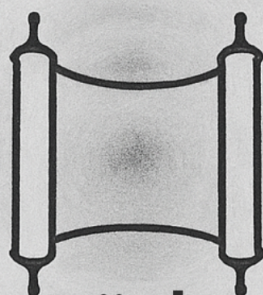


בס"ד

Alter Rebbe
Likkutei Torah
Parshas Matos
וְשָׁמַע אָבִיָּה אֶת נִדְרָהּ



לע"נ

שמעון בן ישראל

Dedicated By:

ר' נחום אהרון & חיה

ליטשקאווסקי

To find more Maamarim and to dedicate one visit:

ChassidusNow.com

Alter Rebbe
Likkutei Torah
Parshas Matos - ושמע אביה את נדרה

Introduction

This discourse by the Alter Rebbe (Rabbi Shneur Zalman of Liadi, 1745–1812), founder of Chabad Chassidus and author of the Tanya and Shulchan Aruch HaRav, explores the deeper mystical meaning of the Torah laws related to annulment of vows (“הפרת נדרים”) as described in Parshas Matos. The Alter Rebbe delves into the soul’s entrapment by spiritual constrictions and the redemptive power of divine love. Through intricate layers of Kabbalah and Chassidus, he reveals how the interplay of *Iskafya* (subjugation) and *It’hapcha* (transformation) allows the soul to break free, culminating in the manifestation of the divine trait of “אהבה רבה” (abundant love) from the level of “אביה” (her Father). This discourse provides a blueprint for spiritual liberation through inner work, Torah, and the higher powers drawn down through teshuvah.

And her father heard her vow. To understand the matter of the “fine points of the scribes” (דקדוקי סופרים), we see that almost all of the Talmud is filled with laws and stringencies that the Sages enacted, adding many fences and safeguards to the Written Torah.

וּשְׁמַע אֲבִיהָ אֶת נִדְרָהּ. לְהַבִּין עֲנֵנוּ דְקָדוּקֵי סוּפְרִים שְׁאַנְחָנוּ רוּאִים כְּמַעֲט שְׁפָל הַתְּלִמּוּד מְלֵא מִהֶלְכוֹת וְחֻמְרוֹת שֶׁהִתְמִירוּ חֲזוֹ"ל וְהוֹסִיפוּ כְּמֵה גְדָרִים וְסִיגִים לַתּוֹרָה שֶׁבְּכֻתָּב.

And the matter is understood according to what our Sages said on the verse, “For Your love is better than wine” (Shir HaShirim 1:2): the Congregation of Israel said, “The words of the Scribes are more pleasing to me than the wine of Torah.” The meaning is: the “wine of Torah” refers to the inner dimension of Torah and its secrets—as our Sages said, “When wine enters, the secret emerges.” Yet even more pleasing to the Congregation of Israel are the words of the Scribes than the secrets of Torah.

וְהַעֲנֵנוּ מוֹבֵן כְּמֵה שְׁאַמְרוּ רַז"ל עַל פְּסוּק כִּי טוֹבִים דְּדִיד מִיַּיִן אֲמָרָה כְּנֶס"ת יִשְׂרָאֵל עֲרָבִים עָלֵי דְבָרֵי סוּפְרִים יוֹתֵר מִיַּיִן שֶׁל תּוֹרָה. פִּירוּשׁ יַיִן שֶׁל תּוֹרָה הוּא פְּנִימִיּוֹת הַתּוֹרָה וְסוּדוּתֶיהָ כְּמִשְׁ"ר רַז"ל נֶכְנֵס יַיִן יֵצֵא סוּד דִּ"ס עֲרָבִים עַל כְּנֶס"ת יִשְׂרָאֵל יוֹתֵר מִסּוּדוֹת הַתּוֹרָה.

For all the fences and stringencies in the words of our Sages, and the moral pathways in the Aggadah and Pirkei Avos—all of them are drawn from the level of great love (אהבה רבה), as it says: “I have loved you, says Hashem” (Malachi 1:2). (See also what is explained on the verse “because Hashem your God loves you” in the maamar beginning with “Lo Avah”).

כִּי כָל הַגְּדָרִים וְהַחֻמְרוֹת שֶׁבְּדִבְרֵי רַז"ל וּדְרָכֵי מוֹסֵר שֶׁבְּאַגְדוֹת וּפְרָקֵי אֲבוֹת כָּלֶם נִמְשָׁכִים מִבְּחִינַת אֲהֲבָה רַבָּה כְּמִשְׁ"שׁ אֲהֲבָתִי אֲתִכֶּם אָמַר ה' (וְעַיִן מֵה שֶׁכָּתוּב עַל פְּסוּק כִּי אֲהֲבָה ה' (אַלְהֵינוּ בְּד"ה לֹא אָבָה).

Like a man who, due to his great love for his son, is very exacting with him, adding additional protection with every possible safeguard and boundary—so that his son will be completely clean in every respect. He also desires greatly that the child find favor and grace to an even greater degree.

כְּמוֹ לְמִשְׁלַל אָדָם מִחֻמַּת אֲהֲבָתוֹ עַל בְּנוֹ מְדַקְדֵּק עִמּוֹ יוֹתֵר לְהוֹסִיף עָלָיו שְׁמִירָה מְעֻלָּה בְּסִיגִים וּגְדָרִים כָּכֵל הָאֲפֻשְׁרֵי בַעַל כְּרֹחוֹ שֶׁיִּהְיֶה מְנִקָּה מִכָּל וְכָל וְכֵן חֲפֵץ מְאֹד שְׂמִימָצָא חֵן וְשִׁכְל בְּיוֹתֵר שְׂאֵת.

Alter Rebbe

Likkutei Torah

Parshas Matos - ושמע אביה את נדרה

And like a pearl that is extremely precious—it is guarded with the highest level of protection, stored inside multiple containers. So too, because of Hashem's great love for us, He is stringent and meticulous with us through the "fine points of the Scribes." For these are His Torah, drawn from His abundant love, in the form of fences and safeguards—for our merit and for our good, that we may be clean before Him.

וּכְמוֹ לְמַשָּׁל מְרֻגְלִיּוֹת מֵהַ שְׂהִיָּא יְקָרָה בְּיוֹתֵר שׁוֹמְרָה בְּיוֹתֵר שְׁמִירָה מְעֻלָּה כְּלִי בְּתוֹךְ כְּלִי. כִּי מִחֲמַת גָּדֹל אֶהְבְּתוּ יִתְבָּרַךְ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מִחֲמִיר וּמִדְקָדֵק עָלֵינוּ בְּדִקְדּוּקֵי סוּפְרִים שֶׁהֵן הֵם דְּבָרֵי תוֹרָתוֹ הַנִּמְשָׁכִים מֵאַהֲבָה רַבָּה בְּסִיגִים וּגְדָרִים לְזַכּוֹתֵנוּ לְטוֹב לָנוּ שְׁנֵהֲיָה נְקִיִּים לְפָנָיו יִתְבָּרַךְ.

(See also what is written on the verse "blackened am I, yet beautiful" and see Midrash Rabbah on Parshas Shemos regarding "And the one who loves him, chastens him with blackness.")

וְעֵינֵינוּ מֵהַ שְׂכָתוֹב מְזֵה עַל פְּסוּקַי שְׁחֹרָה אֲנִי וְנִאֲנָה וְעֵינֵינוּ בְּרַבָּה רִישׁ פְּרֻשֵׁת שְׁמוֹת גְּבִי וְאוֹהֲבוֹ (שְׁחָרוּ מוֹסֵר).

And behold, in the time when the Beis HaMikdash stood, it was sufficient to follow only the Torah itself—for our spirit was faithful to Hashem, and the cords of our love were not drawn toward physical desires. It was easy then for the love of Hashem to be firmly implanted in the heart of every person, with enthusiasm for serving Hashem and learning His Torah—even without being aroused by an abundance of love.

וְהִנֵּה בְּזִמְנֵי שְׁפִית הַמִּקְדָּשׁ הָיָה קִיָּם הָיָה סִגִּי בְּדֹאורֵי יִתְאָר כִּי הָיָה נֶאֱמָנָה אֵת ה' רוּחָנוּ וְלֹא מִשְׁכָּנוּ חֲבֻלֵי עֲבוֹתוֹת אֶהְבְּתֵנוּ לְתַאֲוֹת גִּשְׁמִיּוֹת וְהָיָה בְּנִקְלָל לְהִיּוֹת אֶהְבֵּת ה' קְבוּעָה בְּלֵב כָּל אִישׁ לְהִיּוֹת בְּהִתְלַהֲבוֹת לְעִבּוּדֵי ה' וְתוֹרָתוֹ גַּם מִבְּלִי שְׁנִתְעוֹרֵר מִזֶּה אֶהְבֵּה רַבָּה.

But generation after generation, as the hearts became diminished from perfect service of Hashem with intense love and flaming fire—and we were burned by a foreign fire, with bodily loves and desires—these have so overwhelmed us that we can no longer serve Hashem with love unless we are aroused through an abundance of love brought about by the Sages' fine enactments and their stringencies in all their details.

אֲכַל דּוֹר אַחֵר דּוֹר כִּי נִתְמַעֲטוּ הַלְכָּבוֹת הַשְּׁלֵמוֹת בְּעִבּוּדֵי ה' בְּאַהֲבָה עֲזָה בְּרִשְׁפֵי אֵשׁ וְנִכְוִינוּ בְּאֵשׁ זָרָה בְּאַהֲבֹת וְתַאֲוֹת גּוֹפְנִיּוֹת וְכָל כִּי גָבְרוּ עָלֵינוּ עַד אֲשֶׁר לֹא נוֹכַל לְעִבּוֹד ה' בְּאַהֲבָה בְּלִתִּי שְׁנִתְעוֹרֵר מִזֶּה אֶהְבֵּה רַבָּה עַל יְדֵי דִקְדּוּקֵי סוּפְרִים וְחֲמִירָהּם בְּכָל פְּרִטְיָהּם.

Both in the aspect of "turn from evil" through all the stringencies in the Gemara and the Poskim, and in the aspect of "do good" through the words of Mussar in the Aggadah and the matters of Avos—such as a "good eye," that one should see his fellow favorably and not think evil in his heart; and likewise "a good heart" and "a good friend," etc.

הֵן בְּבַחֲיַנַת סוּר מִרָע בְּכָל הַחֲמֻרוֹת שְׂבִיגְמָרָא וּפְסָקִים וְהֵן בְּבַחֲיַנַת וַעֲשֵׂה טוֹב בְּדְבָרֵי מוֹסֵר שְׂבִיגְמוֹת וּמִלֵּי דְאֲבוֹת עֵינֵי טוֹבָה שְׂיִרְאָה אֵת חֲבֵרוֹ בְּטוֹב עֵינֵי וְרַעַת רַעַהוּ אֵל יִחַשֵׁב בְּלִבּוֹ וְכֵן לֵב טוֹב וְחֵבֵר טוֹב כו'.

Alter Rebbe

Likkutei Torah

Parshas Matos - ושמע אביה את נדריה

(And see what is written in the discourse beginning “כה תברכו את” בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל in the explanation of the verse “How could I not show favor to Israel...”—for they are exacting upon themselves down to the smallest measure, like an olive’s bulk, etc. It is found that because the Congregation of Israel is exacting upon themselves to be stringent beyond what is stated in the Written Torah, from this is drawn the aspect of “Yisa Hashem Panav”—“May Hashem lift His countenance”—which is the level of *Abundant Love* (אַהֲבָה רַבָּה), beyond the order of spiritual progression (hishtalshelus), and this level is drawn to you directly—so that this abundant love will be revealed in man as well.

And as is also written in the discourse beginning “שחורה אני” mentioned above, that through this even the animal soul is elevated, etc., see there. And see also what is written on Parshas Miketz in the discourse beginning “כי אתה נרי” regarding “And behold, in earlier generations...”—but in the later generations... And this is the meaning of the verse “And Hashem shall illuminate my darkness...”—and see there—that it comes from a level higher than the order of hishtalshelus.

And this is the concept of “Yisa Hashem Panav Eilecha”—“May Hashem lift His face toward you”—and this comes about through one being exacting upon themselves, as it says in the *Raaya Mehemna* on Parshas Pinchas (Zohar III 238b), that this is the level of “He will carry him on His pinions,” which is higher than what is drawn through the 248 commandments, which are the 248 limbs of the King.

And see in the Gemara Megillah (27b and 28a) regarding the question “And by what merit did you live a long life?”—see there. And see also what is written elsewhere on the explanation of the saying “Whoever lengthens the word ‘Echad’ [in Shema], his days are lengthened for him,” etc.

And this is what is written: “And her father hears her vow, etc.,” “her father annulled her”—that the father annuls the vow, for it is from the level of *Abundant Love* (אַהֲבָה רַבָּה) that he annuls, as the Targum renders: “He nullified” all the prohibitions and bondages through which the Congregation of Israel is bound and tied, and “a prisoner cannot free himself”—only through the attribute of *Abundant Love*, the level of “her father.”

ועין מה שכתוב בדברי המתחיל כה תברכו את בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל בפירוש איד לא אשא פנים לישׂרָאֵל כו' והם מדקדקים על עצמן עד דזית כו'. נמצא שעל ידי שפנס"ת ישראל מדקדקים על עצמן להחמיר על עצמן ביותר ממה שכתוב בתורה שבכתב מזה נמשך בחינת ישא ה' פניו שהוא בחינת אהבה רבה שלמעלה מהשתלשלות כו' ונמשך בחינה זו אליה ממש להיות גילוי אהבה רבה זו גם באדם.

וכמו שכתוב גם כן בדברי המתחיל שחורה אני ונאנה הנ"ל שעל ידי זה תתעלה הנפש הבהמית גם כו' עין שם. ועין מה שכתוב בפרשת מקץ דברי המתחיל כי אתה נרי גבי והנה בדורות הראשונים כו' אבל דורות האחרונים כו'. וזהו וה' יגיד חשכי כו' ועין שם שהוא למעלה מסדר ההשתלשלות.

וזהו ענין ישא ה' פניו אליה והינו על ידי שמדקדקים על עצמן וכמו שכתוב ברעיא מהימנא בפרשת פינחס (דף רל"ח ע"ב) שהוא בחינת ישאהו על אברתו שהוא למעלה ממה שנמשך על ידי רמ"ח פקודין דאינון רמ"ח אברין דמלכא.

ועין בגמרא במגילה (דף כ"ז ע"ב ודף כ"ח ע"א) גבי ובמה הארכת ימים כו' יש לראות שם. ועין מה שכתוב במקום אחר בפירוש כל המאריך באחד מארכיון לו ימיו כו'.

וזהו שכתוב ושמע אביה את נדריה כו' הניא אביה אותה שהאב מפר את הנדר כי מבחינת אהבה רבה הוא מפר בתרגומו מבטל כל האיסורים והקישורים אשר כנס"ת ישראל היא אסורה וקשורה ואין חבוש מתיר עצמו כי אם על-ידי מדת אהבה רבה בחינת אביה.

Alter Rebbe

Likkutei Torah

Parshas Matos - ושמע אביה את נדרה

(And the matter of the prohibitions by which she is bound and tied—this can be explained as the weakness of the soul's strength, that it does not have the power to leave its confinement and bondage, etc.—the coarseness of the body and the animal soul—as explained elsewhere in the discourse beginning “In the third month” on Parshas Yisro, and there it is explained that through Torah is drawn strength and power to the soul to nullify these bondages, etc. And elsewhere it is explained that these bondages are called *sirchos* (strangulations) in the *Raaya Meheimna*, through which the soul becomes entangled and therefore cannot ascend, etc.—see there in the discourse beginning “Who is a G-d like You.”)

And it can be said that the annulment of vows on Yom Kippur is that through teshuvah, the annulment and nullification of these bondages is drawn, and the revelation of *Abundant Love* in the soul, etc.

Additionally, it can be said regarding the concept that “the father annuls,” that it is similar to what is said in Zohar, Parshas Emor (96b), about “in a time when it is taken from the house of the father, and not from the house of the mother”—because from the levels of *Binah* and *Daas* comes *subjugation* of the Other Side (*Iskafya Sitra Achra*), and this is the idea of vows: “a fence for abstinence.”

But to achieve *transformation* of darkness to light (*It'hapcha Choshech L'Nehorah*) cannot come from Binah, from which judgments are aroused—but only from the level of *Chochmah Ila'ah* (Supernal Wisdom), and “Chochmah gives life”—this is the nullification that transcends comprehension and knowledge, etc., as explained in the discourse beginning “See, I place before you.”

And this is the meaning of “her father annuls”—that He transforms darkness into light. And from this level is also drawn the concept of “if she will be to a man” mentioned above—see there in the Zohar.

וענין האיסורים שהיא אסורה וקשורה בהן יש לומר דהינו חלישות כח הנפש שאין בכחה לצאת מנרתקה ומאסורה כו' חוקריות הגוף ונפש הבהמית, וכמו שכתוב במקום אחר בדברי המתחיל בחדש השלישי בפרשת יתרו ושמ נתבאר שעל ידי התורה נמשך כח ועוז לנפש לבטל קישורים אלו כו' ובמקום אחר נתבאר דקישורים אלו נקראים סירכות ברענא מהימנא שהנפש מסתבכת בהן ועל ידי זה אינה יכולה (לעלות כו' בדברי המתחיל מי א-ל כמוד

ויש לומר שהפרת נדרים ביום הכפורים הינו שעל ידי התשובה נמשך בחינת הפרה ובטול הקישורים וגילוי האהבה רבה בנפש כו'

ועוד יש לומר בענין שהאב מפר והוא על דרך מה שכתוב בזהר פרשת אמור (ד"ף צ"ו ע"ב) גבי בזמנא דנטלא מבית אבא ולא בזמנא דנטלי מבית אמא, כי מבחינת הבינה והדעת נמשך להיות אתכפא סטרא אחרא, וזהו ענין הנדרים סגן לפרישות.

אבל להיות אתהפכא חשוכא לנהורא ממש אי אפשר להיות מבחינת בינה שמינה דינין מתערין, אלא מבחינת חכמה עילאה והחכמה תחיה, והוא הבטול שלמעלה מהשגה ודעת כו' כמבואר בדברי המתחיל ראה אנכי נותן

וזהו שהאב מפר ומתפך חשוכא לנהורא ומבחינת זו נמשך גם כן בחינת ואם היו תהיה לאיש הנזכר למעלה וראה בזהר שם

Alter Rebbe

Likkutei Torah

Parshas Matos - וְשָׁמַע אָבִיהָ אֶת נִדְרָהּ

But the meaning of “and her father hears her vow” is that through *Iskafya* (initial subjugation)—which is the idea of vows—there then follows a revelation of the level of “her father,” bringing about *It’hapcha* (transformation) of darkness into light.

And see also more about the concept of “her father” in Pardes, Gate Five, Chapter Three. And this is also what it says, “And Moshe spoke to the heads of the tribes, etc., saying, *this is the thing*, etc.”—that through saying *this is the thing*, which comes from the level of Moshe, through this the vow can be annulled.

And the “heads of the tribes” refer to the *Will of the Heart* (*Re’usa d’Liba*)—*Abundant Love*—as explained above.

אָבִי פִירוּשׁ וְשָׁמַע אָבִיהָ אֶת נִדְרָהּ הִנּוּ שְׁעַל-יָדֵי
אֶתְפָּקֵא בְּתַחֲלָה שֶׁזֶּהוּ עֲנִינוּ הַנִּדְרִים מִזֶּה נִמְשָׁךְ
אַחֵר כִּדּוּלֵי בְּחִינַת אָבִיהָ לְהִיּוֹת אֶתְהַפָּקֵא
חֲשׂוֹכָא לְנִהוּרָא.

וְעִינֵינוּ עוֹד מֵעֲנִינוּ בְּחִינַת אָבִיהָ בְּפֶרֶד"ס שֶׁעַר
חֲמִישִׁי פֶּרֶק ג'. וְזֶהוּ גַם כֵּן וְיִדְבֵּר מֹשֶׁה אֶל רֹאשֵׁי
הַמִּטּוֹת כו' לֵאמֹר זֶה הַדְּבָר כו' שְׁעַל יָדֵי לֵאמֹר
זֶה הַדְּבָר שֶׁמִּבְּחִינַת מֹשֶׁה עַל יָדֵי זֶה יוּכַל לְהַתֵּר
אֶת הַנִּדָּר כו'.

גַּם רֹאשֵׁי הַמִּטּוֹת הוּא בְּחִינַת רְעוּתָא דְלִבָּא אֲהֵבָה
רַבָּה וְכִמוּ שֶׁמִּבּוֹאֵר לְמַעַלָּה.

[NOTE Summary]

The discourse opens with the verse “וְשָׁמַע אָבִיהָ אֶת נִדְרָהּ... וְה' יִשָּׂא פָנָיו אֵלֶיהָ”—interpreting the father’s annulment of the vow as a metaphor for divine intervention in response to the soul’s self-imposed limitations. The “father” represents the divine attribute of *Abundant Love* (אֲהֵבָה), which transcends the structured system of reward and punishment (*seder hishtalshelus*) and is capable of completely nullifying the inner entanglements (*sirchos*) that bind the soul.

These entanglements are described as the soul’s inability to escape the grip of materiality—the body, the animal soul, and spiritual inertia. When the soul lacks strength, it becomes a “prisoner” that cannot free itself. The Alter Rebbe explains that the Torah gives power to break these chains, but more deeply, it is אֲהֵבָה רַבָּה—unconditional divine love—that ultimately liberates the soul. This divine love is revealed especially through teshuvah and on Yom Kippur, where annulment of vows is spiritually equivalent to nullifying the soul’s entrapments.

The discourse contrasts two stages of spiritual refinement:

1. **Iskafya (subjugation)** — restraint and discipline, aligned with the attribute of *Binah*, which enables separation from evil (e.g., making vows as fences).
2. **It’hapcha (transformation)** — the total transformation of darkness into light, which can only come from *Chochmah Ila’ah* (Supernal Wisdom), where there is complete self-nullification (*bittul*) beyond understanding.

The Alter Rebbe explains that only the divine “father” (אָבִיהָ)—not the “mother” (*Binah*)—can annul the soul’s vows and transform its darkness. Thus, the act of annulment isn’t merely technical—it’s the manifestation of infinite love, lifting the soul to divine heights. Moshe and the “heads of the tribes” (רֹאשֵׁי הַמִּטּוֹת) symbolize this channel of divine will and compassion, with Moshe’s words “זֶה הַדְּבָר” enabling the release from constriction.

Alter Rebbe
Likkutei Torah
Parshas Matos - וְשָׁמַע אֲבִיָּה אֶת נִדְרָהּ

Practical Takeaway

When you feel spiritually stuck—trapped by habits, distractions, or emotional darkness—you cannot always free yourself through intellect or willpower alone. The path forward often begins with small acts of restraint (*Iskafya*) and moral commitment (vows). But true transformation (*It'hapcha*)—the turning of darkness into light—comes when you open yourself to Hashem's unconditional love. This אהבה רבה, symbolized by the “father” in the verse, is aroused when you go beyond the minimum, adding personal stringencies and heartfelt sincerity in your avodah. In doing so, you draw down the deepest divine compassion, enabling you to transcend your limitations and reconnect with your divine source.

Chassidic Story

Once, a man came to the Alter Rebbe, brokenhearted, explaining that he had failed in his spiritual commitments and had fallen into despair. “I made many resolutions,” he wept, “but I always return to the same darkness. I cannot free myself.”

The Alter Rebbe responded with surprising gentleness. “Indeed, a prisoner cannot release himself. But when the soul cries out from its exile, the Father hears. And from a place higher than justice and logic, He comes and lifts His child.”

Then the Rebbe leaned forward and said, “The annulment of your vow is not only legal—it is divine. Your sincerity draws down a love beyond comprehension. Hold to that. Even if you only manage *Iskafya* today, it will become *It'hapcha* tomorrow.”

This encounter became a cornerstone of the Chassid's life, and he later told his children: “My Rebbe taught me that even the vow of despair can be annulled—if it reaches the Father.”

Source: *Shemuos V'Sippurim* Vol. 1, p. 22 (story adapted with minor expansion).

TPX (Therapeutic-Psychological Integration)

This discourse by the Alter Rebbe presents a profound therapeutic model for understanding spiritual entrapment, inner transformation, and the healing power of unconditional love.

At its core, the maamar describes the human condition as one of **inner bondage**—states of being where a person feels spiritually, emotionally, or behaviorally stuck. The soul is “bound by vows,” meaning it is entangled in patterns it cannot easily escape: trauma loops, addiction cycles, depression, or even just the crushing weight of routine and shame. The language of “אין חבוש מתיר” (“a prisoner cannot release himself”) acknowledges a critical therapeutic truth: **self-help has limits when one is deeply imprisoned by their own psyche.**

The maamar offers a psychological roadmap:

1. **Subjugation (אתכפיה)** – This refers to the client's initial effort to restrain themselves. In therapeutic terms, it's the practice of impulse control, mindfulness, and boundary-setting.

Alter Rebbe

Likkutei Torah

Parshas Matos - וְשָׁמַע אֲבִיָּה אֶת נִדְרָהּ

The Alter Rebbe aligns this with the *Binah* state—the analytical, discerning mind, which creates “vows” (safeguards) to distance oneself from harmful behaviors. But this mode, while essential, is limited—it only suppresses darkness; it does not transform it.

2. **Transformation (אתהפכת חשוכא לנהורא)** – True healing, however, is not about suppression. It’s about **metabolizing darkness into light**. The maamar insists that this deeper transformation can only come from a higher place—*Chochmah Ila’ah*, or supernal wisdom—which represents **radical surrender**, not cognition. In therapy, this is the moment of breakthrough where a client no longer fights the darkness but integrates it—realizing they are not defined by their past, by their thoughts, or even by their wounds.
3. **Abundant Love (אהבה רבה)** – Here lies the therapeutic pivot: **healing is not earned through performance; it is drawn down through love**. The maamar explains that only “the father” can annul the vow—meaning, the soul is freed when it receives unconditional, compassionate regard from a source beyond itself. In therapy, this may be mirrored by the role of the therapist or safe attachment figures, but ultimately it models how God’s love operates in the human psyche. Teshuvah (return) becomes not merely an act of guilt but a **relational surrender** to a love that precedes the brokenness.
4. **Moshe and the Heads of the Tribes** – These figures symbolize archetypes of leadership, inner will (*Re’usa d’Liba*), and transcendence. The therapist (or inner Moshe) facilitates the articulation of “זה הדבר” — clear truth — which itself can dissolve the vow. Language, as in narrative therapy, is transformative when spoken from a place of aligned will and heart.

In sum, this discourse reframes religious concepts like sin, vows, and annulment into a powerful psychological framework. It affirms that **the soul is not condemned by its past or its patterns**. By aligning with divine compassion (אהבה רבה), and transitioning from behavioral suppression to self-transcendent transformation, the human being can achieve deep inner release.

Story

A young woman who had struggled with years of self-harm once came to a trauma specialist. “I made so many promises to stop,” she said. “But each time I fall, I hate myself more. It’s like there’s a vow inside me I can’t break.”

The therapist gently responded, “You’re not failing because you’re weak. You’re bound. But you’re not alone. Healing doesn’t come from willpower alone—it comes from being seen, held, and loved, even in your darkness.”

Over months, as trust built, the woman began to cry in front of someone for the first time in years. She later reflected, “The moment things changed wasn’t when I stopped hurting myself. It

Alter Rebbe**Likkutei Torah****Parshas Matos - וְשָׁמַע אֲבִיָּה אֶת נִדְרָהּ**

was when someone saw me in that state and didn't flinch. That love undid something inside me I didn't know could be undone."

Source: Clinical case inspired by composite narratives from trauma-informed therapy (based on Bessel van der Kolk's *The Body Keeps the Score*, pp. 215–219). **END NOTE]**