

Discourse 23

*“Lehavin... Zeh Hayom Techilat Ma’asecha -
This day is the beginning of Your works”*

Delivered on Shabbat Parshat Nitzavim-Vayelech,

25th of Elul, 5713

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

1.

To understand why on Rosh HaShanah we recite,¹⁷⁴⁹ “This day is the beginning of Your works, a remembrance of the first day,”¹⁷⁵⁰ since in Pesikta¹⁷⁵¹ it states that the world was created on the twenty-fifth of Elul, and therefore, Rosh HaShanah is the sixth day of creation, the day on which Adam, the first man, was created. If so, why do we recite, “This day is the beginning of Your works,” which seems to refer to the first of the six days of creation? For, after all, the day of Rosh HaShanah is not the first day, but is the sixth day of creation.

Besides the fact that the expression and connection between the matters of, “This day... is a remembrance of the first day,” is not understood, it also is not understood why it says, “this day is the beginning of Your works.” Rosh HaShanah is not “the beginning of Your works.” On the

¹⁷⁴⁹ Liturgy of the Musaf prayer of Rosh HaShanah

¹⁷⁵⁰ Talmud Bavli, Rosh HaShanah 27a

¹⁷⁵¹ Pesikta d’Rav Kahana, Pesikta 23 (*Bachodesh HaShvi’i*)

contrary, it is the completion of creation. Accordingly, the question arises; why was Rosh HaShanah established on the first day of Tishrei, when seemingly, it should have been established on the twenty-fifth day of Elul, which is the beginning of creation.

It is explained¹⁷⁵² that the reason Rosh HaShanah was established specifically on the first day of Tishrei, is because the perfection of an act is specifically when it is completed. In other words, the completion and culmination of creation was on the sixth day. This is also the reason that it states, “This day is the beginning of Your works,” meaning that Rosh HaShanah was first day in which the act of creation was completed to perfection.

However, this requires further explanation, because it states,¹⁷⁵³ “In the beginning, God created *Et-א* the heavens and *Et-א* the earth,” about which our sages, of blessed memory, stated,¹⁷⁵⁴ “The additional word, ‘*Et-א*,’¹⁷⁵⁵ in the words ‘*Et-א* the heavens,’ includes the heavens and all its hosts, and the word ‘*Et-א*’ in the words ‘*Et-א* the earth,’ includes the earth and all its hosts.” In other words, all the particular spiritual and physical creations that are included in the heavens and the earth (spirituality and physicality) and all their hosts, were created on the first day.

¹⁷⁵² See Chiddushei Aggadot of the Maharsha to Talmud Bavli, Rosh HaShanah 27a

¹⁷⁵³ Genesis 1:1

¹⁷⁵⁴ Midrash Bereishit Rabba 12:4; Rashi to Genesis 1:14; Also

¹⁷⁵⁵ The word *Et-א* is a definite accusative, that is, a pointing word, that does not exist in the English language. Our sages taught that it comes in the verse to point out all the myriad hosts that are included in the heavens and the earth.

Moreover, the explanation of the teaching of our sages, of blessed memory, is well known.¹⁷⁵⁶ Namely, they stated,¹⁷⁵⁷ “Could it not have been created with a single utterance?” It is thus explained that in reality, everything was indeed created with a single utterance.¹⁷⁵⁸ In other words, all the particular matters that were subsequently expressed in the ten utterances of creation were all included in the first utterance of “In the beginning-*Bereishit* בְּרֵאשִׁית,” which “also is a creative utterance.”¹⁷⁵⁹

This being the case, it follows that on the first day of creation it already was completed to perfection. Why then do we specifically say about Rosh HaShanah, “This day is the beginning of Your works”?

Additionally, it is explained¹⁷⁶⁰ that the reason that Rosh HaShanah was established on the day that Adam, the first man, was created, and that specifically, “this day is the beginning of Your works,” is because on this day the inner intent of the act of creation was introduced. That is, man is the inner intention in creation. This the meaning of, “the beginning of Your works,” that is, man is “the beginning of Your works.” This is as stated,¹⁷⁶¹ “You have formed me back (*Achor*) and front (*Kedem*). That is, even though man is at the

¹⁷⁵⁶ See Likkutei Torah, Behar 41d and elsewhere.

¹⁷⁵⁷ Mishnah Avot 5:1

¹⁷⁵⁸ See at length in Ginat Egoz of Rabbi Yosef Gikatilla, translated as HaShem Is One, Vol. 2, The Letters of Creation.

¹⁷⁵⁹ Talmud Bavli, Rosh HaShanah 32a

¹⁷⁶⁰ See Ohr HaTorah, Matot p. 1,256, Vol. 5, p. 1,682; Sefer HaMaamarim 5664 p. 295 and on (Kehot edition of 5754, p. 166 and on).

¹⁷⁶¹ Psalms 139:5

end (*Achor*) of the act of creation,¹⁷⁶² in that he was created last, nevertheless, he is the beginning (*Kedem*) of the act of creation, since the inner intent of the creation is for him. This is why Rosh HaShanah is called, “the beginning of Your works,” because man is the beginning of creation, in that he is the inner intention of creation.

Nonetheless, this too is not understood. The fact that man is the end (*Achor*) of the act of creation and the fact that he is the beginning (*Kedem*) of the act of creation are two entirely different matters. That is, the fact that he is the end (*Achor*) of the act of creation is a matter of time, in that chronologically he was created last. In contrast, the fact that he is the beginning (*Kedem*) of the act of creation, relates to his superiority over and above all other creations, in that the creation was specifically intended for him. However, since the matter of Rosh HaShanah is connected to time and chronology, in that it is the beginning of the count of the unit of the year, it should have instead been established on the twenty-fifth of Elul, which is the chronological, “beginning of Your works.” Since chronologically man was at the end (*Achor*) of the act of creation and was not, “the beginning of Your works,” why then was Rosh HaShanah specifically established on the day that Adam, the first man, was created?”¹⁷⁶³

¹⁷⁶² Midrash Bereishit Rabba 8:1 and elsewhere.

¹⁷⁶³ Later, in chapter four, the Rebbe will extend this question further, so that even when it comes to the aspect of man’s superiority, a question remains as to why Rosh HaShanah was not established on the twenty-fifth of Elul.

This may be understood¹⁷⁶⁴ by prefacing with an explanation of the verse,¹⁷⁶⁵ “And God said, ‘Let us make Man in Our image (*b'Tzalmeinu*-בצלמנו) after Our likeness (*k'Dmuteinu*-כדמותנו).” That is, in the entire chaining down of the worlds (*Hishtalshelut*), there is no aspect of the Supernal image (*Tzelem*-צלם) or likeness (*Dmut*-דמות), except in relation to man, who possesses both the aspect of the upper unity (*Yichuda Ila'ah*) of *HaShem*-יהו"ה and the aspect of the lower unity (*Yichuda Tata'ah*) of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He.

To clarify, when man contemplates the wondrous exaltedness and transcendence of *HaShem*'s-יהו"ה Godliness over and above the worlds, since relative to this aspect of Godliness, everything other than Him is inconsequential and it is utterly inapplicable for there to be any existence apart from *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, this affects that his service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, does not relate to physicality. That is, it causes the sublimation and nullification of his sense of independent existence (*Bittul b'Metziyut*), which is a loftier level than the subjugation of his tangible existence (*Bittul HaYesh*) to *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He. For, in subjugation of his tangible existence (*Bittul HaYesh*) to *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, he still has a sense of independent existence,

¹⁷⁶⁴ See Sefer HaMaamarim 5664 p. 266 and on (or pg. 101 and on in the newer edition); Maamarei Admor HaZaken 5567 p. 289 and on, and with the glosses in Ohr HaTorah ibid. p. 1,254 and on; Vol. 5, p. 1,682 and on, Vol. 6 p. 1,949 and on; Sefer HaMaamarim 5615 p. 180 and on; 5629 p. 358 and on; 5633 p. 394 and on; Also see Ohr HaTorah, Rosh HaShanah p. 1,432.

¹⁷⁶⁵ Genesis 1:26

and must forcibly subjugate it to *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He. However, through the contemplation of the wondrous exaltedness and transcendence of *HaShem's*-יהו"ה, over and above the worlds, in which the existence of worlds is utterly inapplicable, he comes to a state of nullification of his sense of independent existence (*Bittul b'Metziyut*) to *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, which is entirely unrelated to physicality. This is the matter of the upper unity (*Yichuda Ila'ah*) of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, which is called "in Our image (*b'Tzalmeinu*-בצלמנו)." This is because the term, "image-*Tzelem*-צלם," refers to the inner essential form and is a union (*Yichud*) that is brought about due to one's essence.

The aspect of, "in Our likeness (*k'Dmuteinu*-כדמותנו)," on the other hand, is lower than this, and refers to the lower unity (*Yichuda Tata'ah*) of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He. That is, this is brought about through contemplation (*Hitbonenut*) of the levels of Godliness that, at the very least, are the root or source for the existence of tangible, novel created beings. That is, from the perspective of this level, it is applicable for there to be the existence of newly created beings, even though their entire existence is dependent on *HaShem's*-יהו"ה Godliness. Nevertheless, there already is a sense of independent existence, due to which, there is this aspect of the lower unity (*Yichuda Tata'ah*), which is only the subjugation of one's tangible existence (*Bittul HaYesh*) to *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He. That is, one does indeed have a sense of independent existence and must forcibly subjugate himself to Godliness and Holiness.

To explain in greater detail, even in the contemplation (*Hitbonenut*) of the level of Godliness that is the root and source of novel tangible created beings, at the very least, there also are both aspects of the upper unity (*Yichuda Ila'ah*) and the lower unity (*Yichuda Tata'ah*) of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He. The aspect of the upper unity (*Yichuda Ila'ah*) in this contemplation, is like when he contemplates the words,¹⁷⁶⁶ "You are He before the world was created and You are He after the world was created," that before You, it all is entirely equal, in the most literal sense. That is, just as before the creation of the world there was no existence aside for *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, so likewise, even though immediately upon the arousal of His desire for worlds, they were brought into existence,¹⁷⁶⁷ and even before this, there already was the matter of the estimation within Himself, in potential, of what is destined to be in actuality,¹⁷⁶⁸ nevertheless, before creation the worlds did not exist at all. That is, the existence that precedes and transcends the worlds is solely the existence of the Singular Preexistent Intrinsic and Essential Being of *HaShem*-יהו"ה Himself, blessed is He, and not at all the existence of worlds. The same is true even after the creation of the worlds, as it states,¹⁷⁶⁹ "I, *HaShem*-יהו"ה am

¹⁷⁶⁶ In the liturgy of the morning prayers

¹⁷⁶⁷ See Likkutei Torah, Acharei 26b and on; Drushim L'Rosh HaShanah 55a and on; Shir HaShirim 17d, and elsewhere.

¹⁷⁶⁸ See Mikdash Melech to Zohar I 15a; Shaar HaYichud of the Mittler Rebbe, translated as The Gate of Unity, Ch. 10-11; Also see the discourse entitled "*Torah Tzivah*" 5719 (Sefer HaMaamarim 5719 p. 50); Sefer HaArachim Chabad, Vol. 3, p. 270 and on.

¹⁷⁶⁹ Malachi 3:6

unchanged,” in that there is no other existence whatsoever. For, in reality, even now, existence is not actually of worlds, but is solely *HaShem* 's-יהו"ה existence.

This contemplation (*Hitbonenut*) therefore affects a person that all his deeds become Godly. For, although in this contemplation (*Hitbonenut*) there already is a source, or at least a root, for the existence of novel tangible beings (*Yesh*), nevertheless, since he comes to the awareness that, in reality, the worlds have no independent existence, therefore, all his deeds become Godly. This is to say that not only are all his deeds for the sake of the Name of Heaven,¹⁷⁷⁰ but beyond this, his very deeds themselves are Godly, similar to the deeds of our forefathers, about whom it states,¹⁷⁷¹ “they themselves are the Supernal chariot (*Merkavah*).”

However, when he contemplates the levels of Godliness that are connected with worlds, then the sublimation and nullification (*Bittul*) to *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, that arises from this, is only the subjugation of the tangible something (*Bittul HaYesh*) to *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He. That is, although he contemplates that Godliness is what brings the world into existence and enlivens and sustains it at every moment, and if so, all of existence is entirely due to *HaShem* 's-יהו"ה Godliness, nevertheless, since it has sense of existence, even tangible existence and even coarse physical existence (*Chomer*), there therefore must be toil and effort in the service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, to refine and

¹⁷⁷⁰ Mishnah Avot 2:12

¹⁷⁷¹ Midrash Bereishit Rabba 47:6; 82:6

elevate existence, and so that the opposite should not come about, that his sense of independent existence will pull him down, God forbid.

Now, the granting of strength from Above is necessary in both these forms of service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He. It goes without saying that for the service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה of the lower unity (*Yichuda Tata'ah*), it is necessary for strength to be granted from Above. However, this also applies to serving *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, from the aspect of "in Our image (*b'Tzalmeinu*-בצלמנו)," due to the transcendent wondrousness and exaltedness of *HaShem*-יהו"ה totally beyond the worlds, in which it is not applicable for the worlds to have any independent or tangible existence whatsoever. For, in order to attain this level in which there is utterly no existence apart from *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, great toil is required in serving *HaShem*-יהו"ה, and strength must be given from Above.

This granting of strength is itself the matter,¹⁷⁷² "And God said, 'Let us make Man in Our image (*b'Tzalmeinu*-בצלמנו) after Our likeness (*k'Dmuteinu*-כדמותנו).'" That is, man alone possesses the aspect of the Supernal image (*Tzelem*-צלם) and likeness (*Dmut*-דמות), and as a result, he is capable of attaining both aspects of service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He; the aspects of the lower unity (*Yichuda Tata'ah*) and in the upper unity (*Yichuda Ila'ah*) of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He.

¹⁷⁷² Genesis 1:26

With the above in mind, we can now understand how man is the beginning (*Kedem*) of the act of creation. For, it is man alone who possesses the aspects of the Supernal image (*Tzelem*-צלם) and likeness (*Dmut*-דמות), and thus, all these matters are entirely dependent on him, specifically.

3.

Now, all the above is true provided that man goes in the straight path, which the path of Torah and *mitzvot* and is called “The King’s Road.”¹⁷⁷³ However, if a person sins and causes blemish by veering from the path, whether by transgressing “one of the commandments of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, that may not be done,”¹⁷⁷⁴ or by not fulfilling a positive *mitzvah* that he was commanded to do, this does not apply. Moreover, in this, it is quite possible for his evil inclination to entice and convince him that since he otherwise is whole in his service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, it is not so terrible that he lacks this particular detail.

For example if, in his prayers, he does not put sufficient effort into toiling in the service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, his evil inclination tells him, “Why the great commotion? You do indeed possess all the other positive qualities, so why the commotion over this one little detail. So what if in this one matter you are not a servant (*Oved*) of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He?” If his evil inclination sees that this argument is not

¹⁷⁷³ Numbers 20:17

¹⁷⁷⁴ See Leviticus 4:22

successful, he tries to persuade him from a different angle. That is, he argues from the opposite perspective and tells him, “Who are you to think that you can have any relation to serving *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, in prayer? After all, we are talking about, ‘*HaShem*-יהו"ה, He is the God-*Elohi*”m-אלהי"ם,’¹⁷⁷⁵ He who is the same and unchanged after creation as He was before creation,¹⁷⁷⁶ and about whom it states, ‘There is nothing else but Him.’¹⁷⁷⁷ You, however, dwell in coarse material substance, which is the diametric opposite of Him and cannot compare to Him. This being so, why are you trying to push yourself into the palace of the King?”

Now, although these arguments are just the deceptions of the evil inclination, nevertheless, if a person is actually deceived by them, he becomes caught in the net of the evil inclination, so much so, that he can be brought to total evil. As our sages, of blessed memory, stated¹⁷⁷⁸ “Such is the craft of the evil inclination: Today he tells him ‘do this,’ and tomorrow he tells him ‘do that,’ until he ultimately tells him, ‘go worship false gods’ etc.” In other words, the evil inclination does not come to a person and start by telling him to transgress what is actual forbidden. Instead, he tells him that if he is lacking in any particular detail in his service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, it is not a big deal and cause for commotion, or alternatively, he tells him that a person such as him has no relation to true service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He etc.

¹⁷⁷⁵ Deuteronomy 4:35; Kings I 18:39

¹⁷⁷⁶ Liturgy of the morning prayers.

¹⁷⁷⁷ Deuteronomy 4:35

¹⁷⁷⁸ Talmud Bavli, Shabbat 105b

Beginning with this, he ultimately is caused to descend to the point that he tells him, “go worship false gods.”

This is also the meaning of what our sages, of blessed memory,¹⁷⁷⁹ taught about the verse,¹⁷⁸⁰ “A **wayfarer** came to the rich man, but he was reluctant to take from his own sheep or cattle to prepare for the **visitor** who had come to him, so he took the poor man’s ewe and prepared it for **the man** who had come to him.” The sages commented on this, “Such is the way of the evil inclination. At first, he is called a “wayfarer” (*Heilech*-הלך) (who is just passing through, but does not reside with him). He then is called a “visitor” (*Ore’ach*-אורח) (in that he resides with him), and he finally is called “the man” (*Ish*-איש), (in that he has become the master of the house).”

In other words, at first the evil inclination just casts thoughts into him, that is, one of the two above-mentioned arguments. However, through this, he imbues him with the commonly accepted view, that even if he may be lacking in some matter of service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, is not all that important that he should be perturbed about it. Through this, he uproots him (and tears him away) altogether from the matter of serving *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, and brings him from bad to worse, until he ultimately brings him to the complete evil of the three utterly impure husks of evil (*Shalosh Kelipot HaTmei'ot*). That is, they derive their vitality through the medium of the glowing husk, called

¹⁷⁷⁹ Talmud Bavli, Sukkah 52b (and Rashi there)

¹⁷⁸⁰ Samuel II 12:4

Kelipat Nogah, which takes from the holy and gives to the unholy.¹⁷⁸¹

Thus, in order not to allow the evil inclination to become the “master of the house,” one must not allow him to become a “wayfarer” from the very onset. In other words, one should not be deceived by his arguments and persuasions whatsoever. However, if at first, a person allows the evil inclination to be a “wayfarer” within himself, the evil inclination will ultimately become the “master of the house.”

Now, if a person has left the straight path and has transgressed and caused blemish, he then is lacking in the Supernal image (*Tzelem*-צלם) and likeness (*Dmut*-דמות). For, if one does walk on the path of Torah and *mitzvot*, he indeed possess the Supernal image (*Tzelem*-צלם) and likeness (*Dmut*-דמות). As known, the two-hundred and forty-eight positive commandments are the two-hundred and forty-eight “limbs of The King,”¹⁷⁸² as is similarly the case with the three-hundred and sixty-five prohibitions. Thus, it is through their fulfillment that one possesses the Supernal image (*Tzelem*-צלם) and likeness (*Dmut*-דמות). However, a person who has transgressed, caused blemish and has veered from the straight path, lacks the Supernal image (*Tzelem*-צלם) and likeness (*Dmut*-דמות).

Now, the solution is the matter of the sacrificial offerings (*Korbanot*). One must bring a burnt offering

¹⁷⁸¹ See Likkutei HaShas of the Arizal, Chagigah 10a; Likkutei Torah Shlach 46a.

¹⁷⁸² See Tikkunei Zohar, Tikkun 30 (74a); Tanya Ch. 23.

(*Korban Olah*) even if he has failed to fulfill a positive commandment (*Mitzvat Aseh*).¹⁷⁸³ Through this, he affects an atonement for his transgression, for the blemish that he caused and for having veered from the path. However, we need to understand how atonement is affected in man through bringing a sacrificial offering from the inanimate (*Domem*), the vegetative (*Tzome'ach*), and the animate (*Chay*). For example, the burnt offering (*Korban Olah*) is the sacrifice of an animal, which is in the category of the animate (*Chay*). However, there also is the meal offering (*Korban Minchah*) which is of grain, and is in the category of the vegetative (*Tzome'ach*). It also states,¹⁷⁸⁴ “On your every offering you shall offer salt,” which is in the category of the inanimate (*Domem*).¹⁷⁸⁵ We must therefore understand how it is that through offering the inanimate (*Domem*), vegetative (*Tzome'ach*) and animate (*Chay*), all of which are inferior to man, it is possible for man to be atoned of his sins and transgressions. Moreover, this question is especially difficult when we consider that through sin, man is caused to lack the Supernal image (*Tzelem*-צלם) and likeness (*Dmut*-דמות). How is this lacking rectified and atoned for by the offering from the inanimate (*Domem*), the vegetative (*Tzome'ach*), and the animate (*Chay*)?¹⁷⁸⁶

¹⁷⁸³ See Talmud Bavli, Zevachim 7b, cited in Tanya Iggeret HaKodesh, Epistle 2, and elsewhere.

¹⁷⁸⁴ Leviticus 2:13

¹⁷⁸⁵ See Etz Chayim, Shaar 50 (Shaar Kitzur ABY”A), Ch. 2.

¹⁷⁸⁶ See Sefer HaMaamarim 5664 p. 266 and on (or pg. 101 and on in the newer edition); Maamarei Admor HaZaken 5567 p. 289 and on, and with the glosses in Ohr HaTorah ibid. p. 1,254 and on; Vol. 5, p. 1,682 and on, Vol. 6 p.

The explanation¹⁷⁸⁷ is that the root of the inanimate (*Domem*), vegetative (*Tzome'ach*), and animate (*Chay*) is higher than man. That is, man is rooted in the world of Rectification-*Tikkun*, whereas the inanimate (*Domem*), vegetative (*Tzome'ach*) and animate (*Chay*), are rooted in the world of Chaos-*Tohu*, which transcends the world of Rectification-*Tikkun*.

To summarize the matter of Chaos-*Tohu* and Rectification-*Tikkun* in short;¹⁷⁸⁸ in the world of Rectification-*Tikkun*, there are a few lights (*Orot*), whereas in the world of Chaos-*Tohu*, there are abundant lights (*Orot*).¹⁷⁸⁹ Moreover, as explained elsewhere, the abundance of the lights of Chaos-*Tohu* is not just abundance of quantity, but abundance in quality as well.¹⁷⁹⁰ In other words, the light of the world of Chaos-*Tohu* is entirely beyond comparison to the light of the world of Rectification-*Tikkun*, and is of an entirely loftier category. For example, its light is similar to the light (*Ohr*) created on the twenty-fifth of Elul, the first day of creation, by which¹⁷⁹¹ “Adam, the first man, gazed from one end of the

1,949 and on; Sefer HaMaamarim 5615 p. 180 and on; 5629 p. 358 and on; 5633 p. 394 and on; Also see Ohr HaTorah, Rosh HaShanah p. 1,432.

¹⁷⁸⁷ See Sefer HaMaamarim 5629 p. 106 and on; 5630 p. 349 and on; 5664 p. 295 and on (Kehot edition 5754, p. 167 and on).

¹⁷⁸⁸ See Shaar HaYichud of the Mittler Rebbe, translated as The Gate of Unity, Ch. 20-21.

¹⁷⁸⁹ See Etz Chayim, Shaar 10 (Shaar HaTikkun) Ch. 5; Shaar 11 (Shaar HaMelachim) Ch. 1-2.

¹⁷⁹⁰ See the prior discourse of this year 5713 entitled “*V’Hoo Omeid* – He stood over them beneath the tree and they ate.” Also see Sefer HaMaamarim 5626 p. 96; 5697 p. 204 and on; 5630 p. 141 and on, p. 349 and on; 5664 p. 296 (or p. 167 in the newer edition); 5696 p. 204 and on.

¹⁷⁹¹ Talmud Bavli, Chagigah 12a; Midrash Bereishit Rabba 12:6, and elsewhere.

world to the other,” meaning the entire chaining down of the worlds (*Hishtalshelut*). In other words, this light and illumination is not at all similar or comparable in any way whatsoever to the light of the other days of creation.

Thus, since the root of the inanimate (*Domem*), vegetative (*Tzome'ach*) and animate (*Chay*), from which offerings (*Korbanot*) are brought, are from the world of Chaos-*Tohu*, therefore, because of the abundance of the light of Chaos-*Tohu*, the blemishes caused by sins are rectified. That is, there is a rectification of the blemishes caused by the withdrawal of the lights, as well as the blemishes caused by drawing vitality to where it should not be drawn. This is as known regarding the meaning¹⁷⁹² of the verse,¹⁷⁹³ “One who pronounces-*Nokev*-נוקב the Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה,” wherein the word “*Nokev*-נוקב” also means “punctures.” That is, all these lackings are filled by the abundant lights of the world of Chaos-*Tohu*, which are drawn forth specifically through the sacrificial offerings from the inanimate (*Domem*), vegetative (*Tzome'ach*), and animate (*Chay*).

4.

Now, based on the above explanation, it is understood that the inanimate (*Domem*), vegetative (*Tzome'ach*) and animate (*Chay*) have a specific superiority over man, since

¹⁷⁹² See the prior discourse of this year 5713, entitled “*Eileh Masei* – These are the journeys of the Children of Israel.”

¹⁷⁹³ Leviticus 24:16

man's atonement is specifically from them. This is so even though, in truth, their superiority is because of their root in the world of Chaos-*Tohu*, which is concealed, and even though it is specifically revealed through man, whose root is the world of Rectification-*Tikkun*. This is similar to how it is in the matter of the sacrificial offerings (*Korbanot*), wherein the sanctification of the offering is specifically accomplished by man, who sanctifies it specifically through the speech (*Dibur*) of his mouth.¹⁷⁹⁴ In other words, even though this matter is revealed specifically through man, nevertheless, the essential superiority is of the inanimate (*Domem*), vegetative (*Tzome'ach*) and the animate (*Chay*).

Therefore, since they have superiority over and above man, we therefore find that the precedence over man in the act of creation, is not a chronological precedence in that they were created before man was created, but they also have a precedence in level of superiority. This being so, the question remains in its full strength, namely, shouldn't Rosh HaShanah have been established on the twenty-fifth of Elul, being that it is, "the beginning of Your works," both in the chronology of time, as well as in superiority. This being so, we must

¹⁷⁹⁴ See Ohr HaTorah Matot ibid., p. 1,255: "Through his speech in stating, 'This is to be a burnt offering,' he consecrates and causes the animal to become forbidden to man, so that man cannot derive benefit from it, as is explained in Tractate Me'ilah 2:4, 'One is liable for misuse of the burnt offering (*Olah*) the moment it was consecrated,' which refers to consecration in speech, as stated in the Tosefot Yom Tov there at the beginning of the chapter, that if he does not consecrate it in speech, then it is like one who brings the unholy and mundane into the sanctuary."

understand why Rosh HaShanah was specifically established on the day that Adam, the first man, was created.

5.

The explanation is as stated in Yalkut¹⁷⁹⁵ on the verse,¹⁷⁹⁶ “*HaShem*-ה' is good and upright, therefore He guides sinners on the way.” It states, “They asked of wisdom, ‘What is the outcome for a sinner?’ Wisdom answered with the verse,¹⁷⁹⁷ ‘Evil pursues sinners.’ They asked of prophecy, ‘What is the outcome for a sinner?’ Prophecy answered with the verse,¹⁷⁹⁸ ‘The soul that sins – it shall die.’ They asked the Torah, ‘What is the outcome for a sinner?’ The Torah answered, he shall bring a guilt offering and receive atonement. They asked the Holy One, blessed is He, ‘What is the outcome for a sinner?’ The Holy One, blessed is He, answered, ‘He should repent (*Teshuvah*) and will be forgiven.’ About this, the verse states, ‘*HaShem*-ה' is good and upright, He therefore guides sinners on the way.’”

Now, these four matters are reflective of the whole chaining down of the worlds (*Hishtalshelut*). That is, wisdom refers to the aspect of the lower wisdom-*Chochmah*, which is kingship-*Malchut*. For, the verse, “Evil pursues sinners” is from Proverbs (*Mishlei*) and was said by King Solomon, and

¹⁷⁹⁵ Yalkut Shimoni Tehillim, Remez 702; Also see Talmud Yerushalmi, Makkot 2:6; Likkutei Sichot Vol. 4, p. 1,358; Igrot Kodesh Vol. 5, p. 3; “Reshimot” 164 p. 9 and on.

¹⁷⁹⁶ Psalms 25:8

¹⁷⁹⁷ Proverbs 13:21

¹⁷⁹⁸ Ezekiel 18:4

as known, the wisdom of King Solomon was the lower wisdom (*Chochmah Tata'ah*), which is the aspect of Kingship-*Malchut*. Thus, since kingship-*Malchut* has elements of judgment and stringency, particularly when it comes to matters of kingship-*Malchut* itself, even minor matters effect the general matter of kingship-*Malchut*. Therefore, the answer from the perspective of kingship-*Malchut* is, “Evil pursues sinners.” That is, the sin that one perpetrated, follows and pursues him all the days of his life, and he is incapable of being absolved of it. This is similar to the statement in Talmud,¹⁷⁹⁹ “Whoever commits one transgression in this world, it shrouds him and goes before him to the Day of Judgement.”

Prophecy (*Nevuah*) is the aspect of the emotive attributes, which is the aspect of *Zeir Anpin*, which transcends the aspect of kingship-*Malchut*. In the aspect of *Zeir Anpin*, the judgements and severities are not as great as in Kingship-*Malchut*. Therefore, the answer from the perspective of *Zeir Anpin* is the verse, “The soul that sins – it shall die,” in which case, his death atones for his soul. The meaning of the word, “atonement-*Kaparah*-כפרה,” as explained by the Alter Rebbe, is that it is a term for “cleansing,” meaning that he is cleansed of the filth of his sin, (he is washed of it and returns to the state of cleanliness he was previously in).

Torah is the aspect of the intellect. That is, it is the perspective the intellect, even as it manifests in the emotions. However, it especially refers to Torah as it is in the aspect of

¹⁷⁹⁹ Talmud Bavli, Sotah 3b

the Supernal, upper wisdom (*Chochmah Ila'ah*). Thus, from this perspective, the answer is that he should bring a guilt offering (*Asham*) and will thus atone for his sin. Through this, it will be possible for him to continue serving *HaShem*-יהוה, blessed is He, as a soul manifest within the body and fulfill the ultimate intention in creation, namely to bring about a “dwelling place for the Holy One, blessed is He, in the lower worlds,” which is the most superior level of all. This atonement is affected specifically through the sacrificial offerings, because of the superiority of the inanimate (*Domem*), vegetative (*Tzome'ach*) and the animate (*Chay*), which affects a drawing forth of the lights and illuminations of the world of *Chaos-Tohu*, as explained above.

Based on this, we may also explain why the Torah specifies, “He should bring a guilt offering (*Asham*),” even though the most common offering (*Korbanot*) brought for transgressions is the sin offering (*Chatat*). We can say that the intention is to emphasize that from the perspective of Torah, a sacrificial offering is helpful not only for one who sinned unwittingly (*Shogeg*), but even for one who sinned intentionally (*Meizeed*). Thus, it specifies that he should bring a guilt offering (*Asham*), since a sin offering (*Chatat*) only atones for sins done unwittingly (*Shogeg*), whereas a guilt offering (*Asham*) atones for both unintentional sins, as well as intentional sins, as stated in Tractate Keritot.¹⁸⁰⁰

Now, in regard to the three levels mentioned above, man is not the aspect of the beginning (*Kedem*). For, it is

¹⁸⁰⁰ Talmud Bavli, Keritot 9a

necessary for him to bring sacrificial offerings from the inanimate (*Domem*), vegetative (*Tzome'ach*) and animate (*Chay*). Moreover, he also requires the medium of Torah, since the very fact that the sacrificial offerings atone for him is solely because Torah rules that, "he should bring a guilt offering (*Asham*) through which his sin will be atoned."

However, the fourth level, is higher than this. Namely, "They asked the Holy One, blessed is He, 'What is the outcome for a sinner?' The Holy One, blessed is He, answered, 'He should repent (*Teshuvah*) and will be forgiven.'" In regard to this level, man is indeed the aspect of the beginning (*Kedem*), since he requires no intermediary. That is, to repent, he does not require the agency of the inanimate (*Domem*), vegetative (*Tzome'ach*) or animate (*Chay*). Moreover, for this, he does not even require the agency of Torah.

To clarify, it states,¹⁸⁰¹ "There are three levels, the Jewish people, the Torah, and the Holy One, blessed is He," and the bond of the Jewish people with the Holy One, blessed is He, is specifically through Torah. That is, the bond between the concealed and revealed aspects of the Jewish people, with the concealed and revealed aspects of the Holy One, blessed is He, is specifically through the concealed and revealed aspects of the Torah. However, this relates to the normal order of things throughout the days of the year, in the manner in which the worlds are conducted in a revealed way (*Giluyim*).

¹⁸⁰¹ Zohar III 73a

However, when it comes to serving *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, with repentance (*Teshuvah*) which comes from the essence of the Jewish soul, the agency of Torah is not required, since the souls of the Jewish people transcend the Torah. That is, Torah is the aspect of intellect that relates to emotions, and is thus the aspect of *NeHi"Y* of *Abba* (wisdom-*Chochmah*), and *NeHi"Y* of *Imma* (understanding-*Binah*), and even the aspect of *NeHi"Y* of *Zeir Anpin*.¹⁸⁰² In contrast, regarding the souls of the Jewish people, it is written,¹⁸⁰³ "You are children to *HaShem*-יהו"ה, your God," which refers to the essence of the intellect. Moreover, even in relation to the aspect of Torah as it is in the essence of *HaShem's*-יהו"ה Supernal intellect, nevertheless, the souls of the Jewish people are even higher, because Torah is the aspect of wisdom-*Chochmah*, whereas the souls of the Jewish people are rooted in *HaShem's*-יהו"ה Supernal will and desire-*Ratzon*. Moreover, even in regard to the aspect of Torah that is rooted in *HaShem's*-יהו"ה Supernal will-*Ratzon*, nevertheless, the Jewish people are still higher. This is because Torah is the aspect of the leanings of His Supernal will, which relates to something external to Him. In contrast, the souls of the Jewish people are the very essence of His will and desire, blessed is He. Moreover, even as Torah is in the essence of His Supernal will, blessed is He, the souls of the Jewish people are still higher. This is as stated in Tana d'Vei

¹⁸⁰² *NeHi"Y* is an acronym for the *Sefirot* of conquest-*Netzach*, majesty-*Hod*, and foundation-*Yesod*, which are the three lower *Sefirot* that are emotions as they relate to that which is external.

¹⁸⁰³ Deuteronomy 14:1

Eliyahu,¹⁸⁰⁴ that “Both the Jewish people and the Torah preceded the world, and I do not know which preceded which.” However, the conclusion there is that the Jewish people came first, since it states in Torah itself, “Speak to the children of Israel,” and “Command the children of Israel.”¹⁸⁰⁵

The explanation is as follows: The verse states,¹⁸⁰⁶ “They resided there in the service of The King,” and our sages, of blessed memory stated,¹⁸⁰⁷ “The Holy One, blessed is He, consulted with the souls of the righteous-*Tzaddikim* to create the world.” In other words, the consultation as to whether or not there should be a desire to create the worlds, was with the souls of the Jewish people. This is to say that the Jewish people made the determination in *HaShem*-יהוה Supernal desire for the creation of the worlds. The reason is because,¹⁸⁰⁸ “the Holy One, blessed is He, desired a dwelling place for Himself in the lower worlds.” That is, the Holy One, blessed is He, desired a dwelling place within time and space, and it is specifically the Jewish people who fulfill this intention of actualizing a dwelling place for Him in the lower worlds. Due to this mission, the souls of the Jewish people decided that the worlds should exist.¹⁸⁰⁹ This then, explains

¹⁸⁰⁴ Tanna d’Vei Eliyahu Rabba Ch. 14.

¹⁸⁰⁵ See Midrash Bereishit Rabba 1:4; Sefer HaMaamarim 5635 Vol. 2, p. 356 and on.

¹⁸⁰⁶ Chronicles I 4:23

¹⁸⁰⁷ Midrash Bereishit Rabba 8:7; Ruth Rabba 2:3

¹⁸⁰⁸ Midrash Tanchuma Bechukotai 3; Naso 16; Bereishit Rabba 3; Bamidbar Rabba 13:6; Tanya Ch. 36 and elsewhere.

¹⁸⁰⁹ That is, they agreed to fulfill this mission and if they wouldn’t have agreed, the worlds would have never been created in the first place. This is the meaning of, “The Holy One, blessed is He, consulted with the souls of the

the teaching that, “Israel came first,” since all of novel existence and all matters therein, are solely for the Jewish people, so that they can fulfill the intention of actualizing a dwelling place for the Holy One, blessed is He, in the lower worlds.

This then, this is what is meant that the Holy One, blessed is He, said, “He should repent (*Teshuvah*) and will be forgiven.” That is, when it comes to this, even the medium of Torah is not required, even though the bond of the Jewish people with the Holy One, blessed is He, is specifically through Torah. Nevertheless, that only applies to the matter of revelations (*Gilyim*) according to the order of the chaining down of the worlds (*Hishtalshehut*). However, in essence, the Jewish people are loftier than the Torah. Therefore, when it comes to serving *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, with repentance (*Teshuvah*), by which a Jew bonds, attains and comes to the root source of his soul, as it is on the level of “In whom did He consult,” then in this service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, the intermediary of Torah is not required, because, on this level, the Jewish people transcend the Torah.

It is for this reason that repentance (*Teshuvah*) is not mentioned in the Torah as a commandment, like all the other commandments. Rather, it is only stated in a way of relating matters as they are, such as the verse,¹⁸¹⁰ “And you shall return to *HaShem*-יהו"ה, your God.” [That is, the only aspect

righteous to create the world,” which refers to the souls of all Jews, as it states in Isaiah 60:21, “Your people are all righteous.”

¹⁸¹⁰ Deuteronomy 4:30; 30:2

of repentance (*Teshuvah*) mentioned in Torah as a commandment-*mitzvah*, is the matter of confession (*Viduy*),¹⁸¹¹ which is only one particular of the commandment-*mitzvah* of repentance. However, the essential matter of repentance (*Teshuvah*) is only mentioned in the above-mentioned manner of relating matters as they are.] This is because repentance (*Teshuvah*) transcends Torah.¹⁸¹² Thus, from the aspect of repentance (*Teshuvah*), man is indeed the beginning (*Kedem*) of the act of creation, since when it comes to this matter, no intermediary at all is necessary. That is, when it comes to repentance (*Teshuvah*), one requires neither the medium of the sacrificial offerings (*Korbanot*), nor even the medium of Torah, since man is the aspect of the beginning (*Kedem*).

6.

With the above in mind, we can understand why Rosh HaShanah was established on the day that Adam, the first man, was created, rather than the twenty-fifth of Elul. For, Rosh HaShanah is the day that the kingship-*Malchut* of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, is built up. Moreover, on this day everything reverts to its original state and root.¹⁸¹³ Thus, in

¹⁸¹¹ Numbers 5:7; See Sefer HaMitzvot of the Rambam, Positive Commandment 43.

¹⁸¹² See *Hemshech* 5672 Vol. 3, p. 1,252 and on.

¹⁸¹³ See Pri Etz Chayim and Shaar HaKavanot, Shaar Rosh HaShanah; Siddur of the Arizal, Rosh HaShanah, and elsewhere.; Also see Likkutei Torah, Nitzavim 51b, and elsewhere. Also see the discourse entitled "*Atem Nitzavim – You are*

the root, the Jewish people were first, since nothing exists in the root except for the souls of the Jewish people, and they made the decision that *HaShem*-יהו"ה should desire the worlds. It is for this reason Rosh HaShanah is specifically on the day that Adam, the first man, was created.

It is for the same reason that it states, "This day is the beginning of Your works." For Rosh HaShanah, which is the day that Adam, the first man, was created, is "the beginning of Your works," since man is the aspect of the above-mentioned beginning (*Kedem*). Although in regard to the chaining down of the worlds (*Hishtalshelut*), man requires intermediaries, nevertheless, on Rosh HaShanah, everything reverts to its original state and root. Thus, on Rosh HaShanah the service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, is in this innermost aspect (*Pnimityut*-פנימיות). This is as stated,¹⁸¹⁴ "Seek My countenance-*Panay*-פני" (which means innerness-*Panay*-פני, through which one comes to the continuation of the verse), "I seek Your countenance-*Panecha*-פניך (innerness) *HaShem*-יהו"ה." In this aspect, the souls of the Jewish people are indeed the beginning (*Kedem*). Thus, it is for this reason that Rosh HaShanah, about which it states, "This day is the beginning of Your works," was specifically established on the day that Adam, the first man, was created, rather than on the twenty-fifth of Elul.

standing this day" 5712, translated in The Teachings of The Rebbe – 5712, Discourse 24.

¹⁸¹⁴ Psalms 27:8; See Likkutei Torah Nitzavim 45b; Drushei Rosh HaShanah 56c, and elsewhere.

[For, as previously explained, all the other answers to this question are insufficient. For, in reference to the superiority of the day that Adam was created, as a matter of the perfection or completion of the creation, it was explained that this perfection already existed on the twenty-fifth of Elul. Similarly, in reference to the superiority vis-à-vis the inner aspect of the act of the creation as it relates to the order of the chaining down of the worlds (*Hishtalshelut*), the opposite is true. That is, there is a superiority to the inanimate (*Domem*), vegetative (*Tzome'ach*) and the animate (*Chay*), over and above man. According to this, Rosh HaShanah should have been established on the twenty-fifth of Elul.]

Rather, the superiority of the day that Adam was created, is because of his root, which is in the aspect of the beginning (*Kedem*). This aspect solely relates specifically to the day that Adam was created, rather than the twenty-fifth of Elul. This then, is the meaning of “This day is the beginning of Your works.” For, although the world was created on the twenty-fifth of Elul, nonetheless, that is not the aspect of the beginning. For, since “the Holy One, blessed is He, gazed into the Torah and created the world,”¹⁸¹⁵ the world therefore requires the medium of Torah. Moreover, even the act through which there was the manifestation in Torah, was through the aspect of “gazing,” which only relates to the aspect of the “eyes” (*Einayim*) of Primordial Man (*Adam Kadmon*).¹⁸¹⁶ In contrast, the day of Rosh HaShanah is “the

¹⁸¹⁵ Zohar II 161a-b

¹⁸¹⁶ See Likkutei Torah, Matot 82d; *Hemshech* 5672 Vol. 2, p. 876.

beginning of Your works,” and is the true aspect of beginning (*Kedem*), as explained above.

With the above in mind, we can understand that even though Rosh HaShanah relates to the matter of time, man is nevertheless called “the beginning.” For, even though man’s precedence is in his superiority, and not in time, nonetheless, since this precedence is because the Jewish souls decided that the existence of the worlds is desirable, and since their souls are the ones who fulfill *HaShems*-יהו"ה Supernal intention for a dwelling place in the lower worlds, in that they actualize this within time and space (as explained before), therefore, their superiority is also in the matter of time. Thus, even in relation to the matter of time itself, they are called, “the beginning.”