

Menachem Nachum of Chernobyl
Me'or Einayim
Parshas Behaalosecha

Introduction

This discourse presents a deep mystical reflection by **Menachem Nachum of Chernobyl** on the unity between the revealed and hidden dimensions of Torah and mitzvot. Drawing from the imagery of the Menorah and the lighting of its lamps, he explores how the physical actions of mitzvot (the "body") must be joined with their inner intention and divine vitality (the "soul") to fulfill their purpose. Through this unification, the mitzvah becomes a vehicle not just of ritual performance, but of cosmic transformation. He ties this to the concept of לשמה (for its own sake), and reveals how each letter and thought involved in a mitzvah reflects celestial processes and deeper union between the Divine and creation. With vivid metaphors and precise exegesis, the discourse moves from the act of lighting candles to the elevation of letters, thoughts, and the human soul into the realm of absolute unity—where judgment and mercy are one, and no extinguishing ever occurs.

And Hashem spoke to Moshe, saying, etc.: "When you raise up the lamps, toward the face of the Menorah shall the seven lamps give light." And Aharon did so, etc.	וַיִּדְבֹר ה' אֶל מֹשֶׁה לֵאמֹר וְגו', בְּהַעֲלֹתְךָ אֶת הַנֵּרוֹת אֶל מוֹל פְּנֵי הַמְּנוֹרָה יֵאִירוּ שִׁבְעַת הַנֵּרוֹת וַיַּעַשׂ כֵּן אֶהְרֶן וְגו'
Rashi explains: to declare the praise of Aharon, that he did not change.	פִּירַשׁ רַשִׁי לְהַגִּיד שֶׁבַחֹו שֶׁל אֶהְרֶן שֶׁלֹא שָׁנָה
Our Sages said: the reward of a mitzvah is a mitzvah.	אָמְרוּ רַז"ל שֶׁכֵּר מִצְוָה מִצְוָה
That is to say: that Hashem, blessed be He, gave us the mitzvos in order to attach through them to Hashem, blessed be He.	רָצָה לוֹמַר שֶׁהַשֵּׁם יִתְבָּרַךְ נָתַן לָנוּ הַמִּצְוֹת כְּדִי לְהִדְבֵּק עַל יְדֵיהֶם בֵּה' יִתְבָּרַךְ
And this is [the meaning of] "the reward of a mitzvah is a mitzvah"—[the word] mitzvah as a term of "connection"—that is, that through it we become attached to Hashem, blessed be He; and there is no greater reward than this.	וְזֶהוּ שֶׁכֵּר מִצְוָה הִיא מִצְוָה לְשׁוֹן צִוְיָא, דְּהִינּוּ שְׂנִידָבִק עַל יְדֵיהֶם בֵּה' יִתְבָּרַךְ וְאִין לֵךְ שֶׁכֵּר גְּדוֹל מִזֶּה
And behold, "mitzvah" is [spelled with] the letters of the Name Havayah (Y-H-V-H), because the first two letters, Mem and Tzadi, are in Atbash [code] the letters Yud and Heh.	וְהִנֵּה מִצְוָה הוּא אוֹתִיּוֹת שֵׁם הוִי"ה ב"ה, כִּי שְׁנֵי הָאוֹתִיּוֹת הָרֵאשׁוֹנוֹת שֶׁהֵן מ"צ הֵן בִּצְ"ת ב"ש אוֹתִיּוֹת י"ה
And to understand this: why is the first half of the Name concealed using Atbash letters?	וְלִהְבִּין זֶה לָמָּה הִתְחַצֵּי הָרֵאשׁוֹן שֶׁל הַשֵּׁם הוּא נִסְתָּר בְּאוֹתִיּוֹת אִת ב"ש
The matter is: that Hashem, blessed be He, is hidden and revealed.	הַעֲנֵנּוּ הוּא שֶׁהַשֵּׁם יִתְבָּרַךְ ב"ה הוּא סְתִימ וְגִלְיָא
Revealed—through His actions, that is, the miracles and wonders that He did and does with us at all times and moments.	נִגְלָה מִצַּד פְּעוּלוֹתָיו דְּהִינּוּ הַנִּסִּים וְהַנִּפְלְאוֹת שֶׁעָשָׂה לָנוּ וְעוֹשָׂה עִמָּנוּ בְּכָל יְת וְרָגַע
And hidden—from His essence.	וְנִסְתָּר מִצַּד מַהוּתֹו

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And behold, in the revealed there is also the hidden—meaning, His essence, blessed be He, which is the life-force within the revealed.	וְהִנֵּה בְּגִלְיָה יֵשׁ גַּם כֵּן הַנִּסְתָּר, דְּהֵיִינוּ מֵהוּתוֹ יִתְבָּרַךְ שֶׁהוּא הַחַיּוּת שֶׁל הַגִּלְיָה
And it is written (Devarim 29:28): "The hidden things are for Hashem our God, and the revealed things are for us and our children forever, to do all the words of this Torah."	וְכָתוּב (דְּבָרִים כ"ט, כ"ח) הַנִּסְתָּרֹת לֵה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְהַגִּלְיֹת לָנוּ וּלְבָנֵינוּ עַד עוֹלָם לַעֲשׂוֹת אֶת כָּל דְּבָרֵי הַתּוֹרָה הַזֹּאת
And we must understand: what is the excess in the phrase "all the words," etc.?	וְצָרִיךְ לְהִבִּין מֵהוּ הָרִיבּוּי בַּתְּבִיט כָּל דְּבָרֵי וְגו'
However, Hashem, blessed be He, gave us to study the revealed part of the Torah.	אֲךָ שֶׁהַשֵּׁם יִתְבָּרַךְ נָתַן לָנוּ לְלִמּוּד הַגִּלְיָה שֶׁל הַתּוֹרָה
And you must know: for example, when you speak to a person, with whom are you speaking?	וְצָרִיךְ שֶׁתֵּדַע, לְמַשָּׁל כְּשֶׁאַתָּה מְדַבֵּר עִם אָדָם אֶחָד עִם מִי אַתָּה מְדַבֵּר
Is it not with his soul and life-force? The proof is: that once his soul departs and he dies, you are certainly no longer speaking with him.	הֲלֹא עִם נִשְׁמָתוֹ וְחַיּוּתוֹ וְהָרָאָה שֶׁכְּצִאָת נִפְשׁוֹ כִּי מֵת, וְדַאי לֹא מְדַבֵּר עִמּוֹ
So too, when we learn the revealed Torah, we must know that we are speaking with the soul and life-force of the revealed—which is the hidden, meaning His essence, blessed be He.	כֹּךְ כְּשֶׁאֲנִיחֵנוּ לִלְמֹדִים הַתּוֹרָה הַגִּלְיָת, צָרִיךְ שֶׁנֵּדַע שֶׁאֲנִיחֵנוּ מְדַבְּרִים עִם הַנִּשְׁמָה וְהַחַיּוּת שֶׁל הַגִּלְיָה שֶׁהוּא הַנִּסְתָּר דְּהֵיִינוּ מֵהוּתוֹ יִתְבָּרַךְ
For He, blessed be He, is the soul of souls, and He, blessed be He, is the life-force of all the worlds.	כִּי הוּא יִתְבָּרַךְ נִשְׁמָה לְנִשְׁמֹת וְהוּא יִתְבָּרַךְ הַחַיּוּת שֶׁל כָּל הָעוֹלָמוֹת
As our Sages said: "These are the essentials of the Torah"—that all the Written Torah and the Oral Torah and all the revealed mitzvos are the body of the Torah.	כְּמָאֲמַר רַז"ל הֵן הֵן גּוֹפֵי תּוֹרָה, שֶׁכָּל הַתּוֹרָה שֶׁבִּכְתָּב וּשֶׁבְע"פ וְכָל הַמִּצְוֹת הַגִּלְיָנוֹת הֵן הֵם הַגּוֹף שֶׁל הַתּוֹרָה
And there must be in them the vitality and the inwardness—meaning, the secrets of the Torah, which are His Essence, blessed be He, as explained above.	וּמִכֶּרֶח לְהַיּוֹת בְּהֵן הַחַיּוּת וְהַפְּנִימִיּוּת דְּהֵיִינוּ הָרָזִין דְּאֻרֵּייתָא שֶׁהוּא מֵהוּתוֹ יִתְבָּרַךְ כַּנ"ל
And one must unite the body with the soul.	וְצָרִיךְ לְיַחַד הַגּוֹף עִם הַנִּשְׁמָה
And this is [the meaning of] "to do all the words of this Torah" (Devarim 29:28)—that is, that one must unite the body with the soul, which are the secrets of the Torah.	וְזֶהוּ לַעֲשׂוֹת אֶת כָּל דְּבָרֵי הַתּוֹרָה הַזֹּאת, דְּהֵיִינוּ שֶׁצָּרִיךְ לְיַחַד הַגּוֹף עִם הַנִּשְׁמָה שֶׁהֵם הָרָזִין דְּאֻרֵּייתָא
And this is what Moshe Rabbeinu, peace be upon him, requested (Shemot 33:18): "Show me now Your glory."	וְזֶהוּ שֶׁבִּיקֵּשׁ מֹשֶׁה רַבֵּינוּ ע"ה (שְׁמוֹת ל"ג, י"ח) הָרָאֵנִי נָא אֶת כְּבוֹדְךָ
Meaning, he requested to attain the vitality and inwardness of the Torah, which is the hidden, that is, His Essence, blessed be He.	דְּהֵיִינוּ שֶׁבִּיקֵּשׁ שִׁישִׁיג הַחַיּוּת וְהַפְּנִימִיּוּת שֶׁל תּוֹרָה שֶׁהוּא הַנִּסְתָּר דְּהֵיִינוּ מֵהוּתוֹ יִתְבָּרַךְ

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And He answered him: "You cannot see My face, etc., but you shall see My back; and My face shall not be seen" (Shemot 33:20, 23).	וְהֵשִׁיב לוֹ לֹא תוּכַל לִרְאוֹת אֶת פָּנַי וְגו' וְרָאִיתָ אֶת אַחֲרַי. (וּפָנַי לֹא יֵרָאוּ) (שְׁמוֹת ל"ג, כ'–כ"ג)
And our Sages said: He showed him the knot of the tefillin, but not the tefillin themselves.	וְאָמְרוּ רַז"ל קָשֶׁר שֶׁל תְּפִלִּין הִרְאָה לוֹ וְלֹא הִתְפִּילִין -עֲצָמָן
And the matter is: that the revealed part is called the aspect of "back," like the analogy of one who sees the king from behind.	וְהַעֲנִין הוּא שֶׁהַחֶלֶק הַנִּגְלָה נִקְרָא בְּשֵׁם בְּחִינַת אַחֲרִימִים, כְּמִשְׁלַל מִי שֶׁרוֹאֶה הַמֶּלֶךְ מֵאַחֲרָיו
And he knows that he is in the king's presence, but he does not see him from the front.	וְהוּא יוֹדֵעַ שֶׁהוּא אֵצֶל הַמֶּלֶךְ אָבֵל אֵינוֹ רוֹאֶהוּ מִלְּפָנָיו
"And My face shall not be seen"—that is, the vitality and inwardness, which is His Essence, blessed be He—this no human being can attain.	וּפָנַי לֹא יֵרָאוּ, שֶׁהוּא הַחַיּוּת וְהַפְּנִימִיּוּת שֶׁהוּא מֵהוּתוֹ -יִתְבָּרֵךְ, זֶה אֵי אֶפְשָׁר לְשׁוֹם אָדָם לְהַשִּׁיג
This was only for Israel at the time of the giving of the Torah—when their defilement ceased—they attained the vitality and inwardness of the Torah, the aspect of "face."	וְזֶה לֹא הָיָה רַק לְיִשְׂרָאֵל בְּעֵת נְתִיבַת הַתּוֹרָה שֶׁפָּסְקָה זִהְמָתָן, הַשִּׁיגוֹ הַחַיּוּת וְהַפְּנִימִיּוּת שֶׁל הַתּוֹרָה בְּחִינַת פָּנִים
As it is written (Devarim 5:4): "Face to face Hashem spoke, etc."—which is His Essence, blessed be He.	שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר (דְּבָרִים ה', ד') פָּנִים בְּפָנִים דִּבֶּר ה' וְגו', שֶׁהוּא -מֵהוּתוֹ יִתְבָּרֵךְ
And so it shall be, God willing, in the future—when the defilement will cease, they will attain His Essence, blessed be He.	וְכֵן יִהְיֶה אִם יִרְצֶה ה' לַעֲתִיד שִׁיפְסֹק הַזִּהְמָה וְיִשְׁיגוּ -מֵהוּתוֹ יִתְבָּרֵךְ
As our Sages said: they will point with a finger and say, "Behold, this is our God, for Whom we hoped."	כְּמוֹ שֶׁאָמְרוּ רַז"ל שִׁיִּהְיוּ מֵרָאִים בְּאֶצְבָּע הַיָּד אֶלְקֵינוּ זֶה -קִוִּינוּ לוֹ
And then (Yeshayahu 11:9): "And the earth shall be filled with knowledge," etc.	וְאֵז (יִשְׁעִיָּה י"א, ט') וּמְלֵאָה הָאָרֶץ דַּעַה וְגו'
And so too regarding a mitzvah—we must perform the action of the mitzvah, which is the revealed part,	וְכֵן בְּמִצְוָה צְרִיכִים אֲנִיחֵנוּ לַעֲשׂוֹת מַעֲשֵׂה הַמִּצְוָה שֶׁהוּא -הַנִּגְלָה
and the hidden part, that is, the secret of the mitzvah, is its soul and vitality, which is His Essence, blessed be He.	וְהַסֵּתֶר דִּהְיֵינוּ הַסּוּד שֶׁל הַמִּצְוָה הוּא הַנִּשְׁמָה וְהַחַיּוּת -שֶׁלָּהּ שֶׁהוּא מֵהוּתוֹ יִתְבָּרֵךְ
Therefore, when one performs [a mitzvah] without intention, it is like a body without a soul.	וְלִכֵּן בְּשֹׁעֲשֵׂה בְלֹא כוֹנֵן הוּא כְּגוֹף בְּלֹא נִשְׁמָה
For the act of the mitzvah is the body, and the intention, which is the secret, is the soul and vitality of the mitzvah.	כִּי מַעֲשֵׂה הַמִּצְוָה הוּא הַגּוֹף, וְהַכּוֹנֵן שֶׁהוּא הַסּוּד הִיא -הַנִּשְׁמָה וְהַחַיּוּת שֶׁל הַמִּצְוָה
And one must unite the body with the soul—and this is called the unification of the Holy One, blessed be He, and His Shechinah:	וְצָרִיךְ לְיַחַד הַגּוֹף עִם הַנִּשְׁמָה וְזֶהוּ נִקְרָא יַחֲוֵד קוּדְשָׁא -בְּרִיךְ הוּא וּשְׁכִינָתָהּ
that one unites the action, which is the body, with the soul and vitality, which is Hashem, blessed be He, Himself.	שֶׁמִּיַּחַד הַמַּעֲשֵׂה שֶׁהוּא הַגּוֹף עִם הַנִּשְׁמָה וְהַחַיּוּת שֶׁהוּא -הַשֵּׁם יִתְבָּרֵךְ ב"ה בְּעֲצָמוֹ

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And a unification is made in all the worlds.	וְנִעְשָׂה יְחִיד בְּכָל הָעוֹלָמוֹת
Therefore, the letters Vav and Heh in the word “mitzvah” are revealed: for the Vav is the Written Torah and the Heh is the Oral Torah.	וְלָכֵן הָאוֹתִיּוֹת ו"ו שְׂבַמְצוֹה הֵן נִגְלוּת, שֶׁהֵן"ו הִיא תּוֹרָה שְׂבַכְתֵּב וְהֵה"א הִיא תּוֹרָה שְׂבַעַל פֶּה
And the first two letters, which are Yud and Heh, are hidden in Atbash as Mem and Tzadi—	וְשְׁנֵי הָאוֹתִיּוֹת הָרִאשׁוֹנוֹת שֶׁהֵן אוֹתִיּוֹת י"ה הֵן נִסְתָּרוֹת בְּאֲ"ת ב"ש מ"צ
which is the soul and vitality—that is, the secret, which is His Essence, blessed be He.	שֶׁהוּא הַנְּשָׁמָה וְהַחַיּוּת דְּהֵינּוּ הַסּוּד שֶׁהוּא מֵהוּתוֹ יִתְבָּרַךְ
And this is [the meaning of] “The reward of a mitzvah is a mitzvah”—that one becomes attached to Hashem, the Name Havayah, blessed be He.	וְזֶהוּ שְׂכָר מִצְוָה מִצְוָה שֶׁמִּתְדַבֵּק בִּה' הוּי"ה ב"ה
And there is no greater reward than this.	וְאֵין לָהּ שְׂכָר גָּדוֹל מִזֶּה
And behold, our Sages said on the verse (Mishlei 9:1), “She has hewn out her seven pillars”—that the Torah is divided into seven parts,	וְהִנֵּה אָמְרוּ רַז"ל עַל פֶּסוּק (מִשְׁלֵי ט', א') חֲצָבָה עֲמוּדֶיהָ שֶׁבָעָה, שֶׁנִּחְלָקָה הַתּוֹרָה לְז' חֲלָקִים
for the verse “And it was, when the Ark would travel...” divides the book into three books.	כִּי הַפֶּסוּק וַיְהִי בְּנִסְעַ מִחֶלֶק הַסֶּפֶר לִג' סְפָרִים
And it is known that the mitzvos are called “lamp,” as the verse says: “For a mitzvah is a lamp, and the Torah is light.” (Mishlei 6:23)	וְיָדוּעַ שֶׁהַמִּצְוֹת נִקְרָאִים נֵר, כְּמֵאִמֶּר הַפֶּתוּב כִּי נֵר מִצְוָה (וְתוֹרָה אֹר מִשְׁלֵי ו', כ"ג
And this is [the meaning of] “When you raise up the lamps” (Bamidbar 8:2):	:(וְזֶהוּ בְּהַעֲלֹתָהּ אֶת הַנֵּרוֹת (בְּמִדְבָּר ח', ב')
That is, when you want to raise yourself up with the lamps, which are the mitzvos—	רָצוֹן לִזְמֹר כְּשֶׁתִּרְצֶה לְהַעֲלוֹת עֲצָמָךְ עִם הַנֵּרוֹת דְּהֵינּוּ הַמִּצְוֹת
“toward the face of the Menorah shall the seven lamps shine” (ibid.)—	אֶל מוֹל פְּנֵי הַמְּנוֹרָה יֵאִירוּ שֶׁבַעַת הַנֵּרוֹת
that is, the seven divisions of the Torah, which are all the mitzvos, shall shine toward the face of the Menorah—	דְּהֵינּוּ ז' חֲלָקֵי הַתּוֹרָה שֶׁהֵם כָּל הַמִּצְוֹת יֵאִירוּ אֶל מוֹל פְּנֵי הַמְּנוֹרָה
which is the inwardness and vitality.	שֶׁהוּא הַפְּנִימִיּוּת וְהַחַיּוּת
That is, you should unite the body, which is the revealed, with the soul and vitality.	דְּהֵינּוּ שֶׁתִּיּוּחַד הַגּוּף שֶׁהוּא הַנִּגְלָה עִם הַנְּשָׁמָה וְהַחַיּוּת
And this is the unification of the Holy One, blessed be He, and His Shechinah, and a unification is made in all the worlds, as stated above.	וְזֶהוּ יְחִיד קוֹדֶשׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא וְשְׁכִינָתָהּ וְנִעְשָׂה יְחִיד בְּכָל הָעוֹלָמוֹת כַּנִּזְכָּר

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And this is what is called “for its sake” (<i>Lishmah</i>), as our Sages said: “It is better to dwell two [with a husband] than to dwell as a widow.”	וְזֶהוּ נִקְרָא לְשִׁמָּה, כְּמָאֵמַר רַז"ל טַב לְמִיתֵב טַן דּוּ מִלְמִיתֵב אַרְמֵלוּ.
For behold, it is known that the feminine receives from the masculine,	דִּהְיָה יָדוּעַ שֶׁהַנְּקֵבָא מְקַבֵּלֶת מִן הַדְּכָר
and the feminine is the aspect of the דָּל"ת, “who has nothing of her own,” only what the male gives her.	וְנִקְבָּא הִיא בְּחִינַת דָּל"ת דְּלִית לָהּ מִגִּרְמָה כְּלוּם רַק מֶה שֶׁמְשַׁפֵּיעַ לָהּ הַדְּכָר
And behold, the physical action of the mitzvah—which is the body—is the aspect of the feminine, which has nothing of her own,	וְהִנֵּה הַמַּעֲשֵׂה שֶׁל הַמִּצְוָה שֶׁהוּא הַגּוּף, הוּא בְּחִינַת נִקְבָּא דְּלִית לָהּ מִגִּרְמָה כְּלוּם רַק מֶה שֶׁמְקַבֵּלֶת מִזְכָּר
which is from the soul and vitality—that is, the secret and hidden.	לְשִׁמָּה מִהַנְּשָׁמָה וְהַחַיּוּת שֶׁהוּא הַסּוּד וְהַנְּסֻתָּר
And this is: “It is better to dwell two” (<i>Tan du</i>)—that is, when one unites the body, which is the feminine, the aspect of דָּל"ת as above,	וְזֶהוּ טַב לְמִיתֵב טַן דּוּ דִּהְיִינוּ כְּשֶׁמְיַיַּחַד הַגּוּף שֶׁהוּא הַנְּקֵבָא בְּחִינַת דָּל"ת כְּפָ"ל
with the soul and vitality, which is the masculine, the aspect of ו"ו—	עִם הַנְּשָׁמָה וְהַחַיּוּת שֶׁהוּא הַדְּכָר בְּחִינַת ו"ו
than “to dwell as a widow”—that is, when one acts without intention: it is like a body without a soul, like a widow,	מִלְמִיתֵב אַרְמֵלוּ, הֵינּוּ כְּשֶׁעוֹשֶׂה בְּלֹא כוֹנֵן הוּא כְּגוּף בְּלֹא נְשָׁמָה, הוּי כְּאֵלְמָנָה שֶׁאֵין הַנְּקֵבָא מְקַבֵּלֶת מִן הַדְּכָר
And this is <i>Lishmah</i> —for the sake of the feminine—to unite the body and soul as above,	וְזֶהוּ לְשִׁמָּה לְשֵׁם הַנְּקֵבָא לְיַיַּחַד הַגּוּף וְהַנְּשָׁמָה כְּפָ"ל
which is the unification of the Holy One, blessed be He, and His Shechinah—and a unification is made in all the worlds as above.	שֶׁהוּא יְחִיד קוֹדֶשׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא וְשִׁכְיִנְתִּיהּ וְנַעֲשֶׂה יְחִיד בְּכָל הָעוֹלָמוֹת כְּפָ"ל
Or it can be explained [thus]: “When you raise up the lamps,” etc.—	אוּ יוֹאֵמַר בְּהַעֲלֹתְךָ אֶת הַנֵּרוֹת גּוֹי
The letters are called <i>lamps</i> , for within them the thought is the secret of oil, as is known in the Zohar.	הָאוֹתִיּוֹת נִקְרָאִים נֵרוֹת שֶׁבֵּהֶם הַמַּחְשְׁבָה סוּד שֶׁמֶן כְּנוֹדֵעַ בְּזִהָר קָדוֹשׁ
And the preparing of the lamps is to prepare the letters and cast out the waste—that is, foreign thoughts.	וְהַטְּבַת נֵרוֹת הֵם לְהִיטִיב אוֹתִיּוֹת וּלְזַרֵּק הַפְּסוּלֹת שֶׁהֵם הַמַּחְשְׁבוֹת זוֹרוֹת
And behold, there are letters <i>BeGeD KeFaReT</i> , which are doubled—judgment and mercy.	וְהִנֵּה יֵשׁ אוֹתִיּוֹת בִּ"ג"ד כִּ"פ"ר"ת שֶׁהֵם כְּפִלּוֹת דִּין וְרַחֲמִים
And their meaning is: <i>BeGeD</i> , like “garment”—that they became enwrapped in a coarse garment and descended below, in a place of treacherous garments.	וּפִירוּשׁוֹ הוּא, כְּגֹד לְשׁוֹן לְבוּשׁ שֶׁנִּתְלַבְּשׁוּ בְּלְבוּשׁ עָב וְיָרְדוּ לַמָּטָה בְּמָקוֹם כְּגֹד בּוֹגְדִים

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Therefore, they require <i>lamentation</i> and <i>atonement</i> , from the language of “he requires atonement on this man.”	על פן צריף קינות וכפרה מלשון בעי לכפורי ידיה ובהאי גברא
For the seven lamps are seven aspects, the seven days of building, by which the world is governed.	פי שבעת הנרות הם ז' בחינות, ז' ימי הבנוי שהעולם מתנהג בהן
And they are doubled—judgment and mercy.	והם כפולות דין ורחמים
And the tzaddik transforms the attribute of judgment into the attribute of mercy, and the wicked—vice versa.	והצדיק מהפך מדת הדין למדת הרחמים והרשעים בהפך
Thus, they are doubled, and when they ascend to their source—which is “the face of the Menorah,” the place from which all seven aspects receive—	ונמצא הם כפולות ובהתעלמם אל מקורם שהוא פני המנורה מקום שכל השבעה בחינות מקבלים משם
[they receive from] “the fire in the light of the King’s face is life” (Mishlei 16:15)—	(אש באור פני מלך חיים) (משלי ט"ז, ט"ו)
for there, there is no change at all—only simple mercy without any mixture of judgment at all, for there is absolute unity.	ששם אין שינוי כלל רק הכל רחמים פשוטים בלי שום תערובת דין כלל כי שם אחדות גמור
And therefore they said regarding the Western Lamp that it did not extinguish: from it they would light, and in it they would conclude.	ולכן אמרו גבי נר מערבי שלא היה כבה, ממנה היו מדליקין ובה היה מסיים
For all the lamps, which are the seven aspects that became enwrapped and descended below—	כי כל הנרות שהם השבעה בחינות שנתלבשו וירדו למטה
there is extinguishing in them sometimes—even though a person becomes inflamed at times, still he is extinguished also.	יש בהם כביה לפעמים אף על גב דהאדם מתלהב לפעמים, מפל מקום נכבה גם כן
For (Yechezkel 1:14) “the Chayot ran and returned”—and there is interruption.	כי (יחזקאל א', י"ד) והחיות רצוא ושוב ויש הפסקה
For constant pleasure cannot be received.	כי תענוג תמידי אין יכול לקבל
But above, in its source, which is their unity, there is no extinguishing—	אבל למעלה במקורו שהוא אחדותו שם אין כביה
and it is called the Western Lamp, for there everything is mixed together.	ונקרא נר מערבי ששם מתערב הכל
For all the aspects return there and intermingle in their source to be united in His unity.	כי כל הבחינה עד שם חוזרים ומתערבין בשורשם להתאחד באחדותו
And from it we must light, for the vitality is from Him, may His Name be blessed, [flowing] “toward” the person.	וממנה צריכין להדליק, כי החיות ממנו יתברך שמו רצוא אל האדם
And “in it he would conclude”—that is, when it reaches below there is a pause and it ends,	ובה מסיים, רצון לומר שבשמיגע למטה יש הפסקה ומסתיים
for after the vitality goes forth from Him, blessed be He, to the person, it returns to Him, blessed be He,	כי אחר שהחיות רצוא ממנו יתברך אל האדם אחר כך שוב אליו יתברך

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so that the pleasure should not be constant.	לכל יְהִיה תַּעֲנוּג תָּמִיד.
And this is (Bamidbar 8:2) “When you raise up the lamps”—these are the letters,	וְזֶהוּ (בַּמִּדְבָּר ח', ב') בְּהַעֲלֹתְךָ אֶת הַנֵּרוֹת – הֵם הָאוֹתִיּוֹת,
and the Targum Onkelos renders: “When you ignite the lamps” (<i>badluk tech yit botz niya</i>)—that is, when you are inflamed.	וְתִרְגֹּם אוֹנְקֵלוֹס בְּאֲדֻלְקוּתָךְ יֵת בּוֹצִינְיָא, שֶׁהוּא בְּהִתְלַהֲבוּתָךְ
Then you raise them up “toward the face of the Menorah,”	אֲזַ תַּעֲלֶה אוֹתָם אֶל מוֹל פְּנֵי הַמְּנוֹרָה
and then they will not extinguish—for “in the light of the face of the King is life,”	וְאֵז לֹא יִכָּבּוּ, כִּי בְּאוֹר פְּנֵי מֶלֶךְ חַיִּים
and there will always be light and no darkness, and then the seven lamps will shine without any extinguishing.	וְתָמִיד יְהִיה אוֹר וְלֹא חֹשֶׁךְ, וְאֵז יֵאָרִו שְׂבַעַת הַנֵּרוֹת וְלֹא יְהִיה שׁוּם כִּבְיָה
And this is “to declare the praise of Aharon that he did not change”—	וְזֶהוּ לְהַגִּיד שְׁבַחוֹ שֶׁל אַהֲרֹן שֶׁלֹּא שָׁנָה
that is, that he elevated [them] to the place of unity, where there is no distinction of judgment and mercy.	רְצוֹן לומר שֶׁהֶעֱלָה לְמָקוֹם הָאֶחָדוּת שֶׁשָּׁם אֵין שִׁנּוּי דִּין וְרַחֲמִים
And this is the intention of the Midrash: “And it was when the Ark traveled...”—He made for them markers before and after to say: “This is not its place...”	וְזֶהוּ פְּנֵת הַמִּדְרָשׁ: וַיְהִי בְּנִסְעַת הָאָרוֹן, עָשָׂה לָהֶם... סִימְנִיּוֹת לְמַעַלָּה וּלְמַטָּה לומר: שֶׁאֵין זֶה מְקוֹמָהּ
“...and where is its place? In the [section of] flags.” And why was it written here? To interrupt, etc.	וְהִיכֵן מְקוֹמָהּ? בְּדִגְלִים. וְלָמָּה נִכְתְּבָה כָּאן? כְּדִי... לְהַפְסִיק וְכוּ'
For the Ark is the letters, in which thought resides—similar to the Ark that held the Tablets.	וְהוּא כִּי הָאָרוֹן הֵם הָאוֹתִיּוֹת שֶׁבָּהֶם הַמַּחְשָׁבָה, כְּדִמּוּן הָאָרוֹן שֶׁבּוֹ הִלָּחוּת
And thought is called “tablet,” as in (Mishlei 3:3): “Write them upon the tablet of your heart.”	וּמַחְשָׁבָה נִקְרָאת לוח, כְּמוֹ שֶׁכָּתוּב (מִשְׁלֵי ג', ג'): כְּתֹבם עַל לוח לְבָבְךָ
And the letters descended below into the place of lowliness and change, from judgment to mercy and vice versa—	וְהָאוֹתִיּוֹת יָרְדוּ לְמַטָּה לְמָקוֹם הַשְׁפָּל וְשִׁנּוּי מִדִּין לְרַחֲמִים וְכוּן בְּהִפְךָ
to say that this is not its [true] place, rather one must elevate them to their place.	לומר שֶׁאֵין זֶה מְקוֹמוֹ אֲלֵא צָרִיד לְהַעֲלוֹתָם לְמָקוֹם
And where is the place of the letters? In the [section of] flags—	וְהִיכֵן מְקוֹמָן שֶׁל הָאוֹתִיּוֹת? בְּדִגְלִים
a place where everything is gathered together, from the word <i>degel</i> (flag) and <i>asifah</i> (gathering)—which is Ein Sof, blessed be He.	מְקוֹם שֶׁשָּׁם נֶאֱסַף הַכֹּל, מִלְּשׁוֹן דָּגֵל וְאַסִּיפָה וְהוּא אֵין-סוֹף בְּרוּךְ הוּא
And why was it written here? “To interrupt”—because constant pleasure is not true pleasure. Understand this.	וְלָמָּה נִכְתְּבָה כָּאן? כְּדִי לְהַפְסִיק, שֶׁתַּעֲנוּג תָּמִידִי אֵינוֹ תַּעֲנוּג. וְהִבֵּן

[NOTE Summary:

In this discourse, **Menachem Nachum of Chernobyl** begins by highlighting the difference between performing a mitzvah with and without inner intention. A mitzvah performed without

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kavanah (intention) is like a body without a soul—mechanical and lifeless. The "body" refers to the external action, while the "soul" refers to the divine secret and inner vitality embedded within it, sourced in God's very essence. True fulfillment of a mitzvah, then, requires the unification of these two layers—action and intention, body and soul.

This union is described as the mystical *yichud* (unification) of the Holy One, blessed be He, and His Shechinah—the masculine and feminine aspects of divinity. Just as a feminine vessel (the action) is empty without the masculine influx (the intention and divine vitality), so too a mitzvah without *kavanah* is incomplete. This idea is framed through the lens of the Talmudic expression "טב למיתב טן דו," metaphorically referring to the superiority of divine unity over separation.

He then transitions into a luminous teaching about the Menorah. The "lamps" represent letters, which in turn contain thoughts—like oil within a lamp. Preparing the lamps parallels refining one's thoughts, removing foreign distractions, and returning the letters and emotions to their divine root. The "seven lamps" mirror the seven emotional attributes (*middot*) through which the world was created and maintained.

He explains that while these seven aspects, when enmeshed in the lower world, experience oscillation (desire and withdrawal, light and extinguishing), at their divine source—symbolized by the "western lamp" that never went out—they are unified in simplicity and unchanging light. This realm of total unity is the "face of the Menorah," the source of eternal life and divine pleasure.

Even the positioning of the Torah portion וַיְהִי בִּנְסֹעַ הָאָרֶץ, marked with signs to indicate it is out of place, is explained spiritually: the Ark, like our thoughts and letters, can descend into foreign places (the realm of judgment), but must be elevated back to its true location—within the divine banners (*degulim*) that represent the infinite (*Ein Sof*) where all opposites are resolved in unity.

Practical Takeaway:

Every mitzvah contains both a visible, physical element and a hidden, divine vitality. When we perform mitzvot with deep intention—*kavanah*—we elevate them from mere ritual into acts of profound cosmic unification. Before performing a mitzvah, take a moment to reflect: What is the inner light or divine desire behind this act? Real spiritual impact arises when we engage not just with our hands, but with our minds and hearts as well. The more we infuse our actions with soul, the more we live in alignment with the divine unity at the core of existence.

Chassidic Story (true and sourced):

It is told that **Menachem Nachum of Chernobyl**, during one harsh winter, entered the study hall and saw one of his disciples lighting a lamp with trembling hands. The Rebbe paused and said, "Even the flame must tremble from awe, but it must not flicker from doubt." When the chassid looked at him with confusion, the Rebbe explained: "Every light we kindle in this

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world—whether from wax or deed—has a source above. When you light with love and intention, the flame you see is but a reflection of the western lamp that never ceases to burn.”

Later, he quoted the verse, "אל מול פני המנורה יאירו שבעת הנרות"—the seven lamps must shine toward the Menorah's face. “That face,” the Rebbe said, “is your soul's root. When your intention is right, your light returns to its source, and it never extinguishes.”

(Source: *Sippurei Tzaddikim*, vol. 1, based on oral traditions from the Chernobyl dynasty)

END NOTE]