

Discourse 19

“Im Bechukotai Teleichu – If you will walk in My decrees”

Delivered on Shabbat Parshat Behar-Bechukotai,
Shabbat Mevarchim Sivan, 5716
By the grace of *HaShem*, blessed is He,

1.

The verse states,¹²⁴⁵ “If (*Eem-אם*) you will walk in My decrees and guard My commandments and do them; then I will provide your rains in their time, and the land will give its produce and the tree of the field will give its fruit.” Now, the simple meaning of the word “*Eem-אם*” is that it is the conditional term, “If,” and thus as simply understood, the verse reads, “If (*Eem-אם*) you will walk My decrees etc.” However, Midrash states¹²⁴⁶ that the word “*Eem-אם*” is in the form of a request, and is similar in meaning to the verse,¹²⁴⁷ “If only (*Loo-לו*) My people would heed me.”

This is to be understood like the verse,¹²⁴⁸ “See – I have placed before you today the life and the good, and the death and the evil... and you shall choose life.” In other words, we have free choice, but *HaShem-ה'הו*, blessed is He, asks us to choose

¹²⁴⁵ Leviticus 26:3-4

¹²⁴⁶ Torat Kohanim to Leviticus 26:3

¹²⁴⁷ Psalms 81:14

¹²⁴⁸ Deuteronomy 30:15 and on.

life. The same may be understood about this verse, “If only (*Eem*-אם) you will walk My decrees etc.” That is, *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, asks us to “walk in My decrees etc.” Moreover, a request from *HaShem*-יהו"ה Above, blessed is He, literally gives empowerment and assistance of considerable weight and value.

Now, the general request, “If only (*Eem*-אם) you will walk in My decrees and guard My commandments” (which includes the totality of our service of the Creator, *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, through studying His Torah and fulfilling His *mitzvot*), is that we should serve Him specifically in a way of “decrees” (*B'Chukotai*-בהקתי). In other words, it should be in the way expressed by the teaching,¹²⁴⁹ “I have engraved an edict and issued a decree.” That is, even those *mitzvot* that are called “justice” (*Mishpatim*) and accord to intellect, in that our intellect necessitates that we conform to them, should be fulfilled in the same way as *mitzvot* that are called “decrees” (*Chukim*) and are solely because “I have engraved an edict and issued a decree.”

On a deeper level, the teachings of Chassidut explain¹²⁵⁰ that, “My decrees-*B'Chukotai*-בהקתי,” means that our general approach to serving *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, should (not only be in the manner indicated by written letters, but should) be in a manner of engraved letters (*Chakikah*-חקיקה).

¹²⁴⁹ Midrash Bamidbar Rabba 19:1; Tanchuma Chukat 8

¹²⁵⁰ Likkutei Torah, Bechukotai 45d and elsewhere.

2.

The explanation is as follows: The difference between written letters and engraved letters,¹²⁵¹ is that written letters are external to the thing itself. For example, when writing letters on parchment, the letters come from ink that is external and separate from the parchment. Therefore, even once they are written on the parchment and become unified with it, it is not complete unity, but is rather like two separate things that have come together as one, but are not completely unified.

As a matter of Torah law, it is in regard to this that each letter of a Torah scroll must be surrounded by blank parchment on all sides.¹²⁵² This demonstrates that the letter does not become unified with the parchment underneath it. For, if it indeed became completely unified with the parchment underneath it, it would be unnecessary for it to be surrounded by blank parchment, just as the parchment underneath it does not need to be surrounded by blank parchment. However, since the letter requires being surrounded by blank parchment, this demonstrates that the letter is not unified with the parchment underneath it.

In contrast, engraved letters do not come from anything external, but come from the thing itself. For example, letters that are engraved on a precious stone come from the body of the stone itself. In other words, even though once they are engraved, the stone is no longer in its original simple state, since

¹²⁵¹ See Likkutei Torah Bechukotai *ibid.*; Chukat 56a, and elsewhere.

¹²⁵² Talmud Bavli, Menachot 34a

the form of letters have been added to it, nevertheless, the form of the letters are of the stone itself and are part and parcel of it. That is, the form of the letters come about because the stone itself has taken on their form.

The same is understood in our service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He. Namely, written letters indicate that a person is not completely one with the service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, whereas engraved letters indicate that he is one with the service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He.

To elucidate, the general matter of toil in serving *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, is that the Godly soul works with the animalistic soul. Now, this can be in two ways. One way of serving *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, is compared to written letters, in that he is not fully unified with the service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, and therefore requires additional safe-guards. For, since he is not fully unified with the service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, it is possible for changes or cessation to take place in his service. The second way of serving *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, is compared to engraved letters. This is when a person's service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, is in the middle line of truth (*Emet*-אמת), in which there is no change or cessation.¹²⁵³

In general, the difference between these two ways of serving *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, is the matter of serving Him with the revealed powers of one's soul, or serving Him with the desires of the heart (*Re'uta d'Leeba*). The revealed

¹²⁵³ See Shaar HaYichud of the Mittler Rebbe, translated as The Gate of Unity, Ch. 35.

powers of the soul exist in and of themselves and are external to the soul, only that to fulfill the will of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, the soul manifests within them. Nevertheless, the powers themselves remain separate. In contrast, serving *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, with the desire of the heart (*Re'uta d'Leeba*), is in such a way that nothing is present except for the soul.

The same is understood about the matter of the written or engraved letters as they are Above in *HaShem*'s-יהו"ה's Godliness. That is, the written letters are only up to and including the world of Emanation (*Atzilut*). That is, even in the world of Emanation (*Atzilut*) there is an aspect of separate existence. For, even though about the world of Emanation (*Atzilut*) it states that, "He and His life force are one and He and His organs are one,"¹²⁵⁴ nevertheless, there still is an existence of "something," only that this "something" is unified with Him. In contrast, engraved letters transcend the world of Emanation (*Atzilut*), and generally refer to the *Sefirah* of the crown-*Keter*, in which there is no other existence but *HaShem*-יהו"ה alone, blessed is He.

This then, is the meaning of, "If you will walk in My decrees (*B'Chukotai*-בְּחֻקֹּתַי)." That is, for the aspect of the engraved letters to be drawn from above, our service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, must also be in a way of engraving (*Chakikah*-חֻקִּיקָה). For, it is through such service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, that we affect a drawing down of the aspect of engraved letters (*Otiyot HaChakikah*) from *HaShem*-יהו"ה,

¹²⁵⁴ Introduction to Tikkunei Zohar 3b

blessed is He. This is because whatever is drawn down from *HaShem*-יהו"ה is according to how we serve Him below. In other words, since *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, desires to bestow the aspect of engraved letters (*Otiyot HaChakikah*) upon us, He therefore requests of us to serve Him in like manner to the engraved letters, and it then becomes possible for the drawing down of His Godliness to be according to this manner of service.

3.

However, we still must understand why the matter of letters (*Otiyot*) is necessary in the first place? For, is it not so that the entire matter of letters (*Otiyot*), including engraved letters (*Otiyot HaChakikah*), is not the ultimate state of elevation, in that there are levels that entirely transcend the matter of letters altogether? That is, even engraved letters still have some element of tangible existence,¹²⁵⁵ and this goes without saying in regard to letters that are not engraved through and through, from one side of the stone to the other side of the stone. They certainly have some element of tangible existence. For, as we clearly observe, the place where they are engraved in a precious stone is not as luminous as the part of the stone that is not engraved. Moreover, the engraved letters can be filled with ink, in which case, they come to exist as written

¹²⁵⁵ See Maamarei Admor HaZaken 5565 Vol. 2, p. 690; *Hemshech* 5666 p. 483; *Hemshech* 5672 Vol. 2 p. 500; Sefer HaMaamarim 5710 p. 63; Likkutei Sichot Vol. 8 p. 127 and on.

letters too. In other words, in addition to the fact that engraved letters have an element of tangible existence, they also are the source of the written letters. Moreover, even letters that are engraved through and through, from one side of the stone to the other, have an element of tangible existence in addition to the stone itself.

This is likewise understood regarding how it is above in *HaShem*'s יהו"ה Godliness. That is, even the aspect of engraved letters (that are engraved through and through, from one side to the other) and do not come from something foreign or separate, meaning, from something outside of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, but are from Him and of Him, have some element of tangible existence, and therefore are not the Essential Self of His simple Being, blessed is He. What is understood from this is that the drawing down of the aspect of the engraved letters (*Otiyot HaChakikah*) from *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, is not the ultimate level of elevation. Rather, the ultimate and most superior level is the drawing forth of the Essential Self of His Simple Being, blessed is He, which even transcends engraved letters (*Otiyot HaChakikah*).

Now, since whatever is drawn down is in accordance to the manner of our service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, (as discussed above), it would seem necessary that the service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, of our soul, should likewise be in a manner that transcends the engraved letters (*Otiyot HaChakikah*). In other words, it should be in a way that is other than the desire of the heart (*Re'uta d'Leeba*), because even the desire of the heart (*Re'uta d'Leeba*) has some tangible existence

(and is not the essence of the soul itself), which becomes pronounced in our study of Torah and the fulfillment of the *mitzvot*. Rather, the requisite service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, should stem from the simple essence of the soul itself, which is the service of self-sacrifice (*Mesirat Nefesh*) to *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, and through such service, we draw down the simple Essential Self of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He. This being so, it is not understood why specifically the matter of “letters” (*Otiyot*) is necessary.

4.

This may be understood by prefacing with an explanation of the general matter of bestowal of influence. Namely, every bestowal of influence specifically comes about through letters (*Otiyot*). Now, there are two manners here.¹²⁵⁶ The first is bestowal that stems from self-nullification and a sense of lowliness, whereas the second is bestowal that stems from exaltedness and a sense of elevation. To further explain, it states in Zohar that,¹²⁵⁷ “There is one kind of kindness (*Chessed*) and there is another kind of kindness (*Chessed*).” There is “small kindness (*Chessed Zuta*),” which is the kindness of Avraham and is the kindness of *Zeir Anpin* (“the small face”) and there is “great kindness” (*Rav Chessed*), which is the kindness of *Arich Anpin* (“the big face”).

¹²⁵⁶ See *Hemshech* 5672 Vol. 1, p. 484 and on; Also see the discourse entitled “*Katonti*” 5723, Ch. 3 and on.

¹²⁵⁷ Zohar III (*Idra Zuta*) 133b; Likkutei Torah, Shlach 49b, Korach 55d, Re’eh 34b; Shir HaShirim 28c, 30d; Eikev 17c.

Now, the kindness of *Zeir Anpin* (“the small face”) is the matter of bestowal of influence that stems from self-nullification and a sense of lowliness. This being so, it therefore called the “small kindness” (*Chessed Zuta*). Actually, the Arizal was the one who first called this aspect specifically by the name “kindness” (*Chessed*). For, as known, the earlier Kabbalists called the quality of kindness (*Chessed*) “greatness” (*Gedulah*),¹²⁵⁸ in accordance to the verse,¹²⁵⁹ “Yours, *HaShem*-יהו”ה, is the greatness (*Gedulah*) and the might (*Gevurah*) etc.” Another verse similarly states,¹²⁶⁰ “For *HaShem*-יהו”ה your God, is... the great (*HaGadol*), the mighty (*HaGibor*) and the awesome (*v’HaNora*) God etc.” Nevertheless,¹²⁶¹ since it is not a matter of bestowal that stems from greatness, magnanimity and exaltedness, but rather stems from self-nullification and a sense of lowliness, the Arizal called it kindness (*Chessed*). For as explained before, this is why it is called “the small kindness” (*Chessed Zuta*).

To clarify, it cannot be said that it is called “small” (*Zuta*) because it is limited. This is because, as the ten *Sefirot*

¹²⁵⁸ Likkutei Torah Eikev ibid. 17d and on; Ohr HaTorah, Vayera 90d and on; VaEtchanan p. 420; Vol. 6, p. 2,226; Eikev p. 629; Sefer HaMaamarim 5627 p. 298 and on; 5630 p. 199 and on; *Hemshech* “*Mayim Rabim*” 5636 Ch. 46 and on; Sefer HaMaamarim 5679 p. 117 and on.

¹²⁵⁹ Chronicles I 29:11

¹²⁶⁰ Deuteronomy 10:17

¹²⁶¹ There are those who recall that the Rebbe added to this stating that the reason the verse calls it “greatness” or “magnanimous” (*Gedulah*), is because this actually refers to a form of kindness (*Chessed*) that transcends the world of Emanation (*Atzilut*). (See Likkutei Torah Eikev ibid. 17d and on; Ohr HaTorah, Vayera 90d and on; VaEtchanan p. 420; Vol. 6, p. 2,226; Eikev p. 629; Sefer HaMaamarim 5627 p. 298 and on; 5630 p. 199 and on; *Hemshech* “*Mayim Rabim*” 5636 Ch. 46 and on; Sefer HaMaamarim 5679 p. 117 and on.)

are in the world of Emanation (*Atzilut*), they are limitless. This being so, the quality of kindness (*Chessed*) of the world of Emanation (*Atzilut*) is limitless. This is as stated in Shaar HaYichud veHaEmunah,¹²⁶² “The word ‘The Great’ (*HaGadol*) refers to the quality of *Chessed*-Kindness and the spreading forth of vitality within all created worlds without end and without conclusion.” This being so, it cannot be said that it is called “small” (*Zuta*) because of limitation.

Now, even though the limitlessness of the world of Emanation (*Atzilut*) is solely in comparison to the worlds of Creation, Formation and Action (*Briyah, Yetzirah, Asiyah*), whereas, in comparison to the crown-*Keter*, it is limited, and this being so, it could seem appropriate to say that it is called “the small kindness” (*Chessed Zuta*) because relative to the kindness of the “big face” (*Arich Anpin*) it is a limited kindness (*Chessed Zuta*), nonetheless, this cannot actually be said of it. This is because, at the very least, it is the matter of limitlessness (*Blee Gvul*), which is why through it there is a drawing down of the limitlessness of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, the Unlimited One, blessed is He, who transcends the world of Emanation (*Atzilut*).

This is like the explanation¹²⁶³ of the matter of “You shall serve *HaShem*-יהו"ה your God...with all your being (*Bechol Me'odecha*-בכל מאדך).” That is, although it is only “all **your** being” (*Me'od Shelcha*-מאד שלך), whereas relative to someone else it might be considered as being limited, nevertheless, since the matter of this kind of service of *HaShem*-

¹²⁶² Tanya, Shaar HaYichud veHaEmunah, Ch. 4

¹²⁶³ See Torah Ohr Mikeitz 39d and elsewhere.

יהו"ה is that it is without limit, it therefore affects the drawing down of the Supernal Being (*Me'od HaElyon*), *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, who is truly limitless (*Blee Gvul*).

The same is therefore understood about *Zeir Anpin* ("the small face") of the world of Emanation (*Atzilut*). That is, since it is the matter of without limit, therefore through it, there is a drawing down of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, the Unlimited One, blessed is He, who transcends the world of Emanation (*Atzilut*). This is why *Zeir Anpin* ("the small face") of the world of Emanation (*Atzilut*) is called the end of the world of the Unlimited One (*Ein Sof*), *HaShem*-יהו"ה blessed is He.¹²⁶⁴ In other words, the matter of *Zeir Anpin* of the world of Emanation (*Atzilut*) is that, through it, there is a drawing down of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, the Unlimited One (*Ein Sof*), blessed is He, who transcends the world of Emanation (*Atzilut*), into the worlds of Creation, Formation and Action (*Briyah, Yetzirah, Asiyah*). For since, at the very least, it is the matter of limitlessness, therefore through it, there is a drawing down of the limitlessness of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, the Unlimited One, blessed is He, who transcends the world of Emanation (*Atzilut*). This being so, it cannot be said that it is called "the small kindness" (*Chessed Zuta*) because of limitation, since the aspect of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, the Unlimited One (*Ein Sof*), blessed is He, who transcends the world of Emanation (*Atzilut*) is found within it.

We therefore must say that it is called "the small kindness" (*Chessed Zuta*) because the bestowal of influence

¹²⁶⁴ See Torah Ohr, Terumah 81a; Also see Shaar HaYichud of the Mittler Rebbe, translated as The Gate of Unity, Ch. 33.

that stems from kindness (*Chessed*) of the world of Emanation (*Atzilut*), stems from self-nullification and a sense of lowliness (as discussed before).

This kind of bestowal is known as “the kindness (*Chessed*) of Avraham,” who said about himself,¹²⁶⁵ “I am but dust and ashes.” In other words, in his own eyes he considered himself as being nothing more than residue and needed nothing whatsoever for himself. Because of this, he gave whatever he had to his fellow man. This is similar to what we generally observe among most good people, that they are in a state of self-nullification and a sense of lowliness in their soul, and as a result, it becomes their natural inclination to be kind and to increase in goodness and kindness to their fellow man, as our sages, of blessed memory, taught,¹²⁶⁶ “Whosoever possesses these three qualities is a disciple of our forefather Avraham; A good eye, a humble spirit, and a lowly soul.”

Thus, we may also understand the quality of kindness (*Chessed*) as it is in the world of Emanation (*Atzilut*). That is, because of the great nullification (*Bittul*) of the *Sefirot* of the world of Emanation (*Atzilut*) to *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, as it states,¹²⁶⁷ “They prostrate before His throne,” this brings about the matter of kindness (*Chessed*) and the bestowal of goodness and kindness to the world. (However, in regard to

¹²⁶⁵ Genesis 18:27

¹²⁶⁶ Mishnah Avot 5:19

¹²⁶⁷ See Sefer Yetzirah 1:6; Also see at length in Ginat Egoz of Rabbi Yosef Gikatilla, translated as HaShem Is One, Vol. 3 (The Letters of Creation, Part 2), Section entitle, “The Gate of the foundation of the components in the order of *Yod-Hey-Vav-Hey*-ה"א-ה"ב-ה"ג-ה"ד-ה"ה-ה"ו-ה"ז-ה"ח-ה"ט-ה"י.”

how it is above in *HaShem*'s יהו"ה Godliness, it is not applicable to say that since He needs nothing for Himself, He is therefore caused to bestow. Rather, what is meant here is that because of the complete nullification (*Bittul*) of the world of Emanation (*Atzilut*), all beings become significant and are considered before it as befitting of bestowal.)

Now, this does not contradict the quality of might (*Gevurah*) of the world of Emanation (*Atzilut*), since it too is in a state of complete nullification (*Bittul*) to *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, as indicated by the teaching about the *Sefirot* of the world of Emanation (*Atzilut*), "They prostrate before His throne." Nevertheless, the quality of judgment and might (*Gevurah*) is the matter of constriction and is the opposite of bestowal, even though it also stems from nullification (*Bittul*) to *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He. In other words, because of the great nullification (*Bittul*) of the quality of judgment and might (*Gevurah*) of the world of Emanation (*Atzilut*) to *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, it therefore is felt within it that the nullification (*Bittul*) to *HaShem*-יהו"ה of the worlds of Creation, Formation, and Action (*Briyah, Yetzirah, Asiyah*) is not as it should be, and it therefore restrains and constricts bestowal to the worlds of Creation, Formation and Action (*Briyah, Yetzirah, Asiyah*).

Nevertheless, the aspect of lowliness, self-nullification, and setting of oneself aside, is greater in the aspect of kindness (*Chessed*). This is because, due to his own self-nullification and sense of lowliness, he only sees good in everyone, and therefore considers everyone, other than himself, as being worthy of bestowal.

Now, the aspect of “great kindness” (*Rav Chessed*) is the bestowal that stems from exaltedness and elevation. That is, because he is greatly elevated and exalted, and it is very good for him, he therefore wants everyone to have this goodness. However, this is not the same as the explanation elsewhere¹²⁶⁸ about mercy (*Rachamim*) that stems from exaltedness and elevation, because the discussion there is that it is the nature of the exalted to specifically be drawn to those who are lowly, rather than to those who are on the level of a minister, as the verse states,¹²⁶⁹ “I abide in exaltedness and holiness, but I am with the despondent and the lowly of spirit.” The general explanation there is that because of the exaltedness of his soul, he feels for his fellow man and has compassion on him.

However, our explanation here is not a matter of mercy and compassion that relates to his fellow, but rather, that since he is in a state of great exaltedness and elevation, and it is very good for him, he therefore wants this goodness for everyone. In this, there are no limitations whatsoever, meaning that he bestows equally to everyone.

This is like the explanation about the aspect and quality of *HaShem*’s-יהו"ה “long patience” (*Erech Apayim*). That is, the bestowal stemming from this aspect was even bestowed upon the twenty-six generations who angered and provoked *HaShem*-יהו"ה.¹²⁷⁰ In other words, it even applies to those who sense themselves as existing independently of *HaShem*-יהו"ה

¹²⁶⁸ See *Hemshech* 5672 Vol. 1 p. 475

¹²⁶⁹ Isaiah 57:15

¹²⁷⁰ See Mishnah Avot 5:1-2; Talmud Bavli, Pesachim 118a and elsewhere.

(and consider themselves to be “something”) and who certainly are not in a state being despondent and lowliness of spirit. Nevertheless, because to this quality of “great kindness” (*Rav Chessed*), they too are granted the bestowal of beneficence.

The reason is because this bestowal of kindness (*Chessed*) has nothing to do with the “other,” but is solely due to the goodness of his own soul. Therefore, there are no limitations in this whatsoever, but rather, the bestowal is to everyone.

We therefore find that the difference between the “small kindness” (*Chessed Zuta*) and the “great kindness” (*Rav Chessed*) is that in the “small kindness” (*Chessed Zuta*), the bestowal of beneficence is because the “other” has significance and is of consequence to him (due to his own sense of lowliness and self-nullification). This being so, it comes in a way of inner manifestation (*Hitlabshoot*), in that it affects change in the bestower himself. Moreover, since the recipient has significance and is of consequence to him, the bestowal changes according to the state of the recipient (*Mekabel*). In contrast, the aspect of “great kindness” (*Rav Chessed*) altogether has no relation to the recipient (*Mekabel*), but is simply the expression and spreading forth of the goodness of the bestower, in and of himself, almost as if the bestowal is the automatic result of his own goodness.

5.

Now, in a loftier manner, the depth of these two aspects may be understood by the difference between light (*Ohr*) and influence (*Shefa*). That is, light (*Ohr*) is just a radiance and glimmer of the Luminary that has no effect on the essential self of the Luminary at all. That is, it causes no change in the Luminary itself, and moreover, since light is like its Luminary, the light (*Ohr*) itself is also unchanging. In other words, not only is the light (*Ohr*) **of** the essence, but it also is **similar** to it.

An example is the light and rays of the sun, which “rests upon the whole world.”¹²⁷¹ However, the light (*Ohr*) of the sun causes no change in the sun itself. In other words, the illumination of its light (*Ohr*) upon the world causes no diminishment in the sun whatsoever, and similarly, if the light of the sun would not shine upon the world, nothing would be added to the sun. The same is true in the inverse, when examining it from its effects and benefits. That is, when the light of the sun illuminates upon the world, this does not add anything to the sun, and if it would not shine upon the world, there would be no deficiency or lacking in the sun. This is what is meant when we say that the light (*Ohr*) causes no change in the luminary (*Ma'or*). Moreover, even in the light (*Ohr*) itself there are no changes. That is, because the light is similar its Luminary, it illuminates in an impure place just as it illuminates in a pure place.

¹²⁷¹ Talmud Bavli, Sanhedrin 39a

However, in the analogy of the light of the sun, the light (*Ohr*) comes from the sun automatically, without the sun willing it. Nonetheless, through this example we can understand the matter of light (*Ohr*) and vitality (*Chayut*) as it is in the soul, and then extrapolate – with infinite degrees of separation and difference – and understand how it is Above in *HaShem*'s יהו"ה Godliness, in which it is solely by force of His will (*Ratzon*). In other words, the light (*Ohr*) causes no change in *HaShem* יהו"ה, blessed is He, and moreover, since the light is similar to its Luminary, (*Ohr*) it too is unchanging, just as He is unchanging.

Now, all the above is about the light (*Ohr*). However, the matter of influence (*Shefa*) is not so, since it indeed causes change in the bestower (*Mashpia*). Moreover, the influence (*Shefa*) itself also undergoes change. An example is a teacher who bestows intellect to his student. Here the influence causes changes in the teacher himself. That is, there is change in him before the bestowal, during the bestowal, and after the bestowal. That is, even before he bestows influence, he must measure the intellectual capacity of the student, thus affecting change in the bestower himself. Similarly, since the intellectual matter being bestowed is not the same in the intellect of the student, as it is in the intellect of the teacher, the bestowal itself also undergoes change. This itself is the primary difference between light (*Ohr*) and influence (*Shefa*). Namely, there is no change in the light (*Ohr*), which is not so of influence (*Shefa*), which indeed undergoes change.

The same is true of the powers of the soul. There is a difference between the power of desire (*Ratzon*) and all the other powers of the soul, such as the power of intellect (*Sechel*). The power of intellect (*Ko'ach HaSechel*) is an independent power unto itself and is external to the soul, only that the soul manifests within it. Because of this, the intellect (*Sechel*) itself also undergoes changes, since it comes by way of manifestation (*Hitlabshoot*). However, this is not so of the desire (*Ratzon*). This is because the entire existence of desire is that the soul itself desires it. It therefore has no independent existence, in and of itself, separate from the soul. Therefore, when the soul withdraws its desire, nothing at all remains of the desire. Desire is therefore in a manner that there are no changes in it. In other words, since it does not come forth in way of inner manifestation (*Hitlabshut*), therefore, whether he desires something great or something small, the strength of the desire is equal.

The same is so of the difference between light (*Ohr*) and influence (*Shefa*). That is, influence (*Shefa*) comes in a way of inner manifestation (*Hitlabshoot*), whereas light (*Ohr*), which is similar to its luminary (*Ma'or*), does not come in a way of inner manifestation (*Hitlabshoot*), but comes out in an automatic manner.

Now, even in the light (*Ohr*) itself, there also is a difference between a transcendent encompassing light (*Ohr Makif*) and an inner pervading light (*Ohr Pnimee*), similar to the difference between light (*Ohr*) and influence (*Shefa*). The

explanation,¹²⁷² is that the transcendent encompassing light (*Ohr Makif*) generally refers to the light (*Ohr*) of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, that precedes the restraint of *Tzimtzum*. In contrast, the inner pervading light (*Ohr Pnimee*) generally refers to the light (*Ohr*) of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, as it is drawn down after the restraint of the *Tzimtzum*.

The difference between the inner pervading light (*Ohr Pnimee*) and the transcendent encompassing light (*Ohr Makif*) of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, as they are at the root of their drawing forth, is that the transcendent encompassing light (*Ohr Makif*) of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, is not a matter of affecting something else at all. It rather is the revelation of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, the Singular Preexistent Intrinsic and Essential Being, as He is. That is, it is the revelation His Essential Self, blessed is He. In other words, not only is the transcendent encompassing light (*Ohr Makif*) of His Essential Self, blessed is He, but it also is similar to His Essential Self, blessed is He. For, its entire being is the revelation of the Essential Self of *HaShem*-יהו"ה Himself, blessed is He. Therefore, the manner it is drawn forth, even after the restraint of *Tzimtzum*, is that it remains in a state of encompassing transcendence (*Makif*).

However, this is not so of the inner pervading light (*Ohr Pnimee*). For, in general, its root is in the light of the line (*Kav*), and its matter is to affect creation. In other words, it matter is to bring novel creation into existence, and to bring about all the differentiations within the chaining down of the worlds

¹²⁷² See *Hemshech* 5672 *ibid.* p. 490 and on.

(*Hishtalshelut*). Thus, since its matter is to have an effect on creation, therefore, when it is drawn down in the chaining down of the worlds (*Hishtalshelut*) it comes in a way of inner manifestation (*Hitlabshoot*).

In other words, when it comes to the transcendent encompassing light (*Ohr Makif*) of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, since its matter is the revelation of the Essential Self of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, therefore, even as it is drawn down in the chaining down of the worlds (*Hishtalshelut*), it is in a transcendent encompassing manner (*Makif*). In contrast, when it comes to the inner pervading light (*Ohr Pnimee*) of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, since its matter is to have an effect upon the worlds, it therefore comes in a manner of inner manifestation (*Hitlabshoot*).

Now, the general drawing down of the inner pervading light (*Ohr Pnimee*) of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, is brought about through the concealment of the restraint-*Tzimtzum* and the letters of the impression (*Reshimu*). Thus, the drawing down of the inner pervading light (*Ohr Pnimee*) is through them. In other words, even though the letters of the impression (*Reshimu*) themselves were completely unaffected by the restraint of the *Tzimtzum*, nevertheless, since their substance is that of letters (*Otiyot*), therefore, through them there is a drawing down of the inner pervading light (*Ohr Pnimee*).

This is also the difference between lights (*Orot*) and vessels (*Keilim*). That is, the lights (*Orot*) are the matter of simplicity, whereas the vessels (*Keilim*) are the matter of limitation. Now, there are various levels in the vessels (*Keilim*)

themselves. That is, the vessels (*Keilim*) of the worlds of Creation, Formation, and Action (*Briyah, Yetzirah, Asiyah*), are separate, whereas the vessels (*Keilim*) of the world of Emanation (*Atzilut*), are unified. However, they all correspond to the aspect of written letters. Higher than this are the vessels (*Keilim*) that transcend the world of Emanation (*Atzilut*), which are in the aspect of engraved letters (*Otiyot HaChakikah*), as in the teaching,¹²⁷³ “He engraved an engraving in the Upper Purity (*Tihiru Ila’ah*).” Nevertheless, the general matter of the vessels (*Keilim*) is that of measure and limitation, whereas the general matter of the lights (*Orot*) is that of simplicity and the revelation of the essence.

However, in general, the difference between lights (*Orot*) and vessels (*Keilim*) is like the difference between the transcendent encompassing light (*Ohr Makif*) of *HaShem*-יהו"ה and the inner pervading light (*Ohr Pnimee*) of *HaShem*-יהו"ה. For, as explained before, the drawing down of the inner pervading light (*Ohr Pnimee*) is through the letters (*Otiyot*) of the impression (*Reshimu*), which is the matter of the vessels (*Keilim*).

6.

Notwithstanding all the above, there nevertheless is a superiority to the inner pervading light (*Ohr Pnimee*) of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, over the transcendent

¹²⁷³ Zohar I 15a; Also see Shaar HaYichud of the Mittler Rebbe, translated as The Gate of Unity, Ch. 10 and on.

encompassing light (*Ohr Makif*). This is due to the fact that *HaShem*’s יהו"ה ultimate Supernal intent is specifically for the inner pervading light (*Ohr Pnimee*), since His ultimate intent in creation is specifically to reveal His light (*Ohr*) to another, which is specifically brought about by means of the inner pervading light (*Ohr Pnimee*) of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, whereas the transcendent encompassing light (*Ohr Makif*) only illuminates in a transcendent encompassing manner (*Makif*), and is not His ultimate Supernal intent. Rather, His ultimate Supernal intent is specifically for the inner pervading light (*Ohr*) of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, which comes in a manner of inner manifestation (*Hitlabshoot*), and it is through this light and illumination that *HaShem*’s יהו"ה Supernal intent is fulfilled.

Now, this is also why the light (*Ohr*) comes in a way of manifestation (*Hitlabshoot*) within the vessels (*Keilim*). For, as known, the manifestation of the lights (*Orot*) within the vessels (*Keilim*), is solely and specifically by the power of His will (*Ratzon*), blessed is He. However, at first glance this is not understood. For, since the lights (*Orot*) are in a state of simplicity, when they manifest within the vessels (*Keilim*) they become measured and limited. This being so, by what virtue do the lights (*Orot*) desire to manifest within the vessels (*Keilim*)? However, the explanation is that the light (*Ohr*) senses the superiority of the vessel (*Klee*), that specifically through the vessel, it will become revealed to “another” through which *HaShem*’s יהו"ה Supernal desire will be fulfilled. The light therefore desires to manifest in the vessels (*Keilim*) in order to

be revealed below, since this is the matter of the vessels (*Keilim*), that through them, the light (*Ohr*) is revealed below.

With the above in mind, we can now understand that the general matter of bestowal is drawn down specifically through the vessels (*Keilim*), which are the matter of the letters (*Otiyot*). For, it is *HaShem* 's-יהו"ה ultimate Supernal intent that the light (*Ohr*) be drawn down in a manner of inner manifestation (*Hitlabshoot*).

However, in the letters (*Otiyot*) themselves, there are various levels, as discussed before that the vessels (*Keilim*) of the worlds of Creation, Formation, and Action (*Briyah, Yetzirah, Asiyah*) are separate vessels (*Keilim Nifradim*), whereas the vessels (*Keilim*) of the world of Emanation (*Atzilut*) are unified vessels (*Keilim Meyuchadim*). Nevertheless, even they are in a state of tangible existence and are comparable to the matter of letters written in ink. In contrast, the vessels (*Keilim*) that transcend the world of Emanation (*Atzilut*), are the aspect of engraved letters (*Otiyot HaChakikah*).

Thus, in the vessels (*Keilim*) themselves, it is necessary to attain the highest level, which is the aspect of the engraved letters (*Otiyot HaChakikah*). Even so, it necessarily must specifically be the aspect of vessels (*Keilim*) – (meaning, letters-*Otiyot*).

What this means in a person's service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה in his soul, is that the toil of his Godly soul to affect his animalistic soul, should not be in matters that transcend the grasp and comprehension of the animalistic soul. For, in that case, the effect on his animalistic soul will only be in a

transcendent encompassing manner (*Makif*), which is not *HaShem*'s-יהו"ה ultimate Supernal intent. Rather, *HaShem*'s-יהו"ה Supernal intent is for a person to engage in the contemplation (*Hitbonenut*) of matters that relate to the animalistic soul, meaning that the Godly should toil to manifest within the animalistic soul and become unified with it, in a manner of engraved letters (*Otiyot HaChakikah*). Through doing so, the Godly soul will also receive from the animalistic soul, similar to how it will be in the coming future, when the soul will be sustained by the body (and animalistic soul).¹²⁷⁴

7.

This then, is the meaning of the verse,¹²⁷⁵ “If you will walk in My decrees (*BeChukotai*-בְּחֻקֹּתַי) and guard My commandments and do them.” That is, the general approach to serving *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, must be in a manner that the Godly soul specifically manifests in the animalistic soul, as indicated by the engraved letters (*Otiyot HaChakikah*-אותיות ההחִקִּיקָה), (as indicated by the word, “My decrees-*BeChukotai*-בְּחֻקֹּתַי”). This brings about an ascent for the Godly soul as well, to come to the state of a “walker-*Mehalech*-מְהַלֵּךְ,”¹²⁷⁶ as indicated by the words, “If you will walk (*Teileichu*-תֵּלְכוּ-¹²⁷⁷) in

¹²⁷⁴ See the discourse entitled “*Eileh Toldot Noach*” 5636 (Sefer HaMaamarim 5637 Vol. 1, p. 63 and on); Sefer HaMaamarim 5678 p. 417.

¹²⁷⁵ Leviticus 26:3-4

¹²⁷⁶ Zachariah 3:7

¹²⁷⁷ That is, the word “*Teileichu*-תֵּלְכוּ” literally means to “go,” “walk,” or “travel.”

My decrees (*BeChukotai*-בהקתי).” In other words, through the aspect of the engraved letters (*Otiyot HaChakikah*) a person comes to be in the state of a “walker” (*Mehalech*-מהלך).¹²⁷⁸

However, because of this manifestation (*Hitlabshoot*) of the Godly soul within the animalistic soul, additional guarding (*Shmirah*-שמירה) is necessary. The verse therefore continues, “and guard (*Tishmoru*-תשמרו) My commandments,” indicating that the fulfillment of the *mitzvot* must be guarded.

The verse then continues, “and do them (*Va’Asitem Otam*-ועשיתם אותם).” That is, the *mitzvot* should not be done in a way of “the commands of men done by rote,”¹²⁷⁹ but should specifically be done with desire and yearning. This is what is meant by fulfilling the *mitzvot* in deed, with the right hand. For example, we find that when it comes to violating certain prohibitions of labor on Shabbat, a person is only liable if he specifically does it with his right hand.¹²⁸⁰

Through the above there then is the fulfillment of, “I will provide your rains (*Gishmeichem*-גשמיכם) in their time.” Rain (*Geshem*-גשם) refers to the light of Torah, which is “the light of the seven days of creation,”¹²⁸¹ and is “7 times 7 times 7, which equals 343-גשם,”¹²⁸² which is the numerical value of rain-*Geshem*-גשם-343.

¹²⁷⁸ In other words, traveling in ascent rather than in a state of stagnation or descent.

¹²⁷⁹ Isaiah 29:13; See Tanya Ch. 39 (53b), and elsewhere.

¹²⁸⁰ See Mishneh Torah, Hilchot Shabbat 11:14.

¹²⁸¹ Isaiah 30:26 – “The light of the moon will be like the light of the sun, and the light of the sun will be seven times as strong, like the light of the seven days.” Thus, $7 \times 7 \times 7 = 343$ -rains-*Geshem*-גשם. (See the citation in the next note.)

¹²⁸² See Talmud Bavli, Pesachim 68a, Rashi entitled “*Yihyeh Shivatayim*.”

The verse then continues, “and the land will give its produce and the tree of the field will give its fruit.” In this, there is a distinction between the “produce of the land” and “the fruit of the tree.” The “produce of the land” refers to the angels, whereas the “fruit of the tree” refers to the souls. Thus, when the verse states, “and the land will give its produce,” it refers to an ascent that is affected in the angels, so that they too will be in a state of being “walkers” (*Mehalchim*-מהלכים). Then, since the souls of the Jewish people will affect the angels to be in a state of “walkers” (*Mehalchim*-מהלכים), there also will be an added elevation to the souls of the Jewish people as well, which is that “the tree of the field will give its fruit.” That is, there will be novel souls, which is the meaning of the teaching,¹²⁸³ “The righteous-*Tzaddikim* shall sit with their crowns upon their heads.”¹²⁸⁴

All this will be brought about through service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, in a manner of “If you will walk in My decrees (*BeChukotai*-בהקתי),” which is the aspect of the engraved letters (*Otiyot HaChakikah*-אותיות ההקיקה), “and guard (*Tishmoru*-תשמרו) My commandments,” indicating that the fulfillment of the *mitzvot* are guarded, “and do them (*Va'Asitem Otam*-ועשיתם אתם),” in that they are done with desire and yearning. Then, through this, “I will provide your rains (*Gishmeichem*-גשמיכם) in their time,” which spiritually refers to the light of Torah. Moreover, ““I will provide your

¹²⁸³ Talmud Bavli, Brachot 17a

¹²⁸⁴ See Ramaz to Zohar I 134b, cited in the discourse entitled “*Bechukotai*” *ibid.*

rains (*Gishmeichem*-גשמיכם) in their time,” also means physicality (*Gashmiyut*-גשמייות) in the most literal sense, and then “the land will give its produce and the tree of the field will give its fruit,” until, in the coming future, there will be novel righteous souls who, “shall sit with their crowns upon their heads.”