

Discourse 58

“Eileh Masei Bnei Yisroel...-

These are the journeys of the children of Israel...”

Delivered on Shabbat Parshat Matot-Masei,

2nd of Menachem-Av, 5725¹¹⁷⁹

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

1.

The verse states,¹¹⁸⁰ “These are the journeys of the children of Israel, who went forth from the land of Egypt etc.” In Likkutei Torah,¹¹⁸¹ the Alter Rebbe asks about the precise wording [of this verse]. Namely, we must understand the use of the words, “These are the journeys-*Eileh Masei*-אלה מסעי,” in the plural, though it continues, “who went forth from the land of Egypt” [in the singular]. That is, the [exodus] “from the land of Egypt” was a single departure and was their first journey of traveling from Ramses to Sukkot. About this he explains¹¹⁸² that all forty-two journeys are called “going forth from the land of Egypt,” until they camped at “the Jordan across from Yericho (*Yarden Yericho*-ירדן יריחו).”

It should be added that there is a similar question about the precise wording of the verse,¹¹⁸³ “As in the days when you

¹¹⁷⁹ This discourse only includes the summary notes of the discourse.

¹¹⁸⁰ Numbers 33:1

¹¹⁸¹ Likkutei Torah, Masei 88c

¹¹⁸² Likkutei Torah, Masei ibid. 89b

¹¹⁸³ Micah 7:15

left the land of Egypt,” in which the word “As in the days-*KiYemei*-כימי” is plural. This is as stated in Zohar,¹¹⁸⁴ “It should have said, ‘As in the day-*K’Yom*-כיום,’ being that they left at once.”

However, the explanation¹¹⁸⁵ is that from the time of the exodus from Egypt until the coming redemption, may it be speedily in our days, Amen! it all is [considered to be] “the days that you left the land of Egypt.” This is why the verse states, “As in the days-*KiYemei*-כימי,” in the plural.

Now, it can be said that this is hinted in the statement in Likkutei Torah, that all forty-two journeys are called “going forth from the land of Egypt,” (and he then adds) until they encamped at the Jordan across from Yericho (*Yarden Yericho*-ירדן יריחו).

This is because, in Likkutei Torah there, it explains the matter of “Yarden Yericho-ירדן יריחו,” that the word “Yericho-ריחו” is of the root “scent-*Rei’ach*-ריח,” which is the aspect that will be revealed in the coming future, as the verse states,¹¹⁸⁶ “He will be imbued with a spirit (והריחו-*Haricho*) of fear of *HaShem*-יהו”ה, and will not need to judge by what his eyes see etc.,” in that,¹¹⁸⁷ “He will **smell** and judge-*Morach V’Da’in*-מורח ודאין.”

From this it is understood that the additional words, “until they encamped at the Jordan across from Yericho (*Yarden Yericho*-ירדן יריחו)” (this being the aspect that will be

¹¹⁸⁴ Zohar III 176a

¹¹⁸⁵ See the beginning of the discourse entitled “*KiYemei Tzeitcha*” 5691 and 5708 (Sefer HaMaamarim 5691 p. 271; 5708 p. 159).

¹¹⁸⁶ Isaiah 11:3

¹¹⁸⁷ Talmud Bavli, Sanhedrin 93b

revealed in the coming future), includes all the service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה of the Jewish people, from the time they left the exile of Egypt until the coming redemption, all of which is called "going forth from the land of Egypt," and "the days that you left the land of Egypt."

2.

Now, the teaching of the Baal Shem Tov,¹¹⁸⁸ that all forty-two journeys are present in every single Jew throughout all the days of his life, is well known. This begins when he first comes into the atmosphere of the world (from the state of constraint and limitation [in the womb] similar to the exodus from Egypt).

Then, all the days of his life are the particular journeys, "these are the journeys etc.," until he arrives "at the Jordan across from Yericho (*Yarden Yericho*-ירדן יריחו)," meaning, until he comes to attain the perfection of the matter of the "scent-*Rei'ach*-ריח" etc., and until there is caused to be in all of the Jewish people in general, and the world at large, the matter of "He will be imbued with the spirit (*v'Haricho*-והריחו) of fear of *HaShem*-יהו"ה," [meaning that], "He will smell and judge-*Morach V'Da'in*-מורה ודאין," which will be drawn down into revelation below ten hands-breadths, with the true and complete redemption, with the coming of Moshiach, speedily and in the most literal sense.

¹¹⁸⁸ Degel Machaneh Ephraim, beginning of the Torah portion of Masei; Also see Keter Shem Tov, Hosafot, Section 30.

3.

Now, we should connect this matter (of the forty-two journeys that there are in the life of every Jew) to the verse that states,¹¹⁸⁹ “Moshe wrote their goings forth according to their journeys etc.” However, we first must preface with the question about the precise wording here, as pointed out by the Alter Rebbe in Likkutei Torah.¹¹⁹⁰

That is, we must understand why about “Moshe wrote,” the verse first states, “their goings forth according to their journeys (*Motza’eihem L’Maseihem*-למסעיהם-מוצאיהם),” but then reverses the order [and continues], “these were their journeys according to their goings forth (*Maseihem L’Motza’eihem*-למוצאיהם-מסעיהם).”

The essential point of the explanation¹¹⁹¹ is that “their goings forth (*Motza’eihem*-מוצאיהם)” refers to the source of the souls of the Jewish people, similar to the verse,¹¹⁹² “Like a source of water (*Motza Mayim*-מים-מוצא) whose waters never fail,” from which there is a drawing down of radiance to empower them to ascend from below to Above, this being the matter of “their journeys (*Maseihem*-מסעיהם).” (In other words, the drawing down from “their goings forth (*Motza’eihem*-מוצאיהם)” is for “their journeys (*Maseihem*-מסעיהם)” to be), which refers to the journey and ascent from below to above.

After this it states, “These were their journeys according to their goings forth (*Maseihem L’Motza’eihem*-מסעיהם

¹¹⁸⁹ Numbers 33:2

¹¹⁹⁰ Likkutei Torah, Masei ibid. 91a

¹¹⁹¹ Likkutei Torah, Masei ibid. 92a, 93d and on.

¹¹⁹² Isaiah 58:11

(למוצאיהם).” This refers to the ascent from below to Above, until the aspect of “their goings forth (*Motza’eihem*-מוצאיהם).”

We thus find that in [this passage], ““These are the journeys... their goings forth according to their journeys (*Motza’eihem L’Maseihem*-מוצאיהם למסעיהם)... their journeys according to their goings forth (*Maseihem L’Motza’eihem*-מסעיהם למוצאיהם),” there is a hint to the general totality of one’s service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, throughout all the days of his life, beginning with the descent of his soul “from a high peak,”¹¹⁹³ this being the root of his soul, and then to, “You created it, [You formed it] etc.,”¹¹⁹⁴ until it descends “to a deep pit,”¹¹⁹⁵ referring to this lowest world. That is, since there is no world lower than it,¹¹⁹⁶ it therefore is called “a deep pit.” It is here that the soil toils in its service etc., and upon the conclusion of its service, the soul returns and ascends to the source from where it was hewn etc.

4.

He continues and explains¹¹⁹⁷ the meaning of the words, “Moshe wrote etc.,” based on what is explained in the discourse entitled “*Im Bechukotai*,”¹¹⁹⁸ that there are two aspects in Torah. There is the aspect of engraved letters (*Otiyot HaChakikah*), referring to the letters (*Otiyot*) of the Tablets

¹¹⁹³ See Talmud Bavli, Chagigah 5b *ibid*.

¹¹⁹⁴ See the liturgy of the “*Elo’hai Neshamah*” in the morning blessings.

¹¹⁹⁵ See Talmud Bavli, Chagigah 5b *ibid*.

¹¹⁹⁶ Tanya, Likkutei Amarim, Ch. 36

¹¹⁹⁷ Likkutei Torah, Masei *ibid*. p. 96a

¹¹⁹⁸ Likkutei Torah, Bechukotai 45a and on

(*Luchot*), about which the verse states],¹¹⁹⁹ “[The script of God], engraved on the Tablets,” (in which the letters are not something in addition to the stone, but are part and parcel of it, as explained before¹²⁰⁰ in regard to the particulars of the engraved letters themselves). Then there are letters written [with ink]. The same is so of every spark amongst the Jewish people, that there also are these two aspects etc.

Now, the aspect of “their goings forth (*Motza'eihem-מוצאיהם*),” which is the root of the soul (as mentioned above), is from the aspect of the engraved letters (*Otiyot HaChakikah*), (about which it states, “He engraved an engraving in the Upper Purity (*Tehiru Ila'ah-טהירו עילאה*),”¹²⁰¹ which is the aspect of “She is pure (*Tehorah Hee-טהורה היא*).”¹²⁰² The descent of the soul to below to [manifest within] the body is the aspect of the written letters.¹²⁰³

Therefore, for there to be the drawing down from the aspect of “their goings forth” (*Motza'eihem-מוצאיהם*), the verse thus states, “Moshe wrote their goings forth.” That is, he drew from the aspect of the engraved letters (*Otiyot HaChakikah*) to manifest in written letters (*Otiyot HaKtav*) etc. This is so that there should subsequently be the [ascent indicated by] “these were their journeys according to their goings forth (*Maseihem L'Motza'eihem-מסעיהם למוצאיהם*)” etc.

¹¹⁹⁹ Exodus 32:16

¹²⁰⁰ In the preceding discourses of this year entitled “*Eem Bechukotai* – If you go in My statutes,” Discourse 46, and the discourse entitled “*Zot Chukat HaTorah* – This is the decree of the Torah,” Discourse 54.

¹²⁰¹ Zohar I 15a; See Shaar HaYichud of the Mittler Rebbe, translated as The Gate of Unity, Ch. 10-11.

¹²⁰² See the liturgy of the “*Elo'hai Neshamah*” in the morning blessings.

¹²⁰³ Likkutei Torah, Masei ibid. p. 47a

5.

Now, at the conclusion of the matter there [he states]: It is possible that the ascent to “their source-*Motza’eihem*-מוצאיהם,” is even higher than the drawing when “their goings forth-*Motza’eihem*-מוצאיהם” began.

The explanation is as explained in various places¹²⁰⁴ that since the descent of the soul is for the purpose of ascent, it cannot be said that it will ascend to the same place where its descent originated. For if this was so, what benefit would there be in the descent? It thus must be said that the ascent is to a much higher place than before the descent. That is, the ascent is to higher than the aspect indicated by “She is pure-*Tehorah Hee*-טהורה היא,”¹²⁰⁵ which still has a certain form (*Tziyur*) etc.

6.

Now, we should add and connect what was stated above to the explanation in Likkutei Torah at the end of the Torah

¹²⁰⁴ [See Ginat Egoz of Rabbi Yosef Gikatilla, translated as HaShem Is One, Vol. 2 (The Letters of Creation, Part 1), The twelve letters ט"ו צ"ק ל"ג ט"ז ח"ו ז"ה ה"ו correspond to the twelve tribes of Israel]; Likkutei Torah, Balak 73a; Sefer HaMaamarim 5706 p. 64 and on; Likkutei Sichot Vol. 15, p. 248.

¹²⁰⁵ In Likkutei Torah, Masei *ibid.* it states that the root of the drawing forth indicated by the words “their goings forth according to their journeys (*Motza’eihem L’Maseihem*-מוצאיהם למסעיהם),” is from the aspect of the seven lower *Sefirot* of Primordial Man (*Adam Kadmon*), whereas the ascent indicated by the words their journeys according to their goings forth (*Maseihem L’Motza’eihem*-מסעיהם למוצאיהם) is to the aspect of the three upper *Sefirot* of Primordial Man (*Adam Kadmon*), or alternately, “their goings forth” (*Motza’eihem*-מוצאיהם) is from the aspect of the Long Patient One-*Arich* of the general worlds (*Klallut HaOlamot*), and the ascent is to the aspect of the Ancient One-*Atik* of the general worlds (*Klallut HaOlamot*).

portion of Masei, which also is the conclusion of the book of Bamidbar, with what is explained in Likkutei Torah at the beginning of the book of Bamidbar (based on the general principle that “their end is bound to their beginning and their beginning to their end”),¹²⁰⁶ on the verse,¹²⁰⁷ “Take a head-count... according to their head-count, from twenty years and up.”

(Twenty years old is the matter of the wholeness of the intellectual faculties (*Mochin*),¹²⁰⁸ which is the elevation of the head, in and of itself. About this the verse states, “Take a head-count-*Se’u et Rosh*-שאו את ראש,” [which also means] elevate the head.) He also gives a similar explanation there¹²⁰⁹ to what was

¹²⁰⁶ Sefer Yetzirah 1:7

¹²⁰⁷ Numbers 1:2-3

¹²⁰⁸ See Likkutei Torah 2a; [Also see Shaar HaYichud of the Mittler Rebbe, translated as The Gate of Unity, Ch. 34]

¹²⁰⁹ Perhaps the intention is to what is explained there (1b) that the matter of “Take a head-count-*Se’u et Rosh*-שאו את ראש,” [which also means to elevate the head] “by their head-count-*LeGulgulotam*-לגולגלותם” is “to bind the lower desire that is drawn from the aspect of the head and intellect that is manifest within the body and soul, and to bind it and elevate it high above, to the source from where he was hewn... to the aspect of ‘their skulls-*LeGulgulotam*-לגולגלותם,’ specifically, meaning, their own ‘skulls-*Gulgolet*-גולגלת,’ which refers to the root of their souls Above.” He continues to explain (2a and on), “The descent of the souls of the Jewish people to manifest within the body and animalistic soul in this world, is a great descent... however, the descent is for the sake of ascent... (for) before the soul descended into this world to fulfill Torah and *mitzvot*, when it was in the upper Garden of Eden (*Gan Eden HaElyon*), which is in the world of Creation (*Briyah*), it did not at all grasp the aspect of the world of Emanation (*Atzilut*) that is in the world of Creation (*Briyah*)... This is the meaning of “Israel arose in thought (*Machshavah*),” in which thought (*Machshavah*) is the aspect of the world of Creation (*Briyah*). They ascended in thought (*Machshavah*) means in the loftiest level of the thought, which is thought of thought (*Machshavah SheB’Machshavah*), which is the world of Creation (*Briyah*) within the world of Creation (*Briyah*). However, they did not grasp the world of Emanation (*Atzilut*) whatsoever... however, through their descent to this world and with their fulfillment of Torah and *mitzvot*, there is a drawing forth to them of the ray of their Torah and service of *HaShem*-יהוה, blessed is He, which is the radiance of

explained before about the matter of the ascent brought about through the descent to below.¹²¹⁰

the masculine waters (*Mayim Dechurin*) of the world of Emanation (*Atzilut*) itself, literally etc.” [Note from the original publisher.]

¹²¹⁰ This concludes the portion of this discourse that we have available to us.