellations." Were the divine Light less absolutely concealed it would be obvious to all that the blessing comes from G-d. However, because of the many concealments caused by the garbs of the "constellations," men can err in conceiving the garbs as substance.

The world operates according to His will. He willed a mate-

rial universe that would come into being and be sustained with concealment of Creator from creature. The investment we have spoken of was necessary, so that the beneficence could take natural forms in accordance with the lowly creatures. Were the divine Light openly illuminating, unconcealed by the garbs we noted, then the beneficence would be higher than the natural order, and creatures subject to the natural order would be incapable of absorbing the beneficence. The blessing would be beyond their capacities. For this reason the investment was imperative. But man must ever be aware that the blessing granted him comes from G-d through the garbs, and this concealment itself is part of His kindness too.

It follows that all this investment within the "constellations" is applicable only in the mundane universe, Asiyah. Investment within garbs is also orderly and systematic. First the divine Light is clothed in the garbs of Briah. We have noted (XXIII: 2) that at that stage the kindness is still considered "spiritual" in terms of lower stages. In Briah there is still the radiance of the light of Atzilus, so it is of course not an entity, independent, an "existence." Then it is clothed in the garbs of Yetzirah and Asiyah. In the world of Asiyah, the lowliest of all, the divine Light is most concealed, so much indeed that it can be invested in the coarse garb of the "constellations." On a higher plane, for example in Yetzirah, where the divine Light is not so thoroughly obscured, the Light cannot be invested in such garbs. Only when it descends and is clothed in the garments of Asiyah, where it is so concealed, can it also be clothed in the garbs of the "constellations."

Now we can understand R. Chaim Vital's statement that *Keil Adneh*, the names that vivify Asiyah, are numerically equal to *tzav*, which is synonymous with idolatry. When the divine Light is clothed in the garbs of Asiyah, then it can be clothed in the coarse sack-cloth garbs of the supernal "constellations" that severely conceal it. Since the G-dhood is not at all evident, there can be the illusion that they grant by their own independent power. Though *Keil Adneh* are divine names, through their

concealment the divine Light becomes invested in the "constellations" which utterly hide and cover it, leaving room for the possibility of conceiving of them as the power that grants and therefore paying them obeisance. Thus the Names effecting this investment are numerically equivalent to *tzav* . . . But we have noted in Chapter 1 that in truth this investment is of the divine kindness toward us, for it makes it possible for the beneficence to assume the form of physical good and kindness. The physical state is imperative in fulfillment of the divine purpose in creation.

*S u m m a r y*

The "constellations" are mere messengers to concretize the flow coming from Him; whoever worships them is an idolator; for the world to exist and operate as He wills, as physical matter, the Light must be concealed; the concealment is so complete that there may be error in imagining the "constellations" to be entities, leading to idolatry.

*Discourse Twenty-five*

CHAPTER 1

"G-d will bless you in all you do" (Deut. 15:18). Sifre comments, "Were one to presume (he would be blessed) even if he sat with folded hands, the Scripture declares, 'In all you do.'" Man must *do*, he must prepare some instrument for his livelihood.

This is one of the differences between the period of Exile and its service of purification, and the future days of the Moshiach. In those days the bounteous benevolence will flow forth from Him with no effort or preparation of a vessel for the bounty. However, in the days of Exile man must exert himself in preparing the instrument for his sustenance.

Why is action so important? We inhabit the World of Asiyah, action, deed. The benevolence granted man must issue through

the garbs of Asiyah. Man, the image of Above, must also create a garb by engaging in labor, so the blessing from Above may be invested in natural garb.

“Indeed, You are G-d Who conceals Himself” (Isa. 45:15). In G-dhood there is the revealed G-d and the concealed G-d. These are two contradictory stages, nature and transcending nature. It is readily understood that the G-dhood invested in the garbs of nature is the same as the G-dhood transcending nature. The difference between G-dhood within nature and that beyond nature is only in terms of the creatures. For Him there is no difference whether He is clothed in nature or manifest without the garb of nature. For man there is a difference—to perceive G-d within nature requires meditation; perception of the transcendent G-d is immediate.

The Hebrew word for nature is *tev'a*, related to the word for sinking, as in “Sank in the Red Sea” (Ex. 15:4). The object sunk in the sea is covered by the waters. Nothing is obvious beneath the surface, only water is visible. But the water covering the object does not eliminate its existence. The only effect is that water alone can be seen. The concealed object retains its existence and nature precisely as before being covered.

G-dhood conceals itself in the garments of nature which do no more than cover the G-dhood. But there is a difference between the analogy of the water and nature's concealing G-d. The water and the object it conceals are independent of each other. The water did not create the object it covers, nor did the object create the water that covers it. However, the G-dhood clothed in nature created those very garbs of nature, and the G-dhood clothed within them vivifies and sustains them. It follows then that the G-dhood reposing in nature is identical with the G-dhood transcending nature.

In Tanya chapter 19 the Rebbe explains that the word *tev'a*, nature, is used as a description for the supra-intellectual. Men, observing the rising and setting of the sun with such regularity, and other natural phenomena where G-dhood conceals itself in various garbs, are not impressed. They must be aroused to con-

template deeply, before they grasp the truth that nature itself is "supernatural." Comprehending this fact, that nature is actually far higher than "natural," requires deep, profound thought. The first glance can mislead, and only meditation leads one to the truth that nature itself is a manifestation of G-d; nature is supernatural, as it were.

All this refers to G-dhood invested in the ways and garbs of nature, the G-d who conceals Himself. But the revealed G-d is obvious at once to all and requires no particular meditation.

*S u m m a r y*

Since the beneficence allotted on Rosh Hashana must become concretized through the vessels of the Ten Attributes of the lower worlds and the garbs of the "constellations," man must fashion an instrument for his livelihood in the garbs of the natural order; nature is G-dhood concealed, but perceived in general through meditation; nature is really "supernatural"; revealed G-dhood is "visible" even without meditation.

CHAPTER 2

These garbs of nature accord with His divine will and purpose, as He wished to create a physical universe. He wished that the divine Light in This World be concealed within the natural order. Despite their origin in G-d's purpose, the garbs of nature do utterly conceal the light and flow from G-d. A merchant is capable of convincing himself that his "strength and valor of his hands wrought him all this wealth,"<sup>74</sup> that his cleverness stood him in good stead in conducting his business. He is convinced that he followed the natural paths to wealth and success and selected the most reasonable for himself. He bought shrewdly and he sold advantageously, and his superior wits brought him profit.

The truth is that these garbs of nature are no more than mere garbs. The blessing comes through the garb but not from

<sup>74</sup> Deut. 8:17.

the garb proper. Crops grow by virtue of sun and moon, as we find, "From the delightful fruits of the crops of the sun and delightful fruits of the yield of the moon" (Deut. 33:14). The sun and moon are the agents for the blessing, but they do not determine whether or not to give their radiance; they fulfil His decree, as noted above (XXIII:1). Commerce too is an agent, while the blessing comes from the hand of G-d, which must however be clothed in the garb of nature, namely work and business.

It follows that too much emphasis and concentration on the garb is superfluous, for the garb is secondary, an agency for the blessing. It is urgent that man pray to Him who is the Master of all wealth, that man direct his steps in the path of Torah and mitzvos that he may be worthy of G-d's blessing and bestowal of kindness. In effect, he strives that the allotment of beneficence determined for him on Rosh Hashana-Yom Kippur be actually granted to him, and his striving is through accepting the yoke of Heaven and through true *teshuvah*.

"True" is used purposely here. His acceptance of the yoke and his *teshuvah* are not for the aim that G-d bequeath to him the allotment of blessing he is due. He accepts the yoke, he "does" *teshuvah*, for their own sakes, because this is imperative. He will be strong in his observance of Torah and mitzvos throughout the year, offering his prayers at the appointed times, with earnest intention, and also implore for his needs. He will study Torah with regularity, permitting no interference. Then he will occupy himself with his business, and he will find that less time will suffice. The divine blessing has already been determined, and it has been drawn down and "clothed" in the vessels of the Ten Attributes of the three lower worlds, and lacks nothing more than investment in nature and in the instruments of livelihood. Hence, with minimal involvement and occupation the blessing can be evoked and translated into actuality through the business.

When man is worthy, by virtue of his deeds in Torah and mitzvos, of the divine kindness, then the kindness is drawn forth

from *atik* through arousing the Attributes of Atzilus, as we noted (XXIV:1). The beneficence is drawn forth into *malchus* of Atzilus, and continues downward through the vessels and garbs of the Ten Attributes of the three lower worlds, becoming physical matter through investment in the "constellations," until it is ultimately brought into concrete blessings through the work man performs. At this stage, only a bit of work is enough.

If, G-d forbid, he is unworthy of the bestowal of kindness, then it may be that the allotment of kindness has not been drawn forth into Atzilus. It may be that the allotment was never made on Rosh Hashana-Yom Kippur, G-d forbid. But even if the determination was favorable, and it was drawn forth into *malchus* of Atzilus, still if it is not shaped in the garbs of the lower worlds in a manner that can prepare the blessing for translation into material good, as we noted (XIX:1), what effect could all his labor and striving for livelihood have? There has been no summoning of Kindness from Above.

The critical task of man is to be devoted to G-d. When the kindness is called forth, then "G-d's blessing will bring wealth" even with small effort.

#### *S u m m a r y*

The garbs of nature are in accordance with the pattern determined by G-d; still they obscure totally; they are no more than garbs, deserving no attention; what matters is G-d who grants blessing; man must be careful about public worship, unhurried prayer, established periods for Torah study; if he is, G-d forbid, unworthy, then strenuous efforts will be useless; when he is worthy then a little work can bring G-d's blessing that brings wealth.

#### CHAPTER 3

There are any number of merchants and workingmen who are pious, who cherish worship and Torah study periods of Tal-

mud or Chassidus, who are deeply troubled that they cannot worship with the congregation and cannot participate in the public Torah sessions. Some make valiant efforts to worship with the congregation, and hurriedly dash off the prayers then rush off to their business or work. It does not occur to them to take part in some Torah session. Besides the fact that they are so busy that they simply have no free time for Torah, their minds and thoughts are so fully occupied with business and worldly affairs that they are unreceptive to a Torah thought. Their worship too is diluted with alien thoughts until they frequently don't even know what they are reciting and which Psalm they are reading. Their tongues are so accustomed to the text that the words flow forth, lips moving, hearts elsewhere. Nevertheless, they do have the "yoke" of worshipping with the congregation. There are some so busy that only on Monday and Thursday can they be in the synagogue to worship.

The universal excuse is that because of the demands of their work they cannot worship with the congregation and certainly have no leisure time for Torah study. Their minds are too involved with their business for Torah. As a result of this base way of living, all week long they live lives not truly human, and even worse. This is the Prophet's cry of distress, "The ox knows its master and the donkey its owner's manger, Israel does not know, my people to not give thought" (Isa. 1:3). In addition, their odd and debasing way of living during the week has repercussions on the Shabbos day. When they are finally free of their weekday obligations they use the opportunity for uninspired pursuits. For one thing, their strenuous efforts all week leave them exhausted on Shabbos, so they must simply rest that day. Then too, because they have become coarsened by the way they live all week, instead of utilizing the sacred Shabbos day for its own purpose of rest from work to be free to worship and study Torah more than all week, these people profane the Shabbos holiness with all sorts of trivial activities.

The truth is that the foundation of his whole structure, his intense occupation with his business with his conviction that it

is impossible to study and worship properly because he might, G-d forbid, lose something as a result, is error and folly. If, G-d forbid, there has been no allotment and elicitation of bounty from Above, what effect can all his efforts have? If there has been the allotment and elicitation of bounty, then tremendous efforts are not necessary, for all he need accomplish is to fashion a garb for the bounty. His endless strivings and his permitting them to prevent him from doing what he must in Torah and worship, is nothing more than the nonsense of the *yetzer hara*. It appears from his conduct that he deems the garb, meaning the work, as the root of his livelihood, for which he labors so mightily, with body and mind. This is tantamount to idolatry, as we discussed (XXIII:1).

It is of a piece with the worship of sun and moon, considering them the powers that grant and withhold instead of being agents and instruments of the blessing, as we noted. This applies to emphasizing business as the key to livelihood. The total involvement in it, the constant scheming, is a form of idolatry. Physical idolatry is bowing, lowering the head. Devoting the "head," the mind and the faculties, to business so completely that he has no time for Torah and worship, is a spiritual form of "bowing," nothing less than idol worship.

#### *S u m m a r y*

Businessmen and workingmen who do not regularly worship with the congregation, whose worship is hurried and full of irrelevant thoughts, who do not participate in public Torah study; the excuse of being too busy earning a living; result is coarsening; vulgarize the rest and sanctity of Shabbos with trivia; their excuse is basically false.

#### CHAPTER 4

Israel are called "believers, sons of believers." Faith is their heritage. This is a difference between Israel and others. The nations boast of men of deep faith; however it is acquired, not an inborn trait. In matters of intellect we find innate intellect

and intellect acquired through something else. This is the general difference between human intelligence and that of other creatures. Man is by his very nature a thinking being, and his intellect is essence-intellect. An animal's intelligence is something learned, like "an ox knows its master and a donkey its owner's manger." There are methods and tools by which an animal is trained, and the result is acquired intelligence. Man's intelligence is of his essence.

Faith too is a trait acquired by the nations through something external to the individual. The faith of Israel in G-d and Torah are of their essence. In the daily experience, whether pleasant or not, the name of Heaven is immediately invoked in different phrasings—May G-d have mercy, thank G-d, and the like. There are the many expressions of prayer or gratitude that articulate the innate faith of Israel in G-d and His Torah that is "our life and the length of our days" and for which we have suffered martyrdom and endured the harsh exile.

In matters of livelihood too the truth is that each one knows that G-d's blessing is all-important, and whoever is a Jew never entertains the thought that his work is the source of prosperity. He knows quite well that the bounty is G-d's who grants him livelihood through his efforts. It is the foolishness of the *yetzer hara* that deludes him into not considering the truth of all this. Since the bestowal from Above is of critical importance, he should not tolerate any obstacle or deficiency in fulfilling what G-d commands him. This may well mean that he will limit his activities in business, but what he does will be sufficient. G-d will provide his sustenance through less striving; his limited labor will provide the instrument for the beneficence granted him.

But when he is swayed by the blandishments of the *yetzer hara* and is governed by the spirit of folly, he is convinced that he must devote himself unreservedly to his worldly occupation, and dare not spare time for regular Torah study and proper worship. In his crooked manner of reasoning he is certain that he is doing the correct thing. Then G-d demonstrates to him

that his total involvement is not necessarily effective. He may rush around the market-place all day without earning a copper. "Measure for measure" G-d treats him. "You will be insane from what you see" (Deut. 28:34). His distress because of problems of livelihood will make him irrational. Folly and insanity are related. To the insane the utterly impossible seems to be plausible, and the fool dominated by his folly conducts himself similarly.

"Do I lack maniacs?" (I Samuel 21:16). David's outlandish conduct caused the king to dub him insane; David was not acting rationally.

All this comes to him because he submitted to the lure of the *yetzer hara*. Had he seriously considered the true values we noted, he would have acted quite differently. His business would require less devotion and the divine blessing would be granted him in full and unstinting measure.

#### *S u m m a r y*

Israel's faith in G-d and Torah is of their essence; faith among the nations, the devout included, is acquired from an external source; essence-intellect and acquired intellect; all recognize that G-d's blessing makes wealthy; being swayed by the *yetzer hara* jeopardizes livelihood; folly and insanity are similar.

### *Discourse Twenty-six*

#### CHAPTER I

We may return to our opening verse. "A wellspring shall go forth from the House of G-d and shall water the valley of Shittim." In the realm of holiness too there is the state of *shtus*, folly. "His folly stood the venerable sage in good stead" (Kesubos 17a). "Folly" in this sense indicates that which is superior to intellect. The prophet was called insane, as "Why did this

insane man come" (II Kings 9:11). The prophet's way is contrary to that of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, meaning the prophet is insensitive to the natural faculties, which is the meaning of the Tree of Knowledge. The sin of the Tree caused this sensitivity, as we find, "They knew they were unclôthed" (Gen. 3:7). Did they not *know* they were naked before they tasted the fruit? But the meaning is that at first they were insensitive to the fact of their nakedness, and then they became aware of its significance; they "felt" their nakedness. At first "They were both unclôthed . . . and felt no shame" (Gen. 2:25), meaning that they did not regard their lack of clothing as being at all unseemly, but then they "knew . . .," meaning they *felt*, that they were unclôthed.

Rambam in *Moreh Nevuchim* (1:2) remarks that someone challenged him about the effects of the Tree. How could sin bring Adam to a quality denied him earlier, that of intellect and reason, as stated in, "The eyes of both were opened" (Gen. 3:7)? Rambam answered that the "new" knowledge was no advantage or superiority whatsoever. At first Adam's knowledge was intellectual, rational. He could not employ categories like "attractive" or "repulsive" (for these are irrelevant to intellectual definition). His rational faculty was diminished as a result of the sin, and his "natural perception" became active in determining what is beautiful or ugly. This new state is inferior to Adam's earlier state.

Zohar (III:261b): "The eyes of both were opened" to the murkiness of This World. This was not so earlier, when they observed and had open eyes for what was *above* them.

The prophets when visited with the spirit of prophecy were in a state of divestment from material existence. They attained the quality and category of Adam as he was prior to his sin. This means that their natural senses were nullified; they were insensitive to the material world. This explains the "removal of garments" of the prophets during prophecy, as in the case of Saul (I Samuel 19:24), "He too removed his garments and prophesied . . . and fell naked. . . ." This is the state of Adam before the

sin, utterly unaware of the need for clothing. The prophets during prophesy did not know or recognize the need for clothing because they lacked the natural perception ("Removal of garments" means divesting oneself of the natural faculties).

The epithet "insane" applied to the prophet reflects the nullification of his natural perceptions acquired through the sin of the Tree. This is also similar to the "folly" of the elderly sage mentioned in Kesubos above. Akavia ben Mehalalel declared, "Better that I be called a fool all my life and not be wicked even a moment" (Edios V:6). "Fool" in this context is the "folly of holiness," the antithesis of the worldly folly. Worldly foolishness means irrationality, acting out the various idiocies of the *yetzer hara* deluding man and deflecting him from the path of truth. The cause of the worldly folly is the knowledge and perception of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil that conceals truth.

#### Summary

Intelligence resulting from the sin of the Tree is a descent from the divine intelligence endowed man, to the murkiness of This World; "removal of garments" of the prophets, and the effective "folly" of the venerable sage, mean divestment of natural perceptions; this is service transcending reason, and is called "folly of holiness."

#### CHAPTER 2

"G-d made man upright." Endowed with the divine ability and perceptiveness, man should be able to know and perceive the truth, that for him the ultimate good is the spiritual good, the constant progress in *dvekus*, cleaving to G-dhood, to Torah and mitzvos He should be able to recognize that whatever contradicts these purposes is evil, gall and wormwood; the blandishments of the *yetzer hara* are absolutely false and evil. Truly, man should be able to sense all this because of the divine perceptivity within him. How could he ever have succumbed to the

urgings of the *yetzer hara*? But this is a result of the sin of the Tree.

Before man sinned he already possessed a *yetzer hara*. Commenting on the spelling of "He formed" (Gen. 2:7), the Talmud says in Berachos 61a that Adam was created with "two impulses" (for good and for evil). Before his sin, the spiritual perceptivity was so dominant that Adam was insensitive to matters of nature. As we quoted Rambam earlier, his knowledge was rational, and he did not perceive the so-called "popular" values because of his intense sensitivity to G-dly matters. He changed radically after the sin, with an intensified "natural" sensitivity, meaning that he was now fully aware of the attractiveness of the material world; he "felt" every natural and physical phenomenon deeply. This sensitivity to the material causes the diminution of the divine perceptivity, to know and sense his true welfare, as we have noted.

This is the folly engendered by the *yetzer hara*. He is so overwhelmed with awareness of the physical world that he loses perspective, falls lower and lower, fails to conduct himself with reason and honest evaluation. This is the folly of evil that is inferior to reason. In opposition to this is the "folly of holiness" that is also behavior along lines other than the rational, but it transcends reason. It is not according to reason and natural perceptiveness resulting from the Tree, nor is it according to the holy rationality. He does not entertain any speculations according to reason, attempting to determine what should be his conduct. He acts by the intensity of the soul, higher than the rational faculties.

The soul possesses two categories of faculties. There are revealed powers of the soul, intellect and emotion, and there is the essence of the soul, transcending reason and intellect.

The state that was manifest and dominant in Adam before the sin, when his attention was riveted on the divine, was that of the intellect-powers of the divine soul that were manifest within him. There are souls that even after the sin have not utterly lost their estate, in whom the illumination of the divine

soul is bright. They have a knowledge and comprehension of G-dhood and this is what occupies them constantly. They are indifferent to other concerns, and are relatively insensitive to the natural animal conception of physical good. They are not quite the same as Adam in his pristine state, who had no perceptivity for the natural whatsoever. Still their sensitivity for the natural is blunted, they resist the urgings of the *yetzer hara*, they understand the truth.

#### *S u m m a r y*

G-d gave man divine sensitivity; hence he should know that his true welfare is in Torah and mitzvos, and that the *yetzer hara's* urgings are false and evil; the natural sensitivity, because of the sin of the Tree, is susceptible to the nonsense of the *yetzer hara*, that is inferior to reason; "folly of holiness" is superior to rationality; those in whom the light of the divine soul shines.

### *Discourse Twenty-seven*

#### CHAPTER 1

There are those whose G-dly soul shines within them, illuminates them. They have a comprehension of G-dhood. Most important, they are men of *avoda* quite apart from their intellectual comprehension of G-dhood. Whatever their intellectual acquisition, it brings an enhancement of their actual service of G-d, their *avoda*. Their perceptivity of the divine dominates their sensitivity to the natural. They are immune to the blandishments of the *yetzer hara*; more, they create new elucidations of the principles enunciated above (I:3 and 4) of the quality of man and the purpose of his creation. The key to their development is the fact that they are men of *avoda*, constantly becoming more refined, constantly growing, constantly developing the mastery of "form" over "matter."

But those whose G-dly soul is not as manifest within them, who are susceptible to the urgings of the *yetzer hara*, must use another approach. They are not to immerse themselves in the detailed elaboration of the human quality, but they must resist the *yetzer* and the obstacles it throws in their path with stubborn firmness, based on the second aspect of the soul, the essence of soul, transcending reason and intellect.

Intellect and emotion are powers of the soul, but not essence of the soul, the soul proper. The essence of soul is far higher than its powers and faculties. "For they are a stiff-necked people, so forgive" (Ex. 34:9). Their stiff-neckedness is their quality, a virtue, a reason for being forgiven. It is the granite determination of the soul to "turn from evil and do good" without rationalizing, without apologetics. The obstinate is unreasonable, much more willful than the one who conducts himself with reason. The desires of the one who lives by reason are controlled by reason. Intellect weakens desire, imposes limitations on it. Will, desire, not directed by intellect, is boundless. The obstinate person's will is firm and strong.

Israel possess some of this immovable obstinacy for holiness, ready for martyrdom for His Name's sake. Not only for martyrdom, but in every human concern, there can be this unshakable determination to resist the *yetzer hara* and animal soul, not to indulge the passions of the heart. All that is needed is awareness that physical desires and indulgence are the abomination of G-d that He despises, particularly the forbidden and evil. Man need not have internal debates on the subject.

He must be aware that he must worship and pay careful heed to the prayers, he must set aside inviolable periods for Torah study. This is not a matter for discussion, for consideration of possible loss. His decision is final that he shall do his duty as expressed in Torah, he will absolutely not follow the urgings of his heart. This is the "folly of holiness" that is contrary to the rationality of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil. It is not even dictated by the rationality of holiness but derives from the firmness of the essence of soul. Only after this state is

attained is he prepared for the rationality of holiness. When he acts with firmness expressing the essence of soul, he enervates the natural sensitivity of the animal soul, and makes possible the action of the powers of the divine soul. Then it is possible that he will be capable of reasoning and sensing in accordance with the G-dly soul, performing his works intelligently, with the understanding and principles we have discussed.

*S u m m a r y*

Whoever lacks manifestation of the G-dly soul, must determine to arouse the powerful bond between soul and G-d and His Torah and mitzvos, without detailed rationalization; intellect weakens desire; the quality of obstinacy in boundless will; obstinacy of holiness in setting times for Torah and in maximal performance of mitzvos weakens the natural sensitivity.

CHAPTER 2

"A wellspring from the House of G-d shall go forth." The "wellspring" is the state of *chochma*, as explained in *Kahalas Yaakov* in the name of *Raya Mehemna*. This is in distinction to "river" which represents the attribute of *bina*. It is called the "breadth of the river" because the characteristic of the river is its flow in length and breadth, covering great distances and spreading wide. The wellspring represents *chochma*. While the river is impressive in its magnitude, the way it fills its banks, it still may dry out. "The river wastes and is dry" (Isa. 19:5). The wellspring may issue a drop at a time, but it is not interrupted.

The Rebbe (Tanya chapters 18 and 19) explains that the state of *chochma* of the soul is higher than reason and intellect. It is the source of the ability to suffer martyrdom that every Jew possesses. He cites the verse "A fool believes everything" (Prov. 14:15), the state of "folly of holiness," which derives from the power of *chochma* of the soul, the *koach mah*, the

nullity of self. This power of *koach mah* is the highest aspect of *chochma*.

There are two aspects of *chochma*. First, *chochma* is the beginning of the revelation, the initial stage of downward progression. The second is an aspect superior to this, higher than the system of downward progression, not revealed in the manner and order that the first aspect of *chochma* is revealed, the first step in downward progression.

What are these two states in terms of *chochma* as a power of the soul? There is a phenomenon of the flash of intellect, the swift insight of the mind. It is still far higher than actual comprehension, for it is still in nucleus form, generalized, uncomprehended. However at the very least, it is intellect manifest, for with this "flash" he does know the idea at least in general terms. This is the external aspect of *chochma*. The inward aspect of *chochma* is that element of intellect that transcends downward progression. These two may be called *koach* (power) and *mah* (nullity), both elements of *chochma*. The first is what extends and progresses to *bina*, development, comprehension. *Mah*, nullity, is the element of *chochma* that is bound to *kesser*, will, transcendent. This latter element is the characteristic nullity of *chochma*, *bitul*, higher than reason and intellect.

"A wellspring from the House of G-d shall go forth." "House" represents *makif*, encompassing, not penetrating or permeating. *Likutai Torah* explains that this is the internal aspect of *kesser*. The "wellspring" that "goes forth from the House" is *chochma* as it issues from *kesser*, the element of nullity, or *mah* of *chochma*. This wellspring shall "water the valley of Shittim," the "folly" of the "other side" to convert it to become "folly of holiness." In practical terms this means that the service of man will not be determined by the dictates of reason and calculations, as we have explained.

*Chochma*, that is higher than reason and intellect, is *re'usa d'liba*, the "will of the heart," higher than the rational faculties in terms of *avoda*, service of G-d. This state of *chochma* is the "wellspring." It represents the service of the essence of soul.

This "shall water the valley of Shittim," the folly of the animal soul, so that all his conduct shall be in the form of "folly of holiness." This includes his business affairs which shall not interfere with his spiritual pursuits. In his personal matters too, he will resist the lure of indulging his desires and his wish for pleasure. Thus will he humble the animal soul in general, being less impressed with the "goodness" of material things. As a result the intellectual and emotional faculties of the G-dly soul will become manifest, and thereby he will order his life fully according to the standards of the rationality of holiness.

*S u m m a r y*

The Rebbe explained that *chochma* is higher than reason; wellspring; the power of martyrdom for the Sanctification of the Name and in tests of faith; *koach mah*; *koach* is extension to *bina*; *mah* is attachment to *kesser*; *mah* of *chochma* "waters the valley of Shittim," converting the folly of the "other side" to the folly of holiness; then all his conduct will be according to the rationality of holiness.

*Discourse Twenty-eight*

CHAPTER 1

What have we touched on in this essay on the "wellspring from the House of G-d shall go forth and water . . .?"

Some have succumbed to the delusions and nonsense of the *yetzer hara*, in one of several possible ways. There are the passions for worldly pleasure, with man attracted to the animal concept of goodness, the natural good, physical enjoyment. Because of his own coarseness he feels strongly the attraction of bodily pleasure. This dulls his reasoning ability, to recognize that this is not his sort of "goodness" at all. Even to matters that are prohibited does the spirit of folly of the *yetzer* extend, to

dominate him and sway him. It conceals the truth that he does become separated from G-d by this conduct, that he does not retain his Jewish integrity. He persuades himself that he "will have peace" and who will ever know of his interests and his deeds. These are all delusions, absolute falsehood, and he falls prey to them because of his grossness.

For others the problem is their unreserved devotion to their business affairs, with all the attendant drain on time and mind. This prevents man from having time for Torah study and from worshipping properly.

Whatever his weakness, whether subjection to the *yetzer hara* in indulging desires for licit or even illicit pleasure, or whether he is simply too "busy" to find times for his spiritual needs, his problem is formidable. When the *yetzer hara* encompasses him, deflecting him from the path of truth, he may not feel it in his power to overcome the *yetzer* using the knowledge and honest reckoning we have outlined, because of the strength of the *yetzer*. (Over the course of time, the *yetzer* keeps getting stronger, as we find in Tanya, chapter 13, "On the contrary, with the passing of time it has gained strength, because the man has indulged it considerably, in eating and drinking and other mundane pursuits.") Upon confronting the *yetzer hara* in whatever form, he is overwhelmed, reacting with his natural, animal response, losing all rationality, and making a fool of himself.

Beside the forbidding strength of the *yetzer hara*, the powers of the divine soul within him are correspondingly feeble, for vigor of body spells weakness of spirit. The final result is that he cannot be guided by reason and thoughtful, honest calculation, but what other course is there?

He must simply overcome the folly of the *yetzer hara*, the "valley of Shittim," by conducting himself according to the "folly of holiness." He must arouse his latent strength to oppose the *yetzer hara*, not with argumentation or explanations, but with unswerving determination. Whatever his weakness, he shall do the opposite, without consideration of consequences. Every Jew has this ability by virtue of his soul, possessing a

strength higher than reason and intellect. This is their stiff-neckedness, a virtue, not a fault. This quality is the "wellspring that shall come forth from the House of G-d." On a higher plane this is the inwardness of *chochma* as it is bound up with *nesser*, and in terms of the soul it is the essence of soul that transcends reason and intellect.

"A wellspring from the House of G-d shall go forth and water the valley of Shittim." The forcefulness of the essence of soul is quite capable of overcoming the spirit of folly of the *yetzer hara* and converting it to the "folly of holiness," to be unshakably determined to act contrary to his natural perception in his particular weakness. When he actually lives this way for a period of time, he will succeed in tempering his coarseness and his natural animal perception. Instead he will enjoy an invigoration of the powers of the divine soul, and then he will live in accordance with rationality of holiness. "In all your ways, know Him" (Prov. 3:6). Even in your worldly pursuits that are necessary for the maintenance of life and in your business activities, don't act foolishly, in the spirit of folly of the *yetzer hara*. Everything should be in the state of true divine rationality. He will go then in confidence.

#### *S u m m a r y*

Every one of Israel possesses the strength of *mah* of *chochma* of the soul, which is the wellspring that waters even the valley of Shittim; whoever is ensnared by the *yetzer hara* must arouse this strength; he can act contrary to his natural perceptions, and thus purify his physical grossness, and then live by the divine intelligence.

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