

Erev Shabbos Kodesh Parshas Tazria 5770

D'ei Chochmah L'nafshechah

“Let your soul know wisdom”

Parshas Tazria

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

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"YAM HACHOCHMAH"
PUBLISHING INSTITUTE
P.O BOX 5245 JERUSALEM
TEL: 057-3153884 FAX: 15325388242
E-MAIL: tc7@neto.bezeqint.net

Shalosh Seudos of Parshas Tazria 5768

”אִשָּׁה כִּי תִזְרִיעַ וְיָלְדָה זָכָר...וּבַיּוֹם הַשְּׁמִינִי מְמֹל בָּשָׂר עֲרָלְתּוֹ.”

“If a woman shall give seed and bear a male child...and on the eighth day he shall circumcise the flesh of his foreskin.”¹

Rashi explains: “**If a woman shall give seed**”—Rav Samlai said, just as the formation of man took place after that of all cattle, wild animals, and fowl at the beginning of creation, so too is the law that relates to him defined after the law relating to cattle, beasts, and fowl.”

The Ohr HaChayim explains that the verse is really referring to Moshiach—“If she shall give seed and bear a male child”—because one must “give birth” to Hashem’s glory in the world. This is the “male child” that is associated with *Ze’ir Anpin* in a state of gestation in Egypt.² When it is “born,” Hashem’s glory is revealed. Similarly, it is our task to “give birth” to the light of Moshiach.

“And She Shall be Impure Seven Days”

The inner meaning of the cycle of impurity at birth is due to the *klippah* that of necessity precedes the fruit—the birth of any new bestowal of abundance from on high. This is reflected in the fact that Eretz Yisrael was first in the hands of the Canaanite nations before the Jewish people took possession of it, as explained in *Likutei Moharan*. Similarly, the foreskin covers the sign of the holy covenant, and it is only on the eighth

¹ *Vayikra* 12:2-3

² *Sha’ar Hakavanos, D’rush Pesach*

day that the flesh of the foreskin is circumcised. It is only then that the mark of Amalek in the flesh which blocks the light of the true *tzaddik* and causes one to forget the truth is obliterated.

Cycles of Revealing and Concealing

The true *tzaddik* reveals the light of *Ze'ir Anpin* in the world, and afterward the *klippah* of Amalek reasserts itself to conceal the Divine light so that it is forgotten. Yet even if it seems as though the original darkness has returned in full force, a person must know that this is untrue. It is always the way that after light is drawn down, the force of Amalek returns again. A person's task is then to "circumcise the foreskin" and reveal the light afresh.

As we find in *Likutei Moharan*: "Occasionally, a person is struck by a thought of repentance and at that moment he becomes a truly worthy person. Afterward, he longs to perform a worthy act, since he is inspired by his thought of repentance. This fills him with a desire to travel to the *tzaddik*. However, on his journey the *yetzer hara* rises up again within him, and he falls away from his initial enthusiasm. After that, when he reaches the *tzaddik*, the *yetzer hara* asserts itself even more and he loses all of his interest. Do not allow this phenomenon to worry you, and do not dwell on it in your mind.

"Know, that all of this stems from the fact that when the person felt his initial impulse to repent which was sparked by the good in him, the good actions that he did at that time completely felled and nullified his evil inclination. Later, when he wanted to travel, a new *yetzer hara* arose against him (as the sages taught in *Sukkah* 52). At that point, he has a greater *yetzer hara* than he had originally, and if he fails to rise to the occasion and do battle with it, the new *yetzer hara* will overwhelm him so that he falls away from his interest [in the *tzaddik*] completely. One must redouble one's efforts against this new *yetzer hara*."³

³ *Likutei Moharan* I:72

This process also takes place when the point of truth, which is the birthing of the light of Moshiach, is revealed. Even after its root is revealed it will still be beset by a *klippah* that seeks to obscure it. “And on the eighth day, he shall circumcise the flesh of his foreskin”—the *klippah* must be cut away so that the light of the holy covenant which is the light of Moshiach will be revealed. One should not be shaken by the concealment at all. This is the main task of a person, to bind himself to the point of truth with absolute self-sacrifice represented by the blood of circumcision, until one merits to experience the light of the point of truth.

This is the inner meaning of the verse, “[Her household shall not fear the snow] for all her house is dressed in scarlet wool.”⁴ The sages taught, “Do not read the phrase שניים / *shanim* as ‘scarlet wool,’ rather read it as *shnayim*, ‘twice.’” The point of truth is only revealed to a person through the aspect of “twice,” of persistent repetition. And this is also the meaning of the verse, “If a woman shall give seed and bear a male child.” At first the light of truth begins to be revealed, but immediately there is some obstacle that comes to conceal the light. One must then work for a further revelation, “And on the eighth day he shall circumcise the flesh of his foreskin.” This is why we have the custom to precede the blessing over the wine with the invocation סברי מרנן, “Take heed, Rabbosai...” We find in the work *Toras Chochom* a teaching of the Arizal, that the word *Maranan* has the same numerical value of the word *shem*, “name.”⁵ [This can also be read as “there.”] Even though invoking the *tzaddikim* through the word *Maranan* draws down the Divine light, it immediately retreats again “there,” [as we will see to the place where *Leah* and *Rachel* emerge, which is called שם] and must be actively drawn down again through the recitation of the blessing itself. This principle is also active in every aspect of one’s personal *avodah*, since even when one knows the truth it is again concealed and forgotten until one draws close to it to reveal it anew, at a level of greater clarity.

⁴ *Mishlei* 31:21

⁵ *Toras Chochom*, 64b

The Sign of Tzora'as

[Note: Sometimes people feel blocked from feeling connection to Hashem. This state is due to a lack of *Chochmah*, which causes spiritual leprosy. This lack of *Chochmah* is the result of various character defects as the in the Arizal reveals in the following piece.]

The Arizal taught: “‘If a person [אדם] shall have in the skin of his flesh a ‘raised-sign’ or a ‘spreading-sign’...’—Know that the term *Adam* refers to *Ze'ir Anpin*, which is the Name *M”H* which has the numerical value of *Adam* [45]. From behind him, the two ‘wives’ [feminine *partzufim*] *Leah* and *Rachel* emerge. The 45-Name contains three *alefs*, and they are the forces that cause *Leah* and *Rachel* to emerge from behind him. *Leah* parallels the upper *alef*, and *Rachel* assumes [the lower] two *alefs* since [the *partzuf* of] *Rachel* begins from the chest-level of *Ze'ir Anpin*. [The letters *alef* are used in this particular permutation of the Divine Name to fill in the open consonant sounds. The 45-permutation is written out as follows: יייד הייא ואיי הייא]

“The 45-Name is manifest in *Ze'ir Anpin* as follows: the three components of the *yud* are within *Chochmah* of *Ze'ir Anpin*; the *hei* is within *Binah* of *Z”A* and the *alef* is within *Da'as*; the three components of the *vav* are within the three thirds of *Tiferes*; and the two components of the final *hei* are within *Netzach-Hod-Yesod*.

“We find, then, that the three *alefs* are along the middle axis of *Da'as-Tiferes-Yesod*; *Leah* is only associated with the *alef* within *Da'as*, while *Rachel* is associated with the lower two *alefs*. The *alef* that is a component of the articulated letter *vav* is associated with the three thirds of *Tiferes*, it is the second-most part of that grouping, and it is from this point that the *partzuf* of *Rachel* begins.

“Therefore, *Rachel* assumes two *alefs* and each one is an aspect of Divine light. It follows that *Rachel* possesses two types of light, and when the word אור is multiplied by two we have the *gematria* of the words בית [house] and שחוק [laughter]. The result for ‘house’ is attained when the initial *alefs* of both words אור are first removed [206 x 2 = 412], while the latter result for ‘laughter’ is attained with multiplying the entire word

אור by two [$207 \times 2 = 414$]. This is the inner meaning of the statement of the sages, 'Since the destruction of the *Beis Hamikdash* [בית]—which is *Rachel* {the sanctuary was built on the land of her son Binyamin} who has two lights [that are currently in eclipse]—one may not “fill his mouth with laughter.” One may only do so when the sanctuary is built, because the ‘house’ and ‘laughter’ are both the same [related to the multiplying of the two words אור].

“But *Ze'ir Anpin* possesses all three *alefs* which are three complete lights, and when the word אור is multiplied by three we attain the value of כתר—‘*Kesser / Crown*’ [plus the *kollel*]. The *Kesser* of *Ze'in Anpin* is complete, while that of *Rachel* only comprises two lights.

“Every type of light is associated with *Chessed*, as is known. These lights [of *Z"A*] are states of *chassadim* within *Binah* of *Ze'ir Anpin* and they have three aspects. One is in *Da'as*, the next is in the second third of *Tiferes* where they begin to be revealed because above [in *Da'as*] they are hidden—that is two. Below, in *Yesod* of *Ze'ir Anpin*, they are gathered together. These are the three aspects of *chassadim*. These are represented by the three *alefs* in the 45-Name.

“The five times that the word light is mentioned on the first day of creation parallel the five *chassadim*, and the five times that water is mentioned on the second day of creation parallel the five states of *gevuros*—as reflected in the phrase, “the powers of rain,” גבורות גשמים.

“*Leah* possesses only a third of *Kesser* which is one light, and so the states of Divine judgment are greater in *Leah* than they are in *Rachel*. This is all the more so because the light within *Leah* is in a concealed state, while those two that are in *Rachel* are in a revealed state. These lights within *Ze'ir Anpin* only emerge outward to form [the *partzufim*] of *Leah* and *Rachel* after the *mochin* of *Abba* enters them as well. The mentality of *Abba* drives out the forces of evil, preventing them from entering and latching on to the *chassadim* within *Binah* which constitute the main aspect of the Tree of Knowledge from which the forces of evil derive sustenance, as we have explained

elsewhere. When the light of *Abba* is not revealed and is hidden, these three *alefs* that produce *Leah* and *Rachel* issue instead three types of *tzora'as* blemishes: , שאת, ספחת, בהרת—the ‘raised-sign,’ the ‘spreading-sign,’ and the ‘bright-sign.’ It is from them that the forces of evil derive their sustenance, and the *partzufim* of *Leah* and *Rachel* cannot be formed there. The ‘raised-sign’ parallels the first *alef* associated with *Leah*, since it indicates height, and she is higher. The ‘spreading’ and ‘bright’ signs parallel the two lights of *Rachel*.

“This helps to clarify that which we find in the *Zohar* on *Parshas Tazria*, that the Aramaic translation of the phrase, ‘plague of *tzora'as*’ is, ‘closing plague.’ This means that the blemish is in fact holy, and it drives out the spirit of impurity that is within the house or the person. It has the force of holy judgment—that is the blemish itself. And what caused this manifestation of holy judgment? The *tzora'as*—the סגירו—which means the closing off of the supernal light so that it is not revealed. This is what is called *tzora'as*. This is why, ‘he shall be brought to Aharon HaKohen [who represents *Chessed*],’ so that the supernal light that has been closed off can be drawn down and revealed [again].

“That was the language of the *Zohar* itself. By way of further explanation, the supernal light that was closed off is the mentality of *Abba* that was not revealed within *Ze'ir Anpin*; this is what caused the *tzora'as*, which is the latching-on of the forces of evil. And this is why the sages taught that the *metzora* is likened to a dead person. We have already explained in our discussion of the laws of mourning that death causes the *mochin* of *Abba* [*Chochmah*] to retreat. As the verse says, ‘They die, and without *Chochmah*.’ For, ‘Wisdom gives life to those who possess it,’ and so when it departs there is a state of death. Therefore, when they die, it is because of the lack of *Chochmah*.

“The *metzora* is likewise a manifestation of the removal of *Chochmah*, and so he is considered like a dead person. And it appears to me that I learned that the word *metzora* is equal to 406, which is associated with the 72-Name when articulated with *yuds*. [יוד ה"י וי"ו ה"י = 72] This particular permutation of the Divine Name represents

Chochmah. The four *yuds* of this permutation together come to 400 [because each of the *yuds* are considered full, which means squared by ten *sefiros*, which is 100], plus the remaining six letters of the permutation, and this adds up to 406. When *Abba* / *Chochmah* withdraws, when the light of 72-Name leaves, it results in the *metzora*-state—and *metzora* indicates *motzi shem ra*, one who ‘sends out a bad name’ [literally, about another Jew].

“We have already explained that the word ‘name’ [שם] indicates *Nukvah*, the feminine that is either manifest as *Leah* or *Rachel*, for each of them is called שם. The *metzora* who spoke evil causes an ‘evil name to go out,’ meaning, he causes a negative manifestation of feminine energy to emerge from the place of either *Leah* or *Rachel*. When the supernal light of *Abba* is closed off only *Binah* remains, and this state is called a plague-blemish or נגע. This is why the *Zohar* teaches that this is the holy supernal power of harsh judgment that drives out the forces of evil, because all of these aspects are within *Binah* that has the power to drive out evil in the manner of the *techeilis* [which is אכלי כולא—it ‘consumes and destroys everything’]. But this is only true when *Binah* is joined with *Chochmah*, but in the case of the plague-blemish, this is not so. Nevertheless, she remains with a power of harsh judgments, since judgments derive from her when *Chochmah* is withdrawn from her.

“The *gematria* of the word נגע is 123, which is the same as the *alef*-articulation of the Name *EHYH*. [אליף היי יייד הייא—In the *gevuros*-form we only count the *milui*, the articulation letters plus one for the Name itself.] These blemishes occur in אדם, which is associated with the 45-Name articulated by *alefs*. And likewise we call the blemishes *Leah*, since they correspond to the *Yud-Hei* [higher aspect] of the Divine Name when articulated with *alefs*, and likewise the 45-Name articulated with *alefs* which are associated with the *mochin* of *Binah* that fill the head of *Ze'ir Anpin* which is also known as *Adam*. And *Binah* is also associated with the Name *EHYH* when articulated with *alefs*, however it is only the *milui* of *Binah* that ‘enters the head of *Ze'ir Anpin*,’ not *Binah* itself. This is obvious, since we find in the verse: ‘If a person [*Adam*

= *Ze'ir Anpin* = [מ"יה] shall have in the skin of his flesh...' All of the blemishes emerge from outside the 'skin' of *Ze'ir Anpin*, like *Leah* and *Rachel* that emerge beyond the skin.

"Now, all of these aspects are reflected within the Name *ADNI* that expresses *Nukvah*, whose light is expropriated by the forces of evil. The word for the 'bright-sign,' בהרת, has the same numerical value as the *milui* of *ADNI* [אליף דלית נויך יי"ד]; just the *milui* is equal to 607 with the *kollel*], as does the name רות with its *kollel*. The word ספחת, 'spreading-sign,' with its *kollel* [549] has the same value as the Name *ADNI* after it has been reformed as תקט"ם through the *Atbash* system [where *alef* is transposed with *tav*, *beis* with *shin*, *gimmel* with *reish*...]. The word שאת, 'raised-sign,' which parallels *Leah* [is equal to 702 with its *kollel*], and it comprises the combinations of the Divine Names *ADNI* articulated fully together with *EL* [671 + 31]. It appears to me that I have learned that the verse states, 'This is the Torah of the *metzora*,' because the *metzora*-state is one of the withdrawal of *Chochmah*. This is why Torah is mentioned [which is associated with *Chochmah*] rather than 'din' or 'taharah' of the *metzora*."⁶

Two Pathways in Torah Study

Hashem gave us the holy Torah in the manner of both *Leah* and *Rachel*. At first, we study the material, the letters, and receive its first light—the light of *Leah*. Afterward, two further lights are drawn down in the manner of *Rachel*. One exerts great effort to delve into it deeply, know it thoroughly, and in so doing grasps one of those lights. After doing so, he receives the final light, which is that of the "crown" of Torah—which is *Torah lishmah*. By studying Torah for its own sake one mitigates the judgments within *Leah* and accesses the spiritual light that is invested in the material of the letters themselves. This is really what it means to learn Torah *lishmah*—to join together the pathways of *Leah* and *Rachel*. When he attains all three lights, he receives the *Kesser Torah*—אור is equal to three times the value of אור.

⁶ *Sefer Halikutim, Parshas Tazria*; Also see *Eitz Chayim* 38:7

The exact order in which one goes about this process of uniting *Leah* and *Rachel* differs from person to person. Some focus on *dveikus* before they approach the letters, and others focus on the letters and material of learning before they aim for *dveikus*. This is a reflection of the fact that the Kabbalists speak of sometimes *Rachel* preceding *Leah*, and sometimes *Leah* preceding *Rachel*. In general, however, one must strive to mitigate the judgments inherent in *Leah* by not only studying the Torah's letters which incorporate *din*, but infusing study with depth of understanding and commitment to memory that brings a person to true *dveikus* with the holy Torah.

The Crown of Torah

“Rabbi Shimon says: There are three crowns; the crown of Torah, the crown of the priesthood, and the crown of kingship. And the crown of a good name surpasses them all.”⁷ The crown of a good name refers to the crown of faith, the light of the Torah's secrets that transcends all of the other crowns.

And so we find in the Arizal's teachings brought earlier that there are three lights; one with *Leah* and two with *Rachel*. *Leah* refers to the study of the Torah's letters, and it means covering material even if one doesn't understand it. Even so, every word of the Torah contains a wondrous light, and one receives it even if he learns without understanding or understands without remembering the material, even according to those who hold that the study of the oral Torah does demand comprehension to fulfill one's obligation. That primal light within the letters is nevertheless accessed, no matter what the result is.

However, when a person then merits to study the Torah over and over again until he really understands it and remembers it, this brings about a far greater purification that draws down the second of the three lights, until he attains the state of *dveikus* which is the third light. This is the ultimate state of Torah study, this is what it

⁷ Avos 4:13

means to study Torah illuminated by the light of spiritual vitality—that it should be an elixir of life that can free us from the death of exile.

The entire redemption depends on this, the splitting of the sea of Torah. In exile, the Torah's true light which is the *Shechinah* itself is hard to access even though it is certainly there. Now we can better understand the continuation of the verse in *Parshas Tazriya*: “And if she shall bear a female child...” One must also “birth” the feminine principle of *emunah*, so that it should join together with the masculine principle of Torah that emerges from exile. And this is the main focus of our *avodah* during the period between Pesach and Shavuos, to “give birth” to the Torah so that it emerges from exile until we merit to birth it completely, and join it together with a newly emerging faith.

The Three *Klippos*

“The appearance of *tzora'as* blemishes are of two forms that are really four variations. The ‘bright-sign’ that is as intense as snow, and a secondary one that is as bright as the whitewash of the sanctuary. The ‘rising-sign’ that is like an eggshell, and a secondary one that is like white wool. These are the words of Rabbi Meir. The sages say, the ‘rising-sign’ is like white wool, and the secondary one is like eggshell.”⁸

This is why the sign is called the *שאת*, the ‘raised-sign,’ which implies pride. The person is filled with conceit because Torah is like an ego-inflating intellectual exercise. He knows how to give the most wonderful lectures, but he has lost sight of the main goal which is *dveikus*. He loses his ability to apprehend *Elokus*; instead of seeing the ‘heavenly chambers [היכלות],’ he is afflicted with a sign that is, ‘like the whitewash of the sanctuary [היכל].’ The “raised-sign like white wool [צמר]” is the negative counterpart of the state of self-nullification before Hashem in prayer that is expressed as, “I called out to G-d from the narrows [מיצר].” If Torah study is reduced to self-seeking, he will find himself in the place of true constriction, *Mitzrayim*, where Pharaoh

⁸ *Negaim* 1:1

prevents the Divine light from descending. Once that happens, a person cannot even penetrate the plain meaning of the Torah because *Leah* has been grabbed hold of by the forces of evil. The person can no longer see Hashem's providence over every aspect of creation which is channeled through the twelve main permutation of the *Shem HaVaYaH*. The phrase *י"ב צירופי הוי"ה* bears the initials *ביצה*: when the person is caught up in the *klippah* that is like the "eggshell" blemish, he can no longer see that all of creation is a reflection of the twelve permutations of the Divine Name. All of this results in the Jewish people falling into a state of disassociation from the Torah's soul, and as a consequence even the simple meaning of its letters becomes unclear.

The "spreading-sign" or *ספחת* indicates the "heels of *Leah* that are encloded within the crown of *Rachel*." This blemish twists the person so that he fails to study Torah with faith. Balak and Bilaam prevent this—they block the Jewish people from reviewing their studies energetically and joyfully, and remembering what they learn so that it can illuminate the mind afterward. And these impure forces cause the Jewish people to forget the details of their learning, which is a reflection of losing touch with the twelve permutations of the *Shem HaVaYaH*.

Worse than all of these signs and blemishes is the *בהרת*, the "bright-sign" that is the negative counterpart of the third and highest light of the Torah, the light of *dveikus* with Hashem. One really must learn with a burning fire of enthusiasm, but the other side prevents this and cools a person off.

Fortunate is the person who merits to study Torah and feel the holiness of the spiritual worlds, to feel how Hashem is revealed in each and every letter. This is the way of the *tzaddikim*, to study and unite the Torah with the Divine light. They take every Torah concept and, through it, reveal Hashem's G-dliness.

The *בהרת* is "strong as snow" because the other side works to cool a person off so that he will not study Torah with *emunah*. The word snow [שלג = 333] is three times the value of the word *alef* [111], the three *alefs* of the 45-Name, as mentioned above.

One must come to feel the worlds and levels expressed by the three *alefs* as one studies, but the *klippah* of *בהרת* that is “strong as snow” comes to prevent it.

The four different variations of blemish break into two groups: two of them affect *Leah* and two affect *Rachel*. But during this period between Pesach and Shavuos, it is possible to overcome them completely and merit the three lights within *Leah* and *Rachel*. The holiness of *Leah* subdues the ‘raised-sign’ and its subsidiary which produce pride, and the holiness of *Rachel* subdues the ‘bright-sign’ and its subsidiary which influence worldly desire. These are the four exiles, and the joining of *Leah* and *Rachel* is what catalyzes the redemption from all of them and ensures that there will be no real fifth exile of Yishmael at all. “Anyone who accepts upon himself the yoke of Torah has the yoke of foreign domination lifted from him.”⁹

There are times during the year, like *Leil HaSeder*, when we place the striving for *dveikus* ahead of focused study and understanding of the Torah in order to mitigate the judgments within *Leah*. This means that when a person has a hard time focusing and understanding what he learns, he should nevertheless force himself to continue to mouth the plain and simple words no matter what. Even if he feels little vitality from this, he should rejoice in the words themselves, and this will bring him to sweeten the judgments within *Leah*—by feeling connected with Hashem even without the illumination from the meaning of the Torah’s teachings. A person must do this whether he is sick or well, until the last day of his life.

Hashem certainly has mercy on us when He sees that we make the effort to attain *dveikus* in the way of *Rachel* even as we struggle to grasp meaning at the level of *Leah*. Hashem makes it so that our efforts do indeed mitigate the judgments within *Leah* so that the spiritual tasks are accomplished and all of the world’s bitterness and suffering is nullified.

Redemption means finding Hashem who hides within the Torah’s letters. When one merits to feel the Divine light within the Torah, the “spirit of G-d that hovers over

⁹ *Yalkut Shimoni, Parshas Bamidbar 21*

the waters” of the Torah, the four exiles [of “void, chaos, darkness, and the face of the abyss”] are subdued along with all four blemishes.

Dovid, King of Yisrael

All of these efforts to join Torah and *dveikus* arouse Hashem’s mercy and compassion at the highest level of *Atik*. In truth, in the upper worlds at the very source, *Leah* and *Rachel* are not two levels but are a single unified level called *Dovid*. At this level it is revealed that the Jewish people never really sinned. As it says, when a person really and truly accepts upon himself the yoke of Torah no matter what, he arouses the light of דוד מלך ישראל חי וקיים—Dovid, king of Yisrael, who is perpetually alive. Dovid represents the epitome of Torah *lishmah*, and it is the pursuit of Torah *lishmah* that arouses Divine mercy at the level of *Atik*. This mercy is expressed as, “For My sake, for My sake, I will do it.” The Jewish people have the ability to arouse this level of mercy through commitment to simple acts that are within their grasp, because Hashem does not challenge His children harshly with tests that they are doomed to fail, G-d forbid. He only asks that we occupy ourselves with His *mitzvos*.

“On the eighth day, he shall circumcise the flesh of his foreskin.” The true *tzaddikim* have already performed the needed spiritual rectifications so that the light of redemption can be revealed—they have already “birthed the male child.” What remains is for us, on the eighth day, to “circumcise our hearts” and develop the requisite faith in them, even though sometimes it appears as though their *tikkunim* are too simple to effect the necessary repairs.

Through accepting upon ourselves the yoke of the *milah* which includes all of the Torah’s *mitzvos* and represents self-sacrifice for the Torah—each person in accordance with his level—we merit to receive the “covenant of the rainbow”—a revelation of the three lights, the “crown of a good name.” This is *dveikus* that is the ultimate crown of Torah.

Dveikus with Hashem through the holiness of the letters is a pathway that is hidden and secret, because in this world only external successes and achievements are of

note or interest to people. However, *emunah* includes all levels of holiness, and a true bond with the Torah is only forged by those who do the inner and private work of seeking it out. One can only achieve *dveikus* by ignoring or closing one's eyes to personal achievement in study, because *emunah* is, "a beautiful young maiden without eyes." There must be no self-awareness or focus on successes, because the entire goal must only be binding to the light of *emunah*. This *avodah* is filled with ups and downs, and one must constantly renew himself in it if he wants to pursue it.

That which we find written in the holy works, that the *Shechinah* "has nothing of its own," does not mean that it does not have light, G-d forbid. On the contrary, it is the level that surpasses all others, since it is *Malchus d'Ein Sof*. However, the *Shechinah* hides herself in the guise of a receiver, and this is the ultimate *tzimtzum*, until the time will come when the great light of *emunah* will be appreciated by all. When one attains *emunah*, the "crown of a good name," he will certainly come to understand and remember all of the Torah's parts. "יהא לכם זרע" — "Take for yourselves seed." Yosef HaTzaddik was telling them that the letter *hei* which represents the *Shechinah* is that which will bear abundance for you. But one can only reach this by seeking it out.

This is the deeper meaning of the Mishnah: "There are four new years. Rosh Chodesh Nisan is the new year of kings and of the festivals."¹⁰ It seems perplexing that the main aspect of the holiness of Nisan—that it is the first month of the year—is not mentioned here in the Mishnah at all. However, when we realize that this highest aspect of Nisan which is the renewal of the self in the search for *dveikus* is private and hidden, we understand better why it is not mentioned in the Mishnah. This is the highest and most hidden light of the greatest *tzaddikim* who renew themselves constantly, the light of *Leah*.

The Mishnah's mention of the new year of kings and festivals parallels the two revealed lights of *Rachel*, for she is of the "revealed world" [as opposed to *Leah*, who is of the "concealed world"]. Through expending real effort in his Torah study, a person

¹⁰ *Rosh Hashanah* 1:1

draws down the light of the three *mochin* of *Chochmah-Binah-Da'as* that parallel the three festivals and rises higher and higher, until he is himself like a king and binds himself to the light of Melech HaMoshiach. He will understand the Torah and its laws and remember them, until he reaches the level of constant self-renewal. Then *Leah* and *Rachel* are bound together—he will forget himself and his past in constant self-renewal as the Torah is implanted deeper and more indelibly into his consciousness.

This is the *Da'as* of Moshiach, which is both constantly rising higher and also constantly renewing and revealing Hashem's Kingship to all. So too, when a person binds himself to the truth *tzaddik* who has the aspect of Moshiach, he also merits to experience constant renewal in the light of *emunah* and reveal Hashem's Kingship to the world.

“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.”¹¹ Even if a person cannot immerse himself in study at the level of *Leah*, he should at least begin by seeking *dveikus* with the light of *Rachel* through the simplest of study. Let the light of *Chochmah-Rachel* shine into the level of *nefesh-Leah* so that their three lights will combine. Then one will come to the ultimate *Kesser* of Torah, the three lights of *Rachel* and *Leah* that shine with *emunah* which is the crown of a good name.

“Guard your holy *mitzvos*”—through guarding, which is review of one's Torah study you will come to “guard the holy Shabbos” and receive the light of *dveikus*.

May our eyes see Your Kingship, Hashem, with the nullification of all of the desires of this world through the power of Moshiach ben Yosef, and the nullification of pride through the power of Moshiach ben Dovid. May the four kingdoms of exile be destroyed, most especially this final one that has the force of the rest of them combined. In the merit of our awakening through the light of the four parts of the Torah—*p'shat*,

¹¹ From the *Shabbos zemer* “*D'ror Yikrah*,” based on *Mishlei* 24:14.

remez, derash, and sod—may we be worthy of the arrival of our righteous redeemer with the mercy of *Atik*, speedily and in our days. Amen.

Translated and Adapted by Rav Micha Golshevsky.

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