

## Discourse 4

“*Ki Tisa et Rosh B’nei Yisroel* -

When you take a census of the Children of Israel”

Delivered on Shabbat Parashat Vayakhel, Parashat Shekalim, Shabbat  
Mevarchim Adar II 5711

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

### 1.

The verse states,<sup>210</sup> “When you uplift the head-*Ki Tisa et Rosh*-ראש כי תשא את ראש of the children of Israel.” Now, we must understand<sup>211</sup> why the verse specifically uses the term, “when you uplift-*Ki Tisa*-כי תשא,” rather than simply stating, “when you count-*Ki Tifkod*-כי תפקוד.” Additionally, why does it specify, “When you uplift the head-*Tisa et Rosh*-ראש את ראש,” specifically mentioning the “head-*Rosh*-ראש?”

Now, Rashi explained this as follows: “When you wish to take a census of their numbers to know how many they are, do not count them by the head (so that there should not be a plague amongst them). Rather, each one should give a half-shekel, and you shall count the shekels, and thereby you will know their number.” According to this explanation, it seems apparent that the words “When you take a census-*Ki Tisa et*

---

<sup>210</sup> Exodus 30:12

<sup>211</sup> See discourse entitled *Ki Tisa* 5658, Sefer HaMaamarim 5658 p. 146; 5675 (*Hemshech* 5672 Vol. II) p. 893 and elsewhere.

*Rosh*” indicate that this is not something that we are commanded to do as a *Mitzvah*, but that it is optional. However, in the Midrash<sup>212</sup> it states, “The Holy One, blessed is He, said to Moshe, ‘Go and count the Jewish people etc.,’” seeming to indicate that this was indeed a commandment-*Mitzvah*. (The method of the count should be through the half-shekel, in order that they should not be afflicted by plague.) Nevertheless, even according to the Midrash, it is clear that this was a commandment-*Mitzvah* specific to that time, and not something commanded for all generations. On the contrary, it is understood from the response of Yo’av to King David that one is to avoid such a count, when he responded,<sup>213</sup> “May *HaShem*-יהוה your God, increase the number of the people over and over a hundred times, while the eyes of my lord the king live to see it.” That is, he tried to avoid counting the Jewish people.

Now, there are also a number of other matters that are learned from this Torah portion. It states,<sup>214</sup> “You shall take the silver of atonements from the Children of Israel and give it for the work of the Tent of Meeting etc.” Rashi comments, “This silver was used for the production of the base sockets.” In other words, although the giving of the half-shekel for the purpose of the base sockets (*Adanim*-אדנים) only occurred once, meaning that it was something temporary, nevertheless, something permanent was produced through it, since the Tabernacle (*Mishkan*) was preserved for eternity.<sup>215</sup>

---

<sup>212</sup> Yalkut Shimoni beginning of Parshat Ki Tisa

<sup>213</sup> Samuel II 24:3 and on; Also see Torah Sheleima Vol. 21, Miluim 61

<sup>214</sup> Exodus 30:16, and Rashi commentary there.

<sup>215</sup> Talmud Bavli, Sota 9a and elsewhere.

In this Torah portion, we also learn that the commandment of the half-shekel was indeed commanded for all generations (as also necessitated by Chronicles II 24:9).<sup>216</sup> That is, there is a constant and ongoing commandment for all generations,<sup>217</sup> to give the half-shekel each and every year for the coffers of the Holy Temple, which was used to pay for the communal offerings, as clearly elucidated in the Mishnah in Shekalim.<sup>218</sup> However, the distinction is that when it comes to the commandment of the half-shekel that applies to all generations, the obligation is solely in regard to giving the half-shekel, but is not accompanied by any command to count the Jewish people or to know their number. Furthermore, as indicated in several places, they specifically did not count them.

This being the case, our difficulty is as follows: From the superficial reading of the language of the Torah portion, it seems to indicate that all these matters discussed in the Torah portion require being prefaced by the verse,<sup>219</sup> “When you uplift the head-*Ki Tisa et Rosh*-כִּי תשא אֶת רֹאשׁ of the children of Israel.” In other words, this matter seems to be a precondition and primary aspect to all the other matters discussed in the Torah portion, and must therefore be understood.

---

<sup>216</sup> Also see Talmud Yerushalmi, Shekalim 1:1 and Ramban commentary to Exodus 30:12.

<sup>217</sup> Rambam Hilchot Shekalim, Ch. 1

<sup>218</sup> Mishnah Shekalim 4:1

<sup>219</sup> Exodus 30:12

2.

Now, the explanation of the matter is that the general purpose of the half-shekel is to fund the communal offerings. The general explanation of this in man's service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, is that through bringing the offerings on the altar to become included in the upper fire, which is the aspect of, "the lion that consumed the offerings,"<sup>220</sup> the animal souls of every Jew were also diminished and became included in holiness.<sup>221</sup> This affected that each and every Jew would be able to bind his faculties of knowledge-*Da'at* and understanding-*Binah* to the greatness of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, and become sublimated to Him.

Nowadays, this is accomplished through the prayers, which were established in place of the offerings.<sup>222</sup> However, it first is necessary for strength and assistance to be given for this from Above. This is accomplished through the matter of "uplifting the head of the Jewish people," which is accomplished through Moshe, as well as the offshoot of Moshe that exists in every generation. For, Moshe is called the, "shepherd of faith" (*Ra'aya Mehemna*),<sup>223</sup> in that he is the shepherd who grazes the flock, (meaning that he provides them

---

<sup>220</sup> Zohar I 6a; Zohar III 32b; 211a; Discourse entitled *Ki Tisa* in the addendums to Torah Ohr 111c; Likkutei Torah Bamidbar 11a; Sefer HaMaamarim 5698 p. 229; 5709 p. 30 and elsewhere.

<sup>221</sup> See Sefer HaMaamarim 5698 p. 232

<sup>222</sup> Talmud Bavli, Brachot 26a-b

<sup>223</sup> Throughout the Zohar; See Tanya Ch. 42 and citations there.

with their sustenance), of faith-*Emunah*. This is as stated,<sup>224</sup> “Nourish faith,” through Torah study and acts of lovingkindness. By means of this, there is an elevation and uplifting of the head of the Jewish people, meaning that there is an ascent caused from below to Above by means of the offerings and through prayer.

### 3.

Now, we must further understand the relationship between this matter to Moshe, “the shepherd of faith,” specifically, since it is regarding him that it states,<sup>225</sup> “When you uplift the head-*Ki Tisa et Rosh* ראש את of the children of Israel.” The reason that Moshe is called, “the shepherd of faith” (*Ra’aya Mehemna*), is because it is he who nourishes the faith of the Jewish people, sustaining and enlivening it. This is because faith-*Emunah*, on its own, can remain transcendent and encompassing.<sup>226</sup>

This is like the teaching,<sup>227</sup> “A thief, when standing on the threshold, calls out to the Merciful One for assistance.” In other words, we are discussing a thief-*Ganav* who is even worse

---

<sup>224</sup> Psalms 37:3 – The term for nourish-*Re’eh* רעה shares the same root as shepherd-*Ro’eh* רועה.

<sup>225</sup> Exodus 30:12

<sup>226</sup> See discourse entitled *Ki Tisa* Sefer HaMaamarim 5679, p. 267 and on; Additions to Torah Ohr, 111a and on; Maamarei Admor HaZaken 5563 Vol. 1, p. 176 and on; Maamarei Admor HaEmtza’ee Shmot Vol. 2, p. 619 and on; Ohr HaTorah Tisa p. 1,838 and on & p. 1,879 and on; Sefer HaMaamarim 5630 p. 108 and on; 5654 p. 181 and on; 5687 p. 113 and on; 5711 p. 183 and on; Likkutei Torah VeEtchanan, first discourse entitled *VeYada’ata* and its explanation there.

<sup>227</sup> Talmud Bavli, Brachot 20a

than a robber-*Gazlan*. This is as our sages, of blessed memory, taught,<sup>228</sup> “Why is the Torah stricter with a thief-*Ganav* than with a robber-*Gazlan*? Because this one (the robber-*Gazlan*) equates the honor of the servant to the honor of his Master, whereas that one (the thief-*Ganav*), does not equate the honor of the servant to the honor of his Master.”<sup>229</sup> (That is, he gives greater honor to the servant than to his Master, in that he has fear of man, but is not concerned by the fact that he is being watched from Above.) In other words, the concealment and hiddenness of Godliness is so great in him, that although he does have sensitivity and is embarrassed of his deeds (in that he fears man), he nonetheless thinks that he can deceive *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He. Even so, while he is on the threshold, he calls out to the Merciful One, blessed is He, for assistance. In other words, even as he is perpetrating an act that is the diametric opposite of *HaShem*'s Supernal will, he actually requests that *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, give him success in this matter itself, a matter that is the diametric opposite of *HaShem*'s will.

Now, in a refined manner, every single person can find this in himself. This applies whether he is a businessman or a Torah scholar, meaning those who are found within the four

---

<sup>228</sup> Talmud Bavli, Bava Kamma 79b and Rashi there.

<sup>229</sup> That is, the robber-*Gazlan* acts in a public manner, in that he has neither fear of the Holy One, blessed is He, nor fear of man, and thus, at the very least he equates them. In contrast, the thief-*Ganav* acts in a hidden manner, which indicates that he fears man to a greater extent than he fears the Holy One, blessed is He, and thus, he does not even equate the Holy One, blessed is He, to man, but considers *HaShem* inferior. In this respect the thief-*Ganav* is therefore actually considered worse than the robber-*Gazlan*.

cubits of Torah and within the four cubits of prayer. That is, they too possess this aspect of, “A thief, when standing on the threshold, calls out to the Merciful One for assistance.”

For example, this matter can be found within businessmen, in that, although he believes that it is *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, “who gives the strength to make wealth,”<sup>230</sup> nevertheless his mind will delve into all kinds of schemes that distract him from Torah study, the service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, and from having fixed times for Torah study, as required even of businessmen. On an even more particular level, when he is indeed successful in business, but then encounters problems in his business that are not as they should be, his thoughts then become drawn into new schemes etc. In other words, the Holy One, blessed is He, has made him successful in his business, and he too has transformed the physical into spiritual through giving a tenth or a fifth (or something in between) of his profits to charity. Moreover, the commandment of charity is the single commandment about which *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, states,<sup>231</sup> “‘Test Me, if you will, in this,’ says *HaShem* *Tzva* ‘ot-יהו"ה צבאות, ‘see if I do not open up the windows of the heavens for you and pour blessings upon you without end.’” *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, is certainly trustworthy to fulfill this, and yet, the businessman draws his thoughts into all kinds of schemes. We thus observe one thing and its diametric opposite,

---

<sup>230</sup> Deuteronomy 8:12

<sup>231</sup> Malachi 3:10; Talmud Bavli, 9a; Tur and Shulchan Aruch, Yoreh De'ah end of Siman 247.

just like the “thief, who when standing on the threshold, calls out to the Merciful One for assistance.”

Similarly, this can even be found in those who are occupied with the study of Torah. That is, he fully believes that the Torah is the wisdom and will of the Holy One, blessed is He. Yet, if he is successful in his studies and shows off his prowess, he becomes boastful in this. It goes without saying that this is the diametric opposite of *HaShem*’s Supernal intent, especially if he studies for this very purpose. The automatic result, is that, at times, he will bend the subject to his own will, just to have the upper hand in the debate. Thus, on numerous occasions, he may transgress the laws of the Shulchan Aruch (The Code of Torah Law) specifically **because** of his occupation in studying Torah.

There likewise are Torah scholars who do not occupy themselves with the service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה by praying at length, and certainly do not involve themselves with the contemplations (*Hitbonenut*) that should precede prayer. Or they may not occupy themselves with the three preparations for prayer, as explained in Likkutei Torah,<sup>232</sup> namely, the study of the inner aspects of Torah, purity and charity.

All this is because he thinks the Torah that he studies is his own, meaning, it is his Torah, in the sense that he thinks he must come up with novel insights in Torah from his own human intellect. He thus abstains from all the aforementioned matters, since they require a significant expenditure of his time. He,

---

<sup>232</sup> Likkutei Torah Tavo 43b and on.

however, feels that he needs this time to come up with novel insights in Torah.

If, on the other hand, he would study Torah because it is the wisdom and will of the Holy One, blessed is He, then he would surely understand that it is not applicable that matters that the Holy One, blessed is He, Himself commanded, would be an obstruction to his Torah study. For example, the study of the teachings of Chassidut, immersing in the Mikvah, and giving charity, cannot possibly obstruct the study of Torah, since that itself is the wisdom and will of the Holy One, blessed is He.

All these circumstances are brought about because his faith-*Emunah* is in an aspect of transcendence (*Makif*), just like the, “thief, who when standing on the threshold, calls out to the Merciful One for assistance.” It is because of this that the influence of Moshe, the shepherd of faith, is necessary. For, it is he who nourishes and sustains the faith of the Jewish people. That is, he draws the faith-*Emunah* from its transcendence to become manifest in the inner powers of the soul, so that a person actually conducts himself in alignment with his faith. This is accomplished through true reflection and contemplation in one’s soul, strongly affixing one’s thoughts to *HaShem*-יהוה, blessed is He, with great strength, so that his contemplation will not result in false self-delusions.<sup>233</sup>

---

<sup>233</sup> See Tanya, Ch. 3

#### 4.

Now, regarding what one should contemplate, there is a well-known difference between the faith that comes about through the wisdom of philosophical inquiry, which is the wisdom of the pious of the nations of the world,<sup>234</sup> and the faith of the Jewish people. The faith of the pious of the nations of the world is solely in the aspect of how *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, fills the worlds (*Memale Kol Almin*). This refers to the vitality and life-force that manifests within all the details within creation. The resultant view of this perspective is that the world does indeed have an existence, although it is sublimated and dependent upon the vitality that is manifest within it. This perspective arises from the name, "אלהי"ם-*m*"God-*Elohi*."

In contrast, the faith of the Jewish people is in the aspect of how *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, utterly transcends the worlds (*Sovev Kol Almin*), which is the general transcendence of *HaShem*-יהו"ה that encompasses all of existence, and is beyond reason, knowledge, and division.

In even greater detail, there actually are three levels of faith. There is the faith in the aspect of how *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, fills all worlds (*Memale Kol Almin*). Then there is the faith in how *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, utterly transcends all worlds (*Sovev Kol Almin*). Then there is the faith

---

<sup>234</sup> See Siddur Im Divrei Elokim Chaim, Shaar Chag HaMatzot p. 284c & 287b and on. Sefer HaMitzvot of the Tzemach Tzedek, p. 23a; Sefer HaMaamarim 5626 p. 244; Likkutei Sichot, Vol. 3, p. 1,015.

in the aspect of the Singular Intrinsic Essential Being of *HaShem*-יהו"ה Himself, which utterly transcends any relation to worlds altogether, and is beyond both transcending all worlds (*Sovev Kol Almin*), and filling all worlds (*Memale Kol Almin*).

In other words, there is the faith that comes through philosophical inquiry, which even the pious of the nations of the world possess. Then there is a higher level of faith, which is specifically the faith of the Jewish people, because of which they are called, “the faithful-*Ma’aminim*.” There is yet a higher level, which is that the Jewish people are also called, “the children of the faithful-*Bnei Ma’aminim*.”<sup>235</sup> This third level refers to the faith that comes to us as an inheritance from our forefather Avraham, peace be upon him.

The explanation is that the first level, is faith that is also graspable with human intellect. This is the faith-*Emunah* in the aspect of how *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, fills all worlds (*Memale Kol Almin*). This is like the teaching of our sages, of blessed memory,<sup>236</sup> “Just as the soul fills the body, so too the Holy One, blessed is He, fills the earth.” For, man is called a microcosm of the world.<sup>237</sup> This is likewise stated in Otiyot D’Rabbi Nathan that,<sup>238</sup> “everything that was created in man was likewise created in the world,” and the world is likewise called a “large body,”<sup>239</sup> or “macrocosm.”

---

<sup>235</sup> Talmud Bavli, Shabbat 97a; Midrash Shmot Rabba 23:5

<sup>236</sup> Midrash Vayikra Rabba, end of Ch. 4; Midrash Tehillim 103:1; Talmud Bavli, Brachot 10a

<sup>237</sup> Midrash Tanchumah, Pekudei 3; Tikkunei Zohar, Tikkun 69 100b & 101a

<sup>238</sup> Otiyot D’Rabbi Nathan, end of Ch. 31

<sup>239</sup> Moreh HaNevuchim Vol. 1, Ch. 72

Thus, “just as the soul fills the body,” in that the body, in and of itself, is entirely inanimate and all its vitality is from the soul, so likewise, the vitality of the worlds is the Godly vitality that manifests within them. In other words, the very same proofs that demonstrate that the existence of the soul vitalizes the body, are used to demonstrate that Godly vitality vitalizes the world.

Now, although this is something that the intellect can comprehend, it nevertheless requires the matter of faith-*Emunah*. The reason is because the substance and physicality of the body covers over and conceals the intellect. For example, we clearly observe that when a person becomes heavily invested in the pursuit of his lusts, God forbid, he will act irrationally and not according to intellect at all. It goes without saying that he is not acting according to the Godly intellect of the Jewish people.

It is about this that our sages, of blessed memory, stated,<sup>240</sup> “A person commits a transgression only if a spirit of folly enters him.” This applies even to the human intellect of the nations of the world. That is, when a person is ruled by his lusts, they have dominion over him and his intellect has no control at all. Therefore, this type of comprehension alone is inadequate in keeping a person from sin and must be conjoined to the matter of faith-*Emunah*. Nevertheless, this kind of faith is understandable, even by the intellect.

---

<sup>240</sup> Talmud Bavli, Sotah 3a

Above this is the level of faith-*Emunah* in the aspect of how *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, transcends all worlds (*Sovev Kol Almin*), in that He encompasses and surrounds them all equally. (This is unlike the aspect of how He fills all the worlds, wherein there are divisions and differences between one world and another.) In the soul of man, an example of this would be the general life force that vitalizes the totality of his body equally, in which there is no distinction between the head and the foot. It is in regard to this aspect that the Jewish people are called, "the faithful-*Ma'aminim*," since they have faith in this aspect of how *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, transcends and encompasses all worlds (*Sovev Kol Almin*).

Now, there is yet another aspect of faith-*Emunah* which is even loftier than this. This is the faith-*Emunah* in the aspect of the Godliness that is even beyond *HaShem*'s transcendence over all worlds (*Sovev Kol Almin*). For, in the aspect of how *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, transcends all worlds, there still, at the very least, is some relation to worlds, even if only in a manner of negation. In other words, when we say that this aspect of *HaShem*'s Godliness is not in the category of worlds, nevertheless, in the very statement itself, that "He is not related to worlds," there is some relation to worlds, at least in a way of negation.

In truth, however, the fact that He brings the worlds into existence, is not at all of His Essential Self.<sup>241</sup> Rather, what is understood from this, is that His Singular Intrinsic Essential

---

<sup>241</sup> See Torah Ohr, Megilat Esther 99b; Likkutei Torah Shir HaShirim 8a, See Ginat Egoz, translated as, HaShem is One, volume one.

Being, blessed is He, as He is, in and of Himself, is beyond even a negative relation to worlds. The Jewish people are thus called “sons of the faithful-*Bnei Ma’aminim*,” in relation to our faith in the Singular Essential Intrinsic Being of the Unlimited One, *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, who even transcends the aspect of transcending all worlds (*Sovev Kol Almin*). This faith is our inheritance from our forefather Avraham, peace be upon him, who is called, “the first of the faithful.”<sup>242</sup>

We should add that even in the aspect of the faith in how *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, fills all worlds (*Memale Kol Almin*), there is a vast difference between the faith of Jewish people and the faith of other nations. This may be likened to the fact that there is no comparison between the world of Action-*Asiyah* of the three worlds of Creation-*Briyah*, Formation-*Yetzirah*, and Action-*Asiyah*, to the aspect of Action-*Asiyah* of the world of Emanation-*Atzilut*. For, as is simply understood, there is a screen (*Parsa*) between the world of Emanation-*Atzilut* and the worlds of Creation-*Briyah*, Formation-*Yetzirah*, and Action-*Asiyah*, and the light that comes through that screen is the aspect of a secondary, novel light.<sup>243</sup>

The same applies to the matter of faith-*Emunah*. Namely, since the Jewish people possess faith in the aspect of how *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, transcends all worlds (*Sovev Kol Almin*) and even higher, it is self-understood that their faith

---

<sup>242</sup> Midrash Shir HaShirim Rabba 4:8

<sup>243</sup> Etz Chaim, Shaar 42, Ch. 13; Torah Ohr Vayera 14a and on. Also see Shaar HaYichud of the Mittler Rebbe, translated as The Gate of Unity, Ch. 51.

in the aspect of how *HaShem*-יהו"ה fills all worlds, (*Memale Kol Almin*) is of an altogether different level and category.

## 5.

The explanation is as follows: The aspect of how *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, fills all worlds (*Memale Kol Almin*) is called, "the Supernal speech."<sup>244</sup> That is, it is similar to speech, which is to one's fellow, in that speech is the aspect of revelation to another person, and is in the category of relating to others. Additionally, speech can cease, as it states,<sup>245</sup> "There is a time to keep silent and a time to speak." The same applies to the aspect of how *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, fills all worlds (*Memale Kol Almin*), which is revelation to another, in which there is division.

Now, the world of speech (*Olam HaDibur*) is called by the term,<sup>246</sup> "the city of our God-*Elohei*"*nu*-אלהינו,"<sup>247</sup> in that it is related to the title God-*Elohi*"*m*-אלהים. In other words, when the essential name *HaShem*-יהו"ה is concealed, and the title God-*Elohi*"*m*-אלהים is revealed, then it is called, "the city of our God-*Eer Elohei*"*nu*-עיר אלהינו," which is the aspect of the world of speech (*Olam HaDeebur*) wherein there is division etc.

---

<sup>244</sup> Sefer HaMitzvot of the Tzemach Tzedek Ibid.

<sup>245</sup> Ecclesiastes 3:7

<sup>246</sup> Psalms 48:2

<sup>247</sup> See Torah Ohr Veyera 56b and on; Sefer HaMaamarim 5700 p. 139 and on;

It is with this in mind that we may understand the Halachic ruling<sup>248</sup> (cited in the teachings of Chassidut<sup>249</sup>), that the sons of Noah were not commanded against the conjoining or partnering of *HaShem* with matters in creation (*Shituf*). At first glance, however, if the Jewish people were indeed commanded against conjoining or partnering *HaShem* with matters in creation (*Shituf*) since the reality is that indeed *HaShem*-יהו"ה is utterly beyond creation and has no partner, since this is so, why is it that the sons of Noah were not commanded against such partnering (*Shituf*)?

The explanation is that the sons of Noah are rooted in the aspect of how *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, fills all worlds (*Memale Kol Almin*), and in this aspect, which is the world of speech, there indeed is a matter of division-*Hitchalkut*-התחלקות. This is indicated by the verse,<sup>250</sup> “And lest you raise your eyes to the heavens and you see the sun and the moon and the stars – the entire legion of the heavens – and you be drawn astray to bow to them and worship them, which *HaShem*-יהו"ה, your God, has apportioned-*Chalak*-חלק to all the other nations under the entire heaven.” Because of this view of the nations of the world, they have turned it into a matter of partnering (*Shituf*), in that they call Him the, “God of the gods.”<sup>251</sup>

---

<sup>248</sup> Rama to Orach Chaim 156:1 and the Darkei Moshe there

<sup>249</sup> Sefer HaMitzvot of the Tzemach Tzedek 59b; Ohr HaTorah Noach Vol. 3, p. 658a and on; Ohr HaTorah Bereishit Vol. 7 p. 1,164b; Sefer HaMaamarim 5626 p. 18 & 187; 5629 p. 155 and on; Bati Legani 5713 Ch. 3; Mayim Rabim 5717 Ch. 3; and elsewhere.

<sup>250</sup> Deuteronomy 4:19; Also see Ramaz commentary to Zohar III 286b cited in the Sefer HaMitzvot and Torah Ohr *ibid*.

<sup>251</sup> Talmud Bavli, Menachot 110a

Now, all the above is in regard to the matter of speech (*Dibur*), which is the aspect of how *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, fills all worlds (*Memale Kol Almin*). However, the aspect of how *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, transcends all worlds (*Sovev Kol Almin*) is the matter of thought (*Machshavah*). Unlike speech, thought never ceases, but rather, constantly flows. Additionally, the “garment” of thought is unified with the soul.

This then,<sup>252</sup> is why the faith of the nations is only in the aspect of how *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, fills all worlds (*Memale Kol Almin*), whereas the faith-*Emunah* of the Jewish people is in the aspect of how *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, transcends all worlds (*Sovev Kol Almin*). For, the nations of the world are rooted in the title God-*Elohi*”מ-אלהי, which is the aspect of how *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, fills all worlds (*Memale Kol Almin*) and is the world of speech (*Olam HaDibur*). In contrast, the Jewish people are rooted in the aspect of how *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, transcends all worlds (*Sovev Kol Almin*), and is the world of thought (*Olam HaMachshavah*), for, as we are taught,<sup>253</sup> “Israel arose in thought.”

Now, in regard to the faith that the Jewish people have in the aspect of the Essential Self of *HaShem*-יהו"ה Himself, blessed is He, who transcends relation to worlds **altogether**, including the aspect that He transcends all worlds (*Sovev Kol*

---

<sup>252</sup> See Siddur Im Divrei Elokim Chaim, Shaar Lag Ba’Omer 305a and on; Ohr HaTorah Na”ch, Vol. 2, p. 956 and on.

<sup>253</sup> Midrash Bereishit Rabba 1:4

*Almin*), this is because “Israel arose-*Alu*-עלו” – that is, ascended – “in thought.” This is according to the well-known explanation<sup>254</sup> of the teaching that, “Israel arose-*Alu*-עלו in thought,” meaning that they ascended-*Alu*-עלו to the loftiest level of thought, which transcends all revelations (*Giluyim*) entirely. Moreover, in reality, they even are rooted higher than thought (*Machshavah*) altogether.

For, even this aspect of, “they ascended in thought,” is already within the category of thought, albeit, the loftiest level of thought. This is like our sages, of blessed memory, stated,<sup>255</sup> “The thought for the Jewish people preceded everything.” In other words, although it preceded everything, they nevertheless related this thought to everything, only that it was first and preceded everything. However, the true root of the souls of the Jewish people is entirely beyond thought, and even beyond the loftiest level of thought, to the point that it is not even applicable to say about it, that it “preceded everything,” since really, there is no relativity between them and “everything,” whatsoever.

It is about this that our sages, of blessed memory, stated,<sup>256</sup> “The Holy One, blessed is He, consulted the souls of the righteous to create the world.” In other words, even the consideration and consultation to create the thought itself, arose with the council of the souls of the Jewish people. It thus is understood from this that the souls of the Jewish people entirely transcend even the matter of thought-*Machshavah*. In other

---

<sup>254</sup> Likkutei Torah Shir HaShirim 17d and on; Sefer HaMaamarim 5700 p. 17 & p. 27; 5703 p. 74 and elsewhere.

<sup>255</sup> Midrash Bereishit Rabba 1:4 Ibid.

<sup>256</sup> Midrash Ruth Rabba 2:3

words, the matter that,<sup>257</sup> “Israel arose in thought” is only how this comes forth into revelation, but their essential root is actually higher than this, about which it states, “The Holy One, blessed is He, consulted the souls of the righteous to create the world.” Thus, because of their root in this higher aspect, their faith-*Emunah* is even in the Essential Intrinsic Preexistent Being of the Unlimited One, *HaShem*-יהו"ה Himself, blessed is He.

## 6.

Now, although the Jewish people have all aspects of faith-*Emunah*, not only faith in how *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, fills all worlds (*Memale Kol Almin*), and not only faith in how *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, transcends all worlds (*Sovev Kol Almin*), but even faith-*Emunah* in the aspect of the Essential Intrinsic Preexistent Being of the Unlimited One Himself, *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, they nevertheless need Moshe, the “shepherd of faith,” to sustain and nourish them with faith-*Emunah*. What this means is that even faith in the Essential Intrinsic Preexistent Being of the Unlimited One, *HaShem*-יהו"ה Himself, blessed is He, is insufficient. For, since it is only in a manner of inheritance, it is entirely possible for it to remain dormant. Thus, Moshe is needed to reveal it from concealment into revelation.

---

<sup>257</sup> Midrash Bereishit Rabba 1:4

Moreover, it even is possible for the faith-*Emunah* in how *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, transcends all worlds (*Sovev Kol Almin*) to remain in an encompassing aspect of transcendence. It thus is necessary for Moshe to draw forth this faith for it to penetrate internally.

Beyond even this, it is quite possible that even in the aspect of the faith of how *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, fills all worlds (*Memale Kol Almin*), which the intellect can grasp, there still must be an aspect of, "nourishing faith," so that these matters penetrate all of one's inner being, to the point that the true reality of *HaShem*-יהו"ה manifests in ones thought, speech, and action.

Without this, it is entirely possible for a person to find himself in the category of,<sup>258</sup> "A thief, when standing on the threshold, calls out to the Merciful One for assistance," as understood quite simply from what we explained before. In other words, because one is so invested into the lusts of this world, it is possible for him to do things that even the pious of the nations would not do.

This is why the actions of Moshe, the shepherd of faith, are so needed, for it is he who sustains and nourishes faith-*Emunah*. This is because it states about Moshe,<sup>259</sup> "Because I drew him-*Mesheeteehu*-משיתיהו from the water," which refers to the aspect of the Supernal waters that even transcend the aspect of,<sup>260</sup> "Even the heavens and the heavens of the heavens

---

<sup>258</sup> Talmud Bavli, Brachot 20a

<sup>259</sup> Exodus 2:10; Torah Ohr Mishpatim 76c; Also see chapter 4 of the prior discourse of this year.

<sup>260</sup> Kings I 8:27

cannot contain You,” which is the aspect how *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, transcends all worlds (*Sovev Kol Almin*).

It is for this reason that Moshe is able to even draw forth faith-*Emunah* in the aspect of the very Essential Intrinsic Preexistent Being of the Unlimited One, *HaShem*-יהו"ה Himself, blessed is He. Moshe specifically draws this faith-*Emunah* to the fore in the Jewish people, since because of their essential root, they already possess this aspect of faith-*Emunah*.

(This is as previously explained<sup>261</sup> regarding the matter of the verse,<sup>262</sup> “If you acquire a Hebrew servant etc.,” which is like the acquisition of something, wherein there is no novelty or change to the existence of the thing itself, but only a transference from one domain to the other, from concealment into revelation.)

## 7.

Based upon all the above we may now also understand the matter of the half-shekel. For, about the half-shekel, our sages, of blessed memory, stated,<sup>263</sup> “The Holy One, blessed is He, showed Moshe a coin of fire, and told him, ‘Like this one they shall give.’” In other words, by giving the half-shekel here below, which is the aspect of the awakening from below, we draw forth the aspect of the, “coin of fire,” from Above, which

---

<sup>261</sup> See the prior discourse entitled “These are the ordinances-*V’Eleh HaMishpatim*” 5711, where this was explained.

<sup>262</sup> Exodus 21:2

<sup>263</sup> Talmud Yerushalmi Shekalim 1:4; Midrash Tanchumah Tisa 9; Rashi to Exodus 30:13, and elsewhere.

is the aspect of the awakening from Above. However, this is only the aspect of the awaking from Above that is affected and reached by the awakening from below. Nevertheless, it is through this that there subsequently is a drawing down of the aspect of an awaking from Above, that is entirely beyond the reach of the awakening from below.

This accords with what is explained regarding the matter of the desire of the heart (*Re'uta D'Leeba*), that there are two levels in it. The first is the aspect of the desire of the heart (*Re'uta D'Leeba*) that is roused through contemplation-*Hitbonenut*. In other words, although it itself is beyond comprehension, nevertheless, it is drawn forth by means of the contemplation-*Hitbonenut*. Then, there is the aspect of the desire of the heart (*Re'uta D'Leeba*) that is not drawn forth through any contemplation-*Hitbonenut*, but is of the essence of the soul itself.

It is this latter aspect that is the matter of the “half-shekel of the sacred-*Kodesh*-קדש shekel.” That is, the verse specifies “sacred-*Kodesh*-קדש” without the letter *Vav*-ו, which is loftier than “holy-*Kadosh*-קדוש.” As known, the difference between the term “sacred-*Kodesh*-קדש” and “holy-*Kadosh*-קדוש,” is that the term “holy-*Kadosh*-קדוש” with the letter *Vav*-ו indicates the expressions and descent of drawing down. This is as explained regarding *HaShem*’s title, “The Holy One, blessed is He-*HaKadosh Baruch Hoo*-הוא הקדוש ברוך.”

In other words, although holiness-*Kadosh*-קדוש is likewise a term of separation, in that He is holy and transcendent, nevertheless, He is also blessed-*Baruch*-ברוך,

which means that He is drawn down. This is further hinted at in the fact that the term “holy-*Kadosh*-קדוש,” has the *Vav*-ו present, which indicates a drawing down from Above to below.<sup>264</sup> In other words, the term “holy-*Kadosh*-קדוש,” with the *Vav*-ו, at the very least denotes the aspect of how *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, transcends the worlds (*Sovev Kol Almin*), in which there is already a relation to worlds, even if only in a way of negation.

In contrast, the term “sacred-*Kodesh*-קדש” is as stated,<sup>265</sup> “*Kodesh*-קדש is a matter entirely unto to itself,” indicating the aspect that transcends even the aspect of how *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, transcends all worlds (*Sovev Kol Almin*).

This, then, explains the continuation of the verse,<sup>266</sup> “every man shall give *HaShem*-יהו"ה an atonement for his soul.” In other words, through giving this half-shekel, there is a drawing down of the aspect of the Intrinsic Preexistent Essential Being of the Unlimited One, *HaShem*-יהו"ה Himself, blessed is He, since this is from the aspect of the singular-*Yechidah* essence of the soul. As known,<sup>267</sup> the aspect of the Singular One-*Yachid*-יחיד,<sup>268</sup> blessed is He, manifests within the singular-*Yechidah* essence of the soul, since it is rooted in the

---

<sup>264</sup> Likkutei Torah Tazria 22c & 24b; Shir HaShirim 40c and on.

<sup>265</sup> Zohar III 94b

<sup>266</sup> Exodus 30:12

<sup>267</sup> Likkutei Torah, Re'eh 25a; Sefer HaMaamarim 5696 p. 57

<sup>268</sup> See Shaar HaYichud of the Mittler Rebbe, translated as The Gate of Unity, Chapters 10 & 11.

Essential Self of the Unlimited One, *HaShem*-יהו"ה Himself, blessed is He, as explained before.

It is about all this that the verse states, “When you uplift the head of the children of Israel,” referring to Moshe, who uplifts and elevates the head of the Jewish people. It is through this, that the matter of the “atonement of his soul,” is possible, which is the matter of drawing down the Singular Intrinsic Being of the Unlimited One, *HaShem*-יהו"ה Himself, blessed is He.

From all the above we can also understand what our sages, of blessed memory, stated in the Midrash. That is,<sup>269</sup> “Moshe asked the Holy One, blessed is He, about the commandment of the half-shekel, ‘What will be with it in the coming generations?’ The Holy One, blessed is He, responded, ‘This is why it states, ‘When you uplift,’ in the future tense.’”

Now, at first glance, it is not understood why Moshe specifically asked about this commandment. However, the explanation is that within this commandment-*Mitzvah* the entirety of the matter of man’s service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, is included. This refers to the sacrificial offerings that were funded by the half-shekel, through which the animalistic souls of the Jewish people become diminished and included in holiness. That is, that which cannot be purified becomes diminished, and that which can be purified becomes included in holiness, to the point that the service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה is such,

---

<sup>269</sup> Midrash Tanchumah Tisa 3; Torah Sheleima Tisa 30:12, Ch. 38

that “every man shall give *HaShem*-יהו"ה an atonement for his soul.”

It is through this that we then arrive at the aspect of the “sacred-*Kodesh*-קדש shekel,” which is the aspect of, “*Kodesh*-קדש is a matter entirely unto itself.” In other words, not only do we draw forth the aspect of how *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, fills all worlds (*Memale Kol Almin*), and not only the aspect of how *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, transcends all worlds (*Sovev Kol Almin*), but even the aspect of the Singular Essential Intrinsic Being of the Unlimited One Himself, *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, “before Whom all is as nothing.”<sup>270</sup> It is because of this that Moshe specifically asked about this particular commandment and what would be of it in future generations.

Thus, the Holy One, blessed is He, answered him that He wrote in the Torah the words, “When you uplift,” in the future tense. In other words, it applies to all generations, since there is an offshoot of Moshe in each and every generation. That is, the Moshe of each generation must draw forth not only the aspect of how *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, fills all worlds (*Memale Kol Almin*), and not only the aspect of how *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, transcends all worlds (*Sovev Kol Almin*), but even the aspect of the Singular Intrinsic Essential Being of the Unlimited One, *HaShem*-יהו"ה Himself, blessed is He, “before Whom all is as nothing,”<sup>271</sup> and,<sup>272</sup> “There is nothing aside for Him.”

---

<sup>270</sup> Zohar I 11b; Daniel 4:32

<sup>271</sup> Zohar I 11b; Daniel 4:32

<sup>272</sup> Deuteronomy 4:35