

Discourse 11

*“V’Khol Banayich Limudei HaShem... -
All your children will be students of HaShem...”*

Delivered on Shabbat Parshat Vayishlach,

13th of Kislev, 5727

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

1.

The verse states,⁸¹⁶ “All your children will be studied of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, and the peace of your children will be abundant.” In his discourse [by this title],⁸¹⁷ his honorable holiness, my father-in-law, the Rebbe, brings the commentary of Metzudat Tziyon and Metzudat Dovid, that the words, “studied of *HaShem-Limudei HaShem*-יהו"ה-למודי,” mean, “students of *HaShem-Talmidei HaShem*-יהו"ה-תלמידי.” That is, they will be students of the Ever Present One, blessed is He, through the study of Torah, as in the translation of Targum, “studied in Torah.”

He also explains the continuation of the verse, “and the peace of your children will be abundant,” through which our sages, of blessed memory, derived,⁸¹⁸ “Torah scholars increase

⁸¹⁶ Isaiah 54:13

⁸¹⁷ In the discourse entitled “*v’Khol Banayich*” 5689 [said on] “Shabbat Parshat Vayeitzei, the groom (the Rebbe), may he live long, was called to the Torah, and on the second day of the week of the Torah portion of Vayishlach, was the [feast of the] ‘*Chatan-Mohl*’ in Yeshivat Tomchei Temimim of Warsaw” (Sefer HaMaamarim, Kuntreisim Vol. 1 16b and on; Sefer HaMaamarim 5689 p. 111 and on.)

⁸¹⁸ Talmud Bavli, Brachot 64a

peace in the world, as it states, ‘All your children will be students of *HaShem*-יהו"ה and the peace of your children will be abundant.’ Do not only read it as ‘your children-*Banayich*-בניך,’ but read it as, ‘your builders-*Bonayich*-בונים.” In other words, through the study of Torah, (“the students of *HaShem*-יהו"ה”) the construction (“builders-*Bonayich*-בונים”) of the world is through the study of Torah.

This is because the world is sustained by the Torah, as our sages, of blessed memory, taught,⁸¹⁹ “If not for the Torah, heaven and earth would not be sustained, as the verse states,⁸²⁰ “If not for My Covenant by day and by night, I would not have set up the laws of heaven and earth.”

In the continuation of the discourse,⁸²¹ his honorable holiness, my father-in-law, the Rebbe, brings the explanation of the verse,⁸²² “Each ladle was ten, ten (*Asarah, Asarah*-עשרה עשרה) of the sacred *shekel*.” That is, the Ten Utterances by which the world was created⁸²³ are aligned to the Ten Commandments,⁸²⁴ and through the Ten Commandments the Ten Utterances are sustained, meaning that the world is sustained.

Now, we should explain what he adds about this, based on what the Alter Rebbe wrote in *Shaar HaYichud VeHaEmunah*,⁸²⁵ in explanation of the verse,⁸²⁶ “Forever

⁸¹⁹ Talmud Bavli, Pesachim 68b

⁸²⁰ Jeremiah 33:25

⁸²¹ Ch. 3

⁸²² Numbers 7:86

⁸²³ Mishnah Avot 5:1

⁸²⁴ Zohar III 11b and on

⁸²⁵ Tanya, *Shaar HaYichud VeHaEmunah*, translated as *The Gate of Unity and Faith*, Ch. 1

⁸²⁶ Psalms 119:89

HaShem-יהו"ה Your speech stands in the heavens." That is, "Your speech, that You said,⁸²⁷ 'Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters,' these very words and letters are established and stand continuously in the firmament of the heavens and are vested within all the firmaments always, to enliven them, [as written,⁸²⁸ 'The word of our God shall be established forever' and,⁸²⁹ 'His words live and exist forever.']

This is because if these letters would be withdrawn for even a moment and revert to their source, God forbid, all the heavens would literally become nothingness! [They would be as if they altogether never were, literally like before the statement, 'Let there be a firmament.']

This is true of all the creatures [in all the worlds, both the upper and the lower ones, even this physical planet Earth, which literally is in the aspect of inanimate matter]. If the letters from the ten utterances by which the Earth was created in the six days of creation would be withdraw from it, even momentarily, it would revert to actual nothingness, literally."

In other words, the Ten Utterances are present in the creations at all times and at every moment in order to enliven them and bring them into being as an existence of something from nothing. Now, since at every single moment there must be the coming into being of the creations from nothing to something through the Ten Utterances, it is understood that the sustainment of the Ten Utterances through the Ten Commandments must also be at every single moment, and that

⁸²⁷ Genesis 1:6

⁸²⁸ Isaiah 40:8

⁸²⁹ Liturgy of "*Emet Veyatziv*" following the morning *Shema* recital.

through this it is possible for the existence of the creations from the Ten Utterances to be at every single moment.

This is why the obligation to study Torah study is at every single moment, as the verse states,⁸³⁰ “You shall meditate in it day and night.” In other words, at every moment there must be Torah study, in that at every moment there must be the sustainment of the Ten Utterances through the Ten Commandments, which is the matter of Torah study.

2.

He continues in the discourse that our sages, of blessed memory, stated,⁸³¹ “The world was created with Ten Utterances. What does this come to teach us, for could not it be created with one utterance? Rather, it is to exact retribution [upon the wicked who destroy the world that was created with ten utterances], and to bestow reward to the righteous who sustain the world that was created with Ten Utterances.”

Now, we should explain the continuation and connection of these matters. (For, at first glance, it is not understood what relationship there is between this matter and the discourse in general.) That is, the possibility that through the study of Torah (“students of *HaShem*-יהוה”) the world will be sustained (“your builders-*Bonayich*-בניך”) is specifically through the fact that the worlds were created with Ten Utterances.

⁸³⁰ Joshua 1:8; See Talmud Bavli, Menachot 99b

⁸³¹ Avot 5:1 *ibid*.

The explanation is that through elucidating the above-mentioned teaching of our sages, (“could it not be created with one utterance etc.”) his honorable holiness, my father-in-law, the Rebbe, explains that the “one utterance” refers to the *Sefirah* of Kingship-*Malchut*,⁸³² and being that the *Sefirah* of Kingship-*Malchut* includes ten *Sefirot* within itself, we thus find that the creation of the world (which had to specifically be through the ten *Sefirot*), could have been brought about through the *Sefirah* of Kingship-*Malchut* alone.

However, even so, the world was created with Ten Utterances, meaning, with the ten *Sefirot* themselves, (not [just] as the ten *Sefirot* are included within Kingship-*Malchut*, which is “one utterance”). This is because if the creation would be brought about through the *Sefirah* of Kingship-*Malchut* alone, there would not be illumination of Godly revelation in the world, because as the ten *Sefirot* are included in Kingship-*Malchut*, they are in a state of concealment. However, this is not so when the creation is brought about through the ten *Sefirot* (“with Ten Utterances”), in which case, there is a drawing down of revelation of Godliness into the world.

It can be said that the explanation is that since the matter of the *Sefirah* of Kingship-*Malchut* is exaltedness and elevated rulership, therefore the Godliness in the world (created through it) is also in a state of exaltedness and concealment, and it would be impossible to bring about the revelation of Godliness in the world. This is why the world was created with Ten Utterances, meaning, through all ten *Sefirot*. For, even though the existence

⁸³² Midrash Shmuel to Avot 5:1 *ibid.*, cited and explained in Sefer HaMaamarim 5659 p. 146; 5704 p. 73.

of the world, as it currently is (“with Ten Utterances”) is in a way that Godliness is concealed, nonetheless, through toil and contemplation (*Hitbonenut*) etc., it is possible to reveal Godliness in the world. (In contrast, if the creation would have been brought into being through the *Sefirah* of Kingship-*Malchut* alone, it would be impossible for us to reveal Godliness in the world, even through our toil.)

With the above in mind, we can explain the teaching of our sages, of blessed memory, “to bestow reward to the righteous who sustain the world that was created with Ten Utterances.” That is, the possibility for the deeds of the righteous to sustain the world (through the study of Torah, this being the matter of the Ten Commandments, through which the Ten Utterances are sustained) is because the world was created with Ten Utterances, and specifically in such a world (through their toil) the righteous can bring about the revelation of Godliness in the world. This is also the meaning of the teaching, “Torah scholars increase peace (*Shalom*-שלום) in the world,” meaning that they draw the revelation of Godliness into the world.

3.

However, to bring the revelation of Godliness into the world through the study of Torah, the matter of self-nullification (*Bittul*) is specifically necessary, meaning that a person does not sense himself as being [a something] etc. About this, his honorable holiness, my father-in-law, the Rebbe,

continues in the discourse⁸³³ [about] the great imperative for the matter of self-nullification (*Bittul*) and negating one's sense of self. This is because one's sense of self is similar to bribery, which causes his intellect to lean [to what he wants] etc.

About this, he also brings the well-known story of a certain Chassid who had great intellectual knowledge and came to his honorable holiness, the Tzemach Tzeddek, with the complaint that, "In the study hall they trample over me, and don't agree with anything I say, etc." The Tzemach Tzeddek responded, "You spread yourself over the entire study hall, so that wherever anyone steps he steps on you." The Tzemach Tzeddek concluded, "It is written,⁸³⁴ 'Let the wicked forsake his way and the iniquitous man his thoughts.'

The word 'iniquitous-*Aven*-אָנֶם' is related to the word 'On-אָן' which means strength, as in the verse,⁸³⁵ 'By the abundance of His power-*Oneem*-אֱנִיָּהּ and by the vigor of His strength.' In other words, even a person who has the power of the side of holiness, if he senses himself as being [a something], he must repent ('forsake [his thoughts] etc.') and come to a state of self-nullification (*Bittul*).

To clarify, what is meant here, is not the negation of arrogance, being that arrogance is forbidden by Torah law.⁸³⁶ Rather, what is meant is just one's sense of self, and even so, he must 'forsake [his thoughts] etc.'

⁸³³ In Ch. 4-5

⁸³⁴ Isaiah 55:7

⁸³⁵ Isaiah 40:26

⁸³⁶ See Talmud Bavli, Sotah 5a; Mishneh Torah, Hilchot De'ot 2:3; Shulchan Aruch of the Alter Rebbe 156:3.

Moreover, from the fact that ‘the strong man [should forsake] his thoughts’ comes in continuation to the beginning of the verse, ‘Let the wicked one forsake his way,’ it is understood that the wicked one forsaking his way and the strong man forsaking his thoughts must be with the same simplicity. In other words, just as it is simply understood that it is imperative for the wicked man to forsake his way, it is with the same simplicity that the strong man must forsake his thoughts, such that even a person who has strength on the side of holiness, must leave his sense of self and be in a state of self-nullification (*Bittul*).

This matter, (that Torah study must specifically be preceded by self-nullification (*Bittul*)), is also connected to the blessings of the Torah that must be recited before studying Torah, [as it states],⁸³⁷ “First make the blessing over the Torah,” and as Rabbeinu Nissim wrote⁸³⁸ in the name of Rabbeinu Yonah, that giving precedence to the blessings of the Torah indicates the importance and preciousness of the Torah to the one who studies it, and then his study is such that he remembers the Giver of the Torah, rather than in a way of sense of self etc.

This then, is the matter of “*Limudei HaShem*-למודי יהוה,” the meaning of which is “students of *HaShem*-יהוה,” (as mentioned above). Due to this, there is caused to be a sense of self-nullification (*Bittul*). This is because even a person who senses the superiority of his qualities compared to his fellow, and beyond this, even in comparison to the angels, he argues

⁸³⁷ Talmud Bavli, Nedarim 81a; Bava Metziya 85b

⁸³⁸ Ra”N to Nedarim 81a ibid; Also see Bayit Chadash to Tur, Orach Chayim Siman 47.

that at his root his level is greater than the level of the angels, nonetheless, in relation to the Holy One, blessed is He, he certainly in a state of ultimate nullification (*Tachlit HaBittul*).

About this he explains in the discourse⁸³⁹ that when there will be students of the Ever Present One (“students of *HaShem*-יהו"ה”) this being the matter of self-nullification (*Bittul*), then the truth will be sensed in them that it is *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, who is the place of the world (*Mekomo Shel Olam*).⁸⁴⁰ One’s Torah study will then be in a way that it is sensed in him that the Torah is the will and wisdom of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, and is not human intellect. This will cause that “the peace of your children will be abundant.” [Do not read “your children-*Banayich*-בניך,” but read], “your builders-*Bonayich*-בוניך,” this being the matter of [Torah scholars] increasing peace in the world.

4.

Now, even though this matter must be brought about through man’s labor by his own strength, and as the verse states,⁸⁴¹ “You shall choose life,” nevertheless, there is a granting of empowerment for this from Above. This is as his honorable holiness, my father-in-law, the Rebbe, brings in the discourse⁸⁴² citing the words of our great Rebbe, the Alter

⁸³⁹ At the end of Ch. 5

⁸⁴⁰ Midrash Bereishit Rabba 68:9; Also see Ginat Egoz of Rabbi Yosef Gikatilla, translated as *HaShem Is One*, Vol. 3 (The Letters of Creation, Part 2), The Gate explaining that *HaShem*, blessed is He, is the place-*Makom*-מקום of all beings, and elsewhere.

⁸⁴¹ Deuteronomy 30:19

⁸⁴² Ch. 2

Rebbe, whose soul is in Eden, that the letters written in the Torah, “You shall choose life-*uVacharta BaChayim*- וּבַחַרְתָּ בַחַיִּים,” themselves grant assistance to the person who gazes upon them etc.

This likewise with how he concludes the discourse. Namely, that on the Shabbat before his wedding, the groom is called up to the Torah. This is because the bride and groom uphold the world by raising children who are engaged in the study of Torah, and this is why he is called up to read the letters of the Torah, which sustain the Ten Utterances.

Now, we should explain the precision in his stating that the letters (*Otiyot*) of the Torah are read, specifying “the letters” (*Otiyot*-אוֹתֵיּוֹת) (rather than understanding and comprehending the Torah). This is because the existence and vitality of the world is through the letters (*Otiyot*-אוֹתֵיּוֹת) of the Ten Utterances (as mentioned in chapter one). Thus, since the groom stands to build a new world, “an everlasting edifice,”⁸⁴³ which will have impact until the end of all generations, we therefore call him to read and gaze at the letters (*Otiyot*-אוֹתֵיּוֹת) of the Torah.

There is another matter in this as well, which is that there specifically must be the matter of self-nullification (*Bittul*). That is, the matter of self-nullification (*Bittul*) is more emphasized in reading of the letters (*Otiyot*-אוֹתֵיּוֹת) of the Torah than it is in studying Torah by way of understanding and comprehension. This is why it is not enough for the study of Torah be in a way of understanding and comprehension, but there also must be the reading of the letters of the Torah.

⁸⁴³ See the liturgy of the *Sheva Brachot* (the seven blessings of the groom and bride).

From this it is understood that also the drawing down and granting of empowerment is brought about through reading the Torah, not only as it applies to those who relate to understanding and comprehending the Torah, but also to those who, thus far, only relate to reading the letters (*Otiyot*-אותיות) of the Torah. This is why they too ascend to the Torah and make the blessings of the Torah,⁸⁴⁴ just like those who relate to understanding and comprehending the Torah.

Through this toil the ultimate perfection of the Jewish people is caused. This is why about them the verse states,⁸⁴⁵ “Turn back, turn back, O’ Shulamit,” referring to the Jewish people who are called “Shulamit-שולמית”⁸⁴⁶ because of the matter of perfection-*Shleimut*-שלימות in them.⁸⁴⁷

⁸⁴⁴ Hilchot Talmud Torah of the Alter Rebbe 2:12

⁸⁴⁵ Song of Songs 7:1

⁸⁴⁶ See Midrash Shir HaShirim Rabba to Song of Songs 7:1; Also see the discourse entitled “*v’Khol Banayich*” 5689 *ibid.* Ch. 2.

⁸⁴⁷ The conclusion of this discourse is missing.