

Discourse 10

“b’Chaf Hey b’Kislev - On the twenty-fifth of Kislev”

Delivered on Shabbat, Parshat Vayeishev,
Shabbat Chanukah, Shabbat Mevarchim Tevet, 5716
By the grace of *HaShem*, blessed is He,

1.

It states in Talmud,⁵⁹⁵ “From the twenty-fifth of Kislev there are eight days of Chanukah. One may not eulogize on them and one may not fast on them. When the Greeks entered the Sanctuary [of the Temple], they defiled all the oils in the Sanctuary. When the Hasmonean monarchy overcame them and emerged victorious, they searched and found a single cruse of oil that (still) had the seal of the High Priest upon it, containing oil that was sufficient for one day only. A miracle occurred and they lit from it for eight days. The next year they instituted those days and made them holidays, with the recitation of praise and prayers of thanksgiving.”

That is, the holiday of Chanukah was established because of the miracle that happened with the oil for the candelabrum of the Holy Temple, and therefore they established the lighting of the Chanukah candles.

⁵⁹⁵ Talmud Bavli, Shabbat 21b

However, there is a difference between the lights of the Holy temple and the lights of Chanukah. The lights of the candelabrum in the Holy Temple were seven in number, whereas the Chanukah lights are eight in number. Furthermore, they also differ in the times that they are to be lit. The lights of the candelabrum in the Holy Temple were specifically lit while it was still daylight,⁵⁹⁶ at the time that the incense (*Ketoret*) was offered. This is as stated,⁵⁹⁷ “Every morning, when he cleans the lamps, he shall bring it with incense. And when Aharon kindles the lamps in the afternoon, he shall bring it with incense.” In contrast, the time for kindling the Chanukah lights is specifically after dark.⁵⁹⁸

2.

Now, the Torah is eternal,⁵⁹⁹ meaning that the details regarding the lights of the candelabrum in the Holy Temple, as well as the Chanukah lights, can always be found in spiritual form in man’s service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, as well as in man’s soul.

To understand this as it relates to serving *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, it is briefly explained in Torah Ohr⁶⁰⁰ that the

⁵⁹⁶ See the discourse entitled “*Tanu Rabbanan* – The Sages taught: The Mitzvah of kindling the Chanukah lights” of the year 5714, translated in The Teachings of The Rebbe 5714, Discourse 7; Also see the discourse by the same title of the year 5738 (Torat Menachem, Sefer HaMaamarim Kislev p. 162).

⁵⁹⁷ Exodus 30:7-8; Also see Talmud Bavli, Yoma 15a

⁵⁹⁸ Talmud Bavli, Shabbat 21b *ibid*.

⁵⁹⁹ See Tanya Ch. 17 and elsewhere.

⁶⁰⁰ See Torah Ohr, discourse entitled “*b'Chaf Hei b'Kislev*” 29a and on.

seven lights of the candelabrum of the Holy Temple correspond to the seven emotive qualities (*Midot*) in a person's soul. Furthermore, just as there are seven holy emotive qualities (*Midot*), so likewise, there are seven emotive qualities (*Midot*) in the side opposite holiness, which chain down and derive vitality from the holy emotive qualities (*Midot*).

Now, in order to refine the emotive qualities (*Midot*) of the side opposite holiness, there must be a general drawing forth of intellect (*Mochin*). More specifically, there must be a drawing forth of the light of wisdom-*Chochmah*. The reason is because through drawing forth the light and illumination of wisdom-*Chochmah*, there remains no room for the existence of the opposite of holiness. On the contrary, through doing so, the emotive qualities (*Midot*) that oppose holiness are transformed into holiness.

This itself is the substance of Aharon's service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה in kindling the lights in the Holy Temple. That is, he drew forth the light of wisdom-*Chochmah* (which is the matter of the oil-*Shemen*) into the emotions (*Midot*). Through this, he caused there to be no room for the existence of a side opposing holiness and also brought about a transformation of the emotions (*Midot*) of the opposite of holiness, thus transforming them into holiness.

Now, Aharon performed his service in the Holy Temple, but nonetheless, through his service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, he caused the light of wisdom-*Chochmah* to spread throughout the world in general, in the seven emotive qualities (*Midot*) by which the world is ordered and conducted.

Similarly, through his service, he affected a drawing forth of the light of wisdom-*Chochmah* in the souls of the Jewish people. This is because the souls of Israel are called,⁶⁰¹ “the seventy souls that emerged from the loins of Yaakov,” corresponding to the seven lights of the candelabrum and the seven emotive qualities (*Midot*), since each one includes all ten *Sefirot* for a total of seventy. He thus affected a drawing forth of wisdom-*Chochmah* in them. This itself is indicated by the name *Yaakov*-עקב, which divides into “*Yod* in the heel-*Yod Eikev* עקב-י,”⁶⁰² indicating the drawing forth of wisdom-*Chochmah* (*Yod*-) even in the aspect of the “heel-*Eikev* עקב-י.

Nevertheless, the refinement affected through drawing forth the intellect (*Mochin*), was only affected in the emotions (*Midot*). That is, the emotions (*Midot*) alone are refined through the intellect (*Mochin*). The reason is because the intellect (*Mochin*) and the emotions (*Midot*) are in juxtaposition and relationship to each other, in that they receive directly from one another. This is like the juxtaposition of relationship between the vegetative (*Tzome'ach*) and animals (*Chay*), for which reason they emerged together at once.⁶⁰³

However, in regard the aspect of the letters (*Otiyot*) of the garments of thought, speech, and action (*Machshavah*, *Dibur*, *Ma'aseh*) – which are in the category of inanimate (*Domem*) – it is not possible for them to be refined through the light of the intellect (*Mochin*), being that they have no relation

⁶⁰¹ Exodus 1:5

⁶⁰² Pardes Rimmonim, Shaar 23 (Shaar Erchei HaKinuyim) section on Yaakov; Etz Chayim, Shaar 3 (Shaar Seder HaAtzilut) Ch. 2.

⁶⁰³ See Torah Ohr, Bereishit 4b.

to intellect (*Mochin*). Furthermore, from the angle of their root, they actually are much higher than intellect, since they are drawn from the pre-intellect (*Kadmoot HaSechel*).⁶⁰⁴ Because of this, the elevation of these garments, was accomplished through the service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, of the incense (*Ketoret*). This is because the eleven spices of the incense (*Ketoret*) were composed of substances that have no flavor, are inedible, and are in the category of the inanimate (*Domem*). Thus, through them, refinement and ascent was affected in the aspect of the letters (*Otiyot*).

3.

Now, this may better be understood by what was explained previously,⁶⁰⁵ that the general intent in the service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, is to affect a drawing forth of intellect (*Mochin*) into the emotions (*Midot*).⁶⁰⁶ This is because⁶⁰⁷ in the emotional qualities (*Midot*), there are emotions of the side of holiness and emotions of the opposite of

⁶⁰⁴ See Tanya, Iggeret HaKodesh, Epistle 5; Also see Shaar HaYichud of the Mittler Rebbe, translated as The Gate of Unity, Ch. 38 and on.

⁶⁰⁵ In the discourse entitled "*Padah b'Shalom Nafshi* – He redeemed my soul in peace" of this year 5716, Discourse 7.

⁶⁰⁶ See Sefer HaMaamarim 5678 p. 92; 5707 p. 201.

⁶⁰⁷ See the discourse entitled "*Shemen u'Ketoret*" 5677 (Sefer HaMaamarim 5677 p. 112 and on); Also see the notes to the discourse entitled "*b'Chaf Hei b'Kislev*" in Torah Ohr ibid. (Ohr HaTorah, Chanukah p. 278b and on); Sefer HaMaamarim 5635 Vol. 1 p. 19 and on.

holiness.⁶⁰⁸ This is as stated in Sefer Yetzirah,⁶⁰⁹ that the emotions (*Midot*) are called, “the seven doubles (*Sheva Kefulot*),” corresponding to the seven doubled letters בג"ד כפר"ת which are pronounced either hard or soft.⁶¹⁰

It is from this very matter that soft constitutions and hard constitutions stem, for the constitutions of soft or hard are the constitutions of the world of Repair-*Tikkun* and the world of Chaos-*Tohu*, respectively. This is like the teaching,⁶¹¹ “A person should always be as soft as a reed,” (referring to the emotive qualities of the world of Repair-*Tikkun*). The teaching then continues, “he should not be hard like a cedar,” (referring to the emotive qualities of the world of Chaos-*Tohu*, which are strong and forceful emotive qualities).⁶¹²

This then, is why the emotions (*Midot*) are doubled. That is, they exist in holiness, but because of the shattering of the vessels of the world of Chaos-*Tohu*, they also are found in the side opposite holiness.

Now, this does not contradict the explanation elsewhere, that the matter of the doubled letters (*Kefulot*) corresponds to the two lines of kindness-*Chessed* and judgment-*Gevurah*, both of which are within holiness. This is because, in their root, they are the matter of the world of Chaos-*Tohu* and the world of

⁶⁰⁸ See Sefer HaMaamarim 5668 p. 74 and on.

⁶⁰⁹ Sefer Yetzirah 4:1 and on; Also see Ginat Egoz of Rabbi Yosef Gikatilla, translated as HaShem Is One, Vol. 2 (The Letters of Creation, Part 1), section on the seven letters בג"ד כפר"ת.

⁶¹⁰ See at length in Ginat Egoz of Rabbi Yosef Gikatilla, translated as HaShem Is One, Vol. 2 (The Letters of Creation, Part 1) *ibid*.

⁶¹¹ Talmud Bavli, Taanit 20a and on.

⁶¹² See Likkutei Torah, Emor 37d and on; Torat Chayim, Bereishit 13b and on, and elsewhere.

Repair-*Tikkun*. For, as a result of the hard constitution of the judgments (*Gevurot*), this caused a shattering of the vessels (*Shevirat HaKeilim*), the effect of which is that the emotive qualities (*Midot*) of the opposite of holiness came into being.

Now, this very matter itself only applies specifically to the emotions (*Midot*). This is because, the foundation of the emotions is specifically one's sense of self. For example, in the matter of love, a person loves what he feels is good for him. Similarly, the matter of fear is that he fears what will cause him damage. Moreover, not only is one's sense of self the foundation of his emotions, but even once his emotions come out, they are felt in him. Thus, since their foundation and substance is one's sense of self, therefore even when they are in a state of holiness, they can possibly chain down until emotions (*Midot*) that are the opposite of holiness come about.

In contrast, the intellectual faculties (*Mochin*) are in a state of nullification and sublimation (*Bittul*). This is because the intellectual faculties (*Mochin*) involve inner grasp and comprehension. (That is, the matter becomes settled in his mind in an inner manner, without protruding outward.) Moreover, comprehension itself is the grasp of something higher than himself, which brings about a state of nullification (*Bittul*) to *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He. Thus, regarding the light and illumination of the intellect (*Mochin*) in general, and more particularly, when the light of wisdom (*Chochmah*) illuminates, the derivation of any vitality to the extraneous forces that stand in opposition to holiness, becomes completely

inapplicable. This is as stated,⁶¹³ “They die, but not in wisdom.” This is because,⁶¹⁴ “a person who falls from his level is called dead.” However, in the aspect of wisdom-*Chochmah*, the matter of a “fall” or “death,” is entirely inapplicable.⁶¹⁵ On the contrary, the drawing forth of the light and illumination of wisdom-*Chochmah* causes the refinement (*Birur*) of the emotive qualities (*Midot*).

Now, more particularly, there are two matters here, as stated,⁶¹⁶ “According to a man’s wisdom will he be praised.” The word for “be praised” is written “*Yehulal*-יהלל” which can also be read, “will praise-*Yehalel*-יהלל,”⁶¹⁷ meaning that this term indicates his conduct (*Hanhagah*). That is, it indicates that the conduct of his emotions (*Midot*) will accord to his intellect (*Sechel*). This refers to the externality of his emotional qualities (*Chitzoniyyut HaMidot*), in that they are aroused and undergo change due to the influence of the externality of the intellect (*Chitzoniyyut HaSechel*). However, the word is read, “be praised-*Yehulal*-יהולל” (with a *Vav*-ו), which refers to the inner aspect of the emotional qualities (*Pnimiyyut HaMidot*), in that they too are caused to be sublimated and nullified (*Bittul*) to *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, through the inner aspect of the intellect (*Pnimiyyut HaMochin*) being drawn into them.

⁶¹³ Job 4:21; Also see Shaar HaYichud of the Mittler Rebbe, translated as The Gate of Unity, Ch. 35.

⁶¹⁴ See Zohar III 135b, cited in Etz Chayim, Shaar 9 (Shaar Shvirat HaKeilim) Ch. 2.

⁶¹⁵ See Shaar HaYichud of the Mittler Rebbe, translated as The Gate of Unity, Ch. 35 *ibid*.

⁶¹⁶ Proverbs 12:8

⁶¹⁷ see Tanya Iggeret HaKodesh, Epistle 24.

In summation, in the emotional qualities (*Midot*), as they are, in and of themselves, it generally is possible for the extraneous forces of the opposite of holiness to derive vitality from them, as stated,⁶¹⁸ “A fool does not desire understanding, but only to expose the emotions of his heart.”⁶¹⁹ However, through drawing an illumination of the light of wisdom-*Chochmah*, the emotions (*Midot*) become refined (*Birur*).

4.

Now, this explains the matter of washing and uplifting the hands (*Netilat Yadayim*) before a meal,⁶²⁰ whereupon water is poured upon the hands. For, the hands (*Yadayim*) represent the emotions (*Midot*) and there are nails (*Tzipornayim*) that grow at the extremity of the hands. Now, there are two levels in the nails (*Tzipornayim*) themselves. There is the part of the nail that is attached to the flesh, which is protected and thus is still considered to be within holiness (*Kedushah*) and there is the part of the nail that protrudes from the flesh. It is from this aspect of the nails that the extraneous forces of the opposite of holiness derive sustenance (*Yenikah*). About this Zohar states,⁶²¹ “The external forces are connected to the nails,” and

⁶¹⁸ Proverbs 18:2

⁶¹⁹ See Likkutei Torah Bamidbar 90a; Also see Kuntres HaHitpaalut of the Mittler Rebbe, translated as Divine Inspiration, Section 8.

⁶²⁰ This was mentioned in the earlier discourse of this year, 5716, entitled “*Padah b'Shalom Nafshi* – He redeemed my soul in peace,” discourse 7 (Ch. 5).

⁶²¹ Zohar II 208b; Etz Chayim, Shaar 49 (Shaar Kelipat Nogah), Ch. 4; Shaar 31 (Shaar Partzufei Zu”N), Ch. 2

this is why Mikdash Melech⁶²² states that it is forbidden to grow long nails, since the extraneous forces of the opposite of holiness derive vitality from them. In other words, in regard to the emotions (*Midot*), at their end, the extraneous forces of the opposite of holiness can derive vitality (*Yenikah*).

The solution is to wash the hands with water, thus uplifting them (*Netilat Yadayim*). This is because water is colorless and indicates simplicity without form, and if it appears to have color, it is only because of the vessel that contains it. For example, if water is in a white vessel, it will appear to be white, (if it is in a black vessel it will appear to be black) and same applies to all the colors. However, in and of itself, water is simple (*Peshitut*) and formless (and can therefore be contained in vessels of various forms and colors and take on their color and form).

Spiritually speaking, since wisdom-*Chochmah* is in a state of simplicity (*Peshitut*), this refers to the aspect of the light of wisdom-*Chochmah*. This is why wisdom-*Chochmah* can be tilted, either toward judgment and guilt or toward kindness and merit, as we find about the flood (*Mabul*) in the days of Noach, that the very same reason initially given as justification for bringing the flood (as it states,⁶²³ “All the impulses of the thoughts of [man’s] heart are only evil all day long,”) was later given for never again destroying mankind with a flood, as it states,⁶²⁴ “I will not continue to curse the ground because of

⁶²² See Mikdash Melech to Zohar II 208b *ibid*.

⁶²³ Genesis 6:5

⁶²⁴ Genesis 8:21

man; because the impulse of man's heart is evil from his youth."⁶²⁵ This is because wisdom-*Chochmah* is in a state of simplicity (*Peshitut*) and therefore, its reasoning can manifest in opposite ways.

Now, as it is even higher, in regard to the various names in Torah that refer to *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, water (which is formless and colorless, indicating absolute simplicity) refers to His Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He.⁶²⁶ This is because all His other names are merely His titles, and are only adjectives that describe His actions in relation to the world. This being the case, they each have a certain form. However, His Essential Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה is utterly simple (*Peshitut*) and beyond description.⁶²⁷ Thus, His Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה existed even before the restraint of the *Tzimtzum*,⁶²⁸ as in the teaching,⁶²⁹ "Before the creation of the world there was Him and His Name alone." All the Kabbalists agree with one consensus, that this refers to His Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He and blessed is His Name,⁶³⁰ and that this is the proper and essential name of the Singular Preexistent Intrinsic Essential Being, *HaShem*-

⁶²⁵ See Shaar HaYichud of the Mittler Rebbe, translated as The Gate of Unity, Ch. 20.

⁶²⁶ See Ginat Egoz of Rabbi Yosef Gikatilla, translated as HaShem Is One, Vol. 1, The Gate of Intrinsic Being (*Shaar HaHavayah*) and on.

⁶²⁷ See the discourse entitled "*Shiviti* – I have set *HaShem*-יהו"ה before me always," of the year 5720.

⁶²⁸ See Ginat Egoz of Rabbi Yosef Gikatilla, translated as HaShem Is One, Vol. 1, The Gate of Intrinsic Being (*Shaar HaHavayah*) *ibid.*; Also see Shnei Luchot HaBrit 5a; Ohr HaTorah Yitro p. 836-839; Sefer HaMaamarim 5656 p. 381 and on; *Hemshech* 5666 p. 431; Sefer HaMaamarim 5677 p. 72 and on; Sefer HaMaamarim 5696 p. 73 and on, and elsewhere.

⁶²⁹ Pirke d'Rabbi Eliezer, Ch. 3

⁶³⁰ As is written (Exodus 15:3), "*HaShem*-יהו"ה is His Name," and similarly, (Isaiah 42:8), "I am *HaShem*-יהו"ה, that is My Name."

יהוה Himself, blessed is He, unrelated to His actions. It thus utterly transcends any other names by which He is called, which are merely titles and adjectives that describe His actions relative to the worlds, and thus are limited.⁶³¹

To further clarify, even in regard to the seven unerasable names,⁶³² all of which are holy (*Kedushah*), it is a well-known teaching in the name of the Baal Shem Tov⁶³³ that all these names are an aspect of vessels (*Keilim*). Thus, since they are vessels (*Keilim*) (which by definition is in a state of limitation), it is applicable for the opposite of holiness to derive some sustenance (*Yenikah*) from them.⁶³⁴ In other words, even though they themselves are holy (*Kedushah*), as it states about the world of Emanation (*Atzilut*),⁶³⁵ “Evil shall not dwell with You,” nevertheless, all this is specifically in the world of Emanation (*Atzilut*). However, as they are drawn down, it is applicable for the external forces of the opposite of holiness to derive vitality (*Yenikah*) from them.

⁶³¹ See at length in *Ginat Egoz* of Rabbi Yosef Gikatilla, translated as *HaShem Is One*, Vol. 1, *The Gate of Intrinsic Being (Shaar HaHavayah)*, and *The Gate of His Title (Shaar HaKinuy)*.

⁶³² See *Mishneh Torah Hilchot Yesodei HaTorah*, Ch. 6; *Shulchan Aruch*, *Yoreh De'ah* 276:9, and elsewhere.

⁶³³ See *Likkutei Torah Behar* 43b; *Ohr HaTorah*, *Shemot* p. 106; *Yitro* p. 849 and on; *Keter Shem Tov*, *Hosafot*, Section 34. (In other words, as manifest in defining letters-*Otiyot* which are called vessels-*Keilim*.)

⁶³⁴ For example, *HaShem's* יהוה primary title “God-*Elohi*” מֵאלֹהִים is in the plural form and is a shared term, in that even in Torah itself, this title is used in reference to angels, judges and magistrates, and even to false gods. In contrast, *HaShem's* יהוה proper and essential name refers only to the Singular Preexistent Intrinsic Essential Being, *HaShem*-יהוה Himself, blessed is He. (See at length in *Ginat Egoz*, translated as *HaShem Is One*, *ibid.*)

⁶³⁵ *Psalms* 5:5; See *Likkutei Torah*, *Bamidbar* 3c; Also see *Shaar HaYichud* of the *Mittler Rebbe*, translated as *The Gate of Unity*, Ch. 54 and the citations there.

Similarly, even according to the explanation elsewhere,⁶³⁶ that these seven names are rooted in the letters of the Impression-*Reshimu*, nevertheless, as known,⁶³⁷ the letters of the Impression-*Reshimu* that precede the restraint of *Tzimtzum* do not exist as actual letters (*Otiyot*) at all. Rather, actual letters only exist specifically after the restraint of the *Tzimtzum*.

However, the Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה exists even before the restraint of the *Tzimtzum*. In fact, the very opposite is true. That is, the essential matter of the Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, is specifically **before** the restraint of *Tzimtzum* and transcends it.⁶³⁸

This itself explains the verse,⁶³⁹ “I *HaShem*-יהו"ה have not changed.” At first glance, this verse is not understood, being that all the worlds in the entire chaining down of the worlds (*Seder HaHishtalshelut*) were brought into existence out of nothing. This is especially so, considering the matter of the restraint of the *Tzimtzum*, which at first glance, seems to be a very great change. How then, does He state, “I *HaShem*-יהו"ה have not changed”?

The explanation is that the essential matter of the Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, is in fact before to the restraint of *Tzimtzum* and utterly transcends it, whereas everything drawn forth after the restraint of *Tzimtzum* is but a mere glimmer of

⁶³⁶ See Ohr HaTorah, Shemot ibid.

⁶³⁷ See *Hemshech* 5672 Vol. 1, p. 20, 29, 115 and elsewhere.

⁶³⁸ See Ginat Egoz of Rabbi Yosef Gikatilla, translated as *HaShem Is One*, Vol. 1, The Gate of Intrinsic Being ibid.

⁶³⁹ Malachi 3:6

HaShem's יהו"ה Godliness, and is therefore called the **lower** Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה. Therefore, even the chaining down of the worlds (*Hishtalshelut*) in its entirety and even the restraint of the *Tzimtzum*, cause utterly no change in His Essential Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed He. For, all of that is solely from the perspective of the restraint of *Tzimtzum*. In contrast, the essential aspect of the Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, precedes the *Tzimtzum*, and is the essential simplicity (*Peshitut*) of the Singular Preexistent Intrinsic Essential Being, *HaShem*-יהו"ה Himself, blessed is He.

Therefore, there can be the matter of the interweaving (*Shiluv*) of His Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה with His titles. For example, there is the interweaving (*Shiluv*) of His Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה with His title “God-*Elohi*” מ-אלהים, (יאהלוהים) or the interweaving (*Shiluv*) of His Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה with His title “Lord-*Adona*” י-אדני, (יאהדוני).⁶⁴⁰ The same applies to all His other titles. That is, since He is utterly simple, so is His Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה utterly simple (*Peshitut*).⁶⁴¹ He therefore can manifest in all of them. This is like what was explained about the light of wisdom-*Chochmah*. Namely, that since wisdom-*Chochmah* is in a state of simplicity (*Peshitut*) it therefore can manifest in various matters. The same is true of the Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, and thus, this is the

⁶⁴⁰ See the prior discourse of this year, 5716, entitled “*Bereishit Bara* – In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth,” Discourse 5.

⁶⁴¹ See Shaar HaYichud of the Mittler Rebbe, translated as *The Gate of Unity*, Ch. 10-11.

meaning of the verse,⁶⁴² “יהו"ה-*HaShem* is in wisdom-*b'Chochmah*.”

This then, explains the matter of washing the hands and thereby uplifting them (*Netilat Yadayim*), in that we pour water on our hands. In other words, the matter of water is like that of light in a state of simplicity (*Peshitut*), this being the light of the Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He. Lower than this, it corresponds to the light of wisdom-*Chochmah*, which is the light and illumination that must be drawn into the emotions (*Midot*). Then, because of the sublimation and nullification (*Bittul*) to *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, stemming from the light of wisdom-*Chochmah*, this causes the nullification and sublimation (*Bittul*) of the emotions (*Midot*) to *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, as well.

Now, the reason that the washing and thus uplifting of the hands (*Netilat Yadayim*) must specifically be done before a meal, is because all of person's bodily needs are generally included in the matter of eating, which can take place in two possible ways. (The same applies to the utilization of all physicality as necessary needs of man) The first way is that he eats for the sake of Heaven, as in the teaching,⁶⁴³ “Wine and good scents make me wise,” and similarly,⁶⁴⁴ “Until I ate ox meat my mind was not sharp.” Through consuming food for the sake of Heaven, a person elevates the food to *HaShem's*-

⁶⁴² Proverbs 3:19 – The literal translation of the verse is “יהו"ה-*HaShem* founded the earth with wisdom” but it can also be read as, “*HaShem* is in wisdom-*HaShem b'Chochmah*.”

⁶⁴³ Talmud Bavli, Yoma 76b

⁶⁴⁴ Talmud Bavli, Bava Kamma 72a; Eruvin 64a

יהו"ה Godliness.⁶⁴⁵ This is especially so when he uses the energy of the food directly in service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, in which case, he most certainly elevates it. However, if he does not use the physical for the sake of Heaven, not only does he not elevate the food, but the opposite happens. That is, the food brings him down.

Thus, a very great battle rages within a person, regarding how and why he eats his food. That is, does he eat for the sake of Heaven or not? About this the Zohar states,⁶⁴⁶ “One who wishes to eat bread must do so by the blade of a sword.” This is also why the word “bread-*Lechem*-לֶחֶם” is of the same root as the word “war-*Milchamah*-מִלְחָמָה,” as in the verse,⁶⁴⁷ “Then war-*Lachem*-לָחֶם came to its gates.”

This then, is why the hands are washed and thus uplifted (*Netilat Yadayim*) before a meal. That is, for one’s meal to be as it should be, there first must be a refinement (*Birur*) of the emotions (*Midot*). (This is because the emotions (*Midot*) can either be on the side of holiness or the opposite of holiness). Thus, through drawing the light and illumination of wisdom-*Chochmah* into the emotions (*Midot*), the emotions (*Midot*) become refined, and it automatically follows that his meal will be as it should be.

⁶⁴⁵ See the prior discourse of this year, 5716, entitled “*V’Yaakov Nasa Sukkot* – Yaakov journeyed to Sukkot,” Discourse 8.

⁶⁴⁶ Zohar III 188b; Sefer HaMaamarim 5659 p. 160 and on; 5704 p. 103.

⁶⁴⁷ Judges 5:8

Now, all the above is about the matter of the emotions (*Midot*), for which the drawing forth of intellect (*Mochin*) is beneficial, as explained before. However, in regard to the letters (*Otiyot*) of the garments of thought, speech, and action (*Machshavah, Dibur, Maaseh*), the drawing forth of the light and illumination of the intellect does not help. For, even when the aspect of wisdom-*Chochmah* is drawn forth, so that the emotions (*Midot*) become refined (*Birur*), it can nevertheless be that the letters (*Otiyot*) remain in place. That is, he still will continue to have disturbing thoughts that are foreign (*Machshavot Zarot*) to Godliness and holiness. This includes extraneous idle speech and chatter, which will follow automatically. For example, as known, there are many people who complain about this in regard to their service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He. That is, even after having repaired their emotions (*Midot*), nevertheless, they still have disturbing thoughts (*Machshavot Zarot*) that are foreign to Godliness and holiness.

This is because his previous thoughts remain imprinted in him, as our sages, of blessed memory, stated,⁶⁴⁸ "It shrouds him and goes before him to the day of judgment." This is especially so if his thoughts were of forbidden matters. Thus, even though he already has repaired his emotional characteristics and qualities (*Midot*), nevertheless, the actual

⁶⁴⁸ Talmud Bavli, Sotah 3b

body of the letters remain imprinted in him, and this is why such thoughts fall into his mind. In such a case, the drawing forth of the light and illumination of the intellect (*Mochin*) is of no assistance to him.

Rather, to remove these letters (*Otiyot*), requires service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, that is higher than intellect (*Mochin*). About this the verse states,⁶⁴⁹ “O’ wall of the daughter of Zion, shed tears like a river, day and night.”⁶⁵⁰ The “wall” refers to the matter of the letters (*Otiyot*), as in the teaching,⁶⁵¹ “Two stones build two houses etc.”⁶⁵² Thus, tears are required in order to remove the “wall” of the opposite of holiness. These tears specifically stem from the constriction and overpowering of the intellect (*Mochin*). In other words, the removal of these letters (*Otiyot*) is accomplished through a much higher light and illumination (*Ohr*) that the intellect (*Mochin*) is incapable of withstanding. This is the service of the desire of the heart (*Re’uta d’Leeba*) which transcends reason and intellect.

⁶⁴⁹ Lamentations 2:18

⁶⁵⁰ See the prior discourse of this year, 5716, entitled “*Padah b’Shalom Nafshi* - He redeemed my soul in peace,” Discourse 7.

⁶⁵¹ Sefer Yetzirah 4:12 (or 4:16 in some versions) – The “stones” refers to the letters (*Otiyot*). Two letters can form two composites, three can form six etc.

⁶⁵² In Sefer Yetzirah 1:11 (1:12 in the long version) it also states about the letters, “He stood them up like a kind of wall-הציבן כמין חומה-.” However, another version states, “He hewed them like a kind of wall-הצבן כמין חומה-.”

With the above in mind, we can understand the service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, that was performed by Aharon, the High Priest. That is, his service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, was in two matters; the kindling of the lights (*Neirot*) and the burning of the incense (*Ketoret*). The matter of the lights (*Neirot*) was to affect the refinement of the emotions (*Midot*) through drawing forth the oil, which refers to the light and illumination of wisdom (*Chochmah*), into the seven lights of the candelabrum, which are the aspect of the emotions (*Midot*). Through doing so, he affected a refinement of the emotions (*Midot*) and transformed them into holiness, as explained above.

However, the matter of burning the incense (*Ketoret*) was to remove the evil letters (*Otiyot*). This was accomplished through the eleven spices of the incense (*Ketoret*), which consisted of substances that have no flavor and are in the category of the inanimate (*Domem*), as explained before. This is also why there were specifically eleven spices in the incense (*Ketoret*). This is because the number of holiness is ten,⁶⁵³ as in the teaching,⁶⁵⁴ "Ten and not nine, ten and not eleven." This is because, on the side of holiness, the Godly vitality is unified with the *Sefirot* and not counted separately, whereas on the side opposite holiness, the vitality is not unified with their *Sefirot*

⁶⁵³ See also Leviticus 27:32

⁶⁵⁴ Sefer Yetzirah 1:4

and remains encompassing and transcendent. It therefore is counted separately and totals eleven.⁶⁵⁵

Thus, to affect the side that is the opposite of holiness, which has no relation to holiness, it does not help to draw the light and illumination of the intellect (*Mochin*) within them. Therefore, there must be the service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, of burning the eleven spices of the incense (*Ketoret*), through which the vitality is consumed and removed from them, meaning, their essential vitality. About this our sages, of blessed memory, stated,⁶⁵⁶ "When Moshe ascended to the heights, each of the angels gifted him with something, as written,⁶⁵⁷ 'You ascended on high, you have taken captives, you took gifts of man and even of rebels etc.' That is, even the angel of death gave him something, as written,⁶⁵⁸ 'He gave the incense (*Ketoret*) and provided atonement for the people etc.'"

The explanation⁶⁵⁹ is that⁶⁶⁰ because of creation, the external husks of the *Kelipot* were also brought into novel existence and given life and vitality. This is so that there should be the matter of free choice (*Bechirah*), as written,⁶⁶¹ "And you shall choose life," and so that there should not be the matter of

⁶⁵⁵ See Etz Chayim, Shaar 11 (Shaar HaMelachim) Ch. 10; Pri Etz Chayim, Shaar HaKadeishim, Ch. 4; Torah Ohr, Toldot 20b and on, and with the glosses in Ohr HaTorah there 152a and on.

⁶⁵⁶ Talmud Bavli, Shabbat 89a

⁶⁵⁷ Psalms 68:19

⁶⁵⁸ Numbers 17:12

⁶⁵⁹ See Ohr HaTorah, Naso p. 1,472 and on (in the edition printed in 5755, see p. 123 and on); Sefer HaMaamarim 5677 p. 86 and on.

⁶⁶⁰ See Ramaz to Zohar II 40b

⁶⁶¹ Deuteronomy 30:20

the “bread of shame.”⁶⁶² Thus, since they receive vitality as a result of the creation itself, their vitality cannot be taken from them, except if they themselves give it as a gift. This then, explains the above-mentioned matter, that the angel of death himself gave the incense (*Ketoret*) as a gift, in order to stop the plague.

From all the above, it is understood that through burning the incense (*Ketoret*), the essential life force and vitality is removed from the opposite side of evil, and that this is the matter of removing the body of the letters (*Otiyot*), through the service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, indicated in the verse,⁶⁶³ “Shed tears like a river.” This refers to serving *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, with the desire of the heart (*Re'uta d'Leeba*), in a manner that transcends reason and intellect, as explained above.

Thus, it was through Aharon's service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, in the two above-mentioned matters, namely, kindling the lights (*Neirot*) of the candelabrum in order to refine the emotions (*Midot*) and burning the incense (*Ketoret*) in order to remove the extraneous letters (*Otiyot*), that he thereby affected these two matters in the world at large.

Now, these two matters are also of assistance in one's personal service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, in that he too has these two forms of serving *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He. That is, these two aspects are indicated in the verse,⁶⁶⁴ “You

⁶⁶² Maggid Meisharim, Ohr L'Yom Shabbat 14 Tevet; Also see Talmud Yerushalmi Orla 1:3, cited in Likkutei Torah, Tzav 7d.

⁶⁶³ Lamentations 2:18

⁶⁶⁴ Deuteronomy 6:5

shall love *HaShem*-יהו"ה your God, with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your being.” The words, “with all your heart and with all your soul” refer to all the powers of the soul, and correspond to the service of kindling the lights (*Neirot*). The words “with all your being,” refer the limitless manner of serving *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, and is the matter of serving *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, through burning the incense (*Ketoret*).

More particularly, the service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, of the incense (*Ketoret*) can also be found in the service of prayer, as well as in the actual performance of *HaShem*'s-יהו"ה *mitzvot*-commandments. This is because each form of serving *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, includes all the various aspects of serving *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He.

To further explain, even though the service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, through prayer, primarily corresponds to the matter of kindling the lights (*Neirot*) of the candelabrum, which is the refinement (*Birur*) of the emotions (*Midot*), being that the prayers were established corresponding to the daily *Tamid* offerings,⁶⁶⁵ and as known, the sacrificial offerings are the service of refining the emotional characteristics (*Midot*), nevertheless, the matter of incense (*Ketoret*) can also be found in the prayers.⁶⁶⁶ This is as stated,⁶⁶⁷ “May my prayer stand as incense (*Ketoret*) before You.” This refers to the afternoon *Minchah* prayer, for which reason it is permissible [to offer the

⁶⁶⁵ Talmud Bavli, Brachot 26a-b

⁶⁶⁶ See Sefer HaMaamarim 5635 Vol. 1 p. 8 and on; 5677 p. 86 and on.

⁶⁶⁷ Psalms 141:2

incense] even after the *Minchah* prayer (until evening), as our sages, of blessed memory, taught,⁶⁶⁸ “One who acts according to this Sage acted legitimately, and one who acts according to that Sage acted legitimately.”

The explanation is that the afternoon *Minchah* prayer is done by force, meaning that a person must force himself to do it. On the other hand, the morning *Shacharit* prayer, does not require as much force, since it takes place before a person starts engaging in his business affairs and matters of livelihood. The same is true of the evening *Aravit* prayer, which takes place after a person has concluded his business affairs and is already within his four cubits. In contrast, the afternoon *Minchah* prayer takes place in the middle of the work day, while he still is engaged in the middle of his business affairs and work related responsibilities. Nevertheless, he forces himself to stop everything and pray to *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He.⁶⁶⁹ It is specifically through forcing himself to pray the afternoon *Minchah* prayer that he removes the essential vitality of the external husks of *Kelipah*, similar to the burning the incense (*Ketoret*).

The same is true in fulfilling *HaShem's*-יהו"ה *mitzvot*-commandments in general. That is, the fulfillment of every *mitzvah* involves a certain element of force in it. This is why all the *mitzvot* are generally called, “charity-*Tzedakah*,”⁶⁷⁰

⁶⁶⁸ Talmud Bavli, Brachot 27a – In regard to the time for the *Minchah* prayer.

⁶⁶⁹ Seder HaYom (Seder Tefilat *Minchah*) cited in Sefer HaMaamarim 5635 *ibid.* and 5677 *ibid.*

⁶⁷⁰ See Torah Ohr, Mikeitz 38c, 42c; Likkutei Torah, Shir HaShirim 44c, and elsewhere.

because the matter of giving charity (*Tzedakah*) involves force,⁶⁷¹ in that a person must force himself to give funds that could have been used to procure his own necessities. This is especially true if there was much labor and toil in earning these funds. Nevertheless, he gives of them to charity.⁶⁷² Thus, since all the *mitzvot* involve a level of force, they all have a similarity to the burning of the incense (*Ketoret*).

7.

With the above in mind, we can understand the matter of the Chanukah lights. Since the Greeks entered the Sanctuary and made all the oils impure, it currently is impossible to serve *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, with the service of the intellect (*Avodat HaMochin*). This is because all the oils have become impure, and as explained before, oil refers to the matter of wisdom-*Chochmah*. They therefore established the kindling of the Chanukah lights, which is similar to the burning of the incense (*Ketoret*), the substance of which is to remove the external husks of the *Kelipot*. This is why the *mitzvah* is specifically to kindle them after dark, since their purpose is specifically to illuminate the darkness (and therefore they specifically are positioned on the outside).

However, the matter of illuminating the darkness is accomplished through an even higher form of serving *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, as explained before about the matter of

⁶⁷¹ See Beit Yosef to Tur, Yore De'ah 248 (section entitled "*Kol Adam*").

⁶⁷² See Tanya, Ch. 37 (48b).

burning of the incense (*Ketoret*), that it is higher than kindling the lights of the candelabrum, which refers to the matter of drawing forth the illuminations of the intellect (*Mochin*).

This is why the Chanukah lights are eight in number. The lights in the Holy Temple were seven in number, corresponding to the refinement (*Birur*) of the seven emotive qualities (*Midot*), through drawing forth the illuminations of the intellect (*Mochin*), which is the matter of the Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, (as explained in chapter four). However, the Chanukah lights are higher than this, and about them the verse states,⁶⁷³ "For You are my lamp *HaShem*-יהו"ה and *HaShem*-ויהו"ה illuminates my darkness." That is, to illuminate the darkness, there must be a drawing down and illumination of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, as indicated by the prefix letter *Vav*-ו ("and *HaShem*-ויהו"ה"). This is the matter of the eight lights of *Chanukah*, which are eight times the Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה.⁶⁷⁴ For, the number eight indicates the aspect of the outer transcendent encompassing light of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, (as stated by Rashba),⁶⁷⁵ which is even loftier than the aspect indicated by the verse, "I *HaShem*-יהו"ה have not changed."

⁶⁷³ Samuel II 22:29; Psalms 18:29

⁶⁷⁴ See Ohr HaTorah Chanukah 326b

⁶⁷⁵ Sha'alot uTeshuvot HaRashba Vol. 1, Sec. 9 (Shomer HaHekef)