



TORAH OHR • PARSHAS YISRO • MAAMAR 1

בחדש השלישי לצאת בני ישראל מארץ מצרים ביום...

“In the third month”



Avraham rose by his own ascent to a love in which the soul longs to expire into G-d; most people contemplate the same truths and stay unmoved. Receiving the Torah gave every Jew what contemplation alone cannot guarantee: strength for the G-dly soul to break out of the body's constraints. That strength comes through self-nullification, in which a person's Torah is G-d's own word speaking through him, as the moon has no light but the sun's.

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

Avraham rose by his own ascent to a love in which the soul longs to expire into G-d; most people contemplate the same truths and stay unmoved. Receiving the Torah gave every Jew what contemplation alone cannot guarantee: strength for the G-dly soul to break out of the body's constraints. That strength comes through self-nullification, in which a person's Torah is G-d's own word speaking through him, as the moon has no light but the sun's.

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

Scripture says Israel reached Sinai “on this day” without naming the day; the Sages show it was Rosh Chodesh. To explain why it is called “this day,” the Alter Rebbe asks what the giving of the Torah added to the Patriarchs. Avraham rose out of “Egypt,” the constraints of the body, to a love in which his soul longed to expire into G-d, by contemplating that all the worlds are only G-d's “speech” and “handiwork,” while He Himself is unchanged. Most people contemplate this and remain unmoved, because the body's physicality weakens the soul. The Torah, called “strength” and tushiyah, empowers the G-dly soul and weakens the sitra achra, because its source is G-d's essence. The word “saying” in the Ten Commandments gave Israel the power to speak Torah as G-d's own word, in self-nullification, which is why study calls for the awe of Sinai. Like the moon, which has no light of its own, Israel receive the light of Havayah, the sun. On Rosh Chodesh Sivan, the new moon after the preparation of the Omer, this self-nullifying love was revealed: “this day.”

OUTLINE

- 1 “On this day” and what Sinai added** ¶1-2
The verse says only “this day,” and the Sages show it was Rosh Chodesh. To explain why, the Alter Rebbe asks what the Torah added to the Patriarchs, beginning with Avraham's ascent to the higher love.
- 2 Avraham's love and the soul's weakness** ¶3-8
Avraham rose out of “Egypt,” the body's constraints, to kelos hanefesh, by contemplating that the worlds are only G-d's speech and handiwork while He is unchanged. Others contemplate the same and stay unmoved, because the body's physicality weakens the soul.
- 3 The Torah as strength and tushiyah** ¶9-10
The Torah gives the G-dly soul strength and weakens the sitra achra, bringing peace above and below; its power comes from its source in G-d's essence, with which it is one.

4 “Saying”: G-d’s word in our mouths

¶11–14

“Saying” in the Ten Commandments gave Israel the power to speak all of Torah as G-d’s word from Sinai, in self-nullification, like one who repeats after the speaker; hence the awe of Sinai in every study.

5 Anochi and the way out of Egypt

¶15–17

Through the Torah, G-d’s essence (Anochi) reaches Israel through Havayah until it is “your G-d,” freeing the soul from its Egypt. Love born of the higher unity overcomes both inclinations, as in the Shema of the people of Jericho.

6 The moon and the sun

¶18–21

Israel are like the moon, with nothing of their own: the Infinite Light, the “sun” of Havayah, dwells and speaks in their Torah and service. Through tzedakah and self-nullifying service it shines below as above.

7 Rosh Chodesh Sivan

¶22–23

After the preparation of the Omer, Rosh Chodesh Sivan, the new moon, revealed self-nullifying love, “this day.” The “wilderness” of Sinai is speech nullified to G-d’s word, and leaving Refidim is the end of the soul’s weakness.

KEY CONCEPTS

Self-nullification (bittul) ביטול

Setting aside one’s own sense of self before G-d. Here it is the key to Torah study: one speaks the Torah only as one who repeats what G-d says, so that His word, not the person, is heard.

The soul’s expiry (kelos hanefesh) כלות הנפש

A love of G-d so intense that the soul longs to leave the body and be absorbed in Him. Avraham reached it; Malachi’s “you have not expired” is read as wonder that others do not.

Egypt as constraint מצרים / מצר וגבול

The narrowness (meitzar) that the body and the animal soul impose on the G-dly soul. Avraham’s going up from Egypt and the Exodus are read as the soul’s release from it.

Strength (oz) and tushiyah עוז ותושיה

Two names of the Torah: oz, the strength it gives the G-dly soul, and tushiyah, which the Talmud connects with weakening, its power to sap the sitra achra.

“Saying” (leimor) לאמר

The word that introduces the Ten Commandments. Since all Israel heard them directly, it is read as the power given to Israel to “say” the Torah themselves, so that a sage’s halachah is G-d’s word from Sinai.

Anochi אנכי

“I,” the first word of the Ten Commandments, read as G-d’s very essence, which through the Torah reaches Israel by way of the Name Havayah until it is “your G-d.”

The moon that has nothing of its own לית לה מגרמה כלום

The moon receives all its light from the sun and shrinks to a point when it stands beneath it. Israel, whose Torah and service “have nothing of their own,” are like the moon to the sun of Havayah.

The light that encompasses all worlds (sovev kol almin) סובב כל עלמין

G-d’s light beyond the worlds, before whom above and below are equal and nothing changed with creation. Contemplating it gives rise to Avraham’s love, and it is the source of the Torah.

SECTION 1 • 11-2

“On this day” and what Sinai added**1 בחדש השלישי^{1,2} לצאת בני ישראל מארץ מצרים ביום הזה באו מדבר סיני.**

“In the third month after the children of Israel went out of the land of Egypt, on this day they came to the wilderness of Sinai.”

The maamar opens with the verse that tells when Israel reached the wilderness of Sinai: in the third month after the Exodus, “on this day.” It is the verse the whole maamar sets out to explain.

הנה נאמר סתם ביום הזה ולא פ"י באיזה יום רק חז"ל [חכמינו זכרונם לברכה] דרשו שהוא בר"ח [בראש חודש].³ כתי' [כתיב] הכא ביום הזה וכתוב התם החדש הזה לכם.^{4,5}

Now, it says simply “on this day,” and does not specify which day, but our Sages, of blessed memory, expounded that it was on Rosh Chodesh: it is written here, “on this day,” and it is written there, “This month shall be for you.”

The verse says only “this day” and does not name the day of the month. The Sages (Shabbos 86b) identified it by a verbal analogy (gezeirah shavah): the word “this” links it to “This month (hachodesh) shall be for you,” the verse about the new moon, so the day was Rosh Chodesh, the first of the month. The maamar will ask why Scripture calls Rosh Chodesh simply “this day.”

2 ולהבין למה נק' ר"ח [ראש חודש] בכתוב בלשון ביום הזה. יובן בהקדים ענין מעלת קבלת התורה והלא קודם מ"ת [מתן תורה] היו כמה צדיקים⁶ והאבות⁷ הן הן המרכבה⁸ ג"כ⁹ קודם שנתנה התורה.

And [we need] to understand why Rosh Chodesh is called in Scripture by the expression “on this day.” It will be understood by first introducing the matter of the virtue of receiving the Torah. Yet surely, before the giving of the Torah there were a number of tzaddikim, and “the Patriarchs are themselves the chariot,” also before the Torah was given.

To explain why Rosh Chodesh is called “this day,” the Alter Rebbe first asks what the giving of the Torah added: there were tzaddikim before Sinai, and the Midrash (Bereishis Rabbah 47:6) says that “the Patriarchs are themselves the chariot,” wholly given over to G-d's will, as a chariot has no will of its own apart from its rider. A later maamar in Torah Ohr (Yisro, 73c) asks the same question, naming Adam, Chanoch and Mesushelach, and adds that Avraham kept the whole Torah before it was given.

אך הענין כי הנה מעלת אברהם הוא שהי' [שהיה] הולך ונסוע הנגבה.¹⁰ פי' שהי' [שהיה] הולך ונסוע ממדרגה למדרגה¹¹ עד שבא הנגבה הוא בחי' ומדת אהבה¹² העליונה.¹³

But the explanation is this: the virtue of Avraham is that he was “going on and journeying toward the south” (hanegbah). This means that he was going and journeying from level to level until he came to “the south,” which is the level and attribute of the higher love.

The answer begins with Avraham. In its plain sense the verse tells that Avram moved on by stages toward the Negev, the south of the land; the Alter Rebbe reads it as an inner ascent from level to level until he reached “the south,” the attribute of the higher love, which the maamar will show comes from contemplating the Infinite Light itself. The Mittler Rebbe’s transcript of this maamar gives this reading in the name of the Zohar, and Likkutei Torah (Beha’alosecha) reads the verse the same way.

SECTION 2 • 13-8

Avraham’s love and the soul’s weakness

3 וכי' [וכן כתב] היה הולך מעלייה לעלייה עד שהיה בבחי' מרכבה ממש לאהבה זו העליונה עד שהיתה בבחי' גילוי בנפשו ממש

And he went so far, from ascent to ascent, that he was at the level of an actual chariot for this higher love, until it was in a state of revelation in his very soul.

Avraham’s climb made him a “chariot” for this love, wholly its vehicle, so that the love was openly revealed in his soul.

והליכה זו היא ממטה למעלה מבחי' מצרים כמ"ש ויעל אברם ממצרים¹⁴ דהיינו בחי' מצר וגבול שמצד הגוף ונפש הבהמית המגבילים ומלבישים את נפש האלקית שבאדם

And this going is from below to above, out of the level of Egypt (Mitzrayim), as it is written, “And Avram went up out of Egypt”: that is, the level of constraint (meitzar) and limitation that comes from the body and the animal soul, which limit and clothe the G-dly soul in a person,

The climb was from below upward, out of “Egypt,” as in the verse “And Avram went up out of Egypt.” The Alter Rebbe reads the name Mitzrayim as meitzar, “constraint”: inwardly, “Egypt” is the narrowness and limitation that the body and the animal soul impose on the G-dly soul, which they hem in and clothe.

עד שאע"פ [שאף על פי] שנפשו האלקית היא משכלת ומתבוננת בגדולת א"ס ב"ה והתפשטותו על הנבראים שהוא חיי החיים ואתה מחיה את כלם.¹⁵ את השמים ואת הארץ אני מלא ומכה"כ [ומלא כל הארץ כבודו].¹⁶

so that even though his G-dly soul understands and contemplates the greatness of the Infinite One (Ein Sof), blessed be He, and His extending over the created beings, that He is the Life of all life, and "You give life to them all," "The heavens and the earth I fill," and "the whole earth is full of His glory,"

As a result, even when the G-dly soul grasps G-d's greatness, that He is the Life of all life and fills heaven and earth, as the verses say, that understanding alone does not set it free. The abbreviation at the end stands for "the whole earth is full of His glory," the seraphim's call in Isaiah's vision.

אעפ"כ [אף על פי כן] אינו בכח נפשו לצאת מנרתקה הוא מאסר הגוף להיות בבחי' אתכפייא ואתהפכא כו' רק הגוף עומד על עמדו בתקפו ובגבורתו כתולדתו.

nevertheless it is not in the power of his soul to go out of its sheath, which is the prison of the body, so as to be at the level of subjugation (iskafya) and transformation (ishapcha), etc. Rather, the body stands in its place, in its strength and its might, just as it was born.

The soul still lacks the strength to leave its "sheath," the prison of the body, and to bring the body's drives to be subdued (iskafya) or transformed (ishapcha). The body remains as strong as it was at birth, untouched by what the soul understands.

4 וכמארז"ל [וכמאמר רבותינו זכרונם לברכה] גנבא אפום מחתרתא¹⁷ כו'. ומעלת אברהם היתה שעלה מבחי' מצר זה לדבקה נפשו באהבה עליונה עד שתחפוץ להתפשט מלבושי' [מלבושיה / מלבושים] שבנגה שמצד הגוף להיות בבחי' בטול אליו ית' לבדו בבחי' כלות הנפש ממש.

And as our Sages, of blessed memory, said: "The thief at the mouth of the tunnel," etc. And the virtue of Avraham was that he rose up out of this level of constraint, so that his soul cleaved in a higher love, until it would desire to strip itself of its garments of nogah that come from the body, so as to be in a state of self-nullification (bittul) toward Him alone, blessed be He, in a state of the soul's actual expiry (kelos hanefesh).

The Sages' saying about the thief who, at the mouth of the tunnel he is digging, calls on G-d (found at the end of Tractate Berachos in the Ein Yaakov's version) shows the point: a person can believe in G-d and still do what the body wants. Avraham rose out of these constraints until his soul longed to shed its "garments of nogah," the layer bound to the body that is neither holy nor wholly evil, and to be nullified to G-d alone in kelos hanefesh, "the soul's expiry," a longing so strong that the soul would leave the body.

5 והנה אהבה זו באה מחמת התבוננות¹⁸ באור א"ס ב"ה עצמו הסוכ"ע דלית מחשבה ת"ב [תפיסא ביה] כלל¹⁹ כי מלכותך מלכות כ"ע [כל עלמין]²⁰ בחי' מלך לבד שהוא בחי' דבור כמ"ש דבר מלך שלטון.²¹

Now, this love comes from contemplating the Infinite Light (Or Ein Sof), blessed be He, itself, the light that encompasses all worlds (sovev kol almin), which no thought can grasp at all. For "Your kingship is a kingship over all worlds": [this is] the level of King alone, which is the level of speech, as it is written, "The word of a king is sovereign."

Avraham's love came from contemplating the Infinite Light that "encompasses" all worlds (sovev kol almin), beyond any grasp. By contrast, G-d's "kingship" over the worlds is only the level of "King," whose instrument is speech, as a king rules by his word.

וכמאמר ברוך שאמר²² והיה העולם אמירה בלבד שמזה נמשך חיות כל העולמות וקיומם והתהוותם מאין ליש שאין זה אלא בחי' הארה בעלמא

And as in the saying, "Blessed is He who spoke, and the world came to be": by an utterance alone, from which is drawn the life-force of all the worlds, their existence and their coming into being from nothing into something; and this is no more than the level of a mere glimmer.

The prayer "Blessed is He who spoke, and the world came to be" shows that all creation comes from mere speech. So all the life, existence and creation of the worlds from nothing is only a faint glimmer of G-d's light.

וכמ"ש תתברך בשמים ממעל²³ ועל הארץ מתחת על כל שבה מעשה ידיך²⁴ שכל העולמות שמים וארץ מן הארץ לרקיע ת"ק שנה^{25, 26} אינה אלא בחי' מעשה ידיך

And as it is said, "May You be blessed in the heavens above and on the earth below, for all the praise of the work of Your hands": for all the worlds, heaven and earth — from the earth to the firmament is [a journey of] five hundred years — are nothing but the level of "the work of Your hands."

A second proof comes from the blessings of the Shema, which praise G-d "for all the praise of the work of Your hands." All the worlds, even so vast that, according to the Talmud (Chagigah 13a), the distance from the earth to the firmament is a five-hundred-year journey, are only His handiwork.

שכמו במעשה ידי אדם עד"מ אינו מלובש אלא כח המעשה²⁷ שהוא לבוש החיצוני של הנפש.

For just as with the work of a person's hands, by way of analogy, nothing is invested [in it] but the power of action, which is the outer garment of the soul,

The analogy: what a person makes with his hands holds only his power of action, the outermost of the soul's garments of thought, speech and action, and nothing of his inner self. The Kehot note identifies this power of action with the world of Asiyah (Action), and says the Mitteler Rebbe's transcript shows at length that the same holds in Yetzirah and Beriah.

כך החיות המלוּבש בכל העולמות אינן אלא בבחי' כח המעשה שהוא כח החיצוני והארה בעלמא שאינו נוגע לעצמות ומהות הנפש כלל.

so too the life-force invested in all the worlds is only at the level of the power of action, which is an outer power and a mere glimmer, which does not touch the essence and being of the soul at all.

So too the divine life-force in all the worlds is like that outer power of action, a mere glimmer that does not touch G-d's essence. Contemplating this shows how far G-d Himself is beyond all the worlds.

6 ובורא קדושים ישתבח שמך²⁸ לעד כו' שהקדושים שהם מלאכים ונשמות הם בחינת שם כלכד שהוא ג"כ אינו אלא זיו והארה כו'

And "Creator of holy beings, may Your Name be praised forever," etc.: for the holy beings, which are angels and souls, are only the level of a name, which is also no more than a radiance and a glimmer, etc.,

Another phrase of the same blessing, "Creator of holy beings, may Your Name be praised," points to a higher level. The angels and souls, the "holy beings," relate to G-d's "Name," which is also only a radiance.

אלא שאינם בבחי' מעשה ידיך כמו חיצוניות העולמות

except that they are not at the level of "the work of Your hands," like the outer dimension (chitzoniyus) of the worlds.

Yet the angels and souls stand above the outer dimension of the worlds, which is only "the work of Your hands."

כי הנה כח המעשה²⁹ המלוּבש באיזה כלי או שאר דבר מעשה ידי אדם עד"מ הנה הכח ההוא אין לו שייכות כלל עם עצמות ומהות הנפש כי נעשה נפרד מובדל ממנו וע"י אחיזת הכלי עם הכח המלוּבש בו אין נמשך עצמות אדם אחריו.

For as for the power of action invested in some vessel, or in any other thing that is the work of a person's hands, by way of analogy, that power has no connection at all with the essence and being of the soul, for it has become separate and set apart from it. And by taking hold of the vessel with the power invested in it, the person's essence is not drawn after it.

To explain the difference, the Alter Rebbe returns to the craftsman: the power of action he puts into a vessel becomes separate from him, so that taking hold of the vessel does not draw the person himself along with it. Tanya (Shaar HaYichud VehaEmunah, ch. 2) uses the same image of the craftsman's vessel, which keeps its form after his hands have left it.

משא"כ בקראו שמו נמשך ג"כ עצמות האדם שהשם הוא זיו והארה הנוגע לעצמות הנפש ועודנו קשור ומיוחד עמה.

This is not so when one calls him by his name: then the person's essence is drawn as well, for the name is a radiance and a glimmer that touches the essence of the soul, and it is still bound and united with it.

A name is different. When a person is called by his name, he himself responds, because a name, though only a radiance, is still bound up with the essence of the soul.

אך עכ"ז [עם כל זה] אין זה אלא בחי' זיו. אבל הוא ית' בכבודו ובעצמו רם³⁰ ונשא כו'.

Nevertheless, this is only the level of radiance. But He, blessed be He, in His own glory and essence, is high and exalted, etc.

Still, a name is only a radiance. G-d Himself, "in His glory and essence," is exalted far above both the worlds and the holy beings.

7 והוא הוא הסוכ"ע ומעלה ומטה שוים לפניו כו'. וכמ"ש אני ה' לא שנית³¹ ואי לזאת תשפך הנפש אל חיק אביה³² ממש

And it is He who is the light that encompasses all worlds (sovev kol almin), and above and below are equal before Him, etc. As it is written, "I, Havayah, have not changed." And therefore the soul will pour itself out into the very bosom of its Father,

G-d Himself is the level that "encompasses all worlds," before whom above and below are the same. "I, Havayah, have not changed" teaches, as the Mittler Rebbe's transcript explains, that there is no change at all in Him between before creation and after it. Grasping this, the soul pours itself out toward G-d like a child into its father's embrace.

להיות נכספה וגם כלתה נפשי³³ להיות בבחינת בטול ממש אליו ית' לבדו וכמ"ש מי לי בשמים³⁴ וז"ש [וזהו שכתוב] אני ה' לא שנית³⁵ ואתם בני יעקב לא כליתם.

to be [in the state of] "My soul longs, indeed it expires," so as to be in a state of complete self-nullification (bittul) toward Him alone, blessed be He, as it is written, "Whom do I have in heaven?" And this is [the meaning of] what is written, "I, Havayah, have not changed, and you, the children of Yaakov, have not expired."

Its longing becomes kelos hanefesh, as in "My soul longs, indeed it expires": complete self-nullification to G-d alone, as in "Whom do I have in heaven?" Tanya (ch. 50) traces the same steps, from thirst to love-sickness to the soul's expiry, citing this verse. This is why the prophet joins "I have not changed" to "you have not expired."

פִּי שֶׁהִנְבִּיא מִתְמַה עַל יִשְׂרָאֵל הֲרִי אֲנִי ה' לֹא שִׁנִּיתִי וּמִפְּנֵי מָה לֹא כִלִּיתֶם שְׂאִין לָכֶם כִּלּוֹת הַנֶּפֶשׁ.³⁵

That is, the prophet wonders at Israel: Behold, “I, Havayah, have not changed,” so for what reason “have you not expired,” [meaning] that you do not have the soul’s expiry (kelos hanefesh)?

Read this way, Malachi’s verse is a prophet’s astonished question: since G-d is unchanged by creation, why do Israel not reach kelos hanefesh? In its plain sense lo chelisem means “you have not been consumed”; the Alter Rebbe hears in it the soul’s expiry (kelos), and Likkutei Torah (Rosh Hashanah) reads the verse the same way.

אך דבר הגורם להיות מונע ומעכב את הנפש מבחי' בטול זה כמו שהעיד הכתוב ואתם בני יעקב לא כליתם

But as for the thing that causes the soul to be held back and hindered from this level of self-nullification, as the verse testified, “and you, the children of Yaakov, have not expired,”

The Alter Rebbe now asks what holds the soul back from this self-nullification, as the verse testifies that Israel “have not expired.”

הגם שיתכונן בגדולת א"ס ב"ה כי אני ה' לא שניתי ולא כל האדם זוכה למעלת ומדרגת אברהם שנעשה מרכבה בבחי' בטול ממש באהבה עליונה מחמת התכוננות זו. הנה הסבה היא חלישת כח הנפש שאין בכחה לצאת מנרתקה ומאסרה.³⁶

even though one contemplates the greatness of the Infinite One (Ein Sof), blessed be He, that “I, Havayah, have not changed,” and [why] not every person merits the virtue and rank of Avraham, who became a chariot in a state of complete self-nullification in the higher love because of this contemplation: the cause is the weakness of the soul’s power, for it does not have the strength to go out of its sheath and its prison.

Even when a person contemplates G-d’s greatness, that He is unchanged, not everyone becomes, like Avraham, a “chariot” of the higher love through that contemplation. The cause is the soul’s weakness: it lacks the strength to break out of its sheath, the prison of the body.

8 והוא מ"ש כשל בעוני כח³⁷ שע"י העונות נכשל ונתחלש כח הנפש³⁸ וכמ"ש כי אם עונותיכם³⁹ היו מבדילים ביניכם לבין אלהיכם ולא עונות ממש אלא גשמיות הגוף וחומריותו הוא שנעשה מסך מבדיל

And this is what is written, "My strength stumbles through my iniquity": through iniquities the power of the soul stumbles and is weakened. And as it is written, "But your iniquities have separated between you and your G-d." And [this means] not actual iniquities; rather, the physicality of the body and its materiality is what becomes a separating screen,

The soul's weakness is tied to the verse "My strength stumbles through my iniquity" and to Isaiah's "your iniquities have separated between you and your G-d." The Alter Rebbe adds that the separating "screen" here is not actual sin but the body's physicality and coarseness. A maamar of 5662 ("Pesal Lecha"), cited in the Kehot note, explains that avon here means crookedness: bending one's way after the body's materiality and desires until the G-dly soul too is caught and cannot get out.

שהוא הוא המצר וגבול שמגביל ומלביש את הנפש עד שמורידה לימשך אחריה ואינה יכולה לעלות ולצאת ממנה⁴⁰ וע"ז נאמר ותרא את עני אבותינו⁴¹ היינו מדות אהוי"ר [אהבה ויראה] כו' אברהם מדת האהבה כו':

which is itself the constraint and limitation that limits and clothes the soul, until it brings it down to be drawn after it, and it cannot rise and go out of it. And of this it is said, "And You saw the affliction of our fathers": that is, the attributes of love and awe, etc., Avraham [being] the attribute of love, etc.

This physicality is the "constraint" of Egypt that hems in the soul and drags it after the body, so that it cannot rise. "And You saw the affliction (oni) of our fathers" in Egypt refers to the confinement of the attributes of love and awe, the attributes of the Patriarchs, with Avraham as the attribute of love. In Sefer HaMaamarim 5634 the passage ends by reading oni as poverty: "there is no poverty except in Daas," the source of love and awe, which is poor because it is in Egypt, the body's constraint.

SECTION 3 • 19-10

The Torah as strength and tushiyah

9 ולזה נתנה התורה לישראל⁴² שהתורה נק' עוז⁴³ שהיא הנותנת כח ועוז לנפש האלקית להתגבר על חומריות הגוף ונפש הבהמית וגסותן לצאת ממסגר אסיר.⁴⁴

And for this the Torah was given to Israel. For the Torah is called 'strength' (oz), since it is what gives power and strength to the G-dly soul to overcome the materiality of the body and of the animal soul, and their coarseness, so as to go out from the prisoner's confinement.

This is why the Torah was given. The Midrash (Vayikra Rabbah 31:5) calls the Torah oz, "strength," and the Alter Rebbe explains why: it gives the G-dly soul the power to overcome the coarseness of the body and the animal soul and to go free, like a prisoner leaving his confinement.

וזהו ה' עוז לעמו יתן⁴⁵ ה' יברך את עמו בשלום כי ע"י התורה שנק' עוז נעשה בשלום פי' ב' שלום.

And this is [the meaning of] “Havayah will give strength to His people; Havayah will bless His people with peace”: for through the Torah, which is called ‘strength,’ there comes about “with peace” (beshalom), meaning two (beis) [kinds of] peace.

The verse “Havayah will give strength (oz) to His people; Havayah will bless His people with peace” is read accordingly: through the Torah, “strength,” comes “peace.” The word beshalom is read as beis shalom, “two peaces,” since the letter beis stands for two.

כמארז"ל [כמאמר רבותינו זכרונם לברכה] עושה שלום בפמליא של מעלה⁴⁶ ובפמליא של מטה. שלום היינו התקשרות בפמליא של מעלה היינו בחי' גילוי אור א"ס ב"ה ממש בנפש האלקית להיות קשורה ומיוחדת בבחי' בטול ממש.

As our Sages, of blessed memory, said: “He makes peace in the household above and in the household below.” ‘Peace’ means connection. In the household above, that is, the level of the revelation of the very Infinite Light (Or Ein Sof), blessed be He, in the G-dly soul, so that it be bound and united in a state of complete self-nullification (bittul).

The two are the Sages’ “peace in the household above and in the household below.” Peace means connection; Likkutei Torah (Shir HaShirim) defines it as the joining of two opposites. In the “household above,” the G-dly soul, the Infinite Light is revealed, so that the soul is bound to G-d in self-nullification.

10 ובפמליא של מטה היינו הארת כחות נפש האלקית המלובשת בגוף ונה"ב [ונפש הבהמית] שלא יהיה מונע ומעכב מצד הגוף ונפשו הבהמית רק שיהיו כולם מסכימים ומתרצים ליחוד זה כד אתכפייא ואתהפכא חשוכא לנהורא

And in the household below, that is, the shining of the powers of the G-dly soul that is clothed in the body and the animal soul, so that there be no holding back or hindrance from the side of the body and its animal soul; rather, that all of them agree and consent to this union, when there is subjugation (iskafya) and darkness is transformed into light (ishapcha).

Peace in the “household below” is within the person himself: the powers of the G-dly soul shine through the body and the animal soul, so that they do not resist but consent to this union with G-d. This is the state of iskafya and ishapcha, when the other side is subdued and its darkness becomes light.

כי התורה שנק' עוז נקי ג"כ תושיה⁴⁷ שמתשת כח הס"א [הסטרא אחרא] שמצד הגוף כי לאום מלאום יאמץ^{48,49} וכשזה קם זה נופל.⁵⁰

For the Torah, which is called 'strength,' is also called tushiyah, for it weakens (mateshes) the power of the sitra achra (the other side) that comes from the body; for "one nation shall prevail over the other nation," and when this one rises, that one falls.

The Torah is also called tushiyah, a word that usually means "sound wisdom"; the Talmud (Sanhedrin 26b) connects it with mateshes, "weakens," and the Alter Rebbe applies this to the Torah's power to sap the sitra achra that comes from the body. As G-d told Rivkah of Yaakov and Eisav, "one nation shall prevail over the other": when one rises, the other falls.

אך להבין כיצד הוא העוז של התורה ליתן כח לנפש האלקית ולהתיש כח גשמיות הגוף וחומריותו הלא גם התורה נתלכשה בענינים גשמיים⁵¹ תרומות ומעשרות כו'.

But [we need] to understand how the Torah's strength gives power to the G-dly soul and weakens the power of the body's physicality and materiality. Is not the Torah, too, clothed in physical matters, terumos and tithes, etc.?

A question follows: how can the Torah strengthen the soul against physicality, when the Torah itself is clothed in physical matters, such as the laws of terumos (the portion of the harvest given to the kohanim) and tithes? The Mittlerer Rebbe's transcript spells it out: terumos and tithes are taken from grain and tzitzis are made of wool, and it asks how such laws can give the G-dly soul strength in its grasp of G-dliness, even for self-sacrifice.

אמנם הנה נודע כי מקור התורה ויסודה בהררי קדש⁵² עליון מאא"ס [מאור אין סוף] ב"ה בעצמו ובכבודו הסוכ"ע אני ה' לא שניתי אורייתא וקוב"ה [וקודשא בריך הוא] כולא חד.^{53,54}

However, it is known that the source of the Torah and its foundation are in the "holy mountains" on high, from the Infinite Light, blessed be He, in His very self and His glory, which encompasses all worlds: "I, Havayah, have not changed." "The Torah and the Holy One, blessed be He, are all one."

The answer: the Torah's source is in the "holy mountains" above, in G-d's own essence, the level that encompasses all worlds and does not change. "The Torah and the Holy One, blessed be He, are all one," so the Torah's strength is G-d's own. Earlier in Torah Ohr (Va'eira, 57c) the Alter Rebbe brings this saying of the Zohar and stresses that it means the Holy One Himself, so far beyond the worlds that they could not receive life even from His radiance.

SECTION 4 • 11-14

“Saying”: G-d’s word in our mouths

11 והנה עיקר קבלת התורה הוא מ”ש בעשרת הדברות וידבר אלקים⁵⁵ את⁵⁶ כל הדברים האלה לאמר אנכי.

Now, the essence of the receiving of the Torah is what is written in the Ten Commandments: “And G-d spoke all these words, saying (leimor): I (Anochi)...”

The heart of receiving the Torah is in the opening of the Ten Commandments: “And G-d spoke all these words, saying: I (Anochi)...” The Alter Rebbe focuses on the word “saying” (leimor).

דלכאורה מלת לאמר אין לה הבנה⁵⁷ ואינה⁵⁸ כמו כל לאמר שבמקרא⁵⁹ שפ”י לאמר לזולתו.

For seemingly the word ‘saying’ (leimor) cannot be understood. It is not like every ‘saying’ in Scripture, whose meaning is ‘to say [it] to someone else.’

Elsewhere in Scripture, “saying” means “to say it to others,” as when G-d speaks to Moshe for him to pass the words on to Israel. Likkutei Torah (Shir HaShirim, 40b) asks the same question and notes that in the Torah’s other mitzvos, which Israel heard from Moshe, “saying” fits.

משא”כ בעשרת הדברות א”א לפרש כך שהרי כל ישראל שמעו⁶⁰ ופכ”פ [ופנים בפנים] דבר⁶¹ ה’ את אשר ישנו פה⁶² ואת אשר איננו פה כו’.

But in the Ten Commandments it is impossible to explain it this way, for all Israel heard, and “face to face Havayah spoke,” “with the one who is here and with the one who is not here,” etc.

That cannot be its meaning in the Ten Commandments: all Israel heard G-d directly, “face to face,” and the covenant included even those “not here,” the generations to come, so no one was left to whom the words still had to be told. A maamar of 5730 sharpens this from Pirkei d’Rabbi Eliezer: the souls of every generation stood at Mount Sinai.

אך פ”י הוא לאמר ולדבר את כל דברי התורה מה שכבר נאמר למשה מסיני כי כל מקרא ומשנה הלכות ואגדות כולם נאמרו למשה בסיני

Rather, the meaning is: to say and to speak all the words of the Torah, what was already said to Moshe from Sinai. For all of Scripture and Mishnah, halachos and aggados, were all said to Moshe at Sinai.

The new meaning: “saying” refers to Israel themselves saying and speaking all the words of Torah already given to Moshe at Sinai. All of Scripture and Mishnah, the halachos (laws) and the aggados (the non-legal teachings), were given at Sinai.

הגם שבגמרא הוזכרו שמות תנאים ואמוראים⁶³ שאמרו הלכה זו כמו ב"ש [בית שמאי] אומר כך כו' היינו דבר ה' זו הלכה⁶⁴ שנאמרה למשה מסיני שיצא מפי אותו תנא ואמורא.

Even though the Gemara mentions the names of the Tannaim and Amoraim who said this halachah, as in "Beis Shammai say thus," etc., [still,] it is "the word of Havayah": this is halachah," which was said to Moshe from Sinai and came out of the mouth of that Tanna or Amora.

The Talmud gives teachings in the names of the Tannaim (the sages of the Mishnah) and the Amoraim (the sages of the Gemara), as in "Beis Shammai (the school of Shammai) say thus." Yet each ruling is still "the word of Havayah," which the Talmud (Shabbos 138b) defines as halachah, given at Sinai and now spoken through the mouth of that sage. Or HaTorah notes that the Midrash Rabbah on Yisro (end of ch. 28) clearly implies this.

12 וכענין דברי אשר שמתי בפיו⁶⁵ וכח זה ניתן לישראל להיות הלכה היוצאת מפיהם דבר ה' ממש שנאמרה למשה מסיני ניתן בזמן קבלת התורה בעשרת הדברות לאמר מה שכבר נאמרה

This is like "My words which I have placed in your mouth." And this power was given to Israel, that the halachah coming out of their mouths should be the very word of G-d that was said to Moshe from Sinai; it was given at the time of the receiving of the Torah, in the Ten Commandments: "saying" (leimor), [saying] what had already been said;

This is like Isaiah's promise, "My words which I have placed in your mouth." The power for halachah spoken by Jews to be G-d's own word from Sinai was given at Sinai, in that one word "saying": to say again what had already been said.

דהיינו בחי' בטול אליו ית' שאין הדבור נעשה נפרד⁶⁶ אצל האדם להיות יוצא מפי עצמו כאלו הוא שלו רק כמ"ש תען לשוני אמרתך⁶⁷

that is, the level of self-nullification (bittul) toward Him, blessed be He, so that the speech does not become something separate for the person, coming out of his own mouth as though it were his, but rather as it is written, "My tongue shall answer Your word."

That power is self-nullification: the words of Torah do not become the speaker's own, as though he were their author, but are as the verse says, "My tongue shall answer Your word." Or HaTorah calls this "a wondrous matter" and links it to the level of Moshe.

שהתורה היא אמרתך אלא שלשוני תען כעונה אחר האומר מה שהוא אומר.

For the Torah is "Your word," except that "my tongue answers" [it], like one who answers after the speaker with what he says.

The verse is read this way: the Torah is G-d's word, and the person's tongue only "answers," repeating it after the One who speaks. In its plain sense ta'an means to declare or sing aloud; the Alter Rebbe takes it as answering, as one repeats after a reader, and Likkutei Torah (Shemini Atzeres) reads the verse the same way, as David's prayer for all Israel.

13 ויוֹד הדברות הן כללות כל התורה שבקבלתן עשרת הדברות מפי הגבורה קבלו כל התורה להיות בחי בטול אצלם לדבר ה' המדבר בפיהם

And the Ten Commandments comprise the whole Torah in general, so that by receiving the Ten Commandments from the mouth of the Almighty they received the whole Torah: that there be in them the level of self-nullification (bittul) to the word of G-d that speaks in their mouths,

The Ten Commandments contain the whole Torah in general form, so receiving them from G-d's mouth meant receiving the whole Torah. What Israel received was the self-nullification through which G-d's word speaks in their mouths.

ול להיות רק כעונה אחר האומר שהוא ענין גילוי אור א"ס למטה כמו למעלה בבחי בטול ממש.

and that they be only like one who answers after the speaker, which is the revelation of the Infinite Light (Or Ein Sof) below as above, in a state of complete self-nullification.

They were to be only like one who repeats after the speaker. This is the revelation of the Infinite Light below just as above, in complete self-nullification.

14 ומזה יתבונן המשכיל ויפול עליו אימה ופחד בעסק התורה בשומו ללבו כי דבר ה' הוא ממש שנאמרו למשה מסיני.

From this the thoughtful person will reflect, and dread and fear will fall upon him in his Torah study, when he takes to heart that it is truly the word of G-d, which was said to Moshe from Sinai.

A practical consequence: a thoughtful person who takes to heart that the Torah he studies is truly G-d's word from Sinai will be filled with dread and fear as he learns.

וזה שארז"ל [וזהו שאמרו רבותינו זכרונם לברכה] ע"פ והודעתם לבניך ולבני בניך וסמך ליה יום אשר עמדת⁶⁸ כו' מה להלן באימה ויראה כו' אף כאן כו'

And this is what our Sages, of blessed memory, said on the verse "And you shall make them known to your children and your children's children," next to which is [written] "the day that you stood," etc.: "Just as there [it was] in dread and awe, etc., so too here," etc.

The Sages (Berachos 22a) learned this from two adjacent verses: "make them known to your children," followed by "the day that you stood" at Sinai. As Sinai was in dread and awe, so must Torah study be.

שלכאורה אינו מובן דמיון זה מה להלן אף כאן כו' שהרי במעמד הר סיני וכל העם רואים את הקולות ⁶⁹ ופכ"פ [ופנים בפנים] דבר ⁷⁰ ה'. משא"כ בעסק התורה של כל אדם כשלומד בפני עצמו.

For seemingly this comparison, "just as there, so too here," etc., is not understood, since at the standing at Mount Sinai "all the people saw the voices," and "face to face Havayah spoke." This is not so with the Torah study of every person when he learns by himself.

The Alter Rebbe asks how the comparison holds: at Sinai the people saw the voices and heard G-d face to face, while a person studying alone has no such experience.

אלא הענין הוא כמש"ל [כמה שכתוב לעיל] כי גם עסק התורה שבכ"א [שבכל אחד / שבכל אחת] ובכל זמן הוא דבר ה' ממש שנאמר למשה מסיני. ועל ידי זה תפול עליו אימה ויראה כאלו קבלה היום מהר סיני: ⁷¹

But the explanation is as written above: that the Torah study of each person, at any time, is also truly the word of G-d that was said to Moshe from Sinai. And through this, dread and awe will fall upon him, as if he received it today from Mount Sinai.

The answer is the point just made: every person's Torah study, at any time, is the very word of G-d given at Sinai, and knowing this brings awe, as if he were receiving the Torah from Mount Sinai today. Torah Ohr (Vayeitzei, 22b) answers the same question: the Torah one learns draws down supernal Chochmah, where the Infinite Light shines beyond the chain of worlds and nothing is hidden, so "just as there, so here."

SECTION 5 • ¶15-17

Anochi and the way out of Egypt

15 והנה עסק התורה בבחי' בטול זה הוא הנותן עוז ותעצומות ⁷² לנפש האלקית ⁷³ ותושיה לסט"א [לסטרא אחרא].

Now, Torah study in this state of self-nullification (bittul) is what gives strength and might to the G-dly soul, and tushiyah to the sitra achra (the other side).

Torah study in this self-nullification is what gives the G-dly soul "strength and might" and acts as tushiyah, weakening the sitra achra. Or HaTorah (on the Prophets and Writings) quotes this line: the Torah gives the G-dly soul the power to overcome the animal soul until it longs to leave its sheath, the body's prison.

וזהו אנכי ה' אלקיך אשר הוצאתיך מארץ מצרים⁷⁴ כי בקבלת התורה נמשך בחי' אנכי דהיינו אנכי ממש עצמותו ומהותו ית' הסוכ"ע כו'.

And this is [the meaning of] “I (Anochi) am Havayah your G-d, who brought you out of the land of Egypt”: for through receiving the Torah the level of Anochi is drawn down, that is, the very Anochi, His essence and being, blessed be He, which encompasses all worlds (sovev kol almin), etc.

This is hinted in the first commandment, “I (Anochi) am Havayah your G-d, who brought you out of Egypt.” Receiving the Torah drew down Anochi, “I” in the fullest sense: G-d’s own essence, which encompasses all worlds.

16 וכמ"ש והיו הדברים האלה⁷⁵ אשר אנכי מצוך היום כו' ובחי' אנכי זה נמשך לישראל בבחי' הוי"ה דהיינו ע"י צמצום והתפשטות כנ"ל עד שנעשה בבחי' אלקיך ממש

As it is written, “And these words which I (Anochi) command you today shall be,” etc. And this level of Anochi is drawn to Israel through the level of Havayah, that is, through tzimtzum (contraction) and expansion, as mentioned above, until it becomes the level of ‘your G-d’ (Elokecha) itself.

The same Anochi appears in “these words which I (Anochi) command you today.” This essence reaches Israel through the Name Havayah, by contraction and expansion, until it becomes Elokecha, “your G-d,” in actuality.

ואזי אשר הוצאתיך מארץ מצרים מבחי' מצרים וגבולים שמצד הגוף ונה"ב [ונפש הבהמית] המגבילים ומלבישים את נפש האלקית ומעכבים לצאת מנרתקה

And then [comes] “who brought you out of the land of Egypt (Mitzrayim)”: out of the level of constraints (meitzarim) and limits that come from the body and the animal soul, which limit and clothe the G-dly soul and keep [it] from going out of its sheath.

Then comes “who brought you out of the land of Egypt”: out of the meitzarim, the constraints of the body and the animal soul that limit the G-dly soul and keep it from leaving its sheath.

וכמ"ש ואעלה אתכם מעני מצרים אל ארץ טובה ורחבה^{76,77} כי ע"י קבלת אנכי דהיינו בחי' סוכ"ע ואני ה' לא שנית בעסק התורה בבחי' בטול כו' הוא הנותן כח לנפש האלהית.

As it is written, “And I will bring you up out of the affliction of Egypt to a good and spacious land.” For through receiving Anochi, that is, the level of the light that encompasses all worlds (sovev kol almin) and “I, Havayah, have not changed,” in Torah study in a state of self-nullification (bittul), etc., it is this that gives power to the G-dly soul.

The verse “I will bring you up out of the affliction of Egypt to a good and spacious land” describes the result: out of narrowness into a “spacious” land. Receiving Anochi, the transcendent level of “I have not changed,” through self-nullifying Torah study is what gives the G-dly soul its power.

17 ותושיה לתאוות הגוף כו'. וזהו ענין אנשי יריחו⁷⁸ היו כורכין את שמע ולא היו מפסיקין בין אחד ואהבת.⁷⁹

And [it is] tushiyah to the desires of the body, etc. And this is the matter of the people of Jericho, who would run together (korchin) the Shema, and would not pause between 'One' (echad) and 'And you shall love' (ve'ahavta).

The Torah also weakens the body's desires. This explains the custom of the people of Jericho, who recited the Shema without a pause between "One" and "And you shall love," that is, without saying "Blessed be the Name of the glory of His kingdom" in between.

כי ע"י קבלת בחי' אחד דהיינו בחי' יחודא עלאה שהוא בחי' בטול ממש לאור א"ס ב"ה הסוכ"ע כנ"ל

For through receiving the level of 'One,' that is, the level of the higher unity (yichuda ila'ah), which is the level of complete self-nullification (bittul) to the Infinite Light (Or Ein Sof), blessed be He, which encompasses all worlds (sovev kol almin), as mentioned above,

The reason: receiving "One" means receiving the higher unity (yichuda ila'ah), in which everything is nullified before the Infinite Light that encompasses all worlds.

תגדל האהבה ביתר שאת עד שתהיה בכל לבבך בשני יצריך⁸⁰ דאתכפיא סט"א [סטרא אחרא] ואתהפכא חשוכא לנהורא שמבחי' בטול זה נמשך עוז ותושיה כנ"ל.

the love will grow with surpassing loftiness, until it is "with all your heart," with both your inclinations, when the sitra achra (the other side) is subdued (iskafya) and darkness is transformed into light (ishapcha); for from this level of self-nullification are drawn strength and tushiyah, as mentioned above.

From that self-nullification love grows until it is "with all your heart," which the Mishnah explains as with both inclinations, the good and the evil, since the animal side is subdued and even transformed. So "One" leads straight into "And you shall love."

משא"כ בשכמל"ו [ברוך שם כבוד מלכותו לעולם ועד] הרי כתיב מלך אלהים על גוים כי שם זה הוא חיות העולמות ואפי' [ואפילו] עכו"ם [עובדי כוכבים ומזלות] בכלל.⁸¹

This is not so with 'Blessed be the Name of the glory of His kingdom forever and ever': for it is written, "Elokim reigns over the nations," since this Name is the life-force of the worlds, and even idolaters are included.

"Blessed be the Name of the glory of His kingdom" is different. It refers to Elokim, G-d as the life-force of the worlds, which, as the verse "Elokim reigns over the nations" shows, gives life even to idolaters; the Mitteler Rebbe's transcript explains that the nations receive from combinations (tzirufim) of the Name Elokim.

וכענין שארז"ל [שאמרו רבותינו זכרונם לברכה] לא כאברהם שיצא ממנו ישמעאל^{82, 83} כ"י אלא שאנו אומרים בשכמל"י [ברוך שם כבוד מלכותו לעולם ועד] בחשאי כי ועד הוא ג"כ אחד אלא שהוא בחילופי דאטוון⁸⁴ כמ"ש בזוהר:⁸⁵

This is like what our Sages, of blessed memory, said: "Not like Avraham, from whom Yishmael came forth," etc. But we say 'Blessed be the Name of the glory of His kingdom forever and ever' in a whisper, because 'forever' (va'ed) is also 'One' (echad), except that it is in an exchange of letters, as is written in the Zohar.

This connects to the Sages' teaching (Sifrei) that Yaakov's sons were "not like Avraham, from whom Yishmael came forth"; in the Talmud's telling (Pesachim 56a), when they declared the Shema, Yaakov answered "Blessed be the Name...." We say it only in a whisper because, as the Zohar explains, its va'ed ("forever") is echad ("One") with its letters exchanged, so that "One" is not said openly.

SECTION 6 • ¶18-21

The moon and the sun

18 ובזה יובן מה שישראל מונים ללבנה.⁸⁶ כי הלבנה לית לה מגרמה כלום⁸⁷ רק שמקבלת האור שלה מאור השמש להאיר על הארץ.

With this we can understand why Israel reckons by the moon. For the moon has nothing of its own; it only receives its light from the light of the sun, to shine upon the earth.

The maamar now turns to the moon, by which, the Talmud says (Sukkah 29a), Israel reckon their calendar. The moon has no light of its own; all its light is received from the sun.

ולכן בכל חודש וחודש מתמעטת קודם חידושה עד שנעשית בבחי' נקודה⁸⁸ מפני שבאה תחת אור השמש ממש לקבל ממנה ולכן אינה מאירה על הארץ

Therefore, every month it diminishes before its renewal until it becomes the level of a point, because it comes directly under the light of the sun to receive from it, and therefore it does not shine upon the earth.

Each month, before its renewal, the moon shrinks to a mere point, because it stands directly beneath the sun to receive from it; in that position it gives no light to the earth.

והולכת ואור עד מילוי הלבנה והכל מאור השמש ממש שהלבנה לית לה מגרמה כלום.

And it grows steadily brighter until the moon is full, and all of it is from the very light of the sun, for the moon has nothing of its own.

Afterward it grows brighter until it is full, and all of that light is the sun's. Its waning and waxing show that it has nothing of its own.

19 ואחר מילוי הלבנה חוזרת ומתמעטת להיות בבחינת נקודה בסוף החדש עד שחוזרת ומתחדשת. וככל

הדברים האלה וכמשל הזה כך הוא ענין ישראל⁸⁹

And after the moon is full, it diminishes again, becoming the level of a point at the end of the month, until it is renewed again. And in keeping with all these words and with this analogy, so it is with Israel,

After it is full, the moon wanes again to a point at the end of the month and is then renewed. Israel are like the moon in all of this; the Mittler Rebbe's transcript says it plainly: the souls of Israel have nothing of their own except what they receive from G-d's light shining on them, the Infinite Light.

שהם בחי' בטול לאור א"ס ב"ה הסוכ"ע ותורתם ועבודתם הם בבחינת דלית להון מגרמיהון כלום.

שאנו בבחי' יש מי שלומד יש מי שאוהב כו'. אלא הכל בבחי' בטול לאור א"ס ב"ה ממש

who are the level of self-nullification (bittul) to the Infinite Light (Or Ein Sof), blessed be He, which encompasses all worlds (sovev kol almin); and their Torah and their divine service are at the level of 'they have nothing of their own,' that is, it is not at the level of 'there is (yesh) one who learns, there is one who loves,' etc. Rather, everything is in a state of self-nullification to the very Infinite Light, blessed be He,

Israel are nullified to the Infinite Light, and their Torah study and service "have nothing of their own," like the moon. There is no independent self (yesh, "something"), no "one who learns" or "one who loves"; everything is nullified to the Infinite Light.

ואור א"ס ב"ה ממש הוא השוכן בתוך תורתם ועבודתם ודבר ה' זו הלכה⁹⁰ היא המדברת בפיהם

and it is the very Infinite Light, blessed be He, that dwells within their Torah and their divine service, and "the word of Havayah": this is halachah" is what speaks in their mouths.

It is the Infinite Light itself that dwells within their Torah and their service, so the halachah they speak is "the word of Havayah," speaking through them.

וזו היא בחי' שמש כמ"ש כי שמש ומגן הוי"ה אלקים.⁹¹ שבחי' הוי"ה נקי שמש.

And this is the level of 'sun,' as it is written, "For Havayah Elokim is a sun and a shield": for the level of Havayah is called 'sun.'

This is the "sun" of the verse "For Havayah Elokim is a sun and a shield": the Name Havayah is the sun, the source of the light that Israel, like the moon, receive.

20 ובחיי אלהים נקי מגן כוי כמ"ש במ"א. והתורה נמשך משם הוי"ה. וזהו ענין תורה ועבודה וגמ"ח [וגמילות חסדים] שצריך להיות שלשתן דוקא כי גמ"ח [גמילות חסדים] היינו צדקה.

And the level of Elokim is called 'shield,' etc., as explained elsewhere. And the Torah is drawn from the Name Havayah. And this is the matter of Torah, divine service and acts of kindness (gemilus chasadim), that all three of them, specifically, are needed. For acts of kindness means tzedakah.

The Name Elokim, which conceals and limits, is called the "shield"; the maamar only notes that this is explained elsewhere. The Torah comes from the Name Havayah, the "sun." The maamar then turns to the three things on which, the Mishnah says (Avos 1:2), the world stands, Torah, divine service and acts of kindness, all three of which are needed; acts of kindness here means tzedakah, charity.

וצדקה היא כללות כל התורה שנקי בשם צדקה ובפרטות מעשה הצדקה ממש שהצדקה היא להחיות רוח שפלים⁹² היא בחיי שמש כמ"ש וזרחה לכם יראי שמי⁹³ שמש צדקה. כי כמו שהצדקה היא להחיות רוח שפלים.

And tzedakah is the whole Torah in general, which is called by the name 'tzedakah,' and in particular the actual deed of tzedakah. For tzedakah, which is "to revive the spirit of the lowly," is the level of 'sun,' as it is written, "And there shall shine for you who fear My Name a sun of tzedakah." For just as tzedakah is "to revive the spirit of the lowly,"

Tzedakah has a broad sense, the whole Torah, which is called "tzedakah," and a specific one, actual charity. Charity "revives the spirit of the lowly," and so it is like the sun, as in the verse "a sun of tzedakah": in Malachi the word means righteousness, and the Alter Rebbe reads it as charity.

21 וכן אור השמש הוא להאיר במקום חשך שאין בו אור שהיא בחי השפעה מלמעלה למטה.

So too the light of the sun is to shine in a place of darkness that has no light, which is the level of influence from above to below.

Just as charity revives the lowly, sunlight shines into darkness where there is no light. Both are an influence from above to below.

והשפעה זו היא ע"י בחי' עבודה שהוא בחי' בטול ממטה למעלה אור א"ס ב"ה הסוכ"ע להיות השפעת אוא"ס [אור אין סוף] ב"ה ממש שורה ומתגלה למטה כמו למעלה דהיינו כמו בטול הלבנה לאור השמש ממש:

And this influence is through the level of divine service (avodah), which is the level of self-nullification (bittul) from below to above, [to] the Infinite Light (Or Ein Sof), blessed be He, which encompasses all worlds (sovev kol almin), so that the influence of the very Infinite Light, blessed be He, rest and be revealed below as above; that is, like the self-nullification of the moon to the very light of the sun.

This influence comes through divine service, which is self-nullification from below upward toward the Infinite Light. Through it the Infinite Light rests and is revealed below as it is above, just as the moon, nullified before the sun, receives its light.

SECTION 7 • ¶22-23

Rosh Chodesh Sivan

22 וזהו בחדש השלישי לצאת בני ישראל מארץ מצרים ביום הזה⁹⁴ כו' כי בצאת ישראל ממצרים התחילו לספור ספירת העומר כמ"ש שבעה שבועות תספור לך.⁹⁵ והם הכנה להיות קבלת התורה בשבועות.

And this is [the meaning of] "In the third month after the children of Israel went out of the land of Egypt, on this day," etc. For when Israel went out of Egypt they began the counting of the Omer, as it is written, "Seven weeks shall you count for yourself." And these are a preparation for the receiving of the Torah on Shavuos.

The maamar returns to its opening verse. When Israel left Egypt they began counting the Omer, the seven weeks from Pesach to Shavuos ("seven weeks shall you count"), as a preparation for receiving the Torah on Shavuos.

דהיינו להיות גילוי אוא"ס [אור אין סוף] ב"ה למטה כמו למעלה בבחי' בטול אליו ית' לאמר אחר מה שיאמר הוא ולהיות דבר ה' ממש בתוך בני ישראל בעסק תורתם.

That is, so that there be a revelation of the Infinite Light (Or Ein Sof), blessed be He, below as above, in a state of self-nullification (bittul) toward Him, blessed be He: to 'say' after Him what He will say, and that the very word of G-d be within the children of Israel in their Torah study.

The goal of that preparation was the revelation of the Infinite Light below as above through self-nullification: that Israel "say" after G-d what He says, so that His very word is present in their Torah study.

23 ובשבוע הז' ביום ג' בו הוא כאלו כבר נכנסה כל השבוע ונעשו אז ישראל מוכנים ועומדים⁹⁶ לקבל בחי בטול זה.

And in the seventh week, on its third day, it is as if the whole week had already come in, and Israel then became prepared and standing ready to receive this level of self-nullification (bittul).

Rosh Chodesh Sivan, the day Israel reached Sinai, is the third day of the seventh week of the Omer. By then it is as if the whole week had come, so Israel were already prepared to receive this self-nullification; a maamar of 5729 explains that they were ready not only through the light drawn from above but also through their own service below.

והיה אז מולד הלבנה שהוא גילוי אוא"ס [אור אין סוף] ב"ה אחר בטול הלבנה אליו. ולכן נק' ביום הזה סתם כי יום היינו אור וגילוי כמ"ש ויקרא אלהים לאור יום⁹⁷

And then came the birth of the moon (molad), which is the revelation of the Infinite Light (Or Ein Sof), blessed be He, after the moon's self-nullification to Him. Therefore it is called simply "on this day," for 'day' means light and revelation, as it is written, "And G-d called the light 'day.'"

That day was also the birth of the new moon (molad): after the moon's nullification to the sun, when it shrinks to a point, comes a new revelation of light. This is why the verse calls it simply "this day," since "day" means light and revelation, as in "G-d called the light 'day.'"

והיינו גילוי ואהבה שבבחי בטול אליו ית' (שבחי אהבה זו נק' היום הזה כי פי' זה הוא בחי יחודי [יחודא עילאה] שלכן משרע"ה [משה רבינו עליו השלום] נתנבא בזה.

And this is the revelation and the love that is in a state of self-nullification toward Him, blessed be He. (For this level of love is called 'this day' (hayom hazeh), because the meaning of 'this' (zeh) is the level of the higher unity (yichuda ila'ah), which is why Moshe our teacher, peace be upon him, prophesied with 'this.'

Here the revelation is of a love that comes from self-nullification. In a parenthesis the Alter Rebbe adds that this love is called "this day" because zeh, "this," signifies the higher unity; the Sages teach that Moshe alone prophesied with the words "This is the thing."

וּבְרִיחַ [וּבְרֵאשׁ חֹדֶשׁ] מִקְבֶּלֶת כְּנִי [כְּנִסְת יִשְׂרָאֵל] מוֹחִין מִחֲכָמָה. עֲמִישׁ בְּדִיָּה וְהִיָּה מְדֵי חֹדֶשׁ.⁹⁸ לֶכֶן הָאֱהָבָה
הִיא בְּבַחֲי בְטוֹל

And on Rosh Chodesh the Community of Israel (Knesses Yisrael) receives the intellect (mochin) from Chochmah (wisdom); see what is written in the discourse beginning “And it shall be, from one new moon to the next.” Therefore the love is in a state of self-nullification.)

On Rosh Chodesh the Community of Israel (Knesses Yisrael, the source of Israel’s souls, in Kabbalah the sefirah of Malchus) receives mochin, intellect, from Chochmah. In Likkutei Torah (V’Zos HaBerachah), in the discourse beginning “And it shall be, from one new moon to the next,” the Alter Rebbe explains that on weekdays it receives G-d’s speech by way of the emotions, but on Rosh Chodesh from Chochmah itself; therefore the love of that day is a love of self-nullification.

כִּי וְאֱהָבָת⁹⁹ בִּפ [בִּי פַעֲמִים] אֹר וְאִי בְּאוּ לְמַדְבָּר סִינִי שִׁירְדָּה שְׁנָאָה¹⁰⁰ כִּי דִהִינּוּ עֲנִין תוֹשִׁיָּה שְׁמַתְשָׁת
כַּח הַסִּיא [הַסְטָרָא אַחֲרָא] כִּי

For ‘And you shall love’ (ve’ahavta) is twice ‘light’ (or) [in numerical value]. And then “they came to the wilderness of Sinai,” where hatred (sin’ah) descended, etc., that is, the matter of tushiyah, which weakens the power of the sitra achra (the other side), etc.

The numerical value of ve’ahavta, “And you shall love” (414), is twice that of or, “light” (207), which is why this love is called “day.” Then Israel came to Sinai, whose name the Talmud (Shabbos 89a) links to sin’ah, “hatred”; here it means tushiyah, the weakening of the sitra achra.

וּמַדְבָּר מִלְשׁוֹן דְּבוּר כְּמוֹ וּמַדְבָּר נָאוֹה¹⁰¹ וְנִקְי מַדְבָּר בְּתוֹסַפַּת מִי כִי הִמִּי הוּא מְאוֹתִיּוֹת הָאֲמֻנָתִיּוֹ שֶׁהֵן
לְהַקְטִין הָעֲנִין¹⁰² כְּלוֹמַר שְׁאִין בּוֹ בַּחֲי דְבוּר בְּפִי [בְּפִנֵּי עֲצָמוֹ] רַק בַּחֲי שְׁכַבְר נִדְבָר

And ‘wilderness’ (midbar) is from the word ‘speech’ (dibbur), as in “and your speech (midbarech) is lovely.” And it is called midbar with an added mem, because the mem is one of the letters ‘he’e-mantiv,’ which serve to diminish the matter; that is to say, in this there is no level of speech in its own right, only the level of what has already been spoken,

Midbar, “wilderness,” is related to dibbur, “speech,” as in “your speech (midbarech) is lovely.” But it has an added mem, one of the letters (remembered as he’e-mantiv) that are added to a root, which the Alter Rebbe says diminish its sense: midbar is speech that is not independent, only a repetition of what has already been spoken.

דִּהִינּוּ שֶׁהַדְּבוּר הוּא בַּחֲי בְטוֹל בְּדָבָר הִי הַמַּדְבָּר בּוֹ (וְעֲמִישׁ בְּדִיָּה הַנִּיִּל)

that is, the speech is in a state of self-nullification within the word of G-d that speaks in him (and see what is written in the discourse mentioned above).

Such speech is nullified within the word of G-d that speaks through the person, and the text again refers to the discourse on Rosh Chodesh for more. Likkutei Torah (Pekudei), to which Or HaTorah points here, calls this speech that is “spoken” of itself: the word of G-d is spoken in the person, not by him.

ואזי ויסעו מרפידים.¹⁰³ בחיי רפיון ידים כמארז"ל [כמאמר רבותינו זכרונם לברכה] למה נק' שמה רפידים¹⁰⁴
 כו' דהיינו בחינת חלישת כח הנשמה רק שניתנה להם עוז ותעצומות לנשמה ותושיה לס"א [לסטרא אחרא]
 כו':

And then “they journeyed from Refidim”: the level of slackness of hands (rifyon yadayim), as our Sages, of blessed memory, said, “Why was its name called Refidim?” etc., that is, the level of weakness of the soul’s power; but they were given strength and might for the soul, and tushiyah to the sitra achra, etc.

Then the verse says, “they journeyed from Refidim,” and the Talmud (Sanhedrin 106a) reads Refidim as rifyon yadayim, “slackness of hands,” here the weakness of the soul. Israel left that weakness behind because they were given strength and might for the soul and tushiyah against the sitra achra, the gift of the Torah described throughout the maamar.

IN ONE’S AVODAH

A person who takes to heart that the Torah he is learning is truly the word of G-d given at Sinai will feel dread and awe as he studies, as if he were receiving it today. And Torah studied in self-nullification, as one who only repeats what G-d says, is what gives the G-dly soul the strength to overcome the body and weakens the sitra achra, where contemplation alone has left a person unmoved.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Why does the Alter Rebbe say that contemplating G-d’s greatness is not enough to free the soul, and what does the Torah add that even the Patriarchs’ love did not?
2. How does the word “saying” (leimor) in the Ten Commandments become the basis for saying that every halachah a sage speaks is G-d’s word from Sinai?
3. How do a craftsman’s handiwork and a person’s name differ in their connection to the self, and how does the maamar apply this to the worlds and to angels and souls?
4. What does the moon, which shrinks to a point when it stands closest beneath the sun, teach about self-nullification and receiving light?
5. Why did the people of Jericho go straight from “One” to “And you shall love,” and why is “Blessed be the Name of the glory of His kingdom” said in a whisper?

SOURCES AND REFERENCES

Notes

PARAGRAPH 1

1

בחדש השלישי

The note records that this maamar was also printed in the Lemberg edition of Torah Ohr, on folio 5a.

KEHOT'S NOTE

נדפס גם בתור"א לעמבערג דף ה, א. הנחת כ"ק אדמו"ר האמצעי בסה"מ תקס"ז ע"ק: בשבת שלפני שבועות. ובעי שעה ביאור נוסף. ראה לעיל בציונים לכ"ק אדמו"ר ז"ע. הגהות וקיצורים באוה"ת יתרו ע"י תשעב. תשעג. תשצ. שי"ך לביאור ע"י תשצב. קיצורים בכרך ח ע"י בתקעה. עוד קטע לכאן ע"י בתקעו. חלק נעתק גם בסה"מ תרל"ג כרך א ע"י רצג עם הגהות ושינויים (מיוסד על הנדפס באוה"ת פ' יתרו ע"י תשעג). וראה גם באוה"ת יתרו ע"י תשסח ואילך. חלק מהמאמר הושווה לכו"ך 1052 כתי"ק מהר"ל (רוב הכת"י דהה מאוד וא"א לפענח האותיות). לכללות מאמר זה ראה אוה"ת יתרו ע"י תתסו. בסה"מ תרנ"ה ע"י פח [שמיוסד על ד"ה בסי תרל"ג הנ"ל]. ד"ה באתי לגני תשל"ו. פלח הרמון שמות ע"י רכ.

2

בחדש השלישי

The verse that opens the account of the giving of the Torah: Israel reached the wilderness of Sinai in the third month after the Exodus, "on this day." The maamar asks why it says only "this day," and at its end reads the phrase as the revelation that came on the day of the new moon.

שמות י"ט:1א: Exodus 19:1

בחדש השלישי לצאת בני־ישראל מארץ מצרים ביום הזה באו מדבר סיני:

In the third month after the children of Israel were gone forth out of the land of Egypt, the same day came they into the wilderness of Sinai.

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שבת פ"ו ב:ה: Shabbat 86b:5

תנו רבנן: בשש"י בחדש ניתנו עשרת הדברות לישראל. רבי יוסי אומר: בשבועה בו. אמר רבא: דכולי עקמא בראש חדש אֲתוּ לְמַדְבַּר סִינִי. כתיב הָכָא: "בַּיּוֹם הַזֶּה בָּאוּ מִדְבַּר סִינִי", וכתוב הָתָם: "הַחֹדֶשׁ הַזֶּה לָכֶם רֹאשׁ חֲדָשִׁים" — מָה לְהֵלֵן רֹאשׁ חֲדָשׁ, אִם כָּאֵן רֹאשׁ חֲדָשׁ. ודכולי עקמא, בשבת ניתנה תורה לישראל. כתיב הָכָא: "זָכוֹר אֶת יוֹם הַשַּׁבָּת לְקַדְשׁוֹ", וכתוב הָתָם: "וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה אֶל הָעָם זָכוֹר אֶת הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה" — מָה לְהֵלֵן בְּעֶצְמוֹ שֶׁל יוֹם, אִם כָּאֵן בְּעֶצְמוֹ ...

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KEHOT'S NOTE

שמות יט, א. ראה בשיחת ש"פ שלח תשמ"ח בהערה 31 ההדגשה "מה שמתן תורה הי' בחודש השלישי" ולא נזכר באיזה יום בחודש [עד שיש בזה ב' דיעות בגמרא (שבת פו, ב) וכן בתושב"ע"פ (שם פז, א) — "ירחא תליתאי" [ומש"נ (יתרו יט, טז) "ביום השלישי", "יומא תליתאי" — הי"ז לא יום השלישי בחודש, כ"א מימי הכנה (הגבלה) למ"ת]. ע"ש.

3

ביום הזה . . . שהוה בר"ח

Or HaTorah notes that the analogy from "this... this" is in the Gemara, Shabbat 86b, and adds at the foot of the page that this answers Tosafos' question there: why the Talmud

learns the day from "this... this" and not from "wilderness... wilderness" (midbar... midbar).

שבת פ"ו ב:ה: Shabbat 86b:5

תנו רבנן: בשש"י בחדש ניתנו עשרת הדברות לישראל. רבי יוסי אומר: בשבועה בו. אמר רבא: דכולי עקמא בראש חדש אֲתוּ לְמַדְבַּר סִינִי. כתיב הָכָא: "בַּיּוֹם הַזֶּה בָּאוּ מִדְבַּר סִינִי", וכתוב הָתָם: "הַחֹדֶשׁ הַזֶּה לָכֶם רֹאשׁ חֲדָשִׁים" — מָה לְהֵלֵן רֹאשׁ חֲדָשׁ, אִם כָּאֵן רֹאשׁ חֲדָשׁ. ודכולי עקמא, בשבת ניתנה תורה לישראל. כתיב הָכָא: "זָכוֹר אֶת יוֹם הַשַּׁבָּת לְקַדְשׁוֹ", וכתוב הָתָם: "וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה אֶל הָעָם זָכוֹר אֶת הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה" — מָה לְהֵלֵן בְּעֶצְמוֹ שֶׁל יוֹם, אִם כָּאֵן בְּעֶצְמוֹ ...

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KEHOT'S NOTE

מכילתא שם. שבת פו, ב. באוה"ת יתרו ע"י תשעג שגוי"ש הזה הזה בגמרא פ"ט דשבת דפ"ו ע"ב. וראה בסוף העמוד שם: ובזה מתורץ קושי' התוספות שם בשבת אמאי יליף הזה הזה ולא מדבר מדבר ע"ש.

4

החדש הזה לכם

G-d's words to Moshe and Aharon in Egypt: "This month shall be for you the head of months." Because it speaks of the new moon, the shared word "this" shows that "this day" at Sinai was Rosh Chodesh.

שמות י"ב:2: Exodus 12:2

הַחֹדֶשׁ הַזֶּה לָכֶם רֹאשׁ חֲדָשִׁים רֵאשׁוֹן הוּא לָכֶם לְחֹדֶשׁ הַשָּׁנָה:

'This month shall be unto you the beginning of months; it shall be the first month of the year to you.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

שמות יב, ב.

5

למה נק' ר"ח . . ביום הזה

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

KEHOT'S NOTE

ראה בחיי כאן יט, א. בתקס"ז ע"ק: "למה נק' ר"ח זה".

PARAGRAPH 2

6

שו"ה צדיקים — צדיקים

The manuscript reads "great tzaddikim" instead of "tzaddikim."

KEHOT'S NOTE

בכו"ך 1052 (בכתי"ק מהר"ל): צדיקים גדולים.

7

היו כמה צדיקים והאבות

A later maamar on Yisro asks the same question more fully: before the giving of the Torah there were tzaddikim and prophets such as Adam, Chanoch and Mesushelach, and Avraham kept the whole Torah, though only spiritually; it too answers from Avraham's "going on and journeying toward the south." The passage on Megillas Esther (96c) names only Avraham.

KEHOT'S NOTE

לקמן עג, ג "צדיקים ונביאים כמו אדם הראשון חנוך מתושלח כו', ואברהם קיים כל התורה". ולקמן צו, ג מביא רק אברהם. בסה"מ תקס"ב עי' יא "מתושלח נח ואברהם" (מוכא גם באוה"ת פי' ראה עי' תשנד). בסה"מ תרל"ג ובסה"מ תרנ"ה עי' פה: כמו מתושלח ואברהם והאבות.

8 והאבות הן הן המרכבה

On "And G-d went up from upon Abraham," Reish Lakish says, "The Patriarchs are themselves the chariot." The Alter Rebbe cites it to ask what the giving of the Torah added, if the Patriarchs were already a chariot for G-d before it.

Bereshit Rabbah 47:6 מ"ו: רבה

ויכל לדבר אתו - תני, הנפטר מחבירו בין גדול בין קטן, צריך ליטול ממנו רשות. ממי את למד? מאברהם. פעם אחת היה אברהם מדבר עם הקב"ה, באו מלאכי השרת לדבר עמו. אמר להן: נפטר מן השכינה, שהיא גדולה מכם תחלה, אחר כך אני מדבר עמכם. כיון שדבר עם הקדוש ברוך הוא כל צרכו, אמר לפניו: רבון העולמים! צריך אני לדבר. אמר לו: הפטר בשלום, הה"ד: ויעל אלקים מעל אברהם. אמר ריש לקיש: האבות הן הן המרכבה, שנא: ויעל אלקים מעל אברהם. ויעל מעליו אלקים. (בראשית כה) והנה ה' נצב עליו:

"He concluded speaking with him, and G-d ascended from upon Abraham" (Genesis 17:22). It is taught: One who departs from another person, whether of greater or lesser stature, must take his leave from him. From whom do you derive this? From Abraham. On one occasion, Abraham was speaking with the Holy One blessed be He, when the ministering angels came to speak with him. He said to them: 'Let me first take my leave from the Divine Presence, which is of greater stature than you, then I will speak with ...

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Zohar I, 210b ר"י, בזה"א

Zohar III, 182a קפב, זח"ג

KEHOT'S NOTE

ב"ר פמ"ז. זח"א ר"י, ב. זח"ג קפב, א.

9 שו"ה צדיקים — ג"כ

The manuscript writes גם ("also") in full instead of the abbreviation ג"כ; the meaning is the same.

KEHOT'S NOTE

בב"ר 1052: גס.

10 הלוח ונסוע הנגבה

After arriving in Canaan, "Avram journeyed, going on and journeying toward the south (the Negev)," moving on by stages. The Alter Rebbe reads the journey as Abraham's inner ascent, level by level, to "the south," the attribute of the higher love.

Genesis 12:9 י"ב: בראשית

ויסע אברהם הלוח ונסוע הנגבה:

And Abram journeyed, going on still toward the South.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

בראשית יב, ט.

11 שהי' הלוח ונסוע ממדרגה למדרגה

The Zohar reads "going on and journeying toward the south" as "level after level," until Abraham was crowned in the south, his portion. The Kehot note says the Mittlerer Rebbe's transcript gives this reading in the Zohar's name.

Zohar I, 84a פד, זח"א

KEHOT'S NOTE

בסה"מ תקס"ז כי זה בשם הזהר, ראה זח"א פד, א. ראה לקמן צו, ג.

12 שו"ה אהבה — מעלייה לעלייה

The manuscript reads מעילוי לעילוי ("from elevation to elevation") instead of מעלייה לעלייה ("from ascent to ascent").

KEHOT'S NOTE

בב"ר 1052: מעילוי לעילוי.

13 הנגבה הוא בחי' ומדת אהבה העליונה

Likkutei Torah reads the verse the same way: Abraham went from level to level, from below upward, until he cleaved to "the south," the love of G-d, with attachment, desire and thirst.

KEHOT'S NOTE

וכ"ה בלקו"ת בהעלותך כט, ג.

PARAGRAPH 3

14 ויעל אברהם ממצרים

When the famine in Canaan was over, "Avram went up out of Egypt, he and his wife and all that he had," back to the Negev. The Alter Rebbe reads Avraham's going up from Egypt as his rise out of the constraints (meitzarim) that the body places on the soul.

Genesis 13:1 ג: בראשית

ויעל אברהם ממצרים הוא ואשתו וכל אשר לו ולוט עמו הנגבה:

And Abram went up out of Egypt, he, and his wife, and all that he had, and Lot with him, into the South.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

בראשית יג, א.

15 ואתה מחיה את כולם

From the prayer of the Levites at the assembly in Nehemiah's day: "You alone are Havayah; You made the heavens... and You give life to them all." The Alter Rebbe brings it as one of the truths the G-dly soul contemplates: G-d is the life of all things.

Nehemiah 9:6 ט: נחמיה

אתה הוא ה' לבדך אתה עשית את השמים שמי השמים וכל צבאם הארץ וכל אשר עליה הימים וכל אשר בהם ואתה מחיה את כלם וצבא השמים לך משתחווים:

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

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KEHOT'S NOTE

נחמ"י ט, ו.

16 את השמים ואת הארץ אני מלא ומכה"כ

G-d, through Jeremiah, rebukes the false prophets: "Can a man hide in secret places and I not see him?... Do I not fill the heavens and the earth? — the word of Havayah." The Alter Rebbe brings it as another truth the soul contemplates: G-d fills all of creation. (context: Steinsaltz Tanakh)

Jeremiah 23:24 כ"ג:יג:יג

אִם-יִסְתֵּר אִישׁ בְּמִסְתָּרִים וְאֲנִי לֹא-אֶרְאֶנּוּ נְאֻם-יְיָ הֲלוֹא אֶת־הַשָּׁמַיִם
וְאֶת־הָאָרֶץ אֲנִי מִלֵּא נְאֻם-יְיָ

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

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ישעיהו ו:ג:ג

וְקָרָא זֶה אֶל־זֶה וְאָמַר קְדוֹשׁ קְדוֹשׁ קְדוֹשׁ הִי צְבָאוֹת מִלֵּא כָל־הָאָרֶץ
כְּבוֹדוֹ:

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

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KEHOT'S NOTE

ירמ"י כג, כד. ישע"י ו, ג.

PARAGRAPH 4

17 גנבא אפוס מחתרתא

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

KEHOT'S NOTE

סוף ברכות ע"פ גירסת העין יעקב.

PARAGRAPH 5

18 והנה אהבה זו באה מחמת התבוננות

Kuntres Etz HaChaim explains that this passage shows why the service of the higher unity is needed by every person: though few truly reach it, each must strive for it, and then, at least for a time, he will desire it.

KEHOT'S NOTE

בקונטרס עץ החיים סעי' ז מבאר שכאן מבואר איך בהכרח שתהיה העבודה דיחוי"ע בכאוי"א, ובהקיצור שם כתב "יסביר אשר אף דעבודה דיחוי"ע באמיתית מועטים השייכים אלי", מ"מ הכרח לכאוי"א להשתדל בוה, ואז, לפי שעה עכ"פ יחפוץ בוה" ע"ש.

19 שו"ה ת"ב — כלל

The word כלל ("at all") is missing in the manuscript.

KEHOT'S NOTE

ת"י זו ליתא בבזך 1052.

20 מלכותך מלכות כ"ע

From David's psalm of praise (Ashrei). In its plain sense olamim means "eternity": "Your kingship is an everlasting kingship." The Alter Rebbe reads it as "all worlds": the

...בחדש השלישי לצאת בני ישראל מארץ מצרים ביום

worlds relate to G-d only as "King," the level of speech, not to His essence. (context: Steinsaltz Tanakh)

Psalms 145:13 י"ג:יג:יג

מלכותך מלכות כלי-עלמים וממשלתך בכל-דור ודור:

Thy kingdom is a kingdom for all ages, And Thy dominion endureth throughout all generations.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

תהלים קמה, ג.

21 דבר מלך שלטון

Koheles advises obeying a king, "since the word of a king is sovereign, and who can say to him, 'What are you doing?'" A king rules through his word, so G-d's kingship over the worlds is the level of speech.

Ecclesiastes 8:4 ד:ד:ד

באשר דבר-מלך שלטון ומי יאמר-לו מה-תעשה:

Forasmuch as the king's word hath power; and who may say unto him: 'What doest thou?'

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KEHOT'S NOTE

קהלת ח, ד. בסה"מ תקט"ז ע' קמו מבאר המשל.

22 וכמאמר ברוך שאמר

An earlier maamar in Torah Ohr (Shemos) also brings "Blessed is He who spoke" as a subject for contemplation: with a single utterance all the worlds came into being.

KEHOT'S NOTE

ראה גם לעיל נד, א.

23 Kehot's note points to I Kings 8:23 for these words.

מלכים א ח:כ"ג:יג

וַיֹּאמֶר ה' אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אִין־כְּמוֹד אֱלֹהִים בְּשָׁמַיִם מִמַּעַל וְעַל־הָאָרֶץ
מִתַּחַת שִׁמֹּר הַבְּרִית וְהַחֲסֵד לַעֲבָדֶיךָ הָאֵלֹהִים לִפְנֵיךָ בְּכָל־לְבָבָם:

and he said: 'O L-RD, the G-d of Israel, there is no G-d like Thee, in heaven above, or on earth beneath; who keepest covenant and mercy with Thy servants, that walk before Thee with all their heart;

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24 תתברך . . שבת מעשה ידיך

Likkutei Torah (V'Zos HaBerachah) describes the six weekdays as G-d's light descending into Beriah, Yetzirah and Asiyah to become "the power of action," and refers back to this maamar on "all the praise of the work of Your hands." On Shir HaShirim (44c) it says that all the worlds, even those beyond our grasp, are only "making," like a person's physical action, which holds only a glimmer of his intellect, and refers here: the power invested in them is the light that fills all worlds, while the agent's essence encompasses them, and before it above and below are equal.

KEHOT'S NOTE

נוסח ברכות ק"ש. בלקו"ת ברכה צו, א. שה"ש מד, ג — מציין לכאן.

25

מן הארץ לרקיע ת"ק שנה

The Talmud says that from the earth to the firmament is a journey of five hundred years. The Alter Rebbe cites it to show that even worlds this vast are only "the work of Your hands."

חגיגה י"ג א:3a:Chagigah

כמה שנותיו של אדם — שבעים שנה, שנאמר: "ימי שנותינו בהם שבעים שנה ואם בגבורות שמונים שנה". והלא מן הארץ עד לרקיע מהלך חמש מאות שנה, ועוביו של רקיע מהלך חמש מאות שנה, וכן בין כל רקיע ורקיע.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

חגיגה יג, א.

26

שו"ה הארץ — ת"ק שנה

The manuscript repeats the phrase: "five hundred years, etc., five hundred years, etc."

KEHOT'S NOTE

בבוכ 1052: ת"ק שנה כו' ת"ק שנה כו'.

27

אינו מלובש אלא כח המעשה

The note identifies the power of action with the level of Asiyah, and says the transcript explains at length how the same holds in Yetzirah and Beriah.

KEHOT'S NOTE

בחי עשי. בסה"מ תקס"ז ע' קמז-ח מבאר באריכות גם ביצירה ובבריאה.

PARAGRAPH 6

28

ובורא קדושים ישתבח שמוך

A passage beginning here is quoted there.

KEHOT'S NOTE

קטע מכאן מובא בסה"מ תרל"ג ח"א ע' קפח.

29

כי הנה כח המעשה

Tanya uses the same image: a silversmith's vessel keeps its form after his hands leave it, because human making only changes the shape of existing matter, whereas creation from nothing depends on G-d's power at every moment.

תניא, חלק שני: שער היחוד והאמונה 2:1Tanya, Sha'ar HaYichud

והנה, מכאן תשובת המינים וגילוי שורש טעותם, הכופרים בהשגחה פרטית ובאותות ומופתים התורה, שטועים בדמיונם הכוזב, שמדמין מעשה ה' - "עושה שמים וארץ" למעשה אנוש ותחבולותיו, כי כאשר יצא לצורף כלי - שוב אין הכלי צריך לידי הצורף, כי אף שידיו מסולקות הימנו והולך לו בשוק - הכלי קיים בתבניתו וצלמו ממש כאשר יצא מידי הצורף, כך מדמין הסכלים האלו מעשה שמים וארץ.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

ראה תניא ח"ב פ"ב. לקו"ת קדושים ל, ג.

30

שו"ה בכבודו — רם

The manuscript reads רם, "He is high," adding the

word "He."

KEHOT'S NOTE

בבוכ 1052: הוא רם.

PARAGRAPH 7

31

אני ה' לא שניתי

G-d tells Israel through Malachi, "For I, Havayah, have not changed, and you, the children of Yaakov, have not been consumed": because He does not change, His people have not perished. The Alter Rebbe hears lo chelisem as "you have not expired" (kelos hanefesh) and reads the verse as the prophet's wonder that Israel do not expire into G-d, who is the same after creation as before. (context: Steinsaltz Tanakh)

Malachi 3:6ג'ר:Malachi

כי אני ה' לא שניתי ואנכם בני יעקב לא כליתם:

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

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KEHOT'S NOTE

מלאכי ג, ו. בסה"מ תקס"ז ע' קמח מבאר "פי בלתי המצא שם שינוי כלל בין קודם הבריאה לאחר הבריאה, ואין שם חילוק ג' מדרגו דבי"ע". קטע מכאן מובא גם בד"ה פסל לך בסה"מ תרל"ד ע' קמ. ראה המשך תרס"ו ע' פז.

32

אל חיק אביה

Tanya describes a love like fiery coals: contemplating the greatness of the Infinite One makes the soul thirst for Him, then grow love-sick, and finally reach kelos hanefesh, citing the same "and indeed my soul expires."

תניא, חלק ראשון: ליקוטי אמרים נ:50Tanya, Likkutei Amarim

... "ואם רץ לבך - שוב לאחד", פירוש "ואם רץ לבך" - היא תשוקת הנפש שבלב בחלל הימני, כשמתגברת ומתלהבת ומתלהטת במאד מאד עד כלות הנפש ממש, להשתפף אל חיק אביה חיי החיים ברוך הוא, ולצאת ממאסרה בגוף הגופני וגשמי לדבקה בו יתברך - אזי, זאת ישיב אל לבו: מאמר רבותינו זכרונם לברכה, כי "על כרחך אתה חיי בגוף הנה להחיותו, כדי להמשיך חיים עליונים מחיי החיים ברוך הוא למטה, על ידי תורת חיים, ...

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KEHOT'S NOTE

ראה תניא פ"נ. וראה לעיל כז, א. לב, ב. מה, ג. לקמן פו, ב.

33

נכספה וגם כלתה נפשי

The psalmist, longing for the Temple: "My soul longs, indeed it expires, for the courts of Havayah." The Alter Rebbe uses its two stages, longing and expiry, for the soul pouring itself out to G-d.

תהילים פ"ד:84Psalms

נכספה וגם כלתה נפשי לחצרות ה' לבי ובשרי ירננו אל אליהי:

My soul yearneth, yea, even pineth for the courts of the L-RD; my heart and my flesh sing for joy unto the living G-d.

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34

מי לי בשמים

Asaf, troubled that the wicked prosper, ends in trust: "Whom do I have in heaven [but You]? And besides You I desire nothing on earth." The Alter Rebbe brings it for the soul's self-nullification to G-d alone.

Psalms 73:25 תהילים ע"ג:כ"ה

מִי־לִי בַשָּׁמַיִם וְעִמָּךְ לֹא־חָפְצָתִי בָאָרֶץ:

Whom have I in heaven but Thee? And beside Thee I desire none upon earth.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

תהלים עג, כה.

35

שהנביא מתמה על ישראל . . שאין לכם כלות הנפש

The note says this talk refers to Likkutei Torah on Rosh Hashanah for the same reading of "you have not expired."

KEHOT'S NOTE

בלקו"ש ח"י ע"י 116 מציין ללקו"ת ר"ה סא, ד. וראה בסה"מ תרל"ד ע"קמא "והיינו כי ע"י ההתבוננות בבחי' אני ה' לא שגיתי ואתה הוא קודם שנבה"ע ואתה הוא לאחר שנבה"ע בלי שום שינוי כלל וכלל, והיינו לפי שכללות ההשתלשלות הוא מבחי' הארה בעלמא שאינו נוגע כלל . . ואי לזאת באיזה יחפון אם בהארה הנפרשת או בעצמותו עיקר ומקור לכל, וע"ז מתמה הנביא על ישראל מדוע לא כליתם". ראה גם בסה"מ תרס"ב ע"תטו.

36

שאיין בכחה לצאת מנרתקה ומאסרה

The note points to Kuntres Etz HaChaim on the soul's inability to leave its sheath and its prison.

KEHOT'S NOTE

ראה קונטרס עץ החיים פ"ז.

PARAGRAPH 8

37

כשל בעוני כחי

David, in distress, cries, "My strength stumbles through my iniquity, and my bones waste away." The Alter Rebbe reads it as the soul's power weakened, so that it cannot rise.

Psalms 31:11 תהילים ל"א:י"א

כִּי כָלוּ בְּיָגוֹן חַיִּי וּשְׁנוֹתַי בְּאִנְחָה כָּשֶׁל בְּעוֹנִי כְחִי וְעֲצָמַי עֲשָׂשׁוּ:

For my life is spent in sorrow, and my years in sighing; My strength faileth because of mine iniquity, and my bones are wasted away.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

תהלים לא, יא.

38

שע"י העונות נכשל ונתחלש כח הנפש

That maamar adds that avon here is not necessarily an actual sin: the word means crookedness, bending one's way to follow the body's materiality and the animal soul's desires until the G-dly soul too is caught and cannot get out.

KEHOT'S NOTE

בד"ה פסל לך תרס"ב ע"י טטו מוסיף "ולא דוקא עון ממש אלא הוא לשון עיוות ועקום מה שמעוות ומעקם דרכו לילך אחרי חומריות ותאוות הגוף

ונה"ב עד שגם נה"א נסרך ונדבק שאינו יכול ליצא (ארויסגיין) משם". ראה גם בתרל"ג שם ע"רצה.

39

כי אם עונותיכם

Isaiah tells the people why their fasts go unanswered: G-d can hear, "but your iniquities have separated between you and your G-d." The Alter Rebbe explains the separating screen as the body's physicality rather than actual sins. (context: Steinsaltz Tanakh)

ישעיהו נ"ט:כ"ב

כִּי אִם־עוֹנֹתֵיכֶם הָיוּ מִבְּדָלִים בֵּינְכֶם לְבֵין אֱלֹהֵיכֶם וְחַטְאוֹתֵיכֶם הִסְתִּירוּ פָנִים מִכֶּם מִשְׁמוֹעַ:

But your iniquities have separated Between you and your G-d, And your sins have hid His face from you, That He will not hear.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

ישע"י נט, ב.

40

ואינה יכולה לעלות ולצאת ממנה

The wording there goes further: "on the contrary, it brings him down."

KEHOT'S NOTE

בקונטרס עץ החיים שם "ואדרבה מורידו כו".

41

ותרא את עני אבותינו

From the Levites' prayer in Nehemiah's day, recounting the Exodus: "And You saw the affliction of our fathers in Egypt, and heard their cry at the Sea of Reeds." The Alter Rebbe reads "our fathers" as the attributes of love and awe, confined by the body's "Egypt."

Nehemiah 9:9 נחמיה ט:ט

וְתָרָא אֶת־עֲנֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ בְּמִצְרַיִם וְאֶת־זַעְקָתָם שְׁמַעְתָּ עַל־יַם־סוּף:

And Thou sawest the affliction of our fathers in Egypt, and heardest their cry by the Red Sea;

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KEHOT'S NOTE

נחמ"י ט, ט. בסה"מ תרל"ד הסיום "וע"ז ותרא את עני אבותינו אשר במצרים אין עני אלא בדעת שנחלק לחו"ג בחי' אהוי"ר הוא בחי' הכוסף והתשוקה הנ"ל, והוא ע"י שהם במצרים בחי' מיצר הגוף שמגביל ומלביש הנפש עד מאד" ולזה נתנה . . .

PARAGRAPH 9

42

ולזה ניתנה התורה לישראל

The note points to this maamar for a related discussion of why the Torah was given to Israel.

KEHOT'S NOTE

ראה ד"ה ויתן לך ש"פ תולדות תרס"ו.

43

שהתורה נק' עוז

Expounding "he brings down the strength (oz) in which it trusts" (Proverbs 21:22), Rabbi Yehudah, Rabbi Nechemiah and the Sages all say, "Oz, this is the Torah."

The Alter Rebbe builds on this name: the Torah gives strength to the G-dly soul.

Vayikra Rabbah 31:5 ה"ה:א' ויקרא רבה

Shir HaShirim Rabbah 1:4 ד"א:א' שיר השירים רבה

משכני אחריו נרוצה, אמר רבי מאיר בשעה שעמדו ישראל לפני ה' סיני לקבל התורה, אמר להם הקדוש ברוך הוא אלעזרי אני נותן לכם את התורה, אלא הביאו לי ערבים טובים שתשמרוה, ואני נותנה לכם. אמרו לפניו רבוננו של עולם, אבותינו ערבים לנו. אמר להם אבותיכם צריכין ערבים, למה הדבר דומה לאחד שהלך ללוות מן המלך, אמר לו הבא לי ערב ואני מלך אותה, הלך והביא לו ערב אחד, אמר לו ערבך צריך ערב, הלך והביא לו ערב שני, ...

"Draw me; we will run after you. The king has brought me to his chambers; let us exult and rejoice in you. We will recount your love through wine; sincerely do they love you" (Song of Songs 1:4). "Draw me; we will run after you." Rabbi Meir said: When the Israelites stood before Mount Sinai to receive the Torah, the Holy One blessed be He said to them: 'Am I giving you the Torah without assurance? Rather, bring Me good guarantors that you will observe it, and I will ...

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KEHOT'S NOTE

ראה מדרש תלים ח, ג. מכילתא בשלח טו, ב. ויק"ר פלי"א, ה. ילי"ש בשלח רמז רמ"ד. שהש"ר פ"א, ד. וראה הערת כ"ק אדמו"ר זי"ע בסה"מ תשי"א [לכ"ק אדמו"ר מהור"י צ"ע] ע' 181.

44

ממסגר אסיר

G-d describes the mission of His servant: "to open blind eyes, to bring the prisoner out of the dungeon." The Alter Rebbe borrows the phrase for the G-dly soul set free from the body by the strength of the Torah.

Isaiah 42:7 ז"ב:ז' ישעיהו

לפקח עינים עורות להוציא ממסגר אסיר מבית כלא ישבי חשך:

To open the blind eyes, To bring out the prisoners from the dungeon, And them that sit in darkness out of the prison-house.

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45

ה' עוז לעמו יתן

The closing words of David's psalm of G-d's voice: "Havayah will give strength to His people; Havayah will bless His people with peace." The Sages read "strength" here as the Torah; the Alter Rebbe adds that beshalom means two kinds of peace.

Psalms 29:11 י"א:ט' תהילים

ה' עוז לעמו יתן ה' יברך את עמו בשלום:

The L-RD will give strength unto His people; The L-RD will bless his people with peace.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

תהלים כט, יא.

46

עושה שלום בפמליא של מעלה

Rabbi Alexandri says that whoever studies Torah for its own sake makes peace in the household above and in the

household below. The Alter Rebbe applies the two kinds of peace to the G-dly soul and to the body and animal soul.

Sanhedrin 99b:10-11 י"א:ב' סנהדרין

אמר רבי אלכסנדר: כל העוסק בתורה לשמה משים שלום בפמליא של מעלה ובפמליא של מטה, שנאמר: "או יחזק במעוזי יעשה שלום לי שלום יעשה לי". רב אמר: כאילו בנה פלטרין של מעלה ושל מטה, שנאמר: "ואשים דברי בפיך ובצל ידי כפיתיד לנטע שמים וליסד ארץ". רבי יוחנן אמר: אף מגין על כל העולם כולו, שנאמר: "ובצל ידי כפיתיד". ולוי אמר: אף מקרב את הגאולה, שנאמר: "ולאמר לציון עמי אתה".

R' Alexandri said: All who engage in Torah for its own sake make peace in the household above and in the household below, as it says "If they would grasp My fortress, they would make peace for Me, they would make peace for Me." (Yeshayahu 27:5) Rav said: it is as if he built the palace above and below, as it says "And I placed My words into your mouth, and with the shadow of My hand I covered you, to plant the heavens and to found the earth..." (Yeshayahu ...

William Davidson, Vocalized Aramaic (CC-BY-NC) • Rabbi Mike Feuer, Jerusalem Anthology (CC-BY)

Bamidbar Rabbah 12:8 ז"ב:ח' במדבר רבה

KEHOT'S NOTE

סנהדרין צט, ב. במד"ר יב, ח. ראה אגה"ק סי' יב. לקו"ת שה"ש ז, ד. בלקו"ת צו טו, ב. אוה"ת נ"ך כרך ב ע' תשפח מציון לכאן.

PARAGRAPH 10

47

כי התורה — נק' ג"כ תושי'

Rabbi Chanin asks why the Torah is called tushiyah and answers, "because it weakens (mateshes) a person's strength." The Alter Rebbe turns this into the Torah's power to weaken the sitra achra.

Sanhedrin 26b כ"ו סנהדרין

KEHOT'S NOTE

סנהדרין כו, ב. ראה אגה"ק סכ"ב. ערכי הכינויים (לבעל סה"ד) מע' תושי'. ובאוה"ת יתרו ע' תשעה. תשצג. ראה סה"מ תרמ"א ע' טז.

48

לאום מלאום יאמץ

The words here quote Pesachim 42b:6; the passage is shown below.

Pesachim 42b:6 ב"ב:ו' פסחים

ועבשיו אין יינם של אדומיים מחמיץ עד שנותנין לתוכן שעורין. וקורין אותו חומץ האדומי, לקיים מה שנאמר: "אמלאה התרבה", אם מלאה זו — תרבה זו, ואם מלאה זו — תרבה זו. רב נחמן בר יצחק אמר, מהכא: "ולאם מלאם לאמץ".

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

KEHOT'S NOTE

פסחים מב, ב. רש"י בראשית כה, כג.

49

לאום מלאום יאמץ

G-d tells Rivkah, troubled by the struggle of the twins in her womb: "Two nations are in your womb... one nation

shall prevail over the other nation.” The Alter Rebbe applies it to the G-dly soul and the sitra achra.

בראשית כ"ה:23:Genesis

וַיֹּאמֶר ה' לָהּ שְׁנֵי גוֹיִם בְּבֶטְנְךָ וּשְׁנֵי לְאָמִים מִמֶּעֶיךָ יִפְרְדּוּ וְלֹאִם מִלְּאִם יֵאָמֵץ וְרֵב יַעֲבֹד צָעִיר:

And the L-RD said unto her: Two nations are in thy womb, And two peoples shall be separated from thy bowels; And the one people shall be stronger than the other people; And the elder shall serve the younger.

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50

וכשזה קם זה נופל

Rashi explains that the two nations will never be equal in greatness: “when this one rises, that one falls.” So too, as the G-dly soul grows strong, the sitra achra is weakened.

רש"י על בראשית כ"ה:23:Genesis

וַיֹּאמֶר ה' לָהּ. עַל יְדֵי שְׁלֵיחַ; לְשֵׁם נֶאֱמַר בְּרוּחַ הַקֹּדֶשׁ וְהוּא אָמַר לָהּ (בראשית רבה): שְׁנֵי גוֹיִם בְּבֶטְנְךָ. גִּיּוֹם כְּתִיב; אֵלּוּ אֲנִטּוּנִינוּס וְרֵבִי, שְׁלֹא פִּקְסוּ מִעַל שְׁלֵחָנָם לֹא צָנוּן וְלֹא חֲזָרָה לֹא כִימוֹת הַחֲמָה וְלֹא כִימוֹת הַגִּשְׁמִים (עבודה זרה י"א): וּשְׁנֵי לְאָמִים. אֵין לָאִם אֶלָּא מִלְּכוּת: מִמֶּעֶיךָ יִפְרְדּוּ. מִן הַמַּעֲשִׂים הֵם נִפְרָדִים זֶה לְרִשְׁעוֹ וְזֶה לְתָמוֹ: מִלֵּאִם יֵאָמֵץ. לֹא יִשּׁוּ בְּגִדְלָהּ, כְּשֶׁזֶה קָם זֶה נֹפֵל, וְכֵן הוּא אוֹמֵר אֶמְלֶאֶה הַחֲרָבָה (יחזקאל כ"ו), לֹא נִתְמַלְאָה צוּר אֶלָּא מִחֲרָבָהּ שֶׁל יְרוּשָׁלַיִם:

AND THE ETERNAL SAID UNTO HER through a messenger: it was told to Shem by holy inspiration and he told it to her (Genesis Rabbah 63:7). TWO NATIONS ARE IN THY WOMB —The word is written גִּיּוֹם (exalted, noble persons), an allusion to Antoninus and Rabbi (Rabbi Judah the Prince) from whose table neither radish nor lettuce was absent neither in summer nor in winter (Avodah Zarah 11a) AND TWO RACES — The word אִם always denotes a people that has all ...

Pentateuch with Rashi's commentary by M. Rosenbaum and A.M. Silbermann, 1929-1934 (Public Domain) • Pentateuch with Rashi's commentary by M. Rosenbaum and A.M. Silbermann, 1929-1934 (Public Domain)

כיצד הוא העוז של התורה . . . הלא גם התורה נתלבשה בענינים גשמיים

The transcript spells out the question: the laws of the Torah are clothed in physical things, such as terumos and maasros from grain and tzitzis from wool; how can they give the G-dly soul strength in its grasp of G-dliness, even to the point of self-sacrifice?

KEHOT'S NOTE

בתקס"ז ע' קמט מבאר הקושיא "כיצד תהי התורה עוז ותושי והלא מצד גופי ענייני ההלכות שבתורה הרי הם מלוכשים בענינים גשמיים כמו מצות תרומות ומעשרות בתבואות ומצות ציצית בצמר וכיוצא, ואיך יועילו להיות כח ועוז להשגה האלקי בנפש האלקי להיות לה עוז וכח במס"נ וכיוצא," ע"ש.

52

ויסודה בהררי קדש

A psalm of the sons of Korach in praise of Zion opens, “Its foundation is in the holy mountains,” the hills on which Jerusalem and the Temple stand. The Alter Rebbe borrows

...כחדש השלישי לצאת בני ישראל מארץ מצרים ביום

the phrase for the Torah's source and foundation, high above in G-d's own essence. (context: Steinsaltz Tanakh)

Psalms 87:1:תהילים

לְבִנְיָקֶרַח מִזְמוֹר שִׁיר יִסּוּדוֹתוֹ בְּהַר־יִקְדָּשׁ:

A Psalm of the sons of Korah; a Song. His foundation is in the holy mountains.

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53

שו"ה התקשרות — היינו

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

KEHOT'S NOTE

בכרך 1052: הוא.

54

אורייתא וקוב"ה כולא חד

The earlier maamar quotes this saying from the Zohar and stresses “the Holy One, blessed be He” itself: the level that is holy and wholly separate from the worlds, so far beyond them that they could not receive life even from its radiance.

KEHOT'S NOTE

נסמן לעיל נו, ג.

PARAGRAPH 11

55

וידבר אלקים

The opening of the Ten Commandments: “And G-d spoke all these words, saying.” Elsewhere “saying” introduces words to be passed on; the Alter Rebbe reads it here as the power given to Israel to say the Torah themselves.

Exodus 20:1: שמות כ"א

וַיְדַבֵּר אֱלֹקִים אֶת כָּל־הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה לְאָמֹר:

And G-d spoke all these words, saying:

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KEHOT'S NOTE

שמות כ, א.

56

Kehot's note points to Exodus 20:1-2 for these words.

Exodus 20:1-2: שמות כ"א-ב'1-2

וַיְדַבֵּר אֱלֹקִים אֶת כָּל־הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה לְאָמֹר: אֲנִכִּי ה' אֱלֹקֶיךָ אֲשֶׁר הוֹצֵאתִיךָ מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם מִבֵּית עֲבָדִים:

And G-d spoke all these words, saying: I am the L-RD thy G-d, who brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.

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57

דלכאורה מלת לאמר אין לה הבנה

On 15c Likkutei Torah (Bamidbar) begins a maamar on this very verse, “And G-d spoke all these words, saying: I...”; it explains “all these words” as everything revealed, the Oral Torah included, contained in the Ten Commandments.

KEHOT'S NOTE

ראה לקו"ת במדבר טו, ג. שה"ש מ, ב. מה שנתבאר כאן ראה ד"ה בחדש השלישי תשל"ד (סה"מ מלוקט ח"ד ע' קנה) ושם בהערה 8 נוסף לסה"מ תקס"ז ותו"ח מציין לסה"מ תרנ"ה ע' צא-ב.

58 שו"ה מלת — ואינה

The manuscript reads שאינה ("for it is not") instead of ואינה ("and it is not").

KEHOT'S NOTE

בכרך 1052: שאינה.

59 כמו כל לאמר שבמקרא

Rabbi Akiva asks what "saying" (leimor) adds in "and they spoke, saying" at the Song of the Sea, and answers that Israel repeated the song after Moshe, phrase by phrase, as one answers when Hallel is read. The Kehot note points here; the Alter Rebbe likewise reads "saying" at Sinai as repeating after the One who speaks.

סוטה כ"ז ב:ח' ט"ז-9 Sotah 27b:8-9

בו ביום דרש רבי עקיבא: "ומדלתם מחוץ לעיר את פאת קדמה אלפים באמה וגו'", ומקרא אחר אמר: "מקיר העיר וחוצה אלף אמה סביב". אי אפשר לומר אלף אמה, שכן נאמר אלפים אמה. ואי אפשר לומר אלפים אמה, שכן נאמר אלף אמה. הא כיצד? אלף אמה מגרש, ואלפים אמה תחום השבת.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

ראה סוטה כז, ב. ובארוכה בלקו"ש ח"ו ע' 119 הערה 1*. ובלקו"ש שה"ש (מ, ב) מפרט דהקושיא מ"שאר מצותי של תורה" (לקוטי שיחות ח"ו ע' 119 הערה 3). ובאור"ת יתרו ע' תתסו "שאינו דומה לשאר לאמר שבתורה שהקב"ה מדבר למשה לאמר הדיבור לישראל, אבל כאן בעשה"ד אין לומר כן שהרי כל ישראל שמעו בעצמן הדיבורות כו". וראה שם ע' תתעג. ובכרך ח ע' ביתתקפד.

60 שהרי כל ישראל שמעו

The maamar sharpens the question: Pirkei d'Rabbi Eliezer teaches that all the souls of Israel, from the first generation to the last, were at Mount Sinai and received the Torah, so the word "saying" is not understood here.

KEHOT'S NOTE

בד"ה וידבר כו' אנכי תש"ל (הנחה בלתי מוגה) ומפרט "יותר מזה כמבואר בפדר"א שכל נש"י מראש כל הדורות עד סוף כל הדורות היו בהר סיני וכתרו ברית עם הקב"ה וקבלו את התורה, וא"כ אינו מובן כאן פירוש תיבת לאמר".

61 ופכ"פ דיבר ה'

Moshe, recounting the revelation: "Face to face Havayah spoke with you at the mountain, from the midst of the fire." Since all Israel heard G-d directly, "saying" cannot mean passing the words on to others.

דברים ה':ד' 5:4 Deuteronomy

KEHOT'S NOTE

דברים ה, ד.

62 את אשר ישנו פה

Moshe makes the covenant in the plains of Moav "with whoever is here with us standing today... and with whoever is not here with us today," that is, the generations to come. The Alter Rebbe brings it to show that every Jew was

included in receiving the Torah. (context: Steinsaltz Tanakh)

דברים כ"ט:י"ד 29:14 Deuteronomy

כי את־אשר ישנו פה עמנו עמד היום לפני ה' אלקינו ואת אשר איננו פה עמנו היום:

but with him that standeth here with us this day before the L-RD our G-d, and also with him that is not here with us this day—

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KEHOT'S NOTE

דברים כט, יד.

63 שמות תנאים ואמוראים

Or HaTorah notes that this point is clearly implied in the Midrash Rabbah on Yisro, at the end of chapter 28.

KEHOT'S NOTE

באור"ת יתרו ע' תשפג מציין: הנה כן משמע בהדיא ברבות פ' יתרו ס"פ כח".

64 דבר ה' זו הלכה

Amos foretells a time when people will roam "to seek the word of Havayah, and they will not find it"; the Talmud explains "the word of Havayah" there as halachah. The Alter Rebbe uses this to say that every halachah a sage speaks is G-d's word given at Sinai.

שבת קל"ח ב:י"א-י"ב 138b:11-12 Shabbat

"דבר ה' — זו הלכה, דבר ה' — זה הקץ, דבר ה' — זו נבואה. ומאי יישובטו לבקש את דבר ה'?" אמרו: עתידה אשה שתטול כפר של תרומה ותחזור בכתי כנסיות ובכתי מדרשות לידע אם טמאה היא ואם טהורה היא, ואין מבין.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

שבת קלח, ב.

PARAGRAPH 12

65 דברי אשר שמתי בפיה

G-d's covenant with Israel, through Isaiah: "My spirit that is upon you, and My words which I have placed in your mouth, shall not depart from your mouth, nor from the mouth of your children." The Alter Rebbe cites it for G-d's word speaking in the mouths of Israel.

ישעיהו נ"ט:כ"א 59:21 Isaiah

ואני זאת פריתי אותם אמר ה' רוחי אשר עליך ודברי אשר שמתי בפיה לא ימושו מפיה ומפי ירעה ומפי ירעה אמר ה' מעתה ועד עולם:

And as for Me, this is My covenant with them, saith the L-RD; My spirit that is upon thee, and My words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, saith the L-RD, from henceforth and for ever.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

ישע"י נט, כא.

66

שאינ הדבור נעשה נפרד

Or HaTorah calls this “a wondrous matter” and refers to the end of the maamar beginning “Va’eira el Avraham,” where this is described as the level of Moshe.

KEHOT’S NOTE

באווה"ת יתרו ע"י תשפג מציין "הוא ענין נפלא, ועי מזה לעיל סד"ה וראא אל אברהם שזהו בחי משה". ולהעיר שבתקס"ז אין תי' אלו.

67

תען לשוני אמרתך

The psalmist prays, “My tongue shall answer (ta’an) Your word, for all Your commandments are righteous”; in its plain sense ta’an means to declare or sing aloud. The Alter Rebbe reads it as “answer,” repeating after the speaker: the Torah is G-d’s word, and the tongue only repeats it. (context: Steinsaltz Tanakh)

תהילים קי"ט: כע"ב Psalms 119:172

תען לשוני אמרתך כי כל־מצותיך צדק:

Let my tongue sing of Thy word; For all Thy commandments are righteousness.

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KEHOT’S NOTE

תהלים קיט, קעב. ראה פ"י הפסוק גם בלקו"ת שמע"צ פא, ג. שה"ש מד, ב. ספר המאמרים תש"ד ע' 139.

PARAGRAPH 14

68

יום אשר עמדת

The next verse: “the day that you stood before Havayah your G-d at Chorev.” Placed beside the teaching of Torah to one’s children, it teaches that study must be like the standing at Sinai.

דברים ד': י"ד Deuteronomy 4:10

יום אשר עמדת לפני ה' אלקיך בחורב באמר ה' אלי הקהל־לי את־העם ואשמעם את־דברי אשר ילמדון ליראה אתי כל־הימים אשר הם חיים על־האדמה ואת־בניהם ילמדון:

the day that thou stoodest before the L-RD thy G-d in Horeb, when the L-RD said unto me: ‘Assemble Me the people, and I will make them hear My words that they may learn to fear Me all the days that they live upon the earth, and that they may teach their children.’

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69

וכל העם רואים את הקולות

After the Ten Commandments the Torah tells: “And all the people saw the voices and the flames,” the thunder and lightning at the mountain. The Alter Rebbe cites it to contrast the open revelation at Sinai with a person learning on his own.

שמות כ"ט: י"ו Exodus 20:15

וְכָל־הָעָם רֹאִים אֶת־הַקּוֹלֹת וְאֶת־הַלְפִידִם וְאֵת קוֹל הַשֹּׁפָר וְאֶת־הַהָרָה עֲשֵׂן וַיֵּרָא הָעָם וַיִּנְעוּ וַיַּעֲמִדוּ מִרְחָק:

And all the people perceived the thunderings, and the lightnings, and the voice of the horn, and the mountain smoking;

...בחדש השלישי לצאת בני ישראל מארץ מצרים ביום

and when the people saw it, they trembled, and stood afar off.

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70

ופכ"פ דבר ה'

Moshe recalls: “Face to face Havayah spoke with you at the mountain.” Part of the contrast between Sinai and private study.

דברים ה': ד"ד Deuteronomy 5:4

פָּנִים בְּפָנִים דִּבֶּר ה' עִמָּכֶם בְּהָר מִתּוֹךְ הָאֵשׁ:

The L-RD spoke with you face to face in the mount out of the midst of the fire—

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71

והודעת לבניך . . מה להלן באימה ויראה

Moshe warns Israel not to forget what they saw at Sinai, “and make them known to your children and your children’s children.” The Sages join this verse to the next to teach that Torah study requires the awe of Sinai.

דברים ד': ט"ו Deuteronomy 4:9

רק השמר לך ושמר נפשך מאד פן־תשכח את־הדברים אשר־ראו עיניך ופן־יסורו מלִבְּךָ כל ימי חייך והודעתם לִבְנֵיךָ וּלְבְנֵי בְנֵיךָ:

Only take heed to thyself, and keep thy soul diligently, lest thou forget the things which thine eyes saw, and lest they depart from thy heart all the days of thy life; but make them known unto thy children and thy children’s children;

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ברכות כ"ב א: ד"ד Berakhot 22a:4

דַּתְנִינָא: "והודעתם לִבְנֵיךָ וּלְבְנֵי בְנֵיךָ", וכתבי בתריה "יום אשר עמדת לפני ה' אלקיך בחורב", מה להלן באימה וביראה וביראת ובירא, אף כאן באימה וביראה וביראת ובירא.

for there is a teaching: "Thou shalt make them known unto thy children and thy children's children" (Deut. iv. 9) and it continues, "The day that thou stoodest before the L-rd thy G-d in Horeb" (Deut. iv. 10) — as [the Israelites stood at Horeb] with dread and fear and trembling and shaking, so here [when teaching Torah] must it be with dread and fear and trembling and shaking.

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KEHOT’S NOTE

דברים ד', ט. ברכות כב, א. וראה לעיל כב, ב. ובמ"מ לשם.

PARAGRAPH 15

72

עוז ותעצומות

David’s psalm ends, “The G-d of Israel, He gives strength and might to the people.” The Alter Rebbe uses the phrase for what Torah study gives the G-dly soul.

תהילים ס"ח: ל"ו Psalms 68:36

נִזְרָא אֱלֹקִים מִמִּקְדָּשֶׁיךָ אֵל יִשְׂרָאֵל הוּא נָתַן עֹז וְתַעֲצוּמוֹת לְעַם כְּרוֹךְ אֱלֹקִים:

Awful is G-d out of thy holy places; The G-d of Israel, He giveth strength and power unto the people; Blessed be G-d.

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73 עסק התורה . . הנותן עוז ותעצומות לנפש האלקית

Or HaTorah quotes this passage: the Torah gives power to the G-dly soul and weakens the animal soul, so that the G-dly soul can overcome it until it longs to leave its sheath, the body's prison.

KEHOT'S NOTE

מובא באוה"ת נ"ך כרך ב ע' אקא: שנותנת כח לנפש האלקית ומתשת כח הנפש הבהמית, והיינו שתוכל הנפש האלוהית להתגבר על נה"ב עד שתכסוף לצאת מגרסה מאסר הגוף, ע"ש. ראה בד"ה בחודש השלישי תשל"ד שם לצד הערה 21 "שע"י לימוד התורה נעשה שינוי (רוממות) בהאדם הלומדה". וראה שם בהערה הנ"ל.

74 אנכי ה' אלקיך אשר הוצאתיך מארץ מצרים

The first of the Ten Commandments: "I am Havayah your G-d, who brought you out of the land of Egypt." The Alter Rebbe reads Anochi as G-d's essence drawn down to Israel through receiving the Torah.

Exodus 20:2: שמות כ:

אֲנֹכִי ה' אֱלֹהֶיךָ אֲשֶׁר הוֹצֵאתִיךָ מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם מִבֵּית עֲבָדִים:

I am the L-RD thy G-d, who brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.

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PARAGRAPH 16

75 והיו הדברים האלה

Moshe, after the Shema: "And these words which I command you today shall be upon your heart." In the verse the "I" is Moshe; the Alter Rebbe hears in it Anochi, G-d's essence, given in the commandments.

Deuteronomy 6:6: דברים ו:

וְהָיוּ הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה אֲשֶׁר אֲנִי מְצַוְךָ הַיּוֹם עַל-לִבְּךָ:

And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be upon thy heart;

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KEHOT'S NOTE

דברים ו, ו.

76 ואעלה אתכם מעני מצרים אל ארץ טובה ורחבה

At the burning bush G-d tells Moshe what to say to the elders: "I will bring you up out of the affliction of Egypt." The Alter Rebbe reads it as the G-dly soul brought out of the body's constraints.

Exodus 3:17: שמות ג':

וְאָמַר אֶעֱלֶה אֶתְכֶם מֵעֲנִי מִצְרַיִם אֶל-אֶרֶץ הַכְּנַעֲנִי וְהַחִתִּי וְהָאֱמֹרִי וְהַיְבוֹסִי וְהַחִתִּי וְהַיְבוֹסִי אֶל-אֶרֶץ זָבַת חֶלֶב וְדָבָשׁ:

And I have said: I will bring you up out of the affliction of Egypt unto the land of the Canaanite, and the Hittite, and the Amorite, and the Perizzite, and the Hivite, and the Jebusite, unto a land flowing with milk and honey.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

שמות ג, יז.

77 אל ארץ טובה ורחבה

In the same vision G-d promises to bring Israel "to a good and spacious land." Joined to the previous verse, it describes the soul's release from narrowness (meitzar) into breadth.

Exodus 3:8: שמות ג':

וְאָרְדָּה לְהַצִּילוֹ מִיַּד מִצְרַיִם וּלְהַעֲלֹתוֹ מִן-הָאֶרֶץ הַהִיא אֶל-אֶרֶץ טוֹבָה וְרַחְבָּה אֶל-אֶרֶץ זָבַת חֶלֶב וְדָבָשׁ אֶל-מְקוֹם הַכְּנַעֲנִי וְהַחִתִּי וְהָאֱמֹרִי וְהַיְבוֹסִי:

and I am come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land unto a good land and a large, unto a land flowing with milk and honey; unto the place of the Canaanite, and the Hittite, and the Amorite, and the Perizzite, and the Hivite, and the Jebusite.

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PARAGRAPH 17

78 אנשי יריחו היו כורכין את שמע

The Mishnah lists six practices of the people of Jericho, among them that they "ran together" the Shema, which the Sages did not stop. The Alter Rebbe explains why they did not pause.

Pesachim 55b:15: פסחים נ"ה ב' ט"ו:

מתני' ששה דברים עשו אנשי יריחו, על שלשה מיחו בידם ועל שלשה לא מיחו בידם. ואלו הן שלא מיחו בידם: מרפיקין דקלים כל היום, וכורכין את שמע, וקוצרין וגודשין לפני העומר. ואלו שמיחו בידם: מתירין גמזיות של הקדש.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

פסחים נה, ב. וראה בקונטרס עץ החיים ע' לד. ובספר הערכים-חב"ד ערך אהבת ה'.

79 ולא היו מפסיקין בין אחד ואהבת

The Talmud explains that they said "Hear, O Israel... is One" without pausing, and tells how Yaakov, fearing an unworthy son as with Avraham and Yishmael, heard his sons declare the Shema and answered "Blessed be the Name...", which is therefore said quietly.

Pesachim 56a:5: פסחים נ"ו א' ה':

וכורכין את שמע. היכי עבדי? אמר רב יהודה: אומרים "שמע ישראל" ה' אלקינו ה' אחד, ולא היו מפסיקין. רבא אמר: מפסיקין היו, אלא שיהיו אומרים "היום על לבבך", דמשמע: היום על לבבך, ולא מחר על לבבך. תנו רבנן: כיצד היו כורכין את שמע? אומרים "שמע ישראל" ה' אלקינו ה' אחד, ולא היו מפסיקין, דבירי רבי מאיר. רבי יהודה אומר: מפסיקין היו, אלא שלא היו אומרים "ברוך שם כבוד מלכותו לעולם ועד".

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80 ככל לבבך בשני יצריך

The Mishnah explains "with all your heart" as "with both your inclinations, the good inclination and the evil incli-

nation.” The Alter Rebbe uses it for the love that subdues and transforms the animal soul.

Mishnah Berachot 9:5 ט:ה' משה ברכות

חַיֵּב אָדָם לְכַרֵּךְ עַל הָרָעָה כְּשֶׁשָּׁהוּ מְכַרֵּךְ עַל הַטּוֹבָה, שְׁנֵאָמֵר (דברים ו) וְאַהֲבַת אֵת יְיָ אֱלֹהֶיךָ כָּכָל לְבָבְךָ וּכְכָל נַפְשְׁךָ וּכְכָל מְאֹדְךָ. כָּכָל לְבָבְךָ, בְּשֵׁנֵי יִצְרִיךָ, בְּנִצָּר טוֹב וּבְנִצָּר רָע. וּכְכָל נַפְשְׁךָ, אִפְלוּ הוּא נוֹטֵל אֶת נַפְשְׁךָ. וּכְכָל מְאֹדְךָ, כָּכָל מְמוֹנְךָ. דְּבַר אַחֵר כָּכָל מְאֹדְךָ, כָּכָל מְדָה וּמְדָה שֶׁהוּא מוֹדֵד לָךְ הָיָה מוֹדָה לוֹ בְּמֵאד מְאֹד. לֹא יָקָל אָדָם אֶת רֹאשׁוֹ כְּנִגְדֹּ שְׂעֵר הַמִּזְרָח, שֶׁהוּא מְכַנֵּן כְּנִגְדֹּ בֵּית קֹדֶשׁ הַקִּדְשִׁים. לֹא יִכְנֹס לְהַר הַבַּיִת בְּמִקְלּוֹ, וּבְמִנְעֵלּוֹ, ...

One must bless [G-d] for the evil in the same way as one blesses for the good, as it says, “And you shall love the L-rd your G-d with all your heart, with all your soul and with all your might” (Deuteronomy 6:5). “With all your heart,” with your two impulses, the evil impulse as well as the good impulse. “With all your soul” even though he takes your soul [life] away from you. “With all your might” with all your money. Another explanation, “With all your might” whatever treatment ...

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

81 מלך אלקים על גוים

A psalm of the sons of Korach crowning G-d King of all the earth: “Elokim reigns over the nations; Elokim sits upon His holy throne.” The Alter Rebbe cites it to show that the Name Elokim, G-d’s kingship, sustains even the nations.

Psalms 47:9 ט:ט' תהילים

מֶלֶךְ אֱלֹקִים עַל-גּוֹיִם אֱלֹקִים יֹשֵׁב עַל-כִּסֵּא קִדְשׁוֹ:

G-d reigneth over the nations; G-d sitteth upon His holy throne.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

תהלים מז, ט. “פי” גם על גוים מלך אלקי” לפי שהם מקבלים ממ”ח צירופים דאלקים — תקס”ז ע”ק.

82 לא כאברהם שיצא ממנו ישמעאל

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

KEHOT'S NOTE

ספרי דברים לב, ט.

83 לא כאברהם שיצא ממנו ישמעאל

The Sifrei says that when Avraham came into the world, refuse came from him, Yishmael; but all of Yaakov’s sons were worthy. The Alter Rebbe cites it in explaining “Blessed be the Name....”

Sifrei Devarim 312:1-2 ב'א-ב' ספרי דברים

... צָאוּ מִתּוֹךְ שְׁלִי, אִי אִפְשִׁי שֶׁתִּהְיֶה בְּתוֹכָהּ, תָּנוּ לִי חֶלְקִי שְׂאֵהָא מִכִּירוֹ. כֹּה כְּשֶׁבָא אַבְרָהָם אֲבִינוּ לְעוֹלָם יִצְחָא מִמֶּנּוּ פְסוּלָת, יִשְׁמַעְאֵל וְכָל בְּנֵי קִטּוּרָה. כֹּה יִצְחָק לְעוֹלָם יִצְחָא מִמֶּנּוּ פְסוּלָת, עֲשׂוּ וְכָל אֲלוֹפֵי אָדָם. חֲזָרוּ לְהִיּוֹת רָעִים יוֹתֵר מִן הָרָשׁוּנִים. וְכִשְׁבָּא יַעֲקֹב לֹא יִצְחָא מִמֶּנּוּ פְסוּלָת, אֲלָא נִוְלְדוּ כָּל בְּנָיו כְּשָׂרִים, כְּעִנְיָן שְׁנֵאָמֵר (בראשית כה כז): “וַיַּעֲקֹב אִישׁ תָּם יוֹשֵׁב אֲהֻלִּים.” מִהִיכָן הַמָּקוֹם מִכִּיר אֶת חֶלְקוֹ? מִיַּעֲקֹב, שְׁנֵאָמֵר: כִּי חֶלֶק הִי עִמּוֹ יַעֲקֹב חֶלֶק ...

...בחדש השלישי לצאת בני ישראל מארץ מצרים ביום

(Devarim 32:9) "For the portion of the L-rd is His people": An analogy: A king had a field and gave it to tenant-farmers, who began to steal from it — upon which he gave it to their sons — who began to be worse than the first. When a son was born to him, he said to them: Get out of what is mine. You cannot remain there. Give me my portion so that I can recognize it. Similarly, when our father Abraham came to the world, there issued from ...

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84 ועד הוא ג"כ אחד אלא שהוא בחילופי דאטון

The Zohar says that va'ed in “Blessed be the Name... forever (va'ed)” is echad, “One,” with its letters exchanged, and that we exchange them so as not to say “One” openly. The Alter Rebbe cites it to explain why the line is said in a whisper.

Zohar, Terumah 12:134-143 קמ"ג קל"ד-י"ב: תרומה

At present, as the “other side” still cleaves to the Shekinah, She is not entirely One, and therefore, although even in this present time we proclaim the unity, we do so silently, symbolizing it by the letters of the word va'ed (ever), which are equivalent by certain permutations to those of the word echad (one).

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

85 ועד . . אחד . . בחילופי דאטון כמ"ש בזהר

The note points to the Rebbe’s note there on the Zohar’s teaching that va'ed is echad with its letters exchanged.

KEHOT'S NOTE

ח"ב קלד, א. וראה הערת כ"ק אדמו"ר זי"ע בספר המאמרים תש"ח ע' 242.

PARAGRAPH 18

86 ישראל מונים ללבנה

The Talmud says that an eclipse of the moon is a bad sign for Israel, “because Israel reckon by the moon, and the nations by the sun.” The Alter Rebbe explains what Israel share with the moon.

Sukkah 29a:10 כ"ט א' סוכה

תָּנוּ רַבָּנֵינוּ: בְּזֶמַן שֶׁחֲחֻמָּה לֹקָה — סִימָן רַע לְגוֹיִם. לְבָנָה לֹקָה — סִימָן רַע לְשׁוֹנְאֵיהֶם שֶׁל יִשְׂרָאֵל. מִפְּנֵי שֶׁיִּשְׂרָאֵל מוֹנִין לְלִבָּנָה, וְגוֹיִם לְחֶמֶה. לֹקָה בְּמִזְרָח — סִימָן רַע לְיוֹשְׁבֵי מִזְרָח. בְּמַעֲרָב — סִימָן רַע לְיוֹשְׁבֵי מַעֲרָב. בְּאַמְצַע הָרָקִיעַ — סִימָן רַע לְכָל הָעוֹלָם כּוּלּוֹ.

Our Rabbis taught, When the sun is in eclipse it is a bad omen for idolaters; when the moon is in eclipse, it is a bad omen for Israel, since Israel reckons by the moon and idolaters by the sun. If it is in eclipse in the east, it is a bad omen for those who live in the east; if in the west, it is a bad omen for those who live in the west; if in the midst of heaven it is bad omen for the whole world.

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Chullin 60b:3 ג'ב: חולין

אמרה לפניו רבש"ע הואיל ואמרתי לפניך דבר הגון אמעית את עצמי אמר לה לך ומשול ביום ובלילה אמרה ליה מאי רבותיה דשרגא בטיהרא מאי אהני אמר לה זיל לימנו בכך ישראל ימים ושנים אמרה

ליה יומא נמי אי אפשר דלא מנו ביה תקופותא דכתיב (בראשית א, יד) והיו לאותות ולמועדים ולימים ושנים זיל ליקרו צדיקי בשמיר (עמוס ז, ב) יעקב הקטן שמואל הקטן (שמואל א יז, יד) דוד הקטן

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KEHOT'S NOTE

סוכה כט, א. ראה חולין ס, ב. ובחדא"ג למהרש"א בחולין שם.

87

כי הלבנה לית לה מגרמה כלום

The transcript adds that the moon's upper half, facing the sun, gives no light because it is nullified in existence to the sun's light, while its lower half shines on the earth with the sun's light.

Zohar III, 33a, לח"ג לג,

KEHOT'S NOTE

ראה זח"ג לג, א. רמט, ב. "ולחיותה דבוקה בחצי העליון למול נגד אור השמש ע"כ אינה מאירה רק בחצי התחתון שלה ובחצי העליון שבה אינה מאירה כלל כי מפני אור השמש אשר לנגדה בטלה במציאות אל האור של השמש המאיר עלי, אך חצי התחתון שבה מאיר בארץ מחמת הארת השמש כידוע" — תקס"ז ע' קנ.

88

עד שנעשית בבחי' גקודה

The note points to Or HaTorah on Yisro for the moon's shrinking to a point.

KEHOT'S NOTE

ראה אוה"ת כאן ע' תשצה.

PARAGRAPH 19

89

כך הוא ענין ישראל

The transcript states the comparison directly: Israel are likened to the moon because, as a whole, the souls of Israel have nothing of their own except what they receive from G-d's light shining on them, the Infinite Light.

KEHOT'S NOTE

"שנמשלי' ללבנה כי ישראל מונין ללבנה כנודע דגם כללות נ"י לית להו מגרמיהו כלום אלא רק מה שמקבלים מאור ה' המאיר עליהם והוא אור א"ס ב"ה" — תקס"ז ע' קנא.

90

ודבר ה' זו הלכה

The Talmud explains "the word of Havayah" in Amos's prophecy ("they will roam to seek the word of Havayah") as halachah. The Alter Rebbe uses it for G-d's word speaking in the mouths of those who study.

Shabbat 138b:11-12, לח"א-י"א

"דבר ה'" — זו הלכה, "דבר ה'" — זה הקץ, "דבר ה'" — זו נבואה. ומאי "ישוטטו לבקש את דבר ה'"? אפרו: עתידה אשה שתטול כפר של תרומה ותחזור בבתי כנסיות ובבתי מדרשות לידע אם טמאה היא ואם טהורה היא, ואין מבין.

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91

כי שמש ומגן הוי"ה אלקים

The psalm of longing for the Temple ends in trust: "For Havayah Elokim is a sun and a shield; Havayah gives

...בחדש השלישי לצאת בני ישראל מארץ מצרים ביום

grace and glory." The Alter Rebbe reads the sun as the Name Havayah and the shield as the Name Elokim.

Psalms 84:12, תהילים פ"ד:י"ב

כי שמש ומגן ה' אלקים חן וכבוד יתן ה' לא ימנע טוב להלכים בתמים:

For the L-RD G-d is a sun and a shield; the L-RD giveth grace and glory; No good thing will He withhold from them that walk uprightly.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

תהלים פד, יב.

PARAGRAPH 20

92

להחיות רוח שפלים

G-d, "high and exalted," says through Isaiah that He dwells also "with the crushed and lowly of spirit, to revive the spirit of the lowly." The Alter Rebbe applies the phrase to charity, which revives the poor.

Isaiah 57:15, ישעיהו נ"ז:ט"ו

כי כה אמר רם ונשא שכן עד וקדוש שמו מרום וקדוש אשכון ואת־דכא ושפלים להחיות רוח שפלים ולהחיות לב נדכאים:

For thus saith the High and Lofty One That inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy: I dwell in the high and holy place, With him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, To revive the spirit of the humble, And to revive the heart of the contrite ones.

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93

וזרח לכם יראי שמי

Malachi describes the coming day of judgment, burning like a furnace for the wicked; but for those who fear G-d, "there shall shine for you who fear My Name a sun of righteousness (tzedakah), with healing in its wings." The Alter Rebbe reads tzedakah as charity, the level of the sun.

Malachi 3:20, מלאכי ג':כ'

וזרח לכם יראי שמי שמש צדקה ומרפא בכנפיה ויצאתם ופשתם כעגלי מרבק:

But unto you that fear My name shall the sun of righteousness arise with healing in its wings; and ye shall go forth, and gambol as calves of the stall.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

מלאכי ג, כ.

PARAGRAPH 22

94

בחדש השלישי לצאת בני ישראל מארץ מצרים ביום הזה

The maamar's opening verse, now explained: "on this day" is the day of revelation for which the counting of the Omer prepared.

Exodus 19:1, שמות י"ט:א'

בחדש השלישי לצאת בני־ישראל מארץ מצרים ביום הזה באו מדבר סיני:

In the third month after the children of Israel were gone forth out of the land of Egypt, the same day came they into the wilderness of Sinai.

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95

שבעה שבועות תספר לך

Moshe commands: “Seven weeks shall you count for yourself,” from the start of the grain harvest. This is the counting of the Omer, which the Alter Rebbe calls the preparation for receiving the Torah on Shavuot.

Deuteronomy 16:9 ט"ז:ט"ז דברים

שבעה שבועות תספר לך מהחל חרמש בקמה תחל לספר שבעה שבועות:

Seven weeks shalt thou number unto thee; from the time the sickle is first put to the standing corn shalt thou begin to number seven weeks.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

דברים טז, ט.

PARAGRAPH 23

96

ונעשו אז ישראל מוכנים ועומדים

The maamar explains that Israel were ready not only through the light drawn from above but also through their own service below.

Chullin 60b ס' חולין

KEHOT'S NOTE

בד"ה בחודש השלישי תשכ"ט מבאר "שהיו מוכנים לא רק מצד ההמשכה מלמעלה, אלא גם מצד עבודת המטה". ראה חולין ס, ב.

97

ויקרא אלקים לאור יום

"And G-d called the light 'day,' and the darkness He called 'night.'" The Alter Rebbe cites it to show that "day" means light and revelation.

Genesis 1:5 ה'א:ה' בראשית

ויקרא אלקים לאור יום ולחשך קרא לילה ויהי ערב ויהי בקר יום אחד:

And G-d called the light Day, and the darkness He called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, one day.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

בראשית א, ה.

98

בד"ה והיה מדי חדש

This is the discourse the text refers to, on "And it shall be, from one new moon to the next." On 97c it explains that on the weekdays the Community of Israel receives G-d's "speech" by way of the emotions, while on Rosh Chodesh it receives it from Chochmah itself, so that its love is one of self-nullification, as in "My words which I have placed in your mouth"; there it refers back to this maamar.

KEHOT'S NOTE

ראה לקו"ת ברכה צו, ד ואילך.

...בחדש השלישי לצאת בני ישראל מארץ מצרים ביום

99

ואהבת

Moshe's words in the Shema: "And you shall love Havayah your G-d with all your heart." The Alter Rebbe notes that the numerical value of ve'ahavta is twice that of or, "light."

Deuteronomy 6:5 ה'ו:ה' דברים

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

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

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100

למדבר סיני שירדה שנאה

The Talmud reads the name Sinai as the mountain upon which sin'ah (hatred) came down. The Alter Rebbe, who quotes only "on which hatred descended, etc.," applies it to the Torah's power to weaken the sitra achra.

Shabbat 89a:7 ט"א:7 שבת

... דרב חסדא ורבא בריה דרב הונא דאמר תרין יומין: מאי "הר סיני"? הר שירדה שנאה לאמות העולם עליו. והיינו דאמר רבי יוסי ברבי חנינא: תמשה שמות יש לו: מדבר צין — שנצטוו ישראל עליו; מדבר קדש — שנתקדשו ישראל עליו; מדבר קדמות — שנתנה קדומה עליו; מדבר פארן —

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KEHOT'S NOTE

שבת פט, א.

101

ומדברך נאווה

The lover praises his beloved: "Your lips are like a scarlet thread, and your speech (midbarech) is lovely." The Alter Rebbe cites it to show that midbar can mean speech.

Song of Songs 4:3 ג'ד:ג' שיר השירים

כחוט השני שפתותיך ומדברך נאווה כפלה הרמון וקנתה מבעד לצמתה:

Thy lips are like a thread of scarlet, And thy mouth is comely; Thy temples are like a pomegranate split open Behind thy veil.

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102

ומדבר מלשון דבור . . בתוספת מ' . . להקטין הענין

Or HaTorah, noting this passage, refers to Likkutei Torah's discourse on "These are the accounts of the Mishkan" and its explanation, and to a discourse on "There are sixty queens" about "where I cause My Name to be mentioned," which speaks of speech in words of Torah.

KEHOT'S NOTE

באזה"ת פ' במדבר ע' כג מציין ע"ז "ועי' בלקו"ת סד"ה אלה פקודי המשכן ובהביאור שם ספ"ז ובד"ה ששים המה מלכות דרוש השני פ"ג בענין אשר אוכיר את שמי ושם מירי בבחי' הדיבור בד"ת", ע"ש.

103

ויסעו מרפידים

"They journeyed from Refidim and came to the wilderness of Sinai." The Alter Rebbe reads leaving Refidim as leaving the soul's weakness.

שמות י"ט:2: Exodus 19:2

וַיִּסְעוּ מֵרִפְדִּים וַיָּבֹאוּ מִדְּבַר סִינַי וַיַּחֲנוּ בְּמִדְבַּר וַיַּחֲשֹׁם יִשְׂרָאֵל נֶגֶד

הָהָר:

And when they were departed from Rephidim, and were come to the wilderness of Sinai, they encamped in the wilderness; and there Israel encamped before the mount.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

שמות יט, ב.

104

למה נק' שמה רפידים

Rabbi Yehoshua explains the name Refidim: "they slackened (rippu) their hold on the words of Torah," citing "from slackness of hands (rifyon yadayim)." The Alter Rebbe reads it as the weakness of the soul's power.

סנהדרין ק"ו א: י"ד-ט"ו 106a: Sanhedrin 106a

מאי לשון "רפידים"? רבי אליעזר אומר: רפידים שמה. רבי יהושע אומר: שריפו עצמן מדברי תורה, שנאמר: "לא הפנו אבות אל בנים מרפיון ידים". אמר רבי יוחנן: כל מקום שנאמר "וישב" אינו אלא לשון צער, שנאמר: "וישב ישראל בשטים ויחל העם לזנות אל בנות מואב". "וישב יעקב בארץ מגורי אביו בארץ כנען", "ויבא יוסף את דבתם רעה אל אביהם". ונאמר: "וישב ישראל בארץ גשן", "ויקרב ימי ישראל למות". "וישב יהודה ...

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KEHOT'S NOTE

סנהדרין קו, א. תדא"ר פרק כד.



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THE CHASSIDISHE PARSHA

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

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

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מוקדש לכבוד הגאון המקובל רבי לוי יצחק שניאורסאהן זצ"ל

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