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# LESSONS IN TORAH

OR

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PRECIOUS TEACHINGS THAT AWAKEN THE HEART  
TO DIVINE SERVICE FROM THE HOLY MASTER  
❧ **RABBI SHNEUR ZALMAN OF LIADI** ❧  
TRANSLATED AND EXPLAINED

תּוֹרַה אֹר

פְּרִשְׁת חַיֵּי שְׂרָה

דְּבוּר הַמְתַּחֵל

לְהַבִּין מֵה שְׁאִמְרוּ רַז"ל "יָפָה שְׂעָה אַחַת"  
"Daily Garments for the Soul"

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# Torah Or

## תורה אור

דבור המתחיל

לְהַבִּין מַה שְּׁאָמְרוּ רַז"ל "יָפָה שְׂעָה אַחַת"<sup>1</sup>

(שׁוֹרְטֵי לְפָסוּק "וְאַבְרָהָם זָקֵן" (פְּרָשְׁתָנוּ כד, א))

פְּרָשְׁת חַיֵּי שָׂרָה דָף טז, א - טז, ב

“Daily Garments for the Soul”<sup>2</sup>

In Parshas Chayei Sarah (24:1), the Torah tells how Avraham was getting old and needed to marry off his son Yitzchok. In describing Avraham, it says: “Avraham was old, coming along in his days, and Hashem blessed Avraham with everything.” Why does the Torah use the double expression “he was old, coming along in his days” and not simply say he was “old?”

The Zohar explains (vol. I, 129a and 224a) that “days” is also a metaphor for the spiritual accomplishments created by Mitzvos that we perform every day.

The purpose of why Hashem creates time, and creates a new day every day, is to reveal Hashem in the world through the Torah and Mitzvos. Therefore, the inner meaning of a “day” is what is accomplished that day.

When it says that Avraham was “coming along in his days” it does not just mean he had physically lived through many days, but rather, that he took with him all the spiritual accomplishments that he created from serving Hashem each and every day of his life.

<sup>1</sup> (דבור המתחיל להבין כי יפה שעה אחת לקמן משפטים דבור המתחיל "שש שנים". לקוטי תורה סוף פרשת שלח. - ציון כבוד קדושת אדמו"ר.

נאמר [בשבת פרשת וישלח, יז בסלו או בשבת פרשת וישב כד בסלו, ערב חנוכה] תקנ"ז בשקלאו). ביאור נפלא על חלק הראשון מהמאמר נמצא בפלא הרמון ס' בראשית ע' קטו, ג ואילך

<sup>2</sup> For a better understanding of this maamar, see Tanya Igeres HaKodesh chapter 29, where the idea of the “garments” for the soul in Gan Eden created by Mitzvos is discussed at length.

The Zohar describes these daily spiritual accomplishments as “garments.” This is because each Mitzvah creates a Divine revelation that clothes the soul of the person and allows him to perceive and experience the deep wisdom of Hashem’s Torah in the spiritual realm of Gan Eden. Without those “garments” for the soul created by the Mitzvos, the finite soul is unable to fully experience the (relatively) infinite revelation of Hashem in Gan Eden.

The verse is thus saying that when Avraham was old, he came and brought with him all the spiritual “garments” that he created from his daily Mitzvos.

The Alter Rebbe in this maamar will explain this teaching from the Zohar in connection with a teaching from Pirkei Avos:

לְהַבְיִין עֲנִינַן מַה שְּׂאֲמָרוּ רַז"ל  
(אָבוֹת ד, יז): "יָפָה שְׁעָה אַחַת  
בְּתְשׁוּבָה וּמַעֲשִׂים טוֹבִים בְּעוֹלָם-  
הַזֶּה מְכַל חַיֵּי עוֹלָם-הַבָּא."

**Let us explain what our Sages taught (Avos 4:17), “One moment of teshuva and good deeds in this world is better than the entire life in the World to Come.”**

וְצָרִיךְ לְהַבְיִין: וְהֵלֵא תְּכַלִּית  
תְּשׁוּבָה וּמַעֲשִׂים טוֹבִים הוּא,  
שְׂמֵהֶם נַעֲשׂוּ לְבוּשֵׁי<sup>3</sup> לְנִשְׁמָה  
שְׂתוּכָל לִיהְנוֹת מִזֵּיו הַשְּׂכִינָה  
בְּעוֹלָם-הַבָּא,

**We need to understand: Isn’t the entire purpose of teshuva and good deeds that they make garments for the soul so that when it goes to the next world, it can enjoy the radiance of the Shechina-Divine Presence in the World to Come?**

כְּמֵאֲמַר הַזֹּהֵר (חֻלְק א וַיְחִי רַכֵּד,  
א) <sup>4</sup>עַל פְּסוּק "וְאַבְרָהָם זָקֵן בָּא  
בַּיָּמִים":

**As the Zohar (I, 224a) explains on the verse (Bereishis 24:1), “And Avraham was old, coming in days”:**

בְּאִינוּן יוֹמִין עֵילָאִין כּו'. וַיְחִי לִיה  
לְהוּא גְבָרָא דְגָרַע יוֹמִין לְעֵילָא,

The Zohar comments that these “days” are referring to “those “days” (garments) Above...woe to the one who ruins his “days” Above,

דְּכַד בְּעֵינֵין לְאַלְבָּשָׂא לִיה בְּאִינוּן

**because when they come to dress him in the “days,” which are the garments created from**

<sup>3</sup> (לְבוּשֵׁי... בַּיָּמִים: רָאָה גַם לְקַמֵּן עֵה, ד. עט, ב. פב, א רִישׁ דְּבוּר הַמִּתְחִיל "וְעֵשִׂית בְּגָדֵי קוֹדֶשׁ". לְקוּשֵׁי תוֹרָה שְׁלַח נֹא ב וַאֲיִלָּה. יוֹם הַכְּפֹרִים סט, א. וּבְכַמָּה מְקוּמוֹת).  
<sup>4</sup> (וַרְאָה שָׁם קַבֵּט, א).

יִזְמִין, Mitzvos that are required to perceive G-dly revelation in the World to Come,

יִזְמִין דְּפָגַם חֶסְרִין לִיה מִהֵוּא  
לְבוּשָׁא<sup>5</sup>. כְּנ"ל.

**the days that were wasted** i.e., a day that a mitzvah opportunity was not fulfilled, **will be missing from that garment.**” This statement of the Zohar **corresponds to what was mentioned before** that daily mitzvos create garments for the soul in Gan Eden.

The question is: If the purpose of mitzvos is to create garments for the soul in Gan Eden, so that the soul can enjoy the Light of Hashem there, then seemingly, the Light of Hashem in Gan Eden is greater and more valuable than mitzvos.

However, in Pirkei Avos quoted above it says that one hour of mitzvos and Teshuva is greater than all the life of the soul in Gan Eden!

If mitzvos are greater than the life of the soul in Gan Eden, then why are they called merely “garments” for the soul to be able to receive the Light of Hashem in Gan Eden?

וְהַעֲנִין: דִּיהֵנָּה עֲנִין זִיו הַשְּׂכִינָה  
בְּעוֹלָם־הַבָּא אֵינוּ כְּמוֹ הַתְּפִשְׁטוֹת  
חַיּוֹת אֱלֻקוֹת בְּתוֹךְ הָעוֹלָמוֹת,

**Now, the idea is: The radiance of Hashem’s Shechina-Presence in the World to Come** i.e., Gan Eden, **is not like the lifeforce of Elokus<sup>6</sup> that extends into** the other aspects and dimensions of the **worlds,**

<sup>5</sup> (תְּרֻגָּם: בְּאוֹתָם יָמִים עֲלִיוֹנִים כּו', אוֹי לוֹ לְאוֹתוֹ אִישׁ שְׁגוּרָע יָמָיו לְמַעַלָּה, שְׂכַאֲשֶׁר רוּצִים לְהַלְבִּישׁ אוֹתוֹ בְּאוֹתָם יָמִים, הַיָּמִים שֶׁפָּגַם חֶסְרִים מְאוֹתוֹ לְבוּשׁ).

<sup>6</sup> The word “Elokus” requires explanation. Commonly translated as “Godliness” or “Divinity” or “the Divine,” its true meaning is different from any English word. The words above used to translate Elokus, express that Elokus means something connected to Hashem that represents Him.

But the idea of Elokus is not that it is a creation of Hashem that represents Him, like an angel that acts as a representative of Hashem in terms of the message it gives over.

Rather, Elokus is the light and power of Hashem, it is bound up with Hashem and has no separate existence other than Hashem, it has no existence outside of the context of Hashem.

The example for this is a person’s soul powers relative to the essence of the soul. The soul itself is a single indivisible spiritual entity. It manifests itself through soul

כְּמוֹ שֶׁכָּתוּב (נְחֻמְיָה ט, ו): "וְאַתָּה  
מְחִיָּה אֶת כּוֹלָם",

as it is written, "and You Hashem enliven them all" (Nechemia 9:6).

שֶׁהַחַיּוֹת אֵלֶקוֹת הַמִּתְלַבֵּשׁ תוֹךְ  
[כָּל] עֲלָמִין אֵינּוּ מוֹשֵׁג וְנִרְאָה.

This is because **the lifeforce of Elokus that is invested within each world** outside of Gan Eden **is not grasped or perceived** by the creations of that realm.

בְּמִשַּׁל הַתְּפִשָּׁטוֹת הַחַיּוֹת שֶׁל  
הַנְּשֻׁמָּה תוֹךְ הַגּוּף בְּהִתְחַלְקוֹת  
הָאֲבָרִים;

This can be understood as in the analogy of **the energy and life that extends from the soul into the body and becomes differentiated into each limb**, allowing each limb to function according to its own characteristics.

וּבּוֹדָאֵי בְּהַחַיּוֹת<sup>8</sup> רוּחָנִי לֹא שִׁיִּךְ  
כָּלֵל שְׂיִהְיֶה בּוֹ גַם כֵּן הַתְּחַלְקוֹת  
הַחַיּוֹת לְחֻלְקִים, כִּי אֵין בְּרוּחָנִיּוֹת  
שׁוּם תְּמוּנָה וְצִיּוֹר.

**Surely, it is not possible that this spiritual energy** of the soul **becomes separated into parts** corresponding to the separate parts of the body, **since spiritual energy has no image or form.**

In Tanya chapter 51 the Alter Rebbe explain: The soul itself is essentially a singular indivisible spiritual entity. It contains the potential power to animate all the different parts of the body. When it comes into the body, each body part receives power from the soul according to its nature. However, the soul itself is not a conglomerate of different soul powers, it is a single indivisible entity that contains the potential power for all the various energies needed in the body.

וְהִנֵּה, הַתְּפִעָלוֹת הַחַיּוֹת בְּאֲבָרִים  
נִכָּר וְנִרְאָה,

**Now, the activity of the soul's energy in the limbs can be recognized and perceived.**

powers of will power, pleasure, intellect, and emotion, and in its ability to be revealed in giving life and function to the body etc. These soul powers are not the indivisible essence of the soul, but they are not separate from the soul either. Rather, they are the extension of the soul, the light and power of the soul.

Similarly, Elokus is the light and power of Hashem, it is not separate from Hashem at all, but it is not the essence of Hashem either.

<sup>7</sup> (גוֹסֵף מִכְּתָב יֵד 775).

<sup>8</sup> [בְּהַחַיּוֹת - בְּכְתָב יֵד 775: בְּהִיּוֹת].

אָבֵל מְהוּת וְעֲצָמוֹת הַחַיּוֹת אֵינּוּ  
נִרְאָה וְנִיכָפֵר כֻּלָּל.

**However, the lifeforce itself, in its essence, cannot be seen or recognized at all.**

A person can feel the fact that he has life from his soul in his body, which enables it live and function in various ways. However, the essential lifeforce and being of the soul that transcends the limitation and details of the body is not perceived directly.

כְּמוֹ כֵּן חַיּוֹת אֵלֶקוֹת הַמַּחְיָה כֹּל  
הָעוֹלָמוֹת בְּעֵלֵי גְבוּל וְתַכְלִית,  
בְּדָאֵי אֵינן בְּהַחַיּוֹת הָרוּחָנִי  
בְּחִינַת גְּבוּל וְתַכְלִית.

**Similarly, just because there is lifeforce from Elokus that enlivens all the limited worlds, certainly does not mean that this spiritual energy is in any way limited or finite.**

דֶּרֶךְ מְשָׁל, חַיּוֹת הַמַּחְיָה אֶת עֵיגוּל  
בְּדוּר הַשָּׁמַיִם,

**This is analogous to the lifeforce of the rounded sphere of the heavens.**

בְּדָאֵי לֹא יִתְכַּן לִדְבַר שֶׁגַּם הַחַיּוֹת  
הָרוּחָנִי הוּא בְּתַמוּנַת עֵיגוּל כְּנִ"ל.

**Surely, it is not possible to say that also the spiritual energy that energizes the heavenly sphere is also round in shape.**

רַק שֶׁהַתְּפִשְׁטוֹת הַחַיּוֹת הוּא לְפִי  
תַמוּנַת כְּלֵי הַמְּקַבֵּל הַחַיּוֹת.

**Rather, we must say that it is the undefined and unlimited energy that extends forth according to the structure and characteristics of the vessel that receives the energy.**

The fact that every creation of every world receives a specific lifeforce from Hashem is connected to the limitation of the creature itself. The lifeforce from Hashem itself has no such details and limitations.

וְאֵף עַל פִּי שֶׁהַחַיּוֹת מְתַלְבֵּשׁ  
לְתוֹכוֹ, מִכָּל מְקוֹם הַחַיּוֹת עֲצָמוֹ  
אֵינּוּ בְּגֵדֶר מְקוֹם וְגְבוּל: .

**And, even though the lifeforce becomes invested within the recipient, the lifeforce itself does not become defined by spatial parameters or any other limitation applicable to the creature receiving life from Hashem.**

The Alter Rebbe is emphasizing that the lifeforce from Hashem does in fact become invested in each creation, similar to how the lifeforce of the soul comes into the body. But nonetheless, the lifeforce from Hashem is still not affected on any level by the creature it gives life to.

וּבְזָה יוֹבֵן דְּכִתִּיב (ישעיהו ו, ג):  
 "מֵלֵא כָּל הָאָרֶץ כְּבוֹדוֹ",

Based on this, we can understand how to resolve the following contradiction: It is written in one verse (Yeshaya 6:3), "The world is filled with His Glory,"

וּתְרַגְמוּ: "זִיו יִקְרִיָה", שֶׁהוּא רַק  
 זִיו וְהִתְפַּשְׁטוֹת הָאָרֶה בְּלִבְדוֹ;

which the Targum Yonasan renders this as, "the ray of His Glory," meaning that it is only a ray and glimmer of Hashem's true Glory that fills the earth.

וּכְתִיב (ירמיהו כג, כד): "אֵת  
 הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאֵת הָאָרֶץ אֲנִי מֵלֵא!"

However, it is written in another verse (Yirmiya 23:24), "I [Hashem] fill the heavens and the earth" implying that Hashem Himself fills the earth, not just a "ray" of "His Glory"?

וְהַעֲנִין, שֶׁשְׁנֵיהֶם אֱמֶת כֵּן ל<sup>9</sup>.

The idea is, that both concepts are true, as will be further explained.

וְהוּא שֶׁאָמְרוּ רַז"ל<sup>10</sup>: "בְּמִקוֹם  
 שֶׁאֲתָה מוֹצֵא גְדוּלְתוֹ שֶׁל הַקָּדוֹשׁ  
 בְּרוּךְ הוּא שֶׁם אֲתָה מוֹצֵא  
 עֲנֻתָנוֹתָיו כו'".

This idea is understood based on what our Sages said (Megila 31a), "Wherever you find Hashem's Greatness is where you will find His Humility."

דְּהֵינּוּ, לֹא כְּמוֹ שֶׁהָעוֹלָם סוֹבְרִים  
 שֶׁגְדוּלַת הַבּוֹרָא נִקְרָא מֵה שֶׁהוּא  
 יִתְבַּרַךְ מִחַיָּה כָּל הָעוֹלָמוֹת,

Meaning, that it is not like what the world thinks, that Hashem's Greatness refers to the fact that he gives life to all the worlds.

שֶׁאֲדַרְבָּה זֶה הִיא יְרִידָה אֲעֲלוֹ  
 יִתְבַּרַךְ, שֶׁמִּשְׁפִּיל עֲצָמוֹ וּמִתְלַבֵּשׁ  
 תּוֹךְ כָּל עֲלָמִין לְהַחַיּוֹתָם  
 וּלְקִיּוּמָם.

For, on the contrary, for Him this is a descent, that He lowers Himself and invests Himself within the worlds to give them life and existence.

וּמֵה שֶׁכְּתוּב (נחמיה ט, ו): "וְאֲתָה  
 מְחַיֶּה אֵת כָּלֵם" אֵינוֹ שֶׁבַח  
 בְּבַחֲיַנַת גְּדוּלְתוֹ יִתְבַּרַךְ -

And when the verse says, "And You enliven them all," this is not a praise of Hashem's Greatness, for "His Greatness cannot be understood" (Tehillim 145:3), and "His

<sup>9</sup> (בְּנוֹזֵר לְקָמִין).

<sup>10</sup> (מְגִלָּה לֵא, א).

ש"לְגֹדְלוֹתָו אֵין חֶקֶר" (תהלים  
קמה, ג), ו"לְתַבִּינְתוֹ אֵין מִסְפָּר"  
(תהלים קמו, ה),

אָלָא הַשְּׁבַח הוּא בְּחִינַת עֲנוּה  
שְׁלוֹ, שְׂיֻכַּל לְהַשְׁפִּיל עֲצֻמוֹ וְכו'.

אָבֵל עֲנִין עוֹלָם-הַבָּא, ש"נְהַיִן  
מִזֵּיו הַשְּׂכִינָה"<sup>11</sup>, הוּא הַשְּׂגַת  
מְהוּת וְעֲצֻמוֹת הַתְּפִשְׁטוֹת הַחַיּוֹת  
אֵלְקוֹת בְּחִינַת גִּילּוּי :

**understanding is beyond reckoning”**  
(Tehillim 147:5).

**Rather, this a praise of Hashem’s humility,  
that He lowers Himself** to such an extent that  
He even relates to and enlivens the worlds and  
the creatures within them.

**However, the idea of the World to Come**  
i.e., Gan Eden, **in which Jewish souls**  
“**delight in the radiance of the Shechina-  
Divine Presence**” **is that they can grasp and**  
**perceive the actual essence of the lifeforce**  
**of Elokis in a revealed manner.**

The following explanation will be based on the Tzemach Tzedek’s comments in  
Or HaTorah (Bereishis vol. 3, p. 130a, Devarim vol. 6 p. 2,230):

There are two ideas of “the World to Come” which in this context refers to Gan  
Eden:

The first idea:

There is a fundamental difference between Gan Eden and the remainder of all the  
created worlds and their inhabitants:

In the worlds in general, Hashem’s lifeforce is not grasped or perceived directly.  
We know that it exists, and we feel its presence, but we do not “see” it directly.

However, the souls of the Jewish people, both those that are not born yet and those  
that left the body, enter the “World to Come” which is Gan Eden. The name Gan  
Eden means “garden of delight.” The delight is from the fact the soul can “see”  
and directly perceive and experience the lifeforce of Elokus that flows into Gan  
Eden and into the souls there. This level of perception of Elokus is on a completely  
different level than anywhere else in any of the created worlds. (The angels that  
live in the World of Beriah, which contains the Higher Gan Eden, have some  
perception of this lifeforce of Elokus, but not nearly on the same level as the Jewish  
souls in Gan Eden itself that directly perceive this power of Elokus.)

Based on the above we can explain the contradiction between the two verses:

<sup>11</sup> (בְּרִכּוֹת יז, א).

The verse that says that “I [Hashem] fill the heaven and earth” means that He is present in heaven and earth, and gives life to heaven and earth, but He is not “seen” by the creations.

The verse that says that only a “ray of His Glory” fills the earth refers to the revelation of Hashem. The revelation of Hashem in the created worlds is only like a ray of light, a minute glimmer, of His true glory. In fact, outside of Gan Eden no one can directly see even Hashem’s power that is invested in the creation. Only in Gan Eden can they directly “see” the “ray of His Glory” that enlivens the creations.

However, there is a second idea to Gan Eden, that surpasses what was explained above:

Not only do the Jewish souls in Gan Eden directly “see” the power of Elokus that is creating and enlivening them, but the souls that left the body after doing mitzvos have something even greater:

They can perceive the Infinite Light of Hashem, the Essence of Elokus, that shines in the Ten Sefiros of the World of Atzilus. This Infinite Light is completely beyond the limited Light of Hashem that descends to create and enliven the worlds. This is only accessible to Jewish souls that performed mitzvos in the physical world and then left the body. The souls who were not born yet are not able to access this Infinite Light shining from Atzilus.

Now the Alter Rebbe will ask: How is possible for any creation to perceive the Infinite Light shining in Atzilus?

**וְעַתָּה צְרִיךְ לְהַבִּין, Now, we need to understand the following:**

**אִיךָ תוּכַל הַנְּשַׁמָּה, שֶׁהִיא בְּחִינַת  
נִבְרָא, יֵשׁ וְדָבָר בְּפָנֵי עֲצָמוֹ,**

**How can the soul, which is a created entity, that perceives itself as having its own independent existence that is separate from Hashem,**

**לְהַשִּׁיג מְהוּת וְעֲצָמוֹת אֵלֶקוֹת  
שֶׁאֵינּוּ בְּבְחִינַת הַשְּׂגָה וְגִבּוֹל?**

**be able to perceive and “see” the Essence and true Being of Elokus, the Infinite Light shining in Atzilus that is then funneled down into Gan Eden, when this level of Elokus, is beyond the understanding of creations since it is essentially unlimited?**

**וְאִף שֶׁהַנְּשַׁמָּה הִיא "חֵלֶק אֱלֹהִים מִמַּעַל"  
(איוב לא, ב),**

**Now, the above it true even though the soul is a “piece of Elokus from Above.**

Perhaps we can answer: Since the Jewish soul is “a piece of Elokus from Above,” meaning that it derives from the Ten Sefiros of Atzilus, therefore, once it leaves the limitation of the body, it is in fact able to perceive the level of Elokus of Atzilus that shines into Gan Eden.

However, the Alter Rebbe rejects this explanation by saying that the soul we have down here only derives from the Ten Sefiros of Atzilus, but on a revealed level does not retain all the characteristics and infinitude of Atzilus. (See Tanya chapter 2 for more on this.)

הוא דרך משל כענין טפת הזרע  
שנמשכה מן המוח, שלא יתכן  
לומר שגם עודנה במוחו היתה  
טפת זרע גשמית, שאם כן היה  
נחסר מהמוח כו'.

This answer is not sufficient, for the following reason: **This is analogous to the droplet of seed that derives from the brain of the father, about which it is impossible to claim that while it was still within the brain it was a physical droplet. For, if that were the case, then by leaving the brain, this droplet would cause the brain to be lacking part of its physical substance, and the brain is not diminished in any way by producing seed.**

אך שבאמת התחלת המשכחה  
מן המוח הוא כח רוחני לבר,  
אלא שאחר כך בהשתלשלות  
ירידתה דרך חוט השדרה  
נשתנית ונעשית טפה גשמית.

**However, truthfully, at the beginning of the drawing down of the seed from the brain it exists as an intangible potential for producing seed. But, afterward, through the descent of this intangible potential for seed down the spinal cord, it changes, becoming a physical droplet.<sup>12</sup>**

כן על דרך משל, הנשמה עיקר  
שרשה מבחינת אלקות ממש, רק  
שנשתלשלה בירידתה להיות  
בחינת נברא, יש ודבר בפני עצמו  
כו' -

**Similarly, by way of analogy, the soul's main root is in the actual Elokus of the Ten Sefiros of Atzilus. However, it came down by way of the chainlike system of spiritual levels known as Hishtalshelus to become a created entity that perceives itself to be an independent being.**

<sup>12</sup> In the physical sense, some explain this to mean as follows: The brain produces the hormone, the chemical message, that is sent to the part of the body that actually produces the seed. In the brain itself there is only the “message” about producing seed, which becomes actual seed only when this message travels all the way down the body to the organ that produces the substance of the seed.

In other words, as the soul comes down into an actual physical person it is still connected to Elokus, but it does not retain the original properties of limitlessness of the Elokus of the Sefiros of Atzilus. Rather, it takes on the limitations of created beings.

Just as the child derives from the brain of the father, but now he is separate from the father, so too, the soul derives from the Elokus itself, but descends to become a separate entity.

וְאִם כֵּן, אֵיךְ תּוּכַל לְהַשִּׁיג מְהוּת  
וְעֵצְמוֹת אֱלֻקוֹת?

**If so, how, then, can it possibly directly perceive the Essential Light of Elokus?**

וְהַעֲנֵנִי:

**The idea is as follows:**

דִּהְיֶה כְּתִיב: "וַיָּבֹא מֹשֶׁה בְּתוֹךְ  
הָעֲנָן" (מִשְׁפָּטִים כד, יח), "וַיְהִי  
שָׁם [ . . ] אַרְבָּעִים יוֹם וְאַרְבָּעִים  
לַיְלָה, לֶחֶם לֹא אָכַל כּוֹ" (תְּשֵׁא לָד,  
כח).

**The verse** (Mishpotim 24:18) **states** regarding Moshe on Mount Sinai receiving the Torah, **"And Moshe came in the cloud"** and then ascended to the top of the mountain to learn from Hashem. Another verse states: **"And he was there for 40 days and 40 nights; he did not eat any bread or drink any water"** (Ki Sisa 34:28).

When Moshe went on Mount Sinai to receive the Torah from Hashem, he was first "wrapped up" in a "cloud" and then he was able to learn with Hashem at the top of the mountain for 40 days and nights without eating or sleeping.

וְהָיָה גּוּפוֹ הַגִּשְׁמִי נִיזוֹן מִמְּזוֹן  
רוּחָנִי לְבָר.

During those 40 days, **his physical body was nourished entirely by spiritual "food."**

כְּמוֹ שְׂכָתוּב (תְּהִלִּים עח, כה):  
"לֶחֶם אַבְיָרִים<sup>13</sup> אָכַל אִישׁ וְכוּ" –  
מִמֶּשׁ כְּמוֹ הַמְּלֵאכִים<sup>14</sup> –

**As it is written** (Tehillim 78:25), **"The man (Moshe) ate the spiritual food of angels,"** meaning, that Moshe's physical body was **literally** sustained by Divine Light **just as the angels** are sustained by the spiritual "food" of Divine Light.

וְאֵיךְ יוּכַל לְהִיּוֹת זֶה, שְׂגִשְׁמִי  
יִקְבַּל מְזוֹן וְחַיּוֹת מִרוּחָנִי,

Now, **how is it possible for a physical being to receive its lifeforce and sustenance from**

<sup>13</sup> ("לֶחֶם שֶׁל מְלָאכִים". רש"י).

<sup>14</sup> (רֵאדָה יוֹמָא עה, ב. וְרֵאדָה לְקוּטֵי שִׁיחוֹת חֶלֶק לוֹ עֲמוּד 177 הָעֵרָה 37).

שְׁמוֹבְדָלִים זֶה מִזֶּה בְּתַבְלִית?

**spirituality? They are completely different realms of existence!**

אך זהו ענין הענן שהיה משה על־יִהְיֶה־הַשְּׁלוֹם מִתְכַסֶּה בו<sup>15</sup>.

**But this is the idea and purpose of the cloud with which Moshe clothed himself** before ascending Har Sinai to learn the Torah with Hashem.

דהיינו, שהיה הענן שרשו ממדרגת אלקות מאד נעלה, אך שנשתלשל ונתגשם להיות לבוש למשה על־יִהְיֶה־הַשְּׁלוֹם שֶׁעַל יָדוֹ יוכל להשיג אלקות;

**Meaning, that the cloud was rooted in a very lofty level of Elokus. However, it descended to the physical level to become a garment for Moshe, enabling him to grasp Elokus,**

והיה לו למזון.

**and in this way, it enabled him to be physically sustained** by spiritual “food,” i.e., energy that came from Hashem’s Light shining into him through the Torah he learned.

כמשל אדם הרוצה ומסתכל באור צח דרך יריעה,

**This is analogous to a person who looks at a bright light shining through a curtain.**

The curtain filters out the intensity of the light so that the person can perceive the light without becoming overwhelmed.

Similarly, the power of Hashem’s Light which shines in the spiritual worlds of the angels is too powerful and lofty for the physical body to receive and be powered by it.

The “cloud” was a filter that blocked out the intensity and loftiness of Hashem’s Light shining in the Torah so that Moshe’s body could handle receiving it and being powered by it, similar to how the angels are powered by Hashem’s Light that shines in the spiritual worlds.

The reason the “cloud” was able to serve an interface system between the loftiness of Hashem’s Light and the physicality of the body is because this “cloud” is derived from a very deep level of Elokus, that is higher than the Hashem’s Light that shines in the spiritual worlds of the angels.

<sup>15</sup> (יומא ד, א: "משה עלה בענן ונתכסה בענן").

The cloud, which is the idea of darkness and concealment, derives from a level of Elokus that is “dark” in the sense that it so deep it is beyond the perception of all spiritual beings of souls and angels. It seems “dark” to them because it transcends their understanding. Because this level is so lofty, relative to it there is no difference between the physical needs of a body or the spiritual needs of an angel, since both are equally distant from this level of Elokus. Because from that level physical and spiritual are equal, it can enable these two realms to merge, so that the physical body can be nourished by the spiritual energy that angels live from.

The Alter Rebbe gave an analogy of the “cloud” that Moshe used as an interface for his mind and body to receive and be powered by Hashem’s Light. Now he will apply that concept to how Mitzvos in general serve as an interface system for the soul to perceive Elokus in Gan Eden after they leave the body:

כְּמוֹ כֵּן תּוֹרָה וּמִצְוֹת מְעֻשִׂיּוֹת, **Similarly, regarding Torah study and the actions of mitzvos:**

שְׁשָׂרְשָׁם מִרְצוֹן הָעֲלִיּוֹן, **They are rooted in Hashem’s Lofty Will and Wisdom, and are completely unified with him, for “He [Hashem] is Wise, but not with a knowable Wisdom”** (Introduction to Tikkunei Zohar).  
 מִחֻכְמָתוֹ יִתְבָּרַךְ, שֶׁהֵם מִיּוֹחָדִים בּוֹ יִתְבָּרַךְ, "הוּא חָכִים כִּי"<sup>16</sup>,

Saying that “Hashem is Wise” means that Hashem puts Himself, as it were, into the level of Wisdom of Atzilus, so that it becomes “His Wisdom,” that is completely inseparable from Him. Because this Wisdom is one with Hashem it is “not a knowable wisdom” to the creations, since, just as Hashem is unknowable, His Wisdom is also essentially unknowable to the creations in its original state. Only after Hashem’s Wisdom of Atzilus is limited and brought down to a lower level can it be comprehended by the creations.

שֶׁהֵם לְמַעַלָּה מִזִּיּוֹ הַשְּׂכִינָה, **These levels of Elokus which are Hashem’s Will and Wisdom in Atzilus are above and beyond the level of Elokus called “the ray of the Shechina-Divine Presence, which is just a radiance of energy of Malchus of Atzilus.**  
 שֶׁהוּא רֶק הַתְּפִשְׁטוֹת הַחַיּוֹת כִּי;

The World of Atzilus has ten Sefiros, ten levels and aspects of Hashem’s revelation, how Hashem brings Himself down, as it were, to relate to creations. The highest of these Sefiros is Chochmah-Wisdom, the essential Wisdom of Hashem. This level is the inner wisdom and purpose behind all of creation. What

<sup>16</sup> ("וְלֹא בְּחֻכְמָה יִדְעָא").

is this innermost wisdom and purpose of creation? The Torah is the innermost wisdom of Hashem and fulfilling mitzvos is the innermost purpose of why Hashem creates everything. Thus, the Torah and Mitzvos are the highest level of Atzilus, the innermost wisdom and will behind all of creation.

The lowest level of the Sefiros of Atzilus is the Sefirah of Malchus-Kingship. This is the level of how Hashem comes down to actually act as a King and Creator of the universe. This level itself has two aspects: 1- Hashem's Sefirah of Malchus as it exists in Atzilus is the power to create and govern the worlds. 2- Hashem's Sefirah of Malchus as it descends "out of Atzilus" into the realm of the created worlds to create, enliven, and govern them. This second level of Malchus is referred to as "Shechina-Divine Presence," since it is the level of how Hashem's power and lifeforce is "present" and manifest in a revealed sense to the creations. The "ray" of the Shechina is how the power and light of Malchus becomes limited according to the capacity of the creations to handle without being overwhelmed, in each level according to their limitations.

Thus, the Torah and Mitzvos themselves are from the highest levels of Elokus, from the highest level of Atzilus, which is incomparably higher and deeper than the limited "ray of the Shechina" that shines in the created worlds.

וְנִשְׁתַּלְשְׁלוּ וְנִתְפַשְׁטוּ וְנִתְלַבְּשׁוּ  
 בְּעֵינֵי זֶה הָעוֹלָם הַגָּשְׁמִי, כְּמוֹ  
 קֶלֶף שֶׁל תְּפִלִּין, וְצִמְרָן שֶׁל צִיצִית,  
 וְצִדְקָה כּו' -

And yet, **these** levels of Hashem's Will and Wisdom **descended and extended** downwards and became invested in matters of this physical world, such as parchment for tefillin and wool for tzitzis and money for tzedakah.

כְּשֶׁאִדָּם עוֹסֵק בַּתּוֹרָה וּבְמִצְוֹת  
 נַעֲשֶׂה לְנִשְׁמָתוֹ לְבוּשִׁים שֶׁנִּתְלַבֵּשׁ  
 בָּהֶם בְּגַן-עֵדֶן הָעֶלְיוֹן,

When a person involves himself in learning Torah and doing mitzvos, this creates a garment for his soul to that it wears when it is in the Upper Gan Eden.

שֶׁעַל יָדָם תּוֹכֵל הַנִּשְׁמָה, שֶׁהִיא  
 בְּחִינַת נְבִיאָא, לְהַשִּׁיג זֵיו הַשְּׂכִינָה,  
 עֲצֻמוֹת אֱלֻקוֹת.

By way of these garments, the soul, which is a created entity, can: 1- grasp the radiance of the Shechina that creates and enlivens the worlds, and more than that, 2- it perceives the Essential Light of Elokus shining in Atzilus.

Just as the "cloud" that Moshe had served as an interface system that allowed his human mind and physical body to become bound up with Elokus, the Mitzvos we do create a similar interface system that allows the finite soul to directly perceive

both levels of Elokus that shine in Gan Eden, known as the “radiance of the Shechina,” and “the Essence of Elokus,” that shines from Atzilus, as explained above.

The reason that Mitzvos have this power is because they derive from a level in Elokus that is incomparably loftier than the “radiance of the Shechina,” rather, they derive from Hashem’s Will. Because mitzvos are from such a deep level in Elokus that is beyond the limitations of all worlds, from the perspective of that lofty source there is no difference between the limitation of the soul and the (relative) limitlessness of the “radiance of the Shechina” and these two things can merge.

In other words, specifically because Torah and Mitzvos are so much loftier than the Light of Hashem in Gan Eden, that is why they even have the power allow a limited creation to perceive the Elokus of Gan Eden. This is expressed in the “garments” created by the Mitzvos that the soul “wears” to enter Gan Eden and perceive Elokus there without being overwhelmed.

וְזֶהוּ "יִפָּה שְׁעָה אַחַת בְּתְשׁוּבָה  
וּמַעֲשִׂים טוֹבִים" - שֶׁהֵם שָׂרָפִים  
מִרְצוֹן-הָעֲלִיוֹן בְּרוּךְ-הוּא - "מִכָּל  
חַיֵּי עוֹלָם הַבָּא", שֶׁהוּא רַק זֵיו  
הַשְּׂבִינָה כְּיָדוּעַ.

**And this is the meaning of “Better one moment of teshuva and good deeds” – since they are rooted in Hashem’s Supernal Will – “than all the life of the World to Come in Gan Eden” – since it is only a radiance of Hashem’s Shechina, as is known.**

The Tzemach Tzedek adds: Even the Infinite Light shining from Atzilus into Gan Eden is still not as great as the mitzvah itself. Since even that Light from Atzilus is only a glimmer of the truly Infinite dimension of the connection to Hashem accomplished by the mitzvah. Even though this Light of Atzilus is so much greater than the “regular” Light of Hashem invested in Gan Eden, nonetheless, it is still only a glimmer of the Essential Will of Hashem found in the Mitzvah that transcends the entire World of Atzilus.

מִכָּל מְקוֹם הֵם נִקְרָאִים "לְבוּשִׁים"  
- שֶׁעַל יְדֵה תּוֹכֵל לְהַשִּׁיג זֵיו  
הַשְּׂבִינָה. וְדִי לְמַבִּין. :

**Nevertheless, teshuva and mitzvos are called “garments,” which enable one to grasp the radiance of the Shechina. This should suffice for those who understand.**

Based on all the above, we answered the question that was asked at the beginning of the maamar:

If mitzvos are better than all “the World to Come,” then why are they merely “garments” for the soul to enter Gan Eden?

The answer:

There are two aspects of the mitzvos. One is the source of Mitzvos is from Hashem's Essential Will, will transcends the limitations of all worlds, and is above and beyond the realm of Gan Eden, known as "the World to Come."

The second is how the mitzvos come down here into this world. When a Jew performs a mitzvah in this world, he not only connects to the source of the Mitzvah, Hashem's Essential Will, but he also creates a "garment" for his soul to enable it to perceive the Elokus in Gan Eden known as "the radiance of the Shechina."

The fact that Mitzvos also create a garment for the soul to enter Gan Eden is specifically because their source is so lofty and unlimited that it has the power to combine such opposites as a limited soul of a person and the (relatively) limitless Light of Hashem in Gan Eden.

The Alter Rebbe has described how precious mitzvos are, that they are beyond the whole category of the realm of Gan Eden, seemingly the only thing important in life should be to do mitzvos.

Now we need to understand: If mitzvos are so important, and are greater than mystical revelations of Hashem in Gan Eden, why spend time trying to awaken a love and fear for Hashem through contemplation, wouldn't it be a better use of the time to just do more mitzvos?

The answer will be<sup>17</sup>: Mitzvos are performed with physical things in this world. For these "garments" of the mitzvos to ascend to Gan Eden and serve as the spiritual interface between the soul and Elokus, they need to be "elevated" by the "wings" of the love and fear of Hashem.

וְעֵתָהּ צָרִיךְ לְהִבִּין עֵינֵי אֱהָבָה-  
וִירָאָה, שֶׁהֵם רַק "גְּדַפִּי" <sup>18</sup> לְבַד  
לְהַגְבִּיחַ עֵיקַר הַדְּבָר שֶׁהֵם תּוֹרָה  
וּמַעֲשִׂים טוֹבִים; **And now, we need to understand the idea of love and fear of Hashem, which are like the "wings" compared to the main thing, which is Torah study and good deeds of mitzvah performance.**

A bird has wings which allow it to fly, but are not the main part of the body of the bird, since, a bird can live even its wings are not functioning.

Similarly, the Torah and mitzvos are the main "body" and vitality of our connection to Hashem. But the love and fear of Hashem are "wings" that enable our Torah and mitzvos to "fly" up to a higher level of revealing this connection to

<sup>17</sup> ראה ד"ה וטהר לבנו עזר"ת

<sup>18</sup> (בְּנִפְיָם).

Hashem and experiencing it on a conscious level. This is expressed in their ability to serve as “garments” for the soul in Gan Eden, enabling them to perceive Elokus.

ולִהְיִין מֵהוֹת הָאֵהָבָה – מֵהָיָא?

**We need to understand: What is the true meaning of this love for Hashem that enables our mitzvos to “fly up”?**

הִנֵּה בְקִרְיַת־שָׁמַע צָרִיךְ  
שְׂיִמְלִיכוּהוּ לְמַעַלָּה וּלְמַטָּה וּלְדָרְ  
רוּחוֹת הָעוֹלָם.<sup>19</sup>

**In Krias Shema we need to declare Hashem’s Kingship Above and Below, and in all Four directions of the world.**

פִּירוּשׁ, דְּכַתִּיב: "מְלֵא כָּל הָאָרֶץ  
כְּבוֹדוֹ", וְתַגְּמוּ: "זֵיו יִקְרִיָה",

The meaning of this can be explained based on what is written, “The whole world is filled with His Glory.” The Targum Yonasan translates “His Glory” as “the ray of His Glory.” This indicates that it is only a ray and radiance of Hashem’s Light that becomes invested within the worlds. And another verse states, “I fill the heavens and the earth.”

This second verse does not refer to His Glory, but rather Hashem Himself (“I fill”). How can this be that Hashem Himself, in His Essence, fills the heavens and earth, since he cannot be grasped in any limited or measured way?

שֶׁהוּא רַק זֵיו וְהַתְּפֹשֶׁטוֹת וְהָאָרֶה  
בְּלִבְד הַמְתַּלְבֶּשֶׁת תּוֹךְ כָּל עֲלָמִין;

**This indicates that it is only a ray and radiance of Hashem’s Light that becomes invested within the worlds.**

וְכַתִּיב: "אֵת הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאֵת הָאָרֶץ  
אֲנִי מְלֵא", בְּבַחֲיִנַת עֲצָמוֹת  
אֵלְקוֹת שְׂאִינוּ נִתְפָּס תּוֹךְ מִדָּה  
וְגִבּוֹל?

However, another verse states, “I [Hashem] fill the heavens and the earth,” meaning, that the Essence of Elokus, Hashem Himself – who is not grasped in any measured or limited way – is what fills the heaven and earth, not merely the “ray of His Glory”?

וְהַעֲנִין שְׁשֵׁנִיהֶם אֲמַת כּוֹ.

**Now, the idea is that they are both true:**

<sup>19</sup> (בְּרִכּוֹת יג, ב).

כְּמִשַׁל בְּטוֹל זֵיו הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ בְּמִקּוֹר  
הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ עֵצְמָהּ.

This can be understood from the analogy of the nullification of the rays of the sun within the sun itself.

כִּידוּעַ שְׁבִאָמַת, עֵצְמוֹת אֱלֻקוֹת -  
"מֵלֵא כָּל הָאָרֶץ".

As is known, that in truth, the Essence of Elokus, Hashem Himself, "fills the entire world."

אֲךָ מָה שֶׁהוּא מִתְפַּשֵּׁט תוֹךְ כְּלִי  
וְגוּבּוֹל, הוּא בְּטֵל וְנִבְלָל בְּמַהוּתוֹ  
וְעֵצְמוֹתוֹ אֱלֻקוֹת כּו'. .

However, His light and power that He expresses within the limits and constraints of the worlds that He creates is considered as nothing other than its original source that it still exists inside of, which is the True Essence of Elokus.

The light of the sun exists withing the sun, but it is not noticeable or separate from the sun at that point. Similarly, the light and power of Hashem, His limited expression that He uses to create and sustain the worlds, actually still exists inside of its source, Hashem Himself. This is because Hashem is everywhere, there is no place or level that can exist outside of Him. The reason we see a world as existing separate from Hashem is only because Hashem is hiding Himself and His Elokus that is creating us. But, in reality, we still exist inside of Him, even though we don't know it (yet).

Therefore, both ideas are true: On the one hand, what we see manifest in creation is only a limited expression of His Light and Power, the "ray of His Glory," that He uses to create the world. (Even this limited expression of Elokus is also hidden from us to see it directly, we only know about its existence from the fact that it interacts with us by creating and enlivening us, but we can't actually "see" it.)

On the other hand, the fact is that everything still exists inside of its True Source, which is Hashem Himself, even though this fact is completely hidden from our perception, even from perceiving its existence, except indirectly (like through studying Chassidus).

וְהִנֵּה, כְּשִׁיתְבוּנֵן אָדָם הֵיטֵב בְּזוֹ  
בְּפִסְקֵי דְזִמְרָה וּבְקִרְיַת שְׁמַע,

Now, when one will properly reflect on this idea during Pesukei D'Zimra and Krias Shema,

אִיךָ שְׁבִאָמַת הוּא כֵּן, שֶׁהֶעֱלָמוֹת  
בְּטֵלִים בְּמִקּוֹר חַיּוּתָם,

the idea that in truth the worlds and all their inhabitants, including the person himself, are nothing other than an extension of their

**Source of Life that are still included in,**  
Hashem who is creating and enlivening them.

רק מפני שהאדם הוא בכלי גשמי  
- הגוף שהוא "משכא דחויא"<sup>20</sup>,

**And the reason he cannot perceive this at all is only because a person is limited within a physical vessel, i.e., the body, which is called 'the skin of the snake,'<sup>21</sup> since it derives from kelipas nogah (see note),**

שמתגדל ומתרבה מגשמיית,  
המסתיר ומעלים שלא יוכל  
לראות בעיני ראייה חושית,

**which derives its nourishment and growth from the physical world which is itself from kelipas nogah, that conceals and hides the revelation of Hashem so that one cannot see Hashem's revelation with his physical eyes.**

We said before that we are being created and enlivened from Hashem's light and power called Elokus. In addition, this Elokus (and us) are still included in our Source, in Hashem.

<sup>20</sup> (עור של נחש. ראה תקוני זהר תקון כא דף מח, ב).

<sup>21</sup> The meaning of the "skin of the snake": The original cause of sin in the world was the first "snake" that convinced Chavah to eat from the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Bad. This "snake" thus represents unholiness in general. Now, even though the snake itself was unholy and brought about death etc., but when the snake dies, its skin can be used for clothing. In fact, according to one Midrash, the clothing that Hashem made for Adam and Chavah after the sin was made from the skin of the snake itself (see Targum Yonasan on Bereishis 3:21). This represents that in 'kelipa-unholiness' there are two aspects, the is the "body of the snake," that is completely unholy, referred to as the "the 3 completely unholy kelipos," and there is the "the skin of the snake," referred to as "kelipas nogah," that can be used for holiness, once is it separated from the completely unholy kelipos. The physical body of a Jew is called "the skin of the snake" since it is from "kelipas nogah" that can be used for holiness. However, if it is not used for holiness then it conceals holiness, since it is kelipas nogah, which is also a type of kelipa, a type of concealment on Hashem's Light. Because the body is from kelipas nogah, 'the skin of the snake,' it automatically conceals Hashem's Light to a certain extent. Because of this (and the animal soul which is also from kelipas noga) we are not automatically aware of the Elokus that is creating and enlivening us, and how we are always bound up with our Source of Life, Hashem. ראה ד"ה ויעש ה' כתנות עור בספר החקירה להצ"צ

Even though its not possible for limited being to see Hashem, who is infinite, but it should be possible to “see” the Elokus that is creating us, at least on some level. In addition, we should be able to know that we are still bound up in our Source in Hashem, even if we cannot “see” Him directly. In Gan Eden, the soul does “see” the Elokus creating us, and does know that it is bound up in its Source.

So why is that in this world we cannot see Elokus at all and have no idea whatsoever that we are still bound up in our Source?

This is because the world we live in is from the level of kelipas nogah, which conceals the Light of Hashem, meaning, it dulls our perception and awareness of Hashem’s Existence and how He is creating us etc.

Since the body (and the animal soul) are nourished and grow from the physical things that are kelipas nogah, therefore they are also permeated with this type of kelipah.

(When the Jews received the Torah from Hashem, then needed to eat the Munn, the food from heaven, to purify their bodies from kelipas nogah, since the munn had no kelipa in it, to reach the complete awareness of Hashem in their Torah study.)

אִזִּי יִתְעוֹרֵר בְּלֵב תְּשׁוּקָה שִׁיחִיָּה  
קָשׁוּר בְּהִתְבּוֹנְנוֹת זֶה כָּל הַיּוֹם וְלֹא  
יִפָּרֵד מִמֶּשׁ בְּלָל.

Upon considering and recognizing the truth of these facts, **then one’s heart will be awakened in yearning to be bound up with this idea** and bring it into his conscious awareness **throughout the entire day, so that he should never be separated from it at all.**

וְזֶהוּ קִבְּלַת מַלְכוּת־שָׁמַיִם בְּפָסוּק  
רִאשׁוֹן<sup>22</sup>;

**This is the concept of “acceptance of the Sovereignty of Hashem who is in Heaven” in the first verse** of Krias Shema.

In the Gemara (Brachos 13a) it says that the first parsha of Shema is about “accepting Hashem’s Sovereignty.” The simple meaning of this is that when we say that “Hashem is our G-d, Hashem is One,” this means that since He is our one and only G-d, He is also our True King who we worship and serve with unconditional commitment. Even if a human king would tell us to do something against Hashem’s will, we would not listen to him, since Hashem is the One and only Supreme Being that His commands supersede any else’s.

(בְּרִכּוֹת יג, א.)<sup>22</sup>

However, the deeper meaning of this verse is that not only is Hashem our King because He is our Creator and Manager, but also because He is the only True Existence and the only Source of Life.

It is not just that Hashem is more important than people, and therefore His commands take precedence. There are no other beings that have any separate existence from Him to give us commands in the first place. They are all just like puppets in Hashem's hands, whatever they do is only because Hashem is giving them that power for a certain reason known to Him.

(Even though people have free will to choose to do good or bad, they do not have the power to do good or harm anyone unless Hashem gives them that power. A person can only choose to try to do something good or bad to himself or others, but the actual result of his choice is not dependent on the person's choice.)

This is the deeper meaning of "accepting Hashem's Sovereignty" in Shema: To accept the idea that Hashem is the absolute only power in existence at all.

"וְאַהֲבָתָּהּ" - שְׂיֵהִיָּהּ "הוֹיָה אֱלֹקֵינוּ"  
(וְאַתְחַנֵּן ו, ה),

After the first verse of Krias Shema, it continues to say: **"And you would love it if Hashem would reveal that He is your G-d,"** i.e., your Life and Power, and that you are bound up with Him.

שְׂיֵהִיא תְּמִיד קָשׁוּר בְּהַתְּבוּנָתוֹ זֶה  
- בִּיטוּל הָעוֹלָמוֹת לְהַמְחִיָּה  
וּמְהוּוֹה אוֹתָם.

Meaning, that you would love **to always be bound up with this idea, that the worlds are nothing other than an extension of the One that is enlivening them and bringing them into existence.**

רַק מִפְּנֵי הַיּוֹת כִּי גוּפוֹ הַגִּשְׁמִי לֹא  
יֻכַל לְקַבֵּל בִּיטוּל אֲמַתֵּי הַנִּל,

**However, since the physical body cannot handle this true awareness of how it is nothing other than its Source of life and existence as described above,**

יִגְמֹר בְּדַעְתּוֹ בְּקִרְיַת־שְׁמַע עֲנִין  
לִימּוּד הַתּוֹרָה בְּאָמְרוֹ "וְדַבַּרְתָּ  
בָּם" (שָׁם, ז).

therefore, during Krias Shema when he says, "And you shall speak of those words of Torah," **one should decide that he will actually learn Torah after he finishes praying.**

דְּהֵיִינוּ, שְׁנִפְשׁוֹ הָאֱלֹקִית בְּעֶסְקוֹ  
בַּתּוֹרָה נַעֲשֶׂה יְחִוּד אֲמַתֵּי עִם

**This is because, when one learns Torah, his Divine soul becomes truly united with the Torah.**

התורה.

ו"אורייתא וקודשא בריך הוא  
בולא חד" <sup>23</sup> ממש,

And because "the Torah and Hashem are one," through this he becomes literally united with Hashem Himself,

כי "אורייתא מהכמה עילאה  
נפקת" <sup>24</sup>, ונתלבשה בעניני זה  
העולם,

since, on the one hand, "the Torah is derived from the level of Hashem's Chochma-Wisdom Above in the World of Atzilus," and, on the other hand, it becomes invested in matters of this world, dealing with physical mitzvos that we can comprehend while in the body,

וכשאדם מלביש נפשו האלקית  
בעניני לימוד התורה שבוה  
העולם, אזי גם שרש נפשו  
למעלה מתלבש גם כן בתורה  
שלמעלה עד רום המעלות,  
ונעשה שם יחוד גמור.

therefore, when a person involves his Divine soul in the matters of Torah learning that relate to this world, this causes the root of his soul Above in the spiritual worlds to also become involved in the Torah as it exists Above, on the highest spiritual levels, and there, on that higher level of the soul and the higher level of the Torah, they completely merge.

In other words:

How does the Torah study accomplish uniting us with Hashem, that we should experience how we are nothing other than Him, just His Light and Power that is still included in Himself?

The answer is that the Torah has two opposite aspects. In its source it is Hashem's Wisdom, the highest level of transparency to Him. But it descends to the lowest level, to discuss mitzvos performed in the physical world. We can learn the Torah in this world on a conscious level without becoming overwhelmed. But at the same time, the deeper parts of our soul, the subconscious hidden dimension of our Divine soul, can access the true source of the Torah as it exists as Hashem's Wisdom Above, at the highest level of revealing Hashem's Oneness. When that happens, the deepest part of our Divine soul does in fact perceive the true Oneness of Hashem as manifest in the Torah Above. This "trickles down" into our conscious

<sup>23</sup> (נסמן לקמן נו, ג).

<sup>24</sup> (זהר חלק ב יתרו פה, א. וראה שם קבא, ב).

dimension so that we should have some connection to Hashem's True Oneness even in this world.

וְזֶהוּ "הַקְדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ־הוּא יוֹשֵׁב  
וְשׁוֹנֵה בְּגִידוֹ"<sup>25</sup> בְּנֵל.

**This is the meaning of (Yalkut Shimoni #1,035) "Hashem sits and learns Torah opposite the person learning Torah," as explained above.**

וְזֶהוּ "ה' צֶלֶךְ" (תְּהִלִּים קכא, ה),  
פִּירוּשׁ, כְּמוֹ צֶל.

**And this is the meaning of (Tehillim 121:5) "Hashem is your shadow," meaning just like the shadow of a person reflects the shape of the person, Hashem reflects His Light corresponding to the person's actions.**

These two quotes are showing how when a person sits to learn Torah in this world, Hashem responds by bringing Himself down to the person. Hashem brings down the His Light in His Torah as it exists Above all the way to the person as he is in the physical world. Thus, by learning Torah in this world we also access the unlimited dimension of the Torah as it exists Above, where His Oneness is fully revealed.

וְהִנֵּה כְּתִיב (שְׁלַח טו, מא): "אֲנִי  
הוֹיָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם אֲשֶׁר הוֹצֵאתִי  
אֶתְכֶם מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם."

**Now, it is written in the third parsha of Shema that we say in our prayers (from Bamidbar 15:41), "I am Hashem, your G-d, Who took you out of the land of Mitzrayim (Egypt)."**

The idea of "Mitzrayim" (which is similar to the word for "limitations") is not just physical slavery and limitations, but spiritual "slavery" and limitations of how the animal soul traps the Divine soul in physical temptations and tries to stop it from connecting to Hashem. Hashem is the one who frees us from both physical and spiritual slavery and captivity. (See the 47<sup>th</sup> chapter of Tanya for more on this.)

פִּירוּשׁ: שְׁלֵא יֵאמֵר הָאָדָם בְּדַרְךְ  
שְׁפָלוֹת, הָאֵיךְ יִגִּיעַ לְמַדְרַגַּת  
הַיְחוד בְּתוֹרָה וּתְפִלָּה, מֵאַחַר  
שֶׁהוּא עֲדִיין אֵינוֹ סוֹר מֵרַע גְּמוּר  
כו', וְהוּא עֲדִיין בְּשִׁלְמוֹת אֶצְלוֹ?

**Meaning that one should not think, out of misplaced humility, "how will I attain such a level of unity with Hashem through Torah and prayer, since I myself am not yet completely detached from evil and selfish desires, and my selfish desires and tendencies are still fully active in me?"**

<sup>25</sup> (ראַה תָּנָא דְבִי אֱלִיהוּ רַבָּה רִישׁ פְּרָק יח. יִלְקוּט שְׁמֵעוּנֵי אִיכָה רָמֵז תתּרלה).

זאת ישיב אל לבו: שהשם הוא המוציא אותו מארץ מצרים.

**This is what he should take to heart and tell himself: “Hashem is the one who takes me out of my own personal Mitzrayim.”**

פירוש: שהוא מבדיל ומפריש בנפשו הטוב מן הרע, הנפש-אלקית מנפש-הבהמית כשהוא עדיין לא עשה רע בפועל ממש.

**Meaning that Hashem separates the good within him from the bad, which is the Divine soul from the animal soul, as long as the person did not do anything bad.**

Even if a person’s animal soul has physical desires or even unholy desires, this does not stop the person’s Divine soul from uniting with Hashem. This is because Hashem “takes us out of Mitzrayim,” i.e., He takes out our Divine soul from the limitations and captivity of the animal soul.

However, this ability to become fully united with Hashem during prayer and Torah study is only when a person does not actually sin, he just has a desire for sin. Because the unholiness of the animal soul’s desires are not expressed in the body, the body remains pure enough to be a vehicle and a vessel for the expression of the Divine soul and its unity with Hashem.

This is the concept of the Beinoni, discussed at length in the first section of the Tanya. The Beinoni is someone who has unholy desires in his animal soul but does not act upon them. Instead, during prayer he awakens a love for Hashem and those unholy desires are temporarily “put to sleep.” Even after those unholy desires reawaken, he continues to ignore them, due to the connection to the love and fear of Hashem he experienced in prayer. This person will also be able to feel some of the Light of Hashem shining into him when he studies Torah (at least on some level).

But someone who actually sins will have a harder time experiencing a love for Hashem in prayer until he does Teshuva, (as mentioned in Tanya chapter 42), and a harder time feeling the Light of Hashem in the Torah study.

Now the Alter Rebbe adds that even someone who sins and does not do teshuva still creates a connection to Hashem through Torah study, even though he cannot feel it:

ואפילו רשע גמור, **And even someone who is completely wicked,**

הוא ממשִׁיךְ בְּנַפְשׁוֹ הָאֱלֹקִית<sup>26</sup>  
בְּעֶסְקוֹ בַּתּוֹרָה.

he draws down Elokus into his Divine soul  
when he is involved in Torah study.

רק שְׁעָלְיוֹ נֶאֱמַר (תְּהִלִּים נ, טז):  
"וְלֹרְשָׁע אָמַר אֱלֹקִים מַה לָּךְ  
לְסַפֵּר חֻקָּי,"

It is just that regarding him the verse states  
(Tehillim 50:16), "and to the wicked G-d  
said, 'What gain do you have from talking  
of my statutes.'"

פִּירוּשׁ: שְׂאִין תּוֹעֵלֶת לְנַפְשׁוֹ  
הָאֱלֹקִית, מִפְּנֵי שְׁעָלְיוֹ נֶאֱמַר  
(תְּהִלִּים נ, טז): "וְתִשְׁלַךְ דְּבָרֵי  
אֲחֵרֶיךָ," שֶׁלֹּא יוּכַל לְהַמְשִׁיךְ  
בַּתּוֹךְ פְּנִימִיּוֹתוֹ.

This means that there is no revealed benefit  
for the Divine soul, since the verse states  
regarding him (ibid. 50:17), "and you  
throw my words behind your back," simply  
meaning that he disregards Hashem's words,  
but the deeper meaning is that he is unable to  
internalize Hashem's words of Torah, as  
though the words go right over his head and  
fall behind his back instead of going inside of  
his head.

In other words: Any time a Jew does a mitzvah or learns Torah he creates a connection with Hashem in his Divine soul. But if he sins, then the unholiness of the sin blocks out the Light of Hashem from being felt in his Divine soul. If he wants to sin but holds himself back, then Hashem will not allow those unholy desires to stop him from feeling the Light of Hashem in prayer and Torah study, Hashem will "take him out of his personal Mitztrayim."

וְדִי לְמַבִּין :

And this should suffice for one who  
understands.

וְהִנֵּה בְּעֵינֵי בְּרִכּוֹת<sup>27</sup> [שְׁמוּנָה-  
עֶשְׂרֵה] - "בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה' הַנֵּה",

Now, regarding the concept of the  
[eighteen] blessings of the Amida prayer  
which follows Krias Shema, which begin with  
the words "Blessed are You, Havaya  
(Hashem)..."

פִּירוּשׁ:

The meaning is as follows:

<sup>26</sup> (ראַה פְּרִדָּס שְׁעַר הַנְּשׂוּמוֹת סוֹף פֶּרֶק יא).

<sup>27</sup> [בְּנִרְאָה קְאֵי אֲשׁוּמְנָה-עֶשְׂרֵה - וְאוּלַי צְרִיךְ לְהִיּוֹת: "ח"י בְּרִכּוֹת" - וּבֵא בְּהַמְשָׁךְ לְקִרְיַת-שְׁמַע, דְּבִיָּאָר עַד עֵתָּה. - הָעֵרַת כְּבוֹד קְדוּשַׁת אֲדָמוֹר. בְּכַתֵּב יד 2088: בְּרִכּוֹת שְׁמוּנָה-עֶשְׂרֵה].

"בְּרוּךְ" הוא הַמְשָׁכָה וְרַבּוּי, "בְּרוּךְ-Blessed" refers to an expression of drawing down and increasing Hashem's revelation,

שִׁיהִיָּה "הַוַּיָּה", שֶׁהוּא בְּחִינַת צְמֻצוּם וְהַתְּפִשְׁטוּת כּוּי

so that "Havaya," which is Hashem's Four-Letter Name that represents the entire four-step process of drawing His Light into creation which is 1- contraction of His Light into a singular point, and then 2- expansion of that point of Light, then 3- drawing down that expansion of the point of Light, and then 4- allowing the recipient to fully receive this drawing down of Light,

- יְהִיָּה בְּחִינַת "אַתָּה" - לְנוֹכַח, הַתְּגָלוּת כּוּי.

can be directly related to, so that we can refer to Him as "You," in a revealed sense.

The Alter Rebbe analyzes the first three words of the Shemona Esrai, (which are also the first three words of all blessings):

- 1- "בְּרוּךְ-Blessed" in reference to Hashem means that Hashem is the Source of all blessings, and that all blessings flow down from Him. This word is related to the word 'הַמְבַרֵךְ-one who bends down,' like someone who takes a grape vine and bends it down into the ground to have it grow in a new location. In our context this means that the word "בְּרוּךְ" can also mean "drawn down" from a state of concealment to a state of revelation, i.e., that Hashem's Light is drawn down and revealed to us. The word "בְּרוּךְ-Blessed" also connotes that something becomes greater, like someone who is "blessed" with an abundance of wealth, or many children etc. In our context this means that Hashem's Light, as expressed in the name Havaya, becomes greater in terms of its revelation to us.
- 2- "אַתָּה- are You" is in how we refer to Hashem in the second person, showing that this drawing down of Hashem's Light becomes revealed to us directly.
- 3- "הַוַּיָּה-Havaya" refers to Hashem's Four-Letter Name spelled with the same letters. This Name is so holy we do not pronounce it, and we do not even write it except when necessary. The four letters of this Name represent how Hashem draws down His Light to us through four stages of the Sefiros of Atzilus (known as 1-Chochma, 2-Bina, 3-Zeir Anpin, 4-Malchus) limiting the Light until can reach us.

Thus: “בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה' הַיּוֹמָהּ-Drawn down and directly revealed is Your Light Hashem, from Your Name Havaya, from Your Sefiros of Atzilus, until it reaches us down here directly.”

In other words, the idea of the eighteen blessings of Shemona Esrai is that some of His Light is actually able to come down and be revealed to us. What are asking for in Shemona Esrai is that His Light should be fully revealed to us. When Hashem helps us with what we need we come to recognize Him in our life. This is the goal of Shemona Esrai, to bring the awareness of Hashem into our mind and heart.

אך להיות כי הגוף הוא המסתיר ומחשיך, רק לעתיד-לבא יהיה התגלות אלקות "וראו כל בשר"<sup>28</sup>, ויהיה בבחינת ביטול.

**Now, being that the body is what conceals and obscures the Light of Hashem, and only in the Future Times will Elokus be fully revealed “so that all flesh will see” and will become nullified to Hashem thereby.**

אבל עכשיו צריך להראות על כל פנים ענין הביטול בחיצוניות, בכריעה והשתחוואות בראש, "הכורע, כורע בברוך"<sup>29</sup>.

**However, now we must at least show this nullification to Hashem in a superficial way, by bending and bowing the head, as the Gemara teaches, that “one who bows, does so at the word “ברוך.”**

As mentioned above, the word “בְּרוּךְ-Blessed” also means to bend down, thus an appropriate moment for us to bend down in submission to Hashem.

וענין "רופא חולים", ו"גואל ישראל", ו"מברך השנים" הם כלים לבחינת המשכה והתגלות אלקות כו'.

**And the idea of the blessings of Shmona Esrei, “He Who heals the sick,” and “He Who redeems Israel,” and “He Who blesses the years,” are vessels to receive the drawing down revelation of Elokus.**

When Hashem helps us with health and livelihood etc. this shows us His presence in our lives. This is called “revelation of Elokus,” i.e., our ability to perceive Hashem.

והכורע צריך "שיראה איסר כנגד לבו"<sup>30</sup>.

**And it says in the Gemara (Brachos 28b): “one who bows during Shemona Esrai must make visible the vertebrae opposite the**

<sup>28</sup> (ישעיה מ, ה): "וּנְגַלָה כְבוֹד ה' וְרָאוּ כָל בָּשָׂר יַחְדָּו כִּי פִי ה' דַּבֵּר".

<sup>29</sup> (ברכות יב, א).

<sup>30</sup> (ברכות כח, ב). ראה גם לקוטי תורה מטות פו, ג).

**heart** at least the size of a small coin called an ‘issar.’”

Rashi explains that when someone bows down, there appear bumps on one's back from the vertebrae. When bowing during Shemona Esrai, a person should bend his back so that two “bumps” would theoretically appear on his back (if his shirt would be off, but one is required to wear a shirt during Shemona Esrai), and between these two bumps there is a space the size of small coin called an issar.<sup>31</sup>

פִּירוּשׁ: עֵיקַר הַמְשָׁכָה יְהִיָּה  
בְּמוֹחַ, עַד שְׂיתַפְּשֵׁט גַּם כֵּן בְּלִבּוֹ  
אֶפִּילוֹ מְעַט,

**This means that the main process of drawing down an awareness of Hashem in Shemona Esrai is into his brain, which then must extend into his heart, even slightly,**

הַיְינוּ בְּחִינַת אִיסָר<sup>32</sup>, שְׁהוּא  
בְּחִינַת חֶפֶץ.

**which is the idea of an ‘איסר-issar,’ which represents the desire for connecting to Hashem as it exists in the mind, before it is emotionally felt.**

When a person wants something, this desire happens in a few stages. First, he learns about something being good in general. Then he realizes that this is something that he should personally want. Then he comes to have an emotional attachment to that that thing.

When a person comes to an awareness of Hashem in Shemona Esrai, he mainly experiences this in his mind. He needs to bring that awareness into his heart, so that he translates that awareness of Hashem's presence in his life into a desire to connect to Hashem more through Torah and mitzvos. Even if he cannot bring himself to an emotional feeling of desire for connection to Hashem, he can at least come to an intellectual level of desire, to realize that this is what he should really want.

This is referred to an “‘איסר-issar,’ since the word ‘איסר’ is the same letters as ‘אוסר’, tying down the letter ‘י’. The ‘י’ represents Chochma, the total submission and giving yourself over to Hashem, where you feel like a singular point, like a ‘י’ before Hashem. ‘אוסר-to tie down the ‘י’ means to bring that awareness of Hashem and submission before Him into the heart, that a person should want to

<sup>31</sup> An issar is a coin used in the times of the Gemara, worth 8 perutos, which is silver in the weight of 4 barley grains (see (שו"ת צ"צ יו"ד סי' רכג). It is not clear exactly what size the coin itself was, but if it weighed the amount of 4 barely grains of silver it must be relatively small in total area.

<sup>32</sup> (וְעַיִן מִה שֶׁנִּתְבָּאָר לְקַמּוֹן (יְחִי מוֹ, ד - מו, א) בְּפִירוּשׁ "אוֹסְרֵי לְגַפְּנוֹ").

connect with Hashem throughout the day after Shemona Esrai. This is why he needs to show an איסר opposite his heart, meaning he need to tie down the י' to his heart, at least on some level.

תהלים (כדכתיב) [וכתיב]<sup>33</sup> "הודו על ארץ ושמים",  
קמח, יג):

**And it is written** (Tehillim 148:13), **“His Splendor is exalted above the earth and the heavens,”**

אפילו בבחינת זיו והתפשטות  
החיות המלופש תוך כל עלמין.

meaning, that **even only the level of the ray and radiance of life force** of Elokus **that becomes invested within the worlds** is still “exalted” above their perception, since (outside of Gan Eden) the creations have no direct perception of it whatsoever.

After Shemona Esrai, a person should take to heart:

On the one hand, he cannot have any direct perception of Elokus in this physical world, not even the Elokus that creates the physical world.

On the other hand, it is here in this physical world that he can perform mitzvos, which connect him to Hashem on a deeper level than the Light of Elokus that shines in Gan Eden.

- [אבל] (ו)תכלית<sup>34</sup> הכוונה -  
"להיות לו דירה בתחתונים"<sup>35</sup>

**However**, even though he cannot perceive even the Elokus invested in creation, **the ultimate purpose** of creation **is to make for Hashem a dwelling in the lowest world** through fulfilling mitzvos, which can only be done in this world.

ו'סוף מעשה במחשבה  
תחלה<sup>36</sup>, "נעוץ סופן  
בתחלתו"<sup>37</sup>

**And** it we say in the Shabbos evening prayers: **“the final deed of the mitzvos was the original intention”** of Hashem behind creation, and it says in Sefer Yetzirah (1:7) **“the end deed of mitzvos is bound up in the**

<sup>33</sup> [כדכתיב: צריך להיות: וכתיב].

<sup>34</sup> [ותכלית: צריך להיות: אבל תכלית - הגהת כבוד קדושת אדמו"ר מוהרש"ב נשמתו-עדן].

<sup>35</sup> (תנחומא נשא טז).

<sup>36</sup> (פיוט "לכה דודי").

<sup>37</sup> (ספר יצירה פרק א משנה ז).

**beginning** of Hashem’s thought to create the world.”

ולכן אמרו רז"ל (חגיגה יב, א):  
 "אֶרֶץ נִבְרָאת תְּחִלָּה כּוּ":  
**Therefore, our Sages say (Chagigah 12a) that “the earth was created first before the heavens.”**

Even though the heavens were actually created before the earth, but the desire to create the earth came before Hashem’s desire to create the heavens, since the His Ultimate Desire to have a “dwelling place” on earth through mitzvos that we do.



### Summary of the Maamar:

- 1- Based on the Zohar it seems that the purpose of Torah and Mitzvos is to create “garments” for the soul in Gan Eden to perceive the Light of Hashem there. If so, what is the meaning of what it says in Pirkei Avos that “one hour of Teshuva and mitzvos in this world is better than all of the life of the World to Come” in Gan Eden?
- 2- To answer that, let’s ask another question: The lifeforce of Elokus that creates and enlivens the worlds is not revealed and seen. In fact, this power of Elokus is not limited based on the parameters of the worlds it creates, it remains beyond the limitations of time and space even as it descends to create the world.
- 3- If so, how is it possible that the soul of a person, that was bound up with limitations of creation, can perceive the actual power of Elokus creating the world? We can ask the question even stronger: How can this soul perceive the Infinite Light that shines in the Ten Sefiros of Atzilus after it leaves the body and ascends to Gan Eden?
- 4- The words of Torah and the action of Mitzvos the person says and does in the physical world are actually a deeper level of connection to Hashem than all of the Light of Elokus that shines in Gan Eden, both the Elokus that creates the world, and the Elokus shining in Gan Eden from the Ten Sefiros of Atzilus. This is because they are the Essential Will and Wisdom of Hashem that transcends the Elokus invested in creation, and are even greater than Light of Atzilus that shines into Gan Eden.

- 5- Because the Mitzvos are from such a high level of in Hashem, they have the power to create a “garment,” an interface system, that allows the soul to perceive the Elokus shining in Gan Eden. This is similar to the “cloud” that Moshe Rabeinu had on Har Sinai that allowed his physical body to be nourished from spiritual power. This “cloud” is derived from a very deep level of Hashem’s Hidden Power, and therefore can unite physical and spiritual. Similarly, Mitzvos are derived from Hashem’s Essential Will, that has the power to connect a limited creation with the Light of Elokus in Gan Eden, through the “garments” that the Mitzvos create.
- 6- If the actions of the Mitzvos (and saying words of Torah) is what creates the “garments” because they are from Hashem’s Will, then what is the purpose of awakening love and fear for Hashem during prayer? A person’s love and fear of Hashem is limited, and of a lower quality than the love and fear he possessed in Gan Eden. Why would his lower level of love and fear of Hashem in this world be needed to enter Gan Eden, what does it accomplish that the soul did not already have when it was in Gan Eden before it entered the body?
- 7- The answer: Since mitzvos are done in the physical world, they need the person’s love and fear of Hashem for the “garments” created by them to ascend to Gan Eden and be able to serve as the proper intermediary between the person’s soul and the Light of Elokus shining there.
- 8- How do come to attain this love for Hashem?
- 9- During prayer, a person should contemplate on the following during Krias Shema:
- 10- Hashem creates the everything in the world, including the person, from a limited expression of His Light and Power. But this Light and Power is actually still included in its source in Hashem, since Hashem is always everywhere. The truth is that there is nothing separate from Hashem at all, there is not existence other than Hashem Himself, who contains everything in Himself like the sun contains sunlight.
- 11- If so, then why does the person himself not feel anything of Hashem’s Light, of His Presence, of the fact that He is creating the person, of Hashem’s True Oneness?

- 12- This is because the body and the world is from kelipas nogah that cover over the Light of Hashem, and block out our ability to feel His Presence and True Existence.
- 13- When a person realizes this, he will come to truly yearn to experience the Truth of Hashem's Oneness.
- 14- However, in this world a person is not able to be fully conscious of that Oneness of Hashem. Instead, the closest a person can get to Hashem's Oneness is through Torah study. This is because when a Jew studies Torah in the physical world, the source of his soul studies Torah with Hashem on High, where this Oneness of Hashem is revealed. Through this, the Oneness of Hashem trickles down to the soul as it exists in the body.
- 15- In addition to the contemplation on Hashem's Oneness in Krias Shema, the person comes to an awareness of Hashem in Shemona Esrai. This is expressed in the person talking directly to Hashem, and bringing down Hashem's Light into his personal life by asking Hashem to help him even with health and livelihood etc. However, the person needs to "tie down" that awareness of Hashem into his heart to realize that what he really needs more than anything else is just to connect to Hashem through mitzvos during the day after prayers.
- 16- Through the above contemplation in Krias Shema and focused awareness in Shemona Esrai, a person can come to love and fear Hashem properly. This will enable him to not only do more mitzvos, but also to elevate his mitzvos to serve as the proper "garments" for his soul to perceive Elokus in Gan Eden.

**A Lesson from the Maamar:<sup>38</sup>**

We need to balance out the following two points: On the one hand, the actual mitzvos we do and words of Torah we say are what have infinite value, since they are the Essential Will of Hashem. The goal of life is not to get reward in Gan Eden, rather it is to make a “dwelling place” for Hashem through Mitzvos.

At the same time, Hashem wants that we should do the mitzvos in a way that we should be able to feel the Elokus shining in them. He wants us to develop a love and awareness of Him in Davening, so that we will feel the connection to Him created by mitzvos.

Even the “reward” in Gan Eden is really just another detail in “dirah batachtonim”: This is because perceiving Hashem’s Light in Gan Eden is a preparation to perceive the Essence of Hashem in the time after Moshiach is revealed, in the time of the Techiyas Hameisim.

The idea of “dirah batachtonim” has two elements: 1- That Hashem’s Essence is drawn down into this physical world, which is accomplished through Mitzvos. 2- That we will end up actually seeing and perceiving Hashem’s Essence in this world in the future.

Perceiving Hashem’s Light is actually a part of the “dirah batachtonim” plan of Hashem, since this is the preparation for the perception of His Essence in this physical world, which will be the ultimate “dirah batachtonim.”

By working hard nowadays to try to perceive Hashem in Davening, to try to awaken a love for Hashem and elevate our Mitzvos, we prepare ourselves and the whole world for the true perception and revelation of Hashem that will happen when Moshiach comes.

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<sup>38</sup> Based on the explanation given in Pelach HaRimon referenced at the beginning of the maamar.

### **Torah Or English translation project:**

The original text of the maamarim with נקודות and punctuation is presented side by side with a phrase-by-phrase translation and explanation. The translation of the text is in **bold** whereas the commentary is in regular font. The explanations of general concepts that are not directly relevant to understanding the flow of the maamar are in footnotes.

### **The Goal**

The main purpose of this project is to enable the reader to learn the Likutay Torah in the original. By learning the words, structure, and concepts of the maamarim, eventually they should be able to learn it by themselves in the original.

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