

ביום עשתי עשר יום

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BeYom Ashtei-Asar Yom



## FOREWORD

Everyone who shared a connection with the Rebbe at that time remembers that special night. In 5731 (1971), *Yud-Alef* Nissan — the date of the Rebbe’s birthday — was yet to be established by the Rebbe as a time when he would hold a *farbrengen* with chassidim.<sup>1</sup>

On the eleventh of Nissan, the Rebbe went to the *Ohel*. After he returned, he davened *Minchah* together with the chassidim. Later, the Rebbe gave notice that he would hold a *farbrengen* that night. At the *farbrengen*, after an opening *niggun*, he indicated that the *shluchim* who had returned to New York from Australia and guests who had come from *Eretz Yisrael* should say *LeChayim*. The Rebbe then asked that the *niggun* traditionally preceding a *maamar* be sung, and delivered the *maamar* translated here.<sup>2</sup>

In that *maamar*, he cited a teaching of the *Midrash*<sup>3</sup> that focuses on the Aramaic phrase, *Ana nasiv malka* — “I will choose the king.” In doing so, he put into words a fundamental approach with which he had been nurturing his chassidim for the more than two decades of his leadership.

### THE CHOICE OF THE CLEVER PERSON

The *Midrash* begins with an analogy:

A king entered a country accompanied by a duke, a prefect, and a commander. . . . One person said, “I will choose the duke as my patron.” Another said, “I will choose the prefect as my patron.” And still another said, “I will choose the commander as my patron.” There was a clever person [among them] who said: “I will choose the king, because the others are all subject to replacement, whereas the king is not subject to replacement.”

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1. The last time the Rebbe had done so was nine years earlier, in 5722 (1962), on the occasion of his sixtieth birthday.

2. The text of the *maamar* was afterwards edited by the Rebbe and published in connection with *Yud-Alef Nissan*, 5749 (1989) and later included in *Sefer HaMaamarim Melukat*, Vol. 3.

3. *Eichah Rabbah* 3:8 on *Eichah* 3:24.

The *Midrash* explains the analogue:

There are gentile nations that serve the sun and others that serve the moon.... Israel, by contrast, serves only the Holy One, blessed be He. This is the intent of the verse, “‘G-d is my portion,’ says my soul.”

Although the *Midrash* speaks of the worship of the sun and the moon, its lesson still relates to our lives today. For the pagans worshiped the sun and the moon because they saw them as intermediaries that convey G-d’s influence to the earth. The worship — at least in a figurative sense — of other such intermediaries is unfortunately still widely prevalent in our times. True, we don’t bow down to images or offer them animal sacrifices, but we bow our heads and make many sacrifices of time and effort to appease the powers that we see as controlling our lives and our fortunes.

The proper approach is that of the clever person: “I will choose the king” — to focus on a relationship with G-d alone.<sup>4</sup>

## WHY CLEVERNESS IS NOT ENOUGH

The *maamar* asks: Why must a person be “clever” to come to such a realization? Even a child understands that a king is greater than his officers, or in the analogy, that G-d is greater than the intermediaries through which He dispenses His influence.

In resolution, it is explained<sup>5</sup> that if a person is to receive spiritual influence from the King, from the realm of holiness, there are two prerequisites: he must first have (a) *bittul*, self-nullification and self-transcendence, and (b) *avodah*, working to transform his self-concern. When, however, one receives his spiritual energy via the intermediaries, there is no necessity for *bittul*. Influence is given, in the words of the *Zohar*,<sup>6</sup> “at no cost.”

A second consideration that could make a person prefer to be nurtured by the intermediaries is that the influence they dispense is quantitatively greater. The influence granted “from the King” is measured, meted out in a manner

4. Certainly, G-d will diffuse His influence through various mediums within the natural order. Nevertheless, these mediums will be recognized as nothing more than an axe in the hand of the chopper, with no independent authority or choice.

5. See sec. 4 of the *maamar*.

6. *Zohar*, Vol. II, p. 128a.

commensurate with the Divine service performed. Influence granted through the intermediaries, by contrast, is given without any calculations. Hence, it is granted in abundance.

The “clever person” is not concerned with his individual benefit. He is willing to forego the additional benefit and invest hard work to attain *bittul* — so long as he receives influence from the King’s hand, directly.

## LOOKING BEYOND EVEN THE BIG PICTURE

Despite its seeming advantages, all influence received from the intermediaries is temporary. In the Ultimate Future, those who receive their spiritual nurture from the King will receive abundantly more. This realization, however, is not the reason for the Jew’s choice of G-d. After all, such a choice would be no more than enlightened self-interest. Instead of serving the intermediaries for short-term gain, he sees the larger picture and serves G-d, confident that “if this [worldly pleasure] is what those who *transgress* [G-d’s] desires will receive, then certainly those who *fulfill* His desires will be even more richly rewarded.<sup>7</sup>

Nevertheless, this calculation is not the reason for his choice of the King. Rather, the King is chosen because He is the King. The “clever person” realizes Who the King is and seeks to bond with Him. That itself is his rationale.

## STEPPING ABOVE SELF

The original question still remains: The King’s eminence can be appreciated by all. Why, then, is the choice of Him not embraced by all mankind?

The core of the resolution is that mortal reasoning alone compels a person to desire his own personal benefit. True, others can appreciate the King’s eminence, but they will still choose the intermediaries. Since their fundamental nature is characterized by *yeshus*, self-concern, they do not want to enter into a relationship with the King at the expense of having to forego the benefit they will receive from the intermediaries.

In this lies the uniqueness of the “clever person”: he is willing to rise above his self-concern and choose the King because He is King, and for no other reason.

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7. *Nedarim* 50b; the end of Tractate *Makkos*.

## NOTHING BUT YOU ALONE

The *Midrash* is speaking of crass paganism, but the above pattern also applies to those who give credence to intermediaries at other levels. Indeed, its lesson is relevant — albeit in a subtle manner — even to individuals of lofty stature. In that vein, the *maamar* cites a statement the Alter Rebbe was wont to make at times when he would enter a state of *dveikus*:<sup>8</sup> “I desire nothing. I don’t want Your *Gan Eden*,<sup>9</sup> I don’t want Your *Olam HaBa* [World to Come];<sup>10</sup>.... I want nothing but You alone.”

True, there is a drastic difference between the pagan’s worship of intermediaries and the worship of a holy person who yearns to delight in the revelations of G-d in the spiritual realms. There is, however, one shared factor: self-interest. The pagan’s self-interest is focused on plain material satisfaction. The person seeking the revelations of *Gan Eden* seeks to luxuriate in the radiance of the Divine Presence. Both are concerned with their personal wants and desires.

The “clever person,” by contrast, “want[s] nothing but You alone.” He chooses the King, even though that choice requires *bittul* and *avodah*.

This approach is what the Rebbe cultivated within his chassidim and this is why the *maamar* hit home so powerfully. Throughout his leadership, he exemplified and sought to inculcate in others a willingness to commit oneself to G-d without a reason, to commit oneself to service without any thought of self-interest.

## PERMEATING THROUGH AND THROUGH

The *Midrash* describes the Jews with the analogy of a clever person. Nevertheless, when speaking of the analogue, it states:

Israel, by contrast, serves only the Holy One, blessed be He. This is the intent of the verse, “ ‘G-d is my portion,’ says my soul.”

There is a seeming conflict between the analogy and the analogue. The analogy attributes the choice of G-d to a logical decision, while the analogue speaks of an essential bond, an inherent, spiritual response.

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8. *Derech Mitzvosecha, Shoresch Mitzvas HaTefillah*, sec. 40, p. 138a. See *HaYom Yom*, the entry for 18 Kislev, for more details. *Dveikus* is a state in which a person enters a rapturous bond with God that lifts him totally above material consciousness.

9. I.e., the abode of souls in the spiritual realms in the Afterlife.

10. It appears that here, the intent of the phrase “the World to Come” is the era of the Resurrection.

The *maamar* explains the interrelationship of these two aspects of our makeup. Why does the clever person make a logical decision to choose G-d? Because of the inner bond with Him that his soul shares. As explained above, a person's self-interest by nature would motivate him to rely on intermediaries. Nevertheless, he chooses the King — because the inner soul-connection he shares with Him compels him to. The functioning of his mind is shaped by the spiritual bond that transcends reason.

One might then ask: Since the choice of the King is a reflection of the soul's essential, inherent connection to G-d, why is it necessary for this choice to be filtered through “cleverness”? Let it shine forth with its own essential power, rising above reason.

The resolution of this question lies in the understanding that a person's bond with G-d is not an appendage to his personality, but the essence of his being — who he is. And since it is his essence, it will permeate every element of his being, including his intellect. If one's bond with G-d had to remain supra-rational, it would imply that there is an element of his personality that it cannot penetrate and thus, it could not be his essence. For if something is essential, nothing can block its expression. It pervades every aspect of a person's makeup, beginning with the mind and filtering through all of his various faculties.

With these explanations as well, the *maamar* touched a responsive chord in chassidim worldwide. For the above pattern of development is a fundamental ideal in the *Chabad* school of thought — that every Jew's essential soul-connection with G-d, as highlighted and inspired by the Baal Shem Tov, should permeate our intellect, which in turn will motivate selfless service that utilizes every one of our soul's faculties.

## NOT JUST A SLOGAN

Upon hearing the *maamar*, chassidim understood *ana nasiv malka* — “I will choose the king” — as a message of *hiskashrus*, which means the cultivation of one's individual bond with the Rebbe. This is no mere exuberant reverence; it is connected with the core themes of the *maamar*.

The *maamar* explains the desire to receive spiritual influence from intermediaries and the desire to receive it from G-d's encompassing light as parallel motifs. For in both instances, the influence is received without *bittul* and without *avodah*. Conversely, the choice of the King depends on one's efforts to *inter-*

*nalize* one's essential connection with him — for, as explained above, since the connection is an essential part of the person's being, it must permeate every dimension of his personality.

That, however, presents an almost insurmountable challenge: the essential connection with G-d is transcendent, whereas we are limited mortals, whose minds cannot comprehend the infinite.

Chassidic thought<sup>11</sup> explains that the challenge can be overcome because a person's individual strivings toward this goal are facilitated by the efforts of “the shepherds of faith” whom G-d has apportioned to the Jewish people. Just as in a simple sense, a shepherd enables his sheep to find the nourishment appropriate for them, so too, “a shepherd of faith” enables faith to be internalized by providing nourishment for the conscious development of his flock until their minds are aligned with their G-dly essence.

In that vein, the *maamar* cites the *Midrash* on the verse, “For the chief musician, by David, a prayer of remembrance.”<sup>12</sup> The *Midrash* offers the analogy of a king who one day grew angry with his sheep. He drove them away, broke open the corral, and dismissed the shepherd. After time passed, he gathered together the sheep, rebuilt the corral, but made no mention of the shepherd. The shepherd protested: “The sheep are gathered together; the corral is rebuilt. Why am I not mentioned?”

This is what chassidim meant when they identified the call, “I will choose the king,” with their bond with the Rebbe. They understood that for them to carry out the *avodah* called for by the *maamar*, the influence of a shepherd is needed. They did not want merely to be carried away with the intense spiritual energy that the *maamar* generated. They wanted to make it their own. And the role of the shepherd is to make that happen.

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11. See the *maamar* entitled *VeKibeil HaYehudim 5687 [1927]*, translated in *Defiance and Devotion* (Kehot, N.Y., 5756/1996), and the *maamar* entitled *VeAtah Tetzaveh 5741 [1981]*, translated below in this text (p. 343ff.).

12. *Midrash Tehillim*, cited by *Rashi* on *Tehillim* 70:1.

It is customary to recite the *kapitl* of *Tehillim* whose chapter number corresponds to the years of one's life. (See the letter of the Rebbe Rayatz published in *Kovetz Tehillim* and in his *Igros Kodesh*, letter #3355, Heb. Vol. 10, p. 53.) A footnote appended to his *Igros Kodesh* (letter #1069, Heb. Vol. 4, p. 429) states that it is customary for chassidim to recite the Rebbe's *kapitl* as well as their own. Hence, chassidim began to recite this *kapitl* daily on 11 Nissan of the year the *maamar* was delivered, which was 5731 (1971).



## THE ULTIMATE SHEPHERD

The *Midrash* cited directly above is describing the era of *Mashiach*. In that time, “The world will be filled with the knowledge of G-d as the waters cover the ocean bed,”<sup>13</sup> an all-encompassing revelation of G-dliness. It is possible that a person will be overwhelmed by the abundance of goodness — material and spiritual — that will characterize that era and thus be lulled into passivity. Those who “choose the King” will not be content with the mere appreciation of those revelations, but instead will endeavor to internalize them and have them permeate their beings entirely.

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13. *Yeshayahu* 11:9.

(א) "ביום עשתי עשר יום נשיא לבני אשר", ואיתא במדרש: כל השבטים לשם גאלתן של ישראל ולשם שבחן נקראו שמותם, ואשר נקרא שמו לשם גאלתן של ישראל כמה דתימא: "ואשרו אתכם כל הגוים כי תהיו אתם ארץ חפץ אמר

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"On the eleventh day, the prince of the tribe of Asher: His offering was..."<sup>1</sup> "ביום עשתי עשר יום נשיא לבני אשר",

This verse is part of the description of the sacrifices brought by the princes of the tribes of the Jewish people in connection with the dedication of the Sanctuary in the desert. The Sanctuary was dedicated on the first of Nissan. On that day, and on each of the eleven subsequent days, one of the princes of the Jewish people brought sacrificial offerings. On the eleventh day, the prince of the tribe of Asher offered his sacrifices.

Referring to that verse, the *Midrash* states:<sup>2</sup> וְאִתָּא בְּמִדְרָשׁ:

The *Midrash* explains that although the princes from every tribe each brought the same number and type of animals and articles as an offering, each of the princes had a different motivating rationale for his offering which reflected the Divine service connected with that specific tribe.

All the tribes were given names that reflect the redemption of Israel and her praise. Asher (אשר) was named for the sake of the redemption of Israel, as it is written:<sup>3</sup> "And all the nations shall praise (אשרו) you, for you will be a land of desire," says G-d, Commander of legions." כָּל הַשְּׁבָטִים לְשֵׁם גְּאֻלָּתָן שֶׁל יִשְׂרָאֵל וְלִשְׁם שְׂבַחָן נִקְרְאוּ שְׁמוֹתָם, וְאֶשֶׁר נִקְרָא שְׁמוֹ לְשֵׁם גְּאֻלָּתָן שֶׁל יִשְׂרָאֵל כְּמָה דְתִימָא "וְאֶשֶׁרוּ אֶתְכֶם כָּל הַגּוֹיִם כִּי תִהְיוּ אִתְּם אֶרֶץ חֶפְצִין אָמַר ה' צְבָאוֹת",

This praise is associated with redemption, because it is only in the Era of the Redemption that the nations will wholeheartedly praise the Jewish people.

1. *Bamidbar* 7:72.

2. *Bamidbar Rabbah* 14:10.

3. *Malachi* 3:12.

ה' צבאות", ולשם שבחן כמה דתימא "אשרי העם שככה לו אשרי העם שה' אלקיו", אין אשורן של ישראל אלא על שבחרו בהקדוש ברוך הוא להיות להם לאלקים, והקדוש ברוך הוא בחר בהם להיות לו לעם סגלה, ולפיכך כשבא נשיא אשר להקריב, הקריב קרבנו על שם הבחירה שבחר הקדוש ברוך הוא בישראל מכל האמות, כמה דתימא "ובך בחר ה' אלקיך להיות לו לעם סגלה". וצריך להבין, דבתחלת הענין אומר דאשורן של ישראל הוא שבחרו בהקדוש ברוך הוא (וזה שממשיך שהקדוש

וּלְשֵׁם שִׁבְחָן כְּמָה דְתִימָא  
 "אֲשֶׁרִי הָעָם שֶׁכָּבָהּ לוֹ  
 אֲשֶׁרִי הָעָם שֶׁה' אֱלֹקָיו",

And Asher was named for Israel's praise, as it is written:<sup>4</sup> "Fortunate (אשרי) is the nation whose lot is this; fortunate is the nation whose G-d is the L-rd."

*Ashrei*, "fortunate" in Hebrew, shares the same root letters as the name Asher.

אֵין אֲשׁוּרָן שֶׁל יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶלָּא  
 עַל שִׁבְחָתוֹ בְּהַקְדוּשׁ בְּרוּךְ  
 הוּא לְהִיּוֹת לָהֶם לְאֱלֹקִים,

Israel's good fortune rests solely on her choice of the Holy One, blessed be He, to be her G-d

וְהַקְדוּשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא בָּחַר  
 בָּהֶם לְהִיּוֹת לוֹ לְעַם סִגְלָהּ,

and G-d's choice of her to be His cherished nation.

וּלְפִיכֵךְ כְּשֶׁבָּא נְשִׂיא  
 אֲשֶׁר לְהַקְרִיב, הַקְרִיב  
 קְרָבָנוּ עַל שֵׁם הַבְּחִירָה  
 שֶׁבָּחַר הַקְדוּשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא  
 בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל מִכָּל הָאֲמוֹת,

Therefore when the prince of Asher came to offer his sacrifices, he offered those sacrifices in recognition of G-d's choice of Israel over all the nations,

כְּמָה דְתִימָא "וּבְךָ  
 בָּחַר ה' אֱלֹקֶיךָ לְהִיּוֹת  
 לוֹ לְעַם סִגְלָהּ".

as it is written:<sup>5</sup> "And G-d has chosen you this day to be His cherished people."

וְצָרִיךְ לְהַבִּין,

The passage requires explanation:

דְּבִתְחִלַּת הָעֲנִין אֹמֵר  
 דְּאֲשׁוּרָן שֶׁל יִשְׂרָאֵל הוּא  
 שֶׁבָּחָרוּ בְּהַקְדוּשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא

Initially, the *Midrash* states that the good fortune of Israel is that they chose – and continue to choose – the Holy One, blessed be He.

4. *Tehillim* 144:15.

5. See *Devarim* 26:18. The *Midrash* quotes the verse slightly differently from the manner in which it appears in *Devarim*.

ברוך הוא בחר בהם, הוא לכאורה כמו דבר נוסף<sup>1</sup>, ולאחר זה אומר דאשר (על שם אשורן של ישראל) הקריב קרבנו על שם הבחירה שבחר הקדוש ברוך הוא בישראל. גם צריך להבין, דבחירה שיש דוקא בשני דברים ששניהם שוים, או שבכל אחד מהם יש מעלה שאין בזולתו, אבל בנוגע להקדוש ברוך הוא ולהבדיל אלהי הנכרה, האיך

וְזֶה שֶׁמִּמְשִׁיף שֶׁהַקְדוֹשׁ (Though the *Midrash* continues by saying that G-d chose the Jewish people, that appears to be mentioned as a secondary point.)  
 בָּרוּךְ הוּא בָּחַר בָּהֶם, הוּא לְכַאוֹרָה כְּמוֹ דְבַר נוֹסֵף),

This is also reflected in the prooftext used to illustrate this point: “Fortunate is the nation whose G-d is the L-rd.” This is comparable to the Jews’ choice of the Holy One, blessed be He, “to be their G-d.”

וְלֵאחֲרַי זֶה אוֹמֵר דְּאֶשֶׁר (על Afterwards, however, the *Midrash* states that the sacrifice of the tribe of Asher (who was so named because of Israel’s good fortune) was brought because of Israel’s good fortune) was brought because the Holy One, blessed be He, chose Israel.  
 שֶׁם אֲשׁוּרָן שֶׁל יִשְׂרָאֵל הַקָּרִיב קָרְבָּנוֹ עַל שֶׁם הַבְּחִירָה שֶׁבָּחַר הַקְדוֹשׁ בָּרוּךְ הוּא בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל.

It is thus necessary to understand why the focus was switched from the Jewish people’s choice of G-d to G-d’s choice of the Jewish people.

גַּם צָרִיךְ לְהַבִּין, It is also necessary to understand why the term “choice” is used.

דְּבַחֲרָה שִׁיף דְּוִקָא בְּשִׁנֵּי The term “choice” is relevant when one chooses between two equal entities or between two entities whereby each possesses an advantage the other lacks.  
 דְּבָרִים שְׁשִׁנֵּיהֶם שׁוּיִם, אוֹ שֶׁבְּכֹל אֶחָד מֵהֶם יֵשׁ מַעְלָה שְׁאִין בְּזוּלָתוֹ,

If one entity is clearly preferable over the other, it is not appropriate to say that the preferable entity is chosen. On the contrary, one is forced, as it were, to select it because of its superiority. Doing otherwise would not make sense. The term “choice” is appropriate only where there is no reason compelling one to choose one article over the other.

אָבֵל בְּנוֹגַע לְהַקְדוֹשׁ בָּרוּךְ Why then is the term “choice” used to describe Israel’s choice of the Holy One, blessed be He, over false gods?<sup>6</sup>  
 הוּא וְלְהַבְדִּיל אֱלֹהֵי הַנְּכָר, הַאִיף שִׁיף לֹמֵר שֶׁיִּשְׂרָאֵל בָּחַר בְּהַקְדוֹשׁ בָּרוּךְ הוּא.

6. Note *Rashi’s* commentary to *Devarim*, *op. cit.*: “I have separated you from false gods,” indicating that there is a clear distinction.

שיך לומר שישראל בחרו בהקדוש ברוך הוא. ועל דרך זה – בזה שהקדוש ברוך הוא בחר בישראל, הרי ישראל הם נעלים באין ערוך מכל האמות, ומהו שהקדוש ברוך הוא בחר בישראל. גם מה שכתוב בתניא<sup>7</sup> ד"בנו בחרת מכל עם ולשון" הוא הגוף החמרי הנדמה בחמריותו לגופי אמות העולם, צריך באור, דזה שהגוף דישראל נדמה (בחיצוניות) לגופי אמות העולם אין זה באור (לכאורה) בנוגע להקדוש ברוך הוא.

Obviously, there is no comparison between the two.

וְעַל דֶּרֶךְ זֶה – בְּזֶה  
שֶׁהַקְּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא  
בָּחַר בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל,  
A similar question applies regarding G-d's choice of Israel.

הָרִי יִשְׂרָאֵל הֵם נְעִלִים  
בְּאֵין עֲרוּךְ מִכָּל הָאֲמוֹת,  
Since Israel is incomparably superior to all other nations,

וּמָהוּ שֶׁהַקְּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ  
הוּא בָּחַר בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל.  
how can it be said that the Holy One, blessed be He, chose Israel?

גַּם מָה שֶׁכְּתוּב בְּתַנְיָא  
ד"בְּנוּ בְּחֵרְתָּ מִכָּל עַם  
וְלִשׁוֹן" הוּא הַגּוּף הַחֲמָרִי  
Tanya<sup>7</sup> states that the phrase<sup>8</sup> "And You chose us from all nations and tongues" refers to the body which, in its physical form,

הַנִּדְמָה בְּחֲמָרִיוֹתוֹ  
לְגוּפֵי אֲמוֹת הָעוֹלָם,  
appears to resemble the bodies of the nations.

I.e., it is inappropriate to use the term "choice" regarding the souls of the Jewish people, because the Jews' souls are obviously higher. The body of a Jew, however, resembles that of a non-Jew and hence, in that context, the term "choice" is relevant.

צָרִיךְ בְּאוּר, Explanation is also required here.

דְּזֶה שֶׁהַגּוּף דִּישְׂרָאֵל  
נִדְמָה (בְּחִיצוֹנִיּוֹת) לְגוּפֵי  
אֲמוֹת הָעוֹלָם אֵין זֶה  
בְּאוּר (לְכַאוּרָה) בְּנוֹגֵעַ  
לְהַקְדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא.  
(Seemingly,) the fact that the bodies of the Jewish people resemble the bodies of the non-Jews (externally) does not sufficiently explain why the term "choice" is used regarding G-d's choice of the Jewish people.

There is a fundamental difference between the bodies of the Jewish people and the

7. Ch. 49 (p. 70a).

8. From the daily liturgy.

bodies of non-Jews. The source of the life-force of a Jewish body is *kelipas nogah*, i.e., the source of the existence of permissible substances whose G-dly spark can be revealed in a direct manner by utilizing them for a holy purpose. The source of the life-force of a body of a non-Jew is the three impure *kelipos*, the source of those substances whose G-dly spark cannot be revealed in an ordinary manner.<sup>9</sup>

Now, for a person on the physical plane, it is appropriate to say that the selection of one body over the other stems from choice because we are not capable of distinguishing between entities on the basis of their spiritual source. G-d, however, obviously appreciates this distinction. Why then is His selection of the Jewish people termed “choice”? One would think that the positive quality even their bodies inherently possess would necessitate their selection.

## SUMMARY

Commenting on the sacrifices brought by the princes of the tribes for the dedication of the Sanctuary in the desert, the *Midrash* associates the sacrifices brought by the prince of Asher with “Israel’s good fortune.” It links that good fortune with Israel’s “choice of the Holy One, blessed be He, to be her G-d and G-d’s choice of her to be His cherished nation.” This presents somewhat of a difficulty because the *Midrash* first states that the good fortune of Israel is that they chose G-d, and afterwards, it speaks of G-d’s choice of Israel. Also, the use of the term “choice” is problematic. That term is appropriate when speaking of two entities that are equal or when each possesses an advantage the other lacks. Seemingly, it is not appropriate to speak of choosing G-d over false deities, or to speak of choosing the Jews over other nations.

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9. *Tanya*, chs. 6 and 7; *Likkutei Sichos*, Vol. 2, p. 603.

ב) וְיֹבֵן זה בהקדם מה שכתוב "חלקי הוי' אמרה נפשי", ואיתא במדרש<sup>10</sup> משל למלך שנכנס למדינה והיו עמו דכסין ואפרכין ואיסטרטילוטין כו', חד אמר: אנא נסיב דכסין לגבי, חד אמר: אנא נסיב איפרכין לגבי, וחד אמר: אנא נסיב איסטרטילוטין לגבי, היה פקח אחד [ל]שם, אמר: אנא נסיב מלכא, דכלהו מתחלפין, ומלכא אינו מתחלף. כן אמות העולם מהן עובדין לחמה ומהן עובדין ללבנה כו' אבל ישראל אינן עובדין אלא להקדוש ברוך הוא, הדא הוא דכתיב: "חלקי הוי' אמרה

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וְיֹבֵן זֶה בְּהֶקְדָּם מֵה שְׁפָתוֹב "חֶלְקֵי הוֹי" אָמְרָה נַפְשִׁי," The above can be understood by prefacing with an explanation of the verse<sup>10</sup> "G-d is my portion," says my soul."

וְאִיתָא בְּמִדְרָשׁ On this verse, the *Midrash* comments:<sup>11</sup>

מְשָׁל לְמֶלֶךְ שְׁנֹכְנֵס לְמַדִּינָה וְהָיוּ עִמּוֹ דְּכָסִין וְאַפְרָכִין וְאַיִסְטְרָטִילוּטִין כּו', To illustrate with an analogy: a king entered a country accompanied by dukes, prefects, and commanders....

חַד אָמַר: אֲנָא נְסִיב דְּכָסִין לְגַבִּי, חַד אָמַר: אֲנָא נְסִיב אִיפְרָכִין לְגַבִּי, וְחַד אָמַר: אֲנָא נְסִיב אִיִּסְטְרָטִילוּטִין לְגַבִּי, One person said: "I will choose a duke as my patron." Another said: "I will choose a prefect as my patron." And still another said: "I will choose a commander as my patron." I.e., they wanted to attach themselves to one of the officers so that he would be their benefactor.

הָיָה פְּקִיחַ אֶחָד [ל]שֵׁם, אָמַר: אֲנָא נְסִיב מַלְכָּא, דְּכָלְהוּ מִתְחַלְפִּין, וּמִלְכָּא אִינוּ מִתְחַלְפִּין. There was a clever person among them who said: "I will choose the king, because the others are all subject to replacement, while the king is not subject to replacement."

כֵּן אָמוֹת הָעוֹלָם מְהִין עוֹבְדִין לְחַמָּה וּמְהִין עוֹבְדִין לְלִבְנָה כּו' אַבְל יִשְׂרָאֵל אִינוּ עוֹבְדִין אֶלָּא לְהַקְדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא, הָדָא הוּא דְּכִתְיִב: "חֶלְקֵי הוֹי" אָמְרָה נַפְשִׁי." In the analogue, there are gentile nations who serve the sun and others who serve the moon.... Israel, by contrast, serves only the Holy One, blessed be He. This is the intent of the verse: "G-d is my portion," says my soul."

10. *Eichah* 3:24.

11. *Eichah Rabbah* to the verse.

נפשי". וידוע הדיוק בזה<sup>12</sup>, דלכאורה, הרי גם מי שאינו פקח ואפלו תינוק קטן<sup>13</sup> יודע שהמלך הוא גדול יותר מהדכסין וכו', ומה צריכים לפקחות בכדי לבחר בהמלך. וגם, הרי גם אם הדכסין וכו' לא היו מתחלפין, היה מובן בפשטות שהמלך הוא גדול מהם [ובפרט לפי הידוע<sup>14</sup> בפרוש הכתוב<sup>15</sup> "משכמו ומעלה גבה מכל העם", שגם שכמו

וְיָדוּעַ הַדְּיוּק בְּזֶה, There are well-known explanations regarding the details of the *Midrash*.<sup>12</sup>

דְּלִכְאוּרָה, For, on the surface, its intent requires explanation:

הָרִי גַם מִי שְׂאִינוּ פָּקֵחַ וְאֶפְלוּ תִינוּק קָטָן Everyone, even one who is not clever, even a very young child,<sup>13</sup>

יֹדֵעַ שֶׁהַמֶּלֶךְ הוּא גָדוֹל יוֹתֵר מִהַדְּכָסִין וְכוּ', knows that the king is greater than the duke or the other officers. Why then would "cleverness" וְמָה צָרִיכִים לְפַקְחוֹת be required to choose the king? בְּכַדֵּי לְבַחַר בְּהַמֶּלֶךְ.

וְגַם, Also, the rationale given for choosing the king requires explanation.

הָרִי גַם אִם הַדְּכָסִין וְכוּ' Even if the position of the duke and the other officers would be permanent and they would not be לא הָיוּ מִתְחַלְּפִין, הָיָה subject to replacement, it is obvious that the king מוּבֵן בְּפִשְׁטוֹת שֶׁהַמֶּלֶךְ is greater than they. הוּא גָדוֹל מֵהֶם

[This is certainly true according to the well-known explanation<sup>14</sup> of the verse:<sup>15</sup> "From his וּבִפְרָט לְפִי הַדְּיוּעַ shoulders up, he was taller than all the people."

The verse refers to King Shaul, the first of Israel's kings. The spiritual implications, however, apply to all proper monarchs. They possess inner qualities that are inherently loftier than those of their subjects.

12. See the *maamar* entitled *Es Havayah Amarta* (*Or HaTorah, Ki Savo*, pp. 1072, 1083) and in *Sefer HaMaamarim* 5630, p. 291; *Biurei Zohar* of the *Tzemach Tzedek*, p. 248ff.; *Sefer HaMaamarim* 5660, p. 11.

13. This is the wording used in *Or HaTorah, op. cit.* and *Sefer HaMaamarim* 5660, *op. cit.*

14. See *Or HaTorah, Vayeira*, Vol. 4, p. 764; *Or HaTorah, Shir HaShirim*, Vol. 2, p. 414.

15. *I Shmuel* 9:2.



של המלך, היינו המדות שנמשכים מהשכל שבראש ולמטה ממנו, הוא גבה יותר מהראש (השכל) של כל העם, שבזה (כל העם) נכללים גם השרים הכי גדולים, ולמה<sup>16</sup> צריך להטעם דכלהו מתחלפין.

שגם שכמו של המלך, היינו המדות שנמשכים מהשכל שבראש ולמטה ממנו, הוא גבה יותר מהראש (השכל) של כל העם, Implied is that the king's shoulders, i.e., his emotions that are drawn down from the intellect in his head and which influence his lower levels, are higher than the heads (i.e., the intellect) of the people at large.

The king's inherent superiority places him in a different category than the entire nation.

שפזזה (כל העם) נכללים גם השרים הכי גדולים, This includes even the nation's most elevated officers,] including the dukes, prefects, and commanders.

ולמה צריך להטעם דכלהו מתחלפין? Why then is it necessary to state the rationale that all the officers "are subject to replacement"?<sup>16</sup>

Seemingly, the king should be chosen in any case because of his superior qualities.

## SUMMARY

On the verse, "'G-d is my portion,' says my soul," the *Midrash* offers an analogy:

A king entered a country accompanied by dukes, prefects, and commanders.... One person said: "I will choose a duke as my patron." Another said: "I will choose a prefect as my patron." And still another said: "I will choose a commander as my patron." There was a clever person among them who said: "I will choose the king, because the others are all subject to replacement, while the king is not subject to replacement."

In the analogue, there are gentile nations who serve the sun and others who serve the moon.... Israel, by contrast, serves only the Holy One, blessed be He. This is the intent of the verse: "'G-d is my portion,' says my soul."

The *Midrash* provokes questions:

a) Why must one be "clever" to choose the king? Seemingly, choosing him

16. See *Sefer HaMaamarim* 5630, *loc. cit.*

should be obvious.

- b) The rationale given for choosing the king – because all the officers “are subject to replacement” – requires explanation. Shouldn't the king be chosen in any case because of his superior qualities?

ג) וְהִנֵּה לְכַאוּרָה הִיָּה אֲפֹשֶׁר לְבֹאֵר זֶה עַל פִּי הַיְדוּעַ" שְׂבִדוּרוֹת הָרֵאשׁוֹנִים, אֱלֹהֵי שְׂעִבְדוּ לְכֹכְבִּים וּמְזֻלוֹת יִדְעוּ שֶׁהַשֶּׁפַע שֶׁנִּשְׁפָּע בְּאֶרֶץ עַל יְדֵי הַכֹּכְבִּים וּמְזֻלוֹת ("מִמְגֵד תְּבוּאֵת שֶׁמֶשׁ וּמִמְגֵד גֶּרֶשׁ יְרֵחִים"י) הוּא (לֹא שֶׁהֵם עֲצָמָם מְשַׁפְּיעִים,

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וְהִנֵּה לְכַאוּרָה הִיָּה אֲפֹשֶׁר לְבֹאֵר זֶה עַל פִּי הַיְדוּעַ On the surface, the above can be explained based on the well-known concept<sup>17</sup>

שְׂבִדוּרוֹת הָרֵאשׁוֹנִים, אֱלֹהֵי שְׂעִבְדוּ לְכֹכְבִּים וּמְזֻלוֹת that in the early generations, the people who worshiped the stars and the constellations,

i.e., the Zodiac constellations which are associated with (and seen as representations of) different spiritual forces

יִדְעוּ שֶׁהַשֶּׁפַע דִּיד עוֹ שֶׁהַשֶּׁפַע did not think that the stars could generate these blessings independently. They knew that the sustenance conveyed to the earth through the stars and the constellations

יִדְעוּ שֶׁהַשֶּׁפַע דִּיד עוֹ שֶׁהַשֶּׁפַע בְּאֶרֶץ עַל יְדֵי הַכֹּכְבִּים וּמְזֻלוֹת (as implied by the verse:<sup>18</sup> "With the goodness of the sun's crops and with the goodness of the moon's yield,")

הוּא (לֹא שֶׁהֵם) is not brought forth by them independently.  
עֲצָמָם מְשַׁפְּיעִים,

Many have difficulty relating to these concepts because the worship of the stars and the constellations has, thank G-d, to a large extent disappeared from contemporary society. Nevertheless, the concepts are still relevant, for, as will be explained, the intent is not only the actual stars and the constellations, but rather all the intermediaries through which G-dly blessings<sup>19</sup> are conveyed to the earth and its inhabitants. The service – at least in a figurative sense – of such intermediaries is unfortunately still widely prevalent in our times.

17. See *Derech Mitzvosecha*, p. 6a ff.; see also *Rambam, Hilchos Avodas Kochavim* 1:1.

18. *Devarim* 33:14.

19. The term "blessings" is being used as a translation of the Hebrew term שֶׁפַע. That term literally means "flow," as in the flow of water from one body of water to another. Often, it is translated as "influence." Throughout the *maamar*, it will be translated as blessings, sustenance, or prosperity.

אלא) שהקדוש ברוך הוא משפיע על ידם, אלא שטעו וחשבו שהשפע שנשפע ממנו יתברך על ידי הכוכבים ומזלות הוא בבחירתם, ולא ידעו את האמת שאין להם בחירה כלל, והם רק כגרזן<sup>20</sup> ביד החוצב. ולכן השתחוו להכוכבים ומזלות ועבדו

אֵלֶּא שְׁהַקְדוּשׁ בְּרוּךְ  
הוּא מְשַׁפֵּיעַ עַל יָדָם,    **Instead, it is the Holy One, blessed be He, who conveys sustenance *through* them.**

אֵלֶּא שְׁטָעוּ וַחֲשָׁבוּ  
שְׁהַשְּׁפַע שְׁנִשְׁפָּע מִמֶּנּוּ  
יִתְבָּרַךְ עַל יְדֵי הַכּוֹכָבִים  
וּמִזְלוֹת הוּא בְּבַחֲרֵתָם,    **Where these people erred, however, was in thinking that the sustenance which G-d conveys through the stars and the constellations is transmitted by their choice.**

Hence, since according to their misconception, the stars and the constellations – and, by extension, the entire array of intermediaries in the natural order – have the power of choice, these people felt that the intermediaries deserve to be served.

וְלֹא יָדְעוּ אֵת הָאֱמֶת  
שְׁאִין לָהֶם בְּחִירָה פְּלִלִי,    **They did not know the truth: that the stars and the constellations have no free choice at all**

וְהֵם רַק כְּגֵרְזָן בְּיַד הַחוֹצֵב.  
וְלָכֵן הִשְׁתַּחֲוּ לְהַכּוֹכָבִים  
וּמִזְלוֹת וְעָבְדוּ אוֹתָם,    **and are only like an axe in the hands of the chopper.<sup>20</sup>**

וְלָכֵן הִשְׁתַּחֲוּ לְהַכּוֹכָבִים  
וּמִזְלוֹת וְעָבְדוּ אוֹתָם,    **This was the reason they bowed down to the stars and the constellations and served them.**

In *Chassidus*,<sup>21</sup> it is explained that this error (thinking that the intermediary powers have the choice whether to convey sustenance or not) is not considered the worship of false deities, but rather *shituf*, associating G-d with other powers, considering that He works in “partnership” with them, as it were. According to certain authorities, such a conception of G-d’s relationship with other powers is permitted to non-Jews. **The further error** committed by subsequent idolaters (explained later on in the text of the *maamar*) was that G-d abandoned the earth and relegated the authority over it to the stars. This is, by contrast, the worship of false deities itself.

20. Cf. *Yeshayahu* 10:15.

21. See the *maamar* entitled *Es Havayah HaAmarta*, 5678, sec. 3 (*Sefer HaMaamarim* 5678, p. 414); the *maamar* entitled *Kol HaMaarich*, 5686, sec. 4, (*Sefer HaMaamarim* 5686, p. 157ff.); and the *maamar* entitled *Mayim Rabbim*, 5717 (*Sefer HaMaamarim Melukat*, Vol. 1, p. 54).

אותם, כי לפי טעותם (שהשפע שנשפע על ידי הכוכבים ומזלות הוא בבחירתם) ראוי להודות להם על זה, על דרך "חמרא למרא טיבותא לשקייא"כא. וגם כי לפי

כי לפי טעותם (שהשפע שנשפע על ידי הכוכבים ומזלות הוא בבחירתם) According to their mistaken conception, (the sustenance drawn down through the stars and the constellations was dependent on the free choice of those celestial bodies).

ראוי להודות להם על זה, Hence, the people thought, it is appropriate to thank them,

על דרך "חמרא לקרא טיבותא לשקייא". following the logic of the saying:<sup>22</sup> "The wine belongs to the owner, but the waiter deserves favor," i.e., although the wine does not belong to the waiter, he deserves recognition for his efforts in serving it.

In *Chassidus*,<sup>23</sup> another example is given to illustrate this concept: Our Sages state<sup>24</sup> that there are three partners in the birth of a child: the two parents who provide the cells from which the fetus develops, and G-d Who gives the fetus the soul through which it lives. Obviously, G-d's share of the partnership is much greater, for we see that the physical act itself cannot generate life. Nevertheless, since the parents have a choice as to whether or not to conceive the child, they are considered as partners and the child is obligated to honor them. (Here we are speaking about the obligation of honoring one's parents that stems from the fact that they have given their children the gift of life. Obviously, parents also deserve honor for many other reasons including their efforts in raising their children and sustaining them throughout their lives.)

This concept does not apply to the stars and the other intermediaries through which G-d grants sustenance to this world. Although they do convey vitality, they do so without any independent choice. They are merely instruments through which G-d acts. As such, they are not deserving of any honor or favor, as are a waiter or one's parents.

22. *Bava Kama* 92b.

23. See *Or HaTorah, Yisro*, Vol. 8, p. 303ff.; *Likkutei Sichos*, Vol. 36, p. 92ff. See also the sources mentioned in fn. 21.

24. *Niddah* 31a.

טעותם, שהכוכבים ומזלות הם בעלי בחירה, חשבו שעל ידי שיעבדו אותם ישפיעו להם יותר. ומזה נשתלשל אחר כך שבאו לטעות גדולה יותר, שחשבו שעזב ה' את הארץ בידי הכוכבים ומזלות, והנהגת הארץ תלויה רק בהם. ובדגמת מלך שמנה שרים להנהיג את המדינה, דהגם שזה שבכחם להנהיג את המדינה הוא מפני שהמלך מנה אותם על זה, מכל מקום, לאחרי שנתמנו, הנהגת המדינה היא על ידי השרים,

וְגַם כִּי לְפִי טְעוּתָם, וְשֶׁהַכּוֹכָבִים וּמִזְלוֹת הֵם בְּעֲלֵי בְחִירָה, חָשְׁבוּ שְׁעַל יְדֵי שְׂיַעֲבֹדוּ אוֹתָם

**Furthermore, because of their mistaken conception that the stars and the constellations have free choice, they thought that by serving them, i.e., through such service, they could ingratiate themselves with them and**

יִשְׁפִּיעוּ לָהֶם יוֹתֵר. they would motivate them to grant them greater prosperity.

וּמִזֶּה נִשְׁתַּלְשַׁל אַחַר כֵּן שֶׁבָּאוּ לְטְעוּת גְּדוּלָּה יוֹתֵר, שֶׁחָשְׁבוּ שְׁעָזַב ה' אֶת הָאָרֶץ

**This led to their committing an even greater error:**

בְּיַדֵּי הַכּוֹכָבִים וּמִזְלוֹת, וְהִנְהִיגָה הָאָרֶץ

**the thought that G-d abandoned the earth,<sup>25</sup>**

בְּיַדֵּי הַכּוֹכָבִים וּמִזְלוֹת, relegating the authority over it to the stars and the constellations,

וְהִנְהִיגָה הָאָרֶץ וְתְלוּיָהּ רַק בָּהֶם. and that they alone control the earth's destiny.

וּבְדִגְמַת מֶלֶךְ שֶׁמִּנֶּה שָׂרִים לְהִנְהִיג אֶת הַמְּדִינָה, **To illustrate by analogy: these individuals thought that the situation resembled a king who appointed officers to run a country.**

דִּהְגַּם שֶׁזֶה שֶׁבְּכַחֲסָם לְהִנְהִיג אֶת הַמְּדִינָה הוּא מִפְּנֵי שֶׁהַמֶּלֶךְ מְנַה אֹתָם עַל זֶה, **Now, it is true that the officers' authority over the country came about because the king appointed them, i.e., they recognize that the king is the ultimate authority and it is only because of him that they have power.**

מִכָּל מְקוֹם, לְאַחֲרֵי שֶׁנִּתְמַנּוּ, הִנְהִיגָה הַמְּדִינָה, הִיא עַל יְדֵי הַשָּׂרִים, **Nevertheless, once they were appointed, it is they who govern the country,**

25. Cf. Yechezkel 8:12, 9:9.

ואין המלך מתערב בזה (מלבד לפרקים רחוקים, בשביל צורך גדול). וישי לומה, דזה שאמות העולם קוראין אותו יתברך בשם אלקא דאלקיא<sup>26</sup> נכללים בזה שני הסוגים. שגם אלו שחושבים שעזב ה' את הארץ בידי הכוכבים ומזלות קוראין אותו יתברך בשם אלקא דאלקיא דנוסף לזה שהוא יתברך גבוה מהם ושליט עליהם, הנה גם בזה גופא שהכוכבים ומזלות הם "אלקיא" (לדעתם), היינו שיש להם כח להנהיג את הארץ ולהשפיע בה, הוא לא מצד עצמם אלא מפני שהקדוש ברוך הוא נתן להם

making decisions independently. As such, there is reason to worship them in an attempt to curry favor with them.

ואין המלך מתערב בזה and the king does not involve himself

(מלבד לפרקים רחוקים, בשביל צורך גדול). (except on rare occasions when extreme measures are necessary).

[Both types of errors described above are included in our Sages' statement<sup>26</sup> that the nations of the world refer to G-d as "the G-d of gods," i.e., they conceive of their false deities as gods, but acknowledge that G-d is "the G-d of gods."

For even those who believe that G-d abandoned the earth – and relegated the authority over it to the stars and the constellations – refer to G-d as "the G-d of gods."

They acknowledge that He is greater than those bodies and rules over them.

Moreover, they realize that the very fact that (according to their mistaken conception) the stars and the constellations are deities

and have the authority to control the earth and convey sustenance to it,

26. Menachos 110a.

כח על זה, בדגמת שרי המלך שמנהיגים את המדינה מפני שהמלך מנה אותם על זה. ולאידך, גם הטעות שהשפע שנשפע מהקדוש ברוך הוא על ידי הכוכבים ומזלות הוא בבחירתם, נכלל (בדקות<sup>2</sup>) באלקא דאלקיא, כי גם זה שיכולים לעשות כרצונם (להשפיע או לאו) הוא ענין של שליטה – אלקיא. ושליטת הענין דאלהים אחרים<sup>2</sup>

הוא לא מצד עצמם **did not come about because these bodies have independent authority.**

אֵלָא מִפְּנֵי שְׁהַקְדוּשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא נִתֵּן לָהֶם כַּח עַל זֶה, **Instead, their worshipers recognize that G-d gave these celestial bodies the authority over existence,**

בְּדִגְמַת שְׂרֵי הַמְּלָךְ שְׁמִנְהִיגִים אֶת הַמְּדִינָה מִפְּנֵי שְׁהַמְּלָךְ מְנָה אוֹתָם עַל זֶה. **as in the analogy of the officers of the king who rule the country because the king appointed them.**

Thus, they recognize G-d as “the G-d of gods.” They err in their conception that the intermediaries He appointed also have authority and are therefore “gods.”

וְלֵאדָּךְ, גַּם הַטְּעוּת שְׁהַשְּׂפַע שְׁנִשְׂפָּע מִהַקְדוּשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא עַל יְדֵי הַכּוֹכָבִים וּמְזֻלוֹת הוּא בְּבַחֲרֵתָם, נִכְלָל (בְּדִקּוֹת) **Conversely, even the error that the stars and the constellations are significant because the sustenance that the stars convey from the Holy One, blessed be He, comes through their choice, is included (abstractly)**

בְּאֵלְקָא דְאֵלְקִיא, **as part of the approach that refers to G-d as “the G-d of gods.”**

Though these people’s error is less grievous than that made by those who worship the intermediaries themselves, nevertheless, they can also be considered as conceiving of the intermediaries as “gods.”

I.e., in a general sense, the conception of G-d as “the G-d of gods” applies only to those who believe that G-d abandoned the earth and relegated the authority over it to the stars and the constellations, but seemingly, it does not apply to those people whose error is that the intermediaries have independent choice. However, on a more abstract level, the conception of G-d as “the G-d of gods” can also be applied to the latter category.

כִּי גַם זֶה שְׁיִכּוּלִים לַעֲשׂוֹת כְּרִצּוֹנָם (לְהַשְּׂפִיעַ אוֹ לְאוֹ) הוּא עֲנִיָּן שֶׁל שְׁלִיטָה – אֵלְקִיא. **For the very fact that the intermediaries can do as they desire (i.e., convey or withhold sustenance) would imply that they have a certain measure of authority, and are therefore considered gods.**



בתכלית הוא דוקא על ידי הידיעה שכל הממצעים הם רק כגרזן ביד החוצבן. ועל פי זה היה אפשר לבאר פקחותו של זה שאמר אנא נסיב מלכא (בהנמשל), דזה שישראל יודעים את האמת שכל הממצעים שעל ידם באה ההשפעה הם רק כגרזן ביד החוצב, הוא מצד גדל הדעת שלהם, שהם רואים את הפנימיות. שהרי בחיצוניות נראה<sup>27</sup> דזה

**ושלילת הענין דאלהים  
אחרים בתכלית**      **Negating the concept of other gods altogether**

In *Chassidus*,<sup>27</sup> commenting on the commandment:<sup>28</sup> “You shall not have other gods before Me,” it is explained that the term *elokim* (translated as “gods”) means “rulers.” In the explanation there, it is stated that the stars and the constellations are not agents to whom it would be appropriate to honor, like the favor given to the waiter mentioned above. Instead, they are merely like an axe in the hand of the Chopper.

הוא דוקא על ידי הידיעה  
שכל הממצעים הם רק  
כגרזן ביד החוצבן.      comes about through realizing that all the inter-  
mediaries are merely like an axe in the hand of  
the Chopper.]

ועל פי זה היה אפשר לבאר  
פקחותו של זה שאמר אנא  
נסיב מלכא (בהנמשל),      On this basis, it is possible to explain the nature  
of the wisdom of the clever person who (in the  
analogy) said: “I will choose the king.”

דזה שישראל יודעים את  
האמת שכל הממצעים  
שעל ידם באה ההשפעה  
הם רק כגרזן ביד החוצב,      The fact that the Jews know the truth – that all  
the intermediaries through which sustenance  
descends are merely like an axe in the hand of  
the Chopper –

הוא מצד גדל  
הדעת שלהם,      comes as a result of their great knowledge,

שהם רואים את הפנימיות.      that they perceive the inner truth.

שהרי בחיצוניות נראה  
דזה שההשפעה היא על  
ידי הכוכבים ומזלות,      For from a surface perspective, the reason it  
appears that the sustenance comes as a result of  
the stars and the constellations

In *Chassidus*,<sup>29</sup> it is explained that “lowly creatures that possess neither knowledge nor

27. Note *Or HaTorah, Yisro*, p. 918.

28. *Shmos* 20:3.

29. See *Sefer HaMaamarim* 5678, p. 357.

שההשפעה היא על ידי הכוכבים ומזלות, הוא מפני שיש בהם מעלה שמצד זה הם

understanding judge only according to external appearances. Therefore they give importance to the intermediaries." I.e., since it appears that the intermediaries are sources of sustenance, a person who does not think deeply will honor them.

הוא מפני שיש בָּהֶם is that they have a positive quality which causes one  
 מְעֵלָה שְׁמַצֵּד זֶה הֵם to think that they are fit to serve as intermediaries.  
 רְאוּיִים לְהִיּוֹת מְמַצְעִים,

To understand the relevance of the *maamar's* content, it is necessary to go beyond the discussion of the stars and the constellations and focus on what they represent: intermediaries to convey G-dly blessings to the world at large. The *maamar* mentions three approaches as to how to relate to such intermediaries:

a) the approach of the later worshipers of false deities who maintain that G-d abandoned the world to the stars and the constellations. According to this approach, what is most important is the intermediary. These individuals recognize that G-d is "the G-d of gods" and can control and change the natural order if He so desires, but that is a rare occurrence. Instead, they view the intermediaries as those who control the world in practice and who are therefore deserving of respect and homage. In ancient times, the people's respect for the intermediaries was expressed by making statues for these "deities" and bowing down to them. In contemporary terms, it is expressed through submission to the powers that one perceives as controlling one's sustenance, be it one's employer, the larger network of powers that control commerce and finance, or the myriad intermediate levels in between.

b) the approach of the original worshipers of false deities who maintained that indeed, it is G-d Who gives the intermediaries power, but the intermediaries have free choice regarding the dispensation of the Divine blessings they convey. According to this approach, although the intermediaries are not the ultimate source of sustenance man receives, they deserve a certain degree of deference, and command a measure of respect. To explain by analogy, sight is one of the powers of the soul. We cannot say that it is a function of the body, because without a soul, the body cannot see. Nevertheless, the soul sees by way of the medium of the body. Without the body and the eyes, the organ of sight, the soul cannot see. In this instance, there is an interrelationship between the body and the soul: e.g., an improvement of the functioning of the physical eye enhances the soul's power to see.

To relate the concept to the analogue: these people acknowledge that the only reason an intermediary has any importance is that G-d chose it. Nevertheless,

they erroneously argue that since G-d chose this intermediary, it should be given the honor and respect due it. To translate the above into contemporary terms: A person might think, for example, that if he spends more time in meditation during prayer, his business affairs will suffer. Likewise, if he gives generously to *tzedakah*, he may be left with less money to invest. What prompts him to feel that he must compromise his religious priorities? His conception that the intermediaries – the powers that appear to control his financial future – have independent importance.

c) The true approach: that all the intermediaries are merely an axe in the hand of the Chopper. According to this understanding, a person uses intermediaries to earn his sustenance, but only because G-d so commanded. The natural ways and means he employs are, in and of themselves, of no importance in his eyes. They are nothing more than a means of fulfilling G-d's will.

This explains the teaching of our Sages<sup>30</sup> on the verse,<sup>31</sup> “He shall be the faithfulness of your times....” The Sages teach that here, *emunas* (“faithfulness”) alludes to *Seder Zera'im* which is the section of the *Mishnah* that deals mainly with the laws applying to agriculture, for a Jewish farmer “believes in He Who is the Life of all the worlds – and sows.”<sup>32</sup>

True enough, it is a natural phenomenon, a fact, that the sprouting of a seed follows sowing. It does not matter whether the farmer is Jewish or not, or even if the seed fell to the ground without any human agency. The earth by nature promotes germination, regardless. (Indeed, this intrinsic nature of the earth is constant, as in the verse,<sup>33</sup> “seed time and harvest... will not cease.”) Nevertheless, nature does not command any independent status in the mind of a Jew. When he sows, he does not do so because according to the laws of nature sowing leads to germination, but only because “he believes in He Who is the Life of all the worlds – and sows.” *That* is why he sows.

Following this approach, a person will not ascribe any independent importance to the conduit that he makes for G-d's blessing. He will involve himself with it only in order to fulfill the Creator's will, as reflected in the promise:<sup>34</sup> “And G-d your L-rd will bless you in everything that you do,” which implies that one should create a medium in nature for his livelihood.

When viewed from that perspective, his involvement in these natural mediums

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30. *Shabbos* 31a; see *Tosafos*, s.v. *Emunas*, citing the *Talmud Yerushalmi*.

31. *Yeshayahu* 33:6.

32. *Talmud Yerushalmi*, loc. cit., quoted in *Tosafos*, *Shabbos* 31a.

33. *Bereishis* 8:22.

34. *Shmos* 15:18.

ראויים להיות ממצעים, וזה שישראל יודעים שהם רק כגרזן ביד החוצב הוא מצד גדל הדעת שלהם.

becomes a mode of Divine service. Accordingly, conflicts like those involving giving *tzedakah* or meditation in prayer mentioned above will not arise, because one's religious obligations and his efforts to earn his livelihood are seen as two complementary expressions of a single thrust: fulfilling G-d's will.<sup>35</sup>

וְזֶה שִׁישְׂרָאֵל יוֹדְעִים שֶׁהֵם  
 רַק כְּגֵרְזָן בְּיַד הַחֹצֵב  
**The awareness possessed by the Jews: that the intermediaries are like an axe in the hand of the Chopper,**

הוא מצד גדל  
 הדעת שלהם.  
**stems from their great knowledge.**

## SUMMARY

A possible reason for choosing false deities (the duke or the other officers) can be explained based on the rationale as to why the initial pagans worshiped the stars and the constellations in the first place. They did not think that the stars could generate sustenance independently. They knew it derived from G-d. Nevertheless, they thought that the stars and the constellations had free choice as to whether or not to dispense the sustenance. Hence, they thought it appropriate to thank them, following the logic of the saying: "The wine belongs to the owner, but the waiter deserves favor." They did not know the truth: that the stars and the constellations have no free choice and are only like an axe in the hands of the chopper. They thought that by serving the stars they could ingratiate themselves with them and motivate them to grant them greater prosperity.

This led to their committing an even greater error: having the thought that G-d had abandoned the earth, relegating the authority over it to the stars and the constellations. These individuals erroneously concluded that the situation resembled a king who appointed officers to run a country. While the officers' authority over the country derives from the king, in practice, it is the officers who govern the country, making decisions independently. As such, there is reason to "worship" them in an attempt to curry favor with them. Both these errors are included in our Sages' statement that the nations of the world refer to G-d as "the G-d of gods."

35. See *Likkutei Sichos*, Vol. 18, p. 294ff., translated in *As a Father Loves His Only Son*, p. 71ff., where these concepts are explained in detail.

The clever person (in the analogy, the Jews) who says: "I will choose the king," makes that choice because he knows the truth - that all the intermediaries through which sustenance is given are merely like an axe in the hand of the Chopper Who controls every aspect of existence. The intermediaries, on the other hand, have no independent power or choice.

ד) **אמנם** מזה שהמדרש מביא משל על זה ממלך ודכסין, אף שבהמשל, הדכסין הם בעלי בחירה, שלכן מסתבר לומר שהבחירה בהדכסין (אנא נסיב דכסין) יכולה לגרם שישפיעו יותר לאלו שבחרו בהם ונדלא כבהנמשל, שהעבודה להכוכבים ומזלות אינה מועלת כלל, מאחר שאינם בעלי בחירה, מובן, שזה שהפקח

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אמנם מזה שהמדרש מביא משל על זה ממלך ודכסין, A further concept can be derived from the analogy given in the *Midrash* of a king, dukes, and other officers.

אף שבהמשל, הדכסין הם בעלי בחירה, In the analogy – in contrast to the analogue – the dukes and the other officers have free choice.

The analogy does not truly reflect the analogue, for, in truth, as explained in sec. 3, the intermediaries through which G-d conveys His influence do not possess free choice.

שלכן מסתבר לומר שהבחירה בהדכסין (אנא נסיב דכסין) יכולה לגרם שישפיעו יותר לאלו שבחרו בהם Therefore it is logical to assume that the choice of the duke (“I will choose a duke as my patron”) will motivate the duke to convey a greater amount of influence to those who choose him.

I.e., in appreciation of the service of those who choose them as their patron, these officials will grant them favors.

וידלא כבהנמשל, [In the analogue, this is not so.

שהעבודה להכוכבים ומזלות אינה מועלת כלל, The service one renders to the stars and the constellations is of absolutely no benefit<sup>36</sup>

מאחר שאינם בעלי בחירה, because these celestial bodies do not have free choice.

They are merely “an axe in the hands of the Chopper.”]

מובן, שזה שהפקח אמר 'אנא נסיב מלכא' הוא From this, it can be understood that the clever person's decision, “I will choose the king,”

36. To offer an analogy: It's like flipping a switch that is not connected to an electric current.

אמר 'אנא נסיב מלכא' הוא מפני שעבודת המלך היא חשובה אצלו יותר מהתועלת (ההשפעה) שיהיה לו על ידי השרים. ומזה מובן גם בהנמשל, דעיקר הטעם על זה שאמות העולם עובדין לחמה וללבנה וכו' וישראל אינם עובדין אלא להקדוש ברוך הוא, הוא (לא מפני שאמות העולם טועים שהכוכבים ומזלות הם בעלי בחירה וישראל יודעים את האמת שהם רק כגרזן ביד החוצב, אלא) מפני שאמות העולם, העיקר אצלם הוא שיקבלו ההשפעה, ואצל ישראל העיקר הוא לעבד את המלך.<sup>37</sup>

מפני שעבודת המלך היא חשובה אצלו יותר מהתועלת (ההשפעה) שיהיה לו על ידי השרים.

is motivated by the fact that serving the king is of greater import to him than the benefit (i.e., sustenance) he will receive from the officers.

ומזה מובן גם בהנמשל, To refer to the analogue:

דעיקר הטעם על זה שאמות העולם עובדין לחמה וללבנה וכו' וישראל אינם עובדין אלא להקדוש ברוך הוא, הוא

The primary reason the nations of the world serve the intermediaries that convey Divine influence, e.g., the sun, the moon, etc., while the Jewish people serve G-d is

(לא מפני שאמות העולם טועים שהכוכבים ומזלות הם בעלי בחירה וישראל יודעים את האמת שהם רק כגרזן ביד החוצב, הוא)

(not that the gentiles err and maintain that the intermediaries, the stars, the constellations, and the like have free choice, while the Jews, by contrast, know the truth that the intermediaries are merely “an axe in the hands of the Chopper.”

I.e., although the explanation in the previous section is true, it does not reflect the fundamental motivation for the conduct of the non-Jews and the Jews.

אלא) מפני שאמות העולם, העיקר אצלם הוא שיקבלו ההשפעה,

Instead, the fundamental reason is that) what is most important for the nations of the world is that they receive sustenance,

and therefore, they seek to curry favor with the intermediaries who dispense the sustenance by serving them.

ואצל ישראל העיקר הוא לעבד את המלך.

while what is most important for the Jews is serving the King.<sup>37</sup>

37. See *Sefer HaMaamarim* 5686, p. 136.

והענין הוא, דעיקר הטעם על זה שעבדו לכוכבים ומזלות הוא (כמבאר בהדרושים<sup>38</sup>), כי בכדי לקבל השפעה מהקדשה צריך להיות בבטול, ולהיות שלא רצו לבטל את

In one of his *maamarim*, the Rebbe Rayatz focuses on the analogue, describing a **person who is overly engrossed in his business affairs. He compares that person's preoccupation in business to bowing down to the stars and the constellations.** Why does the person conduct himself in this manner? Because **he thinks that the business activities with which he is involved are the source of the sustenance he receives.** He does not appreciate that G-d is the source of his prosperity and his business activities are merely intermediaries.

In developing this concept, the Rebbe Rayatz states:<sup>38</sup> **"All his thoughts concern only his own benefit; i.e., they are for the sake of his body, his wealth, and his possessions."** From these words, it appears that **not only is the person's preoccupation with earning his livelihood, even to the extent of compromising his spiritual values, comparable to the worship of false deities, but the very thoughts that "are only about his own benefit" are comparable to the worship of false deities.**

Previously, the emphasis was that the conception of the intermediaries as having independent importance was comparable to accepting a false deity. At this point, the *maamar* introduces a new concept: that self-concern itself is comparable to the worship of false deities.

וְהַעֲנִין הוּא, To explain the concept:

דְּעִיקַר הַטַּעַם עַל זֶה שֶׁעָבְדוּ לְכוֹכָבִים וּמַזְלוֹת הוּא The fundamental reason that the gentile nations serve the stars and the constellations is

(כְּמַבָּאָר בְּהַדְרֵוּשִׁים),<sup>39</sup> (as explained in the *maamarim*),<sup>39</sup>

כִּי בְּכַדֵּי לְקַבֵּל הַשְּׁפָעָה מִהַקְדָּשָׁה צָרִיךְ לְהִיטֵל בְּבִטּוּל, *bittul* is necessary.

For, as stated in *Tanya*,<sup>40</sup> G-dliness only rests on entities characterized by *bittul*, the willingness to rise above self-concern and dedicate oneself to a higher purpose.

38. *Ibid.*, p. 137.

39. I.e., the *maamarim* cited in sec. 2, fn. 12 above (*Or HaTorah, loc. cit.*, pp. 1072ff., 1084) and in *Sefer HaMaamarim* 5630, p. 292ff.; *Biurei Zohar, loc. cit.*; *Sefer HaMaamarim* 5660, p. 11ff. See also *Siddur Im Dach*, p. 142c; *Derech Mitzvosecha*, p. 6a, et al.

40. *Tanya*, ch. 6.



עצמם, לכן עבדו להכוכבים ומזלות, שבכדי לקבל ההשפעה מהם אין צריך לבטול, וכדאיתא בזהר<sup>41</sup> דרוח מסאבא אזדמן תדיר במגנא ובריקנייא, כמו שכתוב כ"ט "אשר נאכל במצרים חנם", דההשפעה מלעמת זה (מצרים) היא חנם. ועוד טעם על זה

וְלִהְיוֹת שְׁלֵא רְצוֹ      Since they do not desire to nullify themselves,  
לְבַטֵּל אֶת עֲצָמָם,

לְכֵן עֲבָדוּ לְהַכּוֹכְבִּים      people at large choose to serve false deities  
וּמִזְלוֹת,

or other intermediaries which they believe to be sources of sustenance.

שֶׁבְּכַדֵּי לְקַבֵּל הַהִשְׁפָּעָה      For to receive influence from these intermediaries,  
מֵהֶם אֵין צָרִיךְ לְבַטּוֹל,      *bittul* is not required,

וְכַדְאִיתָא בְּזֵהַר דְּרוּחַ      as the *Zohar* states:<sup>41</sup> "A spirit of impurity is con-  
מְסַאבָּא אֲזַדְמָן תְּדִיר      tinuously found where there is no cost and there  
בְּמַגְנָא וּבְרִיקְנִיָּא,      is emptiness,

כְּמוֹ שֶׁכָּתוּב "אֲשֶׁר      as it is written:<sup>42</sup> "... We ate in Egypt without  
נֹאכַל בְּמִצְרַיִם חֲנָם,"      charge."

Commenting on this verse, the *Sifri* (quoted by *Rashi*) interprets "without charge" as "without *mitzvos*,"

i.e., without service. Expanding on that interpretation, it can be inferred that

דְּהַהִשְׁפָּעָה מִלְּעֻמַּת זֶה      Influence from the nether side<sup>43</sup> (Egypt) is con-  
מִצְרַיִם) הִיא חֲנָם.      veyed without cost,

i.e., without the cost of going beyond oneself.

וְעוֹד טַעַם עַל זֶה      A second reason why the non-Jewish nations  
שֶׁרְצוּ לְקַבֵּל הַשְׁפָּעָתָם      seek to receive their sustenance from the stars  
מֵהַכּוֹכְבִּים וּמִזְלוֹת,      and the constellations<sup>44</sup>

41. *Zohar*, Vol. II, p. 128a; see the lengthy exposition in *Siddur Im Dach* (p. 56d) on the verse: "Do not place your trust in generous men." There the Alter Rebbe explains that "generous men" refers to *kelipah*, because influence from *kelipah* is given "freely." In contrast, influence from holiness is given commensurate to a person's Divine service. See sec. 5 of this *maamar*.

42. *Bamidbar* 11:5.

43. *L'umas zeh*, lit. "the opposite side," i.e., the forces of *kelipah*, the source for evil, which oppose holiness.

44. This rationale is explicitly stated in the *Biurei Zohar* of the *Tzemach Tzedek*, p. 249.

שרצו לקבל השפעתם מהכוכבים ומזלות, כי גם ההשפעה עצמה (הנמשכת על ידי הכוכבים ומזלות) היא גדולה יותר. דמכיון שיניקת הסטרא אחרא הוא מהמקיף שלמעלה מהשתלשלות, שההשפעה משם היא שלא על פי חשבון, הרי ההשפעה היא

כי גם ההשפעה עצמה (הנמשכת על ידי הכוכבים ומזלות) היא גדולה יותר. is that the sustenance that is drawn down through the stars and the constellations is quantitatively greater.

דמכיון שיניקת הסטרא אחרא הוא מהמקיף שלמעלה מהשתלשלות, To explain: The nurture received by the nether side comes from G-d's encompassing light (*or makkif*) that is above the framework of the Spiritual Cosmos.

I.e., the Spiritual Cosmos is structured according to the pattern of *or b'k'li*; light enclothing itself in a vessel. Now the term "enclothe" implies that just as a person's clothes are fitted to his body, so too, G-d's light adjusts and fits itself to the capacity and limitations of the vessel. As such, it does not reflect G-d's infinity in a complete sense. (Were it to do so, it could not be contained within a finite vessel.)

There is, however, another pattern of Divine revelation, *or makkif*, which is not measured according to the nature of the recipients. Instead, it shines as a reflection of G-d's infinity, without any measure or limitation. As such, it is not internalized within the recipients. Nevertheless, it is possible for them to bask in its light, like the sun's light which shines even in a place of filth and dirt.

This is one of the sources through which *kelipah* derives nurture. Since the influence from this light is not internalized, the fact that *kelipah* is characterized by a sense of self, *yeshus*, and not by *bittul*, does not prevent *kelipah* from benefiting from this light. And since we are speaking about an *or makkif*, those benefits are boundless, without measure or limit.

שההשפעה משם היא The prosperity that emanates from that source is dispensed without any calculations. שלא על פי חשבון,

There are two implications of the statement that the prosperity that derives from the *or makkif* is dispensed without any calculations:

- a) It does not matter whether the recipient is worthy or not. For as explained above, since the influence is not internalized, the worthy and the unworthy are equally capable of benefiting from it.
- b) The influence is granted in abundance, as befits light that reflects G-d's infinity.

ברבוי גדול<sup>45</sup>. ומזה מוכן גדל השבח והפקחות דישראל שאינם עובדין אלא להקדוש ברוך הוא, דהגם שבכדי לקבל מהקדשה צריך לעבודה ויגיעה, וגם אז ההשפעה היא (מלכתחלה) במדידה והגבלה לפי מדת העבודה, מכל מקום, הם מותרים על רבוי

To clarify the contrast: Influence from the forces of holiness is internalized within the recipient. Hence, the influence that is given is commensurate with the refinement (through Divine service) of the recipient and is thus limited. The influence from *kelipah*, by contrast, reflects the infinite nature of the encompassing light and

הרי ההשפעה היא  
ברבוי גדול. **hence, it is granted in abundance.**<sup>45</sup>

ומזה מוכן גדל השבח  
והפקחות דישראל  
שאינם עובדין אלא  
להקדוש ברוך הוא, **On this basis, we can appreciate the unique positive quality and “cleverness” of the Jewish people who serve only the Holy One, blessed be He.**

דהגם שבכדי לקבל  
מהקדשה צריך  
לעבודה ויגיעה, **To receive sustenance from the realm of holiness, service and labor is required to make oneself a fit medium to receive that sustenance.**

וגם אז ההשפעה  
היא (מלכתחלה)  
במדידה והגבלה **Moreover, (initially) the blessings are measured,**

The *maamar* states “initially,” because ultimately, at the time of the Future Redemption, G-d will grant the Jews an unlimited reward for their Divine service in recognition of the struggle that was necessary to carry out this service. At present, however, reward is meted out according to the structures of our limited world and

לפי מדת העבודה, **meted out in a manner commensurate with the Divine service performed.**

מכל מקום, הם מותרים על  
רבוי השפע (בגשמיות) **Nevertheless, for the sake of serving G-d alone, the Jews are willing to forego the abundant (material) prosperity that could be received.**

45. See the lengthy explanations of this concept in *Torah Or*, p. 61a; *Kuntres U'Maayan*, Discourse 8, ch. 2ff.

השפע (בגשמיות) [אף שגם ישראל יכולים לקבל (לפי שעה) שפע מלעמת זה<sup>46</sup>, ולא עוד אלא שהם נוטלים חלק בראש<sup>47</sup>, מכל מקום הם מותרים על זה] וחביב להם יותר ההשפעה המצמצמת שנמשכת מהקדשה.

יְאָף שְׁגַם יִשְׂרָאֵל יְכוּלִים [For even the Jewish people can (temporarily) receive influence from the nether side. שְׁפַע מְלַעֲמַת זֶה, לְקַבֵּל (לְפִי שָׁעָה) וְחָבִיב לָהֶם יוֹתֵר, שְׁפַע מְלַעֲמַת זֶה,

In *Chassidus*,<sup>46</sup> it is explained that, ultimately, when the Jews' essence will be revealed, a Jew will be unable to receive influence from the realm of *kelipah*. Since his essence is G-dly, his nurture can only come from holiness. See sec. 5 below. Nevertheless, when a Jew sins, he draws down energy into the forces of *kelipah*. And since he draws down this energy to them, he becomes, temporarily, a recipient of its influence.

וְלֹא עוֹד אֵלֶּא **Indeed**, when doing so,

as explained,<sup>47</sup> since the Jews are the ones who convey Divine energy to the nether side, energy which would not otherwise be granted to those forces,

שֶׁהֵם נוֹטְלִים חֵלֶק בְּרֵאשׁ, **they receive the first and choicest portion.**

מִכָּל מְקוֹם הֵם **Nevertheless, they are willing to forego this]** מִנְתָּרִים עַל זֶה]

וְחָבִיב לָהֶם יוֹתֵר **because they cherish the limited influence they receive from the realm of holiness more.** הַהִשְׁפָּעָה הַמְצַמְצָמָת שְׁנִמְשְׁכַת מֵהַקְּדוּשָׁה.

## SUMMARY

A deeper explanation can be offered for the non-Jews' choice of the intermediaries. The motivation is not intellectual; i.e., that the non-Jews make an error in logic and maintain that the intermediaries have free choice. Instead, their fundamental motivation is to receive sustenance, while what is most important for the Jews is to serve the King.

In order to receive beneficence from G-d, *bittul* (self-nullification) is necessary. In

46. See *Kuntres U'Maayan*, the end of Discourse 6; Discourse 7, ch. 4; Discourse 11, ch. 2.

47. See *Tanya, Iggeres HaTeshuvah*, ch. 6; *Kuntres U'Maayan*, Discourse 7, *loc. cit.*

contrast, people at large choose to serve false deities because they do not desire to nullify themselves.

A second reason to seek beneficence from the intermediaries is that the beneficence derived from them is quantitatively greater, for its source is in G-d's encompassing light that is above the framework of the Spiritual Cosmos and hence, has no limits. On this basis, we can appreciate the unique positive quality and "cleverness" of the Jewish people who serve only G-d. To receive sustenance from the realm of holiness, service and labor is required. Moreover, the blessings are meted out in a manner commensurate with the Divine service performed. Nevertheless, for the sake of serving G-d, the Jews are willing to forego the abundant material prosperity that could be received were they to serve the intermediaries.

ה) וְהִנֵּה הַטַּעַם שֶׁל הַפְּקָח (לִזְה שְׂבוּחַת בַּהַמֶּלֶךְ וְלֹא בַּהַשָּׂרִים) הוּא מִפְּנֵי דְכֻלְּהוּ מִתְחַלְפִין וְמִלְכָא לֹא מִתְחַלְף. וְלִכְאוּרָה הִיא אִפְשָׁר לִומר הַכּוֹנֵה בִּזְה,

— 5 —

Initially, a question was raised concerning the *Midrash* which states that there were people who chose intermediaries: Why does a person have to be “clever” to choose the king? Seemingly anyone — even a young child — realizes that the king is greater. In resolution, it was explained in sec. 3 that those who chose the intermediaries did so because they believed that the intermediaries possess free choice and could independently decide to convey sustenance or withhold it. It requires cleverness to realize that the intermediaries are merely an axe in the hand of the Chopper and everything comes from Above.

In sec. 4, a deeper resolution was offered: that the sustenance granted by the intermediaries has its source in the *sitra achra*, which derives nurture from the *or makkif*, G-d’s encompassing light. As a result: a) it is possible to receive that light even when one is unworthy; and b) the sustenance they grant is abundant. Nevertheless, the unique positive quality of the Jewish people is that they “choose the King.” They desire to receive sustenance from G-d directly, even though Divine service is required and as such, the sustenance will be meted out in a measured manner.

At this point, there are implied questions in the conceptual flow of the *maamar*: Certainly, the desire to receive sustenance from G-d directly reflects a higher level of spiritual refinement. Why, however, does the analogy in the *Midrash* associate such a choice with “cleverness”? What role does wisdom play in the process? In this and the subsequent sections, the *maamar* resolves these questions.

וְהִנֵּה הַטַּעַם שֶׁל הַפְּקָח    **The rationale the *Midrash* gives as to why the**  
 (לִזְה שְׂבוּחַת בַּהַמֶּלֶךְ)    **“clever person” chooses the king and not one of**  
 (וְלֹא בַּהַשָּׂרִים)    **his officers**

הוּא מִפְּנֵי דְכֻלְּהוּ מִתְחַלְפִין    **is that “the others are all subject to replacement,**  
 וְמִלְכָא לֹא מִתְחַלְף.    **while the king is not subject to replacement.”**

As mentioned above, this rationale requires explanation, for one would think that the choice of the king should be obvious.

וְלִכְאוּרָה הִיא אִפְשָׁר    **On the surface, it can be explained that the**  
 לִומר הַכּוֹנֵה בִּזְה,    **לומר הכּוֹנֵה בִּזְה,**

שההשפעה הבאה מלעמת זה (עם היותה ברבוי יותר מההשפעה הבאה מהקדשה) הוא דבר המתחלף שאין לו קיום. כי לאחרי הברור, כשיתבררו הניצוצות שנפלו בקלפות (שמזה הוא החיות שלהם) יתבטלול לגמריה. [ומכל שכן בנוגע לישראל,

שְׁהַשְׁפָּעָה הַבְּאָה מִלְעֻמַּת זֶה the sustenance that comes from the *sitra achra*

lit., “the other side,” one of the kabbalistic terms for evil –

(עַם הַיּוֹתֵה בְּרַבּוּי) (even though it is more abundant than the  
 יוֹתֵר מִהַשְׁפָּעָה sustenance that comes from holiness) –  
 הַבְּאָה מִהַקְּדוּשָׁה)

Since, as explained in the previous section: a) the sustenance received from the nether side has its source in G-d’s encompassing light which reflects His infinity; and b) it is given freely, without being measured by the scales of judgment, it is more abundant than the blessings that derive from the realm of holiness. Nevertheless, it

הוא דָּבָר הַמְּתַחַלֵּף is merely temporary, something that will not  
 שְׂאִין לוֹ קִיּוּם. endure.

כִּי לְאַחֲרֵי הַבְּרוּר, For after the task of refinement is completed and  
 כְּשֵׁיִתְבָּרְרוּ הַנִּיצוּצוֹת the sparks of G-dliness that fell into *kelipah* –  
 שְׁנָפְלוּ בְּקַלְפוֹת

Our Sages relate<sup>48</sup> that G-d “would build worlds and destroy them.” It is explained that this refers to the world of *Tohu*. This was a very elevated framework of existence in which the lights were very powerful while the *keilim* (vessels) were insubstantial. For this reason, not only were the vessels unable to contain the light, they were shattered by it. After they shattered, their sparks fell and were filtered through the lower levels of the Spiritual Cosmos and dominated by the powers of *kelipah*, because the higher an entity’s spiritual potential, the lower it falls in its descent.

(שְׁמֵנָה הוּא הַחַיּוּת שֶׁלָּהֶם) (and from which *kelipah* derives its vitality) are  
 refined and elevated,

These sparks which stem from lofty levels of G-dliness are the source for the en-

48. *Koheles Rabbah* 1:5.

שגם עכשו, זה שישראל יכולים לקבל חיות מהלעמת זה, הוא רק לפי שעה<sup>49</sup>. וכן

ergy present in *kelipah*. (Indeed, their loftiness explains why the energy of *kelipah* is so great.)

**יִתְבַּטְּלוּ לְגַמְרֵי. *kelipah* will be nullified entirely.**<sup>49</sup>

*Chassidus*<sup>50</sup> explains concepts similar to the above when interpreting the verses:<sup>51</sup> “Do not place your trust in generous men.... Nevertheless, when his spirit departs... his plans perish.” The term “generous men” refers to *kelipah*, because largesse from *kelipah* is given “freely,” without the necessity to refine oneself. Nevertheless, “when his spirit departs” — when the spirit of holiness that stems from the 288 sparks of G-dliness from the realm of *Tohu* that fell into *kelipah* are elevated — “his plans perish,” the existence of *kelipah* will cease.

To explain: “the spirit,” i.e., the vitality of *kelipah*, is from holiness. In the present framework of existence, that G-dly spark is “swallowed up” and in exile,<sup>52</sup> i.e., controlled by *kelipah*, as stated later in the *maamar*. After the task of refinement is completed, the sparks will be elevated and the existence of *kelipah* will cease. Since, in essence, *kelipah* is not desired by G-d, its existence will ultimately cease, as it is written:<sup>53</sup> “I will cause the spirit of impurity to pass from the earth.” This is the meaning of the *Midrash’s* statement that the other officers are “subject to replacement.” For ultimately, *kelipah* has no lasting power.

[יִמְכָּל שְׂכָן] [Certainly, this, i.e., the fleeting nature of the benefits received from *kelipah*,

בְּנוֹגַע לְיִשְׂרָאֵל, applies to the Jewish people,

שָׁנָם עַכְשָׁו, זֶה שִׁישְׂרָאֵל for even in the present era, a Jew can only receive  
יְכוּלִים לְקַבֵּל חַיּוּת vitality from the nether side temporarily.]  
מִהַלְעַמַּת זֶה, הוּא  
רַק לְפִי שְׂעָה].

Since a Jew is essentially G-dly – the very opposite of *kelipah* – he can only derive nurture from *kelipah* for a limited time.

49. See the *maamarim* in *Or HaTorah*, loc. cit., p. 1074 and p. 1085; *Sefer HaMaamarim* 5630, p. 294; *Sefer HaMaamarim* 5660, p. 13.

50. See *Siddur Im Dach*, p. 57a ff.

51. *Tehillim* 146:3-4.

52. See *Tanya*, ch. 6.

53. *Zechariah* 13:2.



הוא לאיך גיסא, דזש שהשפעה הבאה מהקדשה היא במדידה והגבלה, הוא רק עכשו, אבל לאחרי שיתגלה השרש דבחינת הפנימיות, ששרשו הוא מפנימיות המקיף, ההשפעה מהקדשה תהיה ברבוי גדול יותר מהרבוי שנשפע מחיצוניות המקיף (השיך

וְכֵן הוּא לְאִיךָ גִּיסָא, **The converse is also true.**

דְּזֶה שֶׁהַשְּׁפָעָה הַבְּאָה מִהַקְדָּשָׁה הִיא בְּמִדְיָה וְהַגְבֵּלָה, הַשְּׁרָשׁוֹ הוּא מִפְּנִימִיּוֹת הַמְּקִיף, הַהִשְׁפָּעָה מִהַקְדָּשָׁה תִּהְיֶה בְּרַבּוּי גָּדוֹל יוֹתֵר מִהַרְבּוּי שֶׁנִּשְׁפָּע מִחִיצוֹנִיּוֹת הַמְּקִיף (הַשִּׁיךְ וְהַגְבֵּלָה, הוּא רַק עֲכָשׁוֹ, **The fact that sustenance from holiness is measured and limited is only true in the present era,**

before the world has reached its perfected state when G-d's true intent for existence will be revealed.

אַבְּל לְאַחֲרֵי שִׁתְּגַלֶּה הַשְּׁרָשׁוֹ דְּבַחֲיַנַּת הַפְּנִימִיּוֹת, **Ultimately, after the source of the inward beneficence is revealed**

שֶׁשְּׂרִשׁוֹ הוּא מִפְּנִימִיּוֹת הַמְּקִיף, **– its source being the inner dimension of the encompassing light –**

The external dimensions of an entity refer to its functional qualities, the way it expresses itself. Its internal dimension refers to its true intent. Obviously, there is far greater power in an entity's true intent than in its functional qualities.

הַהִשְׁפָּעָה מִהַקְדָּשָׁה תִּהְיֶה **the beneficence granted to the side of holiness**

which derives from the internal dimension of G-dliness,

בְּרַבּוּי גָּדוֹל יוֹתֵר מִהַרְבּוּי שֶׁנִּשְׁפָּע מִחִיצוֹנִיּוֹת הַמְּקִיף **will be far greater than the abundance that stems from the external dimension of the encompassing light**

In the present era, since the material substance of the world has not yet been refined, only the external dimensions of the encompassing light can be drawn down. In the Ultimate Future, however, the world will be refined and made fit to accept even the inner dimensions of that light.

(הַשִּׁיךְ גַּם לְהַשְׁפִּיעַ) (from which the *kelipos* can also derive nurture),  
בְּקִלְפוֹת, as explained in sec. 4.

גם להשפיע בקלפות), כמאמר רז"ל: אם לעוברי רצונו כן, לעושי רצונו על אחת כמה וכמה. אבל, באור זה אינו מספיק, דלפי זה, גם בחירתו של הפקח בהמלך הוא בשביל ההשפעה שתהיה לו על ידי זה, והחלוק בינו ובין אלו שבחרו בהשרים (דכסין וכו') הוא שהם חושבים רק במצב ההווה, והפקח חושב מה שיהיה בעתיד,

קְמַאֲמַר רַז"ל: אִם לְעוֹבְרֵי רַצוֹנֵי קָדָּה, לְעוֹשֵׂי רַצוֹנֵי עַל אַחַת כְּמָה וְכְמָה. **In this vein, our Sages state:<sup>54</sup> "If this is what those who transgress G-d's will receive, certainly, those who fulfill His will, will receive even greater benefit."**

The Talmud relates that Rabbi Akiva and other Sages were traveling to Rome on a mission on behalf of the Jewish people. While still far away from the city, they heard the noise of its revelers. The other Sages wept in mourning at seeing the great joy of the idolaters. Rabbi Akiva laughed and explained his conduct with the quote above.

The rationale is that ultimately, when the world is refined and it will be possible for the inner dimension of the encompassing light to be revealed, the Jews will receive infinitely greater benefit.

אָבֵל, בְּאוֹר זֶה אֵינוֹ מְסַפֵּיק, **This explanation, however, is not sufficient.**

דְּלִפִּי זֶה, גַּם בְּחִירָתוֹ שֶׁל הַפְּקִיחַ בְּהַמְּלֶכֶךְ הוּא בְּשִׁבִיל הַהִשְׁפָּעָה שֶׁתְּהִיָּה לוֹ עַל יְדֵי זֶה, **For from it, it logically follows that the "clever person's" choice of the king would also have been made in expectation of the sustenance he would receive.**

He realizes that ultimately, "those who fulfill His will, will receive even greater benefit."

וְהַחֲלוּק בֵּינוּ וּבֵין אֱלוֹ שֶׁבָּחָרוּ בְּהַשָּׂרִים (דְּכֶסֶין וְכו') הוּא **The difference between him and those who choose the other officers (the duke and the like) is**

שֶׁהֵם חוֹשְׁבִים רַק בְּמִצַּב הַהוּנָה, **that they merely look at the present situation,**

וְהַפְּקִיחַ חוֹשֵׁב מֵהַ שִׁיחֵיהָ בְּעֵתִיד, **while "the clever person" thinks about the future,**

54. *Nedarim* 50b; the end of tractate *Makkos*; see *Torah Or*, p. 61c.

על דרך מאמרם ז"ל<sup>55</sup> איזהו חכם הרואה את הנולד. אבל מזה שאומר במדרש, דזה שישראל אין עובדין אלא להקדוש ברוך הוא הוא מפני כי "חלקי הוי' אמרה נפשי", מוכח, דזה שהפקח בוחר בהמלך הוא לא מפני התועלת שיהיה לו מזה, אלא מצד המלך<sup>56</sup>. והיינו דזה שישראל בוחרים בהקדוש ברוך הוא, אף שעכשו רבוי ההשפעה היא לעוברי רצונו הוא (לא מפני שאחר כך תהיה ההשפעה לעושי רצונו גדולה יותר,

על דרך מאמרם ז"ל איזהו חכם הרואה את הנולד. as our Sages say:<sup>55</sup> "Who is a wise man? One who sees what will be."

Thus, according to this explanation, there is no fundamental difference between the two. Both are concerned with their self-benefit. The others make their choice in order to receive immediate, short-term benefit, and "the clever person" has the wisdom to view the larger picture and see the long-term consequences. Nevertheless, according to this explanation, they share the same objective: what is good for themselves.

אבל מזה שאומר במדרש, דזה שישראל אין עובדין אלא להקדוש ברוך הוא הוא מפני כי "חלקי הוי' אמרה נפשי", However, the fact that the *Midrash* states that Jews "solely serve the Holy One, blessed be He," because "G-d is my portion,' says my soul,"

מוכח, דזה שהפקח בוחר בהמלך הוא לא מפני התועלת שיהיה לו מזה, indicates that the "clever person's" choice of the king is not because of the benefit that he will derive,

אלא מצד המלך. but solely because of the king, i.e., because of the bond with the king created by serving him and not because he realizes that he will ultimately receive greater benefit as a result of his service.

והיינו דזה שישראל בוחרים בהקדוש ברוך הוא, The reason the Jews choose G-d even

אף שעכשו רבוי ההשפעה היא לעוברי רצונו though at present, abundant sustenance is granted to those who violate His will

55. *Tamid* 32a.

אלא) מפני שההשפעה לעושי רצונו היא מפנימיות רצונו יתברך וחפצו האמתי, וההשפעה לעוברי רצונו היא כמאן דשדי בתר כתפוי לשונאו, שלא ברצונו<sup>56</sup>, ולכן רוצים הם דוקא בההשפעה לעושי רצונו, עם היותה השפעה מצמצמת, להיותה נמשכת מפנימיות רצונו יתברך. ומה שאומר דכלהו מתחלפין כו', הכונה בזה היא<sup>57</sup>,

הוא (לא מפני שאחר כך תהיה ההשפעה לעושי רצונו גדולה יותר, is (not because of the calculation that afterwards, an even greater measure of prosperity will be received by those who fulfill His will.

אלא) מפני שההשפעה לעושי רצונו היא מפנימיות רצונו יתברך וחקצו האמתי, Rather,) their choice is motivated by the fact that the sustenance granted to those who fulfill His will is given from the inner dimensions of His will; it is His true desire.

וההשפעה לעוברי רצונו היא כמאן דשדי בתר כתפוי לשונאו, שלא ברצונו, The sustenance given to those who violate His will, by contrast, is given as one who throws something over his shoulder to his enemy, against his will.

In *Chassidus*,<sup>56</sup> it is explained that there are situations when a person is required to give something to an enemy. Nevertheless, the fact that he is required to give to him does not indicate his love for him. Indeed, the opposite is true; he is upset at having to give to his enemy. Hence, even when giving to him, he cannot bear to look at him and therefore throws the article over his shoulder.

Similarly in the analogue, G-d does not desire to give beneficence to the forces of *kelipah*. Nevertheless, according to the prevailing gestalt of the world, a certain degree of beneficence must be given to them to allow for free choice. Even while bestowing that influence, however, G-d loathes them and does not give to them willingly.

ולכן רוצים הם דוקא בההשפעה לעושי רצונו, Therefore the Jews desire the sustenance that is given to those who fulfill His will, because

עם היותה השפעה מצמצמת, להיותה נמשכת מפנימיות רצונו יתברך. – even though it is lesser than that which they would receive from *kelipah* – it emanates from His inner will and desire.

56. *Tanya*, ch. 22; *Kuntres U'Maayan*, Discourse 2, ch. 2ff.

דמזה שהם מתחלפין אחר כך מוכח שגם עכשו אינם מציאות אמיתית. וזה שיש בהם חיות להשפיע חיות לבעלי חיים ולאמות העולם, הוא לא מצד עצמם חס ושלום אלא

To use an analogy, it is like a father giving to a son, or a teacher to a favored student, in which instance they give from the depths of their heart, doing so happily, with a beaming countenance.

One might ask: If the clever person's choice of the king is due to his desire to bond with him, why does the *Midrash* offer the rationale

ומה שאומר דְּחָלָהּוּ  
מִתְחַלְפִּין כּו', **that all the others are subject to replacement?**

According to the above explanation, even if they were not subject to replacement but would endure endlessly, the clever person would in any event choose the king because of his desire to bond with him.

הַכּוֹנֵן בְּזֶה הִיא, In resolution, **the intent of the statement is that**

דְּמָזָה שֶׁהֵם מִתְחַלְפִּין  
אֲחֵר כֶּף מוֹכַח שֶׁגַם עַכְשָׁו  
אֵינָם מְצִיאוֹת אֱמִתִּית. **the fact that they are all subject to replacement indicates that even at present, while they are in power, they do not represent true existence.**

To illustrate with an example from *halachah*:<sup>57</sup> The water used for the sprinkling of the ashes of the Red Heifer must be “living water,” taken from a spring or river that flows from the depths of the earth and is not dependent on rain water. If a spring dries up once in seven years, it is termed “deceptive water” and is not acceptable for this purpose. Although the river exists, since it will run dry at some point, its existence is not *halachically* significant. Similarly, in the present instance, although the forces of *kelipah* exist, their existence is not significant, even at present, since ultimately they will be nullified.

וְזֶה שֵׁשׁ בָּהֶם חַיּוֹת  
לְהַשְׁפִּיעַ חַיּוֹת לְבַעֲלֵי  
חַיִּים וְלְאֲמוֹת הָעוֹלָם, **In the analogue, the fact that the stars and the constellations possess vitality that enables them to convey life-energy to the animals and to the nations of the world**

הוא לא מצד עצמם  
חס ושלום **is not because of their own inherent power, Heaven forbid,**

57. Parah 8:9.

מפני שהם יונקים מהקדשה<sup>58</sup>, ומכיון שהחיות דקדשה שבהם אינו מתאחד עמהם (ואדרבא הוא בבחינת גלות בתוכם), הרי מצד מהותם הם בחינת מות<sup>59</sup>. נועל דרך זה הוא גם אלו שמקבלים השפעת החיות מהם, כמבאר בתניא<sup>60</sup>, דזה שרשעים בחייהם קרויים מתים<sup>61</sup> הוא מפני שחייהם נמשכים ממקום המות והטמאה]. וזהו אנא נסיב מלכא משום דכלהו מתחלפין, שאינו רוצה בהשפעה שנמשכת ממקום המות

אָלֵא מִפְּנֵי שְׁהֵם but rather because they derive vitality from the  
יִוְנָקִים מֵהַקְּדֻשָּׁה, realm of holiness.<sup>58</sup>

וּמִכֵּיּוֹן שֶׁחַיּוּת דְּקֻדְשָׁה Now, since the vitality that comes from the holi-  
שְׁבֵהֶם אֵינּוּ מִתְאַחַד עִמָּהֶם ness within them does not become one with them

Since *kelipah* is not characterized by *bittul*, such oneness is impossible.

(וְאִדְרָבָא הוּא בְּבַחֲיַנְתָּ גְלוּת בְּתוֹכָם), – (on the contrary, it is in exile within them) –

הָרִי מֵצַד מֵהוּתָם the inherent state of these intermediaries is one of  
הֵם בְּחִינַת מוֹת. death.<sup>59</sup>

[The same applies to those who receive their  
וְעַל דְּרָדָן זֶה הוּא גַם vitality from them.  
אֵלּוּ שְׁמַקְבָּלִים הַשְּׁפָעַת  
הַחַיּוּת מֵהֶם,

כְּמִבְאֵר בְּתַנְיָא, דְּזֵה As explained in *Tanya*,<sup>60</sup> the wicked are referred  
שְׂרָשְׁעִים בְּחִיָּיהֶם to as “dead”<sup>61</sup>  
קְרוּיִים מֵתִים

הוּא מִפְּנֵי שֶׁחַיֵּיהֶם נִמְשָׁכִים because their vitality stems from a place of death  
מִמְקוֹם הַמּוֹת וְהַטְּמֵאָה]. and impurity.]

Their vitality derives from the realm of *kelipah*, which has no inherent vitality.

וְזֵהוּ אֲנֵא נְסִיב מְלָכָא On this basis, we can understand the “clever per-  
מִשׁוּם דְּכִלְהוּ מִתְחַלְפִּין, son’s” statement: “I will choose the king, because all  
הַיְּחִידִים הַיְּחִידִים the others are subject to replacement.”

58. *Tanya*, ch. 29, p. 37b.

59. *Tanya*, ch. 22, loc. cit.; *Sefer HaMaamarim* 5660, loc. cit.; et al.

60. *Tanya*, *Iggeres HaTeshuvah*, ch. 7, p. 97a; see also *Tanya*, ch. 19, p. 24b.

61. *Berachos* 18b.

והטמאה עם היותה השפעה ברבוי, ורוצה דוקא בהשפעה שמצד הקדשה עם היותה השפעה מצמצמת.

שְׂאִינוּ רוֹצֵה בְּהַשְׁפָּעָה  
שְׁנַמְשֶׁכֶת מִמְקוֹם הַמָּוֶת  
וְהַטְמֵאָה עִם הַיּוֹתָה  
הַשְׁפָּעָה בְּרַבּוּי,

**He does not desire the prosperity that is drawn down from the place of death and impurity even though it is abundant.**

רוֹצֵה דִּוְקָא בְּהַשְׁפָּעָה  
שְׂמַצֵּד הַקְדְּשָׁה עִם הַיּוֹתָה  
הַשְׁפָּעָה מְצַמְצָמָת.

**Instead, he desires sustenance from the realm of holiness even though it is limited in nature, for he desires to receive from the King Himself.**

At the beginning of this section, it was stated that the “clever person’s” choice of the king could have been motivated by his desire for his own benefit. Unlike the others who were shortsighted, however, he looked at the larger picture and realized that ultimately, it would be more beneficial to receive from the king directly than from the intermediaries.

That explanation was rejected because it does not fit the analogue. The Jews’ choice of G-d is because “G-d is my portion,’ says my soul,” i.e., they share a bond with the King. In resolution, it was explained that their choice of G-d stems from the realization that He is the truth of existence and the intermediaries are merely temporary. To highlight the difference: the first explanation was dependent on the benefit the person received. The second explanation is dependent on the realization of the truth: that G-dliness is genuine existence and the intermediaries are not.

## SUMMARY

Section 5 concluded by stating that for the sake of serving G-d, the Jews are willing to forego the abundant material prosperity that could be received from serving the intermediaries. It is necessary to understand the connection between this concept and the rationale given by the *Midrash* why the “clever person” chooses the king and not one of his officers: because “the others are all subject to replacement, while the king is not subject to replacement.” Also, as mentioned above, this rationale requires explanation, for one would think that the choice of the king should be obvious.

It can be explained that the intent of the *Midrash* is that the sustenance that stems from the officers comes from the *sitra achra*, “the other side.” Hence, even though it is more abundant than the sustenance that comes from holiness, it is merely temporary, something that will not endure. For after the task of refinement is completed and the

sparks of G-dliness that fell into *kelipah* are refined and elevated, *kelipah* will be nullified entirely. This is especially true for the Jewish people, for even in the present era, a Jew can only receive vitality from the nether side temporarily.

The converse is also true. The fact that sustenance from holiness is measured and limited is only true in the present era, before the world has reached its perfected state when G-d's true intent for existence will be revealed. Ultimately, the true source of the beneficence granted by G-d in an inward manner will be revealed and it will be manifest that this beneficence is rooted in the inner dimension of the encompassing light. In that future time, the beneficence granted to the side of holiness will be far greater than the abundance that stems from the external dimension of the encompassing light. As our Sages state: "If this is what those who transgress G-d's will receive, then certainly, those who fulfill His will, will receive even greater benefit."

This explanation, however, is not sufficient. For from it, it follows that the "clever person's" choice of the king would also be in expectation of the sustenance he will receive. He realizes that ultimately, "those who fulfill His will, will receive even greater benefit." The difference between him and those who choose the other officers is that they merely look at the present situation, while he, "the clever person," thinks about the future. However, the fact that the *Midrash* states that Jews "solely serve the Holy One, blessed be He," because "'G-d is my portion,' says my soul," indicates that the "clever person's" choice of the king is not because of the benefit that he will ultimately derive, but solely because of his desire to bond with the king.

One might ask: If the clever person's choice of the king is due to his desire to bond with him, why does the *Midrash* offer the rationale that all the others are subject to replacement?

In resolution: An entity that is "subject to replacement" is not true or genuine. Even while it exists, its existence is not true. By saying, "I will choose the king because all the others are subject to replacement," the clever man is stating that he does not desire the prosperity that is drawn down from the place of death and impurity even though it is abundant. Instead, he desires sustenance from the realm of holiness even though it is limited in nature, for it is true and genuine, coming from the King's inner desire.



(ו) וצריך להבין, דלכאורה, גם לבאור זה שבחירת הפקח בהמלך היא לא מצד התועלת שיהיה לו מזה אלא מצד מעלת המלך, שלכן הוא מותר על רבוי ההשפעה הבאה על ידם, בחירתו בהמלך היא מצד השכל<sup>62</sup>, דמכיון שכולהו מתחלפין ומלכא לא מתחלף, ראוי לותר<sup>63</sup> על רבוי ההשפעה הבאה על ידי השרים

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Further explanation is necessary, וצריך להבין,

דלכאורה, גם לבאור זה שבחירת הפקח בהמלך היא לא מצד התועלת שיהיה לו מזה, אלא מצד מעלת המלך, but because of his realization of the king's eminence, for it appears that the “clever person’s” choice of the king is an intellectual decision. This applies even according to the explanation that he is not choosing the king because of his desire for personal benefit,

אלא מצד מעלת המלך, but because of his realization of the king's eminence.

שלקן הוא מותר על רבוי ההשפעה הבאה על ידם, As a result of this realization, he foregoes the abundant influence that comes from the intermediaries.

בחירתו בהמלך היא מצד השכל, Thus the “clever person’s” choice of the king appears to stem from his understanding.

Indeed, the *Midrash* cited describes him as a clever person.

דמכיון שכולהו מתחלפין, He realizes that since “all the others are subject to replacement,

And thus, as explained in sec. 5, since they are subject to replacement, they do not represent true existence, even when they are in power.

ומלכא לא מתחלף, while the king is not subject to replacement,”

ראוי לותר – it is befitting to forego –

I.e., this can be understood even by mortal intellect.

To offer a parallel: In *Chassidus*,<sup>62</sup> it is explained that *ahavah rabbah*, “abundant love,” is characterized by a person’s desire for G-d’s Essence and not the radiance of His light, even though bonding with Him on that level will cause the person’s own existence to be

62. See *Likkutei Torah, Vayikra*, p. 20b.

ולבחר בההשפעה המצמצמת שבאה מהמלך; ומזה שמקשר במדרש ענין זה (אנא נסיב מלכא) עם "חלקי הוי' אמרה נפשי", משמע, דזה שישראל בוחרים בהקדוש ברוך הוא הוא מצד הנשמה (שהיא חלק הוי') שלמעלה מהשכל. ונקדת הבאור בזה,

nullified. Such love is "referred to as being 'male' in nature, because it reflects powerful knowledge such that the person chooses what is of fundamental importance and not what is of secondary importance." *Ahavah zuta*, a lesser level of love (characterized by a desire for the radiance of G-d's light so that the person's existence will remain intact) is "referred to as being 'female' in nature, because his knowledge is fickle,<sup>63</sup> i.e., he grants primacy to what is secondary, seeking to receive the radiance of Divine light because he seeks his own self-importance."

על רבוי ההשפעה      **the abundant influence conveyed by the "officers,"**  
הבאה על ידי השרים

the various intermediaries through which Divine blessings are channeled,

ולבחר בההשפעה      **and choose the limited influence that comes from**  
המצמצמת שבאה מהמלך;      **the King Himself.**

ומזה שמקשר במדרש ענין      **Nevertheless, from the fact that the *Midrash* asso-**  
זה (אנא נסיב מלכא) עם      **ciates the "clever person's" choice of the king with**  
"חלקי הוי' אמרה נפשי",      **the verse, "G-d is my portion,' says my soul,"**

משמע, דזה שישאל      **it appears that the Jews' choice of G-d stems from**  
בוחרים בהקדוש ברוך      **their souls**  
הוא הוא מצד הנשמה

(שהיא חלק הוי')      **(because their souls are "an actual part of G-d**  
      **from Above")<sup>64</sup> and thus seek to cleave to their source**  
      **because of an innate spiritual desire**

שלמעלה מהשכל.      **that transcends intellect.**

To explain by analogy: A son desires to cleave to his father not because of his appreciation of the good that his father has done for him or the positive virtues his father possesses, but because of the mere fact that he is his father. They share an essential bond. Similarly, the soul shares a core connection to G-dliness that transcends all reason and logic.

63. Cf. *Kiddushin* 80b.

64. *Tanya*, ch. 2.

דשכל האדם כמו שהוא מצד עצמו מכריח לרצות רק בזה שטוב לו. דזהו שאמות העולם בוחרים בהשרים, אף שגם הם יכולים להבין שהמלך הוא העיקר (דכלהו מתחלפין ומלכא לא מתחלף), כי להיותם בבחינת יש, אינם רוצים לותר על התועלת שיהיה להם על ידי שיקבלו מהשרים. וזה שבישראל ישנה ההכרה שצריך לותר על

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Thus there is an apparent contradiction: If the choice comes from the soul's inherent G-dly nature, how is it connected with the *wisdom* of the “clever person”? And if the choice is motivated by logic, what connection does it have to the soul's innate desire for G-dliness?

- The core of the resolution is that,**  
**as it exists on its own, mortal logic compels a person to desire his own personal benefit.**
- That is the reason why the nations of the world choose the officers**  
**even though they can also understand that the king is of fundamental importance.**
- (After all, the rationale that “all the others are subject to replacement**  
**while the king is not subject to replacement”) is a logical imperative that, seemingly, they can also comprehend. Nevertheless,**
- since their fundamental nature is characterized by *yeshus*, self-concern,**  
**they do not want to forego the benefit they will receive from the officers.**

Their fundamental self-concern prevents them from internalizing the awareness of the truth of G-d's prominence. Even though they are capable of understanding that G-dliness is the only true existence, that understanding does not affect their fundamental approach to life. Hence, they choose the intermediaries, the entities that appear to provide them with immediate benefit.

התועלת והמציאות שלהם ולבחר באלקות, הוא מצד הנשמה<sup>65</sup> (חלק הוי') שבחירתה באלקות היא בחירה עצמית שלמעלה מהשכל (דבחירה זו היא לא מצד העלוי

וְזֶה שֶׁבְּיִשְׂרָאֵל יִשְׁנָה  
 הַהִכָּרָה שֶׁצָּרִיךְ לְוַתֵּר  
 עַל הַתּוֹעֵלֶת וְהַמְצִיאוֹת  
 שֶׁלָּהֶם וּלְבַחֵר בְּאַלְקוֹת,

Conversely, the reason that Jews recognize that they should forego the benefit they could receive from the officers, and instead, rise above their self-concern and choose G-dliness

הוא מצד הנשמה is because of their souls –

As explained in *Tanya*,<sup>65</sup> the soul's desire "to cleave to its root and source in G-d, the Life of lives – even though as a result it will be nothingness and void and have its existence subsumed in G-d entirely" – is a natural drive that transcends intellect. Now, the soul desires to cleave to G-d because He is "the Life of lives" (the ultimate eminence), i.e., something that logic would accept. Nevertheless, since by cleaving to G-d, the soul will become "nothingness and void," its desire to cling to its source stems from a natural drive that transcends intellect. For a person's intellect on its own would never desire to entirely obliterate his own selfhood. It is the soul's essential G-dly nature that motivates such a desire.

On this basis, it is possible to explain the statement cited above,<sup>66</sup> that the reason for the soul's desire to bond with G-d's Essence is "powerful knowledge," i.e., seemingly a motivation stemming from logic, while *Tanya* states that the soul's desire to cleave to G-d stems from a natural drive that transcends intellect.<sup>67</sup> The apparent contradiction can be resolved on the basis of the statements that follow in this *maamar*: that the desire which stems from the soul's natural drive, a desire that transcends intellect, affects its thinking processes.

(חלק הוי') (because their souls are "a part of G-d").

שֶׁבְּחִירְתָּהּ בְּאַלְקוֹת  
 הִיא בְּחִירָה עֲצֻמִּית  
 שֶׁלְּמַעַלָּה מִהַשְּׁכָל

Thus their choice of G-d is an essential choice that transcends logic and reason.

65. See *Tanya*, ch. 19 (cited in *Likkutei Torah*, loc. cit.).

66. *Likkutei Torah*, loc. cit.

67. Indeed, the *maamar* in *Likkutei Torah* cites the passage from *Tanya* mentioned above.

דאלקות, שמלכא לא מתחלף, אלא מצד העצמות), וזה פועל על שכלם<sup>68</sup>, שגם השכל מכיר דמכיון שאלקות הוא האמת שחי וקים בקיום נצחי (מלכא לא מתחלף), צריך הוא לותר על המציאות שלו ולבחר באלקות.

דְּבַחֲרָה זֶה הִיא לֹא (For their choice is not motivated by their awareness of G-d's eminence that “the King is not subject to replacement” – but rather by His Essence.)

וְזֶה פּוֹעֵל עַל שְׁכָלָם, Nevertheless, their essential bond with G-d affects their thinking processes as well,

In *Chassidus*,<sup>68</sup> it is explained that: “Because of the essence of the soul’s cleaving to G-d... its power of wisdom is inclined to comprehend the positive nature of G-dliness and choose what is good.”

שְׁגָם הַשְּׁכָל מְכִיר דְּמַכְיֹון causing their minds to realize that since G-d is true Being, that He is alive and exists everlastingly  
שְׁאַלְקוֹת הוּא הָאֵמֶת שְׁחֵי וְקִים בְּקִיּוֹם נְצָחִי

(מְלֻכָּא לֹא מִתְחַלֵּף) (– i.e., “the King is not subject to replacement” –)

צָרִיךְ הוּא לְוִתֵּר they should forego their own self-concern and  
עַל הַמְּצִיאוֹת שְׁלוֹ choose G-dliness.  
וּלְבַחֵר בְּאַלְקוֹת.

## SUMMARY

Further explanation is necessary, for it appears that the “clever person’s” choice of the king is an intellectual decision. Even according to the explanation that he is not choosing the king because of his desire for personal benefit, his choice of the king appears to stem from his understanding of the truth of the king’s eminence.

Nevertheless, from the fact that the *Midrash* associates the “clever person’s” choice of the king with the verse, “‘G-d is my portion,’ says my soul,” it appears that the Jews’ choice of G-d stems from their souls because their souls are “an actual part of G-d from Above.”

The core of the resolution is that, as it exists on its own, mortal logic compels a

68. See *Sefer HaMaamarim* 5560, p. 16.

person to desire his own personal benefit. That is the reason why the nations of the world choose the officers even though they can also understand that the king is of fundamental importance. Since their fundamental nature is characterized by *yeshus*, self-concern, they do not want to forego the benefit they will receive from the intermediaries.

Conversely, the reason that Jews recognize the need to forego the benefit they could receive from the intermediaries, and instead, rise above their self-concern and choose G-dliness, is due to their souls' intrinsic bond with G-d. Nevertheless, their essential bond with G-d also affects their thinking processes, causing their minds to realize that since G-d is true Being, they should forego their own self-concern and choose G-dliness.

(ז) וְאוֹלֵי יֵשׁ לְהוֹסִיף, דַּעַל יְדֵי שֶׁהִבְחִירָה דֵּהִנְשָׁמָה שְׁלִמְעֵלָה מֵהַשְּׁכַל נִמְשַׁכַּת וּפּוֹעֵלַת בְּהַשְּׁכַל, מִתּוֹסֵף בָּהּ עֲלוֹי נִעְלָה יוֹתֵר מִכְמוֹ שֶׁהִיא מִצַּד עֲצָמָה.

— 7 —

Until now, the *maamar* has explained the analogy of the *Midrash*, which speaks of “a clever person who said: ‘I will choose the king,’” and the analogue, the Jewish people’s choice of G-d. A difficulty was noted: that the analogy did not parallel the analogue. For in the analogy, it appears that the clever person chooses the king due to that person’s wisdom. Hence, he provides an explanation for his choice: “The others are all subject to replacement, while the king is not subject to replacement.” Nevertheless, in the analogue, when describing the Jewish people’s choice of G-d, the *Midrash* states that the choice is made because “G-d is my portion,’ says my soul,” implying that what motivates the choice is not an intellectual rationale but an inherent spiritual bond.

In resolution, it was explained that the essence of the soul affects its intellectual functioning: because of the soul’s inherent spiritual connection to G-dliness, its intellect operates in a manner that enables it to appreciate the advantage of choosing G-d.

As explained previously, it is possible for a person to attain an intellectual appreciation that G-dliness is the ultimate truth and yet, because of one’s own self-interest, he will seek to receive sustenance from the intermediaries. In contrast, the soul’s essential connection with G-d causes one’s thinking processes to rise above self-interest and understand that it is desirable to choose G-d even though it may conflict with its self-interest.

The question, however, remains: If the choice is a reflection of the soul’s essential, inherent connection to G-d, why is it necessary for this choice to be filtered through the person’s intellect? Let it shine forth with its essential power. This question is resolved through the explanations in this and the subsequent sections.

וְאוֹלֵי יֵשׁ לְהוֹסִיף, דַּעַל  
 יְדֵי שֶׁהִבְחִירָה דֵּהִנְשָׁמָה  
 שְׁלִמְעֵלָה מֵהַשְּׁכַל

As mentioned above, **the soul’s choice** of G-d stems from the essence of the soul, a level **that transcends intellect**. Perhaps one can add

נִמְשַׁכַּת וּפּוֹעֵלַת בְּהַשְּׁכַל,  
 מִתּוֹסֵף בָּהּ עֲלוֹי נִעְלָה יוֹתֵר

**that when this choice is drawn down and has an effect on the intellect,**

מִתּוֹסֵף בָּהּ עֲלוֹי נִעְלָה יוֹתֵר  
 מִכְמוֹ שֶׁהִיא מִצַּד עֲצָמָה.

**it elevates the soul to a loftier rung than its natural, inherent level.**

ויוכן זה בהקדם המבאר בסדור דבור המתחיל "עבדים היינו לפרעה במצרים" מט, בענין ההשפעה הנמשכת לעוברי רצונו: שהיא רק בדרך אגב כמאן דשדי בתר כתפוי, שהוא בדגמת מלך<sup>71</sup> שעושה סעודה ומשתה בשביל השרים הגדולים ועבדים החשובים ומוציא על זה ממון רב, ומהשירים של הסעודה מקבלים גם פחותי הערך כמו עבדים ושפחות שאחרי הרחים, ועד שגם הכלבים אוכלים את העצמות

וְיִוְכַן זֶה בְּהֶקְדָּם  
הַמְבָאָר בְּסִדּוּר דְּבוּר  
הַמִּתְחִיל "עֲבָדִים הָיִינוּ  
לְפָרְעָה בְּמִצְרַיִם",  
This can be understood by prefacing with a concept explained in the *maamar* entitled *Avadim Hayinu LeFaraoh BeMitzrayim* in the *Siddur Im Dach*:<sup>69</sup>

בְּעֵינֵי הַשְּׁפָעָה  
הַנִּמְשָׁכֶת לְעוֹבְרֵי רְצוֹנוֹ  
שֶׁהִיא רַק בְּדֶרֶךְ אֲגָב  
כְּמֵאן דְּשָׂדֵי בְּתֵר כְּתֵפוֹי,  
that the Divine blessings granted to those who transgress G-d's will are as "an aside,"<sup>70</sup>  
like one who throws what he gives to another over his shoulder.

The sustenance is given begrudgingly, with disdain. For G-d to bring into being and maintain the world in its present form, there must exist entities that He does not fundamentally desire. He brings them into being only "as an aside," i.e., solely to create the setting He desires for His will to be expressed.

שֶׁהוּא בְּדִגְמַת מֶלֶךְ  
שֶׁעוֹשֶׂה סְעוּדָה וּמְשַׁתָּה  
בְּשִׁבְלֵי הַשָּׂרִים הַגְּדוֹלִים  
וְעֲבָדִים חֲשׂוּבִים  
To explain by analogy, it is like a king who makes a celebratory feast for his prominent officers and prestigious servants<sup>71</sup>

וּמוֹצִיא עַל זֶה מִמּוֹן רַב,  
and spares no expense.

וּמַהֲשִׁירִים שֶׁל הַסְּעוּדָה  
מִקְבָּלִים גַּם פְּחוּתֵי הָעֶרְךָ  
כְּמוֹ עֲבָדִים וּשְׁפָחוֹת  
שֶׁאַחֲרֵי הַרְחִים,  
Now, even lowly servants and maids found "behind the millstones"<sup>72</sup> receive the leftovers from the feast.

69. *Siddur Im Dach*, p. 293d.

70. *Ibid.*, p. 294c.

71. This example is also cited in *Toras Chayim, Shmos*, p. 157a; *Derech Mitzvosecha*, p. 79a; *Kuntres U'Maayon*, the beginning of Discourse 7; *et al.*

72. Cf. *Shmos* 11:5.



שמשליכים למטה. שבטח לא כיון המלך להוציא בשבילם הוצאות, וזה שנשפע להם שירים (שגם השירים של הסעודה הם הון רב) הוא רק בדרך אגב. ועל דרך זה הוא בהנמשל שההשפעה לעוברי רצונו היא רק בדרך אגב, כמאן דשדי בתר כתפוי, כמבאר שם בארכה. ויש לומר, דזה שמביא שתי דגמאות שההשפעה להם היא רק בדרך אגב (ואינם יושבים בשלחן המלך), עבדים ושפחות וכלבים, ושתי

וְעַד שְׁגַם הַפְּלָבִים אֶת הָעֲצָמוֹת  
אֶת הָעֲצָמוֹת שֶׁמְשָׁלִיכִים לְמִטָּה.  
And even dogs feast on the bones that were discarded.

שְׁבִטַח לֹא כִּיּוֹן הַמֶּלֶךְ  
לְהוֹצִיא בְּשִׁבְלֵם הוֹצָאוֹת,  
Of course, the king had no intention of spending money on them.

וְזֶה שֶׁנִּשְׁפָּע לָהֶם שִׁירִים  
The leftovers they receive

(שְׁגַם הַשִּׁירִים שֶׁל  
הַסְּעוּדָה הֵם הוֹן רַב)  
(and the leftovers from such a feast are indeed of great value)

הוּא רַק בְּדֶרֶךְ אֲגַב.  
are given merely as an aside.

Does the king really desire to provide a feast to the lowly servants and the dogs? Of course not. But in order for the king's palace to be maintained and the feast to be served, the lowly servants and even the dogs are necessary.

וְעַל דֶּרֶךְ זֶה הוּא בְּהִנְמָשֶׁל  
Similarly, in the analogue,

שֶׁהַהֲשָׁפָעָה לְעוֹבְרֵי רְצוֹנוֹ  
הִיא רַק בְּדֶרֶךְ אֲגַב,  
those who violate G-d's will receive sustenance as an aside.

כְּמֵאן דְּשָׂדִי בְּתֵר כְּתַפּוּי,  
It is given to them begrudgingly, like one who throws it over his shoulder,

כְּמִבְּאָר שֶׁם בְּאַרְכָּה.  
as explained at length in that source.<sup>70</sup>

וְיֵשׁ לוֹמֵר,  
It can be explained that the details of the analogy are significant.

דְּזֶה שֶׁמְבִיא שְׁתֵּי  
דְּגִמָּאוֹת שֶׁהַהֲשָׁפָעָה לָהֶם  
הִיא רַק בְּדֶרֶךְ אֲגַב  
The two examples that the *maamar* cites of those who receive sustenance as an aside

(וְאֵינָם יוֹשְׁבִים  
בְּשִׁלְחַן הַמֶּלֶךְ),  
(and do not sit at the king's table)

דגמאות באלו שיושבים בשלחן המלך, שרים גדולים ועבדים חשובים, הוא, בהתאם לד' דרגות בהנמשל. שדרגא הכי תחתונה הם הכלבים שאינם עובדים את המלך, ורצונם הוא שישפע להם גשמיות, עוד ועוד, כמו שכתוב: "והכלבים עזי נפש לא ידעו שבעה". ויש לקשר זה עם הידוע: שכלב הוא מלשון כלו לב. דטבע האדם בתולדתו וטבע יצירתו – שהמח שליט על הלב,<sup>73</sup> וזה שהוא בבחינת כלב הוא קצה

עבדים ושפחות וכלבים, – the servants and maids, and the dogs –

ושתי דגמאות באלו ושיושבים בשלחן המלך, and the two examples of those who sit at the king's table

שרים גדולים ועבדים חשובים, – prominent officers and prestigious servants –

הוא, בהתאם לד' דרגות בהנמשל. parallel four levels in the analogue.

שדרגא הכי תחתונה On the lowest level are the dogs.

הם הכלבים

שאינם עובדים את המלך, They do not serve the king;

ורצונם הוא שישפע להם גשמיות, they are motivated solely by their own desire that material things be given to them and

עוד ועוד, that the largesse should continue endlessly, enabling them to receive more and more,

כמו שכתוב "והכלבים עזי נפש לא ידעו שבעה". as it is written:<sup>73</sup> "The dogs are fiercely wanting; they know no satiation."

ויש לקשר זה עם הידוע שכלב הוא מלשון כלו לב. This can be associated with the well-known concept<sup>74</sup> that כלב, Hebrew for "dog," can be associated with the phrase: כולו לב, "all heart."

דטבע האדם בתולדתו וטבע יצירתו – שהמח שליט על הלב, The inherent nature of a person and his innate tendency is that his mind rules over the heart.<sup>75</sup>

73. *Yeshayahu* 56:11; see *Zohar*, Vol. III, p. 80a ff. Our translation follows the gloss of *Metzudas Tziyon*.

74. *Meorei Or, erech kelev*.

75. *Zohar*, Vol. III, p. 224a (in the *Raya Mehemna*); *Tanya*, ch. 12.

ההפכי. דלא רק שהלב שליט על המח, אלא יתרה מזו שהוא כלו לב. ולכן כלִי ענינו הוא למלאות תאות לבו. ולמעלה מזה הם העבדים הפחותים<sup>76</sup> (העבדים והשפחות שאחרי הרחמים), שהם עובדים את המלך, אלא שעבודתם היא רק מצד ההכרח (מפני אימת הכאת השבט)<sup>77</sup>, הפך הרצון והתענוג שלהם, ד"עבדא בהפקירא נוחא ליה"<sup>78</sup>.

וְזֶה שֶׁהוּא בְּבָחִינַת כָּלֵב  
הוּא בְּקֶצֶה הַהֶפְכִי. A person described with the analogy of a dog is the direct opposite.

דְּלֵא רַק שֶׁהֵלֵב  
שְׁלִיט עַל הַמַּח, Not only does his mind not rule over his heart,

אֲלֵא יִתְרֵה מְזוּ  
שֶׁהוּא כְּלוּ לֵב. he is "all heart."

וְלִכְּן כָּל עֲנִינֵו הוּא  
לְמִלְאוֹת תַּאוֹת לְבוֹ. All<sup>76</sup> of his concerns are solely to fulfill the desires of his heart.

וְלְמַעַלָּה מִזֶּה הֵם  
הַעֲבָדִים הַפְּחוּתִים On a higher level are the lowly servants<sup>77</sup>

(הַעֲבָדִים וְהַשְּׁפֹחוֹת  
שֶׁאַחֲרֵי הַרְחִימִים), (the servants and the maidservants who are found "behind the millstones") who do not enter the king's presence.

שֶׁהֵם עוֹבְדִים אֶת הַמֶּלֶךְ, They do serve the king, in contrast to the dogs that only serve themselves.

אֲלֵא שֶׁעֲבוּדָתָם הִיא  
רַק מִצַּד הַהֶכְרַח Nevertheless, they serve the king only out of compulsion

(מִפְּנֵי אֵימַת הַכָּאֵת הַשְּׁבֵט), (because they fear that otherwise they will be beaten).<sup>78</sup>

הַפֶּךְ הַרְצוֹן וְהַתַּעֲנוּג  
שֶׁלָּהֵם, Serving the king runs contrary to their will and their pleasure,

76. Truly "all" his concerns, because he is "all heart."

77. See the *Siddur Im Dach* which describes these servants as "the lowly among the servants."

78. See *Derech Mitzvosecha*, p. 83b; *Or HaTorah, Mishpatim*, p. 1128. In those sources, however, a slightly different explanation is given.

ומכיון שהרצון והתענוג שלהם הוא בתאוות עולם הזה, וזה שאינם עוברים על רצונו יתברך הוא מפני יראת הענש, מקומם הוא מחוץ לשלחן המלך. מה שאין כן עבדים החשובים, עבודתם את המלך היא ברצון וחשק. דהגם שעיקר עבודתם היא מצד קבלת על נכידועי החלוק בין בן לעבד, דזה שהבן עושה רצון אביו הוא מפני

ד"עבדא בהפקיִרא  
ניחא ליה".  
for a servant enjoys living without any restraints  
upon him,<sup>79</sup> *behefkeira nicha lei*, in the original  
Aramaic.

ומכיון שהרצון  
והתענוג שלהם הוא  
בתאוות עולם הזה,  
ומכיון שהרצון  
והתענוג שלהם הוא  
בתאוות עולם הזה,

וזה שאינם עוברים  
על רצונו יתברך הוא  
מפני יראת הענש,  
and the only reason they do not violate G-d's will  
is that they fear punishment,

מקומם הוא מחוץ  
לשלחן המלך.  
they are not worthy of sitting at the king's table.

Since they have no real desire to serve the king, they are not worthy of beholding his countenance.

מה שאין כן עבדים  
החשובים,  
In contrast, the "prestigious servants"

עבודתם את המלך  
היא ברצון וחשק.  
serve the king willingly; this is their desire.

דהגם שעיקר עבודתם  
היא מצד קבלת על  
True, their service is primarily motivated by the  
acceptance of the king's yoke.

[כידוע החלוק  
בין בן לעבד,  
[As is well known,<sup>80</sup> this constitutes the difference  
between the service of a son and a servant.

דזה שהבן עושה רצון  
אביו הוא מפני האהבה  
A son carries out his father's will because of his  
love,

79. *Gittin* 13a.

80. See *Tanya*, ch. 41; the series of *maamarim* entitled *Yom Tov shel Rosh HaShanah*, 5666, p. 308ff., et al.

האהבה וזה שהעבד ממלא רצון אדונו הוא בדרך קבלת על], מכל מקום, זה גופא הוא ברצון וחשק, שרוצים לקבל עליהם על מלכות שמים. ולכן מקומם הוא בשלחן המלך. ולמעלה מהם הם השרים, שיש להם ידיעה בהנהגת המלוכה [שלכן כמה וכמה ענינים בהנהגה מתנהגים על פיהם], וגם יש להם השגה במעלת המלך, ומפני זה יש להם אהבה אליו, ועבודתם היא לא רק מצד קבלת על אלא גם מצד אהבה. ובשרים

וְזֶה שֶׁהַעֲבָד מְמַלֵּא  
רְצוֹן אֲדוֹנוֹ הוּא  
בְּדֶרֶךְ קִבְלַת עַל],  
while a servant carries out the will of his master  
because he accepts his yoke.]

מִכָּל מְקוֹם, זֶה גּוֹפֵא  
הוּא בְּרְצוֹן וְחֶשֶׁק,  
Nevertheless, a “prestigious servant” accepts the  
king’s yoke willingly and with desire;

שְׂרוּצִים לְקַבֵּל עֲלֵיהֶם  
עַל מַלְכוּת שָׁמַיִם.  
in the analogue, he desires to accept the yoke of the  
kingdom of Heaven.

וְלִכֵּן מְקוֹמָם הוּא  
בְּשִׁלְחַן הַמֶּלֶךְ.  
Therefore, he is worthy of a place at the king’s  
table.

And the gifts the king grants him are granted face to face, joyfully.

וְלִמְעַלָּה מֵהֶם הֵם הַשָּׂרִים,  
On a higher level than this are the king’s officers.

שֵׁישׁ לָהֶם יְדִיעָה  
בְּהִנְהַגַת הַמְּלוּכָה  
They know the conventions of the kingdom.

[שְׁלֹכֵן כַּמָּה וְכַמָּה  
עֲנִינִים בְּהִנְהַגַת  
מִתְנַהֲגִים עַל פִּיהֶם],  
[For that reason, many of the matters of the king-  
dom are entrusted to their authority.]

וְגַם יֵשׁ לָהֶם הַשָּׂגָה  
בְּמַעַלְת הַמֶּלֶךְ,  
They also comprehend the virtues of the king

וּמִפְּנֵי זֶה יֵשׁ לָהֶם  
אַהֲבָה אֵלָיו,  
and therefore, they love him.

וְעִבּוּדָתָם הִיא לֹא רַק  
מִצַּד קִבְלַת עַל  
Thus their service is not motivated by the accep-  
tance of the king’s yoke alone;

אֲלָא גַם מִצַּד אַהֲבָה.  
it also results from their love of him.

גופא ישנם כמה וכמה דרגות, שנחלקות בכללות לשתיים. שרים (סתם) ושרים גדולים. ויש לומר, דג' סוגים אלו שנמצאים בשלחן המלך [עבדים חשובים, שרים ושרים גדולים] הם בהתאם לג' הסוגים שבמדרש, דכסין ואיפרכין ואיסטרטילוטין, שנמצאים יחד עם המלך, כלשון המדרש "והיו עמו", בדגמת עבדים החשובים והשרים שנמצאים בשלחן המלך. ועל פי זה יש לומר, דהגם שהכונה (בפשטות) בדכסין וכו' היא לשבעים השרים דנגה (כמובא לעיל מהדרושים), מכל מקום, זה

ובשרים גופא ישנם  
כמה וכמה דדרגות, The category of officers itself subdivides into several levels.

שנחלקות בכללות  
לשתיים. שרים (סתם)  
ושרים גדולים. In general, there are two levels, ordinary officers and prominent officers.

יש לומר, דג' סוגים אלו  
שנמצאים בשלחן המלך It is possible to say that these three categories found at the king's table

[עבדים חשובים, שרים  
ושרים גדולים] – prestigious servants, ordinary officers and prominent officers –

הם בהתאם לג' הסוגים  
שבמדרש, דכסין  
ואיפרכין ואיסטרטילוטין,  
שנמצאים יחד עם המלך, correspond to the three types of officers – a duke, a prefect, and a commander – whom the above-mentioned *Midrash* describes as accompanying the king.

כלשון המדרש "והיו עמו", The description the *Midrash* gives – that they accompany the king –

בדגמת עבדים החשובים  
והשרים שנמצאים  
בשלחן המלך. is similar to the concept mentioned in the analogy: that the prestigious servants and officers sit at the king's table.

ועל פי זה יש לומר, On this basis, it is possible to offer further insight concerning the *Midrash* cited above:

דהגם שהפונה (בפשטות)  
בדכסין וכו' היא  
לשבעים השרים דנגה The obvious analogues to the duke, the prefect, and the commander are the seventy patron angels of *kelipas nogah*

(כמובא לעיל מהדרושים), (as explained in the *maamarim* cited above).<sup>78</sup>

שמדיק שהדכסין "היו עמו" הוא בכדי לרמוז שמדבר כאן [לא רק בה' בשבעים שרים, שהם יש ודבר בפני עצמוס<sup>81</sup>, דגמת עבדים הפחותים שמקומם הוא מחוץ לשלחן המלך, אלא] גם במלאכים שהם בטלים לאלקות, ולמעלה יותר – בספירות דאצילות שאיהו וחייהו וגרמוהי חדס<sup>82</sup>, שהם תמיד עם המלך. ועל פי זה מובן עוד יותר גדל

This is also evident from the fact that the *Midrash* describes the people who chose these officers as those who serve the sun and the moon.

מְכַל מְקוּם, זֶה שְׁמֵדִיק  
שְׁהַדְכָסִין "הִיו עִמו" הוּא  
בְכָדִי לְרִמּוֹז שְׁמֵדִבְרַר כְּאֵן

Nevertheless, the fact that the *Midrash* describes the duke, *et al.*, as "accompanying the king," alludes to the concept that the analogue refers

[not to the seventy patron angels who are characterized by *yeshus* and possess an independent identity,

Accordingly, it is explained in *Chassidus*<sup>81</sup> that the vitality drawn down to the seventy patron angels is in exile within them.

דְּגִמַת עֲבָדִים הַפְּחוּתִים  
שְׁמֵקוּמָם הוּא מְחוּץ  
לְשִׁלְחַן הַמֶּלֶךְ,

like the lowly servants whose place is removed from the king's table,

Since these patron angels are characterized by *yeshus*, self-concern, it is not fit to speak of them as "accompanying the king."

אָלָא] גַם בַּמְלָאכִים  
שְׁהֵם בְּטָלִים לְאַלְקוּת,

but] also to those angels whose identity is subsumed in G-dliness.

וּלְמַעְלָה יוֹתֵר –  
בְּסִפְרוֹת דְּאֶצִּילוֹת

Moreover, on a higher level, the analogy can also refer to the *Sefiros* of *Atzilus*,

שְׁאִיהוּ וְחִיּוּהֵי וְגִרְמוּהֵי חֵד,  
אֵבֶר; הֵם וְחִיּוּהֵם אֵבֶר

about which is said:<sup>82</sup> "He and His life-energy are one; He and His causations are one"

שְׁהֵם תָּמִיד עִם הַמֶּלֶךְ. – entities that are at one with the King at all times

And hence, can be described as "accompanying" Him. Previously, the *maamar*

81. See *Siddur Im Dach*, p. 287b ff., *et al.* See also *Tanya, Iggeres HaKodesh*, Epistle 25.

82. *Etz Chayim, Shaar 47 (Shaar Atzilus, Beriah, Yetzirah, and Asiyah)*, ch. 2, *et al.*; *Tanya, Iggeres HaKodesh*, the beginning of Epistle 20.

פקחותו של זה שאמר "אנא נסיב מלכא", דנוסף לזה שאינו רוצה לקבל ההשפעה בדגמת הכלבים וגם לא כעבדים הפחותים שמחוץ לשלחן המלך (הגם שההשפעה שנשפע להם היא ברבוי גדול) ורוצה להיות בשלחן המלך, אלא שאינו רוצה גם בהדכסין וכו' (מלאכים, ספירות דאצילות ולמעלה יותר), אלא בהמלך, אנא נסיב

described the intermediaries as being powers within the realm of *kelipah*. At this point, the *maamar* is emphasizing that it is possible to conceive of there being intermediaries even within the realm of holiness. Nevertheless, they are merely intermediaries. The uniqueness of "the clever person" is – as the *maamar* proceeds to explain – that he does not want to receive sustenance even from these intermediaries. He desires a bond solely with the king.

וְעַל פִּי זֶה מוֹבֵן עוֹד יוֹתֵר  
גְּדוֹל פִּקְחוּתוֹ שֶׁל זֶה שְׁאָמַר  
"אֲנֵא נְסִיב מַלְכָּא",  
On this basis, one can further comprehend the extent of the "cleverness" of the person who states: "I will choose the king."

דְּנוֹסָף לְזֶה שְׁאִינוּ  
רוֹצֵה לְקַבֵּל הַשְּׂפָעָה  
בְּדִגְמַת הַכְּלָבִים וְגַם  
לֹא כְּעַבְדִּים הַפְּחוּתִים  
שֶׁמְחוּץ לְשִׁלְחַן הַמֶּלֶךְ.  
Not only is he unwilling to receive sustenance as do the dogs or the lowly servants that are removed from the king's table

(הַגַּם שֶׁהַשְּׂפָעָה שְׁנִשְׂפָּע לָהֶם הִיא בְּרַבּוּי גְּדוֹל)  
(even though the sustenance granted to them is vast),

וְרוֹצֵה לְהִיּוֹת  
בְּשִׁלְחַן הַמֶּלֶךְ,  
he wants to be present at the king's table.

אֲלֵא שְׁאִינוּ רוֹצֵה  
גַּם בְּהַדְּכָסִין וְכוּ'  
Moreover, he does not desire intermediaries like the duke,

(מַלְאָכִים, סְפִירוֹת  
דְּאֲצִילוּת וּלְמַעְלָה יוֹתֵר),  
(in the analogue, the angels, the *Sefiros* of *Atzilus*, or intermediaries on even higher levels).

אֲלֵא בְּהַמֶּלֶךְ, אֲנֵא  
נְסִיב מַלְכָּא.  
He desires the king himself: "I will choose the king."



מלכא. וכתורת הבעל שם טוב<sup>83</sup> הידועה על הפסוק<sup>84</sup> "תפלה לעני כי יעטף ולפני הוי' ישפך שיחו", שאינו מבקש שום דבר, ותפלתו היא שלפני הוי' ישפך שיחו. ולזה צריך פקחות גדולה. ובדגמת מלך בשר ודם, שבכדי לכנס להקיסטון שבו נמצא המלך ולראות את פני המלך, צריך לעבר תחלה דרך כמה וכמה היכלות שבכל אחד מהם יש הון יקר, וישנם כאלו שכשרואים את ההון יקר שבהיכל החיצון, הם מתענגים מזה בתענוג נפלא ומתעכבים שם. ויש כאלו שמתענגים בהיכל פנימי יותר. ודוקא מי

וְכַתּוּרַת הַבַּעַל שֵׁם טוֹב  
הַיְדוּעָה עַל הַפְּסוּק  
"תְּפִלָּה לְעֵנִי כִי יַעֲטֵף  
וְלִפְנֵי הוֹי' יִשְׁפֹךְ שִׁיחוֹ",  
This can be illustrated by the Baal Shem Tov's well-known analogy<sup>83</sup> on the phrase:<sup>84</sup> "A prayer of a poor person when he languishes and pours out his soul before G-d."

שְׁאִינוּ מִבְּקֵשׁ שׁוּם דָּבָר,  
The "poor person" does not desire anything.

וְתִפְלָתוֹ הִיא שֶׁלִּפְנֵי  
הוֹי' יִשְׁפֹךְ שִׁיחוֹ.  
His request is only that he be able to "pour out his soul before G-d."

וְלָזֶה צָרִיף פְּקָחוֹת גְּדוֹלָה.  
Choosing the King rather than the intermediaries requires great wisdom.

וּבְדִגְמַת מֶלֶךְ בְּשָׂר וְדָם,  
As in the analogy of a mortal king,

שֶׁבְּכַדֵּי לְכַנֵּס לְהַקִּיסְטוֹן  
שֶׁבּוֹ נִמְצָא הַמֶּלֶךְ  
וְלִרְאוֹת אֶת פְּנֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ,  
in order to reach the throne room where the king is found and his countenance can be beheld,

צָרִיף לְעֵבֵר תְּחִלָּה דְּרָף  
כַּמָּה וְכַמָּה הַיְכָלוֹת שֶׁבְּכֹל  
אֶחָד מֵהֶם יֵשׁ הוֹן יָקָר,  
it is necessary to pass through numerous chambers, each containing fabulous treasures.

וְיִשְׁנֵם כְּאֵלוֹ שֶׁכְּשָׂרוּאִים אֶת  
הַהוֹן יָקָר שֶׁבְּהֵיכַל הַחִיצוֹן,  
There are people who will derive such wonderful pleasure from seeing the great treasures that are found in the outermost chamber

הֵם מִתְעַנְּגִים מְזִיד בְּתַעֲנוּג  
נִפְלָא וּמִתְעַכְּבִים שָׁם.  
that they become transfixed and will remain there and thus fail to reach the chamber where the king sits.

83. *Kesser Shem Tov*, sec. 97 (p. 13c), *Or Hamei'ir*, *Parshas Vayishlach*.

84. *Tehillim* 102:1.

שהוא חכם גדול, גייט אים ניט אן החשיבות והיקר של ההון עצום הנמצא גם בהיכל הכי פנימי, וכל רצונו ותשוקתו היא לכנס להקיטון בו נמצא המלך ולראות את פני המלך.

וַיֵּשׁ כְּאֵלוֹ שְׂמֵת־עֲנָגִים    **Others are transfixed by the pleasure they derive**  
 בְּהִיכַל פְּנִימֵי יוֹתֵר.    **from the treasures found in an inner chamber.**

וַיְדַוְקָא מִי שֶׁהוּא חָכֵם    **Only one who is very wise is unaffected by the**  
 גְּדוּלָּה, גֵּיִיט אִים נִיט אָן    **magnitude and the value of the magnificent**  
 הַחֲשִׁיבוּת וְהִיקָר שֶׁל    **treasures that are found in even the innermost**  
 הַהוֹן עֲצוּם הַנִּמְצָא גַם    **chambers,**  
 בְּהִיכַל הַכִּי פְּנִימִי,   

וְכָל רְצוֹנוֹ וְתִשְׁוּקָתוֹ    **but instead, focuses his will and his desire solely**  
 הִיא לְכַנֵּס לְהַקִּיטוֹן    **on entering the throne room where the king sits,**  
 בּוֹ נִמְצָא הַמֶּלֶךְ   

וְלִרְאוֹת אֶת פְּנֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ.    **so that he can behold the king's countenance.**

## SUMMARY

The soul's choice of G-d stems from the essence of the soul, a level that transcends intellect. Perhaps one can add that when this choice is drawn down from its essence and has an effect on the intellect, it elevates the soul to a loftier rung than its natural, inherent level.

This can be understood by prefacing with a concept explained in the *Siddur im Dach*: that the Divine blessings granted to those who transgress G-d's will are like "an aside," like one who gives something to another by throwing it over his shoulder. To explain by analogy, it is like a king who makes a celebratory feast for his prominent officers and prestigious servants. Now, even lowly servants and maids receive the leftovers from the feast. And even dogs feast on the bones that were discarded, but of course, the king had no intention of spending money on them. The leftovers they receive are given merely as an aside. Similarly, in the analogue, those who violate G-d's will receive sustenance as an aside. It is given to them begrudgingly.

The details of the analogy are significant. The two examples of those who receive sustenance as an aside and do not sit at the king's table - i.e., the servants and maids, and the dogs - and the two examples of those who sit at the king's table - the prominent officers and prestigious servants - parallel four levels in the analogue.

On the lowest level are the dogs. They do not serve the king; they are motivated solely by their own desire that material things be given to them. On a higher level are the lowly servants who do not enter the king's presence. They do serve the king, but only out of compulsion, because they fear that otherwise they will be beaten. Serving the king runs contrary to their will and their pleasure. Therefore, they are not worthy of sitting at the king's table.

In contrast, the "prestigious servants" serve the king willingly; this is their desire. True, their service is primarily motivated by the acceptance of the king's yoke. Nevertheless, he accepts that yoke willingly and with desire. In the analogue, the person desires to accept the yoke of the kingdom of Heaven. Therefore, he is worthy of a place at the king's table. On a higher level than this are the king's officers. They comprehend the virtues of the king and therefore, they love him.

The category of officers itself subdivides into several levels. In general, there are two levels, ordinary officers and prominent officers. It is possible to say that these three categories found at the king's table - prestigious servants, ordinary officers and prominent officers - correspond to the three types of officers - the duke, the prefect, and the commander - whom the above-mentioned *Midrash* describes as accompanying the king.

The description the *Midrash* gives - that they accompany the king - resembles the concept mentioned in the analogy: that the prestigious servants and officers sit at the king's table. On this basis, it is possible to offer further insight concerning the *Midrash* cited above: Although the obvious analogue to the duke, the prefect, and the commander are the seventy patron angels of *kelipas nogah*, since the officers are described as "accompanying the king," they can also be understood as referring to angels whose identity is subsumed in G-dliness, and even to the *Sefiros* of *Atzilus*.

On this basis, one can further comprehend the extent of the "cleverness" of the person who states: "I will choose the king." He wants the king alone, not any intermediaries, not even one bonded with the king.

This relates to the Baal Shem Tov's well-known analogy explaining the phrase: "A prayer of a poor person who pours out his soul before G-d." The poor person wants nothing else but to come before the king.

(ח) וַיֵּשׁ לֹמְרָה, שְׁעֲנִין זֶה הוּא הָאֱהָבָה ד' מִי לִי בְּשָׁמַיִם וְעַמֶּךָ לֹא חִפְצָתִי<sup>85</sup>, וְכָל־שׁוֹן אֲדַמּוּ"ר הִזְקֵנוּ<sup>86</sup> "אֵיךְ ווִיל זַע גָּאָר נִיסֵט אֵיךְ ווִיל נִיט דַּאִיִּן גַּן עַדֵּן אֵיךְ ווִיל נִיט דַּאִיִּן עוֹלָם הַבָּא כּו' אֵיךְ ווִיל מַעַר נִיט אֵז דִּיךְ אֲלֵיִן". דֶּה־גַּם שֶׁהַגְּלוּיִים שֶׁבְּגַן עַדֵּן וּמְכַל שֶׁכֵּן הַגְּלוּיִים דְּעוֹלָם הַבָּא הֵם גְּלוּיִים נְעֻלִים בְּיוֹתֵר, וְאֲדַמּוּ"ר הִזְקֵן הִיתָה

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וַיֵּשׁ לֹמְרָה, שְׁעֲנִין זֶה הוּא הָאֱהָבָה ד' מִי לִי בְּשָׁמַיִם וְעַמֶּךָ לֹא חִפְצָתִי, It is possible to say that this approach is synonymous with the love for G-d described by the verse:<sup>85</sup> "Whom have I in heaven but You? And besides You, I desire nothing."

וְכָל־שׁוֹן אֲדַמּוּ"ר הִזְקֵן As the Alter Rebbe was wont to say at times when he would enter a state of *deveikus*:<sup>86</sup> (*Deveikus* refers to a state in which a person enters a conscious bond with G-d that lifts him totally above material consciousness.)

"אֵיךְ ווִיל זַע גָּאָר נִיסֵט אֵיךְ ווִיל נִיט דַּאִיִּן גַּן עַדֵּן "I desire nothing. I don't want Your *Gan Eden*. Here, the term *Gan Eden* refers to the abode of the souls in the spiritual realms in the afterlife.

אֵיךְ ווִיל נִיט דַּאִיִּן עוֹלָם הַבָּא כּו' I don't want Your *Olam HaBa* (World to Come) .... Here, the intent of the phrase "the World to Come" is the Era of the Resurrection.

אֵיךְ ווִיל מַעַר נִיט אֵז דִּיךְ אֲלֵיִן". I want nothing but You alone."

דֶּה־גַּם שֶׁהַגְּלוּיִים שֶׁבְּגַן עַדֵּן וּמְכַל שֶׁכֵּן הַגְּלוּיִים דְּעוֹלָם הַבָּא הֵם גְּלוּיִים נְעֻלִים בְּיוֹתֵר, The revelations of *Gan Eden*, and how much more so the revelations of the World to Come, are truly very lofty.

וְאֲדַמּוּ"ר הִזְקֵן הִיתָה לוֹ הַשְּׂגָה בְּזֶה, Moreover, the Alter Rebbe had comprehended the nature of these revelations,

For unless he understood the nature of these revelations, saying that he did not

85. *Tehillim* 73:25.

86. *Derech Mitzvosecha, Shoresh Mitzvas HaTefillah*, sec. 40, p. 138a. See *HaYom Yom*, entry for 18 Kislev, for more background details.

לו השגה בזה, השגה אמתית באפן שהשכל נתאחד עם המשכל<sup>87</sup>, אף על פי כן אינו רוצה לא בהגלויים דגן ערן ולא בהגלויים דעולם הבא, וכל רצונו הוא רק בהעצמות, 'דיך אליין'. ויש להוסיף, דעיקר הפקחות בזה שאינו רוצה בהדכסין וכו' (המדרגות שבסדר ההשתלשלות, וגם שלמעלה מהשתלשלות) הוא, דהגם שהספירות (מלשון

desire them would be of no significance. If an unschooled youth says he does not desire an artistic masterpiece, but instead wants something else, his comment has no significance. He does not understand its value; therefore, he does not desire it. How different it is when a connoisseur of art makes such a statement! He appreciates the value of the work and yet desires something else.

השגה אמתית באפן understanding them truly, i.e., in a manner in  
 שהשכל נתאחד which the mind becomes completely one with  
 עם המשכל, the concept it understands.<sup>87</sup>

Intellect enables a person to bond with the idea he understands. Despite having understood, and thus bonded with, the World to Come in all its sublimity, the Alter Rebbe did not seek it. Instead, he desired “You alone.”

This approach reflects the wisdom of “the clever person.”

אף על פי כן אינו רוצה He does not desire the revelations of *Gan Eden*  
 לא בהגלויים דגן ערן ולא or the revelations of the World to Come.  
 בהגלויים דעולם הבא,

וכל רצונו הוא רק His will is solely and entirely focused on G-d's  
 בהעצמות, 'דיך אליין'. Essence: “You alone.”

ויש להוסיף, דעיקר A further point can be made. The fundamental  
 הפקחות בזה שאינו aspect of his cleverness in not choosing the duke  
 רוצה בהדכסין וכו' or the other officers

(המדרגות שבסדר – (i.e., in the analogue, the intermediate levels that  
 ההשתלשלות, וגם exist within the Spiritual Cosmos or which  
 שלמעלה מהשתלשלות) transcend the Spiritual Cosmos) –

הוא, is that he does not desire these intermediaries even  
 when they are at one with their G-dly source. Among  
 the intermediaries

87. As explained in *Tanya*, ch. 5, p. 9b.

ספירות ובהירות<sup>88</sup>) אין מסתירים על אור אין סוף, דבההשפעה שנמשכת על ידי הספירות (הכלים) נראה בגלוי שההשפעה היא לא מהספירות עצמם חס ושלום אלא שאור אין סוף משפיע על ידם<sup>89</sup>, וביותר הוא בהאורות דהספירות, שעל ידם מתגלה

דְּהִגְמֵי שְׁהִסְפִירוֹת are the *Sefiros* of Atzilus.

(מְלִשׁוֹן סְפִירוֹת וּבְהִירוֹת) (The term *sefirah* relates to the term *sefirus* which means “shining”)<sup>88</sup>

אֵין מְסַתִּירִים עַל and these *Sefiros* do not conceal G-d’s infinite light.  
אֹר אֵין סוֹף,

The intermediaries mentioned previously include angels. Although the angels’ source is in the realm of holiness and not in the realm of *kelipah*, they are, nevertheless, characterized by *yeshus*, a sense of self. They are separate entities who desire G-dliness. The *Sefiros*, by contrast, are Divine attributes with no sense of self. Hence, they are able to reveal G-d’s light without any concealment. Even so, “the clever person” does not desire even them; he desires G-d’s Essence.

לְדַבְּרֵי הַשְּׁפָעָה שֶׁנִּמְשָׁכֶת עַל When Divine beneficence is drawn down through  
יְדֵי הַסְּפִירוֹת (הַכְּלִים) the *Sefiros* (i.e., their *keilim*),

The *Sefiros* comprise *oros*, “lights,” and *keilim*, “vessels.” The *oros* reveal G-d’s light directly. The *keilim*, by contrast, reflect particular attributes: *Chochmah* (“wisdom”), *Chessed* (“kindness”), etc. Nevertheless, these attributes are entirely one with their source and it is overtly apparent that the beneficence does not come from the *Sefiros* themselves, Heaven forbid,

אֲלָא שְׂאוֹר אֵין סוֹף but emanates from G-d’s infinite light which pro-  
מְשַׁפֵּיעַ עַל יָדָם, vides the beneficence through them.<sup>89</sup>

וּבִיּוֹתֵר הוּא בְּהִירוֹת This is true to an even greater extent regarding  
דְּהִסְפִירוֹת, the light of the *Sefiros*,

שְׁעַל יָדָם מִתְגַּלֶּה הָאוֹר for through this light, the light that transcends the  
שְׁלִמְעָלָה מֵהֶם, *Sefiros* is revealed.<sup>90</sup>

The light that shines within the *Sefiros* has undergone a degree of *tzimtzum* so that

88. See *Or HaTorah, Chayei Sarah*, p. 106b, et al.

89. See the series of *maamarim* entitled *BeShaah SheHikdimu*, 5672, Vol. 1, sec. 106, (pp. 204-205); et al.

90. See *ibid.*, sec. 119.



גן עדן", "דאיין עולם הבא", דנוסף לזה שהגלויים דגן עדן ודעולם הבא עצמם הם גלויים נעלים ביותר, מתגלה על ידם כל מה שאפשר להתגלות מהמאור, מכל מקום אינו רוצה בהם, וכל רצונו הוא רק בהעצמות, דיך אליין.

דְּהִגְמֵי שְׁהִגְן עֲדָן וְהַעוֹלָם  
הָבָא הֵם "דְּאִיִּין גֵּן עֲדָן",  
"דְּאִיִּין עוֹלָם הָבָא",

Even though he spoke about "*Your Gan Eden*" and "*Your World to Come*," i.e., *Gan Eden* and the World to Come as they reveal "You,"

דְּנוֹסֵף לְזֶה שְׁהִגְלוֹיִים דְּגֵן  
עֲדָן וְדְעוֹלָם הָבָא עֲצָמָם  
הֵם גְּלוֹיִים נְעֵלִים בְּיֹתֵר,

– implying that aside from *Gan Eden* and the World to Come being elevated levels in and of themselves,

מִתְגַּלֶּה עַל יְדֵם כָּל מָה  
שְׁאֶפְשֵׁר לְהִתְגַּלּוֹת מִהַמְּאֹר,

and everything that is possible to be revealed from the Source of light is revealed through them –

מִכָּל מְקוֹם אֵינּוּ רוֹצֵה בָּהֶם,

nevertheless, a "clever person" does not desire even such lofty intermediaries.

וְכָל רְצוֹנוֹ הוּא רַק  
בְּהַעֲצָמוֹת, דִּיךְ אֵלֵיִן.

His entire will is focused on G-d's Essence: "You alone."

## SUMMARY

At times, when he would enter a state of *deveikus*, the Alter Rebbe was wont to say: "I desire nothing. I don't want *Your Gan Eden*. I don't want *Your Olam HaBa*. I want nothing but You alone."

Even though the Alter Rebbe appreciated the richness of the revelations of *Gan Eden* and *Olam HaBa*, all that concerned him was the bond with G-d's Essence. Similarly, to refer back to the *Midrash*, although the duke and others accompany the king and are one with him, the clever person ignores them and focuses only on the king.



ט) וַיֵּשׁ לומר, דפרוש זה ב'אנא נסיב מלכא' שאינו רוצה בהדרגות (דקדשה) שלמעלה אלא בהעצמות, והפרוש דאנא נסיב מלכא כפשוטו (שאינו עובד להכוכבים ומזלות), שיכים זה לזה. ויובן זה על פי הידוע<sup>93</sup> שהאהבה ד"מי לי בשמים" שאינו רוצה בהגלויים דגן עדן אלא בעצמות אור אין סוף, אף שבגן עדן

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וַיֵּשׁ לומר, דפרוש זה  
ב'אנא נסיב מלכא' It could be said that the interpretation<sup>93</sup> of the statement "I will choose the king" (offered in secs. 7-8),

שאינו רוצה בהדרגות  
(דקדשה) שלמעלה – that "the clever person" does not desire the levels (of holiness) that exist in the spiritual realms Above,

אָלָא בְּהַעֲצָמוֹת, but rather desires G-d's Essence –

והפרוש דאנא נסיב  
מלכא כפשוטו and the simple interpretation of that statement

(שאינו עובד  
להכוכבים ומזלות), (that he does not serve the stars and the constellations), i.e., the intermediaries that G-d has established through which He conveys sustenance to the world and which the pagans worshiped as deities, (as explained in secs. 3-4),

שיכים זה לזה. are interrelated.

ויובן זה על פי הידוע  
שהאהבה ד"מי לי בשמים" Their interrelation can be understood according to the well-known explanation<sup>94</sup> that the love for G-d intimated by the verse, "Whom have I in heaven but You?" (See sec. 8)

שאינו רוצה בהגלויים  
דגן עדן אלא בעצמות  
אור אין סוף, – i.e., that he does not desire the revelations of *Gan Eden*, but rather desires G-d's Essence –

stems from the person's willingness to rise above self-concern. As will be explained,

93. See secs. 7-8.

94. *Likkutei Torah, Vayikra*, p. 20a ff.; *Derech Mitzvosecha*, loc. cit.

ישאר במציאותו ויהיה לו השגה ותענוג באלקות (נהנים מזיו השכינה<sup>95</sup>) מה שאין כן מצד הגלוי דעצמות אור אין סוף יתבטל ממדרגתו, מכל מקום, מכיון שהגלוי דגן עדן הוא רק הארה בלבד (זיו השכינה), שבאין ערוך לגבי עצמות אור אין סוף, הוא בוחר בהעיקר ולא בהטפל. ומזה מובן, דכאשר הוא בוחר בהגלויים דגן עדן (שהם כלא חשיב לגבי עצמות אור אין סוף) בשביל הלגרמיה שלו<sup>95</sup>, בכדי שישאר במציאותו

the self-concern of a person who desires the revelations of *Gan Eden* is on an elevated level. He does not desire physical things, but rather to behold the radiance of G-d's Presence. Ultimately, however, his desire is for his own personal satisfaction; spiritual satisfaction to be sure, but satisfaction nonetheless.

אף שְׁבִגְן עֵדֵן יִשְׁאֵר In *Gan Eden*, one's soul remains a distinct entity  
בְּמִצִּיאוֹתָו וְיִהְיֶה לוֹ that will comprehend and delight in G-dliness  
הַשְּׂגָה וְתַעֲנוּג בְּאַלְקוּת

(נְהַנִּים מְזִיו הַשְּׂכִינָה) (as our Sages state:<sup>95</sup> in *Gan Eden*, the souls “take pleasure in the radiance of the Divine Presence”).

מֵה שְׁאִין כֵּן מִצַּד הַגְּלוּי The revelation of G-d's Essence, by contrast, will  
דְּעִצְמוֹת אֹר אֵין סוֹף cause a person's existence to be nullified entirely.  
יִתְבַּטֵּל מִמְדְּרַגְתּוֹ,

מִכָּל מְקוֹם, מִכִּיּוֹן Nevertheless, since the revelations of *Gan Eden*  
שֶׁהַגְּלוּי דְּגֵן עֵדֵן הוּא are merely a ray

רַק הָאֶרֶה בְּלִבְדּוֹ

(זִיו הַשְּׂכִינָה). (“the radiance of G-d's Presence”)

שְׁבִאִין עֲרוּף לְגַבִּי which cannot be compared to G-d's Essence,  
עִצְמוֹת אֹר אֵין סוֹף,

הוּא בּוֹחֵר בְּהֶעֱקֵר “the clever person” chooses what is of primary  
לֹא בְּהֶטְפֵּל. importance, i.e., G-d's Essence, and not what is  
שֶׁהֵם כְּלֹא חֲשִׁיב לְגַבִּי secondary, i.e., the radiance of His light.

וּמִזֶּה מוּבֵן, דְּכַאֲשֶׁר הוּא From this explanation, one can understand that  
בּוֹחֵר בְּהַגְּלוּיִים דְּגֵן עֵדֵן when one chooses the revelations of *Gan Eden*

(שֶׁהֵם כְּלֹא חֲשִׁיב לְגַבִּי) (which have no importance at all in relation to  
עִצְמוֹת אֹר אֵין סוֹף) G-d's Essence),

ויהנה מזיו השכינה, אפשר שיבוא מזה (על ידי רבוי השתלשלות וכו') דהגם שיודע שההשפעה שעל ידי השבעים שרים היא נמשכת ממקום המות (כנ"ל סוף סעיף ה), מכל מקום ירצה בהשפעה זו יותר מבההשפעה שמהקדשה, בכדי שיהיה לו שפע ברבוי. ועל דרך זה הוא גם בנוגע להטעות של העובדים לכוכבים ומזלות שמחשבים

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<p>בְּשִׁבִיל הַלְגָּרְמִיָּה שְׁלוֹ,</p>	<p>he is doing so for the sake of his self-interest<sup>96</sup></p>
<p>בְּכַדֵי שְׂיִשְׂאָר בְּמִצִּיאוֹתָיו וְיִהְיֶה מְזִיּוֹ הַשְּׂכִינָה,</p>	<p>so that he can retain his identity and derive satisfaction from the radiance of the Divine Presence.</p>
<p>אֶפְשָׁר שְׂיִבּוֹא מְזָה (עַל יְדֵי רְבוּי הַשְּׁתַלְשָׁלוֹת וְכוּ')</p>	<p>As a consequence, the possibility exists that this will lead (through a long sequence of chainlike descents)</p>
<p>דִּהְגָּם שְׂיִוָדַע שֶׁהַשְּׂפָעָה שְׁעַל יְדֵי הַשְּׂבָעִים שָׂרִים הִיא נִמְשָׁכֶת מִמְּקוֹם הַמָּוֶת</p>	<p>to the approach that although the person knows that the largesse conveyed by the seventy patron angels comes from the place of death</p>
<p>(כנ"ל סוף סעיף ה),</p>	<p>(as explained at the end of sec. 5),</p>
<p>מִכָּל מְקוֹם יִרְצֶה בְּהַשְּׂפָעָה זו יוֹתֵר מִבְּהַשְּׂפָעָה שֶׁמִּהַקְּדוּשָׁה,</p>	<p>he nevertheless desires this largesse more than deriving his sustenance from holiness,</p>
<p>בְּכַדֵי שְׂיִהְיֶה לוֹ שְׂפָע בְּרְבוּי.</p>	<p>because in this manner, he will receive greater abundance.</p>

I.e., the desire for the radiance of the Divine Presence reflects an elevated plane of spiritual awareness, while the desire for prosperity bestowed by the seventy patron angels stems from base material desire. Nevertheless, they share a common factor: self-concern.

Now, self-concern is a slippery slope. When a person is motivated by self-concern, even if that self-concern is on a refined level, it is entirely possible that ultimately, he will find himself expressing his self-concern on a lower – and even base – level.

וְעַל דֶּרֶךְ זֶה הוּא גַם  
בְּנוֹגֵעַ לְהַטְעוֹת שֶׁל  
הָעוֹבְדִים לְכּוֹכְבִים וּמְזָלוֹת  
שֶׁמִּחְשְׁבִים אוֹתָם לְמִצִּיאוֹת

Similar concepts apply regarding the error of those who serve the stars and the constellations because they consider them as significant entities

96. This is the wording used by *Likkutei Torah, loc. cit.*

אותם למציאות (שההשפעה באה מהכוכבים ומזלות עצמם, או שיש להם בחירה על כל פנים להשפיע). דמזה שרוצה בהגלויים דגן עדן ולא בעצמות אור אין סוף, היינו שהוא נותן חשיבות לענין שמחוץ להעצמות, אפשר שיבוא מזה (על ידי רבוי השתלשלות וכו') שיתן חשיבות להכוכבים ומזלות, שיש להם בחירה בהשפעתם, ויתרה מזו שההשפעה היא מהם עצמם חס ושלום. ויש להוסיף, דגם כשרצונו בגן

(שֶׁהַהִשְׁפָּעָה בָּאָה מֵהַכּוֹכָבִים וּמִזְלוֹת עֲצָמָם, either because they think that the prosperity comes from the stars and the constellations themselves

או שִׁישׁ לָהֶם בְּחִירָה עַל כָּל פְּנִים לְהִשְׁפִּיעַ). or because they maintain that the stars and the constellations have the choice to convey prosperity).  
(See sec. 3 above.)

דְּמִזְהָ שְׂרוּצָה בְּהַגְלוּיִים Here, too, the mistaken perspective of one who desires the revelations of *Gan Eden* and not G-d's Essence  
דְּגֵן עֵדֶן וְלֹא בְּעֲצָמוֹת אֹר אֵין סוּף,

הַיִּינוּ שֶׁהוּא נוֹתֵן חֲשִׁיבוֹת – i.e., he considers something outside of G-d's  
לְעֵנִין שְׂמַחוּץ לְהִעֲצָמוֹת, Essence as important –

אֶפְשֶׁר שְׂיָבֹא מִזֶּה can ultimately lead him

(עַל יְדֵי רַבּוּי הַשְׁתַּלְשְׁלוֹת וְכוּ') (through a long sequence of chainlike descents)

שְׂיִתֵּן חֲשִׁיבוֹת to consider the stars and the constellations as  
לְהַכּוֹכָבִים וּמִזְלוֹת, important –

Previously, the *maamar* spoke from an emotional perspective: i.e., what the person desires. Now, it is speaking from an intellectual perspective: what the person considers important.

שִׁישׁ לָהֶם בְּחִירָה and to think that they have free choice,  
בְּהִשְׁפָּעָתָם,

וְיִתְּרָה מִזּוּ שֶׁהַהִשְׁפָּעָה הִיא or to make an even greater error and think that  
מֵהֶם עֲצָמָם חַס וְשְׁלוֹם. they themselves are the source of the prosperity, Heaven forbid.

עדן הוא מפני שהוא גן עדן של הקדוש ברוך הוא ("דאיין גן עדן"), גם אז אפשר שיבוא מזה הטעות שיש להם (להכוכבים ומזלות) בחירה להשפיע ועד להטעות שההשפעה היא מהם עצמם, מכיון שגם לפי טעות זו הכח שיש להם להשפיע הוא (לא מצד עצמם אלא) מפני שהקדוש ברוך הוא מנה אותם על זה כנ"ל ס"ג (בדגמת "דאיין גן עדן"). ובכדי שלא יהיה שום נתינת מקום לאנא נסיב דכסין וכו' הוא על

וַיֵּשׁ לְהוֹסִיף, דְּגַם כְּשֶׁרְצוֹנוֹ  
בְּגַן עֵדֶן הוּא מְפָנִי שֶׁהוּא  
גֵן עֵדֶן שֶׁל הַקְּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ  
הוּא ("דאיין גן עדן"),  
Moreover, one may say that even when a person  
desires *Gan Eden* because it is the *Gan Eden* of  
the Holy One, blessed be He, ("*Your Gan Eden*,")  
(see the explanation of the quote of the Alter Rebbe  
mentioned in sec. 8)

גַּם אֲזַ אֶפְשֶׁר שְׂיִבּוֹא  
מִזֶּה הַטְּעוּת שְׂיִישׁ לָהֶם  
(לְהַכּוֹכְבִּים וּמְזוֹלוֹת)  
it is still possible to come to the error that the  
stars and the constellations

בְּחִירָה לְהַשְׁפִּיעַ  
have the choice of whether or not to convey  
prosperity

וְעַד לְהַטְּעוּת שֶׁהֵשְׁפַעָה  
הִיא מֵהֶם עֲצָמָם,  
and even to the error that they are the source of  
the prosperity.

מִכְיּוֹן שְׂגַם לְפִי טְעוּת זוֹ  
הַכֹּחַ שְׂיִישׁ לָהֶם לְהַשְׁפִּיעַ  
For even according to this mistaken thinking, the  
power that the stars and the constellations have  
to provide beneficence

הוּא (לֹא מִצֵּד עֲצָמָם  
is (not because of their inherent capacity

אֲלֵא) מְפָנִי שֶׁהַקְּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ  
הוּא מְנַה אוֹתָם עַל זֶה  
כַּנִּל ס"ג  
but) stems from the fact that the Holy One, bless-  
ed be He, appointed them to serve this function,  
as explained in sec. 3 above.

(בְּדִגְמַת "דאיין גן עדן").  
(Thus there is a commonality between this mistaken  
approach and the desire for "*Your Gan Eden*.")

For, in both instances, there is an intermediate level which, though connected to  
G-d, is not Him.

וּבְכַדִּי שְׂלֵא יִהְיֶה שׁוּם  
נְתִינַת מְקוּם לְאַנָּא  
נְסִיב דְּכַסִּין וְכוּ'  
The approach that does not even allow for the  
possibility that "I will choose a duke"

ידי שיעורר אצלו (מעין ושמץ על כל פנים, שזהו בכחו של כל אחד ואחד מישראל, כדלקמן) שלא לרצות אפלו "דאיין גן עדן", כי אם "מער ניט אז דין אליין".

הוא על ידי שיעורר  
אצלו שזהו

comes from arousing oneself

(מעין ושמץ על כל פנים, (for this, at least in microcosm,

בכחו של כל אחד ואחד  
מישראל, כדלקמן) is within the potential of every Jew, as will be explained) (see secs. 11-13)

שלא לרצות אפלו  
"דאיין גן עדן", so that he does not desire even "Your Gan Eden,"

כי אם "מער ניט  
אז דין אליין". rather he wants "nothing but You alone."

## SUMMARY

The statement "I will choose the king" is interpreted to mean:

- a) that "the clever person" does not desire the levels (of holiness) that exist in the spiritual realms above, but rather G-d's Essence; and
- b) on a more basic level, that he does not serve the intermediaries that G-d has established to convey sustenance to the world, but he serves G-d Himself.

These two interpretations are interrelated. In both instances, the choice of something other than G-d is motivated by self-concern. The revelation of G-d's Essence causes a person's existence to be nullified entirely. By contrast, when one chooses the revelations of *Gan Eden*, he is doing so for the sake of his self-interest, so that he can retain his identity and derive satisfaction from the radiance of the Divine Presence. As a consequence, the possibility exists that this will lead to the approach that although the person knows that the largesse conveyed by the seventy patron angels comes from the place of death, he nevertheless desires this largesse more than deriving his sustenance from holiness, because in this manner, he will receive greater abundance.

Similar concepts apply regarding the error of those who serve the stars and the constellations because they consider them as significant entities. Here, too, the mistaken perspective of one who desires the revelations of *Gan Eden* and not G-d's Essence - i.e., he considers something outside of G-d's Essence as important - can ultimately lead him to consider the stars and the constellations as important, and to think that they have free choice. Or it can lead to an even greater error, thinking that the intermediaries themselves are the source of prosperity.

י) **ויש** להוסיף באור בהשיכות ד'אנא נסיב מלכא' להאבהה ד'מי לי בשמים' שרוצה באור אין סוף, בהקדם שעיקר הענין דעבודת כוכבים ומזלות הוא שחושבים דבר שהוא רק אמצעי – לעיקר. הן בנוגע להכוכבים ומזלות, דהאמת הוא שאינם אלא אמצעי (גרזן) שעל ידם נמשכת ההשפעה, והעובדים לכוכבים ומזלות חושבים שהם עיקר, והן בנוגע להשפעות הגשמיות הנשפעות על ידם, שהשפעת

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ויש להוסיף באור בהשיכות ד'אנא נסיב מלכא' להאבהה ד'מי לי בשמים' Further explanation can be added to clarify the connection between the approach of “I will choose the king” and the love of G-d intimated by the verse, “Whom have I in heaven but You?”

שרוצה באור אין סוף – i.e., that a person desires G-d's infinite light.

בהקדם שעיקר הענין דעבודת כוכבים ומזלות As a preface: The fundamental error that led to the worship of the stars and the constellations, which, as explained above, serve as analogies for all the intermediaries that control the natural order.

הוא שחושבים דבר שהוא רק אמצעי – לעקר. is that primacy was attributed to something that was intended to be merely an intermediary. This leads to a twofold misunderstanding:

הן בנוגע להכוכבים ומזלות, a) Regarding the stars and constellations themselves:

דהאמת הוא שאינם אלא אמצעי (גרזן) In truth, they are merely intermediaries (an axe in the hand of the Chopper)

See sec. 3. As explained there, the analogy of an axe is employed because it is merely a tool, an instrument that has no power, will, or initiative of its own.

שעל ידם נמשכת ההשפעה, through which Divine blessings are granted.

והעובדים לכוכבים ומזלות, חושבים שהם עקר, Nevertheless, those who serve the stars and the constellations attribute primacy to them.

והן בנוגע להשפעות הגשמיות הנשפעות על ידם, b) Regarding the material prosperity that is drawn down through them:

הגשמיות היא בכדי שישתמשו בהם לעבודת ה', והעובדים לכוכבים ומזלות מחשבים את הגשמיות לעיקר (שלכן הם רוצים בההשפעה מהלעמת זה, בכדי שיהיה להם רבוי שפע גשמי, כנ"ל סעיף ד). והנה הגלויים, גם הגלויים הכי נעלים, התכלית הוא לא בהם עצמם, והם רק אמצעי שעל ידם תשלם הכונה הפנימית דדירה

שֶׁהַשְּׁפָעַת הַגְּשְׁמִיּוֹת  
היא בכדי שישתמשו  
בהם לעבודת ה',

**The entire purpose of G-d's granting material prosperity is that it be used for one's Divine service.**

וְהַעֲבֹדִים לְכֹכְבִּים  
וּמְזֻלוֹת מְחַשְּׁבִים אֶת  
הַגְּשְׁמִיּוֹת לְעִקָּר

**Those who serve the stars and the constellations give primacy to the material benefits themselves.**

(שְׁלֹכֵן הֵם רוֹצִים)  
בְּהַשְּׁפָעָה מֵהַלְעֻמַּת זֶה,

**(Therefore, they choose to receive their sustenance from the nether side**

בְּכַדִּי שְׂיִהְיֶה לָהֶם  
רְבוּי שְׁפַע גְּשָׁמִי,

**so that they will have an abundance of material prosperity,**

כְּנ"ל סעיף ד.)

**as explained in sec. 4 above.)**

A similar misunderstanding motivates one who seeks the revelations of G-dliness in the spiritual realms.

וְהִנֵּה הַגְּלוּיִים, גַּם הַגְּלוּיִים  
הַכִּי נְעָלִים, הַתְּכָלִית  
הוא לא בהם עצמם,

**The purpose of the existence of all the revealed levels of G-dliness, even the most lofty, is not for their own sake.**

וְהֵם רַק אֲמֻצְעֵי שְׁעַל יָדָם  
תְּשֻׁלַּם הַכֹּנָה הַפְּנִימִית  
דְּדִירָה בַּתְּחִתּוֹנִים.

**They are merely intermediaries through which G-d's inner intent for a dwelling in the lower realms<sup>97</sup> is fulfilled.**

The statement that G-d desired a dwelling in the lower realms implies that He desired to create a world in which man carries out the service of subduing and transforming the forces of *kelipah*. (For the existence of forces that seemingly oppose G-dliness is what defines it as "lower.") To bring such a world into being and inspire that service, G-d brought an entire Spiritual Cosmos into being. Nevertheless, the purpose of even the highest rungs in the Spiritual Cosmos – and even the infinite Divine light that transcends it – is solely for the sake of bringing

97. See Tanya, ch. 36, et al.



בתחתונים. ולכן, כשרוצה בהגלויים (ולא באור אין סוף), היינו שמחשיב אותם לעיקר, אפשר להיות נתינת מקום שיחשיב גם האמצעים (הכוכבים ומזלות והשפע הגשמי) לעיקר. ועל פי זה יש לומר, דזה שאמות העולם מהן עובדין לחמה ומהן ללבנה וישראל אינן עובדין אלא להקדוש ברוך הוא, הוא, כי השרש דאמות העולם הוא מחיצוניות הרצון (שרוצה באיזה דבר בשביל ענין אחר), והבחינה דחיצוניות הרצון

about a dwelling for Him in this world.

וְלִכֵּן, כְּשֹׁרָצָה בְּהַגְלויִים (ולא באור אין סוף), הִינּוּ שִׁמְחָשִׁיב אוֹתָם לְעִקָּר, Therefore, when a person seeks these spiritual revelations and gives primacy to them (and not to G-d's infinite light),

אֶפְשָׁר לְהִיּוֹת נְתִינַת מְקוֹם שִׁיחְשִׁיב גַּם הָאֲמָצְעִים (הַכּוֹכָבִים וּמְזָלוֹת) הַשֹּׁפֵעַ הַגְּשָׁמִי לְעִקָּר. there is a possibility that he will give primacy to other intermediaries (i.e., the stars and the constellations, and material benefit).

Why is he seeking these intermediaries? Because he is motivated by self-interest. He desires to derive satisfaction from “the radiance of the Divine Presence” and therefore focuses on them rather than on G-d's Essence. Since that is his primary motivation, the possibility exists that he will also give primacy to other intermediaries – the stars and the constellations (or in contemporary terms, the prevailing structures of the natural order) – with the thought that they will benefit him.

וְעַל פִּי זֶה יֵשׁ לוֹמַר, On this basis, it is possible to explain the underlying rationale as to why, as stated in the *Midrash* cited at the outset,

דְּזֵה שְׂאֵמוֹת הָעוֹלָם מִהֵן עוֹבְדִין לַחֲמָה וּמֵהֵן לְלִבְנָה there are those among the nations of the world who serve the sun and those who serve the moon,

וְיִשְׂרָאֵל אֵינָן עוֹבְדִין אֶלָּא לְהַקְדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא, while Israel serves only the Holy One, blessed be He.

הוּא, כִּי הַשֶּׁרֶשׁ דְּאֵמוֹת הָעוֹלָם הוּא מְחִיצוֹנִיּוֹת הָרָצוֹן The source for the existence of the nations of the world is the external dimensions of G-d's will

(שֹׁרָצָה בְּאִיזָה דְבָר, בְּשִׁבִיל עֲנִין אַחֵר), (whereby one wants something not for its own sake, but for the sake of something else).

(כמו שהיא מקור לאמות העולם) היא באפן שאין נרגש בה שהרצון הוא בשביל ענין אחר אלא שזה גופא הוא התכלית, ולכן מסתעף מזה שאמות העולם מחשבים את

To cite an example from ordinary experience: A person engages in a business enterprise. Why? Because he seeks to gain a profit. He does not desire all the struggle of commercial activity for its own sake. What he desires is the ultimate benefit he will derive, and this is the focus of the inner dimension of his will. The external dimensions of his will – what he wants to do so that he can achieve his inner desire – are focused on the activities he must undertake to earn it.

Similarly, in the analogue, G-d created the world because He desired a dwelling in the lower realms.<sup>1</sup> That dwelling is brought about through the Jewish people's observance of the Torah and its *mitzvos* in this material world. As *Rashi* states in the beginning of his commentary to the Torah, this was the motivation for the entire creation. This is the inner dimension of G-d's will. To enable that will to be brought into expression, He brought into being the entire Spiritual Cosmos and this material world together with all its creations. Although He brought them into being, He does not desire them in and of themselves. They exist only to bring His inner desire to fruition. They are thus all expressions of the external dimensions of His will.

וְהִבְחִינָה דְחִיצוֹנִיּוֹת הָרָצוֹן **The aspect of the external dimensions of His will**

(כְּמוֹ שֶׁהִיא מְקוֹר לְאֲמוֹת הָעוֹלָם) **(that serves as the source for the existence of the nations of the world)**

הִיא בְּאִפְּן שֶׁאֵין נִרְגָּשׁ בָּהּ שֶׁהָרָצוֹן הוּא בְּשִׁבִיל עֲנִין אַחֵר **is expressed in a manner that does not enable one to understand that this external desire is for the sake of something else, i.e., that in truth, all being exists in order to enable the inner dimension of G-d's will to be expressed,**

אֲלָא שֶׁזֶה גּוֹפָא הוּא הַתְּכַלִּית, **but rather thinks of itself as the ultimate purpose.**

The *maamar* is stating that mankind in general is motivated by an innate self-concern, because the souls of people at large are rooted in the external dimension of His will. This leads to a mistake in their world-view: Since their souls are rooted in a level of G-dliness that serves as the source for intermediaries that enable our world to come into existence, the intermediaries are significant to them. As a result,

הממצעים דכל מקום לעיקר<sup>ע</sup>. והשרש דישראל הוא מפנימיות הרצון, שמצד פנימיות הרצון אין נתינת מקום לאיזה ענין אחר, ולכן יש לישראל ההכרה שהכוכבים ומזלות

their focus is immediate, the makeup of the world as they see it. The concept that they exist solely for the sake of the fulfillment of G-d's inner desire is inherently foreign to them. To refer back to the analogy given above: it is like a workaholic. He has lost sight of the goal for which he works; the work itself becomes a goal. He is focused on the tasks in front of him alone.

וְלִכֵּן מִסְתַּעֲף מִזֶּה שְׂאֵמוֹת  
הָעוֹלָם מִחֻשְׁבִּים אֵת  
הַמְּצָעִים דְּכָל מְקוֹם לְעִקָּר. **Therefore, as a consequence of being created in this manner, in all instances, the nations of the world give primacy to the intermediaries.**

*Rambam*<sup>98</sup> explains that the reason the early pagans thought that they should honor the stars and the constellations is not (as explained previously in sec. 3, that they thought it necessary to acknowledge them as one acknowledges a waiter who brings wine), but rather because the Holy One, blessed be He, “conveyed honor upon them” and therefore, it is “G-d’s desire” that man convey honor upon them as well.

Why did they develop such a misconception? It is possible to say that the reason for their error stems from their inherent makeup. The external dimension of G-d’s will that serves as a source for the existence of the nations of the world gives rise to their mistaken perception that the existence of intermediaries reflects G-d’s inner desire.

וְהִשְׁרֵשׁ דִּישְׂרָאֵל הוּא  
מִפְּנִימִיּוֹת הָרָצוֹן  
שְׂמֻצָד פְּנִימִיּוֹת הָרָצוֹן  
אֵין נְתִינַת מְקוֹם  
לְאִיזָה עֲנִיָּן אַחֵר, **The source of the Jewish people, by contrast, is rooted in the inner dimension of G-d’s will – and from the perspective of the inner dimension of G-d’s will, there is no possibility for anything other than G-d’s will to be given prominence.**

Implied is that all other entities exist as expressions of His external will. They are intermediaries, whose sole purpose is to facilitate the expression of His inner will. Since their existence derives solely from His will, the power they exercise stems entirely from Him, and their exercise of that power is not at all dependent on their choice. As such, there is no reason to attach any importance to them; they are merely “like an axe in the hands of the Chopper.”

The uniqueness of the Jewish people is that their souls are rooted in the *inner* dimension of G-d’s will. Therefore, they possess an inherent recognition that they

98. *Rambam*, the beginning of *Hilchos Avodas Kochavim*.

הם רק אמצעי כגרון ביד החוצב (וכן השפע הגשמי הוא רק בשביל עבודת ה'), ולכן אינן עובדין אלא להקדוש ברוך הוא, 'אנא נסיב מלכא'.

themselves, and everything that exists on both the material and spiritual planes, are simply mediums to bring G-d's desire for a dwelling in the lower realms into expression. This insight stems from their innate spiritual makeup and defines their nature.

וְלִכְן יֵשׁ לְיִשְׂרָאֵל  
הַהֲפָרָה שֶׁהַכּוֹכָבִים  
וּמְזֻלוֹת הֵם רֶק אֲמֻצָּעִי  
Therefore the Jewish people recognize that  
the stars and the constellations are merely  
intermediaries,

כַּגְרוֹן בְּיַד הַחֹצֵב  
like an axe in the hand of the Chopper

(וְכֵן הַשְּׁפַע הַגְּשָׁמִי הוּא  
רֶק בְּשִׁבְלֵי עֲבוּדַת ה'),  
(and similarly, the material prosperity they receive  
is solely for the sake of Divine service).

וְלִכְן אֵינָן עוֹבְדִין אֶלָּא  
לְהַקְדֹּשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא,  
Therefore they serve only G-d,  
להקדוש ברוך הוא,

'אָנָּא נְסִיב מַלְכָּא'.  
declaring "I will choose the King."

## SUMMARY

The fundamental error that led to the worship of the intermediaries that control the natural order is that primacy was attributed to entities – both the intermediaries themselves and the prosperity they convey – that were intended to be merely intermediaries.

Similarly, the purpose of all the revealed levels of G-dliness is that they serve as intermediaries through which G-d's inner intent for a dwelling in the lower realms is fulfilled. Thus, one who seeks to derive satisfaction from these revelations rather than be nullified in G-d's Essence is attributing primacy to something that is fundamentally an intermediary. Therefore, when a person seeks these spiritual revelations and gives primacy to them (and not to G-d's infinite light), there is a possibility that he will give primacy to other intermediaries.

On this basis, it is possible to explain the underlying rationale as to why, as stated in the *Midrash* cited at the outset, mankind as a whole serves intermediaries, while the Jewish people serve G-d. The source for the existence of the nations of the world is the external dimensions of G-d's will. The external dimensions of will resemble

wanting something not for its own sake, but for the sake of something else. Since the nations of the world are rooted in the external dimensions of His will, it is difficult for them to understand that, in truth, all being exists in order to enable the inner dimension of G-d's will to be expressed. Instead, they think of what is immediately apparent as the ultimate purpose. As a consequence of coming into being from such an external source, mankind at large gives primacy to the intermediaries.

The source of the Jewish people, by contrast, is rooted in the inner dimension of G-d's will – and from the perspective of the inner dimension of G-d's will, there is no possibility for anything other than G-d's will to be given prominence. Therefore the Jewish people declare, "I will choose the King," recognizing the intermediaries to be no more than an axe in the hand of the Chopper. Similarly, the material prosperity they receive is solely for the sake of Divine service.

יאל וַעֲלֵ פִי זֶה יֵשׁ לְבָאָר גַּם הַמַּעֲלָה בְּזֶה דְּבַחֲרִית יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּהַקְדוּשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא הִיא  
 לֹא רַק מִצַּד הַרְצוֹן דֵּהנִשְׁמָה שְׁלִמְעֵלָה מֵהַשְׁכַּל אֲלֵא גַם מִצַּד הַשְׁכַּל (כִּנ"ל  
 סַעִיף ז), כִּי זֶה שֶׁהַשְׁרֵשׁ דִּישְׂרָאֵל הוּא בְּפִנִּימִיּוֹת הַמְקִיף (פְּנִימִיּוֹת הַרְצוֹן) הוּא מִפְּנֵי

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יַעֲלֵ פִי זֶה יֵשׁ לְבָאָר גַּם הַמַּעֲלָה בְּזֶה דְּבַחֲרִית יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּהַקְדוּשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא הִיא לֹא רַק מִצַּד הַרְצוֹן דֵּהנִשְׁמָה שְׁלִמְעֵלָה מֵהַשְׁכַּל אֲלֵא גַם מִצַּד הַשְׁכַּל (כִּנ"ל סַעִיף ז), כִּי זֶה שֶׁהַשְׁרֵשׁ דִּישְׂרָאֵל הוּא בְּפִנִּימִיּוֹת הַמְקִיף (פְּנִימִיּוֹת הַרְצוֹן) הוּא מִפְּנֵי

i.e., it is a result of the soul's essential connection to G-d,

אֲלֵא גַם מִצַּד הַשְׁכַּל but also from the intellect itself

(כִּנ"ל סַעִיף ז), (as explained in sec. 7).

As explained in sec. 6, the inherent bond that the Jews share with G-d (as indicated by the prooftext cited by the *Midrash*, “G-d is my portion,’ says my soul”) influences their understanding and motivates them to choose G-d even from the perspective of reason and logic. (Therefore, the *Midrash* describes the Jews with the analogy of “a clever person.”)

Sec. 7 began by stating: “The soul’s choice [of G-d stems from the essence of the soul, a level] that transcends intellect. Perhaps one can add that when this choice is drawn down and has an effect on the intellect, it elevates the soul to a loftier rung than its natural, inherent level.” With that statement commenced the explanation of why it is necessary for the soul’s essential, inherent connection to G-d to be filtered through a person’s intellect. In this and the subsequent sections, the *maamar* concludes that explanation, highlighting the higher dimension of the soul that is revealed when one’s intellect is aligned with the essence of the soul.

כִּי זֶה שֶׁהַשְׁרֵשׁ דִּישְׂרָאֵל הוּא בְּפִנִּימִיּוֹת הַמְקִיף To explain: **The source of the Jewish people stems from the inner dimension of G-d’s encompassing light**

It was explained in sec. 10 that the source of the existence of the nations of the world derives from the external dimension of G-d’s will, i.e., He does not desire the existence of these nations in and of themselves, but brings them into being to enable the Jews to be involved in the observance of the Torah and its *mitzvos*,

שישראל הם בחינת פנימי, וכידוע דשרש הפנימי הוא בפנימיות המקיף, ולכן, עיקר העלוי דבחירת ישראל בהקדוש ברוך הוא הוא כשהרצון דהנשמה שלמעלה מהשכל

for that is the purpose of creation as a whole (see the interpretation of our Sages' statement:<sup>99</sup> "The entire world was created only to be part of this" in *Rambam's* introduction to his Commentary on the *Mishnah*). Since these nations are intermediaries, their inherent, natural tendency is to choose intermediaries.

The source of the Jewish people, by contrast, is the inner dimension of G-d's will; i.e., He desires them for themselves, for His dwelling in the lower worlds is established through their involvement in the Torah and its *mitzvos*. Since their source is rooted in His inner desire, their inherent, natural tendency is to choose G-d's Essence and not the intermediaries.

(פְּנִימִיּוֹת הַרְצוֹן) (the inner dimension of G-d's will)

הוא מְפַנֵּי שִׁשְׂרָאֵל because the Jewish people are characterized by  
הם בְּחִינַת פְּנִימִי, inwardness (*pnimiyus*).

Inwardness begins with one's power of intellect, for it is the mind that enables a person to internalize his experience and have it become part of his personality. There are higher potentials in our spiritual makeup, e.g., will and pleasure, but they are described as encompassing dimensions, i.e., they affect us – indeed, powerfully so – but we don't understand them. When motivated by these encompassing dimensions, we feel that we are being swept up in something larger than our conscious selves. When we understand something, by contrast, it is part of who we are.

On an apparent level, the encompassing lights are higher and more powerful than the potential of intellect, but, in the ultimate sense, the inward light reflected in intellect stems from a higher source and possesses an advantage over these encompassing lights, as will be explained below.

וְכִידוּעַ דְּשִׂרְשׁ הַפְּנִימִי And, as is well known, the source of inwardness is  
הוא בְּפְנִימִיּוֹת הַמְּקִיף, the inner dimension of G-d's encompassing light

i.e., this is His fundamental intent.

וְלִכֵּן, עִיקַר הָעֵלּוּי Therefore the fundamental dimension of the  
דְּבַחְרֵת יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּהַקְדוּשׁ virtue reflected by the Jews' choice of G-d is  
בְּרוּךְ הוּא הוּא

(מקיף) נמשך ופועל גם בהשכל (פנימי), שעל ידי זה דוקא נמשך מעצם הנשמה (פנימיות המקיף), שלמעלה גם מהרצון שלמעלה מהשכל (חיצוניות המקיף). ויש

כְּשֶׁהֶרְצוֹן דִּהְנִשְׁמָה **when the soul's essential will that transcends logic**  
 שְׁלִמְעָלָה מְהַשְׁכֵּל (מקיף) — (i.e., will that reflects **an encompassing dimension**)

נִמְשָׁךְ וּפּוֹעֵל גַּם **is drawn down and affects logic itself (the inward**  
 בְּהַשְׁכָּל (פְּנִימִי), **dimension).**

Will is fundamentally above logic and reason – a person wants because he wants, not because he has a reason for what he wants. Even if it is explained to him that what he wants does not make sense, his desire remains. For will reflects and manifests the person's "I," where his soul seeks expression, while intellect appreciates and internalizes the realities that govern the world at large. As such, there can be a dichotomy between a person's will and his logic.

When, however, the essence of one's soul is drawn down, it remakes both his will and his intellect. His wants are not capricious; they reflect his inner being. And his mind does not function merely as a receptor, internalizing the external reality. Instead, in a proactive manner, it gives him the tools to express his inner spiritual reality in the world at large.

The intent is that a person's thinking processes express his soul's inner will. To illustrate the above concepts: There are certain spiritual absolutes – e.g., utter reliance and trust in G-d's providence – that human logic has difficulty in accepting. When the essence of the soul affects and transforms one's intellect, those absolutes become fundamental premises on which one's entire thinking process becomes based.

שְׁעַל יְדֵי זֶה דְּדוֹקָא **This reflects influence from the essence of the**  
 נִמְשָׁךְ מֵעֵצָם הִנְשְׁמָה **soul**

(פְּנִימִיּוּת הַמְּקִיף), **(the inner dimension of the encompassing light)**

שְׁלִמְעָלָה גַּם מְהַרְצוֹן **which is loftier yet than the will that transcends**  
 שְׁלִמְעָלָה מְהַשְׁכֵּל **logic**

(חִיצוֹנִיּוּת הַמְּקִיף). **(i.e., will as it reflects the external dimensions of the encompassing light).**

In another *maamar*,<sup>100</sup> the Rebbe speaks of individuals who displayed *mesirus*

100. The *maamar* entitled *VeAtah Tetzaveh* (*Sefer HaMaamarim Melukat*, Vol. 6, p. 129ff.), translated later in this text (p. 395ff.).



*nefesh* (self-sacrifice) continuously for many years when they were living in a country where oppressive decrees conflicted with the observance of the Torah and its *mitzvos*. When, however, these same individuals came to a free country where they could observe the Torah and its *mitzvos* without external challenges, the *mesirus nefesh* which they previously displayed was not necessarily manifest as prominently in their conduct.

Why is this possible? Because the *mesirus nefesh* they expressed throughout the years stemmed from a revelation of the higher, encompassing powers of the soul that transcended their inward powers. Hence, although this revelation spurred these individuals to deeds which were truly lofty, it did not elevate the people themselves. As individuals, they remained on the same spiritual level as before. The self-sacrifice they showed had no direct effect on the functioning of their hearts and minds, i.e., how they operate within the framework of their inward powers.

How was this possible? Because two different potentials were involved. Their self-sacrifice reflected the encompassing powers of the soul, potentials above the person's self, while their inward powers of thought and feeling defined their actual day-to-day selves. Even though their self-sacrifice expressed the encompassing powers of the soul, it did not transform their conscious powers entirely.

Nevertheless, in an ultimate sense, when the essence of the soul as it is rooted in G-d's Essence is expressed, no such dichotomy can exist. The essence of a Jew's soul must permeate his inward powers as well, because the essence of a person's being does not allow for the existence of anything else within his personality. Thus the fundamental expression of the essence of the soul is when it permeates the person's intellect and, through the intellect, every other dimension of his personality. At that point, all dichotomies are erased, for the essence pervades and remakes the person's entire character, causing every dimension of the person to reflect the essence of his soul.

Similarly, the *maamar* here is emphasizing how the essence of the soul (which stems from the inner dimension of the encompassing light) which is loftier than even the will that transcends logic (which reflects the external dimension of the encompassing light) is expressed when it is drawn down and affects the person's thought itself (the inward light).

To state the concept in terms of the analogy employed by the *Midrash*: The clever person's choice of G-d stems from an inherent, spiritual connection: "G-d is my portion,' says my soul." That spiritual connection reflects the essence of his being. Therefore it is drawn down into his intellect to the extent that he can explain his choice logically, giving a rationale: "The others are all subject to replacement,

לומר, דזהו גם מה שכתוב "חלקי הוי' אמרה נפשי" (חלקי דוקא), דחלק הוא בחינת פנימי (כידוע<sup>101</sup> בענין "מה טוב חלקנו ומה נעים גורלנו ומה יפה ירשתנו"), והעלוי דבחירת ישראל בהקדוש ברוך הוא הוא כשהבחירה דהנשמה נמשכת בפנימיות, בהבנה והשגה, ובאפן שזה פועל במחשבה דבור ומעשה, שעל ידי זה הוא ההמשכה

while the king is not subject to replacement." This indicates that even his selfhood, which begins with his intellect, is aligned with and expresses the essential G-dly core of his being.

וַיֵּשׁ לוֹמֶר, דְּזֶהוּ גַם  
מֵה שֶׁכָּתוּב "חֵלְקִי  
הוֹי' אָמְרָה נַפְשִׁי"

**It can be said that this is intimated by the prooftext cited by the *Midrash*:<sup>101</sup> "G-d is my portion,' says my soul."**

(חֵלְקִי דְּדוֹקָא),  
(The verse specifically makes use of the term *chelki*, "my portion")

דְּחֵלֶק הוּא בְּחִינַת פְּנִימִי  
**because that term connotes inwardness**

(כְּפִדּוּעַ בְּעֵנִין "מֵה טוֹב  
חֵלְקֵנוּ וּמֵה נְעִים גּוֹרְלֵנוּ  
וּמֵה יָפֵה יִרְשָׁתֵנוּ"),  
(as is well known regarding the interpretation<sup>102</sup> of the lines from the Morning Prayers: "How good is our portion [*chelkeinu*]! How pleasant is our lot! And how attractive is our inheritance!")

וְהַעֲלִי דְּבְחִירַת יִשְׂרָאֵל  
בְּהַקְדוּשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא הוּא  
כְּשֶׁהַבְּחִירָה דְּהַנְּשָׁמָה  
נִמְשָׁכַת בְּפִנִּימִיּוּת,  
**The virtue of the Jews' choice of G-d — the essential and inherent identification that causes the soul to choose G-d — is also drawn down in an inward manner**

בְּהַבְנָה וְהַשְׁגָּה,  
**and is thus internalized through one's understanding and comprehension**

וּבְאִפְּן שְׂגוּה פּוֹעֵל  
בְּמַחְשָׁבָה דְּבוּר וּמַעֲשֵׂה,  
**in such a manner that it affects one's thought, speech, and action.**

The soul's essential choice of G-d and commitment to His service must permeate not only his understanding and emotions, but also his thought, speech, and deed. When the commitment stems from the essence, there can be nothing – neither

101. *Eichah* 3:24.

102. See the *maamar* entitled *Ashreinu*, 5700, et al. That *maamar* (*Sefer HaMaamarim* 5700, p. 36) explains that *chelkeinu*, "our portion," refers to Divine service with one's heart and within one's heart.

his understanding, nor his actual conduct, nor any level in between – that is not aligned with the soul's essence.

שָׁעַל יְדֵי זֶה הוּא הַהִמְשָׁכָה  
 דְּפָנִימִיּוֹת הַמְּקִיף. **This effort on man's part draws down the inner dimension of G-d's encompassing light** into his own being and into the world at large.

## SUMMARY

Based on the above, we can also explain the advantage of the fact that the Jews' choice of G-d stems not only from the soul's essential connection to G-d, but also from the intellect itself. The source of the Jewish people stems from the inner dimension of G-d's encompassing light. As is well known, the inner dimension of G-d's encompassing light gives rise to *pnimiyus*, "inwardness." Hence, the Jewish people are characterized by that quality.

Therefore, the fundamental positive quality expressed by the Jews' choice of G-d is manifest when the soul's essential will that transcends intellect is drawn down and affects intellect itself (the inward dimension). Such efforts on man's part draw down the inner dimension of G-d's encompassing light into the person's own being and into the world at large.

יב) וַיֵּשׁ לְקֹשֶׁר זֶה עִם מָה שֶׁכָּתוּב בְּמִדְרַשׁ תְּהִלִּים עַל הַפְּסוּקָה "לְמִנְצַח לְדוֹד לְהַזְכִּיר", מִשָּׁל לְמֶלֶךְ שֶׁהָיָה לוֹ צֹאן וְכַעַס עֲלֵיהֶם. גָּרַשׁ אֶת הַצֹּאן וְהִתִּיר אֶת הַדִּיר וְהֵעֵבִיר אֶת הָרוּעָה. אַחַר זְמַן כָּנַס הַצֹּאן וּבִנָּה אֶת הַדִּיר, וְלִרְעוּתָהּ לֹא הִזְכִּיר. אָמַר הָרוּעָה: הֲרִי הַצֹּאן מִכְּנֻסוֹת וְהַדִּיר בְּנוֹי וְאֲנִי אֵינִי נִזְכָּר. כֵּךְ אָמַר דוֹד לְמַעַלְהָ מִן

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The importance of *pnimiyus*, inwardness, highlighted in the previous section sheds light on the role of the unique souls designated as “shepherds” of the Jewish people.

וַיֵּשׁ לְקֹשֶׁר זֶה עִם מָה  
שֶׁכָּתוּב בְּמִדְרַשׁ תְּהִלִּים  
עַל הַפְּסוּקָה "לְמִנְצַח  
לְדוֹד לְהַזְכִּיר",  
The above explanations can be connected to the  
*Midrash's* comments on the phrase: “For the chief  
musician, by David, a prayer of remembrance.”<sup>103</sup>

מִשָּׁל לְמֶלֶךְ שֶׁהָיָה לוֹ  
צֹאן וְכַעַס עֲלֵיהֶם.  
The *Midrash* offers<sup>104</sup> an analogy of a king who had  
a flock of sheep. At one point, he was angry with  
them.

גָּרַשׁ אֶת הַצֹּאן וְהִתִּיר אֶת  
הַדִּיר וְהֵעֵבִיר אֶת הָרוּעָה.  
He drove away the sheep, broke apart the corral,  
and dismissed the shepherd.

אַחַר זְמַן כָּנַס הַצֹּאן  
וּבִנָּה אֶת הַדִּיר,  
וְלִרְעוּתָהּ לֹא הִזְכִּיר.  
After time passed, he gathered together the  
sheep, rebuilt the corral, but made no mention  
of the shepherd.

אָמַר הָרוּעָה: הֲרִי  
הַצֹּאן מִכְּנֻסוֹת וְהַדִּיר  
בְּנוֹי וְאֲנִי אֵינִי נִזְכָּר.  
The shepherd protested: “The sheep are gathered  
together and the corral is rebuilt. Why have I not  
been mentioned?”

103. *Tehillim* 70:1.\*

\* According to the custom of reciting the *kapitl* of *Tehillim* that corresponds to the years of one's life (see the letter of the Rebbe Rayatz printed in *Kovetz Tehillim* and in his *Igros Kodesh*, Vol. 10, p. 53), on 11 Nissan of the year the *maamar* was delivered (5731), this *kapitl* began to be recited. See the note appended to the *Igros Kodesh* of the Rebbe Rayatz, Vol. 4, Letter no. 1069, p. 429, which states that it is customary for chassidim to recite the Rebbe's *kapitl* as well as their own.

104. *Midrash Tehillim*, cited by *Rashi* in his commentary to the verse.

המזמורה<sup>105</sup> "כי אלקים יושיע ציון ויבנה ערי יהודה" – הרי הדיר בנוי, "וישבו שם וירשוה וזרע עבדיו ינחלוה ואהבי שמו ישכנו בה" – הרי הצאן מכנסות, ואני איני נזכה, לכך "למנצח לדוד להזכיר". וצריך להבין, הרי זה שכנס הצאן לאחר ששכעם עליהם (ולא היו מרצים לפניו) הוא מפני שנתעורר שוב הרצון אליהם, ולמה לא הזכיר (מעצמו) להרועה, וצריך לבקשה מיחדת על זה. והענין הוא, דרצון הוא מקיף,

To refer to the analogue, in the previous *kapitl*, David said:<sup>105</sup> "G-d will deliver Zion and rebuild the cities of Yehudah" – this is analogous to "the corral is built."

כָּף אָמַר דָּוִד לְמַעַלָּה  
מִן הַמְזֻמָּר "כִּי אֱלֹקִים  
יוֹשִׁיעַ צִיּוֹן וַיְבַנֶּה עָרֵי  
יְהוּדָה" – הָרִי הַדִּיר בְּנוֹי,

David continues: "And they<sup>106</sup> shall settle there and possess it. And the offspring of His servants will inherit it and those who love His name will dwell there"<sup>3</sup> – thus the sheep have been gathered together.

"וַיֵּשְׁבוּ שָׁם וַיִּרְשׁוּהָ  
וַיִּזְרַע עֲבָדָיו וַיִּנְחַלְוּהָ  
וְאֶהְבִּי שְׁמוֹ יִשְׁכְּנוּ בָּהּ"  
– הָרִי הַצֹּאן מְכַנְסוֹת,

"Why then," asked David, "have I not been mentioned?"

וְאֲנִי אֵינִי נִזְכָּר,

As a result, he authored this psalm beginning, "For the chief musician, by David, a prayer of remembrance."

לְכֹהֵן "לְמַנְצַח לְדָוִד  
לְהַזְכִּיר".

It is necessary to understand: The king gathered the sheep after and despite having been angered by them (and even though they previously had lost favor in his eyes)

וְצָרִיף לְהַבִּין, הָרִי זֶה שְׁכַנְס  
הַצֹּאן לְאַחֲרֵי שְׁכַעַם עֲלֵיהֶם  
(וְלֹא הָיוּ מְרִיצִים לְפָנָיו)

because his desire for them had been rekindled.

הוּא מְפַנֵּי שְׁנַתְעוֹרֵר  
שׁוֹב הָרִצוֹן אֲלֵיהֶם,

Why then did he fail to mention their shepherd on his own?

וְלָמָּה לֹא הִזְכִּיר  
(מֵעֲצָמוֹ) לְהַרְוֵעָה,

Why was a special request necessary for this?

וְצָרִיף לְבַקֶּשׁ  
מִיְחַדָּת עַל זֶה.

105. *Tehillim* 69:36-37.

106. The exiles of Zion and Yehudah.

ואפשר שהמשכת הרצון יהיה בחיצוניות. וזהו שבקש דוד שהרועה יהיה נזכר, דרועה הוא ענין השפעה פנימית (כידוע<sup>107</sup> החלוק בין רועים לנסיכים). וכל זמן שלא ישנה

Obviously, sheep need a shepherd. If the king's desire for the sheep – in the analogue, G-d's desire for the Jewish people – was aroused, seemingly, the need for a shepherd should be recognized without the shepherd having to make a request.

וְהַעֲנִין הוּא, **The concept can be explained as follows:**

וְרָצוֹן הוּא מְקִיף, **Will (*ratzon*) is an encompassing light.**

וְאֶפְשֶׁר שֶׁהַמְשַׁכֵּת הַרְצוֹן יִהְיֶה בְּחִיצוֹנִיּוֹת. **As a result, it is possible for the will of G-d to be drawn down only in an external manner.**

וְזֶהוּ שֶׁבִקֵּשׁ דָּוִד שֶׁהָרֹעֵה יִהְיֶה נִזְכָּר, **For this reason, it is possible that no mention would be made of the shepherd, and it was necessary for David to request that.**

דְּרוּעָה הוּא עֲנִיָּן הַשְּׁפָעָה פְּנִימִית **A shepherd is identified with helping his flock internalize influence**

Just as in a simple sense, a shepherd enables the sheep to find the nourishment appropriate for them, so too, “a shepherd of faith” enables faith to be internalized by providing spiritual nourishment for the conscious development of his flock until their minds are aligned with their G-dly Essence.<sup>107</sup> *Mashiach*, as the ultimate shepherd of faith, will empower the people to draw down the revelation of G-dliness that is above comprehension into the realm of comprehension.

(כִּידוּעַ הַחֲלוּק בֵּין רֹעִים לְנָסִיכִים). **(as evident from the well-known contrast between the spiritual shepherds of the Jewish people and their princes).**<sup>108</sup>

*Chassidus* explains<sup>109</sup> that the input of both the “shepherds” and the “princes” are necessary for the refinement of the Jewish people and the world at large. The “princes” draw down an encompassing light that dispels evil. The “shepherds,” by contrast, nurture the Jewish people, highlighting their internal spiritual potentials and enabling them to develop.

107. See the *maamar* entitled *VeKibeil HaYehudim*, 5687 (translated in *Defiance and Devotion*).

108. *Michah* 5:4 speaks of “seven shepherds and eight princes of men.” See also *Sukkah* 52b.

109. *Torah Or*, p. 33b ff., et al.

ההשפעה פנימית (הרועה), חסר העיקר. כי המשכת המקיף עצמו היא מחיצוניות המקיף, ושרש הפנימי הוא מפנימיות המקיף. והגם שכשהצאן מכנסות נותנים להם כל צרכיהם, והאיך שיך לומר שאין להם רועה, יש לומר, דהמשכה פנימית שעל

וְכָל זְמַן שֶׁלֹּא יִשְׁנָה הַהֲשָׁפָעָה פְּנִימִית (הַרְוֵעָה), **Thus as long as the inward influence (facilitated by the shepherd) is lacking,**

חֲסֵר הָעֵקֶר. **the most fundamental element is lacking.**

כִּי הַמְשַׁכֵּת הַמְּקִיף עֲצֻמוֹ הִיא מְחִיצוֹנִיּוֹת הַמְּקִיף, **It is possible that such a lack will exist because the or makkif, encompassing light, can be drawn down merely from the external dimensions of the encompassing light –**

As mentioned previously (see sec. 4), an encompassing light shines without having to be internalized in a *k'li* (a “vessel” or “receptor”). To cite an example: the sun shines in a place of filth. Thus from the perspective of the encompassing light, the lack of a shepherd, who makes possible the internalization of the light, is not a shortcoming.

וְשָׂרֵשׁ הַפְּנִימִי הוּא מְפְנִימִיּוֹת הַמְּקִיף. **while the source of inward influence is from the inner dimension of the encompassing light.**

The inner dimension of the encompassing light is identified with G-d's Essence. From the standpoint of G-d's Essence, there is nothing else but Him. Every dimension of existence should be permeated by and manifest His Essence. Therefore the encompassing light that reflects His Essence should be internalized so that it permeates the identity of the souls of the Jewish people.

וְהִגָּם שֶׁכְּשֶׁהֲצִאן מְכַנְסוֹת נוֹתְנִים לָהֶם כָּל צָרְכֵיהֶם, **The question, however, arises: Once the sheep have been gathered together, they will be granted all their needs.**

וְהֵאֵיךְ שִׁיךְ לֹמֵר שֶׁאֵין לָהֶם רוֹעֵה, **If so, how is it possible to say that they will not have a shepherd?**

Sheep need a shepherd. In the analogue, it is necessary for the Jewish people to internalize the influence they are granted from Above. How is it possible that in an era of Divine favor this need will not be granted?

In resolution,

ידי הרועה הוא למוד התורה<sup>110</sup>, ומכיון שהתורה דעכשו היא הבל לגבי תורתו של משיח<sup>111</sup>, נמצא שחסר עדין אמיתית הענין דרועה (פנימיות). והגם שהמדבר כאן הוא לאחרי שאלקים יושיע ציון ויבנה ערי יהודה וגו' שזה יהיה בגאלה העתידה, הרי עיקר הגלוי שיהיה בגאלה העתידה הוא הגלוי דעצמות אור אין סוף שלמעלה

יִשׁ לֹוֹמַר, דְּהַתְּמָשְׁכָּה  
פְּנִימִית שְׁעַל יְדֵי הַרְוֵעָה  
הוּא לְמוֹד הַתּוֹרָה, it can be explained that the inner influence that  
is drawn down by the shepherd comes about  
through the study of the Torah.<sup>110</sup>

Thus, at a time of Divine favor, when “the corral is rebuilt” and the “sheep are gathered,” i.e., the Era of the Redemption, the Jews will certainly be granted the influence of a shepherd through the Torah they study.

וּמִכֵּיּוֹן שֶׁהַתּוֹרָה  
דְּעַכְשָׁו הִיא הֶבֶל לְגַבֵּי  
תּוֹרָתוֹ שֶׁל מְשִׁיחַ, Nevertheless, the Torah of the present age is  
“emptiness” when compared to the Torah of  
*Mashiach*.<sup>111</sup>

נִמְצָא שְׁחָסַר עַדִּין אֱמִיתִית  
הָעֲנִיָּן דְּרְוֵעָה (פְּנִימִיּוֹת). Thus without the revelation of the teachings of *Mashi-*  
*ach*, the fundamental aspect to be contributed by  
the shepherd<sup>112</sup> (i.e., internalizing the essential rev-  
elations of that Future Era) is lacking.

וְהָגַם שֶׁהַמְדַבֵּר כְּאֵן הוּא  
לְאַחֲרֵי שְׁאֵלְקִים יוֹשִׁיעַ צִיּוֹן  
וַיְבַנֶּה עָרֵי יְהוּדָה וְגו' שְׁזֶה  
יְהִיֶּה בְּגֹאֲלָהּ הָעֲתִידָה, Even though we are speaking about the Future  
Redemption after the fulfillment of the prophecy  
when: “G-d will deliver Zion and rebuild the cities  
of Yehudah,” and thus all the apparent needs of the  
Jewish people will be met and thus the external dimen-  
sions of the Redemption will be manifest, nevertheless,  
there is a still a need that King David addresses in his  
request. For

הָרִי עֵיקַר הַגְּלוּי שְׁיִהְיֶה  
בְּגֹאֲלָהּ הָעֲתִידָה הוּא  
הַגְּלוּי דְּעַצְמוֹת אֹר אֵין  
סוּף שֶׁלְּמַעַלָּה מִהַשְּׁגָה, the fundamental revelation of G-dliness that  
will take place in that Future Era is the revela-  
tion of the Essence of G-dliness which is above  
comprehension.

110. See *Torah Or*, p. 33d ff.

111. *Koheles Rabbah* 11:8; see also *ibid.* 2:1.

112. I.e., a shepherd of the level of *Mashiach*.



מהשגה, וזו היתה בקשתו של דוד (דוד מלכא משיחא), ועל ידי בקשתו נעשה זה, שיהיה גם הענין דרועה, הבנת והשגת התורה בתכלית השלמות.

וְזוֹ הִיְתָה בְקִשְׁתּוֹ שֶׁל דָּוִד This was the request of King David

(דָּוִד מְלֻכָּא מְשִׁיחָא), (who is referred to as David, “the anointed king,” and is the progenitor of *Mashiach*, “the anointed one”)

Since the ultimate goal is to draw G-dliness, even the Essence of G-d that transcends comprehension, into the thinking processes of the Jewish people, for this motif to be fulfilled in a consummate manner, it is befitting that the revelation of G-dliness not come solely from Above, but that there be a request for this revelation from the shepherd of the Jewish people.

וְעַל יְדֵי בְקִשְׁתּוֹ נִעְשֶׂה זֶה, – and his request will lead to its fulfillment

שִׁיְהִיָּה גַם הָעֲנִיָּן דְּרֻעָה, – that there would be a shepherd,

הַבְּנֵת וְהַשְּׂגַת הַתּוֹרָה i.e., one who would facilitate the comprehension and grasp of this essential dimension of the Torah

More particularly, the teachings of *Mashiach* which will reveal the Essence of G-d.

בְּתַכְלִית הַשְּׁלֻמוֹת. in a consummate manner.

I.e., G-d granted David’s request that the Essence of G-d — which transcends intellect — would be encloded in the Torah teachings to be revealed by *Mashiach*. Accordingly, they would be able to be internalized by the Jewish people.

Since we are speaking about the revelations of the Ultimate Future, when transcendent G-dliness will be revealed, it is possible that the revelation will not be internalized. David’s request was that these essential revelations be internalized.

## SUMMARY

The importance of *pnimiyus*, inwardness, sheds light on the role of the unique souls designated as “shepherds” of the Jewish people. To explain by citing the *Midrash*’s comments on the phrase: “For the chief musician, by David, a prayer of remembrance.” The *Midrash* offers an analogy of a king who had a flock of sheep. At one point, he was angry with them. He drove away the sheep, broke apart the corral, and dismissed the shepherd. After time passed, he gathered together the sheep, rebuilt the corral, but made no mention of the shepherd.

The shepherd protested: "The sheep are gathered together and the corral is rebuilt. Why have I not been mentioned?"

It is necessary to understand: Since the king gathered the sheep because his desire for them had been rekindled, why then did he fail to mention their shepherd on his own? Obviously, sheep need a shepherd. If the king's desire for the sheep - in the analogue, G-d's desire for the Jewish people - was aroused, seemingly, the need for a shepherd should be recognized without the shepherd having to make a request.

In resolution: Will (*ratzon*) is an encompassing light. As a result, it is possible for the will of G-d to be drawn down only in an external manner. A shepherd is identified with helping his flock internalize influence. For this reason, even when G-d's will has been aroused, it is possible that no mention would be made of the shepherd and it is necessary that a special request be made for that.

The question, nevertheless, arises: Once the sheep have been gathered together, they will be granted all their needs. If so, how is it possible to say that they will not have a shepherd? This is seemingly a fundamental need.

In resolution: In the analogue, the inner influence drawn down by the shepherd comes about through the people's study of the Torah. Thus, at a time of Divine favor, when "the corral is rebuilt" and the "sheep are gathered," i.e., the Era of the Redemption, the Jews will certainly be granted the influence of a shepherd through the Torah they study. Nevertheless, the Torah of the present age is "emptiness" when compared to the Torah of *Mashiach*. Thus without the revelation of the teachings of *Mashiach*, the fundamental aspect to be contributed by the shepherd (i.e., the potential to internalize the essential revelations of that Future Era) is lacking.

This is what is meant by the request for a shepherd - that there would be one who would facilitate the comprehension and grasp of the teachings of *Mashiach*.



כנ"ל בארוכה דזה שישראל בוחרים בהקדוש ברוך הוא הוא מפני ששרשם הוא בפנימיות הרצון. ויש לומר, דזה שהבחירה בישראל הוא בהגוף, מזה נמשך להם הכח שגם בענינים הגשמיים יהיה הגלוי דפנימיות הרצון, שעל ידי זה נרגש בהם שגם הגשמיות הוא בשביל עבודת ה'. ועל פי זה יש לבאר זה שהקרבנות של אשר היו על שם הבחירה שבחר הקדוש ברוך הוא בישראל, אף שאין אשורן של ישראל אלא על שבחרו בהקדוש ברוך הוא, כי עיקר העלוי דישראל הוא (לא זה שיש בהם

כנ"ל בארוכה דזה שישאאל  
בוחרים בהקדוש ברוך  
הוא מפני ששרשם  
הוא בפנימיות הרצון.

For, as explained above at length,<sup>115</sup> the Jews' choice of G-d comes as a result of their being rooted within the inner dimension of G-d's will.

ויש לומר, דזה שהבחינה  
בישראל הוא בהגוף,

[G-d's choice of the Jewish people is focused on their bodies.<sup>116</sup> It is possible to explain

מזה נמשך להם הכח שגם  
בענינים הגשמיים יהיה  
הגלוי דפנימיות הרצון,

that this choice empowers them to reveal the inner dimensions of G-d's will even in their material matters,

שעל ידי זה נרגש בהם  
שגם הגשמיות הוא  
בשביל עבודת ה'.

enabling them to feel that their material dimensions exist for the sake of their Divine service.]

ועל פי זה יש לבאר זה  
שהקרבנות של אשר היו  
על שם הבחירה שבחר  
הקדוש ברוך הוא בישראל,

On this basis, it is possible to explain why the sacrifices brought by the prince of Asher came "in recognition of G-d's choice of Israel"<sup>117</sup>

אף שאין אשורן של  
ישראל אלא על שבחרו  
בהקדוש ברוך הוא,

even though "Israel's good fortune is solely that she chose the Holy One, blessed be He."

As explained in sec. 1, the *Midrash* appears to contradict itself: On one hand, it highlights G-d's choice of the Jewish people. However, it also focuses on the Jewish people's choice of G-d.

115. Sec. 10.

116. *Tanya*, ch. 49; see sec. 2 above.

117. *Bamidbar Rabbah*, loc. cit.

מצד למעלה, אלא) זה שפועלים על ידי עבודתם, ובזה דוקא (מה שפועלים על ידי עבודתם) הוא עיקר הנחת רוח והתענוג דהקדוש ברוך הוא, אלא שבכדי שיהיה להם הנתינת כח על זה הוא על ידי ההמשכה והגלוי דבחירת הקדוש ברוך הוא בישראל, וגלוי זה נמשך על ידי הקרבנות שהקריב אשר. דנוסף להכח שבכל אחד

**כי עיקר העלוי דישאאל הוא** For the primary positive quality possessed by the Jewish people is

(לא זה שיש בהם) (not what they have been granted from Above, מצד למעלה,

אלא) but) what they achieve through their Divine service. על ידי עבודתם,

The resolution of the seeming contradiction is that the fundamental positive quality possessed by the Jewish people is their choice of G-d because that is an achievement of their own service. Nevertheless, the potential for making that choice stems from G-d's choice of them.

**ובזה דוקא (מה שפועלים על ידי עבודתם)** This (- i.e., what the Jews achieve through their Divine service -)

הוא עיקר הנחת רוח וְהַתְּעוּגָה דְהַקְדוּשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא, is what generates the principal satisfaction and pleasure that the Holy One, blessed be He, derives.

Therefore this is Israel's good fortune.

אלא שבכדי שיהיה להם הנתינת כח על זה הוא על ידי ההמשכה והגלוי דבחירת הקדוש ברוך הוא בישאאל, Nevertheless, the Jewish people are only able to make this choice because G-d empowered them by drawing down and revealing His choice of the Jewish people.

וגלוי זה נמשך על ידי הקרבנות שהקריב אשר. The revelation of this choice was drawn down through the sacrifices offered by the prince of Asher.

Although the offerings brought by each of the princes during the dedication of the altar were identical, each one had a unique spiritual objective in their offerings. The spiritual objective of the prince of Asher was to reveal the positive potential

מישראל מצד שרשו בפנימיות הרצון, הנה על ידי הקרבנות דאשר, נמשך כח זה בגלוי יותר. ויש לומר דעל ידי שאמר אדמו"ר הזקן איך וויל מער ניט אז דיך אליין, ובפרט לאחר שנתפרסם זה על ידי הצמח צדק, נתן הכח (עוד יותר) לכל אחד ואחד מישראל, ובפרט לההולכים בעקבותיו ובדרכיו, דהגם שיש לו רבוי רצונות, ועד לרצונות שמצד נפש הבהמית, שכל הרצונות שלו יהיו בלא לב ולב, ועיקר רצונו יהיה

of choice possessed by the Jewish people.

דינוסף להפח שפכל אָחד  
מישראָל מצד שרשו  
בפנימיות הרצון,      **Every Jew possesses an inherent potential to make such a choice because the Jewish people are rooted in the inner dimension of G-d's will.**

הנה על ידי הקרבנות  
דאשר, נמשך פֿח  
זה בגלוי יותר.      **Nevertheless, the sacrifices brought by the prince of Asher assisted in drawing down and revealing this potential to a greater extent.**

These sacrifices affected the state of the Jews' spiritual potential. Instead of merely existing latently in the inner reaches of a person's spiritual subconscious, these sacrifices enabled the potential for positive choice to exert a more active influence on his conscious thought.

ויש לומר דעל ידי שאמר  
אדמו"ר הזקן איך וויל  
מער ניט אז דיך אליין,      **We may say that a similar objective was accomplished by the Alter Rebbe in saying: "I want nothing but You alone,"**

ובפרט לאחר שנתפרסם  
זה על ידי הצמח צדק,      **particularly after this was publicized by the Tzemach Tzedek.**

By publicizing this statement to people at large, the *Tzemach Tzedek* highlighted that this approach was not merely a reflection of the personal Divine service of the Alter Rebbe, but is – to a certain extent – within the reach of everyone.

נתן הפח (עוד יותר) לְכָל  
אָחד וְאָחד מישראָל,      **His statement generated the potential (to an even greater extent) for every Jew,**

ובפרט לההולכים  
בעקבותיו ובדרכיו,      **particularly those who follow in his footsteps and paths,**

דהגם שיש לו רבוי רצונות,  
ועד לרצונות שמצד  
נפש הבהמית,      **that even though one has many different desires, even desires stemming from the animal soul,**

להשלים כונת העצמות לעשות לו יתברך דירה בתחתונים (על דרך ומעין שהיה אצל אדמו"ר הזקן שלא רצה מער ניט אז דיך אליין), וגם רצונו בגשמיות יהיה (בעיקר) בכדי לעשות את הגשמיות כלי לאלקות. ועל ידי זה ימשך לו גם רבוי השפעה בגשמיות, כמאמר אדמו"ר הזקן<sup>118</sup> אז דער אויבערשטער גיט אידן גשמיות און אידן מאכן פון

I.e., the *maamar* is referring to ordinary individuals who, unlike the Alter Rebbe, are motivated by other desires.

שְׁפָל הַרְצוֹנוֹת שְׁלוֹ he will relate to all these desires with detachment,<sup>118</sup>  
יְהִי בְּלֹא לֵב וְלֵב,

i.e., without putting his full heart into them. Since the person has dimensions of his being that are not fundamentally holy, he will have other desires, but he will not be entirely swayed by them.

וְעִיקַר רְצוֹנוֹ יְהִי לְהַשְׁלִים and his fundamental desire will be to fulfill G-d's  
כְּוִנַּת הָעֲצָמוֹת לַעֲשׂוֹת לוֹ essential desire that a dwelling for Him be made  
יִתְבָּרַךְ דִּירָה בְּתַחְתּוֹנִים in the lower realms.

(על דרך ומעין שהיה אצל) (This approach reflects and resembles, albeit in  
אדמו"ר הזקן שלא רצה microcosm, the Alter Rebbe's desire for nothing  
מער ניט אז דיך אליין), else but G-d.)

וְגַם רְצוֹנוֹ בְּגִשְׁמִיּוֹת Even the person's desire for material things will  
יְהִי (בְּעִקָּר) be (primarily) motivated

Again, since we are speaking about ordinary people, they will still have personal desires. Nevertheless, even these desires will be primarily motivated

בְּכַדֵּי לַעֲשׂוֹת אֶת by the intent to transform the material entities  
הַגִּשְׁמִיּוֹת כְּלֵי לְאַלְקוּת. into mediums for G-dliness.

וְעַל יְדֵי זֶה יִמְשָׁךְ לוֹ גַּם This approach will also draw down an abundance  
רְבוּי הַשְּׁפָעָה בְּגִשְׁמִיּוֹת, of material influence for him,

כְּמֵאמַר אַדְמו"ר הַזְקֵן אֵז as the Alter Rebbe said: "G-d gives the Jews mate-  
דְּעַר אוֹיְבֵעֶרשְׁטֵעַר גִּיט אִידֵן rial things and the Jews transform the material  
גִּשְׁמִיּוֹת און אִידֵן מֵאָכֵן into something spiritual."<sup>119</sup>  
פֿון דֵּי גִשְׁמִיּוֹת רוֹחֵנִיּוֹת,

118. Our translation follows the interpretation of *I Divrei HaYamim* 12:33 found in *Vayikra Rabbah* 25:2.

119. See *HaYom Yom*, entry for 27 Teves; *Igros Kodesh* of the Rebbe Rayatz, Letter no. 492, Vol. 2, p. 265; *Sefer HaMaamarim* 5700, p. 78.

די גשמיות רוחניות, דמזה מובן, דכשהקדוש ברוך הוא נותן לישראל רבוי גשמיות, עושים ישראל רבוי רוחניות, רבוי בכמות ורבוי באיכות, ועד לתכלית השלמות, ועד שמתקשרים ומתאחדים בהקדוש ברוך הוא, ישראל (אורייתא) וקדשא בריך הוא כלא חד.<sup>120</sup> וכל זה נעשה מתוך שמחה וטוב לבב, בימי ההכנה לזמן חרותנו, וזה מביא גם את זמן חרותנו בפעל, גאלה האמתית והשלמה על ידי משיח צדקנו, בקרוב ממש.

דמזה מובן, דכשקדוש  
ברוך הוא נותן לישראל  
רבוי גשמיות, From this, we can conclude that when the Holy One, blessed be He, grants the Jews an abundance of material blessings,

עושים ישראל  
רבוי רוחניות, the Jews transform them into spiritual abundance,

רבוי בכמות ורבוי באיכות, an abundance that is both quantitative and qualitative,

ועד לתכלית השלמות, reaching a consummate level of perfection.

ועד שמתקשרים  
ומתאחדים בהקדוש  
ברוך הוא, The Jews will reach the level where they are bonded and united with the Holy One, blessed be He, in our Sages' words,<sup>120</sup>

ישראל (אורייתא) וקדשא  
ברוך הוא כלא חד "Israel, (the Torah), and the Holy One, blessed be He, are all one."

וכל זה נעשה מתוך  
שמחה וטוב לבב, All of this will be accomplished amidst happiness and gladness of heart,

בימי ההכנה לזמן חרותנו, in these days of preparation for "the season of our freedom."<sup>121</sup>

וזה מביא גם את זמן  
חרותנו בפעל, And this will bring about the actual experience of "the season of our freedom":

גאלה האמתית והשלמה  
על ידי משיח צדקנו, the true and complete Redemption led by *Mashiach*.

בקרוב ממש. May it take place in the immediate future.

120. See *Zohar*, Vol. III, p. 73a.

121. The *maamar* was delivered on the 11th of Nissan (the Rebbe's birthday), four days before the Pesach holiday.



## SUMMARY

"Israel's good fortune is solely that she chose the Holy One, blessed be He," because the primary positive quality possessed by the Jewish people is not what they have been granted from Above, but what they achieve through their own Divine service. Nevertheless, the sacrifices brought by the prince of Asher came "in recognition of G-d's choice of Israel," because G-d's choice of Israel empowers Israel to choose Him.

Every Jew possesses the inherent potential to make such a choice because the Jewish people are rooted in the inner dimension of G-d's will. Nevertheless, the sacrifices brought by the prince of Asher assisted in revealing this potential.

A similar objective was accomplished by the Alter Rebbe in saying: "I want nothing but You alone." His statement generated the potential for every Jew to relate to all his personal desires with detachment, and for his fundamental desire to be the fulfillment of G-d's desire that a dwelling for Him be established in the lower realms.

(\* יצא לאור בקונטרס י"א ניסן – תשמ"ט, "לקראת יום הבהיר י"א ניסן, יום הולדת הפ"ז של כ"ק אדמו"ר שליט"א.. ערב שה"ג תשמ"ט".

- (א) נשא ז, עב.  
 (ב) במדב"ר פי"ד, י.  
 (ג) מלאכי ג, יב.  
 (ד) תהלים קמד, טו.  
 (ה) ראה תבוא כו, יז.  
 (ו) ראה יד, ב.  
 (ז) להעיר גם מזה שמביא שם הפסוק "אשרי העם שה' אלקיו" שהוא ע"ד ("שבחרו בהקב"ה) להיות להם לאל-קים".  
 (ח) ראה פרש"י תבוא שם "הבדלתיו לך מאלהי הנכר".  
 (ט) פמ"ט (ע, רע"א).  
 (י) איכה ג, כד.  
 (יא) איכ"ר עה"פ.  
 (יב) בד"ה את הוי' האמרת להצ"צ (אוה"ת תבוא ע' תתרעב. שם ע' תתרפג) ולאדמו"ר מהר"ש (סה"מ תר"ל ע' רצא). ביאווה"ז להצ"צ ע' רמח ואילך. סה"מ תר"ס ע' יא.  
 (יג) כ"ה באוה"ת ובסה"מ תר"ס שם.  
 (יד) ראה אוה"ת וירא כרך ד תשסד, ב. שה"ש כרך ב ע' תיד.  
 (טו) שמואל-א ט, ב.  
 (טז) ראה גם סה"מ תר"ל שם.  
 (יז) ראה סהמ"צ להצ"צ ו, א ואילך. וראה עד"ז רמב"ם הל' ע"ז בתחלתו. וראה לקמן הערה 75.  
 (יח) ברכה לג, יד.  
 (יט) ע"פ ל' הכתוב – ישע"י, י, טו.  
 (כ) ראה גם ד"ה את הוי' האמרת תרע"ח פ"ג (סה"מ תרע"ח ע' תיד). ד"ה כל המאריך תרפ"ו פ"ד (סה"מ תרפ"ו ע' קנז ואילך). ד"ה מים רבים ה'תשי"ז פ"ד (לעיל ח"א ע' שכנ ואילך). ושם, שטעות זו (שהם משפיעים בבחירתם) הוא לא ע"ז אלא שיתוף, משא"כ הטעות שעזב ה' את הארץ בידי הכו"מ (דלקמן בפנים) הוא ע"ז. עיי"ש בארוכה.  
 (כא) ב"ק צב, ב.  
 (כב) מנחות קי, א.  
 (כג) אבל בכללות, ענין "אלקא דאלקיא" הוא רק באלו החושבים שעזב ה' את הארץ בידי הכו"מ, משא"כ הטעות שהם בעלי בחירה, כמפורש בהמצויין בהערה 20.  
 (כד) להעיר מאוה"ת יתרו ע' תתקכ בפירוש לא יהי' לך אלקים אחרים: "אלקים תואר למושל". ובהמשך הענין שם, שהכו"מ אינם כמו שליח ששייך לתת לו כבוד ע"ד "טיבותא לשקיי" אלא כגרון ביד החוצב.  
 (כה) להעיר מסה"מ תרע"ח ע' שנו "נבראים השפלים שאין דעת ותבוניה להם ישפטו רק למראה עיניהם ומחשבים את הממוצעים".  
 (כו) להעיר מסה"מ תרפ"ו ע' קלו, שמדבר שם בענין ההתחכמות בעסק, שהוא דוגמת המשתחוה לכו"מ כי חושב שמהם באה ההשפעה, ובהמשך הענין שם (ע' קלז) "כל מחשבותיו הם רק לטובת עצמו, כלומר גופו הונו ורכושו". דמזה משמע, שלא רק המחשבה בנוגע סיבת הפרנסה, אלא גם המחשבה "רק לטובת עצמו" היא דוגמת עבודת כו"מ.  
 (כז) שבהערה 12 (אוה"ת שם ס"ע תתרעב ואילך. שם ע' תתרפד. סה"מ תר"ל שם ע' רצב ואילך. ביאווה"ז שם. סה"מ תר"ס ע' יא ואילך). וראה גם סידור (עם דא"ח) קמב, ג. סהמ"צ להצ"צ ו, א. ובכ"מ.  
 (כח) ח"ב קכת, א. וראה בארוכה סידור (עם דא"ח) עה"פ אל תבטחו בנידיים (נו, ד).  
 (כט) בהעלותך יא, ה. ולהעיר מספרי (הובא בפרש"י) עה"פ: חנם מן המצרות.  
 (ל) כ"ה להירא בביאווה"ז להצ"צ שם (ע' רמט).  
 (לא) ראה בארוכה תו"א ר"פ בשלח (סא, א). קונטרס ומעין מאמר ח' פ"ב ואילך.  
 (לב) ראה קונטרס ומעין מאמר ו' בסופו. מ"ז פ"ד. מ"א פ"ב.

- (לג) ראה אגה"ת ספ"ו. קונטרס ומעין מאמר ז' שם.  
 (לד) ראה סידור (עם דא"ח) נז, סע"א ואילך, דזהו מ"ש אל תבטחו בנדיבים גו' (הם הקליפות, כי כאשר) תצא רוחו (רוח הקדושה מרפ"ח ניצוצין שנפלו בהם) גו' אברו עשתונותיו.  
 (לה) ראה דרושים שבהערה 12 (אזה"ת תבוא ע' תתרעד. שם ע' תתרפה. סה"מ תר"ל ע' רצד. תר"ס ע' יג).  
 (לו) נדרים נ, סע"ב. מס' מכות בסופה. וראה תו"א בשלח סא, ג.  
 (לז) תמיד לב, א.  
 (לח) כנ"ל סעיף ד.  
 (לט) תניא פכ"ב (כו, ב). נת' בקונטרס ומעין מ"ב פ"ב ואילך.  
 (מ) ועפ"ז מובן האריכות והפרטים בהמצויין בהערה 35.  
 (מא) תניא פכ"ט (לז, ב).  
 (מב) תניא פכ"ב שם. סה"מ תר"ס שם. ובכ"מ.  
 (מג) אגה"ת פ"ז (צז, סע"א). וראה גם תניא ח"א פ"ט (כד, ב).  
 (מד) ברכות יח, ב.  
 (מה) כמובן גם מזה שנק' בשם פקח.  
 (מו) גם מצד השכל. ולהעיר מלקו"ת תזריע (כ, ב) שאהבה רבה (שרוצה בעצמות או"ס ולא בהזיו אף שעי"ז יתבטל ממציותו) "נק' דכר שהוא דעת חזק, שבוחר העיקר ולא הטפל", ואהבה זוטא (שרוצה בהזיו בכדי שישאר במציותו) נק' "בשם נקבה שדעתה קלה, שעושה את הטפל עיקר בשביל הלגרמי' שלו". וראה הערה הבאה.  
 (מז) להעיר מתניא פ"ט (הובא בלקו"ת שם), דזה שנשמת האדם רוצה לירבק בשרשה ומקורה בה' חיי החיים ב"ה הגם שתה"א אין ואפס ותתבטל שם במציות לגמרי, הוא טבע שלמעלה מהשכל. דהגם שזה שרוצה לירבק בה' הוא מפני שהוא "חיי החיים" (תכלית העילוי), מ"מ, מכיון שהוא יהי' עי"ז אין ואפס, הרצון לירבק בשרשו הוא טבע שלמעלה מהשכל.  
 ואולי יש לומר דמ"ש בלקו"ת שם שהסיבה לרצון זה הוא "דעת חזק" [ובפרט שבלקו"ת גופא מציין לתניא שם] – הכוונה היא, דהרצון שמצד טבע הנשמה פועל על השכל, כדלקמן בפנים.  
 (מח) ראה גם סה"מ תר"ס ע' טז "מצד הדביקות שמעצמות הנפש.. לכן יש לו הנטי' בכח חכמתו להבין את הטוב דאלקות ולבחור בטוב".  
 (מט) רצג, סע"ד ואילך.  
 (נ) ראה שם רצד, ג.  
 (נא) ראה גם תו"ח שמות קנז, א ואילך [בהוצאה החדשה – בא ח"א קכה, ב ואילך]. סה"מ צ' להצ"צ עט, א. קונטרס ומעין מאמר ז' בתחלתו. ובכ"מ.  
 (נב) ישע"י נו, יא. וראה זח"ג פ, סע"א ואילך.  
 (נג) מאורי אור בערכו.  
 (נד) זח"ג רכד, א (ברע"מ). תניא פ"ב (יז, א).  
 (נה) כל דוקא, מכיון שכולו לב.  
 (נו) ראה סידור שם (רצה, א) "פחותי העבדים".  
 (נז) ראה סה"מ צ' להצ"צ פג, ב. אזה"ת משפטים ע' א'קכח ואילך. אלא שהביאור שם הוא באופן אחר קצת.  
 (נח) גיטין יג, א.  
 (נט) תניא פמ"א (נז, א). המשך תרס"ו ס"ע שח ואילך. ובכ"מ.  
 (ס) וכמובן גם מזה שממשיך במדרש מהן עובדין לחמה ומהן ללבנה.  
 (סא) ראה סידור רפז, סע"ב ואילך. ובכ"מ. ולהעיר גם מאגה"ק סכ"ה (קלט, ב) שהחיות הנמשך להשרים "הוא בבחי' גלות בתוכם".  
 (סב) ע"ח שער מז (שער סדר אבי"ע) פ"ב. ובכ"מ. אגה"ק ס"כ בתחלתו.  
 (סג) כתר שם טוב (הוצאת קה"ת) ס"י צז (יג, ג). אור המאיר פ' וישלח.  
 (סד) תהלים קב, א.  
 (סה) תהלים עג, כה.  
 (סו) הובא בשרש מצות התפלה להצ"צ פ"מ (קלח, סע"א).

סז) תניא פ"ה (ט, ב).

סח) ראה גם אוה"ת חיי שרה קו, ב ואילך. ובכ"מ.

סט) המשך תער"ב ח"א פק"ו (ע' רד-רה). ובכ"מ.

ע) ראה בארוכה המשך הנ"ל פקי"ט ואילך.

עא) ראה בארוכה המשך הנ"ל פקכ"א ואילך. וראה שם פקכ"ג (ע' רלט).

עב) לקו"ת תזריע כ, סע"א ואילך. שרש מצות התפלה להצ"צ שם.

עג) ברכות יז, א.

עד) כ"ה הלשון בלקו"ת שם.

עה) ראה רמב"ם הל' ע"ז בתחלתו, דזה שטעו שצריך לחלוק כבוד להכו"מ הוא (לא מפני שצריך להודות להם ע"ד

"טיבותא לשקיי", כמובא לעיל, אלא) מפני שהקב"ה "חלק להם כבוד" ושזה (שיחלקו להם כבוד) הוא "רצון

הא-ל". ואולי יש לומר, שהסיבה לטעות זו היא כי בחיצוניות הרצון (כמו שהוא מקור לאוה"ע) נרגש שזהו

הרצון הפנימי.

עו) ראה סד"ה אשרנו ה'ש"ת. ובכ"מ.

עז) תהלים מזמור ע\*.

\* ע"פ המנהג לומר הקאפיטל תהלים המתאים למספר שנותיו (מכתב כ"ק מו"ח אדמו"ר, נדפס בקובץ

מכתבים ע"ד אמירת תהלים. אגרות-קודש כ"ק אדמו"ר מוהרי"צ ח"א ע' לא. ח"י ס"ע נג. סה"מ י"א ניסן

ע' 1 ואילך) – התחילו ב"א ניסן שנה זו (תשל"א) לומר מזמור ע שבתהלים.

עח) סוף מזמור סט.

עט) תו"א מקץ לג, ד ואילך.

פ) קה"ר פי"א, ח. ועיין ג"כ שם פ"ב, א.

פא) ראה "היום יום" כז טבת (אגרות-קודש כ"ק אדמו"ר מוהרי"צ ח"ב ע' רסה). סה"מ ה'ש"ת (הוצאת תשמ"ו)

ע' עח.

פב) ראה זח"ג עג, א.