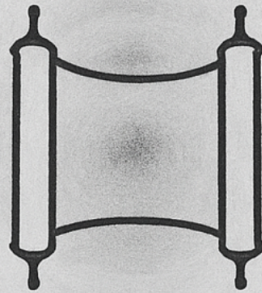


בס"ד

Alter Rebbe
Likkutei Torah
Parshas Devarim
בְּרַבּוֹת פִּי עֶקֶב



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Alter Rebbe

Likkutei Torah

Parshas Devarim

ברבות פ' עקב ד"א ושמר לה כו'

Introduction

This discourse by the Alter Rebbe—Rabbi Schneur Zalman of Liadi (1745–1812), founder of Chabad-Lubavitch—explores the layered meanings behind the verse “Zion shall be redeemed through justice, and her returnees through righteousness” (Yeshayahu 1:27). Drawing from Midrash, Kabbalah, and deep psychological insight, the Alter Rebbe reveals how justice (mishpat) and righteousness (tzedakah) are not only judicial or charitable acts but spiritual states that enable redemption on both cosmic and personal levels. The discourse touches on the role of Divine mercy, inner discipline, and the festivals of Yom Kippur and Sukkos, ultimately culminating in the experience of transcendent love and Divine union through acts of Torah, teshuvah, and kindness.

In the Midrash Rabbah on Parshas Eikev, on the verse

"וְשָׁמַרְתָּ לָהּ", it brings a different interpretation: Avraham gave his children two tenant-farmers, as it says, "For I have known him so that he will command his children... to keep the way of Hashem, to do righteousness and justice." Likewise, the Holy One, blessed be He, assigned her two tenant-farmers in parallel—Chesed and Rachamim (Kindness and Mercy).

ברבות פ' עקב ד"א ושמר לה כו' אברהם נתן לבניו שני אריסין שנאמר כי ידעתיו כו' ושמרו דרך ה' לעשות צדקה ומשפט. אף הקב"ה זקף לה שני אריסין כנגדן חסד ורחמים כו'

The Israelites stood and prepared themselves, as it is written, "Zion will be redeemed with justice, and her returnees with charity." So too, the Holy One, blessed be He, brought His own (attributes), as it is written: "For the mountains may move... but My kindness shall not depart from you," says your Merciful Hashem.

עמדו ישראל וכשירו את עצמן כו' שפך כתיב ציון במשפט תפדה ושביה בצדקה. אף הקב"ה הביא את שלו שפך כתיב כי ההרים כו' וחסדי מאתה כו' אמר מרחמך ה'

The matter is according to what is explained elsewhere on the verse "Praise Hashem, O Jerusalem; praise your God, O Zion" — for it is seemingly difficult: Zion is the inner dimension of Jerusalem, so why is the name of Hashem (Y-H-V-H) mentioned regarding Jerusalem, while the name Elokim is mentioned regarding Zion?

והענין על דרך המבואר במקום אחר על פסוק שבחי ירושלים את ה' הללי אלהיך ציון דלכאורה קשה הרי ציון הוא פנימיות דירושלים ולמה נזכר גבי ירושלים שם הוי"ו וגבי ציון שם אלהים

However, the idea is as follows: it is written, "Israel will rejoice in its Maker; the children of Zion will exult in their King." It is explained elsewhere (in the discourse "Sos Asis BaHashem") that the term "gila" (exultation) refers to the verse "and exult with trembling," which is a higher level than joy.

אבל הענין דהנה כתיב ישמח ישראל בעשיו בני ציון יגילו במלכם ומבואר במקום אחר בד"ה שוש אשיש בה' ותגל נפשי באלקי דבחינת גילה היא כמו שפתיב וגילו ברעדה כו'

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This "gila" is a higher level than "simchah" (joy), and as explained also in the discourse "Veyadata Hayom," that the fusion of love and awe arises from the revelation of the level of "HaNorah El Elyon" (the Awesome Supreme One).

והיא בחינה גבוהה יותר מהשמחה וכמו שכתוב גם כן בד"ה וידעת היום כי התכללות האהבה והיראה מתמת הגלוי מבחינת והנורא אל עליון כו'

And also, "gila" is the joy found in the innermost part of the heart and the hidden world ("alma de'iskasya") — like the second set of tablets, which were given quietly, in secret.

וגם הגילה היא השמחה שבבחינת פנימיות הלב ועולמא דאתבסא וכענין לוחות אחרונות שנתנו בהשאי

And behold, in order for the revelation from the level of "VeHanora El Elyon" (the Awesome Supreme One) to be drawn into the level of inwardness—until it brings forth the level of "and exult with trembling"—this is specifically through gevuros and tzimtzumim (severity and constrictions). See also what is written in the discourse beginning "Vayikach Korach" regarding the concept of the threads of tzitzis.

והנה כדי שיומשך הגלוי מבחינת והנורא אל עליון בבחינת פנימית עד שיומשך מזה בחינת וגילו ברעדה זהו על ידי גבורות וצמצומים דוקא ועמ"ש סד"ה ויקח קרח בענין חוטי הציצית

And this is the meaning of "my soul shall exult in my Elokim," which refers to the Divine name Elokim, the level of tzimtzum and gevurah. In truth, this level of Elokim is as it says, "Hashem will be to me for a God (Elokim)"—as explained in the discourse "Shuvah Yisrael" regarding Yom Kippur. This is the meaning of "praise your God, O Zion."

וזהו תגל נפשי באלקי שהוא בחינת שם אלקים בחינת צמצום וגבורה ובאמת בחינת אלקים זה הנו כמשכתוב והיה ה' לי לאלקים כמשכתוב מזה בד"ה שובה ישראל גבי יום הכפורים וזהו הללי אלהיך ציון

And in order to draw down this level, it is through the level of "mishpat" (justice), meaning self-nullification and contraction—that a person should constrain himself, sanctify himself even in what is permitted, as explained in the discourse "Velo Avah Hashem Elokecha Lishmoa El Bilam." This is the level of mishpat a person does in his soul, to not follow after indulgences—as the Sages said, "the good inclination judges the righteous."

וכדי להמשיך בחינה זו זהו על ידי בחינת משפט הינו להיות בטול רצון וצמצום שצמצם את עצמו להיות קדש את עצמו במתן לך כמשכתוב בד"ה ולא אבה ה' אלהיך לשמע אל בלעם וזהו בחינת משפט שעושה האדם בנפשו שלא לימשך אחר המותרות וכמ"ר צדיקים יצר טוב שופטן

And this is also through the study of Torah, which is called "mishpat"—and this is the meaning of "Zion will be redeemed through mishpat"—in order that the level of "and the children of Zion will exult," and "exult with trembling," be attained. This comes through the level of mishpat as described above, and through Torah study, for "if there is no wisdom, there is no awe."

והינו גם כן על ידי עסק התורה שנקראת משפט וזהו ציון כמשפט תפדה של להיות בחינת ובני ציון וגילו ברעדה זהו על ידי בחינת משפט הנ"ל ועסק התורה כי אם אין חכמה אין יראה

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As it is explained in the discourse "Vayedaber Elokim... Anochi," and also because "mishpat belongs to Elokim," which is the meaning of "praise your God, O Zion," as explained above. See also what is written in the discourse "Hashem Li Be'ozri"—that in order for there to be absorption in the Divine soul, it must be "so that the nations of the world will know," to break the desires of the animal soul and the body that block and prevent the absorption in the Divine soul, which is the level of Zion.

וּכְמַ"ש בְּד"ה וַיְדַבֵּר אֱלֹקִים כו' אֲנֹכִי כו' וְגַם כִּי הַמִּשְׁפָּט לְאֱלֹקִים הוּא לְהִיּוֹת הַלְלִי אֱלֹהֶיךָ צִיּוֹן וּכְבֹּד לְעַמְ"ש בְּד"ה ה' לִי בַעֲזָרִי שְׂכָדִי לְהִיּוֹת הַקְּלִיטָה בְּנֶפֶשׁ הָאֱלֹקִית הוּא עַל יְדֵי לְמַעַן דַּעַת עַמִּי הָאֶרֶץ לְשִׁבּוֹר תַּאֲוֹת נֶפֶשׁ הַבְּהֵמִית וְהַגּוֹף הַמִּסְתִּירִים וּמוֹנְעִים הַקְּלִיטָה בְּנֶפֶשׁ הָאֱלֹקִית שֶׁהִיא בְּחִינַת צִיּוֹן

As explained in Parshas Tzav, in the discourse "Inyan Shiv'as Yemei HaMilu'im," on the verse "I will fill the desolate one"—this is the idea that Zion will be redeemed specifically through mishpat, as it says, "like the original mishpat," and the Targum says: "like the first halachah." This means that mishpat restores everything to its proper place, as it was before the sin of the Tree of Knowledge.

וּכְמַ"ש בְּפ' צו סד"ה עֲנִין שְׂבַעַת יְמֵי הַמִּלּוּאִים בַּעֲנִין פִּירוּשׁ אֲמִלְאָה הַתְּרֻבָּה וְזֶהוּ עֲנִין צִיּוֹן בְּמִשְׁפָּט דִּוְקָא תַּפְדָּה וְכַמִּשְׁפָּטוֹב כַּמִּשְׁפָּט הָרָאוּשׁוֹן וּת"א בְּהַלְבָּתָא קַדְמוּתָא דְהִינּוּ שֶׁהַמִּשְׁפָּט הוּא לְהִיּוֹת כָּל דָּבָר עַל מְכוּנוֹ כְּמוֹ שְׂצָרִיךָ לְהִיּוֹת וְהִינּוּ כְּמוֹ שֶׁהִיוּ הָעוֹלָמוֹת עַל מְכוּנָן קֹדֶם חֲטָא עֵץ הַדַּעַת כו'

As it says in Yirmiyahu (30:18), "and the palace shall sit on its rightful mishpat." And the level of "and her returnees with tzedakah" refers to all the mitzvos, which are called tzedakah, as it says, "and it shall be righteousness for us if we observe..." Also, from the level of mishpat, it draws down into the performance of tzedakah, as explained in the discourse "Ashira LaHashem Ki Ga'oh Ga'ah."

וּכְמַ"ש בִּירְמְיָה (ס' ל' י"ח) וְאֶרְמוֹן עַל מִשְׁפָּטוֹ יָשָׁב. וּבְחִינַת וְשָׁבִיָּה בְּצִדְקָה הִנֵּה כָּלִלוֹת הַמִּצְוֹת שֶׁנִּקְרְאוּ צִדְקָה כַּמִּשְׁפָּטוֹב וּצִדְקָה תַּהֲנֶה לָנוּ כִּי נִשְׁמֹר כו' וְגַם כִּי מִבְּחִינַת מִשְׁפָּט נִמְשָׁךְ לְהִיּוֹת עוֹשֶׂה צִדְקָה כַּמִּשְׁפָּטוֹב בְּד"ה אֲשִׁירָה לָהּ כִּי גָאָה גָאָה

And this is the meaning of "David would do mishpat and tzedakah," through which the level of "Sos Asis BaHashem" and "Yismach Yisrael Be'osav" is drawn. See also what is written in the discourse "Sos Asis."

וְזֶהוּ וַיְהִי דָוִד עוֹשֶׂה מִשְׁפָּט וּצִדְקָה שְׂעַל יְדֵי זֶה נִמְשָׁךְ בְּחִינַת שׁוֹשׁ אֲשִׁישׁ בְּה' יִשְׁמַח יִשְׂרָאֵל בַּעֲשׂוֹי וְעֵין שֶׁם בְּד"ה שׁוֹשׁ אֲשִׁישׁ

And behold, the matter of "He assigned to her two tenant-farmers" corresponding to the level of "Mercy"—as in "Hashem, your Merciful One"—refers to the revelation of the Thirteen Attributes of Mercy (י"ג מדות הרחמים) that are revealed on Yom Kippur. As it says later in the discourse that begins with "Ki Heharim Yamushu," this is drawn down through the level of mishpat (justice) mentioned above, which a person performs within his soul.

וְהִנֵּה עֲנִין זָקָף לָהּ שְׁנֵי אֲרִיסִין כְּגִגְדָן בְּחִינַת רַחֲמִים אֲמַר מִרְחֻמֶּךָ ה' הִנֵּנוּ גִילּוֹי י"ג מִדּוֹת הַרַחֲמִים הַמִּתְגַּלּוֹת בְּיוֹם הַכִּפּוּרִים וּכְמַ"ש לְקַמֵּן סד"ה כִּי הִהָרִים יְמוּשׁוּ וְהוּא נִמְשָׁךְ עַל יְדֵי בְּחִינַת מִשְׁפָּט הַנִּלְשָׁעוּשָׁה הָאֶדָם בְּנֶפֶשׁוֹ

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For they were all said regarding Yom Kippur: "And you shall afflict your souls," and see what is written in the discourse "Ra'isi Vehinei Menoras Zahav" regarding crushing and pressing, that a person does to himself—through this, he draws down the revelation of the Thirteen Attributes of Mercy like the good oil that descends upon the beard, etc., as mentioned there.

שכלן נאמר ביום הכפורים ועניתם את נפשתיכם ועמ"ש בד"ה ראיתי והנה מנורת זהב בענין הכתיבה והבטוש שאדם עושה בעצמו שעל ידי זה ממש ממשיך גילוי בחינת י"ג מדות הרחמים בפשמן הטוב כו' יורד על הזקן כו' ע"ש

And also through Torah, which is called mishpat, one draws down the Thirteen Attributes of Mercy, as written in the discourse "Acharei Hashem Elokeichem Teleichu," and also in the discourse "Ani Ledodi" regarding "the Shepherd among the roses," which refers to those who learn halachos.

וגם על ידי התורה שנקראת משפט ממשיכים י"ג מדות הרחמים כמ"ש סד"ה אחרי ה' אלהיכם תלכו וכמ"ש גם כן סד"ה אני לדודי בענין הרושה בשושנים ששונים הלכות

However, the level of chesed (kindness) implies something higher even than the level of mercy. Since the Thirteen Attributes of Mercy are called "great mercy," how can there be something beyond that called chesed?

אבל ענין בחינת החסד דמשמע שהוא למעלה גם מבחינת הרחמים וכיון שהרחמים הם בחינת רחמים גדולים י"ג מדות הרחמים אם כן מהו עוד ענין החסד

However, the matter is that just before the verse "Zion will be redeemed with justice," it says (Yeshayahu 1:18), "Come now and let us reason together, says Hashem. Though your sins be like scarlet, they shall be white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall become like wool."

אבל הענין דהנה לעיל מינה דהאי קרא ציון במשפט תפדה כתיב לכו נא ונזכרה יאמר ה' אם יהיו חטאיכם כשנים כשגלג לבנינו אם יאדימו כתולע כצמר יהיו

And the matter of "they shall become white as snow" refers to the crimson strip that would turn white on Yom Kippur, as mentioned in the Mishnah (Yoma ch. 6) and Shabbos ch. 9. This was through drawing down the Thirteen Attributes of Mercy, about which it says: "The Ancient of Days sat, his garment white as snow," as explained in the discourse "Ki BaYom Hazeh Yechaper."

והנה ענין כשגלג לבנינו זהו ענין לשון של זהירות שהיה מלבין ביום הכפורים כמ"ש במשנה סו"פ ו' דיומא ופ"ט דשבת והינו על ידי המשיכת י"ג מדות הרחמים שעל זה נאמר ועתיק יומין יתיב לבושיה כתלג חיור וכמ"ש מזה בד"ה כי ביום הזה יכפר

But the level of "like wool they shall be" is even higher. This is as it says: "And the hair of his head like clean wool," meaning that the hair of the head is a metaphor for the innermost essence and is higher than "His garment."

אבל בחינת כצמר יהיו הוא בחינה עליונה יותר והוא כמשכתוב ושער רישה כצמר נקא שפחינת שער רישה הוא מבחינת עצמות על דרך משל ולמעלה מבחינת לבושיה

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And this is the level of chesed that is above even the Thirteen Attributes of Mercy. As written in Eitz Chayim, the level of "hair of the head" is a metaphor for the outflow from the innermost level of the Supernal Kindness (chesed elyon) from the level of Ein Sof itself, in which there is no mixture of judgment at all.

Unlike the level of "like white snow" (כְּתֵלַג חִיּוֹר), where there still remains some mixture of judgment—for Yom Kippur is called the Day of Judgment and Justice—and furthermore, the Sages said regarding mercy: "Whoever lacks understanding, it is forbidden to have mercy on him." Thus, there is an aspect of judgment even within mercy.

For mercy applies only to those in distress or to the poor, whereas chesed (kindness) applies equally to the poor and the wealthy. This is the meaning of "they shall be like wool" (בְּצֶמֶר) (יהיו).

And the main revelation of this Supreme Kindness (chesed elyon) is on the festival of Sukkos, which follows the Ten Days of Repentance. Nevertheless, it is stated in praise: "He gives snow like wool" (הַנּוֹתֵן שֶׁלֵג כְּצֶמֶר)—that even within the level of snow, representing His garment, there is also a drawing from the level of wool, which is a higher level, as mentioned above.

And see what is written on this regarding the verse "Shabbas Shabbason hu lachem." And see what is written in the discourse beginning "Haazinu HaShamayim" regarding Sukkos, which is the level of "Eh'yeh katal liYisrael"—an arousal from above (isarusa d'le'eila) that is higher than arousal from below (isarusa d'letata). And it may be said that this too is a level of chesed, for "He desires kindness."

And behold, these two levels are drawn through mishpat and tzedakah: for the Ten Days of Repentance are associated with the aspect of "HaMelech HaMishpat," as mentioned above; and Sukkos is associated with the quality of tzedakah, as explained in Pri Eitz Chayim at the end of Shaar HaSukkos in the name of the RaShaSh.

וזהו ענין הקסד שלמעלה גם מבחינת י"ג מדות הרחמים וכמ"ש בעץ חיים שבחינת שער רישא על דרך משל הן המשכות מבחינת פנימית קסד עליון שבחינת אין סוף ממש שאין בו שום תערובת דין כלל

משאין כן בבחינת כְּתֵלַג חִיּוֹר יש עדין קצת תערובות דין גם כן שְׁהָרִי יום הכפור נקרא יום הדין והמשפט וגם ארז"ל בענין הרחמים כל מי שאין בו דעה אסור לרחם עליו הרי יש בזה בחינת דין

בשגם כי הרחמים אינו אלא על מי שצד לו ועל העניים אבל הקסד הוא בין לעניים בין לעשירים וזהו ענין בצמר יהיו

ועקר התגלות בחינת קסד עליון הנה הוא בחג הסוכות אחר קדימת עשרת ימי תשובה אלא שגאמר השבח הנותן שלג בצמר דהינו שגם בבחינת שלג בחינת לבושיה יומשוף גם כן מבחינת בצמר שהוא בחינה עליונה יותר כנ"ל

וענין מה שכתוב מזה על פסוק שבת שבתון הוא לכם. וענין מה שכתוב סד"ה האזינו השמים בענין סוכות שהוא בחינת אהנה כטל לישראל אתערוותא דלעילא שלמעלה מאתערוותא דלתתא, ויש לומר שזהו גם כן בחינת הקסד כי חפץ קסד הוא

והנה ב' בחינות אלו נמשכים על ידי משפט וצדקה כי עשרת ימי תשובה בחינת המלך המשפט וכנ"ל וסוכות בחינת צדקה כמו שכתוב בפרי עץ חיים סוף שער הסוכות בשם הרח"ו

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And see what is written in the discourse beginning "Vechol Boneich" regarding the verse "bitzedakah tikonani." And regarding the verse "Zion shall be redeemed with justice," one may also explain this based on what is written in the discourse "Torah Tzivah" about the future when they will say to Yitzchak, "You are our father."

וְעֵינֵינוּ מֵהָשְׁכָּתוֹב סד"ה וְכָל בְּנֵיךְ בְּעֵינֵינוּ בְּצִדְקָה תִּכְוֶנֶנִּי. וּבְעֵינֵינוּ צִיּוֹן בְּמִשְׁפָּט תִּפְדֶּה יִשְׂרָאֵל לומר עוד
עַל פִּי מֵהָשְׁכָּתוֹב סד"ה תוֹרָה צִוָּה בְּעֵינֵינוּ
שְׁלֵשֶׁתִּיד יֵאמְרוּ לְיִצְחָק כִּי אֲתָה אָבִינוּ

And on what is written regarding "Hanosein sheleg," that in snow there is intensity of whiteness, etc. And what is explained elsewhere regarding the linen garments of the Kohen Gadol on Yom Kippur. And the phrase "v'shavecha b'tzedakah" (her returnees with righteousness) as mentioned above.

וּבְמֵהָשְׁכָּתוֹב בְּעֵינֵינוּ הַנּוֹתֵן שֶׁלֵּג שֶׁבְּשֶׁלֵּג יֵשׁ תוֹקֵף
הַלְבֻנָּתִית כו' וּמֵהָשְׁכָּתוֹב בְּמָקוֹם אַחֵר בְּעֵינֵינוּ
בְּגָדֵי בַד דְּכֹהֵן גָּדוֹל בְּיוֹם הַכִּפּוּרִים. וְשִׁבְחָהּ
בְּצִדְקָה בְּנ"ל

[NOTE Summary

The discourse begins with the Midrashic explanation that Avraham passed on two “arisin” (stewards) to his children—representing tzedakah and mishpat—mirrored by Hashem’s own attributes of chesed and rachamim. When the Jewish people engage in these qualities, Hashem responds in kind. This leads to the central verse: “Zion shall be redeemed through mishpat and her returnees through tzedakah.”

The Alter Rebbe asks: why is the name “Hashem” (Y-H-V-H) used in connection with Yerushalayim, and “Elokim” with Tziyon, when Tziyon represents the inner dimension of Yerushalayim? The answer lies in the concept of *gila* (exultation), a joy that comes from trembling and awe, rooted in the innermost part of the heart—beyond the simple emotion of happiness. This deeper joy, linked with the hidden world (*alma d'iskasya*), comes specifically through the path of *mishpat*—self-contraction, discipline, and refinement.

To achieve this inner awakening, one must engage in *mishpat* through Torah study and spiritual restraint. This type of service leads to the transformation described as “exultation with trembling,” representing the synthesis of love and awe.

The discourse then turns to the interplay of justice and mercy, explaining how the Thirteen Attributes of Mercy are drawn down through self-affliction (as on Yom Kippur) and Torah study. But even higher than mercy is *chesed elyon*—transcendent kindness. Mercy is given only to those in need, while *chesed* is bestowed freely, even on the undeserving.

This higher form of kindness is symbolized by “wool” (*tzemer*), in contrast to “snow” (*sheleg*), both from the verse: “Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow... like wool they shall become.” Snow (representing whiteness and purity) corresponds to Divine garments

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(Yom Kippur), while wool comes from the “hair of the head” of Atik Yomin—a metaphor for the deepest, infinite level of kindness from the Essence.

This transcendent *chesed* is revealed most fully on Sukkos—after the soul’s purification during the Ten Days of Teshuvah. Sukkos is characterized by *isarusa d’le’eila* (arousal from above), flowing freely like dew. Thus, both levels—*mishpat* and *tzedakah*—enable the redemption of Tziyon.

Practical Takeaway

Redemption begins with inner discipline. If we want to experience deep Divine connection (Tziyon), we must practice *mishpat*—the work of self-refinement through Torah and spiritual boundaries. Yet the final transformation requires *tzedakah*—open-hearted kindness and giving without calculation. These two paths together open the gates for the deepest revelations of G-dliness to dwell within us, particularly during the sacred days from Rosh Hashanah through Sukkos.

Chassidic Story

The Alter Rebbe once met a wealthy chassid who prided himself on giving large amounts of *tzedakah*. The Rebbe asked him gently, “Do you also give like the poor man gives?” The man was puzzled. The Rebbe explained, “When a pauper gives a few coins, he gives not only his money, but his heart. His giving breaks him open. That kind of giving reaches Hashem’s essence.”

He then added, “Tziyon is redeemed not only through justice, but through *that* kind of *tzedakah*—one that reflects the heart’s inner work.”

(Source: *Shivchei HaRav*, stories of the Alter Rebbe)

TPX (Therapeutic-Psychological Integration)

This discourse by the Alter Rebbe offers profound psychological insight under the guise of mystical and legal terminology. On its surface, it discusses “justice” (*mishpat*) and “righteousness” (*tzedakah*) as the pathways to redemption. But beneath that lies a subtle model of inner transformation.

At its core, *mishpat* represents self-discipline—the capacity to set limits, to engage in internal evaluation, and to live not by instinct or desire but by a higher calling. Psychologically, this is the work of the mature ego: to regulate impulses, confront self-deception, and make space for responsibility and growth. In the Alter Rebbe’s terms, this is the process of “contracting” oneself (*tzimtzum*) and “sanctifying oneself in that which is permitted”—i.e., restraining even from things that are technically allowed, in order to stay aligned with deeper truth.

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Only through this internal structure—*mishpat*—can the heart open to *gila*, the deeper joy that paradoxically comes with trembling. This is akin to the emotional vulnerability that arises when one surrenders ego and enters an authentic relationship with a greater presence.

But *mishpat* alone is not enough. The discourse introduces *tzedakah*, not merely as financial giving, but as a symbol of radical kindness—*chesed elyon*, transcendent compassion that is not conditional upon the worthiness of the recipient. In modern terms, this is the therapeutic ideal of unconditional positive regard: seeing the whole person even in their brokenness. Whereas *rachamim* (mercy) responds to suffering, *chesed* flows freely, whether deserved or not. It reflects the capacity to give without the need to justify or control.

This discourse distinguishes between the mercy of Yom Kippur—which still contains judgment—and the pure kindness of Sukkos, which represents healing love. The metaphor of “snow” vs. “wool” mirrors two types of transformation: one that cleanses, and one that embraces. “Snow” is cold and bright; “wool” is warm and soft. True healing comes when the soul, after doing its inner work (*mishpat*), becomes able to receive Divine kindness not just as pardon, but as love.

The spiritual psychology here teaches that redemption—both personal and collective—requires a dual path:

1. Discipline and honesty (*mishpat*)
2. Loving connection and unconditional giving (*tzedakah*)

And only through their integration does the soul reach “Zion”—the inner place where the Divine presence dwells.

Story

A woman once approached a well-known therapist after a decade of estrangement from her adult son. “I’ve done everything,” she said. “I’ve apologized. I’ve gone to therapy. I’ve even respected his silence. But he still won’t speak to me.”

The therapist asked, “When you apologized, did you expect him to forgive you?”

She nodded, “Of course.”

He replied, “That’s not apology. That’s bargaining. True apology is *tzedakah*. It gives without the need for return.”

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A year later, she wrote him a letter. Not asking for forgiveness. Just giving love. Weeks passed. One day, her phone buzzed. Her son had replied: *"Thank you, Mom. That meant more than you know."* **END NOTE]**