

Discourse 14

*“V’Hayah Midei Chodesh b’Chodsho... -
It shall be that at every New Moon...”*

Delivered on Shabbat Parshat Va’era,
Rosh Chodesh Shvat, 5723
By the grace of *HaShem*, blessed is He,

1.

The verse states,⁵⁵⁸ “It shall be that on every New Moon and every Shabbat all flesh will come and prostrate before Me, says *HaShem*-יהוה.” Now, we must better understand this, and moreover, we must understand why the verse states, “all flesh will come,” specifying “flesh-*Bassar*-בשר.”

2.

This may be understood based on the explanation in the Alter Rebbe’s discourse (from Shabbat Chanukah 5553).⁵⁵⁹ There he first explains the teaching of our sages, of blessed memory,⁵⁶⁰ “The reward of the *mitzvah* is the *mitzvah*,” and that we must understand the Torah’s promise of reward in the coming world (*Olam HaBa*) in general. For, at first glance, it

⁵⁵⁸ Isaiah 66:23 – The concluding verse of the *Haftorah* of Shabbat Rosh Chodesh.

⁵⁵⁹ Subsequently printed in Maamarei Admor HaZaken, HaKetzarim p. 161 and on (in three versions).

⁵⁶⁰ Mishnah Avot 4:2

would have been better had we not known about the reward at all, so that our service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, will "not be with the expectation of receiving reward."⁵⁶¹ However, the explanation is that knowledge of the reward relates to service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה itself, since from the reward it is understood what manner toil in serving *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, should be done.

The explanation is that in the coming world (*Olam HaBa*) the reward is the the ascent of the souls in the Garden of Eden (*Gan Eden*) by way of the [known] column etc.⁵⁶² Now, the ascents of Shabbat are comparable to this, in that for this ascent to be, the general toil of serving *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, during the six days of action must be, as the verse states,⁵⁶³ "Six days shall you work, [and on the seventh day you shall desist; you shall desist] from plowing and harvesting."

As known, plowing is the matter of "softening the earth,"⁵⁶⁴ and the matter of sowing seed only takes place afterwards, through which there then will be growth etc. The same is so in our service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He. It first is necessary to "soften the earth," referring to the body, and to humble it so that it will not be drawn after the pleasures of this world.

This comes about by doing the very opposite of what the body desires in everything etc. There than can be the matter of

⁵⁶¹ Mishnah Avot 1:3

⁵⁶² See Zohar I 219a; Zohar II 211a; Torah Ohr, Megillat Esther 100b and on.

⁵⁶³ Exodus 34:21

⁵⁶⁴ Talmud Bavli, Mo'ed Katan 2b; See Likkutei Torah, Ha'azinu 74b and on, and elsewhere.

“sowing,” as the verse states,⁵⁶⁵ “Light is sown for the righteous,” referring to Torah and *mitzvot* as they are imbued with love of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He. This is because the word “you shall love-v'Ahavta-ואהבת-414” is twice the numerical value of “light-Ohr-אור-207,”⁵⁶⁶ these being the direct light (*Ohr Yashar*) and the rebounding light (*Ohr Chozar*),⁵⁶⁷ meaning, the drawing down (*Hamshachah*) and the ascent (*Ha'ala'ah*). Afterwards, the matter of harvesting etc., is also caused.⁵⁶⁸

3.

However, all this is during the six days of action, whereas about Shabbat the verse states, “You shall desist from plowing and harvesting,” because there then is no need for the matter of plowing. That is, because of the additional sanctity of Shabbat [itself], it is not necessary for one to break himself etc.

However, after Shabbat, the toil of plowing and softening the earth must begin again, in order to be able to ascend on the next Shabbat and become included in an even loftier level. This is like the coming world (*Olam HaBa*), in which the soul constantly ascends from elevation to elevation.

⁵⁶⁵ Psalms 97:11; See Likkutei Torah, Bechukotai 48a

⁵⁶⁶ Shaar HaKavanot, Kavanat Kriyat Shema, Drush 8; Pri Etz Chayim, Shaar HaKriyat Shema, Ch. 23 & Ch. 25.

⁵⁶⁷ Maamarei Admor HaZaken 5568 Vol. 1, p. 538; Ohr HaTorah, Zot HaBrachah p. 1,893 and on; Sefer HaMaamarim 5680 p. 160 and on.

⁵⁶⁸ Some of the redactors of this discourse recall that it was stated that plowing is the labor that is from below to Above, and sowing is that which is drawn from Above to below, and subsequently there is harvesting, which is also a labor that is from below to Above.

This is also the meaning of what we recite during the sanctification of the moon (*Kiddush Levanah*), “Just as I dance toward you but I cannot touch you.”⁵⁶⁹ That is, this is analogous to two people dancing opposite each other, that if they come too close to each other they cannot dance, and must distance themselves from each other in order to return and come close etc. The same is so of the sun and the moon.⁵⁷⁰ That is, when the moon comes close to the sun, its light becomes diminished, whereas the further it moves from the sun, its light increasingly grows, and it then begins to come close again and diminish etc.

As this matter relates to our service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, due to the closeness and ascent of Shabbat, one senses that there is an even loftier level that he is not yet capable of reaching. This is the meaning of the words, “I cannot touch you,” since, “There is no thought that grasps Him.”⁵⁷¹ It therefore is necessary for one to return and nullify himself etc., to “soften the earth,” so that he can then ascend to an even loftier level.

4.

This then, is the meaning of [the verse], “It shall be that on every New Moon and on every Shabbat all flesh will come and prostrate before Me, says *HaShem*-יהו"ה.” This is because *HaShem* 's-יהו"ה ultimate Supernal intent in our serving Him, is to bring about that even the physicality of the world becomes

⁵⁶⁹ Mesechet Sofrim 20:2

⁵⁷⁰ See Maamarei Admor HaZaken, 5568 *ibid.* (p. 539); Ohr HaTorah, Zot HaBrachah *ibid.* (p. 1,894); Sefer HaMaamarim 5680 *ibid.* (p. 162 and on).

⁵⁷¹ Introduction to Tikkunei Zohar, 17a

elevated and included in His Godliness. This is the meaning of the precise wording, “all flesh will come,” in which the verse specifies “flesh-*Bassar*-בשר.”

That is, even the physical flesh will become close to its root and come to prostrate before *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He.⁵⁷² This matter is brought about through toiling during the six days of action, through the matter of “plowing” etc., to “soften the earth,” meaning, to humble the physical body. Through this, even the physical flesh will come to prostrate etc., which is the elevation that subsequently comes about on Shabbat.

However, even after the ascent of Shabbat is caused by being preceded by the toil of “plowing” etc., during the six days of action, since on the next Shabbat there must be an ascent to an even loftier level, “on every Shabbat” (and “on every New Moon”), therefore, immediately after the preceding Shabbat, there once again must be the toil of the six days of action of “softening the earth” etc. Through this there will be the ascent to a loftier level on the following Shabbat.⁵⁷³

⁵⁷² Also see Maamarei Admor HaZaken, HaKetzarim ibid. (p. 166-168).

⁵⁷³ The conclusion of this discourse is missing.