

LIKKUTEI SICHOS

AN ANTHOLOGY OF TALKS

by the
Lubavitcher Rebbe
Rabbi Menachem M. Schneerson

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 ben Horav **Yitzchok Elchonon Halevi** הי"ד
Shagalov
 Passed away on 21 Tamuz, 5766

Reb **Dovid Asniel** ben Reb **Eliyahu** עי"ה
Ekman
 Passed away on 5 Sivan - Erev Shavuot, 5765

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AND IN HONOR OF
 Mrs. **Esther Shaindel** bas **Fraidel Chedva** שתח'ל
Shagalov

DEDICATED BY
 Rabbi & Mrs. **Yosef Y. and Gittel Rochel** שיחי
Shagalov

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LIKKUTEI SICHOT

AN ANTHOLOGY OF TALKS

RELATING TO THE WEEKLY SECTIONS OF THE TORAH AND
SPECIAL OCCASIONS IN THE JEWISH CALENDAR

by the
Lubavitcher Rebbe
Rabbi Menachem M. Schneerson

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Volume VIII: *Vayikra*

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In English rendition
by
Rabbi Eliyahu Touger

T Z A V

WHEN CAN OUR SAGES ENFORCE RESTRICTIONS?

On the verse:¹ “This is the law of the burnt offering... [It shall remain on] the altar’s hearth throughout the night,” *Rashi* comments: “This comes to teach that burning the fats and limbs of the sacrifices is permitted throughout the night.” According to Scriptural law, an attempt should be made to burn all the portions of the sacrifice during the day; this is the appropriate time.² After the fact, however, if the other services associated with the sacrifice were performed during the day, one may burn the fats and limbs at night.

Our Sages³ placed restrictions on several *mitzvos* fulfilled during the night. Although Scriptural law permits these activities until daybreak, our Sages required that they be performed before midnight in order to “place a distance between a person and sin.”

There is a difference of opinion between the *Rambam* and *Rashi* as to whether this decree was applied to the burning of sacrificial fats and limbs. The *Rambam* maintains⁴ that the Sages included this in their restriction, while *Rashi* argues that the Sages left the Scriptural law unchanged.

1. *Vayikra* 6:2.

2. *Menachos* 72a, *Rambam*, *Mishneh Torah*, *Hilchos Maaseh HaKorbanos* 4:3.

3. *Berachos* 2a.

4. *Ibid.* 4:2; *Hilchos Temidim UMusafim* 1:6.

Rashi's opinion can be explained on the basis of a distinction between the burning of fats and limbs and the other *mitzvos*. According to many authorities,⁵ when the Torah explicitly says an activity is permitted, our Sages cannot prohibit it. Since the Torah says the fats and limbs can be burnt “throughout the night,” and states:⁶ “Do not allow the fat of the festive offering to remain until morning,” the Sages did not institute a prohibition in this regard.

Following this logic, the *Rambam's* ruling becomes difficult to understand. Several *acharonim* maintain that the *Rambam* accepts the above principle.⁷ Why then does he maintain that the Sages restricted the burning of the sacrificial limbs and fats to the hours before midnight?

TWO DIMENSIONS OF THE CONSUMPTION OF A SACRIFICE

On the verse,⁸ “And if the meat of the peace offering is eaten on the third day,” our Sages⁹ note that the verb is repeated, **האכל יאכל**, and comment: “The verse is speaking about two types of eating — consumption by man (partaking of the portions of the sacrifice given to the priests and the owners) and consumption by the fire of the altar.” On this basis, the *Talmud* develops a parallel between partaking of

5. See *Turei Zahav, Orach Chayim*, the conclusion of sec. 588 (with regard to the observance of the *mitzvos*), *Yoreh De'ah* 117:1 (with regard to optional activities). See also *S'dei Chemed, Kallelim, Maareches Yud*, sec. 17-27, *Darchei Teshuvah, Yoreh De'ah* 117:4, and others.

It appears that the Alter Rebbe does not accept this principle, even with regard to a *mitzvah*, as reflected in *Shulchan Aruch HaRav* 588:4. There is room for further deliberation concerning this matter.

6. *Shmos* 23:18. As reflected in *Sefer HaChinuch (mitzvah 90)*, this prohibition applies to all other sacrifices and to the portions of sacrifices which have to be burnt on the altar.

7. See *S'dei Chemed, loc. cit.*, sec. 17.

8. *Vayikra* 7:18.

9. *Zevachim* 13b.

sacrificial meat and burning portions of the sacrifice on the altar.

With regard to consumption of the sacrifices by man, there is also a *mitzvah* these portions of the offering should be eaten “on the day it was sacrificed.”¹⁰ Thus, there are two dimensions to the human consumption of a sacrifice at the appropriate time:

a) The positive *mitzvah* of partaking of the sacrifice. This is reflected in the blessing recited before eating from an offering.¹¹

b) Eating the sacrifice on the day it was offered precludes the transgression of *notar*, leaving sacrificial meat until the following morning.

These two dimensions are not entirely matching. Several conditions must be met with regard to the priests’ partaking of the sacrifices: e.g., they must be eaten in a manner which befits people of stature;¹² they may not be eaten uncooked.¹³ If these conditions are not met, one has not performed the *mitzvah*.

With regard to *notar*, by contrast, it makes no difference how one partakes of the sacrifice; as long as the meat does not remain, one has not violated the prohibition.

Parallels to these two dimensions of the human consumption of sacrificial meat exist with regard to the consumption

10. *Vayikra* 7:15. See *Rambam, Mishneh Torah, Hilchos Maaseh HaKorbonos* 10:7.

11. See the *Mishnah* and the *Tosefta* at the conclusion of *Pesachim*.

12. *Bamidbar* 18:8; *Zevachim* 91a. See the *Chacham Tzvi* (*Responsum* 62), who explains that this is a binding obligation.

13. The above enables us to understand the statement of *Tosafos* (*Menachos* 48a) that eating uncooked sacrificial meat is not considered a merit. Although one is permitted to eat sacrificial meat uncooked (as *Tosafos, loc. cit.* 99b proves), doing so is not considered a *mitzvah*. Although it precludes *notar*, it is not considered a merit for an individual.

of the fats and limbs by the fire of the altar. Thus burning the fats and limbs of the sacrifice on the altar:

a) is one of the services involved in offering the sacrifices, contributing a positive quality;

b) precludes the sin of *notar*.

Based on the above, it is possible to explain why at the outset, one should burn the fats and limbs during the day, and only after the fact is it acceptable to burn them during the night. {Indeed, it is rare to find instances in which Scriptural law makes a distinction between “at the outset” (לכתחילה) and “after the fact” (בדיעבד).¹⁴} The positive dimension — burning the fats and limbs — must (like all other services associated with the sacrifices) be performed during the day. The license which the Torah grants to burn the fats and limbs throughout the night is merely to prevent the sin of *notar*.

Therefore, at the outset, the fat and the limbs must be burnt during the day as part of — and during the time set aside for — the service of offering the sacrifices. If that was not performed, the fat and the limbs must be burnt at night so that the prohibition against *notar* will be observed.

This enables us to explain the ruling of the *Rambam* mentioned previously. The *Rambam* maintains — in contrast to the opinion of the *Turei Zahav*⁵ — that the principle which holds that the Sages have no power to forbid something which the Torah permits applies only with regard to the observance of *mitzvos*. When the Torah explicitly states that a *mitzvah* should be performed, our Sages do not have the power to rule that it should not.

14. See the discussion of this concept in the works of R. Yosef Engel: *Lekach Tov* (sec. 5), *Asvin D'Oraisa*, sec. 12. See also *Darchei Sholom, Os Bet* (printed also in the Kehot edition of *S'dei Chemed*, p. 4258).

But when a *mitzvah* is not involved, (and burning the fats and limbs at night is not considered a *mitzvah*), the Sages do have the power to enforce a restriction. Although the Torah states that these activities can be performed throughout the night, our Sages restricted their performance to the hours before midnight.

DEDICATING OUR PLEASURE TO G-D

The *Ramban*¹⁵ explains that the sacrifice of an animal atones for a person's improper conduct because the person offering the sacrifice repents, and realizes that whatever is being done to the animal should have been done to him. It is merely that G-d, in His kindness, allowed the animal to be offered in his stead. It thus follows that all the elements of sacrificial worship have parallels in our own Divine service.

Fat is an analogy for satisfaction.¹⁶ And we are commanded:¹⁷ "All the fat [should be offered] to G-d," implying that a Jew must anchor his powers of pleasure and satisfaction to G-dliness.

One might have thought that this refers only to the pleasure derived from material things, for we are taught that one's involvement in material affairs should be "as if compelled by a demon."¹⁸ But what could be wrong with deriving pleasure from the observance of *mitzvos* and other holy matters?

We can take a lesson from the burning of fats on the altar. Although partaking of the sacrifices is a *mitzvah*, we may not

15. In his commentary to *Vayikra* 1:9. See also the commentary of Rabbeinu Bachaye to that verse and the *Sheloh, Torah SheBiksav, Parshas Vayikra*, p. 337b.

16. See *Gittin* 56b. Note also the *sichah* to *Parshas Vayikra* in this series, where this concept is discussed.

17. *Vayikra* 3:16. See the *sichah* to *Parshas Mishpatim* in this series, where this concept is discussed.

18. *Nedarim* 20b; see also *Torah Or, Megillas Esther* 93c.

eat from them until we have seen to the burning of their fats. This teaches us that we can be sure of having fulfilled a *mitzvah* in the proper way only after we have given all our satisfaction (including that derived from the *mitzvah* itself) to G-d. When a person has not dedicated his satisfaction to G-d, it is possible that he is fulfilling the *mitzvah*, not because the *Shulchan Aruch* orders its observance, but because of the satisfaction it brings.

One must feel energy and vitality in the observance of the *mitzvos*, observing them not simply out of compulsion, but out of a genuine love for G-d. The fact that one is able to fulfill G-d's will should be the greatest source of pleasure. Nevertheless, care must be taken to ensure that one takes pleasure in fulfilling G-d's will, and not from ancillary dimensions of the observance of *mitzvos*.

SPIRITUAL SATISFACTION MAY ALSO PRESENT PITFALLS

Based on the above, we can appreciate that the *mitzvah* of burning the sacrificial fats applies only during the day, and the burning of fats at night is only to compensate for not burning them earlier.

With regard to our Divine service, “day” refers to the times when we are occupied with the study of Torah and the observance of *mitzvos*, as reflected in the analogy:¹⁹ “A *mitzvah* is a candle, and the Torah, light.” Night and darkness, by contrast, represent times when a person is not occupied with the Torah or its *mitzvos*, but with material concerns.

The lesson about dedicating the fat — our potential for pleasure and satisfaction — to G-d applies primarily during the day. When it comes to material things, it is obvious that a

19. *Mishlei* 6:23.

person should not seek his own pleasure, but should perform “[all his deeds] for the sake of heaven.”²⁰ When it comes to the Torah and its *mitzvos*, however, it is possible that a person might feel that his motives are not important; as long as he studies the Torah and performs its *mitzvos*, it’s okay. And he will rationalize his behavior quoting our Sages:²¹ “A person should always occupy himself in the Torah and its *mitzvos*... [even] for a selfish intent.”

Such a person has to be taught: The fats must first be offered on the altar.

For example, when one develops a new concept in Torah thought, one experiences great pleasure. That pleasure, however, has to be dedicated to G-d. As an expression of this dedication, if the new concept is contradicted by one of the *Rishonim* or *Achronim*,²² one must be willing to sacrifice his “fat,” and rethink his idea. For his objective must be to appreciate the true intent of the law, not to demonstrate his own greatness.

To cite a parallel: Rabbeinu Yonah²³ explains that a conditional guilt offering is more expensive than a sin offering because a sin offering is brought when one is certain one has transgressed, while a conditional guilt offering is brought when one is in doubt. Since in the latter case one might err and think that atonement is not necessary, the gravity of the situation must be emphasized. Similarly, in the present instance, it is the satisfaction associated with the Torah and

20. *Avos* 2:15.

21. *Pesachim* 50b. See *Shulchan Aruch HaRav, Hilchos Talmud Torah* 4:3, and the *Kuntres Acharon*.

22. This confers upon them the status of a *dvar Mishnah*, an accepted Torah teaching, as stated in *Shulchan Aruch HaRav, Hilchos Talmud Torah* 2:1.

23. In his gloss to the *Rif, Berachos* 1b. See the *sichah* to *Parshas Vayikra* in this series, where this concept is discussed.

its *mitzvos* — enjoyment which appears harmless — to which our attention must be directed.

DAY AND NIGHT IN OUR DIVINE SERVICE

Alternatively, it is possible to explain the analogies of day and night on a deeper plane, enabling us to understand why offering the fats during the day is a positive *mitzvah*, while offering them at night serves merely to preclude sin.

In addition to the interpretation mentioned above, day and night can be seen as analogies for a person's spiritual state. Day refers to a time when one feels the G-dly light in his soul. This applies not only when he is involved in the observance of Torah and *mitzvos*, G-d's will and His wisdom,²⁴ but also when involved in material activities. Even in the worldly sphere, he serves G-d, following the dictum:²⁵ "Know Him in all your ways." To cite an example, when *tzaddikim* partake of food, their eating serves a higher purpose than humanity's ordinary efforts at refinement; "A *tzaddik* eats for the satisfaction of his soul."²⁶

Night, by contrast, refers to a condition in which a person does not feel G-dliness. Therefore his need to engage in material things generates a constant struggle to serve G-d²⁷ rather than indulge his desires. Moreover, even when he is involved

24. *Tanya*, ch. 4.

25. *Mishlei* 3:6. See the *sichah* to *Parshas Terumah* in this series, where this concept is discussed.

26. *Mishlei* 13:25. See the *sichah* to *Parshas Vayishlach* in this series, where this concept is discussed.

27. [There is a difference between the Divine service mandated by the directive: "Let all your deeds be for the sake of Heaven," and "Know Him in all your ways."] When service is carried out "for the sake of Heaven," the material entities involved are not perceived as G-dly. Hence, even while in a spiritual state of "night," this service is possible. "Know[ing] Him in all your ways," by contrast, involves a conscious appreciation of G-dliness, and is possible only during the spiritual "day."

in studying Torah and observing its *mitzvos*, he must labor to remain properly motivated. For the law is encloded in mortal intellect, and the *mitzvos* involve material entities and the potentials of our animal soul. And so it is necessary to strive that one study *lishmah*, only for the sake of the Torah. Similarly, our observance of the *mitzvos* must be for G-d's sake, and not for our own.

The concept of burning the fats on the altar — dedicating our satisfaction to G-d — applies both day and night. But there is a difference. When a person's Divine service is that of "day," all the satisfaction he feels — not only that derived from observance of the Torah and its *mitzvos*, but also that which comes from worldly things — is an expression of holiness, "know[ing] G-d in all His ways."

In contrast, those whose Divine service are on the plane of night, and whose perception is obscured by their animal souls, cannot transform all the pleasure they feel into an expression of G-dliness. Instead, their Divine service concentrates on breaking their nature, not indulging in superfluous pleasures and desires. They endeavor never to engage in a material activity for the sake of that activity itself; instead, they seek that their intent be "for the sake of heaven." Thus their "burning of the fats" is of a preventive nature, holding back from indulgence in permitted matters, because for them indulgence in permitted matters all too often leads to indulgence in forbidden matters.

Similarly, with regard to the study of the Torah, since they cannot summon up a genuine commitment to study *lishmah*, they must struggle to prevent themselves from relying on their mortal reasoning and instead seek out the true intent of the Law. For mortal reason can lead a person to distort the Torah's intent. Thus here as well — and similarly

with regard to the observance of *mitzvos* — one's efforts are aimed at avoiding negative consequences.

A CATALYST FOR REDEMPTION

There is an advantage to the Divine service of *iscafia*, breaking evil, over the Divine service of the righteous.

To cite a parallel: the Divine service involved in refining the body and the animal soul is superior to the devotion of the soul before its descent to this world. Although the soul had a more refined and elevated perception of G-d in the spiritual plane, its accomplishments in this material world are greater.

Similarly, when considering the Divine service of souls on this plane, there is an advantage to the service performed by *benonim* over that performed by *tzaddikim*.²⁸

There is also an allusion to this in the verse “Do not allow the fat of the festive offering to remain until the morning.” The phrase “Do not allow,” i.e., to avoid negative influences by refining material entities, prefigures “the morning” — the ultimate dawn, the era when “the sun will no longer serve you for the light of day.... Instead, G-d will be your eternal light.”²⁹

The refinement of the body and the animal soul in this material world will bring about the Future Redemption led by *Mashiach*.³⁰ May it come speedily, in our days.

(Adapted from *Sichos Yud-Tes Kislev*, 5711)



28. See *Tanya*, ch. 27.

29. *Yeshayahu* 60:19.

30. See *Tanya*, ch. 27.

SHABBOS HAGADOL

WHEN SAGES SPEAK

In the first section dealing with the laws of Pesach,¹ the Alter Rebbe writes:

It has become customary in these latter generations for the [local Rabbinic] sage to expound upon the laws of Pesach on the preceding *Shabbos*, unless that *Shabbos* is Pesach eve,² and upon the laws of Sukkos on *Shabbos Shuvah* [the *Shabbos* of Repentance].

The essence of the matter is to speak about and teach G-d's ways, and give instruction concerning the deed which must be performed.

This practice has its source in the customs of the *Maharil*, and is also cited by the *Bach* and the *Magen Avraham*. But there is a slight difference between the wording chosen by the Alter Rebbe and that used by the *Magen Avraham*.

The *Magen Avraham*³ states: "The *Maharil* would also expound on the laws of Sukkos on *Shabbos Shuvah*." By adding the word "also," the *Magen Avraham* implies that, that Sukkos was not the only subject of the *Maharil*'s talk on *Shabbos Shuvah*. He would expound upon the laws of Yom Kippur, but would not confine himself to that subject and

1. *Shulchan Aruch HaRav* 429:1.

2. In which case the talk is given on the preceding *Shabbos*.

3. 429:1.

would also speak of the laws of Sukkos.⁴ The Alter Rebbe, by contrast, does not mention the word “also,” and speaks only of the laws of Sukkos. Why does he not mention the need to speak of the laws of Yom Kippur?

Another question arises: *Shabbos Shuvah* is not always the *Shabbos* directly before Sukkos. In many years, there is another *Shabbos* between Yom Kippur and Sukkos. It seems reasonable that the exposition of the laws of Sukkos should take place on the *Shabbos* directly preceding the holiday. In particular, this would seem true with regard to the Alter Rebbe’s ruling, which doesn’t mention Yom Kippur.

Why should the laws of Sukkos be mentioned on *Shabbos Shuvah* even when it is not the *Shabbos* which directly precedes Sukkos?

Also, there is a difficulty with the wording used by the Alter Rebbe: Why does he distinguish between “G-d’s ways” and “the deed which must be performed”? What is meant by these terms?⁵

It is possible to explain as follows: The Alter Rebbe alludes to the fact that on these two *Shabbosos*, our Rabbis should discuss not only the laws of Pesach and Sukkos, but also concepts that relate to our Divine service in general. This is alluded to by the term “G-d’s ways.”

Similarly, the Alter Rebbe does not mention Yom Kippur because the laws of Yom Kippur do not require special elaboration; they are included in the “ways of G-d” which are

4. This interpretation is offered by the *Machtzis HaShekel*.

5. Significantly, the *Magen Avraham* uses slightly different wording, stating: “to speak about and teach G-d’s ways, giving instruction concerning the deed which must be performed.” By omitting the word “and,” he implies that “the deed which must be performed” refers to “the ways of G-d.” The Alter Rebbe, by contrast, adds the word “and,” indicating that these are two different subjects.

taught on *Shabbos HaGadol* and *Shabbos Shuvah*. To cite a parallel: It is not customary for the Rabbis to speak on the *Shabbos* preceding Shavuos because “Shavuos does not have distinct laws of its own. All the prohibitions and leniencies which we observe are also observed on Pesach and Sukkos.”⁶

BODY AND SOUL

The expression “ways of G-d” merits explanation. A way leads from one place to another. The goal is not the way itself, but the destination. It is, however, impossible to reach one’s destination without the “way.”

The ultimate purpose of the entire creation is that the Jewish people should observe *mitzvos* in this material world. Nevertheless, “a *mitzvah* without [the proper] intent is like a body without a soul.”⁷ In order to observe the *mitzvos* in a proper way, the love and fear of G-d are necessary, for they infuse vitality into the observance of *mitzvos*.⁸ These emotions are the “ways of G-d” which lead to the goal of observing *mitzvos*.

It is true that “deed is most essential.”⁹ Though someone may possess all the intentions associated with a *mitzvah*, if he fails to actually observe the *mitzvah*, he is transgressing G-d’s will. When, by contrast, one observes a *mitzvah* without the proper intent, one will still have fulfilled the essence of the *mitzvah*, thus carrying out G-d’s will.¹⁰ Nevertheless, observance should be accomplished with energy and vitality, and this is possible only through love and fear.

6. *Shulchan Aruch HaRav* 429:2.

7. See *Likkutei Torah* of the AriZal, *Parshas Eikev*; *Sheloh*, *Masechtes Tamid*, *Amud Tefillah*, *Inyan Chanukah* (p. 249b); *Tanya*, ch. 38.

8. See *Tanya*, chs. 4 and 38; *Kuntres HaAvodah*, ch. 2, p. 15.

9. Cf. *Avos* 1:16.

10. See the *sichah* to *Parshas Mishpatim* in this series, where this concept is explained.

One might protest: What's wrong if one fulfills a *mitzvah* merely to satisfy one's obligation? Although one's deed is "like a body without a soul," the "body" is still intact, and that seems to be the essence of the matter.

In reply, it must be explained that when a person observes *mitzvos* merely to fulfill his obligation, or out of habit, there will ultimately be a lack in his observance.

At the outset, he will observe the *mitzvos* without *hiddurim*, fastidious care.¹¹ This will inevitably lead to spiritual descent. For if a person does not invest energy and vitality in the Torah and its *mitzvos*, that energy will find expression in matters at variance to these spiritual purposes, setting in motion a downward spiral.

Perhaps at the outset, the person's observance will remain sound, for after all, he seeks to fulfill his obligations, and therefore will control his feelings and desires in order to do what is required of him. But eventually, since his desire and energy are focused outside the sphere of holiness, he will seek (and find, for "a bribe [and particularly the bribe of self-love] blinds")¹² loopholes, and ultimately he will become involved in forbidden matters. From here, "one sin leads to another,"¹³ and he will continue downward, transgressing even prohibitions for which he cannot find a loophole. Ultimately, he will no longer oppose his desire for forbidden matters, and will give in to it without remorse.

11. It must be emphasized that these *hiddurim* relate to the essence of the *mitzvah*. For *mitzvos* are G-d's will, and will is an expression of the soul that knows no division. The difference between the fundamental requirement of the *mitzvah* and its observance *b'hiddur* is relevant only with regard to the concepts of reward and punishment. (See *Sichos Chag HaShavuos*, 5693, *Likkutei Dibburim*, p. 1540. See also *Shulchan Aruch HaRav* 481:1.)

12. *Devarim* 16:19.

13. *Avos* 4:2.

For these reasons, observance must be charged with the energy and vitality which stem from love and fear. This process is called the ways of G-d, for it leads to perfect observance of the *mitzvos*.

FASHIONING G-D'S DWELLING

Moreover, even when the actual observance of *mitzvos* is unaffected, performing them like “a body without a soul” does not truly fulfill G-d's will. G-d's will is that the *mitzvos* should be “living *mitzvos*.”

To explain: The *mitzvos* were given with the intent of “refining the created beings.”¹⁴ This implies that the person performing the *mitzvah* will thereby be refined and brought into connection with G-d. Ultimately, this connection should permeate all of a person's potentials, and the innermost depths of his soul. Accordingly, if a person observes *mitzvos* only to fulfill his obligation, the observance will affect only his power of deed. This runs contrary to G-d's will, for G-d desires that *every* aspect of a person's character should be connected to Him. This is achieved when a person invests all his energies in the observance of *mitzvos*.¹⁰

The Divine intent is that all of a person's potentials, including his conscious powers, be connected with G-d. The connection of these conscious powers is higher than that of the power of deed. Nevertheless, achieving love and fear of G-d should not be considered an independent purpose. Instead, the purpose of love and fear is to introduce vitality into the actual observance of *mitzvos*.¹⁵

14. *Bereishis Rabbah* 44:1.

15. See *Tanya*, ch. 40, which describes love and fear as “wings” which elevate the observance of the *mitzvos*, and which explains that “the purpose of love is Divine service motivated by love.”

For the ultimate intent is the establishment of a dwelling for G-d in this lowly material world.¹⁶ This is achieved through using the lowest powers we possess — performing *mitzvos* with the power of deed. Nevertheless, the *completion* of G-d's dwelling comes about when a person observes the *mitzvos* with all his potentials.¹⁷

On this basis, we can appreciate the reference to love and fear as “the ways of G-d.” The ultimate purpose is the actual observance of the *mitzvos*; this is what establishes a connection to G-d's essence. But it is “the ways of G-d” which bring that connection from a hidden state into revelation. Our understanding, love, and fear of G-d bring out the connection to G-d established through our deeds.

TWO WAYS

The above also enables us to understand why the Alter Rebbe speaks of “the ways of G-d,” using the plural term. With regard to the observance of *mitzvos*, by contrast, he uses the singular form “the deed which must be performed.”

The distinction can be explained as follows: Although there are 613 *mitzvos*, they all have the same purpose: the dedication of one's power of deed to G-d. Therefore, the singular term is in place. By contrast, everyone serves G-d according to his personal level. Hence with regard to “the ways of G-d” the plural is employed.

16. See *Tanya*, ch. 36.

17. To explain this concept within the analogy of a dwelling: There are two aspects to a dwelling: a) that one's entire *essence* is found there, and b) that in one's dwelling, this essence is *revealed*.

The latter dimension is contributed by love and fear, which introduce vitality into our observance of *mitzvos*. See the *sichah* to *Parshas Korach* in this series where this concept is explained.

In general, there are two types of “ways” (or it can be said that a single way serves two purposes):¹⁸ one of ascent and one of descent (in analogy, one goes from the field to the king’s palace, and one goes from the king’s palace to the field). This represents the difference between the Divine service of the month of Nissan and the Divine service of the month of Tishrei. Nissan expresses the drawing down of G-dliness into our world, while Tishrei gives expression to man’s potential for ascent, as explained in other sources.¹⁹

Therefore the custom is for our Rabbis to speak twice a year, on the *Shabbos* before Pesach, and on *Shabbos Shuvah*, for the *Shabbos* before Pesach expresses the motif of drawing down G-dliness, and *Shabbos Shuvah* relates to man’s ascent. These two addresses thus embrace the Divine service of the entire year: the address of *Shabbos HaGadol* includes the Divine service of the summer months, and the address of *Shabbos Shuvah* includes the Divine service of the winter months.

(Adapted from *Sichos Shabbos Shuvah*, 5719)



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18. See *Biurei HaZohar*, the beginning of *Parshas Pinchas* and the *maamar* entitled *Havayah Yechatu*, 5689, ch. 6.
19. See the *Zohar*, Vol. II, p. 186a, which explains that Nissan is called the month of spring, אביב in Hebrew. This name illustrates a progression of the letters from the beginning onward, while the name Tishrei (תשרי) begins from the end of the alphabet. Similarly, the *Zohar* (*ibid.*, p. 51b) states that the progressive order of אביב points to the influence of *chesed*, “kindness,” while the reverse order of תשרי points to the influence of *gevurah*, “might.” See also similar concepts in the *Likkutei Torah* of the *AriZal*, *Parshas Vayeitzei*, entry *Sheva kochvei lechas*.

(Note, however, other sources, e.g., *Taamei HaMitzvos*, *Parshas Bo* as quoted in *Ateres Rosh*, in the beginning of the *maamar* dealing with *Asaras Yimei HaTeshuvah*; *Pri Etz Chayim*, *Shaar Rosh HaShanah*, ch. 4; *Shaar HaKavannos*, *Inyan Rosh HaShanah*, p. 4; *Nahar Shalom* at the conclusion of *Etz Chayim*, in the Warsaw printing.)

See the discussion of this subject in *Kehillas Yaakov*, *Mareches Yud-Beis Chadashim*.

BESURAS HAGEULO

The Announcement Of The Redemption

18

What was said previously concerning the Redemption receives extra emphasis as we find ourselves in the month of Nissan of this year, "It will be a year of miracles [that] I will show you." And as we said (also in the general letters) regarding the wonders and miracles which occurred this year (close to Purim), an opponent of the Jews was nullified. The victory reached the point that the enemy freed some of the prisoners of war in a fitting manner, as we previously discussed in detail.

And certainly the Holy One, Blessed be He, will continue to reveal wonders and miracles until - and most important - "I will show you miracles" in the true and complete Redemption.

For these wars in that part of the world ("the king of Persia" with the "king of Aram") are one of the signs that the Redemption through our righteous Moshiach is imminent, as stated in *Yalkut Shimoni*.¹ And as it says there, "My children, do not be afraid... the time of your Redemption has arrived" and "the King Moshiach stands on the roof of the Beis HaMikdash [Holy Temple] and proclaims to them - to Israel - and says, 'Humble ones, the time for your Redemption has arrived!'"

*(From the talk of Shabbos Parshas Tzav,
Shabbos HaGadol, 8 Nissan 5751)*

1. *Yeshayahu, Remez 499.*

IN LOVING MEMORY OF A DEAR FRIEND
Horav Avrohom Aharon ben Reb Yitzchok ע"ה
Plotkin

Passed away on Shabbat Parshat Nasso, 14 Sivan, 5780

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