

Discourse 42

*“Atem Nitzavim HaYom... -
You are standing this day...”*

Delivered on Shabbat Parshat Nitzavim-Vayeilech,

23rd of Elul, 5729

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

1.

The verse states,¹³⁷⁶ “You are standing this day, all of you, before *HaShem*-יהו"ה your God; the heads of your tribes... your small children, your women... from the hewer of your wood to the drawer of your water.” Now, it states in Likkutei Torah¹³⁷⁷ that this Torah portion is always read before Rosh HaShanah,¹³⁷⁸ and that this is hinted in the word “this day-*HaYom*-היום” which refers to Rosh HaShanah, in that “This day (*HaYom*-היום) is the beginning of Your works, a remembrance of the first day.”¹³⁷⁹

Likewise, the Tzemach Tzeddek writes in Ohr HaTorah¹³⁸⁰ that it states in Midrash¹³⁸¹ that it would have been appropriate for the verse, “You are standing this day” to have

¹³⁷⁶ Deuteronomy 29:9-10

¹³⁷⁷ Likkutei Torah, Nitzavim 44a

¹³⁷⁸ Mishneh Torah, Hilchot Tefilah 13:2; Tosefot to Talmud Bavli, Megillah 31b; Tur and Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chayim 428:4

¹³⁷⁹ See the Musaf liturgy of Rosh HaShanah (Talmud Bavli, Rosh HaShanah 27a).

¹³⁸⁰ Ohr HaTorah, Nitzavim p. 1,189

¹³⁸¹ Midrash Kohelet Rabba 1:31

been [stated] at the beginning of the book, only that in Torah there is no chronological order. He adds that it can be said that even so, although “You are standing this day” is said close to the end of the book of Mishneh Torah (Deuteronomy) it also is for the above-mentioned reason.

[That is, it is as the Shalah writes¹³⁸² in explanation of [the principle that] there is no chronological order in Torah, that there are reasons and matters as to why they are ordered the way they are ordered etc., and it all is with specific intent etc.] Namely, that “This day-*HaYom*-היום” refers to Rosh HaShanah, “This day (*HaYom*-היום) is the beginning of Your works,” and therefore this portion is written regarding a matter that should be read before Rosh HaShanah. [This is as in the simple custom amongst all Jews that we complete the [entire] Torah in a single year,¹³⁸³ not every three years,¹³⁸⁴ nor every three and a half years.]¹³⁸⁵

The explanation is as known,¹³⁸⁶ that on Rosh HaShanah all things revert to their initial state and must draw down anew. This is why Rosh HaShanah is called “the beginning of Your works.” The general drawing down of renewal is brought about through “all of you are standing this day etc.,” specifying “all of you-*Kulchem*-כולכם,” [meaning], “individuals who are as one,”¹³⁸⁷ and in a way of “standing-*Nitzavim*-נצבים,” which means sustaining and upright, meaning that we are meritorious

¹³⁸² Shnei Luchot HaBrit, Chelek Torah SheBaal Peh 402b

¹³⁸³ Mishneh Torah, Hilchot Tefilah, Ch. 13

¹³⁸⁴ Mishneh Torah, Hilchot Tefilah, Ch. 13 *ibid*.

¹³⁸⁵ See Chiluf Minhagim Bein Bnei Bavel L'Bnei Eretz Yisroel, Section 48

¹³⁸⁶ See Pri Etz Chayim, Shaar Rosh HaShanah, Ch. 1; Likkutei Torah, Nitzavim 51b, and elsewhere.

¹³⁸⁷ Likkutei Torah *ibid*. 44a

in judgment, [this being the blessing of the Holy One, blessed is He, who blesses the seventh month, as in the teaching of the Alter Rebbe, who heard it from his teacher and Rebbe, the Rav, the Maggid of Mezhritch, who heard it from his teacher and Rebbe, the Baal Shem Tov].¹³⁸⁸

This is to such an extent that it is in a way that the word “standing-*Nitzavim*-נִצְבִּים” is of the same root as [in the verse],¹³⁸⁹ “A commissioner-*Nitzav*-נִצַּב reigned as king.” That is, just as the king rules over all without impediment, and in a way that “if the king says to uproot the mountain [it will be uprooted],”¹³⁹⁰ solely by his word and without any effort altogether, in the same way, “you are standing-*Nitzavim*-נִצְבִּים” in a way of “a commissioner-*Nitzav*-נִצַּב reigned as king,” and you rule over all matters and cause all the drawings down anew (“the beginning of Your works”) without any effort altogether, and with joy and goodness of heart.

2.

This may be understood according to the explanation in the discourse of the Torah portion of Nitzavim of the year 5629, [said by the Rebbe Maharash] (one-hundred years ago) entitled “*Teekoo BaChodesh Shofar*.”¹³⁹¹ [In it] he states that we must understand why the verse states,¹³⁹² “Sound the Shofar at the

¹³⁸⁸ Igrot Kodesh of the Rebbe Rayatz, Vol. 3, p. 430 and on, (copied in HaYom Yom for the 25th of Elul), elucidated in Likkutei Sichot, Vol. 4, p. 1,139 and on; Vol. 9 p. 184 and on; Vol. 29 p. 173 and on.

¹³⁸⁹ Kings I 22:48; Ohr HaTorah Nitzavim, p. 1,201 and on.

¹³⁹⁰ Talmud Bavli, Bava Batra 3b

¹³⁹¹ Sefer HaMaamarim 5629 p. 341 and on.

¹³⁹² Psalms 81:4

New Moon (*Chodesh*-חודש),” but without specifying which new moon, when it should have said, “Sound the Shofar at the new moon of the seventh month.”

However, the explanation is that the word “new moon-*Chodesh*-חודש” is of the same root as “renewal-*Hitchadshut*-התחדשות.” This is why Rosh HaShanah is simply called “the new moon-*Chodesh*-חודש,” being that on Rosh HaShanah there is the renewal of the general vitality of all the worlds for the whole year. This is because the first vitality withdrew to its source, and on Rosh HaShanah we draw down the general vitality anew for the whole year.

However, we still must understand the connection and relationship to the matter of Kingship-*Malchut* on Rosh HaShanah, as in the teaching of our sages, of blessed memory,¹³⁹³ “On Rosh HaShanah say verses of Kingship before Me in order to crown Me as King over you.”

About this the discourse explains that the primary renewal is in Kingship-*Malchut*. For, as known,¹³⁹⁴ the construction of Kingship-*Malchut* takes place on Rosh HaShanah. It should be added that this is also the meaning of the verse,¹³⁹⁵ “His wife *Chodesh*,” which hints that the primary renewal (“*Chodesh*-חודש”) is in Kingship-*Malchut* (“His wife”).

He continues in the discourse [and explains] that we must understand why the primary renewal is specifically in Kingship-*Malchut*. For, as explained before, all matters (not

¹³⁹³ Talmud Bavli, Rosh HaShanah 16a; 34b

¹³⁹⁴ Pri Etz Chayim, Shaar Rosh HaShanah; Shaar HaKavanot; and elsewhere.

¹³⁹⁵ Chronicles I 8:9

only the matter of Kingship-*Malchut*) must be drawn down anew. The reason is because He, blessed is He, “is not of any of these qualities at all,”¹³⁹⁶ in that “You are He who is One, but not in enumeration,”¹³⁹⁷ this being to such an extent that His Essential Self even transcends the aspect of “You are He who is One.” This is why it is necessary to draw down all matters anew. Based on this, we must understand why the primary renewal is specifically in Kingship-*Malchut*.

However, the explanation is that when it comes to the aspect of Kingship-*Malchut*, there must be a matter of renewal in it even after it is drawn down. This is as explained in the discourse, that in the aspect of Kingship-*Malchut* there are two levels. The first level is as it states,¹³⁹⁸ “The King who is alone exalted from then,” this being the essence of Kingship-*Malchut* - the aspect of the Crown-*Keter* of Kingship-*Malchut*. In the words of his honorable holiness, the Rebbe Rashab, whose soul is in Eden, this is the aspect of His Essential Exaltedness (*Hitnasut Atzmit*).

The second level is as the verse states,¹³⁹⁹ “Your Kingship is the Kingship of all worlds,” meaning, as it becomes the source for the worlds of Creation, Formation, and Action (*Briyah, Yetzirah, Asiyah*) which are the aspect of “something” (*Yesh*) and are separate unto themselves.

Nevertheless, even after the aspect of Kingship-*Malchut* is drawn down to be the source of the worlds, we plead, “Reign over the whole world with Your glory,” and, “Reveal Your

¹³⁹⁶ Introduction to Tikkunei Zohar 17b

¹³⁹⁷ Introduction to Tikkunei Zohar ibid. 17a

¹³⁹⁸ In the *Yotzer* blessing of the *Shema* recital.

¹³⁹⁹ Psalms 145:13

Kingship over us.” That is, even in the worlds of Creation, Formation, and Action (*Briyah, Yetzirah, Asiyah*) there should be the revelation of the aspect of the glory of His Kingship, blessed is He, as He is in the aspect of “The King who alone is exalted etc.”

This then, is the matter of the renewal of Rosh HaShanah, that there should be the drawing down from the source of Kingship-*Malchut*, which is called the Crown-*Keter* of Kingship-*Malchut*. This is as explained in the Siddur¹⁴⁰⁰ in the discourse entitled “*Lehavin Inyan Tekiyat Shofar Al Pi Kavanat HaBaal Shem Tov Zichrono LiBrachah*,” that on Rosh HaShanah there must be the renewal of the aspect of Kingship-*Malchut* from its first source, this being the aspect of the essence of the power of the Supernal pleasure in the innerness and essence of the Emanator etc.

Now, we should add in explanation of the reason that in Kingship-*Malchut* there must be the matter of the renewal and drawing down from the highest aspect in Kingship-*Malchut*.¹⁴⁰¹ This is because of the well-known matter,¹⁴⁰² that the aspect of Kingship-*Malchut* is rooted higher and deeper than all other matters.

This is because the root of Kingship-*Malchut* is in the aspect of the Unknowable Head (*Reisha d’Lo Ityada*). This is as we find in the soul of man below, that the quality of Kingship-*Malchut* is more concealed than all the other qualities. That is, even though there is the presence of all the particulars

¹⁴⁰⁰ Siddur Im Da”Ch 246a

¹⁴⁰¹ In regard to the coming section, see Sefer HaMaamarim 5699 p. 14 and on; 5709 p. 12 and on.

¹⁴⁰² Etz Chayim, Shaar 13 (Shaar Arich Anpin) Ch. 2

of the qualities within the soul of man, including the quality of Kingship-*Malchut*, nevertheless, all the other qualities sometimes come into revelation, which is not so of the quality of Kingship-*Malchut*, in that most of the time it does not come into revelation. This is because it is rooted in the essence of the soul, in an aspect of concealment that has no [tangible] existence (*He'elem SheEino b'Metziyut*).

The same is understood Above, that the *Sefirah* of Kingship-*Malchut* is rooted in His Essential Self, blessed is He, to a greater degree than all the other *Sefirot*. This is also why to arouse and reveal the aspect of Kingship-*Malchut* there specifically must be service stemming from the innerness and essence of the soul. For, it is specifically through this kind of service that we can reach the root of Kingship-*Malchut* as she is rooted in His Essential Self, blessed is He, higher than all the other *Sefirot*.

Now, since even as the aspect of Kingship-*Malchut* becomes the source for worlds, it is rooted in His Essential Self, blessed is He, as He is “The King who alone is exalted,” therefore, even after the drawing down of Kingship-*Malchut* to be the source for worlds, there must be the matter of renewal, in that there also must be the drawing down from the aspect of “the King who alone is exalted.”

3.

He continues in the discourse¹⁴⁰³ [and states] that the Torah is expanded in general (*Klall*) and particular (*Prat*), and

¹⁴⁰³ Sefer HaMaamarim ibid. p. 344

that just as on Rosh HaShanah there is a renewal in a general way (*Klall*), so likewise, on each and every day there is a renewal in a particular way (*Prat*). This is as it states,¹⁴⁰⁴ “In His goodness, He renews the act of creation every day constantly.” [This is why in the Siddur of the Arizal¹⁴⁰⁵ and in the writings of the Arizal,¹⁴⁰⁶ we find about the intentions (*Kavanot*) of the first three blessings of the daily Amidah prayer, that they are akin to the intentions (*Kavanot*) of Rosh HaShanah, this being the matter of the construction of Kingship-*Malchut*.]

This being so, we must understand what the renewal on Rosh HaShanah is to a greater extent than every other day. That is, it cannot be said that the difference between them is only like the difference between the general (*Klall*) and the particular (*Prat*), but rather, the renewal of Rosh HaShanah is certainly in a much higher way than it is every day.

In the discourse he explains that to understand this we must understand the teaching of our sages, of blessed memory,¹⁴⁰⁷ “Why does the portion of *Shema* precede that of *Vehayah Eem Shamo’a*? So that one will first accept the yoke of the Kingdom of Heaven upon himself and only then accept the yoke of the *mitzvot* upon himself.”

¹⁴⁰⁴ In the *Yotzer* blessing of the *Shema* recital.

¹⁴⁰⁵ Siddur Arizal, beginning of the *Amidah* prayer.

¹⁴⁰⁶ Pri Etz Chayim, Shaar HaAmidah, Ch. 18

¹⁴⁰⁷ Talmud Bavli, Brachot 13a in the Mishnah; Also see Siddur Im Da”Ch, Shaar HaKeriyat Shema 74b and on; Ohr HaTorah, Va’etchanan Vol.6 p. 2,237 and on; Also see the discourses entitled “*BaChodesh HaShleeshee* – In the third month: (Discourse 28) and “*Reisheet Areesoteichem* – The first of your dough” (Discourse 33) of earlier this year, 5729 (Sefer HaMaamarim 5729 p. 203 and on; p. 249 and on).

Now, at first glance, this is not understood, since accepting the yoke of the *mitzvot* is also the matter of accepting the yoke of the Kingdom of Heaven (*Kabbalat Ol Malchut Shamayim*). [It can be said that the explanation is that when it comes to the matter of the yoke, though it also applies between a servant and a master, it primarily is in relation to a king.

This is because when it comes to a servant and a master, it is not something that touches the very essence of one's existence, such that it would apply for there to be a punishment that is the opposite of life. Rather, this only applies with a king, such that even "one who makes gestures in the presence of the king etc.,"¹⁴⁰⁸ in that he is nullified of his [independent] existence.] This being so, why are they divided into two, and in a way that one must first preface with accepting the yoke of the Kingdom of Heaven, and only then [accept] the yoke of the *mitzvot*?

[In the discourse] he prefaces with an explanation of the verse,¹⁴⁰⁹ "The *Chayot*-חיות [angels] were running (*Ratzo*) and returning (*Shov*)," meaning that the vitality-*Chayoot*-חיות of the limitless life of the Unlimited One is in a state of "running" (*Ratzo*) and "returning" (*Shov*), and that due to this, it is drawn forth in the creations that they are in a state of "running" (*Ratzo*) and "returning" (*Shov*), and the same is so of the souls of the Jewish people, that their service of *HaShem*-יהוה, blessed is He, also is with "running" (*Ratzo*) and "returning" (*Shov*).

He explains that this is the matter of accepting the yoke of the Kingdom of Heaven and the yoke of accepting the

¹⁴⁰⁸ Talmud Bavli, Chagigah 5b

¹⁴⁰⁹ Ezekiel 1:14

mitzvot. That is, the first paragraph of the *Shema*, the matter of which is the acceptance of the yoke of the Kingdom of Heaven, is the matter of “running” (*Ratzo*), this being the matter of self-sacrifice (*Mesirat Nefesh*) with [the word] “One-*Echad*-אֶחָד,” which is the matter of the simple desire for his Father in Heaven in a way of “running” (*Ratzo*) and withdrawal to become subsumed and nullified Above.

The second paragraph of the *Shema*, the matter of which is the yoke of the *mitzvot*, is that of “returning” (*Shov*), to draw down lights (*Orot*) into various different vessels (*Keilim*), up to and including serving Him in worldly matters, as the verse states,¹⁴¹⁰ “And you shall gather your grain etc.”

In other words, the general matter of the *Shema* recital, not only the first paragraph, but even the second paragraph, is the matter of self-sacrifice (*Mesirat Nefesh*). Only that in this itself, there is a difference between the first paragraph - the acceptance of the yoke of the Kingdom of Heaven, in which the self-sacrifice (*Mesirat Nefesh*) is in a motion of “running” (*Ratzo*) - and the second paragraph, the yoke of the *mitzvot*, in which the self-sacrifice (*Mesirat Nefesh*) is in a motion of “returning” (*Shov*).

The difference between them is that in the motion of “running” (*Ratzo*) one’s sense is primarily of the Source within which he desires to be subsumed and nullified etc. In contrast, in the motion of “returning” (*Shov*), even though it too is in a way of accepting the **yoke** of the *mitzvot*, nevertheless, what one primarily senses are the particular powers and matters by

¹⁴¹⁰ Deuteronomy 11:14 [in the second paragraph of the *Shema* recital].

which the service is done, in that the Source is drawn into them etc.

This is also the meaning of the statement in Mechilta,¹⁴¹¹ “This is analogous to a king of flesh and blood who entered a country and his servants told him, decree laws upon us. He said to them, when you [first] accept my kingship, I then will decree laws etc.” That is, although fulfilling the laws is in a way of accepting the yoke, nonetheless, it first must be preceded by accepting the kingship.

This is because accepting the kingship is a motion of “running” (*Ratzo*) in which that which is primarily sensed is the existence of the king (the source). Then, after this, the fulfillment of the laws come to be in a motion of “returning” (*Shov*), after the king is already drawn to the people to decree laws upon them.

With the above in mind, we can also understand the difference between the renewal of Kingship-*Malchut* on Rosh HaShanah and its renewal every single day. That is, the renewal of Kingship-*Malchut* on Rosh HaShanah is through the service of accepting the yoke of the Kingdom of Heaven in a way of “running” (*Ratzo*), in which that which is primarily sensed is the aspect of the Source within which he desires to be subsumed and nullified. Through this, there also is caused to be a drawing forth in all matters as they stem from the Source and as they are included in the Source. In contrast, when it comes to the renewal that takes place every single day, it is through the service of accepting the yoke in a way of “returning” (*Shov*), as

¹⁴¹¹ Mechilta to Exodus 20:3

the acceptance of the yoke (*Kabbalat Ol*) is drawn forth in the revealed powers etc.

4.

This is why before Rosh HaShanah we read [the Torah portion], “You are standing this day, all of you.” For, since on Rosh HaShanah we must bring about the renewal of Kingship-*Malchut* from her first source - the aspect of “The King who alone is exalted from then,” in which all matters are included as one (before she is drawn to be the source of the worlds of Creation, Formation, and Action (*Briyah, Yetzirah, Asiyah*) in a way of division) thus the service of the Jewish people must also be in a way of “all of you,” meaning, “individuals who are as one.”

That is, even though there are different levels within the Jewish people, as in the ten levels enumerated in the verse, “the heads of your tribes... from the hewer of your wood to the drawer of your water,” they nonetheless are individuals who are as one.¹⁴¹² This is because they all are standing and elevated in their first source, and in a way of “standing-*Nitzavim*-נצבים” as it is of the root,¹⁴¹³ “A commissioner reigned as king-*Nitzav Melech*-נצב מלך,” meaning, the aspect of “the King-*HaMelech*-המלך who alone is exalted from then.”

The same is so of the service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, by each and every Jew as an individual. That is, even though his soul has ten powers, three intellectual powers and

¹⁴¹² Likkutei Torah, Nitzavim 44a

¹⁴¹³ Kings I 22:48; Ohr HaTorah Nitzavim, p. 1,201 and on.

seven emotional powers, nonetheless, one's service on Rosh HaShanah is as all the powers are included in the aspect of the singular-*Yechidah* [essence of the soul].

This is as in the known teaching of the Alter Rebbe¹⁴¹⁴ on the words of the Talmud¹⁴¹⁵ about the ten days between Rosh HaShanah and Yom Kippur, "Here it is referring to [the prayers] of an individual-*Yachid*-יחיד," in that this refers to the aspect of the singular-*Yechidah*-יחידה [essence of the soul]. Beyond this, it can be said that since the Talmud specifies, "Here it is referring to [the prayers] of an individual-*Yachid*-יחיד" [in the masculine] (and does not say "singular-*Yechidah*-יחידה" [in the feminine] but "Singular-*Yachid*-יחיד" [in the masculine]), what is meant in this is "the spark of the Creator that manifests in the created spark, which is called 'singular-*Yechidah*-יחידה.'" ¹⁴¹⁶

It likewise is in this way that the drawing down is brought about on Rosh HaShanah, as matters are in the aspect of the "head-*Rosh*-ראש," (which is why it is called "the Head of the Year-Rosh HaShanah-ראש השנה" rather than "the beginning of the year-*Techilat HaShanah*-תחילת השנה") in which all matters are included together, and are then drawn down in a particular way throughout all the days of the year.

About this the verse states, "Sound the Shofar at the New Moon," in that the renewal of Rosh HaShanah is specifically brought about by the Shofar. For, even though it is a matter of a *mitzvah*, and as in the language of our sages, of

¹⁴¹⁴ Likkutei Torah Tavo 43d

¹⁴¹⁵ Talmud Bavli, Rosh HaShanah 18a; Yevamot 49b; 105a

¹⁴¹⁶ See Etz Chayim, Shaar 42 (Shaar Drushei ABY"A) Ch. 1, cited in Likkutei Torah, Re'eh 27a.

blessed memory,¹⁴¹⁷ “The *mitzvah* of the day is with the Shofar,” nevertheless, it is a simple sound (*Kol Pashut*) that transcends division into letters, stemming from the inner aspect of the heart (*Pnimiyyut HaLev*), the aspect of the inner voice that is unheard.

This refers to the matter of service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה that stems from the simplicity of the soul which transcends reason and intellect (which is why the Shofar is specifically from the horn of an animal).¹⁴¹⁸ For, specifically through this we draw down the aspect of Kingship-*Malchut* from her first Source.

5.

Now, even though the renewal of Kingship-*Malchut* on Rosh HaShanah is through accepting the yoke (*Kabbalat Ol*) in a way of “running” (*Ratzo*), through which there also is caused to be the drawing down of all matters as they stem from the Source, and as they are included in the Source, nevertheless, all matters are specifically drawn down to below.

In other words, on Rosh HaShanah there are two extremes. On the one hand, the service is in a way of giving oneself up entirely to *HaShem*-יהו"ה in complete servitude (as is explained in various places, especially in the discourses of his honorable holiness, my father-in-law, the Rebbe)¹⁴¹⁹ and on the other hand, there is an emphasis of the drawing down to below, specifically in the physical, as in the words, “Inscribe us in the

¹⁴¹⁷ Talmud Bavli, Rosh HaShanah 26b; 27a

¹⁴¹⁸ See Likkutei Torah, Nitzavim 44b

¹⁴¹⁹ Sefer HaMaamarim 5702 p. 8 and elsewhere.

book of good life, and inscribe us in the book of sustenance etc.,” so that physical sustenance will be provided to man.

Moreover, the primary judgment on Rosh HaShanah is in regard to the bodies etc. This is as the Alter Rebbe brings in Likkutei Torah,¹⁴²⁰ that on Rosh HaShanah one is only judged about matters of this world etc. This is why we must be precise in the prayers of Rosh HaShanah in specifying that all things should be in a way of goodness that is clearly apparent and revealed.¹⁴²¹

In other words, the drawing down of Rosh HaShanah is in a way that we draw down all matters from their First Source, all the way down to below, so that we will be inscribed and sealed for good, with clearly seen and apparent revealed goodness, below ten hands-breadths, in matters pertaining to one’s children, health, and abundant sustenance!

¹⁴²⁰ Likkutei Torah, Drushim L’Rosh HaShanah 59b- from Hagahot Maymoniyot to Mishneh Torah, Hilchot Teshuvah, Ch. 3, in the name of the Ramban.

¹⁴²¹ See Shulchan Aruch of the Alter Rebbe 582:7, 591:12