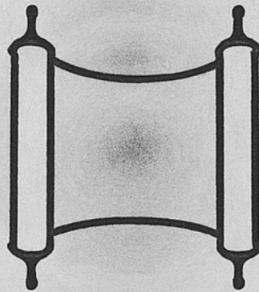


בס"ד

# Alter Rebbe Torah Ohr Chanukah

עֲנִין חֲנוֹכָה



*Dedicated To:  
the Holy Victims  
of the Bondi Terror attack:*

To find more Maamarim and to dedicate one visit:

**ChassidusNow.com**

# Alter Rebbe

## Torah Ohr

### Parshas Miketz & Chanukah

#### עֲנָנִין חֲנוֹכָה

#### Introduction

Rabbi Shneur Zalman of Liadi (1745–1812), known as the Alter Rebbe, founder of Chabad Chassidut and author of the *Tanya*, delivered this *maamar* to illuminate the inner meaning of Chanukah, the nature of mitzvot, and the dynamics of divine love within the soul. This *maamar* weaves together Halachah, Midrash, Kabbalah, and experiential avodah to explain why Chanukah is uniquely commemorated through light, and how the mitzvah–Torah relationship generates an ever-deepening bond between the Jew and the Infinite.

The subject of Chanukah. Behold, they established the miracle through the lights. This is unlike the other miracles.

עַבְנִין חֲנוּכָה. הַנֶּה קָבְעוּ הַגֵּס בְּגִירֹת. מַשְׁאַיִן כֵּן בְּשָׁאָר  
נְסִים

On Pesach, in the exodus from Egypt, you shall eat matzot. On Purim, days of feasting and joy.

**בפסח ביציאת מצרים תאכלו מצות בפירות ימי  
משתה ושמחה**

Corresponding to the exile, which was also physical. In Egypt, with mortar and bricks.

בנגד הגלות שהייתה גם כן גופני במאירים בחומר  
ובלבנים

And in the days of Haman, he sought to destroy, etcetera, and their spoil for plunder.

ובימיו הָמָן בָּקַשׁ לְהַשְׁמִיד כָּוֹ וְשָׁלַלְמָם לְבָזָז

This is not so with Chanukah, for Israel were dwelling on their land and were not exiled from their land.

מִשְׁאֵין כֵּן בְּחִנּוּכָה שֶׁקְיוּ יִשְׂרָאֵל שְׁרוּוּיִם עַל אַדְמָתָם  
וְלֹא גָּלוּ מִרְאַצָּם

Rather, there was an exile of the Torah, to make them forget Your Torah and to cause them to transgress the statutes of Your will.

רק גלויות הטורה להשכיהם תורתך ולהעיביהם חי  
רצונך

Therefore, they established it through lights, on account of the verse.

לפייך קבעו בירות על שם הפסוק

“For a commandment is a lamp and the Torah is light, and the way of life is reproofs of discipline” (Proverbs 6:23).

משלוי וכ"ג כי נר מצוה ותורה אור ודרך חיים תוכחות מוסר

To understand the matter of this verse, and also the latter part of the verse which states “and the way of life,” etcetera, requires explanation.

ול'ה'בין ענין פסוק זה וגם סיפ'א דק'ר'א דק'תיב ו'זר'ה  
ת'ים וג'ו' צ'ר'יך באור

What “way of life” is this, beyond the Torah and the commandments mentioned earlier in the verse.

אייזה דרך סיים הוא מלבד התרבות והמצוות האמורה  
למעלה בפסקוק

The matter is as follows. That which the commandment is compared to a lamp and the Torah to light is understood.

ובענין כי מה שהמשיל המצוה לנר והתורה לאור  
היא מובן

Just as a lamp is called by the name of the oil, as in the language of our Sages, a lamp of oil, a lamp of wax.

שְׁכָמוֹ שְׁנִגְרָא עַל שֵׁם הַשְׁמָן כָּלְשׂוֹן רְבוּתִינוֹ  
זְכוּרָנוּ לְבָרְכָה נָר שֶׁל שְׁמָן נָר שֶׁל שְׁעוֹהָה

**Alter Rebbe**  
**Torah Ohr**  
**Parshas Miketz & Chanukah**  
**ענין חנוכה**

Behold, even though the oil has no light in itself, and on the contrary extinguishes light that falls into it.

Nevertheless, from it and through it the flame of light is drawn, which clings to the wick through a small amount of oil drawn after the wick.

For when the oil is consumed, the light is extinguished.

Thus it is precisely with the commandment. Even though it is the will of the King without any reason or understanding, and there is no comprehension in it.

Nevertheless, from it and through it is drawn and revealed the light of wisdom. This is the Oral Torah, for the Torah emerges from wisdom.

And the wisdom and understanding in the Oral Torah is only to understand and grasp the explanation and reason of the commandments.

Each tractate according to its subject. And an explanation of this matter in particular in the service of the Eternal.

Behold it is written, "In the morning, in the morning, when he prepares the lamps, he shall burn it," and "When Aaron kindles the lamps at twilight, he shall burn it" (Exodus 30:7-8).

To understand why regarding the morning it is written "when he prepares," and regarding twilight "when he kindles."

Behold, the Congregation of Israel, the source of the souls of Israel, is called by the name Menorah, and it is beaten from one piece.

All Israel are in unity, and it is divided into seven lamps.

For in particular there are six hundred thousand general sparks, and each spark divides into six hundred thousand individual sparks, as explained in Tanya.

And in a general way they are included in the seventy souls that descended to Egypt.

And the general of the general is called by the name seven lamps.

הנה אף על פי שהשמן אין בו אור מצד עצמו  
ואזרבאה הוא מכבה את האור הנופל לתוךו

מכל מקום ממנה ועל ידו נמשך לקב שילובת האור  
הנאיו בפתחה במעט שמן הנמשך אחר הפתחה

**שערי בכלות השמן נכבה האור**

בכה מפש היא האמונה הגם שהוא רצון הפלת כל  
שומ טעם ודעתי אין בה שום חשגה

מכל מקום ממנה ועל ידה נמשך ונתגלה אור החקמה  
וז תורה שבעל פה דאורייתא מחקמה נקחת

והחקמה והבינה בתורה שבבעל פה הוא רק לקבין  
ולחשיג פרוש וטעם המצות

כל מסקנת לפיעוגה. ובאיור ענין זה דרך פרט  
בעבורו ה

הנה כתיב (שםות ל:ז-ח) בברוך בברוך בחייב את  
הנרות יקטרינה ובהעלוות אהרון את הנרות בין  
הערבים יקטרינה

ולקבין לאה גבי בברוך כתיב בהחייב ובין הערבים  
בהעלוות

הנה כנסת ישראל מדור נשמות ישראל נקראת בשם  
מנורה והוא מקשלה

שכל ישראל הם באחדות והוא מתחלה לשבעה  
נרות

כי דרך פרט יש שישים רבוא ניצוצות כלליות שכל  
ניצוץ מתחילק לששים רבוא ניצוצות פרטיות  
במボאר בתניא

וזרה כל נכללו בשבעים נפש שירדו אבותינו  
למקרים

ובכל מון הקיל נקרא בשם שבעה נרות

**Alter Rebbe**  
**Torah Ohr**  
**Parshas Miketz & Chanukah**

**ענין חנוכה**

For behold, Aaron, the attendant of the Matron, is Aaron, priest to the Most High, from the seven shepherds.

דָהַנָּה אָהָרְן שׁוֹשְׁבֵנָא דְמִטְרוֹנִיתָא הוּא אָהָרְן כֶּן  
לֹאֵל עָלֵינוּ מִשְׁבָּעָה רֹועִים

They sustain and bestow His Godliness into the Congregation of Israel, that they should shine with the light of love.

הַמִּפְרָסִים וּמִשְׁפִּיעִים אֶלָּהוּתוֹ יִתְבְּרַךְ בְּכָנַסְתָּה יִשְׂרָאֵל  
שְׁזַיְאָרוּ בְּאֹרְךָ הַאֲהָבָה

To inflame toward Him, may He be blessed, with the expiration of the soul, like a flame that rises of itself.

לְהַתְלִפְתָּט אֵלֵינוּ יִתְבְּרַךְ בְּכָלֹת הַגְּפֵשׁ כְּשַׁלְבָּת הַעוֹלָה  
מְאַלְיָה

And to fulfill the commandment of "You shall love," which they accept upon themselves in the recitation of Shema.

וְלֹקִים מֵאוֹת וָאֶחָתָה שָׁמָקְבָּלִים עַלֵּיכֶם בְּקָרִיאַת שָׁמָעַ  
שִׁיחַנָּה כְּדֹבָר אֶמְתָה לְאֶמְתָה תָּקוּעַ בְּלֹבֶל אֶחָד וְאֶחָד  
מִשְׂרָאֵל

That it be so in truth, truly embedded in the heart of each and every one of Israel.

שְׁהָאָדָם מֵאַז עָצָמוֹ מֵאַחֲר שֶׁהָאָדָם מְגֻוָּשׁ וּמְלֻכָּשׁ  
בְּעַנְיָנִים גְּשָׁמִים לְאֵין קַיָּם לְוָלִי הַקָּדוֹשׁ בָּרוּךְ הוּא  
עֹזָרוֹ

For a person on his own, since he is corporeal and clothed in physical matters, would not be able, were it not that the Holy One blessed be He helps him.

וְהַעֲזָר הָוּא אֲהָבָה הַבָּא מִלְמָעָלָה לְהַמְשִׁיכָו אֵלֵינוּ.  
וְזַהֲוָה בְּחִנָּת בְּהַעֲלָות וּבְהִטְבָּה

And the assistance is love that comes from Above, to draw him toward Him. This corresponds to the aspects of "when he kindles" and "when he prepares."

כִּי הַנָּה אָמָרָנוּ רְבּוֹתֵינוּ זְכָרוֹנָם לְבָרָכה אֲפָל עַל פִּי  
שְׁהָאָשׁ יָוֶרֶד מִן הַשָּׁמִים מֵאַזְנָה לְהַבָּיא מִן הַקָּדוֹת

For behold, our Sages said: even though the fire descends from the heavens, it is a commandment to bring it from the ordinary person. (Yoma 21b)

פָּרוֹשֵׁה קָדוֹת הָוּא הַאֲהָבָה שָׁאָדָם לְזַקֵּן מִקְהָמָת  
הַעוֹלָמָה מִבְּחִנָּה מִלְכָוֹת יוֹחָבָר

The meaning of "ordinary" is the love that a person takes because of the worlds, from the aspect of His sovereignty.

שְׁהָוָא מֶלֶךְ גָּדוֹל וּנְרוּא עַל כָּל הַעוֹלָמָה עַלְיוֹנִים  
וּמִתְּחִתּוֹנִים

That He is a great and awesome King over all the worlds, supernal and lower.

וְכָל אָבָא הַשָּׁמִים לְכָל מִשְׁתְּחוּיִם וְאֶלָּפָנִים וּרְבוֹ  
רְבָּכוּ קְדוֹמָה כִּי

And all the hosts of heaven bow to You, and a thousand thousands and myriads of myriads stand before Him, etcetera.

כְּמַבּוּרָבָגְּמַרְאָה וּבְזַהֲרָבָבָאָר עַנְיָן רְבּוֹי הַעוֹלָמָה  
וְגַדְולָתוֹ

As explained in the Talmud and in the Zohar, in elucidating the matter of the multiplicity of the worlds and His greatness.

וְעַל קָרְךָ זֶה תַּקְנוּ חֲכָמִים לְזֹמֶר בְּרוּךְ שֵׁם קָבוֹד  
מִלְכָוֹתוֹ לְעוֹלָם וְעַד לִפְנֵי וְאֲהָבָה

And according to this, the Sages instituted to say "Blessed be the name of the glory of His kingdom forever and ever" before "You shall love." (Deuteronomy 6:5)

כִּי הַנָּה אָנוּ אָוֹמְרִים יְחִיד חַי הַעוֹלָמִים מֶלֶךְ מִשְׁבָּח  
וּמִפְּאַר עֲדֵי עַד שְׁמוֹ הַגָּדוֹל כִּי

For behold, we say: singular, living of the worlds, King, praised and glorified forever and ever is His great Name, etcetera.

פָּרוֹשֵׁה יְחִיד הָוּא לְמָעָלָה מִבְּחִנָּת אֶחָד. כִּי אֶחָד קִינְיָן  
כְּמַאֲמָר רְבּוֹתֵינוּ זְכָרוֹנָם לְבָרָכה שֶׁהָוּא אֶחָד בְּשָׁמִים

The meaning of "singular" is above the aspect of "one." For "one" means, as our Sages say, one in heaven and on earth and in the four directions of the world.

וּבְאָרֶץ וּבְאָרֶבֶעָ רֹוחֹת הַעוֹלָם

**Alter Rebbe**  
**Torah Ohr**  
**Parshas Miketz & Chanukah**

**ענין חנוכה**

For all the supernal worlds do not occupy space to be an entity and a separate thing in themselves.

And all is before Him as nothing and as nonexistence, truly considered so, and there is nothing besides Him.

Therefore He is called “one,” meaning when He is evaluated in relation to the worlds.

But “singular” means He is singular and unique in Himself alone, and He alone exists, not within the category of the worlds at all.

“Living of the worlds, King” means that all the vitality of the worlds, which gives life to all of them and brings them into being, supernal and lower, exists only because He is King.

All of them receive vitality from the aspect of His Kingship, may He be blessed, solely because He is King over them.

Likewise, that He is praised and glorified, meaning the praise that comes from apprehending His greatness, is forever.

For His greatness has no limit, and above there is praise after praise and elevation after elevation, without end or conclusion.

And all of this is solely for His great Name, for only that His Name and His Kingship be called upon them.

It cannot touch the aspect of His Essence and Being at all, for no thought can grasp Him whatsoever.

For He is singular and unique, and His Name alone is exalted, as it is written: “Your Kingship is a Kingship of all worlds.”

(Psalms 145:13)

This is the meaning of: “In the place where you find His greatness, there you find His humility.”

As it is written: “He lowers Himself to look upon heaven and earth,” which for Him, may He be blessed, is considered humility.

To give life to the spirit of the lowly. Likewise what is written: “He supports the fallen, heals the sick, and straightens the bent.”

כִּי כָל הַעוֹלָמִות הַעַלְיוֹנִים אֵינָם תֹּופְסִים מֶקְומֵם לְהִזְהִיר  
 יִשְׁ וְדָבָר נִפְרֵד בְּפָנֵי עָצָם

וְכֹלֶא קַמְפִיה כָּלָא וְכֹאַנְיָגְדוּ תְּשִׁיבֵי מִפְשֵׁז וְאַיִן עוֹד  
 (Deuteronomy 4:35)

לְכֹן נִקְרָא אֶחָד וְהַיִנּוּ כְּשַׁמְעָרִיכִים אָתוֹ נְגַדְּה  
 הַעוֹלָמִות

אָכָל יְחִיד פָּרוֹשׁ הוּא יְחִיד וּמִיחָד בְּפָנֵי עָצָמוֹ וְהִיא  
 לְבָדוֹ הוּא וְאַיִן בְּגַם הַעוֹלָמִות כָּלָ

וְחַי הַעוֹלָמִים מֶלֶךְ פָּרוֹשׁ שָׁכֵל חַיָּות הַעוֹלָמִות שְׁמַחְיָה  
 אֶת כָּלָם וּמְהֻנוֹ אֶת כָּלָם עַלְיוֹנִים וּמִתְּחַתּוֹנִים

אִינּוּ אֶלָּא בְּשִׁכְבֵּל שֶׁהָוָה מֶלֶךְ וּכָלָם מִקְבְּלִים חַיָּות  
 מִפְּחִינָה מֶלֶכְתָּו יִתְּבָרֵךְ בְּעַבוּר הַיּוֹתֹר מֶלֶךְ עַלְיָהָם

וְכֹן מִה שֶׁהָוָה מִשְׁבֵּח וּמִפְּאַר דְּהִינָּו הַשְּׁבָח מִחְמָת  
 שְׁמַשְׁגִּים גְּדוּלָתוֹ הוּא עַד יְמִינָה

כִּי לְגַדּוֹלָתוֹ אֵין חָקָר וּלְמַעַלָּה יִשְׁשַׁבְּחָאַחֲרָשְׁבָּח  
 וְעַלְיוֹן עַלְיוֹן עַד אֵין קָז אֵין פְּכָלִית

וְהַפְּלָל הָוָה בְּעַבוּר שְׁמוֹ הַגָּדוֹל כִּי לְהִזְהִיר נִקְרָא שְׁמוֹ  
 וּמִלְכּוֹתָו עַלְיָהָם בָּלְבָד

הָוָה וְאַיִן יִכְלֹעַל לְבִחְנִית עַצְמוֹתָו וּמְהוֹתָו כָּל  
 כִּי לִיתְמַחְשֵׁבָה תְּפִיסָה בֵּיהֶן כָּל

שֶׁהָוָה יְחִיד וּמִיחָד וּגְשִׁיבָּשׁ שְׁמוֹ לְבָדוֹ כְּדַכְתִּיב מֶלֶכְתָּה  
 (מלכotta כָּל עַוְלָמִים (תְּהִלִּים קְמ"ה:י"ג

וְזַהֲיוּ בָּמֶקְומֵם שָׁאַתָּה מוֹצִיא גְּדוּלָתוֹ שֶׁאַתָּה מוֹצִיא  
 עֲגַוְתָּנוֹתָו

כְּדַכְתִּיב הַמְּשִׁפְלִי לְרֹאֹת בְּשָׁמִים וּבְאָרֶץ שְׁאָצְלָוּ  
 (יִתְּבָרֵךְ נְחַשֵּׁב זֹאת לְהַשְּׁפֵלָה וּלְעַנְנָה (תְּהִלִּים קְי"ג:ו'

לְהַחְיִת רֹוח שְׁפָלִים וּכֹן מִה שְׁכַתּוּב סָמֵךְ נְפָלִים  
 (וּרְוֹפָא חֹלִים וּזְקִיף כְּפֻופִים (תְּהִלִּים קְמ"ה:י"ז

**Alter Rebbe**  
**Torah Ohr**  
**Parshas Miketz & Chanukah**

**ענין חנוכה**

And the entire realm is called “earth,” like this lowly earth, a descent from the place of His glory.

That His Name be called as King. Therefore every created being should understand this.

When one sets it upon his heart and broadens his understanding of His greatness and wondrous deeds.

In the multiplicity of the worlds without limit, he will comprehend that this itself is His humility.

For there is no comparison to Him, as He is not within the category of worlds at all.

He is the One who equalizes and makes equal small and great. Consequently, the soul and heart will ignite and blaze for the light, with the light of love, with all your soul in actuality.

To depart from the category of the worlds, as it is said: “Whom have I in heaven but You, and with You I desire nothing on earth; my flesh and my heart are spent.” (Psalms 73:25–26)

This is the meaning of “You shall love the Lord your God.” Love is from the root “desire” and “will.” (Deuteronomy 6:5)

Meaning the will of the heart, that the Lord your God be desired, and to cleave to Him in actuality.

Through this arousal from below, the light of love from above rests upon him, to enlarge the bonfire of love in his heart beyond human capacity.

More than the power of the soul and its root, which is limited and created, to draw near to the Lord in actuality with complete self-nullification.

This comes through the aspect of Aaron the High Priest, for “You shall love” in numerical value is twice “light.”

This aspect is called “when he prepares,” from goodness and supernal kindness that bestows upon the spirit of the lowly to enhance the love below.

However, in truth, even the arousal from below, that a person desires to cleave to Him in actuality, is also a gift of God.

וְכָל הַמּוֹלֶכֶת נִקְרָאת בְּשָׁם אָרֶץ לְהִוָּת אֶאָרֶץ הַלּוֹן  
**הַשְׁפֵּלָה שִׁירְךָ מִמְּקוּם כְּבוֹד**

לְהִוָּת מֶלֶךְ שְׁמוֹ נִקְרָא וְלֹכִן זֹאת יִבְנֵן כָּל יִצְחָר  
**בְּשָׁמוֹ אֶל לִפְוּ וִירְחִיב דַעַתוֹ בְּגִדּוֹלָתוֹ יִתְבְּרָךְ**

בְּרַבּוֹי הַעֲוָלָמּוֹת עַד אֵין חִקָּר הַגָּהָה יִשְׁפְּכֵיל שְׂזָהוּ  
**עֲנוּנוֹתָהוּ יִתְבְּרָךְ**

**וְאֵין עֲרוֹךְ אֶלְיוֹ שְׁאַיְנוּ בְּגַדְרָ עַלְמָיו כָּל**

וְהָא הַשְׁוָה וּמְשֻׁבָּה קָטָן וּגְדוֹלָ מִפְּיָלָא תְּתַלְּחַט  
**וּתְתַלְּהַבָּ נְפָשׁ וּלְבָ לְאָוֹר בְּאָוֹר הַאֲקָבָה בְּכָל נְפָשׁ**  
**מִפְּשָׁ**

לְצָאת מִגְּדָר הַעֲוָלָמּוֹת בְּמַאֲמָר מַי לִי בְּשָׁמִים וּעַמָּקָם  
**לְאָחִיפָּתִי בְּאָרֶץ כָּלָה שָׁאָרִי וּלְבָבִי (תְּהִלִּים ע"ג:כ"ה-כ"ו)**

וְזַהֲיוֹ וְאֲהַבָּתָה אֶת הָאֱלֹהִים כִּי אֲקָבָה מִשְׁרָשׁ אֲבָה  
**(שְׁהָוָא מַלְשָׁוֹן חָפֵץ וּרְצֹן (קְבָרִים וּוְהָ)**  
**דְּקַיְנָה רְעוֹתָה דְּלָבָא שִׁיחָה הָאֱלֹהִים וְלְקָבָה בּוּ**  
**מִפְּשָׁ**

וְעַל יְדֵי אַתְּעַרְוֹתָא דְלַמְּפָא זֹו יְחִוֵּל עַלְיוֹ אָוֹר הַאֲקָבָה  
**מְלַמְּעָלָה לְהַגְּדִיל מִדּוֹרָת אַשְׁהָאֲקָבָה בְּלִבּוּ**

יוֹתָר מִפְּקָדִי כַּח אֲנוֹשִׁי וְשָׁרָשִׁ נְשָׁמָתוֹ שְׁהָיָא בְּגַדְרָ  
**וְגַבְוֵל וְגַבְרָא לְקָרְבָּה אֶל הָמִפְּשָׁ וּבְטוֹל אֶלְיוּ**  
**בְּמִצְיאוֹת מִפְּשָׁ**

עַל יְדֵי בְּחִינַת אֲקָרְן פְּהַנָּא רְבָא כִּי וְאֲהַבָּת בְּגִימְטָרִיא  
**פְּעָמִים אָוּרָה**

וְנִקְרָאת בְּחִינָה זו בְּהִיטִּבוֹ שְׁמָטוֹב וְחַסְד עַלְיוֹן  
**מִשְׁפֵּעָה עַל רֹוח שְׁפָלִים לְהִיטִּיב וּלְהַגְּדִיל אֶת הַאֲקָבָה**  
**שְׁלָמָטָה**

אֵחַ הַגָּה בְּאָמָת גַּם אַתְּעַרְוֹתָא דְלַמְּפָא כְּפָ"ל אֲשֶׁר  
**ינְחַפֵּץ הָאָדָם לְקָבָה בּוּ מִפְּשָׁ גַּם זֹאת מִתְּאַלְמָה אֶלְהִים**  
**הִיא**

**Alter Rebbe**  
**Torah Ohr**  
**Parshas Miketz & Chanukah**

**ענין חנוכה**

It is not according to the power, temperament, or disposition of the human soul. This is called “when Aaron kindles.”

For the supernal Aaron grants strength to the Congregation of Israel to arouse this love.

This is “between the evenings,” which is the quality of mixture, night and darkness, that has no light of its own.

But the quality of morning is the attribute of Abraham, the man of kindness, as it is said: “And Abraham arose early in the morning.” (Genesis 21:14)

This corresponds to “when he prepares.” See further what is written later regarding rejoicing at night and joy in the morning.

Who is the person that can reach this level, that the supernal Aaron should reach him? It is through Torah and commandments.

For a commandment is a lamp. The commandments are drawn from a very exalted place, therefore they have no intellectual grasp at all.

Like the analogy of oil mentioned above, they do not enter the inner soul, but surround it from above.

As it is written: “You shall surely set a king over yourself,” like a king who rules over his people. (Deuteronomy 17:15)

He is exalted above them, and they do his will without reason or understanding, for it is the command of the King.

By way of analogy, like a person who grasps the king by one of his limbs and draws him toward himself.

Then even the vitality within him is drawn after him, as it is written: “His right hand embraces me.” (Song of Songs 2:6)

For the 248 positive commandments are the 248 limbs of the King, and through drawing the commandments, His unity is drawn after them.

His blessed unity itself, in His essence and glory, in the aspect of His unity as explained above.

**[NOTE Summary:**

The Alter Rebbe begins by explaining why Chanukah is commemorated specifically through lighting candles,

לא ל' כי כה נפש האדם ומגנו ותכוותו ונקראת בחינה  
 ובהעלות אַהֲרֹן

שאַהֲרֹן הַעֲלִיוֹן הוּא הַפּוֹתֵן כֵּה בְּכַנְסַת יִשְׂרָאֵל לְעֹזֶר  
 את הַאֲקָבָה כֵּז

זֶה בֵּין הַעֲרָבִים שֶׁהוּא מִזְרָח עָרֵב וְלִילָה וְחַשָּׁךְ מִצְרָא  
 עַצְמוֹ שֶׁאָנוּ בָּו אָז

אַבְלָל מִזְרָח בְּקַרְבָּו שֶׁהָיָה מִזְרָח אַבְרָהָם אִישׁ הַקָּסֶד  
 (כְּמַאֲמָר וַיְשַׁבֵּם אַבְרָהָם בְּפֶלֶג) (בראשית כ"א:י"ז)

הוּא בְּחִנָּת בְּהִיטִּבוֹ (וְעַזְנֵנוּ מִזְרָח בְּקַרְבָּא לְקַפְּןִ בְּדָבָר  
 הַמְתִחְיֵל רְנִי וְשְׁמַתִּי בְּעַזְנֵנוּ רְנִא בְּרַמְשָׁא וְשְׁמַתִּה  
 (בְּצִפְרָא)

וְהַיְהֵי מֵזֶה הַאֲקָם שְׁנָגֵיעַ עַד קְלֹום שְׁנָגֵיעַ אַלְיוֹן בְּחִנָּת  
 אַהֲרֹן הַעֲלִיוֹן אַבְלָל הוּא עַל יְדֵי תּוֹרָה וּמִצּוֹת

כִּי בְּרֵר מִזְרָח שְׁהַמִּצּוֹת גַּמְשָׁכִות מִפְּנֵי מִזְרָח גַּבּוֹהַ מִזְרָח  
 נְעָלָה וּלְפִיכָה אֵין בְּהָנָן הַשְּׁגָה כָּלָל

כְּמַשְׁלֵל הַשְּׁמַן כְּפֶל שְׁאַיִם נְכַנְּסִים בְּפִנְמִיּוֹת נְפָשָׁם  
 רַק בְּבִחְנַת מִקְרֵפָה עַלְיָהָם מַלְמַעַלה

כְּמַאֲמָר שׁוֹם תְּשִׁים עַלְיָהָם מֶלֶךְ כִּמוֹ מֶלֶךְ הַמּוֹשֵׁל עַל  
 (עַמּוֹ) (דברים י"ז:ט"ז)

וְהַוְאָ גַּבּוֹהַ עַלְיָהָם וְהַמּוֹשֵׁל רְצֹנוֹ בְּלִי טָעַם וּדְעָתָה  
 כִּי מִזְרָח הַמּוֹלֵךְ הִיא

אַד מְפַלְּלָה בְּאַחֲרֵיו וּמְמַשְׁיכָו אַלְיוֹן  
 הַמּוֹלֵךְ בְּאַחֲרֵי מְאַבְרִיו וּמְמַשְׁיכָו אַלְיוֹן

הַנְּהָה גַּם חַיוֹתָו שְׁבָקְרָבָו גַּמְשָׁךְ אַהֲרִיו כְּפִתְּיבָה וּמִמְּנוֹ  
 (תַּחַקְנִי) (שיר השירים ב'ו)

כִּי הַנְּהָה רַמְ"ח מִזְרָח עַשְׂה הַמּוֹלֵךְ אַבְרִין דְּמַלְכָא  
 וּעַל יְדֵי הַמְּשִׁכָּת הַמִּצּוֹת מַפְּלַא גַּמְשָׁךְ אַהֲרִיו

בְּחִנָּת יְהוּדָה יְהִבְרָה בְּעַצְמוֹ וּבְכַבּוֹדוֹ בְּבִחְנַת יְהוּדָה  
 כְּפֶל

**Alter Rebbe**  
**Torah Ohr**  
**Parshas Miketz & Chanukah**

**ענין חנוכה**

unlike Pesach and Purim, which are marked by physical acts such as eating matzah or feasting. Pesach and Purim addressed physical threats to the Jewish people: enslavement in Egypt and annihilation under Haman. Chanukah, however, addressed a spiritual exile. The Greeks did not exile the Jews from their land but sought to sever them from Torah by making them forget divine wisdom and violate the statutes of God's will. Since the struggle was spiritual, the commemoration is likewise spiritual: light.

This leads to the verse "For a mitzvah is a lamp and Torah is light, and the way of life is reproofs of discipline." The Alter Rebbe explains that mitzvot are compared to a lamp and Torah to light because, like oil, mitzvot themselves possess no revealed illumination or intellectual grasp. Oil by itself produces no light and even extinguishes flame, yet it is precisely oil that enables the flame to burn. Similarly, mitzvot are expressions of God's will beyond human comprehension, yet through them the light of divine wisdom is drawn down and revealed. Torah, particularly the Oral Torah, emerges from Chochmah and provides understanding, explanation, and meaning to the mitzvot, each tractate according to its subject.

The maamar then applies this symbolism to avodat Hashem. The Congregation of Israel is likened to a single Menorah, hammered from one piece, representing the essential unity of all Jewish souls. Though souls appear diverse and innumerable, they are rooted in unity and structured through seven primary spiritual channels, corresponding to the seven lamps of the Menorah. Aaron the Kohen, described as the shushvina d'matronita, serves as the intermediary who draws divine vitality into the souls of Israel, igniting within them love for God like a flame rising on its own.

The Torah describes two expressions regarding the Menorah: "when he prepares the lamps" in the morning and "when he kindles the lamps" in the evening. These describe two forms of divine love. One is love that comes from above, exceeding human capacity, ignited by divine kindness. The other is arousal from below, love generated by human contemplation of God's kingship, greatness, and the vastness of creation. Even though heavenly fire descends on its own, a human must still bring fire from below. Contemplating God as King of innumerable worlds, served by endless hosts, awakens awe and love rooted in His sovereignty.

This is why the sages instituted the declaration "Blessed is the Name of the glory of His kingship forever and ever" before "You shall love." The Alter Rebbe distinguishes between "One" and "Singular." "One" describes God's unity relative to the worlds, which have no independent existence before Him. "Singular" describes His absolute transcendence beyond all worlds entirely. All praise, greatness, and exaltation relate only to His Name and Kingship, not to His Essence, which remains utterly beyond thought or grasp.

Paradoxically, God's greatness is revealed through His humility. Where His greatness is found, there His humility is found. His sustaining of the lowly, healing the broken, and ruling creation is considered humility relative to His infinite transcendence. The very act of creating and sustaining worlds is a descent from His true exaltedness. Recognizing this leads a person to deeper awe and love, realizing that all existence reflects divine humility rather than divine limitation.

**Alter Rebbe**  
**Torah Ohr**  
**Parshas Miketz & Chanukah**

**ענין חנוכה**

From this understanding, the soul naturally ignites with love, longing to transcend the confines of all worlds and cleave to God alone, echoing the cry “Whom have I in heaven but You.” Love is defined as desire and will, a heartfelt yearning to bind oneself to God in actuality. Through human arousal from below, divine love descends from above, intensifying the flame beyond the soul’s natural limits and drawing the person into genuine self-nullification before God.

Yet even the desire to arouse love from below is itself a divine gift. True spiritual awakening is not proportionate to human temperament or capacity. This higher ignition is called “when Aaron kindles,” while the love drawn from supernal kindness is called “when he prepares.” Evening represents darkness and mixture, where light does not arise naturally, while morning represents the attribute of Abraham, kindness and illumination.

Ultimately, the means to reach this supernal love is through Torah and mitzvot. Mitzvot originate from an exalted source beyond comprehension, surrounding the soul like oil rather than entering it internally. Yet by performing them, one grasps the King, so to speak, and draws His vitality and unity along with them. The 248 positive commandments correspond to the 248 limbs of the King, and through attachment to mitzvot, one draws God’s unity itself into their life, achieving true closeness through action even where understanding cannot reach.

**Practical Takeaway:**

The maamar teaches that spiritual growth does not depend on emotional talent or intellectual brilliance, but on faithful action. Even when mitzvot feel dry or inaccessible, they are the oil that sustains the flame. Through consistent performance of Torah and mitzvot, a person draws divine light into their life, awakens love beyond natural limits, and achieves genuine connection with God. Chanukah reminds us that enduring spiritual illumination comes not from understanding alone, but from humble, steady devotion that allows God’s light to burn within us.

**Chassidic Story:**

It is told that once a simple Chassid approached the Alter Rebbe before Chanukah and said, “Rebbe, I do not understand lofty ideas, and my heart does not burn with love during prayer. What do my candles accomplish?”

The Alter Rebbe replied, “Tell me, when oil is poured into a lamp, does the oil understand the flame?”

The Chassid answered, “No.”

“Yet without the oil,” said the Alter Rebbe, “the flame cannot burn. Your lighting, even without understanding, allows God’s light to shine. Do not underestimate the power of faithful action.”

**Alter Rebbe**  
**Torah Ohr**  
**Parshas Miketz & Chanukah**

**ענין חנוכה**

That Chanukah, the Chassid lit with renewed devotion. Years later, he testified that his heart slowly awakened, not through sudden inspiration, but through years of steady mitzvah-light, until love arose on its own, like a flame climbing heavenward.

### **Therapeutic Psychological Integration (TPX)**

#### **Reframing Chanukah: When Light Comes Before Feeling**

The Alter Rebbe's teaching on Chanukah offers a psychologically sophisticated model of emotional growth that runs counter to modern intuition. Most people assume that feeling must come first and action later: first inspiration, then commitment. This maamar quietly but firmly reverses the order. Light precedes warmth. Action precedes emotion. Commitment precedes clarity.

Chanukah was not a rescue from physical danger but from spiritual erosion. The Greeks did not threaten Jewish bodies; they targeted meaning, memory, and inner coherence. In modern language, this was not trauma to survival but trauma to identity. When identity is threatened, the repair must occur at the level of inner illumination, not external relief. That is why Chanukah is commemorated with light rather than food or celebration.

The Alter Rebbe explains that a mitzvah is like oil. Oil is psychologically counterintuitive. It has no warmth. It produces no light on its own. It even extinguishes flame if misused. Yet it is the only substance that can sustain fire over time. This maps precisely onto human behavior. Many healthy actions feel emotionally flat at first: routines, boundaries, commitments, values. They do not immediately soothe or inspire. Sometimes they even feel constricting. But they are what allow emotional vitality to emerge and endure.

#### **Two Kinds of Love: Bottom-Up and Top-Down**

The maamar distinguishes between two forms of love. One emerges from below, through reflection, effort, and meaning-making. This is the love a person generates by contemplating purpose, values, and the vastness of existence. In psychological terms, this is cognitive-emotional integration: using understanding to cultivate feeling.

The second love descends from above. It exceeds personal capacity, temperament, and emotional skill. It is not earned by insight or personality traits. It arrives unexpectedly, often after long periods of dryness. This resembles what clinicians recognize as corrective emotional experience: moments when something larger than the self intervenes and reorganizes the emotional system.

Crucially, the Alter Rebbe insists that even the desire to try is itself not self-generated. The impulse to grow, to connect, to reach beyond one's limits is already help from above. This reframes self-criticism. If motivation itself is a gift, then lack of motivation is not moral failure. It is a signal to lean more heavily into structure and action rather than waiting for feeling.

**Alter Rebbe**  
**Torah Ohr**  
**Parshas Miketz & Chanukah**  
**ענין חנוכה**

### **Why Night Comes Before Morning**

The Torah's language of evening and morning is not poetic coincidence. Night represents emotional mixture, confusion, heaviness, and low visibility. Morning represents clarity, warmth, and kindness. The Alter Rebbe teaches that illumination does not begin in the morning. It begins in the night. Love that appears in darkness is not born from emotional ease but from persistence.

This matters deeply for modern inner life. Many people judge themselves harshly during periods of numbness, distraction, or spiritual fatigue. The maamar reframes those states as the precise conditions in which deeper light is formed. Night is not the absence of growth. It is the environment that allows growth beyond the limits of personality.

### **Action as Attachment**

Perhaps the most radical psychological insight in this teaching is the claim that mitzvot create attachment even without emotional awareness. The Alter Rebbe compares mitzvot to grasping a king's limb. One does not need to comprehend the king's mind to be connected to him. Physical contact alone draws vitality.

Translated into modern terms, consistent value-aligned behavior creates attachment to meaning even when feelings lag behind. Showing up matters more than feeling ready. Structure precedes intimacy. Repetition precedes passion. This is not mechanical religion; it is emotional realism.

### **Practical Takeaway**

If you are waiting to feel inspired before committing, you may wait indefinitely. Instead, choose small, faithful actions aligned with your values and perform them steadily, without demanding emotional payoff. Treat action as oil, not fire. Over time, warmth will appear, often quietly and unexpectedly. Growth is not the result of emotional intensity. It is the result of staying lit long enough for light to catch.

### **Contemporary Story**

A therapist once worked with a client who felt spiritually disconnected and emotionally flat. The client kept saying, "When I feel something, I'll start practicing again." After months of stagnation, the therapist suggested one small, non-negotiable ritual: five minutes every night of intentional silence, no insight required.

At first, the ritual felt empty and mechanical. Weeks passed. Then one night, without warning, the client felt a sudden tenderness and grief, followed by calm. Nothing had changed externally. The structure had simply held long enough for something deeper to surface.

Later, the client said, "I thought the practice was supposed to create the feeling. I didn't realize it was creating the space for the feeling to arrive."

That is Chanukah psychology. Light does not begin with fire. It begins with oil, patiently waiting to burn.

### **END NOTE]**

**Alter Rebbe**  
**Torah Ohr**  
**Parshas Miketz & Chanukah**  
**ענין חנוכה**