

Discourse 39

*“Nachamu Nachamu Ami... -
Be consoled, be consoled, My people...”*

Delivered on Shabbat Parshat Va'etchanan,
Shabbat Nachamu, 16th of Menachem-Av, 5728
By the grace of *HaShem*, blessed is He,

1.

The verse states,²⁴³⁴ “Be consoled, be consoled, My people, says your God.” Now, we must understand the meaning of the repetitive language, “Be consoled, be consoled-*Nachamu Nachamu*-נחמו נחמו.” In his discourse entitled “*Nachamu*,”²⁴³⁵ his honorable holiness, my father-in-law, the Rebbe, (whose day of joy and redemption we recently celebrated on the 12th of Tammuz) brings the statement in Midrash,²⁴³⁶ “It is written, ‘Be consoled, be consoled-*Nachamu Nachamu*-נחמו נחמו.’ Why is it written twice? Rabbi says: Because all the afflictions by which they were afflicted were doubled. We thus find that Yirmiyahu said,²⁴³⁷ ‘Disaster upon disaster (*Shever al shever*-שבר על שבר)’ has occurred,’ and²⁴³⁸ ‘She weeps and weeps-*Bacho Tivkeh*-בכה תבכה,’ and,²⁴³⁹ ‘My eye, o’ my eye-*Einee Einee*-עייני עייני’

²⁴³⁴ Isaiah 40:1

²⁴³⁵ 5703 – Sefer HaMaamarim Yiddish p. 126

²⁴³⁶ Yalkut Shimoni, Eichah, Remez 1,018

²⁴³⁷ Jeremiah 4:20

²⁴³⁸ Lamentations 1:2

²⁴³⁹ Lamentations 1:16

[continuously runs with water],’[and²⁴⁴⁰ ‘Yerushalayim] has sinned and sinned-*Cheit Chatah*-הטא חטאה.’ Why to such an extent? Because she sinned in double measure, as the verse states,²⁴⁴¹ ‘For My people has committed two evils.’ Thus, since she sinned in double measure, she therefore was afflicted in double measure, as the verse states,²⁴⁴² ‘She has received double for all her sins.’ However, because her *mitzvot* are in double measure, therefore her consolation is in double measure, as the verse states, ‘Be consoled, be consoled, My people etc.’”

He explains that we must understand the matter of the double punishment (“they were doubly afflicted”) and the consolation (“her consolation is in double measure”). For, at first glance, since the sin was doubled (“she sinned in double measure”) we thus find that there only was a single punishment and a single consolation. That is, for each sin there only was a single punishment, and afterwards (through repentance, there came) one consolation. We also must understand the matter of “her *mitzvot* are in double measure.”

We should add and point out that the double measure in the matter of the *mitzvot* was the cause for the double measure in the matter of sin, and therefore automatically also in the matter of the punishment. For, the general matter of sin and punishment only applies once there is a commandment. This is similar to the verse,²⁴⁴³ “You alone did I know (did I love,²⁴⁴⁴

²⁴⁴⁰ Lamentations 1:8

²⁴⁴¹ Jeremiah 2:13

²⁴⁴² Isaiah 40:2

²⁴⁴³ Amos 3:2

²⁴⁴⁴ See Metzudat David to Amos 3:2

as it states,²⁴⁴⁵ ‘I loved you, says *HaShem*-יהו"ה’) from all the families of the earth; therefore I will hold you accountable for all your iniquities.” Thus, it is because her *mitzvot* are doubled that there also is a matter of doubling in the sin and punishment, and subsequently, also in the consolation. From this it is understood that through explaining the matter of the doubling in the *mitzvot*, this will thereby also explain the matter of the doubling in the sin, punishment, and consolation.

The essential point of the explanation of the above-mentioned discourse,²⁴⁴⁶ is that the meaning of “doubled *mitzvot*” is that there are two matters in every *mitzvah*. This is because through the *mitzvah* the refinement and purification of **the person** is caused, and also the refinement and purification of **the world** is caused. Therefore, the lack of serving *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, in fulfilling the *mitzvot*, is a matter of doubled sin, in that there is deficiency in two matters - in the refinement of man and in the refinement of the world.

It follows automatically that they were doubly afflicted, since the lacking in the two above-mentioned matters is itself the punishment. From this it is understood that when we rectify this through repentance (*Teshuvah*) a double consolation is thereby automatically caused

²⁴⁴⁵ Malachi 1:2

²⁴⁴⁶ Sefer HaMaamarim Yiddish p. 127

Now, we should add more specifically to the explanation of the “doubled *mitzvot*.” For, it states in Tanya,²⁴⁴⁷ citing Etz Chayim,²⁴⁴⁸ that the soul itself requires no repair etc., and did not need to descend into this world and manifest in the body and vital soul except to repair them etc., to elevate his vital soul and its general portion in the world, and to bind and unify them with the limitless light of the Unlimited One, *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He.

This matter (of refining the body, the animalistic soul, and one's portion in the world), is not a secondary matter, but is a primary matter in which there is ultimate purpose, in and of itself. For, through doing so, *HaShem*'s-יהו"ה Supernal intention is fulfilled, in that “the Holy One, blessed is He, desired a dwelling place for Himself in the lower worlds.”²⁴⁴⁹

However, as known²⁴⁵⁰ through its descent below there also is caused to be ascent in the soul itself. This does not contradict the statement above that the soul itself is not in need repair at all, for what is not needed by the soul is the matter of **repair**. That is, since it “literally is a part of God from on high,”²⁴⁵¹ it does not apply for there to be any deficiency in it

²⁴⁴⁷ Tanya, Likkutei Amarim, Ch. 37 (48b)

²⁴⁴⁸ Etz Chayim, Shaar 26, Ch. 1

²⁴⁴⁹ See Midrash Tanchuma, Bechukotai 3; Naso 16; Midrash Bereishit Rabba 3; Bamidbar Rabba 13:6; Tanya, Ch. 36, and elsewhere.

²⁴⁵⁰ See Likkutei Torah, Re'eh 29a; Also see Likkutei Sichot, Vol. 15 p. 247 and on.

²⁴⁵¹ See Job 31:2; Pardes Rimmonim of Rabbi Moshe Cordovero, Shaar 32, Ch. 1; Ohr Ne'erav by the same author, Chelek 1, Ch. 3; Likkutei Torah of the Arizal, Bereishit; Etz Chayim, Shaar 42, Ch. 1; Etz HaDa'at Tov of Rabbi Chayim Vital, VaEtchanan; Asis Rimmonim v'Pelach HaRimon, Shaar 32, Ch. 1; Hakdama Ben

whatsoever, Heaven forbid. It thus follows automatically that it does not require any repair at all. However, in regard to the matter of **ascent**, it specifically is through the soul descending below that a matter of ascent is caused in it, up to and including an ascent that is beyond all relativity.²⁴⁵²

The explanation is that as the soul is unto itself (before its descent to below) it relates to the aspect of the garments (*Levushin*), as in the teaching,²⁴⁵³ “You have fixed garments (*Levushin*) for them, from which souls fly forth etc.” However, through its descent to below, the elevation of “becoming subsumed in **the body** (*Gufa*) of the King,”²⁴⁵⁴ is caused, and it is understood that the body of the King is immeasurably loftier than the garments of the King.

In addition, it is written,²⁴⁵⁵ “As *HaShem*-יהו"ה, God of Israel, lives – before Whom I stood,” referring to the soul before to its descent to below. Its perfection was then in the matter of “standing” (*Amidah*) (“before Whom I stood”) which is the matter of nullification (*Bittul*) to Him.²⁴⁵⁶ Nevertheless, this only is a matter of “standing” (*Amidah*-עמידה), rather than “walking” (*Halichah*-הליכה). However, upon its descent to below, the soul comes to the aspect of “making strides”

Me'ah Shanah to Shefa Tal; Chessed L'Avraham, Maayan 3, Nahar 25; Introduction to Siddur HaArizal of Rabbi Yaakov Kopel of Mezhrich; Da'at Tevunot of the Ramchal, Section 158; GR"A to Heichalot, Heichala Tinyana, Heichal 1; Nefesh HaChayim, Shaar 1, Ch 5, and elsewhere.

²⁴⁵² See Ginat Egoz of Rabbi Yosef Gikatilla, translated as *HaShem Is One*, Vol. 3 (The Letters of Creation, Part 2), The twelve letters ק"ץ ט"ז ל"ג ט"ע צ"ק ה"ו ז"ח ת"י ל"ד ט"ז ת"ח correspond to the twelve tribes of Israel.

²⁴⁵³ Introduction to Tikkunei Zohar 17a

²⁴⁵⁴ Zohar I 217b; See Likkutei Torah *ibid*.

²⁴⁵⁵ Kings I 17:1

²⁴⁵⁶ See Torah Ohr, Vayeishev 29b

(*Mehalech*-מהלך),²⁴⁵⁷ as the verse states,²⁴⁵⁸ “I shall grant you to stride (*Mahalechim*-מהלכים) amongst these [angels] who stand here (*Omdeem*-עומדים).”

That is, it comes to the aspect of “those who walk” (*Mehalech*-מהלך) even relative to its state and standing when it was before Him (“before Whom I stood”), specifically “**before** Him-*Lefanav*-לפניו,” meaning higher than the aspect of “*HaShem*-יהוה, God of Israel,” up to the elevation that is beyond all relative comparison.

For, as known, the matter of “striding” (*Heelooch*-הילוך) is in a way of being completely uprooted from his previous level, this being a matter of “striding” (*Halichah*-הליכה) in a way that is beyond all relative comparison, or (in more familiar language), “striding” that is without limitation (*Bli Gvul*). That is, it reaches the aspect of “with all your soul,” and [beyond that] to the aspect of “with all your more” (*Bechol Me’odecha*).²⁴⁵⁹

With the above in mind, we can explain the matter of the doubling as it is in the *mitzvot*, that in addition to the doubling that there is in the refinement **of the person** and the refinement **of the world** (as mentioned before), there also is a doubling in the refinement of the person himself, in that there are two matters in this. There is the repair of the body and animalistic soul, and there is the ascent of the [Godly] soul.

The same is likewise so that there is a doubling in the refinement of the world itself, this being the matter of making

²⁴⁵⁷ See Torah Ohr ibid. 30a and on.

²⁴⁵⁸ Zachariah 3:7

²⁴⁵⁹ Deuteronomy 6:5; See Torah Ohr, Mikeitz 39c and on.

the dwelling place in the lower worlds. For, as known,²⁴⁶⁰ to make the dwelling place for the Holy One, blessed is He, there first must be the purification of the dwelling place etc., this being the matter of “turn away from evil.”²⁴⁶¹ Only after this is it possible for there to be the work of “do good.”²⁴⁶²

It should be added that the matter of “doubling” in the *mitzvot* is also in regard to the deed of fulfilling the *mitzvot*, that it specifically must be done by the Godly soul and the animalistic soul together (as explained in Tanya).²⁴⁶³ This is because, in and of itself, the Godly soul cannot act in the physical body, and in and of itself, the animalistic soul is incapable of fulfilling the *mitzvot*, being that “the spirit of the beast descends below.”²⁴⁶⁴

Therefore, the fulfillment of the *mitzvot* must be by both souls together. This then, is the matter of “doubling” as it is in fulfilling the *mitzvot*, this being the deed of the animalistic soul (similar to the refinement and purification of the world), and the deed of the Godly soul (similar to the ascent of the soul).²⁴⁶⁵

3.

This also explains the “doubled sin,” as it states, “My people have committed two evils,” and as in the continuation of

²⁴⁶⁰ Likkutei Torah, Balak 70c

²⁴⁶¹ Psalms 34:15

²⁴⁶² Psalms 34:15 *ibid.*

²⁴⁶³ Tanya, Likkutei Amarim, Ch. 37 (47a)

²⁴⁶⁴ Ecclesiastes 3:21

²⁴⁶⁵ Also see the Sichah talk of Shabbat Parshat Va’etchanan, 13th of Menachem-Av 5750, Ch. 4 (Hitva’aduyot 5750 Vol. 4 p. 119).

the verse²⁴⁶⁶ brought in the above-mentioned discourse, “They have forsaken Me, the Source of living waters, to dig cisterns for themselves, broken cisterns etc.”

The explanation is that the verse states,²⁴⁶⁷ “See – I have placed before you today the life and the good and the death and the evil” (and there also are intermediaries between them). Therefore, through sin, in which one does not refine himself and the world and make it into a dwelling place for *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, not only is he deficient in the matter of life, this being the refinement of man and the refinement of the world, (“they have forsaken Me etc.”), but in addition, the opposite is also caused (“to dig for themselves cisterns, broken cisterns etc.”).

The same is so of the soul, in that not only does it lack the elevation it could have had through serving *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, in fulfilling Torah and *mitzvot* upon its descent to below, such that it remains in the state and standing it was in before its descent to below, but beyond this, the matter of descent is caused in it, in that it comes to relate to the “broken cisterns that cannot hold water.” The same is the meaning of the continuing words of the Midrash, that “since they doubly sinned, they were doubly afflicted,” in that the punishment is doubled in relation to each particular in the sin.

The explanation is that, as known, sin causes the matter of exile, this being the matter of the withdrawal of the Indwelling Presence of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, the

²⁴⁶⁶ Jeremiah 2:13

²⁴⁶⁷ Deuteronomy 30:15

Shechinah. This is as stated in Zohar,²⁴⁶⁸ that “during the time of exile, the Holy One, blessed is He, withdraws high above.”

The Holy One, blessed is He (*Kudsha Breech Hoo*) refers to the aspect of *Zeir Anpin*, which is the aspect of the light of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, that surrounds and transcends all worlds (*Sovev Kol Almin*).²⁴⁶⁹ There also is another explanation²⁴⁷⁰ of [the title] “the Holy One, blessed is He-*Kudsha Breech Hoo*-קודשא בריך הוא.” The word “Holy-*Kadosh*-קדוש,” which means “separate,” refers to the aspect of the light of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, that surrounds and transcends all worlds (*Sovev Kol Almin*), and the word “Blessed-*Baruch*-ברוך,” which is a word that means “to draw down,” refers to the aspect of the light of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, that fills all worlds (*Memaleh Kol Almin*).

Thus, the meaning of “the Holy One, blessed is He withdraws high above,” is that there is a withdrawal of [both] the aspect of the light of *HaShem*-יהו"ה that surrounds and transcends all worlds (*Sovev Kol Almin*), as well as the withdrawal of the aspect of the light of *HaShem*-יהו"ה that fills all worlds (*Memaleh Kol Almin*). This then, is the meaning of “they were doubly afflicted.”

To explain in greater detail, about the time of the exile it is written,²⁴⁷¹ “We have not seen our signs etc.” The word “our signs-*Ototeinu*-אותותינו” means wonders (*Otot*-אותות) and miracles (*Mofteem*-מופתים). That is, this refers to the conduct that transcends the natural order stemming from the aspect of

²⁴⁶⁸ Zohar I 210a; Zohar III 20b; 75a

²⁴⁶⁹ See Torah Ohr, Lech Lecha 12d, and elsewhere.

²⁴⁷⁰ See Sefer HaMaamarim 5627 p. 224

²⁴⁷¹ Psalms 74:9

the light of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, that surrounds and transcends all worlds (*Sovev Kol Almin*). About this the verse states, "We have not seen," in that during the time of exile we do not see the conduct that transcends the natural order.

In addition, there also is a deficiency in the conduct that accords to the natural order stemming from the aspect of the light of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, that fills all worlds (*Memaleh Kol Almin*). This is as explained in Kuntres U'Maayon,²⁴⁷² that during the time of exile, the souls of the Jewish people cannot receive from the place where the nations of the world receive, even though that is the conduct that accords to the natural order.

This then, is the meaning of the "doubled affliction," in that there is a lacking both in the aspect of the light of *HaShem*-יהו"ה that surrounds and transcends all worlds (*Sovev Kol Almin*), as well as in the aspect of His light that fills all worlds (*Memaleh Kol Almin*).

4.

In the discourse he concludes that serving *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, with repentance (*Teshuvah*) brings about "Be consoled, be consoled." This is as in the conclusion of the words of the Midrash, that "her consolation is in double measure, as it states, 'Be consoled, be consoled, My people.'"

The explanation is that serving *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, with repentance (*Teshuvah*) is in a way of "double

²⁴⁷² Kuntres U'Maayon, discourse 11, Ch. 2 and on.

sagacity.”²⁴⁷³ For, as known,²⁴⁷⁴ at the giving of the Torah it says “I-*Anochi*-אֲנִי” once, whereas about repentance (*Teshuvah*) it states “I-*Anochi*-אֲנִי” twice, as the verse states,²⁴⁷⁵ “I-*Anochi*-אֲנִי, [only] I-*Anochi*-אֲנִי, am He who wipes away your willful sins.”

As this is understood simply, since he sinned, blemished, and left the path, he therefore requires special stringencies and safeguards etc. This is as known from the teaching of the Rav, the Maggid of Mezhritch,²⁴⁷⁶ that about the words of our sages, of blessed memory,²⁴⁷⁷ “I desire it, but what shall I do, in that my Father in heaven has imposed these decrees upon me,” this only applies to the conduct of the righteous (*Tzaddikim*). However, the repentant (*Baal Teshuvah*) must say, “I do not desire it etc.”

This is as stated by Rambam in Hilchot De’ot,²⁴⁷⁸ (and the Alter Rebbe brings what he says in his pure Shulchan Aruch, in Siman 156),²⁴⁷⁹ that the straightforward path is the intermediate path, which is equidistant from the two extremes, but nevertheless, if a person has leaned to one (undesirable) extreme, he should distance himself [from it] to the opposite extreme etc.

Another matter that is doubled in service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה with repentance (*Teshuvah*), is that through serving Him in repentance (*Teshuvah*), stemming from the aspects of the

²⁴⁷³ See Job 11:6; Midrash Shemot Rabba 46:1

²⁴⁷⁴ Exodus 20:2; Deuteronomy 5:6

²⁴⁷⁵ Isaiah 43:25

²⁴⁷⁶ Cited in Likkutei Torah, Va’etchanan 9d

²⁴⁷⁷ Torat Kohanim and Rashi to Leviticus 20:26

²⁴⁷⁸ Mishneh Torah, Hilchot De’ot 1:4; 2:2

²⁴⁷⁹ Shulchan Aruch of the Alter Rebbe, Orach Chayim 156:3

Chayah and *Yechidah* [levels of the soul],²⁴⁸⁰ [which are the aspects of] “with all your more,” there also is caused to be an elevation in service of Him stemming from the aspects of the *Nefesh*, *Ru’ach*, and *Neshamah* [levels of the soul, which are the aspects of] “with all your heart and with all your soul.”

Now, since serving *HaShem* יהו"ה with repentance (*Teshuvah*) is in a way of “double sagacity,” therefore, the drawing down brought about through serving Him with repentance (*Teshuvah*) is in a way that is doubled. It is for this reason those who return in repentance (*Baalei Teshuvah*) “are drawn to Him... with greater strength,”²⁴⁸¹ this being the matter of “doubling.”

This then, is why repentance (*Teshuvah*) brings about “Be consoled, be consoled-*Nachamu Nachamu*-נחמו נחמו,” a doubled consolation, the meaning of which is not only two times the thing, but rather in a way that is beyond comparison. Moreover, all this is in addition to the great elevation of the first “Be consoled-*Nachamu*-נחמו.” This is also understood from the explanation in the discourse.²⁴⁸² Namely, the first “Be consoled-*Nachamu*-נחמו” (which is regular consolation, and is unlike the second “Be consoled-*Nachamu*-נחמו” about which it states, “Be consoled My people-*Nachamu Ami*-נחמו עמי”), refers to the consolation of the Holy One, blessed is He.

This is as stated in the Midrashic teachings of our sages, of blessed memory,²⁴⁸³ “To what is this analogous? To a person whose children were taken into captivity. Who does one

²⁴⁸⁰ See Likkutei Torah, Balak 74a

²⁴⁸¹ Zohar I 129b; See Torah Ohr, Mikeitz 39d

²⁴⁸² Ibid. p. 125

²⁴⁸³ Yalkut Shimoni to Isaiah, Remez 443

console? Is it not **their father?**” The same is so of one whose house has burned down. Who does one console? The house, or **the owner of the house?** In the words of the Talmud,²⁴⁸⁴ “[Woe to Me... that] I destroyed My house and burned My sanctuary... How great is the pain of the father who exiled His children etc.” Thus, since the consolation is the consolation of the Holy One, blessed is He, it is understood that the consolation is in a way that is beyond comparison.

5.

Now, as known, the root of all matters is in Torah, as it states,²⁴⁸⁵ “He gazed into the Torah and created the world.” Therefore, there also a matter of doubling in the Torah, this being the doubling of the Tablets (*Luchot*), in that there were the first set of Tablets and the second set of Tablets.

The explanation is that the first Tablets (*Luchot*) were given before the sin of the golden calf, and the second Tablets (*Luchot*) were given after the sin of the golden calf. That is, the second Tablets came through serving *HaShem*-יהוה, blessed is He, with repentance (*Teshuvah*), after the great descent caused by the sin of the golden calf, which is the root and source of all the sins.²⁴⁸⁶ Therefore, the greatness of the second Tablets over and above the first Tablets, is greatness that is beyond comparison, “double sagacity.”²⁴⁸⁷

²⁴⁸⁴ Talmud Bavli, Brachot 3a

²⁴⁸⁵ Zohar II 161a and on

²⁴⁸⁶ See Talmud Bavli, Sanhedrin 102a

²⁴⁸⁷ Midrash Shemot Rabba 46:1

It should be added that the matter of the doubling of the Tablets (*Luchot*) is also expressed in the fact that through the second Tablets there was an even greater addition in elevation over the first Tablets (similar to the explanation before, that through serving *HaShem*-יהו"ה with repentance (*Teshuvah*), stemming from the *Chayah* and *Yechidah* [levels of the soul] there also is caused to be addition in service of Him stemming from the *Nefesh*, *Ru'ach*, and *Neshamah* [levels of the soul]).

This is also why the Torah portion of Va'etchanan, which was said after the sin of the golden calf, relates the general matter of the giving of the Torah, and the giving of the first Tablets as they were before the sin (as in the Torah portion of Yitro),²⁴⁸⁸ hints at the greater elevation that was added to the first Tablets (*Luchot*) through the second Tablets (*Luchot*).

6.

The same is so of the first and the second Holy Temples. For, it states in Midrash²⁴⁸⁹ (about the reason for the doubled language, "Be consoled, be consoled") that this is because the verse states that there are two weepings,²⁴⁹⁰ "She weeps and weeps-*Bacho Tivkeh* תבכה בככה," that is, for the first Holy Temple and for the second Holy Temple. The verse therefore states, "Be consoled, be consoled, My people."

However, in the discourse entitled "*Nachamu*" of the year 5670,²⁴⁹¹ a question is asked on this. That is, since it states

²⁴⁸⁸ Also see Likkutei Sichot Vol. 9, p. 69

²⁴⁸⁹ Yalkut Shimoni to Isaiah, Remez 445

²⁴⁹⁰ Lamentations 1:2

²⁴⁹¹ Sefer HaMaamarim 5670 p. 218; p. 221

“Be consoled-*Nachamu*-נחמו” about the first Holy Temple, and as known, at that time there was a much loftier revelation of light than in the second Holy Temple, therefore there was no need to state the additional “Be consoled-*Nachamu*-נחמו” about the second Holy Temple, being that “one-hundred is included in two-hundred.”

He explains that to understand this, we first must preface with the teaching of our sages, of blessed memory,²⁴⁹² “Never were there more joyous festivals in Israel than the fifteenth of Av and Yom HaKippurim.” The reason as stated in Pri Etz Chayim,²⁴⁹³ is because the moon is then full. However, this must be understood. For, is it not so that the moon is full on the 15th of every month? Why then do we not find that holidays were established then? For, except for Pesach and Sukkot, which are on the 15th of the month, the other months of the year do not have a holiday on their 15th day. Why then, is it specifically a holiday on the 15th of Av? Moreover, from the fact that it states, “Never were there more joyous festivals for Israel than the fifteenth of Av,” this seems to indicate that it is an even greater holiday than the other holidays, meaning even more than Pesach and Sukkot. Therefore this must be understood.

He [continues and] explains,²⁴⁹⁴ that even though the moon is full on the 15th of every month, nevertheless, at those times, the descent is not so low, and therefore the ascent is also not so great. In contrast, this is not so of the 15th of Av, in which

²⁴⁹² Mishnah Taanit 4:8; Talmud Bavli, Taanit 30b

²⁴⁹³ Pri Etz Chayim, end of Shaar Chag HaShavuot – Drush L'Tu b'Av

²⁴⁹⁴ Sefer HaMaamarim 5670 *ibid.* p. 229s (copied in short in the HaYom Yom for the 15th of Menachem-Av).

the descent (of the 9th of Av) is to a greater degree, and therefore the ascent is also to a greater degree.

It therefore is specifically the 15th of Av that it is a holiday, and it also is greater than the other holidays, including even Pesach and Sukkot. [It can be said that the ascent of the 15th of Av is even higher than [the ascent of] Yom HaKippurim. For, as known, the Schach covering of the Sukkah is drawn from the cloud of incense (*Ketoret*) of Yom HaKippurim.²⁴⁹⁵ Now, since the 15th of Av is even higher than Sukkot, it thus is also higher than Yom HaKippurim.]²⁴⁹⁶

With the above in mind, he also explains this relation to the first Holy Temple and the second Holy Temple. That is, the [first] “Be consoled-*Nachamu*-נחמו” for the first Holy Temple is not sufficient, for even though it was on a loftier level than the second Holy Temple and “two-hundred includes one-hundred,” nevertheless, (upon the destruction of the first Holy Temple) the descent was not so low etc. Therefore, the [first] “Be consoled-*Nachamu*-נחמו” for the first Holy Temple is not sufficient in and of itself. The verse therefore states, “Be consoled, be consoled-*Nachamu Nachamu*-נחמו נחמו” twice, once for the first Holy Temple and once for the second Holy Temple.

However, based on this, the matter is not understood from a different angle. That is, since it was specifically with the second Holy Temple that the descent was so great, which is

²⁴⁹⁵ See Ateret Rosh, beginning of Shaar Yom HaKippurim 29a and on; 36a and on; Ohr HaTorah, Sukkot p. 1,722 and on; *Hemshech* “v’Kachah” 5637, Ch. 84; Sefer HaMaamarim 5657 p. 162 and on.

²⁴⁹⁶ For a more complete elucidation, also see the Sichah talk that followed the discourse (Torat Menachem, Vol. 53 p. 343 and on).

why the ascent is also greater, this being so, it should have been sufficient to say “Be consoled-*Nachamu*-נחמו” once about the second Holy Temple. This being so, what need is there to also say “Be consoled-*Nachamu*-נחמו” about the first Holy Temple? However, the explanation is that through the consolation over the second Holy Temple, elevation is also added to the first Holy Temple. This is as explained before (in chapter five), that through the second Tablets (*Luchot*) added elevation was also caused in the first Tablets (*Luchot*).

7.

This then, is the meaning of [the verse], “Be consoled, be consoled, My people.” In his discourse, his honorable holiness, my father-in-law, the Rebbe, brings the explanation of the Radak, that all these consolations are destined for the times of Moshiach, and as he concludes in the discourse,²⁴⁹⁷ “The true consolation will be with the coming of Moshiach in the near future.”

Now, since all the revelations of the coming future depend on our deeds and service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, right now,²⁴⁹⁸ the preparation for this is through serving Him with repentance (*Teshuvah*). This is the meaning of [the teaching],²⁴⁹⁹ “Moshiach is destined to bring the righteous (*Tzaddikim*) to repentance.” The explanation is that upon the coming of Moshiach there will be the fulfillment of the

²⁴⁹⁷ On p. 127 *ibid*.

²⁴⁹⁸ See Tanya, Likkutei Amarim, beginning of Ch. 37

²⁴⁹⁹ See Likkutei Torah, Shemini Atzeret 92b; Shir HaShirim 50b; See Zohar III 153b

prophecy,²⁵⁰⁰ “I shall transform their mourning into joy,” therefore the preparation for this is also specifically by way of transformation (*It'hapcha*), this being the element of superiority in the service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה of the repentant (*Baalei Teshuvah*) compared to the service of Him of the Righteous (*Tzaddikim*).

This is because the work of the Righteous (*Tzaddikim*) does not cause transformation (*It'hapcha*) in matters that are bound in the hands of the external forces, but rather, their mode of service in relation to them is solely and specifically by way of repulsion. In contrast, through repentance (*Teshuvah*) even “willful transgressions become like merits for him,”²⁵⁰¹ (to the point of being actual merits),²⁵⁰² as explained in Tanya.²⁵⁰³ Therefore, through serving *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, with repentance (*Teshuvah*), which causes a transformation of willful sins into merits, there is caused to be the fulfillment of “I shall transform their mourning into joy.”

This likewise is the matter of the 15th of Av,²⁵⁰⁴ in which there specifically is the emphasis of the descent to further below, through which the ascent above is even greater, as explained before from the discourse entitled “*Nachamu*” of the year 5670.

Now, it should be pointed out that this discourse has a novelty in comparison to other places that explain that every

²⁵⁰⁰ Jeremiah 31:12, cited in Tur Orach Chayim 580

²⁵⁰¹ Talmud Bavli, Yoma 86b

²⁵⁰² See Likkutei Sichot, Vol. 17, p. 184 and on; Vol. 27 p. 110 and on.

²⁵⁰³ Tanya, Likkutei Amarim, Ch. 7

²⁵⁰⁴ To point out, this year, 5728, the 15th of Av fell out on the eve before Shabbat, and it therefore also relates to Shabbat Nachamu, at which time there is the ascent and completion of the 15th of Av.

descent is for the purpose of ascent, and that the greater the descent, so likewise the greater ascent.

To explain, this matter that because of the greatness of the descent therefore the ascent must be even higher, can also be in a way of **order and gradation**. At first glance, this is what is indicated in Pesikta,²⁵⁰⁵ that after the Holy One, blessed is He, told the prophets, “My prophets, console My people,” the prophets answered and said before the Holy One, blessed is He, “The congregation of Israel do not accept our consolations, as the verse states,²⁵⁰⁶ ‘O’ afflicted, storm-tossed one, who has not been consoled.’”

It is then that the Holy One, blessed is He, returned and said, “I, only I, am He who comforts you,” as explained about the reason for the order of Haftorahs during the seven weeks of consolation (that follow the three weeks of affliction), until we come to the Haftorah of “*Shuvah Yisroel* – Return, O’ Israel,” which relates to the repentance of Yom HaKippurim.

However, according to the explanation in this discourse, that the superiority of the 15th of Av is because the great descent of the 9th of Av, it is understood that the ascent is in a way that is beyond comparison, **without** order and gradation, so that after the descent of the 9th of Av we **immediately** come to the elevation of the 15th of Av, which is an even greater holiday than Pesach and Sukkot.

Now, all this comes about through serving *HaShem* - יהו"ה, blessed is He, with repentance (*Teshuvah*). This is as in

²⁵⁰⁵ Cited in Avudraham, Seder HaParshiyot v’HaHaftarot (p. 73).

²⁵⁰⁶ Isaiah 54:11

the Halachic ruling of Rambam,²⁵⁰⁷ “Israel will be redeemed only through repentance, and the Torah has already promised that, ultimately, toward the end of their exile Israel will repent, and immediately they will be redeemed,” specifying, “immediately,” meaning without any obstacles or obstructions due to the limitations of the chaining down of the worlds (*Seder Hishtalshehut*), just as the general matter of repentance (*Teshuvah*) transcends limitations. Thus, through thinking thoughts of repentance in one’s heart, he immediately becomes a righteous *Tzaddik*,²⁵⁰⁸ up to and including a perfectly righteous *Tzaddik Gamur*,²⁵⁰⁹ (as in the version of the Alter Rebbe in Tanya),²⁵¹⁰ this being the most elevated title.

As stated before, through repentance (*Teshuvah*) the prophecy, “I shall transform their mourning into joy,” and, “those days will be transformed to rejoicing and celebration,” is fulfilled.²⁵¹¹ This is as stated in the Midrashic teachings of our sages, of blessed memory,²⁵¹² that these days (about which it states “I shall transform their mourning into joy”) shall be transformed into the greatest holidays, and there then will be the true consolation, the inner and full consolation, with the coming of our righteous Moshiach, speedily and in the most literal sense!

²⁵⁰⁷ Mishneh Torah, Hilchot Teshuvah 7:5

²⁵⁰⁸ Talmud Bavli, Kiddushin 49b

²⁵⁰⁹ See Ohr Zaru’ah, Section 112

²⁵¹⁰ Tanya, Likkutei Amarim, Ch. 1; Also see Likkutei Torah, Devarim 1b

²⁵¹¹ See Zachariah 8:19; Mishneh Torah, Hilchot Taaniyot 5:19

²⁵¹² See Pesikta Rabbati, end of “*Al Naharot Bavel*”; Likkutei Sichot, Vol. 24,