

Discourse 1

*“Toov Ta’am v’Da’at Lamdeini...
Teach me good reasoning and knowledge”*

Delivered on the 2nd day of Rosh HaShanah, 5722

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

1.

The verse states,³³ “Teach me good reasoning and knowledge, for I had faith in Your commandments.” Now, this is one of the verses recited before sounding the Shofar [on Rosh HaShanah]. About this, his honorable holiness, my father-in-law, the Rebbe, explains in the continuum of discourses (*Hemshech*) of Rosh HaShanah 5696,³⁴ that there are two types of verses in relation to sounding the Shofar. There are the verses of Kingship (*Malchiyot*), Remembrances (*Zichronot*), and *Shofarot* recited in the [*Musaf*] prayers and blessings of Rosh HaShanah and there are the verses recited [immediately] before sounding the Shofar.

Now, the general matter of reciting verses is as our sages, of blessed memory, taught³⁵ “Recite before Me verses of kingship (*Malchiyot*), so that you will crown Me as King over you; verses of remembrance (*Zichronot*), so that your

³³ Psalms 119:66

³⁴ Kuntres 118 (subsequently printed in Sefer HaMaamarim, Kuntreisim Vol. 3, p. 147 and on, and the beginning of Sefer HaMaamarim 5696).

³⁵ Talmud Bavli, Rosh HaShanah 34b

remembrance will rise before Me for the good; and with what? With the Shofar.”

In other words, even though the actual coronation and drawing down of *HaShem*'s-יהו"ה Kingship is brought about through the **actual** blowing of the Shofar,³⁶ nonetheless, these verses must also be recited. For, in order for the sounding of the Shofar to affect the drawing down of *HaShem*'s-יהו"ה Kingship upon the Jewish people, and thereby upon the whole world, all accusers, concealments, and hiddenness, must first be removed. This comes about through saying these verses. Then, once the accusers etc. have been removed the act of sounding the Shofar draws it down.

This then, is the meaning of what the Rambam writes,³⁷ “Even though the sounding of the Shofar on Rosh HaShanah is a scriptural decree, it contains an allusion. It is as if [the call of the Shofar] is saying: Wake up you sleepy ones from your sleep, and you who slumber, arise,” referring to the matter of repenting and returning (*Teshuvah*) to *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He.³⁸ However, at first glance, the sounding the Shofar is the matter of crowning *HaShem*-יהו"ה and drawing down His Kingship, blessed is He. This being so, how is it related to the matter of repentance?

However, the explanation is that for the Holy One, blessed is He, to accept the coronation to be our King, we first must repent and return (*Teshuvah*) to Him, by which all the

³⁶ See Rabbi Sa'adya Ga'on cited in Avudraham, Taamei HaTekiyot, HaNyan HaRishon, and elsewhere.

³⁷ Mishneh Torah, Hilchot Teshuvah 3:4

³⁸ Also see *Hemshech* 5666 p. 2 and on; Sefer HaMaamarim 5710 p. 8 and on, and elsewhere.

concealments and hiddenness are removed. It specifically is then that the sounding of the Shofar affects the coronation.

To explain, the accusers etc. are removed primarily by saying the verses [immediately] before the sounding of the Shofar. This is because the verses of Kingship (*Malchiyot*), Remembrance (*Zichronot*), and *Shofarot*, that follow the sounding of the Shofar and were established by Rabbinic ordinance, come in continuation and in assistance to the sounding of the Shofar.

However, the primary removal of the accusers is not brought about by reciting those verses, but by reciting the verses before the sounding of the Shofar, that are only customary (*Minhag*) as preparation for sounding the Shofar. It is specifically these verses that remove all the barriers. This is explained at length in the above-mentioned continuum (*Hemshech*) that with the very first sigh [of repentance and return to *HaShem*-יהו"ה] of the Jewish people before the Shofar is blasted, the Holy One, blessed is He, rises from His throne of judgment and sits upon His throne of mercy,³⁹ thereby removing all accusations.

Now, the difference between the verses that precede the sounding of the Shofar and the verses that are said [afterwards] as part of the [*Musaf*] prayer, is that the verses of the [*Musaf*] prayer mention the superiority of the matters of Kingship (*Malchiyot*), Remembrance (*Zichronot*) and *Shofarot*. In contrast, in the verses before the sounding of the Shofar, there is no mention of anything having to do with this whatsoever. Yet, even so, it is specifically through these

³⁹ See Midrash Vayikra Rabba 29:3; Zohar III 99a

verses that we prepare for the sounding of the Shofar, by removing all obstructions and concealments etc., [as explained above].

2.

Now, it is explained in the continuum (*Hemshech*) there,⁴⁰ about the matter of reciting those verses that come [immediately] before the sounding of the Shofar, that each verse in particular, is a matter unto itself, separate and apart from the other verses of the portion [it was taken from]. It thus follows automatically that these verses do not bear the full understanding and comprehension of the whole portion [that each verse was taken from].

An example is that it is like disparate letters that are separated from a certain word, so that when one letter is separated from the other letters in that word, it does not bear the inner substance of the word, but only an impression of the substance of the word when the letter was joined with its other letters. We thus find that upon reciting that individual letter alone, the intention in it is not to the understanding and grasp contained in the [full] word, but is to the substance of that letter, as it is, in and of itself.

The same is so of verses that are separated from other verses of that portion, that their substance is not one with [the] understanding and comprehension [as they are in the context of the whole portion], being that they no longer are within the

⁴⁰ In the discourse entitled “*Tuv Ta’am v’Da’at*,” Ch. 7 – Sefer HaMaamarim 5696 p. 15.

context of the other verses of that portion. For, it only is specifically then, that they bear the understanding and meaning in context with the whole portion.

Now, although it is true that the verses of Kingship (*Malchiyot*), Remembrance (*Zichronot*), and *Shofarot*, are also separated from the context of the other verses in the portions they were taken from, nonetheless, their inner substance bears the understanding and grasp of the matters of Kingship (*Malchiyot*), Remembrance (*Zichronot*), and *Shofarot*. This is because the matter of Kingship (*Malchiyot*) is not mentioned in the other verses of the portions from which these verses are taken, but only in these verses that we recite during the [*Musaf*] prayer. This being so, in these verses the understanding of the matter of Kingship (*Malchiyot*) remains fully intact and whole. The same is so of the matter of Remembrance (*Zichronot*). It remains fully intact and whole in the verses of Remembrance (*Zichronot*), and the same applies to the verses of *Shofarot*.

In contrast, this is not so of the verses that come before the sounding of the Shofar, in which there is no mention of the matters of Kingship (*Malchiyot*), Remembrance (*Zichronot*), and *Shofarot*, as explained before. This being so, the entire matter that lends itself to understanding them, is solely the substance matter and context of the other verses of the portions [from which they were gleaned], and when they are separate from the context [of those passages], there then is no understanding in them whatsoever. This proves that the matter of the verses recited before sounding the Shofar is not a

matter of understanding or comprehending the Torah, but their substance is rather [like] the letters (*Otiyot*) of the Torah.

3.

Based on the above, we must understand why before sounding the Shofar we recite the verse,⁴¹ “Teach me good reasoning and knowledge.” For, the substance of this request of King Dovid on behalf of the assembly of the souls of all Israel, as well as on behalf of each and every Jew individually, is to understand and comprehend, [that is] “Teach me.”

However, the entire substance of reciting these verses is that they are not a matter of understanding and comprehension, but are solely a matter of [reciting the] letters (*Otiyot*) of Torah. This being so, what is the meaning of this request, “Teach me”? This [question] is especially strengthened by the fact that it states, “good (*Toov*-טוֹב) [reasoning],” using the *Melupum* [*Shoorook*] vowel, indicating ultimate goodness.⁴² This refers to the matter of the source, root, and inner aspect of the intellect (*Pnimiyut HaSechel*) which itself transcends the matter of intellect (*Sechel*). This being so, what is the meaning of the word, “Teach me,” which indicates that which specifically comes into comprehension and grasp?

To explain, we also find that [in the same Psalm] King Dovid pleads for that which is not a matter of grasp and

⁴¹ Psalms 119:66

⁴² See the discourse entitled “*Tuv Ta’am*” 5696 p. 23; Also see Shnei Luchot HaBrit (ShaLa”H) 368b; Likkutei Torah, Shir HaShirim 10d

comprehension, but is rather a matter of seeing and gazing, as it states,⁴³ “Unveil my eyes, that I may gaze upon wonders from Your Torah.” This is similar to how Torah will be studied in the coming future, about which the verse states,⁴⁴ “They will no longer teach – [each man his fellow, each man his brother – saying, ‘Know *HaShem*-יהו"ה!’ For they all will know Me, from their smallest to their greatest – the word of *HaShem*-יהו"ה.” For, as known,⁴⁵ in that time the learning (will not be in a way of understanding and comprehension, but) in a way of seeing. However, here the plea is “Teach me,” meaning that it specifically should be in a way of comprehension.

We also must understand⁴⁶ why Dovid states, “[Teach me good reasoning and knowledge, for] I had faith in Your commandments.” That is, we must understand what King Dovid’s superiority is in stating about himself, “I had faith in Your commandments,” being that the matter of faith (*Emunah*) is present in every single Jew, in that “all Israel are the faithful, the children of the faithful,”⁴⁷ to the point that even the most simple people amongst them have a most complete and perfect faith (*Emunah Sheleimah*). This being so, why does King Dovid emphasize that his [personal] superior and elevated quality is that, “I had faith in Your commandments”?

⁴³ Psalms 119:18

⁴⁴ Jeremiah 31:33; See the discourse entitled “*Tuv Ta’am*” 5696 *ibid.* p. 22

⁴⁵ Likkutei Torah, Tzav 17a-b and elsewhere

⁴⁶ See the discourse entitled “*Tuv Ta’am*” 5696 *ibid.* p. 12 and on.

⁴⁷ See Talmud Bavli, Shabbat 97a

Now, it could possibly be explained that the words “I had faith in Your commandments” refers to faith (*Emunah*) that follows after having attained completeness in understanding and grasp. In other words, after having attained completeness in the understanding and comprehension of those levels that are possible to be grasped, there then comes faith in the higher level that cannot be grasped. This is why whosoever has attained a much greater grasp and comprehension will also come to have a much higher level of faith (*Emunah*).

This is as explained in Likkutei Torah,⁴⁸ on the verse,⁴⁹ “You shall know this day, and set it upon your heart [that *HaShem*-יהו"ה, He is the God],” that when matters that at first were [accepted] only by way of faith, come into grasp and comprehension, the faith is then of much higher levels etc. The same is so of the particulars within the Jewish people themselves. That is, one who has a much greater grasp and comprehension, will also have a much higher level of faith.

In other words, that which a person of lesser comprehension and grasp accepts by way of faith, a person of greater comprehension grasps by way of comprehension, whereas his faith (*Emunah*) is of a much higher level. Thus, since this faith (*Emunah*) comes after perfecting the comprehension, therefore, according to the differences and distinctions there are in the comprehension, there likewise will be differences and distinctions in the faith. With this in mind,

⁴⁸ Likkutei Torah, Va'etchanan 7b-c; Also see Torat Menachem, Sefer HaMaamarim Tishrei p. 159

⁴⁹ Deuteronomy 4:39

it could be explained that King Dovid's praise in stating, "I had faith in Your commandments," is that since he has much greater grasp and comprehension, it follows that his faith is of a much loftier aspect.

However, in truth, this cannot be said, because the **true** superiority of faith (*Emunah*) is [found] specifically in simple people. For, as his honorable holiness, my father-in-law, the Rebbe, cites⁵⁰ from the words of the Alter Rebbe - who said this in the name of his teacher, the Rav, the Maggid of Mezhritch, whose soul is in Eden, who himself received this from his teacher, the Baal Shem Tov, whose soul is in Eden - that the service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, of simple people who serve *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, with simplicity, is the receptacle for the Simple Essence of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, may He be blessed and elevated.

This⁵¹ also is why the verse states,⁵² "Now the man Moshe was exceedingly humble, more than any person," and it also states,⁵³ "[Moshe said,] 'Six hundred thousand foot-soldiers are the people in whose midst I am.'" That is, even though Moshe had a very great level of grasp and comprehension [of *HaShem*'s-יהו"ה Godliness], to the point that even while being below in a physical body, he literally was in the state of wisdom-*Chochmah* of the world of Emanation (*Atzilut*) – and in this itself, he was not just in the state of the aspect of the strength-*Ko'ach*-כ"ח of wisdom-*Chochmah*-חכמה, but he also was in the aspect of the 'what-

⁵⁰ See the discourse entitled "*Tuv Ta'am*" 5696 *ibid.* p. 13.

⁵¹ Also see *Sefer HaMaamarim* 5679 p. 464; 5689 p. 69; p. 299.

⁵² Numbers 12:3

⁵³ Numbers 11:21

Ma"h-h"m of wisdom-*Chochmah*-חכמה, as the verse states,⁵⁴ “For what (*Ma"h-h"m*) are we” – nevertheless, he was “exceedingly humble, more than any person.”

This was due to the superiority of the strength of simple faith (*Emunah Peshutah*) that specifically simple people have, which is the meaning of the words, “Six hundred thousand foot-soldiers are the people (*Ragli HaAm*-רגלי העם) in whose midst I (*Anochi*-אנכי) am.” That is, specifically the aspect of the “feet” (*Raglayim*-רגלים) [of the people] is what drew down the aspect of “I-*Anochi*-אנכי”⁵⁵ in Moshe.

The reason is because essential strength and simplicity of faith is more present in simple people than in those who have grasp and comprehension. For, even though those of grasp and comprehension can have faith in a higher level [of *HaShem*’s-יהוה Godliness], as explained above, nonetheless, the essential superiority of strength and simplicity of faith (*Emunah*) is much greater in simple people.

The reason is because in regard to those who are masters of intellect, especially a person who toils with all his strengths over a matter of intellect, each and every matter that relates to him, especially that which touches him personally, especially that which touches him in an inner way; the foundation of each particular for him is the matter of intellect (*Sechel*), since that is his essence. This is why a master of intellect requires special toil and labor to come to the [level of] simplicity and strength of faith of simple people.

⁵⁴ Exodus 16:7-8

⁵⁵ See Exodus 20:2; Deuteronomy 5:6

This is why the verse states, “Now the man Moshe was exceedingly humble, more than any person.” For, when Moshe beheld the generation of the footsteps of Moshiach, that it would be a generation of concealments and hiddenness [about which the verse states],⁵⁶ “We have not seen our signs... and there is none amongst us who knows until what-*Ma”H*-ה”מ,” that there would be trials, decrees and attempts to convert the Jews etc., and that even so, the Jewish people would stand up to the test, to the point of public sanctification of *HaShem*’s-יהו”ה Name, to the point of actual self-sacrifice, without taking any consideration of questions, such as,⁵⁷ “Why should the gentiles say, ‘[Where now is their God],” nor the questions posed by “the [personal] gentile inside of yourself,”⁵⁸ but on the contrary, this itself rouses the strength of their self-sacrifice for the Name *HaShem*-יהו”ה, blessed is He, to an even greater extent - on account of which “Moshe was exceedingly humble.”

For, true strength and simplicity of faith (*Emunah*) in *HaShem*-יהו”ה, blessed is He, is specifically in the simple people, being that their faith reaches much higher. This is as explained before, that the simple service of *HaShem*-יהו”ה, blessed is He, of the simple people who serve *HaShem*-יהו”ה, blessed is He, with simplicity, is the receptacle for the Simple Essence of *HaShem*-יהו”ה, may He be blessed and elevated.

To further explain, in intellect itself there are three matters, these being the knowledge (*Mada*-מדע), the knower

⁵⁶ Psalms 74:9

⁵⁷ Psalms 115:2

⁵⁸ See Torah Ohr, Bereishit 2b; Likkutei Torah, Tavo 42b

(*Yode'a*-ידוע), and the known (*Yadu'a*-ידוע).⁵⁹ The essence of intellect, as it is unto itself, is called knowledge (*Mada*-מדע), the manner in which it is conceptualized and grasped is called the known (*Yadu'a*-ידוע), and the one who grasps the intellect as it is conceptualized is called the knower (*Yode'a*-ידוע).

In the same way, in each and every service (*Avodah*) of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, there also are these three matters. That is, service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, in and of itself, is when it is a simple service (*Avodah Peshutah*-עבודה פשוטה), and the way of serving Him is with simplicity, meaning simplicity in serving Him (*Psheetut HaAvodah*-פשטות העבודה), which comes from simple people (*Anasheem Peshutim*-אנשים פשוטים). It is specifically this [type of service] that becomes the receptacle for the Simple Essence (*Etzem Pashut*-עצם פשוט) of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, may He be blessed and elevated.

This then, is the meaning of the verse, “Now the man Moshe was exceedingly humble.” At first glance this is not understood, being that Moshe himself also had this level of faith (*Emunah*) in *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He. This is as stated,⁶⁰ “A fool will believe everything,” about which Midrash states,⁶¹ “This refers to our teacher Moshe.” Even so, he was “exceedingly humble,” since the true superiority of the strength and simplicity of faith is specifically in simple people.

⁵⁹ See Moreh Nevuchim 1:68; Sefer HaMitzvot of the Tzemach Tzedek, Mitzvat Ha'amanat Eloket, Ch. 3 and on; Likkutei Sichot, Vol. 20 p. 260.

⁶⁰ Proverbs 14:15

⁶¹ Midrash Shemot Rabba 3:1

However, because he was “exceedingly humble, more than any person,” he also attained this aspect, as it states, “Six hundred thousand foot-soldiers are the people (*Ragli HaAm*-רגלי העם) in whose midst I (*Anochi*-אנכי) am.” That is, it was specifically the “feet” (*Raglayim*-רגלים) of the Jewish people – referring to the simple people – who drew down the aspect indicated by “I-*Anochi*-אנכי”⁶² within Moshe– referring to the inner aspect (*Pnimityut*) of the Crown-*Keter*.

With all the above in mind, there is cause to wonder what exactly King Dovid’s superiority was in stating, “I had faith in Your commandments.” For, we see that faith (*Emunah*) in *HaShem*-יהוה, blessed is He, is present in all Jewish people, even the simple people. On the contrary, the superiority of the faith (*Emunah*) of simple people is even greater, as explained above. This being so, what is the meaning of, “I had faith in Your commandments.”

We also must understand why he states, “for (*Ki*-כי) I had faith in Your commandments,” in which he gives the reason for his request, “Teach me good reasoning and knowledge.” For, as known, every arousal from Above is commensurate and according to the manner of arousal from below.

This also is as simply understood from the matter of reason (*Sibah*-סיבה), in that that the reason (*Sibah*-סיבה) must be akin to that which is brought about by the reason (*Mesuvav*-מסובב). This being so, it is not understood why he gives the reason that because “I had faith in Your commandments” – wherein faith (*Emunah*) is a transcendent encompassing aspect

⁶² See Exodus 20:2; Deuteronomy 5:6

(*Makif*) – it therefore should follow [to say that You should] “teach me good reasoning and knowledge,” in a way of understanding and comprehension.

4.

However, the explanation is as explained in the above-mentioned continuum of discourses (*Hemshech*),⁶³ that there are various different levels in Torah. There is the aspect of Torah as it is below, within understanding and comprehension, and there is the root of Torah in the aspect of Wisdom-*Chochmah* of the world of Emanation (*Atzilut*). This is as explained⁶⁴ about the matter of [the words],⁶⁵ “And for Your Torah that You have taught us,” that the words, “for Your Torah,” [refer to the Torah] of the world of Emanation (*Atzilut*), “that You taught us” in the world of Creation (*Briyah*).

The order of the levels from below to Above is that there is the level of the Torah as it is in the worlds of Creation, Formation, and Action (*Briyah*, *Yetzirah*, *Asiyah*), and higher than this, there is the Torah as it is in the world of Emanation (*Atzilut*), and even in the world of Emanation (*Atzilut*) itself, it is precise in stating “Your Torah” (*Toratecha*-תורתך), (not simply stating “wisdom-*Chochmah*,” but rather, “**Your** Torah”), referring to the aspect of the Upper Wisdom (*Chochmah Ila’ah*) of the world of Emanation (*Atzilut*).

⁶³ See the discourse entitled “*Tuv Ta’am*” 5696 *ibid.* p. 10 and on.

⁶⁴ See *Likkutei Torah*, Eikev 17b; *Drushim L’Sukkot* 81d, and elsewhere; (Also see the citations in *Sefer HaMaamarim* 5696 *ibid.*)

⁶⁵ In the second blessing of the grace after meals (*Birkhat HaMazon*)

Higher than this, there is Torah as it is in the aspect of the Primordial Wisdom (*Chochmah HaKedoomah*-חכמה הקדומה), which is why the Torah is called “The Primordial Allegory” (*Mashal HaKadmoni*-משל הקדמוני).⁶⁶

Now, in addition to the general matter of the wisdom in Torah, there also is the matter of the reasons (*Ta'amim*) of Torah. In the matter of the reason (*Ta'am*) itself, there are various different manners. However, the general matter of the reasons (*Ta'amim*) is that they relate to the pleasure (*Ta'anug*),⁶⁷ and are the matter of the pleasure (*Ta'anug*) in Torah.

It is in this regard that King Dovid said,⁶⁸ “Your statutes were songs to me.” For, the matter of songs is that one sings a song several times over because of the pleasure in it, and this matter is the pleasure in Torah.⁶⁹ It is about this matter that he praised the elevated level of Torah. For, it was when King Dovid was in a state that was the opposite of openly revealed and apparent goodness that he said, “Your statutes were songs to me,” referring to the pleasure in Torah. For, the totality of the chaining down of the worlds depends on a single [seemingly] minor precision of Torah, and it was in this that he took comfort. For, of what consideration are all worldly matters relative to the pleasure in Torah?⁷⁰ It was

⁶⁶ Samuel I 24:14; Rashi to Exodus 21:13; Torah Ohr, Megillat Esther 98b and elsewhere. (Also see the citations in Sefer HaMaamarim 5696 *ibid.*, p. 7).

⁶⁷ The word “*Ta'am*” טעם can also mean “flavor.”

⁶⁸ Psalms 119:54

⁶⁹ Likkutei Torah, Bamidbar 18a

⁷⁰ Tanya, Kuntres Acharon, p. 161a; Sefer HaMitzvot of the Tzemach Tzedek 41a and on; *Hemshech* 5672 Vol. 1 p. 346 and on.

through this that he also affected a drawing down to below, for the good to be openly apparent and revealed.

However, even so, he was punished for [stating] this.⁷¹ This is because all this stems from the aspect of Torah as it relates to the person who studies it, which is the aspect of the pleasure as it comes into the aspect of the Primordial Wisdom (*Chochmah HaKedoomah*). However, the true matter of Torah is as the verse states,⁷² “I was then with Him... I was His delight,” which is higher than the aspect indicated [in the continuation],⁷³ “My delights are with the children of man,” but rather, “I was then **with Him** (*Etzlo*-אצל),” specifically. This refers to the aspect of the essential pleasure (*Ta’anug Atzmi*) that is not drawn down into the aspect of Wisdom-*Chochmah*.

Now, even though the pleasure (*Ta’anug*) drawn down from the aspect of the Primordial Wisdom (*Chochmah HaKedoomah*) is also an essential pleasure, as in the teaching,⁷⁴ “The inner aspect of the Father-*Abba* [Wisdom-*Chochmah*] is the inner aspect of the Ancient One-*Atik* [Pleasure-*Taanug*],” nonetheless, as known, the inner aspect of the Ancient One-*Atik* as it comes into the inner aspect of the Father-*Abba* (Wisdom-*Chochmah*) is not at all comparable to the inner aspect of the Ancient One-*Atik* as it is in its own place and level,⁷⁵ to the point that the difference between them

⁷¹ See Talmud Bavli, Sotah 35a, and the citations in the previous note.

⁷² Proverbs 8:30

⁷³ Proverbs 8:31

⁷⁴ See Pri Etz Chayim, Shaar HaKriyat Shema, Ch. 15; Likkutei Torah Nitzavim 49d and elsewhere.

⁷⁵ Sefer HaMaamarim 5696 ibid. p. 9 and on; Also see *Hemshech* 5666 p. 95 and on, and elsewhere.

is like the vast distance between one extreme and the other extreme. This is why Dovid was punished with forgetfulness, being that forgetfulness and remembrance are two opposites, from one extreme to the other extreme.

5.

Now, the difference between these two aspects of Torah is similar to what we explained before⁷⁶ about the matter of the general pleasure (*Taanug*) that transcends the service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, of the Jewish people in affecting refinements (*Birurim*), in which there are various levels.

To elucidate, the general matter of the completion of the toil of affecting refinements (*Birurim*) is on Shabbat. This is as the verse states,⁷⁷ “And the heavens and the earth were finished (*Vayechulu*-ויכלו) and all their hosts,” in which there are two explanations [of the word “*Vayechulu*-ויכלו”].⁷⁸ The first is that it is a term of completion (*Gemar*-גמר) and the second is that it is a term of pleasure (*Taanug*-תענוג). In other words, due to the completion (*Gemar*-גמר) of the refinements (*Birurim*) there is a drawing down of pleasure (*Taanug*) from Above.

Moreover, there are various levels in the pleasure of Shabbat itself. There is Shabbat evening, there is Shabbat day,

⁷⁶ In the discourse entitled “*Atem Nitzavim* – You are standing this day, all of you, before *HaShem*,” 5721, translated in The Teachings of The Rebbe 5721, Discourse 32 (Sefer HaMaamarim 5721 p. 243 and on).

⁷⁷ Genesis 2:1

⁷⁸ See Ohr HaTorah, Bereishit Vol. 1 p. 42b and on; Vol. 3, p. 505b and on.

and there then is [Shabbat afternoon, the time of] “The desire of all desires” (*Ra’ava d’Kol Ra’avin*). Shabbat evening is the particular pleasure stemming from the matter of the toil of affecting refinements (*Avodat HaBirurim*), as in the teaching,⁷⁹ “One who toils on the eve [before] Shabbat will eat on Shabbat.” Shabbat day is the aspect of the essential pleasure (*Taanug Atzmi*). In other words, the drawing down of the particular pleasure stemming from the toil of affecting refinements (*Avodat HaBirurim*) is what prepares and subsequently allows for the drawing down of the general and essential pleasure on Shabbat day. However, even so, this general pleasure is still related and bound, albeit with a distant bond, to the aspect of the pleasure (*Taanug*) stemming from the refinements (*Birurim*).

This is why there also are various distinctions in it, in that according to the distinctions in the manner by which the toil of refinements (*Birurim*) was affected, so likewise, there will be distinctions of levels in the pleasure (*Taanug*). This is similar to the inner aspect (*Pnimiyut*) of the Ancient One-*Atik* as it comes into the inner aspect (*Pnimiyut*) of the Father-*Abba* (Wisdom-*Chochmah*). However, the aspect of “the desire of all desires” (*Ra’ava d’Kol Ra’avin*) is the drawing down of the actual essential pleasure (*Taanug Atzmi*) itself, which utterly transcends the matter of the toil of created beings altogether.

About this the verse states,⁸⁰ “and He rested on the seventh day.” About this Mizrachi⁸¹ explains that “He also

⁷⁹ Talmud Bavli, Avodah Zarah 3a

⁸⁰ Genesis 2:2

⁸¹ See Mizrachi to Genesis 2:2 *ibid*.

rested from the tranquility (*Menuchah*).” In other words, the general matter of the seventh day is the matter of tranquility (*Menuchah*). However, the matter of tranquility (*Menuchah*) also relates to the existence of the worlds, as in the teaching,⁸² “What was the world lacking? Tranquility (*Menuchah*)! When Shabbat came, tranquility (*Menuchah*) came.”

This then, refers to the aspect of the pleasure of Shabbat evening, as well as to the pleasure of Shabbat day, which has some relation to the matter of affecting refinements (*Birurim*), as explained above. That is, these two aspects are the aspects of rest and tranquility that follow toil and labor, as well as the essential tranquility as it relates to the tranquility following labor. About these aspects the verse states, “He rested on the seventh day,” referring to drawing down the actual essential pleasure (*Ta’anug Atzmi*) itself, which is the aspect of “the desire of all desires” (*Ra’ava d’Kol Ra’avin*) and is the aspect of the essential tranquility itself, literally.

We previously explained⁸³ the matter of the three above-mentioned aspects as they are in the matter of the *Sefirot*. The first drawing down is of the aspect of the root of the created beings, up to the aspect of the Long Patient One-*Arich*, which has a relation and relativity to novel created beings.

The second drawing down is of the aspect of the three upper *Sefirot* of the Ancient One-*Atik*, as they manifest in the aspect of the Understanding-*Binah* of the Ancient One-*Atik*.

⁸² Rashi to Genesis 2:2 *ibid.*; Also see Midrash Bereishit Rabba 10:9

⁸³ In the discourse entitled “*Atem Nitzavim* – You are standing this day, all of you, before *HaShem*,” 5721, translated in The Teachings of The Rebbe 5721, Discourse 32 (Sefer HaMaamarim 5721 p. 243 and on).

For, although it is the aspect of Understanding-*Binah* of the Ancient One-*Atik*, nevertheless, through numerous veils, screens, separations, and cessations, it becomes the source of understanding and comprehension. This is similar to the manner in which the inner aspect (*Pnimiyyut*) of the Ancient One-*Atik* is the inner aspect (*Pnimiyyut*) of the Father-*Abba* (Wisdom-*Chochmah*).

The third drawing down is of the inner aspect (*Pnimiyyut*) of the Ancient One-*Atik* itself, literally, which utterly and completely transcends the entire matter of novel creations.

6.

Now, the drawing down of the inner aspect (*Pnimiyyut*) of the Ancient One-*Atik* itself, which is the aspect of “the desire of all desires” (*Ra’ava d’Kol Ra’avin*), is in a way that “the end action arose first in thought.”⁸⁴ In other words, the drawing down of the aspect of “first in thought” (*Machshavah Techilah*), which [itself] transcends the aspect of thought (*Machshavah*), and even transcends the beginning of thought (*Machshavah*), is specifically brought about through “the end action” (*Sof Ma’aseh*).⁸⁵

The explanation is that when it comes to the three matters of thought, speech, and action (*Machshavah*, *Dibur*, *Ma’aseh*), “action (*Ma’aseh*) is primary.”⁸⁶ Moreover, in

⁸⁴ See the *Lecha Dodi* hymn in the Shabbat evening liturgy.

⁸⁵ See *Hemshech* 5672 Vol. 2 p. 1,117 and on.

⁸⁶ See Mishnah Avot 1:17

action itself, “the end action” (*Sof Ma’aseh*) [is primary]. That is, this does not refer to action (*Ma’aseh*) as there is a manifestation of intellect (*Sechel*) or emotions (*Midot*) in it, but rather refers to the matter of action (*Ma’aseh*) as it is, in and of itself, as a simple service (*Avodah Peshutah*) of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He.

In other words, in actual deed, the reason for the action (*Ma’aseh*) does not stem from the desire (*Ratzon*) and the pleasure (*Taanug*), and does not even stem from the inner manifest powers [of the soul]. It rather is in a way of accepting the yoke of serving *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, by way of simple faith (*Emunah Peshutah*). This is the aspect of serving *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, with simplicity, and is the manner of serving Him as actualized by simple people. Specifically though this we reach the aspect of “first in thought” (*Machshavah Techilah*). For, as explained above, this is what creates the receptacle for the Simple Essence of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, may He be blessed and elevated.

The same is so in relation to the Torah. That is, to literally draw down the aspect of the essential pleasure in Torah itself, which is not even drawn down into the aspect of the Primordial Wisdom (*Chochmah HaKedoomah*), this does not come about through understanding and comprehending the Torah, but solely through engaging in the study of Torah by way of accepting the yoke (*Kabbalat Ol*). In general, this also is the matter of the letters (*Otiyot*) of Torah. It is specifically through this that we literally draw down the aspect of the essential pleasure (*Taanug Atzmi*).

This then, is the inner substance of King Dovid's request,⁸⁷ "Teach me good reasoning and knowledge," in which the word "good (*Toov*-טוב) [reasoning]," using the *Melupum* [*Shoorook*] vowel, refers to the root, source, and inner aspect of the intellect, namely, the aspect of the actual essential pleasure (*Taanug Atzmi*) itself, which does not even come into the Primordial Wisdom (*Chochmah HaKedooma*) in a concealed manner. The inner substance of his request is that even this aspect should literally come into revelation in actual comprehension and grasp, which is the meaning of the word "Teach me."

Now, he specifies, "[Teach me good reasoning] and knowledge (*Da'at*-דעת)." In other words, the "good reasoning" (*Toov Ta'am*-טוב טעם) – which refers to the simple pleasure (*Taanug Pashut*) – should be similar⁸⁸ to the matter of Knowledge-*Da'at*-דעת.

⁸⁷ Psalms 119:66

⁸⁸ Note: The comparison to the matter of knowledge-*Da'at* is solely that even though it is like the inner aspect (*Pnimiyyut*) of the Crown-*Keter*, nevertheless, it comes into the understanding-*Binah* (and is amongst the count of the *Sefirot*). However, when it comes to the matter of knowledge-*Da'at*, the inner aspect (*Pnimiyyut*) of the Crown-*Keter* comes in a way of descent, similar to the inner aspect (*Pnimiyyut*) of the Father-*Abba* (Wisdom-*Chochmah*) which is the inner aspect (*Pnimiyyut*) of the Ancient One-*Atik*, which is not comparable to the inner aspect (*Pnimiyyut*) of the Ancient One-*Atik* as it is in its own place and level (as explained before in chapter four). In contrast, the aspect of "good reasoning" (*Toov Ta'am*-טוב טעם) that comes into the understanding is the aspect of the simple pleasure (*Taanug Pashut*), meaning, the inner aspect (*Pnimiyyut*) of the Ancient One-*Atik* itself, as it is in its place and level, without any descent whatsoever, and it is in this manner that it comes into the understanding. (See the end of the above-mentioned discourse entitled "*Toov Ta'am*," after chapter 11[Sefer HaMaamarim 5696 p. 23]).

To explain, Knowledge-*Da'at* is similar to the inner aspect (*Pnimiyut*) of the Crown-*Keter*, which is why when the Crown-*Keter* is counted, Knowledge-*Da'at* is not counted, and when Knowledge-*Da'at* is counted, the Crown-*Keter* is not counted.⁸⁹ As known, when the Crown-*Keter* is not counted, this refers to the inner aspect (*Pnimiyut*) of the Crown-*Keter*, and then Knowledge-*Da'at* is counted.

We thus find that Knowledge-*Da'at* is similar to the inner aspect (*Pnimiyut*) of the Crown-*Keter*. However, even though Knowledge-*Da'at* is similar to the inner aspect (*Pnimiyut*) of the Crown-*Keter*, it nevertheless is counted in the count of the *Sefirot*, meaning, it comes into understanding.

The same is so of the “good reasoning” (*Tuv Ta'am-טוב טעם*), which is the simple pleasure (*Taanug Pashut*), that it should be in a way of “Teach me,” meaning that it should come into understanding and comprehension, all the way to the aspect of the “foot” of Wisdom-*Chochmah*, referring to the revealed aspect of the soul that comes into complete understanding and grasp, not only in the concealed, inner aspects of Torah, but even in the revealed aspects of Torah, and even into the human intellect of the animalistic soul, and even into the physical brain in the human body, in the three chambers of the physical brain; the brain of Wisdom-*Chochmah*, the brain of Understanding-*Binah*, and the brain of Knowledge-*Da'at*.⁹⁰

⁸⁹ Etz Chayim, Shaar 23 (Shaar Mochin d'Tzelem), Ch. 8; Mishnat Chassidim, Mesechet Briyat Adam Kadmon 1:4; Torah Ohr, Megilat Esther 91c; Likkutei Torah, Shlach 49c, and elsewhere.

⁹⁰ See Zohar III 136a

That is, the simple pleasure (*Taanug Pashut*) should be drawn into all these aspects, not just in a way of intellectual sight, and not only in a way of actual sight, but specifically with actual grasp with human intellect in the physical brain.

Now, this matter is loftier than the reasons of Torah that will be revealed in the coming future in a way of seeing. This is because the reasons of the Torah that will be revealed in the coming future are not yet the aspect of the essential pleasure (*Taanug Atzmi*) itself, in the most literal sense. This is why there will still be differentiations in levels then. For, although about the coming future the verse states,⁹¹ “The earth will be filled with the knowledge of *HaShem*-יהוה” as the waters cover the ocean floor,” nevertheless, as known, there are mountains and valleys even in the sea.⁹²

(That is, this will be similar to the pleasure (*Taanug*) of Shabbat day, in which there are different levels, as explained before in chapter five.) Rather, the request of “Teach me good reasoning and knowledge” is that there should be a drawing down of the actual essential pleasure (*Taanug Atzmi*) itself, and that this pleasure should come into revelation in the human intellect in the physical brain.

The reason is “for I had faith in Your commandments.” To explain, in general the *mitzvot* [divide into three categories;] rational laws (*Mishpatim*), testimonies (*Edut*) [as signs of remembrance], and super-rational statutes (*Chukim*). King Dovid’s superiority was that, for him, all *mitzvot* were

⁹¹ Isaiah 11:9

⁹² See Maamarei Admor HaZaken, HaKetzarim p. 141 (in explanation of the verse, “The earth will be filled etc.”)

done in a way of simple faith (*Emunah*) and with the acceptance of the yoke of *HaShem*'s-יהו"ה Kingship.

Likewise, regarding the matter of Torah, which involves understanding and comprehension, its foundation must be by way of simple faith (*Emunah*) and the acceptance of the yoke of *HaShem*'s-יהו"ה Kingship.⁹³ Thus, even though Dovid grasped the loftiest revelations in Torah, as in the teaching,⁹⁴ "Dovid would bond the Torah above with the Holy One, blessed is He," nonetheless, the foundation of all his matters was "for I had faith in Your commandments." Due to this, the matter of "Teach me good reasoning and knowledge," is caused.

8.

This then, is also the meaning of the verse,⁹⁵ "You are standing this day, all of you, before *HaShem*-יהו"ה your God; your leaders, your tribes, your elders, your officers – all the men of Israel. Your young children, your wives and your proselyte who is in your camp, from your wood-cutter to your water-drawer." That is, all of you as individuals are literally as one, which is a matter stemming from the essence.

This likewise must be drawn down into the particular powers, such as "Your leaders, [your tribes] etc." Through doing so there is a renewal (not only of the aspect of "your wood-cutter to your water drawer," but also of) "your leaders

⁹³ See Kuntres Etz HaChayim, Ch. 12.

⁹⁴ See Zohar III 222b (Ra'aya Mehemna); Likkutei Torah, Shelach 47c, 51a

⁹⁵ Deuteronomy 29:9-10

(*Rosheichem*-ראשיכם),” referring to those who are masters of intellect (*Baalei Sechel*), so that they too reach and attain the aspect of the strength and simplicity of simple faith in *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He. For, even in Torah study there must be the strength of faith (*Emunah*), and the toil of engaging in Torah study should be with the acceptance of the yoke of *HaShem*'s-יהו"ה Kingship.

This then, is the general matter of [reciting the] verses that precede the sounding of the Shofar, the substance of which is the letters (*Otiyot*) of Torah, as explained above. For, through this we affect the matter indicated by the verse, “Teach me good reasoning and knowledge.” It is through this toil of reciting the letters (*Otiyot*) of Torah that we affect the fulfillment of the verse,⁹⁶ “God has ascended with the cry; *HaShem*-יהו"ה with the voice of the Shofar,” so that He rises from the throne of judgment and sits upon the throne of mercy.⁹⁷

This itself is the preparation for the crowning of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, and the drawing down of His Kingship through sounding the Shofar, so that this is drawn down throughout the whole year, to be a year filled with Torah. This is as stated,⁹⁸ “I will raise the cup of salvations, and I will call in the Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה.” That is, the Torah is the “cup of salvations,” for it is through Torah that we affect the drawings down throughout the whole year, so that it is a good and sweet year [filled with blessings in] children, health,

⁹⁶ Psalms 47:6

⁹⁷ See Midrash Vayikra Rabba 29:3; Zohar III 99a

⁹⁸ Psalms 116:13

and abundant sustenance, with openly apparent and revealed goodness.