

Discourse 45

*“Et Shabtotai Tishmoru... -
You shall guard My Shabbats...”*

Delivered on Shabbat Parshat Behar,
20th of Iyyar, 5725
By the grace of *HaShem*, blessed is He,

1.

The verse states,⁶⁴⁵ “You shall guard My Shabbats, and you shall revere My sanctuary – I am *HaShem*-יהוה.” In Likkutei Torah⁶⁴⁶ it is explained that the meaning of “My Shabbats-*Shabtotai*-שבתותי” [in the plural] is two Shabbats, referring to the two aspects of Shabbat present in every Shabbat, these being the lower Shabbat and the upper Shabbat. (This is as he explains in the continuation of the matter,⁶⁴⁷ that this refers to Shabbat evening and Shabbat day.)

The essential point of the explanation is that Shabbat refers to the ascent of the worlds, this being the matter of nullification (*Bittul*). In this itself there are two levels. There is the lower Shabbat, which is the nullification of the “something” (*Bittul HaYesh*) to the Godly “nothing” (*Ayin*), and there is the upper Shabbat, which is the true nullification (*Bittul*), this being the revelation of the Essential Self of the

⁶⁴⁵ Leviticus 26:2

⁶⁴⁶ Likkutei Torah Behar, discourse entitled “*Et Shabtotai*” 41a and on.

⁶⁴⁷ In the continuation of the discourse entitled “*Biur HaDevarim Al Pasuk ‘Et Shabtotai’*” in Likkutei Torah, Behar 44a.

limitless light of the Unlimited One, that surrounds and transcends all worlds (*Sovev Kol Almin*), which [itself] is the aspect of the Godly “nothing” (*Ayin*) that will be revealed in the coming future.

About this the verse states, “You shall guard My Shabbats.” For, in truth, Shabbat is a gift given to us from *HaShem*-יהוה, blessed is He, but we must guard not lose it, Heaven forbid, through any blemish or damage that may cause the obstruction of this revelation etc.

2.

The explanation in greater detail, may be understood based on the discourse of his honorable holiness, the Rebbe Rashab, whose soul is in Eden, in the discourse by this title of the year 5679,⁶⁴⁸ that there are three levels in Shabbat, which in general are two levels, two Shabbats. The content of his words [there] are that the verse states,⁶⁴⁹ “The children of Israel shall guard the Shabbat, to make the Shabbat,” these being are two levels of Shabbat.

The first level is the Shabbat that is present, in and of itself, this being the matter of the teaching,⁶⁵⁰ “Shabbat is sanctified and established [from the six days of creation].” About this the verse states, “The children of Israel shall guard the Shabbat,” meaning that they only must guard the Shabbat. The second level is that which the Jewish people draw down

⁶⁴⁸ Sefer HaMaamarim 5679 p. 404 and on; Also see the discourse entitled “*Et Shabtota*” 5700 (Sefer HaMaamarim 5700, p. 79 and on).

⁶⁴⁹ Exodus 31:16

⁶⁵⁰ Talmud Bavli, Beitzah 17a

and make the Shabbat, about which the verse states, “to make the Shabbat.” In other words, through their toil in serving *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, they draw down a higher level of Shabbat, this being the matter of [the verse], “And you shall call Shabbat a delight.”⁶⁵¹

However, there is an even higher level of Shabbat which cannot be draw down through one's own toil, but comes from Above in the form of a gift. About this it states,⁶⁵² “I have a good gift in My treasure house and Shabbat is its name.” The explanation is that the pleasure drawn down through the toil in serving *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, [about which the verse states], “You shall call Shabbat a delight,” is only a radiance of the essential pleasure, whereas the essential pleasure itself cannot be drawn down through toil, but only by way of gift, through an arousal from Above that comes in and of itself. About this the verse states,⁶⁵³ “Then you will delight in *HaShem*-יהו"ה,” automatically.

We thus find that, in general, there are two Shabbats. The first Shabbat is the aspect of arousal from below, this being the matter of the Jewish people drawing down and making the Shabbat, (“to make the Shabbat”). The second Shabbat is the aspect of arousal from Above, except that in this itself, there are two levels. The first level is that “Shabbat is sanctified and established [from the six days of creation]” (this being the aspect of arousal from Above that precedes the arousal from

⁶⁵¹ Isaiah 58:13

⁶⁵² Talmud Bavli, Shabbat 10b

⁶⁵³ Isaiah 58:14

Above that comes about through an arousal from below of “making the Shabbat”).

In regard to the words, “You shall guard My Shabbats,” the matter of guarding is applicable in the drawing down in a way of arousal from Above, in that in this there only must be the matter of “guarding.” This refers to the aspect of “Shabbat is sanctified and established [from the six days of creation],” as well as to the aspect of Shabbat in the form of a gift.

Now, it can be said that Likkutei Torah also discusses the third level of Shabbat, which is the aspect of a gift from Above. This is as hinted in the explanation in Likkutei Torah⁶⁵⁴ on the continuation of the verse, “you shall revere My sanctuary,” in that “My sanctuary-*Mikdashi*-מִקְדָּשִׁי” refers to the Torah. This is because the Sanctuary below is made by man, built by King Shlomo. In contrast, the Torah is literally the Sanctuary of the Holy One, blessed is He, etc.

The explanation is that even in regard to the third level of Shabbat, even though it is a lofty level that will be revealed in the coming future, a foretaste of it is drawn down on every Shabbat, just as the two Shabbats are present on every Shabbat. For just as the two Shabbats of every Shabbat are Shabbat evening and Shabbat day, so likewise the third level of Shabbat is the matter of the third meal, which takes place on Shabbat afternoon (Mincha), about which the verse states,⁶⁵⁵ “Today you will not [find it in the field],” meaning that this is not in a

⁶⁵⁴ Likkutei Torah Behar 43a

⁶⁵⁵ Exodus 16:25; Shabbat 117b

way of arousal from below that brings to an arousal from Above, but is rather arousal from Above, in and of itself.⁶⁵⁶

This is also why during the third meal, the matter of eating and drinking is unnecessary, as it is with the other meals of Shabbat.⁶⁵⁷ This is so much so, that there are opinions that a person can fulfill his obligation through speaking words of Torah.⁶⁵⁸ This is because⁶⁵⁹ it is a foretaste of the coming world, in which there is no eating or drinking.⁶⁶⁰

Thus, with the above in mind, we can say that “you shall revere My sanctuary” refers to Torah (as mentioned above) and is connected to the third meal, this being the third level of Shabbat, which is in the aspect of a gift.

This is also why the verse concludes, “I am *HaShem-Ani HaShem*-יהו"ה-אני,” about which Rashi explains,⁶⁶¹ “I am trustworthy to pay you your reward.” The explanation is that the intention of the matter of the reward is (not just its simple meaning but refers) to the true matter of the reward. About this our sages, of blessed memory, stated,⁶⁶² “The reward of the *mitzvah* is the *mitzvah*,” which Likkutei Torah⁶⁶³ explains means that the *mitzvah* itself is the reward.

⁶⁵⁶ Sefer HaMaamarim 5679 *ibid.* (p. 411); Also see Sefer HaMaamarim 5700 *ibid.* (p. 86 and on).

⁶⁵⁷ See Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chayim 291:5; Shulchan Aruch of the Alter Rebbe 291:7.

⁶⁵⁸ See Mateh Ephraim 497:4

⁶⁵⁹ See Bayait Chadash (Ba"Ch) to Orach Chayim 291; Ohr HaTorah, Beshalach p. 621; *Hemshech* 5672 Vol. 2, p. 1,127 and on; Likkutei Sichot Vol. 21 p. 84 and on.

⁶⁶⁰ Talmud Bavli, Brachot 17a

⁶⁶¹ Rashi to Leviticus 26:2 *ibid.*

⁶⁶² Mishnah Avot 4:2

⁶⁶³ Likkutei Torah, Behar 42b and on.

This is because the matter of the *mitzvah* is primarily the nullification of the “something” (*Bittul HaYesh*) to the Godly “nothing” (*Ayin*-אין), and this itself is the reward of the *mitzvah*, only that the reward is the revelation of the true Godly “nothing” (*Ayin*-אין) etc. That is, fulfilling the *mitzvah* causes the bond (in that the word “commandment-*mitzvah*-מצוה” is of the same root as “*Tzavta*-צוותא” which means a bonding)⁶⁶⁴ to the aspect of “I-*Ani*-אני” (which shares the same letters as [the Godly] “nothing-*Ayin*-אין”),⁶⁶⁵ referring to the Essential Self of the Singular Preexistent Intrinsic and Unlimited One, *HaShem*-יהוה Himself, blessed is He, who even transcends the aspect of His light that surrounds and transcends all worlds (*Sovev Kol Almin*).

[With this in mind, we can also understand why the matter of “I am *HaShem-Ani HaShem*-יהוה” – “I am trustworthy to pay you your reward,” was also said at the beginning of the Torah portion of Va’era about our forefathers. For, at first glance, given that service that is rendered for the sake of receiving reward is of a lower order, what relevance does this have in relation to our forefathers?

However, the explanation is that what is meant here is the true matter of the reward, that “the reward of the *mitzvah* is the *mitzvah*,” this being the matter of the adhesion and bond to the aspect of “I-*Ani*-אני,” referring to the Essential Self of the Singular Preexistent Intrinsic and Unlimited One, *HaShem*-יהוה Himself, blessed is He.]

⁶⁶⁴ Likkutei Torah, Bechukotai 45c; Sefer HaMaamarim 5698 p. 52

⁶⁶⁵ Likkutei Torah, Behar 44d

Now, the true matter of the reward that will be revealed in the coming future,⁶⁶⁶ especially in the seventh millennium,⁶⁶⁷ is from the aspect that cannot be drawn down through toil, but will be drawn down and revealed from Above in the way of a gift.

3.

Now, we should add to this, based on the explanation in Likkutei Torah⁶⁶⁸ on the words “I am *HaShem-Ani HaShem*-אני יהוה,” that “I-*Ani*-אני” refers to His Essential Self, blessed is He, and that He literally is *HaShem*-יהוה, this being what is drawn down to be the aspect of His light that fills all worlds (*Memaleh Kol Almin*), and that it all is one.

The explanation is that the aspect of the light of *HaShem*-יהוה, blessed is He, that fills all worlds (*Memaleh Kol Almin*) is as our sages, of blessed memory, stated,⁶⁶⁹ “Just as the soul fills the body, so does the Holy One, blessed is He, fill the world.” In other words, just as the vitality of the soul that manifests in the body is drawn forth in all the limbs of the body, even in the heels of the feet, and even in the toenails etc., the same is so of the light of *HaShem*-יהוה, blessed is He, that fills all worlds (*Memaleh Kol Almin*), in that it even is drawn down in the place of concealment, hiddenness, and opposition etc.

⁶⁶⁶ See Likkutei Torah, Behar ibid. p. 42a

⁶⁶⁷ See Tanya, Ch. 36 in the note.

⁶⁶⁸ Likkutei Torah, Behar ibid. p. 43a, 44d

⁶⁶⁹ Midrash Vayikra Rabba 4:8; Midrash Tehillim 103a; Also see Talmud Bavli, Brachot 10a.

However, even so, that which is drawn down to fill all worlds (*Memaleh Kol Almin*) is entirely one with “I-Ani-אני,” this being His Essential Self, blessed is He. In other words, it is specifically through toiling in the place of concealment and hiddenness (which stems from the aspect of the light of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, that fills all worlds (*Memaleh Kol Almin*)), that we take hold of the aspect of “I-Ani-אני,” which is His Essential Self, blessed is He.

With the above in mind, we can explain that this discourse in Likkutei Torah (as well as the discourse by this title of his honorable holiness, the Rebbe Rashab, whose soul is in Eden, mentioned before, and the same is so of other discourses by this same title) is on the verse, “You shall guard My Shabbats etc.,” that specifically is in the Torah portion of Behar, even though this verse was already stated in the Torah portion of Kedoshim.⁶⁷⁰

The explanation is that the difference between the two above-mentioned verses, is that the verse in the Torah portion of Kedoshim refers to the service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, of the righteous *Tzaddikim*. That is, it refers to how the Jewish people are when they are in a state of “You shall be holy.” In contrast, this is not so of the verse in the Torah portion of Behar, which refers to serving Him with repentance (*Teshuvah*), which is a state in which there is hiddenness and concealment etc.

This is as Rashi explains,⁶⁷¹ that this verse refers to a person who has sold himself as a slave to a non-Jew (in that he

⁶⁷⁰ Leviticus 19:30

⁶⁷¹ Rashi to Leviticus 30:1

should not say to himself, “since my master desecrates the Shabbat, I too will be like him”) referring to the general state and standing of the time of exile, as indicated by the verse,⁶⁷² “For we have been sold as slaves and maid-servants.”

This is why the above-mentioned discourses, which explain the superior revelation of the coming future that will be drawn down from Above in the form of a gift, were specifically said in relation to the verse in the Torah portion of Behar. This is because coming to the loftiest revelations of the coming future is (not brought about through the service of the righteous *Tzaddikim*, but is) specifically brought about through service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, out of concealment and hiddenness. This is like the fact that the general matter of the coming redemption is specifically connected to the service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, of repentance (*Teshuvah*).⁶⁷³

This is as in the teaching,⁶⁷⁴ “Moshiach is destined to bring the righteous *Tzaddikim* to repentance.” What this emphasizes is that there not only will be the two levels of those who are righteous *Tzaddikim* and those who return in repentance (*Baalei Teshuvah*) (meaning that there also is an advantage in the service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, of the righteous *Tzaddikim*, even compared to complete repentance (*Teshuvah*)) for if this was so, it should have said that “Moshiach will cause the repentant (*Baalei Teshuvah*) to become righteous *Tzaddikim*.” Rather, the emphasis here is specifically about the level of returning and repenting

⁶⁷² See Esther 7:4

⁶⁷³ Mishneh Torah, Hilchot Teshuvah 7:5

⁶⁷⁴ See Likkutei Torah, Shemini Atzeret 92b; Shir HaShirim 50b; See Zohar III 153b

(*Teshuvah*). This is as explained above, that it is specifically through the toil of serving *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, in a place of concealment and hiddenness, that we take hold of the aspect of "I-*Ani*-"אני," referring to His Essential Self, blessed is He.

4.

Now, we can connect this matter to the Second Pesach (*Pesach Sheni*) and Lag BaOmer, both of which fall out (this year) during the week of the Torah portion of Behar, their ascent ([indicated by],⁶⁷⁵ "and they were finished-*Vayeuchulu*-"ויכלו") being on the day of Shabbat of the Torah portion of Behar. This is because both (*Pesach Sheni* and Lag BaOmer) are connected to the matter of repentance (*Teshuvah*).

To explain, *Pesach Sheni* (the second Pesach offering) comes about because of those people who became ritual impurity by coming in contact with a corpse,⁶⁷⁶ and the general matter of impurity contracted from a corpse, comes about because of the sin of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. *Pesach Sheni* (the second Pesach offering) is what rectifies this, this being the matter of repentance (*Teshuvah*).

This likewise is so of Lag BaOmer, the day of the Hilulah of Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai.⁶⁷⁷ For, as known,⁶⁷⁸ the matter of Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai is the bond between the

⁶⁷⁵ Genesis 2:1; See Likkutei Torah, Behar 42c

⁶⁷⁶ Numbers 9:6 and on

⁶⁷⁷ See Zohar III 296b; Pri Etz Chayim, Shaar Sefirat HaOmer, Ch. 7

⁶⁷⁸ *Hemshech "Chayav Adam Levarech"* 5638 Ch. 25 (Sefer HaMaamarim 5638 p. 152).

inner aspects (*Pnimiyut*) of the Torah and the revealed parts of the Torah.

However, the revelation of the inner aspects (*Pnimiyut*) of the Torah comes about through the matter of breaking (brokenness). This is as in the known saying of his honorable holiness, the Rebbe Rashab, whose soul is in Eden,⁶⁷⁹ in regard to [the teaching],⁶⁸⁰ “Just as this olive, when you crush it, it puts forth its oil,” in that the crushing of the olive is the matter of broken-heartedness (as explained in the discourses of the Torah portion of Beha’alotcha and the discourses of Chanukah),⁶⁸¹ this being the matter of repentance (*Teshuvah*).

This then, is the connection between Pesach Sheni, Lag BaOmer, and the Torah portion of Behar. Namely, that through the repentance (*Teshuvah*) of Pesach Sheni and Lag BaOmer we come to the true reward of, “I am *HaShem-Ani HaShem*- אֲנִי הַשֵּׁם,” – “I am trustworthy to pay the reward,” this being the matter of the bond between the aspect indicated by “I-*Ani*- אֲנִי,” which is what will be revealed in the coming future in a way of a gift, this being the third aspect of Shabbat, (“You shall guard My Shabbats”). This is also the matter of “You shall revere My sanctuary,” referring to the Torah, as mentioned before.

We also should add in explanation of the connection and relationship with Lag BaOmer, based on the explanation in the Chassidic discourses⁶⁸² about the matter of Lag BaOmer (the

⁶⁷⁹ Sefer HaSichot, Torat Shalom p. 26

⁶⁸⁰ See Talmud Bavli, Menachot 53b; Midrash Shemot Rabba, beginning of the Torah portion of Tetzaveh

⁶⁸¹ See Likkutei Torah, Beha’alotcha 35b; Also see Shaarei Orah of the Mittler Rebbe 35b, 39a.

⁶⁸² Siddur Im Da’Ch, Shaar Lag BaOmer 304a

33rd day of the Omer), that since Lag BaOmer is the *Sefirah* of Majesty-*Hod* within Majesty-*Hod*, it thus is the end and completion of the primary emotive qualities of the *Sefirot*. (That is, the primary aspect of the emotions, conclude with the *Sefirah* of Majesty-*Hod*.)

We thus find that on Lag BaOmer there already is the primary completion of the toil in serving *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, throughout the counting of the Omer (*Sefirat HaOmer*) and there already begins to be preparation for the giving of the Torah. The Torah [itself] is connected to the aspect of the gift, the primary aspect and completion of which will be revealed in the coming future, as mentioned before.