
LESSONS IN TORAH OR

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

תּוֹרָה אֹר

פְּרִשְׁת חַיֵּי שְׂרָה

דְּבוּר הַמִּתְחִיל

וַיֵּצֵא יִצְחָק לְשׁוּחַ בְּשָׂדֵה

“Grasping the Torah with its Details”

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ב"ה

Torah Or English translation project:

With Hashem's help we would like to present this installment of **Lessons in Torah Or**.

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.

All of the commentary of the Tzemach Tzedek printed with brackets in the original Torah Or have been moved to the Hebrew footnotes and left untranslated.

The Goal

The main purpose of this project is to enable the reader to learn the Torah Or 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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Please Donate to Keep this Project Going

Translating these maamarim takes many hours of work per week, and funding is needed to cover the expenses to make this possible. Please donate at our website www.LearnChassidus.com

For comments and questions please email me at avraham.t.katz@gmail.com

Torah Or

תּוֹרַה אֹר

דְּבוּר הַמִּתְחִיל

וַיֵּצֵא יִצְחָק לְשׁוּחַ בִּשְׂדֵה¹

פְּרֻשֵׁת חַיֵּי שָׂרָה דָף יז, א - יז, ב

“Grasping the Torah with its details”

In Parshas Chayei Sara, the Torah describes the marriage of Yitzchok and Rivka. While Avraham’s servant Eliezer was bringing Rivka to meet Yitzchok, Yitzchok went out to the field to talk to Hashem (in prayer) in the evening, before sunset. In the Gemara (Brachos 26b) they learn from this verse that Yitzchok established the custom to pray in the afternoon (what we call Mincha).

Another interpretation of the fact that Yitzchok went out to the field to “talk” was to say words of Torah.

In this maamar, the Alter Rebbe will explain on a mystical level the significance of the fact that Yitzchok went out specifically to the “field” to pray or learn, and did not do so in a house in a city, and what the lesson is from the fact this was “before sunset”.

In order to explain this, he will explain the idea of “a field” versus “a house in a city” as a metaphor for two different types of Torah study known as “Mishna” and “Beraisa”:

(א) Part 1

"וַיֵּצֵא יִצְחָק לְשׁוּחַ בִּשְׂדֵה לְפָנוֹת עָרֵב
וַיִּשָּׂא עֵינָיו וַיִּרְא וְהִנֵּה גַמְלִים בָּאִים: כו" (פְּרֻשֵׁתנו
כד, סג):

“And Yitzchok went out to talk in the field before sunset, and he lifted up his eyes and he saw that there were camels coming [and Eliezer

¹ (הַמְאָמָר מִתְקִיפֵת לִיאֲזוּנֵי).

and Rivka were on those camels].”
(Bereishis 24:63)

לְבֵאֵר זֶה, דִּהְיֶה יֵשׁ מִשְׁנָה וּבְרִייתָא.

To explain this, we first need to explain the difference between a “Mishna” and a “Beraisa”:²

וּבְרִייתָא - פִּירוּשׁ הַמִּשְׁנָה, כִּי הַמִּשְׁנָה
הוּא הַבְּלָל, וּבְרִייתָא הִיא הַפְּרֵט שֶׁל
הַמִּשְׁנָה, וְ"אֵין בְּכֻלָּ אֵלָא מֵה
שֶׁבְּפֵרֵט".

The Beraisa is the explanation of the Mishna, since the Mishna is a general teaching that could be understood in different ways and could be applied in many ways, and the Beraisa is a detail explaining the reasoning or application of the Mishna, and there is a rule “The information of a general teaching comprises no more than the sum of all its details.”

וְלִבְאֹרְהָ הַבְּרִייתָא הִיא לְמַטָּה מִן
הַמִּשְׁנָה, שֶׁנִּשְׁתַּלְשְׁלָה יוֹתֵר לְמַטָּה.

It would seem superficially that the Beraisa is lower than the Mishna, since it comes down lower to explain specific details as opposed to a more general teaching.

אֲבָל הָאֲמֵת הוּא, שֶׁהַבְּרִייתָא גְבוּהָ
יוֹתֵר, דְ"סוּף מַעֲשֵׂה בְּמַחְשָׁבָה

However, the truth is just the opposite, that the Beraisa is higher, since “the actual deed [of

² The word Mishna-מִשְׁנָה comes from the word שינון-learning, especially teaching orally to a student, as in the phrase from the Krias Shema “וְשִׁנַּנְתֶּם לְבָנֵיךָ”-and you should teach these [words of Torah] to your children”. The Mishna is the main compilation of the laws of the Torah as they were passed down orally (the Oral Torah) from generation to generation. The Mishna was compiled by Rabbi Yehuda Hanasi with his contemporaries and students towards the end of the time of the Seond Beis Hamikdash. Since one of the goals of the Mishna was to be memorized and recited by heart, only the most essential teachings of the laws of the Torah were compiled in the text of the Mishna. Many of the details pertaining to these laws and their reasonings were left out of the text of the Mishna and taught separately under the name בְּרִייתָא-Beraisa which comes from the word בַּר-outside, since these teachings were left “outside” of the carefully chosen text of the Mishna.

תַּחֲלָה" the Mitzvos] **was the original intention** [of Hashem]." (Shabbos Prayers, Lecha Dodi)

Since only through the knowledge of the details of the Mitzvos explained in the Beraisa are we able to actual fulfill them, it comes out that there is an advantage in the Beraisa over the Mishna.

דְּהֵינָה הַתּוֹרָה נִשְׁתַּלְּשֵׁלָה לְמַטָּה אֶפְיָלוּ
בְּדַבַּר שָׁקֵר. **We see that the Torah descended to deal with lowly things** of our world, **even dealing with people who say lies.**

כְּגוֹן: "זֶה אוֹמֵר אֲנִי מֵצְאֵתִיהָ כִּי". **For example:** The Torah deals with a case where two people find a garment at the same time and are both holding on to it, and while holding on to it they go to the Beis Din (Jewish court) and present their claims: **This one says 'I found it and I should keep the entire thing'**, and the other one says 'I found it and I should keep the entire thing'.

The law is that each one swears that he doesn't own less than half of the garment and they sell the garment and each one keeps half of the value of the garment." (Baba Metzia 2a)

In this case, one of them is definitely lying, since each one claims to be the only one to have found it and therefore has the right to keep the entire thing. Even in this case of people lying, the Torah describes what we should do.

וּלְפִי הַנִּרְאָה הִיא יִרְיֵדָה לְמַטָּה מְאֹד. **It would look like this is very great descent** for the Torah to have to deal with sorting out claims of people who (some of them) are lying.

וּמִכָּל מְקוֹם הִיא גְבוּהָ, כִּי "סוּף מַעֲשֵׂה **Nonetheless, this** ability to present a correct solution in a situation where

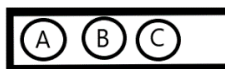
³ (בְּבֵא מְצִיעָא ב, א: "שְׁנַיִם אוֹחֲזִין בְּטִלִית, זֶה אוֹמֵר אֲנִי מֵצְאֵתִיהָ וְזֶה אוֹמֵר אֲנִי מֵצְאֵתִיהָ").

כי⁴. people are lying **comes from a higher level** of Hashem's Wisdom than just dealing with things that are naturally true and correct, **since "the actual deed** was the original intention [of Hashem]"

In other words, the original intention of Hashem is that we should serve Him in this physical world where some people lie, and His intention from the beginning was to show us how to live even in such circumstances. Thus, the ability to descend to show us what to do in these situations comes from a higher level of Hashem's Wisdom than abstract knowledge of Kabbala that describes spiritual worlds that are naturally holy.

וּבְמִשְׁלַּל הַשְּׂפוּפֶרֶת - הַנִּכְנָס רֵאשׁוֹן יוֹצֵא אַחֲרוֹן.

An analogy for this: If there is a tube that is sealed on one end, and someone puts objects (that take up the width of the tube) into that tube, then: **whatever was put into the tube first will leave the tube last.**



In this picture, the ball inserted first, ball A, will be the third ball to exit the tube, after balls C and B.

וּבְמִוּוֹ הָאָדָם, שֶׁהוּא סוּף כָּל הַנִּבְרָאִים - וְהוּא בְּמַעְלָה עַל כּוֹלָם, וְהַכֵּל נִבְרָא בְּעִבּוּרוֹ.

So too regarding a person, the fact that he was the last of all the creations,⁵ is because he is higher than all of them, and all of them were created for him.

Just like the ball that was put in first comes out last, so too, the fact that man came out last in creation is because he was the first thing in Hashem's original plan and intention for creation.

וְלָכֵן נִמְצָא הָעוֹלָם כּוֹלּוֹ בְּאָדָם אֶחָד,

Therefore, we find aspects of the entire world in every single person,

⁴ (בְּמַחְשָׁבָה תְּחִלָּה).

⁵ Man was created on the sixth day of creation, after everything else was created.

להורות שהכל נברא בעבורו - כי זה
כל האדם.⁶

to show that the entire world was created just for him, since “this was the entire purpose of creation-for man.” (Koheles 12:13).⁷

וזהו מאמר רז"ל: "יפה שעה אחת כו".

This is the meaning of the saying of our Sages: “One minute of Teshuva and good deeds in this world is better than all of the Life of the World to Come.” (Pirkei Avos 4:17)

דהנה בעולם-הבא "צדיקים יושבים כו",

The idea behind this: In the spiritual World to Come “the righteous [all Jewish People] dwell and enjoy the radiance of the Shechina [Divine Presence].” (Brachos 17a)

והוא רק בחינת אחרים, כמאמר
(תשא לג, כג): "וראית את אחורי כו",

This revelation of “the radiance of the Shechina” is only an external aspect of Hashem’s revelation, that is limited to the understanding of the created beings, as it says (Shemos 33:23): “And [Hashem said to Moshe:] you will be able to perceive an external aspect of My revelation, however the innermost aspect of My revelation will not be revealed”.¹⁰

⁶ (כי זה כל האדם: קהלת יב, יג).

⁷ In this maamar it doesn’t elaborate on this concept, but in other places it explains how the various parts of the body and of the soul correspond to all the different aspects of the physical and spiritual worlds, to show how each person is of fundamental importance to the purpose of the entire world.

⁸ ("בתשובה ומעשים טובים בעולם-הזה מכל חיי העולם-הבא". אבות ד, יז).

⁹ ("ונהנין מזיו השכינה". ברכות יז, א).

¹⁰ The verses (Shemos 23:18-23) read in full:

ויאמר ה' לא את כבודי: ויאמר אני אעביר כל טובי על פניו וקראתי בשם ה' לפניו וחסתי את אשר

התענוג שמשגי האדם בעבודתו הוא
בחינת אחרים,

This means: **The enjoyment that a person has in his understanding of his service of Hashem is only an external aspect** of connection to Hashem.

"ופני" אינו באפשרי להשיג, כי "לא
יראני האדם וחי" (תשא לג, ב);

The “innermost aspect” of Hashem’s revelation **cannot be grasped** by created beings, since “[Hashem says:] **no man can see Me and live.**” (Shemos 33:20)

ועל דרך זה גם הגלוי בגן עדן הוא רק
בחינת זיו והארה לבר.

Similarly, the revelation of Hashem in Gan Eden (the spiritual ‘World to Come’), is **only like a “ray of light”** of Hashem’s True Revelation, an external expression of the Infinite Truth of Hashem.

ולכן "יפה שעה אחת כו" - שהוא
המעשה עצמה בלי תענוג ובלי שכל -
"מכל חיי העולם הבא" - ד"סוף
מעשה במחשבה תחלה".

Therefore, “one minute of Teshuva and good deeds in this world is **better**”, meaning the **actual performance of the mitzvah itself, even without any enjoyment or understanding**, is “better than all of the Life of the World to Come,” since “the actual deed [of the

אחז ורסמתי את אשר ארעם: ויאמר לא תוכל לראת את פני כי לא יראני האדם וחי: ויאמר ה' הנה מקום אתי ונצבת על הצור: ונהה בעבר כבדי ושמיך בנקרת הצור ושפתי כפי עליך עד עברי. ונהסרתי את כפי וראית את אחרי ופני לא יראו:

And [Moshe] said [to Hashem]: “Please show me Your Glory”. And [Hashem] said: “I will cause My ‘Goodness’ to pass before you and I will call out the name of Hashem before you, and I will be gracious and merciful to those that I choose.” And [Hashem] further said: “You will not be able to see My innermost aspect, for no man can see me and live.” Hashem said [to Moshe]: “See, there is a place with Me that you can stand near a rock. When My Glory will pass, I will place you in a hole in that rock and I will cover you with my ‘Hand’ until my Glory passes. After I remove My ‘Hand’ you will see my external aspect, however my innermost aspect shall not be seen.”

Mitzvos] was the original intention [of Hashem].”

Even though in Gan Eden, there is only a “radiance” of the Divine Presence, which is only an external aspect of Hashem’s revelation that is limited to what the created beings can understand, however through Mitzvos in this world we connect to Hashem’s Innermost aspect that cannot be understood or grasped by any created being.

וְזֶה גַם כֵּן עֲנִין מִשְׁנֶה וּבְרִייתָא:
שֶׁהַמִּשְׁנֶה הוּא כָּלָל. כְּמוֹ: "ד' צִיצִית
מְעַכְבֹּת"¹¹;

This is also the difference between the Mishna and the Beraisa: The Mishna is like a general teaching, for example, the laws of Tzitzis are only mentioned as follows: “the Tzitzis on each of the four corners of the garment invalidate each other if one of them is missing, since the Tzitzis on all four corners are all part of one mitzvah.”

In the Mishna the laws of Tzitzis are not explained in detail, there are only two Mishnayos (plural of Mishna) that directly discuss Tzitzis, the last Mishna of chapter 3 of Menachos and the first Mishna of chapter 4 of Menachos (where the obligation of putting Techeiles¹² color on the Tzitzis is mentioned). However, in the Gemara of Menachos there are 6 folios explaining the laws of Tzitzis (38a-44a). In these 6 folios of the Gemara, numerous Beraisos (plural of Beraisa) are brought to explain in detail the laws of Tzitzis. We see clearly in regards to Tzitzis that the Mishna’s teachings are only general, whereas (almost) all of the details are only explained in the Beraisa (which is further explained in the Gemara).

וְכֵן "סוּכָה שֶׁהִיא גְבוּהָ כו"¹³. **So too, the Mishna says regarding a Sukka: “A Sukka that its Sechach**

¹¹ (מְנַחוֹת כח, א בַּמִּשְׁנָה: "ד' צִיצִיּוֹת מְעַכְבֹּת זו אֶת זוּ - שֶׁאֵרְבַּעַתָּן מִצְוֶה אַחַת").

¹² Techeiles is a turquoise/dark blue color that is derived from a certain creature called the Chilazon, whose identity is now unknown (according to most opinions). The Torah says that we must dye one of the strings of each corner in the Techeiles color and wrap it around the remaining strings of that corner.

¹³ (סוּכָה ב, א בַּמִּשְׁנָה: "סוּכָה שֶׁהִיא גְבוּהָ לְמַעַלָּה מִעֲשָׂרִים אַמָּה פְּסוּלָה").

(covering)¹⁴ is higher than 20 amos¹⁵ is invalid.”

The Mishna doesn't give any reason for this statement, only in the Gemara do the Sages analyze this statement and give various interpretations of the reasoning. Based on the different explanations of the reasoning from the Sages of the Gemara, there are different opinions of which cases the Sukka will be invalid if its Sechach is higher than 20 amos.¹⁶ We thus see that this is a general statement that includes various interpretations and details.

וַיֵּשׁ לְמִצּוֹא טַעַם לָזֶה, כְּעִנְיָן "תְּכִילֶת דּוֹמָה לַיָּם כוּ"ו"; **Now, regarding these general statements of the Mishna it is possible to find a reason to explain them, for example,** when the Mishna mentions the obligation to put Techeiles color on the Tzitzis there is a general explanation: **“The color of Techeiles is similar to the color of the sea,** and the color of the sea is similar to the color of the sky, and the sky reminds us of the Throne of Glory [that Hashem's presence ‘sits’ on].” (Menachos 43b)

¹⁴ Sechach is the cover of the Sukka that must be made of plants detached from the ground, like tree branches or raw wooden boards etc.

¹⁵ An amah (plural amos) is a measurement of distance of around 19 inches, thus 20 amos is around 32 feet.

¹⁶ In the Gemara there are three explanations of why a Sukka is invalid if its Sechach is higher than 20 amos: 1- Rabba: until 20 amos we “know” we are in a Sukka, higher than that we don't notice the Sechach and we don't “know” we are in Sukka; 2- Rabbi Zeira: until 20 amos we are protected by the shade of the Sechach, higher than 20 amos we are protected by the shade of the walls; 3- Rava: until 20 amos it is considered a temporary dwelling, higher than 20 amos it is considered a permanent dwelling.

¹⁷ (מְנַחוֹת מַג, ב (וְרַשׁ"י): "תִּנְיָא הִיָּה רַבִּי מֵאִיר אֹמֵר: מֵה נִשְׁתַּנָּה תְּכִילֶת (שִׁיחֲדוּ הַקְדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא לְמַצְוֶה זו) מִכָּל מִינֵי צְבָעוֹנִין? מִפְּנֵי שֶׁהַתְּכִילֶת דּוֹמָה לַיָּם, וַיֵּם דּוֹמָה לְרִקִיעַ, וְרִקִיעַ לְכֶסֶף הַכְּבוֹד". זֶהר חֶלֶק א קבא, א.

וְגַבְיֵי סוּכָה יֵשׁ טַעַם¹⁸ - "לְמַעַן יֵדְעוּ דִּרְוֹתֵיכֶם" - "עַד כ' אָמָה נו'".

So too regarding the case of Sukka (mentioned above) **there is a reason:** The verse (Vayikra 23:42-43) says: "You shall dwell in Sukkos for seven days...**in order that your future generations will know** that I [Hashem] caused the Children of Israel to dwell in 'Sukkos' when I took them out of Egypt," **and only** when the Sechach is **until 20 amos** high does a person **know** that he is in a Sukka, i.e. notice the Sechach.

אָבֵל הַבְּרִייתָא הוּא פֶּרֶט לְבֵאֵר הַמְּשֻׁנָּה בְּכָל דְּקְדוּקִים וּפְרָטִים.

However, the Beraisa contains the details to explain the Mishna in all of its details and intricacies.

כְּמוֹ סוּכַת גַּב"ךְ וְרַקב"ש¹⁹ שְׂאִין טַעַם לְדַבֵּר, וְנִרְאָה בְּחוּשׁ שֶׁהוּא לְמַעֲלָה מִהַשְׁכָּל וְהַטַּעַם²⁰.

For example: the cases of the Sukkos known as גַּב"ךְ-GANBA"CH and רַקב"ש-RABKA"SH²¹, in these detailed

¹⁸ (סוכה שם בגמרא: "מנא הני מילי? אמר רבה דאמר קרא (אמור כג, מג): "למען ידעו דרתיכם כי בסכות הושבתי את בני ישראל", עד עשרים אמה - אדם יודע שהוא דר בסוכה, למעלה מעשרים אמה - אין אדם יודע שדר בסוכה, משום דלא שלטא בה עינא").

¹⁹ (סוכה ח, ב: "תנו רבנן: גב"ך - סוכת גוים, סוכת נשים, סוכת בהמה, סוכת פותים . . סוכת רקב"ש - סוכת רועים, סוכת קניצים, סוכת בורגנין, סוכת שומרי פירות . . כשרה, ובלבד שתהא מסוככת כהלכתה. מאי כהלכתה? אמר רב חסדא: והוא שעשאה לצל סוכה").
²⁰ (ראה גם לקוטי תורה שיר השירים מא, ב).

²¹ These two words are acronyms for Hebrew words of cases of sukko that were not originally made to be used for the mitzvah of sukka by those who are obligated in the mitzvah, but nonetheless are valid to be used for the mitzvah as long as they were made to provide shade from the sun. They stand for:

גַּב"ךְ-gentiles, נְשִׁים-sukka of women (who are exempt from the mitzvah of sukka), בְּהֵמָה-sukka made as a shelter for animals, כּוּתִים-Kutim (people who pretended to convert to Judaism but really didn't)

קְנִיזִים-sukka of shepherds while on the job (during the rest of the year), רַקב"ש-sukka used by people drying fruit in the field during the summer, בּוּרְגָנִין-sukka of shopkeepers (during the year), שׁוֹמְרֵי פִירוֹת-sukka of people who guard the fields

cases **there is no** revealed **explanation** why these Sukkos are permitted to be used, **and we can clearly see that these** laws of the Torah **are higher than any logical explanation** known to man, rather they are just the Divine Will and Wisdom.

Even though the Gemara gave explanations for the reason of the Mishna's statement that a Sukka which is higher than 20 amos is invalid, it could not find an explanation for why a Sukka is valid even though it was not made for the purpose of the mitzvah at all, only for protection from the sun, as in the cases of GANBA"CH RABKA"SH where the sukka was built to be used during the year for shade and not for the mitzvah on the Festival of Sukkos. We see that even though we find general explanations for the reasons of mitzvos, but when it comes to the details, we have no such explanations.

(Another prime example of this is Tefillin: even though we have a general explanation of why we put on Tefillin, to place the Unity of Hashem written in the Shema on our mind and near our heart and thus dedicate ourselves to Hashem, but when it comes to the details of the mitzvah, that they must be perfectly square and the straps must be black etc. we have no logical explanation.)

We see from these details of the mitzvas that we cannot explain, that they are clearly just Hashem's Will and Wisdom that is beyond human understanding.

וְזֶהוּ "אֵין בְּכֹל אֶלָּא מֵה שְׁבִפְרֵט":

This is the meaning of the principle stated above: "The information of a general teaching comprises no more than the sum of all its details."

שְׂאִין בְּמִשְׁנָה - בְּכֹל, יוֹתֵר מִבְּפֵרֵט -
הַבְּרִיּוֹתָא.

This means that there is not contained in the Mishna -which is a general teaching- more than what is contained in its details - referring to the Beraisa.

וימה שלא נתגלה טעמה הוא יותר גבוה.

The fact that the reasons for these details **have not been revealed** to us is because they come from a **higher place** in Hashem's Wisdom than the Mishna, and therefore it is beyond our ability to understand them.

כי טעמי המצוות לא נתגלו²², ולעתיד-לבא, אם ירצה השם, יתגלו.

Like our Sages say: “The reasons for the Mitzvos were never revealed [by Hashem],” however, in the Future Era [after Moshiach comes], when Hashem desires to reveal them, then they will be revealed.

וזהו "רבי שמעון דריש טעמי דקראי"²³:

This is the meaning of the statement: “Rabbi Shimon [Ben Yochai] would explain the reasoning of the verses.” (Baba Metzia 115a)

שדרש, שמה שנאמר בפסוק טעם של דבר, לא זהו עיקר, רק שיש טעם בזה גבוה יותר למעלה מהטעם.

He would explain that the reason for mitzvos mentioned in the verse is not really the main reason for it, rather there is a higher [deeper] reason for them that is beyond our understanding.

For example, the Torah says regarding a Jewish king that he may not marry more than 18 wives. It says (in Devarim 17:17) the reason is “he should not increase for himself wives in order that his heart not be turned away [from serving Hashem]”.

The Gemara explains that according to Rabbi Shimon, the king cannot marry even one wife who will turn his heart from Hashem. Even though the reason mentioned in the verse is for why he cannot marry many wives, and not why he cannot have even one wife who is improper, nonetheless, Rabbi Shimon

²² (ראה סנהדרין כא, ב).

²³ (בבא מציעא קטו, א. ושם נסמין).

explains the reason for the mitzvah: Since the reason for not having too many wives is to not have a bad effect on the king, so even one improper wife is forbidden. The fact that the verse mentions that he should not have too many wives is a separate prohibition, that he should not have more than 18 wives even if they are all righteous and he wishes to add another righteous wife.

We see from Rabbi Shimon's approach that even where the verse itself gives a reason for a mitzvah, there is more to the reasoning of the mitzvah than what the verse says, since he interprets the verse's reason of "in order that his heart not be turned away" as another prohibition to not marry even one improper wife rather than an explanation of why he cannot marry more than 18 wives.

We see from this that (according to Rabbi Shimon) whenever the Torah gives a "reason" for a mitzvah it is actually just giving additional details to the mitzvah, since the ultimate reasons for the mitzvos are completely beyond human understanding and were never revealed.

נִמְצָא, שְׁבִמְצוּהָ שְׂאִין מְשִׁיג בָּה טַעַם, הוּא יוֹתֵר גְּבוּהָ. **It comes out from this that a mitzvah where the person does not grasp any logical explanation for it is higher [in a certain aspect] than if he would have some understanding.**

This simple fulfillment of the mitzvah out of pure dedication to Hashem, without one's own intellect mixing in, expresses the real truth of the mitzvah that it is completely beyond human understanding, and any understanding is limiting the mitzvah, [in a certain sense].

וַיְמָה שְׁמִשִּׁיג טַעַם וְתַעֲנוּג הוּא רַק בְּחִינַת אַחֲוָרִיִּים. **Any understanding and enjoyment that person perceives in fulfilling the mitzvah is only an "external" aspect of Hashem's revelation that is able to become limited to a level that we can understand and enjoy.**

וְלֹא כְמוֹ שְׁסוֹבְרִים הָעוֹלָם שֶׁהַעִיקָר הוּא הַלֵּב, שְׁמִשִּׁיג תַּעֲנוּג וְעוֹבֵד בְּהַתְּלֵהבוֹת, וְאֵינוֹ כֵּן הָאֱמֶת. **This approach is not like the general approach that many people have, that the main service of Hashem depends on what we feel in our heart, and that we should have enjoyment and**

excitement in our service of Hashem, but this is not the truth.

רק עיקר הוא המעשה בלי תענוג,
והלב אינו כי אם סיוע בחינת "גדפין".

Rather, [the truth is that] the main service of Hashem is just the actual performance of the mitzvos even without personal enjoyment, and the purpose of the excitement of the heart is only to help the mitzvos by being “wings” to make them fly up to holiness²⁴, but the actual service of Hashem is just actually doing what He wants, regardless of our feelings.

We see from all of this there is advantage in knowing the details of how to fulfill the mitzvos (as explained in the Beraisa and Gemara) even over the knowledge of the Mishna which contains all of the Oral Torah in general manner. This is because the main thing is the actual performance of the mitzvos, even if we don't understand the reasoning for these details. Not only that, but the fact that we can't understand the reasons for the details is because they are rooted in Hashem's Wisdom deeper than any human understanding.

It comes out from this the main connection to Hashem is not based on what we can understand and feel, which is inherently limited, but on the performance of His mitzvos which contain infinite depth beyond what any created being could ever fathom.

(ב) Part 2

והנה, משנה נקרא "עיר", וברייתא -
בחינת "שדה", לשון "בר" - חוץ
לעיר²⁵. ולכאורה העיר הוא עיקר -
שדרים בה בני אדם.

Now, the Mishna is compared to a “city” and the Beraisa is compared to as a “field”, since the root of the word ברייתא is “בר-”

²⁴ In Tanya chapters 39 and 40 the Alter Rebbe describes how the love and fear of Hashem are the two “wings” that cause our Torah and Mitzvos to “fly up” to Hashem, i.e. to become spiritually elevated to a level where their holiness can be revealed.

²⁵ (ראה מאורי אור ב, נג).

outside”, meaning outside of the city.

Seemingly, the city is on a much higher level than the field, since people live specifically in the city and not in the field. So too, it would seem that the Mishna is much higher than the Beraisa.

אַךְ נִרְאֶה מִי הוּא מְחִיָּה אוֹתָם? הַשָּׂדֶה
שְׁחוּץ לְעִיר שֶׁמְבִיאִים מִשָּׁם הַתְּבוּאָה!

However, lets look at the following: Which of these [the field or the city] is providing sustenance for people? It is the field that is outside of the city from which grain is brought [to provide bread for people]!

כִּן הוּא הַבְּרִייתָא מְחִיָּה הַמְּשַׁנָּה,
וּמְבַאֶרֶת הַהֲלָכָה יוֹתֵר בְּפֶרֶט הַיֵּאָךְ
לַעֲשׂוֹת.

So too, it is the Beraisa that “gives life” to the Mishna, and explains the halacha [Torah laws] in detail how it should actually be fulfilled.

כִּי הַתְּנָאִים – “מְבַלֵּי עוֹלָם”²⁶ – שְׁמוֹרִים
מִתּוֹךְ הַמְּשַׁנָּה.

Like our Sages say (Sota 22a): “Those who only teach Mishanyos destroy the world”, since they render decisions of halacha based on a superficial reading of the Mishna itself without the commentary of the Beraisa (or Gemara).

The Alter Rebbe has explained the difference between the Mishna and Beraisa and the advantage that the Beraisa, the “field”, has in ‘sustaining’ us with detailed Torah laws, like the physical field gives grain which makes bread to live off of.

Now he will return to explain the verse quoted at the beginning of the maamar, describing how Yitzchok went out to ‘talk’ in the ‘field’ before evening:

²⁶ (סוֹטָה כב, א: "תְּנָא: הַתְּנָאִים מְבַלֵּי עוֹלָם. מְבַלֵּי עוֹלָם סְלָקָא דְעֵתָךְ? אָמַר רַבִּינָא: שְׁמוֹרִין הַלְּכָה מִתּוֹךְ מְשַׁנָּה").

וְזָהוּ "וַיֵּצֵא יִצְחָק לְשׁוּחַ בְּשָׂדֶה"²⁷ –
 הוא לְשׁוּחַ דְּבוּר וְשִׁיחָה, וּלְשׁוּחַ שְׁחִיבָה
 לְמִטָּה, מִלְשׁוֹן "וְשָׁח רוּם אַנְשִׁים"
 (וְשִׁעְיָה ב, יא). וְכֵן "כַּאֲשֶׁר יִפְרֹשׁ הַשׁוֹחָה
 לְשָׁחוֹת" (בִּישְׁעָיָה כ"ה, יא)²⁸.

This is the meaning of the verse (Bereishis 24:63): "And Yitzchok went out 'לְשׁוּחַ-to talk' in the field," this word 'לְשׁוּחַ' is an expression of speech and 'וְשִׁיחָה-talking', but it is also an expression of 'שְׁחִיבָה-bending over' downwards, as in the phrase (Yeshaya 2:11): "וְשָׁח-and He will bend down' the arrogance of man," and in the phrase (ibid. 25:11): "Just as the 'שׁוֹחָה-swimmer' spreads out his hands to swim", a swimmer is bent over on his stomach in order to swim.

We see from this that the word 'לְשׁוּחַ-to talk' mentioned regarding Yitzchok can mean either 1- to talk, 2- to bend down.

"בְּשָׂדֶה" הוא בַּר. Our verse continues: "he went out לְשׁוּחַ in the field," which is outside of the city.

This is similar to the Beraisa, which is outside of the Mishna, like the field is outside of the city.

"וְלִפְנֵי עֶרֶב" – לִפְנֵי הָעֶרֶב וְהַחֹשֶׁךְ: The verse continues: "לִפְנֵי-before' night", meaning that Yitzchok bent down to a level 'outside' of holiness in order לִפְנֵי-to clear out' the spiritual night and darkness.

The word 'לִפְנֵי-before' is the same letters as 'לִפְנֵי-to clear out' or to remove.

²⁷ (פְּרָשְׁתָנוּ כד, סג: "וַיֵּצֵא יִצְחָק לְשׁוּחַ בְּשָׂדֶה לִפְנֵי עֶרֶב, וַיִּשָּׂא עֵינָיו וַיִּרְא וְהָיָה גְמִלִים בָּאִים").
²⁸ (וְעֵינָי מֵהַ שְׁנֵי תַבָּאָר בְּזָה עַל פְּסוּק "תִּבְנֶה וְתִכְוֶנַּן עֵיר סִיחוּן כו" עֵינָי שָׁם (לְקוּטֵי תוֹרָה חֻקַּת סו, א)).

Based on the above we can translate the verse as follows:

וַיֵּצֵא יִצְחָק -and Yitzchok went out

לְשׁוֹן - to bend himself down to the level of

בְּשָׂדֵה -in the ‘field’, a place outside of the city where people live, referring even to dealing with people or things in an unholy situation

לְפָנוֹת עָרָב -in order to clear out and remove the spiritual darkness from that place.

The Alter Rebbe will elaborate on this process as it applies to Torah study:

דְּהִינָה הַתּוֹרָה נִשְׁתַּלְּשֵׁל בַּחֲשָׁךְ,
כְּמֵאמֶר²⁹: "בְּמַחְשָׁכִים הוֹשִׁיבֵנִי" (אֵיכָה
ג, ו) "זֶה תִּלְמוּד בְּבֵלִי", שֶׁנִּשְׁתַּלְּשֵׁל
לְמַטָּה אֶפִּילוֹ בְּשָׂקֶר.

The idea behind this is: The Torah descends to deal with spiritual darkness, like the saying of our Sages (Sanhedrin 24a): “What is the verse referring to when it says (Eicha 3:6) ‘He [Hashem] caused me [the Jewish People] to dwell in darkness’? This is a reference to the Talmud Bavli [Babylonian Talmud],” where the Torah descends below to deal even with false claims.

We mentioned earlier in the maamar that the Torah addresses how to deal with situations where two people are arguing and one of them is definitely lying, for example two people claim full ownership of the same object. The fact that the Torah deals with such lowly matters is a great descent from its lofty source of being Hashem’s Wisdom.

וְלָמָּה הוּא כֵּן? כְּדֵי לְפָנוֹת הָעָרָב
וְהַחֲשָׁךְ - "וַיְהִי אֹרֶךְ", כְּמֵאמֶר (זְכַרְיָה יד,
ז): "לַעֲת עָרָב יִהְיֶה אֹרֶךְ".

Why is this so [that it must descend so far down]? In order to clear out the spiritual ‘night’ and darkness, so that it should become transformed into light, like the it says (Zecharya 14:7): “At the time of night, it should become light.”

²⁹ (סְנֵהֲרִין בְּד, א).

כַּמְשַׁל מִי שְׂרוּצָה לְפָנוֹת אֵיזָה דָּבָר,
צָרִיךְ הוּא לְכַנּוֹס בְּתוֹכָהּ כְּדֵי לְפָנוֹתָהּ,
אֲבָל לֹא שִׁישָׂאָר בְּתוֹכָהּ.

An analogy for this: Someone who wants to clean out a place, he first needs to go into that place in order to clean it out. However, the intention is not that he should remain in that empty cleaned out place, rather that after he cleans it out, he fills it up with whatever is supposed to actually go there.

גַּם מֵהֵן ³⁰ שֶׁנִּשְׁתַּלְשְׁלָה הַתּוֹרָה
וְנִחְלַבְשָׁה בַחֲשֵׁךְ - טְעוֹנוֹת שְׂקָר, הוּא
כְּדֵי לְפָנוֹת הַחֲשֵׁךְ "לְאַהֲפֹכָא חֲשׂוּכָא
לְנִהוּרָא"³¹.

So too, the fact that the Torah descended to become invested in a place of spiritual darkness, into false claims or the like, is in order to clear out that spiritual darkness, and to ‘transform the darkness into light’.

וְכֵן הָעֵסֶק בַּתּוֹרָה - לְדַחוֹת הַחֲשֵׁךְ
וְהַקּוֹשְׁיּוֹת הַמְסֻתֵיר עַל הַשְּׂפֵלַת הַדִּין
הָאֲמֵת לְאֲמֵתוֹ, וְלִמְצֵא הָאֲמֵת - גִּילּוּי
רְצוֹן-עֲלִיוֹן בְּרוּךְ-הוּא³².

So too, in the involvement of Torah study, the intention [of the study of the Talmud Bavli that include Beraisos or similar styles of learning] is to push away the spiritual darkness of the questions that conceal our understanding of the Torah laws according to their ultimate true meaning, and to find the truth, to reveal the True Will of Hashem.

וְזֶהוּ "וַיֵּצֵא יִצְחָק לְשׁוּחַ": כִּי כְּדֵי
לְפָנוֹת הָעָרֵב וְהַחֲשֵׁךְ וּלְתַקְנֵנוּ, הוּא עַל
יְדֵי יִצְחָק, שֶׁהוּא בַּחֲיִינַת פְּחַד³³ וַיִּרְאֵת

This is the meaning of “and Yitzchok went out to bend down to the level of the field...”: In order to clear out the spiritual ‘night’ and

³⁰ גַּם מֵהֵן: נִרְאָה לִי בְּדֶרֶךְ אֲפֹשֶׁר שְׂצָרִיךְ לְהִיּוֹת: כִּי מֵה - הָעֵרַת כְּבוֹד קְדוּשַׁת אֲדָמוֹ"ר].

³¹ (רָאָה זֶהָר בְּהַקְדָּמָה ד, א).

³² וְכִמוֹ שֶׁנִּתְבָּאָר עַל פְּסוּק "וְהִמְשִׁכִּילִים יִזְהִירוּ וְגו'" עֵינֵי שֵׁם (תַּנְיָא, אֲגַרַת הַקֹּדֶשׁ סִימָן כו).

³³ "וּפְחַד יִצְחָק" - וַיֵּצֵא לֹא, מַב).

ה' darkness and transform it, this is through the aspect of “Yitzchok” which refers to awe and fear of Hashem.

וּבְמֵאֲמָר³⁴: "אִם אֵין יִרְאָה אֵין חֲכָמָה כִּי"³⁵.

Like it says (Pirkei Avos 3:17): “If there is no fear [of Hashem] then there is no wisdom.”

Only someone who is truly dedicated to doing what Hashem wants will be able to really grasp the true Will of Hashem in the Torah laws.

וְזֶהוּ "הָאוֹמֵר אֵין לִי אֶלָּא תוֹרָה אֶפִּילוּ תוֹרָה אֵין לוֹ"³⁶ וְנִשְׁאָר בְּחֹשֶׁךְ.

This is the meaning of the statement of our Sages (Yevamos 109b): **Whoever says that he only has Torah knowledge without true fear of Hashem, then even Torah knowledge he does not have,**” and **he remains in spiritual darkness** despite his learning.

Since he lacks fear of Hashem, his knowledge of the Torah’s laws is only superficial and their true intention, since only one who actually really cares about doing what Hashem wants will really understand what Hashem wants.

אָבֵל בְּאֵמֶת כְּתִיב (תְּהִלִּים יח, יב): "יֵשֶׁת חֹשֶׁךְ סִתְרוֹ", שְׂאֵף שֶׁהוּא חֹשֶׁךְ, מִכֵּל מְקוֹם הוּא "סִתְרוֹ".

But the truth is, that in the seeming darkness of the Beraisos and in Talmud Bavli he reaches a deeper connection to Hashem, **as it is written** (Tehillim 18:12): “He [Hashem] **makes ‘darkness’ His hiding place,**” meaning that even

³⁴ (אָבוֹת ג, יז).

³⁵ (וְעֵינַי בְּזוֹהַר בְּרֵאשִׁית, ד' כ"א, סוֹף עֲמוּד א'): [וְשֵׁם: תַּנְיִנָּא נְהִירוּ דְאִזִּיל לְאַתְחַשְׁבָּא לְעַת פְּנוֹת עֵרֵב, רָזָא דְעֻלוּתָא דִּי צִדְקָא - לְאַתְקַנָּא הָאֵי דְרַגְנָא. דְכְתִיב: 'וַיֵּצֵא יִצְחָק לְשׁוּחַ בְּשָׂדֵה לְפָנוֹת עֵרֵב', אֶסְתַּכְלוּתָא דְ'עֵרֵב' וְחֹשׁוֹכֵן כְּלָהוּ לְגַבִּיּה. בְּהָאֵי פְּנוֹת עֵרֵב"].

³⁶ (יְבָמוֹת קט, ב).

though this type of Torah study is ‘dark’, nonetheless it “His hiding place”.

Even though it requires more effort to see Hashem in this type of Torah study, since he has to deal with finding the halacha in situations involving unholiness, and in resolving many questions and contradictions in the Gemara until he arrives at the correct conclusion, nonetheless, specifically in discovering the halacha in this ‘darkness’ he connects to Hashem deeper than if the halacha would be obvious and dealing with only holy things. This is why it is called “Hashem’s hiding place”.

וְזָהוּ לְפָנוֹת הָעֶרֶב וְהַחֹשֶׁךְ, וְלֵעֵת עֶרֶב
יְהִי אֹרֶךְ,

This is the meaning of ‘לפנות ערב’-before night’: ‘לפנות הערב-to clear out the night’ and darkness, so that “at the time of night there should be light”.

וְהַיְינוּ "לִיבוֹן הַלְכָתָא"³⁷.

For this reason, this type of learning is referred to as “ליבוּן-whitening [clarifying] the halacha”, since the intention is to take the spiritual ‘darkness’ and make it ‘white’ representing light and revelation.

Through a person attaining a true fear of Hashem, he will really care about what Hashem wants, and he will be able to reveal Hashem in the seemingly ‘dark’ learning of Gemara that discusses physical matters and unholy situations.

וְגַם זֶה פִּירוּשׁ "בִּרְכוּ בְּתוֹרָה"³⁸ :

This is also the meaning of: “making a bracha (blessing) on the Torah before learning.”

It says in the verse (Yirmiya 9:11-12): “[Hashem says:] Why was the Land [of Israel] lost? Because they [the Jewish People] abandoned my Torah.”

³⁷ (ראיה זהר חלק ג ברעיא מהימנא בהעלותך קנג א. פינחס רמח, ב).

³⁸ (ועיין מה שנתבאר על פסוק “קול דודי” (לקמן נא, ג), ועל פסוק “ששים המה מלכות” (לקוטי

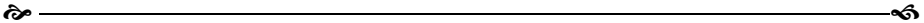
תורה שיר השירים מא, ב)).

Our Sages comment (Nedarim 81b): “What is the meaning of this verse that the Land was lost because they abandoned the Torah, we find that they learned Torah diligently? The answer is that they didn’t make a bracha on the Torah before they learned it.”

Chassidus explains that making a bracha on the Torah doesn’t just mean saying the words of the bracha printed in the siddur, it also means to appreciate the holiness of the Torah and how it connects us to Hashem. This comes from the prayer in the morning that comes before the Torah study, where a Jew comes to a love and fear for Hashem, and recognizes that through the Torah he learns he fulfills his yearning to connect to Hashem.

The phrase “בְּתוֹרָה בִּבְרַכּוֹ-they made a blessing on the Torah” can also be translated “בְּתוֹרָה בִּבְרַכּוֹ-they drew down into the Torah”, since בְּרוּךְ can mean to bless or to draw down (bend down). This means that we through the prayer before Torah study, we draw down Hashem’s Light into the Torah that we learn, revealing how Hashem is really “hiding Himself” in the Torah and we connect to Him specifically there.

This completes the idea mentioned in the maamar that when a Jew fears Hashem- the aspect of Yitzchok, then he ‘bends down’ into the ‘field’, meaning he reveals how Hashem is ‘hiding’ in the Gemara and Beraisa, which causes that the ‘night’ should be ‘cleared out’ and replaced with Light.



Summary

- 1- The verse says (Bereishis 24:63): “ וַיֵּצֵא יִצְחָק לְשׂוּחַ בַּשָּׂדֶה לִפְנֵי עֶרֶב וַיִּשָּׂא עֵינָיו וַיִּרְא וְהִנֵּה גַמְלִים בָּאִים. And Yitzchok went out to talk in the field before night, and he lifted up his eyes and he saw that there were camels coming [and Eliezer and Rivka were coming on them].” The simple meaning of the verse is that Yitzchok went out before nightfall to pray Mincha, or to learn Torah, and while he was in the field, he saw Eliezer and Rivka coming.
- 2- The Alter Rebbe explains the deeper meaning of the verse by first explaining the symbolism of “field” as opposed to “city”. The field is where grain grows that provides sustenance for the people, but people don’t live in the field, they only live in the city. Similarly, there are two aspects of learning the Oral Torah (Torah SheBaal Peh): Mishna and Beraisa. The Mishna gives over the most essential teaching of the Torah laws (the Halacha), and the Beraisa explains the details of the application of those laws. In the Mishna where the laws are presented in a general form, we are able to understand and explain much of the reasoning. However, in the Beraisos, where the details and possible applications are presented, we find that we are not able to explain their reasoning, rather they are just the essential Will of Hashem.
- 3- Even though it would seem that the Beraisa and Gemara are on lower level than the Mishna, the truth is that they have a great advantage, since only through them can we know the actual application of how to actually fulfill the Mitzvos in all of their details. This advantage of the Beraisa (and Gemara) over the Mishna is similar to the advantage of the field over the city: Even though the field is not where people live, all the sustenance comes from the field, and the city where people live cannot be sustained without the grain derived from the field. So too, even though our minds grasp the Mishna and its reasoning more easily than the Beraisa, nonetheless our main sustenance is from the Beraisa where the details are specified, since only with the details can we fulfill Mitzvos.

- 4- Now we can give a mystical interpretation of the verse as follows:
 “וַיֵּצֵא יִצְחָק”- and Yitzchok went out”, his attribute is fear of Hashem, meaning that when a G-d fearing Jew goes out
 “לְשׁוּחַ”-to talk/to bend down” to go down from learning the Mishna into a seeming lower level of
 “בְּשָׂדֵה”-in the field” a reference to the Beraisa and Gemara
 “לְפָנוֹת עֶרֶב”-before night” the intention of this is “לְפָנוֹת”-to clear out” the spiritual “עֶרֶב”-darkness” and night of this world by revealing the details of the Torah laws as they apply in our physical world. Even though in our world there are ‘dark’ situations of unholiness, like dealing with people who are lying, nonetheless the Torah shows us how to reveal Hashem in those situations. Only through defining the details of the halacha in the Beraisa and Gemara are we able to deal with and refine the darkness of the physical world.
- 5- The Alter Rebbe adds another explanation of the verse:
 “וַיֵּצֵא יִצְחָק”- and Yitzchok went out”, when a Jew goes out of his own limitations to really fear Hashem, which is accomplished through the morning prayers with an awareness of Hashem,
 “לְשׁוּחַ”-to talk/to bend down” then through this talking to Hashem in prayer he is able to ‘bend down’, to draw down Hashem’s Infinite Light “בְּשָׂדֵה”-into the field” a reference to the Beraisa and Gemara, meaning
 into the Torah that he studies afterwards,
 “לְפָנוֹת עֶרֶב”-before night”, thereby causing “לְפָנוֹת”-to clear out” the superficial “עֶרֶב”-darkness” of the Beraisa and Gemara which discuss physical matters and unholy situations, by revealing how really Hashem Himself is ‘hiding’ in the Gemara, and by learning Gemara with the proper intention the Jew is connecting to Hashem much more deeply than if he only had to learn parts of the Torah that are more obviously “lit up” and revealing Hashem.

לזכות יואל זוסמאן הכהן,

שהוריו יגדלו לתורה ולחופה ולמעשים
טובים ויראו ממנו הרבה נחת לאריכות
ימים ושנים טובות!

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ויגדלו לתורה ולחופה ולמעשים טובים
ויראו ממנו הרבה נחת לאריכות ימים
ושנים טובות!

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ההולדת בכ"ף חשון,
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 שיגדלו לתורה ולחופה
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 הרבה נחת לאריכות ימים ושנים
 טובות!

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 וחיה מושקא למשפחת וואלף.
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 אבינו בשעה טובה ומוצלחת
 ויגדלו לתורה ולחופה ולמעשים
 טובים מתוך הרחבה בגשמיות
 וברוחניות!

Rabbi Roberto and Margie Szerer,
in loving memory of

Gladys Szerer-Sarah Bat Shalom Z"L

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Enrique Szerer-Hersh Ben Aryeh Meyer HaCohen
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