

Discourse 13

“*Yehudah, Atah...* -
Yehudah, you...”

Delivered on Shabbat Parshat Vayechi,
18th of Teivet, 5730
By the grace of *HaShem*, blessed is He,

1.

The verse states,¹⁰¹² “Yehudah, you your brothers shall submit to you; your hand will be on the neck of your enemies.” The question about this is well known.¹⁰¹³ Namely, why does the verse state “Yehudah, you-*Atah*-אתה,” which is not stated in relation to all the other tribes? This is especially so considering the continuation of verse, “your brothers shall submit to you-*Yoducha Acheecha*-יודוך אחיך,” speaking directly to Yehudah (in the second person). Thus, the verse should have [simply] said, “Yehudah, your brothers shall submit to you-*Yehudah Yoducha Acheecha*-יְהוּדָה יוֹדוּךְ אַחִיךָ.” That is, the word “You-*Atah*-אתה” seems to be superfluous here.

We also must understand the relationship between, “your brothers shall submit to you” and the continuation of the verse, “Your hand will be on neck of your enemies.” The explanation is that there **is** an enemy (that is, it is not such that

¹⁰¹² Genesis 49:8

¹⁰¹³ See the beginning of the discourse entitled “*Yehudah Atah*” 5680 (Sefer HaMaamarim 5680 p. 217) 5688 (Sefer HaMaamarim 5688 p. 45).

there altogether is no enemy) but that “your hand will be on the neck of your enemies.” That is, it is not only like the verse,¹⁰¹⁴ “I will cause all your enemies turn the back of their neck to you,” that is, that the enemy will flee and his neck will thus be turned to you, but it is beyond this, in that “your hand will be on the neck of your enemies,” to smite him etc.

2.

This can be understood by prefacing with the explanation of the Alter Rebbe (this week being his Hilulah on the 24th of Teivet) in Torah Ohr,¹⁰¹⁵ where he explains that the matter of “Your brothers shall submit to you” refers to Reuven, Shimon, and Levi.

It can be said that the reason he explains the matter of “Your brothers shall submit to you” only in regard to Reuven, Shimon, and Levi, even though Yehudah was king over all the tribes,¹⁰¹⁶ is because the primary novelty of “Your brothers shall submit to you” is in relation to Reuven, Shimon, and Levi, who were born before him [and were his elders], for about the tribes born after Yehudah, it is not such a great novelty [that they submitted to him].

¹⁰¹⁴ Exodus 23:27

¹⁰¹⁵ Torah Ohr 45a and on.

¹⁰¹⁶ See Midrash Bereishit Rabba 84:17; Yalkut Shimoni, Vayechi, Remez 159.

This is especially so according to the view¹⁰¹⁷ that explains the teaching of our sages, of blessed memory,¹⁰¹⁸ on the verse,¹⁰¹⁹ “Honor your father etc.,” that [the additional word] ‘*et*-את’ [in the verse] comes to include your older brother, which not only refers to the eldest brother, but to any brother who is older than you.

Therefore, the matter of “Your brothers will submit to you” - the aspect of “submission-*Hoda’ah*-הודאה” being the matter of nullification (*Bittul*) - was only in relation to Re’uven, Shimon, and Levi. In contrast, this was not so of the other tribes, for whom Yehudah’s elevation stemmed from the intellectual [understanding that he is their elder], rather than by way of submitting (*Hoda’ah*-הודאה) [to him].

Now, about the verse stating, “Yehudah, You-*Yehudah Atah*-אתה יהודה etc.,” about the word “You-*Atah*-אתה”¹⁰²⁰ it states in Zohar,¹⁰²¹ “Three places are called ‘You-*Atah*-אתה.” About this it is explained¹⁰²² that the three levels of “You-*Atah*-אתה” are Kingship-*Malchut*, Kindness-*Chessed*, and Wisdom-*Chochmah*. This is because about the *Sefirah* of Wisdom-

¹⁰¹⁷ See Zohar III 82a; 83a; Sefer HaMitzvot of the Rambam, Shores 2; Sefer HaChassidim, Section 345; Shaar HaMitzvot of the Arizal to Exodus 20:12 (Yitro); Birkei Yosef to Yoreh De’ah 240:22 (and in Shiurei Brachah there); Also see Torat Menachem, Reshimat HaYoman p. 286.

¹⁰¹⁸ Talmud Bavli, Ketubot 103a (“honor your father **and** (ואת) your mother... the additional *Vav*-ו in “and your mother-*v’Et Eemecha*-ואת אמך is in order to include your older brother.”)

¹⁰¹⁹ Exodus 20:12

¹⁰²⁰ In regard to the coming section, also see Ohr HaTorah, Vayechi (Vol. 2), p. 363b and on.

¹⁰²¹ Zohar III 193b

¹⁰²² Siddur Im Da”Ch 39c and on; Biurei HaZohar of the Tzemach Tzedek, Vol. 1, p. 422, p. 524 and on.

Chochmah the verse states,¹⁰²³ “For You (*Atah*-אתה) are our Father.” About the *Sefirah* of Kindness-*Chessed* the verse states,¹⁰²⁴ “You (*Atah*-אתה) shall be a priest forever,” and the *Sefirah* of Kingship-*Malchut* is called “You-*Atah*-אתה” as in the continuation of the verse,¹⁰²⁵ “You (*Atah*-אתה)... because you are a king of righteousness.”

This then, is also the meaning of the verse here, which states, “Yehudah, You-*Atah*-אתה.” This is because Yehudah refers to the *Sefirah* of Kingship-*Malchut*, which is the final *Sefirah*, as the verse states [about Yehudah],¹⁰²⁶ “Then she stopped giving birth.”

This is as explained in the Siddur, in the discourses on “*Baruch SheAmar*,”¹⁰²⁷ about the difference between “You-*Atah*-אתה” and “He-*Hoo*-הוא.” That is, the word “He-*Hoo*-הוא” [in the third person] indicates someone who is hidden and concealed, whose being is not [directly] known in a revealed way. In contrast, the word “You-*Atah*-אתה” [in the second person] indicates the aspect of revelation, and therefore, the word “You-*Atah*-אתה” indicates the three levels that are the aspect of revelation (*Giluy*).

The *Sefirah* of Kingship-*Malchut* is called “You-*Atah*-אתה” because its matter is the drawing down and revelation into the worlds of Creation, Formation, and Action (*Briyah*,

¹⁰²³ Isaiah 63:16

¹⁰²⁴ Psalms 110:4

¹⁰²⁵ Ibid

¹⁰²⁶ Genesis 29:35

¹⁰²⁷ Siddur Im Da”Ch 39c and on ibid.

Yetzirah, Asiyah) (about which the verse states,¹⁰²⁸ “From there it divided”).

Moreover, the revelation of all the *Sefirot* is through the *Sefirah* of Kingship-*Malchut*.¹⁰²⁹ This is like how it is in the powers of the soul, that Kingship-*Malchut* is the matter of revelation to another. Likewise, the [aspect of the] revelation (*Gilyu*) of each of the powers is the matter of Kingship-*Malchut* within [each of] them.¹⁰³⁰

Now, the *Sefirah* of Kingship-*Malchut* is called “The Congregation of Israel-*Knesset Yisroel*-כנסת ישראל,”¹⁰³¹ because she congregates (*Konesset*-כונסת) and collects all the revelations that are above her within herself.¹⁰³² The drawing down and revelation of all matters in Kingship-*Malchut* come about through the *Sefirah* of Kindness-*Chessed*, which is called “the day that accompanies all the days,”¹⁰³³ in that through it all revelation is drawn to Kingship-*Malchut*. Likewise, the *Sefirah* of Wisdom-*Chochmah* is the beginning of the revelation,¹⁰³⁴

¹⁰²⁸ Genesis 2:10

¹⁰²⁹ See Likkutei Torah, Masei 89d.

¹⁰³⁰ Likkutei Torah Masei ibid.

¹⁰³¹ See Shaarei Orah of Rabbi Yosef Gikatilla, translated as Gates of Light, Gate One (*Malchut*), section on “The Ingathering of Israel-*Knesset Yisroel*-כנסת ישראל.”

¹⁰³² See Pardes Rimmonim, Shaar 23 (Shaar Erchei HaKinuyim) section on “The Ingathering of Israel-*Knesset Yisroel*-כנסת ישראל.”

¹⁰³³ See Zohar III 103a-b; 191a-b; Etz Chayim, Shaar 25 (Shaar Drushei HaTzelem) Drush 2; Pri Etz Chayim, Shaar HaSukkot, Ch. 1; Shaar Maamarei Rashbi, Parshat Yitro, Terumah and Emor; Likkutei Torah, Ha’azinu 76b and elsewhere.

¹⁰³⁴ See Likkutei Torah, Shir HaShirim 26d and elsewhere.

both in man, who is called “a small world,”¹⁰³⁵ as well is in the big world, and the same is so Above.

This then, is the meaning of “Yehudah, you (*Atah*-אתה) your brothers shall submit to you.” That is, even though Yehudah refers to the *Sefirah* of Kingship-*Malchut*, and “your brothers” refers to the tribes Reuven, Shimon, and Levi, who preceded and are higher than him, nevertheless, “your brothers shall submit to you,” due to the superiority of the revelation in the *Sefirah* of Kingship-*Malchut* (“Yehudah you-Yehudah *Atah*-אתה יהודה” which is the matter of the revelation) drawn down into the worlds of Creation, Formation, and Action (*Briyah*, *Yetzirah*, *Asiyah*).

That is, even though the other *Sefirot* have the matter of revelation, nevertheless, the revelation is only in its own place, and is of no comparison to the *Sefirah* of Kingship-*Malchut* which brings about revelation even in the worlds of Creation, Formation, and Action (*Briyah*, *Yetzirah*, *Asiyah*).

(In Torah Ohr¹⁰³⁶ in the [section] “from the handwriting of his honorable holiness, the [Alter] Rebbe, whose soul is in Eden,” it states that *Zeir Anpin* is the end of the worlds of the Unlimited (*Olamot HaEin Sof*),¹⁰³⁷ whereas Kingship-*Malchut* is the root of the creations. This is the matter of the two Cherubim [about which the verse states],¹⁰³⁸ “One Cherub from

¹⁰³⁵ Midrash Tanchuma Pekudei 3; Zohar III 257b; Tikkunei Zohar, Tikkun 69 (100b; 101a); Also see Sefer HaMashalim of Rabbi Yosef Gikatilla, translated as The Book of Allegories, Section 1.

¹⁰³⁶ Torah Ohr, Terumah 81a-b

¹⁰³⁷ Also see Shaar HaYichud of the Mittler Rebbe, translated as The Gate of Unity, Ch. 33.

¹⁰³⁸ Exodus 25:19; 37:8

the end at one side, and one Cherub from the end at the other side.”)

This then, is the meaning of “your brothers shall submit to you,” due to the revelation in the worlds of Creation, Formation, and Action (*Briyah, Yetzirah, Asiyah*). This is because through the descent to the worlds of Creation, Formation, and Action (*Briyah, Yetzirah, Asiyah*) ascent is caused even in the *Sefirah* of Wisdom-*Chochmah*.

This is like the explanation in Tanya,¹⁰³⁹ that *HaShem*’s-יהו"ה ultimate Supernal intent in the chaining down of the worlds (*Hishtalshelut*) etc., is not for the sake of the upper worlds, and for them (including the world of Emanation (*Atzilut*)) it is a descent from the light of His countenance, blessed is He.

However, through the revelations being drawn down all the way to the world of Action (*Asiyah*) there also is caused to be ascent in the world of Emanation (*Atzilut*), and the matter of the world of Emanation (*Atzilut*) is the *Sefirah* of Wisdom-*Chochmah*.¹⁰⁴⁰

3.

The verse continues, “Your hand will be on the neck of your enemies.” The explanation is that because of the superiority of “Yehudah you-Yehudah אתה-יהודה” (which

¹⁰³⁹ Tanya, Likkutei Amarim, Ch. 36; See Sefer HaMaamarim 5658 p. 30; 5678 p. 112; Discourse entitled “*Bati LeGani* – I have come to My garden” 5711 (Torat Menachem, Sefer HaMaamarim Bati LeGani, Vol. 1, p. 9, translated in The Teachings of The Rebbe 5711, Discourse 1).

¹⁰⁴⁰ See Etz Chayim, Shaar 42 (Shaar Drushei ABY”A) Ch. 5 & Ch. 13.

is why “your brothers shall submit to you”) this being the matter of the revelation in the worlds of Creation, Formation, and Action (*Briyah, Yetzirah, Asiyah*) (as discussed above) the primary revelation is specifically in the world of Action (*Asiyah*) of which there is no lower world. For, it is in [the world of Action] that we bring about the matter of “a dwelling place for Him, blessed is He, in the lower worlds,” through the toil of self-restraint (*Itkafiya*) and self-transformation (*It'hapcha*).

This is as explained in Tanya,¹⁰⁴¹ that “so it arose in His will, blessed is He, that He finds it pleasurable when the side opposite holiness is subjugated [to holiness] and darkness is transformed to light, so that the light of *HaShem*-יהוה illuminates in the place of darkness with the greater strength and intensity of light that emerges out of darkness etc.” [This matter specifically applies below, rather than in the world of Emanation (*Atzilut*) in which “no evil shall dwell with You.”]¹⁰⁴²

This then, is the meaning of “Your hand will be on the neck of your enemies.” This is because the enemy refers to the external husks (*Kelipah*) and the side opposite holiness (*Sitra Achara*), meaning¹⁰⁴³ “the other side that is not the side of holiness.”

This is because the side of holiness is the manifestation and drawing down of the holiness of the Holy One, blessed is He, which rests upon that which is nullified to Him, blessed is

¹⁰⁴¹ Tanya, Likkutei Amarim, Ch. 36

¹⁰⁴² 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.

¹⁰⁴³ Tanya, Likkutei Amarim, Ch. 6.

He, like every Jew below, who has the power to literally be nullified to the Holy One, blessed is He, with self-sacrifice (*Mesirat Nefesh*) for the sanctification of the Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה. This is as in the known teaching,¹⁰⁴⁴ "A Jew neither desires nor is able to be separated from Godliness." Therefore, whatever separates him from Godliness is his enemy.

About this the verse states, "Your hand will be on the neck (*Oref*-עורף) of your enemies,"¹⁰⁴⁵ in that there is no revelation of the inner manifest powers in the neck. In our service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, this refers to the matter of restraint (*Itkafiya*), in that he altogether has neither the interest nor the desire nor the vitality to engage with the enemy, and thus is "like one who begrudgingly casts something over his shoulder [to his enemy] etc.,"¹⁰⁴⁶ with or without being wholeheartedly invested in it.¹⁰⁴⁷

4.

This then, is the meaning of the verse, "Yehudah, you your brothers shall submit to you; your hand will be on the neck of your enemies." That is, through the revelation of ("You-*Atah*-אתה") in the worlds of Creation, Formation, and Action (*Briyah, Yetzirah, Asiyah*), until and including this lowest world

¹⁰⁴⁴ See Igrot Kodesh of the Rebbe Rayatz, Vol. 4, p. 384 (copied in HaYom Yom for the 25th of Tammuz); p. 547 (copied in HaYom Yom for the 21st of Sivan); Discourse entitled "*Bati LeGani*" 5710, Ch. 3-4 (Sefer HaMaamarim 5710 p. 115, p. 117) and elsewhere.

¹⁰⁴⁵ Also see Torah Ohr, Vayechi ibid., column c.

¹⁰⁴⁶ See Tanya, Likkutei Amarim, Ch. 22.

¹⁰⁴⁷ See Chronicles I 12:33 as per Midrash Vayikra Rabba 25:2 cited in Rashi there (that the soldiers of the tribe of Zevulun would be victorious in battle with or without being invested in it wholeheartedly).

of Action (*Asiyah*) to bring the matter of the restraint (*Itkafiya*) about etc., the elevation in all the *Sefirot* is caused, including the *Sefirot* of Kindness-*Chessed* and Wisdom-*Chochmah*.

This is such, that through this we come to the **true reality** of the matter of “You-*Atah*-אתה” (higher than the three levels Kingship-*Malchut*, Kindness-*Chessed*, and Wisdom-*Chochmah* called “You-*Atah*-אתה”) this being the Essential Self of the Singular Preexistent Intrinsic and Unlimited One, blessed is He, the True Being. (This is as the Rambam writes,¹⁰⁴⁸ “He alone is true, and no other entity has truth that compares to His truth,” and,¹⁰⁴⁹ “all existent beings only came into being from the truth of His Being.”)

As explained in Torah Ohr,¹⁰⁵⁰ this refers to the fact that the Name of Heaven is frequent upon the mouths of all,¹⁰⁵¹ and even children know etc. That is, this is not a matter of revelations (*Giluyim*), being that the matter of the constriction-*Tzimtzum* was in the revelations (*Giluyim*) and they thus are only a radiance.

This is not so of the Essential Self of the Singular Preexistent Intrinsic Being, the True Existence. Therefore, it does not apply to say “You-*Atah*-אתה” about [created] beings. Only when we see the True Being in [the novel created] beings, does it then apply for there to be the true matter of “You-*Atah*-אתה” in them.

Now, we come to this through the work of “Yehudah, you-*Atah*-אתה etc.,” through which we reach the true matter of

¹⁰⁴⁸ Mishneh Torah, Hilchot Yesodei HaTorah 1:4

¹⁰⁴⁹ Mishneh Torah, Hilchot Yesodei HaTorah 1:1

¹⁰⁵⁰ Torah Ohr, Vayera 14:2

¹⁰⁵¹ See Sefer HaMaamarim 5689 p. 23.

“You-*Atah*-אתה” as revealed in *Wisdom-Chochmah*. This is as stated in the note, in the thirty-fifth chapter of Tanya, “This accords with what I heard from my teacher (the Rav, the Maggid of Mezhritch), peace be upon him etc., that the Unlimited One, blessed is He, is the True One-*Echad*-אחד, in that He alone exists and there is nothing besides Him, and this in fact, is the level of *Wisdom-Chochmah*.”¹⁰⁵²

We then come to the fulfillment of the prophecy, [in a subsequent verse]¹⁰⁵³ “[until Shiloh¹⁰⁵⁴ arrives], the assembly of nations will be his,” (not only in a way of “your hand will be on the neck of your enemies,” [through] the restraint (*Itkafiya*), but in a way that they utterly are nullified and transformed into holiness), at which time there will be the fulfillment of the verse,¹⁰⁵⁵ “Foreigners will stand and tend to your crops,” with the coming of our righteous Moshiach, speedily and in the most literal sense!

¹⁰⁵² There is a small portion of the discourse missing here.

¹⁰⁵³ Genesis 49:

¹⁰⁵⁴ The name Shiloh refers to Moshiach.

¹⁰⁵⁵ Isaiah 61:5