

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

לְקֹצְטִי תָּזְרָה

פרשת כי תבא

מִאָמֶר

וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה אֶל־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל

“Prepare for Revelation
through Self-refinement”

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Likutay Torah

ליקוטי תורה

פרקשת כי תבא

מאמר

ויקרא משה אל כל ישראל

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?

Additionaly, 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:

”**וַיֹּאמֶר** מֹשֶׁה אֶל כָּל יִשְׂרָאֵל

אֱלֹהֶם: אַתֶּם רָאִיתֶם אֶת כָּל אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה ה'
 לְעֵינֵיכֶם בָּאָרֶץ מִצְרָיִם לְפָרָעָה וְלִכְלָדָיו וְלִכְלָדָיו
 אָרְצֵיכֶם, הַמִּסּוֹת הַגְּדוֹלֹת אֲשֶׁר רָאָו עִינֵיכֶם
 הַאֲתָה וְהַמְּפֹתִים הַגְּלִילִים הָם כֵּן, וְלֹא נָתַן ה'
 לְכֶם לִבְךָדָעַת, וְעֵינֵים לְרָאֹות אֲזֹנֵים לְשִׁמְעָ
 עַד הַיּוֹם הַהִזְהִרְנוּ” (פרקשתנו בת, 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 נאמר בשפת פרשת כי תבא, שבת שלפני סליחות, בא אלוול תקנו.

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 תָמֹהַ: דְמַתְחָלָה אָמָר: "אַתֶּם רַאֲתֶם כֵּי", וְאַחֲרַ בְּךָ אָמָר: "וְלֹא נָתַן כֵּי עַיִינִים לְרֹאֹת וּכֵי"?

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”?

ולהבין זה: הנה כתיב (וירא בא, לג):

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

“He (Avraham) set up a hotel in Be’er 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.”

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

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

דנהנה כתיב: “רָם עַל כָּל גּוֹיִם הֵן כֵּי³,”
ז' אֶל-עוֹלָם².

² (נזכר ברבות: וירא, סוף פרשה נ”ד. ויגש, פרשה צ”ד. זהר: חלק א’, ק”ב, ב’. חלק ג’: כ”ב, ב’).

³ (גויים). תהילים קיג, ד).

⁴ (“מלך הגויים.”).

דָּגֶם עַוְבָּדִי-כּוֹבָבִים⁵ "קָרוּ לִיהּ אֶלְקָאָרִי"
דָּאֶלְקָאָרִי"⁶,

כְּמוֹ שְׁכַתּוֹב?⁷ מִמְּזֹרֶחֶת שְׁמֶשׁ עַד מִבּוֹאָו
גָּדוֹל שְׁמֵי בָּגּוּיִם וּגּוֹיִם.

אֵن הֵם בְּבָחִינָת פִּירּוֹד, לְהִיוֹת בְּבָחִינָת יְשָׁוָא
וּבְבָרָבָר בְּפָנֵי עַצְמָוֹן.

וְאַבְרָהָם, הַנֶּה קָיָה עוֹמֵד וְצֹוחַ: "בְּשֵׁם הָאֱלֹהִים
אֵל עַולְם!"

פִּירּוֹשׁ: שְׁהָשֵׁם הַיְיָ הַוְאָ אֵל-עַולְם" -
כּוֹלָא חָדָר,

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

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

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

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."

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-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, ה-ו-י-ה-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 ("גּוּיִם").

⁶ (מְנֻחּוֹת קִי, א.).

⁷ (מלאכי א, יא): "מִמְּזֹרֶחֶת שְׁמֶשׁ וְעַד מִבּוֹאָו גָּדוֹל שְׁמֵי בָּגּוּיִם. וּבָכֶל מָקוֹם מְקֻטָּר מְגַשֵּׁשׁ לְשָׁמֵי, וּמְנַחָּה שְׁהָוָרָה, כִּי גָּדוֹל שְׁמֵי בָּגּוּיִם אָמַר הַצְּבָאֹת".

ולא "אל הָעוֹלָם" שֶׁהָעוֹלָם הוּא יְשׁ וְדָבָר
בְּפָנָיו עַצְמָו, וְהוּא הַמְּחִיל אֹתָם - אֵינוֹ בָּן,

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:

אֵלָא בָּמוֹ שְׁשָׁמוֹ שֶׁל אָדָם אֵינוֹ מַעֲצָמִוֹת
הָאָדָם,

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

אֵלָא שְׁחִיּוֹת שֶׁלֽוּ מַלְבָּשׁ בָּאוֹתִיוֹת
שְׁמוֹ,

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.

שְׁהִרְיָן אָנוּ רֹאִים שְׁבָשְׁקָוִרִין אֹתוֹ בְּשָׁמוֹ
הַוְאָ מַתְּעוּרָה,

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.

בָּמוֹ בָּן שְׁמַה הַיְיָ הַבָּרוּךְ הוּא הַוְאָ מַתְּלָבֵשׁ
תוֹרָה בְּלָלְמִין, וְהֵם רַק לְבִישִׁים וְטַפְּלִים

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

אֲלֹו יְחִבָּרָה, וּכְלֹא חָדָר 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.

זֶהוּ אֶל-עוֹלָם: בָּמוֹ שְׁכַנּוּב (זֶכְרִיהַ יָד,
ט): בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא יְהִי ה' אֶחָד וְשַׁמוֹ
אֶחָד",

יְהִי"ה" - ב' פָּעָמִים י"ה.

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

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

שֶׁלֹּא יְהִי בְּבִחִינַת 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,

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.

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

כִּי הַנֹּא"וּ הוּא בְּחִינַת הַמִּשְׁבָּה שְׁיוֹכְלַ
לְהַשְׁתְּלִיל לִמְטָה עַד שְׁיוֹכְלַ לְהִיּוֹת יְשָׁ
וּדְבָר בְּפָנֵי עָצְמוֹ.

אֲלֹא שְׁיִהְיָה הַכָּל בְּחִינַת י"ה, לִמְטָה כְּמוֹ

למעלה.⁸ Hashem in a manner of י-ה, 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 'ו and 'ה.

How His revelation comes down into the created worlds is like the letters 'ה and 'ו. 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 ועין ב"לקוטי תורה" [מהארין ל] בזכורה על פסוק זה. ומה שנכתב מזה בביאור על פסוק "ויהי מספר בני ישראל" (לעיל במדבר ט, ד). ומה שנכתב סוף דבר המתחיל "ששים הפה מלכות" (כגראה הכוונה לדבור המתחיל זה לקמן בשיר השירים לח, ב ואילך), גבי "תempti".

י-ה-ה

אך הננה כתיב: "וּנְגַנֵּן מִפְרִיד אֱלֹהֶיךָ":
(בָּמִשְׁלֵי 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.

לְתַחַווּ יְבָקֵשׁ - נִפְרֵד" (בָּמִשְׁלֵי י"ח, 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

**שְׁבַשְׁאָדָם מִשְׁוִים רַצְוֹנָתָיו בַּתְּעִנוּגִי
 הָעוֹלָם, אוֹ בְּנַצְחֹנוֹת וּמִדּוֹת רַעֲוָת חָסֵךְ
 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,

הוּא בְּחִנַּת "נִפְרֵד", שֶׁלֹּא יוּכֶל לְהִיוֹת
 בְּבִחִנַּת "ה' אֶחָד וְשֵׁמוֹ אֶחָד" הַגָּנָן.

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.

**וְהַנֵּה בְּתִיב (תְּהִלִּים ס' ב): "יִאָר פָּנָיו,
 אַתָּנוּ סָלָה,"**

Now, it is written: "He (Hashem) will shine His face with us forever," (Tehillim 67:2).

⁹ וְעַיְן זֶה חָלֵק ג' (י"ו, א) [וּנְגַנֵּן מִפְרִיד אֱלֹהֶיךָ, מִפְרִיד אֱלֹהֶיךָ, וְךָ קָוָדֵשׁ אֶבְרִירָה-הָוֹא]. וּבָרְבּוֹת, בְּרָאשִׁית, רִישׁ פְּרָשָׁה כ' [וּנְגַנֵּן, שָׁרַגְן דְּבָרִים עַל בָּוָרָא... מִפְרִיד אֱלֹהֶיךָ, שְׁהַפְרִיד אֱלֹהֶיךָ שֶׁל עַוְלָם].

פִּירּוֹשׁ: בְּחִנַּת 'הָאָרֶת-פָּנִים' הַוָּא כְּמַשְׁלֵךְ אֶתְּנָם הַנּוֹתֵן לְאוֹהֶבֶן הָאָמִתִּי אֵיזֶה דָּבָר, הַוָּא נֹתֵן בְּעֵינֵינוֹ¹⁰, וְרֹצֵן הַטּוֹב, וְצַהֲבוֹן פָּנָיו מִרְׁוּב אָוֶרֶת וְשִׁמְחָה.

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.

מַה שָׁאֵין כִּן לְשׁוֹנָאנוּ נֹתֵן "בְּמַמְּאָן דְּשָׁדֵי בְּתַר בְּתַפּוֹ" - בָּעֵל בְּרָחוֹן.

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.

וְזֹהוּ "יִאָר ה' פָנָיו אֲלֵיכֶם" (בָשָׂא ו, כה), שִׁיפּוּעַ הַחַיּוֹת מִבְּחִנַּת הָאָרֶת פָנִים הַנְּלָמָד מִה שָׁאֵין כִּן גְּבִיָּנוּ!

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.”

אֶךְ הָאָרֶת פָנִים הַנְּלָמָד הַוָּא "אָתָנוּ דָוָקָא,

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

פִּירּוֹשׁ: כְּשֶׁאָנָחָנוּ גַם כִּן בְּבִחִנַּת הָאָרֶת פָנִים.

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 (רְאֵה בְּבָא בְּתַרְאָה נְגָמָה).

במו שבחוב (משלי כו, יט): "בפניהם הפנים
לפנים בון לב הזרים לאדם נו".

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.

פירוש: ה'אָדָם-הַתְּחִתּוֹן

הוא בְּנֵשֶׁת-
ישראל, במו שבחוב¹¹: "וְאַתָּה נָאָנִי",
צָאן מֶרְעִיתִי, אָדָם אַתָּם" - "אַתָּם קְרִירִים
אָדָם נָוָא",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" - פירוש: לְאָדָם-הַעַלְיוֹן ש"ע
דָמֹות הַכְּסֵא כו"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.

ובחינת הארץ-פנים אצל יישׂראל, הוא

Regarding the Jewish People, the concept of having a "shining face" is

¹¹ (שלוב הפסוקים יחזקאל לד, יז: "וְאַתָּה נָאָנִי", ושם, לא: "וְאַתָּה נָאָנִי, צָאן מֶרְעִיתִי, אָדָם אַתָּם").

¹² (יבמות טא, א).

¹³ ("דָמֹות בְּמִרְאָה אָדָם. יְחִזְקָאֵל א, כו").

בָּמוֹ שָׁבְתָה תּוֹב (תְּהִלִּים קָמֶט, בָּ): "יִשְׁמַח יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּעֹשָׂיו."

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

בָּמוֹ שָׁהּוֹא יִתְבְּרֹךְ שָׁשׁ וְשָׁמַח בָּנוֹ, בָּמוֹ שָׁאוּמִים¹⁴: "וְמִשְׁמַחְתָּךְ שְׁשָׁמַחְתָּךְ בָּו, קָרָאתְךָ כָּיוֹ".

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 חִדּוֹת הָ מְגֹדְלָתוֹ שָׁאֵין חֶקֶר.

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

בְּמַשְׁלֵחַ אָדָם שְׁאַחֲבָוּ פָנָיו מְרֻוב אֹרֶה וְשָׁמַחְתָּה כִּשְׁרוֹאָה אֶת אֹהֶבָוּ הַאֲמִתִּי, בְּבִחִינַת הָאֶרֶת פָנִים הַנְּגָל,

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,

שׁוֹכֵחַ לְגַמְרֵי עַל צָעִיר וַיְגַנֵּנוּ שִׁישׁ לוֹ, מְחַמֵּת הַשְּׁמַחַת וְתַעֲנֵג מְרָאוֹת פָנִים אֹהֶבָוּ;

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

כִּר בְּשִׁזְוּפָר הָאָדָם עַל הָ - שָׁהּוֹא אֹהֶבָוּ הַאֲמִתִּי, בְּבִחִינַת הָאֶרֶת-פָנִים הַנְּגָל,

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,

וַיַּתְבֹּונֵן בְּגֹדְלָתוֹ אֲשֶׁר 'מִמְלָא כָּל עַלְמִין' וְסַובֵב כָּל עַלְמִין, וּ'כָלָא קַמְיה בְּלֹא חַשְׁיב'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 (תְּפִלַת הַשָּׁחַר, מ"חַנְאָ דָבֵי אֱלֹהָיו" פַרְק כ א: "וְמִשְׁמַחְתָּךְ שְׁשָׁמַחְתָּךְ בָו קָרָאת שְׁמוֹ יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיְשֻׁרוֹן").

¹⁵ (זָהָר חָלָק אֶ בְּהַקְדָּמָה יא, ב).

ישבח על עצמו לנMRI, אפילו יש לו עצה
מMRI דעלמא כי, וישבח הצער מפני
השמחה בה כי.

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.

כמו שכתב תהילים עג, כה: "מי לי
בשמים, ועمر לא חפצתי באָרֶץ",

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)

לבטל כל חפץ ותשוקה זולת התשוקה
בָּהֶ 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.

וְהַנֶּה זֶמֶן הַתְּעוּרֹות הָאֶרֶת פְּנֵים הַנֶּל
הוּא בַּרְאָשֵׁה-הַשָּׁנָה: "יֹשֵׁב עַל בֵּסָא
רְחָמִים".

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.”

ואז כתיב (שיר השירים ב, ו): "שמאלו
תחת לראשי" - התחילה התקרכבות, עד
שביטות-הכפורים, ושמחת-תורה הוא
וימינו תחבקני כי." (שם).

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.”

ובעשרה ימי תשובה צרייך האדם להתבושש מפני ה'.

אשר הוא יתברך מקרוב אוטנו בבחינת הארת-פנים הנ'ל,

ואנחנו בתקלית הריחוק ממנו מפני שונות המבידין, כמו שבתו (עוזרא ט, 1): "בושתי ונכלהתי להרים אלמי פני אליך פיעונתינו רבו למעלה ראש".

ובמו שבתו בזוהר סוף פרשת בחקתי (קטוב ב), על פסוק (בחקותיכו, מד): "וְאַף גַם זֹאת בַּהֲיוֹתָם בָּאָרֶץ אוֹיְבֵיכֶם, לֹא מְאַסְתִּים וְלֹא גַּעֲלִתִים לְכַלּוֹתֶם":

לכלהם" כתיב -

למשל בכלה שהיא בשוקא דבורסקי, ומחייבת עצם אהבתנו אליה "דמי ליה בשוקא דרוכליין בריחין טבין".¹⁶

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

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

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)

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 לכלהם 'to the point of destroying them' (Heaven forbid)."

This word 'to the point of destroying them,' is written similar to the word "לכלהם'-because they are His bride."

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 (תרגום: נרמה לו בשוק רוכלים בריחות טובים).

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.

וזהו שאנו מבקשים "מחל לנו", שלא
יריח ריח הרע שבבבורהסקי,

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.

דיהינו על ירי שיזורוק עלינו "מים טהורים"¹⁷ להרחין את הריח הרע שבבורהסקי וכו'.

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.

וענין מים טהורים הם י"ג מדות הרחמים, י"ג נהרי לאפרסמנא דכ"א¹⁸.

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.

והם נמשכים ממוקם הנקרא "טמירא" דכל טמירין, רעוא דכל רעון²⁰.

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

¹⁷ (יחזקאל לו, כה: "וְזָרַקְתִּי עֲלֵיכֶם מִים טָהוֹרִים").

¹⁸ (תענית כה, א. ירושלמי עבודה זורה פרק ג הלכה א. בראשית רבבה פרשה סב, ד. זהר חלק ב כמו, 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 (זהר חלק א רפח, ב).

פִּירּוֹשׁ: לְמַשֵּׁל, מִקּוֹר הַמְּעֵין שֶׁאֵינוֹ נִרְאָה וּנְגַלָּה, רַק נְהָרוֹת הַגְּמַשְׁכּוֹת מִמֶּנּוּ هֵם הַנִּרְאִים;

בֶּן הָוָה יִתְּבַּרְךָ נִקְרָא "טָמִירָא דָכְלָתָמִירִין", שֶׁהִי"ג מִדּוֹת הַרְחָמִים هֵם גַּמְשְׁכּוֹת מִמֶּנּוּ.

וּלְכֵן נִקְרָא "יֹשֵׁב עַל בֵּסָא רְחָמִים" שֶׁהָוָה רְעוּאָה דָכְלָתָמִירִין.

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."

וְהַנֶּה בְּחִינָה זו – "רְעוּאָה דָכְלָתָמִירִין", יִשְׁנוּ אֶצְל בְּלָא אֶחָד וְאֶחָד מִיְשְׁרָאֵל.

וְהָוָה בְּחִינָת נְקוּדָת-הַלְּבָב שֶׁלְמַעַלָּה מִן הַדָּעַת, וְהִיא נִקְרָאת יְחִידָה.

וְזֹה שֶׁכְתוּב (תְּהִלִּים כב, כא): "הַצִּילָה מִחְרָב נְפָשִׁי מִיד בַּלְבָב 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.

להוציא בחרית חפץ ורצונו מעניינו זה
העולם, ולכך בדיקה ותחזקה, רצון
של כל הרצונות לה אחד בלבד.

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.

ובשופר הוא מעורר בחרית זה שחיתה
בבחינת שינה, שישנו אצל כל אחד ואחד
מיישר אל.

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

ועל ידי בחרית זו נמשך בכל יום מעשרה
ימי תשובה בחרית י"ג מדות הרחמים,
שהם נחרות ג"ל שנמשכים ממוקרים
הנ"ל. וידי למבחן.

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.

ונקראים "מים טהורים" - שמרחיצים
את הריח הרע וכו'.

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.

– ²¹ שופר מאיר

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 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.

אריך איד אנפין – דרכ בלא

This “extending” of the sound of the Shofar **represents in a general way the level of “אריך-Anrich’ 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.

ובדרור פרט: בכל יום מעשרה ימי תשובה חוזר פנימ-בפנים אחד מן יספירות שבאדם, שהם ח'ד ומדותין.

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 (משנה ראש השנה פרק ג', משנה ג': שופר של ראש השנה... ושתि חוצרות מן האזרין. שופר מאיר וחוצרות מקרים, שמצוות היום בשופר).

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.

וְהַנָּה אָמְרוּ רַזּ²²: "דְּרַשׁוּ הָ' בְּהַמְּצָאוֹ,
קְרָאָוּהוּ בְּהִיּוֹתּוּ קָרוֹב" (ישעיה נה, ז) -
"אַלּוּ עִשְׂרָה יְמִים שְׁבִין רָאשֵׁה-שָׁנָה
לַיּוֹם-הַכְּפֹרִים".

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."

פִּירּוֹשׁ "בְּהִיּוֹתּוּ קָרוֹב": כַּשְׁהוּא בְּבִחִינַת
הַאֲרָתָה-פְּנִים הַנֶּלֶךְ, אַחֲעֲרוֹתָא-דְלָעִילָא,
שְׁמָאַלּוּ תַּחַת לְרַאשֵּׁי" נֶלֶךְ,

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.

וְאַז בְּנַקְלָה יָכֹל לְהִיּוֹת אַתְּעַרְוָתָא
דְלַתְתָּא,

בְּמוֹ שָׁאַמְרוּ: "כִּאֵן לִיחִיד"

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

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

(רָאשֵׁה-שָׁנָה יְהָ, א: "נִאָמֵר (וְאַתְּחַנֵּן ד, ז): 'בָּה' אָלְהָינוּ בְּכָל קָרְאָנוּ אֲלֵינוּ, וְהַכְּתִיב (ישעיה נה, ז):
דְּרַשׁוּ הָ' בְּהַמְּצָאוֹ?' הַתִּמְבָּרְךָ בְּעַצְבוֹר. בִּיחִיד אִימָתָה? אָמַר רַבָּה בֶּן אָבּוּה: אַלּוּ עִשְׂרָה יְמִים
שְׁבִין רָאשֵׁה-שָׁנָה לִיּוֹם הַכְּפֹרִים".)

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

פירוש, בוחינת ייחידה חנ"ל.²³

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

והנה בזמן והוא מקבלים כל ניצוצות
מישרָאֵל בוחינת דחילוּוֹרְחִימָוּ
מלמעלה,²⁴

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.**

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.

ובמו שבחותוב (תהלים נא, יב): “לב טהור
ברא לֵאלְקִים”,

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

²³ (ב”חנה אריאל” האזינו מוד, ב זהה הלשון: שמענו בלארדי: **בָּאָן לִיחִיד** הוא בוחינת תשובה דיחידה ליחירו של עולם, **בָּאָן לְצָבָור** – לבחינת הג’ קווין דמדות. עד **בָּאָן לְשָׁוֹנוֹ**. – ראה לקוטי שיחות חלק יד עמוד 145 בהערה 16).

²⁴ (עיין זהר חלק ג’, ריד, ב’).

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

בְּחִינַת "בָּרְלַבְבָּ" (תְּהִלִּים כְּדָ), לֹא יוּכָל
לְהִיּוֹת אֶצְלָ בְּחִינַת נִבְרָא מִעַד עָצָמוֹ
בְּאַתְּרוֹתָא דִילִיה,

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

כִּי אִם מִתְּנַהַה שְׁנוֹתִינִים לוֹ מִלְמַעַלה בְּעֵת
בְּחִינַת הַאֲרָתָּה פָנִים הַגְּלִילִיָּה.²⁵

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

וְצִרְיךָ הַכְּנָה לֹזָה עַל יָדֵי עִינּוֹנִים וּסִגּוֹפִים.

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.

וְלֹכֶן בְּעִשְׂרַת יְמֵי תְּשׁוּבָה “מְחֻנְנִים וְלֹא
מְשֻׁלִימִין”,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 (ועין מה שכתבEAR בדבוק המתחיל “כִּי תֵצֵא”, בפירוש “יַהֲבִין לְיהָ בְּרִתָּא דְמַלְפָא” (לעיל לה, ג). וסוף דבר המתחיל “וַיַּדַּעַת הַיּוֹם”, בענין “וְתִגְזֹרָא” (לעיל ואתחנן ח, ואילך)).

²⁶ (ראה שלחן ערוך אורח חיים סימן תקפ"א סעיף 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.

שָׁאַנְןָ חַשׁוֹב תְּעִנִּית אֶלָּא עִנוּי, שֶׁלֹּא יְהִי
בְּנֶפֶשׁ שְׁבִיעָה²⁸ וּכְרֵס מְלָאָה,

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).

שֶׁלֹּא יוּכֶל לְקַבֵּל בְּחִינַת "לִב טָהוֹר"
בְּשֹׁאַכְל לְשׁוֹבֵע וּכְרֵס מְלָאָה כֹּו.

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 (גַּעַפְתַּשׁ שְׁבִיעָה מְשֻׁלִּי כו, ז).

וזהו שאמר "אתם כו", פירוש: שעד הנה היותם אתם הרואים כו על ידי אתערותת-ידתתא,

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."

אבל "ולא נתן לך כו", פירוש: בחרית לב- טהור שנוטנים מלמעלה - שלא יכול נברא להשיג על ידי אתערותתא דיליה.

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.

זה היה עניין המן, הכתוב (עקב ח, ג): "יענבר וירעיבך ויאכלך את המן כו" -

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 discomforting 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.

שליל ידי המן, ועל ידי עינויים וסיגופים זכו למעלה עלילונה יותר, לקבל בחרית לב-טהור.³⁰

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 ("אתם ראותם").
(יעין מה שנכתב באפרשה עקב, על פסוק "ויאכלך את המן כו" (לעיל יג, ג)).

ובן הוא הענין בעשרה ימי תשובה.

This is similar to the concept of “fasting” during the Ten Days of Teshuva.

ולבן קורים פרשה זו קודם רosh³¹ השנה.

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 Shavuos) 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 (תוספות דבר הפתחיל “כללות שבתורת ביהנום” מגילה לא, ב. טור ושלחן ערוך אורח חיים סימן תכ”ח, סעיף 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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