

בס"ד

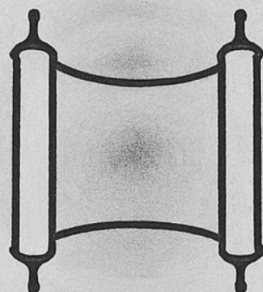
Tzemach Tzedek

Ohr HaTorah

Parshas Ki Savo

וְהָיָה כִּי תָבֹא &

הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה יוֹם כְּנִיסַתוֹ לְאֶרֶץ



Dedicated To:

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וְהָיָה כִּי תָבוֹא & הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה יוֹם כְּנִיסַתְךָ לְאֶרֶץ

וְהָיָה כִּי תָבוֹא הַהַמְשָׁכָה מִלְמַעְלָה לְמַטָּה אֶל הָאָרֶץ עָלְיוֹנָה עַד מָה שְׁאָמַר בְּפֶרֶשׁת בְּהַר בְּפִירוּשׁ
כִּי תָבוֹא כו'

And it shall be, when the drawing down comes from Above to below into the higher land, as it is written in Parshas Behar in the explanation of “When you come...”

Then, “and you shall place it in a basket,” meaning to enclothe the drawing down within the Taamim, Nekudos, and Osyos of the written letters.

אָזי וְשִׁמְתָּ בַטֶּבֶל הַהַמְשָׁכָה בְּטַעֲמִים
נְקוּדוֹת אוֹתִיּוֹת שְׂבֻכָתָב

For the drawing down is from the level of engraved letters above TaNaNTa (Taamim, Nekudos, Tagin, Osyos) that are revealed, or from the level of the shofar sound above the letters.

כִּי הַהַמְשָׁכָה מְבַחֶינָת אוֹתִיּוֹת הַחִקְיָה שְׁלִמְעָלָה
מְטַנְתָּא הַגְּלוּיּוֹת אוֹ מְבַחֶינָת קוֹל שׁוֹפָר שְׁלִמְעָלָה
מְאוֹתִיּוֹת

Only, “and you shall place it in a basket,” for it is good to hide it, as in “Take with you words...”

רַק וְשִׁמְתָּ בַטֶּבֶל כִּי טוֹב לְגַנוּז עַל דְּרָךְ קַחוּ עִמָּכֶם
דְּבָרִים כו'

[NOTE Summary

The Tzemach Tzedek begins by explaining that when the Torah says “And it shall be, when you come into the land” (Ki Savo), it refers not only to the literal entry into Eretz Yisrael, but to a spiritual drawing down of Divine light. This descent is from the highest levels Above into the “supernal land,” which signifies the realm of revelation in holiness. The verse continues “and you shall place it in a basket,” symbolizing that this lofty Divine energy must be clothed and preserved in a vessel — the Taamim (cantillation), Nekudos (vowels), and Osyos (letters) of Torah. These are the revealed forms of expression that allow the hidden essence of holiness to be received.

The discourse emphasizes that the source of this flow comes from a level beyond revelation — either from the engraved letters (a state higher than written letters) or even from the voice of the shofar, which transcends letters altogether. Precisely because of its greatness, the Torah says it must be “placed in a basket,” meaning it must be hidden and safeguarded, as expressed in the verse “Take with you words.” The essence is that the deepest revelations of Godliness must descend and become integrated into vessels of Torah study and mitzvah observance.

Practical Takeaway

Divine inspiration cannot remain as lofty feelings or unstructured spirituality. It must be channeled and concretized into words of Torah and actions of mitzvos. When a person has moments of deep inspiration — like during prayer, on Shabbos, or at special times in life — he must “place it in a basket,” ensuring that these experiences are preserved in practical observance and daily life. That is how the highest light is safeguarded and carried forward.

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Chassidic Story

It is told that the Tzemach Tzedek once spent hours in deep dveikus during Yom Kippur, completely absorbed in lofty states of holiness. Afterward, he turned to his Chassidim and said: “All the sublime revelations and visions that one may experience are nothing if they are not carried down into the physical world through Torah and mitzvos.” He then began teaching a halachic discussion on the laws of sukkah, emphasizing that holiness must be brought into action.

This story reflects the teaching of “placing it in the basket”: the loftiest inspiration must not remain above, but must be grounded in the revealed letters and deeds of Torah.

END NOTE]

Introduction

This discourse of the Tzemach Tzedek (Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneersohn, 1789–1866, the third Rebbe of Chabad, grandson and successor of the Alter Rebbe, and father of the Rebbe Maharash) explores the deeper meaning of the verse “And it shall be, when you come into the land” (Ki Savo). The Tzemach Tzedek lived in Lubavitch and served as Rebbe for 32 years. His followers treasured his ability to integrate halacha, Kabbalah, and Chassidus.

Here, he interprets “entering the land” not only as a physical entry into Eretz Yisrael but as the soul’s work of drawing Divine light into vessels. The land becomes a metaphor for the Jewish people, who are called “a desirable land.” By analyzing mitzvos as garments, fruits, and seeds, the discourse shows how Divine will — rooted above intellect — becomes manifest in action

“And it shall be, when you come... the fruit of the ground...” — “Israel is holy to Hashem, the first of His produce.” Behold, mitzvos are described in the Zohar as garments, and in the Gemara at the end of Sotah they are called fruits, and in the verse “Sow for yourselves charity, sowers upon all waters.”

וְהָיָה כִּי תָבֹוא וְגו' פָּרִי הָאֲדָמָה כו', קֹדֶשׁ יִשְׂרָאֵל
 רֵאשִׁית תְּבוּאָתָהּ, הִנֵּה הַמִּצְוֹת נֶאֱמַר בְּזֵהָר שֵׁהֵם
 בְּחֵינֵת לְבוּשִׁים וּבְגָמִי סוּף סוּטָה נִקְרָא פְרוֹת
 וּבַפְסוּק זֹרְעֵי אֲדָקוֹת זֹרְעֵי עַל כָּל מָיִם

The idea is: Hashem desired to have a dwelling below. For there is Memale and Sovev, and the one hundred blessings are the flow of Sovev — “Bless the house of Israel.” This is because within each Jew lies the power of mesirus nefesh. Yet this is in speech; it must also be in action — and that is through the performance of mitzvos.

וְהַעֲנִין כִּי נִתְאַוָּה לְהִיּוֹת לוֹ דִּירָה בְּתַחְתּוֹנִים כִּי יֵשׁ
 מְמַלָּא וְסוֹבֵב וּמְאַה בְּרִכּוֹת הַמְשֻׁכּוֹת סוֹבֵב בֵּית
 יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּרָכוֹ וְהִינּוּ לְפִי שְׂיֵשׁ בְּכָל אֶהָד בְּכַח לְמִסִּירַת
 נֶפֶשׁ, אָבֵל זֶהוּ בְּדָבָר וְאָבֵל צָרִיךְ לְהִיּוֹת בְּמַעֲשֵׂה וְהוּא
 עַל יְדֵי מַעֲשֵׂה הַמִּצְוֹת

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This is like the example of garden seeds: even though they themselves are not eaten, from them sprouts fruit, and this is through the vegetative power in the earth. So too, “sow charity and cause salvations to sprout.” And this is through the Jewish people, for “you shall be a desirable land.”

For the main desire and supernal will is to have a dwelling below, and this is through “Your Kingship.” There is no king without a people — the bittul of ego that exists within Jews, unlike angels who are not as separate. This is “A woman who fears Hashem, she shall be praised.”

And this is the meaning of “He came here and his learning was in his hand” — i.e., that it was absorbed into the earth. Therefore it is called “the first of His produce,” the vegetative power, unlike the category of “speaking beings,” man.

(See in the Siddur regarding Birkas HaMazon and Bris Milah.)

And this is the meaning of the giving of the land to Avraham — that he and his children after him were given this power, to be the “desirable land.”

For this level above is the attribute of His blessed Kingship, which is called the supernal land, that has the power to create something from nothing. And this is because it is a “desirable land,” as it is written, “All that He desired, He did,” for the end is bound up with the beginning. Within it is revealed the desire and the supernal will for the nullification of self, and therefore it brings into being existence from nothing, as explained above.

And chiefly, chafetz is the inwardness of the will, to bring about the nullification of self. And this was given to Avraham as an inheritance — that the power of his self-sacrifice should effect salvations, like the vegetative power. Also, within him was given this level of desire for mesirus nefesh, which is above intellect, and is called “land” — meaning desire.

And regarding this it is said, “The land is very, very good.” For through this is drawn the revelation of the infinite light. The double “very”: one refers to the nullification in “with all your might,” and the second to the expansion — “Your commandment is very broad.”

וּכְמִשְׁלַל זְרַעוֹנֵי גֵינֵה אֶרֶץ שְׂאִינָם נֶאֱכָלִין נִצְמַח מִזֶּה פְרִי וְהֵינּוּ עַל יְדֵי כַח הַצּוֹמֵחַ שֶׁבְּאֶרֶץ כְּמוֹ כֵּן זוֹרְעֵי צְדָקוֹת לְהֵיוֹת מְצַמִּיחַ יְשׁוּעוֹת, וְהֵינּוּ עַל יְדֵי נִשְׂ"י כִּי תִהְיֶה אִתָּם אֶרֶץ חֲפֵץ

וְהוּא כִּי עֶקֶר הַחֲפֵץ וְרִצּוֹן עֲלִיוֹן לְהֵיוֹת דִּירָה בְּתַחְתּוֹנִים וְהֵינּוּ עַל יְדֵי מְלֻכּוּתָהּ אֵין מֶלֶךְ בְּלֹא עִם בְּטוֹל הַיֵּשׁ שֵׁישׁ בְּנִשְׂ"י מֵה שְׂאִיִּן כֵּן מְלֻאָכִים אֵינָם נִפְרָדִים כֹּל כֶּה, וְזֶהוּ אִשָּׁה יִרְאת כו' הִיא תִתְהַלֵּל

וְזֶהוּ בָּא לְכַאֵן וְתִלְמוּדוֹ בְּיָדוֹ פְרוֹשׁ שֶׁנֶּקְלַט בְּאֶרֶץ, וְלָכֵן נִקְרָא רֵאשִׁית תְּבוּאָתוֹ כַּח הַצּוֹמֵחַ, מֵה שְׂאִיִּן כֵּן בְּחֵינֵת מְדַבֵּר הָעַמִּי'

ע' בְּסִידוּר גְּבִי בְרַכַּת הַמְּזוֹן וּמִיָּלָה (וְזֶהוּ עֲנִין נְתִיבֵת) הָאֶרֶץ לְאַבְרָהָם, שֶׁנִּתְּנָה לוֹ וְלִזְרַעוֹ אַחֲרָיו כַּח זֶה שִׁיְהֵי בְּחֵינֵת אֶרֶץ חֲפֵץ

כִּי בְּחֵינָה זֶה לְמַעְלָה הִיא מִדַּת מְלֻכוּתוֹ יִתְבַּרַךְ שֶׁנִּקְרָאת אֶרֶץ עֵילָאָה שֵׁישׁ בָּהּ הַכַּח לְחַדֵּשׁ יֵשׁ מֵאֵין וְהֵינּוּ מִשׁוּם שֶׁהִיא אֶרֶץ חֲפֵץ כִּמְה שֶׁכְּתוּב כֹּל אִשָּׁר חֲפֵץ עֲשֶׂה כִּי נְעוּץ סוּפֵן כו' שֶׁבָּה גְלוֹי חֲפֵץ וְרִצּוֹן הָעֲלִיוֹן לְהֵיוֹת בְּטוֹל הַיֵּשׁ וְלָכֵן מִהֵנָּה מֵאֵין לֵישׁ כְּנִ"ל

וְחֲפֵץ הוּא פְּנִימִיּוֹת הַרִצּוֹן לְהֵיוֹת בְּטוֹל הַיֵּשׁ, וְזֶה נִתֵּן לְאַבְרָהָם לְאַחֲזָה שִׁיְהֵי כַח מְסִירַת נַפְשׁוֹ פּוֹעֵל יְשׁוּעוֹת כְּמוֹ כַּח הַצּוֹמֵחַ, וְגַם שֶׁנִּתֵּן בוֹ בְּחֵינֵת רִצּוֹן זֶה לְמְסִירוֹת נַפְשׁ שֶׁהוּא לְמַעְלָה מִהַשְׂכָּל וְנִקְרָא אֶרֶץ לְשׁוֹן רִצּוֹן כו'

וְעַל זֶה נֶאֱמַר טוֹבָה הָאֶרֶץ מְאֹד מְאֹד שֶׁעַל יְדֵי זֶה נִמְשָׁךְ בְּחֵינֵת גְלוֹי אֹר אֵין סוּף, וּבְפַעְעִמִּים מְאֹד: אֶחָד הַבְּטוֹל בְּכָל מְאֹדָה וְהַשְּׁנִי הַצְּמִיחָה רִחְבָּה מְצוּתָהּ מְאֹד

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And this is “a land which the eyes of Hashem your God are upon it, from the beginning of the year...” (see Iggeres HaKodesh), that in each year a new light is drawn into the souls of Israel, for they are called “land.”

However, it must be “when you come into the land.” For behold, even though the levels of love and fear are drawn from Above, from the supernal land, into the souls of Israel — and therefore it is called “the land of life,” as it says, “Fear of Hashem is life,” and “Your kindness is from life,” and “by his faith he shall live.”

Nevertheless, there must be preparation for this — “when you come...” For there is “desire” and “desire”: there is desire that extends from the intellect and contemplation, and this serves as a vessel for the supernal desire.

And it is like the parable: “One who kills the snake is given the daughter of the king.” And this is the “land flowing with milk and honey” — “How beautiful...” And this is “which I give to you.”

[NOTE Summary

The Tzemach Tzedek begins by teaching that the phrase “And it shall be, when you come into the land” refers to the descent of Divine revelation from Above into the “supernal land.” This revelation, beyond letters and even the shofar’s primal sound, must be “placed in a basket” — clothed within the revealed forms of Torah: Taamim, Nekudos, and Osyos.

Mitzvos, the Zohar says, are garments, while the Talmud calls them fruits. Just as garden seeds are not eaten themselves yet produce edible fruit through the earth’s power, so too mitzvos draw forth salvation and blessing through the power given to the Jewish people — for “you shall be a desirable land.” The ultimate Divine desire is to have a dwelling below, and this is realized through Jewish self-nullification and mitzvah performance, not through angels. Hence, Israel is called “the first of His produce,” the unique power of the earth to bring forth new life.

This power was given to Avraham Avinu as an inheritance, enabling mesirus nefesh to bring about salvations, like the vegetative force that transforms a seed into abundant fruit. The “land” symbolizes ratzon (will) — a will beyond intellect, the inner essence of God’s desire for self-nullification. This is “the land is very, very

וְהָיָה אֶרֶץ אֲשֶׁר כּוֹ עֵינֵי ה' אֶלְקֵיךָ בָּהּ מֵרֵאשִׁית
הַשָּׁנָה כּוֹ (עַי בְּאַגְרַת הַקֹּדֶשׁ), שֶׁכָּכֵל שָׁנָה נִמְשָׁךְ אֹר
חֵדָשׁ בְּנֶשֶׁ"י שֶׁהֵם בְּחִינַת אֶרֶץ

אֶבֶל צְרִיף לְהִיּוֹת כִּי תָבוֹא אֶל הָאֶרֶץ, כִּי הֵנָּה הַגֵּם
שֶׁבְחִינּוֹת אֶהְבֶּה וְיִרְאֶה נִמְשָׁכוֹת מִלְמַעְלָה מֵאֶרֶץ
הָעֲלִיּוֹנָה לְנֶשֶׁ"י וְלָכֵן נִקְרָאת אֶרֶץ הַחַיִּים כִּי כְּתִיב
יִרְאת ה' לַחַיִּים וְכֵן חֲסֻדָּה מִחַיִּים וּבְאֻמִּינּוֹתוֹ יִתְּנָה

וּכְנִ"ל שֶׁרָצוֹן זֶה שֶׁרָשׁוּ מִבְּחִינַת רָצוֹן הָעֲלִיּוֹן
שֶׁלְמַעְלָה מֵהַשָּׁכֵל, מִכָּל מְקוֹם צְרִיף הַכְּנָה לְזֶה כִּי
תָבוֹא כּוֹ כִּי אֵית רָצוֹן וְאֵית רָצוֹן, אֵית רָצוֹן הַנִּמְשָׁךְ
מֵהַשָּׁכֵל וְהַתְּבוֹנָנוֹת וְהוּא כָּלִי לְרָצוֹן הָעֲלִיּוֹן

וְעַל דֶּרֶךְ מְשָׁל מֵאֵן דְּקָטִיל לְחוּוִיָּא יִתְבִּין לִיה בְּרַתָּא
דְּמִלְפָּא, וְהִיא אֶרֶץ זֹבַת חֶלֶב וְדָבַשׁ מֵה יִפִּית כּוֹ וְזֶהוּ
אֲשֶׁר אָנִי נוֹתֵן לָךְ

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good”: one “very” signifies self-nullification in “with all your might,” and the second the infinite expansion of mitzvos, “Your commandment is very broad.”

Each year, a new Divine light descends into the souls of Israel, for they are the “land” that receives it. Yet there must also be preparation: “When you come into the land” requires a lower form of will that comes through contemplation and intellect, which serves as a vessel for the supernal will above intellect. As the parable says: “One who kills the serpent is given the daughter of the king” — the reward for effort is access to the highest levels, the “land flowing with milk and honey,” the inheritance granted by Hashem.

Practical Takeaway

The highest Divine inspiration cannot remain lofty and abstract. It must be absorbed into vessels — words of Torah, mitzvos, and daily actions. Each Jew carries the power of “earth” — the ability to take seeds of Divine will and bring them into tangible reality. The lesson is that self-sacrifice, humility, and commitment to mitzvos are what draw the infinite light of Hashem into the world, year after year. To “enter the land” is to prepare ourselves through study and contemplation so that we can become vessels for supernal desire.

Chassidic Story

The Tzemach Tzedek once said to his Chassidim after a deep maamar: “One may soar in dveikus and grasp sublime levels, but if it does not enter vessels of Torah and mitzvos, it will not endure.” To illustrate, he told of his grandfather, the Alter Rebbe, who after long hours of fiery prayer would immediately begin teaching a halachic sugya. When asked why he shifted so quickly from such lofty states to legal discussion, he explained: “The fire must be placed in wood, or it will dissipate.”

This mirrors the teaching of “placing it in a basket”: the highest revelations must be clothed in concrete mitzvah action to endure and bear fruit.

END NOTE]

Introduction

Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson, the Tzemach Tzedek (1789–1866), grandson of the Alter Rebbe and third Rebbe of Chabad, led in Lubavitch for 32 years. He was known for his ability to unify halachah, Kabbalah, and Chassidus, weaving them into a seamless whole. In this discourse on the verse “And it shall be, when you come into the land” (Ki Savo), he explains that “entering the land” is not only about physical inheritance, but about drawing Divine light into vessels — making a dwelling for Hashem in this world through Torah, mitzvos, and the inner work of the soul.

Tzemach Tzedek

Ohr HaTorah

Parshas Ki Savo

וְהָיָה כִּי תָבֹוא & הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה יוֹם כְּנִיסַתְךָ לְאֶרֶץ

On this day, the day of their entry into the Land (a land flowing with milk and honey, as in the previous verse), He commands you to establish a covenant. For “the land” is Torah shebaal peh, and “man” is Israel — Torah shebichsav. And “the land is the footstool of My feet,” yet the foot belongs to man, from a high place. For “flowing with milk and honey” refers to the final outcome, all through the completion of the palace of knowledge and intent.

(To note: “and honey” — Shemos 562, “A beautiful thing for one hour,” and also “it transforms bitterness...”; so too Torah shebaal peh, “its light returns him,” for “extra understanding was given to woman” — Torah shebaal peh, speech; Rosh Hashanah, awe. For the positive commandments of the Oral Torah, this is also “and honey”: severities sweetened in kindness.)

And there must be a covenant cut below, like the second blessing which is sealed with “Blessed... sealed...”; or one can say a covenant cut from Above, that the lowering be into the level of “the land is My footstool.” For Moshe Rabbeinu was heavy of mouth, and this is “and honey.” Just as Torah shebaal peh exists in space — in Eretz Yisrael — so too it exists in time, in Rosh Hashanah (for Rosh Hashanah is the world of speech, Malchus, mouth).

So too there is a new covenant on Rosh Hashanah: for Shavuot was with thunderous voices, two loves on that day, but inner — like a son to his father — therefore not aloud but whispered (hidden kindnesses). To reach this one must have awe: “The king is feared.” The shir shel yom is Vav (the month is concealed...), for the moon shines when distant from the sun. From afar it appears, his soul expires. But on Rosh Hashanah the moon is concealed, from closeness — awe, nullification to the new will. It is covered with a point with no light (only a small light born — see “In the third month”).

הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה יוֹם כְּנִיסַתְךָ לְאֶרֶץ (זָבַת כּו') וְדָבַשׁ
שֶׁבֶפְסוּק שֶׁלִּפְנֵי זֶה) מְצֹוֶה כְּרִיתוֹת בְּרִית, כִּי הָאֶרֶץ
תּוֹשֵׁב־פִּי אָדָם יִשְׂרָאֵל תּוֹשֵׁב־כּ, וְאֶרֶץ הַדּוֹם רַגְלֵי
עֲשִׂי, מִכָּל מְקוֹם רַגְלָא לְאָדָם וּמִמְקוֹם גְּבוּהָ כִּי זָבַת כּו'
סוּף תְּבוֹת סוּף מַעֲשֵׂה כָּל זֶה עַל יְדֵי גִמְרַת הַפְּלִטְרִין
זְדִיעוֹת הַמְּכִינּוֹן

לְהַעֲרִיר וְדָבַשׁ שְׁמוֹת תַּקְסִיב מְקוֹם * דְּבַר יָפָה שְׁעָה)
א' כּו' וְגַם מִהַפָּךְ מְמַרְרֵו כּו' * וְכֵן תּוֹשֵׁב־פִּי הַמְּאֹר
שְׁבָה מִחֲזִירוֹ כּו', בִּינָה יִתְרָה נִתְּנָה בְּאִשָּׁה תּוֹשֵׁב־פִּי
דְבוּר ר"ה יִרְאָה, כִּי הַעֲשִׂין דְּדִי"ס כְּלִי"ת זָהוּ גַם וְדָבַשׁ
(גְּבוּרוֹת וּמִיתוּק בְּחֻסְדִּים)

וְצָרִיךְ כְּרִיתוֹת בְּרִית מְלַמְטָה כְּמוֹ בְּרִכָּה ב' חוֹתֵם
כְּרוּךְ חֲתוּם תּו' כּו' אוֹ יֵשׁ לְזֶמֶר כְּרִיתוֹת בְּרִית
מְלַמְעָה שִׁיחָה הַשְּׁפָלָה בְּכַחֲנִית אֶרֶץ הַדּוֹם שְׁהַרִי
מִשָּׁה רַבִּינוּ כְּבֵד פֶּה כּו' וְהִינּוּ וְדָבַשׁ כּו', וְכֵמוֹ
שְׁבַחֲנִית תּוֹשֵׁב־פִּי בְּעוֹלָם אֲי", כִּן יִשְׁנָה בְּשִׁנָּה בְּחִינַת
(ר"ה) (כִּי ר"ה עוֹלָם הַדְּבוּר מְלָכוּת פֶּה כּו')

גַּם כֵּן כְּרִיתוֹת בְּרִית מְחַדָּשׁ מְצֹוֶה כִּי שְׁבוּעוֹת ל"ר
בְּקוֹלוֹת כּו' ב' אֶהָבּוֹת בַּיּוֹם רַק פְּנִימִית לְפָנֵי כְּבוֹן
אֲצֵל אָבִיו ע"כ ל"א בְּחֻשָּׁאִי (חֻסְדִּים מְכוּסִים) וְלִהְגִיעַ
לְזֶה צָרִיךְ יִרְאָת הַמְּלָךְ מְלָכוּת שִׁיר יוֹם ו' (וְזָהוּ
שֶׁחַדָּשׁ מִתְּפֶסֶה כּו') כִּי הִלְבְּנָה מְאִירָה בְּרַחוּק מְקוֹם
מִהַשְּׁמֵשׁ מְרַחוּק נִרְאָה אֵלַי, כְּלִתָּה נִפְשׁוֹ, אֲבָל בְּר"ה
הִלְבְּנָה מִתְּפֶסֶה מְצַד קִירוֹב יִרְאָה בְּטוֹל לְרִצּוֹן הַחֲדָשׁ,
מִתְּפֶסֶה בּוֹ נִקְוָה שְׂאִין בָּהּ אוֹר (רַק נוֹלָד מְעַט הָאֶרֶץ
(ע' בַּחֲדָשׁ הַשְּׁלִישִׁי)

Tzemach Tzedek

Ohr HaTorah

Parshas Ki Savo

וְהָיָה כִּי תָבֹא & הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה יוֹם פְּנִיטָתוֹ לְאַרְצָךְ

And during the Ten Days of Teshuvah, there is distance, and therefore the love is revealed outwardly — “their heart cries out.” As it is said, “when He is near,” meaning He hides Himself (see “Draw me after You, let us run”). And on Yom Kippur, the love is inner. Thus Rosh Hashanah is awe, the Ten Days of Teshuvah are constricted love, and Yom Kippur is inner love.

וּבַעֲשָׂרַת יָמֵי תְשׁוּבָה רְחוּק עַל פְּנֵי גְלוּי הָאֱהָבָה לְחוּץ
צָעַק לָבָם כּו' וּמָה שֶׁנִּתְּוֹב בְּהִיּוֹתוֹ קָרוֹב שֶׁמִּסְתַּיֵּר
עֲצָמוֹ כּו' (ע' מְשַׁכְּנֵי אֶת־רִיחָה נְרוּצָה כּו') וּבַיּוֹם
הַכַּפּוּרִים הָאֱהָבָה בְּפְנִימִית (נִמְצָא ר"ה יְרָאָה עֲשָׂרַת
(יָמֵי תְשׁוּבָה אֱהָבָה בְּלִחּוץ וַיּוֹם כַּפּוּר אֱהָבָה פְּנִימִית

But to reach this level there must be “Seek My face” — to cross into the covenant. The point of the heart. And this is through the removal of the foreskin — “Remove the...” — then also the external is purified.

אֲבָל לְהַגִּיעַ לְבְחִינָה זוֹ צָרִיךְ בְּקִשׁוֹ פְּנֵי לְעִבְרָךְ
בְּבְרִית, נְקוּדַת הַלֵּב וְהִינּוּ עַל יְדֵי הַעֲבָרַת הָעֶרְלָה כּו'
הַסִּירוֹ אֶת כּו' וְאֵז גַּם חִיצוֹנִית כּו'

[NOTE Summary

The Tzemach Tzedek interprets “when you come into the land” as the descent of Divine revelation into the “supernal land,” the level of Malchus that brings existence into being from nothing. This revelation, which transcends letters and even the shofar’s primal sound, must be “placed in a basket” — clothed within the revealed letters of Torah: Taamim, Nekudos, and Osyos. Just as seeds planted in the ground yield fruit through the earth’s vegetative power, so too mitzvos — called garments in Zohar and fruits in the Gemara — produce salvation through the Jewish people, for they are called “a desirable land.”

The discourse highlights that Hashem’s ultimate desire is a dwelling below, achieved through the self-nullification and actions of Israel, not angels. This power was given to Avraham Avinu as an inheritance — the ability of mesirus nefesh to bring salvation, like the earth’s power to make seeds grow. The “land” symbolizes ratzon, Divine will beyond intellect, which is very, very good: one “very” signifies self-nullification in “with all your might,” and the other the infinite expansion of mitzvos, “Your commandment is very broad.”

Each year on Rosh Hashanah, a new light is drawn into the Jewish people, for they are the land that receives it. But to draw down this supernal will, preparation is needed: there is a lower form of desire born from contemplation and intellect, which becomes a vessel for the higher will. Thus, “when you come into the land” means preparing ourselves through study, prayer, and awe.

The discourse then compares the covenant of entry into the land to the covenant renewed on Rosh Hashanah. At Shavuot, the covenant was revealed with voices and thunder; on Rosh Hashanah, it is concealed, whispered like the inner bond of a son with his father. The moon, symbol of Malchus, is hidden then — expressing awe and bittul. During the Ten Days of Teshuvah, love is revealed outwardly through cries of the heart, while on Yom Kippur the love is inward, reaching the essence. To reach these levels requires “Seek My face” —

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וְהָיָה כִּי תָבוֹא & הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה יוֹם כְּנִיסַתְךָ לְאֶרֶץ

entering into the covenant, the circumcision of the heart, removing barriers so that even the external becomes purified.

Practical Takeaway

To “enter the land” means to draw Hashem’s will into vessels through Torah and mitzvos, transforming inspiration into concrete action. Each Jew has the power of “earth” — to make seeds sprout, to turn self-nullification and mesirus nefesh into lasting growth. Rosh Hashanah calls for awe, the Ten Days of Teshuvah for heartfelt cries, and Yom Kippur for inner love. Preparation is key: by refining both heart and action, one becomes a true “desirable land,” capable of receiving and expressing the infinite light each year anew.

Chassidic Story

The Tzemach Tzedek once explained after Yom Kippur that the essence of the day is not in visions or lofty feelings but in the covenant sealed in the heart. He pointed to a simple Jew who had spent the day reciting Tehillim with tears, saying: “This Jew has entered the covenant of the land. He has removed the covering of his heart, and therefore he receives the new light of the year.”

This recalls his teaching that the true “land” is the Jewish soul, which must be prepared to receive the will of Hashem. Just as Avraham received the “desirable land” as an inheritance, so too every Jew inherits this power to bring down Divine light through mesirus nefesh and purified action.

END NOTE]