Discourse 14

"Eileh Pekudei HaMishkan -These are the sums of the Tabernacle"

Delivered on Shabbat Parshat Vayakhel-Pekudei, Parshat HaChodesh, Shabbat Mevarchim Nissan, 5720 By the grace of *HaShem*, blessed is He,

1.

The verse states, ⁹⁶⁸ "These are the sums of the Tabernacle, the Tabernacle of Testimony, which were reckoned at Moshe's bidding." The questions regarding the specific wording of this verse are well known. ⁹⁶⁹ That is, the verse repeats the word "Tabernacle-*Mishkan-קשב*" and the second time "Tabernacle-*Mishkan-משב*ן" is mentioned, it states, "the Tabernacle of Testimony-*Mishkan HaEidut*-משבן." The Holy Alshich, ⁹⁷⁰ asks additional questions on the specific wording here, some of which Likkutei Torah also mentions. ⁹⁷¹

The point of the explanation is that from the fact that the verse mentions "Tabernacle-Mishkan-משכן" twice, it must be said that there are two levels of the "Tabernacle-Mishkan-

⁹⁶⁸ Numbers 38:21

⁹⁶⁹ Likkutei Torah, Pekudei 3a; Torat Chaim, Pekudei, p. 647b, 655b (Vol. 2 p. 442c, 452a in the new edition).

⁹⁷⁰ Rabbi Moshe Alshich to Numbers 38:21

⁹⁷¹ See Likkutei Torah, Pekudei ibid.

משכן," and that the second level of the "Tabernacle-*Mishkan*-" is the matter of "Testimony-*Eidut*."

Now, the general matter of the verse, "These are the sums etc.," refers to a previous statement (in the Torah portion before this, that),⁹⁷² "Moshe gathered the entire assembly of the children of Israel," in preparation for the toil of [constructing] the Tabernacle (*Mishkan*). The conclusion of the [above] matter is as stated here [in the Torah portion of Pekudei], "These are the sums etc."

Now, since in the matter of "these are the sums of the Tabernacle (*Mishkan*)," there are two aspects to the Tabernacle (*Mishkan*-,"), it is understood that this likewise is so of the matter of "Moshe gathered etc.," that there also two aspects, corresponding to the two aspects of the Tabernacle (*Mishkan*-, משכן).

The explanation is that the verse states,⁹⁷³ "There the tribes ascended, the tribes of *Ya"h-ה"י*, a testimony for Israel." At first, this verse simply states "tribes-*Shevatim*-שבטי" and then states, "the tribes of *Ya"h-Shivtei Ya"h-"h"*, indicating two aspects in the tribes (*Shevatim-שבטי*). About the second aspect of "tribes" (*Shevatim-שבטים*) the verse states, "a testimony for Israel-*Eidut l'Yisroel-"yדות לישראל*," indicating that they are the aspect of "Testimony-*Eidut-"y"*."

The same is so of the Tabernacle (Mishkan-משכן), in that there are two aspects of the Tabernacle (Mishkan-משכן). That is, there is the simple [mention] of the "Tabernacle-Mishkan-

 $^{^{972}}$ Exodus 35:1 – The beginning of the Torah portion of Vayakhel.

⁹⁷³ Psalms 122:4

משכן," and there is the "Tabernacle of Testimony-Mishkan HaEidut-משכן."

2.

The explanation⁹⁷⁴ is that the word "Tribe-*Shevet*-שבש" indicates the matter of "drawing down" (*Hamshachah*), as in,⁹⁷⁵ "a star that extends out-*Kochava d'Shaveit*-" (a comet).⁹⁷⁶ That is, the light of the comet is drawn outside [of itself], like the branch of a tree that is drawn out from the tree. Now, there are two details here. The first is that it is drawn outside. The second is that even as it is drawn outside, it nevertheless is part and parcel of the body of the tree [or the comet] and adheres to it.

The same is so of the tribes (*Shevatim-שבטים*), in that they are drawn from the forefathers. The forefathers [Avraham, Yitzchak and Yaakov] (about whom it states, ⁹⁷⁷ "One may only call three people 'forefathers-*Avot*-אבות-"") are the aspect of the Chariot (*Merkavah*) for the world of Emanation (*Atzilut*). On the other hand, the tribes (*Shevatim-שבטים*) are a drawing down of the aspect of the Chariot (*Merkavah*) of the world of Emanation (*Atzilut*) into the worlds of Creation, Formation and

⁹⁷⁴ See the discourse entitled "*Vayakhel*" 5655 (Sefer HaMaamarim 5655 p. 137 and on); 5634 (Sefer HaMaamarim 5634 p. 144 and on); Also see the discourse by this title in Ohr HaTorah, Vayakhel p. 2,086.

⁹⁷⁵ Talmud Bavli, Brachot 58b and Rashi there.

⁹⁷⁶ Also see Torah Ohr, Vayechi 103b; Sefer HaMaamarim 5689 p. 257.

⁹⁷⁷ Talmud Bayli, Brachot 16b

Action (Briyah, Yetzirah, Asiyah), all the way down to this world.

(This is similar to the drawing down of a comet – "a star that extends out-Kochava d'Shaveit-"כוכבא דשביט" – that is, it is drawn outside of itself.) Nonetheless, even in their descent to the worlds of Creation, Formation, and Action (Briyah, Yetzirah, Asiyah), the [tribes] are connected to their source in the aspect of the Chariot (Merkavah) of the world of Emanation (Atzilut).

Now, the descent of the tribes (*Shevatim*-שׁכטים) to the worlds of Creation, Formation, and Action (*Briyah*, *Yetzirah*, *Asiyah*), is a very great descent. For, the world of Emanation (*Atzilut*) is the World of Unity (*Olam HaAchdut*), in which "He and His life force are one, and He and His organs are one."978 In contrast, in the world of Creation (*Briyah*) there is the beginning of the sense of independent "somethingness" (*Yeshut*), as it states, 979 "And from there it separates (*Yipared*-775")." This is especially so of the descent to this physical world, which is a very great descent beyond all comparison.

However, HaShem's-הי"ה ultimate Supernal intent in the descent is for the purpose of ascent, as in the teaching, 980 "The descent is for the purpose of ascent." In other words, the whole matter of the tribes (Shevatim-שבטים), which is the matter

⁹⁷⁸ Introduction to Tikkunei Zohar 3b

⁹⁷⁹ Genesis 2:10; See Shaarei Orah of Rabbi Yosef Gikatilla, translated as Gates of Light, Gate Eight (*Binah*); Also see Torah Ohr, Vayeishev 27c and on, and elsewhere.

⁹⁸⁰ See Ginat Egoz of Rabbi Yosef Gikatilla, translated as HaShem Is One, Vol. 2, Section entitled "The twelve letters ה"נ ט"י ל"נ ס"יע צ"ק correspond to the twelve tribes of Israel."

of descent, is for the sake of ascent. It is in this regard that the verse states, 981 "There the tribes ascended (Alu-ישבטים)." In other words, the whole matter of the tribes (Shevatim-שבטים), which is the matter of descent, is for the sake of ascent, as in, "There the tribes ascended (Alu-ישלו)."

This is also hinted at in Yosef's dream, in the verse, 982 "Behold! – We were binding sheaves in the middle of the field etc." That is, the toil of "binding sheaves" refers to gathering stalks that are separate from each other. This refers to the worlds of Creation, Formation, and Action (*Briyah*, *Yetzirah*, *Asiyah*), which are "the world of separation (*Alma d'Pruda*)."983

This also is the meaning of "in the middle of the field," meaning that they were not in the city, and were not the aspect indicated by the verse, 984 "The splendor (*Tiferet*) of man is to dwell in a house." They were rather in "the field" which refers to the worlds of Creation, Formation, and Action (*Briyah*, *Yetzirah*, *Asiyah*), and their toil was to gather [the stalks] together and bring about the matter of unity (*Achdut-*nath) in them, which is the matter of ascent from the worlds of Creation, Formation, and Action (*Briyah*, *Yetzirah*, *Asiyah*), to the world of Emanation (*Atzilut*).

981 Psalms 122:4

⁹⁸⁴ Isaiah 44:13

⁹⁸² Genesis 37:7; See the discourse entitled "V'Heenei Anachnu MeAlmeem" in Torah Ohr, Vayeishev 27c and on; Sefer HaMaamarim 5689 p. 266 and on.

⁹⁸³ See Zohar I 22a; Zohar III 228b (Ra'aya Mehmena); Shaarei Orah of Rabbi Yosef Gikatilla, translated as Gates of Light, Gate Eight (*Binah*) ibid.

The explanation is that the general purpose of the descent of the soul to below, is for the sake of refining and gathering sparks [of holiness]. This is done through eating [and drinking], as well as through all the physical matters that one is engaged in for the sake of refining the sparks [of holiness in them].

In other words, the eating [and drinking] must not be for the sake of the physical bread. This is as stated,⁹⁸⁵ "He brings his bread with his soul," meaning that for the sake of bread, one gives his very soul, in the most literal sense. However, it is for the sake of affecting refinements (*Birurim*) and gathering the sparks [of holiness].

This accords to the teaching of the Baal Shem Tov, 986 based on the writings of the Arizal, 987 on the verse, 988 "Not by bread alone does man live, but by everything that emanates from the mouth of *HaShem-ה*" does man live." In other words, the matter of eating must not be for the sake of the bread itself, but for the sake of that which "emanates from the mouth of *HaShem-*" that is within it.

It is in this same way that one must engage in all his physical matters. That is, his intention should be to refine the sparks [of holiness] in them, and to elevate them to Above. It is to this end that the soul descended to the worlds of Creation,

⁹⁸⁵ In the liturgy of "Ki k'Shimcha-כי כשמך" in the [repetition] of the Musaf of Rosh HaShanah and Yom HaKippurim (based on Lamentations 5:9).

⁹⁸⁶ Keter Shem Tov, Section 194; Also see Likkutei Torah, Tzav 13b and on; Sefer HaMaamarim 5697 p. 207, and elsewhere.

⁹⁸⁷ Likkutei Torah of the Arizal to Deuteronomy (Eikev) 8:3

⁹⁸⁸ Deuteronomy 8:3

Formation, and Action (*Briyah*, *Yetzirah*, *Asiyah*), all the way to this physical world, so that even in the place of separateness, the soul should bring about the matter of unity (*Achdut*).

3.

This also is the meaning of the verse, 989 "Then Shlomo gathered together the elders of Israel and all the heads of the tribes... every man of Israel." The matter of this gathering (Hakhel-הקהל) is that he elevated them to the aspect of unity (Achdut-אוד). However, all this is the matter of the first refinement (Birur Rishon), which is from below to Above. That is, this is refinement and ascent from the worlds of Creation, Formation, and Action (Briyah, Yetzirah, Asiyah) to the world of Emanation (Atzilut).

That is, since it is the first refinement (*Birur Rishon*), from below to Above, the toil itself still takes place in the place of separateness, where there is not yet even the sublimation and nullification of the "something" (*Bittul HaYesh*) to *HaShem-*in", blessed is He. Therefore, the order in this service is in a way of division, in that he first gathered the elders of Israel, then the heads of the tribes, and only afterwards, the rest of the Jewish people.

However, after the first refinement (*Birur Rishon*) and ascent from the worlds of Creation, Formation, and Action (*Briyah*, *Yetzirah*, *Asiyah*) to the world of Emanation (*Atzilut*),

⁹⁸⁹ Kings I 8:1-2; Chronicles II 5:2-3

there then is the second refinement (*Birur Sheini*). This is the matter of ascent to the aspect that transcends the world of Emanation (*Atzilut*), which is the aspect of the Concealed of all concealed (*Steema d'Kol Steemeen*), about which the verse states, ⁹⁹⁰ "He made darkness His concealment," and this aspect transcends division.

This is the matter of the second time that "Tribes-Shevatim-שבטים" is mentioned, about which the verse states, "a testimony for Israel-Eidut l'Yisroel-עדות לישראל." For, testimony (Eidut-ידות) is not [necessary] when something is revealed, nor is it even [necessary] for something that will be revealed. Rather, testimony it is specifically necessary for that which is concealed, this being the matter of ascent to the Concealed of the all concealed (Steema d'Kol Steemeen), about which the verse states, "He made darkness His concealment."

The explanation is that, as known, in the general totality of the chaining down of the worlds (*Hishtalshelut*), there are three aspects. ⁹⁹² These are *Akudim*, *Nekudim*, and *Berudim*. ⁹⁹³

990 Psalms 18:12; See Likkutei Torah, Pekudei 3d

⁹⁹¹ See Talmud Bavli, Rosh HaShanah 22b

⁹⁹² See Maamarei Admor HaEmtza'ee, Bamidbar Vol. 2, p. 864 and on; Ohr HaTorah, Bamidbar p. 188 and on.

⁹⁹³ The two levels of the world of Tohu, and the level of the world of *Tikkun* correspond to the three worlds of *Akudim*, *Nekudim* and *Berudim*. These terms, which mean "bound," "speckled" and "splotched," have their source in the Torah account of how Lavan (Leah and Rachel's father) tried to swindle Yaakov out of the wages due him for tending Lavan's flock. After working without pay for fourteen years in return for marrying his daughters, Lavan agreed that Yaakov would receive his payment with those goats that were born with "bands" around their ankles (*Akudim*), small speckles (*Nekudim*) or large splotches (*Berudim*). These Torah terms hint at the three levels of *Nekudah*, *Sefirah* and *Partzuf*. The term *Akudim* (bands) represents the level of *Nekudah*, in which the sefirot are all "bound" up in a single vessel and are thus indistinguishable from each other. They are all expressed in the essential

Berudim (splotches) refers to how the ten Sefirot come into division. In general, this refers to the ten Sefirot of the world of Emanation (Atzilut), which are in a state of division. For, even though the world of Emanation (Atzilut) is the World of Unity (Olam HaAchdut), nonetheless, it has ten Sefirot, which are "ten and not nine, ten and not eleven." 994

Now, even as the *Sefirot* are in the world of *Nekudim* (Points), which is the aspect of the point (*Nekudah*) of Wisdom-*Chochmah* or the Crown-*Keter* of each *Sefirah*, they also are in a state of division, in that they are ten points (*Nekudot*), or ten Crowns (*Ketarim*).

However, the above only relates to the aspects of *Nekudim* and *Berudim*. However, the aspect of *Akudim* (Bound), refers to how they [the *Sefirot*] are bound up (*Akudim*) in a single vessel and thus transcend division. About this [Sefer Yetzirah] states, ⁹⁹⁵ "Before One (*Echad-*77) what do you count?"

That is, the entire matter of numeration-*Mispar*-מספר, meaning the ten *Sefirot*-ספירות, is specifically included in the

desire, such as the essential desire for kindness, for example, similar to a band which is circular, representing that it is bound up in itself. The small speckles (*Nekudim*) represent the level of *Sefirah*, in which the particular divisions of each *Sefirah* are recognizable, but nonetheless, remain disjointed and do not interconnect to work in conjunction, as a unified system. The large splotches (*Brudim*) represent the level of *Partzuf*, in which the sefirot are recognizable as distinct qualities, but nonetheless, unite and connect to work in conjunction as a unified system. This is comparable to the merging of many specks into one large splotch. See Shaar HaYichud of the Mittler Rebbe, translated as The Gate of Unity, Ch. 20 and the notes there. Etz Chayim, Shaar 6 (Shaar HaAkudim) Ch. 1; Shaar 7 (Shaar Mati v'Lo Mati) Ch. 1, and elsewhere; Also see Torah Ohr, No'ach 10c and on, and elsewhere.

⁹⁹⁴ Sefer Yetzirah 1:4

⁹⁹⁵ Sefer Yetzirah 1:7

aspect of "One-*Echad-*". אה"ד." Moreover, this is the meaning of the word "One-*Echad-*". That is, the *Aleph-*8-1 and *Chet-*п-8 are the nine *Sefirot* of *Zeir Anpin*, and the *Dalet-*7-4 is *Sefirah* of Kingship-*Malchut*.

This is the matter of the ten *Sefirot* as they are drawn down in the world of Emanation (*Atzilut*), (as well as in the world of *Nekudim*-Points), in which they are there in a state of ten, and in the category of numeration (*Mispar*-מספר). However, "before One (*Echad*-זיש) what do you count?" That is, that which transcends the lights (*Orot*) and vessels (*Keilim*) of the world of Emanation (*Atzilut*) is not in the category of numeration or division altogether. This refers to the world of *Akudim* (Bound) and higher.

About this the verse states,⁹⁹⁶ "Moshe gathered (*Vayakhel-יקהל*) the entire assembly of the children of Israel," which refers to the matter of the second refinement (*Birur Sheini*) and is the ascent and gathering of the sparks [of holiness] to the aspect of *Akudim* (Bound), which transcends division.

This is why the verse states, "Moshe gathered (Vayakhel-ויקהל) the entire assembly of the children of Israel," in that he gathered them all equally, without any divisions whatsoever. In other words, this is unlike the gathering of Shlomo, in which there was the division of the elders of Israel, the heads of the tribes etc. For, the gathering of Shlomo was the matter of the first refinement (Birur Rishon) and ascent from

⁹⁹⁶ Exodus 35:1 – The beginning of the Torah portion of Vayakhel.

the worlds of Creation, Formation, and Action (*Briyah*, *Yetzirah*, *Asiyah*) to the world of Emanation (*Atzilut*). However, as explained before, in the world of Emanation (*Atzilut*) there is a division of ten *Sefirot*.

However, the gathering of Moshe is the matter of the second refinement (*Birur Sheini*) and ascent to the aspect that transcends the world of Emanation (*Atzilut*) and transcends division altogether. The reason that Moshe had the power to affect the ascent to the aspect that transcends the world of Emanation (*Atzilut*) is because about Moshe, the verse states, ⁹⁹⁷ "For I drew him from the water."

That is, as known, Moshe's soul was from the first Sabbatical (*Shmitah*), ⁹⁹⁸ which is an aspect that transcends the chaining down of the worlds (*Hishtalshelut*). It therefore was in his power to affect the gathering and ascent to the aspect of *Akudim* (Bound), and even higher, to the aspect indicated by the verse, ⁹⁹⁹ "He made darkness His concealment."

This is likewise the meaning of the verse, 1000 "Moshe approached the thick cloud where God-*Elohi"m*-ש" was." The "thick cloud-*Araphel*-"ערפל" refers to the aspect of darkness that transcends light and revelation, meaning, the aspect of "He made darkness His concealment." The meaning of the words, "where God-*Elohi"m*-"ש-"מ-"מ-" was" is that relative to this aspect,

⁹⁹⁷ Exodus 2:10

⁹⁹⁸ Torah Ohr, Shemot 51d, 52b

⁹⁹⁹ Psalms 18:12; See Likkutei Torah, Pekudei 3d

¹⁰⁰⁰ Exodus 20:18

even the [lower name] *HaShem-יהו"* is considered to be like His title "God-*Elohi"m*-ה"מ-אלהי"ם.

This then, explains why the matter of "Moshe gathered etc.," was in preparation not only for the aspect of the Tabernacle (משכן), as simply stated, but also for the aspect of the Tabernacle of Testimony (Mishkan HaEidut-משכן). This is because Moshe's gathering was the ascent of the second refinement (Birur Sheini). It therefore was also preparatory for the aspect of the Tabernacle of Testimony (Mishkan HaEidut-משכן העדות), in that Testimony (Eidut-עדות) applies to that which is concealed, which is the matter of drawing down the aspect of the Concealed of all concealed (Steema d'Kol Steemeen), as explained before.

4.

Now, everything stated above, both in regard to the matter of "the tribes ascended," as well as to the matter of "the tribes of *Ya"h-¬i"*, a testimony for Israel," which are the two gatherings of Shlomo and of Moshe, are both an ascent from below to Above, except that in the matter of ascent, there are two aspects. For, "just as they unite Above, so does she unite below." This refers to the first refinement (*Birur Rishon*)

¹⁰⁰¹ See Torah Ohr, Vayeitzei 21d; Likkutei Torah, Shabbat Shuvah 65d; Also see Shaarei Orah of Rabbi Yosef Gikatilla, translated as Gates of Light, Gate Five (*Tiferet*) where the lower Name *HaShem-הרוויה* (of the world of Emanation-*Atzilut*) is explained, and see his Ginat Egoz translated as HaShem Is One, Vol. 1, The Gate of Intrinsic Being (*Shaar HaHavayah*), where the upper essential Name *HaShem* is explained.

¹⁰⁰² Zohar II 135a (recited at the end of the Kabbalat Shabbat liturgy).

and the second refinement (Birur Sheini), both of which are from below to Above.

Through these two ascents from below to Above, a drawing down from Above to below is then drawn into both aspects. This is the meaning of the verse, "These are the sums of the Tabernacle-Mishkan-משכן," — which states "Tabernacle-Mishkan-משכן" simply — and then continues, "the Tabernacle of Testimony-Mishkan HaEidut-משכן."

This is also why about "the Tabernacle of Testimony-Mishkan HaEidut-משכן העדות" the verse continues, "that were reckoned at Moshe's bidding." This is as explained before, that the preparation for the drawing down was specifically because of the ascent brought about by Moshe. In the same way, the drawing down of "the Tabernacle of Testimony-Mishkan HaEidut-משכן העדות" was specifically in Moshe's power.

5.

This is also the meaning of the continuation of the verse, 1005 "The toil of the Levites etc." At first glance, this [part of the verse] is not understood, being the the construction of the Tabernacle (*Mishkan*) did not require the toil of the Levites. Their toil only came afterwards, in the Tabernacle (*Mishkan*) itself, as well as in transporting the Tabernacle (*Mishkan*) when

¹⁰⁰³ Numbers 38:21

¹⁰⁰⁴ Also see Likkutei Torah, Pekudei 4d and on.

¹⁰⁰⁵ Numbers 38:21 ibid.

they moved from encampment to encampment. However, the construction of the Tabernacle (*Mishkan*) was not done through the toil of the Levites.

However, the explanation¹⁰⁰⁶ is that since *HaShem's*הר"ה ultimate Supernal intent in the Tabernacle (*Mishkan*) is the
drawing down of the Oneness (*Achdut*) of *HaShem-*הר"ה,
blessed is He, even in the place of separateness, as explained
before, meaning that even in the worlds of Creation, Formation,
and Action (*Briyah*, *Yetzirah*, *Asiyah*) – which are the "world
of separation" (*Alma d'Pruda*) – there should be a drawing
down, not only of the world of Emanation (*Atzilut*), but of the
aspect of the world of *Akudim* (Bound) and even higher, all of
which comes about through the toil of affecting refinements
(*Birurim*), as explained before.

This then, is the matter of the toil of the Levites-לויים, which is related to [the word "Leviathan-לויתן,"] as in the verse, "You fashioned this Leviathan-לויתן to laugh-Lesachek-שחק with." For, "from the time that the Holy Temple was destroyed, it is forbidden to fill one's mouth with laughter-Schok-שחוק "." שחוק." "1008 Only in the coming future "our mouths will then be filled with laughter-Schok-שחוק." "1009

However, the toil of the Levites-לויים - which is the matter of bonding and nullifying the tangible "something" (Yesh) to the Godly "nothing" (Ayin) - brings about the drawing forth of HaShem's-זהו"ה-Supernal laughter and delight, to the

¹⁰⁰⁶ See Likkutei Torah, Pekudei 5d; Likkutei Torah, Naso 24b and on.

¹⁰⁰⁷ Psalms 104:26

¹⁰⁰⁸ Talmud Bavli, Brachot 31a

¹⁰⁰⁹ Psalms 126:2; Talmud Bavli, Brachot 31a ibid.

point that "our mouths will then be filled with laughter-Schok-שחוק," which is the matter of the revelation of the coming future.

This then, is the general matter of the Tabernacle-Mishkan-משכן, about which the verse states, 1010 "They shall make a sanctuary for Me, and I shall dwell (v'Shachanti-ישכנתי) within them." That is, through the toil of the Tabernacle (Mishkan-משכן) and the Sanctuary (Mikdash-שבן), which refers to the matter of gathering and refining the sparks [of holiness], both the first refinement (Birur Rishon) and the second refinement (Birur Sheini), as explained before, there thereby is caused to be the matter of "I shall dwell within them (V'Shachanti B'Tocham-ושכנת),"1011 referring to drawing down the aspect of the pleasure (Taanug) and revelation of the coming future.

¹⁰¹⁰ Exodus 25:8

¹⁰¹¹ See Shaarei Orah of Rabbi Yosef Gikatilla, translated as Gates of Light, Gate One (*Malchut*); Shnei Luchot HaBrit 69a; Likkutei Torah, Naso 20b.