

Discourse 21

*“Shiviti HaShem L’Negdi Tamid -
I have set HaShem before me always”*

Delivered on Shabbat Parshat Naso,
9th of Sivan, 5720
By the grace of *HaShem*, blessed is He,

1.

The verse states,¹³⁵³ “I have set *HaShem*-יהו"ה before me always.” We previously explained (in the discourse of the holiday of Shavuot)¹³⁵⁴ that the Baal Shem Tov explains¹³⁵⁵ that the word “I have set-*Shiviti*-שׁוִיטִי” means “equanimity-*Hishtavut*-הִשְׁתַּוּת.” We thus can say that, “I have set *HaShem*-*Shiviti HaShem*-יהו"ה שׁוִיטִי,” refers to the matter of “equanimity-*Hishtavut*-הִשְׁתַּוּת” in the Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה.

To clarify, though I have not seen this explanation [written] anywhere, however, being that “a [Torah] verse never departs from its simple meaning,”¹³⁵⁶ and the simple meaning is that [the word] “I have set-*Shiviti*-שׁוִיטִי” refers to *HaShem*-

¹³⁵³ Psalms 16:8

¹³⁵⁴ It seems that the intention is either to the discourse entitled “*b’Sha’ah She’heekdeemoo*” of the first night of Shavuot (toward morning) or to the missing portion of the preceding discourse entitled “*Chamishah Kinyanim* – Five acquisitions” of the second day of Shavuot. In either case, the section referenced is missing. See however, the Sichah talk of the second day of Shavuot of this year, 5720, Ch. 10 and on (Torat Menachem, Vol. 28 p. 118 and on).

¹³⁵⁵ Tzavat HaRivash, translated as The Way of The Baal Shem Tov, 2

¹³⁵⁶ Talmud Bavli, Shabbat 63a

יהו"ה (I have placed *HaShem*-יהו"ה before me always),¹³⁵⁷ it therefore is understood that the explanation of the Baal Shem Tov that the word “I have set-*Shiviti*-שׁוִיטִי” means “equanimity-*Hishtavut*-הִשְׁתַּוּוּת,” (that is, the word “I have set-*Shiviti*-שׁוִיטִי” refers to the person himself, in that whatever happens, it all is equal to him), we can also explain that it refers **to *HaShem*-יהו"ה** (as in the simple meaning). That is, this is the matter of equanimity (*Hishtavut*-הִשְׁתַּוּוּת) in the Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה itself.

2.

Now, the explanation is that in the name *HaShem*-יהו"ה there is a matter of division, in that the Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה has four letters corresponding to four distinct levels. Moreover, the Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה is vowelized with different vowels, as we find in the Alter Rebbe's siddur¹³⁵⁸ that each blessing is printed with different vowels for the Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה, some with the vowel *Komatz*-קִמָּץ, some with the vowel *Patach*-פָּתָח etc.] Each vowelization of the Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה indicates the drawing down of the name *HaShem*-יהו"ה in a different way.¹³⁵⁹

¹³⁵⁷ Rashi and Metzudot commentaries to Psalms 16:8

¹³⁵⁸ Siddur Im Divrei Elohi'm Chayim, and see Shaar HaKollel 6:9, and the introduction to the siddur there, note 3; Also see the Opening Gateway (*Petach HaShaar*) to Imrei Binah of the Mittler Rebbe, translated as The Gateway to Understanding, Ch. 17 and on; Siddur of the Arizal, and elsewhere.

¹³⁵⁹ See Ginat Egoz of Rabbi Yosef Gikatilla translated as *HaShem Is One*, Vol. 1, The Gate of His Sanctuary (*Shaar HaHeichal*); Vol. 4 (The Vowels of Creation); Ohr HaTorah, VaEtchanan, p. 379 and on; Sefer HaLikkutim (Tzemach Tzeddek), section on “*Nekudoṯ*” and “*Pratei HaNekudoṯ*” p. 285 and on; Sefer HaMaamarim 5698 p. 112, p. 123, and elsewhere.

However, it should be pointed out that the divisions relating to the vowels are not true divisions at all. That is, they cannot compare to the matter of inter-weaving (*Shiluv*) the Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה with His titles, such as inter-weaving (*Shiluv*) the Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה with His title "Lord-Adon" אדני"י¹³⁶⁰ or inter-weaving (*Shiluv*) the Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה with His title "God-Elo" אלה"ים.¹³⁶¹ For, in the matter of inter-weaving (*Shiluv*), the aspect that is primarily sensed is the added title (either "Lord-Adon" אדני"י or "God-Elo" אלה"ים),¹³⁶² whereas the Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה is only interwoven into it, meaning that it is drawn down and revealed through it.

In contrast, in the various ways by which the Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה is vowelized, the Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה is sensed in all of them. Even so, in the matter of vowelizing the Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה, there is a matter of division.

Now, the above-mentioned divisions are in all levels of the Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה, which consists of two general levels. That is, there is the lower Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה and the upper Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה.¹³⁶³ It goes without saying that in the lower Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה there certainly are divisions. However, in the upper Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה there also is division.

¹³⁶⁰ אידהבני"ה or יאהדונה"י

¹³⁶¹ אילההיה"ם or יאהלההיה"ם

¹³⁶² See Tanya, Shaar HaYichud v'HaEmuna, Chapter 7; Likkutei Torah, Drushim L'Shabbat Shuvah 65d.

¹³⁶³ Torah Ohr, Beshalach 61d and on; Also see Shaarei Orah of Rabbi Yosef Gikatilla, translated as Gates of Light, Gate Five (*Tiferet*).

On the contrary, in the upper Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה the matter of division is to an even greater extent than how it is in the lower Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה. That is, since the existence of the letters (*Otiyot*) of the upper name *HaShem*-יהו"ה are much loftier, the division between them is therefore much greater.

However, there is an even higher aspect of the Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה, and about this the verse states,¹³⁶⁴ "I have set (*Shiviti*-שוייתי) *HaShem*-יהו"ה before me always," [in which the term "I have set-*Shiviti*-שוייתי"] indicates "equanimity-*Hishtavut*-השתוות." That is, there is no division whatsoever in this aspect [of the Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה]. This refers to the Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה without vowels,¹³⁶⁵ and beyond this, without letters (*Otiyot*) at all.¹³⁶⁶ This is the Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה as it precedes the restraint of the *Tzimtzum*.

Now, more generally, this also applies after the restraint of the *Tzimtzum*. This refers to the Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה as it is in the Crown-*Keter*. This is because the Crown-*Keter* is the matter of desire (*Ratzon*), and as known, desire (*Ratzon*) is in way of equanimity (*Hishtavut*-השתוות) in that desire (*Ratzon*) is equal wherever it is.¹³⁶⁷ In other words, by the same [power of] desire (*Ratzon*) that a person desires something lofty, he can also desire something lowly. Moreover, the strength of the desire remains equal in the both. It thus is understood that in

¹³⁶⁴ Psalms 16:8

¹³⁶⁵ See Ginat Egoz of Rabbi Yosef Gikatilla, translated as *HaShem Is One*, Vol. 1, The Gate of The Sanctuary (*Shaar HaHeichal*); Also see Ohr HaTorah ibid. p. 384.

¹³⁶⁶ See Ginat Egoz of Rabbi Yosef Gikatilla, translated as *HaShem Is One*, Vol. 1, The Gate of Intrinsic Being (*Shaar HaHavayah*).

¹³⁶⁷ Likkutei Torah, Naso 24a, and elsewhere.

the Crown-*Keter* the Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה is also in a way of equanimity (*Hishtavut*-השתוות). That is, there are no divisions in it, not even a division of vowels.

(Though as known, the Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה vowelized with the vowel *Komatz*-קמץ refers to the Crown-*Keter*,¹³⁶⁸ nonetheless, the vowelization of this Name with the *Komatz*-קמץ is essential to it [*Nikud Atzmi*].) Likewise, in this aspect there is not even division stemming from the letters (*Otiyot*).

Thus, in this aspect there is a true matter of equanimity (*Hishtavut*-השתוות) in the name *HaShem*-יהו"ה (as in "I have set *HaShem-Shiviti HaShem*-יהו"ה שויתי יהו"ה"). This is because not only is there no division stemming from the vowels (*Nikud*), but there also is no division stemming from the letters (*Otiyot*).

3.

To explain in greater detail, the Zohar states,¹³⁶⁹ "There are no desires (*Re'utin*), no lights (*Nehorin*), and no candles (*Botzinin*) in that Unlimited One (*Ein Sof*).” The explanation¹³⁷⁰ is that candles (*Neirot*) refer to the aspect of vessels (*Keilim*), including the lights (*Orot*) as they manifest in the vessels (*Keilim*), which Zohar calls "His organs." The lights

¹³⁶⁸ Ohr HaTorah, VaEtchanan, p. 379 and on; Sefer HaLikkutim (Tzemach Tzeddek), section on "*Nekudot*" and "*Pratei HaNekudot*" p. 285 and on; Also see Ginat Egoz of Rabbi Yosef Gikatilla, translated as *HaShem Is One*, Vol. 4 (The Vowels of Creation).

¹³⁶⁹ Zohar II 239a; Zohar III 26b

¹³⁷⁰ See *Hemshech* 5627 Vol. 2, p. 914

(*Nehorin*) refer to the lights (*Orot*) that transcends manifestation in vessels (*Keilim*), which Zohar calls “His life force.” Even higher is the aspect of the desires (*Re’utin*), which are the desire (*Ratzon*) for the *Sefirot*.

Now, the aspect of candles (*Botzinin*), referring to the lights (*Orot*) as they manifest in vessels (*Keilim*), certainly has the matter of division. The same is true of the lights (*Orot*) before they manifest in vessels (*Keilim*), which is the matter of the “lights” (*Nehorin*), in that they too have a matter of division.

Even the “desires” (*Re’utin*) which refer to the desire (*Ratzon*), meaning as the *Sefirot* are in the Crown-*Keter* – even though the general matter of desire (*Ratzon*) is in a way of equanimity (*Hishtavut*-השתוות) (as explained above), nevertheless, this is not a true matter of simplicity (*Psheetoot*).

It thus is in this regard that Zohar states, “There are no desires (*Re’utin*), no lights (*Nehorin*), and no candles (*Botzinin*) in that Unlimited One (*Ein Sof*).” In other words, the Unlimited One, *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, transcends division altogether. That is, He transcends the divisions of “candles” (*Botzinin*), the divisions of “lights” (*Nehorin*), and even the divisions of “desires” (*Re’utin*).

Now, just as this is so of the *Sefirot*, so it is of the Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה – as it relates to the matter of the *Sefirot*. For, when the Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה, is spelled fully (*Miluy*) it has ten letters (י"ד ה"א וא"ו ה"א) corresponding to the ten *Sefirot*. That is, there are the aspect of “candles” (*Botzinin*), the aspect of “lights” (*Nehorin*), and even the aspect of “desires” (*Re’utin*), which is the matter of the Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה of the Crown-

Keter. For, even though it transcends division in general, nonetheless, this is not the true matter of simplicity (*Psheetoot*).

However, there is an even higher aspect of the Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה that even transcends the aspect of “desires” (*Re'utin*), and is “not desires” (*Lav Re'utin*). This refers to the Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה (explained in Ginat Egoz),¹³⁷¹ which is the aspect of His ability (*Yecholet*)¹³⁷² (which even transcends desire-*Ratzon*).¹³⁷³ This is the Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה that has no letters (*Otiyot*),¹³⁷⁴ and in this there is the true matter of equanimity (*Hishtavut*-השתוות).

In other words, even though He has the ability (*Yecholet*) for each power in particular, nevertheless, this is not in a way that there is an ability for one power and an ability for another power. Rather here, the ability for all powers, as well as the ability for the absence of all powers, is all one matter.

To further clarify, it is explained¹³⁷⁵ that there even is the matter of the Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה which entirely transcends the aspect of “ability” (*Yecholet*), which is the true matter of [the teaching],¹³⁷⁶ “Before to the creation of the world there was

¹³⁷¹ See Ginat Egoz of Rabbi Yosef Gikatilla, translated as *HaShem Is One*, Vol. 1, *The Gate of Intrinsic Being (Shaar HaHavayah)*, cited by the holy ShaLa”H 5a, and explained in *Ohr HaTorah*, Yitro p. 836-839; *Hemshech Samech Vav* 5666, p. 431; *Sefer HaMaamarim* 5677, p. 72 and on, and elsewhere.

¹³⁷² *Ohr HaTorah* *ibid.* p. 839; *Sefer HaMaamarim* 5656 p. 381, 382 and on; *Hemshech* 5666 p. 431; *Sefer HaMaamarim* 5677 p. 72 and on.

¹³⁷³ *Sefer HaMaamarim* 5656 *ibid.*

¹³⁷⁴ See Ginat Egoz of Rabbi Yosef Gikatilla, translated as *HaShem Is One*, Vol. 1 *The Gate of Intrinsic Being (Shaar HaHavayah)* cited in *Hemshech Samech Vav* 5666, p. 431.

¹³⁷⁵ See Ginat Egoz of Rabbi Yosef Gikatilla, translated as *HaShem Is One*, Vol. 1, *The Gate of Intrinsic Being (Shaar HaHavayah)* *ibid.*

¹³⁷⁶ *Pirke d’Rabbi Eliezer*, Ch. 3

Him and His Name alone.” However, more generally, even the Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה in the Crown-*Keter* is in a way of equanimity (*Hishtavut*-השתוות). For desire (*Ratzon*) (and this also applies to pleasure-*Ta'anug*) is equally present everywhere (as explained above).

4.

This then, is the meaning of, “I have set *HaShem*-יהו"ה before me always.” That is, our service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, must be in a way of “I have set *HaShem-Shiviti* *HaShem*-שויתי” as a term of “equanimity-*Hishtavut*-השתוות.” In other words, even on those levels in which there is division, we draw down the aspect of *HaShem*-יהו"ה which transcends division, meaning, the Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה that has no vowels, and even higher, the Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה that has no letters, and even higher, the aspect of “there was Him and His Name alone,” which generally refers to the Simple Essential Self of the Singular Preexistent Intrinsic and Unlimited One, *HaShem*-יהו"ה Himself, blessed is He.

It should be added that this is also hinted in the fact that the verse states “(I have set *HaShem*-יהו"ה before me) **always-*Tamid***-תמיד,” indicating eternity, meaning that in this there is no change whatsoever. For, in regard to all light (*Ohr*), even the loftiest level of light (*Ohr*), since light is revelation, it is applicable for it to undergo change. However, the true matter of eternity (“always-*Tamid*-תמיד”), in which there is no change, specifically stems from the Essential Self of the

Singular Preexistent Intrinsic and Unlimited One, *HaShem*-יהו"ה Himself, blessed is He.¹³⁷⁷

5.

Now, this is connected to the general matter of the giving of the Torah. For, about the Torah the verse states,¹³⁷⁸ “I was then (*VaEheye*ה-וָא) His nursling, I was then His delight every day, playing before Him at all times etc.” That is, the Torah is the essential delight and pleasure of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, as it is in an aspect of simplicity (*Psheetoot*).

From there it traveled and descended through many levels [which are five general levels, as explained elsewhere¹³⁷⁹ about [the five aspects enumerated in] the verse,¹³⁸⁰ “I was then His nursling, I was then His delight every day, playing before Him at all times, playing in the inhabited areas of His earth, My delights are with the children of man”], until it is drawn down to manifest in the understanding and comprehension of human intellect below, in a way of division etc. However, through the study of Torah, man elevates Torah as it is below, to its root in

¹³⁷⁷ See Likkutei Sichot Vol. 5 p. 98 and the notes there.

¹³⁷⁸ Proverbs 8:30; Tanya Kuntres Acharon 161a; Sefer HaMitzvot of the Tzemach Tzedek, Mitzvat Masa HaAron BaKatef (40b and on); Discourse entitled “*VaEheye Etzlo Amon*” 5721 (Torat Menachem, Sefer HaMaamarim Sivan p. 419 and on); Also see Midrash Bereishit Rabba 1:1

¹³⁷⁹ See Maamarei Admor HaZaken 5565 Vol. 1 p. 507 and on; with the glosses in Ohr HaTorah Shir HaShirim Vol. 2, p. 707 and on; Sefer HaMaamarim 5665 p. 73; *Hemshech* 5672 Vol. 1 p. 374; Also see the discourse entitled “*Alpayim Shanah* – The Torah preceded the creation of the world by two-thousand years,” of the year 5711, translated in The Teachings of The Rebbe 5711, Discourse 11, Ch. 3 (Sefer HaMaamarim 5711 p. 94 and note 26 there), and elsewhere.

¹³⁸⁰ Proverbs 8:30-31 *ibid*.

the essential delight of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, which transcends division.

This likewise is so in the root of the Torah. For, as our sages, of blessed memory, explained,¹³⁸¹ the verse, "I was with Him as a nursling-*Amon*-אמון," means, "I was the craftsman's tool-*Kli Umanuto*-כלי אומנתו of the Holy One blessed is He." In other words, even as the Torah is "with Him-*Etzlo*-אצלו," as in "I was with Him (*Etzlo*-אצלו) as a nursling-*Amon*-אמון," in which "the word '*Amon*-אמון' means 'wondrous-*Mufla*-מופלא'¹³⁸² and "the word '*Amon*-אמון' means 'hidden-*Mutzn*-מוצנע' etc."¹³⁸³ nevertheless it still is connected to the aspect called "the craftsman's tool-*Kli Umanuto*-כלי אומנתו," in which the term "vessel-*Kli*-כלי" is used, referring to the [lower aspect of] the vessels (*Keilim*), (meaning, the "candles-*Botzinin*").

This itself grants empowerment to even bind the aspect of the "candles" (*Botzinin*), where the primary aspect of division is, to the aspect that even transcends the "desires" (*Re'utin*), that is, to the ultimate simplicity of *HaShem*-יהו"ה Himself, blessed is He.

This then, is the matter of "I have set *HaShem-Shiviti HaShem*-יהו"ה שוייתי." That is, even in the levels where there is division, the level of the Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה that transcends division should be drawn down, as explained above.

¹³⁸¹ Midrash Bereishit Rabba 1:1

¹³⁸² Tikkunei Zohar, Tikkun 42 (81b); Me'orei Ohr, Ma'arechet 1, Ot 95

¹³⁸³ Midrash Bereishit Rabba 1:1 *ibid*.

This is why there also is the matter of, “I have set *HaShem*-יהו"ה before me always,” even in the very lowest level. This is as mentioned at the beginning of Shulchan Aruch (the Code of Jewish Law)¹³⁸⁴ in regard to a person’s service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, even before reciting the “*Modeh Ani*” prayer [upon waking in the morning].

Through this, we come to an even higher level in the matter of “I have set-*Shiviti*-שויתי,” which is that a person’s service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, is such that whatever happens is all equal (*Hishtavut*-השתוות) to him (as the Baal Shem Tov explained).

This is to such an extent that we come to the highest level of “I have set *HaShem-Shiviti HaShem*-יהו"ה שויתי,” which is the matter of equanimity (*Hishtavut*-השתוות) in the Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה itself. That is, we reach that aspect of *HaShem*-יהו"ה that transcends division, and we ultimately reach the Essential Self of the Singular Preexistent Intrinsic and Unlimited One, *HaShem*-יהו"ה Himself, blessed is He.

From there we affect a drawing down to below as well, to the point that there even is a drawing down into matters that initially stood in opposition, so that they too are transformed to goodness. This is indicated by the specific wording, “I have set *HaShem*-יהו"ה **before me** (***L’Negdi***-לנגדי) always,” [in which the word “*L’Negdi*-לנגדי” also means “opposite me” or

¹³⁸⁴ See Rama to the beginning of Orach Chayim 1:1

“opposed to me”]. That is, even those matters that were in opposition (*Menagdim*-מנגדים) to holiness are themselves transformed to holiness, to the point that they are elevated to the aspect of “I have set *HaShem* always-*Shiviti HaShem Tamid*-שויתי יהו"ה תמיד.”

Similarly, from there, there is a drawing down of abundant bestowal without any limitation whatsoever, even as it relates to all physical matters, as in the verse cited at the end of *Shulchan Aruch*,¹³⁸⁵ “Whoever is goodhearted feasts continually-*Tamid*-תמיד.”

¹³⁸⁵ Proverbs 15:15; Rama to Siman 697