

## Discourse 43

*“V’Hadarta Pnei Zaken... -*

*You shall honor the countenance of the elder...”*

Delivered on Shabbat Parshat Kedoshim,

6<sup>th</sup> of Iyyar, 5725<sup>586</sup>

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

### 1.

The verse states,<sup>587</sup> “You shall honor the countenance of an elder (*Zaken*-זקן),” referring to “one who has acquired wisdom-*Chochmah*.”<sup>588</sup> In Likkutei Torah in the discourse by this title, toward the end of this week’s Torah portion,<sup>589</sup> the Alter Rebbe explains as follows: “One who has acquired” (*SheKamah*-שקנה) refers to the verse,<sup>590</sup> “Those who hold onto Torah (*Tofsei Torah*-תופשי תורה).” This refers to those who grasp it in their memory, so that it is engraved on the tablet of their heart in a constant way. This is as our sages, of blessed memory, stated,<sup>591</sup> “Who is [considered to be] a Torah scholar? Whosoever is asked a question in Torah law (*Halachah*) [about any topic, and can state it] etc.” It then is a *mitzvah* to stand before him, even when he is not engaged in Torah study.<sup>592</sup> This

---

<sup>586</sup> This is the second of two discourses delivered at this gathering.

<sup>587</sup> Leviticus 19:32

<sup>588</sup> Talmud Bavli, Kiddushin 32b

<sup>589</sup> Likkutei Torah, Kedoshim 30d

<sup>590</sup> Jeremiah 2:8

<sup>591</sup> Talmud Bavli, Shabbat 114a

<sup>592</sup> See Shulchan Aruch, Yoreh De’ah 244a and on.

is because the Holy One, blessed is He, dwells within him, even when he is engaged in worldly matters, being that the Torah is engraved in his brain of memory, in his soul and upon his heart, and “the Torah and the Holy One, blessed is He, are entirely one.”<sup>593</sup>

He continues [and states]: “This is why every man of heart, whose heart has moved him and who constantly [yearns] with the expiry of the soul, to adhere to *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, so that *HaShem*-יהו"ה will constantly dwell within him without any cessation or separation ever, not even for a single moment, should acquire the Torah in his brain of memory within his soul etc.”

He adds: “With this we may also understand the reason for the statement in Hilchot Talmud Torah,<sup>594</sup> citing Sifri,<sup>595</sup> that it is a *mitzvah* for each and every Jew to know all of Torah, which includes all 613-תר"ג *mitzvot* and their precise details etc., meaning, to draw forth the light of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, upon all 613-תר"ג powers of his Godly soul in their precise details, as the verse states,<sup>596</sup> “All of you is beautiful, My beloved, and there is no blemish in you,” specifying “All of you-*Kulach*-כלך.”

He concludes: “However, because of the constraints of the times and the shortness of the spirit of knowledge (*Da'at*) of the one who grasps, along with the depth of that which is

---

<sup>593</sup> Tanya, Likkutei Amarim, Ch. 4 and beginning of Ch. 23 citing Zohar; Also see Zohar I 24a; Zohar II 60a; Tikkunei Zohar, beginning of Tikkun 6; Likkutei Torah, Nitzavim 46a, and elsewhere.

<sup>594</sup> Hilchot Talmud Torah of the Alter Rebbe 1:4

<sup>595</sup> Sifri to Deuteronomy 4:7

<sup>596</sup> Song of Songs 4:7

being grasped, at the very least, one should endeavor to receive the strength and empowerment to acquire and engrave the five books of the Torah of Moshe into his brain of memory, which were written according to the mouth of the Almighty One, these being the root of the entire Written Torah and Oral Torah. This is as known that Rabbi Akiva would expound mounds and mounds of Torah laws (*Halachot*) from all the strokes and thorns [of the letters],<sup>597</sup> only that they are in a state of very great concealment in the Concealed World (*Alma d'Itkasiya*). In regard to the Revealed World (*Alma d'Itgaliya*) which is where the Oral Torah comes from, one should, at the very least, acquire and engrave the Mishnaic order of Kodoshim, which in the words of our sages, of blessed memory, is called “Wisdom-*Chochmah*”<sup>598</sup> and brings atonement for man’s sins, as stated by the Arizal.<sup>599</sup>

Now, we must better understand the superiority of the Mishnaic order of Kodoshim (for which reason one should, at the very least, acquire and engrave the Mishnaic order of Kodoshim [into his brain of memory]). For, it makes sense in regard to the reason that the order of Kodoshim is called “Wisdom-*Chochmah*” and thus relates to the matter of an “elder sage (*Zaken-זקן*) is one who has acquired Wisdom-*Chochmah*.” This is as he emphasizes, that it is necessary to acquire the Torah in the brain of memory if one’s soul, being that the brain

---

<sup>597</sup> Talmud Bavli, Menachot 29b

<sup>598</sup> Talmud Bavli, Shabbat 31a

<sup>599</sup> Also see Pri Etz Chayim, Shaar Hanhagat HaLimmud; See Talmud Bavli, Menachot 110a and Rashi there.

of memory is the brain of Wisdom-*Chochmah*.<sup>600</sup> There thus is a special superiority in acquiring and engraving the Mishnaic order of Kodoshim in the brain of memory. However, what relation is there between the Mishnaic order of Kodoshim and the fact that it atones for the sins of man?

## 2.

This may be understood with a preface explaining the verse, “All of you is beautiful, My beloved, and there is no blemish in you,” (cited in Likkutei Torah there), in which there are two matters. The first matter is “All of you is beautiful,” which refers to the beauty in all 613-תרי”ג limbs (and powers), brought about through fulfilling the 613-תרי”ג *mitzvot*, or through the study of the whole of Torah, which includes all 613-תרי”ג *mitzvot* and their particular details etc. This is as mentioned before (from Likkutei Torah) that through this, we draw down the light of *HaShem*-יהו”ה, blessed is He, in all 613-תרי”ג powers of the Godly soul, in all their particular details. Through this there is caused to be the matter of “My beloved-*Ra’ayati*,” this being the bond between the ingathering of the souls of the Jewish people (*Knesset Yisroel*) and the Holy One, blessed is He.

The second matter is “there is no blemish in you.” This refers to the precondition of necessarily turning away from evil. For, if the matter of sin and transgression is present, then

---

<sup>600</sup> Torah Ohr, Hosafot to Tetzaveh 110d; Likkutei Torah, Hosafot to Vayikra 52d.

since,<sup>601</sup> “Your sins have separated between you and your God,” it therefore is not possible for the matter of “My beloved-*Ra’ayati*-רעיתי” to be. This is as explained in Tanya,<sup>602</sup> that it is not possible for the wicked to begin serving *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, without first repenting for the past, in order to break the external husks (*Kelipot*) which are veils that separate and cause an iron curtain that separates between them and their Father in heaven etc.

Based on this, it is understood why the verse adds, “and there is no blemish in you.” For, at first glance, since the verse already said “all of you is beautiful,” it is self-understood that “there is no blemish in you,” in that the matter of blemish is the opposite of beauty.

However, the explanation is that it is possible that when it comes to the spirituality of matters, it can be that “all of you is beautiful,” but that even so, one has a blemish. This is as our sages, of blessed memory, stated,<sup>603</sup> “Even the sinners of Israel are full of *mitzvot* as a pomegranate [is filled with seeds].” In other words (in all their limbs) they are full of *mitzvot* and “all of you is beautiful,” but even so, they have blemish, in that they intentionally transgress sins, which is why they are called “the sinners of Israel-*Poshei Yisroel*-פושעי ישראל,” in that the word “sin-*Pesha*-פשע” refers to intentional sins.<sup>604</sup> This is why the verse emphasizes that besides the fact that “all of you is beautiful, My beloved,” in addition, “there is no blemish in you.”

---

<sup>601</sup> Isaiah 59:2

<sup>602</sup> Tanya, Likkutei Amarim, Ch. 17

<sup>603</sup> Talmud Bavli, Chagigah 27a

<sup>604</sup> See Talmud Bavli, Yoma 36b

However, because of the constraint of the times etc., (which is what Likkutei Torah is discussing here) it is possible that not only is there a lacking in the matter of “all of you is beautiful” caused through the study and knowledge of all the particular details of the 613 תרי”ג *mitzvot*, but there can even be a lacking in the matter of “there is no blemish in you.”

It is in this regard that there is the solution of acquiring and engraving the Mishnaic order of Kodoshim within oneself. This is because there are both elements of superiority in it, in that the matter of “all of you is beautiful” is present in it, being that it is called Wisdom-*Chochmah*, and there also is the matter of “there is no blemish in you” in it, being that it atones for all of one’s sins. The word “atonement-*Kapparah*-כפרה,” is a term that means “wiping-*Kinu’ach*-קינוח,” in that it wipes away (and completely removes) the contamination of the sin,<sup>605</sup> by which the matter of blemish is nullified.

### 3.

We can add that the saying of his honorable holiness, my father-in-law, the Rebbe, is well known,<sup>606</sup> that the study of the discourse entitled “*v’Hadarta Pnei Zaken*” in Likkutei Torah, causes the arousal of the reception of the radiance of the singular-*Yechidah* essence of the soul in an inner manifest way (*b’Pnimiyyut*). From this it is understood that even the content of the discourse speaks about the aspect of the singular-*Yechidah* [essence of the soul].

---

<sup>605</sup> Tanya, Iggeret HaTeshuvah, Ch. 1

<sup>606</sup> Sichah talk of the 19<sup>th</sup> of Kislev 5707 (Sefer HaSichot 5707 p. 93).

It can be said that the explanation of this is based on the well known matter,<sup>607</sup> that the revelation of the aspect of the singular-*Yechidah* [essence of the soul] (which transcends all four [other] aspects of the soul, the *Nefesh*, *Ru'ach*, *Neshamah*, and *Chayah*), causes the nullification of the existence of the external husks (*Kelipot*), being that they are utterly inconsequential and have no hold there, as our sages, of blessed memory, stated,<sup>608</sup> “They lack a shadow of a shadow.” This is the matter of the nullification of the existence of the sin, which is the superiority of the Mishnaic order of *Kodoshim*, which atones for the sins of man, as mentioned above.

Based on this, it can be said in regard to what is explained at the end of the discourse, [in the discourse entitled “*Shechorah Ani*,”<sup>609</sup> and as in the words of his honorable holiness, my father-in-law, the Rebbe,<sup>610</sup> as to the inner reason that the end of the discourse is printed in the discourse entitled “*Shechorah Ani*”],<sup>611</sup> in explanation of the conclusion of the verse (“You shall rise in the presence of an elder etc.”) “And you shall fear Your God,” which refers to the aspect of *Kingship-Malchut*.

---

<sup>607</sup> See Likkutei Torah, Teitzei 36c

<sup>608</sup> Talmud Bavli, Gittin 66a

<sup>609</sup> See the citation at the end of the discourse: “See what is stated in regard to the verse, “In the presence of an old person shall you rise and you shall honor the presence of an elder [sage],” at the end of the discourse entitled “I am black but I am beautiful” (Likkutei Torah, Shir HaShirim 11a and on).

<sup>610</sup> Sichah talk of the 19<sup>th</sup> of Kislev 5707 (Sefer HaSichot 5707 p. 93).

<sup>611</sup> And based upon what was explained before, that due to the aspect of the *Yechidah* there is caused to be the atonement for sins, since “they do not possess a shadow of a shadow,” the relationship with what is explained in the discourse “*Shechorah Ani*” (7b) is also understood with regard to the matter of “the draperies of Shlomo,” “to which there is no corresponding aspect in the external husks (*Kelipot*) whatsoever.”

The explanation is that the aspect of the singular-*Yechidah* of the soul, which transcends the aspect of the chaining down (*Hishtalshelut*) within man, is drawn and illuminates in an inner way (*b'Pnimityut*) within all the inner manifest powers (*Kochot Pnimityim*), up to and including the aspect of Kingship-*Malchut*.