

Erev Shabbos Kodesh Parshas Tetzave 5770

D'ei Chochmah L'nafshechah

“Let your soul know wisdom”

Parshas Tetzave

From the discourses of Moreinu v'Rabeinu
the Gaon and Tzaddik Shlit'a

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Shalosh Seudos¹ of Parshas Tetzave 5768

”וְאַתָּה תְצַוֶּה אֶת-בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל, וַיִּקְחוּ אֵלֶיךָ שֶׁמֶן זַיִת זָךְ כְּתִיב לְמֵאוֹר לְהַעֲלֹת נֵר תָּמִיד.”

“And you shall command the children of Yisrael, that they bring to you pure olive oil crushed for the light, to cause a lamp to burn continually.”²

Rashi explains: “[Pure olive oil] crushed”—The olives were crushed in a press and not in a mill, to ensure that there was no admixture of leavening. After the first pressing, the olives were removed to the mill for further pressing. This second expression of oil was unfit for the menorah but was valid for use in the *menachos* offerings. As the verse says, ‘[Pure olive oil] crushed *for the light*,’ but not crushed for the *menachos*.”

Binding the Souls of the Jewish People to the Tzaddik

The opening statement of the *parshah*, “And you shall command [*tetzave*],” comes from the root *tzavta*, which implies connection, because connecting with the true *tzaddikim* is the main element of Divine service. Hashem revealed this matter of binding the *tzaddikim* with the souls of the Jewish people to Moshe Rabbeinu, so that when they are united they become like pure olive oil that fires an eternal flame. Together, they can uplift the *Shechinah*, draw down holy fire and “light brilliant torches” of fervent Divine service. Genuine *avodah* needs to be fired from within, and when it is like a continual flame, it brings satisfaction on high. Then the oil that is crushed for the light is really *for the light*—for the sake of Hashem who is the light of the world.³ Then this flame is continual—is illuminates the souls of the Jewish people in this world and the next.

¹ The lesson was delivered at the third meal of Shabbos.

² *Shemos* 27:20

³ See commentary of the Alshich, there.

We find in the *haftorah* of Shabbos Chanukah: “I have seen, and behold a candlestick all of gold, with a bowl upon the top of it, and its seven lamps upon it; there are seven pipes, seven to the lamps which are upon the top; and two olive-trees by it, one upon the right side of the bowl, and the other upon the left side of it.”⁴ Rashi explains, “The word for bowl, גולה, is derived from the same root as גולת עלית [in *Shoftim* 1:15], a wellspring, like a large and round vessel. ‘And its seven lamps’—they were like receptacles to hold the oil and wick. ‘Seven, seven pipes’—each and every lamp had seven small pipes through which the oil flowed from the bowl into each lamp.”

The *haftorah* continues: “Then he answered and spoke unto me, saying: ‘This is the word of Hashem unto Zerubavel, saying: Not by might, nor by power, but by My spirit, says Hashem, L-rd of hosts.’”⁵ A question naturally arises—if we have learned that the oil, the lamps, and the menorah all symbolize expending great effort in one’s *avodah* just like pressing oil, then how does this fit with what we see in Zechariah’s vision? In the *haftorah*, the menorah symbolizes serenity which we see from the fact that its oils flow naturally, like water flows of its own volition from a natural wellspring. This is clear from Rashi’s comments as well as from the vision itself: “Not by might nor by power, but by My spirit...”

Two Paths of Dveikus

We find in the deeper works that the first letters *yud* and *hei* of the *Shem HaVaYaH* represent *Abba-Chochmah* and *Imma-Binah* respectively, while the final letters *vav* and *hei* represent *Ze’ir Anpin* and the *Shechinah* [*Nukvah*] respectively. Those *tzaddikim* who unify the masculine Names [*Chochmah* and *Ze’ir Anpin*] merit to receive the Torah’s innermost secrets, while those who unify the feminine Names [*Binah* and *Nukvah*] receive the oral Torah. Although these lofty levels of *avodah* are the province of great *tzaddikim*, nevertheless they do have some application to each and

⁴ Zechariah 4:2

⁵ Ibid., 4:6

every one of us. The *Chochmah-Ze'ir Anpin* Divine service that applies to us is maintaining in our memories the thought that everything is *Elokus* and there is nothing but Hashem. [The capacity of memory—זכרון—is considered a masculine quality, which we see from the root of the word, זכר.] This memory of אין עוד מלבדו arouses the mind to *dveikus* with Hashem, and this connection makes him worthy of a revelation of the Torah's secrets. On the feminine side, whoever accepts upon himself the yoke of the kingdom of heaven, Hashem's *Malchus*, merits the light of the oral Torah and to have the *Shechinah* rest upon him. [The oral Torah is associated with the feminine, which is expressed in speech. As the sages taught, "Of the ten measures of speech that descended to the world, women received nine of them."]

Before we answer this question, we should first examine the words of the Arizal: "This is the 'pure olive oil crushed for the light'—it embodies two *chassadim* and two-thirds of the exposed [area of the array of the *sefiros*], from the torso of *Ze'ir Anpin* and below. They are given to *Nukvah* by way of *Yesod*, which is where they are 'crushed' to uplift the flame, which is *Nukvah*. You already know that every aspect of the *chassadim* is a single *HaVaYaH*, and the *Shem HaVaYaH* when written out completely has ten letters. [י"י"ד ה"י"י ו"א"י"א ה"י"א or י"י"ד ה"י"ה ו"א"י"י ה"י"ה or י"י"ד ה"י"י ו"א"י"י ה"י"י] There are three possible ways of writing out the *Shem HaVaYaH* as a *milui* [actually four, but it drops the *alef* between the letters *vav* and is considered separate], and they comprise a total of thirty letters. When we reduce these by a 'third' [triad], we are left with twenty-seven letters, which is the *gematria* of the word טָהוֹר—'pure'—as in, 'pure olive oil.'"⁶

The Arizal also taught: "Its meaning also follows this theme, since *Yesod* is also called *tzaddik* because it gives *tzedakah* to *Nukvah* who is called *tzedek*, and this additional gift [of the *hei*] transforms *tzedek* into *tzedakah*. The *tzaddik* disperses or dispenses [*shefa*] by taking the higher *chassadim* and crushing or breaking them down into fine crumbs. The act of crushing itself disperses them so that they can reach

⁶ *Sha'ar Hapesukim, Tetzave*

Nukvah, and that is the means through which they are given as *tzedakah*. One should not think that the *chassadim* are reduced [as they pass] through *Ze'ir Anpin* [which culminates in *Yesod*] and are given to *Nukvah*. Quite the contrary; this is not a loss, it is a gain. Through the breaking down of the *chassadim*, they are actually increased and their light is magnified, and *Ze'ir Anpin* expands. As the verse states, 'There is one who distributes and adds more [וְנוֹסֵף עוֹד].'⁷ It is possible that this is why *Yesod* is also called Yosef—from the language of increase. This is why those who give charity become wealthier—their possessions increase beyond what they were at the outset.'⁸

Breaking Down the Light

The *Zohar* explains that the crushing of the olives for oil is to enable the *Shechinah*, who awaits the descent of the *chassadim* through *Netzach-Hod-Yesod* of *Ze'ir Anpin*, to process the broken-down bits so that they can return in an aspect of *ohr chozer* or rebounding light. Then the *Shechinah* can be uplifted and repaired. What this means in terms of our personal *avodah* is that one who seeks to receive the light of oral Torah must accept the yoke of Hashem's G-dliness upon himself and willingly break himself down into crumbs for the sake of Hashem's glory. To build the *Shechinah* and *emunah*, one must reflect light back from below to above, and producing such pure and illuminating oil demands great effort.

This is why the *gematria* of the word for olive, זית, is the same as that of its ultimate product, שֶׁמֶן זַיִם or "pure oil." The innermost mystery of the olive is in that which emerges when it is crushed. So too, if a person really wants to receive the light of the oral Torah, he must break himself down as he recites the *Shema*. He must learn with self-sacrifice and break down Torah concepts over and over again with *mesirus nefesh* until the light of the *Shechinah* shines into his soul.

We find further: "I [Chaim Vital] heard once from my teacher [the Arizal] that those seven *sheimos* that are associated with [the seven blessings of the *Shemonah Esrei*

⁷ *Mishlei* 21:24

⁸ *Sefer Halikutim, Tetzave*

of] Shabbos, namely *EHYH* and *YHV*, and from which emerge seven ‘pearls,’ are the seven extremities of *Ze’ir Anpin*. [The Name *YHV* is just the first three letters of the *Shem HaVaYaH*, with the final *hei* dropped since it is only a protection of the upper *hei*.] The four Names that emerge from the Name *EHYH* have a combined *gematria* of 432, or תב"ל—which literally means, ‘the world.’ This means that when *Malchus* receives the light of these four Names it is called ‘the world.’ The numerical value of the three Names that emerge from *YHV* is the same as that of יתז, which is 417. When this ‘olive’ is crushed, it produces טז שמן or ‘pure oil,’ as we see from the correlation of their numerical values [explained earlier]. It appears to me that this idea is related to that which we have just stated. The three letters of the Name *YHV* are associated with *Netzach-Hod-Yesod* of *Ze’ir Anpin*, and the three initial letters of the Name *EHYH* are associated with *Chessed-Gevurah-Tiferes* of *Ze’ir Anpin*. The final *hei* of the Name *EHYH* represents *Malchus*, and it clings to the torso-level *Tiferes* of *Ze’ir Anpin*. It follows that the ‘olive’ corresponds to *NHY*, the sub-*sefiros* that are revealed and crushed from which issues the pure oil that shines on the menorah of *Malchus*. This is the innermost meaning of the verse, ‘There is one who distributes and adds,’ [who crushes and distributes the crumbs of *chassadim*], which the sages taught refers to one who gives charity.”⁹

So too, the more one gives, the more he merits to increase his own wealth. And this is just as true with the energy one invests in his Torah study, because Torah can only be acquired through this crushing, by being “crushed for the light.” One feels as though he is breaking himself to pieces for the Torah, but he gains the Torah’s light in exchange. One should never think that if he invests so much into study of the revealed Torah that he will lose out on having his mind illuminated with the Torah’s secrets. Quite the contrary, “there is one who distributes and adds.” Just as it is true of the upper worlds where *Yesod* breaks down the *chassadim* to share them with *Nukvah* and only receives greater illumination in return, so too is it true of a person. The *tzaddik* who

⁹ Ibid

devotes himself to revealing Hashem's presence with *mesirus nefesh* only receives a greater measure of *dveikus*, *chassadim*, and the light of the mind. The *Shechinah* doesn't take in a way that depletes—she takes in a way that brings ever greater returns to *Ze'ir Anpin*. Investment of energy into the oral Torah always brings about a greater enlightenment of the written Torah [which is associated with the Torah's secrets, since all is included there in an encoded form]. The *Shechinah* / oral Torah is like a bride—הכלה = הלכה—and she does not reveal herself to he who seeks her all at once. Rather, she is revealed little by little, through the seeker demonstrating his devotion. He must be willing to review and clarify every ruling many times over, filled with trepidation lest he err in the interpretation of Hashem's word.

Moshe Rabbeinu's Question

As we mentioned before, this need for dedicated striving seems to contradict the image of the serenity and natural flow of the menorah of Zechariah's vision. This was the root of Moshe Rabbeinu's question—how can one make this menorah, when it demands the highest degree of self-sacrifice and still do it effortlessly? Hashem responded by commanding Moshe Rabbeinu to throw the measure of gold into the fire, and it would form itself. Although one must “throw himself into the fire” of devoted effort, nevertheless on a certain level the menorah is really built of itself, it is effortless and its *avodah* is one of serenity.

This is the level that the *tzaddikim* reach—of throwing themselves heart and soul into their *avodah*, and at the same time feeling certain and utterly secure in the fact that everything is done by Hashem alone, without contingency on their effort at all. This is the level of the “crown of crowns”—כתר כל הכתרים—which has the initials ככ"ה, as in, "כִּכְהָ יַעֲשֶׂה לְאִישׁ אֲשֶׁר הִמְלִיךְ הַמֶּלֶךְ הַפָּא בִּיקָרוֹ" —“So shall it be done for the man whom the king wants to honor.”¹⁰ The *tzaddikim* bind together the external *avodah* of effort with the internal *avodah* of serene *dveikus* which is the level of the fiftieth gate. Although

¹⁰ Esther 6:11

they are constantly in the state of the fiftieth gate of prayer and *dveikus*, they do not fall into the danger of abandoning the effort of Torah study in its plainest sense. The oil is to be crushed “for the light, and not for the *menachos*.”

We see this dual state in Mordechai HaTzaddik. Inside, he was always in the state of, “And Mordechai knew all that was happening.”¹¹ He knew within himself that there is nothing but Hashem, and his every movement and thought was only directed in prayer and *dveikus* to his Creator. He knew that the battle is to be won, “not by might and not by power.” But that is the internal *avodah*. From outside, he donned sackcloth and ashes and threw himself into the *avodah* of self-sacrifice. And the two are not mutually exclusive; the light of *dveikus* is what gives the *tzaddik* the energy to burn with a continuous flame in his external *avodos*.

It was to this unification of *avodos* that Hashem referred when He commanded Moshe Rabbeinu, “And you shall command the children of Yisrael,” you shall *bind* for them the internal and external aspects of *avodah*. Like you, they must know that everything is done by Hashem alone, and He does not require our contribution. At the same time, the building up of the *Shechinah* does demand effort on our part, that we should “crush” ourselves for the sake of the *Shechinah* and the Torah. The fact that the *tzaddik* can hold both of these *avodos* together in his mind and intentions is not self-contradictory—both are needed for the completion of *avodah*. The external effort creates a vessel so that the freely-given light of Hashem can enter. “Those who blacken themselves for Me [with effort by going to learn early and diligently] will find Me.”¹² “Whoever blackens himself for the sake of Torah will merit to shine in the world to come.”¹³

¹¹ Ibid., 4:1

¹² *Mishlei* 8:17

¹³ *Sanhedrin* 100a; *Zohar* II:140a

The Choshen and the Ephod

“The *ephod* corresponds to perceiving spirituality through a clouded mirror, while the *choshen* corresponds to perceiving spirituality through a clear mirror. The former is the back; the latter is the front. The matter is as follows: *Ze'ir Anpin* and its *Nukvah* are initially in a back-to-back state. *Ze'ir Anpin* is associated with the front and the *choshen*, while *Nukvah* is associated with the back and the *ephod*. The numerical value of the word אפרת is equal to that of the combined Names *HaVaYaH* and *ADNI* [91], and the joining of these two Names represents the joining of *Ze'ir Anpin* and *Nukvah*. The *choshen* embodies *Ze'ir Anpin* in its state of *mochin d'katnus* and judgment, which is why it is called, ‘the *choshen* of judgment.’ It is because it is a manifestation of the undeveloped state of unmitigated *dinim*. The *choshen* [in this state] is likened to the snake that tears open the womb of the hind as she crouches to give birth, which we have explained in our discussion of the splitting of the Yam Suf. This, too, is a reflection of unmitigated judgment. It is for this reason that we learn that securing one’s sustenance is as, ‘difficult as the splitting of the sea,’ for both depend on the aspect of judgment, as we find in the *Zohar*. All of this expressed by the numerical value of the word snake: נחש = 358, which is equal to the value of the Name שד"י [314] combined with the value of the Name *EHYH* written in descending value [איהא"י = 44]. This last Name is also equal to the value of the word for blood [דם], and all of them indicate the state of *mochin d'katnus*.”¹⁴

A fundamental principle is that whenever the Divine light descends, it first must enter into vessels in an aspect of *katnus*. First it is drawn into a vessel known as the *choshen*, but it is still incomplete. It is only when the light descends all the way to the aspect of *ephod*, where there is a unification of *HaVaYaH* and *ADNI*, where the work is really accomplished. It is not sufficient for *Ze'ir Anpin* to enjoy the light alone; rather, it is when the *mochin* descend all the way to impact the *ephod*, when it reaches down to the oral Torah, that the *mochin* develop to a state of maturity and *yichud*.

¹⁴ *Sefer Halikutim, Tetzave*

It is for this reason that a person should never be thrown by finding himself in a state of *mochin d'katnus*, because this is always the first stage of the descent of the Divine light to *Nukvah* and the *yichud* of full *mochin d'gadlus*. This two-step process is embodied by the act of *shechitah*, where the head is severed from the body. This severing reminds us of the state of *katnus*, where all that a person knows is divorced from his body and heart. This is the preliminary state, because the final goal is that all that a person knows should penetrate to his heart, and this is the essential state of *yichud*. Passing through this state of *katnus* is the way in which the *mochin d'gadlus* come to be born, just as the *shechitah* is what makes the meat fit to be eaten. The flesh itself embodies the light of the prior *yichud*, apprehensions of G-dliness that are very lofty and are still unrevealed to the person. To birth them into actuality and *yichud*, one must pass through the state of *choshen*—the snake [חשן = נחש] that tears open the womb of the hind so that she can deliver. This is not merely the דם or blood-state of suffering; rather, if one enters into the *mochin d'katnus* with acceptance, knowing that it is a time for *mesirus nefesh*, then it is an opportunity for its own form of *dveikus*.

The Urim V'Tumim

“According to the *Zohar*, the *Urim* were manifest within the *choshen*, while the *Tumim* were manifest within the *ephod*. This parallels that which we have already explained, that the *Urim* are the lights that shine of his [Ze'ir Anpin] heart so that their words glow. The *Tumim* parallel *Nukvah* [and the name *Tumim* is from the root תמים], that they [the boards of the *Mishkan*] shall, ‘together be matching (complete) at the top.’ ...The *Urim V'Tumim* correspond to the מ״ב and ע״ב permutations of the *Shem HaVaYaH*. The *Urim* is associated with the 42-Name which is positioned in the head, while the *Tumim* is associated with the 72-Name which is positioned in the body. In other places where the *ephod* is mentioned, as it says of Eviasar, ‘He went down with an *ephod* in his hand,’¹⁵ it does not mean the actual *Urim V'Tumim*, because one could only

¹⁵ *Shmuel* I:23:6

consult with them in the *Beis Hamikdash* or the *Mishkan*. In contrast, they would bring the *ephod* wherever they needed to consult with it. This is why we find that when we are commanded to bind ourselves to Hashem Himself, to the ‘body of the King,’ the verse instructs: ‘You shall be תמים / complete with Hashem, your G-d.’¹⁶ So too, the *Tumim* [of the *ephod*] expressed the 72-Name, which is associated with the level of the ‘body.’ Similarly, ‘And Yaakov is a sincere [תם] man’¹⁷—he clings to the body of the King. This is also why [when Shaul cast lots] he said, ‘Bring a complete [תמים answer].’ Why did he use this expression [הבה תמים = 12]? He intended to allude to the twelve tribes that cling to the body of the King [to call upon the oracular quality of the *Urim V'Tumim* that shone through the stones that marked the names of the twelve tribes on the breastplate]. For the tribes are twelve *vav*-forms, and the numerical value of each is six. When we multiply six by the twelve tribes we find a total of 72, which is associated with the body or torso.”¹⁸

Now we can better understand why the verse commands not to ever remove the *choshen* from upon the *ephod*—we should never make the mistake of thinking that these two aspects can exist independently of one another. One should never think that one may devote himself exclusively to the inner pursuit of *dveikus*, and this absolves him of his obligation to apply himself to the study of the oral Torah. This is the way in which the *tzaddik* unifies the Names מ"ב and ע"ב, the “head” and the “heart”—by holding strongly to both the inner and outer aspects of *avodah*. He is filled with the head *avodah* of the 42-Name, which is *mochin d'gadlus* and knowing that everything is always in Hashem’s hands alone, even as he expends the external “body” effort of the 72-Name. Even so, every new birth of *mochin d'gadlus* first demands the *mochin d'katnus* of constriction—the “seventy cries of the birthing woman” that precedes every birth of new *mochin*. Later, this experience of *mochin d'gadlus* fills him with the energy that he will need to begin the process of descent into *katnus* all over again.

¹⁶ *Devarim* 19:13

¹⁷ *Bereishis* 26:25

¹⁸ *Sefer Halikutim, Tetzave*

Mesirus Nefesh on Behalf of the Jewish People

This is why the *Urim V'Tumim* were upon the *choshen mishpat*, where the names of all of the tribes of the Jewish people were inscribed. One must know that the main aspect of *mesirus nefesh* is on behalf of one's fellow Jews who are bound as one through the Torah. One cannot decide that he wants to act with self-sacrifice for Hashem and still act however he likes with his fellow Jews! If a person makes light of the interpersonal *mitzvos* he will not succeed in binding himself to the *Shechinah*. Some people don't bother to study those *mitzvos*, and so they don't even know what they are violating. Others study certain areas like *shemiras halashon* but ignore entire segments of *halachah* that involve serious transgressions, like being careless with other people's money or engaging in controversy and strife. Still others fail to realize just how serious it is to embarrass another Jew. With regard to theft—even when one intends to make good on it—the Arizal taught that the stain prevents a person's prayers from being accepted. Although it is shameful to have to mention such things, nevertheless many fall into error in such matters.

The Arizal explains why it is that so many people fail to see the significance of the interpersonal lapses. The entire controversy between Yosef and Yehudah concerned matters of verbal abuse, and the spiritual root of this is the conflict inherent in the array of *chassadim* and *gevuros* that disperse outward. The deeper works explain that until the place of *Tiferes*, the Divine lights are covered and are associated with the *partzuf* of *Leah*; from there downward they are exposed and are associated with the *partzuf* of *Rachel*. It is as though the upper third are in conflict with the lower two thirds, and they “steal” from one another [in the area where they “fight” over the same space]. This is why the enormity of interpersonal strife is unclear to people. They may be aware of the prohibitions against speaking ill of others, but rarely do people understand how serious it is to engage in disputes with others. And feeling hatred for others in their hearts does not appear to them to be forbidden at all. But all of this laxity is due to the spiritual root of the conflict between Yosef and his brothers—and because this left an impression of

the matter being of little import, even now there are many who just do not understand the severity of the prohibitions that are *bein adam l'chaveiro*.

In order to strengthen ourselves in these matters, we must bear in mind that when we improve in the practical manifestation we will also cause change and improvement on the spiritual root. If we take more care in our interpersonal *mitzvos*, we will find that it is much easier for us to obtain a powerful connection with the *Shechinah*. In this vein, Rav Avraham b'Rav Nachman taught that Moshiach is called the prince of peace because this is his primary merit—he is extremely careful about maintaining peaceful relations with every Jew. If we too will follow this path, we will find that the souls of the Jewish people will soon cleave to the light of Moshiach. We should not make the mistake of thinking that petty theft and squabbling is not significant—as we find in the *Neilah* prayer, “That we might cease abusing others.” No matter how far we might be from *kedushah*, let us at the very least be able to say of ourselves that we have nothing to do with theft of any kind, in any form. Because this is the underlying sin and is the basis of the conflict between Yehudah and Yosef that has been responsible for the lengthening of our exile. We should steer clear of any form of theft, even those which appear to be permitted, so that we should not have even a trace of it defiling our souls.

How ashamed we will be on the day of judgment, G-d forbid, if we are caught with such sins on our account! Even though people who sinned during their lifetimes often manage to repent of them before they die, these interpersonal sins are so hard to be rid of [since they require the forgiveness of the victims]. How will we be any different than Yosef's brothers who, when his righteousness was revealed to them, suffered from such agonies of conscience? It is for this reason that we must apply ourselves with true self-sacrifice to mastery of these *halachos*, since most failings in these areas arise simply from not knowing the *din* clearly. Furthermore, one only merits to experience

Hashem's light to the extent that he devoted himself to His Torah, for even the *Shechinah* is called, "The ways [*halichos*] of My G-d, my King in holiness."¹⁹

This was the way in which Mordechai HaTzaddik sacrificed on behalf of Esther HaMalkah. "And she was to him a daughter." Even though he was in a constant state of *dveikus* with Hashem—the inner state of the fiftieth gate of complete confidence in Hashem's care—nevertheless he threw himself externally into his efforts on behalf of the oral Torah. He was "crushed, for light." And we are now entering into the sacred time of accepting the Torah upon ourselves anew—"They upheld and accepted"—"They upheld that which they had already accepted [at Sinai]," the oral Torah.

Rebbe Nachman of Breslov taught that Mordechai and Esther are aligned with the revealed and the hidden aspects of the Torah, respectively.²⁰ Even though Mordechai is always, within himself, attached to the hidden Torah and the fiftieth gate, nevertheless in the external view he does don sackcloth and ashes and perform the *avodah* of self-sacrifice for the Torah's sake. Even though he is in a state of *dveikus*, he nevertheless goes out to study the laws of *kemitzah* with the littlest schoolchildren—he knows that the light of *Kesser* which is associated with the *kamatz* has to be brought down into the external *avodos*, right down to the *katnus* state of actual *mesirus nefesh*.

And Esther HaMalkah is the embodiment of the oral Torah, which is the outer garment of the Torah's inner secrets without any admixture of suffering, G-d forbid. As the Baal Shem Tov taught, the sages' dictum that one must reject with the left hand and draw close with the right can be read differently. One must "push off the left-hand aspect" of G-dly awareness that comes through suffering and blood associated with *Hod*, and instead "draw close the right-hand aspect" of coming closer to Hashem in the way of pleasantness and sweetness associated with *Netzach*.²¹ One must seek to bring the light of the future into this world not through blood and suffering, but rather through following the path of the true *tzaddikim* who taught us the right-hand path of sweetness.

¹⁹ *Tehillim* 68:25

²⁰ *Likutei Moharan* I:10

²¹ *Baal Shem Tov al HaTorah, Pinchas*

As the sweet singer of Yisrael said: “Pleasantness in Your right hand, eternally victorious [*netzach*].”²²

“And every day, Mordechai went before the courtyard of the women’s house to know Esther’s welfare and what befell her.” Mordechai HaTzaddik binds together the external and the internal aspects—he goes before the courtyard which is outside, and binds it to the aspect of house which is inside. He reveals that all speech and thoughts are places where Hashem can be found. This revelation takes place in the “women’s house” because the word נשיח indicates נשיה, forgetting Hashem and falling away from Him. He reveals that Hashem and the Torah’s secrets can be found even there.

The Fourteenth and the Fifteenth of Adar

The sages designated two days of Purim to parallels these two states. The first, on the fourteenth of Adar, corresponds to the initial drawing down of the light in potential and the *choshen*. The second, on the fifteenth of Adar [when the moon representing the feminine is full], which was given to walled cities corresponds to drawing down the light into actuality. This is the concept of the walled city of Yerushalayim, which represents holy *Malchus*.

When we merit to draw down the light on these two days, in these two ways, we are privileged to receive both the revealed and hidden aspects of the Torah. We must bind ourselves to Hashem in absolute serene trust, and at the same time expend every bit of effort for the Torah’s sake—and especially to cleanse ourselves of any taint of interpersonal sin or indebtedness to anyone. When we do that, we will have reached the state of the *choshen* upon the *ephod* and merit to give birth to the Divine light, with the arrival of our righteous redeemer in mercy.

And now, as we are occupied with the mitzvah of destroying Amalek, “the head of the nations,” we must know that the time is ripe for our *avodah* to rise to the highest places. Amalek was the one who “took *orlos* and threw them heavenward,” and when

²² *Tehillim* 16:11

we destroy the force of Amalek we also can “throw our *avodah* heavenward” so that it reaches to the very source of the ills of exile.

Amalek seeks to damage the *Shem HaVaYaH*, and on Purim the *mitzvos* we perform bring completion to the *Shem HaVaYaH*. The reading of the *Megillah* at night and in the morning parallels the letters *yud* and *vav* of the Name, and *mishloach manos* and the giving of charity parallel the two letters *hei*, since they indicate receiving. The festive meal and rejoicing are included within these aspects and are a special time to experience a revelation of G-dliness, just as we know that spiritual influence exerts its power in a hidden manner into numerous ramifications. [The *mitzvos* that parallel the four letters do so openly, but their influence extends into the other *mitzvos* as well.] May Hashem help us to experience the fullness of salvation both in potential and actually, just as the miracle of Purim extended from the fourteenth into the fifteenth.

“Let Your Soul Know Wisdom”

This is the meaning of: “דעה חכמה לנפשך והיא כתר לראשך”—“Let your soul (*nefesh*) know (*d'ei*) wisdom (*Chochmah*) and it will be a crown (*Kesser*) for your head.”²³ One must bind the aspect of *Chochmah-dveikus* to the aspect of *mesirus nefesh*, and then it will be “a crown to your head.” We will come to the level of the fiftieth gate, of *Kesser*. May Hashem help us to awaken spiritually from the true *yichud* of the Holy One and His *Shechinah*, with the arrival of Moshiach in mercy. Speedily and in our days, amen.

Translated and Adapted by Rav Micha Golshevsky.

²³ From the *Shabbos zemer* “D’ror Yikrah,” based on *Mishlei* 24:14.

For those who are interested in dedicating a *shiur* in the *zechus* of a loved one, who would like to make a donation, or who would prefer to subscribe by e-mail to receive the *shiur* as a PDF file, please contact us at: tc7@neto.bezeqint.net. We require your support to continue our work publishing the translations on a weekly basis.

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