

Discourse 27

*“Hinei Mah Tov uMah Na'im... -
How good and how pleasant...”*

Delivered on the 3rd day of the week,
Parshat Behar-Bechukotai, Lag BaOmer, 5729
By the grace of *HaShem*, blessed is He,

1.

The verse states,³¹⁴ “How good and how pleasant when brothers’ dwell, also in unity.” It states in Zohar³¹⁵ that it once happened that the world needed rain etc., and by Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai expounding on this verse, “How good and how pleasant when brothers’ dwell, also in unity,” the rain descended.

Now, we must understand this.³¹⁶ For, in Talmud³¹⁷ we find many Tana'im and Amora'im who required prayers and fasts to bring the descent of the rains. This is such that even in Shulchan Aruch³¹⁸ there are many particulars to the laws of fasts required to bring the descent of the rains. [This being so],

³¹⁴ Psalms 133:1

³¹⁵ Zohar III 59b

³¹⁶ Also see the discourse entitled “*b'Zohar Zimna Chada*” 5627 (Sefer HaMaamarim 5627 p. 291 and on); Also see the discourse entitled “*Hinei Mah Tov*” of Lag BaOmer 5722, translated in The Teachings of The Rebbe 5722, Discourse 29, Ch. 2 and on.

³¹⁷ Talmud Bavli, Taanit 23a

³¹⁸ See Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chayim 575; 579:1

how did Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai bring this about by [merely] speaking [words of] Torah?

We also must understand why the descent of the rains brought about through prayer and fasting is explained in the revealed parts of the Torah, whereas the matter of the descent of the rains through speaking Torah is explained in Zohar, the inner aspect (*Pnimiyyut*) of the Torah.

2.

This may be understood by prefacing with the statement in the Torah portion of this week,³¹⁹ “I shall walk within you-*v’Heet’halachti b’Tochechem*-והתהלכתי בתוכם.” About this, it explains in the discourse entitled “*v’Heet’halachti*” of the year 5629,³²⁰ (said one-hundred years ago) that when it states “and I will walk-*v’Heet’halachti*-והתהלכתי” in the plural, it indicates two types of “walking,” a “walking” from Above to below, and a “walking” from below to Above.

Now, there is the aspect of “walking” (*Hiluch*-הילוך) in one’s toil in serving *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, as the verse states,³²¹ “walk before Me.” There likewise is a matter of “walking” (*Hiluch*-הילוך) from Above, as in the teaching of our sages, of blessed memory,³²² “The Holy One, blessed is He, walked (*Halach*-הלך) a distance of five-hundred years etc.” In each of them (both the “walking” in man’s service of Him, as well as the “walking” as it is Above), there are the two aspects

³¹⁹ Leviticus 26:12

³²⁰ Sefer HaMaamarim 5629 p. 194 and on

³²¹ Genesis 17:1

³²² Midrash Kohelet Rabbah 7:1:2

of “walking” (*Hiluch*-הלוך), from below to Above and from Above to below.

The explanation is that in man’s service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, there is [both] a “walking” from below to Above and a “walking” from Above to below, as the verse states,³²³ “You shall walk **after** *HaShem*-יהו"ה your God,” specifying “after-*Acharei*,” this being “walking” that is in the aspect of the “back” (*Achorayim*-אחוריים). It also states, “Walk **before** Me (*Lefanai*-לפני),” this being a walking that is in the aspect of the “face-*Panim*-פנים.”

Now, Above there also are these two aspects. For, since they stated,³²⁴ “Know that what is Above is from you (*Mimcha*-ממך),” meaning that all matters Above depend on one’s service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה below,³²⁵ it thus is through man’s service of Him in the two aspects of “walking,” that Above there also is a “walking” in its two aspects.

3.

The explanation is that the two ways of “walking,” from Above to below and from below to Above, as they generally are in our service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, are the two matters of Torah and prayer. For, about prayer the verse states,³²⁶ “A ladder was set earthward and its top reached

³²³ Deuteronomy 13:5

³²⁴ Avot 2:1

³²⁵ See Tzavaat HaRivash, Section 142 (from the Maggid of Mezhrich); Igrot Kodosh of the Rebbe Rayatz, Vol. 3, p. 303 (copied in HaYom Yom for the 13th of Iyar).

³²⁶ Genesis 28:12; Zohar I 266b; Zohar III 306b; Tikkunei Zohar, Tikkun 45 (83a)

heavenward,” this being the matter of “walking” in ascent from below to Above.

In contrast, Torah is the aspect of the “bread of Heaven,”³²⁷ as the verse states about Torah,³²⁸ “Is not My word like fire,” and “just as fire does not contract ritual impurity, likewise the words of Torah do not contract ritual impurity.”³²⁹ In other words, even as the soul is in the body, and even as it is in a state of impurity, nonetheless, through studying *HaShem*’s-יהו"ה Torah, it is like fire etc., this being the matter of drawing down from Above to below.

Now, just as this is so in our service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, so likewise, these two matters are in the order of the chaining down of the worlds (*Seder Hishtalshelut*), these being the light of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, that fills all worlds (*Memaleh Kol Almin*) and His light that surrounds and transcends all worlds (*Sovev Kol Almin*).

To explain, the aspect of His light that fills all worlds (*Memaleh*) is the aspect of the Godly light that manifests in each world according to its capacity. This is why it comes in the way of division; in that it has many different levels according to the different levels in the worlds.

In this, there are divisions that are beyond relative comparison. For example, the difference between the Godliness in the world of Emanation (*Atzilut*) and the Godliness in the world of Action (*Asiyah*) is a difference that is beyond relative comparison.

³²⁷ Shnei Luchot HaBrit, Mesechet Pesachim 165b

³²⁸ Jeremiah 23:29

³²⁹ Talmud Bavli, Brachot 22a

About this, our sages, of blessed memory, stated,³³⁰ “Just as the soul fills the body, so does the Holy One, blessed is He, fill the world.” That is, just as it is of the soul as it fills the body, that its primary aspect is in the brain in the head, as stated in Tanya,³³¹ and there also is the aspect of the soul as it is in the other limbs, up to and including the aspect of the soul as it is in the heel of the foot, which is the lowest part of the body and is of no comparison whatsoever to the aspect of the soul in the head, the same is so of the Godly light that fills all worlds (*Memaleh*) (“Just as the Holy One, blessed is He, fills the world”), in that it too comes with divisions in each world according to its capacity.

Therefore, the “walking” in the aspect of His light that fills all worlds is a “walking” that is limited and is the matter of “walking” from below to Above. In contrast, the “walking” in the aspect of the light of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, that surrounds and transcends all worlds (*Sovev*), is a limitless “walking” and is the matter of “walking” from Above to below.

More specifically (for as known,³³² all matters are present both generally and specifically) there is the matter of both ways walking,” from Above to below and from below to Above, in our service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, in each of the two matters; Torah study and prayer.

The explanation is that in prayer itself, there is the difference between serving Him, “with all your heart and with all your soul,” and serving Him “with all your more.”³³³ That

³³⁰ Midrash Vayikra Rabbah 4:8; See Talmud Bavli, Brachot 10a

³³¹ Tanya, Ch. 51

³³² See Talmud Bavli, Chagigah 6a

³³³ Deuteronomy 6:5

is, serving Him “with all your heart and with all your soul” is service of Him with the ten powers of the soul, which are measured and limited, and is the matter of the “walking” from below to Above. In contrast, serving Him “with all your more” is service of Him with self-sacrifice (*Mesirat Nefesh*) which transcends limitation and is the matter of “walking” from Above to below.

Likewise, in Torah itself, there also are these two matters, these being the revealed part of Torah and the inner aspect (*Pnimityut*) of Torah. The revealed part of the Torah is the aspect of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil,³³⁴ which relates to the existence of evil, to the point of actual evil, and certainly [relates] to refined and very refined evil. In contrast, the inner aspect (*Pnimityut*) of Torah is the Tree of Life, which transcends good and evil.³³⁵

4.

Now, it states in the Talmud,³³⁶ “Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai says... when Israel actualizes the will of the Ever Present One, their work is done by others, as the verse states,³³⁷ ‘Foreigners will stand and tend to your flocks etc.’” It is explained in the discourse³³⁸ that the matter of “when Israel actualizes the will of the Ever Present One” refers to the matter

³³⁴ Zohar III 124b (Ra’aya Mehemna), cited and explained in Tanya, Iggeret HaKodesh, Epistle 26 (142a) and on.

³³⁵ See Zohar III 124b *ibid.*, and Tanya, Iggeret HaKodesh, Epistle 26 *ibid.*

³³⁶ Talmud Bavli, Brachot 35b

³³⁷ Isaiah 61:5

³³⁸ Sefer HaMaamarim 5629 *ibid.* p. 197

of serving Him,³³⁹ “with all your more,”³⁴⁰ through which we draw down the aspect of the light of *HaShem*-יהוה, blessed is He, that surrounds and transcends all worlds (*Sovev Kol Almin*).

Now, as understood, this will take place in the coming future, for there then will be the fulfillment of the prophecy, “Foreigners will stand and tend to your flocks.” However, even though this only will take place in the coming future, whereas about the time that precedes the coming of Moshiach [our sages] said,³⁴¹ “Many have acted according to the view of Rabbi Yishmael and were successful, and [many have acted according] to the view of Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai, and were unsuccessful,” nevertheless, Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai opened the pipe for this drawing down, except that at that time, it only was opened for singularly unique individuals, and at auspicious times.

Later, in the time of the Arizal, [it became] “a *mitzvah* to reveal this wisdom,”³⁴² and especially through the Baal Shem Tov, the head and founder of Chassidus in general, and especially through the Alter Rebbe, the head and founder of Chabad Chassidus, who drew down the inner aspects of Torah into understanding and comprehension, into Wisdom-*Chochmah*, Understanding-*Binah*, and Knowledge-*Da’at*, and thereby, into all the powers of the soul, being that “the brain rules over the heart,”³⁴³ this matter now is drawn to everyone.

³³⁹ Deuteronomy 6:5 *ibid*.

³⁴⁰ See Chiddushei Aggadot of the Maharsha to Talmud Bavli, Brachot 35b; Ohr HaTorah of the Rav, the Maggid of Mezritch 53d; Likkutei Torah, Shlach 42c

³⁴¹ Talmud Bavli, Brachot 35b *ibid*.

³⁴² Tanya, Iggeret HaKodesh *ibid*. (142b)

³⁴³ Tanya, Ch. 12 (17a), citing Zohar III 224a

That is, every single Jew must serve *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, “with all your more,” [meaning] without limitation, and likewise in Torah, one must study the inner aspects (*Pnimiyut*) of the Torah.

Moreover, the matter of Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai is that he affected the bond between the inner aspect (*Pnimiyut*) of Torah and the revealed part of Torah, in that he drew down the inner aspects (*Pnimiyut*) of Torah into revelation in the revealed parts of Torah.

In our service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, this is the matter of drawing down the aspect of “with all your more” into the aspects of “with all your heart and with all your soul,” so that even the aspects of “with all your heart and with all your soul” become permeated with the matter of “with all your more,” [that is,] without limitation.

In general, this is the bond between Torah and prayer, as our sages, of blessed memory, stated,³⁴⁴ “May my prayer be adjacent to my bed.” That is, Torah study must specifically follow prayer. This is because the matter of prayer is self-sacrifice (*Mesirat Nefesh*) and it therefore is specifically necessary for Torah study to follow prayer, so that the Torah study will also be permeated with the self-sacrifice (*Mesirat Nefesh*) of prayer.

We also find this in regard to Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai, that even though “Torah study was his vocation,”³⁴⁵ he also had the matter of prayer, in that he sometimes would pray and

³⁴⁴ Talmud Bavli, Brachot 5b; See Likkutei Torah, Zot HaBrachah 96b

³⁴⁵ Talmud Bavli, Shabbat 11a

sometimes would recite the *Shema*. That is, his Torah study was permeated with the matter of prayer.

Now, since the matter of “with all your more” will primarily take place in the coming future (as mentioned above), thus even now, when we are in the times of “the footsteps of Moshiach” and are close to the coming of Moshiach, the time when “your wellsprings will spread to the outside,”³⁴⁶ there must be service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, “with all your more” with even greater strength, such that it is drawn into the powers of *ChaBa*”*D*³⁴⁷ and all the other powers of the soul, up to and including the power of action (*Koach HaMa’aseh*), so that in all of them, there will be the drawing forth of the aspect of the Unlimited One. That is, even one’s actual service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה in fulfilling His *mitzvot*, especially the *mitzvah* of charity which is equal to all the *mitzvot*,³⁴⁸ must be without measure and limitation.

Now, although charity also has some limitations, nonetheless, it is explained at length in Iggeret HaKodesh,³⁴⁹ and more generally in Iggeret HaTeshuvah,³⁵⁰ that giving charity can also be in a way of “with all your more.” Thus, since giving charity is equal to all the *mitzvot*, it is understood that it also is possible for all the *mitzvot* to be done in a way of “with all your more.”

³⁴⁶ See the famous letter of the Baal Shem Tov, printed at the beginning of Keter Shem Tov and elsewhere, translated at the beginning of The Way of The Baal Shem Tov, a translation of Tzavaat HaRivash.

³⁴⁷ An acronym for Wisdom-*Chochmah*, Understanding-*Binah*, and Knowledge-*Da’at*.

³⁴⁸ Midrash Bava Batra 9a; Talmud Yerushalmi, Pe’ah 1:1

³⁴⁹ Tanya, Iggeret HaKodesh, end of Epistle 10 (115b and on)

³⁵⁰ Tanya, Iggeret HaTeshuvah, Ch. 3 (93a)

5.

The same is so of the way of conduct Above, in that even though we are in the doubled and quadrupled darkness of the time of exile, and it altogether is not the matter of the redemption (such that we find that in the times of Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai the exile was very bitter etc.) nonetheless, the Holy One, blessed is He, helps us right now and gives blessing and success, even in the conduct of the Jewish people according to the ways of the natural order.

That is, the bitterness, concealment, and hiddenness are in matters of understanding in the study of Torah and the fulfillment of the *mitzvot*, whereas various other matters of the exile have become easier, even though it still is a bitter exile of doubled and quadrupled darkness, and there is very great hiddenness and concealment, except that is primarily is only in matters of spirituality.

Therefore, one must conduct himself out of great trust in *HaShem*-יה"ה, blessed is He, [with the knowledge] that in His Divine providence (*Hashgachah Pratit*-Personal Supervision) He supervises over each and every one, and how much so of the Jewish people as a whole, wherever they may be, whether in the Holy Land or whether outside of the Holy Land, as the verse states,³⁵¹ “*HaShem*-יה"ה is your protective shade, at your right hand. By day the sun will not harm you, nor the moon at night,” and³⁵² “A thousand may fall victim at

³⁵¹ Psalms 121:5-6

³⁵² Psalms 91:7

your side and a myriad at your right, but it shall not approach you.”

Moreover, no great effort is required for this, but rather, as related³⁵³ about Rabbi Chaninah ben Dosa, they asked of him to simply place his little finger [on the stone], through which they then brought the big hard stone, the mighty stone (*Even Eitan*-אֵתֶן אֵתֶן) by way of ascending in pilgrimage to the Holy Temple, to the Holy City of Yerushalayim.

The same is likewise so, that through our present conduct, with great trust in the Holy One, blessed is He, there will be the fulfillment of the statement in Psalms,³⁵⁴ “Kings of legions flee, they flee (*Yeedodun, Yidodun*-יִדְדוֹן יִדְדוֹן),” meaning,³⁵⁵ “The nations of the world will be ostracized (*Yitnadu*-יִתְנָדוּ) and cast out of the land of Israel,” and [this will be] with the slightest of effort, just to give credence to the ways of the natural order, there will be complete victory.

This complete victory, which will happen when it still is the time of exile, also becomes the preparation and receptacle for the conclusion of the bitter exile, and there then will begin to be the beginning of the redemption, followed by the true and complete redemption through our righteous Moshiach!

³⁵³ Beginning of Midrash Kohelet Rabbah and Shir HaShirim Rabbah

³⁵⁴ Psalms 68:13

³⁵⁵ See Rashi to Psalms 68:13

The explanation, as it relates to the general service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה of every single Jew, is that he must do that which depends on him in serving *HaShem*-יהו"ה throughout the day. This is because the beginning of service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, and its primary essence and root, is the matter of accepting the yoke of His Kingship,³⁵⁶ which is connected to the matter of self-sacrifice (*Mesirat Nefesh*) “with all your more” (*Bechol Me’odecha*-בכל מאדך) in the first paragraph of the *Shema* recital, (this being the matter of “may my prayer be adjacent to my bed”).

This self-sacrifice (*Mesirat Nefesh*) must then be drawn into serving Him “with all your hearts and with all your souls” up to “you shall gather your grain, your wine, and your oil.” (For, since we still are in the time of the exile, our service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, throughout the day, is in these matters). That is, even in the work that one is engaged in throughout the day, he sows self-sacrifice.

This is as in the known saying and teaching of our Rebbes, our leaders, that the time of self-sacrifice (*Mesirat Nefesh*) must be drawn throughout the entire day in a way of having an effect on all matters throughout the day, so that even in things that externally appear to be measured and limited, it should be recognized that they are being done by a Jew who has self-sacrifice (A *Mesirat Nefesh* Jew). Then, even all those matters, as they are limited and measured, will come to be in a completely different way.

³⁵⁶ Tanya, Likkutei Amarim, Ch. 41

Through this, we draw down the blessings of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, even in the matter of rain, which usually can come about through prayer and fasting, as in the Halachic ruling of Shulchan Aruch, which is a Halachic ruling that is equal at all times.

Now, in these generations, and particularly in the generation of "the footsteps of Moshiach," we bring this about by increasing our persistence and diligence in studying Torah in general, and especially in studying the inner teachings (*Pnimiyyut*) of Torah, and in a way that we draw the inner aspects (*Pnimiyyut*) of the Torah into understand and comprehension in matters of the revealed parts of Torah, up to and including one's revealed powers of Wisdom-*Chochmah*, Understanding-*Binah*, and Knowledge-*Da'at*, through which we thereby also bring about that "I will give the rains in their times,"³⁵⁷ with the descent of the rains in the literal sense, also including all the drawings down of blessings from the Holy One, blessed is He, (as is explained by the commentators of the Torah),³⁵⁸ and this drawing down will be out of tranquility, joy, and gladness of heart.

All this is brought about through the pleasant service of Him through the study of His Torah, both the revealed parts of Torah and the inner aspects (*Pnimiyyut*) of the Torah, such that they come to be in a way of "One Torah (to us all),"³⁵⁹ since, "I have stricken-*Machatzti*-מחצתי, and I shall heal," meaning, that there is the removal of the partition-*Mechitzah*-מחיצה that there

³⁵⁷ Leviticus 26:4

³⁵⁸ See Ramban to Leviticus 26:4 *ibid*.

³⁵⁹ See Numbers 15:16; Tanya, end of Ch. 46

is for those who separate between the revealed part of Torah and the inner aspect of Torah,³⁶⁰ and they become one study, and [moreover] the study is in a way that brings to action.³⁶¹ In other words, even though the action [itself] is measured and limited, nonetheless, within it is that which transcends measure and limitation – “with all your more.”

7.

This then, is the meaning of the story in Zohar, that it once happened that the world needed rain, and through Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai expounding on the inner aspects of Torah, the rain descended. In other words, through the study of the inner aspects of the Torah, at any time there is a need in the world – and we always need the blessings of *HaShem*-יהו"ה – there then is a drawing forth of the blessing of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, from His full, open, holy, and broad hand,³⁶² without measure and limitation.

This was the novelty of the way of Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai, and as mentioned before, even though “many have acted according the view of Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai, and were unsuccessful,” nonetheless, once Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai opened the pipe, and then after the revelation of the Arizal, and then after the revelation of the Baal Shem Tov, up to and including the revelation of the Alter Rebbe, as well as the Rebbes, our leaders, who followed after him, up to and

³⁶⁰ *Hemshech “Chayav Adam Levarech”* 5638, Ch. 25 (Sefer HaMaamarim 5638 p. 152 and on).

³⁶¹ See Talmud Bavli, Kiddushin 40b; Bava Kamma 17a

³⁶² See the third blessing of the Grace after Meals (*Birkhat HaMazon*).

including the Rebbe of our generation, we thus are able to draw the matter of the inner aspects of the Torah into the revealed aspects of the Torah in a revealed way, as well as to draw the matter of “with all your more” into all of one’s deeds throughout the day, by which we draw down the blessing of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, so that “for all the children of Israel there is light in their dwellings.”³⁶³

That is, wherever they may be, whether outside of the Holy Land or in the Holy Land, they should have light that completely transcends the natural order, and in a way of doing a minor action, solely to give credence to the matters of the natural order.

They should draw down the blessings of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, which transcend the ways of the natural order in the most literal sense, in all physical matters, below ten hands-breadths, up to and including matters that pertain to one’s children, health, and abundant sustenance. Then, how much more so will there be peace, tranquility and quiet, so that they can engage in the study of the Torah and the fulfillment of the *mitzvot* out of expansiveness.

This matter speeds up, draws down, and reveals the coming of our righteous Moshiach, speedily and literally below ten hands-breadths, at which time there will be the actual fulfillment of the verse,³⁶⁴ “You shall spread out powerfully (*uFaratzta*-ופרצת) westward, eastward, northward and southward,” with “a boundless portion.”³⁶⁵

³⁶³ As was stated whilst still in Egypt – Exodus 10:23

³⁶⁴ Genesis 28:14

³⁶⁵ See Talmud Bavli, Shabbat 118a and on

Likewise, as stated in this week's Torah portion,³⁶⁶ "I will walk within you, I will be God to you and you will be a people to Me," up to the conclusion that is destined to be,³⁶⁷ "I shall lead you upright," with the true and complete redemption!

³⁶⁶ Leviticus 26:12

³⁶⁷ Leviticus 26:13