

Discourse 12

“*Megillah Nikreit* – The Megillah is read”

Delivered on Shabbat Parshat Tzav,
Shushan Purim, 5714
By the grace of *HaShem*, blessed is He,

1.

The⁸⁹⁹ Mishnah states,⁹⁰⁰ “The Megillah is read on the eleventh, on the twelfth, on the thirteenth, on the fourteenth, or on the fifteenth (of the month of Adar). Cities that have been surrounded by a wall since the days of Yehoshua bin Nun, read the Megillah on the fifteenth, whereas villages and larger towns read it on the fourteenth. However, the villages may advance their reading to the day of assembly.”⁹⁰¹

In other words, the Megillah reading is generally divided into two primary times, these being the fourteenth and fifteenth. The remaining times that it may be read are the times

⁸⁹⁹ On the copy of the transcript of this discourse in the library of Agudat Chassidei Chabad, the Rebbe added a handwritten note: “The discourse by this title from the Rebbe Maharash, whose soul is in Eden,” – (It appears that the reference is to the discourse by this same title from the year 5629, *Sefer HaMaamarim* 5629 p. 83 and on) – “and the discourse entitled ‘*Le’umat HaMisgeret*’ 5665” – (*Sefer HaMaamarim* 5665, p. 148 and on; p. 158 and on.)

⁹⁰⁰ Mishnah Megillah 1:1; Talmud Bavli, Megillah 2a

⁹⁰¹ That is, the Sages instituted that the smaller villages may advance their readings to the day of assembly, meaning, Monday or Thursday, when the Rabbinical courts are in session and the Torah is publicly read. The villagers would therefore come to the larger towns on those days. (See Rashi to Megillah 2a *ibid.*)

that are applicable to villages, who may advance their day of reading to the day of assembly, whether it is for the benefit of the villages, or whether it is for the benefit of the larger towns.⁹⁰²

We must therefore understand the reason for these divisions of the times on which the Megillah is to be read. For, about Purim the verse states,⁹⁰³ “The Jews confirmed and undertook upon themselves,” about which our sages, of blessed memory, stated,⁹⁰⁴ “They confirmed that which they already undertook.”⁹⁰⁵ In other words, the substance of Purim is akin to the giving of the Torah, and beyond that, Purim is the conclusion and fulfillment of the matter of the giving of the Torah.

For, at the giving of the Torah, the children of Israel received the Torah in a way of coercion, whereas on Purim they accepted it willingly and with self-sacrifice. In doing so, they affected an obligation upon Torah and *mitzvot* as having been willingly accepted for all generations.⁹⁰⁶ This being so, we do not understand the reason for the divisions of the times on Purim. For, about the giving of the Torah, it states,⁹⁰⁷ “And

⁹⁰² That is, since the villagers supplied the towns with food and water, the Sages allowed the villages to advance their reading of the Megillah to the day of assembly, so that they would be free to supply provisions to the larger towns. (See Talmud Bavli Megillah 2a *ibid.*)

⁹⁰³ Esther 9:27

⁹⁰⁴ Talmud Bavli, Shabbat 88a

⁹⁰⁵ That is, they willingly confirmed and undertook upon themselves that which they undertook through coercion at Mt. Sinai. (See Talmud Bavli, Shabbat 88a *ibid.*)

⁹⁰⁶ That is, by doing so, they removed any claim that the Jewish people could possibly have that, at Sinai, the Torah was accepted under duress, and is therefore not binding. (See Talmud Bavli, Shabbat 88a *ibid.*)

⁹⁰⁷ Exodus 19:2

Israel encamped (*VaYichan*-וִיחֵן) there, opposite the mountain,” wherein the term “encamped-*VaYichan*-וִיחֵן” is in the singular form, about which it states in Mechilta,⁹⁰⁸ that when the children of Israel left Egypt, they traveled in a state of division and they camped in a state of division, but here at Mount Sinai, they were equal and of one heart. The Midrash concludes that it was then that the Holy One, blessed is He, said: “The time has arrived for Me to give the Torah to My children.”

In other words, the matter of the giving of the Torah is specifically a matter of unity and the absence of division. For, although it is true that even at the giving of the Torah, Moshe had his designated place and Aharon had his designated place etc.,⁹⁰⁹ nevertheless, there was no division of times, since the matter of the giving of the Torah is specifically a matter of oneness. It thus is understood that when it comes to Purim, which is the culmination and sustainment of the giving of the Torah, it certainly is not applicable for there to be any matter of division. This being so, we must understand why there are divisions of times between the cities and the villages on Purim.

2.

This may be understood with an introductory preface regarding the spiritual difference between a city and a village in man’s service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He. Now, *HaShem*’s-

⁹⁰⁸ See Mechilta to Exodus 19:2; Also see Pirke d’Rabbi Eliezer Ch. 41; Midrash Vayikra Rabba 9:9; Tanchuma Yitro 9; Yalkut Shimoni Yitro, Remez 247, 273, and elsewhere.

⁹⁰⁹ Mechilta, Yalkut Shimoni (Yitro Remez 285) and Rashi to Exodus 19:24.

יהו"ה ultimate Supernal intent in creating man is for man to serve Him, as in the teaching,⁹¹⁰ “I was only created to serve my Maker.” Therefore, in man’s service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, there also is a difference between a city-dweller and a villager. This is as taught by our sages, of blessed memory,⁹¹¹ “Everything that Ezekiel saw, Isaiah saw, only that a villager who sees the King is not like a city-dweller who sees the King.” In other words, spiritually, in one’s service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, there is a difference between a city-dweller and a villager.

The difference may be understood from this teaching itself, in that it makes a distinction between Isaiah and Ezekiel. For, in the book of Isaiah it states,⁹¹² “I saw the Lord-*Adona*”י-*נָסָא* sitting upon a high and lofty throne-*Keeseh*-*כִּסֵּא*.”⁹¹³ The throne-*Keeseh*-*כִּסֵּא* refers to the world of Creation-*Briyah*,⁹¹⁴ which the Zohar calls “Throne-*Kursaya*-*כּוּרְסִיָא*,” within which there is an illumination of the *Sefirah* of understanding-*Binah*.

⁹¹⁰ See the Mishnah and Baraita at the end of Tractate Kiddushin according to the manuscript editions (Osef Kitvei Yad – Talmud Bavli, Yerushalayim 5724); Also see Melechet Shlomo to the Mishnah in Kiddushin there.

⁹¹¹ Talmud Bavli, Chagigah 13b – That is, in regard to the fact that Ezekiel’s description of the Supernal Chariot is far more detailed than Isaiah’s, the Talmud provides the above explanation, that Ezekiel is compared to a villager who saw the King, and is far more excited in describing the splendor that he beheld, whereas Isaiah is compared to a person who dwells in the capital city and is accustomed to the splendor. Therefore, his focus is primarily on his encounter with the King, and he only gives a brief description of the splendor.

⁹¹² Isaiah 6:1

⁹¹³ See Likkutei Torah, Bracha 97a and on.

⁹¹⁴ See Pardes Rimonim, Shaar 16 (Shaar ABY”A) Ch. 3; Etz Chayim, Shaar 46 (Shaar Kees’e HaKavod) Ch. 1, Ch. 5; Shaar 47 (Shaar Seder ABY”A) Ch. 5.

This accords with the teaching,⁹¹⁵ “The supernal mother (*Imma Ila’ah*)⁹¹⁶ dwells in the throne (*Kursaya*).”

The *Sefirah* of understanding-*Binah* is the matter of comprehension. That is, just as in man below, the powers of the soul called, wisdom-*Chochmah*, understanding-*Binah*, and knowledge-*Da’at*, are the matter of intellectual comprehension, so likewise, this is how it is Above in Godliness, that Above, the *Sefirah* of understanding-*Binah* is the comprehension of Godliness. This then, is the meaning of the teaching that Isaiah’s prophecy was that he beheld the Chariot (*Merkavah*) of the world of Creation-*Briyah*, which is the world of the *Seraphim* angels. In contrast, Ezekiel’s prophecy was in the place of the *Ophanim* angels, which is lower.

Now, the world of Creation-*Briyah*, within which the supernal mother (*Imma Ila’ah*) dwells, and whose substance is that of comprehension, is similar to comprehension as it is in man below, in that it manifests in an inner manner (*Pnimiyut*). That is, when a person understands something with complete comprehension, his mind then encompasses it and he grasps it with his intellect. In other words, although at first, he only understood the matter superficially, in which case, it transcended and encompassed his intellect, that was only before he came to fully grasp it. However, once he finally grasps it,

⁹¹⁵ Tikkunei Zohar, Tikkun 6 (23a); Etz Chayim, Shaar 47 (Shaar Seder ABY”A) Ch. 3; Tanya Ch. 39 (52a).

⁹¹⁶ That is, the *Sefirah* of understanding-*Binah* which is called the supernal mother (*Imma Ila’ah*) dwells in the throne-*Kursaya*, which is the world of Creation-*Briyah*, as opposed to wisdom-*Chochmah* which is called the supernal father (*Abba Ila’ah*) and dwells within the world of Emanation-*Atzilut*. (See commentaries to Zohar and Etz Chayim *ibid.* and elsewhere.)

then his intellect encompasses the matter and grasps it in an inner manner (*Pnimiyut*).⁹¹⁷

Thus, since comprehension is an inner (*Pnimiyut*) matter, so likewise is it Above in the world of Creation-*Briyah*, wherein there is an illumination of the wisdom-*Chochmah*, understanding-*Binah*, and knowledge-*Da'at* of the Unlimited One, *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He. That is, the illumination and revelation in the world of Creation-*Briyah*, is likewise in an inner manner (*Pnimiyut*). Now, because it is grasped in an inner manner (*Pnimiyut*), it comes to be revealed in a systematic and orderly fashion, meaning, in the order of the Ten *Sefirot*, as they are divided into the three aspects and categories of *ChaBa"D*, *ChaGa"T*, and *NeHi"Y*.

3.

The explanation of the matter in a more particular manner is as follows: The comprehension of the *Seraphim* angels in the world of Creation-*Briyah*, is not only of their vitality itself, but also of the Cause and Source of their vitality. That is, they not only grasp their vitality, as it is in the world of Creation-*Briyah*, but they also grasp their Cause as He is in the world of Emanation-*Atzilut*, in a state of elevated separation from them. For, it states about the world of Emanation-*Atzilut*,⁹¹⁸ “He and His life force and organs are one.”

⁹¹⁷ See Tanya Ch. 5; Sefer HaMaamarim 5665 p. 332; Shaar HaYichud of the Mittler Rebbe, translated as The Gate of Unity, Ch. 1-3.

⁹¹⁸ Introduction to Tikkunei Zohar 3b

In other words, even though the Source of their vitality is in a state of elevated separation from them – since even their vitality, as it is in the world of Creation-*Briyah*, is in a state of elevated separation from them, and this being so, it certainly is the case that the Source of their vitality in the world of Emanation-*Atzilut* is in a state of elevated separation from them – nevertheless, since they have comprehension of Godliness, and as explained before, comprehension is an inner manner (*Pnimiyyut*), therefore, even the light and vitality that is elevated and separated from them, illuminates within them in an inner manner (*Pnimiyyut*). In other words, in an inner way, they sense that He is elevated and removed from them.

About this the verse states,⁹¹⁹ “The *Seraphim* were standing above Him,” meaning above their vitality, in the sense that even the Source and Cause of their vitality is felt in them in an inner manner (*Pnimiyyut*). Now, since this is so, that although He is elevated and separated from them, they nonetheless sense His elevated separation, they therefore recite⁹²⁰ “Holy, Holy, Holy is *HaShem* of hosts-*HaShem Tzva’ot* צבאות יהוה.” In general, this refers to the light of *HaShem* יהוה, blessed is He, that fills all worlds (*Memaleh Kol Almin*), since the light and illumination is felt within their grasp and comprehension in an inner manner (*Pnimiyyut*).

⁹¹⁹ Isaiah 6:2 – The simple meaning of the verse is: “The *Seraphim* were standing above, in His service.” Nevertheless, the phrasing is such that it is indicative that the *Seraphim* are “above” in the sense that their vitality is grasped in them in an inner manner (*Pnimiyyut*). (See Ginat Egoz of Rabbi Yosef Gikatilla, translated as *HaShem Is One*, Vol. 2, p. 237-238.)

⁹²⁰ Isaiah 6:3; Also see *Sefer HaMaamarim* 5635 Vol. 2 p. 392.

Now, the ultimate intent of grasp and comprehension is to arouse the emotions. For, if a person has no arousal of emotions, it clearly indicates that he does not truly grasp and comprehend. True grasp and comprehension is felt in the emotions, for the emotions are the ultimate culmination of the comprehension. This is as stated,⁹²¹ “Listen Israel, *HaShem*-יהו"ה is our God, *HaShem* is One-*HaShem Echad*-אחד יהו"ה,” and then continues, “And you shall love *HaShem*-יהו"ה your God etc.”

The word “Listen-*Shma*-שמע” is a term that means, “comprehend.”⁹²² However, comprehension alone is insufficient, but must also bring a person to arousal of love of *HaShem*-יהו"ה. Thus, the grasp and comprehension of the *Seraphim* angels affects an arousal of emotions in them, in that they are in a state of passionate love that burns like flames of fire. This is why these angels are called the “flaming ones” – *Seraphim*-שרפים – by virtue of the fact that they are aflame in their comprehension of Godliness.⁹²³

Now, just as comprehension, indicated by the word, “Listen-*Shema*-שמע,” is insufficient in and of itself, but the arousal of the emotions, indicated by the words, “and you shall love *HaShem*-יהו"ה your God” is also necessary, so likewise, the arousal of the emotions alone is also insufficient. Rather, there

⁹²¹ Deuteronomy 6:4-5

⁹²² See the Petach HaShaar (Opening Gateway) to Imrei Binah of the Mittler Rebbe, translated as The Gateway to Understanding; Also see Rabbi Hillel Paritcher's Likkutei Biurim to Shaar HaYichud Ch. 1 (Biur 2), translated as Listen Israel, and elsewhere.

⁹²³ See Likkutei Torah, Naso 28d; Also see Pinchas 77d.

also must be the actual fulfillment of Torah and *mitzvot*. About this the verses continue,⁹²⁴ “And you shall bind them as a sign upon your arm etc.,” which refers to all the commandments, as our sages, of blessed memory, stated that,⁹²⁵ “The entire Torah is compared to the *Tefillin*.”

In other words, the intellectual *Sefirot* of *ChaBa”D* (comprehension) are not sufficient in and of themselves, nor are the emotional *Sefirot* of *ChaGa”T* (emotional arousal). Rather, *HaShem*’s-יהוה ultimate intent is for Godliness to be drawn forth even in the aspect of *NeHi”Y* (the gut emotions that compel one to act).

The same is likewise true of the supernal angelic beings. That is, their comprehension and emotional arousal are not sufficient in and of itself, but specifically the (gut emotions of) *NeHi”Y* must also be drawn forth. Now, although it is not applicable for there to be actualization at the hand of the angelic beings, nevertheless, they too possess the aspect of *NeHi”Y*. This refers to their recitation of their songs, which is adhesion (*Dveikut*) in actuality, brought about by their arousal of love of *HaShem*-יהוה, blessed is He. In other words, their arousal of love with flaming passion is the matter of “running” (*Ratzo*), whereas their recitation of song is the matter of “returning” (*Shov*), which is the aspect of *NeHi”Y*.

This is the meaning of their words,⁹²⁶ “Holy, Holy, Holy is *HaShem* of hosts-*HaShem Tzva’ot*-יהוה צבאות; The whole

⁹²⁴ Deuteronomy 6:8

⁹²⁵ Talmud Bavli, Kiddushin 35a

⁹²⁶ Isaiah 6:3

earth is full of His glory.” That is, the words, “Holy, Holy, Holy-*Kadosh Kadosh Kadosh* קדוש קדוש קדוש” are the aspect of “running” (*Ratzo*), whereas the words, “The whole earth is full of His glory,” is the aspect of “returning” (*Shov*). The general explanation is that the comprehension of the *Seraphim* angels is in the light and illumination of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, that fills all worlds (*Memaleh Kol Almin*), which is an inner pervading light (*Pnimi*) that manifests within all three aspects, *ChaBa*”D, *ChaGa*”T, and *NeHi*”Y, until it is drawn forth below, which is the meaning of the words, “The whole earth is full of His glory.”

4.

However, the service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, of the *Ophanim* angels, is with great noise and commotion.⁹²⁷ This commotion is due to the concealment and their lack of comprehension. To clarify, it is not that they have no comprehension at all, but rather, that they lack sensitivity to the inner aspect of the comprehension. As a result, they are in a state of noise and commotion.

This is similar to how it is in man below when he comprehends something wondrous, in which case he senses it in the inner essence of his soul. Nonetheless, if he hears a wondrous thing, but does not grasp it, even so, it has an effect on him. However, it is not an inner effect of truly having a feel

⁹²⁷ See the liturgy of the blessings of the *Shema* recital.

for it. Rather, the effect is (astonishment) and his being is nullified, which is the matter of the commotion.

This is similarly the case with the *Ophanim* angels about whom it states,⁹²⁸ “And the *Ophanim*...with great commotion, rise toward the *Seraphim*.” That is, they hear the song of the *Seraphim* as they recite, “Holy, Holy, Holy, is *HaShem* of hosts-*HaShem Tzva’ot*-יהו"ה צבאות,” – in which the three aspects of “Holy-*Kadosh*-קדוש” correspond to the first three letters of the Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה. These first three letters are in a state of holiness and transcendence.

The term “Hosts-*Tzva’ot*-יהו"ה צבאות” is understood according to the teaching of our sages, of blessed memory,⁹²⁹ “He is a letter (*Ot*-אות) amongst His hosts,” meaning that the vitality of the creatures comes solely from the final *Hey*-ה of His Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה, which is “the most ethereal of the letters, in that it is barely sensory,”⁹³⁰ (or like the version that states “it has nothing to it”). In contrast, the first three letters of the Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה are transcendent and removed from them.⁹³¹

Thus, since the *Ophanim* angels hear the song of the *Seraphim*, which is the aspect of Godliness that transcends and is removed from the worlds, but they themselves cannot grasp

⁹²⁸ See the liturgy of the blessings of the *Shema* recital.

⁹²⁹ Talmud Bavli, Chagigah 16a

⁹³⁰ See the liturgy of the *Piut Akdamot* for Shavuot; Midrash Bereishit Rabba 12:10; Ginat Egoz of Rabbi Yosef Gikatilla, translated as *HaShem Is One*, Vol. 4, The Gate of The Vowels; Tanya, Iggeret HaKodesh, Epistle 4 (94b); Likkutei Torah, Ha’azinu 74d; Ohr HaTorah, Chayei Sarah 121b; Sefer HaMaamarim 5635 Vol. 2 p. 388.

⁹³¹ See Likkutei Torah *ibid.*, and elsewhere.

the transcendent elevation, the effect is that they become nullified of their sense of independent existence and thus are in a state of great commotion.

Now, in truth, the sublimation and nullification to *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, and the great commotion of the *Ophanim* angels in their service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, reaches an even higher level than the service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה of the *Seraphim* angels, which is a matter of comprehension. That is, the service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה of the *Seraphim* angels through comprehension, is in the light of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, that fills the worlds (*Memaleh Kol Almin*), as mentioned above. In contrast, the service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, of the *Ophanim* angels, is with great commotion as a result of their lack of comprehension of the light and illumination. It therefore is the light of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, that is elevated, transcendent, surrounds all worlds (*Sovev Kol Almin*) and is removed from them.

We therefore find an element of superiority in the *Ophanim* angels, over and above the *Seraphim* angels. This is similar to the teaching of our sages, of blessed memory,⁹³² that the *Seraphim* angels only mention *HaShem*-יהו"ה after three words, whereas the *Ophanim* angels mention *HaShem*-יהו"ה after two words.⁹³³ This is because the service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה

⁹³² Talmud Bavli, Chullin 91b

⁹³³ That is, the *Seraphim* angels recite (Isaiah 6:3) "Holy, Holy, Holy is *HaShem* Tzva 'ot-יהו"ה" (קדוש קדוש קדוש יהו"ה צבאות), thus only mentioning the Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה in their song after three words. In contrast, the *Ophanim* angels recite (Ezekiel 3:13) "Blessed is the glory of *HaShem*-יהו"ה from His place," (ברוך כבוד יהו"ה ממקומו) thus mentioning the Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה in their song after only two words. (See Chullin 91a-b *ibid.*)

of the *Ophanim* angels results from the light of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, that surrounds and transcends all worlds (*Sovev Kol Almin*).

It is also why the term, “Holy-*Kadosh*-קדוש,” recited by the *Seraphim* angels includes the letter *Vav*-ו in it, indicating the light of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, that is drawn down to fill all worlds (*Memaleh Kol Almin*). That is, although He is holy-*Kadosh*-קדוש, exalted and removed, it nevertheless is spelled with a *Vav*-ו, indicating that it is drawn down, meaning that it is felt in the comprehension of the *Seraphim* angels. This is unlike the word “Holy-*Kodesh*-קדש (without the *Vav*-ו), which is, “something unto itself,”⁹³⁴ indicating complete separateness and transcendence.

In contrast, the *Ophanim* angels recite,⁹³⁵ “Blessed is the glory of *HaShem*-יהו"ה from His place.” The verse specifically states, “from His place-*Meemikomo*-ממקומו,” since (as stated by Rambam) the word, “place-*Makom*-מקום” signifies spiritual elevation and superiority.⁹³⁶ This then, is the meaning of, “Blessed is the glory of *HaShem*-יהו"ה from His place,” – referring to the Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, in His elevated state, in that He is entirely removed and transcends the entire chaining down of the worlds (*Seder HaHishtalshelut*).

⁹³⁴ Zohar III 94b; Also see Shaar HaYichud Ch. 26.

⁹³⁵ Ezekiel 3:13

⁹³⁶ Moreh Nevuchim Vol. 1 Ch. 8; Mishneh Torah, Hilchot Yesodei HaTorah, 2:6; Likkutei Torah, Vayikra, Hosafot 54b; Sefer HaChakirah 74b. (That is, when terms of spatial relationship (*Makom*-מקום) are used in reference to non-physical matters, they signify superiority of level. For example, if there are two Torah scholars, but the wisdom and understanding of one is greater than the other, we may speak of one as being higher than the other, or similarly, we may say that the cause is higher than its effect.)

In other words, this matter is much loftier than the matter of the *Seraphim* who recite, “Holy-*Kadosh*-קדוש,” which refers to the Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה as He relates to the chaining down of the worlds (*Seder Hishtalshelut*) and is a state of holiness-*Kadosh*-קדוש that includes the letter *Vav*-ו, rather than the level of holiness indicated by the word, “Holy-*Kodesh*-קדש (without the letter *Vav*-ו), which is, “something unto itself.”⁹³⁷

The explanation is that it is similar to man’s service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, below. That is, service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, that accords to the parameters of grasp and comprehension is in a state of limitation. In contrast, service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, that does not accord to grasp and comprehension, is unlimited, and can therefore reach a much loftier level. This is the difference between the love indicated by the words,⁹³⁸ “You shall love *HaShem*-יהו"ה your God...with all your soul (*Bechol Nafshecha*),” and the love indicated by the words, “with all your being (*Bechol Me’odecha*).”

The service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה indicated by the words “With all your soul (*Bechol Nafshecha*),” accords with the parameters of reason and intellect. That is, it is service about which it states, “Listen Israel-*Shema Yisroel*-שמע ישראל,” followed by, “and you shall love *HaShem*-יהו"ה your God,” indicating that through comprehension one is brought to love *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He. Therefore, the resultant love of

⁹³⁷ Zohar III 94b; Also see Likkutei Torah, Ha’azinu 77b.

⁹³⁸ Deuteronomy 6:5

HaShem-יהו"ה, blessed is He, is limited to the parameters of intellect.

This is even true of the aspect indicated by the words, “with all your soul (*Bechol Nafshecha*),” which the sages said means,⁹³⁹ “Even if He takes your soul,” and refers to self-sacrifice (*Mesirat Nefesh*) for the sake of the Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He. In other words, even the self-sacrifice (*Mesirat Nefesh*) that results from this, is limited. For, since his self-sacrifice (*Mesirat Nefesh*) is the result of his grasp and comprehension, it is self-sacrifice (*Mesirat Nefesh*) in which he has a sense of independent existence, separate and apart from *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, in that it is *he* who is sacrificing himself. It thus is limited.

However, such is not the case regarding the love of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, indicated by the words, “with all your being (*Bechol Me'odecha*),” which our sages said means,⁹⁴⁰ “With every measure that He metes out to you,” which is entirely beyond limitation. For, since this has nothing to do with grasp or comprehension, it therefore is completely unlimited.

The same is true above in Godliness, in regard to the *Ophanim* angels. Since their service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, is not out of grasp and comprehension, therefore their “great commotion-*Ra'ash Gadol* רעש גדול” reaches the aspect

⁹³⁹ Talmud Bavli, Brachot 54a (in the Mishnah); Sifri and Rashi to Deuteronomy 6:5.

⁹⁴⁰ See Brachot 54a *ibid*, and Sifri and Rashi to Deuteronomy 6:5.

of,⁹⁴¹ “Great is *HaShem-Gadol* יהו"ה *HaShem* and much praised.”

5.

Now, it is the same way in the soul of man. In man's service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, there likewise are these two forms of service. That is, there is the service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה like the *Seraphim* angels, in a way of grasp and comprehension, and there is the service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה like the *Ophanim* angels, in a way of submission and nullification.

To further explain, the very foundation and beginning of service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, is to serve Him in a way of submission and nullification. This is why, immediately upon waking in the morning, we initiate our daily service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, with the words, “I submit before You-*Modeh Ani Lefanecha* לפניך-מודה אני,” and we then begin our morning prayers with the words, “Submit to *HaShem-Hodu LaHaShem* להודו ליהו"ה.” This is the primary foundation of service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, and though this submission is below reason and intellect, nonetheless, there also is submission above reason and intellect. That is, the general foundation and culmination of service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, is the matter of submission, sublimation and nullification to Him.

⁹⁴¹ Psalms 48:2; See Sefer HaMaamarim 5635 Vol. 2, p. 393.

More particularly, initially one begins his service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, through submission that is below reason and intellect. This is why we start the day with the words, "I submit before You-*Modeh Ani Lefanecha*-מודה אני לפניך" immediately upon waking up, and we begin our prayers with the words, "Submit to *HaShem-Hodu LaHaShem*-הודו ליהו"ה." "ליהו"ה."

This is below reason and intellect, since it is submission that precedes the section of the prayers called, "Verses of Praise (*Psukei d'Zimra*)" and more particularly, it precedes the blessings of the *Shema* recital. This being so, at this stage, the submission is below reason and intellect. This is so, even though there certainly is some measure of comprehension here. That is, the very fact that he submits to *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, and is sublimated and nullified to Him, is because he has some element of comprehension.

This is similar to what was explained about the commotion of the *Ophanim* angels. That is, although the commotion is out of lack of grasp and comprehension, nevertheless, the commotion is caused because they⁹⁴² "rise toward the *Seraphim*," and hear their song. The same is true of man's service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, below. The submission and nullification to *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, is the result of some element of grasp and comprehension. Nevertheless, the primary aspect is the matter of submission. This is analogous to a fetus in the fetal position, with its head

⁹⁴² See the liturgy of the blessings of the *Shema* recital.

between its knees.⁹⁴³ That is, even though the fetus has a head and it has the entire form of the body, nevertheless, its head is between its knees. That is, all that is sensed in a revealed way is the aspect of the lower (gut emotions) of *NeHi"Y*.

This then, is the difference between serving *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, in a way of submission, which is the service of the *Ophanim* angels, and serving *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, in a way of comprehension, which is the service of the *Seraphim* angels.⁹⁴⁴ The *Seraphim* angels also possesses the full stature of all three aspects of *ChaBa"D*, *ChaGa"T*, and *NeHi"Y* (as mentioned in chapter three), except that their primary aspect is the matter of grasp and comprehension. That is, even their aspects of *ChaGa"T* and *NeHi"Y* are illuminated by the comprehension, and because of the comprehension, the order of the form of *ChaBa"D* and *ChaGa"T* are dominantly revealed.

However, such is not the case, when it comes to service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, in a manner of submission. For, although it too possesses the entire stature of *ChaBa"D*, *ChaGa"T* and *NeHi"Y*, nevertheless, the primary matter here is that of submission to *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, whereas all other matters are concealed. This is what is meant by the analogy of the fetus, "whose head is between its knees."

All the above discusses service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, that is in a way of submission below reason and

⁹⁴³ Talmud Bavli, Nidah 30b

⁹⁴⁴ See Maamarei Admor HaZaken 5562 Vol. 1, p. 48 and on; Ohr HaTorah, Terumah, p. 1,467 and on; p. 1,471 and on; Discourse entitled "*Lehavin Inyan d'Tlat Killin Go Tlat*" 5723 (Sefer HaMaamarim 5723 p. 133 and on.)

intellect, in the recitation of the words, “I submit before You-*Modeh Ani Lefanecha*-לפניך מודה אני,” and “Submit to *HaShem-Hodu LaHaShem*-להודו ליהו”ה.” This is then followed by the verses of praise (*Pesukei d’Zimrah*), which is service of *HaShem*-יהו”ה, blessed is He, in a way of comprehension.

This is analogous to an infant once he has come out from his mother’s womb. He has a head, torso and feet in a revealed manner. That is, it is recognizable in him that his torso is above his feet and that his head is above his torso. The same applies to the order of service of *HaShem*-יהו”ה, blessed is He, in a manner of grasp and comprehension. It goes from below to above, beginning with the songs of praise (*Pesukei d’Zimrah*), followed by the blessings of the *Shema* recital (*Birchot Kriyat Shma*), followed by the recital of *Shema* itself.

This is then followed by service of *HaShem*-יהו”ה, blessed is He, in a manner of submission that transcends reason and intellect, which is the matter of, “You shall love *HaShem*-יהו”ה your God...with all your being (*Bechol Me’odecha*).” This is more particularly so in the *Amidah* prayer, in which one is in a state of nullification of his sense of independent existence (*Bittul b’Metziyut*) from *HaShem*-יהו”ה, blessed is He, “like a servant before his Master,”⁹⁴⁵ who has no sense of independent being at all.

Rather, he only is a conduit for the word of *HaShem*-יהו”ה to be drawn forth, as in the verse said immediately before commencing the *Amidah* prayer,⁹⁴⁶ “Lord-*Adona*”-י-אדוני, open

⁹⁴⁵ Talmud Bavli, Shabbat 10a

⁹⁴⁶ Psalms 51:17

my lips and my mouth will declare Your praise.” This is more particularly so in the section of the *Amidah* in which we bow and say, “We submit to You-*Modim* לך-מודים, which is the matter of complete and utter nullification of one’s sense of independent existence apart from *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, and is service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה in a way of submission that transcends reason and intellect.

Now the primary aspect and ultimate culmination of service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, is to serve Him in a way of submission. For since, in this manner, our service of Him is not the result of our grasp and comprehension, it therefore is unlimited and never ceases. In other words, by its very nature, serving *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, in a way of intellectual comprehension, is limited. However, when it comes to a state of submission, in which one’s very existence is nullified to the true reality of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, the Singular Unlimited Intrinsic Being, blessed is He, it is unlimited and never ceases.

The same is true Above regarding the difference between the service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה of the *Seraphim* angels, and the service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה of the *Ophanim* angels. That is, the *Seraphim* angels recite “Holy, Holy, Holy” three times. The reason is because there are twelve hours in the day. Thus, every four hours they recite, “Holy-*Kadosh*-קדוש.”⁹⁴⁷ In other words, their recitation of “Holy-*Kadosh*-קדוש” is only sufficient for four hours. This is because their service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, is in a way of comprehension. They therefore

⁹⁴⁷ Tanna d’Bei Eliyahu Rabba, Ch. 6, 17, 31; Tanna d’Bei Eliyahu Zuta Ch. 12.

have a sense of independent existence and their service of him is limited. Thus, cessation is applicable to their service. In contrast, the service of יהו"ה-*HaShem* of the *Ophanim* angels is in a way of sublimation and nullification (*Bittul*) to *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, and is thus in an unlimited manner.

6.

Now, these two forms of service of יהו"ה-*HaShem*, blessed is He, whether with comprehension or whether with submission, are divided in their times. The general difference between them is like the difference between Shabbat and the six mundane days of the week. Regarding the six mundane days of the week, the verse states,⁹⁴⁸ “On six days, work shall be done,” wherein the word “shall be done-*Tei’aseh* תעשה” is in the form of a command,⁹⁴⁹ and refers to serving יהו"ה-*HaShem*, blessed is He, by way of refinements (*Birurim*), which is comparable to the matter of submission. For, since the work of refinement (*Birurim*) requires that the one doing the refining, must garb himself in the garments of the one being refined, it thus is connected to the world, only that he is refining it. This is similar to the matter of submission to יהו"ה-*HaShem*, blessed is He, in which he has neither grasp nor comprehends, nor does it illuminate within him in a revealed way, and his approach is solely that of submission to יהו"ה-*HaShem*, blessed is He.

⁹⁴⁸ Exodus 35:2

⁹⁴⁹ See Mechilta cited in Drashot Rabbi Yehushua Ibn Shuaib, Parshat Vayeishev; Discourse entitled “*Vayakhel Moshe*” 5712 Ch. 3 (Sefer HaMaamarim 5712, p. 242, translated in The Teachings of The Rebbe – 5712, Discourse 11.)

Nevertheless, it is the toil of refinement (*Birurim*) during the six mundane days of the week that brings about the automatic result of,⁹⁵⁰ “One who toils on the eve of Shabbat will eat on Shabbat.” For, Shabbat is the matter of pleasure and delight (*Oneg*-ענג), as it states,⁹⁵¹ “They all will be satiated and delighted (*Yit’angu*-יתענגו) from Your goodness.” That is, the pleasure and delight (*Oneg*-ענג) are caused by the grasp and comprehension of the revelation of light and illumination.

Now, the reason there is an empowerment in the service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, of refinement (*Birurim*) in general, and more particularly, that through the refinement one “will eat on Shabbat” as an automatic result, is because there is a radiance of Shabbat in the six mundane days of the week too, which is the matter of prayer.⁹⁵²

That is, even though the *Amidah* prayer of the six mundane days of the week includes the twelve middle blessings in it, which are requests and supplications for physical matters,⁹⁵³ nevertheless, each blessing begins with the words, “Blessed are You *HaShem-Baruch Atah HaShem*-ברוך אתה יהו"ה,” meaning that the beginning of each blessing is the matter of drawing down *HaShem*’s-יהו"ה light and illumination.⁹⁵⁴ Even so, what takes place during the six mundane days of the

⁹⁵⁰ Talmud Bavli, Avoda Zara 3a

⁹⁵¹ In the liturgy of the Shabbat *Amidah* prayer, in the “*Yismechu b'Malchutch*” section.

⁹⁵² See Torah Ohr, Vayakhel 88a

⁹⁵³ Unlike the *Amidah* prayers of Shabbat.

⁹⁵⁴ See Likkutei Torah, Shir HaShirim 32c; The term “Blessed-Baruch-ברוך” is of the root “*Berech*-ברך” which also means “to draw down” or “kneel” (See Mishnah Kilayim 7:1 and elsewhere).

week is only a glimmer of the radiance of Shabbat. This is why during the six mundane days of the week we recite the twelve middle blessings of the *Amidah* prayer, because they come forth with an abundance of letters (*Otiyot*) in a systematic and orderly fashion etc.

However, through this, we subsequently arrive at the aspect of Shabbat, particularly in the *Amidah* prayer of Shabbat. The twelve middle blessings regarding physical matters are not present in the *Amidah* prayer of Shabbat. Instead, there is only a single blessing in the middle of the *Amidah* prayer of *Shabbat*, the substance of which is pleasure and delight (*Oneg*), and this pleasure is the result of the revelation of light and illumination.

7.

With the above in mind we can understand the difference between the giving of the Torah, and Purim, as well as the differentiation in the times for reading the Megillah on Purim. For, due to the divisions between the two above-mentioned forms of service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, in which each form of service has its specific time, it thus is necessary for there to be a division between the various times.

Now, in regard to the giving of the Torah, it was bestowed from Above, meaning that the revelation was from Above to below. This is the meaning of the teaching,⁹⁵⁵ "He turned the mountain over them like a tub." About the giving of

⁹⁵⁵ Talmud Bavli, Shabbat 88a

the Torah, Torah Ohr explains,⁹⁵⁶ that this refers to a revelation of abundant love (*Ahavah Rabba*) from Above, and therefore, there was no division of times in this. In other words, even though, in the order of service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה from below, it is necessary for there to be the divisions of times, nevertheless, since the revelation at the giving of the Torah was from Above to below, there was no division of times.

In contrast, in regard to Purim, at which time “the Jewish people confirmed and undertook”⁹⁵⁷ “that which they already undertook,”⁹⁵⁸ and they did so willingly and in a way of self-sacrifice (*Mesirat Nefesh*), from which point the service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, was renewed from below to Above for all generations. Thus, since it is service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה from below to Above, there therefore are differentiations and distinctions of times, between the villages and the cities.

The explanation is that the village refers to the matter of submission to *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He. That is, the villager is connected to the world, only that he submits to *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He. On the other hand, the city, refers to the matter of comprehension of Godliness, meaning that the city-dweller grasps revelations of light and illumination and is in a state of elevated separation from the world. This is what is meant by “walled cities.” For, the matter of a wall-*Chomah*-חומה, is as our sages, of blessed memory, stated,⁹⁵⁹ “The words,⁹⁶⁰ ‘I am a

⁹⁵⁶ Torah Ohr, Megillat Esther 98d

⁹⁵⁷ Esther 9:27

⁹⁵⁸ Talmud Bavli, Shabbat 88a

⁹⁵⁹ Talmud Bavli, Pesachim 87a

⁹⁶⁰ Song of Songs 8:10

wall-*Ani Chomah*-חומה-אני is a reference to Torah.” That is, the Torah is like a wall (*Chomah*-חומה) that separates and elevates a person from the world.

Thus, there is a division and difference between the times for reading the Megillah in the village and the times for reading it in the city, as stated,⁹⁶¹ “The Megillah is read on the eleventh, on the twelfth, on the thirteenth, on the fourteenth, or on the fifteenth.” The first day that it may be read is on the eleventh (א"י-11), which is the numerical value of the letters *Vav-Hey*-ו"ה-11, the last two letters of the Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה.⁹⁶² Subsequently, there is a greater ascension to the twelfth, and thirteenth etc., until cities that are surrounded by a wall, which read on the fifteenth (the numerical value of the first two letters of the Name *HaShem* 's-ה"ה).⁹⁶³ This is because they are surrounded by “a wall” which refers to Torah.

That is, the Torah is like a wall that separates and elevates a person from the world. Moreover, the Torah affects him in such a way, that even while he is in the world, he is nevertheless removed and elevated from the world. This is the meaning of the specific wording in the Mishnah, “Cities that have been surrounded by a wall since the days of Yehoshua bin Nun.” For, Yehoshua was the first student to receive, as it

⁹⁶¹ Mishnah Megillah 1:1; Talmud Bavli, Megillah 2a

⁹⁶² See at length in Ginat Egoz of Rabbi Yosef Gikatilla, translated as *HaShem Is One*, Vol. 2 & 3 (The Letters of Creation).

⁹⁶³ That is, the first two letters of the Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, are the letters *Yod-Hey*-י"ה, which have a numerical value of fifteen, and are indicative of the illuminations of the intellectual *Sefirot* of wisdom-*Chochmah* and understanding-*Binah*.

states,⁹⁶⁴ “Moshe received the Torah from Sinai and transmitted it to Yehoshua.”

To further clarify, the matter of Moshe, is that his state of being is such, that “the face of Moshe was like the face of the sun,”⁹⁶⁵ which refers to the matter of⁹⁶⁶ the Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה which is compared to the sun. That is, the Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה utterly transcends the world. In contrast, Yehoshua, is called, “the head of the conquerors,”⁹⁶⁷ meaning that it was he who brought the Jewish people (into the land of Israel) to serve *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, with the thirty-nine forms of labor and through being engaged in mundane matters.⁹⁶⁸

Now, although he was the “head of the conquerors,” it nevertheless states about him that,⁹⁶⁹ “he would not depart from within the tent” (of Moshe). That is, he did not depart from, “the face of Moshe which is like the face of the sun,” which refers to the sun of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, who utterly transcends the world. This is to say that, “the wall,” which is Torah, affects a person, that even while he is in the world, he is in a state of elevated separation from the world.

Thus, when it comes to cities that are walled from the days of Yehoshua Bin Nun, which is the matter of perfection

⁹⁶⁴ Mishnah Avot 1:1

⁹⁶⁵ Talmud Bavli, Bava Batra 75a; Also see the discourse entitled “*Na'ar Yisroel v'Ohaveihu*” 5716.

⁹⁶⁶ Psalms 84:12; See Tanya, Shaar HaYichud v'HaEmunah Ch. 4; Ohr HaTorah (Yahal Ohr) to Psalms 84:12.

⁹⁶⁷ Petichta to Esther Rabba 10

⁹⁶⁸ That is, before they actually entered the land of Israel, the thirty-nine forms of labor (*Melachah*) were not applicable as they were once they enter the land under the leadership of Yehoshua.

⁹⁶⁹ Exodus 33:11

and completion in the service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, the Megillah is read on the fifteenth. For, then “the moon comes to be in a state of completion,”⁹⁷⁰ which is the matter of “*HaShem*-יהו"ה will be perfect, and His throne will be perfect,”⁹⁷¹ which will be drawn forth below with the complete redemption, may it occur speedily in our days, below ten handsbreadths!

⁹⁷⁰ See Zohar II 215a; Zohar I 150a, 225b; Midrash Shemot Rabba 15:26 – Also of note is that the Yehoshua in relation to Moshe is compared to the moon (Talmud Bavli, Bava Batra 75a ibid; Sifri Bamidbar 140:2 and elsewhere.)

⁹⁷¹ The verse (Exodus 17:16 and Rashi) states, “כי יד על כס יד”-Because the hand is upon the throne-*Keis*-כס of *Ya”h*-יה"ה, *HaShem*-יהו"ה is at war with Amalek for all generations.” That is, the hand of the Holy One, blessed be He, is raised to swear by His throne, that He will have war and enmity against Amalek for all eternity. The verse utilizes the shortened term for throne-*Keis*-כס instead of the complete term throne-*Kees’e*-כסא. Similarly, the Name *Ya”h*-יה"ה is only the half of the Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה. The reason is that Holy One, blessed be He, swears that His Name will not be perfect nor His throne perfect until the name of Amalek be entirely blotted out. When his name will blotted out, then *HaShem*’s-יהו"ה Name will be perfect and complete and His throne will be perfect and complete.