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16 בְּשַׁלַּח *Beshalach*

Overview

*P*arashat *Beshalach* encompasses many major events, both sublime and momentous: the first stages of the Exodus, the miraculous splitting of the Sea of Reeds and the Divine revelations that attended it, the subsequent song of praise, the descent of the heavenly manna and quails, and the victorious battle against Amalek.

Yet the *parashah* is not named after any of these events; it is called *Beshalach*—“when [Pharaoh] sent [the people] out.” Since this word was chosen as the name of the *parashah*, there is evidently something about it that both encompasses and transcends the *parashah*’s other elements.

On the other hand, the word *beshalach* implies that the Jews were unwilling to leave Egypt and had to be forcibly expelled. It is hard to imagine that this idea could be the underlying and unifying theme of the *parashah*; moreover, it seems to be a denigrating and derogatory comment on the state of the Jewish people at that time.

If we pause to consider, it indeed seems strange that Pharaoh would have to send the people out. Why would any Jew not wish to leave Egypt? Egypt was a harsh dictatorial state that subjected the Jews to oppressive slavery. Moses had promised the Jews that their exodus would lead to the pinnacle of spirituality—to be chosen by God as His nation and given the Torah on Mount Sinai. That, in turn, would be the precursor to their entry to the Promised Land. Who would not jump at such an opportunity? True, as we have seen, there were a significant number of Jews who did not wish to leave Egypt, but we also saw that all these Jews died during the plague of darkness. Thus, those who were actually liberated from Egypt were only those who desired to go out. Why, then, did Pharaoh have to “send” them?

The answer is that there were two dimensions of the Jews’ desire to leave Egypt. On the one hand, they were eager to leave the oppression and become the chosen people at Mount Sinai, as we said. This desire, strong and genuine as it was, was simply a direct result of the situation and the opportunities available to them. It was a rational desire that was essentially dictated by logic, a desire about which they had virtually no choice.

But the moment they were freed, they experienced an altogether different type of desire to leave. The minute they breathed the fresh air of freedom, the profound contrast between their enslavement to the idolatry of Egyptian materialism and the freedom from

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it afforded by the Godly life hit home. The intensity of their desire to leave immediately rose far above what it had been when their desire was dictated by calculated logic. Their flight from Egypt became suddenly supra-rational, a frenzied obsession, an ontological necessity. Relative to the transcendent intensity of their new desire, their former desire was forced and imposed.

This contrast is underscored by the use of the word *Beshalach* as the name of the *parashah*. This name reminds us that as intensely and sincerely we yearned for the freedom to fulfill our Divine destiny all the years of the oppression, our desire to leave shrinks to the equivalence of a forced expulsion when compared to the yearning for this freedom we experienced once the shackles of slavery were broken.

In this context, all the miraculous events of this *parashah* can indeed be considered subordinate to the general tenor expressed in the word *Beshalach*, for once the Jews began to relate to God on the supra-rational level, the stage was set for God to transcend the laws of nature in His reciprocal relationship with them. It was precisely this ascent to a supra-rational connection with God that provided the spiritual impetus for all the miraculous events of the ensuing narrative to take place.

The reality of this dynamic applies to us today, as well. It is certainly commendable to help other people out of their personal “Egypt,” the constrictions that prevent them from experiencing life in the fullness God intended and from fulfilling their Divine mission. God will surely reward anyone who catalyzes another person’s personal redemption by liberating him, as well, from whatever “Egypt” constricts him in his own life.

But sometimes we meet someone who has no conscious desire to be liberated. He is so entrenched in the materialism of life that he is oblivious to the possibility that there is anything better. In such a case, our job first and foremost is to create within him a desire to be free. God’s reward in such a case is commensurate with the accomplishment: just as we created a will where there was none, He transforms our will into a desire so intense that our previous desire will seem forced by comparison.

The word *Beshalach* also alludes to what the Jews accomplished in this process. As we have seen, every action we take has a concomitant reaction in the spiritual world. Here, when the Jews’ desire for Divine freedom became so intense that its previous form appeared as coercion by comparison, this caused a backlash in the world at large. The radical transition from the darkness of exile to the light of redemption caused Pharaoh himself to change from being the personification of evil to a force for holiness. The very same Pharaoh who had earlier crassly proclaimed “Who is God, that I should heed His word and send the Jews out of my land” was totally transformed—he not only allowed them to leave, but actively sent them away.

This lesson, too, applies to us today, as well. A conception of God and relationship with Him that is based solely on reason is equally limited in its intensity. We are called upon to go beyond the limitations of reason and reach an appreciation of God that is beyond our own selves. In this manner, it is possible to transform even “Pharaoh”—our most cynical and materialistic characteristics—into being aware and conscious of God. And indeed, this is the litmus test of our success in transforming the world into holiness. When we see the very forces of nature that constituted our most insurmountable obstacle in fulfilling our Divine mission transformed into forces that aid us—when, like Pharaoh,

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they forcibly “send” us out of Egypt—we know that we are achieving our goal.

When Pharaoh “sent out the people,” he was unwittingly sending them on the first leg of their journey toward the Giving of the Torah and their entry into the Land of Israel. So it is with us: by elevating our relationship with God to the supra-rational level and transforming the gross materialism of reality into an active force for holiness, we will hasten the Messianic redemption and the new revelations of the Torah that will finally and ultimately transform this world into God’s true home.¹

1. Based on *Sichot Kodesh* 5732, vol. 1, pp. 396-400; *Sichot Kodesh* 5734, vol. 1, pp. 284-288, 301-303.

ONKELOS

13:17 וַיְהִי בַשְּׁלַח פְּרַעְהָ אֶת־הָעָם וְלֹא־נָחַם אֱלֹהִים דְּרֹד אֶרֶץ פְּלִשְׁתִּים כִּי קָרוֹב הוּא כִּי אָמַר אֱלֹהִים פֶּן יִנָּחֵם הָעָם בְּרֹאֲתָם מִלְחָמָה וְשָׁבוּ מִצְרַיִם: 18 וַיֹּסֶב אֱלֹהִים אֶת־הָעָם דְּרֹד הַמִּדְבָּר יַם־סוּף וְחַמְשִׁים עָלוּ בְנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם: 19 וַיִּקַּח מֹשֶׁה אֶת־עֲצָמוֹת יוֹסֵף עִמּוֹ כִּי הִשְׁבַּע הַשָּׁבִיעַ אֶת־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל לֵאמֹר פֶּקֶד יִפְקֹד אֱלֹהִים אֶתְכֶם וְהַעֲלִיתֶם אֶת־עֲצָמֹתַי מִזֶּה אִתְּכֶם:

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17 וַיְהִי בַשְּׁלַח פְּרַעְהָ וְלֹא־נָחַם. וְלֹא נָחַם, כְּמוֹ: "לֵךְ נָחַה אֶת־הָעָם", "בְּהִתְהַלֵּךְ תִּנָּחַה אִתָּךְ"; כִּי קָרוֹב הוּא. וְנוֹחַ לָשׁוּב בְּאוֹתוֹ הַדֶּרֶךְ לְמִצְרַיִם וּמִדֶּרֶשִׁי אֲגִידָה יֵשׁ הִרְבֵּה: בְּרֹאֲתָם מִלְחָמָה. כְּגוֹן מִלְחָמַת "וַיִּרֶד הָעַמְלָקִי וְהַכְּנַעֲנִי וְגו'", אִם הֵלְכוּ דֶּרֶךְ יִשְׂרָאֵל חוּזְרִים. וְמָה, אִם כְּשֶׁהִקִּיפִם דֶּרֶךְ מַעֲקֶם אֲמָרוּ: "נִתְּנָה רֹאשׁ וְנִשְׁוּבָה מִצְרַיִמָּה", אִם הוֹלִיכֶם בְּפִשׁוּטָה — עַל אַחַת כְּמָה וְכְמָה: פֶּן־יִנָּחֵם. וַיִּחְשְׁבוּ מִחֻשְׁבָּה עַל שְׂוִיעָא, וַיִּתְּנוּ לֵב לָשׁוּב: 18 וַיֹּסֶב. הִסָּבֵם מִן הַדֶּרֶךְ הַפִּשׁוּטָה לְדֶרֶךְ הָעֵקוּמָה: יַם־סוּף. כְּמוֹ 'לִים סוּף'. וְ"סוּף" הוּא לְשׁוֹן אֲגָם, שֶׁגִּדְלִים בּוֹ קָנִים. כְּמוֹ: "וַתִּשֶׂם בְּסוּף", "קִנְיָה וְסוּף קָמְלוּ"; וְחַמְשִׁים. אֵין חַמּוּשִׁים אֶלָּא מְזוּנִים. לִפִּי שֶׁהִסָּבֵן בַּמִּדְבָּר גָּרַם לָהֶם שַׁעֲלוֹ חַמּוּשִׁים, שֶׁאֵלּוּ דֶּרֶךְ יִשְׁוּב לֹא הָיוּ מְחוּמָשִׁים לָהֶם כְּלִי־מַה־שֶּׁצָּרִיכִין, אֶלָּא כְּאֵדָם שֶׁעוֹבֵר מִמָּקוֹם לְמָקוֹם וּבִדְעָתוֹ לְקִנּוּת שֶׁם מַה־

שְׂוִיעָטָרָה. אָבֵל כְּשֶׁהוּא פוֹרֵשׁ לְמִדְבָּר צָרִיךְ לִזְמֵן לוֹ כָּל־הַצָּרָה, וּמִקְרָא זֶה לֹא נִכְתָּב כִּי אִם לְשִׁבְרָתָהּ אֶת הָאֶזְנוֹן — שֶׁלֹּא תֵאמַר: בְּמִלְחָמָה עָמְלָק וּבְמִלְחָמוֹת סִיחוֹן וְעוֹג וּמִדָּן. מִהֵיכָן הָיוּ לָהֶם כָּלִי וַיִּן שֶׁהִכּוֹם יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּחֶרֶב? וְכֵן הוּא אוֹמֵר: "וְאַתֶּם תַּעֲבִרוּ חַמְשִׁים". וְכֵן תִּרְגֹּם אֲנָקְלוֹס: "מְזוּזִין", כְּמוֹ: "וַיִּרַק אֶת־חֲזִיכִיו" — "וְזָרִיו". דָּבָר אַחֵר: "חַמּוּשִׁים" — אֶחָד מִחֻשְׁבָּה יִצְאָה, וְאֶרְבָּעָה חֲלָקִים מִתּוֹ בְּשִׁלְשֵׁת יָמֵי אֶפְלָה: 19 הַשָּׁבִיעַ הַשָּׁבִיעַ. הַשָּׁבִיעִים שֶׁיִּשְׁבָּעוּ לְבִנְיָהֶם. וְלָמָּה לֹא הַשָּׁבִיעַ אֶת בְּנָיו שִׁישְׁאוּהוּ לְאֶרֶץ כְּנַעַן מִיָּד, כְּמוֹ שֶׁהַשָּׁבִיעַ יַעֲקֹב? אָמַר יוֹסֵף: אֲנִי שְׁלִיט הָיִיתִי בְּמִצְרַיִם וְהָיָה סֶפֶק בִּידִי לַעֲשׂוֹת, אָבֵל בְּנֵי — לֹא נִיחָוּ מִצְרַיִם לַעֲשׂוֹת, לֵכָה הַשָּׁבִיעִים לְכַשִּׁיגָאֵלוֹ וַיִּצְאוּ מִשָּׁם שִׁישְׁאוּהוּ: וְהַעֲלִיתֶם אֶת־עֲצָמֹתַי מִזֶּה אִתְּכֶם. לְאֶחָיו הַשָּׁבִיעַ בֶּן. לְמִדָּנָה, שֶׁאֵף עֲצָמוֹת כָּל־הַשָּׁבִיעִים הָעָלוּ עִמָּהֶן, שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר: "אִתְּכֶם".

1. שמות לב, לד. 2. משלי ו, כב. 3. במדבר יד, מה. 4. שם, ד. 5. שמות ב, ג. 6. ישעיה יט, ו. 7. יהושע א, יד. 8. בראשית יד, יד.

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places in our path are truly the way He leads us peacefully to our goal.⁶

18 The Israelites were armed: Although the Jews were leaving Egypt proudly and unchallenged, they still took weapons with them, for the redemption process was not yet complete. The enemy had been conquered, but still not eradicated. In contrast, after the messianic redemption, when all God's enemies will be totally vanquished, all nations "will beat their swords into ploughshares,"⁷ for there will no longer be any need for arms.

Everything in the physical world is a reflection of spiritual reality. At the Exodus from Egypt, evil was tem-

porarily subjugated but still existed as a real danger.⁸ It was therefore necessary for the people to be spiritually "armed" as well, to be guarded against evil and wary of it. Until the final redemption, this will continue to be the case; there are times that good gains the upper hand, but caution is always warranted. Only in the messianic era will God "wipe the spirit of evil off the face of the earth,"⁹ fully refining the entire world and transforming it into good, so that there will no longer be any need for arms at all, physical or spiritual.¹⁰

19 Moses took the bones of Joseph with him: From the context, it is apparent that Moses took Joseph's bones not only in order to fulfill the promise the peo-

6. *Sichot Kodesh* 5725, vol. 1, pp. 342-343. 7. Isaiah 2:4. 8. See on 14:5, below. 9. Zechariah 13:2. 10. *Sefer HaMa'amarim* 5716, pp. 537, 542.

From Sukot to Eitam

13:17 As mentioned above,¹ there were some Israelites who were reluctant to leave Egypt and brave the unknown desert, thinking that the Egyptians would treat them better now that they had suffered so much from the plagues. Pharaoh had to drive these people out of Egypt forcibly. **Since they did not leave wholeheartedly, but rather Pharaoh had to send these people out, God did not lead them from Sukot via the road to the land of the Philistines, because it was near, and it would have been easy for the people to return to Egypt. For God said, "The people may have a change of heart when they see the inhabitants of the Land of Israel go to war against them, and return to Egypt."**²

18 So instead, God led the people via the desert road toward the other side of the Sea of Reeds, i.e., northward from Sukot,³ along the west bank of the sea, and then southward, along the east bank of the sea, to Eitam, which is at the edge of the desert⁴ (see Figure 1). **The Israelites were armed when they went up from Egypt.**

19 Moses took the bones of Joseph and his brothers with him, for Joseph had bound the sons of Israel by an oath that they should in turn bind their descendants by an oath, saying, "God will surely remember you and your descendants, and when He does, you shall have your descendants take up my bones from here together with yours."⁵



Figure 1: From Sukot to Eitam

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17 God did not lead them: This verse speaks of those Jews who were so attached to Egypt and so lacking in faith that they would have preferred to remain behind. Yet the word the Torah uses here for "lead" (*nacham*) implies calm, tranquil movement, implying that when God took us out of Egypt, He led even the lowest elements of the people gently and peacefully.

The same applies today: both individually and as a people, we are always leaving "Egypt" and progressing forward toward "Mount Sinai," and God leads us on this path in the easiest most painless way possible. If we do encounter obstacles, we should recall that God

puts them there only because the easier way is *too* easy, and we would be tempted to slide back into Egypt at the first hint that the way to Mount Sinai conflicts with our previous lifestyle. Rather, these obstacles test our devotion to our convictions and strengthen us by forcing us to summon our latent, inner powers.

By overcoming these apparent obstacles, we make it unnecessary to wage actual war against our spiritual enemies. We can proceed unhindered to Mount Sinai, free from the threat of spiritual forces that would otherwise obstruct our path. Thus, the obstacles God

1. 12:32. 2. *Sichot Kodesh* 5725, vol. 1, p. 342. 3. Above, 12:37. 4. Below, v. 20. 5. Genesis 50:25.

— ONKELOS —

20 ונטלו מסכות ושרו באתם
בסתר מדברא: 21 ויז מדבר
קדמיהון ביממא בעמודא דעננא
לדברותהון בארְחא ובליליא
בעמודא דאשתא לאנהרא להון
למיוז ביממא ובליליא: 22 לא
יעדי עמודא דעננא ביממא ואף
לא עמודא דאשתא בליליא קדם
עמא: 14:1 ומליל יי עם משה
למימר: 2 מליל עם בני ישראל
ויתבון וישרון קדם פום חירתא
בין מגדול ובין ימא קדם בעיל
צפון לקבלה תשרון על ימא:

20 ויסעו מסכת ויחנו באתם בקצה המדבר:
21 ויהיה הלך לפניהם יומם בעמוד ענן לנחותם הדרך
ולילה בעמוד אש להאיר להם ללכת יומם ולילה:
22 לא ימיש עמוד הענן יומם ועמוד האש לילה לפני
העם: פ

14:1 וידבר יהוה אל-משה לאמר: 2 דבר אל-בני
ישראל וישבו ויחנו לפני פי החירת בין מגדל ובין הים
לפני בעל צפן נכחו תחנו על-הים:

— RASHI —

מגיד, שעמוד הענן משלים לעמוד האש ועמוד האש
משלים לעמוד הענן, שעד שלא ישקע זה עולה זה:
2 וישבו. לאחוריהם, לצד מצרים, היו מקרבין בליום
השלישי כדי להטעות את פרעה, שיאמר: תועים הם
בדרך, כמו שנאמר: "ואמר פרעה לבני ישראל וגו'":
ויחנו לפני פי החירת. הוא "פיתום", ועכשו נקרא "פי
החירת" על שם שנעשו בני חורין. והם שני סלעים
גבוהים וזקופים, והגיא שביניהם קרוי "פי הסלעים":
לפני בעל צפן. הוא נשאר מכל-אלהי מצרים כדי
להטעותו, שיאמרו: קשה יראתו. ועליו פרש איוב:
"משגיא לגוים ויאבדם"!

20 ויסעו מסכת. ביום השני, שהרי בראשון באו
מרעמס לסכות: 21 לנחותם הדרך. נקוד פתח, שהוא
כמו 'להנחותם', כמו: "לארתכם בדרך אשר תלכו"
בה"י, שהוא כמו 'להראותכם'. אף כאן להנחותם על
ידי שליח. ומי הוא השליח? — עמוד הענן, והקדוש
ברוך-הוא בכבודו מוליכו לפניהם. ומכל-מקום, את
עמוד הענן הכין להנחותם על ידו, שהרי על ידי
עמוד הענן הם הולכים. עמוד הענן אינו לאורה,
אלא להורותם הדרך: 22 לא ימיש. הקדוש ברוך-
הוא את "עמוד הענן יומם, ועמוד האש לילה".

9. דברים א, לג. 10. לעיל פסוק ג. 11. איוב יב, כג.

— CHASIDIC INSIGHTS —

ple made to him, but also as a prerequisite for the en-
suing journey through the desert.

Rather than referring to Joseph's "remains" or using
some other discreet term, the Torah uses the seeming-
ly indelicate description—"the bones of Joseph." This
is because the bones are in a sense the essence of the
body; they form its strong, defining frame and are the
only part that remains after all else has decayed. In-
deed, the Hebrew word for "bone" (*etzem*) also means
"essence." This verse can therefore be understood to
mean that Moses took Joseph's very essence with him,
and this enabled them to cross the desert.

Joseph's essence is expressed in his name: "[Rachel]
named him *Joseph* ['May He add'], saying, 'May God
add for me another son.'" ²³ Rachel yearned to bring
another Jew into the world. Allegorically, this wish
includes the desire to make an "other"—an estranged
Jew—into a "son," to bring him back into the fold. ²⁴ In
a more general sense, it includes the desire to trans-

form all reality from its profane state into the vehicle
for holiness it was originally intended to be.

The Jewish people were about to embark on a treach-
erous journey through a dangerous desert, whose
physical barrenness and perils were a reflection of its
spiritual desolation. In order to be able to survive such
a journey, Moses ensured that they were accompanied
by the message and spirit of Joseph—that they were
prepared to transform even the most bleak landscape
into a fitting home for the Divine.

The ongoing phenomenon of exile is referred to as a
sojourn through "the desert of nations."²⁵ In order for
us to persevere through such darkness, we must take
our cue from Joseph's essence. We must strive to reha-
bilitate even the most distant and rebellious individu-
als, encouraging them to return to the fold and show-
ing them that they are truly God's beloved children.
If we remain true to this objective, we can be assured
that in the end, no Jew will be left behind.²⁶

23. Genesis 30:24. 24. *Or HaTorah, Vayeitzei* 220a ff, *Vayeichi* 386a ff, 390a ff, 397b ff, etc. 25. See Ezekiel 20:35; R. Bachaye and *Or HaChaim* on Numbers 33:1 ff. 26. This is in contrast to the redemption from Egypt, where, as previously mentioned, a large segment of the Jewish people did not merit redemption. Concerning the messianic redemption, however, there is a clear promise that "even the forlorn will not be forsaken." *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 26, pp. 85-89.

20 Thus, on the 16th of Nisan, **they moved on from Sukot and encamped at Eitam, at the edge of the desert.**

21 Beginning at Sukot, **God went before them by day in a pillar of cloud** so that it **guide them along the way, and by night in a pillar of fire** so that it **give them light, so that they could travel day and night.** In addition to guiding them, the pillar of cloud leveled the ground and killed any snakes or scorpions in their way.¹¹ Besides the pillar of cloud in front of them, God surrounded the people—from all four sides, above, and below¹²—with clouds that protected them from the elements¹³ and from attack,¹⁴ and that cleaned and pressed their clothes.¹⁵ These clouds also served as an “honor guard,” in the merit of Aaron.¹⁶ They also expelled anyone who committed a sin from within them,¹⁷ and thus gave the people constant feedback on their spiritual status. The clouds did not surround the mixed multitude that accompanied the people.¹⁸ In honor of these clouds, the people named this location *Sukot* (“protective shelters”).¹⁹

22 **God did not remove the pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire at night from before the people.** Neither pillar disappeared until the other had first appeared to take its place. Even though the people were heading into the desert, the majority of them did not ask Moses how they were going to survive there; they trusted implicitly that God would provide for them.²⁰

From Eitam to Pi Hachiroth: Misleading the Egyptians

14:1 The next day, the 17th of Nisan, **God spoke to Moses, saying,**

2 “Although the Egyptians have suffered greatly because of the plagues, only the firstborn actually died. The rest of them have still not received the punishment they deserve for enslaving the Israelites.²¹ Furthermore, as long as the Egyptian army still survives, the Israelites will never feel entirely freed from their threat. Therefore, **speak to the Israelites and let them turn back to Sukot**—traveling first northward along the eastern shore of the Sea of Reeds and then southward along its *western* shore—**and encamp in the valley before the two peaks of the original Pitom,**²² which will now be known as **Pi Hachiroth** [‘the Mouth of Freedom’] since it is here that I will bring the rest of the Egyptians to their death and thus free the Israelites completely. Have the people camp **between Migdol and the sea**, stopping **before the monument to Baal Tze-fon**, the one Egyptian idol I left intact in order to mislead the Egyptians into thinking that they still have some hope of overcoming you. **You shall encamp opposite it, facing the sea** (see Figure 2).

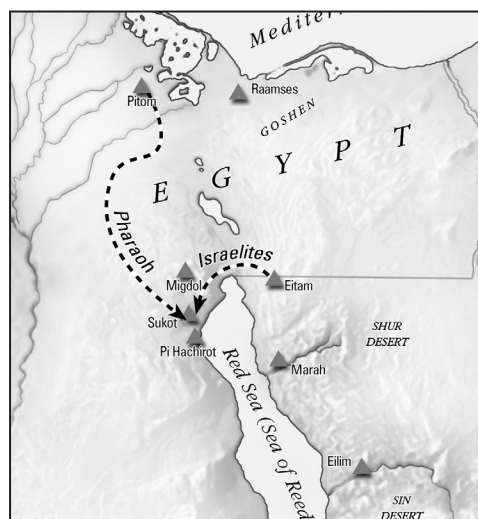


Figure 2: From Eitam to Pi Hachiroth

11. Rashi on Numbers 10:34. 12. Ibid. 13. Rashi on Numbers 25:4; *Tur* and *Shulchan Aruch*, *Orach Chaim* 625. 14. Rashi on 17:9, 19:4, below, and on Numbers 33:40. 15. Rashi on Deuteronomy 8:4. 16. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 18, pp. 253-260. 17. Rashi on Deuteronomy 25:18. 18. See *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 18, p. 259, note 58. 19. *Mechilta*, Bo 14, *Beshalach*, introduction. 20. Rashi on Deuteronomy 32:9. 21. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 16, pp. 148-160. 22. See 1:11, above.

— ONKELOS —

3 וַיִּמַּר פֶּרַעַה עַל בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל מִעֲבָדֶיךָ אֲנִי בְּאֶרֶץ אֲחֵד עֲלִיהוֹן מִדְּבָרָא: 4 וְאַתְּקִיף יָת לְבָא דְּפֶרַעַה וְיִרְדֹּף בְּתִרְיָהוֹן וְאַתְּיִקֵּר בְּפֶרַעַה וּבְכָל־מִשְׁרִיתָהּ וְיִדְעוּן מִצְרָאִי אֲרִי אֲנִי יְיָ וְעַבְדּוֹ כּוּ: 5 וְאַתְּחִנּוּא לְמִלְכָּא דְּמִצְרַיִם אֲרִי אֲזִל עִמָּא וְאַתְּהִפִּיךְ לְבָא דְּפֶרַעַה וְעַבְדּוֹהִי לְעִמָּא וְאַמְרוּ מַה דָּא עֲבָדְנָא אֲרִי שְׁלַחְנָא יָת יִשְׂרָאֵל מִלְּמַפְלָחָנָא: 6 וְטָקִיס יָת רַתִּיכָה וְיָת עֲמָה דְּבֵר עֲמָה:

3 וַיֹּאמֶר פֶּרַעַה לְבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל נִבְכִּים הֵם בְּאֶרֶץ סֹגֵר עֲלֵיהֶם הַמִּדְבָּר: 4 וְחִזְקֹתִי אֶת־לֵב־פֶּרַעַה וְרִדְּף אַחֲרֵיהֶם וְאֶפְכְּדָה בְּפֶרַעַה וּבְכָל־חֵילוֹ וְיָדְעוּ מִצְרַיִם כִּי־אֲנִי יְהוָה וַיַּעֲשׂוּ־כֵן: 5 וַיֵּגַד לְמֶלֶךְ מִצְרַיִם כִּי בָרַח הָעָם וַיִּהְיֶה לִבֵּב פֶּרַעַה וַעֲבָדָיו אֶל־הָעָם וַיֹּאמְרוּ מַה־זֹּאת עָשִׂינוּ כִּי־שְׁלַחְנוּ אֶת־יִשְׂרָאֵל מִעֲבָדֵינוּ: 6 וַיֹּאסֶר אֶת־רַכְבּוֹ וְאֶת־עַמּוֹ לָקַח עִמּוֹ:

— RASHI —

שְׁקָבְעוּ לִילָף וּלְשׁוֹב, וְרָאוּ שְׂאִינָן חֹזְרִין לְמִצְרַיִם, בָּאוּ וְהִגִּידוּ לְפֶרַעַה בְּיוֹם הָרְבִיעִי וּבְחֲמִישִׁי, וּבְשִׁשִּׁי רָדְפוּ אַחֲרֵיהֶם, וְלִיל שְׁבִיעִי — יָרְדוּ לַיָּם, בְּשַׁחֲרִית אָמְרוּ שִׁירָה, וְהָיָה יוֹם שְׁבִיעִי שֶׁל פֶּסַח. לָכֵן אָנוּ קוֹרִין הַשִּׁירָה בְּיוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי: **וַיִּהְיֶה**. נִהְפָּה מִמַּה־שֶּׁהָיָה שְׁהָרִי אָמַר לָהֶם: "קוּמוּ צֵאוּ מִתּוֹךְ עַמִּי"²². וְנִהְפָּה לִבֵּב עֲבָדָיו, שֶׁהָרִי לְשַׁעֲבֵר הָיוּ אוֹמְרִים לוֹ: "עַד־מָתִי יִהְיֶה זֶה לָנוּ לְמוֹקֵשׁ"²³. וְעַכְשָׁיו נִהְפָּכוּ לְרֹדֵף אַחֲרֵיהֶם, בְּשִׁבְלֵי מְמוֹנָם שֶׁהִשְׁאִילוּם: **מִעֲבָדֵינוּ**. מִעֲבֹד אוֹתָנוּ: 6 **וַיֹּאסֶר אֶת־רַכְבּוֹ**. הוּא בְּעֵצְמוֹ: **וְאֶת־עַמּוֹ לָקַח עִמּוֹ**. מִשְׁכֵּם בְּדִבְרֵיהֶם: לָקִינוּ, וְנִטְלוּ מְמוֹנֵינוּ, וְשְׁלַחְנוּם. בּוֹאוּ עִמָּי, וְאֲנִי לֹא אֶתְנַהֵג עִמָּכֶם בְּשָׂר מְלָכִים — דֶּרֶךְ שָׂר מְלָכִים עֲבָדָיו קוֹדֵמִין לוֹ בַּמִּלְחָמָה, וְאֲנִי אֶקְדִּים לַפְּנִיכֶם, שְׁנֵאמַר: "וּפֶרַעַה הִקְרִיב"²⁴ — הִקְרִיב עִצְמוֹ וּמָהָר לַפְּנֵי חִילוֹתָיו. דֶּרֶךְ שָׂר מְלָכִים לִטֹּל בָּזָה בְּרָאשׁ כִּמוֹ שְׂוִיבָחָר, אֲנִי אֲשׁוּה עִמָּכֶם בְּחֶלֶק, שְׁנֵאמַר: "אֲחֶלֶק שְׁלָל"²⁵.

3 וַיֹּאמֶר פֶּרַעַה. כְּשִׁישְׁמַע שֶׁהֵם שָׁבִים לְאַחֲרֵיהֶם: לְבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל. עַל בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל. וְכֵן "ה' יִלְחֶם לָכֶם"¹² — עֲלֵיכֶם. "אֲמַר־לִי אֲחִי הוּא"¹³ — אֲמַר־יָעִלֵּי: נִבְכִּים הֵם. כְּלוֹאִים וּמִשְׁקָעִים. וּבְלַעַז שִׁיר"¹⁴, כְּמוֹ: "נִבְכִּי יָם" "בְּעֵמֶק הַבְּכָא"¹⁵, "מִבְּכֵי נְהֹרוֹת"¹⁶. "נִבְכִּים הֵם" — כְּלוֹאִים הֵם בַּמִּדְבָּר, שְׂאִינָן יוֹדְעִין לְצֵאת מִמֶּנּוּ וּלְהִיכֵן יִלְכוּ: 4 **וְאֶפְכְּדָה בְּפֶרַעַה**. כְּשֶׁהִקְדֹּשׁ בְּרוּךְ־הוּא מִתְנַקֵּם בְּרָשָׁעִים — שְׂמוֹ מִתְגַּדֵּל וּמִתְכַּבֵּד. וְכֵן הוּא אוֹמֵר: "וְנִשְׁפָּטִי אֹתוֹ וְגו'"¹⁷, וְאַחֲרֵי כֵן: "וְהִתְגַּדַּלְתִּי וְהִתְקַדַּשְׁתִּי וְנִוְדַעְתִּי וְגו'"¹⁸. וְאוֹמֵר: "שְׂמָה שְׁבֵר רִשְׁפִּי קִשְׁתִּי"¹⁹, וְאַחֲרֵי כֵן: "נִוְדַע בִּיהוּדָה אֱלֹהִים"²⁰. וְאוֹמֵר: "נִוְדַע ה' מִשְׁפָּט עֲשֵׂה"²¹: **בְּפֶרַעַה וּבְכָל־חֵילוֹ**. הוּא הַתְּחִיל בְּעֲבָרָה, וּמִמֶּנּוּ הַתְּחִילָה הַפְּרָעָנוּת: **וַיַּעֲשׂוּ־כֵן**. לְהִגִּיד שְׁבָחוֹן, שֶׁשְׂמָעוֹ לְקוֹל מִשָּׁה, וְלֹא אָמְרוּ: הִיאָף נִתְקַרֵּב אֵל רֹדְפֵינוּ, אָנוּ צְרִיכִים לְבָרַח. אֲלֹא אָמְרוּ: אֵין לָנוּ אֵלָא דְּבָרֵי בֶן־עַמְרָם: 5 **וַיֵּגַד לְמֶלֶךְ מִצְרַיִם**. אִיקְטוּרִין שְׁלַח עִמָּהֶם, וּבִכּוֹן שֶׁהִגִּיעוּ לְשִׁלֶּשֶׁת יָמִים

12. שמות יד, יד. 13. בראשית כ, יג. 14. לחוצים, שקועים. 15. תהלים פד, ז. 16. איוב כח, יא. 17. יחזקאל יז, כ. 18. שם לח, כג. 19. תהלים עז, ד. 20. שם, ב. 21. תהלים טז, יז. 22. שמות יב, לא. 23. שמות יז, ז. 24. שמות יד, י. 25. שמות טו, ט.

— CHASIDIC INSIGHTS —

cal Egyptians, and could no longer be held in captivity. However, there still remained "an Egyptian" within each one of the Jews themselves. They had not yet truly eradicated and transformed the evil within them—they would not do this until the revelation at Mount Sinai. Neither had they reached sublime levels of spirituality, for they were no more than the benefactors of unearned Divine beneficence. Therefore, the most they could hope to do was to flee, to leave their evil inclination "behind" and bury it under their strong desire to connect to God.

In contrast to all this, the messianic redemption will be the result of the Jewish people's struggles and achievements to refine themselves and the world around them

throughout the long years of exile. At that time, therefore, there will be no necessity for flight, for physical matter itself will have been prepared and readied for elevation.

Until then, we continue to struggle to be redeemed from Egypt, from the limitations and boundaries imposed upon us by the material world in which we live. This battle must be waged in stages. Attempting to completely transform and rehabilitate evil all at once can be overwhelming and may lead to failure. It is often necessary to begin with a simple, absolute rejection of evil—even if that means fleeing from it—only afterwards making a stand and attacking it on its own terms.³⁰

30. Tanya, ch. 31; Sefer HaMa'amarim 5737, p. 193; Hitva'aduyot 5744, vol. 3, p. 1511.

3 Pharaoh will then say about the Israelites, 'They are trapped in the land; the desert has closed in on them.'

4 I will harden Pharaoh's heart and he will pursue them. I will then be glorified in the world's eyes **through** the end that **Pharaoh and his entire army** will suffer, **and the Egyptians**—those who will die here and those who remained in Egypt—**will finally know that I am God**. Pharaoh began your slavery, so he will be the first to meet his end." Even though backtracking seemed to be walking straight into the face of danger, the Israelites **did this**, saying, "We trust Moses implicitly." They arrived at Sukot on the same day and waited.²⁷

5 The next day, the 18th of Nisan, the officers Pharaoh sent with the people saw that although the people were returning toward Egypt, they had not returned to Goshen. They therefore went and informed Pharaoh of this. **When the king of Egypt was told that the people had fled, Pharaoh and his courtiers had a change of heart towards the people**. When they thought about all their possessions they had "lent" them, **they said, "What is this that we have we done, sending Israel away from our service?"**

6 On the 19th of Nisan, Pharaoh **harnessed his chariot himself and convinced his people to go with him**. He reminded them of how they had suffered because of the Israelites and how the Israelites had made off with their possessions. Furthermore, he promised to lead them himself into battle and to divide the spoils with them equally.

✧ CHASIDIC INSIGHTS ✧

5 The officers Pharaoh sent with the people saw: We are told in the Midrash²⁸ that when three days had passed and the people showed no sign of turning back, the officers announced, "It's time to return to Egypt!"

"Do you think we left Egypt because of Pharaoh's permission?" answered the Jews. "The Holy One, blessed be He, took us out of Egypt, and we have no intention of heeding Pharaoh's commands."

"Eventually you'll have to give in," warned the officers. "Pharaoh is a mighty king, and he will force you to return!"

At that, the Jewish people arose and chased Pharaoh's officers away: "Return to Egypt, and inform Pharaoh that the Jews are confidently continuing on their path to freedom."

Moses then turned to the people and said: "If we continue on our way now, Pharaoh will assume that we are fleeing from him, implying that we still fear his might. Let us stop; indeed, let us turn back a little bit towards Egypt, to demonstrate clearly that we do not fear them at all. No matter what they do, we will not

return to Egypt, because we are now on the path towards Mount Sinai."

We are all constantly struggling with our own personal Pharaoh—our evil inclination—that attempts to keep us enslaved in the chains of materialism. Moses taught the Jewish people that the way to overthrow Pharaoh is by rejecting him outright. Banish his sentries, his subliminal messages and demands. Do so with pride, and heap insults upon them. With such a confident attack upon the attackers, our progress on the proper path of Godliness and Torah is secured.²⁹

The people had fled: After all the plagues that Egypt had suffered, especially after the tenth plague, there is no doubt that Pharaoh had no will to fight on. Why, then, was it necessary for the Jews to stoop to subterfuge? They left under the pretense that they wished no more than a brief hiatus, while in truth they never intended to return. Why could they not have told Pharaoh clearly that they insist upon leaving, rather than fleeing like fugitives?

As mentioned earlier, all of these events were the physical manifestation of spiritual struggles. The Jewish people were indeed finished with the physi-

²⁷ Rashi on Sotah 12b, s.v. *Shirah al HaYam*. ²⁸ *Mechilta*, as explained in the source in the next footnote. ²⁹ *Hitva'aduyot* 5745, vol. 3, pp. 1782-1784.

— ONKELOS —

7 וידבר שית מאה רתיבין בחינן וכל-רתיבי מצראי וגברין ממנן על בלהון: 8 ואתקוף יי ית לבא דפרעה מלכא דמצרים וידרף בתר בני ישראל ובני ישראל נפקין בריש גלי: 9 וירדפו מצראי בתריהון ואדביקו יתהון פד שרן על ימא כל-סוסות רתיבי פרעה ופרשוהי ומשריתה על פום חירתא דקדם בעיל צפון: 10 ופרעה קריב וזקפו בני ישראל ית עיניהון והא מצראי נטלין בתריהון ודחילו לחדא וזקפו בני ישראל קדם יי:

7 וַיִּקַּח יִשְׁמָאוֹת לְרֶכֶב בַּחֹר וְכָל רֶכֶב מִצְרַיִם וְשָׁלֹשׁ עַל-בָּלוֹ: 8 וַיַּחֲזֹק יְהוָה אֶת-לֵב פְּרָעָה מֶלֶךְ מִצְרַיִם וַיְרַדֵּף אַחֲרֵי בְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וּבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל יִצְאִים בְּיַד רָמָה:

◆ שני 9 וירדפו מצרים אחריהם וישיגו אותם חזים על-הים כל-סוס רכב פרעה ופרשיו וחילו על-פלי החירות לפני בעל צפון: 10 ופרעה הקריב וישאו בני-ישראל את-עיניהם והנה מצרים | נסע אחריהם וייראו מאד ויצעקו בני-ישראל אל-יהוה:

— RASHI —

תולה אם לרדף אם לאו. ויחזק את לבו לרדף: ביד רמה. בגבורה גבוהה ומפרסמת: 10 ופרעה הקריב. היה לו לכתב ופרעה קרב/ מהו "הקריב"? הקריב עצמו ונתאמץ לקדם לפניו, כמו שהתנה עמהם: נסע אחריהם. בלב אחד כאיש אחד. דבר אחר: "והנה מצרים נסע אחריהם" — ראו שר של מצרים נוסע מן השמים לעזור למצרים: ויצעקו. תפשו אמונות אבותם — באברהם הוא אומר: "אל-המקום אשר-עמד שם" 28. ביצחק: "לשוח בשדה" 29. בייעקב: "ויפגע במקום" 30:

7 בחור. נבחרים. "בחור" לשון יחיד — כל-רכב ורכב שבמנין זה, היה בחור: וכל-רכב מצרים. ועמהם כל-שאר הרכב. ומהיכן היו הבהמות הללו? אם תאמר: משל מצרים — הרי נאמר: "וימת כל מקנה מצרים" 26! ואם תאמר: משל ישראל — והלא נאמר: "וגם-מקננו ילך עמו" 27! משל מי היו? — מן "היירא את דבר ה'". מכאן היה רבי שמעון אומר: כשר שבמצרים — הרג, טוב שבנחשים — רצץ את מוחו: ושלשם על-בלו. שרי צבאות, בתרגומו: 8 ויחזק ה' את-לב פרעה. שהיה

26. שמות ט, ו. 27. שמות י, כו. 28. בראשית יט, כו. 29. בראשית כד, סג. 30. בראשית כח, יא.

— CHASIDIC INSIGHTS —

when he met the soul of the Messiah, who then told the Ba'al Shem Tov that he would descend to redeem the world "when your teachings will be publicized and revealed throughout the world, and 'your well-springs spread outward.'" 41

Remarkably, *bereish* can also be seen as an acronym for the names of two other sages who played pivotal roles in the dissemination of the teachings of Jewish mysticism: Rabbi Yitzchak ben Shlomo Luria (the Arizal) and the previous Lubavitcher Rebbe—Rabbi Yosef [Yitzchak] ben Shalom Dovber, or Rabbi Yosef [Yitzchak] ben Shterna [Sarah].

The Arizal, in addition to revealing new levels of understanding in the teachings of the *Zohar*, declared that the time had come to promulgate these teachings to the masses, rather than restricting their study to the spiritual elite, which had been the practice until

his time.⁴²

The previous Lubavitcher Rebbe initiated the translation of these teachings into modern languages, thereby making them accessible to an even wider public.⁴³

Each of these individuals thus revealed the Torah's secrets to a greater extent than had been previously accomplished, and thus brought the redemption closer.⁴⁴

10 Pharaoh drew [himself] nearer: The Midrash offers another interpretation: by chasing them, Pharaoh drew the Jews nearer to God, as evidenced by their crying out to Him at the end of this verse.

Even though these interpretations may seem diametrically opposed, in truth they are compatible. It is often the presence of opposition that awakens our very deepest reserves of energy. Pharaoh's exertions, despite his being evil incarnate, caused a reciprocal

41. Proverbs 5:16. 42. *Sefer HaGilgulim* 32; see *Igeret HaKodesh* (part 4 of *Tanya*) 26. 43. See *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 3, pp. 374-376, vol. 13, p. 180. 44. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 3, pp. 872-876. See also Rabbi J. I. Schochet, *The Mystical Dimension*, vol. 1, pp. 115-148.

7 **He took 600 choice chariots, as well as the rest of the chariots of Egypt**, harnessing all the horses that had survived the plagues, **with officers in command of them all**. Confident of victory, the Egyptians adorned their horses lavishly with gold and silver ornaments and precious stones.³¹ It was the God-fearing Egyptians who had taken the trouble to save their animals from the plagues. But even these Egyptians deserved to die, because they hated the Israelites rabidly—as evinced by their readiness to offer Pharaoh the use of their animals—and had persecuted them sadistically. God therefore coerced Pharaoh to take these people into battle in order to do away with them.³²

8 Before setting out, Pharaoh wavered momentarily, but **God hardened the heart of Pharaoh, king of Egypt, and he pursued the Israelites**. It took him two days—the 19th and 20th of Nisan—to reach them. In contrast to Pharaoh's hesitation, **the Israelites had left triumphantly**, confident in God's well-established ability to overcome the Egyptians.

- ◆ *Second Reading* 9 **The Egyptians—all Pharaoh's chariot horses, his horsemen and his army—pursued them, and overtook them** toward dusk on the 20th of Nisan, **while they were camping by the Sea of Reeds, at Pi Hachiot, before Baal Tzefon**.

10 **Pharaoh drew himself nearer**, to the frontlines, as he had promised.³³ **The Israelites raised their eyes and caught sight of the Egyptians advancing at their rear** in exemplary military discipline, showing they all shared the same vehement hatred for the Israelites.³⁴ They also **raised their eyes and caught sight of** the angelic Prince of Egypt coming to the Egyptians' aid. When they saw both of these, **they became very frightened**. They knew God had promised to bring them safely into the Land of Israel, so there was nothing to fear, but **the Israelites** did what their forefathers had always done, even when there was no objective danger: they **cried out to God**.³⁵

✧ CHASIDIC INSIGHTS ✧

8 **The Israelites had left triumphantly** (lit., “**with arms held high**”): Onkelos renders this expression as “with a revealed head,” meaning “boldly unafraid,” not bothering to shield their heads with helmets or the like.

The Ba'al Shem Tov's grandson, Rabbi Moshe Chaim Efraim of Sadilkov, pointed out³⁶ that the word for “with a head” (*bereish*) can be seen as an acronym formed from the first letters of the name of Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai, author of the *Zohar*, the seminal classic of Jewish mysticism. Allegorically, then, this phrase can be understood to mean that “The Israelites will leave [exile] with the revelation of [the teachings of] Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai.”

Indeed, in the *Zohar* itself,³⁷ the prophet Elijah is quoted as saying that those who study the teachings of “this book...the *Zohar*...will not need to undergo trials [before the final Redemption]. Since the Jewish people will, in the future, taste from the Tree of Life, which is the *Zohar*, they will, in this merit, leave exile in mercy, fulfilling the verse, ‘God Himself will lead them, and there will be no alien deity with Him.’”³⁸

Rabbi Moshe Chaim Efraim then quotes Rabbi Eliezer Lipa of Chmielnik³⁹ as saying that *bereish* can also be seen as an acronym for the Ba'al Shem Tov's name—Rabbi Yisrael ben Sarah, or Rabbi Yisrael Ba'al Shem.

This accords with the Ba'al Shem Tov's account of his famous spiritual ascent on Rosh HaShanah of 1746,⁴⁰

31. Rashi on 15:22, below. 32. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 16, pp. 148-160. 33. Above, v. 6. 34. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 21, pp. 101-103. 35. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 11, pp. 52-54. 36. *Degel Machaneh Ephraim* on this verse. 37. 3:124b. 38. Deuteronomy 32:12. 39. Son of Rabbi Elimiech of Lizhensk and author of *Orach LaTzadik*. 40. Described in the Ba'al Shem Tov's letter to his brother-in-law, Rabbi Gershon of Kitov, printed at the end of *Ben Porat Yosef* (127cd) and quoted partially in *Keter Shem Tov* 1.

— ONKELOS —

11 ואמרו למשה המדלית קברין במצרים דברתנא לממת במדברא מה דא עבדתא לנא לאפקותנא ממצרים: 12 הלא דין פתגמא די מלילנא עמנו במצרים למימר שבק מננא ונפלח ית מצראי ארי טב לנא דנפלח ית מצראי מדנמות במדברא: 13 ואמר משה לעמא לא תדחלון אתעמדי וחזו ית פקנא די די יעביד לבון יומא דין ארי כמא די חזיתון ית מצראי יומא דין לא תוספון למחזיוון עוד עד עלמא: 14 יי יגיה לבון קרב ואתון תשתקון:

11 וַיֹּאמְרוּ אֶל־מֹשֶׁה הַמִּבְלִי אֵין־קְבָרִים בְּמִצְרַיִם לְקַחְתָּנוּ לָמוֹת בַּמִּדְבָּר מִה־זֹּאת עֲשִׂיתָ לָנוּ לְהוֹצִיאָנוּ מִמִּצְרַיִם: 12 הֲלֹא־זֶה הַדָּבָר אֲשֶׁר דִּבַּרְנוּ אֵלֶיךָ בְּמִצְרַיִם לֵאמֹר הַדָּל מִמֶּנּוּ וְנַעֲבֹדָה אֶת־מִצְרַיִם כִּי טוֹב לָנוּ עֲבֹד אֶת־מִצְרַיִם מִמֶּתְנוּ בַּמִּדְבָּר: 13 וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה אֶל־הָעָם אֶל־תִּירְאוּ הַתִּיַצְבוּ וִירְאוּ אֶת־יְשׁוּעַת יְהוָה אֲשֶׁר־יַעֲשֶׂה לָכֶם הַיּוֹם כִּי אֲשֶׁר רִאִיתֶם אֶת־מִצְרַיִם הַיּוֹם לֹא תִסָּפוּ לְרֹאתָם עוֹד עַד־עוֹלָם: 14 יְהוָה יִלָּחֶם לָכֶם וְאַתֶּם תַּחֲרִשׁוּן: פ

— RASHI —

מוֹתִיר דַּאֲבָשְׁלוֹם³⁵ — שְׁאָמוֹת. כְּמוֹ: "לַיּוֹם קוֹמִי לַעֲד"³⁶, "עַד שׁוֹבִי בְּשָׁלוֹם"³⁷ — שְׁאָקוֹם, שְׁאָשׁוּב: 13 כִּי אֲשֶׁר רִאִיתֶם אֶת־מִצְרַיִם וְגו'. מִה־שְׁרִאִיתֶם אוֹתָם אֵינוֹ אֶלָּא הַיּוֹם. הַיּוֹם הוּא שְׁרִאִיתֶם אוֹתָם, וְלֹא תוֹסִיפוּ עוֹד: 14 יִלָּחֶם לָכֶם. בְּשִׁבְיָכֶם. וְכֵן "כִּי ה' נִלָּחֵם לָהֶם"³⁸. וְכֵן "אִם־לֹאֵל תִּרְיֹבוּ"³⁹. וְכֵן "וְאֲשֶׁר דִּבַּר־לִי"⁴⁰. וְכֵן "וְהָאֵתָם תִּרְיֹבוּן לְבַעַל"⁴¹:

31. האם בגלל מחסור של לא קברים. 32. שמות ה, כא. 33. חולם. 34. שמות טו, ג. 35. שמואל ב יט, א. 36. צפניה ג, ח. 37. דברי הימים ב יח, כו. 38. שמות יד, כה. 39. איוב יג, ח. 40. בראשית כד, ו. 41. שופטים ו, לא.

— CHASIDIC INSIGHTS —

But alas, prayer is passive, and this, too, is not the path.

Rather, God commands us to journey forth, to continue on our path to Sinai, to bring ourselves and the world around us closer to the Torah, one good deed at a time.

The common denominator among the four factions was that their plans of action originated in their own psyche. They lacked the absolute surrender to Divine consciousness that would have allowed them to hear the voice of God. When we reach the level of total surrender and "journey forth," the sea is split: the hidden becomes revealed. The deepest dimension of the soul—the aspect that is absolutely one with God—is manifest.⁵⁰

There is indeed a time for prayer. On a personal level, it is the highest form of connection to God. However, when action is called for, prayer is the wrong response. When the sea is waiting to be split, when God demands forward movement, it is not time to stop and worry about personal levels of connectedness.

This lesson is eternal, continuing to resound nowa-

days.

The sea is home to as much or more life as is dry land. The major difference is that its life forms are concealed by the water. There comes a point in our lives when we must "split the sea"—we must be able to see beyond the physical trappings and recognize the all-pervading Godly vitality that is the source of all life. Every person is capable of this; all that is needed is the will. Assisting someone else in this process often enables us to accomplish it for ourselves as well.

This is God's message: now is a time for action. Sequestering oneself in a synagogue or study hall, as personally fulfilling as it may be, is not the proper approach. There are people who need our help; they are waiting for their personal Splitting of the Sea. It is necessary to go out, to "journey forth" and help ensure that the entire world joins in the victorious march through the challenges of the Sea of Reeds toward the final and complete redemption.⁵¹

For the Egyptians whom you have seen today you will never see again: This statement is viewed not only as an assurance, but also as a commandment: It

50. Likutei Sichot, vol. 3, p. 876 ff. 51. Sichot Kodesh 5740, vol. 2, pp. 23-27.

11 But the heat of the danger soon made them speak insolently despite their trust in God. **They said to Moses, “Was it for want of graves in Egypt that you brought us to die in the desert? What is this that you have done to us, taking us out of Egypt?”**

12 **Is this not the very thing we spoke to you about in Egypt,** when Dathan and Aviram said, ‘Leave us alone and let us serve the Egyptians’?⁴⁵ **For it would have been better for us to serve the Egyptians than to die in the desert!”** Alternatively, the people voiced these complaints when they saw that the Egyptians continued to approach even after they had prayed; or only some of them still believed in God’s promise while others began to have doubts.⁴⁶ In any case, this was the first time the people challenged God’s ability to come to their aid.⁴⁷

13 **But Moses said to the people, “Have no fear. Stand firm and witness the deliverance that God will perform for you today, for the Egyptians whom you have seen today, you will never see again.**

14 **God will do battle for you; you shall remain silent.”**

✧ CHASIDIC INSIGHTS ✧

arousal on the part of the Jewish people; they, too, realized that desperate measures were called for.

Similarly, whenever we are confronted with a challenge, we should view it as an opportunity for spiritual growth rather than try to evade it. When we are comfortable and complacent, we are apt to lose sight of priorities or lose our sense of urgency in our Divine mission. Physical or spiritual adversity can shock us out of this indifference, enabling us to climb to the sublime spiritual heights possible through repentance for our callousness. The challenge of difficulties undermines our egotistical self-assurance and affords us the opportunity to advancement in our relationship with God by breaking through the obstacle.⁴⁸

13 But Moses said to the people: The Jews were in a dilemma. They were standing without rafts in front of the Sea of Reeds and the Egyptians were fast approaching. Four factions developed among them, each with another plan of action:

- ♦ “Let us drown ourselves in the sea!”
- ♦ “Let us surrender and return to Egypt!”
- ♦ “Let us wage war against them!”
- ♦ “Let us pray!”

Moses replied to each faction in turn:

- ♦ *Stand firm and witness the deliverance that God will perform for you today.* —do not jump into the sea.
- ♦ *For the Egyptians whom you have seen today, you will never see again.* —do not return to Egypt.
- ♦ *God will do battle for you.* —do not wage war against

them.

- ♦ *You shall remain silent.* —do not pray.

What, then, were they to do? *Let them journey forth!* —continue along on the path to Mount Sinai and all will be well.⁴⁹

These four factions reflect four erroneous attitudes that we, too, are liable to adopt in our confrontation with spiritual darkness:

- ♦ At times we wish to “jump into the sea,” to immerse ourselves in the pure waters of Torah and prayer and shut our eyes in oblivion to the darkness around us.
- ♦ At times we do better saying, “let us return to Egypt”—we will deal with the darkness, but as slaves. We resign ourselves to our fate of living in a dark world; we do our job but without hope.
- ♦ Even better is when we say, “let us wage war”—we feel the power of light and aspire to conquer the Pharaohs of our dark world. But when God instructs us to go on to Mount Sinai, it is not time to do battle. Furthermore, our motives for battle are questionable: do they stem from a commitment to goodness or from a desire to fight?
- ♦ The fourth path is the highest—“let us pray.” During prayer we become one with God, losing our sense of self, and desiring only to fulfill His wishes. We would not think of secluding ourselves from the world or losing hope that light will ultimately prevail. We would not think of waging self-strategized wars not commanded by God.

45. Above, 5:21. 46. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 11, pp. 52-54. 47. *Arachin* 15a. 48. *Torah Or* 61c; *Sefer HaMa’amarim* 5721, pp. 257-8; *Sichot Kodesh* 5721, pp. 62-3. 5726, pp. 209-210. 49. *Mechilta*.

— ONKELOS —

15 ואמר יי למשה קבלית צלותך מליל עם בני ישראל ויטלון: 16 ואת טול ית חוטרך וארם ית ירך על ימא ובזעדי ויעלון בני ישראל בגו ימא בישתא: 17 ואנא הא אנא מתקיף ית לבא דמצראי ויעלון בתריהון ואתיקר בפרעה ובכל משריתה ברתיוכהי ובפרשוהי: 18 וידעון מצראי ארי אנא יי באתיקרתי בפרעה ברתיוכהי ובפרשוהי: 19 ונטל מלאכא דיי דמדבר קדם משריתא דישראל ואזל מבתריהון ונטל עמודא דעננא מן קרמיהון ושרא מבתריהון:

◆ **שלישי 15** ויאמר יהוה אל־משה מה־תצעק אלי דבר אל־בני־ישראל ויסעו: **16** ואתה הרים את־מטף ונטה את־ידך על־הים ובקעוהו ויבאו בני־ישראל בתוך הים ביבשה: **17** ואני הנני מחזק את־לב מצרים ויבאו אחריהם ואפבדה בפרעה ובכל־חילו ברכבו ובפרשיו: **18** וידעו מצרים כי־אני יהוה בהפבדי בפרעה ברכבו ובפרשיו: **19** ויסע מלאך האלהים ההלך לפני מחנה ישראל וילך מאחריהם ויסע עמוד הענן מפניהם ויעמוד מאחריהם:

— RASHI —

מחנה ישראל, ולקבל חצים ובליסטראות של מצרים. בכל־מקום הוא אומר: "מלאך ה'", וכאן "מלאך האלהים". אין אלהים בכל־מקום אלא דין, מלמד שהיו ישראל נתונים בדין באותה שעה, אם להציל אם להאבד עם מצרים: **ויסע עמוד הענן**. כשחשכה, והשלים עמוד הענן את המחנה לעמוד האש, לא נסתלק הענן כמו שהיה רגיל להסתלק ערבית לגמרי, אלא נסע והלך לו מאחריהם להחשיך למצרים:

15 מה־ תצעק אלי. למדנו, שהיה משה עומד ומתפלל. אמר לו הקדוש ברוך־הוא: לא עת עתה להאריך בתפלה, שישאל נתונים בצרה. דבר אחר: "מה־ תצעק אלי" — עלי הדבר תלוי ולא עליך, כמו שנאמר להלך: "על־בני ועל־פעל ידי תצוני"⁴²: **דבר אל־בני־ישראל ויסעו**. אין להם אלא לסע, שאין הם עומד בפניהם. כדאי וכות אבותיהם והם, והאמונה שהאמינו בי ויצאו, לקרע להם הים: **19 וילך מאחריהם**. להבדיל בין מחנה מצרים ובין

⁴². ישעיה מה, יא.

— CHASIDIC INSIGHTS —

Nachshon knew that God had instructed the people to travel to Mount Sinai to receive the Torah. He was therefore singularly unimpressed with the obstacles that stood in the way. The fact that a sea stood between the people and their final goal did not faze him. If he had to jump into the sea and keep going until he would reach Mount Sinai, so be it.

Nachshon did not enter into any of the discussions mentioned above, nor was he impressed with any of the four factions' plans, since none of them led to Mount Sinai. He did what was to him the only logical thing: to jump into the sea and move one step closer to Mount Sinai. In his merit, the sea split.⁵⁸

15-16 Let them journey forth...take up your staff and raise your arm over the sea: The splitting of the Sea of Reeds is generally viewed as the archetype of a miraculous and supernatural event. Yet even in this

case, there had to be a natural action to catalyze the miracle: God instructed the people to journey forward and Moses to lift his staff over the water. God always demands some human act first and only then does He perform miracles.

Simply stated, this is because events that occur without our involvement do not truly affect us; we may adjust to the changes, but we are not internally affected. Only when we expend some effort do we truly appreciate and assimilate the miracle.

The same applies in all areas of life. Asking for God's blessings is not sufficient; we must do something that can serve as a conduit for the blessing. Whether it is a visit to the doctor or performing an extra good deed, the blessing requires an expenditure of effort on our part.⁵⁹

⁵⁸. Likutei Sichot, vol. 1, pp. 135-136. ⁵⁹. Hitva'aduyot 5742, vol. 2, pp. 561-562.

Splitting the Sea

- ◆ **Third Reading 15** Moses then began to pray to God, too. But **GOD said to Moses, “Why are you crying out to Me?** The Egyptians are almost upon you. Now is the time for action, not prayer. And in any case, the outcome of this situation is not dependent upon you, but on Me. As to what to do: **speak to the Israelites and let them journey forth!** In the combined merit of their forebearers and the faith they themselves showed in Me when they left Egypt,⁵² the Sea of Reeds will split before them!

16 As for you, take up your staff and raise your arm over the Sea of Reeds and split it, and the Israelites will go into the midst of the sea on dry land.

17 And as for Me, I am going to harden the hearts of the Egyptians so that they will go in after them. I shall thus be glorified in the eyes of the world through what will then happen to Pharaoh and his entire army, his chariots and his horsemen, when I drown them in the sea.

18 The Egyptians here and back in Egypt will then finally know that I am God, when I am thus glorified through Pharaoh, his chariots, and his horsemen.”

19 As the Egyptians approached, the angel of God that had been advancing in front of the Israelite camp now moved and followed behind it in order to keep the Egyptians from penetrating into the Israelite camp and to absorb whatever arrows and rocks the Egyptians would hurl at the Israelites.⁵³ From the point when the danger to the Israelites became palpable and throughout the ensuing night, the heavenly court deliberated over whether the Israelites should be allowed to escape or drown in the sea with the Egyptians. At nightfall, **the pillar of cloud, instead of disappearing as it usually did, also moved from in front of the Israelites and stood at their rear.**

CHASIDIC INSIGHTS

is forbidden for Jews to settle in Egypt;⁵⁴ we are only allowed to visit there for the sake of business.

Rabbi Yitzchak Luria explains the reason for the prohibition to travel to Egypt as follows: Every journey we take—indeed, everything we do—must serve some Godly purpose. There are “sparks” of holiness scattered throughout the entire world; our mission is to return them to their source by utilizing our physical surroundings to fulfill God’s plan for reality. When the Jewish people left Egypt, they took everything that could be elevated out along with them; Egypt was totally emptied of its holy sparks.⁵⁵ Therefore, since there is no mission left to be accomplished in Egypt, it is indeed forbidden for Jews to travel there, since everything that a Jew does must have a purpose.

This explains why business travel *is* permitted. Although the sparks from Egypt itself were all elevated, objects continue to be brought into the country from elsewhere through trade, together with their corresponding spiritual content. It is therefore permissible and even necessary for some people to conduct trade there, thereby gathering those elusive sparks as well.⁵⁶

15 Speak to the Israelites and let them journey forth: According to the Midrash,⁵⁷ the sea had not yet split when God told the Jews to enter it. The people hesitated, until the prince of the tribe of Judah, Nachshon ben Aminadav (Aaron’s brother-in-law) jumped in. Only then did God tell Moses to raise his hand and split the sea.

52. Above, 4:31, 12:27, 39. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 11, p. 54, note 23. 53. Rashi here and on Deuteronomy 32:11. 54. See *Mishneh Torah*, *Melachim* 5:7. 55. See above, on Exodus 12:36, etc. 56. *Sichot Kodesh* 5734, vol. 2, pp. 432-433. 57. *Mechilta*, *Beshalach* 5; *Sotah* 37a and *Chidushei Agadot ad. loc.*

— ONKELOS —

20 וַעֲלֵךְ בֵּין מִצְרַיִם וּמִצְרָאֵל וּבֵין מִצְרַיִם וְיִשְׂרָאֵל וְהָיָה עֲנָנָא וְקִבְלָא לְמִצְרָאֵי וּלְיִשְׂרָאֵל נָהָר כַּל-לֵילִיא וְלֹא אֶתְקָרִיב דִּין לְיָת דִּין כַּל-לֵילִיא: 21 וְאֲרִים מִשָּׁה יֵת יִדָּה עַל יָמָא וּדְבַר יֵת יָמָא בְּרוּחַ קְדוּמָא תְּקִיף כַּל-לֵילִיא וְשׁוּי יֵת יָמָא לִיבְשָׁתָא וְאֶתְבְּנֵוּ מִיָּא: 22 וַעֲלֵוּ בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּגוּ יָמָא בִּיבְשָׁתָא וּמִיָּא לְהוֹן שׁוּרִין מִימִינְהוֹן וּמִשְׁמָאלְהוֹן:

20 וַיָּבֹא בֵּין | מִחֲנֶה מִצְרַיִם וּבֵין מִחֲנֶה יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיְהִי הָעֲנָן וַהֲחֹשֶׁךְ וַיָּאָר אֶת-הַלֵּילָה וְלֹא-קָרַב זֶה אֶל-זֶה כַּל-הַלֵּילָה: 21 וַיֵּט מֹשֶׁה אֶת-יָדוֹ עַל-הַיָּם וַיִּזְלַךְ יַחֲוֶה | אֶת-הַיָּם בְּרוּחַ קָדִים עֹז וְכַל-הַלֵּילָה וַיֵּשֶׁם אֶת-הַיָּם לַחֲרֹבָה וַיִּבְקְעוּ הַמַּיִם: 22 וַיָּבֹאוּ בְּנֵי-יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּתוֹךְ הַיָּם בִּיבְשָׁה וְהַמַּיִם לָהֶם חֹמָה מִימִינֵם וּמִשְׁמָאלָם:

— RASHI —

הַלֵּילָה. וַהֲחֹשֶׁךְ שֶׁל עֶרְפֶּל לְצַד מִצְרַיִם: וְלֹא-קָרַב זֶה אֶל-זֶה. מִחֲנֶה אֵל מִחֲנֶה: 21 בְּרוּחַ קָדִים עֹז. בְּרוּחַ קָדִים שֶׁהִיא עֹז שֶׁבְּרוּחוֹת, הִיא הָרוּחַ שֶׁהַקְדוּשׁ בְּרוּחָהּ הוּא נִפְרַע בָּהּ מִן הָרָשָׁעִים, שְׁנֵאמַר: "בְּרוּחַ קָדִים אֲפִיצֵם"⁴⁴, "וְבֹא קָדִים רוּחַ ה'"⁴⁵, "רוּחַ הַקְדֻשָּׁה שֶׁבְּרוּחַ בָּלָב יָמִים"⁴⁶, "הִגָּה בְּרוּחוֹ הַקֶּשֶׁה בְּיוֹם קָדִים"⁴⁷: וַיִּבְקְעוּ הַמַּיִם. כַּל-מַיִם שֶׁבְּעוֹלָם:

20 וַיָּבֹא בֵּין מִחֲנֶה מִצְרַיִם. מָשַׁל לְמַהֲלָךְ בְּדָרָךְ וּבְנֵו מַהֲלָךְ לְפָנָיו, בָּאוּ לְסֻטִּים לְשִׁבּוֹתוֹ — נִטְלוּ מִלְּפָנָיו וּנְתַנּוּ לְאַחֲרָיו. בָּא זָאב מֵאַחֲרָיו — נִתְּנוּ לְפָנָיו. בָּאוּ לְסֻטִּים לְפָנָיו וְזֹאבִים מֵאַחֲרָיו — נִתְּנוּ עַל זְרוּעוֹ וְנִלְחַם בָּהֶם. כֶּף וְאֶנְכִי תְּרַגְלָתִי לְאַפְרִים קָחַם עַל-זְרוּעָתִי"⁴³: וַיְהִי הָעֲנָן וַהֲחֹשֶׁךְ. לְמִצְרַיִם: וַיָּאָר. עֲמוּד הָאֵשׁ אֶת הַלֵּילָה לְיִשְׂרָאֵל וְהוֹלֵךְ לְפָנֵיהֶם בְּדָרְכּוֹ לְלֶכֶת כַּל-

43. הושע יא, ג. 44. ירמיה יח, יז. 45. הושע יג, טו. 46. יחזקאל כז, כו. 47. ישעיה כז, ח.

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freedom to choose between good and evil at any given moment, unencumbered by precedent or habit.⁶⁹

And the waters split: The Splitting of the Sea was the culmination of the Exodus for several reasons:

- ♦ The Egyptian army still remained intact after the Exodus, so the threat of re-enslavement still existed. At the sea, the people were being pursued by an army that naturally should have destroyed them. According to the Midrash,⁷⁰ there were 30 Egyptians to each Jew. Only when the sea split and swallowed the Egyptians alive was the process of the Exodus truly complete.
- ♦ God had promised Abraham that his descendents would leave their exile with great wealth. Although the Jews took a large amount of wealth out of Egypt, they technically only *borrowed* this wealth from the Egyptians. It did not actually belong to them until after the Egyptians drowned in the sea. Furthermore, the Egyptian wealth that the Jews took at the sea exceeded that which they took with them from Egypt.⁷¹
- ♦ Spiritually, God's promise to Abraham was that the Jews would liberate all the sparks of holiness trapped in Egypt. Since it was primarily at the sea that the wealth of Egypt became theirs, it follows that the primary release of the sparks also occurred at the sea.
- ♦ Finally, the ultimate goal of the Exodus, the receiv-

ing of the Torah, could only have been achieved by first experiencing the spiritual revelations at the Splitting of the Sea.⁷²

Spiritually, leaving Egypt means freeing the Divine soul from the shackles of the animal soul. The Divine soul is free when it realizes that although we are surrounded by "pharaohs," we need not be servants to them; we are free to be servants of God alone. But the soul cannot experience this freedom fully until "the sea has been split," until the true, Divine nature of reality has been revealed.

Even without being aware of the true nature of reality, we can "leave Egypt," break out of our bondage to materialism and dutifully fulfill our responsibilities. But such uninspired commitment is vulnerable. If our mind and heart are not in it, Pharaoh and his armies can give chase. We truly left Egypt and Pharaoh behind only after the sea is split, when God's presence is revealed and obvious and the lie of Egypt has been exposed.

It is for this very reason that, just as we are required to mention the Exodus from Egypt in our daily prayers, we are also required to mention the Splitting of the Sea, since it is an integral part of our daily spiritual exodus.⁷³

22 On dry land: It is related in the Midrash that God caused fruit trees to instantaneously grow in the middle of the sea and bear fruit; the children plucked the fruit of these trees and fed them to the birds, which

69. *Sha'ar HaYichud VehoEmunah*, chapter 2. 70. *Tanchuma* on Deuteronomy 12:29. 71. Exodus 15:22. 72. See below, on 14:29. 73. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 1, pp. 878-880.

20 It came and positioned itself between the camp of the Egyptians and the camp of Israel. Thus, **there was cloud and darkness** for the Egyptians, for the pillar of cloud hid the light shed by the pillar of fire. It was so dark for the Egyptians that they could not see the Israelite camp at all. They could no longer attack the Israelites, so the angel of God was no longer needed and departed.⁶⁰ But the Egyptians continued to shoot arrows and hurl projectiles nonetheless, so the pillar of cloud now absorbed these.⁶¹ **But**, although it was dark for the Egyptians, the pillar of fire **lit up the night** for the Israelites. Because the pillar of cloud blocked the Egyptians' vision, **neither camp came near the other all through** the first two thirds⁶² of the night.

21 Moses raised his arm over the sea. And God drove back the sea throughout the night with a powerful east wind—which He uses to punish the wicked⁶³—**and turned the sea into dry land, and**, in addition **the waters** all over the world **split**, so the whole world would know of this miracle. The sea split into twelve pathways, one for each tribe.⁶⁴

22 The Israelites went into the midst of the sea on dry land, and the water formed a wall for each tribe on its right and on its left. The tribe of Benjamin was the first to enter.⁶⁵

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20 There was cloud and darkness, but [the pillar of fire] lit up the night: The literal translation of the verse is: “there was cloud and darkness and it [i.e., the cloud and darkness] lit up the night,” implying that the darkness itself became a source of illumination.⁶⁶ This revelation was a precursor to the Splitting of the Sea, where the concealment of the sea would also be “peeled back” to disclose the great treasures hidden within.

Darkness—the apparent absence of Divine revelation and clarity—is only such from our limited perspective. From God’s perspective, “Darkness does not obscure anything for You; night is as bright as day, and darkness as light.”⁶⁷ Darkness is a challenge we are meant to overcome and thereby reap the benefits that are to be had by overcoming it.

We can approach this challenge in two ways. One is to repel the darkness by taking whatever light we do have and forging ahead with it. Ignoring the darkness and focusing on the light will dispel the darkness, even if the darkness is seemingly much greater than the little light we possess. This strategy is certainly better than succumbing to the depression and despair of darkness, and will even suffice, in most cases, to carry us through the dark periods of life.

But the ultimate objective is not merely to dispel the darkness but to transform it into light by turning its

negativity into a positive force in our lives. When we succeed in this, the resultant light is infinitely brighter than the light that was shining as such all along.⁶⁸

21 And God drove back the sea with a powerful east wind throughout the night: In other words, God had to keep the wind constantly blowing in order to keep the walls of water erect. Had God let the wind stop, these walls would have collapsed and the sea would have reverted to its natural level.

When God created the world, He also acted against the “natural” state of things: He created existence out of non-existence. Analogous to the Splitting of the Sea, God has to keep His creative force constantly “blowing” into reality in order to keep it from reverting back to its original, default state of non-existence. Reality is therefore not something that exists on its own, nor is it even something that exists by virtue of the property of existence with which God imbued it when He first created it. It exists solely because God is actively and continuously infusing it with His creative force.

The implications of this truth are both profound and far-reaching. If God is constantly recreating the world, then the world right now is, in a very real sense, an entirely different one than the world that existed a moment ago. It is a fresh, new world, and we are brand new people, not necessarily straitjacketed by any cause-and-effect relationship with the past. We have complete

60. *Sichot Kodesh* 5732, vol. 1, pp. 406-408, 410-411, 417-419, 452-454, 459-462. 61. Rashi on 19:4, below. 62. See below, v. 24. 63. As seen in Jeremiah 18:17, Hosea 13:15, Ezekiel 27:26, and Isaiah 27:8. 64. Rashi on Psalms 136:13. 65. Rashi on 1 Samuel 15:17. 66. *Sefer HaMa'amarim* 5666, p. 227; *BeSha'ah SheHikdimu* 5672, vol. 2, pp. 934-942, vol. 3, pp. 1323-1328. 67. Psalms 139:12. 68. *Hitva'aduyot* 5711, vol. 2, pp. 42-43.

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23 וַיִּרְדְּפוּ מִצְרַיִם וַיָּבֹאוּ אֶתְרֵיהֶם בְּלִי סוּם פְּרָעָה רָכְבוּ וּפָרָשָׁיו אֶל־תּוֹךְ הַיָּם: 24 וַיְהִי בְּאַשְׁמֹרֶת הַבֹּקֶר וַיִּשְׁקֹף יְהוָה אֶל־מַחֲנֵה מִצְרַיִם בַּעֲמֹד אֵשׁ וַעֲנַן וַיָּהָה אֶת מַחֲנֵה מִצְרַיִם: 25 וַיִּסַּר אֶת אַפְּן מִרְכַּבְתּוֹ וַיִּנְהָגֵהוּ בְּכַבְדָּת וַיֹּאמֶר מִצְרַיִם אֲנוֹסָה מִפְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל כִּי יְהוָה נִלְחָם לָהֶם בְּמִצְרַיִם: פ
רביעי 26 וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל־מֹשֶׁה נִטָּה אֶת־יָדְךָ עַל־הַיָּם וַיֵּשְׁבוּ הַמַּיִם עַל־מִצְרַיִם עַל־רָכְבוֹ וְעַל־פָּרָשָׁיו:

RASHI

23 בל סוס פרעה. וכי סוס אחד היה? מגיד שאין כלם חשובין לפני המקום אלא כסוס אחד: 24 באשמורת הבקר. שלשת חלקי הלילה קרויין אשמורות, ואותה שלפני הבקר קרויה אשמורת הבקר. ואומר אני, לפי שהלילה חלוק למשמרות שיר של מלאכי השרת, כת אחר כת, לשלשה חלקים, לכך קרוי "אשמורת". וזהו שתרגם אנקלוס "במטרת": וישקף. ויבט. כלומר, פנה אליהם להשחיתם. ותרגומו: "ואסתכי", אף הוא לשון הבטח, כמו: "שדה צפים"⁴⁸ — "חקל סכותא": בעמוד אש וענן. עמוד ענן יורד ועושה אותו כטיט, ועמוד אש מרתחו, וטלפי סוסייהם משתמטות: ויהם. לשון מהומה, אישטורדישו"ן בלעז⁴⁹. ערבכם, נטל סגניות

שלהם. ושנינו בפרקי רבי אליעזר בנו של רבי יוסי הגלילי⁵⁰: כל־מקום שנאמר בו "מהוזה" — הרעמת קול הוא, וזה אב לכל: "וירעם ה' בקול־גדול וגו' על־פלשתים ויהם"⁵¹: 25 ויסר את אפן מרכבתו. מבח האש נשרפו הגלגלים, והמרכבות נגררות, והיושבים בהם נעים ואבריהן מתפרקין: וינהגה בכבדת. בהנהגה שהיא כבדה וקשה להם, במדה שמדרו — "ויכבד לבו" הוא ועבדיו⁵², אף כאן — "וינהגה בכבדת": נלחם להם במצרים. במצרים. דבר אחר: "במצרים" — בארץ מצרים, שכשם שאלו לוקים על הים, כך לוקים אותם שנשארו במצרים: 26 וישבו המים. שוקפים ועומדים בחומה, ושובו למקומם ויכסו "על מצרים":

48. במדבר כג, יד. 49. מבוכה, הקלם. 50. עיין משנת רבי אליעזר (ניו יורק, תרצ"ד) עמ' 15. 51. שמואל א' ז, י. 52. שמות ט, לד.

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reality. Since we are still in exile, we do not always see the effects of our actions, but eventually, when the unseen changes in reality reach a critical mass, they will usher in the messianic redemption. Then, even the inanimate kingdom will openly reveal its hidden, Divine potential.⁷⁷

And the water formed a wall for them on their right and on their left: Allegorically, too, we need to be protected from the floodwaters of life on both the "left" and the "right." When the evil inclination attempts to lead us astray from the proper, Torah-true path, there are two tacks it can take.

It can attack from the "right": When we are doing well, financially and otherwise, it attempts to convince us that we have no need for Divine assistance. "When the Jews were in the desert, without anything at all, they needed God's help for food and sustenance. But

you are doing quite well all on your own. Your charm/business sense/trading savvy is all that you need. Why bother with old-fashioned rituals and constrictions?"

Or, it can assault us from the "left": When things aren't going so well, it attempts to convince us that we have no time for eliciting Divine assistance. "This is no time for restrictions," it says. "As soon as things get better, when you've got the time and the money, then you will be able to worry about such things as Shabbat observance, ethical business behavior, and the like. But right now you've got to work. You're in the rat-race, and you need to concentrate solely and fully on getting ahead."

We therefore need God's protection on both sides, for only with it can we be assured of successfully traversing the turbulent waters of life and staying on the tried and true path of the Torah.⁷⁸

77. Likutei Sichot, vol. 3, pp. 972-973. 78. Based on Likutei Sichot, vol. 2, pp. 524-525.

23 As the pillar of cloud followed the Israelites into the sea, the Egyptians' ability to see was restored. **The Egyptians—all of Pharaoh's horses, chariots and horsemen—came in pursuit after the Israelites into the midst of the sea.**

24 Despite the Egyptians' numbers, however, God thwarted them easily. The night is divided into three parts, during each of which a different "watch" of angels takes its turn singing God's praises. **During the third watch** of the night, which is already the beginning of the morning, **God looked down upon the camp of the Egyptians** and confounded them **with the pillar of fire and the pillar of cloud**: the pillar of cloud turned the seabed under the Egyptians into mud and the pillar of fire made the mud boiling hot, so the horses' hooves fell off. God then made all the ensigns on the chariots fall off and made it thunder. All this **threw the camp of the Egyptians into confusion.**

25 The hot mud burnt the wheels of the chariots and they fell off. God thus **removed the wheels of their chariots**, so the horses dragged them on the ground. He thus **treated the Egyptians heavily**, shaking up the riders and dislocating their joints. **The Egyptians said, "Let us flee from Israel, for God is fighting for them against Egypt!"** As God struck the Egyptians at the Sea of Reeds, He simultaneously struck many more back in Egypt. When the sea split, the heavens also split open, and as the Israelites emerged from the sea even the least of them beheld a prophetic vision superior to any the Biblical prophets after Moses would ever experience.⁷⁴

- ◆ **Fourth Reading 26 God said to Moses, "Raise your arm over the sea so that the waters that have been standing erect, allowing the Israelites and the Egyptians to traverse the Sea of Reeds, will come back over the Egyptians, over their chariots and their horsemen before they leave it."**

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then joined the Jews in their song of praise to God. Although God is generally loath to tamper with nature, He caused trees to grow miraculously to teach the fledgling Jewish nation an important lesson: whenever there is an opportunity to utilize some part of creation in fulfilling God's purpose, it should be taken advantage of. Thus God caused the seabed—which for the brief time during the Jew's passage was capable of producing trees—to give forth fruit. These fruits in turn enhanced the people's song to their Creator. The miraculous trees teach us that even the most fleeting opportunity can and should be used to a Godly end.⁷⁵

On a deeper level, God caused fruit trees to grow and bear fruit because this was an integral part of the miracle of the Splitting of the Sea. The Splitting of the Sea was the revelation of reality's hidden side, its potential to express the Divinity pulsing within it. This revelation had to occur at all levels of creation: in the

mineral, vegetable, and animal kingdoms, as well as in humanity.

The earth possesses the potential to sustain plant life, so when the sea split, the earth manifested this potential. Plant life has the potential to sustain animal life, so the trees that sprouted from the seabed bore fruit. Animal life has the potential to sustain and enhance human life, so the birds ate from the miraculously-produced fruit and thus were enabled to join the Jews in the Song at the Sea.

As we will explain shortly,⁷⁶ the sea would not have split unless the Jews first revealed *their* hidden Divine potential; the seabed revealed *its* potential to produce fruit-bearing trees because the people revealed *their* inner Divine potential.

Similarly, when we repeat the experience of the Splitting of the Sea in our daily lives by revealing our hidden Divine potential, we affect the very fabric of

74. Rashi on 15:2, below. 75. *Sichot Kodesh* 5723, 15 Shevat. 76. On v. 29, below.

— ONKELOS —

27 ואָרַיִם מֹשֶׁה יֵת יְדָה עַל יָמָא
וְתַב יָמָא לַעֲדָן צַפְרָא לְתַקְפָּה
וּמִצְרָאֵי עֲרָקִין לְקַדְמוּתָהּ וְשִׁנִּיק יֵי
יֵת מִצְרָאֵי בְּגוּ יָמָא: 28 וְתַבּוּ מִיָּא
וְחַפּוּ יֵת רְתִיכִיא וְיֵת פְּרָשִׂיא לְכָל־
מִשְׁרֵית פְּרָעָה דְּעֵלוּ בְּתִרְיָהּ
בְּיָמָא לֹא אֲשַׁתָּאֵר בְּהוּן עַד חֹד:
29 וּבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל הִלִּיכוּ בִּיבְשֻׁתָּא
בְּגוּ יָמָא וּמִיָּא לְהוּן שׁוּרִין
מִימִינֵיהוּן וּמִשְׁמָאלָהוּן: 30 וּפְרָק
יֵי בְּיוֹמָא הַהוּא יֵת יִשְׂרָאֵל מִיָּדָא
דְּמִצְרָאֵי וְחֹזָא יִשְׂרָאֵל יֵת מִצְרָאֵי
מִיָּתִין עַל בֵּיף יָמָא:

27 וַיֵּץ מֹשֶׁה אֶת־יָדוֹ עַל־הַיָּם וַיָּשָׁב הַיָּם לַפְּנוֹת בְּקָר
לְאִיתָנוּ וּמִצְרַיִם נָסִים לִקְרָאתוֹ וַיִּנְעַר יְהוָה אֶת־
מִצְרַיִם בְּתוֹךְ הַיָּם: 28 וַיָּשָׁבוּ הַמִּיִּם וַיִּכְסּוּ אֶת־הָרֶכֶב
וְאֶת־הַפָּרָשִׁים לְכָל חֵיל פְּרָעָה הַבָּאִים אַחֲרֵיהֶם
בָּיִם לֹא־נִשְׁאָר בָּהֶם עַד־אַחַד: 29 וּבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל
הִלְכוּ בִּיבְשָׁה בְּתוֹךְ הַיָּם וְהַמִּיִּם לָהֶם חֹמָה מִימִינֵם
וּמִשְׁמָאלָם: 30 וַיִּוָּשַׁע יְהוָה בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא אֶת־יִשְׂרָאֵל
מִיַּד מִצְרַיִם וַיֵּרָא יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת־מִצְרַיִם מֵת עַל־
שִׁפְתֵי הַיָּם:

— RASHI —

הָרֶכֶב וְגו' לְכָל חֵיל פְּרָעָה. בְּךָ דֶּרֶךְ הַמִּקְרָאוֹת לְכַתֵּב
לְמַ"ד יִתְרָה, כְּמוֹ: "לְכָל־כְּלָיו תַּעֲשֶׂה נְחֹשֶׁת"⁵³. וְכֵן "לְכָל
כְּלֵי הַמִּשְׁכָּן בְּכָל עֲבֹדָתוֹ"⁵⁴, "וַיִּתְּנֵם וּמִיִּתְּרֵיהֶם לְכָל־
כְּלֵיהֶם"⁵⁵. וְאֵינָה אֵלָּא תַקּוּן לְשׁוֹן: 30 וַיֵּרָא יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת־
מִצְרַיִם מֵת. שֶׁפִּלְטָן הַיָּם עַל שִׁפְתּוֹ, בְּדִי שֶׁלֹּא יֵאמְרוּ
יִשְׂרָאֵל: כִּשְׁם שֶׁאֵנוּ עוֹלִים מִצַּד זֶה כֶּף הֵם עוֹלִין מִצַּד
אַחֵר רְחוֹק מִמֶּנּוּ, וַיִּדְּפּוּ אַחֲרֵינוּ:

27 לַפְּנוֹת בְּקָר. לַעֲת שֶׁהִבְקֵר פּוֹנָה לְבֹא: לְאִיתָנוּ. לְתַקְפּוֹ
הָרֹאשׁוֹן: נָסִים לִקְרָאתוֹ. שֶׁהָיוּ מְדוּמָּמִים וּמְטוֹרְפִים, וְרָצִין
לִקְרָאת הַמִּיִּם: וַיִּנְעַר ה'. בְּאֵדָם שֶׁמִּנְעַר אֶת הַקְּדִירָה
וְהוֹפֵךְ הָעֲלִיִּין לְמִטָּה וְהַתְּחַתּוֹן לְמַעְלָה, כֶּף הָיוּ עוֹלִין
וַיִּוֹרְדִין וּמִשְׁתַּבְּרִין בָּיִם, וְנָתַן הַקְּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ־הוּא בָהֶם
חַיּוֹת לְקַבֵּל הַיִּסּוּרִין: וַיִּנְעַר. "וְשִׁנִּיק", וְהוּא לְשׁוֹן טְרוּף
בְּלִשׁוֹן אֲרָמִי, וְהִרְבֵּה יֵשׁ בְּמִדְרָשֵׁי אֲגָדָה: 28 וַיִּכְסּוּ אֶת־

53. שמות כז, ג. 54. שם, יט. 55. במדבר ד, לב.

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can they possibly have that makes them worthy of such a great miracle?" God answered: "Their protection is derived from the right—the Torah that they will soon accept, and from the left—the prayers they will recite and the *tefilin* they will don."

Why the necessity for a double merit?

As mentioned, the purpose of the sea's splitting was not merely to escape from the Egyptians; it also served as a foretaste of the Giving of the Torah and a preparation for it. At the Giving of the Torah, the Godliness latent within the physical world would be fully revealed.

This revelation was elicited by a parallel occurrence within the Jews themselves. Under normal circumstances, the restrictive, material context in which we live our lives forces us to develop our personalities in a limited way, emphasizing one or another character trait or propensity to the exclusion of others. When we respond to God's call to join in the work of rectifying the world, we naturally gravitate toward those aspects of the Divine mission that align with our dom-

inant personality traits. We try to respond to God on our own terms.

But the Torah requires us to enlist all possible facets of human nature in performing God's work, even those that are of opposing natures. For example, we are required at times to draw Divinity into the world by studying and teaching the Torah's rules for life or fulfilling God's commandments. At other times, we are required to do just the opposite: to renounce this world and lose ourselves in the ecstatic rapture of prayer. By advancing toward accepting the Torah, the Jews displayed their *essential* connectedness to God, reflected in their willingness to serve Him on *His* terms. As such, the Jews were protected on both the "right" and the "left," i.e., they accrued the merit of their willingness to serve God in conflicting directions.

This willingness revealed and reflected their very essence, which transcended whatever particular personality each of them had developed. As a result, they merited the Splitting of the Sea, a similar act of revelation within nature.⁸⁸

88. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 3, pp. 966-973.

27 Moses raised his arm over the sea, and towards morning of the 21st of Nisan, the sea surged back to its accustomed state while the Egyptians were fleeing towards it. For the Egyptians were so confused at this point that they fled into the sea, *toward* the returning waters. **And then God churned the Egyptians in the midst of the sea:** they rose and fell,⁷⁹ together with their chariots,⁸⁰ until they were dismembered, but God kept them alive until the end so they could experience the pain. They sunk into the mud, in retribution for having made the Israelites make bricks,⁸¹ and were dashed against the waters that had solidified in the depth of the sea.⁸²

28 The waters came back and covered over the chariots and horsemen of Pharaoh's entire army that had gone into the sea after the Israelites; not one of them remained.

29 But the Israelites had walked on dry land in the midst of the sea, while the water formed a wall for them, on their right and on their left.

30 Thus, on that day, God rescued Israel from Egypt. The pathways through the sea were semicircular, and the people emerged from the water on the same side of the sea as they had entered, further north along the shore (see Figure 3).⁸³ The people did not see the Egyptians drown, so they feared that they, too, had left the sea somewhere else along the shore. They thus doubted God's ability to rescue them for a second time.⁸⁴ In order to allay this fear, God made the sea wash up all the dead Egyptians, **and thus Israel saw the Egyptians dead on the seashore.** After the Israelites saw them, the earth swallowed the dead Egyptians. In the merit of Pharaoh having previously submitted to God,⁸⁵ God granted them proper burial.⁸⁶

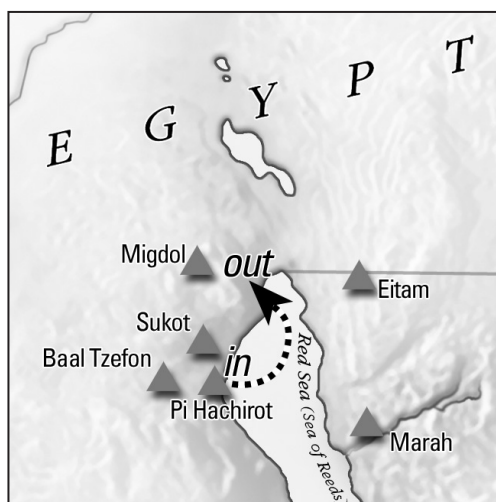


Figure 3: The Splitting of the Sea

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29 While the water formed a wall for them on their right and on their left: The repetition of this fact underscores its centrality to the miracle of the Splitting of the Sea. Indeed, it serves to indicate that this encompassing protection served not only to protect the Jews from the Egyptians—for if that were the case, it would only have been needed earlier on, when the Egyptians were still alive—but also from some other

peril endangering their journey towards the Giving of the Torah.

The Midrash⁸⁷ describes the Splitting of the Sea in the following terms:

As the Jews were passing through the sea, the angels appeared before God, complaining: "How can it be that idol worshippers such as these should be able to walk on dry land through the sea itself? What merit

79. Rashi on 15:1, below. 80. Rashi on 15:1, below. 81. Rashi on 15:4, below. 82. Rashi on 15:8, below. 83. See *Tosefot, Arachin* 15a, s.v. *Kesheim sheAnu*; Maimonides, *Commentary to the Mishnah, Avot* 5:4; *Shitah Mekubetzet, Arachin* 15a §13. 84. *Arachin* 15ab. 85. Above, 9:27. 86. Rashi on 15:12, below. 87. *Mechilta ad loc.*

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31 וְהָיָה יִשְׂרָאֵל יְתֵד הַגְּדֹלָה אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה יְהוָה
בְּמִצְרַיִם וַיִּירָאוּ הָעָם אֶת־יְהוָה וַיֹּאמְרֵינוּ בְּיַהוָה וּבְמֹשֶׁה
עֲבָדָיו: פ
15:1 אִזּוּ יִשְׁכַּח מֹשֶׁה וּבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת־הַשִּׁירָה הַזֹּאת
לְיַהוָה וַיֹּאמְרוּ לֵאמֹר אֲשִׁירָה לַיהוָה כִּי־נָאָה נָאָה סוֹם
וּרְכָבוֹ רָמָה בָּיִם:

31 וְיִירָא יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת־יְתֵד הַגְּדֹלָה אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה יְהוָה
בְּמִצְרַיִם וַיִּירָאוּ הָעָם אֶת־יְהוָה וַיֹּאמְרֵינוּ בְּיַהוָה וּבְמֹשֶׁה
עֲבָדָיו: פ
15:1 אִזּוּ יִשְׁכַּח מֹשֶׁה וּבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת־הַשִּׁירָה הַזֹּאת
לְיַהוָה וַיֹּאמְרוּ לֵאמֹר אֲשִׁירָה לַיהוָה כִּי־נָאָה נָאָה סוֹם
וּרְכָבוֹ רָמָה בָּיִם:

RASHI

הַעֲנֵן⁵⁵. לְפִי שֶׁהָיָה דָּבָר הַהוּא תְּמִיד, וְנוֹפֵל בּוֹ בֵּין לְשׁוֹן
עֲתִיד בֵּין לְשׁוֹן עֶבֶר. אֲבָל זֶה, שֶׁלֹּא הָיָה אֵלָּא לְשָׁעָה,
אֵינוֹ יָכוֹל לִישָׁבוּ בְּלִשׁוֹן הַזֶּה: **כִּי־נָאָה גָּאָה**. שֶׁנֶּתְנָהָה
עַל כָּל־גָּאָה, כְּתִירוֹמָה. דָּבָר אַחֵר: בָּא הַכֶּפֶל לִזְמֶר,
שֶׁעָשָׂה דָּבָר שְׂאֵי אֶפְשָׁר לְבָשֶׁר וְדָם לַעֲשׂוֹת, כְּשֶׁהוּא
נִלְחָם בְּחֶבְרֹן וּמִתְגַּבֵּר עָלָיו מִפִּילֹּת מִן הַסּוֹס, וְכָאן
— הַסּוֹס וּרְכָבוֹ רָמָה בָּיִם. וְכָל־שְׂאֵי אֶפְשָׁר לַעֲשׂוֹת
עַל יְדֵי זִוְלָתוֹ, נּוֹפֵל בּוֹ לְשׁוֹן "גָּאָה" כְּמוֹ: "כִּי גָאָה
עָשָׂה"⁵⁶. וְכָן כָּל־הַשִּׁירָה תִּמְצָא כְּפֹלֶה: "עֲזִי וְזִמְרָת יְהוָה,
וַיְהִי לִי לִישׁוּעָה", "ה' אִישׁ מִלְחָמָה ה' שְׁמוֹ", וְכָן כָּלֶם.
דָּבָר אַחֵר: "כִּי־נָאָה גָּאָה" — עַל כָּל־הַשִּׁירָה וְכָל־
מִה־שֶׁאֶקְלָס בּוֹ עוֹד יִשָּׁבוּ תּוֹסֶפֶת, וְלֹא כְּמִדַּת מֶלֶךְ
בָּשָׂר וְדָם שֶׁמְקַלְסִין אוֹתוֹ וְאֵין בּוֹ: **סוֹס וּרְכָבוֹ**. שֶׁיִּהְיֶה
קְשׁוּרִין זֶה בְּזֶה, וְהַמִּים מַעְלִין אוֹתָם לְרוֹם וּמוֹרִידִין
אוֹתָם לַעֲמֹק, וְאֵינָן נִפְרָדִין: **רָמָה**. הַשִּׁלֵּף. וְכָן "וּרְמִי
לְגֹא־אֶתוֹן נוֹרָא"⁵⁷. וּמִדְּרַשׁ אֲגָדָה⁵⁸: כְּתוּב אֶחָד אוֹמֵר
"רָמָה", וְכְתוּב אֶחָד אוֹמֵר "יְרֵה". מִלְמַד, שֶׁהָיָה עוֹלִין
לְרוֹם וְיִוֶּרְדִין לְתַהוֹם. כְּמוֹ: "מִי־יְרֵה אֶבֶן פְּנֹתָה"⁵⁹
— מִלְמַעְלָה לְמַטָּה:

31 אֶת־יְתֵד הַגְּדֹלָה. אֶת הַגְּבוּרָה הַגְּדוֹלָה שֶׁעָשָׂתָה
יְדוֹ שֶׁל הַקְּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ־הוּא. וְהִרְבֵּה לְשׁוֹנוֹת נּוֹפְלִין עַל
לְשׁוֹן "יְד", וְכָלֶן לְשׁוֹן יָד מִמֶּשׁ הֵן, וְהַמִּפְרָשׁ — יִתְקֵן
הַלְשׁוֹן אַחֵר עֲנִין הַדְּבוּר: **אִזּוּ יִשְׁכַּח מֹשֶׁה**. אִזּוּ כְּשֶׁרָאָה
הַנֶּס, עָלָה בְּלָבוֹ שִׁישִׁיר שִׁירָה. וְכָן "אִזּוּ יְדָבֵר יְהוֹשֻׁעַ"⁵⁶.
וְכָן "וּבֵית יַעֲקֹב לְבַת־פְּרָעָה"⁵⁷ — חָשַׁב בְּלָבוֹ שִׁיעֲשֶׂה
לָהּ. אֵף כָּאן: "יִשְׁכַּח" — אָמַר לוֹ לָבוֹ שִׁישִׁיר. וְכָן עָשָׂה
— "וַיֹּאמְרוּ לֵאמֹר, אֲשִׁירָה לָהּ". וְכָן בִּיהוֹשֻׁעַ, כְּשֶׁרָאָה
הַנֶּס אָמַר לוֹ לָבוֹ שִׁידָבֵר, וְכָן עָשָׂה — "וַיֹּאמֶר לְעִינֵי
יִשְׂרָאֵל". וְכָן שִׁירַת הַבָּאָר שֶׁפָּתַח בָּהּ "אִזּוּ יִשְׁכַּח
יִשְׂרָאֵל"⁵⁸, פָּרַשׁ אַחֲרָיו: "עָלִי בָּאָר עֲנִי־לָהּ"⁵⁹. "אִזּוּ
יִבְנֶה שְׁלֹמֹה בְּמֶה"⁶⁰ — פָּרַשׁ בּוֹ חֲכָמֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל⁶¹ שֶׁבִקֵּשׁ
לְבָנוֹת וְלֹא בָנָה. לְמִדְּנָה, שֶׁהָיָה עַל שֵׁם הַמִּחְשָׁבָה
נֶאֱמָרָה. וְהוּא לִישָׁב פְּשׁוּטוֹ. אֲבָל מִדְּרַשׁוֹ אֶמְרוּ רַבּוּתֵינוּ
זְכוּרֵנוֹם לְבִרְכָּהָ⁶²: מִכָּאן רָמַז לְתַחִית הַמַּתִּים מִן
הַתּוֹרָה. וְכָן בְּכָלֶן, חוּץ מִשָּׁל שְׁלֹמֹה שֶׁפָּרַשׁוּהוּ: בִּקֵּשׁ
לְבָנוֹת וְלֹא בָנָה. וְאֵין לִזְמֶר וְלִישָׁב הַלְשׁוֹן הַזֶּה כְּשֶׁאֵר
דְּבָרִים הַנִּכְתָּבִים בְּלִשׁוֹן עֲתִיד וְהֵן מִיָּד, כְּגוֹן: "כִּכָּה
יַעֲשֶׂה אִיּוֹב"⁶³, "עַל־פִּי ה' יִחַנו"⁶⁴, "וַיֵּשׁ אֲשֶׁר יְהוָה

56. יהושע י, יב. 57. מלכים א' ז, ח. 58. במדבר כא, יז. 59. שם. 60. מלכים א' יא, ז. 61. שבת נז, ב. 62. סנהדרין צא, ב. 63. איוב א, ה. 64. במדבר ט, כג. 65. שם, כ. 66. ישעיה יב, ה. 67. דניאל ג, ו. 68. מילתא פרשה ב. 69. איוב לח, ו.

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nection he provides to God should be visualized as a knot, which simply serves to tie two pieces of string together. While a bridge is a third entity interposed between the two banks, the knot is nothing in and of itself; it is simply the connection joining the two pieces of string.⁹⁷

1 He cast both horse and rider into the sea: Interestingly enough, the song does not focus primarily upon the people's salvation, but rather on the destruction of

their enemies, the Egyptians.

The Jews had no need to affirm their spiritual connection to God; that was never in any doubt. Instead, they thanked God for revealing that connection in the physical world, where there were real enemies who were attempting to destroy them. Such a manifestation of their intrinsic connection could not be taken for granted, and for that they raised their voices in song.⁹⁸

98. Hitva'aduyot 5751, vol. 2, pp. 213-214.

31 When Israel saw the mighty arm that God had exercised against the Egyptians, the people stood in awe of God; they believed in God and in His servant Moses.

The Song at the Sea

15:1 Then, when they saw how God had miraculously saved them from the Egyptians once and for all,⁸⁹ **Moses and the Israelites sang this song to God.** Being in the midst of a sublime prophetic experience, Moses was able to quote Pharaoh's words (which he had not heard) and predict future events.⁹⁰ **They said as follows: "I will sing to God for He is exalted** beyond any other **exalted** being and only He is absolutely supreme. He is superhuman, for a human can only throw a rider off a horse, but **He cast both horse and rider into the sea.** Furthermore, **I will sing to God** even though **He is exalted** beyond my capacity to articulate—unlike human rulers, whom people praise beyond their true merit. **He cast horse and rider together into the sea,** miraculously keeping the riders astride despite the torrent of the waves.

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31 Israel saw...they believed in God: Generally, after seeing something, we no longer need to accept it on faith. If so, after *seeing* God's great hand, why did the Jewish people still need to *believe* in God and Moses? The answer is that once they had seen and validated what they had previously only believed in, they were able to "upgrade" their belief and believe in that which still remained beyond what they had seen; they believed in what they had *not* seen.

The potential to do this is infinite. We struggle to perceive what we currently believe; when we succeed in doing so, we realize that there is still more about God to believe in; more subtle nuances in our conceptualization of Him. We then strive to understand these new realizations, which we can initially only believe in, and no sooner do we accomplish this than new visions of Divinity open up before us, giving us still more to believe in. In this way we perpetually broaden the horizons of our faith and our capacity to relate to God on ever-higher levels.⁹¹

And in His servant Moses: The Midrash⁹² deduces from this verse that belief in Moses is an integral component of belief in God and that, conversely, doubting his credibility is a breach in one's belief in God.

Here we find reference to the concept of a Rebbe—a leader the belief in whose existence is in some way on a par with our belief in God—and the imperative to identify him. The *Zohar* states that God provides every generation with a preeminently righteous individual who is "an extension of Moses."⁹³ This "Moses," just as the original Moses, serves as a link between his generation and God.⁹⁴ Faith in this extraordinary person fortifies our faith in God, and commitment to his guidance deepens our commitment to God.

In addition to being a channel through which we can reach God, Moses is also the channel through which God's blessings reach us. As it is stated in the Talmud: "One who has an ailing person in his home should go to a sage and ask him to pray for him."⁹⁵ The sage's prayers can accomplish for someone ailing physically or spiritually what our own prayers cannot. This sage is our connection with God in both directions.

Belief in the power of the Moses of the generation does not contradict the fundamental Jewish belief that there are no intermediaries between God and man, for in order to qualify for this role, the sage must be, like Moses, devoid of ego and completely transparent—"the humblest man on earth."⁹⁶ As opposed to a bridge, which connects two banks of a river, the con-

89. See above, 14:2, and on 14:21. ⁹⁰ *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 36, p. 66. ⁹¹ *Derech Mitzvotecha*, pp. 44b-46b. ⁹² *Mechilta*. ⁹³ *Tikunei Zohar* 69 (112a, 114a). ⁹⁴ See Deuteronomy 5:5. ⁹⁵ *Bava Batra* 116a. ⁹⁶ Numbers 12:3. ⁹⁷ *Hitva'aduyot* 5711, p. 273; *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 2, pp. 485, 510-511, vol. 11, pp. 172-174, 184-186.

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2 תקפי ותשבחת דחילא יי אמר במימרה וזה לי לפריק דין אלהי ואבני לה מקדשא אלהא דאבהתי ואפלא קדמוהי: 3 יי מרי נצחון קרבנא יי שמה: 4 רתיכי פרעה ומשריתה שדי בימא ושפר גברוהי אטבעו בימא דסוף: 5 תהומיא חפו עליהון נחתו לעמקא באבנא: 6 יי מינה יי אדירא בחילא יי מינה יי תברת סנאה:

2 עזי וזמרת יה ויהי לי לישועה זה אלי ואנוהו אלהי אבי וארממנהו: 3 יהוה איש מלחמה יהוה שמו: 4 מרכבת פרעה וחילו ירה בים ומבחר שלשיו טבעו בים-סוף: 5 תהמת יכסימו ירדו במצולת כמו-אבן: 6 ימינה יהוה נאדרי בבח ימינה יהוה תרעץ אויב:

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שאנן⁷⁰, "לנה צאן"⁷¹. דבר אחר: "ואנוהו" — לשון נוי, אספר נוי ושבחו לבאי עולם, כגון: "מהדודך מדוד"⁷², "דודי צח ואדום"⁷³, וכל הענין: **אלהי אבי**. הוא זה וארממנהו. "אלהי אבי" — לא אני תחלת הקדשה, אלא מחוקת ועומדת לי הקדשה ואלהותו עלי מימי אבותי: 3 ה' איש מלחמה. בעל מלחמות, כמו: "איש נעמי"⁷⁴. וכל "איש" ו"איש" מתרגמין "בעל", וכן "וחוקת ודיית לאיש"⁷⁵ — לגבור: ה' שמו. מלחמותיו לא בכל יונו, אלא בשמו הוא נלחם, כמו שאמר דוד: "ואנכי בא-אליך בשם ה' צבאות"⁷⁶. דבר אחר: "ה' שמו" — אף בשעה שהוא נלחם ונוקם מאויביו, אוהו הוא במדתו לרחם על ברואיו ולונו את כל-באי עולם, ולא כמדת מלכי אדמה — כשהוא עוסק במלחמה פונה עצמו מכל-עסקים, ואין בו כח לעשות זו וזו: 4 ירה בים. "שדי בימא", לשון יירה. וכן הוא אומר: "אז-ירה יירה"⁷⁷ — "אז-אשתדא ישתד". והתירו משמשת באלו במקום התפעל: **ומבחר**. שם דבר, כמו: "מרכב" "משכב" "מקרא קדש": **טבעו**. אין טביעה אלא במקום טיט, כמו: "טבעתי בין מצולה"⁷⁸, "ויטבע ירמיהו בטיט"⁷⁹. מלמד, שנעשה הים טיט לגמל להם במדתם, ששעבדו את ישראל בחמר ובלבנים: 5 יכסימו. כמו יכסום, והיו"ד האמצעית יתרה בו, ודרך המקראות ככה, כמו: "ויקרה וצאנה ירבין"⁸⁰, "ירון מדשן ביתך"⁸¹, והיו"ד ראשונה שמשמעה לשון עתיד, כן פרשהו: טבעו בים סוף, כדי שיחזרו המים ויכסו אותן. "יכסימו" — אין דומה לו במקרא בנקודתו, וירכבו להיות נקוד "יכסימו" במלאפוס⁸²: **כמו-אבן**. ובמקום אחר: "צללו בעופרת"⁸³, ובמקום אחר: "יאכלמו כקש"⁸⁴. הרשעים — כקש, הולכים ומטרפין עולין ויורדין, בינונים — כאבן, והכשרים — בעופרת, שנחזו מיד: 6 ימינה...ימינה. שתי פעמים — כשישראל עושין את רצונו של מקום, השמאל נעשית ימין: **ימינה ה' נאדרי בבח**. להציל את ישראל, וימינה השנית תרעץ אויב. ולי נראה, אותה ימין עצמה תרעץ

2 עזי וזמרת יה. אנקלוס תרגם: "תקפי ותשבחת". "עזי" — כמו "עזי בשורק". "וזמרת" — כמו "וזמרת". ואני תמה על לשון המקרא, שאין לה כמוהו בנקודתו במקרא, אלא בשלשה מקומות שהוא סמוך אצל "וזמרת", וכל-שאר מקומות נקוד שורק: "ה' עזי ונעמי"⁷⁰. "עזו אליך אשמה"⁷¹. וכן כל-תבה בת שתי אותיות הנקודה מלאפוס⁷², כשהיא מארכת באות שלישית ואין השניה בש"א בחטף הראשונה, נקודה בשורק, כגון: "עז", "רקי", "רוקי", "חק" "חקי", "על" "עלו" — "סור... עלו"⁷³, "כל" "כלו" — "ושלשם על-כלו"⁷⁴. ואלו שלשה "עזי וזמרת" של כאן ושל ישעיה⁷⁵ ושל תהלים⁷⁶, נקודים בחטף קמץ. ועוד, אין באחד מהם כתוב "וזמרת" אלא "וזמרת", וכלם סמוך להם: "יהי לי לישועה". לכה אני אומר לישב לשון המקרא. שאין "עזי" כמו "עזי", ולא "וזמרת" כמו "וזמרת", אלא "עזי" שם דבר הוא, כמו: "הישבי בשמים"⁷⁷, "שכני בחגי סלע"⁷⁸, "שכני סנה"⁷⁹. וזה השבח "עזי וזמרת יה" — הוא היה לי לישועה. "וזמרת" דבוק הוא לתבת "ה'", כמו: "לעזרת ה"⁸⁰, "בעברת ה"⁸¹, "על-דברת בני האדם"⁸². ולשון "וזמרת" — לשון "לא תומר"⁸³, "זמיר עריצים"⁸⁴, לשון בסוח ובריתא — עזו ונקמתו של אלהינו היה לנו לישועה. ואל תתמה על לשון "יהי" שלא נאמר "יהי", שיש לנו כמה מקראות מדברים בלשון זה, וזה דגמט: "את-קירות הבית סביב להיכל ולדביר, ויעש צלעות סביב"⁸⁵, היה לו לומר "עשה צלעות סביב". וכן בדברי הימים: "ובני ישראל הישבים בערי יהודה, וימלוך עליהם רחבעם"⁸⁶, היה לו לומר "מלוך עליהם רחבעם". "מבילתי יכלת ה' וגו' וישחטם"⁸⁷, היה לו לומר "שחטם". "והאנשים אשר-שלח משה וגו' וימתו"⁸⁸, מתו היה לו לומר. "ואשר לא-שם לבו אל-דבר ה' ויעזב"⁸⁹, היה לו לומר "עזב". זה אלי. כבודו נגלה עליהם. והיו מראין אותו באצבע, ראתה שפחה על הים מה-שלא ראו נביאים: **ואנוהו**. אנקלוס תרגם לשון נוה — נוה

70. ירמיה טו, יט. 71. תהלים נט, י. 72. חולם. 73. ישעיה י, כו. 74. שמות יד, ז. 75. יב, ב. 76. קית, יד. 77. תהלים כב, א. 78. ירמיה מט, טו. 79. דברים לג, טו. 80. שופטים ה, כג. 81. ישעיה ט, יח. 82. קהלת ג, יח. 83. ויקרא כה, ד. 84. ישעיה כה, ה. 85. מלכים א, ו, ה. 86. ב, י. 87. במדבר יד, טו. 88. שם, לרלו. 89. שמות ט, כא. 90. ישעיה לג, כ. 91. ישעיה סה, י. 92. שיר השירים ה, ט. 93. שם, י. 94. רות א, ג. 95. מלכים ב, ב. 96. שמואל א, יז, מה. 97. שמות יט, ג. 98. תהלים סט, ג. 99. ירמיה לח, ו. 100. דברים ח, יג. 101. תהלים לו, ט. 102. חולם. 103. לחלן פסוק י. 104. לחלן פסוק ז.

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7 ובסג' תקפף תברתנו לך קמו על עמך שלחת רגלך שיצנוך כנורא לקשא: 8 ובמימור פמך חפיו מיא קמו כשור אזליא קפו תדומי בלבא ד'מא: 9 דהוה אמר סגא ארדוף אדביק אפלג בותא תשבע מנהון נפשי אשלוף חרבי תשיצנוך ידי: 10 אמרת במימך חפא עליהון ימא אשתקעו באברא במיין תקיפין: 11 לית בר מנף את הוא אלהא יי לית בר מנף אלהא אלא את, אדיר בקדשא דחיל תשבחון עבד פרישון: 12 אריות ימינך בלעתנון ארעא: 13 דברת בטבותך לעמא דנן דפרקתא סוברדי בתקפף לדירא דקדשה:

7 וברב גאונך תהרס קמיה תשלח חרנך ואכלמו בקש: 8 וברוח אפיה נערמו מים נצבו כמורגד נזלים קפאו תהמת בלבים: 9 אמר אויב ארדף אשיו אחלק שלל תמלאמו נפשי אריק חרבי תורישמו ידי: 10 נשפת ברוחך כסמו ים צללו בעופרת במים אדירים: 11 מי כמכה באלם יהוה מי כמכה נאדר בקדש נורא תהלת עשה פלא: 12 נטית ימינך תבלעמו ארץ: 13 נחית בחסדך עסנו גאלת נהלת בעוז אל נוח קדשה:

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מים — ממזקד רוח שיצא מאפך יבשו המים, והם נעשו כמים גלים וכריות של ערמה, שהם גבוהים: **כמו נד**. כתרגומו: "כשור" — כחומה: **נד**. לשון צבור וכנוס, כמו: "נד קציר ביום נחלה"¹²⁸. "כונס כנר" — לא כתב "כונס כנאר" אלא "כנר". ואלו היה "כנר" כמו "כנאר", ו"כונס" לשון הכנסה — היה לו לכתב "מכניס כבנאר מי הים", אלא "כונס" לשון אוסף וצובר הוא. וכן "קמו נד אחר"¹²⁹, ו"נעמדו נד אחר"¹³⁰. ואין לשון קימה ועמידה בנאדות אלא בחומות וצבורים, ולא מצינו נאד נקוד אלא במלאפוס"¹³¹, כמו: "שימה דמעתי בנאדר"¹³², "את נאור החלב"¹³³: **קפאו**. כמו: "וכבנה תקפאני"¹³⁴, שהקשו ונעשו כאבנים, והמים זורקים את המצרים על האבן בכח, ונלחמים בם בכל מיני קשי: **בלבים**. בחוק הים. ודרך המקראות לדרבן בן: "עד לב השמים"¹³⁵. "בלב האלה"¹³⁶. לשון עקרו ותקפו של דבר: 9 **אמר אויב**. לעמו, כשפתם בדברים: ארדף ואשיגם, ואחלק שלל עם שרי ועבדי: **תמלאמו**. תתמלא מהם: **נפשי**. רוחי ורצוני. ואל תתמה על תבה המדברת בשתים: "תמלאמו" — תמלא מהם, יש הרבה כלשון הזה: "כי ארץ הגלב נתתני"¹³⁷ — כמו "נתת לי". "ולא יכלו דברו לשלם"¹³⁸ — כמו "דבר עמו". "בני יצאני"¹³⁹ — כמו "יצאו ממני". "מספר צעדי אגידנו"¹⁴⁰ — כמו "אגיד לך". אף כאן "תמלאמו" — תמלא נפשי מהם: **אריק חרבי**. אשלי, ועל שם שהוא מריק את התער בשליפתו ונשאר ריק, נופל

7 **וברב גאונך**. אם היד בלבד רועצת האויב כשהוא מרום ברב גאונו, או יהרס קמיו. ואם ברב גאונו לבד אויביו נהרסים, קל וחמר כששלח בם חרון אף ואכלמו: **תהרס**. תמיד אתה הורס קמיה נגדך. ומי הם הקמים כנגדו? אלו הקמים על ישראל. וכן הוא אומר: "כי הנה אויביך יהמיון"¹¹⁹. ומה היא ההמיה? "על-עמך יערימו סוד"¹²⁰. ועל זה קורא אותם אויביו של מקום: 8 **וברוח אפיה**. היוצא משני נהירים של אף. דבר הכתוב בכיכול בשכינה דגמת מלך בשר ודם, כדי להשמיע און הבריות כפי ההוה, שיוכלו להבין דבר — כשאדם כועס יוצא רוח מנחיריו. וכן "עלה עשן באפו"¹²¹. וכן "ומרוח אפו כלו"¹²². וזהו שאמר: "למען שמי אאריך אפי"¹²³ — כשזעפו נח נשימתו ארפה, וכשהוא כועס נשימתו קצרה. "ותהלתי אהטם-לך" — ולמען תהלתי אשים חטם באפי לסתם נחירי בפני האף והרוח שלא יצאו. "לך" — בשבילך. "אחטם" — כמו "נאקה בחטם", במסכת שבת¹²⁴, כך נראה בעיני. וכל "אף" ו"חרון" שבמקרא, אני אומר בן: "חרה אף", כמו: "נעצמי-חרה מני-חרב"¹²⁵ — לשון שרפה ומוקד, שהנחירים מתחממים ונחירים בעת הקצף. ו"חרון" מגזרת "חרה", כמו "רצון" מגזרת "רצה". וכן "חמה" לשון חממות, על בן הוא אומר: "וחמתו בערה בו"¹²⁶. ובגוף החמה אומר: "נתקרה דעתו"¹²⁷: **נערמו מים**. אונקלוס תרגם לשון ערמימות. ולשון צחות המקרא, כמו: "ערמת חטים". ו"נצבו כמו נד" יוכיח. "נערמו

119. תהלים פג, ג. 120. שם, ד. 121. תהלים יח, ט. 122. איוב ד, ט. 123. ישעיה מח, ט. 124. נא, ב. 125. איוב ל, ל. 126. אסתר א, יב. 127. יבמות סג, א. 128. ישעיה יז, יא. 129. יהושע ג, טז. 130. שם, יג. 131. חולם. 132. תהלים נו, ט. 133. שופטים ד, יט. 134. איוב י, י. 135. דברים ד, יא. 136. שמואל ב, יח. 137. יהושע טו, יט. 138. בראשית לו, ד. 139. ירמיה י, כ. 140. איוב לא, לו.

7 when You raise this hand in Your great majesty, You overthrow those who rise up against You; and when You send forth Your wrath, it consumes them like straw. In Your great majesty, You always destroy those who rise up against You, which include¹⁰³ all those who rise up against the Jewish people. You always send forth Your fury against them; it consumes them as it consumed the most wicked of the Egyptians by hurling them in the water — not like quick-sinking stones, but like straw, which tosses easily to and fro in the depths.¹⁰⁴

8 At the blast of Your flaming nostrils, so to speak, the waters dried out, became solid, and piled up; the flowing streams stood erect like a wall; the deep waters solidified in the heart of the sea so the Egyptians would crash against them violently.

9 Pharaoh, the enemy, had said to his people, to convince them to join him: 'I will give chase; I will overtake; I will divide the spoils with you equally;¹⁰⁵ my desire will be satiated upon them; I will unsheathe my sword; my hand will despoil them.'

10 But You blew with Your wind; the sea enveloped them; although the best of them sank in the mighty waters like lead — i.e., quicker than stone¹⁰⁶ so they suffered for less time — they still drowned.

11 Who is like You among the mighty, O God! Who is like You, resplendent in holiness, feared by those who offer You praises since they know they cannot possibly praise You sufficiently, performer of wonders!

12 Everything is suspended by Your hand, so when You tilted Your right Hand, your enemies descended: the earth swallowed them.¹⁰⁷

13 When we arrive in the Land of Israel, we will see how in Your loving-kindness You led the people whom You redeemed; in Your strength You guided them out of Egypt to Your holy abode, the Land of Israel.

— RASHI —

בעופרת. אָבֶר, פִּלּוֹם בִּלְעֻזָּה¹⁴⁹: **11 בָּאֵלֶם.** בְּחֻקִּים, כְּמוֹ: "וְאֶת-אֵילֵי הָאֶרֶץ לָקַח"¹⁵⁰, "אֵילוּתֵי לְעֹרְתִי חֻשָּׁה"¹⁵¹: **נֹרָא תִהְיֶה.** יִרְאִי מִלְּהֻגִּיד תִּהְיוּתִיךְ פֶּן יִמָּעֵט, כְּמוֹ שֶׁכְּתוּב: "לֵךְ דְּמִיָּה תִהְיֶה"¹⁵²: **12 נָטִיתָ יְמִינֶךָ.** כְּשֶׁהִקְדוּשׁ-בְּרוּךְ-הוּא נוֹטֶה יָדוֹ, הִרְשָׁעִים כְּלִים וְנוֹפְלִים, לְפִי שֶׁהִבֵּל נִתּוֹן בְּיָדוֹ וְנוֹפְלִים בְּהִטָּתָהּ, וְכֵן הוּא אוֹמֵר: "וְהָיָה יְשָׁה יִדוֹ, וְכִשְׁל עֲזוֹר וְנִפְל עֲזוֹר"¹⁵³. מִשָּׁל לְכָלִי וְכוּכִית הַנְּתוּנִים בְּיַד אָדָם, מִטָּה יָדוֹ מַעֵט — וְהָיוּ נוֹפְלִין וּמִשְׁתַּבְּרִין: **תִּבְלַעְמוּ אֶרֶץ.** מִכָּאן שֶׁזָּכוּ לְקִבּוּרָה, בְּשֶׁכֶר שֶׁאָמְרוּ: "ה' הַצִּדִּיק"¹⁵⁴: **13 נִהְיֶה.** לָשׁוֹן מְנַהֵל. וְאוֹנֶקְלוֹס תִּרְגָּם לָשׁוֹן נוֹשֵׂא וְסוֹבֵל, וְלֹא דִקְדָק לְפָרֵשׁ אַחֵר לָשׁוֹן הֶעֱבְרִית:

בו לְשׁוֹן הֶרְקָה, כְּמוֹ: "מְרִיקִים שִׁקְיָהֶם"¹⁴¹, "וְכָלִי יִרְקוּ"¹⁴². וְאַל תֹּאמַר: אֵין לָשׁוֹן רִיקוּת נוֹפֵל עַל הַיּוֹצֵא, אֶלָּא עַל הַתִּיק וְעַל הַשֶּׁק וְעַל הַכָּלִי שֶׁיּוֹצֵא מִמֶּנָּה, אֲבָל לֹא עַל הַחֶרֶב וְעַל הַיָּין, וְלִדְחוּק וּלְפָרֵשׁ "אֶרֶיק חֶרֶב" כְּלָשׁוֹן "וַיִּרַק אֶת-חֲנִיכִיו"¹⁴³ — "אֲוִדִין בְּחֶרֶב". מְצִינוּ הַלָּשׁוֹן מוֹסֵב אַף עַל הַיּוֹצֵא: "שָׁמֶן תוֹרַק"¹⁴⁴. "וְלֹא-הוֹרַק מִכָּלִי אֶל-כָּלִי"¹⁴⁵. "לֹא הוֹרַק הַכָּלִי" אֵין כְּתִיב כָּאן, אֶלָּא "לֹא-הוֹרַק הַיָּין מִכָּלִי אֶל-כָּלִי", מְצִינוּ הַלָּשׁוֹן מוֹסֵב עַל הַיָּין. וְכֵן "וְהִרְיקוּ חֲרֻבוֹתֶם עַל-יָפִי חֲכֻמָּתְךָ" דְּחִירָם¹⁴⁶: **תוֹרִישְׁמוֹ.** לָשׁוֹן רִישוֹת וְדִלּוֹת, כְּמוֹ: "מוֹרִישׁ וּמַעֲשִׂיר"¹⁴⁷: **10 נִשְׁפָּתָה.** לָשׁוֹן הַפָּתוּחַ, וְכֵן "וְגַם-נִשְׁפָּה בָּהֶם"¹⁴⁸: **צָלְלוּ.** שִׁקְעוּ, עָמְקוּ, לָשׁוֹן מְצוּלָה:

¹⁴¹. בראשית מב, לה. ¹⁴². ירמיה מח, יב. ¹⁴³. בראשית יד, יד. ¹⁴⁴. שיר השירים א, ג. ¹⁴⁵. ירמיה מח, יא. ¹⁴⁶. יחזקאל כח, ז. ¹⁴⁷. שמואל א ב, ז. ¹⁴⁸. ישעיה מ, כד. ¹⁴⁹. עופרת. ¹⁵⁰. יחזקאל יז, יג. ¹⁵¹. תהלים כב, כ. ¹⁵². תהלים סה, ב. ¹⁵³. ישעיה לא, ג. ¹⁵⁴. שמות ט, כז.

103. Likutei Sichot, vol. 23, p. 78. 104. Rashi on v. 5, above. 105. Above, 14: 6. 106. Above, v. 5. Rashi ad loc. 107. Above, 14:30.

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14 שְׁמַעוּ עִמָּיִם יִרְגָּזוּן חֵיל אָחִיו יִשְׁבִּי פִלְשֶׁת׃ 15 אִזְּ נִבְהִלוּ אֱלֹפִי אֲדָוָה מִזֶּמֶן יִשְׁבִּי כִנְעָן׃ 16 תִּפֹּל עֲלֵיהֶם אִמָּתָהּ וּפָחַד בְּגִדְלָהּ וְרוּעָה יִדְמוּ כְּאֶבֶן עַד־יַעֲבֹר עֲמָךְ יְהוָה עַד־יַעֲבֹר עִם־וְ קִנִּיתָ׃ 17 תִּבְאֲמוּ וְתִשְׁעֲמוּ בְּהָר נִחְלָתְךָ מִכּוֹן לְשִׁבְתְּךָ פְּעֻלָּתָ יְהוָה מִקֶּדֶשׁ אֲדָנִי כֹנֵנִי יָדִיד׃

14 שְׁמַעוּ עִמָּיִם יִרְגָּזוּן חֵיל אָחִיו יִשְׁבִּי פִלְשֶׁת׃ 15 אִזְּ נִבְהִלוּ אֱלֹפִי אֲדָוָה מִזֶּמֶן יִשְׁבִּי כִנְעָן׃ 16 תִּפֹּל עֲלֵיהֶם אִמָּתָהּ וּפָחַד בְּגִדְלָהּ וְרוּעָה יִדְמוּ כְּאֶבֶן עַד־יַעֲבֹר עֲמָךְ יְהוָה עַד־יַעֲבֹר עִם־וְ קִנִּיתָ׃ 17 תִּבְאֲמוּ וְתִשְׁעֲמוּ בְּהָר נִחְלָתְךָ מִכּוֹן לְשִׁבְתְּךָ פְּעֻלָּתָ יְהוָה מִקֶּדֶשׁ אֲדָנִי כֹנֵנִי יָדִיד׃

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14 בְּתַרְגֻּמוֹ: קִנִּיתָ. חֲבִבְתָּ מִשְׁאֵר אֲמוֹת, כְּחֶפֶץ הַקִּנּוּי בְּדָמִים יִקְרִים שְׂחָבִיב עַל הָאָדָם: 17 תִּבְאֲמוּ. נִתְבָּא מִשָּׂה שֶׁלֹּא יִבְנֶס לְאָרֶץ, לְכָף לֹא נֶאֱמַר "תִּבְאֲמוּ": מִכּוֹן לְשִׁבְתְּךָ. מִקֶּדֶשׁ שֶׁל מִטָּה מִכּוֹן בְּנֶגֶד פֶּסַח שֶׁל מַעֲלָה אֲשֶׁר פְּעֻלָּתָ: מִקֶּדֶשׁ. הֵטַעַם עָלָיו זָקָף גָּדוֹל, לְהַפְרִידוֹ מִתְּבַת הַשָּׁם שֶׁלֹּאֲחֲרָיו — הַמִּקֶּדֶשׁ אֲשֶׁר כֹּנֵנִי יָדִיד ה': חֲבִיב בֵּית הַמִּקֶּדֶשׁ, שֶׁהַעוֹלָם נִבְרָא בְּיַד אַחַת, שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר: "אֶף־יָדִי יִסְדָּה אֶרֶץ"¹⁵⁸. וּמִקֶּדֶשׁ בְּשֵׁמִי יָדִים. וְאִמָּתִי יִבְנֶה בְּשֵׁמִי יָדִים? בִּזְמַן שֶׁה' יִמְלֹךְ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד — לְעֵתִיד לְבָא, שֶׁכָּל־הַמְּלוּכָה שָׁלוֹ:

14 יִרְגָּזוּן. "מִתְרַגְּזִין": יִשְׁבִּי פִלְשֶׁת. מִפְּנֵי שֶׁהָרָגוּ אֶת בְּנֵי אֶפְרַיִם, שֶׁמָּהָרוּ אֶת הַקֶּץ וַיִּצְאוּ בְּחֻקָּה. כִּמְפָרֵשׁ בְּדִבְרֵי הַיָּמִים: "וַהֲרֹגוּם אֲנִשְׁיֵגֶת"¹⁵⁵: 15 אֱלֹפִי אֲדָוָה אִילֵּי מִזֶּמֶן. וְהָלֹא לֹא הָיָה לָהֶם לִירֵא כְּלוּם, שֶׁהָרִי לֹא עָלִיהֶם הוֹלְכִים? אֵלָּא, מִפְּנֵי אֲנִיּוּת שֶׁהָיוּ מִתְּאֻנְנִים וּמִצְטַעְרִים עַל כְּבוֹדָם שֶׁל יִשְׂרָאֵל: נִמְגֹּו. נִמְסוּ, כִּמּוֹ: "בְּרִבְבִּים תִּמְגֹּגְנָה"¹⁵⁶ — אָמְרוּ: עָלִינוּ הֵם בָּאִים, לְכֻלּוֹתֵינוּ וְלִירֵשׁ אֶת אֶרְצֵנוּ: 16 תִּפֹּל עֲלֵיהֶם אִמָּתָהּ. עַל הָרְחוּקִים: וּפָחַד. עַל הַקְּרוֹבִים, כְּעֵנִן שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר: "כִּי שִׁמְעֵנוּ אֶת אֲשֶׁר־הוֹבִישׁ"¹⁵⁷ וגו'. עַד־יַעֲבֹר... עַד־יַעֲבֹר.

155. א, ז, כ. 156. תהלים סה, יא. 157. יהושע ב, י. 158. ישעיה מח, יג.

CHASIDIC INSIGHTS

16 Creeping dread upon those who are far away from us, and immediate terror upon those who are near us: In our spiritual lives, too, we are beset by two types of enemies: "distant" and "close." The "distant" enemies are the temptations that we naturally disdain and recoil from. We are usually invulnerable to these (except, perhaps, when we are depressed or our spiritual senses are particularly dulled). The "close" enemies are the temptations we struggle with daily and

that threaten us on an ongoing basis.

Without God's help, we would be incapable of overcoming either type of temptation.¹²¹ We therefore ask of Him: "May dread and terror fall upon them." We ask God to restrain the evil inclination so that it cannot influence us.¹²²

17 Your hands, O God, will establish this sanctuary: Historically, we see a progressive increase in the

A CLOSER LOOK

[15] They will still be distressed over all our glory and jealous of it: Esau and Moab were especially jealous for they were related to the Israelites. Esau was Isaac's son; Moab was Abraham's grandnephew. They felt that they, too, deserved to be the patriarchs' heirs, and therefore were particularly bothered by the sudden resurgence of the Jewish people.

The Israelites' other relative-nations, however—the Ishmaelites, the nations descended from Abraham's concubines, and the Ammonites—were not

jealous of the Israelites' success. Ishmael repented and recognized that he and his progeny would be subordinate to Isaac and his progeny.¹²³ Abraham had sent his concubines' children away,¹²⁴ so they had no pretenses about inheriting along with Isaac. As for Ammon, their mother was embarrassed by the fact that she had cohabited with her father, Lot,¹²⁵ and transmitted this embarrassment to her progeny. The nation of Ammon therefore did not lay any claims to the Israelites' inheritance; on the contrary, they were ashamed of their familial connection with the Israelites.¹²⁶

121. Sukah 52b. 122. Likutei Sichot, vol. 36, pp. 68-69. 123. Genesis 25:9. 124. Genesis 25:6. 125. Genesis 19:37. 126. Hitva'aduyot 5745, vol. 2, pp. 1115-1116, 1130-1132.

14 Soon, **nations** will have **heard** that the sea split **and be angered** over this, since they cannot bear to see our glory.¹⁰⁸ **Terror** will have **gripped those who dwell in Philistia**, because they will fear our retribution for having slain those of the tribe of Ephraim who left Egypt before the appointed time.¹⁰⁹

15 All the nations will be angered over our glory, but in particular, **the chieftains of Edom** will have become **disoriented; trembling** will have **seized the mighty men of Moab**. They will not fear war with us since they do not live in the Promised Land, but they will still be distressed over all our glory and jealous of it. Since they are both descended from Abraham's family, these two nations will be jealous of us for inheriting the land promised him, whereas other nations not related to Abraham will not be jealous of us for this. Although the Ishmaelites and Ammonites are also related to us, Ishmael repented before he died¹¹⁰ and the Ammonites are embarrassed about their ancestral relation to us¹¹¹—so they will not be openly jealous of us. As for Abraham's children by his concubines, he sent them far away long ago¹¹² and they have no contact with us.¹¹³ In contrast to Edom and Moab, **all the inhabitants of Canaan**—whose land has been promised us—will have **melted away**, i.e., will have been totally demoralized from fear.

16 When they hear about the splitting of the sea, **dread and terror will fall upon them**—creeping, gnawing dread will fall upon the inhabitants of the Land of Israel, who are far away from us now, and immediate terror will fall upon those who are near us now, the Philistines¹¹⁴ and the Amalekites.¹¹⁵ Later, when we approach the Land of Israel, a creeping dread will fall upon the nations surrounding the land (such as Edom and Moab), whose territory we will not conquer but who will fear that we will plunder them—while immediate terror will grip the nations occupying the Land of Israel, whom we will be going to dispossess. This fear and terror will be so strong¹¹⁶ that **they will remain still as stone** in fear of **the greatness of Your arm until** the Israelites, **Your nation, passes over** first the Arnon River, **O God**, and further, **until** the Israelites, **this nation You acquired** through great deeds and therefore hold dear, **passes over** the Jordan River.¹¹⁷

17 **You will bring them**—by saying “them” and not “us,” Moses here unwittingly¹¹⁸ prophesied that he would not enter the Land of Israel with them—**“and plant them** in their land, centered around **the mountain of Your inheritance**, Mount Moriah, the site of the permanent Temple that will supersede the Tabernacle. This mountain is Your inheritance because, figuratively, it is situated precisely ‘beneath’ **the place which You, O God, have prepared for Your abode**, the heavenly Sanctuary,”¹¹⁹ meaning that the Land of Israel in general and the site of the Temple in particular are the locales most receptive to the spiritual consciousness of the higher worlds. At this point in history, Moses and the people foresaw their entrance into the Promised Land as heralding the messianic era and the Temple they would build as the one and only Temple that would ever be built.¹²⁰ Thus, they prophesied: **“Your hands, O God, will establish this Sanctuary** on earth when

108. *Hitva'aduyot* 5745, vol. 2, pp. 1115-1116. 109. Above, on 2:15. 110. Genesis 25:9. 111. Genesis 19:38. 112. Genesis 25:6. 113. *Hitva'aduyot* 5745, vol. 2, pp. 1115-1116, 1130-1132. 114. Above, 13:17. 115. Numbers 13:29. 116. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 36, pp. 65-68. 117. See Joshua 2:10. 118. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 12, p. 25, and note 30 there. 119. See Genesis 28:17; below, 15:17. 120. *Hitva'aduyot* 5744, vol. 2, pp. 877-878, 952-955.

— ONKELOS —

18 יי מלכותה קאם לעלם
ולעלמי עלמא: 19 ארי עלו
סוסות פרעה ברתיוכהי ובפרשוהי
בימא ואתיב יי עליהון ית מי ימא
ובני ישראל הליכו ביבשתא בגו
ימא: 20 ונסיבת מרים נביאתא
אחתה דאחרן ית תפא בידה
ונפקו כל נשיא בתרהא בתפין
ובחנני: 21 ומעניא להון מרים
שבחיו ואודו קדם יי ארי אתגאי
על גינתניא וגאנתא דילה היא
סוסא ורכבה רמא בימא:

18 יהוה | ימלך לעלם ועד: 19 כי בא סוס פרעה
ברכבו ובפרשיו בים וישב יהוה עליהם אתמי הים
ובני ישראל הלכו ביבשה בתוך הים: פ
20 ותקח מרים הנביאה אחות אהרן אתהתף
בידה ותצאן כל הנשים אחריה בתפים ובמחלות:
21 ותען להם מרים שירו ליהוה כי גאאה גאאה סוס
ורכבו רמה בים: ס

— RASHI —

אהרן, לפי שמסר נפשו עליה בשנצטרעה, נקראת
על שמו: אתהתף. בלי של מיני זמר: בתפים ובמחלות.
מבטחות היו צדקניות שבדור שהקדוש ברוך הוא
עושה להם נסים, והוציאו תפים ממצרים: 21 ותען
להם מרים. משה אמר שירה לאנשים, הוא אומר והם
עונין אחריו. ומרים אמרה שירה לנשים:

18 לעולם ועד. לשון עולמית הוא, והני"ו בו יסוד,
לפיקו היא פתוחה. אבל, "ואנכי היודע ועד" 159 שהני"ו
בו שמוש, קמוצה היא: 19 כי בא סוס פרעה. באשר
בא: 20 ותקח מרים הנביאה. היכן נתנבאה? בשהיתה
"אחות אהרן", קדם שנולד משה אמרה: עתידה אמי
שתלד בן וכו', כדאיתא בסוטה¹⁶⁰. דבר אחר: "אחות

159. ירמיה כט, כג. 160. יג, א.

— CHASIDIC INSIGHTS —

ments from Ezekiel's prophetic description of the third Temple.

- ♦ Finally, although the *Zohar* states that God will build the third Temple, God will build it only in the cumulative merit of the work we will have done in refining the world in the meantime. Since this work has taken so long (the entire length of our protracted exile) and has been much more difficult (since we have had to do it mostly under adverse circumstances), the third Temple will be the result of the most human effort of all.

The length of the Temples' existence is directly proportionate to the amount of human effort invested in them. Thus, the Tabernacle never had a permanent location; the first Temple lasted longer (410 years) and established a permanent Temple-site forever; the second Temple stood longer still (420 years); and the third Temple will be eternal.¹³⁵

18 In the future, when they will be resurrected, Moses and the generation of the Exodus will again sing this song to God: As we have noted, at the Splitting of the Sea, transcendent Divinity was revealed and the limitations of time and space were temporarily sus-

pended. The Song of the Sea therefore became also the Song of the Future. This underscores the timelessness of the Splitting of the Sea, an event that we experience every day as an integral part of our daily exodus from our spiritual Egypt.

We can access this timelessness by rising above our self-orientation and self-awareness, losing ourselves in God. Like God, we then transcend time: past, present, and future converge and we experience the ecstatic, Divine rapture of the Song of the Sea as a contemporary event.¹³⁶

20 With timbrels and dancing: The joy of the women surpassed that of the men: both the men and the women sang, but the women danced and drummed as well. This was because the women, led by Miriam, felt the bitterness of exile more intensely than the men; as we have seen,¹³⁷ Miriam's very name expressed the bitterness of the exile. Her sensitivity to the pain of exile led her to prophesy the birth of Moses,¹³⁸ the redeemer, and to take an active interest in her prophecy's fulfillment.¹³⁹ Because her anguish over the exile and her yearning for its end was so great, her joy over being liberated surpassed the men's.¹⁴⁰

135. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 30, pp. 119-121. 136. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 7, p. 271. 137. Above, 1:13. 138. Above, 1:21. 139. Above, 2:4 ff. 140. *Sefer HaSichot* 5752, vol. 1, pp. 303-307.

18 all humanity will recognize You as their king, and You, **GOD, will reign forever and ever.**" In fact, however, the advent of the messianic era was delayed, and only in the messianic future will the Temple achieve this universal focus. The messianic Temple is spoken of as being built with God's *hands*, in the plural, to indicate that God loves it more than He loves the world itself, which is spoken of as having been created only with *one* of God's hands.¹²⁷

19 Moses led the men in singing this song responsively: He sang each verse and they repeated it after him. In addition, **after the women saw how the horses of Pharaoh, with his chariots and horsemen, went into the sea, and how God turned the waters of the sea back on them while the Israelites had walked on dry land in the midst of the sea,** they were also inspired to sing.^{127a}

20 **Miriam** had shown herself to be a **prophetess** before Moses was born, when she was only **Aaron's sister**.¹²⁸ She is referred to here as 'Aaron's sister' also because later on, Aaron would risk his life for her.¹²⁹ On her own prophetic authority—i.e., without having to secure Moses' permission¹³⁰—she **took her timbrel in hand, and all the women followed her with timbrels and dancing.**¹³¹

21 **Miriam led them in responsive song,** beginning "**Sing to God for He is most exalted; horse and rider He cast into the sea,**" and continuing for the rest of the song as the men had sung it.

In the future, when they will be resurrected, Moses and the Israelites who left Egypt will again sing this song to God.¹³²

CHASIDIC INSIGHTS

human involvement in each Temple:

- ♦ Although the Tabernacle was built by the people, God instructed Moses to build it, gave him precise instructions regarding how to fashion each component, and even made the Candelabrum Himself.
- ♦ The first Temple was also built by God's instructions as transmitted through the prophets, but because of its size, it took much longer and much more human effort to build it than it took to build the Tabernacle. Also, the prophetic revelation of its site came only after King David painstakingly sought an appropriate location for it.¹³³
- ♦ The initiative for building the second Temple did not (openly) come from God at all, but rather from the non-Jewish King Cyrus of Persia. Furthermore, although its location was a given—the same site as the first Temple—the people were uncertain about the details of its design and included some ele-

A CLOSER LOOK

[17] **Your hands, O God, will establish this Sanctuary:** Moses and the people assumed that they were soon to enter the Land of Israel (the decree to wander for forty years in the desert had not been made yet) and build the one, everlasting Temple

that would usher in the messianic Era. Although events did not unfold this way, their prophetic song remained true—its fulfillment was merely postponed.¹³⁴

127. See Isaiah 48:13. 127a. Chizkuni. 128. Above, 1:21. 129. Numbers 12:1-12. 130. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 11, pp. 57-59. 131. See 12:36, above. 132. Rashi on v. 1, above. 133. Psalms 132:1-5; Rashi *ad loc.*, *Sifrei*, *Re'eh* 12:5. 134. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 31, p. 79.

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22 וְאֵטִיל מִשֶּׁה יֵת יִשְׂרָאֵל מִיָּמָא דְסוּף וְנִפְקוּ לְמַדְבָּרָא דְחִגְרָא וְאֵלּוּ תִלְתָּא יוֹמִין בְּמַדְבָּרָא וְלֹא אֲשָׁכְחוּ מֵיָא: 23 וְאֵתוּ לְמַרְה וְלֹא יָכִילוּ לְמַשְׁתִּי מֵיָא מִמַּרְה אֲרִי מוֹרִינִן אֲנֹן עַל כֵּן קָרָא שְׁמָהּ מַרְה: 24 וְאַתְרַעְמוּ עֲמָא עַל מִשֶּׁה לְמִיָּמָר מַה נִּשְׁתִּי: 25 וְצִלִּי קָדָם יְיָ וְאַלְפָּה יְיָ אֲעָא וְרָמָא לְמִיָּא וּבְסִימֹו מֵיָא תִפְן גִּזֵּר לֵה קָם וְדִין וְתִפְן נִסְיָה:

22 וַיֵּסַע מֹשֶׁה אֶת־יִשְׂרָאֵל מֵיַם־סוּף וַיֵּצְאוּ אֶל־מִדְבָּר־שׁוּר וַיֵּלְכוּ שְׁלֹשֶׁת־יָמִים בַּמִּדְבָּר וְלֹא־מָצְאוּ מַיִם: 23 וַיָּבֹאוּ מֶרְתָּה וְלֹא יָכְלוּ לִשְׁתֹּת מֵיִם מִמֶּרְתָּה כִּי מָרִים הֵם עַל־כֵּן קָרָא־שְׁמָהּ מַרְה: 24 וַיִּלְנוּ הָעָם עַל־מֹשֶׁה לֵּאמֹר מַה־נִּשְׁתִּי: 25 וַיַּצַּעַק אֶל־יְהוָה וַיֹּרְהוּ יְהוָה עֵינַי וַיִּשְׁלַךְ אֶל־הַמַּיִם וַיִּמְתְּקוּ הַמַּיִם שֵׁם שָׁם לוֹ חֶק וּמִשְׁפָּט וְשֵׁם נִסָּהוּ:

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הָיָא ר' הַנּוֹסֶפֶת. וְכֵן "עֲבַד וְאָמַר" ¹⁶⁴ — "הִנֵּה אֲמָתִי בִלְהָה" ¹⁶⁵. "לִנְפֹשׁ חַיָּה" ¹⁶⁶ — "וְהִקְדַּמְתָּ חֵיתוֹ לָחֶם" ¹⁶⁷. "בֵּין הָרְמָה" ¹⁶⁸ — "וְתִשְׁבְּתוּ הָרְמָתָה" ¹⁶⁹: 24 וַיִּלְנוּ. לְשׁוֹן נִפְעֵל הוּא, וְכֵן הִתְרַגְּמוּ לְשׁוֹן נִפְעֵל הוּא: "וְאַתְרַעְמוּ". כֵּן דָּרָךְ לְשׁוֹן תְּלוּנָה, לְהִסָּב הַדְּבוּר אֶל הָאָדָם — "מִתְלוֹנֵן" "מִתְרוֹעֵם", וְלֹא אָמַר "לִינוֹן" "רוֹעֵם". וְכֵן יֵאמַר הַלּוֹעֵז דִּיקוּמְפִּלִּישׁנִי שִׁי"ט ¹⁷⁰ מוֹסֵב הַדְּבוּר אֵלָיו בְּאָמְרוֹ שִׁי"י: 25 שֵׁם שָׁם לוֹ. בְּמַרְה נָתַן לָהֶם מִקְצֵת פְּרָשִׁיּוֹת שֶׁל תּוֹרָה, שִׁיתְעַסְקוּ בָּהֶם: שְׁבַת, וּפְרָה אֲדָמָה, וְדִינִין: וְשֵׁם נִסָּהוּ. לָעָם, וְרָאָה קִשִּׁי עֶרְפֹּן שֶׁלֹּא נִמְלְכוּ בְּמִשֶּׁה בְּלִשׁוֹן יְפֹה: בְּקֶשׁ עֲלֵינוּ רַחֲמִים שְׁיִהְיֶה לָנוּ מַיִם לִשְׁתוּת, אֲלֵא נִתְלוֹנְנוּ:

22 וַיֵּסַע מֹשֶׁה. הִסִּיעֵן בְּעַל כְּרַחֵם, שֶׁעֲטָרוּ מִצְרַיִם סוּסִיָּהֶם בְּתִכְשִׁיטֵי זָהָב וְכֶסֶף וְאֲבָנִים טוֹבוֹת, וְהָיוּ יִשְׂרָאֵל מוֹצְאִין אוֹתָם בָּיִם, וּגְדוּלָּה הֵיחָה בְּזֹת הָיִם מִבּוֹת מִצְרַיִם, שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר: "תוֹרִי זָהָב נִעֲשֶׂה־לָּךְ עִם נִקְדוּת הַכֶּסֶף" ¹⁶¹. לְפִיכָךְ הִצְרֵךְ לְהִסִּיעֵן בְּעַל כְּרַחֵם: 23 וַיָּבֹאוּ מֶרְתָּה. כְּמוֹ לְמַרְה. הָיָא בְּסוּף תְּבָהּ בְּמָקוֹם לְמִ"ד בְּתַחֲלִיתָהּ, וְהָיָא הִיא בְּמָקוֹם הָיָא הַנִּשְׁרָשֶׁת בְּתַבַּת "מַרְה", וּבְסִמִּיקָתָהּ כְּשֶׁהִיא נִדְבָּקֶת לְהָיָא שֶׁהוּא מוֹסִיף בְּמָקוֹם הַלְמָ"ד, תִּהְפֹּךְ הָיָא שֶׁל שְׂרָשׁ לְתִי"ו. וְכֵן כָּל־הָיָא שֶׁהִיא שְׂרָשׁ בְּתַבָּה, תִּתְהַפֵּךְ לְתִי"ו בְּסִמִּיקָתָהּ, כְּמוֹ: "חֲמָה אֵין לִי" ¹⁶² — "וְחִמְתּוּ בָּעֵרָה בּוֹ" ¹⁶³. הָיָא הָיָא שֶׁל שְׂרָשׁ נִתְפַּכֶּת לְתִי"ו, מִפְּנֵי שֶׁנִּסְמַכְתָּ אֶל

161. שִׁיר הַשִּׁירִים א, יא. 162. ישעיה כז, ד. 163. אסתר א, יב. 164. ויקרא כה, מד. 165. בראשית ל, ג. 166. בראשית ב, ז. 167. איוב לו, כ. 168. שופטים ד, ה. 169. שמואלא ז, יז. 170. קונו על עצמו - התלונו.

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From this we can learn two lessons: First, that once we know what our Divine mission in life is, we must be so devoted to it, so consumed by it, that doing something else seems unthinkable. On the other hand, as soon as it is clear that it is time to change direction—either because Jewish law requires it or because we receive a directive from someone we recognize as our spiritual guide, the voice of the Torah in our lives—we must not hesitate. We should apply ourselves to our new mission with the same devotion and enthusiasm we gave to our previous mission.

For example, those engaged in full-time Torah study must metamorphose into people of action when they are called upon to save lives—physically or spiritually—and do so gladly and enthusiastically. Conversely, people who have full-time jobs or are involved in communal work must transform themselves into devoted Torah scholars when engaged in their daily study sessions.

The second lesson: just like the Israelites at the sea did not want to leave one item unclaimed, one "spark" unelevated, our desire to bring others closer to God

should be uncompromising. Until we receive a clear directive to focus on something else, either temporarily or permanently, we must view every individual estranged from God as a priceless pearl waiting to be redeemed from Egypt.

This desire applies both to Jews and non-Jews, but inasmuch as we are taught that every Jew is like a whole world,¹⁴⁹ we should view every estranged Jew as a whole world waiting to be redeemed and brought to a life of fulfillment and holiness.¹⁵⁰

23 They could not drink water at Marah for the water was bitter: Literally, the latter part of this phrase means, "for they were bitter." This may be understood to mean that the *people*, rather than the water, were bitter. In this context, the whole phrase reads, "they could not drink water at Marah for they were bitter."

When one is bitter, everything tastes bitter. Only when the people themselves were "sweetened" did the water begin to taste sweet as well.¹⁵¹

25 God showed him a tree; he threw it into the water, and the water became sweet: According to the

149. Sanhedrin 37a. 150. Likutei Sichot, vol. 21, pp. 77-82. 151. Sefer HaMa'amarim 5720, p. 68.

From the Sea of Reeds to Marah

22 The Israelites then collected the gold and silver ornaments and precious jewels with which the Egyptians had adorned their horses.¹⁴¹ There was so much that the wealth they acquired here exceeded that with which they left Egypt. On the following day, the 22nd of Nisan, they were still busy collecting this wealth, so **Moses had to forcibly make the Israelites set out from the Sea of Reeds. They returned to Eitam and went out into the Shur Desert. They walked for three days in the desert without finding any water.**

23 On the 25th of Nisan, **they came to the Marah stream (see Figure 4), but they could not drink water from the Marah stream, for the water was bitter; that was why it was named Marah** [“bitter”].

24 But instead of respectfully asking Moses to pray on their behalf, **the people complained impertinently against Moses, saying, “What shall we drink?”**

25 Moses **cried out in prayer to God, and God showed him a tree; he threw a branch of it into the water and the water became sweet. It was there, by the Marah stream, that God gave the people some parts of the Torah to study: a rule—a commandment whose rationale is beyond human understanding—and an ordinance—a commandment that does appear to be rational. These commandments did not become officially binding until God gave them again, with the rest of the Torah, on Mount Sinai; they were given here for study only.**¹⁴² The “rule” God gave them here was the law of the purification rites of the red cow,¹⁴³ as “ordinances,” He reiterated the seven basic commandments given to all humanity and gave them the laws of the Sabbath, of honoring parents,¹⁴⁴ and the group of laws¹⁴⁵ that He later gave during the first forty days Moses was on top of Mount Sinai after the Giving of the Torah.¹⁴⁶ **There, by the Marah stream, He also tested them by bringing them to a place where the water was bitter and seeing how they reacted. As stated, they failed this test. This was the third time the people challenged God’s ability to come to their aid.**¹⁴⁷



Figure 4: From the Sea of Reeds to Marah

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22 **Moses had to forcibly make the Israelites set out from the Sea of Reeds:** The Israelites had just experienced an intense Divine revelation during the Splitting of the Sea, and were already counting the days to the Giving of the Torah. It is thus clear that they tarried at the shore for spiritual reasons rather than out of sheer greed. They were assiduously fulfilling the commandment “and you shall empty Egypt,”¹⁴⁸ whose spiritual

dimension was the endeavor to salvage all the sparks of holiness present in Egypt.

Although Moses had informed them that it was time to move on, the people found it hard to leave. They were so thoroughly involved in fulfilling God’s command that when He issued a new directive that conflicted with past directives, they simply froze.

141. Above, 14:7. 142. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 21, p. 142, note 24. 143. Numbers 19:1-22. 144. Rashi on 24:3, below, and on Deuteronomy 5:16. 145. I.e., those in Exodus 21:1-23:19. 146. Rashi here, on 24:3, below, and on Deuteronomy 5:12 & 16; *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 21, p. 140, note 15, p. 142, note 24. 147. *Arachin* 15ab. 148. Above, 3:22.

— ONKELOS —

26 ואמר אם קבלא תקביל למימרא דיי אלהך ודכשר בעינוהי תעביד ותצית לפקודוהי ותטר כל-קמזוהי כל-מרעין די שויתי במצרים לא אשויו עוף ארי אנה יי אסף: 27 ואתו לאילם ותמן תרי עטר מבוטין דמיין ושבעין דקלין ושרו תמן על מניא: 161 ונטלו מאילים ואתו כל-בנשטא דבני ישראל למדברא דסין די בין אילים ובין סיני בחמשת עשר יומא לירחא תנינא למפקדון מארעא דמצרים:

26 וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים תִּשְׁמָע לְקוֹלִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ וְהִישָׁר בְּעֵינָיו תַּעֲשֶׂה וְהִאֲזַנְתָּ לְמִצְוֹתָיו וְשָׁמַרְתָּ כְּלִיחֶיךָ כְּלֵי הַמַּחֲלָה אֲשֶׁר-שָׁמַתִּי בַּמִּצְרִים לֹא-אֲשִׁים עֲלֶיךָ כִּי אֲנִי יְהוָה רַפָּאָךְ: 8

◆ חמישי 27 וַיָּבֹאוּ אֵילָמָה וְשֵׁם שְׁתֵּים עָשָׂרָה עֵינַת מַיִם וְשִׁבְעִים תְּמָרִים וַיַּחֲנוּ-שָׁם עַל-הַמַּיִם: 16:1 וַיִּסְעוּ מֵאֵילָם וַיָּבֹאוּ כָּל-עֵדַת בְּנֵי-יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶל-מִדְבַּר-סִין אֲשֶׁר בֵּין-אֵילָם וּבֵין סִינִי בַחֲמִשָּׁה עָשָׂר יוֹם לַחֹדֶשׁ הַשְּׁנִי לְצֵאתָם מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרָיִם:

— RASHI —

לְאָדָם: אֵל תֹּאכַל דָּבָר זֶה פֶּן וַיֵּאָךְ לִידֵי חֹלִי, וְזֶה אֲזוּן מִצְוֹת. וְכֵן הוּא אוֹמֵר: "רַפָּאוֹת תְּהִי לְשָׁרְךָ" 171: 27 שְׁתֵּים עָשָׂרָה עֵינַת מַיִם. כְּנֶגֶד שְׁנַיִם עָשָׂר שְׁבָעִים נִזְדַּמְנוּ לָהֶם: וְשִׁבְעִים תְּמָרִים. כְּנֶגֶד שִׁבְעִים זְקֵנִים: 1 בַּחֲמִשָּׁה עָשָׂר יוֹם. נִתְפָּרַשׁ הַיּוֹם שֶׁל חֲנֻיָּה ז', לְפִי שְׁבוּ בַיּוֹם כְּלֵתָהּ הַחֲרָרָה שְׁהוֹצִיאוּ מִמִּצְרַיִם, וְהִצְרָכּוֹ לָמוֹן. לְמַדְנָה, שְׁאֵכְלוּ מִשְׁנֵי הַבָּצֵק שִׁשִּׁים וְאַחַת סְעוּדוֹת, וַיֵּרֶד לָהֶם מִן בִּשְׁטָה עָשָׂר בָּאֵיר, וַיּוֹם רָאשׁוֹן בִּשְׁבַת הַיּוֹם, כִּדְאִיתָא בְּמִסְכַּת שְׁבַת 172:

26 אֱלֹהִים-שְׁמוּעַ תִּשְׁמָע. זוֹ קִבְלָה שְׁיִקְבְּלוּ עֲלֵיהֶם: תַּעֲשֶׂה. הִיא עֲשִׂיהָ: וְהִאֲזַנְתָּ. תִּטָּה אֲזוּנִים לְדַקֵּק בָּהֶם: כְּלִיחֶיךָ. דְּבָרִים שְׁאֵינָן אֶלָּא גִזְרֵת מֶלֶךְ בְּלֹא שׁוּם טַעַם, וַיִּצַּר הָרַע מִקְנִטֵּר עֲלֵיהֶם: מָה אֲסוּר בְּאֵלּוּ לָמָּה נֶאֱסְרוּ? כְּגוֹן: לְבִישַׁת כְּלָאִים, וְאַכִּילַת חֹזֵר, וּפְרָה אֲדָמָה, וְכִיּוּצָא בָהֶם: לֹא-אֲשִׁים עֲלֶיךָ. וְאִם אֲשִׁים — הֲרִי הִיא בְּלֹא הוֹשְׁמָה, "כִּי אֲנִי ה' רַפָּאָךְ". וְזֶה מִדְּרָשׁוֹ. וְלְפִי פְשׁוּטוֹ: "כִּי אֲנִי ה' רַפָּאָךְ" — וּמִלְמַדְךָ תוֹרָה וּמִצְוֹת לְמַעַן תִּנְצֹל מֵהֶם, כְּרֹפֵא הוּא הָאוֹמֵר

171. משלי ג, ח. 172. פו, ב.

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Zohar,¹⁵⁸ this tree was the Tree of Life, the epitome of goodness. According to the Midrash,¹⁵⁹ however, it was an extremely bitter tree; some sages even say that it was poisonous.

These seemingly conflicting opinions reflect the various stages in the process of neutralizing evil.

There are several steps in our war against evil. The first is to refuse outright to do anything forbidden or wrong. We may very well still desire to do these things, but we control our urges and avoid giving in to them. This is the spiritual level the Jews had reached when they left Egypt, as mentioned earlier.¹⁶⁰

The first step leads naturally to the second. Our success at continuously controlling our urges to do evil and refusing to give into them, coupled with our effort to do good, refines us. Eventually, we not only avoid wrongdoing but also rid ourselves of the *desire* to do wrong. Allegorically, this corresponds to sweet-

ening the water by means of a sweet tree: we simply overpower the improper aspects of our personality and drown them in goodness. This is a major stride forward from merely reining in our desire to do evil, but it is not yet a complete victory. The strength and energy of the forces of evil have not yet been harnessed to serve God.

The final stage is when we not only subjugate or even eradicate our evil desires but rather harness their energy and channel it in a constructive manner. Allegorically, this corresponds to taking a bitter tree and throwing it into bitter water, thereby making it sweet. The bad itself becomes good; we are now truly fulfilling God's desire of transforming the physical world into a spiritualized one.¹⁶¹

26 I am God who heals you: Unlike a mortal doctor, who cures an already-sick person (or immunizes him against future sickness), God has the capacity to prevent disease from attacking in the first place. [continues...]

155. Numbers 33:12. 156. Numbers 33:13. 157. Likutei Sichot, vol. 31, p. 87, note 23.158. 2:60a-b. 159. Tanchuma 24; Mechilta ad loc.; Shemot Rabbah 50:3. 160. Above, on 14:5. 161. Sefer HaMa'amarim 5715, pp. 241-242.

26 God **said**, referring to Himself in the third person, “If you diligently heed the voice of God, your God, by agreeing to do what He says, and you not only commit yourselves but in fact **do what is upright in His eyes**—carefully listening to the details of **all His commandments** and fulfilling them precisely and observing even **all His rules**, i.e., the commandments whose rationale is beyond human understanding—then I, God, will bring none of the sicknesses that I brought on Egypt during the plagues **151a** upon you. And even if for some other reason I do bring any of these sicknesses upon you, it will not matter, **for I am God who heals you**; I can be relied upon to heal you of them. But in general, if you accept My authority and follow My commands, that itself will heal you *a priori* of all diseases.” The people camped at the Marah stream for six days.¹⁵²

From Marah to Eilim

- ◆ **Fifth Reading 27** Then, on the 1st of Iyar, they journeyed and came to Eilim, where there were twelve springs of water, corresponding to the twelve tribes, and seventy date palms, corresponding to the seventy elders (see Figure 5). They encamped by the water for ten days.

From Eilim to Alush

16:1 On the 11th of Iyar, they moved on from Eilim and camped on the east shore of the Sea of Reeds.¹⁵³ On the 12th of Iyar, they journeyed from this stop and camped somewhere in the Sin Desert.¹⁵⁴ On the 13th of Iyar, they journeyed from this stop and camped at Dafkah, another location in the Sin Desert.¹⁵⁵ They stayed there for two days. The entire community of Israel came to Alush,¹⁵⁶ another location in the Sin Desert, which is between Eilim and Mount Sinai, on Shabbat,¹⁵⁷ the fifteenth of Iyar, the second month after they had left Egypt (see Figure 6).

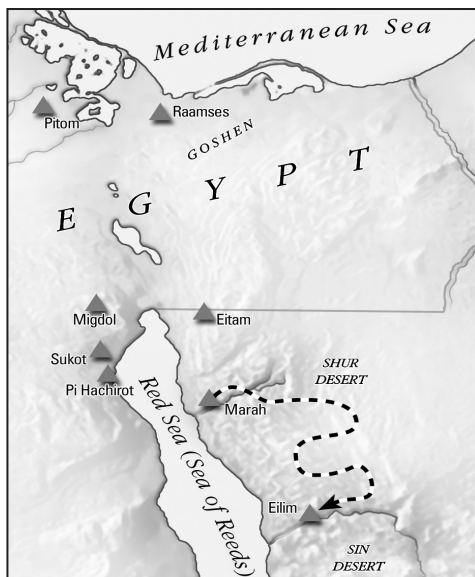


Figure 5: From Marah to Eilim

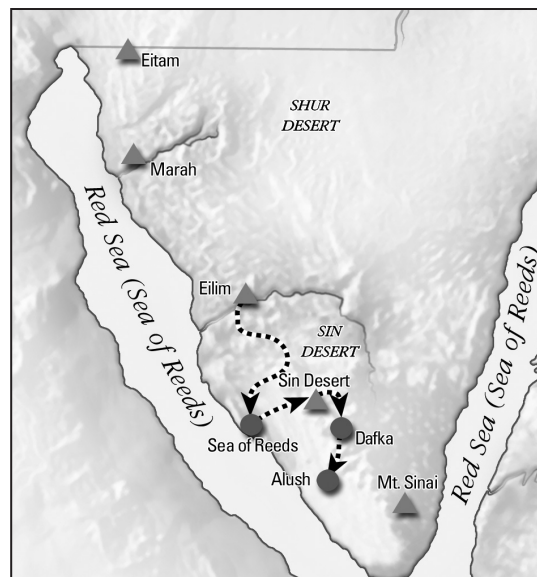


Figure 6: From Eilim to Alush

151a. See Deuteronomy 7:15, 28:27, 28:60 and Rashi *ad loc.* **152.** Since they arrived on the 25th of Nisan (v. 23) and left on the 1st of Iyar (v. 27). **153.** Numbers 33:10. **154.** Numbers 33:11.

— ONKELOS —

2 וְאֶתְרַעְמוּ כָּל־כְּנֻשֵׁתָא דְּבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל עַל מֹשֶׁה וְעַל אֹהֶרֶן בְּמִדְבָּרָא: 3 וְאָמְרוּ לְהוֹן בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל לְוִי דְּמִיתְנָא קָדָם יי בְּאַרְעָא דְּמִצְרַיִם כִּד הוּינָא יִתְבִּין עַל דְּוִידִי בְּשָׂרָא וְכִד הוּינָא אֲכָלִין לַחֲמָא וְשִׁבְעִין אָרִי אֲפִיקְתוּן יִתְנָא לְמִדְבָּרָא הָדִין לְקֻטְלָא יִתְ כָּל־קְהָלָא הָדִין בְּכַפְנָא: 4 וְאָמַר יי לְמֹשֶׁה הָא אָנָּא מַחִית לְכוּן לַחֲמָא מִן שְׁמַיָּא וְיִפְקֹון עֻמָּא וְיִלְקֻטוּן פִּתְגָם יוֹם בְּיוֹמָהּ בְּדִיל דְּאֲנִסְנוּן הִיִּתְכּוֹן בְּאוֹרֵיתִי אִם לֹא: 5 וַיְהִי בְּיוֹמָא שְׁתִּיתָאָה וַיִּתְקַנּוּן יִת דִּי יִיתָנוּ וַיְהִי עַל חֹד תַּרְיִן עַל דְּיִלְקֻטוּן יוֹם יוֹם:

2 וילינו {וילוננו} כָּל־עֲדַת בְּנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל עַל־מֹשֶׁה וְעַל־ אֹהֶרֶן בְּמִדְבָּר: 3 וַיֹּאמְרוּ אֲלֵהֶם בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל מִי־יִתֵּן מוֹתָנוּ בְּיַד־יְהוָה בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם בְּשִׁבְתָּנוּ עַל־סִיר הַבָּשָׂר בְּאֲכִילָנוּ לֶחֶם לְשֹׁבַע כִּי־הוֹצֵאתָם אֹתָנוּ אֶל־ הַמִּדְבָּר הַזֶּה לְהָמִית אֶת־כָּל־הַקָּהָל הַזֶּה בַּרְעֵב: 4 וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל־מֹשֶׁה הִנְנִי מִמְטִיר לָכֶם לֶחֶם מִן־הַשָּׁמַיִם וַיֵּצֵא הָעָם וּלְקֻטּוֹ דְּבִרְיֹם בְּיוֹמוֹ לְמַעַן אֲנִסְנוּ הָיִלֶךְ בְּתוֹרָתִי אִם־לֹא: 5 וַהֲיָה בְּיוֹם הַשְּׁשִׁי וַהֲכִינוּ אֵת אֲשֶׁר־יִבְיֹאוּ וַהֲיָה מִשְׁנֶה עַל אֲשֶׁר־יִלְקֻטּוּ יוֹם | יוֹם:

— RASHI —

ליום ולמחרת: משנה. על שהיו רגילים ללקט יום יום של שאר ימות השבוע. ואומר אני: "אשר־יביאו והיה משנה" — לאחר שיביאו ימצאו משנה במדידה על אשר ילקטו וימדו יום יום, וזהו: "לקטו לכם משנה" ¹⁷³ — בלקיטתו היה נמצא לחם משנה. וזהו: "על־כן הוא נתן לכם ביום הששי לחם יומים" ¹⁷⁴ — נותן לכם ברכה, פוישו" ¹⁷⁵ בבית, למלאות העמך פעמים ללחם יומים:

2 וילינו. לפי שכלה הלחם: 3 מי־יתן מותנו. שנמות. ואינו שם דבר כמו "מותנו", אלא כמו "עשותנו" "חנותנו" "שובנו" — לעשות אנחנו, לחנות אנחנו, למות אנחנו. ותרגמו: "לוי דמיתנא" — לו מתנו, הלאי והיינו מתים: 4 דבר־יום ביומו. צרף אכילת יום ילקטו ביומו, ולא ילקטו היום לצרף מחר: למען אנסנו הילך בתורת. אם ישמרו מצות התלויות בו: שלא יותירו ממנו, ולא יצאו בשבת ללקט: 5 והיה משנה.

¹⁷³. להלן פסוק כב. ¹⁷⁴. פסוק כט. ¹⁷⁵. שפעי.

— CHASIDIC INSIGHTS —

left no room for such misconceptions. Manna was clearly not acquired by human effort, but was rather bestowed by God as a gift.

For this reason, God did not allow the people to collect more than one day's worth of manna at a time. If He had allowed them to collect food for several days at once, this would have left room for some feelings of self-assuredness. During those days that the pantry was full, the people would not feel dependent upon God. The very point of manna, therefore, was to serve as a test to see if the people could throw themselves completely at God's mercy, ending each day with nothing but their reliance on God to provide for them on the morrow as He had done today.¹⁶⁸

On the other hand, the manna prepared the Jews for

their eventual entry into the real world. The manna taught them that sustenance comes from heaven; even when it appears to be the fruit of one's labor, it is in fact a gift from God. Therefore, although the manna was entirely heavenly, and they were only to collect enough for one day at a time and rely upon God to provide more the next day, some degree of human involvement was required in collecting it. If the manna had not required any human effort, the people would not have applied its lesson to their earthly existence once out of the desert. They would have written the manna off as an isolated, miraculous phenomenon, irrelevant to real life. By being somewhat involved in collecting the manna, they learned that human effort and Divine beneficence are not mutually exclusive.¹⁶⁹

¹⁶⁸. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 16, pp. 174-175. ¹⁶⁹. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 16, pp. 177-178.

2 That morning, they finished the bread they had taken with them from Egypt. Having eaten two meals a day, this was the sixty-first meal they ate from these provisions. Although they were not yet hungry and there was still ample time for God to provide them with food, **the entire community of the Israelites complained against Moses and Aaron** because they were **in the desert** with no provisions left.

3 **The Israelites said to them, "If only we had died by the hand of God in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the fleshpots and ate our fill of bread! But you have taken us out to this desert, to starve this entire congregation to death!"** This was the fourth time the people challenged God's ability to come to their aid.¹⁶²

The Manna and the Quails

4 **God said to Moses, "The people asked for meat and bread. Today, in the late afternoon, I will send them quails to eat, and tomorrow, I am going to rain down bread for you from the sky. The people will go out and gather each day's portion on that day.** They must not save any from one day for the next. **This way, I will test them as to whether or not they will follow My teaching** regarding the bread, i.e., that they not leave any of it over and not collect it on the Sabbath, as I will soon instruct them.

5 **On the sixth day of the week they shall prepare what they bring in, and, even though they will have collected the same amount as on previous days, it will miraculously be twice as much as they gather each day.** Thus, they will not have to collect it on the Sabbath."

❧ CHASIDIC INSIGHTS ❧

This applies to spiritual "diseases," as well. A person who has rid himself of evil and devoted himself entirely to God's will—a *tzadik*—is immune to spiritual disease. Unlike the average person, he does not need to be cured of spiritual maladies.

Although we may not have reached the spiritual level of a *tzadik*, each of us nonetheless possesses an inner *tzadik*, an inner point of purity that—unlike our everyday selves, which must be constantly cured of the spiritual maladies afflicting it—is unsusceptible to spiritual harm.

The initials of the words for "I am God who heals you" form the word *Iyar*, the name of the second month of the Jewish calendar.¹⁶³ *Iyar* follows *Nisan*, in which we celebrate the Exodus from Egypt. *Nisan* is a time when we are redeemed from exile; *Iyar* is a time when we can reveal that part of ourselves that was never afflicted by exile.¹⁶⁴

4 **So that I may test them as to whether or not they will follow My teaching:** The word for "test" (אנסנו) is from same root as the word for "uplift" (להעניס).¹⁶⁵ The purpose of the manna was to uplift those who ate it and heighten their spiritual consciousness. As a result of this spiritual boost, the Jews were able to "follow My teaching"—to receive the Torah, as it is indeed stated in the Midrash:¹⁶⁶ "The Torah could only have been given to those who had partaken of the manna."¹⁶⁷

They must not save any from one day for the next: We might tend to think that our "bread from the earth" (regular physical sustenance) is acquired solely through our own effort. Although we believe that everything is truly in God's hand, we still entertain the notion that our own physical effort also plays a role, even if only because it is God's desire that we work for our living. In contrast, manna, the bread from heaven,

162. *Arachin* 15ab. 163. See *Chidushei Chatam Sofer, Shabbat* p. 147b; *Sha'ar Yissachar, Iyar*. 164. *Hitva'aduyot* 5743, vol. 3, pp. 1372-1373. 165. See *Psalms* 60:6. 166. *Mechilta* ad loc. 167. *Sefer HaMa'amaram Melukat*, vol. 1, pp. 238-239.

— ONKELOS —

6 ואמר משה ואהרן לכל־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּרִמָּשׁ וּתְדַעְנוּ אֲרִי יִי אִפִּיק יִתְכוֹן מֵאֲרַע דְּמִצְרַיִם: 7 וּבִצְפָרָא וְתַחֲזוּן יִת יִקְרָא דִּי כִד שְׁמִיעֵן קְדֻמוֹהִי תוֹרַעְמוֹתְכוֹן עַל יִי וְנִחְנָא מִה אֲרִי אֲתִרַעְמוֹתוֹן עֲלֵנָא: 8 ואמר משה בדיתן יי לכוֹן בְּרִמָּשׁ בְּשָׂרָא לְמִיכַל וְלִחְמָא בְּצִפְרָא לְמִשְׁבַּע כִּד שְׁמִיעֵן קֳדָם יִי תוֹרַעְמוֹתְכוֹן דִּי אֲתוֹן מְתַרַעְמִין עֲלוֹהִי וְנִחְנָא מִה לֹא עֲלָנָא תוֹרַעְמוֹתְכוֹן אֱלֹהִין עַל מִימְרָא דִּי: 9 ואמר משה לאהרן אמר לכל־בְּנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל קְרִיבוּ קֳדָם יִי אֲרִי שְׁמִיעֵן קְדֻמוֹהִי תוֹרַעְמוֹתְכוֹן:

6 וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה וְאַהֲרֹן אֶל־כָּל־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל עֲרֹב וַיִּדְעֻתֶם כִּי יְהוָה הוֹצִיא אֶתְכֶם מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם: 7 וּבִקֹּר וּרְאִיתֶם אֶת־כְּבוֹד יְהוָה בְּשִׁמְעוֹ אֶת־תַּלְלֹתֵיכֶם עַל־יְהוָה וְנַחֲנוּ מֶה כִּי תִלּוּנוּ {תְּלִינוּ} עֲלֵינוּ: 8 וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה בְּתַת יְהוָה לָכֶם בָּעֶרֶב בָּשָׂר לֶאֱכֹל וּלְחֶם בַּבֹּקֶר לְשִׁבְעַת בְּשִׁמְעַת יְהוָה אֶת־תַּלְלֹתֵיכֶם אֲשֶׁר־אַתֶּם מְלִינִם עָלָיו וְנַחֲנוּ מֶה לֹא־עֲלֵינוּ תַלְלֹתֵיכֶם כִּי עַל־יְהוָה: 9 וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה אֶל־אַהֲרֹן אָמֹר אֶל־כָּל־עַדַּת בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל קִרְבוּ לִפְנֵי יְהוָה כִּי שִׁמְעַת אֶת תַּלְלֹתֵיכֶם:

— RASHI —

ועל כרחי אני זקוק לפרש "תלינו" בלשון תפעילו, מפני דגשותו וקריאתו. שאלו היה רפה, הייתי מפרשו בלשון תפעלו, כמו: "וילן העם על־משה"¹⁷⁶. או אם היה דגוש ואין בו יו"ד ונקרא "תלוננו", הייתי מפרשו לשון תלוננו. עכשו הוא משמע תלינו את אחרים, כמו במרגלים: "וילינו עליו את־כל־העדה"¹⁷⁷. 8 **בשר לאכל**. ולא לשבע. למדה תורה דרך ארץ, שאין אוכלין בשר לשובע. ומה ראה להוריד לחם בבקר ובשר בערב? לפי שהלחם שאֵלו בהגן, שאי אפשר לו לאדם בלא לחם, אבל בשר שאֵלו שלא בהגן, שהרבה בהמות היו להם. ועוד, שהיה אפשר להם בלא בשר, לפיכך נתן להם בשעת טורח שלא בהגן: **אשר־אתם מלינים עליו**. את האחרים השומעים אתכם מתלוננים: 9 **קרבו**. למקום שהענין ירד:

6 **ערב**. כמו לערב: וידעתם כי ה' הוציא אתכם מארץ מצרים. לפי שאמרתם לנו: "כִּי־הוֹצֵאתֶם אֶתְנוּ"¹⁷⁶, תדעו כי לא אנחנו המוציאים, אלא ה' הוציא אתכם, שגזיו לכם את השליו: 7 **ובקר וראיתם**. לא על הכבוד — שנאמר: "וְהָיָה כְבוֹד ה' נִרְאָה בְּעֵינֶיךָ"¹⁷⁷ — נאמר, אלא כך אמר להם: ערב וידעתם כי הכולת בידו לתן מתנותכם ובשר יתן, אף לא בפנים מאירות ותננה לכם, כי שלא בהגן שאלתם אותו ומכרס מלאה. והלחם ששאלתם לצרף, בירידתו לבקר תראו את כבוד אור פניו, שירידהו לכם דרך חבה בבקר, שיש שהות להכינו, וטל מלמעלה וטל מלמטה כמוֹנח בקפסא: **את־תלנתיכם עליה**. כמו "אשר עליה": **ונחנו מה**. מה־אנחנו חשובין: **כי תלינו עלינו**. שתַרְעִימוּ עֲלֵינוּ את הכל — את בניכם ונשיכם ובנותיכם וערב רב.

¹⁷⁶. לעיל פסוק ג. ¹⁷⁷. להלן פסוק י. ¹⁷⁸. שמות יז, ג. ¹⁷⁹. במדבר יד, לו.

— CHASIDIC INSIGHTS —

8 **You should only eat bread to satiety**: Allegorically, bread signifies the *exoteric* dimension of the Torah, its laws and lessons for life; meat signifies the *esoteric* dimension of the Torah, its teachings regarding the inner workings of the universe and the spiritual life of the soul. Quail meat is especially fatty, and oil/fat is another metaphor for the esoteric dimension of the Torah; quail meat thus represents the most spiritual secrets of the Torah. As a form of *meat*, quail meat signifies these sublime secrets becoming "digestible," i.e., taking on a form in which they can be understood, applied, and appreciated.

True, manna also descended from heaven, and therefore also signifies the inner dimension of the Torah, but since it is a form of *bread*, it more precisely sig-

nifies how the inner dimension of the Torah is felt within the study of the exoteric dimension of the Torah. The quails allude to the inner dimension of the Torah itself.

This explains why everyone received equal portions of manna, just as the laws and lessons of the Torah apply to all equally. The quails, however, "covered the camp" — there was no specific quantity per person, for each of us plumbs the depths of the inner dimension of the Torah differently — quantitatively and qualitatively — in accordance with our spiritual disposition.

For this reason, too, the manna did not fall on the Sabbath, for on the Sabbath we are intended to devote ourselves almost exclusively to the spiritual life, whereas the quails *began* to descend for the first time

6 As for what to say to the people, God first addressed the impertinent *tone* of their complaint. He had both Moses and Aaron deal with this, since they were both responsible for teaching the people how to believe and trust in God. Thus, both **Moses and Aaron said to all the Israelites** in God's name, "You said that *we* took you out of Egypt,¹⁷⁰ and since *we* cannot provide for you in the desert, you assume that you will perish. Your faith in God needs to be strengthened. Furthermore, asking for *meat* was unnecessary and impudent—you can survive quite well without it, and anyway you have plenty of cattle.¹⁷¹ Therefore, **in the evening, you will know that it is God**, not us, **who took you out of the land of Egypt**, for you will see Him provide you miraculously with the meat you crave. But He will express His displeasure with your impertinence by giving you meat *at dusk*, when it is difficult to gather and prepare.

7 On the other hand, implicit in your complaint against our inability to provide for you is your awareness that God *can* provide for you, and this is praiseworthy. Furthermore, this belief in God prompted you to ask for *bread*—which is justified, since you cannot subsist without bread. So tomorrow, **in the morning, you will see the glory of God**, i.e., His goodwill and love, as He provides you with bread. He will express His approval of your faith in Him by giving you bread *in the morning*, when there is ample time to gather and prepare it, and by presenting it to you protected with layers of dew above and below. (This is why He will provide you with bread only tomorrow morning, and not immediately.) He will thus provide for you, **having heard your complaints, which**, although you voiced them against us, are not against us, but **are against God. For what are we that** by your example **you should incite** your families and the mixed multitude **to complain against us?** We have no power of our own."

8 God then addressed the *substance* of the people's complaint. Since only Moses, not Aaron, was responsible for providing for the people, God spoke through Moses alone: **Moses said**, "You will realize that you asked for meat impudently and bread properly **when** you see how **God gives you meat to eat in the evening and bread to satiety in the morning**. (Although He will provide you with an abundance of both bread and meat,¹⁷² you should only eat *bread* to satiety, because it is gluttonous to eat meat to satiety.) He will give you bread compassionately **because God hears your complaints**. He will give you meat reproachfully because, although you direct your complaints at us, by example, **you are inciting others to complain against Him**, not us. **For what are we? Your complaints are not against us, but against God!**"¹⁷³

9 Pointing to a location outside the camp, **Moses said to Aaron**, "Tell the entire community of the Israelites, 'Draw near that place and stand there **before God**, for He has heard your complaints.'"

170. Above, v. 3. 171. Rashi on v. 8, below. 172. See below, v. 13. 173. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 16, pp. 161-168.

— ONKELOS —

10 וַהֲרָה כֹד מְלִיל אֶהְרֶן עִם כָּל־
כְּנִשְׁתָּא דְבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְאַתְפְּנִיאוּ
לְמַדְבָּרָא וְהָא יִקְרָא דִּי אֶתְגְּלִי
בְּעִנְיָא: 11 וּמְלִיל יִי עִם מִשָּׁה
לְמִימָר: 12 שְׁמִיעַ קֳדָמִי יִתְּ
תוֹרַעְמוֹת בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל מְלִיל עֲמַהוּן
לְמִימָר בֵּין שְׁמִשָּׁא תִיכְלוּן בְּשָׂרָא
וּבְצִפְרָא תִשְׁבְּעוּן לְחִמָּא וְתִדְעוּן
אַרִי אָנָּא יִי אֱלֹהֵבוֹן: 13 וַהֲרָה
בְּרַמְשָׁא וְסִלְקַת שְׁלִיו וְחַפְתָּ יִתְּ
מִשְׁרִיתָא וּבְצִפְרָא הֲוֹת נְחֻתָּת
טִלָּא סְחֹר סְחֹר לְמִשְׁרִיתָא:
14 וְסִלְקַת נְחֻתָּת טִלָּא וְהָא עַל
אִפִּי מַדְבָּרָא דִּדְעִק מְקַלְף דִּדְעִק
דְּגִיר בְּגִלְדָּא עַל אֶרְעָא: 15 וְחֹזוּ
בְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְאָמְרוּ גְבֵר לְאַחֻוּי
מִנָּא הוּא אַרִי לֹא יָדְעוּ מַדָּה הוּא
וְאָמַר מִשָּׁה לְהוֹן הוּא לְחִמָּא
דִּי יִיב יִי לְבוֹן לְמִיכָל: 16 דִּין
פְּתִיגָמָא דִּי פִקִּיד יִי לְקוּטוּ מִנְּהָ גְבֵר
לְפָנִים מִיכָלָה עֲמָרָא לְגִלְגָּלְתָא
מִנֵּן נְפִשְׁתִּיכּוֹן גְּבֵר לְדִי בְּמִשְׁכָּנָה
תִּסְבּוּן: 17 וְעֲבָדוּ כֹן בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל
וּלְקוּטוּ דְּאַסְגִּי וְדִאֲזַעַר:

10 וַיְהִי כַדְבַר אֶהְרֶן אֶל־כָּל־עֵדֶת בְּנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיִּפְּנוּ
אֶל־הַמִּדְבָּר וַהֲרָה כְּבוֹד יְהוָה נִרְאָה בָּעֵינֵי: פ
שִׁישִׁי 11 וַיְדַבֵּר יְהוָה אֶל־מֹשֶׁה לֵּאמֹר: 12 שְׁמַעְתִּי אֶת־
תְּלִונֹת בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל דִּבֵּר אֱלֹהִים לֵאמֹר בֵּין הָעֲרִבִים
הָאֲכִלוּ בָשָׂר וּבִבְבֶּקֶר תִּשְׁבְּעוּ לָחֶם וַיִּדְעוּתָם כִּי אֲנִי יְהוָה
אֱלֹהֵיכֶם: 13 וַיְהִי בָעֶרֶב וַתַּעַל הַשָּׁלֹו וַתִּכַּס אֶת־הַמַּחֲנֶה
וּבִבְבֶּקֶר הִיָּתָה שְׂכֶבֶת הַטֹּל סָבִיב לַמַּחֲנֶה: 14 וַתַּעַל
שְׂכֶבֶת הַטֹּל וַהֲנֶה עַל־פְּנֵי הַמִּדְבָּר דִּק מְחַסְפָּס דִּק
כְּפָפֶר עַל־הָאָרֶץ: 15 וַיִּרְאוּ בְנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיֹּאמְרוּ אִישׁ
אֶל־אָחִיו מִן הוּא כִּי לֹא יָדְעוּ מַדָּה־הוּא וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה
אֱלֹהִים הוּא הִלָּחֶם אֲשֶׁר נָתַן יְהוָה לָכֶם לֶאֱכֹלָה: 16 זֶה
הַדְּבָר אֲשֶׁר צִוָּה יְהוָה לְקַטוּ מִמֶּנּוּ אִישׁ לְפִי אֲכָלוּ עֹמֶר
לְגִלְגָּלֹת מִסֹּפֶר נַפְשֹׁתֵיכֶם אִישׁ לְאִשֶּׁר בָּאָהֶלוּ תִקְחוּ:
17 וַיַּעֲשׂוּ־כֵן בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיִּלְקְטוּ הַמִּרְבָּה וְהַמִּמְעִיט:

— RASHI —

בְּלַעַז¹⁸⁴. "דִּדְעִק גִּיר" — כְּאֲבֵנֵי גִיר, וְהוּא מִין צֶבַע
שְׁחֹר, כְּדֹאמְרִינֵן גְּבִי כְּסוּי הַדָּם¹⁸⁵: "הַגִּיר וְהוֹרְנִיר".
"דִּדְעִק גִּיר, בְּגִלְדָּא עַל אֶרְעָא" — דִּק הִיָּה גִיר
וְשׁוֹכֵב מְגִלָּד כְּקֹרַח עַל הָאָרֶץ. וְכֵן פְּרוּשׁוֹ: "דִּק כְּפָפֶר"
— שְׁטוֹחַ, קְלוּשׁ, וּמְחַבֵּר בְּגִלְדִּי. "דִּק" — טִיבִי־שׁ
בְּלַעַז¹⁸⁶, שְׁהִיָּה מְגִלְדִּי גִלְדִּי דִּק מְלַמְעָלָה. וְ"גִיר"
שְׁתַּרְגָּם אוֹיִנְקְלוּס, תּוֹסַפֶּת הוּא עַל לְשׁוֹן הָעֵבְרִית,
וְאִין לֹא תִבָּה בְּפִסּוּק: 15 מִן הוּא. הַכֶּנֶת מִזֶּזֶן הוּא, כְּמוֹ:
"וַיִּמְנֵן לָהֶם הַמֶּלֶךְ"¹⁸⁷: כִּי לֹא יָדְעוּ מַדָּה־הוּא. שְׁיִקְרָאוּהוּ
בְּשֵׁמוֹ: 16 עֹמֶר. שֵׁם מִדָּה: מִסֹּפֶר נַפְשֹׁתֵיכֶם. כְּפִי מִנֵּן
נַפְשׁוֹת שֵׁשׁ לְאִישׁ בָּאָהֶלוּ, תִּקְחוּ עֹמֶר לְכָל־ גִּלְגָּלֹת:
17 הַמִּרְבָּה וְהַמִּמְעִיט. יֵשׁ שְׁלִקְטוּ הַרְבֵּה וַיֵּשׁ שְׁלִקְטוּ
מִעֵט, וּכְשֶׁבָאוּ לְבֵיתָם מְדָדוּ בְּעֹמֶר אִישׁ אִישׁ מַדָּה־
שְׁלִקְטוּ, וּמִצָּאוּ שֶׁהַמִּרְבָּה לִלְקֹט לֹא הִעֲדִיף עַל עֹמֶר
לְגִלְגָּלֹת אֲשֶׁר בָּאָהֶלוּ, וְהַמִּמְעִיט לִלְקֹט — לֹא מִצָּא
חֶסֶר מִעֹמֶר לְגִלְגָּלֹת. וְהוּא נִס גְּדוֹל שֶׁנֶּעֱשֶׂה בּוֹ:

13 הַשָּׁלֹו. מִין עוֹף, וְשִׁמְן מֵאֵד: הִיָּתָה שְׂכֶבֶת הַטֹּל.
הַטֹּל שׁוֹכֵב עַל הַמֶּן. וּבְמִקּוֹם אַחֵר הוּא אוֹמֵר: "וּבְכֹרֶת
הַטֹּל"¹⁸⁸ וְגו'. הַטֹּל יוֹרֵד עַל הָאָרֶץ וְהַמֶּן יוֹרֵד עָלָיו,
וְחֹזֵר וַיּוֹרֵד טַל עָלָיו, וְהָרִי הוּא כְּמוֹנֵחַ בְּקַפְסָא:
14 וַתַּעַל שְׂכֶבֶת הַטֹּל וְגו'. כְּשֶׁהַחֲמָה וּזְרַחַת — עוֹלָה
הַטֹּל שֶׁעַל הַמֶּן לְקִרְאֵת הַחֲמָה, כְּדֶרֶךְ טַל עוֹלָה לְקִרְאֵת
הַחֲמָה, אֵף עִם תְּמַלָּא שְׁפּוֹפֶרֶת שֶׁל בִּיצָה טַל וְתִסְתָּם
אֶת פִּיהָ וְתִנְיָחָה בַּחֲמָה, הִיא עוֹלָה מֵאֶלֶיָּה בְּאִוִיר.
וְרַבּוּתֵינוּ דְּרִשׁוּ¹⁸⁹: שֶׁהַטֹּל עוֹלָה מִן הָאָרֶץ בְּאִוִיר וְהַמֶּן
יוֹרֵד מִן הַשָּׁמַיִם שְׁלֹא כְּדֶרֶךְ סִדְרֵי בְּרָאשִׁית, הִלָּחֶם
מִלְמַעְלָה וְהַטֹּל מִלְמַטָּה, וְכַעֲלוֹת שְׂכֶבֶת הַטֹּל נִתְּגַלָּה
הַמֶּן, וְרָאוּ "וַהֲנֶה עַל־פְּנֵי הַמִּדְבָּר" וְגו': דִּק. דְּבֵר דִּק:
מְחַסְפָּס. מְגִלָּה. וְאִין דּוּמָה לֹא בְּמִקְרָא. וַיֵּשׁ לִזְמֹר
"מְחַסְפָּס" לְשׁוֹן חִפְסָא וְדִלְסָקְמָא שְׁבִלְשׁוֹן מִשְׁנָה¹⁹⁰,
כְּשֶׁנִּתְּגַלָּה מִשְׂכֶּבֶת הַטֹּל, רָאוּ שְׁהִיָּה דְּבֵר דִּק מְחַסְפָּס
בְּתוֹכּוֹ, בֵּין שְׁתֵּי שְׂכִבּוֹת הַטֹּל. וְאוֹנְקְלוּס תִּרְגָּם:
"מְקַלְף", לְשׁוֹן "מְחַשֵּׁף הַלְבָן"¹⁹¹: כְּפָפֶר. כְּפֹר יִילִיד־א

180. במדבר יא, ט. 181. תנחומא ישן בשלח, כ. 182. בבא מציעא כ, א. 183. בראשית ל, לו. 184. שְׂכֶבֶת קְפֹאָה. 185. חולין פב, ב. 186. דק. 187. דניאל א, ה.

174. Likutei Sichot, vol. 16, p. 170, note 53. 174a. Sifrei, Beha'alotekha 31 (on Numbers 11:9). 175. Cf. Numbers 11:9. 176. Likutei Sichot, vol. 16, pp. 168-171.

10 And when Aaron spoke to the entire community of the Israelites and they turned toward that place in the desert, they beheld the glory of God in a cloud.

◆ **Sixth Reading** **11 God then spoke to Moses from the cloud, saying,**

12 “I have heard the complaints of the Israelites. Speak to them and say, ‘At dusk you will eat meat, and in the morning you will eat bread to satiety, and you will know that I am God, your God.’” Everyone then dispersed.

13 That evening, i.e., the late afternoon of Shabbat, the 15th of Iyar,¹⁷⁴ quails came up and covered the camp, and in the morning of the following day, Sunday, the 16th of Iyar, there was a layer of dew around the camp.

14 When the sun rose and the layer of dew rose, behold, over the surface of the desert a thin substance that had been packed within the two layers of dew **was exposed**, as if the dew had been peeled back. It had a **thin crust** on top and was **as fine as the frost on the ground**. Underneath this was another layer of dew.¹⁷⁵ This substance was thus protected from dirt and insects by dew both above and below.^{174a} Although dew usually descends from the atmosphere onto the earth, here, the dew miraculously rose from the ground.

15 The Israelites saw the exposed substance and said to each other, “It is a portion of food [man],” for they did not know what it was exactly, to call it by name. Moses said to them, “That is the bread that God has given you to eat.

16 This is what God has commanded: ‘Gather as much of it as each man eats; you shall take an omer (about two and a half liters or quarts) per head, according to the number of people each man has in his tent.’” However, he did not tell them that Friday’s portion would be double so they would not have to gather it on the Sabbath.

17 The Israelites did what Moses told them. They gathered it, some more than what they should have and some less than this.

✧ CHASIDIC INSIGHTS ✧

not only on the Sabbath but at the apex of the Sabbath, its most sublime moment, Sabbath afternoon.

The Jews had plenty of cattle, so when they asked for meat and God rebuked them for asking for what they already had, it is clear that they were asking for *red* meat. Allegorically, this means that they sought to understand the inner dimension of the Torah with even their “animal” minds, the intellect of the animal-part of their personalities, which is normally occupied with devising ways to satisfy material needs (or perceived needs). This may be praiseworthy, but it is also problematic. Trying to translate the sublime insights of the esoteric dimension of the Torah directly into terms intelligible to the mundane animal intellect runs the risk of oversimplifying and de-spiritualizing the message.

God therefore gave the people quail meat—a more refined type of meat than red meat—indicating that they should first assimilate the Torah’s inner dimen-

sion into the intellect of the *Divine* aspect of their personalities.

God also chastised the Jews for asking for meat because it is possible to live without meat altogether. The lesson here is that, indeed, that generation—who witnessed the great miracles of the Exodus and the giving of the Torah and were taught by Moses himself—could get along without “meat,” i.e., without delving into the inner dimension of the Torah. But, with the passage of time, the memory of the revelations which that generation experienced recedes into history and it becomes increasingly imperative to bolster the weak spiritual health of the people with “fatty meat,” the successively more explicit revelations of the inner dimension of the Torah tailored to the needs of each generation.¹⁷⁶

17 They gathered it, some more and some less: There were those who recognized the lofty nature of the

— ONKELOS —

18 וְכָלוּ בַעֲמָרָא וְלֹא אוֹתֵר דְּאֶסְגִּי וּדְאֶזַר לֹא חָסֵר, גִּבֵּר לְפָנֵם מִיכְלָה לְקִטּוֹ: 19 וְאָמַר מֹשֶׁה לְהוֹן אֲנִשׁ לֹא יִשְׁאַר מִנֶּה עַד צַפְרָא: 20 וְלֹא קִבִּילוּ מִן מֹשֶׁה וְאִשְׁאֲרוּ גִבְרִיָּא מִנֶּה עַד צַפְרָא וּרְחִישׁ רִיחָשָׁא וְסָרִי וְרִגְזוּ עַל־יְהוֹן מֹשֶׁה: 21 וּלְקִטּוֹ יִתֵּה בַּצֶּפֶר בַּצֶּפֶר גִּבֵּר כְּפֹנֵם מִיכְלָה וּמָה דְּמִשְׁתַּאֲר מִנֶּה עַל אִפִּי חֻקְלָא כִּד חֻמָּא עֲלוּהִי שְׁמִשָּׁא פֶשֶׁר: 22 וְהוּהָ בְיוֹמָא שְׁתִּיתָאָה לְקִטּוֹ לְחֻמָּא עַל חֵד תְּרִין תְּרִין עֲמִרִין לְחֵד וְאִתּוֹ כְּלִדְבָרְבִי כְּנִשְׁתָּא וְחִינְיָא לְמֹשֶׁה: 23 וְאָמַר לְהוֹן הוּא דִּי מְלִיל יִי שְׁבִתָּא שְׁבִתָּא קִדְשָׁא קִדְשָׁא יִי מְחִיר יִת דִּי אֲתוֹן עֲתִידִין לְמִיפָא אִפּוֹ וְיִת דִּי אֲתוֹן עֲתִידִין לְבִשְׁלָא בְּשִׁילוֹ וְיִת כְּלִי מוֹתָרָא אֲצִנְעוּ לְכוֹן לְמִטְרָא עַד צַפְרָא: 24 וְאֲצִנְעוּ יִתֵּה עַד צַפְרָא כְּמָא דִּי פְקִיד מֹשֶׁה וְלֹא סָרִי וְרִיחָשָׁא לֹא הוּת בָּהּ:

18 וַיִּמְדּוּ בַעֲמָר וְלֹא הִעֲדִיף הַמֶּרְבֶּה וְהַמְמַעֵיט לֹא הִחֲסִיר אִישׁ לְפִי־אֹכְלוֹ לְקִטּוֹ: 19 וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה אֲלֵהֶם אִישׁ אֶל־יֹתֵר מִמֶּנּוּ עַד־בֶּקֶר: 20 וְלֹא־שָׁמְעוּ אֶל־מֹשֶׁה וַיֹּתֵרוּ אֲנָשִׁים מִמֶּנּוּ עַד־בֶּקֶר וַיִּרְם תּוֹלְעִים וַיִּבְאֵשׁ וַיִּקְצֹף עֲלֵהֶם מֹשֶׁה: 21 וַיִּלְקְטוּ אוֹתוֹ בַּבֶּקֶר בַּבֶּקֶר אִישׁ כְּפִי אֹכְלוֹ וְהֵם הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ וְנֶמֶס: 22 וַיְהִי בַיּוֹם הַשֵּׁשִׁי לְקִטּוֹ לֶחֶם מִשְׁנֵה שְׁנֵי הָעֵמֶר לְאַחַד וַיִּבְאוּ כָּל־נִשְׂיָאֵי הָעֵדָה וַיִּגִּדּוּ לְמֹשֶׁה: 23 וַיֹּאמֶר אֲלֵהֶם הוּא אֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר יְהוָה שְׁבִתוֹן שְׁבִת־קֹדֶשׁ לַיהוָה מִחֹר אֶת אֲשֶׁר־תֹּאפּוּ אִפּוֹ וְאֶת אֲשֶׁר־תִּבְשְׁלוּ בִשְׁלוּ וְאֶת כָּל־הָעֵדָה הִנִּיחוּ לָכֶם לְמִשְׁמֶרֶת עַד־הַבֶּקֶר: 24 וַיִּנְיְחוּ אוֹתוֹ עַד־הַבֶּקֶר כַּאֲשֶׁר צִוָּה מֹשֶׁה וְלֹא הִבְאִישׁ וְרָמָה לֹא־הִיתָה בּוֹ:

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אוֹתוֹ הַיּוֹם נִשְׁתַּנָּה לְשִׁבְחָה, בְּרִיחוֹ וְטַעְמוֹ: וַיִּגִּדּוּ לְמֹשֶׁה. שְׁאֵלוֹהוּ: מַה־הַיּוֹם מִיּוֹמִים? וּמַכָּאן יֵשׁ לְלַמֵּד, שְׁעֲדִין לֹא הִגִּיד לָהֶם מֹשֶׁה פֶּרֶשֶׁת שְׁבִתָּא שְׁנִצְטוּהָ לֹאמַר לָהֶם: "וְהָיָה בַיּוֹם הַשֵּׁשִׁי וְהִכִּינוּ וְגו'"¹⁸², עַד שֶׁשְּׁאֵלוּ אֶת זֹאת. אָמַר לָהֶם: "הוּא אֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר ה'"¹⁸³ — שְׁנִצְטוּיָתִי לֹאמַר לָכֶם. וְלִכְף עֲנִשׁוֹ הַכְּתוּב, שְׁאָמַר לוֹ: "עַד־אֲנִי מֵאֲנַתֶּם"¹⁸⁴, וְלֹא הוֹצִיאוּ מִן הַכֹּל: 23 אֶת אֲשֶׁר־תֹּאפּוּ אִפּוֹ. מֵה־שְׂאֵתֶם רוֹצִים לְאַפּוֹת בְּתַנּוּר, אִפּוֹ הַיּוֹם הַכֹּל לִשְׁנֵי יָמִים. וּמֵה־שְׂאֵתֶם צָרִיכִים לְבִשְׁל מִמֶּנּוּ בַּיּוֹם, בִּשְׁלוּ הַיּוֹם. לִשּׁוֹן אִפְּיָה נּוֹפֵל בְּלָחֶם, וְלִשּׁוֹן בִּשּׁוּל בְּתַבְשִׁיל: לְמִשְׁמֶרֶת. לְגִנְיָה:

20 וַיֹּתֵרוּ אֲנָשִׁים. דָּתִן וְאֶבִירִם: וַיִּרְם תּוֹלְעִים. לִשּׁוֹן רָמָה: וַיִּבְאֵשׁ. הָרִי זֶה מִקְרָא הַפּוֹךְ, שְׁבִתְחִלָּה הִבְאִישׁ וּלְבִסּוֹף הִתְלִיעַ, כַּעֲנִין שְׁנִצְטָמַר: "וְלֹא הִבְאִישׁ, וְרָמָה לֹא־הִיתָה בּוֹ"¹⁸⁵ וְכֵן דֶּרֶךְ כָּל־הַמִּתְלִיעִים: 21 וְהֵם הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ וְנֶמֶס. הַנִּשְׁאָר בַּשָּׂדֶה נִמּוּחַ וְנִצְטָה נְחָלִים, וְשׁוֹתִין מִמֶּנּוּ אֵילִים וְצִבְאִים, וְאִמּוֹת הָעוֹלָם צָדִין מֵהֶם וְטוֹעֲמִים בָּהֶם טַעַם מֶן, וַיִּוֹדְעִים מֵה־שִּׁבְחָה שֶׁל יִשְׂרָאֵל. וְתִרְגּוּמוֹ שֶׁל "נֶמֶס" — "פֶּשֶׁר", לִשּׁוֹן פּוֹשְׁרִים, עַל יְדֵי הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ מִתְחַמֵּם וּמִפְשִׁיר. דִּשְׁטִימְפִּירִי¹⁸⁶. וְדִגְמָתוֹ בְּסִנְהֶדְרִין בְּסוֹף אַרְבַּע מִיתוֹת¹⁸⁷: 22 לְקִטּוֹ לֶחֶם מִשְׁנֵה. כְּשֶׁמְדּוּ אֶת לְקִיטָתָם בְּאֶהְלֵיהֶם, מִצָּאוּ כְּפָלִים — שְׁנֵי הָעֵמֶר לְאַחַד. וּמִדֶּרֶשׁ אֲגָדָה¹⁸⁸: "לֶחֶם מִשְׁנֵה" — מִשְׁנֵה,

188. פסוק כד. 189. להפשיר. 190. סנהדרין סז, ב. 191. תנחומא ישן בשלח, כד. 192. לעיל פסוק ה. 193. להלן פסוק כג. 194. להלן פסוק כח.

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specifically in connection with the manna, for the Sabbath and the manna share a common purpose—to underscore our complete dependency upon God as the true source of all sustenance. Belief that human effort is the sole determining factor for success makes it hard to justify giving up a full day's income. Not working on the Sabbath is a clear affirmation of our faith that sustenance lies in God's hands and that our

work is no more than a vessel through which God's blessings can flow.

In fact, it is stated in the *Zohar*¹⁸² that the manna's thematic connection to Shabbat is why it may not be hoarded from one day to the next. Specifically because the manna underscores our total reliance upon God, it is counterproductive to put any of it aside for future consumption.¹⁸³

182. 2:63b, 88a. 183. See *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 16, p. 172 ff.

18 But when they measured it by the omer, they found miraculously that he who had gathered much had no excess, and he who had gathered little was lacking nothing; each man had gathered as much as he needed to eat.

19 Moses said to them, “Let no man leave any of it over until morning.”

20 But they did not listen to Moses, and some people — Dathan and Aviram — left some of it over until morning, and it became maggoty, after having first become putrid. Moses was angry with them, for by saving some for the next day, the people challenged God’s ability to come to their aid for the fifth time.¹⁷⁷

21 The people gathered it each morning, each man according to what he would eat, and when the sun grew hot after everyone had gathered his portion, whatever remained in the field would melt and run into streams. Deer would drink this liquid; when other nations hunted and ate them they tasted the taste of the manna and realized still further how God favored the Jews.

22 On the sixth day of the week they gathered the usual amount, but when they took it home and measured it, they found that it was a double portion of bread that tasted even better than the manna usually did, two omers for each person, and all the leaders of the community came and told Moses. They had studied the laws of the Sabbath in the abstract, but since they knew these laws would not become binding until the Torah was given, they did not understand why this was happening.¹⁷⁸

23 He said to them, “That was what God spoke about but I haven’t told you yet: tomorrow some of the laws of the Sabbath — specifically, the prohibition of cooking — will take effect. It will be a day of rest, a holy Sabbath dedicated to focusing on God and not on earning your livelihood. Whatever you wish to bake, bake today for today and tomorrow, and whatever you wish to cook, cook today for today and tomorrow. Set aside for yourselves whatever is left over from what you eat today in safekeeping until morning.”

24 They set it aside until morning, as Moses had commanded, and it did not become putrid, nor were there any maggots in it.

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manna and wished to gather as much of it as possible, and there were others who lacked this spiritual sensitivity and were less interested in the manna. There were even those who disregarded Moses’ commands and hoarded manna for the next day or went out to gather it on the Sabbath. Yet, all of them, from Moses himself down to the rebel, were provided with the same measure of manna.

The reason for this equality among such disparate groups of people is because the manna, as we shall see,¹⁷⁹ related to the essence of the soul, which is equally extant in each person.¹⁸⁰

The lesson for us here is that we must not presume to judge who is more or less “deserving” of whatever spiritual or physical nourishment we are in a position to share with them. Rather, we should seek to provide for our brethren’s spiritual and physical needs equally. Even someone who may not appreciate the value of what we have to offer him, or might even abuse it, deserves the very best that we can give him.¹⁸¹

23 Tomorrow will be a day of rest, a holy Sabbath unto God: This is the first explicit mention in the Torah of the obligation to observe the Sabbath. It is appropriate for this commandment to be introduced

¹⁷⁷. *Arachin* 15ab. ¹⁷⁸. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 38, p. 86. ¹⁷⁹. On v. 36, below. ¹⁸⁰. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 26, pp. 110-111. ¹⁸¹. *Hitva’aduyot* 5745, vol. 2, pp. 1105-1108.

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25 וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה אֲכָלְהוּ הַיּוֹם כִּי־שַׁבַּת הַיּוֹם לַיהוָה הַיּוֹם לֹא תִמְצְאוּהוּ בַשָּׂדֶה: 26 שֵׁשֶׁת יָמִים תִּלְקְטְתֶּהוּ וּבַיּוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי שַׁבַּת לֹא יִהְיֶה־בוֹ: 27 וַיְהִי בַיּוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי יֵצְאוּ מִן־הָעָם לִלְקֹט וְלֹא מִצְאוּ: 28 וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל־מֹשֶׁה עַד־אֲנִי מֵאֲנִתָּם לְשֹׁמֵר מִצְוֹתַי וְתוֹרָתִי: 29 רְאוּ כִּי־יְהוָה נָתַן לָכֶם הַשַּׁבַּת עַל־כֵּן הוּא נָתַן לָכֶם בַּיּוֹם הַשְּׁשִׁי לֶחֶם יוֹמִים שְׁבוּ אִישׁ תַּחְתּוֹ אֶל־יֵצֵא אִישׁ מִמְּקוֹמוֹ בַּיּוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי: 30 וַיִּשְׁבְּתוּ הָעָם בַּיּוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי: 31 וַיִּקְרְאוּ בֵּית־יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת־שְׁמוֹ מִן־וְהוּא כְּזֶרַע גֶּדֶל לָכֵן וַיַּעֲמֵמוּ בְּצַפִּיחַת בְּדָבָשׁ: וַיַּעֲמֵמוּ בְּאֶסְקְרִיטוֹן בְּדָבָשׁ:

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ה' בכבודו מזהיר אתכם על השבת, שהרי נס נעשה בכל־עֶרֶב שַׁבַּת לַמָּת לָכֶם לֶחֶם יוֹמִים: שְׁבוּ אִישׁ תַּחְתּוֹ. מִכָּאֵן סָמְכוּ חֲכָמִים אַרְבַּע אֲמוֹת לְיוֹצֵא חוּץ לַתְּחוּם, שֶׁלֹּשׁ לְגוּפוֹ וְאַחַת לְפִשּׁוֹ יָדַיִם וְרַגְלַיִם: אֶל־יֵצֵא אִישׁ מִמְּקוֹמוֹ. אֵלּוּ אֲלָפִים אָמָה שֶׁל תְּחוּם שַׁבַּת. וְלֹא בַּמִּפְרָשׁ, שֶׁאֵין תְּחוּמִין אֶלָּא מִדְּבָרֵי סוֹפְרִים, וְעָקְרוּ שֶׁל מִקְרָא עַל לֹקְטֵי הַמֶּן נֹאמַר: 31 וְהוּא כְּזֶרַע גֶּדֶל לָכֵן. עֲשֹׂב שְׁשֻׁמוֹ אִלְיִינִדֶּרֶס¹⁹⁵ וְזֶרַע שֶׁלֹּשׁ עֶגְלוֹ וְאֵינוֹ לָכֵן. וְהַמֶּן הָיָה לָכֵן, וְאֵינוֹ נִמְשָׁל לְזֶרַע גֶּדֶל אֶלָּא לְעֵנֶן הָעֶגְלוֹל, כְּזֶרַע גֶּדֶל הָיָה, וְהוּא לָכֵן: בְּצַפִּיחַת. בְּצֶק שֶׁמֶטְגָּנִין אוֹתוֹ בְּדָבָשׁ, וְקוֹרִין לוֹ "אֶסְקְרִיטוֹן" בְּלָשׁוֹן מִשְׁנָה¹⁹⁶, וְהוּא תְּרָגוּם שֶׁל אֲוֹנְקִלוֹס:

25 וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה אֲכָלְהוּ הַיּוֹם וְגו'. שְׁחִרִית, שֶׁהָיָה רָגִילִים לִיצֵאת וְלִלְקֹט — בָּאוּ לִשְׁאֹל אִם יֵצֵא אִם לֹא. אָמַר לָהֶם: אֵת שְׁבִידְכֶם אֲכָלוּ. לְעֶרֶב, חֲזָרוּ לְפָנָיו וּשְׁאֲלוּהוּ מִדּוֹ לִיצֵאת. אָמַר לָהֶם: "שַׁבַּת הַיּוֹם". רָאָה אוֹתָם דוֹאֲגִים שֶׁמָּא פֶסֶק הַמֶּן וְלֹא יֵרֵד עוֹד, אָמַר לָהֶם: "הַיּוֹם לֹא תִמְצְאוּהוּ". מִדֶּה־תִלְמוּד לִזְמַר "הַיּוֹם"? — הַיּוֹם לֹא תִמְצְאוּהוּ אֲבָל מִקֵּחַ תִּמְצְאוּהוּ: 26 וּבַיּוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי שַׁבַּת. שַׁבַּת הוּא, הַמֶּן לֹא יִהְיֶה בּוֹ. וְלֹא בָּא הַכְּתוּב, אֶלָּא לְרִבּוּת יוֹם הַכְּפֻרִים וְיָמִים טוֹבִים: 28 עַד־אֲנִי מֵאֲנִי מִצְוֹתַי וְתוֹרָתִי. מִשְׁלַל הַדִּיּוּט הוּא: בְּהִדֵּי הוֹצֵא, לָקִי כְּרָא — עַל יְדֵי הַרְשָׁעִים מִתְגַּנֵּין הַכְּשָׁרִין: 29 רְאוּ. בְּעֵינֵיכֶם, כִּי

¹⁹⁵ כְּזֶרַע. ¹⁹⁶ פִּסְחִים לו', א.

— CHASIDIC INSIGHTS —

29 See that God has given you the Sabbath: By saying that "God has given the Sabbath to you," Moses implied that God has given it to every person indi-

vidually. Although the external form of Sabbath observance is the same for everyone, the nature of the inner, spiritual experience of the Sabbath differs from

INNER DIMENSIONS

[25] Today you will not find it in the field: Interestingly, Moses does not tell the Jews that the manna will not be in the field, but only that they will not find it there. And indeed, the manna was esoterically present on the Sabbath as well. The Sabbath is the source of all blessings, including those of material sustenance. In this sense, the manna of the other six days descended as a result of the "spiritual manna" that was produced on the Sabbath.¹⁹³

The physical manna gathered during the week "materialized" out of this spiritual manna. It there-

fore had to be acquired through physical effort: it had to be gathered, cooked, and so on. In contrast, the Sabbath manna was not manifested physically and therefore could not be "accessed" by any physical means.

Similarly, our physical livelihood is spiritually "produced" by our observance of the Sabbath. During the ensuing week, we have to gather the material blessings of the Sabbath by engaging in our weekday work. But on the Sabbath itself, we must refrain even from *thinking* about our livelihood.¹⁹⁴

25 Still, they asked Moses if they should go gathering today as they had on the previous days. After all, the prohibition of carrying in the public domain on the Sabbath had not yet taken effect.¹⁸⁴ **Moses said, “No, eat the remainder of what you prepared yesterday today.”** In the afternoon they asked again about gathering it. Moses said, “No, **for today is a Sabbath unto God.**” He saw they were worried that the manna had stopped, so he said, “Although **today you will not find it in the field**, *tomorrow* it will resume falling and you will find it awaiting you once again.

26 **Six days you shall gather it, but the seventh day is the Sabbath.** And not only on the Sabbath, but on other days of rest on which God will command you not to work, **there will be none** as well. A double portion will descend on the day before.”

27 Nonetheless, **on the seventh day some of the people did go out to gather manna, but they found nothing.** This was the sixth time the people challenged God’s ability to come to their aid.¹⁸⁵

28 **God told Moses,** “Some of the people did not believe that the manna would not fall on the Sabbath, and even *you* neglected to tell them about the Sabbath until they came to ask you about the double portion of manna. True, you were not technically required to convey My message before it became relevant, but you should have acted with more alacrity.¹⁸⁶ **How long will all of you refuse to observe My commandments and My teachings,** that is, to believe in Me? True, only some of you did not believe, but the community does bear some degree of collective responsibility for not using its social tools to bolster all its members’ faith.

29 **Look:** a miraculous double-portion of manna falls on Friday! Clearly, **it is God who has given you the Sabbath, and that is why on the sixth day He gives you food for two days.** Therefore, **every man shall remain where he is: let no man leave his place on the seventh day** to gather manna.” Here, God made an additional Sabbath law take effect: the prohibition of leaving a settled area and carrying objects out of it.¹⁸⁷ He told them: “The maximum distance a person is allowed to walk outside any settled area on the Sabbath is 2000 cubits.¹⁸⁸ If, for any reason, he finds himself in such an unsettled area on the Sabbath, he may move about only within a radius of 4 cubits.”

30 **So the people rested on the seventh day.**

31 Once the manna had fallen for seven days, and they had seen how, through it, God was taking the trouble to make their life easier and more delightful, including making it possible for them to rest from the pursuit of their livelihood altogether on the Sabbath, they were ready to name it. **The House of Israel called the food manna.** They did not give it a descriptive name; they kept the name they first used to describe it: “a portion of food.”¹⁸⁹ It was not appropriate to give it a descriptive name because **it was round like coriander seed, but was white,**¹⁹⁰ **and it tasted naturally like pastry fried in honey** kneaded with oil, but if they wanted it to taste like anything else (other than vegetables harmful to nursing infants) it did.¹⁹¹ Therefore, simply calling it “manna” indicated the rest, repose, and delight it brought them.¹⁹²

184. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 38, p. 87. 185. *Arachin* 15ab. 186. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 21, p. 89, note 9. 187. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 38, pp. 87-88. 188. See *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 6, p. 208, notes 32, 33, vol. 13, p. 6; cf. Numbers 2:1. 189. Above, v. 15. 190. Numbers 11:7. 191. Numbers 11:8. 192. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 38, pp. 88-89. 193. *Zohar* 2:63b, 88a. 194. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 16, pp. 181-182.

— ONKELOS —

32 ואמר משה דין פתגמא די פקיד יי מלי עמרא מנה למשרא לדריכון בדיל דיחזון ית לחמא די אוכלית יתכון במדברא באפקותי יתכון מארעא דמצרים: 33 ואמר משה לאהרן סב צלוחית חדא והב תמן מלי עמרא מנא ואצנע יתה קדם יי למשרא לדריכון: 34 כמא די פקיד יי למשה ואצנעה אהרן קדם סהדותא למשרא: 35 ובני ישראל אכלו ית מנא ארבעין שנין עד דעלו לארעא יתיבתא ית מנא אכלו עד דאתו לספי ארעא דכנען: 36 ועמרא חד מן עשרא בתלת סאין הוא:

32 וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה זֶה הַדָּבָר אֲשֶׁר צִוָּה יְהוָה מִלֵּא הָעָמָר מִמֶּנּוּ לְמִשְׁמֶרֶת לְדֹרֹתֵיכֶם לְמַעַן | יֵרָאוּ אֶת־הַלֶּחֶם אֲשֶׁר הָאֵכְלֹתִי אֶתְכֶם בַּמִּדְבָּר בְּהוֹצִיאִי אֶתְכֶם מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם: 33 וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה אֶל־אַהֲרֹן קַח צִנְצָנֶת אַחַת וְתִן־שָׁמָּה מִלֵּא־הָעָמָר מִן וְהִנֵּחַ אֹתוֹ לִפְנֵי יְהוָה לְמִשְׁמֶרֶת לְדֹרֹתֵיכֶם: 34 כַּאֲשֶׁר צִוָּה יְהוָה אֶל־מֹשֶׁה וַיַּנִּיחֻהוּ אַהֲרֹן לִפְנֵי הָעֵדֻת לְמִשְׁמֶרֶת: 35 וּבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אָכְלוּ אֶת־הֶמֶן אַרְבָּעִים שָׁנָה עַד־בָּאֵם אֶל־אֶרֶץ נוֹשָׁבִת אֶת־הֶמֶן אָכְלוּ עַד־בָּאֵם אֶל־קֶצֶה אֶרֶץ כְּנָעַן: 36 וְהָעָמָר עֲשִׂרִית הָאִיפָה הוּא: פ

— RASHI —

מן: אל־ארץ נושבת. לאחר שעברו את הירדן, שאותה שבעבר הירדן מִשְׁבֵּת וטובה, שנאמר: "אֶעֱבְרָה־נָא וְאֶרְאֶה אֶת־הָאָרֶץ הַטּוֹבָה אֲשֶׁר בְּעֵבֶר הַיַּרְדֵּן"¹⁹⁹. ותרגום של "נושבת" — "יתבתא", רצה לומר מִשְׁבֵּת: אל־קצה ארץ כנען. בתחלת הגבול, קדם שעברו את הירדן, והוא ערבות מואב. נמצאו מכחישים זה את זה? אלא, בערבות מואב בְּשִׁמַּת מֹשֶׁה ב'ו' באדר פסק המן מלירד, ונסתפקו ממן שלקטו בו ביום, עד שהקריבו העמר בששה עשר בניסן, שנאמר: "וַיֹּאכְלוּ מִעֲבוּר הָאֶרֶץ מִמִּחֶרֶת הַפֶּסַח"²⁰⁰. 36 עֲשִׂרִית הָאִיפָה. האיפה שלש סאין, והסאה ששה קבין, והקב ארבעה לגין, והלג ששה ביצים. נמצא, עשירית האיפה מ"ג ביצים וחמש ביצה, והוא שעור לחלה ולמנחות:

32 לְמִשְׁמֶרֶת. לַגְנִיזָה: לְדֹרֹתֵיכֶם. בימי ירמיהו. בְּשִׁהִיָּה ירמיהו מוכיחם: למה אין אתם עוסקים בתורה? והם אומרים: נניח מלאכתנו ונעסק בתורה, מהיכן נתפרנס? הוציא להם צנצנת המן, ואמר להם: "אתם ראו דבר־ה'?"¹⁹⁷ — "שמעו" לא נאמר אלא "ראו" — בזה נתפרנסו אבותיכם, הרבה שלוחין יִשְׁלְחוּ לְמִקּוֹם לְהִכִּין מוֹזֵן לִירְאִיו: 33 צִנְצָנֶת. צלוחית של חרס, בתרגומו: וְהִנֵּחַ אֹתוֹ לִפְנֵי ה'. לפני הארון. ולא נאמר מקרא זה, עד שנבנה אהל מועד, אלא שנכתב כאן בפרשת המן: 35 אַרְבָּעִים שָׁנָה. והלא חסר שלשים יום? שהרי בט"ו באדר ירד להם המן תחלה, ובט"ו בניסן פסק, שנאמר: "וַיִּשְׁבֹּת הֶמֶן מִמִּחֶרֶת"¹⁹⁸. אלא, מגיד שהעוגות שהוציאו ישראל ממצרים, טעמו בהם טעם

197. ירמיה ב, לא. 198. יהושע ה, יב. 199. דברים ג, כה. 200. יהושע ה, יא.

— CHASIDIC INSIGHTS —

their souls as well their bodies. Just as the body has to be fed in both a general and particular way, so does the soul.

The *essence* of the soul is equally extant in every person, while the particular elements of the soul are manifested differently from person to person. When they first left Egypt, the Jews were like spiritual newborns: their religious consciousness was at its most basic and had not yet differentiated into all of its various mature forms. God took care of all their needs "as a nurse carries a suckling":²⁰² when we look at babies, we see that they are alive; we do not see the individual aspects of their minds and personalities in formation. Thus, the

primary function of manna throughout the 40 years in the desert was to strengthen the people's essential connection to God. The manna is therefore referred to throughout this period as a complete unit (an *omer*), alluding to the irreducible nature of the essence of the soul.

Only at the end of the journey — "at the border of Canaan," when the Jews were about to enter the Holy Land, where the essence of their souls was to express itself and manifest itself through their deeds in the physical world — is the manna referred to as a part of a whole (a tenth of an *ephah*), emphasizing the particulars.²⁰³

202. Numbers 11:12. 203. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 26, p. 103 ff.

32 Moses said, “This is what God has commanded: ‘An *omer*-ful of it is to be for safekeeping throughout your generations, so that when it is necessary, they will see the bread which I fed you in the desert when I brought you out of the land of Egypt. I may deem it necessary at some future point for the people to devote themselves completely to studying the Torah and temporarily neglect earning a livelihood altogether. They will then ask Me how they will survive, and I will be able to have My prophet show them the manna and remind them that when necessary, I can indeed provide for them miraculously, just as I did for this generation.’”¹⁹⁵

33 Ten and a half months later, when the Tabernacle was erected, Moses said to Aaron, “Take an earthenware urn and put in it an *omer*-ful of manna, and place it before God for safekeeping throughout your generations.”

34 As God had commanded Moses, Aaron placed it before the Ark of Testimony for safekeeping.

35 The Israelites ate the manna for 40 years: The bread the people took with them when they left Egypt (on Nisan 15, 2448) already tasted like manna,¹⁹⁶ so it was as if they started eating manna then. The manna ceased to fall when Moses died, on Adar 7, 2489, but the supply they gathered that day lasted until Nisan 15, 2489, when they crossed the Jordan River, came to an inhabited land, and began to eat the produce of the land.¹⁹⁷ They ate the manna on the same day it fell only until they came to the plains of Moab, at the edge of the land of Canaan, where Moses died. Similarly, the quails also descended every evening until they entered the Land of Israel.¹⁹⁸

36 The *omer* is a tenth of an *ephah*.

✧ CHASIDIC INSIGHTS ✧

person to person. The amount and quality of spiritual inspiration we will experience on the Sabbath is dependent largely on the amount of physical and spiritual effort we expend preparing for it during the preceding workweek.¹⁹⁹

33 For safekeeping throughout your generations: The manna should not be viewed as a one-time phenomenon that occurred in the distant past. God told us to treasure it throughout the generations, for its lesson is eternal. True, we no longer dwell in the desert and, for the most part, can no longer rely on purely miraculous means of sustenance. Yet it is always imperative to remember the message of the manna: human endeavor is merely the instrument through which God’s is channeled to us; in truth, livelihood is granted by God.²⁰⁰

36 The *omer* is a tenth of an *ephah*: Throughout the account of the manna, the size of the manna-portion is simply called an *omer*, which is a complete unit. At this point, after mentioning that the Jews ate manna until they came to the border of Canaan, the Torah describes it as a part of a greater measurement—“a tenth

of an *ephah*.” These two descriptions reflect the two types of sustenance manna provided.

Food keeps body and soul together in two ways:

- ♦ it keeps the body alive by sustaining and enhancing the general life force pulsing throughout it.
- ♦ it enables each of the body’s limbs, organs, and faculties to function in its particular fashion.

The body’s general life force is indiscriminate: a newborn child is just as *alive* as the tallest and strongest adult; the brain is as much *alive* as the elbow. Similarly, food’s ability to give life is uniform and irreducible. It is a complete unit, equally present for every person.

The second property of food affects each person and limb individually. This property is a composite of varied elements and forces, and is therefore referred to as being a part of a larger measure.

In the Talmud,²⁰¹ manna is referred to as “the food of angels”—spiritual food—for it reinforced the people’s connection to God by sustaining and developing

^{195.} *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 11, pp. 104-105. ^{196.} Above, 12:39. ^{197.} Joshua 5:11-12. ^{198.} *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 16, p. 171; p. 170, note 53. ^{199.} *Likutei Torah* 2:2c. ^{200.} See *Hitva’aduyot* 5751, vol. 2, pp. 212-213. ^{201.} *Yoma* 75b.

— ONKELOS —

17:1 ונטלו כל־כִּנְשָׁתָא דְבְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל מִמִּדְבָּרָא דְסִין לְמַטְלִיָּהוֹן עַל מִימְרָא דִּי וְשָׂרוּ בְּרִפְיִים וְלִית מִיָּא לְמִשְׁתִּי עֲמָא: 2 וְנָצוּ עֲמָא עִם מֹשֶׁה וְאַמְרוּ הָבוּ לָנָא מִיָּא וְנִשְׁתִּי וְאַמְרַ לְהוֹן מֹשֶׁה מָה אַתּוֹן נָצוּ עִמִּי מָה אַתּוֹן מְנַסֵּן קָדָם יי: 3 וְצָחִי תִּפְּנֵן עֲמָא לְמִיָּא וְאַתְרַעַם עֲמָא עַל מֹשֶׁה וְאַמְרַ לְמָא דָּנֵן אֲסִיקְתָּנָא מִמְצָרִים לְקַטְלָא יְתִי וְיִת בְּנֵי וְיִת בְּעִירִי בְּצִחוּתָא: 4 וְצָלִי מֹשֶׁה קָדָם יי לְמִימְרַ מָה אַעֲבִיד לְעֲמָא דְדִין עוֹד וְעִיר פֻּן וְיִרְגְּמוּנִי: 5 וְאַמְרַ יי לְמֹשֶׁה עֲבַר קָדָם עֲמָא וְדַבֵּר עִמָּךְ מִסְבִּי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְחוֹטְרָךְ דִּי מַחִיתָא בֹה יִת נִהְרָא סָב בִּידָךְ וְתִיזִיל: 6 הָא אָנָּא קָאִים קְדָמָךְ תִּפְּנֵן עַל טַנְרָא בְּחוּרֵב וְתִמְחִי בְּטַנְרָא וְיִפְקוֹן מִנָּה מִיָּא וְיִשְׁתִּי עֲמָא וְעֲבַר בֵּן מֹשֶׁה לְעִינֵי סָבִי יִשְׂרָאֵל:

◆ שביעי 17:1 ויסעו כל־עַרְת בְּנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל מִמִּדְבָּר־סִין לְמַסְעֵיהֶם עַל־פִּי יְהוָה וַיַּחֲנוּ בְּרִפְיִים וַאֲיִן מַיִם לְשִׁתָּתָהּ הָעָם: 2 וַיָּרֶב הָעָם עַם־מֹשֶׁה וַיֹּאמְרוּ תִּנּוּ־לָנוּ מַיִם וְנִשְׁתֶּה וַיֹּאמֶר לָהֶם מֹשֶׁה מַה־תִּרְיֹבוֹן עִמָּדִי מַה־תִּנְסֹן אֶת־יְהוָה: 3 וַיִּצְמָא שָׁם הָעָם לַמַּיִם וַיֵּלֶן הָעָם עַל־מֹשֶׁה וַיֹּאמֶר לָמָּה זֶה הָעֲלִיתָנוּ מִמִּצְרָיִם לְהָמִית אֹתִי וְאֶת־בְּנֵי וְאֶת־מִקְנִי בַּצָּמָא: 4 וַיִּצְעַק מֹשֶׁה אֶל־יְהוָה לֵאמֹר מָה אֶעֱשֶׂה לָּעָם הַזֶּה עוֹד מַעַט וְסִקְלֹנִי: 5 וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל־מֹשֶׁה עֲבֹר לִפְנֵי הָעָם וְקַח אֶתְּךָ מִזִּקְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וּמִטֶּטֶף אֲשֶׁר הִפִּיתָ בּוֹ אֶת־הַיָּאֵר קַח בְּיָדְךָ וְהִלַּכְתָּ: 6 הֲנִי עֹמֵד לִפְנֶיךָ שָׁם | עַל־הַצּוּר בְּחוּרֵב וְהִפִּיתָ בַּצּוּר וַיִּצְאוּ מִמֶּנּוּ מַיִם וְשִׁתָּה הָעָם וַיַּעַשׂ בֵּן מֹשֶׁה לְעִינֵי זִקְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל:

— RASHI —

הַמִּטָּה שְׁאִינוּ מוֹכֵן אֶלָּא לְפָרְעוֹת — בּוֹ לִקְה פָּרְעוֹת וּמִצְרַיִם, כְּמָה מְכוֹת בְּמִצְרַיִם וְעַל הַיָּם, לְכַף נֶאֱמַר: “אֲשֶׁר הִפִּיתָ בּוֹ אֶת־הַיָּאֵר” — יָרָא עֲתָה שְׁאֵף לְטוֹבָה הוּא מוֹכֵן: 6 וְהִפִּיתָ בַּצּוּר. “עַל הַצּוּר” לֹא נֶאֱמַר, אֶלָּא “בַּצּוּר”. מִכָּאן, שֶׁהַמִּטָּה הִיָּה שֶׁל מִין דְּבַר חֹק וְשִׁמוֹ “סִנְפְּרִינוֹן”, וְהַצּוּר נִבְקַע מִפְּנִי.

2 מַה־תִּנְסֹן. לֹא־מֵר: הַיּוֹכֵל לְתֵת מַיִם בְּאֶרֶץ צִיָּה: 4 עוֹד מַעַט. אִם אֲמַתִּין עוֹד מַעַט וְסִקְלֹנִי: 5 עֲבֹר לִפְנֵי הָעָם. וְרָאָה אִם יִסְקְלוּךְ. לְמָה הוֹצֵאתָ לְעוֹ עַל בְּנֵי: וְקַח אֶתְּךָ מִזִּקְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל. לְעִדּוֹת, שִׁינְאוּ שְׁעַל יָדְךָ הַמַּיִם יוֹצְאִים מִן הַצּוּר, וְלֹא יִאֲמְרוּ מַעֲיִנוֹת הֵיוּ שָׁם מִימֵי קָדָם: וּמִשָּׁךְ אֲשֶׁר הִפִּיתָ בּוֹ אֶת־הַיָּאֵר. מַה־תִּלְמוֹד לֹא־מֵר: “אֲשֶׁר הִפִּיתָ בּוֹ אֶת־הַיָּאֵר”? אֶלָּא, שֶׁהָיוּ יִשְׂרָאֵל אוֹמְרִים עַל

— CHASIDIC INSIGHTS —

6 **You shall strike the rock:** Allegorically, God is also called a “Rock.”²⁰⁹ Just as a flint stone possesses the abstract potential to produce fire, so does God constitute the primordial and embryonic source of all existence and revelation. Coercing sparks of fire from a stone requires great force, and so does eliciting Divine sparks of revelation from *their* Source. The force Moses used to “strike” the “Rock” was his powerful “staff”—his unswerving and resolute devotion to God.

By “striking” the “Rock” with his “staff,” Moses succeeded in providing both corporal and spiritual sustenance for the body and soul of his entire people.²¹⁰

If determinate devotion can actualize potential Divine revelations and draw forth hidden Godly revelations, it can also ignite the Godly spark within every Jew. Oftentimes, we encounter people who appear too intimidating to inspire. Their spiritual condition is much like our ancestors’ physical condition in the wilderness of Refidim: devoid of the spiritual fluid of life, bone-dry and stonehearted, vulnerable to the apathy and indifference of Amalek. Apprehensive about attempting to motivate them, we tend to shy away, considering it a futile or even hazardous task. After all, we reason, even Moses feared such a confrontation, saying, “Soon enough they’ll stone me!” [continues...]

209. Deuteronomy 32:4. 210. *Sichot Kodesh* 5736, vol. 2, pp. 8-9.

From Alush to Refidim

- ◆ **Seventh Reading 17:1** On the 23rd of Iyar, the entire community of the Israelites moved on from Alush, in the Sin Desert, on their journeys, according to the word of God. They encamped that day at Refidim (see Figure 7), and there was no water for the people to drink.

2 The people again contended with Moses—except for the tribe of Levi²⁰⁴—and said, “Give us water so that we may drink!” Moses answered them, “Why are you contending with me? Why are you impertinently testing God, to see if He can supply you with water in the desert?” This was the seventh time the people challenged God’s ability to come to their aid.²⁰⁵

3 The people thirsted there for water and the people complained against Moses, saying, “Why did you bring us up from Egypt, to make us and our children and our livestock die of thirst?”

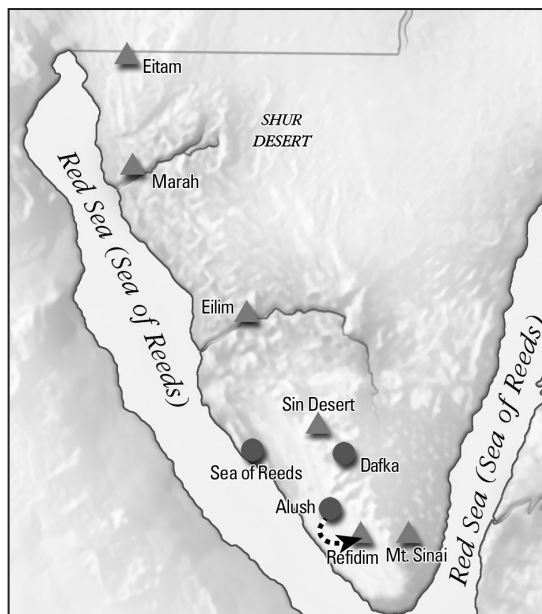


Figure 7: From Alush to Refidim

4 Moses cried out to God, saying, “What shall I do for this people? Before long they will stone me!”

5 God then said to Moses, “You exaggerate. Pass in front of the people and see if they stone you. Don’t slander My children. As for water, take with you some of the elders of Israel for witnesses, and take in your hand your staff with which you struck the Nile River and which the people therefore think is only meant for punishment, and go to Mount Horeb.

6 I will be standing before you there at the rock at Mount Horeb. You shall strike the rock, penetrating it with your sapphire staff, and water will come out of it and the people will drink. I could just as easily give you water from a rock at Refidim, where the people are now, but I wish to demonstrate My affection for them by giving them water from a special, holy place, where they will soon receive the Torah.”²⁰⁶ Moses did so in the sight of the elders of Israel that had accompanied him. This miraculous rock served as a well that accompanied the people on their subsequent journeys, so from this point on they did not lack water until the rock disappeared.²⁰⁷ Even though Moses produced this well, it existed in the merit of his sister Miriam.²⁰⁸

204. Deuteronomy 33:8, Rashi *ad loc.* 205. *Arachin* 15ab. 206. *Hitava’aduyot* 5747, vol. 2, pp. 457-463. 207. See Numbers 20:2. 208. Rashi on Numbers 20:2.

— ONKELOS —
 7 וַיִּקְרָא שְׁמָא דְאַתְרָא נְסִיתָא
 וּמִצּוֹתָא עַל דְּנִצּוּ בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל
 וְעַל דְּנִסְיָאוֹ קֳדָם יְיָ לְמִימְרָא הָאֵית
 שְׂכִינְתָא דִּי בִּינָנָא אִם לֹא:
 8 וְאַתָּא עֲמִלְק וְאַנָּח קִרְבָּא עִם
 יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּרַפְדִּים:

7 וַיִּקְרָא שְׁמֵי הַמָּקוֹם מִסָּה וּמִרִיבָה עַל־רִיב | בְּנֵי
 יִשְׂרָאֵל וְעַל נִסְתָּם אֶת־יְהוָה לְאמֹר הִנֵּה יְהוָה בְּקִרְבָּנוּ

אִם־אֵין: פ

8 וַיָּבֹא עֲמִלֶק וַיִּלָּחֶם עִם־יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּרַפְדִּים:

— RASHI —

אותו הֵבֵן רוֹאֶה חֲפֵץ וְאוֹמֵר: אֲבָא, טַל חֲפֵץ זֶה וְתֵן־
 לִי. וְהוּא נוֹתֵן לוֹ, וְכֵן שְׁנִיָּה וְכֵן שְׁלִישִׁית. פָּגְעוּ בְּאֶדָם
 אַחֵר, אָמַר לוֹ אוֹתוֹ הֵבֵן: רְאִיתָ אֶת־אֲבָא? אָמַר לוֹ
 אֲבִיו: אֵינֶךָ יוֹדֵעַ הֵיכָן אָנִי? הַשְׁלִיכוּ מַעְלֵיו וּבֹא הַכֶּלֶב
 וּנְשָׁכוּ:

8 וַיָּבֹא עֲמִלֶק וְגו'. סָמַךְ פָּרָשָׁה זוֹ לְמִקְרָא זֶה, לֹמַר:
 תְּמִיד אֲנִי בִּינִיכֶם וּמִזְמָן לְכָל־צָרְכֵיכֶם, וְאַתֶּם אוֹמְרִים:
 "הִנֵּה ה' בְּקִרְבָּנוּ אִם־אֵין?" חֲיִיכֶם, שְׂהַכֵּל בָּא
 וְנוֹשֵׁף אֶתְכֶם, וְאַתֶּם צוֹעְקִים לִי, וְתִדְעוּ הֵיכָן אָנִי.
 מְשַׁל, לְאֶדָם שְׂהַרְכִיב בְּנוֹ עַל כְּתָפוֹ וַיִּצָּא לְדֶרֶךְ, הָיָה

201. פסוק ז.

— CHASIDIC INSIGHTS —

This inner Amalek continues to plague us today, attempting to sow doubt and cool our religious fervor. "Of course God exists," he says. "I'm not denying that. But is He really present among us? Does God really care what is happening in your pots and pans? God is so great and omnipotent, so beyond nature and the physical order, that He couldn't possibly care about such picayune details!"

"I'll go even further," the inner Amalek continues. "I'll admit not only that God exists, I'll even admit that He is constantly recreating the world every second. But *you* must admit that He does not dwell *among us*, in the details of our lives; He is involved with the world in only the most general way."

This is Amalek's first step, planting in us dangerous cells of doubt that then blossom into a malignant growth. This type of doubt eventually leads us to believe that God has totally abandoned life on earth. That, in turn, leads to the worst of all possible outcomes; it causes us to abandon our search for Godliness and spirituality. When we no longer seek God, Amalek has been truly successful.²¹⁷

8 In Refidim: According to the Midrash, this place was called Refidim because there the people "loosened (*rafu*) their hands' grip on the Torah."²¹⁸

Torah study is a pursuit of the *intellect*, yet the Midrash speaks of loosening the grip of the *hands*. This is because the Torah is not intended to remain "in the head" as a theoretical study; it must be translated into action, to "the hands." At Refidim, the Jews let their natural materialistic outlook on life get the bet-

ter of them and could not see how God was making His presence known in the physical world; they wondered, "is God among us?" Amalek therefore pressed his advantage, in an attempt to further weaken the Jewish people's practical commitment to bringing the Torah into the physical world.²¹⁹

Amalek then came and fought against Israel: Amalek was the second enemy the Jews faced after they left Egypt. The first was the Egyptians, who pursued them into the Sea of Reeds. There, Moses said, "God will do battle for you and you shall remain silent." In contrast, God had the Israelites fight against the Amalekites themselves.

This is because the Egyptians stood *in back* of the Jews; they were not blocking their path to Mount Sinai, while the Amalekites *were* impeding their progress. Similarly, whenever we are confronted with adversity, we must determine the nature of its threat: does it stand as a barrier between Mount Sinai and us or is it merely a spiritual nuisance? The latter type of battles should be left to God, while those that stand in the way of bringing light to the world must be tackled head on.²²⁰

As we have explained, the Exodus from Egypt is allegorically understood as the birth of the emotions from the intellect. Egypt signifies constricted Divine consciousness, while receiving the Torah and entering the Land of Israel signifies the acquisition of expanded Divine consciousness. [continues...]

217. *Sichot Kodesh* 5739, vol. 2, pp. 144-145. 218. *Mechilta*. 219. *Sefer HaMa'amarim* 5742, pp. 101-102. *Sefer HaMa'amarim* 5744, pp. 165-166; *Sichot Kodesh* 5727, vol. 2, p. 7. 220. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 1, p. 144.

7 And he named the place near Mount Horeb where he hit the rock **Masah uMerivah** [“testing and contention”] **because of the people’s contentiousness and because they had tested God by saying, “Is God present among us or not?”**

The Battle with Amalek

8 The people had doubted if God was “among them,” mindful of them and caring for them. This was after God had already provided them with food, water, and shelter miraculously and lovingly: instead of regular bread, He gave them the heavenly manna; instead of water from the water table, He gave them water from a rock from Mount Sinai; and He sheltered them with the clouds of glory. Doubting if God was mindful and caring was extremely insolent, and called for a drastic response.²¹¹ In order to demonstrate to the people that He is indeed always at hand to come to their aid, God emboldened the nation of Amalek—which was otherwise as frightened of the Israelites as all the other nations were²¹²—to attack them, so the people would have to elicit His aid and He would answer immediately.²¹³ **Amalek came and fought against Israel in Refidim** (see Figure 8). They attacked the spiritually weak men who had sinned and whom the clouds had therefore expelled and were thus unprotected.²¹⁴ The Amalekites seduced these spiritually weaker Israelite men to engage in carnal relations with them and then killed them. After this, they and cut off their victims’ reproductive organs and threw them heavenward, mocking the commandment of circumcision by crying to God, “Here is what you wanted!”²¹⁵

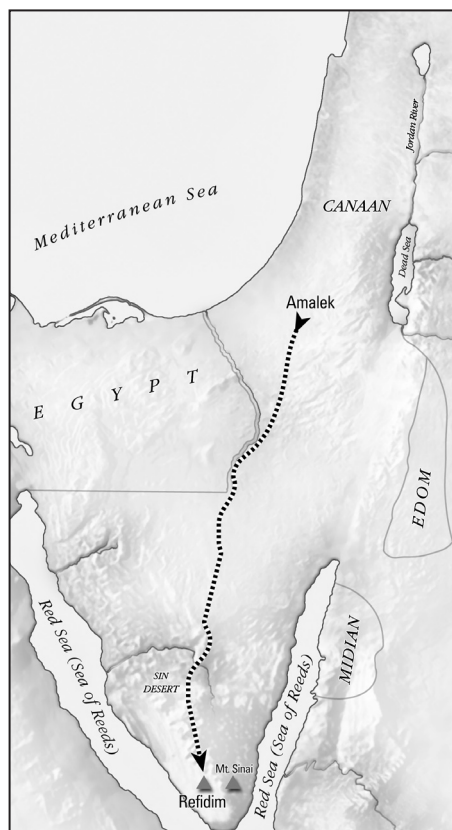


Figure 8: Amalek Attacks

CHASIDIC INSIGHTS

God’s response to this scenario is unequivocal: “Approach (‘strike’) this individual, who appears as spiritually lifeless as a rock, with your ‘staff of God,’ your unshakable faith in the Torah and your resolute devotion to it. Its intensity will hit home and tap into the reservoir of ‘living waters’ at his core. You will see his inherent goodness gush forth.”²¹⁶

7-8 “Is God present among us or not?” Amalek then came: The nation of Amalek’s physical attack was the outer manifestation of the spiritual attack of the inner Amalek that had already infected the people. The numerical value of the word *Amalek* (עמלק) is the same as that of the word for “doubt” (ספק). The people doubted God’s involvement in their lives when they said, “Is God present among us or not?”

²¹¹. *Hitva’aduyot* 5747, vol. 2, pp. 456-463. ²¹². Above, 15:16. ²¹³. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 36, p. 67, note 19. ²¹⁴. Above, 13:21; Rashi on Deuteronomy 25:18; *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 18, p. 256, note 31, vol. 8, p. 196, note 23. ²¹⁵. Rashi on Deuteronomy 25:18; *Midrash Tanchuma*, *Teitzei* 10. ²¹⁶. *Hitva’aduyot* 5744, vol. 2, pp. 868-869.

— ONKELOS —

9 וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה אֶל־יְהוֹשֻׁעַ בְּחַר־לָנוּ אֲנָשִׁים וַיֵּצֵא הַלָּחֶם בַּעֲמֶלֶק מִחֹר אֲנֹכִי נֹצֵב עַל־רֹאשׁ הַגִּבְעָה וּמִמֶּנּוּ הָאֱלֹהִים בִּידִי: 10 וַיַּעַשׂ יְהוֹשֻׁעַ כַּאֲשֶׁר אָמַר־לּוֹ מֹשֶׁה: לְהִלָּחֶם בַּעֲמֶלֶק וּמִשָּׁה אַהֲרֹן וְחֹזֶר עָלָיו רֹאשׁ הַגִּבְעָה: 11 וְהִזָּה כַּאֲשֶׁר יָרִים מֹשֶׁה יָדוֹ וְגִבֹּר יִשְׂרָאֵל וְכַאֲשֶׁר יָנִיתָ יָדוֹ וְגִבֹּר עַמְּלֶק:

9 וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה אֶל־יְהוֹשֻׁעַ בְּחַר־לָנוּ אֲנָשִׁים וַיֵּצֵא הַלָּחֶם בַּעֲמֶלֶק מִחֹר אֲנֹכִי נֹצֵב עַל־רֹאשׁ הַגִּבְעָה וּמִמֶּנּוּ הָאֱלֹהִים בִּידִי: 10 וַיַּעַשׂ יְהוֹשֻׁעַ כַּאֲשֶׁר אָמַר־לּוֹ מֹשֶׁה: לְהִלָּחֶם בַּעֲמֶלֶק וּמִשָּׁה אַהֲרֹן וְחֹזֶר עָלָיו רֹאשׁ הַגִּבְעָה: 11 וְהִזָּה כַּאֲשֶׁר יָרִים מֹשֶׁה יָדוֹ וְגִבֹּר יִשְׂרָאֵל וְכַאֲשֶׁר יָנִיתָ יָדוֹ וְגִבֹּר עַמְּלֶק:

— RASHI —

9 בַּעֲת הַמִּלְחָמָה, אֲנֹכִי נֹצֵב: בְּחַר־לָנוּ אֲנָשִׁים. גְּבוּרִים וִירָאֵי חַטָּא, שְׂתֵּהָא וְכוּתָן מְסִיעָתָן. דָּבָר אַחֵר: "בְּחַר־לָנוּ אֲנָשִׁים", שְׂיוּדָעִין לְבַטֵּל כְּשָׁפִים, לְפִי שְׁבִנֵי עַמְּלֶק מְכַשְׁפִּים הֵיוּ: 10 וּמִשָּׁה אַהֲרֹן וְחֹזֶר. מִכָּאן לְתַעֲנִית שְׂצָרִיכִים שְׁלֹשָׁה לְעַבּוֹר לְפָנֵי הַתְּבָה, שְׂבִנְתַּעֲנִית הֵיוּ שְׂרוּוִים: חֹזֶר. בְּנֵה שֶׁל מְרִים הָיָה, וְכָלֵב בַּעֲלָה: 11 כַּאֲשֶׁר יָרִים מֹשֶׁה יָדוֹ, וְכִי יָדָיו שֶׁל מֹשֶׁה נִזְחָחוּת הֵיוּ הַמִּלְחָמָה וְכוּ'. כַּדְאִיתָא בְּרָאשׁ הַשְּׁנָה²⁰²:

9 בְּחַר־לָנוּ. לִי וְלָךְ, הַשְׁוֵהוּ לוֹ. מִכָּאן אָמְרוּ חֲכָמִים²⁰²: יְהִי כְבוֹד תַּלְמִידָךְ חָבִיב עֲלֶיךָ שְׁלֹף, וְכְבוֹד חֲבֶרֶךְ כְּמוֹרָא רַבָּה. מִנִּין? שְׁנָאֵמַר: "וַיֹּאמֶר אַהֲרֹן אֶל־מֹשֶׁה, בִּי אֲדֹנִי"²⁰³. וְהָלֹא אַהֲרֹן גָּדוֹל מֵאֲחִיו הָיָה, וְעוֹשֶׂה אֶת חֲבֵרוֹ כְּרָבוֹ. וּמוֹרָא רַבָּה כְּמוֹרָא שְׁמַיָּם, מִנִּין? שְׁנָאֵמַר: "אֲדֹנִי מֹשֶׁה כָּלָאם"²⁰⁴ — כָּלָם מִן הָעוֹלָם, חֲזִבִין הֵם כָּלֵיָהּ, הַמוֹרְדִים בָּהּ כָּאֵלוֹ מְרֹדוֹ בְּהַקְדוּשׁ בְּרוּךְ־הוּא: וַיֵּצֵא הַלָּחֶם. יָצָא מִן הָעֵנָן וְהַלָּחֶם בּוֹ: מִחֹר.

202. אבות ד, יב. 203. במדבר יב, יא. 204. במדבר יא, כח. 205. כט, א.

— CHASIDIC INSIGHTS —

thereby the way we act.²²⁸ Just as the nation of Amalek brazenly attacked us despite the miracles God had just done for us, the inner Amalek is the insolent voice within us that bids us to ignore the implications of what we know and act in capricious disregard of our convictions.

Thus, just as the Exodus from Egypt allegorically reoccurs every generation and every day, so does the war with Amalek. Every day, we must release ourselves ever further from the yoke of materialism and silence the voice of insolence that seeks to halt our spiritual progress. This is why we are required to remember both these events daily.

Once we successfully leave Egypt and overcome Amalek, the way is clear for the Giving of the Torah and our entry into the Promised Land. Successfully implementing this process of spiritual growth on an individual basis will hasten its collective fulfillment, bringing the world to its messianic redemption. Once we truly enter the Promised Land, both physically and spiritually, Amalek will be finally annihilated, no longer to annoy us with its brazen call to insolence.²²⁹

9 Moses said to Joshua: Although this was Moses' war, Joshua was the one to actually go into battle. This was because Joshua was more the spiritual opponent of Amalek, and therefore was its fitting opponent. This relationship can be seen in the prophetic statement: "The house of Jacob will be as fire and the house of Joseph as the flame, while the house of Esau will be as straw."²³⁰ Joshua was a descendant of Joseph, while Amalek was a member of Esau's family.

Amalek attacked the spiritually weak, whom the clouds of glory had expelled. It was in the spirit of Joseph, whose bones (and essence²³¹) had been brought out of Egypt by Moses himself, that his descendant Joshua took up this battle on their behalf. Joseph's mother Rachel's prayer for "another son," which was answered with the birth of Joseph, is interpreted to express Joseph's approach to his brothers, i.e., that all Jews, even if they act as "others," far removed from Godliness, should be treated as God's "sons." Joshua, true to the ideals of his ancestor Joseph, treated even his spiritually weak compatriots, whom the clouds of glory had expelled, as God's "sons," and went out to defend them against Amalek.²³²

228. The name Amalek (עמלק) can be seen as a contraction of the words for "a people that severs the head from the body" (עם מלק). 229. Torah Or 84b-85b; Sefer HaMa'amarim 5747-5751, pp. 101-105. 230. Obadiah 1:18. Pesikta d'Rav Kahana 3; Pesikta Rabati 12. 231. See commentary on 13:19, above. 232. Likutei Sichot, vol. 26, pp. 87-88.

9 Moses' chief student and attendant was Hosea, the son of Nun, whom Moses would later rename Joshua.²²¹ **Moses said to Joshua, "Although most of us are protected from attack by the clouds surrounding us,²²² we should still defend those of us who are not and repel this attack. I have not received specific instructions from God to do this, but the fact that we have been attacked now is clearly because God is temporarily abandoning us in order to show us how He will come to our aid when we need Him. Since this battle will be fought naturally—at least until God assists us—I will not lead the people, since I am 81 years old and only men between 20 and 60 years old²²³ are supposed to fight.²²⁴ Choose brave and pious men, whose merit will protect them. Choose also men who know how to counteract witchcraft, for the Amalekites are practiced in this art. Choose these men for us—for you and I, who are responsible for the people—and go out tomorrow, outside the clouds, and fight against Amalek. Tomorrow the people will fast and I will station myself at the top of the hill with the staff of God in my hand."** Moses addressed Joshua as an equal, for one should honor one's student as one honors oneself, one's friend as one honors one's teacher, and one's teacher as one honors God.²²⁵

10 **Joshua did as Moses had told him, to fight against Amalek, while Moses, Aaron, and their nephew Hur²²⁶ went up to the top of the hill** and stood in prayer, for at least three people must lead the prayers at a public fast.

11 **Then, whenever Moses raised his hand** and the people were inspired to submit themselves to God, God came to their aid and **Israel prevailed. But whenever he lowered his hand,** and they were not inspired this way, **Amalek prevailed.**

❧ CHASIDIC INSIGHTS ❧

Throughout the Egyptian exile, our ancestors held on to their perfect, simple faith in God, but could not progress beyond this. Their faith was strong enough to keep them from assimilating into Egyptian culture altogether, but their servitude to Egyptian materialism kept their faith from filling their hearts with active love and awe of God. Bringing faith into emotion is possible only when the mind is free and directed to contemplate God's reality, magnificence, transcendence, and immanence. This expanded Divine consciousness engenders expanded Divine emotions that fill the heart with love and awe; these emotions motivate us in turn to uphold God's commandments and lead good and holy lives.

It is nearly impossible, however, to pass directly from constricted consciousness to expanded consciousness. Even if we profess to eschew our inborn materialism, our newly liberated intellect is not initially strong

enough to fill our consciousness with love and fear of God, overtaking and supplanting all other desires, loves, and fears. Old habits linger; old ways of thinking are hard to uproot.

Therefore, an intermediate stage is necessary, wherein the intellect is required only to motivate us to *control* our behavior, cognizant of God's reality and its implications in our lives.²²⁷

Allegorically, this is the desert we traverse between Egypt and the Land of Israel. The untamed desert alludes to the spiritual state in which we have not yet totally "civilized" ourselves, but neither are we in control of an alien value-system that endeavors to enslave us to its materialistic lifestyle.

Yet, here a new enemy confronts us: Amalek. Amalek seeks, as we have seen, to dissociate the intellect from the emotions, preventing our developing intellectual ties with God from influencing the way we feel and

221. Numbers 13:8; *Sichot Kodesh* 5733, vol. 1, pp. 319, 325. 222. Above, 13:21. 223. Numbers 1:3. 224. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 21, pp. 89-96. 225. *Avot* 4:12. 226. Above, 2:15. 227. The technical term for this stage is *itkafia* ("control"); the term for the stage wherein the emotions are completely transformed is *ithapcha* ("transformation").

ONKELOS

12 וַיְדִי מֹשֶׁה כִּבְדִּים וַיִּקְחוּ אֶבֶן וַיִּשְׁמֹו תַּחֲתָיו וַיֵּשֶׁב
עָלֶיהָ וְאַהֲרֹן וְחֹור תַּמְכוּ בְּיָדָיו מִזֶּה אֶחָד וּמִזֶּה אֶחָד
וַיְהִי יָדָיו אֲמוֹנָה עַד-בֹּא הַשָּׁמֶשׁ: 13 וַיַּחֲלֵשׁ יְהוֹשֻׁעַ
אֶת-עַמְלֹק וְאֶת-עַמּוֹ לְפִי-חֶרֶב: פ
מִפֶּטֶר 14 וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל-מֹשֶׁה כְּתֹב זֹאת זָכְרוֹן בַּפֶּפֶר
וַיִּשִׁים בְּאָזְנוֹ יְהוֹשֻׁעַ כִּי-מָחָה אֶמְחֶה אֶת-זָכְרֵךְ עַמְלֹק
מִתַּחַת הַשָּׁמַיִם: 15 וַיִּבֶן מֹשֶׁה מִזְבֵּחַ וַיִּקְרָא שְׁמוֹ יְהוָה
נָסִי: 16 וַיֹּאמֶר כִּי-יָד עַל-כֶּסֶם יֵה מַלְחָמָה לַיהוָה בְּעַמְלֹק
מִדָּר דָּר:

קט"ז פסוקים. אמונה סימן. סנא"ה סימן.

RASHI

שְׁמוֹ. שֶׁל מִזְבֵּחַ: ה' נָסִי. הַקָּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ-הוּא עָשָׂה לָנוּ
כָּאן נֶס גָּדוֹל. לֹא שֶׁהַמִּזְבֵּחַ קָרוֹי "ה'", אֲלָא הַמִּזְבֵּחַ
שְׁמוֹ שֶׁל מִזְבֵּחַ זָכָר אֶת הַנֶּס שֶׁעָשָׂה הַמֶּקוֹם, ה' הוּא
נֶס שֶׁלָּנוּ: 16 וַיֹּאמֶר. מֹשֶׁה: כִּי-יָד עַל-כֶּסֶם יֵה. יָדוֹ שֶׁל
הַקָּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ-הוּא הוֹרָמָה לְשֹׁבַע בְּכֶסֶאוֹ, לְהִיּוֹת לוֹ
מַלְחָמָה וְאִיבָה בְּעַמְלֹק עוֹלָמִית. וּמָהוּ "כֶּסֶם" וְלֹא נֹאמַר
"כֶּסֶא", וְאֵף הַשֵּׁם נִחְלָק לְחֻצֵּי? נִשְׁבַּע הַקָּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ-
הוּא, שְׁאִין שְׁמוֹ שֶׁלֹּם וְאִין כֶּסֶא שֶׁלֹּם עַד שְׁיִמְחָה
שְׁמוֹ שֶׁל עַמְלֹק כֻּלּוֹ, וְכִשְׁיִמְחָה שְׁמוֹ יִהְיֶה הַשֵּׁם שֶׁלֹּם
וְהַכֶּסֶא שֶׁלֹּם, שְׁנֹאמַר: "הָאֵיב תִּמּוּ חֲרָבוֹת לְנֶצַח"²⁰⁶
— זֶהוּ עַמְלֹק, שְׁכָתוֹב בּוֹ: "וְעִבְרָתוֹ שְׁמָרָה נֶצַח"²⁰⁷
— "וְעָרִים נִתְשָׁת, אֲבָד זָכָר הַמָּוֶה". מָהוּ אוֹמֵר אַחֲרָיו:
"וְה' לְעוֹלָם יֵשֶׁב" — הָרִי הַשֵּׁם שֶׁלֹּם. "כּוֹנֵן לְמִשְׁפַּט
כֶּסֶא" — הָרִי כֶּסֶא שֶׁלֹּם:
חִסְלַת פֶּרֶשֶׁת בִּשְׁלַח

12 וַיְדִי מֹשֶׁה כִּבְדִּים. בְּשָׂבִיל שְׁנִתְעַצֵּל בְּמַצְוָה וּמִנְה
אַחַר תַּחֲתָיו, נִתְיָקְרוּ יָדָיו: וַיִּקְחוּ. אַהֲרֹן וְחֹור: אֶבֶן
וַיִּשְׁמֹו תַּחֲתָיו. וְלֹא יֵשֶׁב לוֹ עַל כֶּר וְכֶסֶת, אָמַר: יִשְׂרָאֵל
שְׁרוּיִין בְּצַעַר, אֵף אֲנִי אֶהְיֶה עִמָּהֶם בְּצַעַר: וַיְהִי יָדָיו
אֲמוֹנָה. וַיְהִי מֹשֶׁה יָדָיו בְּאֲמוֹנָה — פְּרוּשׁוֹת הַשָּׁמַיִם
בְּתַפְלָה נֹאמְנָה וְנִכּוֹנָה: עַד בֹּא הַשָּׁמֶשׁ. שֶׁהָיוּ עַמְלֹקִים
מְחַשְׁבִּין אֶת הַשְּׁעוֹת בְּאִי-צִטְרוֹלִיגִיָּה בְּאִיזוֹ שְׁעָה הֵם
נוֹצְחִים וְהַעֲמִיד לָהֶם מֹשֶׁה חֲמָה וְעָרַב אֶת הַשְּׁעוֹת:
13 וַיַּחֲלֵשׁ יְהוֹשֻׁעַ. חֲתָךְ רֹאשִׁי גְבוּרָיו, וְלֹא הִשְׁאִיר
אֲלֵא חֲלָשִׁים שְׁבָהֶם, וְלֹא הִרְגָם כָּלָן. מִכָּאן אָנוּ
לְמַדִּים, שֶׁעָשָׂה עַל פִּי הַדְּבוּר שֶׁל שְׁכִינָה: 14 כְּתֹב זֹאת
זָכְרוֹן. שֶׁבֶּא עַמְלֹק לְהוֹדִיג לְיִשְׂרָאֵל קֹדֶם לְכָל-הָאֲמוֹת:
וַיִּשִׁים בְּאָזְנוֹ יְהוֹשֻׁעַ. הַמְכַנִּים אֶת יִשְׂרָאֵל לְאַרְץ, שְׁיִצְוָה
אֶת יִשְׂרָאֵל לְשָׁלֵם-לוֹ אֶת-גְּמוּלוֹ. כָּאן נִרְמָז לוֹ לְמֹשֶׁה,
שְׁיִהוֹשֻׁעַ מְכַנֵּס אֶת יִשְׂרָאֵל לְאַרְץ: כִּי מָחָה אֶמְחֶה.
לָכֵךְ אֲנִי מִזְהִירָךְ כֵּן, כִּי חֲפֹץ אֲנִי לְמַחֲוֹתוֹ: 15 וַיִּקְרָא

206. תהלים ט, ז. 207. עמוס א, יא.

INNER DIMENSIONS

[continued...] The first two letters of God's name indicate the intellect and the emotions—the knowledge of God's existence and love and fear of Him, respectively. The final two letters reflect the study of the Torah and the fulfillment of its commandments, respectively. The goal of our inner Amalek is, as mentioned, to weaken our study and application of God's word. He realizes that he has no chance of attacking the higher faculties outright, so he attempts to weaken us in areas of practice.

As long as Amalek exists and this malady is allowed to persist, God's very Name is diminished and incomplete; the first two letters are allowed to function, but the latter two are stymied. Similarly, God's throne—the symbol of His kingship—is incomplete, since in the interim we have only submitted our intellect to Him, not our emotions and actions. Only when the Jewish people succeed in eradicating Amalek from both within and without will Godliness be fully established and revealed.²³⁸

238. Hitva'aduyot 5745, vol. 2, pp. 1363-1364; Torah Or 85a.

12 But since he had remissly appointed Joshua to fulfill his responsibility to protect the people, **Moses' hands became heavy** much sooner than they otherwise would have. In this way, God showed him that his choice to only pray for the people was ill made. Even though he was over the age of conscription, he should have overlooked this and done his utmost to defend the people. A short prayer in the battlefield would have sufficed.²³³ **So Aaron and Hur took a stone and placed it under him and he sat on it.** Moses refused to sit on anything more comfortable than a stone because it would be inappropriate for him to do so while the people were suffering. **Aaron and Hur then supported his hands, one on each side, and Moses remained with his hands in steady and confident prayer.** Using astrology, the Amalekites had calculated when they would win, but Moses delayed the sunset, confusing them **until** the Israelites won; then he let **the sun set.**

13 God instructed Moses to only kill the stronger Amalekites,²³⁴ **and thus Joshua only weakened Amalek and his people with the sword,** rendering them incapable of attack, but did not wipe them out completely.

- ◆ **Maftir 14 God said to Moses, "Write down the fact that Amalek attacked you before any other nation and thereby led the way for others to attack you as a remembrance in the Book of the Torah. Explain clearly to Joshua and inspire him to instruct the people, when they enter the Land of Israel, to wipe out Amalek. He should not do this merely out of obedience, but with vigor and motivation."**²³⁵ (Here God hinted to Moses that he would not lead the people into the Land of Israel.) **"For I wish to utterly erase the memory of Amalek from under the heavens.** Even though you have won this battle, and it would therefore seem that the damage done by Amalek's attack has been repaired and the nations of the world again fear you, as long as Amalek still lingers, your invincibility can still be doubted."

15 **Moses** recorded the incident with Amalek, as God directed. He then **built an altar** and gave it a name that **made people proclaim, "God performed a miracle for us here,"** and then, in recognition of this, say: **"God is my Miracle."**²³⁶

16 In order to fulfill God's instruction to inspire Joshua to perpetuate the struggle against Amalek, **he further said, "The hand of God is raised in oath on God's throne** to swear by it: **God shall be at war with Amalek** and harbor continuous enmity toward him, **from generation to generation.** Neither His Name nor His throne will be complete until Amalek is annihilated."²³⁷

The Haftarah for parashat Beshalach may be found on p. 309.



INNER DIMENSIONS

[16] He said, "The Hand is [raised in oath] on God's Throne...": Rather than the full word for "throne" (כס), a truncated version is used here (כס). Furthermore, a shortened form of God's Name

is used (ה-י) rather than its full spelling (ה-י-ה-ו-ה). This is what indicates that both God's Name and His throne remain incomplete until Amalek will be totally eradicated.

233. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 21, pp. 89-96. 234. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 21, p. 95, note 54. 235. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 6, pp. 95-104. 236. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 6, p. 99. 237. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 6, pp. 95-104.

