

Discourse 10

“*V’Eleh HaMishpatim* – These are the ordinances”

Delivered on Shabbat Parshat Mishpatim,
Shabbat Mevarchim Adar I, 5714
By the grace of *HaShem*, blessed is He,

1.

The verse states,⁷⁶⁰ “And these are the ordinances that you shall place before them.” The verses then continue to explain,⁷⁶¹ “If you acquire a Hebrew servant,” and,⁷⁶² “If a man sells his daughter as a maidservant,” and,⁷⁶³ “If a man shall strike his slave or maidservant with the rod etc.” That is, this portion of Torah discusses the three categories of slaves, these being the indentured Hebrew servant (*Eved Ivri*), the Hebrew maidservant (*Amah HaIvriyah*) and the Canaanite slave (*Eved Cana’ani*).

Now, since everything that exists in the revealed parts of Torah also exists in the concealed parts of Torah, meaning that it exists above in the chaining down of the worlds (*Seder HaHishtalshelut*), it automatically follows that this also applies to one’s spiritual service of *HaShem*-יהוה, blessed is He, in his

⁷⁶⁰ Exodus 21:1

⁷⁶¹ Exodus 21:2

⁷⁶² Exodus 21:7

⁷⁶³ Exodus 21:20

soul. This is to say that even regarding commandments that are tied to specific times – such as commandments that relate to a Hebrew servant (*Eved Ivri*), which only apply when the Jubilee (*Yovel*) year is in force⁷⁶⁴ – we must say that these commandments too, continue to exist spiritually, with all their details. This is because Torah is eternal⁷⁶⁵ and is in effect at all times and in all places. We therefore must say about all commandments that depend on the times and therefore are not physically constant, that even when they are not in force, they continue to exist spiritually, because spiritually, they indeed are constant.

His honorable holiness, the Alter Rebbe, whose soul is in Eden, explained the different categories;⁷⁶⁶ the Hebrew servant (*Eved Ivri*), the Hebrew maidservant (*Amah HaIvriyah*) and the Canaanite slave (*Eved Cana'ani*), as they exist spiritually in one's service of *HaShem*-יהוה, blessed is He, and in his soul. The general explanation is based on what our sages, of blessed memory, stated,⁷⁶⁷ “The soul is called by five names (in ascending order): *Nefesh*-נפש, *Ru'ach*-רוח, *Neshamah*-נשמה, *Chayah*-חיה, and *Yechidah*-יחידה.”

In general, these five names correspond to the four worlds: Emanation-*Atzilut*, Creation-*Briyah*, Formation-

⁷⁶⁴ Talmud Bavli, Gittin 65a; Mishneh Torah, Hilchot Avadim 1:10

⁷⁶⁵ Tanya Ch. 17 and elsewhere.

⁷⁶⁶ Printed with glosses in Ohr HaTorah, Mishpatim p. 1,227 and on; Also see Torat Chayim, Mishpatim 71b and on (293a and on in the new print); Derech Chayim, Shaar HaTefilah, Ch. 66 and on; Ohr HaTorah ibid. p. 1,139 and on; Sefer HaMitzvot of the Tzemach Tzedek 83b and on; Also see the discourse entitled “*V'Eleh HaMishpatim*” 5738 Ch. 4 and on (Torat Menachem, Sefer HaMaamarim Adar p. 9 and on); Discourse by the same title, 5741 (p. 24 and on there).

⁷⁶⁷ Midrash Bereishit Rabba 14:9; Dvarim Rabba 2:37

Yetzirah, and Action-*Asiyah*.⁷⁶⁸ Generally, *Chayah*-חיה and *Yechidah*-יחידה are counted as one level. Thus, in Zohar they are jointly called, “The soul of the soul-*Neshamah L’Neshamah*.”⁷⁶⁹ This level corresponds to the world of Emanation-*Atzilut*.

The three levels; *Neshamah*, *Ru’ach* and *Nefesh* correspond to the three worlds of Creation, Formation and Action (*Briyah*, *Yetzirah*, *Asiyah*). However, because the worlds inter-include each other, even a person whose soul is only on the level of *Nefesh* of the world of Action-*Asiyah*, nevertheless, includes all the other levels within his soul. This is what the sages meant when they said, “The soul is called by five names.” That is, this applies to each and every soul.

Now, corresponding to these four levels of the soul, there are four levels of servants; the Canaanite slave (*Eved Cana’ani*), the Hebrew servant (*Eved Ivri*), the Hebrew maidservant (*Amah HaIvriyah*) and the daughter (*Bat*). About this fourth level the verse states,⁷⁷⁰ “If a man will sell his daughter,” which refers to the princess, that is, the daughter of the King (*Barta d’Malka*).⁷⁷¹ The level of the daughter (*Bat*), which is called, “the daughter of the King (*Barta d’Malka*),” corresponds to *Chayah* and *Yechidah* of the world of Emanation-*Atzilut*.

⁷⁶⁸ See Etz Chayim, Shaar 42 (Shaar Drushei ABY”A), Ch. 1; Also see the beginning of Shaar HaGilgulim and elsewhere.

⁷⁶⁹ Zohar I 79b; Sefer HaMaamarim 5688 p. 121.

⁷⁷⁰ Exodus 21:7

⁷⁷¹ Zohar II (Mishpatim) 94b

The three levels; the Canaanite slave (*Eved Cana'ani*), the Hebrew servant (*Eved Ivri*) and the Hebrew maidservant (*Amah Halvriyah*), correspond to the levels of *Nefesh*, *Ru'ach* and *Neshamah* of the soul. The Canaanite slave (*Eved Cana'ani*) corresponds to *Nefesh* of the world of Action-*Asiyah*. The Hebrew servant (*Eved Ivri*) corresponds to *Ru'ach* of the world of Formation-*Yetzirah* and the Hebrew maidservant (*Amah Halvriyah*) corresponds to *Neshamah* of the world of Creation-*Briyah*.

Now, just as the souls are divided in like manner to the divisions between the worlds, this also is so of the angels, since they are the intermediaries through which beneficence is drawn down and bestowed below. That is, the angels also have the above distinctions resulting from the differences between the worlds. Thus, the angel *Sandal'fon* (סנדלפון) is the aspect of the Canaanite slave (*Eved Cana'ani*) in the world of Action-*Asiyah*, the angel *Metat'ron* (מטטרוֹן) is in the world of Formation-*Yetzirah*, and there likewise are angels in the world of Creation-*Briyah*.

Now, because the ultimate Supernal intent in the descent of the soul is for the purpose of serving it's Maker, *HaShem*-יהוה, blessed is He, as our sages, of blessed memory, stated,⁷⁷² "I was only created to serve my Maker," which is the ultimate and loftiest level of ascent, for which reason there was the descent in the first place; and because this ascent is by way of the three pillars that support the world, these being the study of

⁷⁷² Mishnah and Baraita at end of Tractate Kiddushin (from manuscript version of the Talmud, Jerusalem 5724) and elsewhere.

Torah, prayer, and acts of lovingkindness,⁷⁷³ it therefore is also the case that these three manners of serving *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, also have the above-mentioned divisions.

2.

To explain in greater detail, the matter of the Canaanite slave (*Eved Cana'ani*) may be understood from what we empirically observe; that a Canaanite slave would prefer to be free of his servitude.⁷⁷⁴ That is, he neither desires to accept the yoke of his master, nor does he desire to serve him. Rather, his desire is such, that he would prefer to be free of his master's yoke, which is the very opposite of accepting his master's yoke.

Instead, he only serves him because he fears the rod, as in the verse,⁷⁷⁵ "When a man strikes his slave, male or female, with a rod." For, even if the master has never actually hit him, nevertheless, the very existence of the rod by which he can be smitten, affects him to serve his master. In other words, even though his fear of the rod may be in a transcendent and encompassing way (*Makif*), in that his master has never hit him, it nevertheless affects him to serve his master. Ultimately, his entire service is just out of fear of the rod, and he has neither pleasure nor desire in it, nor does he have any intellectual or emotional feelings in his heart for his work. It rather is only out of fear of the rod.

⁷⁷³ Mishnah Avot 1:2

⁷⁷⁴ Talmud Bavli, Gittin 13a

⁷⁷⁵ Exodus 21:20

With the above in mind, we may understand the spiritual level called, “the Canaanite slave (*Eved Cana’ani*).” That is, this is a person who, in essence, has no pleasure or desire in serving *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, and the only reason he serves Him is out of fear of the rod. Spiritually, this corresponds to the awakening to repentance (*Teshuvah*) brought about by the supernal heralds.⁷⁷⁶

Now, on this level,⁷⁷⁷ it is possible that out of fear of the rod, a person serves *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, his entire life, without ever transgressing any sins all his days, nor will he ever. This is the level of the intermediate person (*Beinoni*).⁷⁷⁸ That is, not only does he guard his powers of speech and action, but even his power of thought. This is because a person who willfully ruminates about sin in his thoughts, is called wicked (*Rasha*), and cannot be called an intermediate (*Beinoni*).⁷⁷⁹ This being so, of necessity, the intermediate (*Beinoni*) is even cautious of his thoughts, never allowing himself to sink into lustful thinking, not even for permissible matters, as stated in Tanya⁷⁸⁰ that “sanctifying yourself in that which is permissible to you”⁷⁸¹ is a positive Torah commandment (according to the view of Sefer Chareidim).⁷⁸²

This being so, an intermediate person (*Beinoni*) is not sunken into lustful thoughts, and certainly does not willfully

⁷⁷⁶ See Likkutei Torah Bamidbar 6c; Teitzei 36d.

⁷⁷⁷ See Ohr HaTorah ibid. p. 1,128 and on.

⁷⁷⁸ Tanya Ch. 12

⁷⁷⁹ See Tanya end of Ch. 12.

⁷⁸⁰ Tanya Ch. 27 and Ch. 30

⁷⁸¹ Talmud Bavli, Yevamot 20a; Sifrei to Re'eh 14:21

⁷⁸² Sefer Chareidim, Chelek Mitzvot Aseh Min HaTorah

ruminate on forbidden matters. Nevertheless, all this is only because he fears the rod, and nothing more. However, in and of himself, he is capable of transgression and sin, and because of this, he is called a Canaanite slave (*Eved Cana'ani*), in that, from his own perspective, he would prefer to be free of the yoke.

However, this level (the intermediate-*Beinoni*), is the loftiest level of the spiritual aspect called, “the Canaanite slave.” This is similar to what Rabban Gamliel said,⁷⁸³ “My slave Tavi was not like all the other slaves, he was virtuous.” However, there also is the aspect of the Canaanite slave who indeed is like other slaves.

This refers to the wicked (*Rasha*), who is below the level of the intermediate (*Beinoni*). Moreover, in this itself, there are a number of levels. The highest level is a wicked person who has goodness (*Rasha v'Tov Lo*) and whose state and standing is such, that he only transgresses occasionally, at long intervals, and even then, only in minor matters. In other words, his fear of the rod does not affect him enough to desist from sin altogether, like an intermediate person (*Beinoni*). It only affects his powers of speech and action, but not his power of thought. That is, there are times that he will ruminate and contemplate sin etc.

Now, there also are people on a lower level than this, who will occasionally sin in speech and action too. However, because of fear of the rod, the spiritual substance of which is

⁷⁸³ Talmud Bavli, Brachot 16b

thoughts of repentance brought about by the supernal heralds (as mentioned before) or by auspicious times,⁷⁸⁴ they are roused to repent and indeed fully repent. About this the verse states,⁷⁸⁵ “Your iniquity has gone away and your sin shall be atoned for.” (Nevertheless, such a person is still called wicked (*Rasha*), in that he still is fully capable of falling to sin.)

Now, there is yet a lower level. This is a person who is awakened to have thoughts of repentance, but they do not affect him enough to fully repent in actuality. This is because the goodness in his soul is in the minority. Therefore, even the spiritual fear of the rod does not affect him enough to truly and fully repent. Nevertheless, since he does indeed possess some goodness, even though it is in the minority, nonetheless, it is a recognizable minority. Therefore, at the very least, he comes to regret his ways. About this our sages, of blessed memory, said,⁷⁸⁶ “The wicked are full of regrets.”

Now, there is an even lower level than this, which is that the “spiritual rod” has utterly no effect on him whatsoever. The only thing that may affect him is fear of the physical rod, that is, physical afflictions that befall him. In such a person, the measure of goodness in him is so small that it is unrecognizable. This is why the only thing that affects him is fear of the physical rod, which is the matter of physical afflictions. This is similar to what we find about Menasheh, that it was due solely to his

⁷⁸⁴ Such as the ten days of repentance, from Rosh HaShanah through Yom Kippur

⁷⁸⁵ See Isaiah 6:7

⁷⁸⁶ See Tanya Ch. 11; See Reishit Chochmah, Shaar HaYira Ch. 3; Shevet Musar Ch. 25.

afflictions that he repented and returned to *HaShem*-יהו"ה with all his heart.⁷⁸⁷

Now, the lowest level, are those who are never roused to repent at all. In such a person, his portion of goodness has withdrawn from within him and only hovers over him in an encompassing, transcendent manner, from above. About such people our sages, of blessed memory, said that,⁷⁸⁸ “The Indwelling Presence of *HaShem*-יהו"ה dwells in any place where there are ten [adult male Jews].”⁷⁸⁹

Now, all these levels within the wicked who possesses goodness (*Rasha v'Tov Lo*), including its loftiest level, and even the aspect of the intermediate (*Beinoni*) (which is similar to Rabban Gamliel's statement,⁷⁹⁰ “My slave Tavi was not like all the other slaves, he was virtuous”), are included in the level of the Canaanite slave (*Eved Cana'ani*). For, in all these levels, a person serves *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, not out of his own volition, but out of fear of the rod. Thus, it all is the aspect of *Nefesh* of the world of Action-*Asiyah*. In other words, the manifestation of the Godly soul within the animalistic soul is not the aspect of *ChaBa"vD*⁷⁹¹ of the Godly soul, nor is it even the aspect of *ChaGa"vT*⁷⁹² of the Godly soul, but is rather only

⁷⁸⁷ See Sanhedrin 101b

⁷⁸⁸ Sanhedrin 39a

⁷⁸⁹ See Tanya Ch. 11 *ibid*.

⁷⁹⁰ Talmud Bavli, Brachot 16b

⁷⁹¹ An acronym for the intellectual *Sefirot* of wisdom-*Chochmah*, understanding-*Binah*, and knowledge-*Da'at*.

⁷⁹² An acronym for the heartfelt emotional *Sefirot* of kindness-*Chessed*, might-*Gevurah*, and beauty-*Tiferet*.

the aspect of *NeHi"Y*⁷⁹³ of the Godly soul. In other words, there only is a manifestation of that which relates to action, and this itself is in a way of force, which is the matter of Action-*Asiyah*.⁷⁹⁴

As this relates to serving *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, in prayer, this refers to the section of the prayers from, "I am thankful – *Modeh Ani*" and "Submit to *HaShem* – *Hodu LaHaShem*-יהו"ה," until the blessing, "Blessed is He who spoke – *Baruch She'Amar*." The verses of song (*Pesukei D'Zimra*) that follow, are the matter of contemplating and relating the praises of the All-Present One, *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, whereas the verses from, "Submit to *HaShem* – *Hodu LaHaShem*-יהו"ה" until "Blessed is He who spoke – *Baruch She'amar*," are only the aspect of acknowledgement and submission to *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, which is the aspect of *NeHi"Y*.

3.

Now, the spiritual level called, "the Hebrew servant (*Eved Ivri*)" is that one's service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, is not just in a manner of submission by force, like the Canaanite slave (*Eved Cana'ani*). For, it states about the Hebrew servant (*Eved Ivri*),⁷⁹⁵ "you shall not work him with

⁷⁹³ An acronym for the gut emotional *Sefirot* that relate to action, which are victory-*Netzach*, majesty-*Hod*, and foundation-*Yesod*.

⁷⁹⁴ See Maamarei Admor HaEmtza'ee, Vayikra Vol. 2 761 and on; Sefer HaMaamarim 5678 p. 121, p. 124 and on, and elsewhere.

⁷⁹⁵ Leviticus 25:39

slave labor,” and,⁷⁹⁶ “you shall not subjugate him through hard labor.” In other words, for such a person, there is no need to subjugate him by force. This is because the service of the Hebrew servant (*Eved Ivri*) is not just in a way of submission and force. He also has sensitivity in his heart. However, the sensitivity is not because he has undergone a profound and complete transformation of being.

This may be better understood by what we empirically observe in the service of the Hebrew servant (*Eved Ivri*). Namely, he is the one who goes out to acquire provisions for the household and brings them in. That is, since it is unbefitting of the master or the members of his household to do this themselves, nor is it befitting of the Hebrew maidservant (*Amah HaIvriyah*) to do, it therefore is part of the duties of the Hebrew servant (*Eved Ivri*). Nevertheless, even after having acquired and brought the provisions home, they still are unfit for consumption. That is, they first must be cooked and roasted, which is the function of the Hebrew maidservant (*Amah HaIvriyah*). In other words, from the work of the Hebrew servant (*Eved Ivri*) the provisions are still unfit for actual consumption. That is, no fundamental change of being has been affected by his work, because all he has done is bring it from the outside to the inside.

The same may likewise be understood about the spiritual level called, “the Hebrew servant (*Eved Ivri*).” That is, although such a person indeed has sensitivity to holiness in

⁷⁹⁶ Leviticus 25:46

his heart, nonetheless, he has not yet affected any transformation in himself. In other words, his sensitivity to holiness is such, that his emotive qualities, according to their natural tendencies, are used for holy purposes, whether their expression is restrained or expansive. In other words, he brings them from the outside to the inside. However, no transformation has taken place in them, in that the very being and nature of his emotions remains entirely unchanged. That is, if his natural emotional tendency is in a manner of constriction and restraint, then it remains in a state of constriction and restraint. Likewise, if his natural tendency is to be expansive and expressive, then even now, he remains expansive and expressive. The only difference is that now his natural emotive qualities are awakened by matters of holiness.

The reason is because his service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, is not in the aspect of *ChaBa"D*. That is, it is specifically through the intellectual *Sefirot* of wisdom-*Chochmah*, understanding-*Binah*, and knowledge-*Da'at* that the emotions are caused to undergo a transformation of their state and being. However, since his service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, is solely with his emotive qualities of *ChaGa"T*, they therefore do not undergo any transformation of their being.

In other words, his service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, is in a manner that he awakens and reveals the natural love and fear of *HaShem*-יהו"ה that every Jew possesses. For, although they are a natural love and fear of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, it nevertheless requires effort and toil to awaken

them, since by nature, a person loves his physical body more.⁷⁹⁷ However, because these emotions are not actually brought about through toil, being that they are natural to him, and his toil is only to remove whatever concealments cover over them, therefore, they remain in their natural state, whether they are in a state of constriction or expansiveness, and an essential transformation of their nature is not possible. Thus this level is the aspect of *Ru'ach* of the world of Formation-*Yetzirah*, which is service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, with the emotive qualities of *ChaGa*"T.

In the service of prayer to *HaShem*-יהו"ה, this corresponds to the blessing, "Blessed is He who spoke – *Baruch She'Amar*," and the verses of song (*Pesukei d'Zimrah*), the substance of which is the arousal of the emotions (*Midot*), in that they are not a matter of intellect (*Mochin*). Although it indeed is true that even to awaken the emotions (*Midot*) contemplation (*Hitbonenut*) is necessary – and it is impossible to arouse them without contemplation (*Hitbonenut*) – nevertheless, this cannot be considered to be intellectual service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He. Rather, the matter of intellect here is only to arouse the emotions.

This may be understood by the difference between superficial study (*Girsa*) and in-depth study (*Iyun*).⁷⁹⁸ Even when a subject is studied superficially (*Girsa*) there nevertheless must be understanding and comprehension,

⁷⁹⁷ See Tanya Ch. 16

⁷⁹⁸ See Shaar HaYichud of the Mittler Rebbe, translated as The Gate of Unity, Ch. 1.

because without this, it cannot be called “study” at all.⁷⁹⁹ We therefore must say that even in superficial study (*Girsa*), there must be an element of understanding and comprehension.

However, when it comes to in-depth study (*Iyun*), a person invests himself so fully into grasping the subject that he essentially becomes one with it, to the point that it is incorporated into his very being. This does not apply to surface study (*Girsa*), because although he has a degree of grasp and understanding of the matter, nonetheless, he only understands it superficially, and no more. That is, he does not give himself over to fully invest himself into the subject, to understand and grasp it to the point that it becomes part and parcel of his being. Rather, he remains in his previous state of being, only that he understands the matter intellectually.

The same is true of the contemplations (*Hitbonenut*) that take place during the verses of song (*Psukei d’Zimrah*). That is, they are not in a manner that he becomes essentially bound to the subject, to the point that his entire being becomes aligned with the intellect he comprehends, to such a degree that, in line with the contemplation of the matter, new emotions are automatically born in him.

Rather, his contemplations are only similar to what our sages, of blessed memory, stated,⁸⁰⁰ “Man must always arrange praise before his Master,” in which the term “arrange-*Yesader*-יִסְדֵּר,” indicates putting the praises in their proper order and nothing more. In other words, this is similar to surface study

⁷⁹⁹ Hilchot Talmud Torah of the Alter Rebbe, end of Ch. 2.

⁸⁰⁰ Talmud Bavli, Brachot 34a

(*Girsa*), in which case, whatever emotions there are, are not the automatic result of the intellect. Rather, the intellect only acts as the catalyst for awakening emotions that already preexisted, thus there is no transformation to the essential nature of the emotions. It is in this manner that a person on the level of the Hebrew servant (*Eved Ivri*) serves *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He.

In contrast, the service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, of the Hebrew maidservant (*Amah Halvriyah*) is such, that it also causes a transformation of being. That is, not only is one's service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, not just by way of force, but in a way that there is sensitivity of the heart, but beyond this, he undergoes a transformation of being. In other words, his conduct is not simply such that, if he has a natural disposition toward extroversion, he then serves *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, with extroversion, or if he has a natural disposition toward introversion, he then serves *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, with introversion, all of which is a matter of fear of Heaven. Rather, in this case, even though his natural disposition may be one of introversion, he nonetheless is capable of serving *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, with extroversion, since his service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, affects an essential transformation of being in him.

This is similar to the matter of a physical Hebrew maidservant (*Amah Halvriyah*), who cooks and roasts the food, through which it becomes fitting for consumption. In other words, a transformation of state of being takes place. This is because the flavor of the food is not its physical part, but is rather the spiritual part within it. The effect of cooking it is that

it breaks down and causes a diminishment of the physicality of the food, so that the flavor, which is its spiritual part, can be sensed to a greater degree. The same is likewise the case when it comes to the spiritual toil on the level of the Hebrew maidservant (*Amah Halvriyah*), that the service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, is in such a manner that it affects a transformation in one's being. This is because his toil is in the intellectual *Sefirot* of wisdom, understanding and knowledge (*Chochmah, Binah, Da'at*), which is the aspect of the *Neshamah* of the world of Creation-*Briyah*. In other words, his being comes to be affected and transformed commensurate to his grasp of *HaShem*'s-יהו"ה Godliness, and since it is the intellect that actualizes and causes the emotions, there thus is caused to be a transformation to the being of his emotions.

In the service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, of prayer, this corresponds to the blessings of the *Shema* and the *Shema* recital itself. This involves contemplating (*Hitbonenut*) the service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה of the angelic beings and their utter sublimation to *HaShem*-יהו"ה, as well as the service of souls who are granted eternal love (*Ahavat Olam*) and abundant love (*Ahavah Rabbah*) of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He. All this refers to serving *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, with the intellect itself (*Avodat HaMochin*), through which a transformation of being takes place.

Now, just as in prayer there are these various levels of service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, so likewise, in the study of Torah there also are these levels.⁸⁰¹ That is, there are three approaches in the study of Torah: There is Torah study not for the sake of the Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה, there is simple Torah study, and there is Torah study for the sake of the Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה. These three manners correspond to the three levels; the Canaanite slave (*Eved Cana'ani*), the Hebrew servant (*Eved Ivri*), and the Hebrew maidservant (*Amah HaIvriyah*).

More particularly, in the study of Torah not for the sake of the Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, there are a number of levels. The loftiest level is the study of Torah in order to know "the deeds that they should do."⁸⁰² This kind of study is called Torah study not for the sake of the Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה, since he studies it not for the Torah itself, but only to know the deed that he must do.⁸⁰³ Although study in order to know what to do is still a matter of holiness, nevertheless, this is considered to be Torah study that is not for the sake of the Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה, since it is not for the Torah itself. Moreover, even though by doing so, he fulfills the commandment to study Torah (*Talmud Torah*), nevertheless, in this itself, the commandment

⁸⁰¹ See *Derech Chayim* of the Mittler Rebbe *ibid.* Ch. 74 and on.

⁸⁰² Exodus 18:20

⁸⁰³ See *Likkutei Sichot* Vol. 17, p. 402 and on; Vol. 23, p. 147.

to study Torah is merely preparatory to fulfilling all the other commandments etc.

However, there is a lower level than this. On this level, a person learns Torah because he finds it intellectually stimulating, as the verse states about Torah,⁸⁰⁴ “For it is your wisdom and understanding in the eyes of the nations.” This is why even the body and animalistic soul are capable of appreciating the intellect of Torah. Therefore, since such a person has a natural proclivity and love for intellectual matters, he therefore studies Torah to satisfy the lust of his intellectual soul.

Nevertheless, when it comes to these levels of Torah study, although they are not for the sake of the Name *HaShem*-יהוה, blessed is He, they nevertheless still are for matters that are related to Torah itself, whether it is study for the sake of knowing what to do, or whether it is study for the sake of the intellectual stimulation that Torah provides. This is because even the intellectual stimulation of Torah is part of Torah.

However, there is an even lower level than this. This is when one studies Torah as his source of income. In other words, he uses the Torah as, “a spade to dig with,”⁸⁰⁵ which is an entirely alien motive altogether. Nevertheless, in truth, even this has an element of a *mitzvah* in it, in that, ultimately, a person must sustain himself and the members of his household, which is a *mitzvah*, only that in the Mishnah⁸⁰⁶ it states that it is

⁸⁰⁴ Deuteronomy 4:6

⁸⁰⁵ Hilchot Talmud Torah of the Alter Rebbe 4:3

⁸⁰⁶ Mishnah Avot 4:5

forbidden to use Torah study, “as a spade to dig with,” and he does the very opposite. Nevertheless, the essential matter of sustaining his family is a *mitzvah*, except that he does so in a forbidden manner.

Now, there is an even lower level than this. This is when a person studies Torah in order to fuel his ego, in order to be called a wise and learned sage and Rav.⁸⁰⁷ There is an even lower level, in which one studies Torah solely to be able to argue and be victorious in debate.⁸⁰⁸ Moreover, there is an even lower level, in which one studies Torah and then does the very opposite, about which the verse states,⁸⁰⁹ “But to the wicked God said: ‘To what purpose do you recount My decrees and bear My covenant upon your lips?’”

All these levels mentioned above, including the loftiest one, which is study of Torah in order to know what to do, are levels of Torah study that are not for the sake of the Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה. That is, they all are included in the category of Torah study that is not for the sake of the Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה, and thus are all in the category of the Canaanite slave (*Eved Cana'ani*). That is, just as the matter of the Canaanite slave was explained before in relation to serving *HaShem*-יהו"ה through prayer, in which one's entire service is solely out of fear of the rod, and in reality, he has no sensitivity to Godliness at all, so likewise is the matter of the Canaanite slave as it relates to Torah study. That is, he studies Torah for some ulterior motive,

⁸⁰⁷ See Tosefot entitled “*HaOseh*”, Talmud Bavli, Brachot 17a; Tosefot entitled “*v'Kan*” Pesachim 50b.

⁸⁰⁸ See Tosefot *ibid*.

⁸⁰⁹ Psalms 50:16

meaning, for something that is extraneous to Torah itself, which is not for the sake of the Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה.

However, there is a loftier level than this, in which one studies Torah for the sake of the Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה, in order to bond his soul to *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He. That is, he desires to bond the concealed and revealed aspects of his soul with the concealed and revealed aspects of the Holy One, blessed is He, through the concealed and revealed aspects of Torah. For, as known,⁸¹⁰ the Torah binds the souls of the Jewish people with the Holy One, blessed is He. In this, the Torah is the aspect of the groom, and the souls of the Jewish people are the aspect of the bride.⁸¹¹ This is to say that Torah bestows influence to the souls of the Jewish people. This level is the aspect of the Hebrew servant (*Eved Ivri*).

To further clarify, just as it was explained before that the matter of the Hebrew servant (*Eved Ivri*) is that the emotional sensitivities of his heart are into matters of holiness, only that he remains in his state of being and undergoes no transformation, the same applies to his study of Torah. That is, his study of Torah does not affect a transformational change in him, except that he desires to bind his soul to *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He. Therefore, compared to the true matter of Torah study for the sake of the Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה, this type of study is considered to be simply study (albeit, it is not study that is *not* for the sake of the Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה).

⁸¹⁰ See Zohar III 73a; Likkutei Torah Netzavim 46a

⁸¹¹ See Likkutei Torah, Zot HaBracha 93d and on.

However, the true matter of Torah study for the sake of the Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, is when He studies Torah for the sake of Torah itself. In this kind of study, the Torah is the aspect of the bride, and the souls of the Jewish people are the aspect of the groom. That is, the souls of the Jewish people bestow influence to the Torah. This is similar to the statement about King David, that he would bond the Torah to the Holy One, blessed is He, Above.⁸¹² This kind of Torah study is in a manner of transformational change of being, and is the aspect of the Hebrew maidservant (*Amah HaIvriyah*).

The explanation is that our sages, of blessed memory, stated,⁸¹³ "There are twelve hours in the day. During the first three, the Holy One, blessed is He, sits and engages in Torah study. During the second three, He sits and judges the entire world. During the third three, He sits and sustains the entire world etc." However, a question is asked⁸¹⁴ on this teaching. Namely, certainly, *HaShem*'s-יהו"ה's Supernal judgment and justice accords with His Torah. This being so, during the second set of three hours, in which He judges the whole world, the Holy One, blessed is He, is also engaged in the study of Torah. This being the case, what then is the novelty of the first three hours during which He specifically, "sits and engages in the study of Torah"?

The explanation is that certainly when He sits and judges the world, the judgment accords to Torah, however, this

⁸¹² See Zohar III 222b; Likkutei Torah Shlach 51a

⁸¹³ Talmud Bavli, Avodah Zarah 3b

⁸¹⁴ See Sefer HaMaamarim 5629 p. 404, and elsewhere.

is as Torah is already drawn forth. In other words, when it comes to Torah study, which corresponds to the intellectual *Sefirot* of wisdom, understanding and knowledge (*Chochmah, Binah, Da'at*) there already is an aspect of drawing forth in it, which are the emotional leanings within it. It is about this that it states, “He sits and judges,” in that the judgment is the aspect of the leanings of the emotional qualities of kindness, might and beauty (*Chesed, Gevurah, Tiferet*). That is, there is an emotional leaning toward kindness-*Chessed* and mercy-*Rachamim*, or the opposite thereof. This is subsequently followed by the three hours in which, “He sits and sustains the whole world,” which refers to the bestowal of actual beneficence, and is the aspect of *NeHi”Y*.⁸¹⁵

In contrast, during the first three hours, when the Holy One, blessed is He, sits and engages in the study of Torah, it is the matter of drawing forth Torah itself, as it is drawn forth from Him, blessed is He. Although it is true that amongst the ancient Chassidim, the first three hours of the day were apportioned for prayer, in that they would prepare themselves for prayer and lengthen in their prayers,⁸¹⁶ nonetheless, this in no way contradicts what we are explaining here, that this period of time is when Torah itself is drawn forth. For, through the prayers of the ancient Chassidim – in that prayer is the matter of binding one’s soul to its Source, and the Source of the soul is the Singular Preexistent Intrinsic and Essential Being of *HaShem*-

⁸¹⁵ An acronym for the gut emotional *Sefirot* that relate to action, which are victory-*Netzach*, majesty-*Hod*, and foundation-*Yesod*.

⁸¹⁶ Talmud Bavli, Brachot 32b; Hilchot Talmud Torah 4:5

יהו"ה Himself, blessed is He, who even transcends the root of Torah – they affected novel illuminations to be drawn forth in Torah.

That is, although the Torah may have already been drawn forth with a leaning that is not one of kindness-*Chessed* etc., they nevertheless affected a novel drawing forth within Torah, which automatically affected the three hours in which He sits and judges the world and the three hours in which He sits and sustains the world, so that they too are drawn forth in an entirely different manner.

About this, our sages, of blessed memory, stated,⁸¹⁷ “The Holy One, blessed is He, makes a decree, and the righteous-*Tzaddik* nullifies it.” This is because he affects a novelty within the order of the chaining down of the worlds (*Seder HaHishtalshelut*) – (that is, he makes a new chaining down of the worlds – *Seder Hishtalshelut*) – which is the matter of drawing forth novelty and actualizing a transformational change of being. This aspect is the level of the Hebrew maidservant (*Amah Halvriyah*).

5.

Now, just as all the above was explained in regard to the two pillars of prayer and Torah study, it likewise applies to the third pillar, which are acts of lovingkindness, and generally includes all the commandments-*mitzvot* in them. This is why

⁸¹⁷ Talmud Bavli, Mo'ed Katan 16b

all the commandments are simply called, “charity-*Tzedakah*-צדקה,” since it is the most primary commandment.⁸¹⁸ That is, in the fulfillment of the commandments-*mitzvot*, there likewise are three levels, as mentioned above; the Canaanite slave (*Eved Cana’ani*), the Hebrew servant (*Eved Ivri*), the Hebrew maidservant (*Amah HaIvriyah*).

To further explain, in the fulfillment of the commandments-*mitzvot*, there also is a manner of fulfilling them that is not for the sake of the Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He. This is as stated by his honorable holiness, the Alter Rebbe, in Tanya,⁸¹⁹ that “even if one engages in them not for any ulterior motive, God forbid, but rather, in a manner conveyed by the verse,⁸²⁰ ‘Their fear of Me was like the commandments of men done by rote,’ meaning that a person serves *HaShem*-יהו"ה out of a habit acquired in his youth, in that his father and teacher trained him to serve *HaShem*-יהו"ה.” That is, at first he began serving *HaShem*-יהו"ה out of fear of the whip, but in the course of time, the habit became second nature to him,⁸²¹ to the point that he performs them mechanically, “like the commandments of men done by rote.”

There is yet another manner that the commandments-*mitzvot* are fulfilled *not* for the sake of the Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה. This is when a person fulfills them for self-aggrandizement and to take pride in them. This is a much lower level. This is similar to what we find about fasts of abstention, that when one fasts

⁸¹⁸ See Tanya, Ch. 37 (48b).

⁸¹⁹ See Tanya, Ch. 39 (53b).

⁸²⁰ Isaiah 29:13

⁸²¹ Shvilei Emunah 54:2; Shu"t HaRama m'Pano 36; Tanya Ch. 14.

and takes pride in doing so, it would have been better had he not fasted at all etc.⁸²² Generally, fulfilling the commandments in a manner that is not for the sake of the Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, is considered to be the level of the Canaanite slave (*Eved Cana'ani*).

Now, the level of the Hebrew servant (*Eved Ivri*) is that a person fulfills the commandments in order to draw vitality to his soul. That is, through fulfilling the two-hundred and forty-eight positive commandments, he draws vitality to his two-hundred and forty-eight limbs and organs. Similarly, through desisting from the three-hundred and sixty-five negative commandments, he draws vitality to his three-hundred and sixty-five veins and sinews.⁸²³ In general, through fulfilling the commandments-*mitzvot*, vitality is drawn to man, as it states,⁸²⁴ "You shall observe My decrees and My laws, which a man shall carry out and by which he shall live – I am *HaShem*-יהו"ה." Nevertheless, on this level, it is in a manner that he remains in his current state of being, only that he desires to draw Godly vitality to his soul.

However, the level of the Hebrew maidservant (*Amah HaIvriyah*) is higher than this. On this level, fulfilling the commandments, causes the Supernal commandments to be fulfilled Above. For there are two matters regarding the fulfillment of the Supernal commandments Above. The first is

⁸²² See Talmud Yerushalmi, Chagigah 2:2; Shaalot uTeshuvot Tashbatz 112; Beit Yosef to Tur Orach Chayim 565; Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chayim 656:6

⁸²³ See Zohar I 170b

⁸²⁴ Leviticus 18:5

as stated,⁸²⁵ “He relates **His** words to Yaakov, **His** statutes and **His** judgments to Israel.” Commenting on this, our sages, of blessed memory, said,⁸²⁶ “That which He Himself does, He commands His children to do.” In other words, first the commandments-*mitzvot* are fulfilled Above, in that the Holy One, blessed is He, dons *Tefillin*,⁸²⁷ prays,⁸²⁸ visits the sick and comforts mourners etc,⁸²⁹ and then, that which He does, He commands His children to do.

The second matter is that through us fulfilling the commandments below, we affect the fulfillment of the commandments Above. About this the verse states,⁸³⁰ “If you will follow My decrees and observe My commandments and you do them-*V’Asitem Otam*-ועשיתם אתם,” about which it states,⁸³¹ “The addition of the word, ‘and you do-*V’Asitem*-ועשיתם’ (which may be read as, “and you make-ועשיתם”) coupled with the word, ‘them-*Otam*-אתם,’ which may be read as, ‘yourselves-*Atem*-אתם,’ comes to teach that the Holy One, blessed is He says: ‘I consider it as if you *yourselves* have made-עשיתם אתם and rectified Me.’” This is because the two-hundred and forty-eight positive commandments are called “the two-hundred and forty-eight organs and limbs of The King.”⁸³²

⁸²⁵ Psalms 147:19

⁸²⁶ Midrash Shemot Rabba (Mishpatim) 30:9

⁸²⁷ Talmud Bavli, Brachot 6b

⁸²⁸ Talmud Bavli, Brachot 7b

⁸²⁹ Talmud Bavli, Sotah 14a

⁸³⁰ Leviticus 26:3

⁸³¹ Zohar III 113a; Midrash Vayikra Rabba 35:6; Likkutei Torah, Bechukotai

⁸³² See Tikkuntei Zohar, Tikkun 30 (74a)

Thus, our fulfilling them causes the sustainment of the commandments Above. Therefore *HaShem*-יהו"ה considers it, "as if you *yourselves have made*-ועשיתם אתם and rectified Me." This is similar to the explanation of the Baal Shem Tov⁸³³ on the verse,⁸³⁴ "*HaShem*-יהו"ה is your shadow." That is, just as a shadow (*Tzeil*-צל) is dependent on the person, so too, the verse, "*HaShem*-יהו"ה is your shadow," may be understood in the same manner. That is, by us fulfilling *HaShem*'s-יהו"ה's commandments - "and you do them-*V'Asitem Otam*-ועשיתם אתם," we bring about "and you *yourselves have made*-*V'Asitem Atem*-ועשיתם אתם," in that "I consider it as if you *yourselves have made*-ועשיתם אתם and rectified Me." This aspect of the fulfillment of the commandments is the level of the Hebrew maidservant (*Amah HaIvriyah*), which is the matter of drawing forth novel illumination and transformation of being.

6.

Now, the aspect of the daughter (*Bat*) – that is the princess, the daughter of The King – is the aspect of the *Chayah* and *Yechidah* levels of the soul, of the world of Emanation-*Atzilut*. That is, the levels mentioned before; the Canaanite slave (*Eved Cana'ani*), the Hebrew servant (*Eved Ivri*) and the Hebrew maidservant (*Amah HaIvriyah*), are the aspects of the *Nefesh*, *Ru'ach* and *Neshamah* of the worlds of Action, Formation and Creation (*Asiyah*, *Yetzirah* and *Briyah*)

⁸³³ Kedushat Levi, Beshalach (39c, 40b); Keter Shem Tov, Hosafot p. 8

⁸³⁴ Psalms 121:5

respectively. In other words, they all are in the general category of servants.

However, the world of Emanation-*Atzilut*, is the aspect of a child. About this we recite,⁸³⁵ “Whether we are as Your children, or whether we are as Your servants.” That is, the words “whether we are as Your children-*Banim*-בָּנִים” refers to the aspect of the world of Emanation-*Atzilut*, whereas the words, “whether we are as Your servants-*Avadim*-עֲבָדִים” refers to the aspects of Creation, Formation and Action (*Briyah*, *Yetzirah* and *Asiyah*).

The explanation is as follows: In all the levels mentioned above, a person senses himself as a tangible independent being. This goes without saying regarding the level of the Canaanite slave (*Eved Cana'ani*), in which he serves *HaShem*-יְהוָה, blessed is He, by compulsion, out of fear of the rod. This also is so of the level of Hebrew servant (*Eved Ivri*), in which he has sensitivity to Godliness in his heart, but nevertheless sees himself as an independent being. This is why he undergoes no transformation of being, because he remains in a state of awareness of self and sees himself as an independent being. Moreover, this even applies to the level of the Hebrew maidservant (*Amah HaIvriyah*) which indeed is in a manner of transformation of being, but even then, he still remains in a state of awareness of self and independent being, in that there is one who understands, grasps and comprehends etc.

⁸³⁵ Liturgy of the *HaYom Harat Olam* section of the *Musaf* prayer of Rosh HaShanah.

In contrast, the level of the daughter (*Bat*) is the aspect of total and complete nullification of independent existence (*Bittul b'Metziyut*), wherein one becomes like a singular point. In the service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, through prayer, this is the nullification of self and sublimation to *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, of the *Amidah* prayer,⁸³⁶ particularly in the parts of the *Amidah* prayer that involve prostration.⁸³⁷ This nullification of self and sublimation to *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, is from the aspects of the *Chayah* and *Yechidah* of the soul, which are the inner aspects of the soul.

However, it is our teacher Moshe who accomplishes the illumination of this aspect in the souls of the Jewish people, for it is he who draws forth the aspect of the upper knowledge (*Da'at Elyon*) of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, into the souls of the Jewish people.⁸³⁸ This is as explained regarding the verse,⁸³⁹ "I shall provide grass in your field for your cattle." That is, the upper knowledge (*Da'at Elyon*) of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, is that *HaShem*-יהו"ה Above is the true reality and the true something (*Yesh*), whereas whatever is below is nothing (*Ayin*). Thus, when the upper knowledge (*Da'at Elyon*) of *HaShem*-יהו"ה is drawn below, even the one below senses the upper knowledge (*Da'at Elyon*) - that whatever is below is truly nothing (*Ayin*). This causes nullification of awareness of self

⁸³⁶ There are some individuals who recalled that the Rebbe further specified that this is particularly so in the "Bestow peace-Seem *Shalom*-שים שלום" blessing at the end of the *Amidah* prayer.

⁸³⁷ See Tanya Ch. 42

⁸³⁸ See Tanya, Ch. 42 *ibid.*; Torah Ohr, Mishpatim 75b.

⁸³⁹ Deuteronomy 11:15; See Torah Ohr, Mishpatim 75b *ibid.*

and complete nullification of one's existence (*Bittul b'Metziyut*) to *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He.

Thus, it is in this regard that Moshe was told,⁸⁴⁰ “And these are the ordinances that **you** shall place *before them-Lifneihem*-לפניהם: If you acquire a Hebrew servant etc.” That is, this verse refers to Moshe himself, since it is he who draws forth the upper knowledge (*Da'at Elyon*) of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, into the souls of the Jewish people. Through this, he affects a revelation to their innerness-*Lifneihem*-לפניהם, which is the meaning of the word, “before them-*Lifneihem*-לפניהם.” This is possible through the continuation of the verse, “If you acquire a Hebrew servant (*Eved Ivri*).” For as explained in Torah Ohr,⁸⁴¹ the term “Hebrew-*Ivri*-עברי” is of the same terminology as the verse,⁸⁴² “Your forefathers dwelt on the other side-*Ever*-עבר of the river,” and is a reference to the root of the soul. It is Moshe who draws forth and reveals the root of the soul, bringing it out from concealment to revelation, through which a nullification of sense of independent being (*Bittul b'Metziyut*) and sublimation to *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, is brought about.

Thus, it is in this regard that the verse states, “And these are the ordinances that you shall place before them: If you acquire a Hebrew servant etc.” The words “these are the ordinances” refer to the levels of the Canaanite slave (*Eved Cana'ani*), the Hebrew servant (*Eved Ivri*) and the Hebrew

⁸⁴⁰ Exodus 21:1

⁸⁴¹ Torah Ohr, Mishpatim ibid. 75d.

⁸⁴² Joshua 24:2

maidservant (*Amah HaIvriyah*), the particulars of which were explained above. However, since the primary Supernal intent and ultimate objective in serving *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, is to come to the state of nullification of sense of independent being (*Bittul b'Metziyut*) and complete sublimation to *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, the verse therefore states, "that you shall place to their innerness-*Lifneihem*-לפניהם: If you acquire a Hebrew servant etc." This refers to the drawing forth of the upper knowledge (*Da'at Elyon*) of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, and the revelation of the aspects of the *Chayah* and singular-*Yechidah* essence of the soul, because it is this aspect that illuminates all the other levels, so much so, that it even illuminates within the aspect of the Canaanite slave (*Eved Cana'ani*), and it is specifically then, that the service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, of the *Nefesh*, *Ru'ach* and *Neshamah* levels of the soul, will be as they should be!⁸⁴³

⁸⁴³ For further elucidation of each of these levels of the soul that are revealed in the service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, see Kuntres HaHitpaalut of the Mittler Rebbe, translated as Divine Inspiration.