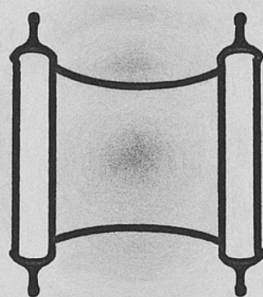


בס"ד

**Rabbi Menachem Mendel
of Horodak
Parshas Matos Massei**

מאמר א



Dedicated To:

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Menachem Mendel of Horodak

Pri Ha'Eretz

Parshas Matos Massei

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Introduction

This profound teaching by Rabbi Menachem Mendel of Horodok (also known as the "Horodaker") explores the inner purpose of spiritual descent, the role of thought and daas in unifying reality with the Divine, and the mystical meaning of mitzvos, journeys, and sacred structure. Rabbi Menachem Mendel was a leading disciple of the Maggid of Mezritch and a central figure in the early Chassidic movement. After emigrating to the Holy Land, he led the Chassidic community in Tiberias until his passing in 1788. His discourses often combine depth of kabbalistic insight with practical guidance for spiritual refinement

And Moshe spoke to the heads of the tribes of the children of Israel, saying (Bamidbar 30:2): This is the matter that Hashem has commanded. And at the end of the book (Bamidbar 36:13): These are the commandments and the laws that Hashem commanded by the hand of Moshe to the children of Israel, in the plains of Moav by the Jordan, near Jericho.

The matter is as our Sages said (Avos 4:3): "Do not be disdainful of any person, and do not be dismissive of any thing." Likewise is the story of Rabbi Elazar the son of Rabbi Shimon (Taanis 20a), to whom Eliyahu, of blessed memory, appeared as a repulsively ugly man such as there had never been, until Rabbi Elazar degraded him, etc. And afterward Eliyahu gave him rebuke until he accepted upon himself not to behave so again.

And the matter is, as it is known from the verse (Mishlei 16:4): "Everything Hashem made for His purpose," and the explanation of (Yeshayahu 43:7): "All that is called by My Name and for My glory I created it, etc." — that all the creatures in the world, even the smallest worm in the sea, are needed by the world, and the greatness of the Creator is revealed through them more than without them. For if revelation were possible without them, they would not have been created.

וַיְדַבֵּר מֹשֶׁה אֶל רֹאשֵׁי הַמִּטּוֹת לְבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל לֵאמֹר
זֶה הַדְּבָר אֲשֶׁר צִוָּה ה' (בַּמִּדְבָּר ל' ב'): וְכִסּוּף
הַסֶּפֶר (בַּמִּדְבָּר ל"ו י"ג): אֵלֶּה הַמִּצְוֹת וְהַמִּשְׁפָּטִים
אֲשֶׁר צִוָּה ה' בְּיַד מֹשֶׁה אֶל בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּעֶרְבֹת מוֹאָב
עַל יַרְדֵּן יֵרֵחוֹ

הַעֲנִינָּה הוּא אָמְרוּ רַז"ל (מִשְׁנָה אָבוֹת ד' ג'): "אֵל תְּהִי
כְּזוֹ [לְכָל אָדָם, וְאֵל תְּהִי מִכְּלִיג] לְכָל דָּבָר". וְכֵן
מַעֲשֵׂה דְרָבִי אֶלְעָזָר בֶּן רַבִּי שְׁמַעוֹן (תַּעֲנִית כ' א')
שֶׁנֶּדְמָה לוֹ אֱלִיָּהוּ ז"ל לְאָדָם מְכַעֵר שְׂאִין כְּמוֹהוּ עַד
שֶׁגִּנָּה אוֹתוֹ רַבִּי אֶלְעָזָר וְכו', וְאַחֵר כֵּן אָמַר לוֹ אֱלִיָּהוּ
מוֹסֵר עַד שֶׁקִּבֵּל עַל עֲצָמוֹ שְׁלֹא לַעֲשׂוֹת כֵּן

וְהַעֲנִינָּה כִּי הִנֵּה יָדוּעַ מֵאֲמֵר (מִשְׁלֵי ט"ז ד'): "כָּל פֶּעַל
ה' לַמַּעֲנֵהוּ", וּפִירוּשׁ (יְשַׁעְיָהוּ מ"ג ז'): "כָּל הַנִּקְרָא
בְּשֵׁמִי וּלְכַבֹּדִי בָּרָאתִיו וְכו'", שֶׁכָּל הַבְּרִיאִים
שֶׁבְּעוֹלָם עַד הַשְׁלֵשׁוּל הַקָּטָן שְׂבִיבִים — צִרְיָה הָעוֹלָם
בָּהֶם, וּגְדוּלַת הַבְּרִיאָה מִתְגַּלֶּה בָּהֶם יוֹתֵר מִבְּלָתָם.
שְׂאֵם הֵיטָה אֲפֻשְׁרוֹת הַהִתְגַּלּוּת בְּלָתָם, לֹא הָיוּ
נִבְרָאִים.

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To the extent that there is not a single thing in the world — even the kelipos (forces of concealment), and the nations of the world, and punishments — all are for His glory, may He be blessed. This is the secret of the verse (Tehillim 103:19): “And His kingdom rules over all.” Likewise, the explanation of (Nechemiah 9:6): “And You give life to them all.” And the explanation of (Tehillim 104:24): “How manifold are Your works, Hashem; all of them You made with wisdom.” The glory of Hashem revealed through this creature could not be revealed through any other.

And the matter is, whether it is fear of punishment, or fear of shame, or fear of exaltedness, through which a person is aroused—within each of these types of fear there are countless details, without end or number.

And similarly, loves are also divided, as well as the rest of the emotions and connections—without end, as is known. These are the bodies of the created beings in this lowly physical world. So too is man, who is a microcosm (Tikkunei Zohar 130b), included of all of it, through variations in thoughts, imaginations, emotions, and connections, without end.

As is known, thought is a complete stature—whether for good or, Heaven forbid, for evil. Through it one is aroused toward Hashem, whether for the aforementioned fear, or for love of Him, or through whatever attribute He measures out to him, he acknowledges and thanks Him.

And by this, King Shlomo, peace be upon him, knew the languages of all creatures in the world—through his contemplation upon himself and his variations and the variations of his variations.

For thought does not remain fixed even for a single moment; rather, it constantly removes and dons forms, as is known. And not all times are equal, as is known from the 28 times and the endless changes.

עד שאין לה דבר שבעולם, אפילו הקליפות ואומות העולם ועונשין — הכל לכבודו יתברך. וזהו סוד (תהלים ק"ג י"ט): "ומלכותו בכל משלה", וכן פירוש (נחמיה ט' ו'): "ואתה מחיה את כלם", וכן פירוש (תהלים ק"ד כ"ד): "מה רבו מעשיו ה' כלם ברחמיה עשית", וכבודו יתברך שמתגלה מבריה זו — אי אפשר אותה התגלות מבריה אחרת.

והענין הוא אם יראת עונש או יראת בושות או יראת הרוממות, שמתעורר האדם עליהם, ובכל אחד מיראות הנזכרות יש כמה וכמה פרטים עד אין קץ, ומספר,

וכן מתחלקין האהבות וכן שארי המדות וההתקשרות עד אין קץ פידוע, והן הן גופי הבריות בעולם הזה השכל החומרי, וכן הוא באדם שהוא עולם קטן (תיקוני זוהר ק"ל ב'), כליל את הכל בחלוי המחשבה והדמיונות והמדות וההתקשרות עד אין קץ,

פידוע שהמחשבה היא קומה שלימה אם טוב ואם רע חס ושלום, מתעורר ממנה לה' ברוך הוא אם ליראתו הנזכרת, אם לאהבתו יתברך או בכל מדה ומדה שהוא מודד לו מודה לו יתברך.

ובזה הנה יודע שלמה המלך עליו השלום הלשונות מכל הבריות שבעולם בהסתכלותו על עצמו וחלופו, וחלופי חלופו,

שהרי אין המחשבה עומדת אפילו רגע אחד, אלא פושט ולובש צורה תמיד פידוע, ולא כל העתים שוין. פידוע מכ"ח עתים והשתנות לאין מספר.

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And this applies even among the greatest of the righteous, even with Moshe Rabbeinu, peace be upon him. Opposite him was Bilaam, the da'as of the kelipah, who encompassed all da'as and corrupt thought of sanctified matters, as it says (Koheles 7:14): "This one opposite the other Hashem made."

And since Moshe Rabbeinu, peace be upon him, was da'as of holiness, it was necessary for all of these to come into play in his thoughts—and he overcame them and subdued within himself all evil, until he reached the level of da'as of holiness, as is known.

And this is the statement of the Baal Shem Tov: that all that was in Bilaam, they suspected in Moshe Rabbeinu, peace be upon him.

Because as long as the ascent of the Shechinah has not been completed — as it will be at the time of the [final] ascent of the Shechinah and the Righteous Redeemer, speedily in our days — which is the nullification of the kelipah, as it says (Yeshayahu 25:8): "Death will be swallowed up forever,"

therefore, all ascents must take place only in the thought of a proper person. And a proper person is unable to reach and ascend to his root except through his opposite — that they rise in his thought, and from them he is aroused toward his Creator, may He be blessed.

And these are the trials, as our Sages said (Shabbos 77b): "Like the creation of the world — first darkness, then light." And this is mentioned in the Zohar many times.

Therefore, when a person wants to subdue some matter that stands against him, he must first truly subdue, before anything else, that very evil which dwells within himself.

And this is the nullification of evil and the sweetening of judgments. And this is what is written (Tehillim 69:19): "Draw near to my soul, redeem it," and afterwards (ibid.): "Because of my enemies, ransom me."

ודבר זה נוהג אפילו בגדולי הצדיקים ואפילו במשה רבינו עליו השלום, כנגדו היה בלעם דעת דקליפה, שהיה כולל כל הדעת ומחשבת פסול המקדשיו, כמאמר (קהלת ז' י"ד): "את זה לעמת זה עשה", "האלהים",

ואתרי שמשה רבינו עליו השלום היה דעת דקדושה — בודאי היו מכרחים כל אלו לעבוד במחשבתו, והוא גבר עליהם והכניע בעצמו כל הרע עד שהגיע, להיות במדרגת דעת דקדושה פידוע

ומאמר הבעל שם טוב שכל מה שהיה בבלעם היה חושדין למשה רבינו עליו השלום.

מפני שכל זמן שלא נגמרה עליית השכינה באשר יהיה בזמן [עלית] השכינה וגאול צדק במהרה בימינו, שהוא בטול הקליפה (ישעיהו כ"ה ח'): "בלע", "המות לנצח",

מכרחים כל העליות להיות רק במחשבת אדם בשר, והאדם בשר אי-אפשר לו להגיע ולעלות אל שרשו פייאם על-ידי שפנגדו, שיעלו במחשבתו והוא יתעורר מהם לבוֹרֵא יתברך.

והן הן הנסיונות כמאמר רז"ל (שבת ע"ז ב'): "כבר יצאו של עולם — ברישא חשוכא והדר נהורא", והוא מזכר בזהר הרבה פעמים

לכן פשהאדם רוצה להכניע איזה דבר העומד עליו — בתחלה צריך להכניע באמת לפני כו' ברוך-הוא מאותו הרע השוכן בעצמו

וזהו בטול הרע והמתקנת הדינין. וזהו שכתוב (תהלים ס"ט י"ט): "קרבא אל נפשי גאלה", "ואחר-כך (שם): "למען איבי פדני".

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Meaning: at first, he asks that redemption come to his soul from all the nations of the world — which are the attachments of foreign thoughts — and then, automatically, he will be redeemed from his enemies, which is the nullification of the kelipah and the sweetening of the judgments.

And this is what our Sages said (Sanhedrin 97a): “Mashiach does not come except through *hese'ach ha'daas* (distraction from daas).” The meaning is: daas is the inclusive sum of all the emotions from the seven days of Creation and is not an attribute in itself.

And the redemption, which must be from all the seventy nations of the world, whose root is in the seven days of Creation, can only come by reaching beyond daas—by removing oneself from daas so that there will be no intermediary between him and Hashem, and no separation in the world, but rather a true unity.

And this is what our Sages said (Bava Basra 75b): “In the future, the ministering angels will recite Kedushah before Israel just as they do before Hashem.” Because there will be complete unity between Israel and Hashem.

But now, before the coming of Mashiach, *daas* is what unifies all creations with Hashem, and it nullifies evil from them and brings down goodness upon them.

And the matter is: when a person includes in his *daas* many, many created beings that pass through his thought — which is a complete structure — and he is aroused by them toward the Creator, may He be blessed, as it says (Mishlei 3:20): “By His knowledge the depths were split,” he elevates them and refines them in his thought.

As the Zohar says (Zohar III 10b): “All of them were refined through wisdom.” And after they ascend to their root, goodness and blessing are drawn down from there.

And this is what our Sages said (Berachos 33a): “Great is *daas*, for it was placed between two [Divine] Names,” as it says (Shmuel I 2:3): “A G-d of *daos* is Hashem.”

פירוש: בתחלה בקש שתבוא הגאולה לנפשו מכל אומות-העולם, שהם ההתקשרות במחשבת חוץ, וממילא יהיה פדוי מאויביו — שהוא בטול הקליפה והמתקת הדינים.

וזהו שאמרו רז"ל (סנהדרין צ"ז א'): "אין משיח בא אלא בהסח הדעת". פירוש: כי הדעת הוא כללות כל המדות מ'ז' ימי הבנין ואינה מדה בפני עצמה.

והגאולה שצריכה להיות מכל השבעים אומות-העולם אשר שרשם ז' ימי הבנין, אי-אפשר להיות פיראם שניגע למעלה מן הדעת, שייסח עצמו מן הדעת, ולא יהיה שום אמצעי בינו ובין השם יתברך, ולא שום הקפס בועולם — כי אם יחוד אמתי.

וזהו אמרם רז"ל (בבא בתרא ע"ה ב'): "עתידין מלאכי-השרת לומר קדושה לפני ישראל כמו שאומרים לפני השם יתברך", מפני שיהיו אחדות גמור עם השם יתברך.

אבל עכשיו קודם ביאת המשיח — הדעת הוא המיוחד את כל הברואים לה', ומבטל הרע מהם ומשפיע טובה להם.

והענין כשהאדם כולל בדעתו כמה וכמה נבראים שעוברים במחשבה — שהיא קומה שלימה — והוא מתעורר מהם אל הבורא יתברך (משלי ג' כ'): "בדעתו תהומות נבקעו", ומעלה אותם ומבררם במחשבתו.

כמאמר הזהר (זהר חלק ג' י' ב'): "כולם בבחמה אתבררין", ואחרי עלייתם אל שרשם נשפעים משם טובה וברכה.

וזהו אמרם רז"ל (ברכות ל"ג א'): "גדולה דעה שניתנה בין שתי אותיות", שגאמר (שמואל א' ב' ג'): "אל דעות ה'".

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For *daas* is what unites all the [Divine] Names from below to above, and unites the branch to its root — which is the Name Havayah, blessed be He, as we said earlier.

As it says (Yeshayahu 43:7): “All who are called by My Name and for My glory I created them.” And in all creatures there is sanctity of His Names, blessed be He.

For the Ein Sof, blessed be He, surrounds all worlds and fills all worlds, as is known. And through his *daas*, a person elevates them to their root and unifies them with the Ein Sof, blessed be He.

And in this same manner was the Mikdash (Temple), as our Sages said similarly about the Mikdash — that it too was placed between two [Divine] Names, as it says (Shemos 15:17): “You have made, Hashem, the Mikdash, my Lord.”

As is known, the Mikdash provided and distributed nourishment and goodness to all beings, even to the nations of the world, as is explained (Sukkah 55b) regarding the festival offerings and other matters explained in the Zohar.

And this is what our Sages said: “If the nations had known the greatness of the benefit they received from the Mikdash, they would not have destroyed it.”

And now, in place of the Mikdash, it is the proper person — through whom all beings are united to their source and goodness is drawn.

And likewise, a person unites with the aid of created beings, etc. For now, before the coming of Mashiach, it is impossible for any person to bear such supreme pleasure and true unity without any intermediary.

The general principle is: for every tzaddik, it is necessary for all that is opposite him to pass through his thought, up to the place of his level.

And even if someone pious says that he has already nullified all of his emotions and desires — “a fool does not feel.” For if he lacks it in one area, he has it in other traits similar to it.

כי הדעת הוא המיוחד כל השמות ממטה למעלה ומיוחד הענף אל השורש — שהוא שם הוי' ברוך הוא — כדברינו הנזכרים.

שְׁהָרִי (שְׁעִיָּהוּ מ"ג ז'): "כל הנקרא בשמי ולכבודי בראתי", ובכל הכריות כלם יש בהם קדושת שמותיו יתברך.

כי אין-סוף ברוך הוא סובב כל-עלמין וממלא כל-עלמין בנזכר, ובדעתו מעלה האדם אותם אל שורשם ומיוחד לאין-סוף ברוך הוא.

ועל-דרך-זה הנה המקדש, כאמרם רז"ל כמו-כן על מקדש שנתן בין ב' אותיות, שנאמר (שמות ט"ו י"ז): "פַּעַלְתָּ ה' מִקְדָּשׁ אֲדִי",

כידוע שהמקדש הנה משפיע ומחלק מזון וטובה לכל הברואים ואפלו לאומות-העולם, כמבואר (ספ"ה ב' ב' פרי הקדש, ושאר דברים המבוארים בזהר

והוא אמרם רז"ל: "אילו היו יודעים האומות גודל "טובתם מן המקדש לא היו מחריבין אותו".

ועכשיו במקום מקדש — הוא האדם הנכשר, שעל-ידו מתיחדים כל הברואים אל שורשם ונשפעים טובה.

וכן האדם מתיחד באמצעות הברואים וכו'. מפני שעכשיו קודם ביאת המשיח — אי-אפשר לשום אדם לסבול התענוג עליון כזה והיחוד אמתי בלי שום אמצעי.

כללא דמלתא: שאצל כל צדיק וצדיק — מקרבים לעבור במחשבתו כל שנגדו עד מקום מדרגתו.

ואפלו אם יאמר המתחסד שפך בטל כל ההרגשותיו ותאותיו — "אין שוטה מרגיש", שאם אין לו במדה זו, יש לו במדות אחרות כיוצא בה

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And when such a thought comes to him, he must feel despicable and loathed in his own eyes — for he has erected an idol in the sanctuary, for man is a miniature Mikdash, as is mentioned.

And it is known that the mind is the Holy of Holies, and the heart is the sanctuary of love, and the other organs correspond similarly, as explained in many places.

And afterward, when he is aroused from the matter toward the Creator, may He be blessed, this is the *yichud* (union) and the ascent of the Shechinah and her raising from the dust.

And the person himself is also elevated by this and ascends from level to level, and from trial to trial, and from journey to journey.

And this is the forty-two journeys written in the Torah, that Israel traveled from Egypt — which is the servitude of crushing labor in mortar and bricks, which refers to physical and bodily acts.

And to exit from there and arrive at Eretz Yisrael — which is Knesses Yisrael — and to make a complete union, one must, at minimum, undergo forty-two journeys.

And this is the known Name of Mem-Beis (42), aligned with rising upward, ever higher.

And behold, the matter of the journeys often included steps backward, as is known. Therefore, sometimes a descent comes upon the righteous in their thought — but in truth, the descent is for the sake of ascent, and it is a complete journey, like all the journeys, until the redemption will come speedily in our days — amen.

And the ascent of the Shechinah will be in actuality and a true union without any intermediary or separation. Therefore, they (the angels) will say *kedushah* before Israel — for *kedushah* signifies separation from excess.

And this is “[Va’y’]dabeir” — And he spoke,” which is a language of guidance, like (Tehillim 47:4): “He will guide the nations.” “Moshe” represents *daas*, and “to the heads of the tribes” refers to the roots of variation, which are the twelve diagonal boundaries.

וְכַשְׁבָּאָה לוֹ הַמַּחְשְׁבָה — צָרִיף לִהְיוֹת נִבְזָה בְּעֵינָיו
נִמְאָס, שֶׁהָעֵמִיד צֶלֶם בְּהִיכָל, שֶׁהָרִי הָאֵדָם הוּא מִקְדָּשׁ
מְעֻט כְּנִזְכָּר.

וְכִידוּעַ שֶׁהַמַּחְשְׁבָה וְהַמּוֹחַ הוּא קֹדֶשׁ-קִדְשִׁים, וְהַלֵּב
הוּא הֵיכַל הָאֱהָבָה, וְשָׁאֵר דְּבָרִים — כְּמִבּוֹאֵר בְּכָמָה
מְקוֹמוֹת.

וְאַחֲרֵי-כֵן, כְּשִׁמְתָּעוֹרֵר מִן הַדְּבָר אֶל הַבוֹרָא יִתְבָּרַךְ
— הוּא הַיְחוד וְעֲלִית הַשְׁכִּינָה וְהַקְמָתָה מֵעַפְרָא

וְהָאֵדָם גַּם-כֵּן מִתְעַלָּה בָּזֶה וְהוֹלֵךְ מִדְּרָגָא לְדְרָגָא,
וּמִנְסִיּוֹן לְנִסִּיּוֹן, וּמִמַּסָּע לְמַסָּע.

וְזֶהוּ הַמ"ב מִסְעוֹת הַפְּתוּבִים בַּתּוֹרָה — שֶׁנֶּסְעוּ
יִשְׂרָאֵל מִמִּצְרַיִם, שֶׁהִיא עֲבוּדַת פָּרוֹךְ בַּחֲמֹר וּלְבָנִים,
שֶׁהוּא מַעֲשֵׂה הַגְּשָׁמִיּוֹת וְהַגּוֹפְנִיּוֹת.

וְכֵי לְצֵאת מִשָּׁם וְלַהֲגִיעַ אֶל אֶרֶץ יִשְׂרָאֵל — שֶׁהִיא
כְּנֶסֶת יִשְׂרָאֵל — וְלַעֲשׂוֹת יְחוד שְׁלֵם, צָרִיף עַל-כָּל
פְּנִים מ"ב מִסְעוֹת.

וְזֶהוּ שֵׁם שֶׁל מ"ב הַיְדוּעַ, וּמִכֵּן לַעֲלוֹת מַעֲלָה מַעֲלָה.

וְהִנֵּה עֲנִין הַמִּסְעוֹת הָיוּ כְּמָה פְּעָמִים לְאַחֹר כִּידוּעַ,
לְכֵן לְפַעְמִים מִזְמָן לְצִדִּיקִים אֵיזָה יְרִידָה בְּמַחְשְׁבָתוֹ,
אַבֵּל בְּאַמַּת הוּא כִּי הַיְרִידָה צָרִף עֲלֶיהָ הִיא וּמַסָּע
שְׁלִימָה כְּדֶרֶךְ כָּל הַמִּסְעוֹת עַד שֶׁתְּבוֹא הַגְּאֻלָּה בְּמַהֲרָה
בְּיָמֵינוּ אָמֵן.

וְיִהְיֶה עֲלִיּוֹת הַשְׁכִּינָה בְּפֶעַל וְיְחוד אֲמַתִּי בְּלִי שׁוּם
אֲמָצְעִי וְהַפְסֵק. וְלִכֵּן יֹאמְרוּ קְדוּשָׁה לְפָנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל,
שֶׁעֲנִין הַקְּדוּשָׁה הוּא פְּרִישַׁת הַמוֹתְרוֹת מֵהֶם.

וְזֶהוּ "וַיְדַבֵּר" שֶׁהוּא לְשׁוֹן הַנְּהֻגָה, כְּמוֹ (תְּהִלִּים מ"ז
ד'): "יְדַבֵּר עִמָּם," ו"מִשָּׁה" הוּא הַדַּעַת, ו"אֶל רִאשֵׁי
הַמִּטּוֹת" הֵם שְׁרָשֵׁי הַהֲשָׁתָנוֹת שֶׁהֵם י"ב גְּבוּלֵי
אֶלְכָסוֹן.

Menachem Mendel of Horodak

Pri Ha'Eretz

Parshas Matos Massei

מאמר א

“To the children of Israel” represents emunah (faith), and “saying” (*leimor*) is an expression of union and love, as in (Devarim 26:17): “You have declared Hashem,” and the explanation is that *daas* should guide and train all variations that rise in his thought, in emunah, to unify them with the Creator, may He be blessed.

And this is “These are the commandments” (*eileh ha'mitzvos*), which also means *yichud* (unification), as in “[to] command to this one.” “And the laws” (*u'mishpatim*) — means: through habitual practice, it will be light and upright in his eyes, and the law will follow naturally.

“Which Hashem commanded through Moshe” means the union of the Ein Sof, blessed be He, with *daas*. “To the children of Israel” means through emunah.

“In the plains of Moav” (*b'arvos Moav*) means to believe that all the confusion in thoughts and all creatures — through them, life is granted, as it says (Nechemiah 9:6): “And You give life to them all.” All come from the Ein Sof, blessed be He.

And this is “Moav, by the Jordan, near Jericho” — as it is known that in Jericho there was perception of the Mikdash, as our Sages said (Yoma 39b): “In Jericho was heard the voice of the Kohen Gadol; in Jericho, the goats would sneeze,” and many other such matters.

And this — that the descent is for the sake of attaining the Mikdash.

Or it may be said that the mitzvos are like candles, as it is stated (Mishlei 6:23): “For a mitzvah is a candle, and Torah is light,” and as the verse says (Mishlei 20:27): “The candle of Hashem is the soul of man, which searches all the inner chambers of the belly.”

The essence of preparing for every mitzvah is to search in one's limbs and body whether it is fitting that the Divine presence should rest upon it.

And this is “and the *mishpatim* (ordinances),” which refers to self-sacrifice.

לבני ישראל" הוא האמונה, "לאמר" הוא לשון יחוד ואהבה, כמו (דברים כ"ו י"ז): "אתה ה' האומר", והפירוש הוא שירגל וינהג הדעת את כל ההשתנות שיעלו בדעתו באמונה ליחד אותם לבוֹרֵא יתברך.

וזהו "אלה המצוות" שהוא פירוש גם-כן יחוד, כמו "לצוות לזה". "והמשפטים" פירוש: על ידי הרגל יהיה קל בעיניו ונשאר, והדין נותן.

אשר צוה ה' ביד משה" פירוש: יחוד אין-סוף" ברוך-הוא עם הדעת. "אל בני ישראל" פירוש: על-ידי האמונה.

בערבות מואב" פירוש: להאמין שכל הערבוביא במחשבות וכל הבריות — בו יפקדו לחיים, כמאמר (נחמיה ט' ו'): "ואתה מחיה את כלם", כלם באים מאין-סוף ברוך-הוא.

וזהו "מואב על ירדן ירחו", פידוע שפירחו היתה השגת המקדש, כמו שאמרו רז"ל (יומא ל"ט ב'): "פירחו היה נשמע קולו של כהן גדול, פירחו היו מתעששין העזים", וכו' וכמה דברים.

וזה — שהירידה היא לצורך השגת המקדש

או יאמר כי המצוות כמו נרות, כנאמר (משלי ו' כ"ג): "כי נר מצוה ותורה אור"

וכמאמר (משלי כ' כ"ז): "נר ה' נשמת אדם חופש", "כל-חדרי-בטן",

שעיקר הכנת כל מצוה — לחפוש באבריו ובגופו אם ראוי שתשרה עליו

וזהו "והמשפטים" — שהוא מסירת נפש

Menachem Mendel of Horodak

Pri Ha'Eretz

Parshas Matos Massei

מאמר 8

[NOTE Summary: The discourse opens with a teaching on how daas (integrated spiritual consciousness) unifies the diversity of human experience — thoughts, desires, fears, and emotions — with their Divine source. All mental imagery, even foreign or negative thoughts, can become a path of return when the individual uses them to awaken love or awe of Hashem. This is how King Shlomo “understood the languages of all creatures”: by recognizing the divine significance embedded within every internal movement.

This process extends to the elevation of all creation. Every being has a root in the Divine, and man — through daas — is charged with refining these sparks. This is why daas is called "great," and why it was placed between two Divine Names. Like the Mikdash (Temple), which distributed sustenance to all beings, a tzaddik functions as a microcosmic sanctuary: by contemplating all things, even opposing forces, he raises them up to holiness. Even trials and descents are part of the Divine journey — modeled by the 42 travels of Israel from Egypt to the Land — for each journey (even backward ones) refines a different layer of reality.

The culmination is a world where daas no longer mediates the Divine, because the union will be direct — no longer filtered through thought or effort. That is why Mashiach comes *behesach hadaas* (when daas is let go): because the ultimate union transcends all spiritual intermediaries.

Practical Takeaway: Your thoughts — even those that seem negative or distracting — are not inherently foreign. Instead of rejecting them, use them as fuel to turn toward Hashem. Search within your body and soul before each mitzvah and ask: “Is my being ready to become a vessel for the Divine?” Even spiritual regressions are part of your growth. Like Israel's wilderness journeys, they are necessary to reach true redemption. Train your daas to unify all aspects of your life with Hashem, and know that every struggle — if transformed — is itself a holy journey.

Chassidic Story: Rabbi Menachem Mendel of Horodok, after settling in Tiberias, was once approached by a disciple tormented by disturbing thoughts during prayer. Instead of rebuking him, the Rebbe said: “These thoughts are not your enemies — they are messengers. Each one comes to be uplifted. The key is not to chase them away but to invite them up.” He instructed the chassid to take each distracting image and ask himself: “What does this teach me about my yearning for G-d?” Years later, the disciple recounted that this one instruction transformed his entire avodah: instead of fearing his thoughts, he began to mine them for divine sparks — until he found light in even the darkest corners of his mind.

TPX (Therapeutic-Psychological Integration)

This discourse by **Rabbi Menachem Mendel of Horodok** offers a deeply healing framework for understanding the internal chaos, contradictions, and “descent” we often experience in our psychological and emotional lives.

The teaching begins with a recognition that human thought is never static. We are constantly fluctuating — between fear and desire, guilt and aspiration, distraction and focus. Rather than seeing these fluctuations as

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flaws, the Horodaker reframes them as sacred terrain. Just as the Shechinah (Divine Presence) rises through each stage of exile, the human soul ascends through confronting — and ultimately transforming — these inner movements.

From a psychological perspective, this is a call to radical self-acceptance. The thoughts that disturb us, even those that seem base or disconnected from holiness, are not intrusions to be crushed. They are part of the psyche's attempt to integrate fragmented parts of the self and return to wholeness. The Horodaker teaches that these thoughts arise specifically *because* the person is striving for holiness — they are the “opposite” created to make the journey real, a Divine design (as per Koheles 7:14: “This one opposite the other G-d created”). There is a striking therapeutic parallel here to Internal Family Systems (IFS) or trauma-informed healing, which see every part of the psyche — even the most disturbing — as trying to protect us or bring us into awareness. The key is not suppression but conscious integration. When a person brings daas (compassionate awareness) to their inner chaos, they elevate it. Like the Mikdash, which channeled blessing to all nations, the conscious self becomes a sanctuary through which all thoughts — even “foreign” ones — are transformed into spiritual vitality.

This also reframes failure or spiritual “descent.” A tzaddik, the Rebbe says, must pass through the opposite of his level in order to reach it. So too with us: a regression is often preparation for a greater leap. We journey like the Israelites through 42 wilderness stops — often going “backward” — only to reach a promised internal integration. The ultimate goal is what the Horodaker calls *yichud amiti* — true union — where the self no longer needs to fight its inner worlds because the Divine is revealed without intermediaries. That is why Mashiach comes *behesach hadaas* — not through effortful consciousness but through surrender beyond thought.

Story

In a trauma healing circle in Jerusalem, a young woman named Ayelet shared how for years she'd struggled with intense shame over her intrusive thoughts. Raised in a strict religious environment, she believed they made her impure. But one night, after hearing a class based on teachings like this one, she tried something new. Instead of fighting her thoughts, she sat with them. She asked each: “What are you trying to tell me? What part of me are you protecting?” To her surprise, she began to cry — not from fear, but from release. She realized that each “bad” thought had been shielding a part of her child self. Through this compassionate curiosity, she slowly made peace with herself. Years later, she became a trauma therapist, often quoting the verse: “The soul of man is the candle of Hashem, searching all the inner chambers of the belly” — not to judge, but to illuminate.

END NOTE]