

Discourse 29

“Eileh Masei Bnei Yisroel - These are the journeys of the Children of Israel”

Delivered on Shabbat Parshat Matot-Masei,
Shabbat Mevarchim Menachem-Av, 5719
By the grace of *HaShem*, blessed is He,

1.

The verse states,²¹³⁰ “These are the journeys of the children of Israel, who went forth from the land of Egypt, by the hand of Moshe and Aharon. Moshe wrote their goings forth according to their journeys at the bidding of *HaShem*-יהוה, and these were their journeys according to their goings forth.”

As known, about the words, “These are the journeys (*Masei*-מסעי) of the children of Israel, who went forth from the land of Egypt,” the Alter Rebbe explained in *Likkutei Torah*²¹³¹ that the word “journeys-*Masei*-מסעי” is plural, even though when they “went forth from the land of Egypt,” that was only the first of their journeys. The reason [for these many journeys-*Masei*-מסעי] is because as long as they had not yet come to the [east] bank of the river Jordan, opposite Jericho, they were still in a state of Egypt (*Mitzrayim*-מצרים), which means constraints (*Meitzarim*-מצרים) and limitations.

In other words, [each level] in comparison to the levels that preceded it, was indeed an exodus from constraints-

²¹³⁰ Numbers 33:1-2

²¹³¹ *Likkutei Torah*, *Masei* 88c and on.

Mitzrayim-מצרים), but in comparison to being on the [east] bank of the river Jordan, opposite Jericho, they all were still a matter of constraints (*Meitzarim*-מצרים), and they therefore needed to leave the constraints and limitations of each level. This then, explains the matter of the forty-two journeys, until they arrived at the matter of being on the [east] bank of the river Jordan, opposite Jericho.

Now, in order for these journeys to be, which is the toil of exiting “Egypt” (*Mitzrayim*-מצרים) and the “constraints” (*Meitzarim*-מצרים) of each level, this is brought about through, “Moshe wrote.” That is,²¹³² it must be drawn down into written letters (*Otiyot*), this being the matter of the revealed powers of the soul.

This drawing down is from “their goings forth-*Motza’eihem*-מוצאיהם,” which also means “their origins,” and refers to the root and source of the soul. That is, there must be a drawing down from the root and source of the soul into the matter of “their journeys-*Maseihem*-מסעיהם,” meaning, into the aspect of the soul that manifests in the body, and is involved in the toil of the journeys.

Through this toil of “their journeys-*Maseihem*-מסעיהם,” by the soul that is manifest in the body, an ascent from below to Above comes about. This is the meaning of [the reversed order of the words at the conclusion of the verse], “These were their journeys (*Maseihem*-מסעיהם) according to their goings forth (*Motza’eihem*-מוצאיהם).”

That is, this refers to the ascent to the (second) aspect of “their goings forth (*Motza’eihem*-מוצאיהם),” which is higher than the first of “their goings forth (*Motza’eihem*-מוצאיהם) [mentioned in the verse]. This refers to the matter of becoming “subsumed in

²¹³² See Likkutei Torah, Masei 96c

the body of the King,”²¹³³ which is even higher than the root and source of the soul.

Now, our sages, of blessed memory, stated,²¹³⁴ “A person is obligated to view himself as if he [personally] left Egypt (*Mitzrayim*-מצרים).” That is, every single day there must be an exodus from one’s constraints (*Meitzarim*-מיצרים) and limitations. And although it may be true that yesterday he brought about an exodus from Egypt in his soul, nevertheless, relative to the level he is on today, he still has constraints and limitations. He therefore must bring about an exodus of his soul from the constraints and limitations of this level. This then, explains the matter of the forty-two journeys that take place every day,²¹³⁵ which are higher than they were the day before.

However, in general, the matter of the forty-two journeys takes place over the course of a person’s lifetime, as known from the teaching of the Baal Shem Tov,²¹³⁶ that the duration of a person’s lifetime is the matter of the forty-two journeys in general. The first journey, which is the exodus from Egypt (*Mitzrayim*-מצרים) itself, is the matter of one’s birth. The arrival at the bank of the river Jordan, opposite Jericho, is the matter of ascending to the upper Land of the Living (*Eretz HaChayim*-ארץ החיים).

All this is brought about through, “Moshe wrote their goings forth (*Motza’eihem*-מוצאיהם) according to their journeys (*Maseihem*-מסעיהם),” which refers to affecting a drawing down from the root and source of the soul, to the level of the soul that manifests in the body. This causes an ascent from below to Above

²¹³³ Zohar I 217b

²¹³⁴ Mishnah Pesachim 10:5; Talmud Bavli, Pesachim 116b; Tanya, Likkutei Amarim, Ch. 47

²¹³⁵ See Ohr HaTorah, Masei p. 1,352.

²¹³⁶ Degel Machaneh Ephraim, Masei

[indicated by the reversed order of the words at the end of the verse], “These were their journeys (*Masei*הם-מסעיהם) according to their goings forth (*Motza’eihem*הם-מוצאיהם),” which refers to the ascent to the level that transcends the root and source of the soul, as mentioned above.

2.

The explanation is that the reason that in order to affect the drawing down from “their origins (*Motza’eihem*הם-מוצאיהם)” to “their journeys (*Masei*הם-מסעיהם),” it is necessary that “Moshe wrote,” is because these two aspects are utterly incomparable to each other – that is, the aspect of “their origins (*Motza’eihem*הם-מוצאיהם),” which refers to the soul as it is Above and is the level of the “head” (*Rosh*ראש) of the soul, and higher still, is the level of the root and source of the soul – and the aspect of “their journeys (*Masei*הם-מסעיהם),” which is the level of the soul that manifests in the body and is the level of the “foot” (*Regel*רגל) of the soul – are utterly incomparable to each other.

To further explain,²¹³⁷ as known, in the words,²¹³⁸ “The soul that You have given within me, she is pure; You created her, You formed her, You blew her into me,” the words, “She is pure-*Tehorah Hee*היא-טהורה” refer to the aspect of the root and source of the soul. In contrast, the words, “You created her-*Atah Baratah*אתה בראתה” refer to the aspect of the “foot” (*Regel*) of the soul.

²¹³⁷ See the discourse entitled “*Tziyon b’Mishpat Teepadeh*” 5676 (Sefer HaMaamarim 5676 p. 137 and on); Discourse entitled “*V’Taher Libeinu* – Purify our hearts” of the second day of Sukkot 5717, translated in The Teachings of The Rebbe, 5717, Vol. 1, Discourse 2, Ch. 2 and on (Sefer HaMaamarim 5717 p. 12 and on).

²¹³⁸ In the “*Elohai Neshamha*” liturgy of the morning blessings.

It thus is in this regard that it states “You created her-*Atah Baratah*-אתה בראתה,” using a term of “creation-*Briyah*-בריאה.” For, as known, in the Holy Tongue [Biblical Hebrew], the term “creation-*Briyah*-בריאה” indicates the creation of something from nothing (*Yesh MeAyin*), as the verse states,²¹³⁹ “In the beginning God created-*Bara*-ברא.”

Now, though it is true that the coming into being of souls is unlike the coming into being of other creations, in that other creations are not Godliness, except that the way they are brought into being and are vitalized and sustained, is through the power of the Actor in the acted upon (*Ko'ach HaPo'el BaNifal*), which is only because there is nothing outside of Him, blessed is He. Nevertheless, even so, they are not Godliness.

However, this is not so of the coming into being of souls. For, as known, even as the soul is a creation, it still is literally Godliness.²¹⁴⁰ That is, in the coming into being of souls, *HaShem's*-יהו"ה Godliness itself comes into the aspect of an existent soul.

This being so, that the soul itself is *HaShem's*-יהו"ה Godliness, it therefore has no limitations in it whatsoever. This is like the teaching of our sages, of blessed memory,²¹⁴¹ “A person is obligated to say to himself, ‘When will my deeds reach the deeds of my forefathers, Avraham, Yitzchak, and Yaakov.’”

²¹³⁹ Genesis 1:1 and Ramban (Nachmanides) there.

²¹⁴⁰ Job 31:2; Pardes Rimonim of Rabbi Moshe Cordovero, Shaar 32, Ch. 1; Ohr Ne'erav by the same author, Chelek 1, Ch. 3; Likkutei Torah of the Arizal, Bereishit; Etz Chayim, Shaar 42, Ch. 1; Etz HaDa'at Tov of Rabbi Chayim Vital, VaEtchanan; Asis Rimonim v'Pelach HaRimon, Shaar 32, Ch. 1; Chessed L'Avraham, Maayan 3, Nahar 25; Introduction to Siddur HaArizal of Rabbi Yaakov Kopel of Mezhrich; Da'at Tevunot of the Ramchal, Section 158; Shefa Tal, Introduction; GR"A to Heichalot, Heichala Tinyana, Heichal 1; Tanya, Likkutei Amarim, Ch. 2, Nefesh HaChayim, Shaar 1, Ch 5, and elsewhere.

²¹⁴¹ Tanna d'Bei Eliyahu Rabba, Ch. 25

Elsewhere²¹⁴² the deeds of Moshe are also included, which is even loftier, being that Moshe's deeds took place after the Torah was given.

Nonetheless, even so, the level of the soul as *HaShem's*-יהו"ה Godliness becomes a creation, is utterly of no comparison to the level of the soul as it transcends the aspect of being created. This aspect is referred to with the words "She is pure-*Tehorah Hee* טהורה היא."

This may be better understood through [understanding] the matter of the different levels in *HaShem's*-יהו"ה Godliness itself. That is, there is the aspect of *HaShem's*-יהו"ה Godliness that transcends the chaining down of the worlds (*Hishtalshelut*). Then there is the aspect of *HaShem's*-יהו"ה Godliness as it is drawn into the chaining down of the worlds (*Hishtalshelut*), into the aspect of the lights (*Orot*), which are called "His life force,"²¹⁴³ until they come to a state of manifesting and being contained in vessels (*Keilim*). In other words, even though this is literally an aspect of *HaShem's*-יהו"ה Godliness, who is limitless, it nevertheless comes into the category of the measure and limitation of the vessels.

By understanding this, we can understand that this certainly is so of *HaShem's*-יהו"ה Godliness as it is in the soul. That is, when it comes into the state of creation (*Briyah*-בריאה), it is utterly incomparable to the essence of the soul, so much so, that it is called "the creation of something from nothing," being that it has come into the category of the limitations of the creatures.

This is why souls of the world of Emanation (*Atzilut*), even when they descend below, are not in a state of being contained by the body and animalistic soul, as explained in Iggeret

²¹⁴² See Sefer HaMaamarim 5676 ibid. and *Hemshech* 5672 Vol. 1, p. 334.

²¹⁴³ Introduction to Tikkunei Zohar 3b; Tanya, Iggeret HaKodesh, Epistle 20

HaKodesh,²¹⁴⁴ that at a time that they desire to sin, [their soul] departs,²¹⁴⁵ and even not in a time of sin, [this aspect] is not inwardly manifest, but is rather in a transcendent encompassing state (*Makif*).

In other words, the aspect of the soul that comes down in a way of inner manifestation (*Hitlabshut*) is only the aspect indicated by “You created her-*Atah Baratah*-אתה בראתה,” which is in a state of limitation. However, as the soul is in the aspect of Emanation (*Atzilut*), it transcends inner manifestation (*Hitlabshut*).

However, all the above is in regard to the aspect of “You created her-*Atah Baratah*-אתה בראתה,” as it is in souls of the world of Emanation (*Atzilut*), meaning, the aspect of Creation-*Briyah* within the world of Emanation-*Atzilut*. This being so, how much more is this so, in regard to the aspect of the essence of the soul, that it certainly transcends the parameters of inner manifestation (*Hitlabshut*).

3.

Now, when the soul is in the state indicated by “She is pure-*Tehorah Hee*-טהורה היא,” it is called, “Zion-*Tziyon*-צִיּוֹן,” as in the verse,²¹⁴⁶ “Say to Tziyon, ‘You are My people.’” In other words, the Jewish people are called “Zion-*Tziyon*-צִיּוֹן,”²¹⁴⁷ which

²¹⁴⁴ Tanya, Iggeret HaKodesh, Epistle 20 (130a)

²¹⁴⁵ Also see Tikkunei Zohar, Tikkun 70 (124a).

²¹⁴⁶ Isaiah 51:16; Talmud Yerushalmi, Taanit 4:2; Also see the discourse entitled “*Tziyon b’Mishpat Tipadeh*” 5718, translated in The Teachings of The Rebbe 5718, Vol. 2, Discourse 29 (Sefer HaMaamarim 5718 p. 291 and on).

²¹⁴⁷ Also see the introduction of the Mittler Rebbe to Shaar HaEmunah and Shaar HaYichud, translated as Essential Faith, that the term “*Tziyon*-צִיּוֹן” is a term of “excellence-*Metzuyan*-מְצֻיָּאן.”

[is a name that] stems from the essence of the soul, and is the aspect indicated by “She is pure-*Tehorah Hee* טהורה היא.” Now, the name “Zion-*Tziyon* ציון,” means a “indicator-*Tziyun* ציון” and “sign-*Siman* סימן.” The matter of a “sign-*Siman* סימן” is specifically applicable [in identifying] something that is lost, meaning hidden.

The comparison to this Above in *HaShem*’s יהו"ה Godliness, is that when it comes to the light of *HaShem* יהו"ה, blessed is He, that fills all worlds (*Memaleh Kol Almin*), there is no need for a “sign” (*Siman*), since it is openly revealed, as explained elsewhere,²¹⁴⁸ that even the nations of the world believe in the light of *HaShem* יהו"ה, blessed is He, that fills all worlds (*Memaleh Kol Almin*), since this is something that is openly revealed and intellectually necessitated. Rather, the matter of a “sign” (*Siman* סימן) specifically relates to the light of *HaShem* יהו"ה, blessed is He, that surrounds and transcends all worlds (*Sovev Kol Almin*), referring to the matter of His true transcendence, in that before Him everything is equal. This is something that is concealed, and therefore requires a sign (*Siman*).

This then, is why the Jewish people are called “Zion-*Tziyon* ציון.” That is, the essence of their souls, indicated by the words “She is pure-*Tehorah Hee* טהורה היא,” is itself the “indicator-*Tziyun* ציון” and “sign-*Siman* סימן” for the light of *HaShem* יהו"ה, blessed is He, that transcends and surrounds all worlds (*Sovev Kol Almin*), specifically.

The reason is because the essence of the soul bears a likeness to the light of *HaShem* יהו"ה that surrounds and transcends

²¹⁴⁸ See Derech Mitzvotecha 22b and on; Sefer HaArachim Chabad, Vol. 2, section on “*Umot HaOlam*,” Section 2; Also see the discourse entitled “*Bati LeGani* – I have come to My garden” of the year 5713, translated in The Teachings of The Rebbe, 5713, Discourse 9, Ch. 2 and on.

all worlds (*Sovev Kol Almin*). It therefore is a “sign” for this light. For, a “sign” (*Siman*) must have a likeness to the thing it is a sign for. In other words, as explained before, the essence of the soul does not come to be manifest in the body, but remains above in a transcendent encompassing state (*Makif*). It therefore is the aspect of a sign and indicator for the transcendent encompassing light (*Sovev*) of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He.

This is also the meaning of the verse,²¹⁴⁹ “There the tribes ascended, the tribes of *Ya"H*-יה"ה, a testimony for Israel, to give thanks to the Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה.” That is, the matter of testimony (*Eidut*-עדות) likewise applies specifically to that which is hidden. For, that which is openly revealed requires no testimony. Even when it comes to a matter that is likely to be revealed, full testimony is not required.²¹⁵⁰ This is why in regard to testimony verifying the death of a woman’s husband, the testimony of a single witness is accepted, even the testimony of a woman or a slave, as Rambam writes at the end of Laws of Divorce.²¹⁵¹ This is because it is something that is likely to be revealed, and therefore does not require full testimony. Rather, testimony (*Eidut*-עדות) specifically applies to something that is hidden, meaning the aspect of the transcendent surrounding light of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, as explained before.

The testimony and sign of the transcendent surrounding light (*Ohr HaSovev*) of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, is the essence of the soul, indicated by the words, “She is pure-*Tehorah Hee*-טהורה היא,” as explained before. This then, is the meaning of the

²¹⁴⁹ Psalms 122:4

²¹⁵⁰ Talmud Bavli, Rosh HaShanah 22b

²¹⁵¹ Mishneh Torah, Hilchot Geirushin, Ch. 13

verse, “There the tribes ascended, the tribes of Ya”H-יה”א, a testimony (*Eidut*-עדות) for Israel.”

That is, in and of themselves, the twelve tribes are the aspect of the “twelve oxen of the Chariot (*Merkavah*)” of the world of Creation (*Briyah*),²¹⁵² which are the aspect of the chaining down of the worlds (*Hishtalshelut*). However, when the tribes are ascendant, they ascend to the world of Emanation (*Atzilut*) and are then “a testimony (*Eidut*-עדות) for Yisroel-ישראל,” meaning, “a testimony (*Eidut*-עדות)” for the aspect of “a head to Me-Lee *Rosh*-ראש,”²¹⁵³ meaning, the aspect of the “head” (*Rosh*-ראש) of the soul, and are a testimony (*Eidut*-עדות), in that they reveal the surrounding transcendent light (*Ohr HaSovev*) of *HaShem*-יהוה, blessed is He.

Now, in the time of the Holy Temple, the aspect of Zion-*Tziyon*-ציון was openly revealed, for at that time there was the *mitzvah* of seeing and being seen (*Re'iyah*-ראיה),²¹⁵⁴ as it states,²¹⁵⁵ “Three times a year all males should appear (*Yeira'eh*-יראה) before the face of the Lord *HaShem*-יהוה,” in which the verse specifies, “the face-*Pnei*-פני,” which indicates “innerness-*Pnimityut*-פנימיות.”

That is, they beheld *HaShem*'s-יהוה's Supernal innerness (*Pnimityut*) and the true matter of the surrounding transcendent light of *HaShem*-יהוה, blessed is He (*Sovev Kol Almin*). This was through the innerness (*Pnimityut*) of the soul, meaning that from the innerness (*Pnimityut*) of their soul they beheld *HaShem*'s-יהוה's

²¹⁵² See Torah Ohr, Veyeitzei 24a and elsewhere.

²¹⁵³ See Likkutei Torah, Shlach 48b; Zohar cited in Sefer HaMitzvot of the Tzemach Tzeddek 15b; Shaar HaPesukim of the Arizal to Genesis 32:29 (*Vayishlach*); Shaar HaYichud of the Mittler Rebbe, translated as The Gate of Unity, Ch. 35, and elsewhere.

²¹⁵⁴ Talmud Bavli, Chagigah 2a; Also see Shaarei Orah of Rabbi Yosef Gikatilla, translated as Gates of Light, Gate Five (*Tiferet*).

²¹⁵⁵ Deuteronomy 16:16

Supernal innerness (*Pnimiyyut*). For, as our sages, of blessed memory, stated,²¹⁵⁶ “Just as one comes to see (*Lirot*-לראות), so also, he comes to be seen (*Leira'ot*-ליראות).”

Now, in addition to the matter of seeing (*Re'iyah*-ראיה) during the three pilgrimage festivals, throughout the whole year there also was the matter of kindling the Candelabrum (*Menorah*) [in the Holy Temple], which consisted of seven flames. The matter of these seven flames is the seven classes of Jewish souls (as explained at length in *Likkutei Torah*).²¹⁵⁷

Now, as known, in a flame there is the black of the flame and the white of the flame.²¹⁵⁸ The black of the flame is the light that is closest to the wick, whereas the white of the flame is the light that is above the wick. These are the two aspects of the soul²¹⁵⁹ mentioned before, these being the aspect of “She is pure-*Tehorah Hee* טהורה היא” and the aspect of “You created her-*Atah Baratah* בראתה.” That is, the aspect of “You created her-*Atah Baratah* בראתה,” is the aspect of the black of the flame, which manifests in the body and animalistic soul. The aspect of “She is pure-*Tehorah Hee* טהורה היא” is the aspect of the essence of the soul, which transcends manifestation (*Hitlabshut*) etc.

Likewise, the Altar (*Mizbe'ach*) also had these two aspects, as our sages, of blessed memory, stated,²¹⁶⁰ “Even though a fire descends [on the altar miraculously] from heaven, it is a *mitzvah* for a mortal to bring a fire.” In other words, the fire brought by the mortal is the aspect of the lower fire, which is the matter of toil in serving *HaShem* יהו"ה, blessed is He, which stems

²¹⁵⁶ Talmud Bavli, Chagigah 2a; Also see Shaarei Orah of Rabbi Yosef Gikatilla, translated as Gates of Light, Gate Five (*Tiferet*).

²¹⁵⁷ Likkutei Torah, Beha'alotcha

²¹⁵⁸ See Zohar I 50b and on.

²¹⁵⁹ See Shaarei Teshuvah, Vol. 1, p. 64d; Torat Chaim, Shemot 347a

²¹⁶⁰ Talmud Bavli, Yoma 21b, 53a; Torat Kohanim and Rashi to Leviticus 1:7

from the radiance of the soul that manifests in the body, and it is through this that the upper fire descends, referring to the revelation of the aspect of the essence of the soul.

4.

Now, the explanation is that our sages, of blessed memory, stated,²¹⁶¹ “If a man (*Ish*-אִישׁ) and woman (*Ishah*-אִשָּׁה) are meritorious, the Indwelling Presence of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He (the *Shechinah*), rests between them.” The word “man-*Ish*-אִישׁ” is “fire-*Aish*-אֵשׁ” with the letter *Yod*-י, which is the aspect of Wisdom-*Chochmah*. The word “woman-*Ishah*-אִשָּׁה” is “fire-*Aish*-אֵשׁ” with the letter *Hey*-ה, which is the aspect of Kingship-*Malchut*, and is the lower *Hey*-ה of the Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה.²¹⁶² About this the verse states,²¹⁶³ “This shall be called ‘Woman-*Ishah*-אִשָּׁה,’ for she was taken from ‘Man-*Ish*-אִישׁ.’” That is, the “fire-*Aish*-אֵשׁ” with the letter *Hey*-ה, is drawn from the “fire-*Aish*-אֵשׁ” with the letter *Yod*-י.

To further explain, the “fire-*Aish*-אֵשׁ” with the letter *Hey*-ה, is the aspect of Kingship-*Malchut*. Now, as known, the *Sefirah* of Kingship-*Malchut* is the root and source of all the creations, as it states,²¹⁶⁴ “Your Kingship is the Kingship over all worlds.” For, through it all the worlds were brought into being in a way of existing as a “something” (*Yesh*).

²¹⁶¹ Talmud Bavli, Sotah 17a

²¹⁶² See Shaarei Orah of Rabbi Yosef Gikatilla, translated as Gates of Light, Gate Five (*Tiferet*), and elsewhere.

²¹⁶³ Genesis 2:23

²¹⁶⁴ Psalms 145:13

However, *HaShem*'s יהו"ה ultimate Supernal intent, blessed is He, is for the "something" (*Yesh*) to be sublimated to the Godly "nothing" (*Ayin*), brought about through a revelation of the light (*Ohr*) of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, that illuminates within them.

This light is called "dark light" (*Nehora Ookma*), since its matter is to illuminate the darkness of the worlds.²¹⁶⁵ This is the meaning of the teaching,²¹⁶⁶ "At first it was dark, and then light followed." "At first it was dark" refers to the matter of the concealment and hiddenness of the worlds, which were brought into being [and sense themselves as existing as an independent] "something" (*Yesh*). The words, "and then light followed" refer to the matter of sublimation and nullification (*Bittul*) to *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, which is subsequently caused in them through the revelation of His light (*Ohr*). However, since this light (*Ohr*) was preceded by darkness (*Choshech*), it therefore is called "dark light" (*Nehora Ookma*).

Now, in its first root,²¹⁶⁷ the matter of "At first it was dark" refers to the first restraint of *Tzimtzum*, in that all the light was withdrawn and all that remained was the Impression-*Reshimu*, which is the root and source of the vessels (*Keilim*). "And then the light followed" refers to the drawing down of the light of the Line-*Kav* to illuminate the vessels (*Keilim*). It is called, "dark light" (*Nehora Ookma*), since its matter is to illuminate the darkness of the vessels (*Keilim*) and because it is drawn down by means of the darkness of the restraint of the *Tzimtzum*.

²¹⁶⁵ See Sefer HaMaamarim 5670 p. 17; 5698 p. 109; 5710 p. 37.

²¹⁶⁶ Talmud Bavli, Shabbat 77b

²¹⁶⁷ See Shaar HaYichud of the Mittler Rebbe, translated as The Gate of Unity, Ch. 13-14.

This matter, as it relates to serving *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, is that the word “fire-*Aish*-אש” with the letter *Hey*-ה, which is the “dark light” (*Nehora Ookma*), is the matter of serving *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, with the soul that is manifest in the body and animalistic soul, thus affecting their refinement and clarification.

This is brought about through serving *HaShem*-יהו"ה in prayer, which is “a ladder set on the earth, whose top reaches the heavens.”²¹⁶⁸ For, through prayer one affects the refinement, clarification, and ascent of his animalistic soul.

That is, when a person engages in contemplation (*Hitbonenut*) during the verses of song (*Pesukei d’Zimra*), into the matter of,²¹⁶⁹ “Blessed is He who spoke and the world was,” that all of existence is brought forth solely from the breath of the spirit of the mouth of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He,²¹⁷⁰ and that all the creations only stem from a glimmer and ray of His light, this causes him to be in a state of “running desire” (*Ratzo*) and thirst, in that he desires to leave the constraints of the world and be subsumed in the Oneness of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He.

This then, is the matter of the word “fire-*Aish*-אש” with the letter *Hey*-ה. That is, he is in a state of “running desire” (*Ratzo*) and ascent that stems from the judgments (*Gevurot*), (that is, since it is an arousal of love of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, like flames of fire), it therefore is called “fire-*Aish*-אש,” which is the aspect of Judgment-*Gevurah*. This is the aspect of “dark light” (*Nehora*

²¹⁶⁸ Genesis 28:12; Zohar I 266b; Zohar III 306b; Tikkunei Zohar, Tikkun 45 (83a).

²¹⁶⁹ The “*Baruch SheAmar*” blessing.

²¹⁷⁰ See *Shaar HaYichud VeHaEmunah* of Tanya, translated as *The Gate of Unity and Faith*, Ch. 1 and on; Also see *Ginat Egoz* of Rabbi Yosef Gikatilla, translated as *HaShem Is One*, Vol. 1 (*The Foundations*), *The Gate of Intrinsic Being* (*Shaar HaHavayah*) and on.

Ookma), since it is light (*Ohr*) that relates to the animalistic soul etc.²¹⁷¹

However, in order for the Godly soul to be able to affect the refinement of the animalistic soul, and especially given that “the argument of the animalistic soul is presented first,”²¹⁷² this being so, how is it possible for him to battle against it? However, it is about this that the verse states,²¹⁷³ “This shall be called ‘Woman-*Ishah*-אִשָּׁה,’ for she was taken from ‘Man-*Ish*-אִישׁ.” That is, the empowerment that makes it possible to toil in the aspect of the “fire-*Aish*-אֵשׁ” with the letter *Hey*-ה, stems from the aspect of the “fire-*Aish*-אֵשׁ” with the letter *Yod*-י.

The explanation is that the aspect of the *Yod*-י transcends manifestation (*Hitlabshut*) in the worlds. In other words, this is not an aspect of ascent from below to Above, but is rather in a manner in which he himself is present beyond the chaining down of the worlds (*Hishtalshelut*) and awakens abundant mercies upon his soul etc.

This is the matter of the “fire-*Aish*-אֵשׁ” with the letter *Yod*-י. For, the matter of Mercies (*Rachamim*) are also called “fire-*Aish*-אֵשׁ,” being that warmth causes mercies (*Rachamim*) etc., as the verse states about Yosef,²¹⁷⁴ “His mercies were kindled (*Nichmeru*-נִכְמְרוּ),” in which the word “*Nichmeru*-נִכְמְרוּ” means “became warm-*Nit’chamemu*-נִתְחַמְמוּ,” as in the Talmudic statement,²¹⁷⁵ “The meat will become warm-*Michmar*-מִכְמַר.”

²¹⁷¹ There are individual redactors of the discourse who recalled (and did not clearly recall) that it was stated that in addition to the fact that its matter is to illuminate the darkness of the animalistic soul, even the light itself comes in a way of concealment, and it is for this reason that it is applicable for it to affect the “running desire” (*Ratzo*) in the animalistic soul, since it relates to it etc.

²¹⁷² See Zohar I 179a and on; Midrash Kohelet Rabba 4:13

²¹⁷³ Genesis 2:23

²¹⁷⁴ See Rashi to Genesis 2:23

²¹⁷⁵ Talmud Bavli, Pesachim 58a

Through the drawing down of the aspect of abundant mercies (*Rachamim Rabim*), which are rooted in the aspect of simple mercies (*Rachamim Peshutim*), there is the granting of empowerment to serve *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, in the aspect of the “fire-*Aish*-שא” with the letter *Hey*-ה. This is because in relation to the aspect of the “fire-*Aish*-שא” with the letter *Yod*-י, “the argument of the animalistic soul taking precedence” does not apply, since this aspect transcends manifestation (*Hitlabshut*) and has utterly no relationship whatsoever to the concealments of the animalistic soul etc.

However, even this service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, does not stem from the actual essence of the soul itself, but is still in the category of toiling with the aspect of the “fire-*Aish*-שא” with the letter *Hey*-ה, only that in order to be able to serve *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, with the aspect of the “fire-*Aish*-שא” with the letter *Hey*-ה, a person must first bring about the empowerment by toiling in the aspect of the “fire-*Aish*-שא” with the letter *Yod*-י, (as discussed above).

Rather, true service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה with the “fire-*Aish*-שא” with the letter *Yod*-י, as it is, in and of itself, is the aspect of the singular-*Yechidah* essence of the soul, for since [the *Yechidah* essence of the soul] is in a state of “hugging and adhering to You,”²¹⁷⁶ it therefore is not applicable for it to be in a state of “running desire” (*Ratzo*) at all, being that it already is in a state of closeness to *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He. Thus, the “fire-*Aish*-שא” of this aspect is the matter of “the flame that [continually] ascends of its own accord.”²¹⁷⁷

²¹⁷⁶ See the *Hosha 'anot* liturgy (for the 3rd day).

²¹⁷⁷ See Rashi to Exodus 27:20; Numbers 8:2; Talmud Bavli, Shabbat 21a

This refers to love (*Ahavah*) of *HaShem*-יהו"ה stemming from the essence of the soul, which is present in each and every Jew. That is, it is because of this love that a Jew “is neither able, nor desires to be separated from *HaShem*’s-יהו"ה Godliness, Heaven forbid.”²¹⁷⁸ This love (*Ahavah*) of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, is not a state of “running” (*Ratzo*) [to Him], but is rather a state of adhesion (*Dveikut*) [to Him], in that “it hugs and adheres to You.”

5.

Now, all the above was in the time of the Holy Temple (as mentioned in chapter three). However, during the time of exile, the essence of the soul is in a state of concealment. Because of this, there is lacking in the service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, with the aspect of the “fire-*Aish*-אש” with the letter *Hey*-ה. For, since the granting of empowerment for serving Him with the aspect of the “fire-*Aish*-אש” with the letter *Hey*-ה stems from the aspect of the “fire-*Aish*-אש” with the letter *Yod*-י, as explained above, it therefore is understood that being that the essence of the soul is concealed, therefore there also is a lacking in the granting of empowerment for service of Him with the “fire-*Aish*-אש” with the letter *Hey*-ה, which is the “dark light” (*Nehora Ookma*).

About this the verse states,²¹⁷⁹ “Tziyon will be redeemed through justice.” That is, during the time of exile, the aspect of Tziyon-צִיּוֹן (referring to the essence of the soul) is in a state of concealment, and must be redeemed from its exile. This

²¹⁷⁸ Igrot Kodesh of the Rebbe Rayatz, Vol. 4 p. 384 (quoted in HaYom Yom for the 25th of Tammuz), p. 547 (quoted in HaYom Yom for the 21st of Sivan).

²¹⁷⁹ Isaiah 1:27

redemption is with “justice-*Mishpat*-משפט,” and as explained in Likkutei Torah,²¹⁸⁰ “justice-*Mishpat*-משפט” refers to Torah, as the verse states,²¹⁸¹ “As in the original practice-*KaMishpat HaRishon*-כמשפט הראשון,” which Targum translates, “As in the original law-*K’Hilcheta Kadma’a*-כהלכתה כדמאא-ה.” In other words, through Torah there is made to be the revelation of the “fire-*Aish*-אש” with the letter *Yod*-י, and this revelation also empowers the aspect of the “fire-*Aish*-אש” with the letter *Hey*-ה.

The reason is because Torah also has these two aspects, as our sages, of blessed memory, stated,²¹⁸² “The Torah was given with black fire upon white fire.” The explanation is that, at first glance, it is not understood why the black fire is upon the white fire, given that the white fire is of a higher level than the black fire. Accordingly, they should have instead stated, “white fire upon black fire.”

However, the explanation is that *HaShem*’s-ה"ה ultimate Supernal intent in the toil of serving Him, is specifically in the aspect of the “black fire,” which is the toil of the soul that comes by way of inner manifestation (*Hitlabshut*) etc., only that in the “black fire” there must be a sense of the “white fire,” which is the light of the soul that transcends inner manifestation. That is, *HaShem*’s-ה"ה ultimate Supernal intent is for the toil in serving Him to be manifest (*Hitlabshut*) in the soul, meaning that it specifically should have an effect on the body and animalistic soul and refine them.

The same is so of Torah study, that it specifically must be with understanding and comprehension. Nevertheless, within the

²¹⁸⁰ Likkutei Torah, Devarim 1b

²¹⁸¹ Genesis 40:13

²¹⁸² Midrash Tanchuma Bereishit 1; Dvarim Rabba 3:12; Shir HaShirim Rabba 5:9 (6); Midrash Tehillim 90:12; Rashi to Deuteronomy 33:2, and elsewhere.

understanding and comprehension, there must be the sense of accepting the yoke of *HaShem*'s יהו"ה Kingship, which transcends grasp and comprehension. This is the matter of "first making the blessings over the Torah."²¹⁸³

However, that which transcends grasp and comprehension must specifically be sensed and felt within the grasp and comprehension. This then, is why the "black fire" is upon the "white fire," being that *HaShem*'s יהו"ה ultimate Supernal intent is in the "black fire," except that the "black fire" must be upon the "white fire."

Now, these two "fires" in Torah, are the matter of the Written Torah (*Torah SheB'Khtav*) and the Oral Torah (*Torah SheBa'al Peh*). That is, the Oral Torah (*Torah SheBa'al Peh*) is the aspect of "black fire," since it is specifically the matter of grasp and comprehension.²¹⁸⁴ Moreover, within the grasp and comprehension itself, it must be grasped in the intellect of the animalistic soul. In contrast, this is not so of the Written Torah (*Torah SheB'Khtav*), which transcends grasp, and is called "Calling-*Mikra*-מקרא," like a person calling (*Kore*-קורא) his friend, or like a child calling (*Kore*-קורא) his father (as explained in *Tanya*).²¹⁸⁵

More specifically, these two aspects of "fire" are the matter of the revealed parts of Torah and the inner aspects of the Torah (*Pnimiyut HaTorah*). That is, the revealed parts of Torah are called "black fire," since they come in a way of manifestation

²¹⁸³ See Talmud Bavli, Nedarim 81a; Rabbeinu Nissim to Nedarim there; Bayit Chadash (Ba"Ch) to Tur, Orach Chayim 47; Shulchan Aruch of the Alter Rebbe, Orach Chayim 47:1.

²¹⁸⁴ See Hilchot Talmud Torah of the Alter Rebbe, Ch. 2.

²¹⁸⁵ *Tanya*, Likkutei Amarim, Ch. 37

in physical things, even including [the clarification of] false arguments etc.

In contrast, this is not so of the inner aspect of Torah (*Pnimiyyut HaTorah*), which transcends manifestation (*Hitlabshut*) etc., and is called “white fire.” Therefore, through the study of Torah, which is “black fire upon white fire,” meaning that even the comprehension *HaShem*’s-יהו”ה Godliness, which transcends grasp, is sensed in Torah, and this brings about the redemption of the essence of the soul, which is the aspect of Tziyon-צִיּוֹן, which becomes revealed in the soul that manifests in the body. This is as explained before, that the granting of empowerment for the toil of the “woman-*Ishah*”-אִשָּׁה, is from the aspect of the “fire-*Aish*”-אֵשׁ with the letter *Yod*-י.

6.

This then, is the meaning of the words,²¹⁸⁶ “Moshe wrote their goings forth (*Motza’eihem*-מוֹצְאֵיהֶם) according to their journeys (*Maseihem*-מַסְעֵיהֶם).” “Their origins (*Motza’eihem*-מוֹצְאֵיהֶם)” refers to the essence of the soul, which is the aspect of the “fire-*Aish*”-אֵשׁ with the letter *Yod*-י. “Their journeys (*Maseihem*-מַסְעֵיהֶם)” refers to the “foot” (*Regel*) of the soul, which is the aspect of the “fire-*Aish*”-אֵשׁ with the letter *Hey*-ה.

That is, this is the aspect of the soul which manifests in the body and animalistic soul, with which and by which, there must be the toil of the “journeys” in bringing about the refinement of the body and animalistic soul, which is brought about by drawing down the aspect of “their origins (*Motza’eihem*-מוֹצְאֵיהֶם),” meaning, the aspect of the essence of the soul, as explained before.

²¹⁸⁶ Numbers 33:2

Now, since these two aspects are utterly incomparable to each other, therefore, the drawing down is brought about by “Moshe wrote.” Additionally, this drawing down must take place within each and every Jew every single day. This is because a person’s life in general is the matter of the forty-two journeys, and every day one must bring himself to journey from the level he is currently on, to a higher level. This is the matter of leaving Egypt (*Mitzrayim*-מצרים) every day, which specifically comes about through “Moshe wrote,” in that he draws down the aspect of “their origins (*Motza’eihem*-מוצאיהם)” into “their journeys (*Maseihem*-מסעיהם).”

Now, it is through this drawing down and toil in the aspect of “their journeys (*Maseihem*-מסעיהם)” that the ascent is caused from below to Above, that is, “Their journeys (*Maseihem*-מסעיהם) according to their goings forth (*Motza’eihem*-מוצאיהם).” For, as explained before, the second time that “their origins (*Motza’eihem*-מוצאיהם)” is mentioned in the verse, is higher than the first time “their origins (*Motza’eihem*-מוצאיהם)” is mentioned.

This is because *HaShem*’s יהו"ה ultimate Supernal intent is specifically for the toil of the “black fire,” (as discussed before), this being the aspect of “their journeys (*Maseihem*-מסעיהם).” Therefore, through this toil we reach even higher. That is, we reach the aspect of the revelation of the essence of the soul, which even transcends the root and source of the soul as it was before its descent.