

ולא אַבָה הויי אַלהֵיך לְשִׁמֹעַ אֵל בִּלְעָם וַיַּהַפֹּך הי אֵלהֵיך לְדָּ אֵת הַקְּלַלָה לְבָרַכָה כוי

Introduction

This discourse of the Alter Rebbe develops a profound explanation of the inner dimension of the verse: "And Hashem your God did not desire to listen to Bilam, and Hashem your God turned the curse into a blessing for you" (Deuteronomy 23:6). From the first section to the last, the Alter Rebbe explores how every Jew contains within his soul the full expression of the Divine Name Havayah — the Yud, Hei, Vav, and Hei — and how prayer, Torah, mitzvos, and teshuvah awaken and reveal these dimensions. The discourse explains the limits of human comprehension, the role of contraction (tzimtzum), the natural love and self-sacrifice embedded in every Jew, the higher revelation available through teshuvah, and the ultimate transformation of darkness into light.

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And Hashem your God did not want to listen to Bilaam, and Hashem your God turned the curse for you into a blessing, etc. To understand: what is the great and wondrous wonder that He did not want to listen to the voice of a wicked man like Bilaam the rasha? And also, what is [the meaning of] "and Hashem your God turned the curse into a blessing," since He did not listen to Bilaam at all?

וְלֹא אָבָה הוּי׳ אֱלֹהֶיף לִשְׁמֹעַ אֶל בִּלְעָם וַיַּהֲפֹּף ה׳ אֱלֹהֶיף לְּף אָת הַקְּלָלָה לִבְּרָכָה כוּ׳. לְהָבִין מַהוּ הַפֶּלֶא הַגָּדוֹל וְעָצוּם מַה שֶׁלֹא אָבָה לִשְׁמֹעַ בְּקוֹל אִישׁ בְּלִיַעַל כְּבִלְעָם הָרָשָׁע וְגַם מַהוּ וַיַּהֲפֹּף ה׳ אֶת הַקְּלָלָה לִבְרָכָה מֵאַחַר שֵׁלֹא שַׁמַע אֶל בִּלְעַם כֵּל עָקַר.

The matter is: there are accusers who accuse Israel, and therefore they take the shofar on Rosh Hashanah to confuse the accuser. For he seeks out the sins of the Jewish people and scrutinizes them to argue against them. This is called the aspect of Bilaam, for this too was Bilaam's way — he also sought to find a place of sin in Israel: "the head of Pe'or, which looks out upon the wasteland, and he set his face toward the desert" (Numbers 23:28), places where the Jewish people would in the future sin, etc.

הָעִנָיָן הוּא שֶׁיֵּשׁ מְקַטְרְגִים שֶׁמְּקַטְרְגִים עַל יִשְׂרָאֵל
שׁלֶּכֵּהְ נוֹטְלִין שׁוֹפָר בְּר״ה לְעַרְבֵּב הַקַּטֵּגוֹר וְהוּא
שׁלְּכֵּהְ נוֹטְלִין שׁוֹפָר בְּר״ה לְעַרְבֵּב הַקַּטֵּגוֹר וְהוּא
שׁמְּחַפֵּשׁ אַחַר עֲווֹנוֹת בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וִמְדַקְדֵּק אַחֲרֵיהֶם
לְלַמֵּד עֲלֵיהֶם חוֹבָה וְזֶהוּ נִקְרָא בְּחִינַת בִּלְעָם שֶׁכָּהְ
הָיְתָה דַּרְכּוֹ שֶׁל בִּלְעָם ג״כ שֶׁהָיָה מְחַפֵּשׁ ג״כ לְמְצוֹא
מָקוֹם עָוֹן לְיִשְׂרָאֵל רֹאשׁ הַפְּעוֹר הַנִּשְׁקְפָה עַל פְּנֵי
הַיְשִׁימוֹן וַיָּשֶׁת אֶל הַמִּדְבָּר פָּנְיו מְקוֹמוֹת שֶׁהִיוּ
עַּתִיִּדִים שַׁם יִשְׂרָאֵל לְחַטוֹא כו׳

And this is the praise which Scripture praises: for although he came with an argument, nevertheless "Hashem your God did not want to listen." And the meaning is: He did not want to listen to his words at all — not that one should have to answer his words with a conclusive answer from reasoning and from logical understanding, but only that his words are not accepted or listened to at all, without reason and without knowledge.

וְזֶהוּ הַשֶּׁבַח שֶׁשִּׁבֵּחַ הַכָּתוּב כִּי אַעַ״פּ שֶׁבָּא בְּטַעֲנָה אַעַפ״פּ וְלֹא אָבָה הוי׳ אֱלֹהֶיךְּ לִשְׁמֹעַ וּפֵרוּשׁ שֶׁלֹא אָבָה לִשְׁמֹעַ אֶל דְּבָרָיו כָּל עָקָר וְלֹא שֶׁיֵשׁ לְהָשִׁיב עַל דְּבָרִיו הְשׁוּבָה נִצַּחַת מִטַעַם וָדַעַת הַמּוּשָׂג וּמוּבָן רַק שָׁאֵין מְקַבְּלִין וּשְׁמְעִין אֶת דְּבָרָיו כָּל עָקָר בְּלִי טַעַם וַדַעַת.

ולא אַבָה הויי אַלהֵיך לְשִׁמֹעַ אֵל בִּלְעָם וַיַּהַפֹּך הי אֵלהֵיך לְדָּ אֵת הַקְּלַלָה לְבָרַכָה כוי

And also, why does the verse explain "And Hashem your God did not want," [emphasizing] that Hashem is truly your God? For in every soul of Israel there is an aspect and radiance from the Name Havayah, as it is written, "For Hashem's portion is His people, Yaakov the rope of His inheritance" (Deuteronomy 32:9), that they are literally a portion and radiance from the Name Havayah (see also discourse beginning "Re'eh Anochi").

And the explanation of this matter is: behold, in every soul of Israel there is a natural love, founded and embedded in the nature of his divine soul, not to be separated from His unity and oneness, blessed be He. And a person does not transgress unless a spirit of folly enters him, misleading him to say that even so he still remains in his Jewishness, etc. But to be separated from His unity, even the most worthless person gives up his soul for the sanctification of His Name, etc., because of the nature of his soul — "the lamp of Hashem is the soul of man" (Proverbs 20:27) — like a lamp whose flame rises by itself, etc., without reason and understanding.

But it is concealed and covered by the sackcloth garment, which is the physical body, and from this comes the spirit of folly, etc. However, when he arouses the love until it desires to emerge from its garments, he comes to the fear of sin, not to transgress even a minor Rabbinic decree. For the decrees of the Sages are stricter than Biblical commandments, and therefore they are called "Scribes." For behold, there is the aspect of "sofer" (scribe), "sefer" (book), and "sipur" (story). "Sefer" is the Written Torah, and "sofer" is the one who makes the book — this is the Oral Torah, "the woman of valor is the crown of her husband" (Proverbs 12:4) (see also discourse beginning "U'sha'avtem Mayim" and discourse "Shechorah Ani V'Naavah").

ְוְכֵ״כ לָמָּה בִּיאֵר הַכָּתוּב וְלֹא אָבָה הוי׳ אֱלֹהֶיךּ כִּי הוי׳ הוּא אֱלֹהֶיךּ מַמָּשׁ שָׁבְּכָל נָפֶשׁ מִיִּשְׂרָאֵל יֵשׁ בְּחִי׳ וְהָאָרָה מִשֵּׁם הוי׳ וּכְמַ״שׁ כִּי חֵלֶק הוי׳ עַמּוֹ יַעֲקֹב חֶבֶל נַחֲלָתוֹ שֶׁהֵם חֵלֶק וְהָאָרָה מִשֵּׁם הוי׳ מַמָּשׁ [וְעַמ״שׁ [מָזָּה בַּד״ה רָאָה אַנֹכִי].

וּבֵיאוּר עִנְיָן זָה הוּא כִּי הָנֵה בְּכָל נָפֶשׁ מִיּשְׂרָאֵל יֵשׁ
בְּחִי׳ אַהְבָה הַטִּבְעִית הַמְיָפֶדֶת וּמְטוּבַעַת בְּטָבַע נַפְשׁוֹ
הָאֱלֹהִית שֶׁלֹּא לִהְיוֹת נִפְּרָד מִיִּחוּדוֹ וְאַחְדוּתוֹ יִת׳ וְאֵין
אָדָם עוֹבֵר עֲבֵירָה אֶלָּא אִם כֵּן נִרְנַס בּוֹ רוּחַ שְׁטוּת
הַמֵּטְעֵה אוֹתוֹ לוֹמֵר שֶׁאַף עַל פִּי כֵן עוֹדֶנוּ בִּיהְדוּתוֹ כו׳
אֲבָל לִיפֶּרֵד מִיִּחוּדוֹ יִת׳ הֲרֵי אֲפִלוּ קֵל שֶׁבַּקַלִּים מוֹמֵר
נַפְשׁוֹ עַל ק״ה כו׳ מְחַמַת טֶבַע נַפְשׁוֹ נֵר ה׳ נִשְׁמַת אָדָם
בְּנֵר הַדוֹלֵק שֶׁהַשַּׁלְהֶבֶת עוֹלָה מֵאֵלֶיהָ כו׳ בְּלִי טַעַם
נַדְּעַת

אֶלָּא שֶׁהִיא מְסוּתֶּרֶת וּמְכוּסָּה בִּלְבוּשׁ שֵׂק הוּא הַגּוּף
הַגַּשְׁמִי וּמְמֶּנוּ בָּא הָרוּחַ שְׁטוּת כו׳ אֲבָל כְּשָׁמְּעוֹרֵר אֶת
הָאַהֲבָה עַד שֶׁתַּחְפֹּץ לָצֵאת מִלְבוּשִׁיהָ הָרֵי הוּא בָּא
לִידֵי יִרְאַת חֵטְא שֶׁלֹּא לַעֲבוֹר אֲפָלוּ עַל דָּבָר קַל שֶׁל
ד״ס כִּי חֲמוּרִים ד״ס יוֹתֵר מִד״ת שֶׁלָּכֵן נִקְרְאוּ
סוֹפְרִים כִּי הִנֵּה יֵשׁ בְּחִי׳ סוֹפֵר וְסַפֶּר וְסִפּוּר סַפֶּר הוּא
בְּחִי׳ תִּשב״כ וְסוֹפֵר הוּא הָעוֹשֶׂה אֶת הַפַּפֶּר הִיא בְּחִי׳
תִּשבע״פ א״ח עֲטֶרֶת בַּעְלָה כו׳ [וְעַמ״שׁ מִזֶּה בּד״ה
תִּשבע״פ א״ח עֲטֶרֶת בִּעְלָה כו׳ [וְעַמ״שׁ מִזֶּה בַּד״ה.

וְלֹא אָבָה הוי׳ אֱלֹהֶיךְ לִשְׁמֹעַ אֶל בִּלְעָם וַיַּהַפֹּךְ ה׳ אֱלֹהֶיךְ לְךְ אֶת הַקְּלָלָה לְבְרָכָה כוי

And this aspect of love is the point of the thorn of the Yud of the Name Havayah. For the thorn on the Yud turns upward and hints that it is drawn upward to the Infinite, blessed be He, Who is beyond grasp, and no thought grasps Him, and before Him all is considered as nothing, as it is written, "For I, Hashem, have not changed" (Malachi 3:6). So too is this love, which is without reason or knowledge — it is from the resting of the light of the Infinite, blessed be He, literally, clothed in the Chochmah that enlivens the soul, which is above grasp. Therefore it is like a flame that rises by itself and on its own. But since it is hidden, a person must arouse it, and with an awakening from below comes an awakening from Above, to also be "And He did not want to listen" — from a level above reason and knowledge (see Shaar HaKavanos of R. Chaim Vital, part 3, Shaar 1 regarding the thorn of the Yud, and there Shaar 2 regarding the level of Yechidah).

וּבְחִי׳ אַהָבָה זוֹ הוּא בְּחִי׳ קוֹצוֹ שֶׁל יוּ״ד שֶׁל שֵׁם הוּי׳
כִּי הַקּוֹץ שֶׁעַל הַיוּ״ד פּוֹנֶה לְמַעְלָה וְרוֹמֵז שֶׁהוּא נִמְשָׁךְ
לְמֵעְלָה לְאֵין־סוֹף בָּרוּךְ הוּא שֶׁהוּא לְמֵעְלָה מִגֶּדֶר
הַהַשָּׁגָה וְלֵית מַחֲשָׁבָה תְּפִיסָא בֵיה וְכוּלָּא קַמֵּיה כְּלָא
חֲשִׁיב כִּי אֲנִי ה׳ לֹא שָׁנִיתִי כו׳ וְכָדְ הוּא עִנְיֵן אַהֲבָה זוֹ
שָׁהִיא בְּלִי טַעַם וָדַעַת הִיא מִצֵּד הַשְּׁרָאֵת אוֹר אֵין־סוֹף
בָּרוּךְ הוּא מַמְשׁ הַמְלוּבָּשׁ בְּחָכְמָה שֶׁמְחַיֶּה אֶת הַנֶּפֶשׁ
שָׁהִיא לְמַעְלָה מִאֶּלֶיה וֹמַעַצְמָה כו׳ רַק לְפִי שֶׁהִיא מְסוּתֶּרת
בָּריךְ הָאָדָטְלְיה וּבְאִתְעָדְלְ״ת אִתְעַדְלְ״ת לְהִיוֹת לְהִיוֹת גַּיִרְרָה וּבְאִתְעָדְלְ״ת אִתְעַדְלְ״ע לְהִיוֹת גַּיִרְ וְמִיּעְבָּח לְהַרְח״ו ח״ג שַׁעַר א׳ כִּי קוֹצוֹ וְשִׁיִם וְעִישׁ וְשַעַר ב׳ וִיחִידָה כו׳ וְשִׁבִּי קוֹצוֹ

(ב)

And the explanation of the matter of the Yud of the Name Havayah, how it is in the soul: behold, the Yud is the aspect of Chochmah, koach mah, which is the aspect of contraction, for it is only a point, etc.

And the matter is, for behold, it is known that the existence of Chochmah, which is the beginning of the revelation of the chain of descent, from the light of the Infinite, blessed be He, which is far above the aspect and category of the chain of descent, comes through many contractions and the descent of the light, concealment after concealment, until a very limited and contracted radiance descends and is drawn.

Like the image of a radiance that comes out through the hairs of the head, which grow and draw from the brains in the head through the skull that covers over the brains, hiding and concealing the brains themselves from being revealed. By this the hairs grow from the essence of the skull that covers and conceals the brains. וּבֵיאוּר עִנְיַן הַיוּ״ד שֶׁל שֵׁם הוי׳ אֵיךּ הוּא בַּנָּפֶשׁ הָנֵּה הַיוּ״ד הוּא בְּחִי׳ חָכְמָה כֹּחַ מָ״ה שֶׁהִיא בְּחִי׳ הַצִּמְצוּם שָׁאֵינָה אָלָּא בָּחִי׳ נְקוּדָּה כו׳.

ְוָהָעְנְיֶן כִּי הָנֵּה נוֹדָע שֶׁלְּהִיוֹת הִתְהַוּוֹת בְּחִי׳ חָכְמָה שָׁהִיא רֵאשִׁית גִּילּוִי הַהִּשְׁתַּלְשְׁלוּת מֵאוֹר אֵין־סוֹף בָּרוּךְ הוּא שֶׁהוּא לְמַעְלָה מַעְלָה מִבְּחִי׳ וּגְדֶר הַהִשְׁתַּלְשְׁלוּת הוּא ע״י כַּמָּה צִמְצוּמִים וִירִידַת הָאוֹר בְּהֶעְלֵם אַחַר הָעְלֵם עַד שֶׁיָּרְדָה וְנִמְשְׁכָה הָאָרָה מוּעֶטֶת וּמְצוּמְעָמת מְאֹד.

ּכְּדָמְיוֹן הָאָרָה הַיּוֹצֵאת דֶּרֶךְ שְׂעָרוֹת הָרֹאשׁ שָׁצוֹמְחִין וְיוֹנְקִין מִן הַמּוֹחִין שֶׁבָּרֹאשׁ דֶּרֶךְ הַגַּלְגֹּלְתָּא הַחוֹפֶפֶּת עַל הַמּוֹחִין שֶׁמַּעֲלֶמֶת וּמַסְתֶּרֶת אֶת הַמּוֹחִין עַצְמָן שֶׁלֹּא יִהְיוּ בְּגִילּוּי.

וְלֹא אָבָה הוּיי אֱלֹהֶיךְ לִשְׁמֹעַ אֶל בִּלְעָם וַיַּהָפֹּךְ הי אֱלֹהֶיךְ לְדְּ אֶת הַקְּלָלָה לְבְרֶכָה כוי

So that by this the hairs grow from the essence of the skull that covers and conceals over the brains. And that radiance is very limited, to the extent that it has no comparison or relation with the radiance of the brains themselves. For just as hairs have no relation or comparison with the brains, since even if one cuts the hairs there is no sensation of pain in the brains at all, so too is this analogy.

So it is with this analogy, and more so without limit: the matter of the coming into being of Chochmah from above Chochmah, from the light of the Infinite, blessed be He, Who is exalted and uplifted, etc. This is even more than the coming into being of the emotions of love and fear from Chabad, for the essence of Chabad is clothed in the emotions.

But the coming into being of Chochmah from the light of the Infinite, blessed be He, is not the essence of the light of the Infinite clothed in it, but only a very limited and contracted radiance from concealment, that is, after the concealment and hiding of the essence of the Infinite.

And as it is written, "He made darkness His concealment" (Psalms 18:12), that He hides in darkness and concealment, in order that there be the revelation of radiance in the aspect of Chochmah, the beginning of the revelation of the chain of descent. And this is [the meaning of] "Hashem is King, He has clothed Himself with grandeur" (Psalms 93:1), etc.

"Indeed, the world is established," etc. For in order that the world be established, it was necessary that the light of the Infinite, blessed be He, be clothed in a garment and covering, that it should not shine and be revealed as it is, but rather in the aspect of contraction, etc.

And this is [the meaning of] "In the beginning, Elokim created," etc. "In the beginning" — in the revelation of the aspect of "beginning," the revelation is the aspect of Chochmah. "Elokim created" — with the attribute of contraction. And as our Sages said, "At first it arose in [His] thought to create with the attribute of judgment," etc., for it is a contracted radiance, in order that

כְּדֵי שֶׁעַל יְדֵי זֶה תִּצְמַחְנָה הַשְּׁעָרוֹת מֵעֶצֶם הַגִּלְגֹּלְתָּא הַחוֹפֵף וּמְכַסֶּה עַל הַמּוֹחִין וְהָאָרָה הַהִיא הִיא מְצוּמְצֶמֶת מְאֹד עַד שֶׁצֵין לָה עֵרֶך וְיַחֲסוּת עִם הֶאָרַת הַמּוֹחִין עַצְמָן כְּמוֹ שֶׁאֵין עֵרֶךּ וְיַחֲסוּת לַשְּׁעָרוֹת עִם הַמּוֹחִין שֶׁהָרֵי אֲפִלּוּ אָם מְגַלְחִין אֶת הַשְּׁעָרוֹת לֹא יַרְגִּישׁ כְּאֵב בּּמּוֹחִין כְּלָל.

כָּךְ כָּל הַמָּשֶׁל הַזֶּה וְיוֹתֵר מִזֶּה לְאֵין קֵץ הוּא עִנְיַן
הַתְּהַוּוּת הַחָּכְמָה מִלְמֵעְלָה מִן הַחָּכְמָה מֵאוֹר אֵין־סוֹף
בָּרוּךְ הוּא שֶׁהוּא רָם וְנִשָּׁא כו׳ יוֹתֵר מֵהְתְּהוּוּת הַמִּדּוֹת
אַהְנָי״ר מִן הַחב״ד שֶׁעַצְמִיּוּת הַחב״ד הֵן מְלוּבָּשׁוֹת
בּמִדּוֹת

אָבָל הִתְהַוּוּת הַחָּכְמָה מֵאוֹר אֵין־סוֹף בָּרוּךְ הוּא אֵין עַצְמִיּוּת אוֹר אֵין־סוֹף בָּרוּדְ הוּא מְלוּבָּשׁ בָּה אֶלָּא הָאָרָה מוּעֶטֶת וּמְצוּמְצֶמֶת מִן הַהֶעְלֵם דְּהַיִּינוּ לְאַחַר הַהֶּעְלֵם וְהַהַסְתֵּר עַצְמִיּוּת אוֹא״ס בָּרוּדְ הוּא.

וּכְמַ״שׁ יָשֶׁת חֹשֶׁךְּ סִתְרוֹ שֶׁמְּסְתַּתר בִּבְחִי׳ חֹשֶׁךְ וְהֶעְלֵם לְהִיוֹת גִּילוּי הֶאָרָה בִּבְחִי׳ חָכְמָה רֵאשִׁית גִּילוּי הַהִשְׁתַּלְשְׁלוּת וְזָהוּ ה' מֶלֶךְ גֵּאוּת לְבֵשׁ כו׳.

אַף תִּכּוֹן תַּבֵל כו׳ שֶׁכְּדֵי לְהְיוֹת תִּכּוֹן תַּבֵל הוּצְרַךְּ לְהָתְלַבֵּשׁ אוֹר אֵין־סוֹף בָּרוּךְ הוּא בִּבְחִי׳ לְבוּשׁ וְכִסּוּי שֶׁלֹּא יָאִיר וְיִתְגַּלֶּה כְּמוֹ שֶׁהוּא אֶלָּא בִּבְחִי׳ צִמְצוּם כו׳.

ְוֶזֶהוּ בְּרֵאשִׁית בָּרָא אֱלֹקִים כו׳ בְּרֵאשִׁית בְּגִילוּי בְּחִי׳ רֵאשִׁית הַגִּילוּי הִיא בְּחִי׳ חָכְמָה בָּרָא אֱלֹקִים בְּמִדַּת הַצִּמְצוּם וּכְמָאֲמַר רַז״ל בַּתְּחַלָּה עָלָה בְּמַחֲשָׁבָה לְבְרֹא בְּמִדַּת הַדִּין כו׳ כִּי הִיא הֶאָרָה מְצוּמְצֶמֶת כְּדֵי לִהְיוֹת רֵאשׁית הָגִילוּי בָּהשָׁתַּלִשָּׁלוּת הַעוֹלַמוֹת.

וְלֹא אָבָה הויי אֱלֹהֶיךְ לִשְׁמֹעַ אֶל בִּלְעָם וַיַּהָפֹּךְ הי אֱלֹהֶיךְ לְדְ אֶת הַקְּלָלָה לִבְרָכָה כוי

there be a beginning of revelation in the chain of descent of the worlds.

For Chochmah is the beginning of the revelation of comprehension and understanding of the light of the Infinite, blessed be He, which is revealed in the aspect of Binah, which is the upper Hei, the aspect of expansion of length and breadth, etc., memalei kol almin and sovev kol almin, etc.

However, in Chochmah this comprehension is in concealment, for it is not shining and revealed except like a flash of lightning that flashes in the intellect of a man, by way of analogy. And without the contraction of the light of the Infinite, blessed be He, and His being clothed in the aspect of Chochmah, there could not be the expansion of memalei kol almin and sovev kol almin.

For then the worlds would have been utterly nullified in their existence, and they would be nothing and absolute naught. For even now, after the worlds have been created, "before Him all is considered as nothing," except that it is "as nothing" with a kaf of comparison, not truly nothing. And even this is only before Him, not relative to the creations.

But if the light of the Infinite, blessed be He, were revealed as it is, they would be truly nullified, and would be nothing and absolute nothing. And therefore our Sages said that at the time the angels protested and said, "What is man...," He stretched out His little finger among them and burned them.

The meaning is, that He stretched forth and drew the revelation of His Essence, blessed be He, more than the measure and limit contracted within the comprehension of the angels. A mere minuscule radiance, the aspect of "His little finger" (see Pardes at its beginning in the name of Sefer Yetzirah: "Ten sefirot without what, their number is ten fingers," etc., and in Zohar II, beginning of Parshas Yisro).

And then "He burned them," for they were burned and utterly nullified in their existence, as if they never were. But the contraction is what causes the coming into being of the worlds.

כִּי הַחָּכְמָה רֵאשִׁית גִּילּוּי הַהַשָּׁגָה וְהַהְבָנָה בְּאוֹר אֵין־סוֹף בָּרוּךְ הוּא הַמִּתְגַּלֶּה בִּבְחִי׳ בִּינָה שֶׁהִיא ה״ע בְּחִי׳ הִתְפַּשְׁטוּת אֹרֶךְ וְרוֹחַב כו׳ מְמַלֵּא כָּל עָלְמִין וְסוֹבֵב כָּל עָלְמִין כו׳.

אֶלֶּא שֶׁבַּחָכְמָה הַהַשֶּׂגָה הַהִיא בִּבְחִי׳ הָעְלֵם שֶׁאֵינָה מֵאִירָה וּמִתְגַלָּה אֶלֶּא כְּבָרָק הַמַּבְרִיק בְּמוֹחַ שִּׂכְלוֹ שֶׁל אָדָם עַד״מ וּבְלִי צִמְצוּם אוֹר אֵין־סוֹף בָּרוּךְ הוּא וְהִתְלַבְּשׁוּתוֹ בִּבְחִינַת חָכְמָה לֹא הָיָה יָכוֹל לִהְיוֹת הִתְפַּשְׁטוּת בָּחִי׳ מְמֵלֵא כָּל עָלְמִין וְסוֹבֵב כָּל עָלְמִין. הֹתְפַּשְׁטוּת בָּחִי׳ מְמֵלֵא כָּל עָלְמִין וְסוֹבֵב כָּל עָלְמִין.

שֶׁהָיוּ הָעוֹלָמוֹת בְּטֵלִים בִּמְצִיאוּת לְגַמְרֵי וְהָיוּ אַיִן וָאֶפֶס מַמָּשׁ כִּי גַּם עַּכְשָׁיו אַחַר שָׁנִּבְרְאוּ הָעוֹלְמוֹת הָרֵי קַמֵּיה כוּלָא כְּלָא אֶלָּא שֶׁהוּא כְּלָא בְּכ״ף הַדִּמְיוֹן וְלֹא לָאו מַמָּשׁ וְאַף גַּם זֹאת אֵינוֹ אֶלָא קַמֵּיה וְלֹא לְגַבֵּי הַנִּבְרָאִים.

אֲבָל אָם הָיָה אוֹר אֵין־סוֹף בָּרוּךְ הוּא מִתְגַּלֶּה כְּמוֹ שָׁהוּא הָיוּ בְּטַלִּים מַמֶּשׁ וְהָיוּ אַיִן וְלָאו מַמָּשׁ וְלָכֵן אָמְרוּ רַז״ל בִּשְׁעָה שֶׁקִּטְרְגוּ הַמַּלְאָכִים וְאָמְרוּ מָה אֵנוֹשׁ כו׳ הוֹשִׁיט אֶצְבָּעוֹ הַקְּטַנָּה בֵּינִיהֶן וְשֵׂרְפָן. אֵנוֹשׁ כו׳ הוֹשִׁיט אֶצְבָּעוֹ הַקְּטַנָּה בֵּינִיהֶן וְשֵׂרְפָן.

פֵּרוּשׁ שֶׁהוֹשִׁיט וְהָמְשִׁיךּ גִּילּוּי עַצְמוּתוֹ יִת׳ יוֹתֵר מִכְּדֵי מִדָּה וְשִׁעוּר הַמְצוּמְצָם בְּהַשָּׁגַת הַפַּלְאָכִים מְעַט מִזְעָר בְּחִי׳ אֶצְבָּעוֹ הַקְּטַנָּה (וְע׳ בְּפַרְדֵּ״ס בִּתְחִלָּתוֹ בְּשֵׁם סֵפֶר יְצִירָה עֶשֶׂר סְפִירוֹת בְּלִי מָה מִסְפֶּר עֶשֶׂר אֶצְבָּעוֹת כו׳ וּבְזַח״ב ר״פ יִתְרוֹ.

ּוְאָזי וְשֵׂרְפָּן שֶׁנִּשְׂרְפוּ וְנִתְבַּטְלוּ בִּמְצִיאוּת לְגַמְרֵי וְהָיוּ בָּלֹא הָיוּ רַק הַצָּמְצוּם הוּא הַגוֹרֵם הָתְהַוּוּת הַעוֹלַמוֹת.

וַלֹא אַבָּה הויי אַלהֵיךְ לְשָׁמֹעַ אֵל בִּלְעָם וַיַּהַפֹּךְ הי אֵלהִיךְ לְדְּ אֵת הַקְּלַלָה לְבָרֶכָה כוי

And behold, the beginning of the creation of the worlds was because "He desires kindness" (Micah 7:18). However, that which in His goodness He renews every day continually the act of Creation, He renews by way of yesh (something) from the aspect of Chochmah and contraction every day. For every day a different radiance is renewed [and also in every hour a different permutation of the Name Havayah is renewed, etc.].

וְהָנֵּה תְּחַלַּת בְּרִיאַת הָעוֹלֶמוֹת הָיָה מִפְּנֵי כִּי חָפֵץ חֶסֶד הוּא אֲבָל מֵה שֶׁבְּטוּבוֹ מְחַדֵּשׁ בְּכָל יוֹם תָּמִיד מַעֲשֵׂה בְרֵאשִׁית מְחַדֵּשׁ בִּבְחִי׳ יֵשׁ מִבְּחִי׳ חָכְמָה וְצִמְצוּם בְּכָל יוֹם כִּי בְּכָל יוֹם מִתְחַדָּשֶׁת הָאָרָה אַחֶרֶת [וְגַם בְּכָל [שָׁעָה מִתְחַדֵּשׁ צֵרוּף שֵׁם הוי׳ כו׳].

And it depends on an arousal from below (it'aruta d'letata). And it must be that this contraction and concealment is also in it'aruta d'letata. This means: "Nullify your will" (Avos 2:4) — that is, to contract and subdue all his desires which are not for Hashem.

בְּאָתְעָדְל״ת מָּלְיָא מִלְּמָּא וְצָרִידְּ לוֹמֵר צִמְצוּם וְהֶעְלֵם זֶה גַּם בְּאָתְעָדְל״ת וְהוּא לְהִיוֹת בָּחִי׳ בַּטֵל רְצוֹנְדְּ כו׳ דְּהַיִינוּ לְצַמְצֵם וּלְכַבֵּשׁ אֶת כָּל רְצוֹנוֹתָיו אֲשֶׁר לֹא לַה׳ הַמָּה.

Whether in thought — "Many thoughts are in a man's heart, but the counsel of Hashem will stand" (Proverbs 19:21); or in speech — that his speech and the breath of his mouth should not be as his own will; or in action — "He closes his eyes from seeing evil" (Isaiah 33:15), and "You shall not stray after your heart and after your eyes" (Numbers 15:39).

הֵן בְּמַחֲשֶׁבָה רַבּּוֹת מַחֲשָׁבוֹת בְּלֵב אִישׁ וַעְצַת ה׳ הִיא תָקוּם וְהֵן בְּדְבּוּר שֶׁלֹּא לְהְיוֹת דְּבּוּרוֹ וְרוּחַ פִּיו כִּרְצוֹנוֹ וְהֵן בְּמַעֲשֶׂה עֹצֵם עֵינָיו מֵרְאוֹת בָּרָע וְלֹא תָתוּרוּ אַחֲרֵי לָבַבָּכֵם כו׳.

This applies whether in the realm of prohibition or even in the realm of the permitted, as our Sages said: "Sanctify yourself in what is permitted to you" (Yevamos 20a). And this is in the full stature of man — to cast away his soul and will entirely.

בֵּין בָּאָסוּר בֵּין בְּהֶיתֵּר כְּמָאֲמֵר רַז״ל קַדֵּשׁ עַצְמְךּ בְּמוּתָר לָדְ וְהוּא בְּכָל שִׁעוּר קוֹמָה שֶׁל אָדָם לְהַשְׁלִידְ נַפְשׁוֹ וּרְצוֹנוֹ מִנָּגָד כו׳.

And this nullification is in the aspect of Chochmah, for in Chochmah things are clarified — to clarify the good from the bad, and to nullify the evil will before the good by the power of the Chochmah in the soul.

וּבִיטוּל זֶה הוּא בִּבְחִי׳ חָכְמָה כִּי בַּחָכְמָה אָתְבְּרִירוּ לְבָרֵר הַטוֹב מֵהָרַע וּלְבַטֵּל רָצוֹן הָרַע מִפְּנֵי הַטוֹב בְּכֹחַ הַחָכְמָה שֶׁבַּנֶּפֶשׁ.

And therefore our Sages said: "Sanctify yourself" (Yevamos 20a), for sanctity is in Chochmah, like [the verse] "Sanctify to Me every firstborn" (Exodus 13:2), etc.

וְלָכֵן אָרְזוּ״ל קַדֵּשׁ עַצְמְדְּ כו׳ כִּי קָדוֹשׁ הוּא בְּחָכְמָה בָּמוֹ קַדֵּשׁ לִי כָּל בִּכוֹר כו׳.

And through this aspect of nullification from below — that he nullifies and removes himself and his will to be nullified to Him, blessed be He — there is an arousal from Above, that there be the nullification and removal of the Essence of the light of the Infinite, blessed be He, that it should not shine and be revealed except in the aspect of contraction, concealment after concealment.

ַןע״י בְּחִי׳ בִּטוּל זָה שֶׁבְּאִתְעָדְלֵ״ת שֶׁמְבַטֵּל וּמְסַלֵּק אֶעְצְמוֹ וּרְצוֹנוֹ לִיבָּטֵל אֵלָיו יִת׳ אִתְעָדְלֵ״ע לְהִיוֹת בִּטוּל וְסִילוּק עַצְמִיּוּת אוֹר אֵין־סוֹף בָּרוּךְ הוּא שֶׁלֹא יָאִיר וְיִתְגַּלֵּה אֵלָא בִּבְחִי׳ צִמְצוּם בְּהַעָלֵם אַחַר הַעְלֵם. יָאִיר וְיִתְגַּלֵּה אֵלָא בִּבְחִי׳ צִמְצוּם בְּהַעָּלֵם אַחַר הַעְלֵם.

וְלֹא אָבָה הויי אֱלֹהֶיךְ לִשְׁמֹעַ אֶל בִּלְעָם וַיַּהַפֹּדְ הי אֱלֹהֶיךְ לְךְ אֶת הַקְּלָלָה לִבְרָכָה כוי

In the aspect of "He made darkness His concealment" (Psalms 18:12) — darkness and not light. And there will be the revelation of the aspect of the Yud, which is Chochmah, etc., through the aspect of the Yud, the Chochmah that is in the soul.

בִּבְחִינַת יָשֶׁת חֹשֶׁךְ סִתְרוֹ חֹשֶׁךְ וְלֹא אוֹר וְיֵהְיֶה גִּילוּי בְּחִי׳ יוּ״ד שֶׁהִיא חָכְמָה כו׳ ע״י בְּחִי׳ יוּ״ד חָכְמָה שֵׁבַּנֵּפָשׁ שֵׁבַּנֵּפָשׁ

(1)

And the matter of the Hei of the Name Havayah that is in the soul is as follows: the first Hei is the aspect of Binah Ilaah, the aspect of the spreading of the Hei in length and breadth, memalei kol almin and sovev kol almin, from the contraction of the point, etc.

וְעִנְיֵן הַה״א שֶׁל שֵׁם הוי׳ שֶׁבַּנֶּפֶשׁהוּא כִּי הָנֵּה ה״א רִאשׁוֹנָה הִיא בְּחִי׳ בִּינָה עִילָּאָה בְּחִי׳ הִתְּפַשְׁטוּת הַה״א בְּאֹרֶדְ וְרוֹחַב מְמַלֵּא כָּל עָלְמִין וְסוֹבֵב כָּל עָלְמִין מִן צִּמְצוּם הַנְּקוּדָּה כו׳.

And in the soul this is the spreading and expansion of comprehension from the flash that flashes in the brain, which is the aspect of the point, etc., to broaden his knowledge and understanding in the greatness of the Infinite, blessed be He, how He is memalei kol almin and sovev kol almin in a single contracted radiance, etc.

וּבַנֶּפֶשׁ הוּא הִתְפַּשְׁטוּת וְהִתְרַחֲבוּת הַהַשָּׁגָה מִן בָּרָק הַמֵּבְרִיק בַּמוֹחַ שֶׁהִיא בְּחִי׳ נְקוּדָּה כו׳ לִהְיוֹת מַרְחִיב דַּעְתּוֹ וּבִינָתוֹ בִּגְדוּלֵת אֵין־סוֹף בָּרוּךְ הוּא אֵיךְ שֶׁהוּא מְמַלֵּא כָּל עָלְמִין וְסוֹבֵב כָּל עָלְמִין בְּהֶאָרָה אַחַת מְצוּמְצֶמֶת כו׳.

And through this there will also be expansion and revelation in the heart — excitement and flaming with fiery sparks of love, and also the joy of the soul in Hashem its Maker. This is through the broadening of contemplation in the heart, as it says, "The mother of children is joyous" (Psalms 113:9).

ְעַל יְדֵי זֶה יִהְיֶה גַּם כֵּן הַהִּתְפַּשְׁטוּת וְהַהִּתְגַּלוּת בַּלֵּב וְהִתְלַהָבוּת וְהִתְלַהָּטוּת רִשְׁפֵי אֵשׁ הָאַהַבָּה וְכֵן שִׁמְחַת הַנֶּפֶשׁ בַּה׳ עוֹשָׂה הוּא עַל יְדֵי הִתְרַחֲבוּת הַהִּתְבּוֹנְנוּת בַּלֵב אָם הַבַּנִים שִׁמֵּחָה.

And an arousal from below to the revelation of this Hei — this is the aspect of teshuvah ilaah, from below to above [and this is "teshuvah, return the Hei"]. "And they shall cry out to Hashem in their distress" (Psalms 107:19), for the descent from the light of His Face, blessed be He, is in the aspect of narrowness, a radiance that is meager and contracted.

וְאָתֶעֶדְלֵ״ת לְגִילּוּי בְּחִי׳ ה״א זוֹ הִיא בְּחִי׳ תְּשׁוּכָה עִילָּאָה מִפַּטָּה לְמַעְלָה [וְזֶהוּ תְּשׁוּבָה תָּשׁוּב ה״א] וַיִּצְעֵקוּ אֶל ה׳ בַּצַר לָהֶם כִּי הַיְרִידָה מֵאוֹר פָּנָיו יִת׳ הוּא בִּבְחִי׳ צֵר בִּבְחִי׳ הָאָרָה מוּעֶטֶת וּמְצוּמְצֶמֶת.

Especially if he places guilt upon his soul for all his deeds, words, and thoughts which were not for Hashem — that "in vanity he came and in darkness he shall go" (Ecclesiastes 6:4). Therefore he will set his heart, spirit, and soul toward Him, to be gathered and cleave to Him, blessed be He, literally.

וּבִפְּרָט אִם יָשִּׁים אָשָׁם נַפְשׁוֹ מִכָּל מַצְשָׁיו דְּבּוּרָיו וּמַחְשָׁבוֹתָיו אֲשֶׁר לֹא לַה׳ הֵמֶּה אֲשֶׁר בְּהֶבֶל בָּא וּבַחֹשֶׁךְ יֵלֵךְ וְאִי לָזוֹת יָשִׁים אֵלָיו לְבּוֹ רוּחוֹ וְנִשְׁמָתוֹ אַלָיו יָאֱסֹף לְזָבְקָה בוֹ יִת׳ מַמָּשׁ.

And "spirit brings spirit, and draws spirit" (Zohar III 68a), etc.

יורוּחַ אַיְתֵי רוּחַ וְאַמְשִׁיךְ רוּחַ כו׳.

וְלֹא אָבָה הויי אֱלֹהֶיךְ לִשְׁמֹעַ אֶל בִּלְעָם וַיַּהַפֹּךְ הי אֱלֹהֶיךְ לְךְ אֶת הַקְּלָלָה לְבְרָכָה כוי

And in this way goes all the matter of prayer: to contemplate the descent and chain of the light of the Infinite, blessed be He, into a small and contracted radiance — the aspect of memalei kol almin and sovev kol almin — until they will praise the Name of Hashem, etc., the aspect of the Name alone, "And Your Name shall be praised forever," etc.

So that through this he will come to the fulfillment of "And you shall love" in Krias Shema, "Hashem your God," literally — that the revelation of the light of the Infinite, blessed be He, be actual. And this we ask: that it be in the revelation of expansion in length and breadth in the heart and soul.

And this is [the meaning of] "And return us in complete teshuvah before You" — meaning, to draw forth Your Face, Your inwardness, that is, the aspect of the light of the Infinite, blessed be He, literally, as it is written: "May Hashem cause His Face to shine," etc. (Numbers 6:25).

And the matter of Havayah in the soul is to be the revelation of the drawing down in Torah and mitzvos, in the fulfillment of deed in actual practice. For Torah is the aspect of the Vav, "A voice calls in the wilderness: prepare the way of Hashem" (Isaiah 40:3) — to draw forth the voice of Torah, calling the way of Hashem, and the revelation of His light, blessed be He, even in the aspect of wilderness, which is this world.

That it should also be so: "In holiness I have beheld You" (Psalms 63:3) — the drawing down of the supernal holiness (see discourse beginning "Ki Sishma B'kol" on Parshas Re'eh). And this drawing down is in the lower Hei, which is the aspect of deed. "And the act of tzedakah shall be peace" (Isaiah 32:17) — specifically "act."

And tzedakah is the generality of mitzvos. For just as tzedakah is to enliven the spirit of the lowly, etc., so too is the generality of the mitzvos — to draw down the life-force and the light of the Infinite, blessed be He, below, into the lowly physical world, that the glory of Hashem be revealed below, etc.

וְעַד״ז סוֹבֵב הוֹלֵךְ כָּל עִנְיֵן הַתְּפִלָּה לְהִתְבּוֹגֵן בִּירִידַת וְהִשְׁמַלְשְׁלוּת אוֹר אֵין־סוֹף בָּרוּדְ הוּא בְּהָאָרָה מוּעֶטֶת וּמְצוּמְצֶמֶת בְּחִי׳ מְמַלֵּא כָּל עָלְמִין וְסוֹבֵב כָּל עָלְמִין עַד שִׁיְּהַלְלוּ אֶת שֵׁם ה׳ כו׳ בְּחִי׳ שֵׁם בִּלְבַד וְיִשְׁתַּבַּח שִׁמְךְּ לַעַד כו׳.

בָּכְדֵי שֶׁעַל יְדֵי זֶה יָבוֹא לְקִיּוּם וְאָהַרְתָּ בְּק״שׁ אֶת הוי׳ אֱלֹהָיךְ מַפְּשׁ לְהִיוֹת גִּילּוּי אוֹר אֵין־סוֹף בָּרוּך הוּא מַמָּשׁ וְאוֹתָה אֲנַחְנוּ מְבַקְשִׁים שֶׁיִּהְיֶה בִּבְחִי׳ גִּילוּי הַהִּתְפַּשִׁטוּת בָּאֹרֶךְ וְרוֹחֵב בַלֵּב וָנָפֶשׁ הַהִּתְפַּשִׁטוּת בָּאֹרֶךְ וְרוֹחֵב בַלֵּב וָנָפֶשׁ

וְזֶהוּ וְהַחַזִּירֵנוּ בִּתְשׁוּבָה שְׁלֵימָה לְפָנֶיךּ פֵּרוּשׁ לְהִיוֹת הַמְשָׁכַת פָּנֶיךָ פְּנִימִיּוּתֶךְ דְּהַיְינוּ בְּחִי׳ אוֹר אֵין־סוֹף בָּרוּךְ הוּא מַמָּשׁ וּכְמַ״שׁ יָאֵר ה׳ פָּנָיו כו׳.

וְעִנְיֵן הו״ה בַּנָּפֶשׁ הוּא לִהְיוֹת גִּילוּי הַהַמְשֶׁכָה בַּתּוֹרָה וּמְצְוֹת בִּקְיוּם הַמַּצְשֶׁה בְּפוֹ״מ כִּי הַתּוֹרָה הִיא בְּחִי׳ וָ״ו קוֹל קוֹרֵא בַּמִּדְבָּר פַּנּוּ דֶּרֶךְ ה׳ לִהְיוֹת הַמְשָׁכַת קוֹל הַתּוֹרָה קוֹרֵא דֶּרֶךְ ה׳ וְגִילוּי אוֹרוֹ יִת׳ אֲפִלוּ בִּבְחִי׳ מִדְבָּר שֶׁהוּא הָעוֹלָם הַזֶּה.

שֶׁיהָיֶה בּוֹ כֵן בַּקּדֶשׁ חֲזִיתִיךּ הַמְשָׁכַת קֹדֶשׁ עֶלְיוֹן [וְעַמ״שׁ בּד״ה כִּי תִשְׁמֵע בְּקוֹל פֹ׳ רְאֵה] וְהַמְשָׁכָה זוֹ הִיא בַּה״א תַּתָּאָה הִיא בְּחִי׳ הַמַּצְשֶׂה וְהָיָה מַצְשֵׂה הַצְּדָקָה מַצְשֶׂה דַּיִִּקָא.

וּצְדָקָה הִיא כְּלֶלוּת הַמִּצְוֹת כִּי כְּמוֹ שֶׁצְּדָקָה הוּא לְהַחֵיוֹת רוּחַ שְׁפָלִים כו׳ כָּדְ כְּלֶלוּת הַמִּצְוֹת הֵן לִהְיוֹת הַמְשָׁכַת חֵיּוּת וְאוֹר אֵין־סוֹף בָּרוּדְ הוּא לְמַטָּה בָּעוֹלְם הַשַּׁפל הַגִּשָׁמי וְנִגְלָה כְבוֹד ה׳ לִמַטַה כו׳.

וְלֹא אָבָה הויי אֱלֹהֶיךְ לִשְׁמֹעַ אֶל בִּלְעָם וַיַּהַפֹּדְ הי אֱלֹהֶיךְ לְךְ אֶת הַקְּלָלָה לִבְרָכָה כוי

And this is the aspect of Hei, "For righteousness is full of Your right hand" (Psalms 48:11), which is called tzedek without the Hei. But when Your right hand is full — expansion and drawing down of kindness — then it is called with the addition of the Hei, tzedakah.

(And see Zohar, Parshas Bechukosai 113b, and the commentary of the Ramaz there, and in Idra Rabbah, 291b–292a.) And behold, this revelation that is in the aspect of deed is through the aspect of the Vav, which is the matter of drawing down, etc.

(7)

However, all this is the matter of the aspect of Havayah that is in the divine soul, which has an aspect of being clothed in the body and the animal soul. But there is an aspect of Havayah that is drawn from Above — and this is [the meaning of] "Because Hashem your God loves you" (Deuteronomy 23:6). "He loves you" is in the causative sense, meaning He draws into you the attribute of love, which comes from Above — the it aruta d'le eila that precedes the it aruta d'letata. And from there is [the power that] "Hashem turned for you the curse into a blessing" — that deliberate sins become as actual merits.

And the explanation of this matter is that the power of a baal teshuvah is very great, that he draws with greater force, etc. And this is through the aspect of "with all your might" (Deuteronomy 6:5) — above what the soul can bear. This is either through actual self-sacrifice in deed, like the case of Rabbi Elazar ben Durdia, etc., or through the aspect of nullification to Him, blessed be He, and the expiration of the soul in Krias Shema, as it is written: "To You, Hashem, I lift up my soul" (Psalms 25:1). And the aspect of "with all your might" is revealed in the baal teshuvah more than in the greatest of tzaddikim, for in tzaddikim it is the aspect of "with all your soul." And this is because "the superiority of light is [recognized only] when it comes from darkness" (Ecclesiastes 2:13).

וְהוּא בְּחִי׳ ה״א כִּי צָדֶק מֶלְאָה יְמִינֶךּ שֶׁנַּקְרָא צֶדֶק בְּלֹא ה״א וּכְשֶׁמֶּלְאָה יְמִינֶךּ הִתְפַּשְׁטוּת וְהַמְשָׁכוֹת הַחֵסֵד אַזי הוּא נִקרא בִּתוֹסֵפֵת ה״א צִדַקה.

ְנְע׳ בְּזֹהַר פּ׳ בְּחָקּוֹתֵי דק״י״ג ע״ב וּבְפֵירוּשׁ הָרַמַ״ז) שָׁם וּבְאַדְרָ״ז דרצ״א סע״ב וּדרצ״ב ע״א). וְהָנֵּה גִּילּוּי זֶה שֶׁבִּבְחִי׳ הַמַּצְשֶּׂה הוּא ע״י בְּחִי׳ הַנָּ״ו שֶׁהוּא עִנְיַן הַהַמִּשָׁכָה כו׳.

אַהְ הָנֵּה כ״ז הוּא עִנְיַן בְּחִי׳ הוי״ה שֶׁבַּנָּפֶשׁ הָאֱלֹקִית שָׁיֵשׁ לָה בְּחִי׳ הִתְלַבְּשׁוּת בְּגוּף וְנֶפֶשׁ הַבְּהֵמִית אֲבָל יֵשׁ בְּחִי׳ הוי׳ הַנִּמְשָׁךְ מִלְמַעְלָה וְזֶהוּ כִּי אֲהֵבְךְ ה׳ אֱלֹקֵיךְ. פֵּרוּשׁ אֲהַבְּךְ לְשׁוֹן פּוֹעֵל יוֹצֵא שָׁהוּא הַמַּמְשִׁיךְּ בְּךְ מִדַּת הָאַהְבָר הַבָּאָה מִלְמַעְלָה שֶׁהִיא אִתְעָדְלֵ״ע שֶׁלְּפְנֵי אָתְעָדְלֵ״ת וּמִשָּׁם וַיַּהְפֹּךְ ה׳ לְךְ אֶת הַקְּלָלָה לִבְרָכָה שִּׁדְּוֹנוֹת נַעֲשׁוֹּ כִּוְכָיוֹת מַמְּשׁ שַׁדְּדוֹנוֹת נַעֲשׁוֹּ כִּוְכָיוֹת מַמְּשׁ

וּבֵיאוּר עִנְיַן זֶה הוּא כִּי הָנֵּה גָּדוֹל כֹּחַ בַּעַל מְּשׁוּכָה דְּמַשְׁכִּין לֵיה בְּחֵילָא יְתִיר כו׳ וְהַיְינוּ ע״י בְּחִי׳ וּבְכָל מְאֹדֶךְ לְמַעְלָה מִכְּדֵי שֶׁתוּכַל נַפְשׁוֹ שְׂאֵת הֵן בְּמָסִ״נ בְּפוֹ״מ כְּמַצְשָׂה דְר׳ אֶלְעָזָר בֶּן דֵּרְדְיָא כו׳ וְהֵן בִּרְחִי׳ בִּטוּל אֵלָיו יִת׳ וּכְלוֹת הַנֶּפֶשׁ בְּק״שׁ וּכְמַ״שׁ אֵלֶיךְ ה׳ נַפִּשִׁי אָשֵׂא וְגו׳.

וּבְחִי׳ וּבְכָל מְאֹדֶךְ הוּא הַמִּתְגַלֶּה בַּבַּעֵל תְּשׁוּבָה יוֹתֵר מִבְּצַדִּיקִים שֶׁבַּצַּדִּיקִים הִיא בְּחִי׳ וּבְכָל נַפְשְׁךְּ כו׳ וְהַיִינוּ לְפִי שֶׁיִתְרוֹן הָאוֹר הוּא הַבָּא מִתּוֹךְ הַחֹשֶׁךְ דַּוְקָא

וְלֹא אָבָה הוי׳ אֱלֹהֶיךְ לִשְׁמֹעַ אֶל בִּלְעָם וַיַּהַפֹּךְ ה׳ אֱלֹהֶיךְ לְךְ אֶת הַקְּלָלָה לְבְרָכָה כוי

For through the deliberate sins, when he places guilt upon his soul — how that "in vanity he came," etc. — and it touches him to the soul, therefore he cries out to Hashem in his great distress, and the cry is exceedingly great to God, above what his soul can bear.

שֶׁע״י הַזְּדוֹנוֹת שֶׁיָשִׂים אָשֶׁם נַפְשׁוֹ אֵיךְ שֶׁבְּהֶבֶל בָּא כו׳ וְנָגְעָה בוֹ עַד הַנָּפֶשׁ אִי לָזוֹת יִצְעַק אֶל ה׳ בְּצֶר לוֹ מְאֹד וְתִהָיֶה הַצְּעָקָה גְּדוֹלָה לֵאלֹקִים לְמַעְלָה מִכְּדֵי שַׁתוּכֵל נַפְשׁוֹ שֵׂאת.

And this is the matter of Yud-Hei with My Name, 365, etc. — that the negative commandments are in the Name Yud-Hei, which is above the aspect of the positive commandments, which are in the Name Vav-Hei. And as it is written, "In a land not sown" (Jeremiah 2:2) — for the aspect of "not" is that which is not sown, etc.

ן ָזֶהוּ עִנְיַן י״ה עִם שְׁמִי שס״ה כו׳ שֶׁהַל״ת הֵן בְּשֵׁם י״ה לְמַעְלָה מִבְּחִי׳ עֲשֵׂה שֶׁהֵן בְּשֵׁם ו״ה וּכְמַ״שׁ בָּאָרֶץ לֹא זְרוּעָה שֶׁבְּחִי׳ לֹא הוּא הַנִּזְרַע כו׳.

As it is explained elsewhere, for since the Name Yud–Hei is above the Name Vav–Hei, it is not possible by the power of the soul to draw from there in the aspect of drawing down, which is through the fulfillment of the positive commandments. But only through the guarding of the negative commandments, which is the matter of uprooting the will from the opposite.

כְּמֵ"שׁ בְּמָקוֹם אַחֵר כִּי לְכִּי שֶׁשֵׁם י״ה הוּא לְמַעְלָה מִשֵּׁם ו״ה אִי אֶפְשָׁר בְּכֹחַ הַנָּפֶשׁ לְהַמְשִׁיךּ מִשָּׁם בִּבְחִי׳ הַמְשָׁכָה שֶׁהוּא בְּקִיּוּם מַ״ע רַק בִּשְׁמִירַת הַל״ת שֶׁהוּא עָנָיַן עַקִירַת הַרַצוֹן מִן הַהִיפֵּךְ.

And this uprooting becomes very great — until he comes and reaches the aspect of "with all your might," above what the soul can bear.

וַעֲקִירָה זוֹ שֶׁמָּן הַהֵּיפוּף תִּגְדַּל מְאֹד עַד שֶׁיָבוֹא וְיַגִּיעַ לְבָחִי׳ וּבְכָל מְאֹדֶךְ לְמַעְלָה מִכְּדֵי שֶׁתוּכַל הַנָּפָשׁ שְׁאֵת.

And behold, regarding this it is said: "From the depths I have called You, Hashem" (Psalms 130:1). For there are ten depths, corresponding to the ten faculties of the soul — the seven emotions and the three intellectual powers.

וְהָבֵּה עַל זֶה נָאֶמַר מִמַּעֲמַקִּים קְרָאתִידְ הוּי׳ כִּי יֵשׁ יו״ד עֲמָקִים שֶׁהֵם כְּנָגֶד עֲשֶׂר בְּחִינוֹת הַנָּפֶשׁ ז׳ מִדּוֹת וּג׳ שַׂכליּים

And their depth is the root within each aspect, which is called "the depth of darkness" — that is, the aspect of darkness that has not yet come to revelation in the soul, in which there is not yet an aspect of being clothed in the body and animal soul.

וְהָעוֹמֶק שֶׁלֶּהֶן הוּא הַשֶּׁרֶשׁ שֶׁבְּכָל בְּחִי׳ שֶׁנִּקְרָא עוּמְקָא דְּחֲשׁוֹכָא דְּהַיִּנוּ בְּחִי׳ הַחֹשֶׁךְ שֻׁצְדֵיִן לֹא בָּא לִידֵי גִּילּוִי בַּנֶּפֶשׁ שָׁאֵין בּוֹ בְּחִי׳ הִתְלַבְּשׁוּת בְּגוּף וְנֶפֶשׁ הַבָּהֵמִית. הַבָּהֵמִית

This is from the supernal emotions that come from Above, which are higher than the faculties revealed in the soul. Only through the aspect of "with all your might" is revealed the aspect of "from the depths." And from there, "I have called You, Hashem" — that there be a renewal of the aspect of Havayah in the soul.

הוּא מֵהַמִּדּוֹת עֶלְיוֹנוֹת הַבָּאוֹת מִלְמַעְלָה שֶׁהֵן לְמַעְלָה מִכּוֹחוֹת הַמִּתְגַלּוֹת בַּנָּפֶשׁ רַק ע״י בְּחִי׳ וּבְכָל מְאֹדֶךְ מִתְגַלֶּה בְּחִי׳ מִמַּעֲמַקִּים וּמִשָּׁם קְרָאתִיךְ הוי׳ לְהִיוֹת הִתְחַדְשׁוּת בְּחִי׳ הוי׳ בַּנָּפָשׁ.

ולא אַבָה הויי אַלהֵיךּ לִשְׁמֹעַ אֵל בְּלעָם וַיַּהַפֹּדְ ה׳ אֵלהִיךְ לְדָּ אַת הַקְּלַלָה לְבָרַכָה כוי

And to be in the soul this Havayah from the aspect of "from the depths" — which had not yet been in revelation of the soul. And through this, "Hashem turned the curse into a blessing" — for from there is drawn forgiveness and pardon of sins.

"And I will sprinkle upon you pure water" (Ezekiel 36:25), "I have erased like a cloud your transgressions" (Isaiah 44:22). And therefore we say in the Ten Days of Repentance this psalm, "From the depths," for every day a different depth is drawn, until on Yom Kippur — "Before Hashem you shall be purified" (Leviticus 16:30).

וְלִהְיוֹת בַּנֶּפֶשׁ הוי׳ זוֹ שֶׁל בְּחִי׳ מִמַּעֲמַקִּים שֶׁעֲדַיִן לֹא הָיְתָה בְּגִילּוּי הַנָּפֶשׁ וְעַל יְדֵי זָה וַיַּהֲפֹּךְ ה׳ אֶת הַקְּלָּלָה לִבְרָכָה שֶׁמִשָּׁם נִמְשָׁךְ מְחִילַת וְסְלִיחַת הָעֲוֹנוֹת.

וְזָרְקְתִּי עֲלֵיכֶם מַיִם טְהוֹרִים כו׳ מָחִיתִּי כָּעָב פְּשָׁעֶיךְ כו׳ וְלָכֵן אוֹמְרִים בַּעֲשֶׁרֶת יְמֵי תְּשׁוּבָה מִזְמוֹר זֶה מִמַּעֲמַקִּים שֶׁבְּכָל יוֹם מַמְשִׁיךְ עֹמֶק אֶחָד עַד שֶׁבְּיוֹם הַכִּפּוּרִים לִפְנֵי הוי׳ תִּטְהָרוּ לִפְנֵי הוי׳ הַמִּתְגַלֶּה בַּנָּפֶשׁ שָׁמִשֶּׁם נִמְשַׁךְ לְהִיוֹת תִּטְהָרוּ שֵׁמִשֶׁם נִמְשֵׁךְ לְהִיוֹת תִּטְהָרוּ

NOTE Summary

The discourse begins with Bilam's attempt to curse Israel, which represents spiritual accusers seeking to arouse judgment. Hashem's response, "He did not desire to listen," reveals that no reasoning was needed; rather, Divine refusal itself silenced the accusations, rooted in the innate bond between Hashem and Israel. This bond stems from the fact that every Jewish soul is a portion of Havayah, a spark of the Infinite.

The Alter Rebbe then unpacks each letter of the Divine Name as it manifests in the soul. The Yud corresponds to *Chochmah* — a point of Divine wisdom contracted from the Infinite, like a ray passing through hair from the brain. This small radiance is the beginning of revelation, but only through *tzimtzum*. The first Hei is *Binah* — expansion and contemplation of that wisdom, broadening the heart with fiery love and joy. The Vav signifies Torah and mitzvos — the drawing down of Divine voice and light even into the wilderness of this world. The final Hei is the realm of action — mitzvos as deeds, especially tzedakah, which extends Divine vitality into the physical plane.

Prayer revolves around contemplating the descent of Infinite light into limited, contracted radiance until one awakens love and requests complete teshuvah — to be drawn back to the inner light of Hashem's face. Through mitzvos, particularly action, one makes this revelation tangible in the lowest realm.

The discourse then advances to the special quality of *teshuvah*. Beyond the structured service of the divine soul, there is a higher Havayah that descends from Above, expressed in "*Because Hashem your God loves you*." This is an *it'aruta d'le'eila* (arousal from Above) that precedes and empowers man's arousal from below. Here, sins can be transformed into merits, for the cry of the baal teshuvah reaches deeper than the steady service of the tzaddik. His "*with all your might*" transcends the limits of the soul's capacity, drawn precisely from the depths of darkness.

Finally, the Alter Rebbe connects this to "From the depths I call You, Hashem." These depths correspond to the ten faculties of the soul and their hidden roots, called "the depth of darkness." In the Ten Days of Teshuvah,

ולא אַבָה הויי אַלהֵיך לִשְׁמֹעַ אֵל בָּלעָם וַיַּהַפֹּדְ ה׳ אֱלהֵיךְ לְדָּ אֵת הַקְּלַלָה לְבָרֵכָה כוי

each day reveals another depth, culminating in Yom Kippur when "Before Hashem you shall be purified." From these concealed depths arises a new Havayah within the soul, effecting atonement and renewal.

Practical Takeaway

Every Jew carries within his soul the letters of the Divine Name Havayah, yet their revelation depends on both *hishtalshelus* (gradual service through prayer, Torah, mitzvos, and contemplation) and on the depths accessed through *teshuvah*. Daily avodah requires focus on contraction — curbing one's desires, sanctifying oneself even in the permitted, and turning the point of wisdom into expansive understanding and heartfelt love. At the same time, one must know that even the lowest fall can become the key to the highest ascent. By crying out from the depths and surrendering beyond one's natural capacity, one draws down a love from Above that transforms curses into blessings, and sins into merits.

Practical Takeaway (Expanded)

The Alter Rebbe teaches that the Divine Name Havayah is imprinted in every soul. Our avodah is to awaken and embody each letter in practical life:

- Yud Chochmah (Point of Wisdom): Begin the day with *bittul* a moment of silence before Hashem, recognizing that all wisdom and renewal come from Him. This is the spark of awareness, a point of clarity that sets the tone for prayer and study. In practice: before starting Shema or Torah learning, pause to reflect on Hashem's presence.
- **Hei Binah** (**Contemplation**): Expand that spark into heartfelt meditation. Spend time during *Pesukei D'zimrah* or Shema contemplating how Hashem fills all worlds (*memalei kol almin*) and surrounds all worlds (*sovev kol almin*). In practice: take one phrase, such as "*Shema Yisrael Hashem Elokeinu Hashem Echad*," and dwell on its meaning until the heart warms with love or joy.
- Vav Torah and Mitzvos (Drawing Down): Channel contemplation into concrete expression. Just as the Vav draws down, so Torah study and mitzvah performance bring Divine light into this world. In practice: when saying words of Torah or performing a mitzvah, know you are acting as Hashem's "voice" in the wilderness of this world.
- **Hei (Final) Action and Tzedakah:** The culmination is in deeds. Tzedakah, the Alter Rebbe explains, represents all mitzvos because it gives life. In practice: give tzedakah daily, even a coin, with intention to draw Hashem's infinite vitality into the physical world. Every mitzvah act putting on tefillin, lighting candles, eating kosher is an act of Divine revelation.

At times, a Jew falls short and feels disconnected. Here the Alter Rebbe emphasizes *teshuvah*: crying out "from the depths" (*mima'amakim*). In practice: during the Ten Days of Teshuvah — or whenever one feels distant —

וְלֹא אָבָה הויי אֱלֹהֶיךְ לִשְׁמֹעַ אֶל בִּלְעָם וַיַּהָפֹּךְ הי אֱלֹהֶיךְ לְדְ אֶת הַקְּלָלָה לִבְרָכָה כוי

cry out sincerely, even without words, asking Hashem to renew the Havayah within your soul. This draws from the deepest root of the soul and transforms darkness into light, sins into merits.

The daily avodah, then, is twofold: structured revelation through Havayah in thought, speech, and action, and unstructured surrender from the depths through *teshuvah*. Together, they create the complete bond that transforms curse into blessing.

Chassidic Story

Once, during the Alter Rebbe's imprisonment in Petersburg (1798), he was interrogated by officials who demanded to know the meaning of the verse: "And Hashem called to Adam and said, 'Where are you?'" The Alter Rebbe replied that the verse is eternal, addressed to every person: "Where are you in your life? Have you accomplished what you were created for?" This explanation so moved his interrogator that he trembled in awe. Here the Alter Rebbe revealed the essence of his teaching — that Divine words are not bound to the past but call forth the deepest point of a Jew's soul in every moment. Just as in his discourse he explains "From the depths I have called You, Hashem," so too he embodied it, showing that from the depths of exile, darkness, or even sin, a Jew can cry out and uncover a new revelation of Havayah in his soul.

END NOTE