

Lessons in
Likutay Torah

לקוטי תורה

וְהוּא

לקוטי אַמְרִים, מְאֲמָרִים יְקָרִים, מְעוֹדְרִים הַלְבָבוֹת לְעִבּוּדַת ה' עַל סְדְרֵי פְרָשִׁיּוֹת הַתּוֹרָה, וְעַל שְׁלֹשֶׁת רְגָלִים, וְרֵאשֵׁי-הַשָּׁנָה, וְיוֹם-הַכַּפּוּרִים, וְשִׁירֵי-הַשִּׁירִים מִפִּי

קְדוֹשׁ עֲלִיּוֹן, אֲדוֹנֵנוּ וּמוֹרְנוּ וְרַבֵּינוּ, הַרְבֵּה הַגָּאוֹן הַגְּדוֹל, הַחֲסִיד וְהַעֲנִי, אֹר עוֹלָם, מוֹפֵת הַדּוֹר, אִישׁ אֱלֻקִּים, קְדוֹשׁ וְטָהוֹר, כְּבוֹד קְדֻשַׁת שְׁם תְּפִאֲרָתוֹ

מִוֹרְנוּ וְרַבֵּנוּ הַרְבֵּה **רַבֵּי שְׁנֵי אֹר זְלָמָן** נְשָׂמָתוֹ בְּגַנְזֵי מְרוֹמִים

– אֲדַמּוּ"ר הַזֶּקֶן –

דְּבוּר הַמִּתְחִיל "וְשָׁמַע אָבִיהָ אֶת נְדָרָה"

“Loving Hashem through being Careful with Mitzvos”

The maamar from Likutay Torah
with phrase by phrase translation and commentary,
followed by a summary and lessons in the service of Hashem.

Lessons in Likutay Torah: New English translation and commentary

With Hashem's help we would like to present the fifth installment of **Lessons in Likutay Torah**.

The original text of the maamarim is presented with vowels and punctuation, next to a phrase-by-phrase translation and explanation. The translation of the text is in **bold** whereas the commentary is not. The explanations of general concepts not directly relevant to understanding of the maamar are in footnotes. Hebrew text which is not from the original text of the Likutay Torah that has been inserted to help the reader understand the the maamar (e.g. the end of a verse quoted) is in smaller text.

In the original Likutay Torah there are notes, citations, comments and commentary of the Tzemach Tzedek. We have moved most of them to the footnotes and left them untranslated.

Goals

1. The purpose of the Lessons in Likutay Torah series is to teach readers how to learn the text of Likutay Torah in the original by familiarizing them with the words, structure, and concepts of the maamarim.
2. Besides for providing tools for the beginner, it will provide clarity to even more advanced students struggling with confusing or difficult passages by explaining the concepts based on other places in Chassidus (especially those found in the other versions of the maamar printed elsewhere, which were written by the Mittler Rebbe and Tzemach Tzedek).
3. It also provides prepared material to learn Likutay Torah weekly by oneself or in a group. One can learn a complete passage from the maamar in a sitting and come away with the lessons in the service of Hashem derived from it. Over the course of several weeks one can complete an entire maamar with a grasp of the entire thing.

Credits

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I would like to thank Kehot for permission to use the text of the maamarim, the administrator of the לקוטי תורה מנוקד project for providing the text with the נקודות and punctuation, to R' Baruch Katz for his editing the translation and for creating and managing the website. I thank Rabbi Levi Gelb for his inspiration that helped towards this project coming about. His Hebrew commentary on Likutay Torah is distributed weekly with the title לקוטי תורה המבואר.

Please Donate

Translating these maamarim takes many hours of work per week, and funding is needed to cover expenses and enable this project to continue. Please donate at our website www.learnchassidus.com

Please consider becoming a monthly donor of \$18 or \$36 a month, when we have enough monthly donors we will be able to put out a maamar translation on a weekly basis bezras Hashem.

Consider becoming a partner to help make Chassidus available to as many people as possible. The Rebbe said in sicha of Chayei Sarah 5752, **"Every Jew that learns Likutay Torah will help bring Moshiach."** For the majority of English speaking Jews it is almost impossible to learn Likutay Torah properly without a translation of this kind that enables the reader to learn the actual words of Likutay Torah. Please take part in making the Rebbe's plan of everyone learning Likutay Torah a reality.

Please email me at avraham.t.katz@gmail.com with comments and questions. I would love to hear from you.

Rabbi Avraham Katz

לקוטי תורה

דבור המתחיל "וּשְׁמַע אָבִיָּהָ אֶת נְדָרָהּ" פְּרִשְׁת מִטּוֹת דָּף פ"ד, ד - פ"ה, ב,

“Loving Hashem through Being Careful with Mitzvos”

"וּשְׁמַע אָבִיָּהָ אֶת נְדָרָהּ וְאִסְרָהּ אֲשֶׁר אִסְרָה עַל-נַפְשָׁהּ וְהַחְרִישׁ לָהּ אָבִיָּהָ וְקָמוּ כָּל-נְדָרֶיהָ וְכָל-אִסְרֵי אִסְרָהּ עַל-נַפְשָׁהּ יָקוּם:" (פְּרִשְׁתֵּנוּ ל, ה):

The verse describing the law of a father nullifying his daughter's vows states (Bamidbar 30:5): “**And if her father will hear her vow or her prohibition that she places on herself and her father will remain silent (and not nullify them right away), then all of her vows and prohibitions that she places on herself will be effective.**”

The Torah gives a father the ability to nullify his young daughter's vows or voluntary prohibitions. However, he can only nullify them if he declares them invalid right when he hears about them. If he waits until the next nightfall before saying anything then he loses the ability to nullify them.

לְהַבִּין עֲנִין "דְּקָדוּקֵי סוּפְרִים"¹ - שְׁאֲנוּ רוּאִים, כְּמַעַט שְׁכָל הַתְּלִמוּד מְלֵא מִהֲלָכוֹת וְחוּמְרוֹת שֶׁהַחֲמִירוּ חֲזו"ל וְהוֹסִיפוּ כְּמָה גְדָרִים וְסִיּוּגִים לַתּוֹרָה-שֶׁבְּכַתָּב.

To understand the inner meaning behind a father's power to nullify his daughter's vows and prohibitions, we need to first understand the idea of the “**extra careful measures of the Sages**”, that we see that **most of the Talmud is full of the laws and stringencies that the Sages imposed, adding additional “boundaries and fences”** to protect us from transgressing the commands in the **Written Torah**, the Chumash.

Just like a fence prevents someone from accidentally trespassing into someone else's property, so too the Sages established extra careful measures to prevent us from coming near to transgressing what it says in the Torah. For example, in the Torah it says that one may not cook meat from a land animal with milk or eat them together, and the Sages established that we shouldn't even eat meat from a bird with milk so that we shouldn't get it confused with meat from a land animal with milk.

The question is: Why do we need more stringencies and precautions in the later generations of the Talmud and onwards? If they were so important then why didn't we always have them from the time of Moshe Rabeinu? What changed as time went on that we need additional stringencies?

וְהַעֲנִין מוּבָן, כְּמוֹ שְׁאָמְרוּ רַז"ל עַל פְּסוּק (שִׁיר הַשִּׁירִים א, ב) "יִשְׁקֵנִי מִנְּשִׁיקוֹת פִּיהוּ כִּי טוֹבִים דוֹדֶיךָ מִיַּיִן":

The idea will be understood based on our Sages explanation of the verse (Shir Hashirim 1:2): “Hashem should ‘kiss us with His mouth’ (meaning He should connect to us through our mouths saying words of Torah), **because Your ‘love’ is better than ‘wine’.**”

¹ (מגילה יט, ב: מאי דכתיב (עקב ט, י): 'ועליהם ככל הדברים אשר דבר ה' עמכם בהר' מלמד, שהאזהרה הקדוש ברוך הוא למשה דקדוקי תורה ודקדוקי סופרים [שדקדקו האחרונים מלשון משנת הראשונים - רש"י. "שהוסיפו לדקדק אחר מעשה הבריות ולהחמיר ולעשות סייג ואזנים לתורה וגזרו גזרות להרחיק את האדם מן העבירה" - רש"י סוכה כח, א. "כגון גזירות שגזרו חכמים שלא יבא לידי איסור תורה" - רש"י בבא בתרא קלד, א.)

"אמרה כנסת ישראל: ערבים עלי דברי סופרים יותר מיינה של תורה".

פירוש: "יינה של תורה" הוא פנימית התורה וסודותיה, כמה שאמרו רז"ל: "נכנס יין - יצא סוד"²;

"דברי סופרים" ערבים על כנסת ישראל יותר מסודות התורה -

כי כל הגדרים והחומרות שבדברי רז"ל, ודרכי מוסר שבאגדות, ו"פרקי אבות" - כולם נמשכים מבחינת אהבה רבה, כמו שכתוב (מלאכי א, ב): "אהבתי אתכם אמרה"³.

כמו למשל, אדם מחמת אהבתו על בנו מדקדק עמו יותר, להוסיף עליו שמירה מעולה בסייגים וגדרים, בכל האפשרי בעל כרחו, שיהיה מנוקה מכל וכל.

וכן חפץ מאד שימצא חן ושכל⁴ ביתר שאת;

וכמו למשל מרגליות, מה שהיא יקרה ביותר שומרה ביותר שמירה מעולה, כלי בתוך כלי;

Our Sages comment: **The Jewish People said to Hashem: The instructions of the Sages** (referred to in the verse as "Your love") **are sweeter to me than the 'wine' of the Torah.**

The explanation of that cryptic statement is as follows: **The 'wine of the Torah' refers to the inner dimension and secrets of the Torah, as our Sages said the "when someone drinks wine, his secrets come out",** thus the 'wine' of the Torah refers to the secrets of the Torah which require prompting to discover, just like a person's private secrets that require prompting (like by drinking wine) for him to reveal.

Thus, the **'instructions of the Sages' are sweeter to the Jewish People than the secrets of the Torah,**

since all of the **"boundaries" and stringencies instructed to us by the Sages, and the moral instructions which are found in the Aggada** (portions of the Talmud with stories, quotes and non-literal interpretations of verses) **and in the Pirkei Avos** (Ethics of the Fathers), **they are all expressing the idea a Great Love from Hashem to us, like it says** (Malachi 1:2): **"Hashem says that I love you** (the Jewish People)", and because Hashem loves us, that's why He is extra careful with our behavior.

For example, because a person loves his son that is why he pushes him to be extra careful in his conduct, and he protects him from acting inappropriately by making **"boundaries and fences"** for him not to cross. **The father will do whatever he can** to encourage his son to act properly, **even if its seemingly against the will** of the son (since the son doesn't appreciate the consequences of his conduct), **since he wants his son to be totally clean of any inappropriate behavior.**

Furthermore, he greatly desires that his son be very **gracious and intelligent** and therefore he pushes him to act kindly and to learn diligently.

This is similar to the idea that regarding pearls or other gems, **the more valuable they are, the more**

² (ערובין סה, א).

³ (ועיין מה שנתבאר על פסוק (תצא כג, ו) "כי אהבה ה' אלקיה" - בדבור המתחיל "לא אבה").

⁴ (על פי משלי ג, ד: "ומצא חן ושכל טוב בעיני אלקים ואדם").

כך מחמת גודל אהבתו יתברך אלינו, מחמיר ומדקדק עלינו בדקדוקי סופרים, שהן המה דברי תורתו, הנמשכות מאהבה רבה בסייגים וגדרים, לזכותינו לטוב לנו, שנהיה נקיים לפניו יתברך.⁵

one invests in guarding them, employing multiple layers of protection.

So too, because of the great love from Hashem to us, He is extra careful and stringent with our behavior. He gives us the “extra careful measures of the Sages”, which are actually part of the Torah expressing the Great Love from Hashem to us by protecting us with “boundaries and fences”. They are there for our benefit to refine us, so that we be spotless before Hashem.

Now that we understand the idea of what the “extra careful measures of the Sages” accomplish, we will understand why they are needed more in the time of exile than in the time of the Beis Hamikdash (The Holy Temple in Jerusalem):

והנה, בזמן שבית המקדש היה קיים, היה סגי בדאורייתא.

Now, in the time when the Beis Hamikdash existed it was enough to fulfill the mitzvos as defined “by the Torah’s definition”, without the extra precautions from the Sages.

כי היתה נאמנה את ה' רוחנו, ולא משכנו חבלי עבותות אהבתנו לתאוות גשמיות, והיה בנקל להיות אהבת ה' קבועה בלב כל איש, להיות בהתלהבות לעבודת ה' ותורתו גם מבלי שנתעורר מזה אהבה רבה.

This is because our spirit was faithful to Hashem and we were not drawn with strong ropes of love for physical desires. It was therefore easier to have the love of Hashem firmly established in the heart of every man, and to be passionate in the service of Hashem and the learning of His Torah, even without these extra careful measures of the Sages inspiring a great love of Hashem.

אך דור אחר דור, כי נתמעטו הלקבות השלימות בעבודת ה' באהבה עזה ברשפי אש,

However, with every successive generation, those whose hearts are complete in their service of Hashem with an intense fiery love decreased.

ונכוינו באש זרה באהבות ותאוות גופניות, וכמו כן גברו עלינו עד אשר לא נוכל לעבוד ה' באהבה, בלתי שנתעורר מזה אהבה רבה על ידי דקדוקי סופרים וחומריהם בכל פרטיהם:

We became ‘burned’ with the ‘strange fire’ of love and desire for physical things. These physical desires became so overwhelming to us that we are not able to serve Hashem with love unless we first awaken in ourselves a great love for Hashem through fulfilling the ‘extra careful measures of the Sages’ and their stringencies in every detail:

הן בבחינת “סור-מרע” - בכל החומרות שבגמרא ופוסקים,

We must fulfill these precautions both in regard to ‘turning away from wrong’ by fulfilling all of the stringencies mentioned in the Gemara and later rulings,

והן בבחינת “ועשה טוב” - בדברי מוסר שבאגדות

and in regard to ‘doing good’ by fulfilling the ethical guidance found in the Aggada and the

⁵ (עיין מה שנתבאר מזה על פסוק “שחורה אני ונאנה”. ועיין ברבות ריש פרשת שמות, גבי (משלי יג, כד): “ואהבו - שחרו מוסר [זה הקדוש ברוך הוא, על שאהב את ישראל, דכתיב (מלאכי א, ב): ‘אהבתי אתכם אמר ה’, שהוא מרבה אותן ביסוריין]).”

⁶ (על פי תהלים עח, ח: “דור . . . נאמנה את אל רוחו”).

ו"מילי דאבות": "עין טובה" – שיראה את חבירו בטוב עין, ורעת רעהו אל יחשוב בלבו⁸;

teachings found in the Pirkei Avos. For example, it instructs one to have "a good eye", meaning to view his friend with a generous eye and not think ill of his friend in his heart.

וכן "לב טוב", ו"חבר טוב כו"⁹.

And so too the other instructions in Pirkei Avos, that one should have a 'good heart' and a 'good friend',

All of these instructions teach us how to fulfill the Torah's command to "love your fellow as much as you love yourself" in the highest and most complete manner; much more than the bare minimum requirement that someone might fulfill from just looking at the "Torah's definition" of loving your fellow.

וזהו שכתוב (פרשתנו ל, ה-ו): "ושמע אביה את נדרה ואסרה אשר אסרה על-נפשה והחריש לה אביה וקמו כל-נדריה וכל-אסר אשר-אסרה על-נפשה יקום, ואם-הניא אביה אתה ביום שמעו כל-נדריה ואסריה אשר-אסרה על-נפשה לא יקום ויהוה יסלח-לה כי הניא אביה אתה", שהאב מפר את הנדר:

And this is the idea behind what is written (Bamidbar 30:5-6): "And if her father heard her vow or her prohibition that she placed on herself and her father will remain silent (and not nullify them right away), then all of her vows and prohibitions that she places on herself will be effective. However, if her father removes (i.e. nullifies) her vow on the day that he hears about it, then all her vows and prohibitions that she places on

⁷ (אבות ב, ט: "איזוהי דרך ישרה שידבק בה האדם? .. עין טובה .. חבר טוב .. לב טוב").

⁸ (על פי זכריה ח, יז: "ואיש את רעת רעהו אל תחשבו בלבבכם").

⁹ (ועיין מה שנתבאר בדבור המתחיל "כה תברכו את בני ישראל" (נשא ו, כג), בפירושו: "איך לא אשא פנים לישראל כו", והם מדרקקים על עצמן עד כזית כו" – נמצא, שעל ידי שכנסת-ישראל מדרקקים על עצמן, להחמיר על עצמן ביותר ממה שכתוב בתורה שבכתב, מזה נמשך בחינת "ישא ה' פניו" (שם), שהוא בחינת אהבה-רבה שלמעלה מההשתלשלות כו'. ונמשך בחינה זו "אליך" ממש, להיות גילוי אהבה-רבה זו גם באדם.

וכמו שנתבאר גם כן בדבור המתחיל "שחורה אני ונאנה" הנ"ל, שעל ידי זה תתעלה הנפש-הבהמית גם כן כו'. עיין שם. ועיין מה שנתבאר בפרשת מקץ, סוף דבור המתחיל "כי אתה נרי" (תורה אור מא, א), גבי: "והנה בדורות הראשונים כו" [כמו בנביאים ושופטים מצינו דור שכולו זכאי או כולו חייב. ומי שהיה זכאי במדרגת צדיק גדול או נביא, ומי שהיה חייב היה רשע גמור, ועל ידי זה לא היו ממוצעים]. אבל דורות האחרונים כו' [דור אחר דור אין בהם רשעים כל כה, ולא צדיקים כל כך טובים.

והענין: שבדורות הראשונים היו נשמות עליונות ממדרגות גבוהות, ומצד נשמתם בעצמם, היו יכולים לשלוט על הרע שבנפשם. ומיד כשיתבונן בגדולת אין-סוף ברוך הוא יגיע אליו היראה כו'. רק רשע גמור – שמגביר הרע שבנפשו בשאט בנפש. אבל דורות האחרונים, עיקבא דמשיחא, בחינת עקביים, אין כח בנשמתם עצמם לשלוט על הרע, וצריך יגיעה רבה יגיעת נפש ויגיעת בשר].

וזהו "והוי"ה יגיה חשכי" (שמואל ב' כב, כט) כו', [היינו בחינת חשך שבדורות אחרונים. כי דוד המלך עליו השלום אמר זה בעד כללות ישראל, שיש בהם בחינת חשך בדורות אחרונים עיקבא דמשיחא, שאין 'אתה' 'נרי הוי"ה', כלומר שאין 'נר הוי"ה' נשמת אדם, מכל מקום 'והוי"ה' – היא בחינת הוי"ה עליונה שלמעלה מההשתלשלות – 'יגיה חשכי'"]. ועיין שם, שהוא מלמעלה מסדר ההשתלשלות.

וזהו ענין "ישא ה' פניו אליך", והיינו על ידי שמדרקקים על עצמן. וכמו שכתוב ב"רעיא מהימנא", בפרשת פינחס (דף רל"ח, עמוד ב'), שהוא בחינת "ישא ה' פניו אליך" (האזינו לב, יא), שהוא למעלה ממה שנמשך על ידי "רמ"ח פקודין, דאינון רמ"ח אברין דמלכא".

ועיין בגמרא במגילה (דף כ"ז, עמוד ב'. ודף כ"ח, עמוד א'), גבי "ובמה הארכת ימים כו". יעוין שם.

ועיין מה שנתבאר במקום אחר, בפירושו "כל המאריך ב'אחד' מאריכין לו ימיו כו" (תורה אור זכור פד, ג. לעיל בהעלותך לד, ד. פנחס פ, א. לקמן ואתחנן יב, ב. ראש השנה סג, א)).

herself will not be effective, and Hashem will forgive her (if she transgresses her vow without knowing that it was nullified) **because her father removed it.**" We see from this **that specifically the father is able to remove a vow.**

כי מבחינת אהבה רבה הוא מפר - כתרגומו¹⁰: מבטל - כל האיסורים והקישורים אשר כנסת ישראל היא אסורה וקשורה.

The deeper meaning behind this is **that from the aspect of the 'great love' from Hashem to the Jewish People He (Hashem) removes (and as the word is translated by Rabbi Yonasan ben Uziel this means that Hashem nullifies) all of the restrictions and bonds of unholiness to which the Jewish People are restricted and bound.**

ו"אין חבוש מתיר עצמו" - כי אם על ידי מדת אהבה רבה - בחינת "אביה".

Its necessary for this 'great love' to come and release the Jewish People from their connection to unholiness since **"a prisoner is unable to free himself". It is only through the aspect of the 'great love' from Hashem to us which is the idea of the "father".**

Meaning, just as a father does everything he can to encourage his children to go on the proper path out of his great love for them, so too Hashem loves us so much that He gives us the fullest possible way of keeping Torah and mitzvos, so that we can express our love of Hashem fully. Just as the father of a girl is able to nullify her vow since he cares about her and knows what's best for her, so too Hashem can reverse and "nullify" our bonds with unholiness and physical desire through giving us some of His great love in the form of the 'extra careful measures of the Sages' which are an expression of His deep love for us.

The following is an explanation of the Tzemach Tzedek¹¹ (found in the text of Likutay Torah) on the above statement of the Alter Rebbe that the connection of the person to unholiness is like being bound in an oath, and the 'great love' of Hashem nullifies that bond just as a father nullifies a vow.

(וענין האיסורים שהיא אסורה וקשורה בהן, יש לומר דהיינו חלישת כח הנפש, שאין בכחה לצאת מנרתקה ומאסרה כו' - חומריות הגוף ונפש הבהמית. וכמו שנתבאר במקום אחר.¹²)

What is the idea of these 'restrictions that the person is restricted and bound by' mentioned above? We can possibly explain this as a reference to **weakness of the G-dly soul; that is not strong enough to leave its covering and prison which are the coarseness of the body and the animal soul, as explained elsewhere.**

ושם נתבאר: שעל ידי התורה נמשך כח ועוז לנפש לבטל קישורים אלו כו'.

There it is also explained that **through the study of the Torah, power and strength are given to the G-dly soul to nullify all of these bonds to unholiness.**

ובמקום אחר נתבאר, דקישורים אלו נקרא "סירכות" ב"רעיא מהימנא" - שהנפש מסתבכת בהם ועל ידי זה

In another place it is explained that these 'bonds' to unholiness are also referred to as 'lesions' i.e. holes, as it is written in the passage of the Zohar referred to as **"Raya Meheimna"**, meaning that just

¹⁰ ('הניא תרגם יונתן - 'בטל').

¹¹ Even though generally the comments of the Tzemach Tzedek have been moved to the Hebrew footnotes, due to the relative shortness of the maamar it was felt necessary in this case to include this explanation to give a complete understanding of the maamar.

¹² בדבור המתחיל "בהודש השלישי", בפרשת יתרו (תורה אור סז, א).

אינה יכולה לעלות כו'¹³.

as an animal that has holes in its lungs is not kosher to be eaten, and therefore cannot become elevated into holiness by undergoing shechita (ritual slaughtering) and a Jew eating it, so too through these 'bonds' to unholiness, **the G-dly soul is stuck in them and is therefore not able to go up** and reconnect to its source in Hashem.

ויש לומר, שהפרת נדרים ביום הכפורים, היינו שעל ידי התשובה נמשך בחינת הפרת וביטול הקישורים וגילוי האהבה רבה בנפש כו'.

We can possibly explain that this is the idea of nullifying vows on Yom Kippur at the Kol Nidrei service, meaning that through teshuva (repentance/return to Hashem) there is drawn down a revelation of Hashem which removes and nullifies these 'bonds' to unholiness created by the animal soul, just as the bonds of the vows became nullified at the Kol Nidrei service, and this allows the great love that a Jew has for Hashem to become revealed.

ועוד יש לומר בענין ש"האב מפר", והוא על דרך מה שכתוב בזהר פרשת אמור (דף ק', עמוד ב'), גבי "בזמנא דנטלא מבי אבא, ולא בזמנא דנטלי מבי אימא".

We can further explain the idea that specifically the father can remove vows from his daughter, based on what is written in the Zohar regarding the concept that in order for there to be a complete unity of Ze'eir Anpin¹⁴ and Malchus¹⁵ it needs to be "at the time when she (Malchus) receives from the "house of the Father" (meaning from Chochma), and not at the time when she receives from "the house of the Mother" (meaning Bina).

In the verse (Bereshis 20:12) it says: "וגם-אמנה אחתי בת-אבי הוא אך לא בת-אמי ותהי-לי לאשה:"

"And besides, she is in truth my sister, my father's daughter though not my mother's; and she became my wife."

The simple meaning of the verse is that Avraham is explaining to Avimelech, king of the Pelishtim, the reason he called Sara his sister even though she was really his wife. She is related to him like a sister; she was his father's granddaughter, his niece, but only from his father's side. Sara's father Haran was Avraham's half-brother since they shared the same father but had different mothers. Thus, Sara was related to him from his father's side, as though she was his sister (even though she was actually his niece), but not from his mother's side.

In the Zohar it gives a mystical explanation of the verse to mean that for Ze'eir Anpin and Malchus to be united like a husband and wife (ותהי-לי לאשה), then it isn't enough for them to receive from Bina (אך לא בת-אמי), rather they need to receive from Chochma (וגם-אמנה אחתי בת-אבי הוא). This is the idea of saying "at the time when they receive from the house of the father-Chochma, and not at the time when they receive from the house of the mother-Bina.

¹³ בדבור המתחיל "פירוש הפסוק 'מי אל כמוך'" (לקמן ראש השנה סב, א).

¹⁴ The six "emotive" attributes of Hashem in the spiritual world of Atzilus. Meaning, the way that Hashem relates to us in a manner of reward and punishment (kindness and severity), giving kindness to those who do good and punishing those who do bad.

¹⁵ The aspect of how Hashem is actually involved in the creation and guiding of the world. When these two types of attributes are united then then we actually see in the physical world how Hashem is running everything and is part of His plan, but when these two types of attributes of Hashem are not fully united, then Hashem's Divine Providence in everything becomes concealed.

כי מבחינת הבינה והדעת נמשך להיות "אתפפא סטרא-אחרא", וזהו ענין ה"נדרים סייג לפרישות".

This is so because from the aspect of Bina and Daas there is brought forth the ability to “restrain the Sitra Achra (the side opposed to holiness)”, which is the idea of what it says in Pirkei Avos that “vows are a fence protecting a person that he be separate and removed from indulging in worldly matters.”

אבל להיות "אתהפכא חשוכא - ממש - לנהורא" אי אפשר להיות מבחינת בינה, ש"מינה דינין מתערין",

But to “actually transform spiritual darkness into spiritual light”; this cannot happen from the aspect of Bina alone, since “from it (Bina) judgements from Hashem’s Heavenly court are aroused against the created beings for their improper conduct”,

אלא מבחינת חכמה-עילאה, ו"החכמה תחיה" (קהלת ז, יב),

Only from the aspect of the Higher Level of Chochma (Chochma of Atzilus) regarding which it says (Koheles 7:12) “and Chochma (wisdom) will give life to those who have it” can there be the nullification of the bonds to unholiness (the opposite of life) created by the animal soul.

והוא הביטול של מעלה מהשגה ודעת כו¹⁶.

This level of Chochma is a type of selfless dedication to Hashem beyond all logic and reason and is therefore unaffected by the animal soul’s pull to physicality, and can even transform that pull into a drive to connect to Hashem.

וזהו שהאב מפר ומתפרך חשוכא לנהורא.

This is the idea that the *father* (meaning the power of Chochma) is able to nullify spiritual darkness and transform it into spiritual light.

ומבחינה זו נמשך גם בן בחינת "ואם היו תהיה לאיש" (פרשתנו ל, ז) הנזכר למעלה. ועיין בזהר שם.

Specifically from this aspect (of the *father*-Chochma) is drawn forth the ability for “her (the daughter mentioned at the beginning) to become married to a man”, meaning in a mystical sense that from the *father*-Chochma is drawn forth the ability for Ze’eir Anpin to become united and fully revealed in Malchus, as described above.

From the sequence of the verses we are discussing, it would seem that the daughter’s marriage is connected to her father’s ability to nullify her vows. In simple terms, this connection is that just as the girl’s father can nullify her vows, so can her husband nullify her vows. However, in a mystical sense we are using the reference of the “daughter” to mean Malchus of Atzilus and the “father” to mean Chochma of Atzilus. The verse is telling us that for Malchus to get “married” to her “husband” who is Ze’eir Anpin, she needs to first be connected to her “father” who is Chochma, since only from Chochma is there the ability for a complete union of Ze’eir Anpin and Malchus.

In other words: Only from a totally selfless dedication to Hashem (Chochma) is one able develop their great love for Hashem (Ze’eir Anpin) so that it be expressed in everyday life (Malchus). This selfless dedication is especially nurtured through practicing the “extra careful measures of the Sages” who taught us how to be totally dedicated to Hashem.

¹⁶ כמבואר בדבור המתחיל "ראה אנכי נותן" (לקמן ראה).

אך פִּירוּשׁ "וּשְׁמַע אָבִיָּהָ אֶת נְדָרָהּ וְאַסְרָה אֲשֶׁר אָסְרָה עַל־
נַפְשָׁהּ וְהַחֲרִישׁ לָהּ אָבִיָּהּ וְקָמוּ כָּל־נְדָרֶיהָ וְכָל־אֲסוּר־אֲסְרָהּ עַל־
נַפְשָׁהּ יָקוּם"

However, now we need to understand the mystical meaning of "And if her father will hear her vow or her prohibition that she places on herself and her father will remain silent (and not nullify them right away), then all of her vows and prohibitions that she places on herself will be effective."

הַיְינוּ, שְׁעַל יְדֵי אֲתַכְפִּיּא בְּתַחֲלָה, שְׂוֵהוּ עֲנִין הַנְּדָרִים,
מִזֶּה נִמְשָׁךְ אַחֵר כִּן גִּילוי בְּחִינַת "אָבִיָּהָ" לַהֲיוֹת
"אֲתַהֲפֹכָא חֲשׂוּכָא לְנִהוּרָא"¹⁷.

Meaning that specifically through first "restraining" the unholiness by restraining the desires of the animal soul, which is the point of vows (which are intended to restrain a person from indulgence), from this he will afterwards come to experiencing the revelation of the level of "her father (Chochma)" which causes that "spiritual darkness will be transformed into spiritual light".

וְזֶהוּ שְׂכָתוֹב גַּם בֵּן (שָׁם ל, ב): "וַיְדַבֵּר מֹשֶׁה אֶל רְאִשֵׁי
הַמִּטּוֹת לְבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל לֵאמֹר זֶה הַדְּבָר אֲשֶׁר צִוָּה ה'":

And this also the meaning of what is written (Bamidbar 30:2): "And Moshe spoke to the heads of the tribes of the Children of Israel saying: This is the matter that Hashem has commanded", the commandment that a father may nullify his daughter's vows, and a husband may nullify his wife's vows if done in the correct time and manner.

What's the lesson in specifically stressing here that this mitzva was transmitted through Moshe, when all mitzvos were?

שְׁעַל יְדֵי "לֵאמֹר זֶה הַדְּבָר" שְׂמַבְחִינַת מֹשֶׁה, עַל יְדֵי זֶה
יוֹכַל לְהַתִּיר הַנְּדָר כּו'.

This is to teach us that through Moshe "saying (to the heads of the tribes) that this is the matter" meaning from the aspect of Moshe (who represents the level of Chochma of Atzilus) can the vows become nullified. From Chochma itself (represented by Moshe) comes the power for the G-dly soul to free itself from the "vows," the bonds of the animals soul's passions.

גַּם, "רְאִשֵׁי הַמִּטּוֹת" הוּא בְּחִינַת רְעוּתָא־דְּלִיבָא,
אֲהָבָה־רַבָּה. וְכַמְבוֹאֵר לְמַעְלָה):

In addition, the idea of "heads of the tribes" is that they represent the "essential desire of the heart to connect to Hashem", in a manner of "great love for Hashem", as explained above.

In other words, by saying that specifically Moshe spoke to the heads of the tribes about nullifying vows, the verse is hinting to us that from Chochma- represented by Moshe- can someone reveal in themselves the true love for Hashem which is represented by the "heads of the tribes". The "heads of the tribes" mystically means that highest part of the soul of the Jewish people, just like the head is the highest part of the body, so too the deep essential love for Hashem in every Jew is the idea of the "heads of the tribes", and this deep love -the heads of the tribes- is revealed through Moshe, which is Chochma.



¹⁷ ועיין עוד מענין בחינת "אביה" - ב"פרדס", שער חמישי, פרק ג'.

Summary of the Maamar

- Q1 What is the reason why in the generations after the destruction of the Beis Hamikdash we find that the Sages places many additional restrictions more than what the Torah demands, and instructed us to be extra careful in mitzvos beyond the letter of the law of the Torah?
- A1 Because in the time of the Beis Hamikdash we experienced so much revelation of Hashem that our animal souls were naturally more refined and it was much easier to reveal our love for Hashem even by just by keeping the laws of the Torah itself without extra measures. However, after the destruction of the Beis Hamikdash when our animal souls are more coarse and have a much stronger passion for physicality, thus making it very difficult to reveal our love for Hashem. Therefore, in the time of exile the only way to overcome the animal soul and reveal our love for Hashem is through keeping the “extra careful measures of the Sages”.
- Q2 How do the “extra careful measures of the Sages” help us reveal a great love for Hashem?
- A2 Because the motivating factor behind these “extra careful measures” is the fact that Hashem has a great love for us. Just like a father who truly loves his son will push him to be careful in his conduct that he should behave in the most refined manner and that should attain wisdom and sensitivity etc., so too because Hashem loves us that’s why He wants us to keep the Torah and Mitzvos in the most complete manner possible, and that’s the purpose of the “extra careful measures of the Sages”. Since the motivation behind these measures is Hashem’s great love for us, they have the power to reveal the great love for Hashem we have hidden in us. This is because our love for Hashem is a reflection of His infinite love for us.
- Q3 How does that tie into our parsha, Parshas Matos, in giving a deeper understanding of the passage about a father nullifying his daughter’s vows?
- A3 The mystical meaning of a *father* nullifying vows is that *father* represents Chochma, total selfless dedication to Hashem beyond all reasoning which comes from the deepest part of the soul, and only through that type of selfless dedication which is expressed in fulfilling the “extra careful measures of the Sages” can someone remove the “vows and prohibitions” that they are bound to. What are these “vows and prohibitions” a reference to? They are referring to the fact that the animal feels “bound” to pursue physical pleasure and the G-dly soul is stuck dealing with the animal soul’s drives, just like someone who is bound by an oath is stuck dealing with the consequences of the oath. By saying that the “father” nullifies the “vows” it means to say that through the dedication to Hashem on a level of Chochma by keeping everything in Torah law, even every Rabbinic decree and instruction, this will remove the coarseness and passion of the animal soul which “binds” the G-dly soul to pursue it’s goals. Once those “bonds” to materiality are “nullified” through the power of Chochma, then a Jew can reveal his true love for Hashem.
- Q4 Why does the Torah stress the fact that Moshe himself gave over the command regarding annulling vows, didn’t he give over all of the commandments?
- A4 Since Moshe Rabeinu himself embodies the power of Chochma in its most absolute state, specifically by connecting to him we receive the spiritual power to “nullify” the “bonds” of the animal soul stopping us from loving Hashem, that’s why in this mitzva there is special emphasis on the fact that Moshe gave over the commandment.

Lessons from the Maamar in the service of Hashem

- 1 Keeping every detail of halacha doesn't just make us have more fear of Hashem, it is what refines us and gives us the ability to reveal our love for Hashem during davening.
- 2 Someone who really cares about himself, his children, his family and friends, will encourage himself and others to act in the most refined manner and pursue wisdom and sensitivity.
- 3 Sometimes we feel "bound" to listen to the animal soul's demands on us to pursue physical pleasure or something seemingly foolish. We need to know that we have the power to free ourselves from any of its demands by dedicating ourselves more strongly to serving Hashem and revealing Him in this world. When a person is busy learning Torah, teaching, and spreading the knowledge and practice of Torah and Mitzvos to every Jew he can, then there won't be any room left for the animal soul to convince us that he has us "bound" to his wishes.
- 4 In order to receive this power to totally dedicate ourselves to Hashem, we need to connect to Moshe Rabeinu in our generation, the Rebbe, who shows us what dedication to Hashem is all about.