

Discourse 67

“Atem Nitzavim HaYom Kulchem - You are standing this day, all of you”

Shabbat Parshat Nitzavim,

28th of Elul, 5725

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

1.

The verse states,¹⁵²⁹ “You are standing this day, all of you etc.” In the discourse in Likkutei Torah by this title,¹⁵³⁰ the Alter Rebbe explains that this Torah portion is always read before Rosh HaShanah,¹⁵³¹ which is hinted in the word “this day-*HaYom*-הַיּוֹם,” referring to Rosh HaShanah.¹⁵³² For, “this day (*Zeh HaYom*-זֶה הַיּוֹם) is the beginning of Your works, a remembrance of the first day,”¹⁵³³ in that in their first source all the sparks of the souls stand and are elevated, all the way until “before *HaShem*-ה'” (and as the verse continues), “from the heads of your tribes... to the choppers of your wood and the drawers of your water,”¹⁵³⁴ in which the Torah enumerates ten levels. This is because all the Jewish people are one stature¹⁵³⁵

¹⁵²⁹ Deuteronomy 29:9

¹⁵³⁰ Likkutei Torah, Nitzavim 44a

¹⁵³¹ Mishneh Torah, Hilchot Tefilah 13:2; Tosefot to Talmud Bavli, Megillah 31b; Tur and Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chayim 428:4

¹⁵³² Paane'ach Raza, end of Nitzavim; Megaleh Amukot, Nitzavim, section entitled “*Aseeree*” (60d).

¹⁵³³ Talmud Bavli, Rosh HaShanah 27a; Musaf liturgy of Rosh HaShanah

¹⁵³⁴ Deuteronomy 29:9-10

¹⁵³⁵ Likkutei Torah, Nitzavim ibid.

that is divided into ten levels. On Rosh HaShanah, all the levels are elevated, even “the choppers of your wood to the drawers of your water,” which are the lowest aspects and levels.

This can be further explained by the words of his honorable holiness, my father-in-law the Rebbe,¹⁵³⁶ regarding the explanation of the Alter Rebbe, that [the words] “the choppers of your wood-*Choteiv Eitzecha*-חוטב עציך,” is of the same root as “counsel-*Eitzah*-עצה,” and that one must chop away the “many thoughts in a man’s heart,”¹⁵³⁷ (these being the counsel of the evil inclination). “The drawers of your water,” means that we must cast out the “waters that cause all kinds of pleasure to grow.”¹⁵³⁸ This explanation emphasizes the lowliness of the levels of “the choppers of your wood and the drawers of your water.”

In Likkutei Torah he continues [and explains] that even though there are the different above-mentioned levels, nonetheless, “You are standing this day, all of you,” individuals who are united as one. This is because the general principle is that everything that comes from the side of holiness is in a state of “their end is bound to their beginning [and their beginning to their end]”¹⁵³⁹ so that a person cannot identify the beginning and the end. That is, every individual has aspects and levels that his fellow does not have, and they all need each other.

This is analogous to a person, who has a complete stature, with head and feet. Although the feet are the last and lowest level, whereas the head is the highest and is superior to

¹⁵³⁶ Sefer HaSichot 5698 p. 275, copied in HaYom Yom for the 19th of Elul.

¹⁵³⁷ Seen Proverbs 19:21

¹⁵³⁸ Tanya, Likkutei Amarim, Ch. 1

¹⁵³⁹ See Sefer Yetzira 1:7

them, nonetheless, in one aspect the feet have an advantage and superiority [over the head], in that they are needed for walking etc.

Furthermore, if a person has heaviness of the head, they heal him by drawing blood from his feet etc., thus indicating the unity between the head and the feet, in a more inner way than the unity indicated by the matter of walking (that the head needs the feet to walk), which only is external [by comparison].

He continues and explains that this is in general. However, the manner of the union in a particular etc., is explained by the subsequent verse,¹⁵⁴⁰ “For you to pass into the covenant.” This is like the analogy of two friends who cut a covenant that their love for each other shall never cease etc., and will be everlasting etc. Because they entered into a covenant and bond [with each other], it is as though they have become one flesh, and just as one’s love for himself can never cease, so too [his love] for his friend will never cease.

This is why it is called “cutting a covenant-*Keritat Brit*-כריתת ברית,” as the verse states,¹⁵⁴¹ “Through the calf that they cut (*Kartu*-כרתו) in two and passed between the parts,” meaning that they both pass through one body and become unified as one. It is like this analogy that *HaShem*-יהוה our God has done with us, as the verse states,¹⁵⁴² “Behold, I cut (*Koret*-כורת) a covenant etc.” For, through the thirteen attributes that our teacher Moshe, peace be upon him, drew down, the sealing of a

¹⁵⁴⁰ Deuteronomy 29:11

¹⁵⁴¹ Jeremiah 34:18, cited in Rashi to Deuteronomy 29:11

¹⁵⁴² Exodus 34:10

covenant and bond was caused between the Holy One, blessed is He, and the Jewish people, so to speak etc.

2.

Now, we can connect this to the explanation in the discourse entitled “*Atem Nitzavim*” in Ohr HaTorah,¹⁵⁴³ (which is now in print), that the word “standing-*Nitzavim*-נצבים,” is in the passive form (*Lashon Niphal*), indicating that the matter is done by someone else. [This is indicated by the prefix letter *Nun*-נ of the word “standing-*Nitzavim*-נצבים,” as in the difference between “he writes-*Kotev*-כותב” and “it is written-*Nichtav*-נכתב.” That is, the word “he writes-*Kotev*-כותב” indicates that “he himself is writing-*Kotev*-כותב.” In contrast, the word “it is written-*Nichtav*-נכתב” indicates that it was written by another.

This is also the difference between “he stands-*Omed*-עומד,” meaning by himself, and “it is made to stand-*Nitzav*-נצב,” which is done by another.] He explains¹⁵⁴⁴ that the power for this is drawn from Above, as it subsequently states,¹⁵⁴⁵ “In order to establish-*Hakim*-הקים you today as a nation for Him,” in which the establishing [is in the passive form and] is not of themselves, but is done from Above (“to establish you”). This refers to the matter of drawing down and revealing the thirteen attributes of mercy, which is a revelation from Above that does not depend on the state and standing of the person.

¹⁵⁴³ At the beginning of Parshat Nitzavim (p. 1,189 and on)

¹⁵⁴⁴ Ohr HaTorah *ibid.*, p. 1,197

¹⁵⁴⁵ Deuteronomy 29:12

This is understood from the fact that the thirteen attributes of mercy begin with, “*HaShem*” יהו"ה, *HaShem*” יהו"ה,¹⁵⁴⁶ one before he sins and one after he sins, (as stated in Tosefot¹⁵⁴⁷ citing Midrash).¹⁵⁴⁸ That is, the thirteen attributes of mercy are also for [the benefit of] one who has sinned etc. This is because the revelation from Above does not depend on the state and standing of the person. Thus, being that during the month of Elul there is an illumination of the thirteen attributes of mercy,¹⁵⁴⁹ this brings about the matter of “You are standing this day, all of you etc.,” on Rosh HaShanah.

In Ohr HaTorah,¹⁵⁵⁰ he continues and explains that all this is according to the explanation that the word “*Nitzavim*” נצבים means “rising” and “standing,” (except that in this itself, it is a “rising” and “standing” caused from Above). However, there is another explanation of the word “*Nitzav*” נצב,” that it means “a leader” or a “commissioner,” as in the verse,¹⁵⁵¹ “There [still] was no king in Edom; a commissioner-*Nitzav*” נצב reigned,” and as in the verse,¹⁵⁵² “there was one commissioner-*Netziv*” נציב in the land.”

This is like the verse,¹⁵⁵³ “[No longer will it be said that your name is Yaakov], but Yisroel-ישראל, for you have striven-*Sarita*” שרית with God-*Elohi*” מ-אלהי”ם and with man, and prevailed.” That is, he is a minister-*Sar*” שר and ruler over

¹⁵⁴⁶ Exodus 34:6; See Likkutei Sichot, Vol. 4 p. 1,348 and on.

¹⁵⁴⁷ Tosefot entitled “*Shlosh Esreh Midot*” to Rosh HaShanah 17b

¹⁵⁴⁸ Pesikta Rabbati, Pesikta 32 (Piska VaTomer Tziyon) 7.

¹⁵⁴⁹ Likkutei Torah, Re’eh 32a and on.

¹⁵⁵⁰ Ohr HaTorah ibid. p. 1,201

¹⁵⁵¹ Kings I 22:48

¹⁵⁵² Kings I 4:19

¹⁵⁵³ Genesis 32:29

HaShem's יהו"ה title God-*Elohi* "מ-אלהי"ם, which is the aspect of the constriction and concealment of His countenance, so that there will be the revelation of this world and its pleasure, but he rules over this aspect, since his Godly soul has already divested itself of the filthy garments, and has transformed [them] from darkness etc., due to the desire of the Godly soul which rules within him.

In contrast, this is not so of [the name] Yaakov-יעקב, which is "the *Yod*-י in the heel-*Eikev*-עקב."¹⁵⁵⁴ That is, the Godly soul still descends into the "heel-*Eikev*-עקב" to manifest within the garments of this world, except that though he is in a state of self-restraint, he is not yet the minister and ruler etc.

Therefore, on Rosh HaShanah it states, "You are all standing-*Nitzavim*-נצבים this day." That is, all the souls of the Jewish people are capable of attaining the aspect of "*Nitzavim*-נצבים," meaning, to be in the aspect of the minister and ruler over the animalistic soul and the body, like the aspect of Yisroel-ישראל. This is because on Rosh HaShanah there is a very lofty radiance, much loftier than the radiance that illuminates throughout the rest of the year etc.

3.

The verse continues,¹⁵⁵⁵ "In order to establish you today as a nation for Him, and He will be your God." In other words,¹⁵⁵⁶ the intention of all the above, is for the Jewish people

¹⁵⁵⁴ Etz Chayim, Shaar 3 (Shaar Seder Atzilut), Ch. 2

¹⁵⁵⁵ Deuteronomy 29:12

¹⁵⁵⁶ Also see Likkutei Torah, *Nitzavim* ibid. 44d; Ohr HaTorah ibid. p. 1,198

be a nation (*Am-עם*), by which there can be the Kingship-*Malchut* of the Holy One, blessed is He, on Rosh HaShanah. This is as our sages, of blessed memory, stated,¹⁵⁵⁷ “Recite before Me on Rosh HaShanah verses of Kingship in order to crown Me as King over you.” For, “there is no king without a nation.”¹⁵⁵⁸

Then, after the Holy One, blessed is He, is made King of Israel, (this being the matter of “He will be a God for you”), the Jewish people then request,¹⁵⁵⁹ “Reign over the **whole** world... so that everything that has been made will know [that You have made it] etc.”

Then, after the verses of Kingship (*Malchiyot*), there also must be the verses of Remembrance (*Zichronot*), “that our remembrance should rise before You for good.”¹⁵⁶⁰ In other words, the verses of Kingship (*Malchiyot*) are the matter of drawing down the aspect of the exaltedness of the Essential Self of the Singular Preexistent Intrinsic and Unlimited One, *HaShem*-יהוה Himself, blessed is He, to be exalted and elevated over a nation, as explained in *Hemshech* “*Samach TeSamach*”¹⁵⁶¹ (which was just printed).

About this it states,¹⁵⁶² “Lord of the world, who reigned before any form was created.” That is, even before the arousal of the desire to be King over a nation, so to speak, there already

¹⁵⁵⁷ Talmud Bavli, Rosh HaShanah 16a; 34b

¹⁵⁵⁸ Rabbeinu Bachaye to Genesis 38:30; beginning of the Torah portion of Balak; Tanya, Shaar HaYichud VeHaEmunah, translated as The Gate of Unity and Faith, beginning of Ch. 7 (81b), and elsewhere.

¹⁵⁵⁹ In the Amidah of Rosh HaShanah

¹⁵⁶⁰ Talmud Bavli, Rosh HaShanah 16a *ibid.*; 34b *ibid.*

¹⁵⁶¹ 5657 – p. 11 (subsequently printed in Sefer HaMaamarim 5657 p. 183 and on).

¹⁵⁶² In the “*Adon Olam*” in the morning prayers.

was the essential elevation and exaltedness of His Essential Self, and it is from this aspect that we draw on Rosh HaShanah, that there should be an awakening of the desire to reign over a nation. About this it [continues and] states, “At the time that by His will all things were made, then was His Name proclaimed King.” In other words, it is as He is called King over a nation, that the worlds were brought into being and created, and His Name is called upon them etc.

Then, after this, there must be the particular remembrances, meaning, by remembering the binding of Yitzchak,¹⁵⁶³ and in a way that we make a blessing over this, mentioning His Name and His Kingship, which indicates the certainty¹⁵⁶⁴ of the matter etc.¹⁵⁶⁵

¹⁵⁶³ At the conclusion of the blessings of the section of the remembrances (*Zichronot*) in the Musaf prayer of Rosh HaShanah.

¹⁵⁶⁴ See Tanya, Iggeret HaTeshuvah, Ch. 11

¹⁵⁶⁵ This concludes the portion of this discourse that we have available to us.