Discourse 33

"Reisheet Areesoteichem... -The first of your dough..."

Delivered on Shabbat Parshat Shlach, 28th of Sivan, Shabbat Mevarchim Tammuz, 5729 By the grace of *HaShem*, blessed is He,

1.

The verse states,⁷³⁷ "The first of your dough you shall set aside as a portion." In Yechezkel it is written,⁷³⁸ "You shall give the first portion of your dough to the Priest, to bring blessing upon your home." In the discourse by this title of the year 5629,⁷³⁹ (said one-hundred years ago), the Rebbe Maharash points out that we must understand the matter of the blessing brought upon your home through the dough (*Challah*) that you shall give to the Priest. That is, since twenty-three additional gifts are given to the priesthood,⁷⁴⁰ this being so, why is it that specifically through giving the dough (*Challah*) to the Priest the blessing will be brought upon your home?

⁷³⁷ Numbers 15:20

⁷³⁸ Ezekiel 44:30

⁷³⁹ Sefer HaMaamarim 5629 p. 242 and on.

⁷⁴⁰ Talmud Bavli, Bava Kamma 110b

2.

In the discourse he explains that the *mitzvah* of giving the first portion of the dough (*Challah*) is one of the three *mitzvot* that were given to women. The reason is as our sages, of blessed memory, stated,⁷⁴¹ "Adam, the first man (who was formed by the hands of the Holy One, blessed is He,⁷⁴² as the verse states,⁷⁴³ "And *HaShem* God-*HaShem Elo*"him- יהו"ה formed the man of dust from the ground, and He blew into his nostrils the soul of life") was the Challah (the first dough) of the world."

Now, just as our sages, of blessed memory, stated⁷⁴⁴ about the Challah, "Just as it is so that from the moment that a woman agitates her dough (meaning, her flour) with water, she immediately lifts her Challah, so likewise [the Holy One, blessed is He, did] with Adam, the first man. This is as the verse states, "A mist ascended from the earth and watered," and it then states, 'And *HaShem God-HaShem Elo"him-מורה* האלה" formed the man of dust from the ground." As in Rashi's explanation, "It is in relation to the matter of the creation of Adam that He caused the deep to rise and filled the clouds with water to moisten the dust, like one kneading bread, who first pours water in and then kneads the dough – in the same way here, first He watered the ground and then He formed man."

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⁷⁴¹ Talmud Yerushalmi Shabbat 2:6; Midrash Tanchuma Noach 1; Bereishit Rabba 14:1

⁷⁴² See Midrash Bereishit Rabba 24:5; Kohelet Rabba 3:11 (2)

⁷⁴³ Genesis 2:7

⁷⁴⁴ Talmud Yerushlami and Midrash Tanchuma ibid.

⁷⁴⁵ Genesis 2:6

⁷⁴⁶ Rashi to Genesis 2:6 ibid.

[In the discourse he adds that, at first glance, this must be better understood. For, did not the verse [first] state, 747 "HaShem God-HaShem Elohi"m-יהו״ה אלהי״ם had not sent rain upon the earth and there was no man to work the soil," from which we learn that before Adam, the first man, praying for the rains to descend, there was no rain. Nonetheless, it could be said that the waters were brought about through HaShem-יהו" causing the deep to rise from below to above.]

However, because [Chavah, the first] woman brought about ruination and caused Adam, the first man, the Challah of the world, to stumble, [to correct this] the *mitzvah* of Challah was given specifically to the women.

After this introduction, in the continuation of the discourse, he explains the matter of kneading flour and water etc., as it is in one's soul in his service of *HaShem-*יהו", blessed is He.

3.

This may be understood by prefacing with an explanation of the general matter of the Challah, as hinted in the name "Challah-הֹה" [For, as known from the explanation in the teaching of the Rav, the Maggid of Mezhritch,⁷⁴⁹ and in Shaar HaYichud VeHaEmunah,⁷⁵⁰ the name is the vitality of the thing called by that name.] In the name Challah- הֹלה there are

748 Rashi to Genesis 2:5

⁷⁴⁷ Genesis 2:5

⁷⁴⁹ Ohr Torah 4b and on

 $^{^{750}}$ Tanya, Shaar Ha Yichud Ve
Ha Emunah, translated as The Gate of Unity and Faith, Ch. 1.

the letters *Chet*-ה (and *Lamed-*ל) and *Hey-*ה, and in an order that the letter *Chet*-ה precedes the letter *Hey-*ה. As explained in Shaar HaYichud VeHaEmunah, ⁷⁵¹ the first letter [in a word] is its dominant and primary letter, whereas the others are secondary and subsumed in its light etc. We therefore must understand the connection and relationship between these letters to each other, such that they are included in a single word.

To explain, about the letter *Hey-*ה our sages, of blessed memory, stated in Tractate Menachot, "See "Why is [the leg of the *Hey-*ה] suspended (the inner leg of the *Hey-*ה is suspended in the air and is not attached to the roof [of the letter])? Because if one repents, he is brought back in (through the upper opening, between the leg and the roof [of the letter *Hey-*ה])." In contrast, this is not so of the letter *Chet-*π which does not have an opening from above but is closed on all three sides and is only open from below, this indicating the descent to below, which is the matter of "the spirit of the beast that descends below." This descent comes about through the opening below, as the verse states, "Sin crouches at the opening."

This is similar to the explanation about the matter of *Chametz-*מצה, and *Matzah-מצה*, the difference between them being the letters *Chet-*ה and *Hey-*ה. That is, the word "*Chametz-*" indicates ego and rising in elevation (which is why

⁷⁵¹ Tanya, Shaar HaYichud VeHaEmunah, translated as The Gate of Unity and Faith, Ch. 12.

⁷⁵² Talmud Bavli, Menachot 29b (and Rashi there).

⁷⁵³ See Ecclesiastes 3:21

⁷⁵⁴ Genesis 4:7

Chametz hints at the evil inclination)⁷⁵⁵ and has the letter Chet- Π . In contrast, the word "Matzah- π ", which indicates nullification (Bittul), has the letter Hey- π . We thus find that the letters Chet- Π and Hey- Π are opposites of each other. Now, this being so, how can they both be included in a single word?

However, the explanation is that this itself is the reason. Namely, the general service of the Challah-ה'ה is to affect that even in the state and standing of the letter *Chet*-ה (which is the beginning and primary aspect of the word) there should also be the presence of the matter of the letter *Hey*-ה.

That is, even in leavened bread (*Chametz-*המץ) there should be the aspect of the letter *Hey-*ה, similar to the matter of the two loaves of the holiday of Shavuot, about which the verse states, "They shall be baked leavened-*Chametz-*". For, although on the holiday of Pesach, leaven (*Chametz-*המץ) is forbidden, nonetheless, on the holiday of Shavuot the leavened-*Chametz-*" is made into a *mitzvah* that is fulfilled in the Holy Temple etc.

This matter is also hinted at in the fact that the obligation of the *mitzvah* of Challah, is from the time that the woman agitates her dough with water, this being the matter of mixing water in the flour. That is, the primary aspect of the dough is the flour and **not** the water (which is why on the bread that is made from the dough, we make the blessing, "Who brings forth bread from the earth (*Hamotzee Lechem*)" and not "By whose

⁷⁵⁵ See Talmud Bavli, Brachot 17a and Rashi there; Talmud Bavli, Rosh HaShanah 3b; Likkutei Torah, Tzav 13c; Ohr HaTorah, Vayikra Vol. 2 p. 441.

⁷⁵⁶ See Zohar III 252a; Likkutei Torah ibid. 14b; Siddur Im Da"Ch 45a; Likkutei Sichot Vol. 1, p. 129, and elsewhere.

⁷⁵⁷ Leviticus 23:17; See Torah Ohr, 116b; Likkutei Torah, Bamidbar 17d

word all things came to be (*Shehakol*)"), and it only is that water is also mixed into the flour.

4.

The explanation of the matter as it is in our service of *HaShem*-יהו", blessed is He, is that "flour" refers to Torah, as in the teaching of our sages, of blessed memory, "If there is no flour there is no Torah." In contrast, "water" refers to prayer, as the verse states, "Pour your heart out like water in the presence of *HaShem*-ה"." The mixing of "water" and "flour" refers to serving Him in prayer before the study of Torah. That is, for the study of Torah be as it should be, that he will not come to ego etc., this must be preceded by the nullification

⁷⁵⁸ Talmud Bavli, Taanit 7a

⁷⁵⁹ Mishnah Avot 3:17

⁷⁶⁰ Lamentations 2:19; Also see Torah Ohr, Mishpatim 78d and elsewhere.

(*Bittul*) brought about through serving *HaShem-יהו"*, blessed is He, in prayer.

This is as our sages, of blessed memory, taught,⁷⁶¹ "One may only stand in prayer from an approach of gravity (*Koved Rosh-*כובד ראש)" about which Rashi explains, "subjugation and humility."⁷⁶² This is as stated in Shulchan Aruch,⁷⁶³ that before prayer one must contemplate (not only the exaltedness of God, but also) the lowliness of man.

Then, after there has been the mixing of the water in the flour, this being the matter of the kneading, there then is the baking,⁷⁶⁴ this being the matter of love that is like flames of fire, [as in the verse],⁷⁶⁵ "Her infernos are infernos of fire, the flames of *Ya"H-ה"*," and as the verse states,⁷⁶⁶ "Ten women will bake your bread in one oven (*Tanur Echad-הוור Echad-הוור Echad-הוור Echad-הוור Echad-הוור שוא "etc.* [This is to the point that one arrives at love of Him with delight in Him (*Ahavah b'Taanugim*), about which the verse states,⁷⁶⁷ "I have presented your priesthood as a service that is a gift," as explained in Tanya.]⁷⁶⁸

Through this, the study of Torah following prayer will be as it should be, in the aspect of nullification (*Bittul*) etc., until one reaches the level of the fear of Him about which they

⁷⁶¹ Talmud Bavli, Brachot 30b in the Mishnah

⁷⁶² See Likkutei Sichot, Vol. 34 p. 69 note 18.

⁷⁶³ Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chayim 98:1

⁷⁶⁴ Also see Likkutei Torah, Behar 40c and on.

⁷⁶⁵ Song of Songs 8:6

⁷⁶⁶ Leviticus 26:26

⁷⁶⁷ Numbers 18:7

⁷⁶⁸ Tanya, Likkutei Amarim, Ch. 14

stated⁷⁶⁹ that the Torah is called "a gateway to the courtyard." (This is in addition to the fear that precedes the study of the Torah, about which they said⁷⁷⁰ that it is the keys to the outer door, as compared to the keys to the inner door.)

5.

Now, we should add and explain the matter of the kneading as it is in serving Him in prayer itself. For, before the matter of the kneading, this being the mixing of the water with the flour, there must be the matter of grinding, that one grinds the wheat to make it into refined flour. About this it is explained⁷⁷¹ that this refers to the matter of humbling, such that he comes to be in a state of "a broken and contrite heart."⁷⁷² Based on this, the lowliness and humility that precedes prayer is the matter of the grinding.

Then, in addition to this, there must be the nullification (*Bittul*) that comes with the mixing of the water into the flour, this being the matter of the kneading that comes after the grinding, as it is in the service of Him in prayer itself.

The explanation is that service of *HaShem-*יהוי in prayer must be "with all your heart and with all your soul,"⁷⁷³ meaning, with all ten powers of the soul, which also is the matter of praying with the congregation. This is as in the known

⁷⁶⁹ Talmud Bavli, Shabbat 31b; See Tanya, Likkutei Amarim, end of Ch. 23

⁷⁷⁰ Talmud Bavli, Shabbat 31b ibid.; Also see Sefer HaMaamarim 5677 p. 63 and on; Sefer HaMaamarim Kuntreisim Vol. 2, p. 281a and on.

⁷⁷¹ Likkutei Torah, Behar ibid.

⁷⁷² Psalms 51:19

⁷⁷³ Deuteronomy 6:5

saying of his honorable holiness, my father-in-law, the Rebbe, in the name of his grandfather, that prayer with the congregation-*Tzibur*-ציבור means to assemble and gather-*Litzbor*-מצור dll ten powers of one's soul.⁷⁷⁴

Now, there are two ways in this - as the matter is from the perspective of the first paragraph of the *Shema* recital, and is it is from the [perspective of] second paragraph of the *Shema* recital. To explain, our sages of blessed memory, stated,⁷⁷⁵ "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." This is the matter of "running" (*Ratzo*) and "returning" (*Shov*).⁷⁷⁶ That is, the first paragraph, the acceptance of the yoke of the Kingdom of Heaven, is the matter of the "running" (*Ratzo*) brought about because of the great love of *HaShem-*" in a way of "with all your more," (which specifically is mentioned in the first paragraph).

The second paragraph, the acceptance of the yoke of the *mitzvot*, is the matter of "returning" (*Shov*), this being the opposite of the motion of "running" (*Ratzo*) and ascent to above, but is rather the matter of drawing down from above to below, specifically, to serve Him in worldly matters, [as in the verse], "You shall gather your grain etc.," (which specifically is mentioned in the second paragraph).

 $^{^{774}}$ See Likkutei Sichot Vol. 2 p. 477 and on; Also see HaTomim, Vol. 2, p. 45 $\left[75a\right]$ and on.

⁷⁷⁵ Talmud Bavli, Brachot 13a in the Mishnah

 $^{^{776}}$ See Siddur Im Da''Ch, Shaar Ha
Keriyat Shema 74b and on; Ohr Ha Torah, Va'etchanan Vol
. 6 p. 2,237 and on.

⁷⁷⁷ Deuteronomy 6:5 ibid.

⁷⁷⁸ Deuteronomy 11:14

Now, even though the matter of the love and "running" (*Ratzo*) is very great, as in the teaching,⁷⁷⁹ "There is no labor like the labor of love," this being such that the Torah attests that the matter of "running" (*Ratzo*) is "a great matter,"⁷⁸⁰ nevertheless, "He did not create it for emptiness, but created it to be settled,"⁷⁸¹ meaning that *HaShem's*-ה" ultimate Supernal intent is not for the matter of "running" (*Ratzo*), but specifically for the matter of "returning" (*Shov*).

Because of this there is a superiority in the second paragraph [of the *Shema* recital] over and above the first paragraph. For, even though in the second paragraph it does not say "with all your more" (*Bechol Me'odecha-*ככל מאדך-(which is the matter of "they actualize the will of the Ever Present One"⁷⁸² as explained in the teaching of the Rav, the Maggid of Mezhritch)⁷⁸³ as it says in the first paragraph, there nonetheless, is something stated specifically in the second paragraph and not in the first paragraph, this being the verse,⁷⁸⁴ "To serve Him (*l'Avdo*-1724) with all your heart."

The matter of "service-*Avodah*-מעבודה" is that it is of the same root as "the working of hides-*Eevood Orot*-עיבוד עורות," 785 referring to the general work of the world of Repair-*Tikkun*, as

⁷⁷⁹ See Zohar II 55b; Zohar III 267a; Likkutei Torah, Shlach 42c

⁷⁸⁰ See Talmud Bavli, Sukkah 28a; Mishneh Torah, Hilchot Yesodei HaTorah, end of Ch. 4; Also see the prior discourse of this year, 5729, entitled "*Beha'alotcha et HaNeirot* – When you kindle the lamps," Discourse 32, Ch. 6 (Sefer HaMaamarim 5729 p. 241 and on).

⁷⁸¹ See Isaiah 45:18

⁷⁸² See Talmud Bavli, Brachot 35b and Chiddushei Aggadot of the Maharsha there.

⁷⁸³ Ohr Torah 53d; Also see Likkutei Torah, Shlach ibid., and elsewhere.

⁷⁸⁴ Deuteronomy 11:13

⁷⁸⁵ See Torah Ohr, Bereishit 5b; Mishpatim 76a

the verse states,⁷⁸⁶ "That God created to do-*La'asot*-קלעשות," meaning, "to repair-*Letaken*-לתקן."⁷⁸⁷ That is, everything that was created in the six days of creation requires repair-*Tikkun*-⁷⁸⁸ Specifically this work is *HaShem's*-⁷⁸⁹ ultimate Supernal intent for which the soul descended to below. This is because the matter of "running" (*Ratzo*) was already present (and on the contrary, was in an even higher way) before the descent of the soul to below, as the verse states, ⁷⁸⁹ "As *HaShem*-⁷⁸⁰, the God of Israel, lives, before whom I stood etc.," this being the matter of the "running" (*Ratzo*).

However, *HaShem's*-הר"ה-, ultimate Supernal intent in the descent of the soul to below, is specifically for the matter of "returning" (*Shov*), meaning, that one should work in affecting the refinement of his body, his animalistic soul, and his portion in the world, specifically by way of self-restraint (*Itkafiya*), by which "the glory of the Holy One, blessed is He, is elevated in all the worlds." ⁷⁹⁰

Now, in the second paragraph of the *Shema* it states,⁷⁹¹ "Guard yourselves [lest] etc.," and our sages, of blessed memory, stated,⁷⁹² "Wherever it states 'Guard yourself-*Hishamer*-קר,' 'lest-*Pen*-קר,' or 'do not-*Al-*¬¬,' it means nothing other than a negative prohibitive *mitzvah*." In other

⁷⁸⁶ Genesis 2:3

⁷⁸⁷ Rashi to Midrash Bereishit Rabba 11:6

⁷⁸⁸ Midrash Bereishit Rabba 11:6 ibid.

⁷⁸⁹ Kings I 17:1; (See Sefer HaMaamarim 5700 p. 13 in the note; Likkutei Sichot Vol. 25, p. 147 note 53).

⁷⁹⁰ Tanya, Ch. 27 (34a); Likkutei Torah, beginning of Pekudei cites to Zohar II 128b (and Likkutei Torah there also cites to Zohar ibid. 67b; Also see 184a); Also see Torah Ohr, Vayakhel 89d; Likkutei Torah, Chukat 65c.

⁷⁹¹ Deuteronomy 11:16

⁷⁹² Talmud Bavli, Eruvin 96a; Makkot 13b

words, the general matter of the toil of the second paragraph of the *Shema* recital is specifically the matter of nullification (*Bittul*) and fear (*Yirah*), meaning that even the love (*Ahavah*) is in a motion of constriction.

This then, is the matter of the kneading that follows the grinding. That is, in addition to the general matter of the lowliness and humility that precedes prayer, this being the matter of the grinding, in prayer itself there must be the matter of the nullification (Bittul) and fear (Yirah) of the second paragraph of the Shema recital, this being the matter of the kneading, the mixing of the water with the flour, through which we draw down and actualize the matter of the Oneness of HaShem-היהיה, (this being the general matter of the Shema recital), within the place of the separation, meaning, within the work in the world as it is in a way of "you shall gather your grain etc.," similar to the effect of the water upon the particles of flour, in binding them and making them into one body and one dough.

6.

This then, is the meaning of [the verse], "The first of your dough you shall set aside as a portion," [and] "You shall give the first portion of your dough to the Priest, to bring blessing upon your home." To explain, it was explained before (in chapter three) that the general service of the Challah-π' is to make the letter *Chet*-π into the letter *Hey*-π, so that there will not be the descent through the opening below, the aspect of Kingship-*Malchut*, called "the daughter that sins before her

Father,"⁷⁹³ in that sin is close to her, as the verse states, "Sin crouches at the opening." This is why there must be the matter of "guarding" (*Shemirah-ממירה*) etc. This guarding is brought about through the matter of nullification (*Bittul*). This is hinted in the way that the letter *Hey-*π is written in a Torah Scroll, in which [the scribe] first makes the two lines on the right, like the letter *Dalet-*7, and then adds the left leg, which is like the letter *Yod-*', (in addition to the *Yod-*' that is behind the *Dalet-*7 through which we make the *Reish-*γ into a *Dalet-*γ, ⁷⁹⁴ which indicates the matter of nullification (*Bittul*). We thus find that the matter of the *Chalah-*π is the drawing forth of the letter *Yod-*' into the aspect of Kingship-*Malchut*, for then Kingship-*Malchut* is in a state of wholeness and perfection.

This then, is why the matter of *Challah*-הלה is "to bring blessing upon your home." For, the matter of "your home" is the aspect of Kingship-*Malchut*, which is called the "home-*Bayit*-"," and refers to the whole world, which was created with the letter *Beit*-", as the verse states, 795 "In the beginning-*Bereishit*-" God created." It is through the Challah which is called "the first-*Reishit*-","ראשית-"796 that one draws blessing into your "home" (*Beitecha*-").

This refers to the drawing of Wisdom-*Chochmah* into Kingship-*Malchut*, as it states,⁷⁹⁷ "A home-*Bayit*-מים is built with Wisdom-*Chochmah*." For, it is through this that it is possible for there to be the general toil of affecting the

⁷⁹³ Zohar III 188b; Also see Likkutei Torah, Emor 36c and on.

⁷⁹⁴ See Sefer HaMaamarim 5700 p. 119 and on.

⁷⁹⁵ Genesis 1:1

⁷⁹⁶ Midrash Bereishit Rabba 1:4

⁷⁹⁷ Proverbs 24:3

refinement of the world, first in a way of restraint (*Itkafiya*) and then also in a way of transformation (*It'hapcha*), [such that] "willful sins are transformed to be as merits for him."⁷⁹⁸ This is similar to what was explained before, that even the Chametz that is forbidden on Pesach, becomes the *mitzvah* of the two loaves of the holiday of Shavuot, this being the novelty introduced at the giving of the Torah.

In the coming future this will be with the ultimate perfection, as the verse states,⁷⁹⁹ "I will remove the spirit of impurity from the land," after the refinement and ascent of all the sparks of holiness in the world, this being the matter of "with their silver and gold with them," solo including the gifts they will receive from the nations of the world.

This is just as it was at the giving of the Torah, as the verse states, ⁸⁰² "You took gifts," such that even the angel of the opposite of life (the angel of the three completely impure husks) gave a gift to Moshe, transmitting the secret of the incense (*Ketoret*) to him, ⁸⁰³ indicating the refinement of the side opposite holiness. This is why the [ingredients of the] incense (*Ketoret*) were eleven in number, which is associated with the side opposite holiness. Yet, even so, they would make incense of them and offer it upon the altar, this being the matter of the refinement of the side opposite holiness. ⁸⁰⁴

⁷⁹⁸ Talmud Bavli, Yoma 86b

⁷⁹⁹ Zachariah 13:2

⁸⁰⁰ Isaiah 60:9

⁸⁰¹ See Radak to Isaiah 60:9 ibid.

⁸⁰² Psalms 68:19, the Psalm that began to be recited on the 11th of Nissan of this year (see the beginning of Sefer HaMaamarim 11 Nissan).

⁸⁰³ See Talmud Bavli, Shabbat 89a

⁸⁰⁴ See Torah Ohr, Toldot 20b and on.

The perfection of this will take place in the coming future, at which time there will be the refinement of all the sparks of holiness. This is as explained in Shaarei Orah,⁸⁰⁵ that when the redemption will be "in its time," ⁸⁰⁶ [since at this point in time, after "all the calculations of the end of days have already passed," ⁸⁰⁷ and it no longer is possible for the redemption to be in a way of "I will hasten it"], ⁸⁰⁸ there then is the refinement of all the sparks of holiness and not even a single spark is lost, as the verse states, ⁸⁰⁹ "You will be gathered up one by one etc.," with the coming of the righteous redeemer, speedily and in the most literal sense!

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⁸⁰⁵ Shaarei Orah of the Mittler Rebbe, Shaar HaPurim, discourse entitled "Yaviyu Levush Malchut" Ch. 94 and on.

⁸⁰⁶ Isaiah 60:22: Talmud Bayli, Sanhedrin 98a

⁸⁰⁷ Talmud Bavli, Sanhedrin 97b

⁸⁰⁸ Isaiah 60:22; Talmud Bavli, Sanhedrin 98a

⁸⁰⁹ Isaiah 27:12