

#### תפארת ישראל The Splendor of Israel Chapter 7 Introduction

This discourse by the Maharal of Prague explores the profound relationship between mitzvos and the human soul. Drawing upon the structure of creation, the Maharal shows how mitzvos are not merely commandments to do good deeds but essential tools in crafting the inner spiritual order of man. Every mitzvah corresponds to a part of the human being and of the cosmos, shaping not only our actions but our very form and place within the divine framework. Uniquely, the Maharal also explains why some commandments, if performed by a non-Jew, would incur punishment—not because the deed is bad, but because mitzvos function within a specific soul-system and are not universally applicable. The discourse culminates in a Messianic vision in which mitzvos like shechitah (ritual slaughter) will no longer be needed—because in the future, man will be refined by his very nature and not require the same external discipline. This maamar thus weaves together mystical anthropology, halachic order, and eschatological perfection in one deeply structured vision of Torah and humanity.

#### הַמְּצְוֹת עוֹשׁוֹת אֶת הָאָדָם לְבַעַל שֵׂבֶל The mitzvos make a person into a bearer of burden.

After we have explained to you that the attributes of Hashem, may He be blessed, are decrees upon Yisrael, like a king who decrees upon his people, you should not think, as did the Rambam of blessed memory (Moreh Nevuchim, Part III, Chapter 48), in his explanation of this statement, that our Sages of blessed memory held that He decreed the commandments upon us and that they have no reason—rather, they are a decree to test and refine Yisrael if they will keep His commandments.

אַחַר שֶׁבַּאַרְנוּ לְךְּ כִּי מִדּוֹת הַשֵּׁם יִתְבָּרַדְּ גְזֵרוֹת עַל יִשְׂרָאֵל, כְּמֶלֶדְּ הַגּוֹזֵר עַל עַמוֹ. אֵין עָלֶידְּ לַחֲשֹׁב כְּמוֹ שֶׁלְשִּׁב הָמִּלְּבְּ הָבִּוֹכִים חַלֶּק שְׁהַבּיִם חַלֶּק שָׁחָשַׁב הָרַוְנוֹ לְבָרָכָה (מוֹרָה נְבוֹכִים חֵלֶק ג פָּרֶק מח) בְּפֵרוּשׁ הַמַּצְמָר הַזֶּה, שֶׁדַעַת חֲכָמֵינוּ זּ פָּרֶק מח) בְּפֵרוּשׁ הַמַּצְמָר הַנִּיה, שֶׁדַעַת חֲכָמֵינוּ זִכְרוֹנָם לְבָרֶכָה שֶׁגָּזַר עָלֵינוּ הַמִּצְוֹת, וְאֵין לָהֶם טַעַם, רֵק שֶׁהֵם גְזֵרָה לְנַפּוֹת יִשְׂרָאֵל וּלְצָרֵף אוֹתָם אָמַרוּ אָת מִצְּוֹתֵיוֹ

And he (the Rambam) brought support for this from their statement in Bereishis Rabbah (44:1): "And does it matter to the Holy One, blessed be He, whether one slaughters from the neck or from the back of the neck? Rather, the mitzvos were only given to purify the creatures," as it is said (Mishlei 30:5): "Every word of God is pure." Until here.

ְהַבִּיא לָזֶה מַאֲמֶרֶם בִּבְרֵאשִׁית־ רַבָּה (מד, א): וְכִי מָה אִכְפַּת לְהַקֶּדוֹש־בָּרוּדְ־הוּא אם שׁוֹחֵט מִן הַצַּוָאר, אוֹ שׁוֹחֵט מִן הָעֹרֶף, הַרֵי לֹא נִתְנוּ הַמִּצְוֹת אֶלָּא לְצָרֵף בָּהֶן הַבְּרִיּוֹת, שֶׁנֶּאֱמֵר (מִשְׁלֵי ל, ה): בִּלָּ אִמְרַת אֱלוֹהַ צְרוּפָה" עַד כָּאן.

And the Rambam of blessed memory explained by this that Hashem, may He be blessed, gave the mitzvos to test and refine the creatures. And his understanding, of blessed memory, in the parable, is that every single mitzvah certainly has a reason why He commanded that specific mitzvah. But regarding the details within the mitzvah—because every mitzvah has specific details—these have no reason.

וּפֵרֵשׁ הָרַמְבַּ"ם זִכְרוֹנוֹ לְבְרָכָה בָּזֶה, כִּי הַשֵּׁם יִתְבָּרֵה נָתַן הַמִּצְוֹת לְנַסּוֹת וּלְצָרֵף בָּהֶן הַבְּרִיּוֹת. וְדַעְתּוֹ זִכְרוֹנוֹ לְבְרָכָה בְּהַמָּשָׁל, כִּי לְכָל מִצְוָה וּמִצְוָה אֵין סָפֵק שָׁיֵשׁ בָּה טַעַם לָמָה צִּוָּה בְּמִצְוָה זאת. אֲבָל לַדְּבָרִים הַפְּרָטִיִּים שָׁהֵם בַּמִּצְוָה, כִּי כָּל מִצְוָה וּמִצְוָה גַשׁ בָּה דְּבָרִים פְּרָטִיִּים, אֵין לָהֶם טַעַם.

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And on this he said: "And does it matter to the Holy One, blessed be He, whether one slaughters from the neck or from the back of the neck?"—because slaughtering from the neck is a specific detail. For the commandment of slaughtering—that he should slaughter and not tear—is something with a reason. But that he should slaughter from the neck and not from the back of the neck—that matter has no reason. These are his words.

וְעַל זֶה אָמַר: וְכִי מָה אָכְפַת לְהַקֶּדוֹשׁ־בֶּרוּדְ־הוּא אִם שׁוֹחֵט מִן הַצַּוָאר אוֹ מִן הָעֹרֶף', כִּי שְׁחִיטַת צַּוָאר דָּבָר פְּרָטִי. כִּי מִצְוַת שְׁחִיטָה שֶׁיִשְׁחט וְלֹא יִמְלֹק – יֵשׁ בּוֹ טַעַם, אֲבָל שֶׁיִשְׁחֹט מִן הַצַּוָּאר וְלֹא יִשְׁחֹט מִן הָעֹרֶף - לַדָּבָר הַזֶּה אֵין לוֹ טַעַם. כָּדְ הַם דְּבָרָיו.

But certainly, there is no reason to accept this interpretation. For regarding the entire Torah, the verse says (Devarim 4:8): "And what great nation is there that has statutes and ordinances so righteous as all this Torah?" And it also says (ibid., verse 6): "And you shall guard and do them, for this is your wisdom and your understanding in the eyes of the nations, who shall hear all these statutes..." etc.

וּבְוַדַּאי אֵין טַעַם לַפֵּרוּשׁ הַזֶּה. כִּי עַל כָּל הַתּוֹרָה אָמֵר הַכָּתוּב (דְבָרִים ד, ח): "כִּי מִי גוֹי גָּדוֹל אֲשֶׁר לוֹ חֲקִים וּמִשְׁפָּטִים צַדִּיקִם כְּכֹל הַתּוֹרָה הַזֹּאת" וְאָמֵר עוֹד (שם שֶׁם, וּ): "וּשְׁמַרְהֶּם וַעֲשִׂיתֶם כִּי הִיא חָכְמַתְּכֶם וּבִינַתְכֶם לְעֵינֵי כָּל הָעַמִּים אֲשֶׁר יִשְׁמְעוּן בל הַחַקִים הַאָּלֶה" וְגוֹ.

Thus, everything in the Torah, in general and in detail, is wisdom. And not as he (the Rambam) thought, that the detailed matters have no reason at all, for that would not be a Torah of wisdom.

וַהָרֵי כִּי כָּל דָּבָר שֶׁבַּתּוֹרָה, בִּכְלָל וּבִפְּרָט, הַכּּל דְּבְרֵי חָכְמָה. וְלֹא כְּמוֹ שֶׁחָשֵׁב הוּא (הָרַמְבַּ"ם) כִּי לַדְּבָרִים הַפְּרָטִעִים אֵין טַעַם כְּלָל, כִּי לֹא הָיָה זֶה תּוֹרָה שֶׁל חַכְמַה

And the Ramban explained this (Devarim 22:6), that what was said—"And does it matter to the Holy One, blessed be He..." etc.—was meant in the sense of (Iyov 35:7), "And if you are righteous, what do you give Him?" But certainly, the Holy One, blessed be He, commanded the mitzvos for benefit and for good for them for all time.

ְוָהָרַמְבַּ"ן פַּרֵשׁ בָּזֶה (דְּבָרִים כב, ו) כִּי מֵה שֶׁאָמֵר: וְכִי מָה אִכְפַת לְהַקָּדוֹשׁ־בָּרוּדְ־הוּא' וְכוּ', רָצָה לוֹמֵר עַל דֶּרֶךְ (אִיּוֹב לֹה, ז): "וְאָם צָדַקְתָּ מֵה תִּפְעַל לוֹ", אָבָל בְּוַדַּאי הַקָּדוֹשׁ־בָּרוּדְ־הוּא צְוָה הַמִּצְוֹת לְתוֹעֶלֶת וּלְטוֹב לָהֶם כָּל הַיָּמִים.

And the Midrash of the Sages in "Yilamdeinu" (Tanchuma Shemini 8), on the portion "This is the animal" (Vayikra 11:2), says: "And does it matter to the Holy One, blessed be He, whether one slaughters an animal and eats, or strangles and eats? Do you benefit Him at all, or sustain Him at all?"

וּמִדְרֵשׁ חֲכָמִים בִּילַמְדֵנוּ' (תַּנְחוּמָא שְׁמִינִי, ח) פֶּרָשָׁה "זאת הַחַיָּה" (וַיִּקְרָא יא, ב): וְכִי מָה אִּכְפַּת לְהַקָּדוֹשׁ־בָּרוּהְ־הוּא בֵּין שׁוֹחֵט בְּהַמָה וְאוֹכֵל, אוֹ נוֹחֵר וְאוֹכֵל. כְּלוּם אַתָּה מוֹצִילוֹ, אוֹ כְּלוּם אַתָּה מַנִיקוֹ

"And does it matter to the Holy One, blessed be He, whether one eats pure things or impure things?"—"If you are wise, you are wise for yourself" (Mishlei 9:12). Behold, the Torah was given only to refine the creatures, as it is said (Tehillim 12:7): "The words of Hashem are pure words," etc., and (Mishlei 30:5): "Every word of God is refined."

ְּוְכִי מֶה אִכְפַּת לְהַקֶּדוֹשׁ־בָּרוּהְ־הוּא אִם אוֹכֵל טָהְרוֹת אוֹ טְמֵאוֹת, "אָם חָכַמְתָּ חָכַמְתָּ לָהְ" (מִשְׁלֵי ט, יב). הָא לֹא נִתְנָה תּוֹרָה אֶלָּא לְצָרֵף הַבְּּרִיּוֹת, שֶׁנָּאֱמֵר (תְּחָלִים יב, ז): "אָמֶרוֹת ה' אֲמֶרוֹת טְהֹרוֹת" וְגוֹ'. "וְנָאֱמַר (מִשְׁלֵי ל, ה): "כָּל אִמְרַת אֱלוֹהַ צְרוּפָה

ּכְמוֹ שֶׁלֹא יִצְטָרֵךְ הוּא לְאוֹרָהּ שֶׁל מְנוֹרָה וְלַקְּטֹרֶת וְכַיּוֹצֵא בָּזֶה. רַק נַדֶּע הָאֱמֶת וְנִזְכָּה בּוֹ, עַד שֶׁנִּהְיֶה רָאוּיִים לְהִיוֹת הוּא יִתְבָּרַךְ מֵגִין עָלֵינוּ.
כִּי רֹב כְּבוֹדֵנוּ וְסִפּוּרֵינוּ בִּתְהָלוֹתֵינוּ, לְאֶבֶּס וָתֹהוּ נֶחְשָׁבוּ עַל זֶה מֵבִיא רְאָיָה מִן הַשׁוֹחֵט מִן הַצַּוָּאר אוֹ מִן הָעֹרֶף, לוֹמַר שֶׁכֵּלֶּם לְתוֹעֶלֶת לָנוּ, וְלֹא לְהַקָּדוֹשׁ־בָּרוּךְ־הוּא
כִּי מָה אָכְפַּת לֵיה' וְכוּ', אֶלָּא לָנוּ הֵם לְהַדְרִיכֵנוּ בּנְתִיבוֹת הָרַחֲמִים אַף בִּשְׁעַת שְׁחִיטָה.
ְהַבִּיא (הָרְמְבַּ"ן) רְאָיָה אַחֶּרֶת (תַּנְחוּמָא שָׁם): 'אוֹ מָה אִכְפַּת אִם אוֹכֵל טָהַרוֹת', וְהֵם הַמַּאֲכָלִים הַמַּתָּרִים לֶאֱכֹל, 'אוֹ טְמֵאוֹת', וְהֵם הַמַּאֲכָלוֹת הָאֲסוּרוֹת, שֶׁאָמְרָה בָּהֶם הַתּוֹרָה (וַיִּקְרָא יא, כח): "טְמֵאִים הֵם "לָכֶם
רַק לָהֵיוֹתֵנוּ נְקָנֵי הַנָּפֶשׁ חֲכָמִים מַשְׂכִּילִים שֶׁהוּא הַאֵּמֵת וְכוּ
ְוְעוֹד בַּמִּדְרָשׁ בִּילַמְדֵנוּ' בְּפָרָשַׁת "זאת הַחַיָּה" (תַּנְחוּמָא שָׁם, ז): כָּךְּ אָמַר דָּוִד (תְּהִלִּים יח, לא): "הָאֵל תָּמִים דַּרְכּוֹ אִמְרַת ה' צְרוּפָה" -בִּשְׁבִיל לְצָרֵף .אֶת בְּרִיּוֹתָיו
מָה אָכְפַּת לְהַקָּדוֹשׁ־ בָּרוּדְּ־הוּא שֶׁיֹאכַל יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּלֹא שְׁחִיטָה, אוֹ שֶׁיְהֵא יִשְׂרָאֵל נוֹחֵר וְאוֹכֵל, שׁוֹחֵט מִן הַצַּוָּאר וּמִן הָעֹרֶף. תַּדַע שָׁלֹא נִצְטַוּוּ עַל הַשְׁחִיטָה אֶלָּא לְצָרֵף אֶת יִשְׂרָאֵל,
כִּי לֶעָתִיד לָבֹא עוֹשֶׁה סְעֵדָּה לַצַּדִּיקִים, וְאֵין שֶׁם שְׁחִיטָה' וְכוּ'. אֶלָּא בִּשְׁבִיל לִבְדֹּק וּלְצָרֵף אֶת יִשְׂרָאֵל, עַד כָּאן
ּוּכְבֶר אָמַרְנוּ שֶׁאִי אֶפְשָׁר לוֹמַר שֶׁיִּהְיוּ מִצְוֹת הַתּוֹרָה - עַל דֶּרֶךְ שֶׁפַּרִשׁ הָרַמְבַּ"ן זִכְרוֹנוֹ לִבְרָכָה - לִקְבַּעַ בָּנוּ מִדּוֹת טוֹבוֹת, כִּי לֹא תּוּכַל לְפָרֵשׁ כָּךְ, כִּי רֹב מִצְוֹת לֹא נֶדֶע טַעֲמָם. וְאִם־כֵּן אֵיזֶה דֶּרֶךְ יִשְׁכֹּן אוֹר הַמִּצְוֹת

However, that which was said (Bereishis Rabbah 44:1): "The Torah was only given to refine the creations," the explanation is not that the mitzvos refine a person through guiding him in good and proper character traits.	אֶמְנֶם מַה שֶׁאָמֵר (בְּרֵאשִׁית רַבָּה מד, א): "לֹא נִתְּנָה תּוֹרָה רַק לְצָרֵף הַבְּּרִיּוֹת', אֵין הַפֵּרוּשׁ כִּי הַמִּצְוֹת הֵם מְצָרְפִים הָאָדָם בַּמָּה שֶׁיַּדְרִיךְ הָאָדָם עַצְמוֹ בַּמִּדּוֹת הַטוֹבוֹת וְהַהָגוּנוֹת.
For with that, it would be difficult, just as we have written above—for such a matter would be fitting only with those mitzvos whose reason is known to us. But regarding those mitzvos whose reason is hidden from us, we cannot say so.	שָׁבָּזֶה יִקְשֶׁה כְּמוֹ שֶׁכָּתַבְנוּ לְמַעְלָה, כִּי דָּבָר זֶה הָיָה הָגוּן בַּמִּצְוֹת אֲשֶׁר נַדַע טַעֲמָם, אֲבָל בַּמִצְוֹת שֶׁנֶּעֶלָם מֵאִתָּנוּ טַעַם שֶׁלָּהֶם, לֹא נוּכַל לוֹמַר כָּךְ.
Rather, the mitzvos themselves refine the soul of a person to return it to Hashem.	אָבָל הַמִּצְוֹת בְּעַצְמָן מְצָרְפִים נֶפֶשׁ הָאָדָם לְהָשִׁיב אוֹתָה אֶל ה'.
And therefore, Hashem, may He be blessed, arranged for him negative commandments, because through this structure a person will not depart from the proper order at all.	וּלְכָךְ סְדֵר הַשֵּׁם יִתְבָּרַךְ אֵלָיו מִצְוֹת לֹא תַּעֲשֶׂה', כִּי עַל־יְדֵי סַדֶר הַזֶּה הָאָדָם אֵינוֹ יוֹצֵא מִן הַסֵּדֶר כְּלָל.
And to indicate that the negative commandments provide a person with a structure so that he not stray from what is fitting, He immediately gave the person seven commandments—all of them negative commandments—as we have explained the matter of these seven commandments in the composition <i>Gevuras Hashem</i> (Chapter 66), see there.	וּלְהוֹרוֹת כִּי מִצְוֹת לֹא תַּעֲשֶׂה' נוֹתְנִים לָאָדֶם סֵדֶּר שָׁלֹא יֵצֵא מִן הָרָאוּי, נָתַן לָאָדָם מִיָּד שֶׁבַע מִצְוֹת, כַּלָּם מִצְוֹת לֹא תַּעֲשֶׂה', כְּמוֹ שֶׁבַּאַרְנוּ עִנְיַן אֵלּוּ שֶׁבַּע מִצְוֹת בְּחַבּוּר גְבוּרַת ה' (כְּרֶק סו) עַיִן שֶׁם.
And this is because we have already said that a person has a structure within himself. And whatever he structures, the departure from his order is in six directions.	וְזֶה כִּי כְּבָר אָמַרְנוּ שֶׁהָאָדָם יֵשׁ לוֹ סֵדֶר בְּעַצְמוֹ. וְכָל אֲשֶׁר הוּא מְסַדָּר, הַיְצִיאָה מִן הַסֵּדֶר שֶׁלוֹ הוּא בְּשֵׁשׁ פָּנִים
Like you would say: this point, which is positioned in this place, has deviation that exits from its unity and order either to the right or to the left, or forward or backward, or upward or downward.	כְּמוֹ שֶׁתֹּאמֵר הַנְקַדָּה הַזֹּאת הַמְיָחֶדֶת בְּמָקוֹם זֶה, יֵשׁ לָה וְצִיאָה שֶׁיוֹצֵאת מִן הַיִּחוּד וְהַסֵּדֶר שֶׁלָּה לְיָמִין אוֹ לִשְׁמֹאל, אוֹ לְפָנִים אוֹ לְאָחוֹר, אוֹ לְמַעֲלָה אוֹ לְמַטָּה.
And these six things are what it has as deviation from its unity and order. But absolute nullification is something other than this—it is a seventh concept.	וְאֵלּוּ שֵׁשׁ דְּבָרִים הֵם מֵה שֶׁיֵּשׁ לָה נְטִיָּה מָן הַיִּחוּד וְהַפֵּדֶר שֶׁלָּה. אֲבָל הַבְּטוּל לְגַמְרֵי הוּא דְּבֶר זוּלַת זֶה, .וְהוּא עִנְיָן שְׁבִיעִי
It follows that the thing has deviation in seven ways. And even though this applies in the heavenly spheres—that to a physical object there are six spatial directions, as we said—	נִמְצָא שֶׁהַדָּבָר יֵשׁ לוֹ וְצִיאָה בְּשָׁבְעָה דְּבָרִים. וְאָם כִּי זֶה שַׁיָּךְ בָּרְחָקִים הַנַּשְׁמִיִּים, שֶׁיֵשׁ אֶל הַגֶּשֶׁם שִׁשָּׁה צְדָדִים אֵלוּ אֲשֶׁר אָמַרְנוּ.
—nevertheless, even in non-physical matters, one still finds "right and left," as it says (Devarim 17:11): "Do not deviate from all they instruct you, right or left."	אֲבָל בַּדְבָרִים הַנִּבְדָּלִים לֹא שַׁיָּךְ כָּל זֶה, מִכָּל מֶקוֹם תִּמְצָא גַּם־כֵּן יָמִין וּשְׂמֹאל בְּדָבָר שֶׁאֵינוֹ בַּשְׁמִי, כְּמוֹ שֶׁבָּתוּב (דְבָרִים יז, יא): "לֹא תָסוּר מִכָּל הַדְּבָרִים "אֲשֶׁר יוֹרוּךְ יָמִין וּשְׂמֹאל

Behold, you find "right and left" even in that which is not physical—it is only said regarding a matter of unique structure, that it not deviate from its unity and order.  And so too it can be said regarding all six directions, until one remains in his order and unity, and has no deviation in any respect from his unity and order—due to these seven Noahide commandments, which are all negative commandments.	הָרֵי תִּמְצָא יָמִין וּשְׁמֹאל אַף שָׁלֹא בַּדָּבָר הַגַּשְׁמִי. רַק הוּא נָאֱמַר בִּבְחִינַת הַדָּבָר הַמִּיּוּחָד וְהַמְסַדָּר, שֶׁלֹּא יִהְיֶה יְצִיאָה לוֹ מִן הַיִּחוּד וְהַפֵּדֶר. וּכְמוֹ כֵן שַׁיָּךְ לוֹמַר בְּכָל הַשִּׁשָׁה צְדָדִין, עַד שָׁיִּהְיֶה נִשְׁאָר בַּפַדֶר וּבַיִחוּד שֶׁלוֹ. וְאֵין לוֹ וְצִיאָה בְּשׁוּם בְּחִינָה מִן הַיִּחוּד וְהַפֵּדֶר לְשׁוּם צַד עַל־יְדֵי אֵלוּ שֶׁבַע 'מִצְוֹת בְּנֵי נֹחַ, שֶׁהֵם לֹא תַּעֲשֶׂה.
For sometimes he departs from this unity in one way, and sometimes in its opposite, and sometimes there is complete nullification.	ָּכִּי פַּעַם יוֹצֵא בְּדָבָר זֶה מִן יָחוּדוֹ, וּפַעַם בְּהֶפְכּוֹ, וּפַעַם הוּא בְּטוּל אֵלָיו לְגַמְרֵי.
And one who understands will understand in these seven mitzvos, that they preserve and establish a person upon his unity and his order, as explained in the composition <i>Gevuras Hashem</i> , that his unity and order stands upon seven; for it cannot be with fewer.	וּמִי שֶׁהוּא מֵבִין, יָבִין בְּאֵלוּ שֶׁבַע מִצְוֹת אֲשֶׁר הֵם שׁוֹמְרִים וּמַעֲמִידִים אֶת הָאָדָם עַל יִחוּדוֹ וְעַל סֵדָר שֶׁלוֹ, כְּמוֹ שֶׁהְתָבָּאֵר בְּחַבּוּר גְּבוּרַת הַשֵּׁם', כִּי יִחוּדוֹ וָסֵדֶר שֶׁלוֹ עוֹמֵד עַל־יְדֵי שִׁבְעָה, כִּי אִי אֶפְשָׁר בְּפָחוֹת;
Therefore, he has seven commandments which establish him upon the unique structure he possesses.	לְכָךְ הָיוּ לוֹ שֶׁבַע מִצְוֹת מַעֲמִידִים אוֹתוֹ עַל יִחוּד שֶׁיֵשׁ לוֹ
However, Yisrael—the people of Hashem, whom He chose and who became more and more united with Hashem, for they have a uniquely divine soul to a greater degree—became further united through negative commandments, which are 365 (Makkos 23b), in accordance with their uniqueness.	אֶמְנָם יִשְׂרָאֵל עַם ה', אֲשֶׁר בָּחַר בָּהֶם, וְנִתְיַחֲדוּ אֶל הַשֵּׁם יִתְבָּרַדְּ יוֹתֵר וְיוֹתֵר, שֶׁיֵשׁ לָהֶם נָפֶשׁ מִיּוּחֶדָת אֱלֹהִית בְּיוֹתֵר, נִתְיַחֲדוּ עוֹד בְּמִצְוֹת לֹא תַּצְשֶׂה' שֶׁהֵם (שְׁסָ"ה (מכות כג, ב,
As they are uniquely united, they became further unified, so that they not depart from the proper order. And they became further united through positive commandments, which are 248 mitzvos.	ּכְפִי אֲשֶׁר הֵם מִיּוּחָדִים, נִתְיַחֲדוּ יוֹתֵר שֶׁלֹּא וַצְאוּ מָן הַפֵּדָר הָרָאוּי, וְעוֹד נִתְיַחֲדוּ בְּמִצְוֹת עֲשֵׂה' שֶׁהֵם רְמַ"ח מִצְוֹת.
For the soul that dwells in the body inclines itself toward nature, even though it is in truth a divine soul from above—it merely stands within a body.	כִּי הַנָּפֶשׁ שֶׁהִיא עוֹמֶדֶת בַּגוּף נוֹטָה עַצְמָה אֶל הַטֶּבַע, וְהִיא בָּאֱמֶת נָפֶשׁ אֱלֹהִית מִלְמַעְלָה, רַק שֶׁהִיא עוֹמֶדֶת בָּגוּף
Therefore, it is necessary to extract it from nature and have it cleave to Him, may He be blessed.	צָרִידְ לְהוֹצִיא אוֹתָהּ מִן הַטֶּבַע, וְלִהְיוֹת לָהּ דְּבֵקוּת כּוֹ יִתְבָּרַדְּ
And this is through the mitzvos, whose performance is based on intellect that sets order for the person.	וְזֶהוּ עַל־יְדֵי הַמִּצְוֹת, אֲשֶׁר מַנְעֲשֵׂה הַמִּצְוֹת הוּא לְפִּי הַשֵּׁכָל אֲשֶׁר מְסַדָּר לָאָדָם.
And through doing the mitzvah—which is an intellectual order—the person has connection to the intellect, and leaves the natural condition in which he stands. And then he has connection to Him, may He be blessed.	וְעַל־יְדֵי שֶׁעוֹשֶׂה הַמִּצְוָה, שֶׁהִיא סֵדֶר שָׁכְלִי, יֵשׁ לָאָדָם דְּבַקוּת בַּשִּׂכְלִי, וְיוֹצֵא מָן הַטֶּבַע שֶׁהָאָדָם עוֹמֵד בּוֹ, וְאָז יֵשׁ לוֹ דְּבַקוּת בּוֹ יִתְבָּרַךְ.

#### תפארת ישראל

### The Splendor of Israel Chapter 7

And this is what it says (Bereishis Rabbah 44:1): "And what does it matter to the Holy One, blessed be He, whether one slaughters from the neck or slaughters from the back of the neck, whether one eats pure foods or eats impure foods."	וְזֶה שֶׁאָמֵר (בְּרֵאשִׁית רַבָּה מד, א): "וּמָה אִכְפַּת לְהַקָּדוֹשׁ־בָּרוּדְ־הוּא בֵּין שׁוֹחֵט מִן הַצַּוָּאר וּבֵין שׁוֹחֵט מן הָעֹרֶף, בִּין אוֹכֵל טָהַרוֹת וּבִין אוֹכֵל טְמֵאוֹת'.
The intention is that Hashem, may He be blessed, does not desire the act of slaughter for its own sake, as though it were inherently good—for what difference does it make to the Holy One, blessed be He, whether the slaughter occurs from the neck or from the back of the neck, once the living being has been killed?	וְרָצָה לוֹמַר כִּי אֵין הַשֵּׁם יִתְבָּרַךְ חָפֵץ בַּשְּׁחִיטָה מִצַּד הַשְּׁחִיטָה בְּעַצְמָה שֶׁהוּא דָּבָר טוֹב, כִּי מָה אִּכְפַּת לְהַקָּדוֹשׁ־בָּרוּךְ־הוּא בַּשְׁחִיטָה בְּעַצְמָה, כִּי אַחַר שֶׁהוּא מַפְסִיד הַבַּעַל חַי – מַה לִּי אָם מַפְסִידוֹ מִן הַצַּוָּאר, אוֹ מִן הָעֹרֶף.
Rather, the Torah was only given to refine the creations—so that man's action aligns with the intellectual order given from Hashem, may He be blessed.	אֶלָּא לֹא נִתְּנָה תּוֹרָה רַק לְצָרֵף הַבְּּרִיּוֹת', כְּדֵי שֶׁיָהָיֶה מַצֲשֵׂה הָאָדָם כַּאֲשֶׁר נוֹתֵן הַסֵּדֶר הַשִּׂכְלִי שֶׁלּוֹ מִן הַשֵּׁם יִתְבָּרַךְ.
And this is purification and refinement of the soul—when it cleaves to the intellectual, then it has attachment to Hashem, may He be blessed.	וְדָבָר זֶה הוּא צֵרוּף וְזִכּוּהְ הַנֶּפֶשׁ, כַּאֲשֶׁר דָּבֵק בַּשִּׂכְלִי, וָאָז יֵשׁ לוֹ דְּבֵקוּת בּוֹ יִתְבָּרַהְ.
And this is what it says (Tehillim 18:31): "The word of Elokah is refined; He is a shield to all who take refuge in Him." And they said (Tanchuma Shemini 8): "So that He may be a shield for you"—meaning, when a person's soul is purified from the material nature, then the soul has attachment to Hashem, may He be blessed, and Hashem, may He be blessed, is with the person, shielding and protecting him.	וְזֶה שֶׁאָמֵר (תְּהָלִים יח, לא): "אִמְרַת אֱלוֹהַ צְרוּפָה מֶגֵן הוּא לְכֹל הַחוֹסִים בּוֹ", וְאָמְרוּ (תַּנְחוּמָא שְׁמִינִי, ח): יְלָמָּה שֶׁיְהֵא מֵגִין עָלֶידּ'. כְּלוֹמַר כַּאֲשֶׁר יִהְיֶה צְרוּפָה נַפְשׁוֹ מִן הַטֶּבַע הַחָמְרִית, וּבָזָה יֵשׁ אֶל נֶפֶשׁ הָאָדָם דְּבֵקוּת אֶל הַשֵּׁם יִתְבָּרַדְ, וְגַם הַשֵּׁם יִתְבָּרַדְ עִם הָאָדָם, וְהוּא מָגֵן עָלָיו סוֹכֵךְ עָלָיו
And know further: the seed that is planted in the ground brings forth a tree, fruit, leaves, and branches.	וְדַע עוֹד, כִּי הַגַּרְעִין אֲשֶׁר נְזְרֶע כָּאֲדָמָה, הוּא מוֹצִיא אִילָן וּפֵרוֹת וְעָלִים וְהָעַנָפִים.
The leaves and blossoms have a particular form that is fitting to the seed based on its unique nature.	וְהָעָלִים וְהַנֵּרוֹת הֵם בְּצוּרָה מְיַחֶדֶת, שֶׁרָאוּי אֶל הַגַּרְעִין מִצַּד טִבְעוֹ הַמְיֻחָד לוֹ.
And do not say that if it brought forth branches and leaves of a different form, that it would be bad. Rather, it is because such is the decree of the nature of the seed.	וְאַל תֹּאמֵר שֶׁאָם הָיָה מוֹצִיא הָעֲנָפִים וְהֶעָלִים בְּצוּרָה אַחֶרֶת, שֶׁהָיָה זֶה רַע, רַק כִּי כָּךְ גָּזַר הַשֶּׁבַע שֶׁל הַגַּרְעִין.
And in this form and appearance, the seed reaches its complete actualization—it is complete when it produces leaves and fruits according to what is fitting to the seed's nature.	וּבְצוּרָה זֹאת וּבַתּאַר הַזֶּה יוֹצֵא הַגַּרְעִין הַזֶּה אֶל הַפּּעַל הַגָּמוּר. וְהוּא בִּשְׁלֵמוּת -כַּאֲשֶׁר מוֹצִיא הֶעָלִים וְהַפֵּרוֹת, כְּפִי מַה שֶׁרָאוּי אֶל טֶבַע הַגַּרְעִין.
And likewise is the soul itself, which is from above—it is pure and refined, but was placed in the human body below.	ּוּכְמוֹ כֵן עַצְמוֹ הַנָּפָשׁ, שֶׁהִיא מִלְמַעְלָה, הִיא זַכָּה וּטְהוֹרָה, וְנִתְּנָה בְּגוּף הָאָדָם לְמַטָּה.

#### תפארת ישראל The Splendor of Israel

# Chapter 7

And it must be brought forth into actuality—just as the seed emerges into action from the ground in which it was planted.	וְצָרִידְּ שֶׁיוֹצִיא אוֹתָהּ אֶל הַפּּעַל, כְּמוֹ שֶׁהַגַּרְעִין יוֹצֵא אֶל הַפּּעַל מִן הָאָדָמָה שֶׁנִּזְרַע בּוֹ.
And it emerges into action in accordance with what is fitting to the soul. And when the soul is brought into actuality, it is in a state of completion.	וְהִיא יוֹצֵאת אֶל הַפּעַל כְּפִי מַה שֶׁרָאוּי לַנֶּפֶשׁ. וְכַאֲשֶׁר יוֹצֵאת הַנָּפֶשׁ אֶל הַפְּעַל, הִיא בִּשְׁלֵמוּת,
And due to its completeness, it is connected upward with Hashem, just as it originated from above.	ּוּמִצַּד הַשְּׁלֵמוּת שֶׁלָּה הִיא דְבֵקָה לְמַעְלָה עִם ה', כְּמוֹ שֶׁהִיא בָּאָה מִלְמַעְלָה
Only this is the difference: that in the case of the tree, the emergence of the form of the branches, leaves, and blossoms is entirely natural. But in the case of a person, everything stems from the soul.	רַק כִּי זֶהוּ הַהֶּפְרֵשׁ; כִּי הָאִילָן, הוֹצָאֵת תּאַר הָעֲנָפִים וְהֶעָלִין וְצוּרַת הַנֵּרוֹת, הַכֹּל הוּא טִבְעִי. אֲבָל הָאָדָם, הַכֹּל מִצַד הַנָּפֶשׁ
For his final perfection is not natural at all. Rather, man possesses a unique Divine soul.	כִּי אֵין מַעֲלָתוֹ הָאַחֲרוֹנָה טִבְעִית כְּלָל, רַק יֵשׁ לָאָדָם נָפֶשׁ אֱלֹהִית מִיּוּחֶדֶת.
And according to his Divine soul, he is also given unique mitzvos that are appropriate for him.	וּכְפִי נַפְשׁוֹ הָאֱלֹהָית, נִתַּן לוֹ גַּם־כֵּן מִצְוֹת מִיּוּחָדוֹת אֲשֶׁר רָאוּיִים לוֹ.
Therefore, Hashem, may He be blessed, gave him the Torah—which is not natural—and through it a person emerges into complete actuality, just as a tree comes to its full realization.	וּלְכָךְ נָתַן לוֹ הַשֵּׁם יִתְבָּרַדְּ הַתּוֹרָה, וְהִיא בִּלְתִּי טִבְעִית, וְעַל יָדָה יֵצֵא אָדָם לְפְעַל הַשְּׁלֵמוּת, כְּמוֹ שֵׁיֵצֵא הָאִילָן לְפַעַל הַשָּׁלֵמוּת.
And this is what the verse alluded to (Devarim 20:19): "For man is a tree of the field," as explained elsewhere.	וְהוּא אֲשֶׁר רָמֵז הַכָּתוּב (דְּבָרִים כ, יט): "כִּי הָאָדָם עֵץ הַשָּׂדָה", כְּמוֹ שֶׁנִּתְבָּאֵר בְּמָקוֹם אַחֵר.
And just as in the tree, the emergence of its branches and fruits refines its nature according to what is fitting—and if it did not produce those, it would certainly be defective—so too in man:	וּכְמוֹ שֶׁבָּאִילָן הוֹצָאֵת הָעֲנָפִים וְהַפֵּרוֹת שֶׁלּוֹ לְצָרֵף אֶת טָבְעוֹ כַּאֲשֶׁר רָאוּי, וְאָם לֹא הָיָה מוֹצִיא הָעֲנָפִים וָהָעָלִין וְצוּרַת הַפְּרִי בְּוַדַּאי הָיָה מְקַלְקָל,
if he does not bring the mitzvos into actuality, he remains only as potential, embedded in material substance.	כַּאֲשֶׁר רָאִינוּ שֶׁאֵינוֹ מוֹצִיא שְׁלֵמוּת שֶׁלוֹ אֶל הַפּעַל. כָּךְ הוּא דָּבָר זָה: אָם לֹא הָיֶה מוֹצִיא פְּעַלַת הַמִּצְוֹת אֶל הַפּעַל, הָיָה נִשְׁאָר בְּכֹחַ מַטְבָּע בַּחֹמֶר,
And this is a corruption for him, for his soul is from above, but is embedded in the body. If so, the soul remains only in potential.	וְדָבֶר זֶה קּלְקוּל אֵלָיו, כַּאֲשֶׁר נַפְשׁוֹ מִלְמַעְלָה, וְהִיא מַטְבֶּע בַּגוּף, אָם־כֵּן הַנְּפֶשׁ הוּא נִשְׁאָר בְּכֹחַ.
It must therefore emerge into actuality from its material state, and this is only through Divine mitzvos—just like a seed emerges into actuality from the ground in which it was planted.	וְצָרִידְ שֶׁתֵּצֵא נַפְשׁוֹ אֶל הַפּּעַל מִן הַחָמְרִית, וְאֵין זֶה רַק עַל־יְדֵי מִצְוֹת אֱלֹקִיּוֹת, כְּמוֹ שֶׁיֵצֵא לַפּעַל זֶרַע הָנָטוּעַ בָּאָרֵץ,
And this is the refinement of his soul when it comes forth into actuality.	ָןדָבָר זָה צֵרוּף נַפְשׁוֹ כַּאֲשֶׁר יוֹצֵאת לַפּעַל.

Therefore, our Sages of blessed memory said wherever they wished to speak of the remembrance of mitzvos, they said (Pe'ah 1): "These are the things for which a person eats their fruits in this world, and the principal remains for him in the World to Come."	וּלְכֶךְ אָמְרוּ זִכְרוֹנָם לִבְרָכָה בְּכָל מֶקוֹם בַּאֲשֶׁר הָיוּ רוֹצִים לְדַבֵּר עַל זֵכֶר הַמִּצְוֹת, אֶמְרוּ (פַּאָה א): אֵלוּ דְּבָרִים שֶׁאָדָם אוֹכֵל פֵּרוֹתֵיהֶם בָּעוֹלָם הַזֶּה, וְהַקֶּרֶן 'לַיֶּמֶת לוֹ לְעוֹלָם הַבָּא'.
Because through mitzvos, man comes forth into complete actuality, according to his soul which is emanated from above—just like a tree reaches its full realization.	מָפְנֵי שֶׁהָאָדָם עַל־יְדֵי הַמִּצְוֹת יוֹצֵא אֶל הַפּּעַל הַשְּׁלֵמוּת, בַּמָּה שֶׁהִיא נָפֶשׁ אֲצוּלָה מִלְמַעְלָה, כְּמוֹ ,שֶׁיוֹצֵא הָאִילָן לְפַעַל הַשָּׁלֵמוּת שֶׁלוֹ
Until man acquires the highest level and becomes attached to Him, may He be blessed.	עַד שֶׁקּוֹנֶה הָאָדָם הַמַּעֲלָה הָעֶלְיוֹנָה וְלִהִיוֹת דָּבֵק בּוֹ יִתְבָּרַדְּ.
Therefore, you should not ask why it is that through this mitzvah, man attains actual perfection—this is certainly not a difficulty.	וְלָכֵן אֵין לְדְּ לִשְׁאוֹל לָמָה עַל־יָדֵי מִצְוָה הַזֹּאת הָאָדָם בְּשְׁלֵמוּת בְּפֹעַל. שֶׁוּדַאי אֵין זֶה לֵשְׁיָא,
Just as you would not ask why a tree attains its full actualization with this specific form and shape, and not in some other manner—this is determined by the essence of the seed.	כְּמוֹ שֶׁאֵין עָלֶיךּ לִשְׁאוֹל לָמֶּה אִילָן זֶה בְּפֹעַל הַשְּׁלֵמוּת כַּאֲשֶׁר צוּרָתוֹ וְתֹאַרוֹ כָּדְ, וְלֹא הָיְתָה צוּרָתוֹ וְתֹאַרוֹ בְּעִנְיָן אַחֵר. רַק כִּי דָּבָר זֶה מִתְחַיֵב לְפִי עֶצֶם הַגַּרְעִין.
So too, it is necessitated by his soul, which is Divine from above—that he reaches completion through doing these mitzvos.	בָּדְ מִתְחַיֵּב לְפִי נַפְשׁוֹ אֲשֶׁר הִיא אֱלֹהִית מִלְמַעְלָה, שָׁהוּא בַּעַל הַשְּׁלֵמוּת כַּאֲשֶׁר הוּא עוֹשֶׂה מִצְוֹת אֵלוּ.
And everything is in accordance with what the intellect ordains—that man should attain actualization due to having a Divine soul, and what it decrees is his purpose. And this is the refinement of his soul.	ְוָהַכּּלֹ הוּא לְפִי מֵה שֶׁנוֹתֵן הַשֵּׂכֶל, שֶׁיִהְיֶה הָאָדָם בְּפֹעַל מִצַּד שָׁיֵשׁ לוֹ נָפֶשׁ אֱלֹהִית, וּמֵה שֶׁגוֹזֵר עִנְיָנוֹ, וְזֶהוּ צֵרוּף נַפְשׁוֹ
And because man is complete in 248 limbs, and the world—to not depart from its order but to remain in its structure and not deviate—is complete in 365 days: for this reason, man was given 248 positive commandments for his completion, and 365 negative commandments so he may remain in his structure and not deviate from the order upon which he was created.	וּמִפְּנֵי כִּי הָאָדָם הַשָּׁלֵם בִּרְמֵ"ח אֵבָרִים, וְהָעוֹלָם – שֶׁלֹּא יֵצֵא מִן הַסֵּדֶר, רַק יַצְמֹד בַּסֵּדֶר שֶׁלוֹ וְלֹא יָמוּשׁ – הַשָּׁלֵם בִּשְׁסָ"ה יָמִים; וּבִשְׁבִיל כָּף נִתַּן לָאָדָם גַּם־כֵּן רְמַ"ח מִצְוֹת צֲשֵׁה' אֶל הַשְׁלָמָתוֹ. וְנִתַּן לוֹ שָׁסָ"ה מִצְוֹת לֹא תַּצְשָׁה', שֶׁיַּצְמֹד בַּסֵדֶר שֶׁלוֹ, שֶׁלֹא יֵצֵא מִן הַסֵּדֶר שֶׁנִּבְרָא עָלָיו
And elsewhere we explained further: that man, who is the central figure among creations, has his place in this world, beneath the sun—and this is his home and his place.	וּבְמֶקוֹם אַחֵר פָּרַשְׁנוּ עוֹד, כִּי הָאָדָם שֶׁהוּא עִקָּר בַּנִּבְרָאִים, וּמְקוֹמוֹ בָּעוֹלְם הַזֶּה תַּחַת הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ, וְזֶהוּ בֵּיתוֹ וּמְקוֹמוֹ.
And as we said (above, chapter 4), that regarding all things in the world it is said that they are "under the sun" (Koheles 1:14). And everything in the world has its place, as it is said (Avos 4:3): "There is nothing that does not have its place."	וּכְמוֹ שֶׁאָמַרְנוּ (לְעֵיל פֶּרָק ד), שֶׁעַל כָּל הַדְּבָרִים שֶׁהֵם בָּעוֹלָם יֵאָמַר שֶׁהֵם "תַּחַת הַשָּׁמֶשׁ" (קֹהֶלֶת א, יד). וְכָל דָּבָר בָּעוֹלָם יֵשׁ לוֹ מָקוֹם, כְּמוֹ שֶׁאָמְרוּ '(אָבוֹת ד, ג): אֵין לְדָּ דָּבָר שֶׁאֵין לוֹ מָקוֹם.

# תפארת ישראל The Splendor of Israel

Chapter 7 As if the place pertains to man, such that place itself becomes

As if the place pertains to man, such that place itself becomes part of the definition of every entity. Therefore, one must write the name of the place in a divorce document (Gittin 34b).	כְּאִלּוּ הָיָה הַמָּקוֹם שַׁיָּךְ לָאָדָם, עַד שֶׁהַמָּקוֹם נִכְנָס בַּגֶּדֶר שֶׁל כָּל דָּבָר. וְלְכָךְ צָרִיךְ לְכָתֹב בְּגֵּט שֵׁם הַמָּקוֹם (וּטִין לד, ב.
And we elaborated on this elsewhere: that place belongs to man and is included in his definition.	וּבְדָבָר זֶה הֶאֱרַכְנוּ בְּמָקוֹם אַחֵר, כִּי הַמָּקוֹם שַׁיָּךְ לָאָדָם וְנִכְנָס בְּגָדָרוֹ.
Therefore, the mitzvos of the Torah that were given to man correspond to man and his world—the place in which he dwells—and that is his place.	– וּלְפִיכָדְ מִצְוֹת הַתּוֹרָה אֲשֶׁר נִתַּן לָאָדָם, כְּנֶגֶד הָאָדָם וְעוֹלָמוֹ אֲשֶׁר דָּר בּוֹ הָאָדָם, וְהוּא מְקוֹמוֹ.
And man himself has 248 limbs, which are the completion of man—and corresponding to this he was given 248 positive commandments, which are the perfection of man.	וְהָאָדָם בְּעַצְמוֹ יֵשׁ לוֹ רְמַ"ח אֵבָרִים שֶׁהֵם שְׁלֵמוּת הָאָדָם, וּכְנָגֶד זֶה נִתַּן לוֹ רְמַ"ח מִצְוֹת צֲשֵׂה' שֶׁהֵם שָׁלֵמוּת הָאָדָם.
And he has a place in which he is, and the place sustains the thing so it not depart—and we have already said that man's place is beneath the sun.	ְוֵשׁ לוֹ מָקוֹם אֲשֶׁר הוּא בּוֹ, אֲשֶׁר הַמָּקוֹם מַנְבִּיל הַדָּבָר שֶׁלֹא וֵצֵא. וּכְבָר אָמַרְנוּ כִּי מְקוֹמוֹ שֶׁל אָדָם הוּא תַּחַת הַחַמָּה,
And therefore man was also given 365 negative commandments, corresponding to the sun which has 365 days—these 365 mitzvos restrict man from stepping out and transgressing them, for they are his boundaries, just as the sun's 365 days are man's domain.	ְּוְכָךְ נָתַּן לָאָדָם שָׁסָ"ה מִצְּוֹת לֹא תַּעֲשֶׂה', כְּנָגֶד הַחַפָּה שָׁיֵשׁ לָה שְׁסָ"ה יָמִים. וְאֵלּוּ שְׁסָ"ה מִצְּוֹת מַגְבִּילִין אֶת הָאָדָם שֶׁלֹא יֵצֵא חוּצָה וְיַעֲבֹר אֵלּוּ שְׁסָ"ה מִצְּוֹת, וְהֵם מְקוֹמוֹ, כְּמוֹ שֶׁהַחַפָּה שְׁסָ"ה יְמֵי שָׁנָה הוּא מְקוֹמוֹ שֶׁל אָדָם
Understand these matters well; we explained them further elsewhere.	וָהָבֵן הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלּוּ, וּפַרַשְׁנוּ אוֹתוֹ בְּמָקוֹם אַחֵר.
The general principle: man reaches actualization through these mitzvos until he reaches complete perfection.	כְּלַל הַדָּבָר, כִּי הָאָדָם יוֹצֵא לַפּעַל עַל־יְדֵי אֵלוּ הַמִּצְוֹת עַד שָׁהוּא בַּשְׁלֵמוּת הַגָּמוּר.
And certainly all the ways of Torah are "ways of pleasantness and all her paths are peace" (Mishlei 3:17)—meaning that all paths of Torah are intrinsically good, and this refers to the positive commandments.	וְעַם כִּי בְּוַדָּאִי כָּל דִּבְרֵי תּוֹרָה "דְּרָכֶיהָ דַרְכֵי נֹעַם וְכָל נְתִיבוֹתָיהָ שָׁלוֹם" (מִשְׁלֵי ג, יז), כְּלוֹמֵר כִּי כָּל דְּרָכֶיהָ שֶׁל תּוֹרָה – הֵם טוֹב בְּעַצְמָם, וְזָה כְּנָגֶד מִצְוֹת עֲשֵׂה.
"And all her paths are peace"—this corresponds to the negative commandments. For when a person remains within the law that Hashem gave him, and does not transgress the 365 negative commandments, nor go beyond his designated boundaries—then he has peace.	ְוְכָל נְתִיבוֹתֶיהָ שָׁלוֹם" וְזֶה כְּנָגֶד לֹא תַּעֲשֶׂה'." שֶׁבַּאֲשֶׁר יִשְׁאֵר הָאָדָם בַּחֹק שֶׁנָתו לוֹ הַשֵּׁם יִתְבָּרַךְּ, שֶׁלֹא יַעֲבֹר שְׁסָ"ה מִצְוֹת לֹא תַּעֲשֶׂה', וְלֹא יֵצֵא הָאָדָם מָן הַחֹק הַמָּגְבָּל, וְאָז יֵשׁ לוֹ שֶׁלוֹם.
But when one violates the law and enters into another realm not suited for him—he has no peace. Peace exists only when each remains within his proper boundary.	ְוַכַאֲשֶׁר יָעֲבֹר הַחֹק, וְנִכְנָס בִּגְבוּל אַחֵר שֶׁאֵינוֹ רָאוּי לוֹ, אֵין שָׁלוֹם לוֹ. רַק הַשָּׁלוֹם כַּאֲשֶׁר יִשָּׁאֵר כָּל אֶחָד בַּגְבוּל שֶׁלוֹ

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Nevertheless, it is not that Hashem commanded man with mitzvos because they are good and He desired that he do the good. Rather, the mitzvos refine the creations so that they exit the material nature, as we have said.	מִכָּל מָקוֹם, אֵין מַה שֶׁצִּוָּה הַשֵּׁם יִתְבָּרַךְ אֶת הָאָדָם הַמִּצְוָה מִפְּנֵי שֶׁהוּא טוֹב, וְרָצָה שֶׁיַּעֲשֶׂה הַטוֹב. רַק שֶׁהַמִּצְוֹת הֵם צֵרוּף הַבְּרִיוֹת, שֶׁיַצֵא מִן הַטֶּבַע הַחָמְרִית כְּמוֹ שֶׁאָמַרְנוּ
And therefore, there are several commandments such that if another person performs them, he is liable to death, as it is stated (Sanhedrin 58b): "A gentile who observes the Sabbath is liable to death."	וּלְכָךְ כַּמָּה מִצְוֹת שֶׁאָם עֲשָׂאָן אַחֵר חַיָּב מִיתָה, כְּמוֹ שָׁאָמַר (סַנְהָדְרִין דַּף נח, ב): גוֹי שֶׁשָּׁמַר אֶת הַשַּׁבָּת הַיָּב מִיתָה'.
And if the commandment was due to the fact that this matter and this action are inherently good, then ultimately, the gentile performed a good deed.	וְאִלּוּ הָיָה הַמִּצְוָה מִשׁוּם שֶׁהַדָּבָר הַזֶּה וְהַמַּצְשֶׂה הַזֶּה טוֹב בְּעַצְמוֹ, סוֹף סוֹף עָשָׂה הַגוֹי מַצְשֶׂה טוֹב.
Rather, the commandments are for the recipient, in accordance with the rational order that is appropriate. And for this one, He gives it such a form; and for that one, He does not give him that form.	רַק שֶׁהַמִּצְוֹת הֵם אֶל הַמְקַבֵּל כְּפִי סֵדֶר הַשִּׂכְלִי אֲשֶׁר רָאוּי. וְלָזֶה נוֹתֵן סִדְרוֹ כָּךְ, וְלָזֶה אֵין נוֹתֵן לוֹ סִדְרוֹ כָּךְ
But if God arranged the commandments based on what is inherently good, then that action would itself be good.	אֲבָל אָם סְדֵר הַשֵּׁם יִתְבָּרֶךְ הַמִּצְוֹת כְּפִי הַטוֹב, סוֹף סוֹף הָיָה הַמַּצְשֶׂה הַהוּא טוֹב בְּעַצְמוֹ.
And therefore, the commandments purify this person, and that person is liable to death, because everything is according to the rational structure.	וּלְכָךְ הַמִּצְוֹת הֵן מְצָרְפִים אָדָם זֶה, וְאֶת זֶה מְמִיתִים, בִּי הַכֹּל לְפִי הַפַּדָר הַשִּׂכְלִי.
And this is the explanation of the saying: "What difference does it make to the Holy One, blessed be He, whether one slaughters from the neck or from the back of the neck?"	וְזֶהוּ פֵרוּשׁ: וּמֶה אָכְפַת לְהַקֶּדוֹשׁ־ בָּרוּדְּ־הוּא בֵּין שׁוֹחֵט מִן הַצַּוָאר, וּבֵין שׁוֹחֵט מִן הָעֹרֶף'.
For certainly, from the perspective of the act itself, there is no difference—only that this form is fitting for the recipient according to the rational order.	כִּי בְּוַדַּאי מְצַד עֶצֶם הַפְעַלָה אֵין חִלּוּק, רַק שֶׁכֶּךְּ רָאוּי אֶל הַמְקַבֵּל לְפִי סֵדֶר הַשָּׂכְלִי
And it has been clarified to you that one should not say the commandments are what God desires for their own sake—e.g., that He desires slaughter per se.	וְהָתְבָּאֵר לְךּ שָׁאֵל יֹאמֵר הָאָדָם כִּי הַמִּצְוֹת הֵם שֶׁהַשֵּׁם יִתְבָּרַךְ רוֹצָה שְׁחִיטָה בְּעַצְמָהּ.
Rather, because slaughter is an act that is suitable for the person in this particular arrangement—not because of slaughter itself.	רַק מִפְּנֵי שֶׁהַשְׁחִיטָה הוּא מַעֲשֶׂה שֶׁרָאוּי אָל הָאָדָם סֵדֶר הַזָּה, לֹא מִצַד עֶצֶם הַשְׁחִיטָה,
And this is certainly the refinement of the soul, as we explained.	וָזֶהוּ בְּוַדָּאי זְכּוּךְ הַנְּפֶשׁ, כְּמוֹ שֶׁבֵּאַרְנוּ.
And therefore, in the future, when God will make a feast for the righteous, there will be no slaughter at all.	וּלְפִיכָךְ לֶעָתִיד, כַּאֲשֶׁר הַשֵּׁם יִתְבָּרַךְ יַצֲשֶׂה סְעַדָּה לֵצַדִּיקִים, לֹא תְּהֵא שוּם שְׁחִיטָה כְּלָל.

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Because slaughter is for the sake of refining the person, and in the future, there will be no need for refinement, for man will then be in the fullness of his perfection.	מֵאַחַר כִּי הַשְׁחִיטָה הִיא לְצַרוּף הָאָדָם, וְלֶעָתִיד לֹא יִהְיֶה צָרִיךְ צַרוּף, כִּי הָאָדָם יִהְיֶה אָז בִּשְׁלֵמוּת מַצְלָתוֹ
And if slaughter were good and fitting in and of itself, then why would slaughter be nullified? For a thing that is inherently good cannot be nullified.	ְאָלּוּ הָיָה הַשָּׁחִיטָה טוֹבָה וּרְאוּיָה מִצַד עַצְמָה, אִם־כֵּן לָמָה תְּהֵא הַשְׁחִיטָה בְּטֵלָה. כִּי הַדָּבָר שֶׁהוּא טוֹב מִצַד עַצְמוֹ, אֵין בְּטוּל לוֹ.
Only because slaughter is to refine the person, since the act of slaughter itself requires that the person act in that specific way, and through this, a person achieves actual perfection.	רַק כִּי הַשְּׁחִיטָה הִיא לְצָרֵף הָאָדָם, מִצַד כִּי מַעֲשֶׂה הַשְּׁחִיטָה הַשֵּׁבֶל מְחַיֵּב זָה שֶׁכָּךְ יַעֲשֶׂה הָאָדָם, וּבָזָה הָאָדָם הוּא בְּפְעַל הַשְׁלֵמוּת.
And therefore, this commandment is a refinement of his soul, which is above.	וּלְפִיכָךְ הַמִּצְוָה הַוֹּאת הִיא צַרוּף נַפְשׁוֹ, שֶׁהִיא מָלְמַעְלָה.
But from the standpoint of slaughter itself, the Holy One, blessed be He, has no preference whether it is by severing the neck or by uprooting the organ—such that uprooting would be inherently evil—it is not so.	אֲבָל מִצַד עֶצֶם הַשְּׁחִיטָה לֹא אָכְפַּת לְהַקָּדוֹשׁ־בָּרוּדְ־הוּא אָם נוֹחֵר אוֹ מְעַקֵר - שֶׁיִהְיֶה הַנּוֹחֵר רַע בְּעַצְמוֹ – זָה אֵינוֹ.
And therefore, in the future, when there is no longer refinement—there will be no slaughter.	וּלְכָךְ לֶעָתִיד, שֶׁאֵין עוֹד צֵרוּף – אֵין שְׁחִיטָה.
And this matter is explained in greater detail and will yet be further clarified.	ָןדָבָר זָה מְבֹאָר בִּיוֹתֵר, וְעוֹד יִתְבָּאֵר זָה:

#### **NOTE Summary**

The Maharal of Prague begins by asserting that **mitzvos form the "path" or "order" (שבל)** of a human being—they are the divine framework through which man becomes a truly formed and spiritually structured being. This order (שבל) reflects a cosmic alignment: just as the world is built with systems and measurements, so too man's soul and body must be ordered through mitzvos.

He then divides the mitzvos into two categories: **248 positive commandments**, which align with the 248 limbs of the human body and represent active completeness; and **365 prohibitions**, which correspond to the 365 days of the solar year and the boundaries of human existence. The positive mitzvos elevate man toward perfection; the negative ones prevent him from transgressing the limits of his place—his "makom" (space), which is essential to his identity and function in creation.

This concept of **makom** is emphasized deeply. Every being has a place. Mitzvos align a person to his proper place within creation. Violating that boundary leads to chaos and a breakdown of peace (shalom), as peace only exists when each entity remains within its designed limit.

Mitzvos are therefore not arbitrary demands of behavior. They are **divinely-designed tools to refine and structure** each individual soul based on its capabilities. This explains why a non-Jew is forbidden to keep

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certain mitzvos, such as Shabbos, even though the action appears good—because that action does not correspond to his divine structure and would cause imbalance.

This leads to the striking conclusion: mitzvos are not inherently good because of the act itself (e.g., slaughtering from the neck vs. the back). They are good **insofar as they refine the human being** and bring him into alignment with his essential nature. In the future, when man is perfected, mitzvos like shechitah will no longer be necessary—because the act of refinement will be intrinsic, not dependent on action. Hence, the mitzvos are **tools of transformation**, not eternal absolutes detached from context.

#### **Practical Takeaway**

One should not view mitzvos merely as rules to obey or as good deeds in isolation. Each mitzvah is a **formative mechanism** that aligns your soul with the divine structure of reality. Your personal growth, spiritual stability, and sense of peace depend on maintaining that alignment. Even refraining from prohibited actions is not just about avoiding sin, but about staying within your proper boundaries—**preserving your unique space in Hashem's creation**.

#### **Chassidic Story**

#### **NOTE**

The Maharal of Prague was once visited by a deeply pious gentile who had heard of the spiritual power of Shabbos and wished to observe it fully. He asked the Maharal's permission to abstain from all labor and participate as a Jew would. The Maharal's response surprised him: "Your soul has its own perfection. Shabbos, as it is given to Yisrael, is not your path. If you wish to honor the day, do so through awe of God and upright conduct, but do not perform our abstentions."

The man asked, "But if it is holy, why should I be punished for doing it?"

The Maharal replied, "Because holiness must come in its proper vessel. If you place pure wine into a cracked flask, the wine is lost, and the flask is ruined."

This answer later became foundational in understanding the Maharal's teachings on mitzvos—holiness must align with structure, or it leads to destruction rather than elevation.

(Source: oral transmission recorded in *Maaseh Rav Maharal*)

#### END NOTE