

Discourse 19

“Reishit Goyim Amalek - Amalek is the first of the nations”

Delivered on Purim, 5723

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

1.

The⁸²⁷ verse states,⁸²⁸ “Amalek is the first of the nations, but his end will be eternal destruction.” This is in continuation of the commandment to “remember what Amalek did to you, on the way, when you were leaving Egypt.”⁸²⁹ However, we must understand why Amalek is the first of the nations. For, the nations-*Goyim*-גוים, refers to the seven nations, which in general, includes all the [seventy] nations, whereas Amalek is “the first of the nations (*Reishit Goyim*)” and therefore “his end will be eternal destruction.”

⁸²⁷ See the Sichah talk that followed the discourse (Torat Menachem Vol. 36, p. 215) that this discourse is a discourse of the Alter Rebbe entitled “*Zachor et Asher Asah Lecha Amalek*” which was said on Shabbat Parshat Zachor 5562 (and subsequently printed in Maamarei Admor HaZaken 5562 Vol. 1, p. 167 and on, and with glosses etc., in Ohr HaTorah, Parshat Zachor, p. 1,785 and on; Tetzaveh, Vol. 7 p. 2,770; Sefer HaMaamarim of the Tzemach Tzedek, Mitzvat Zechirat Amalek p. 94b, 98b); Also see the discourse entitled “*Zachor*” 5655 (Sefer HaMaamarim 5655 p. 122 and on).

⁸²⁸ Numbers 24:20

⁸²⁹ Deuteronomy 25:17

This may be understood by prefacing with an explanation of the verse,⁸³⁰ “Gaze from Your holy abode, from the heavens, and bless Your people Israel.” Now, the matters of “gazing-*Hashkifah*-השקפה” and “peering-*Habatah*-הבטה”⁸³¹ are from Above to below, which is why the verse states, “Gaze (*Hashkifah*-השקפה)... from the heavens,” as in the verse,⁸³² “*HaShem*-יהוה peered (*Heebeet*-הביט) from the heavens, He saw all mankind,” in which the thing being gazed appears further than it is.

In contrast, this is not so from below to Above, in which case the term used primarily is that of “seeing-*Re'iyah*-ראיה.” In such a case, it appears to be closer [than it is], like a person who stands below and looks up at the sun, the moon and the stars, which appear to be closer [than they actually are], even though they are awesomely distant.

Now, from the matter of “seeing-*Re'iyah*-ראיה” as it is below, we can understand how it is Above. That is, Above there also are two ways; from Above to below and from below to Above. This is as the verse states,⁸³³ “*HaShem*-יהוה is a God of knowledges (*De'ot*-דעות),” in which the word “knowledges-*De'ot*-דעות” is plural and indicates two.⁸³⁴

⁸³⁰ Deuteronomy 26:15

⁸³¹ See Midrash Bereishit Rabba 44:12 (cited in Ohr HaTorah, Drushim L'Parshat Zachor ibid.)

⁸³² Psalms 33:13

⁸³³ Samuel I 2:3

⁸³⁴ See Tikkunei Zohar, Tikkun 69.

That is, there is knowledge-*Da'at* stemming from “gazing-*Hashkafah*” and “peering-*Habatah*” from Above to below, this being the Upper Knowledge (*Da'at Elyon*) and there is knowledge-*Da'at* as it stems from “seeing-*Re'iyah*” from below to Above, this being the Lower Knowledge (*Da'at Tachton*).

In other words, when the created being gazes from below to Above, the lower one calls himself “something-*Yesh-ש*” and calls the Upper One “nothing-*Ayin-אין*.” For, being that he has no grasp or comprehension of spirituality, therefore relative to himself, he does not consider it to be an existence.

In contrast, from the perspective of “gazing” and “peering” from Above to below, the fact that the lower one is called “something-*Yesh-ש*” (as in “something from nothing-*Yesh MeAyin-מאין*”) is not because he is the True Something (*Yesh HaAmeete*), but he only is “something-*Yesh-ש*” because he senses himself as being “something.” Similarly, the fact that the Upper One is called “nothing-*Ayin-אין*” is only because He is concealed and hidden from the created being.

However, in truth, specifically the One Above is the True Something (*Yesh HaAmeete*), so much so that from His Being the entire existence of the lower one is caused. On the contrary, relative to the One Above, the existence of the lower one is utterly inconsequential.

We observe this in man below, that in the chaining down (*Hishtalshelut*) of the powers of his soul, when a particular intellect is drawn down from the power of conceptualization (*Ko'ach HaMaskeel*), the particular intellect is as nothing relative to the power of conceptualization (*Ko'ach HaMaskeel*),

which relative to it is a “something-*Yesh*-שׁ.” This being so, it is the very opposite of the knowledge-*Da’at* of the created being, that below is “something-*Yesh*-שׁ” and Above is “nothing-*Ayin*-אין.”

However, even though the two above mentioned “knowledges” (*De’ot*) are in contradiction and are opposites of each other, nonetheless, from the fact that the verse states, “*HaShem*-יהו"ה is a God of knowledges (*De’ot*-דעות)” [in the plural] it is understood that even Above, there are two knowledges (*De’ot*-דעות), these being the Upper Knowledge (*Da’at Elyon*) and the Lower Knowledge (*Da’at Tachton*).

(In other words, there is not only the knowledge that Above is “something-*Yesh*-שׁ” and below is “nothing-*Ayin*-אין,” but there also is the opposite knowledge and vantage point). Moreover, since the Upper Knowledge (*Da’at Elyon*) stems from *HaShem*’s-יהו"ה Godliness that transcends the created, and certainly transcends the formed and the actualized, both are true.

That is, this is the aspect of the light of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, that surrounds and transcends all worlds (*Sovev Kol Almin*). Thus, relative to it, the radiance of light that manifests [below] to be the power of the Actor in the acted upon, is entirely inconsequential. It rather is like the drawing down of a particular detail from a general principle, similar to the above-mentioned example of drawing down a particular intellect from the [general] power of conceptualization (*Ko’ach HaMaskeel*). That is, the particular intellect, (and how much more is this so when the particular intellect is drawn further

down to manifested within), is like nothing (*Ayin*-אין) relative to the general power of conceptualization (*Ko'ach HaMaskeel*).

However, from the perspective of *HaShem*'s-יהו"ה Godliness that manifests within the worlds, this being the aspect of the light of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, that fills all worlds (*Memaleh Kol Almin*), since this radiance and power is constricted to the point that it manifests within and fills the created, formed, and actualized, this itself indicates that they are of consequence and consideration, which is why the power of the Actor is within them.

This then, is the meaning of “*HaShem*-יהו"ה is a God of knowledges (*De'ot*-דעות).” That is, Above in *HaShem*'s-יהו"ה Godliness, there are two knowledges (*De'ot*-דעות) and both are true. This is because the Holy One, blessed is He, both transcends all worlds (*Sovev Kol Almin*) and fills all worlds (*Memaleh Kol Almin*). Both knowledges (*De'ot*-דעות) are included in His Essential Self, blessed is He, before whom “all is considered as nothing.”⁸³⁵ This is because *HaShem*-יהו"ה Himself transcends both His light that surrounds and transcends all worlds (*Sovev Kol Almin*) and His light that fills all worlds (*Memaleh Kol Almin*).

About this the verse states, “Gaze... from the heavens.” That is, when there is a “gazing-*Hashkafah*-השקפה” and “peering-*Habatah*-הבטה” from Above to below stemming from the Upper Knowledge (*Da'at Elyon*), then “bless Your people Israel,” for from the perspective of the light of *HaShem*-יהו"ה that fills all worlds (*Memaleh Kol Almin*), which is the Lower Knowledge (*Da'at Tachton*), the level of *HaShem*'s-יהו"ה

⁸³⁵ Daniel 4:32; Zohar I 11b

Godliness that is constricted and manifest in the worlds is drawn down to be the power of the Actor within the acted upon, to the point that “her feet descend unto death,”⁸³⁶ until something that is separate (*Yesh Nifrad*) is made.

That is, not only does he sense himself as being something (*Yesh*-יש), but he truly is something (*Yesh*) and is separate from Godliness, meaning, from the Godly vitality and Supernal will of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He. This is so much so, that the matter of “other gods-*elohim acheirim*-אלהים אחרים” who receive [vitality] from the aspect of the backside (*Achorayim*) of *HaShem*’s-יהו"ה title God-*Elohi*”מ-אלהים, is possible.

This is to such an extent that, as in the second explanation brought in Tanya,⁸³⁷ “The tiny measure of light and life that it derives and absorbs internally from the backside (*Achorayim*-אחרים) of Godly holiness, is literally in a state of exile within it etc., which is why it is called ‘other gods-*elohim acheirim*-אלהים אחרים,’ in that it constitutes actual idolatry etc.” This itself is not just in a way that [the idolators] call *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, “the God of the gods,”⁸³⁸ but even lower, such as Pharaoh who said,⁸³⁹ “My river is mine and I made myself [powerful].”

However, from the perspective of “gazing-*Hashkafah*-השקפה” and “peering-*Habatah*-הבטה” from Above to below, this

⁸³⁶ Proverbs 5:5; See Ohr HaTorah, Na”Ch Vol. 1 to Proverbs 5:5 (p. 564 and on).

⁸³⁷ Tanya, Likkutei Amarim Ch. 22; See “Marei Mekomot, Hagahot, v’Ha’arot Ktzarot” to Tanya there (p. 135).

⁸³⁸ Talmud Bavli, Menachot 110a

⁸³⁹ Ezekiel 29:3

being the aspect of the light of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, that surrounds and transcends all worlds (*Sovev Kol Almin*), which is the Upper Knowledge (*Da'at Elyon*), there cannot be a drawing down to the nations of the world (the seven nations).

On the contrary, through this they are nullified of their existence, and there is a drawing down from there of blessing only to the Jewish people ("bless Your people Israel"). This is because "Israel arose in thought,"⁸⁴⁰ meaning that in the thought (*Machshavah*) itself, they are in a state of rising and ascent to the highest level of the Supernal thought,⁸⁴¹ that is, aspect of the Concealed Thought (*Machshavah Stima'ah*),⁸⁴² this being the aspect of the "heavens" from where the "gazing" and "peering" stems ("Gaze... from the heavens"), through which the existence of the seven nations is nullified, and the blessing is drawn down to the Jewish people alone.

3.

Now, as this relates to our service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, (being that every matter must specifically be drawn down through our toil in serving *HaShem*-יהו"ה), is as follows:

As known, our general service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, is expressed in the first paragraph of the *Shema* recital, especially in the first verse,⁸⁴³ "Listen Israel, *HaShem*-יהו"ה is our God, *HaShem* is One-*HaShem Echad*-אהד יהו"ה," in which

⁸⁴⁰ Midrash Bereishit Rabba 1:4

⁸⁴¹ See Likkutei Torah, Shir HaShirim 19b

⁸⁴² See Likkutei Torah, Shir HaShirim ibid. p. 26a

⁸⁴³ Deuteronomy 6:4

HaShem-יהו"ה is mentioned twice. As known, the first mention of *HaShem*-יהו"ה and the second mention of *HaShem*-יהו"ה are the two knowledges (*De'ot*-דעות) of "*HaShem*-יהו"ה is a God of knowledges (*De'ot*-דעות)." They both become unified and united through the service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה of the Jewish people, being that they are "one-*Echad*-אחד nation on earth."⁸⁴⁴ That is, even on "earth" (*Aretz*-ארץ) they draw down the aspect of [*HaShem* is] One-*Echad*-אחד, just as He is in the heavens,⁸⁴⁵ this being the matter [of the verse],⁸⁴⁶ "All that is in the heavens and the earth [is Yours]." This likewise is the meaning of⁸⁴⁷ "the place where earth and heaven touch."

Now, this comes about through two ways of toiling in serving *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, from the easy to the difficult. That is, at first, one's toil is in a way of "seeing-*Re'iyah*-ראיה" from below to Above. This is the meaning of "Listen-*Shema*-שמע Israel," since, as known,⁸⁴⁸ the word "Listen-*Shema*-שמע" also means to gather and summon, as in the verse,⁸⁴⁹ "And Shaul summoned-*VaYeshama*-וישמע the people." In other words, in his service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה from below, a person summons and gathers all his matters [and powers]. This is service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, stemming from the Lower Knowledge (*Da'at Tachton*), ("*HaShem* is our God-*HaShem Elohei*"nu-יהו"ה אלהינו"). He then unifies this with "*HaShem* is One-*HaShem Echad*-יהו"ה

⁸⁴⁴ Samuel II 7:23; Chronicles I 17:21

⁸⁴⁵ See Tanya, Iggeret HaKodesh, Epistle 9 and elsewhere.

⁸⁴⁶ Chronicles I 29:11

⁸⁴⁷ Talmud Bavli, Bava Batra 74a

⁸⁴⁸ See Likkutei Torah, Shelach 40d; Va'etchanan 11b

⁸⁴⁹ Samuel I 15:4

אֶחָד,” that is, as *HaShem*-יהו"ה is from the perspective of the Upper Knowledge (*Da'at Elyon*). This is the unification of the two knowledges (*De'ot*-דעות) as they are in our service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, until the matter of “One-*Echad*-אֶחָד” is also drawn down to the earth, as mentioned before.

We then say, “And you shall love *HaShem*-יהו"ה your God with all your heart and with all your soul, and with all your more.”⁸⁵⁰ This is the matter of the flames of fire and yearning love etc., in all three above-mentioned levels of love, by which all alien loves are caused to be nullified, referring to the seven bad emotional traits in general, that correspond to the seven nations, these being the Canaanite, the Hittite etc.⁸⁵¹ That is, they are nullified because of the revelation of the Upper Knowledge (*Da'at Elyon*), as explained above about the matter of “Gaze from Your holy abode, from the heavens, and bless Your people Israel.”

4.

This is also the meaning of the verse,⁸⁵² “You alone are *HaShem*-יהו"ה; You made the heavens and the most exalted heavens and all their legions, the earth and all that is upon it... and you give them all life... You are *HaShem*-יהו"ה the God, You chose Avram... and You found his heart to be faithful before You, and You sealed the covenant with him to give the

⁸⁵⁰ Deuteronomy 6:5

⁸⁵¹ Nehemiah 9:8

⁸⁵² Nehemiah 9:6-8

land of the Canaanite, the Hittite... and You affirmed Your word, for You are righteous.”

The words, “You alone are *HaShem*-יהוה” refer to the Essential Self of the Singular Preexistent Intrinsic and Unlimited One, *HaShem*-יהוה Himself, blessed is He, who transcends the two above-mentioned knowledges (*De’ot*-דעות). Therefore, both knowledges (*De’ot*-דעות) are equally present there. There thus is a drawing down from there of the matter of “You made the heavens and the most exalted heavens,” (the Upper Knowledge – *Da’at Elyon*), “and the earth and all that is upon it” (the Lower Knowledge – *Da’at Tachton*), all together as one. This is similar to the verse,⁸⁵³ “He who forms their hearts together,” in which the verse specifies “together-*Yachad*-יחד.”

Through this, the union of the two knowledges (*De’ot*-דעות) is caused in our service of *HaShem*-יהוה as well. This begins with love (*Ahavah*) of *HaShem*-יהוה, blessed is He, which is matter of Avraham, as the verse states,⁸⁵⁴ “Avraham who loved me.” Thus, about this the verse states, “You found his heart faithful before You, and You sealed the covenant with him etc.,” meaning that the drawing down should specifically be to Israel (“bless Your people Israel”), to the point that they are even given “the land of the Canaanite, the Hittite etc.,” and there is a nullification of derivation of vitality to the seven nations, as the verse states about them,⁸⁵⁵ “You shall not allow anyone to live.” That is, we remove all the sparks of Godliness

⁸⁵³ Psalms 33:15; See Torah Ohr, Yitro 68d

⁸⁵⁴ Isaiah 41:8

⁸⁵⁵ Deuteronomy 20:16

from them, this being their vitality, and refine, clarify, and elevate them to holiness.

This is the meaning of the words, “You affirmed Your word, for You are righteous.” “Your word” refers to the word of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, from which the entire chaining down of the worlds (*Hishtalshelut*) is brought into existence from nothing to something (*Yesh MeAyin*), through the power of the Actor in the acted upon, as a result of which the matter of “her feet descend unto death,” is also possible, meaning that there can be a derivation of vitality even by the Canaanite, the Hittite etc., to the point that Pharaoh said, “My river is mine and I made myself [powerful]” (as mentioned before).

However, about this the verse states, “You affirmed Your word,” meaning that there should be a drawing down in this, from the aspect of “gazing-*Hashkafah*-השקפה” and “peering-*Habatah*-הבטה” from Above to below. “For You are righteous-*Tzaddik*-צדיק,” in which the word “righteous-*Tzaddik*-צדיק” refers to the quality of Foundation-*Yesod*, which causes a drawing down of the aspect of the Upper Knowledge (*Da'at Elyon*) into the aspect of Kingship-*Malchut*, which is the aspect of “You-*Atah*-אתה,”⁸⁵⁶ this being the aspect of “Your word-*Devarecha*-דבריך.”

⁸⁵⁶ The word “You-*Atah*-אתה” is inclusive of all the letters from *Aleph*-א to *Tav*-ת and the *Hey*-ה-five organs of speech in the mouth, or the five motions of the five primary vowels, meaning speech-*Dibur*-דבור, which is the aspect of Kingship-*Malchut*. See Ginat Egoz of Rabbi Yosef Gikatilla, translated as *HaShem Is One*, Vol. 4 (The Vowels of Creation).

5.

However, the above-mentioned toil is just to nullify the seven nations of the Canaanite, the Hittite etc., which generally includes of all the [seventy] nations. However, to also nullify “the head of the nations is Amalek,” this being their beginning and root, it is not enough for there to only be the toil discussed in the first paragraph of the *Shema*, “Listen Israel,” this being the matter of contemplation (*Hitbonenut*) with understanding and comprehension etc., until one comes to the love of *HaShem*-יהוה, blessed is He, indicated by the words, “And you shall love etc.,” so that through the love, all seven bad emotional traits are nullified.

Rather, an additional toil that stems from the trait of being “stiff necked” is necessary, as in the words of Moshe,⁸⁵⁷ “For it is a stiff-necked people, and (therefore) You shall forgive.” This toil is discussed in the second paragraph of the *Shema* (as will be explained).

6.

The explanation is that even though the second paragraph of *Shema* comes in continuation to the first paragraph, meaning that through this, there even is a drawing down of the aspect of the Upper Knowledge (“*HaShem* is One-*HaShem Echad*-יהוה אחד”) into the aspect of the Lower Knowledge (“*HaShem* is our God-*HaShem Elohei*”נו-יהוה), this being the “gazing-*Hashkafah*-השקפה” and

⁸⁵⁷ Exodus 34:9

“peering-*Habatah*-הבטה” from Above to below, “Gaze down... from the heavens,” so that thereby the blessing is drawn down to Israel, “and bless Your people Israel,” through which the second paragraph of the *Shema* thereby states,⁸⁵⁸ “you shall gather in your grain, your wine, and your oil, and I shall provide grass in your field for your cattle and you will eat and be satisfied,” nevertheless, in the second paragraph of the *Shema* there is something novel that was not said in the first paragraph. This refers to the verse,⁸⁵⁹ “to love *HaShem*-יהו"ה your God, and to serve Him with all your heart and with all your soul,” in which the matter of “serving Him-*LeAvdo*-לעבדו” is specified, referring to service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He.

Now, the general matter of service and toil (*Avodah*-עבודה) may be understood from a servant (*Eved*-עבד) below, [about whom it states],⁸⁶⁰ “A slave prefers to be free.” Therefore, whatever he must do for his master is difficult for him, “like a yoke to the ox.”⁸⁶¹ It is only because he fears his master that he does all the work of the Master. However, this does not stem from intellectual understanding and comprehension (as in the first verse of *Shema*, in which the word “listen-*Shema*-שמע” means to contemplate (*Hitbonenut*) until one is roused with love, as explained above).

The explanation is as stated in Ra’aya Mehemna,⁸⁶² “Like a son who strives for the sake of his father, not for the sake of his own honor, but for the honor of his father etc.” In

⁸⁵⁸ Deuteronomy 11:14-15

⁸⁵⁹ Deuteronomy 11:13

⁸⁶⁰ Talmud Bavli, Gittin 13a

⁸⁶¹ Talmud Bavli, Avodah Zarah 5b

⁸⁶² Zohar III 281a; See Tanya, Likkutei Amarim, Ch. 41 (57b and on)

other words, there is a way in which one toils in the study of Torah and fulfilling *mitzvot* “for his own honor,” meaning that there is benefit to (the one who serves) and benefit to the general bestowal in the world at large.

This is as explained above, that through contemplation [that brings to] “and you shall love *HaShem*-יהוה your God,” there is a nullification of the vitality [derived by the forces of externality] through “her feet descending unto death,” and there likewise is caused to be the matter of “You affirmed Your word,” to the point that the seven nations, which are the seven bad emotional traits, are completely nullified, this being the general toil of “turn away from evil.”⁸⁶³ There then is also the toil of “do good,”⁸⁶⁴ which is to draw down and reveal *HaShem*’s-יהוה Godliness in the world. However, all this is “for his own honor.”

However, there is a way of service that is “like a son who strives for the sake of his father, nor for the sake of his own honor, but for the honor of his father.” That is, he does not toil because he will derive any benefit from this, but solely in a way of the service of a servant, “to serve Him-*LeAvdo*-לעבדו,” like a yoke to the ox.

Now, even though all the service of the servant is solely out the fear of his master, and at first glance⁸⁶⁵ the fear should only arouse his power to act, so that he serves the master solely from his power of action, but not in way of being fully invested in fulfilling the work in a way of beautification and

⁸⁶³ Psalms 34:15

⁸⁶⁴ Psalms 34:15 *ibid.*

⁸⁶⁵ Also see *Hemshech* 5666 p. 325 and on.

glorification, in that such work is bound to the power of intellect (*Sechel*), and even deeper, with the powers of desire (*Ratzon*) and pleasure (*Taanug*). However, since all this does not apply to the toil of a servant, being that his service only stems from accepting the yoke, this being so, his service should necessarily be in a way of simply performing the deed, without beautifying and glorifying it.

However, in actuality, we see that in the toil of a servant (*Eved*-עבד) who is worthy of the title, he fulfills the service of his master not only with his power of action alone, but does so in a way that the work is beautified and splendid, stemming from the satisfaction of spirit and pleasure in it (as mentioned above). However, this is not for his own benefit, nor is it because it accords with his own understanding and comprehension, nor in accordance to his own powers of desire and pleasure.

Rather, the opposite is true, that he altogether is not an independent being unto himself, and his whole existence is the existence of the master. Therefore, the satisfaction of spirit and pleasure of the master becomes his own satisfaction of spirit and pleasure. In other words, it is not that he has his own pleasure and satisfaction of spirit, but nullifies it as necessary for the pleasure and satisfaction of spirit of his master. For, in such a case, he too benefits from this, being that it [also] is his own satisfaction and pleasure.

It rather is in a way that he himself is not an independent existence altogether, in that “whatever a slave acquires is the acquisition of his master.”⁸⁶⁶ Thus, since his whole being is the

⁸⁶⁶ Talmud Bavli, Pesachim 88b

being of the master, and the master derives pleasure and satisfaction of spirit from work that is done with beautification and splendor, he therefore not only does his work with his power of action, but in a way of beautification and splendor, with all ten powers of his soul, including the power of pleasure (*Taanug*).

7.

This then, is the novelty introduced in the second paragraph of *Shema*, which states, “To serve Him (*LeAvdo*-לעבדו) with all your heart and with all your soul,” this being specifically like the service of a servant. That is, this is even greater than service that stems from, “You shall love *HaShem*-יהוה your God... with all your more (*Bechol Me’odecha*-בכל מאדך),” stated in the first paragraph of the *Shema*. For, when service of Him stems from love, and the One who is faithfully beloved, commands the one he loves to do something that in his own eyes is unbefitting, whether this stems from his intellect, or whether it stems from his desire and pleasure, to the point that he despises it, he will be unable to do it.

In contrast, this is not so of a servant who has no being unto himself altogether. He will even do that which is not at all beneficial and even that which he despises, this being the superiority of a faithful servant. This is likewise so of a “son who strives after his father (not for his own honor, but) for the honor of his father,” being that he is one essence with the being

of his father, in that “a son is like his father’s foot.”⁸⁶⁷ We thus find that the matter of accepting the yoke on the lowest level, by “a slave who prefers to be free,” even has a superiority over and above service that stems from love.

Now, this matter is hinted in the four letters of the Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה, which expresses the general matter of our service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, as the verse states,⁸⁶⁸ “I am *HaShem* your God-*Anochi HaShem Elohe*”*cha*-אנכי יהו"ה-”אֵלֶיךָ,” meaning that through this *HaShem*-יהו"ה becomes your strength and vitality.⁸⁶⁹

Therefore, in our service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, there also are the four letters of the Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה, the matter of which is fear and love and love and fear.⁸⁷⁰ That is, the letters *Yod-Hey*-יה"י are the upper fear (*Yira Ila’ah*) and the abundant love (*Ahavah Rabba*) of Him, and the letters *Vav-Hey*-ו"ה are the minor love (*Ahavah Zuta*) and the lower fear (*Yira Tata’ah*) of Him.

Nevertheless, even the final letter *Hey*-ה, which is the lower fear (*Yira Tata’ah*) and is even lower than the letter *Vav*-ו, which is the minor love (*Ahavah Zuta*), is bound to its root and source, ascending and reaching the letter *Yod*-י, which is the matter of the upper fear (*Yira Ila’ah*) that transcends (not only the letter *Vav*-ו, but) even the first letter *Hey*-ה, which is the matter of abundant love (*Ahavah Rabba*) of Him.

⁸⁶⁷ Etz Chayim, Shaar 23 (Shaar Pirkei HaTzelem) Ch. 1, citing “our sages, of blessed memory”; Yonet Eilem Ch. 4; Emek HaMelech, Shaar Olam HaBriyah, Ch. 17 (174c); Shnei Luchot HaBrit 154a; See Talmud Bavli, Eruvin 70b; Tosefot to Yevamot 3a (entitled “*Mekimi*”); Rashi to Ketubot 92a (entitled “*K’Ba’al*”).

⁸⁶⁸ Exodus 20:2; Deuteronomy 5:6

⁸⁶⁹ See Likkutei Torah, Balak 73c

⁸⁷⁰ See Zohar III 123a and on; Likkutei Torah ibid. 73a

As this matter relates to our service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, is that even though the beginning of one's service stems from acceptance of the yoke, nevertheless, "this is the gateway by which to ascend."⁸⁷¹ In other words, through this one comes to the upper fear (*Yirah Ila'ah*) of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, which is the letter *Yod*-י of the Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה that even transcends the first letter *Hey*-ה. That is, the service itself stems from accepting the yoke, but even so, it is with the wholeness of all the [soul] powers, including the power of pleasure (*Taanug*).

8.

This is also the general difference between Shaul's service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה and Dovid's service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה. This is because Shaul pursued reason,⁸⁷² being that "Shaul is from the expansiveness of the river"⁸⁷³ (*Rechovot HaNahar*),⁸⁷⁴ referring to the matter of Understanding-*Binah*.⁸⁷⁵ It is from the comprehension and grasp of the "expansiveness of the river" (*Rechovot HaNahar*) that we come to toil in a way of "you shall love *HaShem*-יהו"ה your God etc.," and "there is no labor like the labor of love,"⁸⁷⁶ up to and including the highest level of love.

⁸⁷¹ See Zohar I 8a; 11b

⁸⁷² See Ohr HaTorah, Chanukah 331a; Re'eh p. 669, and elsewhere.

⁸⁷³ Genesis 36:37; Chronicles I 1:48

⁸⁷⁴ See Etz Chayim, Shaar 8 (Shaar Drushei HaNekudot) Ch. 4

⁸⁷⁵ Shaarei Orah of Rabbi Yosef Gikatilla, translated as Gates of Light, Gate Eight (*Binah*); See Etz Chayim, Shaar 8 (Shaar Drushei HaNekudot) Ch. 4

⁸⁷⁶ See Zohar II 55b; Zohar III 267a; Likkutei Torah, Shlach 42c; Kuntres HaAvodah Ch. 1 & Ch. 3 and on.

However, there also is how Dovid served *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He. For, about Dovid the verse states,⁸⁷⁷ “the words of the man who was established on high-*Hukam Al* עול,” meaning,⁸⁷⁸ “He established the yoke-*Ol* עול of Torah,” specifically a “yoke-*Ol* עול.” This is as stated in Tractate Brachot,⁸⁷⁹ “Happy is he who grew in Torah and whose toil is in Torah.” However, at first glance, what is added by stating “and whose toil is in Torah” over and above [the words] “who grew in Torah”?

The explanation is that “who grew (*Gadel*-גדל) in Torah” refers to the matter of attaining maturity (*Gadlut*-גדלות) in the study of Torah, in understanding and comprehension, in a way that one senses the benefit in it etc.

However, there is an even higher way of studying Torah, indicated by the words “whose toil (*Amal*-עמל) is in Torah.” That is, for him Torah is a matter of toil and difficult labor, “like an ox to the yoke.” That is, even in the study of Torah itself, he is not an existence unto himself.

This is also as Dovid said,⁸⁸⁰ “If He says, ‘I do not desire you,’ then I am prepared; let Him do with me as is good in His eyes.” That is, even when discussing something hateful, such as “I do not desire you,” even then “I am prepared-*Hineini*-הנני,” in that I am ready and prepared to do this as well, and this same matter is what “I desire.” This kind of service does not stem from deriving any benefit, or from any understanding and

⁸⁷⁷ Samuel II 23:1

⁸⁷⁸ See Midrash Bamidbar Rabba 18:21; Midrash Shmuel Ch. 29; Tanna D’Vei Eliyahu Ch. 2.

⁸⁷⁹ Talmud Bavli, Brachot 17a

⁸⁸⁰ Samuel II 15:26

comprehension, desire, or pleasure, but only because he is in a state of readiness, and is prepared to do whatever is asked of him, this being the matter of accepting the yoke.

This also is the matter of “stiff-neckedness,” this being the matter of victory and stubbornness of the side of holiness (*Kedushah*), for though it is a most difficult labor, and he has no understanding, comprehension, desire, or pleasure in it, so much so, that it even is hateful to him, “I do not desire,” even so, he says “I am prepared-*Hineini*-הנני,” and does it by accepting the yoke.

9.

Now, the difference between the two above-mentioned ways of serving *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, becomes pronounced in the war against Amalek. That is, about Shaul, we find that he was commanded to wipe out Amalek, and he said,⁸⁸¹ “I have fulfilled the word of *HaShem*-יהו"ה,” when he took “the best of the sheep and cattle to bring them as offerings to *HaShem*-יהו"ה your God.”⁸⁸² However, Shmuel responded,⁸⁸³ “Does *HaShem*-יהו"ה delight in the elevation offerings and the feast offerings, as in obedience to the word of *HaShem*-יהו"ה? Behold! To obey is better than a choice offering, to be attentive [is better] than the fat of rams.”

The explanation is that from the perspective of understanding and comprehension of the side of holiness, this

⁸⁸¹ Samuel I 15:13

⁸⁸² Samuel I 15:15

⁸⁸³ Samuel I 15:22

too is in a way that, “I have fulfilled the word of *HaShem*-יהו”ה.” This is because the matter of the sacrificial offerings is for there to be a “pleasing aroma to *HaShem* (*Rei’ach Nicho’ach*-ריח ניחוח ליהו”ה),”⁸⁸⁴ which not only is an ascent from below to Above (“scent-*Rei’ach*”-ריח) but is also a drawing down from Above to below (“pleasing-*Nicho’ach*”-ניחוח),⁸⁸⁵ until it was drawn into the word of *HaShem*-יהו”ה, and brought about “I have fulfilled the word of *HaShem*-יהו”ה.” Therefore, Shaul’s service was in a way that he took “the best of the sheep and cattle to bring them as offerings to *HaShem*-יהו”ה your God.”

However, this matter only applies to the seven nations, in which it is enough to serve in a way that stems from understanding and comprehension, which brings to the three levels of love of *HaShem*-יהו”ה, blessed is He, “with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your being,” up to and including abundant love (*Ahavah Rabba*) of Him, which is the first *Hey*-ה of the Name *HaShem*-יהו”ה, blessed is He, through which all the nations are nullified.

However, when it becomes necessary to nullify the external husk of Amalek, “Amalek is the first amongst the nations,” in that “He knows his Master but intends to rebel against Him,”⁸⁸⁶ being that Amalek knew of all the miracles that took place in the exodus from Egypt and the splitting of the sea, but even so, “Amalek came and waged war,”⁸⁸⁷ then understanding and comprehension are of no benefit. For, in any

⁸⁸⁴ Numbers 28:8 and elsewhere

⁸⁸⁵ See Likkutei Torah, Pinchas 76a; 78d

⁸⁸⁶ See Torat Kohanim and Rashi to Leviticus 26:14 and elsewhere; Also see Likkutei Sichot, Vol. 21, p. 193, note 38.

⁸⁸⁷ Exodus 17:8

event, he knows his Master, and even so, intends to rebel against Him.

Thus, about this Shmuel said that to wage war against Amalek, it is not enough for service of Him to stem from “Shaul from the expansiveness of the river (*Rechovot HaNahar*),” through bringing sacrificial offerings that have “a pleasing aroma” (*Rei’ach Nicho’ach*). Therefore, “*HaShem*-יהו"ה has torn the kingship of Israel from you this day, and has given it to your fellow who is better than you.” For, in order to nullify the external husk of Amalek, who knows his Master but intends to rebel against Him, ones service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, must specifically be in the way of Dovid, meaning obedience, as in the verse, “If He says, ‘I do not desire you,’ then ‘I am prepared (*Hineini*-הנני).”

This kind of service is specifically the acceptance of the yoke, in a way of victory and stubbornness derived from the innerness of the desire (*Pnimityut HaRatzon*) and even from the essential self of the soul. It is specifically in this that *HaShem*-יהו"ה delights, (“does *HaShem*-יהו"ה delight in etc.”), specifying the word “delight-*Chafetz*-חפץ”, indicating the innermost aspect of desire (*Pnimityut HaRatzon*).

10.

This is also the meaning of Moshe’s supplication,⁸⁸⁸ “For it is a stiff-necked people and You shall forgive.” Now, at first glance, it is not understood why the reason he gave was that “it is a stiff-necked people,” and that because of this, “You

⁸⁸⁸ Exodus 34:9

shall forgive.” However, the explanation is that the sin of the golden calf (about which Moshe requested “You shall forgive” because “it is a stiff-necked people”) is similar to the matter of one who knows his Master but intends to rebel against Him, Heaven forbid. This is because the Jewish people were in the state and standing immediately following all the revelations they beheld with the giving of the Torah, in a way of actual sight,⁸⁸⁹ and also at the splitting of the sea (which preceded it) at which time they said,⁸⁹⁰ “This is my God.” However, even so, they came to sin with the golden calf.

Therefore, for something such as this, service that stems from understanding and comprehension is not enough. This is because in this, they already had understanding and comprehension, but even so “this people has committed a great sin.”⁸⁹¹ It is called a “great sin-*Chata'ah Gedolah*-חטאה גדולה,” because this sin is greater than all [other] sins and transgressions, being that it is like one who knows his Master but intends to rebel against Him.

However, the reason that Moshe requested “You shall forgive,” is because their service was in a way that “it is a stiff-necked people.” To explain, the back of the neck (*Oreph*-עורף) is behind the forehead (*Metzach*-מצח) and there is an illumination in it of the strength of desire in the forehead (*Metzach*-מצח),⁸⁹² this being the delight (*Chafetz*-חפץ) of *HaShem*-יהוה, blessed is He, drawn down in our serving Him

⁸⁸⁹ See Tanya, Likkutei Amarim, Ch. 36

⁸⁹⁰ Exodus 15:2

⁸⁹¹ Exodus 32:31

⁸⁹² See Zohar III 129a, 136b (Idra Rabba); Also see Shaar HaYichud of the Mittler Rebbe, translated as The Gate of Unity, Ch. 17.

in the way of obedience (*Shmo'ah*-שמוע), which is higher than a “choice offering.” Therefore, even when forgiveness is impossible through the service of sacrificial offerings, nonetheless, through being “a stiff-necked people” we bring about “You shall forgive.”

In other words, when service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, is in a way of stubbornness, such that “If He says, ‘I do not desire you,’ then I am prepared (*Hineini*-הנני),” meaning that he is prepared to do even what is hateful to him (as explained above), this also has an effect Above, so that even one who was despised etc., becomes beloved and dear before *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He,⁸⁹³ so much so, that “in the place where the repentant (*Baalei Teshuvah*) stand, even the perfectly righteous *Tzaddikim* cannot stand.”⁸⁹⁴

11.

This is also the meaning of the verse about the war against Amalek,⁸⁹⁵ “*HaShem*-יהו"ה maintains a war against Amalek from generation to generation.” To explain, generations (*Dorot*-דורות) refers to the emotions (*Midot*),⁸⁹⁶ which [come] in a way of “lines-*Shurot*-שורות after lines-*Shurot*-שורות.”⁸⁹⁷ Now, our service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is

⁸⁹³ Mishneh Torah, Hilchot Teshuvah 7:6

⁸⁹⁴ Mishneh Torah, Hilchot Teshuvah 7:4

⁸⁹⁵ Exodus 17:16

⁸⁹⁶ See at greater length in the Sichah talk that followed the discourse (Torat Menachem, Vol. 36 p. 215 and on).

⁸⁹⁷ See the discourse entitled “*Vayomer Shmuel el Shaul*” in Maamarei Admor HaZaken 5565 Vol. 1 p. 419; Ohr HaTorah (Yahal Ohr) to Tehillim p. 549; Also see the Sichah talk of Simchat Torah 5661 (Sefer HaSichot 5702 p. 141 and on);

He, is in way that in each and every generation, and at each and every time, battle must be waged against one of the bad emotional traits, which in that particular generation and time is dominant. However, it does not apply that in each generation, the primary and foundational war is against all the bad emotional traits. However, in the “war of *HaShem*-יהוה against Amalek,” which is “from generation to generation,” this is not so. That is, in every single generation there is the matter of Amalek, against which war must be waged.

However, in the matter of Amalek itself, there are various levels, such as whether this matter of Amalek is coarse or refined. For, as known, in the external husks (*Kelipot*), the higher they are, the coarser they are, whereas the lower they are, the more refined they are, and the more refined they are, the more difficult it is to nullify them, and therefore more time is required for this. In contrast, a matter that is more coarse is much easier to nullify, without spending much time.

The explanation is that in regard to the matter of Amalek, who knows his Master but intends to rebel against Him in the most literal sense, the toil required to nullify this, does not require much time. This is because in the matter of intending to rebel against Him in the most literal sense, a person cannot err etc. It therefore is in his power and ability to nullify such a matter, being that he knows his Master, and his only problem is that the matter of “Amalek, who is first amongst the nations,” is present. Even so, as a response to this, he has the power of being a “stiff-necked people,” through which he can

Discourse entitled “*Bati LeGani* – I have come to My garden” 5721 translated in The Teachings of The Rebbe 5721, Discourse 14, Ch. 9.

even overcome and nullify the external husk (*Kelipah*) of Amalek.

However, when the matter of Amalek is more refined, which is the meaning of the words,⁸⁹⁸ “that he happened upon you (*Asher Karcha* - אשר קרך) on the way,” meaning that even when one indeed is on the way (*BaDerech* - בדרך), referring to the known “way” (*Derech* - דרך), this being “the way of *HaShem*” (*Derech HaShem* - דרך יהו"ה), blessed is He,⁸⁹⁹ even then there is an Amalek who creeps in and intends to rebel against Him, by causing coldness (*Kerirut* - קרירות) [to matters of Godliness] in him.⁹⁰⁰

Now [as the verse states], “God made one opposite the other,”⁹⁰¹ such that there also is a matter of coldness (*Kerirut* - קרירות) on the side of holiness. This refers to Wisdom-*Chochmah* on the side of holiness, in that generally, intellect is cold. However, on the side of holiness, the coldness stems from the strength of one’s self-nullification, in a way that one’s self-existence is nullified (*Bittul b’Metziyut*) to *HaShem* - יהו"ה, blessed is He, to the point that he remains like an inanimate stone.

In contrast, the coldness (*Kerirut* - קרירות) of the side opposite holiness, is in a way that his toil is dispassionate and lifeless, in that it has become old [and stale] for him, such that it is like a heavy yoke for him. This is to such an extent that it

⁸⁹⁸ Deuteronomy 25:18

⁸⁹⁹ Genesis 18:19; See the discourse entitled “*Zachor*” 5634; 5678 (Sefer HaMaamarim 5634 p. 136, p. 139; 5678 p. 193 and on).

⁹⁰⁰ See Midrash Tanchuma, Teitzei 9; Rashi to Deuteronomy 18:19 *ibid.*; Sefer HaMaamarim 5679 p. 294, and elsewhere.

⁹⁰¹ Ecclesiastes 7:14

causes laziness and heaviness, so that he does not perform his work as he should.

There then is an even more refined form of Amalek, that even when he indeed performs his work as he should, he comes to a state of great self-exaltation, and says to himself, “By my reputation *HaShem*-יהו"ה is glorified.”⁹⁰² In other words, his toil is “for my reputation,” (meaning that an admixture of ego is in it etc.).

About this the verse states,⁹⁰³ “*HaShem*-יהו"ה maintains a war against Amalek from generation to generation (*MiDor Dor*-מדר דר).” That is, because of the refined aspects of this external husk (*Kelipah*), much time, until the generation of Moshiach, must be spent to nullify it, (as stated in Targum).⁹⁰⁴

12.

This also is why specifically about the war against Amalek the verse states,⁹⁰⁵ “Remember,” [and],⁹⁰⁶ “Do not forget.” That is, the matter of remembering applies when something has already entered ones knowledge in a way of understanding and grasp, but even so, it is possible for him to not remember, to the point of forgetting.⁹⁰⁷ Now, at first glance, given that he already understood and grasped it, where did it go?

⁹⁰² Isaiah 66:5

⁹⁰³ Exodus 17:16

⁹⁰⁴ Targum Yonatan ben Uziel to Exodus 17:16 *ibid*.

⁹⁰⁵ Deuteronomy 25:17

⁹⁰⁶ Deuteronomy 25:19

⁹⁰⁷ See *Hemshech* 5666 p. 243 (p. 323 in the new edition).

However, the explanation is that understanding and grasp go and return to their source in the power of conceptualization (*Ko'ach HaMaskeel*). It therefore is easier to recall something that he once knew, since it already was revealed and drawn down from the power of conceptualization (*Ko'ach HaMaskeel*). Even so, a state of not remembering is possible, to the point of forgetting.

Nonetheless, all this is only in regard to the revealed powers of the soul, meaning, as the power of conceptualization (*Ko'ach HaMaskeel*) is drawn into the revealed intellect, within understanding and grasp etc., where it is then possible for there to be change, such as a change from mature intellect (*Mochin d'Gadlut*) to immature intellect (*Mochin d'Katnut*),⁹⁰⁸ and even to a state of “sleep” (*Sheinah*).⁹⁰⁹

However, from the angle of the essential self of the soul, and even from the angle of the power of conceptualization (*Ko'ach HaMaskeel*), changes are not applicable. This then, is the matter of memory (*Zicharon*-זכרון), which transcends the revealed intellect, but comes from the power of conceptualization (*Ko'ach HaMaskeel*) itself.

Though it is true that we see people who naturally have good memory, but even so, may not have great understanding that enables them produce novel insights, this is because the power of memory is separate from and independent of the power of intellect, though it is equal to it and on a single level

⁹⁰⁸ See Shaar HaYichud of the Mittler Rebbe, translated as The Gate of Unity, Ch. 34-35 and the notes and explanations there.

⁹⁰⁹ See Shaar HaYichud of the Mittler Rebbe, translated as The Gate of Unity, Ch. 30.

with it. That is, relative to the essential self of the soul they both are of equal comparison and relation.

Now, as this matter relates to our service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, is that there is a form of service brought about through contemplation (*Hitbonenut*) in the understanding and grasp of the revealed intellect (*Sechel HaGaluy*). This is the toil of the first paragraph of *Shema*, [beginning with the verse,] “Listen Israel-*Shema Yisroel*-שמע ישראל,” which is the matter of contemplation (*Hitbonenut*), through which the [fulfillment of], “You shall love *HaShem*-יהו"ה your God, with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your being” is brought about. However, since this service stems from understanding and comprehension, there are changes in it from a state of immaturity to a state of maturity etc. All this is indeed sufficient in nullifying the seven nations, these being the seven bad emotional traits (*Midot*).

However, to nullify the external husk (*Kelipah*) of Amalek, who knows his Master but intends to rebel against Him, one’s service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, must be in a way of remembering, as indicated by [the words], “Remember,” [and], “Do not forget.” This is as in the verse,⁹¹⁰ “When I remember You upon my bed.”

That is, even when a person is in the state indicated by laying down and sleeping, he nevertheless has the matter of memory in full strength, without any change. This is because his service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, does not stem from understanding and comprehension, which is the way of service indicated by the first paragraph of the *Shema*. Rather, it is like

⁹¹⁰ Psalms 63:7

the second paragraph of the *Shema*, which states, “To serve Him (*LeAvdo*-לעבדו),” referring to the matter of the work and service of a servant (*Eved*-עבד), such that even “if He says, ‘I do not desire you,’ I am prepared (*Hineini*-הנני),” in a way of stubbornness and victory, stemming from the quality of Victory-*Netzach* of the soul, in which change is inapplicable, as the verse states,⁹¹¹ “Moreover, the Eternal One (*Netzach*-נצח) of Israel does not lie [and does not relent] etc.”

13.

This then, is the meaning of the verse,⁹¹² “Amalek is the first amongst the nations, and his end will be eternal destruction.” That is, even after the destruction and nullification of the nations, all seven nations of the Canaanite, the Hittite etc., there is still the presence of “Amalek, the first amongst the nations,” who knows his Master but intends to rebel against Him, whether in a way of coarse rebellion, or in the most refined of the [most] refined way, this being the matter of coldness (*Kerirut*-קרירות) etc., (as explained above).

It therefore is necessary for there to be “the war of *HaShem*-ה' against Amalek,” through fulfilling the command, “remember what Amalek did to you, on the way etc.,”⁹¹³ and,⁹¹⁴ “You shall wipe out the memory of Amalek,” and,⁹¹⁵ “I shall surely erase the remembrance of Amalek.”

⁹¹¹ Samuel I 15:29

⁹¹² Numbers 24:20

⁹¹³ Deuteronomy 25:17

⁹¹⁴ Deuteronomy 25:19

⁹¹⁵ Exodus 17:14

Through this, we bring about that at the end of it all, “his end will be eternal destruction,” since there will be the completion of “the war of *HaShem*-יהו"ה against Amalek from generation to generation,” until the generation of Moshiach, at which time there will be the fulfillment of the prophecy,⁹¹⁶ “Saviors will ascend Mount Tziyon to judge the Mountain of Esav, and the kingdom will be *HaShem*'s-יהו"ה.”

⁹¹⁶ Obadiah 1:21