



TORAH OHR • PARSHAS SHEMOS • MAAMAR 5

להבין מארז"ל ע"פ כי טובים דודיך מייין

To understand the saying of our Sages on
“For your love is better than wine”: “The
words of the Scribes are sweet upon me”



The love of self-sacrifice beyond reason, hidden in every Jew, is brought out by the mitzvos, “the wine of the Torah,” and is revealed on Shabbos. Yet the blessings over the mitzvos, from the words of the Scribes, draw down an encompassing light above the inner light of the mitzvah itself, and so they are sweet “upon me” (alai) more than the wine of the Torah.

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 love of self-sacrifice beyond reason, hidden in every Jew, is brought out by the mitzvos, “the wine of the Torah,” and is revealed on Shabbos. Yet the blessings over the mitzvos, from the words of the Scribes, draw down an encompassing light above the inner light of the mitzvah itself, and so they are sweet “upon me” (alai) more than the wine of the Torah.

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

Our Sages read “For your love is better than wine” as “The words of the Scribes are sweet upon me more than the wine of the Torah.” Why “upon me,” alai, and not “to me”? The maamar begins with love. “To love Havayah your G-d, for He is your life” gives a reason: G-d is the source of all life and delight. But a love drawn from a reason stays within Chochmah, and G-d is exalted beyond Chochmah. Self-sacrifice, “with all your soul,” comes from a radiance of the Infinite One beyond reason, present but hidden in every Jew. The wine of the Torah, the fulfillment of the mitzvos, in which the supernal will above Chochmah is en clothed, brings it out: “Wine enters, the secret comes out.” Shabbos reveals it too, when the Sefiros, lowered for the six days of Creation, rise back to G-d’s Being and Essence. The blessings over the mitzvos are from the words of the Scribes: the mitzvah draws down an inner light, the blessing an encompassing light, and so it is sweet “upon me.” The blessing’s words run and return, as a person’s service does: first awe, then longing for the mitzvos.

OUTLINE

1 “Sweet upon me” and love with a reason

¶1-2

Why do the Sages say the words of the Scribes are sweet “upon me,” not “to me”? The maamar begins with “To love Havayah your G-d, for He is your life”: a love with a reason, for G-d is the source of all life and delight in the four worlds.

2 Self-sacrifice beyond reason

¶3

A love drawn from a reason stays within Chochmah, but G-d is exalted beyond it. From a radiance of the Infinite One in every Jew’s soul comes self-sacrifice, a simple love that wants only “to be one with the One.”

3 The wine of the Torah and Shabbos

¶4-7

This love is hidden in every Jew. The mitzvos, “the wine of the Torah,” which carry the supernal will above Chochmah, bring it out: “Wine enters, the secret comes out.” Shabbos reveals it too, when the Sefiros, lowered for the six days of Creation as a person bends his mind to a picture he draws, rise back to G-d’s Being and Essence.

4 The blessings: “sweet upon me”

¶8-10

The blessings over the mitzvos are from the words of the Scribes. The mitzvah draws down an inner light that enters the vessels; the blessing, said over, before the deed, draws down an encompassing light, and so it is sweet “upon me.”

5 The words of the blessing

¶11-12

“Blessed” draws from the source of all blessing, above the chain of worlds, to “You,” the revealed world, as Havayah; “our G-d, King of the world” brings the flow down to Malchus of Atzilus; “who has sanctified us with His commandments” reaches His very Being and Essence.

6 Running and returning

¶13-14

The blessing first returns, drawing the flow down, then runs up into His Essence; so in “Fortunate is the man who fears Havayah,” awe that keeps its distance comes first, then “he desires His commandments greatly.” Every flow from above comes through “reaching and not reaching,” and the words of the Scribes are rooted in “Where is the scribe?”, above the wine of the Torah.

KEY CONCEPTS

“Sweet upon me” (arevim alai) ערבים עלי

“Upon me,” not “to me”: the sweetness drawn down by the rabbinic blessing over a mitzvah is encompassing, resting above the person rather than entering within.

The words of the Scribes דברי סופרים

The rabbinic enactments, here the blessings over the mitzvos. Their root is “Where is the scribe?”, above the Written Torah, the book, and above the wine of the Torah.

The wine of the Torah יינה של תורה

The fulfillment of the mitzvos, in which the supernal will, above Chochmah, is en clothed. As wine brings out a secret, it brings out the hidden love.

The hidden love אהבה מסותרת

The love of self-sacrifice, beyond reason, present in potential in every Jew because a radiance of the Infinite One is en clothed in his soul. It wants only to be one with the One.

Shabbos: “He rested and was refreshed” שבת וינפש

During the six days of Creation the Sefiros were lowered to create the world; on Shabbos they rise back to G-d’s Being and Essence, and the hidden love is revealed.

Encompassing light (Or Makif) אור מקיף

Light too high to enter the vessels. The mitzvah itself draws down the inner light; the blessing said before it draws down the encompassing light.

Running and returning (ratzo vashov) רצוא ושוב

The two movements of the blessing and of a person’s service, matching “reaching and not reaching”: every flow from above comes first as withdrawal, then as expansion.

SECTION 1 • ¶1-2

“Sweet upon me” and love with a reason

1 להבין מארז"ל [מאמר רבותינו זכרונם לברכה] ע"פ כי טובים דודיך מיין. ערבים עלי^{1,2} דברי סופרים יותר מיינה של תורה. ³ וי"ל [ויש לומר] לשון עלי והל"ל [והוה ליה למימר] לי.

[We need] to understand the saying of our Sages, of blessed memory, on the verse “For your love is better than wine”: “The words of the Scribes are sweet upon me (arevim alai) more than the wine of the Torah.” And we need to understand the expression alai (“upon me”); it should have said li (“to me”).

A new section opens with the Sages’ teaching on “For your love is better than wine”: “The words of the Scribes are sweet upon me, more than the wine of the Torah.” The words of the Scribes (divrei soferim) are the laws the Sages enacted, as distinct from the Torah’s own commands, which the maamar will call “the wine of the Torah.” It asks why the saying has alai, “upon me,” and not li, “to me.”

הנה כתיב לאהבה את⁴ ה' אלקיך כי הוא חייך. פ"י כי הוא חייך. היינו נתינת טעם.

Now, it is written, “To love Havayah your G-d, for He is your life.” The meaning of “for He is your life” is that it gives a reason.

To answer, the maamar first looks at the verse “To love Havayah your G-d ... for He is your life.” The words “for He is your life” give a reason for the love.

2 וכנודע דכי משמש בארבע לשונות.^{5,6} וכאן הוא משמש בלשון דהא. שהוא נתינת טעם לאהבה את ה' אלקיך מפני שהוא חייך.

As is known, ki serves in four senses, and here it serves in the sense of dehai (“because”): it gives a reason for loving Havayah your G-d — because He is your life.

As the Talmud says (Rosh Hashanah 3a), the word ki has four meanings: “if,” “perhaps,” “but” and “because.” Here it means “because”: the verse gives the reason to love G-d, because He is your life.

שהמאציל העליון ב"ה הוא מקור החיים ומקור התענוגים כמ"ש כי עמך מקור חיים^{7,8} וגוי וממך הכל⁹ כתיב שממנו נמשכו כל החיים והתענוגים הנמצאים בארבעה עולמות אבי"ע [אצילות בריאה יצירה עשיה] והוא ית' הוא חיי החיים.

For the supernal Emanator, blessed be He, is the source of life and the source of delights, as it is written, "For with You is the source of life," etc.; and it is written, "Everything is from You": from Him are drawn all the life and delights found in the four worlds of Atzilus (Emanation), Beriah (Creation), Yetzirah (Formation) and Asiyah (Action), and He, may He be blessed, is the Life of life.

The Emanator is the source of all life and all delight, as the verses say, "For with You is the source of life" and "Everything is from You." All the life and pleasure in the four worlds, Atzilus, Beriah, Yetzirah and Asiyah, comes from Him, so He is the Life of all life.

SECTION 2 • 13

Self-sacrifice beyond reason

3 ואי לזאת כשיתבונן האדם בזה יומשך מזה לאהבה את ה' שכמו שאוהב האדם לחיי נפשו כך יאהוב את ה' שהוא חיי החיים כולם וחיי נפשו בפרט.

Accordingly, when a person contemplates this, he will be drawn by it to love G-d: just as a person loves the life of his soul, so will he love G-d, who is the Life of all life, and the life of his own soul in particular.

Contemplating this, a person comes to love G-d: as everyone loves his own life, so he will love G-d, the Life of all life and of his own soul in particular.

אך אהבה זו שנמשכה מן הטעם כי הוא חיך לא נקי עדיין מס"נ [מסירות נפש] הנא' [הנאמר] בפסוק בכל נפשך ובכל מאדך¹⁰ מאחר שנמשכ' [שנמשכת] מן הטעם כי הוא חיך ונודע שבחיי טנת"א [טעמים נקודות תגין אותיות] הוא בבחי' הנאצליי [הנאצלים] טעמים בחכמה¹¹ כו'.

But this love, which is drawn from the reason "for He is your life," is not yet called the self-sacrifice (mesirus nefesh) stated in the verse "with all your soul and with all your might," since it is drawn from the reason "for He is your life." And it is known that the level of ta'amim, nekudos, tagin and osiyos (cantillation notes, vowels, crowns and letters) is in the level of the emanated [realms]: ta'amim ("reasons") in Chochmah (wisdom), etc.

Yet love born of a reason is not yet the self-sacrifice of "with all your soul and with all your might." A reason belongs to Chochmah: of the four parts of the Torah's text, the ta'amim (cantillation notes, a word that also means "reasons") correspond to Chochmah, one of the emanated levels. In Likkutei Torah, Chukas, the Alter Rebbe gives the whole order: ta'amim in Chochmah, nekudos (vowels) in Binah, tagin (crowns) in Z'eir Anpin and osiyos (letters) in Malchus.

אבל המאציל א"ס ב"ה מרומם ונשגב אף מגדר החכמה כמ"ש כולם בחכמה עשית¹² שהחכמה נחשבת לעשיי [לעשייה] גשמית קמיה ית'.

But the Emanator, the Infinite One (Ein Sof), blessed be He, is exalted and transcendent even beyond the bounds of Chochmah, as it is written, "You made them all with wisdom": for Chochmah is considered physical action (asiyah) before Him, may He be blessed.

The Emanator, the Infinite One, is beyond even Chochmah. "You made them all with wisdom" counts Chochmah among the things He made: before Him, even wisdom is like physical action.

ומזה נמשך בחי' מסירת נפש (שיש בכח בכל אי מישראל מחמת שמלובש בנשמתו הארה מבחי' א"ס ב"ה שלמעלה מן החכמה והטעם כו') למסור נפשו באחד בלי טעם ודעת כלל רק מצד אהבה הפשוטה לה' המרומם לבדו ואין ערוך אליו כלל

And from this is drawn the level of self-sacrifice (which is present in potential in every one of Israel, because there is en clothed in his soul a radiance from the level of the Infinite One, blessed be He, which is above Chochmah and reason, etc.): to give over his soul to the One, without any reason or knowledge at all, but only out of a simple love for G-d, who alone is exalted and to whom there is no comparison at all.

From this level beyond Chochmah comes self-sacrifice, present in every Jew at least in potential, because a ray of the Infinite One, above Chochmah and reason, is en clothed in his soul. It is giving oneself over to the One with no reason at all, out of a simple love for G-d, who is beyond any comparison. In Likkutei Torah (Shir HaShirim 1:1), which refers back to this maamar, the Alter Rebbe ties this "giving over one's soul be'echad," at "One," to the One of the Shema, G-d being One as before the world was created.

וכמ"ש אני הוי"ה לא שניתי¹³ כו' בין קודם שנברא העולם ובין אחר שנברא העולם אין בו שום שינוי והתפעלות כלל

As it is written, "I, Havayah, have not changed," etc.: whether before the world was created or after the world was created, there is no change or being affected in Him at all.

The verse "I, Havayah, have not changed" is the proof that He is beyond comparison: before the world was created and after, nothing in Him changed and nothing affected Him.

וענין אהבה זו היינו שאינו רוצה להיות נפרד מיחודו ית' אלא למהוי אחד באחד ממש

And the nature of this love is that one does not want to be separated from His unity, may He be blessed, but rather "to be one with the One," truly.

The love that answers to this level is the wish never to be separated from His unity, but to be truly "one with the One."

והיינו ענין בכל נפשך ובכל מאדך למסור נפשו ממש למעלה מן הטעם והדעת והוא ההתקשרות במהותו ועצמותו ית' שלמעלה מעלה מבחי' טנת"א [טעמים נקודות תגין אותיות] כנ"ל:

And this is the meaning of “with all your soul and with all your might”: to actually give over his soul, above reason and knowledge; and this is the bond with His very Being and Essence, may He be blessed, which is far, far above the level of ta’amim, nekudos, tagin and osiyos, as [explained] above.

This is the meaning of “with all your soul and with all your might”: giving oneself over beyond reason and knowledge. It binds the soul to G-d’s very Being and Essence, far above the level of ta’amim, the realm of reasons.

SECTION 3 • 14-7

The wine of the Torah and Shabbos

4 והנה אהבה ומס"נ [ומסירות נפש] זו יש בכל א' מישראל בכח אלא שהיא בבחי' העלם והסתר. וכדי להוציאה מהעלם אל הגלוי הוא ע"י בחינת יינה של תורה דוקא.

Now, this love and self-sacrifice (mesirus nefesh) is present in potential in every one of Israel, only it is in a state of hiddenness and concealment. And bringing it out from hiddenness into revelation is through the level of “the wine of the Torah,” specifically.

This love and readiness for self-sacrifice exist in every Jew in potential, but hidden. They come into the open only through “the wine of the Torah.”

כמארז"ל [כמאמר רבותינו זכרונם לברכה] נכנס יין יצא סוד¹⁴ והסוד הגנוז בנפש היא האהבה מסותרת הנ"ל

As our Sages, of blessed memory, said: “Wine enters, the secret comes out.” And the secret hidden away in the soul is the hidden love mentioned above.

As the Sages say, “Wine enters, the secret comes out.” The secret hidden in the soul is the hidden love described above.

ועי"י שיכנס בנפשו בחי' יינה של תורה שהוא בחי' קיום התומ"צ [התורה ומצות] שע"י נמשך התגלות האהבה המסותרת שתצא האהבה אל הגלוי בלב כנס"י [כנסת ישראל] שיהיו בוערים באהבה פשוטה למהוי אחד באחד.

And when the level of the wine of the Torah enters his soul — which is the level of fulfilling the Torah and the mitzvos — through this the revelation of the hidden love is drawn forth, so that the love comes out into revelation in the heart of the Congregation of Israel (Knesses Yisrael), that they may burn with a simple love “to be one with the One.”

When the wine of the Torah, the keeping of the Torah and its mitzvos, enters the soul, the hidden love is revealed in the heart of Knesses Yisrael, so that they burn with a simple love, wanting to be one with the One.

5 והנה בשבת מתגלה ג"כ בחי' האהבה מסותרת בבחי' גלוי.¹⁵ והענין דהנה כתיב ששת ימים עשה¹⁶ ה' את השמים וכו' וביום השביעי שבת.

Now, on Shabbos too the level of the hidden love is revealed, openly. The explanation: it is written, “Six days Havayah made the heavens,” etc., “and on the seventh day He rested.”

On Shabbos too the hidden love comes into the open. To explain why, the maamar turns to the verse “Six days Havayah made the heavens,” and so on, “and on the seventh day He rested.” In Torah Ohr, Vayakhel, the Alter Rebbe explains that this is the extra soul of Shabbos: a love and will for G-d above intellect, newly revealed in every Jew on Shabbos.

כי בעשרה מאמרות שהם ע"ס [עשר ספירות] נברא העולם.^{17, 18} ובראשית נמי מאמר הוא^{19, 20} דהיינו שגם החכמה דאצי' ראשית האצי' הוא ג"כ בחי' מאמר לבד לגבי מהו"ע [מהותו ועצמותו] ית' וכנ"ל בענין כלם בחכמה עשית.

For the world was created with ten utterances, which are the ten Sefiros. And “‘In the beginning’ is also an utterance”: that is, even the Chochmah (wisdom) of Atzilus (Emanation), the beginning of Atzilus, is also only a level of utterance relative to His Being and Essence, may He be blessed, as [explained] above on “You made them all with wisdom.”

The world was created through ten utterances, which are the ten Sefiros, and the Talmud counts “In the beginning” as an utterance too. Since the maamar takes reishis, “beginning,” as Chochmah, the beginning of Atzilus, even Chochmah is only an “utterance” compared with G-d’s own Being, as “You made them all with wisdom” showed above.

6 ובשי"ב [ובששת ימי בראשית] נשפלו החכמה והמדות עליונות שהם הע"מ [העשרה מאמרות] לברוא העולם

And during the six days of Creation the supernal Chochmah (wisdom) and emotive attributes (middos), which are the ten utterances, were lowered to create the world.

During the six days of Creation the supernal Chochmah and the emotive attributes, which are the ten utterances, were lowered in order to create the world.

כמו עד"מ האדם העושה איזה מלאכה שכותב או מצייר איזה ציור אזי משפיל שכלו ומחשבתו לעיין באותו הציור והכתב וכשגמר מחשבתו חוזרים שכלו ומחשבתו למהותן ועצמותן.

As, by way of analogy, with a person who does some work, who writes or draws some picture: he then lowers his intellect and thought to look into that picture and writing; and when he has finished his thought, his intellect and thought return to their own being and essence.

The analogy: a person who writes or draws lowers his mind and thought into the picture or the writing while he works; when he finishes, his mind and thought return to their own state.

כך עד"מ למעלה בשי"ב [בששת ימי בראשית] נשפלו הע"ס [העשר ספירות] עליונות להיות בריאת העולם על ידיהן ובשבת שבת וינפש²¹ שנתעלו החכמה ומדות למהו"ע [למהותו ועצמותו] ית' המרומם ונשגב לבדו בבחי' אין ערוך כו' מקור התענוגים.

So too, by way of analogy, above: during the six days of Creation the supernal ten Sefiros were lowered, so that the creation of the world would come about through them; and on Shabbos, "He rested and was refreshed": Chochmah and the middos were raised up to His Being and Essence, may He be blessed, who alone is exalted and transcendent, at the level of "There is none to compare," etc., the source of delights.

So above: during the six days the ten Sefiros lowered themselves so that the world would be created through them, and on Shabbos "He rested and was refreshed": Chochmah and the middos rose back up into G-d's own Being, the source of all delight. "There is none to compare" (ein aroch) is a phrase of the Shabbos morning prayers, "There is none to compare to You."

7 ולכן מתגלה בשבת בחי' אהבה מסותרת שהיא מבחי' זו למעלה מבחי' חכמה ובחי' טעמים כו' כנ"ל.

Therefore on Shabbos the level of the hidden love is revealed, for it is from this level, above the level of Chochmah (wisdom) and the level of reasons, etc., as [explained] above.

That is why the hidden love is revealed on Shabbos: it comes from the very level, above Chochmah and reasons, to which the Sefiros return on Shabbos.

וכי' [וכל זה] בא ע"י שנכנס בנפש האדם בחי' יינה של תורה היינו קיום המצות שבהם משובש רצון העליון שהוא למעלה מבחי' חכמה כנודע

And all this comes about through the level of the wine of the Torah entering a person's soul, that is, the fulfillment of the mitzvos, in which the supernal will is enlothed, which is above the level of Chochmah, as is known.

All this comes about through the wine of the Torah entering the soul, which means keeping the mitzvos, for the supernal will, which is above Chochmah, is enlothed in them.

וע"י גילוי רצה"ע [רצון העליון] יתעורר באדם גלוי האהבה מסותרת שהיא בחי' אהבה ורצון שלמעלה מן החכמה והטעם וזהו ענין נכנס יין יצא סוד:²²

And through the revelation of the supernal will, the revelation of the hidden love will be aroused in a person, which is a level of love and will that is above Chochmah and reason. And this is the meaning of "Wine enters, the secret comes out."

When the supernal will is revealed through the mitzvos, it awakens in the person the hidden love, itself a love and will above Chochmah and reason. This is "Wine enters, the secret comes out."

SECTION 4 • ¶8-10

The blessings: "sweet upon me"

8 ועתה יובן ענין ערבים עלי ד"ס יותר מיינה של תורה. עלי דוקא והיינו כי המצות עצמן נק' יינה של תורה כנ"ל. והנה הברכות²³ שמברכים על המצות הם מד"ס.^{24, 25}

Now the meaning of "The words of the Scribes are sweet upon me more than the wine of the Torah" will be understood — "upon me" specifically. That is: the mitzvos themselves are called "the wine of the Torah," as [explained] above; and the blessings recited over the mitzvos are from the words of the Scribes.

Now the Sages' saying can be understood, with its stress on "upon me." The mitzvos themselves are the wine of the Torah, while the blessings said over the mitzvos are rabbinic, from the words of the Scribes; the Kehot note counts them among the seven mitzvos the Sages instituted.

9 והם למעלה מקיום המצות עצמן כמ"ש בע"ח [בעץ חיים] ²⁶ שע"י עצם המצוה נמשך בחי' האו"פ [האור פנימי] המתלבש בתוך הכלים ממש וע"י הברכה שעל המצוה ממשיכים בחי' האור מקיף ²⁷ שהוא למעלה מבחי' האו"פ [האור פנימי] שלכך א"י [אינו יכול] להתלבש בתוך הכלי

And they are above the fulfillment of the mitzvos themselves, as is written in Etz Chaim: through the mitzvah itself the level of the inner light (Or Pnimi) is drawn down, which is encloded within the actual vessels; and through the blessing over the mitzvah one draws down the level of the encompassing light (Or Makif), which is above the level of the inner light, and for this reason it cannot be encloded within the vessel.

The blessings rank above the mitzvah itself. As Etz Chaim, the Arizal's teachings, explains, the act of the mitzvah draws down an inner light (Or Pnimi) that enters the vessels, while the blessing over it draws down an encompassing light (Or Makif), too high to enter any vessel. In the place the Kehot note gives, Pri Etz Chaim (Gate of the Omer Count, end of ch. 3), the blessing, being speech and breath that leave the mouth, is an encompassing light, while the inner light entered only through an offering.

וז"ש [וזהו שכתוב] רז"ל [רבותינו זכרונם לברכה] כל המצות מברך עליהן עובר לעשייתן ²⁸ לשון עובר הוא ענין מקיף ²⁹ כמו עובר לסוחר. ^{30, 31}

And this is what our Sages, of blessed memory, said: "Over all the mitzvos one recites a blessing oveir la'asiyasan (before doing them)." The word oveir denotes something encompassing, as in oveir lasocher ("current with the merchant").

This is hinted in the Sages' rule that a blessing is said over a mitzvah "oveir la'asiyasan," before doing it. The Talmud proves that oveir here means "ahead of," but the word also means "passing over," and the maamar reads it as encompassing, as in the silver Avraham paid, "current with the merchant" (oveir lasocher). In Likkutei Torah, Masei, the Alter Rebbe asks why the Sages chose oveir and then had to prove that it means "before," and answers that the blessing is an encompassing light over the act of the mitzvah, which raises the act up.

10 וזהו ענין ערבים עלי ד"ס ולא אמר לי. כי פ"י עלי היינו לומר שהמשכה ע"י הברכה הוא בבחי' מקיף וזהו עלי

And this is the meaning of "The words of the Scribes are sweet upon me (alai)," and it did not say li ("to me"): for the meaning of alai is to say that the drawing down through the blessing is in the mode of the encompassing [light], and this is alai ("upon me").

This is why the Sages said "sweet upon me" and not "to me": "upon" means that what the blessing draws down is encompassing, resting above the person rather than entering within.

ולכך ערבים יותר מיינה של תורה שהם רק בחי' או"פ [אור פנימי] כו' ונועם ה' והעריבות הנמשך ע"י הברכה שהוא מד"ס הוא מבחי' מקיף וזהו ערבים עלי'.

And therefore they are sweeter than the wine of the Torah, which is only the level of the inner light, etc. And "the pleasantness of Havayah" and the sweetness drawn down through the blessing, which is from the words of the Scribes, is from the level of the encompassing [light]; and this is "sweet upon me."

That is why the words of the Scribes are sweeter than the wine of the Torah, the mitzvos, which bring only inner light. "The pleasantness of Havayah" and the sweetness drawn down by the rabbinic blessing come from the encompassing level: "sweet upon me." In Torah Ohr, Tetzaveh, the Alter Rebbe explains that when the Mishkan was brought to Moshe he said "May the pleasantness ..." (Psalms 90:17), that the blessing should rest from far above, and that this is the blessing over the mitzvos.

SECTION 5 • 111-12

The words of the blessing

11 ופי' וענין לי' [לשון] הברכה בא"י [ברוך אתה ה'] אמ"ה [אלקינו מלך העולם] אקב"ו [אשר קדשנו במצותיו וצונו] היינו ברוך הוא המשכ' מבחי' ראש ומקור כל ברכה מקור החיים שלמעלה מהשתלשלות.

And the meaning and substance of the wording of the blessing, "Blessed are You, Havayah, our G-d, King of the world, who has sanctified us with His commandments and commanded us," is this: Baruch ("blessed") is a drawing down from the level of the head and source of all blessing, the source of life, which is above the chain of descending worlds (hishtalshelus).

Now the wording of the blessing, "Blessed are You, Havayah, our G-d, King of the world, who has sanctified us with His commandments and commanded us," is explained phrase by phrase. Baruch, "blessed," is a drawing down from the head and source of all blessing, the source of life, which is above the chain of worlds.

ונמשך ברכה והמשכה זו אל בחי' אתה הוא בחי' עלמא דאתגליא שיהיה בחי' הוי"ה שהוא כללות ההשתלשלות יו"ד צמצום ה"א התפשטות ו' המשכה ה' התפשטות.

And this blessing and drawing down is drawn to the level of Atah ("You"), which is the level of the revealed world (alma de'isgalya), that there be the level of Havayah, which is the chain of descent as a whole: the yud, tzimtzum (contraction); the hei, expansion; the vav, drawing down; the hei, expansion.

This flow is drawn to Atah, "You," addressed as one who is present, which stands for the revealed world, so that it becomes Havayah, the whole chain of worlds in four letters: yud, contraction; hei, expansion; vav, drawing down; and the final hei, expansion.

12 וז"ש [וזהו שכתוב] ברכת הוי"ה³² היא תעשיר ובאברהם כתיב והיה ברכה³³ שהברכה היא בחי' הוי"ה ואח"כ אומרים אמ"ה [אלקינו מלך העולם] שיומשך השפע למטה עד גם בבחי' מלך העולם שהיא בחי' מל' דאצי' שהיא בחי' תחתונה שבאצי' כנודע.

And this is what is written, "The blessing of Havayah, it makes rich"; and of Avraham it is written, "And be a blessing": for the blessing is the level of Havayah. And afterward we say "our G-d, King of the world," so that the flow (shefa) be drawn downward, even to the level of "King of the world," which is the level of Malchus (sovereignty) of Atzilus (Emanation), which is the lowest level in Atzilus, as is known.

So it says, "The blessing of Havayah, it makes rich," and Avraham is told, "And be a blessing": blessing is the level of Havayah (the Hebrew for "and be," והיה, is spelled with the four letters of that Name). Then come the words "our G-d, King of the world," drawing the flow further down to Malchus of Atzilus, the lowest level of Atzilus.

אשר הוא בחי' תענוג העליון כמה שכתוב באשרי כי אשרוני בנות.³⁴ בכדי לקדשנו במצותיו הקב"ה מניח תפילין³⁵ כו' שהם מבחי' מהו"ע [מהותו ועצמותו] ית'.

Asher ("who") is the level of the supernal delight, as it is written, "In my happiness (be'oshri), for daughters have called me happy." In order "to sanctify us with His commandments" — "the Holy One, blessed be He, puts on tefillin," etc. — which are from the level of His Being and Essence, may He be blessed.

Asher, "who," is read as delight, like Leah's words when she named Asher, "In my happiness (be'oshri), for daughters have called me happy." That delight is "to sanctify us with His commandments," which come from G-d's own Being, as the Talmud says that the Holy One, blessed be He, Himself puts on tefillin. In Torah Ohr, Miketz, the Alter Rebbe explains "His commandments" in this way: the 248 mitzvos are "the limbs of the King," one with the Infinite Light as a limb is one with the life within it.

SECTION 6 • ¶13-14

Running and returning

13 ונמצא יש בהברכה בחי רי"ש [רצוא ושוב] תחלה הוא השוב להמשיך השפע למטה עד בחי מלך העולם ואח"כ הרצוא קדשנו במצותיו במהו"ע [במהותו ועצמותו] להמשיך משם למטה.

It follows that in the blessing there is the level of running and returning (ratzo vashov). First is the returning: to draw the flow down to the level of "King of the world." And afterward the running: "who has sanctified us with His commandments," into His Being and Essence, to draw down from there below.

So the blessing contains ratzo vashov, running and returning: the two movements of a soul that runs toward G-d and returns to its task below. First comes the "returning," drawing the flow down to "King of the world"; then the "running," "who has sanctified us with His commandments," reaching into G-d's own Being in order to draw down from there.

וז"ש [וזהו שכתוב] אשרי איש ירא את ה' מתחלה בחי ריחוק שירא לגשת אל הקדש מי אנכי כי באתי עד הלום.³⁷

And this is what is written, "Fortunate is the man who fears Havayah": first the level of distance, that he is afraid to approach the holy — "Who am I, that I have come this far?"

The verse "Fortunate is the man who fears Havayah" shows the same order in a person. First comes distance: he is afraid to approach the holy, thinking, "Who am I, that I have come this far?"

14 ואח"כ במצותיו חפץ מאד.³⁸ דהיינו אמת שאיני ראוי לכך אך מ"מ במצותיו חפץ מאד.

And afterward, "he desires His commandments greatly": that is, it is true that I am not worthy of this, but nevertheless "he desires His commandments greatly."

Then comes "he desires His commandments greatly": true, I am not worthy of this, and yet he greatly desires His mitzvos.

והטעם שצ"ל רי"ש [רצוא ושוב] כי כל המשכה מלמעלה צ"ל ע"י מטי ולא מטי תחלה בחי הסתלקות שהוא ענין לא מטי ואח"כ התפשטות בחי מטי.

And the reason there must be running and returning is that every drawing down from above must come through "reaching and not reaching" (mati velo mati): first the level of withdrawal, which is the matter of "not reaching," and afterward expansion, the level of "reaching."

The reason there must be both running and returning: every flow from above comes through "reaching and not reaching" (mati velo mati), a light that touches and withdraws. First comes a withdrawal, the "not reaching," and then an expansion, the "reaching."

ולכן צ"ל אתעדל"ית [אתערותא דלתתא] ג"כ בחי' רוי"ש [רצוא ושוב] וזהו ענין ערבים עלי ד"ס ששרש דברי חז"ל [חכמינו זכרונם לברכה] נמשך מבחי' סופר בחי' איה סופר³⁹ שהוא למעלה מבחי' יינה של תורה שתושב"כ [שתורה שבכתב] נק' ספר כו' וכמש"ל [וכמה שכתוב לעיל].

And therefore the arousal from below must also be [in] the mode of running and returning. And this is the meaning of "The words of the Scribes are sweet upon me": for the root of the words of our Sages, of blessed memory, is drawn from the level of softer (scribe), the level of "Where is the scribe?", which is above the level of the wine of the Torah, for the Written Torah is called sefer (book), etc., as explained above.

So the arousal from below, our own service, must also run and return. This explains "The words of the Scribes are sweet upon me": the Sages' words come from the softer, the "scribe" of "Where is the scribe?", who stands above the Written Torah, the sefer, the "book" he writes. As explained earlier (Torah Ohr, Shemos 4, the maamar "This is My Name forever" before this one), Ayeh, "Where," is itself the scribe, the source of the Written Torah, and the words of the Scribes are rooted there.

ועמ"ש מענין ברכת המצות בפסוק ועשית בגדי קדש^{40,41} ע"ש:

And see what is written on the blessings over the mitzvos on the verse "And you shall make holy garments"; see there.

For more on the blessings over the mitzvos the maamar sends the reader to the explanation of "And you shall make holy garments" (Torah Ohr, Tetzaveh). There the blessing over a mitzvah is compared to the blessing of groom and bride, which draws an added flow from far above both giver and receiver.

IN ONE'S AVODAH

When a person contemplates that G-d is the Life of all life, and the life of his own soul, he comes to love Him. A deeper love, the self-sacrifice that wants only to be one with the One, lies hidden in every Jew, and keeping the mitzvos, the wine of the Torah, brings it out. In the blessing over a mitzvah a person's service should run and return: first awe that keeps its distance, "Who am I, that I have come this far?", and then, though he knows he is not worthy, "he desires His commandments greatly."

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Why is the love that comes from "for He is your life" not yet the self-sacrifice of "with all your soul and with all your might"?
2. How do the mitzvos, "the wine of the Torah," bring out the hidden love, and why does it matter that the supernal will is en clothed in them?
3. How does the analogy of a person who draws a picture, and whose mind then returns to itself, explain why the hidden love is revealed on Shabbos?
4. Why is the blessing over a mitzvah, from the words of the Scribes, sweet "upon me" more than the mitzvah itself, and what does ovej teach about it?
5. How do awe that keeps its distance and longing for the mitzvos fit together, and why must every flow from above come through "reaching and not reaching"?

SOURCES AND REFERENCES

Notes

PARAGRAPH 1

1 להבין — ערבים עלי

According to the note, another transcript of this section of the maamar is printed there.

KEHOT'S NOTE

הנחה אחרת בסה"מ תקס"ה ע' רב. הנחה אחרת ובאריכות יותר במאמרי אדה"ז כתובים ח"ב ע' קכג. ראה לעיל בציונים לכ"ק אדמו"ר זי"ע. ראה מאמרי אדה"א נביאים ע' נה.

2 כי טובים דודיך מיין, ערבים עלי ד"ס

The young woman of the Song longs for her beloved: "Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth, for your love (dodecha) is better than wine." The Sages read dodecha as "your beloved ones," the Sages themselves, whose words are sweeter than the wine of the Torah (context: Steinsaltz Tanakh).

Song of Songs 1:2: שיר השירים א:ב

יִשְׁקֵנִי מִנְשִׁיקוֹת פִּיהוּ כִּי־טוֹבִים דְּדִידְךָ מֵיַיִן:

Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth— For thy love is better than wine.

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עבודה זרה ל"ה א:ב: Avodah Zarah 35a:6

השיאו לְדָבָר אַחֵר וְכוּ'. מֵאִי "כִּי טוֹבִים דְּדִידְךָ מֵיַיִן"? כִּי אֵתָא רַב דִּימִי אָמַר: אֲמַרְהָ כְּנֶסֶת יִשְׂרָאֵל לִפְנֵי הַקְדוּשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא: רְבוּנוּ שֶׁל עוֹלָם, עֲרִיבִים עָלֵי דְבָרֵי דְדִידְךָ יוֹתֵר מֵיַיִנָּה שֶׁל תוֹרָה.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

שה"ש א, ב. שהש"ר שם. ראה ע"ז לה, א.

3 ערבים עלי דברי סופרים יותר מיינה של תורה

The Midrash on this verse says, "The words of the Scribes are dearer than the words of the Torah, as it says, 'For your love is better than wine.'" The maamar explains why this is so.

שיר השירים רבה א:ח:ט' 9-8: Shir HaShirim Rabbah

... לְסִסְתִּי בְּרַכְבִּי פְרָעָה, דְּרַשׁ רַבִּי פְּפִיס (איוב כג, יג): וְהוּא בְּאֶחָד וּמִי לְשִׁיבְנוּ, דּוּ חִידֵי לָכָל בְּאִי עוֹלָם וְאִין לְהָשִׁיב עַל דְּבָרֵי מִי שְׁאָמַר וְהִנֵּה הָעוֹלָם. אָמַר לוֹ רַבִּי עֲקִיבָא דִּידֵךְ פְּפִיס שְׁלֵא לְהָשִׁיב עַל דְּבָרֵי מִי שְׁאָמַר וְהִנֵּה הָעוֹלָם, לִפִּי שְׁהַפֵּל בְּאֵמַת וְהַפֵּל בְּדִין, שְׁכֹן כְּתִיב (ישעיה ו, א): וְאֶרְאָה אֵת ה' יֹשֵׁב עַל כֶּסֶּא רָם וְנֹשֵׂא. אָמַר רַבִּי סִימּוֹן כֶּסֶּא שְׁמִפְרִישׁ בֵּין מִיתָה לְחַיִּים, (מלכים א כב, יט): וְכָל צָבָא הַשָּׁמַיִם עוֹמְדִים עָלָיו מִימִינוֹ וּמִשְׁמָאלוֹ, וְכִי יֵשׁ שְׁמָאל לְמַעְלָה, וְהֵלֵא ...

"If you do not know, fairest among women, go out in the footsteps of the flock, and herd your kids by the tents of the shepherds" (Song of Songs 1:8). "Go out in the footsteps of [be'ikvei] the flock." Rabbi Eliezer, Rabbi Akiva, and the Rabbis, Rabbi Eliezer says: From the coal-baked loaf that the Israelites took in their hands from Egypt, from which they ate for thirty-one days, as Rabbi Shila said: You know that

there were sixty-two meals for the Israelites from this coal-baked loaf, [you know] what ...

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4 לאהבה את ה'

At the close of his words Moshe sets life and death before Israel and urges them to choose life, "to love Havayah your G-d, to listen to His voice and to cleave to Him, for He is your life and the length of your days." The maamar reads "for He is your life" as the reason given for the love.

דברים ל:כ: Deuteronomy 30:20

לְאַהֲבָה אֶת־ה' אֱלֹהֶיךָ לְשִׁמְעַת בְּקוֹלוֹ וּלְדַבְּקָה־בּוֹ כִּי הוּא חַיִּיה וְאֶרְךָ יָמֶיךָ לְשִׁבְתָּ עַל־הָאָדָמָה אֲשֶׁר נִשְׁבַּע ה' לְאַבְרָהָם לְיִצְחָק וּלְיַעֲקֹב לֵאמֹר:

to love the L-RD thy G-d, to hearken to His voice, and to cleave unto Him; for that is thy life, and the length of thy days; that thou mayest dwell in the land which the L-RD swore unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give them.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

דברים ל, כ.

PARAGRAPH 2

5 דכי משמש בארבע לשונות

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

KEHOT'S NOTE

ראש השנה ג, א.

6 דכי משמש בארבע לשונות

Reish Lakish teaches that ki has four meanings: "if," "perhaps," "but" and "because." The maamar reads the ki of "for He is your life" in the last sense, as a reason.

ראש השנה ג' א:ב:ג' 3-2: Rosh Hashanah 3a:2-3

וְאָמַר רַבִּי אֶבְרָהָם: אֵל תִּקְרִי "וַיִּרְאוּ", אֶלָּא "וַיִּירְאוּ", כְּדָרִישׁ לְקִישׁ. דְּאָמַר רִישׁ לְקִישׁ, "כִּי" מְשַׁמֵּשׁ בְּאַרְבַּע לְשׁונוֹת: אִי, דִּילְמָא, אֶלָּא, דְּהָא. מִי דְמִי? הֵתָם כְּנָעַן, הֵכָא סִיחוּן! תִּנְא: הוּא סִיחוּן, הוּא עֶרֶד, הוּא כְּנָעַן. סִיחוּן — שְׂדוּמָה לְסִיחַ בְּמַדְבָּר, כְּנָעַן — עַל שֵׁם מְלָכוּתוֹ, וְהָא שְׂמֹ — עֶרֶד שְׂמֹ. אִיכָא דְאָמַרִי: עֶרֶד — שְׂדוּמָה לְעֶרֶד בְּמַדְבָּר, כְּנָעַן — עַל שֵׁם מְלָכוּתוֹ, וְהָא שְׂמֹ — סִיחוּן שְׂמֹ.

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7 כי עמך מקור חיים

Kehot's note points to Psalms 35:10 for these words.

Psalms 35:10: תהילים ל"ה:י

KEHOT'S NOTE

תהלים לה, י.

8

כי עמך מקור חיים

In a psalm of David addressed to G-d: "For with You is the source of life; in Your light we see light." The maamar brings it to show that G-d is the source of all life. (The Kehot note gives 35:10.)

Psalms 36:10 ליהלים ליו:י

כִּי־עִמָּךְ מְקוֹר חַיִּים בְּאוֹרְךָ נִרְאָה־אֵוֹר:

For with Thee is the fountain of life; In Thy light do we see light.

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9

וממך הכל

David, giving the gifts for the Temple, says, "For everything is from You, and from Your hand we have given You." The maamar brings it to show that all life and de-light come from G-d.

I Chronicles 29:14 דברי הימים א כ"ט:י"ד

וְכִי מִי אֲנִי וּמִי עַמִּי כִּי־נִעְצָר כָּח לְהַתְּנִיב כְּזֹאת כִּי־מִמֶּךָ הַכֹּל וּמִיָּדְךָ נִתְּנוּ לָךְ:

But who am I, and what is my people, that we should be able to offer so willingly after this sort? for all things come of Thee, and of Thine own have we given Thee.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

דו"א כט, יד.

PARAGRAPH 3

10

בכל נפשך ובכל מאודך

In the Shema Moshe commands Israel, "And you shall love Havayah your G-d with all your heart, with all your soul and with all your might." The maamar reads "with all your soul" as self-sacrifice beyond reason.

Deuteronomy 6:5 דברים ו' ה'

וְאַהֲבַתְּ אֶת ה' אֱלֹהֶיךָ בְּכָל־לִבְּךָ וּבְכָל־נַפְשְׁךָ וּבְכָל־מְאֹדְךָ:

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

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11

טעמים בחכמה

In Vayikra (4:1) the Alter Rebbe states that all ta'amim are drawn from Chochmah, since ta'amim are in the Name of seventy-two (Ayin-Beis), which is Chochmah; so salt, rooted in the gevuros of Abba, gives taste though it has none itself.

Numbers 11:3 דברים י"א ג'

וַיִּקְרָא שֵׁם־הַמָּקוֹם הַהוּא תַבְעֵרָה כִּי־בָעֲרָה בָּם אֵשׁ ה'

And the name of that place was called Taberah, because the fire of the L-RD burnt among them.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

ראה לקו"ת ויקרא ד, א. במדבר יא, ג. חוקת נז, ד. לפעמים אמרו טעמים בכתר, ולפעמים אמרו טעמים בחכמה, ראה בארוכה באוה"ת שמות כרך ז ע' ב'תקעב ואילך. שם ע' ב'תקעה (המאמר הנ"ל הוא הגהות לד"ה הידוע

12

כולם בחכמה עשית

The psalmist marvels at the works of creation: "How many are Your works, Havayah; You made them all with wisdom." Plainly, wisdom is the means by which G-d made all things; the maamar infers that before G-d even Chochmah falls under "making," like physical action.

Psalms 104:24 תהילים ק"ד כ"ד

מִה־רַבּוֹ מַעֲשֵׂיךָ ה' כָּל־ם בְּחִכְמָה עָשִׂיתָ מְלָאָה הָאָרֶץ קִנְיָנָה:

How manifold are Thy works, O L-RD! In wisdom hast Thou made them all; The earth is full of Thy creatures.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

תהלים קד, כד.

13

אני הווי"ה לא שניתי

G-d tells Israel through Malachi, "For I, Havayah, have not changed, and you, children of Yaakov, have not come to an end": because He does not change, His bond with them endures. The maamar uses it to say that the creation of the world made no change in G-d (context: Steinsaltz Tanakh).

Malachi 3:6 מלאכי ג' ו'

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

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

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PARAGRAPH 4

14

נכנס יין יצא סוד

Rabbi Chiya teaches that yayin (wine) and sod (secret) both have the numerical value seventy: "Wine enters, the secret comes out." The maamar applies it to the wine of the Torah bringing out the soul's hidden love.

Eruvin 65a:19-20 עירובין ס"ה א' י"ט-כ'

אָמַר רַבִּי חִיָּיא: כָּל הַמִּתְיַשֵּׁב בֵּינֵנוּ — לֹשׁ בּוֹ דַּעַת שְׂבָעִים זָקֵנִים. "יֵינִי נִיתָן בְּשִׁבְעִים אוֹתִיּוֹת, וְ"סוּד" נִיתָן בְּשִׁבְעִים אוֹתִיּוֹת. נִכְנָס יַיִן — יֵצֵא סוּד. אָמַר רַבִּי חֲנִינִי: לֹא נִבְרָא יַיִן אֶלָּא לְנַחֵם אַבְלִים וּלְשַׂלֵּם שְׂכָר לְרֹשְׁעִים, שְׁנֵאמַר: "תָּנוּ שְׂכָר לְאוֹבֵד וָגוּי".

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Sanhedrin 38a:3-4 סנהדרין ל"ח א' ג'-ד'

אָמַר לָהֶם: בְּנֵי, קוֹצִים אַתֶּם מְטִילִין לִי בְּעֵינַי? אָמַר לוֹ רַבִּי חִיָּיא: רַבִּי, אַל יָרַע בְּעֵינַי. "יֵינִי נִיתָן בְּשִׁבְעִים אוֹתִיּוֹת, וְ"סוּד" נִיתָן בְּשִׁבְעִים אוֹתִיּוֹת. נִכְנָס יַיִן — יֵצֵא סוּד. אָמַר רַב חֲסִידָא אָמַר מֶר עוֹקְבָא, וְאָמַר לָהּ אָמַר רַב חֲסִידָא: דָּרֵשׁ מִרִּי בַר מֶר, מֵאִי דְכְּתִיב: "וַיִּשְׁקֹד ה' עַל הָרָעָה וַיְבִיאָהּ עָלֵינוּ כִּי צָדִיק ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ"? מִשּׁוֹם דְּצָדִיק ה' — "וַיִּשְׁקֹד ה' עַל הָרָעָה וַיְבִיאָהּ עָלֵינוּ"? אֵינִי, צָדִיק עֲשֵׂה הַקְדוּשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא עִם יִשְׂרָאֵל שְׁהַקְדִּים גְּלוּת צְדִיקָהּ וְעוֹד גְּלוּת יְכֻנָּה ...

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Zohar III, 39a, זח"ג לט,

KEHOT'S NOTE

עירובין סה, א. סנהדרין לה, א. זח"ג לט, א.

PARAGRAPH 5

15 והנה בשבת מתגלה ג"כ בחי' האהבה מסותרת בבחי' גילוי

There the saying "I am black all the days of the week, and comely on Shabbos" is explained: the hidden love, called "black fire," stays hidden all week, but on Shabbos it comes out of hiding into revelation.

KEHOT'S NOTE

ראה ג"כ לקו"ת שה"ש ה, ד. לקמן פו, ד. דאית רצון ואית רצון דהו ענין הנשמה היתירה שמתגלה בשבת. ועג"כ באוה"ת דרושים לר"ה עי' איתלת.

16 ששת ימים עשה ה' את השמים וכו' וביום השביעי שבת

G-d tells Moshe that Shabbos is a sign between Him and Israel forever, "for in six days Havayah made the heavens and the earth, and on the seventh day He rested and was refreshed." The maamar explains what this rest is above: the Sefiros that came down to create rise back into His Essence.

שמות ל"א:י"ז Exodus 31:17

ביני ובין בני ישראל אות הוא לעלם כִּי־שֵׁשֶׁת יָמִים עָשָׂה ה' אֶת־הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאֶת־הָאָרֶץ וּבַיּוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי שָׁבַת וַיְנַפֵּשׁ:

It is a sign between Me and the children of Israel for ever; for in six days the L-RD made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day He ceased from work and rested.'

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17 בעשרה מאמרות . . נברא העולם

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

KEHOT'S NOTE

אבות ה, א.

18 בעשרה מאמרות שהם ע"ס נברא העולם

"With ten utterances the world was created." The maamar identifies the ten utterances with the ten Sefiros.

משנה אבות ה:א' Pirkei Avot 5:1

בַּעֲשָׂרָה מְאֻמְרוֹת נִבְרָא הָעוֹלָם. וּמָה תִּלְמוּד לזֹמֶר, וְהָלֹא כְּמֵאֲמָר אֶחָד יָכוֹל לְהַפְרֹאוֹת, אֲלֵא לְהַפְרֹעַ מִן הַרְשָׁעִים שֶׁמַּאֲבִידִין אֶת הָעוֹלָם שֶׁנִּבְרָא בַּעֲשָׂרָה מְאֻמְרוֹת, וְלִמָּן שֶׁכָּר טוֹב לְצַדִּיקִים שֶׁמְקַיְמִין אֶת הָעוֹלָם שֶׁנִּבְרָא בַּעֲשָׂרָה 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.

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19 ובראשית נמי מאמר הוא

Counting the ten utterances of creation, the Talmud finds only nine "And He said" and answers, "In the beginning"

is also an utterance." The maamar applies this to Chochmah, "the beginning."

ראש השנה ל"ב א:י"ט-כ"ט Rosh Hashanah 32a:19-20

"וַיֹּאמֶר" דְּבִרָאשִׁית תִּשְׁעָה הֵוּו! "בְּרָאשִׁית" נָמִי מְאֻמָּר הוּא, דְּכֵתִיב: "בְּדִבְרֵי ה' שָׁמַיִם נִעֲשִׂוּ". רַבִּי יוֹחָנָן בֶּן נוּרִי אוֹמֵר: אִם אָמַר שְׁלֹשׁ שְׁלֹשׁ מִכּוֹלָן — נִצָּא. אֵיבָעִיא לְהוּ, הִיכִי קִתְּנִי: שְׁלֹשׁ מִן הַתּוֹרָה, שְׁלֹשׁ מִן הַנְּבִיאִים, וְשְׁלֹשׁ מִן הַכְּתוּבִים — דְּהוּ תִשְׁעָה, וְאֶחָד מִן הַנְּבִיאִים, וְאֶחָד מִן הַכְּתוּבִים — דְּהוּיִין לְהוּ שְׁלֹשׁ, וְאֵיכָא בִּינְיָהוּ טוֹבָא?

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Megillah 21a כ"א

KEHOT'S NOTE

ר"ה לב, א. מגילה כ, א.

20 ובראשית נמי מאמר הוא

Rabbi Yochanan sets the minimum of ten verses read from the Torah against the ten utterances with which the world was created; the Talmud finds only nine "And He said" and answers, "In the beginning" is also an utterance." The Kehot note gives Megillah 21a; the passage is on 21b.

מגילה כ"א ב:י"א-י"ב Megillah 21b:10-11

הֵי נִינְהוּ? "וַיֹּאמֶר" דְּבִרָאשִׁית. הֵנִי תִשְׁעָה הֵוּו! "בְּרָאשִׁית" נָמִי מְאֻמָּר הוּא, דְּכֵתִיב: "בְּדִבְרֵי ה' שָׁמַיִם נִעֲשִׂוּ וּכְרוּחַ פִּי כָל צְבָאִים". אָמַר רַבָּא, רֵאשׁוֹן שְׁקָרָא אַרְבַּעָה — מְשׁוּבָח, שְׁנִי שְׁקָרָא אַרְבַּעָה — מְשׁוּבָח, שְׁלִישִׁי שְׁקָרָא אַרְבַּעָה — מְשׁוּבָח.

What are these? The expressions "And [G-d] said" in the first chapter of Genesis. But there are only nine? "In the beginning" is also a statement [through which the world was created], since it is written, "By the word of the L-rd the heavens were made, and by the breath of his mouth all of the hosts" (Psalms 33:6). Rava said: If the first one reads four verses he is praiseworthy; if the second reads four verses he is praiseworthy; if the third reads four verses he is praiseworthy.

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PARAGRAPH 6

21 שבת וינפש

G-d tells Moshe that on the seventh day "He rested and was refreshed." Plainly this is His ceasing from the work of creation; the maamar reads it as the rising of Chochmah and the middos, which came down to create, back into G-d's own Being.

שמות ל"א:י"ז Exodus 31:17

ביני ובין בני ישראל אות הוא לעלם כִּי־שֵׁשֶׁת יָמִים עָשָׂה ה' אֶת־הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאֶת־הָאָרֶץ וּבַיּוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי שָׁבַת וַיְנַפֵּשׁ:

It is a sign between Me and the children of Israel for ever; for in six days the L-RD made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day He ceased from work and rested.'

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PARAGRAPH 7

22 נכנס יין יצא סוד

"Wine enters, the secret comes out." Here the wine is the mitzvos and the secret is the hidden love they bring out.

Eruvin 65a:19-20 כ"ט-כ"א: עירובין ס"ה

אמר רבי חייא: כל המתעשר ביינו — יש בו דעת שבקעים וקנים. "יין" ניתן בשבקים אחרות, ו"סוד" ניתן בשבקים אחרות. נכנס יין — יצא סוד. אמר רבי חנין: לא נברא יין אלא לנחם אבלים ולשלם שגר לרשעים, שנאמר: "תנו שגר לאובד וגו'".

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PARAGRAPH 8

23 והנה הברכות

According to the note, a passage from this point on is quoted in that maamar, with additions and changes.

KEHOT'S NOTE

קטע מכאן מובא בד"ה חייב אדם לברך תרל"ה פרק ג בהוספות ושינויים.

24 הברכות שמברכים . . הם מד"ס

The note counts the blessings over the mitzvos among the seven rabbinic mitzvos, remembered by the sign נ"ע בשמח"ה, and points to a note in this volume on them.

KEHOT'S NOTE

מד"ס מצות דרבנן — וסימנם נ"ע בשמח"ה. ראה סה"מ ת"ש ע' 50 בהערה.

25 שמברכים על המצות הם מד"ס

On the blessing said when separating terumah, the Talmud remarks that "the blessing is rabbinic" (berachah derabbanan). The Kehot note brings it for the rule that the blessings over the mitzvos are from the words of the Scribes.

Berachot 15a כ"ו ברכות

KEHOT'S NOTE

ראה ברכות טו, א. רמב"ם הל' ברכות פ"א ה"ב.

PARAGRAPH 9

26 כמ"ש בע"ה

Kehot's note points to where this is explained further: Pri Etz Chaim.

KEHOT'S NOTE

ראה פע"ח שער ספירת העומר ספ"ג.

27 וע"י הברכה שעל המצוה ממשיכים בחי האור מקיף

In the Arizal's teaching on counting the Omer, to which the Kehot note points, the blessing is speech and breath leaving the mouth, an encompassing light (Or Makif), while the inner light (Or Pnimi) entered only through an

offering. The maamar brings this to show that a blessing draws down an encompassing light.

Pri Etz Chaim, Gate of the Omer Count 3:6 שער חיים, ספירת העומר ג'ו

וז"ס הברכה, כי הוא בסוד דיבור והכל היוצא מן הפה, שהוא סוד אור מקיף, וכל כוונתו אינו רק בסוד אור מקיף, ובוה עיקר כוונתו. אמנם אור פנימי אינו נכנס, רק על ידי קרבן, ועתה שאין בית המקדש קיים, ואין בנו כח להמשיכם, אנו אומרים אחר ברכת העומר וספירתו, הרחמן יבנה בית המקדש, ויחזיר עבודת בה"מ למקומה וכו', ועי"ז נתקן איהו דבר, אך עכ"ז ראוי שתכוין בעת שאתה מכוין להמשיך א"מ, גם תכוין להמשיך גם א"פ עמו כסדר המקיף ג"כ, אך עיקר כל הכוונה הוא במקיפים, כי הא"פ כבר נכנסו, ואינן ...

Pri Etz Chaim (Public Domain)

28 כל המצות מברך עליהן עובר לעשייתן

Rav Yehudah says in the name of Shmuel, "Over all the mitzvos one recites a blessing oever la'asiyasan," and the Talmud proves from verses that oever here means "before." The maamar finds in the word a hint of the encompassing light.

Pesachim 7b:9-10 ט"ז-ט"ח: פסחים

דכולי עלמא מיהא, מעיקרא בעינו לברוכי, מנלן? דאמר רב יהודה אמר שמואל: כל המצות מברך עליהן עובר לעשייתן. מאי משמע דהאי "עובר" לישנא דאקדומי הוא? אמר רב נחמן בר יצחק, דאמר קרא: "וירץ אחימלך דרך הכפר ויעבר את הכושי". אב"י אמר, מהכא: "והוא עבר לפניהם". ואיבעית אימא מהכא: "ויעבר מלכם לפניהם והי בראשם".

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KEHOT'S NOTE

פסחים ז, ב. לקו"ת מסעי צב, ג.

29 לשון עובר הוא ענין מקיף

There oever la'asiyasan is explained: the Sages could have said simply "before doing them," but oever means that the blessing is an encompassing light over the act of the mitzvah, which raises the act up, as in the Idra Rabba's explanation of oever lasocher.

KEHOT'S NOTE

ראה גם לקו"ת פ' מסעי צב, ג.

30 עובר לסוחר

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

KEHOT'S NOTE

חיי שרה כג, טז.

31 עובר לסוחר

Avraham weighs out for Efron "four hundred shekels of silver, current with the merchant (oever lasocher)," plainly silver that any merchant would accept (context: Steinsaltz Tanakh). The maamar cites the phrase as another use of oever in the sense of encompassing; the Likkutei Torah parallel (Masei) points to the Idra Rabba on this verse and

to the commentary Kol B'Ramah, which takes lasocher from the Aramaic sechor sechor, "round about."

בראשית כ"ג:ט"ז: Genesis 23:16

וַיִּשְׁמַע אַבְרָהָם אֶל־עֶפְרוֹן וַיִּשְׁקַל אַבְרָהָם לְעֶפְרוֹן אֶת־הַכֶּסֶף אֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר בְּאֲזְנֵי בְנֵי־חֶת אַרְבַּע מֵאוֹת שֶׁקֶל כֶּסֶף עֶבֶר לְסֹחֵר:

And Abraham hearkened unto Ephron; and Abraham weighed to Ephron the silver, which he had named in the hearing of the children of Heth, four hundred shekels of silver, current money with the merchant.

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PARAGRAPH 12

32 ברכת ה' היא תעשיר

Shlomo teaches that "the blessing of Havayah, it makes rich," and toil adds nothing to it: the wealth is G-d's gift (context: Steinsaltz Tanakh). The maamar reads it to say that blessing itself is the level of Havayah.

משלי י"ב:כ"ב: Proverbs 10:22

בְּרֶכֶת ה' הִיא תַעֲשִׂיר וְלֹא־יֹסֵף עֲצָב עִמָּה:

The blessing of the L-RD, it maketh rich, And toil addeth nothing thereto.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

משלי י, כב.

33 והיה ברכה

G-d sends Avraham from his land and promises, "I will make you a great nation and bless you ... and be a blessing," plainly that he will be a source of blessing. The maamar brings it with the previous verse to show that blessing is the level of Havayah; the word "and be" (והיה) has the letters of that Name.

בראשית י"ב:כ"ג: Genesis 12:2

וְאֶעֱשֶׂה לְגוֹי גָדוֹל וְאֶבְרַכְךָ וְאֶגְדָּלְהָ שְׁמִי וְהָיָה בְרָכָה:

And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and be thou a blessing.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

בראשית יב, ב.

34 באשרי כי אשירי בנות

At the birth of Zilpah's second son Leah says, "In my happiness, for daughters have called me happy," and names him Asher. The maamar reads the asher of the blessing as this supernal delight.

בראשית ל"ג:יג: Genesis 30:13

וְתֹאמַר לָאָה בְּאֲשֶׁרִי כִי אֲשִׁירֹנִי בְנוֹת וְתִקְרָא אֶת־שְׁמוֹ אֲשֶׁר:

And Leah said: 'Happy am I! for the daughters will call me happy.' And she called his name Asher.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

בראשית ל, יג.

35

הקב"ה מניח תפילין

The Talmud teaches that the Holy One, blessed be He, puts on tefillin, and asks what is written in His tefillin. The maamar uses it to show that the mitzvos come from G-d's own Being.

ברכות ו' א:י"ז-י"ח: Berakhot 6a:17-18

אָמַר רַבִּי אֲבִין בֶּר רַב אָדָא, אָמַר רַבִּי יִצְחָק: מִנֵּין שֶׁהַקָּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא מְנִיחַ תְּפִלִּין שְׁנָאֵמַר: "נִשְׁבַּע ה' בְּיָמִינוּ וּבִזְרוּעַ עֲזוֹ." "בְּיָמִינוּ" — זו תּוֹרָה, שְׁנָאֵמַר: "מִיָּמִינוּ אֵשׁ דָּת לָמוּ", "וּבִזְרוּעַ עֲזוֹ" — אֵלּוּ תְּפִלִּין, שְׁנָאֵמַר: "ה' עוֹלָמֹךָ יִתֵּן".

Rab Abin b. Rab Adda said in the name of R. Isaac : Whence is it that the Holy One, blessed be He, lays Tefillin ? As it is said, "The L-rd hath sworn by His right hand, and by the arm of His strength" (Is. Ixii. 8). "By His right hand" means Torah ; as it is said, "At His right hand was a fiery law unto them" (Deut. xxxiii. 2); "by the arm of His strength" means Tefillin, as it is said, "The L-rd will give strength unto ...

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KEHOT'S NOTE

ברכות ו, א. ראה לעיל לד, ד.

PARAGRAPH 13

36 אשרי איש ירא את ה' . . במצותיו חפץ מאד

The psalm opens in praise of the G-d-fearing man: "Fortunate is the man who fears Havayah, who desires His commandments greatly." The maamar reads the first half as the distance of awe and the second as the longing that follows.

תהילים קי"ב:א': Psalms 112:1

הַלְלוּ־יָהּ אֲשֶׁר־יֵאֵשׁ יִרְא אֶת־ה' בְּמִצְוֹתָיו חָפֵץ מְאֹד:

Hallelujah. Happy is the man that feareth the L-RD, That delighteth greatly in His commandments.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

תהילים קיב, א.

37

מי אנכי כי באתי עד הלום

Told that his dynasty will endure, David says, "Who am I ... and what is my house, that You have brought me this far?" The maamar borrows his words for the awe that keeps a person at a distance.

שמואל ב ז':י"ח: II Samuel 7:18

וַיָּבֹא הַמֶּלֶךְ דָּוִד וַיֵּשֶׁב לִפְנֵי ה' וַיֹּאמֶר מִי אֲנֹכִי אֲדֹנָי ה' וּמִי בֵּיתִי כִּי הִבֵּאתָנִי עַד־הַלֹּם:

Then David the king went in, and sat before the L-RD; and he said: 'Who am I, O L-rd GOD, and what is my house, that Thou hast brought me thus far?

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KEHOT'S NOTE

ראה שמואל-ב ז, יח.

PARAGRAPH 14

38

במצותיו חפץ מאד

The second half of the verse, "who desires His commandments greatly," is read as the longing for the mitzvos that follows the distance of awe.

Psalms 112:1 א"י: קייב תהילים

הַלְלוּ יְהוָה אֲשֶׁר־אִישׁ יִרְאֶה אֶת־ה' בְּמִצְוֹתָיו חָפֵץ מְאֹד:

Hallelujah. Happy is the man that feareth the L-RD, That delighteth greatly in His commandments.

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39

איה סופר

Isaiah pictures Jerusalem's dread under the Assyrian siege: "Your heart will meditate on dread: 'Where is the one who counts (sofer)? Where is the one who weighs? Where is the one who counts the towers?'" The Sages read sofer of the scholars who counted every letter of the Torah (Chagigah 15b; Kiddushin 30a: the early Sages were called soferim for this counting), and the maamar takes it as the root of the words of the Scribes, above the Written Torah, the sefer (context: Steinsaltz Tanakh).

ישעיהו ל"ג:י"ח

לִבְךָ יִהְיֶה אֵימָה אֵיךְ סֹפֵר אֵיךְ שֹׁקֵל אֵיךְ סֹפֵר אֶת־הַמִּגְדָּלִים:

Thy heart shall muse on the terror: 'Where is he that counted, where is he that weighed? Where is he that counted the towers?'

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40

ועמ"ש . . בפסוק ועשית בגדי קדש

There the blessing over a mitzvah is likened to the blessing of groom and bride: as "blessing rests only where male and female are," so where there is a giver and a receiver an added flow comes from far above both.

KEHOT'S NOTE

לקמן פב, ד.

41

ועשית בגדי קדש

G-d tells Moshe, "And you shall make holy garments for Aharon your brother, for glory and for beauty." The Torah Ohr maamar on this verse (Tetzaveh) explains the blessings over the mitzvos.

שמות כ"ח:2

וְעָשִׂיתָ בְּגָדֵי־קֹדֶשׁ לְאַהֲרֹן אָחִיךָ לְכָבוֹד וּלְתִפְאָרֶת:

And thou shalt make holy garments for Aaron thy brother, for splendour and for beauty.

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THE CHASSIDISHE PARSHA

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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/](https://www.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