

Discourse 27

*“Yegiyah Kapecha Ki Tochal... -
When you eat of the labor of your hands...”*

2nd night of the holiday of Pesach, 5724

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

1.

The¹³⁹² verse states,¹³⁹³ “When you eat of the labor of your hands, you are happy and it is good for you.” Now, we must understand what the superiority is when a person’s food comes specifically from the labor of his hands.

To understand this, we must preface by explaining the matter that a person is judged on a daily basis,¹³⁹⁴ (which is why every day we pray for our livelihood and all our other needs). For, at first glance, being that our sages, of blessed memory, stated,¹³⁹⁵ “All of one’s livelihood is allocated to him [in the period] from Rosh HaShanah to Yom Kippur,” this being so, what is this matter of a person being judged every day?

¹³⁹² See the discourse entitled “*Yegiyah Kapecha*” in Maaamarei Admor HaZaken 5568 Vol. 1 p. 165 and on; Also see the Sichah talk that precedes the discourse, Ch. 25 (Torat Menachem, Vol. 39, p. 298).

¹³⁹³ Psalms 128:2

¹³⁹⁴ Talmud Bavli, Rosh HaShanah 16a

¹³⁹⁵ Talmud Bavli, Beitza 16a

2.

This may be understood¹³⁹⁶ by prefacing about the matter of the concluding seal of the *Ne'ilah* prayer on Yom HaKippurim, (at which time the judgment for the entire year is sealed and concluded Above).¹³⁹⁷ This is similar to the [wax] seal (*Chotem*-חותם) stamped on a letter, such that without the seal, what is written in the letter can still be altered. However, once the letter is sealed, [that which is written in it] is sustained and undergoes no change, as in the verse,¹³⁹⁸ “[An edict...] that is sealed... may not be revoked.”

The explanation is that the drawing down on Rosh HaShanah is from the aspect of Kindness-*Chessed* of the Ancient One-*Atik*, this being the *Hiyulie*-ability of the power of Kindness-*Chessed*, which can spread forth without measure or limit, but also has no particular form. It thus is in this way that the Kindness-*Chessed* can be bestowed to the recipient. It therefore is necessary for there to be the matter of Might-*Gevurah* within Kindness-*Chessed*, this being the matter of the constriction (*Tzimtzum*) and division of the bestowal. That is, the *Hiyulie*-ability for Kindness-*Chessed* [must] be divided into various particulars, by which it then can manifest in particular form and be drawn down in a measured and limited way, so that it can then be bestowed to the recipient.

¹³⁹⁶ Also see Maamarei Admor HaZaken 5565 Vol. 2 p. 648 and on; Sefer HaMitzvot of the Tzemach Tzedek, Mitzvat Tiglachat Metzorah, Ch. 2 and on (106a and on); Ohr HaTorah, Re'eh p. 722 and on. Kuntres U'Maayon, Maamar 17 and on; Discourse entitled “v'*Hineih Parach*

¹³⁹⁷ Talmud Bavli, Rosh HaShanah ibid. 16b

¹³⁹⁸ Esther 8:8

This then, is the matter of the seal (*Chotem*-חותם) of the *Ne'ilah* prayer on Yom HaKippurim.¹³⁹⁹ For, being that at that time, the aspect of Kingship-*Malchut* ascends to the aspect of the Ancient One-*Atik*, therefore, the five judgments-*Gevurot* of Kingship-*Malchut* bring the matter of the constriction (*Tzimtzum*) about and the division of the bestowal coming from the aspect of Kindness-*Chessed* of the Ancient One-*Atik*, so that it can be drawn into the worlds below.

This is similar to a seal and signet, through which the matter is caused to be sustained and unchanged. That is, the bestowal of the kindness-*Chessed* should not remain in the state of a *Hiyulie*-ability in which it can change in various ways etc. Rather, it should manifest within form, with measure and limitation, through which the kindness-*Chessed* will be bestowed to the recipient.

However, even though the drawing down brought about by the seal (*Chotem*-חותם) of Yom HaKippurim, is only in the aspect of Kingship-*Malchut* of the world of Emanation (*Atzilut*), it also is necessary to affect that the bestowal be drawn down to the worlds below the world of Emanation (*Atzilut*).

The explanation is that relative to the worlds of Creation, Formation, and Action (*Briyah*, *Yetzirah*, *Asiyah*), even the aspect of Kindness-*Chessed* of the world of Emanation (*Atzilut*) is in a state of simplicity (*Pshitut*), simple kindness (*Chessed Pashut*), from which various kinds of bestowal are possible.

That is, either physical bestowals can be drawn down or spiritual bestowals can be drawn down, such as the bestowal of

¹³⁹⁹ See Pri Etz Chayim, Shaar Yom HaKippurim Ch. 5

intellect and success in one's study of Torah. Moreover, in this itself, there can be various ways, such as bestowal in the revealed parts of Torah or bestowal in the inner parts (*Pnimiyut*) of Torah. There likewise may be bestowal in serving *HaShem*-יהוה, blessed is He, in prayer, giving a person additional vitality in prayer etc. There similarly can be the bestowal of a good portion in the Garden of Eden (*Gan Eden*) and the like.

It thus is in regard to this that it states that a person is judged on a daily basis. That is, in addition to the drawing down on Rosh HaShanah until it is sealed on Yom HaKippurim, (this being the aspect of Kindness-*Chessed* of the Ancient One-*Atik* as it is drawn down to Kingship-*Malchut* of the world of Emanation-*Atzilut*), a person is judged daily about how the bestowal will be drawn down and take form on this particular day. This is the substance of our daily prayers and supplications, by which the bestowal takes form and is drawn down in the particular matters one prays and pleads for.

This also is why there specifically must be “the labor of your hands.” That is, for beneficence to be drawn down into one's livelihood, such that it manifests and takes form in physical livelihood in the physical world of Action (*Asiyah*), one must make a receptacle for this through the labor of his hands.

Based on this, it is also understood why in the blessing of Grace after meals (*Birkhat HaMazon*) we recite, “In His goodness He provides sustenance for the entire world with grace, with kindness etc... He gives bread to all flesh.” However, at first glance, this is not understood. For, the very fact that the Holy One, blessed is He, sustains the entire world,

is itself the bestowal of the kindness. This being so, what is the meaning of the words, “He provides sustenance... with kindness”? We also must understand the meaning of the words, “He gives bread (*Lechem*-לֶחֶם) to all flesh,” specifically. For, the primary kindness-*Chessed* is the blessing and the bestowal, and this being so, why is the kindness-*Chessed* specifically in regard to the bread (*Lechem*-לֶחֶם)?

However, the explanation is that when it states, “(He provides sustenance etc.” with kindness-*Chessed*,” this refers to the aspect of Kindness-*Chessed* of the Ancient One-*Atik*, which is the *Hiyulie*-ability for kindness. Thus, the novelty of “He provides sustenance... with kindness-*Chessed*” is that the light of the Supernal kindness-*Chessed* is drawn down and manifests in physical kindness, to “give bread,” specifically meaning, physical food. In other words, the descent and manifestation of the light of the Supernal Kindness-*Chessed* comes forth in physical kindness, (brought about through the aspect of Might-*Gevurah* of the Ancient One-*Atik*, as explained before), and this itself is a great kindness etc.

With the above in mind, we can also understand the statement in Zohar,¹⁴⁰⁰ that Rabbi Yeisa Sabba would pray for his sustenance even when his meal was already prepared and set before him. The explanation, (and to elucidate, this is a new explanation),¹⁴⁰¹ is that even when one’s food is already prepared and set before him, it could be that the aspect of Kindness-*Chessed* of the Ancient One-*Atik* is not manifest within it. Thus, this is what he prayed about, to affect that the

¹⁴⁰⁰ Zohar I 199b; Zohar II 62b

¹⁴⁰¹ Another explanation of this – See Likkutei Sichot Vol. 26 p. 99 and on.

prepared food set before him should be a garment for the aspect of Kindness-*Chessed* of the Ancient One-*Atik*, and that the aspect of Kindness-*Chessed* of the Ancient One-*Atik* should manifest in the prepared food set before him.

3.

The explanation is that the general need is for the descent and manifestation of the beneficence to be specifically below, which is why there must also be the matter of “the labor of your hands” (as mentioned before), stemming from two matters:

The first matter is the Torah, the matter of which¹⁴⁰² is to refine and separate between the impure and the pure,¹⁴⁰³ and between the holy and the mundane. However, the matter of refinement and separation does not apply except by way of descent and manifestation below, all the way to this world, in which there also is the presence of matters that are the opposite of holiness etc. For, as known, in this world there is an admixture of two extremes etc., as explained at length elsewhere¹⁴⁰⁴ in explanation of why the matter of repentance (*Teshuvah*) specifically applies in this world.

This is also why at the giving of the Torah He stated, “I am *HaShem*-יהוה your God etc.”¹⁴⁰⁵ which is immediately followed by, “You shall have no other gods etc.”¹⁴⁰⁶ Now, at

¹⁴⁰² Also see Tanya, Iggeret HaKodesh, Epistle 26

¹⁴⁰³ See Leviticus 11:47

¹⁴⁰⁴ See Likkutei Torah, Pinchas 75b and on.

¹⁴⁰⁵ Exodus 20:2; Deuteronomy 5:6

¹⁴⁰⁶ Exodus 20:3; Deuteronomy 5:7

first glance, this is not understood, for is it not so that at the giving of the Torah there were the greatest revelations? This being so, why was this warning, “You shall have no other gods” necessary at such a time?

However, the explanation is that the entire matter of Torah is to refine and separate etc., which only applies to the descent and manifestation below, until there can even be separate beings who can call out in the name of other gods, Heaven forbid.

This explains the teaching of our sages, of blessed memory,¹⁴⁰⁷ “The Torah was not given to those who ate the Manna.” [To explain, the novelty here is that it is the opposite of the teaching quoted in many places, that our sages, of blessed memory, taught,¹⁴⁰⁸ “The Torah was given to be expounded **only** by those who ate the Manna.”]

This is because those who ate the Manna had no need of earning a livelihood through the toil of their hands. This is because matter of the Manna was that it was drawn down from Above in a way that the deeds and labor of the recipients below were of no consequence. This is as the verse states,¹⁴⁰⁹ “Whoever took more had nothing extra and (moreover) whoever took less was not lacking.” Rather, the Torah was specifically given for there to be a matter of labor from below to Above, to refine and separate between the impure and the pure and between the holy and the mundane, as explained above.

¹⁴⁰⁷ See the aforementioned discourse of the Alter Rebbe entitled “*Yegiyah Kapecha*” in Maaamarei Admor HaZaken 5568 Vol. 1 p. 170.

¹⁴⁰⁸ See Mechilta, Beshalach 13:17, 16:4, and elsewhere.

¹⁴⁰⁹ Exodus 16:18

The second matter stems from the shattering that took place in the world of Chaos-*Tohu*, caused by the sin of Adam, the first man,¹⁴¹⁰ by which the sparks of the world of Chaos-*Tohu* fell down to below. To this end, it is necessary for man to toil in refining the sparks, and this refinement comes by way of inner manifestation (*Hitlabshut*), through engaging with the physical things within which the sparks fell. This likewise is the matter of toiling in earning a livelihood, “the labor of your hands,” through which the sparks are refined etc.

4.

This then, is also the meaning of the verse, “When you eat of the labor of your hands, you are happy and it is good for you.” The explanation is that since the need for the matter of labor is solely so that the Godly beneficence will be drawn down to manifest in the physical world of Action (*Asiyah*) (for the above mentioned reason[s], therefore as a result of Torah, the matter of which is refinement and separation etc., and because of the matter of the shattering and fall of the sparks etc.), it therefore is unnecessary for a person to invest his mind into this labor [of earning a livelihood], but only “the labor of his hands.”¹⁴¹¹ This explains the precise wording, “the labor of your hands,” rather than “the labor of your head.” In other

¹⁴¹⁰ Also see *Torat Chayim*, Vayeishev 198b

¹⁴¹¹ Also see *Likkutei Torah*, Shlach 42d; Chukat 66c; Discourse entitled “*Vayakhel Moshe – Moshe assembled*” 5712, translated in *The Teachings of The Rebbe* 5712, Discourse 11, Ch. 3 and on (*Sefer HaMaamarim* 5712, p. 241 and on); Discourse entitled “*Mayim Rabim*” 5738 (*Torat Menachem*, *Sefer HaMaamarim* Cheshvan p. 246).

words, as a result of the knowledge and recognition that his involvement in it is only a garment of the ways of the natural order, within which the Godly bestowal is drawn down and manifests, this being so, the primary matter is the Godly bestowal, and not the garment of the ways of the natural order. For, the whole matter of the natural order is that it is nothing but “an axe in the hand of the One who hews with it.”¹⁴¹²

When the involvement in earning a livelihood is in this way, this removes and nullifies all things that can cause obstruction and hindrance to the bestowal of livelihood, and it causes that even in the garments of the world of Action (*Asiyah*) there will be the revelation of the root and source of the Godly bestowal, as it is drawn down from the aspect of Kindness-*Chessed* of the Ancient One-*Atik*.

About this the verse states, “When you eat of the labor of your hands, you are happy and it is good for you,” about which our sages, of blessed memory, expounded,¹⁴¹³ “‘You are happy’ – in this world, ‘and it is good for you’ – in the coming world.” “You are happy in this world” because the involvement in earning a livelihood is free of all concerns and worries etc., and “it is good for you in the coming world” being that one refines (*Mevarer*-מברר) the sparks and elevates them to their root and source, this being the matter of the coming world (*Olam HaBa*), which is called “a clear world” (*Olam Barur*-עולם ברור),¹⁴¹⁴ in which any dross whatsoever is inapplicable,

¹⁴¹² See Isaiah 10:15

¹⁴¹³ Talmud Bavli, Brachot 8a

¹⁴¹⁴ See Talmud Bavli, Pesachim 50a; Bava Batra 10b

similar to the Manna, which was absorbed in their limbs and organs and had no waste product.¹⁴¹⁵

This is why the Torah was not given to those who ate of the Manna, since the matter of Torah is to affect refinements (*Birurim*) (as explained above). However, even so, the Manna was a test (*Nisayon*) to see whether they could affect refinements according to Torah, as it states in the Torah portion of the Manna,¹⁴¹⁶ “So that I can test them, whether they will follow My Torah or not,” the reason for which is explained elsewhere.¹⁴¹⁷ This will suffice for the understanding.

¹⁴¹⁵ Talmud Bavli, Yoma 75b

¹⁴¹⁶ Exodus 16:4

¹⁴¹⁷ Also see Maamarei Admor HaZaken 5568 Vol. 1, p. 29 and on.