

Discourse 6

“VaYeishev Yaakov - Yaakov settled...”

Delivered on the 23rd of Kislev,
Shabbat Mevarchim Teivet, 5712
By the grace of *HaShem*, blessed is He,

1.

The verse states,³³⁸ “And Yaakov settled in the land of his father’s sojournings, in the land of Canaan.” Now, the simple explanation of the verse is that Yaakov established his dwelling place in the land where his father Yitzchak sojourned. However, we need to understand this.³³⁹ It was stated before that,³⁴⁰ “Yaakov came to Yitzchak his father, in Mamre of Kiryat-Arba, which is Chevron, where Avraham and Yitzchak resided.” The subsequent verse continues,³⁴¹ “And Yitzchak expired and died etc.,” which took place several years after Yaakov came to him.³⁴² It thus is understood that Yaakov’s coming to his father Yitzchak was not merely a temporary visit, but that he came to settle down

³³⁸ Genesis 37:1

³³⁹ See Abarvanel to Gen. 37:1; Ohr HaTorah VaYeishev Vol. 1, p. 266a; Discourse entitled “*VeYeishev Yaakov*” 5631 & 5656 (Sefer HaMaamarim 5631 Vol. 1, p. 97; 5656 p. 308) & 5675 (*Hemshech* 5672 Vol. 2, p. 776) and elsewhere.

³⁴⁰ Genesis 35:27

³⁴¹ Genesis 35:29

³⁴² See Rashi to Genesis 35:29

permanently. This being the case, by telling us that, “Yaakov settled in the land of his father’s sojournings,” what novelty is the Torah introducing here that we did not already know?

Now, it states in the Midrash³⁴³ (and is also cited in Rashi’s commentary),³⁴⁴ “Yaakov sought to dwell in tranquility... the Holy One, blessed is He, said, ‘Is not what is prepared for the righteous in the coming world sufficient for them, that they also seek to dwell in tranquility in this world?’” This is how they explain the novelty introduced by the verse, “And Yaakov settled-*VaYeishev Yaakov*-וישב יעקב,” namely, that the meaning is “settling in tranquility.”

Nevertheless, we still must understand why the Holy One, blessed is He, said, “Is not what is prepared for the righteous in the coming world sufficient for them, that they also seek to dwell in tranquility in this world?” For, since Yaakov sought to dwell in tranquility, certainly, he knew that he merited to dwell in tranquility. This is further demonstrated by the fact that although *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, promised Yaakov,³⁴⁵ “Behold I am with you and I will guard you wherever you go,” it nevertheless states that³⁴⁶ “Yaakov became very afraid,” about which our sages, of blessed memory, explained,³⁴⁷ “Yaakov was worried that transgression might cause *HaShem*’s protection to be removed from him.” This being the case, it is certain that when he did

³⁴³ Midrash Bereishit Rabba 84:3

³⁴⁴ Genesis 37:2

³⁴⁵ Genesis 28:15

³⁴⁶ Genesis 32:8 – When Esav was coming to greet him.

³⁴⁷ Talmud Bavli, Brachot 4a; Rashi to Genesis 32:11

indeed seek to dwell in tranquility, he certainly knew that he had attained such a level in which it was appropriate for him to dwell in tranquility.

This is also understood by what our sages, of blessed memory, stated,³⁴⁸ “There were three people to whom the Holy One, blessed is He, gave a taste of the coming world while yet in this world. They are Avraham, Yitzchak, and Yaakov.” Thus, it certainly was appropriate that Yaakov, “the choicest of the forefathers,”³⁴⁹ should dwell in tranquility. Therefore, it is not understood why the Holy One, blessed is He, stated, “Is not what is prepared for the righteous in the coming world sufficient for them, that they also seek to dwell in tranquility in this world?”

2.

Now, to understand this, we first must preface with an explanation of the particulars of the matter of Chanukah. For, it states in the Talmud,³⁵⁰ “The *mitzvah* of kindling the Chanukah candles is from sunset... it is a *mitzvah* to place the Chanukah lamp at the entrance to one’s house, on the outside...on which side should it be placed...? On the left side, so that the *Mezuzah* will be on the right and the Chanukah lamp will be on the left.”

³⁴⁸ Talmud Bavli, Bava Batra 16b; Also see *Hemshech* 5672 *ibid.* p. 784.

³⁴⁹ Shaar HaPsukim, Toldot 27:25; Midrash Bereishit Rabba 76; Zohar I 119b & 147b.

³⁵⁰ Talmud Bavli, Shabbat 21b and on.

Now, there are three *mitzvot* that involve lights. There is the *mitzvah* of lighting the candelabrum (*Menorah*) that was in the Holy Temple. There is the *mitzvah* to light the Shabbat candles, and there is the *mitzvah* to light the Chanukah lamp. However, the Chanukah lamp differs from the lamps of the candelabrum (*Menorah*) in the Holy Temple, and from the Shabbat candles.³⁵¹ That is, the commandment to kindle the lights of the candelabrum (*Menorah*) in the Holy Temple was at the midpoint, between *Minchah Ketanah* and sunset (*Plag HaMinchah*), which is a period of time that precedes sunset.³⁵² Similarly, one must light the Shabbat candles before sunset. However, the Chanukah lights are different, in that the *mitzvah* is to light them after the sun sets.

Additionally, regarding the candelabrum (*Menorah*) in the Holy Temple, the place of the candelabrum was specifically inside the Holy Temple, and in this itself, it was within the inner sanctuary-*Heichal*, where only the priests (*Kohanim*) were permitted to enter (rather than in the courtyard-*Azarah*). Moreover, even the priests themselves were forbidden to enter there for purposes other than to perform their service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, (and were warned against unwarranted entry for no purpose).³⁵³ The same is true of the Shabbat lights, which are to be lit

³⁵¹ See discourse entitled “*Mitzvatah Mishetishka HaChamah*” in Ohr HaTorah Chanukah (*Bereishit* Vol. 5) p. 940b; Sefer HaMaamarim 5678 p. 112; Discourse entitled “*Tanu Rabbanan Mitzvat Ner Chanukah*” and “*Mitzvatah Mishetishka HaChamah*” 5738 (*Torat Menachem Sefer HaMaamarim Kislev* p. 162 & p. 169).

³⁵² One and one-quarter variable hours (*Sha'ot Zmaniyot*) before sunset.

³⁵³ Mishneh Torah, Hilchot Biyat HaMikdash 2:2

indoors, since the primary matter of these lights is to bring peace to the home, and it therefore is necessary to light them in the dining room.³⁵⁴ This is not the case, however, in regard to the Chanukah lights, in which, “it is a *mitzvah* to place the Chanukah lamp at the entrance to one’s house, on the outside,” specifically.

Another difference³⁵⁵ is that the lights in the Holy Temple were placed on the right, as it states,³⁵⁶ “The table (*Shulchan*) stood in the north (left) and the candelabrum (*Menorah*) in the south (right).” This is similarly the case with the Shabbat lights, about which it states in Kabbalah (in *Sefer Mishnat Chassidim*)³⁵⁷ that they should be placed on the right. This is not the case, however, with the lights of Chanukah, which must specifically be placed on the left.

Now, the main point in this matter, is that the particular details of the laws of the *mitzvah* of the lights of Chanukah, relate to the general matter and reason that the sages established the *mitzvah* of the lights of Chanukah, as stated in the Talmud. Namely, it states,³⁵⁸ “What is Chanukah...? When the Greeks entered into the Sanctuary, they defiled all the oils that were in the Sanctuary... When the Hasmonean monarchy overcame them and emerged victorious

³⁵⁴ Shulchan Aruch and Shulchan Aruch Admor HaZaken, Orach Chayim 263.

³⁵⁵ See discourse entitled “*Ner Chanukah Mitzvatah*” 5675 (*Hemshech* 5672 Vol. 2, p. 784 and on).

³⁵⁶ Exodus 26:35 and Rashi there; Talmud Bavli, Yoma 33b; Mishneh Torah, Hilchot Beit HaBechirah 1:7

³⁵⁷ Mesechet Leil Shabbat 3:8; Siddur HaArizal, Seder HaShulchan

³⁵⁸ Talmud Bavli, Shabbat 21b and on

over them...”³⁵⁹ That is, they were victorious over the Greeks, who desired³⁶⁰ “to make them forget Your Torah and to make them forsake the laws that are Your will,” as will be explained.

3.

The explanation of this, in accordance with what is explained in various places,³⁶¹ is that the decree of the Greeks was not against Torah study in general. Rather, their intention was specifically as we recite, “to make them forget **Your** Torah.” In other words, their desire was specifically to cause the Jewish people to forget that Torah is the **Torah of HaShem-יהוה**, blessed is He. Regarding Torah, it is written,³⁶² “For it is your wisdom and understanding in the eyes of the nations.” In other words, even human intellect understands that the wisdom of Torah is an extremely deep wisdom etc. Therefore, even the Greeks were in agreement to this, and because of its elevated wisdom and intellect, they allowed the study of Torah, but only as the study of human wisdom and intellect, just like any other human wisdom. Their decree was solely, “to make them forget **Your** Torah,”

³⁵⁹ “...they searched and found only one cruse of oil that was placed with the seal of the High Priest... There was sufficient oil to light for one day, but a miracle occurred and they lit from it eight days...”

³⁶⁰ Liturgy of the “*Al HaNisim*” recited on Chanukah

³⁶¹ See Sefer HaMaamarim 5689 p. 161 and on; 5692 p. 185 and on; 5698 p. 173 and on; 5701 p. 59 and on; HaYom Yom, 2 Tevet, the 7th day of Chanukah.

³⁶² Deuteronomy 4:6

meaning, specifically to cause them to forget that Torah is the **Torah of HaShem-יהו"ה**, blessed is He.

The same applies to the performance of the commandments-*mitzvot*. They specifically desired, “to make them forsake the laws that are **Your will**.” For, as known,³⁶³ there are three categories of *mitzvot*: Testimonies-*Eidot*-עדות, Decrees-*Chukim*-חוקים and Ordinances-*Mishpatim*-משפטים. Ordinances-*Mishpatim*-משפטים and Testimonies-*Eidot*-עדות refer to commandments-*mitzvot* that have room for intellectual understanding. This is certainly the case with Ordinances-*Mishpatim*-משפטים, which are commandments-*mitzvot* that are necessary even according to human intellect. Moreover, even Testimonies-*Eidot*-עדות have room to be understood according to the intellect. For example, this includes the various commandments-*mitzvot* that are a remembrance to the Exodus from Egypt. The same is true of Shabbat, which is a remembrance of the Act of Creation (*Ma'aseh Bereishit*),³⁶⁴ as it states,³⁶⁵ “For in six days *HaShem-יהו"ה* made the heavens and the earth, the sea and all that is in them, and He rested on the seventh day.”

This is not the case however with *mitzvot* that are in the category of Decrees-*Chukim*-חוקים, which cannot at all be understood through the intellect. It is about these commandments that our sages, of blessed memory, stated that

³⁶³ See Sefer HaMaamarim 5692, 5698, 5701 cited earlier, and elsewhere.

³⁶⁴ Moreh HaNevuchim Vol. 2 Ch. 31; Ramban to Deuteronomy 5:15, and elsewhere.

³⁶⁵ Exodus 20:11, 31:17

they are solely because,³⁶⁶ “I have decreed a decree (*Chukah Chakakti*-חוקה חקקתי), and issued an edict.” It was specifically in regard to these commandments that the Greeks desired, “to make them forsake the **decrees that are Your will-*Chukei Retzonecha***-חוקי רצונך.” In other words, the decree of the Greeks did not extend to the commandments that were in the category of Ordinances-*Mishpatim*-משפטים and Testimonies-*Eidot*-עדות, since these commandments have room to be understood according to human intellect. Thus, they agreed to the fulfillment of these commandments. Rather, their decree was solely in regard to *mitzvot* in the category of Decrees-*Chukim*-חוקים, as stated, they desired “to make them forsake the **decrees that are Your will-*Chukei Retzonecha***-חוקי רצונך.”

Additionally,³⁶⁷ even in regard to the other commandments-*mitzvot*, they agreed that they may be fulfilled only as a matter of human reason and intellect, but not because they are the will of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, as in the teaching,³⁶⁸ “It gives me spiritual satisfaction that I spoke and My will was fulfilled.”

However, the ultimate and primary intention of the Greeks was to cause the Jewish people to utterly nullify the general matter of Torah study and the fulfillment of the commandments-*mitzvot* altogether.³⁶⁹ In other words, through causing them to first nullify the study of Torah as the Torah of

³⁶⁶ Midrash Tanchuma 3:8; Midrash Bamidbar Rabba 19:1

³⁶⁷ See Likkutei Sichot Vol. 3, p. 815.

³⁶⁸ Torat Cohanim and Rashi to Leviticus 1:9 and elsewhere.

³⁶⁹ See Torat Menachem, Sefer HaMaamarim Kislev p. 164 note 31.

HaShem-יהו"ה, blessed is He, as well desisting from performing, "the decrees that are Your will-*Chukei Retzonecha*-חוקי רצונך," their ultimate goal was to nullify all of Torah and *mitzvot* in general. This is understood from the explanation of his honorable holiness, my father-in-law the Rebbe,³⁷⁰ regarding the teaching of our sages, of blessed memory,³⁷¹ "Today [the evil inclination] tells him to do this and tomorrow it tells him to do that, until eventually it tells him to worship idolatry and he goes and worships idolatry." That is, when a person is serving the Holy One, blessed is He, studying Torah and fulfilling the commandments-*mitzvot*, the evil inclination comes to him and tells him, "Do this." That is, he agrees that a Jew should fulfill the commandments-*mitzvot*, but only because they make intellectual sense, not because they are the will of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He. He even agrees to the study of Torah, but only because of the intellect that is in it. Thus the evil inclination tells him that he too (the evil inclination) wants to study with him ("I want to learn together with you"). However, it is through this, that in the end, he comes to nullify his study of Torah and fulfillment of the commandments-*mitzvot* entirely.

4.

The explanation of the matter may be understood through the teaching of our sages, of blessed memory, on the

³⁷⁰ Sefer HaMaamarim 5689 *ibid.* p. 172 and on; 5698 p. 175.

³⁷¹ Talmud Bavli, Shabbat 105b

verse,³⁷² “The companion of harlots will lose a fortune.” They stated,³⁷³ “Anyone who says: ‘This teaching is pleasant, but this teaching is not pleasant,’³⁷⁴ loses the fortune of Torah.” In other words, in the end he even loses the teaching about which he stated, “This teaching is pleasant.”

However, at first glance this is not understood. For, since he said, “This teaching is pleasant,” and he indeed derives vitality from his understanding of it, why does he lose it? Moreover, this is also not understood because of the statement of our sages that,³⁷⁵ “A person should always learn Torah in a place that his heart desires – and if he studies a different Tractate, that his heart does not desire, it will not be sustained in him, since his heart follows his desire.” This being the case, why should he lose the teaching that he finds pleasant and that his heart desires?

However, the explanation is that the wisdom of Torah differs from all other wisdoms. This is because, in and of itself, Torah is beyond grasp, and it is entirely inapplicable for it be grasped by the intellect. The only reason it is possible for grasp of Torah is because the Holy One, blessed is He, desires that through it, the Jewish people will become bonded to Him. That is, the Jewish people bind themselves to Torah and Torah is bound to the Holy One, blessed is He.³⁷⁶ Moreover, He desired that not only the Godly soul of the Jew should be

³⁷² Proverbs 29:3

³⁷³ Talmud Bavli, Eruvin 64a

³⁷⁴ That is, the words “this is pleasant-*Zo Na'ah*-נאה” is hinted at in the word for “harlot-*Zonah*-זונה.”

³⁷⁵ Talmud Bavli, Avoda Zarah 19a and Rashi there.

³⁷⁶ Zohar III 73a

included in this bond, but also the animal soul of the Jew and his physical and material body should be included. Thus, the Torah descended from level to level until it manifested within intellect and comprehension.³⁷⁷ For, through his grasp of Torah, the person who studies it becomes unified with *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, in a "most wondrous unity, a unity that is completely unparalleled."³⁷⁸

It therefore is understood that if a person's study of Torah is not to bond himself to the Holy One, blessed is He, but only because of the intellect of Torah, it becomes impossible for him to truly grasp Torah at all, since Torah itself is entirely unrelated to grasp and comprehension, as mentioned above. It is because of this that, "Anyone who says: 'This teaching is pleasant, but this teaching is not pleasant,'" even loses the teaching that he finds pleasant. This is because he studies it only because he finds this teaching to be pleasant, due to the intellect in it.

This then, was the intention of the Greeks, who desired "to make them forget **Your** Torah," meaning that their goal was to cause it to be forgotten that the Torah is the **Torah of HaShem**-יהו"ה, blessed is He. For, they knew that, through this, the entire matter of Torah study, generally, would be forgotten. In the same vein, the Greeks desired, "to make them forsake the **decrees that are Your will**-*Chukei Retzonecha*-חוקי רצונך." In other words, their purpose was, "to

³⁷⁷ See Tanya Ch. 4

³⁷⁸ See Tanya Ch. 5

make them forget **Your** Torah,” through which they would ultimately altogether stop studying Torah in general.

The explanation of this is known, that our awakening below (*It'aruta D'leTata*) causes an awakening Above (*It'aruta D'Le'Eiyla*). The same principle applies regarding drawing forth Torah into human intellect. That is, although Torah itself transcends grasp and comprehension, nevertheless, it descended to manifest within human intellect, to the point that it is possible to grasp it and become unified with it in a, “most wondrous unity, a unity that is completely unparalleled.”³⁷⁹ The awakening from below (*It'aruta D'leTata*) that causes this, is through the fulfillment of the commandments-*mitzvot* (“the decrees that are **Your** will-*Chukei Retzonecha*-חוקי רצונך”). This is because, through the fulfillment of the commandments-*mitzvot*, we affect a change of being in physical objects through which the *mitzvot* are performed, so that they become Godly. The awakening below (*It'aruta D'leTata*) causes an awakening Above (*It'aruta D'Le'Eiyla*), in that, “a spirit awakens a spirit and draws forth a spirit,”³⁸⁰ through which we cause that the Torah, which totally transcends grasp and comprehension, is drawn forth into the intellect and into grasp and comprehension.

Thus, it is for this reason that the Greeks desired, “to make them forsake the **decrees that are Your will-*Chukei Retzonecha***-חוקי רצונך.” That is, their ultimate intention was to nullify the fulfillment of the commandments-*mitzvot*

³⁷⁹ See Tanya Ch. 5

³⁸⁰ Zohar II 162b

altogether, and by not fulfilling the commandments-*mitzvot*, there no longer would be the awakening from below (*It'aruta D'leTata*) that is required to draw forth the Torah from Above. This is what is meant by their desire, "to make them forget **Your** Torah," through which they would ultimately nullify the general matter of Torah study altogether.

5.

However, the Jewish people stood up against this wicked decree of the Greeks, and battled against them with self-sacrifice (*Mesirat Nefesh*), which transcends reason and intellect. That is, not only does self-sacrifice transcend human reason and intellect, but it even transcends reason and intellect of the side of holiness. For, according to the strict letter of the law, there is room for debate as to whether the decrees of the Greeks are amongst those matters that we are commanded to die rather than transgress, or whether it is better to transgress them, rather than to be killed.³⁸¹ For, the decrees of the Greeks prohibited the fulfillment of circumcision (*Milah*), Shabbat and family purity (*Taharat HaMishpachah*).³⁸² (That is, the Greeks decreed that all virgins that are to be wed, must first have relations with the high official.)³⁸³

³⁸¹ See Likkutei Sichot Vol. 35, p. 173; Torat Menachem Vol. 4, p. 233 and on.

³⁸² See Megilat Antiochus; Mishneh Torah, Hilchot Chanukah 3:1; Rashi and Ra"n to Talmud Bavli, Shabbat 23a and elsewhere.

³⁸³ See Rashi to Shabbat 23a *ibid*.

Now, regarding the commandments of circumcision (*Milah*) and Shabbat, one is obligated to transgress them, rather than to be killed.³⁸⁴ Similarly, even regarding the decree that virgins must first have relations with the high official before being wed, although it is true in matters of forbidden sexual relations (*Arayot*) the obligation to be killed rather than to transgress,³⁸⁵ there nevertheless is room to say that this was a similar to, “Esther, who was like the ground of the earth.”³⁸⁶ Moreover, although during a time in which there is a decree, the intent of which is to nullify the faith of the Jewish people, there indeed is an obligation to give up one’s life rather than to transgress **any** of the commandments,³⁸⁷ this only applies when one is forced to actively transgress it.³⁸⁸ Thus, at first glance, it does not seem that there is room to argue that there is any obligation to rise up in battle against the wicked kingdom that enacts such decrees.³⁸⁹

It therefore is understood from all of the above, that the self-sacrifice (*Mesirat Nefesh*) of the Jewish people in standing up against the decrees of the Greeks, was a self-

³⁸⁴ Mishneh Torah, Hilchot Yesodei HaTorah 5:2

³⁸⁵ Mishneh Torah, Hilchot Yesodei HaTorah 5:2

³⁸⁶ Talmud Bavli, Sanhedrin 74b and Rashi & Tosefot there; Ketuvot 3b and elsewhere – That is, there is room to say that the obligation to give up one’s life rather than to engage in forbidden sexual intercourse, only applies to men, who must actively transgresses the prohibition, since an erection is only possible if one is willing and interested. On the other hand, women, such as Esther, who passively submit to a rape without interest, are not necessarily required to give up their lives in order not to sin.

³⁸⁷ Mishneh Torah, Hilchot Yesodei HaTorah 5:3

³⁸⁸ Which, as explained in the footnote above, does not necessarily apply to women.

³⁸⁹ See Likkutei Sichot, Vol. 35, p. 173 *ibid*.

sacrifice (*Mesirat Nefesh*) that even transcended holy reason and intellect.

There is yet an additional superiority to the self-sacrifice of the Jewish people in standing up against the decrees of the Greeks. For, the decrees of the Greeks were enacted in a way of shrewdness and wisdom. That is, they began by only enacting decrees prohibiting specific commandments. However, their intention was to uproot the very foundations of faith in *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, and to nullify and cause the Jewish people to stop studying Torah and fulfilling the *mitzvot* entirely (as explained before). Thus, because their decree was enacted in a way of shrewdness, the self-sacrifice (*Mesirat Nefesh*) required to combat it was much greater.

This is similar to the explanation³⁹⁰ given for the difference between the sin offering (*Chatat*) and the guilt offering (*Asham Taluy*). That is, when it comes to the sin offering (*Chatat*) which is for a definite transgression, one brings an offering worth only one-sixth (*Danka*) of a dinar, whereas for the guilt offering (*Asham*) which is for possible transgressions, one brings double that.³⁹¹ The reason is because in regard to a sin offering (*Chatat*), which is brought for known transgressions, one's heart is troubled within him, and he is remorseful with all his heart. However, such is not the case, regarding guilt offerings (*Asham Taluy*) which is

³⁹⁰ See Rabbeinu Yona commentary to Tractate Brachot 1,2:4; Cited in Shulchan Aruch (and Shulchan Aruch of the Alter Rebbe), Orach Chayim 603.

³⁹¹ Talmud Bavli, Zevachim 48a

brought for possible transgressions that are uncertain. For, in the case of uncertain transgressions, since he is doubtful as to whether or not he even sinned, he blesses himself in his heart, saying that he possibly did not sin altogether. Therefore, he is not truly remorseful over it. This is why guilt offerings (*Asham Taluy*) for possible sins need to be more expensive than the sin offerings (*Chatat*) for definite sins.

The same principle can be applied to the matter of their self-sacrifice (*Mesirat Nefesh*) against the decrees of the Greeks. That is, since their decrees were enacted in a way of shrewdness, the self-sacrifice (*Mesirat Nefesh*) required to combat it necessarily needed to be much greater.

6.

Now, by the very fact that the Jewish people stood up in battle against these decrees, in a way of self-sacrifice (*Mesirat Nefesh*) that transcended all reason and intellect, they therefore elicited that their victory was also in a way that entirely transcended the natural order. This is as we recite,³⁹² “You delivered the strong into the hands of the weak, the many into the hands of the few etc.” In addition, there also was the miracle of the cruse of oil that, “they searched and found only one cruse of oil that was placed with the seal of the High Priest... There was sufficient oil to light for one day, but a miracle occurred and they lit from it for eight days.”³⁹³

³⁹² Liturgy of the “*Al HaNisim*” recited on Chanukah

³⁹³ Talmud Bavli, Shabbat 21b and on

This miracle occurred, “only for the Ever Present One, *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, to demonstrate how beloved the Jewish people are to Him,”³⁹⁴ and applies to the entire matter, both that they found a single cruse of oil, as well as to the fact that it was neither rendered impure by touch nor rendered impure by movement.³⁹⁵ For, it was in fact permissible for them to light the candelabrum (*Menorah*), even with the oil that was rendered impure, since “ritual impurity is overridden in cases involving the public.”³⁹⁶

This likewise applies to the miracle that occurred, in that there only was sufficient oil to light for a single day, and yet, they lit from it for eight days. It was entirely possible for an alternate miracle to have occurred instead, in the first place, namely, that they should find a cruse of oil that had adequate oil for eight days. We therefore see that all this happened “only for the Ever Present One, *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, to demonstrate how beloved the Jewish people are to Him.”

Now, all this came to be revealed specifically in relation to the lighting of the candelabrum (*Menorah*), since the entire “matter of the candelabrum (and particularly the westernmost lamp)³⁹⁷ is a testimony to all mankind, that the

³⁹⁴ See Pnei Yehoshua to Shabbat 21b *ibid*; Sha'alot uTeshuvot Chacham Tzvi, Siman 87.

³⁹⁵ See Tosefot “*SheHayah*” to Shabbat 21b *ibid*.

³⁹⁶ Talmud Bavli, Pesachim 77a

³⁹⁷ The westernmost lamp in the candelabrum in which the measure of oil was placed, was the same measure of oil as placed in the other lamps. Nevertheless, the priest would light the others from it each day, and he would conclude with it. That is, the westernmost lamp would continue burning throughout the day after all the others were extinguished. The rest of the lamps

Indwelling Presence of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, dwells with the Jewish people."³⁹⁸

The explanation is that the love that the Holy One, blessed is He, has for the Jewish people, is an essential love that transcends reason and intellect. In other words, there is no logical reason for this level of love. This is as stated,³⁹⁹ “‘Was not Esav the brother of Yaakov?’ – the word of *HaShem*-יהו"ה – ‘Yet I loved Yaakov, but I hated Esav!’” In other words, *HaShem*’s-יהו"ה love of Yaakov is an essential love that totally transcends reason and intellect. This matter comes to be drawn forth into revelation when the Jewish people serve *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, with self-sacrifice (*Mesirat Nefesh*), in a manner that transcends reason and intellect. For, through this, we draw forth the essential love that the Holy One, blessed is He, has for the Jewish people, which transcends reason and intellect. Thus, it was due to this, that the miracle of the cruse of oil happened, “only for the Ever Present One, *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, to demonstrate how beloved the Jewish people are to Him.”

7.

Now, based on what we explained above about the general matter of Chanukah, and that it happened through the self-sacrifice (*Mesirat Nefesh*) of the Jewish people, which

only burned at night, and each night, the priest would relight the rest of the lamps from the westernmost lamp. (See Talmud Bavli, Shabbat 22b).

³⁹⁸ Talmud Bavli, Shabbat 22b

³⁹⁹ Malachi 1:2-3

transcended reason and intellect, causing a drawing forth of the essential love that the Holy One, blessed is He, has for the Jewish people, which also transcends reason and intellect, and that this was the cause for the miracle of the cruse of oil, “to demonstrate how beloved the Jewish people are to Him,” through this we may now also understand the specifics of the *mitzvah* of the Chanukah lights. That is, based on this, we can now understand the aforementioned details, such as the fact that,⁴⁰⁰ “the *mitzvah* of kindling the Chanukah candles is from sunset...that it is a *mitzvah* to place the Chanukah lamp at the entrance to one’s house on the outside...and specifically on the left.”

However, to better understand this, let us preface with a further explanation of what was already explained (in the previous discourse entitled, “He redeemed my soul in peace”), that there are two manners of refinement (*Birurim*).⁴⁰¹ That is, there is a refinement that is in a way of battle and there is a refinement that is in a way of tranquility.

Refinement in a way of battle entails that one enters into give and take with the enemy, battling against him. This, in and of itself, gives room to the existence of the enemy. That is, in this there indeed is the existence of an enemy and moreover the enemy is powerful, only that he battles against him and is victorious over him. However, since the enemy exists, therefore, even though he overcomes and is victorious

⁴⁰⁰ Talmud Bavli, Shabbat 21b and on.

⁴⁰¹ Also see at length in *Hemshech “Padah B'Shalom”* 5659 (Sefer HaMaamarim 5659, p. 162 and on); 5704 (Sefer HaMaamarim 5704, p. 106 and on).

over him, it nevertheless is possible for the enemy to return and reawaken.

In contrast, refinement in a way of tranquility is like the refinement that happened in the days of King Solomon, peace be upon him.⁴⁰² For, it is written about him,⁴⁰³ “Behold, a son will be born to you; he will be a man of rest, and I shall grant him rest from all his enemies roundabout; His name will be Shlomo,⁴⁰⁴ and I will bestow peace and tranquility upon Israel in his days.” For, in the days of Shlomo, “the moon was returned to its state of perfection,” (as stated in Midrash and in Zohar).⁴⁰⁵ Thus, due to the abundant illumination of light, the sparks were gravitated to the Luminary in an automatic manner. For example, the queen of Sheba⁴⁰⁶ heard about the great wisdom of King Solomon and came to him, bringing all of the sparks of holiness that she had etc. Thus, since the refinement was in an automatic manner, there was no room for the existence of an enemy, and in such a circumstance, it is impossible for him to return and be reawakened.

Nevertheless, even the way that the refinement happened in the days of King Solomon, did not affect all sparks of holiness. (For, on the simple level of things, even though they brought King Solomon silver and gold etc., they did not bring him all of the silver and gold etc. Rather, some of these precious matters remained amongst the nations of the

⁴⁰² Also see the discourse entitled “*Padah B'Shalom*” 5675 (*Hemshech* 5672 Vol. 2, p. 769).

⁴⁰³ Chronicles I 22:9

⁴⁰⁴ The name Shlomo-Solomon means, “Peace is His.”

⁴⁰⁵ Midrash Shemot Rabba 15:26; Zohar I 73b & 150a and elsewhere.

⁴⁰⁶ Kings I 10:1 and on

world.) In other words, the refinement only affected those sparks that already possessed holiness, but it did not yet affect and refine those sparks within which the light of holiness had become completely darkened, to the extent that the light of Godliness that they possess was altogether not felt. An example, is the consumption of forbidden foods, which are from the three entirely impure husks of evil (*Shalosh Klipot HaTmei'ot*). Even if a person consumes them unknowingly and his intention is for the sake of Heaven, nevertheless, they cannot be elevated until the time of the fulfillment of the prophecy,⁴⁰⁷ “He will swallow death forever,” about which it states,⁴⁰⁸ “I will remove the spirit of impurity from the land.”⁴⁰⁹ That is, **all** the sparks will only be refined to perfect completion in the coming future, as it states,⁴¹⁰ “For then I will transform the nations to speak a pure language, so that they will all proclaim the Name of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, to serve Him with a united resolve.” In other words, there will then be a refinement of even those sparks whose light and illumination has become completely dimmed, so that even in them, there will be the revelation that,⁴¹¹ “*HaShem* is One-*HaShem Echad*-יהו"ה אחד and His Name is One.”

Now, we may state that on Chanukah there also was a refinement in a manner of tranquility, akin to the complete perfection of the coming future. This is reflected in the

⁴⁰⁷ Isaiah 25:8

⁴⁰⁸ Zachariah 13:2

⁴⁰⁹ Also see Tanya Ch. 7-8.

⁴¹⁰ Zephaniah 3:9

⁴¹¹ Zachariah 14:9

miracle of the cruse of oil that they found. That is, they specifically found a cruse of pure oil, even though, according to the letter of the law, they could have kindled the lights of the candelabrum (*Menorah*) with the impure oil (as explained before). For, the possibility of lighting with the impure oil relates to the manner of refinement in a way of battle, and does not relate to the state and standing of the revelation of the love of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, toward the Jewish people. That is, the essential love that the Holy One, blessed is He, has toward the Jewish people, that transcends reason and intellect, is revealed through the service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה of the Jewish people in a way of with self-sacrifice (*Mesirat Nefesh*) that transcends reason and intellect. This is specifically what causes refinement in a way of tranquility, similar to the refinements of the coming future.

This then, also explains the superiority of the Chanukah lights, over and above the lights of the Holy Temple. (This is as stated by the Ramban,⁴¹² in his explanation of the words of Midrash,⁴¹³ "The Holy One, blessed is He, said to Moshe: 'Go and tell Aharon not to fear (that the tribe of Levi did not participate in the sacrificial offerings of the princes of the tribes). I have prepared you for an even greater matter. For, the sacrificial offerings only take place as long as the Holy Temple is standing. However, the lights of the candelabrum are eternally 'toward the face of the

⁴¹² Nachmanides; At the beginning of his commentary to Parshat Beha'alotcha.

⁴¹³ Midrash Bamidbar Rabba 15:6

Menorah,’ and will never be nullified.” However, at first glance, this does not seem to make sense. Being that the Holy Temple is not standing and because of its destruction the sacrificial offerings are nullified, is it not so that the lights of the *Menorah* are also nullified? However, it is explained that the Midrash was hinting at the Chanukah lights of the Hasmoneans etc.)

Additionally, there are eight lights in the Chanukah lights, unlike the lights of the candelabrum (*Menorah*) in the Holy Temple, which consisted of only seven lights. This is similar to the difference between⁴¹⁴ “the harp (*Kinor*) used in the Holy Temple, which had seven strings, compared to the harp (*Kinor*) in the days of Moshiach, which will have eight strings.” This is because the revelation of Chanukah is a foretaste of the revelation of the coming future.

This is also the reason that, “the *mitzvah* of kindling the Chanukah candles is from sunset... and it is a *mitzvah* to place the Chanukah lamp at the entrance to one’s house on the outside...and on the left,” specifically. The explanation is as follows: It is known that the general matter of Torah and *mitzvot* is related to the right,⁴¹⁵ as it states,⁴¹⁶ “The right hand draws near.” Within this itself, there is a manner of refinement through the, “right hand draws near,” which is in an automatic manner and reaches to a great distance (a longer

⁴¹⁴ See Talmud Bavli, Arachin 13b

⁴¹⁵ See the Levush and Shulchan Aruch of the Alter Rebbe Orach Chayim 2:4; Hagahot Maimoniyot to Mishneh Torah Hilchot Chanukah 4:7, *se’if katan* 8. Ra”N to Shabbat 22a; Likkutei Sichot Vol. 5, p. 223; Ohr HaTorah ibid. p. 337a and on.

⁴¹⁶ Talmud Bavli, Sota 47a

right hand that stretches further). However, all this is still the aspect of the right line.

However, through the self-sacrifice (*Mesirat Nefesh*) of Chanukah, there was a refinement that was akin to what will happen in the coming future, wherein there even will be a refinement of the left line. This then, explains the matter of the placement of the Chanukah lights on the left.⁴¹⁷

In the same manner, this is also why “the *mitzvah* of kindling the Chanukah candles is from sunset.”⁴¹⁸ For, in Midrash,⁴¹⁹ our sages, of blessed memory, commented on the verse,⁴²⁰ “Who is she that shines through like the dawn, beautiful as the moon, radiant as the sun, awesome as bannered hosts.” They stated, “Four praises were said about the Jewish people, corresponding to the four exiles, within which the Jewish people stood strong and kept their faith in the Holy One, blessed is He... radiant as the sun corresponds to the kingdom of the Greeks.” For, the kingdom of the Greeks is compared to the sun (and as explained there in Midrash, the court of the Greeks was outdoors and was named for the sun),⁴²¹ and all people flee from the strength of the sun. Nevertheless, Matityahu and his sons stood up against them with their faith in the Holy One, blessed is He, and the Greek

⁴¹⁷ See Sefer HaMaamarim 5679 p. 148; 5698 *ibid*; and elsewhere.

⁴¹⁸ See Sefer HaMaamarim 5654 p. 98 and on; 5660 p. 73 and on; 5686 p. 164 and on.

⁴¹⁹ Midrash Shemot Rabbah 15:6

⁴²⁰ Song of Songs 6:10

⁴²¹ As stated there, “The Sandreas Em Helious” which as explained in the commentaries refers to the outdoor Greek court in Athens “was named for the sun.” Of note is that the supreme court of ancient Athens was called “Heliaina” which relates to “Helios” or “Helius” and refers to the sun.

armies fled from them and were killed. In other words, through the self-sacrifice (*Mesirat Nefesh*) of Chanukah, they affected a nullification of the power of the sun of the opposing side of evil.

Now, in man's service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, the matter of the sun-*Chamah*-חמה refers to the heat-*Chamimut*-חמימות of one's lusts. Thus, the matter of the "setting of the sun" refers to the nullification of the heat of one's passions and lusts. This is also why the time period that one is permitted to light the Chanukah lights is, "until there are no more feet walking around in the marketplace... and until the footsteps of the people of Tarmod (*Tarmuda*'i-תרמודאי) cease."⁴²² For, the matter of feet-*Regel*-רגל is indicative of the strength of the forces of the opposing side of evil. This is as stated,⁴²³ "Sending the feet of the ox and of the donkey," which our sages, of blessed memory, stated refers to the animal soul.⁴²⁴ This is similarly indicated by the word Tarmod-תרמוד, which shares the same letters as "rebellious-*Moredet*-מורדת."⁴²⁵ In other words, this refers to the elements in whom not only is there no sensitivity to Godliness, but that the concealment and hiddenness is so great, to the point that they rebel against Godliness. Yet, even so, the refinements caused by the lights of Chanukah even reach there, similar to the refinements of the coming future, which will affect even

⁴²² Talmud Bavli, Shabbat 21b

⁴²³ Isaiah 32:20

⁴²⁴ Talmud Bavli, Avoda Zarah 5b and Rashi there; Also see Sefer HaMaamarim 5654 ibid (p. 103); 5660 ibid. (p. 76); 5686 ibid. (p. 177).

⁴²⁵ See Emek HaMelech, Shaar Kiryat Arba, Ch. 111; Kohelet Yaakov, section on Tarmod-תרמוד.

those sparks, the light and illumination of which, have become entirely dimmed, as explained before.

8.

Based on all the above,⁴²⁶ we may now also understand the verse,⁴²⁷ “And Yaakov settled in the land of his father’s sojournings, in the land of Canaan.” That is, we may now understand the explanation that,⁴²⁸ “Yaakov sought to dwell in tranquility... the Holy One, blessed is He, said, ‘Is that which is prepared for the righteous in the world to come is not sufficient for them, that they seek to also dwell in tranquility in this world!’”

The explanation is that Yaakov thought that the time had already arrived for the refinements (*Birurim*) to happen in a way of tranquility.⁴²⁹ This is because Yaakov had already worked with Lavan and had refined all of the sparks of holiness, as it states,⁴³⁰ “I served you fourteen years for your two daughters, and six years for your flocks.” That is, he already refined all the necessary refinements of Lavan, who said, “The daughters are my daughters, and the children are my children, and the flock is my flock, and all that you see is

⁴²⁶ See the end of the discourse entitled “*VaYeishev Yaakov*” 5675 (*Hemshech* 5672 Vol. 2, p. 783 and on).

⁴²⁷ Genesis 37:1

⁴²⁸ Genesis 37:2

⁴²⁹ See Torah Ohr Vayishlach 24b and on; Torat Chayim 42b and on; Also see the prior discourse entitled “*Padah B'Shalom*” of this year 5712; Likkutei Sichot Vol. 25, p. 368.

⁴³⁰ Genesis 31:41-43

mine.” He thus thought that he could now already begin to perform the service of refinement (*Birurim*) in a manner of tranquility. This is to say that he thought that he need not descend into Egypt, but that instead, he should settle in tranquility in the land of Canaan and that the sparks would be automatically refined, similar to what will be in the coming future.

Now, although it is true that, in and of himself, Yaakov was a righteous *Tzaddik*, and could certainly have affected the refinement (*Birur*) in this manner, nevertheless, the world at large was not yet ready for this.⁴³¹ It thus was necessary for Yaakov to descend to Egypt. This is as our sages, of blessed memory, stated,⁴³² “Our forefather Yaakov should have descended to Egypt in iron chains. However, his merit caused him to descend without suffering,” in the carriages sent to him by Yosef.

On the other hand, even though Yaakov was required to descend to Egypt, nevertheless, in Egypt itself his refinements were accomplished in a way of tranquility. For, Yaakov settled in the land of Goshen, after having “sent Yehuda ahead of him to direct him-*Lehorot*-להורות,”⁴³³ which means,⁴³⁴ “to establish a house of study for him, from which teachings-*Hora’ah*-הוראה would emanate.” Thus, the refinements of the entire land of Egypt happened in an automatic manner. This is to say that Yaakov needed to

⁴³¹ See Torah Ohr and Torat Chayim ibid.

⁴³² Talmud Bavli, Shabbat 89b

⁴³³ Genesis 46:28

⁴³⁴ Midrash Tanchuma, Yalkut Shimoni, and Rashi to Genesis 46:28

merely descend to the place that needed refinement, however, once there, the refinements (*Birurim*) themselves, were in a manner of tranquility.

Now, we likewise find an example of this after the giving of the Torah,⁴³⁵ when the Jewish people traveled in the “wilderness of the nations.”⁴³⁶ That is, they traveled to the place that required refinement, but when they arrived in that place itself, the refinement happened in an automatic manner. For, the Holy Ark (*Aron HaKodesh*) would travel before them “and flatten the mountains and raise the hollows and kill all the snakes and scorpions.”⁴³⁷

However, in the coming future, the refinement (*Birur*) will be in a way of complete tranquility.⁴³⁸ In other words, there will be a refinement in a completely automatic manner, without any need to relate to the one being refined whatsoever. The example for this is likewise from the Chanukah lights. For,⁴³⁹ “the *mitzvah* of kindling the Chanukah candles is from sunset... it is a *mitzvah* to place the Chanukah lamp at the entrance to one’s house on the outside...and on the left,” specifically. This is because it is through this that there is a refinement of the left line in a completely automatic manner, similar to the refinements of the coming future.

⁴³⁵ See discourse entitled “*Padah B'Shalom*” 5675 (*Hemshech* 5672 Vol. 2, p. 774); *Hemshech* “*Padah B'Shalom* 5659 (Sefer HaMaamarim 5659 p. 164); 5704 (Sefer HaMaamarim 5704 p. 110).

⁴³⁶ Ezekiel 20:35

⁴³⁷ Rashi to Numbers 10:34

⁴³⁸ See discourse entitled “*Padah B'Shalom*” 5675 (*Hemshech* 5672 Vol. 2, p. 769).

⁴³⁹ Talmud Bavli, Shabbat 21b and on.

The explanation of all this in man's service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, is as follows: Every single person possesses the capacity for both manners of refinement (*Birurim*). When a person is involved in eating and drinking, then his service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, is in a way of battle.⁴⁴⁰ This is as stated,⁴⁴¹ "one who wishes to eat bread must do so by the blade of the sword." For, when one is eating, he must be cautious and take care not to eat more than what is necessary to sustain his body. If he eats beyond the measure that he needs, it is a matter of the extraneous husk of *Kelipat Nogah*.

Moreover, even whatever he does actually eat for the sustainment of his body and vitality, must be eaten for the sake of Heaven. In other words, he should eat according to the way of piety (*Chassidut*). For, even when a person eats in a mundane manner and not in order to fulfill his lust, but only what is necessary to sustain him, but if he does so not for the sake of Heaven, then his consumption of the food is also a matter of the extraneous husk of *Kelipat Nogah*,⁴⁴² and thus requires refinement and elevation. He must therefore battle with himself, to ensure that his consumption of food is as it should be. This is what is meant by, "one who wishes to eat bread must do so by the blade of the sword."

⁴⁴⁰ See *Hemshech* "Padah B'Shalom 5659 ibid. (Sefer HaMaamarim 5659 p. 160 and on); 5704 p. 103 and on.

⁴⁴¹ Zohar III 188b (Parshat Balak, Yenuka)

⁴⁴² See Likkutei Sichot Vol. 12 p. 200

In contrast, when he is occupied in the study of Torah, then the refinement (*Birur*) is in a manner of tranquility. However, in the study of Torah itself, there are also two approaches,⁴⁴³ which are similar to the two aforementioned manners of refinement (*Birurim*) in the way of tranquility. For, when it comes to the study of the revealed aspects of the Torah, which manifests in physical things, such as, “these are *kosher* and these are *treifot*,”⁴⁴⁴ one must necessarily refine and separate the permissible from the forbidden. Although this refinement is in a way of tranquility, nevertheless, he only possesses the power to refine the permissible.

However, when it comes to the study of the inner aspects of Torah,⁴⁴⁵ since it deals with spiritual matters, such as how *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, fills all worlds (*Memale Kol Almin*), how *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, transcends all worlds, as well as the Singular Preexistent Intrinsic and Essential Being of *HaShem*-יהו"ה Himself, blessed is He, and His revelations, then this study creates a bond between the one who studies and the Singular Preexistent Intrinsic and Essential Being of the Unlimited One, *HaShem*-יהו"ה Himself, blessed is He. Because of this bond with the Essential Being of *HaShem*-יהו"ה Himself, blessed is He, then,⁴⁴⁶ “Even darkness obscures not from You; and night shines like the day; darkness and light are the same.”

⁴⁴³ See the prior discourse entitled “*Padah B'Shalom*” of this year 5712.

⁴⁴⁴ Mishnah Chullin, Ch. 3

⁴⁴⁵ See end of the discourse entitled “*Padah B'Shalom*” 5675 (*Hemshech* 5672 Vol. 2, p. 775); Sefer HaMaamarim 5679 p. 137.

⁴⁴⁶ Psalms 139:12

An example of this may be derived from the consumption of food and drink on Shabbat,⁴⁴⁷ during which time it is a commandment-*mitzvah* to delight in rich meats and pleasant wines.⁴⁴⁸ Even if he eats beyond the measure necessary for his sustainment, the pleasure he derives in this, is Godly pleasure. This is as stated about Shabbat,⁴⁴⁹ “Then you will delight in *HaShem*-יהו"ה.”

It is in a similar manner in regard to the matter of eating and drinking when they are done in the occupation of studying the inner aspects of Torah. Thus, this is the lesson and moral that each and every person must learn from the matter of Chanukah. That is, even when one is involved in the consumption of food and drink,⁴⁵⁰ when the refinement is in a manner of battle, he nevertheless must sense and be aware of his bond with the Singular Preexistent Intrinsic and Essential Being of the Unlimited One, *HaShem*-יהו"ה Himself, blessed is He, in that, from His perspective, “Even darkness obscures not from You; and night shines like the day; darkness and light are the same.” Thus, it is through this bond that the refinement (*Birurim*) is accomplished in a way of tranquility, as it will be in the coming future.

⁴⁴⁷ See *Hemshech* “*Padah B'Shalom* 5659 (Sefer HaMaamarim 5659 p. 162); 5704 (Sefer HaMaamarim 5704 p. 107), and elsewhere.

⁴⁴⁸ Mishneh Torah, Hilchot Shabbat 30:7; Talmud Bavli, Shabbat 118b; Tanya Ch. 7.

⁴⁴⁹ Isaiah 58:14

⁴⁵⁰ See Mishneh Torah, Hilchot De'ot 3:2; Also see Ginat Egoz of Rabbi Yosef Gikatilla, translated as *HaShem Is One*, Volume 4, The Gate of Unity.