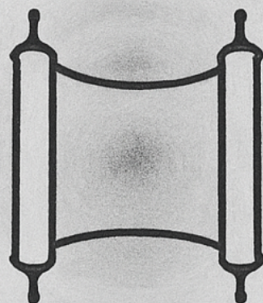


בס"ד

The Maharal Of Prauge

תפארת ישראל

Chapter 12



לע"נ

שְׁרָה מְרִים בֵּת אֲבָרָהָם

Dedicated By:

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פרק שנים עשר - Chapter 12

רק למידת התורה משלים את הצורה של כל נברא

Only the study of Torah completes the form of every created being

It has already been explained to you in the chapter, based on trustworthy witnesses, that the knowledge of Torah is more effective in acquiring eternal success than that which a person can acquire through knowledge of wisdom.

התבאר לך בפרק שפבר על-פי עדים נאמנים, כי ידיעת התורה יותר מסגל לקנות ההצלחה הנצחית, ממה שיקנה האדם בידיעות החכמה.

Though we agree with them that they stood on a point of truth, yet the truth is not as they think—because they are far from the center, like the distance between the surrounding line and the point at its center.

עם שנודה להם כי הם עמדו על נקדת האמת, ועם שהאמת אינו פה, כי רחקו מממש כרחוק קו הסובב מן הנקדה שבתוכו.

But even if we agree to all this, still this matter is not fit to acquire eternal success—only through the knowledge of Torah, as has already been explained.

אבל אף אם נודה בכל זה, הלא אין דבר זה ראוי לקנות הצלחה הנצחית, רק בידיעת התורה, כמו שהתבאר.

And in this chapter, we will add for you sound reasoning and knowledge, and to inform you further of the error of these people.

ובזה הפרק נוסף לך טוב טעם ודעת, ולהודיע עוד טעות האנשים האלו.

Know that they perceive that man is worthy of attaining eternal success through the knowledge of existing beings—like the angels, the spheres, and the other things that exist in the world.

דע כי יראו כי האדם ראוי לו לקנות הצלחה הנצחית בידיעת הנמצאים, כמו המלאכים והגלגלים ושאר הדברים אשר הם במציאות העולם.

And this matter flows from a superficial understanding they hold—that man is the lowest of creations, inferior in being to the spheres, and certainly to the angels.

ודבר זה נמשך לדעת חיצוני שיש להם, מה שהם אומרים כי האדם פחות היצירה, שפל הבריאה מן הגלגלים, ומפל שכן מן המלאכים.

As they elaborate in praise of the angels and the spheres, and in their denigration of man's creation.

כמו שהאריכו הם בספור שבח המלאכים ובגלגלים, ובגנות הבריאה של אדם.

And they supported this with simple readings of verses, such as (Tehillim 8:5), “What is man that You are mindful of him, and the son of man that You take note of him,” and other similar straightforward proofs.

והמשיכו לזה פשטי הכתוב (תהלים ח, ה): "מה אנוש כי תזכרנו וכן אדם כי תפקדנו". ושאר ראיות פשטי הכתוב.

Their first assumption is that man is a physical being, subject to coming into being and to decay—and therefore they consider that this lowly being, man, is only fit to attain greatness and

והמסל הראשון כי האדם בעל חמר ובעל הנייה והפסד, ומפני זה חושבים כי ראוי לאדם השפל לקנות מעלה והצלחה בידיעת החשוב, המה המלאכים והגלגלים.

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success by knowing the most exalted beings: the angels and the spheres.

And when he knows these, he then attains exaltedness.

וְכַאֲשֶׁר יֵדַע אֱלֹהִי, יֵשׁ לוֹ מַעֲלָה

And it has already been explained in the book *Gevuros Hashem* that the spirit of the Sages does not rest with this [idea], and it is completely contrary to faith.

וְכִכֵּר הַתַּבְּאָר בְּחִבּוּר גְּבוּרוֹת ה' כִּי אֵין רוּחַ חֲכָמִים
נִוְחָה בְּזֶה, וְהוּא הִפָּךְ הָאֱמוּנָה לְגַמְרִי

And you will not find this notion in the words of the Sages—only the opposite, as was explained in *Gevuros Hashem*.

וְלֹא תִמָּצֵא דָבָר זֶה בְּדִבְרֵי חֲכָמִים, רַק הֵפָּךְ, כִּמּוֹ
'שֶׁהַתַּבְּאָר בְּחִבּוּר גְּבוּרוֹת ה'

And this has been revealed in many, many places, and they derived it (Bereishis Rabbah 78:1) from the verse (Tehillim 91:11): “For His angels He will command concerning you, to guard you in all your ways.” “Who is greater—the one who guards, or the one who is guarded?”

וְגִלּוֹ דָבָר זֶה בְּמִקּוֹמוֹת הַרְבֵּה מְאֹד, וְדִרְשׁוּ זֶה
(בְּרֵאשִׁית רַבָּה עח, א) מִן הַפְּתוּב (תְּהִלִּים צא, יא):
"כִּי מִלְאָכָיו יִצְוֶה לְךָ לְשֹׁמְרֶךָ בְּכָל דְּרָכֶיךָ" — מִי
הוּא גָדוֹל — הַשּׁוֹמֵר אוֹ הַנִּשְׁמָר

And this is, in truth, the opinion of the Sages.

וְזֶהוּ בְּאֵמַת דַּעַת חֲכָמִים

And they called the angels and the spheres “serving servants” of the created beings, as it is written (Bereishis 1:17): “And God placed them in the firmament of the heavens to give light upon the earth”—behold, the beginning of their creation was to serve the world, and they were not created for their own sake at all.

וְקִרְאוּ הַמִּלְאָכִים וְהַגְּלִגְלִים שֶׁהֵם עֲבָדִים מְשֻׁמְשִׁים
אֶל הַנִּבְרָאִים, וְכִדְכָתִיב בִּבְרָא (בְּרֵאשִׁית א, יז):
"וַיִּתֵּן אֹתָם אֱלֹהִים בְּרִקְיעַ הַשָּׁמַיִם לְהָאִיר עַל
הָאָרֶץ", הֲרִי כִי תַחֲלַת בְּרִיאָתָם הָיָה כְּדִי לְשִׁמּוֹשׁ אֶת
הָעוֹלָם, וְלֹא נִבְרָאוּ לְעַצְמָם כָּלֵל

And man is the essence of creation; everything was created for his sake, and he alone is the entire existence—there is no other.

וְהָאָדָם הוּא עֶשֶׂר הַבְּרִיאָה, שֶׁהַכֹּל נִבְרָא בְּשִׁבְלֵוֹ,
וְהוּא בְּלִבְד כָּל הַמְּצִיאוֹת, לֹא זוּלַת זֶה

And even though man possesses materiality, nevertheless, by virtue of the “Divine Image” in which he was created (Bereishis 1:27), he has superiority beyond the higher beings—as explained elsewhere.

וְעַם שֶׁהָאָדָם הוּא בְּעַל חִמָּר, הֵנָּה מִצַּד צֶלֶם אֱלֹהִים
שֶׁנִּבְרָא בּוֹ (בְּרֵאשִׁית א, כז) יֵשׁ לוֹ מַעֲלָה, מִשְׁנֵה מִן
הָעֲלִיּוֹנִים, וְכִמוֹ שֶׁמִּבְּאֵר בְּמָקוֹם אֲחֵר

And because of the greatness of this image, Torah pertains to him—for the positive commandments are 248, matching the number of limbs of man (Makkos 23b).

אֲשֶׁר בְּשִׁבְלֵ מַעֲלַת צֶלֶם הֵנָּה שִׁינּוֹ אֱלֹהֵי הַתּוֹרָה,
שֶׁהֲרִי מִצְוֹת עֲשֵׂה רַמ"ח (מִכּוֹת כג, ב) בְּמִסְפַּר אֲבָרֵי
הָאָדָם

Therefore, the Torah, which is the Torah of man who possesses the Divine image, despite the jealousy of the angels, is the perfection of man—and nothing else.

וּלְפִיכֵךְ הַתּוֹרָה, שֶׁהִיא תּוֹרַת הָאָדָם אֲשֶׁר יֵשׁ לוֹ צֶלֶם
אֱלֹהִים, בְּרִגְמַת הַמִּלְאָכִים, הוּא הַשְּׁלֵמַת הָאָדָם, לֹא
בְּזוּלַת זֶה

For it is not fitting that the great one be perfected by the lesser.

כִּי אֵין רְאוּי שִׁיְשַׁלֵּם הַגָּדוֹל — בְּפִחוֹת

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And if man would be completed through knowledge of the angels, and certainly through knowledge of the spheres, and even more so through knowledge of the elements or anything lower, then it would be the case of the great being completed by something lesser.

ואם ישלם האדם בידיעת המלאכים, וכל שכן בידיעת הגלגלים, ואף בידיעת היסודות, ומה שהוא עוד יותר פחות מזה, הנה זה השלמת הגדול – בפחות.

Therefore, the knowledge of Torah is the completion of man, who is the most important and is the essence of existence—on account of his image, which is the image of God. And through this, he can attain success—not through anything that is not the essence of existence.

ולפיכך הידיעה בתורה, שהוא השלמת האדם, שהוא היותר חשוב, והוא עקר המציאות מצד צלמו, שהוא צלם אלהים, בדבר זה אפשר שיקנה ההצלחה, לא בדבר שאין עקר המציאות

Therefore, the Sages greatly exalted the knowledge of Torah above all else—not the knowledge of created beings aside from Torah—

ולכך הגדילו חכמים על כל ידיעת התורה, לא הידיעה בנבראים וזולת התורה

since the essence of creation is only man. And it is as if man is a form over the created things, because of the importance of his form—having been created in the image of God.

מאחר שאין עצם הנראה רק האדם, וכאלו האדם הוא צורה אל הנבראים, בעבור חשיבות צורתו שנוברא בצלם אלהים

Therefore, because of the importance of his form, he is worthy to be a form over all the created things.

ולכך ראוי הוא מצד חשיבות צורתו שיהיה צורה אל הנבראים

And we explained that for this reason it does not say “good” regarding man, but only with the verse: “And God saw everything that He had made, and behold it was very good” (Bereishis 1:31).

ופרשנו כי מטעם זה לא נאמר 'טוב' אצל האדם, רק אצל: "וירא אלהים את כל אשר עשה והנה טוב", (בראשית א, ל"א)

And our Sages of blessed memory expounded (Bereishis Rabbah 8:5): “‘Very good’—this is man.”

וירשו זכרונם לברכה (בראשית רבה ח, ה): "מאד" – זה אדם

And it does not explicitly say “good” with regard to the creation of man—because man is everything.

ולא נאמר בפרוש 'טוב' אצל בריאת האדם. כי האדם הוא הכל

Therefore it says: “And God saw all that He had made, and behold, it was very good”—which spells “אדם” (man), to say that man is the all.

ולכך נאמר: "וירא אלהים את כל אשר עשה והנה טוב מאד" – אותיות אדם, לומר כי האדם הכל

And the Torah is the form that completes man, who is the all—so much so that Torah is the form of perfection for the entire world.

והתורה היא צורה משלמת האדם, שהוא הכל, עד שהתורה היא צורת השלמה אל כל העולם

And this is [what the Sages said] in the chapter “Chazakas HaBatim” (Bava Basra 58a): “I looked at the heels of Adam, and they were like the two orbs of the sun.”

וזה אמרם בפרק חזקת הבתים (בבא בתרא נ"ח, א): "נסתכלתי בעקביי של אדם, והם כמו שני גלגלי חמה"

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The explanation is: the “heels” refer to the lowliest end of man—and they have a physical character, which is lowly.

ובאור זה: כי עקביו – שהוא סוף שפלותו של אדם, וְלָהֶם מִדְּרָגָה חֲמִרִית, שֶׁהוּא שָׁפֵל.

And even they are like the orbs of the sun.

וְאֵלּוּ הֵם כְּמוֹ גִּלְגָּלֵי חֲמָה.

And the face [of man], which has a level of form, all the more so.

וְאֵלּוּ הַפָּנִים יֵשׁ לָהֶם מִדְּרָגָה בְּצוּרָה.

For we have already said that man is regarded as the form of existence, and all existence—even the sun, which is the head of the world—is like the level of matter in comparison to him.

כִּי כָּבֹד אֲמַרְנוּ שֶׁהָאָדָם נִחָשֵׁב כְּמוֹ צוּרָה לְנִמְצָאִים, וְהַנִּמְצָאִים כָּלֶם – אֵף הַחֲמָה, שֶׁהוּא רֹאשׁ לְעוֹלָם – הוּא כְּמוֹ מִדְּרָגַת הַחֲמָה אֵלָיו.

Therefore he said: “I looked at the two heels of Adam HaRishon, and they were like the orb of the sun.”

וּלְפִיכָּךְ אָמַר: נִסְתַּכַּלְתִּי בְּשְׁנֵי עַקְבָּיו שֶׁל אָדָם. הִירָאשׁוֹן וְהֵם כְּמוֹ גִּלְגָּל חֲמָה.

And this matter we explained elsewhere.

וְנִדְּבַר זֶה בְּאַרְנוֹ בְּמָקוֹם אֲחֵר.

The general principle is that the number of positive commandments, and the number of negative commandments, is to complete man.

כָּלֵל הַדְּבָר, כִּי מִסְפֵּר מִצְוֹת עֲשֵׂה, וּמִסְפֵּר מִצְוֹת לֹא תַעֲשֶׂה, הוּא לְהַשְׁלִים הָאָדָם.

For man is like a form to the world, and for this reason the Torah is the perfection of the entire world.

אֲשֶׁר הָאָדָם הוּא כְּמוֹ צוּרָה אֶל הָעוֹלָם, וּבִשְׂבִיל זֶה הַתּוֹרָה הִיא הַשְׁלֵמַת כָּל הָעוֹלָם.

And therefore the Tanna (Avos 3:14) mentioned both together: “Beloved is man who was created in the image of God,” and also said: “Beloved are Israel, for a precious vessel was given to them, through which the world was created.”

וּמִפְּנֵי כֵּךְ הִתְנַח (אָבוֹת ג', י"ד) זָכַר אֵלּוּ שְׁנֵיהֶם בְּיַחַד; 'חֲבִיב הָאָדָם שֶׁנִּבְרָא בְּצֶלֶם אֱלֹהִים', וְאָמַר: 'חֲבִיבֵינוּ יִשְׂרָאֵל שֶׁנִּתְּנָן לָהֶם כְּלֵי חֲמֻדָּה שֶׁבּוֹ נִבְרָא הָעוֹלָם'.

To teach that man, because of the form of his image—being in the image of God—is beloved, to the point that he is a form over the entire world.

לְהוֹרוֹת כִּי הָאָדָם מֵצַד צוּרַת צֵלְמוֹ, שֶׁהוּא בְּצֶלֶם אֱלֹהִים — הוּא חֲבִיב, עַד שֶׁהוּא צוּרָה אֶל כָּל הָעוֹלָם.

This is the opposite of those who belittle the stature of man.

הַפֶּךְ בְּנֵי אָדָם שֶׁמִּמְעַטִּין מִדְּרָגַת הָאָדָם.

And if not for the opinion of our Sages, may their memory be a blessing, that man's belovedness is above all the world—even more than the angels—then there would be no need to state that man is beloved, for certainly he is more beloved than any living being.

וְאִם לֹא הָיָה דְּעֵת רַבּוּתֵינוּ וְזִכְרוֹנָם לְבִרְכָּה לּוֹמַר כִּי חֲבִיבוֹת שָׁלוֹ עַל כָּל הָעוֹלָם, אֵף מִן הַמַּלְאָכִים, לֹא הָיָה צְרִיף לּוֹמַר כִּי הָאָדָם חֲבִיב, דּוֹדַי חֲבִיב מִן כָּל בִּעַל חַי.

Rather, they wished to say by this, that because he is in the image of God, he is beloved—even more than the angels.

אֲלֹא שֶׁרָצוּ בְּזֶה לּוֹמַר, מֵצַד שֶׁהוּא בְּצֶלֶם אֱלֹהִים, חֲבִיב אֵף מִן הַמַּלְאָכִים.

And he said that here there is love upon love in that a precious vessel was given to them—for the Torah is the perfection of man.

וְאָמַר כִּי יֵשׁ כָּאֵן חֲבֶה עַל חֲבֶה בְּמָה שֶׁנִּתְּנָן לָהֶם כְּלֵי חֲמֻדָּה, שֶׁהַתּוֹרָה הִיא הַשְׁלֵמַת הָאָדָם.

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And this is what they said (Yevamos 61a): “You are called 'Adam,' but the nations of the world—deniers of the Torah—are not called 'Adam.’”

והוא שֶׁאָמְרוּ (יבמות סא, א): 'אַתָּם קְרוּיִם אָדָם וְלֹא
'אַמּוֹת הָעוֹלָם – מִכְחֵישֵׁי הַתּוֹרָה - קְרוּיִם אָדָם.

And why are the idolatrous nations not called “Adam”? Only because they do not have the Torah, which is the completion of man himself.

וְלָמָּה לֹא נִקְרְאוּ הָאֻמּוֹת עוֹבְדֵי כּוֹכָבִים 'אָדָם'? רַק
בְּשִׁבִּיל שֶׁאֵין לָהֶם הַתּוֹרָה, שֶׁהִיא הַשְּׁלֵמַת הָאָדָם
בְּעֶצְמוֹ.

For in the Torah there are 248 positive commandments to complete the human being who has 248 limbs;

שֵׁשׁ בַּתּוֹרָה רַמ"ח מִצְוֹת עֲשֵׂה, לְהַשְׁלִים הָאָדָם
שֵׁשׁ לוֹ רַמ"ח אֲבָרִים.

and likewise, 365 negative commandments to complete man with respect to his material aspect—

וְכֵן שֶׁס"ה מִצְוֹת לֹא תַעֲשֶׂה, לְהַשְׁלִים הָאָדָם מִצַּד
הַחֶמֶר;

until, through Torah, he becomes “Adam” in the fullest sense, as was explained.

עַד שֶׁעַל־יְדֵי הַתּוֹרָה הוּא 'אָדָם' לְגַמְרִי, כְּמוֹ
שֶׁהִתְבָּאֵר.

And from this it will become clear to you that man’s perfection is only when he is completed through the intellectual Torah—

וּמִזֶּה יִתְבָּאֵר לָךְ, כִּי אֵין הַשְּׁלֵמַת הָאָדָם רַק בְּאִשְׁר
הוּא מְשַׁלֵּם בַּתּוֹרָה הַשְּׂכָלִית

not through the study of other created beings, but through comprehension of the intellectual Torah,

לֹא בְהַשְׁנַת שְׂאֵר הַנִּבְרָאִים, רַק הַשְׁנַת הַתּוֹרָה
הַשְּׂכָלִית,

which is like the form and completion of man, who himself is the totality of creation.

שֶׁהִיא כְּמוֹ צוּרָה וְהַשְּׁלָמָה לָאָדָם, אִשְׁר הָאָדָם הוּא
כָּל הַבְּרִיאָה.

And when he attains through his study of Torah—which is the completion of man—then he attains the comprehension of everything.

וּכְאִשְׁר מְשִׁיג בְּהַשְׁנָתוֹ הַתּוֹרָה, שֶׁהִיא הַשְּׁלֵמַת הָאָדָם,
הוּא מְשִׁיג בְּהַשְׁנַת הַכֹּל,

And this is the highest level.

וְזֶהוּ מִדְרָגָה הַיּוֹתֵר עָלִיוֹנָה

And behold, once this becomes clear to you, you will have no doubt that it is not fitting for any kind of knowledge to acquire true success—

וְהִנֵּה כְּאִשְׁר יִתְבָּאֵר לָךְ זֶה, לֹא יִהְיֶה לָךְ סִפְק שֶׁאֵין
רְאוּי בְּשׁוּם יָדִיעָה לְקִנּוּת הַהַצְלָחָה

except by the study of that which brings completeness to all—and this thing is his true success.

רַק בְּהַשְׁנַת דְּבַר שֶׁעַל יְדּוֹ יִשְׁלַם הַכֹּל, וְדָבָר זֶה הוּא
הַהַצְלָחָתוֹ.

And this is nothing other than the knowledge of Torah.

וְאֵין זֶה רַק בִּידִיעַת הַתּוֹרָה.

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[NOTE: Summary

This discourse develops the foundational concept that **the human being—specifically the Jew—is the central form (צורה) and purpose of all creation**, by virtue of being created **בְּצֶלֶם אֱלֹהִים** (in the image of God). The **Torah** is not just a guide for living; it is the **very form that perfects the human**, aligning him with his Divine blueprint. The Maharal highlights:

- **Torah as the completion of man:** The 248 positive commandments correspond to the 248 limbs, and the 365 prohibitions correspond to the 365 sinews—perfecting both the active and the passive aspects of man.
- **The exclusivity of the title “Adam”** for the Jewish people (Yevamos 61a): The nations are not called “Adam” because they do not possess Torah—the source of human perfection.
- **All other knowledge is secondary:** Intellectual pursuits regarding creation (angels, spheres, etc.) may be interesting, but only **Torah knowledge brings eternal success**, as it completes man’s essential form.
- **Humanity as the “form” over creation:** Just as form gives meaning to matter, man gives meaning and direction to the rest of existence.
- The phrase **“וְהָיָה טוֹב מְאֹד”** refers not just to creation generally, but **to man himself**—whose perfection elevates the entire cosmos.

In essence, **to perfect the world is to perfect man, and to perfect man is through Torah.**

Practical Takeaway

Your greatest purpose is not outside yourself—it is within.

One must stop undervaluing their spiritual potential by comparing themselves to celestial beings or abstract philosophy. Your perfection, success, and divine connection are realized through immersing yourself in Torah and mitzvos, which are precisely mapped to your being. Every moment spent studying Torah or doing a mitzvah isn't just fulfilling an obligation—it is sculpting your Divine form and actualizing your role as the center of creation.

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Chassidic Story (About the Maharal of Prague)

"The Footprint in the Dust" — The Maharal's Gaze

One time, the **Maharal of Prague** was walking with a group of his students through the forest outskirts of the city. As they walked, the Maharal suddenly stopped and gazed intently at a **single human footprint** in the dust of the trail.

The students stood back, puzzled. The Maharal knelt near the footprint and began to weep.

After a long silence, he finally said:

"This is not just a print in the dust. It is the shadow of the Divine image. How can the world not tremble when it sees this? How can man not realize who he is?"

The students later explained that this moment revealed one of the Maharal's deepest beliefs: that **even the lowest part of man—his heel—carries the radiance of אֱלֹהִים**, as he taught elsewhere, even referencing the Talmudic statement that "the heels of Adam shone like the sun" (Bava Basra 58a).

 **Source:** Adapted from oral traditions cited in introductions to Maharal's works (esp. *Be'er HaGolah*) and stories compiled in *Chassidim Mesaprim al ha-Maharal*. **END NOTE]**

And in Tractate Menachos (53b): "Let the good come and receive the good from the Good for the good ones."

ובמסכת מנחות (נג, ב): יבא טוב ויקבל טוב מטוב לטובים

"Let the good come"—this is Moshe, as it is written (Shemos 2:2): "And she saw him, that he was good."

יבא טוב — זה משה, דכתיב (שמות ב, ב): "ותרא אותו כי טוב"

"And receive the good"—this is Torah, as it is written (Mishlei 4:2): "For I have given you a good teaching; do not forsake My Torah."

ויקבל טוב — זו תורה, דכתיב (משלי ד, ב): "כי לקח טוב נתתי לכם תורתִי אֶל־תַּעֲזֹבו"

"From the Good"—this is the Holy One, blessed be He, as it is written (Tehillim 145:9): "Hashem is good to all."

מטוב — זה הקדוש־ברוך־הוא, דכתיב (תהלים קמה, ט): "טוב ה' לכל"

"For the good ones"—this is Israel, as it is written (Tehillim 125:4): "Do good, Hashem, to the good..."

לטובים — אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל, דכתיב (תהלים קכה, ד): "הִיטִיבָה ה' לטובים" וגו'

"Let this one come and receive this one from this one for that nation."

יבא זה ויקבל זאת מזה לְעַם זֶה

"Let this one come"—this is Moshe, as it is written (Shemos 32:1): "For this man Moshe..."

יבא זה — זה משה, דכתיב (שמות לב, א): "כי זה משה הקאיש"

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“And receive this”—this is Torah, as it is stated (Devarim 4:44):	ויקבל זאת – זו תורה, שנאמר (דברים ד, מד):
“And this is the Torah...”	”וזאת התורה
“From this one”—this is the Holy One, blessed be He, as it is written (Shemos 15:2): “This is my God and I will glorify Him.”	מִזֶּה – זֶה הַקְדוֹשׁ-בְּרוּךְ-הוא, דְּכָתִיב (שְׁמוֹת טו, ב): ”זֶה אֱלֹהֵי וְאֶנְהוּ
“To that nation”—this is Israel, as it is said (ibid. 15): “This nation You have acquired.”	לְעַם זֶה – אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל, שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר (שָׁם שָׁם, טו): “עַם
Until here.	”זו קִנִּיתָ.
Behold, he came to explain two great matters:	עַד כָּאן.
The first, which we mentioned in the previous chapter: that Torah is distinct from all created things.	הִנֵּה בָּא לְבַאֵר שְׁנֵי דְבָרִים גְּדוֹלִים:
For all created things contain some aspect that relates to materiality.	הָאֶחָד, אֲשֶׁר אִמְרָנוּ בַּפֶּרֶק שֶׁלִּפְנֵי זֶה, כִּי הַתּוֹרָה
But Torah, being the decree of Hashem, is not related to the material at all—only to the decree of Hashem, may He be blessed.	מִיִּחְדָּת מְכַל הַנִּבְרָאִים
And because of this, it has no material dimension at all, as explained.	שֶׁכָּל הַנִּבְרָאִים יֵשׁ בָּהֶם בְּחִינָה שְׁמַתִּיחִסִּים אֵל
And the second: that Torah is the completion and form of man, who is regarded as the form of the world.	הַחֲמִירי
And thus praise and thanks are given for the greatness and the truest uprightness found in the Torah, as was explained above.	וְהַתּוֹרָה, מֵצַד שֶׁהִיא גִּזְרַת הַשֵּׁם יִתְבָּרַךְ, אֵינָה
And about this it was said (Shabbos 88a): “Blessed is the Merciful One who gave us the threefold Torah...”	מִתְיַחֶסֶת אֵל הַחֲמִירי, רַק אֵל גִּזְרַת הַשֵּׁם יִתְבָּרַךְ
He now comes to explain these two final levels.	וּמֵצַד הַזֶּה אֵין בָּהּ בְּחִינָה חֲמִירִית כָּלֵל, וּכְמוֹ
And therefore it says: “Let good come.” The term “good” indicates something that is separate from the material.	שֶׁהַתְּבָאֵר
And this is known: for what is attached to matter has absence and deficiency, which is bad.	וְהַשְׁנִי, בְּמָה שֶׁהַתּוֹרָה הִיא הַשְׁלֵמָה וְצוּרָה אֵל הָאֲדָמָה,
And there is no doubt about this at all, and we have explained it at length elsewhere.	שֶׁהוּא נִחָשֵׁב צוּרָה אֵל הָעוֹלָם
Therefore, it says that one who is not prepared to receive the intellectual Torah—which has no material aspect at all—can	וּכְמוֹ שֶׁנֶּחֱמַן שָׁבַח וְהוֹדָאָה עַל הַמַּעֲלָה, בְּמָה שֶׁיֵּשׁ
	בַּתּוֹרָה הָאֲמִתִּית וְהַיָּשָׁר בְּיוֹתֵר, כְּמוֹ שֶׁהַתְּבָאֵר
	לַמַּעֲלָה
	וְעַל זֶה אָמַר (שָׁבַת פח, א): בְּרִיךְ רַחֲמָנָא דִּיהִיב לָן
	”אוֹרֵינָן תְּלִיתָא
	בָּא עֲתָה לְבַאֵר שְׁתֵּי מַעֲלוֹת הָאֲחֵרוֹנוֹת
	וּלְכֹךְ אָמַר: יְבֵא טוֹב. לְשׁוֹן ‘טוֹב’ מוֹרָה עַל הַדְּבָר
	שֶׁהוּא נִבְדָּל מִן הַחֲמִירי
	וְזֶה יְדוּעַ, לְפִי שֶׁדְּבַק בַּחֲמִיר הִקְעֵדַר וְהַחֲפָרוֹן, שֶׁהוּא
	רַע
	וְאֵין סֶפֶק בַּדְּבָר זֶה כָּלֵל, וּבִאֲרָנוּ בְּאֲרִיכוֹת בְּמָקוֹם
	אַחֵר
	וּלְכֹךְ אָמַר: כִּי לֹא הֵיךָ מוֹכֵן לְקַבֵּל הַתּוֹרָה הַשְׁכֵּלִית
	– שֶׁאֵין לָהּ בְּחִינָה חֲמִירִית כָּלֵל – רַק מִי שֶׁיֵּשׁ לוֹ
	מִדְּרָגָה זֹאת גִּם-כֵּן, שֶׁהוּא נִבְדָּל בְּלִתִּי חֲמִירי

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only be someone who also has this level: to be detached and non-material.

For to receive Torah requires preparation.

כי לקבל התורה צריך הכנה;

Therefore, it says: "Let good come"—this is Moshe.

ולפיכך אמר: יבא טוב – זה משה.

For the level of Moshe was completely detached from materiality.

כי מדרגת משה נבדל לגמרי מן החמרי

And this matter is well known: that this is the essence of Moshe's superiority.

ודבר זה ידוע מאד, שזהו מעלת משה

Therefore he prophesied through a clear lens.

ולכך הנה מתנבא באספקלריה המאירה

And we have already explained this at length in *Gevuros Hashem* (Chapter 18) by the verse "for I drew him from the water" (Shemos 2:10),

וכבר הארכנו בזה בחבור גבורות ה' (פרק יח) אצל ("פי מן המים משיתהו" (שמות ב, י

and in many places, that this is the primary essence of Moshe: that he was separate from the material.

ובכמה מקומות, שזה עקר עצם משה, שהיה נבדל מן החמר

Therefore he alone separated from [his] wife (Shabbos 87a), and is called "the man of God" (Devarim 33:1).

ולכך הוא בלבד הנה פורש מן האשה (שבת פז, א), (ונקרא "איש אלהים" (דברים לג, א

"And he received good." It has already been explained that Torah—more than anything—is completely unrelated to materiality, as it is a decree of Hashem alone, as explained.

ויקבל טוב' – כבר התבאר כי התורה בפרט יותר מכל אין לה התחסות אל החמרי, במה שהיא גזרת השם יתברך בלבד, כמו שהתבאר

And all existing things, by their essence, are related to matter.

וכל הנמצאים בצד עצמם הם מתחסים אל החמר

Therefore the Torah is called "a good acquisition" (Mishlei 4:2).

(ולפיכך תקרא התורה "לקח טוב" (משלי ד, ב

"From the Good"—this is the Holy One, blessed be He, who is holy and infinitely separate from matter, as the ministering angels declare: "Holy, holy, holy..." (Yeshayahu 6:3).

ממטוב – הוא הקדוש-ברוך-הוא, שהוא קדוש ונבדל מן החמר בלי תכלית, כאשר מקדישין אותו (מלאכי השרת: "קדוש קדוש קדוש" (ישעיה ו, ג

"Good ones"—these are Israel, who are holy and separated from the baseness of materiality found among the nations.

טובים' – אלו ישראל, שהם קדושים נבדלים מפחיתות החמרי שיש לאמות העולם

And this has also been explained in many places, and is very well known: that the level of Israel is that they do not have the same baseness of materiality as the nations.

ודבר זה התבאר גם-כן במקומות הרבה, עד שהוא ידוע מאד, כי מדרגת ישראל שאין להם פחיתות החמר, כמו שיש לאמות העולם

Therefore they are called "good," for anything that is separate from the baseness of matter is called good, since evil is in the material.

ולפיכך נקראו 'טובים', שכל אשר נבדל מפחיתות החמר – הוא טוב, שהרע הוא בחמר

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Explanation: the word “זה (this)” is said regarding form, for *form* is the recognition of a thing—until one says about it, “this is it.”

And this is what it says: “Let *this* come”—this is Moshe.

For we have already said and explained elsewhere that Moshe is called “this” because he was the *form* of Israel, and he completed Israel.

Therefore they said (Shemos 32:1): “For *this* man Moshe...”—meaning, Moshe is like a form to Israel.

“And we do not know what became of him”—and it is impossible to exist without a full integrator.

Therefore, they wanted to make gods that would go before them.

And this is what they said: “For this man Moshe...”—Moshe is also called *man* for this same reason, as explained elsewhere.

And for this same reason, Israel is called “this nation,” because they too are a form over the entire world.

For Israel completes all and gives form to the entire world.

And without Israel, the world is not considered at all—and we have already explained this elsewhere.

And you will see that this is so, for Israel has the level of *form*, as we already said: Israel alone is called *Adam*.

As they said (Yevamos 61a): “You are called Adam, and Torah deniers are not called Adam.”

And *Adam* is the form and completion of the entire world.

Therefore, you will find the quality of *form* in man—and likewise in Israel.

For in all things, the *form* comes last, and the *matter* comes first.

For the *form* is that which completes, and it is fitting that it come last.

Therefore, man was created last of all the works of Creation—as we explained elsewhere—for upon man is the designation of *form*, which comes at the end.

פרוש, לשון זה' נאמר על הצורה, כי הצורה הוא הכרת הדבר, עד שיאמר על הדבר כי זה הוא

ונה' שצאמר: 'בא זה' – הוא משה

כי כבר אמרנו, ונתבאר במקום אחר, כי משה נקרא 'זה' בשביל שהיה צורת ישראל, והוא המשלים את ישראל.

ולכך אמרו (שמות לב, א): "כי זה משה האיש", כלומר כי משה הוא כמו צורה אל ישראל.

ולא ידענו מה היה לו", ואי אפשר להיות בלא משלים הכל.

ולכך רצו לעשות אלהים אשר ילכו לפנייהם

ונה' שצאמר: "כי זה משה האיש", כי משה נקרא 'איש' מטעם זה גם כן, כמו שהתבאר במקום אחר

ובשביל טעם זה עצמו נקראו ישראל 'עם זו', שגם הם צורה אל כלל העולם

כי ישראל משלימים הכל ונותנים צורה אל כל העולם

ובלא ישראל אין [העולם] נחשב כלל, וכבר בארנו זה גם כן במקום אחר

ותראה שכן הוא, כי יש לישראל מדרגת הצורה, ששכר אמרנו כי ישראל היו נקראים 'אדם' בפרט

כמו שצאמר (במלות סא, א): 'אתם נקראים אדם, ואין מכחישי התורה נקראים אדם'

והאדם הוא צורה והשלמה אל כל העולם

ולכך תתמצא הסגולה של צורה באדם, וכמו כן בישראל

כי כל הדברים – הצורה באה באחרונה, והחומר קודם

כי הצורה הוא המשלים – ראוי שיהיה באחרונה

ולפיכך נברא האדם באחרונה לכל מעשה בראשית, וכמו שבארנו זה במקומו, כי יש על האדם משפט הצורה שהיא באה באחרונה

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Likewise, you will find the same regarding Israel—that all the other nations were created before.

וְכֵן תִּמְצָא בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל, שְׁכָל הָאֲמוֹת נִבְרְאוּ קֹדֶם

For there were seventy nations in the generation of dispersion, as our Sages taught (Pirkei D'Rabbi Eliezer 24).

כִּי שִׁבְעִים אֲמוֹת הָיוּ בְּדוֹר הַפְּלִנָּה, כַּחֲכָמֵינוּ וְזָכוֹנֵנוּ
(לְבָרְכָהּ) (פֶּרֶק דְּרַבִּי אֱלִיעֶזֶר כ"ד)

Even Amon, Moav, and Edom were already peoples before Israel.

וְאַף עֲמוֹן וּמוֹאָב וְעֵדוֹם תִּמְצָא כִּי הָיוּ לָעַם קֹדֶם שֶׁהָיוּ
יִשְׂרָאֵל.

For when [Israel] came out of Egypt and became a people, Amon, Moav, and Edom were already settled in their lands.

כִּי בְּאֶשֶׁר יָצְאוּ מִמִּצְרַיִם, וְהָיוּ לָעַם, כָּבֵד יוֹשְׁבוֹ עֲמוֹן
וּמוֹאָב וְעֵדוֹם בְּאַרְצָם.

From this you see that they became nations and settled in their lands before Israel.

שֶׁמִּזֶּה תֵּרְאֶה, כִּי הָיוּ לְאֻמוֹת וְנִתְּשְׁבוּ בְּאַרְצָם קֹדֶם
יִשְׂרָאֵל.

For upon Israel is the designation of *form*, which emerges at the end.

כִּי יֵשׁ עַל יִשְׂרָאֵל מִשְׁפָּט הַצּוּרָה, שֶׁהִיא יוֹצֵאת
בְּאַחֲרוֹנָהּ.

And behold, Israel is fitting to be called “this nation,” for they are the form of completion for the world.

וְהִנֵּה יִשְׂרָאֵל רְאוּיִים שִׁיקְרָאוּ 'עַם זֶה', שֶׁהֵם צוּרַת
הַשְּׁלֵמָה לָעוֹלָם.

And Torah, too, is fitting to be called “this” (זֹאת), for it is the form for Israel—as was explained, that the Torah is like a form for man.

וְהַתּוֹרָה גַּם-כֵּן רְאוּיָה שֶׁתִּקְרָא 'זֹאת', כִּי הִיא צוּרָה
לְיִשְׂרָאֵל, כְּמוֹ שֶׁהִתְבָּאֵר אֵיךְ הַתּוֹרָה הִיא כְּמוֹ צוּרָה
לְאָדָם.

Therefore, the Torah is particularly fitting to be called “this” (זֹאת).

וְלִכְךָ רְאוּי שֶׁתִּקְרָא הַתּוֹרָה 'זֹאת' בְּפֶרֶט

And Hashem, may He be blessed, is above all—for He is the ultimate *form* over everything, the one who completes all.

וְהַשֵּׁם יִתְבָּרֵךְ עַל הַכֹּל, שֶׁהוּא צוּרָה אַחֲרוֹנָה אֶל הַכֹּל,
מִשְׁלֵימִים הַכֹּל.

Therefore, He is called “this” (זֶה).

'וְלִפְיֶכָּה נִקְרָא 'זֶה'

And these things are explained and well known.

וְהַדְּבָרִים אֵלֶּיךָ מְבֹאָרִים וְיָדוּעִים

Behold, now you have all our words that we said in the previous chapter and in this chapter—through which the Sages wanted to explain that engagement in Torah is the ultimate purpose of man.

הִנֵּה לָךְ כָּל דְּבָרֵינוּ אֲשֶׁר אִמְרָנוּ בְּפֶרֶק הַקּוֹדֶם,
וּבְפֶרֶק הַזֶּה, אֲשֶׁר רָצוּ חֲכָמִים לְבָאֵר כִּי הַעֲסֵק
בַּתּוֹרָה הוּא תְּכִלִּית הָאָדָם.

And on this the verse says (Yehoshua 1:8): “And you shall meditate upon it day and night.”

וְעַל זֶה אָמַר הַכָּתוּב (יְהוֹשֻׁעַ א, ח): "וְהִגִּיתָ בּוֹ יוֹמָם
וְלַיְלָה."

And the explanation of this concept is: since the Torah is the form of all existence, it is fitting that one labor in Torah day and night—

וּבִאֹר עֲנִינוּ זֶה, אַחֲרֵי שֶׁהַתּוֹרָה הִיא צוּרַת כָּל
—הַמְּצִיאוֹת, רְאוּי שִׁיחֶיָּה עֲמַל בַּתּוֹרָה יוֹמָם וְלַיְלָה

for day and night comprise the entirety of existence.

יוֹם וְלַיְלָה הֵם כָּל הַמְּצִיאוֹת

For how could one take something that belongs to Torah and give it to other things?

?כִּי אֵיךְ יִקַּח דָּבָר שֶׁהוּא שֶׁל תּוֹרָה, וְיִתֵּן לְאַחֵרִים

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Since Torah is the completion of all, one should give to Torah *everything*—that is, all of his time, which is day and night.

כִּי מֵאַחֵר שֶׁהַתּוֹרָה הִיא הַשְׁלֵמַת הַכֹּל, יִתֵּן לַתּוֹרָה הַכֹּל – הוּא כָּל זְמַן, שֶׁהוּא יוֹם וְלַיְלָה.

And it has become clear to you that the thinking of those people [philosophers] is vanity—those who pursued abstract intellects.

וְהִתְבָּאֵר לָךְ כִּי מִחֻשְׁבֵּת הָאֲנָשִׁים הָאֵלּוּ הוּא הַבֶּל, אֲשֶׁר רָדְפוּ אַחֵר הַמְשֻׁכְּלוֹת.

Behold, they were foolish and distanced themselves from the path of truth—

– וְהִנֵּה סָכְלוּ וּרְחַקוּ מִן דֶּרֶךְ הָאֱמֻנָה

which is the path that ascends to the mountain of Hashem and to His holy place.

הוּא דֶּרֶךְ הָעוֹלָה אֶל הַר ה' וְאֶל מְקוֹם קִדְשׁוֹ.

And more will yet be explained.

וְעוֹד יִתְבָּאֵר.

[NOTE: Summary

In this far-reaching discourse, the **Maharal of Prague** develops a majestic vision of the universe centered around the concept of **צורה (form)**—the essential, spiritual inner dimension of existence.

1. **Torah is the form (צורה) of all creation:** It is not just a book of commandments but the **spiritual blueprint** of the entire world. All existence is matter (*chomer*) needing form—and Torah is that form.
2. **Man is the form of the world:** Humanity, particularly the Jew, was created last because the **form always comes last**—it perfects the preceding material. Thus, man (and even more so Israel) **gives shape and meaning** to the world.
3. **Moshe is the form of Israel:** He is repeatedly called “this man” (זֶה הָאִישׁ), reflecting his identity as the embodiment of Israel’s spiritual form. His separation from materiality (e.g., abstaining from marital life) allowed him to receive the **non-material Torah**.
4. **Israel is the form of the nations:** Just as form perfects matter, Israel elevates the rest of the world. That is why Israel was formed last historically—after the seventy nations—just as man was created after the rest of creation.
5. **Torah is called “this” (זֶה), and Hashem is called “this” (זֶה):** These designations reflect complete, visible spiritual essence—clarity of form. “This” implies clarity and perfection, the very nature of the Torah, of Moshe, and of Hashem Himself.
6. **The culmination:** Since Torah is the essence of all, and man is its vessel, **a person must dedicate all of himself—day and night—to Torah**, as it says in Yehoshua 1:8. It is the **ultimate purpose of man**, the only path that leads to God’s holy mountain.

Practical Takeaway

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If Torah is the form of reality, then engaging with it is not just study—it is alignment with the essence of all existence.

- Make Torah the **central structure of your day**, not something extra. It is not one discipline among many—it is the **spiritual architecture** of the universe and of yourself.
- Strive to **elevate beyond material distractions**. You don't need to abandon the world, but aim to reflect the Maharal's hierarchy: first comes *chomer*, but ultimate purpose lies in *tzurah*.
- Recognize your **dignity and responsibility** as a Jew. As "Adam," your task is to give **form to the world** through Torah, mitzvos, and moral refinement. You are the "this" (זה) that the world looks to for definition.

Chassidic Story: The Maharal and the Hidden Torah in the Night

It is said that once the **Maharal of Prague** was seen walking through the alleyways of Prague in the middle of the night, deep in thought, murmuring words of Torah. A student followed him quietly, wondering why the Rav wasn't resting.

When the Maharal noticed him, he smiled and said:

"My child, the verse says, '*You shall meditate upon it day and night*'. The day is given to the world, but the **night belongs to those who seek form within darkness**. The Torah is the light that shapes the void. If I waste the night, I leave part of the world unformed."

Later, the Maharal told this student: "A person who studies Torah during the night hours becomes a partner with Hashem in **sustaining the world**—because he is filling the night with *tzurah*."

 **Source:** Adapted from traditions cited in *Sefer Maharal u-Mesoraso* and *Chassidim Mesaprim al ha-Maharal*. **END NOTE]**