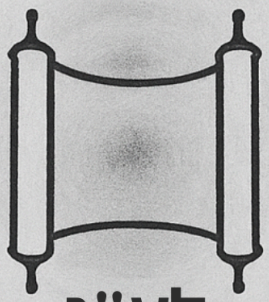
בס"ד

Rebbe Maharash

Torahs Shmuel

Parshas Pinchas

וַיְדַבֵּר ה' אֶל מֹשֶׁה לֵאמֹר 1869



לע"נ

שמעון בן ישראל

Dedicated By:

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Introduction

This discourse by the Rebbe Maharash (Rabbi Shmuel of Lubavitch, 1834–1882), the fourth Rebbe of Chabad, addresses a profound Chassidic interpretation of "והיו הדברים האלה אשר אנכי מצוך היום", revealing how the inner dimension of Torah serves as the true vessel for G-d's Infinite Light. The Maharash explores the mystical path of *ratzo v'shov* (spiritual yearning and return), the structure of the Divine in the world of Atzilus, and how Torah and mitzvos become the dwelling place for the Essence of G-d Himself. Most striking is his analysis of the sons of Aharon and Pinchas, illustrating the difference between unbounded longing versus grounded self-sacrifice, and how Pinchas's act repairs the imbalance by fusing yearning (*ratzo*) with return (*shov*).

And Hashem spoke to Moshe, saying: Pinchas, the son of Elazar, the son of Aharon the Kohen, turned back My wrath from upon the Children of Israel when he zealously avenged My vengeance among them, etc. And it is necessary to explain what is written in the sefarim, that Pinchas was a reincarnation of Nadav and Avihu, and through his zealousness for the vengeance against Zimri, he rectified the sin of Nadav and Avihu.	**וַיְדַבֵּר ה' אֶל מֹשֶׁה לֵאמֹר**, פִּינְחָס בֶּן אֶלְעָזָר בֶּן אַהֲרֹן הַכֹּהֵן הֵשִׁיב אֶת חֲמָתִי מֵעַל בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּקַנְאוֹ אֶת קִנְאָתִי בְּתוֹכָם כו', וְצָרִיךְ לוֹמַר מַה שֶּׁכָּתוּב בַּסְּפָרִים שֶׁפִּינְחָס הָיָה גִּלְגּוּל נָדָב וַאֲבִיהוּא וְעַל־יְדֵי שֶׁקִּנֵּא קִנְאַת זִמְרִי עַל־יְדֵי זֶה תִּקֵּן נָדָב וַאֲבִיהוּא.
Behold, the root of the sin of Nadav and Avihu in their drawing near before Hashem, is explained in the Zohar: that they were in the aspect of "ratzo" alone, and were in a state of complete soul-expiration. But this is puzzling: why is this considered a sin and transgression? For the concept of mesirus nefesh (self-sacrifice) is higher than all the Torah and mitzvos— in service, this level is loftier. And it is known from the concept of giving over one's soul in "Echad" that this type of service is above all 248 positive mitzvos.	הִנֵּה שׁוֹרֶשׁ עִנְיַן חֵטְא נָדָב וַאֲבִיהוּא בְּקָרְבָתָם לִפְנֵי ה', פֵּירוּשׁ בַּזֹּהַר שֶׁהָיוּ בְּבְחִינַת רָצוֹא לְבַד וְהָיוּ בְּבְחִינַת כְּלוֹת הַנֶּפֶשׁ מַמָּשׁ, וּלְכָאוֹרָה יִפָּלֵא מִפְּנֵי מַה נֶּחְשַׁב לַחֵטְא וַעֲוֹן, הֲלֹא עִנְיַן מְסִירוּת נֶפֶשׁ הוּא גָּבוֹהַּ יוֹתֵר מִכָּל הַתּוֹרָה וְהַמִּצְוֹת, שֶׁבַּעֲבוֹדָה בְּחִינָה זוֹ גָּבוֹהַּ יוֹתֵר וּכְנוֹדָע מֵעִנְיַן לִמְסוֹר נַפְשׁוֹ בְּאֶחָד, שֶׁעֲבוֹדָה זוֹ נַעֲלָה יוֹתֵר מִכָּל בְּחִינַת הָעֲבוֹדָה בְּרַמַ"ח מִצְוֹת עֲשֵׂה.
Also, it is written in the Maggid Meisharim that the Maggid promised the Beis Yosef that he would merit to die sanctifying the Name (Kiddush Hashem), and it turns out that this level is more precious than all the Torah the Beis Yosef learned throughout his years. If so, what was the sin and transgression of Nadav and Avihu? And if "ratzo" with self-sacrifice is considered a sin and transgression for them, how then did Pinchas rectify their sin through that very same self-sacrifice?	וְגַם אִיתָא בְּמַגִּיד מֵישָׁרִים שֶׁהַמַּגִּיד הִבְטִיחַ לַבֵּית יוֹסֵף שֶׁיִּזְכֶּה לְהֵהָרֵג עַל קִידּוּשׁ הַשֵּׁם, וְנִמְצָא כִּי בְּחִינָה זוֹ יְקָרָה מִכָּל הַתּוֹרָה שֶׁלָּמַד הַבַּיִת יוֹסֵף בְּכָל שְׁנוֹתָיו, וְאִם כֵּן מַהוּ הַחֵטְא וְהָעָוֹן שֶׁל נָדָב וַאֲבִיהוּא, וְאִם הָרָצוֹא בְּמְסִירוּת נֶפֶשׁ נֶחְשָׁב לַחֵטְא וְעָוֹן גַּבֵּי נָדָב וַאֲבִיהוּא, אֵיךְ תִּקֵּן פִּינְחָס גַּם כֵּן בְּמְסִירוּת נֶפֶשׁ גּוּפָא.

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And it is also necessary to explain: did not the Sages say, why does Shema precede "V'haya im shamoa"? In order that they should first accept upon themselves the yoke of the Kingdom of Heaven and afterward the yoke of mitzvos. And it is explained in earlier discourses that the precedence of Shema, which is the acceptance of the yoke of Heaven, is the aspect of "ratzo" and yearning to be included and nullified in the Infinite Light of Hashem, to the point of "With You I do not desire," that he does not desire even Gan Eden haTachton or Elyon, nor the World to Come—only the very Essence of the Infinite One.	וְגַם צָרִיךְ לוֹמַר, הֲלֹא אָמְרוּ רַז"ל לָמָּה קְדָמָה קְרִיאַת שְׁמַע לְוְהָיָה אִם שָׁמוֹעַ, כְּדֵי שֶׁיְּקַבְּלוּ עֲלֵיהֶם עוֹל מַלְכוּת שָׁמַיִם תְּחִלָּה וְאַחַר כָּךְ עוֹל מִצְוֹת, וְנִתְבָּאֵר בַּדְּרוּשִׁים הַקּוֹדְמִים שֶׁעִנְיַן הַקְדָּמַת קְרִיאַת שְׁמַע בְּחִינַת קַבָּלַת עוֹל מַלְכוּת שָׁמַיִם הוּא בְּחִינַת רָצוֹא וּתְשׁוּקָה לְהִכָּלֵל וּלְהִיבָּטֵל בְּאוֹר אֵין־סוֹף בָּרוּךְ־הוּא לִהְיוֹת "וְעִמְּךָ לֹא חָפַצְתִּי" כו', שֶׁלֹּא יַחְפֹּץ לֹא בְּגַן־עֵדֶן הַתַּחְתּוֹן וְלֹא בְּגַן־עֵדֶן הָעֶלְיוֹן וְלֹא בָּעוֹלָם הַבָּא רַק בְּבְחִינַת אוֹר־אֵין־סוֹף בָּרוּךְ־הוּא עַצְמוּתוֹ מַמָּשׁ.
And this is the meaning of "With You I do not desire"—everything that is with You, meaning even the level of "For with You is the source of life," this too I do not desire. And through this is aroused the level of the Infinite One Himself, the Master of the will, and from this is drawn the will within Torah and mitzvos, as is explained there. If so, this too is the aspect of "ratzo" and longing than which nothing is higher. So why, then, when the sons of Aharon drew near with this "ratzo" to the point their souls expired, was it considered a sin and transgression, such that Pinchas rectified their sin through his zeal—which appears, too, to be the same kind of "ratzo" and longing?	וְזֶהוּ פֵּירוּשׁ "וְעִמְּךָ לֹא חָפַצְתִּי", כָּל מַה שֶּׁעִמְּךָ הַיְנוּ אֲפִלּוּ בְּחִינַת "כִּי עִמְּךָ מְקוֹר חַיִּים" גַּם כֵּן לֹא חָפַצְתִּי, וְעַל־יְדֵי זֶה מְעוֹרְרִים בְּחִינַת אוֹר־אֵין־סוֹף בָּרוּךְ־הוּא בַּעַל הָרָצוֹן, וְנִמְשָׁךְ עַל־יְדֵי זֶה לִהְיוֹת רָצוֹן דְּתוֹרָה וּמִצְוֹת כְּמוֹ שֶׁנִּתְבָּאֵר שָׁם, וְאִם כֵּן הֲרֵי זֶה גַּם כֵּן בְּחִינַת רָצוֹא וּתְשׁוּקָה שֶׁאֵין לְמַעְלָה הֵימֶנָּה, וּמַדּוּעַ בְּנֵי אַהֲרֹן בְּקָרְבָתָם בְּבְחִינַת רָצוֹא עַד שֶׁכָּלְתָה נַפְשָׁם מַמָּשׁ הִנֵּה נֶחְשַׁב לָהֶם לַחַטָּא וָעָוֹן עַד שֶׁפִּינְחָס תִּקֵּן חֶטְאָם בְּמַה שֶּׁקִּנֵּא כו', שֶׁלְּכְאוֹרָה זֶהוּ דּוֹמֶה לְבְחִינַת קַבָּלַת עוֹל מַלְכוּת שָׁמַיִם.
However, the matter is as follows: the expression of the Sages, "Why does Shema precede 'Vehaya im shamoa'?"—in order that they accept upon themselves first the yoke of the Kingdom of Heaven and afterward the yoke of mitzvos—does not mean that one should accept only the yoke of Heaven and remain in that state of "ratzo." Rather, first he should accept the yoke of Heaven, and afterward accept the yoke of mitzvos, which is the level of "shuv" (return).	אֲבָל הָעִנְיָן הוּא דְּהִנֵּה לְשׁוֹן רַז"ל לָמָּה קְדָמָה קְרִיאַת שְׁמַע לְוְהָיָה אִם שָׁמוֹעַ בְּכְדֵי שֶׁיְּקַבְּלוּ עֲלֵיהֶם עוֹל מַלְכוּת שָׁמַיִם תְּחִלָּה וְאַחַר כָּךְ עוֹל מִצְוֹת, אֵין הַפֵּירוּשׁ שֶׁיְּקַבֵּל עוֹל מַלְכוּת שָׁמַיִם לְבַד וְיִשָּׁאֵר כָּךְ בְּבְחִינַת הָרָצוֹא, כִּי אִם תְּחִלָּה יְקַבֵּל עוֹל מַלְכוּת שָׁמַיִם וְאַחַר כָּךְ יְקַבֵּל עוֹל מִצְוֹת בְּחִינַת שׁוּב.
And that is because in order for the service through mitzvos to be complete and whole—that one performs the mitzvah due to being attached to the level of the Infinite One, the Master of the will, and therefore performs His individual desires—this requires that first there be the general acceptance of the yoke of Heaven, which is acceptance of everything that He may command to do.	וְהַיְינוּ כִּי בְּכְדֵי שֶׁתִּהְיֶה הָעֲבוֹדָה בִּבְחִינַת הַמִּצְוֹת עֲבוֹדָה תַּמָּה וּשְׁלֵימָה שֶׁעַיֶּשֶׂה הַמִּצְוָה מִמַּטַּעַם שֶׁהוּא דָּבוּק לְבְחִינַת אוֹר־אֵין־סוֹף בָּרוּךְ־הוּא בַּעַל הָרָצוֹן לָכֵן הוּא עוֹשֶׂה פְּרָטֵי רְצוֹנוֹתָיו, לָזֶה צָרִיךְ תְּחִלָּה קַבָּלַת עוֹל מַלְכוּת שָׁמַיִם בִּכְלָל שֶׁהִיא הַקַּבָּלָה לְכָל מַה שֶּׁיְּצַוֶּה לַעֲשׂוֹת.

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Thus, this acceptance is not upon the individual commandments, but rather an acceptance from the Master of the will—that he accepts upon himself that whatever He commands, he will do. And this is the aspect of accepting His sovereignty—that this acceptance is what is meant by accepting upon oneself the yoke of His Kingship.	נִמְצָא שֶׁקַּבָּלָה זוֹ אֵינָהּ עַל פְּרָטֵי הַצִּוּוּיִים כִּי אִם הַקַּבָּלָה מִבַּעַל הָרָצוֹן שֶׁמְּקַבֵּל עַל עַצְמוֹ שֶׁכָּל מַה שֶּׁיְצַוֶּה אוֹתוֹ יַעֲשֶׂה, וְהֵרֵי זֶה בְּחִינַת קַבָּלַת אֲדוֹנוּתוֹ יִתְבָּרֵךְ שֶׁהַקַּבָּלָה לָזֶה הוּא מַה שֶּׁמְּקַבֵּל עַל עַצְמוֹ קַבָּלַת עוֹל מַלְכוּתוֹ יִתְבָּרֵךְ.
Then the performance of the individual Torah and mitzvos—which are His specific desires—is connected to the prior general acceptance, in that one is performing His command because he has accepted His sovereignty with willingness. Then the service is complete, etc.	וְאָז הַעֲשִׂיָּה מִפְּרָטֵי הַתּוֹרָה וּמִצְוֹת שֶׁהֵם פְּרָטֵי רְצוֹנוֹתָיו מְקֻשָּׁרִים לִבְחִינַת הַקַּבָּלָה שֶׁקָּדְמָה לָהֶם שֶׁעוֹשֶׂה צִוּוּיוֹ מִפְּנֵי שֶׁקִּבֵּל עָלָיו מַלְכוּתוֹ יִתְבָּרֵךְ בִּרְצוֹן, וְאָז הָעֲבוֹדָה שְׁלֵימָה כו'.
And this is what the Sages said: in order that one should accept upon himself first the yoke of Heaven, and afterward the yoke of mitzvos. "First" here only means that before accepting the individual mitzvos, which are His specific desires, one should first accept His sovereignty willingly. Then all the mitzvos are connected to the level of the Infinite One, the Master of the will.	וְלָזֶה אָמְרוּ כְּדֵי שֶׁיְּקַבֵּל עוֹל מַלְכוּת שָׁמַיִם תְּחִלָּה וְאַחַר כָּךְ יְקַבֵּל עוֹל מִצְוֹת, אוֹמְרִים תְּחִלָּה הַיְנוּ רַק שֶׁקֹּדֶם עוֹל מִצְוֹת שֶׁהֵם פְּרָטֵי הָרְצוֹנוֹת יְקַבֵּל תְּחִלָּה קַבָּלַת מַלְכוּתוֹ בִּרְצוֹן וְאָז כָּל פְּרָטֵי הַמִּצְוֹת מְקֻשָּׁרִים לִבְחִינַת אוֹר־אֵין־סוֹף בַּעַל הָרָצוֹן כו'.
But to remain in a state of "ratzo" alone—this is not a complete service at all. This is like the case of someone who "looked and died" from the sight of the divine radiance; this is not complete service. Rather, it is like the case of Rabbi Akiva, who entered in peace and exited in peace—this is complete service.	אֲבָל לְהִשָּׁאֵר בִּבְחִינַת הָרָצוֹא לְבַד אֵין זֶה עֲבוֹדָה שְׁלֵימָה כְּלָל, וְזֶהוּ כְּעִנְיַן "בָּא הַצִּיץ וּמֵת", שֶׁאֵין זֶה עֲבוֹדָה שְׁלֵימָה, כִּי אִם כְּעִנְיַן רַבִּי עֲקִיבָא שֶׁנִּכְנַס בְּשָׁלוֹם וְיָצָא בְּשָׁלוֹם זֶהוּ עֲבוֹדָה שְׁלֵימָה כו'.
And from what the Sages said about Raavad—that his soul left him in a certain mode—this is the level of a baal teshuvah. And it is explained there that garments were given to them from others who had done many mitzvos and then transgressed—so their garments of mitzvah-performance are given to the baal teshuvah.	וּמִשֶּׁאָמְרוּ רַז"ל בְּעִנְיַן רַב אַבָּא אַבָּא דְּנָפְקָא נִשְׁמָתֵיהּ בִּבְחִינָה זֹאת הוּא מַדְרֵגַת הַבַּעַל תְּשׁוּבָה, וְנִתְבָּאֵר שָׁם שֶׁנִּתְּנוּ לָהֶם לְבוּשִׁים מֵאֲנָשִׁים אֲחֵרִים שֶׁעָשׂוּ מִצְוֹת הַרְבֵּה וּלְבָסוֹף סָרְחוּ, שֶׁנּוֹתְנִים הַלְּבוּשִׁים מִמַּעֲשֵׂה הַמִּצְוֹת שֶׁלָּהֶם לַבַּעַל תְּשׁוּבָה.
But the service of the righteous is to be specifically in "ratzo and shuv"—as it says, "And the Chayos (supernal beings) ran and returned"—that first they are in a state of "ratzo," yearning to be included and nullified within the Infinite Light of Hashem.	אֲבָל עֲבוֹדַת הַצַּדִּיקִים הוּא לִהְיוֹת בִּבְחִינַת רָצוֹא וָשׁוּב דַּוְקָא, וּכְמוֹ שֶׁכָּתוּב "וְהַחַיּוֹת רָצוֹא וָשׁוּב", שֶׁמִּתְחַלָּה הֵם בִּבְחִינַת רָצוֹא לְהִכָּלֵל וּלְהִיבָּטֵל בְּאוֹר אֵין־סוֹף בָּרוּךְ־הוּא.
And afterward, they are in the aspect of "shuv." And so too is the meaning of "and the Chayos ran and returned," which is explained as referring to the divine Chayos that enliven and bring into being the worlds—they are in the mode of ratzo and shuv.	וְאַחַר כָּךְ הֵם בִּבְחִינַת הַשּׁוּב, וְכֵן הוּא פֵּירוּשׁ "וְהַחַיּוֹת רָצוֹא וָשׁוּב" שֶׁמְּפֹרָשִׁים עַל הַחַיּוֹת הָאֱלֹקִי שֶׁמְּחַיָּה וּמְהַוֶּה עוֹלָמוֹת הוּא בִּבְחִינַת רָצוֹא וָשׁוּב.

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Only that from above to below it is in the aspect of descent from above to below. But "ratzo" without "shuv" is not complete service.	רַק שֶׁמִּלְמַעְלָה לְמַטָּה הוּא בִּבְחִינַת מִלְמַעְלָה לְמַטָּה, אֲבָל רָצוֹא בְּלֹא שׁוּב אֵין זֶה עֲבוֹדָה שְׁלֵימָה.
And therefore it says in Krias Shema: "And these words which I command you today," and the Sages said: this refers to words of Torah, since it cannot be referring to Krias Shema itself—because if so, why does it say "when you sit in your house and when you walk on the way," which is constant, and Krias Shema is only twice a day, morning and evening?	וְלָכֵן נֶאֱמַר בְּקְרִיאַת שְׁמַע "וְהָיוּ הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה אֲשֶׁר אָנֹכִי מְצַוְּךָ", וְאָמְרוּ רַז"ל בִּדְבָרֵי תוֹרָה הַכָּתוּב מְדַבֵּר, שֶׁאִי אֶפְשָׁר לוֹמַר שֶׁקַּאי עַל קְרִיאַת שְׁמַע שֶׁמְּדַבֵּר בָּהּ, דְּאִם כֵּן לָמָּה נֶאֱמַר "בְּשִׁבְתְּךָ בְּבֵיתֶךָ וּבְלֶכְתְּךָ בַדָּרֶךְ", שֶׁזֶּהוּ תָּמִיד, וְהֲרֵי קְרִיאַת שְׁמַע אֵינָהּ אֶלָּא פַּעֲמַיִם בַּיּוֹם שַׁחֲרִית וְעַרְבִית.
Rather, one must say that it refers to words of Torah. And if so, it must be explained why it uses the phrase "And these words," whose simple meaning implies that it refers to Krias Shema. Rather, Krias Shema and Torah are one.	אֶלָּא עַל כָּרְחָךְ צָרִיךְ לוֹמַר שֶׁקַּאי עַל דִּבְרֵי תוֹרָה, וְאִם כֵּן צָרִיךְ לוֹמַר לָמָּה נֶאֱמַר לָשׁוֹן "וְהָיוּ הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה", שֶׁפֵּירוּשׁ הַפָּשׁוּט הוּא שֶׁקַּאי עַל קְרִיאַת שְׁמַע, אֶלָּא שֶׁקְּרִיאַת שְׁמַע וְדִבְרֵי תוֹרָה אֶחָד הֵם.
And to understand this, one must preface an explanation of what is stated in the first verse of Krias Shema: "Hashem Elokeinu Hashem," where many commentators ask: why are three Names—Hashem Elokeinu Hashem—written? It should have said simply "Hashem Elokeinu is One."	וּלְהָבִין זֶה יֵשׁ לְהַקְדִּים מַה שֶּׁכָּתוּב בַּפָּסוּק הָרִאשׁוֹן דְּקְרִיאַת שְׁמַע: ה' אֱלֹקֵינוּ ה', שֶׁהַרְבֵּה מְפָרְשִׁים הִקְשׁוּ לָמָּה כָּתוּב שְׁלוֹשָׁה שֵׁמוֹת: ה' אֱלֹקֵינוּ ה', דְּהָוָה לֵי לְמֵימַר ה' אֱלֹקֵינוּ אֶחָד.
The Rokeach (see *Kaf HaKemech*, entry Yud: Yichud) explains that these three Names correspond to the verse "I am first, and I am last, and besides Me there is no god." "I am first" refers to before the creation of the world, when He was alone—He and His Name alone, as our Sages said in Pirkei d'Rabbi Eliezer, "Before the world was created, He was and His Name alone."	וְתִירֵץ הָרוֹקֵחַ (עַיֵּן בְּכַד הַקֶּמַח אוֹת יו"ד יְחוּד) שֶׁשְּׁלוֹשָׁה שֵׁמוֹת אֵלּוּ מוֹרִים עַל מַה שֶּׁכָּתוּב: "אֲנִי רִאשׁוֹן וַאֲנִי אַחֲרוֹן וּמִבַּלְעָדַי אֵין אֱלֹהִים", "אֲנִי רִאשׁוֹן" הַיְינוּ קֹדֶם שֶׁנִּבְרָא הָעוֹלָם שֶׁהָיָה לְבַדּוֹ הוּא, וּכְמַה שֶׁאָמְרוּ רַז"ל בִּפְרָקֵי דְּרַבִּי אֱלִיעֶזֶר שֶׁעַד שֶׁלֹּא נִבְרָא הָעוֹלָם הָיָה הוּא וּשְׁמוֹ לְבַדּוֹ.
"And I am last"—this refers to what will be in the future, as it says, "And Hashem alone will be exalted on that day" (Yeshayahu 2:11), which is the revelation of the Infinite Light of Hashem that will take place in the future, that is, after fifty thousand jubilee cycles. Then the worlds will be nullified in a way that has no comparison to how they are now, and everyone will know, grasp, and feel that there is no reality besides Him.	"וַאֲנִי אַחֲרוֹן" הוּא כְּמוֹ שֶׁיִּהְיֶה לֶעָתִיד לָבוֹא, שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר: "וְנִשְׂגַּב ה' לְבַדּוֹ בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא" (יְשַׁעְיָה ס"ב), וְהוּא עִנְיַן גִּילּוּי אוֹר־אֵין־סוֹף בָּרוּךְ־הוּא שֶׁיִּהְיֶה לֶעָתִיד לָבוֹא, הַיְינוּ לְאַחַר נו"ן אֶלֶף יוֹבְלוֹת, שֶׁיִּהְיוּ הָעוֹלָמוֹת בְּטֵלִים שֶׁאֵין עֲרוֹךְ אֲלֵיהֶם מֵאֵיזֶה שֶׁהֵם עַכְשָׁו, וְיֵדְעוּ הַכֹּל וְיַשִּׂיגוּ וְיַרְגִּישׁוּ שֶׁאֵין שׁוּם מְצִיאוּת לְבַדּוֹ יִתְבָּרַךְ.
And this is the meaning of "And Hashem alone will be exalted on that day"—that on that day, all will know and perceive that only Hashem is in a state of exaltedness, etc.	וְזֶהוּ "וְנִשְׂגַּב ה' לְבַדּוֹ בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא" שֶׁבַּיּוֹם הַהוּא יֵדְעוּ וְיִרְאוּ הַכֹּל שֶׁרַק ה' יִתְבָּרַךְ הוּא בִּבְחִינַת נִשְׂגָּב כו'.

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"And besides Me"—this refers to the intermediate period, that even now, when the world appears to be something and a separate entity, nevertheless this concealment and hiddenness is only to our eyes, physical eyes. From our perspective, it is concealment and hiddenness, but regarding Him, may He be blessed, the world does not conceal at all.	ו"מִבַּלְעָדַי" הַיְינוּ בְּאֶמְצָעִיתָא, שֶׁגַּם עַכְשָׁו שֶׁהָעוֹלָם נִרְאֶה לִיֵּשׁ וְדָבָר נִפְרָד, מִכָּל מָקוֹם הִנֵּה הַהֶעְלֵם וְהַהַסְתָּר הַזֶּה הוּא רַק לְעֵינֵינוּ, עֵינֵי בָשָׂר. שֶׁלְּפָנָיו הוּא הֶעְלֵם וְהַסְתֵּר, אֲבָל לְגַבֵּי יִתְבָּרַךְ אֵין הָעוֹלָם מַסְתִּיר כְּלָל.
And therefore, also "besides Me there is no god"—even in the intermediate state, there are no other gods, for nothing conceals or hides. This is the concept of the level of the Name Elokim, as is known from the verse "a sun and shield is Hashem Elokim"—that the Name Elokim is like a shield and concealment over the Name Havayah.	וְלָכֵן גַּם "מִבַּלְעָדַי אֵין אֱלֹקִים" שֶׁגַּם בְּאֶמְצָעִיתָא אֵין אֱלֹקִים, שֶׁאֵין שׁוּם דָּבָר מֵגִין וּמַסְתִּיר. שֶׁזֶּהוּ עִנְיַן בְּחִינַת שֵׁם אֱלֹקִים כַּנּוֹדָע מִמַּה שֶׁכָּתוּב "שֶׁמֶשׁ וּמָגֵן ה' אֱלֹקִים", שֶׁשֵּׁם אֱלֹקִים הוּא בְּחִינַת מָגֵן וּמַסְתִּיר עַל שֵׁם הוי'.
And therefore He said "also besides Me"—meaning even now, when the world remains in its place—this is only from our perspective. But regarding His godliness, may He be blessed, there is no other god, etc.	וְלָכֵן אָמַר גַּם "מִבַּלְעָדַי", דְּהַיְינוּ כָּעֵת שֶׁהָעוֹלָם בִּמְקוֹמוֹ עוֹמֵד, זֶהוּ רַק לְפָנֵינוּ, אֲבָל לְגַבֵּי אֱלֹקוּתוֹ יִתְבָּרַךְ אֵין אֱלֹקִים כו'.
And this is the idea of the three Names in Krias Shema: that the first Havayah is the aspect of "I am first," and the second Havayah is the aspect of "I am last," and the Name Elokeinu is the intermediate state—"and besides Me," i.e., even in the intermediate, there is no other god, etc.	וְזֶהוּ עִנְיַן שְׁלוֹשָׁה שֵׁמוֹת שֶׁבִּקְרִיאַת שְׁמַע שֶׁהַוי' הָרִאשׁוֹן הוּא בְּחִינַת "אֲנִי רִאשׁוֹן", וְהַוי' הַשֵּׁנִי הוּא בְּחִינַת "אֲנִי אַחֲרוֹן", וְשֵׁם "אֱלֹקֵינוּ" הוּא בְּחִינַת אֶמְצָעִיתָא שֶׁגַּם "וּמִבַּלְעָדַי" הַיְינוּ בֶּאֶמְצָעִיתָא אֵין אֱלֹקִים כו'.
And it says **Elokeinu** ("our God") and not **Elokim**, because the primary intent of creation is for the sake of Israel, as our Sages said on the verse *"Bereishis bara"*—"for the sake of 'reishis'," meaning for the sake of the Torah which is called 'reishis,' and for the sake of the souls of Israel, who are also called 'reishis,' as it is written: *'Kedosh Yisrael laHashem, reishis tevuasoh'* (Yirmiyahu 2:3).	וְנֶאֱמַר "אֱלֹקֵינוּ" וְלֹא "אֱלֹקִים" לְפִי שֶׁעִיקַּר הַמְכוּוָּן מִבְּרִיאַת הָעוֹלָם הוּא בִּשְׁבִיל יִשְׂרָאֵל, וּכְמַה שֶׁאָמְרוּ רַז"ל עַל הַפָּסוּק "בְּרֵאשִׁית בָּרָא" – "בִּשְׁבִיל רֵאשִׁית", בִּשְׁבִיל הַתּוֹרָה שֶׁנִּקְרֵאת רֵאשִׁית וּבִשְׁבִיל נִשְׁמוֹת יִשְׂרָאֵל שֶׁנִּקְרְאוּ רֵאשִׁית, וּכְתִיב: "קֹדֶשׁ יִשְׂרָאֵל לַה' רֵאשִׁית תְּבוּאָתָהּ".
And it is written: *"I made the earth, and man upon it I created"*—that the entire purpose of making the earth was for the man that I created upon it. And *"You are called 'man'"*, and our Sages said: *"You [Israel] are called 'man'"*, etc.	וּכְתִיב: "אָנֹכִי עָשִׂיתִי אֶרֶץ וְאָדָם עָלֶיהָ בָּרָאתִי", שֶׁכָּל עִיקַּר הַמְכוּוָּן מַעֲשִׂיּוֹת הָאָרֶץ הוּא בִּשְׁבִיל הָאָדָם שֶׁבָּרָאתִי עָלֶיהָ, וְ"אָדָם אַתֶּם", וְאָמְרוּ רַז"ל "אַתֶּם קְרוּיִים אָדָם" כו'.
And *"bara'siv"* ("I created") is numerically equal to 613, which is the aspect of fulfilling the 613 mitzvos that we were commanded—this is the entire purpose of the creation of the world.	ו"בָּרָאתִי" בְּגִימַטְרִיָא תַּרי"ג, הַיְינוּ בְּחִינַת קִיּוּם תַּרי"ג מִצְוֹת שֶׁנִּצְטַוִּינוּ, שֶׁזֶּהוּ כָּל עִיקַּר הַמְכוּוָּן מִבְּרִיאַת הָעוֹלָם כו'.

Rebbe Maharash

Torahs Shmuel

וַיְדַבֵּר ה' אֶל מֹשֶׁה לֵאמֹר, פִּינְחָס -תרכ"ט/1869

And as our Sages said in *Bereishis Rabbah*, Parshas Vayakhel: *"These are the generations of the heavens and the earth"*—in whose merit were they created? In whose merit do they stand? In the merit of *"Ve'eileh Shemos"*—the names of the children of Israel. And *"Eileh"*—in whose merit do they stand? In the merit of *"Eileh haChukim vehaMishpatim"*, etc.	וּכְמַה שֶׁאָמְרוּ רַז"ל בְּמִדְרַשׁ רַבָּה פָּרָשַׁת וַיַּקְהֵל: "אֵלֶּה תוֹלְדוֹת הַשָּׁמַיִם וְהָאָרֶץ" – אֵלֶּה בִּזְכוּת מִי נִבְרְאוּ? וּבִזְכוּת מִי הֵם עוֹמְדִים? בִּזְכוּת "וְאֵלֶּה שְׁמוֹת" – בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל, וְ"אֵלֶּה" בִּזְכוּת מִי הֵם עוֹמְדִים? בִּזְכוּת "אֵלֶּה הַחֻקִּים וְהַמִּשְׁפָּטִים" כו'.
Therefore, it says "Elokeinu"—**our** God—for in the intermediate state, the intent is for the sake of the souls of Israel, etc.	וְלָכֵן נֶאֱמַר "אֱלֹקֵינוּ" – אֱלֹקֵי **שֶׁלָּנוּ**, שֶׁבֶּאֱמְצָעִיתָא הַמְכוּוָּן הוּא בִּשְׁבִיל נִשְׁמוֹת יִשְׂרָאֵל כו'.
And it concludes with the word **Echad**, meaning that all three aspects—*"I am first," "I am last," and "besides Me,"* i.e. the intermediate state, which are all hinted at in the three Names *Hashem Elokeinu Hashem*—are truly one.	וּמְסַיֵּים בְּתִבַת "אֶחָד" – הַיְינוּ שֶׁכָּל שְׁלוֹשֶׁת הַבְּחִינוֹת: "אֲנִי רִאשׁוֹן", "אֲנִי אַחֲרוֹן", וְ"וּמִבַּלְעָדַי" הַיְינוּ אֶמְצָעִיתָא – שֶׁעֲלֵיהֶן רוֹמְזִים שְׁלוֹשָׁה שֵׁמוֹת: ה' אֱלֹקֵינוּ ה' – הֵם אֶחָד מַמָּשׁ.
For in truth, *"I Hashem have not changed at all"*, as it says in *Ata Hu*: *"You are He before the world was created, and You are He after the world was created"*—for *"I Hashem have not changed"*, neither before creation nor after. All three states are equal before Him.	כִּי בֶּאֱמֶת: "אֲנִי ה' לֹא שָׁנִיתִי כָּל עִקָּר", וּכְמוֹ שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר בְּ"אַתָּה הוּא": "אַתָּה הוּא קֹדֶם שֶׁנִּבְרָא הָעוֹלָם וְאַתָּה הוּא לְאַחַר שֶׁנִּבְרָא הָעוֹלָם", כִּי "אֲנִי ה' לֹא שָׁנִיתִי" כָּל עִקָּר – בֵּין קֹדֶם הַבְּרִיאָה לְאַחֲרֵי הַבְּרִיאָה, וְכָל שְׁלוֹשֶׁת הַבְּחִינוֹת הַנַּ"ל שָׁוִין לְפָנָיו.
And this is because in "Baruch Sheim Kevod Malchuso l'olam va'ed," the explanation is: *l'olam va'ed*—forever—all that has been drawn down and brought into being comes only from the level of **Sheim Kevod Malchuso**—His Name and the glory of His Kingship.	וְהַיְינוּ לְפִי שֶׁבְּ"שֵׁם כְּבוֹד מַלְכוּתוֹ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד" – פֵּירוּשׁ: "לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד", כָּל מַה שֶׁנִּשְׁתַּלְשֵׁל וְנִתְהַוָּה הוּא רַק מִבְּחִינַת שֵׁם כְּבוֹד מַלְכוּתוֹ יִתְבָּרֵךְ.
This is the aspect of *Malchuscha*—"Your Kingship"—which is the Kingship over all the worlds. The word *kol* (all) has the numerical value of 50, and this refers to fifty thousand jubilee cycles. All of this is only from the level of **Your Kingship**—a mere radiance and external glow.	הוּא בְּחִינַת "מַלְכוּתְךָ" – שֶׁהִיא מַלְכוּת כָּל הָעוֹלָמִים. פֵּירוּשׁ: "כָּל" עוֹלֶה לְמִסְפַּר נו"ן, וְהַיְינוּ בְּחִינַת נו"ן אֶלֶף יוֹבְלוֹת – הַכֹּל הוּא מִבְּחִינַת "מַלְכוּתְךָ" לְבַד, בְּחִינַת זִיו וְהָאָרָה בְּעַלְמָא.
And as is known from the concept of "The King—His Name is called upon them," that a name is only a radiance, not the essence itself, etc.—and therefore: *"I have not changed at all."*	וּכְנוֹדָע מֵעִנְיַן "מֶלֶךְ – שְׁמוֹ נִקְרָא עֲלֵיהֶם", שֶׁעִנְיַן הַשֵּׁם הוּא רַק הָאָרָה בְּעַלְמָא וְלֹא הֶעֱצֵם כו', וְלָכֵן: "לֹא שָׁנִיתִי כָּל עִקָּר".
And when one contemplates this deeply, with profound knowledge and reflection—if so, he will desire nothing except: *"And you shall love Hashem your God."* The meaning of *"love"* is from the word *avah*, which means desire—that he should have no will except a simple desire for the Infinite One, may He be blessed.	וּכְשֶׁיִּתְבּוֹנֵן בָּזֶה הֵיטֵב בְּעֹמֶק הַדַּעַת וְהַתְבּוֹנְנוּת, אִי לְזֹאת לֹא יַחְפֹּץ בְּשׁוּם דָּבָר כִּי אִם לִהְיוֹת "וְאָהַבְתָּ אֵת ה' אֱלֹקֶיךָ". פֵּירוּשׁ "אַהֲבָה" הוּא מִלְּשׁוֹן "אָבָה", שֶׁפֵּירוּשׁוֹ רָצוֹן, הַיְינוּ שֶׁלֹּא יִהְיֶה לוֹ רַק רָצוֹן פָּשׁוּט לְאוֹר־אֵין־סוֹף בָּרוּךְ־הוּא.

Rebbe Maharash

Torahs Shmuel

וַיְדַבֵּר ה' אֶל מֹשֶׁה לֵאמֹר, פִּינְחָס -תרכ"ט/1869

As it says: *"Whom have I in Heaven? And with You I have no desire on Earth."* Heaven and Earth refer to the lower and upper Gan Eden—"Heaven" is the upper Gan Eden and "Earth" is the lower Gan Eden.	כִּי "מִי לִי בַּשָּׁמַיִם וְעִמְּךָ לֹא חָפַצְתִּי בָאָרֶץ". "שָׁמַיִם" וְ"אָרֶץ" הֵם בְּחִינַת גַּן־עֵדֶן הַתַּחְתּוֹן וְגַן־עֵדֶן הָעֶלְיוֹן, "שָׁמַיִם" הוּא בְּחִינַת גַּן־עֵדֶן הָעֶלְיוֹן וְ"אָרֶץ" הוּא בְּחִינַת גַּן־עֵדֶן הַתַּחְתּוֹן.
And when he contemplates all of the above, he will not desire either the lower or upper Gan Eden, nor the World to Come—for all of these are included in the general term *"with You."*	וּכְשֶׁיִּתְבּוֹנֵן בְּכָל הַנַּ"ל לֹא יַחְפֹּץ לֹא בְּגַן־עֵדֶן הַתַּחְתּוֹן וְלֹא בְּגַן־עֵדֶן הָעֶלְיוֹן וְלֹא בָּעוֹלָם הַבָּא, שֶׁכָּל זֶה נִכְלָל בִּכְלַל פֵּירוּשׁ "עִמְּךָ".
For *"with You"* refers to what is written: *"For with You is the source of life"*—the source of pleasures is *with You*—meaning that it is nullified and subordinate to You. Therefore, he will not desire this, but only to cleave to Him, to His very Essence.	כִּי "עִמְּךָ" הַיְינוּ מַה שֶּׁכָּתוּב: "כִּי עִמְּךָ מְקוֹר חַיִּים", הַיְינוּ בְּחִינַת מְקוֹר הַתַּעֲנוּגִים – "הוּא עִמְּךָ" בָּטֵל וְטָפֵל לְךָ, וְלָכֵן לֹא יַחְפֹּץ בָּזֶה כִּי אִם לְדָבְקָה בּוֹ יִתְבָּרֵךְ עַצְמוּתוֹ מַמָּשׁ.
That he should desire and yearn to be included and nullified in the very Essence of the Infinite One, may He be blessed—and not in something that is nullified and subordinate to Him. And this is the meaning of *"And with You I have no desire."*	שֶׁיִּרְצֶה וְיִשְׁתּוֹקֵק לְהִכָּלֵל וּלְהִיבָּטֵל בְּאוֹר־אֵין־סוֹף בָּרוּךְ־הוּא הָעַצְמִי, וְלֹא בְּמַה שֶּׁהוּא בָּטֵל וְטָפֵל אֵלָיו, וְזֶהוּ: "וְעִמְּךָ לֹא חָפַצְתִּי".
And the meaning of *"chafatzti"* ("I have desired")—for there is *chefetz* and *ratzon*. *Chefetz* is the inner dimension of will, whereas *ratzon* is the external.	וּפֵירוּשׁ "חָפַצְתִּי" – כִּי יֵשׁ "חֵפֶץ" וְיֵשׁ "רָצוֹן", "חֵפֶץ" הוּא בְּחִינַת פְּנִימִיּוּת הָרָצוֹן, אֲבָל "רָצוֹן" הוּא חִיצוֹנִיּוּת.
As our Sages said: *"We compel him until he says 'I want'"*—even a will that comes about through coercion is still called *ratzon*.	וּכְמַה שֶׁאָמְרוּ רַז"ל: "כּוֹפִין אוֹתוֹ עַד שֶׁיֹּאמַר רוֹצֶה אֲנִי", שֶׁגַּם הָרָצוֹן הַנַּעֲשֶׂה עַל־יְדֵי כְּפִיָּה יִקָּרֵא גַּם־כֵּן בְּשֵׁם רָצוֹן.
So too here—even if, in the external aspect of will, a person might have desire for Gan Eden or Olam HaBa—still, that is only in the external. But in the inner dimension of will, which is called *chefetz*, he does not desire this at all. Rather, only to be included and nullified in the Essence of the Infinite One, may He be blessed, and to cleave to Him, etc. And this is *"And with You I have no desire."*	וְכָךְ נָמִישׁ בְּכָאן: גַּם אִם בְּבְחִינַת חִיצוֹנִיּוּת הָרָצוֹן יָכוֹל לִהְיוֹת שֶׁיִּהְיֶה לוֹ בְּחִינַת רָצוֹן לְגַן־עֵדֶן וְעוֹלָם הַבָּא, מִכָּל מָקוֹם הוּא רַק בְּבְחִינַת חִיצוֹנִיּוּת בִּלְבַד, אֲבָל בִּבְחִינַת פְּנִימִיּוּת הָרָצוֹן – הוּא הַנִּקְרָא "חֵפֶץ" – לֹא יַחְפֹּץ בָּזֶה כְּלָל, כִּי אִם לְהִכָּלֵל וּלְהִיבָּטֵל לְאוֹר־אֵין־סוֹף בָּרוּךְ־הוּא הָעַצְמִי וּלְדָבְקָה בּוֹ יִתְבָּרֵךְ כו', וְזֶהוּ: "וְעִמְּךָ לֹא חָפַצְתִּי".
But what is the path and the vessel in which the Essence of the Infinite One, may He be blessed, can dwell, so that the thirst of his soul may be settled? This is through: *"And these words which I command you today…"*—as our Sages said, this refers to words of Torah.	אֲבָל אֵיךְ הוּא הַדֶּרֶךְ וְהַכְּלִי אֲשֶׁר יִשְׁכּוֹן בּוֹ אוֹר־אֵין־סוֹף בָּרוּךְ־הוּא הָעַצְמִי בְּכְדֵי שֶׁתִּתְיַשֵּׁב אֲצִלּוֹ צִמְאוֹן נַפְשׁוֹ – זֶהוּ עַל־יְדֵי "וְהָיוּ הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה אֲשֶׁר אָנֹכִי מְצַוְּךָ", שֶׁאָמְרוּ רַז"ל בִּדְבָרֵי תּוֹרָה הַכָּתוּב מְדַבֵּר.

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Torahs Shmuel

וַיְדַבֵּר ה' אֶל מֹשֶׁה לֵאמֹר, פִּינְחָס -תרכ"ט/1869

For the Torah comes forth from Chochmah, and the indwelling of the Infinite One is in Chochmah, as it is written: *"And Hashem in wisdom…"* The Name Havayah refers to the very Essence of the Infinite One.	כִּי אוֹרַיְיתָא מֵחָכְמָה נַפְקַת, וְהַשְׁרָאַת אוֹר־אֵין־סוֹף הוּא בַּחָכְמָה, וּכְמוֹ שֶׁכָּתוּב: "וַה' בַּחָכְמָה" – וְהַוי' קָאֵי עַל אוֹר־אֵין־סוֹף בָּרוּךְ־הוּא עַצְמוּתוֹ.
For by the Avos it is written: *"And I appeared… but My Name Havayah I did not make known to them"*—and Rashi explains: *"I did not make Myself known to them with My attribute of truth,"* for the Name Havayah is called the Name of Truth, as it is written: *"And the truth of Hashem is forever."*	שֶׁהֲרֵי בָּאָבוֹת כְּתִיב: "וָאֵרָא כו' וּשְׁמִי ה' לֹא נוֹדַעְתִּי לָהֶם", וּפֵירֵשׁ רַשְׁ"י ז"ל: לֹא נִכַּרְתִּי בְּמִדַּת אֲמִיתוּת שֶׁלִּי, שֶׁשָּׁם הוי' נִקְרָא שֵׁם הָאֱמֶת, וּכְמוֹ שֶׁכָּתוּב: "וֶאֱמֶת ה' לְעוֹלָם".
And this is the level of His Great Name, that before the world was created, there was only Him and His Name alone.	וְהוּא בְּחִינַת שְׁמוֹ הַגָּדוֹל, שֶׁעַד שֶׁלֹּא נִבְרָא הָעוֹלָם הָיָה הוּא וּשְׁמוֹ בִּלְבַד.
The reason the indwelling of the Infinite One is specifically in Chochmah is because Chochmah is the aspect of *echad ha-emes* ("true oneness"), as explained in Tanya, Chapter 35, in the note, in the name of the Maggid (may his memory be a blessing): that Chochmah is true bittul (self-nullification), and the Infinite One only dwells in that which is nullified to Him.	וְהַטַּעַם עַל מַה שֶּׁהַשְׁרָאַת אוֹר־אֵין־סוֹף הִיא בַּחָכְמָה דַּוְקָא – לְפִי שֶׁהַחָכְמָה הִיא בְּחִינַת "אֶחָד הָאֱמֶת", כְּמוֹ שֶׁכָּתוּב בְּסֵפֶר הַתַּנְיָא פֶּרֶק ל"ה בְּהַגָּה, בְּשֵׁם הַמַּגִּיד נ"ע – שֶׁהַחָכְמָה הִיא בְּחִינַת בִּטּוּל אֲמִתִּי, וְאֵין אוֹר־אֵין־סוֹף בָּרוּךְ־הוּא שׁוֹרֶה אֶלָּא בְּמִי שֶׁבָּטֵל אֵלָיו יִתְבָּרַךְ.
Therefore, there are levels of revelation of the Infinite One even within Atzilus itself: in Chochmah, the Infinite One shines in *close proximity*, and in Binah, in *distant proximity*.	וְלָכֵן יֵשׁ חִלּוּקֵי מַדְרֵגוֹת בְּגִילּוּי אוֹר־אֵין־סוֹף בָּרוּךְ־הוּא אֲפִלּוּ בַּאֲצִילוּת גּוּפָא – שֶׁבַּחָכְמָה מֵאִיר אוֹר־אֵין־סוֹף בִּקְרוֹב מָקוֹם, וּבִבִינָה הוּא בִּרְחִיקוּק מָקוֹם.
This is because relative to Chochmah, Binah is considered as *yesh* (existence), as it is known that Chochmah and Binah are the roots of ayin (nothingness) and yesh. As it is written: *"To bestow yesh upon those who love Me…"*	וַהֲיִינוּ לְפִי שֶׁהַבִּינָה לְגַבֵּי הַחָכְמָה נֶחְשֶׁבֶת בְּחִינַת "יֵשׁ" כַּנּוֹדָע – שֶׁחוֹכְמָה וּבִינָה הֵם שֹׁרֶשׁ הָאַיִן וְהַיֵּשׁ, וּכְמוֹ שֶׁכָּתוּב: "לְהַנְחִיל אֹהֲבַי יֵשׁ".
Therefore, He does not shine in Binah the way He does in Chochmah—as explained elsewhere regarding Etz Chayim, that in Keser and Chochmah He shines in close proximity, and in Binah in distant proximity.	לָכֵן אֵינוֹ מֵאִיר בַּבִּינָה כְּמוֹ בַּחָכְמָה, וּכְמוֹ שֶׁכָּתוּב בְּיִאוּר הָעִנְיָן בִּדְרוּשׁ בִּפְנֵי עַצְמוֹ עַל הָעֵץ חַיִּים – שֶׁבַּכֶּתֶר וּבַחָכְמָה מֵאִיר בִּקְרוֹב, וּבַבִּינָה בִּרְחוֹק כו'.
And in the Middos (emotions), since they are more a source of *yesh* than even Binah—being the source of the worlds, as it is written: *"For I said, the world is built on kindness"*—there, He does not shine except through a barrier (*parsa*) which separates.	וּבַמִּדּוֹת – לִהְיוֹתָם בְּבְחִינַת מָקוֹר הַיֵּשׁ יוֹתֵר מִבְּחִינַת בִּינָה "אֹם הַבָּנִים", לִהְיוֹתָם מָקוֹר לָעוֹלָמוֹת, כְּמוֹ שֶׁכָּתוּב: "כִּי אָמַרְתִּי עוֹלָם חֶסֶד יִבָּנֶה" – שָׁם אֵינוֹ מֵאִיר אֶלָּא עַל־יְדֵי פַּרְסָא הַמַּפְסִיק.
And this is the meaning of *"From whose belly came the ice?"*—this refers to the firmament that is above the upper Chayos. The level of *rakia* (firmament) is like the appearance of	וְזֶהוּ עִנְיַן מַה שֶּׁכָּתוּב: "מִבֶּטֶן מִי יָצָא הַקֶּרַח" – וְהוּא עִנְיַן הָרָקִיעַ שֶׁעַל גַּבֵּי חַיּוֹת הָעֶלְיוֹנוֹת, בְּחִינַת רָקִיעַ כְּעֵין הַקֶּרַח כו', דִּכְתִיב: "וְעַל רָאשֵׁי הַחַיּוֹת רָקִיעַ כְּעֵין הַקֶּרַח הַנּוֹרָא".

Rebbe Maharash

Torahs Shmuel

וַיְדַבֵּר ה' אֶל מֹשֶׁה לֵאמֹר, פִּינְחָס -תרכ"ט/1869

ice, as in the verse: *"And above the heads of the Chayos was a firmament like the appearance of awesome ice…"*	
So too above, the level of upper Chayos of Atzilus is like the Avos, for they are the Merkavah (Divine Chariot).	וְכֵן גַּם כֵּן בְּבְחִינַת חַיּוֹן עִילָּאִין דַּאֲצִילוּת – הוּא בְּחִינַת הָאָבוֹת, הֵן הֵן הַמֶּרְכָּבָה.
And this is because, as explained above, the Infinite One, may He be blessed, only dwells where there is nullification. And according to the degree of bittul, so is the degree of indwelling—as it is written: *"I dwell in exaltedness and holiness—and with the contrite and humble spirit."*	וְהַיְינוּ מִטַּעַם הַנַּ"ל – דְּאֵין אוֹר־אֵין־סוֹף בָּרוּךְ־הוּא שׁוֹרֶה אֶלָּא בְּמִי שֶׁבָּטֵל דַּוְקָא, וּלְפִי עֶרֶךְ הַבִּטּוּל – כֵּן הוּא עֶרֶךְ הַהַשְׁרָאָה, וּכְמוֹ שֶׁכָּתוּב: "מָרוֹם וְקָדוֹשׁ אֶשְׁכּוֹן – וְאֶת דַּכָּא וּשְׁפַל רוּחַ".
And it is written (I Kings 19:11–12): *"And after the wind—an earthquake; not in the earthquake is Hashem… a still small voice."* And the Zohar says: *"There the King is found."*	וּכְתִיב (מְלָכִים א' י"ט סוֹף פָּסוּק י"א–י"ב): "וְאַחַר הָרוּחַ רַעַשׁ – לֹא בָרַעַשׁ ה' כו' – קוֹל דְּמָמָה דַקָּה", וְאָמְרוּ בַּזֹּהַר: "תַּמָּן קָאֵי תִּימְלְכָא".
And this is because the indwelling of the Infinite One is specifically in the place of bittul. Therefore, the primary indwelling of the Infinite One is in Chochmah—the aspect of *echad ha-emes*.	וְהַיְינוּ לְפִי שֶׁהַשְׁרָאַת אוֹר־אֵין־סוֹף הִיא בִּמְקוֹם הַבִּטּוּל דַּוְקָא, וְלָכֵן עִיקַּר הַשְׁרָאַת אוֹר־אֵין־סוֹף בָּרוּךְ־הוּא הִיא בַּחָכְמָה – בְּחִינַת "אֶחָד הָאֱמֶת".
And the Torah comes from Chochmah—therefore it is the vessel for the revelation of the Infinite One. And this is why the Torah is called *Emes* (truth), as it is written: *"Hashem is close to all who call upon Him, to all who call upon Him in truth."* And our Sages said: *"There is no truth but Torah."*	וְאוֹרַיְיתָא מֵחָכְמָה נַפְקַת, לָכֵן הִיא הַכְּלִי לְגִילּוּי אוֹר־אֵין־סוֹף. וְלָכֵן נִקְרֵאת הַתּוֹרָה "אֱמֶת", כְּמוֹ שֶׁכָּתוּב: "קָרוֹב ה' לְכָל קֹרְאָיו – לְכָל אֲשֶׁר יִקְרָאֻהוּ בֶּאֱמֶת", וְאָמְרוּ רַז"ל: "אֵין אֱמֶת אֶלָּא תּוֹרָה".
And this is because *emes* (truth) consists of the first letter of the Alef-Beis, the last letter, and the middle letter—aleph, mem, tav.	וְהַיְינוּ כִּי "אֱמֶת" הוּא אוֹת רִאשׁוֹן מֵאָלֶ"ף־בֵּית וְאוֹת אַחֲרוֹן, וְהַמֵּ"ם הִיא אֶמְצַעִית שֶׁבְּאָלֶ"ף־בֵּית.
"U'Mivl'adai ein Elokim"—"And besides Me, there is no god"—this aligns with what was explained above: the concept of the three Names *Hashem Elokeinu Hashem*—which represent *"I am first," "I am last," and "besides Me, there is no god."*	וּמִבַּלְעָדַי אֵין אֱלֹקִים" – וְהַיְינוּ כְּמוֹ שֶׁנִּתְבָּאֵר לְעֵיל" עִנְיַן ג' שֵׁמוֹת: ה' אֱלֹקֵינוּ ה' – שֶׁזֶּהוּ בְּחִינַת "אֲנִי רִאשׁוֹן וַאֲנִי אַחֲרוֹן – וּמִבַּלְעָדַי אֵין אֱלֹקִים".
If so, *"And you shall love Hashem"* must follow—and how is the path upon which the light of Hashem and His holiness will dwell? This is: *"And these words…"*—the aspect of Torah, which is called *emes* (truth), because it is the vessel for the revelation of light from the Infinite One—*"I am first, I am last, and besides Me there is no god."*	אִי לְזֹאת – צָרִיךְ לִהְיוֹת "וְאָהַבְתָּ אֵת ה'", וְאֵיזֶהּ הוּא הַדֶּרֶךְ אֲשֶׁר יִשְׁכּוֹן בּוֹ אוֹר ה' וּקְדֻשָּׁתוֹ – זֶהוּ: "וְהָיוּ הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה" – בְּחִינַת תּוֹרָה, שֶׁנִּקְרֵאת "אֱמֶת" עַל שֵׁם שֶׁהִיא הַכְּלִי לְגִילּוּי הָאוֹר מִבְּחִינַת אוֹר־אֵין־סוֹף – ""אֲנִי רִאשׁוֹן, וַאֲנִי אַחֲרוֹן, וּמִבַּלְעָדַי אֵין אֱלֹקִים".
And this is what was said about Torah: *"He wraps Himself in light like a garment."* For Torah is the aspect of *shalem* (wholeness), and a garment for the Essence of the Infinite One—*"I am first," etc.*	וְזֶהוּ שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר עַל הַתּוֹרָה: "עוֹטֶה אוֹר כַּשַּׂלְמָה" – לִהְיוֹתָהּ בְּחִינַת "שְׁלֵמָה" וּלְבוּשׁ לְבְחִינַת אוֹר־אֵין־סוֹף הָעַצְמִי – "אֲנִי רִאשׁוֹן כו'".

Rebbe Maharash

Torahs Shmuel

וַיְדַבֵּר ה' אֶל מֹשֶׁה לֵאמֹר, פִּינְחָס -תרכ"ט/1869

And behold, through Torah the light is drawn throughout the entire world of Atzilus. For it is written: *"This is the Torah: a man…"*—meaning the level of *adam* that is upon the likeness of the throne, as it says: *"The likeness as the appearance of a man upon it from above."*	וְהִנֵּה עַל־יְדֵי הַתּוֹרָה נִמְשָׁךְ הָאוֹר בְּכָל הָאֲצִילוּת, דְּהִנֵּה כְּתִיב: "זֹאת הַתּוֹרָה אָדָם" – שֶׁהוּא בְּחִינַת אָדָם עַל דְּמוּת הַכִּסֵּא "דְּמוּת כְּמַרְאֵה אָדָם עָלָיו מִלְמַעְלָה".
This is the idea of the 248 *pekudin* (commandments)—248 limbs of the King. The meaning is: just as the limbs are vessels and a dwelling place for the presence and drawing down of the soul, i.e. the life-force that extends from the soul to enliven them and is distributed to each limb according to its form and nature,	שֶׁזֶּהוּ עִנְיַן רַמַ"ח פִּקּוּדִין – רַמַ"ח אֵבָרִין דְּמַלְכָּא, פֵּירוּשׁ: כְּמוֹ שֶׁהָאֵבָרִים הֵם כֵּלִים וּמִשְׁכָּן לְהַשְׁרָאַת וְהַמְשָׁכַת הַנֶּפֶשׁ – הַיְינוּ בְּחִינַת הַמְשָׁכַת הַחַיִּים הַנִּמְשָׁךְ מִן הַנֶּפֶשׁ לְהַחֲיוֹתָם שֶׁמִּתְפַּשֵּׁט וּמִתְחַלֵּק לְכָל אֵבָר לְפִי – מִזְגּוֹ וְתָכוּנָתוֹ
so too, the mitzvos are vessels and a dwelling place for the indwelling of the Essence of the Infinite One (the level of Sovev Kol Almin), who actually dwells and is enclothed within them—with a distribution of this flow, each mitzvah according to its level.	כָּךְ הַמִּצְוֹת הֵן בְּחִינַת כֵּלִים וּמִשְׁכָּן לְהַשְׁרָאַת אוֹר־אֵין־סוֹף בָּרוּךְ־הוּא – הַסּוֹבֵב כָּל עָלְמִין – הַשּׁוֹרֶה וּמִתְלַבֵּשׁ מַמָּשׁ בְּתוֹכָן – בִּבְחִינַת הִתְחַלְקוּת הַהַמְשָׁכָה, כָּל מִצְוָה וּמִצְוָה לְפִי מַדְרֵגָתָהּ.
And all these flows are from the level of the Essence of the Infinite One (Sovev Kol Almin), who is not defined by any of these attributes at all. He is called the Master of Worlds—above the level of worlds—to be enclothed in them, as it is written: *"You are wise… but not with a known wisdom."*	וְכָל הַהַמְשָׁכוֹת הֵן מִבְּחִינַת אוֹר־אֵין־סוֹף בָּרוּךְ־הוּא – הַסּוֹבֵב כָּל עָלְמִין – דְּלָא מִכָּל אִנּוּן מִדּוֹת אִיהוּ כְּלָל, וְנִקְרָא "רִבּוֹן עָלְמִין" – לְמַעְלָה מִבְּחִינַת עָלְמִין – לְהִתְלַבֵּשׁ בִּבְחִינַת עָלְמִין, לִהְיוֹת: "אַתָּה הוּא חַכִּים כו' – וְלֹא בְּחָכְמָה יְדִיעָה".
And through Torah, the Essence of the Infinite One is drawn and enclothed in Chochmah of Atzilus. And the mitzvos, in their entirety, are the aspect of tzedakah and chesed—the Essence of the Infinite One is drawn and enclothed in chesed, as is known from the concept: *"The world is built on chesed."*	וְעַל־יְדֵי הַתּוֹרָה – נִמְשָׁךְ וּמִתְלַבֵּשׁ אוֹר־אֵין־סוֹף בָּרוּךְ־הוּא בְּחָכְמָה דַּאֲצִילוּת, וְהַמִּצְוֹת – כְּלָלוּתָן הֵן בְּחִינַת צְדָקָה וָחֶסֶד – נִמְשָׁךְ וּמִתְלַבֵּשׁ אוֹר־אֵין־סוֹף בָּרוּךְ־הוּא בְּחֶסֶד, כַּנּוֹדָע מֵּעִנְיַן "עוֹלָם חֶסֶד יִבָּנֶה".
For chesed must be *built*, as explained in Likutei Torah, Shir HaShirim, in the discourse *"L'Susasi"*—that in order for the Essence of the Infinite One to be enclothed in the Middos, such as: *"Yours, Hashem, is the greatness and the power…"*, it depends on *it'arusa d'l'tata* (arousal from below), through: *"who sanctified us with His mitzvos…"*	שֶׁהַחֶסֶד צָרִיךְ לְבָנוֹתוֹ, וּכְמוֹ שֶׁכָּתוּב בְּלִקּוּטֵי תּוֹרָה – בְּשִׁיר הַשִּׁירִים – בְּדִבּוּר הַמַּתְחִיל "לְסוּסָתִי", שֶׁכְּדֵי לִהְיוֹת הִתְלַבְּשׁוּת אוֹר־אֵין־סוֹף בָּרוּךְ־הוּא בַּמִּדּוֹת – "לְךָ ה' הַגְּדוּלָּה וְהַגְּבוּרָה כו'" – "בְּאִתְעָרוּתָא דִּלְתַתָּא תְּלָיָא מִלְּתָא" – עַל־יְדֵי "אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו" כו'.

Rebbe Maharash

Torahs Shmuel

וַיְדַבֵּר ה' אֶל מֹשֶׁה לֵאמֹר, פִּינְחָס -תרכ"ט/1869

And all this is the idea of *ratzo v'shov*—this is complete service. And this is the reason why Shema precedes the acceptance of mitzvos: the aspect of accepting the yoke of Heaven in general is the drawing from the level of the supernal will, and afterward the acceptance of the mitzvos—so that even the individual mitzvos are drawn as they are connected and bound to the Master of the Will.	וְכָל זֶה הוּא עִנְיַן "רָצוֹא וָשׁוּב" – שֶׁזֶּהוּ בְּחִינַת עֲבוֹדָה שְׁלֵמָה. וְזֶהוּ עִנְיַן לָמָּה קָדְמָה קְרִיאַת שְׁמַע – בְּחִינַת קַבָּלַת עֹל מַלְכוּת שָׁמַיִם בִּכְלָל – הוּא הַהַמְשָׁכָה מִבְּחִינַת רָצוֹן הָעֶלְיוֹן, וְאַחַר־כָּךְ קַבָּלַת הַמִּצְוֹת – שֶׁגַּם פְּרָטֵי הָרְצוֹנוֹת יִהְיוּ נִמְשָׁכִים – אֵיךְ שֶׁהֵם קְשׁוּרִים וּדְבוּקִים לְבַעַל הָרָצוֹן כו'.
And this is why, in the first paragraph of Shema, it states in general: *"And these words…"*—and our Sages said this refers to Torah, which is the general drawing. Nevertheless, this is still within the category of *ratzo*.	וְלָכֵן נֶאֱמַר בַּפָּרָשָׁה הָרִאשׁוֹנָה בִּכְלָל: "וְהָיוּ הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה", וְאָמְרוּ רַז"ל – בְּדִבְרֵי תּוֹרָה הַכָּתוּב מְדַבֵּר – שֶׁהוּא עִנְיַן הַהַמְשָׁכָה בִּכְלָל, וּמִכָּל מָקוֹם זֶהוּ בִּכְלָל הָרָצוֹא.
That is: if your heart runs because of the above-mentioned contemplation—then it says: *"And these words…"*—meaning: this is only a reference point; there you will find Him.	וְהַיְינוּ כִּי אִם רָץ לִבְּךָ מִפְּנֵי הַהִתְבּוֹנְנוּת הַנַּ"ל – לָזֶה נֶאֱמַר: "וְהָיוּ הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה", פֵּירוּשׁ: שֶׁאֵין זֶה אֶלָּא מָרְאֵה מָקוֹם שֶׁשָּׁם תִּמְצָאֶנּוּ.
And afterward, in the second paragraph, it details specifically how the drawing comes through the actual performance of the mitzvos, etc.	וְאַחַר־כָּךְ בַּפָּרָשָׁה הַשֵּׁנִיָּה מְפֹרָט בִּפְרָטִיּוּת – שֶׁהַהַמְשָׁכָה הִיא עַל־יְדֵי בְּחִינוֹת הַמִּצְוֹת כו'.
However, the sin of the sons of Aharon was that they were in the mode of *ratzo* alone, without *shov*. And even in their *ratzo* itself, it was not in the proper manner of *ratzo* that precedes *shov*.	אֲבָל חֵטְא דִּבְנֵי אַהֲרֹן שֶׁהָיוּ בִּבְחִינַת הָרָצוֹא לְבַד בְּלֹא שׁוּב, וְגַם בְּעִנְיַן הָרָצוֹא עַצְמוֹ הָיָה שֶׁלֹּא כְּדֶרֶךְ הָרָצוֹא שֶׁלִּפְנֵי הַשּׁוּב.
For with them, it was only self-sacrifice (*mesiras nefesh*) and not their body—their body remained intact—and only due to the pleasant sweetness and intimacy their soul expired and left their body.	שֶׁהֲרֵי הָיָה אֲצָלָם רַק מְסִירַת נֶפֶשׁ וְלֹא הַגּוּף – שֶׁהַגּוּף נִשְׁאַר שָׁלֵם – וְרַק מִמַּטְעַם עֲרֵבוּת מְתִיקוּת יְדִידוּת כָּלְתָה נַפְשָׁם וְיָצְאָה מִגּוּפָם.
This is similar to the departure of lights from vessels, like in the world of Tohu, etc.—and it is not like *mesiras nefesh* where through the giving of the body, the soul departs.	שֶׁזֶּהוּ כְּדִמְיוֹן הִסְתַּלְּקוּת הָאוֹרוֹת מֵהַכֵּלִים עַל דֶּרֶךְ עוֹלַם הַתֹּהוּ כו', וְאֵינוֹ דּוֹמֶה לְמְסִירַת נֶפֶשׁ שֶׁעַל־יְדֵי מְסִירַת הַגּוּף – מִסְתַּלֶּקֶת נַפְשָׁם.
Therefore, it is not at all similar to what the Maggid promised the Beis Yosef—that he would be brought to the *burning of self-sacrifice* (*hisromemus akedas Hashem*), which refers to the giving over of the body, and thereby the soul departs.	וְלָכֵן אֵינוֹ דּוֹמֶה כְּלָל לְמַה שֶׁהִבְטִיחַ הַמַּגִּיד לַבַּיִת יוֹסֵף שֶׁיְּבִיאֵהוּ לְאִתְוַקְדָּא עֲקִידַת ה' יִתְבָּרַךְ – שֶׁזֶּהוּ עִנְיַן מְסִירַת הַגּוּף וּמִמֵּילָא מִסְתַּלֶּקֶת הַנֶּפֶשׁ.
And it is also not similar to the matter of accepting the yoke of Heaven, which is also for everything He may command—like the command of the *akeidah* to Avraham, which involved the giving of the body, etc.	וְגַם אֵינוֹ דּוֹמֶה לְעִנְיַן קַבָּלַת עֹל מַלְכוּת שָׁמַיִם, שֶׁהוּא גַּם כֵּן לְכָל מַה שֶׁיְּצַוֵּהוּ – וּכְעִנְיַן צִוּוּי הָעֲקֵידָה לְאַבְרָהָם – שֶׁהָיָה עִנְיַן מְסִירַת הַגּוּף כו'.

Rebbe Maharash

Torahs Shmuel

וַיְדַבֵּר ה' אֶל מֹשֶׁה לֵאמֹר, פִּינְחָס -תרכ"ט/1869

Also, the main purpose of *ratzo* is the *shov* that follows it—only that the advantage of *ratzo* is that it reaches to the level of the Infinite One, the Master of the will.	וְגַם עִיקַר מְכֻוָּן הָרָצוֹא הוּא הַשּׁוּב שֶׁאַחַר כָּךְ – רַק שֶׁמַּעֲלַת הָרָצוֹא הִיא לְהְיוֹת מַגִּיעַ לְבְחִינַת אוֹר־אֵין־סוֹף בָּרוּךְ־הוּא בַּעַל הָרָצוֹן.
As a result, the fulfillment of the mitzvos that follows—the individual wills—is as they are drawn and attached to the Master of the will.	מִמֵּילָא קִיּוּם הַמִּצְוֹת שֶׁאַחַר כָּךְ – הֵם פְּרָטֵי הָרְצוֹנוֹת – הֵם כְּמוֹ שֶׁהֵם נִמְשָׁכִים וּדְבוּקִים לְבַעַל הָרָצוֹן.
And this is the meaning of *"And these words… which I command you"—"I"* being *He who I am*, etc.	וְזֶהוּ: "וְהָיוּ הַדְּבָרִים כו׳ אֲשֶׁר אָנֹכִי מְצַוְּךָ" – "אָנֹכִי" מִי שֶׁאָנֹכִי כו׳.
And behold, Pinchas rectified their sin—for Pinchas gave over his body, since the tribe of Shimon wanted to kill him.	וְהִנֵּה פִּינְחָס תִּקֵּן הַחֵטְא שֶׁלָּהֶם, שֶׁהֲרֵי פִּינְחָס מָסַר גּוּפוֹ – שֶׁשֵּׁבֶט שִׁמְעוֹן רָצוּ לְהָרְגוֹ.
And his soul departed, and the souls of Nadav and Avihu entered him. And he stood in giving over his body and carried out the vengeance of Hashem, Master of Legions—and this was a complete *ratzo*.	וּפָרְחָה נִשְׁמָתוֹ וְנִתְלַבְּשָׁה בּוֹ נִשְׁמַת נָדָב וַאֲבִיהוּא, וְהוּא עָמַד בִּמְסִירַת גּוּפוֹ וְעָשָׂה נְקָמַת ה׳ צְבָאוֹת – וְהֲרֵי זֶה רָצוֹא שָׁלֵם כו׳.
Therefore, through this came afterward the level of *shov*, as it says: *"Behold, I give him My covenant of peace"*—this is the drawing of peace and unity that comes from the revelation of godliness drawn through his *ratzo*.	לָכֵן עַל־יְדֵי זֶה נִמְשַׁךְ אַחַר־כָּךְ בְּחִינַת הַשּׁוּב – שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר: "הִנְנִי נוֹתֵן לוֹ אֶת בְּרִיתִי שָׁלוֹם" – שֶׁהוּא בְּחִינַת הַהַמְשָׁכָה שֶׁיִּמָּשֵׁךְ שָׁלוֹם וְהִתְחַבְּרוּת מִצַּד בְּחִינַת גִּילּוּי אֱלֹקוּת שֶׁנִּמְשַׁךְ עַל־יְדֵי בְּחִינַת הָרָצוֹא שֶׁלּוֹ.
And he also atoned for the people—and this too is the idea of *shov*, that Hashem returns to cause His Shechinah to dwell and to be revealed in Israel, as it was before the sin. And this is the concept of *shov*, etc.	וְגַם כִּפֶּר עַל הָעָם גַּם־כֵּן – שֶׁזֶּהוּ גַּם־כֵּן עִנְיַן שׁוּב – שֶׁיָּשׁוּב ה׳ לְהַשְׁרוֹת וּלְגַלּוֹת שְׁכִינָתוֹ בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל כְּמוֹ קֹדֶם הַחֵטְא – וְהֲרֵי זֶה כְּעִנְיַן הַשּׁוּב כו׳.

[NOTE *Summary*

The discourse opens by addressing the essential question: *How can G-d's Infinite Essence dwell in something finite?* The answer lies in Torah, which is described as emerging from Chochmah (wisdom)—the highest of the ten Sefiros and the first vessel in which the Infinite dwells. Torah is called "truth" because it spans from the beginning to the end of existence (Alef to Tav) with Mem in the center—mirroring the nature of G-d who is "First and Last, and besides Him there is nothing."

This is why Torah is the only true vessel for the Essence—it is rooted in total bittul (self-nullification), which allows the Ein Sof (Infinite) to dwell without distortion. Chochmah, as the embodiment of bittul, becomes the first and most direct channel for the Infinite Light, whereas Bina (understanding) and the lower Sefiros—being more "something"—can only receive through limited gradations and partitions (*parsaos*).

Rebbe Maharash

Torahs Shmuel

וַיְדַבֵּר ה' אֶל מֹשֶׁה לֵאמֹר, פִּינְחָס -תרכ"ט/1869

The Maharash then explains how mitzvos correspond to the limbs of the Divine "Adam," each one drawing G-dliness into the structure of the world, but the ultimate source remains the Chochmah-root of Torah. This is why Torah must precede mitzvos—it reveals the Essence, while mitzvos apply that revelation into the structure of existence.

Finally, the discourse addresses the spiritual misstep of Nadav and Avihu: their *ratzo* (yearning to cleave to G-d) lacked *shov* (return to earth to fulfill G-d's will), resembling the chaotic departure of light from vessels in the realm of Tohu. Their bodies remained whole because they did not die through bodily self-sacrifice, but rather through ecstasy alone. This is contrasted with true mesiras nefesh (like the Akeidah) which involves full bodily surrender.

Pinchas, on the other hand, merges both dimensions—he risks his life physically (*shov*) while burning with Divine zeal (*ratzo*). His soul leaves and returns. For this, he is rewarded with "My covenant of peace," a phrase denoting the restoration of unity between G-d and Israel—ultimate *shov*. His deed not only corrects Nadav and Avihu's imbalance but brings atonement to the people, ushering in renewed Divine indwelling.

Practical Takeaway

Spiritual passion (*ratzo*) must always be paired with grounded purpose (*shov*). It's not enough to feel elevated or inspired—we must channel that into fulfilling mitzvos with our bodies, in this world, as Pinchas did. The deepest truth is accessed not through escape from the world, but through sanctifying it.

Chassidic Story

In 1872, a certain chossid returned from a pilgrimage to the grave of Rabbi Levi Yitzchak of Berditchev, deeply moved and yearning to devote his life entirely to spiritual meditation and detachment. When he asked the Rebbe Maharash whether he should leave his business and retreat to a more secluded life of avodah, the Rebbe told him sharply:

"Pinchas didn't bring peace by meditating in a cave—he brought it by risking his body to act in the world."

The Rebbe added: "You want *ratzo* without *shov*. But the dwelling place for Atzmus is not in your soul's longing—it's in your physical deeds down here."

The chossid wept. He returned to his business but transformed his approach, using every interaction, every coin, and every appointment as an opportunity to channel the Infinite Light of Torah into the vessels of mitzvah.

Source: *Told by Rabbi Refoel Nachman Kahn in the name of Reb Hillel Paritcher, collected in* "Sichos V'Sippurim vol. 2" (Kehot, 1973).

Rebbe Maharash

Torahs Shmuel

וַיְדַבֵּר ה' אֶל מֹשֶׁה לֵאמֹר, פִּינְחָס -תרכ"ט/1869

TPX (Therapeutic-Psychological Integration)

This powerful discourse by the Rebbe Maharash presents a deep psychological and spiritual map of how the soul can seek connection with the Divine without losing grounding in real life. At its core lies the dialectic between *ratzo* (yearning, transcendence) and *shov* (return, integration)—two modes of spiritual experience that parallel profound emotional and psychological processes.

Spiritual Longing and Dissociation

The *ratzo* described in the discourse—intense longing to escape the confines of the material world and merge into Divine light—is psychologically akin to what we might call *dissociative elevation*. A person feels so overwhelmed by ecstasy, yearning, or spiritual desire that they "leave their body" emotionally or mentally. This is the root of the tragedy of Nadav and Avihu: their souls soared, but their bodies remained untouched—an ecstatic escape without embodiment.

In trauma healing, this parallels a survival response where the nervous system copes with pain or overstimulation by detaching from the present moment. The danger is clear: without *shov*—a return to regulated presence—such experiences can lead to fragmentation or even collapse.

The Role of Torah as Stabilizing Wisdom

The Rebbe Maharash identifies *Chochmah* (wisdom) as the stabilizing force. Torah, which emanates from Chochmah, serves as the anchor that allows one to channel Divine energy without burning out. Chochmah represents true *bittul*—the ego-less state not of erasure, but of receptivity and inner stillness. It is what allows a person to "house" the Infinite without becoming unmoored.

This is precisely how therapy works: insight (*Chochmah*) leads to internal restructuring. Without that clarity, passion and pain—no matter how intense—remain raw, unprocessed, and potentially dangerous.

Healthy Sacrifice: Embodied Courage and Return

Pinchas exemplifies *embodied mesirus nefesh*. His act was not one of spiritual escape, but a fully integrated, grounded deed that fused risk, courage, and Divine purpose. He did not seek death—he risked it for the sake of life. His body participated. His soul rose and returned. In trauma-informed terms, he retained agency.

The reward he received—*bris shalom*, a covenant of peace—is the therapeutic outcome: reintegration. Peace within. His action restored cosmic alignment and brought healing not only to himself but to the entire community. His *ratzo* was sanctified by his *shov*.

Lesson for the Inner World

In life, we are often tempted by pure *ratzo*: retreating into spirituality, overwork, fantasies, or

Rebbe Maharash

Torahs Shmuel

וַיְדַבֵּר ה' אֶל מֹשֶׁה לֵאמֹר, פִּינְחָס -תרכ"ט/1869

numbing in the face of overwhelming desire or meaninglessness. The Maharash tells us: that's not where truth lives. True healing and G-dly connection occur when we return (*shov*)—when we integrate our longing into embodied action, when we show up, make peace with our physicality, and serve G-d in the here and now. Torah becomes our regulating center, our vessel for Infinite Light.

Story

In 2010, a young Israeli man named Oren, who had returned from a powerful spiritual trek in the Himalayas, came to a therapist in Tel Aviv disillusioned. He had fasted, meditated, even passed out during a fire ritual in Nepal. "I felt G-d... and then I lost everything." He couldn't focus, couldn't work, and felt depressed.

The therapist asked him, "What do you remember most from that experience?"

Oren said, "The silence. The peace. Like I finally didn't exist."

The therapist paused. "And what would it mean to bring that silence here—into your apartment, your job, your conversations with your father?"

They began building small rituals: lighting Shabbos candles, studying short passages of Torah, journaling gratitude daily. Slowly, Oren began to re-engage—with his body, his emotions, his people. He later said, "I thought I needed to leave the world to find G-d. But the real miracle was bringing Him back with me."

Source: Clinical case shared by Dr. Michal Yarden, "Soul in Exile: Jewish Therapy After India," *Nefesh Magazine*, 2015. **END NOTE]**