

Discourse 39

“v’Hayah Eikev Tishme’un... -
It shall be that because you listen...”

Delivered on Shabbat Parshat Eikev,¹¹¹⁹

20th of Menachem-Av,¹¹²⁰ 5727

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

1.

The verse states,¹¹²¹ “It shall be that because (*Eikev*-עֵקֶב) you listen... and guard them and do them etc.” About this, there is the well-known question,¹¹²² Is not fulfilling Torah and *mitzvot* dependent on man’s free choice? This being so, why did the verse not say, “It shall be that **if** (*Eem*-אִם) you listen, [like the verses],¹¹²³ “If (*Eem*-אִם) you follow My decrees,”

¹¹¹⁹ The original discourse was edited by the Rebbe and published as a pamphlet for the 20th of Menachem-Av 5747. There is also a second discourse that was said at this gathering (Discourse 40), which follows in succession to this discourse.

¹¹²⁰ Minhagei Kahal Kadosh Beit E”l Yikonneh b’Tzeddek, that on the 20th of Av they would do Hatarat Nedarim (the annulment of vows), as it is forty days prior to Rosh HaShanah (cited in the beginning of Sefer Divrei Shalom of Rabbi Avraham Shalom Mizrahi) – seemingly similar to the matter of “forty days prior to the formation of the fetus” (Sotah 2a).

¹¹²¹ Deuteronomy 7:12

¹¹²² See the discourse by the same title as this in Ohr HaTorah, Eikev, p. 491; Also see the discourses by the same title of the years 5673 and 5674 toward the beginning (*Hemshech* 5672 Vol. 1 p. 355 & p. 580); Also see Ohr HaChayim to Deuteronomy 7:12; Also note Rashi to the beginning of the Torah portion, “**If-Eem-אִם** you will heed even the lighter commandments etc.” as well as the commentaries on Rashi there.

¹¹²³ Leviticus 26:13

and¹¹²⁴ “It shall be that if (*Eem*-אם) you listen”]. Why then does [this] verse state, “It shall be that **because** (*Eikev*-עקב) you listen,” in a way of certainty, meaning you certainly shall listen?

The Tzemach Tzedek explains¹¹²⁵ that the word “because-*Eikev*-עקב” refers to the time of the “**heels** of Moshiach-*Ikveta d'Meshicha*-דמשיחא-עקבתא,” and that the meaning of, “It shall be because (*Eikev*-עקב) you listen,” is that you certainly shall listen. That is, “*HaShem*-יהוה” **promises** us in His Torah, that ultimately, toward the end of our exile, Israel will return to Him in repentance and will immediately be redeemed.”¹¹²⁶

In the discourse¹¹²⁷ he continues [and explains] that the three words, “you listen-*Tishme'un*-תשמעון,” “and you keep them-*u'Shemartem*-ושמרתם,” “and do them-*v'Asitem*-ועשיתם,” correspond to thought (*Machshavah*), speech (*Dibur*), and action (*Ma'aseh*).

The word “you listen-*Tishme'un*-תשמעון” corresponds to thought (*Machshavah*) (in that the ear is merely the organ (*Kli*) by which the voice enters the thought of the listener). The word “and you guard-*u'Shemartem*-ושמרתם” is speech (*Dibur*), being that the primary matter of guarding (*Shemirah*-שמירה) is in the mouth, as the verse states,¹¹²⁸ “ordered in all matters and

¹¹²⁴ Deuteronomy 11:13

¹¹²⁵ Ohr HaTorah, beginning of *Eikev*; See p. 491, p. 504 (citing Ohr HaMe'ir).

¹¹²⁶ Mishneh Torah, Hilchot Teshuvah 7:5; In Ohr HaTorah ibid. p. 491 [it states]: As promised in the Torah portion of Nitzavim [Deuteronomy 30:2], “And you will return etc.” – which are the verses cited by Rambam there.

¹¹²⁷ Ohr HaTorah, beginning of *Eikev*; p. 491 and on; Also see the discourse entitled “*v'Hayah Eikev*” 5673 toward the end (p. 364 and on); 5674 (Ch. 291 – p. 588 and on).

¹¹²⁸ Samuel II 23:5; See Talmud Bavli, Eruvin 54a

secure (*u'Shemurah*-ושמורה).” The word “and you do them-*v'Asitem*-ועשיתם” refers to Action (*Ma'aseh*).

About this the verse continues,¹¹²⁹ “*HaShem*-יהו"ה your God will safeguard for you the covenant and the kindness that He swore [unto your forefathers].” The words “covenant-*Brit*-ברית,” “kindness-*Chessed*-חסד,” and “oath-*Shevu'ah*-שבועה” refer to thought (*Machshavah*), speech (*Dibur*), and action (*Ma'aseh*) (as explained there at length).

That is, it is through “you listen-*Tishme'un*-תשמעון,” “and you guard them-*u'Shemartem*-ושמרתם,” “and you do them-*v'Asitem*-ועשיתם,” that *HaShem*’s-יהו"ה Supernal thought (*Machshavah*), speech (*Dibur*), and action (*Ma'aseh*) is drawn down to us, these being, “His covenant (*Brit*-ברית) and the kindness (*Chessed*-חסד) that He swore (*Nishba*-נשבע) [unto your forefathers].”

However,¹¹³⁰ this matter, (that there will be a drawing down of *HaShem*’s-יהו"ה Supernal thought, speech, and action to man) is not enough. For, even before the descent of the soul to below, it already was in this highest state in *HaShem*’s-יהו"ה Supernal thought (*Machshavah*), [as the verse states],¹¹³¹ “Israel ascended in thought (*Machshavah*).” However, the descent of the soul to below is for the sake of ascent,¹¹³² so that through its toil below, the soul ascends to higher than it was

¹¹²⁹ Deuteronomy 7:12

¹¹³⁰ In regard to the coming section (regarding the precise term “[He] will safeguard-*v'Shamar*-ושמר”) see the discourse entitled “*v'Hayah Eikev* 5673 toward the end. Also note Ohr HaTorah *ibid.* p. 499.

¹¹³¹ Midrash Bereishit Rabba 1:4; See at length in Ohr HaTorah *ibid.* (p. 480; p. 493) that this is the aspect of the Upper Thought (*Machshavah* *Ila'ah*).

¹¹³² [See Ginat Egoz of Rabbi Yosef Gikatilla, translated as *HaShem Is One*, Vol. 2 (The Letters of Creation), Section entitled, “The twelve letters ה"י ז"ח ט"י ל"ב correspond to the twelve tribes of Israel.”]

before its descent, all the way to the aspect of¹¹³³ “and You-*v’Atah*-ואתה safeguard it within me” (which is even higher than the aspect of¹¹³⁴ “She is pure”).¹¹³⁵

This then, is why the verse states, “[*HaShem*-יהו"ה your God] will safeguard for you the covenant and the kindness that He swore [to your forefathers] etc.” That is, through “you listen-*Tishme’un*-תשמעון,” “and you guard them-*u’Shemartem*-ושמרתם,” “and you do them-*v’Asitem*-ועשיתם,” in serving *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, in thought (*Machshavah*), speech (*Dibur*), and action (*Ma’aseh*), in the “heel-*Eikev*” of the soul, referring to the level of the soul that is in the body,¹¹³⁶ and especially during the time of “the footsteps of Moshiach-*Ikveta d’Meshichah*-דמשיחא,” [at which time there is greater descent, and it follows automatically that the ascent brought about by the descent is also greater], in that through the descent of the soul into the animalistic soul and the body (especially during exile), our service of Him in the thought, speech, and action of our soul is with the desire of the heart (*Re’uta d’Leeba*) and in a way of self-sacrifice (*Mesirat Nefesh*) (which transcends the chaining down of the worlds (*Hishtalshelut*)).

This brings about that, “[*HaShem*-יהו"ה your God] will safeguard for you the covenant and the kindness that He swore [unto your forefathers] etc.,” (in which the word “He will

¹¹³³ See the liturgy of the morning blessings (“*Elo’hai Neshamah* etc.) from Talmud Bavli, Brachot 60b; Mishneh Torah, Hilchot Tefillah 7:3

¹¹³⁴ See the liturgy of the morning blessings (“*Elo’hai Neshamah* etc.) from Talmud Bavli, Brachot 60b; Mishneh Torah, Hilchot Tefillah 7:3

¹¹³⁵ See at length in the discourse entitled “*Shuvah*” 5686 (Sefer HaMaamarim 5686 p. 36 and on); [Discourse entitled] “*Tza’aku*” 5688 (Sefer HaMaamarim 5688 p. 174 and on), and elsewhere.

¹¹³⁶ Likkutei Torah, Drushim L’Rosh HaShanah 62c and elsewhere.

safeguard-v 'Shamar-ושמר" is specified), that in His Supernal thought, speech, and action there will be the revelation of "and You-v 'Atah-ואתה guard it within me," which generally refers to¹¹³⁷ the revelation of the Essential Self of the Singular Preexistent Intrinsic and Unlimited One, *HaShem*-יהו"ה Himself, blessed is He.

2.

Now, the above-mentioned explanation (of the Tzemach Tzedek) on the words, "It shall be that because (*Eikev*-עקב) you listen," (in which the word "*Eikev*-עקב" indicates the "end" and refers to the end of days)¹¹³⁸ can be connected to the teaching of the Midrash¹¹³⁹ on this verse.

That is, "the Holy One, blessed is He, said to them... the reward for them I will give you at the end (*b' Eikev*-בעקב) etc., (as it states), 'It shall be that after (*Eikev*-עקב) you listen.'" That is, according to the Midrash, which discusses the matter of the reward of the *mitzvot*, the word "end-*Eikev*-עקב" (the "end of

¹¹³⁷ See at length in the discourse entitled "*Shuvah*" 5686 (Sefer HaMaamarim 5686 p. 36 and on); [Discourse entitled] "*Tza'aku*" 5688 (Sefer HaMaamarim 5688 p. 174 and on), and elsewhere.

¹¹³⁸ As stated in Ohr HaTorah at the beginning of this week's Torah portion [Eikev], the term "Because-*Eikev*-עקב" is related to the matter of the "**heels-Akavayim**-עקביים," (and based on this, the relationship between the term "because-*Eikev*-עקב" and the "footsteps of Moshiach-*Ikveta d' Meshicha*-דמשיחא" is because the souls of these generations are from the aspect of the "heels-*Akavayim*-עקביים"). However, in Ohr HaTorah *ibid.* p. 504 (and similarly on p. 491) it states that "*Eikev*-עקב" is a term that indicates the "end-*Sof*-סוף" and refers to the end of days. It is based on this that we can connect this with the teaching of the Midrash as per the discourse.

¹¹³⁹ Midrash Devarim Rabba, beginning of this week's Torah portion [Eikev] (3:1), cited in Ohr HaTorah *ibid.* p. 503; Also see Devarim Rabba *ibid.* section 3 (toward the end).

days”) refers to **after** Moshiach arrives. In contrast, according to the simple meaning of the verse, it is discussing the matter of fulfilling the *mitzvot* (“you listen... and you guard them to do them”) meaning that the word “end-*Eikev*-עקב” (the “end of days”) is referring to the end of the time of exile, that is, the time of “the footsteps of Moshiach-*Ikvetā d’Meshicha*-עקבתא דמשיחא.”

The connection between the two explanations is¹¹⁴⁰ that the reward of the *mitzvot*, which will take place in the “end-*Eikev*-עקב” (in the coming future), is that in that time there will be the revelation of the Essential Self of the Singular Preexistent Intrinsic and Unlimited One, *HaShem*-יהוה Himself, blessed is He, as explained in Tanya.¹¹⁴¹

Since this revelation is brought about through the toil (of learning Torah and doing *mitzvot* in a way) of self-sacrifice (*Mesirat Nefesh*) (as explained before) therefore, it is through, “It shall be that because (*Eikev*-עקב) you listen” according to the Tzemach Tzedek’s explanation, meaning the toil during the time of “the footsteps of Moshiach-*Ikvetā d’Meshicha*-עקבתא דמשיחא,” at which time the self-sacrifice (*Mesirat Nefesh*) is greater,¹¹⁴² that there will thereby be the revelation of the coming future, “the reward for them I will give you at the end (*b’Eikev*-בעקב).”

¹¹⁴⁰ Similarly see Likkutei Sichot Vol. 9 p. 83.

¹¹⁴¹ Tanya, Likkutei Amarim, Ch. 36

¹¹⁴² See the discourse entitled “*v’Nachah* – The spirit of *HaShem* will rest upon him,” 5725 (Torat Menachem, Sefer HaMaamarim Nissan p. 189 and on [translated in The Teachings of The Rebbe 5725, Vol. 2, Discourse 40]), Ch. 2 and on.

This may be better understood by prefacing with the statement in Tanya¹¹⁴³ that “the ultimate perfection of the days of Moshiach and the resurrection of the dead, depends on our actions and our Divine service throughout the time of the exile.”

In his notes in the margins of his Tanya,¹¹⁴⁴ (which was in captivity for a number of years, but was recently released from captivity (both his Tanya, as well as his other books) and arrived here), my father, master and teacher, whose Hilulah we are celebrating, wrote that the matter of the two words used here, “our actions (*Ma’aseinu*-מעשינו) and our Divine service (*Avodateinu*-עבודתינו),” may be understood from what is stated later in Iggeret HaKodesh, Epistle 12, in the discourse entitled “*v’Hayah Ma’aseh HaTzeddakah*” [stating], “see in depth there.”

He then continues, “‘our actions’ (*Ma’aseinu*-מעשינו) refers to the days of Moshiach, and ‘our Divine service’ (*Avodateinu*-עבודתינו) refers to the resurrection of the dead.”¹¹⁴⁵ Now, the intention of the one whose Hilulah we are celebrating, in his citation to Iggeret HaKodesh, Epistle 12, in the discourse entitled “*v’Hayah Ma’aseh HaTzeddakah* etc.,” seems to be in reference to the explanation in Iggeret HaKodesh there¹¹⁴⁶

¹¹⁴³ Tanya, Likkutei Amarim, Ch. 37

¹¹⁴⁴ Printed in Likkutei Levi Yitzchak – Ha’arot L’Sefer HaTanya (Kehot 5730) p. 15.

¹¹⁴⁵ See Igrot Kodesh of his honorable holiness, the Rebbe Rashab, whose soul is in Eden, Vol. 1, p. 110, that it can be suggested that “the act of charity (*Ma’aseh HaTzedakah*) and the Divine service of charity (*Avodat HaTzedakah*) refer to the matter of the two levels of the days of Moshiach (*Yemot HaMashiach*) and the resurrection of the dead (*Techiyat HaMeitim*).

¹¹⁴⁶ [Tanya, Iggeret HaKodesh, Epistle 12], p. 118a and on.

about the difference between the word “act” (*Ma’aseh*-מעשה) and the word “service” (*Avodah*-עבודה).

“The word ‘act’ (*Ma’aseh*-מעשה) applies either to that which has already been done, or that which is done constantly and spontaneously, and is thus existent, common, and constant etc. (In contrast), the word ‘service’ (*Avodah*-עבודה) only applies to what a person does with much exertion, contrary to his own inclination, thus nullifying his own nature and will out of deference to *HaShem’a*-יהו"ה Supernal will, blessed is He.”

From this it is understood that the same applies to the two words, “our actions” (*Ma’aseinu*-מעשינו) and “our Divine service” (*Avodateinu*-עבודתינו),” in [this chapter] of Tanya. That is, “our actions” (*Ma’aseinu*-מעשינו) refers to fulfilling Torah and *mitzvot* according to our nature and habit, whereas “our Divine service” (*Avodateinu*-עבודתינו)” refers to toiling in Torah and *mitzvot* beyond our nature and habit.

However, from the fact that he writes “the two words (‘our actions’ (*Ma’aseinu*-מעשינו) and ‘our Divine service’ (*Avodateinu*-עבודתינו)) **may be understood** from what it states in Iggeret HaKodesh, Epistle 12,” and concludes (after citing Iggeret HaKodesh there) “see in depth there (*Ayin Sham*-עין שם),” indicating that his intention in citing the above-mentioned Iggeret HaKodesh is (in addition to the distinction between the simple meaning of the words “act” (*Ma’aseh*-מעשה) and “service” (*Avodah*-עבודה)) is also to what is explained there in regard to “the act of charity (*Ma’aseh HaTzedakah*-מעשה

הצדקה).”¹¹⁴⁷ Namely, that through deep study (*Iyun*-עיון) in this (“see in depth there”) we will come to a deeper understanding of the difference between “our actions (*Ma’aseinu*-מעשינו) and our Divine service (*Avodateinu*-עבודתינו).”

To explain, in Iggeret HaKodesh there, about “the act of charity” (*Ma’aseh HaTzedakah*-מעשה הצדקה) it explains that “By their very nature Jews are compassionate¹¹⁴⁸ and perform deeds of lovingkindness.¹¹⁴⁹ This is because their souls are drawn from His qualities, blessed is He, in which the quality of kindness-*Chessed* prevails over the quality of judgment-*Din*... which is why [the soul] is called ‘the daughter of the priest (*Bat Kohen*-בת כהן),”¹¹⁵⁰ (in that a priest (*Kohen*-כהן) is “a man of kindness-*Ish Chessed*-איש חסד”).¹¹⁵¹

He explains there that “the charity drawn down from this aspect is referred to as ‘the act of charity’ (*Ma’aseh HaTzedakah*-מעשה הצדקה), being that the word ‘act’ (*Ma’aseh*-מעשה) applies to that which is already done or is done

¹¹⁴⁷ Based on this there is a sweetening of his addition of the words “which begins with the words ‘And the act of charity shall be-*v’Hayah Ma’aseh HaTzedakah*-והיה מעשה הצדקה,” which is seemingly superfluous.

¹¹⁴⁸ See Talmud Bavli, Yevamot 79a; Mishneh Torah, Hilchot Issurei Biya 19:17; Talmud Yerushalmi, Kiddushin 4:1 (36b) “From where [is it derived] that they are charitable? From [the verse (Deuteronomy 7:12)], ‘*HaShem*-הוייה, your God will safeguard the covenant and the kindness.” This is similarly stated in Devarim Rabba Eikev 3:4 (cited in Ohr HaTorah Eikev (Vol. 5) p. 2,021, see there).

¹¹⁴⁹ The description “shamefaced-*Bayshanim*-ביישנים” was left out (there as well as in Tanya, Likkutei Amarim, Ch. 1). It can perhaps be suggested that “shamefaced” (*Bayshanim*-ביישנים) is brought about through Torah (Talmud Bavli, Beitza 25b, Nedarim 20a). See at length in the letter of the 2nd of Shvat 5708 and the 3rd of Cheshvan 5709* [* Printed in Igrot Kodesh of the Rebbe, Vol. 2 p. 293; Vol. 3 p. 9 and on.]

¹¹⁵⁰ Zohar II 95a

¹¹⁵¹ Tanya, Likkutei Amarim, Ch. 50; Torah Ohr, Tetzaveh 82a; See Midrash Shemot Rabba 5:10; Targum Yonatan to Deuteronomy 33:8 and elsewhere – cited in Ohr HaTorah, Vayeitzei 180b and on.

spontaneously and constantly, (since) the trait of kindness and compassion is implanted within the souls of the whole house of Israel from before, from the time of their creation¹¹⁵² and chained down from His attributes, blessed is He.”

In other words, even though the nature of kindness within him is (not the result of his animalistic soul, but is rather) the result his Godly soul, nonetheless, the charity he does because of this nature is called an “**act of kindness**” (*Ma’aseh HaTzedakah*-מעשה הצדקה).¹¹⁵³ In contrast, the “**Divine service of charity**” (*Avodat HaTzedakah*-עבודת הצדקה) is that his giving of charity is beyond the nature of his Godly soul.

From this it is understood that the difference between “our actions (*Ma’aseinu*-מעשינו) and “our Divine service” (*Avodateinu*-עבודתינו) (in Torah and *mitzvot* in general) is that even when one’s animalistic soul covers over the nature of his Godly soul, and he must toil to remove the covering and concealment of the animalistic soul and reveal the nature of the Godly soul, this is nevertheless in the category of “our **actions** (*Ma’aseinu*-מעשינו).” This is because here his toil is only to reveal the nature that is already present in his Godly soul. In contrast, “our Divine **service** (*Avodateinu*-עבודתינו)” is that one’s toil is even greater than the nature present in his Godly soul.

¹¹⁵² [The term is written as “*Breyyootan*-ברייאותן”] but appears to be a printing error which should be “*Breyyatan*-ברייאתן.”

¹¹⁵³ It can be said that the words of the Alter Rebbe “that which is already done or is constantly being done spontaneously” hints that in “action-*Ma’aseh*-מעשה” there are two matters: “That which **is already** done” – which is due to the nature that “is implanted in the souls of the entire house of Israel **from aforetime**,” and that which “is constantly being done spontaneously” – which is also being done even now, since this is also due to the nature of the animalistic soul.

This may be understood based the explanation elsewhere,¹¹⁵⁴ that in the superiority of those who return in repentance (*Baalei Teshuvah*) over the perfectly righteous (*Tzaddikim Gemurim*) there are two matters.

The first is that through repentance (*Teshuvah*) the strength of the bond of the soul to the Holy One, blessed is He, is revealed. That is, even the separation caused through sins (“your sins separate”)¹¹⁵⁵ only effects the revelations (*Gilyim*) of the soul, but not the essential self (*Etzem*) of the soul. Therefore, even after sinning etc., [a person is capable of repenting] “in a single hour and a single moment”¹¹⁵⁶ and become perfectly righteous (*Tzaddik Gamur*).¹¹⁵⁷

This elevation of the repentant (*Baal Teshuvah*) over and above the righteous (*Tzaddik*), is that in the repentant (*Baal Teshuvah*) the strength of the bond of his soul to *HaShem*-יהוה is revealed, which (in a concealed way) is also present in the righteous (*Tzaddik*).

¹¹⁵⁴ In the discourse entitled “v'Shavti b'Shalom” of Motza'ei Shabbat Parshat Vayeitzei 5738 (Torat Menachem Sefer HaMaamarim Kislev p. 28 and on); Likkutei Sichot Vol. 15 p. 254 and on.

¹¹⁵⁵ Isaiah 59:2; Iggeret HaTeshuvah, Ch. 5

¹¹⁵⁶ See Zohar I 129a and on – The three terms, “one hour, one day, and one moment,” are explained in Likkutei Levi Yitzchak to Zohar there (p. 81); Also see Likkutei Sichot, Vol. 20 p. 86 and on.

¹¹⁵⁷ See Talmud Bavli, Kiddushin 49b: If one betrothed a woman “on condition that I am righteous, even if he was completely wicked, she is betrothed, for perhaps he had thoughts of repentance in his mind.” In Ohr Zarua, Section 112; Likkutei Torah, beginning of Devarim (1b): “On condition that I am **perfectly righteous** (*Tzaddik Gamur*).” See Tanya, Ch. 1.

The second, is that through returning to *HaShem*-יהו"ה in repentance, in a way that "his willful transgressions are transformed into merits,"¹¹⁵⁸ a new elevation that is not present in the righteous (*Tzaddikim*), even in a concealed way, is added to him. For, as known,¹¹⁵⁹ such merits are higher than even the merits of the righteous (*Tzaddikim*).

The same is so of the elevation in returning to *HaShem*-יהו"ה (*Teshuvah*) brought about in the soul by its descent to below. For, as known,¹¹⁶⁰ before their descent, all Godly souls are perfectly righteous (*Tzaddikim Gemurim*) and the advantage of descending into the body, is that they then can repent and return to *HaShem*-יהו"ה (*Baalei Teshuvah*) and have the two matters mentioned above.

The first matter, is that by the body and animalistic soul concealing the light of the soul, this arouses the hidden powers of the soul, up to and including its essential powers, which even transcend its hidden powers.¹¹⁶¹ The second matter is that through the toil of the soul below something novel comes about - the refinement of his body, his animalistic soul, and his portion in the world at large.

Because of this novelty (in that it is not just the revelation of the concealed) this is much higher than the revelation of the hidden powers of the soul. [This is in addition

¹¹⁵⁸ See Talmud Bavli, Yoma 86b

¹¹⁵⁹ See Derech Mitzvotcha 191a and on; Sefer HaMitzvot 5687 p. 37; Likkutei Sichot Vol. 17 p. 186 and on.

¹¹⁶⁰ Likkutei Torah, Balak 73a and elsewhere; In Likkutei Torah there it states that this is "the true answer" as to why the soul descended to this world. Also see the discourse entitled "*Mayim Rabim*" of Motzei Shabbat Parshat Noach 5738 Ch. 4 (Torat Menachem, Sefer HaMaamarim Cheshvan p. 248).

¹¹⁶¹ *Hemshech "Yonati"* Ch. 14; Discourse entitled "*uMaayon MiBeit HaShem*" 5706 Ch. 4 (Sefer HaMaamarim 5706 p. 64) and elsewhere.

to the fact that specifically through this (refinement and purification of the body etc.,) *HaShem* יהו"ה's Supernal intent in the descent of the soul to below and of making a dwelling place [for the Holy One, blessed is He] in the lower worlds] is fulfilled.¹¹⁶²

Now, since this elevation (the novelty in refining the body, the animalistic soul, and one's portion in the world at large) comes through the toil of the soul below, therefore the elevation of the soul brought about by this toil is (not just that its inner and essential powers are revealed, but) the elevation is also novel.

This is explained in various places¹¹⁶³ about the advantage of love of *HaShem* יהו"ה that the Godly soul causes in the animalistic soul, over and above the love of *HaShem* יהו"ה of the Godly soul itself. That is, the love of *HaShem* יהו"ה, blessed is He, of the Godly soul, is in a state of existence.

That is, even the love by which the Godly soul desires to adhere to its root and source, even though by doing so, it will become nothingness and naught and will be utterly nullified of its existence,¹¹⁶⁴ nonetheless, since this desire stems from its nature, therefore, this desire does not nullify its essential form.

In contrast, this is not so of the love of the animalistic soul. For, since by nature it is drawn to matters of physicality, therefore, loving *HaShem* יהו"ה Godliness is the opposite of its

¹¹⁶² Tanya, Likkutei Amarim, Ch. 37 (48b)

¹¹⁶³ See the discourse entitled "*Tanya Shivah Devarim* etc.," 5697 (Sefer HaMaamarim, Kuntreisim Vol. 2 394a); Discourse entitled "*l'Reiach Shemanecha*" 5706 Ch. 6 (Sefer HaMaamarim 5706 p. 105).

¹¹⁶⁴ Tanya, Likkutei Amarim, Ch. 19

nature.¹¹⁶⁵ Thus, through love of His Godliness (which is something novel to the animalistic soul, brought about through the toil of the Godly soul) the animalistic soul is caused to undergo the complete loss of its form and complete nullification, the nullification of its existence (*Bittul b'Metziyut*).

This also causes the nullification of the form of the Godly soul,¹¹⁶⁶ so that its love will be in the aspect of self-nullification (*Bittul*),¹¹⁶⁷ not a love because of the existence and nature of the one who loves (the Godly soul), but rather, love that is because of the One who is loved (His Godliness).

The same is so of one's refinement and purification of his portion in the world. That is, since this causes worldly

¹¹⁶⁵ See Kuntres HaAvodah Ch. 3 (p. 32) that this does not contradict what is stated in various places (Likkutei Torah, Chukat 56d and elsewhere) that the power of lust is not essentially evil – for “this is only because it does not essentially possess the form of evil, but nevertheless, it is not good, and on the contrary, by its nature it is drawn to material matters.”

¹¹⁶⁶ This is the matter of the rotting [of the seed] through which there is thereby caused to be the sprouting – see the discourse entitled “*Tze'ena u'Re'ena*” 5650 (Sefer HaMaamarim 5650 p. 345); Discourse by the same title 5697 (394b); In the discourse entitled “*Tze'ena u'Re'ena* *ibid.*,” (p. 367) it states that the matter of the growth is the revelation of the non-felt pleasure (*Taanug Bilti Murgash*). See later in chapter 7 [of this discourse].

¹¹⁶⁷ In the discourses in the prior note [39 in the original discourse; 5697 *ibid.* 5706 *ibid.*] the matter of the love is explained. However, it is understood that this is likewise so when it comes to the labors in serving *HaShem*-יהוה, blessed is He, **whose substance matter** is that of self-nullification (such as the fear of Him, the acceptance of His yoke, and the like). For, since the nullification (*Bittul*) of the soul stems from its nature, therefore, the nullification (*Bittul*) also is [due to] its “existence.” However, through the Godly soul bringing about nullification (*Bittul*) to *HaShem*-יהוה, blessed is He, in the natural soul, and the natural soul does not have any comingling of [its] “existence” in the nullification (*Bittul*), [this causes] that the nullification of the soul is not because of its nature but is rather true nullification that stems from Godliness. To further elucidate based on the discourse entitled “*v'Hayah Eikev*” 5673 Ch. 178 (*Hemshech* 5672 Vol. 1 p. 363), that it is specifically upon the descent of the soul to below that it comes to the state of setting its own essence aside (*Hanachat Atzmuto*).

matters to be receptacles for Godliness, it is a novel matter, since it is the opposite of the nature of the world (*Olam*-עולם), which is of the same root as “concealment-*He’elem*-העלם,” indicating hiddenness.¹¹⁶⁸

This matter (that the world becomes a receptacle for Godliness) is not because of the world, but because of the Godliness, in that the Oneness of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, is without limit, such that even the existence of the world is unified with Him, blessed is He.¹¹⁶⁹

Through this, this also is brought about in the person (who brought about the refinement and purification of his portion of the world) that his service of his Maker will be with the ultimate nullification of self (*Bittul*), not just stemming from his own existence, but because of *HaShem*-יהו"ה's Godliness.¹¹⁷⁰

5.

Now, based on the above, we also can explain the great elevation of those who merited to sacrifice their lives in actuality for the sanctification of the Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה.¹¹⁷¹

¹¹⁶⁸ Likkutei Torah, Shlach 37d and elsewhere.

¹¹⁶⁹ Similar to the superiority of “One-*Echad*-אחד” over and above “Singular-*Yachid*-יחיד.” – See Torah Ohr beginning of Va’era; Imrei Binah, Shaar HaKriyat Shema Ch. 8, and elsewhere.

¹¹⁷⁰ In addition to the advantage of this in regard to the matter of the nullification (*Bittul*), the service itself is also on a much loftier level. For, since it stems from **Godliness**, it is not limited to the same extent as the limitations of the nature of man, nor even by the limitations of the nature of the soul, this being the matter of “our Divine service-*Avodateinu*-עבודתינו” which is a toil that transcends even the nature of the soul (as explained before).

¹¹⁷¹ See Talmud Baval, Bava Batra 10b in regard to the martyrs of Lod that “[their status is so exalted that] none can stand in their section.” Also see Derech

[To point out based on what is publicly known, my father, master, and teacher, whose Hilulah we are celebrating, was imprisoned and exiled to a city of exile in a distant land, as a result of his toil in strengthening and spreading Judaism, and he suffered great persecution and anguish there (both while in prison and when he was in exile there) etc. etc.,¹¹⁷² such that the suffering and anguish he endured there (naturally) caused his untimely death.]

Now, at first glance, this requires greater analysis. This is because self-sacrifice (*Mesirat Nefesh*) is natural to every single Jew, in that every single Jew is incapable of renouncing “*HaShem* is One-*HaShem Echad* יהוה אחד,” and is prepared to sacrifice his soul for this, and to endure suffering etc.,¹¹⁷³ (and the fact that he has not actually given up his life, is only because as of yet, it has not become necessary to do so,) this being so, what is the greatness of those who had **actual** self-sacrifice (*Mesirat Nefesh*)?

What is further not understood is what Rabbi Akiva said,¹¹⁷⁴ “All my days I have been troubled by the verse,¹¹⁷⁵

Mitzvotcha 186a; Ohr HaTorah, Acharei (Vol. 2) p. 549; Drushim L'Yom HaKippurim (Devarim Vol. 5) p. 2,137-2,138; Also see the beginning of the discourse entitled “*Vayedaber... Pinchas*” 5629 (Sefer HaMaamarim 5629 p. 252) and 5652 (Sefer HaMaamarim 5652 p. 69); Also see Ohr HaTorah, Drushim L'Yom HaKippurim *ibid.* (p. 2,138), “self-sacrifice (*Mesirat Nefesh*) is loftier than all of Torah and *mitzvot*... the Maggid [angel] promised the Beit Yosef that he would merit to give up his life for the sanctification of the Name *HaShem* יהוה – ‘since this aspect is more precious than all of the Torah that the Beit Yosef learned throughout his entire life.’”

¹¹⁷² See his writings which were printed at the beginning of Likkutei Levi Yitzchak on Tanya p. III-IV.

¹¹⁷³ Tanya, Likkutei Amarim, Ch. 18

¹¹⁷⁴ Talmud Bavli, Brachot 61b

¹¹⁷⁵ Deuteronomy 6:5

‘With all your soul’ etc., when will I be given the opportunity to fulfill it?” Now, at first glance, does not the fact that all his days he yearned to fulfill this in actuality, reveal the strength of the self-sacrifice (*Mesirat Nefesh*) that illuminated within him? This being so, what great lacking was there for him in his self-sacrifice (*Mesirat Nefesh*) (for the duration of time that it did not come to being actualized due to a cause that did not depend on himself), such that he was troubled by it?

It can be said that the explanation¹¹⁷⁶ is that the fact that every Jew is prepared to sacrifice his life not to renounce [the true faith], Heaven forbid, is because of His Godly soul. Thus, even when there is an awakening of the power of his self-sacrifice (*Mesirat Nefesh*) in a revealed way (that should he require it, Heaven forbid, he is ready to give up his life in actuality) this is the power of self-sacrifice (*Mesirat Nefesh*) of the Godly soul as it comes into actuality. However, this self-sacrifice (*Mesirat Nefesh*) of the soul is because of its nature, and there is no novelty in this.

In contrast, when it comes to **actual** self-sacrifice (*Mesirat Nefesh b’Poel*), a novelty is introduced that was not previously there. For, in addition to the fact that this comes through the concealment and hiddenness of opposing force, who try to force him to renounce [the true faith], Heaven forbid, by him having self-sacrifice and agreeing to suffer at their

¹¹⁷⁶ In Shaarei Orah [of the Mittler Rebbe] p. 61a and on, and 90b, it seems to indicate that this is because of the elevation of “actualization” (*Po’el*-פועל) over and above “potential” (*Ko’ach*-כח). However, in Shaarei Orah 8a and on (see 9a there) [it states that] the superiority of self-sacrifice (*Mesirat Nefesh*) in actuality is because it is also [the sacrifice] of the body. Also see the end of the aforementioned discourse of the year 5629 (p. 257) and 5652 (p. 75 and on).

hands, he thereby extracts the sparks of holiness within them and elevates them to holiness.¹¹⁷⁷ This matter, (the elevation of the sparks that fell to such a low level below) is a novelty.¹¹⁷⁸

To explain, the novelty of actual self-sacrifice (*Mesirat Nefesh b'Poel*) applies to a person who stands steadfastly with self-sacrifice. For, when he actually gives up his life with self-sacrifice (*Mesirat Nefesh*), the self-sacrifice is (also) of his **natural soul**. That is, not only does his natural soul not obstruct him from having self-sacrifice (*Mesirat Nefesh*), but it too desires to give up its life [for the sanctification of the Name *HaShem*-יהוה] in **actuality**.¹¹⁷⁹ However, since (in and of itself) the natural soul desires to live, the self-sacrifice caused in it (through the Godly soul) is a novelty, in that it is the opposite of its nature.

This then, is specifically the greatness of actual self-sacrifice (*Mesirat Nefesh b'Poel*), because in regard to the self-sacrifice (*Mesirat Nefesh*) of the Godly soul, since it stems from its nature, it thus is in a state of existence. In contrast, this is not so of actual self-sacrifice (*Mesirat Nefesh b'Poel*), since it is the opposite of the nature of the natural soul, such that through its self-sacrifice (*Mesirat Nefesh*) it becomes nullified of its existence. This also causes an ascent of the Godly soul (who brought the self-sacrifice in the natural soul about), that

¹¹⁷⁷ Derech Mitzvotcha 192a; Also see 186b there.

¹¹⁷⁸ See Derech Mitzvotcha ibid. (186a; 191b) that there is the same elevation in this as the transformation of willful sins to merits that is present in repentance (*Teshuvah*).

¹¹⁷⁹ Kuntres HaAvodah Ch. 6 (p. 32), wherein it states, “When it comes to self-sacrifice in actuality for the sanctification of the Name *HaShem*-יהוה, and for whatever reason of *HaShem*-יהוה, blessed is He, he is saved from this, it is without any doubt or even a hint of a doubt that his natural soul is changed by this from one extreme to another to the point that he is caused to be a different person, literally.”

the self-sacrifice of the Godly soul should also be in a state of nullification of self (*Bittul*).

6.

Now, we can say that, so to speak, the same is so of the descent of the first constriction (*Tzimtzum*) (which began the descent of the whole chaining down of the worlds (*Hishtalshelut*)). That is, the constriction (*Tzimtzum*) is for the sake of the revelation [in the ascent, from which it chained down that all descents are for the sake of ascent], in that it too has a likeness to the two above-mentioned matters.¹¹⁸⁰

The first matter is that through the restraint of the *Tzimtzum* a novelty was introduced, that the revelation of the limitless light of the Unlimited One, *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, will also be in the worlds. This is because before the restraint of the *Tzimtzum*, when “the limitless light of the Unlimited One filled the space of the void, there was no room (meaning, no possibility) for the existence of worlds.”¹¹⁸¹ It thus follows automatically that there was no revelation in the worlds.

However, through the restraint of the *Tzimtzum* it was newly introduced that the revelation of the limitless light of the Unlimited One, *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, will be within the worlds. Now, the novelty in this is solely in relation to the worlds and not in relation to the light, for in those levels that

¹¹⁸⁰ With respect to the coming section see *Hemshech* 5666 p. 4, p. 509, p. 524-525; Also see *Sefer HaMaamarim* 5687 p. 158 and on.

¹¹⁸¹ *Etz Chayim*, Shaar 1 (Shaar Iggulim v'Yosher) Anaf 2; Also see beginning of *Otzrot Chayim* and *Mevo She'arim*.

precede the restraint of the *Tzimtzum*, this light was previously revealed.

The second matter is that through the toil of affecting refinements there be a revelation of a new light that did not illuminate before the restraint of the *Tzimtzum*, such that this revelation not only transcends the spreading forth of the light (*Hitpashtut HaOhr*), which is in the aspect of revelation (*Giluy*), but even transcends the essence of the light (*Etzem HaOhr*), up to the revelation of the essential concealment (*He'elem HaAtzmi*).

7.

Now, as known, these two matters, the revelation of the limitless light of the Unlimited One, *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, that illuminated even before the restraint of the *Tzimtzum*, and the revelation of the essential concealment (*He'elem HaAtzmi*), will take place in the coming future, only that there will be two stages in this.

This then, explains the Midrashim that seem to differ with each other about the coming future. [In one place] they stated,¹¹⁸² "The Holy One, blessed is He, is destined to make a feast for the righteous (*Tzaddikim*)."¹¹⁸³ [In another place] they stated,¹¹⁸⁴ "In the coming world there is no eating and no drinking." The explanation is well known,¹¹⁸⁴ namely, that these two teachings refer to two different times. That is, there

¹¹⁸² Talmud Bavli, Bava Batra 75a

¹¹⁸³ Talmud Bavli, Brachot 17a

¹¹⁸⁴ *Hemshech* 5666 p. 97, p. 524-525

first will be the revelation of the felt pleasure (*Taanug Murgash*) (the “feast”). This refers to the revelation of the limitless light of the Unlimited One, *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, that illuminated even before [the creation]. After this there will be the revelation of the unfelt pleasure (*Taanug Bilti Murgash*), up to and including the revelation of the essential concealment of His Essential Self (*He'elem HaAtzmi*).

Now, in general, this is the difference¹¹⁸⁵ between the days of Moshiach (*Yemot HaMashiach*) and the resurrection of the dead (*Techiyat HaMeitim*).¹¹⁸⁶ For, our sages, of blessed memory, stated,¹¹⁸⁷ “All the prophets only prophesied in regard to the days of Moshiach (*Yemot HaMashiach*). However, in regard to the Coming World (*Olam HaBa*) [the verse states],¹¹⁸⁸ ‘No eye has seen it, God, except for You.’” It thus can be said that in days of Moshiach there will be the revelation of the limitless light of the Unlimited One, *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, that illuminated in a revealed way even before the restraint of the *Tzimtzum*. However, in the Coming World (upon the

¹¹⁸⁵ Igrot Kodesh of his honorable holiness, the Rebbe Rashab, whose soul is in Eden, Vol. 1 p. 109; This is likewise understood from what is stated in *Hemshech* 5666 p. 10 (cited later in the discourse), that the revelation of Eden will take place upon the resurrection of the dead (*Techiyat HaMeitim*). This is also further elucidated by the aforementioned *Hemshech* on p. 105 where it is explained in relation to the Father-*Abba* (Wisdom-*Chochmah*) and Mother-*Imma* (Understanding-*Binah*). However, this is not the place [to expand on that].

¹¹⁸⁶ To further elucidate based on what has been discussed on several occasions (see *Siyum HaRambam* 10th of Shvat 5747 (Torat Menachem, Hadranim Al HaRambam v'Sha"Sh p. 130) that with respect to what the Rambam writes (Hilchot Melachim, beginning of Ch. 10) that in the days of Moshiach the world will continue according to its normal conduct, this refers to the first phase. However, in the second phase, which is the resurrection of the dead, there will be **novelty** in the act of creation. We can connect this with what is stated in the discourse, that upon the resurrection of the dead (*Techiyat HaMeitim*) there will be a revelation of **novel** light.

¹¹⁸⁷ Talmud Bavli, Brachot 34b

¹¹⁸⁸ Isaiah 64:3

resurrection of the dead) there will be the revelation of the aspect of Eden, about which the verse states, “No eye has seen it,” [this being] the concealment of the Essential Self.¹¹⁸⁹

8.

With the above in mind we can state in greater detail that the revelation of the days of Moshiach (*Yemot HaMashiach*) depends on “our actions” (*Ma’aseinu*-מעשינו), whereas the revelation of the resurrection of the dead (*Techiyat HaMeitim*) depends on “our Divine service” (*Avodateinu*-עבודתינו). For, since that which causes the reward of the *mitzvah* is the *mitzvah* itself,¹¹⁹⁰ therefore the *mitzvah* (the “Divine service-*Avodah*-עבודה”) must bear an element of similarity to the reward, (that which is drawn forth by it).

Therefore, the drawing forth of the revelation of the limitless light of the Unlimited One that even illuminated before, comes through the toil to reveal the nature of the Godly soul that also was present before, this being “our actions” (*Ma’aseinu*-מעשינו).

In contrast, the drawing forth of the revelation of the concealment of the Essential Self (*He’elem HaAtzmi*), meaning, a novel light, comes through a toil that even transcends the nature of the Godly soul, (through which a novel matter is caused in him that previously was not present, even from the

¹¹⁸⁹ *Hemshech* 5666 p. 10; Discourse entitled “*Yechayeinu Miyomayim*” 5691 Ch. 3 (Sefer HaMaamarim, Kuntreisim Vol. 1, p. 145b; 5691 p. 245).

¹¹⁹⁰ Tanya, Likkutei Amarim, Ch. 37

perspective of his Godly soul), this being [the matter of] “our Divine service” (*Avodateinu*-עבודתינו).

9.

This then, is the meaning of [the verse], “It shall be that because (*Eikev*-עקב) you listen etc.,” as a term of certainty. This is because it is certain that *HaShem*’s-יהו"ה Supernal intent will be fulfilled in both ways mentioned above, in that “the Holy One, blessed is He, desired a dwelling place for Himself in the lower worlds.”¹¹⁹¹ That is, there will be both the revelation of the limitless light of the Unlimited One, *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, that illuminated before the restraint of the *Tzimtzum* (this being the revelation of the days of Moshiach), as well as the revelation of the concealment of the Essential Self (*He'elem HaAtzmi*) (this being the revelation of the resurrection of the dead).

Now, although these revelations depend on our actions (*Ma'aseinu*-מעשינו) and our Divine service (*Avodateinu*-עבודתנו), and free-choice is granted to every person,¹¹⁹² nevertheless, about this we are promised¹¹⁹³ that “no one banished from Him will remain banished,”¹¹⁹⁴ and every single Jew will fulfill *HaShem*’s-יהו"ה Supernal intention in our actions (*Ma'aseinu*-מעשינו), this being toiling in Torah and

¹¹⁹¹ See Midrash Tanchuma, Bechukotai 3; Naso 16; Midrash Bereishit Rabba 3; Bamidbar Rabba 13:6; Tanya, Ch. 36, and elsewhere.

¹¹⁹² See Mishneh Torah, Hilchot Teshuvah 7:1

¹¹⁹³ See Tanya, Likkutei Amarim, Ch. 39; Hilchot Talmud Torah of the Alter Rebbe 4:3; Also see Ohr HaTorah, Eikev p. 504.

¹¹⁹⁴ See Samuel II 14:14

mitzvot beyond the nature of the animalistic soul, as well as in our Divine service (*Avodateinu*-עבודתינו), this being toiling in Torah and *mitzvot* beyond the nature of the Godly soul.

This then, is the meaning of [the verse], “It shall be that because (*Eikev*-עקב) you listen,” wherein the word “*Eikev*-עקב” is referring to the time of the “footsteps of Moshiach-*Ikmeta d'Meshicha*-דמשיחא” as mentioned before. For, (in addition to the fact that there then will be the fulfillment of the promise that they “will listen” in a way of certainty), the perfection of our Divine service (this being the addition of a novelty, even in relation to the Godly soul) (primarily) is through the refinement of the darkness of the exile, especially the darkness of the time of the “footsteps of Moshiach-*Ikmeta d'Meshicha*-דמשיחא.”

[This is especially so considering what the Tzemach Tzedek states,¹¹⁹⁵ that the verse “It shall be that because (*Eikev*-עקב) etc.,” is [related to [the verse],¹¹⁹⁶ “His hand grasping onto the heel (*Akeiv*-עקב) of Esav.” (In the first explanation) he explains that this literally refers to the heel (*Akeiv*-עקב) of Esav.]

Even for the righteous (*Tzaddikim*), for whom the darkness of the exile does not darken to the same degree, and they certainly do not have the toil of transforming willful transgression into merits, and moreover, the elevation brought about through the refinement and purification of their animalistic soul is not as strong in them (being that their animalistic soul is not as coarse, even before their toil) it is

¹¹⁹⁵ Ohr HaTorah *ibid.* p. 500; and see p. 503 there.

¹¹⁹⁶ Genesis 25:26

rather through tests (*Nisyonot*), and especially through actual self-sacrifice (*Mesirat Nefesh*), that they even refine the sparks in the three completely impure husks of *Kelipah*, as explained before.

Now, since it is so, that there were many righteous *Tzaddikim*, thus through their self-sacrifice there already was the elevation brought about through the refinement of the sparks of the three completely impure husks of *Kelipah*, and this elevation is also drawn to their children, [as the verse states, “*HaShem-יהוה* your God will safeguard for you [the covenant and the kindness] that He swore to your forefathers”]. Moreover, one’s children also includes his students¹¹⁹⁷ who studied his Torah.

Therefore, no further tests (*Nisyonot*) are necessary, and certainly no actual self-sacrifice (*Mesirat Nefesh*) in the literal sense. Rather, all that is necessary is the giving over of one’s will (*Mesirat HaRatzon*).¹¹⁹⁸ It shall thereby be for them and for all the Jewish people that “our actions” (*Ma’aseinu-מעשינו*) and “our Divine service” (*Avodateinu-עבודתנו*) will be done with tranquility and with abundance in the most literal and true meaning of this, with joy and goodness of heart, and there will be the fulfillment of the prophecy,¹¹⁹⁹ “Awake and shout for joy, you who dwell in the earth,” and the one whose Hilulah we are celebrating will be amongst them, and we shall all go quickly and with an upright stature to our Land, with the coming

¹¹⁹⁷ Sifri and Rashi to Deuteronomy 6:7

¹¹⁹⁸ See Torah Ohr, Mikeitz 36b and elsewhere.

¹¹⁹⁹ Isaiah 26:19

of our righteous Moshiach, speedily in our times, and in the most literal sense!