

# חומש דברים

# THE TORAH

*With an Interpolated English Translation  
and Commentary Based on the Works of*

***The Lubavitcher Rebbe***

***Rabbi Menachem M. Schneerson***

וצוקללה"ה נבג"מ זי"ע

**Chumash Devarim**

*The Book of Deuteronomy*

***Parshat Re'eh***



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**THE TORAH - CHUMASH DEVARIM**

WITH AN INTERPOLATED ENGLISH TRANSLATION  
AND COMMENTARY BASED ON THE WORKS OF  
THE LUBAVITCHER REBBE

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## Overview

What first gives us pause about *parashat Re'eh* is its name, which means, “See....” As we saw in the preceding two *parashiot*, Moses asked God to let the Jewish people perceive Divinity as he did—with the same direct clarity associated with *sight*—but God refused his request. The generation of the conquest (and thus, all subsequent generations until the final Redemption) would only be able to perceive Divinity indirectly—in the manner of *hearing*. How is it, then, that Moses begins the next portion of his address to the people saying, “See”?

As we explained previously,<sup>1</sup> the reason God did not grant Moses’ request, but instead kept the people at the level of hearing, was on account of the inherent advantages of hearing over sight. When a person has to establish and preserve Divine consciousness by struggling against the “din” of the material world, his perception becomes infinitely more profound than it could have been had it been solely based on a direct but external revelation. Inasmuch as the purpose of creation is to infuse Divinity into *all* strata of reality, it is clear that this goal can only be accomplished if our Divine consciousness assumes command over *all* of our mental and emotional faculties. This, of course, can only happen if we refine these faculties, re-orienting them away from the materialistic perspective they initially possess.

We further explained that Moses’ request was actually granted on a subtle, subliminal level. We all possess the unshakable conviction of “seeing” Divinity deep within our psyches; based on the extent of the imprint that this vision makes on our perception of reality, we can overcome the clamor of materialism that threatens to confuse us.

But in addition to this, the result of successfully “hearing” Divinity—of meditating and contemplating the reality of God deeply enough to affect and refine our cognitive and emotional faculties—is that the subliminal “sight” that God implanted within us on account of Moses’ prayer surfaces to our consciousness. Our clouded perception of truth is purified by our arduous efforts at clarification, such that our minds and hearts become transparent to our inner point of Divine enlightenment. We “see” Divinity with the same clarity of perception as did the generation of the desert, who experienced direct, Divine revelation. But our advantage is that this “sight” is superimposed on and anchored in the solid, inner

1. Overview to *parashat Va'etchanan*.

conviction born of having methodically refined our conscious faculties on our own. Therefore, after instructing us to “hear,” Moses tells us to “see.”<sup>2</sup>



*Parashat Re'eh* comprises a large variety of subject matter. In it, Moses begins his review of the legal matter of the Torah's preceding three books, covering the laws of sacrifices, idolatry, *kashrut*, charity, the sabbatical year, slavery, and the festivals. Thus, the focus in this *parashah* shifts from the basic tenets of Judaism, as discussed in the first *parashiot* of Deuteronomy, to the specific duties of the Jew. This focus will remain throughout the next three *parashiot*, as well.

In this light, the brief introduction at the beginning of the *parashah*—headed by Moses' sweeping declaration that yes, we can achieve sight-consciousness of Divinity after all—is the transitional nexus bridging the first three *parashiot* of Deuteronomy and the following four, setting the tone for the legal material that follows. We have been promised that we can ultimately receive the Divine gift of direct perception and relationship with God. We are then told to respond with renewed, ongoing efforts to refine and elevate the world, until it, too, becomes fit to behold Divinity directly, “and the glory of God will be revealed and all flesh will see it together.”<sup>3</sup>

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2. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 9, p. 76.

3. Isaiah 40:5. Based on *Sefer HaSichot* 5751, vol. 2, pp. 772-774.

— ONKELOS —

11:26 חזי די אָנא יְהב קְדָמִיבֹן יומא דין בְּרֵכָן וּלְטִין: 27 ית בְּרֵכָן אַם תְּקַבְּלוֹן לַפְּקוּדֵי דִי אֱלֹהִיבֹן דִּי אָנא מִפְּקֵד יתְּבוֹן יומא דִּין: 28 וּלְטִין אַם לֹא תְקַבְּלוֹן לַפְּקוּדֵי דִי אֱלֹהִיבֹן וְתַסְטֹן מִן אֲרָתָא דִּי אָנא מִפְּקֵד יתְּבוֹן יומא דִּין לְמַהֲרָ בְּתַר טַעוֹת עֲמֻמֵּי דִי לֹא יִדְעָתוּן: 29 וְיְהִי אָרִי יַעֲלֹךְ יי אֱלֹהֵךְ לֹאֲרַעָא דִּי אַתְּ עָלָל לְתַמְנָן לְמִיִּתְּהָ וְתַתֵּן ית מְבָרְכֵי עַל טוֹרָא דְגִרְזִין וְיִת מְלַטְטֵי עַל טוֹרָא דְעִיבָל:

11:26 רֵאָה אָנֹכִי נֹתֵן לְפָנֶיכֶם הַיּוֹם בְּרָכָה וּקְלָלָה: 27 אֶת־הַבְּרָכָה אֲשֶׁר תִּשְׁמְעוּ אֶל־מִצְוֹת יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם אֲשֶׁר אָנֹכִי מִצְוֶה אֹתְכֶם הַיּוֹם: 28 וְהִקְלָלָה אִם־לֹא תִשְׁמְעוּ אֶל־מִצְוֹת יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם וְסַרְתֶּם מִן־הַדֶּרֶךְ אֲשֶׁר אָנֹכִי מִצְוֶה אֹתְכֶם הַיּוֹם לָלֶכֶת אַחֲרֵי אֱלֹהִים אֲחֵרִים אֲשֶׁר לֹא־יִדְעֶתֶם: 29 וְהָיָה כִּי יִבְיֹאֵל יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ אֶל־הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר־אַתָּה בֹּא־שָׁמָּה לְרִשְׁתָּהּ וְנִתְּנָה אֶת־הַבְּרָכָה עַל־הַר גִּרְזִים וְאֶת־הַקְלָלָה עַל־הַר עִיבָל:

— RASHI —

הַתּוֹרָה בָּלָה: 29 וְנִתְּנָה אֶת הַבְּרָכָה. כְּתִיב: "וְיִתְּנָה לְךָ מְבָרְכֵי", אֶת הַמְּבָרְכִים: עַל הַר גִּרְזִים. כְּלָפִי הַר גִּרְזִים, הוֹפְכִין פְּנֵיהֶם וּפִתְחוּ בְּבִרְכָּה: "בְּרוּךְ הָאִישׁ אֲשֶׁר לֹא יַעֲשֶׂה פֶסֶל וּמִסְכָּה" וְגו'. כָּל הָאֲרוּרִים שֶׁבִּפְרָשָׁה אָמְרוּ תַחֲלָה בְּלִשׁוֹן "בְּרוּךְ". וְאַחֵר כָּף הַפֶּה פְּנֵיהֶם כְּלָפִי הַר עִיבָל וּפִתְחוּ בְּקְלָלָה:

26 רֵאָה אָנֹכִי נֹתֵן לְפָנֶיכֶם הַיּוֹם בְּרָכָה וּקְלָלָה. הָאֲמוּרוֹת בְּהַר גִּרְזִים וּבְהַר עִיבָל: 27 אֶת הַבְּרָכָה. עַל מִנְתַּ "אֲשֶׁר תִּשְׁמְעוּ": 28 מִן הַדֶּרֶךְ אֲשֶׁר אָנֹכִי מִצְוֶה אֹתְכֶם הַיּוֹם לָלֶכֶת וְגו'. הָא לְמַדְתָּ, שֶׁכָּל הָעוֹבֵד עֲבוּדָה זָרָה, הָרִי הוּא סָר מִכָּל הַדֶּרֶךְ שֶׁנִּצְטָווּ יִשְׂרָאֵל, מִכָּאן אָמְרוּ: כָּל הַמוּדָה בְּעֲבוּדָה זָרָה, כְּכּוֹפֵר בְּכָל

— CHASIDIC INSIGHTS —

aspects of God's gift of perception—His free bestowal of the gift and our response to it—as follows. *See, I give*: refers to the bestowal of Divine sight-consciousness, as above.

*To you*: refers to our efforts in response, which serve to internalize this Divine gift.

*Today a blessing*: refers again to God's gift from above.

*And a curse*: refers again to our response, which is required in order to reveal the inner core of blessing concealed in what at first appears to be a curse.<sup>7</sup>

Besides being a blessing in disguise, evil exists in the world in order to provide us with free choice. Free choice, in turn, exists in order to enable us to earn the rewards for our choices, thereby not feeling totally unworthy of the Divine consciousness we are granted and the other blessings that God bestows on us.

Thus, even at the most sublime levels of Divine consciousness, the power of evil remains strong enough to ensure that we retain free choice. Since,

however, evil's existence is not intrinsic (in contrast to good, whose existence is intrinsic), as soon as we choose good, evil disappears.

When we become aware that evil has no intrinsic existence but exists solely to provide us with the free choice to reject it, our struggle with it becomes much easier. It therefore pays to consider this inner dimension of evil at all times (i.e., to "see" into the blessing and the curse) rather than to take things at face value (i.e., to suffice with the more superficial perception of "hearing").<sup>8</sup>

Further ways in which an apparent curse can be realized as a blessing:

- A measure of suffering endured in this world obviates the need for much more severe "cleansing" in Purgatory.<sup>9</sup>
- If we admit that we are responsible for having caused our suffering (by our own sins) and use the occasion as an impetus for repentance, this itself may secure us acquittal from further suffering.<sup>10</sup>

7. *Sefer HaSichot* 5751, vol. 1, pp. 767-769, 772-774. 8. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 4, pp. 1339-1342. 9. See *Igeret HaTeshuvah*, chapter 12 (101a). 10. *Hitva'aduyot* 5750, p. 184.

## Blessings and Curses

**11:26** Moses continued, “God has instructed me to command you to stage a formal ceremony upon your entrance into the Promised Land in order to formalize the covenant between you and Him. After you cross the Jordan River, proceed to the vicinity of Shechem and station yourselves on the adjacent mountains Gerizim and Eival. The Levites, standing in the intervening valley, will then pronounce specific blessings and curses upon the rest of you. **See, I set before you today** the formula of the **blessing and the curse** that they will pronounce.<sup>1</sup>

**27** The blessing will be intended to motivate you to heed the commandments of God, your God, that I am commanding you today;

**28** and similarly, the curse will follow if you will not heed the commandments of God, your God, but instead turn away from the path that I am commanding you today—the Torah—by following other deities whom you did not know, for serving idols will eventually lead you to transgress all the Torah’s commandments.<sup>2</sup>

**29** Thus, when God, your God, will bring you into the land that you are entering in order to possess, you must position those receiving the blessing upon Mount Gerizim and those receiving the curse upon Mount Eival.<sup>3</sup>

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### ∞ CHASIDIC INSIGHTS ∞

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**26 See:** As we have explained previously,<sup>4</sup> the level of Divine perception metaphorically termed “sight” is a direct revelation from God rather than an awareness that we attain on our own. True, the sight-consciousness we are promised in *parashat Re’eh* is elicited by perfecting the hearing-consciousness of *parashat Eikev*, which is very much the product of our own efforts. But the sight that follows this hearing occurs spontaneously once we have laid the groundwork ourselves.

The spontaneous, unsolicited nature of this new-found perception is what is alluded to in the words of the opening sentence of this *parashah*:

*See:* A vision of something encompasses its totality all at once, whereas the perception formed by hearing or learning gradually combines details to form a complete picture. The experience of sight is therefore sudden, rather than unfolding.

*I:* As we have explained previously,<sup>5</sup> there are two words in Hebrew for “I”; the word used here (*anochi*), rather than simply identifying the speaker, refers to his intrinsic, transcendent essence. Although Moses is speaking here, he is delivering God’s message, so the use of this word for “I” indicates that the vision promised is that of God’s essence. Such a revelation is beyond our power to directly elicit and can only occur as a Divine gift.

*Set (literally: give):* A gift is an unearned bestowal.

*Before you:* The word for this phrase in Hebrew may be read “to your inner self,” indicating that this revelation addresses first and foremost our inner essence, only afterward spreading to and overtaking our more superficial faculties, opposite of the way in which we normally approach self-refinement. Ordinarily, we begin with what we see—the most visible flaws in our character—and work inward.

*Today:* This word evokes the imagery of the clear perception afforded by daylight. In addition, it implies that this vision will be permanent, always present “today.” This is possible only if it is a Divine gift, not dependent on possible fluctuations in the recipient’s degree of preparedness.

*Blessing:* A blessing is a bestowal of Divine beneficence beyond that which we deserve.

*And curse:* As we have explained previously,<sup>6</sup> a Divine curse is actually a blessing that is too great to be revealed within our limited world and must therefore be disguised as a curse.

These words thus underscore the great spiritual potentials we possess, encouraging us to make use of them in refining the world through fulfilling the commandments that follow in the Torah’s narrative. We must always keep in mind that God has freely given the revelation of His essence to our inner selves.

In addition, this opening sentence alludes to both

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1. See below, 27:15-26. 2. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 38, p. 56, note 23. 3. See below, 27:12-13. 4. In the Overviews to *parashat Va’etchanan* and *parashat Eikev*. 5. On Exodus 20:2. 6. Overview to *parashat Bechukotai*.

ONKELOS

30 הלא אנון בעברא דירדנא אחורי ארז מעלני שמשא בארע כנענא דיתב במישרא לקבל גלגלא בסטר מישרי מרה: 31 ארי אתון עברין ית ירדנא למעל למירת ית ארעא דיי אלהכון יהב לכון ויתרתון יתה ויתבתון בה: 32 ותשרון למעבד ית כל קמיא וית דינא די אגא יהב קדמיכון יומא דין: 121 אלין קמיא ודינא די תשרון למעבד בארעא דיהב יי אלהא דאבתהך לך למירתה כל יומא די אתון קמיין על ארעא: 2 אבדא תאבדון ית כל אתריא די פלחו תמן עממיא די אתון יתתין יתהון ית טעותהון על טוריא רמיא ועל רמתא ותחות כל אילן עבוף: 3 ותתרעון ית אגוריהון ותתברון ית קמתהון ואשריהון תוקדון בנורא וצלמי טעותהון תקוצצון ותוקדון ית שמהון מן אתרא ההוא: 4 לא תעבדון כן קדם יי אלהכון:

30 הלא־המה בעבר הירדן אחרי דרך מבוא השמש בארץ הכנעני הישב בערבה מול הגלגל אצל אלוני מרה: 31 כי אתם עברים את־הירדן לבא לרשת את־הארץ אשר־יהוה אלהיכם נתן לכם וירשתם אותה וישבתם־בה: 32 ושמרתם לעשות את כל־החקים ואת־המשפטים אשר אנכי נתן לפניכם היום: 12:1 אלה החקים והמשפטים אשר תשמרון לעשות בארץ אשר נתן יהוה אלהי אבותיך לך לרשתה כל־הימים אשר־אתם חיים על־האדמה: 2 אבד תאבדון את־כל־המקומות אשר עבדו־שם הגוים אשר אתם ירשים אתם את־אלהיהם על־ההרים הרמים ועל־הגבעות ותחת כל־עץ רענן: 3 ונתצתם את־מזבחתם ושרפתם את־מצבתם ואשריהם תשרפון באש ופסילי אלהיהם תגדעון ואבדתם את־שם מן־המקום ההוא: 4 לא־תעשון כן ליהוה אלהיכם:

RASHI

שם וגו'. ומה תאבדון מהם, "את אלהיהם" אשר "על הקרים": 3 מזבח. של אבנים הרבה: מצבה. של אבן אחת, והיא בימזש ששנויה במשנה: אבן שחצבה מתחלתה לבימזש: אשרה. אילן הנעבד: ואבדתם את שםם. לכנות להם שם לגנאי: "בית גלגל" קורין לה "בית כריא", "עין כל" — "עין קוץ": 4 לא תעשון כן. להקטיר לשמים בכל מקום, כי אם במקום אשר יבחר. דבר אחר: "ונתצתם את מזבחתם ואבדתם את שםם, לא תעשון כן", אזהרה למוחק את השם ולנותץ אבן מן המזבח או מן העזרה. אמר רבי ישמעאל: וכי תעלה על דעתך שישאל נותצין את המזבחות, אלא שלא תעשו כמעשיהם ויגרמו עונותיהם למקדש אבותיהם שיחריב:

30 הלא המה. נתן בהם סימן: אחרי. אחר העברת הירדן הרבה והלאה למרחוק, וזהו לשון "אחרי", כל מקום שנאמר "אחרי" מפלג הוא: דרך מבוא השמש. להלן מן הירדן לצד מערב. וטעם המקרא מוכיח שהם שני דברים, שנקודו בשני טעמים: "אחרי" נקוד בפשטא, ו"דרך" נקוד במשפלי והוא דגוש. ואם היה "אחרי דרך" דבור אחד, היה נקוד "אחרי" במשורת בשופר הפוף, ו"דרך" בפשטא ורפה: מול הגלגל. רחוק מן הגלגל: אלוני מרה. שכם הוא, שנאמר: "עד מקום שכם עד אלון מורה": 31 כי אתם עברים את הירדן וגו'. נסים של ירדן יהיו סימן בידיכם שתבואו ויתרשו את הארץ: 2 אבד תאבדון. "אבד" ואחר כך "תאבדון", מכאן לעוקר עבודה זרה שצריך לשרש אחריה: את כל המקומות אשר עבדו

1. יתיב. 2. בראשית יב, ו. 3. עבודה זרה מז, ב.

11. See Genesis 12:6. 12. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 9, pp. 94-101, vol. 11, p. 102, note 23. 13. Exodus 23:27-33, 34:11-16; Numbers 33:50-56; above, 7:5. 14. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 9, pp. 94-105. 15. Rashi on Leviticus 20:15.



30 Aren't these mountains on the other side of the Jordan River, further on from the river in the direction of the sunset, i.e. westward, in the land of the Canaanites who dwell in the plain beyond Gilgal, next to the Plains of Moreh at Shechem<sup>11</sup> (see Figure 1)?

31 For you are crossing the Jordan River in order to enter and take possession of the land that God, your God, is giving you; the miraculous way you will cross the river will assure you that you will indeed take possession of the land and settle it, no matter how impossible a feat it may presently seem.

32 Motivated by these blessings and curses, you must safeguard your ability to fulfill all the rules and ordinances that I am setting before you today by constantly studying the Torah's instructions regarding how to perform them.



Figure 1: Mounts Gerizim and Ebal

## Eradicating Idolatry

12:1 Besides the commandments that apply wherever you may live, the following are the specific rules and ordinances that you must first safeguard by studying how to properly perform them, and then perform, in the land that God, God of your forefathers, is giving you to possess all the days that you live on the earth.

2 Whenever you come across a place in which the resident nations served idols, you must utterly eradicate their deities from all the places where the nations whom you will dispossess worshipped them, whether they had set up these idols upon the lofty mountains, upon the hills, or under every lush tree.

3 Specifically, you must demolish their multi-stoned altars, upon which they only offered up sacrifices to their deities; smash their one-stoned pedestals, which were originally set up solely as monuments to their deities but which have since come to be worshipped as idols;<sup>12</sup> burn their deified trees with fire; and cut down the sculpted images of their deities.<sup>13</sup> Moreover, you must destroy the aura surrounding the name of these idols from that place by referring to them by derogatory nicknames indicating that they are the exact opposite of what their worshippers represented them to be.<sup>14</sup> The stones and trees are innocent, but because by Divine providence they were used for this sin, they must be destroyed. From this law you may conclude a fortiori that a human being who causes another person to sin will be punished.<sup>15</sup>

4 You must not do so to God, your God. On the contrary, you must treat His Name with respect, not even erasing it from any inscribed tablet or written document. Likewise, you must not destroy His altar, neither directly—by dismantling it, nor indirectly—by imitating the behavior of idolatrous nations, thereby forfeiting the merit of the Tabernacle or Temple's presence and causing it to be destroyed by invading foreign armies.

5 כִּי אִם-אֶל־הַמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר-יִבְחַר יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם מִכָּל-  
שְׂבָטֵיכֶם לָשׂוּם אֶת-שְׁמוֹ שָׁם לְשִׁכְנוֹ תִדְרָשׁוּ וּבָאתָ  
שָׁמָּה: 6 וַהֲבֵאתֶם שָׁמָּה עֲלֵיתִיכֶם וּבְחִיכֶם וְאֵת  
מַעֲשֵׂרְתֵיכֶם וְאֵת תְּרוּמַת יְדְכֶם וְנִדְרֵיכֶם וְנִדְבָתֵיכֶם  
וּבִכְרֹת בְּקִרְבְּכֶם וְצֹאנֵכֶם: 7 וְאִכְלֹתֶם-שָׁם לִפְנֵי יְהוָה  
אֱלֹהֵיכֶם וּשְׂמַחְתֶּם בְּכֹל מִשְׁלַח יְדְכֶם אֹתָם וּבְתֵיבֵיכֶם  
אֲשֶׁר בִּרְכָךְ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ: 8 לֹא תַעֲשֹׂן כָּכָל אֲשֶׁר  
אֲנַחְנוּ עֹשִׂים כֹּה הַיּוֹם אִישׁ כְּלִי־יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּעֵינָיו: 9 כִּי לֹא-  
בָאתֶם עַד-עַתָּה אֶל־הַמְּנוּחָה וְאֶל־הַנַּחֲלָה אֲשֶׁר-יְהוָה  
אֱלֹהֶיךָ נָתַן לָךְ:

5 לְשֹׁכְנוֹ תִּדְרְשׁוּ. זֶה מִשְׁכַּן שִׁילָה: 6 וּזְבֻחֵיכֶם. שְׁלָמִים שֶׁל חוּבָה: מַעֲשֵׂי תִרְיָכֶם. מַעֲשֵׂר בְּהֶמָּה וּמַעֲשֵׂר שְׁנִי לְאַכֹּל לִפְנֵים מִן הַחוּמָה: תְּרוּמַת יֶדְכֶם. אֵלֹו הַבְּכוֹרִים, שְׁנֹאמֵר בָּהֶם: "וּלְקַח הִכָּהֵן הַטָּנָא מִיָּדֶךָ": וַיּוֹבְכַרְתָּ בִּקְרָכֶם. לְתַתֵּם לַכֹּהֵן וַיִּקְרִיבֵם שָׁם: 7 אֲשֶׁר בִּבְרַךְ ה'. לְפִי הַבְּרָכָה הַבָּא: 8 לֹא תַעֲשׂוּן כָּכָל אֲשֶׁר אֲנַחְנוּ עוֹשִׂים וְגו'.

מוֹסֵב לְמַעְלָה עַל "כִּי אַתֶּם עֹבְרִים אֶת הַיַּרְדֵּן" וְגו' — כִּשְׁתַּעֲבְרוּ אֶת הַיַּרְדֵּן מִיַּד מִתְרִים אֶתֶם לַהֲקָרִיב בְּבִמָּה, כֹּל אַרְבַּע עֶשְׂרֵה שָׁנָה

Nonetheless, even when it was standing, the status of the Tabernacle at Shiloh was inferior to that of the later, permanent Temple in Jerusalem. God's primary purpose in singling out Shiloh was to end decentralized sacrifice; in order to accomplish this, it was necessary to provide a fixed locale for centralized worship. In contrast, Jerusalem was selected as the locus of intrinsic holiness—the site for the revelation of the Divine Presence—and this choice ipso facto rendered it the locale for all sacrificial rites. It is for this reason that despite its quasi-permanence, the establishment of the sanctuary at Shiloh did not invalidate private altars for all time, whereas the establishment of the Temple at Jerusalem did.<sup>38</sup>

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## Centralized Worship

5 Furthermore, **rather** than having multiple sites of worship as the idolaters do,<sup>16</sup> you must direct your attention solely **to the place that God, your God, will select, from among all your tribes, to which to attach His Name. You must seek His Presence and come only there** to offer up your sacrifices.

6 This directive will apply first to the interim, semi-permanent site for the Tabernacle that God will establish before He commands you to construct the permanent Temple. **You must bring there**—to this interim site—**your obligatory ascent-offerings; your obligatory peace-offerings; your tithes**, both the tithe of animals<sup>17</sup> and the second tithe of produce, in order to eat them there;<sup>18</sup> **the first fruits<sup>19</sup> elevated by your hand;<sup>20</sup> the objects of your sacrificial vows and of your sacrificial dedications;<sup>21</sup> and the firstborn of your cattle and flock,<sup>22</sup>** so that they can be offered up there.

7 **You must eat** the portions of the sacrifices and tithes designated for your consumption **there, before God, your God, and you must rejoice in the success of all your endeavors—you and your households**—by offering up voluntary peace-offerings **in accord with how God, your God, has blessed you.**

8 This restriction will not apply to the periods in which the Tabernacle is located at a temporary site (as opposed to the interim or permanent site). Thus, from the time you cross the Jordan River until the interim site is established, you will be permitted to set up private altars. Nonetheless, **you must not act** with regard to these private altars **in the same way we do here today** with the Tabernacle's altar, sacrificing both voluntary and obligatory offerings on them. Rather, you may only offer up on them those sacrifices that **every person deems appropriate** on his own, i.e., voluntary offerings. You will still have to offer up your obligatory offerings in the Tabernacle, even though it is located at a temporary site.

9 You will be allowed to set up and use private altars **because you will not yet have come** either **to the first, interim resting place** of the Tabernacle **nor to the final, permanent inheritance that God, your God, is giving you** for the purpose of establishing His Temple.<sup>23</sup> Once either of these structures is standing, however, the use of private altars will be forbidden. Once the interim sanctuary ceases to function, however, you will again be permitted to offer up voluntary sacrifices on private altars—until the permanent sanctuary is established.

### A CLOSER LOOK

[5] **The place that God will select:** When the Jewish people entered the Land of Israel in the year 2488, they set up the Tabernacle at Gilgal.<sup>24</sup> It remained standing there for 14 years, until the year 2502.<sup>25</sup> It was then transferred to Shiloh,<sup>26</sup> where stone walls were built to replace the gold-

plated wooden walls of the Tabernacle but the three original coverings were still used for the roof.<sup>27</sup> This structure stood for 369 years, until the year 2871,<sup>28</sup> when the Philistines captured the Ark of the Covenant<sup>29</sup> and destroyed the sanctuary.<sup>30</sup> The Tabernacle was then reconstructed at

16. Rashi on v. 4. 17. Leviticus 27:32-33; below, 14:23. 18. Leviticus 27:30-31; below, 14:23-26. 19. Below, 26:1-11. 20. Ibid., v. 4. 21. Leviticus 7:16. 22. Exodus 13:1-2, 11-12; below, 15:19-23. 23. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 11, p. 177, note 15. 24. Joshua 4:19. 25. *Zevachim* 118b. 26. Joshua 18:1. 27. *Zevachim* 14:6, 118a. 28. *Zevachim* 118b. 29. 1 Samuel 4:1-22. 30. See Jeremiah 7:12-14, etc. 31. 1 Samuel

— ONKELOS —

10 ותעברתם את הירדן וישבתם בארץ אשר יהיה  
אלהיכם מנחיל אתכם והיה לכם מכל איביכם  
מסביב וישבתם בטח:  
11 שני 11 והיה המקום אשר יבחר יהוה אלהיכם בו  
לשכן שמו שם שמה תביאו את כל אשר אנכי מצוה  
אתכם עולתיכם וזבחיכם מעשרתיכם ותרמת ידכם  
וכל מבחר נדריכם אשר תדירו ליהוה: 12 ושמחתם  
לפני יהוה אלהיכם אתם ובניכם ובנותיכם ועבדיכם  
ואמהותיכם והלוי אשר בשעריכם כי אין לו חלק  
ונחלה אתכם: 13 השמר לך פן תעלה עלתיך בכל  
מקום אשר תראה: 14 כי אם במקום אשר יבחר יהוה  
באחד שבטיך שם תעלה עלתיך ושם תעשה כל אשר  
אנכי מצוה: 15 רק בכל אות נפשך תזבח ואכלת  
בשר בברכת יהוה אלהיך אשר נתן לך בכל שעריך  
הטמא והטהור ואכלנו בצבי וכאיל:

— RASHI —

בגון אליהו בהר הכרמל: 14 באחד שבטיך. בחלקו  
של בנימין. ולמעלה הוא אומר: "מכל שבטיכם",  
הא כיצד? בשקנה דוד את הגרן מארונה היבוסית,  
גדה הזרב מכל השבטים, ומכל מקום הגרן בחלקו  
של בנימין היה: 15 רק בכל אות נפשך. במה הכתוב  
מדבר? אם בבשר תאנה להתיריה להם בלא הקרבת  
אמורים, הרי הוא אומר במקום אחר: "כי ירחיב ה'  
אלהיך את גבלך וגו' ואמרת אכלה בשר" וגו' במה  
זה מדבר? בקדשים שנפל בהם מום שיפדו ויאכלו  
בכל מקום. וכול יפדו על מום עוברת תלמוד לומר:  
"רק": תזבח ואכלת. אין לך בהם הטר גזה וחלב,  
אלא אכילה על ידי וביחה: הטמא והטהור. לפי שבא  
מכח קדשים שנאמר בהם: "והבשר אשר יגע בכל  
טמא לא יאכל", הצריך להחזיר בו שטמא וטהור  
אוכלים בקערה אחת: בצבי וכאיל. שאין קרבן בא  
מהם: בצבי וכאיל. לפטרן מן הזרוע והלחיים והקבה:

10 ועברתם את הירדן וישבתם בארץ אשר יהיה  
אלהיכם מנחיל אתכם והיה לכם מכל איביכם  
מסביב וישבתם בטח:

שני 11 והיה המקום אשר יבחר יהוה אלהיכם בו  
לשכן שמו שם שמה תביאו את כל אשר אנכי מצוה  
אתכם עולתיכם וזבחיכם מעשרתיכם ותרמת ידכם  
וכל מבחר נדריכם אשר תדירו ליהוה: 12 ושמחתם  
לפני יהוה אלהיכם אתם ובניכם ובנותיכם ועבדיכם  
ואמהותיכם והלוי אשר בשעריכם כי אין לו חלק  
ונחלה אתכם: 13 השמר לך פן תעלה עלתיך בכל  
מקום אשר תראה: 14 כי אם במקום אשר יבחר יהוה  
באחד שבטיך שם תעלה עלתיך ושם תעשה כל אשר  
אנכי מצוה: 15 רק בכל אות נפשך תזבח ואכלת  
בשר בברכת יהוה אלהיך אשר נתן לך בכל שעריך  
הטמא והטהור ואכלנו בצבי וכאיל:

10 ועברתם את הירדן וישבתם בארץ. משתחלקוהו  
ויהא כל אחד מכיר את חלקו ואת שבטו: והניח  
לכם. לאחר כבוש וחלוק ומנוחה מן "הגוים אשר  
הניח ה' לנסות בם את ישראל", ואין זו אלא בימי  
דוד, אז: 11 והיה המקום וגו'. בנו לכם בית הבחירה  
בירושלים. וכן הוא אומר בדרד: "ויהי כי ישב  
המלך בביתו, וה' הניח לו מסביב מכל איביו, ויאמר  
המלך אל נתן הנביא: ראה נא אנכי יושב בבית  
ארוזים וארון האלהים יושב בתוך היריעה": שמה  
תביאו וגו'. למעלה אמור לענין שילה, וכאן אמור  
לענין ירושלים. ולך חלקם הכתוב, לתן הטר בין  
זו לזו, משחברה שילה ובאו לנוב, וחרבה נוב ובאו  
לגבעון, היו הבמות מתרות עד שבאו לירושלים:  
מבחר נדריכם. מלמד שיביאו מן המבחר: 13 השמר  
לך. לתן לא תעשה על הדבר: בכל מקום אשר תראה.  
אשר יעלה בלבך, אבל אתה מקריב על פי נביא,

6. שופטים ג, א. 7. שמואל ב ז, אב. 8. פסוק ה. 9. פסוק כ. 10. ויקרא ז, יט.

that is usually subject to this requirement;<sup>46</sup> in this respect, it is just like gazelle and deer, which are exempt from this requirement. Furthermore, the fleece and milk of such an animal remain consecrated; you may neither shear it nor milk it for your private use.

10 You may establish a permanent Temple only after **you cross the Jordan River, after you settle in the land that God, your God, is giving you as an inheritance, after He will grant you respite from all your surrounding enemies, and after you dwell in the land securely.**

- ◆ *Second Reading* 11 All the restrictions regarding where you may offer up sacrifices that apply to the first, interim location of the Tabernacle will also apply to **the final, permanent place on which God, your God, will choose to rest His Name. There, once again, you must bring all that I am commanding you: your obligatory ascent-offerings; your obligatory peace-offerings; your tithes, both the tithe of animals and the second tithe of produce, in order to eat them there; the first fruits elevated by your hand; and the choice objects of your sacrificial vows—for your offerings should always be of the best you have—that you vow to offer up to God.**
- 12 **You must rejoice before God, your God** by eating there—i.e., in the city surrounding the Temple<sup>39</sup>—the portions of the sacrifices and tithes designated for your consumption—you, your sons, your daughters, your bondmen, and your bondwomen, as well as the Levite who is within your cities. Invite the Levite to share your food, **for he has no portion in the spoils of war or any land-inheritance<sup>40</sup> with you** on which to raise crops.

13 The obligation to offer up voluntary sacrifices only in the Temple, which is couched above as an active commandment,<sup>41</sup> is also subject to a restrictive commandment: **Take heed not to offer up your ascent-offerings at any site you see,**

**14 but only in the place that God will choose,** which, although located in territory belonging to only **one of your tribes,**<sup>42</sup> will be purchased with funds collected from all the tribes, thereby rendering it collective property of the entire nation. **There must you offer up your ascent-offerings, and there must you do all that I am commanding you** concerning such sacrifices. The only exception to this restriction is when a genuine, proven prophet instructs you to offer up a sacrifice elsewhere on an ad hoc basis.<sup>43</sup>

15 **However,** if an animal that had been designated to be offered up as a sacrifice becomes blemished in such a way that permanently disqualifies it from being used as a sacrifice,<sup>44</sup> you may redeem it by buying it back from the Temple treasury, and then **as much as you desire, you may slaughter and eat its meat in any of your cities** outside the Temple city, as long as you take care to eat meat **according to your means, i.e., not beyond the blessing of wealth that God, your God gave you.** The meat of such an animal is no longer subject to the restrictions of ritual purity imposed upon eating sacrificial meat: both **ritually impure people and ritually pure people may eat thereof together—just as they may eat the meat of species of animals that are not offered up as sacrifices, such as gazelle and deer, together—even if doing so renders the meat of this animal ritually defiled.**<sup>45</sup> Nonetheless, this blemished, formerly consecrated animal does not revert to the status of a non-consecrated animal to the extent that it becomes subject to the requirement to give its shoulder, cheeks, and stomach to a priest, even if it belongs to a species

39. Below, v. 18. 40. Rashi on 18:1, below. 41. V. 11. 42. The Temple building was located in the territory assigned to the tribe of Benjamin, whereas the courtyards (including the Outer Altar) were located in the territory assigned to the tribe of Judah (*Yoma* 12a; *Megilah* 26a). 43. Rashi on v. 13. As did Elijah the prophet (1 Kings 18:21-39). 44. See Leviticus 22:17-25. 45. See Leviticus 7:19. 46. Below, 18:3; See the list of Priestly Gifts given at the end of *parashat Korach* (Numbers 18).



— ONKELOS —

16 לחוד דמא לא תיכלון על  
ארעא תשדנה במיא: 17 לית לך  
רשו למיכל בקרויך מעשר עבוך  
וחמך ומשחך ובכורי תורך  
וענך וכל נדריך די תדר ונדבתיך  
ואפרשות ירך: 18 אלהין קדם יי  
אלהך תיכלנה באתרא די יתרעי  
יי אלהך בה את ובך ובחמך  
ועבדך ואמתך ולואה די בקרויך  
ותחדי קדם יי אלהך בכל אושטות  
ירך: 19 אסתמר לך דלמא תשובק  
ית לואה כל יומיך על ארעך:  
20 ארי יפתי יי אלהך ית תחומך  
במא די מליל לך ותימר איכול  
בשרא ארי תתרעי נפשך למיכל  
בשרא בכל רעות נפשך תיכול  
בשרא:

16 רק הדם לא תאכלו על־הארץ תשפכנו במים:  
17 לא־תוכל לאכל בשעריך מעשר דגנך ותרשך  
ויצהרך ובכרת בקרך וציאנך וכל־נדריך אשר תדר  
ונדבתיך ותרומת ירך: 18 כי אם־לפני יהוה אלהיך  
תאכלנו במקום אשר יבחר יהוה אלהיך בו אתה ובנך  
ובתך ועבדך ואמתך וחלוי אשר בשעריך ושמהת  
לפני יהוה אלהיך בכל משלח ירך: 19 השמר לך פן  
תעזב את־חלוי כל־ימך על־אדמתך: ס  
20 כי־ירחיב יהוה אלהיך את־גבולך כאשר דבר־לך  
ואמרת אכלה בשר כי־תאונה נפשך לאכל בשר בכל־  
אות נפשך תאכל בשר:

— RASHI —

אם הסיף העורים והפסחים, צלמים שבתבו  
עליהם את השבועה: ובכרת בקרך. אזהרה לכהנים:  
ותרומת ירך. אלו הבכורים: 18 לפני ה'. לפני מן  
החומה: וחלוי אשר בשעריך. אם אין לך לתת לו  
מחלקו, כגון מעשר ראשון, תן לו מעשר עני. אין  
לך מעשר עני, הומינהו על שלמך: 19 השמר לך.  
לתן לא תעשה על הדבר: על אדמתך. אבל בגולה  
אינה מזהר עליו יותר מעניי ישראל: 20 כי ירחיב  
וגו'. למדה תורה דרך ארץ, שלא יתאונה אדם לאכל  
בשר אלא מתוך רחבת ידים ועשר: בכל אות נפשך  
וגו'. אבל במדבר נאסר להם בשר חליו, אלא אם כן  
מקדישה ומקריבה שלמים:

16 רק הדם לא תאכלו. אף על פי שאמרת ש אין  
לך בו זריקת דם במזבח, לא תאכלנו: תשפכנו  
במים. לומר לך שאין צריך כסוי. דבר אחר: הרי  
הוא במים להכשיר את הזרעים: 17 לא תוכל. בא  
הכתוב לתן לא תעשה על הדבר. רבי יהושע בן  
קרחא אומר: יכול אתה, אבל אינך רשאי. פיוצא  
בוי: "ואת היבוי יושבי ירושלים, לא יכלו בני  
יהודה להורישם", יכולים היו, אלא שאינן רשאים,  
לפי שקרת להם אברהם ברית כשלקח מהם מערת  
המכפלה. ולא יבוסים היו, אלא חתיים היו, אלא  
על שם העיר ששמה "יבוס" נקראים יבוסים. כך  
מפרש בפרקי דרבי אליעזר<sup>12</sup>. והוא שנאמר<sup>13</sup>: "כי

11. יהושע טו, סג. 12. פרק לו. 13. שמואל ב, ה, ו.

animals for non-sacrificial purposes is forbidden. This restriction poses you no inconvenience right now, since we are all encamped closely around the Tabernacle, and in any case you are not presently preoccupied with earning a living. **When,** however, you enter the land and **God, your God, expands your boundary, as He has spoken concerning you,**<sup>58</sup> and you say, 'I will eat meat' because you desire to eat meat, you may eat meat, provided that you can afford it.<sup>59</sup> As long as it is within your means, you may eat meat according to your every desire, i.e., without having to first consecrate the animal as a sacrifice.

58. Exodus 34:24. 59. Leviticus 17:13.

**16 However**, even though you are thus permitted to eat meat that until now had been forbidden to you because it was allocated for the altar, do not assume that its blood—which was also forbidden for consumption<sup>47</sup>—has likewise now become permitted. No, **you must not consume the blood; you must spill it on the ground** when you slaughter the animal. However, even though I have compared these animals, in certain respects, to wild animals—gazelle and deer—you are nevertheless not required to cover their blood after you slaughter them, as you are with respect to the blood of wild animals when you slaughter them.<sup>48</sup> In this respect, the blood of these formerly consecrated animals is **like water**, unlike the blood of gazelle and deer.

**17** The obligation to perform the other rites mentioned above only in the Temple,<sup>49</sup> which is couched there as an active commandment, is also subject to a restrictive commandment: **You may not consume within your other cities the second tithe of your grain, wine, or oil; or (if you are a priest) the firstborn of your cattle or flocks; or any of the objects of your sacrificial vows that you may vow; or the objects of your dedications;**<sup>50</sup> **or the first fruits elevated by your hand**—even if for some reason you are not able to bring them (or their value, in the case of the second tithe) to the Temple city—despite the previously stated obligation to eat these consecrated foods.<sup>51</sup>

Furthermore, you may not eat the second tithe if it has become ritually defiled, for, as will be mentioned presently,<sup>52</sup> God expressly forbids this.<sup>53</sup>

**18** However, you do not have to eat the portions of these sacrifices and tithes that are designated for your consumption only within the Temple precincts; **rather, you, your son, your daughter, your bondman, your bondwoman, and the Levite from your cities** whom you have invited to be your guest **may all eat** these portions and tithes anywhere considered **'before God, your God,'** i.e., **within the place**—the city—that **God, your God, will choose** as the location of His Temple. **You must rejoice before God, your God, in all your endeavors** by eating these portions of the sacrifices and tithes together with your family and guests. If you do not have enough produce to give the Levites as the first tithe,<sup>54</sup> then give them the tithe for the poor;<sup>55</sup> if you do not have enough of this tithe, either, then invite them to be your guests and share in your portion of the sacrifices you offer up.

**19** The obligation to care for Levites, couched above<sup>56</sup> as an active commandment, is also subject to a restrictive commandment: **Take heed not to forsake the Levite all your days** that you dwell **upon your land**. Outside of the Land of Israel, however, you are not required to care for impoverished Levites beyond your obligation to care for the poor in general,<sup>57</sup> for Levites are permitted to own land outside of the Land of Israel and are therefore not uniquely disadvantaged in this respect.

**20** Presently, you are only allowed to eat meat if you offer up the animal as a peace-offering, portions of which are designated for your consumption; slaughtering

47. Leviticus 7:26, 17:10-14; 19:26. See below, v. 23, and 15:23. 48. Leviticus 17:13. 49. V. 11. 50. Leviticus 7:16. 51. Above, v. 12. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 29, pp. 84-85. 52. Below, 15:22. 53. Rashi on 26:14, below; *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 29, p. 85, note 52. 54. Numbers 18:21-24. 55. Below, 14:28-29. 56. V. 12. 57. Leviticus 25:35.

ONKELOS

21 ארי ירחק מן אתרא די יתריי יי אלהך לאשראה שכינתה תמן ותבוס מתוך ומענה די ירב יי לך כמא די פקדתך ותיכול בקרויך בכל רעות נפשך: 22 ברם כמא די מתאכל בשר טבאי ואילא בן תיכלנה מסאבא ודכאי כחדא ייכלנה: 23 לחוד חקף בדיל דלא למיכל דמא ארי דמא הוא נפשא ולא תיכול נפשא עם בשרא: 24 לא תיכלנה על ארעא תשדנה כמאי: 25 לא תיכלנה בדיל דייטב לך ולבניך בתרף ארי תעבד דכשר קדם יי:

21 כִּי־יִרְחַק מִמֶּנִּי הַמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר יִבְחַר יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ לְשׁוֹם שְׁמוֹ שָׁם וְזִבְחֹתַי מִבְּקָרְךָ וּמִצִּאֲנֶנְךָ אֲשֶׁר נָתַן יְהוָה לְךָ כַּאֲשֶׁר צִוִּיתִךָ וְאֶכְלֹתָ בִּשְׂעָרֶיךָ בְּכָל אוֹת נִפְשֶׁךָ: 22 אַךְ כַּאֲשֶׁר יֵאָכֵל אֶת־הַצִּבִּי וְאֶת־הָאֵיל בֶּן הַתְּאֵבִלָּנוּ הַטָּמֵא וְהַטְּהוֹר יִחָדּוּ וְאֶכְלָנוּ: 23 רַק חֹזֵק לְבַלְתִּי אֶכֶל הָדֶם כִּי הָדֶם הוּא הַנֶּפֶשׁ וְלֹא־תֹאכֵל הַנֶּפֶשׁ עִם־הַבֶּשֶׂר: 24 לֹא תֹאכְלָנוּ עַל־הָאָרֶץ תִּשְׁפְּכֶנּוּ בַּמַּיִם: 25 לֹא תֹאכְלָנוּ לְמַעַן יִיטֵב לָךְ וּלְבָנֶיךָ אַחֲרֶיךָ כִּי־תַעֲשֶׂה הַיֵּשֶׁר בְּעֵינֵי יְהוָה:

RASHI

לא בא הכתוב אלא להזהירך וללמדך עד כמה אתה צריך להתחזק במצות — אם הדים שהוא קל להשמר ממנו, שאין אדם מתאנה לו, הצרך לחזקה באזהרתו, קל וחמר לשאר מצות: ולא תאכל הנפש עם הבשר. אזהרה לאבר מן החי: 24 לא תאכלנו. אזהרה לדם התמצית: 25 לא תאכלנו. אזהרה לדם האברים: למען ייטב לך וגו'. צא ולמד מתן שכרן של מצות — אם הדים שנפשו של אדם קצה ממנו, הפורש ממנו וזכה לו ולבניו אחריו, קל וחמר לגול ועריות שנפשו של אדם מתאנה להם:

21 כִּי יִרְחַק מִמֶּנִּי הַמָּקוֹם. ולא תוכל לבוא ולעשות שלמים בכל יום כמו עכשו שהמשכן הולך עמכם: וזבחת וגו' כאשר צויתך. למדנו שיש צווי בזבחה היאך ישחט, והן הלכות שהיטה שנאמרו למשה בסניני: 22 אַךְ כַּאֲשֶׁר יֵאָכֵל אֶת הַצִּבִּי וגו'. אינך מזהר לאכלן בטהרה; אי, מה צבי ואיל חלבון מתר, אף חלין חלבון מתר? תלמוד לומר: "אך": 23 רַק חֹזֵק לְבַלְתִּי אֶכֶל הָדֶם. ממה שנאמר "חזק" אתה למד שהיו שטופים בדם לאכלו, לפיכך הצרך לומר "חזק", דברי רבי יהודה. רבי שמעון בן עזאי אומר:

are naturally averse, it follows that He will reward you even more generously for observing commandments that require effort and discipline!

Besides His promise of reward, God is exhorting you emphatically and repeatedly not to consume blood for two reasons: Firstly, you were accustomed to consuming blood before the Torah was given, and even though most of those who were alive then have since died, and the rest of you have been observing the prohibition against eating blood for forty years now, He sees that it is still difficult for you. Secondly, people normally have no desire to drink blood; the fact that God nonetheless warns you to stay away from it teaches you how carefully you should avoid forbidden things that people normally *are* attracted to!<sup>64</sup>

CHASIDIC INSIGHTS

25 **He sees that it is still difficult for you:** The people knew that their entry into the Land of Israel signaled a shift in focus regarding their spiritual lives. In the desert, their bodily needs were taken care of so they could focus exclusively on their spiritual growth. Once they would enter the land, they would instead be called upon to refine the material world by engaging in mundane pursuits and directing them toward spiritual ends. Thus, inas-

much as the blood of an animal embodies its life-force, it might seem that consuming blood—in order to sublimate animal vitality and/or later utilize this vitality for holy purposes—would actually be a laudatory effort toward refining the material world. It was therefore necessary to warn the people not to descend this far into the material world.<sup>65</sup> Meat, which signifies the material world *per se*, may be enjoyed in a holy way. But blood, the vitality of life,

64. Rashi on v. 23; *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 14, pp. 45-49. 65. Compare Chasidic Insights on Numbers 16:1.



**21** If the place to which God, your God, chooses to attach His Name will be distant from you, therefore making it inconvenient to journey to the Temple to offer up peace-offerings in order to eat meat, as you do now, **you may slaughter of your cattle and flocks that God has given you**, provided that you do so **in accordance with** the method of ritual slaughtering that **I commanded you** to use when I gave the Torah at Mount Sinai, **and you may thus eat meat even in your outlying cities according to your every desire.**

**22** But, just as was stated with regard to consecrated animals that became permanently blemished,<sup>60</sup> the meat of this animal is not subject to the restrictions of purity imposed upon eating sacrificial meat: **you may eat it just as gazelle and deer**—species of animals that are not offered up as sacrifices—**are eaten: both ritually impure people and ritually pure people may eat it together**—even if thereby the meat becomes ritually defiled. Nonetheless, when you eat cattle or sheep, you are still forbidden to eat the fats that would have been offered up on the altar if the animal had been sacrificed as a peace-offering, even though these same fats from wild animals (such as gazelle and deer) are permitted for consumption.<sup>61</sup>

**23** However, even though you will be thus permitted to eat meat that is presently forbidden unless it is first consecrated as a sacrifice, do not suppose that blood—which is also forbidden—will also become permitted. Firstly, **be resolute not to consume the blood** that initially spurts out of the animal as it is slaughtered, **for this blood is the** physical embodiment of the animal's **life-force**; its departure from the animal signals the animal's death. **Similarly, you must not consume this blood, the** physical embodiment of the animal's **life-force, together with its flesh** by cutting off any of the animal's flesh before it has been ritually slaughtered and then eating that flesh—even after the animal has been slaughtered. Once it has been slaughtered, however, it is considered legally dead and you may cut off flesh from its carcass, even if the animal still shows signs of life. Nevertheless, you must wait to eat this flesh until the animal has ceased showing any signs of life.<sup>62</sup> (In contrast, inasmuch as non-Jews are not required to ritually slaughter animals in order to eat them, they must not cut flesh off animals they kill until the animal has altogether ceased showing signs of life.<sup>63</sup>)

**24** Secondly, **you must also not consume** the blood that oozes out of the carcass after the initial spurt accompanying slaughtering. Rather, **you must spill it onto the ground like water.**

**25** And furthermore, **you must not even consume** the blood remaining in the animal's body after slaughtering if the blood leaves its location in the animal's body, for example, by cooking. You must therefore either salt the meat on an inclined surface so the blood is drawn out and drains, or roast it so the blood drains. If you eat the meat raw, however, you do not have to remove this type of blood.

Refrain from consuming blood **in order that it go well for you and your children after you, when you do what is proper in the eyes of God.** And if God promises to reward you for refraining from consuming blood, something to which people

60. Above, v. 15. 61. Leviticus 7:23-25. 62. Leviticus 19:26. 63. Chulin 33a.

— ONKELOS —

26 לחוד מעשר קדשיו ויהיו  
 לך ונדריו תטול ומיתי לאתרא  
 די יתרי יי: 27 ותעבד עלותך  
 בשרא ודמא על מדבחא דיי  
 אלהך ודם נכסת קדשיו ישתפר  
 על מדבחא דיי אלהך ובשרא  
 תיכול: 28 טר ותקבל ית כל  
 פתגמאי האלין די אנא מפקדך  
 בדיל דייטב לך ולבניך בתרך עד  
 עלם ארי תעבד דתקן ודכשר קדם  
 יי אלהך: 29 ארי ישי יי אלהך ית  
 עממאי די את עלל לתמן למירת  
 יתהון מקדמך ומירת יתהון ומיתב  
 בארעהון: 30 אסתמר לך דלמא  
 תתקל בתריהון בתר דישתיצון  
 מקדמך ודלמא תתבע לטעותהון  
 למימר אידין פלחין עממאי  
 האלין ית טעותהון ואעבד בן  
 אף אנא: 31 לא תעבד בן קדם יי  
 אלהך ארי כל דמרחק קדם יי די  
 סני עבדו לטעותהון ארי אף ית  
 בניהון וית בניהון מוקדין בגורא  
 לטעותהון:

26 רק קדשיו אשר יהיו לך ונדריו תשא ובאת אל-  
 המקום אשר יבחר יהוה: 27 ועשית עלתיו הבשר  
 והדם על מזבח יהוה אלהיך ודם זבחיך ישפך על-  
 מזבח יהוה אלהיך והבשר תאכל: 28 שמר ושמעת  
 את פליהדברים האלה אשר אנכי מצוה למען ייטב  
 לך ולבניך אחריך עד-עולם כי תעשה הטוב והישר  
 בעיני יהוה אלהיך: ס

◆ שלישי 29 כי יבחר יהוה אלהיך את-הגוים אשר אתה  
 בא-שמה לרשת אותם מפניך וירשת אתם וישבת  
 בארצם: 30 השמר לך פן-תנקש אחריהם אחרי  
 השמדם מפניך ופן-תדרש לאלהיהם לאמר איכה  
 יעבדו הגוים האלה את-אלהיהם ואעשה-כן גם-אני:  
 31 לא-תעשה כן ליהוה אלהיך כי כל-תועבת יהוה  
 אשר שניא עשו לאלהיהם כי גם את-בניהם ואת-  
 בנותיהם ישרפו באש לאלהיהם:

— RASHI —

— "וארכבתה דא לדא נקשן" 16. ואף זה אני אומר:  
 "פן תנקש אחריהם" — פן תשרף אחריהם, להיות  
 פרוץ אחר מעשיהם. וכן: "ינקש נושה לכל אשר  
 לו" — מקלל את הרשע להיות עליו נושים רבים,  
 ויהיו מחזירין ומתנקשין אחר ממונו: **אחרי השמדם**  
**מפניך**. אחר שתראה שאשמדם מפניך, יש לך לתת  
 לב מפני מה נשמדו אלו, מפני מעשים מקלקלים  
 שבידיהם — אף אתה לא תעשה כן, שלא יבואו  
 אחרים וישמידוך: **איכה יעבדו**. לפי שלא ענש על  
 עבודה זרה, אלא על זבוח וקטור ונסוף והשתחוואה,  
 כמו שכתוב: "בלתי לה' לבדו" — דברים הנעשים  
 לגבוה, בא ולמדך כאן, שאם דרכה של עבודה זרה  
 לעבודה בדרך אחר, כגון פוער לפעור וזורק אבן  
 למרקוליס, זו היא עבודתו וחיב, אכל זבוח וקטור  
 ונסוף והשתחוואה, אפלו שלא כדרכה חיב: 31 **כי**  
**גם את בניהם**. "גם" לרבות את אבותיהם ואמותיהם.  
 אמר רבי עקיבא: אני ראיתי גוי אחד שכפרתו לאביו  
 לפני כלבו ואכלו:

26 רק קדשיו. אף על פי שאתה מתר לשחוט  
 חלין, לא התרתי לך לשחוט את הקדשים ולאכלן  
 בשעריך בלא הקרבה, אלא הביאם לבית הבחירה:  
 27 ועשית עלתיו. אם עולות הם, תן הבשר והדם  
 על גבי המזבח. ואם זבחי שלמים הם, "דם זבחיך  
 ישפך על המזבח" תחלה ואחר כך "והבשר תאכל".  
 ועוד דרשו רבותינו: "רק קדשיו", שבא ללמד  
 על הקדשים שבחוצה לארץ, וללמד על התמורות  
 ועל ולדות קדשים — שיקרבו: 28 **שמר**. זו משנה  
 שאתה צריך לשמרה בבטנך שלא תשכח, כענין  
 שנאמר: "כי נעים כי תשמרם בבטנך". ואם שנית,  
 אפשר שתשמע ותקים. הא, כל שאינו בכלל משנה,  
 אינו בכלל מעשה: **את כל הדברים**. שתהא חביבה  
 עליך מצוה קלה כמצוה חמורה: **הטוב**. בעיני  
 השמים: **והישר**. בעיני אדם: 30 **פן תנקש**. אנקלוס  
 תרגם לשון "מוקש". ואני אומר, שלא חש לדקדק  
 בלשון, שלא מצינו נון בלשון "יוקש", ואפלו ליסוד  
 הנופל ממנו. אכל בלשון טרף וקשקוש מצינו נון

14. ספרי. 15. משל כב, יח. 16. דניאל ה, ו. 17. תהלים קט, יא. 18. שמות כב, יט.

26 Subject to these restrictions, you will be able to eat meat wherever you live. **However**, this applies only to non-consecrated meat. **You must still take your consecrated** animal-offerings **that you will have, as well as** the animals with which you intend to fulfill **your vows** to sacrifice peace-offerings, **and come to the place that God will choose** as the interim location of the Tabernacle<sup>66</sup>—or later, as the site of His permanent Temple<sup>67</sup>—no matter how far you may live from it.

27 There, **you must offer up your ascent-offerings—the meat and the blood—upon the altar of God, your God. The blood of your peace-offerings must be poured upon the altar of God, your God, and afterwards you may eat the flesh.**

The obligation to offer up sacrifices only in the Temple applies even to animals consecrated outside of the Land of Israel, to animals that have been designated as substitutes for already-consecrated animals,<sup>68</sup> and to the offspring born to animals after they have been consecrated.

28 Besides all that you have been told so far, **safeguard all these words that I am commanding you** now—i.e., make sure you are doing them properly—by constantly studying the Torah's instructions regarding how to perform them, **and** then you will be able to **hearken** to them, i.e., perform them properly, **that it may benefit you and your children after you forever, when**—because you know what to do—**you** in fact **do both what is good in the eyes of God, your God, and proper** in the eyes of human beings.

### Imitating Idolaters

◆ *Third Reading* 29 When God, your God cuts down the nations inhabiting the land **into which you are coming in order to dispossess them, and you have dispossessed them and settled in their land,**

30 **beware, lest you begin to imitate them.** On the contrary, **after** you see that **they have been exterminated from before you**, you should understand that God exterminated them because of the depravity of their deeds and you should therefore seek to distinguish yourselves from them, not imitate them. Beware **lest you inquire about their deities, saying, 'How did these nations serve their deities? I will do likewise.'**

31 **You must not do this to God, your God**, for as you have been told,<sup>69</sup> serving an idol in the way it is normally worshipped is forbidden and is punishable by death. **For they did to their deities every abomination to God that He hates; they would burn their sons and daughters—and even their parents—in fire to their deities.**

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#### ∞ CHASIDIC INSIGHTS ∞

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must not be *enjoyed* in and of itself—it is impossible to enjoy *vitality itself* in a holy way, even if it seems that doing so will further our spiritual goals. Blood, the vitality of life, must be contextualized: if it is part of a sacrifice, oriented toward holiness, it may be brought to the altar. If it is part of the simple act

of eating, oriented merely toward preserving and/or enhancing the life of the body itself, it must be avoided. We should aspire to become excited and enthusiastic solely about holy matters, rather than about material matters in themselves.<sup>70</sup>

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66. Above, vv. 5-8. 67. Above, vv. 11-14. 68. See Leviticus 27:33. 69. Exodus 22:19. 70. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 4, p. 1110, vol. 14, p. 47.

— ONKELOS —

13:1 ית כל פתגמא די אָנא מפקד  
יתכון יתה תשרון למעבד לא  
תוספון עלוהי ולא תמנעון מנה:  
2 ארי יקום ביינך נביא או חלם  
חלמא ויתן לך את או מופתא:  
3 וייתי אתא ומופתא די מליל  
עמך למימר נהך בתר טעות  
עממא די לא ידעתנן ונפלחנן:  
4 לא תקבל לפתגמי נביא יהוא  
או לחלם חלמא יהוא ארי מנסי  
י אלהכון יתכון למדע האייתכון  
רחמין ית י אלהכון בכל לבכון  
ובכל נפשכון: 5 בתר דחלמא די  
אלהכון תהכון ויתה תדחלון וית  
פקודיה תשרון ולמימרה תקבלון  
וקדמוהי תפלחון ובדחלתה  
תתקרבון:

13:1 את כל־הדבר אשר אנכי מצוה אתכם אתו  
תשמרו לעשות לא־תסוף עליו ולא תגרע ממנו: פ  
2 כי־יקום בקרבך נביא או חלם חלום ונתן אליך  
אות או מופת: 3 ובא האות והמופת אשר־דבר  
אליך לאמר גלגה אחרי אלהים אחרים אשר לא־  
ידעתם ונעבדם: 4 לא תשמע אל־דברי הנביא ההוא  
או אל־חולם החלום ההוא כי מנסה יהוה אלהיכם  
אתכם לדעת הישכם אהבים את־יהוה אלהיכם בכל־  
לבבכם ובכל־נפשכם: 5 אחרי יהוה אלהיכם תלכו  
ואתו תיראו ואת־מצותיו תשמרו ובקלו תשמעו ואתו  
תעבדו ובו תדבקון:

— RASHI —

לו. ואם תאמר: מפני מה נותן לו הקדוש ברוך  
הוא ממשלה לעשות אות? "כי מנסה ה' אלהיכם  
אתכם": 5 ואת מצותיו תשמרו. תורת משה: ובקלו  
תשמעו. בקול הנביאים: ואתו תעבדו. במקדשו: ובו  
תדבקון. הדבק בדרךיו — גמל חסידים, קבר מתים,  
בקר חולים, כמו שעשה הקדוש ברוך הוא:

1 את כל הדבר. קלה בחמורה: תשמרו לעשות.  
לתן לא תעשה על עשה האמורים בפרשה, שכל  
"השמר" לשון לא תעשה הוא, אלא שאין לוקין על  
"השמר" של עשה: לא תסוף עליו. חמשה טיטפות  
בתפלין, חמשה מינין בלולב, ארבע ברכות בברכות  
בהנינים: 2 ונתן אליך אות. בשמים, כענין שנאמר  
בגדעון: "ועשית לי אות", ואומר: "יהי נא חרב אל  
הגדה" וגו': או מופת. בארץ, אף על פי כן לא תשמע

19. שופטים ו, יז. 20. שם, לט.

— CHASIDIC INSIGHTS —

**4 God is testing you to know:** The word for "test-  
ing" (מנסה) also means "elevating." Thus, this verse  
may be interpreted to mean: "God tests a person  
in order to elevate him to a higher level of Divine  
knowledge."

A test—whether of a person's commitment to Juda-  
ism or of his faith in God's goodness—is a tempo-  
rary concealment of the Divine favor that we as-  
sume should be shown to those who follow God's  
will. Voices from both within and without mock the  
sufferer's naïve belief. However, the fact that God's  
presence is hidden in these situations simply indi-  
cates that He wishes to grace us with a closer, more  
intense relationship with Him than we are pre-  
sently able to sustain. In order to preserve our faith  
in God in the face of situations that test this faith,  
we have to draw upon deeper levels of commitment  
than we normally do.

When we do this, i.e., when we pass the test, the test  
disappears—its purpose having been served—and

our formerly deep, hidden connection with God be-  
comes our normative consciousness.

In the terminology of Kabbalah, the sparks of Divin-  
ity inherent within tests originate in a higher level  
(of the world of *Tohu*) than do the sparks embed-  
ded within the rest of creation. Just as the brighter  
a light source, the thicker a veil that is needed to  
obscure its light, these sparks embody too much  
Divine energy to be clothed in the normal states of  
non-Divinity that make up most of this world; their  
intensity can only be expressed in commensurately  
intense states of Divine hiddenness. These sparks  
therefore are ensconced in situations and existential  
states that not only do not reveal God's hand but  
affrontingly *deny* it.

Of course, our day-to-day involvement with the  
physical world—elevating it into holiness by resist-  
ing its tendency to drag us into materiality on the  
one hand and using it as a means toward spiritual  
ends on the other—also increases and enhances

**13:1 Everything I command you**—whether the punishment for not doing it be severe or light—**that is what you must be careful to do.** I previously warned you not to try to enhance God's commandments by trying to 'expand' their scope.<sup>71</sup> In addition, **you must neither add to any commandment nor detract from it** in a way that seemingly intensifies its effect.<sup>72</sup> For example, do not make your head-*tefilin* with five compartments instead of four,<sup>73</sup> even though adding compartments would seemingly serve to increase your awareness of the ideas that *tefilin* are intended to remind you of.<sup>74</sup> Similarly, do not hold additional specimens of the four types of plants you are commanded to hold on *Sukot*<sup>75</sup>—even though this would seemingly increase the joy these plants are intended to bring you.<sup>76</sup> Another example: do not have the priests bless you with four blessings instead of three,<sup>77</sup> even though additional blessings would seem to intensify your experience of God's blessing.<sup>78</sup> By the same token, in each of these cases, do not use fewer items than are prescribed.

### False Prophets

**2 If there will arise among you a prophet or a dreamer of a dream, and he gives you a sign, i.e., a miracle occurring with regard to something in the sky, or a marvel, i.e., a miracle occurring with regard to something on earth,**

**3 and the sign or the marvel of which he spoke to you takes place, and he then says,** attempting to base his authority on the fact that he was able to perform that miracle, **'Let us go after other deities, which you have not previously known, and let us worship them,'**

**4 you must not heed the words of that prophet or that dreamer of a dream.** God only allowed him to perform a miracle **because God, your God, is testing you to ascertain whether you really love God, your God, with all your heart and with all your soul.**

**5** So if you really do love God, **you should follow only God, your God,** rather than listening to false prophets; **fear Him,** rather than the empty exhortations of a false prophet; **keep His commandments** that He communicated to you through me, not any spurious commandments a false prophet might bid you keep; **heed His voice,** which will speak to you through future legitimate prophets, not the voice of false prophets; **worship Him** in the Temple using the prescribed practices, not in any other location or using any other practices a false prophet might suggest;<sup>79</sup> **and** finally, as the highest expression of your love for Him, **cleave to Him** by imitating His attributes beyond the requirements of the law, that is, beyond merely keeping His commandments<sup>80</sup> or imitating His attributes in general (as mentioned previously<sup>81</sup>). Specifically: (a) bury the dead (just as God Himself buried Aaron even though there were many others who would have been willing to) even when it is inconvenient for you to do so;<sup>82</sup> (b) visit the sick (just as God visited Abraham when he was sick even though there were others who also visited him) even though

71. Above, 4:2. 72. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 9, p. 53, note 24. 73. Above, 11:18. 74. Exodus 13:16. 75. Leviticus 23:40. 76. *Sichot Kodesh* 5729, vol. 2, pp. 418, 420. The exception to this is the myrtle branch, of which three are prescribed but to which more may be added (Leviticus 23:40). 77. Numbers 6:22-27. 78. *Sichot Kodesh* 5729, vol. 2, pp. 420-421. 79. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 14, p. 56, note 21. 80. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 14, pp. 53-57. 81. Above, 11:22. 82. Numbers 20:28.



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6 וּנְבִיאָה הָיָה אוּ חֵלֶם הַחֲלוֹם הָיָה יוֹמֶת בִּי דְבָר־  
סִרְהָ עַל־יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם הַמוֹצִיא אֶתְכֶם | מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם  
וְהַפְדָּךְ מִבֵּית עֲבָדִים לְהַדְיָחֶךְ מִן־הַדֶּרֶךְ אֲשֶׁר צִוָּךְ יְהוָה  
אֱלֹהֶיךָ לָלֶכֶת בָּהּ וּבַעֲרַת הָרַע מִקֶּרְבְּךָ: 8  
7 כִּי יִסִּיתֶךָ אֶחָיִךְ בֶּן־אִמֶּךָ אוֹ־בִנְךָ אוֹ־בִתְּךָ אוֹ  
אִשְׁתְּ חִיקְךָ אוֹ רַעְךָ אֲשֶׁר כִּנְפֶּשְׁךָ בִּפְתָר לֵאמֹר גִּלְכָּה  
וְנַעֲבֹדָה אֱלֹהִים אֲחֵרִים אֲשֶׁר לֹא יָדַעְתָּ אֶתָּה וְאַבְתִּיךָ:  
8 מֵאֱלֹהֵי הָעַמִּים אֲשֶׁר סְבִיבְתֶיכֶם הַקְרֹבִים אֵלֶיךָ אוֹ  
הַרְחֻקִּים מִמֶּךָ מִקְצֵה הָאָרֶץ וְעַד־קְצֵה הָאָרֶץ:

RASHI

בסתר. וכן שלמה הוא אומר: "בְּנִשְׁוֹ בְּעֶרְב יוֹם  
בְּאִישׁוֹן לִלְכָּה וְאֶפְלָה": אֲשֶׁר לֹא יָדַעְתָּ אֶתָּה וְאַבְתִּיךָ.  
דבר זה גנאי גדול הוא לך, שאף האמות אין מניחין  
מה שמסרו להם אבותיהם, וזה אומר לך: עוב מה  
שמסרו לך אבותיך: 8 הַקְרֹבִים אֵלֶיךָ אוֹ הַרְחֻקִּים.  
למה פרט קרובים ורחוקים? אלא כך אמר הכתוב:  
מטיבן של קרובים אתה למד טיבן של רחוקים,  
כשם שאין ממש בקרובים, כך אין ממש ברחוקים:  
מקצה הארץ. זו חמה ולבנה וצבא השמים, שהן  
מהלכין מסוף העולם ועד סופו:

6 סרה. דבר המוסר מן העולם, שלא היה ולא נברא  
ולא צויתו לדבר כן. דישטולוד"א בלעז: וְהַפְדָּךְ  
מִבֵּית עֲבָדִים. אפלו אין לו עליך אלא שפדאך, דיו:  
7 כִּי יִסִּיתֶךָ. אין הסתה אלא גרי, שנאמר: "אם  
ה' הסיתך בי", אמיתר"א בלעז, שמשאיו לעשות  
כן: אֶחָיִךְ. מאב או בן אמך. מאם: חיקך. השוכבת  
בחיך ומחקה בך. אפיקייד"א בלעז: וכן: "ומחיק  
הארץ", מיסוד התקוע בארץ: אֲשֶׁר כִּנְפֶּשְׁךָ. זה אביה,  
פרש לך הכתוב את החביבין לך, קל וחמר לאחרים:  
בסתר. דבר הכתוב בדוה, שאין דברי מסית אלא

21. מענות, דברים מענותים. 22. שמואל א, כו, יט. 23. נשיא, נפתח. 24. דבוקה. 25. יחזקאל מ, יד. 26. משלי ז, ט.

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inspiration. In order to do that—

*You must heed [lit., hear] His voice, which you hear by learning the Torah, for God's presence is more openly felt in the study of the Torah than in the physical performance of the commandments. Therefore, through Torah study, you can maintain your conscious connection to God while still engaging the material world. You will then realize that it is not sufficient to approach God out of love; in addition—*  
*You must worship [or: serve] Him as a simple, faithful servant, for only by so doing do you express your absolute renunciation of your ego in your desire to truly merge with Him. Thus—*

*You will cleave to Him in thought, speech, and action.*<sup>90</sup>

From another perspective, this verse means:

*Follow God, your God* (literally, "walk after God") by submitting to His will. Just as walking is the most prosaic form of human endeavor, so is submission the lowliest form of relationship to God. Once you have

submitted yourselves to God's will, you can also—

*Fear Him*, that is, perform His commandments out of fear of Him, as well as—

*Keep His commandments* out of love for Him. Having refined yourselves by performing His commandments, you can—

*Heed His voice* by cultivating profound sensitivity to Godliness. This sensitivity will illuminate your heart, inspiring you to—

*Worship Him* by putting into practice the inspiration inherent in this sensitivity. This inspiration and its fulfillment in practice will cause you to—

*Cleave to Him.*

Thus, we see here that despite the prosaic nature of simple, submissive, devoted self-discipline, it forms the basis of our relationship with God and is the foundation upon which we subsequently build our loftier, more sophisticated levels of relationship with Him.<sup>91</sup>

90. Likutei Torah 4:19b-20c. 91. Sefer HaMa'amarim Kuntresim, vol. 2, pp. 475b-476a (Sefer HaMa'amarim 5697, pp. 305-306).

doing so might dangerously expose you to their illnesses;<sup>83</sup> and a fortiori (c) comfort mourners (just as God comforted Isaac<sup>84</sup> and Jacob<sup>85</sup> even though there were others who also comforted them) which is neither inconvenient nor dangerous.<sup>86</sup>

6 Returning to the subject of the false prophet: **that prophet or that dreamer of a dream must be put to death by the court<sup>87</sup> because he spoke deceptively about God, your God, who brought you out of Egypt and redeemed you from the house of bondage—for this reason alone God has claim to your loyalty—to lead you astray from the way in which God, your God, commanded you to go. So must you eliminate this evil from your midst.**

## Dealing with Tempters

7 If anyone<sup>88</sup>—even a close relative such as **your brother**, whether you have a common father or he is only **the son of your mother** but not of your father; **your son; your daughter; the wife who lies in your embrace;** or your father, **who is your friend** as dear to you as **your own soul**—**incites you**, either publicly or **in secret, saying, ‘Let us go and worship other deities, which neither you nor your forefathers have known,’**

8 **from among the deities of any of the peoples around you**—whether those nearby or those far off, for just as you know that the deities worshipped **near you** are false, so may you conclude that those **far away from you** are also false—and even if they incite you to worship a transnational deity, such as one of the heavenly bodies that traverse the sky **from one end of the earth to the other end of the earth;**

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### — CHASIDIC INSIGHTS —

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Divine consciousness in the world. The difference, however, is that while our routine refinement of reality requires us to summon our spiritual strength and do battle with our animal nature, convincing and cajoling it into Divine service, tests cannot be approached in this way. Rather, they require us to access far deeper powers, those of self-sacrifice and incontestable commitment to God. Essentially, this means tapping the previously mentioned inner sight-consciousness of God that each of us possesses in the merit of Moses' prayer.

Inasmuch as attaining Divine consciousness, thereby making the world more of a home for God, is the purpose of creation, it follows that moral tests serve a crucial function in bringing creation to its completion and fulfilling the purpose of the soul's descent into the physical world.<sup>89</sup>

5 **Follow God:** This phrase can be read, “[Toward] the back of God, you will walk.” According to this interpretation, the Torah here is describing the following successive rungs on the ladder of spiritual growth:

[Toward] *the back of God, your God:* You must first realize that all existence is created and sustained by God “turning His back,” so to speak, on reality. God's presence is so overwhelming that if it were

to be revealed openly in the world, the world could not maintain its self-awareness as being discrete from God. This, in turn, would undermine the purpose of creation, which is for it to serve as a setting in which we seek God's hidden presence. The more you realize that all you perceive of reality is just a façade for the underlying Divinity that sustains it—

*You will walk:* the more you will progress toward successively more intense levels of loving God, who, you will come to realize, is the only true reality. This will ultimately bring you to the brink of rapturous death as you yearn to unite with God, but—

*You will fear Him:* humiliated by your own puniness, you will be afraid to approach God. Furthermore, you will realize that true unity with God means submission to His will, specifically, His will that you remain in the physical world and fulfill your Divine mission and potential. However, you will also come to realize that in devoting yourself to your Divine mission in this material world, you will be putting your inspiration at risk, since you will be exposing yourself to influences contrary to Divine consciousness. Therefore—

*You must safeguard His commandments,* ensuring that you continue to perform them with enthusiasm and

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83. Genesis 18:1. 84. Genesis 25:11. 85. Genesis 35:9. 86. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 14, pp. 59-61. 87. *Sanhedrin* 1:5; *Mishneh Torah*, *Sanhedrin* 5:1. 88. *Mishneh Torah*, *Avodah Zarah* 5:1. 89. *Sefer HaMa'amarim* 5708, pp. 94-103; *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 9, pp. 286-287.

— ONKELOS —

9 לא תיבני לה ולא תקבל מנה  
ולא תחוס עינך עלוהי ולא תרחם  
ולא תכסי עלוהי: 10 ארי מקטל  
תקטלנה ידך תהי בה בקדמימא  
למקטלה וידא דכל עמא  
בבתימא: 11 ותרגמנה באבניא  
וימות ארי בעא לאטעיותך  
מדיחלתא דיי אלהך די אפקך  
מארעא דמצרים מבית עבדותא:  
12 וכל ישראל ישמעון וידחלון  
ולא יוספון למעבד כפתגמא  
בישא תדין בינך: 13 ארי תשמע  
בחורא מקרויך די יי אלהך יתב לך  
למתב תמן למימר: 14 נפקו גברין  
בני רשעא מבינך ואטעיו ית יתבי  
קרתהון למימר נהך ונפלח לטעות  
עממא די לא ידעתון:

9 לֹא-תִּבְנֶה לוֹ וְלֹא תִשְׁמַע אֵלָיו וְלֹא-תִחְוֶה עֵינְךָ עָלָיו  
וְלֹא-תִחְמֹל וְלֹא-תִכְסֶּה עָלָיו: 10 כִּי הֶרֶג תִּהְרַגְנוּ יָדְךָ  
תִּהְיֶה-בּוֹ בְּרֹאשׁוֹנָה לְהַמִּיתוֹ וְיָדְךָ כְּלִי-הָעֵם בְּאַחֲרֹנָה:  
11 וְסִקְלֵתוֹ בְּאַבְנִים וּמָת כִּי בִקֵּשׁ לְהַדְיָחֶךָ מֵעַל יְהוָה  
אֱלֹהֶיךָ הַמוֹצִיָאֶךָ מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם מִבֵּית עֲבָדִים: 12 וְכָל-  
יִשְׂרָאֵל יִשְׁמְעוּ וְיִדְחֲלוּ וְלֹא-יִוָּסְפוּ לַעֲשׂוֹת כַּדָּבָר הַזֶּה  
הַזֶּה בְּקִרְבְּךָ: 13

13 כִּי-תִשְׁמַע בְּאַחַת עָרֶיךָ אֲשֶׁר יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ נָתַן לְךָ  
לְשֹׁבֵת שֵׁם לֵאמֹר: 14 יֵצְאוּ אֲנָשִׁים בְּנֵי-בְלִיעַל מִקִּרְבְּךָ  
וַיִּדְיָחוּ אֶת-יֹשְׁבֵי עִירָם לֵאמֹר גִּלְכָּה וְנַעֲבָדָה אֱלֹהִים  
אַחֲרֵים אֲשֶׁר לֹא-יָדַעְתֶּם:

— RASHI —

אל תחזירהו לזכות: ידך תהיה בו בראשונה. מצנה  
ביד הנסת להמיתו. לא מת בידו, ימות ביד אחרים,  
שנאמר: "ויד כל העם" וגו'. 13 לשבת שם. פרט  
לירושלים, שלא נתנה לדירה: פי תשמע וגו' לאמר.  
אומרים כן, "יצאו אנשים" וגו': 14 בני בליעל.  
בלי על, שפרקו עלו של מקום: אנשים. ולא נשים:  
ישובי עירם. ולא יושבי עיר אחרת, מכאן אמרו: אין  
נעשית עיר הנדחת, עד שידיחוה אנשים ועד שיהיו  
מודיחיה מתוכה:

9 לא תאבה לו. לא תהא תאב לו, לא תאהבנו,  
לפי שנאמר: "ואהבת לרעך כמוך", את זה לא  
תאהב: ולא תשמע אליו. בהתחננו על נפשו למחל  
לו, לפי שנאמר: "עזב תעזב עמו", לזה לא תעזב:  
ולא תחוס עינך עליו. לפי שנאמר: "לא תעמד על  
דם רעך", על זה לא תחוס: ולא תחמל. לא תהפך  
בזכותו: ולא תכסה עליו. אם אתה יודע לו חובה,  
אינך רשאי לשתק: 10 כי הרג תהרגנו. אם יצא  
מבית דין וכאי, החזירהו לחובה. יצא מבית דין חיב,

27. ויקרא יט, יח. 28. שמות כג, ה.

## The Idolatrous City

**13 If, when you enter your land, you (i.e., your legal proxy, the Sanhedrin<sup>100</sup>) hear testimony about people residing in one of your residential cities (but not in the Temple city, for it is in essence a setting for the Temple service, not for residence, even though people may live there<sup>101</sup>) that God, your God, is giving you, saying, 14 'Men who are unfaithful to the Torah's commandments have gone forth from among you and have led the inhabitants of their city astray, saying, "Let us go and worship other deities, which you have not known,"'**

100. *Sanhedrin* 1:5, 16b. 101. The area of Jerusalem outside the Temple grounds but within the city walls corresponded to the "camp of the Israelites" in the desert (Numbers 1:54). This area was considered consecrated ground, in which certain sacrifices could be eaten (Leviticus 10:14) and in which certain levels of ritual purity had to be maintained (Leviticus 4:12, 13:46; Numbers 5:2, 19:3). *Sifrei d'vei Rav*.



**9 you must not love him**, i.e., seek a way to let him live out of love for him, even though you are otherwise commanded to love your fellow;<sup>92</sup> **you must not hear-ken to him** when he pleads for his life, even though you are otherwise commanded to come to the aid of your enemy;<sup>93</sup> **you must not pity him**, even though you are otherwise prohibited to idly allow your fellow to be killed;<sup>94</sup> **you must not have mercy** upon him by trying to exonerate him; **you must not cover up for him** by refraining from testifying against him when you have incriminating information that would enable you to do so.

Besides the fact that idolatry is forbidden, you should find this attempted incitement insulting, for even idolaters remain loyal to their national deities, refusing to pursue those of other nations.<sup>95</sup> The examples of inciters given above<sup>96</sup> do not include the mother or sister, since an adult man, having formed his own opinions about life, is no longer typically influenced by his mother in matters of theology (as he might still be by his brothers or father), nor, having established his own family, is he any longer close enough to his sister to be drawn by this closeness into questionable activities (as he still is to his wife and children).<sup>97</sup>

**10** Returning to how you should treat the tempter: You should not have mercy on him; **rather, you must** do your best to **kill** him: if the court acquits him and you then remember some incriminating testimony, have him brought back to court for a retrial. Or, if he has been condemned and you then remember some exonerating testimony, do not have him brought back to court for a retrial; let them **kill him**.

The tempter is executed by stoning. The normal procedure in stoning is that the witnesses first try to kill the convict by pushing him from an elevation twice his own height<sup>98</sup> and, if this fails, casting a heavy stone onto his chest; only if this, too fails, does the populace kill him by pelting him with stones.<sup>99</sup> In this case, however, **your hand**—that of the person the inciter was attempting to incite, rather than the hand of the witnesses—**must be the first** to be raised **against him to put him to death**, since you would have been the victim of his attempted incitement, **but** if you cannot kill him by yourself, **afterwards** he must die at **the collective hand of all the people**.

**11** Thus, **you must stone him with stones so that he dies, because he sought to lead you astray from God, your God, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the house of bondage**.

**12** **All Israel must listen to the case and be afraid to do likewise, so that they no longer commit any evil such as this in your midst**.

<sup>92</sup>. Leviticus 19:18. <sup>93</sup>. Exodus 23:5. <sup>94</sup>. Leviticus 19:16. <sup>95</sup>. Rashi on v. 7, above. <sup>96</sup>. V. 7. <sup>97</sup>. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 19, pp. 148-151. <sup>98</sup>. *Sanhedrin* 6:4 (and 45a). <sup>99</sup>. As described below, 17:7.

ONKELOS

15 וְתַבְעֵי וְתַבְדֹּק וְתַשְׁאֵל  
יָאוֹת וְהָא קִשְׁטָא כּוֹן פְּתִימָא  
אֲתַעְבִּידַת תּוֹעֲבָתָא הָדָא בִּינָה:  
16 מִמָּחָא תַּמְחִי יֵת יִתְבִּי קֶרְתָּא  
הִדְיָא לְפִתְגָם דְּחֶרֶב גְּמֹר יֵתָה  
וְיֵת כָּל דִּי בַה וְיֵת בְּעִירָה לְפִתְגָם  
דְּחֶרֶב: 17 וְיֵת כָּל עֲדָאָה תַּכְנוּשׁ  
לְגוּ פְתִיָה וְתוֹקֵד בְּנוּרָא יֵת קֶרְתָּא  
וְיֵת כָּל עֲדָאָה גְּמִיר קָדָם יֵי אֱלֹהִיךָ  
וְתַחֲיָי תַל חֲרִיב לְעֵלָם לֹא תַחְבֵּנִי  
עוֹד: 18 וְלֹא יִדְבַק בִּידְךָ מִדְעָם מִן  
חֲרָמָא בְּדִיל דִּיתוּב יֵי מִתְקוֹף רְגוּזָה  
וְיֵהֱב לָךְ רַחֲמִין וִירַחֵם עֲלֶיךָ וְיִסְגָּן  
כְּמָא דִּי קִיָּים לֹאֲבַהֲתָךְ: 19 אֲרִי  
תַּקְבֵּל לְמִימְרָא דִּי אֱלֹהִיךָ לְמִטְרָה  
יֵת כָּל פְּקוּדֵיהִי דִּי אָנָּא מִפְּקֻדָּךְ  
יִוְמָא דִּין לְמַעַבְד דְּכֶשֶׁר קָדָם יֵי  
אֱלֹהִיךָ: 14 בְּנִין אֲתוֹן קָדָם יֵי  
אֱלֹהִיכֹן לֹא תַתְּהַמְמוֹן וְלֹא תִשּׁוּן  
מִרְט בֵּין עֵינִיכֹן עַל מִיתָ:

15 וְדִרְשֵׁת וְחֻקֶּרֶת וְשִׂאלָת הֵיטֵב וְהִנֵּה אִמָּת נִכּוֹן  
הַדְּכָר נַעֲשִׂיתָה הַתּוֹעֵבָה הַזֹּאת בְּקֶרְבְּךָ: 16 הִכָּה תִּכָּה  
אֶת־יִשְׁבִּי הָעִיר הַהוּא לְפִי־חֶרֶב הַחֹלֶם אֹתָהּ וְאֶת־  
כָּל־אֲשֶׁר־בָּהּ וְאֶת־בְּהֶמְתָּהּ לְפִי־חֶרֶב: 17 וְאֶת־כָּל־  
שְׁלָלָהּ תִּקְבֹּץ אֶל־תּוֹךְ רַחֲבָהּ וְשַׂרְפֶּתָּ בָּאֵשׁ אֶת־הָעִיר  
וְאֶת־כָּל־שְׁלָלָהּ כָּלִיל לַיהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ וְהִיתָה תֵּל עוֹלָם  
לֹא תִבְנֶה עוֹד: 18 וְלֹא־יִדְבַק בִּידְךָ מֵאוֹמָה מִן־הַחֲרָם  
לְמַעַן יֵשׁוּב יְהוָה מִחֲרוֹן אָפָּו וְנָתַן־לְךָ רַחֲמִים וְרַחֲמָנָהּ  
וְהִרְבָּךְ כַּאֲשֶׁר נִשְׁבַּע לְאַבְרָהָם: 19 כִּי תִשְׁמָע בְּקוֹל יְהוָה  
אֱלֹהֶיךָ לְשִׁמּוֹר אֶת־כָּל־מִצְוֹתָיו אֲשֶׁר אָנֹכִי מְצֻוֶּה הַיּוֹם  
לַעֲשׂוֹת הִישָׁר בְּעֵינֵי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ: 8  
◆ רַבִּיעִי 14:1 בָּנִים אַתֶּם לַיהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם לֹא תִתְגַּדְּדוּ  
וְלֹא־תִשְׁיִמוּ קֶרְחָה בֵּין עֵינֵיכֶם לְמָת:

RASHI

אֱלֹהֶיךָ. לְשִׁמוֹ וּבִשְׁבִילוֹ: 18 לְמַעַן יֵשׁוּב ה'. מוֹסֵב  
עַל "הִכָּה תִּכָּה": מִחֲרוֹן אָפָּו. שְׁכָל זְמַן שֶׁעֲבֹדָה זָרָה  
בְּעוֹלָם, חֲרוֹן אָף בְּעוֹלָם: 1 לֹא תִתְגַּדְּדוּ. לֹא תִתְּנוּ  
גִּידָה וְשָׂרֵט בְּבִשְׂרָכֶם עַל מַת, כְּדֶרֶךְ שֶׁהָאֻמִּירִים  
עוֹשִׂין; לְפִי שֶׁאַתֶּם בְּנֵי שֶׁל מְקוֹם וְאַתֶּם רְאוּיִין  
לְהִיּוֹת נָאִים וְלֹא גִדּוּדִים וּמְקַרְחִים: בֵּין עֵינֵיכֶם.  
אֲצֵל הַפְּדֻחַת. וּבְמִקּוֹם אַחֵר הוּא אֻמִּירָה: "לֹא יִקְרָחוּ  
קֶרְחָה בְּרֹאשָׁם", לַעֲשׂוֹת כָּל הָרָאשׁ כְּבִין הָעֵינִים:

15 וְדִרְשֵׁת וְחֻקֶּרֶת וְשִׂאלָת הֵיטֵב. מִכָּאן לְמַדּוּ שֶׁבַע  
חֻקִּיּוֹת מִרְבּוּי הַמִּקְרָא, כָּאֵן יֵשׁ שְׁלֹשׁ: דְּרִישָׁה  
וְחֻקִּירָה וְהֵיטֵב. "וְשִׂאלָת" אֵינּוּ מִן הַמִּנְיָן, וּמִמֶּנּוּ לְמַדּוּ  
בְּדִיקוֹת. וּבְמִקּוֹם אַחֵר הוּא אֻמִּירָה: "וְדִרְשֵׁת" הֵיטֵב.  
וּבְמִקּוֹם אַחֵר הוּא אֻמִּירָה: "וְשִׂאלָת" הֵיטֵב.  
לְמַדּוּ "הֵיטֵב" "הֵיטֵב" לְגִזְרָה שְׁוֶה, לְתַן הָאֻמִּיר שֶׁל  
זֶה בָּהּ: 16 הִכָּה תִּכָּה. אִם אֵינֶךָ יָכוֹל לְהִמִּיתָם  
בְּמִיתָה הַתּוֹבָה בָּהֶם, הִמִּיתָם בְּאֻחֶרֶת: 17 לֹא־

29. דברים יט, יח. 30. שם יז, ד. 31. ויקרא כא, ה.

CHASIDIC INSIGHTS

**1 You are children of God, your God:** This metaphor implies that just as a child originates in its parents' essence, so do the Jewish people originate in God's essence.<sup>110</sup> In the words of the Ba'al Shem Tov, "Every Jew is as precious to God as an only son

born to his parents in their old age is to them—and, in fact, even more precious."<sup>111</sup>

In other words, when our sages say that God created the world for the sake of Israel,<sup>112</sup> they mean not only for the sake of the Jewish people as a whole but

### INNER DIMENSIONS

[1] **You are children of God, your God:** The Ba'al Shem Tov's analogy to *elderly* parents implies that, as stated above, the Jew originates in God's essence. An elder deserves respect by virtue of the wisdom (*chochmah*) he has acquired during his long life.<sup>113</sup> *Chochmah* is the first, and thus the "oldest," of the ten *sefirot*; furthermore, it is

the gateway to the supra-conscious levels of the soul (and by analogy, to the Godhead), including the inner dimension of *keter*, which is known by the Biblical epithet *Atik Yomin* ("the Ancient of Days"<sup>114</sup>). It is at this level that the Jewish soul is one with God<sup>115</sup>

110. Tanya, chapter 2. 111. Keter Shem Tov, addendum 133. 112. Kidushin 32b. 113. Daniel 7:9. 114. See Zohar 3:73a. Sefer HaSichot 5751, vol. 1, pp. 422-423.

15 **you** (i.e., the court) **must inquire, investigate, and question** the witnesses **thoroughly** about their testimony. **If it is indeed true**, and the court is convinced that **the matter is certain, that this abomination has been committed in your midst**,

16 then **you** (i.e., the agents of the court) **must strike down the inhabitants of that city with the edge of the sword, destroying it along with all that is in it, and its livestock** in the fields surrounding it, **with the edge of the sword**. If for some reason they cannot kill them by the sword, they should kill them in some other way.

17 **You** (i.e., the agents of the court) **must then gather all its spoil into the midst of its open square and completely burn the city and all its spoil with fire in honor of God, your God** and on His behalf. **It must be a heap of destruction forever, never to be rebuilt.**

18 **Nothing that is doomed to destruction may remain in your possession, so that God may turn from His fierce wrath**—for God displays anger whenever and wherever idolatry is practiced—**and inspire others to treat you with compassion**,<sup>102</sup> **Himself be compassionate with you, and multiply you, as He swore to your forefathers—**

19 **provided that you hearken to the voice of God, your God, by keeping all His commandments that I am commanding you today, in order that you may do that which is proper in the eyes of God, your God.**

The law concerning an idolatrous city only applies if (a) adult males, and not women or minors, incited the public to idolatry; and (b) the inciters were residents of the city they incited,<sup>103</sup> for only then can full responsibility devolve on the city in question.

## Separating from the Gentiles

- ◆ *Fourth Reading 14:1* As God has said of you before,<sup>104</sup> **You are the children of God, your God**, and should therefore keep yourselves befittingly handsome. As you have already been commanded,<sup>105</sup> **you must neither cut yourselves** anywhere on your body **nor make a bald spot**—either next to your forehead, which is above the point **between your eyes**, or anywhere else on your head—as a sign of mourning **for the dead**, for these are Amorite practices, which you must shun.

You have been taught that on the day a close relative dies, you must observe grieving practices until nightfall.<sup>106</sup> Although this is all the Torah requires, I am instituting now the observance of additional mourning practices for a full seven days,<sup>107</sup> reminiscent of how Joseph mourned for Jacob for a full week.<sup>108</sup>

### ❧ A CLOSER LOOK ❧

**[15] Inquire, investigate, and ask:** The judges must first interrogate the witnesses with regard to (1) in which seven-year agricultural cycle the crime took place, (2) in which year it took place, (3) in which month, (4) on which day of

the month, (5) on which day of the week, (6) in which hour of the day, and (7) where. They must then interrogate the witnesses as to the substance of the crime and with regard to surrounding and accompanying evidence.<sup>109</sup>

102. Cf. Genesis 43:14. 103. Rashi on v. 14, above. 104. Exodus 4:22. 105. Leviticus 19:28, 21:5. 109. *Sanhedrin* 5:1-2; *Mishneh Torah*, *Eidut* 1:4-6. 106. Leviticus 19:28. 107. *Y. Ketubot* 1:1; *Mishneh Torah*, *Aveil* 1:1. 108. Genesis 50:10; see also Genesis 7:4.

— ONKELOS —  
 2 אָרִי עִם קָדִישׁ אַתָּה קָדָם יְיָ אֱלֹהֶיךָ  
 וּבָרַךְ אֶת־רַעֲיָיִי לְמַהֲוֵי לֵה לְעַם  
 חָבִיב מְבַל עֲמֻמָּא דִּי עַל אֲפִי  
 אָרָא; 3 לֹא תִיכּוֹל כָּל דְּמִרְחָק;  
 4 דִּין בְּעִירָא דְּתִיכּוֹלֵן תּוֹרִין אֲמֵרִין  
 דְּרַחֲלִין וּגְדִין דְּעוֹיִן; 5 אֵילָא וְטָבִיא  
 וְיַחֲמוּרָא וְיַעֲלָא וְרִמָּא וְתוֹרְבָלָא  
 וְדִישָׁן וְתִאֵן וְזִמְרָא;

2 כִּי עִם קָדוֹשׁ אַתָּה לִיהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ וּבָרַךְ בְּחַר יְהוָה  
 לְהוֹיֹת לּוֹ לְעַם סֻגָּלָה מִכָּל הָעַמִּים אֲשֶׁר עַל־פָּנָי  
 הָאֲדָמָה: 8  
 3 לֹא תֹאכַל כָּל־תוֹעֵבָה: 4 זֹאת הִבְהֵמָה אֲשֶׁר תֹּאכְלוּ  
 שׁוֹר יֶשֶׁה בְּשָׂבִים וְיֶשֶׁה עֲזִים: 5 אֵיל וְצִבִּי וְיַחֲמוֹר וְאֶקָן  
 וְדִישָׁן וְתִאֵן וְזִמְרָא:

— RASHI —  
 2 כִּי עִם קָדוֹשׁ אַתָּה. קְדֻשַׁת עֲצֻמָּךְ מֵאֲבוֹתֶיךָ, וְעוֹד  
 "וּבָרַךְ בְּחַר ה'": 3 כָּל תוֹעֵבָה. כָּל שֶׁתַּעֲבִיתִי לָךְ,  
 שְׂאֵם צָרֵם אֵין בְּכוֹר כְּדִי לְשַׁחֲטוֹ בְּמִדִּינָה, הָרִי  
 דָּבָר שֶׁתַּעֲבִיתִי לָךְ, "כָּל מוֹם לֹא יִהְיֶה בּוֹ". וּבֹא  
 לְלַמֵּד כָּאֵן שֶׁלֹּא יִשְׁחַט וְיֹאכַל עַל אוֹתוֹ הַמוֹם. בְּשַׁל  
 בָּשָׂר בְּחֶלֶב, הָרִי דָּבָר שֶׁתַּעֲבִיתִי לָךְ, הִזְהִיר כָּאֵן עַל

32. אֶקָן, יַעֲלִיסָלַע.

— CHASIDIC INSIGHTS —  
 had "no choice" but to be intrinsically bound to us. What is lacking in this aspect of our relationship with Him, then, is that it says nothing about what connection, if any, might exist beyond our mutual affinity.  
 Therefore, God also *chose* us to be His people. Free choice implies that no external factors determine the choice; the chooser can even make a choice that goes against his nature, if he so desires. The fact that the chooser chooses the chosen regardless of any rational determining factors indicates that there is a deep, essential identity between the chooser and the chosen that transcends natural cause-and-effect.<sup>121</sup>  
 By choosing us, relating to us beyond our mutually intrinsic, natural connection to Him, God enabled us to choose Him, i.e., to devote ourselves to Him beyond the dictates of logic or natural affinity. Thus, at the Giving of the Torah, we became not only God's "children," but also His faithful "servants."<sup>122</sup>  
 On the other hand, the advantage of the intrinsic connection over the volitional connection lies in the fact that it highlights the qualities that distinguish the Jewish people—how we imitate God, so to speak. In contrast, God's free choice of the Jewish people, as above, is not based on anything about us that would influence such a choice. [continues...]

### A CLOSER LOOK

[3] **The result of some forbidden act:** For example, we are required to consecrate the firstborn of all our cows, sheep, and goats as sacrifices.<sup>123</sup> If, however, such a consecrated animal becomes accidentally blemished, it loses its consecrated status and is permitted to be eaten by laity, just like any ordinary animal.<sup>124</sup> It is forbidden, however, to blemish consecrated animals deliberately;<sup>125</sup> therefore, if someone does intentionally blemish a consecrated firstborn animal, then, by force of this verse, he is not allowed to eat it, despite its having lost its consecrated status. Other lay people, however, are allowed to eat it; since they did not blemish the animal, the prohibition ex-

pressed in this verse does not apply to them. If, however, the animal is later accidentally blemished in some additional way, even the person who originally blemished it may eat it, since his forbidden act is no longer solely responsible for revoking the animal's consecrated status. Similarly (if somewhat more abstractly): it is forbidden to cook meat and milk together; if someone does so, then the cooked food is forbidden to him by force of its original prohibition in addition to the prohibition against consuming anything produced by a forbidden act. For others, however, the cooked food is forbidden only by force of its original prohibition.<sup>126</sup>

121. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 11, pp. 5-6. 122. Exodus 20:2. 123. Exodus 13:1-2, 11-12, 34:19; Leviticus 27:26-28; Numbers 18:15-18. 124. Below, 15:19-22. 125. Leviticus 22:21. 126. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 29, pp. 88-94.

2 **For**, as you have been told,<sup>116</sup> **you** have inherited from your forefathers the qualities that make you a **holy people to God, your God, and beyond this, God has chosen you to be a treasured people for Him out of all the nations upon the earth.**<sup>117</sup> It therefore does not befit you to imitate non-Jewish customs.

3 Furthermore, your holiness obligates you to refrain from eating foods that are detrimental to this holiness. To begin with, **you must not eat** anything produced by a forbidden act; you must not eat such entities, just as you must not eat **any** entity that God has explicitly declared to be an **abomination**. Nonetheless, performing the forbidden act only disentitles the person who performed it from eating the entity; other people are not prohibited from eating the entity by that person's actions.<sup>118</sup>

4 Besides this, you must not eat any animal that God has explicitly forbidden you to eat—which means most species of animals. **The following are the minority of land-animals that you may eat:** among the domesticated animals: **ox** and other cattle, **lamb** and other sheep, and **goat-kids** and other goats;

5 among the undomesticated animals: **deer, gazelle, fallow-deer, ibex, addax, bison, and wild sheep** (see Figures 2a-g),



Figure 2a. Deer



Figure 2b. Gazelle



Figure 2c. Fallow-deer



Figure 2d. Ibex



Figure 2e. Addax



Figure 2f. Bison



Figure 2g. Wild sheep

### — CHASIDIC INSIGHTS —

for the sake of each individual Jew. Therefore, the sages say that every Jew should live life as if the entire world were created for him or her<sup>119</sup> and awaits his or her unique contribution to its destiny.<sup>120</sup>

**1-2 You are children of God.... You have inherited the qualities that make you a holy people...from your forefathers, and beyond this, God has chosen you to be a treasured people:**

Besides our being God's "children," a status we inherit from our forefathers, God also *chooses* us to be His people. Thus, beyond the intrinsic connection between God and the Jewish people comparable to the intrinsic connection between parents and chil-

dren, there is also a volitional connection that exists because God chose us.

In order for us to be His representatives in the world, God created us with a certain affinity to Him, such that we share His passions, we like what He likes, we dislike what He dislikes, and so on. These "inherited characteristics" constitute our parent-child relationship with Him. This affinity makes our relationship with Him intrinsic and natural.

However, just as people are "forced" by their natural tendencies to be attracted to certain things, this natural relationship with God is similarly involuntary. It is as if once God created us this way, He

115. Above, 7:6. 116. Exodus 19:5. 117. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 29, pp. 88-94. 118. *Vayikra Rabbah* 36:4, etc. 119. *Sanhedrin* 4:5. 120. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 3, p. 982.



ONKELOS

6 וְכַל־בְּהֵמָה מִפֶּרֶסֶת פֶּרֶסָה וְשִׁסְעַת שְׁסַע שְׁתֵּי פֶרֶסוֹת  
מַעֲלַת גֵּרָה בְּבִהֶמָה אֹתָהּ תֹאכְלוּ: 7 אֵךְ אֶת־זֶה לֹא  
תֹאכְלוּ מִמַּעֲלֵי הַגֵּרָה וּמִמִּפְרִי־הַפֶּרֶסָה הַשְּׁסוּעָה אֶת־  
הַנֶּמֶל וְאֶת־הָאַרְנָבֶת וְאֶת־הַשָּׁפָן בִּי־מַעֲלָה גֵרָה הֶמָּה  
וּפֶרֶסָה לֹא הִפְרִיסוּ טְמֵאִים הֵם לָכֵם: 8 וְאֶת־הַחֲזִיר כִּי־  
מִפְרִים פֶּרֶסָה הוּא וְלֹא גֵרָה טְמֵא הוּא לָכֵם מִבְּשָׂרָם  
לֹא תֹאכְלוּ וּבְנִבְלָתָם לֹא תִגְעוּ: 9  
9 אֶת־זֶה תֹאכְלוּ מִכָּל אֲשֶׁר בַּמַּיִם כָּל אֲשֶׁר־לּוֹ סִנְפִיר  
וְקַשְׁקֶשֶׁת תֹאכְלוּ: 10 וְכָל אֲשֶׁר אֵין־לּוֹ סִנְפִיר וְקַשְׁקֶשֶׁת  
לֹא תֹאכְלוּ טְמֵא הוּא לָכֵם: 11  
11 כָּל־צִפּוֹר טְהוֹרָה תֹאכְלוּ: 12 וְזֶה אֲשֶׁר לֹא־תֹאכְלוּ  
מֵהֶם הַנֶּשֶׁךְ וְהַפֶּרֶס וְהַעֲזִינָה: 13 וְהָרָאָה וְאֶת־הָאִיָּה  
וְהַדִּידָה לְמִינָהּ: 14 וְאֵת כָּל־עֶרֶב לְמִינוֹ: 15 וְאֵת בֵּת  
הַיַּעֲזָה וְאֶת־הַתַּחֲמָס וְאֶת־הַשֶּׁחַף וְאֶת־הַנִּיץ לְמִינֵהוּ:  
16 אֶת־הַכּוֹס וְאֶת־הַיִּנְשׁוּף וְהַתְּנַשְׁמַת: 17 וְהַקֶּאֶת  
וְאֶת־הַרְחָמָה וְאֶת־הַשֵּׁלֶךְ: 18 וְהַחֲסִידָה וְהָאַנְפָּה  
לְמִינָהּ וְהַדּוֹכִיפֶת וְהַעֲטָלָף:

RASHI

מִשְׁלַחַת שְׁבַמְצָרֶע: 12 וְזֶה אֲשֶׁר לֹא תֹאכְלוּ מֵהֶם.  
לְאֶסֶר אֶת הַשְּׁחוּטָה: 13 וְהָרָאָה וְאֶת הָאִיָּה וְגו'. הִיא  
רָאָה, הִיא אִיָּה, הִיא דִּידָה. וְלִמָּה נִקְרָא שְׁמָהּ "רָאָה"?  
שְׂרׁוּאָה בְּיוֹתֵר. וְלִמָּה הַזֹּהֲרִיר בְּכָל שְׁמוֹתֶיהָ? שֶׁלֹּא  
לִתֵּן פֶּתַח חוֹן פֶּה לְבַעַל דִּין לְחַלֵּק, שֶׁלֹּא יִהְיֶה הָאוֹסֶרָה  
קוֹרָא אוֹתָהּ "רָאָה", וְהָבֹא לְהַתִּיר אוֹמֵר: זֶה "דִּידָה"  
שְׁמָהּ אוֹ "אִיָּה" שְׁמָהּ, וְזֶה לֹא אֶסֶר הַכָּתוּב. וּבְעוֹפּוֹת  
פֶּרֶס לֶף הַטְּמֵאִים, לְלַמֵּד שֶׁהַעוֹפּוֹת הַטְּהוֹרִים מְרַבִּים  
עַל הַטְּמֵאִים, לְפִיכָּךְ פֶּרֶס אֶת הַמוֹעֵט: הַתְּנַשְׁמַת.  
קֶלֶב "א שׁוֹרִי"ץ: 17 שֵׁלֶךְ. הַשּׁוֹלָה דְּגִים מִן הַיָּם:  
18 דּוֹכִיפֶת. הוּא תַרְנַגּוּל הַבֵּר, וּבְלַעַז הִירופ"א<sup>37</sup>,  
וְכַרְבֵּלְתוֹ כְּפוּלָה:

6 מִפֶּרֶסֶת. סְדוּקָה, כְּתוּבָה: פֶּרֶסָה. פֶּלֶט"א<sup>35</sup>:  
וְשִׁסְעַת. חֲלוּקָה בְּשֵׁנֵי צִפְרָנִים, שֵׁשׁ סְדוּקָה וְאִיָּה  
חֲלוּקָה בְּצִפְרָנִים, וְהִיא טְמֵאָה: בְּבִהֶמָה. מִשְׁמַע, מִה  
שֶׁנִּמְצָא בְּבִהֶמָה אֶכֶל. מִכָּאן אָמְרוּ שֶׁהַשֵּׁלֶל נִתֵּר  
בְּשָׁחִיטַת אִמּוֹ: 7 הַשְּׁסוּעָה. בְּרִיָּה הִיא שֵׁשׁ לֶף שְׁנֵי  
גִבִּין וְשִׁנֵּי שִׁדְרָאוֹת. אָמְרוּ רַבּוֹתֵינוּ: לִמָּה נִשְׁנוּ?  
בְּבִהֶמוֹת מִפְּנֵי הַשְּׁסוּעָה, וּבְעוֹפּוֹת מִפְּנֵי הָרָאָה,  
שֶׁלֹּא נֵאֱמָרוּ בְּתוֹרַת כְּהֵנִים: 8 וּבְנִבְלָתָם לֹא תִגְעוּ.  
רַבּוֹתֵינוּ<sup>36</sup> פֶּרֶשׁוּ: בְּרַגֵּל, שְׂאֵדָם חִיב לְטַהֵר אֶת עַצְמוֹ  
בְּרַגֵּל. וְכֹל יִהְיוּ מְזֻהָרִים בְּכָל הַשָּׁנָה? תִּלְמוּד לּוֹמַר:  
"אָמְרוּ אֵל הַכְּהֵנִים" וְגו', וּמִה טְמֵאֵת הַמֵּת חֲמוּרָה  
כְּהֵנִים מְזֻהָרִים וְאֵין יִשְׂרָאֵל מְזֻהָרִים, טְמֵאֵת נִבְלָה  
קֶלֶף לֹא כָּל שָׁכֵן: 11 כָּל צִפּוֹר טְהוֹרָה תֹאכְלוּ. לְהַתִּיר

33. כִּף רִגֵּל. 34. תּוֹרַת כְּהֵנִים שִׁמְיָה פֶּרֶק ד', ח"ט. 35. וִיקְרָא כ"א, א. 36. עֲטָלָף. 37. דּוֹכִיפֶת.

CHASIDIC INSIGHTS

Our intrinsic relationship with God is therefore both expressed and enhanced by fulfilling our mission in this world—disseminating Divine consciousness through the study of the Torah and the

performance of the commandments—for this is how we imitate God and show ourselves to be His children, "cut from the same cloth," so to speak, as He. Once we have evinced our intrinsic connection

6 **as well as**—as you have been told<sup>127</sup>—**every** other land-**animal whose feet** are not only partially **cloven** but **completely split into** at least **two** sub-**feet**, and that **regurgitates its cud**. The prohibition against eating animals that render you spiritually defiled, couched elsewhere as a restrictive commandment,<sup>128</sup> is also subject to an active commandment:<sup>129</sup> **You must only eat such animals.**<sup>130</sup> If there is a fetus **inside** such an **animal**, once you ritually slaughter the mother you may eat the fetus without having to slaughter it separately.

7 **But you must not eat**<sup>131</sup>—**of those** animals **that regurgitate the cud or have split feet—the cloven one** (a now-unknown or extinct animal possessing two backs and two spinal cords), **the camel, the hyrax, and the hare, for they regurgitate the cud**<sup>132</sup> **but do not have** completely **cloven feet**—for as you have been told,<sup>133</sup> eating them **renders you spiritually defiled**,

8 **and the pig, because it has** completely **cloven feet but does not** regurgitate **the cud**—for as you know, eating it also **renders you spiritually defiled. You must not eat** them, because they exhibit only one of the two signs of being permitted. Similarly, you must not eat other animals that exhibit only one of the two signs, and certainly not animals that exhibit neither of the two signs. Nonetheless, you transgress the prohibition against eating such animals only by eating **of their flesh**, not their bones, sinews, horns, or hooves. If you eat these, you transgress only the active commandment<sup>134</sup> to only eat permitted animals.<sup>135</sup>

Although you are not allowed to *spiritually* defile yourselves by eating these animals, you are allowed to *ritually* defile yourselves by touching or carrying their carcasses<sup>136</sup>—except on the pilgrim festivals, during which **you must not touch their carcasses** because doing so renders you ritually defiled, and you must remain ritually pure on the festivals in order to be allowed to enter the sanctuary precincts and eat consecrated meat.<sup>137</sup>

9 **Among all** creatures **that live in the water, you may eat these:**<sup>138</sup> **you may eat all that have both fins and scales.**

10 **But you must not eat whatever does not have both fins and scales**, for eating such creatures **renders you spiritually defiled.**

11 **You may eat every bird that does not impart spiritual defilement**—which includes most species.<sup>139</sup>

12 **But these are those from which you must not eat:**<sup>140</sup> **the griffon vulture, the bearded vulture, the osprey,**

13 **the various other species of vulture,**

14 **every type of species of crow,**

15 **the ostrich, the cuckoo, the gull, the various species of sparrow hawk,**

16 **the screech owl, the barn owl, the bat,**

17 **the pelican, the magpie, the cormorant,**

18 **the stork, the various species of heron, the hoopoe, and the *ataleif*.**

127. Leviticus 11:3. 128. Below, vv. 7-8; Leviticus 11:4-8. 129. Rashi on v. 20, below. 130. Rashi on Leviticus 11:3. 131. Leviticus 11:4-8. 132. See on Leviticus 11:4-7. 133. Leviticus 11:4-8. 134. Leviticus 11:3; above, vv. 4-6. 135. Rashi on Leviticus 11:8. 136. Leviticus 11:24-28. 137. Leviticus 11:8. 138. Leviticus 11:9-12. 139. Rashi on v. 13, below. 140. Leviticus 11:13-19.

ONKELOS

19 וכל רחשא דעופא מסאב הוא  
לבון לא יתאכלון: 20 כל עופא דכי  
תיכלון: 21 לא תיכלון כל גבילא  
לתתב ערל די בקרויף תתננה  
וייכלנה או תובננה לבר עממין  
ארי עם קדיש את קדם יי אלהך  
לא תיכל בשר בחלב: 22 עשרא  
תעשר ית כל עללת זרעך דיפוק  
חקלא שתא בשתא: 23 ותיכול  
קדם יי אלהך באתרא די יתריעי  
לאשראה שכינתה תמן מעשר  
עבורך חמקך ומשקך ובכורי תורך  
וענך בדיל דתילף למדחל קדם  
יי אלהך כל יומא: 24 וארי יסגי  
מנף ארחא ארי לא תכול למשלה  
ארי יתרחק מנף אתרא די יתריעי  
יי אלהך לאשראה שכינתה תמן  
ארי יברכך יי אלהך:

19 וכל שרץ העוף טמא הוא לכם לא יאכלו: 20 כל-  
עוף טהור תאכלו: 21 לא תאכלו בלִיגָה לִגְרֵי אֲשֶׁר-  
בשְׁעָרֶיךָ תתננה ואכלה או מכל לנכרי כי עם קדוש  
אתה ליהוה אלהיך לא תבשל גדי בחלב אמו: פ  
חמישי 22 עֶשֶׂר תַּעֲשֶׂר אֶת בְּלִיַּתְבוֹאת זְרַעְךָ הַיֵּצֵא  
הַשָּׂדֶה שָׁנָה שָׁנָה: 23 ואכלת לפני | יהוה אלהיך  
במקום אשר יבחר לשכן שמו שם מעשר דגנך תירשך  
ויצהרך ובכרת בקרך וצאנך למען תלמד ליראה את-  
יהוה אלהיך בלִיַּהֲמִים: 24 וכִּי־יִרְבֶּה מִמֶּנֶּה הַיֵּרֶךְ כִּי  
לא תוכל שאתו כִּי־יִרְחַק מִמֶּנֶּה הַמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר יבחר  
יהוה אלהיך לשום שמו שם כי יברכך יהוה אלהיך:

RASHI

מה ענין זה אצל זה? אמר להם הקדוש ברוך הוא  
לישראל: לא תגזמו לי לבשל גדיים של תבואה  
עד שהן במעי אמותיהן, שאם אין אתם מעשרים  
מעשרות בראוי בשהוא סמוך להתבשל, אני מוציא  
רוח קדים והיא משדפתן, שנאמר: "וישדפה לפני  
קמה". וכן לענין בכורים: שנה שנה, מכאן שאין  
מעשרין מן החדש על הישן: 23 ואכלת וגו'. זה  
מעשר שני, שפךר למדנו לתן מעשר ראשון ללוים,  
שנאמר: "כי תקחו מאת בני ישראל" וגו', ונתן  
להם רשות לאכלו בכל מקום, שנאמר: "ואכלתם  
אתו בכל מקום", על פרוך זה מעשר אחר הוא:  
24 כי יברכך. שתהא התבואה מרבה לשאת:

19 שרץ העוף. הם הנמוכים הרוחשים על הארץ.  
בגון זבובים וצרעים וחגבים טמאים, הם קרויים  
"שרץ": 20 כל עוף טהור תאכלו. ולא את הטמא,  
בא לתן עשה על לא תעשה. וכן בבהמה, "אתה  
תאכלו" ולא בהמה טמאה, ולא הבא מכלל עשה,  
עשה, לעבר עליהם בעשה ולא תעשה: 21 לגר  
אשר בשעריך. גר תושב שקבל עליו שלא לעבד  
עבודה זרה ואוכל נבלות: כי עם קדוש אתה לה'.  
קדש את עצמך במתן לה, דברים המתירים ואחרים  
נוהגים בהם אסור, אל תתירם בפניהם: לא תבשל  
גדי. שלש פעמים, פרט לחיה ולעופות ולבהמה  
טמאה: 21-22 לא תבשל גדי וגו' עשר תעשר.

38. מלכים ב יט, כו. 39. במדבר יח, כו. 40. שם, לא.

in which He will choose to rest His Name by situating the Temple there, so that you may learn to revere God, your God, always.

24 If, however, the journey from your home to the Temple city is too long for you, for you are unable to carry your produce that far because the place to which God, your God, will choose to attach His Name is too far from where you live, because you have too much tithe-produce to carry that far—for God, your God, has blessed you with abundant crops—then you may do as follows:

CHASIDIC INSIGHTS

with God, it, in turn, enables us to express our otherwise ineffable volitional connection with Him

through free choice, as well.<sup>155</sup>

155. Likutei Sichot, vol. 18, pp. 409-410, vol. 28, pp. 178-179.



**19 Every crawling creature that also flies**—such as flies, wasps, mosquitoes,<sup>141</sup> and forbidden species of grasshopper—**renders you spiritually defiled** if eaten; **they may therefore not be eaten.**

**20** The prohibition of eating fowl that render you spiritually defiled, couched above as a restrictive commandment,<sup>142</sup> is also subject to an active commandment: **You must eat only fowl that do not render you spiritually defiled.**

**21 You must not eat the carcass** of any animal that died by any means other than ritual slaughter. **You may give such a carcass to the resident alien,**<sup>143</sup> **who is allowed to live in your cities, so that he may eat it,**<sup>144</sup> **or you may sell it to a non-Jew. Since you are a holy people to God, your God,** you should voluntarily undertake to abstain from behavior permitted by the Torah if doing so will help prevent you from transgressing any of the Torah's prohibitions. If you see any of your fellow Jews practicing such a stringency that you yourself have not undertaken, you should not act leniently in that regard in their presence.

In addition to not eating or deriving any other benefit from any young animal cooked in milk,<sup>145</sup> **you must not cook a young animal** of the goats, sheep, or cows **in its mother's milk** or in the milk of any other animal that you are permitted to eat. The very act of cooking milk and meat together is forbidden, for it may lead to eating or deriving other benefit from the mixture. This is an act of cruelty, and it is forbidden to be cruel to animals.<sup>146</sup> Nonetheless, you do not transgress this prohibition by cooking permissible wild animals, permissible fowl, or prohibited animals in milk.

## Tithes

- ◆ **Fifth Reading 22** By the same token, you should not force God to metaphorically “cook a child in its mother's milk”—i.e., scorch young, tender kernels of grain with hot weather while they are still developing in their husks, thereby ruining your crop—by neglecting to observe the commandment to tithe your produce,<sup>147</sup> thereby forfeiting your right to benefit from it. Rather, **you must tithe all the produce of the seed** that you sow and **that the field yields year by year.** Furthermore, you should only tithe the produce of any given **year** from produce of that **year**, rather than from produce of a previous or subsequent year. You are not required to tithe the portions of your produce that you have been commanded to abandon for the poor:<sup>148</sup> fallen gleanings, the corners of the field,<sup>149</sup> and forgotten gleanings.<sup>150</sup>

**23** Your obligation to offer up sacrifices to God only in the centralized Temple<sup>151</sup> is reflected in the laws governing the tithes of your produce, as well. After giving the first tithe of your grain, wine, and oil to the Levites, you must then tithe the remainder, and use this second tithe as follows: In the first, second, fourth, and fifth years of every seven-year sabbatical-year cycle,<sup>152</sup> **you must eat this second tithe of your grain, wine, and oil—as well as the firstborn of your cattle and of your flocks**<sup>153</sup> —**‘before God, your God,’** i.e., anywhere **within the place—the city**<sup>154</sup> —

141. Rashi on Leviticus 11:20. 142. V. 12; Leviticus 11:13. 143. See on Exodus 19:5. 144. Rashi here and on Leviticus 25:35. 145. Exodus 23:19, 34:26. 146. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 6, p. 148, 150. 147. The first tithe: Numbers 18:21-32; the second tithe: Leviticus 27:30-31 and below, vv. 23-26. See also Exodus 22:28. 148. Rashi on v. 27, below. 149. Leviticus 19:9-10, 23:22; below, 24:20-21. 150. Below, 24:19. 151. Above, 12:5 ff. 152. Exodus 23:10-12, 34:21; Leviticus 25:1-7; below, 15:1-11. 153. Leviticus 27:32-33. 154. Above, 12:18.

ONKELOS

25 ותתן בכסף ותצור בכסף בידך ותתן לאתרא די יתרי יי אלהך בה: 26 ותתן בכסף די תתרי נפשך בתורי ובגנא ובחמר חדר ועתיק ובכל די תשאלך נפשך ותיכול תמן קדם יי אלהך ותתרי את ואגש ביתך: 27 ולואה די בקרויך לא תרחקנה ארי לית לה חלק ואחסנא עמך: 28 מסוף תלת שנין תפק ית כל מעשר עלתך בשתא ההיא ותצנע בקרויך: 29 וייתי לואה ארי לית לה חלק ואחסנא עמך וגירא ויתמא וארמלתא די בקרויך וייכלון וישבעון בדיל די יברכך יי אלהך בכל עובדי ידך די תעבד:

25 ונתתה בכסף וצרת הפסך בידך והלכת אל- המקום אשר יבחר יהוה אלהיך בו: 26 ונתתה הפסך בכל אשר-תאונה נפשך בפקר ובצאן וביון ובשכר ובכל אשר תשאלך נפשך ואכלת שם לפני יהוה אלהיך ושמחת אתה וביתך: 27 והלוי אשר-בשעריך לא תעזבנו כי אין לו חלק ונחלה עמך: 28 מקצה | שלש שנים תוציא את-כל-מעשר תבואתך בשנה ההוא והנחת בשעריך: 29 ובא הלוי כי אין-לו חלק ונחלה עמך והגר והיתום והאלמנה אשר בשעריך ואכלו וישבעו למען יברכך יהוה אלהיך בכל-מעשה ידך אשר תעשה: 8

RASHI

בשלישית: 29 ובא הלוי. ויטל מעשר ראשון. והגר והיתום. ויטלו מעשר שני, שהוא של עני של שנה זו, ולא תאכלנו אתה בירושלים כדרך שנוקקת לאכל מעשר שני של שתי שנים. ואכלו וישבעו. תן להם כדי שביעה, מכאן אמרו: אין פוחתין לעני בגרן וכו'. ואתה הולך לירושלים במעשר של שנה ראשונה ושניה שהשהית ומתודה: "בערתי הקדש מן הבית", כמו שמפרש ב"כ תכלה לעשר":

26 בכל אשר תאונה נפשך. כלל: בפקר ובצאן וביון ובשכר. פרט: וכל אשר תשאלך נפשך. חור וכלל, מה הפרט מפרש ולד ולדות הארץ וראוי למאכל אדם וכו': 27 והלוי וגו' לא תעזבנו. מלתן לו מעשר ראשון: כי אין לו חלק ונחלה עמך. יצאו לקט שכחה ופאה והפקר, שאף הוא יש לו חלק עמך בהן כמון, ואינן חבין במעשר: 28 מקצה שלש שנים. בא ולמד שאם השהה מעשרותיו של שנה ראשונה ושניה לשמטה, שיבערם מן הבית

41. דברים כו, יב.

Year of Cycle	First Tithe	Second Tithe	Notes
1	given to Levites	eaten in Temple city	
2	given to Levites	eaten in Temple city	
3	given to Levites	given to the poor	
day preceding Passover of 4 <sup>th</sup> year			deadline for neglected first and second tithes of years 1-2-3 to be distributed/eaten in the Temple city
seventh day of Passover of 4 <sup>th</sup> year			declaration of having fulfilled one's obligations vis-à-vis agricultural gifts for years 1-2-3
4	given to Levites	eaten in Temple city	
5	given to Levites	eaten in Temple city	
6	given to Levites	given to the poor	
day preceding Passover of 7 <sup>th</sup> year			deadline for neglected first and second tithes of years 4-5-6 to be distributed/eaten in Temple city
seventh day of Passover of 7 <sup>th</sup> year			declaration of having fulfilled one's obligations vis-à-vis agricultural gifts for years 4-5-6
7	exempt	exempt	

Figure 3. The Seven-Year Cycle of Tithes

**25 You may** assess the monetary value of your second-tithe produce and then **assign** its second-tithe status **to money** equal to that value. **You must bind up the money** onto which second-tithe status has been transferred **in your hand, and go with it**—instead of with the produce—**to the place God, your God, will choose**. The tithe-produce will revert to its pre-tithing status, and you may eat it anywhere you choose.

**26** Once you reach the Temple city, **you must purchase with that money whatever your soul desires**—cattle, flocks, new wine or old wine, or whatever your soul desires, as long as it derives from the earth, even indirectly (excluding, for example, fish)—**and you must eat** what you have bought **there, 'before God, your God,'** i.e., anywhere within the city, **and you must rejoice, you and your household**.

All the aforesaid is in regard to agricultural tithes. You may not, however, redeem your animal tithes; if they are not blemished, you must take them to the Temple city and eat them there.<sup>156</sup>

**27** As for **the Levite who resides in your cities, you must not forsake him** this year by neglecting to give him your first tithe, **for he has neither any portion** in the spoils of war **nor any land-inheritance**<sup>157</sup> **with you**.

**28** If, however, you do not manage to give the Levites your first tithes on time, then, **after the end of** each of the two sub-cycles of **three years** that together constitute the first six years of the seven-year sabbatical-year cycle—specifically, by the day preceding Passover in the fourth and seventh years of the seven-year cycle<sup>158</sup>—**you must take whatever part of the first tithe of your crop** that is left **in that year** from the preceding three years **and place it** outside **the gates** of your property in order to declare it ownerless and make it available for any Levite who might wish to take it.

In addition, should you neglect to bring the second tithe of the first or second years (or its monetary equivalent) to the Temple city, you must take it there and eat it (or whatever you buy with its monetary equivalent) by the day preceding Passover of the fourth year; similarly, should you neglect to take the second tithe of the fourth or fifth years (or its monetary equivalent) to the Temple city, you must take it there and eat it (or whatever you buy with its monetary equivalent) by the day preceding Passover of the seventh year.

**29** In the third and sixth years of each sabbatical-year cycle, you must, as usual, give your first tithe to **the Levite, because he has no portion or inheritance with you**. However, in these years, instead of taking the second tithe with you to the Temple city in order to eat it there, you must instead give it to the poor: **the resident alien, the orphan, and the widow who are in your cities**. You must give a sufficient amount of both the first tithe and the poor tithe so that their recipients **who come** to receive it **will eat and be satiated, so that God, your God, in reward for your generosity, will bless you in all the work of your hand that you do**.

<sup>156</sup>. Leviticus 27:33. <sup>157</sup>. Rashi on 18:1, below. <sup>158</sup>. Below, 26:12-13.

ONKELOS

15:1 מסוף שבע שנים תעבד  
שמיטתא: 2 ודין פתגם שמיטתא  
דישמיט כל גבר מרי רשו די ירשי  
בחברה לא יתבע מן חברה ומן  
אחוי ארי קרא שמיטתא קדם  
די: 3 מן בר עממין תתבע ודי יהי  
לך עם אחור תשמיט יך: 4 לחוד  
ארי לא יהי בר מסכנא ארי ברקא  
יברכך די בארעא די יי אלהיך יתב  
לך אחסנא למירתה: 5 לחוד אם  
קכלא תקבל למימרא די אלהיך  
למטר למעבד ית כל תפקדתא  
הדא די אנא מפקדך יומא דין:  
6 ארי יי אלהיך ברךך כמא די  
מליל לך ותוזף לעממין סגיאין  
ואת לא תוזף ותשלוט בעממין  
סגיאין ובר לא ישלטון: 7 ארי  
יהי בר מסכנא חד מאחיה בחדא  
משרוץ בארעך די אלהיך יתב לך  
לא תתקף ית לבך ולא תקפץ ית  
יך מאחור מסכנא:

ששי 15:1 מקין שבע-שנים תעשה שמיטה: 2 וזה דבר  
השמיטה שמוט כל-בעל משה ידו אשר ישה ברעהו  
לא-יגש את-רעהו ואת-אחיו כִּי-קרא שמיטה ליהוה:  
3 את-הנכרי תגש ואשר יהיה לך את-אחיו תשמיט  
יך: 4 אָפֶס כִּי לֹא יִהְיֶה-בְּךָ אֲבִיּוֹן כִּי-בִרְךָ יִבְרַכְךָ  
יְהוָה בְּאֶרֶץ אֲשֶׁר יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ נָתַן-לְךָ נַחֲלָה לְרִשְׁתָּהּ:  
5 רַק אִם-שָׁמוּעַ תִּשְׁמָע בְּקוֹל יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ לְשִׁמּוֹר  
לַעֲשׂוֹת אֶת-כָּל-הַמִּצְוָה הַזֹּאת אֲשֶׁר אֲנֹכִי מְצַוֶּה הַיּוֹם:  
6 כִּי-יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ בִּרְכְּךָ בְּאֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר-לְךָ וְהִעֲבַטְתָּ גוֹיִם  
רַבִּים וְאֹתָהּ לֹא תַעֲבֹט וּמִשְׁלַת בְּגוֹיִם רַבִּים וְכֵן לֹא  
יִמְשְׁלוּ: 8

7 כִּי-יְהִי־בְךָ אֲבִיּוֹן מֵאֶחָד אַחֶיךָ בְּאֶחָד שְׁעָרֶיךָ  
בְּאֶרֶצְךָ אֲשֶׁר-יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ נָתַן לְךָ לֹא תֹאמַר אֶת-  
לִבִּיךָ וְלֹא תִקְפֹּץ אֶת-יְדֶיךָ מֵאֶחָד הָאֲבִיּוֹן:

RASHI

והעבטת. כל לשון הלואה כשנופל על המלוה, נופל  
בלשון מפעיל, כגון "והלוית", "והעבטת", ואם היה  
אומר "ועבטת" — היה נופל על הלוה, כמו "והלוית":  
והעבטת גוים. יכול שתהא לזה מזה ומלוה לזה?  
תלמוד לומר: "ואתה לא תעבט": ומשלת בגוים  
רבים. יכול גוים אחרים מושלים עליך? תלמוד  
לומר: "וכך לא ימשלו": 7 כי יהיה בך אביון. התאב  
תאב קודם: מאחד אחיך. אחיך מאביון קודם ללואיך  
מאמך: שעריך. עניי עריך קודמין לעניי עיר אחרת:  
לא תאמץ. יש לך אדם שמצטער אם יתן אם לא  
יתן, לךך נאמר: "לא תאמץ". יש לך אדם שפושט  
את ידו וקופצה, לךך נאמר: "ולא תקפץ": מאחרי  
האביון. אם לא תתן לו, סופך להיות אחיו של אביון:

1 מקין שבע שנים. יכול שבע שנים לכל מלוה  
ומלוה? תלמוד לומר: "קרבך שנת השבע", ואם  
אתה אומר שבע שנים לכל מלוה ומלוה להלוואות  
כל אחד ואחד, היאך היא קרבה? הא למדת שבע  
שנים למנין השמיטה: 2 שמוט כל בעל משה ידו.  
שמוט את ידו של כל בעל משה: 3 את הנכרי תגש.  
זו מצות עשה: 4 אָפֶס כִּי לֹא יִהְיֶה-בְּךָ אֲבִיּוֹן. ולהלן<sup>162</sup>  
הוא אומר: "כי לא יחדל אביון", אלא בזמן שאדם  
עושים רצונו של מקום, אביונים באחרים ולא בכס.  
וכשאין אדם עושים רצונו של מקום, אביונים בכס:  
אביון. דל מעני. ולשון "אביון" — שהוא תאב לכל  
דבר: 5 רק אם שמוע תשמע. אז "לא יהיה בך אביון":  
שמוע תשמע. שמע קמעא — משמיעין אותו הרבה:  
6 כאשר דבר לך. והיכן דבר? ברור אתה בעיר<sup>163</sup>:

42. פסוק יא. 43. דברים כח, ג.

## A CLOSER LOOK

[7] Give him a gift of money: The Written Torah does not specify how much of our income we should set aside for charity, defining the amount instead as "sufficient for [the poor person's] needs."<sup>164</sup> The Oral Torah stipulates that if we cannot provide for all the person's needs, we should

give him at least a tenth but ideally up to a fifth of our income.<sup>165</sup> (The figure of one-tenth is arrived at by analogy to the commandment to tithe our grain, wine, and oil;<sup>166</sup> the figure of one-fifth is derived from the double use of the Hebrew verb "to tithe" in Jacob's promise to God.<sup>167</sup> We have

164. V. 8. 165. Ketubot 50a; Y. Peah 1:5 (2b-3a); Pesikta d'Rav Kahana, Aseir Ta'aseir; Tosefot on Ta'anit 9a, s.v. Aseir Ta'aseir; Shulchan Aruch, Yoreh Deah 249:1. 166. Above, 14:22. 167. Genesis 28:22.

## The Sabbatical Year; Charity

◆ *Sixth Reading 15:1* In addition to resting from agricultural work during the sabbatical year, **you must conduct a release of loans at the end of**<sup>159</sup> the sabbatical year, which comes every **seven years**.

**2 This is the type of release** you must conduct: **every creditor must relinquish whatever money he lent his fellow**. No creditor **may exact repayment from his fellow**, i.e., **his brother-Israelite**, for a loan, for God has proclaimed this year to be one of **release in honor of God**.

**3** The prohibition against exacting repayment, couched above as a restrictive commandment, is subject to an active commandment as well: **you may exact repayment** for a loan only **from a gentile** who owes you money, **but you must relinquish** your claim to **whatever money your brother-Israelite owes you**.

**4 However**, these rules will hopefully be irrelevant, for **there will be no destitute people among you** who will need to borrow money, **inasmuch as God will bless you** with material abundance **in the land that God, your God, is giving you to possess as an inheritance** you can bequeath to your descendants—

**5 provided**, of course, **that you hearken to the voice of God, your God**—even if only partially at first, since the impetus of positive action will lead you to further positive action—**by safeguarding all the commandments that I am commanding you today**, i.e., studying the Torah's instructions regarding how to perform them, and then **performing** them.

**6 For God, your God, has blessed you** with abundance if you observe His commandments, **as He spoke to me concerning you**<sup>160</sup> and as I will relate to you later.<sup>161</sup> Thus, **you will lend** your own money **to many nations**—and you will not lend them money you have borrowed from other nations, **for** you will be so wealthy that **you will not** have to **borrow** money. Furthermore, **you will rule over many nations**—and not as regents for nations who rule over you, **for** other nations **will not rule over you**.

**7 If**, however, you are negligent in fulfilling God's commandments,<sup>162</sup> and **there will therefore be among you a destitute person**, you must lend him money,<sup>163</sup> and if necessary, give him a monetary gift. If you have to choose between two destitute individuals, the more destitute one takes priority. If you have to choose **between** giving to **one of your half-brothers**—either your paternal half-brother or your maternal half-brother—your paternal half-brother takes priority. If you have to choose between giving to a local destitute person or to a destitute person who lives further away, you should give first to the one **in your locale, in your land that God, your God, is giving you**. Do not deliberate unnecessarily, for **you must not harden your heart** regarding giving. Do not reconsider, either, for once you have opened your hand to give, **you must not close your hand to the destitute**. If you do, you will eventually lose your money and he will be **your brother** in poverty.

<sup>159</sup>. *Arachin* 28b; *Shulchan Aruch* 4:67:30; *Shulchan Aruch HaRav, Dinei Halva'ah* 36. <sup>160</sup>. Cf. Rashi on Genesis 24:7, 28:15, Numbers 17:5. <sup>161</sup>. Below, 28:1-12. <sup>162</sup>. Rashi on v. 4, above. <sup>163</sup>. Exodus 22:24.

## ONKELOS

8 אָלֵא מִפְּתַח תְּפִלָּה יֵד יְדָהּ לֵאמֹר  
 וְאִתְּמַר תּוֹשָׁבָה כְּמִסְתָּ חֲסוּדָה  
 דִּי חֲסִיר לֵאמֹר: 9 אִתְּמַר לֵךְ דְּלִמָּא  
 יְהִי פְתָנָה עִם לִבָּךְ בְּרִשְׁעָה לְמִימֵר  
 קִרְיָא שְׂתָא שְׂבִיעִתָא שְׂתָא  
 דְּשִׁמְטָא וְתִבְאֵשׁ עֵינֵךְ בְּאַחוּךְ  
 מִסְכְּנָא וְלֵא תִתֵּן לֵה וְיִקְרִי עֲלֵךְ  
 קָדָם יְיָ וְיִהִי בְךָ חוּבָא: 10 מִתֵּן תִּתֵּן  
 לֵה וְלֵא יִבְאֵשׁ לִבָּךְ בְּמִתְנָךְ לֵה  
 אֲרִי בְדִיל פְתָנָא הָדִין יִבְרַכְךָ יְיָ  
 אֱלֹהֵךְ בְּכָל עוֹבְדֵךְ וּבְכָל אוֹשְׁטוֹת  
 יְדֵךְ: 11 אֲרִי לֹא יִפְסֹק מִסְכְּנָא מִגּוֹ  
 אֲרַעָא עַל כֵּן אֲנָא מִפְקֵדֵךְ לְמִימֵר  
 מִפְּתַח תְּפִלָּה יֵד יְדָהּ לֵאמֹר  
 לְעֵנִיךְ וּלְמִסְכְּנֵךְ בְּאַרְעָךְ:

8 כִּי־פֶתַח תְּפִלָּה אֶת־יָדְךָ לֹא וְהֵעֵבֵט תַּעֲבִיטְנוּ דִּי  
 מַחֲסְרוֹ אֲשֶׁר יַחֲסֵר לּוֹ: 9 הַשְׁמַר לְךָ פְּרִי־יְהוָה דְּבַר עִם־  
 לִבְּךָ בְּלִיעַל לֵאמֹר קִרְבָּה שְׁנַת־הַשְּׁבַע שְׁנַת הַשְּׁמִטָּה  
 וְרַעְיָה עֵינֶךָ בְּאַחִיךָ הָאֲבִיוֹן וְלֹא תִתֵּן לּוֹ וְקָרָא עָלֶיךָ אֶל־  
 יְהוָה וְיָהִי בְךָ חֲטָא: 10 נָתַן תִּתֵּן לּוֹ וְלֹא־יִרַע לִבְּךָ  
 בְּתִתְּנֶךָ לּוֹ כִּי בְּגָלַל הַדָּבָר הַזֶּה יִבְרַכְךָ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ  
 בְּכָל־מַעֲשֶׂיךָ וּבְכָל מִשְׁלַח יָדְךָ: 11 כִּי לֹא־יִתְחַדֵּל אֲבִיוֹן  
 מִקִּרְבֵּי הָאָרֶץ עַל־כֵּן אֲנֹכִי מִצְוֶיךָ לֵאמֹר פֶּתַח תְּפִלָּה  
 אֶת־יָדְךָ לְאַחִיךָ לְעֵנִיךָ וּלְאַבְיֹנֶךָ בְּאַרְצְךָ: 8

## RASHI

מִמָּהֵר אָנִי לִפְרַע עַל יְדֵי הַקּוֹרָא, יוֹתֵר מִמִּי שְׂאִינוּ  
 קוֹרָא: 10 נָתַן תִּתֵּן לּוֹ. אֶפְלוּ מֵאָה פְּעָמִים: לּוֹ, בֵּינוּ  
 וּבֵינֵךְ: כִּי בְּגָלַל הַדָּבָר. אֶפְלוּ אִמְרַת לִתֵּן, אִתְּהָ נֹטֵל  
 שֹׁכֵר הָאֲמִירָה עִם שֹׁכֵר הַמַּעֲשֶׂה: 11 עַל כֵּן. מִפְּנֵי  
 כֵּן: לֵאמֹר. עֲצָה לְטוֹבָתְךָ אָנִי מְשִׁיבָה: לְאַחִיךָ לְעֵנִיךָ.  
 לְאַיִזָּה אַח, לְעֵנִי. "לְעֵנִיךָ" בִּי"ד אַחֵד, לְשׁוֹן עֵנִי  
 אַחֵד הוּא. אֲבָל "עֵנִיךָ" בְּשֵׁנֵי יוֹדִין, שְׁנֵי עֵנִיִּים:

8 פֶּתַח תְּפִלָּה. אֶפְלוּ כַּמָּה פְּעָמִים: כִּי פֶתַח תְּפִלָּה.  
 הָרִי "כִּי" מִשְׁמַשׁ בְּלִשׁוֹן "אֶלֵא": וְהֵעֵבֵט תַּעֲבִיטְנוּ. אִם  
 לֹא רָצָה בְּמִתְנָה, תֵּן לוֹ בְּהִלָּאָה: דִּי מַחֲסְרוֹ. וְאִי אִתְּהָ  
 מִצְוָה לְהַעֲשִׂירוֹ: אֲשֶׁר יַחֲסֵר לּוֹ. אֶפְלוּ סוֹס לְרַבֵּב  
 עָלָיו, וְעָבַד לְרוּץ לְפָנָיו: לּוֹ. זֶה אִשָּׁה, וְכֵן הוּא אוֹמֵר:  
 "אֲעֲשֶׂה לוֹ עֹר כְּגִגְדּוֹ": 9 וְקָרָא עָלֶיךָ. יְכוּל מִצְוָה?  
 תִּלְמוּד לומר: "וְלֹא יִקְרָא": וְהָיָה בְךָ חֲטָא. מִכָּל מְקוֹם,  
 אֶפְלוּ לֹא יִקְרָא. אִם כֵּן, לְמָה נֶאֱמַר: "וְקָרָא עָלֶיךָ?"

44. בראשית ב, יח.

## CHASIDIC INSIGHTS

the limited scope of intellect, emotion, and action, there is no limit to what we can want and how much we can want it. This is all the more true when we exercise free choice, which, as we have noted,<sup>177</sup> is rooted in the soul's infinite essence.

It is therefore crucial that we perform God's commandments in general, and the commandment to give charity in particular, "wholeheartedly," i.e., with our full volition and as an expression of our free choice. Only thus can the commandments we perform transcend the limitations intrinsic to our faculties of intellect, emotion, and action.

True, it is every Jew's inner desire to perform God's will completely, whether or not this desire is conscious,<sup>178</sup> and by virtue of that inner desire, our performance of the commandments is always infinite, both in scope and effect. But in order for this infinity to be openly manifest, we must consciously choose to perform the commandments; when we do, even our intrinsically limited faculties—intellect, emotion, and action—become infused with the

infinity of the will and essence of the soul.

By transcending our natural limitations in performing God's will, especially with regard to charity, we elicit God's infinite beneficence, which will eventually be manifest as the ultimate transcendence of limitation—the messianic Redemption, in which the boundaries of nature, manifest as the constraints of exile, will be finally and irrevocably broken. Thus, the prophet Isaiah assures us,<sup>179</sup> "Zion will be redeemed through justice, and its captives through charity."<sup>180</sup>

9 As a sin: Of all the active commandments, charity is the only one whose non-fulfillment is referred to specifically as a "sin." This is because charity atones for sin, spiritually cleansing the sinner, as it is written, "Redeem your sin through charity, and your iniquity through kindness to the poor."<sup>181</sup> Someone who refrains from engaging in charitable activities thus forfeits the benefits of this atonement and spiritual cleansing, and is therefore left with the unrectified results of his sins.<sup>182</sup>

177. On 14:1-2, above. 178. *Mishneh Torah*, *Gerushin* 2:20. See on Genesis 28:11. 179. Isaiah 1:27; *Mishneh Torah*, *Matnot Ani'im* 10:1. 180. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 34, pp. 86-88. 181. Daniel 4:24. 182. *Likutei Torah* 4:30.



**8 Rather, you must open your hand for him** wholeheartedly — each time you give him money.<sup>168</sup> If he does not want to accept the money as a gift, then **lend him** money. You only need to lend him **enough for his needs**, not enough to make him wealthy. But if he was accustomed to a certain standard of living before becoming destitute, you should provide him with **whatever he is now lacking**, even if this might be considered a luxury by others.<sup>169</sup> In particular, you should provide him with the means to get married, if necessary.

**9 Beware lest there be an unfaithful thought in your heart, saying, ‘The seventh year, the year of release, is approaching,’** and, because you know that your loan will be released,<sup>170</sup> **you begrudge your destitute brother-Israelite and not give him** a loan, **for** in that case **he will cry out to God against you**, and even though your stinginess **will be** accounted as **a sin for you** in any case, God will punish you more quickly if he cries out to Him.

**10 Rather, you must give him** a loan despite your hesitations, and if necessary a gift of money,<sup>171</sup> despite your reluctance. Even if you cannot muster the inspiration to give wholeheartedly, you must still give, and repeatedly, if necessary. Furthermore, you should optimally give in private so as not to embarrass the needy individual.<sup>172</sup> **Your heart must not be grieved when you give to him, for** even if you promise to give him and then circumstances prevent you from keeping your word, **God, your God, will still bless you in all your work and in all your endeavors on account of this word** of yours as if you had actually given.

**11 For** as long as you are negligent in performing God’s commandments<sup>173</sup> **there will never cease to be destitute people in the land. Therefore**, because the reward for charity is so great, **I command you** in God’s Name, for your own benefit, **saying, ‘You must repeatedly open your hand to your brother-Israelite, whether poor or destitute, in your land.’**

#### — CHASIDIC INSIGHTS —

**8 You must open your hand for him wholeheartedly:** As human beings living in a finite world, our ability to act, and even our abilities to think and feel, are limited. This is especially evident with regard to the commandment to give charity, in which our ability to give is limited by the extent of the resources at our disposal. There is likewise a limit to

the enthusiasm with which we can give, inasmuch as our enthusiasm is based on our intellectual commitment and emotional involvement, which are limited by the innate limitations of our intellect and emotions respectively.

By contrast, the faculty of will — the source of intellect, emotion, and action — is unlimited. Relative to

#### — A CLOSER LOOK —

**[continued...]** seen how our forefathers also tithed all their income, not only their agricultural yields.<sup>174</sup>

Nonetheless, inasmuch as giving charity atones for sin,<sup>175</sup> the more acutely we are aware of our need for atonement, the less strict we will be in

adhering to the upper limit to giving charity just mentioned. As Rabbi Shneur Zalman of Liadi points out,<sup>176</sup> we would spare no expense to heal our bodies, if need be, so by the same token, we should spare no expense in taking advantage of the ability of charity to heal our souls.

168. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 34, pp. 82-88. 169. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 14, p. 119. 170. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 34, p. 82. 171. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 34, p. 82, note 10. 172. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 34, pp. 82-88. 173. Rashi on v. 4, above. 174. Genesis 14:20, 25:27, 28:22. 175. See on v. 9, below. 176. *Igeret HaTeshuvah*, chapter 3 (93a); *Igeret HaKodesh* 10 (115b-116a).

— ONKELOS —

12 ארי יודבן לך אחור בר ישראל  
או בת ישראל ופלחנה שית שנין  
ובשתא שביעתא תפטרנה בר  
חורין מעמך: 13 וארי תפטרנה  
בר חורין מעמך לא תפטרנה  
ריקן: 14 אפרשא תפרש לה מענה  
ומאדרך וממעצרתך דברך יי  
אלהך תתן לה: 15 ותדבר ארי  
עבדא הוית בארעא דמצרים  
ופרקך יי אלהך על כן אנא מפקדך  
ית פתגמא הדין יומא דין:

12 כִּי־יִמְכֹר לְךָ אֶחִיד הָעֶבְרִי אֹו הָעֶבְרִיָּה וְעַבְדְּךָ שֵׁשׁ  
שָׁנִים וּבִשְׁנָה הַשְּׁבִיעִת תִּשְׁלַחְנוּ חֲפָשִׁי מֵעִמְךָ: 13 וְכִי־  
תִשְׁלַחְנוּ חֲפָשִׁי מֵעִמְךָ לֹא תִשְׁלַחְנוּ רִיקָם: 14 הָעֲנִיִּק  
תַּעֲנִיִּק לוֹ מִצְאָנֶה וּמִגִּרְנֶה וּמִיִּקְבֵּה אֲשֶׁר בִּרְכֶּךָ יְהוָה  
אֱלֹהֶיךָ תִתֵּן־לוֹ: 15 וְזָכַרְתָּ כִּי עֶבֶד הָיִיתָ בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם  
וַיִּפְדֶּךָ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ עַל־כֵּן אֲנֹכִי מְצִנֶּה אֶת־הַדָּבָר הַזֶּה  
הַיּוֹם:

— RASHI —

שִׁיחָא גבר שְׁהֵיבוֹת לוֹ. וַיֵּשׁ מִפְּרָשִׁים, לְשׁוֹן הַטְעָנָה  
עַל צֹארוֹ: מִצְאָנֶה מִגִּרְנֶה וּמִיִּקְבֵּה. יָכוֹל אֵין לִי אֱלָא  
אֵלו בְּלָדְךָ, תִּלְמוּד לומר: "אֲשֶׁר בִּרְכָךָ", מִכָּל מַה  
שֶׁבִּרְכָךָ בּוֹרְאָךְ. וְלָמָּה נֶאֱמָרוּ אֵלּוּ? מַה אֵלו מִיְּחִידִים  
שֶׁהֵם בְּכָלֵל בִּרְכָךָ, אֵף כָּל שְׂדוּא בְּכָלֵל בִּרְכָךָ, יֵצְאוּ  
פְּרִדּוֹת. וְלָמָּה רְבוּתֵינוּ בְּמִסְכַּת קְדוּשִׁין? בְּגִוּרָה  
שׁוּה, כִּמְה נֹתֵן לוֹ מִכָּל מִין וּמִין: 15 וְזָכַרְתָּ כִּי עֶבֶד  
הָיִיתָ. וְהַעֲנִקְתָּ וְשִׁנִּיתָ לָךְ מִבּוֹת מִצְרַיִם וּבּוֹת הַיָּם,  
אֵף אֶתְהָ הָעֲנִיִּק וְשִׁנָּה לוֹ:

12 כִּי יִמְכֹר לְךָ. עַל יְדֵי אֲחֵרִים, בְּמִכְרוֹהוּ בֵּית דִּין  
בְּגִנְבָתוֹ הַכְּתוּב מְדַבֵּר. וְהָרִי כָכָר נֶאֱמַר<sup>45</sup>: "כִּי תִקְנֶה  
עֶבֶד עֲבָרִי", וּבְמִכְרוֹהוּ בֵּית דִּין הַכְּתוּב מְדַבֵּר? אֱלָא  
מִפְּנֵי שְׁנֵי דְבָרִים שֶׁנִּתְחַדְּשׁוּ כָאן — אֶחָד שֶׁכְּתוּב  
"אוֹ הָעֶבְרִיָּה", אֵף הִיא תִצָּא בְּשֵׁשׁ. וְלֹא שֶׁמִּכְרוּהָ  
בֵּית דִּין, שְׁאִין הָאִשָּׁה נִמְכֶּרֶת בְּגִנְבָתָהּ, שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר:  
"בְּגִנְבָתָהּ", וְלֹא בְּגִנְבָתָהּ, אֱלָא בְּקִטְנָה שֶׁמִּכְרָהּ  
אֲבִיהָ, וְלָמָּד כָּאן, שְׁאֵם יֵצְאוּ שֵׁשׁ שָׁנִים קֹדֶם שֶׁתִּבְּאִי  
סִימָנִין, תִּצָּא. וְעוֹד חֲדָשׁ כָּאן<sup>46</sup>: "הָעֲנִיִּק תַּעֲנִיִּק",  
14 הָעֲנִיִּק תַּעֲנִיִּק. לְשׁוֹן עֲדִי, בְּגִבְהָ וּבְמִרְאִית הָעֵינַן,

45. שמות כא, 46. פסוק יד. 47. יז, א.

— CHASIDIC INSIGHTS —

guided by the intellect and not produced by the intellect, they retain their own inherent subjectivity and its attendant limitations.

Thus, when our devotion to God has become based on intellect rather than on raw emotions, our emotional commitment becomes far more intense than it can be when our devotion to Him is based on emotion. At this level, we are no longer "bondservants" slaving endlessly to refine our innate, materially-oriented emotions, but "freemen" able to focus on the spiritual and Divine realities of life unencumbered by the gravity of materiality.

In this context, the "gift" that we, as former bondservants, are given upon the termination of our service, is the intellect. The double expression in Hebrew for this gift (הענק תעניק) alludes to the two principal aspects of the intellect: *chochmah* (insight) and *binah* (understanding).

Significantly, however, unlike in the case of Jewish bondservants, there is no commandment to free non-Jewish bondservants after any specific term of service, and therefore no accompanying command to provide them with gifts. On the contrary, we are told that they can be held on to indefinitely,

and even be inherited by our children.<sup>187</sup> This implies that although we are encouraged to ascend in our relationship with God through the levels of devotion signified by the Jewish bondservants and beyond, we are nonetheless not meant to ever renounce the level of devotion to God signified by the non-Jewish bondservant. In other words, pure, unadulterated discipline must remain the foundation of our relationship with God no matter how high we ascend the ladder of Divine consciousness.

In this context, we see the advantage of the level represented by the non-Jewish bondservant over those represented by the Jewish bondservant. The part of our psyches in which we are simple servants of God possesses no selfhood whatsoever; our entire being is consumed by that of our Master. As such, "graduation" from this level of devotion is irrelevant; furthermore, the "gift" of our own intellect would not "free" us from this level of devotion, since, as above, we are not herein slaving to refine ourselves but simply to accomplish what is required of us. On the contrary, inasmuch as our entire being is subsumed within God's, any human intellectual understanding would just get in the way. [continues...]

187. Leviticus 25:46.



## Hebrew Bondservants

12 Despite your obligation to care for the poor, someone might nevertheless become so destitute that he is driven to steal something, and because he is so impoverished, he cannot pay back its monetary value. As you know, in such a case the court is allowed to indenture him for a period of service, using the price paid for him to repay his victim.<sup>183</sup> It may also happen that a father is too poor to marry off his minor daughter, and, as you also know,<sup>184</sup> in such a case he is permitted to indenture her for a period of service to a wealthier family with the intention that she eventually marry a member of this family.

**If your brother-Israelite, a Hebrew man, is indentured to you** by the court in this way, **or if a Hebrew young woman** is indentured to you by her father in this way (and you decide not to marry her yourself or have her marry your son), **he** or she **must serve you** until the term of service is terminated, by whichever of the following occurs first: (a) monetary redemption or signs of incipient puberty (in the case of the girl), (b) the Jubilee year, or (c) the passage of **six years**, in which latter case **you must send him** or her **forth free from you in the seventh year**.

13 No matter how the his service is terminated, **when you send forth the man free from you, you must not send him forth empty-handed**.

14 **You must provide him** with a sizeable gift of sheep and goats **from your flock**, or grain **from your threshing floor**, or wine **from your vat**, or any other item that replenishes itself on its own—thus excluding infertile animals, money, etc.—**with which God, your God, has blessed you**. Specifically, the value of the gift must be at least that of thirty shekels of silver.<sup>185</sup>

15 **You must remember that you were a slave in Egypt, and that God, your God, redeemed you**, bestowing great material abundance upon you when you left—both when you first left and again at the Sea of Reeds. **Therefore, I am commanding you today**, in God's Name, to do **the same thing** when you release your bondmen.

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### ∞ CHASIDIC INSIGHTS ∞

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14-15 **You must provide him:** As we have noted,<sup>186</sup> the three types of bondservants—non-Jewish bondservants, Jewish bondmen, and Jewish bondwomen—respectively correlate allegorically to the three levels of our devotion to God: (a) out of pure discipline, without emotional involvement, (b) with emotional involvement, but based on self-interest, and (c) with emotional involvement, but based on our feelings of identity with God.

Taking the analogy a step further, the freedom that is granted to both types of Jewish bondservants at the end of their servitude corresponds to our graduation from emotionally-based devotion to intellectually-based devotion. Since emotions are subjective, they are by nature limited: we can feel only to the finite extent that we can experience feeling.

Thus, the intensity of our devotion to God, when dependent on the intensity of our feelings toward or about Him, is likewise limited.

Intellect, in contrast, is not subject to the same subjective limitations as are the emotions. When we become absorbed in the intellectual contemplation of an idea, we lose ourselves, and can therefore transcend ourselves. True, human intellect is limited by its inability to break out of the categories of time and space, but within the confines of its imagination, the intellect can abstract itself from its native context and adopt virtually innumerable points of view. Our natural emotions, in contrast, cannot transcend themselves, although if guided by the intellect, they can indeed mature and even be reoriented toward Divinity. But as long as they are only

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183. Exodus 21:2-6, 22:2. 184. Exodus 21:7-11. 185. *Kidushin* 17ab; *Mishneh Torah*, *Avadim* 3:14. 186. On Exodus 21:2.

— ONKELOS —

16 ויהי ארי ימר לך לא אפוק מעמך ארי רחמך וית אנש ביתך ארי טב לה עמך: 17 ותסב ית מרעא ותתן באדנה ובדשא ויהי לך עבד פלח לעלם ואף לאמתך תעבד בן: 18 לא יקשי בעינך במפטרך יתה בר חורין מעמך ארי על חד תרין באגר אגרא פלחך שית שנין ויברכך יי אלהך בכל די תעבד: 19 כל בכרא די יתליד בתוך ובקך דוכרין תקדש קדם יי אלהך לא תפלח בבכרא ותורף ולא תגוז בכרא דענך: 20 קדם יי אלהך תיכלנה שתא בשתא באתרא די יתרעי יי את ואנש ביתך: 21 וארי יתי בה מומא חגיר או עזיר כל מום ביש לא תכסנה קדם יי אלהך:

16 וְהָיָה כִּי־יֹאמַר אֱלֹהֶיךָ לֹא אֵצֶא מֵעַמִּי כִּי אֶהְבֶּךָ וְאֶת־בֵּיתְךָ בִּי־טוֹב לוֹ עַמֶּךָ: 17 וְלָקַחְתָּ אֶת־הַמְרֵצֶה וְנִתְּתָהּ בְּאֻזְנוֹ וּבִדְלַת וְהָיָה לְךָ עֶבֶד עוֹלָם וְאִף לְאִמְתְּךָ תַעֲשֶׂה־בֶּן: 18 לֹא־יִקְשֶׁה בְּעֵינֶךָ בְּשַׁלְחֶךָ אֹתוֹ חֲפָשִׁי מֵעַמֶּךָ כִּי מִשְׁנֶה שְׂכָר שְׂכִיר עֲבָדְךָ יֵשׁ שָׁנִים וּבִרְכֶּךָ יִהְיֶה אֱלֹהֶיךָ בְּכָל אֲשֶׁר תַעֲשֶׂה: פ

◆ שביעי 19 כִּלְהִבְכוֹר אֲשֶׁר יוֹלֵד בְּבִקְרָךְ וּבְצִאֲנֶךָ הַזֶּכֶר תִּקְדִּישׁ לַיהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ לֹא תַעֲבֹד בְּבֹכֶר שׁוֹרְךָ וְלֹא תִגְזֹז בְּכוֹר צִאֲנֶךָ: 20 לִפְנֵי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ תִּאֲכַלְנֹו שְׁנָה בְּשָׁנָה בַּמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר־יִבְחַר יְהוָה אֹתָהּ וּבֵיתְךָ: 21 וְכִי־יִהְיֶה בֹו מוֹם פֶּסֶח אוֹ עוֹר כָּל מוֹם רָע לֹא תִזְבָּחֲנֹו לַיהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ:

— RASHI —

הקדש עליו, ונותן להקדש כפי טובת הנאה שבו: לא תעבד בבכר שורך ולא תגזז וגו'. אף החלוקה למדו רבותינו<sup>50</sup> שאסור, אלא שדבר הכתוב בדוה: 20 לפני ה' אלהיך תאכלנו. לפהו הוא אומר, שפבר מצינו שהוא ממנתות כהנה, אחד תם ואחד בעל מום, שנאמר<sup>51</sup>: "ובשרם יהיה לך" וגו': שנה בשנה. מכאן שאין משהין אותו יותר על שנתו, יכול יהא פסול משעבדה שנתו? פבר הקש למעשר, שנאמר<sup>52</sup>: "ואכלת לפני ה' אלהיך מעשר דגנך תירשך ויצהרך ובכרת בקרך וצאנך", מה מעשר שני אינו נפסל משנה לחברתה, אף בכור אינו נפסל, אלא שמצוה תוף שנתו: שנה בשנה. אם שקטו בסוף שנתו, אוכלו אותו היום ויום אחד משנה אחרת. למד שנאכל לשני ימים ולילה אחד: 21 מום. כלל: פסח או עור. פרט: כל מום רע. חזר וכלל, מה הפרט מפרש, מום הגלוי ואינו חוזר, אף כל מום שבגלוי ואינו חוזר:

17 עבד עולם. יכול כמשמעו? תלמוד לומר<sup>53</sup>: "ושבתם איש אל אחותו, ואיש אל משפחתו תשבו". הא למדת שאין זה אלא עולמו של יובל: ואף לאמתך תעשה בן. הענך לה. יכול אף לרציעה השנה הכתוב אותה? תלמוד לומר: "ואם אמר יאמר העבד", עבד נרצע ואין אמה נרצעת: 18 כי משנה שכר שכיר. מכאן אמרו: עבד עברי עובד בין ביום ובין בלילה, וזהו כפלים שבעבודת שכירי יום. ומהו עבודתו בלילה? רבו מוסר לו שפחה בנענית, והולדות לאדון: 19 כל הבכור וגו' תקדיש. ובמקום אחר הוא אומר "לא יקדיש", שנאמר<sup>54</sup>: "אף בכור אשר יבכר לה" וגו', הא כיצד? אינו מקדישו לקרבן אחר, וכאן למד שמצוה לומר: הרי אתה קדוש לבכורה. דבר אחר: אי אפשר לומר "תקדיש", שפבר נאמר "לא יקדיש", ואי אפשר לומר "לא יקדיש", שהרי כבר נאמר "תקדיש", הא כיצד? מקדישו אתה

48. ויקרא כה, י. 49. ויקרא כז, כו. 50. בכורות כה, א. 51. במדבר יח, יח. 52. דברים יד, כג.

— CHASIDIC INSIGHTS —

On one level, this orientation is based on our recognition that God is the master of nature, and therefore, if we want our natural efforts to be successful, we should ensure that they accord with His will. On a deeper level, however, our attitude toward work is based on our recognition that God deals with the Jewish people entirely outside the limitations of nature. Our livelihood is an altogether miraculous affair, and the natural efforts we are required to en-

gage in are no more than a ruse that God arranged so that it would appear as if we are earning our livelihood through totally natural means. In this context, unduly devoting ourselves to enhancing the efficacy of our jobs while neglecting to enhance our spiritual worthiness of God's blessing is like working feverishly to sew sturdy pockets into our garments while forgetting to go to work to earn the money with which to fill them.<sup>194</sup>

194. Likutei Sichot, vol. 31, pp. 172-173; Ma'amarei Admor HaZaken 5565, vol. 2, pp. 648 ff; Ma'amarei Admor HaZaken 5568, vol. 1, pp. 165 ff; Derech Mitzvotcha 106a-108a; Kuntres Umayan 17 ff; Sefer HaMa'amarim 5657, pp. 56 ff.

**16** If he says to you, 'I will not leave you,' because he loves you and your household, for it is good for him with you,

**17** you must take an awl and put it through his right earlobe and straight into the doorpost, and he will be a bondman to you until the next Jubilee year, when he will go free whether he wants to or not.<sup>188</sup>

In addition to giving a gift to your bondman when you free him, **you must also do the same for your bondwoman** when you free her.

**18** You should not be troubled by having to give the bondman this bonus **when you send him away from you free, because for six years he has served you twice as much as a hired servant** normally would have: if you gave him a non-Jewish bondwoman as an additional wife, he has provided you with servants through her, besides performing his regular service.<sup>189</sup> Do not worry about the expense, for **God, your God, will bless you in all that you do.**

### Consecrating Firstborn Animals

- ◆ *Seventh Reading* **19** As you know,<sup>190</sup> you must give **every firstborn male that is born of your herd or flock** to a priest. When you do so, **you must consecrate it verbally to God, your God. You must not work the field with the firstborn of your ox** or other cattle, nor with the firstborn of your flock. **You must not shear the firstborn of your flock or cattle."**

**20** Addressing the priests (as individuals), Moses continued: "**You must eat it 'before God, your God,' i.e., within the place—the city—that God will choose** as the location of His Temple. **You, your wife, your children, and the rest of your household** may eat it once its blood and fats have been offered up on the altar. You should optimally eat the firstborn that are born each **year within the first year** of their lives, but if you do not, this does not invalidate the sacrifice; you may still sacrifice it and eat its meat later. The meat of the firstborn may be eaten on the same day it is offered up, the night after, and/or the following day.

**21** If the firstborn animal **be blemished—whether it be lame, blind, or suffering from any other bad, permanent blemish** that is visible on its exterior—**you must not sacrifice it to God, your God.**

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#### ❧ CHASIDIC INSIGHTS ❧

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Thus, the two paradigms of devotion—the static, unchanging service represented by the non-Jewish bondservant and the developing, maturing service represented by the Jewish bondservants—constitute the two complementary facets of our relationship with God.<sup>191</sup>

**18** **God will bless you in all that you do:** The sages understand this verse<sup>192</sup> to imply that although God determines which of us will succeed in our efforts to provide ourselves with a livelihood and amass wealth,<sup>193</sup> we must not rely solely on His provi-

dence, but must rather put forth reasonable efforts to earn our living naturally.

By the same token, however, we must keep in mind that our efforts are not the *direct* cause of our material success; they are only a "vessel," a receptacle to contain God's blessing. In this context, along with taking care to ensure that our "vessels" are fit to receive God's blessing, our main concern should not be with the vessels per se but with making ourselves worthy of receiving the blessing with which we hope God will fill our vessels.

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<sup>188</sup>. Exodus 21:5-6; Leviticus 25:10. <sup>189</sup>. Exodus 21:3-4. <sup>190</sup>. Exodus 13:1-2, 11-12, 34:19; Leviticus 27:26-28; Numbers 18:15-18. <sup>191</sup>. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 24, pp. 91-94. <sup>192</sup>. *Sifrei*. <sup>193</sup>. Proverbs 10:22.

— ONKELOS —

22 בקרין תיכלנה מסאבא  
ודכיא כחדא כבסר טביא ואילא:  
23 לחוד ית דמה לא תיכול על  
ארעא תשדנה כמיא: 16 טר ית  
ירחא דאביבא ותעבד פסחא קדם  
י' אלהי ארי בירחא דאביבא  
אפקר י' אלהי ממזרים ועבד  
לך נסין בליליא: 2 ותבוס פסחא  
קדם י' אלהי מן בני ענא ונכסת  
קדשיא מן תורי באתרא די יתריעי  
י' לאשראה שכינתה תמן:

22 בשעריך תאכלנו הטמא והטהור יחזיו כצבי וכאיל:  
23 רק את דמו לא תאכל על הארץ תשפכנו במים: פ  
16:1 שמור את חדש האביב ועשית פסח ליהוה  
אלהיך כי בחדש האביב הוציאך יהוה אלהיך  
ממצרים לילה: 2 וזבחתי פסח ליהוה אלהיך צאן ובקר  
במקום אשר יבחר יהוה לשכן שמו שם:

— RASHI —

שבילילה נתן להם פרעה רשות לצאת, שנאמר:  
"ויקרא למשה ולאהרן לילה" וגו': 2 וזבחתי פסח  
לה' אלהיך צאן. שנאמר: "מן הכבשים ומן העזים  
תקחו": ובקר. תזבח לחגיגה, שאם נמנו על הפסח  
חבורה מרבה, מביאים עמו חגיגה, כדי שיהא נאכל  
על השבע. ועוד למדו רבותינו דברים הרבה בפסוק  
זה:

23 רק את דמו לא תאכל. שלא תאמר: הואיל וכלו  
התר הבא מפלל אסור הוא, שהרי קדוש ונשחט  
בחזין בלא פדיון ונאכל, יכול יהא אף הדם מתיר?  
תלמוד לומר: "רק את דמו לא תאכל": 1 שמור את  
חדש האביב. מקדם בואו שמור שיהא ראוי לאביב,  
להקריב בו את מנחת העמר, ואם לאו — עבר את  
השנה: ממזרים לילה. והלא ביום יצאו, שנאמר:  
"ממחרת הפסח יצאו בני ישראל" וגו' אלא, לפי

53. במדבר לג, ג. 54. שם, לא. 55. שמות יב, ה.

addition to the obligatory festival peace offering<sup>207</sup> brought on the first day of the holiday (or during the ensuing six days if it is not possible to offer it up on the first day).<sup>208</sup> The meat from this peace-offering, unlike that of the Passover offering, maybe eaten the following day (the 15<sup>th</sup> of Nisan). However, it may not be eaten beyond this time; if any of it is left over on the 16<sup>th</sup> of Nisan, it must be burned up. If you set aside money to purchase an animal for the Passover sacrifice and it costs less than what you have set aside, the remaining money remains consecrated; you must use it to purchase peace-offerings.<sup>209</sup>

— CHASIDIC INSIGHTS —

**1 Add a leap month to the calendar:** The lunar year is approximately 11 days shorter than the solar year, so a leap month was added every few years in order to compensate for this difference. When the Jewish calendar was fixed (in the fourth century CE), the leap month was scheduled to occur exactly seven times in the course of a 19-year cycle.

One of the lessons we can derive from this practice is that God always affords us an opportunity to catch up, as it were: to complete whatever was left undone for whatever reason, and even to counteract the effects of not having utilized our time to the fullest extent possible.

Remarkably, this integral feature of the Jewish calendar implies that we are given the ability not only to change the future, but the past, as well. Fur-

thermore, the fact that we intercalate a full month, thereby "correcting" the accumulated discrepancy of several years at once, indicates that we can change the remote as well as the recent past.

If we look even deeper, we note that the commandment to intercalate the year invests us with the power to overcome the Divinely-instituted laws of nature. God decreed that the lunar year be shorter than the solar year, in response to the moon's complaint about having to share dominion with the sun.<sup>210</sup> Nevertheless, through this commandment, God empowers us to not only neutralize this inequality but even make the lunar year *longer* than the solar year. This is clearly an example of how God intends us to be His "partner in creation," that is, in bringing the world to its true fulfillment.<sup>211</sup>

207. Leviticus 23:29. 208. *Mishneh Torah*, *Korban Pesach* 10:12. 209. *Pesachim* 70b. 210. Genesis 1:16. 211. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 34, pp. 338-341; *Igrot Melech*, vol. 1, pp. 428-433.

22 The meat of a blemished firstborn animal is not subject to the restrictions of ritual purity imposed upon eating sacrificial meat: **You may eat it in any of your cities, the ritually impure people and the ritually pure people together, just as** they may eat of those animal species that are not offered up as sacrifices, such as **gazelle and deer**—even if the meat of this animal thereby becomes ritually defiled.<sup>195</sup> In contrast, however, the restrictions of ritual purity imposed the second tithe remain in force if it becomes invalidated for use for its original purpose. Hence, if it becomes ritually defiled, you may not eat it.<sup>196</sup>

23 **However**, even though you are thus permitted to eat meat whose consumption was otherwise restricted because it was allocated for the altar, do not suppose that its blood—which was also forbidden<sup>197</sup>—has now also become permitted. No, **you must not consume its blood; you must spill it onto the ground** when you slaughter the animal, **as water**. However, even though I have compared these animals in some respects to wild animals—deer and gazelle—you are nevertheless not required to cover their blood when you slaughter them, as you are required to do to the blood of wild animals when you slaughter them.<sup>198</sup> In this respect, the blood of these otherwise-consecrated animals is **like water**, unlike the blood of gazelles and deer.”

## The Festivals

16:1 Again addressing the entire people, Moses continued: “The restriction of offering up sacrifices only in the centralized Temple<sup>199</sup> applies to the sacrifices you must offer up on the festivals, as well. Furthermore, now that you are about to enter the land and begin cultivating it, you must ensure that these festivals coincide with specific points in the annual progression of the seasons. As you know, you are to observe the three pilgrim festivals each year.<sup>200</sup> **Safeguard the timing of the month of Nisan**, ensuring that the grain will be **ripe** when Nisan arrives, so you will be able to offer up the *omer* of barley from the new crop on the second day of Passover as prescribed.<sup>201</sup> If you see that the grain will not be ripe in time, add a leap month to the calendar before Nisan that year.<sup>202</sup> You must also make sure that Nisan will fall in the ripening season because you must **offer up the Passover offering to God, your God**, which commemorates the Exodus from Egypt, during this month, **and because God, your God, brought you out of Egypt in the month of ripening**—specifically, on the morning after<sup>203</sup> Pharaoh gave you permission to leave on the **night** of the 15<sup>th</sup> of Nisan.<sup>204</sup>

2 **You must slaughter the Passover sacrifice to God, your God, from the flock,**<sup>205</sup> **and a peace-offering from the cattle, in the Temple, the place on which God will choose to rest His Name.** If there are too many people in your group<sup>206</sup> for each one to receive a satiating portion of the Passover sacrifice, then offer up a festival peace-offering on the 14<sup>th</sup> of Nisan and eat it first, so your portion of the Passover sacrifice will satiate you. This optional festival peace-offering is brought in

195. See Leviticus 7:19. 196. Rashi on 26:14, below. 197. Leviticus 7:26, 17:10-14; 19:26. See above, 12:16, 23. 198. Leviticus 17:13. 199. Above, 12:5 ff. 200. Exodus 23:14-18; 34:18, 20, 22-25; Leviticus 23:4-22, 33-44; Numbers 28:16-31, 29:12-39. 201. Leviticus 23:9-14. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 36, pp. 112-113. 202. Leviticus 23:39. 203. Exodus 12:37; Numbers 30:3. 204. Exodus 12:31. 205. Exodus 12:3-6. 206. Exodus 12:3-4.



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3 לא תיכול עלוהי חמיע שבקא יומין תיכול עלוהי פטיר לחם עני ארי בבהילו נפקת מארעא דמצרים בדיל דתדבר ית יום מפקד מארעא דמצרים כל יומי חייך: 4 ולא יתחזי לך חמיר בכל תחומך שבקא יומין ולא יבית מן בסרא די תבוס ברמשא ביומא קדמא לפרא: 5 לית לך רשו למכוס ית פסחא בחדא מקרורי דיי אלהך דהב לך: 6 אלהין לאתרא די יתרי יתרי אלהך לאשרא שכינתה תמן תבוס ית פסחא ברמשא כמעל שמשא זמן מפקד ממצרים: 7 ותבשל ותיכול באתרא די יתרי יתרי אלהך בה ותתפני בצפרא ותתך לקרורי: 8 שתא יומין תיכול פטירא וביומא שביעא כנש קדם ית אלהך לא תעבד עבדא: 9 שבקא שבעין תמני לך מדשריות מגלא בחד עומרא דארמוותא תשרי לממני שבקא שבעין:

3 לֹא-תֹאכַל עָלָיו חֶמֶץ שִׁבְעַת יָמִים תֹּאכַל-עָלָיו מִצֹּת לֶחֶם עֲנִי כִּי בַחֲפוּז יֵצֵאתָ מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם לְמַעַן תִּזְכֹּר אֶת-יוֹם צֵאתְךָ מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם כָּל יְמֵי חַיֶּיךָ: 4 וְלֹא-יֵרָאָה לְךָ שָׂאֵר בְּכָל-גִּבְלֶךָ שִׁבְעַת יָמִים וְלֹא-יִלִּין מִן-הַבָּשָׂר אֲשֶׁר תִּזְבַּח בָּעֶרֶב בַּיּוֹם הָרִאשׁוֹן לַבֹּקֶר: 5 לֹא תֹכַל לִזְבַּח אֶת-הַפֶּסַח בְּאֶחָד שְׁעָרֶיךָ אֲשֶׁר-יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ נָתַן לְךָ: 6 כִּי אִם-אֶל-הַמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר-יִבְחַר יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ לְשִׁבְן שָׁמוֹ שָׁם תִּזְבַּח אֶת-הַפֶּסַח בָּעֶרֶב כִּבּוֹא הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ מוֹעֵד צֵאתְךָ מִמִּצְרַיִם: 7 וּבִשְׁלָתָ וְאָכַלְתָּ בַּמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר יִבְחַר יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ בּוֹ וּפְנִיתָ בִּבְקָר וְהִלַכְתָּ לְאַהֲלֶיךָ: 8 שֵׁשֶׁת יָמִים תֹּאכַל מִצֹּת וּבַיּוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי עֲצַרְתָּ לַיהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ לֹא תַעֲשֶׂה מְלָאכָה: 9

9 שִׁבְעָה שִׁבְעַת תִּסְפֹּר-לְךָ מִהַחֹל חֶרְמֶשׁ בַּקָּמָה תַּחֲלֵל לִסְפֹּר שִׁבְעָה שָׁבָעוֹת:

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בִּקְרוֹ שֶׁל שְׁנֵי, אָבֵל נֶאֱכַלְתָּ הִיא בִּאֲרָבָעָה עָשָׂר וּבַחֲמִשָּׁה עָשָׂר. וְכָף הִיא שְׁנוּיָה בְּמִסְכַּת פְּסָחִים: 6 בָּעֶרֶב כִּבּוֹא הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ מוֹעֵד צֵאתְךָ מִמִּצְרַיִם. הָרִי שְׁלֹשָׁה זְמָנִים חֲלוּקִים: "בָּעֶרֶב" מִשֵּׁשׁ שָׁעוֹת וּלְמַעַלָּה וּבַחֲדָה, ו"כִּבּוֹא הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ" תֹּאכַלְהוּ, ו"מוֹעֵד צֵאתְךָ" אֵתָה שׁוֹרְפָהּ, כְּלוּמַר נַעֲשֶׂה "נוֹתֵר" וְיֵצֵא לְבֵית הַשְּׂרָפָה: 7 וּבִשְׁלָתָ. זֶהוּ צֵלִי אֵשׁ, שְׂאֵף הוּא קְרוֹי "בִּשְׂוֹל": וּפְנִיתָ בִּבְקָר. לְבִקְרוֹ שֶׁל שְׁנֵי. מְלֻמֵּד, שֶׁטַעֲוֹן לִינָה לֵיל שֶׁל מוֹצָאֵי יוֹם טוֹב: 8 שֵׁשֶׁת יָמִים תֹּאכַל מִצֹּת. וּבַמָּקוֹם אַחֲרָיִם הוּא אוֹמֵר: "שִׁבְעַת יָמִים"? שִׁבְעָה מִן הַיֶּשֶׁן וְשִׁשָּׁה מִן הַחֲדָשׁ. דָּבָר אַחֵר: לְמַד עַל אֲכִילַת מִצָּה בְּשִׁבְעֵי שְׁאִינָה חוּבָה, וּמִכָּאן אֵתָה לְמַד לְשֵׁשֶׁת יָמִים, שֶׁהָרִי שְׁבִיעִי בְּכֻלָּל הִיָּה, וְיֵצֵא מִן הַכֻּלָּל לְלַמֵּד שְׁאִין אֲכִילַת מִצָּה בּוֹ חוּבָה אֵלָּא רְשׁוּת. וְלֹא לְלַמֵּד עַל עֲצָמוֹ יָצָא, אֵלָּא לְלַמֵּד עַל הַכֻּלָּל כֻּלּוֹ יָצָא — מֵהַ שְׁבִיעִי רְשׁוּת, אֵף כֻּלָּם רְשׁוּת, חוּץ מִלִּילָה הָרִאשׁוֹן שֶׁהַכְּתוּב קָבַעוּ חוּבָה, שְׁנַאֲמַר: "בָּעֶרֶב תֹּאכַלוּ מִצָּת": עֲצַרְתָּ לָּהּ אֱלֹהֶיךָ. עֲצַר עֲצָמְךָ מִן הַמְּלָאכָה. דָּבָר אַחֵר: כִּנְפִיָּא שֶׁל מֶאֱכָל וּמִשְׁתָּה, לְשׁוֹן "נַעֲצָרָה נָא אוֹתָךְ": 9 מִהַחֹל חֶרְמֶשׁ בַּקָּמָה. מִשְׁנַקְצֵר הָעֵמֶר, שֶׁהוּא רִאשִׁית הַקִּצְרִי:

3 לֶחֶם עֲנִי. לֶחֶם שְׁמוֹזִכִּיר אֵת הָעֲנִי שֶׁנִּתְעַנּוּ מִמִּצְרַיִם: כִּי בַחֲפוּז יֵצֵאתָ. וְלֹא הִסְפִּיק בְּצִקְךָ לְהַחֲמִיץ, וְזֶה יְהִיָּה לְךָ לְזִכְרוֹן. וְחֲפוּז לֹא שֶׁלָּךְ הִיָּה אֵלָּא שֶׁל מִצְרַיִם, שֶׁכֵּן הוּא אוֹמֵר: "וְתִחְזַק מִצְרַיִם עַל הָעָם" וְגו': לְמַעַן תִּזְכֹּר. עַל יְדֵי אֲכִילַת הַפֶּסַח וְהַמִּצָּה "אֵת יוֹם צֵאתְךָ": 4 וְלֹא יִלִּין מִן הַבָּשָׂר אֲשֶׁר תִּזְבַּח בָּעֶרֶב בַּיּוֹם הָרִאשׁוֹן לַבֹּקֶר. אֲזַדְרָה לְמוֹתִיר בְּפֶסַח דּוֹרוֹת, לִפִּי שֶׁלֹּא נֶאֱמַר אֵלָּא בְּפֶסַח מִצְרַיִם. וְיוֹם רִאשׁוֹן הָאֱמוּרָה כָּאן הוּא אֲרָבָעָה עָשָׂר בְּנִסְטָן, כְּמָה דְּאֵתָּ אֲמַר: "אֵף בַּיּוֹם הָרִאשׁוֹן תִּשְׁבִּיתוּ שָׂאֵר מִבְּתֵיכֶם". וּלִפִּי שֶׁנִּסְתַּלַּק הַכְּתוּב מֵעֲנִינוֹ שֶׁל פֶּסַח וְהַתַּחֲלִיל לְדַבֵּר בַּחֲקוֹת שִׁבְעַת יָמִים, כְּגוֹן: "שִׁבְעַת יָמִים תֹּאכַל עָלָיו מִצֹּת", "וְלֹא יֵרָאָה לְךָ שָׂאֵר בְּכָל גִּבְלֶךָ", הֲצִרְךָ לְפָרֵשׁ בְּאִינוֹ וּבִיחָה הוּא מוֹהִיר, שְׁאִם כְּתוּב: וְלֹא יִלִּין מִן הַבָּשָׂר אֲשֶׁר תִּזְבַּח בָּעֶרֶב לַבֹּקֶר, הִיִּיתִי אוֹמֵר: שְׁלָמִים הַנִּשְׁחָטִים כָּל שִׁבְעָה כָּלָן ב"בִּלְ תוֹתִירוּ", וְאִינוֹ נֶאֱכָלִין אֵלָּא לַיּוֹם וְלִילָה, לְכָף כְּתוּב: "בָּעֶרֶב בַּיּוֹם הָרִאשׁוֹן". דָּבָר אַחֵר: בְּחִיגַת אֲרָבָעָה עָשָׂר הַכְּתוּב מְדַבֵּר, וְלִמַּד עָלֶיהָ שְׁנַאֲכַלְתָּ לְשְׁנֵי יָמִים. ו"הָרִאשׁוֹן" הָאֱמוּרָה כָּאן, בַּיּוֹם טוֹב הָרִאשׁוֹן הַכְּתוּב מְדַבֵּר, וְכֵן מִשְׁמַעוֹת הַמִּקְרָא: בִּשְׂרַח חִיגָה אֲשֶׁר תִּזְבַּח בָּעֶרֶב, לֹא יִלִּין בַּיּוֹם טוֹב הָרִאשׁוֹן עַד

56. שם, לג. 57. שם, טו. 58. עא, ב. 59. שמות יג, ו; ועוד. 60. שמות יב, יח. 61. שופטים יג, טו.



**3 You must not eat** the Passover offering **with leavened bread**, for you must remove all leavened bread from your possession before you even slaughter it.<sup>212</sup> **For seven days thereafter you must eat matzos, the bread** that will remind you of your affliction in Egypt **because**, since the Egyptians pressured you to leave quickly,<sup>213</sup> **you went out of Egypt hastily**, and the bread you baked that morning did not have time to rise. You are to eat the Passover sacrifice and matzos **in order that you remember the day when you went out of Egypt all the days of your life.**

**4 No leavening agents of yours may be seen**—i.e., found—**throughout your domain**—i.e., under your control—**for seven days.**<sup>214</sup> **None of the meat** of the Passover sacrifice—**which you must slaughter in the afternoon** of the 14<sup>th</sup> of Nisan, i.e., **the day preceding** the seven days of Passover—**may remain uneaten all** through that **night until the morning.** However, if you offer up the festival peace-offering on the afternoon of the 14<sup>th</sup> of Nisan,<sup>215</sup> you may eat the meat of this offering all the following day, and even the night following that day, as well, as long as you finish it before the morning of the 16<sup>th</sup> of Nisan.

**5** The obligation to offer up the Passover sacrifice solely in the Temple, couched above as an active commandment,<sup>216</sup> is also subject to a restrictive commandment: **You must not offer up the Passover offering within any of the other cities** or other locations in the land **that God, your God, is giving you**, for God has commanded you to offer up sacrifices only in the Temple.<sup>217</sup>

**6 Rather, you must slaughter the Passover offering in the place on which God, your God, will choose to rest His Name**, i.e., in the Temple, **in the afternoon** of the 14<sup>th</sup> of Nisan. You must then eat it, **after the sun sets**, anywhere in the Temple city, and finally, the following morning—which is the anniversary of **the appointed time** that God fixed for **your departure from Egypt**—you must set aside the leftovers (if there are any) to be burned later.

**7 You must roast** the Passover offering<sup>218</sup> **and eat it anywhere in the place that God, your God, will choose**, i.e., the Temple city. You must spend the night following the first day of the festival in the Temple city; **you may leave and go home only the following morning** (i.e., the 16<sup>th</sup> of Nisan).

**8** The only bread **you may eat for the next six days** is **matzos**; you must not eat leavened bread.<sup>219</sup> If you wish to eat matzos made from the year's new crop of grain, you may do so only after the *omer* of barley is offered up on the second day of Passover;<sup>220</sup> thus, **you may eat matzos** made from the new crop of grain **for only six** out of the seven **days** of the festival. **On the seventh day** of Passover **there must be a restriction** of activity **in honor of God, your God: you must not do any work** on it. Rather, you should linger together for the final festive meals.<sup>221</sup>

**9 You must count seven weeks for yourself. You must begin to count these seven weeks from the 16<sup>th</sup> of Nisan**, which is **the first time the sickle may be put to the standing crop** of grain to harvest it. The first grain that may be cut from the year's new crop is the *omer* of barley offered up on this day in the Temple; after it is offered up, you may begin to harvest your personal crops.<sup>222</sup>

212. Exodus 23:18, 34:25. 213. Exodus 12:33-34. 214. Exodus 12:18-19, 13:7. 215. See above, v. 2. 216. V. 2. 217. Above, 12:11, 13; *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 29, p. 82. 218. Exodus 12:9. 219. Exodus 12:15. 220. Leviticus 23:9-14. 221. Exodus 12:16. 222. Leviticus 23:9-14.

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10 ותעבד חגא דשבועיא קדם  
 11 ותחדי קדם 12 ותדכר ארי עבדא הוי  
 13 חגא דמטלא תעבד  
 14 ותחדי בחג  
 15 שבועא יומין תחוג  
 16 שבועא יומין תחוג  
 17 ארי ירכנא 18 ארי ירכנא  
 19 ארי ירכנא 20 ארי ירכנא  
 21 ארי ירכנא 22 ארי ירכנא  
 23 ארי ירכנא 24 ארי ירכנא  
 25 ארי ירכנא 26 ארי ירכנא  
 27 ארי ירכנא 28 ארי ירכנא  
 29 ארי ירכנא 30 ארי ירכנא

10 ועשית חג שבועות ליהוה אלהיך מסת נדבת ירך  
 אשר תתן כאשר יברכה יהוה אלהיך: 11 ושמחת  
 לפני יהוה אלהיך אתה ובנך ובתך ועבדך ואמתך  
 והלוי אשר בשעריך והגר והיתום והאלמנה אשר  
 בקרבך במקום אשר יבחר יהוה אלהיך לשכן שמו  
 שם: 12 וזכרת כי עבד היית במצרים ושמרת ועשית  
 את החקים האלה: פ

◆ מפטיר 13 חג הסכת תעשה לך שבועת ימים באספך  
 מגרנך ומיקבך: 14 ושמחת בחגך אתה ובנך ובתך  
 ועבדך ואמתך והלוי והגר והיתום והאלמנה אשר  
 בשעריך: 15 שבועת ימים תחוג ליהוה אלהיך במקום  
 אשר יבחר יהוה כי יברכה יהוה אלהיך בכל תבואתך  
 ובכל מעשה ידך והיית אך שמח:

— RASHI —

חוקים האלה: 13 באספך. בזמן האסוף, שאתה  
 מכניס לבית פרות הקיץ. דבר אחר: "באספך מגרנך  
 ומיקבך", למד שמסכבין את הסבה בפסלת גרן  
 ויקב: 15 והיית אך שמח. לפי פשוטו אין זה לשון  
 צווי, אלא לשון הבטחה. ולפי תלמודו, למדו מכאן  
 לרבות לילי יום טוב האחרון לשמחה:

10 מסת נדבת ירך. די נדבת ירך. הכל לפי הברכה,  
 הבא שלמי שמחה וקדש קרואים לאכל: 11 והלוי  
 והגר והיתום והאלמנה. ארבעה שלי כנגד ארבעה  
 שלך, "בנך ובתך ועבדך ואמתך". אם אתה משמח  
 את שלי, אני משמח את שלך: 12 וזכרת כי עבד  
 היית וגו'. על מנת כן פדיתך, שתשמר ותעשה את

— CHASIDIC INSIGHTS —

and fixed *Shemini Atzeret* immediately after *Sukot*.<sup>225</sup>  
 Based on this analogy, then, just as *Shemini Atzeret*—  
 being just an "appendage" to *Sukot*—has no unique  
 commandment associated with it, so does *Shavuot*—  
 the corresponding "appendage" to *Pesach*—have no  
 unique commandment associated with it.

The deeper answer to this question, however, lies  
 in the identity of *Shavuot* as the anniversary of the  
 Giving of the Torah. In this context, we may con-  
 sider the specific commandment associated with  
*Shavuot* to be reciting words of Torah.

True, of our three faculties of expression—thought,  
 speech, and action—reciting words of Torah in-  
 volves speech rather than action, the faculty we  
 usually associate with fulfilling God's command-  
 ments. Nonetheless, there are a few command-  
 ments that we fulfill specifically through speech  
 (just as there a few we fulfill specifically through  
 thought). Moreover, when we employ our faculty  
 of speech in studying the Torah, our words take on

the ontological characteristics of action, because the  
 words of the Torah are God's words; thus, in ar-  
 ticulating the words of the Torah, we are acting as  
 God's mouthpiece: it is as if God Himself is speak-  
 ing. And as we know from the account of Creation,  
 God's words do not just "speak," they "act,"<sup>226</sup> as  
 the Torah recounts: "God said, 'Let there be...' and  
 there was...."

Hence, just as God used His faculty of speech to cre-  
 ate the world, we, in reciting His words, use our fac-  
 ulty of speech on *Shavuot* to infuse the world with  
 fresh Divine consciousness and thereby re-create it  
 on a new, higher level than ever before.<sup>227</sup>

**14 You must rejoice in your festival:** Noting the  
 unexpected use of the word "your" in this verse  
 (instead of "God's" festival, or simply "the" festi-  
 val), Rabbi Shneur Zalman of Liadi interpreted this  
 phrase as follows: You should infuse joy into your  
 life so thoroughly that your entire life becomes your  
 own personal, ongoing celebration.<sup>228</sup>

225. Pesikta Zutarta 28:7; Midrash Tanchuma, Pinchas 15. 226. Bereishit Rabbah 44. 227. Sefer HaMa'amarim 5705, p. 182. 228. Sefer HaSichot 5704, p. 82.

**10** At the end of these seven weeks, **you must observe the festival of *Shavuot* in honor of God, your God.** You must celebrate it by offering up extra festival peace-offerings and inviting guests to eat them with you; this applies to the other two pilgrim festivals, as well.<sup>223</sup> **The extent of your generosity should be in accordance with the abundance with which God, your God, will have blessed you.**

**11** **You must rejoice before God, your God—you and your wife, plus the four categories of your household members: your son, your daughter, your bondman, and your bondwoman—on condition that you also provide for the four types of people God asks you to care for specially: the Levite from your city, the resident alien, the orphan, and the widow who are among you.** God promises that if you gladden 'His' four, He will gladden 'your' four. You must all rejoice by celebrating the festivals and eating these peace-offerings **in the place in which God, your God, will choose to establish His Name**, i.e., the Temple city.

**12** **You must recall that you were a slave in Egypt and that God redeemed you only in order that you safeguard these rules—i.e. ensure that you observe them properly—by studying the Torah's instructions regarding how to perform them properly, and then do them.**

◆ *Maftir* **13** **You must observe for yourself the festival of *Sukot* for seven days, from the 15<sup>th</sup> to the 21<sup>st</sup> of Tishrei, which is when you typically gather the produce into your homes from your threshing floor and your winepress that has been outside all summer, for safekeeping during the rainy winter.**

**14** As you were promised with regard to *Shavuot*,<sup>224</sup> **so must you rejoice in your festival of *Sukot*—you and your wife, plus the four categories of your household members: your son, your daughter, your bondman, and your bondwoman—on condition that you also provide for the four types of people God asks you to care for specially: the Levite, the resident alien, the orphan, and the widow who are from your city.** Again, God promises that if you gladden 'His' four, He will gladden 'your' four.

**15** **You must celebrate the festival in honor of God, your God, for seven full days—beginning from the night of the 15<sup>th</sup> of Tishrei—in the place that God will choose, i.e., the Temple, because God, your God, will bless you in all your produce and in all the work of your hands, and this will be your opportunity to thank Him for having done so. If you celebrate properly, God assures you that during the entire festival you will be only happy.**

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∞ CHASIDIC INSIGHTS ∞

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**10 *Shavuot*:** The particular revelation of Godliness associated with each holiday is dependent on the performance of a specific commandment (or commandments) unique to that holiday: on *Pesach*, we eat *matzo*; on *Sukot*, we sit in the *sukah* and hold the four plants; on *Rosh HaShanah*, we hear the *shofar*; on *Yom Kippur*, we fast. With regard to *Shavuot*, however, there does not seem to be any specific commandment unique to the festival.

The simple solution to this contrast is that *Shavuot* is just an extension of and the conclusion of *Pesach*, just as *Shemini Atzeret* is the extension of and conclusion of *Sukot*. In fact, the sages tell us that *Shemini Atzeret* should rightfully have occurred seven weeks after *Sukot* just as *Shavuot* occurs seven weeks after *Pesach*, but since God did not want to trouble the people to make the pilgrimage to Jerusalem during the cold winter, He telescoped the extension period

<sup>223</sup>. *Mishneh Torah*, *Chagigah* 1:1. <sup>224</sup>. Above, v. 11.

— ONKELOS —  
 16 תלת זמנין בשתא יתחזי כל  
 דכורף קדם יי אלהך באתרא די  
 יתרעי בחגא דפטיירא ובחגא  
 דשבועיא ובחגא דמטליא ולא  
 יתחזי קדם יי ריקנון: 17 גבר  
 כמתנת ידה בברכתא דיי אלהך  
 די יהב לך:

16 שְׁלוֹשׁ פְּעָמִים | בְּשָׁנָה יִרְאֶה כָּל־זְכוּרָךְ אֶת־פָּנַי |  
 יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ בְּמָקוֹם אֲשֶׁר יִבְחַר בְּחַג הַמִּצּוֹת וּבְחַג  
 הַשְּׁבֻעֹת וּבְחַג הַסֻּכּוֹת וְלֹא יִרְאֶה אֶת־פָּנַי יְהוָה  
 רִיקָם: 17 אִישׁ כְּמִתְנַת יָדוֹ כְּבִרְכַּת יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ אֲשֶׁר  
 נָתַן־לְךָ:

קב"ו פסוקים. פליא"ה סימן.

— RASHI —  
 16 וְלֹא יִרְאֶה אֶת פָּנַי ה' רִיקָם. אֶלֶּא הָבָא עוֹלוֹת לֹא אוֹכְלִין הֶרְבֵּה וּנְכָסִים מְרַבִּים, יָבִיא עוֹלוֹת מְרַבּוֹת  
 רְאִיָּה וְשִׁלְמֵי חֲגִיגָה: 17 אִישׁ כְּמִתְנַת יָדוֹ. מִי שֵׁשׁ וּשְׁלֵמִים מְרַבִּים:  
 חסלת פרשת ראה

**16 Every one of your males must appear before God, your God, in the place He will choose—the Temple—three times a year: on Passover, the festival of matzos; on the festival of *Shavuot*; and on the festival of *Sukot*. Each male must not appear before God empty-handed, but must rather bring with him animals to offer up as ascent-offerings on each festival,<sup>229</sup> besides the obligatory festival peace-offerings<sup>230</sup> and extra festival peace-offerings.<sup>231</sup>**

**17 Every man must bring as much of these offerings as he can afford, in accordance with the blessing of God, your God, that He has given you in the form of material abundance. The wealthier he is, the more ascent-offerings he should bring; the larger his party of family and guests, the more peace-offerings he should bring.”**

The *Haftarah* for *parashat Re'eh* is on p. 242.

If *parashat Re'eh* is read on the 30<sup>th</sup> of the month of Av (*Rosh Chodesh*), the *maftir* for *Rosh Chodesh* (p. 264) is read as *maftir* and the *haftarah* for *Rosh Chodesh* (p. 265) is read instead of the *haftarah* for *parashat Re'eh*.



229. Exodus 23:15. 230. Leviticus 23:39. 231. Above, v. 10.

*Dedicated in honor of our children*

**Nathan, Yitzchok,  
Moshe Lev,  
and Gilana**

*May you continue to grow in the ways  
of our holy Torah*

**Yuri and Deana Pikover**

