



LIKKUTEI TORAH • PARSHAS MASEI • MAAMAR 6

וירד הגבול ומחה על כתף ים כנרת קדמה כו'

“And the border shall descend and shall touch
upon the shoulder of the Sea of Kinneres”



The Jordan, which “takes from this one and gives to that one,” is a person’s work of raising the fallen sparks by turning the heat of his natural emotions into fiery love of G-d. Yet even this love from below succeeds only through light drawn from above, from the Sea of Kinneres, the sparks’ own root before the shattering.

DEDICATED IN HONOR OF

מוקדש לכבוד הגאון המקובל רבי לוי יצחק שניאורסאהן זצ"ל

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



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THE BIG IDEA

The Jordan, which “takes from this one and gives to that one,” is a person’s work of raising the fallen sparks by turning the heat of his natural emotions into fiery love of G-d. Yet even this love from below succeeds only through light drawn from above, from the Sea of Kinneres, the sparks’ own root before the shattering.

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

THE MAAMAR IN BRIEF

The maamar reads the eastern border of the Land of Israel, which touches the Sea of Kinneres and descends along the Jordan, as a map of divine service. The Jordan, which the Sages say “takes from this one and gives to that one,” is the ascent from below: raising the unrefined remnants of the shattered “kings” of Tohu out of kelipas nogah. These are the seven emotive attributes fallen into the “heat” of Cham and Canaan, and the work is to make that very heat into “flashes of fire,” the heart’s ardor for G-d. Such service, an arousal from below at the level of “world” (the six extremities), changes as physical things change. Above it is “great love,” which comes wholly from above the world, like the Torah that preceded it by two thousand years; it is the Land of Israel and Chochmah, and Aharon, the Queen’s groomsman, draws it down. Yet even the lower love cannot come from the world alone, for the nations also eat and their eating does not become holy. It needs light from above: the border descends from Kinneres, the supernal sea of Nekudim where the sparks are rooted, into the Jordan.

OUTLINE

- 1 The Jordan: turning heat into fire** ¶1
The verses of the eastern border. The Jordan “takes from this one and gives to that one”: the ascent from below that raises the unrefined remnants of the kings of Tohu out of kelipas nogah, the seven emotive attributes fallen into the heat of Cham and Canaan, and makes that heat into “flashes of fire” in the service of G-d.
- 2 Two kinds of love** ¶2
The Jordan’s love is an arousal from below at the level of “world,” the six extremities, and it changes with eating, drinking and other bodily matters. “Great love” needs nothing from lower things: it comes from above the world, like the Torah created two thousand years before it, where there are also “flashes of fire.”
- 3 The Land of Israel and Aharon** ¶3
The higher love is the Land of Israel, on which “the eyes of Havayah your G-d” rest: Chochmah, the “two thousand” of “I will teach you wisdom, I will teach you understanding.” It comes only from above, through Aharon, the Queen’s groomsman, who draws great love down to her.

Even the lower love needs an illumination from above, since the nations also eat and their eating is not turned into holiness. Kinneres, sweet as a harp, is the chasadim from Eden (Chochmah) and stands “before the eye”; it is the supernal sea of Nekudim, the root of the 288 sparks that fell into the Jordan, and from there the power to raise them is drawn down.

KEY CONCEPTS

The Jordan (Yarden) ירדן

The river that “takes from this one and gives to that one”: in the maamar, the ascent from below that takes sparks out of kelipas nogah and gives them to holiness.

The remnants of the kings of Tohu שיורי מלכים דתהו

The fragments of the World of Tohu (Chaos) that fell in the shattering and have not yet been refined; they lie in keli-pas nogah and are the material of a person’s service.

Kelipas nogah קליפות נוגה

The husk that is not wholly evil, in which the fallen sparks are held; what is in it can be raised and turned into holiness.

Heat (chamimus) חמימות

The heat suggested by the name Cham, root of the seven evil emotive attributes of the land of Canaan; the very heat that is to be made into “flashes of fire” of love for G-d.

World (olam), the six extremities עולם / ו"ק

The level of the emotive attributes, where the love from below, the arousal from below, takes place.

Great love (ahavah rabbah) אהבה רבה

A love that is not taken from lower things but comes wholly from above the level of “world”; it is the level of the Land of Israel and Chochmah, drawn down through Aharon.

Groomsman of the Queen שושבינא דמטרוניתא

Aharon’s title: the one who draws great love from above down to the Queen (Matronisa).

Nekudim and the 288 sparks נקודים / רפ"ח ניצוצין

Nekudim (Points), the supernal sea of Kinneres, is the world whose vessels shattered; the 288 sparks that fell from it into kelipas nogah are the Jordan, and their root before the shattering remains above.

SECTION 1 • 11

The Jordan: turning heat into fire

1 וירד הגבול ומחה על כתף ים כנרת קדמה¹ כ"י. וירד הגבול הירדנה^{2,3} כ"י. הנה בחי' ירדן הוא זה כמארז"ל [כמאמר רבותינו זכרונם לברכה] שנוטל מזה ונותן לזה.

“And the border shall descend and shall touch upon the shoulder of the Sea of Kinneres, eastward,” etc. “And the border shall descend to the Jordan,” etc. Now, the level of the Jordan (Yarden) is this, as our Sages, of blessed memory, said: that it takes from this one and gives to that one.

The maamar opens with two verses that trace the eastern border of the Land of Israel: the border reaches the Sea of Kinneres (the Sea of Galilee) and then runs down along the Jordan. The Alter Rebbe begins with the Jordan (Yarden), which the Sages describe as a river that “takes from this one and gives to that one,” and he will read this as a spiritual process of taking from one realm and giving to another.

פ"י הוא ענין העלאה מלמטה למעלה להעלות מהשבירה משיורי מלכים דתהו שלא נתבררו שהוא ענין קליפות נוגה. להפכם לקדושה.

That is, it is the matter of ascent from below to above: to raise up, from the shattering, from the remnants of the kings of Tohu (Chaos) that were not refined, which is the matter of the kelipos (husks) of nogah, so as to turn them into holiness.

Taking from one side and giving to the other is an ascent from below to above: raising up the fragments left from the shattering of the vessels in the World of Tohu (Chaos), called “the remnants of the kings,” that have not yet been sifted and refined. These unrefined fragments are kelipas nogah, the husk that is not wholly evil, and the task is to turn them into holiness.

דהיינו הז' מדות שנפלו בקליפות חם וכנען חמימות שרש הז' מדות רעות שבארץ כנען ולעשות מזה החמימות גופא רשפיה רשפי אש⁴ התלהבות הלב לעבודת ה'.

Namely, the seven emotive attributes (middos) that fell into the kelipos of Cham (Ham) and Canaan, [that is,] heat (chamimus), the root of the seven evil emotive attributes that are in the land of Canaan; and to make, out of this very heat, “its flashes are flashes of fire,” the ardor of the heart for the service of G-d.

What fell are the seven emotive attributes, into the husks represented by Cham (Ham) and his son Canaan; the name Cham suggests chamimus, “heat,” and this heat is the root of the seven evil traits found in the land of Canaan. The service is to take that very heat, a person’s natural passion, and make it into the “flashes of fire” of the Song of Songs: the heart’s burning love in serving G-d.

SECTION 2 • 12

Two kinds of love

2 וזהו בחי' ירדן שנוטל מזה ונותן לזה מלמטה למעלה באתערותא דלתתא כ"י וזהו נק' עולם שהוא ו"ק

[ו' קצוות].

And this is the level of the Jordan, which takes from this one and gives to that one, from below to above, through an arousal from below, etc. And this is called “world” (olam), which is the six extremities (vav ketzavos).

This ascent, in which a person takes the energy of the lower world and gives it to holiness, is “the Jordan,” and it begins with the person himself: an arousal from below. This level is called “world” (olam), which corresponds to the six extremities, the six emotive Sefiros from Chesed to Yesod.

ובעבודה זו מוכרח להיות שינויים מחמת שינוי דברים התחתונים ועניני גופנים אכילה ושתייה כ"י.

ויש עוד בחי' עבודה (מדברים תחתונים)

And in this service there must be changes, on account of the changing of the lower things and of bodily matters, eating and drinking, etc. And there is yet another level of service ([beyond that which comes] from lower things),

Because this service depends on lower, physical things such as eating and drinking, which themselves change, the service changes with them and is not constant. The Alter Rebbe now introduces another kind of service, one that does not draw its fire from lower things.

למעלה מזה ונק' אהבה רבה שאינו צריך שתלקח אהבה מדברים תחתונים הם אבי כנען⁵ הנ"ל.

higher than this, and it is called great love (ahavah rabbah), in which there is no need for love to be taken from lower things, “Cham, the father of Canaan,” mentioned above;

This higher service is called “great love” (ahavah rabbah): a love for G-d that does not have to be taken from lower things, from the heat of “Cham, the father of Canaan,” mentioned above. It does not depend on transforming a person’s natural passions.

רק הכל מלמעלה מן בחי' עולם הנ"ל. שהתורה נבראת אלפים שנה קודם בריאת העולם ושם נאמר

ג"כ רשפיה רשפי אש⁶ כ"י.

rather, all of it is from above the level of “world” mentioned above. For the Torah was created two thousand years before the creation of the world, and there, too, it is said, “its flashes are flashes of fire,” etc.

This love comes entirely from above the level of “world,” that is, from higher than the six emotive attributes. The Alter Rebbe ties it to the Torah, which was created two thousand years before the world; at that level too there are “flashes of fire,” but their fire is not drawn from below.

SECTION 3 • 13

The Land of Israel and Aharon

3 וזו היא בחי' ארץ ישראל עיני ה' אלקיך בה⁷ כו' בחי' חכמה שהיא אלפים שנה אאלפך חכמה⁸ אאלפך בינה.

And this is the level of the Land of Israel, “the eyes of Havayah your G-d are upon it,” etc.: the level of Chochmah (wisdom), which is the two thousand (alpayim) years, “I will teach you (a’alefcha) wisdom, I will teach you understanding.”

The higher love corresponds to the Land of Israel, of which the Torah says that “the eyes of Havayah your G-d are upon it”; the eyes, the faculty of sight, stand for Chochmah. Chochmah is the “two thousand” (alpayim) years through a wordplay: the root alef means both “thousand” and “teach,” as in “I will teach you (a’alefcha) wisdom, I will teach you understanding,” so the two “thousands” are Chochmah and Binah.

ואהבה זו היא רק מלמעלה על ידי אהרן שושבינא דמטרוניתא. הממשיך אהבה רבה מלמעלה למטרוניתא הנ"ל ודו"ק [ידוק].

And this love is only from above, through Aharon, the groomsman of the Queen (shushvina deMatronisa), who draws great love from above to the Queen mentioned above; and consider this carefully.

This love comes only from above, and it is drawn down through Aharon, called “the groomsman of the Queen.” The Queen (Matronisa) is Malchus, the Community of Israel, and Aharon, as her groomsman, draws the great love down to her from above.

SECTION 4 • 14

Kinneres above the Jordan

4 ואף האהבה שהיא בתוך העולם מלמטה למעלה לא שנלקחת רק מן העולם שהרי גם האומות אוכלים כו'.

And even the love that is within the world, from below to above, is not taken only from the world; for the nations, too, eat, etc.,

Even the lower love, which rises from within the world, cannot come from the world alone. The proof is that the nations, too, eat and drink.

ולא נהפך לקדושה. אלא מוכרח שיהיה הארה מלמעלה למטה. שיהי' [שיהיה] ביכולתו להעלות המדות לקדושה וזהו וירד הגבול הירדנה⁹ ומחה על כתף ים כנרת קדמה¹⁰ כו'.

and it is not turned into holiness. Rather, there must be an illumination from above to below, so that he will have the ability to raise the emotive attributes (middos) to holiness. And this is [the meaning of] “And the border shall descend to the Jordan, and shall touch upon the shoulder of the Sea of Kinneres, eastward,” etc.

Their eating is not turned into holiness, so there must first be an illumination from above that gives a person the power to raise his emotive attributes to holiness. This is the verse read together: the border comes from the Sea of Kinneres and descends to the Jordan, that is, a light from above flows down into the Jordan's work of refinement.

כנרת מתוק ככנור. בחי' חסדים יצא מעדן¹¹ חכמה וד"ל [ודי למבין]. מקדם לעין למעלה מבחי' עיני ה' אלהיך כו'.

Kinneres: sweet like a harp (kinnor). The level of the chasadim (kindnesses) “going forth from Eden,” [which is] Chochmah (wisdom); this suffices for one who understands. “Mikedem la'ayin” (“east of Ain”): above the level of “the eyes (einei) of Havayah your G-d,” etc.

The Alter Rebbe reads the place names. Kinneres is linked to the kinnor (harp), being sweet like a harp, and this sweetness is the chasadim (kindnesses) that “go forth from Eden,” Eden being Chochmah. “Mikedem la'ayin,” which in the verse means “east of Ain,” is read as “before the eye”: higher even than “the eyes of Havayah your G-d,” the level of Chochmah identified with the Land of Israel.

ים כנרת ים עילאה בחי' נקודים. והירדן הוא בחי' הרפ"ח ניצוצין שבקליפות נוגה שירדו בשבירה.

The Sea of Kinneres is the supernal sea (yam ila'ah), the level of Nekudim (Points). And the Jordan is the level of the 288 sparks in the kelipos (husks) of nogah, which descended in the shattering.

The Sea of Kinneres stands for the “supernal sea,” the World of Nekudim (Points), the world of Tohu whose vessels shattered. The Jordan, flowing down from it, stands for the 288 sparks of holiness that fell in that shattering into kelipas nogah.

אבל שרשם קודם שבירה שם הוא שרשם. ובזה המשכה לירדן שיוכל להעלות וליטול מזה וליתן לזה וד"ל [ודי למבין] והמ"י [והמשכיל יבין]:¹²

But as for their root before the shattering, there is their root. And through this [there is] a drawing down to the Jordan, so that it will be able to raise up, and to take from this one and give to that one. This suffices for one who understands, and the discerning will understand.

Yet the sparks' root, from before the shattering, is up there in the supernal sea of Kinneres. Because the border runs from Kinneres down into the Jordan, light from that root is drawn into the Jordan, and this is what makes it possible to raise the sparks: to “take from this one and give to that one.”

IN ONE'S AVODAH

A person's own heat, the passion that drives him in bodily matters, is not to be discarded but made into the "flashes of fire" of the heart's ardor in serving G-d. Yet this love from below rises and falls with physical things, and it succeeds only through an illumination from above; beyond it stands the "great love" that comes wholly from above.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Why does the work of refinement belong to the Jordan, while the Sea of Kinneres is its root?
2. What does it mean to make "flashes of fire" out of the very heat of Cham and Canaan, rather than simply to suppress it?
3. Why must service that depends on eating and drinking involve changes, and how does "great love" differ from it?
4. How does the wordplay of alef and elef ("thousand") connect the Torah's two thousand years with Chochmah and Binah?
5. If eating as such does not become holiness, what, according to the last paragraph, makes it possible to raise the emotive attributes to holiness?

SOURCES AND REFERENCES

Notes

PARAGRAPH 1

1 וירד הגבול ומחה על כתף ים כנרת קדמה

The verse sets the eastern border of the Land of Israel, which descends and touches the shoulder of the Sea of Kinneres on the east. The Alter Rebbe opens the maamar with it and later reads Kinneres as the supernal root from which the Jordan's work draws its power.

Numbers 34:11 ליד: י"א

וירד הגבול משפם הרבלה מקדם לעין וירד הגבול ומחה על-כפתף ים-
כנרת קדמה:

and the border shall go down from Shepham to Riblah, on the east side of Ain; and the border shall go down, and shall strike upon the slope of the sea of Chinnereth eastward;

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2 Kehot's note points to Numbers 34:11-12 for these words.

Numbers 34:11-12 ליד: י"א-י"ב

וירד הגבול משפם הרבלה מקדם לעין וירד הגבול ומחה על-כפתף ים-
כנרת קדמה: וירד הגבול הירדנה והיו תוצאתיו ים המלח זאת תהיה
לכם הארץ לגבולתיה סביב:

and the border shall go down from Shepham to Riblah, on the east side of Ain; and the border shall go down, and shall strike upon the slope of the sea of Chinnereth eastward; and the border shall go down to the Jordan, and the goings out thereof shall be at the Salt Sea; this shall be your land according to the borders thereof round about.'

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3 וירד הגבול הירדנה

The next verse continues the border down along the Jordan to the Dead Sea. The maamar reads the Jordan as the work of raising the fallen sparks from below to above.

Numbers 34:12 ליד: י"ב

וירד הגבול הירדנה והיו תוצאתיו ים המלח זאת תהיה לכם הארץ
לגבולתיה סביב:

and the border shall go down to the Jordan, and the goings out thereof shall be at the Salt Sea; this shall be your land according to the borders thereof round about.'

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4 The verse says that love is fierce as death and that its flashes are flashes of fire. The Alter Rebbe applies it to the ardent love of G-d that is made out of the very heat of the natural emotions.

Song of Songs 8:6 שיר השירים ח: ו

שימני כחותם על-לבך כחותם על-זרועך כיעצה כמות אהבה קשה
כשאל קנאה רשפיה רשפי אש שלהבתיה:

Set me as a seal upon thy heart, As a seal upon thine arm;
For love is strong as death, Jealousy is cruel as the grave;

The flashes thereof are flashes of fire, A very flame of the L-RD.

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PARAGRAPH 2

5 חם אבי כנען

The verse calls Ham "the father of Canaan." The maamar uses Cham (whose name suggests "heat") and Canaan as the source of the heat of the lower emotions, the love that the higher service does not need.

Genesis 9:22 בראשית ט: כ"ב

וירא חם אבי כנען את ערות אביו ויגד לשני-אחיו בחוץ:

And Ham, the father of Canaan, saw the nakedness of his father, and told his two brethren without.

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6 רשפיה רשפי אש

The same "flashes of fire" of the Song of Songs. Here the Alter Rebbe says the phrase applies also at the level above the world, where the love is not taken from lower things.

Song of Songs 8:6 שיר השירים ח: ו

שימני כחותם על-לבך כחותם על-זרועך כיעצה כמות אהבה קשה
כשאל קנאה רשפיה רשפי אש שלהבתיה:

Set me as a seal upon thy heart, As a seal upon thine arm;
For love is strong as death, Jealousy is cruel as the grave;
The flashes thereof are flashes of fire, A very flame of the L-RD.

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PARAGRAPH 3

7 עיני ה' אלקיך בה

The verse describes the Land of Israel as a land G-d always looks after: "the eyes of Havayah your G-d are upon it, from the beginning of the year to the end of the year." The Alter Rebbe uses its "eyes" to link the Land of Israel with Chochmah.

Deuteronomy 11:12 דברים י"א: כ"ב

ארץ אשר יהי אלקיך דרש אתה תמיד עיני ה' אלקיך בה מרשית השנה
ועד אחרית שנה:

a land which the L-RD thy G-d careth for; the eyes of the L-RD thy G-d are always upon it, from the beginning of the year even unto the end of the year. .

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8 אאלפך חכמה

Elihu tells Job, "Be still, and I will teach you (a'alefcha) wisdom." The Alter Rebbe reads the verb together with

elef, “thousand,” to tie wisdom to the “two thousand years.”

איוב ל"ג:ל"ג Job 33:33

אם־אין אתה שִׁמְעִי הַחֲרֹשׁ וְאֶאֱלָפֶךָ חֻכְמָה:

If not, hearken thou unto me; Hold thy peace, and I will teach thee wisdom.

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a land which the L-RD thy G-d careth for; the eyes of the L-RD thy G-d are always upon it, from the beginning of the year even unto the end of the year. .

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PARAGRAPH 4

9

וירד הגבול הירדנה

Quoted again, now joined to the clause about Kinneres. The border descends from Kinneres to the Jordan, which the Alter Rebbe reads as light drawn from above into the work of refinement.

במדבר ל"ד:12 Numbers 34:12

וְיֵרֵד הַגְּבוּל הַיַּרְדֵּנָה וְהָיוּ תוֹצְאָתָיו יָם הַמֶּלַח זֹאת תְּהִיָּה לָכֶם הָאָרֶץ לְגִבְלֶתֶיהָ סָבִיב:

and the border shall go down to the Jordan, and the goings out thereof shall be at the Salt Sea; this shall be your land according to the borders thereof round about.’

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10

ומחה על כתף ים כנרת קדמה

The border touches the shoulder of the Sea of Kinneres on the east before it descends to the Jordan. The Alter Rebbe reads Kinneres as the supernal sea of Nekudim, where the sparks are rooted.

במדבר ל"ד:11 Numbers 34:11

וְיֵרֵד הַגְּבוּל מִשְׁפָּם הַרְבֵּלָה מִקְדָּם לְעֵינֵי וְיֵרֵד הַגְּבוּל וּמָחָה עַל־כְּתָף יָם־כִּנְרֵת קִדְמָה:

and the border shall go down from Shepham to Riblah, on the east side of Ain; and the border shall go down, and shall strike upon the slope of the sea of Chinnereth eastward;

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11

יצא מעדן

“A river goes forth from Eden to water the garden.” The Alter Rebbe identifies Eden with Chochmah and the flow that goes forth from it with the chasadim, the sweetness of Kinneres.

בראשית כ"ב:10 Genesis 2:10

וְנָהָר יֵצֵא מִעֵדֶן לְהַשְׁקוֹת אֶת־הָגֶן וּמִשָּׁם יִפְרָד וְהָיָה לָאָרְבָּעָה רָאשִׁים:

And a river went out of Eden to water the garden; and from thence it was parted, and became four heads.

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עיני ה' אלהיך

The verse of the previous paragraph, whose “eyes” stand for Chochmah, the level of the Land of Israel. The source of Kinneres is placed above even that level.

דברים י"א:12 Deuteronomy 11:12

אֲרֵץ אֲשֶׁר־ה' אֱלֹהֶיךָ דֹרֵשׁ אֹתָהּ תָּמִיד עֵינֵי ה' אֱלֹהֶיךָ בָּהּ מִרְשִׁית הַשָּׁנָה וְעַד אַחֲרִית שָׁנָה:



LikuteiTorah.com
THE CHASSIDISHE PARSHA

About this edition

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

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

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DEDICATED IN HONOR OF

מוקדש לכבוד הגאון המקובל רבי לוי יצחק שניאורסאהן זצ"ל

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