

Discourse 11

*“Katonti MiKol HaChassadim... -
I have been diminished by all the kindnesses...”*

Delivered on the 19th of Kislev, 5724
By the grace of *HaShem*, blessed is He,

1.

The verse states,⁴¹⁷ “I have been diminished by all the kindnesses [and all the truth that You have done for Your servant] etc.” With this verse the Alter Rebbe, whose joyous day of liberation we are celebrating, begins his holy letter⁴¹⁸ upon arriving from [imprisonment in] Petersburg.⁴¹⁹ [In it], he explains that each and every kindness that the Holy One, blessed is He, does for a person should cause him to be extremely humble. This is because Kindness-*Chessed* is the aspect of closeness to God, and whoever is closer to *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, should be even more humble of spirit etc. About this Yaakov said, “I have been diminished by all the kindnesses,” since in his own eyes he was very small because of all the **kindnesses-*Chassadim***.

Nevertheless, at the beginning of the letter (which starts with the words “I have been diminished by all the kindnesses”) he adds, “and all etc.,” which comes to hint at the remainder of

⁴¹⁷ Genesis 32:11

⁴¹⁸ Tanya, Iggeret HaKodesh, Epistle 2

⁴¹⁹ As it states in the heading of the letter.

this verse, “I have been diminished by all the kindnesses,” which [continues and] states, “and all **the truth-*HaEmet-האמת***.” Now, [from the fact that] in many places he customarily employed the style of “not just this, but also this,”⁴²⁰ it is understood that the explanation of the verse is that “I have been diminished by all the kindnesses,” and beyond that, (and it goes without saying), “and all the truth,” due to which the matter of “I have been diminished” is caused to be to even deeper.

This is also understood from the teaching of our sages, of blessed memory, in Tractate Sanhedrin,⁴²¹ on the verse,⁴²² “Moshe hastened to bow to the ground and prostrate.” They stated, “What did Moshe see? He saw Truth (*Emet-אמת*).” Now, though it is true that before the matter of Truth (*Emet-אמת*), the matter of Kindness (*Chessed-חסד*) is already discussed, ([in the verse,⁴²³ “Abundant in Kindness and Truth”) he did not fall on his face until he specifically saw Truth (*Emet-אמת*).

We therefore must understand what these two matters, Kindnesses (*Chassadim-חסדים*) and Truth (*Emet-אמת*), which bring about the matter of “I have been diminished” are. In this itself, the primary matter of “I have been diminished” is not just what comes about from the Kindnesses (*Chassadim-חסדים*), but also what comes about from the Truth (*Emet-אמת*).

The explanation is that the general difference between Kindness (*Chessed-חסד*) and Truth (*Emet-אמת*), is like the difference between prayer and Torah. This is because prayer is the matter of love [of *HaShem-יהוה*, blessed is He], as in the

⁴²⁰ See, for example, Talmud Bavli, Eruvin 75a

⁴²¹ Talmud Bavli, Sanhedrin 111a

⁴²² Exodus 34:8

⁴²³ Exodus 34:6

teaching,⁴²⁴ “There is no labor like the labor of love,” in that the inner aspect (*PNimiyut*) Kindness-*Chessed* is love (*Ahavah*).⁴²⁵ This is also the meaning of the explanation in *Torat Chayim*,⁴²⁶ that [the verse] “I have been diminished by all the kindnesses” refers to the powers of the Kindnesses-*Chassadim* of Avraham, being that Avraham was the first one to teach the world about the matter of prayer (*Tefillah*).

[On the other hand] Truth (*Emet*-אמת) refers to the matter of Torah, as the verse states,⁴²⁷ “The Torah of Truth (*Torat Emet*-תורת אמת) was in his mouth.” This also aligns with the explanation in *Torat Chayim*,⁴²⁸ that [the continuing words], “and all the truth,” refer to the powers of the Might-*Gevurot* of Yitzchak. This is because Yitzchak relates to Torah, for as known,⁴²⁹ the holiday that is connected to Yitzchak is the time when the Torah was given.

This is why the giving of the Torah (the Ten Commandments) begins with the words,⁴³⁰ “God-*Elohi*”מֵאלֹהֵי spoke all these statements, saying etc.,” specifically using *HaShem*’s יהוה title “God-*Elohi*”מֵאלֹהֵי,” which is the matter of the powers of Might-*Gevurot* (this being the quality of Yitzchak) Above.⁴³¹ However, this is the matter of the powers of Might-*Gevurot* of the Ancient One-*Atik*, [about

⁴²⁴ See Zohar II 55b; Zohar III 267a; Likkutei Torah, Shelach 42c

⁴²⁵ See Tanya, Iggeret HaKodesh, Epistle 15 (123a)

⁴²⁶ *Torat Chayim*, Vayishlach 184c; 195b

⁴²⁷ Malachi 2:6; See Likkutei Torah, Matot 83c and elsewhere.

⁴²⁸ *Torat Chayim*, Vayishlach 184c; 195b *ibid*.

⁴²⁹ See Zohar III 257b; *Tur Orach Chayim* 417 and elsewhere.

⁴³⁰ Exodus 20:1

⁴³¹ See *Shaarei Orah* of Rabbi Yosef Gikatilla, translated as *Gates of Light*, Gate Five (*Tiferet*) and Gate Six (*Gevurah*), and elsewhere.

which it states],⁴³² “There is no left [side] in this Holy Ancient One-*Atik*.”

Now, the matter of the power of Might-*Gevurah* is that it is the dominance of the thing, which is why the matter of constrictions (*Tzimtzumim*) is necessary. An example is “the might of the rains (*Gevurot Geshamim*-גבורות גשמים),”⁴³³ about which our sages, of blessed memory, stated in Tractate Bava Batra,⁴³⁴ that each drop has a [separate] channel unto itself etc., as explained in the preceding discourses.⁴³⁵

Now, based on what we stated, that Kindness (*Chessed*-חסד) is the matter of prayer (*Tefillah*), whereas Truth (*Emet*-אמת) is the matter of Torah, it is understood that the matter of “I have been diminished,” which stems from Truth (*Emet*-אמת), is greater than the matter of “I have been diminished” which stems from the Kindnesses-*Chassadim*.

2.

This may be understood by prefacing with the discourse of the Alter Rebbe in the booklet of [manuscripts] of discourses in the holy handwriting of the Mittler Rebbe, that include the glosses of the Tzemach Tzedek⁴³⁶ (which is currently in print,

⁴³² Zohar III 129a, and also see 289a there.

⁴³³ Mishnah Taanit 1:1

⁴³⁴ Talmud Bavli, Bava Batra 16a

⁴³⁵ See the earlier discourses of this year, 5724, entitled “*Masheev HaRu'ach* – Who makes the wind blow,” Discourse 6, and the discourse entitled “*v'Yitein Lecha* – May God give you of the dew of the heavens,” Discourse 10, Ch. 3.

⁴³⁶ The discourse entitled “*v'Neishev BaGal*” in Maamarei Admor HaZaken 5562 p. 88 and on (first printed around the year 5724); This discourse is found with additional glosses also printed in Ohr HaTorah, Va'etchana p. 144 and on; Also see at length in Maamarei Admor HaEmtza'ee, Va'etchanan p. 150 and on.

and is also in print elsewhere),⁴³⁷ which cites the statement in Talmud Yerushalmi, Tractate Brachot,⁴³⁸ (cited in Tosefot),⁴³⁹ “Rabbi Chiyya the Great said: In all my days I never managed to pray with intent (meaning that he did not have devotional intent during the Amidah prayer) except for once etc.”

Now, at first glance, one should be greatly astonished by this. Moreover, there is additional astonishment in this [statement], for we find in Talmud⁴⁴⁰ that when Rebbe asked Eliyahu [the Prophet] whether there is anyone comparable to them (our forefathers) in the effectiveness of their prayers on this world,⁴⁴¹ Eliyahu answered, “There is Rabbi Chiyya and his sons.”

As related there, [Rebbe decreed a fast and brought Rabbi Chiyya and his sons down (to the pulpit), and when Rabbi Chiyya] “said the words, ‘Who makes the wind blow’ the wind started blowing. When he said, ‘Who makes the rain fall’ the rain started to fall,” (and as it continues there, “When he was about to say ‘Who revives the dead, the world trembled’ etc.”

In other words, Rabbi Chiyya was in such a state and standing that through his service of *HaShem*-יהוה, blessed is He, in prayer, he affected that these matters were drawn all the way down, immediately when he prayed for them. This being so, how could it be that he did not have intent (*Kavanah*) in his prayers etc.?

⁴³⁷ Maamarei Admor HaZaken, Et’halech Liozhna p. 258 and on.

⁴³⁸ Talmud Yerushalmi, Brachot 2:4

⁴³⁹ Talmud Bavli, Rosh HaShanah 16b, Tosefot entitled “v’Iyun”

⁴⁴⁰ Talmud Bavli, Bava Metziya 85b

⁴⁴¹ See Rashi to Bava Metziya 85b ibid.

3.

He begins by explaining the matter of the revelation of the powers of the soul within man, the order of which, from above to below, is the power of thought (*Ko'ach HaMachshavah*), the power of speech (*Ko'ach HaDibur*), and the power of action (*Ko'ach HaMa'aseh*). Above, the likeness to this is the order of the chaining down of the worlds of Creation, Formation, and Action (*Briyah, Yetzirah, Asiyah*), which correspond to thought, speech, and action (*Machshavah, Dibur, Ma'aseh*), as explained elsewhere at length.⁴⁴²

However, there is a difference between the manner of the revelation of the powers within man, and the manner of the chaining down (*Hishtalshelut*) Above in *HaShem's* יהו"ה's Godliness. For, in man below, even though all three powers are solely the revelation of the soul, and the manner of the revelation is that the highest power is thought (*Ko'ach HaMachshavah*), and the power of speech (*Ko'ach HaDibur*) is lower, and the power of action (*Ko'ach HaMa'aseh*) is lower, nonetheless, it is not imperative for the power of action (*Ko'ach HaMa'aseh*) to receive from the power of speech (*Ko'ach HaDibur*).

This is because it is possible for the power of movement of walking with one's feet, to stem from the feelings of the heart, (and before this, from the desire (*Ratzon*) of the brain) as it is drawn through the breath of the heart, in which case, the power of action (*Ko'ach HaMa'aseh*) does not at all receive from the power of speech (*Ko'ach HaDibur*).

⁴⁴² See Likkutei Torah, Chukat 67a and on, and elsewhere.

The same applies in regard to speech (*Dibur*) and thought (*Machshavah*). That is, it is not imperative for speech (*Dibur*) to receive from thought (*Machshavah*). For, even though speech is ordered in a way that one first thinks what he will say, and moreover, even in disordered speech (in which he does not think what he is saying), he can speak those words that were once in his thought (as explained in Tanya).⁴⁴³ Nevertheless, from the very fact that right now (while he is speaking) he does not think what he is saying, this means that the speech is not drawn through the letters of thought (*Machshavah*).

That is, it is not in a way of the chaining down of cause and effect. For, it then would be necessary for the letters [of speech] to first be drawn down in thought, and only through this, the letters of thought would then be drawn into letters of speech. Rather, this is in a way that the power of speech (*Ko'ach HaDibur*) is drawn from the breath of the chest (in a more refined way than how the breath of the chest is drawn to the power of action), without the letters of thought.

However, about the order of the chaining down of the worlds (*Seder Hishtalshelut*) as it is Above in *HaShem*'s יהו"ה's Godliness, this cannot possibly be said. This is also understood from the fact that it is called, "the order of the chaining down" (*Seder Hishtalshelut*) and is compared to a physical chain (*Shalsholet*),⁴⁴⁴ in which the lowest ring of the chain is only connected to the ring that is one level above it, and that ring is

⁴⁴³ Tanya, Iggeret HaKodesh, end of Epistle 19.

⁴⁴⁴ Also see Torah Ohr, Beshalach 64b; Likkutei Torah, Zot HaBrachah 95b and elsewhere.

only connected to the ring above it etc., in which it does not apply for the lowest part of the chain to receive from the highest part of the chain by way of a skip.

Moreover, in addition to what is understood from the term “chaining down” (*Hishtalshelut*), this also is understood from the content of these matters. That is, the Godly light that is drawn and chains down from the world of Emanation (*Atzilut*) to the worlds of Creation, Formation, and Action (*Briyah*, *Yetzirah*, *Asiyah*) below it, cannot possibly be received in the world of Formation (*Yetzirah*) except by first being vested in the world of Creation (*Briyah*), through which the light becomes constricted, causing it to be measured and limited, until it can be received in the world of Formation (*Yetzirah*) in a way that the world of Formation (*Yetzirah*) does not become nullified of its existence. The same is so in regard to the drawing of the light from the world of Formation (*Yetzirah*) to the world of Action (*Asiyah*).

In other words, in the order of the chaining down of the worlds (*Seder Hishtalshelut*) Above in *HaShem*’s יהו"ה-s Godliness it is like the chaining down of cause and effect, in which the effect only knows of its direct cause, but not the cause of its cause etc. This is unlike thought, speech, and action as they are in man below, in which the power of action and the power of speech can receive directly from the highest level (the breath of the heart) not by way of the intermediary level immediately juxtaposed to them, (the power of speech and the power of action).

However, based on what was stated, that the chaining down of the worlds (*Seder Hishtalshelut*) Above in *HaShem*’s-

יהו"ה Godliness, is in a way of cause and effect, even though the effect only knows of its [direct] cause (as mentioned above), nevertheless, the cause is in a way that "one-hundred dinars is included in two hundred."⁴⁴⁵

This being so, it must be said that the highest cause includes all the effects below it. An example is the sweetness or bitterness of fruits in this lowest world, which must be included in the *Sefirah* of Wisdom-*Chochmah*. For, since from the *Sefirah* of Wisdom-*Chochmah* there was a chaining down to below of the matter of intellect (*Sechel*), within which there are leanings toward [a judgment of] guilt or innocence, from which there was a chaining down of the difference between guilt and innocence in the emotions, to the point that from this, there was a chaining down of the matter of sweetness and bitterness in the fruits. This being so, it must be that the sweetness of the apple was included in the Supernal intellect (*Sechel*). However, we see that in actuality, the sweetness of the apple is an existence unto itself, which is not included in the intellect, which itself is [also] an existence unto itself.

Now, to understand this, we first must preface with an understanding of the general matter of how the matter of division into particulars is caused in the general totality of the chaining down of the worlds (*Seder Hishtalshelut*), such as the division of thought, speech and action, as they are in the (three) worlds (of Creation, Formation, and Action (*Briyah, Yetzirah, Asiyah*)), until they are drawn down below, and similarly, the divisions into the particulars in all other matters. For, at first glance, since existence is brought forth from the world of

⁴⁴⁵ See Talmud Bavli, Bava Kamma 74a; Bava Batra 41b

Emanation (*Atzilut*), which is the world of Oneness (*Olam HaAchdut*),⁴⁴⁶ where do they derive their division one from the other, of upper levels and lower levels etc.?

4.

This may be understood by prefacing with an explanation of the verse,⁴⁴⁷ “Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it separate between waters and waters... between the waters that were above the firmament and the waters that were beneath the firmament.” Now, the matter of water is that “it causes the growth of all kinds of pleasurable things.”⁴⁴⁸

However, in this itself there are the waters that are above the firmament, [called] “the upper waters,” from which Supernal and spiritual pleasures come, and there are the waters beneath the firmament, [called] “the lower waters,” from which the lower pleasures come, down to and including physical pleasures, and the firmament (*Rakiya*-רקיע) separates between them. In the terminology of the Zohar, [the firmament] is called the “space (*Parsa*) that separates.”⁴⁴⁹ This is analogous to the diaphragm (*Chatzer HaKaved*) which separates between the respiratory system and the digestive system.

⁴⁴⁶ See Likkutei HaShas of the Arizal, beginning of Tractate Brachot, and elsewhere.

⁴⁴⁷ Genesis 1:6-7

⁴⁴⁸ Shaarei Kedushah of Rabbi Chayim Vital, translated as Gates of Holiness., Part One, Gate Two; Tanya, Likkutei Amarim, Ch. 1

⁴⁴⁹ See Ohr HaTorah ibid. p. 146, “This is the matter of the ‘space-*Parsa*-פרסא’ that is mentioned in Zohar III 32b.”

To explain, the function of the digestive system, which generally consists of the innards, is to separate the food that comes into them, (through the food being nullified and subject to them), and they divide and separate between the inner and choicest aspects within it and the external and the lowest aspects within it, up to and including the waste product. The choicest elements in it become the sustenance and vitality of the higher organs, whereas the lesser elements become the sustenance and vitality of the lesser organs, until the waste product of the food, which is not fit to be the sustenance and vitality of even the lowest limbs, is excreted out.

However, for this function of the innards to divide and separate the various parts of the food to be, there must be the separation of the diaphragm (*Chatzer HaKaved*), which separates between the digestive system below it and the respiratory system above it. For, without the diaphragm separating, just as the [organs of the] respiratory system have no relation to the refinement of physical foods, (but on the contrary, this would be dangerous to them), so likewise, the organs below them would be incapable of refining the physical foods.

However, through the separation and cessation caused by the diaphragm (*Chatzer HaKaved*), the organs below them descend in level from them, until they can receive the food, and after the food is nullified to them, they can affect the above-mentioned refinement of it, dividing and separating between the choicer elements and the lesser elements of the food, and its waste matter, apportioning it to the various organs of the body, and excreting the waste matter out. In other words, the

diaphragm (*Chatzer HaKaved*) is above the digestive system, called the innards, and it separates between it and the respiratory system.

Above, in *HaShem*'s יהו"ה Godliness, the likeness to this is as the verse states,⁴⁵⁰ "All my innards (*Kravay*-קרבי) [bless] His Holy Name." Now, in books of Kabbalah⁴⁵¹ it is explained that this refers to the angels called "innards-*Kirvayim*-קרביים" ("my innards-*Kravay*-קרבי") which refine and apportion the beneficence coming from "the upper waters" (the supernal pleasures) to be drawn down to become the sustenance and vitality for all the worlds, including the lofty spiritual worlds, as well as the worlds below them, down to and including this lowly world, of which there is no lowlier world, [providing] for each world according to its capacity. (This is similar to the function of the innards in man, which apportion the food and vitality between the organs of the body, each organ according to its capacity.)

This is similar to the verse,⁴⁵² "Man ate the bread of the mighty (*Abeereem*-אבירים)," which "referring to the bread that the ministering angels eat."⁴⁵³ In other words, the "bread that the ministering angels eat," this being the sustenance and vitality of the ministering angels, is drawn down and descends to be the food and vitality below, which is the meaning of "Man ate the bread of the ministering angels-*Abeereem*-אבירים."

⁴⁵⁰ Psalms 103:1

⁴⁵¹ See Zohar I 87a; Pardes Rimmonim, Shaar 23 (Shaar Erchei HaKinuyim) Ch. 19 section on this title; Likkutei Torah, Shelach 41d, 46d, and elsewhere.

⁴⁵² Psalms 78:25

⁴⁵³ Talmud Bavli, Yoma 75b

[The word “Man-*Ish*”] here refers to Moshe.⁴⁵⁴ [However], the same applies to all Jews, even those who are on a low level, about whom the verse states,⁴⁵⁵ “[they] would pound it in a mortar.” In other words, their bread was refined through the Supernal “innards” (*Kirvayim*-קרבניים), that divide and separate it to be the sustenance and vitality of the ministering angels, (similar to the sustenance and vitality drawn to the higher organs), until the [bestowal of] sustenance and vitality below, to those who are on the lower level, (similar to the sustenance and vitality drawn to the lower organs).

Now, this division and separation that is done by the angels called “innards-*Kirvayim*-קרבניים” because they are below the firmament (*Rakiya*-רקיע) that separates between the “upper waters” and the “lower waters” (just as the innards [in man] are below the diaphragm (*Chatzer HaKaved*), which separates between them and the respiratory system).

About this the verse states,⁴⁵⁶ “Above the heads of the living animal-*Chayot* [angels] was a firmament (*Rakiya*-רקיע) like the awesome ice etc.” In other words, the firmament (*Rakiya*) is above them, so much so, that in relation to them it is “like the awesome ice.” This separating firmament (*Rakiya*) affects the angels called “innards-*Kirvayim*-קרבניים” (below it) to be capable of performing their function of separating the

⁴⁵⁴ Otzar Midrashim (Eizenstein) Vol. 2, p. 373

⁴⁵⁵ Numbers 11:8; See Talmud Bavli, Yoma 75a – “For the righteous (*Tzaddikim*) it [the Manna] fell at the opening of their homes... as baked bread... for the wicked (*Resha'im*) they had to go out further... and grind it in a mill or pound it in a mortar.”

⁴⁵⁶ Ezekiel 1:22

bestowal according to the capacity of the divisions of upper levels and lower levels etc.

With the above in mind, we also have answered [the question] about the order of the chaining down of the worlds (*Seder Hishtalshelut*) from cause to effect, and how it is **not** in a way of “one-hundred dinars is included in two hundred,” (mentioned in chapter three). This is because the drawing down to below comes through the externality (*Chitzoniyut*) being separated from the internality (*Pnimiyyut*), so that the externality (*Chitzoniyut*) remains alone, (without the internality-*Pnimiyyut*). In contrast, before this, the externality (*Chitzoniyut*) was not recognizable in and of itself, (meaning, as the existence of the lower in the upper), but was nullified to the internality (*Pnimiyyut*).

5.

However, we still must understand the matter of the waste product which is excreted out, (besides the function of the “innards-*Kirvayim*-קִרְבָּיִם” to apportion the bestowal commensurate to the capacity of the levels of upper and lower), as it is in the order of the chaining down of the worlds (*Seder Hishtalshelut*) Above in *HaShem*’s-יהו"ה Godliness.

Now, to understand this we must preface with the statement in the Torah portion of Nitzavim,⁴⁵⁷ “See, I have placed before you [today] the life and the good and the death and the evil.” That is, the verse separates “death” (*Mavet*-מוֹת) unto itself and “evil” (*Ra*-רָע) unto itself. From the statement

⁴⁵⁷ Deuteronomy 30:15

before this, “the life (*Chayim*-חיים) and the good (*Tov*-טוב),” it is understood that “good” (*Tov*-טוב) is higher than “life” (*Chayim*-חיים), as the verse states,⁴⁵⁸ “Your kindness is better (*Tov*-טוב) than life (*Chayim*-חיים).” It thus is also understood that this likewise is so in regard to the continuation of the verse, “the death (*Mavet*-מות) and the evil (*Ra*-רע),” that “the evil (*Ra*-רע)” is lower than “the death (*Mavet*-מות).” This is because death is only the negation of life, whereas the evil is the matter of damage and destruction itself etc.

The explanation is that through the refinements affected by the “innards-*Kirvayim*-קרבניים,” there is a chaining down of beneficence in all worlds, [each] according to its capacities, until there also is a drawing down that reaches the seventy ministering angels [of the nations] called “other gods-*elohim acheirim*-אלהים אחרים.”⁴⁵⁹ They are called this because their vitality is derived from the aspect of the “backside-*Achorayim*-אחוריים” of holiness.⁴⁶⁰ This is because there is no matter of self-nullification (*Bittul*) in them, and they therefore only receive vitality from the aspect of the “backside-*Achorayim*-אחוריים.”⁴⁶¹

Now, the vitality they derive from there is very constricted, so much so, that it is compared to the withdrawal of life [from the body], which is why it is called “death” (*Mavet*-מות). This is similar to the fact that upon the soul withdrawing [from the body], a constricted [glimmer of] vitality remains in

⁴⁵⁸ Psalms 63:4

⁴⁵⁹ See Shaarei Orah of Rabbi Yosef Gikatilla, translated as Gates of Light, Gate Six (*Gevurah*); Torah Ohr, Hosafot 109d

⁴⁶⁰ Tanya, Likkutei Amarim, Ch. 22

⁴⁶¹ Tanya, Likkutei Amarim, Ch. 6

it, (similar to the “impression of life” (*Kista d’Chayuta*)),⁴⁶² which is called “the breath of the limbs” (*Havla d’Garmeih*).⁴⁶³ As a result, the existence of the body remains intact, even after the [soul of] life has withdrawn from it.

This is similar to the existence of an inanimate (*Domem*) stone. Even though it does not have the vitality of a speaking being (*Medaber*) in it, nor even [the vitality] of living animal (*Chai*), nor even the vitality of vegetation (*Tzome’ach*), which is why it is called “silent” and “inanimate” (*Domem*) because of the absence of life, nonetheless, it cannot be said that it has no vitality at all. For, if that was so, it could not be sustained in existence at all. Thus, from the very fact that the inanimate (*Domem*) exists, this proves something within it brings it into being, enlivens it, and sustains its existence,⁴⁶⁴ except that the vitality is very constricted and diminished, so much so, that it is called “the absence of life” (“death”).

This matter is similar to the waste matter in man below, (who is called “man-*Adam*-אדם” because “I am likened-*Adameh*-אדמה to the Supernal One”).⁴⁶⁵ That is, after the innards refine the food, so that vitality can be apportioned from it to all the organs, (not only the respiratory organs above the diaphragm, but even the organs below the diaphragm, all the way to the heels of the feet, which are called “the angel of

⁴⁶² See Zohar 83a; Also see Shaar HaYichud of the Mittler Rebbe, translated as *The Gate of Unity*, Ch. 30.

⁴⁶³ See Zohar III 169a; 170a; *Etz Chayim*, Shaar 5 (Shaar TaNT”A) Ch. 5; Shaar 18 (Shaar RaPa”Ch Nitzotzin) Ch. 1.

⁴⁶⁴ Also see Tanya, Shaar HaYichud VeHaEmunah, translated as *The Gate of Unity and Faith*, Ch. 1.

⁴⁶⁵ *Sefer Asarah Maamarot*, Maamar Eim Kol Chai, Part 2, Ch. 33; *Shnei Luchot HaBrit* 3a, 20b, and elsewhere.

death” as it is in man,⁴⁶⁶ being that the vitality in [the heels] is the most constricted of all), the waste product is then excreted out.

Nonetheless, there is a creature in the world that is sustained by human waste product⁴⁶⁷, through which its vitality is strengthened. This proves that even in the waste product, which is the very opposite of the existence of a living man, so much so, that even the “angel of death” within man (which is the heel of the foot) is incapable of bearing it, which is why it is excreted outside, nonetheless, there is some matter of constricted vitality within it, and it therefore has the power to enliven the existence of a creature in the world, the vitality of which is strengthened by it etc.

Now, in addition to the matter of death (*Mavet*-מות), this being the waste matter drawn to the seventy ministering angels [of the nations], in which there only is a very constricted vitality that is like the withdrawal of life, there also is the matter of evil (*Ra*-רע), which is even lower than death (*Mavet*-מות). This is when, from the constricted vitality drawn to the seventy ministering angels [of the nations], there is a chaining down to become a matter of damage and destruction, which is the opposite of goodness and opposes holiness. This is why it is called “evil” (*Ra*-רע), which is even worse than “death” (*Mavet*-מות).

The explanation is that when an existence that is sustained by the vitality drawn to the seventy ministers, considers the source of its vitality (not just as the waste product

⁴⁶⁶ Avot d’Rabbi Nathan, end of Ch. 31

⁴⁶⁷ The Dung Beetle

of that which is higher than it, which is why it is called “death” (*Mavet*-מות) in relation to the “life” (*Chayim*-חיים) and the “good” (*Tov*-טוב), but) as an independent existence and something unto itself, such that he makes it into the primary matter, this gives room for an existence that is sustained by that waste product (which is the matter of death) to be the existence of evil (*Ra*-רע), (which lower than death-*Mavet*-מות).

This is also what we find in regard to the “other gods-*elohim acherim*-אלהים אחרים,” this being the matter of the seventy ministering angels [of the nations], that there is a drawing down of the matter of evil (*Ra*-רע) from them. This refers to the existence of the external husks (*Kelipot*) [of evil], within which there is a difference between the external husk (*Kelipah*) of Pharaoh-פרעה, and the external husk of Peor-פער.

Now, the time of Pharaoh, was the beginning of the matter of exile, and at the end of the exile (before they entered the land) there was the idolatry of Peor-פער. The explanation is that the matter of the external husk of Pharaoh-פרעה, which corresponds to the world of Creation (*Briyah*),⁴⁶⁸ is the beginning of the revelation of ego and the sense of self (*Yesh*). This is the matter of Pharaoh-פרעה, which is of the same root as, “the revelation-*Itparee*’oo-אתפריעו of all the lights,” (as stated in Zohar),⁴⁶⁹ meaning that the “something-*Yesh*” (that is, the sense of self and ego) is revealed, and one becomes a being who senses himself etc. This further descends until the lowest level of the external husks (*Kelipot*), which is the external husk of

⁴⁶⁸ See Torah Ohr, Hosafot 105b

⁴⁶⁹ Zohar I 210a

Pe'or-פְּעוֹר, [who they worshiped] by defecating before him.⁴⁷⁰ In other words, the excrement became the primary matter for them etc.

About this the Jewish people are commanded,⁴⁷¹ “and you shall choose life (*Chayim*-חַיִּים).” In other words, through there not being a choice in death [*Mavet*-מָוֶת] there will not be a choice in the evil (*Ra*-רָע), but rather, [the choice should be] in the matter of life (*Chayim*-חַיִּים). That is, even though a person is sustained by physical food and drink, he nevertheless knows that this only is the waste product of the supernal pleasures (from the “upper waters” above the firmament), which are processed and bestowed below through the upper “innards-*Kirvayim*-קִרְבָּיִם.” This refers to all worldly matters of this lowly world below, of which there is no lower world, all of which is waste matter, excrement, and is secondary relative to the primary matter, this being the matter of Supernal life (*Chayim Elyonim*-חַיִּים עֲלִיוֹנִים).

About this the verse states,⁴⁷² “The Righteous (*Tzaddik*) shall live by his faith (*Emunah*).” That is, even though he has no understanding or comprehension of the essential being of the Supernal life (*Chayim Elyonim*-חַיִּים עֲלִיוֹנִים), which is why the Source of the Supernal life is called “The Concealed of all concealed,”⁴⁷³ meaning that not only is the Source of the life concealed from him, but even the Supernal life drawn from there is called “concealed” for him, since he has no grasp of the essential being of the Supernal life (*Chayim Elyonim*),

⁴⁷⁰ Talmud Bavli, Sanhedrin 64a

⁴⁷¹ Deuteronomy 30:19

⁴⁷² Habakkuk 2:4

⁴⁷³ See Tanya, Likkutei Amarim Ch. 52 (72a); Torah Ohr, Hosafot 102b

nonetheless, he has faith (*Emunah*) that his life, (meaning, his eating, drinking, and [physical] needs) are only waste product, excrement, and secondary relative to True Life (“he shall live through his faith”), which is “*HaShem*-יהו"ה your God.” This is as stated,⁴⁷⁴ “*HaShem*-יהו"ה your God... He is your life.”

This is to such an extent that he comes to have a love of “*HaShem*-יהו"ה your God... for He is your life.” That is, he comes to have feelings of love with his physical heart of flesh, (which is the primary seat of the emotions) for *HaShem*-יהו"ה your God. This is because he knows that the vitality he receives through eating and drinking etc., are a matter of excrement and waste in relation to the Supernal pleasures (*Taanugim Elyonim*), which for him, are in a state of concealment (since he has no grasp of them), and are drawn from “The Concealed of all concealed,” which is the matter of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He.

6.

Now, about this the verse states,⁴⁷⁵ “So we settled in the valley opposite Beit Pe’or.” In other words, the matter that is opposite of “The House of Pe’or-*Beit Pe’or*-בית פעור,” this being the advice to negate the matter of Pe’or-פעור, is the matter of settling (“we settled”) “in the valley-*BaGai*-בגיא.”

The explanation is that a “valley-*Gai*-גיא” is the opposite of a mountain (*Har*-הר). That is, a mountain is high and seen by all, so much so, that even something small that is on top of a mountain can be seen from a distance. In contrast, a valley

⁴⁷⁴ Deuteronomy 30:20

⁴⁷⁵ Deuteronomy 3:29

(*Gai*-גַּי) is the exact opposite, in that even when something very big is in a deep valley, it is hidden and concealed. That is, a valley (*Gai*-אֵי) is analogous to the aspect of “The Concealed of all concealed,” in that even though He is very great etc., He nonetheless is hidden and concealed, to the point of being called “nothing-*Ayin*-אֵין.”

To further explain, the verse states,⁴⁷⁶ “*HaShem*-ה' is a God of knowledges,” in which the word “knowledges-*De'ot*-דְּעוֹת” [is plural] referring to two knowledges (as stated in *Tikkunei Zohar*).⁴⁷⁷ [That is, there is] the upper knowledge (*Da'at Elyon*), which is from Above to below and is from the perspective of the Bestower, and [there is] the lower knowledge (*Da'at Tachton*), which is from below to Above and is from the perspective of the recipient.⁴⁷⁸

In other words, from the perspective of the Bestower, He knows that what is drawn to the recipient is just a very constricted glimmer, so much so, that it is called “waste” and “dross.” Therefore, the matter of true “somethingness” and Existence is as it is found Above, in the Bestower. In contrast, from the perspective of the recipient, the very opposite is true, in that being that what he grasps and understands is commensurate to his capacities and is within the parameters of his existence, he calls it “something” (*Yesh*), whereas the Source that brings it into being and enlivens and sustains it, is called “nothing” (*Ayin*) for him.

⁴⁷⁶ Samuel I 2:3

⁴⁷⁷ *Tikkunei Zohar*, beginning of Tikkun 69

⁴⁷⁸ Also see Torah Ohr, Yitro 68a; *Likkutei Torah*, Re'eh 23d; *Shemini Atzeret* 83a and elsewhere.

This is why the totality of the matter of creation and the chaining down of the worlds (*Hishtalshelut*) is called [the coming into being] from nothing (*Ayin*) to something (*Yesh*). In other words, below is the “something” (*Yesh*), whereas the Source [above] is called “nothing,” being that it is not grasped, since it is the aspect of the concealed, to the point of being “The Concealed of all concealed.”

Now, as long as a person’s service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, stems from the aspect of the lower knowledge (*Da'at Tachton*), since he senses his own existence, (and on the contrary, the Source which brings him into being is the aspect of “nothingness” (*Ayin*) and is concealed to the point of being [called] “The Concealed of all concealed,”), he then is unable to nullify, sever, and uproot (bring about the ultimate nullification of) the external husk (*Kelipah*) of Pe’or-פְּעוֹר. This is because the general bestowal bestowed to the lower beings is the matter of existence and “somethingness” (*Yesh*), and from this there is a drawing down [to the point that] the dross and waste also comes forth in a way of cause and effect, through the refinement of the upper “innards” (*Kirvayim*-קִרְבָּיִם).

Thus, for there to be the severing and uprooting of the external husk (*Kelipah*) of Pe’or-פְּעוֹר, so that there is the “opposite of Beit Pe’or,” this is specifically brought about through “we settled in the valley.” That is, there must be a dwelling and settling (“we settled-*VaNeishev*-וַנִּשְׁבּ”) in the aspect of the “nothingness” (*Ayin*-אֵין), (which is hidden and concealed in the depth of the “valley-*Gai*-גַּי”). In other words, man below must understand and comprehend with his intellect, (this being the matter of dwelling and settling) that the truth is

(not like the lower knowledge (*Da'at Tachton*) stemming from the perspective of the recipient, but is rather) like the upper knowledge (*Da'at Elyon*), that Above is “something” (*Yesh*).

In other words, he should come to sense the matter that “*HaShem*-יהו"ה your God... for He is your life.” Through this he is caused to be “opposite *Beit Pe'or*,” such that he nullifies, severs and uproots the matter of *Pe'or*-פְּעוּר, and does not make the waste-product primary. This is to such an extent that he also severs and uproots the matter of death (*Mavet*-מוֹת) and causes there to only be the matter of life (*Chayim*-חַיִּים), which is the matter of “*HaShem*-יהו"ה your God... for He is your life.”

7.

Now, the explanation of the difference between the two above-mentioned “*knowledges-De'ot*-דְּעוֹת,” as they are in our service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, is the general difference between the two modes of serving Him in the recital of *Shema* and the Amidah prayer.

This may be understood by prefacing with an astonishing matter that we find in regard to the recital of *Shema* and the Amidah prayer, which are two opposites. That is, although the recital of *Shema* is a Torah law, whereas the Amidah prayer is Rabbinic, (in the opinion of most Torah authorities,⁴⁷⁹ including the Alter Rebbe in his *Shulchan Aruch*),⁴⁸⁰ nonetheless, the Amidah prayer must specifically be

⁴⁷⁹ See Magen Avraham to *Shulchan Aruch*, Orach Chayim 106, section 102; *Sefer HaMitzvot* of the Tzemach Tzedek, *Shores* Mitzvat HaTefillah 115a and elsewhere.

⁴⁸⁰ Alter Rebbe's *Shulchan Aruch*, Orach Chayim 106:2

done while standing, and there must be bowing and prostration in it (“one bows upon reciting the word ‘Blessed-*Baruch*-ברוך’ etc.”),⁴⁸¹ whereas in the recital of the *Shema* there is neither bowing nor prostration, nor is there any obligation to recite it while standing. Rather, each person recites it as he is, as the verse states,⁴⁸² “While you walk on the way.”⁴⁸³

Moreover, one whose sole occupation is the study of Torah must pause [from his studies] to recite the *Shema*, but must not do so for the Amidah prayer.⁴⁸⁴ In other words, the *Shema* recital is more strict than the Amidah prayer, and nevertheless, the matter of bowing and prostrating is not present in the recital of *Shema*, but specifically only in the Amidah prayer.

This may be understood according to what was explained (in chapter six) about the [the verse], “*HaShem*-יהו"ה is a God of knowledges,” meaning, two knowledges (*De'ot*-דעות), the lower knowledge (*Da'at Tachton*) and the upper knowledge (*Da'at Elyon*), which are the two ways of serving *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He; that of reciting the *Shema* and that of the Amidah prayer.

To explain, the recital of *Shema* is the matter of union (*Yichud*), [including both] the upper union (*Yichuda Ila'ah*) and the lower union (*Yichuda Tata'ah*) of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is

⁴⁸¹ Talmud Bavli, Brachot 12a; Mishneh Torah, Hilchot Tefillah 5:10

⁴⁸² Deuteronomy 6:7

⁴⁸³ Talmud Bavli, Brachot 10b (in the Mishnah).

⁴⁸⁴ Tur and Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chayim 106:2; Shulchan Aruch of the Alter Rebbe, Orach Chayim 106:4.

He.⁴⁸⁵ Now, even though there is the firmament (*Rakiya*) that separates between the “upper waters” and the “lower waters,” to the point that there is a drawing down of the existence of a “something” (*Yesh*) below, the toil in serving *HaShem*-יהוה, blessed is He, during the recital of *Shema* is to unify the “something” (*Yesh*) below to its Source and root, (both in the way of the lower unity (*Yichuda Tata’ah*), and ultimately, in the way of the upper unity (*Yichuda Ila’ah*)), as it was before the separation and division of the externality (*Chitzoniyyut*) from the internality (*Pnimiyyut*), brought about by the upper “innards” (*Kirvayim*-קרביים).

However, the nullification of the lower “something” (*Yesh*) to be unified with its root and source, even as it is in the way of the upper unity (*Yichuda Ila’ah*), is not in a way of the complete nullification of its existence (*Bittul b’Metziyyut*). Rather, it is in a way that there is the presence of the existence of the “something” (*Yesh*), as it is from the perspective of the lower knowledge (*Da’at Tachton*). It only is that it becomes united with its root and Source, through which there is caused to be the nullification of the externality (*Chitzoniyyut*) to the internality (*Pnimiyyut*), as it was before becoming separated from the internality (*Pnimiyyut*). There then was also the existence of the externality (*Chitzoniyyut*), except that it was unified with the internality (*Pnimiyyut*) and was not recognizable in and of itself.

⁴⁸⁵ See Zohar I 18b; Tanya, Shaar HaYichud VeHaEmunah translated as The Gate of Unity and Faith, Ch. 7; Introduction and Opening Gateway to Imrei Binah of the Mittler Rebbe, translated as The Gateway to Understanding, and elsewhere.

The example for this is as food is before being refined through the innards (*Kirvayim*) (under the diaphragm, which is similar to the firmament (*Rakiya*) that causes the separation). At that time, there also was the inner aspect (*Pnimiyyut*) of the food and the external aspect (*Chitzoniyyut*) of the food, except that they were intermingled with each other. The effect of the innards (*Kirvayim*) is to separate the externality (*Chitzoniyyut*) from the internality (*Pnimiyyut*), so that the inner aspect (*Pnimiyyut*) remains alone, and the external aspect (*Chitzoniyyut*) remains alone. In contrast, this was not so before the refinement through the innards (*Kirvayim*), at which time the externality (*Chitzoniyyut*) was nullified to the internality (*Pnimiyyut*).

Now, since the toil in serving *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, during the recital of *Shema* is not in a way of the complete nullification of independent existence (*Bittul b'Metziyyut*), but is only to affect that the lower "something" (*Yesh*) becomes nullified and unified to its root and Source, like the nullification and unity of the externality (*Chitzoniyyut*) relative to the internality (*Pnimiyyut*), therefore, there is no [obligation to] stand during the recital of *Shema*, nor is there bowing and prostrating.

This is because the matter of prostration is in a way of the complete nullification of independent existence (*Bittul b'Metziyyut*), such as when one bows and prostrates with his body to the earth before the feet of a great king etc. In contrast, the service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, during the recital of *Shema* is not in a way of complete nullification of independent existence (*Bittul b'Metziyyut*), but only is the act of nullifying

the existence of the “something” (*Yesh*) as it is from the perspective of the lower knowledge (*Da’at Tachton*).

However, after the toil in serving *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, during the *Shema* recital, one comes to service of Him during the Amidah prayer, which is in the world of Emanation (*Atzilut*), (as stated in Pri Etz Chayim).⁴⁸⁶ [The world of Emanation (*Atzilut*)] is the “World of Oneness” (*Olam HaAchdut*), in which there is an open revelation and sense of the matter of “*HaShem*-יהו"ה your God... He is your life.” That is, this is not the lower knowledge (*Da’at Tachton*) from the perspective of the recipient, but is the upper knowledge (*Da’at Elyon*) from the perspective of the Bestower. In other words, the Bestower is primary, whereas that which is drawn to the recipient is merely secondary, so much so, that it is not considered to be an existence at all, and therefore is called “nothing” (*Ayin*).

In other words, the drawing down in the blessing of the years and blessing of healing the sick (and all the other supplications in the Amidah prayer) are in a way that even as the lower one is the existence of a “something,” he should have a drawing down of the sense of the Upper Something (*Yesh HaElyon*) (as He is from the perspective of the upper knowledge (*Da’at Elyon*), in which the Upper Being is the [True] Something (*Yesh*)).

This then, is the matter of “we settled in the valley,” wherein the “nothing” (*Ayin*) of the “something” (*Yesh*) which is concealed and hidden (this being the matter of a “valley-*Gai*-גיא”) comes in a way of being settled, such that it is grasped and

⁴⁸⁶ Pri Etz Chayim, Shaar HaKriyat Shema, Ch. 5

understood that “*HaShem*-יהו"ה your God... He is your life.” That is, [it is sensed and grasped] that the primary being [and reality] is the Upper Something (*Yesh HaElyon*), whereas the lower one is completely nullified of its independent existence (*Bittul b'Metziyut*) and is called “nothing” (*Ayin*).

This is why the service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, during the Amidah prayer, is in a way of standing, indicating the pausing and restraint of one's own existence, to the point of bowing and prostrating, this being the matter of the complete nullification of his existence (*Bittul b'Metziyut*).

Now, even though there is a greater superiority to the service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, of the Amidah prayer, in comparison to service of Him in the recital of *Shema*, nonetheless, a person whose study of Torah is his sole occupation, must only pause [from his studies] for reciting the *Shema* recital, but not for the Amidah prayer.

This may be understood by prefacing with an explanation of the superiority of being occupied in the study of Torah, (“Torah study is his vocation”).⁴⁸⁷ In man below, this is comparable to the superiority of Wisdom-*Chochmah*, which is loftier beyond all comparison than heartfelt emotions (*Midot*). This is so much so, that even the emotions (*Midot*) of Wisdom-*Chochmah* are much loftier than the [heartfelt] emotions (*Midot*), (including the intellect (*Sechel*) of the emotions). This is because even the intellectual leanings toward either innocence or guilt are **intellectual** matters, called Kindness-*Chessed* within Wisdom-*Chochmah* or Might-*Gevurah* within Wisdom-*Chochmah*.

⁴⁸⁷ Talmud Bavli, Shabbat 11a

In contrast, once these leanings are drawn down to the emotions that are felt in the heart, (to Kindness-*Chessed* or Might-*Gevurah*), even though the inner aspect (*Pnimiyyut*) may indeed be a matter of intellect, nevertheless, the true and primary matter of the emotions (*Midot*) is that of a natural [response]. An example is the emotions (*Midot*) of a non-intellectual creature, such as the emotions (*Midot*) of an animal. It too has emotions of Kindness-*Chessed* and compassion for its young etc., (and likewise the opposite emotional quality). This is something that is of no relative comparison to Wisdom-*Chochmah*.

Thus, from the perspective of the superiority of Wisdom-*Chochmah*, which is beyond comparison to the emotions (*Midot*), we see that the matter of Wisdom-*Chochmah* is in a state of wholeness and perfection, (and is a complete stature), even without bestowing to another. For example, in a wise sage, even when he is not bestowing his intellect to another, meaning that he is in a state and movement of exaltedness and aloofness from his fellow, he nonetheless is a wise sage who is in a state of perfection and wholeness, and within himself he understands and grasps deep wisdoms.

In contrast, this is not so of the emotions (*Midot*), in which there necessarily must be bestowal to another. For example, if a person who is naturally kind does not bestow kindness to his fellow, he cannot at all be called kind, but on the contrary, he is be called cruel.

Now, in regard to a person whose study of Torah is his sole occupation, meaning that his toil in serving *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, is in the matter of Wisdom-*Chochmah* as it is in

the Bestower while He is in a state of exaltedness and separation unto Himself, without bestowing to another, he nevertheless must pause [from his studies] to recite the *Shema*.

This is because he also must engage in working with the “something” (*Yesh*) as he is in his own existence, thus affecting nullification (*Bittul*) and union (*Yichud*) to *HaShem*-יהו"ה in it, [both] in the lower unity (*Yichuda Tata'ah*) and the upper unity (*Yichuda Ila'ah*), as it was in its Source and root, before the separation of the externality (*Chitzoniyut*) from the internality (*Pnimiyyut*) brought about by the upper “innards” (*Kirvayim*).

However, even so, a person whose Torah study is his sole occupation does not need to pause for the Amidah prayer. For, in regard to the toil in serving *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, to bring about that even below there will be a drawing down and revelation of the Upper Something (*Yesh HaElyon*), this matter itself is brought about through studying Torah (“Torah study is his vocation”), [and is done] in a much loftier way than that which comes about through the Amidah prayer.

This is because the Amidah prayer only causes a drawing down from the aspect of the emotions (*Midot*), whereas through the study of Torah in a way the “Torah study is his vocation,” the aspect of the Wisdom-*Chochmah* itself is drawn down, so much so, that it is drawn all the way below. This is why he does not pause for the Amidah prayer, being that “one-hundred dinars is included in two hundred.”⁴⁸⁸ That is, by serving *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, in a way that “Torah study is his vocation,” he automatically fulfills and satisfies matters

⁴⁸⁸ See Talmud Bavli, Bava Kamma 74a; Bava Batra 41b

that generally require the toil of the Amidah prayer to bring them about.

Thus, it is about this Rabbi Chiyya said, “In all my days I never managed to pray with intent [except for once].” For, since Rabbi Chiyya was a person whose Torah study was his sole occupation, he therefore was not used to having devotional intentions (*Kavanah*) during prayer, being that this was below his level, such that to have devotional intentions (*Kavanah*), he would have to lower himself from the aspect of Wisdom-*Chochmah* for there to be a drawing down from the emotions (*Midot*) (including the intellect (*Sechel*) of the emotions (*Midot*)). This only was in a time that, in any case, he had a matter that caused him to descend from his level. This should suffice for the understanding.

8.

Now, in the above-mentioned booklet [of manuscripts],⁴⁸⁹ the Tzemach Tzeddek added two notes in his holy handwriting. The first is in regard to the elevated level of the service of *HaShem*-יהוה, blessed is He, of one whose “Torah study is his vocation.” Namely, that this is why Wisdom-*Chochmah* (the Torah) is called “Holy-Kodesh-קדש,”⁴⁹⁰ which is “a thing unto itself.”⁴⁹¹ About this our sages,

⁴⁸⁹ Printed in Maamarei Admor HaZaken ibid. p. 93.

⁴⁹⁰ See Torah Ohr, Yitro 70c; Likkutei Torah, Masei 93a; Shaar HaYichud of the Mittler Rebbe, translated as The Gate of Unity, Ch. 26.

⁴⁹¹ See Zohar III 94b; Shaar HaYichud of the Mittler Rebbe, translated as The Gate of Unity, Ch. 26 ibid.

of blessed memory, said,⁴⁹² “Torah preceded the world by two thousand years,” and “Torah is eternal life (*Chayei Olam*),”⁴⁹³ through which there is a drawing down of Wisdom-*Chochmah* into the emotions (*Midot*), the emotions being the matter of the order of time (*Seder Zemanim*),⁴⁹⁴ from which there is a drawing down to temporal life (*Chayei Sha’ah*), this being the matter of Kingship-*Malchut*, which is called “time” (*Sha’ah*-שעה).⁴⁹⁵ This is why a person whose study of Torah is his sole occupation is exempt from prayer (*Tefillah*), similar to women, who are exempt from action *mitzvot* that are time-bound.⁴⁹⁶ This is because she is sublimated to her husband⁴⁹⁷ and the *mitzvah* is done by her husband, referring to the aspect of *Zeir Anpin*.

Similarly, a person whose study of Torah is his sole occupation affects the drawing down of eternal life (*Chayei Olam*), meaning that he causes a drawing down of vitality into the order of time (*Seder Zemanim*), which is the matter of the emotions (*Midot*), and thereby automatically causes the drawing down of all matters that are brought about through prayer (*Tefillah*), the matter of which is temporal life (*Chayei Sha’ah*).⁴⁹⁸

The second note is about the service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, in the recital of *Shema*, the matter of which is to

⁴⁹² See Midrash Tehillim 90:4; Bereishit Rabba 8:2; Tanchuma Vayeishev 4; Zohar II 49a

⁴⁹³ Talmud Bavli, Shabbat 10a

⁴⁹⁴ See Midrash Bereishit Rabba 3:7 and elsewhere.

⁴⁹⁵ See Ohr HaTorah, Bo p. 349 and on.

⁴⁹⁶ Talmud Bavli, Kiddushin 29a (in the Mishnah)

⁴⁹⁷ See Ohr HaTorah *ibid*. Also see Sefer HaMaamarim 5635 Vol. 2 p. 449.

⁴⁹⁸ Talmud Bavli, Shabbat 10a *ibid*.

unify the “something” (*Yesh*) to its root and Source, so that the externality (*Chitzoniyut*) becomes subsumed and included in the internality (*Pnimiyut*), as it was before the refinement brought about by the “innards” (*Kirvayim*).

He explains that there are two matters in this. The first matter is that from the outset, all matters were in a state of nullification (*Bittul*) to the internality (*Pnimiyut*), like the nullification of bad waters in good waters. The second matter is in a loftier way, that initially they were not evil at all. That is, as the externality (*Chitzoniyut*) is subsumed and included in the internality (*Pnimiyut*), it is unlike the externality (*Chitzoniyut*) as it is after being separated from the internality (*Pnimiyut*), but it rather is loftier.

To explain, besides the separation of the externality (*Chitzoniyut*) from the internality (*Pnimiyut*) there is the descent of the externality (*Chitzoniyut*) from its level. For example, as it is in the firmament (*Rakiya*) which separates between the “upper waters” and the “lower waters,” before the separation, the “lower waters” were also spiritual, and through the firmament (*Rakiya*) separating between them, they descended from their spiritual level and became physical.

This is similar to what we find, that though below, there was caused to be a state in which “he set his eyes against the first Holy Temple... and the second Holy Temple, and destroyed them,”⁴⁹⁹ nevertheless, as this matter is in its root and source Above, it is in a way that, “the intention of Satan and

⁴⁹⁹ Talmud Bavli, Sukkah 52a

Peninnah was for the sake of Heaven.”⁵⁰⁰ That is, on the one hand, he is still called Satan, but on the other hand, his intention was for the sake of Heaven.

From this we can understand the great superiority of serving *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, in the recital of *Shema*. That is, the elevation of the “something” (*Yesh*) to its root and source, is not just in a way that the externality (*Chitzoniyut*) becomes subsumed and included in the internality (*Pnimiyut*), but it also is in a much loftier manner.

9.

With the above in mind, we can understand the matter of [the verse], “I have been diminished by all the kindnesses and all the truth.” For, in regard to the general matter of “I have been diminished etc.,” the Alter Rebbe explains that “to the degree that something is before Him, to that degree it is as naught, nothingness, and zero.” The same is so of the matter of “we settled in the valley,” that to be a receptacle for the aspect of “the Concealed of all concealed,” (the concealment and hiddenness, which is the matter of “a valley-*Gai*-גיא”), for there be a drawing down and revelation in a settled way (“we settled-*VaNeishev*-ונשב”) the ultimate state of self-nullification (*Bittul b’Tachlit*) is necessary.

In other words, this is not merely the negation of sense of self (*Yeshut*) and independent existence, as it is with the seventy ministering angels, that because of the lack of

⁵⁰⁰ Talmud Bavli, Bava Batra 16a; Also see Shaar HaYichud of the Mittler Rebbe, translated as The Gate of Unity, Ch. 54.

nullification (*Bittul*) in them, they only receive the most constricted and diminutive vitality, but beyond that, there also must be the negation of the existence of the something (*Yesh*), even as it is while engaging in the service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, of reciting the *Shema*, which is unlike the bowing and prostrating of Amidah prayer.

For, in order for there to be a drawing down of the Upper Something (*Yesh HaElyon*) in the existence of the lower one, (so that it is sensed in him that "*HaShem*-יהו"ה your God... He is your life," meaning that the true reality of existence is *HaShem*-יהו"ה your God - the Upper Something), this is specifically when the lower one is completely nullified of its existence (*Bittul b'Metziyut*), this being the matter of the bowing and prostrating of the Amidah prayer.

However, based on what we explained before, that studying Torah in a way of "Torah study is his vocation" is an even loftier matter than the bowing and prostrating of the Amidah prayer, which is that a person whose study of Torah is his sole occupation does not pause for the Amidah prayer, and this is to such an extent that Rabbi Chiyya said about himself, "In all my days I never managed to pray with intent, except for once," being that "Torah study is his vocation," and relative to it, the intention (*Kavanah*) in prayer is a matter of lowering.

It thus is understood that through serving *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, in a way of "Torah study is his vocation," causes the matter of "we settled in the valley," (in which the lower one senses the Upper Something) in a much loftier way, and therefore the self-nullification (*Bittul*) is automatically much deeper.

This then, is the meaning of “I have been diminished by all the kindnesses and all the truth.” That is, in addition to the self-nullification (*Bittul*) (“I have been diminished”) in that “whoever is closer to *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, due to the kindnesses,” which is the matter of prayer (*Tefillah*) that is [called] “a labor of love,” (in that love (*Ahavah*) is the inner aspect of the kindnesses-*Chassadim*), there also is a loftier matter, [which is] “and all the Truth-*Emet*-אמת,” this being the matter of Torah, [as the verse states] ,⁵⁰¹ “The Torah of Truth (*Torat Emet*-תורת אמת) was in his mouth,” through which the matter of “The eternal Truth of *HaShem*-יהו"ה is caused [to be drawn down] to the world.”⁵⁰²

In other words, even though [the Torah] precedes the world, (as mentioned before in the note of the Tzemach Tzedek) it is drawn down in a way that “it is not in the Heavens,”⁵⁰³ but is specifically below in this lowly earth. This causes the matter of “we settled in the valley” in a much loftier way than that which comes about through prayer, (and on the contrary, in a more particularly, prayer is the matter of ascent from below to above). It therefore automatically causes the self-nullification (*Bittul*) to be much deeper, in that this is the level of self-nullification (*Bittul*) that we find in Rabbi Shimon Bar Yochai.⁵⁰⁴ (For, the matter of “his study of Torah is his vocation” was [specifically] expressed in Talmud⁵⁰⁵ about Rabbi Shimon Bar Yochai and his companions.)

⁵⁰¹ Malachi 2:6; See Likkutei Torah, Matot 83c and elsewhere.

⁵⁰² Psalms 117:2

⁵⁰³ Deuteronomy 30:12; Bava Metziya 59b

⁵⁰⁴ See Zohar I 225a; Zohar III 288a, 292a

⁵⁰⁵ Talmud Bavli, Shabbat 11a

The same is so of the one whose joyous day and redemption we are celebrating. As our Rebbes and leaders stated about him, that he was a soul of the world of Emanation (*Atzilut*),⁵⁰⁶ so much so, that his conduct below was automatically aligned with the conduct of the world of Emanation (*Atzilut*), without needing to direct his limbs intentionally.⁵⁰⁷ (This is a much loftier matter than self-nullification (*Bittul*) through the bowing and prostrating of the Amidah prayer.)

It is for this reason that the drawing down to below was likewise in a manner that “*HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, has acted wondrously and magnanimously with us,” as the Alter Rebbe writes in his well-known holy letter,⁵⁰⁸ in which he repeats the matter three times,⁵⁰⁹ in a way this this matter is also established and drawn forth also in the generations that followed after him, all the way until the final day,⁵¹⁰ until the generation of “the footsteps of Moshiach,” so that through the service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, in studying Torah and serving Him in prayer, and more generally, through the general service of “engaging in the study of Torah, doing acts of loving-kindness, and praying with the congregation,” we bring about the matter of “He redeemed my soul in peace,”⁵¹¹ so that [*HaShem*-יהו"ה says] it is “as though he has redeemed Me, (first in a way that is “as though he has redeemed Me,” and then in a

⁵⁰⁶ Sefer HaSichot, Torat Shalom p. 166; Sefer HaSichot 5691 p. 175, and elsewhere.

⁵⁰⁷ See Sefer HaSichot, Torat Shalom p. 13.

⁵⁰⁸ Igrot Kodesh of the Alter Rebbe, p. 230 and on.

⁵⁰⁹ See Likkutei Sichot, Vol. 15, p. 285, note 39.

⁵¹⁰ See Sifrei and Rashi to Deuteronomy 34:2.

⁵¹¹ Psalms 55:19

way of actually redeeming Me), “Me and My children from amongst the nations of the world,”⁵¹² through our righteous Moshiach, [may he come] in the near future, in the most literal sense!

⁵¹² Talmud Bavli, Brachot 8a