



LIKKUTEI TORAH • SHIR HASHIRIM • MAAMAR 2

שיר השירים אשר לשלמה

The Song of Songs, which is Solomon's



In true prayer the one who sings is not the individual but the Community of Israel and, above it, Malchus; the person's mouth is only a vessel through which praise from above flows, which is why the verse says "be praised" (hishallelu) rather than "praise."

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 CHASSIDISHE PARSHA

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THE BIG IDEA

In true prayer the one who sings is not the individual but the Community of Israel and, above it, Malchus; the person's mouth is only a vessel through which praise from above flows, which is why the verse says "be praised" (hishallelu) rather than "praise."

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

THE MAAMAR IN BRIEF

The maamar asks what it means in prayer to "receive the face of the Shechinah." Reading the Sages' "let your ears hear what you bring forth from your mouth," it takes "you" as the Community of Israel, the collective soul that speaks within every Jew. All Jews form one body, so inner separation from a fellow Jew removes a limb and leaves G-d's Name incomplete. In prayer a person should resolve that his G-dly soul, not his animal soul, is praying, and listen: that attentive hearing is receiving the Shechinah's face, while inattention is the evil inclination's work. This explains "Song of Songs": the individual songs united in Israel's one song. The maamar then asks why "Glory in His holy Name" uses the passive hishallelu. Sometimes the heart is moved in prayer without effort, because Malchus, which sings unceasingly, reveals its speech from the heart into souls; at other times that speech is silent, or the person lacks a vessel and must first arouse love and awe himself. "Ado-nai, open my lips, and my mouth shall declare Your praise" means Malchus opens the lips and the mouth only lets its praise flow, as the Ark once drew praise into Israel.

OUTLINE

- | | | |
|----------|---|----|
| 1 | Israel speaks within each person | ¶1 |
| | "You" in "what you bring forth from your mouth" is the Community of Israel; all Jews form one body, and separating from another Jew removes a limb. | |
| 2 | Receiving the face of the Shechinah | ¶2 |
| | In prayer the G-dly soul speaks and the person listens as a vessel; failing to listen is the evil inclination's scheme. | |
| 3 | Song of Songs and the question of hishallelu | ¶3 |
| | The many songs are united in Israel's one song; why is praise stated in the passive, and why does the heart sometimes stir without toil? | |

4 The unceasing song of Malchus

¶4-5

Malchus, “And I am prayer,” sings without rest; when the Infinite Light is revealed in its speech, it acts like heartfelt words that stir the listener.

5 Gifted love and its absence

¶6

Revealed divine speech kindles effortless love and awe in souls; when it is hidden, or the person has no vessel, he must first arouse love and awe himself.

6 My mouth shall declare Your praise

¶7-8

Malchus opens the lips and supplies the praise, the mouth only draws it forth; so the verse says hishallelu, as when the Ark drew praise into Israel.

KEY CONCEPTS

Receiving the face of the Shechinah קבלת פני שכינה

Attentive listening in prayer to the words the G-dly soul, and through it the Community of Israel, speaks within a person.

The Community of Israel (Knesses Yisrael) כנסת ישראל

ישראל

The collective soul of the Jewish people, called “you” (atah), which is the life of each Jew and the one who truly prays within him.

Malchus (sovereignty) מלכות

The divine level of speech and prayer, which sings unceasingly to the level above it and whose praise flows into souls and angels.

Hishallelu התהללו

The passive form of “praise”: praise that is drawn into a person from above rather than produced by him.

Love and awe given from above עבודת מתנה

Stirring of the heart toward G-d that comes without effort, as a gift, when the supernal speech is revealed; it is received by one who first arouses love and awe himself.

SECTION 1 • 11

Israel speaks within each person

1 שיר השירים¹ אשר לשלמה². להבין ענין קבלת פני שכינה דהנה ארז"ל (רפ"ב דברכות) השמע לאזניך³ מה שאתה מוציא מפיו⁴ פי' כנסת ישראל נק' אתה כמ"ש בזח"ב (קיד"א⁵ א')

“The Song of Songs, which is Solomon’s.” [We need] to understand the matter of receiving the face of the Shechinah (Divine Presence). Now, our Sages, of blessed memory, said (at the beginning of the second chapter of Berachos), “Let your ears hear what you bring forth from your mouth.” Meaning: the Community of Israel (Knesses Yisrael) is called “you” (atah), as is written in Zohar II (104a)

The maamar opens with the first verse of the Song of Songs and sets its theme: what it means in prayer to “receive the face of the Shechinah.” It rereads the Talmud’s rule about reciting the Shema audibly, “let your ears hear what you bring forth from your mouth,” by taking “you” (atah) as a name for the Community of Israel, the collective soul of the Jewish people, as the Zohar does.

ור"פ ויגש ור"פ ואתה תצוה ואמרו שאין חיוב לאדם בתפלה רק שישמע ויתבונן מה שאתה הוא כנסת ישראל מוצא מפיו פי'

and at the beginning of Parshas Vayigash and at the beginning of Parshas Ve'atah Tetzaveh. And they said that a person has no obligation in prayer other than to hear and contemplate what “you” (that is, the Community of Israel) brings forth from his mouth, meaning

Read this way, the Sages’ words say that a person’s whole task in prayer is to listen to and contemplate what the Community of Israel, speaking within him, brings forth from his mouth. The speaker of the prayer is, at root, not the individual but the collective soul of Israel.

חיותו ונשמתו יעקב חבל נחלתו⁶ וכל ישראל אחד מעורב בחבירו מה שחסר לזה נמצא בחבירו וכשיצטרפו כולם כאחד הם קומה שלימה כידוע

his life-force and his soul, [as it is written,] “Jacob is the lot of His inheritance.” And all Israel are intermingled one with another: what one lacks is found in his fellow, and when they all join together as one they form a complete stature, as is known.

The Community of Israel is the life and soul of each Jew, the “lot of His inheritance.” Because all Jewish souls are bound up with one another, each supplies what the other lacks, and only together do they form one complete body, a “complete stature.”

ולכן כאשר יתפרד אחד מחבירו באיזו פירוד שמנתקת לבבו ורצונו ממנו מאחד הדברי' והענינים והמדות שלו או משכלו ועבודתו במילי דשמיא בתורה ובתפלה וכאשר כן בלבבו אז הוא מחסר במזימות לבו אבר אחד.

Therefore, when one separates himself from his fellow through any kind of separation, in which his heart and will are cut off from him [the other] in one of his words, affairs or traits, or in his intellect and his service in matters of Heaven, in Torah and in prayer, and when this is so in his heart, then by the designs of his heart he makes one limb lacking.

It follows that one who cuts himself off inwardly from a fellow Jew, in his attitudes, traits, understanding or divine service, is in effect removing a limb from that single body. Division between Jews is not only a social fault; it damages the wholeness of the Community of Israel.

SECTION 2 • 12

Receiving the face of the Shechinah

2 ונמצא שאין שמו שלם וע"כ החרד לדבר ה' מאד מאד יזהר בזה ולכן כשיתפלל האדם יגמור בלבו שלא הגוף פ"י נפש הבהמית המתהווה היא המתפלל

It follows that His Name is not complete. Therefore one who trembles at the word of G-d should be very, very careful about this. And therefore, when a person prays, he should resolve in his heart that it is not the body, meaning the animal soul that is brought into being, that prays,

If one limb is missing, the Name of G-d as it rests on Israel is incomplete, so a G-d-fearing person must take great care over unity. In prayer this becomes a practical resolve: to recognize that the one praying is not the body and its animal soul, the soul that drives physical life.

רק נפש חלק אלוה ממעל⁷ היא המתפלל והיא מדבר בו דברי התפלה וכל הענינים הנאמר בה והיא לא יעשה דבר

but only the soul that is a part of G-d above is the one that prays; it speaks within him the words of the prayer and all the matters said in it, and he is to do nothing

The one who truly prays is the G-dly soul, "a part of G-d above," which speaks the words of prayer within the person. The person's own role is set aside: he is not the author of the prayer.

כי אם ישמיע לאזנו אל הרנה והתפלה אשר מזמרת ומשבחת וכאשר יגמר בלבו כן ויעשה כן זאת העבודה נקי קבלת פני שכינה

except let his ear hear the song and the prayer which it sings and praises. And when he resolves this in his heart and does so, this service is called “receiving the face of the Shechinah.”

The person’s only task is to listen, letting his ear hear the song and praise the G-dly soul utters. Prayer with this awareness is what the Alter Rebbe calls “receiving the face of the Shechinah.”

פירוש שעבודת כנס” המתחננת ומתנפלת לפני ה' נקרא פני השכינה וענין שמיעת האדם רנתה ותפלה נקי קבלת פני השכינה ככלי המקבל מה שבתוכה פ”י שאינה

Meaning: the service of the Community of Israel, which pleads and casts itself down before G-d, is called “the face of the Shechinah,” and a person’s hearing its song and prayer is called “receiving the face of the Shechinah,” like a vessel that receives what is within it; meaning, it is

The phrase is now defined: the pleading and self-abasing prayer of the Community of Israel is itself “the face of the Shechinah,” and a person’s attentive hearing of it is the “receiving.” He is like a vessel holding what is placed in it.

אלא לבוש לה ויש כלי רע אשר לא יוכל לקבל הטוב שבה ותפלטמו דהיינו שלא יוכל לכפוף אזניו ולכבו

nothing but a garment for it. And there is a bad vessel that cannot receive the good within it and spits them out; that is, he cannot bend his ears and his heart

A vessel is only a garment for its contents: the listener serves as the container for the prayer. But a “bad vessel” rejects the good placed in it: a person who cannot bend his ears and heart toward the prayer spits it out, as it were.

להבין דברי התפלה והעבודה זה נקרא אין זוכין להקביל פני השכינה שהוא מעשה היצר ותחבולותיו לדחותו ולהסירו מאחרי ה' לבלתי ישמע באזניו ובלבבו יבין ושב ורפא לו.⁸

to understand the words of the prayer and the service. This is called “not meriting to receive the face of the Shechinah,” which is the work of the evil inclination and its schemes, to push him away and turn him aside from following G-d, “lest he hear with his ears and understand with his heart, and return and be healed.”

Failing to attend to the words of prayer is called not meriting to receive the Shechinah’s face. The Alter Rebbe calls this the scheme of the evil inclination, which works to keep a person from hearing and understanding, lest he return to G-d and be healed.

SECTION 3 • 13

Song of Songs and the question of hishallelu

3 וזהו שיר השירים פ"י השירים הוא פרטית ישראל כל אחד מובדל מחבירו ושיר השירים הוא כנסיי והמ"י.

And this is [the meaning of] “the Song of Songs”: “songs” is the individual [aspect] of Israel, each one separate from his fellow, and “the Song of Songs” is the Community of Israel; and the one who understands will understand.

The title “Song of Songs” is now explained. The plural “songs” are the separate songs of individual Jews, while “the Song of Songs” is the single song of the Community of Israel in which they are all united, the song that sings within each person.

וזהו התהללו בשם קדשו⁹ דלכאורה אינו מובן לשון התהללו שהוא לשון נפעל כמו נשבע ונאכל דמשמע שבהן נמשך בחי' תהלה והרי אדרבה הם מהללים את ה' והל"ל הללו את שם קדשו ומהו לשון התהללו.

And this is [the meaning of] “Glory (hishallelu) in His holy Name.” For at first glance the expression hishallelu is not understood, since it is a passive form, like nishba (sworn) and ne'echal (eaten), which implies that the quality of praise is drawn into them. But on the contrary, they are the ones praising G-d, and it should have said “Praise (hallelu) His holy Name.” So what is [the meaning of] the expression hishallelu?

A grammatical question: in “hishallelu in His holy Name,” hishallelu is a passive or reflexive form, like nishba (“sworn”) and ne'echal (“eaten”), suggesting that praise comes into the people rather than from them. Since they are the ones praising, one would expect the active hallelu, “praise.”

אך הענין הוא עפמ"ש אדי שפתי תפתח¹⁰ ופי יגיד תהלתך וביאור פסוק זה יובן עד"מ

But the matter is according to what is written, “Ado-nai, open my lips, and my mouth shall declare Your praise.” The explanation of this verse will be understood by way of an analogy.

The answer will come through the verse that opens the Amidah, “Ado-nai, open my lips, and my mouth shall declare Your praise.” The Alter Rebbe first gives an analogy from a person's own experience of prayer.

הנה כשאדם מתפלל ברוב העתים צריך ליגיעה רבה בהתבוננות עד שיתפעל בלב ולפעמים אי"צ ליגיעה¹¹ כלל רק מיד שתעלה במחשבתו אחדות ה' וגדולתו תמשך הלב מאליה בהתפעלות

When a person prays, most of the time he needs great toil in contemplation until he is stirred in his heart. And sometimes he needs no toil at all: as soon as the oneness of G-d and His greatness rise in his thought, the heart is drawn of itself into being stirred,

Usually, stirring the heart in prayer takes hard work in contemplation. But sometimes it comes with no effort: the moment a person thinks of G-d's oneness and greatness, his heart is moved on its own.

מבלי שידע מי הוא המושכה בעבותות¹² אה"ר וכפלא יחשב בעיניו מהיכן באה לו הכוונה ברעותא דלבא מאליו וממילא כו'. אך הענין הוא דכתיב למען יזמרך כבוד¹³ ולא ידום.

without his knowing who draws it with cords of great love. And it seems a wonder in his eyes: from where did the devotion, with the heart's desire, come to him, of itself and spontaneously, etc.? But the matter is that it is written, "So that [my] glory may sing to You and not be silent."

In such moments the person is drawn by "cords of love" without knowing who is drawing him, and he wonders where his heartfelt devotion came from. The explanation begins with the verse "so that glory may sing to You and not be silent," which, as the next paragraph shows, refers to a song sung from above.

SECTION 4 • ¶4-5

The unceasing song of Malchus

4 וכתוב אלקים אל דמי לך¹⁴ ופי' בזהר דקאי על בחי' מלי' שמזמרת תמיד נהורא תתא קרי תדיר¹⁵ לנהורא עילאה ולא שכיך¹⁶ כו'. וזהו ואני תפלה¹⁷ אני היא בחי' מלי' היא בחי' תפלה כו'.

And it is written, "G-d, do not be silent," and the Zohar explains that it refers to the level of Malchus (sovereignty), which sings constantly: "the lower light calls constantly to the upper light and is not still," etc. And this is [the meaning of] "And I am prayer": "I" (ani) is the level of Malchus, which is the level of prayer, etc.

The Zohar reads "G-d, do not be silent" as referring to Malchus, the lowest of the Sefiros, which constantly sings upward: the "lower light" never stops calling to the "upper light." So too "And I am prayer": the "I" is Malchus, whose very nature is prayer and praise.

ובחיי מל' כלולה מעייס חב"ד ומדות ודבור ובחיי הדבור ממנו נמשכו עשרה מאמרות¹⁸ המלוכשים בעולמות ובפרט בנשמות ומלאכים כו' שמקבלים שלא עיי העלם כ"כ כו'.

And the level of Malchus comprises ten Sefiros: Chochmah, Binah and Daas, the emotive attributes (middos), and speech. And from the level of speech were drawn the Ten Utterances, which are clothed in the worlds, and especially in souls and angels, etc., who receive not through so great a concealment, etc.

Malchus contains within it all ten Sefiros: intellect, emotions and speech. From its power of speech come the Ten Utterances by which the world was created; these are clothed in all the worlds, but souls and angels receive them with less concealment than lower creations do.

5 והנה כשיש גילוי אור איס בתהלה זו של מדת מל' היינו שהגילוי בחב"ד ומדות עד גם בבחי' הדבור שבמל' כמ"ש למען יזמרך כו'.¹⁹ אל דמי לך כו'.²⁰

Now, when there is a revelation of the Infinite Light (Or Ein Sof) in this praise of the attribute of Malchus, that is, the revelation is in Chochmah, Binah and Daas and the emotive attributes, reaching even the level of speech within Malchus, as it is written, "So that glory may sing to You," etc., "Do not be silent," etc.

At times the Infinite Light is revealed in Malchus's praise, not only in its intellect and emotions but down to its level of speech. This is the state described by "so that glory may sing to You" and "do not be silent": a song above that is fully expressed.

והנה עד"מ באדם התחתון כשמתפלל ברעותא דלבא וגילוי תשוקת הלב שאז הדבורים יוצאים מעומקא דלבא ורשפי אש²¹ ודבר היוצא מן הלב נכנס ללב השומע עד שהוא ג"כ מתפעל מזה משא"כ אם הדבור בקרירות כו'.

Now, by way of analogy, in man below: when he prays with the heart's desire and a revelation of the heart's yearning, then the words come out from the depth of the heart, [like] flashes of fire, and a word that comes out from the heart enters the heart of the listener, until he too is stirred by it. This is not so if the speech is cold, etc.

An analogy from human prayer: when a person prays with real longing, his words come from the depth of his heart like flames, and words that come from the heart enter the heart of the one who hears, until he is moved too. Cold words have no such effect.

Gifted love and its absence

6 וכמ"כ יובן עדי"מ למעלה בענין ואני תפלה דבחי"י מלי שהוא בחי"י חב"ד ומדות שבמלי עד גם בחי"י

הדבור

So too it will be understood by analogy above, regarding "And I am prayer," of the level of Malchus, which is the level of Chochmah, Binah and Daas and the emotive attributes within Malchus, reaching even the level of speech,

The analogy is now applied above: Malchus, "And I am prayer," contains intellect and emotions, which extend down into its power of speech.

שהוא בחי"י האותיות כח הפועל שבנפעלים נשמות ומלאכים מאירים בבחי"י גילוי אלקות דברים היוצאי"ן מן הלב כו"

which is the level of the letters, the power of the Maker within the things made: [they] shine in souls and angels as a revelation of G-dliness, [like] words that come out from the heart, etc.,

That speech is the "letters," the Creator's power present within every created thing. When they are filled with light, they shine in souls and angels as an open revelation of G-dliness, like words spoken from the heart.

עד שמאיר בחי"י זו גם בנשמות שלמטה שנמשכי"י מאליהן להתפעל ולהתלהב לכו לה' בלי יגיעה וזהו בחי"י אהוי"ר הנמשכים מלמעלה עבודת מתנה אתן²² כו".

until this level shines also in the souls below, which are drawn of themselves to be stirred and for one's heart to be set aflame for G-d without toil. And this is the level of love and awe that are drawn from above, [as it is written,] "a service of gift I will give," etc.

This revelation can reach even souls in this world, so that a person's heart is moved and set aflame for G-d without effort. This is love and awe given from above as a gift, alluding to the verse "a service of gift I will give," and it explains the effortless inspiration described in paragraph 3.

משא"כ לפעמים כשאין נמשך בחי"י דבור העליון בבחי"י גילוי למטה כמ"ש נאלמתי דומיה²³ כרחל לפני גוזזיה²⁴ נאלמה

This is not so at times, when the level of the supernal speech is not drawn down below in a revealed way, as it is written, "I was mute with silence," [and] "like a ewe before her shearers is mute,"

At other times the supernal speech is not revealed below. The verses "I was mute with silence" and "like a ewe before her shearers is mute" describe that state of divine silence.

וגם מחמת גשמיות וחומריות האדם שאין לו כלי לקבל גילוי זה דהיינו כי כדי לקבל דו"ר הבאים מלמעלה הוא ע"י שמעורר תחלה אהוי"ר בנפשו.

and also because of a person's physicality and coarseness, so that he has no vessel to receive this revelation. That is: to receive the awe and love (dechilu u'rechimu) that come from above is through his first arousing love and awe in his soul.

A second reason for not feeling inspiration is a person's own coarseness, which leaves him no vessel for it. To receive love and awe from above, he must first arouse love and awe in himself through his own effort.

SECTION 6 • ¶7-8

My mouth shall declare Your praise

7 וזהו ענין אדי שפתי תפתח. ²⁵ בחי" שם אדי שהוא בחי" מלי הוא הפותח שפתי האדם המתפלל.

And this is the matter of "Ado-nai, open my lips." The level of the Name Ado-nai, which is the level of Malchus, is what opens the lips of the person who prays.

The verse from paragraph 3 is now explained. "Ado-nai, open my lips" uses the Name Ado-nai, which corresponds to Malchus; so it is Malchus that opens the lips of the person praying.

ופי יגיד תהלתך לשון יגיד הוא המשכה ²⁶ כמשל המושך מים מגבוה לנמוך שהמים הולכים מאליהם ורק שהאדם גרם בהטותו כלי המים העליונים כמ"כ התהלה והשבח שהנשמה משבחת אינה מצד השגת הנשמה עצמה

"And my mouth shall declare (yagid) Your praise": the expression yagid denotes drawing forth, as in the analogy of one who draws water from high to low, where the water flows of itself and the person only brought it about by tilting the vessel of the upper waters. So too, the praise and acclaim with which the soul praises is not by virtue of the soul's own comprehension,

The word yagid ("declare") means drawing forth, like water poured from a higher vessel that flows down by itself once the vessel is tipped. So too, a soul's praise of G-d does not come from its own understanding.

שהיא המשיכה דבר מה רק התהלה היא תהלתך העצמי ממדת מלי ופי אינו אלא המגיד וממשיך בבחי" גרם בעלמא.

as though it drew forth something; rather, the praise is "Your praise," the essential [praise], from the attribute of Malchus, and "my mouth" is only the one that declares and draws it forth, as a mere cause.

The soul does not produce the praise; the praise is "Your praise," belonging to Malchus itself. The person's mouth only releases and conveys it, like the hand that tips the vessel.

8 והיינו שהפה שבאדם היא כלי להשראת דבור העליון כו'. וזהו ענין התהללו בשם קדשו²⁷ לשון נפעל ולא נאמר הללו

That is, the mouth of a person is a vessel for the resting of the supernal speech, etc. And this is the matter of “hishallelu in His holy Name,” in the passive form, and it does not say hallelu:

A person’s mouth is a vessel in which the divine speech of Malchus comes to rest. This answers the question from paragraph 3: the verse says the passive hishallelu, not the active hallelu, because the praise is received rather than produced.

דהיינו כשיש בחי גילוי מלמעלה אז אומר לנשמות ומלאכים עליונים שתהלתם ושבחם בהשגות שלהם באלקים חיים שאין התהלה שלהם לשיאמר הללו רק שנמשך להם בחי תהלה זו מלמעלה ופיהם יגיד תהלתו ית' הנמשך בהם מלמעלה

that is, when there is a revelation from above, then it says to the souls and the supernal angels, whose praise and acclaim are in their comprehension of the living G-d, that their praise is not their own, such that it would say hallelu; rather, this quality of praise is drawn to them from above, and their mouth declares His praise, may He be blessed, which is drawn into them from above.

When there is a revelation from above, even souls and angels, whose praise rests on their grasp of G-d, are told that their praise is not their own doing. The praise is drawn into them from above, and their mouths only declare it, which is why they are told to “be praised” (hishallelu) rather than to “praise.”

(ולכן נאמר זה הפסוק התהללו כשהביאו את הארון לירושלים שאז עיי גילוי אלקות שבארון שהיא בחי נורא תהלות²⁸ נורא אותיות ארון כמ"ש בסה"מ סי עיי²⁹ עיי נמשך בהם גילוי בחי תהלה להיות התהללו כו').³⁰

(And therefore this verse, hishallelu, was said when they brought the Ark to Jerusalem, for then, through the revelation of G-dliness in the Ark, which is the level of “awesome in praises” (nora has the letters of aron, “ark”), as written in סה"מ, section 77, through this a revelation of the quality of praise was drawn into them, so that it would be hishallelu, etc.)

The verse was said when David brought the Ark to Jerusalem, because the Ark revealed G-dliness and embodied “awesome in praises”; the Alter Rebbe notes that nora (“awesome”) has the same letters as aron (“ark”). That revelation drew praise into the people, so the fitting word was hishallelu.

(ועיין בזח"א דקנ"ג סע"א ע"פ וישרנה הפרות^{31,32} ח"ב דקל"ח ע"א). ומכ"ז יובן ענין שיר השירים וכו"ל:

(And see Zohar I, 153a, at the end of the first column, on “And the cows went straight,” [and] Zohar II, 138a.) From all this the matter of “the Song of Songs” will be understood, as above.

The Alter Rebbe points to two Zohar passages, one on the cows that pulled the Ark and “went straight” singing, for further study. With all this, the title “Song of Songs” is understood: the song within each Jew is the song of the Community of Israel and of Malchus, drawn from above.

IN ONE'S AVODAH

When praying, resolve that it is the G-dly soul that prays and give full attention to hearing and understanding its words, without separating yourself inwardly from any other Jew. When the heart is not moved of itself, first arouse love and awe through contemplation, so that there is a vessel to receive the love and awe given from above.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Why does inward separation from another Jew make “His Name not complete”?
2. What is the difference between a person who prays and one who listens to the G-dly soul praying within him?
3. Why do some prayers stir the heart without effort, and what does the maamar say a person should do when they do not?
4. How does the image of tipping a vessel of water explain “my mouth shall declare Your praise”?
5. How does the passive form hishallelu answer the question of who is really praising G-d?

SOURCES AND REFERENCES

Notes

PARAGRAPH 1

1 שיר השירים

The note says this maamar is part of a longer discourse, Hodu LaShem Kir'u Vishmo, from the year 5561 (1800-1801), which is printed there.

KEHOT'S NOTE

ד"ה זה הוא חלק מד"ה הודו לה' קראו בשמו משנת תקס"א נדפס בסה"מ אתהלך עי קלו. המאמר הנ"ל עם הגהות הצ"צ נדפס באוה"ת סידור עי יי ואילך. ונאמר גם ע"י כ"ק מהר"ש בסה"מ תרכ"ז עי מז ואילך. ובסה"מ תרלה ח"א עי ערא. ובלי הגהות בד"ה מצה זו תר"מ פרק ח. הצ"צ הוסיף כאן הפסוק שיר השירים (וכן עשה לכמה דרושים). בכל הדרוש לא נמצא הגהה מהצ"צ רק בסוף יש הגהה, והגהה זו מובנת רק כשמעיינים בתחלת המאמר באוה"ת בסידור עי יא דשם מביא המדרש פ' וירא ע"פ וישרנה הפרות בדרך.

2 The opening verse of the Song of Songs, which gives the maamar its heading; paragraph 3 will explain "Song of Songs" as the collective song of all Israel.

Song of Songs 1:1 א'א: שיר השירים

שיר השירים אשר לשלמה:

THE song of songs, which is Solomon's.

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3 השמע לאזניך

Referring to this very passage, Yahel Or explains that "you" is as in "For You (atah) are our Father": the level called atah is what brings forth from the mouth the letters and words of Torah and prayer.

KEHOT'S NOTE

ביהל אור עי קצו "ושם — הכוונה ללקו"ת כאן] ג"כ ע"ד השמע לאזניך מה שאתה מוציא מפ"ך היינו שבח"י אתה ע"ד כי אתה אבינו הוא המוציא מפ"ך אותיות ודבורים של תורה ותפלה". וכ"ה באוה"ת פ' במדבר עי כג.

4 השמע לאזניך מה שאתה מוציא מפ"ך

The Talmud derives from the word "Shema" ("hear") that one should recite the Shema audibly, letting one's ears hear what one says. The Alter Rebbe reads "you" as the Community of Israel speaking within the person.

ברכות ט"ו א'ט"ז-9:15a Berakhot

גמ' מאי טעמא דרבי יוסי? משום דקתיב "שמע" — השמע לאזניך מה שאתה מוציא מפ"ך. ותנא קמא סבר, "שמע" — כָּל לְשׁוֹן שְׁאֵתָה שׁוֹמֵעַ. וְרַבִּי יוֹסִי, תִּרְתִּי שְׁמַע מִיָּנָה. תִּנּוּ הָתָם: חֲרַשׁ הַמְדַּבֵּר וְאִינוּ שׁוֹמְעִים — לֹא יִתְרוֹם. וְאֵם תִּרְם — תִּרְמִיתוֹ תִּרְוֶמָה.

GEMARA What is R. Jose's reason [for declaring that unless the Shema' is read audibly the requirements of the law have not been fulfilled]? Because it is written, "Hear O Israel," i.e. let thine ear hear what thou issueth from thy mouth. And the first Tanna ? He holds that "Hear" [means that the Shema' may be read] in any language which thou hearest. And R. Jose [— where does he find a basis in the Torah for this regulation] ? Both are to be derived from the word ...

William Davidson, Vocalized Aramaic (CC-BY-NC) • Tractate Berakot by A. Cohen, Cambridge University Press, 1921 (Public Domain)

5 כנסת ישראל נקי אתה כמ"ש בוח"ב (ק"ד א')

The Alter Rebbe cites this Zohar passage for the name "you" (atah) as applied to the Community of Israel.

Zohar, Mishpatim 3:193-202 ג'קצ"ג-ר"ב

6 יעקב חבל נחלתו

"For G-d's portion is His people, Jacob is the lot of His inheritance." It is cited to show that the Community of Israel is bound to G-d as His own portion, and is the life and soul of each Jew.

Deuteronomy 32:9 ט'ב: דברים

כי חֶלֶק Havayah עִמּוֹ יַעֲקֹב חֶלֶל נַחֲלָתוֹ:

For the portion of the L-RD is His people, Jacob the lot of His inheritance.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

דברים לב, ט.

PARAGRAPH 2

7 חלק אלוה ממעל

The phrase "a portion of G-d from above," used in Chassidus for the G-dly soul. Here it identifies the soul that truly prays.

איוב ל"א:2' Job

וְהָיָה חֶלֶק אֱלֹהִים מִמַּעַל וְנַחֲלַת שְׂדֵי מִמְרָמִים:

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

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8 לבלתי ישמע באזניו ובלבבו יבין ושב ורפא לו

Isaiah is told that the people's heart will be dulled "lest it hear with its ears and understand with its heart, and return and be healed." The Alter Rebbe applies it to the evil inclination, which blocks hearing and understanding in prayer so that a person will not return to G-d.

ישעיהו ו':10 Isaiah

הֲשִׁמְנוּ לְבִי־הָעָם הַזֶּה וְאָזְנוֹ הַכֶּבֶד וְעֵינָיו הַשֶּׁשׁ פְּנֵי־רָאָה בְּעֵינָיו וּבְאָזְנוֹ יִשְׁמַע וּלְבָבוֹ יָבִין וְשָׁב וּרְפָא לוֹ:

Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they, seeing with their eyes, and hearing with their ears, and understanding with their heart, return, and be healed.'

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PARAGRAPH 3

9 התהללו בשם קדשו

“Glory in His holy Name,” from the psalm David gave when the Ark was brought to Jerusalem. The Alter Rebbe asks why it uses the passive form hishallelu rather than hallelu.

I Chronicles 16:10:י"ז:א ט"ז

הַתְּהַלְלוּ בִשְׁם קִדְשׁוֹ שְׁמֵהּ לֵב מְבַקְשִׁי

Glory ye in His holy name; Let the heart of them rejoice that seek the L-RD.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

דה"א טז, י. מכאן נמצא בסה"מ אתהלך עי קלט (בשינויים קלים) ובאורח"ת סידור עי יד-טו. סה"מ תרכ"ז עי נב. סה"מ תרל"ה ח"א עי קפד.

10 אד' שפתי תפתח

“Ado-nai, open my lips, and my mouth shall declare Your praise,” recited before the Amidah. It will show that the praise in a person's mouth comes from above.

Psalms 51:17:י"ז:א ט"ז

אֲדֹנָי שְׁפָתַי תִּפְתָּח וּפִי יַגִּיד תְּהִלָּתְךָ:

O L-rd, open Thou my lips; and my mouth shall declare Thy praise.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

תהלים נא, יז.

11 צריך ליגיעה . . ולפעמים א"צ ליגיעה

The note says these two modes of prayer, with toil and without, are also explained there.

KEHOT'S NOTE

ב' ענינים אלו נתבאר גם בלקו"ת פי ויקרא ב, ב.

12 בעבותות

“I drew them with cords of a man, with bonds of love.” The Alter Rebbe borrows the image for love that draws a person's heart to G-d without his own effort.

Hosea 11:4:ד"א י"א

בְּחֶבְלֵי אָדָם אֲמַשְׁכֶּם בְּעִבּוֹתוֹת אֶהְבֶּה וְאֶהְיֶה לָהֶם כְּמִרְיָמִי עַל עַל לְחִיָּהֶם וְאֵט אֶלְיוֹ אוֹכִיל:

I drew them with cords of a man, With bands of love; And I was to them as they that take off the yoke on their jaws, And I fed them gently.

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13 למען יזמרך כבוד

“So that glory may sing to You and not be silent.” It introduces the idea, developed next, that Malchus sings unceasingly to the level above it.

Psalms 30:13:ג"ל י"ג

לְמַעַן יִזְמְרֶךָ כְּבוֹד וְלֹא יִדָּם אֱלֹהֵי לְעוֹלָם אֲדָךְ:

So that my glory may sing praise to Thee, and not be silent; O L-RD my G-d, I will give thanks unto Thee for ever.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

תהלים ל, יג.

PARAGRAPH 4

14 אלקים אל דמי לך

“G-d, do not be silent.” Following the Zohar, it is read as describing Malchus, which is never silent in its song to the level above.

Psalms 83:2:ב"ג:ב' ט"ז

אֱלֹהִים אֶל־דְּמִי־לְךָ אֶל־תִּחְרַשׁ וְאֶל־תִּשְׁקֵט אֵל:

O G-d, keep not Thou silence; Hold not Thy peace, and be not still, O G-d.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

תהלים פג, ב.

15 נהורא תתאה קרי תדיר

The Kehot note also refers to this Zohar passage as a further place to see the theme of the lower light calling to the upper.

Zohar II, 256b:ז"ב רנו,

KEHOT'S NOTE

בזח"א פו, ב. [כ]. ראה גם זח"ב רנו, ב.

16 נהורא תתאה קרי תדיר לנהורא עילאה ולא שכיר

The Zohar describes the lower light calling unceasingly to the upper light, without rest. The Kehot note locates it here.

Sofar Zohar, לך לך כ"ד:רל"ז-רמ"ח 24:237-248

17 ואני תפלה

“And I am prayer.” The “I” is read as Malchus, whose essence is prayer.

Psalms 109:4:ד"ד ק"ט

תַּחַת־אֶהְבֶּתִּי יִשְׁטְנוּנִי וְאֲנִי תַּפְלָה:

In return for my love they are my adversaries; But I am all prayer.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

תהלים קט, ד.

18 עשרה מאמרות

“With ten utterances the world was created.” These utterances, drawn from the speech of Malchus, are the creative words clothed in all the worlds.

Pirkei Avot 5:1:א' ח' אבות

בְּעֶשְׂרֵה מְאֻמְרוֹת נִבְרָא הָעוֹלָם. וּמֵה תְלֻמוֹד לוֹמַר, וְהָלֹא בְּמֵאמָר אֶחָד יָכוֹל לְהַבְרִאוֹת, אֲלֹא לְהַפְרֵעַ מִן הַרְשָׁעִים שֶׁמֵּאבְדִּין אֶת הָעוֹלָם שֶׁנִּבְרָא בְּעֶשְׂרֵה מְאֻמְרוֹת, וְלָתֵן שֶׁכֶּר טוֹב לְצַדִּיקִים שֶׁמְקַיְמִין אֶת הָעוֹלָם שֶׁנִּבְרָא בְּעֶשְׂרֵה מְאֻמְרוֹת:

With ten utterances the world was created. And what does this teach, for surely it could have been created with one utterance? But this was so in order to punish the wicked who

destroy the world that was created with ten utterances, And to give a good reward to the righteous who maintain the world that was created with ten utterances.

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

PARAGRAPH 5

19 למען יזמרך כו

Cited again for the song of Malchus when the Infinite Light is revealed within it.

Psalms 30:13 תהילים ל:יג

למען יזמרך כבוד ולא ידם Havayah אלקי לעולם אודך:

So that my glory may sing praise to Thee, and not be silent; O L-RD my G-d, I will give thanks unto Thee for ever.

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20 אל דמי לך כו

Cited again for Malchus's unceasing song.

Psalms 83:2 תהילים פ"ג:ב

אלקים אל־דמי־לך אל־תחרש ואל־תשקט אל:

O G-d, keep not Thou silence; Hold not Thy peace, and be not still, O G-d.

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21 רשפי אש

"Its flashes are flashes of fire," said of love. The phrase describes words of prayer that burst from the heart.

Song of Songs 8:6 שיר השירים ח:ו

שימיני כחותם על־לִבִּי כחותם על־זרועי כי־עֵזָה 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 6

22 עבודת מתנה אתן

G-d tells Aaron, "a service of gift I give your priesthood." In Chassidus it describes love given from above as a gift, beyond what a person reaches by his own efforts.

Numbers 18:7 במדבר י"ח:ז

ואתה ובניך אתה תשמרו את־כה־נִתְּנָם לְכֹל־דָּבָר הַמִּזְבֵּחַ וְלַמִּבְטִית לְפָרֶכֶת וְעַבְדְּתֶם עֲבֹדַת מִתְּנָה אֲתָן אֶת־כֹּהֲנֵיכֶם וְהָיָה הַקָּרֵב יוֹמֵת:

And thou and thy sons with thee shall keep your priesthood in everything that pertaineth to the altar, and to that within the veil; and ye shall serve; I give you the priesthood as a service of gift; and the common man that draweth nigh shall be put to death.'

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23

נאלמתי דומי

"I was mute with silence." It is applied to times when the supernal speech is not revealed below.

Psalms 39:3 תהילים ל"ט:ג

נאלמתי דומיה החשיתי משוב וכאבי נעצר:

I was dumb with silence; I held my peace, had no comfort; and my pain was held in check.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

תהלים לט, ג.

24

כרחל לפני גוזזי

"Like a ewe before her shearers is mute." It describes the same state of divine silence.

Isaiah 53:7 ישעיהו נ"ג:ז

נגש והוא נענה ולא פתח־פיו כשה לשבח יוכל וכרחל לפני גוזזיה נאלמה ולא פתח פיו:

He was oppressed, though he humbled himself And opened not his mouth; As a lamb that is led to the slaughter, And as a sheep that before her shearers is dumb; Yea, he opened not his mouth.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

ישע"י נג, ז.

PARAGRAPH 7

25

אד' שפתי תפתח

The verse is explained phrase by phrase: Malchus, the level of the Name Ado-nai, opens the lips, and the mouth only draws its praise forth.

Psalms 51:17 תהילים נ"א:יז

אד־נִי שְׁפָתֵי תִפְתָּח וּפִי יַגִּיד תְּהִלָּתְךָ:

O L-rd, open Thou my lips; and my mouth shall declare Thy praise.

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26

לשון יגיד הוא המשכה

There too the Alter Rebbe explains yagid in "my mouth shall declare Your praise" as drawing forth, like "flowing and going forth from before Him," since everything is from G-d and the mouth is only the vessel through which His speech, wisdom and will are revealed.

KEHOT'S NOTE

ראה גם לקמן מא, א "כמו נגד ונפק מן קדמוהי" ע"ש.

PARAGRAPH 8

27

התהללו בשם קדשו

From David's song when the Ark was brought to Jerusalem. The Alter Rebbe explains its passive form as praise drawn into the people through the Ark's revelation.

I Chronicles 16:10 דברי הימים א ט"ז:י

התהללו בשם קדשו ישמח לב מבקשי Havayah

Glory ye in His holy name; Let the heart of them rejoice that seek the L-RD.

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28

נורא תהלות

“Awesome in praises,” from the Song at the Sea. The Ark is called the level of “awesome in praises,” nora being an anagram of aron.

Exodus 15:11 ט"ו:י"א

מִי־כִמְכָּה בָּאֵלִים Havayah מִי כִמְכָּה נֶאֱדָר בְּקֹדֶשׁ נִוְרָא תִהְיֶה עֲשֵׂה פֶלֶא:

Who is like unto Thee, O L-RD, among the mighty? Who is like unto Thee, glorious in holiness, Fearful in praises, doing wonders?

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29

בסה"מ סי' ע"ז

The note points there for the wording that nora (“awesome”) is aron (“ark”) with its letters reversed; there it also refers to Likkutei Torah, Va’eschanan 8a.

KEHOT'S NOTE

נורא בהפך אתון ארון ראה הלשון ביהל אור ע' קכ עם הגהות ושם מציין ללקויות פ ואתחנן ח, א. ראה גם לעיל פ' נשא כט, ג. וע"ע בע"ח שי מיעוט הירח פ"ג [כ].

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ע"ז נמשך בהם גילוי בחי' תהלה להיות התהללו כו'

That maamar gives a short summary: the ascent of Jewish souls comes through the letters of the Torah, and “hishal-lelu” rather than “hallelu” means that a revelation of G-dliness drawn into Malchus to become praise is drawn from there into the souls as well.

KEHOT'S NOTE

בד"ה מצה זו תר"מ יש קיצור: קיצור שהעלי' בנשי' זהו ע"י אותיות התורה וכמ"ש התהללו בשם קדשו שהל"ל הללו אלא ע"י שנמשך גילוי אלקות בבחי' המלי' להיות תהלה ע"ז נמשך גם בנשמות להיות התהללו לשון נפעל כו'.

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וישרנה הפרות

“And the cows went straight” as they carried the Ark back from the Philistines; the Sages read vayisharnah as “they sang.” It shows that the Ark’s presence drew song even into animals.

I Samuel 6:12 א' וי"ב:6

וַיִּשְׁרְנָה הַפָּרוֹת בְּדֶרֶךְ עַל־דֶּרֶךְ בֵּית שֹׁמֶשׁ בְּמִסְלָה אַחַת הָלְכוּ הָלֶךְ וְגָעוּ וְלֹא־סָרוּ יָמִין וּשְׂמֹאל וְסָרְנִי פִלְשְׁתִּים הִלְכִּים אַחֲרֵיהֶם עַד־גְּבוּל בֵּית שֹׁמֶשׁ:

And the kine took the straight way by the way to Beth-shemesh; they went along the highway, lowing as they went, and turned not aside to the right hand or to the left; and the lords of the Philistines went after them unto the border of Beth-shemesh.

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בזח"א דקנ"ג סע"א ע"פ וישרנה הפרות

The text itself sends the reader to this Zohar passage on

“And the cows went straight.”

ספר הזהר, ויצא י"ד:צ"ה-ט"ו:קט"ו 14:95-15:115 Zohar, Vayetzei



Likkutei Torah

THE CHASSIDISHE PARSHA

About this edition

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

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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