

Discourse 9

*“VaYitein Lecha HaElokim... -
May God give you...”*

Delivered on Shabbat Parshat Toldot,
Shabbat Mevarchim & Erev Rosh Chodesh Kislev, 5728⁶⁴⁵
By the grace of *HaShem*, blessed is He,

1.

The verse states,⁶⁴⁶ “May God-*HaElohi*” *m-האלהי* give you of the dew of the heavens and of the fatness of the earth etc.” The question about this is well known.⁶⁴⁷ Namely, all blessings are from the Name *HaShem-יהוה*. That is, the name “God-*Elohi*” *m-האלהי* is the quality of judgment and constriction. In contrast, blessings (*Brachot*) are the matter of drawing down bestowal from the Name *HaShem-יהוה*. For example, in each of the three verses of the Priestly blessing⁶⁴⁸ the Name *HaShem-יהוה* is mentioned. However, this blessing states, “May God-*HaElohi*” *m-האלהי* give you.”

⁶⁴⁵ The original discourse was edited by the Rebbe and published as a pamphlet for Rosh Chodesh Kislev 5750

⁶⁴⁶ This week’s Torah portion (Toldot) [Genesis] 27:28

⁶⁴⁷ See the discourse entitled “*VaYitein Lecha*” in *Torat Chayim* of this week’s Torah portion [Toldot] (8a); *Ohr HaTorah* of this week’s Torah portion (161b); Also see the beginning of the discourse by this title of the year 5654 (*Sefer HaMaamarim* 5654 p. 65); 5666 (*Hemshech* 5666 p. 85); 5684 (*Sefer HaMaamarim* 5684 p. 103); 5702 (*Sefer HaMaamarim* 5702 p. 66), and elsewhere.

⁶⁴⁸ *Naso* [Numbers] 6:24-26

To add to this question (why is the name “God-*Elohi*”מ־אֱלֹהִי” mentioned in this blessing) this can also be asked about the first blessing Yitzchak received after Avraham’s death, where the verse states,⁶⁴⁹ “God-*Elohi*”מ־אֱלֹהִי blessed his son Yitzchak.” That is, in all the blessings that the Holy One, blessed is He, blessed Avraham with,⁶⁵⁰ [and the blessings by which Yitzchak was blessed after this],⁶⁵¹ the Name *HaShem*-יְהוָה is stated. This indicates that the first blessing, “God-*Elohi*”מ־אֱלֹהִי blessed,” as well as the second blessing, “May God-*HaElohi*”מ־אֱלֹהִי give you,” are related.

2.

We can say that the essential point of the explanation of this, based on the explanation in Siddur (Im Divrei Elokim Chayim), Shaar HaTekiyot,⁶⁵² is that the bestowal drawn down from the powers of might-*Gevurot* is greater than the bestowal drawn down from the powers of kindness-*Chassadim*. This is because the powers of kindness-*Chassadim* are cold by nature, and therefore the bestowal from them is limited. In contrast, the powers of might-*Gevurot* are hot by nature, and therefore the bestowal from them is overpowering, to the point of limitless abundance.

⁶⁴⁹ Chayei Sarah [Genesis] 25:11

⁶⁵⁰ Beginning of Lech Lecha [Genesis] 12:7; 13:14 and on, and elsewhere; Vayera [Genesis] 22:16 and on; Chayei Sarah [Genesis] 24:1

⁶⁵¹ This week’s Torah portion (Toldot) [Genesis] 26:2 and on; 12:24 *ibid*.

⁶⁵² In the discourse entitled “*Lehavin Inyan Tekiyat Shofar Al Pi Kavanat HaBaal Shem Tov*” p. 247a-b

Based on this, he explains that it specifically was Yitzchak who blessed with such lofty blessings, “of the dew of the heavens and of the fatness of the earth etc.”) and we do not find such blessings from Avraham or Yaakov. This is because Yitzchak is [the aspect of] Might-*Gevurah*,⁶⁵³ and thus his blessings are with great abundance.

With the above in mind, we can explain the verse,⁶⁵⁴ “And it was after the death of Avraham that God-*Elohi*”מ־אלהי” blessed his son Yitzchak.” That is, during the lifetime of Avraham (the aspect of Kindness-*Chessed*) there was a radiance of the aspect of the Upper Kindness-*Chessed* [in the world]. Then, after the death of Avraham, the conduct (including the conduct Above) was according to the quality of Yitzchak, [the aspect of] Might-*Gevurah*, and there was a drawing down of blessings from the powers of might-*Gevurot* of the name God-*Elohi*”מ־אלהי”⁶⁵⁵ which are even higher than the blessings drawn down by the powers of kindness-*Chassadim*, and this is why in Yitzchak’s blessing to Yaakov the verse states, “May God-*HaElohi*”מ־אלהי” give you,” so that the bestowal will be with great abundance and dominance.

⁶⁵³ Zohar III 3b and on (Ra’aya Mehemna); Zohar Chadash, beginning of Toldot (26c), and elsewhere.

⁶⁵⁴ Chayei Sarah [Genesis] 25:11

⁶⁵⁵ See Siddur ibid., that the bestowal from the powers of might-*Gevurot* of Yitzchak are specifically after the sweetening brought about by the powers of kindness-*Chassadim* of Avraham. Based on this it can be said [that this is why] the verse states, “his son Yitzchak” – the son of Avraham.

Now, the blessing that Yitzchak blessed Yaakov with, “May God-*HaElohi*”מ-אלהי give you,” is higher than the blessing he received, “God-*Elohi*”מ-אלהי blessed his son Yitzchak.” This is because the blessing by which Yitzchak was blessed would have been drawn to his sons even without him blessing them.

This is as Rashi explains on the verse, “God-*Elohi*”מ-אלהי blessed his son Yitzchak.” He states, “Avraham was fearful of blessing Yitzchak because he foresaw that Esav would come out of him. He therefore said, ‘Let the Master of blessings come Himself and bless whoever is proper in His eyes,’ and the Holy One, blessed is He, came and blessed him.”

From this it is understood that just as if Avraham would have blessed Yitzchak, the blessing would have gone to Esav too, even without blessing him, the same is so of the blessing that God-*Elohi*”מ-אלהי blessed Yitzchak with, that in and of itself, this blessing is drawn to both his sons, including Esav.

However, the blessing that Yitzchak blessed Yaakov with, “May God-*HaElohi*”מ-אלהי give you of the dew of the heavens etc.,” is a higher blessing, which is also why to receive the blessing Yaakov strove so greatly and did various things that were not according to his way,⁶⁵⁶ even though the blessing that “God-*Elohi*”מ-אלהי blessed Yitzchak” was drawn to him, in and of itself. This is because the blessing of “May God-

⁶⁵⁶ The opposite of the nature of “Yaakov the pure man” (Genesis 25:27). See Sefer HaMaamarim 5703 p. 186 that the acts of cunning performed by Yaakov, the pure man, were “literal self-sacrifice,” but even so, he did this in order to receive the blessings.

HaElohi”מ-אלהי” give you of the dew of the heavens etc.,” is higher than the blessing of “God-*Elohi*”מ-אלה blessed Yitzchak.”

4.

This may be understood by prefacing with the explanation in Torah Ohr on this week’s Torah portion⁶⁵⁷ and in various other places,⁶⁵⁸ that the reason Yitzchak wanted to bless Esav, even though he knew that “the Name of Heaven is not usually in his mouth,”⁶⁵⁹ is because Yitzchak saw very lofty sparks of holiness in Esav. He therefore wanted to bless him, thus drawing down a very lofty light upon him, through which the sparks of holiness within him would be refined.

However, had this light been drawn down upon Esav (not by way of Yaakov), then one of two things would have happened. Either it would be consumed in him, or he would be nullified of his existence. Thus, for the refinement of Esav to be, it specifically must be through Yaakov. This is why the Holy One, blessed is He, arranged for Yitzchak to bless Yaakov instead, and that the drawing down of the supernal lights (“the dew of the heavens and the fatness of the earth”) will be to Yaakov, by which the sparks of holiness that were in Esav would be refined.

⁶⁵⁷ In the discourse entitled “*Re’eh Rei’ach Bnee*” (20b) and on; Also see the glosses of the Tzemach Tzedek to this discourse – in Ohr HaTorah on this week’s Torah portion 151b and on; 156a and on.

⁶⁵⁸ The discourse entitled “*VaYitein Lecha*” 5654; 5684; 5702, and elsewhere.

⁶⁵⁹ Rashi to this week’s Torah portion (Toldot) [Genesis] 27:21.

Now, to understand the aspect of the supernal lights through which the refinement of the sparks comes, this may be understood from the explanation in Torah Ohr there, and in the aforementioned sources.⁶⁶⁰ That is, the external husks are eleven in number, whereas holiness is ten in number, [as it states],⁶⁶¹ “Ten and not nine, ten and not eleven.” In contrast, on the side opposite holiness there are “eleven crowns of impurity.”⁶⁶² This is also the why there were eleven spices in the incense of the Holy Temple, in order to refine the “eleven crowns of impurity.”

The reason that the side opposite holiness is eleven in number is because the vitality that enlivens them is also counted. For, in holiness, the vitality of the ten *Sefirot*, [and this is so of all matters in holiness, in that all matters [therein] are ten in number],⁶⁶³ is drawn down into them in an inner manifest way (*b’Pnimityut*) and is unified with them. It therefore is not counted by itself. In contrast, since the vitality that enlivens them is transcendent and separate from them, this is not so of the side opposite holiness, [and if it would be drawn into them in an inner manifest way it would be consumed in

⁶⁶⁰ Also see the discourse entitled “*BaSukkot Teishvu*” 5741, Ch. 3 and the citations there (Torat Menachem, Sefer HaMaamarim Tishrei p. 165 and on).

⁶⁶¹ Sefer Yetzirah 1:4; See Zohar II 187b; Pardes Rimonim, Shaar 1 (Shaar Eser v’Lo Teisha), Ch. 6.

⁶⁶² See Etz Chayim, Shaar 11 (Shaar HaMelachim) Ch. 10; Pri Etz Chayim, Shaar 6 (Shaar HaKadeishim), Ch. 4; Also see (in addition to Torah Ohr and Ohr HaTorah *ibid.*) the citations in the aforementioned discourse “*BaSukkot Teishvu*,” in note 48 [there].

⁶⁶³ Pardes Rimonim, Shaar 2 (Shaar Ta’am HaAtzliut).

them and would not be an aspect of vitality] it therefore is counted by itself.

Now, the “other side” (*Sitra Achara*) is the opposite of holiness. From this it is understood that the fact that on the side opposite holiness there is an eleventh aspect which is separate from the ten, so likewise, there a corresponding matter on the side of holiness, in that there is a level that transcends the ten *Sefirot* and is separate from them. [Except that in holiness, this aspect is not the vitality of the ten *Sefirot*, [since the vitality of the ten *Sefirot* manifests and unifies with them, as explained before]. Rather, the aspect of the encompassing [light] (*Makif*) that transcends the ten *Sefirot* is a matter unto itself.]⁶⁶⁴ It therefore is not counted with them, [as it states], “You are He who is One, but not in enumeration.”⁶⁶⁵

In contrast, this is not so of the side opposite holiness, in that the encompassing [light] (*Makif*) is their vitality, and it thus is necessary for the encompassing aspect (*Makif*) to be included in their count. (For, without the encompassing aspect (*Makif*) they would have no vitality.)⁶⁶⁶ Therefore, they are eleven in number.]

With the above in mind, it is understood that the refinement of the eleven crowns of impurity is through drawing down the encompassing [light] (*Makif*) that transcends the ten *Sefirot* and is not counted amongst them (this being the aspect

⁶⁶⁴ See the discourse entitled “*Vayitein Lecha*” 5654 (Sefer HaMaamarim 5654 p. 68).

⁶⁶⁵ Introduction to Tikkunei Zohar (“Patach Eliyahu”) 17a.

⁶⁶⁶ See the discourse entitled “*Vayitein Lecha*” *ibid.* (Sefer HaMaamarim *ibid.* p. 67).

of the Ancient One-*Atik*),⁶⁶⁷ similar to the eleventh aspect in the side opposite holiness, which is separate and transcendent from them, as explained before.

This then, is the meaning of “May God-*HaElohi*”מ-הַאֱלֹהִים give you of the dew of the heavens.” That is, the first matter mentioned in the blessing of Yitzchak is the “dew-*Tal*-טל-39,” referring to “the dew of the Ancient One-*Tala d’Atika*-טל דעתיקא.”⁶⁶⁸ For, as mentioned above, through drawing down the aspect of the Ancient One-*Atik* the sparks of holiness in Esav are refined.

6.

Now, for there to be a drawing down of the Ancient One-*Atik* to below, until through this, there will be the refinement of the sparks in the side opposite holiness, this is brought about specifically through a drawing down of the Essential Self of the limitless light of the Unlimited One, who even transcends the aspect of the Ancient One-*Atik*. For, when it comes to the [aspect of the] Ancient One-*Atik*-עתיק, as it is, in and of itself, since it is separate-*Ne’etak*-נֶעְתָּק and removed from the chaining down of the worlds (*Hishtalshelut*) (in that the name “the Ancient One-*Atik*-עתיק” is of the same root as the word “separate-*Ne’etak*-נֶעְתָּק”),⁶⁶⁹ it thus is impossible for it to be drawn to below. Thus, for it to be drawn to below, this

⁶⁶⁷ See the discourse entitled [“*Vayitein Lecha*”] *ibid.* p. 68, regarding the second manner.

⁶⁶⁸ Zohar to this week’s Torah portion (Toldot) [Zohar I] 143b; Torah Ohr to this week’s Torah portion (Toldot) *ibid.* (20c).

⁶⁶⁹ Torah Ohr, Megillat Esther 98c and elsewhere.

specifically must through the Essential Self of the limitless light of the Unlimited One, who is not limited to any parameters.

With the above in mind, we can understand the greatness and novelty of the blessing of Yitzchak, “May God-*HaElohi*”מ-הָאֱלֹהִי give you etc.,” over and above the blessing that “God-*Elohi*”מ-אֱלֹהִי blessed Yitzchak.” For, the blessing, “May God-*HaElohi*”מ-הָאֱלֹהִי give you,” is that there should be a drawing down to below to refine the sparks in Esav, and this drawing down is from the Essential Self of the limitless light of the Unlimited One, as explained before.

This is why it states, “May God-*HaElohi*”מ-הָאֱלֹהִי give you” (specifying “the God-*HaElohi*”מ-הָאֱלֹהִי” with the [prefix letter] *Hey*-ה indicating “the known God”), referring to the essential concealment (*He’elem HaAtzmi*) of the Unlimited One, from where there is the power to affect the refinements (*Birurim*).⁶⁷⁰

This then,⁶⁷¹ is the meaning of what is stated in Midrash,⁶⁷² “[The words], ‘of the dew of the heavens’ refer to the Torah (*Mikra*). [The words], ‘and of the fat of the land’ refer to Mishnah. [The words], ‘grain’ this is Talmud etc.” Now, at first glance, this is not understood. For, even without of the blessing of Yitzchak, the Torah would have been given to the Jewish people, being that *HaShem*’s-יְהו"ה Supernal intention in the creation was for the Jewish people to accept the

⁶⁷⁰ See the end of the discourse entitled “*Vayitein Lecha*” 5666 (*Hemshech* 5666 p. 93).

⁶⁷¹ In regard to the coming section (until the end of the chapter), see the discourse entitled “*VaYitein Lecha*” 5666; Also see the discourse entitled “*Vayomer Lo Yehonatan*” 5731 (Torat Menachem, Sefer HaMaamarim Cheshvan p. 343 and on).

⁶⁷² Midrash to this week’s Torah portion (Bereishit Rabba) 66:3

Torah, and “the Holy One, blessed is He, established a condition with the act of creation... if the Jewish people accept the Torah etc.”⁶⁷³ This being so, what is the meaning of Yitzchak blessing them with the Torah?

As known, the explanation is that the blessing of Yitzchak was about the matter of **toiling** in Torah, and that through this we reach that which transcends Torah, as Torah is in and of itself. For, in and of itself, the Torah, is the wisdom of the Holy One, blessed is He, and even higher – it is the aspect of the concealed wisdom (*Chochmah Stima’ah*). However, through toiling in Torah, that is, toiling by way of the rebounding light (*Ohr Chozer*), we reach the essential concealment (*He’elem HaAtzmi*) (of the Torah), [about which the verse states],⁶⁷⁴ “No eye has seen it, God-*Elohi*” מֵ-עַיִן לֹא רָאָה אֱלֹהִים, except for You.”

7.

It should be added that since the side opposite holiness is eleven in number, meaning that even the encompassing [light] (*Makif*) is included in the numeration, being that it is the vitality that enlivens them, as explained before, therefore, through the refinement of the eleven crowns of impurity a similar matter is caused on the side of holiness, that even the aspect of the Ancient One-*Atik* (which is not included in the

⁶⁷³ Talmud Bavli, Shabbat 88a

⁶⁷⁴ Isaiah 64:3

numeration of the *Sefirot*) is drawn down to the ten *Sefirot* in an inner manifest way (*b'Pnimityut*).⁶⁷⁵

This is a greater novelty than the drawing down of the Ancient One-*Atik* to affect refinements (*Birurim*) (in which the drawing down to below is only the granting of empowerment). From this it is understood that in this matter (the drawing down of the Ancient One-*Atik* into the ten *Sefirot* in an inner manifest way (*b'Pnimityut*), brought about through the toil of affecting refinements (*Birurim*)), there also is a revelation of the Essential Self (who is not limited to any parameters) to an even greater extent.⁶⁷⁶

This then, is the meaning of, “May God-*Elohi*”מ-אלהי give you,” [meaning],⁶⁷⁷ “He will give and give again.” That is, the first giving is the drawing down of the essential concealment (*He'elem HaAtzmi*) (“May God-*Elohi*”מ-אלהי give you”) to affect refinements (*Birurim*). When it states that He will “give again,” this refers to the drawing down and essential revelation brought about through the toil of affecting refinements (*Birurim*).

It is through [the blessing] “May God-*Elohi*”מ-אלהי give you,” [which refers to] the drawing down of the essential concealment (*He'elem HaAtzmi*) in the two above-mentioned ways (“He will give and give again”) that there also is a drawing

⁶⁷⁵ Similarly see the discourse entitled “*Vayitein Lecha*” 5654 (Sefer HaMaamarim *ibid.* p. 68).

⁶⁷⁶ To elucidate based on what is stated in *Hemshech* 5666 *ibid.* (p. 93), “May God-*Elohi*”מ-אלהי give you [referring to] the essential concealment (*He'elem HaAtzmi*) that it be within his power to affect the refinements (*Birurim*), and through the refinements (*Birurim*) there will be the revelation of the essential concealment (*He'elem HaAtzmi*).”

⁶⁷⁷ Rashi to the verse [Genesis 27:28 *ibid.*]; Midrash Bereishit Rabba to this week's Torah portion 66:3.

down “of the dew of the heavens and of the fatness of the earth etc.,” the Torah and the Mishnah etc., as well as “the dew of the heavens” in the literal sense, in that “the dew (*Tal*-טל-39) is not withheld,”⁶⁷⁸ (especially since in the first place, there is no consideration of withholding it, Heaven forbid), and likewise “of the fatness of the earth, and abundant grain and wine” in the literal sense, with the ultimate abundance and expansiveness, up to and including the construction of the third Holy Temple [of] “Yaakov, who called it a house (*Bayit*-בית),”⁶⁷⁹ and from there its light will go out to the entire world,⁶⁸⁰ so that we make the entire world “a home for Him, blessed is He.”

⁶⁷⁸ Talmud Bavli, Taanit 3a

⁶⁷⁹ Talmud Bavli, Shabbat 118a; Pesachim 88a

⁶⁸⁰ See Talmud Yerushalmi, Brachot 4:5; Midrash Vayikra Rabba 31:7; Talmud Bavli, Menachot 86b and Rashi there.