

Discourse 11

“Alpayim Shanah Kadmah Torah L’Briyato Shel Olam -

The Torah preceded the creation of the world by two-thousand years”

Delivered on the second day of *Shavuot*, 5711

By the grace of *HaShem*, blessed is He,

1.

It says in Midrash,⁷⁰⁴ “The Torah preceded the creation of the world by two-thousand years, as it states,⁷⁰⁵ ‘I was with Him as His nursling, I was delights day by day,’ and a day of the Holy One, blessed is He, is one thousand years.” His honorable holiness, my father-in-law, the Rebbe, said that we must understand this matter of the Torah preceding the world by two-thousand years and analyzed this teaching to precision.⁷⁰⁶ Is it not so, that time itself is a novel creation⁷⁰⁷ that was brought into being out of nothing by the Holy One, blessed is He, together with the rest of the novel creation of the

⁷⁰⁴ Midrash Tehillim 90:7; Also see Bereishit Rabba 8:2; Tanchuma Vayeshev 4; Zohar II 49a; Discourse entitled “*Ita b’Medrash Tehillim*” (Sefer HaMaamarim 5708 p. 272 and on).

⁷⁰⁵ Proverbs 8:30

⁷⁰⁶ In the discourse entitled “*Amar Rav Huna b’Shem Resh Lakish Alpayim Shanah*” of the year 5704, printed in Kuntres Chag HaShavuot 5711 (and subsequently printed in Sefer HaMaamarim 5711 p. 262 and on; Sefer HaMaamarim 5704 p. 198 and on).

⁷⁰⁷ See Ginat Egoz of Rabbi Yosef Gikatilla, translated as HaShem is One, Volume 3, at length.

world out of nothing?⁷⁰⁸ This being the case, what is the meaning of the statement that Torah preceded the creation of the world by two-thousand years?

We should preface that this teaching of our sages, of blessed memory, was also questioned in many earlier works.⁷⁰⁹ They question this based on the fact that time is measured according to the celestial luminaries and the stars and constellations. This is as stated,⁷¹⁰ “And they shall serve as signs, and for appointed times, and for days and years.” This being the case, how is it applicable for there to be a matter of two thousand years before the creation of the celestial luminaries?

The general answer given to this, is that what is meant in stating “two-thousand years,” is that it is according to how we measure time today, after creation. In other words, had the luminaries, which are the instruments by which time is measured, been formed then, the measurement of the amount of time would have been like two-thousand years, by our measurement of time.

However, on a deeper level, the question relates to the very essence of time itself, which is the change of past, present and future. That is, with the passage of a small amount of time, a small amount of change takes place, and with a greater

⁷⁰⁸ See Siddur Im Divrei Elokim Chayim, Shaar HaKriyat Shema 75d and on; Likkutei Sichot Vol. 17, p. 59 note 52; Igrot Kodesh Vol. 1 p. 293 and on; Vol. 2 p. 224.

⁷⁰⁹ See the various citations in Sefer HaChakirah of the Tzemach Tzedek 111b and on, and elsewhere.

⁷¹⁰ Genesis 1:14

passage of time, greater change take place. However, this matter is only applicable within the novelty of the existence of created beings, who undergo change in their existence. However, it is self-understood, that before the creation of the world, when novel created beings did not yet exist, there was no matter of time and change. This being the case, what is the meaning of this matter of time in relation to Torah, that, “Torah preceded the creation of the world by two thousand years”?

In other words, the absence of change, which is the matter of the eternality of Torah, is in such a way that even though it may exist within the parameters of time, nevertheless, time does not cause any weakening in it, whatsoever. It therefore is understood that just as time does not affect Torah negatively in any way, so also, it does not affect it positively. This being the case, what difference does it make whether the measure of time was two-thousand years, or more or less than that?

The answer is that even though Torah is eternal and remains unchanged by time, nonetheless, since it is indeed found within time, and relates to all other matters that are within time, therefore, relative to those matters, a relationship to time is ascribed to it.⁷¹¹

However, in truth, the question is even deeper. For, time itself is a novel creation that is newly brought into being out of nothing. That is, just as the existence of space is novel, in that it is not preexistent or intrinsic, the same is true of time.

⁷¹¹ See Likkutei Torah, Drushim L'Shabbat Shuvah 67c; Sefer HaMaamarim

Its existence is novel, meaning that it did not exist before creation. Moreover, as known, time and space are intertwined.⁷¹² This being the case, the question is strengthened. What is meant by this teaching that, “The Torah preceded the creation of the world by two-thousand years?”

Now, his honorable holiness, my father-in-law, the Rebbe, explains that what is meant, is not that Torah preceded the world in time, but that it preceded the world in **level**. He further explains that this precedence of the Torah by, “two-thousand years-*Alpayim Shanah*-שנה **אלפיים**,” refers to the two aspects of “learning-*Aleph*-אלף” which are,⁷¹³ “I will teach you wisdom-*A’Alephcha Chochmah*-חכמה **אאלף**,” and,⁷¹⁴ “I will teach you understanding-*A’Alephcha Binah*-בינה **אאלף**.” That is, it refers to the aspects of intellect (*Mochin*) that transcend the worlds.⁷¹⁵ For, as stated,⁷¹⁶ “In six days *HaShem*-יהו"ה made the heavens and the earth,” indicating that the creation of the heavens and the earth was preceded by the creation of the six days, these being the six emotive qualities⁷¹⁷ through which *HaShem*-יהו"ה made the heavens and the earth. The “heavens”

⁷¹² See *Ginat Egoz* by Rabbi Yosef Gikatilla, translated as *HaShem is One*, Vol. 3 (and at greater length in the Gate entitled “The Gate explaining that *HaShem*, blessed is He, is the place-*Makom*-מקום of all beings.”) Also see Tanya, Shaar HaYichud VeHaEmunah Ch. 7; Likkutei Torah Brachah 98a and elsewhere.

⁷¹³ Job 33:33

⁷¹⁴ Talmud Bavli Shabbat 104a

⁷¹⁵ See Likkutei Torah Shir HaShirim 1d and on; *Hemshech* entitled “*VeHechereem*” 5631 (Sefer HaMaamarim 5631 p. 289). Also see the Petach HaShaar to Imrei Binah of the Mittler Rebbe, translated as *The Gateway to Understanding*.

⁷¹⁶ Exodus 20:11; 31:17

⁷¹⁷ Zohar I 247a; Zohar III 298b; and elsewhere.

refer to the upper worlds, whereas “the earth” refers to the lower world.

However, the intellect transcends the worlds, and is for Himself, blessed is He. This is similar to how it is in man below. His emotive qualities specifically relate to his fellow. That is, the general matter of emotions is that they are specifically applicable when there is an “other.” If this is so regarding the arousal of the emotions themselves, then it certainly is so regarding the effects of the emotions as they manifest into action, in which case, there certainly must specifically be the existence of an “other.” However, this is not so regarding intellect. For, aside for the fact that there does not need to be an “other” for the arousal of the intellectual faculties, even the effects of the intellect do not require an “other.” Moreover, in actuality, the presence of an “other” is a distraction to the intellect, since the intellect is entirely internal, unto oneself.

It thus is understood how it is Above in Godliness. The matter of the emotive qualities is in relation to the worlds, whereas the intellect is in relation to Himself, blessed is He. Moreover, although in His Essential Being, *HaShem*-יהוה, blessed is He, does not require the matter of light or illumination altogether, in that He transcends the world of Emanation-*Atzilut*, and He certainly does not require the intellectual faculties of wisdom-*Chochmah* and understanding-*Binah* (the “two-thousand years”), nonetheless, they are drawn forth in this order. That is, there first must be the drawing forth of the light and illumination, as it is to Himself (which is the matter of the

intellect) and only afterwards can there be an illumination of light that relates to an “other” (which is the matter of the emotions). This then, is the meaning of the teaching,⁷¹⁸ “The Torah preceded the creation of the world by two-thousand years (*Alpayim Shanah* -אלפיים שנה), as it states,⁷¹⁹ ‘I was with Him as His nursling, I was delights day by day.’” That is, the Torah is rooted in the aspect of the Upper intellect of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, that transcends the worlds.

2.

Now, we still must further understand this teaching of our sages that, “The Torah preceded the creation of the world by two-thousand years.” Why is the level of the Torah, as it is in the state of, “delights day by day,” important, (which is the part of the verse from which they derived the two-thousand years, as they stated, “a day of the Holy One, blessed is He, is one thousand years”). Is it not more relevant how the Torah was in an even loftier state, indicated by the first half of the verse,⁷²⁰ “I was with Him as His nursling”? For, the order of this verse is from Above to below, and the first half of the verse states, “I was with Him as His nursling,”⁷²¹ referring to how the

⁷¹⁸ Midrash Tehillim 90:7; Also see Bereishit Rabba 8:2; Tanchuma Vayeshev 4; Zohar II 49a; Discourse entitled “*Ita b’Medrash Tehillim*” (Sefer HaMaamarim 5708 p. 272 and on).

⁷¹⁹ Proverbs 8:30

⁷²⁰ Proverbs 8:30

⁷²¹ The words “I was with Him as His nursling-*VaEheyeh Etzlo Amon*- ואהיה אצל אמן” indicates the initial revelation of the light of the Oneness of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, with the name *Eheyeh*”ה-יה which corresponds to the attribute of the Crown-*Keter*, and thus transcends the faculties of wisdom-*Chochmah* and

Torah was in the Essential Being of *HaShem*-יהו"ה Himself, blessed is He. Only afterwards does it continue and state, "I was delights day by day," which refers to how the Torah was drawn forth into the aspect of intellect, which are the faculties of wisdom-*Chochmah* and understanding-*Binah*.

It then lists various other levels of descent, until it finally states,⁷²² "My delights are with the sons of man," which refers to the Torah, as it descended down below. We thus find that the most elevated and superior level of Torah is at the beginning of the verse, which states, "I was with Him as His nursling." We must therefore understand why, in this teaching of our sages, they expounded about the level of Torah, as it is in the aspect of, "delights day by day," but did not expound about the higher, superior level of, "I was with Him as His nursling."

Now, at first glance, we might say that the order indicated by the verse is actually from below to Above. For, in explanation of the words, "I was with Him as His nursling-*VaEheye Etzlo Amon*-ואהיה אצלו אמן," the Midrash states

understanding-*Binah*. This is indicated by the fact that the name *Eheye*"ה-21 is the first of *HaShem*'s יהו"ה names of Being-*Havayah*"ה in that it is the very first derivative of the Preexistent Intrinsic Essential Name of *HaShem*-יהו"ה Himself, blessed is He, and is the same as the truncated name *Yeh*"ו-21. This name *Yeh*"ו indicates the absolute Oneness of *HaShem*-יהו"ה-39 in that the letters יו"ה-39 are equal to *HaShem* is One-יהו"ה-39. Additionally, the usage in this verse with the prefix *Vav*-ו-6, as in *VaEheye*"ה-27 is inclusive of all ו"ה-27 letters of the *Aleph-Beit*, which are the letters through which the Torah, and all of creation, were subsequently brought forth. Thus, the former half of the verse, "I was with Him as His nursling-*VaEheye Etzlo Amon*-ואהיה אצלו אמן," indicates the most elevated and superior level of the Essential Torah of *HaShem*-יהו"ה. (See Ginat Egoz of Rabbi Yosef Gikatilla, translated as *HaShem is One*, Volume 1, The Gate of Intrinsic Being.)

⁷²² Proverbs 8:31

that,⁷²³ “The Torah is saying, ‘I was the craftsman’s tool-*Kli Umanuto*-כלי אומנתו of the Holy One, blessed is He... He gazed into the Torah and created the world.” Based on this, we find that the beginning of the verse, “I was with Him as His nursling-*VaEheyeh Etzlo Amon*-ואהיה אצלו אמן,” is the level of Torah that relates to how *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, brings the world into existence out of nothing.

The verse then lists the level of, “delights day by day,” which refers to the Torah as it comes into the aspects of intellect, wisdom-*Chochmah* and understanding-*Binah*, that transcend the world. (It concludes with the words, “My delights are with the sons of man,” which refers to the Torah that was given below, and actually is the highest level, since it is specifically through man’s service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה below, that one is elevated to the highest level, as explained before.)

However, in reality, the first part of the verse, “I was with Him as His nursling-*VaEheyeh Etzlo Amon*-ואהיה אצלו אמן,” is actually the highest and most superior level of Torah. This is understood from the explanation of Rashi,⁷²⁴ that the word, “*Amon*-אמן,” shares the same root as the word,⁷²⁵ “brought up-*HaEmunim*-האמנים,” and thus means, “brought up with Him.” We therefore must say that even in the aspect of how the Torah is the craftsman’s tool-*Kli Umnuto*-כלי אומנתו of the Holy One, blessed is He, it also is a much higher and superior level.

⁷²³ Midrash Bereishit Rabba 1:1

⁷²⁴ Rashi to Proverbs 8:30

⁷²⁵ Meaning to be raised and brought up, like a child. Lamentations 4:5

The explanation is as follows:⁷²⁶ At times Torah states,⁷²⁷ “By the word of *HaShem*-יהו"ה the heavens were made,” indicating that the existence of the worlds is from the aspect of the speech of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He. At other times, Torah states,⁷²⁸ “Whatever *HaShem*-יהו"ה desired, He did,” indicating that the existence of the worlds is from the aspect of the will and desire of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He.

Now, it is explained⁷²⁹ that every created being consists of both substance (*Chomer*) and form (*Tzurah*). The substance (*Chomer*) is the tangible body of the created being, and is made, “by the word of *HaShem*-יהו"ה,” meaning, the attribute of speech-*Dibur*. In contrast, the form (*Tzurah*) of the created being is made by the will and desire of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, and it is this level that is drawn forth and causes the nullification of the created being to *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He. Thus, when it states that, “the Torah is the craftsman’s tool-*Kli Umanuto* אומנתו of the Holy One, blessed is He,” it is in regard to the fact that through it, the form (*Tzurah*) of the created beings is brought into existence, which relates to the nullification and sublimation of the creatures to their Creator, *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He.

We may additionally say that the existence of the created beings that is drawn forth through Torah (which is the craftsman’s tool of the Holy One, blessed is He), also relates to

⁷²⁶ See Sefer HaMaamarim 5665, p. 73 and on.

⁷²⁷ Psalms 33:6

⁷²⁸ Psalms 135:6

⁷²⁹ See Ginat Egoz of Rabbi Yosef Gikatilla, translated as *HaShem is One*; Also see Torah Ohr Miketz 41d

the existence of their substance (*Chomer*). This is as explained in Iggeret HaKodesh,⁷³⁰ that the existence of tangible created beings (*Yesh*) is solely and specifically dependent on the power of the Singular Intrinsic Essential Being of *HaShem*-יהו"ה Himself, blessed is He, who Himself is not preceded by any cause, God forbid. Thus, it is within His ability alone to create something out of absolute nothingness. This then, is what is meant by the fact that the world is brought into existence through Torah, since Torah is rooted in the Singular Intrinsic Essential Being of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, Himself, blessed is He.⁷³¹

It thus is understood that, in fact, the order of the verse is, from Above to below, meaning that the highest and most superior level of Torah is the aspect of, "I was with Him as His nursling-*VaEheyeh Etzlo Amon*-ואהיה אצלו אמן." This being so, we still do not understand why our sages, of blessed memory, selected the superiority of the Torah, in that, "it preceded the creation of the world by two-thousand years," which only relates to the lower level, expressed as, "I was delights day by day." Why did they not discuss the first and higher level of, "I was with Him as His nursling-*VaEheyeh Etzlo Amon*-ואהיה אצלו אמן"??"

Now, there is yet another matter that we must understand regarding the words, "*VaEheyeh Etzlo Amon*-ואהיה אצלו אמן," in that the term "*Eheyeh*-אהיה" is generally used in the future tense and therefore reads, "I **will be** with Him as His nursling." Now, the explanation of this verse (in other words,

⁷³⁰ Tanya, Iggeret HaKodesh, Epistle 20 (p. 130b)

⁷³¹ Also see *Hemshech* 5672, Vol. 1, p. 356.

the abovementioned teaching of our sages, of blessed memory, that is under discussion, in which this verse is mentioned) was taught in the times of the Amora'im, if not earlier, at the time of the giving of the Torah. For, as known, all insights that a seasoned Torah scholar is destined to derive from Torah, were given to Moshe at Sinai.⁷³² This being the case, the verse should have been stated in the past tense (“I was-*Hayeetee*-הייתי”), and we must therefore understand why it was specifically stated in the future tense (“I will be-*Eheyeh*-אהיה”).

Now, it is true that according to the rules of grammar, the explanation is that the prefix letter *Vav*-ו (“*VaEheyeh-*וְאֵהְיֶה”) modifies the word from future tense to past tense⁷³³ (as well as to present tense). Nevertheless, the Zohar states⁷³⁴ that this verse, “*VaEheyeh Etzlo Amon*-וְאֵהְיֶה אֶצְלוֹ אֲמוֹן” is similar to the verse,⁷³⁵ “I will be that I will be-*Eheyeh Asher Eheyeh*-אֵהְיֶה אֲשֶׁר אֵהְיֶה,” which the Zohar explained to mean, “I am destined to be revealed,” in the coming future. According to this, it is understood that the verse specifically uses the word, “*VaEheyeh*-וְאֵהְיֶה” in the future tense. We therefore must understand why this matter was stated in the future tense.

⁷³² Talmud Bavli, Megillah 19b; Midrash Shmot Rabba 47; See notes to Likkutei Sichot Vol. 19, p. 252.

⁷³³ See Gur Aryeh Al HaTorah, Shmot 1:17; Also See Ginat Egoz of Rabbi Yosef Gikatilla translated as HaShem Is One, Vol. 1, section on the name *Eheye*’h-אֵהְיֶה.

⁷³⁴ Zohar III 65b

⁷³⁵ Exodus 3:14

Now, to understand this, we must first explain the five matters enumerated in these verses. Namely, (1) “I was with Him as His nursling,” (2) “I was delights day by day,” (3) “I played before Him at all times,” (4) “playing in the inhabited areas of His earth,” and (5) “My delights are with the children of man.” About this, it is explained that the first part of the verse, which states, “I was with Him as His nursling-*VaEheyeh Etzlo Amon*-ואהיה אצלו אמון,” refers to the Torah, as it is in the Essential Being of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, as indicated by the word, “with Him-*Etzlo*-אצלו.”

The continuation, that states, “I was delights day by day-*VaEheyeh Sha'ashu'im Yom Yom*-ואהיה שעשועים יום יום,” refers to the Torah, as it is drawn into the aspect of the intellect, that is, wisdom-*Chochmah* and understanding-*Binah*, which include all intellect in general. It is about this level that the term, “delights-*Sha'ashu'im*-שעשועים” is used. (It nonetheless does not use the term “My delight-*Sha'ashu'ay*-שעשועי,” which refers to the **Essential** Delights (*Sha'ashu'im HaAtzmiyim*), but instead uses the lesser, general term, “delights-*Sha'ashu'im*-שעשועים.”) For, even as the Torah descends to the aspect of the intellect, there still is an aspect of pleasure in it.

As known, our sages, of blessed memory, were very precise⁷³⁶ when they said,⁷³⁷ “The Torah came out from the upper wisdom.” That is, it “**came out**” from the upper wisdom, meaning that it was **revealed** through the quality of wisdom-*Chochmah*. However, it is rooted much higher than wisdom-*Chochmah*, in the aspect of the Upper Pleasure (*Ta’anug*). Therefore, even as it comes to be revealed in the intellectual faculties of wisdom-*Chochmah* and understanding-*Binah*, there is an aspect of, “delights-*Sha’ashu’im*” שַׁעֲשׂוּעִים.”

Additionally, as we are taught,⁷³⁸ “The revelation of the pleasure of the Ancient One-*Atik* is in understanding-*Binah*.” This also is the inner meaning of the verse,⁷³⁹ “The Levite shall serve Him-*Hoo*-הוּא.” Since the word, “Him-*Hoo*-הוּא” is in the third person it refers to the Ancient One-*Atik*,⁷⁴⁰ and indicates

⁷³⁶ Likkutei Torah Bamidbar 7c; Ohr HaTorah Bereishit Vol. 6 1,023b; Sefer HaMaamarim 5696 p. 8 and various other places.

⁷³⁷ Zohar II 62a, 85a, 121a and elsewhere.

⁷³⁸ Zohar III 178b; Torah Ohr Lech Lecha 11b and on, and elsewhere.

⁷³⁹ Numbers 18:23

⁷⁴⁰ Zohar III 178b *ibid.* and Torah Ohr Lech Lecha *ibid.* Also see Ginat Egoz of Rabbi Yosef Gikatilla, translated in English as *HaShem is One*, Vol. 2. It is explained there, that the word “Him-*Hoo*-הוּא,” which has a numerical value of “In Me-*Bi*-י-12” (Gen. 22:16) is inclusive of all the numerals up until and including י-12 (which is known as *Cheshbon Kidmi*). Thus, א”ב ג”ד ה”ו ז”ח ט”י י”א י”ב is equal to 78, which is the numerical value of, “He is and He was and He will Be-*Hoveh V’Hayah V’Yihyeh*-יהיה ויהיה ויהיה-78” that shares the same letters as, three times the Name *HaShem*-יהו”ה in all three tenses. That is, *HaShem*-יהו”ה is, *HaShem*-יהו”ה was, *HaShem*-יהו”ה will be. Thus, the verse may be read, “And the Levite shall serve He Who Is and Was and Will be,” which is the aspect of the eternality of the Singular Intrinsic Essential Being, *HaShem*-יהו”ה Himself, blessed is He, the Eternal One, blessed is He.

that the revelation of the Ancient One-*Atik* is specifically in understanding-*Binah*.⁷⁴¹

Beyond this, the beginning of the revelation of the pleasure and the essence of the pleasure, is in the aspect of wisdom-*Chochmah*. This is the meaning of the statement,⁷⁴² “The face of Rabbi Avahu would light up when he would find an additional-*Tosefta* teaching.” The term, “additional-*Tosefta* teaching,” indicates the novelty of the discovery, which is the aspect of the insight of the faculty of wisdom-*Chochmah*.⁷⁴³ The effect of the insight of wisdom-*Chochmah* is that it draws forth pleasure (*Ta’anug*), and is the reason his face would light up.

As also known, this matter is referred to as the Garden of Eden (*Gan Eden*). For, as known,⁷⁴⁴ the insight of wisdom-*Chochmah* is called by the term Eden-עֵדֶן, whereas the comprehension of understanding-*Binah*, is called by the term the Garden of Eden-*Gan Eden*-גַּן עֵדֶן. In other words, although understanding-*Binah* is the aspect of the river-*Nahar*,⁷⁴⁵ about which it states,⁷⁴⁶ “A river issued from Eden to water the

⁷⁴¹ For a lengthier explanation of this matter and this verse, see Shaar HaYichud of the Mittler, translated into English as The Gate of Unity, Ch. 40 (Vol. 2).

⁷⁴² Talmud Yerushalmi Shabbat 8:1 and elsewhere.

⁷⁴³ See Likkutei Torah, Masei 93b; Sefer HaMaamarim 5657 p. 266 and elsewhere.

⁷⁴⁴ See Sefer HaMaamarim 5665 *ibid.* and Maamarei Admor HaZaken and Ohr HaTorah Shir HaShirim *ibid.* Also see Ginat Egoz of Rabbi Yosef Gikatilla, translated as HaShem is One, Vol. 1, The Gate of The Sanctuary, and Vol. 2, section entitled “The seven letters בג"ד כפר"ת correspond to the seven chambers of purgatory.”

⁷⁴⁵ See Likkutei Torah, Shir HaShirim 39b and elsewhere.

⁷⁴⁶ Genesis 2:10

garden” (and is actually higher than the aspect of the Garden), nevertheless, this itself demonstrates that understanding-*Binah* is not the aspect of Eden itself, but is only the aspect of the “river” that issues from Eden. In contrast, wisdom-*Chochmah* is Eden itself. This is because the **root** of Torah is even more elevated than the wisdom-*Chochmah*, and thus, even as it is manifest within the aspect of wisdom-*Chochmah*, and even as it “comes forth from wisdom-*Chochmah*,” it still possesses this aspect of “delights-*Sha’ashu’im*-שעשועים.”

The verse then continues, “I played-*Mesacheket*-משחקת before Him at all times.” The root of the word “*Mesacheket*-משחקת” is “laughter-*Schok*-שחק,” and refers to the actual **revelation** of the pleasure. (It is about this⁷⁴⁷ that our sages, of blessed memory, stated,⁷⁴⁸ “It is forbidden for a person to fill his mouth with laughter-*Schok*-שחק in this world.” They specifically used the term “laughter-*Schok*-שחק.” In other words, even though the service of *HaShem*-יהוה, blessed is He, must be with joy, as it states,⁷⁴⁹ “because you did not serve *HaShem*-יהוה your God with joy,” and even beyond that, as the verse continues, “and with goodness of heart,” it nevertheless is, “forbidden for one to fill his mouth with laughter-*Schok*-שחק.” This is because it indicates that he feels the joy in a sensory manner to a very great extent.) Thus, this matter specifically relates to the emotions. For, the drawing forth of pleasure in the intellect is not as revealed, and is primarily

⁷⁴⁷ See the notes of the Tzemach Tzedek to Maamarei Admor HaZaken ibid. (p. 178), and Ohr HaTorah Shir HaShirim ibid. (p. 179).

⁷⁴⁸ Talmud Bavli, Brachot 31a

⁷⁴⁹ Deuteronomy 28:47

experienced in the illumination of the face alone. In contrast, it is specifically in the emotions that the pleasure comes to be felt and revealed to a much greater extent.

The verse then continues, “playing in the inhabited areas of His earth-*Artzo*-ארצו.” This refers to the manifestation of the Torah within the *Sefirah* of kingship-*Malchut*, which is the aspect of the “earth-*Aretz*-ארץ.” For, the attribute of kingship-*Malchut* is the root of the creatures of the worlds of Creation-*Briyah*, Formation-*Yetzirah*, and Action-*Asiyah*.

The verse then concludes, “My delights are with the children of man.” This refers to the Torah as it is drawn down, specifically here below. It is specifically in **this** aspect of Torah that it says, “**My** delights-*Sha’ashu’ay*-שעשועי,” which refers to the Essential Delights of *HaShem*-יהו"ה **Himself**, blessed is He. For, it is specifically through our study of Torah here below, that we can reach the aspect of, “The delights of The King in His Essential Self” (*Sha’ashu’ey HaMelech B’Atzmuto*).⁷⁵⁰

4.

The explanation of the matter is as follows:⁷⁵¹ As known, there generally are two ways by which Godliness is drawn forth, the way of direct light (*Ohr Yashar*) and the way of rebounding light (*Ohr Chozer*). The same applies in the study of Torah.⁷⁵² That is, one may study Torah in a way of

⁷⁵⁰ Emek HaMelech Shaar 1; Likkutei Torah, Shir HaShirim 27a

⁷⁵¹ See *Hemshech* 5666 p. 91 and on, and p. 94 and on.

⁷⁵² See *Hemshech* 5666 *ibid.* p. 80 and on.

direct light (*Ohr Yashar*), meaning that he studies and understands what he studies, or one may study Torah in a way of rebounding light (*Ohr Chozer*), meaning that he studies and does not understand what he studies, or that questions arise for him, because of what he has learned somewhere else in Torah. He then must toil to overcome the questions and concealments.

This is the general difference between the Jerusalem Talmud and the Babylonian Talmud.⁷⁵³ That is, in the Jerusalem Talmud there are not so many questions, nor are there an abundance of lengthy dissections and back and forth debates. Rather, the manner of study is in a way of direct light (*Ohr Yashar*). In contrast, the Babylonian Talmud is full of many questions. As our sages, of blessed memory, stated,⁷⁵⁴ “The verse,⁷⁵⁵ ‘He has made me dwell in darkness’ refers to the Babylonian Talmud.” This is because the manner of study in the Babylonian Talmud is that of rebounding light (*Ohr Chozer*).

Now, as known, the manner of study in a way of rebounding light (*Ohr Chozer*) actually reaches much higher, beyond comparison to study in a manner of direct light (*Ohr Yashar*). This may be understood by what we find regarding the advantage of the Jerusalem Talmud over the Babylonian Talmud. It is to such an extent that Rabbi Zeira,⁷⁵⁶ “fasted one-hundred fasts in order to forget the Babylonian Talmud.” It is

⁷⁵³ See *Hemshech* 5666 ibid. p. 90 and on; Also see Shaarei Orah of the Mittler Rebbe, discourse entitled “On the twenty-fifth of Kislev,” Ch. 54 and on.

⁷⁵⁴ Talmud Bavli, Sanhedrin 24a

⁷⁵⁵ Lamentations 3:6

⁷⁵⁶ Talmud Bavli, Bava Metziyah 85a

understood from this that the Babylonian Talmud cannot at all be compared to the Jerusalem Talmud. For, if the ascension from the Babylonian Talmud to the Jerusalem Talmud was merely a matter of gradation and ascension from one level to the next level, he would not have had to forget the Babylonian Talmud in order to study the Jerusalem Talmud. Thus, from the fact that to study the Jerusalem Talmud it was necessary for him to forget the perspective of the Babylonian Talmud, it is understood that this is not just a matter of gradual ascent, but is an ascent that is entirely beyond comparison. However, through this, we also can understand the advantage of the Babylonian Talmud over the Jerusalem Talmud, that is, that the superiority of the rebounding light (*Ohr Chozer*), also is an advantage that is entirely beyond comparison.

Now, Torah study in the manner of rebounding light (*Ohr Chozer*) is actually comprised of two approaches.⁷⁵⁷ The first, is that one toils in his Torah study, in order to understand what he studies. Now, although there is very great toil in this, the toil itself is not a matter of intellectual understanding at all. For, the matter of intellect is that it descends from above to below, rather than from below to above. Additionally, the essential toil itself is not at all a matter of intellect, but actually transcends intellect. Nonetheless, his toil is specifically in matters of intellect.

The second approach is that he studies in order to know the, “deeds that he should do.”⁷⁵⁸ In other words, his desire is

⁷⁵⁷ See *Hemshech* 5666 p. 390 and on, p. 410 and on, p. 421.

⁷⁵⁸ Exodus 18:20

to grasp the Supernal Intention of the Singular Intrinsic Essential Being of *HaShem*-יהו"ה Himself, blessed is He. He therefore is fearful that perhaps his intention is not properly aligned with the Supernal Desire of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, and he therefore is gripped with fear and dread that he may come to err. This moves him to be completely focused and to toil to an even greater extent. This kind of toil is altogether not a matter of intellect.

Now, at first glance, it may appear that in this second approach to Torah study, it is not applicable for it to be pleasurable. For, regarding the first approach, it makes sense that even though he greatly toils, investing his whole being into his study of Torah (with complete devotion) to the point that he feels that his life is worthless without grasping it, nevertheless, because he toils to grasp its intellect, the matter of delight and pleasure is applicable in it. However, such is not the case with the second approach, in which he is not actually moved by the intellect of it at all. Rather, his entire being is that of total constriction. It therefore does not seem applicable that there would be any pleasure in it at all. However, in truth, there is indeed a matter of pleasure, even in this approach to Torah study.

By way of analogy, this may be understood by the difference between a minister and a servant, both of whom fulfill the will of the king. The minister knows that the king conducts the kingdom with goodness. Therefore, out of love of country, he fulfills the directives and responsibilities set upon him by the king. In other words, because the minister knows

that by fulfilling the directives of the king, he will benefit the country, he fulfills his orders with vitality and pleasure in carrying them out. However, such is not the case, with the servant who fulfills the directives of the king. The servant is not at all an entity unto himself. Rather, his entire reason for being is solely to fulfill the will of his master. In this, he has neither intellectual understanding, nor emotional feelings, and seemingly, he should not have any pleasure from it at all.

However, in truth, it must be said that the servant indeed has (concealed) pleasure in fulfilling the directives of the king. We observe this by the fact that he wants to fulfill the king's directives in the most optimal manner, in a way of beauty and perfection, and with added splendor. This demonstrates that he actually does have pleasure in it. For, regarding his essential acceptance of the yoke of the king upon himself (and his servitude to him), it would have been sufficient for him to merely fulfill the king's directives, as they are, without the added aspect of beautification and splendor at all. However, from the fact that he strives to beautify his fulfillment of the king's directives, with additional splendor, it must be said that he has pleasure in it (albeit in concealed way).

Moreover, it could be said that the pleasure of the servant is the pleasure of the king himself. In other words, since the servant has no independence as an entity unto himself at all, and on the contrary, is nothing of his own, therefore, his entire reason for being is only to fulfill the will of his master. This being so, his pleasure is the pleasure of his master himself,

meaning that what moves him is his master's pleasure. Thus, his master's pleasure is found in him.

Thus, in the analogue, it is understood that when a person learns Torah specifically to fulfill it in actuality, even though his toil is in a way of the constriction of the soul, nevertheless, in truth, he has (concealed) pleasure in it. On the contrary, since he has no ulterior motives in this study, being that it is only for the purpose of properly actualizing the will of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, therefore, his pleasure in it is the Upper Supernal Pleasure of *HaShem*-יהו"ה Himself, blessed is He. That is, it is the Upper Pleasure of *HaShem*-יהו"ה Himself that is felt within him and moves him.

The explanation is that through the second approach to Torah study, that of the rebounding light (*Ohr Chozer*), we reach the very Essential Pleasure of the One Above, blessed is He, which is the inner aspect of the pleasure of the Ancient One-*Atik Yomin* Himself, literally.⁷⁵⁹ Such is not the case with the first approach, through which we only reach the inner aspect of "wisdom-*Abba*, within which the inner aspect of the Ancient One-*Atik Yomin* is manifest."⁷⁶⁰ Although what is meant here, is not that the inner aspect of wisdom-*Abba* garbs or conceals the inner aspect of the pleasure-*Atik*, nonetheless, it only is how the inner aspect of the pleasure-*Atik* is drawn into the inner aspect of wisdom-*Abba*. In other words, it is not the inner aspect of the pleasure of the Ancient One-*Atik Yomin* Himself.

⁷⁵⁹ See *Hemshech* 5666 *ibid.* p. 97; *Sefer HaMaamarim* 5696 p. 8 and on.

⁷⁶⁰ *Pri Etz Chaim*, *Shaar HaKriyat Shma*, Ch. 15; *Likkutei Torah Netzavim* 49d; *Hemshech* 5666 p. 95 and on.

The difference between the two may be compared to the difference between a sensory, composite pleasure⁷⁶¹ (*Ta'anug Murkav*) and a simple, essential pleasure (*Ta'anug Pashut*).⁷⁶² This is similar to what is explained⁷⁶³ about the coming future. That is, it sometimes states,⁷⁶⁴ “In the coming future, the Holy One, blessed is He, will make a feast-*Ariston* (which, as explained, is the “morning meal”⁷⁶⁵) for His servants, the righteous *Tzaddikim*.” At other times, it states,⁷⁶⁶ “The coming world is not like this world. In the coming world there is no eating or drinking etc.” Now, it is explained that these represent two levels in the revelation of the coming future. That is, at first there will be a revelation of composite and tangible pleasure, which is the matter of the “feast-*Ariston*.” Afterwards there will be the revelation of the simple and essential pleasure of *HaShem*-יהוה Himself, which is not felt whatsoever. This is the matter of the coming world, in which, “there will be no eating or drinking etc.”

5.

This then, is the meaning of the conclusion of the verse, “My delights are with the children of man.” That is, it is specifically through the study of Torah here below (“with the

⁷⁶¹ Like the pleasure in fulfilling one's needs and desires.

⁷⁶² Like the pleasure in life itself.

⁷⁶³ *Hemshech* 5666 *ibid*.

⁷⁶⁴ Midrash Vayikra Rabba 13:3

⁷⁶⁵ Matnat Kehunah commentary to Vayikra Rabbi 13:3

⁷⁶⁶ Talmud Bavli, Brachot 17a

children of man”) whereby the study is in a manner of rebounding light (*Ohr Chozer*), primarily in the second approach to study, mentioned above, that one reaches the aspect of, “**My** delights-*Sha’ashu’ay*-שעשועי,” referring to the Essential Delights (*Sha’ashu’im HaAtzmiyim*), and “The delights of the King in His Essence” (*Sha’ashu’ey HaMelech B’Atzmuto*). This refers to the matter of Torah, as it is in the Singular Preexistent Intrinsic Essential Being of *HaShem*-יהו”ה Himself, blessed is He, referred to in the first part of the verse, “I was with Him as His nursling-*VaEheyeh Etzlo Amon*-ואהיה אצלו אמן.”⁷⁶⁷

With this in mind, we may now understand why the verse states, “**I will be** with Him as His nursling-*VaEheyeh Etzlo Amon*-ואהיה אצלו אמן,” specifically using the term “*Eheyeh*-אהיה,” in the future tense, as explained above, for this matter will specifically be revealed in the coming future. In other words, although even now, the Torah is drawn forth as it is in the Essential Being of *HaShem*-יהו”ה, blessed is He, through which additional illuminations are added to the world of Emanation-*Atzilut*, nonetheless, this will specifically be revealed in the coming future.

This is why our sages, of blessed memory, expounded on the level of Torah that preceded the world by two thousand years, which is only the aspect of, “I was delights day by day-*VaEheyeh Sha’ashu’im Yom Yom*-ואהיה שעשועים יום יום,” and did not expound on the level of, “I was with Him as His nursling-

⁷⁶⁷ See Sefer HaMaamarim 5696 *ibid*.

VaEheyeh Etzlo Amon-ואהיה אצלו אמן.” This is because the level of Torah reflected in the words, “I was with Him as His nursling-*VaEheyeh Etzlo Amon*-ואהיה אצלו אמן,” is Torah as it is in the Essential Being of *HaShem*-יהו"ה Himself, blessed is He. In other words, this aspect of Torah is not something separate unto itself, but is rather the very essence of Torah, as it is entirely one with the Essential Self of *HaShem*-יהו"ה Himself, because of His Essential Being, and not because of the Torah.

This is also the meaning of what his honorable holiness, my father-in-law, the Rebbe, said in the name of the Alter Rebbe,⁷⁶⁸ that at the giving of the Torah, three things were given. The first is the revealed aspects of the Torah, the second is the secrets of the Torah, and the third is the ability to serve *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He.

The explanation is that the revealed aspects of Torah, refer to what is currently revealed. The secrets of the Torah refer to the hidden reasons (*Ta'amim*-טעמים) of Torah, that will be revealed in the coming future, and is the aspect of the tangibly felt pleasure, mentioned above.⁷⁶⁹ The ability to serve *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, which is in the manner of reflective light (*Ohr Chozer*), entirely transcends intellect, including even the hidden reasons (*Ta'amim*-טעמים) of Torah that will be revealed in the coming future, since it reaches all the way to the Singular Intrinsic Essential Being of *HaShem*-

⁷⁶⁸ Sefer HaSichot 5705 p. 102

⁷⁶⁹ It is explained that the word for reason-*Ta'am*-טעם also means flavor-*Ta'am*-טעם, which is the aspect of the tangibly felt pleasure.

יהו"ה Himself, blessed is He. As explained above, this will only become fully revealed in the coming future.

Nevertheless, this matter was also present at the giving of the Torah. For, since there will not be another giving of the Torah,⁷⁷⁰ it is understood that all these matters were already given at the giving of the Torah, only that they will become revealed in the coming future.

⁷⁷⁰ See Sefer HaMaamarim 5647 p. 87; 5656 p. 356; *Hemshech* 5666 p. 23, p. 546; *Hemshech* 5672 Vol. 1, p. 366; Sefer HaMaamarim 5679 p. 291; 5685 p. 199; 5709 p. 51.