

Discourse 19

*“Vayedaber HaShem... Zot Chukat HaTorah -
HaShem spoke... This is the decree of the Torah”*

Delivered on Shabbat Parshat VaYakhel-Pekudei,
Parshat Parah, Shabbat Mevarchim Nissan, 5721
By the grace of *HaShem*, blessed is He,

1.

The verse states,¹²⁴⁵ “*HaShem*-יהו"ה spoke to Moshe and Aharon saying: This is the decree of the Torah which *HaShem*-יהו"ה has commanded, saying: ‘Speak to the children of Israel, and they shall take to you a completely red heifer etc.’” The question about the precise wording of this verse is well known.¹²⁴⁶ Namely, (as pointed out in Likkutei Torah)¹²⁴⁷ why does the verse here say the Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה twice?

We also must understand what Midrash states on the Torah portion of Bo,¹²⁴⁸ “The verse states,¹²⁴⁹ “May my heart be whole in Your decrees,” (in which the word “Your decrees-*Chukeicha*-חוקיך” is plural, meaning two decrees),¹²⁵⁰ that “this

¹²⁴⁵ Numbers 19:1-2

¹²⁴⁶ See the discourse by the same title as this of the year 5629 (Sefer HaMaamarim 5629 p. 93 and on); 5631 (Sefer HaMaamarim 5631 Vol. 1 p. 208 and on).

¹²⁴⁷ Likkutei Torah, Chukat 56a

¹²⁴⁸ Midrash Shemot Rabba 19:2

¹²⁴⁹ Psalms 119:80

¹²⁵⁰ See Maharzu commentary to Midrash Shemot Rabba ibid.

refers to the decree (*Chok*-חוק) of the Passover (*Pesach*) sacrifice and the decree (*Chok*-חוק) of the Red Heifer.

Why is this? Because the two are similar to each other. About one, the verse states,¹²⁵¹ ‘This is the decree-*Chukat*-חקת of the Passover (*Pesach*) sacrifice,’ and about the Red Heifer (*Parah*) it is written,¹²⁵² ‘This is the decree-*Chukat*-חקת of the Torah.’ However, it is not known which of the two is greater.

This is like the example of two distinguished ladies who were walking together and resembled each other. How can it be known which is the more distinguished? By [observing] which one accompanies and follows the other to her house. So too, about the Passover (*Pesach*) sacrifice it is written, ‘This is the decree-*Chukat*-חקת,’ and about the Red Heifer (*Parah*) it is written, ‘This is the decree-*Chukat*-חקת.’

Which is greater? The Red Heifer (*Parah*) [is greater], being that those who eat the Passover (*Pesach*) sacrifice require [the Red Heifer], as the verse states,¹²⁵³ ‘For the contaminated person they shall take some of the ashes of the burning of the purification [animal] etc.’” We therefore must understand the meaning of both being great, but that even so, the “decree of the Torah” is greater, since those who eat the Passover (*Pesach*) sacrifice require it.

¹²⁵¹ Exodus 12:43

¹²⁵² Numbers 19:2

¹²⁵³ Numbers 19:17

This may be understood by prefacing with the statement (in this week's Torah portion),¹²⁵⁴ "You shall not kindle fire in any of your dwellings on the Shabbat day." This matter is not understood.¹²⁵⁵ For, all [thirty-nine] forms of labor are prohibited on Shabbat, not just the kindling of fire. This being so, why does the Torah warn against the kindling of fire over and above all other forms of labor?

Now, (in addition to the reasons explained in Talmud),¹²⁵⁶ the Shnei Luchot HaBrit (Shalah HaKadosh) explains in Mesechet Shabbat,¹²⁵⁷ that on the first day, the totality of the creation of novel existence was brought forth in a general way (*Klall*). That is, on the first day of creation, the heavens and earth and all their hosts¹²⁵⁸ were brought forth in a general way. This is because the utterance of the first day,¹²⁵⁹ "Let there be light-*Yehiy Ohr*-יהי אור" included all the utterances. [This likewise is so of the *Sefirot*, in that the *Sefirah* of Wisdom-*Chochmah* includes all the *Sefirot*.]

On Shabbat, there must be rest and cessation from all thirty-nine forms of labor, which is the matter of the creation of

¹²⁵⁴ Exodus 35:3

¹²⁵⁵ See the discourse entitled "*Lo Teva'aru Eish*" 5631 (Sefer HaMaamarim 5631 *ibid.* p. 220); Also see the discourse entitled "*Ki Tisa*" 5722 (Sefer HaMaamarim 5722, p. 165 and on).

¹²⁵⁶ Talmud Bavli, Shabbat 70a; Yevamot 6b; Sanhedrin 35b

¹²⁵⁷ See Shnei Luchot HaBrit, Mesechet Shabbat 136b; Chelek Torah SheB'Khtav, Parshat Shmini (Torah Ohr), 340b, citing and summarizing Ginat Egoz of Rabbi Yosef Gikatilla, translated as HaShem Is One, Vol. 2 (The Letters of Creation, Part 1), section entitled "The three letters *Yod Hey Vov*-יוד ה"א ו"ו – "where it is discussed at great length."

¹²⁵⁸ See Rashi to Genesis 1:14

¹²⁵⁹ Genesis 1:3

novel existence brought about by the ten utterances. However, the primary rest and cessation is generally included in the kindling of fire, which is similar to [the utterance], “Let there be light-*Yehiy Ohr*-יהי אור,” which included all the utterances.

This is why the Torah [singled out this form of labor and] stated, “You shall not kindle fire,” in that this is as though it (simply) said, “You shall not perform any labor.” This is because the creation of the light (*Ohr*-אור) of fire includes the totality of the act of creation.¹²⁶⁰

3.

Now, to understand this in greater depth, and also to understand this matter as it is in our service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, it is written,¹²⁶¹ “For *HaShem* your God-*HaShem Elohei*”*cha*-אלהיך, He is a consuming fire.” That is, the aspect indicated by “*HaShem* your God-*HaShem Elohei*”*cha*-אלהיך – and more specifically, by the aspect of “your God-*Elohei*”*cha*-אלהיך,” meaning “your strength and vitality,”¹²⁶² referring to the matter of drawing down and descent – is compared to fire.

This is because the foundational element of fire differs from all the other foundational elements, in that its nature is to

¹²⁶⁰ See at length in *Ginat Egoz* of Rabbi Yosef Gikatilla, translated as *HaShem Is One*, Vol. 2 (The Letters of Creation, Part 1), section entitled “The three letters *Yod Hey Vov* ו"ו-י"ה-י"ו.”

¹²⁶¹ Deuteronomy 4:24; *Likkutei Torah*, Acharei 25c and on.

¹²⁶² See *Tur* and *Shulchan Aruch*, *Orach Chayim* 5; *Likkutei Torah* *ibid.* 18a; Also see *Ginat Egoz* of Rabbi Yosef Gikatilla, translated as *HaShem Is One*, Vol. 1, The Gate of His Title (*Shaar HaKinuy*), that the title “God-*Elohi*”*m*-אלהים” is a term of “strength-*Aleem*-אליים” as per the dictum (*Gittin* 60b and elsewhere), “Whoever is stronger-*Aleem*-אליים prevails.”

ascend above, in that, in and of itself, it has no relation to the lower aspect. This likewise is the meaning of the verse, “For *HaShem* your God-*HaShem Elohei*” *cha*-יהו"ה אלהיך, He is a consuming fire.” That is, just as fire ascends above and is separate from the lower aspect, so likewise, this so above in *HaShem*’s-יהו"ה Godliness.

This is because the primary aspect of *HaShem*’s-יהו"ה Godliness is utterly beyond the fact that the worlds were brought into existence from Him.¹²⁶³ That is, *HaShem*’s-יהו"ה Godliness is utterly separate from the matter of worlds, and the aspect of His Godliness that brings the worlds into being – which specifically refers to the ten utterances of creation¹²⁶⁴ – is called in Zohar¹²⁶⁵ “the words of a commoner (*Meeleen d’Hedyota* דהדיוטא-מילין)” in comparison to *HaShem*’s-יהו"ה Godliness above. This is because the Essential Self of *HaShem*’s-יהו"ה completely transcends the matter of worlds altogether.

About this the verse states,¹²⁶⁶ “All that is called by My Name and for My glory, I created it (*Barativ*-בראתיו), I formed it (*Yatzartiv*-יצרתיו), I even actualized it (*Asitiv*-עשיתיו).” That is, generally the worlds are divided into three worlds [as indicated by the words], “I created it (*Barativ*-בראתיו), I formed it (*Yatzartiv*-יצרתיו), I even actualized it (*Asitiv*-עשיתיו).” However, for *HaShem*’s-יהו"ה Godliness to be drawn down into the three worlds, this comes about by their being “called by My Name etc.” In other words, it is necessary to “call” (*Likro*-

¹²⁶³ Torah Ohr, Megillat Esther 99b; Likkutei Torah, Shir HaShirim 8a

¹²⁶⁴ Mishnah Avot 5:1

¹²⁶⁵ Zohar III 149b; Also see Likkutei Torah, Acharei 25d

¹²⁶⁶ Isaiah 43:7

(לקרוא) and thereby draw Him into the worlds, being that, in and of Himself, He is compared to the nature of fire, which ascends above.

Now, just as the drawing down is into the three worlds, so likewise, in the drawing down itself, there also are three matters. This is likewise so of the Jewish people, for whom novel existence was brought into being, as the verse states,¹²⁶⁷ “In the beginning-*Bereishit*-בראשית,” meaning,¹²⁶⁸ “For the Jewish people, who are called ‘the beginning-*Reishit*-ראשית.’” That is, the powers of the soul also include three powers, thought, speech, and action, which are comparable to the aspects [and worlds indicated by the words], “I created it (*Barativ*-בראתיו), I formed it (*Yatzartiv*-יצרתיו), I even actualized it (*Asitiv*-עשיתיו).”

To explain, thought (*Machshavah*) is the coming into being of novelty, in that higher than thought (*Machshavah*) there are no recognizable or revealed letters. This being so, [the letters] are compared to the world of Creation (*Briyah*-בריאה), which is the coming into being of novel existence from nothing to something. This is as stated by Ramban,¹²⁶⁹ that the bringing into being of something from nothing (*Yesh MeAyin*) is called “Creation-*Briyah*-בריאה.”

Speech (*Dibur*) is the revelation of that which is concealed (*Giluy HaHe'elem*), meaning that a person reveals what is concealed in his thought, whether he thinks it now, or thought it before. (For, even when a person “does not speak

¹²⁶⁷ Genesis 1:1

¹²⁶⁸ See Rashi and Ramban to Genesis 1:1; Midrash Aggadah to Genesis 1:1; Tanchuma Bereishit 3; Midrash Bereishit Rabba 1:4; Vayikra Rabba 36:4

¹²⁶⁹ Genesis 1:1

with knowledge,”¹²⁷⁰ meaning [that he speaks] without thinking, he necessarily thought it before [speaking], as explained in Tanya.)¹²⁷¹

This is compared to the world of Formation (*Yetzirah*-יצירה), the matter of which is to reveal what is hidden in the world of Creation (*Briyah*-בריאה), as the verse states,¹²⁷² “He forms light (*Yotzer Ohr*-יוצר אור) and creates darkness (*Boreh Choshech*-בורא חושך).” That is, since it is concealed, the world of Creation (*Briyah*-בריאה) is called “darkness,” whereas since its matter is to reveal, the world of Formation (*Yetzirah*-יצירה) is called “light,” as also indicated by the word “form-*Tzurah*-צורה.”

Now, action (*Asiyah*-עשייה) is a separate power etc., and is thus likened to the world of Action (*Asiyah*), which is mostly evil and the wicked are dominant in it, as stated in Tanya,¹²⁷³ citing Etz Chaim.¹²⁷⁴

Now, these three powers of the soul must be used for serving *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, in fulfilling His Torah and *mitzvot*. For, they then become the wick for the Godly light of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, which is compared to fire. In other words, through fulfilling *HaShem* 's-יהו"ה Torah and *mitzvot*, we “call” unto Him to be drawn into the aspects of “I created it (*Barativ*-בראתי), I formed it (*Yatzartiv*-יצרתי), I even actualized it (*Asitiv*-עשיתי).”

¹²⁷⁰ See Job 34:35

¹²⁷¹ See Tanya, Iggeret HaKodesh, Epistle 19

¹²⁷² Isaiah 45:7; Also see the blessings of the *Shema* recital; Pri Etz Chayim, Shaar HaKriyat Shema, Ch. 1

¹²⁷³ Tanya, Likkutei Amarim, Ch. 6 (10b and on); Ch. 24 (30a); Also see Shaar HaYichud of the Mittler Rebbe, translated as The Gate of Unity, Ch. 54.

¹²⁷⁴ Etz Chayim, Shaar 42 (Shaar Drushei ABY”A), Ch. 4

However, even in our service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה of fulfilling His Torah and *mitzvot*, there also are these three lines [and modes of service]. This is as our sages of blessed memory stated,¹²⁷⁵ “The world stands on three things: The Torah, the Temple Service (*Avodah*), and acts of lovingkindness (*Gemilut Chassadim*).”

The Temple Service (*Avodah*) refers to the service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, in the Holy Temple, with the sacrificial offerings (*Korbanot*).¹²⁷⁶ However, [because currently the Holy Temple is not standing], prayer takes the place of the daily offerings (*Temidin*).¹²⁷⁷ This is as our sages, of blessed memory, taught¹²⁷⁸ on the verse,¹²⁷⁹ “[to love *HaShem*-יהו"ה your God], and serve Him with all your heart,” – “Which service [of *HaShem*-יהו"ה] is performed in the heart? You must say this is prayer.” That is, this service must be done with the desire of the heart (*Re'uta d'Leeba*), with devotional intention (*Kavanah*) and thought (*Machshavah*).¹²⁸⁰

Now, Torah too must be studied with speech, as the verse states,¹²⁸¹ “For they are life to whoever finds them-*L'Motzeihem*-למצאיהם,” about which our sages, of blessed

¹²⁷⁵ Avot 1:2

¹²⁷⁶ See the commentaries to Avot 1:2 *ibid.*; Also see *Shnei Luchot HaBrit*, *Mesechet Shabbat* *ibid.*

¹²⁷⁷ See Talmud Bavli, Brachot 26a-b

¹²⁷⁸ Talmud Bavli, Taanit 2a; Mishneh Torah, Hilchot Tefilah 1:1

¹²⁷⁹ Deuteronomy 11:13

¹²⁸⁰ “Though it must also be in speech (*Dibur*), this is only in order to rouse the devotional intent” (Sefer HaMaamarim 5631 *ibid.* p. 222; Also see *Likkutei Torah*, Acharei 25d).

¹²⁸¹ Proverbs 4:22

memory, said,¹²⁸² “To those who express them-*L’Motzi’eihem-*למוציאיהם with their mouth.”

In speech (*Dibur*) itself, it is not sufficient for it be in a whisper, but must specifically be done with the voice, until “they become ordered in all two-hundred and forty-eight limbs, for it is then that they become secured [and remembered].”¹²⁸³ In other words, it is specifically through speaking (*Dibur*) [words of] Torah that there comes to be a true grasp and understanding of it.

Acts of lovingkindness (*Gemilut Chassadim*) include all the *mitzvot*, all of which are called “charity-*Tzedakah-*צדקה,”¹²⁸⁴ the substance of which is “to revive the spirit of the lowly (*Shfeilim-*שפלים).”¹²⁸⁵ Through their fulfillment a drawing forth of the aspect of “I even actualized it (*Asitiv-*עשיתי-” is brought about, to enliven the world of Action (*Asiyah*), which is called “the lowly world” (*Olam HaShafel-*עולם השפל).

Now, when the verse states, “*HaShem-*יהוה your God, He is a consuming fire (*Aish Ochlah Hoo-*אש אוכלה הוא),” in addition to this light (*Ohr-*אור) being compared to fire (*Aish-*אש), it also is a “consuming fire” (*Aish Ochlah-*אש אוכלה). That is, it is compared to the fire that consumes and nullifies the wick, and specifically through doing so, the wick becomes a fitting vessel for the fire to properly take hold, unlike those “wicks on which the fire sputters and flickers.”¹²⁸⁶

¹²⁸² Talmud Bavli, Eruvin 54a

¹²⁸³ Talmud Bavli, Eruvin 54a ibid.

¹²⁸⁴ See Torah Ohr, Mikeitz 38c, 42c; Likkutei Torah, Shir HaShirim 44c

¹²⁸⁵ Isaiah 57:15

¹²⁸⁶ Talmud Bavli, Shabbat 21a

This matter, as it is spiritually, is that it is not adequate to just fulfill Torah and *mitzvot* in and of themselves, but they must specifically be fulfilled with sublimation and nullification (*Bittul*) to *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He. When sublimation and nullification (*Bittul*) to Him are absent, about this our sages, of blessed memory said,¹²⁸⁷ “[About whoever has arrogance in him, the Holy One, blessed is He, said:] He and I cannot dwell together.”

In other words, even if a person learns Torah and fulfills *mitzvot*, but lacks nullification (*Bittul*) to *HaShem*-יהו"ה, then not only are Torah and *mitzvot* not receptacles by which to draw the light of *HaShem*'s-יהו"ה Godliness down to take hold in them, meaning that He remains as He is in His Essential Self, in that the nature of fire is to ascend above, but beyond that, through ego and the sense of self (*Yeshut*) a person adds to the natural tendency of the light to be in a state of withdrawal, as in the teaching,¹²⁸⁸ “[Whosoever walks with an [arrogant and] upright posture [for a distance of] even four cubits,] it is as if he pushes away the feet of the Indwelling Presence of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, the *Shechinah*.”

Therefore, Torah and *mitzvot* must specifically be fulfilled with self-nullification (*Bittul*) and they then are [proper] receptacles (*Keilim*) to drawn down the light of *HaShem*-יהו"ה into them, similar to fire that consumes the wick. This refers to the matter of accepting the yoke (*Kabbalat Ol*) of Torah and *mitzvot* upon oneself, and more specifically, it is the general matter of nullification (*Bittul*) and acceptance of the

¹²⁸⁷ Talmud Bavli, Sotah 5a

¹²⁸⁸ Talmud Bavli, Brachot 43b

yoke of the Kingship of Heaven (*Kabbalat Ol Malchut Shamayim*) upon oneself, which even precedes the yoke of Torah and *mitzvot*. This is as our sages, of blessed memory, taught,¹²⁸⁹ “Why does the portion of *Shema* precede the portion of *Vehayah im Shamo’a*? So that a person will first accept the yoke of the Kingdom of Heaven upon himself, and only then accept the yoke of the *mitzvot* upon himself.”

4.

Now, all the above is in reference the service of the righteous *Tzaddikim*, who walk on the straightforward path, traveling on “the King’s highway.”¹²⁹⁰ However, when one has transgressed, blemished, and left the path, and lacks one of the three above-mentioned modes in his service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, then it automatically is impossible for this drawing down to be.

The rectification for this is to serve *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, with repentance (*Teshuvah*). Through doing so, he draws down the light (*Ohr*-אור) of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, and does so in an even loftier way. This is as our sages, of blessed memory, stated,¹²⁹¹ “Even the perfectly righteous (*Tzaddikim Gemurim*) are incapable of standing in the place of the penitent (*Baalei Teshuvah*).”

However, we must better understand why it is that penitents (*Baalei Teshuvah*) are elevated to a much greater

¹²⁸⁹ Talmud Bavli, Brachot 13a

¹²⁹⁰ See Numbers 20:17

¹²⁹¹ Mishneh Torah, Hilchot Teshuvah 7:4

degree. That is, it makes sense that the service of penitent (*Baalei Teshuvah*) must be with greater strength.¹²⁹² For, since they became very distant from their Source, they therefore require additional strength [over and above the righteous].

In other words, even though a perfectly righteous person (*Tzaddik Gamur*) serves *HaShem*-יהו"ה with fear of Him and with love and delight (*Ahavah b'Taanugim*) in Him,¹²⁹³ he nevertheless is in a state in which "there is one who loves,"¹²⁹⁴ and therefore is distant from his Source. Nonetheless, the distance brought about through sin is much greater, and thus, since such a person has become more distant, therefore, for him to come close like the righteous (*Tzaddik*), greater strength is needed. However, it is not understood why through their service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, the righteous (*Tzaddikim*) are incapable of reaching the same level as penitents (*Baalei Teshuvah*).

This may be understood from what we find¹²⁹⁵ about Rabbi Elazar ben Dordaya, who wept loudly and shed tears [in

¹²⁹² See Zohar I 129b; Maamarei Admor HaZaken 5565 Vol. 1, p. 494; Ohr HaTorah, Shir HaShirim Vol. 2 p. 685.

¹²⁹³ Tanya, Likkutei Amarim, Ch. 35

¹²⁹⁴ See Torah Ohr, Hosafot to Vayakhel 114d.

¹²⁹⁵ Talmud Bavli, Avodah Zarah 17a – "They say about Rabbi Elazar ben Dordaya that [he was so promiscuous that] he did not leave one prostitute in the world with whom he did not engage in intercourse. Once he heard that there was a prostitute in one of the cities overseas, who would take a purse full of dinars as her payment. He took a purse full of dinars and went and crossed seven rivers to reach her. While they were engaged in the act, she passed wind and said, 'Just as this passed wind will not return to its place, so too Elazar ben Dordaya will not be accepted in repentance. He went and sat between two mountains and hills and said, 'Mountains and hills, pray for mercy on my behalf.' They said to him, 'Before we pray for mercy on your behalf, we must pray for mercy on our own behalf, as the verse states (Isaiah 54:10), 'For the mountains may depart, and the hills be removed.' He said, 'Heaven and earth, pray for mercy on my behalf.' They said to him, 'Before we pray for mercy on your behalf, we must pray for mercy on our own behalf, as the

repentance] until his soul left [his body]. [When Rabbi Yehudah HaNasi heard about this], Rabbi Yehudah wept and said, “There are those who acquire their [share in] the coming world after many years [of toil], and there are those who acquire their [share in] the coming world in a single moment.”

Now, this must be better understood. For, it makes sense that on account of his repentance he is forgiven for his sins, due to which his sins are atoned for and he becomes desirable before the Holy One, blessed is He. This is as stated by Rambam,¹²⁹⁶ “Great is repentance (*Teshuvah*), since it draws man close to the Indwelling Presence of *HaShem*-יהוה, the *Shechinah*... for he now is beloved and desirable, close and dear.”

However, in regard to the matter of acquiring the coming world, it is not understood how it is possible for there to be such a drawing forth, to the extent that he acquires his portion in the coming world. After all, the world stands upon three things, Torah study, prayer, and acts of lovingkindness, and being that he lacks these three pillars, he has not built his coming world. This being so, how could he acquire his portion in the coming world?

verse states (Isaiah 51:6), ‘For the heavens shall vanish away like smoke, and the earth shall wax old like a garment.’ He said, ‘Sun and moon, pray for mercy on my behalf.’ They said to him, ‘Before we pray for mercy on your behalf, we must pray for mercy on our own behalf, as the verse states (Isaiah 24:23), ‘Then the moon shall be confounded, and the sun ashamed.’ He said, ‘Stars and constellations, pray for mercy on my behalf.’ They said, ‘Before we pray for mercy on your behalf, we must pray for mercy on our own behalf, as the verse states (Isaiah 34:4), ‘And all the hosts of the heaven shall molder away.’ He then said, ‘The matter depends on nothing other than myself.’ He placed his head between his knees and wept loudly until his soul left his body. A Supernal voice emerged and said, ‘Rabbi Elazar ben Dordaya is destined for the life of the coming world.’”

¹²⁹⁶ Mishneh Torah, Hilchot Teshuvah 7:6

The explanation of these two matters, (that through repentance (*Teshuvah*) he both acquires his portion in the coming world, and even reaches higher than the level of the righteous *Tzaddikim*), is because the drawing down brought about through repenting and returning (*Teshuvah*) to *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, is from a much higher Supernal place, meaning from a place where there is no blemish at all.

To elucidate, as explained before, the three pillars are the receptacles for drawing down the Godly light of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, which is compared to fire. As explained, when there is a blemish in fulfilling Torah and *mitzvot*, this causes the withdrawal of the light to above, as in the teaching,¹²⁹⁷ "If You would withdraw from them... they would remain like a body without a soul." However, all this only applies to the aspect of the revealed fire.

However, there also is an aspect of concealed fire, like the fire in a coal, and even higher, like the fire in a flintstone, in which there is no actual existence of fire. Through repenting and returning (*Teshuvah*) to *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, we cause a drawing down from the aspect of the "flintstone," where there was no blemish at all.

Now, just as it is physically, that to bring fire out of a flint it must specifically be struck, whereas to bring out the fire concealed in a coal, it is enough to blow on it, the same is so spiritually. That is, the toil in serving *HaShem*-יהו"ה with repentance (*Teshuvah*) must be with greater strength, and furthermore, one must be very embittered over his great

¹²⁹⁷ Introduction to Tikkunei Zohar, 17b.

distance from *HaShem*'s יהו"ה Godliness. Through this, he draws down fire from the "flintstone" (*HaTzur*-הצור).¹²⁹⁸

This is why a penitent (*Baal Teshuvah*) acquires his [portion in the] coming world, because he draws down from the aspect of the "flintstone" (*Tzur*-צור), where there was no blemish whatsoever. Moreover, since the aspect of fire [as it is] in the flint is much loftier, therefore he reaches even higher than the toil and service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, of the righteous *Tzaddikim*.

5.

This also is the meaning of the verse,¹²⁹⁹ "Behold! There is a place with Me... When My glory passes by, I shall place you in a cleft of the rock (*HaTzur*-הצור) etc." The Torah continues,¹³⁰⁰ "*HaShem*-יהו"ה passed before him and proclaimed, *HaShem*-יהו"ה, *HaShem*-יהו"ה, God-*E*"l Compassionate and Gracious etc." In other words, when He wanted to draw down from the aspect of the thirteen attributes of mercy, He said, "Behold! There is a place with Me... I shall place you in a cleft of the rock (*HaTzur*-הצור)."

Now, at first glance, the continuum of the matter is not understood. However, the explanation is that when they sinned with the golden calf, which is a most egregious sin, and it subsequently became necessary for there to be (not only

¹²⁹⁸ One of the titles of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, is "The Rock-*HaTzur*-הצור" (Deuteronomy 32:4), which also means a "flint stone." Also see Shaarei Orah of Rabbi Yosef Gikatilla, translated as Gates of Light, Gate Five (*Tiferet*).

¹²⁹⁹ Exodus 33:21-22

¹³⁰⁰ Exodus 34:6

atonement, but also) a drawing down, so that “Your Presence will go [with us],”¹³⁰¹ this drawing down had to be specifically from the aspect of “the flintstone-*HaTzur*-הצור,” since there was no blemish in this aspect, as explained above.

Additionally, the word “*Tzur*-צור,” also means strength, and generally refers to the “powers of might-*Gevurot*-גבורות.” However, what is meant here is not the matter of *Gevurot* indicating judgments (*Dinim*), being that the drawing down of the thirteen attributes of mercy was necessary, which is the matter of *HaShem*’s-ה' abundant kindnesses-*Chassadim*, blessed is He. Rather, what is meant here is the dominance and strength of vitality, in that due to the “mighty powers-*Gevurot*-גבורות” there is a drawing down of additional vitality.

More specifically, in the additional drawing down brought about by the “mighty powers-*Gevurot*-גבורות,” there are three matters. The first is that because of the “mighty powers-*Gevurot*-גבורות” there comes to be a bestowal of alacrity (*Zreezoot*). The second is that because of the “mighty powers-*Gevurot*-גבורות” the bestowal is received by the recipient in an inner way. The third is that because of the “mighty powers-*Gevurot*-גבורות,” the bestowal comes in a way of dispersion and abundance.

As known, the example for this is the difference we find between wild animals and domesticated animals. That is, alacrity (*Zreezoot*) is found in wild animals rather than domesticated animals. For, although about domesticated animals, the verse states,¹³⁰² “Many crops come through the

¹³⁰¹ Exodus 33:15

¹³⁰² Proverbs 14:4

power of the ox,” and similarly,¹³⁰³ “[One should subjugate himself to the words of Torah] like an ox to a yoke and like a donkey to a burden,” nevertheless, because the “mighty powers-*Gevurot*-גבורות” are present in wild animals, the matter of alacrity (*Zreezoot*) is specifically found in them.

We also find that when a person speaks to others, it is possible that they will listen and understand, and it is possible that they will neither listen nor understand. However, when he speaks with a voice stemming from the “mighty powers-*Gevurot*-גבורות” and the innerness (*Pnimityut*) of his soul, his words are received inwardly (*b’Pnimityut*), as in the teaching,¹³⁰⁴ “Words that come from the heart enter the heart.”

We also find that in “the power of the rains-*Gevurot Geshamim*-גבורות גשמים,”¹³⁰⁵ the rains come with division and dispersion, in that each drop [is separate and] has its own channel.¹³⁰⁶ This is due to the “mighty powers-*Gevurot*-גבורות,” that are rooted much higher, which is why the “key of the rains” is in the possession of the Highest of the most High.¹³⁰⁷

This then, is the meaning of the verse, “Behold! There is a place with Me... When My Glory passes by, I shall place you in a cleft of the rock (*HaTzur*-הצור) etc.” For, because of the sin of the golden calf there was a blemish in the aspect of “My Name,” and “My Glory,” which is compared to fire, as

¹³⁰³ Talmud Bavli, Avodah Zarah 5b

¹³⁰⁴ Sefer HaYashar of Rabbeinu Tam, Shaar 13; Shnei Luchot HaBrit 69a

¹³⁰⁵ Mishnah Taanit 1:1; Likkutei Torah, Va’etchanan 14c and elsewhere.

¹³⁰⁶ Talmud Bavli, Bava Batra 16a; Also see Shaar HaYichud of the Mittler Rebbe, translated as The Gate of Unity, Ch. 22.

¹³⁰⁷ See Talmud Bavli, Taanit 2a

explained above. It therefore was necessary for there to be a drawing down from a much higher level. This also is the meaning of the words, “When My Glory passes by” – meaning that it transcends the aspect of “Glory-*Kavod*-כבוד-32” – “I shall place you in a cleft of the rock (*HaTzur*-הצור),” indicating that the drawing down is from a much higher aspect, where there was no blemish.

This is also the meaning of, “Behold! There is a place (*Makom*-מקום) with Me.” For, since the blemish is in the aspect of “space-*Makom*-מקום,” which includes the totality of the chaining down of the worlds (*Hishtalshelut*), as indicated by the words, “I created it (*Barativ*-בראתי), I formed it (*Yatzartiv*-יצרתי), I even actualized it (*Asitiv*-עשיתי),” it therefore was necessary for there to be a drawing down from an aspect that transcends the matter of “space-*Makom*-מקום.”

About this the verse states, “Behold! There is a place (*Makom*-מקום) with Me,” indicating that the matter of “space-*Makom*-מקום” is totally nullified relative to *HaShem*-יהו"ה Himself, blessed is He. This is like the teaching,¹³⁰⁸ “He is the place (*Makom*-מקום) of the world, but the world is not His place (*Makom*-מקום).” This likewise is the meaning of, “*HaShem*-יהו"ה passed before him (*Al Panav*-על פניו),” that is, higher than the aspect of “His face-*Panav*-פניו.” This refers to the matter of drawing down the thirteen attributes of mercy, that transcend the chaining down of the worlds (*Hishtalshelut*).

¹³⁰⁸ Midrash Bereishit Rabb 68:9; Also see Ginat Egoz of Rabbi Yosef Gikatilla, translated as *HaShem Is One*, Vol. 3 (The Letters of Creation, Part 2), The Gate explaining that *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, is the Place-*Makom*-מקום of all beings.

Now, the difference between these two forms of serving *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He; that of the righteous *Tzaddikim*, and that of the penitent (*Baalei Teshuvah*), as they are in the aspect of time, is the difference between the six mundane days of the week, and the day of Shabbat. For, the six mundane days of the week are the matter of the coming into being of novel creation with the ten utterances, which all are included in the first utterance, "Let there be light-*Yehiy Ohr*-יהי אור," which is the aspect of the fire (*Aish*-אש), and is the matter of the service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, of the righteous *Tzaddikim*.

In contrast, Shabbat is service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, with repentance and returning (*Teshuvah*) to *HaShem*-יהו"ה, [in that the word] "Shabbat-שבת" shares the same letters as "Return-*Tasheiv*-תשב."¹³⁰⁹ However, this refers to the aspect of the Upper Repentance (*Teshuvah Ila'ah*),¹³¹⁰ rather than the lower repentance (*Teshuvah Tata'ah*).

Thus, since service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, with repentance and return (*Teshuvah*) to Him, is the aspect of the "flintstone-*HaTzur*-הצור" which transcends the aspect of "fire" (as mentioned before), the Torah therefore states,¹³¹¹ "You shall not kindle fire in any of your dwellings on the Shabbat day."

¹³⁰⁹ Torat Natan of Rabbi Natan Shapira [Tzfat 5645; Yerushalayim 5731 (52a)] toward the end; Iggeret HaTeshuvah, Ch. 10; Torah Ohr, Vayakhel 88c and elsewhere.

¹³¹⁰ See Iggeret HaTeshuvah *ibid.*; Also see Shaarei Orah of Rabbi Yosef Gikatilla, translated as Gates of Light, Gate Eight (*Binah*).

¹³¹¹ Exodus 35:3

This is because, on Shabbat, our service is with the aspect of “the flint-*HaTzur*-הַצֹּר,” which transcends the aspect of “fire.”

That is, it is the aspect of the light (*Ohr*-אור) of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, that transcends the chaining down of the worlds (*Hishtalshelut*) and is beyond relation to worlds altogether. For, as explained before, the aspect of “fire,” which stems from the utterance “let there be light-*Yehiy Ohr*-יהי אור,” is the aspect of the light (*Ohr*) that is drawn down through fulfilling Torah and *mitzvot*, into the aspects of “I created it (*Barativ*-בראתיו), I formed it (*Yatzartiv*-יצרתיו), I even actualized it (*Asitiv*-עשיתיו).”

However, on Shabbat, there is the matter of resting (*Shebitah*-שביתה) from the existence of [limited] novel being, and there is a drawing down of the aspect of “The flint-*HaTzur*-הַצֹּר,” referring to the light of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, that transcends the worlds.

This likewise is why the Talmud¹³¹² derives that on Shabbat punishment is not imposed, from this verse, “You shall not kindle fire in any of your dwellings of the Shabbat day.” Similarly, from this verse it is derived that [the fires of] purgatory (*Gehinom*) rest on Shabbat.¹³¹³

Now, at first glance, the relationship between these explanations and the explanation of the Shnei Luchot HaBrit, is not understood. However, the explanation is that in the aspect of fire (*Aish*-אש) blemish is applicable, and it therefore is possible for there to be a chaining down from the aspect of fire

¹³¹² Talmud Bavli, Yevamot 6b; Sanhedrin 35b

¹³¹³ See Zohar II (Vayakhel) 203b; Zohar III 273a and elsewhere.

(*Aish*-אש) of the side of holiness, to the aspect of fire (*Aish*-אש) of the side opposite holiness.

However, in the aspect of “the flint-*HaTzur*-הצור” in which blemish is entirely inapplicable, there is nothing corresponding to it on the side opposite holiness. Therefore, during the six days mundane days of the week, the toil is with the aspect of fire (*Aish*-אש), and it then is applicable for there to be transgression and blemish, for which reason there are punishments and purgatory (*Gehinom*). However, this is not so on Shabbat, being that the drawing down is from the aspect of the flint (*Tzur*-צור), and there automatically is a nullification of punishments and purgatory (*Gehinom*), being that there is no blemish in this aspect whatsoever.

7.

This also explains the statement in the Midrash, that there are two decrees, [as the verse states],¹³¹⁴ “This is the decree-*Chukat*-חֻקַּת of the Passover (Pesach) sacrifice,” and [as is written about the Red Heifer (*Parah*)],¹³¹⁵ “This is the decree-*Chukat*-חֻקַּת of the Torah,” and the two are similar to each other, but we do not know which decree is greater than the other.

The explanation is that the general matter of Torah and *mitzvot* is the matter of a “decree-*Chukah*-חֻקָּה.”¹³¹⁶ That is, Torah and *mitzvot* must be “engraved-*Chakukim*-חֻקִּים” in the

¹³¹⁴ Exodus 12:43

¹³¹⁵ Numbers 19:2

¹³¹⁶ Midrash Bamidbar Rabba, beginning of the Torah portion of Chukat, and cited in Likkutei Torah, at the beginning of the Torah portion of Chukat.

soul. However, in this itself there are two categories. There is the service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, of the righteous *Tzaddikim*, and there is the service of *HaShem*-ה"ה of the penitent – *Baalei Teshuvah*.

The decree of the Passover offering, is connected to the exodus from Egypt, which was preparatory to the giving of the Torah, and is the matter of the service the righteous *Tzaddikim*. The decree of the Torah, which is the decree of the Red Heifer, is the matter of serving *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, by repenting and returning (*Teshuvah*) to Him.

About this, the Midrash states that the two are similar to each other, and we do not know which is greater than the other. To explain, the meaning of the word “greatness-*Gedulah*-גדולה” is as expressed in the verse,¹³¹⁷ “*HaShem*-יהו"ה is great (*Gadol*-גדול) and exceedingly lauded, and His greatness (*Gedulato*-גדולתו) is beyond investigation,” in which two levels of greatness (*Gedulah*-גדולה) are enumerated.

That is, there is the greatness (*Gedulah*-גדולה) of the [lower] Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה, this being the aspect of the chaining down of the worlds (*Hishtalshehut*), and there is, “His greatness (*Gedulato*-גדולתו) is beyond investigation,” which transcends the chaining down of the worlds. This is why it simply states, “His greatness-*Gedulato*-גדולתו,” in that it transcends the [lower] Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה, and refers to He who “is not hinted in a name, nor a letter, nor in a thorn [of a letter] etc.”¹³¹⁸

¹³¹⁷ Psalms 145:3

¹³¹⁸ See Likkutei Torah, Pinchas 80b

Now, in the time of the exodus from Egypt there was the revelation of the Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה, as the verse states,¹³¹⁹ "I appeared to Avraham, to Yitzchak, and to Yaakov as *E"l Shadday*-א"ל שד"י, but with My Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה I did not make Myself known through them... Therefore, say to the children of Israel, 'I am *HaShem*-יהו"ה.'" ¹³²⁰ This refers to the general matter of Torah and *mitzvot*, for as known, the *mitzvot* depend on the name *HaShem*-יהו"ה.¹³²¹ About this aspect the verse states, "*HaShem*-יהו"ה is great (*Gadol*-גדול)."

However, the Red Heifer is the matter of serving *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, with repentance (*Teshuvah*). This is explained in Chassidic teachings on the Red Heifer (in *Likkutei Torah*,¹³²² and more specifically, in the discourses of the year 5629).¹³²³ That is, "the Heifer (*Parah*) receives from the left side,"¹³²⁴ and as a result of this, there is a chaining down of the aspect of an alien fire (*Aish Zarah*-אש זרה).

However, the toil is to burn away all undesirable forms [of expression,] so that all that remains is the power of lust alone, which is then elevated to holiness. In general, this is the matter of repenting and returning (*Teshuvah*) to *HaShem*-יהו"ה, which transcends Torah and *mitzvot*, and is indicated in the words, "His greatness (*Gedulato*-גדולתו) is beyond

¹³¹⁹ Exodus 6:3-6

¹³²⁰ See Ginat Egoz of Rabbi Yosef Gikatilla, translated as *HaShem Is One*, Vol. 1, *The Gate of The Name (Shaar HaShem)*.

¹³²¹ Introduction to *Tikkunei Zohar* 2a; Tikkun 2, 18a; Also see *Likkutei Torah*, *Pekudei* 3b

¹³²² *Likkutei Torah*, *Chukat* 56c and on

¹³²³ See the discourse entitled "*Zot Chukat*" 5629 (*Sefer HaMaamarim* 5629 p. 101 and on).

¹³²⁴ *Zohar* II 180b

investigation,” which is loftier than the [lower] Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה.

Now, in the Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה itself, this is the matter of the Upper Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה,¹³²⁵ which transcends the lower Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה.¹³²⁶ About this, the verse states *HaShem*-יהו"ה twice, this being the matter of the lower Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה and the Upper Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה, as stated in the thirteen attributes of mercy,¹³²⁷ “And He called: *HaShem*-יהו"ה, *HaShem*-יהו"ה.” This is because, in the matter of repenting and returning (*Teshuvah*) to *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, it also is necessary to draw from the aspect of the Upper Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה.

The Midrash concludes, “Which is greater? The Red Heifer (*Parah*) [is greater], being that those who eat the Passover (*Pesach*) sacrifice require it, as the verse states,¹³²⁸ ‘They shall take for the contaminated person some of the ashes of the burning of the purification [animal] etc.’” This refers to the fact that even the righteous *Tzaddikim* require repentance and return (*Teshuvah*) to *HaShem*-יהו"ה, as in the teaching,¹³²⁹ “Moshiach will bring the righteous *Tzaddikim* to repent (*Teshuvah*).”

In other words, the novelty that will be introduced with the coming of Moshiach is the matter of repentance (*Teshuvah*)

¹³²⁵ See Ginat Egoz of Rabbi Yosef Gikatilla, translated as *HaShem Is One*, Vol. 1, The Gate of Intrinsic Being (*Shaar HaHavayah*).

¹³²⁶ See Shaarei Orah of Rabbi Yosef Gikatilla, translated as *Gates of Light*, Gate Five (*Tiferet*).

¹³²⁷ Exodus 34:6; See Zohar III 138a (Idra Rabba); Torah Ohr, Beshalach 61d, and elsewhere.

¹³²⁸ Numbers 19:17

¹³²⁹ Likkutei Torah, Drushim L'Rosh HaShanah 58d; Ha'azinui 75b; Shmini Atzeret 92b; Shir HaShirim 45a, 50b.

in every single person, even the righteous *Tzaddikim*, who also will come to repent and return (*Teshuvah*) to *HaShem*-יהו"ה. Moreover, upon Moshiach's coming, a novelty will even be introduced in the service of the penitent (*Baalei Teshuvah*), in that they will be elevated to an even higher form of repenting and returning (*Teshuvah*) to *HaShem*-יהו"ה.

This is why the Red Heifer also hints to the matter of the coming redemption, as stated in Midrash,¹³³⁰ that the Torah portion of the Red Heifer hints at the four exiles, Babylonia [Media, Greece] and Edom, which are preparatory to the coming redemption. For, just as the exile in Egypt was preparatory to the giving of the Torah, which is the service of the righteous *Tzaddikim*, at which time the revealed parts of Torah were revealed, so likewise, our current exile is preparatory for the coming redemption,¹³³¹ at which time there will be a revelation not only of the secrets of the Torah, but even the secrets of the secrets (which are related to the matter of repenting and returning to *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He).

This is as stated,¹³³² "Let Him kiss me with the kisses of His mouth," which Rashi explains refers to the hidden reasons of the Torah that will be revealed in the coming future. This is why the preparation for the coming of Moshiach is specifically through spreading the wellsprings (*Hafatzat HaMaayanot*) of the inner aspects of Torah to the outside.¹³³³ Through this we

¹³³⁰ Pesikta d'Rav Kahana, Parshat Parah; Yalkut Shimoni, Chukat, Remez 759

¹³³¹ See Tanya, Likkutei Amarim, Ch. 37

¹³³² Song of Songs 1:2 and Rashi there.

¹³³³ ¹³³³ See the Holy Letter of the Baal Shem Tov printed at the end of Ben Porat Yosef; Sefer Ginzei Nistarot (Yerushalayim 5684), Vol. 1, Section 65; Keter Shem Tov (Kehot), Section 1; Also translated at the beginning of The Way of The Baal Shem Tov, a translation of Tzava'at HaRivash, and elsewhere.

merit the coming of Moshiach, at which time the inner aspects of Torah will be revealed for every single Jew, along with all Israel.¹³³⁴

¹³³⁴ Also see the discourse entitled “*v’Hamaskeeleem Yazheeroo* – And the wise shall be radiant” of last year, 5720, translated in The Teachings of The Rebbe, 5720, Discourse 16 (Sefer HaMaamarim 5720, p. 134 and on).