



LESSONS IN LIKUTAY TORAH

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

לקוטי תורה

פְּרִשְׁתׁ מִי תְּבֵא

מֵאֵמֶר

וַיִּקְרָא מֹשֶׁה אֶל כָּל יִשְׂרָאֵל

“Prepare for Revelation
through Self-refinement”

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Likutay Torah

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פְּרֻשַׁת כִּי תבֹא

מֵאמֵר

וַיִּקְרָא מֹשֶׁה אֶל כָּל יִשְׂרָאֵל¹

דף מ"ג עמוד ג'

“Prepare for Revelation through Self-refinement”

In Parshas Ki Savo, Moshe Rabeinu tells the Jewish People that only after forty years in the desert did the Jewish People finally merit to “see” the truth of Hashem’s greatness, and choose to connect to Him fully. However, he also said that they did see Hashem’s greatness in Egypt and in the desert. So, what is the difference between what they saw then and what they saw before entering the Land of Israel?

Additionally, in Parshas Ki Savo we read about 98 curses that Hashem says are the punishments for not keeping and the Torah, and straying into idol worship, G-d forbid. Why did the Sages establish that we read about these 98 curses of punishment before Rosh Hashana? Isn’t Rosh Hashana a happy time of coming close to Hashem?

The Alter Rebbe will explain the answers to these questions in this maamar:

“וַיִּקְרָא מֹשֶׁה אֶל כָּל יִשְׂרָאֵל, וַיֹּאמֶר אֲלֵהֶם: אַתֶּם רְאִיתֶם אֶת כָּל אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה ה' לְעֵינֵיכֶם בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם לְפָרְעֹה וּלְכָל עַבְדָּיו וּלְכָל אֶרֶצוֹ כו', הַמַּסּוֹת הַגְּדוֹלֹת אֲשֶׁר רָאוּ עֵינֵיכֶם הָאֵתָה וְהַמַּפְתֵּימִים הַגְּדֹלִים הָהֵם כו', וְלֹא נָתַן ה' לָכֶם לֵב לְדַעַת, וְעֵינַיִם לְרֹאוֹת וְאָזְנוֹיִם לְשִׁמֹּעַ עַד הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה וְגו'” (פְּרֻשַׁתְנוּ כַּט, א-ג):

“Moshe called to all of Yisrael (the Jewish People), and he said to them: **You have seen** all that Hashem has done before your eyes in the land of Egypt, to Pharaoh and to his all of his servants, and to all the people of his land. **The great miracles that your eyes have seen**, and the great signs and wonders. **However, Hashem did not**

¹ (נְאֻמֵּר בְּשֶׁבֶת פְּרֻשַׁת תְּבֵא, שֶׁבֶת שְׁלִפְנֵי סְלִיחוֹת, כּא אֶלּוּל תִּקְנ"ו).

give you a heart to understand, or eyes to see, or ears to hear until this day.” (Devarim 29:1-3)

Rashi explains this verse: Before Moshe Rabeinu passed away, he wrote down the Torah and wanted to give it to the members of his Tribe, the Tribe of Levi. When the other Jews heard about this, they became jealous and asked Moshe to also write a Torah scroll for all the other Tribes as well (13 in total). When Moshe heard that they all wanted the Torah, he was very happy, and said that he finally sees that the Jewish People see and appreciate Hashem’s greatness and want to connect with Him through the Torah.

וְהוּא תָמוּהָ: דְּמִתְחַלֵּה אָמַר: "אַתֶּם רְאִיתֶם כּוֹ", וְאַחַר כֵּן אָמַר: "וְלֹא נָתַן כּוֹ" וְעֵינַיִם לְרֹאוֹת וְכוּ"?

Now, this is puzzling: Originally, he said, “You have seen (the wonders of Hashem),” and then he said “however, Hashem has not given you...eyes to see (His greatness) until today”?

וְלִהְבִּין זֶה: הִנֵּה כְּתִיב (וַיֵּרָא כָּא, לֵג):

To understand this, we must preface: It is written (Bereishis 21:33):

"וַיֵּטֵעַ אֵשֶׁל בְּבְאֵר שָׁבַע, וַיִּקְרָא שֵׁם בְּשֵׁם ה' אֱלֹהֵי-עוֹלָם".²

“He (Avraham) set up a hotel in Be’eir Shava, and he called out there that the Name (description) of Hashem, is that He is the G-d that is the true existence of the world.”

דְּהִנֵּה כְּתִיב: "רָם עַל כָּל גּוֹיִם ה' כּוֹ"³,

Now, it is written (Tehillim 113:4): “Hashem is exalted over all the nations,”

"מִי לֹא יִרְאַךָ מֶלֶךְ הַגּוֹיִם וְגוֹ"⁴ (יִרְמְיָה סִימָן יו"ד, ז.).

“Who would not fear You, King of all nations,” (Yirmiya 10:7)

² (נִזְכָּר בְּרִבּוֹת: וַיֵּרָא, סוּף פְּרֻשָׁה נ"ד. וַיֵּגֶשׁ, פְּרֻשָׁה צ"ד. זֶה־ר: חֶלֶק א', ק"ב, ב'. חֶלֶק ג': כ"ב, ב'. נ"ב, ב').

³ ("גוֹיִם". תְּהִלִּים קיג, ד.).

⁴ ("מֶלֶךְ הַגּוֹיִם").

דגם עובדי־כוכבים⁵ "קרו ליה אלקא-
דאלקיא"⁶,

Meaning, that even the nations of the world "call Him G-d over all Supernal Powers," (see Menachos 110a)

כמו שכתוב:⁷ "ממזרח שמש עד מבואו
גדול שמי בגוים וגו'".

As it is written (Malachi 1:11): "From the rising of the sun until its setting, My Name is great among the nations,"

אך הם בבחינת פירוד, להיות בחינת יש
ודבר בפני עצמו.

However, they exist in a manner of detachment from their Source in Hashem, so that they should have their own ego and independent existence.

ואברהם, הנה היה עומד וצוח: "בשם ה'
אל עולם!"

However, Avraham got up and announced that "the Name (description) of Hashem, is that He is the G-d that is the true existence of the world."

פירוש: שהשם הו"ה הוא "אל-עולם" -
כולא חד,

Meaning, that the Name of Hashem, which is Havaya, is the "G-d who is the true existence of the world," and that its all One thing, since the world is nothing other than Hashem,

Hashem's Name as He exists beyond the limitations of nature is spelled

י-ה-ו-ה, which out of its holiness is never pronounced as it is written. Therefore, when referring to it we use the letters of the Name out of order, הויה-Havaya.

The point is that Hashem as He is beyond all limitations of the world, Havaya, is also the true existence of everything in the world. This is because nothing in the world has any separate existence independent of Him.

⁵ ("גוים").

⁶ (מנחות קי, א).

⁷ (מלאכי א, יא): "ממזרח שמש ועד מבואו גדול שמי בגוים. ובכל מקום מקטר מגש לשמי, ומנחה טהורה, כי גדול שמי בגוים אמר ה' צבאות".

ולא "אל העולם" שהעולם הוא יש ודבר
בפני עצמו, והוא המחיה אותם - אינו כן,

It is not written "G-d, (who is merely ruler and sustainer) of the world," implying that the world has its own independent importance and existence, and Hashem only gives it life, this is not the case:

אלא כמו ששמו של אדם אינו מעצמות
האדם,

Rather, just like the name of a person, is not part of his essential being,

אלא שהחיות שלו מלובש באותיות
שמו,

it is just that his Life-Force (from Hashem) is invested in his (Hebrew) name,

In Tanya, Shaar HaYichud Vehaemuna (chap. 1), the Alter Rebbe explains how the Life-Force from Hashem give life to every creation through the letters of its Hebrew name.

שהרי אנו רואים שבשקורין אותו בשמו
הוא מתעורר,

as we see that when we call someone by his name, this awakens his very being..

Even someone who is sleeping or has fainted can be awoken through calling their Hebrew name.

There are several stories of situations that someone was in a coma, and the Rebbe sent someone to call him by his Hebrew name, and that woke him up.

In other words:

On the one hand, a person's name is not part of his essential being, since he can exist without a name (as he did from the time he was born until being named).

On the other hand, this name does reach and affect his essential being. The fact that a person is awakened even from deep sleep through calling his name shows that the person's very life is connected to that (Hebrew) name.

We see that a person's Hebrew name has two opposite aspects to it: It is connected to the very life of the person, but it is nothing of the essence and being of the person. It exists in the context of a person, but it is nothing other than the person. It has no independent value or existence outside of the person with that name.

כמו כן שם הוי"ה ברוך הוא הוא מתלבש
תוך כל עלמין, והם רק לבושים וטפלים

So too, Hashem's Name Havaya is invested in enlivening all worlds, and

אֵלָיו יִתְבָּרַךְ, וְכוּלָא חַד מִמֶּשׁ. **they are only like “garments” that are nullified to Him, and therefore it is literally all One thing, Hashem.**

A Jewish person may not carry outside on Shabbos. However, he may walk outside wearing clothing, because clothing is considered ‘secondary’ and ‘nullified’ to the person himself. It is as if the clothing doesn’t exist, since it has no identity other than the person wearing it.

This is different than a person carrying clothing in his hands. In that case he is considered desecrating Shabbos, since clothing that is not worn has its own identity and is not nullified or secondary to the person.

Similarly, all the worlds receive existence and Life-Force from Hashem constantly. They are like Hashem’s “garments,” as it were, in the sense that they have no separate identity other than that of Hashem who is creating and enlivening them.

וַזֶּהוּ "אֵל-עֹלָם": כְּמוֹ שֶׁכְּתוּב (זְכַרְיָה יד, ט): "בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא יִהְיֶה ה' אֶחָד וְשֵׁמוֹ אֶחָד",

This is the meaning of “G-d who is the true existence of the world,” as it is written “on that day, Hashem ‘יהיה-will be’ One and His Name will be One,” (Zecharya 14:9)

יְהִי"ה" - ב' פְּעָמִים י"ה.

Now, the word ‘יהיה-will be’ is written as the Name of Hashem י-ה twice.

שְׁלֵא יִהְיֶה בְּבַחֲנֵינָת ו"ה,

This implies that at that time, Hashem’s revelation will not be in a manner of first י-ה followed by ו-ה,

כִּי הוּא"וּ הוּא בְּחֵינֵת הַמְּשֻׁכָּה שְׂיוּכָל לְהַשְׁתַּלְשֵׁל לְמַטָּה עַד שְׂיוּכָל לְהִיּוֹת יֵשׁ וְדַבֵּר בְּפָנָיו עֲצֻמוֹ.

since, the letter 'ו' is the aspect of drawing down a type of revelation of Hashem that is able to descend all the way below into our world, without disturbing the limitations of our world, and this allows that there can come into existence beings that have their own ego and sense of existence separate from Hashem.

אֵלָא שְׂיִהְיֶה הַכֵּל בְּחֵינֵת י"ה, לְמַטָּה כְּמוֹ

Rather, the double expression י-ה followed by י-ה, is that everything, even our physical world will express

לְמַעַלָּה⁸ Hashem in a manner of **ה-י**, that **below** in our world, Hashem's revelation **will be expressed as it is** expressed **Above** in Atzilus.

The Four Letters of Hashem's Name represent four stages of how Hashem's Light descends into our world. This is understood from an analogy of a teacher and a student:

Step one: The flash of insight in the mind of the teacher. This is like the letter 'י', which is like a singular point.

Step two: The teacher develops the idea in his own mind, until it he fully understands it. This is like the letter 'ה' which has length and width.

Step three: The teacher takes the idea in his head, and thinks about how he can bring down this idea to the level of the student, as that student can understand it in his current level. This is like the letter 'ו', which is shaped like a hook, that brings down something to a lower level. It is also shaped like a pipe, that the contents must squeeze into to descend to the lower level.

Step four: The teacher actually gives over the idea to his student in speech (or writing), in an organized manner, so that student can grasp it one point at a time. This is like a 'ה', since at this point the student is now able to fully understand the concept in a way of breadth and depth.

Similarly, Hashem's Revelation in Atzilus is like the idea inside the mind of the teacher. At that level it is revealed that there is no existence independent of Hashem. This corresponds to the letters 'י' and 'ה'.

How His revelation comes down into the created worlds is like the letters 'ו' and 'ה'. This revelation comes down to the creations in way that they can handle at their current level, which is the knowledge that Hashem is the Ruler and Life-Giver of the world.

Avraham wanted to reveal in the world the awareness of Hashem as it is perceived in Atzilus, that there is no existence separate from Hashem. He wanted that our perception should directly reflect Hashem's perception, as expressed in the double phrase:

⁸ וְעֵינַי בְּ"לְקוּטֵי תוֹרָה" [מֵהָאֲרִיז"ל] בְּזַכְרֶיהָ עַל פְּסוּק זֶה. וּמָה שֶׁנִּתְבָּאֵר מִזֶּה בְּבִיאוֹר עַל פְּסוּק "וְהָיָה מִסְפֵּר בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל" (לְעֵיל בְּמִדְבָּר ט, ד). וּמָה שֶׁנִּתְבָּאֵר סוֹף דְּבוּר הַמִּתְחִיל "שִׁשִּׁים הֵמָּה מְלָכוֹת" (בְּנִרְאָה הַכּוּוֹנָה לְדְבוּר הַמִּתְחִיל זֶה לְקַמֵּן בְּשִׁיר הַשִּׁירִים לַח, ב וְאֵילָךְ), גְּבִי "תַּמְתִּי".

י-ה-י-ה

אך הנה כתיב: "וַיִּרְגֵן מִפְּרִיד אֱלוֹהֵי:"
 (בְּמִשְׁלֵי סִימָן י"ו, כ"ח)⁹;
However, it is written: "One who complains, distances himself from the Master." (Mishlei 16:28)

Rashi explains that one who complains and quarrels with other people, distances himself from the Master, Hashem. The Zohar (vol. III, 16b) says the verse means that one who sins, and one who speaks disrespectfully about Hashem, separates himself from the Master, Hashem.

"לְתַאֲוֶה יִבְקֶשׁ - נִפְרָד" (מִשְׁלֵי יח, א).
 And another verse states: **"One who purses his lusts, will be separated from Hashem."** (Mishlei 18:1)

Rashi explains this verse to refer to one who separates himself from Hashem by pursuing his physical desires in a way forbidden by Hashem

שֶׁשָּׂאֵדָם מְשִׁים רְצוֹנוֹתָיו בְּתַעֲנוּגֵי
 הָעוֹלָם, אוּ בְנִצְחוֹנוֹת וּמִדּוֹת רְעוֹת חֶסֶד
 וְשָׁלוֹם,
Meaning, that when one places his desires in the physical pleasures of this world, or in unhealthy competition with other people, or in other bad character traits G-d forbid,

הוא בְּחִינַת "נִפְרָד", שֶׁלֹּא יוֹכֵל לְהִיּוֹת
 בְּבְחִינַת "ה' אֶחָד וְשִׁמּוֹ אֶחָד" הַנִּלְ.
he becomes "separated," as it were, from His Master, Hashem, so that he cannot perceive the truth that "Hashem is One and His Name is One."

I.e., he separates himself from being able to experience the truth that there is nothing besides for Hashem. This is because he feels himself and his own ego, which feel completely independent of Hashem.

וְהִנֵּה כְּתִיב (תְּהִלִּים סז, ב): "יָאֵר פָּנָיו
 אֶתְנוּ סְלָה",
Now, it is written: "He (Hashem) will shine His face with us forever," (Tehillim 67:2).

⁹ וְעֵינַי זֶהר חֶלֶק ג' (י"ו, א') [וַיִּרְגֵן מִפְּרִיד אֱלוֹהֵי, מִפְּרִיד אֱלוֹהֵי שֶׁל עוֹלָם, וְדָא קוֹדֶשׁא בְּרִיךְ-הוּא].
 וּבְרִבּוּת, בְּרִאשִׁית, רִישׁ פְּרֻשָׁה כ' [וַיִּרְגֵן, שָׂרְגָן דְּבָרִים עַל בּוֹרְאוֹ . . 'מִפְּרִיד אֱלוֹהֵי, שֶׁהִפְרִיד אֱלוֹהֵי
 שֶׁל עוֹלָם].

פירוש: בחינת 'הארת-פנים' הוא כמשל אדם הנותן לאוהבו האמיתי איזה דבר, הוא נותן בעין יפה¹⁰, ורצון הטוב, וצהבו פניו מרוב אורה ושמחה.

Meaning, the idea of Hashem “shining his face” towards us is like the following analogy: **A person who gives something to his true friend, he gives it graciously, with good will, and a face that is lit-up from great joy and happiness.**

When someone gives to someone he loves, his whole face is lit up in joy. This is called the “Inner Will,” meaning, the person deep down truly desires to give to that person.

מה שאין בן לשונאו נותן "כמאן דשדי בתר כתפוי" - בעל כרחו.

This is not the case regarding his enemy, that he only gives him something “like one who throws it over the back of his shoulder,” against his will.

If someone is in a situation that he must give something to someone he hates, he does so by throwing the object behind himself, so that he won't have to look at the one he is giving to. This is also called the “Outer Will,” that deep down he doesn't want to give to that person, he only does so because he is forced to.

וזהו "יאר ה' פניו אליך" (נשא ו, כה), שישפיע החיות מבחינת הארת פנים הנ"ל. מה שאין כן גבי כו'.

This is the idea of the verse (Bamidbar 6:25) “Hashem will shine His Face to you,” meaning, that He will give you your Life from his Inner Will, which is called “His Shining Face,” which is not the case regarding unholiness, that He gives them Life “like one who throws over the back of his shoulder.”

אך הארת פנים הנ"ל הוא "אתנו" דוקא,

However, this “shining Face” of Hashem is only “with us,”

פירוש: כשאנחנו גם כן בבחינת הארת פנים.

meaning, when we are also focused on Hashem in a way of having a “shining face,” i.e., when we reveal our Inner Will to connect to Hashem with joy.

¹⁰(ראה בבא בתרא נג, א).

כְּמוֹ שֶׁכָּתוּב (מִשְׁלֵי כו, יט): "כַּמַּיִם הַפָּנִים
לְפָנִים כֵּן לֵב הָאָדָם לְאָדָם כֹּי".

Like it says (Mishlei 27:19) "As water reflects the face of a person based on the face he shows, so too between the heart of one man towards another man," that based on the feelings he shows his friend, those same feelings are reflected by to him by his friend.

פִּירוּשׁ: הָאָדָם־הַתַּחְתּוֹן הוּא כְּנֶסֶת־
יִשְׂרָאֵל, כְּמוֹ שֶׁכָּתוּב¹¹: "וְאַתָּה צֹאנִי",
"צֹאן מִרְעִיתִי, אָדָם אַתֶּם" - "אַתֶּם קְרוּיִם
אָדָם כֹּי"¹²,

Meaning: The "man" below is the Congregation of Yisrael (the Jewish People), as it is written (Yechezkal 34:17&31) "(Hashem says to the Jewish People:) And you are my flock, the flock of my tending, you are man." The Gemara (Yevamos 61a) explains this to mean that "you – the Jewish People – are called 'man.'"

"לְאָדָם" - פִּירוּשׁ: לְאָדָם־הָעֲלִיּוֹן שֶׁ"עַל
דְּמוּת הַכִּסֵּא כֹי"¹³.

The heart of the "man" below, the Jewish People, reflects to the heart "of the Man," meaning, the "Man (the One) Above," who sits on the "likeness of the Throne."

In the book of Yechezkal, Hashem's revelation in the world of Atzilus is referred to as "the likeness of a man, sitting on the likeness of a throne." This represents how Hashem limits His revelation into the Ten Sefiros of Atzilus, which are the source of the ten soul powers of man, so that Hashem can "interact" with creation according to their level.

At this level of Atzilus, specifically in the emotive attributes of Hashem's Kindness and Severity, Hashem's "heart," His expression of Kindness or the opposite, are corresponding to the actions and feelings of man below.

וּבְחִינַת הָאֶרֶת־פָּנִים אֶצֶל יִשְׂרָאֵל, הוּא **Regarding the Jewish People, the concept of having a "shining face" is**

¹¹ (שְׁלוּב הַפְּסוּקִים יְחֻזְקָא לַד, יז: "וְאַתָּה צֹאנִי", וְשֵׁם, לא: "וְאַתָּן צֹאנִי, צֹאן מִרְעִיתִי, אָדָם אַתֶּם").
¹² (יְבָמוֹת סא, א).

¹³ ("דְּמוּת כְּמִרְאֵה אָדָם". יְחֻזְקָא לַא, כו).

כְּמוֹ שֶׁתּוֹב (תְּהִלִּים קמט, ב): "יִשְׁמַח
יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּעוֹשֵׂיו."

as it is written: "Yisrael rejoices in
its Creator," (Tehillim 149:2)

כְּמוֹ שֶׁהוּא יִתְבַּרַךְ שֶׁשׁ וְשִׂמַח בָּנוּ, כְּמוֹ
שְׂאוֹמְרִים¹⁴: "וּמְשַׂמְחֶתְךָ שְׂשִׂמְחֶתָּ בּוֹ,
קְרֵאתָ כו'."

just as Hashem is happy and rejoices
with us, as we say "Because of Your
joy that You rejoiced in him
(Yaakov), You called him Yisrael and
Yeshurun." (Daily Shachris
Preliminary Prayers)

וְהִיא חֲדוּת ה' מְגִדוּלְתוֹ שְׂאִין חֶקֶר.

This is the joy in Hashem from
realizing His unlimited greatness,
and at the same time His love and
closeness to us.

כְּמִשַׁל הָאָדָם שֶׁצִּהְבּוּ פָּנָיו מְרוֹב אוֹרָה
וְשִׂמְחָה כְּשֶׁרוֹאֶה אֶת אוֹהֲבוֹ הָאֱמִיתִי,
בְּבַחֲיַת הָאֶרֶת פָּנָיו הִנֵּן ל,

This is comparable to someone
whose face lights up from great joy
and happiness when he sees his true
friend, his "face shines," as
mentioned above,

וְשׁוֹכַח לְגַמְרֵי עַל צַעְרוֹ וַיִּגּוֹנוּ שֵׁישׁ לוֹ,
מִחֲמַת הַשְּׂמִיחָה וְתַעֲנוּג מְרֵאוֹת פָּנָיו
אוֹהֲבוֹ;

and he completely forgets about his
personal problems and suffering,
because of his joy and delight from
seeing the face of his friend,

כִּךְ כְּשִׁיזְכוֹר הָאָדָם עַל ה' - שֶׁהוּא אוֹהֲבוֹ
הָאֱמִיתִי, בְּבַחֲיַת הָאֶרֶת פָּנָיו הִנֵּן ל,

so too, when a person remembers
that Hashem is his True Friend, and
that His Face is "shining" in
happiness and delight to be close to the
person, as explained above,

וַיִּתְבּוֹנֵן בְּגִדּוּלְתוֹ אֲשֶׁר מְמַלֵּא כָּל עֲלָמִין'
וְיִסּוּבֵב כָּל עֲלָמִין', וְ"כּוֹלֵא קְמִיָּה כָּלֵא
חָשִׁיב"¹⁵,

and he contemplates on Hashem's
greatness, how He "Permeates all
Worlds," and "Encompasses all
Worlds," and "everything else is
considered completely insignificant
before Him,"

¹⁴ (תְּפִלַּת הַשַּׁחַר, מ' תְּנַת דְּבִי אֵלֵיהוּ" פֶּרֶק כֹּא: "וּמְשַׂמְחֶתְךָ שְׂשִׂמְחֶתָּ בּוֹ קְרֵאתָ שְׂמוֹ יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיִּשְׂרוּן").

¹⁵ (זֶהֱרַח חֶלֶק אֶבְהַקְדֶּמָּה יֵא, ב).

יִשְׁכַּח עַל עֲצָמוֹ לְגַמְרֵי, אֶפִּילוּ יֵשׁ לוֹ צַעַר
מִמִּילֵי דְעֵלְמָא כּוֹ, וְיִשְׁכַּח הַצַּעַר מִפְּנֵי
הַשְּׂמִחָה בְּה' כּוֹ.

he will completely forget about himself and his problems, even if he suffers regarding his material matters, he will forget his pain because of his joy in Hashem.

The above comes from realizing two things: 1- Hashem is infinite, He is the creator of all existence and beyond all limitations of existence etc., and 2- Hashem truly loves the person and is truly happy and delighted with the person, and wants to be close to him.

These two realizations together produce an unlimited joy that is so powerful it can lift the person out of his own daily problems and bring him to fully experience a closeness with Hashem.

כְּמוֹ שְׂכֵתוֹב (תְּהִלִּים עג, כה): "מִי לִי
בְּשָׁמַיִם, וְעַמְדָּה לֹא חָפְצָתִי בְּאָרֶץ",

As it is written: "Who do I have (besides Hashem) **in the heavens, and besides for You (Hashem) I do not desire anything on earth.**" (Tehillim 73:25)

לְבַטֵּל כָּל חֲפֶץ וְתִשׁוּקָה זוֹלָת הַתִּשׁוּקָה
בְּה' אֶחָד.

Meaning, he will want **to nullify any desire or yearning** for anything **besides for his yearning for the One Hashem.**

This deep desire to only connect to Hashem with great joy and passion, is called the "shining face" of a Jew, when his face is lit up with an inner desire to connect to Hashem, just as Hashem has an Inner Will to connect to us.

וְהִנֵּה זְמַן הַתְּעוֹרְרוֹת הָאֶרֶת פָּנִים הַנִּלְוֹת
הוּא בְּרֵאשִׁי הַשָּׁנָה: "יּוֹשֵׁב עַל כִּסֵּא
רַחֲמִים".

Now, the time to awaken this "shining face" of yearning for Hashem described above is on Rosh Hashana, when Hashem "sits on the Throne of Mercy."

וְאָז כְּתִיב (שִׁיר הַשִּׁירִים ב, ו): "שְׂמָאֵלוֹ
תַּחַת לְרֵאשִׁי" - הַתְּחַלַּת הַתְּקָרְבוֹת, עַד
שְׁבוּסֵי הַכְּפוּרִים, וְשִׂמְחַת-תּוֹרָה הוּא
"וַיִּמְנֵנוּ תַּחְבֻּקְנֵי כּוֹ". (שָׁם).

Regarding that time, it is written (Shir HaShirim 2:6): "His (Hashem's) 'left hand' is under my head (to pick it up to look towards Him)," **which is the beginning of His showing His closeness to us, until on Yom Kippur**

and Simchas Torah “His ‘right hand’ embraces me.” (ibid.)

On Rosh Hashana, Hashem begins the process of bringing us close to Him on the deep level of “shining face” of inner joy and delight in connecting to us. However, the process is only completed on Yom Kippur and Simchas Torah, when His love embraces and envelops us in a revealed way.

In the first maamar in Likutei Torah for Parshas Ki Savo, entitled היום הזה, the Alter Rebbe explains this with an analogy:

A father is away from his home for a long time. His son yearns to see him, but after some time his feelings begin to subside.

Then one day the father comes home. But instead of immediately visiting his son, he hides himself in his house. He wants to see his son’s reaction when he realizes that his father is home but is hiding from him.

When his son reacts by crying and screaming for his father, his father comes out of hiding and hugs him. The purpose of the hiding was to bring out the deep feelings of the son even stronger.

Similarly, the whole year we yearn to see Hashem, but His Presence is hidden, and we lose the intensity of the yearning over time.

On Rosh Hashana, Hashem “comes home,” as it were, but He is “hiding.” When we realize that He is present more strongly than the rest of the year, but we don’t feel it, we cry and scream in teshuva, in yearning to experience Hashem’s closeness.

At the conclusion of the Ten Days of Teshuva, we do experience that closeness of Hashem on Yom Kippur, and even more strongly on Simchas Torah. This is like when the father comes out of hiding and hugs his son.

This is the idea of “His left hand picking up my head”:

Hashem’s Gevura-Severity (the left hand) is expressed on Rosh Hashana, by coming close to us, but at the same time “hiding,” as it were, so that we should pick up our head to look for Him.

Since the purpose of this “hiding” is only to bring out our deep feelings for Him, it is also considered Hashem’s “shining face,” in a certain sense, since He delights in our revealing our deep feelings for Him.

When Hashem’s “shining face” is more obviously revealed on Yom Kippur and Simchas Torah, this is called “His right hand embraces me.”

וּבַעֲשֶׂרֶת יְמֵי תְּשׁוּבָה צָרִיךְ הָאָדָם
לְהִתְבוּשׁ מִפְּנֵי ה'.

Now, during the Ten Days of Teshuva (from Rosh Hashana through Yom Kippur), a person needs to feel embarrassed in front of Hashem.

אֲשֶׁר הוּא יִתְבַּרֵךְ מִקְרֵב אוֹתָנוּ בְּבַחֲיִנַת
הָאֶרֶת-פְּנִים הַנִּלְוָה,

The embarrassment comes from the fact that Hashem brings us close to Him, He “shines His Face” towards us, as described above,

וְאֵנַחְנוּ בְּתַכְלִית הַרְיָחוּק מִמֶּנּוּ מִפְּנֵי
עֲוֹנוֹת הַמַּבְדִּילִין, כְּמוֹ שְׁכָתוּב (עֲזָרָא ט,
ו): "בוֹשְׁתִי וְנִכְלַמְתִּי לְהָרִים אֱלֹהֵי פָנָי
אֵלֶיךָ כִּי עֲוֹנֹתַי רַבּוּ לְמַעַל רֹאשׁ".

yet, we are very far from Him (as it were) because of our sins that separate us from Him (as it were), as it is written: “I am embarrassed and ashamed to lift up my face to You, My G-d, for our sins have increased above our heads...” (Ezra 9:6)

וְכִמוֹ שְׁכָתוּב בְּזֵהָר סוֹף פְּרֻשֶׁת בְּחֻקְתִּי
(קטו, ב), עַל פְּסוּק (בְּחֻקְתִּי כו, מד): "וְאֵף
גַּם זֹאת בְּהִיוֹתְם בְּאֶרֶץ אוֹיְבֵיהֶם, לֹא
מְאַסְתִּים וְלֹא גַעַלְתִּים לְכָלֹתָם".

and as it is written in the Zohar (vol. III), at the end of Parshas Bechukosai (115b) on the verse (Vayikra 26:44): “And even then, when they are in the land of their enemies, I (Hashem) will not despise or be disgusted with them ‘לְכָלֹתָם-to the point of destroying them’ (Heaven forbid).”

"לְכָלֹתָם" כְּתִיב -

This word ‘לְכָלֹתָם-to the point of destroying them,’ is written similar to the word “לְכָלֹתָם-because they are His bride.”

לְמַשָּׁל כְּכֹלָה שֶׁהִיא בְּשׁוּקָא דְבוֹרְסָקִי,
וּמְחַמַּת עוֹצֵם אֶהְבָּתוֹ אֵלֶיהָ "דְּמִי לִיה
בְּשׁוּקָא דְרוֹכְלִין בְּרִיחִין טְבִין"¹⁶.

This is comparable to a bride who works in a market of animal hide tanners, and because the groom’s great love for her, it seems to him like it is a perfume market, and he

¹⁶ (תַּרְגוּם: נִדְמָה לוֹ בְּשׁוּק רוֹכְלִים בְּרִיחוֹת טוֹבִים).

enjoys visiting her in the tanners' market, despite the smell.

In other words, because of Hashem's great love for us, he enjoys our closeness, despite the "smell" or our sins.

וְזֶהוּ שְׂאֵנוּ מִבְּקָשִׁים "מַחֵל לָנוּ", שְׁלֹא
יָרִיחַ רִיחַ הָרַע שֶׁבְּבוֹרְסָקִי,

This is why we ask Hashem to forgive us, so that He shouldn't have to smell the bad smell of our "tanners' market," i.e., our sins.

דְּהֵיינוּ עַל יְדֵי שְׂיִזְרוּק עֲלֵינוּ "מִים
טְהוֹרִים"¹⁷ לְהַרְחִיץ אֶת הָרִיחַ הָרַע
שֶׁבְּבוֹרְסָקִי וְכוּ.

Meaning, that He should "pour upon us pure waters," (see Yechezkal 36:25), to wash away the bad smell of our "tanners' market" or sins.

I.e., we aren't just asking Hashem to forgive us, but also to cleanse us spiritually.

וְעֵינֵן מִים־טְהוֹרִים הֵם "י"ג מְדוֹת
הָרַחֲמִים", "י"ג נְהָרֵי דְאַפְרִסְמוֹנָא
דְּכִיא"¹⁸.

The idea of these "pure waters" is that they represent the "13 Attributes of Mercy" of Hashem, which are also called "13 Rivers of Pure Afarsemon Oil."¹⁹

Afarsemon Oil has a very good smell, which is able to cancel out even a very bad smell. So too, Hashem's Attributes of Mercy are able to wash away the bad smell of our sins.

וְהֵם נִמְשָׁכִים מִמְּקוֹם הַנִּקְרָא "טְמִירָא
דְּכֵל טְמִירִין", "רַעְוָא דְכֵל רַעְוִין"²⁰.

These ("pure waters") are drawn from a level called "Hidden of all Hidden," and "Desire behind all Desires."

¹⁷ (יְחֻזְקָא לֹו, כה: "וְזָרְקֵתִי עֲלֵיכֶם מִים טְהוֹרִים").

¹⁸ (תַּעֲנִית כה, א. יְרוּשְׁלָמִי עֲבוּדָה זָרָה פָּרַק ג' הִלְכָה א. בְּרֵאשִׁית רַבָּה פֶּרֶשָׁה סב, ד. זֶהר חֶלֶק ב קמו, ב.)

¹⁹ The "Afarsemon Oil" was an oil scented with the "Afarsemon" plant. There are various opinions as to which plant this was, but many believe it to be the "Arabian Balsam Tree."

²⁰ (זֶהר חֶלֶק א רפח, ב.).

פִּירוּשׁ: לְמַשָּׁל, מְקוֹר הַמַּעַיִן שְׂאִינוּ נִרְאָה וְנִגְלָה, רַק נְהָרוֹת הַנִּמְשָׁכוֹת מִמֶּנּוּ הֵם הַנִּרְאִים;

כֵּן הוּא יִתְבַּרֵךְ נִקְרָא "טְמִירָא דְכָל טְמִירִין", שְׁהִי"ג מִדּוֹת הַרְחָמִים הֵם נִמְשָׁכִים מִמֶּנּוּ.

לְכֵן נִקְרָא "יוֹשֵׁב עַל כִּסֵּא רַחֲמִים" שֶׁהוּא "רַעוּא דְכָל רַעוּיִן".

Meaning, by way of analogy: The (underground) source of a spring of water is not openly revealed, only the rivers that flow from it are revealed,

so too, the level of Hashem's Light that is called "the Hidden of all Hidden" is the source from where the 13 Attributes of Mercy are drawn from.

That is why on Rosh Hashana, Hashem is called "the One who sits on the Throne of Mercy," since at that time He is revealing His "Desire behind all Desires."

Meaning, He reveals His innermost desire to connect to the Jewish people and cleanse them of their sins. At this deep level, He is the source of the 13 Attributes of Mercy, that clean us like "pure water" and "Afarsemon oil." Because he reveals His Himself as the source of the 13 Attributes of Mercy, He is referred to as "sitting on the Throne of Mercy."

וְהִנֵּה בְּחִינָה זוֹ - "רַעוּא דְכָל רַעוּיִן", יִשְׁנוּ אֶעֱלֵ כָּל אֶחָד וְאֶחָד מִיִּשְׂרָאֵל.

וְהוּא בְּחִינַת נְקוּדַת-הַלֵּב שֶׁלְמַעְלָה מִן הַדַּעַת, וְהִיא נִקְרָאת יְחִידָה.

וְזֶהוּ שְׁכָתוּב (תְּהִלִּים כב, כא): "הַצִּילָה מִחֶרֶב נַפְשִׁי מִיַּד כָּלֵב יְחִידָתִי":

Now, this idea of the "desire behind all desires," i.e., the innermost desire, exists in every Jew.

This is the innermost essence of the heart, which is above (precedes) the faculty of logical explanation, and it is called "Yechida-One and only Essence."

This is referred to in the verse: "Save my soul from the sword, and my 'Yechida-Essence' from the 'dog.'" (Tehillim 22:21)

The 'dog' is a metaphor for the forces of unholiness, who which to drag down the essential desire and passion of the soul into coarse physical desires.

לְהוֹצִיא בְּחִינַת חֲפָצוֹ וְרָצוֹנוֹ מֵעֲנִינֵי זֶה
הָעוֹלָם, וְלִדְבֹק בְּדְבִיקָה וְחֲשִׁיקָה, רָצוֹן
שֶׁל כָּל הָרָצוֹנוֹת לֵה' אֶחָד לְבָדוּ.

Meaning, to remove one's passions and desires from material matters, and instead to connect to Hashem with passionate yearning, so that his deep innermost desire to only connect to the One Hashem should be revealed.

וּבְשׁוֹפָר הוּא מְעוֹרֵר בְּחִינָה זוֹ שֶׁהִיָּתָה
בְּבְחִינַת שֵׁנָה, שִׁישְׁנוּ אֶצֶל כָּל אֶחָד וְאֶחָד
מִיִּשְׂרָאֵל.

With the call of the Shofar, he awakens this level that was "sleeping," that exists in each and every Jew.

וְעַל יְדֵי בְּחִינָה זוֹ נִמְשָׁךְ בְּכָל יוֹם מֵעֲשָׂרָת
יָמֵי תְּשׁוּבָה בְּחִינַת י"ג מִדּוֹת הָרַחֲמִים,
שֶׁהֵם נְהָרוֹת הַנֵּ"ל שֶׁנִּמְשָׁכִים מִמְּקוֹרָם
הַנֵּ"ל וְדֵי לְמַבִּין.

Through this level (of Yechida), he brings down the 13 Attributes of Mercy during each day of the Ten Days of Teshuva, which are the "rivers" of Pure Afarsemon Oil, which come from their source in Hashem's "Desire behind all Desires," as explained above, and will be understood to the discerning.

וְנִקְרָאִים "מֵיִם טְהוֹרִים" - שְׁמֵרְחִיצִים
אֶת הָרִיחַ הָרָע וְכו'.

These (13 Attributes of Mercy) are also called "Pure Waters," since they wash away the bad smell of the sins.

To summarize:

Hashem's Attributes of Mercy clean us of our sins.

They come from Hashem's Innermost Desire to connect to the Jewish People.

This Innermost Desire of Hashem is revealed when we reveal our Innermost Desire to connect to Him.

To do that we need to pull ourselves away from getting caught up in our other desires.

A very important time to do this is in on Rosh Hashana, when Hashem gives us the strength and ability to look past our external desires and reveal our innermost desire to connect to Hashem.

– "שׁוֹפֵר מֵאַרְיֵךְ"²¹ Now, it says in the Mishna (Rosh Hashana 3:3) that on Rosh Hashana in the Beis Hamikdash **“the sound of the Shofar was greatly מֵאַרְיֵךְ-extended.”**

In the Beis Hamikdash, in addition to the sounding of the Shofar on Rosh Hashana, they also sounded the silver trumpets. Since the mitzvah of the day is the Shofar, they made sure to sound the Shofar louder and longer than the silver trumpets.

אַרְיֵכָא־דְאַנְפִּין – דֶּרֶךְ כָּלָל. This “extending” of the sound of the Shofar **represents in a general way the level of “אַרְיֵךְ-Arich’ Anpin-an Extension of a Gracious Countenance.”**

The level of “Arich Anpin” is a level that precedes Atzilus, and is the hidden source of Atzilus. Atzilus is the level that processes all of our actions in a manner of reward and punishment. Receiving from the the level of Arich Anpin is like receiving an extension of grace on a level that goes past the judicial system. This is similar to how a king can extend a “royal pardon” to commute a sentence of someone convicted.

In other words, through the sound of the Shofar, we reach a level in ourselves that is higher than our own “judicial system” of logical processing and analysis, and experience our core-essential desire to connect with Hashem. This is reflected in Hashem’s extension of grace towards us.

וּבְדֶרֶךְ פְּרָט: בְּכָל יוֹם מַעֲשֵׂרֵת יָמֵי
תְּשׁוּבָה חוּזֵר פְּנִים־בְּפָנִים אֶחָד מִן י'
סְפִירוֹת שְׁבָאָדָם, שֶׁהֵם חֲבִ"ד וּמְדוּתָיו.

More specifically: Each day of the Ten Days of Teshuva, we reconnect one of our ten soul powers with Hashem, which are the three aspects of intellect, Wisdom, Understanding, and Knowledge, and its (seven) emotional aspects (which are Kindness, Severity, Beauty/Mercy, Perseverance, Self-control, Connection, and Action).

²¹ (מִשְׁנֵה רֵאשׁ הַשָּׁנָה פָּרַק ג', מִשְׁנֵה ג': "שׁוֹפֵר שֶׁל רֵאשׁ הַשָּׁנָה . . וְשִׁתֵּי חֲצוּצְרוֹת מִן הַצְּדָדִין. שׁוֹפֵר מֵאַרְיֵךְ וְחֲצוּצְרוֹת מְקַצְרוֹת, שֶׁמִּצּוֹת הַיּוֹם בְּשׁוֹפֵר").

In other words, not only do we reconnect our innermost desire to Hashem on Rosh Hashana, but through that we reconnect every aspect of our soul with Hashem. For example, we reconnect our Wisdom to Hashem's Wisdom, so that the only thing we really care to contemplate on and understand is Hashem's Wisdom of the Torah. Similarly, we reconnect our love and fear to Hashem, so that the only thing we should really love is to connect to Hashem, and the only thing we are afraid of is breaking our connection to Hashem through a sin.

Each day of the Ten Days of Teshuva has a special power to reconnect one of our ten soul powers to Hashem.

However, this can only be fully accomplished after we reconnect to Hashem on a more general level, by reconnecting our innermost desire to Hashem.

וְהִנֵּה אָמְרוּ רַי"ל²²: "דְּרָשׁוּ ה' בְּהִמְצָאוֹ,
קְרָאוּהוּ בְּהִיּוֹתוֹ קְרוֹב" (ישעיה נה, ו) -
"אלו עשרה ימים שבין ראש השנה
ליום הכפורים".

Now, our Sages have said in the Gemara (Rosh Hashana 18a): "The verse says (Yeshaya 55:6), 'Seek Hashem when He makes Himself available, call out to Him when He is close,' this refers to the Ten Days between Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur."

פִּירוּשׁ "בְּהִיּוֹתוֹ קְרוֹב": כְּשֶׁהוּא בְּבַחֲיִנַת
הָאֶרֶץ-פְּנִים הַנִּלְוֵל, אֶתְעָרוּתָא-דְּלַעֲלָא,
שְׂמַאלוֹ תַּחַת לְרֵאשִׁי כְּנִלְוֵל,

The meaning of "when He is close" is when He is expressing Himself with a "shining face," as explained above, which is an "Awakening from Above," when "His left hand is under my head," as explained above.

וְאִזּוֹ בְּנִקְלָא יָכוֹל לְהִיּוֹת אֶתְעָרוּתָא-
דְּלַתְתָּא,

At that time is much easier for us to have an "awakening from below,"

כְּמוֹ שְׂאֲמָרוּ: "כָּאֵן לְיַחֲד" -

as they said in the Gemara (Rosh Hashana ibid.): "Usually, Hashem makes Himself easily accessible only to a congregation, and a private individual must invest effort to seek

²² (ראש השנה יח, א: "נֹאמַר (וְאֶתְחַנֵּן ד, ז): 'כֹּה' אֵלֵהֵינוּ בְּכֹל קְרָאֵנוּ אֵלָיו, וְהִכְתִּיב (ישעיה נה, ו): 'דְּרָשׁוּ ה' בְּהִמְצָאוֹ? הֲתֵם בְּיַחֲד, הֲכָא בְּצַבּוּר. בְּיַחֲד אֵימַת? אָמַר רַבָּה בַר אֲבוּהֵי: אֵלּוּ עֶשְׂרֵה יָמִים שְׁבִין רֵאשׁ הַשָּׁנָה לְיוֹם הַכְּפוּרִים").

out Hashem. **But here**, During the Ten Day between Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur, He does make Himself easily accessible **even to a ‘יחיד-private individual,’**”

פִּירוּשׁ, בְּחִינַת יְחִידָה הֵנָּה ל²³.

the deeper meaning of Hashem making Himself available to every ‘יחיד-private individual’ **is** that Hashem comes close to every person in way that reveals **the level of “יחיד-essence”** of the Jew, enabling him to do Teshuva on the deepest level, **as explained above.**

וְהִנֵּה בְּזִמְנָה הַזֶּה הוּא מְקַבְּלִים כָּל נִיצוּצוֹת מִיִּשְׂרָאֵל בְּחִינַת דְּחִילוֹ-וּרְחִימוֹ מִלְּמַעְלָה²⁴.

Now, at that special time (of Rosh Hashana through Yom Kippur), **all the ‘sparks’** of the souls of the Jewish People receive from Hashem Above a deeper level of love and fear of Hashem.

וְהוּא בְּחִינַת דְּחִילוֹ-וּרְחִימוֹ עָלֵינוּ מֵאֵד, שְׂאֵי אֶפְשָׁר לְהַשִּׁיג עַל יָדֵי אֲתַעְרוּתָא-דְּלִתָּא.

This is a very lofty level of love and fear of Hashem, that it is impossible to achieve only with one’s own effort in an “awakening from below.”

Obviously, one must invest effort in an “awakening from below” to attain the love and fear of Hashem in order to receive any higher level of love and fear. The intent is that when someone works to attain the love and fear of Hashem, during the Ten Days of Teshuva he will attain a love and fear of Hashem that far beyond his normal capacity with his inherently limited efforts.

וּכְמוֹ שֶׁכָּתוּב (תְּהִלִּים נא, יב): "לֵב טָהוֹר בְּרָא לִי אֱלֹקִים",

As it is written: “G-d, please create within me a pure heart.” (Tehillim 51:12)

²³ (ב"חנה אריאל" האזינונו מד, ב בזה הלשון: שמענו בלאדי: פאן ליחיד הוא בחינת תשובה דיחידה ליחידו של עולם, פאן לצבור - לבחינת הג' קווין דמדות. עד פאן לשונו. - ראה לקוטי שיחות חלק יד עמוד 145 בהערה 16).

²⁴ (עיין זהר חלק ג', רי"ד, ב').

The person asks from Hashem to give him a heart of pure love and fear of Hashem.

בְּחֵינֵת "בַּר לִבְבִּי" (תְּהִלִּים כד, ד), לֹא יוּכַל
לְהִיּוֹת אֶעֱל בְּחֵינֵת נִבְרָא מִצַּד עֲצָמוֹ
בְּאֲתַעְרוּתָא דִּילֵיהּ,

Now, this level of a “pure heart” cannot be attained by any created being by itself, through its own “awakening below,”

כִּי אִם מִתְּנָה שְׁנוֹתָנִים לוֹ מִלְּמַעְלָה בְּעֵת
בְּחֵינֵת הָאֶרֶת פְּנִים הַנִּ"ל²⁵.

rather, it is a gift that is given from Hashem Above, at that time of His “shining face,” as explained above.

וְצִרִיךְ הַכְּנָה לָזֶה עַל יְדֵי עֵינוּיִם וְסִיגוּפִים.

However, in order to receive this gift from Above, a preparation is required, which is through “fasting” and “making oneself uncomfortable.”

In order to be a proper “vessel” to receive this gift of love and fear of Hashem, a person must refine and humble himself.

Now, already in the times of the Alter Rebbe it was discouraged to afflict oneself physically and to practice excessive fasting, how much more so nowadays. Rather, for the average person nowadays it means to give up on indulgences that a person doesn’t need, such as eating ice-cream on a regular weekday just for the sake of physical enjoyment.

Another person might feel that waking up early to learn Chassidus before Shachris is like “torture,” since he “needs” that extra sleep. When he makes himself uncomfortable by getting up a half hour earlier so he can learn, he is making himself a better vessel to receive the love and fear of Hashem.

וְלָכֵן בְּעֶשְׂרֵת יְמֵי תְּשׁוּבָה "מִתְּעַנִּים וְלֹא
מִשְׁלִימִין"²⁶,

Therefore, the custom is that during the Ten Days of Teshuva, “we fast part of the day, but we don’t need to complete the fast.”

In Shulchan Aruch (Orach Chaim, 581:2) it says: “The custom is to fast on Erev Rosh Hashana. Some people who are very scrupulous also fast all of the days between Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur, (except for Shabbos and Erev Yom

²⁵ (וְעֵינֵי מַה שְׁנִתְבָּאָר בְּדְבוּר הַמִּתְחִיל "כִּי תֵצֵא", בְּפִירוּשׁ "יִהְיֶינָה לֵיהּ בְּרֵתָא דְמִלְפָּא" (לְעֵיל לָהּ, ג). וְסוּף דְבוּר הַמִּתְחִיל "וַיִּדְעַתְּ הַיּוֹם", בְּעֵנִין "וְהַגּוֹרָא" (לְעֵיל וְאֲתַחֲנַן ח, א וְאֵילָהּ)).

²⁶ (רָאָה שְׁלַחֵן עָרוּךְ אוֹרַח חַיִּים סִימָן תַּקפ"א סְעִיף ב).

Kippur), and so it is proper to do. All of these fasts a person is not obligated to complete (the fast until night when the stars are visible).”

The mandatory fasts, such as the Tenth of Teves, a person is obligated to fast from dawn until night (when stars are visible) unless he is sick and physically unable. However, during these optional fasts of Erev Rosh Hashana and the Ten Days of Teshuva (except for Tzom Gedalya, which is a mandatory fast), a person is not required to fast the entire day until night for it to be considered a “fast.”²⁷

It is important to note, that while this custom is mentioned in the Shulchan Aruch, nowadays, most people do not actually perform these “optional fasts” in the literal sense. Rather, they spend more time in prayer and introspection, and try harder to refrain from unnecessary indulgences.

שָׂאִין חָשׁוּב תְּעֵנִית אֶלָּא עֵינׁוּי, שְׁלֵא יְהִיָּה
בְּנִפְשׁ שְׂבִיעָה²⁸ וְכָרַס מִלְּאָה,

Since, the purpose of these “fasts” is not out of the obligation to fast, but rather that the person be humbled, so that he shouldn’t feel self-satisfied and fill his belly,

The days of mandatory fasting, such as Tisha Be’av, were established to complete the fast the entire day, because of the severity of the day itself and what happened on that day that needs to be corrected. However, these “fasts” are not connected to correcting what happened during those days per se, but rather just to humble the person, so that he should be more serious and introspective. Therefore, he doesn’t need to actually fast the entire day (to fulfill that custom).

שְׁלֵא יוּכַל לְקַבֵּל בְּחִינַת “לֵב טָהוֹר”
בְּשִׂאוּכַל לְשׁוֹבֵעַ וְכָרַס מִלְּאָה כּוּ׃

Since, a person cannot receive from Above a “pure heart” when he eats to his fill satiation and his belly is full.

²⁷ In the Sefer Mateh Efraim on Orach Chaim Chapter 581, paragraph 35 he explains this to mean that a person only needs to fast until after he recites the Mincha prayer, preferably wait until Plag Hamincha, an hour and a half halachic hours before sunset, but if that is too difficult, then he may recite Mincha at the time of Mincha Gedola, a half hour after halachic mid-day, and then he may eat, and it is still considered a type of fast.

²⁸ (נִפְשׁ שְׂבִיעָה מִשְׁלֵי כּוּ, ז).

וַזֶּהוּ שְׂאֵמֶר "אַתֶּם כֹּי"²⁹, פִּירוּשׁ: שְׂעַד
הִנֵּה הָיִיתֶם אַתֶּם הַרְוֵאִים כֹּי עַל יַדֵי
אֲתַעְרוּתָא-דְּלִתָּא,

This is the meaning of what Moshe Rabeinu said: “**You** have seen the great miracles that Hashem has done for you in Egypt and in the desert.” **Meaning, until now you were the ones seeing, through your own effort of creating an “awakening from below.”**

אַבְל "וְלֹא נָתַן ה' כֹּי", פִּירוּשׁ: בְּחִינַת לֵב-
טָהוֹר שְׁנוֹתָנִים מִלְּמַעְלָה - שְׁלֹא יָכוֹל
נִבְרָא לְהַשִּׁיג עַל יַדֵי אֲתַעְרוּתָא דִּילֵיהּ.

However, as Moshe continued to say: “**Hashem has not given you a heart to understand or eyes to see...until this day.**” **Meaning, they did not yet have the level of a “pure heart” that is given from Above, since no created being can attain this level using only its own initiate.**

וַזֶּה הִיָּה עֲנִיַן הַמֶּן, דְּכָתִיב (עֵקֶב ח, ג):
"וַיַּעֲנֶה וַיַּרְעִיבְךָ וַיֹּאכֶלְךָ אֶת הַמֶּן כֹּי" -

This was the idea of eating the (supernatural food called) Munn, as it is written, “He (Hashem) afflicted you and made you hungry, and He fed you the Munn.”

Even though the Munn was very tasty, it had two discomfoting aspects: 1- it looked unappetizing, 2- it couldn't be stored from one day to the next. Because of this, eating the Munn took away some of the attraction to food and materialism, and promoted trust in Hashem to provide a person each day with his sustenance. The purpose of eating the Munn was thus to humble the people and enable them to connect to Hashem better.

שְׂעַל יַדֵי הַמֶּן, וְעַל יַדֵי עֵינֻוִיִּים וְסִיגוּפִים
זָכוּ לְמַעְלָה עֲלִיוֹנָה יוֹתֵר, לְקַבֵּל בְּחִינַת
לֵב-טָהוֹר³⁰.

Meaning, that through the Munn, and through other humbling things and discomfort, they merited to receive a much higher level (of love and fear of Hashem), and were able to receive the level of “a pure heart.”

²⁹ ("אַתֶּם רְאִיתֶם").

³⁰ (וְעֵינִין מֵה שְׁנוֹתָבְאָר בְּפִרְשֵׁה עֵקֶב, עַל פְּסוּק "וַיֹּאכֶלְךָ אֶת הַמֶּן כֹּי" (לְעֵיל יג, ג)).

וְכֵן הוּא הָעֲנִין בְּעֶשְׂרֵת יָמֵי תְּשׁוּבָה. **This is similar to the concept of “fasting” during the Ten Days of Teshuva.**

וְלָכֵן קוֹרִים פְּרָשָׁה זוֹ קוֹדֵם רֹאשׁ-הַשָּׁנָה³¹. **This is why we read this Parsha (Torah Portion), i.e., Ki Savo, that contains the passages of “the Curses,” before Rosh Hashana.**

Before Rosh Hashana (and Shavuot) we read in the Torah about the punishments Hashem said He will bring upon those who abandon Him and worship idols etc. These passages in the Torah are called “the Curses.” The Gemara (Megilla 31b) says that this is done so that we may “finish off the curses of the year.” Meaning, that if Hashem decreed any bad things in the coming year, it should be fulfilled by reading about it, and not by it actually happening in the physical world.

Tosfos (there) explains that we read the curses the second to last week of the year, which is always Parshas Ki Savo, so that the Parsha right before Rosh Hashana, Parshas Nitzavim, will contain only blessings.

The Alter Rebbe is explaining another idea behind reading the curses before Rosh Hashana. Since on Rosh Hashana we have the opportunity to receive a much deeper connection to Hashem than we ever had before, we need to refine and humble ourselves, so that we will be receptive to this new level of connection. One who feels self-satisfied and complete in himself will not be yearning for a new and deeper connection to Hashem. That is why we read about the punishments: In order to humble us, so that we may grow in our connection to Him.

This is similar to the story of the Jewish People in the Desert. While they were in the Desert, they served Hashem on a certain level, with a certain degree of love and fear of Hashem. But before they came into the Holy Land, they needed to receive from Hashem a totally new level of connection to Him, a deeper level of love and fear of Him. (This deeper connection was needed to empower them to handle the challenges of settling the physical land without getting distracted from their spiritual purpose.) This deeper level could only be given to them as a gift from Above. In order for them to be able to receive this gift from Above, they needed to be humbled and refined. This was accomplished by wandering in the desert for forty years and going wherever Hashem guided them, and by eating only the Munn that Hashem gave them for each day. After forty years of refinement,

³¹ (תּוֹסֵפוֹת דְּבוּר הַמַּתְחִיל “קָלְלוֹת שְׁבַת־וֹרֵת בְּהַנִּים” מְגִלָּה לֵא, ב. טוֹר וְשִׁלְחַן עֲרוּךְ אוֹרַח חַיִּים סִימָן תכ"ח, סְעִיף ד).

they were finally ready to receive a new and deeper level of connection to Hashem, a higher level of love and fear of Hashem.

In other words, during the forty years in the desert, the Jewish People “saw” Hashem’s wonders and inspired themselves with that knowledge to connect to Hashem. However, at the end of the forty years, Hashem gave them “a heart to understand, eyes to see, and ears to hear,” i.e., an awareness and feeling for Hashem, on a totally different level than they would ever be able to attain through only their own effort.

This is similar to how we work the entire year, and especially in Elul and Tishrei, to come to an awareness and feeling for Hashem, and to humble and refine ourselves, so that on Rosh Hashanah and the other Ten Days of Teshuva, we can receive from Hashem an incomparably deeper and higher level of connection with him.



Likutay Torah 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.

All of the commentary of the Tzemach Tzedek printed with brackets in the original Likutay Torah 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 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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