

Discourse 63

*“Re’eh Anochi Notein Lifneichem HaYom Brachah -
See, I place before you today a blessing”*

Shabbat Parshat Re’eh,
1st day of Rosh Chodesh Elul, 5725
By the grace of *HaShem*, blessed is He,

1.

The verse states,¹³⁸⁴ “See, I place before you today a blessing etc.” In Likkutei Torah,¹³⁸⁵ the Alter Rebbe explains that [the word] “I-*Anochi*-אנכי” in this verse is like [the word] “I-*Anochi*-אנכי (am *Hashem*-יהו"ה your God,”¹³⁸⁶ said at the giving of the Torah. For,¹³⁸⁷ about us receiving the Torah, the verse states,¹³⁸⁸ “Face to face did *HaShem*-יהו"ה speak with you.” That is, the aspect of *HaShem*-יהו"ה was drawn down in the innerness (*b’Pnimityut*) of every single Jew.

This is the meaning of “(I-*Anochi*-אנכי) am *HaShem* your God-*HaShem Elo'hecha*-אלהיך,” that the aspect of His Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה illuminates and is revealed within you, such that He is called by your name, “**your** God-*Elohe'cha*-אלהיך,” meaning, “the God who is yours,” in a way that is internalized (*b’Pnimityut*).

¹³⁸⁴ Deuteronomy 11:26

¹³⁸⁵ Likkutei Torah, Re’eh 18d

¹³⁸⁶ Exodus 20:2; Deuteronomy 5:6

¹³⁸⁷ Likkutei Torah, Re’eh 18a

¹³⁸⁸ Deuteronomy 5:4

The explanation of “I am *HaShem* your God-*Anochi HaShem Elo*”¹³⁸⁹ *hecha*” אלהיך יהוה אלהיך” is that for there be [the actualization of] “*HaShem*, your God-*HaShem Elo*”¹³⁹⁰ *hecha*” אלהיך יהוה אלהיך,” (meaning, “yours,” in an inner way – *b’Pnimityut*), what empowers this is the aspect of “I-*Anochi*-אנכי.” This is also the meaning of the verse, “See, I-*Anochi*-אנכי have placed before you today a blessing etc.” That is, the drawing down of the blessing to be “before you-*Lifneichem*” (meaning, “internalized-*b’Pnimityut*” בְּפְנֵימִיּוֹת) is from the aspect of “I-*Anochi*-אנכי.”

He continues to explain¹³⁸⁹ that this blessing (about which it states, “See, I place before you today a blessing”), is from the aspect of the letter *Aleph*-א of the word “I-*Anochi*-אנכי,” which is higher than the level of the letter *Beit*-ב, which is the first letter of the word “blessing-*Brachah*” בְּרַכָּה.

He begins by explaining that the Torah begins with the letter *Beit*-ב, being that it is a sign of blessing-*Brachah* בְּרַכָּה.¹³⁹⁰ Even though the letter *Aleph*-א shares the same letters as the word “wondrous-*Pele*” פֶּלֶא, and is higher than the letter *Beit*-ב, nevertheless, since it is in a state of wondrousness-*Pele* פֶּלֶא it is concealed etc. This matter is what was drawn down at the giving of the Torah, in which the Holy One, blessed is He, began with the letter *Aleph*-א, ¹³⁹¹ [in the word] “I-*Anochi*-אנכי.” For through the giving of the Torah it became possible for the concealed to be revealed.

¹³⁸⁹ Likkutei Torah, Re’eh 19b

¹³⁹⁰ See Zohar I 205b

¹³⁹¹ See Midrash Bereishit Rabba 1:10

This then, is the meaning of “See, I (*Anochi*-אנכי) place before you today the blessing (*Brachah*-ברכה).” That is, from the aspect of the letter *Aleph*-א of the word “I-*Anochi*-אנכי” there is a drawing “before you today [of] the blessing-*Brachah*-ברכה.” This is far higher than the blessing (*Brachah*-ברכה) by which the world was created with the letter *Beit*-ב (meaning with the aspect of His Wisdom-*Chochmah*¹³⁹² by which the existence of the “something” (*Yesh*) is caused, this being the translation [in Targum] ¹³⁹³ of “In the beginning-*Bereishit*-בראשית God created etc.”), which is the blessing that comes from His [lower] Name *HaShem*-יהוה, as it is **within** the chaining down of the worlds (*Hishtalshelut*) etc.

In contrast, the blessing (*Brachah*-ברכה) drawn down in the giving of the Torah, about which the verse states, “See, I have placed before you today the blessing (*Brachah*-ברכה),” is from His [upper] Name *HaShem*-יהוה which transcends the chaining down of the worlds (*Hishtalshelut*).

2.

Now, in explaining the superiority of the blessing (*Brachah*-ברכה) drawn from,¹³⁹⁴ “I” – meaning “who I am-*Anochi*, *Mi SheAnochi*-מי שאנכי,” we should add, based on the explanation of the Alter Rebbe in the discourses of the year

¹³⁹² Torat Chayim, Bereishit 7a

¹³⁹³ Genesis 1:1. See Targum Yerushlami, which translates the word “In the beginning-*Bereishit*-בראשית” as “with wisdom-*b'Chochmeta*-בהוכמתא.”

¹³⁹⁴ See Likkutei Torah, Pinchas 80b; Re'eh 31d; Zohar I 167b, Zohar III 11a

5562.¹³⁹⁵ He states as follows: We must understand why sometimes it states,¹³⁹⁶ “**I-Ani-אני** am *HaShem*-יהוה your God who took you out of the land of Egypt,” whereas other times it states,¹³⁹⁷ “**I-Anochi-אנכי** am *HaShem*-יהוה your God who took you out etc.”

Now, the primary difference between the word “**I-Ani-אני**” and “**I-Anochi-אנכי**” is the letter *Khaf*-כ.¹³⁹⁸ The word “**I-Ani-אני**” is known to refer to when a person says about himself that he has done something or the like. He will say “I (**Ani-אני**) did this.” Now, in truth, even if he would say “I (**Anochi-אנכי**) did this,” it would also bear this meaning. However, the difference between them, is that if he says it in a way of humility or apologetically and the like, to whoever asked “who did this?” he would say “I (**Ani-אני**) did it.” That is, his intention in saying this is not to elevate himself etc.

However, if whoever asks “who did this?” does so angrily, and he wants to respond “I did it” in a way that indicates that what he did is good, even though it is against the will (of the one who asks), in which he must elevate and exalt himself before him, he then will say “**I-Anochi-אנכי** did it,” indicating the matter of elevation and self-exaltation etc. In other words, it is like saying, “Don’t you know who I am (**Anochi-אנכי**)?” or the like.

This is the primary difference between the word “**I-Ani-אני**” and the word “**I-Anochi-אנכי**” wherever [you find them].

¹³⁹⁵ See the discourse entitled “*Anochi Anochi Hoo Mocheh Peshah’echa*” in Maamarei Admor HaZaken 5562 Vol. 1, p. 13 and on.

¹³⁹⁶ Numbers 15:41

¹³⁹⁷ Exodus 20:2

¹³⁹⁸ Also see Likkutei Torah, Shir HaShirim 35c

That is, “I-*Ani*-אני” denotes that the speaker is speaking humbly, [which is also why the word “I-*Ani*-אני” shares the same letters as the word “nothing-*Ayin*-אין”],¹³⁹⁹ whereas the word “I-*Anochi*-אנכי” is used when a person speaks in a way of elevation, such as Shmuel who said, “I-*Anochi*-אנכי am the seer,”¹⁴⁰⁰ for which he was punished etc.¹⁴⁰¹ This should suffice for the understanding.

With the above in mind, we can also understand why about the Jewish people being in Egypt, in which *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, descended to save them from the impurity of Egypt, this being the ultimate lowering and descent, the verse states, “I-*Ani*-אני am *HaShem*-יהו"ה who took you out etc.” However, in the giving of the Torah, when His Godliness was revealed in a way of exaltation and elevation, with thunder and lightning, (to bring about the matter of awe, fear, quaking and trembling),¹⁴⁰² the verse states, “I-*Anochi*-אנכי am *HaShem*-יהו"ה,” that is, “I” – meaning, who I am-*Anochi*, *Mi SheAnochi*-מי שאנכי, etc. This should suffice for the understanding.

3.

To further explain, based on this we also can understand Moshe’s words,¹⁴⁰³ “Six hundred thousand foot soldiers are the

¹³⁹⁹ See Pardes Rimonim, Shaar 3 (Shaar Eem HaEin Sof Hoo HaKeter) Ch. 1; Etz Chayim, Shaar 6 (Shaar HaAkudim) Ch. 3.

¹⁴⁰⁰ Samuel I 9:19

¹⁴⁰¹ See Sifri to Deuteronomy 1:17; Midrash Shmuel and Yalkut Shimoni to Shmuel I 9:19 *ibid.* (Also see the note of the Rebbe to Sefer HaMaamarim 5562 *ibid.* (p. 313): “On the simple level it is not understood why he was punished for this, since (Samuel I 9:9) ‘the prophet-*Navi*-נביא’ was formerly called ‘the seer-*Ro'eh*-רו"ה”

¹⁴⁰² Talmud Bavli, Brachot 22a

¹⁴⁰³ Numbers 11:21

people in whose midst I am-*Anochi*-אֲנִי,” specifically using the word “I-*Anochi*-אֲנִי,” rather than “I-*Ani*-אֲנִי,” (even though Shmuel was punished for saying “I-*Anochi*-אֲנִי am the seer” rather than saying “I-*Ani*-אֲנִי”). For, for at first glance, being that “Moshe was exceedingly humble, more than any person on the surface of the earth,”¹⁴⁰⁴ when he wanted to include himself together with the Jewish people, he should have said “in whose midst I-*Ani*-אֲנִי am.”

However, the explanation is that since here, there was need for the matter of elevation and exaltedness etc., in relation to the “six hundred thousand **foot**-soldiers of the people,” in that the Jewish people were the aspect of his “foot,”¹⁴⁰⁵ he therefore said “in whose midst I-*Anochi*-אֲנִי am, specifying “I-*Anochi*-אֲנִי,” indicating the matter of exaltedness etc.

4.

Now, at the conclusion of the above-mentioned discourse of the year 5562, he explains that there are two aspects of “I-*Anochi*-אֲנִי.” That is, even the “I-*Anochi*-אֲנִי” that indicates the matter of exaltation is an aspect of revelation, [like] a person who says to his fellow, “Don’t know who I am-*Anochi*-אֲנִי?” (as explained before). However, the true matter of “I” – meaning, who I am-*Anochi*, *Mi SheAnochi*-מִי אֲנִי, “שֶׁאֲנִי,” is that He altogether is ungraspable, such that it is not

¹⁴⁰⁴ Numbers 12:3

¹⁴⁰⁵ Torah Ohr, Bereishit 1b

even applicable to negate that one does not know, since this altogether is not in the category of being revealed.¹⁴⁰⁶

It can be said that the matter of “See, I-*Anochi*-אנכי have placed before you today the blessing etc.,” is the highest aspect of “I-*Anochi*-אנכי,” (this being the true matter of “I” – meaning, who I am-*Anochi*, *Mi SheAnochi*-מי שאנכי,¹⁴⁰⁷ in that He is altogether ungraspable), which even is higher than the “I-*Anochi*-אנכי” of the giving of the Torah (which is the **revelation** of His Godliness in a state of exaltedness).

The explanation is that even though we explained before that the “I-*Anochi*-אנכי” mentioned in this week’s Torah portion is similar to the “I-*Anochi*-אנכי” mentioned at the giving of the Torah, nonetheless, at the giving of the Torah it (does not only) state “I am-*Anochi*-אנכי” (but continues) “*HaShem* your God-*HaShem Elo*”*hecha*-אלהיך-יהוה,” even though, at first glance, this must be in a way that “I-*Anochi*-אנכי” is drawn into “*HaShem*-יהוה” to be “your God-*Elo*”*hecha*-אלהיך,” being that the power to draw this blessing forth is through the utterance “I-*Anochi*-אנכי,” by which there is a drawing down of

¹⁴⁰⁶ This may be further elucidated by what is stated in Likkutei Torah, Shir HaShirim 35c (included in the notes of the Rebbe there), that the two mentions of “I-*Anochi*-אנכי” correspond to [the two aspects of the Crown-*Keter*, these being] the Ancient One-*Atik* and the Long Patient One-*Arich*, and it is explained in various places that the matter of the Long Patient One-*Arich* is the matter of knowledge through negation (*Yediyat HaShlilah*), which is not so of the Ancient One-*Atik*-עתיק-which is completely “removed-*Ne’etak*” [נעתיק-“from comprehension altogether].

¹⁴⁰⁷ [In explanation of the verse (Exodus 3:14), “I shall be as I shall be-*Eheye*”*h Asher Eheye*”*h*-אהייה אשר אהייה,” Zohar (III 11b) states, “The first name is *Eheyeh*-אהייה (which refers to *Keter*), which is concealed (and transcends grasp). This is like a person who says [to another] I am who I am (*Ana Man d’Ana* מאן דאנא), but [to the other] it is not known who He is.”]

His Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה within each individual, through which the blessing (*Brachah*-ברכה) is drawn forth etc.¹⁴⁰⁸

This may be understood with a preface about the superiority of the blessing, about which the verse states, “See, I have placed before you etc.,” as explained by Rashi [that this refers to]: “The blessing and the curse that were [later] said at Mount Gerizim and Mount Eival.”

The novelty in this¹⁴⁰⁹ is the matter of the unity of the Jewish people, in that “they became responsible one for the other.”¹⁴¹⁰ [This is why one Jew can fulfill the obligation of another Jew in reciting the blessings, not just blessings said over the *mitzvot*, but even blessings said over things that a person derives pleasure from (*Birchat HaNehenin*),¹⁴¹¹ (even when the consumption of the food is in a way that the food, which is of the shiny husk (*Kelipat Nogah*), descends and becomes temporarily subsumed in the evil of the three completely impure husks (*Shalosh Kelipot HaTmei'ot*),¹⁴¹² since even then, his fellow must make the blessing over the food, and he can bring his fellow to fulfill his obligation [by reciting the blessing on his behalf], up to and including six-hundred thousand Jews).]

This is why it is necessary to affect the matter of unity and oneness amongst the Jewish people, in a way of “you are standing this day, all of you,”¹⁴¹³ “individuals who are as

¹⁴⁰⁸ Likkutei Torah ibid. 19a

¹⁴⁰⁹ As is explained at length in the Sichah talk that preceded the discourse, Ch. 4 (Torat Menachem, Vol. 44 p. 263 and on).

¹⁴¹⁰ Rashi to Deuteronomy 29:28

¹⁴¹¹ See Shulchan Aruch of the Alter Rebbe, Orach Chayim 197:6

¹⁴¹² See Tanya, Likkutei Amarim, Ch. 7 (11b)

¹⁴¹³ Deuteronomy 29:9

one,”¹⁴¹⁴ as in the words of the Alter Rebbe in Tanya, Ch. 32, “they all are aligned one with the other, and they all have one father, such that [all Jews are called] brothers, literally,” up to and including the unity stemming “from the root of their souls in *HaShem is One-HaShem Echad* יהו"ה אחד,” which utterly transcends division.¹⁴¹⁵

Now, since the drawing down of the blessing here is connected to the oneness of all Jews in a way that utterly transcends division, therefore the verse does not expressly state, “(I am) *HaShem* your God-*HaShem Elo*”*hecha* יהו"ה אלהיך,” which indicates the drawing down into the divisions of the chaining down of the worlds (*Hishtalshelut*). (That is, this is the [lower] Name *HaShem* יהו"ה of the order of the chaining down of the worlds (*Seder Hishtalshelut*) in that the word “God-*Elohi*”*m*-אלהי”ם-86” shares the same numerical value as “the natural order-*HaTeva* הטבע-86.”)¹⁴¹⁶

This is because the unity of the Jewish people then was in a way that it was drawn down into the divisions of levels from “the heads of your tribes... to the chopper of your wood and the drawer of your water,” and not in a way that they were literally individuals who are one, utterly transcending division.

¹⁴¹⁴ Likkutei Torah, beginning of Nitzavim; See Likkutei Sichot, Vol. 4, p. 1,141.

¹⁴¹⁵ See Likkutei Sichot Vol. 31, p. 37 and on.

¹⁴¹⁶ [Ginat Egoz of Rabbi Yosef Gikatilla, translated as *HaShem Is One*, Vol. 1, The Gate of His Title (*Shaar HaKinuy*)]; Pardes Rimonim, Shaar 12 (*Shaar HaNetivot*), Ch. 2; Reishit Chochmah, Shaar HaTeshuvah, Ch. 6, section entitled “*v’Hamargeel*” (121b); Shnei Luchot HaBrit 89a (“it states in Zohar”), 189a (“it is hinted at in Zohar”), 308b; Shaalot uTeshuvot Chacham Tzvi, Section 18 (cited in Likkutei Torah, Re’eh 22c); Tanya, Shaar HaYichud VeHaEmunah, translated as *The Gate of Unity and Faith*, Ch. 6.

This is why [here] it only states, “See, I-*Anochi*-אנכי have placed before you etc.,” emphasizing that the drawing down is from the aspect of “I” – meaning, who I am-*Anochi, Mi SheAnochi*-מי שאנכי, אנכי,” which transcends the divisions of the chaining down of the worlds (*Seder Hishtalshelut*). Due to this aspect there also is caused to be a oneness of the Jewish people in a way that transcends division, “individuals as one,” literally.

[Even though, in actuality, the drawing down is through “*HaShem* your God-*HaShem Elo*”הו"ה אלהיך-*hecha*,” this only is in a way of passing through (*Ma'avir*), rather than in a way of inner manifestation (*Hitlabshut*). This is as explained at length in the Chassidic discourses¹⁴¹⁷ about the difference between the way of “passing through” (*Ma'avir*) and “inner manifestation” (*Hitlabshut*).]

From this it is understood that the aspect of “I-*Anochi*-אנכי” in the verse, “See, I-*Anochi*-אנכי have placed before you... the blessing,” (in which “*HaShem* your God-*HaShem Elo*”הו"ה אלהיך-*hecha*” is not mentioned) refers to the true matter of “I” – meaning, who I am-*Anochi, Mi SheAnochi*-אנכי, מי שאנכי,” which altogether is ungraspable, transcending even the “I-*Anochi*-אנכי (am *HaShem*-הו"ה your God)” of the giving of the Torah, which is the revelation of His Godliness in a way of exaltedness.

It can be said that the same is so in regard to the matter of [the verse] “Six hundred-thousand-foot soldiers are the people in whose midst I-*Anochi*-אנכי am.” That is, this does not

¹⁴¹⁷ See Tanya, Kuntres Acharon, discourse entitled “*Lehavin Mah SheKatuv b'Pri Etz Chayim*” (158a); Likkutei Torah, Masei 89b and on; Maamarei Admor HaEmtza'ee, Kuntreisim p. 533 and on; Ohr HaTorah, Vayikra Vol. 2, p. 466 and on; Sefer HaMaamarim 5696 p. 113 and on; 5698 p. 118 and on, and elsewhere.

only refer to the aspect of “I-*Anochi*-אֲנִי” indicating the matter of exaltedness (as explained in chapter three).

Rather, it also refers to the aspect of “I-*Anochi*-אֲנִי” that transcends division altogether. For, the oneness of Moshe with the Jewish people was in a way that the Jewish people, who are the aspect of the “foot” of Moshe, became the transcendent encompassing (*Makif*) aspect and the aspect of the “head” for him¹⁴¹⁸ such that it is through the “foot soldiers of the people,” that there is a drawing down of the revelation of the “I-*Anochi*-אֲנִי” of Moshe within them,¹⁴¹⁹ this being the oneness that utterly transcends division, drawn from the highest aspect of “I-*Anochi*-אֲנִי.”

In the same way, we can say that this also is so of the verse,¹⁴²⁰ “See, I have placed before you this day the life and the good... that which I-*Anochi*-אֲנִי command you today, to love... (this being the good), then you will live and will multiply (this being the life),” “and you shall choose life.”¹⁴²¹

For, since it speaks of the matter of life, it therefore is specifically necessary for there to be the exaltedness, elevation and strength of the aspect of “I-*Anochi*-אֲנִי,” up to and including the highest aspect of “I-*Anochi*-אֲנִי,” (being that here too, the verse only says “I-*Anochi*-אֲנִי,” and not “I am *HaShem* your God-*Anochi HaShem Elo*”*hecha*-יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיךָ”).

¹⁴¹⁸ Torah Ohr, Bereishit 1b

¹⁴¹⁹ See Torat Menachem, Sefer HaMaamarim Adaar p. 35.

¹⁴²⁰ Deuteronomy 30:15-16 (and Rashi there)

¹⁴²¹ Deuteronomy 30:19

This is as understood from the teaching of our sages, of blessed memory,¹⁴²² that the key to the resurrection of the dead (*Techiyat HaMeitim*) is one of the three keys that is in the hands of the Holy One, blessed is He, and was not given over to an intermediary.¹⁴²³

¹⁴²² Talmud Bavli, Taanit 2a; [However, also see Talmud Bavli, Mo'ed Katan 16b; Midrash Devarim Rabba 10:3; Shaarei Orah of Rabbi Yosef Gikatilla, translated as Gates of Light, beginning of Gate Ten (*Keter*); Talmud Bavli, Avodah Zarah 10b].

¹⁴²³ The conclusion of this discourse is missing.