



LESSONS IN LIKUTAY TORAH

PRECIOUS TEACHINGS THAT AWAKEN THE HEART
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לקוטי תורה

פרשת מטות

מאמר

ושמע אביה את נדרה

“Loving Hashem through Being
Careful with Mitzvos”

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Likutay Torah

לקוטי תורה

פרשת מטות

מאמר

ושמע אביה את נדרה¹

דף פ"ד עמוד ד'

“Loving Hashem through Being Careful with Mitzvos”

The beginning of Parshas Matos discusses the laws of nullifying vows, including the particular laws of a father nullifying the vows of his daughter. The verse states, as follows: (Bamidbar 30:5)

"וְשָׁמַע אָבִיהָ אֶת נִדְרָהּ וְאָסְרָהּ אֲשֶׁר אָסְרָהּ עַל-נַפְשָׁהּ וְהַחֲרִישׁ לָהּ אָבִיהָ וְקָמוּ כָּל-נִדְרֶיהָ וְכָל-אֲסָר אֲשֶׁר-אָסְרָהּ עַל-נַפְשָׁהּ יָקוּם:" (פרשתנו ל, ה):

“And if her father will hear her vow or her prohibition, which she placed on herself and her father will remain silent [and not nullify the vow immediately], then all of the 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 annul them if he declares them invalid immediately upon hearing them. If he does not say anything on that day, until after the following night begins, then he loses the ability to nullify her vows.

¹ (נאמר בשבת פרשת מטות מסעי, ב מנחם אב (או בראש חודש מנחם אב) תקנ"ו. בכמה כתבי יד מתחיל "להבין ענין דקדוקי סופרים". נוסח אחר נדפס במאמרי אדמו"ר הזקן הקצרים עמוד צב בהמשך לדבור המתחיל "את קרבני לחמי" - עיין שם בהערה).

לְהַבִּין עֲנִין "דְּקְדוּקֵי סוּפְרִים"²

We need to understand the idea of the “extra careful measures of the Sages” in order to understand the inner significance of a father’s power to nullify his daughter’s vows and prohibitions:

– שָׁאֲנוּ רוֹאִים, כְּמַעַט שֶׁכָּל הַתַּלְמוּד
מְלֵא מִהֲלָכוֹת וְחוּמְרוֹת שֶׁהַחֲמִירוּ
חַז"ל וְהוֹסִיפוּ כְּמָה גְדָרִים וְסִיגִים
לַתּוֹרָה שֶׁבִּכְתָּב.

We see that almost all 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 one from accidentally trespassing and entering someone else’s property, so did the Sages establish extra careful measures, called ‘fences,’ to prevent us from accidentally entering into transgressions of the Torah. For example, the Torah prohibits cooking, eating or benefitting from a mixture of meat and milk. This Biblical prohibition applies to kosher mammal meat and milk. However, in order to guard us from accidental transgression, the Sages forbade the mixture of bird meat with milk. This is so that we not confuse the two and mistakenly come to eat animal meat with milk.

The question then arises; why do we need more stringencies and precautions, as we see the Sages enacted from the later generations, from the Talmud and onwards? If these precautions were so important, then why did Moshe Rabeinu not establish them from the very beginning of the Giving of the Torah? What changed as time went on that caused us to need these additional stringencies?

² (מגילה יט, ב: מאי דכתיב (עקב ט, י): 'וְעָלִיהֶם כָּכָל הַדְּבָרִים אֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר ה' עִמָּכֶם בְּהָר?' מִלְּמַד, שֶׁהָרָאָהּ הַקָּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ־הוּא לְמַשָּׁה דְּקְדוּקֵי תוֹרָה וְדְקְדוּקֵי סוּפְרִים [שְׁדִקְדוּ הָאֲחֵרוֹנִים מִלְּשׁוֹן מִשְׁנַת הָרִאשׁוֹנִים – רש"י: "שֶׁהוֹסִיפוּ לְדַקֵּק אַחֵר מַעֲשֵׂה הַבְּרִיּוֹת וְלִהְיָמִיר וְלַעֲשׂוֹת סִיגִי וְאֲזָנִים לַתּוֹרָה וְגִזְרוּ גִזְרוֹת לְהַרְחִיק אֶת הָאָדָם מִן הָעֲבִירָה" – רש"י סוּכָה כח, א. "כְּגוֹן גִּזְיוֹת שֶׁגִּזְרוּ חֻקִּים שֶׁלֹּא יָבֵא לְיָדֵי אִיסוּר תּוֹרָה" – רש"י בָּבָא בִּתְרָא קלד, א).

וְהֶעֱנִין מוֹבָן, כְּמוֹ שֶׁאָמְרוּ רַז"ל עַל
פְּסוּק (שִׁיר הַשִּׁירִים א, ב) "יִשְׁקֵנִי
מִנְשִׁיקוֹת פִּיהוּ כִּי טוֹבִים דּוֹדֶיךָ מֵיַיִן":

"אָמְרָה כְּנֶסֶת יִשְׂרָאֵל: עֲרִבִים עָלֵי
רַבֵּי סוֹפְרִים יוֹתֵר מֵיַיִנָּה שֶׁל
תּוֹרָה".

פִּירוּשׁ: "יַיִנָּה שֶׁל תּוֹרָה" הוּא
פְּנִימִית הַתּוֹרָה וְסוֹדוּתֶיהָ, כְּמָה
שֶׁאָמְרוּ רַז"ל: "נִכְנָס יַיִן – יֵצֵא סוֹד"³;

"דְּבָרֵי-סוֹפְרִים" עֲרִבִים עַל כְּנֶסֶת-
יִשְׂרָאֵל יוֹתֵר מִסּוֹדוֹת הַתּוֹרָה –

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 use the mouth to connect with us. This refers to the act of saying words of Torah, which connect us to Hashem through our mouths), because Your 'love' is better than 'wine.'"

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

The explanation of this cryptic statement is as follows: The 'wine of the Torah' refers to the inner dimension and secrets of the Torah, as our Sages said, "When one drinks wine, his secrets come out." Thus, the 'wine' of the Torah refers to the secrets of the Torah, which can only be discovered through prompting. The secrets of Torah are likened to a person's secrets, which also require prompting (such as drinking wine) in order to become revealed.

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

³ (עֲרוּבִין סה, א).

כִּי כָּל הַגְּדָרִים וְהַחֻמְרוֹת שֶׁבִּדְבָרֵי
רַז"ל, וְדַרְכֵי מוֹסֵר שֶׁבְּאַגָּדוֹת,
וְ"פִרְקֵי-אָבוֹת" - כּוֹלֵם נִמְשָׁכִים
מִבְּחִינַת אֱהָבָה-רַבָּה, כְּמוֹ שֶׁכָּתוּב
(מִלֵּאכֵי א, ב): "אֱהָבְתִּי אֶתְכֶם אָמַר
ה'".⁴

since, all of the "boundaries" and stringencies instructed to us by the Sages, and the moral instructions which are found in the Aggada⁵ and in the Pirkei Avos (Ethics of the Fathers), are all expressing the idea of a Great Love from Hashem to us, like it says, (Malachi 1:2) "Hashem says, 'I love you' (the Jewish People)," and because Hashem loves us, He is extra observant of our behavior and conduct.

כְּמוֹ לְמַשָּׁל, אָדָם מַחְמִית אֱהָבָתוֹ עַל
בְּנוֹ מִדִּקְדָּק עִמּוֹ יוֹתֵר, לְהוֹסִיף עָלָיו
שְׂמִיחָה מְעוֹלָה בְּסִיּוּגִים וְגִדְרִים,
בְּכָל הָאִפְשָׁרִי בַעַל כְּרוֹחַ, שִׁיחָה
מְנוּקָה מִכָּל וְכָל.

For example, due to one's love for his son, he is particularly strict with him, in order to protect him from acting inappropriately by making "boundaries and fences" for him not to cross. The father will do whatever he can to encourage and help his son to act properly, even if it is seemingly against the will of the son (since the son doesn't appreciate the consequences of his own conduct), since he wants his son to be totally free of any inappropriate behavior.

וְכֵן חֲפִץ מְאֹד שְׂמִימָצָא חֵן וְשֹׁכֵל⁶
בִּיְתֵר שְׂאֵת;

Furthermore, he greatly desires for his son to be very gracious and intelligent, and therefore, he

⁴ (וְעֵינֵינוּ מֵה שֶׁנִּתְבָּאָר עַל פֶּסוּק (תִּצַּא כָּג, ו) "כִּי אֱהָבְךָ ה' אֱלֹקֶיךָ" - בְּדְבוּר הַמִּתְחִיל "לֹא אָבָה").

⁵ Aggada- Portions of the Talmud with stories, quotes and non-literal interpretations of verses.

⁶ (עַל פִּי מִשְׁלֵי ג, ד: "וּמִצָּא חֵן וְשֹׁכֵל טוֹב בְּעֵינֵי אֱלֹקִים וְאָדָם").

pushes him to act kindly and to learn diligently.

וְכִמּוֹ לַמַּשָּׁל מִרְגָּלִיּוֹת, מֵה שֶׁהִיא
יִקְרָה בְּיוֹתֵר שׁוֹמְרָה בְּיוֹתֵר שְׁמִירָה
מֵעוֹלָה, כְּלִי בְּתוֹךְ כְּלִי;

This is similar to the analogy of pearls or other gems: The more valuable they are, the more one invests in guarding them, employing multiple levels of protection to assure their safety and security.

כֶּן מִחֲמַת גּוֹדֵל אֶהְבֵּתוֹ יִתְבָּרֵךְ
אֵלֵינוּ, מִחֲמִיר וּמְדַקְדֵּק עָלֵינוּ
בְּדַקּוּקֵי סוּפְרִים, שֶׁהֵן הֵמָּה דְּבָרֵי
תוֹרָתוֹ, הַנִּמְשָׁכוֹת מֵאַהֲבָה רַבָּה
בְּסִיגִים וּגְדָרִים, לְזִכּוּתֵינוּ לְטוֹב לָנוּ,
שְׁנֵהֲיָה נִקְיִים לִפְנֵי יִתְבָּרֵךְ.⁷

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

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

וְהֵנָּה, בְּזִמְנֵי שְׁבִית הַמִּקְדָּשׁ הָיָה
קִיָּים, הָיָה סִגִּי ב'דְּאוּרֵי־תָא'.

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

⁷ (עיין מה שנתבאר מזה על פסוק “שחורה אני ונאורה”. 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 ביסורין”).

כִּי הִיָּתָה נֶאֱמָנָה אֶת ה' רוּחָנוּ, וְלֹא
מִשְׁכָּנוּ חֲבִלֵי עֲבוֹתוֹת אֶהְבְּתָנוּ
לְתַאֲוֹת גִּשְׁמִיּוֹת, וְהָיָה בְּנֶקֶל לְהִיּוֹת
אֶהְבֵּת ה' קְבוּעָה בְּלֵב כָּל אִישׁ,
לְהִיּוֹת בְּהִתְלַהֲבוֹת לַעֲבוֹדַת ה'
וְתוֹרָתוֹ גַּם מִבְּלֵי שְׁנֵתְעוֹרֵר מִזֶּה
אֶהְבֶּה רַבָּה.

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 to inspire a great love of Hashem.

אך דור אחר דור, כִּי נִתְמַעֲטוּ
הַלְבָּבוֹת הַשְּׁלִימוֹת בַּעֲבוֹדַת ה'
בְּאַהֲבָה עֲזָה בְּרֶשֶׁפִי אֵשׁ,

However, with every successive generation, there is a diminished number of those who wholeheartedly serve Hashem with an intense and fiery love.

וְנִכְוִינוּ בְּאֵשׁ זָרָה בְּאַהֲבוֹת וְתַאֲוֹת
גּוֹפְנִיּוֹת, וְכִמוּ כֵן גָּבְרוּ עָלֵינוּ עַד
אֲשֶׁר לֹא נוּכַל לַעֲבוֹד ה' בְּאַהֲבָה,
בְּלֵתִי שְׁנֵתְעוֹרֵר מִזֶּה אֶהְבֶּה רַבָּה
עַל יְדֵי דְקֻדּוּקֵי סוּפְרִים וְחוּמְרֵיהֶם
בְּכָל פְּרִטֵּיהֶם:

We have been, instead, 'burned' with the 'foreign fire' of love and desire for physical things which is foreign to the nature of a Jew. These physical desires became so overwhelming to us that we are no longer able to serve Hashem with love, unless we first awaken a great love for Hashem through fulfilling the 'extra careful measures of the Sages' and their stringencies in every detail:

הֵן בְּבַחֲיִנַת "סוּר-מֵרַע" - בְּכָל
הַחוּמְרוֹת שֶׁבְּגִמְרָא וּפּוֹסְקִים,

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

וְהֵן בְּבַחֲיִנַת "וַעֲשֵׂה טוֹב" - בְּדִבְרֵי

and with regard to 'doing good' by fulfilling the ethical guidance

⁸ (על פי תהלים עח, ח: "דור .. נֶאֱמָנָה אֶת אֵל רוּחוֹ").

מוסר שפאגדות ו"מילי דאבות"⁹:
 "עין טובה" - שיראה את חברו
 בטוב עין, ורעת רעהו אל יחשוב
 בלבו¹⁰;

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

וכן "לב טוב", ו"חבר טוב כו"¹¹.

And, so too the other instructions in Pirkei Avos, that one should have

⁹ (אבות ב, ט: "איזוהי דרך ישרה שידבק בה האדם? .. עין טובה .. חבר טוב .. לב טוב").

¹⁰ (על פי זכריה ח, יז: "ואיש את רעת רעהו אל תחשבו בלבבכם").

¹¹ (ועיין מה שנתבאר בדבור המתחיל "זה תברכו את בני ישראל" (נשא ו, כג), בפירוש: "אין לא אשא פנים לישראל כו", והם מדרקקים על עצמן עד כוית כו" - נמצא, שעל ידי שכנסת ישראל מדרקקים על עצמן, להחמיר על עצמן ביותר ממה שכתוב בתורה שכתב, מזה נמשך בחינת "ישא ה' פניו" (שם), שהוא בחינת אהבה רבה שלמעלה מההשתלשלות כו'. ונמשך בחינה זו "אליו" ממש, להיות גילוי אהבה רבה זו גם באדם. וכמו שנתבאר גם כן בדבור המתחיל "שחורה אני ונאווה" הנ"ל, שעל ידי זה תתעלה הנפש ההבחינית גם כן כו'. עיין שם.

ועיין מה שנתבאר בפ'רשת 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 היה 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 כך, 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 עקבים, אין כח בנשמתם עצמם לשלוט על הרע, וצריך יגיעה רבה יגיעת נפש ויגיעת כשר].

וזהו "והיו"ה יגיעה חשפ" (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 הו"ה', כלומר שאין נר הו"ה נשמת אדם, מכל מקום "והיו"ה' - היא בחינת הו"ה עליונה שלמעלה מההשתלשלות - 'יגיעה חשפ"']. ועיין שם, שהוא מלמעלה מסדר ההשתלשלות.

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

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. This transcends the bare minimum requirement of the mitzvah, which someone might fulfill from just looking at the "Torah's definition" of loving your fellow.

וְהָיוּ שְׂכָתוֹב (פָּרָשְׁתָנוּ ל, ה'ו):
 "וְשָׁמַע אָבִיהָ אֶת נִדְרָהּ וְאָסְרָה אֲשֶׁר
 אָסְרָה עַל-נַפְשָׁהּ וְהִחְרִישׁ לָהּ אָבִיהָ וְקָמוּ
 כָּל-נִדְרֶיהָ וְכָל-אֲסֹר אֲשֶׁר-אָסְרָה עַל-
 נַפְשָׁהּ יָקוּם, וְאִם-הִנִּיא אָבִיהָ אֶתָּה בְּיוֹם
 שָׁמְעוּ כָּל-נִדְרֶיהָ וְאָסְרֶיהָ אֲשֶׁר-אָסְרָה עַל-
 נַפְשָׁהּ לֹא יָקוּם וַיְהִי וַיִּסָּלַח לָהּ כִּי הִנִּיא
 אָבִיהָ אֶתָּה", שֶׁהָאֵב מִפֶּר אֶת הַנֶּדֶר:

And this is the idea behind what is written, (Bamidbar 30:5–6) **"And if her father heard her vow or her prohibition which she placed on herself, and her father will remain silent (and not nullify them right away), then all of her vows and prohibitions which she places on herself will be effective. However, if her father removes (i.e., nullifies) her vow on the day he hears about it, then all of the vows and prohibitions that she places on herself will not be effective, and Hashem will forgive her (if she transgresses her vow without knowing it was nullified) because her father removed it."** We see from this **that specifically the father is able to מִפֶּר-remove a vow.**

כִּי מִבְּחִינַת אֲהִבָּה רַבָּה הוּא מִפֶּר -
 בְּתַרְגוּמוֹ¹²: מְבַטֵּל - כָּל הָאִסּוּרִים
 וְהַקִּשּׁוּרִים אֲשֶׁר כֹּנְסֵת יִשְׂרָאֵל הִיא

The deeper meaning behind this is that **due to the aspect of the 'great love'** from Hashem to the Jewish People, **He** (Hashem) מִפֶּר-

וְעֵינֵינוּ בְּגִמְרָא בְּמַגִּילָה (דף כ"ז, עמוד ב'. ודף כ"ח, עמוד א'). גְּבִי "וּבְמַה הָאֲרַכְתָּ יָמִים כו".
 יַעֲזִיב שָׁם.

וְעֵינֵינוּ מֵה שֶׁנִּתְבָּאָר בְּמָקוֹם אֲחֵר, בְּפִירוּשׁ "כָּל הַמַּאֲרִיךְ ב'אֶחָד' מַאֲרִיכִין לוֹ יָמָיו כו" (תוֹרָה
 אור זכור פר, ג. לַעֲלִיל בְּהַעֲלוֹתָךְ לַד, ד. פִּנְחָס פ, א. לְקַמּוֹ וְאֶתְחַנֵּן יב, ב. רֹאשׁ הַשָּׁנָה סג, א).
¹² ('הִנִּיא' תַּרְגֵּם יוֹנָתָן - 'יִבְטֵל').

אֲסוּרָה וּקְשׁוּרָה. removes (and, as the word מִפֶּר is translated by Rabbi Yonasan ben Uziel, this means Hashem nullifies) **all of the restrictions and bonds of unholiness to which the Jewish People are restricted and bound.**

וְ"אֵין חָבוּשׁ מִתִּיר עֲצָמוֹ" - כִּי אִם עַל יְדֵי מִדַּת אֶהְיֶה רַבָּה - בְּחִינַת "אָבִיהָ".

It is 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 possible through the aspect of the ‘great love’ from Hashem to us, which is the idea of the “father.”**

Meaning that just as a father’s great love for his children compels him to do everything in his power to encourage his children to follow the proper path, so does Hashem’s love for us “compel” Him to give us the fullest possible way to keep the Torah and the mitzvos. This allows us to fully express our true love of Hashem. Just as the father of a girl is able to nullify her vow since he cares about her and knows what is best for her, so too can Hashem reverse and “nullify” our bonds with unholiness and physical desire through giving us some of His great love, which comes in the form of the ‘extra careful measures of the Sages.’ These measures are an expression of Hashem’s deep and unlimited love for us.

The following is an explanation of the Tzemach Tzedek¹³ (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 by an oath, and the ‘great love’ of Hashem nullifies this bond, just as a father nullifies a vow.

¹³ 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.

(וְעִנִּין הָאִסּוּרִים שֶׁהֵיא אֲסוּרָה וְקִשּׁוּרָה בָּהֶן, יֵשׁ לוֹמַר דִּהְיִינוּ חֲלִישֵׁת כַּח הַנֶּפֶשׁ, שָׁאִין בְּכַחַה לְצֵאת מִנִּרְתָּקָה וּמֵאֲסָרָה כּו' - חוֹמְרֵי הַגּוּף וְנֶפֶשׁ הַבְּהֵמִית. וְכִמוֹ שֶׁנִּתְבָּאָר בְּמָקוֹם אַחֵר¹⁴.)

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

וְשֵׁם נִתְבָּאָר: שֶׁעַל יְדֵי הַתּוֹרָה נִמְשָׁךְ כַּח וְעוֹז לַנֶּפֶשׁ לְבַטֵּל קִישּׁוּרִים אֵלּוּ כּו'¹⁵.

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

וְיֵשׁ לוֹמַר, שֶׁהַפֶּרֶת נִדְרִים בְּיוֹם הַכִּפּוּרִים,

We can possibly explain that this is the idea of nullifying vows on Yom Kippur at the Kol Nidrei service:

הֵייוֹנוּ שֶׁעַל יְדֵי הַתְּשׁוּבָה נִמְשָׁךְ בְּחִינַת הַפֶּרֶת וּבִיטוּל הַקִּישּׁוּרִים וְגִילוי הָאֱהָבָה רַבָּה בְּנֶפֶשׁ כּו'.

Through teshuva, (repentance/return to Hashem) which is the essential idea of Yom Kippur, a revelation of Hashem is drawn down and 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.

¹⁴ בְּדִבּוּר הַמִּתְחִיל "בַּחֲדָשׁ הַשְּׁלִישִׁי", בְּפֶרֶשׁת יִתְרוֹ (תּוֹרָה אֹרֶז, סו, א).

¹⁵ וּבְמָקוֹם אַחֵר נִתְבָּאָר, דְּקִישּׁוּרִים אֵלּוּ נִקְרָא "סִירְכוֹת" בְּ"רַעֲיָא מֵהִימְנָא" - שֶׁהַנֶּפֶשׁ מְסַתְּבֶכֶת בָּהֶם וְעַל יְדֵי זֶה אֵינָה יֹכֵלָה לְעֻלּוֹת כּו', בְּדִבּוּר הַמִּתְחִיל "פִּירוּשׁ הַפֶּסוּק 'מִי אֵל כְּמוֹךְ'" (לְקַמֵּן רֹאשׁ הַשָּׁנָה סב, א).

וְעוֹד יֵשׁ לוֹמַר בְּעֵנֶן שׁ "הָאֵב מִפֶּר",
וְהוּא עַל דֶּרֶךְ מֶה שֶּׁכְּתוּב בְּזֹהַר¹⁶,

We can further explain the idea that specifically the *father* can remove vows from his daughter, based on what is written in the Zohar,

גִּבִּי "בְּזִמְנָא דְּנִטְלָא מִבֵּי אָבִיא, וְלֹא
בְּזִמְנָא דְּנִטְלִי מִבֵּי אִמָּא".

as explained regarding the concept that in order for there to be a complete unity of Ze'eir Anpin¹⁷ and Malchus,¹⁸ the union must occur "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, וְגַם־אֶמְנָה אֶחָתִי בִת־אָבִי הִוא אֵךְ לֹא
בִת־אִמִּי וְתַהֲיִלִּי לְאִשָּׁה:

"And besides, she is, in truth, my sister, my father's daughter, though not my mother's daughter, 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 was, indeed, related to him like a sister; she was his father's granddaughter and his own niece. However, this relation was 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

¹⁶ פֶּרֶשׁת אֱמֹר (דף ק', עמוד ב')

¹⁷ 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.

¹⁸ 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.

though she was his sister (even though she was actually his niece), but not from his mother's side.

The Zohar provides a mystical explanation of the verse. The Zohar says that for Ze'eir Anpin and Malchus to become united like a husband and wife (וְתִהְיֶה לִי לְאִשָּׁה), it is not enough for them to receive from Bina (אֶרְ) (וְגַם-אֶמְנָה אֶחָתִי). Rather, they need to receive from Chochma (בְּתִּאֲבִי הוּא). 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."

כִּי מִבְּחִינַת הַבִּינָה וְהַדַּעַת נִמְשָׁךְ
לִהְיוֹת "אֶתְפָּאָה סִטְרָא-אַחְרָא",
וְהוּא עֵנִין ה' נִדְרִים סִיג לְפָרִישׁוֹת.

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

אֲבָל לִהְיוֹת "אֶתְפָּאָה חֲשׂוֹכָא -
מִמֶּשׁ - לְנִהוּרָא" אִי אֶפְשָׁר לִהְיוֹת
מִבְּחִינַת בִּינָה, ש' מִינָה דִּינִין
מִתְעָרִין,

But, in order 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."

אֲלָא מִבְּחִינַת חֲכָמָה-עִילָאָה,
וְהַחֲכָמָה תַּחֲיָה" (קֹהֶלֶת ז, יב),

Only from the aspect of the Higher Level, 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.

וְהוּא הַבֵּיטוּל שֶׁלִּמְעֵלָה מִהַשְׁגָּה
וְדַעַת כו'¹⁹.

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 draw to physicality. It can even transform that pull into a drive to connect to Hashem.

וְזֶהוּ שֶׁהָאב מִפֶּר וּמִהִפָּךְ חֲשׂוֹכָא
לְנִהוּרָא.

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

וּמִבְחִינָה זֹאת נִמְשָׁךְ גַּם כֵּן בְּחִינַת "וְאִם
הָיָה תְּהִיָּה לְאִישׁ" (פֶּרֶשְׁתֵּנוּ ל', ז')
הַנִּזְכָּר לְמַעֲלָה. וְעֵינֵינוּ בּוֹהֵר שָׁם.

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." In a mystical sense, this means that the ability for Ze'eir Anpin to become united and fully revealed in Malchus derives from the *father*-Chochma, as described above.

From the sequence of the verses we are discussing, it would appear that the daughter's marriage is connected to her father's ability to nullify her vows. In simple terms, this connection is as follows: 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 in order for Malchus to get "married" to her "husband," who is Ze'eir Anpin, she needs to first be connected to her "father," Chochma. This is due to the fact that the ability to affect a complete union of Ze'eir Anpin and Malchus comes only from the power of Chochma.

In other words: In order for one to develop their great love for Hashem (Ze'eir Anpin) in a way that is expressed in the thoughts, speech and

¹⁹ כְּמִבּוֹאֵר בְּדִבּוּר הַמִּתְחִיל "רְאֵה אֲנִי נֹתֵן" (לקמן ראה.).

actions of their daily life, one must first cultivate a completely selfless dedication to Hashem (Chochma). This selfless dedication is developed specifically through keeping and fulfilling the “extra careful measures of the Sages,” who taught us how to be totally dedicated to Hashem.

אך פירוש "וְשָׁמַע אָבִיהָ אֶת נִדְרָהּ
וְאָסְרָה אֲשֶׁר אָסְרָה עַל-נַפְשָׁהּ וְהִחֲרִישׁ לָהּ
אָבִיהָ וְקָמוּ כָּל-נִדְרֶיהָ וְכָל-אָסֶר אֲשֶׁר-
אָסְרָה 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 the vows and prohibitions that she places on herself will be effective.”

היינו, שְׁעַל יְדֵי אֲתַכְפִּיּא בַּתְחִלָּה,
שֶׁזֶהוּ עֲנִין הַנִּדְרִים, מִזֶּה נִמְשָׁךְ אַחֵר
כִּן גִּילוי בְּחִינַת "אָבִיהָ" לִהְיוֹת
"אֲתַתְּהַפֵּכָא חֲשׁוּכָא לְנִהוּרָא"²⁰.

Meaning that specifically through first “restraining” the unholiness by restraining the desires of the animal soul, which is the purpose of a vow, (which is intended to restrain a person from indulgence), from this he will subsequently come to an experience of the revelation of the level of “her father (Chochma),” which causes that “spiritual darkness will be transformed into spiritual light.”

וְזֶהוּ שֶׁכָּתוּב גַּם כֵּן (שָׁם ל, ב): "וַיְדַבֵּר
מֹשֶׁה אֶל רָאשֵׁי הַמִּטּוֹת לִבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל
לֵאמֹר זֶה הַדְּבָר אֲשֶׁר צִוָּה ה'":

***And this is 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,’” prior to teaching the commandment that a father may nullify his daughter’s vows, and a husband may nullify his wife’s

²⁰ וְעֵינֵינוּ עוֹד מְעַנִּין בְּחִינַת "אָבִיהָ" - בַּ"פֶּרֶדֶס", שֶׁרַח חֲמִישִׁי, פֶּרֶק ג'.

vows if done in the correct time and manner.

What is the lesson in emphasizing that this particular mitzva was transmitted through Moshe? All of the mitzvos were taught to us by Moshe, so why point that out here, specifically?

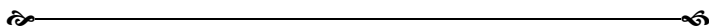
שְׁעַל יְדֵי "לֵאמֹר זֶה הַדָּבָר"
שֶׁמִּבְחִינֵת מֹשֶׁה, עַל יְדֵי זֶה יוּכָל
לְהַתִּיר הַנֶּדֶר כּו'.

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) the vows can become nullified.** From Chochma (represented by Moshe) comes the power for the Divine soul to free itself from the “vows,” ie. the bonds of the animal soul’s passions.

גַּם, "רִאשֵׁי הַמִּטּוֹת" הוּא בְּחִינַת
רְעוּת־אֶדְלִיבָא, אֶהְבֵּה־רֵבָה.
וּבְמִבּוֹאֵר לְמַעַלְהָ):

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 it was Moshe who 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.” Mystically speaking, the “heads of the tribes” means the highest part of the soul of the Jewish people. Just as the head is the highest part of the body, so too, the deep and essential love for Hashem in every Jew is the idea of the “heads of the tribes.” This deep love - the *heads* of the tribes - is revealed through Moshe - Chochma.



Summary of the Maamar

- Q1. What is the reason that in the generations after the destruction of the Beis Hamikdash we find that the Sages established many additional restrictions, beyond what the Torah demands? Why did they instruct us to be extra careful in mitzvos, beyond the letter of the Torah law?
- A1. Because, in the time of the Beis Hamikdash we experienced so much revelation of Hashem that our animal souls were naturally more refined. It was, therefore, much easier to reveal our love for Hashem, even by just keeping the laws of the Torah itself, without any extra measures. However, after the destruction of the Beis Hamikdash, when our animal souls are coarser and have a much stronger passion for physicality, it has become more 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. A father who truly loves his son will push him to be careful in his conduct, so that he should behave in the most refined manner and attain wisdom and sensitivity etc. Similarly, because Hashem loves us, He wants us to keep the Torah and mitzvos in the most complete manner possible. That is 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 which is hidden within us. This is because our love for Hashem is a reflection of His infinite love for us.
- Q3. How does this 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 the *father* represents Chochma, an entirely selfless dedication to

Hashem, which transcends all reason and logic. This dedication comes from the deepest part of the soul, and only through this type of selfless dedication, which is expressed in fulfilling the “extra careful measures of the Sages,” can one remove the “vows and prohibitions” that they are bound to.

What are these “vows and prohibitions” a reference to? They symbolize the fact that the animal soul feels “bound” to pursue physical pleasure, while the Divine soul is stuck dealing with the animal soul’s drives. This is just like someone who is bound by an oath, and is, therefore, stuck dealing with the consequences of the oath. By saying that the “father” nullifies the “vows,” the verse is teaching us that through the dedication to Hashem on a level of Chochma, by keeping everything in Torah law, even every Rabbinic decree and instruction, we will be able to remove the coarseness and passion of the animal soul, which “binds” the Divine soul to pursue its 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 embodied the power of Chochma in its most absolute state, the Torah emphasizes that this command was taught by him, in order to help us receive the spiritual power that Moshe – Chochma – gives us. Namely, the ability to “nullify” the “bonds” of the animal soul, which stop us from expressing our love Hashem. This is why there is special emphasis on the fact that Moshe gave over this 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" and obligated to listen to the animal soul's demands for physical pleasure or other foolish desires. 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 the Moshe Rabeinu in our generation, the Rebbe, who shows us what dedication to Hashem is all about.

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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לזכות כל ילדי החסידים שיתנו חסידישע
נחת לכ"ק אדמו"ר ולהוריהם שיחיו
ולזכות יוסף יצחק בן ביילא איטא ולאה
בת חנה דבורה רייזל וכל יוצאי חלציהם
שיחיו, שיזכו ללמוד חסידות ולילך
בדרכי החסידות, ויפוצו מעיינות אור
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