

Discourse 5

“VeKeebel HaYehudim et Asher Hecheilu La’asot -
The Jews undertook that which they had begun to do”

Delivered on Purim, 5711

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

1.

The verse states,²⁷³ “The Jews undertook that which they had begun to do.” His honorable holiness, my father-in-law, the Rebbe, explains this in his discourse²⁷⁴ that begins with these words (recently printed and publicized).²⁷⁵ That is, the Jews undertook that which they had begun at the time of the giving of the Torah. For, when the Jewish people said,²⁷⁶ “All that *HaShem*-ה' has spoken, we will do and we will hear,” that was only the beginning (“they had begun to do”). It was specifically in the days of Achashverosh (during the period of the decree of Haman) that the “undertaking-*Kabbalah*-קבלה”²⁷⁷

²⁷³ Esther 9:23

²⁷⁴ Of Purim Katan 5687

²⁷⁵ This discourse was printed in 5711, and is printed in Sefer HaMaamarim 5711 p. 180 and on; 5787 p. 110 and on

²⁷⁶ Exodus 24:7

²⁷⁷ Note: This is similarly stated in the discourse by the same title in Torah Ohr, Megillat Esther 96c; Shaarei Orah of the Mittler Rebbe, Shaar HaPurim 88b; Torah Ohr Ibid. 90a, 98a; Shaarei Orah 54a; Sefer HaMaamarim 5678 p. 196 discourse of this title, and various other places. To add further clarity, in the Torah Ohr ibid. (98a) and in the (beginning of the) discourse of 5678 (Ibid. p. 197), it is similar to what our sages, of blessed memory, stated (Shabbat 88a) regarding the verse (Esther 9:27) “The Jews undertook upon themselves – that which they had

took place, as it states, “The Jews undertook-*VeKeebel HaYehudim*-וקבל היהודים.”

Now, (in his discourse) he analyses this with precision, since at first glance this is an extremely wondrous thing.²⁷⁸ For, during the time of the giving of the Torah, the Jewish people were in a state of the utmost elevation. This is true both physically, that they were in an extremely prosperous and excellent state, on account of their freedom,²⁷⁹ and also spiritually, that they had a revelation of the loftiest level of Godliness.²⁸⁰

In contrast, in the days of Achashverosh, the Jewish people were in a state of ultimate descent. For, in addition to the concealment and hiddenness that takes place in all exiles, during which time, “darkness covers the whole earth,”²⁸¹ nevertheless, during that time (of the decree of Haman) there was an even greater concealment and hiddenness.²⁸² For, even

already undertaken.” [Now, although at first glance it seems that they are two opposite matters, meaning, that the words “The Jews undertook that which they had begun to do” seems to indicate that they only undertook this at the time of Purim. In contrast, the words “They fulfilled that which they had previously undertaken” indicates that even at the giving of the Torah they did indeed receive and undertake this, only that it was not yet everlasting. For a more complete explanation see Ch. 12 of this discourse.] Likewise, see Shaarei Orah ibid. (both citations) as well as the discourse by this title in 5678, where this distinction and explanation is stated in the same manner, in the name of our sages, of blessed memory.

²⁷⁸ For the explanation of this precise language, see the discourse with the same title, Purim Katan 5738, Ch. 1.

²⁷⁹ Midrash Shmot Rabba 41:7; VaYikra Rabba 18:3; Zohar II 113b and on; Talmud Bavli, Eruvin 54b

²⁸⁰ See Tanya Ch. 36 that the revelation at the time of the giving of the Torah was a foretaste of the revelation of the coming future.

²⁸¹ Isaiah 60:2

²⁸² Note: To further illuminate from the words of our sages, of blessed memory, who stated (Talmud Bavli, Chullin 139b), “From where do we know of Esther-אסתר in the Torah? From the verse that states (Deut. 31:18) ‘I shall surely hide My face-

physically, they were in a state of utmost lowliness and there was a decree, “to destroy, to slay and to exterminate all the Jews, from young to old, children and women, in one day.”²⁸³

Even so, during the time of the giving of the Torah, when the Jewish people were in a state of utmost elevation, that was only the beginning (“they had begun to do”), whereas in the time of the decree of Haman, when they were in a state of the utmost lowliness, it was specifically then that they, “undertook to do that which they had begun,” at the giving of the Torah!

He continues and explains²⁸⁴ that during the time of the decree, their fulfillment of Torah and *mitzvot* was in a way of self-sacrifice (*Mesirat Nefesh*). [To further clarify, it is explained in Torah Ohr²⁸⁵ that the self-sacrifice (*Mesirat Nefesh*) they had was as follows: If they would have renounced their faith, nothing would have been done to them, since the decree was only against the Jews. Nevertheless, it never entered their minds to consider such a thing, God forbid. Moreover, it is further explained that their self-sacrifice was (not only to not renounce the true faith in *HaShem*-יהו"ה, God forbid, but also)

Aster Asteer-אסתר אסתר”” In other words, even after the miracle of Purim (due to the fact that the miracle manifests within the natural order) the Jewish people were still called Esther-אסתר, as a terminology of, “I shall surely hide-אסתר.” (See Torah Ohr, Megillat Esther 90d and on). This being so, this was certainly the case during the time of the decree itself.

²⁸³ Esther 3:13

²⁸⁴ In the aforementioned discourse, chapter 3 and on.

²⁸⁵ Torah Ohr *ibid.* 91b, 97a, 99b; Also see Shaarei Orah *Ibid.* Ch. 68, p. 90b; Sefer HaMaamarim 5678 p. 204, end of the discourse by this title; Discourse entitled “*Chayav Inish*” 5679, Ch. 4, p. 306; 5671, Ch. 5, p. 191; 5708 p. 118; Discourse entitled “*BaLaylah HaHoo* 5700 Ch. 5, p. 9; Also see Megillat Setarim on the verse in Esther *Ibid.*

that they had literal self-sacrifice in the fulfillment of Torah and *mitzvot*,²⁸⁶ to the extent that they **publicly** gathered by the multitudes to study Torah with self-sacrifice.]

The awakening of their self-sacrifice (*Mesirat Nefesh*) was through Mordechai the Jew-*HaYehudi*, who is called the Moshe of his generation,²⁸⁷ who publicly gathered the multitudes to strengthen their faith-*Emunah*. However, Mordechai's principal work, is that he taught and studied Torah with the schoolchildren, who are the foundation of the whole Jewish people. [This is explained at length in the discourse about the great level of the breath of schoolchildren when they learn Torah].

This is as stated in Midrash,²⁸⁸ “Mordechai gathered twenty-two thousand pupils and taught them Torah with self-sacrifice. When Haman arrived, Mordechai instructed them, ‘Run away, so as not to be burned by my coals.’ They responded, ‘We stand together with you, whether for life or for death.’” In other words, they accepted upon themselves whatever punishments might come, so long as they would not be separated from the holy Torah.

²⁸⁶ Note: This is an even more wondrous thing, because when it comes to the faith-*Emunah*, even the simplest of Jews will have self-sacrifice and give up his life for the sanctification of the Name of *HaShem* (see Tanya Ch. 18 and various other places).

²⁸⁷ Note: In other words, in addition to the fact that there is an offshoot of Moshe in each generation (as stated in Tikkunei Zohar Tikkun 69 – 112a; 114a), and that Mordechai was the offshoot of Moshe in his generation (See the aforementioned discourse Ch. 15) – in addition, it states in the Midrash (Esther Rabba 6:2 cited in the discourse Ch. 3) that “Mordechai in his generation, was equal to Moshe in his generation.”

²⁸⁸ Midrash Esther Rabba 10:4; Yalkut Shimoni Esther Remez 1,058; Vayikra Rabba 28:6; Yalkut Shimoni Emor Remez 643 to Lev. 23:11; Psikta Rabbati Ch. 18.

This then, is what is meant by the fact that they²⁸⁹ “undertook that which they had begun to do,” and that the giving of the Torah was only the beginning, whereas the “undertaking” was at the time of the decree of Haman. For, through the **actual** self-sacrifice (*Mesirat Nefesh*) that they had for the fulfillment of Torah and *mitzvot*, they were elevated (in a certain respect) to an even higher level than at the time of the giving of the Torah. This is the reason why the “undertaking-*Kabbalah*-קבלה” was specifically then, such that it states, “The Jews undertook that which they had begun to do.”

2.

Now, we must further understand this. For, the main point of the explanation in the discourse, is that the reason that this “undertaking” occurred at the time of the decree, was because of their self-sacrifice at that time. This being the case, of what relevance is it that their awakening to self-sacrifice was by the hand of Mordechai, or that his primary work was learning Torah with the schoolchildren?

We also must explain why it was specified (at the beginning of the discourse) that at the giving of the Torah, the Jewish people were in the most elevated state, whereas at the time of the decree they were in a state of utmost lowliness, both spiritually and physically. At first glance, when we examine the discourse, it explains how it was that when they were at the

²⁸⁹ Esther 9:23

height of elevation, it was only “the beginning,” whereas when they were in the utmost lowliness, that is specifically when they took on this “undertaking.” The relevance of their elevation or lowliness thus makes sense, in that it relates to their spiritual standing. However, to what end does the discourse specify their physical elevation at the time of the giving of the Torah and their physical lowliness at the time of the decree?

3.

Now, in addition to the points mentioned above, we must also understand the general theme of the explanation (in the discourse), namely, that the reason the “undertaking” specifically took place at the time of the decree, is because of their self-sacrifice for Torah and *mitzvot* at that time. Now, this must be better understood. For, at first glance, regarding almost all the commandments, the verse states,²⁹⁰ “You shall live by them.”

Even the three cardinal commandments about which it states,²⁹¹ “one should rather be killed, than to transgress,” are not actually one and the same as the matter of self-sacrifice (*Mesirat Nefesh*). Rather, it only is that the manner of fulfilling these commandments entails that one must never transgress

²⁹⁰ Leviticus 18:5; See Rambam Hilchos Yesodei HaTorah 5:1; (Yoma 85b; Sanhedrin 74a; Tosefta Shabbat, end of Ch. 16) – “You shall live by them, and you should not die by them.”

²⁹¹ Rambam Hilchos Yesodei HaTorah 5:2 (Cited from Yoma 82a, and Sanhedrin & Tosefta Ibid.)

them, even if it means that he will be killed as a result of it,²⁹² whereas the commandment of self-sacrifice (*Mesirat Nefesh*) for the sanctification of the Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, is only a single commandment. Why then is this self-sacrifice (*Mesirat Nefesh*) a prerequisite to the “undertaking” (“The Jews undertook”) of the Torah as a whole?

Now, it does state in Tanya,²⁹³ that the reason that Moshe commanded the generation that was entering the land of Israel to recite the *Shema* twice daily and to accept the yoke of the Kingdom of Heaven upon themselves with self-sacrifice, is because the fulfillment of Torah and *mitzvot* is dependent upon the constant remembrance of the matter of self-sacrifice of one’s soul to *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He. (This is so, even though he also promised them that,²⁹⁴ “*HaShem*-יהו"ה your God, shall place the fear of you and the dread of you upon all the land that you shall tread upon etc.”) However, what we see from this is that the self-sacrifice (*Mesirat Nefesh*), upon which the fulfillment of Torah and *mitzvot* are dependent, is self-sacrifice in potential (*BeKoach*), rather than self-sacrifice in actuality (*BePo’el*). (In other words, if he should ever need to have self-sacrifice in fulfilling Torah and *mitzvot*, he is prepared to do so.)

This being so, then even at the giving of the Torah, when the Jewish people said,²⁹⁵ “All that *HaShem*-יהו"ה has spoken, we will do and we will hear,” (and certainly after they were commanded the *mitzvah* of *Shema* recital twice daily) they

²⁹² See Sefer HaMaamarim 5709, p. 123 and in the note there, at greater length.

²⁹³ Tanya, Ch. 25

²⁹⁴ Deuteronomy 11:25

²⁹⁵ Exodus 24:7

accepted upon themselves to fulfill all that they were commanded, even if it would require self-sacrifice (*Mesirat Nefesh*). However, even so, the “undertaking” (when “the Jews undertook”) was not complete until the time of the decree of Haman, when they had self-sacrifice in actuality (*BePo’el*).²⁹⁶

Now, it is generally known that there were two times in history that (the Jewish people as a whole) had actual self-sacrifice for Torah and *mitzvot*. One was on Chanukah (at the time of the decrees of the Greeks), and the other was on Purim (at the time of the decrees of Haman). Since all matters in Torah are with ultimate precision, we must say that the fact that this matter of, “the Jews undertook,” was specifically accomplished through the self-sacrifice of Purim, was (not only because the self-sacrifice of Purim preceded the self-sacrifice of Chanukah, but also) because the self-sacrifice of Purim was more closely related to the (completion) of receiving the Torah. We must therefore understand the difference between the self-sacrifice of Chanukah and the self-sacrifice of Purim.²⁹⁷ For, it is due to

²⁹⁶ Note: In Shaarei Orah *ibid.* (61a; 90b) it is explained that the fact that the “undertaking-*Kabbalah*” of the giving of the Torah was completed specifically through the actual self-sacrifice that they had in the days of Purim (even though when they said “we will do and we will hear” they certainly did so with their whole hearts and with a willingness to have complete self-sacrifice in actuality) is because of the advantage of self-sacrifice in actuality, which reaches and elicits an even higher aspect of Godliness than Torah and the commandments themselves. Nevertheless, this still requires explanation, for, why is it necessary to reach a higher level than the Torah and the commandments, in order to receive the Torah?

²⁹⁷ Note: In the introduction to Shaarei Orah it is explained that the self-sacrifice of Purim was from the “strength of the influencer-*Mashpia*” whereas the self-sacrifice of Chanukah was “from the recipient-*Mekabel*.” However, this distinction seemingly is not coming to explain the fact that the “reception” and “undertaking” was accomplished through the self-sacrifice of Purim specifically. Moreover, according to what is explain in Torah Ohr *ibid.* (92b and on) and in

this difference that the completion of the receiving of the Torah occurred specifically by means of the self-sacrifice of Purim.

4.

Now, this will be understood by prefacing²⁹⁸ with the well-known explanation²⁹⁹ regarding the novelty that occurred with the giving of the Torah, in comparison to the Torah and commandments, as they were, before the giving of the Torah. That is, the *mitzvot* that were fulfilled by our forefathers, peace be upon them (and in general – all those who preceded the giving of the Torah), were only performed and fulfilled spiritually (such as *Tefillin*, through which we recall the exodus from Egypt, whereas at that time, the exile in Egypt had not yet happened) and even in the commandments that they fulfilled physically, the drawing forth of holiness-*Kedushah* only occurred spiritually, and was not transferred to the physical object through which the mitzvah was done.³⁰⁰ For, before the giving of the Torah, there was a Divine edict that, “the upper

Shaarei Orah *ibid.* (97a and on), the reason that at the giving of the Torah there was only the aspect of, “they had begun to do,” is because the self-sacrifice at the giving of the Torah was due to the revelations from Above, which was not the case with the self-sacrifice of Purim. Nevertheless, it seems that if the self-sacrifice of Chanukah was from the angle of “the recipient-*Mekabel*” then it would have been more fitting that the “receiving” and “undertaking” of “*VeKeebel*-וּקְבֵל” should have occurred through the self-sacrifice of Chanukah.

²⁹⁸ Note: See the discourse entitled “*VeKeebel*” in Torah Ohr (96c), and Shaarei Orah (88b), that this matter (that in the days of Ahashverosh they undertook that which they began at the giving of the Torah) is understood through a preface of an explanation of the matter of the giving of the Torah itself.

²⁹⁹ See at length in Likkutei Sichot Vol. 5, p. 88 and on, and pg. 79.

³⁰⁰ See Sefer HaMaamarim 5710 p. 223 and the notes there.

ones shall not descend below and the lower ones shall not ascend above.”³⁰¹ Therefore, there was no bond between the holiness of the *mitzvah* (“the upper ones”) with the physical object through which the *mitzvah* was performed (“the lower ones”).

This is not the case, with the *mitzvot*³⁰² that followed the giving of the Torah. For, at that time, the Divine edict that separated between, “the upper ones and the lower ones,” was nullified, and a bond was made between the physical object (through which the *mitzvah* is performed) and the holiness-*Kedushah* of the *mitzvah*. This is to such a degree, that in some *mitzvot*, the physical object becomes a “Holy *Mitzvah* Object.”³⁰³ Now since, as known, a bond between two opposites only happens through something that is higher than both, it therefore is understood that the bond between, “the upper ones” and “the lower ones” that came about at the giving of the Torah, was because the giving of the Torah was a drawing forth of the Unlimited Light of *HaShem* יהו"ה, who transcends the categories of up and down altogether.

What we understand from all this is that there are three aspects in the commandments-*mitzvot*, after the giving of the

³⁰¹ Midrash Shmot Rabba 12:3; Tanchuma Va'era 15

³⁰² Note: It is this same way with the Torah itself, that specifically through the giving of the Torah, power was given to the study of Torah to transform the man who studies it. See at length in Likkutei Sichot Vol. 16, p. 214. Nevertheless, the primary matter in this is in the commandments-*Mitzvot* – See Hadran al HaShas (in Torat Menachem – Hadranim on the Rambam and Shas, p. 418) note 31.

³⁰³ See Likkutei Sichot Vol. 16, p. 213, note 16 (There are various different levels of holy objects. See Talmud Bavli, Megilla 26b; Rambam Hilchot Sefer Torah 10:3 and on; Tur and Shulchan Aruch Orach Chaim 154; Yoreh De'ah 282; Shulchan Aruch of the Alter Rebbe 42:6)

Torah. There is the aspect of “below,” [for even after the giving of the Torah, the physical object with which the *mitzvah* is done, is not transformed into spirituality, but remains physical, even though it now has become a “Holy *Mitzvah* Object”]. The second is the aspect of “above,” [for even after the giving of the Torah, when the holiness of the *mitzvah* is drawn forth and embedded in the physical object, nonetheless, the holiness itself remains spiritual]. The third and highest aspect is the nullification of “Above” and “Below,” since the very fact that Above and Below bond to each other [though they are opposites] is through the nullification of their parameters and limitations, which is done through drawing forth the Unlimited Light of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, who transcends them both.

It can be said that these three matters may also be found in how a person fulfills the *mitzvot*. If he fulfills them, “as commands people do by rote,”³⁰⁴ it is because he has become accustomed to it out of habit.³⁰⁵ Since the habit has become naturally ingrained in him,³⁰⁶ his fulfillment of the *mitzvot* also becomes due to the nature of his body and natural soul, which is the lower aspect in man.³⁰⁷

However, when he fulfills the commandments of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, because he loves Him and desires

³⁰⁴ Isaiah 29:13

³⁰⁵ Tanya Ch. 39 (p. 53b)

³⁰⁶ Tanya Ch. 44 (p. 63b), end of Ch. 14, Ch. 15 (21a); Shvilei Emunah, Netiv 4, Shaar 2; Shu"t HaRama MiPano 36

³⁰⁷ Midrash Bereishit Rabba 8:11; 12:8; Torah Ohr Bereishit 3d and on; Kuntres U'Maayan discourse 15; Hemshech 5666 p. 495 and elsewhere.

to cleave to Him, and since it is not possible to truly cleave to Him except through the fulfillment of the “two-hundred and forty-eight commands-*Pekudin*,” which are the “two-hundred and forty-eight organs of the King,”³⁰⁸ then his fulfillment of the commandments is due to his (Godly) soul, the upper aspect of man.

However, if he fulfills the *mitzvot* for the Sake of the Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה alone, meaning that he does not do them because of any benefits that he may gain from them (not even spiritual benefits), but rather, only because they are the will of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, then his fulfillment of the commandments is not due to his own existence at all (not even the existence of his soul), but instead, he does them with complete sublimation to *HaShem*-יהו"ה. This is because his only interest (when doing the *mitzvah*) is entirely to fulfill *HaShem* 's-יהו"ה Supernal will, blessed is He.

5.

We should add, that the root of these three ways of fulfilling the commandments is because the *mitzvot* themselves possess these three aspects (corresponding to the three ways of fulfilling the commandments). To further explain the giving of the commandments below, our sages, of blessed memory, stated,³⁰⁹ “The Torah was only given in order to refine the

³⁰⁸ Tanya Ch. 4

³⁰⁹ Midrash Tanchumah 8 (and see 7); Bereishit Rabba beginning of Ch. 44; Moreh HaNevuchim Vol. 3, Ch. 26

creatures.” In other words, the intention in the giving of the commandments-*mitzvot* is (not for the commandments themselves, but rather) for the purification and refinement of the faculties and organs of the person who fulfills them, as well as for the purification and refinement of the physical things of the world through which the commandments are performed.³¹⁰

However, there is a loftier aspect to the *mitzvot*, which is that they are the commands of the Holy One, blessed is He. This is as our sages, of blessed memory, stated³¹¹ about the verse,³¹² “He relates **His** Words to Yaakov, **His** statutes and **His** judgments to Israel,” that, “What He Himself does, He instructs Israel to do.” In other words, the fact that the Holy One, blessed is He, fulfills the *mitzvot* (prior³¹³ to instructing the Jewish people to do them), means that He does them of His own accord (from “Above”). [As is also understood from this, that the “two-hundred and forty-eight commands-*Pekudin*” are the “two-hundred and forty-eight organs of the King.” In other words, when we say that the *mitzvot* are His organs, so to speak, this is from the aspect of what He determined Above.]

Thus, when the Jewish people fulfill the commandments that “He does,” they are walking on the ways of the Holy One,

³¹⁰ See at length in Tanya Ch. 37

³¹¹ Midrash Shmot Rabba 30:9; Talmud Yerushalmi Rosh HaShanah 1:3

³¹² Psalms 147:19

³¹³ Note: That is, since He is above time altogether, the explanation of “prior” here means that it precedes them in level.

blessed is He,³¹⁴ and cleave to Him.³¹⁵ Through this, vitality is drawn to the person who fulfills them, as it states,³¹⁶ “You shall do My ordinances and keep My statutes, to walk therein, which if a man shall do, he shall live by them.” For, through the performance of the *mitzvot*, he cleaves to the Holy One, blessed is He, (as mentioned before), which is the fulfillment of the verse,³¹⁷ “But you who cleave to *HaShem*-יהו"ה your God – are all alive today.”

Now, this aspect of the *mitzvot* (that they are the pathways of the Holy One, blessed is He, in that the Holy One, blessed is He, Himself performs the *mitzvot*) is higher than any relation to worlds. Therefore, the vitality that is drawn to the person who performs them, comes to him from the aspect of how *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, transcends all worlds (*Sovev Kol Almin*). In other words, by itself, it is holy and transcends

³¹⁴ Note: As known, the commandments-*Mitzvot* are called “the paths of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He (See the end of Hosea; Talmud Bavli Nazir 23a; Horayot 10b; Zohar I 175b “these are the pathways and passageways of the Torah” and various other places). It was already explained on a number of occasions (See Torat Menachem Sefer HaMaamarim Cheshvan p. 255; Likkutei Sichot Vol. 34 p. 153 and on) that the explanation of the words “to go in all of His ways” (Deut. 10:12) is that it refers to the actual performance of the commandments-*Mitzvot*. When our sages, of blessed memory, explained that the words “to go in all of His ways” refers to the attributes of the Holy One, blessed is He (in that “just as He is compassionate, so likewise you be compassionate”), they said so in regard to the verse at the end of Parshat Ekev (Deut. 11:22).

³¹⁵ Note: This can be further illuminated by the words of Rashi to the words (Deut. 13:5) “to Him you shall cleave,” who states, “Cleave to His ways: bestow kindness, bury the dead, and visit the sick, just as the Holy One, blessed is He, did.” (Sota 14a). It is through this that one “cleaves to Him.”

³¹⁶ Leviticus 18:5; Likkutei Torah Shir HaShirim 2a [See also Derech Chaim Ch. 75, p. 82a and on where this is similarly stated.] – “You shall live by them – meaning that you shall derive vitality from them.”

³¹⁷ Deuteronomy 4:4; See Avot D’Rabbi Nathan end of Ch. 34.

worlds, but nonetheless, through doing the *mitzvot*, “he lives by them,” and draws forth inner vitality.³¹⁸

Nonetheless, even this aspect of the *mitzvot* has form, and therefore the *mitzvot* of this level are in a manner of division. That is, they are called, “the **ways** of *HaShem-Darchei HaShem*-ה' דרכי” (in the plural),³¹⁹ and thus correspond to the division of the two-hundred and forty-eight “organs of the King.” In other words, the drawing forth of vitality affected by each particular *mitzvah* is unique to that *mitzvah*. (This is similar to the differences between the power of sight in the eye and the power of hearing in the ear.)

This is why it is possible for a person to perform *the mitzvot* that the Holy One, blessed is He, does Himself, because the two-hundred and forty-eight organs of man below, correspond to the, “two-hundred and forty-eight organs of the King,” as stated,³²⁰ “Let us make man in our form and in our likeness.”

However, there is an even loftier aspect in the commandments-*mitzvot*, which is that they are *HaShem*’s-ה' Supernal will, blessed is He (a desire that transcends reason),

³¹⁸ Note: We may further illuminate this based on Tanya, Ch. 36 (p. 66a) from the explanation of the words of our blessings, “that He has sanctified (and betrothed) us with His commandments,” as follows: “This is the holiness of the Holy One, blessed is He, Himself... the aspect of how *HaShem*-ה', blessed is He, transcends all worlds (*Sovev Kol Almin*)... (nevertheless,) she (referring to the soul of man who performs the commandments) attains the quality and level of holiness of the Singular Infinite One, Himself, blessed is He, literally, since she unifies herself to Him and becomes included in His unity, and they become literally one.”

³¹⁹ Note: This is further illuminated by Likkutei Torah Re'eh 21d with respect to the matter of the 613 pathways.

³²⁰ Genesis 1:26

in that *HaShem's* יהו"ה desire is in all six-hundred and thirteen commandments equally (higher than the division into two-hundred and forty-eight organs). Now, since this desire for the commandments is entirely beyond any comparison to the human being who fulfills them (which is certainly the case, since it even is beyond the form of Supernal Man), therefore, relative to this level³²¹ (as it is, in and of itself) man takes up no space at all.

This sublimation, that before *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, one literally takes up no space, is the nullification of one's very existence (*Bitul B'Metziut*).³²² Moreover, even after the matter of a command to man, through which he indeed is given existence, nonetheless, his entire existence is solely to fulfill the command. Thus, through fulfilling the *mitzvah* (in that the term "mitzvah-מצוה" means³²³ "binding and bonding-*Tzavta v'Chibur*-וצוותא וחיבור") he becomes bound to the Commander of the *mitzvah* (who is totally and completely beyond comparison to him altogether).

³²¹ With respect to this section (until the end of this chapter), see Igrot Kodesh of the Rebbe Rayatz, Vol. 10, p. 369 and on, as well as Sefer HaMaamarim 5698, 5700, and 5710 cited below in the coming note.

³²² See the discourse *ibid.* (entitled "*VeKeebel*" 5677) Ch. 12 and on.

³²³ Note: Likkutei Torah, Bechukotai 45c; Derech Chaim Shaar HaTefilah (p. 52b); Sefer HaMaamarim 5698 p. 52; 5700 p. 73 and on; 5710 p. 71 and on; Likkutei Sichot Vol. 7, p. 30 and on; Likkutei Torah Chukat 57d on the words "*Asher Tzeevah*-אשר צוה-that He commanded." Also see the aforementioned discourse Ch. 4 on the explanation of "And you shall command-וצוה" that "command-*Tzivuy*-צווי is a term of "binding and bonding-*Tzavta v'Chibur*-וצוותא וחיבור," and is a term of connection between two things, "*Hitkashrut*-התקשרות." Also see Pri Etz Chaim, Shaar 29 (Shaar HaLulav) Ch. 3: The term "He will command-*Yetzaveh*-יצוה" is as our sages, of blessed memory stated, (Brachot 6b) "The whole world was only created to command-*Letzavot*-לצוות to this one" which is a term of bonding-*Chibur*-חיבור.

6.

Now, the same principle also applies to the study of Torah, in that there likewise are three approaches to the study of Torah. This is to say that in addition to the three ways that exist in the commandment to study Torah (just like all other commandments), in Torah study itself there also are these three ways (in a similar manner).

If one learns Torah because of the wisdom and intellect that is in it, for the Torah is,³²⁴ “Your wisdom and your understanding (even) in the eyes of the nations,” then his Torah study is due to the nature of his body and natural soul, in that he is an intellectual by nature and loves ideas.

If one’s Torah study is because the Torah is the intermediary that binds the Jewish people to the Holy One, blessed is He, as Zohar states,³²⁵ “There are three bonds that are tied to one another, the Jewish people are bound to the Torah and the Torah is bound to the Holy One, blessed is He.” Thus, through Torah study, we bind ourselves to the Torah and to the Holy One, blessed is He. In such a case, one’s Torah study is due to the soul that resides within him. In other words, even this level of Torah study is due to his own existence (in that his motivation is that **he** should be bonded to the Holy One, blessed is He).

However, there is an even higher level of Torah study. This is when one studies Torah (not because of any elevation

³²⁴ Deuteronomy 4:6

³²⁵ Zohar III 73a; Sefer HaMaamarim 5657 end of p. 28.

that he will derive through it, but rather) because of the Torah itself. That is, he studies it because, “The Torah and the Holy One, blessed is He, are entirely one,”³²⁶ so much so, that it actually is one with His Essential Self, blessed is He.

This is as our sages, of blessed memory, stated,³²⁷ “The word, ‘I am-*Anochi*-אֲנִי’³²⁸ is an acronym for, “I have placed My soul in My writings-*Ana Nafshi Katavit Yahavit*-אָנָא נַפְשִׁי כָּתַבִּית יְהָבִית.” The words “I-*Ana*-אָנָא” (and “my soul-*Nafshi*-נַפְשִׁי”) refer to the Essential Self of *HaShem*-יהו"ה Himself, blessed is He. Thus, the meaning of, “I have placed My soul in My writings,” is that He has written and given us His Singular Essential Self, blessed is He,³²⁹ “My soul-*Ana Nafshi*-אָנָא נַפְשִׁי,” and therefore, through Torah study, “it is Me that you are taking.”³³⁰

Therefore, just as the Holy One, blessed is He, is not an intermediary to anything, God forbid, but is the ultimate end, in and of Himself, in the same way,³³¹ this is how it is with this level of Torah study. That is, when a person learns in this manner, his perspective is that the ultimate purpose of his Torah study is Torah itself. In other words, because he realizes that,

³²⁶ Tanya Ch. 4 and beginning of Ch. 23 in the name of the Zohar; See citations in Maamarei Admor HaEmtza'ee Vayikra Vol. 1 p. 285; Zohar I 24a; Zohar II 60a; Tikkunei Zohar Tikkun 6, 21b; Tikkun 22, 64a; Likkutei Torah Netzavim 46a, and elsewhere.

³²⁷ Talmud Bavli Shabbat 105a (Ein Yaakov version of the text).

³²⁸ The first word of the Ten Commandments that states, “I am *HaShem*, your God-*Anochi HaShem Elohe*”-אֲנִי יְהו"ה אֱלֹהֵי יְדְ-*cha*.”

³²⁹ Likkutei Torah Shlach 58d and on.

³³⁰ See Midrash Shmot Rabba 33:1 & 6; Tanchuma Terumah 3; Tanya Ch. 47; Likkutei Torah *ibid*.

³³¹ See Likkutei Sichot Vol. 19, p. 182.

“The Torah and the Holy One, blessed is He, are entirely one,” this realization compels him to fully invest himself into the study of Torah without any calculations (even the calculation that through this he will bond with the Holy One, blessed is He). Through this, he studies Torah in a state of utter nullification of self.

These three ways of Torah study are drawn from the three matters that exist in Torah itself. That is, the Torah is wisdom and intellect (meaning that it is the wisdom of the Holy One, blessed is He, that subsequently descends and becomes manifest within the intellect of man).³³² Additionally, it is an intermediary that binds the Jewish people to the Holy One, blessed is He. Beyond that, “the Torah and the Holy One, blessed is He, are entirely one.”

7.

Now, the three above mentioned matters are also found in the laws and *halachot* of Torah study. That is, the obligation to study the laws that apply to the actual performance³³³ of the commandments, in order to know how and what to do, is similar to studying Torah from the angle of the (nature of the) body and the natural soul. This is because the performance of the commandments (as well as commandments that apply to

³³² See Tanya Ch. 4

³³³ Note: That is, they take a certain amount of precedence over and above the study of laws that do not relate to practical action to such a great extent. See Hilchot Talmud Torah of the Alter Rebbe 2:9.

speech)³³⁴ is done with the physical body and the natural soul that vitalizes it.

On the other hand, the commandment to **know** the Torah, that is, to know all of Torah in its entirety (including matters that are not directly connected to the active performance of the *mitzvot*), is similar to the study of Torah for the benefit of the soul, since the substance of this commandment is specifically the **knowledge** of Torah.

It can therefore be said, that this is why there indeed is measure to the commandment to know Torah. [For the verse that states,³³⁵ “It’s measure is longer than the earth and wider than the sea,” is referring to the **reasons** of the laws. However, the laws themselves, as well as the Midrashim etc., indeed have a fixed measure and number to them,³³⁶ and there indeed have been a number of people who have learned and known the entire Torah.³³⁷] For, since this obligation to know the whole Torah is upon a person, that he must know the Torah, and since man is limited, therefore the Torah that he must know (as it relates to this commandment) has measure and limit.

Then there is the obligation of,³³⁸ “You shall toil in it day and night.” [This applies even after one has learned the

³³⁴ Tanya Ch. 37 (p. 47a); However, in Tanya, Ch. 35 (p. 45a) it seems to state this differently. However, this is not the place for the extended explanation.

³³⁵ Job 11:9

³³⁶ See Hilchot Talmud Torah Ibid. 1:5

³³⁷ Talmud Bavli, Menachot 99b; Kuntres Acharon Hilchot Talmud Torah Ibid. Ch. 3, 1:1 (p. 1686).

³³⁸ Note: Joshua 1:8; Also see at length in the Kuntres Acharon Ibid. that the commandment of knowing the Torah and the commandment of “you shall toil in it, day and night,” are two distinct matters. Although the Kuntres Acharon states that the knowledge of Torah is greater than the commandment of “you shall toil in it” this

entire Torah, and also to those who do not have the attention span to come to know the entire Torah.^{339]} That is, this is the obligation to study Torah because of what Torah itself is. Now, since Torah (as it is, in and of itself) is beyond all measure and limitation (“It’s measure is longer than the earth”), so likewise, the commandment to study Torah (because of what Torah itself is), is that he should be involved in its study constantly, day and night, and at every free moment, beyond measure and limitation.³⁴⁰

8.

Now, we can state with even greater depth, that even regarding the commandment of, “you shall toil in it, day and night,” since it is a commandment that man is commanded to do [and is not like the Torah, as it is, in the wisdom of the Holy One, blessed is He (that transcends all relation to worlds), that subsequently descended below], therefore, Torah that is learned because of the *mitzvah* of, “you shall toil in it day and night,” (is not the same as Torah is, in and of itself, but is rather) as it relates to man.

is not a contradiction to what we are stating here. For, the commandment of knowing the Torah is only greater in the sense that it is not pushed off by any other commandments.

³³⁹ Hilchot Talmud Torah Ibid 3:3-4

³⁴⁰ Note: Now, although it is explained in Hilchot Talmud Torah Ibid. (Ch. 3) that there are various ways to fulfill this commandment of “You shall toil in it” to the point that in extenuating circumstances it may be fulfilled through the recital of the *Shema* in the morning and in the night (Hilchot Talmud Torah Ibid. 3:4) – nevertheless, these differences only apply when he is extremely preoccupied with the pursuit of his livelihood. However, when it comes to a person’s spare time, this commandment of “You shall toil in it” applies at every moment.

Therefore, the **true** matter of Torah study, as it is, (meaning, as it transcends all relation to man), is the study of the Torah of *HaShem*-יהו"ה for the sake of its Name, in that it is the Torah of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He. This type of Torah study is not solely in order to fulfill the *mitzvah* of Torah study, but is because of what Torah itself is.

We should add that the advantage of Torah study for the sake of the Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה, over and above the study of Torah to fulfill the *mitzvah* of Torah study, is not only in one's intention during study, but also, in the actual study itself. For, when Torah study is only to fulfill the commandment of Torah study, the study is in a limited manner. Even in the commandment of, "you shall toil in it, day and night," there are various restrictions and limitations, as explained in the laws of Torah study.

This is not so with the study of Torah for the sake of the Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, wherein there is no consideration of any measure or limitations whatsoever (including whether or not he is obligated to study in this way or not).³⁴¹ Thus, his Torah study will transcend the measures and limitations of time, and will likewise transcend the measures and limitations of space. This is as our sages, of blessed

³⁴¹ Note: See at length in Likkutei Sichot Vol. 2, p. 304 and on; Also see Kuntres Acharon Ibid. (p. 1688) in explanation of the teaching of our sages, of blessed memory, (Avot 6:4) "Such is the way of [a life of] Torah: You shall eat bread with salt, and rationed water shall you drink; you shall sleep on the ground, your life will be one of privation, and in Torah you shall labor etc." It is clarified there that this is not obligatory, but rather "such is the way of Torah." Even so, see the beginning of section 3:3 there, that states, "One whose heart is roused within him to fulfill this **commandment-Mitzvah** as is fitting... will live a life of privation."

memory, stated,³⁴² “One whose studies are beyond his control is different.”

The (inner) reason for this is that, because the *mitzvah* of, “you shall toil in it” is a commandment that was given to man, it therefore has limitations (according to the limitations of man). This is not the case, however, with the study of Torah for the sake of the Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He. This is because the Torah (as it is, in and of itself) transcends all measure and limitations (“its measure is longer than the earth”), and therefore, when man studies Torah in this way, namely, that his study is for the sake of the Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה (meaning, because of what Torah itself **is**), then he too exits the limitations of time and space.

9.

Now, we may state that the novel bond between “the upper ones” and “the lower ones” that occurred at the giving of the Torah, is specifically revealed in **this** aspect of Torah study, that is, for the sake of the Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, that is within it.

That is, there is an additional aspect to this, beyond the fact that in order for there to be a bond between, “the upper,

³⁴² Talmud Bavli, Kiddushin 33a; Hilchot Talmud Torah Ibid. end of Ch. 3 (This teaching was stated relative to one who inadvertently comes to contemplate matters of Torah even in places that it is not permissible to do so, because he is so absorbed in Torah, to the point that, “it is beyond his control.” Thus, this demonstrates an aspect of Torah study that transcends the restrictions of time and space.)

ones,” and, “the lower ones,” there must be a nullification of the categories of upper and lower, by drawing forth the light of the Unlimited One, blessed is He, that transcends them both (as explained before in chapter four). The example for this, in man, is that when a person is involved in Torah study for the sake of the Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה, there is a nullification of his awareness of separate existence (*Bitul B'Metziut*), both with respect to his body (“the lower”), as well as with respect to his soul (“the upper”). Thus, this bond of, “the upper ones” and “the lower ones” is specifically revealed in this manner of Torah study. That is, the Unlimited aspect of Torah (“the upper ones”) affects man (“the lower ones”), such that his study of Torah itself transcends all limitation.

We may further add to this, that through the limitlessness of Torah effecting man (and this also applies to the descent of Torah below to this world, in general), there is a revelation of the limitlessness of Torah to an even **greater** extent. For, the limitlessness of Torah is not only in regard to its place and position, in terms of its level, but rather, the very fact that it is drawn down below, is an indication of its limitlessness.³⁴³ This is to say that even as it is drawn down

³⁴³ Note: This is similar to the difference between the revelation of the Limitlessness of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, that is revealed in the world of Emanation-*Atzilut*, and between the Limitlessness of *HaShem*-יהו"ה Himself, as He transcends the world of Emanation-*Atzilut*. That is, although the light of the world of Emanation-*Atzilut* is described as, “There is no limit to its spreading forth,” nevertheless, “This remains in the world of Emanation-*Atzilut* itself, and is not revealed outside of the world of Emanation-*Atzilut*.” In contrast, the Light of the Singular Intrinsic Being of the Infinite One, *HaShem*-יהו"ה Himself, blessed is He, who transcends the world of Emanation-*Atzilut*, is “in an aspect of total limitlessness

below, there is a felt revelation of the Unlimited One, blessed is He, Who is in it, such that even man's study of Torah is in a way of limitlessness.³⁴⁴

10.

Based on all the above, we may now explain why the completion of receiving the Torah ("the Jews undertook") depends on self-sacrifice (*Mesirat Nefesh*). This is because the bond between "the upper ones" and "the lower ones" comes about through the nullification of the boundaries and existence of the upper and lower (as explained before). Therefore, in order for the receiving of the Torah to be completed to perfection, the nullification (*Bittul*) of self-sacrifice (*Mesirat Nefesh*) is necessary.

Although it is true that at the time of the giving of the Torah, when the Jewish people said,³⁴⁵ "All that *HaShem*-יהו"ה has spoken, we will do and we will hear," they did indeed accept upon themselves to do all that they would be commanded, even should it require having total self-sacrifice in doing so, nevertheless, as long as self-sacrifice is only in potential

to His spreading forth, such that He is drawn forth in the totality of the chaining down of the worlds." (See *Hemshech* 5666 p. 500 and on.)

³⁴⁴ Note: The fact that man retains his existence (limitation) and even so, his Torah study transcends all limitation, this itself further reveals the light of the Limitless One, *HaShem*-יהו"ה, that is within the Torah. This is as explained in *Hemshech* 5666 *ibid.* (p. 501), that "the true matter of 'there is no limit to His spreading forth' is that, on the one hand He, illuminates all space and place with literal open revelation, nevertheless, at the very same time the worlds remain at the level and state of existence, in which He brings them forth into being."

³⁴⁵ Exodus 24:7

(*BeKo'ach*) it is only from the angle of the soul, and is not the body.

However, because the nullification (*Bittul*) (through which a bond is affected between “the upper ones” and “the lower ones”), needs to be both in the upper and the lower, therefore the completion of the receiving of the Torah depends upon self-sacrifice (*Mesirat Nefesh*) in actuality (*BePo'el*), because self-sacrifice is actualized³⁴⁶ (*BePo'el*) with the body and the natural soul.

Based on this, we may also understand the advantage of the self-sacrifice of Purim, over and above, the self-sacrifice of Chanukah. This is because even self-sacrifice (*Mesirat Nefesh*) in actuality (*BePo'el*) is primarily due to the soul. In other words, it is the self-sacrifice of the soul that even affects the body and the natural soul. Nevertheless, because the body and the natural soul (in relation to themselves) remain in their state of existence, therefore it is the same with the revelation at the giving of the Torah, that (the bond between “the upper ones” and “the lower ones”) that was drawn forth to them, through the nullification of the self-sacrifice of the soul, was something that is superimposed upon them.

This then, is the advantage of the self-sacrifice of Purim over and above the self-sacrifice of Chanukah. That is, on Purim they had the ultimate self-nullification (and lowliness)

³⁴⁶ See Shaarei Orah, Shaar HaChanukah discourse entitled “On the twenty-fifth of Kislev” Ch. 19 (8a) and on; Also see at length in the discourse entitled “*VeHayah Ekev*” 5726 Ch. 5.

even from the angle of the body,³⁴⁷ in that they were entirely abandoned to be killed by whoever desired to do so, and according to the natural order, there was no way for them to be saved from the decree. [Although the decree was only against the Jewish people, and had they renounced their faith, God forbid, nothing would have been done to them (as mentioned before in Chapter 1, from Torah Ohr), nevertheless, since the decree was not only against Torah and *mitzvot*, but also against the body, “to slay and cause all the Jews to perish,”³⁴⁸ God forbid, it thus came about that their very bodies were in a state of ultimate lowliness at that time.

For, when the decree was only against Torah and *mitzvot* (as occurred during the time of Chanukah, when the decree was, “to cause them to forget Your Torah and to remove them from the laws that You desire³⁴⁹), this meant that they would only be killed if they fulfilled Torah and *mitzvot*. In that case, the body, in and of itself, is not abandoned to destruction.

This was not the case, however, when the decree was to “to slay and cause all the Jews to perish,”³⁵⁰ God forbid, when the only possibility of being saved from the decree, was through renouncing the true faith in *HaShem*-יהו"ה, God forbid. In this case, because the decree to kill him is (not because he doesn't want to renounce his faith, but rather) upon his body, we find

³⁴⁷ See at length Shaarei Orah, discourse entitled “*VeKeebel*”, Ch. 11 (although the explanation there is in another manner).

³⁴⁸ Esther 3:13

³⁴⁹ See the liturgy of the *Al HaNissim* prayer of thanks recited on Chanukah.

³⁵⁰ Esther 3:13

that the body (as it is, in and of itself) was abandoned to destruction.^{351]}

Thus, it is for this reason that it was specifically the self-sacrifice of Purim that affected the perfect completion of receiving of the Torah. For, because at that time, their nullification of self was from the aspect of the body, they therefore were fitting receptacles for the revelation of the giving of the Torah, both from the angle of the soul, as well as the angle of the body. We may say that this is why the discourse specifies that at the time of Haman's decree, the Jewish people were in a state of utter lowliness, even physically. For it is through this that he hints at the reason that they then were receptacles for the giving of the Torah, even from the angle of the body.

11.

Now, according to what was explained before (in chapter four) that in the bond between the upper and the lower, there are three matters; the upper, the lower and their nullification, it is understood that to merit the completion and perfection of the receiving of the Torah, the nullification

³⁵¹ Note: To further illuminate the difference between these two ways from the angle of *Halachah*-Jewish law: Even those who are in a situation in which they are *Halachically*-legally required to be killed rather than to transgress, if they do indeed transgress under duress, they are not punished for it. (See Rambam Hilchot Yesodei HaTorah 5:4.) Nevertheless, in a case where one transgressed them as a method of healing (See *ibid.* Halachah 6) and was indeed healed, he is indeed punished. Amongst the various reasons for this, is that the sick person did so willingly. (See at length in "Teshuvot u'Burim" p. 14 and the notes there, as well as several other examples of this.)

(*Bittul*) of the soul and the body is insufficient. Rather, it is necessary that even their existence, as they are, should be in a state of ultimate perfection, in that their very existence is tied to and bonded with the Torah.

This is similar to what we explained before (in chapters six and eight) that the advantage of Torah study for the sake of the Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה, is not only in regard to his nullification of self (that is, that his pursuit of Torah is not for the attainment of his own perfection, nor even to attain the perfection of his soul), but also, that the very existence of the one who is learning Torah (both in soul and body) is completely bonded to Torah. Through this, he escapes his limitations and ascends to the limitlessness of the Torah.

We may therefore say that this is why he states in the discourse that it was specifically Mordechai, the Moshe of his generation, who awakened self-sacrifice in the Jewish people, because the Torah study of Mordechai was of the utmost elevation. Therefore, through awakening the Jewish people to study Torah with self-sacrifice (*Mesirat Nefesh*) [and this was especially true of Mordechai who was the head of the generation (like Moshe), thus it is through him that vitality was drawn to all the other limbs and organs], he therefore drew into them (not only the nullification of the sense of separateness (*Bittul*), but also) the elevated level of Torah study, as it is in the most perfected state of man, the perfection of both soul and body.

Based upon this we may also explain what he cites in the discourse, that Mordechai gathered twenty-two thousand

schoolchildren and taught them Torah. For, this elevated level of Torah study (which is from the aspect of the perfection of the soul and of the body), is primarily found in schoolchildren.

This may be understood through what our sages, of blessed memory, taught,³⁵² “‘The world only exists because of the breath of the schoolchildren.’ Rav Pappa said to Abaye, ‘If so, what is the status of my Torah study and yours?’ He responded: ‘Breath that is tainted by sin cannot be compared to breath that is not tainted by sin.’”

In other words, although the Torah study of Rav Pappa and Abaye was (most certainly) for the sake of the Name *HaShem*-יהוה at the highest of levels, whereas the Torah study of schoolchildren is out fear of punishment,³⁵³ nevertheless, the “breath of the schoolchildren” has an advantage, in that the world is sustained in its existence specifically by this breath.

The explanation is well known,³⁵⁴ that the advantage of the breath of schoolchildren is because of both their souls and their bodies. That is, they are closer to Godliness because they have only recently arrived here from the spiritual world. Additionally, their bodies which have not yet become coarse through indulging in food and drink and the various lusts of the world, as explained elsewhere at greater length.

Based in the above, we may therefore state, that the reason the discourse cites the fact that during the time of the decree, Mordechai gathered twenty-two thousand

³⁵² Talmud Bavli, Shabbat 119b

³⁵³ See Tanya Kuntres Acharon, “To understand that which is written in *Shaar HaYichudim*” (p. 155a).

³⁵⁴ Derech Chaim, Ch. 76 (84d)

schoolchildren and taught them Torah, is to explain and highlight that their study of Torah at that time was (not only the nullification of the sense of self of the soul and of the body, but) was also in the state of the utmost perfection of the soul and body.

[However, the advantage of the soul of the schoolchildren was not really related to their Torah study. This is because their Torah study was out of fear of punishment (which is the nature of the body), and is not related to the soul. Moreover, their Torah study had no nullification of sense of self, to the point of self-sacrifice (*Mesirat Nefesh*). This is the reason why he cites in the discourse that it was specifically Mordechai who taught the schoolchildren Torah. For, it is specifically through him that their Torah study too, rose to the level of self-sacrifice, as explained in the discourse.]

It should also be added that through Mordechai gathering the twenty-two thousand schoolchildren, he too gained the additional, elevated aspect of the breath of the schoolchildren,³⁵⁵ and thus³⁵⁶ was able to draw this forth in all of the Jews of his generation.

³⁵⁵ Note: See the explanation in the discourse regarding the fact that it was specifically “through the six-hundred foot-soldiers of the nation... that additional light and illumination was added to Moshe.”

³⁵⁶ Note: To further clarify based upon what it states at the end of the discourse, that “Mordechai got up... and gathered the multitudes in public in order to strengthen their faith in *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He (that is, the faith of the Jewish people in general) *through the study of Torah of the school-children.*”

Based upon all the above, we can also explain the reason that³⁵⁷ “a person is obligated to become intoxicated on Purim until he does not know the difference between cursed is Haman and blessed is Mordechai.” For, every year, on Purim there is a renewed awakening of this matter that the Jews “undertook,” just as on the first occasion. On the contrary – it is in a way of “ascension in holiness.”³⁵⁸

[We may thus add that the novelty of the days of Purim, over and above the giving of the Torah, is in two matters: In the days of Purim there was a completion and perfection of the receiving of the Torah (“the Jews received”), as explained before at length. Moreover, even in the fulfillment of Torah there was an advantage, as stated in Talmud³⁵⁹ on the verse,³⁶⁰ “The Jews fulfilled and undertook,” that they, “Fulfilled that which they already undertook to do at Sinai.”

In other words, that which they undertook to do at Sinai was not in a manner that was everlasting, because after they sinned with the golden calf³⁶¹ “the Jewish people stripped themselves of their ornaments, from Mt. Horeb onward.” In contrast, it states about the days of Purim,³⁶² “And these days of Purim shall not cease from amongst the Jews, nor shall the

³⁵⁷ Talmud Bavli, Megilla 7b; See Sefer HaMaamarim 5681 p. 179 note 1.

³⁵⁸ Talmud Bavli, Brachot 28a

³⁵⁹ Talmud Bavli, Shabbat 88a

³⁶⁰ Esther 9:27

³⁶¹ Exodus 33:6; Shabbat ibid.

³⁶² Esther 9:28

memory of them perish from their offspring.” In other words, that which they “received” and “undertaken” at the time of Purim, is established for eternity.³⁶³

Likewise, each and every year, the days of Purim possess these two matters. That is, every year there is additional perfection in the receiving of the Torah (as explained above), and secondly, this addition perfection is established forever.]

This is why our service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה on Purim, is in this way of, “not knowing the difference.” That is, one must go entirely out of himself, since receiving the Torah only comes about through the total nullification of sense of self (*Bittul*). This is also why the manner through which one goes out of his sense of independent existence (“to the point that he does not know”) must be through, “becoming intoxicated with (physical) wine.”³⁶⁴

This is because the nullification of sense of self (*Bittul*) that is to be attained (on Purim) must also be from the angle of the body, as explained before at length. This draws out the ability and strength that, throughout the year, matters of the body will take up no space for him, and he will automatically have no obstructions to his Torah study on account of his body.

According to what we explained before regarding the elevated level of Torah study for the sake of the Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, and that this is not only a matter of nullification of sense of self (*Bittul*), but beyond, that one's study of Torah also becomes in a way of limitlessness, we may

³⁶³ See Shaarei Orah discourse entitled “*VeKeebel*” Ch. 20 (94a) at length.

³⁶⁴ Rashi to Tractate Megillah Ibid. (7b)

say that it is the same way in the matter of “becoming intoxicated until one does not know the difference.” This is to say that it (subsequently) affects an ascension even in one’s knowledge [since Torah study must specifically be in a way of understanding and comprehension]. That is, he will understand matters in Torah that he would have been incapable of knowing and understanding previously.

This was explained by his honorable holiness, my father-in-law, the Rebbe, in one of his Purim talks.³⁶⁵ That is, through attaining the state of, “not knowing,” the “knowing” that subsequently follows, is of a different order and quality altogether. In general, this is because the limited intellect of man becomes one with the limitless Torah that he learns, through which he becomes one with the Holy One, blessed is He, Himself. For, “the Jewish people, the Torah, and the Holy One, blessed is He, are entirely one.”³⁶⁶

³⁶⁵ See the Sicha of Purim 5706 Ch. 2 (Sefer HaSichot 5706 p. 23 and on.)

³⁶⁶ Tanya Ch. 4 and beginning of Ch. 23 in the name of the Zohar; See citations in Maamarei Admor HaEmtza’ee Vayikra Vol. 1 p. 285; Zohar I 24a; Zohar II 60a; Tikkunei Zohar Tikkun 6, 21b; Tikkun 22, 64a; Likkutei Torah Netzavim 46a, and elsewhere.