

Discourse 16

*“Chayav Inish l’Basumei b’Puriya -
A person is obligated to become intoxicated on Purim”*

Delivered on Purim, 5717¹²⁷³

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

1.

Our sages, of blessed memory, stated,¹²⁷⁴ “A person is obligated to become intoxicated on Purim, to the point that he does not know the difference between ‘Cursed is Haman’ and ‘Blessed is Mordechai.’” Now, at first glance, it seems as if the simple meaning here is that to celebrate on Purim a person must become so intoxicated on wine (as Rashi explains), that he does not know to distinguish between “Cursed is Haman” and “Blessed is Mordechai,” meaning that he could possibly come to interchange them.

However, this is not understood.¹²⁷⁵ For, how is it either fitting or appropriate that in place of “Cursed is Haman,” a

¹²⁷³ This is the first of two discourses that were delivered on Purim 5717. This discourse is based upon the discourse entitled “*u’BeHagiya Tor Esther*” of the Mittler Rebbe, from the year 5583 (see the second Purim discourse of this year, 5717, Ch. 7). The discourse is printed in Maamarei Admor HaEmtza’ee, Nevi’im u’Ketuvim (Kehot 5750) p. 348 and on; The aforementioned discourse is itself founded upon the discourse by the same title in Maamarei Admor HaZaken, Ketuvim Vol. 2 p. 191 and on, which is printed with additional glosses in Ohr HaTorah, Megilat Esther (Kehot 5750) p. 20 and on.

¹²⁷⁴ Talmud Bavli, Megillah 7b

¹²⁷⁵ See Maamarei Admor HaEmtza’ee, Na”Ch *ibid.*, p. 374 and on; Maamarei Admor HaZaken, Ketuvim *ibid.* p. 195; Ohr HaTorah, Megilat Esther *ibid.* p. 29.

person could possibly come to say “Blessed,” God forbid. Moreover, since the obligation to become intoxicated on Purim is in celebration of the joy of Purim, meaning the celebration of the general miracle of Purim, the very substance of which is that “Haman is cursed” and “Mordechai is blessed,” how is it at all applicable that a person should celebrate this by becoming so intoxicated that he is incapable of differentiating between “Cursed is Haman” and “Blessed is Mordechai,” so much so, that he could possibly exchange them, God forbid, this being the very opposite of the whole matter of the Purim miracle?

Such a case is similar to what we find in Talmud¹²⁷⁶ about the matter of checking for leavening (*Chametz*) [before Passover, after the prohibition against eating it has already come into effect], that we are not concerned that the one who is checking will come to eat of it, because since “he himself is looking for leavening (*Chametz*) in order to incinerate it, will he eat from it?” In other words, since his entire involvement in seeking it is for the purpose of incinerating it, it makes no sense to say that he will have any desire for it, or that he will want to derive any benefit from it.

The same may be understood in regard to the joy of Purim. It makes no sense that the intoxication on Purim should lead to the very opposite of what the celebration and joy of Purim is all about, so much so, that he does not know, to such an extent that he could possibly exchange “Cursed is Haman” with “Blessed is Mordechai,” God forbid. Moreover, if this indeed happens, and he exchanges the two, it is a sign that this is not at all the rejoicing of **Purim**, but is its opposite.

¹²⁷⁶ Talmud Bavli, Pesachim 11a

This being so, it must be said that the explanation of this teaching that, “A person is obligated to become intoxicated on Purim, to the point that he does not know between ‘Cursed is Haman’ and ‘Blessed is Mordechai,’” is (not that he should actually come to exchange them, God forbid, but rather) that the matter itself of “Cursed is Haman” and “Blessed is Mordechai,” should be for him in such a way, that “he does not know” (*Lo Yada*-לֹא יָדָע). In other words, the difference between them should not be the result of the reasoning and knowledge (*Da’at*) of ones intellect, but rather, the effect of Purim should be that even in such a state [of intoxication] in which there is no reason or knowledge, meaning that “he does not know” (*Lo Yada*-לֹא יָדָע), nevertheless, in and of himself and by his own volition he recognizes and says that “Cursed is Haman” and “Blessed is Mordechai.”¹²⁷⁷

2.

This may be better understood by explaining what is written in the beginning of the Megillah,¹²⁷⁸ “Now, when Esther’s turn came... to come to the king, she requested nothing except what Hegai, the king’s chamberlain, guardian of the women, advised,” and even so, “The king loved Esther more than all the women and she found more favor and kindness before him than all the other maidens.”

¹²⁷⁷ See Maamarei Admor HaEmtza’ee, Na”Ch ibid., p. 374 and on; Maamarei Admor HaZaken, Ketuvim ibid. p. 195; Ohr HaTorah, Megilat Esther ibid. p. 29.

¹²⁷⁸ Esther 2:15-17

Now, as well known¹²⁷⁹ the story of the Megillah also hints at the relationship between the Ingathering of the souls of Israel (*Knesset Yisroel-the Shechinah*) and the Holy One, blessed is He. That is, Esther corresponds to the Ingathering of the souls of Israel (*Knesset Yisroel-the Shechinah*)¹²⁸⁰ when they are in exile, during which time they are called Esther (אסתר), as in the verse,¹²⁸¹ “Conceal, I shall conceal (*Haster Asteer-הסתר אסתיר*) My face on that day.”¹²⁸² The king Achashverosh (אחשוורוש) refers to the King of the world,¹²⁸³ the Holy One, blessed is He, in that the name Achashverosh (אחשוורוש) hints that “the end-*Acharit-אחרית*” and the beginning-*v’Reishit-וראשית*” are His.¹²⁸⁴

With this in mind, we must understand the verse, “Now, when Esther’s (*Knesset Yisroel-the Shechinah*) turn came...to come the king (the Holy One, blessed is He), she requested nothing except what Hegai, the king’s chamberlain, guardian of the women, advised.” Moreover, even so, the opposite happened, in that it was specifically because of this that, “The king loved Esther more than all the women, and she found more favor and kindness before him than all the other maidens.”

¹²⁷⁹ See Sefer Mechir Yayin of the Rema (Rabbi Moshe Isserles) and Manot HaLevi of Rabbi Shlomo Alkabetz, to Megilat Esther.

¹²⁸⁰ See Maamarei Admor HaEmtza’ee ibid. p. 349.

¹²⁸¹ Deuteronomy 31:18

¹²⁸² See Torah Ohr, Megilat Esther 93d, 94d, and elsewhere; Ohr HaTorah ibid. p. 15; Discourse entitled “*VaYehiy Omein et Hadassah*” 5679 (Sefer HaMaamarim 5679 p. 308 and on); Discourse by the same title of the year 5713 (Sefer HaMaamarim 5713, p. 101 and on, translated in The Teachings of The Rebbe – 5713, Discourse 11), and elsewhere.

¹²⁸³ See Torah Ohr ibid. p. 120b; Ohr HaTorah ibid. p. 58.

¹²⁸⁴ Me’orei Ohr 1:182 (citing our sages, of blessed memory); cited in Ohr HaTorah ibid. p. 24.

The general explanation of this according to what was explained above, is that this verse, “When Esther’s turn came... to come to the King etc.,” refers to the general ascent of the soul from its state and standing during exile, wherein it is in the state indicated by the verse, “Conceal, I shall conceal (*Haster Asteer-* אסתר אסתיר) My face,” (which is why she is called Esther-אסתר). “Coming to the King” refers to this ascent of coming to the Holy One, blessed is He, to the point that “she finds favor and kindness before Him.” This matter is brought about specifically because, “she requested nothing.”

To further explain, as known, it is not possible for the soul to ascend through its own strength, but solely through the help and assistance of the angelic beings.¹²⁸⁵ About this the verse states,¹²⁸⁶ “The angel of *HaShem*-יהו"ה encamps around those who fear Him.” That is, as the soul is when it is in the lower world, it requires help and assistance and the granting of strength from above. This help makes an angelic being who assists the soul so that it can be victorious in battle. This is true of the inner battle of the soul, in that “a person’s inclination overcomes him every day and seeks to kill him, and if not for the Holy One, blessed is He, who assists him, he would be incapable of overcoming it.”¹²⁸⁷ This is likewise so of the external battles, in relation to the various obstacles and opposition that bring about concealment and hiddenness of *HaShem*’s-יהו"ה presence in the world. About this the verse states,¹²⁸⁸ “He commands His angels for you, to guard you in

¹²⁸⁵ See Torah Ohr *ibid.* 100b and on.

¹²⁸⁶ Psalms 34:8, and also see the citations in Ohr HaTorah *ibid.* p. 20.

¹²⁸⁷ Talmud Bavli, Sukkah 52b

¹²⁸⁸ Psalms 91:11

all your ways.” The same is likewise so when it comes to the ascent of the soul from one world to a higher world, in that it requires the help and assistance of the angels.

Now, these angels are called “the agents of the bride” (*Shoshvina d’Matronita*), since it is by their hand that an ascent of the souls, who stem from the feminine world (*Alma d’Nukva*), comes about, (that is, souls who stem from *HaShem*’s יהוה-ה Name of 52-בין-ה [ייריד ה”ה ויר ה”ה]), which includes most of the souls of these latter generations. Their ascent to the world of Emanation (*Atzilut*) – (in a manner that “she finds favor and kindness before Him”) – is solely through the medium and assistance of the angels who are called “the agents of the bride” (*Shoshvina d’Matronita*). That is, by their hand there is caused to be an ascent of the souls from one world to a higher world. The only exceptions to this are singularly special individuals, as it states in Talmud,¹²⁸⁹ “Except for the chariot of Rabbi Chiyah, which ascends of its own accord.” The same is true of the soul of our teacher Moshe, and this is generally so of souls of the world of Emanation (*Atzilut*). This is because they are souls from the masculine world (*Alma*

¹²⁸⁹ Talmud Bavli, Bava Metziya 85b - “Rabbi Chaviva bar Surmakei said, ‘I once saw one of the sages who was frequently visited by Eliyahu the Prophet. In the morning his eyes looked beautiful, but in the evening, they appeared as if they had been charred by fire. I asked him about this and he responded: ‘I asked Eliyahu to show me the sages when they ascend to the Heavenly Academy. Eliyahu told me, ‘You may gaze at all of them except for the chariot of Rabbi Chiya. Upon that you may not gaze.’ I then asked him, ‘What are the signs that identify the chariot of Rabbi Chiya?’ He said, ‘As all the other sages ascend and descend, they are accompanied by angels, except for the chariot of Rabbi Chiya, which ascends of its own accord.’ However, I could not restrain myself and I gazed upon it.’ Two flames of fire came and struck him and blinded his eyes. ‘The next day, I went and prostrated on Rabbi Chiya’s grave in his burial cave and said, ‘I study the teachings of the Master,’ and I was healed.”

d'Dechura) who stem from *HaShem*'s יהו"ה Name of 45-מ"ה [י"ד ה"א ו"א ה"א] and therefore do not require the assistance of angels.

Now, as long as the soul is not in a state of total nullification (*Bittul*) to *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, she requests and expresses the help that she needs. However, when the soul serves *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, in a state of total nullification (*Bittul*), then ("when Esther's turn came... to come to the King") "she requested nothing-*Davar*-דבר."¹²⁹⁰ That is, she does not ask for any help or assistance, meaning that she does not ask for any matter to come into revelation in the world of speech (*Dibur*-דיבור), which is why the verse specifies "nothing-*Davar*-דבר." Thus, because of this total self-nullification (*Bittul*) in that "she requested nothing (*Davar*-דבר)," there is a drawing forth of assistance from *HaShem*-יהו"ה above, blessed is He, much higher than the assistance drawn forth by the angels.

This is indicated by the continuation of the verse, "[she requested nothing] except that which Hegai (הגי), the king's chamberlain, guardian of the women, advised." For, as explained in Torah Ohr,¹²⁹¹ the name "Hegai-הגי" is of the same root as "contemplation-*Higayon*-הגיון," as it specifically refers to the letters (*Otiyot*) of thought (*Machshavah*). Moreover, in this itself, it does not refer to thought as it is in a state of concealment, but specifically to thought that is drawn into revelation. This is hinted at by the fact that the name "Hegai-

¹²⁹⁰ See Ohr HaTorah *ibid.* p. 166

¹²⁹¹ Torah Ohr 100c

הגי” is also of the root used in the verse,¹²⁹² “When he juttred (*Hogah*-הגה) from the path,” referring to thought as it comes out as prominent and pronounced letters.¹²⁹³ In the same vein, the name “Hegai-הגי” is of the root,¹²⁹⁴ “One who pronounces (*Hogeh*-הוגה) the Name *HaShem*-יהו” with its letters.” This refers to the aspect of kingship-*Malchut* as it is in the world of Emanation (*Atzilut*). (That is, it transcends the letters of speech (*Dibur*), which refer to kingship-*Malchut* as it is in the worlds of Creation, Formation and Action (*Briyah*, *Yetzirah*, *Asiyah*). It thus is this aspect that is drawn forth to be of help and assistance to souls that are in a state of total nullification (*Bittul*) to *HaShem*-יהו”-יה, blessed is He, (as indicated by the words, “she requested nothing-*Davar*-דבר”).

Because of this “she finds favor and kindness before Him.” This is like the verse,¹²⁹⁵ “Like a rose amongst the thorns, so is my beloved amongst the maidens.” That is, there is much greater superiority in the service of *HaShem*-יהו”-יה, blessed is He, of a soul that is in a state of total nullification (*Bittul*) to *HaShem*-יהו”-יה, compared to all other forms of service of Him which are not in a way of total nullification (*Bittul*) to Him. Thus, it is because of this total nullification (*Bittul*) to *HaShem*-יהו”-יה, blessed is He, indicated by the words, “she requested nothing-*Davar*-דבר,” that such a soul ascends before

¹²⁹² Samuel II 20:13

¹²⁹³ That is, it refers to when the thought extends out of the concealment of the analysis of the intellect to prominently protrude in revealed letters in the mind to subsequently be the source of speech. See Maamarei Admor HaZaken ibid. p. 195; Also see Shaar HaYichud of the Mittler Rebbe, translated as The Gate of Unity, Ch. 46.

¹²⁹⁴ Mishnah Sanhedrin 10:1; Talmud Bavli, Sanhedrin 90:1

¹²⁹⁵ Song of Songs 2:2; See Maamarei Admor HaEmtza’ee ibid. p. 361.

the King (and comes out of the state [of exile] indicated by the verse, “Conceal, I shall conceal (*Haster Asteer*-הסתר אסתיר) My face”) in a manner that “she finds favor and kindness before Him.”

3.

Now, just as Esther (about whom it states, “when Esther’s turn came etc.”) refers to the soul as she is during a time of exile, in the state indicated by the verse, “Conceal, I shall conceal (*Haster Asteer*-הסתר אסתיר) My face,” so likewise, this is so of king Achashverosh. That is, king Achashverosh (about whom it states, “to come to the king”) refers to the Holy One, blessed is He, and the name Achashverosh (אחשורוש), which hints that “the end-*Acharit*-אחרית” and the beginning-*v’Reishit*-וראשית are His, specifically refers to the level of *HaShem*’s יהו"ה Godliness that is revealed during the time of exile. The general summary of the matter is that Achashverosh-אחשורוש hints at a very lofty level of *HaShem*’s יהו"ה Godliness, from which help and assistance are drawn forth **even** during a time of exile.

The explanation is that the word “Achashverosh-אחשורוש” is a composite of two words, “*Achash*-אחש and *Rosh*-ורוש.” The root of the word “*Achash*-אחש” is “*Chash*-חש,” which means “silence.” This is as stated in Talmud in explanation of the word “*Chashmal*-חשמל,”¹²⁹⁶ that,¹²⁹⁷ “At

¹²⁹⁶ Of Ezekiel’s prophecy of the Supernal Chariot (*Ma’aseh Merkavah*) – Ezekiel 1:27

¹²⁹⁷ Talmud Bavli, Chagigah 13a and on. – “Rav Yehudah said: [the *Chashmal*-חשמל] refers to the speaking animals of fire-*Chayot Eish Memalelot*-חיות אש ממללות.”

times they are silent-*Chash*-חש, and at times they speak-*Mal*-מל. When the Supernal speech comes forth from the mouth of the Holy One, blessed is He, they are silent-*Chash*-חש. When the Supernal speech does not come forth from the mouth of the Holy One, blessed is He, they speak-*Mal*-מל.” From this it is understood that silence is a higher level than speech.

Now, this does not contradict the statement elsewhere,¹²⁹⁸ that about the time of exile the verse states,¹²⁹⁹ “I became mute with stillness, I was silent [even] from good, though my pain was intense.” For, this refers to silence that is lower than speech. For, about the silence (of the time of exile) itself, there are two manners.¹³⁰⁰ The first manner is that the silence is caused by matters that conceal and hide *HaShem*’s-יהו”ה Supernal speech. This is like the verse,¹³⁰¹ “My throat was raspy,” which refers to the time of exile, in which the drawing forth of *HaShem*’s-יהו”ה Godliness is not openly revealed. That is, the word of *HaShem* (*Dvar HaShem*-דבר יהו”ה) is not recognizable in the existence of novel created beings or in the world at large.

¹²⁹⁸ See Ohr HaTorah (Yahal Ohr) to Psalms 39:3 (p. 146 and on); Ohr HaTorah, Na”Ch Vol. 2 p. 1,048; Also see the previous discourse of this year, 5717, entitled “*Bati LeGani* – I have come to My garden,” Discourse 12, Ch. 6.

¹²⁹⁹ Psalms 39:3

¹³⁰⁰ See Ohr HaTorah, Megillat Esther p. 1-2 and with additions in the discourse entitled “*b’Vo’ah Lifnei HaMelech*” *ibid.* (Sefer HaMaamarim 5654 p. 213 and on); Also see the discourse entitled “*Al Kein Karu*” (Sefer HaMaamarim 5713, p. 111; Torat Menachem, Sefer HaMaamarim Adar *ibid.*, translated in The Teachings of The Rebbe – 5713, Discourse 12).

¹³⁰¹ Psalms 69:4; See Torah Ohr, Vayeitzei 21c, cited in Ohr HaTorah to Psalms 39:3 *ibid.*; Also see Shaar HaYichud of the Mittler Rebbe, translated as The Gate of Unity, Ch. 37.

The second manner is like what our sages, of blessed memory, taught,¹³⁰² “Silence is a protective fence around wisdom-*Chochmah*.” In other words, this refers to a level that transcends understanding and tangible comprehension, meaning that it transcends the aspect of wisdom-*Chochmah* as it is in a revealed state, but is rather a much higher manner of intellect that reaches the “power of conceptualization” (*Ko’ach HaMaskeel*) itself, which is not a revealed intellect.¹³⁰³ In general, this refers to the *Sefirah* of the crown-*Keter*, which is higher than wisdom-*Chochmah*, and is called “the protective fence around wisdom-*Syag l’Chochmah*-סיג לחכמה,” which is in a manner of silence (*Shteekah*).

Now, this second manner of silence (*Shteekah*) is also related to the time of exile, as Zohar states¹³⁰⁴ in explanation of the verse,¹³⁰⁵ “Thus said יהו"ה-*HaShem*: A voice is heard on high, wailing, bitter weeping, Rachel weeps for her children; she refuses to be consoled for her children, for He is gone (*Kee Einenu*-כי איננו).” The Zohar asks, “Why does the verse say ‘for He is gone-*Kee Einenu*-כי איננו’ [in the singular] when it should have stated ‘for they are gone-*Kee Einam*-כי אינם’ [in the plural]? Because it is referring to the Supernal King who has withdrawn (because the *Vav*-ו of the Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה has become distant and withdrawn from her) high above, high

¹³⁰² Mishnah Avot 3:13; Also see Torah Ohr, Lech Lecha 12b, 12d; Sefer HaMitzvot of the Tzemach Tzedek 7a;

¹³⁰³ See Shaar HaYichud of the Mittler Rebbe, translated as The Gate of Unity, Ch. 25-26 and the notes there.

¹³⁰⁴ Zohar I 210a; Zohar III 20b

¹³⁰⁵ Jeremiah 31:14

above (*l'Eilah l'Eilah*-לעילא לעילא).” (About such a time the verse states,¹³⁰⁶ “We have not seen our signs (*Ototeinu*) etc.”)

To elucidate, the Zohar does not say that He only withdrew “above (*l'Eilah*-לעילא)” one time, referring to the *Sefirah* of understanding-*Binah*.¹³⁰⁷ Rather, it states that “He withdrew high above, high above (*l'Eilah l'Eilah*-לעילא לעילא),” referring to the inner aspect (*Pnimityut*) of the Ancient One-*Atik*,¹³⁰⁸ which generally refers to the *Sefirah* of crown-*Keter*. In other words, it transcends wisdom-*Chochmah* which is the beginning of the revelation, but is rather in a manner that the intellect is concealed. This is what is meant by “*Chash*-חש,” which is a term of “silence” (*Shteekeh*), as it is in the *Sefirot*. That is, this transcends wisdom-*Chochmah* which is the beginning of the revealed *Sefirot*, and rather refers to the *Sefirah* of crown-*Keter*, about which it states,¹³⁰⁹ “the protective fence around wisdom-*Chochmah* is silence.”

Now, the word “*Rosh*-רוש” (of the name “*Achashverosh*-אחשורוש,” which is a composite of two words, “*Achash*-אחש and *Rosh*-רוש”) is a term that means “bitterness,” as in the verse,¹³¹⁰ “Their grapes are grapes of gall-*Rosh*-רוש” (to which Rashi explains, “The term ‘*Rosh*-רוש’ denotes a bitter herb”). This refers to the general state during the time of exile, in which because of our sins the bitterness of the exile came to be like the verse,¹³¹¹ “Her end is as bitter as wormwood.” Now,

¹³⁰⁶ Psalms 74:9; See Ohr HaTorah (Yahal Ohr) p. 147.

¹³⁰⁷ See Ohr HaTorah, Na”Ch Vol. 2 p. 1,044; Sefer HaMaamarim 5679 p. 561.

¹³⁰⁸ See Likkutei Torah, Shir HaShirim 45a; Maamarei Admor HaZaken 5565 Vol. 1, p. 495; Ohr HaTorah, Shir HaShirim Vol. 2 p. 686.

¹³⁰⁹ Mishnah Avot 3:13

¹³¹⁰ Deuteronomy 32:32 (see Rashi there).

¹³¹¹ Proverbs 5:4

the term “*Rosh*-רוש” also means “impoverishment-*Reishut*-רישות,” indicating the poverty of the time of exile.¹³¹²

These two matters indicated by the words “*Chash*-חש” and “*Rosh*-רוש” come together and form one name. For, since during the time of exile the Holy One, blessed is He, withdraws (from below) high above, high above (*l'Eilah l'Eilah*-לעילא לעילא), to the matter of silence indicated by the term “*Chash*-חש,” therefore, this causes the state indicated by the term “*Rosh*-רוש” (that is, “bitterness” and “impoverishment”). On the other hand, it is from the matter indicated by “*Chash*-חש-silence” which is even loftier than wisdom-*Chochmah*, and is the “silence that is the protective fence around wisdom-*Chochmah*,” meaning, that it is an aspect of *HaShem*’s-יהוה’s Godliness that transcends His revealed Godliness, that there is a drawing forth of assistance to the matter indicated by “*Rosh*-רוש,” which is the bitterness and impoverishment of the time of exile.

4.

To further explain, our sages, of blessed memory, stated,¹³¹³ “Why is it that in the psalm *Ashrei*, there is no verse beginning with the letter *Nun*-נ?¹³¹⁴ Because [the letter *Nun*-נ] alludes to the downfall of the enemies of Israel,¹³¹⁵ as

¹³¹² This was explained at length in the earlier discourse entitled “*Bati LeGani* – I have come to My garden” of this year, 5717, Discourse 12.

¹³¹³ Talmud Bavli, *Brachot* 4b; *Likkutei Torah*, *Teitzei* 40a and on.

¹³¹⁴ Psalm 145

¹³¹⁵ This is actually a euphemism for Israel themselves.

written,¹³¹⁶ ‘She has fallen (*Naflah*-נפלה) and will no longer rise – the virgin of Israel.’ Even so, by Divine inspiration (*Ruach HaKodesh*) David gave her support, as the Psalm says,¹³¹⁷ ‘*HaShem*-יהו"ה supports all the fallen (*Noflim*-נופלים).’” For, as explained in Zohar,¹³¹⁸ “When it states ‘she will no longer rise,’ it means that she will no longer rise by her own strength, but rather, the Holy One, blessed is He, will uplift her.” This support (that “*HaShem*-יהו"ה supports all the fallen”) is the assistance given to the aspect indicated by “*Rosh*-רוש” [bitterness and poverty]. That is, the assistance must specifically be drawn from a much higher level, which is the aspect indicated by “*Chash*-חש” [silence].

By way of analogy, this may be better understood through the matter of falling (*Nefilah*) as it is below. Now, there are many ways of how this could be, from a slight fall, to a very severe fall, in which a person is pushed by force and cast down from very high. Now, to break even a slight fall, a greater force is necessary than the force of the fall of the one who is falling. This is all the more so, when it comes to breaking the fall of a person who has been pushed with force and cast down. There necessarily must be a greater force to break the fall caused by the one who pushed him by force and cast him down.

The same is true in the analogue, that is, as the matter of falling (*Nefilah*) relates to souls. In this too, there are various kinds of fall. That is, there is a kind of fall that is only a slight

¹³¹⁶ Amos 5:2 – “In the west (the land of Israel) they interpreted this verse as, ‘She has fallen, but she shall fall no more; Rise, virgin of Israel.’” (See Talmud Bavli, Brachot 4b *ibid.*)

¹³¹⁷ Psalms 145:14

¹³¹⁸ Zohar II 240a

fall, in which only the place of the soul changes, but not in a way that the soul itself is caused any change or descent, God forbid. This is explained in various places¹³¹⁹ about the verse,¹³²⁰ “And Yosef was brought down (*Hurad*-הורד) to Egypt.” That is, even in his descent to Egypt, he nevertheless was a chariot (*Merkavah*) for *HaShem*’s-יהו"ה Godliness. In other words, the level that his soul served *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, remained as a soul of the world of Emanation (*Atzilut*), and it was in that state of being that he was “brought down to Egypt.” In other words, Yosef remained as he was, a soul of the world of Emanation (*Atzilut*), (even though he no longer was in the world of Emanation-*Atzilut*, but was) in Egypt.¹³²¹

The same is true of the general matter of the exile of the Indwelling Presence of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, the *Shechinah*. [For, although it states,¹³²² “I shall not give My glory to another,” nevertheless, it also is the matter of the exile of the Indwelling Presence of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, the *Shechinah*.¹³²³] That is, it is not in a manner that there is any actual change in the Indwelling Presence of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, the *Shechinah*, God forbid. (Similarly, no change is affected in souls of the world of Emanation-*Atzilut*, and even in souls in general.) Rather, it only is like the meaning of the verse, “And Yosef was brought down (*Hurad*-הורד) to Egypt”

¹³¹⁹ See Maamarei Admor HaZaken 5665 Vol. 1 p. 192 and on; Torat Chayim, Vayechi 102c and on; Sefer HaMaamarim 5627 p. 299; 5633 Vol. 1 p. 65 and on; 5688 p. 26; 5720 p. 196 and on; 5721 p. 230 and on.

¹³²⁰ Genesis 39:1

¹³²¹ The word Egypt-*Mitzrayim*-מצרים means “Constraints.”

¹³²² Isaiah 42:8; 48:11

¹³²³ See Talmud Bavli, Megillah 29a; Zohar I 120b

(which also refers to the matter of exile in general, in that all exiles are called after the exile of Egypt).¹³²⁴ That is, because of this descent, the forces of the opposite of holiness, such as the seventy ministering angels of the nations, derive vitality, and thereby, the nations of the worlds (and through them, the external husks of actual evil and the opposite of holiness) become strengthened. This is as stated in Midrash,¹³²⁵ “We find that all nations and nationalities that ruled over the Jewish people, also ruled from one end of the world to the other, thus giving honor to the Jewish people.” For example, during the exile of Egypt, Pharaoh’s reign extended from one side of the world to the other (that is, he ruled over an empire). The same is so of all the other exiles, until this final exile which is under the dominion of Edom. [However, through this derivation of vitality itself, there ultimately is the refinement of the evil of Egypt etc.]

However, there is also a kind of falling (*Nefilah*) which causes actual damage etc. To explain, the verse states,¹³²⁶ “Who may ascend the mountain of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, and who may abide in the place of His sanctity? One with clean hands and a pure heart; who has not sworn in vain by My soul and has not sworn deceitfully.” In other words, to “ascend the mountain of *HaShem*-יהו"ה,” and to subsequently remain “in the place of His sanctity,” one must have “clean hands and a pure heart etc.” However, if he lacks “clean hands and a pure heart,” he will be unable to be on the mountain of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He,

¹³²⁴ Midrash Bereishit Rabba 16:4

¹³²⁵ Mechilta Beshalach 14:5; Zohar II 6a

¹³²⁶ Psalms 24:3-4

and will automatically fall from the mountain of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He. Moreover, when he indeed is upon the mountain of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, and falls from there, may the Merciful One save us, he falls much further and is damaged much more than a person who has never ascended the mountain of *HaShem*-יהו"ה in the first place. This is like the teaching of our sages, of blessed memory,¹³²⁷ “The inadvertent error of Torah scholars is counted as a deliberate sin.”

Then there is a fall (*Nefilah*) that is even worse and lower still, in which a person comes to be included amongst those about whom our sages, of blessed memory, stated,¹³²⁸ “They do not grant him entry into the boundary of the Holy One, blessed is He.” In other words, he is pushed aside, to the point that he is cast down from Above, may the Merciful One save us. This is like the verse,¹³²⁹ “He cast down the glory of Israel from heaven to earth.” This kind of fall (*Nefilah*), which comes about by being cast down from above to below is with much greater force and much greater damage.

Now, in regard to all these kinds of falls, whether the loftiest kind of fall, about which it states,¹³³⁰ “For though the righteous (*Tzaddik*) may fall seven times, he will rise,” or whether it is the lowest and worst kind of fall (*Nefilah*), nevertheless, the verse states,¹³³¹ “Should he fall, he will not be cast down, for *HaShem*-יהו"ה supports his hand,” because,¹³³²

¹³²⁷ See Mishnah Avot 4:13; Talmud Bavli, Bava Metziya 33b

¹³²⁸ Talmud Bavli, Niddah 13b

¹³²⁹ Lamentations 2:1

¹³³⁰ Proverbs 24:16; See Tanya, Chinuch Katan 76a and elsewhere.

¹³³¹ Psalms 37:24

¹³³² Psalms 145:14

“*HaShem*-יהו"ה supports **all** the fallen.” In other words, even when there is a fall from the mountain of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, and even when he is pushed and cast down from there, nevertheless, “he will not be cast down to the earth,”¹³³³ to the lowest depths, may the Merciful One save us. This is because, “*HaShem*-יהו"ה supports his hand,” and, “*HaShem*-יהו"ה supports **all** the fallen.”

Now, for there to be support from the fall, just as in the above analogy, so it is in the analogue, that there must be a greater force in the support that breaks the fall, than the force that caused the fall. Moreover, if this is so of even a slight fall, how much more is it so if the fall is in a manner of being cast down and thrown with force. That is, there must be a greater force than the force that, “cast him from the heavens to the earth etc.,” may the Merciful One save us. It is specifically only through this force that, “should he fall, he will not be cast down.” Moreover, he will even be supported and uplifted from such a fall of being cast down from above to below with force. In other words, this matter, that “*HaShem*-יהו"ה supports all the fallen,” stems from a much higher source.

Now, in the analogy there is an additional aspect, which is that the force that breaks the fall of that which is falling (like a rock or the like) must come specifically from below that which is falling or is cast down. It is specifically because it is below it, that it can halt its fall to earth. By way of another analogy, when a student stumbles in comprehending what he has learned and has come to err in his understanding, in order to clarify and refine all the various elements of his error, his

¹³³³ Metzudat David to Psalms 37:24

teacher must lower his own mind to manifest in the error itself. Specifically through doing so, he will be able to explain the subject to the student, thereby removing and elevating him from his error, and establishing him on sound and straightforward intellect.

The same is so of the analogue, that the force that affects that “should he fall, he will not be cast down, for *HaShem*-יהו"ה supports his hand,” and the force by means of which “*HaShem*-יהו"ה supports all the fallen,” [and this likewise includes the general matter indicated by the verse,¹³³⁴ “The angel of *HaShem*-יהו"ה encamps around those who fear Him,” which is the granting of strength from above, so that¹³³⁵ “if not for the Holy One, blessed is He, who assists him, he would be unable to overcome it” (as explained before in chapter two)], must descend and manifest into the garments of the lower place where that which has fallen or has been cast down is found. In other words, this support and help from above is not in a way of open revelations of *HaShem*'s-יהו"ה Godliness, but is specifically concealed (in an inner way). This is to such an extent that the one who has fallen has no awareness at all that it even is a matter of *HaShem*'s-יהו"ה Godliness. It is specifically in such a manner that he is given support, so that he will not fall to the earth, until he is elevated above.

With the above in mind, we can also understand the general matter of falling (*Nefilah*) as it relates to the time of exile. That is, in order for the verse, “*HaShem*-יהו"ה supports all the fallen,” to be fulfilled, there must be a drawing forth from

¹³³⁴ Psalms 34:8, and also see the citations in Ohr HaTorah ibid. p. 20.

¹³³⁵ Talmud Bavli, Sukkah 52b

a higher level than the aspect of *HaShem*'s יהו"ה Godliness that was caused to be in a state of the exile of the Indwelling Presence of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, the *Shechinah*, (albeit in the manner indicated by the verse, "And Yosef was brought down to Egypt," as explained before). This refers to the matter of "silence-*Chash*-חש" (of the word "*Achash*-אחש" in the name *Achashverosh*-אחשורוש), which is a term that means silence and refers to the matter indicated by the teaching,¹³³⁶ "the protective fence around wisdom-*Chochmah* is silence." That is, it refers to the highest of levels, from high above, high above (*l'Eilah l'Eilah* לעילא לעילא), that is, the level of *HaShem*'s יהו"ה Godliness that was openly revealed when the Holy Temple was standing.

However, this lofty level must descend and manifest in the garments of exile, which is the meaning of the joining of "*Chash*-חש" [silence] with "*Rosh*-רוש" [bitterness and poverty] into one word, wherein the aspect of "*Rosh*-רוש" is like the verse,¹³³⁷ "Their grapes are grapes of bitterness-*Rosh*-רוש," referring to the bitterness of exile. It is specifically through this descent and manifestation that the support from the fall of the time of exile comes to be, so that "*HaShem*-יהו"ה supports all the fallen." It is in this regard that the whole name *Achashverosh*-אחשורוש (not just the aspect of "bitterness-*Rosh*-רוש," but also the aspect of "silence-*Chash*-חש") is related to the time of exile. That is, this too is like the name *Esther*-אסתר, which is the name of the soul in exile, and requires and receives assistance. In other words, the same is true from the perspective

¹³³⁶ Mishnah Avot 3:13

¹³³⁷ Deuteronomy 32:32 (see Rashi there).

of the Bestower of the Influence, that the name of the exile, as a whole, is the name Achashverosh-אחשורוש, not just the aspect of “bitterness-*Rosh*-רוש,” but also the aspect of “silence-*Chash*-חש,” which refers to the help and assistance from the loftiest of levels.

Now, it is through the help and assistance drawn from the Bestower of influence to the recipient (from the aspect of “silence-*Chash*-חש” as it manifests within the “bitterness-*Rosh*-רוש” of the exile, and comes to the recipient, who is in the state indicated by the verse,¹³³⁸ “Conceal, I shall conceal (*Haster Asteer*-הסתר אסתיר) My face on that day”) that “when Esther’s turn came... to come to the King, she requested nothing,” meaning that she comes to be in a state of total nullification (*Bittul*) to *HaShem*-יהוה, blessed is He. Through this, “she finds favor and kindness before Him,” in the ultimate manner.

5.

This then, is the general inner meaning of the story of the Megillah. For example, when the verse states,¹³³⁹ “In those days, when King Achashverosh sat on his royal throne in Shushan the capital,” the place “Shushan (שושן) the capital” refers to exile. This is as explained in the additions (*Hosafot*) to Torah Ohr,¹³⁴⁰ about the words,¹³⁴¹ “*Shoshan* (שושן), the

¹³³⁸ Deuteronomy 31:18

¹³³⁹ Esther 1:2

¹³⁴⁰ Torah Ohr 116c; Also see Likkutei Torah, Drushim l’Shmini Atzeret 92a and on (cited in Ohr HaTorah ibid.).

¹³⁴¹ See the liturgical hymn (*Piyut*) at the beginning of the Musaf prayer of Yom Kippur.

terrible abyss.” About this our sages, of blessed memory, said,¹³⁴² “They were exiled to Eilam (עֵילָם) and the Indwelling Presence of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, the *Shechinah*, went with them,” being that,¹³⁴³ “Eilam (עֵילָם) is Shushan (שושן).” Thus, even in such a place, there is a manifestation of the Indwelling Presence of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, the *Shechinah*, only that it is in a way indicated by “sitting” (*Yeshivah*),¹³⁴⁴ as the verse specifies, “when King Achashverosh **sat**,” which indicates a lowering to below.¹³⁴⁵

However, the order of things in “*Shoshan*, the terrible abyss,” is that at first there is the matter of the *Chashmal* (the aspect of “*Achash*-אחש” [silence] of the name Achashverosh-אחשורוש), as it is in the opposite of holiness. In other words, this refers to the kingship of Achashverosh during the time of Vashti. For, the matter of Vashti is that she refers to the *Chashmal* (חשמל) of the extraneous husk of *Nogah*, meaning, the silence (*Chash*-חש) and speech (*Mal*-מל) of the opposite of holiness.¹³⁴⁶ [Although this is not the three completely impure husks (*Kelipot*), but is only a thin husk, nevertheless, it is still a husk.] In other words, Queen Vashti is the recipient who

¹³⁴² Midrash Bamidbar Rabba 7:10; Eicha Rabba 1:54; Sifri Bamidbar 161:5; Also see Shaarei Orah of Rabbi Yosef Gikatilla, Gate 1 (*Malchut*).

¹³⁴³ Yalkut Shimoni, Esther, Remez 1,045; Also see Etz Yosef to Bamidbar Rabba 7:10 *ibid.*, and the citations there.

¹³⁴⁴ See the previous discourse of this year, 5717, entitled “*v’Atah b’Rachamecha HaRabim* – and You in Your abounding mercies, stood for them,” where the aspects of “sitting” (*Yeshivah*) and “standing” (*Amidah*) were explained.

¹³⁴⁵ Also see Torah Ohr, Mikeitz 38d and on; Ohr HaTorah, BeHa’alotcha p. 362 and on, and elsewhere.

¹³⁴⁶ See Maamarei Admor HaEmtza’ee *ibid.* p. 363; Also see the discourse entitled “*v’Keebel HaYehudim*” in Maamarei Admor HaZaken, 5570 p. 40; Maamarei Admor HaEmtza’ee *ibid.* p. 460; Ohr HaTorah *ibid.* p. 166, and elsewhere.

conceals what she receives from the Achashverosh of the side of holiness.

However, “when Esther’s turn came... to come to the king,” because “she requested nothing,” the King transferred the royalty of kingship from Vashti (the *Chashmal* of the extraneous husk of *Nogah*) to Esther. This is as written,¹³⁴⁷ “and let the King (the King of the world) confer the royalty of her kingship (*Malchutah*) upon another who is better than her,” meaning, to Esther. For, even during the exile, it states about Esther that “she remained faithful (*b’Amnah*-באמנה),”¹³⁴⁸ and even during a time in which there is the state indicated by the verse,¹³⁴⁹ “Conceal, I shall conceal (*Haster Asteer*-הסתר אסתיר) My face,” she nevertheless has the aspect of “I-*Anochi*-אנכי” and “My face-*Panai*-פני,” as the verse specifies. The sign for this, that (even during a time of doubled concealment, as indicated by the words “Conceal, I shall conceal-*Haster Asteer*-הסתר אסתיר”) Esther nevertheless has the matters indicated by “I-*Anochi*-אנכי” and “My face-*Panai*-פני,” because “she requested nothing.”

Thus, it is in this regard that the beginning of the Megillah continues,¹³⁵⁰ “In the third year of His reign, he made a feast... in the courtyard of the garden of the King’s palace. There were [hangings of] white, fine cotton and turquoise wool, held with chords of fine linen and purple wool, upon silver rods and marble pillars; the couches of gold and silver were on a pavement of variegated marble etc.” These refer to the various

¹³⁴⁷ Esther 1:19

¹³⁴⁸ See Esther 2:20; Also see Tanya, Ch. 24.

¹³⁴⁹ Deuteronomy 31:18

¹³⁵⁰ Esther 1:3-6

levels of the lower Garden of Eden (*Gan Eden HaTachton*) and the upper Garden of Eden (*Gan Eden HaElyon*), (as elucidated in Zohar).¹³⁵¹ In other words, even in “Shushan the capital,” during the time of exile, in which “they were exiled to Eilam,” they affected all the orders of the lower Garden of Eden (*Gan Eden HaTachton*) and the upper Garden of Eden (*Gan Eden HaElyon*). For, since the upper and lower Gardens of Eden are in the worlds of Creation, Formation, and Action (*Briyah, Yetzirah, Asiyah*), which are lower than the world of Emanation (*Atzilut*), they relate to Esther (אסתר) and to the aspects indicated by the verse “Conceal, I shall conceal (*Haster Asteer-*הסתר אסתר) My face.” (The only exception to this is the aspect indicated by “white-*Chur*-חור,”¹³⁵² which is spelled with a large letter *Chet*-ח, and is a radiance of the coming world (*Olam HaBa*), which is called the “World of Freedom-*Olam HaCheirut*-עולם החירות,”¹³⁵³ as explained elsewhere.)¹³⁵⁴

6.

However, based on the above explanation, we must understand the statement in the continuation of the Megillah,¹³⁵⁵ “After these things, King Achashverosh promoted Haman, son of Hamedatha, the Aggagite and elevated him; he set his seat above all the other ministers who were with him.” At first

¹³⁵¹ See Zohar I 38a and on.

¹³⁵² Esther 1:6

¹³⁵³ The words white-*Chur*-חור and freedom-*Cheirut*-חירות are related in their root.

¹³⁵⁴ See Likkutei Torah, Drushei Rosh HaShanah 60b.

¹³⁵⁵ Esther 3:1

glance, this is not understood, given that the royalty of kingship (*Malchut*) had already been given to Queen Esther, referring to the Ingathering of the souls of Israel (*Knesset Yisroel*-the *Shechinah*). Furthermore, it was already explained that King Achashverosh (אחשורוש) refers to the fact that even during the “*Rosh*-רוש” (the bitterness and impoverishment of exile) there is help and assistance from the aspect of “*Chash*-חש” [silence] which is the matter indicated by the verse, “*HaShem*-יהו"ה supports all the fallen.” This being so, how is it possible that King Achashverosh promoted Haman, “a man who is an adversary and an enemy,”¹³⁵⁶ who is the very opposite of holiness?

The explanation is that this is because of the general difference between the time in which the Holy Temple is standing and the time of exile. That is, the order and manner that the light of *HaShem*'s יהו"ה Godliness is drawn forth during the time that the Holy Temple is standing, is by way of the ten *Sefirot* in a straightforward order (*Yosher*). In contrast, during the time of exile the order and manner that the light of *HaShem*'s יהו"ה Godliness is drawn forth, is by way of the ten *Sefirot* of the circular order (*Iggulim*).¹³⁵⁷ That is, during the time that the Holy Temple is standing, there is open revelation of *HaShem*'s יהו"ה Godliness, and the order and manner it is drawn into revelation is in a straightforward order (*Yosher*). Thus, at such a time there is clear recognition of the difference between that which is external (*Chitzoniyut*) and that which is

¹³⁵⁶ Esther 7:6

¹³⁵⁷ See Shaar HaYichud of the Mittler Rebbe, translated as The Gate of Unity, Ch. 16-18 and the notes and citations there; Also see HaYom Yom, 7 Tammuz.

inner (*Pnimityut*). In other words, the drawing forth of *HaShem*'s יהו"ה Godliness below is in such a way that the inner aspects of *HaShem*'s יהו"ה Godliness are separate and removed from the external aspects of *HaShem*'s יהו"ה Godliness. Moreover, since,¹³⁵⁸ "I shall not give My glory to another," the drawing of vitality to the side that is the opposite of holiness, is "like something that a person casts over his shoulder behind him,"¹³⁵⁹ meaning that they only derive sustenance from the "hindside" (*Achorayim*) and externality (*Chitzoniyut*) of holiness, and nothing more. Furthermore, since the externality (*Chitzoniyut*) of holiness is utterly nullified to the inner aspect (*Pnimityut*) of holiness when it is openly revealed, how much more is this the case when it comes to the existence of that which is the opposite of holiness, such as the seventy ministering angels of the nations and the nations of the world, including all the external husks (*Kelipot*) and the opposite of holiness (*Sitra Achara*), that only derive vitality from the "hindside" (*Achorayim*) and externality (*Chitzoniyut*) of holiness. They certainly are in a state of nullification (*Bittul*) to holiness.

However, such is not the case during the time of exile, when the order and manner is in such a way that the light of *HaShem*'s יהו"ה Godliness is drawn forth by way of the ten *Sefirot* of the circular order (*Iggulim*). At such a time there is no clear recognition of the distinction between the "hindside" (*Achorayim*) and externality (*Chitzoniyut*) and the inner aspect (*Pnimityut*), and as a result, it automatically follows that there is

¹³⁵⁸ Isaiah 42:8; 48:11

¹³⁵⁹ See Tanya, Ch. 22 (27b).

a lack in nullification (*Bittul*) to the inner aspects (*Pnimityut*) of holiness, and the opposite of holiness can derive vitality from the transcendent and encompassing aspects (*Makif*) of the light of *HaShem*'s יהו"ה Godliness.

This is like the meaning of the verse,¹³⁶⁰ “The spider seizes its prey with its handiwork, though it dwells in the king’s palace.” That is, it is analogous to a king here below, that because of his elevated rulership and exaltedness (when he is in a state of exaltedness from all matters), so that nothing is of consequence relative to him, at such a time it is possible for there to be “a spider in the king’s palace.”

The analogue to this, as it is above in *HaShem*'s יהו"ה Godliness, is that during the time of exile, “The Holy One, blessed is He, withdraws high above, high above” to the loftiest of heights (the aspect indicated by “silence-*Chash*-חש,” and, “silence is the protective fence for wisdom-*Chochmah*,” as explained before in chapter three). In general, this refers to the ascent from the *Sefirot* of the straightforward order (*Yosher*) to the *Sefirot* of the circular order (*Iggulim*). At such a time, the side that is the opposite of holiness (*Sitra Achara*) can raise itself and derive vitality from the aspect of the transcendent encompassing lights (*Makif*) of *HaShem*'s יהו"ה Godliness. This is indicated by the verse,¹³⁶¹ “If you raise yourself like an eagle or place your nest amongst the stars etc.” The reason is because, relative to the transcendent encompassing lights (*Makif*) of *HaShem*'s יהו"ה Godliness, “everything before Him

¹³⁶⁰ Proverbs 30:28; See Emek HaMelech, Shaar 6, Ch. 45, Shaar 14, Ch. 9 & Ch. 98.

¹³⁶¹ Obadiah 1:4

is as nothing,”¹³⁶² and, “darkness and light are equal,”¹³⁶³ and “If you were righteous, what have you given Him, and if your transgressions multiply, what have you done to Him?”¹³⁶⁴

This is why during the time of exile it is possible for there to be the matter of, “King Achashverosh promoted Haman, the son of Hamedatha, the Aggagite and elevated him.” For, since “everything before Him is as nothing,” and, “darkness and light are equal,” it therefore is possible for even Haman to be in a state of elevation. Moreover, since the bestowal stems from the transcendent encompassing light (*Makif*) of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, in which there is no calculation, “for there is no calculation in the grave,”¹³⁶⁵ [similar to the verse that states,¹³⁶⁶ “We remember the fish that we ate in Egypt free of charge,” meaning,¹³⁶⁷ “free from Torah and *mitzvot*,” in other words, without calculation – which is not so of the Jewish people, who specifically relate to and receive all matters in an inner way (*Pnimiyut*),¹³⁶⁸ meaning according to calculation, and specifically through their making themselves into receptacles], at times, it therefore is possible for there be a bestowal to Haman, in such a manner that, “he elevated him... above all the other ministers who were with him.”

¹³⁶² See Daniel 4:32; Zohar I 11b

¹³⁶³ Psalms 139:12

¹³⁶⁴ Job 35:7

¹³⁶⁵ See Ecclesiastes 9:10

¹³⁶⁶ Numbers 11:5

¹³⁶⁷ Sifri and Rashi to Number 11:5

¹³⁶⁸ See Kuntres U'Maayon, Discourse 10

With the above in mind, we can understand what it states in the continuation of the Megillah,¹³⁶⁹ “Therefore, they called these days ‘Purim-פורים,’ from the word ‘lottery-*Pur*-פור.” Now, at first glance, this is not understood. That is, it states that Haman “cast a *Pur* – that is a lottery (*Goral*).”¹³⁷⁰ This was the lot that he cast by which he brought about the decree to¹³⁷¹ “to destroy, to slay, and to exterminate etc.” How then is it, that the miracle – which was in a manner that “it was overturned to its opposite”¹³⁷² – should be named “Purim” after the “lottery-*Pur*-פור”?

However, the explanation is that the primary miracle that occurred, is that without considering the fact that He “cast a *Pur* – that is the lottery (*Goral*),” from which there can be the decree “to destroy, to slay, and to exterminate,” –this very thing itself “was overturned to its opposite.”

This may be better understood with an explanation of the matter of a lottery (*Goral*), as it is on the side of holiness. (For,¹³⁷³ “God has made the one opposite the other.”) Namely, there are the lotteries (*Goralot*) of Yom HaKippurim, which is also connected to Purim. This is as stated in Tikkunei Zohar, that “Yom HaKippurim-יום הכפורים” means that it is “like Purim-*K’Purim*-כפורים.” Now, about Yom HaKippurim it is

¹³⁶⁹ Esther 9:26

¹³⁷⁰ Esther 9:24

¹³⁷¹ Esther 3:13, 7:3

¹³⁷² Esther 9:1

¹³⁷³ Ecclesiastes 7:14

written,¹³⁷⁴ “Aharon shall place lots upon the two he-goats: one lot ‘for *HaShem*-יהו” and one lot ‘for Azazel.’” Now, our sages, of blessed memory, taught,¹³⁷⁵ “The *mitzvah* of the two Yom Kippur goats: They must both be equal in appearance, in height, in monetary value, and in their purchase, as one etc.” In other words, before the placing of the lottery (*Goral*), there is no preference or priority between one goat over the other, such that either of them could equally be offered either to *HaShem*-יהו, blessed is He, as a sin offering (*Chatat*), or be sent to Azazel. That is, only the lottery (*Goral*) will establish the matter, in that if the Name *HaShem*-יהו comes up in his right hand,¹³⁷⁶ then that one would be offered as a sin offering (*Chatat*) to *HaShem*-יהו, and the one that would come up to the left would be for Azazel, about which it states,¹³⁷⁷ “The he-goat will bear upon itself all their iniquities (of the Jewish people) to an uninhabited land, and he should send the he-goat to the desert,” that is, to the lowest depth of the extraneous husks (*Kelipah*). That is, this is the diametric opposite of the he-goat that is offered as a sin offering (*Chatat*) to *HaShem*-יהו, blessed is He, through which,¹³⁷⁸ “you shall be cleansed before *HaShem*-יהו,” specifically specifying, “before *HaShem*-יהו,” meaning, before He who transcends the chaining down of the worlds (*Hishtalshelut*).¹³⁷⁹ In other

¹³⁷⁴ Leviticus 16:8

¹³⁷⁵ Mishnah Yoma 6:1; Talmud Bavli, Sanhedrin 62a; Mishneh Torah, Hilchot Avodat Yom HaKippurim, 5:14.

¹³⁷⁶ See Talmud Bavli, Yoma 39a

¹³⁷⁷ Leviticus 16:22

¹³⁷⁸ Leviticus 16:30

¹³⁷⁹ See Likkutei Torah, Acharei 26c, 27d, and elsewhere.

words, this matter is determined on the basis of a lottery (*Goral*) which transcends reason and intellect.

We similarly find the matter of a lottery (*Goral*) employed in the division of an inheritance left by a father, amongst his sons. For, there are times that the brothers will divide the inheritance left by their father between themselves in a way that is necessitated intellectually, in that a certain portion is more appropriate to a particular brother, whereas a different portion is more appropriate to another brother. However, there are times that it is impossible to determine this intellectually and establish which portion is appropriate to who, and in such a case, the division of the inheritance is determined by lottery (*Goral*). That is, the lottery (*Goral*) establishes that this portion belongs to this brother, and that portion belongs to another brother. In other words, the lottery (*Goral*) transcends intellect (*Sechel*), and even transcends desire (*Ratzon*). For, if it was the case that one brother desired a certain portion and the other brother desired a different portion, there would be no need for a lottery (*Goral*). We therefore must say that a lottery (*Goral*) even decides in a case that cannot be determined according to desire (*Ratzon*). We thus find that a lottery (*Goral*) even transcends desire (*Ratzon*).

Beyond this, within the one himself who desires, the lottery (*Goral*) reaches an even deeper root than the source of the desire (*Ratzon*). For, even the one who desires, bases it on the result of the lottery (*Goral*), meaning that (he agrees that) whatever the lottery (*Goral*) determines, that is what he will desire. About this the verse states,¹³⁸⁰ “When a person casts lots

¹³⁸⁰ Proverbs 16:33

to himself, its decision is from HaShem-יהו"ה." Thus, the same is true above in *HaShem's*-יהו"ה Godliness, that the matter of a lottery (*Goral*) indicates a revelation of *HaShem's*-יהו"ה Godliness that transcends the revealed *Sefirot*, which begin with the *Sefirah* of wisdom-*Chochmah* (similar to the previous example of wisdom, intellect and reason). Furthermore, it even transcends the external aspect (*Chitzoniyut*) of the crown-*Keter* (like the example of desire (*Ratzon*), including the matter of the one who desires, as he desires in the root of desire, which is the root of the Emanations). Rather, it is "before *HaShem*-יהו"ה,"¹³⁸¹ in the aspect of the Ancient One-*Atik*.

The same is true in the matter of a lottery (*Goral*) as it is in man's service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He. That is, this is not service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, in a manner that accords to intellect (*Sechel*), nor is it service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, that accords to desire (*Ratzon*), but is rather of the inner essence of the soul. This refers to serving *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, with repentance and returning (*Teshuvah*) to Him, which even atones for transgressions of the *mitzvot*, which are the desire (*Ratzon*) of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He. This is because repentance and return reach the aspect of,¹³⁸² "I-*Anochi*-אנכי, only I-*Anochi*-אנכי (am He who wipes away your willful sins)," which transcends desire (*Ratzon*). In other words, it is from this aspect that there is a drawing forth, so that *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, "pardons iniquity and overlooks transgression," to atone for all iniquity, sin and transgression.

¹³⁸¹ Leviticus 16:7

¹³⁸² Isaiah 43:25; See Likkutei Torah, Nitzavim 45d; Shabbat Shuvah 65c; Sefer HaMitzvot of the Tzemach Tzedek 38b, and elsewhere.

In other words, the service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, of repentance and return (*Teshuvah*), even transcends serving Him through Torah and *mitzvot*.¹³⁸³ This is why it has the power and ability to repair the lack and deficiency in fulfilling Torah and *mitzvot*. This is to such an extent that "there can be a person who acquires his share in the (coming) world in a single moment."¹³⁸⁴

This then, explains the matter of the lottery (*Goral*) of Yom HaKippurim. That is, even when according to intellect (*Sechel*) and desire (*Ratzon*), it is unknown which goat is related to the right and which to the left, which is for holiness and which is for the opposite of holiness, the lottery (*Goral*) determines that this goat will be offered as a sin offering (*Chatat*) to *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, which is the ultimate elevation, even higher than the *Sefirot* and even higher than the desire (*Ratzon*), and that the other goat will be sent to Azazel, to the depths of the abyss, bearing all the sins of the Jewish people.

With the above in mind, we can also understand how this relates to Purim. That is, the fact that "King Achashverosh promoted Haman, the son of Hamedatha, the Aggagite and elevated him," was not according to the proper order of things, as they stem from the revealed *Sefirot*, nor was it even according to reason and intellect, but rather, stemmed from the matter of casting a lottery (*Goral*), which transcends intellect (*Sechel*). From that aspect there is no consideration and

¹³⁸³ See Shaar HaYichud of the Mittler Rebbe, translated as The Gate of Unity, Ch. 22.

¹³⁸⁴ Talmud Bavli, Avodah Zarah 18a; See Likkutei Sichot, Vol. 18 p. 121 and on.

calculation of Torah and *mitzvot*, as indicated by the verse,¹³⁸⁵ “If you were righteous, what have you given Him, and if your transgressions multiply, what have you done to Him?” For, this level transcends the desire (*Ratzon*) that manifests in the *mitzvot* (as explained before in chapter six). This is why Haman, the son of Hamedatha, (who Achashverosh promoted and elevated above all the ministers) attempted what he desired to do by casting the *Pur*, which is a lottery (*Goral*), in that perhaps it would arise in his favor, to be able to destroy, to slay and to exterminate all the Jews”¹³⁸⁶ – being that on the level of a lottery “darkness and light are equal.”¹³⁸⁷

However, it was in this itself that the greatness of the miracle took place. That is, even though he cast the *Pur*, which is the lottery (*Goral*) of the opposite of holiness, in which there is “room” for a decree against all the Jewish people, there nevertheless was the miracle of Purim, so that even that very same *Pur* and lottery (*Goral*) was overturned to its opposite – that *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, specifically chose the Jewish people. This is as stated,¹³⁸⁸ “He will choose our heritage for us, the pride of Yaakov that He loves always!” This is because the thought of Israel arose before all other things, even before the thought of Torah and *mitzvot*. This is as our sages, of blessed memory, stated,¹³⁸⁹ “The thought of Israel preceded everything... as it states, ‘Command the children of Israel,’ and ‘Speak to the children of Israel.’” Because of this, the matter

¹³⁸⁵ Job 35:7

¹³⁸⁶ Esther 3:13, 7:3

¹³⁸⁷ Psalms 139:12

¹³⁸⁸ Psalms 47:5

¹³⁸⁹ Midrash Bereishit Rabba 1:4

was overturned to its opposite. For, although it is written,¹³⁹⁰ “Is not Esav the brother of Yaakov?” Nevertheless, the way He divided between the brothers is as the verse continues, “yet I loved Yaakov and I hated Esav.”

Now, since this miracle had to be actualized in a time that the order of things in the world was in a manner of “He cast a *Pur*, that is the lottery (*Goral*),” meaning that matters were not ordered according to the revealed *Sefirot*, nor even according to the externality of the crown-*Keter*, which relates to the chaining down of the worlds, but from even higher, therefore, the service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, of all the Jewish people, needed to be in a similar manner. That is, they needed to affect an awakening from below (*It'aruta d'LeTata*) similar to what needed to be drawn from *HaShem*-יהו"ה above, blessed is He. This is as explained in Torah Ohr,¹³⁹¹ that at that time their service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה was with self-sacrifice (*Mesirat Nefesh*). That is, they were willing to sacrifice themselves unto death for an entire year, and during that whole time the thought of defecting never even crossed their mind, God forbid. In other words, throughout the course of an entire year (*Shanah*-שנה), during which all possible changes (*Shinuy*-שנוי) in time could occur,¹³⁹² they did not take any such changes into consideration. Rather, their service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, was as indicated by the verse,¹³⁹³ “I have not changed,” in a motion of self-sacrifice (*Mesirat Nefesh*).

¹³⁹⁰ Malachi 1:2-3

¹³⁹¹ Torah Ohr, Megillat Esther 97a

¹³⁹² Also see the discourse entitled “*v'Keebel HaYehudim*” 5738 Ch. 3; “*Balaylah HaHoo*” 5744 (Torat Menachem Sefer HaMaamarim Adar, p. 46; p. 85).

¹³⁹³ Malachi 3:6

It is because of this that throughout the Megillah, the Jewish people are always called “Jews-*Yehudim*-יהודים,”¹³⁹⁴ in accordance to the teaching,¹³⁹⁵ “Whosoever repudiates idolatry (it is as though he submits to the truth of the entire Torah¹³⁹⁶ and) is called a ‘Jew-*Yehudi*-יהודי.’” (Moreover, it was solely by this very matter and point that they fell into the category determined by the *Pur*, which is the lottery (*Goral*) that was cast. For, if they had opted to renounce their faith, Haman would have done nothing to them, being that his decree was only upon the “Jews-*Yehudim*-יהודים.”)¹³⁹⁷ Thus, through this kind of service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, they affected this matter above as well, on the level of the lottery (*Goral*) that transcends intellect (*Sechel*) and even transcends the externality of desire (*Ratzon*) and even transcends the one who desires (*Ba'al HaRatzon*) as He relates to the externality of the desire (*Ratzon*), and they thus affected that the matter was overturned to its very opposite (*v'Nahapoch Hoo*).

8.

The Megillah concludes,¹³⁹⁸ “And these days should be remembered (by means of) and celebrated in every generation, every family, every province, and every city, and these days of Purim will never cease amongst the Jews, nor shall their remembrance perish from their descendants.” In other words,

¹³⁹⁴ See Torah Ohr, Megillat Esther *ibid.*, 97a, and elsewhere.

¹³⁹⁵ Talmud Bavli, Megillah 13a

¹³⁹⁶ Talmud Bavli, Kiddushin 40a

¹³⁹⁷ See Torah Ohr *ibid.*

¹³⁹⁸ Esther 9:28

all the above-mentioned matters must be drawn forth in all subsequent times, being that “in every generation they stand against us to destroy us, but the Holy One, blessed is He, saves us from their hand.”¹³⁹⁹ For this to be, the matter of “not knowing” (*Lo Yada*-לֹא יָדַע) is specifically necessary. In other words, the service of *HaShem*-יְהוָה, blessed is He, must not (only) be in a motion and state that stems from “knowing” (*Yada*-יָדַע), in that reason and intellect necessitate that “Cursed is Haman,” which is the matter of desisting from evil, as well as “Blessed is Mordechai,” which is the matter of doing good deeds. Rather, it is necessary for there to (also) be this matter that transcends intellect (*Sechel*) and even transcends desire (*Ratzon*). This refers to serving *HaShem*-יְהוָה, blessed is He, with self-sacrifice (*Mesirat Nefesh*) stemming from the inner essence of the soul, and the inner essence of the soul must be drawn into the revealed powers of the soul, beginning with the powers of reason and intellect and all the ten powers of the soul, including thought, speech, and action. That is, they should all be imbued and filled with an inner motion of self-sacrifice (*Mesirat Nefesh*) for *HaShem*-יְהוָה, blessed is He, (and because of this they are called “Jews-*Yehudim*-יְהוּדִים”) throughout the entire year.

This then, is the meaning of the teaching,¹⁴⁰⁰ “A person is obligated to become intoxicated on Purim, to the point that he does not know the difference between ‘Cursed is Haman’ and ‘Blessed is Mordechai.’” That is, the joy of Purim must transcend measure and limitation. In this, it is unlike other

¹³⁹⁹ Liturgy of the Passover Haggadah, “*v’Hee SheAmdah*” section.

¹⁴⁰⁰ Talmud Bavli, Megillah 7b

holidays, in which even though they are festivals of joy,¹⁴⁰¹ nevertheless, their joy must specifically be in a way of measure and limitation. This is as stated in Shulchan Aruch,¹⁴⁰² that the courts must appoint officers to circulate amongst the people [to ensure that there is no overindulgence of wine and intermingling (between the sexes) that may lead to sin]. However, this is not the case when it comes to Purim, when there is an obligation to become intoxicated. That is, the joy of Purim must be such that it departs all measures and boundaries.

The reason is because the other festivals stem from the aspect indicated by the verse,¹⁴⁰³ “The mother of the children rejoices,” referring to the *Sefirah* of understanding-*Binah*,¹⁴⁰⁴ the substance of which is grasp and comprehension. Therefore, the joy that arises is in a manner of measure and limitation. However, this is not so of Purim, the substance of which is “not knowing (*Lo Yada*-לֹא יָדַע),” to such an extent that the matter of “Cursed is Haman” and “Blessed is Mordechai” is (not out of intellectual reasoning, but is rather) in such a manner that he “does not know (*Lo Yada*-לֹא יָדַע).” Therefore, the resultant joy is also in a manner that transcends all measure and limitation.

Now, we should also add another point about the specific wording of our sages, of blessed memory, in stating, “A person (*Inish*-אִיִּשׁ) is obligated.” That is, this obligation is upon each and every Jew, even those who are only called, “a

¹⁴⁰¹ See the prayer and Kiddush liturgy for the festivals.

¹⁴⁰² Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chayim 529:4; Shulchan Aruch of the Alter Rebbe 529:13; Mishneh Torah, Hilchot Yom Tov 6:21

¹⁴⁰³ Psalms 113:9

¹⁴⁰⁴ Zohar I 219a; Zohar II 84a, 85b; Pardes Rimonim, Shaar Erchei HaKinuyim (Shaar 23), “*Em HaBanim*”; Likkutei Torah, Shmini Atzeret 88d; Shaar HaYichud of the Mittler Rebbe, translated as The Gate of Unity, Ch. 5-6, Ch. 26.

person (*Inish*-אִינִישׁ),” from the root used in the verse,¹⁴⁰⁵ “The heart is the most deceitful of all, and it is fragile (*Anush*-אָנֻשׁ).” This is because whatever differences there are within the Jewish people is just in regard to service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, that stems from reason and intellect. In other words, one person may have greater intellect, whereas another may have lesser intellect etc. In contrast, when it comes to serving *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, with self-sacrifice (*Mesirat Nefesh*), (which transcends reason and intellect – and is the aspect of “not knowing-*Lo Yada*-לֹא יָדַע”), stemming from the singular-*Yechidah* essence of the soul, which is called “the singular one to unify You,”¹⁴⁰⁶ then even the simplest of Jews have self-sacrifice (*Mesirat Nefesh*) and do not become separated from the unity of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He.¹⁴⁰⁷

Now, from the days of Purim, we are to draw forth this joy that transcends all measure and limitations, along with the motion of self-sacrifice (*Mesirat Nefesh*) – which is adequate to be only in a way of potential – throughout the entire year. That is, throughout the entire year there must be this matter that “Haman is cursed,” by which there will automatically be the matter of “Mordechai is blessed,” and “everything that belonged to Haman was given to Mordechai the Jew,”¹⁴⁰⁸ and “Mordechai left the King’s presence clad in royal apparel of turquoise and white with a large golden crown and a robe of

¹⁴⁰⁵ Jeremiah 17:9; See Likkutei Torah, Shir HaShirim 25a and on; Sefer HaMaamarim 5629 p. 172.

¹⁴⁰⁶ See Hoshanaot liturgy (for the third day).

¹⁴⁰⁷ See Tanya, Ch. 18 and elsewhere.

¹⁴⁰⁸ See Esther 8:1-2

fine linen and purple etc.”¹⁴⁰⁹ This is as explained in Torah Ohr,¹⁴¹⁰ that the enumeration of the things in this verse corresponds to the six orders of the Mishnah (“Royal apparel” refers to the Mishnaic order of Zera’im etc.). That is, they include all matters of Torah, which themselves include all matters of the world. This is as stated,¹⁴¹¹ “The Holy One, blessed is He, gazed into the Torah and created the world.” In other words, the world was made to be as it should be according to Torah (after the precedence of serving *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, with self-sacrifice (*Mesirat Nefesh*) – to the point of “not knowing-*Lo Yada* ידע”). Quite simply, the result is a year of success in Torah study and the fulfillment of the *mitzvot*, along with all of one’s physical matters, so that he can fulfill them in actuality, through serving *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, in the way indicated by the verse,¹⁴¹² “Know Him in all your ways,” culminating with the actualization of a “dwelling place for the Holy One, blessed is He, in the lower worlds!”¹⁴¹³

¹⁴⁰⁹ Esther 8:15

¹⁴¹⁰ Torah Ohr, Megillat Esther 93a

¹⁴¹¹ Zohar II 161a and on

¹⁴¹² Proverbs 3:6

¹⁴¹³ See Midrash Tanchuma Bechukotai 3, Naso 16; Midrash Bereishit Rabba 3; Bamidbar Rabba 13:6; Tanya, Ch. 36, and elsewhere.