Discourse 13

"V'Al HaNissim... For the miracles..."

Delivered on Shabbat Parshat Mikeitz, Shabbat Chanukah, Shabbat Mevarchim Teivet, 5728 By the grace of *HaShem*, blessed is He,

1.

We recite, 889 "[We thank You] for the miracles... You battled their battles, You judged their grievances, You avenged their vengeance etc." Now, the explanation is that this is similar to the verse, 890 "When he zealously avenged My vengeance," on which Rashi comments, "When he avenged My vengeance,' – when he displayed the anger that I should have displayed." The same is so of the words, "You battled their battles," that the Holy One, blessed is He, battled the battle **that the Jewish people should have battled**, (unlike the simple meaning, that the Holy One, blessed is He, battled **on behalf** of the Jewish people). That is, there is a battle that the Jewish people must battle ("**their** battle") and this battle is waged by the Holy One, blessed is He, Himself.

⁸⁸⁹ In the prayer of thanks "v'Al HaNissim" recited on Chanukah.

⁸⁹⁰ Numbers 25:11

The explanation is that the battle of the Jewish people ("their battle") is the general battle against the side opposite holiness, so that it will be possible for them to make "a dwelling place for Him, blessed is He." This is analogous to making a dwelling for an honorable person, and how much more so for a king, and how much more so for a great and awesome king, that it first is necessary to cleanse the dwelling from all matters that are undesirable, and only after this it is possible to bring in the beautiful furnishings etc., until it will be fitting for the king to dwell in. 892

As this relates to our service of *HaShem-*הר", blessed is He, is that for it to be possible to engage in the work of "do good,"893 there first must be the work of "turn away from evil."894 In this itself, being that a dwelling place must be made for the great and awesome King, regular cleanliness is insufficient, but the cleanliness must be to the greatest degree. That is, the turning away from evil must be to the ultimate degree. That is, not only does one push away actual evil, but beyond this, there is no possibility for the matter of evil to be in him. This comes about through detesting evil.

This is as explained by the Rebbe Maharash in the discourse entitled "Ravta et Rivam" of the year 5628 (which

⁸⁹¹ See Midrash Tanchuma, Bechukotai 3; Naso 16; Midrash Bereishit Rabba 3; Bamidbar Rabba 13:6; Tanya, Ch. 36, and elsewhere.

⁸⁹² Likkutei Torah, Balak 70c

⁸⁹³ Psalms 34:15

⁸⁹⁴ Psalms 34:15 ibid.

was said one-hundred years ago).⁸⁹⁵ That is, there is a vast difference between them. That is, if he despises evil, he will be angered about the evil and will be its ultimate enemy. contrast, "turning away from evil" means that he only pushes it out of his heart because of his sublimation and nullification (Bittul) to the will of HaShem-יהו"ה, blessed is He. However, he [himself] has no essential hatred for evil, and therefore these still is room for evil to derive vitality from him, due to whatever essential love and closeness he still has for it, even though he completely pushes it away from bringing it into actuality. It is only when a person is angry and infuriated by the evil and hates it totally, that there then is no room for the evil to derive any vitality from him. For, since his hatred of it is total, how can it receive any benefit from him? For as known, every bestowal comes from the quality of Kindness-Chessed, which is the matter of love and closeness. In contrast, the left pushes away and distances, with the ultimate distance, so that no degree of bestowal or vitality can come from him.

More specifically, the difference between turning away from evil and despising evil, is like the difference between the world of Emanation (*Atzilut*) and the worlds of Creation, Formation, and Action (*Briyah*, *Yetzirah*, *Asiyah*). In our service of *HaShem-הו"ה*, blessed is He, this is like the difference between the service of Him of intermediates (*Beinonim*) and the service of Him of the righteous (*Tzaddikim*). For, as known, 896 the difference between the righteous (*Tzaddikim*) and the levels below them, is similar to the

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⁸⁹⁵ Sefer HaMaamarim 5628 p. 41 and on.

⁸⁹⁶ See Ohr HaTorah, Va'etchanan p. 408.

difference between the world of Emanation (Atzilut) and the worlds of Creation, Formation, and Action (Briyah, Yetzirah, Asiyah).

The explanation is that the world of Emanation (*Atzilut*) is the world of Oneness (*Olam HaAchdut*),⁸⁹⁷ about which the verse states,⁸⁹⁸ "Evil shall not dwell with you." In other words, not only is there no actual evil there, but moreover, there is not even the possibility for the existence of evil.

In contrast, this is not so of the worlds of Creation, Formation, and Action (*Briyah*, *Yetzirah*, *Asiyah*). For, even in the world of Creation (*Briyah*) there already is the existence of evil, except that it is mostly good with a minority of evil, ⁸⁹⁹ meaning that the evil is nullified to the good. (This is why we sometimes find that the world of Creation (*Briyah*) is called "the concealed worlds"). ⁹⁰⁰ Nonetheless, being that evil exists in it, it therefore is possible for the external forces to derive vitality from this.

The same is so of the difference between the level of intermediates (*Beinonim*) and the level of the righteous (*Tzaddikim*). For, even though the level of the intermediate (*Beinoni*) is such that, "he has never transgressed in all his days, nor will he ever transgress," nonetheless, there is the possibility for the existence of evil in him, since extraneous

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⁸⁹⁷ See Avodat HaKodesh, Part 1, Ch. 4, and elsewhere.

⁸⁹⁸ Psalms 5:5; Likkutei Torah, Bamidbar 3c and on; Also see Shaar HaYichud of the Mittler Rebbe, translated as The Gate of Unity, Ch. 54.

⁸⁹⁹ See Etz Chayim, Shaar 43 (Shaar Tziyur Olamot), Hakdamah L'Drush; Also see Shaar 47 (Shaar Seder ABY"A) Ch. 4; Shaar 48 (Shaar HaKelipot) Ch. 3; Shaar HaYichud of the Mittler Rebbe, translated as The Gate of Unity, Ch. 54 ibid.

 $^{^{900}}$ See Likkutei Torah, Bamidbar 4b; Sefer Ha Maamarim 5626 p. 195, and elsewhere.

⁹⁰¹ Tanya, Likkutei Amarim, Ch. 12

thoughts come into his mind etc., except that he immediately pushes them away etc. This is as explained in Tanya, 902 that in an intermediate the essential being of the evil, is in its full strength and might etc., and on the contrary, it becomes strengthened over the course of time through him using it in eating, drinking, and engaging in all other matters of the world.

In contrast, on the level of the righteous (*Tzaddikim*), especially the perfectly righteous (*Tzaddik Gamur*), meaning one who despises evil and hates it totally, 903 there is no possibility whatsoever for the existence of evil in him, such that even committing a sin inadvertently (*b'Shogeg*), which comes about because of the dominance of the shiny shell (*Kelipat Nogah*) of animalistic soul (as explained in Iggeret HaKodesh), 904 does not apply to him, as the verse states, 905 "No iniquity will befall a righteous man (*Tzaddik*)."

This then, is the general battle of the Jewish people ("their battle"). That is, they must battle against the side opposite holiness and cause that even the possibility for evil to exist will not be, and thereby the side opposite holiness automatically will not have any derivation of vitality.

Now, when the spiritual work of the Jewish people is as it should be, there is a drawing down to them of all physical

⁹⁰² Tanya, Likkutei Amarim, Ch. 13.

⁹⁰³ Tanya, Likkutei Amarim, Ch. 10 (15a); Also see the discourse entitled "Beela HaMavet L'Netzach – Death will be eliminated forever" 5725, translated in The Teachings of Rebbe 5725, Vol. 2, Ch. 3 (Torat Menachem, Sefer HaMaamarim Av p. 122 and on).

⁹⁰⁴ Tanya, Iggeret HaKodesh, end of Epistle 28.

⁹⁰⁵ Proverbs 12:21

bestowals too, as the verse states, 906 "If you will follow My decrees... then I will provide your rains in their time etc."

3.

However, when this "battle" is lacking in the service of HaShem-יהו"ה of the Jewish people, a state and standing of exile is caused. This is like what happened in the times of Chanukah. That is, even though the Jewish people were dwelling in the Holy Land, and the Holy Temple was standing in its place, and they were not in a state of "because of our sins we were exiled from our land,"907 nonetheless, "the evil Greek kingdom rose up against Your people Israel etc.,"908 to the point that they said to them, 909 "Write on the horn of a bull that you have no portion in the God of Israel," this being the opposite of faithfulness (Emunah) to HaShem-יהו", blessed is He, in that this is a matter of idolatry, may the Merciful One save us, and is equivalent to opposing the entire Torah. 910 This happened because their service of HaShem-יהו", blessed is He, lacked the utter refinement of evil, and therefore it was possible for the side opposite holiness to derive vitality etc.

However, about this it states, "You stood by them in the time of their distress, You battled their battles." That is, when the Jewish people were in a time of distress, and were on a low level, which is why their service of battling against the side

910 Talmud Bavli, Horayot 8a

⁹⁰⁶ Leviticus 26:3-4

⁹⁰⁷ See the liturgy of the Musaf prayer of the holidays.

⁹⁰⁸ See the liturgy of the "Al HaNissim" added on Chanukah.

⁹⁰⁹ Midrash Bereishit Rabba 2:4 and elsewhere; See Torah Ohr, Vayeishev 30a

opposite holiness was lacking, then "You battled their battles," in that the Holy One, blessed is He, battled the battle that the Jewish people should have battled. That is, the Holy One, blessed is He, brought about the battle against the side opposite holiness in by way of arousal from Above to below, and through this the war was victorious.

Although as known, the victory in the war was brought about through the self-sacrifice (Mesirat Nefesh) of the Hasmoneans, in addition to the fact that since they were on a low level only the minority of Jews had self-sacrifice (Mesirat Nefesh), rather than the majority, which would have been considered as if everyone [had self-sacrifice], which is unlike Purim (even though there are many matters in which Chanukah and Purim are similar to each other),911 in which not only Mordechai and Esther had self-sacrifice (Mesirat Nefesh) but all the Jewish people had self-sacrifice], 912 even the matter of the self-sacrifice (Mesirat Nefesh) that was in the minority of Jews, was not to bring about the miracle, in that the miracle was only by way of arousal from Above. Rather, the need for selfsacrifice (Mesirat Nefesh) was only in order to be a receptacle for the revelation drawn down by way of arousal from Above. In other words, since the revelation was drawn down by way of arousal from Above, from higher than the chaining down of the worlds (Seder Hishtalshelut), therefore, to make a receptacle that could receive this revelation, it was not enough for one's service of HaShem-יהו", blessed is He, to be in a way that accords to understanding and comprehension, which is

⁹¹¹ See Hitva'aduyot 5750 Vol. 2, p. 43, note 2.

⁹¹² Also see Torat Menachem, Sefer HaMaamarim Kislev p. 132.

measured and limited, but rather the receptacle for this is specifically self-sacrifice (*Mesirat Nefesh*) in that self-sacrifice (*Mesirat Nefesh*) transcends measure and limitation.

This is also the meaning of the precise wording, "You stood by them... You battled their battles," in which it states, "You stood-Amadeta-ממדה"," specifically indicating the matter of "standing-Amidah-ה"." To explain, the difference between "standing" (Amidah) and "sitting" (Yeshivah) is well known. That is, "sitting" (Yeshivah) indicates a matter of lowering and constriction, in that by sitting the head is lowered down etc. In contrast, when one stands his head is elevated upward, and it is in this way (as the head is, in and of itself) that it also is drawn down in the foot. This refers to the matter of drawing down mature intellect (Mochin d'Gadlut) (as the intellectual faculties (Mochin) are, in and of themselves).

This then, is the meaning of "You stood (Amadeta-עמדת) by them... You battled their battles." That is, to "battle their battles," meaning battling against the side opposite holiness, an even higher drawing down is necessary, "You stood-Amadetaby by them," specially in a way of "standing up" (Amidah-עמידה).

⁹¹³ See Torah Ohr, Bereishit 1b; Ohr HaTorah, Beha'alotcha p. 359 and on; *Hemshech* 5672 Vol. 2, p. 701.

⁹¹⁴ See *Hemshech* 5672 Vol. 3, p. 1,291 and on; Sefer HaMaamarim 5689 p. 40 and on; Discourse entitled "*v'Atah b'Rachamecha* – In Your abundant mercies, You stood for them," 5717, translated in The Teachings of The Rebbe 5717, Vol. 1, Discourse 10 (Sefer HaMaamarim 5717 p. 88 and on).

Now, all this can be connected to the explanation in Torah Ohr, in the discourses of Chanukah, 915 that the lights (*Neirot*) of Chanukah are similar to the verse, 916 "And *HaShem-*illuminates my darkness." That is, to illuminate the darkness, there must be the revelation of a much higher light, which is the meaning of "And *HaShem-*i" (illuminates my darkness)," with the additional [prefix letter] *Vav-*1, this being the matter of the Upper Name *HaShem-*i" that transcends the chaining down of the worlds (*Hishtalshelut*). That is, because of its greatness it can illuminate the darkness.

The explanation is that the word "my darkness-Chashchee-השכי" ("the darkness that is mine") indicates the state and standing of the Jewish people as they are, in and of themselves. This is as explained above, that in the time of Chanukah the Jewish people were on a low level, in that they lacked the matter of battling against the side opposite holiness, which is why [the matter of] "You battled their battles," was necessary, by the Holy One, blessed is He, this being the matter of "And HaShem-in" illuminates my darkness."

In other words, the general matter of the Chanukah flames (*Neirot*) is to illuminate the darkness, this being the matter of "**You** battled their battles," which is the battle against the side opposite holiness. Now, to illuminate the darkness, the

⁹¹⁵ Torah Ohr, Mikeitz 34a; 41a; 41c

⁹¹⁶ Samuel II 22:29

⁹¹⁷ See Likkutei Torah, Drushim L'Rosh HaShanah 59a; Also see Ginat Egoz of Rabbi Yosef Gikatilla, translated as HaShem Is One, Vol. 1, The Gate of Intrinsic Being (*Shaar HaHavayah*) and on.

light that transcends the chaining down of the worlds (*Hishtalshelut*) must be drawn down, about which the verse states, "And *HaShem-ה*" (with the addition of the *Vav-*1) illuminates my darkness." Likewise, this is the matter of "You stood (*Amadeta-ממדת*) by them etc.," specifically emphasizing "standing up" (*Amidah-*", as explained above.

5.

The explanation⁹¹⁸ is that in Talmud it states,⁹¹⁹ "The Chanukah lamp shall be on the left [of the door] and the Mezuzah on the right." This is because the purpose of the Chanukah lamp is to refine the left column.

This is because the Mezuzah [on the right] refers to all the *mitzvot*, in that it is equated to all the *mitzvot*, ⁹²⁰ being that the Mezuzah includes all the *mitzvot*, and as known, all the *mitzvot* are on the right column, as we find, that all the *mitzvot* are named after the *mitzvah* of charity (*Tzedakah*), as the verse states, ⁹²¹ "And it shall be a charity (*Tzedakah*) for us if we are careful to perform this entire commandment (*Mitzvah*)," and thus when referred to, charity (*Tzedakah*) is simply called "commandment-*mitzvah*-מצוה," (מצוה, '922) and as known, charity (*Tzedakah*) is on the right column, the column of Kindness-*Chessed*.

⁹¹⁸ In regard to the coming section, also see Likkutei Sichot Vol. 5, p. 223 and on and the citations there.

⁹¹⁹ Talmud Bayli, Shabbat 22a

⁹²⁰ See Siddur Im Da"Ch, Shaar HaChanukah p. 275a

⁹²¹ Deuteronomy 6:25; See Torah Ohr, Mikeitz 42c and elsewhere.

⁹²² Tanya, Likkutei Amarim, Ch. 37 (48b)

This is because the *mitzvot* are fulfilled only with permissible things, as our sages, of blessed memory, stated, 923 "What is suitable for the service of Heaven, only is what is pure and permitted in your mouth." Through this the shiny husk (*Kelipat Nogah*) is refined, and thus vitality is drawn to all permissible things. In contrast, the three completely impure husks (*Shalosh Kelipot HaTmei'ot*), cannot be refined by way of closeness, but only by way of distance and repulsion, meaning specifically by keeping the negative prohibitive *mitzvot*.

However, the study of Torah also causes the refinement of the three completely impure husks (*Shalosh Kelipot HaTmei'ot*) by way of closeness (similar to the refinement of the shiny husk (*Kelipat Nogah*) through the fulfillment of the positive action *mitzvot* with permissible things). This is because the study of Torah even descends to render judgment on forbidden and impure things, to refine the law and state that such and such a thing is fit and permitted, and such and such a thing is unfit and forbidden, (the word "forbidden-*Assur-*" means "imprisoned-*Assur-*" and bound in the hands of the external forces), such as, 924 "These are unfit... and these are fit." That is, the study of Torah is in a way of engaging and toiling in the give and take of even "these are unfit" in the same way as "these are fit" etc.

However, all this is only so of the study of Torah, that through it, even things that are forbidden and are from the three completely impure husks (*Shalosh Kelipot HaTmei'ot*) are

⁹²³ Talmud Bavli, Shabbat 28b

⁹²⁴ Mishnah Chullin 3:1-2

refined. In contrast, this is not so when it comes to actual deed, in which only permissible things from the shiny husk are refined.

Now, the matter of the Chanukah lamp is like Torah. For, as known, the Chanukah lamp is related to "Torah is light."925 That is, the Chanukah lamp also causes the refinement of the three completely impure husks (Shalosh Kelipot HaTmei'ot) of the left column, this being the matter of, "The Chanukah lamp shall be on the left." This is as explained by his honorable holiness, my father-in-law, the Rebbe, in the discourse entitled "Mai Mevarech" (which was recently published), about the superiority of the Rabbinic *mitzvot*, one of which is the *mitzvah* of lighting the Chanukah lamp. That is, they have both the superiority of the positive action *mitzvot*, as well as the superiority of the negative prohibitive *mitzvot*. In other words, through the Rabbinic *mitzvot* one refines the three completely impure husks (Shalosh Kelipot HaTmei'ot), just as one does through keeping the negative prohibitive mitzvot. However, it is not in a way of distance and repulsion, but in a way of closeness, similar to the positive *mitzvot*.

This bears a similarity to the refinement that will take place in the times of Moshiach. This is as stated in Talmud,⁹²⁷ "What are idolaters doing there (in the coming world, when [there will be the fulfillment of the verse],⁹²⁸ "I will remove the

⁹²⁵ Proverbs 6:23; See Rashi to Talmud Bavli, Shabbat 23b, entitled "*Banim*-"; Torah Ohr, Mikeitz 32b, and elsewhere.

 $^{^{926}}$ 5700 (Kuntres 122 – subsequently printed in Sefer HaMaamarim 5700 p. 70 and on).

 $^{^{927}}$ Talmud Bavli, Pesachim 68a – cited and explained in the discourse entitled "*Ravta et Rivam*" 5628 ibid.

⁹²⁸ Zachariah 13:2

spirit of impurity from the land")? [It will be] as written,⁹²⁹ 'foreigners will stand and tend to your flocks, and the sons of the stranger will be your plowmen and your vineyard workers." That is, the nations of the world will still exist, except that, "I then will transform the nations [to speak] a pure language, so that they all will proclaim the Name *HaShem*-יהו", to worship Him with united resolve." '930

However, to even refine the left column, there must be a drawing down of light from that which transcends the chaining down of the worlds (*Seder Hishtalshelut*), this being the matter of [the verse], "And *HaShem-*" illuminates my darkness," referring to the Upper Name *HaShem-*", as mentioned before.

As explained in the above-mentioned discourse entitled "Mai Mevarch," through the positive action mitzvot there is a drawing down of the externality of the light (Chitzoniyut HaOhr) that manifests in the vessels (Keilim) and through the negative prohibitive mitzvot there is a drawing down of the innerness of the light (Pnimiyut HaOhr) (both the innerness-Pnimiyut of the externality-Chitzoniyut, as well as the essential innerness-Pnimiyut b'Etzem), which transcends manifestation in the vessels (Keilim) and is drawn down in an encompassing transcendent way (Makif).

However, through the Rabbinic *mitzvot*, one of which is the *mitzvah* of lighting the Chanukah lamp, there also is caused to be a drawing down of the innerness of the light (*Pnimiyut HaOhr*) in a way that it manifests in the vessels (*Keilim*). This

⁹²⁹ Isaiah 61:5

⁹³⁰ Zephaniah 3:9

is because the root of the drawing down is from the Essential Self of the limitless light of the Singular Preexistent Intrinsic and Unlimited One, *HaShem-יהויה* Himself, blessed is He, who transcends the innerness of the light (*Pnimiyut HaOhr*).

This is also why the Chanukah lights are eight in number, unlike the lights of the Holy Temple which were seven. This is because the level of the Chanukah lights bears similarity to the harp of the coming future, which will have eight strings, 931 (and includes the harp of ten strings, 932 about which the verse states, 933 "With an instrument of ten strings"). As explained elsewhere, 934 this also is the matter of eight times HaShem-יהו", that is higher than seven times HaShem-יהו", the general matter of which is the light that transcends the chaining down of the worlds (Hishtalshelut) that will be revealed in the coming future.

Now, as this relates to our service of *HaShem-הוֹיזה*, blessed is He, this is the matter of self-sacrifice (*Mesirat Nefesh*), which is the receptacle for drawing down the light that transcends the chaining down of the worlds (*Hishtalshelut*). That is, it is specifically through self-sacrifice that even the three completely impure husks (*Shalosh Kelipot HaTmei'ot*) can be refined, [similar to what the Tzemach Tzeddek explained,⁹³⁵ that through tests and challenges (*Nisyonot*) even

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⁹³¹ Talmud Bavli, Arachin 13b

⁹³² Arachin 13b ibid.

⁹³³ Psalms 94:4: Arachin ibid.

⁹³⁴ Ohr HaTorah, Chanukah 326b and on; Also see the end of the discourse entitled "v'Atah b'Rachamecha HaRabim" 5698 (Sefer HaMaamarim 5698 p. 182 and on).

⁹³⁵ Sefer HaMitzvot of the Tzemach Tzeddek 186a and on.

the three completely impure husks (Shalosh Kelipot HaTmei'ot)] are refined.

In contrast, this is not so of serving *HaShem-הרייה*, blessed is He, in a way that accords to understanding and comprehension, through which only the shiny husk (*Kelipat Nogah*) can be refined, by fulfilling the positive action *mitzvot* with permissible things, whereas in relation to the three completely impure husks (*Shalosh Kelipot HaTmei'ot*), there can only the matter of repulsion, by keeping the negative prohibitive *mitzvot*.

6.

This then, is the meaning of the statement in the "Al HaNissim" [thanksgiving prayer, said on Chanukah] "You stood by them in the time of their distress, You battled their battles." That is, this grants empowerment to each and every Jew, that in whatever state he finds himself, even if he is on a low rung, there is a drawing down from Above, by way of an arousal from Above to "battle their battles" against the side opposite holiness, until even the opposition is transformed to good.

This is like the verse, 936 "For the many were with me," that even the existence of "the many-*Rabim*-" became "with me." Moreover, this matter did not come about in a way of war, (as it was in the times of Chanukah, in which it was necessary for there to be a matter of war), but rather in a way

⁹³⁶ Psalms 55:19; See Talmud Yerushalmi Sotah 1:8; Midrash Bamidbar Rabba 9:24; Ohr HaTorah (Yahal Ohr) to Psalms 55:19 (p. 209).

that "He redeemed [my soul] in peace,"⁹³⁷ even during times of serving *HaShem-*יהו" in prayer and charity.

The same is so of the Jewish people in general, as in the conclusion of the "Al HaNissim" [thanksgiving prayer], "And for Your people, Israel, You performed a great deliverance and redemption unto this very day, and afterwards, Your sons entered Your Holy Abode, cleaned Your Temple, purified Your Sanctuary, and kindled lights in the Courtyards of Your Sanctuary" – in the third Holy Temple which shall be built speedily in our days by our righteous Moshiach!

⁹³⁷ Psalms 55:19 ibid. Also see *Hemshech "Padah b'Shalom*" 5659 (Sefer HaMaamarim 5659 p. 162 and on); 5704 (Ch. 19 and on – Sefer HaMaamarim 5704 p. 106 and on).