

Discourse 41

*“Ani LeDodee v’Dodi Lee -
I am to my Beloved and my Beloved is to me”*

Delivered on Shabbat Parshat Re’eh,
Shabbat Mevarchim Elul, 5727
By the grace of *HaShem*, blessed is He,

1.

The verse states,¹²⁶⁰ “I am to my Beloved and my Beloved is to me-*Ani LeDodee v’Dodee Lee*-אני לדודי ודודי לי.” The first letter of each word (*Roshei Teivot*) spells “Elul-לול,” and the final letters are four *Yod*’s-י-י-י-י,¹²⁶¹ corresponding to the forty days from Rosh Chodesh Elul until Yom HaKippurim.¹²⁶²

It is explained in Likkutei Torah on the Torah portion of Re’eh (page 32),¹²⁶³ that in Elul the aspect of “I am to my Beloved” begins, which is the arousal from below, by which the drawing down from Above on Rosh HaShanah and Yom HaKippurim etc., is caused, this being the matter of “My Beloved is to me.”

¹²⁶⁰ Song of Songs 6:3

¹²⁶¹ Pri Etz Chayim, Shaar Rosh HaShanah Ch. 1; Avudraham Seder Tefilat Rosh HaShanah uPirushah, Ch. 1; Reishit Chochmah, Shaar HaTeshuvah, Ch. 4 (section beginning “*Od Yeish*”); Bayit Chadash (Ba”Ch) to Orach Chayim 581 (section beginning “*v’He’eveeroo*”).

¹²⁶² Avudraham, Reishit Chochmah, and Bayit Chadash *ibid*.

¹²⁶³ See the discourse entitled “*Ani LeDodi*” 5746 Ch. 4 (Torat Menachem, Sefer HaMaamarim Elul p. 231)

The explanation¹²⁶⁴ is that even though the matter of the month of Elul is “I am to my Beloved,” whereas the matter of “My Beloved is to me” comes about afterwards, during the ten days of repentance, which include Rosh HaShanah and Yom HaKippurim within them,¹²⁶⁵ nevertheless, the matter of “My beloved is to me” also relates to Elul. This is because the matter of “I am to my Beloved” is also a preparation and granting of empowerment for the matter of “My Beloved is to me.” In other words, through prefacing with the toil of “I am to my Beloved,” a drawing down from Above (“My Beloved is to me”) is caused in a much higher and deeper way etc.

He continues to explain that the month of Elul is the time of the revelation of the thirteen attributes of mercy. In other words,¹²⁶⁶ even though the matter of Elul is “I am to my Beloved,” this being the toil from below to Above, nevertheless, there first must be the arousal and granting of empowerment from Above.

He explains this with the analogy of a king, that before his arrival to the city, the inhabitants of the city go out to greet him, welcoming his face in the field. Permission is then granted – and as his honorable holiness, my father-in-law, the Rebbe adds:¹²⁶⁷ as well as the ability – for all who desire to go out and greet his face [to do so] and he welcomes them all with a pleasant face, and shows everyone a happy face. By way of

¹²⁶⁴ See the beginning of the discourse entitled “*Ani LeDodee* – I am to my Beloved and my Beloved is to me,” 5726 (Sefer HaMaamarim 5726 p. 216, translated in The Teachings of The Rebbe 5726, Discourse 41).

¹²⁶⁵ See Likkutei Sichot Vol. 4 p. 144, p. 1150; Vol. 29 p. 203, and elsewhere.

¹²⁶⁶ See “*Ani LeDodi*” 5726 *ibid*.

¹²⁶⁷ Sefer HaMaamarim 5700 p. 167

analogy, the same is so in the month of Elul etc. That is, this matter is the granting of empowerment for the toil of “I am to my Beloved.”

Now, it can be suggested that this is why the Tzemach Tzeddek established that the place for this discourse, entitled “*Ani LeDodee*” in Likkutei Torah, will be in the Torah portion of Re’eh,¹²⁶⁸ even though the discourse relates to the month of Elul. For, in this discourse it is explained that even the toil of “I am to my Beloved” which is from below to Above, comes by way of an arousal and granting of empowerment from Above. This is also the theme of the Torah portion of Re’eh, which begins with the words,¹²⁶⁹ “See, I present before you today a blessing etc.,” this being the matter of the granting of empowerment for the totality of man’s toil in serving *HaShem*-יהוה, blessed is He.

2.

The explanation of the matter may be understood according to what is explained in the discourse of the Torah portion of Re’eh of the year 5627¹²⁷⁰ (one-hundred years ago), of the Rebbe Maharash, (this year being one-hundred years since he assumed the mantle of leadership), on the verse, “See, I present before you today... The blessing: that you shall listen etc.” Namely, we must understand why it states, “The blessing: **that you shall** listen (*Asher Tishme’u*-אשר תשמעו).” For, at first

¹²⁶⁸ Also see the discourse entitled “*Ani LeDodee*” 5746 Ch. 3 (Sefer HaMaamarim 5746 p. 230).

¹²⁶⁹ Deuteronomy 11:26

¹²⁷⁰ Sefer HaMaamarim 5627 p. 394 and on.

glance, it should have said “that **if-*Eem*-אם** you shall listen,” this being the more commonly found terminology, and is how it concludes there, “**if-*Eem*-אם** you do not listen.” Why then does it state, “that you **shall** listen (*Asher Tishme'u*-אשר תשמעו),” which is a word indicating certainty.

3.

In the discourse he continues [and explains] that this may be understood with a preface about the difference between blessing (*Brachah*-ברכה) and prayer (*Tefillah*).¹²⁷¹ To explain, the matter of a “blessing-*Brachah*-ברכה” is that it is of the same root as,¹²⁷² “One who draws down-*HaMavreech*-המבריך a vine.” In other words, it indicates that which is already present in the source, rather than something completely novel. That is, it only is in the power of a blessing to reveal the source and root of the thing, but not that something novel is drawn down.

He continues to explain that a blessing (*Brachah*) is also a very great matter. This is as stated,¹²⁷³ “Blessed is *HaShem*-יהוה... from the world to the world.” The explanation is that¹²⁷⁴ there be a drawing down “from the world,” meaning, from the concealed world (*Alma d'Itkasiya*), “to the world,” meaning, to the revealed world (*Alma d'Itgaliya*), this being the root of the matter of blessing (*Brachah*-ברכה). This is why about the coming future the verse states,¹²⁷⁵ “The earth will be filled with

¹²⁷¹ Also see Likkutei Torah Re'eh 19a

¹²⁷² Mishnah Kilayim 7:1; See Torah Ohr, Mikeitz 37c

¹²⁷³ Psalms 106:48

¹²⁷⁴ See Zohar I 158b; Likkutei Torah, Re'eh ibid. 19b

¹²⁷⁵ Isaiah 11:9

the knowledge of *HaShem*-יהו"ה as the waters cover the ocean floor." That is, just as it presently is in the concealed world ("the sea-*Yam*-ים"),¹²⁷⁶ so will the revelation in the coming future be in the revealed world ("the earth-*Aretz*-אֶרֶץ").¹²⁷⁷

From this it is understood that the matter of the blessing (*Brachah*-ברכה) is also a lofty level and is a foretaste of what will be revealed in the coming future. We should add that the drawing down "from the world" - the concealed world (*Alma d'Itkasiya*), is not only from the world of Creation (*Briyah*).¹²⁷⁸ Rather, included in this is also the drawing down from the world of Creation (*Briyah*) of the general worlds (*Olamot d'Klallut*) and even higher, all the way to the root and source in the worlds of the Unlimited One (*Olamot HaEin Sof*) which precede the restraint of the *Tzimtzum*.

However, even so, this still is only that which already is present in the root and source, only that through the blessing (*Brachah*-ברכה) it is drawn down into revelation. However, it is not something completely novel. For, even though below the drawing is novel, nonetheless, it already is present in the source and root.

In contrast, the matter of prayer (*Tefillah*) is to affect something completely new. In other words, even though something has already been decreed, Heaven forbid, [and it should be pointed out that such terminology in a discourse is extremely rare and completely uncommon], nonetheless, through prayer (*Tefillah*) it is possible to affect that there will

¹²⁷⁶ See Likkutei Torah, Tzav 14b and elsewhere.

¹²⁷⁷ See Likkutei Torah, Tzav 14b *ibid*. Also see the Passover discourses of this year, 5727.

¹²⁷⁸ See Likkutei Torah, Bamidbar 5c

be a drawing down that He heals the sick and blesses the years and the like, to change what was previously decreed. This comes about through drawing down a new desire (*Ratzon*). About this we say, “May it be desirable-*Ratzon*-רצון,” so that there will be a drawing down of a “pipe-*Tzeenor*-צנור” and novel issuance from the Unlimited One, *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, the source of all desires.

4.

In the discourse he continues that the explanation of the matter of prayer (*Tefillah*) may be understood from what our sages, of blessed memory, stated,¹²⁷⁹ “[The angel] Metatron ties crowns for his Owner with the prayers of the Jewish people.” The explanation is that, as known, a crown is made of precious stones, which in essence are inanimate (*Domem*) and of the class of simple stones, except that they are luminescent.¹²⁸⁰ The same is so of the letters (*Otiyot*) of prayer and Torah study, which are called stones, in that when they are luminescent with love and fear of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, they then are good stones and a crown-*Keter* is made of them for his Owner.

However, we still must better understand this. For, is it not so that the letters (*Otiyot*) of prayer are physical? In other words, even though prayer (*Tefillah*) is service of Him with the heart (*Avodah SheBaLev*),¹²⁸¹ nevertheless, one does not fulfill his obligation until he articulates the letters with his lips, with

¹²⁷⁹ See Zohar I 167b; Torah Ohr Mikeitz 42b; Sefer HaMaamarim 5696 p. 122.

¹²⁸⁰ Also see Likkutei Torah, Re'eh 27b

¹²⁸¹ Talmud Bavli, Taanit 2a

physical speech, (as in the ruling in Shulchan Aruch).¹²⁸² This being so, how can the physical letters (*Otiyot*) ascend to be made into a crown for his Owner?

The explanation is that about this that they stated that it is [the angel] Metatron who ties crowns. That is, these crowns are made through the medium of the angels. This is as stated in Zohar¹²⁸³ about the angels who elevate the prayers of the Jewish people, that “they hug them and they kiss them.” That is, the angels, who are spiritual beings, refine the physical letters so that they can be made into crowns for his Owner.

To explain, in the matter of the letters (*Otiyot*) there are two aspects. There are the letters (*Otiyot*) of Torah and there are the letters (*Otiyot*) of prayer, which differ from each other. This is because prayer is the ascent from below to Above, whereas Torah is the drawing down from Above to below, as in the lengthy explanation of the difference between them in Likkutei Torah on the Torah portion of Re’eh,¹²⁸⁴ in the discourse entitled “v’*Samtee Kadkod Shimshotayich*,” about the matter of [the stones of] onyx (*Shoham*) and jasper (*Yashfei*) upon which the names Yosef and Binyamin were engraved.¹²⁸⁵

That is [Yosef] is the Upper Righteous One (*Tzaddik Elyon*) who binds the bestower to the recipient and draws down the bestowal from Above to below. The other [Binyamin] is the Lower Righteous One (*Tzaddik Tachton*) who binds the recipient to the bestower, elevating him from below to Above. The matter of the refinement brought about by the angels must

¹²⁸² Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chayim 62:3; 101:2

¹²⁸³ See Zohar I 23b; Zohar II 201b; Torah Ohr *ibid*.

¹²⁸⁴ Likkutei Torah Re’eh 24d and on

¹²⁸⁵ Midrash Shemot Rabba 38:9; Bamidbar Rabba 2:7

also take place in the letters (*Otiyot*) of the Torah, which are drawn from Above to below (the aspect of the onyx (*Shoham*) stone).¹²⁸⁶ How much more then must there be the refinement of the letters (*Otiyot*) of prayer, which are from below to Above, (the aspect of the jasper (*Yashfei*) stone). Specifically through this, they are made to be crowns for their Maker.

In the discourse he explains the matter of “crowns for his Owner.” That is, the Crown-*Keter* is the matter of “May it be desirable-*Yehiy Ratzon*-יהי רצון.” This is because it is from the aspect of the Crown-*Keter* that there is a drawing down of new desire (*Ratzon*-רצון) to heal the sick or to bless the years, even if it was decreed etc., [Heaven forbid]. We thus find that the matter of “crowns for his Owner” is that there should be a drawing down of something novel, which was not present at first, even in the source.

We can add to this about the precise wording “(crowns for) his Owner-*Kono*-קונו,” based on the well-known matter about [the words],¹²⁸⁷ “Blessed is your Creator, blessed is your Owner (*Baruch Koneich*-ברוך קונו),” that the matter of ownership (*Kinyan*-קנין) is higher than the world of Creation (*Briyah*), even higher than the world of Creation (*Briyah*) of the general worlds (*Olamot d’Klallut*) (as mentioned before).

With the above in mind, we can understand to an even greater degree, the greatness of prayer (*Tefillah*) compared to blessing (*Brachah*). This is because through prayer (*Tefillah*) “a crown is made for his Maker,” specifying “his Maker-*Kono*-קונו.” That is, through prayer we reach the aspect of “his Maker-

¹²⁸⁶ See Sefer HaMaamarim 5629 p. 240 and on

¹²⁸⁷ In the liturgy of the Kiddush Levanah

Kono-קונו” up to and including even higher than the head of “his Maker-*Kono*-קונו,” being that the Crown-*Keter* is upon the head.

5.

Now, even though the blessing (*Brachah*) is only a drawing down from the root and source of the thing, which is why there is a greater superiority to prayer (*Tefillah*), in that it has the power to the drawing down a new desire (*Ratzon*) (as explained before), nonetheless, there also is a superiority of blessing (*Brachah*) over prayer (*Tefillah*).

To explain, prayer (*Tefillah*) is in a way that the one praying stands below and asks and pleads for a particular drawing down from Above. However, he does not know whether the One who draws down, will fulfill his request and draw down the light. Even if his prayer is on the loftiest of levels, in that he ascends and bonds himself with self-sacrifice (*Mesirat Nefesh*), causing the matter of the ascent of the feminine waters (*Ha'ala'at Mayim Nukvin*) with his requests and supplications, nonetheless, it all depends on the desire of the Emanator, the One who draws down, and to Him, the ascent of the feminine waters (*Ha'ala'at Mayim Nukvin*) causes no imperative.

In contrast, the matter of blessing (*Brachah*) is such that the one who blesses, is higher than the place where the blessing is drawn from, and he commands that the light be drawn down etc. In other words, a blessing (*Brachah*) is like a command, similar to the priests (*Kohanim*) who bless the people

saying,¹²⁸⁸ “*HaShem*-יהו"ה will bless you,” in the form of a command.¹²⁸⁹ Thus, this is unlike prayer, in which there is doubt whether it will be drawn down below. Rather, blessing (*Brachah*) is in a way of certainty. However, all this is only in regard to the drawing down of something from its root and source, and is not in regard to a completely novel drawing down, which is brought about specifically through prayer (*Tefillah*).

6.

Now, all the above is in regard to a regular blessing (*Brachah*). However, there is a blessing (*Brachah*) about which the verse states, “See, I (*Anochi*-אנכי) present before you today a blessing.” The meaning of “I-*Anochi*,” is “I-*Anochi*,” meaning who I am-*Anochi*,”¹²⁹⁰ which is the aspect of the Crown-*Keter*. From there, there can be a drawing down of a blessing (*Brachah*-ברכה) even for that which was not included in the root and source. This is because the limitless light of the Unlimited One, that is in the Crown-*Keter*, is the Source of everything, even of the aspect of novelty drawn down through prayer (*Tefillah*).

That is, the drawing down is not just from the root and source, but is a novel desire (*Ratzon*) that was not even in the root and source, and moreover is the drawing down of a novel

¹²⁸⁸ Numbers 6:24

¹²⁸⁹ Also see the discourse entitled “*Eeta b'Zohar... Zimna Chada* – It states in Zohar... It once happened,” of Shabbat Parshat Bamidbar of this year, 5727, Discourse 29, Ch. 2 (Sefer HaMaamarim 5727 p. 228).

¹²⁹⁰ Likkutei Torah, Re'eh 18d

desire (*Ratzon*) in a way of certainty, in that it certainly will be drawn down below, and in a way that “His word runs swiftly,”¹²⁹¹ for who will restrain His hand?

This is also the meaning of the verse, “the blessing: that (*Asher*-אשר) you shall listen,” (and not “if-*Eem*-אם you shall listen”), using a word of certainty. This is because of the superiority of the blessing (*Brachah*-ברכה), which is in a way of being drawn down from Above to below. This is further explained by what the Baal HaTurim stated, that the concluding letters of the words “the blessing: that you will listen-*Et HaBrachah Asher Tishme’u* תשמעו-אשר” form the word Torah-תורה, in that the Torah also is a drawing down from Above to below (as mentioned in chapter four).

In addition, through this there also is the transformation of undesirable matters, this being the continuation of the verse,¹²⁹² “and the curse: if you do not listen etc.,” the intention being to transform the evil etc.¹²⁹³ For, through this we bring about a much higher drawing down, as known about the matter of,¹²⁹⁴ “Even (*Af*-אף) my wisdom stayed with me,” that “the Torah that I studied in wrath (*Af*-אף) was sustained in me.”¹²⁹⁵ That is, it is specifically through refining the aspect of wrath (*Af*-אף), which is the matter of the side opposite holiness, that we draw down an even higher aspect.

¹²⁹¹ Psalms 147:15; See Likkutei Torah, end of Parshat Korach.

¹²⁹² Deuteronomy 11:28

¹²⁹³ See Ohr HaTorah, Re’eh p. 658 and on; Also see Sefer HaMaamarim 5679 p. 609 and on.

¹²⁹⁴ Ecclesiastes 2:9

¹²⁹⁵ Midrash Kohelet Rabba 2:9; Yalkut Shimoni, Kohelet Remez 968

With the above in mind, we can understand the connection between the Torah portion of Re'eh and the toil of the month of Elul, which is why the Tzemach Tzedek established that this discourse “*Ani LeDodi*” should be in the Torah portion of Re'eh. For, it was explained before that the matter of “I am to my Beloved” during the month of Elul is the preparation and granting of empowerment for the matter of “My Beloved is to me” of Rosh HaShanah, Yom HaKippurim, and all the ten days of repentance.

Now, based on what the Alter Rebbe explains¹²⁹⁶ on the teaching of our sages, of blessed memory, about the difference between the ten days of repentance and the rest of the year, that “one [verse refers] to a solitary individual (*Yachid*-יחיד) and the other [verse refers] to the congregation (*Tzibur*),”¹²⁹⁷ that the service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, during the ten days of repentance stems from the aspect of the singular-*Yechidah*-יחידה essence of the soul, it is understood that service of Him during the month of Elul, which is in preparation for the ten days of repentance, is also connected to the singular-*Yechidah* [essence of the soul].

Now, as known¹²⁹⁸ when there is a revelation and illumination of the singular-*Yechidah* essence of the soul - the innerness (*Pnimiyut*) of the soul - all obstacles and obstructions stemming from the side opposite holiness depart, and are

¹²⁹⁶ Likkutei Torah, Tavo 43d

¹²⁹⁷ Talmud Bavli, Rosh HaShanah 18a

¹²⁹⁸ See Kuntres HaAvodah Ch. 5 (p. 32)

nullified, such that they become refined, purified, and elevated to holiness.

However, for there to be a revelation of the innerness (*Pnimiyut*) of the soul, this being the aspect of the singular-*Yechidah* essence of the soul, this is brought about through the innerness (*Pnimiyut*) of the One Above, the aspect of “I-*Anochi*-אנכי,” drawn down into the innerness (*Pnimiyut*) of the Jewish people. This is the meaning of “See, I (*Anochi*-אנכי) present before you-*Lifneichem*-לפניכם,” meaning “to your innerness-*L’Pnimiuteichem*-לפנימיותיכם.”¹²⁹⁹

This matter is actualized during the month of Elul, at which time “the King is in the field,” this being the matter of the revelation of the King Himself, the aspect of “I-*Anochi*-אנכי,” through which we draw down the revelation of “My Beloved is to me,” this being the matter of drawing down the limitlessness (*Bli Gvul*) of the One Above.

About this the verse states, “that you shall listen-*Asher Tishme’u*-אשר תשמעו,” using a word of certainty. For, since the drawing down is from the aspect of “I-*Anochi*-אנכי,” it is certain without a doubt that it will be drawn all the way down below, such that even the transformation of the side opposite holiness is brought about (as mentioned in chapter six).

We should add, that as explained in the previous discourse¹³⁰⁰ about the precise wording of the verse,¹³⁰¹ “It shall be that because (*Eikev*-עקב) you listen,” (and not “It shall be that

¹²⁹⁹ See Likkutei Torah, Re’eh 18a, 18d

¹³⁰⁰ See the beginning and end of the discourse entitled “*v’Hayah Eikev Tishme’un* – It shall be that because you will listen,” of Shabbat Parshat Eikev, 20th of Menachem-Av, Discourse 39 (Sefer HaMaamarim 302; p. 310 and on).

¹³⁰¹ Deuteronomy 7:12

if (*Eem*-אם) you listen”), the meaning of which is that you certainly shall listen, that in the time of the “heel-*Eikev*,” [this being the time of] “the footsteps of Moshiach-*Ikveta d'Meshicha*-דמשיחא,” and the end of the time of exile, you shall certainly listen.

The same can also be said of the month of Elul, which is the end of the year (especially the month of Elul at the time of the end of the exile) that there is then “the blessing-*Brachah*-ברכה” that “you shall listen-*Asher Tishme'u*,” that *HaShem's*-יהו"ה Supernal intent will certainly be fulfilled, and certainly “no one banished from Him will remain banished,”¹³⁰² and therefore this necessitates that “you shall listen,” with certainty.¹³⁰³

¹³⁰² See Samuel II 14:14; Tanya, Likkutei Amarim, end of Ch. 39; Hilchot Talmud Torah of the Alter Rebbe 4:3

¹³⁰³ The conclusion of this discourse is missing.