

Discourse 23

*“Kedoshim Tihiyu Ki Kadosh Ani -
Be holy, for I am holy”*

Delivered on Shabbat Parshat Acharei-Kedoshim,

13th of Iyyar, 5721

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

1.

The¹⁵¹¹ verse states,¹⁵¹² “[*HaShem*-יהו"ה spoke to Moshe, saying]: Speak to the entire assembly of the children of Israel and say to them: Be holy, for I, *HaShem*-יהו"ה your God, am holy.” About this the Midrash states,¹⁵¹³ “[One might think that this means] that your holiness can be on par with My holiness. The verse therefore states, ‘For I, *HaShem*-יהו"ה, your God, am holy,’ [meaning] ‘My holiness is above your holiness.’”

¹⁵¹¹ The original discourse was edited by the Rebbe and given out as a pamphlet (*Kuntres*) on the 13th of Iyyar 5751.* [For the general foundation of this discourse, see the discourse entitled “*HaMalach HaGo'el*” 5684 / “*Mi Yitencha K'Ach Lee*” 5684 (Sefer HaMaamarim 5684 p. 167 and on); It is founded upon the discourse entitled “*Mi Yitencha K'Ach Lee*” 5654 which is cited later in this discourse.] [*See at length in the Sichah talk of Shabbat Parshat Acharei-Kedoshim of the 13th of Iyyar 5745 [printed in *Hitva'aduyot* 5745 Vol. 3, p. 1942 and on] for an explanation of the name of the one whose day of passing is being celebrated [Rabbi Yisroel Aryeh Leib, the brother of the Rebbe], and the relationship of his name to the Torah portion of Acharei-Kedoshim. Also see the Sichah talk of Pesach Sheni 5747 [*Hitva'aduyot* 5747 Vol. 3, p. 256 and on], and Shabbat Parshat Acharei-Kedoshim 5751 [*Hitva'aduyot* 5751 Vol. 3 p. 184 and on].

¹⁵¹² Leviticus 19:2

¹⁵¹³ Midrash Vayikra Rabba 24:9; Also see Bereishit Rabba 90:2

Now, this must be better understood,¹⁵¹⁴ for how is it even applicable to assume that “you can be on par with Me”? At first glance, it could seem that there is room to assume that “you can be on par with Me” (even though a created being cannot at all compare to the Creator) because the language of the verse states, “Be holy, **for (כי- Ki)** I, *HaShem*-יהו"ה your God, am holy.” (In other words, “I am holy” is the **reason and explanation** for [the instruction to] “be holy.”)

This seems to indicate that the commandment “be holy” is that the holiness of the Jewish people must be similar to the holiness of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He – “on par with Me.” [It could also be said that the explanation is that since “the Jewish people and the Holy One, blessed is He, are entirely one,”¹⁵¹⁵ therefore they have a relation to all matters of *HaShem*'s-יהו"ה Godliness Above.]

However, according to this, we must better understand (why on the other hand) the conclusion of the Midrash is that “My holiness is above your holiness.” [This being so], how does this Midrash fit with the words of the verse, “**for (כי- Ki)** I am holy?”

About this, Likkutei Torah explains¹⁵¹⁶ that “your holiness” is drawn down through arousal from below (by fulfilling the *mitzvot*), whereas “My holiness is above your holiness” and is a much loftier holiness that is not reached by an arousal from below (through fulfilling the *mitzvot*), but is

¹⁵¹⁴ This is as is pointed out in Likkutei Torah, Nitzavim 50b, and in Ohr HaTorah Kedoshim (p. 105) that “this is cause for question.” Also see Torat Menachem, Sefer HaMaamarim Iyyar p. 261.

¹⁵¹⁵ See Zohar III 73a

¹⁵¹⁶ Likkutei Torah [Nitzavim] ibid. 51c.

drawn down through returning to *HaShem*-יהו"ה in repentance (*Teshuvah*). However, this too requires explanation, being that repentance (*Teshuvah*) is also part of our toil [below], and is an arousal from below. This being so, why is it called “My holiness [which] is above your holiness”?

2.

Now, the matter in the above-mentioned Midrash on “you can be on par with Me etc.,” comes as a continuation to what Midrash states before this, on the verse,¹⁵¹⁷ “You shall only (*Rak*-רק) be above etc.,” [to which the Midrash states], “[One might think that this means] that your greatness can be on par with Mine. [The verse therefore states, ‘only-*Rak*-רק,’ which is a word that restricts the matter, meaning], ‘My greatness is superior to your greatness.’”

Now, based on Likkutei Torah on the matter of “My holiness is above your holiness,” which states that the Jewish people also have the ability to draw down the aspect of “My holiness [which] is above your holiness,” except that this holiness is drawn down through a higher form of service, (the toil of repenting and returning (*Teshuvah*) to *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, which transcends the toil of Torah and *mitzvot*), it must be said that this is also applies to the two levels of “greatness-*Gedulah*-גדולה,” (“My greatness,” and “your greatness”). That is, the Jewish people also have the ability to draw down the aspect of “My greatness,” except that to do so requires a much higher form of service.

¹⁵¹⁷ Deuteronomy 28:13

Now, in addition, [the matter of] “holiness” (*Kedushah*) is higher than [the matter of] “greatness” (*Gedulah*). This is because “greatness” (*Gedulah*) is the matter of expression and revelation.¹⁵¹⁸ [This is why [the *Sefirah* of] Kindness-*Chessed* is called “Greatness-*Gedulah*-גדולה.”¹⁵¹⁹

Even according to the explanation¹⁵²⁰ that ‘Greatness-*Gedulah*-גדולה’ is higher than the quality of ‘Kindness-*Chessed*-חסד,’ nevertheless, the matter of ‘Greatness-*Gedulah*-גדולה’ [meaning magnanimity] is itself ‘Kindness-*Chessed*-חסד’ (meaning, the spreading forth of expression), only that it is higher than the **emotional quality** of Kindness-*Chessed*.

Moreover, the spreading forth of expression stemming from ‘Greatness-*Gedulah*-גדולה’ is limitless (*Bli Gvul*).]¹⁵²¹ In contrast, “holiness-*Kedushah*-קדושה” (which means elevation and separateness) refers to *HaShem*’s יהוה Essential Self,¹⁵²²

¹⁵¹⁸ Ohr HaTorah, Lech Lecha, Vol. 4 p. 696b

¹⁵¹⁹ See Tanya, Shaar HaYichud VeHaEmunah [translated as The Gate of Unity & Faith], Ch. 4 (79a) [where it states], “The word (Deut. 10:17) ‘The Great-*HaGadol*-הגדול’ refers to the quality of Kindness-*Chessed*.” Also see Sefer HaLikkutim of the Tzemach Tzedek, section on “*Gadol*-גדול” and “*Gedulah*-גדולה.” [Also see Shaarei Orah of Rabbi Yosef Gikatilla, translated as Gates of Light, Gate Two (*Yesod*), Gate Five (*Tiferet*).]

¹⁵²⁰ [See the explanation in the discourse entitled “*Peezar Natan LaEvyonim* – He distributed widely to the destitute” 5718, translated in The Teachings of The Rebbe 5718, Vol. 1, Discourse 9, Ch. 3, and the citations there.]

¹⁵²¹ See at length in Ohr HaTorah, Vayeitzei 91a and on, and 95a-b there, in regard to the matter of “My greatness (*Gedulati*) is superior to your greatness (*Gedulatchem*).”

¹⁵²² In Ohr HaTorah, Lech Lacha ibid., it states, “The verse likewise states (Gen. 1:16), ‘The great luminary (*HaMa’or HaGadol*-המאור הגדול) in regard to the greatness of the ray of radiance and illumination that spreads forth and is expressed from it.” However, it seems that the intention there is that the term “Greatness-*Gedulah*-גדולה” is applied not only to the actual expression (the light-*Ohr*-אור), but also to the **Luminary** (*Ma’or*-מאור) from which the light (*Ohr*-אור) spreads forth. What is understood from this, is that the holiness (*Kedushah*-קדושה) of the Essential

which is utterly separate and removed from the matter of expression and revelation.¹⁵²³

Based in this, it can be said that the aspect of “My greatness [which] is superior to your greatness,” is drawn down too, through the toil and service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, of the righteous *Tzaddikim*, [except that in the service of the righteous *Tzaddikim* themselves, this is a much higher form of service], whereas the imperative to serve *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, by repenting and returning (*Teshuvah*) to Him, is to draw down the aspect of “My holiness.”

3.

Now, this can be explained based on the verse,¹⁵²⁴ “The humble will increase their joy in *HaShem*-יהו"ה, and the destitute amongst men will rejoice in the Holy One of Israel.” About this, Likkutei Torah explains¹⁵²⁵ that the [first part of the verse], “The humble will increase their joy in *HaShem*-יהו"ה,” refers to the service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה of the righteous *Tzaddikim*. For, through their humility and sublimation (*Bittul*) to *HaShem*-יהו"ה, they increase joy in the Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה, through which there is a drawing down of the revelation of the Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה below.

Self (*Etzem*-עצם) even transcends the “Luminary” (*Ma'or*-מאור), in that it is entirely removed from [and transcends] the **whole matter** of expression and spreading forth.

¹⁵²³ Ohr HaTorah, Lech Lecha, Vol. 4 p. 696b ibid.

¹⁵²⁴ Isaiah 29:19

¹⁵²⁵ Likkutei Torah, Nitzavim 48a, 48d; Also see the discourse entitled “*Mi Yitencha*” 5654 (Sefer HaMaamarim 5654 p. 107 and on).

[It is further explained that the continuation of the verse], “The destitute amongst men will rejoice in the Holy One of Israel” refers to those who return to *HaShem*-יהו"ה in repentance – *Baalei Teshuvah*. [This is because Torah and *mitzvot* are called by the term “man-Adam-אדם,” which is why those who return to *HaShem*-יהו"ה in repentance (*Baalei Teshuvah*) are called “the destitute amongst men-*Evyonei Adam*-אביוני אדם,” being that in the aspect of “man-Adam-אדם” as it refers to Torah and *mitzvot*, they are destitute.] They are the ones who reach the aspect of “the Holy One of Israel-*Kedosh Yisroel*-קדוש ישראל,” Who is holy in His transcendent separateness, even from the aspect of the upper *Yisroel*-ישראל, and higher than the [lower] Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה.

Now, it can be said that the increase of joy in *HaShem*-יהו"ה, which causes an addition in the drawing down and revelation of the Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה, is the drawing down of the aspect of “My greatness is superior to your greatness.” For, in and of itself, the greatness (*Gedulah*-גדולה) – (meaning, expression and spreading forth) – of *HaShem*-יהו"ה,¹⁵²⁶ is “greatness” and “magnanimity” (*Gedulah*-גדולה) that relates to worlds and created beings, [and is therefore called] “**your** greatness-*Gedulatchem*-גדולתכם,” in which the spreading forth and revelation is limited.

In contrast, the matter indicated by the verse, “The humble will increase their joy in *HaShem*-יהו"ה,” is that there is a drawing down of the greatness (*Gedulah*-גדולה) of the

¹⁵²⁶ See Tanya, Shaar HaYichud VeHaEmunah [translated as The Gate of Unity & Faith], Ch. 4 (79a) *ibid.*, regarding the relationship between “The Great-*HaGadol*-הגדול (and The Mighty-*HaGibor*-הגבור)” with *HaShem*-יהו"ה and ([his title] God-*Elohi*”m-אלהי”ם).

limitless light of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, the Unlimited One, in them, which transcends all relation to worlds, [and is therefore called], “My greatness-*Gedulati*-גדולתי.”

Through this, there is also caused to be addition in the spreading forth and revelation of *HaShem*-יהו"ה. This drawing down comes about through the service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה of the righteous *Tzaddikim*, [who are called] “the humble.” However, the matter of “the destitute amongst men will rejoice in the **Holy One** of Israel (*Kedosh Yisroel*-קדוש ישראל),”¹⁵²⁷ refers to the drawing down of the aspect of “My holiness-*Kedushati*-קדושתי” (which is higher than “your holiness-*Kedushatchem*-קדושתכם”) through repenting and returning (*Teshuvah*) to Him.

4.

This may be understood by first¹⁵²⁸ explaining the verse,¹⁵²⁹ “If only you were a brother to me, who nursed from my mother’s breasts etc.” Rashi¹⁵³⁰ explains the words, “If only you were a brother to me,” saying, “That you would come and comfort me in the way that Yosef did with his brothers, who had done him evil, and yet about him the verse states,¹⁵³¹ ‘and he comforted them.’” The Midrash states,¹⁵³² “Which brother

¹⁵²⁷ As stated clearly in Sefer HaMaamarim 5654 *ibid.* p. 109.

¹⁵²⁸ See Sefer HaMaamarim 5654 *ibid.* regarding the relationship between the particular matters in the following verse.

¹⁵²⁹ Song of Songs 8:1

¹⁵³⁰ Rashi to Song of Songs 8:1; Also see Yalkut Shimoni to Song of Songs 8:1, Remez 993; Zohar I 184a.

¹⁵³¹ Genesis 50:51

¹⁵³² Midrash Shir HaShirim Rabba to Song of Songs 8:1; Shemot Rabba 5:1

is this verse referring to...? You must say this refers to Yosef with Binyomin.”

The Tzemach Tzedek explains¹⁵³³ that the reason we ask the Holy One, blessed is He, (as Midrash explains) to act according to Yosef’s conduct with Binyomin, and not his other brothers,¹⁵³⁴ [even though Yosef’s conduct with his other brothers was even more inclusive, in that even though they had acted wrongly with him, he nevertheless bestowed much kindness upon them], is because Yosef’s conduct with his [other] brothers, began with him making his brothers suffer, in order¹⁵³⁵ to atone them of their sin of selling him [into slavery] (and only afterwards he showered them with goodness). However, since we plead to *HaShem*-יהוה, blessed is He,¹⁵³⁶ “In Your abounding mercies, erase the sins I have committed, but not through suffering,” we therefore ask of the Holy One, blessed is He, to act with us as Yosef acted with Binyomin.

Now, Likkutei Torah, in the discourse entitled “*Mi Yitencha K’Ach Lee*,”¹⁵³⁷ explains that the words, “If only you

¹⁵³³ Ohr HaTorah, Mikeitz 340b and on

¹⁵³⁴ The reason that Midrash explains “that this refers to Yosef and Binyomin” and not “like Yosef and his brothers” is explained explicitly in Midrash there, namely, “which brother is the one who ‘nursed at my mother’s breast.’ (See Ohr HaTorah there). However, further delving is necessary to explain why the request of the assembly of the Jewish people from the Holy One, blessed is He, is “like Yosef with Binyomin,” since, at first glance, it would seem that the request should have been “like Yosef and his brothers,” which would be even more inclusive. [Also see the commentators there, who explain that the term “brother-*Ach*-אח” in this verse, is in the singular form, and that although Binyomin did not suckle from the breast of his mother Rachel, in that she died upon his birth, nevertheless, Yosef indeed suckled from the breast of Binyomin’s mother etc.]

¹⁵³⁵ See the commentary of the Alshich to Genesis 42:6, cited in Ohr HaTorah *ibid*.

¹⁵³⁶ In the liturgy of the *Shema* upon retiring for sleep.

¹⁵³⁷ Likkutei Torah, Shir HaShirim 44b and on, which is from the year 5565, and is printed (with variations) in Sefer HaMaamarim 5565 Vol. 1 p. 487 and on, and

were a brother to me,” refer to the service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, of the righteous *Tzaddikim*. [In contrast, the conclusion of the verse], “When I would find you outside [I would kiss you] etc.,” refers to the service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה of those who return to *HaShem*-יהו"ה in repentance – *Baalei Teshuvah*.

Now, at first glance, it could be said that Likkutei Torah’s explanation that the words, “If only you were a brother to me” refer to the service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, of the righteous *Tzaddikim*, accords to the explanation of the Midrash, that “a brother to me” refers to Yosef’s relationship with Binyomin. In contrast, according to Rashi’s explanation, that “a brother to me” refers to Yosef and his brothers, the first part of the verse also speaks about those who return to *HaShem*-יהו"ה in repentance – *Baalei Teshuvah*.¹⁵³⁸

However, according to what we cited from the Tzemach Tzedek, that the fact that Midrash explains that this refers to Yosef’s [conduct] with Binyomin (unlike Yosef’s conduct with his brothers) is because our plea is for the Holy One, blessed is He, to erase our sins, but not through suffering, it seems to be understood that even according to the explanation of the

with glosses etc., in Ohr HaTorah, Shir HaShirim, Vol. 2, p. 674 and on; Also see Sefer HaMaamarim 5626 (Kehot 5749) p. 103 and on; Also see the discourse entitled “*Mi Yitencha*” 5654 (Sefer HaMaamarim 5654 p. 104 and on).

¹⁵³⁸ In the discourse entitled “*Mi Yitencha*” 5654 *ibid.*, [it states] that the words “If only you were a brother to me” is “as Yosef with Binyomin” (that is, the righteous *Tzaddikim*), whereas the words, “When I would find you outside” refers to those who return in repentance – *Baalei Teshuvah*, like the matter of the tribes, who sold Yosef [into slavery]. However, this requires explanation, since the source that this verse is speaking about Yosef and his brothers (seems to be) the commentary of Rashi and the other Midrashim referenced earlier. However, they only explain the words “If only you were a brother to me,” [and do not say this about the latter part of the verse].

Midrash, the verse is discussing those who return to *HaShem*-יהו"ה in repentance – *Baalei Teshuvah*. In contrast, Likkutei Torah explains that “If only you were a brother to me” refers to the righteous *Tzaddikim*.

5.

Now, as known¹⁵³⁹ (*HaShem* 's-יהו"ה Supernal) intention in Yosef's descent to Egypt was for him to gather all the sparks of holiness that were in Egypt, [as the verse states],¹⁵⁴⁰ “Yosef collected all the money found in the land of Egypt,” by which the exile was lightened for them. That is, the fact that Yosef's descent to Egypt was the cause of the exile in Egypt, is only externally, but internally it is the opposite, that through Yosef's descent to Egypt the exile was lightened.

This is because the decree was that the exile will be for four hundred years,¹⁵⁴¹ whereas through Yosef's descent to Egypt, the exile was [reduced to] only 210-ר"י years.¹⁵⁴² (That is, because even before the children of Israel descended to Egypt, Yosef had already refined the sparks that were in Egypt, they therefore did not need to do as much refinement.) Beyond that, the actual difficulty of enslavement in Egypt only lasted 86-פ"ו years.¹⁵⁴³

From this it is understood that when his brothers sold Yosef to Egypt, not only was it not the opposite of *HaShem*'s-

¹⁵³⁹ Ohr HaTorah, Mikeitz ibid., 343b; Sefer HaMaamarim 5654 p. 107.

¹⁵⁴⁰ Genesis 47:14

¹⁵⁴¹ Genesis 15:13

¹⁵⁴² Rashi to Genesis 15:13 ibid., and to Genesis 42:2

¹⁵⁴³ Midrash Shir HaShirim Rabba 2:11

יהו"ה Supernal intent, but on the contrary, this itself was His Supernal intent, that Yosef should descend into Egypt first in order to lighten the difficulty of the exile. However, they themselves did not know that this was *HaShem's*-יהו"ה intent, and therefore, relative to them it was counted as a sin.

To further explain, at first glance, the above-mentioned matter [that the brothers selling Yosef to Egypt was according to *HaShem's*-יהו"ה Supernal intent] seems to be true even (as simply understood) that *HaShem's*-יהו"ה Supernal intent in Yosef's descent to Egypt was that through this, the exile in Egypt would come about.

[This is as our sages, of blessed memory, expounded¹⁵⁴⁴ on the verse,¹⁵⁴⁵ “He sent him from the depth of Chevron,”] only that according to this explanation, through the brothers selling Yosef to Egypt, the exile came about, which is something that [in and of itself] is undesirable. That is, even though *HaShem's*-יהו"ה intent in the exile of Egypt was so that they thereby will merit to receive the Torah,¹⁵⁴⁶ nonetheless, [in and of itself] the exile is an undesirable matter.

In contrast, according to the explanation that through Yosef's descent to Egypt, the exile was lightened, the fact that

¹⁵⁴⁴ Talmud Bavli, Sotah 11a, cited in Rashi to Genesis 37:14; Midrash Bereishit Rabba to Genesis 37:14 (84:13); Zohar I 184a.* (That is, Chevron was not on a hill, and thus, the “depth-*Emek*-עמק” of Chevron refers to the deep council of the righteous Tzaddik buried on Chevron, namely in order that there be the fulfillment of that which was spoken to Avraham when the covenant ‘between the parts’ was formed (Genesis 15:13), ‘Your offspring shall be aliens in a land not theirs.’) [*The difference in the language between the Zohar and the Talmud (and Rashi) is explained in Torat Menachem, Tiferet Levi Yitzchak (Vol. 1, Bereishit) 52:3 and on (p. 186-187).]

¹⁵⁴⁵ Genesis 37:14

¹⁵⁴⁶ Torah Ohr, Shemot (49a, and with glosses in Ohr HaTorah, Shemot p. 7 and on); Torat Chayim, Shemot, and elsewhere.

the brothers sold (and caused the descent) of Yosef to Egypt, was a desirable matter, (and their sin was only because this was not what they themselves intended).

With the above in mind, we can explain what Yosef said to the tribes,¹⁵⁴⁷ “And now, be not distressed, nor reproach yourselves for having sold me here, for it was to be a provider that God sent me ahead of you.” Seemingly, all sins (including sins that are the opposite of *HaShem*’s-יהו"ה Supernal desire), accord to *HaShem*’s-יהו"ה Supernal Providence, blessed is He, and accord to His blessed will.¹⁵⁴⁸

However, even so, since the sin was done through the free choice of the person himself, [for as explained in various places,¹⁵⁴⁹ *HaShem*-יהו"ה Supernal providence (as it relates to matters of Torah and *mitzvot*) does not contradict the matter of free-choice], we thus find that the sinner himself lost himself [in the act], and “it therefore is appropriate for a person to weep and mourn for his sins [and what he has done to his soul].”¹⁵⁵⁰

¹⁵⁴⁷ Genesis 45:5

¹⁵⁴⁸ This is the language of his honorable holiness, my father-in-law, the Rebbe, in the discourse entitled “*Vayachalom*” 5708, Ch. 9 (Sefer HaMaamarim 5708 p. 88). From the fact that he then states there, “This is the matter of free choice (*Bechirah*) in the fulfillment of Torah and *mitzvot*,” it must be said that this too is “according to the Supernal Providence etc.” Also see the discourse entitled “*Bati LeGani* 5731, Ch. 5 and on, and the citations in note 41 there (Torat Menachem, Sefer HaMaamarim Shvat p. 355).

¹⁵⁴⁹ See at length in Torat Chayim, Toldot, discourse entitled “*Vayiten Lecha*” Ch. 10 and on (12d and on); Likkutei Sichot, Vol. 5, p. 66, and elsewhere.

¹⁵⁵⁰ Mishneh Torah, Hilchot Teshuvah 5:2 – [“A person should not entertain the thesis held by the fools amongst the nations and the majority of those amongst Israel who are underdeveloped, that at the time of a person’s creation, the Holy One, blessed is He, decrees whether he will be righteous or wicked. This is untrue. Every person is capable of being righteous like our teacher Moshe, or wicked like king Yeravam. [Similarly,] he may be wise or foolish, merciful or cruel, miserly or generous, or [acquire] any other character traits. No one compels him, sentences him, or leads him towards either of these two paths. Rather, he, on his own initiative

This being so, why did Yosef tell his brothers, “And now, be not distressed, nor reproach yourselves for having sold me here etc.”?

It thus could be said, that the explanation is that in regard to all sins, the matters themselves that man did are undesirable, meaning, they are against *HaShem*’s-יהו"ה Supernal will, blessed is He. Though it is so, that even the sins accord to His Supernal Providence, and it thus must be said that there is intent in them, nevertheless, the intent is not in the sins themselves, Heaven forbid to think so. Rather, [the intent] is that through the sins, he subsequently will come to repent and return (*Teshuvah*) to *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He. However, the sins themselves are against *HaShem*’s-יהו"ה Supernal will, blessed is He, and therefore one must weep and mourn over them.

However, when the brothers sold Yosef to Egypt, since *HaShem*’s-יהו"ה Supernal intent in this (was not that they should return in repentance (*Teshuvah*) for this, but His Supernal intent) was for the descent itself, [as stated by Yosef], “for it was to be a provider that God sent me ahead of you,” [and this is especially so according to what was cited before, that through

and decision, tends to the path he chooses. This was [implied by the prophet] Yermiyahu who stated (Lam. 3:38), ‘From the mouth of the Most High, neither evil nor good come forth.’ The Creator does not decree that a person shall be good and not evil. Accordingly, it is the sinner himself who causes his own loss. It therefore is appropriate for a person to weep and mourn for his sins and for what he has done to his soul, and the evil consequences he has brought upon it. This is implied by the verse that follows (Lam. 3:39), ‘Of what should a living man be aggrieved? [A man of his sins].’ That is, [the prophet] continues explaining that since free choice is in our hands and our own decision [is what prompts us to] commit all these wrongs, it is appropriate for us to repent and abandon our wickedness, for this choice is presently in our hand. This is implied in the next verse (Lam. 3:40), ‘Let us search and examine our ways and return to *HaShem*-יהו"ה.”]

Yosef's descent to Egypt, the exile was made easier, and it can be said that this is hinted at in the continuation of Yosef's words in the verse,¹⁵⁵¹ "Thus God has sent me ahead of you to insure your survival in the land and to sustain you,"] therefore, "be not distressed, nor reproach yourselves for having sold me here."

However, there still is room to say that even though "it was to be a provider that God sent me ahead of you," nevertheless, in relation to Yosef himself, this matter was undesirable. This is why he added,¹⁵⁵² "It was not you who sent me here, but God; He has made me father to Pharaoh, master of his entire household, and ruler throughout the land of Egypt." In other words, Yosef's descent to Egypt was desirable, even in relation to Yosef.

[To further explain, the same is so in all matters between man and his fellow.¹⁵⁵³ For, as explained in Tanya,¹⁵⁵⁴ even when a person acts with his fellow in a way that is the opposite of good, in truth, "what happened to him was from *HaShem*-

¹⁵⁵¹ Genesis 45:7 – To further elucidate, based on this, it makes sense that this verse ("Thus God has sent me ahead of you to insure your survival etc.") was said **after** [the verse] (Genesis 45:6), "For this has been two years of hunger in the midst of the land [and there are yet five years in which there shall be neither plowing nor harvest]." For, the "two years of hunger etc.," is an explanation of the verse "for it was to be a provider that God sent me ahead of you," (which is the verse that precedes it [Genesis 45:5]), and was said in regard to the years of famine, and then he subsequently also added "Thus God has sent me ahead of you to ensure your survival etc.," which relates to the time period that will follow afterwards.

¹⁵⁵² Genesis 45:8

¹⁵⁵³ And based on this we may understand what it states in Tanya, at the end of Ch. 12, "So too in matters between man and his fellow... we should learn from the example of Yosef's conduct with his brothers." See at length in Likkutei Sichot, Vol. 5, p. 247.

¹⁵⁵⁴ Tanya, Iggeret HaKodesh, Epistle 25 (138b). To further elucidate, the obligation to make a blessing over the bad, just as one makes a blessing over the good (Talmud Bavli, Brachot 54a), is (as simply understood) even when this is brought about by man – who has free choice.

יהו"ה.” It should be added that from this it is understood that good will come to him from this, being that “everything that the Merciful One does is for the best,”¹⁵⁵⁵ only that in Yosef’s case, this was openly revealed.]

6.

Now, based on the well-known fact that all matters in Torah are with the ultimate precision, it can be said that the fact that we plead, “If only you were a brother to me,” meaning, “In the way that Yosef acted with his brothers,” [that even though they did the undesirable to him, he nevertheless bestowed great goodness upon them], is because all undesirable matters that a person does, are similar to the matter of Yosef’s brothers selling him to Egypt.

Thus, our plea, “If only you were a brother to me,” is that although through our undesirable deeds we have caused a matter in the Holy One, blessed is He, that is akin to the sale of Yosef to Egypt (as will be explained), nevertheless, [we plead] that He should bestow goodness upon us, as Yosef did to his brother.

The explanation is that the descent of the soul to below, and its manifestation in the body and animalistic soul, is literally an exile!¹⁵⁵⁶ Beyond this, the soul is in a state of captivity and imprisonment¹⁵⁵⁷ in the body and animalistic soul.

¹⁵⁵⁵ Talmud Bavli, Brachot 60b

¹⁵⁵⁶ Tanya, Likkutei Amarim, Ch. 37 (48a)

¹⁵⁵⁷ See Tanya, Likkutei Amarim, Ch. 31 (40a) – “Comparable to a prince who was taken captive [and subject to the hard labor of] turning the millstone in prison [while covered in filth] etc.”

However, *HaShem* 's-יהו"ה Supernal intent in the descent of the soul to below, is to refine and purify the body, the animalistic soul, and one's portion in the world at large, thus making them into receptacles for *HaShem*'s-יהו"ה Godliness, and also that through the toil of the soul below, it is will be caused to ascend to an even higher level than it was on before its descent.¹⁵⁵⁸

From this it is understood that every moment¹⁵⁵⁹ that a person does not toil in serving *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, the pain and suffering caused to his soul, in that it is exiled and imprisoned in the body and animalistic soul, is to no end.

For, at a time that a person serves *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, since through this, *HaShem* 's-יהו"ה Supernal will in the descent of the soul to below is fulfilled in both above-mentioned matters, [the refinement and purification of the body, animalistic soul and his portion in the world at large, and the ascent of the soul], therefore the pleasure the soul derives by fulfilling the Supernal will of the Holy One, blessed is He, in refining the body, through which *HaShem* 's-יהו"ה Supernal intent for "a dwelling place [for the Holy One, blessed is He, in the lower worlds]"¹⁵⁶⁰ is fulfilled, as well as the soul's ascent brought about by its toil below, it therefore is a much greater pleasure, for the sake of which it is worthwhile for the soul to undergo all the sufferings that accompany its descent.

¹⁵⁵⁸ [See Ginat Egoz of Rabbi Yosef Gikatilla, translated as *HaShem Is One*, Vol. 2 (The Letters of Creation, Part Two), Section entitled "The twelve letters ה"י ז"ה ט"י ל"ג ס"ע צ"ק correspond to the twelve tribes of Israel."]

¹⁵⁵⁹ See at length in *Likkutei Sichot* Vol. 5 p. 434 and on.

¹⁵⁶⁰ [See *Midrash Tanchuma Bechukotai* 3, Naso 16; *Midrash Bamidbar Rabba* 13:6; *Tanya* Ch. 36, and elsewhere.]

However, in those moments that a person is not serving *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, [and this certainly applies to moments that he does the undesirable], then the fact that the soul is in a state of exile and imprisonment in the body and animalistic soul, and the pain and suffering it undergoes as a result of this, is to no end.

Now, since the soul is “literally a part of God from on high,”¹⁵⁶¹ the exile and suffering of the soul is (also) the exile and suffering of the Indwelling Presence of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, the *Shechinah*.¹⁵⁶² This then, is the meaning that through a person’s undesirable conduct, (including the fact that he is not fulfilling his mission, even when he is not transgressing any sin), is as though he is causing to the Holy One, blessed is He, that which Yosef’s brothers caused him, in that they sold him into slavery, and subsequently this also caused him to be imprisoned.

Now, there is another matter in this. Namely, that in regard to the deed the brothers perpetrated against Yosef, the verse states,¹⁵⁶³ “Indeed we are guilty concerning our brother, inasmuch as we saw his heartfelt anguish when he pleaded with us, and we paid no heed etc.” That is, over and above the sale itself, they were even more guilty in having no compassion when he pleaded with them.¹⁵⁶⁴

¹⁵⁶¹ Tanya, Likkutei Amarim, Ch. 2 [and elsewhere].

¹⁵⁶² See Tanya, Iggeret HaTeshuvah, Ch. 6 & 7; Talmud Bavli, Sanhedrin 46a – “At a time that man suffers [in the wake of his sin (Rashi)] what expression does the Divine Presence use? [‘I am distressed about My head, I am distressed about My arm.’]

¹⁵⁶³ Genesis 42:21

¹⁵⁶⁴ Ramban to Genesis 42:21

The same is likewise so in the analogue, that the soul [and the *Shechinah*] plead with a person to take them out of exile and imprisonment, and when he pays no heed to the voice of their plea (in this matter), it is even worse than the undesirable conduct itself.

7.

This then, is the meaning of, “If only you were a brother to me,” meaning, “In the way that Yosef acted with his brothers.” Now, there are several matters in this. That is, just as Yosef supported his brothers and their children,¹⁵⁶⁵ and even gave them a portion in the **choicest** part of the land,¹⁵⁶⁶ so too we plead with the Holy One, blessed is He, that though we have sinned before Him, He should nevertheless bestow all goodness upon us. Similarly, just as Yosef harbored no grudge in his heart against his brothers over having sold him into slavery, [in addition to **actually** bestowing goodness upon them, he bore no grudge against them, **even in his heart**].

On the contrary, he endeavored that their sin should be atoned for [as cited above (in chapter four), that the reason he caused them to suffer was in order for their sin be atoned], so likewise, we request of the Holy One, blessed is He, to forgive us for all our sins.

However, the atonement for the sin of selling Yosef came about through their suffering, whereas we request that the Holy One, blessed is He, should atone for our sins, but not by

¹⁵⁶⁵ Genesis 47:12; 50:21

¹⁵⁶⁶ Genesis 47:11

way of suffering. This is as explained by the Tzemach Tzedek,¹⁵⁶⁷ that the Holy One, blessed is He, is all capable, and thus is capable of forgiveness without any suffering.

This is similar to what our sages, of blessed memory, stated,¹⁵⁶⁸ “They asked the Holy One, blessed is He: [What is the punishment of the sinner? He said to them:] Let him repent and it will be atoned for him.” In other words, from the perspective of the Holy One, blessed is He, who transcends the chaining down of the worlds (*Hishtalshelut*), atonement without suffering is possible, (even without sacrificial offerings), solely through repentance (*Teshuvah*) alone.

Additionally, just as Yosef endeavored that they repent, [since one of the reasons he caused them to suffer was in order to bring them to repent,¹⁵⁶⁹ in that after he caused them to suffer, they said,¹⁵⁷⁰ “Indeed we are guilty etc.”], so likewise, we request of the Holy One, blessed is He, to awaken us to return to Him, [and that this awakening to repent and return (*Teshuvah*) to Him, should not be through suffering].

Moreover, just as Yosef comforted his brothers and told them,¹⁵⁷¹ “And now, be not distressed, nor reproach yourselves for having sold me here, for it was to be a provider that God sent me ahead of you,” meaning that he informed and revealed *HaShem*’s-ה' inner intention to them, in their selling him to

¹⁵⁶⁷ Ohr HaTorah, Mikeitz ibid. p. 340b and on.

¹⁵⁶⁸ Talmud Yerushalmi, Makkot 2:6; Yalkut Shimoni, Yechezkel, Remez 358; Yalkut Shimoni, Tehillim, Remez 702; Also see at length in the discourse entitled “v’Kol Adam” 5723, Ch. 4 and on (Torat Menachem, Sefer HaMaamarim, Tishrei p. 76 and on).

¹⁵⁶⁹ See Kli Yakar to Genesis 42:16 – “All of this was in order that they recognize their sin and confess.”

¹⁵⁷⁰ Genesis 42:21

¹⁵⁷¹ Genesis 45:5

Egypt, and that not only was this not in opposition to *HaShem*’s-יהו"ה Supernal will, blessed is He, but on the contrary, this itself was His Supernal will, so that that through this, the exile would be lightened (as explained in chapter five).

So likewise, we request of the Holy One, blessed is He, not only to forgive us for our sins, but beyond this, He should reveal to us that the inner intention of sins is the superiority of repentance (*Teshuvah*),¹⁵⁷² and through revealing the inner intent and ultimate purpose of the sins, they are transformed into merits.¹⁵⁷³

¹⁵⁷² Even though this is not exactly similar, as explained before in chapter five.

¹⁵⁷³ See Tanya, Ch. 7 (12a). It is explained in Tanya there, that the transformation of one’s willful sins into merits, is brought about through repentance (*Teshuvah*) that stems from abundant love (*Ahavah Rabba*) of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He. However, based on what Tanya states there, that this is “because it is through them [the distance caused by the sins] that he attained this abundant love (*Ahavah Rabba*) of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He,” it can be said that since everyone who repents and returns (*Baal Teshuvah*), (including when his repentance is not out of abundant love (*Ahavah Rabba*) of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He) is higher than a righteous *Tzaddik*, [as understood by the *halachic* ruling of Rambam (Hilchot Teshuvah 7:4 mentioned in the next note)],* therefore the reason stated by Tanya, that, “it is because of them [the distance caused by the sins] that he attained the [abundant love],” applies to all levels of repentance (*Teshuvah*). This is why, in general, the matter of the transformation of willful transgressions [to merits] is present on all [levels of] repentance (*Teshuvah*).** It [therefore should be understood that the intention of Tanya there is] only that [transformation] **primarily** is found in repentance (*Teshuvah*) that stems from abundant love (*Ahavah Rabba*) of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He. [* That is, from the fact that the *halachic* ruling that a person who returns in repentance (*Baal Teshuvah*) is higher than a righteous *Tzaddik*, is without any preconditions, it is understood that it refers to every person who returns in repentance (*Baal Teshuvah*). Additionally, the reason given as to why a person who repents (*Baal Teshuvah*) is greater in level than the righteous *Tzaddik*, is “because they conquer their inclination to a greater extent.” This reason certainly applies to everyone who returns in repentance (*Baal Teshuvah*), (and on the contrary, when his repentance stems from “great love and the yearning and thirsting desire of the soul” (as in the language of Tanya there), he then is not [actively] conquering his evil inclination).] [** From the fact that it states in Talmud (Bavli, Yoma 86b) that it is specifically through repentance (*Teshuvah*) stemming from love, that one’s willful sins are transformed to merits, but that this is not so in regard to repentance

Now, even though generally, the service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, of repentance (*Teshuvah*) is higher than serving Him with Torah and *mitzvot*, which is why “the perfectly righteous (*Tzaddikim Gemurim*) are incapable of standing in the place of those who return in repentance (*Baalei Teshuvah*),”¹⁵⁷⁴ nevertheless, *HaShem*’s-יהו"ה Supernal intent for a dwelling place in the lower worlds is specifically fulfilled through the service of Him of the righteous *Tzaddikim*.

This is why our sages, of blessed memory, stated¹⁵⁷⁵ that the reason the Holy Temple was located specifically in the portion of Binyomin, is because Binyomin was not involved in the sale of Yosef. However, at first glance, this is not understood, being that the brothers repented over having sold Yosef, and “even the perfectly righteous (*Tzaddikim Gemurim*) are incapable of stand in the place of those who return in repentance (*Baalei Teshuvah*).” This being so, why was the Holy Temple specifically built in the portion of Binyomin?

stemming from fear – it may be suggested, with some difficulty, that the intention there is to repentance stemming from fear of punishment. For, in repentance stemming from fear of punishment, there is the lack of superiority stemming from overcoming one’s inclination. However, this requires further in-depth analysis.] [***Translators note: However, it should also be pointed out, that even in Talmud Bavli, Yoma 86b there, it states that there also is transformation brought about through repentance (*Teshuvah*) stemming from fear, except that in that case, willful sins are only transformed into unwitting transgressions, as opposed to repentance (*Teshuvah*) stemming from love, in which they are transformed to merits.]

¹⁵⁷⁴ Mishneh Torah, Hilchot Teshuvah 7:4 – as per the view of Rabbi Avahu (Talmud Bavli, Brachot 34b).

¹⁵⁷⁵ Sifri to Deuteronomy 33:12

However, it is explained in Chassidus¹⁵⁷⁶ that the superiority of those who return in repentance (*Baalei Teshuvah*) over and above the righteous (*Tzaddikim*), is that through repentance (*Teshuvah*) they reach even higher. However, in order for there be a drawing down of *HaShem*'s יהו"ה Godliness below, meaning, to actualize a dwelling place in the lower worlds, this is brought about through the service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, of the righteous (*Tzaddikim*). Thus, since the Holy Temple is the matter of a dwelling place in the lower worlds, it therefore was in the portion of Binyomin.

The explanation is that the superiority of those who return in repentance (*Baalei Teshuvah*) in comparison to the righteous (*Tzaddikim*), is that they **conquer** their inclinations,¹⁵⁷⁷ meaning that this is the superiority of self-restraint (*Itkafiya*). In contrast, the superiority of the righteous (*Tzaddikim*) is that they **transform** their inclination, this being the superiority of self-transformation (*It'hapcha*).

Amongst the differences between self-restraint (*Itkafiya*) and self-transformation (*It'hapcha*) is that¹⁵⁷⁸ through self-restraint (*Itkafiya*) a drawing down of the limitless light of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, the Unlimited One, blessed is He, which transcends the chaining down of the worlds (*Hishtalshelut*), is brought about. [This is like the teaching, "Through the restraint

¹⁵⁷⁶ Ohr HaTorah, Shir HaShirim, Vol. 2 (discourse entitled "*Mi Yitencha*") p. 650; Sefer HaMaamarim 5626 p. 111, and elsewhere.

¹⁵⁷⁷ Mishneh Torah, Hilchot Teshuvah 7:4 *ibid*.

¹⁵⁷⁸ See the discourse entitled "*Bati LeGan*" 5731, Ch. 10 and on (Torat Menachem, Sefer HaMaamarim Shvat, p. 361 and on.

(*Itkafia*) of the side opposite holiness, the glory of the Holy One, blessed is He, is elevated in all worlds.”¹⁵⁷⁹

In other words, this refers to drawing down the light of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, that is equally present in all worlds, meaning, His light that transcends all relation to worlds.] However, the revelation of this drawing down, brought about through self-restraint (*Itkafiya*), is in a way that the one below is not actually a receptacle for it.

[For, by the very fact that the lower one is in such a state that he must forcefully restrain himself to act in opposition to his desire and natural tendency, it is understood that he is not a receptacle for the revelation of *HaShem*'s-יהו"ה Godliness.] Thus, in order for the lower one to be a receptacle for this revelation, the toil of self-transformation (*It'hapcha*) is necessary.

Now, based on the well-known fact,¹⁵⁸⁰ that every person (even if he is on the level of an intermediate (*Beinoni*), and even if he is below the level of an intermediate (*Beinoni*)), who fulfills the *mitzvot*, is called righteous (*Tzaddik*),¹⁵⁸¹ [being that all *mitzvot* are generally called “righteousness-*Tzedakah*-צדקה”]¹⁵⁸² therefore, whoever fulfills the *mitzvot* is called

¹⁵⁷⁹ Tanya Ch. 27 & Likkutei Torah, Parshat Pekudei (citing Zohar II 128b, Zohar II 67b, Zohar II 184a; Torah Ohr Vayakhel 89d; Likkutei Torah Chukat 65c; Also see the discourse entitled “*Bati LeGani*” 5710, Ch. 1 (Sefer HaMaamarim 5710 p. 111 and on). [Also see the discourse entitled “*Bati LeGani*” 5711, translated in The Teachings of The Rebbe, 5711, Discourse 1.]

¹⁵⁸⁰ Likkutei Torah, Shir HaShirim 16c; Also see the discourse entitled “*Mi Yitencha*” in Ohr HaTorah, Shir HaShirim (Vol. 2, p. 634 and on, and p. 675 there). Also see Sefer HaMaamarim 5654 (p. 105), and elsewhere.

¹⁵⁸¹ [See Shaar HaKedushah of Rabbi Chayim Vital, Part 1, Gate 2, and on.]

¹⁵⁸² See Tanya, Ch. 37 (48b), cited in Likkutei Torah *ibid.* Also see the citations in Torat Menachem, Sefer HaMaamarim Cheshvan p. 258, note 33.

“righteous-*Tzadik*-צדיק,” on account of the “righteousness-*Tzedakah*-צדקה,” (the *mitzvot*)].¹⁵⁸³

It can thus be said that the matter of self-transformation (*It'hapcha*) is not only [present] in the most literal sense in the righteous *Tzaddikim*, but even in those who fulfill the *mitzvot* in general. For, since “the *mitzvot* were given for the purpose of smelting the creations,” (in which the word “smelt-*Letzaref*-לצרף” is of the word “*Tziruf*-צירוף,” which means “to refine and purify”), and every time a person fulfills a *mitzvah*, he refines a particular aspect of his body and animalistic soul, therefore, in relation to this particular aspect that he refined, he already is in a state of being righteous (*Tzaddik*), [which is the matter of] self-transformation (*It'hapcha*).

9.

We [also] can connect this to what was explained in the discourse entitled “*Lehavin Inyan Pesach Shen*” (of the Tzemach Tzedek).¹⁵⁸⁴ Namely, that the difference between the first Passover and the second Passover (*Pesach Sheini*) is related to the difference between the month of Nissan and the month of Iyyar.

That is, the toil in serving *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, during the month of Nissan, the substance of which is the exodus from Egypt, is the toil of turning away from evil (*Sur*

¹⁵⁸³ [Also see Shaarei Orah of Rabbi Yosef Gikatilla, translated as Gates of Light, Gate Two (*Yesod*), section on *HaShem*'s-יהו"ה title “The Righteous One-*Tzaddik*-צדיק.”]

¹⁵⁸⁴ Printed in Ohr HaTorah, BeHa'alotcha p. 367 and on; Also see this discourse in 5738 – Torat Menachem Iyyar p. 264 and on.

MeiRa). In other words, the evil is in its full strength, and the toil is to turn away from evil (*Sur MeiRa*), and to separate and flee from it, which is the matter of self-restraint (*Itkafiya*).¹⁵⁸⁵ In contrast, the toil in serving *HaShem*-יהוה during the month of Iyyar is the toil of self-transformation (*It'hapcha*).

This accords with the explanation in Likkutei Torah,¹⁵⁸⁶ on the verse,¹⁵⁸⁷ On the first of the second month... after their exodus from Egypt.” That is, the first toil, which took place upon the exodus from Egypt, in the first month, was that of restraining (*Itkafiya*) the side opposite of holiness. Then, after this, came the second toil of the exodus from Egypt, “the second month,” which is the matter of transformation (*It'hapcha*). This is why that which is unique to the month of Iyyar is the counting of the Omer (*Sefirat HaOmer*),¹⁵⁸⁸ the substance of which is¹⁵⁸⁹ refining the emotions (*Midot*) and transforming them to holiness – their transformation (*It'hapcha*).

Based on this, the discourse¹⁵⁹⁰ explains that the reason that on the first Passover, leaven (*Chametz*) is forbidden from being found and seen [in one's possession], whereas on the second Passover (*Pesach Sheini*), both leaven (*Chametz*) and “matzah are present with him in his home.”¹⁵⁹¹

¹⁵⁸⁵ Tanya, Likkutei Amarim, Ch. 31 (40b)

¹⁵⁸⁶ Likkutei Torah, Bamidbar 3a

¹⁵⁸⁷ Numbers 1:1

¹⁵⁸⁸ Also see Likkutei Sichot, Vol. 1, p. 263 and on, and elsewhere.

¹⁵⁸⁹ Likkutei Torah, Vayikra 3c, and elsewhere – also see the citations in Torat Menachem, Sefer HaMaamarim Iyyar p. 264 *ibid.*, note 4.

¹⁵⁹⁰ Likkutei Torah, Shir HaShirim 16c; Also see the discourse entitled “*Mi Yitencha*” in Ohr HaTorah, Shir HaShirim (Vol. 2, p. 634 and on, and p. 675 there). Also see Sefer HaMaamarim 5654 (p. 105), and elsewhere.

¹⁵⁹¹ Talmud Bavli, Pesachim 95a [in the Mishnah (Pesachim 9:3)]

This is because on the first Passover, when the emotions (*Midot*) are not yet refined, (and the toil is only that of self-restraint (*Itkafiya*)), one must be more cautious of the evil – that “it should not be found and seen,” whereas on the second Passover (in the month of Iyyar), since he already has left the evil¹⁵⁹² (self-transformation-*It’hapcha*), it even is possible to refine, clarify, and elevate the leaven (*Chametz*).

[To further explain, this is similar to the difference between the righteous *Tzaddikim* (self-transformation-*It’hapcha*), and those who return in repentance - *Baalei Teshuvah* (self-restraint-*Itkafiya*). That is, the righteous must say, “I desire it, but what can I do? My Father in Heaven has decreed this upon me.”¹⁵⁹³ In contrast, those who return in repentance must say, “I do not desire it,” being that “he must guard himself to a greater degree.”]¹⁵⁹⁴

This proves that the matter of transformation (*It’hapcha*) applies even to a particular matter. For, the second Passover (*Pesach Sheini*) is [still] in the middle of the days of counting of the Omer, and there still remain more qualities that must be refined. However, even so, the discourse states that the second Passover (*Pesach Sheini*) is the matter of transformation (*It’hapcha*). This is because, regarding those qualities that were already refined in the days preceding the second Passover (*Pesach Sheini*), he indeed separated himself from the evil – [and affected] transformation (*It’hapcha*).

¹⁵⁹² As stated in Ohr HaTorah ibid. Also see the end of this chapter.

¹⁵⁹³ Torat Kohanim, cited in Rashi to our Torah Portion (Kedoshim) [Leviticus] 24:3.

¹⁵⁹⁴ Likkutei Torah, Va’etchanan 9d and elsewhere.

Now, the reason the exodus from Egypt was in a way of restraint (*Itkafiya*), whereas the counting of the Omer (*Sefirat HaOmer*) is in a way of transformation (*It'hapcha*), is because the exodus from Egypt stemmed from an arousal from Above. When it comes to a revelation that is drawn down from Above (and not by way of man's efforts), it is not drawn down to such an extent in an inner manifest way.

In contrast, the counting of the Omer (*Sefirat HaOmer*) is through man's own efforts as an arousal from below, and when it comes to revelation that is drawn down from Above through man's toil, [that is, arousal from Above brought about by arousal from below], it comes in an inner manifest way (*b'Pnimityut*).

Now, although revelation that comes from Above is much higher than revelation drawn down through man's toil in serving *HaShem*-יהוה, blessed is He, [being that the toil of a novel created being can only reach as high as its root],¹⁵⁹⁵ the same is so of the exodus from Egypt and the counting of the Omer (*Sefirat HaOmer*).

That is, the revelation that took place in the exodus from Egypt was that, "the King, King of kings Himself was revealed

¹⁵⁹⁵ As known, proof for this is from the spring of Eitam (Talmud Bavli, Yoma 31a; Sefer HaMaamarim 5703 p. 23, and elsewhere). ["The Spring of Eitam (from which water was supplied to the Holy Temple), was twenty-three cubits higher than the ground of the Temple courtyard. As we learn in Mishnah, all the entrances of the Holy Temple, were twenty cubits high and ten cubits wide... and the dimensions of the ritual bath (*Mikvah*) were one cubit long, one cubit wide, and three cubits high." Thus, "since water cannot ascend to a place on the mountain that is higher than the place from where it flows," (see Rashi there) it must be said that the Spring of Eitam (from where the water flowed) was at least twenty-three cubits higher than the ground of the Temple courtyard."]

upon them in His glory.”¹⁵⁹⁶ In contrast, the month of Iyyar is called “the month of *Ziv*-זִיב,”¹⁵⁹⁷ which means a “ray,” indicating that the revelation drawn down in this month is but a glimmer of radiance.

[It can be said that in addition to the fact that the revelation drawn down by man’s toil is below the revelation drawn down by arousal from Above, [as it is] in and of itself, this is to an even greater degree in regard to the revelation drawn down through the toil of the counting the Omer (*Sefirat HaOmer*).

For, since the toil in serving *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, during the counting of the Omer, is (a preparation that) **precedes** the giving of the Torah, therefore, the revelation drawn down through the toil of counting of the Omer (*Sefirat HaOmer*) is **similar** to the revelation that took place through the toil of our forefathers [Avraham, Yitzchak and Yaakov] which preceded the giving of the Torah (at which time there was a decree and partition separating between the upper and the lower),¹⁵⁹⁸ and was below the revelation drawn down through our service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, after the Torah was given.

(This is true even though the current revelation drawn down through an arousal from below, is lower than the revelation drawn down from Above, in and of itself.) This then, is why the month of Iyyar is called, “ray-*Ziv*-זִיב,” in that [it is explained that] “the radiant ones of the world (*Zivtanei Olam-*

¹⁵⁹⁶ Haggadah, section of “*Matzah Zu*,” from Talmud Bavli, Pesachim 116b, and the “*Vayotzi’einu*” section there.

¹⁵⁹⁷ Kings I 6:1; Talmud Bavli, Rosh HaShanah 2b

¹⁵⁹⁸ See Midrash Tanchuma Va’era 15; Shemot Rabba 12:3 and elsewhere.

עולם) were born in this month,”¹⁵⁹⁹ referring to our forefathers,¹⁶⁰⁰ whose fulfillment of the *mitzvot* was in a way that [only is considered to be] “fragrances.”¹⁶⁰¹

Nevertheless, as these matters relate to man, the revelation that comes from Above is (primarily) only sensed in the Godly soul, and not sensed in the animalistic soul, and because of this, the toil brought about through this revelation is only in a way of self-restraint (*Itkafiya*). In contrast, through man’s efforts in toiling [from below], particularly through the revelation drawn down by his service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, the refinement of the animalistic soul and its transformation to holiness – self-transformation (*It'hapcha*) is brought about.

10.

Now, just as it is in regard to the revelation that **brings to** self-restraint (*Itkafiya*) and self-transformation (*It'hapcha*), in that the superiority of the revelation that brings to self-restraint (*Itkafiya*) is a much loftier revelation, whereas the superiority of the revelation that brings to self-transformation (*It'hapcha*) is that it is drawn down in a person in an inner manifest way (*B'Pnimityut*), [which is why it is something that lasts],¹⁶⁰² the same is so of the revelation drawn down through

¹⁵⁹⁹ Talmud Bavli, Rosh HaShanah 11a

¹⁶⁰⁰ This is further elucidated by the fact that “איייר” is an acronym for Avraham-אברהם, Yitzchak-יצחק, Yaakov-יעקב, and Rachel-רחל (Me’orei Ohr 1:84; Beit Shmuel to Shulchan Aruch, Even HaEzer 126:6).

¹⁶⁰¹ Midrash Shir HaShirim Rabba 1:3

¹⁶⁰² See Likkutei Torah, Vayikra ibid. 2c.

the toil of serving *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, in [the two modes] of self-restraint (*Itkafiya*) and self-transformation (*It'hapcha*).

That is, the superiority of the revelation drawn down through the toil of self-restraint (*Itkafiya*) is that it is a much loftier revelation. [This was explained before in chapter eight, that the light drawn down through self-restraint (*Itkafiya*) is the light of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, that is equally present in all worlds, which is His light that transcends relation to worlds altogether.] In contrast, the superiority of the revelation drawn down through the toil of serving Him in [the mode of] self-transformation (*It'hapcha*) is that it is drawn down within the person and within the world, and is manifest in an inner way (*b'Pnimityut*).

With this in mind, we can explain what Rashi states,¹⁶⁰³ that “The month of Iyyar is called ‘*Ziv*-זיו’ because the radiant ones of the world (*Zivtanei Olam*-זיותני עולם) were born in this month,”¹⁶⁰⁴ (even though, in actuality, our forefathers were born in the month of Nissan),¹⁶⁰⁵ that “When the [moon of the] month of Iyyar was renewed, this was after they already were born in [the preceding month] of Nissan.”

However, this must be better understood. For, the fact that during the month of Iyyar “the radiant ones of the world (*Zivtanei Olam*-זיותני עולם) were born” is only a result of the fact

¹⁶⁰³ Rashi to Talmud Bavli, Rosh HaShanah 11a, section entitled “*Shenoldu*.”

¹⁶⁰⁴ Talmud Bavli, Rosh HaShanah 11a

¹⁶⁰⁵ Rosh HaShanah 11a *ibid*.

that they [already] were born in the month of Nissan. This being so, why is the month of Iyyar called “radiant-Ziv-זִיב”?¹⁶⁰⁶

However, we can say that the explanation is that the matter of the “radiance-Ziv-זִיב,” referring to the revelation drawn down through toil in serving *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, is that the world should be illuminated in an inner (*b'Pnimityut*) and settled way (*b'Hityashvut*). Thus, the revelation of our forefathers, (“the radiant ones of the world (*Zivtanei Olam*-זִיבוֹתַי עוֹלָם)”) in a way that was inwardly manifest in the world in a settled way, took place in the month after their birth, “when the [moon of the] month of Iyyar was renewed, after they had **already** been born.”

11.

The same is so of the difference between the revelation drawn down through the toil of the righteous *Tzaddikim*, and the revelation drawn down through the toil of repentance (*Teshuvah*). That is, in regard to the level of revelation, the revelation drawn down through the toil of repenting and returning (*Teshuvah*) to *HaShem*-יהו"ה is much loftier. However, the drawing down into the world below (in an inner manifest and settled way) is through the toil of the righteous *Tzaddikim*.

The explanation is that since in the matter of repentance (*Teshuvah*) a person departs from his own existence, therefore,

¹⁶⁰⁶ To further illuminate the question, when it comes to the month in which Moshe was born (Talmud Bavli, Megillah 13b), the redemption occurred in the [same] month in which he was born (Adar), and not in the month that followed.

through repentance, the Essential Self of the limitless light of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, the Singular Preexistent Intrinsic and Unlimited One, blessed is He, who transcends the parameters of novel existence, is drawn down.

That is, the light (*Ohr*) drawn down through the service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה of the righteous *Tzaddikim*, is light that is within the parameters of revelation. Even when their service is with nullification (*Bittul*) to Him, such that the drawing down through this kind of service is even loftier, it nonetheless is within the parameters of revelation.

This is the meaning of the words,¹⁶⁰⁷ “The humble will increase their joy in *HaShem*-יהו"ה,” namely, that through the humility and self-nullification of the righteous *Tzaddikim*, they affect a drawing down of additional light in [the lower name] *HaShem*-יהו"ה, being that the drawing down is from the limitless light of the Unlimited One, *HaShem*-יהו"ה Himself, blessed is He, who transcends [the lower name] *HaShem*-יהו"ה.

However, even so, this drawing down is also within the category of revelation. [This is as explained before in chapter three, that we can say that the matter indicated by the words, “The humble will increase their joy in *HaShem*-יהו"ה,” refers to the drawing down of the aspect of “My greatness-*Gedulati*-גדולתי” which “is superior to your greatness-*Gedulatchem*-גדולתכם.”

That is, the matter of “magnanimity-*Gedulah*-גדולה” (including even the aspect of “My greatness-*Gedulati*-גדולתי”) relates to the expression of spreading forth and revelation.] Thus, the substance of this drawing down is that there thereby

¹⁶⁰⁷ Isaiah 29:19

is caused to be additional revelation within [the lower name] *HaShem*-יהו"ה, (as in, "The humble will increase their joy in *HaShem*-יהו"ה").

However, the drawing down of the aspect of "The Holy One of Israel-*Kedosh Yisroel*-קדוש ישראל," referring to [drawing down] the Essential Self of the Singular Preexistent Intrinsic and Unlimited One, *HaShem*-יהו"ה Himself, who transcends and is separate from revelation, comes about through serving Him with repentance (*Teshuvah*).

This may be [further] explained based on what is known,¹⁶⁰⁸ that the matter of humility (*Anavah*-ענוה) is (not that a person is unaware of his positive qualities, but) that even though he is aware of his positive qualities, he nevertheless does not ascribe them to himself, since he knows that his positive qualities were given to him from Above.

Thus, since the self-nullification (*Bittul*) of humility (*Anavah*-ענוה) does not negate his own existence, (being that he is aware of his positive qualities), and it only is that his existence is not of himself, but solely due to *HaShem*'s-יהו"ה Godliness, therefore, it also is so, that the drawing down brought about through the nullification (*Bittul*) of humility (*Anavah*) is in a way that is revealed in the world (within novel existence), only that the revelation in the world is as it stems from its root, which is the aspect of "My greatness-*Gedulati*-גדולתי."

¹⁶⁰⁸ See the discourse entitled "*V'Yasfu Anavim baHaShem Simchah*" 5562 (Sefer HaMaamarim 5562 Vol. 1, p. 51 and on); Also see the citations in Torat Menachem, Sefer HaMaamarim Cheshvan, p. 282 and notes 60-61 there.

However, to draw down the aspect of “The Holy One of Israel-*Kedosh Yisroel*-קדוש ישראל,” who transcends revelation, this comes about through the self-nullification of “the destitute amongst men” (*Evyonei Adam*-אביוני אדם). That is, through the sense that he is a pauper (*Evyon*-אביון) who has no positive qualities at all,¹⁶⁰⁹ he thus is completely nullified of his own existence, and through this, there is a drawing down of the aspect of the Holy One of Israel (“*Kedosh Yisroel*-קדוש ישראל”).

12.

Now, all the above is in regard to the drawing down itself. However, in order for there to be revelation in the world, of “the dwelling place for the Holy One, blessed is He, in the lower worlds,” this is brought about through the toil of the righteous *Tzaddikim* in their service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He.¹⁶¹⁰ For, the matter of the dwelling place for the Holy One, blessed is He, in the lower worlds, is that there should be the revelation of *HaShem*'s-יהו"ה Godliness [below] even as a person remains **in his novel existence**.

¹⁶⁰⁹ For which reason “the destitute yearn for everything” (Rashi to Deuteronomy 15:4, 24:14, and elsewhere) because he has nothing at all.

¹⁶¹⁰ Also see before in chapter eight. However, there we were discussing a person who returns in repentance (*Baalei Teshuvah*) and us on a low level, such that his service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, is only in a way of self-restraint (*Itkafiya*), and why, through this, one does not fulfill the intention of bringing the dwelling place for the Holy One, blessed is He, about in the lower worlds, because he is not a receptacle for *HaShem*'s-יהו"ה Godliness. In contrast, here we are discussing one who returns in repentance-*Baal Teshuvah* who is on the loftiest level, that the reason that he does not fulfill the matter of making a dwelling place for the Holy One, blessed is He, in the lower worlds, is because he **transcends** the matter of novel existence.

Thus, since the matter of repentance (*Teshuvah*) is a **departure** from his own existence, [in addition to nullifying his own existence, as explained before], therefore, the matter of actualizing the dwelling place for the Holy One, blessed is He, in the lower worlds, is brought about through the service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה of the righteous *Tzaddikim*.

This then, explains [the verse],¹⁶¹¹ “If only you were a brother to me,” meaning, “as Yosef was with Binyomin.” That is, even though our request is for the Holy One, blessed is He, to act with us as a brother, even though our conduct **has not been** as it should be, we nevertheless plead that He should act with us as Yosef acted with Binyomin.

It can be said that this also hints that service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה with repentance (*Teshuvah*) should be in a way that the revelation brought about through repentance (*Teshuvah*), (which transcends the parameters of novel existence) should be drawn into the world in a settled way, with the superior quality of the righteous *Tzaddikim*, like the way of Yosef with Binyomin.

This is also the connection between the two explanations of the verse, “If only you were a brother to me,” that it refers to the righteous *Tzaddikim*, and that it refers to those who return to *HaShem*-יהו"ה in repentance - *Baalei Teshuvah* (as explained in chapter four), and that there should be a bond and inter-inclusion of these two matters.

¹⁶¹¹ Song of Songs 8:1

This then, is the meaning of the verse,¹⁶¹² “You shall be holy, for I, *HaShem*-יהו"ה your God, am holy,” [meaning], “My holiness is higher than your holiness.” As explained in Likkutei Torah, [the aspect of] “My holiness [which] is above your holiness” is not drawn down by way of arousal from below, even though it is drawn down through serving *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, by returning to Him repentance (*Teshuvah*). This is because the [manner of] serving *HaShem*-יהו"ה with repentance (*Teshuvah*) is such that one **is not an existence**, and it therefore automatically follows, that this is not a matter of arousal **from below**.

This is why the Midrash first discusses the matter of “My greatness [which] is superior to your greatness,” (even though, at first glance, it does not relate to this verse). For, just as “My greatness-*Gedulati*-גדולתי,” which “is superior to your greatness-*Gedulatchem*-גדולתכם,” is a matter of revelation (and relates to those below), the same will likewise be in the drawing down of the aspect of “My holiness-*Kedushati*-קדושתי,” that it will be revealed in the world (and will also have the superior quality of arousal from below), through which *HaShem*'s-יהו"ה Supernal intent for a dwelling place for the Holy One, blessed is He, in the lower worlds, will be fulfilled.¹⁶¹³

¹⁶¹² Leviticus 19:2

¹⁶¹³ See Midrash Tanchuma Bechukotai 3, Naso 16; Midrash Bamidbar Rabba 13:6; Tanya Ch. 36, and elsewhere.