

Discourse 15

“*VeHayah Eikev Tishme’un* -

And it shall come to pass, that because you listen”

Delivered on Shabbat Parshat Eikev,
Shabbat Mevarchim Elul, 5711
By the grace of *HaShem*, blessed is He,

1.

The verse states,⁹⁷⁹ “And it shall be, that because you listen to these ordinances, to keep and do them; that *HaShem*-יהוה your God, will safeguard for you, the covenant and the kindness that He swore unto your forefathers. He will love you, bless you and increase you. He will bless the fruit of your womb and the fruit of your Land...”

Now, we must understand⁹⁸⁰ the inner theme of these three matters, the covenant (*Brit*-ברית), the kindness (*Chessed*-חסד), and the oath (*Shvu’ah*-שבועה). According to the simple understanding of the verse, this matter seems to be conditional. That is, “**Because** you listen to these ordinances etc., then He will safeguard for you, the covenant and the kindness that He swore etc. Now, we must understand this, for these matters are not at all dependent on conditions, but rather are unconditional.

⁹⁷⁹ Deuteronomy 7:12-13

⁹⁸⁰ See the discourse by the same title 5673 (*Hemshech* 5672 Vol. 1, p. 355).

This is because the matter of a covenant (*Brit*-ברית)⁹⁸¹ is like two friends who make a covenant between each other, that in the event that something comes between them, to stop their love (for example, if one of them acts improperly towards the other), it nevertheless, will not diminish their love for each other at all. We thus find that the matter of a covenant (*Brit*-ברית) is unconditional.

The same is true of the oath (*Shvu'ah*-שבועה). It too is unconditional. For example, this is similar to the oath that the Jewish people took to fulfill the commandments of *HaShem*-יהו"ה.⁹⁸² That is, even if there are obstacles and hindrances to the fulfillment of the commandments, the purpose of the oath (*Shvu'ah*-שבועה) is that, because of it, one remains entirely unmoved by any hindrances and fulfills the commandments nonetheless.⁹⁸³ This likewise is true of the oath (*Shvu'ah*-שבועה) of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He,⁹⁸⁴ as it states,⁹⁸⁵ “‘In Myself I have sworn,’ said *HaShem*-יהו"ה etc.,” and it similarly states,⁹⁸⁶ “As You swore to our forefathers from the days of old.” The intention of this oath, is that regardless of the state

⁹⁸¹ See Likkutei Torah, Netzavim 44b and elsewhere.

⁹⁸² Talmud Bavli, Nedarim 8a; Kuntres U'Maayan, Maamar 14, Ch. 1

⁹⁸³ See Kli Yakar to Deuteronomy 7:12; Discourse by the same title 5634 (Sefer HaMaamarim 5634, p. 290).

⁹⁸⁴ See Likkutei Torah, Shmini Atzeret 83b and on; Maamarei Admor HaZaken, Ethalech Liozhna p. 205; Sefer HaMaamarim 5635 p. 434; Kitzurim V'Ha'arot L'Tanya p. 52 and on; Sefer HaMaamarim 5698 p. 239 and on.

⁹⁸⁵ Genesis 22:16

⁹⁸⁶ Micah 7:20

and standing of the Jewish people, the Holy One, blessed is He, has bound Himself to fulfilling His oath.⁹⁸⁷

The same is so regarding the matter of kindness (*Chessed*-חסד), which also is unconditional. Kindness (*Chessed*) is the indiscriminate bestowal of influence to all, not only to the worthy, but even to the unworthy.⁹⁸⁸ To further explain, the difference between the qualities of kindness-*Chessed*, judgment-*Gevurah*, and mercy-*Rachamim* is well known. Namely, that the attribute of judgment-*Gevurah* means that *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, is exacting, even with those who are worthy. The attribute of mercy-*Rachamim* means that even if someone is unworthy, nevertheless, *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, bestows His influence upon him. However, in the case of mercy-*Rachamim*, the distinction between one who is worthy and one who is unworthy is apparent and taken into consideration. In contrast, the attribute of kindness-*Chessed* means that *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, bestows his influence to all without any consideration as to whether the beneficiaries of the kindness are worthy or not.

This being the case, that these matters are unconditional, why then does the verse state, "And it shall come to pass, that **because** you listen to these ordinances, to keep and do them, that "*HaShem*-יהו"ה your God, will safeguard for you, the **covenant** and the **kindness** that He **swore** unto your forefathers"?

⁹⁸⁷ See the lengthy explanation of this in Ginat Egoz of Rabbi Yosef Gikatilla, translated as *HaShem is One*, Volume 2.

⁹⁸⁸ *Likkutei Torah*, Dvarim 1d; *Igrot Kodesh* of the Rebbe Rashab Vol. 1, p. 74 and on; *Sefer HaMaamarim* 5709 p. 8 and on.

Additionally, we must understand why the Torah specifically uses the word, “And it shall come to pass, that **because-*Eikev***-עַקֵּב you listen.” That is, if it is indeed conditional, then the word, “**if-*Im***-אִם” would have been more appropriate. That is, it could have said, “And it shall come to pass, that **if-*Im***-אִם you listen.” This would be similar to the verse,⁹⁸⁹ “And it shall come to pass, that if-*Im*-אִם you listen diligently to My commandments etc.” Why then does this verse specifically use the word, “because-*Eikev*-עַקֵּב,” stating, “And it shall come to pass, that because-*Eikev*-עַקֵּב you listen”?

Now, (based on the words of Midrash Tanchuma that the word *Eikev*-עַקֵּב means “heel”) Rashi comments that,⁹⁹⁰ “If you will heed the minor commandments that one tramples with his heels [and considers to be of minor importance].” However, this too must be understood, since according to this explanation, the continuation of the verse is not understood. Namely, the verse continues, “because you listen to these ordinances,” specifying the commandments that are known as “ordinances-*Mishpatim*-משפטים.”

As known, there are three categories of commandments-*mitzvot*: Testimonies-*Eidot*-עדות, Decrees-*Chukim*-חוקים, and Ordinances-*Mishpatim*-משפטים. The laws known as Ordinances-*Mishpatim*-משפטים are those laws that are imperative by reason and intellect, even without having been commanded. Testimonies-*Eidot*-עדות are laws that, once they are commanded, make intellectual sense, even though we

⁹⁸⁹ Deuteronomy 11:13

⁹⁹⁰ Rashi to

would never have come to do them of our own volition, had they not been commanded. Nevertheless, once they are commanded, it makes intellectual sense to fulfill them, because of what they commemorate and attest to, such as the commandments that recall and attest to the exodus from Egypt.

Decrees-*Chukim*-חוקים, on the other hand, are those commandments about which, “the nations of the world taunt Israel, saying, ‘What is this commandment and what purpose does it serve?’”⁹⁹¹ In other words, these are commandments that make no sense to human intellect whatsoever, but are done solely because they are the decrees of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, as it states,⁹⁹² “They are statutes that I have engraved and the decrees that I have decreed etc.” This being the case, when the Torah mentions the commandments that, “one tramples with his heels,” and considers to be of minor importance, it should have instead mentioned “Decrees-*Chukim*-חוקים” or “Testimonies-*Eidot*-עדות.” Why then did it specifically mention “Ordinances-*Mishpatim*-משפטים?”

2.

To understand this, we must preface⁹⁹³ with the teaching in Zohar that,⁹⁹⁴ “There are three levels that are bound one to the other; the Jewish people are bound to the Torah and the

⁹⁹¹ Rashi to Numbers 19:2; Midrash Bamidbar Rabba 19:8

⁹⁹² Midrash Bamidbar Rabba, beginning of Parshat Chukat.

⁹⁹³ See *Hemshech* 5672 Ibid. p. 356 and on; Torat Menachem, Sefer HaMaamarim Iyar, p. 284 and on and the citations there.

⁹⁹⁴ Zohar III 73a

Torah is bound to the Holy One, blessed is He. Each is a level upon a level, with a concealed aspect and a revealed aspect.” In other words, this bond is not only in the concealed aspect of the Jewish people, which are the elevated powers of the soul itself, but even in the revealed aspect of the Jewish people, meaning in the revealed powers of the soul. In other words, this teaching does not only relate to the Godly soul of the Jew, but rather, through it, even the revealed powers of the animalistic soul of the Jew become bonded to Torah and to the Holy One, blessed is He.

To further explain,⁹⁹⁵ the term, “binding-*Hitkashrut*-התקשרות” (or in the language of the Zohar, “*Mitkashran*-מתקשראן”) is only applicable in regard to two things that are separate from each other. In contrast, in regard to something that is one, the term “binding-*Hitkashrut*-התקשרות” is not an appropriate term. Instead, the term “adhesion-*Dveikut*-דביקות” should be used. An example of this is the bond that exists between light-*Ohr*-אור and its luminary-*Ma'or*-מאור, in which the light is not a separate entity from the luminary at all, but is merely the revelation of the luminary itself. It therefore would be inappropriate to use the word, “binding-*Hitkashrut*-התקשרות” in regard to their bond, but rather, the term “adhesion-*Dveikut*-דביקות,” which indicates that they are essentially bound and unified as one.

In the same manner, the soul as it is above, is in a state of adhesion-*Dveikut*-דביקות to Godliness. As Tanya specifies,⁹⁹⁶

⁹⁹⁵ See Likkutei Sichot Vol. 9, p. 73 and note 15 there.

⁹⁹⁶ Tanya, Ch. 37 (48a)

“Even if the soul becomes perfectly righteous in this world, serving *HaShem*-יהו"ה with fear and love and delighting in the abundant love of Him, it will not attain the level of **its adhesion-Dveikut**-דביקות to *HaShem*-יהו"ה, with the same fear and love that the soul experienced before it descended into the physical world, not even a fraction of it.”

It is only when the soul descends and comes to a state of seeming independence of existence, that it becomes applicable to use the term “binding-*Hitkashrut*-התקשרות.” In other words, as long as the soul is in a state of, “she is pure-*Tehorah Hee*-טהורה היא,”⁹⁹⁷ it is in a state of adhesion-*Dveikut*-דביקות to Godliness. However, when it comes to a state of, “You created it, You formed it, You blew it into me and You preserve it within me,”⁹⁹⁸ it then is in a state of “somethingness” and has a sense of independent existence, in which case, its bond to Godliness is in a state of being “bound-*Hitkashrut*-התקשרות” to Godliness. It is about these aspects of the soul that Zohar states, “There are three levels that are bound to each other, the Jewish people are bound to the Torah and the Torah is bound to the Holy One, blessed is He.”

Albeit, there is an advantage to the matter of, “binding-*Hitkashrut*-התקשרות” below, over and above the matter of “adhesion-*Dveikut*-דביקות” Above. That is, it is specifically through the matter of “binding-*Hitkashrut*-התקשרות” below, that we come to attain an even loftier level.

⁹⁹⁷ Elokai Neshamah blessing in the morning prayers (Talmud Brachot 60b); See Likkutei Torah Re'eh 27a.

⁹⁹⁸ Continuation of the Elokai Neshamah blessing.

This matter may be understood by the explanation of the verse that states,⁹⁹⁹ “I am black, but beautiful, O’ daughters of Jerusalem.” “Daughters of Jerusalem” refers to the soul as it is Above.¹⁰⁰⁰ That is, as the soul is Above, it is called, “The daughters of Jerusalem-*Bnot Yerushalyim*-בנות ירושלים,” since it is in a state of, “complete and perfect fear-*Yirah Shelimah*-יראה שלימה” of *HaShem*-ה'הו, blessed is He (The name “*Yerushalayim*-ירושלים” means, “perfect fear-*Yirah Shalem*-שלם יראה.”)¹⁰⁰¹ This refers to what we previously cited from Tanya, that,¹⁰⁰² “Even if the soul becomes perfectly righteous (*Tzaddik*) in this world, serving *HaShem*-ה'הו with fear and love of Him, and delighting in the abundant love of Him, it will not attain the level of its adhesion-*Dveikut*-דביקות to *HaShem*-ה'הו, with the fear and love that it experienced before descending into the physical world, not even a fraction of it.” In other words, it is only as the soul is Above that it is in a state of “perfect fear-*Yirah Shelimah*-יראה שלימה,” and it is about this that the souls of the Jewish people are called, “the daughters of Jerusalem-*Bnot Yerushalyim*-בנות ירושלים.”

More specifically, the term, “daughters of Jerusalem-*Bnot Yerushalyim*-בנות ירושלים,” refers to the souls as they are in the aspect of kingship-*Malchut* of the world of Emanation-*Atzilut*.¹⁰⁰³ This is because matters of love and fear of *HaShem*-ה'הו, blessed is He, are not applicable in levels that are higher

⁹⁹⁹ Song of Songs 1:5

¹⁰⁰⁰ Likkutei Torah, Shir HaShirim 6c.

¹⁰⁰¹ Midrash Bereishit Rabba 56:10

¹⁰⁰² Tanya, Ch. 37 (48a)

¹⁰⁰³ Likkutei Torah, Shir HaShirim Ibid. 7b.

than the *Sefirah* of kingship-*Malchut*. This is because, higher than the *Sefirah* of kingship-*Malchut* there is no existence of a separate being for there to be “one who loves” or “one who fears.” Rather, it is only in kingship-*Malchut* of Emanation-*Atzilut*, which is the aspect of the revelation of the world of Emanation-*Atzilut*, that is, the aspect that there is something-*Yesh* that is emanated, that the matter of fear is applicable.

It is because of this that the verse states, “I am black, but beautiful.” In other words, this statement is said by the soul, as it is below, to the souls, as they are Above (wherein they are called “the daughters of Jerusalem-*Bnot Yerushalayim*-בנות ירושלים.”) The words, “I am black” refer to the darkening and concealment of light and illumination, in that the soul is in a state of separateness from the Essential Being of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, the Unlimited One, Himself, blessed is He.

Moreover, she even is separate from the aspect of “the daughters of Jerusalem-*Bnot Yerushalayim*-בנות ירושלים,” mentioned above, in that she is not in a state of “perfect fear-*Yirah Shalem*-יראה שלם” of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He. For, “even if the soul becomes perfectly righteous in this world... it will not attain the level of its adhesion-*Dveikut*-דביקות to *HaShem*-יהו"ה, with the fear and love, that the soul experienced before it descended into the physical world, not even to a fraction of it.”

The reason is because the body is incapable of withstanding this. Thus, as the soul exists and resides in the body, it is self-understood that it is very distant from perfect fear (*Yirah Shalem*-יראה שלם) of *HaShem*-יהו"ה. Moreover, it

resides and exists in,¹⁰⁰⁴ “a parched and thirsty land with no water.” In other words, in this physical world, the possibility exists for the soul to come to transgress positive commandments and even to transgress matters that the advice is to sit idly, rather than to transgress.¹⁰⁰⁵

Even so, (though I am black) “I am beautiful.” In other words, it is specifically when the soul is here below that it is in the ultimate state of attractiveness and beauty. That is, it is specifically because of the concealment and hiddenness of Godliness, as the soul exists below, that it is roused with great thirst for Godliness, with passionate love of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, like “flames of fire,”¹⁰⁰⁶ referring to the level of ultimate beauty of the love. (This is in contrast to the soul, as it is Above, where there are no concealments and hiddenness, and it is not in a state of thirst for Godliness.) Thus, as the soul exists below, it is in the ultimate state of beauty (and “attractiveness”).

3.

However, this needs to be understood, because at first glance, the advantage that the soul has as a result of its descent below, that due to the concealment and hiddenness it becomes roused with thirst and love, “like flames of fire,” is only applicable to the matter of **love** of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He.

¹⁰⁰⁴ Psalms 63:2

¹⁰⁰⁵ In other words, prohibitive commandments.

However, the matter of fear of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, applies to how the soul is Above, and is a much loftier matter. This is because the matter of fear of *HaShem*-יהו"ה comes about through the recognition and awareness of *HaShem*'s-יהו"ה exaltedness, blessed is He, and it is specifically through this, that fear of *HaShem*-יהו"ה is aroused. This is experienced by the soul specifically as it is Above. Since the matter of Godliness is revealed there, the exaltedness of *HaShem*'s-יהו"ה, blessed is He, is felt there, thus causing an arousal of fear in the soul. Such is not the case if the soul is below, where there are no revelations etc.

Additionally, for the arousal of love, comprehension and understanding are adequate, in and of themselves, to awaken the love. For, when a person understands and comprehends that something is good for him, he will be awakened to love and pursue it. This is because it is natural to be drawn after all things that benefit him. Thus, when he grasps that Godliness is good for him, he is roused with love of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He.

In contrast, in regard fear of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, comprehension alone is inadequate to arouse it. Rather, there must be a recognition and bond with the One he fears. This is because the matter of fear (*Yirah*-יראה) is one of self-nullification (*Bittul*), which is the opposite of one's sense of independent existence. Therefore, understanding and comprehension alone are inadequate, but rather, there must specifically be a recognition and bond (*Hitkashrut*-התקשרות) with *HaShem*-יהו"ה for it to be aroused. This requires great toil,

as in the teaching of our sages, of blessed memory,¹⁰⁰⁷ “Woe to mortal flesh who did not toil with fear.” (Which is not the case regarding love of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, which is awakened through understanding and comprehension and does not require the same degree of great toil-*Yegiyah*-יגיעה).

From this it is understood that the essential matter of fear of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, specifically applies to the soul as it is Above. For since above there are revelations of Godliness, the soul as it is above, possesses the aspects of recognition and bonding to Godliness, through which the fear-*Yirah*-יראה of *HaShem*-יהו"ה is brought about. Such is not the case as the soul is below, where there are no revelations of Godliness through which it can come to the recognition and bonding. This being the case, as the soul is below, how can it come to the matter of fear-*Yirah*-יראה?

We must therefore understand the matter of, “I am black, but beautiful,” as it applies to fear of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He. For, as stated above, the **ultimate** beauty of fear of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, is specifically as the soul is below. This being the case, we must say that this matter of beauty not only applies to the love of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, but also to the fear of *HaShem*-יהו"ה. For, as we explained before, the unity of the souls of the Jewish people with *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, as they are below, is called “binding-*Hitkashrut*-התקשרות,” and as known, a “permanent knot” is a doubled knot. That is, it has two knots,

¹⁰⁰⁷ Reishit Chochmah, Shaar HaYirah, Ch. 12, cited in Tanya Iggeret HaKodesh, Epistle 18 (p. 126b).

one over the other.¹⁰⁰⁸ These refer to the two matters of love (*Ahavah*) and fear (*Yirah*) of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He. As explained in Tanya,¹⁰⁰⁹ just as a bird cannot fly with a single wing, but requires two wings, so likewise the matter of ascension is not possible except through the medium of both fear and love of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He. We therefore must understand what it is that is beautiful (“attractive”) in the fear-*Yirah* of *HaShem*-יהו"ה as it is specifically here below.

However, the explanation is that, even though the essential nullification of fear of *HaShem*-יהו"ה is much stronger as the soul is Above, nevertheless, **what** the fear is, is loftier as it is below, since below, the nullification (*Bitul*) is through setting aside one’s sense of self, which is more applicable to the soul as it is below, where it has a sense of separate existence.

This is explained elsewhere¹⁰¹⁰ regarding the distinction between the nullification of self in the aspect of, “there is nothing but Him alone,”¹⁰¹¹ and the nullification of self in the aspect of, “In His Presence everything is regarded as nothing.”¹⁰¹² That is, the nullification of the light (*Ohr*) to the Luminary is in an aspect that it is, “regarded as nothing.” In contrast, the nullification of, “there is nothing but Him alone –

¹⁰⁰⁸ See Ginat Egoz of Rabbi Yosef Gikatilla, translated as *HaShem is One*, Volume 1, section entitled “The Name *Eheye*”ה"י-ה' which is drawn from the reality of the Name of *HaShem*-יהו"ה.” Also see Shaltei Giborim Shabbat Ch. 15; Rama to Orach Chayim 317:1; Shulchan Aruch of the Alter Rebbe ibid 2-3, and elsewhere.

¹⁰⁰⁹ Tanya, Ch. 41 (p. 57b)

¹⁰¹⁰ See Sefer HaMaamarim 5661 p. 197 and on; 5692 p. 110 and on.

¹⁰¹¹ Deuteronomy 4:39

¹⁰¹² Zohar I 11b; Tanya Ch. 20 and elsewhere.

Ein Od Milvado” (the loftier level) is specifically in the aspect of a tangible something-*Yesh*.

In other words, as the soul is Above, it’s nullification of sense of self is in an aspect of, “In His Presence everything is regarded as nothing.” That is, through contemplation that the Source is continuously enlivening him and that he cannot compare to Him, his sense of self becomes nullified, **as if** he does not exist. However, since he too is Godliness, he is not utterly nullified of his existence in a way of, “there is nothing but Him alone – *Ein Od Milvado*.”

In contrast, when one’s soul is below, in a world of concealments and hiddenness, when he comes to the recognition (and realization) that this is not true reality, he then becomes completely nullified in the knowledge that only the Singular Intrinsic and Essential Being of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, the Unlimited One, exists and, “there is nothing but Him alone – *Ein Od Milvado*.”¹⁰¹³

This is the advantage of fear of *HaShem*-יהו"ה as the soul is specifically below. That is, even though the essential fear of *HaShem*-יהו"ה is greater as the soul is Above, nevertheless, **what** the fear is, is much loftier, specifically when the soul is below. We therefore say that the matter of, “I am black, but beautiful” also applies to the matter of fear of *HaShem*-יהו"ה (*Yirah*).

¹⁰¹³ Deuteronomy 4:35

Now, just as in the first “knot,” of the Jewish people with the Holy One, blessed is He, there is an advantage in the connection of the soul, specifically as it is below, so also, in the second “knot” of the Torah with the Holy One, blessed is He, there is an advantage in the connection of the Torah, specifically as it is below.

This¹⁰¹⁴ is so, even though the Torah is the Supernal will and wisdom of the Holy One, blessed is He. Nonetheless, in its descent below it only is in the aspect of the excess of the Upper Wisdom of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, as in the teaching,¹⁰¹⁵ “The excess of the Upper Wisdom-*Chochmah*, is Torah.” This is because the Torah descended to become manifest within human intellect and matters of this world,¹⁰¹⁶ including even false arguments, to the point that a person can study Torah and completely forget about the **Giver** of the Torah, blessed is He.¹⁰¹⁷ More so, one’s approach to Torah study could be in such a way that he is undeserving, in which case, it becomes the opposite of an elixir of life for him.¹⁰¹⁸ All this is because, as the Torah is below, it is in a state of seemingly separate existence.

¹⁰¹⁴ See *Hemshech* 5672 *ibid.* p. 364 and on.

¹⁰¹⁵ Midrash Bereishit Rabba 17:5; *Hemshech* 5672 *ibid.* p. 350 and on.

¹⁰¹⁶ See Tanya Ch. 5

¹⁰¹⁷ See Ra”N to Talmud Bavli, Nedarim 81a and Ba”Ch to Orach Chayim, Siman 47.

¹⁰¹⁸ Talmud Bavli, Yoma 72b

Now, this matter does not only apply to the revealed aspect of Torah, but also to the concealed aspect of Torah, meaning the concealed of the revealed. This refers to Torah as it is studied by the souls in the Garden of Eden, such as the laws pertaining to plagues, impurities, sacrificial offerings and, “one who exchanges a cow for a donkey,”¹⁰¹⁹ and the like. In all of them the Torah is explaining matters that relate to the chaining down of the worlds, meaning that they are in a state of tangible existence.

In other words, what is meant by descent in relation to Torah, not only applies to its descent to this world, but also applies to all the worlds that follow the restraint-*Tzimtzum* of the Unlimited light of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, in general. Before the restraint-*Tzimtzum*, there altogether was no “room” for the existence of worlds,¹⁰²⁰ and it is only with the restraint-*Tzimtzum* that “room” was created for their existence. Thus, even in the Garden of Eden, the Torah discusses and explains the particular matters as they relate to the order of the chaining down of the worlds (*Hishtalshelut*).

Now, since the restraint-*Tzimtzum* of the Unlimited light of *HaShem*-יהו"ה was in a manner of the complete withdrawal (*Siluk*) of illumination, it is understood that the Torah that follows the restraint-*Tzimtzum*, does not fall into the category of “adhesion-*Dveikut*-דביקות,” but rather falls into the category of “binding-*Hitkashrut*-התקשרות.” This is certainly the case regarding Torah as it is below, in this world, wherein it certainly

¹⁰¹⁹ Talmud Bavli, Bava Metzia 100a

¹⁰²⁰ See Etz Chaim, Shaar 1 (Drush Igullim V'Yosher) Anaf 1.

is inapplicable to consider it to be in the category of “adhesion-*Dveikut*-דביקות.”

Now, although the words of Torah do not contract spiritual impurity,¹⁰²¹ this is because Torah does not actually become manifest within the physical (*Hitlabshut*). This accords with the well-known difference between Torah and prayer-*Tefillah*. That is, prayer is in a way of manifestation (*Hitlabshut*), being that the contemplations of prayer are in the aspect of Godliness as it relates to worlds, and the contemplations of prayer are in such a way that he truly grasps these matters in his mind very well. In contrast, Torah does not actually come forth in a way of manifestation (*Hitlabshut*).

The same is true of the difference between Torah and *mitzvot*. That is, the *mitzvot* become manifest in actual physical things. Torah, on the other hand, does not manifest in actual physical things at all, but only **discusses** them. Thus, it does not truly manifest in them in a way of actual manifestation (*Hitlabshut*), but only in a transcendent, encompassing manner (*Makif*). This is why words of Torah do not contract spiritual impurity.

Nevertheless, because the Torah is indeed drawn forth into matters of the world, even if only in a transcendent, encompassing manner (*Makif*), it is therefore inapplicable to use the term “adhesion-*Dveikut*-דביקות” in relation to it. Rather, only the term “binding-*Hitkashrut*-התקשרות” applies to it. Nonetheless, it is specifically in the descent of Torah below,

¹⁰²¹ Talmud Bavli, Brachot 22a

when it is in the category of “binding-*Hitkashrut*-התקשרות,” that the aspect of the Singular Intrinsic and Essential Being of *HaShem*-יהו"ה Himself, the Unlimited One, blessed is He, is drawn within it (in the same manner that we explained regarding the Jewish people).

Now, this is specifically drawn forth to the Torah by the Jewish people. In other words, there first is a bond (*Hitkashrut*-התקשרות) of the Jewish people to the Holy One, blessed is He, through Torah. However, through this bond, an additional illumination of light is caused within Torah itself. For,¹⁰²² “At the outset, when a person does it, he does it for his own soul.” This refers to the study of Torah before prayer, which is the matter of Godly contemplation-*Hitbonenut*. This affects that his prayers cause actual refinement in his soul, through which he binds himself to the Singular Intrinsic and Essential Being of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, the Unlimited One Himself, blessed is He.

This is then followed by Torah study after the prayers, which is the study of Torah for the sake of the Name of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, that is within Torah itself, meaning that he binds the Torah itself to the Singular Intrinsic and Essential Being of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He. In other words, by virtue of the fact that the Torah caused him to be bonded to *HaShem*-יהו"ה Himself, blessed is He, he likewise affects a bond of the Torah to *HaShem*-יהו"ה Himself, blessed is He.

¹⁰²² Talmud Bavli, Pesachim 68b

This then, is the meaning of the teaching in Zohar that,¹⁰²³ “There are three levels that are bound one to the other, the Jewish people are bound to the Torah and the Torah is bound to the Holy One, blessed is He.” In other words, this refers to the bond of the Torah and the Jewish people to *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, even as they are in a state of separate existence, so that even then, they are bound to the Holy One, blessed is He.

Moreover, this is true in both, “the concealed aspect and the revealed aspect.” In other words, this bond is not only in the revealed aspect of the Jewish people, the revealed aspect of Torah and the revealed aspect of the Holy One, blessed is He. Rather, this bond is affected even in the concealed and inner aspect, that is, the inner aspect of the souls of the Jewish people, the inner aspect of Torah and the inner aspect of Godliness. That is, the advantage of this bond is caused specifically through the aspect of “binding-*Hitkashrut*-התקשרות,” that is specifically brought about through the descent below.

5.

This, then, is the meaning of the verse,¹⁰²⁴ “And it shall come to pass, that because you listen to these ordinances, and you observe and perform them; *HaShem*-יהו"ה your God, will safeguard for you the covenant and the kindness that He swore to your forefathers.” For, the matter of the covenant (*Brit*-ברית)

¹⁰²³ Zohar III 73a

¹⁰²⁴ Deuteronomy 7:12-13

applies even if one of the two friends is not conducting himself as he should. The love nevertheless remains in place, as it was initially. The same is true of the kindness (*Chessed*-חסד), which, as explained above, is the indiscriminate bestowal of goodness, even to the unworthy. This refers to the, “True kindness,” which is the aspect of kindness-*Chessed* of the Ancient One-*Atik*, blessed is He, about which it states, “There is no left side in this Holy Ancient One.”¹⁰²⁵ This likewise is the matter of the oath (*Shvu'ah*-שבועה), in which *HaShem*-יהו"ה obligates Himself, as if He has no choice, so to speak (as mentioned above).

All these matters are entirely beyond reason and intellect, meaning that they completely transcend the chaining down of the worlds (*Hishtalshelut*). This level is specifically attained through our service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, in a manner of, “And it shall come to pass, that because-*Eikev*-עקב you listen,” which, as explained above, also means “heel-*Eikev*-עקב.” In other words, this verse is not making a conditional statement at all, but only comes to inform us of the order and manner of serving *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He. Namely, that the aspect that transcends the chaining down of the worlds (*Histhalshelut*), is specifically in the, “heel-*Eikev*-עקב.”

To further explain, there are two aspects in the soul, *Yisroel*-ישראל and *Yaakov*-יעקב.¹⁰²⁶ The name *Yisroel*-ישראל spells the words, “My head-*Li Rosh*-לי ראש,”¹⁰²⁷ and refers to

¹⁰²⁵ Zohar III 129a; 289a

¹⁰²⁶ See Likkutei Torah Balak 70c and on, and elsewhere.

¹⁰²⁷ Shaar HaPesukim of the Arizal, Vayishlach 32:29; Likkutei Torah Shlach 48b and on; Sefer HaMitzvot of the Tzemach Tzedek 15b, citing the Zohar.

the aspect of the head of the soul. In contrast, the name *Yaakov*-יעקב divides into “*Yud Eikev*-יוד עקב,”¹⁰²⁸ and refers to the heel-*Eikev*-עקב of the soul.¹⁰²⁹

The same matter applies to time and space. The heel-*Eikev*-עקב refers to the time and space of the, “heels of *Moshiach-Ikveta D'Meshicha*-עקבתא דמשיחא,”¹⁰³⁰ about which it states,¹⁰³¹ “We have not seen our signs; there is no longer a prophet, and there is none among us who knows for how long,” and,¹⁰³² “I clothe the heavens in darkness and make sackcloth their garment.”

However, there nonetheless is the aspect of “you listen-*Tishme'un*-תשמעון to these ordinances,” wherein “listening-*Tishme'un*-תשמעון” refers to the matter of understanding and comprehension.¹⁰³³ More particularly, the verse specifies that this listening is specifically, “to these ordinances-*Mishpatim*-משפטים.” This refers to the “judgement-*Mishpat*-משפט, by which a person judges himself,”¹⁰³⁴ meaning that he reflects and contemplates the ultimate purpose of his own existence and the manner of how he came to be in the state that he is in. In other words, he contemplates the fact that, at its root, his soul is hewn

¹⁰²⁸ Etz Chaim, Shaar 3, Ch. 2; Torah Ohr VaYeitze 21a.

¹⁰²⁹ See Ohr HaTorah, Eikev, p. 490; p. 502; p. 505.

¹⁰³⁰ See Ohr HaTorah *ibid.* p. 479; 491; 504 (citing Ohr HaMe’ir Eikev).

¹⁰³¹ Psalms 74:9

¹⁰³² Isaiah 50:3; Torah Ohr, Veyeishev 28d

¹⁰³³ Hearing-*Shmiyah*-שמיעה refers to the faculty of understanding-*Binah*, whereas Seeing-*Re'iyah*-ראיה refers to the faculty of insight and wisdom-*Chochmah*. (See Shaar HaYichud, translated as The Gate of Unity, Ch. 5 and elsewhere.)

¹⁰³⁴ See discourse by the same title 5674 (*Hemshech* 5672 Vol. 1 p. 589); Torah Ohr Beshalach 63b; Sefer HaMaamarim 5689 p. 133.

from beneath the Throne of Glory,¹⁰³⁵ and even beyond that, from the state of, “the soul that You have placed within me is pure.”¹⁰³⁶ He thus contemplates,¹⁰³⁷ “From where did you come?” From this he subsequently comes to contemplate his current situation, and that he is in a state about which Torah states,¹⁰³⁸ “[He] dwells within them even in their impurities,” and,¹⁰³⁹ “They were exiled to Edom and the Indwelling Presence (*Shechinah*) accompanies them.” In other words, no matter where a Jew goes and wherever he may find himself, he is accompanied by his spark of Godliness (and pulls it along with him). Through contemplating all this, at some point or another, he will become aroused to complete repentance, especially since strength for this is given to him from Above, through the Supernal heralds who cry out,¹⁰⁴⁰ “Return, O’ wayward children.”

It is through contemplating all this, which is the aforementioned matter of, “judgments-*Mishpatim*-משפטים,” that even though he is in the aspect of the, “heel-*Eikev*-עקב,” meaning the heel of the soul and the heel of the time and space of the, “heels of Moshiach-*Ikveta D’Meshicha*-דמשיחא,” he will come to a state of listening-*Tishme’un*-תשמעון, keeping-*U’Shmartem*-ושמרתם and “doing-*Ve’Asitem*-ועשיתם.” These three aspects, mentioned in the verse, refer to the three garments

¹⁰³⁵ Zohar III 29b; 123b and elsewhere.

¹⁰³⁶ Elokai Neshama blessing in the morning prayer liturgy.

¹⁰³⁷ Mishnah Avot 3:1

¹⁰³⁸ Leviticus 16:16

¹⁰³⁹ Sifri to Masei 35:34

¹⁰⁴⁰ Jeremiah 3:14, 3:22; Zohar III 126a; Maamarei Admor HaEmtza’ee Vayikra Vol. 1, p. 9

of the soul; thought (*Machshavah*), speech (*Dibur*), and action (*Ma'aseh*).¹⁰⁴¹ As mentioned above, “Listening-*Tishme'un*-תשמעון,” refers to the matter of understanding and comprehension and is thus the garment of thought. The term “Keeping-*U'Shmartem*-ושמרתם” refers to speech, as indicated by our sages, of blessed memory, that the words,¹⁰⁴² “Keep them-*Shamor*-שמור” refers to the Mishnah,” and thus refers to,¹⁰⁴³ “the study of Torah, which is equal to all the commandments” and is done specifically through speech. The term “doing-*Ve'Asitem*-ועשיתם,” clearly refers to action-*Ma'aseh*-מעשה.

Thus, it is through the above that, “*HaShem*-יהו"ה your God, will safeguard for you the covenant (*Brit*-ברית) and the kindness (*Chessed*-חסד) that He swore (*Shvu'ah*-שבועה) to your forefathers,” all of which are matters that transcend the chaining down of the worlds (*Hishtalshelut*).

This also explains the connection between this Torah portion to the seven weeks of consolation.¹⁰⁴⁴ Namely, this is hinted at in the specific use of the term, “And it shall come to pass-*VeHayah*-והיה,” about which it states,¹⁰⁴⁵ “The term ‘And it shall come to pass-*VeHayah*-והיה’ is always a term of joy.”¹⁰⁴⁶

¹⁰⁴¹ See Ohr HaTorah Eikev p. 479 and p. 491 and on.

¹⁰⁴² Sifri to Re'eh 11:32; 11:1; Rashi there 12:28 and elsewhere.

¹⁰⁴³ Mishnah Pe'ah 1:1

¹⁰⁴⁴ The seven weeks of consolation refers to the seven weeks between the 9th of Av and Rosh HaShanah.

¹⁰⁴⁵ Midrash Bereishit Rabba 42:3 (Likkutei Torah Re'eh 30d) and elsewhere. Ohr HaMe'ir, Eikev.

¹⁰⁴⁶ The term “And it shall come to pass-*VeHayah*-והיה” is one of the permutations of the Singular Name of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, except that the letters *Vav-Hey*-וה precede the letters *Yud-Hey*-יה. While the letters *Yud-Hey*-יה

For then, both the, “heel-*Eikev*-עֵקֶב,” of the soul and the time and space of the, “heels of Moshiach-*Ikveta D’Meshicha*-עֵקֶב תָּא” will be in a state of “listening-*Tishme’un*-תִּשְׁמָעוּן.” This will affect a drawing forth from Above, as the verse continues, “*HaShem*-ה' יהו"ה your God, will safeguard for you, the covenant and the kindness that He swore to your forefathers,” which is a drawing forth that entirely transcends the chaining down of the worlds (*Hishtalshelut*).

Moreover, all this will be drawn forth below, physically, in accordance with the continuation of the verse, “He will love you, bless you, and multiply you, and He will bless the fruit of your womb and the fruit of your Land; your grain, your wine, and your oil; the offspring of your cattle and the flocks of your sheep and goats; on the Land that He swore to your forefathers, to give you.”

correspond and refer to the judgments of the intellect, the letters *Vav-Hey*-ו"ה-11 correspond and refer to a revelation of the kindness and mercy of *HaShem*-ה' יהו"ה blessed is He, Himself, Who utterly transcends the chaining down of the Ten Sefirot. (See at length in *Ginat Egoz* of Rabbi Yosef Gikatilla, translated as *HaShem is One*, Volumes 2 & 3, as well as *Likkutei Torah Re'eh* 30d *ibid*.)