

Discourse 1

“Min HaMeitzar - From the constraints”

Delivered on the 2nd day of Rosh HaShanah, 5726

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

1.

The verse states,³³ “From the straits I called *Ya”H*-יה”ה, *Ya”H*-יה”ה answered me with expansiveness.” His honorable holiness, my father-in-law, the Rebbe, questions the wording of this [verse] (in the discourse entitled “*Min HaMeitzar*” of the year 5709),³⁴ that we must understand the use of the word “I called-*Karati*-קראתי.” That is, this word is like a person who calls (*Koreh*-קורא) his friend, which is only by way of calling (*Kriyah*-קריאה) him. However, at first glance, since the verse began, “From the straits,” it should have said “From the straits I pleaded-*Shavati*-שועתי,” or, “I cried out-*Tza’akti*-צעקתי,” or “I screamed-*Za’akti*-זעקתי,” as in the verse,³⁵ “They cried out (*Vayitzaku*-ויצעקו) to *HaShem*-יהוה and their plea (*Sha’avatam*-שעותם) ascended.”

³³ Psalms 118:5

³⁴ Toward the beginning (Sefer HaMaamarim 5709, p. 11).

³⁵ This is as the verse is quoted in Sefer HaMaamarim 5709 *ibid*. See Exodus 2:23 “And they screamed out (*VaYizaku*-ויצעקו) and their plea arose before God-*Elohi”m*-אלהי”ם.” See, however, Ramban on the verse, who states, “And the children of Israel cried out (*VaYitzaku*-ויצעקו) and their plea arose.” [Also see Exodus 14:10.]

This is especially so considering that this is one of the verses said on Rosh HaShanah before sounding the Shofar. That is, it follows all the preparations in serving *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, during the month of Elul, including the days of *Selichot*, as well as the day before Rosh HaShanah and the evening of Rosh HaShanah, up to and including the morning of Rosh HaShanah before sounding the Shofar. This being so, how is it that after such service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, one's approach to saying these verses before sounding the Shofar is only by way of "calling-*Kriyah*-קריאה?"

Now, we should add and ask from the opposite angle. Why does it state, "From the straits (*Min HaMeitzar*-מִן הַמֵּיצָר)?" At first glance, after all the service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, of the month of Elul, the days of *Selichot*, the day before Rosh HaShanah, the night of Rosh HaShanah, and the morning of Rosh HaShanah before sounding the Shofar, how does it apply for a person to still be in a state and standing of "constraint" (*Meitzar*-מֵיצָר)?

More specifically, as known,³⁶ in the month of Elul there is an illumination of the thirteen attributes of mercy, which are so great that "they do not return empty-handed."³⁷ This is so not only of the drawing down from Above, but also of its effect in man, that they certainly cause an awakening in a one's soul.³⁸

Now, in addition to the awakening brought about in a Jew by the revelation of the thirteen attributes of mercy **from**

³⁶ See the Siddur of the Arizal (Minhagei Chodesh Elul); Mishnat Chassidim, Meschet Elul 1:3; Likkutei Torah, Re'eh 32b

³⁷ Talmud Bavli, Rosh HaShanah 17b

³⁸ See Likkutei Torah, Re'eh ibid. 33a

Above, there also is an awakening in one's soul through **the actions of the Jewish people**, in that throughout the entire month of Elul they sound the Shofar.

This is to alert the Jewish people to return to *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, in repentance (*Teshuvah*), as the verse states,³⁹ "Can a Shofar be sounded in a city [and the people will not tremble] etc." That is, the blast of the Shofar causes fear and trembling in a person, as the verse concludes, "and the people will not tremble?" (in the form of a question).

It should be added that the fact (that the sounding of the Shofar causes fear and trembling in a person) is a conclusive legal ruling (*Halachah Pesukah*) in Torah, and thus cannot at all be otherwise. That is, through the sounding of the Shofar, even the most lax Jew is roused, and how much more so, those who are involved in serving *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He.

We thus find that even a Jew who, until the day before Rosh Chodesh Elul, was not in a state of being roused etc., nonetheless, upon hearing the blast of the Shofar from Rosh Chodesh Elul on, he is awakened with a motion of fear and trembling etc.

Moreover, from Rosh Chodesh Elul and on, we recite daily the Psalm,⁴⁰ "By David: *HaShem*-יהו"ה is my light and my salvation."⁴¹ That is, on these days every Jew is in a state in which *HaShem*-יהו"ה illuminates ("my light") the path upon which he should tread, and moreover, He even saves him ("my

³⁹ Amos 3:6

⁴⁰ Psalms 27

⁴¹ Siddur of the Arizal and Siddur of the Alter Rebbe there; Match Ephraim, Orach Chayim 581:6; See Shaar HaKolel 11:28

salvation”) and helps him trod upon that path.⁴² Thus, after all this, every Jew certainly is already in a state and standing of having left the constraint. This being so, why is it that this verse “from the straits” is specifically recited in the verses that precede sounding the Shofar?

2.

Now, this can be explained based on the teaching of our sages, of blessed memory,⁴³ “Any year that is poor (*Rashah*-רשה) at its beginning will be rich at its end, as the verse states,⁴⁴ ‘From the beginning of the year-*MeReishit*-מְרֵשִׁית,’ in which the word ‘from the beginning-*MeReishit*-מְרֵשִׁית’ is spelled (missing [the letter *Aleph*-א]), ‘and until the end,’ meaning that at its end it will have a [good] end.” Rashi comments on this stating, “That is, On Rosh HaShanah the Jewish people make themselves poor (*Rashin*-רשין) by speaking words of supplication and prayer, as in the verse,⁴⁵ ‘A pauper (*Rash*-רש) speaks beseechingly.’”

In his discourse entitled “*Tikoo*” of the year 5628,⁴⁶ his honorable holiness, the Rebbe Maharash, explains that this is the superiority of the prayer of the pauper (*Tefillah L'Ani*) as in the verse,⁴⁷ “This poor man calls and *HaShem*-יהו"ה hears.”

⁴² Also see Likkutei Sichot Vol. 9, p. 172 and the citations there.

⁴³ Talmud Bavli, Rosh HaShanah 16b

⁴⁴ Deuteronomy 11:12

⁴⁵ Proverbs 18:23

⁴⁶ Printed in Sefer HaMaamarim 5627 toward the end (p. 428 and on); Also see Sefer HaMaamarim, Kuntreisim Vol. 1, p. 118a and on.

⁴⁷ Psalms 34:7

This likewise is the matter of “from the straits,”⁴⁸ in that it is similar to, “the Jewish people make themselves poor etc.” It is specifically through this that the [conclusion of the verse], “*Ya”H-ה”ה*” answered me with expansiveness,” comes about, this being the matter of “[it] will be rich at its end,” meaning that its end will be a [good] end-*Acharit*-אחרית.”

The word “[its] end-*Acharit*-אחרית-619,” plus the word itself (*Kolel*), is numerically equal to the Crown-*Keter*-כתר-620,⁴⁹ which is the matter of complete wealth. That is, it is not just the wealth of the *Sefirah* of Splendor-*Tiferet*, nor even the wealth of the *Sefirah* of Understanding-*Binah*, but also is the wealth of the Crown-*Keter*, which is limitless (*Bli Gvul*).

Now, the meaning of “a year that is poor,” is as Rashi specifies, that “the Jewish people **make themselves** poor.” These words indicate that, in reality, they are not poor, but only “make themselves poor,” through nullifying themselves (*Bittul*).

With this in mind, we also can explain the matter of “from the straits etc.” That is, in reality (after serving *HaShem*-יהו”ה, blessed is He, throughout the month of Elul etc.), they already left the constraint (as mentioned above), except that because of their self-nullification (*Bittul*), that they “make themselves poor,” there still is the matter of “from the straits etc.”⁵⁰

However, this explanation is not sufficient. For, since service of *HaShem*-יהו”ה, blessed is He, must be in an inner way

⁴⁸ See the discourse entitled “*Tikoo*” ibid. Ch.3 (p. 431).

⁴⁹ Me’orei Ohr Aleph 66

⁵⁰ Also see the discourse entitled “*v’Hayah BaYom HaHoo Yitaka*” 5728 Ch. 7, (Torat Menachem, Sefer HaMaamarim Tishrei, p. 14 and on).

(*b'Pnimityut*), with truth [and sincerity], therefore the matter of “from the straits” must also be (not only in a way that, in reality, he already has left the constraint and only **makes himself** as if he is in constraint, that “they make themselves poor,” but) it must be in an inner and true way, that he truly is in a state of constraint.

However, this is not understood. For, how could it be that after all his service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, throughout the month of Elul etc., until before the sounding of the Shofar, he could still be truly in a state of constraint, about which he says – in a true and inner way – “from the straits etc.?” Moreover, at the very same time that he truly is in a state of “constraint,” he says, “(from the straits) I called-*Karati*-קראתי,” which (as mentioned above) is only a “calling-*Kriyah*-קריאה”.

3.

Now, to understand this, we must preface with the explanation in the above-mentioned discourse⁵¹ about the prayer of the pauper (*Tefillah L'Ani*), about which the verse states,⁵² “A prayer of the pauper when he swoons and pours his talk before *HaShem*-יהו"ה.” The word “his talk-*Sicho*-שיחו” indicates “complaints-*Tar'oomot*-תרעומות.” In other words, a pauper has complaints on the Holy One, blessed is He, that is, why he must suffer anguish and tribulation and receive his [meager] livelihood from the wealthy?

⁵¹ Ch. 3 (p. 431); Also see the discourse entitled “*Tikoo*” of the second day of Rosh HaShanah 5718, Ch. 3 and on (Sefer HaMaamarim 5718, p. 4 and on, translated in The Teachings of The Rebbe 5718, Vol. 1, Discourse 1).

⁵² Psalms 102:1

He explains that, in truth, *HaShem*-יהו"ה has a deep Supernal intent in creating the poor. That is, it was established Above that the entire order of the chaining down of the worlds (*Seder Hishtalshelut*) will be in a manner of bestower (*Mashpia*) and recipient (*Mekabel*).

An example is the aspects of *Zeir Anpin* and *Nukva* of the world of Emanation (*Atzilut*), in which the aspect of *Zeir Anpin* is the bestower, and the aspect of Kingship-*Malchut* is the recipient. The same is so even higher, in the aspects of Wisdom-*Chochmah* and Understanding-*Binah*, in that this too is in a way of bestower and recipient. That is, Wisdom-*Chochmah* is called the Father-אב-א, and is the aspect of bestower to Understanding-*Binah*, which is called the Mother-אם-א and is the aspect of the recipient. The same is so even higher, in the aspect of the Crown-*Keter*, that has two aspects; the Ancient One-*Atik* and the Long Patient One-*Arich*, which are aspects of bestower (*Atik*) and recipient (*Arich*).

This is so much so, that even in the Ancient One-*Atik*, there also is the matter of bestower (*Mashpia*) and recipient (*Mekabel*), as stated in Etz Chayim,⁵³ that the entire essence of the Ancient One-*Atik* is made of the two aspects of *HaShem*'s-יהו"ה Name of *Ma''H*-מ"ה-45 [י"ד ה"א ו"א ה"א] and His Name of *Ba''N*-בן-52 [י"ד ה"ה ו"ו ה"ה]. Its Name of *Ma''H*-מ"ה-45 is the masculine aspect of the Ancient One-*Atik*, and its Name of *Ba''N*-בן-52 is the feminine aspect of the Ancient One-*Atik*.

Beyond this, even the general drawing down of the of the Line-*Kav* from the limitless light of the Unlimited One that precedes the restraint of the *Tzimtzum*, is an aspect of bestowal

⁵³ Etz Chayim, Shaar 11 (Shaar Atik Yomin), Ch. 1

drawn down from the Bestower (*Mashpia*) to the recipient (*Mekabel*).⁵⁴

The same is so even higher, in the drawing of the light that precedes the restraint of the *Tzimtzum* from the aspect of the Luminary (*Ma'or*) etc. This is as understood from the explanation elsewhere⁵⁵ about the matter of The Holy One, blessed is He (*Koodsha Breech Hoo*) and His Indwelling Presence (*Shechintei*) (in that this is a matter of Bestower (*Mashpia*) and recipient (*Mekabel*)), these being the aspects of the light of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, that surrounds and transcends all worlds (*Sovev Kol Almin*) and His light that fills all worlds (*Memaleh Kol Almin*).⁵⁶

Thus, since the entire order of the chaining down of the worlds (*Seder Hishtalshelut*) is in a way of bestower (*Mashpia*) and recipient (*Mekabel*), therefore this matter of bestower (*Mashpia*) and recipient (*Mekabel*) must also be below, this being the matter of the wealthy and the poor.

However, though in truth, there must be poor people, nonetheless, the pauper can still complain why his lot is to be poor, and why are not the wealthy poor. This is especially so when we observe that there are many poor people who are much more exemplary than the wealthy. [That is, not only are they better than them in their service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, in a way of self-sacrifice (*Mesirat Nefesh*), but this is so even

⁵⁴ See Shaar HaYichud of the Mittler Rebbe, translated as The Gate of Unity, Ch. 14-15.

⁵⁵ Maamarei Admor HaZaken 5564 p. 235; Biurei HaZohar of the Tzemach Tzeddek, Vol. 2, p. 819 and on; Also see Torat Menachem, Sefer HaMaamarim Kislev, p. 68 and the citations there.

⁵⁶ Tanya, Likkutei Amarim, Ch. 41 (58a)

in serving Him according to reason and intellect.] Yet, even so, they must receive [their meager livelihood] from the wealthy.

Thus, since the cry of the pauper is so great, and his argument is both strong and right, in that his poverty is not his own fault, but only is necessary because of the order of the chaining down of the worlds (*Seder Hishtalshelut*), therefore his prayer takes precedence etc. Moreover, because of the greatness of his constraint – “from the straits etc.” – his prayer reaches higher etc.⁵⁷

4.

Now, based on what was stated above, that “the prayer of the pauper [when he swoons] and pours his talk before *HaShem*-יהו”ה,” is about being in the aspect of a recipient (*Mekabel*), we thus find that this matter of the prayer of the poor (*Tefillah LeAni*) is present on all levels where there is a matter of bestower (*Mashpia*) and recipient (*Mekabel*).

Thus, since this matter is present throughout all the levels of the order of the chaining down of the worlds (*Seder Hishtalshelut*), and even before the restraint of the *Tzimtzum* etc., it thus is understood that there also are different levels in the matter of “constraint” (poverty). That is, that which until now was considered to be an aspect of expansiveness, is an aspect of constraint compared to even higher levels.

From this it is understood that the same applies to [the verse], “From the straits I called *Ya*”ה-יה,” which we recite on

⁵⁷ Also see the Sichah talk that follows the discourse (Torat Menachem, Vol. 45 p. 14 and on).

Rosh HaShanah before sounding the Shofar. This is also hinted in the Shofar itself, in that one side is narrow whereas the other side is wide, which relates to the verse, “From the straits I called *Ya”H-ה”י*, *Ya”H-ה”י* answered me with expansiveness.”⁵⁸ That is, there [also] are various levels in the “constraint” of the Shofar.

The explanation is that the verse states,⁵⁹ “On that day a great Shofar will be blown.” That is, the Shofar has two aspects, the regular Shofar (of Rosh HaShanah) and “the great Shofar” (*Shofar Gadol* גדול-שופר) (of the coming future).

Now, even the great Shofar (*Shofar Gadol*) is such that one side is narrow and the other side is wide, just like a regular Shofar. This is understood from the teaching of our sages, of blessed memory,⁶⁰ about the ram of Yitzchak, that a ram has two horns. The sound of the left horn was heard at Mount Sinai [this being the Shofar mentioned at the giving of the Torah, which also is connected to the Shofar of Rosh HaShanah, which is why it is recited together with the verses of Shofar recited on Rosh HaShanah.

Moreover, this also is understood from what the great Rav and Godly genius, the Chassid, Rabbi Levi Yitzchak of Berdichev,⁶¹ stated in explaining the sounding of the Shofar with the analogy of dressing [the wise man] in the garments that he wore when he guided the king from the forest to his palace

⁵⁸ See Zohar II 60a (Ra’aya Mehemna), cited in Sefer HaMaamarim 5671 p. 1 and on; 5697 p. 153; Also see Maamarei Admor HaZaken 5563 Vol. 1, p. 197; Ohr HaTorah, Shemot (Drushei Parshat Zachor) p. 1, 773.

⁵⁹ Isaiah 27:13

⁶⁰ Pirke d’Rabbi Eliezer, Ch. 31

⁶¹ In Kedushat Levi, Drush L’Rosh HaShanah, section entitled “*b’Chatzotzrot*” (96a) – cited in *Hemshech* “*v’Kachah*” 5637, Ch. 70.

etc., that the Shofar is the garment that was worn at the giving of the Torah, when the Jewish people accepted the Torah and crowned the Holy One, blessed is He, with the Shofar.] The right horn etc., is destined to be sounded in the coming future, about which the verse states, “On that day a great Shofar will be blown.”

Now, being that the two Shofars (the regular Shofar and the great Shofar) are the two horns of the ram of Yitzchak, it is understood that they are connected and related to each other, and that both are of like manner, in that one side is narrow etc. That is, even in the great Shofar (*Shofar Gadol*) there is a matter of “constraint” (*Meitzar*-מִצֵּר), except that the “constraint” of the great Shofar is of an entirely higher level beyond comparison.

5.

This may be understood based on what his honorable holiness, the Tzemach Tzeddek [this year being the hundredth anniversary of his passing and Hilulah, and his birthday being on the eve before Rosh HaShanah] explains in Ohr HaTorah⁶² [in the [new] volume that currently is being printed.⁶³ The words of the Tzemach Tzeddek about something coming into print is well known,⁶⁴ namely, that it is for [all] generations.] Therein he explains the discourse of the Alter Rebbe in Likkutei Torah, entitled “*v’Hayah BaYom HaHoo Yitaka b’Shofar*

⁶² Ohr HaTorah, Devarim, Vol. 3 – Drushei Rosh HaShanah, p. 1,405 and on.

⁶³ The date in the introduction is “Erev Shabbat Kodesh, 6th of Tishrei, 5626.”

⁶⁴ Igrot Kodesh of the Rebbe Rayatz, Vol. 2, p. 382; Likkutei Sichot Vol. 2, p. 522 and on.

Gadol,”⁶⁵ in elucidation of the difference between the regular Shofar and “the great Shofar” (*Shofar Gadol*). That is, the regular Shofar is the aspect of Splendor-*Tiferet*, whereas “the great Shofar” (*Shofar Gadol*) is the aspect of Understanding-*Binah*.⁶⁶

He explains this based on the teaching of the Zohar⁶⁷ on the verse,⁶⁸ “Naftali is a swift gazelle who gives sayings of beauty (*Imrei Shefer* אִמְרֵי שֹפָר).” [It states there], “This is the meaning of the verse,⁶⁹ ‘Your speech is comely (*u’Midbarech Na’aveh* וּמִדְבַּרְךָ נְאוֹהֶה-),’ for the voice (*Kol* קוֹל) is what directs the speech (*Dibur* דְּבוּר) etc., and that voice (*Kol* קוֹל) was sent from a deep place Above and is an emissary to direct the speech (*Dibur* דְּבוּר) etc.”

The explanation is that the aspect of Kingship-*Malchut* of the world of Emanation (*Atzilut*), which manifests within the worlds of Creation, Formation, and Action (*Briyah*, *Yetzirah*, *Asiyah*), is called speech (*Dibur*), just as speech is that which becomes revealed to one’s fellow. Now, this speech is drawn forth by the voice (*Kol* קוֹל). This is as explained by his honorable holiness, the Mittler Rebbe, in the Siddur,⁷⁰ in the discourse entitled “*Lehavin Inyan Tekiyat Shofar Al Pi Kavanot HaBaal Shem Tov Zichrono LiBrachah*,” (in regard to the statement in the continuation of the above-mentioned teaching

⁶⁵ Drushei Rosh HaShanah 58a and on.

⁶⁶ [Also see Shaarei Orah of Rabbi Yosef Gikatilla, translated as Gates of Light, Gate Eight (*Binah*).]

⁶⁷ Zohar I 246b

⁶⁸ Genesis 49:21

⁶⁹ Song of Songs 4:3

⁷⁰ Siddur Im Da’Ch – Shaar HaTekiyot, 244c

of the Zohar), that the voice (*Kol*-קול) and speech (*Dibur*-דבור) are like the general (*Klall*) and particular (*Prat*).

However, the drawing forth of the speech (that is, Kingship-*Malchut* of the world of Emanation (*Atzilut*) from the voice) is in a way that through it, there will be the novel existence of the separate worlds of Creation, Formation, and Action (*Briyah, Yetzirah, Asiyah*). This comes about through the fact that the voice (*Kol*-קול) is “sent from a deep place Above,” this being the aspect of the Crown-*Keter*. This is why it is sent as an emissary from it to conduct the speech, so that through it there will be the novel existence of the worlds of Creation, Formation, and Action (*Briyah, Yetzirah, Asiyah*). For, as known, it is from a very lofty place that there can be the descent and chaining down to below.

About this the verse states, “sayings of beauty (*Imrei Shefer*-אמרי שפר),” similar to, “Your speech is comely (*u’Midbarech Na’aveh*-ומדברך נאוה).” That is, the speech (“sayings-*Imrei*-אמרי”) receives from the aspect of the pleasure (“beautiful-*Shefer*-שפר”) of the Crown-*Keter*.

More specifically, the aspect of Splendor-*Tiferet* is the “voice” (*Kol*-קול) sent “from the deep place Above,” this being the aspect of the Crown-*Keter* as it is drawn down and revealed in Understanding-*Binah*. (This is because the revelation of the Ancient One-*Atik* is in Understanding-*Binah*.)⁷¹ This voice is the voice of the regular Shofar, which is the aspect of Splendor-*Tiferet*.

⁷¹ See Zohar III 178b; Torah Ohr, Lech Lecha 11b; Likkutei Torah, Drushei Rosh HaShanah 57a; Also see Shaar HaYichud of the Mittler Rebbe, translated as The Gate of Unity, Ch. 40 and the notes and citations there.

Now, based on what was said above, that the Great Shofar (*Shofar Gadol*) is the aspect of Understanding-*Binah*, it is understood that the voice of the Great Shofar is a much higher and Supernal voice (than the voice of the regular Shofar, which is the aspect of Splendor-*Tiferet* that is drawn from the Crown-*Keter* as it is drawn down and revealed in Understanding-*Binah*). That is, in it, there is an actual drawing forth of the aspect of the Ancient One-*Atik* [Himself]. Now, according to the explanation,⁷² that the Great Shofar (*Shofar Gadol*) is the Understanding-*Binah* of the Long Patient One-*Arich*, the drawing forth within it is from the aspect of the Crown-*Keter* of the Ancient One-*Atik* etc.

[This also explains [why] the matter of the Great Shofar (*Shofar Gadol*) will specifically be in the coming future, as the verse states,⁷³ “On that day a great Shofar will be blown.” This is because the difference between the regular voice (which relates to the regular Shofar) and the Great Voice (*Kol Gadol*), (which relates to the Great Shofar) is that the regular voice indicates the drawing down into letters of speech, this being the revealed world (*Alma d’Itgaliya*). In contrast, the Great Voice (*Kol Gadol*) indicates the drawing down into letters of thought, this being the concealed world (*Alma d’Itkasiya*).

Thus, since in the coming future there also will be a drawing down of the aspect of the concealed world (*Alma d’Itkasiya*) to be revealed like the aspect of the revealed world (*Alma d’Itgaliya*) is currently revealed, there therefore will then be a drawing down of the aspect of the Great Voice (*Kol*

⁷² See the explanation of the Ramaz to Zohar III 277c

⁷³ Isaiah 27:13

Gadol), this being the matter of the Great Shofar (*Shofar Gadol*).]

Now, according to the different levels of the matter of the Shofar, the regular Shofar and the Great Shofar (*Shofar Gadol*), we can also understand the different levels in the matter of the “constraint” of the Shofar (which is narrow on one side). That is, on each level the “constraint” is commensurate to that level. Therefore, even after leaving the “constraint” of the regular Shofar, it still is a “constraint” as it relates to the aspect of the Great Shofar.

6.

Based on this, we can explain the matter of reciting the verse, “From the straits I called etc.,” before sounding the Shofar. For, even though after serving *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, throughout the month of Elul, the days of Selichot, the day before Rosh HaShanah, the evening of Rosh HaShanah, until the morning of Rosh HaShanah before sounding the Shofar, we certainly are already in a state of having left the “constraint,” nonetheless, it still is an aspect of a “constraint” in comparison to higher levels.

On a deeper level, it specifically is after leaving the constraint brought about through prefacing by serving *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, throughout the month of Elul etc., until the morning of Rosh HaShanah before sounding of the Shofar, that we come to recognize that even the loftiest service of Him is still a state of constraint. For, in comparison to the Essential Self of the limitless light of the Singular Preexistent Intrinsic

and Unlimited One, *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, "all are as nothing before Him,"⁷⁴ and "no thought at all that can grasp Him,"⁷⁵ not even the Primordial Thought (*Machshavah HaKedooma*) of Primordial Man (*Adam Kadmon*).

This being so, even when one's service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, is on the loftiest level, it utterly is of no consequence, and this is what causes the "constraint" etc. Thus, when he recites the verse, "From the constraints I called etc.," he says this in truth.

Now, it should be added that the matter of the "constraint" present in even the loftiest levels of serving *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, (in that "all are as nothing before Him" and "no thought at all can grasp Him") is in a way that "the Jewish people **make themselves** poor," (as in the precise wording of Rashi in explanation of, "a year that is poor at its beginning").

This may be understood based on the explanation⁷⁶ of the words of our prayers,⁷⁷ "With Your abundant mercies, have mercy on us," that we have no sense of the greatness of the mercies, which is why we plead, "With **Your abundant mercies**, have mercy on us."

The explanation is that it is not just a person who, because of his lowly stature, does not recognize the compassion that is upon him, but this is even so of a person whose state and

⁷⁴ See Daniel 4:32; Zohar I 11b

⁷⁵ Introduction to Tikkunei Zohar 17a

⁷⁶ Likkutei Torah, Pinchas 78c and elsewhere. [Also see the discourse entitled "v'Hayah Eikev Tishme'un – It shall come to pass that because you listen," 5725, translated in The Teachings of The Rebbe 5725, Vol. 2, Discourse 62 and on.]

⁷⁷ In the blessings of the *Shema* in the morning prayers.

standing is very lofty, in which his constraint is only in comparison to an even loftier level, that upon him too there is great pity etc.

For, as known,⁷⁸ even in regard to the upper worlds it applies to use the terms pity and compassion, being that they all are utterly of no comparison to Him, blessed is He, and they too are in a state of constraint etc. However, since this constraint is only in comparison to the Essential Self of the limitless light of the Unlimited One, *HaShem*-יה"ה Himself, blessed is He, therefore, since we have no grasp of Him, we therefore have no grasp of the great mercy and compassion. He alone is the Known and the Knower who knows His being and Essential Self, and the glory of His greatness and splendor, and that before Him all is as nothing, and [to Him we say], "In Your abundant mercies, have mercy on us."⁷⁹

From this it is understood that even the "constraint" (which is what causes the pity and compassion etc.) is not sensed by us as it is **truly** is, and it only is in a way that "the Jewish people **make themselves** poor," similar to the prefix letter *Khaf*-כ which [only] indicates similarity (*Khaf HaDimyon*).

Nonetheless, in regard to the sense of constraint in a way that "they make themselves poor," though it just is with the prefix letter *Khaf*-כ, which only indicates similarity (*Khaf HaDimyon*), it nevertheless **is true**. This is like the

⁷⁸ Likkutei Torah, Teitzei 41a and elsewhere

⁷⁹ Likkutei Torah, Masei 88d

explanation⁸⁰ of the verse,⁸¹ “*HaShem*-יהוה is a God of knowledges,” [in that the plural form of the word “knowledges-*De’ot*-דעות”] indicates two knowledges; His upper knowledge (*Da’at Elyon*) and His lower knowledge (*Da’at Tachton*). That is, being that the lower knowledge (*Da’at Tachton*), is [also] a knowledge within His Godliness, it therefore is true. Thus, calling Him from the “constraints,” in a way that “the Jewish people make themselves poor,” is also true.

However, even so, the true knowledge is specifically the upper knowledge (*Da’at Elyon*). In other words, in truth, the constraint is not just that “they make themselves poor.” Rather, this is how it is in the upper knowledge (*Da’at Elyon*), that before Him, blessed is He, all truly are poor. Therefore, even a person who is on the highest of levels and grasps the loftiest comprehensions in Godliness, is in a state of constraint.

In other words, even when there is an illumination within him of the upper knowledge (*Da’at Elyon*), nonetheless, in comparison to a higher level this only is the aspect of the lower knowledge (*Da’at Tachton*). This is as explained in Tanya,⁸² that before Him, blessed is He, even the upper knowledge (*Da’at Elyon*) “is comparable to a beast etc.” This refers to the matter of the Great Beast (*Behemah Rabbah*) that precedes and transcends the world of Emanation (*Atzilut*).

⁸⁰ Likkutei Torah, Re’eh 23d; Shir HaShirim 47b, and elsewhere; Also see the discourse entitled “*Tikoo*” *ibid.* Ch. 6 (p. 435).

⁸¹ Samuel I 2:3

⁸² Tanya, Likkutei Amarim, Ch. 46

[This is like the explanation elsewhere⁸³ about the verse,⁸⁴ “You shall know this day and set it upon your heart,” that even those aspects that currently cannot be grasped by way of understanding and comprehension, but only by way of faith (*Emunah*), this being the aspect of the light of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, that surrounds and transcends all worlds (*Sovev Kol Almin*), will be drawn down and revealed in the coming future in a way of understanding and comprehension, this being the aspect of His light that fills all worlds (*Memaleh Kol Almin*), and then the matter of faith (*Emunah*) will be in regard to much loftier levels etc.]

7.

Now, being that our recitation of the verse, “From the straits I called etc.,” on Rosh HaShanah before sounding the Shofar, (after preparing through the general service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, during the month of Elul etc.) stems from the recognition that in comparison to the Essential Self of the limitless light of the Singular Preexistent Intrinsic and Unlimited One, *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, “all is as nothing before Him,” and, “no thought at all can grasp Him,” through which it follows automatically that we grasp nothing, as mentioned above, therefore this is the greatest of constraints, in that it is the ultimate constraint, absent of any form at all, in a way that is completely devoid of positive being altogether.

⁸³ Likkutei Torah, Va'etchanan 4b and elsewhere

⁸⁴ Deuteronomy 4:39

The explanation is that there is constraint that accords to reason and intellect, meaning that one grasps his constraint with his intellect, and it thus has form, measure, and limitation. That is, he can measure what the constraint consists of. It thus follows automatically that this is not the true matter of constraint, in that he senses a matter of expansiveness relative to the constraint below it.

However, the true matter of constraint is when it has no form at all, in a way of the utter absence of positive being altogether. This is the constraint of Rosh HaShanah, before the sounding the Shofar. For, there then is an illumination of the revelation of the Essential Self of the limitless light of the Singular Preexistent Intrinsic and Unlimited One, and as a result, one senses that he has no grasp whatsoever. This causes the ultimate constraint, which is in a way of the utter absence of positive being altogether.

This also is the meaning of what our sages, of blessed memory, stated⁸⁵ on the verse,⁸⁶ “Blow the Shofar at the New Moon, at the covered time for our Festival day,” that, “What is the Festival day on which the moon is covered? You must say that this is Rosh HaShanah.” Now, at first glance, this must be better understood.⁸⁷ For, though it is true that Rosh HaShanah differs from all the other holidays, in that all the other holidays are when the moon is full,* whereas the holiday of Rosh

⁸⁵ Talmud Bavli, Rosh HaShanah 8a and on

⁸⁶ Psalms 81:4

⁸⁷ See the beginning of the above-mentioned discourse entitled “*Tikoo*” (p. 428)

* In regard to the holiday of Shavuot [which falls out on the 6th of Sivan, when the moon is not full], it can be said that it differs since it is unrelated to the days of the month, but rather must be the fiftieth day from the counting of the Omer.

HaShanah is at the beginning of the month, when the moon is covered etc., nevertheless, it is not understood why [the verse] does not explicitly state “in the seventh month”? Why does the verse here state “Blow the Shofar at the New Moon, at the covered time,” thus making the matter specifically dependent on the fact that it is the beginning of the month when the moon is covered.

However, the explanation is that the time of the month when the moon is covered is a moment before the birth [of the new moon]. At the time of the birth of the new moon, at the very least, the moon exists in the form of a point. However, the covering is the moment before its birth, when it altogether is in a state of the absence of being, not even an existence of a point.

This is why the Torah ties the holiday of Rosh HaShanah to the time of the month when the moon is covered, this being the matter of the absence of existence altogether. This is because the primary matter of Rosh HaShanah is the construction of Kingship-*Malchut*, and [as known] Kingship-*Malchut* has nothing of her own.⁸⁸ That is, she is in a state of the utter absence of being.

The same is so of the constraint of Rosh HaShanah before sounding the Shofar, that the constraint is in a way of the absence of existence altogether, not even existence in a way of a point. This is because of the revelation of the Essential Self of the limitless light of the Singular Preexistent Intrinsic and Unlimited One, *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, before whom all

⁸⁸ Zohar I 249b and elsewhere

is as nothing, in a way of the utter absence of positive being altogether.⁸⁹

With the above in mind, we can understand why the verse states, “From the straits **I called** (*Karati*-קראתי-),” and not (“I pleaded-*Shavati*-שוועתי” or “I cried out-*Tza’akti*-צעקתי-”), specifically indicating a simple call (*Kriyah*-קריאה-). The explanation is that when the constraint is according to reason and intellect, with measure and limitation, this causes the matter of a “crying out” and a “scream,” that he cries and screams out from the bitterness of his soul over the constraint etc.

In other words, such a constraint can be expressed in the form of a cry and a scream. However, when one is in the ultimate state of constraint, with the utter absence of positive being and existence altogether, then the matter of a cry and a scream does not apply, but simply calling (*Kriyah*-קריאה-) (“from the straits I called (*Karati*-קראתי-)”), specifically.

8.

This then, is the meaning of [the verse] ,⁹⁰ “From the straits I called *Ya”H*-י"ה, *Ya”H*-י"ה answered me with expansiveness.” That is, through the simple calling (*Kriyah*-קריאה-) that comes from the ultimate constraint, that is in a way of the absence of positive being and existence altogether, there is caused to be a drawing down from Above also, from the aspect Above that transcends the matter of existence, this being

⁸⁹ Also see the Sichah that followed the discourse, Ch. 4 (Torat Menachem, Vol. 45 p. 15 and on).

⁹⁰ Psalms 118:5

the essential expansiveness of the Essential Self of the limitless light of the Singular Preexistent Intrinsic and Unlimited One, *HaShem*-יהוה Himself, blessed is He.

This is explained by his honorable holiness, my father-in-law, the Rebbe, (in the discourse entitled “*Min HaMeitzar*” of the year 5709),⁹¹ in regard to the difference between calling a person by his name, and the matter of praising and lauding him with adjectives and titles, such as “wise” or “kind.” Even though through using the titles “wise” and “kind,” [about him] rouses and reveals the powers of wisdom and kindness [in him], whereas, at first glance, calling him by his name alone does not seem to cause any revelation at all.

On the other hand, using the titles “wise” and “kind” only draw forth the powers of his soul, so that they come out from their concealment in the soul into revelation. However, by calling [a person] by his name, this reaches his essential self, which transcends the powers as they are concealed in his soul.

In other words, the name reaches the essential self of the soul, in which there is no existence of powers altogether (not even in a concealed way), but only in a way of an ability (*Yecholet*), since they are utterly unified with the essential self. Therefore, it is [specifically] through calling [his] name that he turns to the one who calls him with the whole essence of his being. [This is like the well-known story,⁹² that when [as a young child] the Tzemach Tzeddek called his grandfather, the Alter Rebbe, and he turned toward him, the Tzemach Tzeddek said, “**That** is the grandfather [meaning the one who turned],”

⁹¹ Ch. 11 (p. 17) and on.

⁹² Also see *Shmu'ot v'Sippurim* (5750) Vol. 1, p. 53.

This then, is why the “calling (*Kriyah*-קריאה)” from the constraint, which specifically is a simple call (*Kriyah*-קריאה) causes a drawing down from the aspect of the essential expansiveness of the Essential Self of the limitless light of the Singular Preexistent Intrinsic and Unlimited One, *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, just as by calling [a person] by his name he turns to the one who called him with his whole essential self and being.

This also explains [the teaching],⁹³ “Any year that is poor at its beginning will be rich at its end.” That is, through “the Jewish people making themselves poor,” like a pauper who has nothing at all and is in the ultimate state of constraint, such that his cry and argument is very powerful about why his lot is to be a pauper, and [as known] “there is no poverty except in knowledge (*Da'at*),”⁹⁴ and he has no knowledge of *HaShem*'s-יהו"ה Godliness, even though it is not his fault and is not because of anything that depends on him – and this particularly is so of our Jewish brothers who are in a state of literal constraint,⁹⁵ in that they neither grant them [the ability] to study Torah and fulfill the *mitzvot*, nor allow them to educate their children in the ways of Torah and *mitzvot* – it is through this poverty at its beginning, that he calls out from the constraint, “Why has this come upon me,” that it then is made wealthy at its end, meaning, immediately after the sounding of the Shofar,⁹⁶ in that there is

⁹³ Talmud Bavli, Rosh HaShanah 16b

⁹⁴ Talmud Bavli, Ketubot 68a; Nedarim 41a

⁹⁵ See the Sichah talk that was delivered immediately before this discourse (Torat Menachem, Vol. 45 p. 14). [“Those who are in a state of travail and captivity etc.”] [Referring to those Jews were in the Soviet Union].

⁹⁶ See Likkutei Levi Yitzchak, Igrot Kodesh p. 421

a drawing down from the aspect of the essential expansiveness of the Essential Self of the limitless light of the Singular Preexistent Intrinsic and Unlimited One, *HaShem*-יהו"ה Himself, blessed is He, beginning with drawing down the expansiveness in spiritual matters, that “the earth will be filled with the knowledge of *HaShem*-יהו"ה,”⁹⁷ and there also is a drawing down of expansiveness in physical matters in the literal sense, including even material matters, so that in the most literal sense there is the departure from constraint to expansiveness, speedily, and in the most literal sense!

⁹⁷ Isaiah 11:9