

ליקוטי מוהר"ן קמא
תורה ס"א
חדי רבי שמעון

Likutey Moharan #61:1
Chadi Rebbi Shimon



מכון
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With Likutey Tefilot
and Kitzur Likutey Moharan



ליקוטי מוהר"ן סימן ס"א

חֲדֵי רַבִּי שְׁמַעוֹן וְאָמַר: "ה' שְׁמַעְתִּי שְׁמַעְךָ יְרֵאתִי", אָמַר:
הֵתָם יְאוֹת הָיִי לְמַדְחַל וְכוּ'. (זוהר ח"ג אידרא רבא קכח, א)

Halakhot based on this lesson is *Hilkhot Rosh Chodesh* #7, the last discourse composed by Reb Noson before his passing in 1844. Similar to the Rebbe's lesson, that final discourse is seen as a last will and testament—Reb Noson's guidelines for following Rebbe Nachman's spiritual path even in the absence of a living central figure to serve as *rebbe* and leader.

2. **Rabbi Shimon Rejoiced.** This lesson, like the previous one, is an explanation of a portion of the opening passage of the *Idra Rabba Kadisha* ("Greater Holy Assembly"). One of the most esoteric sections of the *Zohar* (III, 127b-145a), the *Idra Rabba* is a record of Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai's revelation of the deepest mysteries of the Kabbalah (see Lesson #60, n.2). As RaShBY (the acronym for his name) was preparing to reveal these mysteries to his disciples, he heard the heavenly entourage gathering and took it as a sign that God approved of his intentions. This caused Rabbi Shimon to rejoice.

3. **I heard Your message; I feared...it was right to fear.** Unlike Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai, hearing the heavenly entourage gather caused Rabbi Shimon's disciples to tremble in fear (see also previous lesson, nn. 11-12). Did they sufficiently deserve to be taught the deepest mysteries of the Kabbalah? To dispel their fears and doubts, Rabbi Shimon quoted this verse from Habakkuk: "O God, I heard Your message; I feared." In an earlier passage, the *Zohar* tells of another time when Rabbi Shimon recited this verse. On that occasion, Rabbi Shimon trembled and cried, explaining that Chabakkuk had uttered these words when his parents informed him that when he was a child, Chabakkuk had died and been resurrected by the prophet Elisha (*Zohar* I, 7b; see 2 Kings 4, the story of the Shunamite woman and her son). The Ari teaches that Chabakkuk's soul was rooted in the *gevurot* ("severities") of *Malkhut*, the spiritual root of all fear (see *Shaar HaPesukim*, *Habakkuk*). Rebbe Nachman adds at the end of the lesson, that Chabakkuk's vision alludes to the death by plague of Rabbi Akiva's 24,000 students; the root of their souls, too, was these *gevurot*. The Talmud relates that all 24,000 of Rabbi Akiva's students died over the course of just thirty-three days, during the Omer Counting period (between Pesach and Shavuot, a time when the prevalence of *gevurot* brings severe judgments and Divine punishment for sin), because they did not act respectfully toward one another. Afterwards, the world was left deficient of Torah knowledge, until Rabbi Akiva taught five new students: Rabbi Meir, Rabbi Yehudah, Rabbi Yosi, Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai and Rabbi Elazar ben Shamua. Through these great tzaddikim, who later became the Sages of the Mishnah, the entire Torah was restored to the Jewish people (*Yevamot* 62b). In his opening to the *Idra Rabba*, Rabbi Shimon explains the difference between the earlier situation, when fear and trembling was appropriate, and now, when he rejoiced.

4. **we are linked through love....** Unlike the souls of Rabbi Akiva's students, Rabbi Shimon's soul and the souls of his disciples were rooted in *chasadim* ("benevolences"), the forces of love and unity that dispel the negative forces of the Other Side (*kelipot*) and so negate severe

LIKUTEY MOHARAN #61¹

***Chadi Rebbi Shimon* (Rabbi Shimon Rejoiced),² and said: “O God, I heard Your message; I feared” (Habakkuk 3:2). He said: “In that situation it was right to fear,³ [whereas we are linked through love....”⁴ Rabbi**

1. **Likutey Moharan #61.** Rebbe Nachman gave this lesson on Shabbat, Rosh HaShanah, 5568 (October 3, 1807). The main themes of the lesson are: faith in the sages and tzaddikim, judgment and deriving true laws (§1); ordination and the transmission of wisdom to worthy rabbis, and the evils caused by conferring authority on unworthy leaders (§2); astronomy/astrology and the Mystery of Intercalation (§3); perfect counsel versus foolish advice (§4); *machloket* (dispute and opposition) and its role in the proliferation of books of Torah (§5); mitigating constrictions and severe judgments (§6); traveling to a tzaddik for Rosh HaShanah (§7); joy (§8); love and unity (§9).

In 1802, Czar Alexander I established the Committee for the Amelioration of the Jews. Two years later, this committee issued “The Statute Concerning the Jew,” a set of edicts that over the following decades totally transformed the political, social, economic and cultural life of the Jews living in Russia. Over time these decrees led to the creation of the notorious Pale of Jewish Settlement, as the Jews living under czarist rule were expelled from the areas they had inhabited for centuries and forced to resettle in rural areas defined by the government. In addition, local authorities were given the power to appoint official rabbis for the towns and villages where Jews lived, and secular education was made compulsory. Rebbe Nachman addresses these evils in sections 2-3 of the lesson (see also nn.40-41), and in section 6 he discusses how to mitigate severe judgments (*dinim*, Heaven’s agents of misfortune and suffering; see n.131) that lead to decrees—those issued at that time by the Czar and his Committee for the Amelioration of the Jews, and also those that would be issued by rulers or governments in later generations.

The *Parparaot LeChokhmah* writes: Just before Rosh HaShanah 5568, Rebbe Nachman contracted tuberculosis. With the onset of the disease, the Rebbe began speaking of his demise, and of his desire that his chassidim continue coming to him even after his passing, by visiting his gravesite. The preceding summer the Rebbe discussed some other major themes of the lesson, including the great value of faith—in God, the Torah, the tzaddikim, and also in oneself (see §5; see also *Likutey Moharan* II, 86)—and the importance of traveling to tzaddikim for Rosh HaShanah, since being with the tzaddik for the holiday purifies one’s mind (see below, §7 and n.174; see also *Likutey Moharan* I, 211). Years later, when the Rebbe’s followers reviewed his teachings of this period, they understood that he had been anticipating his passing and they came to view this lesson as Rebbe Nachman’s last will and testament—a statement of how he wanted his followers to conduct themselves when he would no longer be among them physically. In a lengthy commentary on this lesson, the *Parparaot LeChokhmah* points out the references it contains to different events of the times (e.g., the establishment of the Pale of Jewish Settlement and forced secular education; see §2), and shows how the Rebbe’s teaching is a practical guide for spiritual growth. Among the many extensive discourses in *Likutey*

א. עַל-יְדֵי אֱמוּנַת חֲכָמִים, יְכוּלִין לְהוֹצִיא מִשְׁפָּטֵנוּ לְאוֹר. כִּי מִשְׁפָּט הוּא עֲמוּדָא דְאַמְצָעִיתָא. הֵינּוּ בְּחִינַת דֶּרֶךְ הַמִּמְצָע, שְׂאִינוּ

of Torah without questioning. As he matures, the student begins to reason on his own, and starts to ask questions. The more he hones his intellectual faculties, the more he is able to legitimately challenge his teacher's positions. Yet, despite his intellectual advancement, the student must realize that certain concepts remain beyond his comprehension, and in these areas he must have faith in the teachings of those whose knowledge and comprehension of Torah surpass his own. The greatest of the prophets and sages, even the Sages of the Mishnah and Talmud, never reached the level of Torah knowledge Moshe *Rabbeinu* had attained. Therefore, in those matters that were beyond their comprehension they had faith in Moshe and his Torah—i.e., faith in the sages and tzaddikim.

Commenting on the verse, “This is the Torah, a man...” (Numbers 19:14), Reb Noson writes: The Sages teach that the limbs (248) and primary veins and sinews (365) of the human body total 613, paralleling the 613 commandments of the Torah. Just as the Torah, a composite of the Written and Oral Law, is incomplete without its oral teaching, man lacks wholeness without faith in the tzaddikim and the Torah sages, who are the source of the oral teachings. Without the explanation of the mitzvot/Written Law that the sages/Oral Law provide, a person's knowledge of Torah and his level of personal perfection remain incomplete. For example, Scripture's commandment concerning the donning of *tefilin* reads: “Bind them as a sign on your *hand* and as a symbol *between your eyes*” (Deuteronomy 6:8). Without the Sages of the Talmud, we would not know that “on your hand” refers to binding the hand *tefilin* on the *upper arm*, and that “between your eyes” means that the head *tefilin* are to be centered *on the head*, above the hairline. Likewise, without the teachings of the Talmudic Sages we would not know what material to use in making the *tefilin* boxes, or which Biblical passages to inscribe on the parchments housed in those boxes. This is why *emunat chakhamim*, faith in the righteous Torah sages and tzaddikim, is the sine qua non of Torah observance and erudition (see *Likutey Halakhot, Yibum* 3:2).

Reb Noson adds: Although our primary goal is attaining a perfect and absolute faith in God, it is impossible to achieve this exalted quality except through faith in the sages and tzaddikim. This is because God, in His transcendence, is unknowable and infinitely beyond the range of human experience. The tzaddikim, too, are beyond our ability to comprehend. Yet, by developing our faith in them, we can attain a glimpse of insight into their ways and teachings. They, in turn, show us how to develop our faith and how to gain a sense of what it means to perfect one's faith in God (*Torat Natan* #1; see also n.24, below).

8. bring our mishpat to light. Of the various and interrelated meanings of the word *mishpat* (plural, *mishpatim*), the more common are “justice,” “judgment” and “law” (see also *Rashi* on Exodus 28:15, 30). Rebbe Nachman employs all three of these meanings in our lesson. In this opening statement, the Rebbe speaks of *mishpat* as “justice”—moral rightness and the justness of one's case. To “bring our *mishpat* to light” is to make this justice manifest, to have our justness become evident and so be spared punishment or affliction. As mentioned (n.1), at the time Rebbe Nachman gave this lesson, the Czar's committee had already formulated a set of decrees regarding the Jews. The Rebbe teaches that through faith in the sages and tzaddikim one can reverse such decrees (by mitigating *dinim*—i.e., severe judgments, or extreme justice; see n.131) and thus bring one's *mishpat* to light.

Shimon opened the lesson and said: “He who goes around gossiping reveals secrets, but a trustworthy spirit conceals the matter” (Proverbs 11:13). **“He who goes around gossiping”... This is someone whose spirit is unsettled and who is untrustworthy...for his is not a settled spirit.⁵ But someone whose spirit is settled, of him it is written, “but a trustworthy spirit conceals the matter[.]”⁶**

(Zohar III, 128a)

Through faith in the sages⁷ we can bring our *mishpat* to light.⁸ This is because *mishpat* is the “center pillar” (*Tikkuney Zohar*, Introduction,

judgments and punishment. They therefore merited having the deepest mysteries of the Torah revealed and explained to them (*Shaar HaGilgulim* #26, p.71). Thus, Rabbi Shimon assured his disciples that they had no reason to fear; their unity would mitigate the *gevurot* and undo all possible decrees (as Rebbe Nachman will further clarify in §6-§9 below).

5. He who goes around gossiping...his is not a settled spirit. Rabbi Shimon followed this by warning his disciples against revealing the hidden mysteries of the Kabbalah to just anyone. As the *Idra Rabba* relates, he asked them: What is the meaning of “goes around gossiping”? Cannot a person gossip also while standing still? Therefore, Rabbi Shimon explained, this refers to someone whose spirit is unsettled. He cannot be trusted to keep a secret, since what he hears never settles, but “goes around” and around inside him. Eventually, the urge to divulge the secret becomes too strong to contain, and he reveals to others that which was told to him in confidence. Owing to his lack of a settled spirit, it is forbidden to reveal to him the Kabbalah’s hidden mysteries.

6. a trustworthy spirit conceals the matter. Someone who is able to conceal the secrets told to him is considered a trustworthy person; he is deserving and may be taught the Kabbalah’s hidden mysteries. (Rebbe Nachman returns to this topic of keeping a secret in §3 below, where he discusses the Mystery of Intercalation, lofty souls, and how something can be revealed and nevertheless remain a secret.)

7. Through faith in the sages. In Jewish teaching, faith in the sages and tzaddikim—in Hebrew, *emunat chakhamim*—is one of the forty-eight requirements for acquiring Torah erudition (*Avot* 6:5; see also *Likutey Moharan* I, 57:1, n.12). Without *emunat chakhamim*, a person cannot expect to attain true Torah knowledge or gain a deeper sense of how the Torah impacts on every aspect of life. This is because, as the living Word of God, the Torah is always in need of an oral teaching to reveal its meaning and relevancy for each new age. The only ones who can interpret the Torah and apply it to the ever-changing context of the times without violating the integrity of its parameters are the true sages and tzaddikim. (This will be made clearer below, in §6 and nn.141-142, where Reb Noson explains the relationship between the Written and Oral Law in connection with our lesson.)

Elsewhere, Rebbe Nachman explains that although a person must work to develop his intellect to the fullest, striving to understand all of the Torah that he possibly can, in matters beyond a person’s comprehension he must exercise faith (*Likutey Moharan* I, 62:2). This principle applies to all levels of Torah study. A young child will accept his teacher’s explanations

נוֹטָה לְיָמִין וְלִשְׂמָאל. וְזֶה זֹכֵיךְ עַל-יְדֵי אֲמוֹנַת חֲכָמִים, שֶׁהוּא
בְּחִינַת (דברים יז, יא): "לֹא תִסּוּר מִן הַדִּבָּר אֲשֶׁר יִגִּדּוּ לְךָ יָמִין
וּשְׂמָאל". וְעַל כֵּן, עַל-יְדֵי זֶה יוֹצֵא הַמִּשְׁפָּט בְּרוּר כִּנ"ל, בְּבְחִינַת:
"מִשְׁפָּטִי אֶמֶת".

being punished. In both cases, *mishpat* has been exercised. (This arrangement of the *sefirot* into three columns is discussed in Lesson #60, note 6.)

10. the middle path...Do not stray from.... Scripture warns against straying from the rulings of the Sanhedrin, the Supreme Court in Jerusalem, which has the final say on all matters of Jewish law and Torah judgments. A verdict issued by the Sanhedrin is absolutely binding; one must abide by its decision even when convinced that it is wrong. Ramban writes that even if a person is certain that the court has erred—it is as obvious to him as choosing between right and left—he must nonetheless follow its decision. Although the Sanhedrin is no longer extant, the obligation to place one's trust in the adjudicators of *mishpat* applies as well today: each generation is obliged to have faith in its tzaddikim and rabbis (see *Rashi* on Deuteronomy 17:9; cf. below, n.124). This is because each generation faces challenges unique to it, the contemporary issues and problems whose solutions are to be found in the eternal teachings of God's Torah. Yet, only the sages and tzaddikim are capable of plumbing the Torah's depths so as to properly interpret the law as it applies to each particular generation. The Talmud itself states that this verse, "Do not stray from the word....," applies to all the words and teachings of the rabbis (*Berakhot* 19b). It is thus essential that we accept that Torah law comes through the tzaddikim and sages of each generation, putting our faith in these leaders and always abiding by their words.

In the context of our lesson, Rebbe Nachman equates faith in the sages and tzaddikim with *mishpat*, following the middle path (i.e., *Tiferet*). By paying attention to and heeding the teachings of the sages, a person strays neither to the right (*Chesed*) nor to the left (*Gevurah*). Rather, he walks the middle path, that of *Tiferet*, and by doing so is able to bring his *mishpat* to light. Another way of understanding "not straying...either to the right or the left" is that it signifies being overly lenient ("right") or overly stringent ("left") in carrying out one's devotions to God. Rebbe Nachman often counseled against such extremes in one's spiritual practice (see *Likutey Moharan* II, 44; *Rabbi Nachman's Wisdom* #51; *ibid.*, #235.)

11. one can derive clear mishpat. By virtue of a person's faith in the sages and tzaddikim he is guided to the middle path. Since he does not vacillate between the extremes, tending neither to the right nor the left, his *mishpat*—i.e., the path he is to follow—is clear. Rebbe Nachman clarifies this in the next paragraph.

12. true mishpatim. Referring to the Torah, King David says, "The laws of God are true." Rebbe Nachman brings this proof-text to show that where there is *mishpat*, there is truth—a correct path to follow. The Kabbalah, too, teaches that *mishpat/Tiferet* corresponds to the element and characteristic of truth (*Pardes Rimonim* 23:1; see also *Likutey Moharan* I, 2:4, n.47).

Elsewhere, Rebbe Nachman focuses on the strong correlation between the elements of faith and truth (see *Likutey Moharan* I, 7:2 and n.25; *ibid.*, 23:1, see nn.17-19). In the context of our lesson, this reciprocal relationship can be seen in the indispensable role that truth plays

p.17a)⁹—i.e., the aspect of the middle path, which tends neither right nor left. We merit this through faith in the sages, which is the aspect of “Do not stray from the word they declare to you, either to the right or the left” (Deuteronomy 17:11).¹⁰ Therefore, by means of this [faith] <one can derive> clear *mishpat*,¹¹ as mentioned, in the aspect of ‘true *mishpatim*’ (cf. Psalms 19:10).¹²

After this opening statement, however, Rebbe Nachman’s use of the term *mishpat* appears to shift. The Rebbe begins to alternate between two of *mishpat*’s other meanings, “judgment” and “law.” As “judgment,” *mishpat* indicates the capacity to properly assess (judge) circumstances so as to draw sound conclusions and reach clear decisions. Yet the Rebbe also speaks of “*mishpatim*-of-conduct” (see n.14), a concept in which the word *mishpat* signifies “law”—a rule of conduct or a regulation. Reb Avraham Chazan, author of *Biur HaLikutim*, addresses this somewhat uncharacteristic shift in meaning. “Judgment” and “law” he calls “the *mishpat* of below,” since, as Rebbe Nachman will explain, clarity in making decisions and deriving principles of upright conduct are qualities of *mishpat* that each person must attain for himself, through his personal development and study. “Justice,” on the other hand, he calls “the *mishpat* of on high,” since moral rightness and justness are ultimately associated with the Divine. Reb Avraham explains, however, that when we reach the end of the lesson (§6), where the Rebbe discusses mitigating severe judgments (*dinim*, extreme *mishpat*), we understand how these two domains of *mishpat* are complementary and interrelated. In fact, the two are so related, that we can read the word *mishpat* in the lesson’s opening statement—“through *emunat chakhamim* we can bring our *mishpat* to light”—according to any one of its three meanings; not just *mishpat* as “justice,” but also as “judgment” or “law.” As we will see, through faith in the sages and tzaddikim we learn to follow the middle path and achieve the discernment needed to reach clear decisions—i.e., we “bring our *judgment* to light.” Through this faith, too, we learn to derive true laws from our studies, so that we know how to conduct ourselves and also advise others—i.e., we “bring our *laws* to light.” And, by attaining these qualities associated with the *mishpat* of below, we mitigate severe judgments and so “bring our *justice* to light” on high (*Biur HaLikutim* #1). (With no single word in English that incorporates all three connotations of the term *mishpat*, it has been left in the original Hebrew in the translation of the text.)

9. the center pillar. From the *Zohar* (*loc. cit.*) we learn that the ten *sefirot* through which God’s Infinite Light is filtered into the creation are arranged in three columns (see Appendix: Structure of the Sefirot). On the right are the three *sefirot* of expansion and giving: *Chokhmah*, *Chesed* and *Netzach*. On the left are the three *sefirot* of contraction and restraint: *Binah*, *Gevurah* and *Hod*. Both *chesed* (lovingkindness) and *gevurah* (discipline), the paradigmatic qualities of these two sets, are essential elements in the creation. However, an excess of either proves detrimental—too much kindness will overwhelm, too much discipline will inhibit. Creation is therefore comprised of also a third column of *sefirot*—*Keter*, *Tiferet*, *Yesod* and *Malkhut*—in which the qualities of the other two are fused and balanced. This center column is represented by its paradigmatic *sefirah*, *Tiferet*, whose defining quality is balanced *mishpat* (justice and judgment). Through *Tiferet*, kindness is dispensed with measured restraint, commensurate with the recipient’s ability to benefit from it; conversely, punishment, which is a manifestation of *gevurah*, is dispensed only after it has been moderated by love and consideration for the one

הֵינוּ, כִּי כָל הַלְמוּדִים שֶׁהָאָדָם לֹמֵד, צָרִיךְ שִׁיקְבֵּל וְיוֹצִיא מֵהֶם מִשְׁפָּטִי אֱמֶת, שֶׁלֹּא יִהְיֶה בִּבְחִינַת מִשְׁפָּט מְעַקֵּל. דִּהְיִינוּ, שִׁיקְבֵּל וְיִלְמַד מִכָּל הַלְמוּדִים שֶׁלֹּמֵד, מִשְׁפָּטִי הִנְהָגוֹת. שִׁידַע אִיךְ לְהִתְנַהֵג, הֵן לְעֲצֻמוֹ, הֵן לְאַחֲרִים שֶׁמִּתְנַהֲגִים לִפִּי דַעְתּוֹ, כָּל אֶחָד וְאֶחָד כָּפִי בְּחִינָתוֹ, כָּפִי הַמְּשָׁלָה וְהַרְפָּנוֹת שִׁישׁ לוֹ, הֵן לְרֹב אוֹ לְמַעַט. וְכָל זֶה זֹכֵכִין עַל-יְדֵי אֱמוּנַת חֲכָמִים, שֶׁהוּא בְּחִינַת: "לֹא תִסּוּר" וְכו'. וְאִזּוֹ יוֹכֵל לְהוֹצִיא מִשְׁפָּטִי הִנְהָגוֹת יִשְׁרוֹת, בִּבְחִינַת מִשְׁפָּטִי אֱמֶת, שֶׁאֵינוֹ נוֹטֶה לְיָמִין וּשְׂמָאל כֹּנֵ"ל.

אֲבָל כְּשֶׁפּוֹגֵם בְּאֱמוּנַת חֲכָמִים, אִזִּי נִדּוֹן בִּיגִיעַת בֶּשֶׁר, הֵינוּ בְּמוֹתָרוֹת. כִּמוֹ שֶׁאָמְרוּ רַבּוֹתֵינוּ זְכוֹרָנָם לְבָרְכָה (ערוֹבִין כֹּא, ב): 'הַלּוֹעֵג עַל דְּבָרֵי חֲכָמִים נִדּוֹן בְּצוּאָה רוֹתַחַת', כִּמוֹ שֶׁכָּתוּב: "וְלֹהֵג

in danger of arriving at decisions that are distorted and of deriving erroneous laws of conduct from his studies.

15. how to guide others.... The ability to properly advise and guide others is fundamental whether one is instructing the members of one's household, supervising the people in one's employ, educating one's students, governing those over whom one has authority, or counseling others in the way to God. This will be expanded on in the next section, where Rebbe Nachman speaks about the need to appoint only worthy leaders and, conversely, to make certain that unworthy people are denied the opportunity to lead.

16. as explained above. See also note 10. Whereas he who has *emunat chakhamim* attains *mishpat*—the judgment to make clear decisions and to derive true laws from his studies—he who lacks this faith will inevitably blunder in his exercising *mishpat* and so bring harm upon himself and upon those who follow his advice, as Rebbe Nachman explains next.

17. a wearying of the flesh—i.e., waste matter. Rebbe Nachman will show that the Hebrew term *ye'giat basar*, literally "a wearying of the flesh," is to be understood as a euphemism for waste matter and excrement. Reb Noson explains that the body must exert itself to eliminate not only the waste products from the foods it consumes, but also the undesirable traits and emotions that the personality acquires—e.g., avarice, immorality, anger and depression. The Rebbe calls these traits *moterot*, which means "excesses," referring to something "superfluous" and "extraneous." This is because the root of this "waste matter" of the mind is dissatisfaction with one's lot in life and a desire for the *excesses* of this material world (cf. *Torat Natan* #2-4, 10).

18. Whoever LoEG...LaHaG is a wearying of the flesh. The concluding verses of Ecclesiastes point to the Written Law's integral relationship with the Oral Law, the teachings handed down to the Jewish people through the sages and tzaddikim of each generation. Kohelet (King Shlomo) states: "Kohelet sought to discover valuable sayings"—the laws transmitted to

In other words, from whatever a person studies he must obtain <and learn> and derive true *mishpatim*,¹³ so as not to be in the aspect of distorted *mishpat*. From all his studies he must obtain and learn *mishpatim*-of-conduct,¹⁴ so that he knows how to conduct himself and [how to guide] others who conduct themselves according to his advice—[advising] each one commensurate with that person's aspect, according to the greater or lesser degree of his rule and authority [over him].¹⁵ A person merits all this through faith in the sages, which is the aspect of “Do not stray....” And then he is able to derive *mishpatim* of upright conduct, in the aspect of ‘true *mishpatim*,’ since he tends neither right nor left, as explained above.¹⁶

However, when a person blemishes faith in the sages, he is condemned to a wearying of the flesh—i.e., waste matter.¹⁷ As our Sages, of blessed memory, said: Whoever *LoEG* (ridicules) the words of the sages is condemned to boil in excrement, as it is written (Ecclesiastes 12:12), “much *LaHaG* is a wearying of the flesh.”¹⁸ This is

in attaining faith in the sages and tzaddikim; and conversely, in our unqualified need for faith in the sages and tzaddikim in order to attain truth. Without truth, one is in danger of misplaced faith, of putting one's trust in falsehood or false leaders. Without faith in those who espouse and teach the truth, one cannot attain the clear judgment needed for discerning the truth in any situation or for determining one's own true path in life.

13. from whatever a person studies he must obtain.... While this applies most especially to one's Torah study—the narratives and commandments of the *TaNaKh*, the laws of the Mishnah, Talmud and Codes, the homiletic teachings of the Midrash, the mystical insights of the Kabbalah, the ethical guidance of *Musar*, and Chassidism's spiritual wisdom—it is in fact applicable to *whatever* one studies. From all the subjects of life's “lessons”—in one's personal relationships, in engaging in one's profession or earning one's livelihood, in affairs between neighbors, etc.—one must seek to “obtain, learn and derive true *mishpatim*.” This aligns with what Rebbe Nachman teaches elsewhere: A person should be constantly looking for the hints to holiness in everything around him and in everyday life. The greater spiritual understanding that this affords him will bring him closer to God (*Likutey Moharan* I, 54:2).

14. true *mishpatim*...distorted *mishpat*...*mishpatim*-of-conduct. This begins Rebbe Nachman's explanation of how a person brings his *mishpat* to light. When someone has faith in the sages and in their teachings, which are the true interpretations of Torah, their guidance keeps him from straying off course. By conducting himself according to their advice, he acquires the clear perception that comes with exercising balanced judgment, and learns to derive from his studies the laws of upright conduct—i.e., true *mishpatim*. On the other hand, someone who lacks faith in the sages and their teachings is incapable of attaining *mishpat*. Relying on his own interpretations, or on those whose interpretations of Torah are as tenuous as his own, he is

הִרְבֵּה יִגִּיעַת בְּשָׁר׃ וְהוּא מִדָּה כְּנִגְדֵּי מִדָּה, כִּי הוּא אֵינוֹ מֵאֲמִין
בְּדַבְרֵיהֶם, וּמִלְעִיג עֲלֵיהֶם, וְדַבְרֵיהֶם הֵם אֶךְ לְמוֹתֵר אֶצְלוֹ, עַל־כֵּן
נִדּוֹן בְּמוֹתֵרוֹת.

וְכָל הַמְשַׁפְּטִים הֵן מִן הַמַּח, בְּבַחֲיִנַת (מַלְכִּים א' ג', כח): "וַיִּירָאוּ
מִפְּנֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ כִּי רָאוּ כִּי חֲכָמַת אֱלֹקִים בְּקִרְבּוֹ לַעֲשׂוֹת מִשְׁפָּט׃"

teaches that, in certain aspects, the Oral Law is even more essential than the Written Law. If for no other reason, this is because the language of the Written Law is extremely terse, and only through the sages' interpretations—their true *mishpatim*—is it possible to derive the correct way to perform the Torah's mitzvahs (see n.10). This is why someone who has faith in the sages and tzaddikim merits "savoring the taste of meat" from his study; he experiences the satisfaction that comes with acquiring valuable knowledge and pathways of upright conduct. On the other hand, someone who has no faith in the sages and tzaddikim and ridicules their teachings is condemned to a wearying of the flesh. As we have seen, this alludes to waste matter: the "meat" he consumes—i.e., the Torah he studies—produces nothing but *moterot*, a desire for the excesses of this material world.

20. All mishpat stems from the mind. The mind is the seat of *mishpat*, as it is from the intellect's cognitive powers that we derive the discernment through which to exercise judgment and reach clear decisions.

21. the Divine wisdom to exercise mishpat. This verse is from Scripture's account of the two women who appeared before King Shlomo with their newborn babies, one alive and the other dead, each mother insisting that the living infant was hers. As neither woman would yield, the King proposed to solve the matter by cutting the live baby in half. Alarmed and overcome with compassion, the infant's true mother withdrew her claim; she could not bear to see her baby killed, even if that meant it would be awarded to the other woman. This was sufficient proof for King Shlomo to rule on which of the two mothers was telling the truth. Despite a lack of witnesses or evidence, he had succeeded in bringing the truth to light. The people marveled at the King's wisdom and "recognized that he had within him the Divine wisdom to exercise *mishpat*." The commentators explain that the way King Shlomo adjudicated the case proved his great wisdom and his ability to deeply analyze any case brought before him. More importantly, it was clear that he was able to issue a clear judgment, one that was aligned with the absolute truth (*Radak; Metzudat David*). This is as Rebbe Nachman teaches, "from whatever a person studies he must obtain and learn and derive true laws...." With his wisdom/mind King Shlomo could exercise judgment and justice, looking deeply into every matter and discerning true laws of conduct.

In sections 2 and 6 below, Rebbe Nachman discusses the concept of *chokhmah* (wisdom). The Rebbe will explain that each of life's constrictions, its barriers and constraints, is linked to a specific intellect by which it is mitigated, and that all these constrictions and their concomitant intellects are encompassed in a level called Upper Wisdom. When a person connects to this exalted level of intellect, he has the ability to transcend the constrictions of this world and can mitigate all severe judgments (*dinim*) and decrees. Although the Rebbe introduces this only later on (in §6), both the *Torat Natan* and the *Parparaot LeChokhmah* relate the topics of wisdom and constrictions to this part of the lesson. Reb Noson writes: We know that *chokhmah*

measure-for-measure: since he has no faith in their words but ridicules them, and their words are a waste to him, he is therefore condemned to waste matter.¹⁹

All *mishpat* stems from the mind,²⁰ in the aspect of “They feared the king for they recognized that he had within him the Divine wisdom to exercise *mishpat*” (1 Kings 3:28).²¹ And the mind is commensurate with

Moshe at Sinai—“and properly recorded words of truth”—the Five Books of Moshe and all the Books of the Prophets. “The sayings of the wise...given by a single shepherd”—at Sinai, God revealed even all the rabbinic laws and ordinances through Moshe. “Beyond these take care, my son, for the making of many books is without limit”—and more important than all [the works of Torah already mentioned] is heeding the words and teachings of the sages. Why were these teachings not written down [as part of the Written Law]? The reason is that we could not possibly record them all, since “much *lahag* (study) is a wearying of the flesh”—a man could never absorb all the knowledge in the Torah and would exhaust himself trying. In that case, why bother studying at all? “The sum of the matter, when all is considered, is to fear God and perform His commandments, since that is the whole of man”—one must be God-fearing and, to the best of one’s ability, fulfill God’s laws; this being the sum of man’s obligation in this world (Ecclesiastes 12:10-13 based on the commentary of *Rashi*). (See *Bamidbar Rabbah* 14:4 for additional explanations of these verses, all of which emphasize the crucial role played by the teachings of the sages and tzaddikim in mankind’s service of God.)

In the Talmud’s discussion of Kohelet’s words we find two opposing readings of “much *lahag* is *ye’giat basar*.” Rav Pappa maintains that this is a warning against ridiculing (*loeg*) the teachings of the sages and tzaddikim. The myriads of reams and volumes that these teachings fill form a veritable ocean of knowledge. Nothing short of an entire lifetime of dedicated study is required if one is to successfully navigate the endless interpretations, opinions and disputes that are its conduits, and to effectively master the countless laws, ordinances and maxims that are its waters. King Shlomo therefore warns of the danger that, along the way, one might grow weary and abandon the journey, and then, to quiet the pangs of remorse over having given up, begin ridiculing and making light of those very same teachings. Rav Pappa thus reads Kohelet’s words as: “much *ridicule* is a wearying of the flesh”—whoever is guilty of ridiculing the sages’ teachings is condemned to boil in excrement. Rava, however, rejects this reading, arguing that the word which appears in Ecclesiastes is not *loeg* (לעג, ridicule) but *lahag* (להג, study). Thus, Rava reads Kohelet’s words as: “much *study* is the attaining of flesh”—whoever devotes himself to studying the sages’ teachings tastes in these teachings the savoriness of meat (*Eruvin* 21b).

In our lesson, Rebbe Nachman follows the opinion of Rav Pappa, reading *lahag* as *loeg* (see *Maharsha*, *Gittin* 57a, s.v. *v’she’amar*, that the *heh* in *laHag* and the *ayin* in *loEg*, both guttural letters, are interchangeable). Below, in section 5, the Rebbe returns to Kohelet’s words and shows that the preceding clause in this verse—“the making of many books”—is the remedy for someone whose lack of faith in the sages brings him to ridicule their teachings. In section 6, he introduces the concept of Upper Wisdom (*Chokhmah I’laah*), which relates to the vastness of the Torah and its endless interpretations, disputes, laws, ordinances and maxims.

19. **much LaHaG...measure-for-measure....** As explained in the previous note, the Talmud

וְהַמָּח, הוּא לְפִי הַמְּזוֹן. וְכִשְׁהִגּוֹף נָקִי, אֲזִי הַמָּח בְּרוּר. וְאֲזִי יָכוֹל
 לְהוֹצִיא מִשְׁפָּטִי אֶמֶת, הַנִּהְגוֹת יִשְׁרוֹת.
 אֲבָל כְּשֶׁנִּדּוֹן בְּמוֹתָרוֹת, עַל-יְדֵי פָגֶם אֱמוּנַת חֲכָמִים כַּנ"ל, אֲזִי
 עוֹלָם עֲשָׂנִים סְרוּחִים אֶל הַמָּח, וּמַעֲרִבָבִים וּמַבְלִבִּין דַּעְתּוֹ.

and whose ministers dine at the proper time, with restraint and not drunkenness.” To properly exercise *mishpat*, a person must eat properly, with an appropriate measure of holiness (*Torat Natan* #5). Otherwise, the food he consumes is transformed entirely into waste matter, which, like drunkenness, pollutes his mind and undermines his ability to exercise *mishpat*. This can be likened to Adam’s eating from the Tree of *Daat* (Knowledge) of Good and Evil, thereby blemishing his *daat*. Now we, Adam’s descendants, must eat with the proper degree of holiness to rectify that blemish and to purge the waste matter from ourselves so that it does not pollute *our* minds.

24. foul vapors ascend to the brain, mixing up and confusing his daat. As Rebbe Nachman cited above, the Talmud teaches that a person who lacks *emunat chakhamim* is condemned to boil in excrement. Instead of providing nourishment, the food he eats to fuel his body is entirely waste; it emits foul vapors that ascend to his brain and pollute his *daat*. Reb Noson explains this as follows: God’s Infinite Light is unfathomable; although it fills and sustains every element in creation, God’s Light is entirely beyond the mind’s ability to contain or comprehend. The only way that we human beings can come to even a rudimentary perception of this Light is through the mediation of numerous vessels. These vessels are created primarily with faith: simple belief in God, without resorting to the cognitive powers of the mind. Yet, God’s exaltedness and transcendence are such that achieving even simple faith in Him is beyond most people. This is why *emunat chakhamim* is so essential. With the awareness of Godliness that these sages and tzaddikim acquire through their relentless devotions and uncompromising faith in God they are able to perceive the Infinite Light. They are also able to bring this perception and the good that God’s Light affords to others. However, as mentioned at the end of note 7 above, the sages and tzaddikim, too, are beyond our comprehension. The only means we have of gaining insight into their ways and teachings is through the vessels we create by developing and strengthening our *emunat chakhamim*. Through these same vessels, we too are able to hold and contain the incomprehensible perceptions emanating from God’s Infinite Light. One area of our lives in which the importance of the vessels formed through faith in the sages and tzaddikim is especially evident, day in and day out, is eating. Like all the other elements and aspects of the creation, the foods we eat are a combination of the physical and God’s Infinite Light. However, the only way that we can absorb the Light is through vessels formed through faith. The stronger our *emunat chakhamim*, the more we—i.e., our minds, which are the primary beneficiaries of the Light’s “nutrients”—are nourished by the Light. On the other hand, people who repudiate faith in the sages and tzaddikim blemish the vessels formed by this faith. This, the Rebbe teaches, is the deeper meaning of the Sages’ teaching that such a person is condemned to boil in excrement: he is condemned to a mind polluted by waste matter. With no vessels to receive it, the Light in the foods he eats disappears, and all he is left with is its physical elements. When he eats, the nutrients that the blood carries to the brain include the vapors produced by the waste matter, which leave his mind confused and polluted.

the food [a person eats].²² Thus when the body is pure, the mind is clear and can then derive true *mishpatim*/upright conduct.²³

But when a person is condemned to waste matter because of a blemish of faith in the sages, as explained above, then foul vapors ascend to the brain, mixing up and confusing his *daat*.²⁴ As a result,

refers to intellect and the comprehension of the mind, whereas faith, which is applicable only where one does not understand, implies the constriction of *chokhmah*. When a person is in a constricted mindset, he is lacking the intellect to make clear choices and decisions—i.e., to bring his *mishpat* to light. All he has then is faith, his constricted intellect. However, if he puts his trust in the sages and follows their advice, this *emunat chakhamim* frees his intellect of its constrictions, so that he can apply it to his current situation. He eventually discovers how to reach a clear decision, one attained through the intellect itself. In this sense, strengthening one's faith in the sages creates the vessel one needs to contain the intellect. However, if a person rejects this faith and disdains the teachings of the sages and tzaddikim, he is condemned to a mind polluted with waste matter and, as a result of his blemished intellect, can never arrive at clear, proper decisions (cf. *Torat Natan* #1, #3).

The Tcheriner Rav, Rabbi Nachman Goldstein, develops this further. In *Parparaot LeChokhmah* he writes: Each person faces constrictions commensurate with his spiritual level, according to the level of his intellect. The intellect is an aspect of a person's soul, the inner spiritual light that enables him to bring his *mishpat* to light. With *emunat chakhamim*, one is attached to the intellect that illumines his path to proper *mishpat*. Without faith though, a person is unaware of this inner light and therefore succumbs to the dark emptiness of materialism, the waste matter. He is then unable to guide himself and is certainly in no position to guide others. For the essence of a leader is the advice he can offer others on how to better serve God, each person according to his own intellect and level. He, however, has been condemned to the waste matter of a constricted intellect, and, lacking faith in the sages and tzaddikim, is incapable of reaching clear decisions for himself or for guiding others.

22. the mind...the food a person eats. Physiologically, the food we eat is digested and absorbed into the bloodstream. This blood and the nutrients it carries reach the heart, from where approximately fifteen percent of it is pumped to the brain. Hence, “the mind is commensurate with the food a person eats”; nutritious food nourishes the brain and influences it positively. Eating nutritiously also aids digestion, as it prevents an accumulation of waste matter in the digestive tract. Consuming unhealthy foods, on the other hand, clogs the system with excess waste matter. This not only harms the body but also clouds the mind and deprives it of clarity.

23. when the body is pure...upright conduct. Rebbe Nachman now shows how the physiological corresponds to and interrelates with the spiritual. In the context of our lesson, a body cleansed of waste matter corresponds to someone who has faith in the sages and tzaddikim, since it is through them that we are cleansed of the impurities that pollute the mind and undermine our ability to make clear decisions and derive laws of upright conduct. The Rebbe adds here that a person's conduct, too, is influenced by his faith. Improper behavior and the pursuit of excesses (*moterot*; see n.17) are signs of a polluted intellect, of a mind clogged by waste matter.

Reb Noson adds: This is the meaning of (Ecclesiastes 10:16-17), “Woe to you, O land... whose ministers dine in the morning. Fortunate are you, O land, whose king is a free man

וְאִזִּי אֵינוֹ יָכוֹל לְהוֹצִיא מִשְׁפָּטִי אֶמֶת, וְאִזִּי יוֹצֵא מִשְׁפָּט מֵעֶקֶל. בְּבַחֲיִנַת (חֲבֻקָּק א, ד): "כִּי רָשָׁע מִכְתִּיר אֶת הַצְדִּיק עַל כֵּן יֵצֵא מִשְׁפָּט מֵעֶקֶל", הֵינּוּ, עַל-יְדֵי שֶׁהַעֲשָׂנִים סְרוּחִים מְסַבְּבִין וּמְקִיפִין הַמַּח, וּמְבַלְבֵּלִין אוֹתוֹ, עַל-יְדֵי זֶה יוֹצֵא מִשְׁפָּט מֵעֶקֶל, בְּבַחֲיִנַת (תהלים קמז, כ): "מִשְׁפָּטִים בֶּל יָדְעוּם", הֵינּוּ בִלְבוּל הַמַּחֲיִין. וְדוֹאֵג, עַל-יְדֵי שֶׁלְמוּדוֹ הָיָה מְבַחֲיִנַת אֵלּוֹ הַמוֹתְרוֹת, בְּבַחֲיִנַת הַנֶּאֱמָר בְּדוֹאֵג (שמואל א' כא, ח): "וְשֵׁם אִישׁ מֵעַבְדֵי שָׁאוּל נֶעְצָר לִפְנֵי ה' וְשִׁמוֹ דּוֹאֵג" וְכו' וּפִרְשׁ רַש"י: "עוֹצֵר עֲצָמוֹ וְכו' לְעִסְקָא

26. **about these mishpatim, they know BaL...a BiLBuL of the mentalities.** This verse from Psalms speaks of the Torah being exclusively Israel's; it was not given to the nations. Rebbe Nachman reads the words "about these laws, they know nothing" as referring to those who have no knowledge of true *mishpatim*. When a person lacks faith in the sages and tzaddikim, he knows nothing of exercising judgment or determining the laws of upright conduct. Hence, "about these *mishpatim*, they know *BaL* (בל, nothing)"—i.e., their knowledge is in a state of *BiLBuL* (בלבול), "confusion," due to the waste matter that pollutes the mind.

27. **Doeg's studies.** Rebbe Nachman brings the example of Doeg to illustrate that excessive waste matter pollutes the mind and distorts one's ability to exercise *mishpat*. In addition to being the leading Torah scholar of his time, Doeg was head of the Sanhedrin during the reign of King Shaul (see *Midrash Tehillim* 49:2). His scholarship in Torah was legendary and he was very highly regarded (see *Sanhedrin* 106b), yet he misinterpreted the law and made serious errors in judgment. The Rebbe points this out to teach that even very learned rabbis and scholars—even the head of the supreme rabbinical court—can err and issue seriously flawed judgments because of a lack of *emunat chakhamim* (see n.32). In discussing this here, the Rebbe introduces a main topic of the next section: the evils caused by appointing unworthy leaders.

28. **There was a man there...Doeg.** When David fled for his life from King Shaul, he passed through Nov, the city of priests which at that time was the site of the Holy Tabernacle. The high priest, Achimelech, was unaware of the King's enmity for David and so welcomed him, giving David food and a weapon before sending him on his way. King Shaul heard of this and sought out anyone who could tell him precisely what had transpired. Doeg, who had been there at the time, volunteered the information, slandering David and accusing Nov's priests of conspiring with the King's enemy. Shaul issued an order for the priests to be immediately killed, and it was Doeg who rushed to carry it out.

29. **ne'ETZaR in God's presence...to study Torah.** Doeg had traveled to Nov to offer sacrifices in the Tabernacle and remained there after the others of his group had departed (*Radak*). Rashi explains Scripture's use of the word *ne'etzar* (held back), where the simpler term, *nishar* (stayed behind), or a similar verb would have sufficed: This is to indicate that Doeg *held himself back* at the entrance to the Tabernacle in order to study Torah.

he is incapable of deriving true *mishpatim*. Instead, distorted *mishpat* emerges, in the aspect of “for the wicked man encircles the righteous man, therefore *mishpat* emerges distorted” (Habakkuk 1:4).²⁵ That is, because the foul vapors encircle and surround the mind and confuse it, distorted *mishpat* emerges, in the aspect of “about these *mishpatim*, they know *BaL* (nothing)” (Psalms 147:20)—i.e., a *BiLBuL* (confusion) of the mind.²⁶

Doeg’s studies²⁷ were from the aspect of this waste matter, in the aspect of that which was said of Doeg: “There was a man there of Shaul’s officials, *ne’ETZaR* (held back) in God’s presence. His name was Doeg...” (1 Samuel 21:8).²⁸ Rashi explains: He held himself back...to study Torah.²⁹ His studying was from the aspect

In *Parparaot LeChokhmah*, the Tcheriner Rav explains this a bit differently. He writes: When a person eats foods that are unsuitable for human consumption (see Lesson #60:6 and n.138), he cannot digest them properly, and so is deprived not only of the physical nutrients in the foods but also of their spiritual nutrients, which are meant to nourish the mind. In addition, it is difficult to eliminate the waste products of such foods, and so they tend to build up inside his body. As a result, the foul vapors that this waste matter produces ascend to the mind and pollute it, leaving it sluggish and confused. Similarly, when a person repudiates faith in the sages and tzaddikim and accordingly has been condemned to boil in excrement, the foul vapors confuse and mix up his *daat*. As Rebbe Nachman explains next, the *mishpat* that his mind produces is distorted—i.e., he is unable to reach clear decisions or derive laws of upright conduct from his studies.

25. the wicked man encircles...mishpat emerges distorted. In his vision, the prophet Chabakkuk foresaw that God would be patient with Nevuchadnezzar even after the wicked Babylonian ruler had destroyed the Holy Temple. This withholding of judgment perplexed the prophet: How can it be that the “wicked man encircles the righteous man”—Nevuchadnezzar is allowed to destroy Israel (who were righteous by comparison; *Metzudat David*). Is this not distorted judgment—that the righteous are made to suffer and the wicked are allowed to prosper? Rebbe Nachman brings this proof-text to show that when waste matter and foul vapors pollute true *mishpatim*—i.e., when “the wicked” pollutes “the righteous”—distorted *mishpat* abounds.

Elsewhere, Rebbe Nachman equates a person’s *daat*, the repository in the mind of holy knowledge, to the Holy Temple (*Likutey Moharan* I, 13:1). Our Sages teach that each day for a period of eighteen years Nevuchadnezzar heard a voice from Heaven instructing him to destroy the Temple (*Midrash Tehillim* 79:2). Yet, Nevuchadnezzar also knew that if he heeded its call, he would be punished. In the context of our lesson, this is analogous to a person who blemishes faith in the sages and tzaddikim, and as a result cannot derive true *mishpatim*—he destroys his *daat*, the “temple” of his mind.

בְּתוֹרָה'. כִּי לְמוֹדוֹ הָיָה מִבְּחִינַת עֲצִירוֹת, בְּחִינַת מוֹתָרוֹת. עַל-
יְדֵי זֶה, לֹא הָיָה מוֹצִיא מִלְּמוֹדוֹ מְשֻׁפְּטֵי אֱמֶת, רַק מְשֻׁפְּטֵי מַעֲקָל.
וְעַל-כֵּן הָיָה דָּן שְׂאִין דָּוִד רָאוּי לְבּוֹא בַּקָּהֶל (יבמות עו, ב), וְזֶה הָיָה,
עַל-יְדֵי שְׁלֵמוֹדוֹ הָיָה מִמוֹתָרוֹת כֵּן"ל.

ב. וַיֵּשׁ מִנְהִיגִים שֶׁנִּקְרָאִים בְּשֵׁם רַבִּי, שְׁלֵמוֹדֵם מֵאֵלּוֹ הַמוֹתָרוֹת.
וְלֹא דִי שְׂאִינֵם יְכוּלִים אֲפֹלוֹ לְהִנְהִיג אֶת עַצְמָן כֵּן"ל, וּמִכָּל שְׂכָן
שְׂאִינֵם יְכוּלִים לְהִנְהִיג אֶת אֲחֵרִים, וְהֵם נוֹטְלִים גְּדֻלָּה לְעַצְמָן,

In the Kabbalah we find that King David is the embodiment of *Malkhut* (Kingship; see Appendix: The Seven Supernal Shepherds), the *sefirah* that corresponds to the Oral Law (see Appendix: The Divine Personas). In this sense, Doeg's opposition to David reflected his disdain for the Oral Law, and consequently for the sages and tzaddikim. There is even a hint to this in his name, as DOEG (דוּאג) has the same numerical value as DaViD (דוּד; see Appendix: Gematria Chart)—whereas David personified faith in the sages and the rectification of *Malkhut* of holiness, Doeg personified disdain for the sages and the empowering of *Malkhut* of impurity. Reb Noson adds: Even a cursory review of Jewish history shows that all opposition to the Torah throughout the generations has in essence been opposition to the Oral Law and the sages and tzaddikim who transmit it. Yet, the time will come when all the Jewish people will recognize the great value of the Oral Law and put their faith in the sages and tzaddikim. When this happens, we will see the end to all the internal rifts and opposition that today divide our people and keep us mired in exile (see *Likutey Halakhot, Halvaah* 4:8).

In review: Through faith in the sages and tzaddikim we bring our *mishpat* to light. Conversely, a person who repudiates this faith is condemned to a mind plagued by confusion and doubt; he is unable to attain judgment or derive true laws of conduct from his studies, and so is never clear about the path he is meant to follow.

33. There are leaders. In this section Rebbe Nachman expands his discussion of the evils engendered by a lack of faith in the sages and tzaddikim. Far worse than the confusion (pollution of the mind) that this repudiation of faith produces in the individual is the negative affect it has on the Jewish people as a whole. As a result of people's lack of *emunat chakhamim*, unworthy leaders are appointed. This, in turn, subjects the Jews (collectively and individually) to exile and the harmful decrees of the nations.

34. leaders...rabbi...waste matter...guiding others. As mentioned above, Doeg was the leading scholar of the Sanhedrin. Even so, he could not apply his knowledge to properly bring *mishpat* to light. This was because the source of the energy that fueled Doeg's Torah study was waste matter. He therefore could not guide himself—Doeg could not keep from slandering David—and certainly was incapable of properly guiding others.

35. put themselves forward in order to lead others. Despite their shortcomings (of which they are often aware), they pursue the rabbinate or other positions of leadership for the status and power such stations afford.

of *ATZiRut* (holding back nature's call), the aspect of waste matter.³⁰ He therefore did not derive true *mishpatim* from his studies, only distorted *mishpat*.³¹ As a result, he ruled that David was unfit to be admitted into the congregation (*Yevamot* 76b). This was because [Doeg's] studies stemmed from waste matter, as explained above.³²

2. There are leaders³³ who are called rabbi, whose studies are from this waste matter. Although they are incapable of guiding even themselves, as explained above, and all the more so of guiding others,³⁴ they nonetheless put themselves forward in order to lead <others>.³⁵ One must make certain not to confer authority on them,

30. **ne'ETZaR...ATZiRut, the aspect of waste matter.** Rebbe Nachman adds a deeper dimension here, showing that *ne'ETZaR* (נעצר) shares the same root with *ATZiRut* (עצירות), which literally means “constipation.” Scripture uses this word to indicate that Doeg held himself back from nature's call—i.e., his Torah study was in the aspect of waste matter retained in the body.

31. **distorted mishpat.** The waste matter that polluted Doeg's mind prevented him from deriving true laws from his Torah study, as Rebbe Nachman will illustrate next, and also caused him to slander David and the priests of Nov. In the end, Doeg's distorted *mishpat* led to his personally massacring not only eighty-five innocent priests but also the men, women and children, and even the livestock, of Nov.

32. **As a result, he ruled...as explained above.** The Talmud relates: When David, as yet unknown and unheralded, emerged from the ranks of the terrified Israelite warriors to do battle with Goliath, King Shaul gave him his royal suit of armor. Although Shaul was the tallest of all the men of Israel, the armor fit David perfectly. This miracle aroused the King's curiosity, especially since Shaul had promised his daughter's hand in marriage to anyone who would slay Goliath. Who was this lad about whom he could sense the air of nobility? The King sent Avner, his chief-of-staff, to gather more information about David and his ancestry. “Before you ask if David is fit for kingship,” declared Doeg, a member of the royal party at the battlefield, “ask if he is fit to be accepted as a Jew! Is he not a descendent of Ruth the Moabitess?”—a nation forbidden to marry into the Jewish people (see Deuteronomy 23:4). In the ensuing debate, Doeg repeatedly challenged David's right to claim Jewish heritage, successfully countering each of Avner's arguments in David's defense. The matter was finally resolved in David's favor based on a ruling issued by the court of the prophet Shmuel: The prohibition that prevents a convert from Moab to marry a Jew applies only to a Moabite but not a Moabitess (*Yevamot, loc. cit.*). This incident occurred several months before Doeg slandered David and the priests of Nov. Nevertheless, Doeg's Torah had already become polluted; despite his extensive knowledge of Torah, he was incapable of deriving true *mishpatim* from his study. This was because Doeg lacked faith in the sages and tzaddikim. The ruling rendering the descendants of a Moabitess convert full-fledged Jews was well known to all those who has studied with Shmuel. Doeg, it seems, chose to pay no heed to Shmuel, the prophet and leading sage of the generation. It was this lack of faith that led to Doeg's mind being polluted with waste matter and to his being guilty of distorted *mishpat*.

לְהַנְהִיג הָעוֹלָם. צָרִיךְ לִרְאוֹת שֶׁלֹּא לְהַסְמִיךְ אוֹתָם, שֶׁלֹּא לִתֵּן לָהֶם תִּקְוָה וְעֹז, שֶׁלֹּא יִהְיוּ מְכַנִּים בְּשֵׁם רַבִּי. כִּי הֵם עֲצָמָן אֵינָם חַיִּבִּים כָּל־כֶּךָ, כִּי יֵשׁ לָהֶם יֹצֵר הָרַע גָּדוֹל לְהַנְהִיג הָעוֹלָם. אֲךָ צָרִיךְ לְשַׁמֵּר מְאֹד, שֶׁלֹּא לִתֵּן לָהֶם תִּקְוָה וְעֹז, כִּי אִלוּ הַנוֹתְנִים לָהֶם תִּקְוָה וְעֹז וְנִסְמָכִים עַל יָדָם שִׁיְהִיו נִקְרָאִים בְּשֵׁם רַבִּי, הֵם עֲתִידִין לִתֵּן דִּין וְחֶשְׁבוֹן.

וְעַל־יְדֵי שְׁמִסְמִיכֵין רַבִּי שְׂאִינוּ הֶגְוֵן, עַל־יְדֵי־זֶה נִחְלַשׁ כְּתָב יְדֵנוּ, וְאֵין לוֹ שׁוֹם תִּקְוָה, וְנוֹתְנִין כַּח בְּכָתֵב יָדָם. וְעַל־יְדֵי־זֶה הֵם גּוֹזְרִין שֶׁלֹּא יִהְיֶה תִּקְוָה לְכַתְּבִים שְׁלָנוּ, כִּי אִם לְכַתְּבִים שְׁלָהֶם,

alternately refer to the accounting demanded by future generations, who will blame the evils caused by an unworthy rabbi on those who enabled him to attain the position of importance from which he brought about those evils. The *Be'Ibey HaNachal* explains that the reason the sages who confer authority on unworthy rabbis are held responsible is that they failed to consider the prevailing lack of faith in the world. When *emunat chakhamim* is lacking, those who authorize and empower leaders cannot rely solely on their own intellects in deciding whom to appoint. Even Moshe *Rabbeinu* relied on faith, taking counsel with Israel's tribal heads and trusting their opinion regarding which judges to appoint (cf. Deuteronomy 1:13).

39. By conferring authority on an unworthy rabbi.... This is the first evil that Rebbe Nachman teaches will befall the Jewish people if unworthy rabbis are appointed to lead them: the undermining of "the writing of our hand." As will be explained next, this refers to the repudiation of the Torah, which is "our writings." The Rebbe will show that not only do unworthy rabbis not increase Torah study and observance, but, quite the contrary, they *weaken* the Torah's authority and the force of our *mishpatim* (laws).

40. strengthen the writing of the hand of the nations...obligating the Jews to study their writings. Conferring authority on unworthy rabbis weakens the Torah's authority. Without the Torah as their guide, the Jewish people are forced to abide by the statutes and laws of the nations. This further increases the authority of the nations and, in turn, further undermines the authority of Torah. Ultimately, Rebbe Nachman teaches, conferring authority on unworthy rabbis leads to the nations issuing a decree "obligating the Jews to study their writings"—i.e., forced secular education. This was one of the enactments being mooted during the Rebbe's lifetime as part of "The Statute Concerning the Jew" (see n.1 above; it was put into effect only around 1827, with the death of Czar Alexander and the ascent of Czar Nikolai, the Iron Czar, to the Romanov throne). Forced secular education was to be the death knell of the Jewish people's time-honored *cheder* system. Instead of studying Bible, Talmud and the Codes, young Jewish children were forced to study the writings and culture of the nations. As is obvious today, some two hundred years after this decree was first put forward, replacing the Torah with secular education has led to a full three-quarters of the Jewish people having no knowledge whatsoever of their rich and meaningful heritage. This, Rebbe Nachman teaches, is the result of conferring authority on unworthy rabbis.

or strengthen and empower them, so that they are not referred to as “rabbi.”³⁶ For they themselves are not all that at fault, since they have a strong evil urge to lead people.³⁷ Nevertheless one must be very careful not to strengthen or empower them, since it is those who strengthen and empower them and through whose authorization they are called rabbi, who in the future will have to give an accounting.³⁸

By conferring authority on an unworthy rabbi, the writing of our hand is weakened and has no force.³⁹ [Instead,] we strengthen the writing of the hand <of the nations>. This enables <the nations> to issue a decree <against us>, that our writings should have no force, only theirs, thus obligating the Jews to study their writings.⁴⁰ And, <as

The Talmud (*Gittin* 62a) teaches: How do you know that the rabbis are called *melakhim* (kings)? We learn this from the verse, “With me, kings rule” (Proverbs 8:15). “Me,” the Talmud says, refers to the Torah. Likening rabbis and Torah sages to *melakhim* indicates that they are associated with the *sefirah Malkhut* (Kingship). This is as Rebbe Nachman explains elsewhere: Through their study of Torah—and in particular the Oral Law, which corresponds to *Malkhut* (see n.32)—the rabbis and sages elevate *Malkhut* (*Likutey Moharan* I, 135:4). When, in return, they acquire the qualities of kingship and authority that this *sefirah* embodies, they seek to manifest these traits by advising and leading others. However, as the Rebbe has shown, if a person is not free of waste matter, his studies pollute his mind and distort his exercising *mishpat*. He is then unable to employ the authority of the Torah/Oral Law/*Malkhut* to guide other people. On the contrary, there is a very real danger that any attempt he makes to lead others will end in their material, physical or spiritual harm.

36. not to confer authority on them...not referred to as rabbi. Rebbe Nachman now explains why if such a person is appointed to a position of power and leadership, it is more the fault of his mentors and supporters than his own. One historical example of this is Shabbetai Zvi. Without the support of a number of the leading Torah sages of his time, Shabbetai Zvi would never have attained the prominence he did, and so would never have been able to bring such terrible evils upon the Jewish people.

37. strong evil urge to lead people. Such a person is at fault for not having *emunat chakhamim* and for failing to keep his mind clear of waste matter, but is “not all that at fault” for desiring prominence. This is because the authority he acquires through his Torah study creates in him “a strong evil urge to lead people,” as explained above in note 35. Even if his intentions were initially pure, without faith in the sages and tzaddikim, the power that the Torah provides is transformed into a negative force; as our Sages teach: If a person is worthy, the Torah is an elixir for life; if he is unworthy, it becomes a potion of death (*Yoma* 72b). He falls victim to his ambition and cannot derive from his studies proper *mishpat*—i.e., the ability to reach clear decisions and arrive at correct rulings of Torah observance.

38. who in the future will have to give an accounting. In general, this accounting is requested when a person passes on from this world and appears before the heavenly tribunal. It can

וְיִשְׂרָאֵל יִהְיוּ מְכַרְחִין לְלִמּוֹד כְּתָב שְׁלָהֶם. וְעַל-יְדֵי-זֶה גּוֹזְרִין גַּם
 בֶּן לְגֶרֶשׁ בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל מִמָּקוֹם הַיָּשׁוּב, שֶׁנִּתְּשְׁבוּ שָׁם יִשְׂרָאֵל כְּכֹהֵן,
 אֶל מְקוֹמוֹת שֶׁלֹּא הָיוּ שָׁם יִשְׂרָאֵל מֵעוֹלָם.
 כִּי הַסְמִיכָה שְׁסוּמְכִין אֶת הָרֹב, וְהַכְּתָב, הֵם מִבְּחִינָה אַחַת. כִּי
 הַסְמִיכָה בְּיָדַיִם, כְּמוֹ שֶׁכָּתוּב (דְּבָרִים לד, ט): "וַיְהוֹשֻׁעַ בֶּן נֹחַן מָלֵא
 רוּחַ חֲכָמָה כִּי סָמַךְ מֹשֶׁה אֶת יָדָיו עָלָיו". וְהוּא בְּחִינַת הַכְּתָב,
 בְּחִינַת יָד כּוֹתֶבֶת. כִּי הַכְּתָב הוּא גַם בֶּן מִבְּחִינַת חֲכָמָה, כִּי

(סמיכה) refers to rabbinical ordination, and by extension connotes “conferring authority” or “appointing.” It has the same root letters as the word *liSMoKh* (לסמך), which means “to lay upon.” When God instructed Moshe to appoint Yehoshua as the one who would lead the Jewish people after Moshe’s passing, God said (Numbers 27:18), “Take Yehoshua...and lay your hand upon him.” Moshe did so with a beneficent eye, laying *both* his hands on the man who would replace him (ibid., 27:23; see *Rashi*)—instilling Yehoshua with his wisdom. From this verse and the one cited by Rebbe Nachman in the text it is clear that the act of ordaining and conferring authority includes transmitting an illumination of *chokhmah* (wisdom) through the hands.

44. the aspect of writing. Rambam rules that although Moshe ordained Yehoshua by laying his hands upon him, this is not essential for *semikhah*. It is possible to ordain one’s student by simply conferring upon him the title “rabbi” (*Yad HaChazakah, Sanhedrin* 4:1-2). Rebbe Nachman teaches here the deeper meaning of Scripture’s depiction of the laying of hands in ordination, explaining its connection to the act of writing. As we shall see, ordaining or conferring authority on a worthy disciple strengthens the authority of the texts of Jewish writing, whereas ordaining or conferring authority on an unworthy disciple weakens the authority of those texts.

The *Parparaot LeChokhmah* adds: It seems clear that with this discussion concerning conferring authority on a worthy disciple—citing the verse “Yehoshua son of Nun was filled with the spirit of wisdom because Moshe laid his hands upon him”—Rebbe Nachman was “ordaining” and conferring authority on Reb Noson. Of all his chassidim, the Rebbe considered Reb Noson the person most qualified to transmit his teachings to future generations. That Reb Noson was eminently capable of exercising *mishpat* and of guiding others to upright conduct, and therefore worthy of this authority, became obvious to all later on, through his extensive writings. These included various transcriptions of the Rebbe’s teachings; Reb Noson’s own *Likutey Halakhot*, discourses based on *Likutey Moharan* showing how to derive “*mishpatim*-of-conduct” from the halakhot found in the *Shulchan Arukh*; *Likutey Tefilot* (“Collected Prayers”); and *Alim LiTerufah* (translated into English as “Healing Leaves”), a collection of letters written to guide others on the proper path to God. Indeed, Reb Noson is universally recognized as the primary reason that Rebbe Nachman’s teachings and path in serving God are as well-known and treasured as they are in our day.

45. a writing hand. This phrase from the *Zohar* (*loc. cit.*) appears in a discussion about how God came to write the Torah (cf. Exodus 32:15-16). In the context of our lesson, Rebbe Nachman brings “a writing hand” as the first link in proving the connection between the hand/

a result,> they also decree that the Jewish people be exiled from a place Jews settled long ago, to places where no Jew has ever been.⁴¹

The reason for this is that conferring authority on a rabbi and writing are from the same aspect.⁴² *SeMiKhah* (ordination) is with the hands, as it is written (Deuteronomy 34:9), “Yehoshua son of Nun was filled with the spirit of wisdom because Moshe *SaMaKh* (laid) his hands upon him.”⁴³ This is <likewise> the aspect of writing,⁴⁴ the aspect of “a writing hand” (*Tikkuney Zohar* 55, p. 89a).⁴⁵ For writing, too, is

It is important to note that Rebbe Nachman’s critique of secular education does not apply to one’s study of a craft or a profession, the means by which one attempts to earn a livelihood. Rather, the Rebbe’s objection is to the study of speculative philosophy and other similar branches of secular scholarship whose aim is to undermine faith in God. These studies merely pollute a person’s mind with waste matter and contribute nothing to improving oneself or one’s life. Reb Noson writes: *The maskilim* (secular Jews, supporters of the Enlightenment) can see no reason for a Jewish child to study the laws of the Talmud, but they are adamant that he needs to be taught the number of tails that certain worms found only in distant lands have! (*Likutey Halakhot, Geviyat Chov Mei’hayetomim* 3:5). This ties in with what the Rebbe taught earlier (§1), that “whoever ridicules the words of the sages is condemned to boil in excrement”—i.e., his lack of faith in the sages and tzaddikim causes him to be lured by the secular studies that pollute the mind and render one incapable of the clear thinking needed to bring one’s *mishpat* to light.

41. exiled...to places where no Jew has ever been. This is the second evil that conferring authority on unworthy rabbis brings. In particular, Rebbe Nachman’s reference is to the edict, also part of “The Statute Concerning the Jew,” that led to the creation of the Pale of Jewish Settlement. This decree called for the banishment of all Jews from large cities and urban areas, requiring that they settle, instead, in the small towns of Eastern Europe. Moreover, even after the area of the Pale had been defined and the Jewish population had resettled there, the Czar’s officials constantly reduced its size, forcing the Jews to repeatedly uproot themselves and start over in establishing their communities and means of livelihood. Like secular education, being banished to places where no Jew has ever lived and in which Judaism has never been practiced undermines our ability to serve God and makes it considerably more difficult for us to observe the Torah. This was illustrated by the Jewish emigration from Eastern Europe to the West during the latter half of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth. Many of these exiles cast off their commitment to Torah observance as soon as they disembarked on the shores where Judaism, as prescribed by the Torah, was all but unheard of.

42. conferring authority on a rabbi and writing are from the same aspect. Having stated that investing unworthy rabbis with authority leads to the Torah’s authority being weakened and to Jews being uprooted from their homes, Rebbe Nachman next brings proofs for each of these statements. He begins by showing that conferring authority on a rabbi and the act of writing are corresponding aspects. Below (and see nn.58-64), he will show the connection between authorizing an unworthy rabbi and being exiled to places devoid of Torah spirituality.

43. SeMiKhah...spirit of wisdom...laid his hands upon him. The Hebrew term *SeMiKhah*

אוֹתוֹת הַפֶּתַח, בָּהֶם נִבְרָאוּ כָּל הָעוֹלָמוֹת. כִּמוֹ שֶׁפָּתוּב (תהלים לג, ו): "בְּדִבְרֵי ה' שָׁמַיִם נִעֲשׂוּ" וְכוּ', וּכְתִיב (שם קד, כד): "כָּלֶם בְּחֻכְמָה עָשִׂיתָ".

כִּי יֵשׁ בְּכָל אוֹת וְאוֹת חֻכְמָה, שְׁחִיבָה חֻכְמָתוֹ יִתְבַּרֵּךְ שֶׁהָאוֹת הַזֹּאת הִיָּה בְּתִמוּנָה זֹאת, וְעַל יְדֵי יְהִיָּה נִבְרָא זֶה הָעוֹלָם בְּזֹאת הַתִּמוּנָה, וְלִהְיוֹתָהּ בְּאוֹתוֹ הַהִנְהָגָה שֶׁיֵּשׁ בְּאוֹתוֹ הָעוֹלָם. וְכֵן שָׁאֵר הָעוֹלָמוֹת בְּתִמוּנָה וְהִנְהָגָה אַחֶרֶת, עַל-יְדֵי תִּמוּנַת אוֹת אַחֶר, כִּי כֵן גִּזְרַת חֻכְמָתוֹ יִתְבַּרֵּךְ.

וּכְשֶׁהֲחֻכְמָה הָרְאוּ לְסִמְכָהּ, נִסְמָךְ בְּשֵׁם רַבִּי, שֶׁהִנְהָגְתוּ בְּבַחֲיוֹת מִשְׁפָּטִי אִמֶּת כֵּן"ל. אֲזִי עַל-יְדֵי הַסִּמְכָה, שֶׁאֲזִי מְקַבֵּל חֻכְמָתוֹ מִבְּחִינַת יָד ה', בְּבַחֲיוֹת: "וְיִהְיוּ שֶׁ בֵּין נֹון מֵלֵא רוּחַ חֻכְמָה" וְכוּ' כֵּן"ל. אֲזִי מִבִּיא הָאֶרֶץ וְכֹחַ בְּכֶתֶב יְדֵנִי, שֶׁהוּא גַם כֵּן מִבְּחִינַת

and *Likutey Moharan* I, 19:3, n.8). The letters of the Hebrew alphabet are thus the primordial building blocks of the creation; through them God created everything that exists. In the design and shape of each of these letters God invested amazing Divine wisdom and energy—*chokhmah* from the *sefirah Chokhmah*—which He then used to bring the multifarious aspects and elements of the creation into existence. Some of these properties in the letters are detailed in the Talmud (*Shabbat* 104a), the *Zohar* (I, 2b-3b), and the *Tikkuney Zohar* (Introduction, p.16a-b). The most extensive discussion of the role played by the letters of the Hebrew alphabet in the Act of Creation appears in *Sefer Yetzirah* ("The Book of Creation" attributed to the patriarch Avraham).

49. his conduct is in the aspect of true mishpatim, as explained above. See section 1 and notes 12-14, that when a person has faith in the sages and tzaddikim, he is able to attain *mishpat*—the judgment to make clear decisions and the ability to derive true laws from his studies—and thus is worthy of being called a rabbi.

50. his obtaining of wisdom from the aspect of the Hand of God.... As mentioned, *semikhah* is conceptually linked to the hands and wisdom (above and nn.43-44). Rebbe Nachman teaches that the source of the wisdom transmitted by the hands of ordination is "the Hand of God"—i.e., Divine *chokhmah*, the same *chokhmah* God invested in the letters He used to create the world. This ties in also with what the Rebbe taught earlier, that faith in the sages and tzaddikim is essential, because only through them can we achieve perfect faith in God (see n.7). Yehoshua had faith in his mentor, Moshe—the sage and tzaddik of his generation—and thus Moshe was instructed to transmit Divine wisdom/God's Hand to Yehoshua by laying his hand on his disciple.

51. brings illumination and strength to the writing of our hand. The simple reason is that the worthy scholar will use his newly acquired authority to strengthen and enforce the authority

from the aspect of wisdom, <the aspect of “the letters make wise”>,⁴⁶ since all the worlds were created with the letters of writing, as it is written (Psalms 33:6), “By the word of God the heavens were made...”; and it is written (ibid. 104:24), “You made them all with wisdom.”⁴⁷

Each and every letter contains <amazing> wisdom. The Wisdom of the Blessed One prescribed that each letter have its distinct shape, and through it for a world to be created with its distinct shape and to function in the particular manner that pertains to that world. The same is true for the other worlds, [each one] with a different shape and manner of conduct by virtue of a different letter-shape, as decreed by the Wisdom of the Blessed One.⁴⁸

When the scholar who is worthy of being ordained is invested with the title “rabbi,” for his conduct is in the aspect of ‘true *mishpatim*,’ as explained above,⁴⁹ then by means of the ordination—his obtaining wisdom from the aspect of the Hand of God, in the aspect of “Yehoshua son of Nun was filled with the spirit of wisdom...”⁵⁰—he brings illumination and strength to the writing of our hand.⁵¹ It, too, is

wisdom and the written word. This will also tie in below (§6), where Rebbe Nachman connects the written words of wisdom—i.e., the Torah—with Upper Wisdom and the stone Tablets on which the Ten Commandments were inscribed.

46. the letters make wise. Rebbe Nachman adds that the Hebrew letters—the building blocks of the texts of Jewish writing—are themselves the embodiment of wisdom. He cites the ancient maxim, “The letters make wise”—i.e., by fixing one’s attention on the letters of the Torah texts that one studies, one is able to draw wisdom from those letters and come to understand the subject matter much more clearly (see Rabbi Avraham Abulafia, *Chayei Olam HaBa, mehadura bet*, p.136, s.v. *ve’achar shehikdamti*; *Shnei Luchot HaBrit, Mesekhta Shavuot: Torah Or* #60).

These words, “the letters make wise,” are found only in the manuscript version of the *Likutey Moharan*, and do not appear in the standard printed editions.

47. By the word of God the heavens were made...made them all with wisdom. To complete his proof that hand/wisdom and the written word are the same aspect, Rebbe Nachman brings two verses from Psalms. The first verse teaches that the heavens, which are symbolic of all the worlds, were made by the word of God. The second verse states that God made everything in creation with *chokhmah*; through an influx from the *sefirah Chokhmah*. Thus, the word of God—i.e., the letters that formed the words that God spoke to create the worlds—embodies great *chokhmah* (see also *Tikkuney Zohar* #19, p.40b).

48. ...each letter...for a world to be created with its distinct shape...as decreed by the Wisdom of the Blessed One. The Midrash teaches that the language God spoke to create the worlds was the Holy Tongue, Hebrew (*Bereishit Rabbah* 18:4; see also *Rashi* on Genesis 2:23

חֲכָמָה כַּנ"ל. בְּבַחֲיִנַת (דְּבָרֵי-הַיָּמִים א' כח, יט): "הַפֶּל בִּכְתָב מִיָּד ה' עָלֵי הַשִּׁכִּיל", שְׁעַל-יָדֵי הַשִּׁכֵּל שֶׁמִּקְבֵּל מִיָּד ה', שְׁזֶה בְּחִינַת סְמִיכָה, עַל-יָדֵי זֶה מְבִיא הָאָרֶז וְכֹחַ בִּכְתָב כַּנ"ל. וְזֶה בְּחִינַת (בְּמִדְבָר יא, כו): "וַתֵּנַח עֲלֵיהֶם הָרוּחַ וְהָמָּה בִּכְתָבִים", שְׁעַל-יָדֵי שְׁנִסְמָכוּ אָז, וְקִבְּלוּ הָרוּחַ חֲכָמָה, עַל-יָדֵי-זֶה הֵבִיאוּ הָאָרֶז בִּכְתָּבִים, הֵינּוּ בִּכְתָב יָדְנוּ כַּנ"ל. וְאָזִי, לֹא דִי שְׂאִין כְּתָב יָדְנוּ נִכְנַע לְמִשְׁפָּטָם, אֲלָא אִפְּלוּ שֶׁכָּל מִשְׁפָּטֵי הַנְּהֻגוֹת שָׁלָהֶם, כָּלֶם עַל-יָדֵי כְּתָב יָדְנוּ, בְּבַחֲיִנַת (תְּהִלִּים קמט, ט): "לַעֲשׂוֹת בְּהֶם

sikhliim, "intelligences"). In essence these different translations are one in meaning, and only vary to reflect the changing contexts. Thus in note 138 below, man's *sekhel*, his intellect, is likened to the *sekhel*, the intelligence that animates and guides the heavenly spheres.

53. the spirit rested...brought illumination...into the writing of our hand.... God instructed Moshe to choose seventy elders from the Israelite tribes who would assist him in leading the people. Each of the twelve tribes was to present six candidates, after which two would be eliminated through the casting of lots. On seventy of the lots the word "*zaken* (elder)" was written, while the other two were left blank. Scripture tells of two of these elders, Eldad and Meidad. Although both merited a "*zaken*" lot, they did not feel themselves worthy of being appointed to lead the Jewish people, and so remained in the camp while the other sixty-eight went out to the Tent of Meeting to receive the spirit of prophecy. Even so, Heaven rewarded Eldad and Meidad for their humility and they began prophesying inside the camp. The verse cited in our lesson relates that "the spirit rested upon them; they were in the writings"—they were among the seventy elders whose lots had writing on it. In that case, however, it would seem that Scripture's words should have been the other way around—"They were in the writings, thus the spirit rested upon them." This can be answered by what Rebbe Nachman has taught here, that a scholar who is worthy has the "Hand of God"/wisdom rest upon him. Eldad and Meidad were worthy of having the spirit of God rest upon them, they merited *chokhmah*, and because of this wisdom "they were in the writings"—they brought illumination to the lots, meriting those on which "*zaken*" had been written. This is as the Rebbe has explained: Conferring authority on a worthy rabbi or leader draws into the writings an illumination of *chokhmah* from the *sefirah Chokhmah*.

54. not subject to their mishpat.... As Rebbe Nachman taught above, when an unworthy rabbi is invested with authority, the writings of the Jewish people lose their force and the strength of our *mishpatim* (laws) are weakened. As a result, we become subject to the writings, laws and cultures of the nations (see nn.39-40). Conferring authority on a worthy rabbi, on the other hand, results in our writings being illuminated with *chokhmah*. This wisdom strengthens these writings and elevates the level of esteem in which they are held. Then, we are no longer ruled by the dictates of the nations' writings and laws; rather, they become subject to the strengthened and illuminated writings of our hand.

from the aspect of wisdom, as explained above, in the aspect of “All this that God gave me to comprehend by His Hand [I give you] in writing” (1 Chronicles 28:19). By means of the intellect <and wisdom> that he receives from the Hand of God, which is the aspect of ordination, he draws illumination and strength into the writing, as explained above.⁵²

This is the aspect of “the spirit rested upon them; they were in the writings” (Numbers 11:26). Because they were appointed then and received the spirit of wisdom, they brought illumination into the writings—i.e., into the writing of our hand, as explained above.⁵³ And then, not only is the writing of our hand not subject to their *mishpat*, but even all their *mishpatim*-of-conduct are determined by the writing of our hand,⁵⁴ in

of the Torah, which is the writing of our hand. On a deeper level, through the laying of hands in the act of *semikhah*, the letters that form our Torah texts—i.e., the writing of our hand—are illuminated and strengthened with an influx of Divine *chokhmah*.

52. God gave me to comprehend by His Hand...illumination and strength into the writing.... Before King David passed away, he entrusted his son Shlomo, the heir to his throne, with the written plans for building the Holy Temple, including the secret knowledge relating to the Temple’s dimensions. David had received this knowledge from the prophet Shmuel, who had anointed him and conferred upon him the authority of kingship upon him. In this connection King David said, “All this that God gave me to comprehend by His Hand [I give you] in writing—the plan for all the works.” This proof-text from Chronicles shows the connection between all three of the elements Rebbe Nachman has been discussing: the hands of *semikhah*, wisdom and the writing of our hand. “God gave me to comprehend by His Hand” alludes to the wisdom transmitted through the hands that confer *semikhah* and authority; “in writing” alludes to the writing of our hand, the wisdom of which is strengthened and illuminated.

In the context of our lesson, King David is the worthy scholar. His faith in the tzaddik Shmuel and ability to exercise *mishpat* made him deserving of the authority that the prophet conferred upon him. Earlier (n.25), we saw that the Holy Temple is synonymous with *daat*. This is the deeper meaning of Shmuel’s passing on to David the plans for building God’s Temple—he conferred upon him the Divine wisdom that brings illumination to the writing of our hand.

This is Rebbe Nachman’s first mention of *sekhel*, “intellect,” an important theme of this lesson. Although the Rebbe refers to it here only in passing, it is worth noting because his insertion of the words “and wisdom” (from the manuscript version of *Likutey Moharan*) indicates that he views *sekhel* and *chokhmah* as matching concepts, and thus interchangeable. As the psalmist states: “The beginning of *chokhmah* is the fear of God; all who practice it gain sound *sekhel*” (Psalms 111:10; see also *Likutey Moharan* I, 30:4, where these two concepts are similarly juxtaposed). This will become more apparent in section 6, where the Rebbe speaks of Upper Wisdom and Upper Intellect, using the two terms interchangeably. In the next section, when the Rebbe uses the term *sekhel*, it has been translated not as “intellect” but as “cleverness,” and then, in connection with the heavenly spheres, as “intelligence” (also

מִשְׁפָּט כְּתוּב.”

אָבֵל כְּשֶׁמִּסְמִיכִין רַבִּי שְׁאִינוֹ הָגוֹן, עַל-יְדֵי־זֶה נִחְלָשׁ כְּתָב יְדֻנוֹ,
וְנוֹתְנִין תִּקְוָה לַכְּתָב שֶׁלָּהֶם, וְכָל הַמִּשְׁפָּטִים צְרִיכִים לִהְיוֹת עַל-
יְדֵי כְּתָבִים שֶׁלָּהֶם דּוֹקָא, שֶׁהוּא בְּחִינַת “מִשְׁפָּטִים בַּל יִדְעוּם”,
בְּחִינַת מִשְׁפָּט מַעֲקָל כַּנִּל.

וְעַל-יְדֵי־זֶה גּוֹזְרִין לַגֵּרֶשׁ אֶת יִשְׂרָאֵל מִמָּקוֹם שֶׁנִּתְיָשְׁבוּ כְּבָר. כִּי
בְּמָקוֹם שֶׁיִּשְׂרָאֵל יוֹשְׁבִין שָׁם מְכָבֵר, אֶפְלוּ בְּחוּץ לְאָרֶץ, הוּא
בְּחִינַת קִדְשֵׁת אֶרֶץ-יִשְׂרָאֵל, בְּחִינַת (יחזקאל יא, טז): “מִקְדָּשׁ
מֵעַט”. כִּי עַל-יְדֵי שֶׁיִּשְׂרָאֵל יוֹשְׁבִין שָׁם, נִתְקַדֵּשׁ הָאוִיר בְּבְחִינַת
אוֹרָא דְּאֶרֶץ יִשְׂרָאֵל. כִּי עַל-יְדֵי כְּתָב יְדֻנוֹ, נִתְקַדֵּשׁ הָאוִיר

because they confer authority on unworthy leaders, “this enables *them* to decree that the Jews be exiled....” In the context of our lesson, “them” plainly refers to the nations of the world (as in the second paragraph of this section). In Rebbe Nachman’s times, these were the Russian authorities that exiled the Jews to the Pale of Jewish Settlement. However, it can be understood also as alluding to unworthy leaders—i.e., those “enlightened” Jews (*maskilim*; see n.40) who served in important positions and were only too willing to aide the Russian authorities in implementing their decrees against the Jews.

59. even in the Diaspora. This refers to wherever Jewish communities have been established outside the Land of Israel. The manuscript version of *Likutey Moharan* reads: “even in *this* land,” referring to the Ukraine, where Rebbe Nachman lived.

60. a minor sanctuary. Yechezkel reveals a prophecy of consolation meant to encourage the Jewish people living in exile: “Thus said God: I have indeed distanced them among the nations and have scattered them among the lands, yet I have become for them *a minor sanctuary* in the lands whither they have gone.” The commentators explain that this refers to God’s Divine Presence, the *Shekhinah*, residing in the synagogues and study houses wherever the Jewish people have been exiled (*Rashi* and *Metzudat David*, *loc. cit.*). According to the Talmud, calling the synagogue or study house “a minor sanctuary” suggests that a modicum of the Holy Temple’s sanctity is present there (*Megillah* 29a). In our context, Rebbe Nachman extends this to include anywhere that the sanctity of Torah and prayer exists, wherever Jews who are devoted to God reside. Just as the synagogue is a microcosm of the Temple, every Jewish community is a microcosm of the Holy Land—“a *minor* Holy Land.” Reb Noson adds: In order to instill the lands in which the Jews reside in exile with the sanctity of the Land of Israel, the Sages required that several laws related specifically to the Holy Land, such as the mitzvah of tithing *challah*, be practiced in the Diaspora as well (*Torat Natan* #6; see also *Likutey Moharan* I, 55:8, nn.113-115).

the aspect of “to execute written *mishpat* against them” (Psalms 149:9).⁵⁵

But when people confer authority on an unworthy rabbi, it weakens the writing of our hand and strengthens their writing.⁵⁶ All <our> *mishpatim* must be determined specifically by their writings, this being the aspect of “about these *mishpatim*, they know nothing,” the aspect of distorted *mishpat*, as explained above.⁵⁷

This enables them to decree that the Jews be exiled from a place they settled long ago.⁵⁸ A place the Jews settled in the past, even in the Diaspora,⁵⁹ has the aspect of the sanctity of the Land of Israel, the aspect of “a minor sanctuary” (Ezekiel 11:16).⁶⁰ Because the Jews live there, the air is sanctified in the aspect of the air of the Land of Israel. Through the writing of our hand, the air is sanctified, in the aspect of

55. to execute written *mishpat* against them. This verse relates to the time of the Future Redemption, to the judgment that will then be executed against the nations. When this happens, we will see that it was already written of in the Books of the Prophets, the writings of the Jewish people (*Rashi, loc. cit.*). In our context, the simple understanding of this proof-text shows that when our writings have authority, we can “execute written judgment against” the nations, since their writings will have no power over us. On a deeper level, this verse teaches that at the time of the Future Redemption we will see authority returned to the writings of our hand, the Torah. Its illumination from on high, concealed as a result of our having ordained unworthy rabbis and conferred authority on unworthy leaders, will once again be revealed.

56. it weakens the writing of our hand and strengthens their writing. As we have seen (§1), the unworthy rabbi who lacks faith in the sages and tzaddikim has waste matter in his mind and so cannot exercise clear and proper *mishpat*. God does not allow the light that emanates from Upper *Chokhmah* to rest upon such an unsuitable person, and so removes the illumination of *chokhmah* from the hands that would ordain him or empower him to lead. Without this illumination from the *sefirah* *Chokhmah*, the Torah, which is the writing of our hand, loses its authority. Instead of living by the Torah’s *mishpatim*, the Jewish people are ruled by the empowered writings and laws of the nations (*Parparaot LeChokhmah*).

57. about these *mishpatim*, they know nothing...explained above. See section 1 and note 26, where Rebbe Nachman applies this verse to the person whose faith in the sages and tzaddikim is lacking. He knows nothing about deriving laws of upright conduct from his studies and so his *mishpat* is distorted. Here, the Rebbe applies this verse to the distorted *mishpatim* themselves—“these laws of those who know nothing” dominate our weakened *mishpatim* and undermine the writing of our hand.

58. This enables them.... When the authority of the Jewish people’s writings is weakened

בְּבַחֲנֵינָת 'אֲוִירָא דְאֶרֶץ-יִשְׂרָאֵל מִחֲפִים' (בבא בתרא קנח, ב; זוהר ח"ג רמה, ב; ותיקוני זוהר תיקון כב דף סד, א). כִּי הִכְתַּב הוּא בְּחִינַת אוֹתִיּוֹת מִחֲפִימוֹת. וְעַל-יְדֵי תְנוּעוֹת הַקְּלָמוֹס בְּאֲוִיר בִּשְׁעַת כְּתִיבָה, נַחֲקָקִים בְּחִינַת הָאוֹתִיּוֹת מִחֲפִימוֹת בְּתוֹךְ הָאֲוִיר, וְעַל יְדוֹ נִתְקַדֵּשׁ הָאֲוִיר, בְּבַחֲנֵינָת 'אֲוִירָא דְאֶרֶץ-יִשְׂרָאֵל מִחֲפִים'. וְעַל-יְדֵי שְׁפּוּגָמִין בְּכַתֵּב יְדֵנוּ, עַל-יְדֵי הַסְּמִיכָה שְׁמִסְמִיכִין רַבִּי שְׂאִינּוֹ הָגוֹן כֵּן"ל, עַל-יְדֵי זֶה מְגַרְשִׁין יִשְׂרָאֵל מִן הַיָּשׁוּב, מִמָּקוֹם שֶׁיֵּשְׁבוּ שָׁם מִכְּבָר, שֶׁהוּא בְּחִינַת אֲוִירָא דְאֶרֶץ-יִשְׂרָאֵל כֵּן"ל, וּמְגַרְשִׁין אוֹתָם מִשָּׁם, אֶל מָקוֹם מְדָבָר שְׁמָמָה, שְׂאִין שָׁם שׁוֹם קֹדֶשׁה, כִּי לֹא יֵשְׁבוּ שָׁם יִשְׂרָאֵל מֵעוֹלָם כֵּן"ל.

ג. וְעַל-יְדֵי זֶה, נִלְקַח מִמֶּנּוּ חֻכְמַת תְּהִלּוּכֵי גִלְגָּלִי הַרְקִיעַ, לִידַע כָּל

Jewish "rule." But when our writings lose their authority and the air's sanctity disappears, there is no illumination of *chokhmah* to "make wise." As the prophet Yeshayahu states: "I am God... My Glory I shall not give to another, nor My praise to idols" (Isaiah 42:8)—i.e., no Upper Wisdom is manifest (see n.21), so as not to allow those who are unworthy to benefit from it or use it for their own purposes. Without this wisdom, the land is no longer under our authority, but is turned over to the control of the nations. They then use their power to uproot the Jews and banish us from their lands. The *Parparaot LeChokhmah* adds that God's punishment of the Jewish people is measure-for-measure: just as their conferring *semikhah* and authority on unworthy leaders would "banish" Upper Wisdom to an unsuitable place (see n.56), so too, the Jews are banished to a desolate wilderness, to places devoid of spirituality and holiness.

In review: Through faith in the sages and tzaddikim we bring our *mishpat* to light. Conversely, a person who repudiates this faith is condemned to a mind plagued by confusion and doubt; he is unable to attain judgment or derive true laws of conduct from his studies, and so is never clear about the path he is meant to follow (§1). The mind's pollution and the inability to exercise *mishpat* result in our conferring authority on unworthy rabbis and leaders. This, in turn, causes our writings to lose their authority, and it leads to the Jews being banished from the places and lands in which they have settled (§2).

65. This is the reason. "This" refers to exile. Rebbe Nachman has shown that a lack of *emunat chakhamim* causes us to confer authority on unworthy rabbis and leaders, thus weakening the Torah's authority. Here he adds that as a result of this exile, the wisdom of astronomy/astrology is taken from the Jewish people and given over to the nations. The nations then issue decrees to uproot and expel long-standing Jewish communities from their lands.

In ancient times, the Jewish sages were the world's foremost authorities in the wisdom of astronomy/astrology. Their knowledge included mastery of both the astronomical calculations, which are the revealed portion of this wisdom, and the hidden portion, the mysteries, for which

“the air of the Land of Israel makes wise” (*Bava Batra* 158b).⁶¹ For the writing is the aspect of “the letters make wise.”⁶² By means of the pen’s movements through the air at the time of writing, the aspect of “the letters make wise” is etched into the air. This causes the air to become sanctified, in the aspect of “the air of the Land of Israel makes wise.”⁶³

But when people blemish the writing of our hand by conferring authority on an unworthy rabbi, as explained above, they exile the Jews from a settled area, from a place they settled long ago, which is the aspect of the air of the Land of Israel. They exile them from there to a desolate wilderness, where there is no holiness whatsoever, for the Jews have never lived there <and the air there has never been sanctified>, as explained above.⁶⁴

3. This is the reason⁶⁵ that the wisdom of astronomy/astrology—

61. the air of the Land of Israel makes wise. In discussing various cases dealing with inheritance rights, the Talmud (*loc. cit.*) relates that after ascending from Babylon to the Holy Land, Rabbi Zeira reversed his original ruling regarding one of these cases and agreed with the opinion of Rabbi Eila. Rabbi Zeira attributed this change of mind to his newfound insight into his disputant’s position, seeing this as proof that “the air of the Land of Israel makes wise.” The *Zohar* teaches that the air of the Holy Land “makes wise” because it is derived from a level of purity and holiness corresponding to the *sefirah Chokhmah* (*Tikkuney Zohar* #22, p.64b). Rebbe Nachman explains elsewhere that the reason the Holy Land receives an illumination of *chokhmah* is that it alone of all the lands is supervised directly by God’s Hand of Divine providence (*Likutey Moharan* II, 40:1). The Rebbe next shows how the air of the Land of Israel is related to the writing of our hand.

62. the letters make wise. See above, note 46.

63. By means of the pen’s movements through the air.... As noted (n.61), the air of the Land of Israel derives its holiness from the *sefirah Chokhmah*. Earlier, Rebbe Nachman established the connection between *chokhmah* and the letters (nn.47-48). There is thus an inherent connection between wisdom, writing/letters and the Holy Land. The Rebbe teaches here that in moving the pen through the air to write the letters of Torah—which signify wisdom, purity and holiness—we sanctify the air of the Diaspora with the sanctity of the Land of Israel. Each of the lands to which we have been exiled thus becomes “a minor Holy Land,” and through the strength of our writings, its air, too, has the power to “make wise.”

64. to a desolate wilderness.... When wisdom departs from the hands because the Jewish people confer authority on unworthy leaders, the writing of our hand loses its authority. The air around us—sanctified by the pen’s movements—loses its sanctity and no longer makes wise. As a result, we are exiled from the “minor Holy Land” in which we have settled. It might seem that once the air loses its sanctity, actual expulsion should be unnecessary since the Jews are in any case not in their own land. However, the *Parparaot LeChokhmah* explains, as long as our writings maintain their strength and the air is sanctified, the “minor Holy Land” in which we have settled is under

הַשְּׁתַּנּוּת וְעֵתִידוֹת הַבָּאִין עַל-יְדֵי גִלְגָּלִי הַרְקִיעַ, וְנִמְסָר לָהֶם. כִּי
 מִתְחַלָּה זֹאת הַחֲכָמָה נִמְסָרָה רַק לָנוּ, כְּמוֹ שֶׁכָּתוּב (דברים ד, ו): "כִּי
 הוּא חֲכָמְתְּכֶם וּבִינְתְּכֶם לְעֵינֵי הָעַמִּים", וְדַרְשׁוּ רַבּוֹתֵינוּ זְכוֹרָנֶם
 לְבָרָכָה (שבת עה, א): 'אֵיזוֹ חֲכָמָה וּבִינָה שֶׁהִיא לְעֵינֵי הָעַמִּים, הֵוֵי
 אוֹמֵר: זֶה חָשׁוּב תְּקוּפוֹת וּמְזֻלוֹת'.

Rebbe Nachman will return to this topic of the *galgalim* (see below, and nn.74, 76), but only after he first clarifies the nature of the wisdom of astronomy/astrology that was once the preserve of the Jewish people.

67. **given exclusively to us...calculating the seasons and the constellations.** Our Sages teach: He who is capable of calculating the seasons and the constellations of the zodiac but refrains from doing so, of him it is written that he "take[s] no note of the plan of God and pay[s] no attention to work of His Hands" (Isaiah 5:12)...How do we know that it is a mitzvah to calculate the seasons and constellations? It is written, "You shall safeguard and observe them, since this is [proof of] your wisdom and discernment for the eyes of the nations." What is this wisdom and discernment that is recognized by the nations? Say that this refers to calculating the seasons and the constellations (*Shabbat, loc. cit.; Yalkut Shimoni, Devarim* #824).

One area of this wisdom in which the nations of the world recognized the expertise of the descendants of Avraham, Yitzchak and Yaakov was natural astronomy: the ability to accurately compute lunar and solar eclipses, the solstices and equinoxes, as well as predict other stellar phenomena. This is as Rashi comments on the Talmudic passage cited in our text: The nations will be impressed by the Jewish people's use of astronomy/astrology to correctly forecast whether the upcoming year would see abundant rainfall or bring drought (*Rashi, loc. cit., s.v. l'einey*). Elsewhere, the Talmud relates the following story, which illustrates how one can know the future through astronomy/astrology: Rabbi Yehoshua and Rabbi Gamliel set out together on a sea voyage. As it happened, their journey took considerably longer than the sailors had anticipated, and Rabbi Gamliel's supplies ran out. Rabbi Yehoshua, on the other hand, had brought along enough to feed the both of them. "How did you know we would be delayed at sea?" Rabbi Gamliel asked. "There is a certain comet that appears in the sky once every seventy years," Rabbi Yehoshua explained. "Fearing that this comet would cause the sailors to err in their navigation, I brought along extra non-perishable provisions" (*Horayot* 10a).

A second area of astronomical calculation is discussed in *Sefer Mitzvot Gadol*. In this halakhic work on the Torah's 613 commandments, Rabbi Moshe of Coucy (1198-1274) writes: This is the mitzvah of calculating the seasons, constellations and new moons, and inserting months into the years in order to synchronize the lunar year with the solar year so that Pesach falls in the spring...As one verse states (Deuteronomy 4:6), "You shall *safeguard* and observe them..."—referring to calculating the seasons and the constellations—and a second verse states (Deuteronomy 16:1), "*Safeguard* the month of spring so that you will be able to keep Pesach" (*Sefer Mitzvot Gadol*, Positive Commandments #47). This will be further explained in the next note, where it will be shown that the astronomical principles used for synchronizing the lunar year with the solar year and for keeping the festivals in their appointed seasons are the basis of a related wisdom in which the Jews were once recognized as the leading authorities—the fixing of the calendar.

knowing all the changes and future occurrences brought about by the spheres of the firmament⁶⁶—was taken from us and given over to [the nations]. Initially, this wisdom was given exclusively to us, as it is written (Deuteronomy 4:6), “since this is [proof of] your wisdom and discernment for the eyes of the nations”—and our Sages, of blessed memory, expounded: What is this wisdom and discernment that is recognized by the nations? Say that this refers to calculating the seasons and the constellations (*Shabbat* 75a).⁶⁷

the calculations are an external representation. The nations, whose knowledge of this wisdom was limited to its exoteric aspect, derived most of what they knew from Jewish teaching. However, over a period of nearly four hundred years—from the destruction of the Second Temple in 70 C.E. to the abolishing of the office of the Nasi by Rome in 425 C.E. and the subsequent exile of the Jewish people from the Holy Land—both the exoteric and esoteric portions of astronomy/astrology became “lost” to the Jews (see also below, n.69). Following this, it was the nations of the world who were considered the experts in this discipline, though only in the scientific application of its calculations and rules.

66. astronomy/astrology—knowing all the changes and future occurrences brought about by the spheres of the firmament. Traditional Jewish teaching treats astronomy and astrology as a single area of wisdom. This is contrary to contemporary Western thought, which views astronomy as a science but sees astrology—the interpretation of the motions of the heavenly spheres to foretell the fate and acts of nations and individuals—as a mere pseudo-science. That Rebbe Nachman, too, sees them as parallel elements of a single discipline is clear from this section of our lesson, in which he includes within the corpus of this wisdom not only the astronomical principles of intercalating the Jewish calendar, but also those relating to the spheres of the firmament and how their astrological influences are responsible for all the changes that happen here on earth. The Rebbe’s approach is firmly rooted in the rich body of Jewish teaching that relates to this wisdom. True, Scripture expresses a strong negative view of certain astrological practices, which it associates with sorcery and magic. Yet there is no shortage of instances in the Talmud, Midrash and Kabbalah, and even in the Bible itself, which clearly illustrate the validity and value of astrological teaching (see Addendum II: “Astrology in Traditional Jewish Teaching,” following the last note to this lesson).

A word about the translation of the Hebrew term *galgalim* (singular, *galgal*) as “spheres” is necessary here. In Jewish teaching, the *galgalim* are a series of concentric, transparent spheres fixed in the firmament surrounding the Earth. Rabbi Pinchas Eliahu Horowitz explains that unlike the stars, planets and constellations that reside within these spheres, which are purely physical bodies visible to the unaided eye, the spheres themselves are metaphysical entities (*Sefer HaBrit* I:2:5, p.39). Nevertheless, we find the Sages and commentators occasionally using the term *galgalim* more generally, to refer also to the stars and planets. The Ari clarifies that this is because a sphere and its celestial body are in essence a single unit, as evidenced by the fact that a majority of the heavenly spheres are known by the names of their respective star or planet (*Etz Chaim, Heikhal ABYA* 43:2). Thus, although *galgalim* has been translated into English exclusively as “sphere,” this was done for consistency, to avoid confusion and not to rule out its more general usage (whereas “celestial bodies” in the notes refers specifically to the planets and stars).

כִּי יֵשׁ בְּזֶה שָׁכָל, שִׁישָׁאֵר הַסּוּד אֶצְלָנוּ, אַף עַל־פִּי שְׁמוּדִיעִין
 לָהֶם הַחֲכָמָה. כִּי בּוֹדָאי צָרִיךְ לְהוֹדִיעַ לָהֶם הַחֲכָמָה, כִּדִּי
 שִׁידְעוּ מִחֲכָמָתָנוּ, שְׁאֵנוּ יוֹדְעִין חֲכָמָה זֹה, כְּמוֹ שֶׁכָּתוּב: "כִּי הִיא
 חֲכָמָתְכֶם" וְכוּ'. וְאִם כֵּן, מֵאַחֵר שְׁמוּדִיעִין לָהֶם, אֵינוּ סוּד, כִּי
 הֵלֵא גַם הֵם יוֹדְעִין. אַךְ יֵשׁ בְּזֶה שָׁכָל, שִׁיכוּלִין לְהוֹדִיעַ לָהֶם

shortfall would cause the autumn months to fall in the summer, the summer months to fall in the spring, and the spring months, such as Nisan, to fall in the winter. The festivals would then no longer fall in their prescribed seasons. The sages redressed this through the device of the "leap month"—seven times every nineteen years they inserted an extra month (a second Adar) into the lunar calendar, thus pushing Nisan, and therefore Pesach, forward again to the spring and the other festivals to their appointed seasons.

Because the Jewish calendar combines the lunar cycle and the solar cycle in fixing the months of the year, it is known as a lunisolar calendar. This combination renders the calibration of the Jewish calendar more complex than either a solar calendar (of Egyptian origin), such as the Gregorian calendar in its civil usage today by the Christian West, or the purely lunar calendar, in which the climatic seasons and months have no connection, such as the calendar of Islam. In particular, the complexity of the Jewish calendar arises because astronomical cycles are not perfectly commensurable: the months and years cannot be divided exactly by days, and the years cannot be easily divided into months. This is why the lunisolar calendar requires a much broader intercalation—i.e., the insertion of extra days or months to ensure its accuracy—than any of its counterparts. Determining precisely how often and when a leap month has to be intercalated to the lunisolar calendar, and how many days to periodically add to keep the months of the year closely synchronized with the new moon, are dependent on an extremely accurate calculation of the lunar month—i.e., the precise time period between the *molad* ("birth") of one new moon and the next. With the aid of Earth-orbiting satellites and extremely sophisticated instruments, scientists have fixed the astronomical value of the mean lunar period at 29 days, 12 hours, 44 minutes and 2.87 seconds. More than three thousand years ago, without the benefit of even so much as a telescope, Moshe Rabbeinu—using the precise principles and rules transmitted to him by God—calculated the average *molad* period to within less than half-a-second of this figure! (cf. *Rashi* on Exodus 11:4; *Ohr Torah* #78 by Rabbi Y. I. Chaver). Although the Jews were not alone among the ancient peoples who sought to reconcile the solar and lunar calendars through intercalation (e.g., the Greeks, the Chinese and the Maya also did), none were as accurate in the calculation of the lunar month as the Jewish Sages (whose mathematical calendar computations accurately track the time of any mean *molad* period to within 1 day in every 15,304 years). Thus, even though now that they have been set down, these principles and rules which the Sages used for calculating the seasons and the constellations are simple enough for anyone to learn (see *Yad HaChazakah, Hilkhos Kiddush HaChodesh* 11:4), the accuracy with which they fixed the calendrical cycles amazed the great astronomers and mathematicians of the ancient world. As Scripture states: they are proof of the Jewish people's "wisdom and discernment for the eyes of the nations" (this note is largely based on *Rambam, Yad HaChazakah, Hilkhos Kiddush HaChodesh*, and *Understanding the Jewish Calendar*; Rabbi N. Bushwick, Moznaim Publishing).

This entails <much> cleverness—keeping the hidden portion ours, even though we inform them of the wisdom.⁶⁸ It is certainly necessary to inform them of the wisdom, in order that they might know of our wisdom; that we know <such a> wisdom, as it is written, “since this is [proof of] your wisdom....” If so, then after we inform them, it is no longer hidden. For don’t they know it as well? However, this

68. keeping the hidden portion ours even though we inform them of the wisdom. Rebbe Nachman will show that there is a deeper, hidden portion to this wisdom of “calculating the seasons and the constellations.” Before turning our attention to this esoteric aspect (see n.70), we need to first understand the simple meaning of the Sage’s teaching. What were these calculations of the heavenly bodies and spheres that they termed the “wisdom and discernment” once exclusively the possession of the Jewish people?

The Torah commands us to sanctify the New Moon (Exodus 12:2; Leviticus 23:4 and *Rashi* there), and also to celebrate the Jewish festivals in their proper seasons—explicitly Pesach (Deuteronomy 16:1), but also Shavuot and Sukkot (Exodus 23:16, 34:22). In order to proclaim the new moon and keep the festivals aligned with their seasons, it was essential for the sages of the Jewish people to study the stars and planets, and to use the calculations of their motions to chart a calendar. The basis of the Jewish calendar is the lunar month: the twenty-nine days and twelve and a fraction hours it takes the moon to complete one revolution around the Earth. Since it is impossible for part of a day to belong to the outgoing month and the other part to the incoming one (see *Megillah* 5a), some months are set at thirty days, and others at twenty-nine days. This is applied to the year’s twelve months in an alternating pattern: five months (Nisan, Sivan, Av, Tishrei and Shevat) are always *malei* (“full” or “complete”), having 30 days; and five months (Iyar, Tammuz, Elul, Tevet and Adar) are always *chaser* (“lacking” or “incomplete”), having 29 days. The two exceptions are the months of Cheshvan and Kislev; some years these variable months are both *malei*, other years they are both *chaser*, and still other years they align with the alternating pattern applied to the other months. These variances stem from the lunar cycle being a fraction longer than twenty-nine and a half days. Over time, this fraction of an hour adds up to hours and days, which, if left unadjusted, would produce certain anomalies in fixing the calendar (especially as relates to the day of the week on which Yom Kippur and Hoshanah Rabba fall). Thus, although the total number of days in an average year is 354 (12 x 29.5), there are years in the lunar calendar that have 353 days (when both variable months are *chaser*) and others that have 355 (when both variable months are *malei*).

The Jewish calendar is not, however, exclusively lunar. The festivals, which fall on fixed dates of specific months, are also linked to the seasons of the solar year. The Torah states (Deuteronomy 16:1), “Safeguard the month of *Aviv* (spring) so that you will be able to keep Pesach....” This “safeguarding” entails adjusting the lunar calendar to ensure that Nisan—“the month of *Aviv*”—always falls in the spring (on or after the vernal equinox; *Rosh HaShanah* 21a). The other festivals, too, are associated with specific climatic seasons, and so are also tied to the solar year. A solar year is the period of one complete orbit of the sun through the sky and its circle of constellations—approximately 365¼ days. This means that the solar year exceeds the lunar year (354 days) by an average of 11¼ days. As with the calculation of the months, for the solar and lunar years to be synchronized, an adjustment must be made. Otherwise, this

הַחֲכָמָה, וְאָף עַל פִּי כֵן יִשְׁאָר הַסּוּד אֶצְלָנוּ. וְזֶה בְּחִינַת: "כִּי הִיא
 חֲכָמַתְכֶם וּבִינַתְכֶם לְעֵינֵי הָעַמִּים". "לְעֵינֵי הָעַמִּים" דִּיקָא, דְּהֵינּוּ
 שֶׁהִיא רַק לְעֵינֵי הָעַמִּים בְּשַׁעַה שְׁמוּדִיעִין לָהֶם, וְתִכְף אַחֵר כָּךְ
 אֵינָן יוֹדְעִין כָּלֵל, רַק יוֹדְעִין שֶׁהַסּוּד אֶצְלָנוּ. כִּי אֵין אָנוּ מוֹדִיעִין
 לָהֶם זֹאת הַחֲכָמָה בְּעַצְמָם, שֶׁהִיא סוּד הָעֵבוֹר, רַק שִׁישׁ בְּזֶה שְׂכָל,
 שֶׁיְכוּלִין לְהִרְאוֹת זֹאת הַחֲכָמָה לְעֵינֵיהֶם לְבַד, לְמַעַן יִדְעוּ שֶׁזֹּאת
 הַחֲכָמָה הִיא אֶצְלָנוּ, אֲבָל עַצְמָם סוּד הַחֲכָמָה נִשְׁאָר אֶצְלָנוּ.

Therefore, what Rebbe Nachman teaches in this paragraph, that we reveal the wisdom of astronomy/astrology only "for the eyes of the nations," must refer to the generations prior to Hillel the Second, when the Jewish people were still living in the Land of Israel—the land whose air "makes wise" (see §2 and n.61). Conversely, the Rebbe's opening statement in this section, that this wisdom "was taken from us and given over to [the nations]," relates to the time after the Sanhedrin was disbanded and the office of the Nasi was abolished—in our context, when *emunat chakhamim* was lacking—and after the Roman exile had come to pass and the Jewish center of gravity was no longer in the Land of Israel. This is as Rambam writes: The mathematical formulas we use nowadays for intercalating the months and calculating the number of days in each month are known to us from the astronomical writings of the non-Jews. However, this is only because the manuscripts of the Jewish sages from the time of the Prophets are lost to us in consequence of the long periods of Jewish suffering and persecution at the hands of the nations (*Yad HaChazakah, Hilkhos Kiddush HaChodesh* 17:24).

70. Mystery of Intercalation. We have seen that, as it relates to the lunisolar calendar used by the Jewish people, intercalation—*ibur*—entails adding a month to the lunar year to synchronize it with the solar year and its seasons. In Hebrew, the system of calendric intercalation is called *Sod Ha-Ibur*, the Mystery of Intercalation. As mentioned in note 68, the wisdom of astronomy/astrology has a hidden portion. At first glance, it might seem that this *sod* consists of the complex principles of intercalation, i.e., the "wisdom and discernment" of the Jews until the time of Hillel the Second. We shall see, however, that *Sod Ha-Ibur*, particularly in Rebbe Nachman's usage here, is a trope for some of the deepest mysteries of the Torah. It encompasses the very essence of the wisdom of astronomy/astrology and the inner meaning of calculating the seasons and the constellations—mysteries that were *never* revealed to the nations (see Addendum II: "The Mystery of Intercalation," following the last note to this lesson).

71. its essence, the wisdom's hidden portion, remains with us. Reb Noson explains that at the heart of *Sod Ha-Ibur* is the awareness that all the mysterious ways in which the world operates and develops are nothing other than the work of God's Hand hidden in the guise of nature—in this case, the motions of the stars and the constellations. The essence of the wisdom that was given over to the Jewish sages is the recognition that nature is a veil for Divine providence; that although it seems that whatever happens in the creation is dictated by a natural order, it is in fact overseen and directed by God's providence (*Torat Natan* #7).

entails cleverness, that we are able to inform them of the wisdom and nevertheless have the hidden portion remain with us. This is the aspect of “since this is [proof of] your wisdom and discernment for the eyes of the nations”—specifically “for the eyes of the nations.” That is, it is only to let the nations see; <so that they know it> at the moment we inform them, whereas immediately afterwards they know only that the hidden portion is with us.⁶⁹ For we do not inform them of the wisdom’s essence, which is the Mystery of Intercalation.⁷⁰ Except that this entails cleverness: we are able to disclose this wisdom only to let them see it, so that they might know that we possess this wisdom, yet its essence, the wisdom’s hidden portion, remains with us.⁷¹

69. for the eyes of the nations... afterwards they know only that the hidden portion is with us. Rebbe Nachman reads the word “*l’eyney*” in this verse literally: not “*in* the eyes,” but “*for* the eyes.” The Jews reveal the wisdom to the nations only so that they might “see” it—i.e., so that they might recognize that we are in possession of this wisdom, but they have no comprehension of how we come to know this teaching or how it is applied. Afterwards, the nations know only that we possess this hidden wisdom, and so consider us wise and discerning; its essence, however, remains exclusively with us.

In the early times of Israel’s history, the beginning of each new month was determined by direct observation of the moon. The first day of the month was proclaimed by the Sanhedrin—in a ceremony known as Sanctification of the New Moon—after witnesses had testified that they had seen the new crescent and after their testimony had been thoroughly examined, confirmed by calculation and duly accepted (as outlined in the Mishnah and Talmud). This method of observation and intercalation was in use throughout the period that the Jewish people resided in the Land of Israel up until three centuries after the Second Temple’s destruction (70 C.E.), as long as there was an independent Sanhedrin. In 4118 (358 C.E.), however, when Roman persecution threatened the continued Jewish religious autonomy in the Holy Land, Rabbi Hillel the Nasi (last prince of the House of David, known also as Hillel the Second) disbanded the Sanhedrin. This brought the unbroken chain of *semikhah*, begun when Moshe ordained Yehoshua (see n.43), to an end. Sanctification of the New Moon by proclamation was also no longer possible. Hillel thus took an extraordinary step to preserve the unity of Israel. In order to prevent the Jews scattered across the face of the earth from celebrating the new moon and festivals at different times, he sanctified all the new moons from his day until the Final Redemption (for which he had to know the exact length of the lunar month to within a fraction of a second, for even a small error would, over millennia, amount to a visible error). By doing so, the system of Jewish calendar calculation, including elements that until then were found exclusively in Jewish teaching handed down from one generation to the next, became known to the nations who incorporated it into their systems (cf. *Rosh HaShanah* 25a: Rabban Gamliel said, “I have it on the authority of the house of my father’s father that the renewal of the moon occurs...”). The precise principles used for determining the *molad* period and intercalating the lunisolar calendar were thus no longer considered the distinctive “wisdom and discernment” of the Jewish people.

וְזֶהוּ בְּחִינַת סוּד הָעֵבוֹר, שְׂאִינוּ נִמְסַר רַק לְגִדּוּלֵי הַדּוֹר, שֵׁשׁ
לָהֶם נְשָׁמוֹת גְּדוּלוֹת. כִּי תַהֲלוּכוֹת הַגְּלָגָלִים הוּא עַל-יְדֵי

Eliezer ben Hyrcanus and Rabbi Akiva were sitting together and determining the *molad* of the moon....” These six were among the most outstanding sages of the generation that witnessed the destruction of the Holy Temple. Likewise, the Talmud teaches that only select members of the Sanhedrin, those summoned by the *Nasi* (President of the Supreme Court), could intercalate the calendar (*Sanhedrin* 10b-11a and *Rashi* there). The witnesses, whose testimony was essential for the Sanctification of the New Moon, reported their observation of the moon’s new crescent specifically to the generation’s prominent figures (see *Rosh HaShanah* 22a; *Rashi*, s.v. *tehei mesurah*). Certainly only these individuals were privy to the Mystery of Intercalation, the deeper secrets of Creation for which the astronomical calculations were no more than an outer garb (as in n.70).

In Talmudic times Babylon was home to numerous Jewish communities and many of the leading Sages had established their Torah academies there. Even so, the accepted practice was to intercalate the calendar solely in the Land of Israel. This is why when Rabbi Chaninah, the nephew of Rabbi Yehoshua, intercalated the calendar in Babylon, the Sages of the Holy Land sent a warning threatening excommunication unless he desisted. To Rabbi Chaninah’s argument that Rabbi Akiva was wont to intercalate the calendar in the Diaspora, the Sages replied, “Yes, but Rabbi Akiva had no equal!” (*Berakhot* 63a). In the context of our lesson, intercalation—and in particular the Mystery of Intercalation—is the exclusive domain of those authorized rabbis who, because they are worthy, bring about an illumination of *chokhmah* from on high. Just as intercalation was practiced exclusively in the Land of Israel, this illumination of *chokhmah* is tied to the sanctity of the Holy Land. Even after the destruction of the Holy Temple (itself a symbol of intellect/*chokhmah*; nn.25, 52), the worthy rabbis, such as Rabbi Akiva, have known the Mystery of Intercalation and have continued to lead the Jews and bring their *mishpat* to light. This is so because these leaders are able to sanctify the air of the Diaspora through the writing of their hand, and the air has made them wise with *chokhmah*, as in the Land of Israel. On the other hand, whenever unworthy rabbis are appointed, it causes the Jews to be expelled from the places in the Diaspora whose air they have sanctified. The Mystery of Intercalation is then taken away from us.

Reb Noson was one of the very few in his generation who knew the deeper meaning of the Mystery of Intercalation. Another was his sworn opponent, Rabbi Moshe Tzvi of Savran. Even at the height of the latter’s opposition against him, during the period known as “the Years of Oppression” (1834-1838; see below, n.114), Reb Noson remarked, “There is no one else in this generation with whom I can discuss this subject” (*Siach Sarfei Kodesh* 3-160).

73. those with lofty souls. They are the generation’s greatest individuals not only by virtue of the inherent loftiness of their souls (see below, nn.85, 86), but also because of the lofty levels to which they elevate their souls through worshipping God and by attaining superior knowledge of Torah. As the Ari explains, the spiritual levels to which a person ascends and the loftiness of his soul are commensurate with his Torah study and performance of mitzvot (*Shaar HaGilgulim* #1, pp.9-10; see *Biur HaLikutim* #36). Rebbe Nachman will next show that it is precisely because of their lofty souls that these individuals are endowed with the Mystery of Intercalation.

This is the aspect of the Mystery of Intercalation, which is given over only to the generation's greatest individuals,⁷² those with lofty souls.⁷³ For the revolutions of the spheres are determined by

The *Parparaot LeChokhmah* elaborates: The hidden, deeper aspect of astronomy/astrology, that which is not given over to the nations but remains with us, is a practical understanding of the workings of God's Divine providence. In seeing past the veil of nature, the Jewish sages privy to the hidden portion of this wisdom comprehend not just *that* the motions of the heavenly bodies and spheres influence the way our world operates and develops but also *how* they do so. The entire world will attain this awareness only in the Future, when, as Yeshayahu prophesies, "The sun shall no longer be your light by day, nor the shining of the moon...for God shall be your light" (Isaiah 60:19). At present, however, God does not want this deeper understanding and wisdom to be revealed to the nations, as in, "My Glory I shall not give to another" (see n.64). This is the reason He created the spheres of the firmament: to conceal and hide His Divine providence in the forces of nature, which hide His providence and Glory from the undeserving. Scripture itself attests to this distinction between the Jews and the nations: "Should you raise your eyes towards heaven and see the sun, the moon, the stars, and all the heavenly host, do not bow down to them...God made them a portion for the nations" (Deuteronomy 4:19). Instead of discerning God's Divine providence in the astrological forces, the idolatrous nations saw the celestial bodies, as well as other natural phenomena, as independent powers and deities to be worshipped and feared. Nature thus became the portion of the nations. The Jewish people, on the other hand, are enjoined to recognize that the physical celestial bodies and metaphysical heavenly spheres are merely agents of Divine providence, and that when our relationship to God is as it should be, God Himself oversees and cares for us directly. One who is discerning can understand from the motions of the spheres, stars and planets themselves that there is a Creator Who directs them. Even so, the very existence of the solar system obscures the illumination of God's providence. Only the direct connection that the Jewish people have with God enables us to see past this veil. And we are required to reveal the wisdom of astronomy/astrology "for the eyes of the nations," so that they might know that this wisdom's deeper aspects, the practical application of its principles, remains with us. But we are not to reveal this *Sod Ha-Ibur*, since the nations' portion in this world is belief in science and the forces of nature, and God has declared: "My Glory I shall not give to another."

Returning to the context of our lesson, the *Parparaot LeChokhmah* adds: When a worthy rabbi is appointed, the *chokhmah* (wisdom) in our writings is revealed, thus making known God's providence in the world. However, when an unworthy rabbi is invested with authority and we are exiled from the "air of the Land of Israel," the *chokhmah* of *Sod Ha-Ibur* is concealed, for God says, "My Glory I shall not give to another." It then appears as if nature is the controlling force in creation. This is the meaning of Rebbe Nachman's statement: "the wisdom of astronomy/astrology...all the changes and future occurrences brought about by the spheres of the firmament...[were] given over to the nations." Then, instead of our receiving direct Divine providence, we too become subject to the portion of the nations—the forces of nature.

72. the generation's greatest individuals. Chapter 7 of *Pirkey deRabbi Eliezer* begins: "Rabbi Yochanan ben Zakkai, Rabban Gamliel, Rabbi Yishmael, Rabbi Elazar ben Arakh, Rabbi

שְׂכָלִיִּים, שֶׁהֵם הַמְּלָאכִים. וְכָל גַּלְגָּל וְגַלְגָּל יֵשׁ לוֹ שְׂכָל מִיָּחָד, דְּהֵינּוּ מְלָאךְ, שֶׁמִּתְנַהֵּג עַל-יָדוֹ. וְעַל-יְדֵי-זֶה הוּא הַשְּׁתַּנּוּת הַלּוֹךְ הַגַּלְגָּלִים, שֶׁזֶה הַגַּלְגָּל מְהִלֵּךְ בְּחֹדֶשׁ, וּבִזְהָ הַסֵּדֶר, וְזֶה הַגַּלְגָּל מְהִלֵּךְ בְּשָׁנָה אוֹ יוֹתֵר, וְיֵשׁ גַּלְגָּל שֶׁצָּרִיךְ זְמַן רַב כַּמָּה אֲלָפִים שָׁנִים עַד שֶׁמִּסְבֵּב.

וְהַכֹּל לְפִי הַשְּׁתַּנּוּת הַשְּׂכָלִיִּים, שֶׁהֵם מְשַׁתְּנִים לְפִי רְחוּקָם מִהָעֶלָּה, וְכִמוֹ כֵּן מִתְנַהֲגִים הַגַּלְגָּלִים. וְכָל אֶלוֹ הַשְּׂכָלִיִּים, כֻּלָּם מְקַבְּלִים

that rule the heavenly spheres and function as their “animators,” the spirit or conscious energy that is the cause of their motion (see n.76). In addition to “angel,” the Hebrew term *malakh* also means “messenger.” Angels/intelligences are the messengers God sends to guide the motions of the spheres.

75. a month...a year or more...a few thousand years.... This is as the Midrash teaches: There is a star that completes its revolution in twelve months, such as the sun; another, the moon, which completes its revolution in a month; and a planet, Jupiter, whose revolution lasts some twelve years (*Bereishit Rabbah* 10:4). In *Maasiah Tovia* (p.41b), Rabbi Tovia Narol of Metz (1653-1729) charts the different heavenly spheres and their revolutions, including the sphere of the constellations, whose revolution is listed as 36,000 years.

76. intelligences, which vary commensurate with their distance from the first cause.... Rebbe Nachman is referring to the geocentric cosmological model, which speaks of the *galgalim* of the firmament as metaphysical, concentric spheres whose rotations bring about all the changes that happen here on earth (see above, n.66). In *Etz Chaim* (*Heikhal ABYA* 43:2), the Ari speaks of these *galgalim* in the firmament above Earth, which he aligns with the nine spheres mentioned by the philosophers in their teachings: Each of the first seven of these spheres contains one of the seven celestial bodies visible to the unaided eye—the Moon, Mercury, Venus, the Sun, Mars, Jupiter and Saturn. Immediately above these is the stellar sphere, containing all the constellations. Above and surrounding them is a ninth sphere, known as the diurnal sphere (see also *Etz Chaim*, *Heikhal ABYA* 50:8; *Sefer Yetzirah: The Book of Creation*, by Rabbi Aryeh Kaplan, p.167ff). In addition to these, the Ari speaks of a tenth, all-encompassing sphere, the Sphere of Intelligence (*Likutey HaShas*, *Chagigah*; see also *Shaarey Kedushah* 3:1; *Sefer HaBrit*, I:2:1, p.36). As mentioned (n.74), each heavenly sphere is ruled and animated by a separate, individual intelligence that guides its rotation. The reservoir of all these individual intelligences is the greater intelligence that is the agent of motion for the Sphere of Intelligence (see next note). Since this uppermost intelligence dispenses the individual intelligences that animate and drive the Sun, Moon, planets and stars, it is called *ha'ilah* (the first cause) of all the different intelligences. Each individual intelligence, depending on the sphere to which it relates, is thus at a different “distance” from the first cause. The Rebbe teaches here that these variations in the distance of the intelligences from the first cause are reflected in the varied revolutions of the spheres that they guide (so that one sphere’s revolution takes a month, another sphere takes a year, and so on).

intelligences, which are the angels.⁷⁴ Each sphere has its individual intelligence, an angel, that guides its motions. This is what causes the variations in the revolutions of the spheres, so that the revolution of one sphere takes a month and follows one particular pattern, while the revolution of another sphere takes a year or more; and there is even a sphere that takes as long as a few thousand years until it completes its revolution.⁷⁵

All this is determined by the variations in the intelligences, which vary commensurate with their distance from the first cause, and the spheres move accordingly.⁷⁶ And all these intelligences receive from

74. the spheres...intelligences, which are the angels. Having explained the nature of the wisdom that “was taken from us and given over to the nations,” Rebbe Nachman now returns to the other topic of the opening sentence of this section: “knowing all the changes and future occurrences brought about by the *galgalim* (the celestial bodies and spheres) of the firmament.” To understand the significance of the astrological forces, we must first understand the chain that links the Light of *Ein Sof* (the Infinite One) to this physical world. The Kabbalah teaches that there are Four Worlds: *Atzilut*, *Beriyah*, *Yetzirah* and *Asiyah* (see Appendix: Levels of Existence). The highest of the four, *Atzilut*, is the world into which *Ein Sof* emanated the ten Divine powers or potencies known as the *sefirot*. The next world, *Beriyah*, is known also as the Throne of Glory, the source from which all souls are hewn. Through its own ten *sefirot*, the World of *Beriyah* enables the *sefirot* of *Atzilut* to interact with the lower worlds. The third world, *Yetzirah*, is the world of the ten groups of angels. The lowest of the Four Worlds, *Asiyah*, consists of two levels: the higher one contains the ten heavenly spheres, the lower one contains the Earth and all the corporal creations. The commentators explain that the influence of Divine providence does not reach man directly, but evolves via the different channels: from *sefirah* to soul, from soul to angel, from angel to heavenly sphere, and through the astrological forces to all that exists in this world (see *Tikkuney Zohar*, Introduction, p.3; *Zohar* II, 42bff and *Matok Midvash* there; see also *Etz Chaim*, *Heikhal ABYA* 42:2).

This is the meaning of what our Sages teach: There is not a blade of grass below that does not have a *mazal* (star or constellation) over it, striking it and telling it to grow (*Bereishit Rabbah* 10:6). In a second version of this teaching, the *Zohar Chadash* (*Sitrei Torah*, *Bereishit*) replaces the word “*mazal*” with “*malakh* (angel)” (cf. *Sefer Chassidim* #1160; *Reishit Chokhmah*, *Shaar Ahavah*, chap. 5). Elsewhere in *Likutey Moharan* (I, 9:2), Rebbe Nachman, like the Ari (see *Shaar Mamarei Rashby*, *Perek Shirah*), joins these two versions in a single teaching to show that even every blade of grass is ruled over by a star and an angel. God’s providence works through the astrological influences of the heavenly spheres, which oversee even the smallest objects in creation. All the changes constantly occurring on earth can be attributed to the celestial bodies and spheres. In turn, overseeing each *galgal*, animating it and directing its motions, is an angel from the World of *Yetzirah*. As others before him (see *Zohar* III:225a; *Tikkuney Zohar* #21, p.63a; Ramban in *Sefer Torat HaAdam* #121; and *Rabbeinu Bachya* in *Vayeira*: Introduction to *Kedoshim*), Rebbe Nachman identifies these angels with “intelligences”—incorporeal beings

מִהַמְנַהִיג הַכּוֹלֵל, שֶׁהוּא שֶׁכֶּל הַכּוֹלֵל, שֶׁהִיא הַנִּשְׁמָה, שְׁכָלָם
מִתְנַהֲגִים עַל יָדָהּ. בְּבַחֲיַנָּת (אִיּוֹב לֵב, ח): "וְנִשְׁמַת שְׂדֵי תְבִינִים",
שֶׁהַנִּשְׁמָה שׁוֹפֵעַ הַשְּׁכָל בָּהֶם.

וְעַל כֵּן הַנִּשְׁמָה נִקְרָאת שְׁמַיִם, שֶׁהוּא כָּלִיּוֹת הַגְּלִגְלִים. כְּמוֹ שֶׁכָּתוּב
(תהלים נ, ד): "יִקְרָא אֶל הַשָּׁמַיִם מֵעַל", זֶה הַנִּשְׁמָה (סנהדרין צא, ב). כִּי
הַנִּשְׁמָה הוּא מְנַהִיג הַכּוֹלֵל, שֶׁל כָּל הַגְּלִגְלִים כֹּפֵּל. וְעַל כֵּן הַנִּשְׁמָה

individual intelligences/angels overseeing the firmament's spheres are themselves but individual components of the all-encompassing intelligence, which is their comprehensive guiding force. Here, Rebbe Nachman adds that the all-encompassing intelligence, the comprehensive guiding force that rules all the other intelligences, has another name—the soul of man. As explained above (see n.74), because the angels are from the World of *Yetzirah*, they have the power to guide and direct the elements of the world below them, the World of *Asiyah*, including all the heavenly spheres. Man's soul, being rooted in the even higher World of *Beriyah*, is more transcendent than the angels. When elevated to lofty levels through the worship of God and superior knowledge of Torah, the soul becomes a comprehensive guiding force, the all-encompassing intelligence directing all the intelligences/angels and all the astrological influences of the heavenly spheres.

79. the soul from the Almighty...infuses them with their intelligence. This proof-text speaks of the soul as the means through which God transmits intellect to man. In the context of our lesson, the lofty soul is thus identified with the all-encompassing intelligence; it animates each sphere and directs its motions by infusing it with its individual intelligence. The tenth intelligence, the one nearest to the center and closest to the Earth, is identified also as the active intellect, its function being to illuminate the human mind (see *Sefer HaCheshek* 2:3 by Rabbi Avraham Abulafia).

80. Let him call out.... The psalmist speaks of God calling to task the guardian angels of the nations as well as the nations themselves for oppressing the Jewish people. The Talmud relates this verse to a person's Judgment Day, when both the body and the soul appear before the heavenly tribunal. Both insist on their innocence: the soul claims that without a body *it* could not have sinned, and should therefore be exempt from punishment; the body claims that without a soul *it* is no different than an inanimate stone, and therefore is not deserving of punishment. God then takes the soul and places it back into the body, and judges them together. This is the meaning of, He will "call out to the heavens above"—the soul—"and to the earth"—the body—in order "to judge His people" (*Sanhedrin* 91a-b; see *Maharsha*, s.v. *yikra*). Rebbe Nachman will expand this discussion of the soul and its connection to the heavens, and afterwards return to the role of the body.

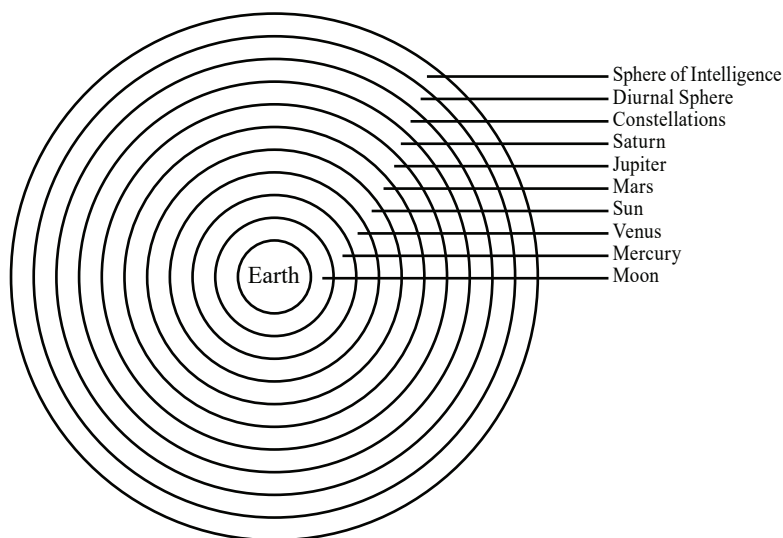
81. soul...heaven...encompasses all the spheres.... The Talmud (*loc. cit.*) directly links the soul with "the heavens." As explained in note 78, the soul comes from a more transcendent world than the world of the heavenly spheres and so, like the heavens, encompasses them all.

82. the soul is the comprehensive guiding force of all the spheres.... Since, as explained, the soul is the all-encompassing intelligence that "enables them to understand"—i.e., provides the individual intelligences that animate their respective heavenly spheres.

the comprehensive guiding force, which is the all-encompassing intelligence.⁷⁷ This is the soul, which guides all their motions,⁷⁸ in the aspect of “the soul [from] the Almighty enables them to understand” (Job 32:8)—i.e., the soul infuses them with their intelligence.⁷⁹

{“Let him call out to the heavens above and to the earth to judge His people” (Psalms 50:4).⁸⁰}

The soul is therefore called heaven, since it encompasses all the spheres, as it is written, “Let him call out to the heavens above”—this is the soul (*Sanhedrin* 91b).⁸¹ For the soul is the comprehensive guiding force of all the spheres, as explained above.⁸² This is why the soul is called



77. **the all-encompassing intelligence.** In Hebrew, *sekhel hakollel*. As mentioned in the previous note, this greater intelligence is the agent of motion for the uppermost all-encompassing sphere, the Sphere of Intelligence (*Galgai HaSekhel*). Rebbe Nachman adds that this all-encompassing intelligence of the Sphere of Intelligence is the comprehensive guiding force, directing all the individual intelligences and the respective heavenly spheres that the intelligences animate.

Concerning the *sekhel [ha]kolel*, Rabbi Moshe Cordovero writes: This is the hidden knowledge relating to the motions of the heavenly spheres and the forces that guide them, including the angels that rule over the seasons, months and constellations. This does not refer to the astronomical calculations taught by the Greeks but to the true astronomy/astrology known to the sages—this being the Jewish people’s “wisdom and discernment in the eyes of the nations” and through which it was possible for man to know the future (*Pardes Rimmonim* 12:1-6; see also *Raavad*, Introduction to *Sefer Yetzirah*). Rebbe Nachman will return to the all-encompassing intelligence below, in section 6 (and n.164), where he connects it with Upper Wisdom.

78. **receive from the comprehensive guiding force...the soul....** We have just seen that the

נִקְרָאת גִּלְגֻּלְתָּא, עַל שֵׁם גִּלְגָּלִי הָרָקִיעַ שֶׁמִּתְנַהֲגִים עַל יָדָהּ. וְעַל כֵּן
אֵלּוֹ הַנִּשְׁמוֹת הַגְּדוֹלוֹת, בְּקִיאִין בְּסוּד הָעֶבֶר, כִּי מִי יוֹדֵעַ הַנִּהְגָּתָם
כְּמוֹ הַמְּנַהִיג.

וְאֵלּוֹ הַנִּשְׁמוֹת הַגְּדוֹלוֹת צְרִיכִין שִׁיְהִי לָהֶם גּוֹף בְּבַחֲיִנוֹת (ישעיה
ד, ב): "פְּרִי הָאָרֶץ", בְּחִינּוֹת אֲוִירָא דְאָרֶץ יִשְׂרָאֵל. כִּי כִּשְׁהַאֲוִיר
מִתְקַדֵּשׁ בְּבַחֲיִנוֹת אֲוִירָא דְאָרֶץ יִשְׂרָאֵל, אֲזִי כָל הַפְּרוֹת וְהַתְּבוּאָה
הַגְּדֹל שֶׁם, שֶׁמֶהֶם נִזּוֹן הָאָדָם, וּמִשָּׁם בָּא הַטֶּפֶחַ זְרַעִיּוֹת, הַכֹּל הוּא
בְּבַחֲיִנוֹת אָרֶץ יִשְׂרָאֵל.

וּמִשָּׁם נִרְקָם הַגּוֹף, בְּבַחֲיִנוֹת (תהלים קלט, טו): "רִקְמָתִי בְּתַחֲתִיּוֹת
אָרֶץ", בְּחִינַת אָרֶץ יִשְׂרָאֵל, וְאֲזִי הַגּוֹף בְּבַחֲיִנַת פְּרִי הָאָרֶץ. וְאֲזִי
רְאוּי לְקַבֵּל נִשְׁמָה גְּדוֹלָה, בְּבַחֲיִנַת: "יִקְרָא אֶל הַשָּׁמַיִם מֵעַל" - זֶה
הַנִּשְׁמָה, "וְאֶל הָאָרֶץ" - זֶה הַגּוֹף (שם סנהדרין). כִּי הַנִּשְׁמָה לְפִי

purity. This is alluded to in the words of the prophet Isaiah: "On that day, God's sprout"—i.e., the righteous Torah sages (*Rashi, loc. cit.*)—"will be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the Land"—i.e., the offspring of the righteous (*ibid.*)—"will be excellent and splendid."

87. when the air is sanctified in the aspect of the Land of Israel. This is when, as a result of our conferring authority on worthy rabbis, our Torah writings are strengthened and the pen's motions in writing them sanctify the air with the sanctity of the Holy Land (as above, §2, nn.63-64).

88. all the fruits and grains...drop of seed...of the Land of Israel. Since the air is sanctified in the aspect of the air of the Holy Land, all the fruits and grains that grow there are conceptually the produce of the Land of Israel—i.e., "the fruit of the Land." People who eat these fruits and grains are thus nourished with the sanctity of the Holy Land, and from this sanctified nourishment comes the seed from which their offspring are conceived. Their offspring are thus born with bodies pure enough to house the very lofty souls capable of comprehending the Mystery of Intercalation, as Rebbe Nachman explains next.

89. in the recesses of the land...the fruit of the Land. The psalmist speaks of nothing being hidden from God, Who could see the psalmist's unformed body even as it was taking shape in the lowest part of the womb—i.e., the deepest "recesses of the land." In the context of our lesson, "land" refers to the Land of Israel. The body formed in the "recesses of the Land" begins as a drop of seed that nourished from the produce of the Holy Land and so carries its sanctity.

90. Let him call out to the heavens above.... See above, note 80. In our context, this verse teaches that in order to "call out to the heavens" for a soul capable of comprehending the Mystery of Intercalation, we must first call "to the earth"—i.e., conceive a body pure enough to house such a lofty soul, a body infused with the sanctity of the Holy Land.

GaLGaLta,⁸³ on account of the *GaLGaLim* (spheres) of the firmament whose motion it guides.⁸⁴ Therefore, these lofty souls are expert in the Mystery of Intercalation, since who knows their motions better than the force that guides them?⁸⁵

And these lofty souls need to have a body that is in the aspect of “the fruit of the Land” (Isaiah 4:2), the aspect of the air of the Land of Israel.⁸⁶ For when the air is sanctified in the aspect of the air of the Land of Israel,⁸⁷ then all the fruits and grains that grow there, from which people are nourished and from which the drop of seed stems, are in the aspect of the Land of Israel.⁸⁸

It is from there that the body is constructed, in the aspect of “I was knit together in the recesses of the land” (Psalms 139:15)—the aspect of the Land of Israel. The body is thus in the aspect of “the fruit of the Land.”⁸⁹ And it is then suited for receiving a lofty soul, in the aspect of “Let him call out to the heavens above”—this is the soul; “and to the earth”—this is the body (*Sanhedrin, op. cit.*).⁹⁰ For the soul reflects the body. When the body is

83. **soul is called GaLGaLta.** *Galgata* is Aramaic for “skull.” The Ari teaches that the *galgata* corresponds to the *sefirah Keter*; it transcends and encompasses the mind’s intellect (*Etz Chaim, Heikhal HaKetarim* 13:4, p.182). As we have seen (n.79), the intellect is contained in the soul. The soul is thus analogous to the *galgata*.

84. **GaLGaLta...GaLGaLim of the firmament whose motion it guides.** The soul/*GaLGaLta* (גלגלתא) guides the motions of the spheres, the *GaLGaLim* (גלגלים). Since the soul directs the heavenly spheres, the psalmist refers to it as “the heavens.”

85. **lofty souls are expert in the Mystery...the force that guides them.** Earlier, Rebbe Nachman taught that only individuals with very lofty souls are privy to *Sod Ha-Ibur*. With their great intellect, they have the cleverness needed to reveal the wisdom of astronomical intercalation while keeping its hidden portion, its *sod*, a secret. What enables the lofty souls to do this, as we have just seen, is the power these souls have to direct the *galgalim*. As the all-encompassing intelligence, a lofty soul is able to guide the different individual intelligences as well as all the spheres, whose revolutions effect the changes that take place in our world (cf. *Likutey Moharan* I, 31:2 and nn.24-27, that charity guides the movements of the *galgalim*). However, as the Rebbe teaches next, another condition must be met if the Mystery of Intercalation is to remain the province of the Jewish people.

86. **a body that is in the aspect of the fruit of the Land....** Just as “the heavens” in the verse cited from Psalms alludes to the soul, “the earth” alludes to the body. Rebbe Nachman teaches that the body that would house a lofty soul must be conceptually “the fruit of the Land”—i.e., just as the fruits of the Holy Land are cherished for their exceptional quality, the bodies of the generation’s greatest individuals need to be worthy of esteem on account of their superior

הגוף, כְּשֶׁהגוף זָךְ וְנָקִי, יָכוֹל לְקַבֵּל נִשְׁמָה גְדוֹלָה, וְכֵן לְהִפָּךְ.
 וְעַל כֵּן יֵשׁ מְדִינֹת שְׂשֻׁכָּלָם עָב וּמִגָּשָׁם, וְכֵן יֵשׁ מְדִינֹת שְׂשֻׁכָּלָם
 זָךְ וְצָלוּל. וְהַכֹּל לִפְי הַמְּדִינָה, לִפְי הַמְּזוֹן הַיּוֹצֵא מִמֶּנָּה. וְעַל כֵּן
 עַל-יְדֵי שְׁנֵת גָּרְשִׁין מִבְּחִינַת אֲוִירָא דְאַרְצֵי-יִשְׂרָאֵל, עַל-יְדֵי בְּחִינַת
 הַנֶּ"ל, אֲזִי אֵין יְכוּלִין לְהִתְרַקֵּם גּוֹפִים זָכִים, וְאֵין יְכוּלִין לְקַבֵּל
 נִשְׁמָה גְדוֹלָה, וְעַל-יְדֵי-זֶה נִלְקַח סוּד הָעֶבּוֹר מֵאַתָּנוּ.
 וְזֶה שֶׁאָמְרוּ חֲכָמֵינוּ זְכוֹרֵנָם לְבָרָכָה (כתובות קיב, א) "וְהִיְתָה יָדִי
 אֶל הַנְּבִיאִים הַחוּזִים שֶׁוָּא וְגו' בְּסוּד עָמִי לֹא יִהְיֶה" – זֶה סוּד
 הָעֶבּוֹר. "וּבִכְתָּב בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל לֹא יִכָּתְבוּ" – זֶה סְמִיכָה. "וְאֶל
 אֲדָמַת בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל לֹא יִבּוֹאוּ" – כְּמִשְׁמָעוֹ. הֵינּוּ כֵּן ל'.
 "בְּכָתְבַת יִשְׂרָאֵל לֹא יִכָּתְבוּ" – זֶה סְמִיכָה, הֵינּוּ עַל-יְדֵי סְמִיכָה
 שֶׁמִּסְמִיכִין בְּשֵׁם רַבִּי, אֶת שְׂאֵינָם הַגּוֹנִים, עַל-יְדֵי-זֶה מַחְלִישִׁין
 כָּתֵב יִשְׂרָאֵל כֵּן ל'. וְזֶהוּ:

and the uniqueness of the produce of the Land of Israel. The Talmud (*Ketuvot* 112a) relates: When Rabbi Elazar went up from the Diaspora to dwell in the Land of Israel, he remarked, "I have escaped one punishment." When he was ordained as a rabbi, he remarked, "I have escaped a second punishment." When he was then given a seat on the counsel of intercalation, he remarked, "I have escaped a third punishment." To explain his words Rabbi Elazar cites this verse from Ezekiel, which, as Rebbe Nachman will show, in our context alludes to unworthy leaders and the suffering they bring upon the Jewish people.

95. in the mystery of My people...of Intercalation. The Mystery of Intercalation is called "the mystery of My people" because it remains a secret even after it is revealed (as above, nn.69-70; *Maharsha, Ketuvot* 112a, s.v. *zeh sod*).

96. in the writings of the House of Israel...ordination. It is customary when ordaining a rabbi to also present him with a document of written confirmation (*Be T'bey HaNachal*), thus here "the writings" alludes to *semikhah* and the conferring of authority.

97. not come back to the Land...according to its plain meaning.... Thus, when Rabbi Elazar arrived in the Land of Israel he understood that he had been spared one of the three punishments associated with unworthy rabbis, for he had returned to the Holy Land. Later, when the leading sages of the generation conferred *semikhah* on him, a sign that he was a worthy rabbi, he understood that he had been spared another of the punishments, since he had been included in the writings of the Jewish people. Finally, when he was accepted into the elite group of rabbis who intercalated the calendar, he understood that he had been spared all three punishments, for he had been initiated into the Mystery of Intercalation.

98. They will not be written in the writings...as explained above. See section 2 above

pure and clean, it can receive a lofty soul; and the opposite is likewise true.

Thus there are countries where the [people's] intellect is obtuse and crass, and other countries where their intellect is clear and lucid. It all depends on the country, on the food that it produces.⁹¹ Therefore, when we are exiled from the air of the Land of Israel because of the aforementioned aspect,⁹² it becomes impossible to construct pure bodies, and we cannot receive a lofty soul. As a result, the Mystery of Intercalation is taken from us.⁹³

{“My hand will be against the prophets who prophesy vanity and divine falsehood. They will not share in the mystery of My people, they will not be written in the writings of the House of Israel, and they will not come [back] to the land of the Israelites” (Ezekiel 13:9).⁹⁴}

This is what the Sages, of blessed memory, said: “My hand will be against the prophets who prophesy vanity.... They will not share in the mystery of My people”—this is the Mystery of Intercalation.⁹⁵ “They will not be written in the writings of the House of Israel”—this is ordination.⁹⁶ “And they will not come [back] to the Land of the Israelites”—this is to be understood according to its plain meaning (*Ketuvot* 112a), as explained above.⁹⁷

They will not be written in the writings of Israel—This is ordination. That is, by investing those who are unworthy with the title “rabbi,” we weaken the writings of the Jews, as explained above.⁹⁸ And this is:

91. depends on the country, on the food that it produces. As mentioned above (§2), when the Jews sanctify the air of the land in which they reside through the *chokhmah* in their writings, the land becomes “a minor Holy Land,” a microcosm of the Land of Israel whose air “makes wise” (see n.61). The food that grows in this country is then “fruit of the Land.” The people who are nourished by this food give birth to pure and clean bodies, into which is drawn the clear and lucid intellect of the very lofty souls.

92. the aforementioned aspect. Namely, conferring authority on unworthy rabbis (§2). As we have seen, such *semikhah* weakens the authority of the writing of our hand and causes us to be exiled from the Land of Israel and from “a minor Holy Land” that we settled in the Diaspora.

93. Mystery of Intercalation is taken from us. Since we no longer reside in the sanctity of the Holy Land, we cannot give birth to pure and clean bodies, and therefore cannot draw down the very lofty souls capable of comprehending the hidden wisdom in astronomy/astrology.

94. My hand will be against.... Speaking in the name of God, Yechezkel warns the false prophets of the punishments they will suffer for their bogus prophecies: they will not be included in the congregation of the Jewish people, or inscribed among those who will be rewarded with a share in the World to Come, or ingathered at the time of the Redemption. This verse is expounded in a Talmudic passage that discusses also the sanctity of the Holy Land

וְאֵל אֲדַמַּת יִשְׂרָאֵל לֹא יָבֹאוּ, הֵינּוּ שְׁנֵת־גִּרְשֵׁין מִבְּחִינַת אוֹרָא
דְּאֶרֶץ-יִשְׂרָאֵל כֵּן ל'. וְזֶהוּ:

"בְּסוּד עָמִי לֹא יִהְיוּ" - 'זֶה סוּד הָעֵבוֹר, שְׁעַל-יְדֵי-זֶה נִלְקַח
מֵאֲתָנּוּ סוּד הָעֵבוֹר כֵּן ל'. וְכֵל זֶה עַל-יְדֵי הַמּוֹתְרוֹת הֵן ל'.

ד. וְעַל-יְדֵי-זֶה אֵין לוֹ עֵצָה שְׁלֵמָה לְעוֹלָם, וְתָמִיד אֵינוּ יָכוֹל
לָתֵת עֵצָה לְנַפְשׁוֹ, וְהוּא תָּמִיד מְסַפֵּק. כִּי כָל עֲצוּתוֹ בְּבַחֲיִנַת

In review: Through faith in the sages and tzaddikim we bring our *mishpat* to light. Conversely, a person who repudiates this faith is condemned to a mind plagued by confusion and doubt; he is unable to attain judgment or derive true laws of conduct from his studies, and so is never clear about the path he is meant to follow (§1). The mind's pollution and the inability to exercise *mishpat* result in our conferring authority on unworthy rabbis and leaders. This, in turn, causes our writings to lose their authority, and it leads to the Jews being banished from the places and lands in which they have settled (§2). Exile causes us to lose the hidden portion of the wisdom that makes us unique in the eyes of the nations—i.e., the Mystery of Intercalation (§3).

102. **Because of this.** "This" refers to the waste matter that stems from a lack of *emunat chakhamim*. As explained in the previous note, this waste matter corresponds to conferring authority on unworthy rabbis, as a result of which *chokhmah* departs.

103. **never has perfect counsel...incapable of making decisions.** Rebbe Nachman directed his followers to wholeheartedly beseech God each day for *eitzah tovah*, good advice (*Rabbi Nachman's Wisdom* #238). Reb Noson explains "perfect counsel" as that advice which is consistent with and brings to everlasting prosperity in the eternal world. For there are many types of advice that at the moment appear perfect, but which in the end do not bring a person any lasting advantage. These are not perfect counsel (*Torat Natan* #11).

Reb Noson adds: The origin of all advice is *chokhmah*, the wisdom that stems from the *sefirah Chokhmah*. However, by its nature *chokhmah* is "counsel from afar" (Isaiah 25:1) and inaccessible, as in the words of King Shlomo, the wisest of all men, "I said I would be wise, but it is distant from me" (Ecclesiastes 7:23). Yet there is a way to overcome this distance and obtain the advice one needs for reaching a clear decision. That way is faith. When a person has faith in the sages and tzaddikim, he attains *chokhmah* and can realize beneficial counsel. On the other hand, if a person is lacking faith, he is distant from *chokhmah* and cannot obtain the advice he needs to help him come to the right decisions, those that are consistent with his attaining eternal life (*Torat Natan* #10). This ties in with what Rebbe Nachman taught above, that through faith in the sages and tzaddikim we are able to reach clear conclusions, derive laws of proper conduct from our studies and bring our *mishpat* to light (§1). This faith draws the *chokhmah* that leads to beneficial counsel. However, when unworthy rabbis are invested with authority as a result of blemished faith, people find themselves constantly in doubt, unable to make the decisions that bring to everlasting prosperity in the eternal world.

104. **foolish advice.** The prophet Yeshayahu states that "Pharaoh's wisest advisors offer foolish

and they will not come [back] to the Land of Israel — That is, they are banished from the aspect of the air of the Land of Israel, as explained above.⁹⁹ And this is:

They will not share in the mystery of My people — This is the Mystery of Intercalation. Because of this, the Mystery of Intercalation is taken from us, as explained above;¹⁰⁰ all this, due to the aforementioned waste matter.¹⁰¹

4. Because of this,¹⁰² a person never has perfect counsel and is perpetually incapable of making decisions.¹⁰³ He is always in doubt, because all his advice is in the aspect of “foolish advice” (Isaiah 19:11),¹⁰⁴

that through the act of *semikhah* the teacher transmits *chokhmah* to the disciple receiving ordination. But when the recipient is unworthy, this *chokhmah* departs. This is the same aspect of *chokhmah* found in the letters of Jewish writings. Thus, conferring authority on an unworthy rabbi weakens the authority of our writings of Torah and is a major cause of the terrible evils that befall the Jewish people.

99. **and they will not come back to the Land....** The air of the Land of Israel “makes wise.” Without this *chokhmah*, sanctity is lost, and the Jews are banished from a place they long ago settled and transformed into “a minor Holy Land.”

100. **the mystery of My people...is taken from us, as explained above.** As Rebbe Nachman has explained in this section, when the Jews are banished from the Holy Land or from “a minor Holy Land” which we have settled, giving birth to bodies pure enough to house lofty souls becomes impossible. Without souls that are capable of comprehending the deepest mysteries of the Torah, *Sod Ha-Ibur* becomes lost to the Jewish people.

101. **all this, due to the aforementioned waste matter.** In section 1, Rebbe Nachman explained that when a person’s faith in the sages and tzaddikim is blemished, vapors from the waste matter of the food he eats ascend to his mind. These foul vapors leave him confused, and as a result he is incapable of clear decisions—i.e., bringing his *mishpat* to light (see also nn.20-24). Here, the Rebbe concludes that waste matter is the reason the Jews are banished from the Land of Israel and lose the Mystery of Intercalation. The *Be’Ibey HaNachal* comments: On the surface, this seems to contradict what we have seen throughout this third section, that Jews are exiled from their homes and lands because they invest unworthy rabbis with the authority to lead them. However, at their root, appointing unworthy rabbis and waste matter confusing the mind are really one and the same—they both stem from blemished faith. As is the case for the individual, when the Jewish people as a whole lack *emunat chakhamim*, the sages who lead them are incapable of exercising proper *mishpat*. As a result, they appoint unworthy rabbis, those whose Torah study is fueled by waste matter (see §2 and n.34). This, in turn, leads to the Jewish people suffering the three punishments the Rebbe has just discussed: the authority of their writings is weakened, they are banished from the aspect of the air of the Land of Israel, and they lose the wisdom of *Sod Ha-Ibur*.

עֲצוֹת נִבְעָרוֹת, עֲצַת נָשִׁים. כִּי הַטְנֶפֶת שֶׁל הַמוֹתָרוֹת עוֹלָה אֶל הַלֵּב, בְּבַחֲיִנַת (יחזקאל יד, ג): "הָעֵלּוּ גְלוּלֵיהֶם עַל לִבָּם". וְנַעֲשֶׂה לָבוּ מְטָנֶף כְּמוֹ בֵּית הַכֶּסֶּא, שֶׁהוּא מְקוֹם עֲצַת הַנָּשִׁים. כְּמֵאֲמַר רַב עֵילָשׁ (גטין מה, א): 'נָשִׁי - כָּל מְלִי מְסַדְרִין בְּבֵית הַכֶּסֶּא, שֶׁשֶּׁם כָּל עֲצָתָם.

the fact that while advice originates in the mind, in the *sefirah Chokhmah* (n.103), all counsel essentially forms in the heart, as in (Proverbs 20:5), "The counsel in a man's heart is deep water, yet a man of understanding can draw it out" (see also §5 and n.112). Thus, when a person is condemned to waste matter because of a lack of faith and the filth rises to his heart, all his counsel is "foolish advice" and he can never bring his *mishpat* to light.

107. concerns in the outhouse, that being where they take counsel. The Talmud relates that Rav Ilash once found himself imprisoned together with the daughters of Rav Nachman. When Rav Ilash received a sign from Heaven that he should attempt to escape, since he would succeed, he thought to take Rav Nachman's daughters with him. "Women are wont to discuss their concerns in the outhouse," he said. "I'll go eavesdrop on their conversation to see if they've remained faithful to their husbands." When he understood from their conversation that, in fact, they hadn't, he left them to their fate (*Gittin, loc. cit.*). In the context of our lesson, Rebbe Nachman teaches that the "outhouse" is nothing other than a person's own heart, which is filled with excrement due to his blemished faith. The *Parparaot LeChokhmah* adds that when a person finds himself uncertain and confused and in need of advice, the pressure to make a decision puts him in a constipated state of mind. Although the right advice has the power to free him of his anxiety and constriction, that relief is not forthcoming if he lacks faith. For then, his heart is filled with waste matter, like an outhouse, and the advice he receives can never be perfect.

As mentioned in the first note, this lesson was the basis for the last discourse of *Likutey Halakhot* that Reb Noson composed before his passing on the 10th of Tevet, 5605 (December 20, 1844). On that final day, Reb Noson spoke about the three tragedies that have befallen the Jewish people during the month of Tevet: on the 8th, the Torah was translated into Greek by the seventy elders of the Sanhedrin; on the 9th, Ezra the Scribe passed away; and on the 10th, Nevuchadnezzar's army laid siege to Jerusalem. His discussion focused especially on Ezra and his accomplishments, and what one does when "Ezra" passes away. The *Be'ibey HaNachal* connects the elements of Reb Noson's conversation with our lesson: Ezra, who received the wisdom of Torah in Babylon from the prophet Barukh ben Neiriyah, remained there until his teacher's passing (*Megillah* 16b; *Shir HaShirim Rabbah* 5:5). Afterwards, he led thousands of Jews up to the Land of Israel. In our context, Ezra represents the worthy rabbi who receives *semikhah* and is appointed to lead the people. His having been a skilled scribe (Ezra 7:6) corresponds to the strengthened writing of our hand, which stems from conferring authority on a worthy rabbi. As we have seen (§2), when our writings are strengthened, even the laws of the nations are subject to our writings. Thus we find that Ezra was authorized to issue judgment as he saw fit, "whether it be to exact punishment by death, banishment, confiscation of property or imprisonment" (Ezra 7:26). On the other hand, Ezra's passing away corresponds to the concealment of *chokhmah* that comes with investing an unworthy rabbi with authority. When

women's counsel.¹⁰⁵ This is because the filth of the waste matter rises to the heart, in the aspect of "they raised their excrement to their hearts" (Ezekiel 14:3).¹⁰⁶ His heart is soiled like an outhouse, which is the place of women's counsel. As in the statement of Rabbi Ilash: Women are wont to discuss their concerns in the outhouse (*Gittin* 45a), that being where they take counsel.¹⁰⁷

advice." In the context of our lesson, this refers to those with wisdom who offer advice for obtaining the transient benefits of this world. This "foolish advice" is the antithesis of the "perfect counsel" through which one achieves everlasting gain. There are many who are wise and can offer good advice in matters of this world, yet, unless that advice is ultimately meant to guide people toward eternal life, it is foolish advice. For what good is great fortune or fame if it distances a person from God? The only perfect counsel is that which brings to the true goal—life in the World to Come (*Torat Natan* #20; see also *Likutey Halakhot*, *Me'onen u'Menachesh* 3:2).

105. women's counsel. The *Parparaot LeChokhmah* connects this with the Talmud's teaching about following the advice of one's wife. Whereas God instructed Avraham to follow Sarah's advice and banish Yishmael from his house, the Talmud (*Bava Metzia* 59a) teaches that there are times when following one's wife's advice will, in the words of the Sages, "land one in Hell." The example the Sages bring is Achav, who followed his wife Jezebel's advice and worshipped idolatry. Reb Noson explains "women's counsel" based on the Kabbalistic teaching that woman parallels the *sefirah Malkhut*. Just as *Malkhut* is especially vulnerable to the forces of the Other Side, which stalk it and seek to disengage it from the realm of holiness, women are by nature susceptible to the forces in life that confuse one's judgment and draw one away from God (*Torat Natan* #10).

Elsewhere (*Likutey Moharan* I, 56:3E), Rebbe Nachman teaches that the word *NaShim* (נָשִׁים, "women") is etymologically similar to *NaShah* (נָשָׂה), which means "to forsake," "to forget" and "to be weak." The Rebbe brings proof-texts showing how each of these three meanings is indicative of someone who is distant from God: either he has forsaken God altogether, forgotten his obligation to Him, or is powerless to overcome the human foibles that keep men from worshipping Him. Thus, whereas perfect counsel is the advice that brings a person closer to God, the counsel of *nashim* can also be understood in our context as the advice one receives from anyone who is distant from God, advice that distances one from worshipping Him.

106. waste matter rises to the heart...excrement.... Yechezkel's words refer to those who have taken the worship of idolatry into their hearts. In our context, Rebbe Nachman equates idolatry with blemished faith. Those who worship idolatry have "raised their excrement to their hearts," just as those who blemish faith are "condemned to boil in excrement" (see §1 and nn.18, 24)—i.e., the waste matter that pollutes the mind (§1). The *Parparaot LeChokhmah* notes that whereas in the opening section the Rebbe spoke of blemished faith as resulting in a blemished intellect, here he shows that blemished faith negatively affects the heart. While it is true that the waste matter in the body causes "foul vapors to encircle and surround the mind and confuse it" (§1), the more immediate harm is to the heart, which is physically closer to the waste matter and so is more immediately polluted by its filth. Conceptually, this is paralleled in

ה. אַךְ מִי שֶׁכָּבַר נִשְׁקַע בְּאֵלּוֹ הַמּוֹתָרוֹת, יֵשׁ מִיָּם שֶׁהוּא מְטַהֵר מִזֹּאת הַטִּנְפָּה, בְּבַחֲיִנַת (יחזקאל לו, כה): "וְזָרְקֵתִי עֲלֵיכֶם מִיָּם טְהוֹרִים וְטָהַרְתֶּם מִכָּל טְמְאוֹתֵיכֶם וּמִכָּל גִּלּוּלֵיכֶם אֲטַהֵר אֶתְכֶם".
וְאִזִּי בָּא לְעֶצֶה שְׁלֵמָה, בְּבַחֲיִנַת (שם לו, כב): "וְלֹא יִחָצוּ לְשֵׁתִי מַמְלָכוֹת עוֹד, וְלֹא יִטְמְאוּ עוֹד בְּגִלּוּלֵיהֶם". שְׁעַל-יָדֵי שְׁנֵטְהָרִין מִהַגִּלּוּלִין וְהַטִּנְפָּה הֵן "ל, עַל-יָדֵי-זֶה, וְלֹא יִחָצוּ לְשֵׁתִי מַמְלָכוֹת, בְּבַחֲיִנַת עֲצוֹת, כָּמוֹ שֶׁכָּתוּב (דניאל ד, כד): "מֶלֶכִּי יִשְׁפָּר עָלָךְ", הֵינּוּ שְׁזוּכָה לְעֶצֶה שְׁלֵמָה. כִּי עַל-יָדֵי הַמֵּיִם הֵן "ל, נַעֲשִׂים אֲצִלוֹ

110. **They will never again be divided...defile themselves....** Here, the prophet relates to the Jewish people's return to the Holy Land under the rule of a single monarchy. The kingdoms of Judah and Israel (Efraim) will reunite, never again to be divided. At that time, the people will turn away from the sins that rendered them impure and be cleansed of their excrement.

111. **MamLaKhot...MiLKi be acceptable to you.** Daniel advised Nevuchadnezzar that if he wanted to keep his horrifying dream from materializing as he, Daniel, had interpreted it, the king of Babylon should give charity to support the impoverished Jews living in his kingdom. The word Daniel uses for "advice," *MiLKi* (מלכי), has the same root letters as *MamLaKhot* (ממלכות). Rebbe Nachman cites this proof-text to show the connection between advice and kingdom: When the pure water cleanses a person of his waste matter, his kingdom—i.e., his advice—is no longer divided. He is then no longer beset by doubts and distorted *mishpat*, but is able to obtain perfect counsel.

Although Yechezkel's prophecy speaks of the reunited Jewish Kingdom and says nothing on the subject of advice, it was distorted *mishpat*—the fatefully misguided decisions made by David's ill-advised grandson, Rechavam—that caused the kingdom to be divided in the first place (see 1 Kings 12:8). Restoring the united Kingdom of David is thus likened to removing doubt and obtaining wise counsel (*Likutey Halachot*, *Hoshanah Rabba* 2:4; *Parparaot LeChokmah*; *Biur HaLikutim* #41). This is the reason Mashiach, descendant of David, is called "the wondrous adviser" (Isaiah 9:5), since he will reveal the wondrous counsel that will bring the people back to God under the banner of a united kingdom (*Likutey Halachot*, *Taanit* 4:7). In a deeper sense, we know that King David corresponds to *Malkhut*, the Oral Law (see above, n.32). As explained earlier, faith in the sages represents faith in the Oral Law. A person who has this faith can bring his *mishpat* to light and obtain perfect counsel (see nn.7, 32). Perfecting one's faith in the Oral Law thus perfects the Kingdom of David, so that there is one, undivided kingdom—i.e., perfect counsel. The *Biur HaLikutim* (#35) adds: The conceptual link between advice and kingdom is apparent also from the fact that when a person advises others, he is, in a certain sense, exercising his authority and rule over them. The good counsel that he dispenses is, in our context, the true *mishpatim* by which he guides himself as well as others who follow his advice (see §1). Reb Noson sees this link illustrated in the practice of kings and leaders to appoint advisors, whose counsel is essential if the kingdom or government is to endure (*Torat Natan* #14).

5. Nevertheless, [for] someone who is already submerged in this waste matter,¹⁰⁸ there is water that will cleanse him of this filth, in the aspect of “I will sprinkle pure water upon you, and you will be pure; I will purify you from all your impurity and from all your excrement” (Ezekiel 36:25).¹⁰⁹

He then attains perfect counsel, in the aspect of “They will never again be divided into two kingdoms, nor will they ever again defile themselves with their excrement” (Ezekiel 37:22, 23).¹¹⁰ Because of their being cleansed of the aforementioned excrement and filth, “They will never [again] be divided into two *MamLaKhot* (kingdoms)” —the aspect of counsel, as it is written (Daniel 4:24), “let *MiLK*i (my advice) be acceptable to you.”¹¹¹ That is, he merits perfect counsel, since by

this happens, the authority of our writings is weakened, as when the Torah was translated into the languages of the nations (see *Megillah* 9a). This results in the Jewish people being exiled from the Land of Israel, begun with Nevuchadnezzar’s siege of Jerusalem, and in the ensuing loss of the Mystery of Intercalation, in which Ezra, the leading sage of his generation, was a foremost authority (cf. *Rosh HaShanah* 19b). His passing thus symbolizes the Jewish people’s loss of this hidden wisdom, as well as a lack of faith in the sages and tzaddikim—without which, Rebbe Nachman has explained, it is impossible to obtain perfect counsel.

In review: Through faith in the sages and tzaddikim we bring our *mishpat* to light. Conversely, a person who repudiates this faith is condemned to a mind plagued by confusion and doubt; he is unable to attain judgment or derive true laws of conduct from his studies, and so is never clear about the path he is meant to follow (§1). The mind’s pollution and the inability to exercise *mishpat* result in our conferring authority on unworthy rabbis and leaders. This, in turn, causes our writings to lose their authority, and it leads to the Jews being banished from the places and lands in which they have settled (§2). Exile causes us to lose the wisdom that makes us unique in the eyes of the nations—i.e., the Mystery of Intercalation (§3). Because of the pollution generated by a lack of faith, the heart can never obtain perfect counsel and we find ourselves in a state of perpetual uncertainty and doubt (§4).

108. **Nevertheless, for someone who is already submerged....** Thus far, Rebbe Nachman has discussed the need for *emunat chakhamim* and the evils that result when this faith is blemished. The Rebbe now shifts the lesson’s focus to rectifying blemished faith and undoing the evils that one’s lack of faith in the sages and tzaddikim engenders.

109. **I will sprinkle pure water upon you....** In this verse, Yechezkel speaks of the Future, when God will redeem the Jewish people for the sake of His Name. Even if their sins have rendered them undeserving of redemption, God says, “I will sprinkle pure water upon you, and you will be pure...from all your excrement.” From this proof-text we learn that “pure water” cleanses the excrement—i.e., the waste matter and foolish advice that befoul the heart as a result of blemished *emunat chakhamim*. Before clarifying what this “water” is, Rebbe Nachman first explains what this cleansing enables: the attaining of perfect counsel.

עצות שלמות, בבחינת (משלי כ, ה): "מים עמקים עצה בלב איש".

ואלו המים, הם בחינת מחלקת, בחינת (במדבר כ, יג): "מי מריבה". ועל כן מחלקת נקרא פלגתא, בחינת (תהלים סה, י): "פלג אלקים מלא מים".

כי מכל מחלקת נעשה ספר, בחינת שאלות ותשובות. כי המחלקת היא שאלה וקשיא, שמקשין ושואלין עליו, והוא שב בתשובה, ועל-ידי-זה הוא משיב ומתרץ השאלה, ונעשה מזה בחינת ספר שאלות ותשובות.

as "the Years of Oppression" (see n.72), Reb Noson would immerse in the *mikvah* not once but twice each day, at midnight and a second time before the morning prayers (*Through Fire and Water*; p.419; *Siach Sarfei Kodesh* 1-679; see also *Likutey Halakhot*, *Hekhsher Keilim* 4:12-22).

115. **Every dispute produces a book....** Having established that *machloket* is the "pure water" for cleansing one's heart of the waste matter produced by blemished faith, Rebbe Nachman now begins a somewhat lengthy discussion on how this works. Briefly, he will explain that dispute consists of the questions and arguments raised against a person, which, together with his responses, form "a book of responsa." A person who lacks faith in the sages and tzaddikim considers all their books meaningless. But when such a person responds to his opposition by repenting and "writing" his own book of responsa, it awakens in him a new interest in their writings. This renews his appreciation for the Oral Law and his respect for the teachings passed on to us by the sages, thereby cleansing his heart and rectifying his lack of *emunat chakhamim*. The Rebbe will explain this in greater detail.

The *Biur HaLikutim* (#60) adds: The *machloket* of which Rebbe Nachman speaks is not limited to the opposition that one suffers at the hands of another human being. *Machloket* can also be Heaven's dispute with a person, which might manifest as illness, financial difficulty, or the obstacles he encounters in worshipping God. If viewed as catalysts for repenting, these too write a book of responsa and cleanse the heart of blemished faith.

116. **TeShuVot...ShaV b'TShuVah...meiShiV...responsa is made.** The letters that make up the word *ShaV* (שב), which means "return," are also the root letters of the word *teShuVah* (תשובה), which means both "response" and "repentance." Rebbe Nachman bases his teaching here on a play on these words, as *ShaV b'TshuVah*, "returns in repentance," can also be read as "returns a response." A person who is honest will see the questions and criticism that others have of him as a reason to question himself: "Why are they opposing me?" "Have I done something to deserve this?" These and similar questions about the deeper reason for this opposition bring him to introspection, to a recognition of his own faults and a desire to rectify them. He responds to (*meiShiV*, משיב) the questions of *machloket* with an act of repentance (*teShuVah*). In this way, the "questions and responses" produced by dispute and controversy are symbolic of a book of *TeShuVot*, responsa.

means of the aforementioned water his counsel is perfected, in the aspect of “The counsel in a man’s heart is deep water” (Proverbs 20:5).¹¹²

This water is the aspect of dispute, the aspect of “Waters of Conflict” (Numbers 20:13).¹¹³ This is why a dispute is called *PLuGta* (disagreement), the aspect of “The *PeLeG* (stream) of God is full of water” (Psalms 65:10).¹¹⁴

Every dispute produces a book, the aspect of questions and *TeShuVot* (responses).¹¹⁵ This is because a dispute consists of a question or an objection raised against a person, and he *ShaV b’TShuVah* (returns in repentance). Through this he *meiShiV* (responds to) and answers the question, and from this the aspect of a book of responsa is made.¹¹⁶

112. counsel in a man’s heart is deep water. Proverbs speaks of the advice and wisdom buried in the heart of man: “The counsel in a man’s heart is deep water, yet a man of understanding can draw it out.” It requires someone of sagely understanding and insight to draw this counsel out (*Rashi* and *Metzudat David*, *loc. cit.*; cf. above, n.107). This proof-text shows the connection between advice and water—i.e., when a person is cleansed by “pure water,” he can obtain perfect counsel.

113. Waters of Conflict. Turning to the nature of this “pure water,” Rebbe Nachman will show that a key element of this cleansing is *machloket*—dispute, controversy and opposition—as a result of which a person’s faith in the sages and tzaddikim is restored. The Rebbe begins by citing Scripture’s depiction of the water that flowed from the rock struck by Moshe as “Waters of Conflict.” The verse calls it this because it was the Jewish people’s argument with Moshe and their lack of faith that angered him and caused him to strike the rock. Thus, in the context of our lesson, “Conflict” connotes a blemish of faith in the sages and tzaddikim, which is rectified by means of the “Waters.”

The *Biur HaLikutim* asks: Since the Waters of Conflict are rooted in dispute and controversy, how can they be a key element in effecting rectification? However, this is the principle taught by the Kabbalah: The primary mitigation, or rectification, of anything is only at its root (see below, §6 and n.135, where this concept is further explained). The antithetical concepts of blemish and rectification are thus embodied in a single entity, in this case the Waters of Conflict. It was a lack of water that brought to conflict; it is “pure water” that effects cleansing and rectification (*Biur HaLikutim* #7, #30)

114. PLuGta...PeLeG of God is full of water. The etymological similarity between *PLuGta* (פלוגתא), the Aramaic word for “disagreement,” and *PeLeG* (פלג), which means “a stream,” highlights the connection between water and dispute.

This connection is indicated as well in the following remark by Reb Avraham Chazan regarding the value of *machloket*. The author of *Biur HaLikutim* once quipped: “Considering the power of *machloket* to cleanse one spiritually, it is only right that a person who knows he is about to be involved in an argument should first immerse in a *mikvah*” (*Biur HaLikutim* #68; see also *Likutey Moharan* I, 56:7). During the period of terrible controversy and conflict known

כִּי עַל־יְדֵי הַתְּשׁוּבָה, עַל־יְדֵי־זֶה נִתְחַדָּשִׁים אֲצִלוֹ כָּמָה סִפָּרִים. כִּי יֵשׁ כָּמָה סִפָּרִים עֲכָשׁוּ, וְגַם עֲתִידִים לִהְיוֹת עוֹד כָּמָה סִפָּרִים, וְכָל־סִפָּרִים לְהַעֲוֹלָם. וּבִתְחִלָּה כִּשְׁלֹא הָיָה לוֹ אֲמוּנַת חֲכָמִים, אֲזִי הָיוּ כָּל הַסִּפָּרִים אֲצִלוֹ כָּלֵא, כִּי הָיָה מְלַעִיג עֲלֵיהֶם, כָּמוֹ שֶׁכָּתוּב (קהלת יב, יב): "עֲשׂוֹת סִפָּרִים הִרְבָּה אֵין קֶץ וְלֹהֵג הִרְבָּה" וְכוּ', דִּהְיָנוּ שְׁמַלְעִיג עַל רַבּוֹי סִפָּרִיהֶם, וְאֲזִי כָּלֵא כָּלֵא אֲצִלוֹ. וְכִשְׁשָׁב בַּתְּשׁוּבָה עַל־זֶה, אֲזִי נִתְחַדָּשׁ אֲצִלוֹ בְּכָל פַּעַם סִפָּר, כִּי חוֹזְרִים וְנִחְשָׁבִים אֲצִלוֹ כָּל הַסִּפָּרִים שֶׁבִּתְחִלָּה הָיוּ בְּעֵינָיו כָּלֵא.

וְהַכֹּל לְפִי הַמַּחֲלָקֶת, כִּי הוּא מְסַתֵּפֵל וּמִתְבּוֹנֵן בְּהַמַּחֲלָקֶת, מִפְּנֵי מָה הֵם חוֹלְקִים כָּךְ, בְּאֵלוֹ הַדְּבוּרִים, וְלֹא בְּאֶפֶן אֲחֵר. וְעַל־יְדֵי־זֶה מִתְבּוֹנֵן אֵיךְ לָשׁוּב בַּתְּשׁוּבָה, וּלְתַקֵּן הָאֲמוּנַת חֲכָמִים, כִּי מִשָּׁם נִמְשָׁךְ הַמַּחֲלָקֶת, עַל־יְדֵי שְׁפָגָם בְּאֲמוּנַת חֲכָמִים. וְלְפִי הַתְּשׁוּבָה,

always a necessity for new works of this kind and the world has need of them all. It is a terrible mistake to insist that there are enough of such books, or that there is no value in the new ones which are being written all the time (see *Likutey Halakhot*, *Kiddushin* 3:21).

119. the making of many books is without limit...ridicules...considers them all meaningless.... Kohelet states: "Beyond these take care, my son, for the making of many books is without limit, and much *lahag* is a wearying of the flesh." Rebbe Nachman cited the conclusion of this verse above, in section 1; see also notes 18-19. As explained there, the Rebbe reads "*LaHaG* (study)" as "*LoEG* (ridicule)," according to the opinion of Rav Pappa. Here, the Rebbe relates to the middle clause of this verse, showing that, in our context, "the making of many books..." is the complaint of those whose faith in the sages and tzaddikim is blemished. They are, so to speak, *wearied* by so many new books, which they consider to be a waste of time and energy. As we have seen, this "much ridicule" is the waste matter that pollutes a person's mind and befouls his heart like an outhouse (§1, §4).

120. the books that he initially saw as meaningless regain their importance. Earlier we saw that each time a person engages in *teshuvah*—i.e., responds/repents—it is as if he himself has written a book of responsa. Thus, each time, his *teshuvah* brings him to recognize the value of yet another of the many books of Oral Law. In the context of our lesson, the verse from Kohelet teaches that when someone with blemished *emunat chakhamim* engages in "much ridicule" of their teachings and considers "the making of many books" to be "a wearying of the flesh" and a waste, he is condemned, measure for measure, with a "wearying of the flesh"—i.e., waste matter. But if he engages in *teshuvah* as a result of the *machloket* against him, he replaces his "much ridicule" with a renewed appreciation for "the making of many books (is) without limit" and with restored faith in the sages and their teachings.

For as a result of the repentance, a number of books gain renewed meaning for him.¹¹⁷ At present there are numerous books, and there will be numerous additional books in the future as well; the world has need of them all.¹¹⁸ Initially, when he was lacking faith in the sages, he considered all the books meaningless. He would ridicule them, as it is written (Ecclesiastes 12:12), “the making of many books is without limit, and much ridicule [is a wearying of the flesh]”—i.e., he ridicules the increase of books and considers them all meaningless, <and so is condemned to a wearying of the flesh>.¹¹⁹ But when he returns in repentance for this, a book gains renewed meaning for him, because all the books that he initially saw as meaningless regain their importance.¹²⁰

And all this is commensurate with the dispute. For he views and reflects on the dispute: Why are they wording their dispute in this particular manner, and not in some other way? As a result he reflects on how he might repent and rectify his <blemished> faith in the sages, since the dispute issues from there because he blemished faith in

117. **a number of books gain renewed meaning for him.** When he repents, his low regard for—and even ridicule of—the sages’ Torah teachings is replaced with appreciation. He takes a fresh interest in these books, which then have renewed value in his eyes.

118. **there are numerous books...additional books...the world has need of them all.** These include *TaNaKh*, Mishnah, Talmud, Codes of Halakhah, Midrash, Kabbalah, *Musar* and Chassidic teaching, as well as the huge body of commentary on each of the foundational texts of these different branches of Torah knowledge. Even in the less than two hundred years since Rebbe Nachman’s passing (1810), the number of works compiled in each area of Torah study has grown exponentially. The Rebbe teaches here that all these books are needed, since each book has an “address”—i.e., a person for whom that particular work is precisely the one he needs to bring him to recognize and worship God. Reb Noson adds: One must look into the Torah to find good counsel, as the Torah itself declares: “Counsel and everlasting wisdom are mine” (Proverbs 8:14). Thus, the more books of Torah that are available, the greater one’s chances for obtaining that perfect counsel which will bring him closer to God. The world therefore has need of all these works (*Torat Natan* #12). Elsewhere, Reb Noson teaches that all *machloket* is connected to doubt. The reason we need many books is to clarify and dispel these doubts (*Torat Natan* #17).

In *Likutey Halakhot*, Reb Noson expands on this idea: There are those for whom the dialectics and exegesis of the Talmud are the primary focus of their study. Others favor the study of halakhic responsa. Still others draw inspiration mainly from the ethical guidance in the Torah. Citing the verse “The Torah of God is whole” (Psalms 19:8), the Baal Shem Tov remarked: “Even with all its commentaries, the Torah is still whole and perfect. We’ve yet to scratch its surface!” This is because the Torah, like God, is infinite. All the works based on the true teachings of Torah seek to explain the Will of God as it is manifest in each successive generation. Therefore, there is

לְפִי הַמַּחֲלָקֶת, כֵּן הוּא חוֹזֵר וְשָׁב אֶל אֲמוֹנַת חֲכָמִים. וְכֵמוּ כֵן
נִתְחַדֵּשׁ אֲצֻלוֹ סֵפֶר, כִּי חוֹזֵר וְנִחְשָׁב בְּעֵינָיו מֶה שֶׁהָיָה בַּתְּחִלָּה
בְּעֵינָיו כָּלֵא.

וְכֵן בְּכָל פַּעַם לְפִי הַמַּחֲלָקֶת, כֵּן הִתְשׁוּבָה, שֶׁשָּׁב וְחוֹזֵר אֶל הָאֲמוֹנַת
חֲכָמִים, וְכֵמוּ כֵן נִתְחַדֵּשׁ אֲצֻלוֹ סֵפֶר אַחֵר, כִּי חוֹזֵר וְנִחְשָׁב בְּעֵינָיו
עוֹד אֵיזָה סֵפֶר אַחֵר, שֶׁבַּתְּחִלָּה הָיָה מְלַעִיג עָלָיו, וְהָיָה בְּעֵינָיו
כָּלֵא כֵּן־ל.

וְעַל כֵּן, עַל-יְדֵי הַמַּחֲלָקֶת נַעֲשֶׂה סֵפֶר. וְזֶה בַּחֲנִינָת (אִיּוֹב לֵא, לה):
”וְסֵפֶר כָּתַב אִישׁ רִיבִי”, שֶׁעַל-יְדֵי רִיב וּמַחֲלָקֶת נַעֲשֶׂה סֵפֶר.

to me. Here is my record! Let the Almighty answer for me; and let the one who argues with me write a book.” Rashi (*loc. cit.*) explains: Iyov was asking that the Book of Job be canonized as one of the books of the Bible. He wanted their dispute to be recorded for posterity, since he was certain that he would ultimately be proven just—i.e., his *mishpat* would be brought to light.

Reb Noson writes: In earlier times, the Oral Law was precisely that, a body of teaching transmitted verbally from one generation to the next as part of the *semikhah* process. In this way, each sage is said to have received ordination and authority from Moshe *Rabbeinu*, the first rabbi. Through *semikhah* he also received a transmission of the Oral Law and the influx of *chokhmah* a worthy rabbi must have to ensure the Law’s proper application and observance. Moshe, who received the Oral Law together with the Written Law at Sinai, passed it on to Yehoshua, whom he ordained and appointed as the next leader of the Jewish people. Armed with this ordination, Yehoshua, the worthy rabbi, strengthened the authority of Jewish writings, and as a result was able to bring the people into the Land of Israel and attain the Mystery of Intercalation (which he used to control the motion of the sun and the moon; Joshua 10:12). And so the Oral Law was passed on from generation to generation, as detailed by the first Mishnah in *Avot* (see also *Rambam, Yad HaChazakah*, Introduction). Through the conferring of *semikhah*, each generation’s sages had the *chokhmah* to guide the people and dispense advice that brought to everlasting prosperity in the eternal world (see n.103). This lasted until shortly before the onset of the Gaonic period (c. 400 C.E.), when *semikhah*, as practiced in Talmudic times, was stopped (see above, n.69). Many years have passed since then, and perfect counsel has become harder and harder to come by. With each additional generation that has gone without *semikhah*, there are more and more self-appointed unworthy rabbis leading the Jewish people. In anticipation of this decline, the Sages of the Talmud gave permission for the Oral Law to be written down. In each generation, the true sages and tzaddikim compose their own works of oral Torah, and fill them with the *chokhmah* that was formerly transmitted through the hands of *semikhah*. Through the proliferation of these holy books, the air around us acquires the sanctity of the Land of Israel and “makes wise.” Therefore, by rectifying our blemished faith in the sages and tzaddikim and studying their writings, we are able to derive perfect counsel for every situation in life (*Torat Natan* #15).

the sages.¹²¹ And commensurate with his repentance, commensurate with the dispute, he reconsiders and returns to faith in the sages. Correspondingly, a book gains renewed meaning for him, since that which he initially saw as meaningless returns to being important in his eyes.¹²²

The same thing happens each time: the repentance—his returning and coming back to faith in the sages—is commensurate with <the nature of> the dispute. And correspondingly, another book gains renewed meaning for him, because yet another book that he initially ridiculed and saw as meaningless returns to being important in his eyes.¹²³

Thus it is that dispute produces a book. This is the aspect of “and let the one who argues with me write a book” (Job 31:35)—as a result of argument and dispute, a book is made.¹²⁴

121. dispute issues from there because he blemished faith in the sages. Rebbe Nachman now shows how the *teshuvah* of a person with blemished faith is connected with *machloket*. When a person’s *mishpat* comes to light, the questions and criticisms that others have of his actions fall away. There is then no cause to oppose him. Blemished faith, on the other hand, produces the waste matter that pollutes the mind, and this leads to a person acting in ways that bring others to question and criticize him. In this sense, *machloket* issues from blemished faith in the sages and tzaddikim. Thus, when a person seeks to repent for his lack of faith and reflects on the opposition against him, he can understand the nature of his blemish and repent accordingly.

122. commensurate with his repentance...returns to being important in his eyes. As explained, *machloket* against a person induces his *teshuvah*—i.e., his return to God in repentance, but also his response to the questions raised against him. Conceptually, his *teshuvah* is therefore the writing of a book of responsa (as above, n.116), since the renewed faith in the sages and tzaddikim that it awakens in him also reawakens the importance he attributes to the books that contain their teachings.

123. This same thing happens...yet another book.... This is because no two disputes are identical. Each *machloket* brings different types and levels of opposition corresponding to the specific area of Torah in which a person has blemished his *emunat chakhamim*. Therefore, his repentance, too, is always different; each time giving renewed meaning to a different type of book.

124. let the one who argues with me write a book.... Having shown that dispute and opposition rectify a person’s blemished faith, and through his reflecting on and responding to the arguments against him he writes a book of responsa, Rebbe Nachman cites this proof-text that connects *machloket* with the writing of books. The verse is from Scripture’s account of Iyov’s dispute with three acquaintances over whether his actions had made him deserving of the misfortunes he suffered. In his closing argument, Iyov says: “If only someone would listen

וַיֵּשׁ צְדִיקֵי הַדּוֹר שְׂאֵמוֹנָתָם שְׁלֵמָה בְּדָאִי, וְאַף־עַל־פִּי־כֵן יֵשׁ
עֲלֵיהֶם מַחְלָקָת, הוּא בְּבַחֲיִנָּת (ישעיה נג, יב): "וְהוּא חָטָא רַבִּים
נָשָׂא" וְכוּ', "וְעֹנֹוֹתָם הוּא יִסְבֵּל", הֵינּוּ שֵׁישׁ לֹו מַחְלָקָת בְּשִׁבְלֵי
הָעוֹלָם. וְעַל־יְדֵי הַמַּחְלָקָת שֵׁישׁ עָלָיו, עַל־יְדֵי זֶה מִתְקַן הָאֱמוּנָת
חֲכָמִים אֲצֵל הַהֶמוֹן עִם.

וַיֵּשׁ שֵׁישׁ עֲלֵיהֶם מַחְלָקָת, מַחְמַת שְׂאִין לָהֶם אֱמוּנָה בְּעֶצְמָן, וְאִינֶם
מֵאֲמִינִים בְּחִדּוּשֵׁי תוֹרָה שְׁלָהֶם שֶׁהֵם מְחַדְּשִׁים, וְאִינֶם מֵאֲמִינִים
שֵׁישׁ לַהֶשֶׁם יִתְבָּרַךְ שֶׁעֲשׂוּעִים גְּדוּלִּים מְחַדְּשִׁים שְׁלָהֶם. וְעַל־
יְדִי־זֶה שְׂאִין לָהֶם אֱמוּנָה בְּחִדּוּשִׁים שֶׁל עֶצְמָן, עַל־יְדִי־זֶה הֵם
מִתְרַשְׁלִין בְּהַחְדוּשֵׁין שְׁלָהֶם. וְעַל כֵּן בָּא עֲלֵיהֶם מַחְלָקָת, וְעַל־
יְדִי־זֶה הֵם שָׁבִים בְּתִשׁוּבָה, וְחוֹזְרִים וְנִחְשָׁבִים אֲצֵלָן חִדּוּשֵׁין
שְׁלָהֶם, וְחוֹזְרִים וּמְחַדְּשִׁים, וְנַעֲשֶׂה מִזֶּה סֵפֶר.

the tzaddik succeeds in answering his opponents and even overturning their opposition, thereby rectifying their blemished faith in him (*Biur HaLikutim* #28-29).

According to the *Be'Ibey HaNachal*, Rebbe Nachman's teaching here connects to what we saw earlier, that there are times when the blemished faith of the masses causes a sage or tzaddik to err and confer authority on an unworthy rabbi (see nn.38, 101). The tzaddikim recognize that what caused this error, and thus a blemishing of faith, was that they "bore the sin of the many." The opposition that the tzaddikim consequently must endure causes them to take greater care when ordaining a disciple. Thereafter, they confer authority only on worthy rabbis—those who strengthen the authority of the Torah and of the texts of Jewish writing, thereby rectifying the *emunat chakhamim* of the masses.

128. they lack faith in themselves.... These, too, are tzaddikim whose *emunat chakhamim* is complete. However, unlike the tzaddikim discussed in the previous paragraph, the suffering of these righteous individuals is not in order to rectify the blemished faith of the masses. Why, then, do they suffer? Rebbe Nachman's answer is that the *machloket* against these individuals stems from their lack faith in themselves—in the Torah novellae that they originate. The Rebbe teaches here that this, too, is considered a blemish of faith in the sages and tzaddikim. We can understand this in light of what he taught earlier, that each new book of Torah is a rectification of blemished faith. Therefore, if a righteous person refrains from originating Torah insights because he does not believe that they are precious in God's eyes, he prevents this rectification from occurring and faith remains blemished. But when he faces opposition as a result of this, his *teshuvah* brings him to a renewed faith in his own insights. Then, through his reflecting on the manner and wording of the *machloket* against him, a book of responsa is made.

Reb Noson writes: The blemish of *emunat chakhamim* engendered by a lack of faith in oneself is not limited to the tzaddikim who compose books of Torah novellae. Every Jew possesses a good point by virtue of which he is considered a tzaddik, as hinted in the verse

Now, there are tzaddikim of the generation whose faith is surely perfect, who are nevertheless subject to dispute.¹²⁵ This is in the aspect of “he bore the sins of the many...” (Isaiah 53:12); “and their transgressions he will suffer” (ibid. :11)—that is, he endures dispute on behalf of the world.¹²⁶ And by means of the dispute against him, he rectifies the faith that the masses have in the sages.¹²⁷

There are likewise those who are subject to dispute because they lack faith in themselves: they do not believe in the Torah insights they originate or that God takes great delight in their insights. And because they have no faith in their own insights, they are remiss in their insights, and so are subject to dispute. This causes them to repent, and their insights return to being important to them. Thus they return to originating insights, and through this a book is made.¹²⁸

125. who are nevertheless subject to dispute. Our lesson relates to three separate groups who are subject to opposition and dispute in order to rectify blemished faith: 1) the masses, many of whom are lacking *emunat chakhamim*; 2) the tzaddikim and sages, who, although their own faith is whole, experience *machloket* because of the masses; 3) individuals who lack faith in themselves. Having thus far focused on the first group, Rebbe Nachman next turns his attention to the sages and tzaddikim whose faith is complete. Why is it that they, too, are subject to *machloket*?

126. bore the sins of the many...and their transgressions he will suffer.... Yeschayah prophesied in the name of God: “My righteous servant will set many on the right path, and their transgressions he will suffer. Therefore, I will give him the many as his portion, and he will receive the mighty as his spoils, since he exposed himself to death and was numbered among the sinners, though he bore the sins of the many and prayed on behalf of the sinners.” There are tzaddikim who, despite their righteousness, endure terrible suffering. This is because these servants of God have accepted upon themselves the sins of the masses, in order to save them from punishment. In the end, these tzaddikim will reap great reward for their self-sacrifice on behalf of the people. In the context of our lesson, Rebbe Nachman applies this to the *machloket* to which the tzaddikim are subjected. The tzaddikim endure opposition and the hardships that controversy brings in order to rectify those who have blemished their *emunat chakhamim* (cf. *Chullin* 86a, and Lesson #63:3 and n.52 that the tzaddik is willing to suffer for the sake of others, in order to atone for the sins of the generation).

127. rectifies the faith that the masses have in the sages. The *Biur HaLikutim* asks: How can the tzaddik’s suffering from *machloket* rectify people’s faith, when the very cause of that opposition and suffering is their lack of faith in him? However, as explained earlier (§1, n.21), faith is intricately bound to the intellect and *chokhmah*. When the tzaddik has to respond to his opposition, the “responsa” he composes stem from the highest levels of *chokhmah*, for only the loftiest wisdom can address the questions and criticisms at their root and thus bring to the desired measure of peace. By attaining this *chokhmah* and revealing it through his responsa,

וּלְפַעֲמִים נַעֲשֶׂה מִזֶּה סֵפֶר לְמַעַלָּה, שֶׁעַל־יְדֵי־זֶה שָׁזָה שׂוֹאֵל
וּמְקַשֶּׁה, וְזֶה שָׁב בְּתִשְׁבּוּכָה, וְעַל־יְדֵי־זֶה מְשִׁיב וּמְתַרָּץ, עַל־יְדֵי
זֶה נַעֲשֶׂה סֵפֶר לְמַעַלָּה, בְּבַחֲיַנֵּת (מלאכי ג, טז): "אֲזַנְדְּבֶרּוּ יְרֵאֵי ה'
אִישׁ אֶל רֵעֵהוּ וַיִּקְשֹׁב ה' וַיִּשְׁמַע וַיִּכְתֹּב סֵפֶר".

ו. וְעַל־יְדֵי־זֶה נִמְתָּקִים כָּל הַצְמָצוּמִים, שֶׁהֵם הַדִּינִים. וְכָל מְקוֹם

so, these responsa, too, rectify faith, since “God listened and heard, and a book was written.” This is as Rabbi Yirmiyah teaches in the name of Rabbi Shimon ben Lakish: When two scholars discuss a law of Torah together, God Himself listens in to their conversation (*Shabbat* 63a).

See *Likutey Moharan* I, 142, where Rebbe Nachman relates this verse to the “book on high” written for someone who cannot study—e.g., he is either unlearned, or has no holy books—but whose heart greatly longs for Torah knowledge and the ability to worship God. For such a person, his heart’s desire is itself an aspect of having studied Torah from this book.

In review: Through faith in the sages and tzaddikim we bring our *mishpat* to light. Conversely, a person who repudiates this faith is unable to derive true judgment and laws of conduct from his studies, and so is never clear about the path he is meant to follow (§1). The mind’s pollution and the inability to exercise *mishpat* result in our conferring authority on unworthy rabbis and leaders. This, in turn, causes our writings to lose their authority, and it leads to the Jews being banished from the places and lands in which they have settled (§2). Exile causes us to lose the wisdom that makes us unique in the eyes of the nations—i.e., the Mystery of Intercalation (§3). Because of the pollution generated by a lack of faith, the heart can never obtain perfect counsel and we find ourselves in a state of perpetual uncertainty and doubt (§4). Blemished faith is rectified by *machloket*, the Waters of Conflict, which cleanse by causing a person to repent. The books of Torah containing the teachings of the sages and tzaddikim then acquire renewed value and importance in the eyes of those who previously ridiculed them (§5).

130. **constrictions.** In Hebrew, *tzimtzumim* (singular, *tzimtzum*), which also means “contractions” (see next note for the difference between this and *dinim*). As one of the basic concepts of Kabbalistic teaching, *tzimtzum* refers to *Ein Sof*’s (the Infinite One’s) contraction of His Infinite Light in order to bring about a finite universe (see LM64:2 n.13; *Likutey Moharan* I, 33:2, n.12). Rebbe Nachman teaches in Lesson #64:5: “It is impossible to know and comprehend the Wisdom in the Light of *Ein Sof*. This is because *Ein Sof* is God Himself, and His Wisdom is altogether incomprehensible.” Thus, as it relates to man, *tzimtzumim* are the many “downscalings” and contractions that God’s unfathomable Wisdom undergoes to make it perceptible to human intellect. This intellect is the *sekhel*, which, as the Rebbe explains, is itself a great light that shines for a person in all his ways, as in (Ecclesiastes 8:1), “A man’s wisdom lights up his countenance” (*Likutey Moharan* I, 1:2; see also Lesson #60:6). Reb Noson explains: In its original state, God’s Light is beyond the grasp of the finite human mind. Only the very great tzaddikim can hope to get a glimpse of it. Nevertheless, the more the *tzimtzumim* cloak and veil the Light, the more the Light shines upon and enlightens the lower levels—i.e., the more those who are not tzaddikim are able to perceive it.

And, occasionally, this produces a book on high. As a result of one person raising questions or objections, and the other person returning in repentance and thereby responding and answering, a book is made on high, in the aspect of “At that time, the God-fearing spoke to one another. God listened and heard, and a book was written” (Malachi 3:16).¹²⁹

6. This mitigates all the constrictions,¹³⁰ which are the severe

(Isaiah 60:21), “Your people, all of them are tzaddikim.” Thus, no matter what a person’s spiritual level, he must have faith that God values his devotions; every effort he makes to come closer to God, no matter how minimal, is very precious in His eyes. Not believing that this is so constitutes a blemish of *emunat chakhamim*. Indeed, in many ways this blemish is the most severe, since a person who lacks faith in himself and so considers any effort on his part as pointless, will make no attempt whatsoever to advance spiritually. A person must therefore encourage himself to beseech God for strengthened faith—in himself and in the sages and tzaddikim (*Torat Natan* #18). Moreover, we must realize that it is by Divine design that this is a matter of faith. A person is never shown the extent of his spiritual accomplishments, since knowing this with absolute certainty—rather than believing it through faith—would void his free will. This is because were a person to truly comprehend the spiritual benefits of even the most minute change for the good, he would have no choice but to devote every ounce of his energy to worshiping God. He would then become a tzaddik, but it would not be of his own volition or free will. Thus, in this world, God never fully reveals how precious our devotions are in His eyes. Rather, He wants us to take it on faith that not a single good thought, word or deed ever goes lost; that in the end, they are all credited to a person as his reward in the World to Come (*Torat Natan* #19).

Rebbe Nachman delivered this lesson on Rosh HaShanah, 5568 (1807). A short time before this, Reb Noson spoke to the Rebbe about the difficulties he was encountering in worshiping God. “When a person lacks faith,” the Rebbe told him, “he must work hard at his devotions” (see *Likutey Moharan* II, 86). Seeing Reb Noson stunned by the suggestion that he lacked faith, the Rebbe added, “Even if you have faith...you don’t have faith in yourself.” Although Reb Noson had begun composing his own Torah insights (*Likutey Halakhot*) a few years earlier at Rebbe Nachman’s behest, he was still bothered by lingering doubts about his abilities. Realizing that Reb Noson needed additional encouragement in this matter, the Rebbe included the subject of faith in one’s original Torah insights in his Rosh HaShanah lesson (*Parparaot LeChokhmah*).

129. **this produces a book on high...a book was written.** The verses in the Book of Malachi preceding the one cited in our lesson relate the blasphemous accusations made by the wicked Israelites. These faithless individuals claimed that, since the deeds of mankind are of little consequence to God, it was pointless to worship Him, and that in any case such devotions earned one no reward (*Rashi* and *Metzudat David*, *loc. cit.*). “At that time, the God-fearing spoke to one another...”—those with faith in God gathered to discuss and repudiate these blasphemous claims. In our context, Rebbe Nachman relates Malakhi’s words to the book of responsa “written” on high. Not every Torah insight is recorded in a book in this world. Even

שֵׁישׁ אֵיזָה דִּין וְצִמְצוּם, נִמְתָּק עַל-יְדֵי-זֶה, עַל-יְדֵי תִקּוּן אֲמוּנָת
חֲכָמִים, שֶׁעַל-יְדֵי-זֶה נִתְרַבֵּין הַסְּפָרִים שֶׁל הַתּוֹרָה הַקְּדוּשָׁה.
כִּי כָל הַמִּתְקוֹת שֶׁל כָּל הַצִּמְצוּמִים וְהַדִּינִים, הוּא עַל-יְדֵי הַשֶּׁכֶּל,
כִּי כָלם בְּמַחֲשָׁבָה אֶתְבָּרִירוּ. שֶׁהַשֶּׁכֶּל הוּא שְׂרֵשׁ הַדִּינִים, וְשֵׁם
נִמְתָּקִים הַדִּינִים. כִּי אֵין הַדִּין נִמְתָּק אֶלָּא בְּשִׂרְשׁוֹ. וְכָל דִּין
וְצִמְצוּם צָרִיךְ שִׁיחֶיהָ נִמְתָּק בַּשֶּׁכֶּל הַשִּׁיךְ לוֹ, שֶׁשֵּׁם שְׂרֵשׁוֹ.

133. **rectification of faith...books of the holy Torah proliferate.** Earlier (§5), Rebbe Nachman explained that dispute and conflict cause a person to repent for blemishing his faith in the sages and tzaddikim. His *teshuvah* is the aspect of writing a book of responsa (*teshuvot*)—i.e., a renewed appreciation for “the making of many books.” This refers to the proliferation of books of the Oral Law, including all the teachings of the Torah sages down through the ages. In this section Rebbe Nachman will show that it is this particular consequence of *emunat chakhamim*—i.e., the proliferation of Torah—that mitigates all *dinim* and brings *mishpat* to light.

134. **All mitigation...they are all purified in the mind.** The Kabbalah teaches that rectification of the fallen sparks of holiness, i.e., purifying them of the *kelipot*, takes place at the spiritual level known as Mind—*Chokhmah* of the highest Divine persona (*Zohar*, *loc. cit.* and *Matok Midvash* there; see also *Pri Etz Chaim*, *Keriat Sefer Torah* 1, p.304). In our physical world, this is paralleled by the process in the human mind that employs intellect and reason to identify the good and separate it from that which is evil. Rebbe Nachman cites this proof-text, which associates the mind with eliminating the *kelipot* (forces of evil), as the first step in establishing the connection between the intellect and mitigating *tzimtzumim* (constrictions) and *dinim* (severe judgments).

135. **the intellect is the root of the severe judgments.** As explained above (§1 and n.8), *mishpat* is both the capacity to exercise judgment so as to reach clear decisions, and also the acumen to derive laws of upright conduct from one’s studies. Hence Rebbe Nachman’s earlier statement that “all *mishpat* stems from the mind”—i.e., from the cognitive faculties of the intellect (see n.20). Here, where the focus is *dinim*—the manifestation of *mishpat* in its negative form—the Rebbe similarly teaches that “the intellect is the root of the severe judgments”—i.e., all *din* stems from the intellect/mind. Thus, all the various evils discussed over the course of the lesson are examples of severe *mishpat*, and in one form or another have to do with the loss of intellect/wisdom.

136. **a severe judgment is mitigated only at its root.** This Kabbalistic principle appears in *Etz Chaim*, *Heikhal HaKetarim* 13:11, page 195. The benefit of mitigating a severe judgment specifically at its root is that, as a result, the looming misfortune and suffering are eliminated altogether rather than merely being delayed or diminished. Although elsewhere in *Likutey Moharan* (I, 41:2, nn.37-38; I, 49:7, n.145) Rebbe Nachman cites the *Zohar* that the *sefirah Binah* is the root of all severe judgments, that is from the perspective of the manifestation of *dinim* in this lower world. In the higher realm of pre-manifestation, the root of *dinim* is the *sefirah Chokhmah*. This is alluded to by both proofs the Rebbe cited: 1) “You made them all with *chokhmah*” (see §2 and n.47); and 2) the *Zohar*, that “they are all purified in the mind.”

137. **each severe judgment...mitigated by the intellect...its root.** As explained in note 130, the

judgments.¹³¹ Wherever there is some severe judgment and constriction, it is mitigated by rectification of faith in the sages,¹³² since through this books of the holy Torah proliferate.¹³³

All mitigation, of all the constrictions and severe judgments, is by means of the intellect, for “they are all purified in the mind” (cf. *Zohar* II, 254b).¹³⁴ That is, the intellect is the root of the severe judgments.¹³⁵ <All> severe judgments are mitigated there, since a severe judgment is mitigated only at its root.¹³⁶ Thus each severe judgment and constriction must be mitigated by the intellect that appertains to it, since that is its root.¹³⁷

131. **severe judgments.** In Hebrew, *dinim* (singular, *din*). The word *din*, like *mishpat*, means “justice,” “judgment” and “law” (e.g., *bet din* and *bet mishpat* both mean “a court of law”). However, in Kabbalah and Chassidic teaching the term *mishpat* is consistently used in a positive context, whereas *din* and *dinim* are associated primarily with the negative. This is illustrated in our lesson, where bringing “*mishpat* to light” indicates making justice manifest and the justness of one’s case or cause evident. In contrast, *dinim* signify harshness and punishment—*mishpat* when it is extreme—and thus has been translated here as “severe judgments.”

Fundamental to understanding the concept of *dinim* is the recognition that whatever exists or occurs in this world is of Divine origin. From great to small, there is no aspect of the creation that stands outside God’s domain; nothing happens unless He first wills it. This applies equally to the good and the bad. However, whereas the good results from the radiance of God’s Infinite Light shining into the world, the bad is said to be a byproduct of *haster panim*, God’s hiding His Light in response to the sins of man. Then, although the Light does not disappear entirely (for the world would then cease to exist), its intensity is greatly diminished. The *tzimtzumim*, which are meant to contract the Light’s radiance and make it accessible, instead become constrictions and blockages that all but obscure its glow. (This is like wearing sunglasses. As long as the sun is shining brightly, they filter its rays and enable one to see. If it suddenly turns cloudy, the sunglasses block out the diminished light, making it hard, if not impossible, to see.) With the Infinite Light hidden in the many *tzimtzumim*, the “darkened” world becomes subject to the forces of evil, the *kelipot* (see *Zohar* I, 68b). At such times, *dinim* (severe judgments), which are Heaven’s agents for exacting punishment for sin, are empowered to inflict misfortune and suffering upon the world and upon each person individually (see also above, n.8).

132. **severe judgment...mitigated by rectification of faith in the sages.** With this Rebbe Nachman returns to what he taught at the beginning of the lesson: “Through *emunat chakhamim* we can bring our *mishpat*—justice/judgment—to light.” From there the Rebbe went on to discuss a number of the terrible evils that befall the Jews when we lack this faith, including: 1) the inability to exercise *mishpat*; 2) the appointing of unworthy leaders; 3) exile; 4) a loss of *chokhmah*, and in particular the Mystery of Intercalation; and 5) an inability to obtain good advice. Each of these evils is a separate materialization of *dinim*, a result of God’s Light being obscured and hidden within *tzimtzumim*. Thus here the Rebbe teaches that through *emunat chakhamim* we can mitigate *dinim*, since, in essence, mitigating severe judgments is bringing our judgments/justice to light. See also above, note 21, where this is explained at greater length by the *Torat Natan* and the *Parparaot LeChokhmah*.

וְיֵשׁ לְכָל צִמְצוּם וְצִמְצוּם שֶׁכֵּל שְׁעַל יָדוֹ נִמְתָּק. אֲךָ יֵשׁ חֲכָמָה
עֲלָאָה, שֶׁכֵּל הַחֲכָמוֹת כְּלוּלִים שָׁם, וּמִקְבָּלִין מִשָּׁם, וְעַל כֵּן שָׁם
נִמְתָּקִים כָּל הַדִּינִים. כִּי בְּהַשְׁכָּלִיִּים פָּרְטִיִּים, אִי אֶפְשָׁר לְהַמְתִּיק
כִּי אִם בְּזֶה הַשְׁכָּל דִּיקָא הַשִּׁיךְ לְזֶה הַצִּמְצוּם, שֶׁהוּא שָׂרֵשׁ. אֲבָל
עַל-יָדֵי בְּחִינַת חֲכָמָה עֲלָאָה שֶׁכְּלוּל מִכָּלֶם, שָׁם נִמְתָּקִים כָּל
הַצִּמְצוּמִים, וְכָל הַדִּינִים כָּלֶם.

וְהַתּוֹרָה שֶׁהִיא יוֹצֵאת מִחֲכָמָה עֲלָאָה, כִּי 'אוֹרֵיתָא מִחֲכָמָה עֲלָאָה
נִפְקַת' (זוהר ח"ב סב, א). וְאֵין יְכוּלָה לְקַבֵּל מִחֲכָמָה עֲלָאָה, כִּי-אִם
בְּשִׁישׁ לָהּ שְׁלֵמוֹת. וּשְׁלֵמוֹת הַתּוֹרָה, הִיא עַל-יָדֵי תּוֹרָה שֶׁבַעַל
פֶּה. כִּי תּוֹרָה שֶׁבִּכְתָּב אֵין לָהּ שְׁלֵמוֹת, כִּי-אִם עַל-יָדֵי תּוֹרָה שֶׁבַעַל

is the encompassing root of all the separate, individual intellects, and so is the root in which all the separate *tzimtzumim* and *dinim* are collectively mitigated.

This corresponds to what Rebbe Nachman taught earlier (§3 and nn.74-77), that each of the heavenly spheres is animated and guided by its individual *sekhel* (intelligence), and that all these individual intelligences are encompassed in the *sekhel hakollel*, the all-encompassing intelligence.

139. this requires proliferation of the Torah. Rebbe Nachman begins his explanation of the Torah's role in mitigating *dinim* by establishing its connection to Upper Wisdom, and then to the Foundation Stone and the aspect of holy of holies—each of these being an aspect of the all-encompassing root in which all severe judgments are collectively mitigated.

140. Torah emerges from Upper Wisdom. We have seen that the root of each *tzimtzum* is an intellect, and that all the individual intellects are, in turn, rooted in Upper Intellect/Upper Wisdom. The Torah is comprised of separate letters, words, verses, chapters and sections. Each of these is a separate contraction of God's unfathomable Wisdom, a different individual intellect. For the Torah, too, as the *Zohar* teaches, is rooted in Upper Wisdom, from where it emerges in its various *tzimtzumim* so that man might understand and benefit from it (see also *Likutey Moharan* I, 56:3, n.38).

141. only when it is whole...through the Oral Law. Earlier we saw that without the elucidation of the Written Law that the Oral Law provides, a person's knowledge of Torah and his level of spiritual perfection remain incomplete (see n.7). The Torah must be whole—i.e., a person's knowledge of Torah must incorporate both Scripture and the teachings of the sages and *tzaddikim*—in order to receive from Upper Wisdom, since in the absence of a fitting receptacle or recipient, *chokhmah* too is absent. This is similar to what Rebbe Nachman taught above, in connection with conferring *semikhah* and authority on a rabbi (§2, and see n.56). When the rabbi is worthy, the hands of *semikhah* instill him with *chokhmah* from Upper Wisdom. As Reb Noson explains (see n.124), he receives a transmission of the Oral Law and the influx of wisdom needed to ensure the Law's proper application and observance. On the other hand, if the rabbi

Although for each constriction there is an intellect through which it is mitigated, there is an Upper Wisdom, in which all the [types of] wisdom are encompassed and from which they receive. Thus all severe judgments are mitigated there. With the individual intellects, mitigation is possible only through the intellect that specifically appertains to that constriction, since that is its root. But through the aspect of Upper Wisdom, since it comprises them all, all the constrictions and all severe judgments are mitigated there.¹³⁸

And [this requires proliferation of] the Torah,¹³⁹ which stems from Upper Wisdom, as in “Torah emerges from Upper Wisdom” (*Zohar* II, 62a).¹⁴⁰ But it can receive from Upper Wisdom only when it is whole. The Torah is made whole by means of the Oral Law, for the Written Law is made whole only through the Oral Law.¹⁴¹ Therefore,

Wisdom in the Light of *Ein Sof* is the root of all human wisdom and intellect. In its original state God’s Wisdom is beyond the grasp of the finite human mind. We can perceive it only by means of *tzimtzumim*, the contractions through which this Wisdom is broken down and “parceled out” as individual intellects. Rebbe Nachman has explained that each individual intellect is the root of a different *tzimtzum*. As such, each *tzimtzum* has a corresponding individual intellect through which it is mitigated when, instead of contracting the Infinite Light, the *tzimtzum* constricts the Light and the Wisdom that it radiates (as explained in n.131, “contractions” are positive and “constrictions” are negative).

This world provides numerous examples of God “parceling out” His Light as individual intellects. Earlier in our lesson Rebbe Nachman discussed the letters of the Hebrew alphabet (§2, n.48), explaining that each letter contains amazing wisdom as determined by the Wisdom of the Blessed One. The distinct shape of each letter represents a different embodiment of wisdom, a separate *tzimtzum* of the unfathomable Wisdom (cf. *Torat Natan* #28; *Biur HaLikutim* #4). Reb Noson supplies another example, teaching that the soul of each Jew is identified with his intellect (see n.79). Thus each person has specific *tzimtzumim* and *dinim* that relate to the root of his particular soul, and which he in particular must strive to mitigate by actualizing his specific individual intellect (*Torat Natan* #22). He adds that this actualization manifests primarily as the perfect counsel that a person obtains when he has faith in the sages and tzaddikim. As explained above (§4 and n.103), the origin of this advice is the intellect. Therefore, through such advice a person knows how to apply the appropriate individual intellect to mitigate the specific *tzimtzum* and *din* that are obscuring the Infinite Light and bringing him misfortune and suffering (*Torat Natan* #16).

138. **Upper Wisdom...all severe judgments are mitigated there.** Having taught that each severe judgment is mitigated specifically through its individual *sekhel*, Rebbe Nachman now introduces the concept of *Chokhmah I’laah* (Upper Wisdom), which he calls also *Sekhel I’laah* (Upper Intellect; see n.52, that the Rebbe interchanges *sekhel* and *chokhmah*). He shows that when a person connects to and receives from Upper Wisdom, he can transcend the constrictions of this world and so mitigate all severe judgments and decrees. This is because Upper Intellect

פֶּה. וְעַל-כֵּן עַל-יְדֵי הַסִּפְרִים הַנֵּל, שְׁנֵת־חֲדָשִׁים עַל-יְדֵי הַמַּחֲלָקֶת, בְּבַחֲיִנַּת: "וְסִפְרָא כְּתִבֵּי אִישׁ רִיבִי", בְּחִינַת: "עֲשׂוֹת סִפְרִים הַרְבֵּה אֵין קֶץ", עַל-יְדֵי-זֶה נִשְׁלָם הַתּוֹרָה.

וְאִזִּי, הַתּוֹרָה בְּבַחֲיִנַּת (שְׁמוֹת כד, יב): "לֹחֲוֹת הָאֶבֶן" שֶׁמִּקְבֶּלֶת הָאָרֶז מִבְּחִינַת אֶבֶן שְׁתִּיָּה. כִּי כָּל דָּבָר שֶׁבְּעוֹלָם, יֵשׁ לוֹ צִמְצוּם אַחֵר בְּכַמּוֹת וְאִיכוּת. וְכָל הַצִּמְצוּמִים שֶׁבְּעוֹלָם, כֻּלָּם נִרְשָׁמִים בְּאֶבֶן שְׁתִּיָּה, שֶׁמִּמֶּנּוּ הִשְׁתַּת הָעוֹלָם, וְכֻלָּם מְקַבְּלִים מִמֶּנּוּ. וְשֵׁם

As Rebbe Nachman will explain, when the Torah is whole, all its individual intellects receive from Upper Intellect, which illumines them and unites them as one. In contrast, the origin of conflict that creates enmity and strife is a lack of faith in the sages and tzaddikim (as explained in §5), which blemishes a person's intellect and prevents him from attaining proper wisdom.

Rebbe Nachman continues his explanation of why arousing an illumination of Upper Wisdom mitigates all *tzimtzumim* and severe judgments.

143. the Torah is in the aspect of the stone Tablets. God said to Moshe, "I will give you the stone Tablets, the Torah and the mitzvah, that I have written to instruct them." The Talmud explains that the Ten Commandments inscribed on the Tablets encapsulates the entire Torah, both the Written Law and the Oral Law (*Berakhot* 5a). Thus the Torah, when whole, corresponds to "the stone Tablets," as the Midrash states: There were *two* Tablets, one representing the Written Law, and the other, the Oral Law (*Midrash Tanchuma, Ekev* #10).

144. the Foundation Stone. The *Zohar* teaches: At Creation, God placed a stone in the center of where the universe was to be created and from it He fashioned everything in the world. This "original matter" came to be known as *Even SheTiyah* (אֶבֶן שְׁתִּיָּה), the Foundation Stone, from which the world was *huShTat* (הוֹשַׁת, drawn forth). From it the Tablets were hewn, and around it the Holy of Holies of the Temple in Jerusalem was built. It was also the stone on which Yaakov rested his head and which he consecrated to God (*Zohar* I, 231a-b). Thus Rebbe Nachman teaches that the stone Tablets, the Written and Oral Torah, receive illumination from the Foundation Stone, the root of all that exists in creation.

The Talmud teaches that in the time of the First Temple, the Yom Kippur incense offering was brought into the Holy of Holies and placed before the Ark. In the Second Temple the Ark was non-existent, and so the offering was placed on the *Even Shetiyah* (*Yoma* 53b). In the context of our lesson, Rebbe Nachman will show that, like Upper Wisdom, the *Even Shetiyah* is the all-encompassing root in which all *dinim* are mitigated. This was why the high priest would enter the Holy of Holies on Yom Kippur, to effect forgiveness for sin and the mitigation of all severe judgments (see *Torat Natan* #26). The *Biur HaLikutim* (#64) adds: Just as the high priest could approach the *Even Shetiyah* only on Yom Kippur, while fasting and abstaining from physical pleasure, approaching Upper Wisdom is only possible when a person purifies his body of the waste matter and foul vapors that ascend to the mind and pollute it (see §1).

145. recorded in the Foundation Stone...from which they all receive. As explained above (see n.130), in order to create a finite universe, the Infinite Light of *Ein Sof* had to undergo

by means of the aforementioned books that gain renewed meaning through dispute—in the aspect of “and let the one who argues with me write a book”; the aspect of “the making of many books is without limit”—the Torah is made whole.¹⁴²

Then, the Torah is in the aspect of “the stone Tablets” (Exodus 24:12),¹⁴³ which receive illumination from the aspect of the Foundation Stone.¹⁴⁴ Each thing in the world has a different contraction, in quantity or quality. And all the contractions in the world are recorded in the Foundation Stone, from which the world was founded and from which they all receive.¹⁴⁵ Thus all severe judgments are

is unworthy, that *chokhmah* departs. Without a transmission of the Oral Law, his Torah and spiritual perfection are incomplete, as he lacks the wholeness to receive from Upper Wisdom.

The *Biur HaLikutim* asks: Considering that certain transgressions of Halakhah can be attributed to the lack of clearly recorded rulings, why wasn't each halakhah, in all its facets and details, committed to writing when the Torah was first given? Why was the Oral Law originally meant to be passed down by the sages, from teacher to disciple throughout the generations, when oral transmission opens the way for the laws of Halakhah to be misunderstood or misinterpreted by unworthy rabbis? His answer is that, as we have seen, the wisdom embodied in the Torah is so exalted, only someone whose body and mind are pure of waste matter is able to plumb its great depths. This purification can be accomplished only when one has faith in the sages (see §1), when one values and studies their teachings of Oral Law. This is why certain aspects of oral teaching, including certain facets and details of Halakhah, were not committed to writing—so that those who study Torah and seek spiritual perfection would be obliged to seek the assistance of the tzaddikim and sages of each generation, and through them acquire the purity needed for comprehending the Torah's deepest mysteries (see *Biur HaLikutim* #57).

142. books that gain renewed meaning...the Torah is made whole. As summarized in note 132, by repenting a person brings about a proliferation of books of the Oral Law, including all the teachings of the Torah sages down through the ages. Together with the Written Law, this renewal of the Oral Law renders the Torah whole. Reb Noson adds that the primary works of Oral Law are the teachings revealed by the very great tzaddikim, who draw their insights directly from Upper Wisdom (*Torat Natan* #16).

The *Parparaot LeChokhmah* writes: Whenever there is a *machloket* (dispute) among the Sages of the Talmud concerning some aspect of the Oral Law, it is because each of these Sages possesses a different individual intellect. In formulating his opinion concerning a law, the Sage employs the wisdom he derives from *his* intellect. Each Sage therefore sees the matter differently and rules accordingly. Through these debates the corpus of Oral Law is expanded. This is illustrated in the Talmud, which relates that Reish Lakish asked twenty-four questions on each of Rabbi Yochanan's lectures, and Rabbi Yochanan responded with twenty-four solutions (*Bava Metzia* 84a). Thus through *machloket* the Torah is “made whole.” Even so, the Sages confined their disputes to their Torah studies; in their interpersonal relationships, peace and unity generally prevailed. This is because their sole objective was to make the Torah whole; to connect the Torah to Upper Intellect, in which everything is united and conflict does not exist.

הַמִּתְקַת כָּל הַדִּינִים, כִּי הוּא בְּחִינַת חֲכָמָה עֲלֵאָה, בְּחִינַת קֹדֶשׁ קֹדָשִׁים. כִּי הַשֹּׁכֵל נִקְרָא קֹדֶשׁ. וְכֻלָּם מִקְבָּלִים וְנִכְלָלִים בְּבְחִינַת קֹדֶשׁ קֹדָשִׁים, שֶׁהוּא בְּחִינַת חֲכָמָה עֲלֵאָה, שֶׁכָּלוּל מִכָּל. וּמִשָּׁם הַמִּתְקַת כָּל הַדִּינִים, בְּפִרְטוֹת וּבְכָלְיֹת.

כִּי גַם בְּשִׁמְמִיתִין הַדִּין בְּפִרְט, בְּאִיזָה שֶׁכָּל שֶׁל אִיזָה צִמְצוּם, צָרִיכִין גַּם כֵּן לְהַמְשִׁיךְ כַּח מַהֲשֶׁכֶּל הָעֲלִיּוֹן הַנ"ל, כְּדִי שְׂיִהְיֶה כַּח לִזְזָה הַשֹּׁכֵל הַפִּרְטִי לְהַמְתִּיק הַדִּין. וְכֵן בְּכָלְיֹת, לְהַמְתִּיק כָּל הַדִּינִים מֵאִיזָה צִמְצוּם שְׂיִהְיֶה, אִי אֶפְשָׁר לְהַמְתִּיק כִּי־אִם עַל־יְדֵי בְּחִינַת הַשֹּׁכֵל הָעֲלִיּוֹן, בְּחִינַת קֹדֶשׁ קֹדָשִׁים, בְּחִינַת אֲבֹן שְׂתִיָּה, כַּנ"ל.

and collectively. At the beginning of this section, the Rebbe introduced the distinction between an individual mitigation and a collective one: “each severe judgment and constriction must be mitigated by the intellect that appertains to it... But through the aspect of Upper Wisdom, since it comprises them all, all the constrictions and all severe judgments are mitigated there.” He then alluded to this distinction when speaking of intellect being called holy, and all the intellects being encompassed in the holy of holies.

150. individual severe judgment through whichever intellect.... As explained above (nn. 136-137), a *din* is mitigated only at its root, the individual intellect that appertains specifically to it.

151. must draw strength also from...Upper Intellect.... Although each severe judgment is rooted in a specific individual intellect through which it can be mitigated, each individual intellect is itself rooted in a higher wisdom, Upper Intellect (see n.52, that Rebbe Nachman uses Upper Wisdom and Upper Intellect interchangeably). Conceptually, each lesser intellect is a *tzimtzum* vis-a-vis the greater Intellect. That being the case, each individual intellect must itself be mitigated at its root. Thus, “even when we mitigate...through whichever intellect...we must draw strength also from the aforementioned Upper Intellect....”

152. to mitigate all severe judgments...as explained above. As we have seen, Upper Intellect/Foundation Stone/the aspect of holy of holies is the root of everything in creation—i.e., the all-encompassing root in which all *tzimtzumim* and *dinim* are collectively mitigated.

Reb Noson asks: Since Upper Intellect mitigates the *dinim* collectively, why should we ever use an individual intellect to mitigate a severe judgment? Would it not be better to connect to the all-encompassing root, as then whatever constrictions and severe judgments exist can be mitigated all at once? However, we need to remember that Upper Intellect is the Wisdom of God’s Infinite Light—unfathomable and inaccessible to the human intellect unless “downscaled” by means of *tzimtzumim*. A person therefore has no choice but to mitigate the specific *tzimtzumim* and *dinim* that relate to the root of his soul, and to do so by actualizing the specific individual intellect that is his to utilize. In any case, as we have just seen, this individual intellect derives its strength to mitigate severe judgments directly from the exalted Wisdom of Upper Intellect (*Torat Natan* #26).

mitigated there, because it is the aspect of Upper Wisdom,¹⁴⁶ the aspect of holy of holies. For the intellect is called holy,¹⁴⁷ and all [the individual intellects] receive from and are encompassed in the aspect of holy of holies—the aspect of Upper Wisdom, which comprises them all.¹⁴⁸ Thus the mitigation of all severe judgments, individually and collectively, is from there.¹⁴⁹

For even when we mitigate an individual severe judgment through whichever intellect of whichever constriction,¹⁵⁰ we must draw strength also from the aforementioned Upper Intellect, in order for this individual intellect to have the strength to mitigate severe judgment.¹⁵¹ The same is true collectively. It is impossible to mitigate all severe judgments [through the intellect of] any constriction, no matter which it is; it can be done only through the aspect of Upper Intellect/holy of holies/Foundation Stone, as explained above.¹⁵²

contraction, *tzimtzum*. Similarly, all the different corporeal forms in creation emerged from the Foundation Stone through contractions of this original matter. Rebbe Nachman teaches here that each of these *tzimtzumim* is recorded in the Foundation Stone, which to this day continues to be the foundation of all created things and the source “from which they all receive” existence.

146. it is the aspect of Upper Wisdom. The Foundation Stone, being the original matter from which everything was created, corresponds to Upper Wisdom, of which Scripture states: “You made them all with wisdom” (see n.47). Moreover, since all *tzimtzumim* are encompassed in the Foundation Stone, this Stone, like Upper Wisdom, is the root in which all *dinim* are mitigated.

147. For the intellect is called holy. Having established that all severe judgments are mitigated in the Foundation Stone, as they are in Upper Wisdom, Rebbe Nachman adds that this corresponds to a higher holiness, the aspect of holy of holies. To prove that this is the case, the Rebbe begins by showing that the Hebrew word *kodesh* (holy) denotes intellect/wisdom. This is as the *Zohar* (II, 121b) teaches: *Kodesh* corresponds to *reishit* (first), as in (Jeremiah 2:3), “Israel is *kodesh* to God, the *reishit* of His produce.” And *reishit* is wisdom, as in (Psalms 111:10), “*Reishit chokhmah* (The first is wisdom)...” (see also *Zohar* III, 61a).

148. holy of holies...Upper Wisdom, which comprises them all. After associating intellect/wisdom with *kodesh* (holy), Rebbe Nachman teaches that all the individual intellects “are encompassed in the aspect of *kodshei kodoshim* (holy of holies)” —just as he earlier taught that all these intellects are encompassed in Upper Wisdom (see above and n.138).

149. the mitigation...individually and collectively, is from there. “From there” refers to Upper Wisdom/the Foundation Stone, the aspect of holy of holies. Since this is the encompassing root of all the individual intellects/elements of holiness, severe judgments are collectively mitigated there.

Before clarifying how all this relates to the Torah’s role in mitigating *dinim*, Rebbe Nachman adds a final point about the intellect’s role in mitigating severe judgments, individually

וּכְשֶׁהַתּוֹרָה יֵשׁ לָהּ שְׁלֵמוֹת עַל-יְדֵי הַסְפָּרִים כַּנ"ל, אֲזִי מְקַבֵּלָהּ
מִחֲכָמָה עֲלָאָה, בְּבַחֲיִנַת לִוְחוֹת הָאֶבֶן, בְּחִינַת אֶבֶן שְׁתִּיָּה. וְאֲזִי
מִשְׁפַּעַת בְּכָל הַחֲכָמוֹת, וְנִמְתָּקִים כָּל הַדִּינִים. בְּבַחֲיִנַת (תהלים כ,
ג): "יִשְׁלַח עֲזָרְךָ מִקֹּדֶשׁ", שְׁעָקֵר הָעֶזֶר וְהִישׁוּעָה, שֶׁהוּא בְּחִינַת
הַמְתָּקַת הַדִּינִים, הוּא מִקֹּדֶשׁ, הֵינּוּ עַל-יְדֵי הַשֶּׁכֶל שֶׁנִּקְרָא קֹדֶשׁ
כְּדוּעָה.

וְזֶה אוֹתִיּוֹת שְׁתִּיָּה, רָאשֵׁי-תִבּוֹת הֵן תּוֹי שְׂדֵי יַעֲנִנִי. (לְשׁוֹן הַמִּקְרָא
אִיּוֹב לֹא: "הֵן תּוֹי שְׂדֵי יַעֲנִנִי וְסֹפֵר כְּתָב אִישׁ רִיבִי").

intellect. By studying Torah and performing mitzvot a person connects his own *tzimtzum* and individual intellect with those of the Torah. When the Torah is made whole and so ascends to Upper Wisdom, it brings all the individual intellects associated with it into Upper Intellect, all the *tzimtzumim* into the Foundation Stone. Thus through the Torah all the individual intellects receive *sekhel* from the all-encompassing root, the *sekhel hakollel*, and by means of this influx all *tzimtzumim* and *dinim* are collectively mitigated (see *Torat Natan* #26).

Reb Noson adds: From Rebbe Nachman's teaching we learn that "encompassing" is the key element in attaining Upper Wisdom. The Kabbalah teaches that each Jewish soul corresponds to a letter in the Torah (*Zohar Chadash, Shir HaShirim* 91a; see also *Likutey Moharan* I, 14:3, nn.17-18). When these souls are united and encompassed in the aspect of the Foundation Stone, the Torah is whole. It ascends to receive from Upper Wisdom and then illumines all the individual intellects with an influx of *sekhel*. This relates to section 9 below, where the Rebbe speaks of "encompassing" as being the qualities of love and unity that mitigate *dinim* and enable the tzaddik to reveal the deepest mysteries of the Torah (*Torat Natan* #24).

156. **He will send your help from the Holy.** The psalmist speaks of God providing salvation from His dwelling place, the Holy Temple.

157. **mitigating severe judgments...intellect...holy, as is known.** Rebbe Nachman reads the verse as: **He will send your help** — The salvation one has when severe judgments are mitigated, comes **from the Holy** — the intellect, which is called holy. That is, when a person's individual intellect receives an influx of wisdom from Upper Wisdom, *sekhel* from *sekhel hakollel*, and the aspect of holy from holy of holies, he is able to mitigate *dinim* and attain salvation.

158. **Here is my record! Let the Almighty....** Iyov requests that their dispute be recorded for posterity, since he is certain that his *mishpat* will be brought to light. This was discussed above, in section 5 (and n.124), where Rebbe Nachman explained the second part of this verse—"and let the one who argues with me write a book"—as alluding to dispute and the proliferation of holy books of Torah.

159. **letters of SheTiYaH are an acronym of....** The first letters of *Hain Tavi Shadai Yaanaini* (הֵן תּוֹי שְׂדֵי יַעֲנִנִי) spell the word *SheTiYaH* (שְׁתִּיָּה), connoting the *Even Shetiyah* (Foundation Stone). Rebbe Nachman will show how Iyov's words allude to mitigating all severe judgments collectively by means of the Torah being made whole through the renewal of its holy books.

And when the Torah is made whole by the aforementioned books,¹⁵³ it receives from Upper Wisdom, in the aspect of the stone Tablets [receiving from] the aspect of the Foundation Stone.¹⁵⁴ It then sends an influx into all the [types of] wisdom, and all severe judgments are mitigated,¹⁵⁵ in the aspect of “He will send your help from the Holy” (Psalms 20:3).¹⁵⁶ That is, the main help and salvation, which is the aspect of mitigating severe judgments, is from “the Holy”—i.e., by means of the intellect, which is called holy, as is known.¹⁵⁷

{“Here is my record! Let the Almighty answer for me; and let the one who argues with me write a book” (Job 31:35).¹⁵⁸}

Hence the letters of *SheTiYaH* are an acronym of “*Hain Tavi Shadai Yaanaini* (Here is my record! Let the Almighty answer for me).”¹⁵⁹

Rebbe Nachman next concludes his explanation of why the Torah, when made whole, brings about a mitigation of all severe judgments.

153. made whole by the aforementioned books. As Rebbe Nachman explained above (§5, and see nn.117-124), when a person repents, the books of Oral Law that he previously considered meaningless gain renewed meaning and return to being important to him. This completes the Oral Law, by means of which the Torah—i.e., a person’s knowledge of Torah—is made whole, since it incorporates both Scripture and the teachings of the sages and tzaddikim (see nn.141-142; see also §2, nn.56).

154. it receives from Upper Wisdom...the stone Tablets...Foundation Stone. Once made whole by the proliferation of holy books of the Oral Law, the Torah ascends to its source, Upper Wisdom, and becomes encompassed there. Upper Wisdom, as we have seen, corresponds to the Foundation Stone/holy of holies. As the Torah is a *tzimtzum* of Upper Wisdom (see n.140), the stone Tablets were a *tzimtzum* of the Foundation Stone (see n.144). The Torah’s receiving from the all-encompassing Upper Wisdom is therefore the same aspect as the stone Tablets receiving from the all-encompassing Foundation Stone.

155. sends an influx into all the types of wisdom...severe judgments are mitigated. Upper Wisdom (*Chokhmah I’laah*), which is Upper Intellect (*Sekhel I’laah*), is synonymous with the all-encompassing intelligence (*sekhel hakollel*; see nn.52, 138, and n.164 below). Thus, Rebbe Nachman teaches here that when the Torah is made whole and becomes encompassed in Upper Wisdom/all-encompassing intelligence, it sends an influx of *sekhel* (intellect/intelligence), which is called holy, into all the different types of wisdom and individual intellects. In this way, the Torah facilitates a collective mitigation from the all-encompassing root—all *tzimtzumim* and all *dinim* are mitigated as one.

Another way of seeing the Torah’s role in mitigating *dinim* is as a bridge for linking man’s personal intellect with Upper Intellect, the all-encompassing intelligence. As explained above, in note 140, the Torah is comprised of separate letters, words, verses, chapters and sections, each of these being a separate *tzimtzum* of Upper Wisdom and a different individual

'הָן תְּוִי שְׂדֵי' – הֵינּוּ בְּחִינַת הָרְשִׁימוֹת שֶׁל כָּל הַצְמָצוּמִים, נִמְתָּקִין
עַל-יְדֵי שְׂבָאִים בְּתוֹךְ שְׂתִיָּה, בְּחִינַת אָבֹן שְׂתִיָּה הַנִּ"ל. וְזֶה:
'יַעֲנֵנִי' – בְּחִינַת הַהִמָּתָקָה, בְּבְחִינַת: "יִשְׁלַח עֶזְרָךְ מִקֹּדֶשׁ"
כַּנִּ"ל. וְזֶה:

"הָן תְּוִי שְׂדֵי יַעֲנֵנִי וְסִפֵּר כָּתֹב אִישׁ רִיבִי" – שְׁעַל-יְדֵי וְסִפֵּר כָּתֹב
כַּנִּ"ל, הֵינּוּ רַבּוֹי הַסִּפָּרִים שֶׁנַּעֲשִׂין עַל-יְדֵי הַמַּחְלָקֶת כַּנִּ"ל, שְׂאֵז
יֵשׁ לְהַתּוֹרָה שְׁלֵמוֹת, וּמִקְבָּלֶת מְשָׁכֵל הַכּוֹלֵל, מִחֻכְמָה עֲלֵאָה,
שֶׁהִיא בְּחִינַת אָבֹן שְׂתִיָּה כַּנִּ"ל, עַל-יְדֵי-זֶה 'הָן תְּוִי שְׂדֵי יַעֲנֵנִי',
בְּחִינַת הַהִמָּתָקָה, עַל-יְדֵי בְּחִינַת לִוְחוֹת הָאָבֹן, שֶׁמִּקְבָּלִין מֵאָבֹן
שְׂתִיָּה כַּנִּ"ל.

165. **as explained above.** The verse thus translates as follows: Hain tavi Shadai — In order for the recorded contractions of the individual intellects to **answer for me** — i.e., be mitigated, **the one who argues with me** — dispute must bring to repentance and **write a book** — cause the holy books of Torah to gain renewed meaning. Through this the Torah is made whole and ascends to Upper Intellect, the Foundation Stone, in which all *tzimtzumim* and *dinim* are mitigated.

Reb Noson connects this with earlier elements of the lesson. He writes: When *dinim* are mitigated through an influx of intellect, *chokhmah* illuminates our writings. The air is then purified and the lands in which the Jewish people reside become an aspect of the Land of Israel (§2). As a result, very lofty souls, those capable of comprehending the deepest mysteries of the Torah, are born into the world. This is the all-encompassing intelligence, which directs all the intelligences/angels and the astrological influences of the heavenly spheres (§3). These are but some of the benefits engendered by rectifying one's blemished faith in the sages and tzaddikim (*Torat Natan* #28).

In review: Through faith in the sages and tzaddikim we bring our *mishpat* to light. Conversely, a person who repudiates this faith is unable to derive true judgment and laws of conduct from his studies, and so is never clear about the path he is meant to follow (§1). The mind's pollution and the inability to exercise *mishpat* result in our conferring authority on unworthy rabbis and leaders. This, in turn, causes our writings to lose their authority, and it leads to the Jews being banished from the places and lands in which they have settled (§2). Exile causes us to lose the wisdom that makes us unique in the eyes of the nations—i.e., the Mystery of Intercalation (§3). Because of the pollution generated by a lack of faith, the heart can never obtain perfect counsel and we find ourselves in a state of perpetual uncertainty and doubt (§4). Blemished faith is rectified by *machloket*, the Waters of Conflict, which cleanse by causing a person to repent. The books of Torah containing the teachings of the sages and tzaddikim then acquire renewed value and importance in the eyes of those who previously ridiculed them (§5). This

Hain Tavi Shadai [Yaanaini] — This is the aspect of all the recorded constrictions being mitigated by means of their entering *SheTiYaH*, the aspect of the aforementioned Foundation Stone.¹⁶⁰ And this is:

answer for me — The aspect of mitigation, in the aspect of “He will send your help from the Holy,” as explained above.¹⁶¹ And this is:

Here is my record! Let the Almighty answer for me; and let the one who argues with me write a book — “Write a book” alludes to the proliferation of books that comes about through dispute,¹⁶² for then the Torah is whole¹⁶³ and receives from the all-encompassing intelligence, from Upper Wisdom, which is the aspect of the Foundation Stone, as explained above.¹⁶⁴ This leads to “*Hain Tavi Shadai Yaanaini*”—the aspect of mitigation by means of the aspect of the stone Tablets that receive from the Foundation Stone, as explained above.¹⁶⁵

160. **Tavi Shadai...recorded constrictions....** The word *tavi* means “my mark” or “my record,” and so connotes the mark and record of the *tzimtzumim* in the Foundation Stone (see above and n.145). The Holy Name *Shadai* (Almighty) signifies limit and *tzimtzum*, as Rebbe Nachman teaches elsewhere: The Name *ShaDaL* (שדל) is a combination of the words *yeSh Dal* (יש דל), “there is enough” (*Likutey Moharan* I, 17:6 citing *Rashi* on Genesis 17:1). In the context of our lesson, this connotes *tzimtzum*—limiting Upper Wisdom, “downscaling” and contracting it into individual intellects, so as to make it perceptible to the human mind (n.130).

Thus, “*Hain Tavi Shadai Yaanaini*”—i.e., *SheTiYaH*—alludes to the contractions recorded in the Foundation Stone, i.e., *Even Shetiyah* in which they are collectively mitigated.

161. **answer for me....** In our context, *Iyov*’s request that “the Almighty answer for me” connotes a request for salvation—i.e., that God mitigate *dinim*, and so relieve him of the misfortune and suffering that they bring. As explained above, this salvation/“answer” comes “from the Holy”—i.e., when a person’s individual intellect receives an influx from Upper Wisdom/holy of holies.

162. **the proliferation of books that comes about through dispute.** See note 153.

163. **Torah is whole.** As explained earlier in this section, and in notes 141-142.

164. **receives from the all-encompassing intelligence...the Foundation Stone, as explained above.** See also notes 143-144. Here Rebbe Nachman explicitly equates *sekhel hakollel* with Upper Wisdom and the Foundation Stone (see n.155). The *Biur HaLikutim* (#3) explains: Just as Upper Wisdom is the all-encompassing root in which all the types of wisdom and individual intellects are encompassed, the all-encompassing intelligence is the very lofty soul that encompasses all the individual intelligences and all their respective heavenly spheres (see §3 and nn.78-79).

ז. וְזֶהוּ בְּחִינַת מַה שֶּׁנּוֹסְעִין עַל רֹאשׁ-הַשָּׁנָה לְצַדִּיקִים. כִּי רֹאשׁ-הַשָּׁנָה הוּא יוֹמָא דְדִינָא שֶׁל כָּל הַשָּׁנָה, וְכָל אֶחָד וְאֶחָד בָּא עִם קִדְשָׁתוֹ וְצִמְצוּמָיו אֶל הַצַּדִּיק הַדּוֹר, שֶׁהוּא בְּחִינַת קִדְשֵׁי קִדְשִׁים, בְּחִינַת אֶבֶן שְׁתֵּיהֶם. בְּבְחִינַת (שְׁמוּאֵל א' ב, ח): "כִּי לֹה' מְצוּקֵי אֶרֶץ וַיֵּשֶׁת עֲלֵיהֶם תִּבְל". שֶׁהֵם הַצַּדִּיקִים שֶׁעֲלֵיהֶם נִשְׁתַּת הָעוֹלָם. וְעַל-יְדֵי זֶה נִמְתָּקִים כָּל הַדִּינִים, עַל-יְדֵי בְּחִינַת אֶבֶן שְׁתֵּיהֶם כֻּנָּה ל'.

intelligence, in which all the separate *tzimtzumim* and *dinim* are collectively mitigated (as above, §6 and n.138).

168. **comes with his holiness and constrictions....** Holiness here refers to a person's intellect, which, as we have seen, is called holy (§6, n.147). Each person has his individual intellect and a commensurate *tzimtzum*, which are a part of him and which he "brings along" when he comes to the tzaddik.

169. **He is the aspect of holy of holies/Foundation Stone.** Earlier Rebbe Nachman taught that in order for an individual intellect, which is the aspect of holy, to mitigate a severe judgment, it must draw strength from Upper Intellect, the aspect of holy of holies/Foundation Stone (see §6 and nn.148-151). This is paralleled in the person who travels to the tzaddik. He brings his intellect and *tzimtzum* to the tzaddik, to draw strength from him, since vis-à-vis his followers, the tzaddik of the generation is the lofty soul/all-encompassing intelligence/holy of holies/Foundation Stone in which all the world's *dinim* are mitigated.

170. **For the pillars of the earth...the tzaddikim, upon whom the earth was founded.** This verse from the Book of Samuel is part of Chanah's prayer. The mother of Shmuel thanks God for granting her a son and extols Him as the Supreme Being Who does as He pleases—"He raises the poor from the dust...apportioning to them a seat of honor. For the pillars of the earth are God's..." (*Metzudat David, loc. cit.*). The Talmud comments that "pillars of the earth" refers to the tzaddikim; they are the foundation upon which God established His world (*Yoma* 38b; *Sanhedrin* 26b). Rebbe Nachman brings this proof-text to show that, as "the pillars" upon whom the earth is founded, the tzaddikim correspond to the Foundation Stone, the root and foundation of all that exists in creation.

171. **all severe judgments are mitigated...as explained above.** As we have seen, the Foundation Stone, the root of all that exists, corresponds to Upper Intellect, the encompassing root of all the individual intellects, in which all *tzimtzumim* and *dinim* are collectively mitigated. Here, Rebbe Nachman adds that the tzaddikim possess these qualities as well. In the context of our lesson, Chanah's words: "He raises the poor from the dust" (see previous note), connote mitigating *dinim* and decrees. God relieves the misfortune and suffering of the poor in the merit of the tzaddikim, who are the pillars of justice and righteousness in the world (see §1, that *mishpat* is the center pillar). The tzaddikim are thus an aspect of the Foundation Stone in which all severe judgments are mitigated. Traveling to them for Rosh HaShanah is therefore a mitigation of all *dinim* at their root.

7. This is the reason people travel to the tzaddikim <of the generation> for Rosh HaShanah.¹⁶⁶ Rosh HaShanah is the Judgment Day of the entire year.¹⁶⁷ Each person comes with his holiness and constrictions to the tzaddik of the generation.¹⁶⁸ He is the aspect of holy of holies/ Foundation Stone,¹⁶⁹ in the aspect of “For the pillars of the earth are God’s; He has founded the world upon them” (1 Samuel 2:8). These are the tzaddikim, upon whom the earth was founded.¹⁷⁰ Thus by [traveling to the tzaddikim], all severe judgments are mitigated through the aspect of the Foundation Stone, as explained above.¹⁷¹

renewal makes the Torah whole, enabling it to fill the individual intellects with an influx from Upper Intellect (Upper Wisdom/Foundation Stone), and so mitigate all constrictions and severe judgments (§6).

166. people travel to the tzaddikim...for Rosh HaShanah. As mentioned above (n.1), Rebbe Nachman delivered this lesson on Rosh HaShanah, 1807. One of its major themes is spending Rosh HaShanah with a tzaddik. The Talmud teaches: In the time of the Holy Temple, the *shofar* was not blown when Rosh HaShanah fell on Shabbat except in the Temple, where the Sanhedrin (i.e., the sages and tzaddikim of the generation) convened. When the Temple was destroyed, Rabban Yochanan ben Zakkai instituted the practice of sounding the shofar wherever a rabbinical court was established, and people would travel there to fulfill the mitzvah (*Rosh HaShanah* 29b). Hence the custom of traveling to spend Rosh HaShanah with the sages and tzaddikim goes back nearly two thousand years. The Rebbe next explains why it is so important that his followers spend the holiday with him.

The *Parparaot LeChokhmah* writes: Even after Rebbe Nachman’s passing, his followers continued to travel to the Rebbe’s Rosh HaShanah *kibbutz* (gathering) each year. This practice persists to this day, with many thousands of people from all over the world gathering in the city of Uman, Ukraine, where Rebbe Nachman is buried, to spend Rosh HaShanah together with the Rebbe. This pilgrimage is discussed in greater detail in *Uman! Uman! Rosh HaShanah!* (Breslov Research Institute, 2001).

167. Judgment Day of the entire year. The Talmud teaches: From the words “...meireishit from the first) of the year to the year’s end” (Deuteronomy (11:12), we learn that each Rosh HaShanah a person is judged concerning all that will happen to him over the course of the year (*Rosh HaShanah* 8a). This is alluded to by the word *MeiReiShIT* (מרשית—written in this verse without an *aleph*), which has the same letters as *MeiTishRel* (מתשרי), which means “from Tishrei,” the first month of the year (*Torah Temimah* on Deuteronomy, *op. cit.*). In our context, Rosh HaShanah, as the Day of Judgment, contains mankind’s *mishpat* (judgment) for the entire year. It is thus a day that requires a very great mitigation to prevent *mishpat* from turning extreme and devolving into *dinim* (severe judgments). Such mitigation can come only from Upper Wisdom/Foundation Stone—i.e., through the soul that is the all-encompassing

וְזֶה בְּחִינַת אֲבְנֵי יַעֲקֹב, שֶׁנִּכְלְלוּ כֻלָּם בְּתוֹךְ אֶבֶן שְׁתִּיָּה (עיין בראשית רבה סח, יא; זוהר ח"א עב, ב; ח"א רלא, א). כִּי הַנִּפְשוֹת הֵם בְּחִינַת אֲבָנִים, כְּמוֹ שֶׁכָּתוּב (איכה ד, א): "תִּשְׁתַּפְּכֶנָּה אֲבְנֵי קִדְּשׁ". וְכָלֵם בָּאִים וְנִכְלָלִים בְּתוֹךְ הַצַּדִּיק הַדּוֹר, שֶׁהוּא בְּחִינַת אֶבֶן שְׁתִּיָּה, וְעַל-יְדֵי זֶה נִמְתָּקִים כָּל הַצְמָצוּמִים כַּנִּ"ל.

ח. וְעַל-יְדֵי-זֶה שֶׁנִּכְלָלִים יַחַד כָּל הַנִּפְשוֹת כַּנִּ"ל, עַל-יְדֵי-זֶה נַעֲשֶׂה שְׁמֻחָה, בְּבְחִינַת (משלי יג, ט): "אוֹר צַדִּיקִים יִשְׁמַח". כִּי הַנִּפְשׁ הוּא בְּחִינַת נֵר, בְּבְחִינַת (משלי כ, כז): "נֵר ה' נִשְׁמַת אָדָם". וְכִשְׁנִכְלָלִין

Around the same time that Rebbe Nachman taught this lesson, he taught *Likutey Moharan* I, 211, in which he speaks of the importance of traveling to the tzaddikim for Rosh HaShanah in order to purify the mind. In the context of our lesson, this corresponds to drawing an influx from Upper Intellect into the individual intellects, since "they are all purified in the mind" (see §6 and n.134).

In review: Through faith in the sages and tzaddikim we bring our *mishpat* to light. Conversely, a person who repudiates this faith is unable to derive true judgment and laws of conduct from his studies, and so is never clear about the path he is meant to follow (§1). The mind's pollution and the inability to exercise *mishpat* result in our conferring authority on unworthy rabbis and leaders. This, in turn, causes our writings to lose their authority, and it leads to the Jews being banished from the places and lands in which they have settled (§2). Exile causes us to lose the wisdom that makes us unique in the eyes of the nations—i.e., the Mystery of Intercalation (§3). Because of the pollution generated by a lack of faith, the heart can never obtain perfect counsel and we find ourselves in a state of perpetual uncertainty and doubt (§4). Blemished faith is rectified by *machloket*, the Waters of Conflict, which cleanse by causing a person to repent. The books of Torah containing the teachings of the sages and tzaddikim then acquire renewed value and importance in the eyes of those who previously ridiculed them (§5). This renewal makes the Torah whole, enabling it to fill the individual intellects with an influx from Upper Intellect/Foundation Stone, and so mitigate all constrictions and severe judgments (§6). Traveling to the tzaddikim for Rosh HaShanah, the Judgment Day of the entire year, is an especially propitious means for mitigating severe judgments. This is because each person represents an individual intellect, and the tzaddik is the lofty soul/all-encompassing intelligence/Upper Intellect in which all severe judgments are mitigated (§7).

176. all the souls joining together, joy is created. It is therefore vital that those traveling to the tzaddik should intend that there be love and unity between them. These qualities produce the harmony that causes their souls to merge, creating joy (see *Parparaot LeChokhmah*).

177. The light of the tzaddikim is joyous. To show that joining their souls creates joy, Rebbe Nachman brings two proof-texts from Proverbs. This first verse connects joy with light. We still need to see how they are connected to the soul.

178. The soul of man is the lamp of God. This second verse from Proverbs shows that light ("lamp") and the soul are synonymous. Therefore, these two verses connect the soul with joy.

This is likewise the aspect of Yaakov's stones, which were all encompassed in the Foundation Stone (*Zohar* I, 231a).¹⁷² For the souls are the aspect of stones, as it is written (Lamentations 4:1), "The holy stones have been strewn about."¹⁷³ They all come and are encompassed in the tzaddik of the generation, who is the aspect of the Foundation Stone.¹⁷⁴ And through this all the constrictions are mitigated, as explained above.¹⁷⁵

8. And by means of all the souls joining together, joy is created,¹⁷⁶ in the aspect of "The light of the tzaddikim is joyous" (Proverbs 13:9).¹⁷⁷ The soul is the aspect of a lamp, in the aspect of "The soul of man is the lamp of God" (ibid. 20:27).¹⁷⁸ When they join together, they become a

172. **Yaakov's stones, which were all encompassed in the Foundation Stone.** Scripture relates that when Yaakov left home, heading for the house of Lavan in the city of Charan, he came to the future site of the Holy Temple and spent the night there. "Taking some stones, he put them at his head and lay down there to sleep" (Genesis 28:11). Rashi on this verse cites the Talmudic teaching that the stones began to argue. "On me shall this tzaddik rest his head!" each one insisted. God took the quarreling stones and turned them into a single stone (*Chullin* 91b; see also *Yalkut Shimoni, Bereishit* #118). As cited above (n.144), the *Zohar* teaches that Yaakov's stone corresponds to the Foundation Stone. Rebbe Nachman next shows how this relates to the context of our lesson.

173. **holy stones...strewn about.** Yirmiyahu laments for the souls of the Jewish people. With the destruction of Jerusalem, these holy souls were strewn about like stones (*Rashi, loc. cit.*). This proof-text points to the connection between stones and souls.

174. **encompassed in the tzaddik...the Foundation Stone.** Just as the separate stones that Yaakov gathered merged into the single stone symbolic of the Foundation Stone, when the tzaddik's followers gather to be with him for Rosh HaShanah, their souls (stones) unite and become encompassed in the tzaddik. The *Parparaot LeChokhmah* suggests that the dispute between Yaakov's stones corresponds to the *machloket* that results from a lack of faith in the sages and tzaddikim. When this dispute brings a person to repent, so that he renews his regard for the books of Torah, the individual intellects receive an influx from Upper Intellect, which is the Foundation Stone. We have already seen (§3 and n.79, and Reb Noson's teaching cited in n.137) that intellect is associated with the soul. Thus, when the intellects/souls/stones become encompassed in the Foundation Stone/tzaddik/Yaakov, they become one and all *machloket* ceases (see also *Be'Ebey HaNachal*).

175. **all the constrictions are mitigated....** When the tzaddik's followers travel to be with him, bringing along their individual intellects and *tzimtzumim*, the tzaddik, as the all-encompassing intelligence/Foundation Stone in which all severe judgments are mitigated, is able to effect a mitigation of all their *dinim*. Since Rosh HaShanah is the Judgment Day of the entire year, it is the most propitious time for this, which is why people travel to spend Rosh HaShanah with the tzaddikim (*Parparaot LeChokhmah; Be'Ebey HaNachal*). The *Parparaot LeChokhmah* adds:

יַחַד נַעֲשֶׂה מֵהֶם אֹר, וְעַל־יְדֵי־זֶה נַעֲשֶׂה שְׂמִיחָה, בְּחִינַת: "אֹר צְדִיקִים יִשְׂמַח".

וְזֶה:

חֲדֵי רַבִּי שְׂמֵעוֹן וְאָמַר: "ה' שָׁמַעְתִּי שְׂמֵעַךְ יִרְאֵתִי", תַּמָּן יָאוֹת הָיָה לְמִדְּחַל – כִּי חֲבִיקוֹק אָמַר נְבוּאָה זֹה עַל רַבִּי עֲקִיבָא וְחֲבֵרָיו, שְׂמֵתוֹ עַל־יְדֵי שְׁלֹא הָיָה בָּהֶם אֲהֶבָה, כְּמוֹ שְׂאֵמְרוּ רַבּוֹתֵינוּ וְזִכְרוֹנָם לְבִרְכָּה (יבמות סב, ב). כִּי הֵם הָיוּ בְּחִינַת גְּבוּרוֹת וְצִמְצוּמִים, וְלֹא נִכְלְלוּ יַחַד, וְלֹא נִמְתְּקוּ. וְרַבִּי שְׂמֵעוֹן וְחֲבֵרָיו שֶׁהָיוּ הִתְקוֹן שְׁלֵהֶם, עַל־כֵּן אָמַר:

Pesachim: Sefirat HaOmer). In the context of our lesson, when Chabakkuk says "O God, I heard Your message; I feared," he is referring to the misfortune and suffering engendered by *dinim*. Commenting on this, Rebbe Shimon says: Since there was no love or respect between Rabbi Akiva's students, "it was right to fear" the consequences of these unmitigated severe judgments.

Maharsha explains that Rabbi Akiva's students did not honor their colleague's Torah (s.v. *mipnei*). In our context, this corresponds to a blemish of faith in the sages and tzaddikim. The ensuing loss of *chokhmah* (due to these unworthy rabbis) and absence of good counsel, as detailed in the lesson, corresponds to the loss of Torah (cf. nn.103, 118). This is as the Talmud states (*loc. cit.*): Following the plague that killed all of Rabbi Akiva's students the world was desolate, until he taught Torah to the sages of the South. "Desolate" alludes to the Jewish people being exiled to "a desolate wilderness" (§2 and n.64); "South," the Sages teach, connotes wisdom (cf. *Bava Batra* 25b). Rabbi Akiva was able to rectify the blemish of unworthy rabbis by teaching worthy students—Rabbi Meir, Rabbi Yehudah, Rabbi Yosi, Rabbi Shimon and Rabbi Elazar ben Shamua—through whom holy books of the Oral Law were renewed (see above, n.3).

182. the aspect of severities and constrictions...not joined together and were not mitigated.

The Ari teaches that the souls of Rabbi Akiva's students, like the soul of their teacher, were rooted in the aspect of *gevurot* (severities). However, the *gevurot* from which Rabbi Akiva's soul emerged were in their original state, still fixed in expanded consciousness (*mochin d'gadlut*), whereas the souls of his 24,000 students emerged from *gevurot* that had already devolved and manifested as constricted consciousness (*mochin d'katnut*). This, the Ari explains, was the reason they were judgmental and antagonistic toward one another. During the Omer-Count, the *kelipot* (forces of the Other Side) engendered by their hostility transformed the *gevurot* into outright *dinim*, and Rabbi Akiva's students were punished with death (*Pri Etz Chaim, Sefirat HaOmer*, chap. 7, p.529). In our context, the antagonism of Rabbi Akiva's students corresponds to an absence of the love that unites the tzaddik's followers. Without this love and unity, it is impossible to merge into the tzaddik, the Foundation Stone (§7). It was thus impossible for the *tzimtzumim* and *dinim* of Rabbi Akiva's students to be mitigated, and Heaven decreed that all 24,000 should die in a plague.

183. **Rabbi Shimon and his fellowship were their rectification.** As explained in note 4, Rabbi

light, and this produces joy, the aspect of “The light of the tzaddikim is joyous.”¹⁷⁹

9. And this is [the explanation of the opening passage]:¹⁸⁰

{Rabbi Shimon rejoiced and said: “O God, I heard Your message; I feared.” He said: In that situation it was right to fear, [whereas] we are linked through love.... Rabbi Shimon opened [the lesson] and said: “He who goes around gossiping reveals secrets, but a trustworthy spirit conceals the matter.” “He who goes around gossiping”... This is someone whose spirit is unsettled and who is untrustworthy...for his is not a settled spirit. But someone whose spirit is settled, of him it is written, “but a trustworthy spirit conceals the matter.”}

Rabbi Shimon rejoiced and said: O God, I heard Your message; I feared. There it would have been right to fear — Chabakkuk delivered this prophecy concerning Rabbi Akiva and his fellowship, who died because there was no love between them, as taught by our Sages, of blessed memory (*Yevamot* 62b).¹⁸¹ For they were the aspect of severities and constrictions, and so did not join together and were not mitigated.¹⁸² But Rabbi Shimon and his fellowship were their rectification.¹⁸³ He therefore said:

179. ...and this produces joy...The light of the tzaddikim is joyous. Thus when the tzaddik brings together the many souls/lamps of his followers, he creates a great light—i.e., great joy. The verse thus reads: “The light of the tzaddikim *creates joy*.” This is especially so on Rosh HaShanah, when the Foundation Stone/Upper Intellect illuminates all the individual intellects. The light generated then by the gathering of the tzaddik’s followers has the power to mitigate all severe judgments. This brings to great joy, since with the mitigation of *tzimtzumim* and *dinim*, suffering is alleviated and punishment overturned. True happiness and joy are all that remain.

Reb Noson adds: Whoever merits being with the tzaddik certainly has no reason to feel low-spirited or fearful on the Day of Judgment or on any other day. On the contrary, he should grow more and more joyous, as in (Proverbs 29:2), “With an increase of tzaddikim, the people rejoice.” This is because every person who joins the tzaddik’s following is himself an aspect of a tzaddik, as in (Isaiah 60:21), “Your nation are all tzaddikim” (*Torat Natan* #30; see above, §5 and n.128).

180. **And this is the explanation....** Rebbe Nachman returns to the opening passage, “Rabbi Shimon rejoiced...,” showing how it encapsulates the concepts discussed in his lesson. The explanation of this passage as it relates to revealing the hidden mysteries of the Torah can be found above, in notes 2-6. Here the focus of the notes will be on the passage as it relates to the Rebbe’s teaching.

181. **right to fear...there was no love between them....** As mentioned above, in note 3, Rebbe Nachman interprets Chabakkuk’s vision as referring to the deaths of Rabbi Akiva’s 24,000 students. The Talmud (*loc. cit.*) relates that Heaven punished Rabbi Akiva’s students because they did not act respectfully toward one another. All 24,000 died over the course of just thirty-three days, during the Omer-Count (between Pesach and Shavuot), a time when the prevalence of *gevurot* brings severe judgments as punishment for sin (see *Shnei Luchot HaBrit*,

אֲנִי בְּחִיבוּתָא תְּלִיא – הֵינוּ בְּחִינַת הָאֱהָבָה וְכָלְלוּת שְׁנִכְלָלִין יַחַד, וְעַל־יְדֵי זֶה הִתְמַתְּקָה וְהִתְקוֹן כֻּלָּם. וּמִזֶּה בָּא בְּחִינַת "חֲדֵי רַבִּי שְׂמֵעוֹן", הֵינוּ בְּחִינַת הַשְּׂמִיחָה, שְׂנַעֲשֶׂה עַל־יְדֵי הַכָּלְלוּת וְהָאֱהָבָה, בְּחִינַת: "אוֹר צְדִיקִים יִשְׁמַח".

פֶּתַח וְאָמַר: "הוֹלֵךְ רַכִּיל מִגִּלָּה סוֹד".

הוֹלֵךְ רַכִּיל וְכו' דְּלִית רוּחָה רִיחָא דִּקְיוּמָא – הֵינוּ רוּחַ חֲכָמָה. וְלֹא הוּא מְהִימָנָא – הֵינוּ אֱמוּנַת חֲכָמִים כֻּלָּם, כִּי עַל־יְדֵי שְׂאִין בּוֹ אֱמוּנַת חֲכָמִים, אֵין בּוֹ רוּחַ חֲכָמָה, כִּי נִדּוֹן בְּמוֹתָרוֹת כֻּלָּם. **מִגִּלָּה סוֹד – זֶה בְּחִינַת בְּטוּל כֶּתֶב יְדֵנּוּ, שְׂאִין מִקְבָּלִין אוֹר הַשֶּׁכֶל**

185. **love and the unity...mitigation...as explained above.** See above, section 7, that when the followers of the tzaddik (each with his individual *tzimtzum*) come together to be with the tzaddik (who is the lofty soul/all-encompassing intelligence), all severe judgments are collectively mitigated.

186. **Rabbi Shimon rejoiced...joy...is joyous.** As explained in section 8 (and n.179), the light that shines when the individual souls/lamps of the tzaddik's followers unite produces great joy—this being: "The light of the tzaddikim *creates joy*." Thus, when Rabbi Shimon and his fellowship came together to reveal the deepest teachings of Kabbalah, i.e., Upper Wisdom, "Rabbi Shimon rejoiced." Unlike the souls of Rabbi Akiva's students, Rabbi Shimon's soul and those of his disciples were rooted in *chasadim* ("benevolences"). Their love and unity had the power to dispel the *kelipot* and negate all *dinim*, replacing them, instead, with great light and joy.

187. **reveals secrets.** In the context of our lesson, "secrets" refers to the Mystery of Intercalation, which includes some of the deepest teachings of the Torah. These secrets are to be revealed only "for the eyes" of those who are unworthy, only so that they might know that such wisdom exists and is in the possession of the generation's greatest tzaddikim and sages (see §3 and nn.67-73).

188. **gossiping...not a settled spirit...not a spirit of wisdom.** As Rebbe Nachman taught above (§3), revealing the Torah's deepest mysteries so that they nevertheless remain a secret requires much *sekhel* (cleverness). In contrast, a person who "goes around gossiping" is someone who, because his *sekhel* (intellect) is unsettled and he lacks "a spirit of *chokhmah*," cannot be entrusted with the Torah's secrets.

189. **he has no faith in the sages....** The person whose spirit is unsettled and is lacking *chokhmah*, and so cannot be trusted with the Torah's secrets, is someone who lacks faith in the sages and tzaddikim, as Rebbe Nachman explains next.

190. **no faith...no spirit of wisdom...condemned to waste matter, as explained above.** As explained in section 1, a person who lacks *emunat chakhamim* is condemned to boil in excrement—i.e., his intellect is polluted with waste matter.

we are linked through love¹⁸⁴ — This is the aspect of love and the unity of joining together. It produces the mitigation and the rectification, as explained above.¹⁸⁵ And from this comes the aspect of “Rabbi Shimon rejoiced”—i.e., the aspect of joy, which comes about through unity and love, the aspect of “The light of the tzaddikim is joyous.”¹⁸⁶

He opened [the lesson] and said: He who goes around gossiping reveals secrets.¹⁸⁷

He who goes around gossiping...for his is not a settled spirit — That is, [not] a spirit of wisdom.¹⁸⁸

and who is untrustworthy — That is, <he has no> faith in the sages, as explained above.¹⁸⁹ Since he has no faith in the sages, he has no spirit of wisdom, because he has been condemned to waste matter, as explained above.¹⁹⁰

reveals secrets — is the aspect of nullifying the writing of our hand—we do not receive the light of the intellect from the hands

Shimon’s soul and the souls of his disciples were rooted in *chasadim* (“benevolences”), the forces of love and unity that dispel the *kelipot* and so negate severe judgments and punishment (*Shaar HaGilgulim* #26, p.71). Here, Rebbe Nachman explains that Rabbi Shimon and his fellowship are the personification of the love and unity that mitigate all *tzimtzumim* and severe judgments. They were thus the rectification for the 24,000 students of Rabbi Akiva, who died because there was no love or respect between them.

The Ari, too, encouraged his disciples to show love and respect for one another. He once said that if they could maintain harmony in their ranks, he would be able to invoke certain meditations that would transport them to Jerusalem and, together, they could bring the Mashiach. However, controversy soon beset their fellowship, and the opportunity was forever lost (*Shivchey HaAri*; see also *Torat Natan* #31).

184. **we are linked through love.** Throughout the *Zohar* we find references to the genuine love and unity that existed between Rabbi Shimon’s disciples (cf. *Zohar* I, 8b; *ibid.*, 127a; *Tikkuney Zohar*, Introduction, p.17a; *Idra Zutra*, p. 287b-288a).

In Aramaic, “we are linked through love” is *anan b’chavivuta talia*. Rebbe Nachman’s followers apply this to themselves. The letters of the word *ANaN* (אנן) stand for *Anshei Nachal Novea*—the followers of the flowing brook (אנשי נחל נובע). This flowing brook is Rebbe NaChMaN (נחמן), whose name is an acronym for the words in Proverbs (18:4), “*Nachal Novea Mekor Chokhmah*—a flowing brook, a source of wisdom” (נחל נובע מקור חכמה). Breslov Chassidim are thus fond of saying, “*ANaN b’chavivuta talia*—we, the followers of the flowing brook, are linked through love”; seeing in these words an allusion to the love and unity that binds them as followers of Rebbe Nachman (*Rabbi Binyamin Zev Cheshin*; see also *Parparaot LeChokhmah*).

מִיָּדֵי הַסְּמִיכָה כֵּן"ל, בְּבַחֲנֵינָת (אִיּוֹב לו, לב): "עַל כַּפֵּימָם כֶּסֶף אֹרֶךְ".
כִּי הָאוֹתִיּוֹת צָרִיכוֹת לְקַבֵּל אֹרֶךְ הַשֶּׁכֶל, מִיָּדֵי הַסְּמִיכָה כֵּן"ל.
וְעַל-יָדֵי פָגָם אֱמוּנַת חֲכָמִים, שֶׁהוּא בַּחֲנֵינָת 'הוֹלֵךְ רָכִיל', עַל-יָדֵי
זֶה 'מַגִּלָּה סוּד', שֶׁנִּתְגַּלָּה וְנִסְתַּלַּק אֹרֶךְ הַשֶּׁכֶל כֵּן"ל, וְעַל-יָדֵי-זֶה
– בְּסוּד עָמִי לֹא יִהְיוּ כֵּן"ל.

וְנֶאֱמַן רוּחַ מְכֻסָּה דְּבָר, דָּאִית בֵּה רוּחָא דְקִיּוּמָא – עַל-יָדֵי בַּחֲנֵינָת
אֱמוּנַת חֲכָמִים, עַל-יָדֵי-זֶה, מְכֻסָּה דְּבָר, בַּחֲנֵינָת 'עַל כַּפֵּימָם כֶּסֶף
אֹרֶךְ' כֵּן"ל:

196. **But a trustworthy spirit conceals the matter.** In contrast to those who “reveal secrets,” someone with *emunat chakhamim* is a “trustworthy spirit” who “conceals the matter”—he keeps the *chokhmah* transmitted by the hands concealed. Even when the Torah’s deepest secrets are revealed to him, it is as though they nevertheless remain hidden—known only to one who is worthy enough to “share in the mystery of My people.”

Thus, in our context, the passage from the *Zohar* translates as follows:

Rabbi Shimon rejoiced and said: O God, I heard Your message; I feared. He said: In that situation it was right to fear, [whereas] we are linked through love... — As a result of the unity and love shared by Rabbi Shimon’s followers, all severe judgments were mitigated in the all-encompassing intelligence. This caused Rabbi Shimon to rejoice.

He who goes around gossiping reveals secrets...This is someone whose spirit is unsettled and who is untrustworthy...for his is not a settled spirit — Because he lacks faith in the sages and tzaddikim, his spirit is unsettled, i.e., his mind is polluted with waste matter, so that he “goes around gossiping”—revealing the secrets that are meant to be concealed (§1 and n.5). As a result, *chokhmah* departs and the writing of our hand is weakened. We are exiled from the Land of Israel (§2) and the Mystery of Intercalation is taken from us (§3, see nn.95, 97). The waste matter that stems from a lack of *emunat chakhamim* prevents him from obtaining perfect counsel (§4), and his blemished intellect cannot receive the influx of light from Upper Intellect needed to mitigate the *dinim* afflicting him (§6).

But someone whose spirit is settled, of him it is written, but a trustworthy spirit conceals the matter — But the person who has faith in the sages and tzaddikim causes the letters to be illuminated with *chokhmah* and strengthens our writings (§1). In doing so, he reveals the sanctity of the Land of Israel (§2) and keeps the mysteries of the Torah with those who deserve to know them (§3). He is able to attain good counsel (§4), and through the value he attributes to the Torah’s teachings strengthens his faith in the sages. Alternatively, if he has erred in matters of faith, he repents and renews his appreciation for the books of Torah, thereby restoring and strengthening his faith (§5). This “renewing” of the holy books of Torah causes the individual intellects to be filled with an influx from Upper Intellect/Foundation Stone, which mitigates all constrictions and severe judgments (§6). This is paralleled in the followers of a tzaddik coming together with him, especially on Rosh HaShanah, the Day of Judgment. The love and unity they share arouse an illumination from the tzaddik to mitigate severe judgments (§7) and this brings to great joy (§8).

of ordination, as explained above,¹⁹¹ in the aspect of “He conceals the light with the palms” (Job 36:32).¹⁹² The letters must receive the intellect’s light from the hands of ordination, as explained above.¹⁹³ But due to a blemish of faith in the sages, which is the aspect of “goes around gossiping,” he “reveals secrets”—<the mystery, i.e.,> the intellect’s light, is revealed and departs.¹⁹⁴ And because of this, “They will not share in the mystery of My people,” as explained above.¹⁹⁵

But a trustworthy spirit conceals the matter, for his is a settled spirit—<That is,> by means of faith in the sages he “conceals the matter,”¹⁹⁶ the aspect of “He conceals the light with the palms,” as explained above.¹⁹⁷

191. **nullifying the writing of our hand...explained above.** See section 2, where Rebbe Nachman shows the connection between the hands of ordination (*semikhah*) and the writing of our hand. He explains that the hands represent the transmission of wisdom from the *sefirah Chokhmah* through the ordaining of worthy rabbis. By means of the intellect and wisdom that the hands receive from the Hand of God, they draw illumination and strength into the writing. But when a person gossips, when he is untrustworthy and lacks faith in the sages, this illumination of *chokhmah* disappears, weakening the writing of our hand.

192. **He conceals the light with the palms.** The commentators explain this as heaven’s light being obscured by the “palms”—i.e., clouds. In the context of our lesson, the verse alludes to the light of *chokhmah* (heavens/intellect; §3) transmitted through the hands (“palms”). The hands must conceal this light, transmitting it only to those who are worthy.

193. **The letters...as explained above.** See section 2 and notes 44-52, that “the letters make wise”—i.e., each letter is a different embodiment of the *chokhmah* transmitted by the hands. As explained in note 137, the distinct shape of each letter represents a separate *tzimtzum* of Upper Intellect, a separate individual intellect. By ordaining/appointing worthy leaders, the letters that form the writing of our hand are illuminated and strengthened through an influx of the intellect’s light.

194. **blemish of faith...reveals secrets—the mystery...is revealed and departs.** This is as explained above and in notes 188-191.

The word translated here as “reveals,” *meGaLeh*, has the same root letters as *GaLut*, exile. Although Rebbe Nachman never explicitly states this connection, he seems to be alluding here to what he taught above: When we are exiled from the air of the Land of Israel because our lack of faith in the sages causes us to confer authority on unworthy rabbis, the Mystery of Intercalation—the “secrets”—is taken from us (see §3 and nn.92-93).

195. **They will not share in the mystery of My people....** Rebbe Nachman cited these words of the prophet Yechezkel earlier, in section 3 (see also n.95), where he connected it with the Mystery of Intercalation. As explained there, the verse speaks also of exile. Thus the Rebbe brings it again here to teach that a person who “reveals/exiles secrets” causes the intellect’s light to depart. He is considered untrustworthy and so “will not share in the mystery of My people.”

§8). When Reb Noson passed away thirty-four years later, he had just completed a discourse of *Likutey Halakhot* based on this lesson. There he discusses the three tragedies that befell the Jewish people in the month of Tevet (see n.107). Shortly before his passing, Reb Noson remarked, “Nu! When Ezra the Scribe passes away, and atheism and heresy engulf the world, as we find today...I say to you, ‘[Even] one page of the Rebbe’s teachings is enough to rectify everything! Your job is to *print the Rebbe’s books!*’” This is because, even as they counter the evil that results from appointing unworthy leaders, these writings strengthen the writing of our hand and the authority of the Torah. And, the *Parparaot LeChokhmah* adds, the same applies to Reb Noson’s writings. His teachings, like those of Rebbe Nachman, bring people to repent and renew their appreciation for the holy books of Torah. We must therefore make every effort to spread the Rebbe’s and Reb Noson’s teachings, since through their works people’s faith in the sages and tzaddikim is strengthened and restored.

* *

ADDENDUM I

Astrology: In Traditional Jewish Teaching

In Genesis (1:14) we find: “God said, ‘There shall be lights in the expanse of the sky to separate day from night; they shall serve as signs [to define] the festivals, the days and the years.’” Commenting on the word “signs,” Rashi relates it to the eclipses, which are bad omens for those who transgress the Will of God (see also *Ramban, loc. cit.*). Another commentary, *Chizzkuni* (Rabbi Chezkiah ben Manoach, c. 1250), states that these lights are “signs” in the sky, through which those who know how to read them can predict the future. The Midrashic work, *Pirkey deRabbi Eliezer* (chap. 5), details the order in which each of the “lights in the expanse of the sky”—the seven spheres of the firmament and their corresponding star or planet: Sun, Venus, Mercury, Moon, Saturn, Jupiter and Mars—rules a different hour of the day. *Sefer Yetzirah* (see n.48), the primary and most ancient Jewish work on astronomy/astrology, details how the influences of the seven spheres align with those of the seven days of the week, the seven gates into the soul (orifices of the head), and the seven primary character traits; it also connects them with the twelve constellations, the twelve months of the Jewish calendar, and the twelve boundaries of the universe (which align with the twelve tribes of Israel).

The Talmud, too, provides numerous examples of the ways in which astrological phenomena directly affect us here on earth, both as they influence inanimate nature and people’s personal lives. The following are two instances of natural astrology: 1) God made changes in the alignment of the constellations to bring about the Flood (*Rosh HaShanah* 11b-12a); and 2) If the winter solstice occurs in Jupiter and the moon enters the phase of that new month in its own sign or under Jupiter, the season will be dry (*Eruvin* 56a). Two instances in the Talmud of personal astrology are: 1) Life, children and livelihood are not conditional on a person’s merit, but are bestowed commensurate with one’s “fortune,” or astrological reading (*Moed Katan* 28a); and 2) The Sages teach: Those born under the sign of Mercury will tend to be wise and radiant in appearance. Those born under the sign of Venus will tend to be wealthy and promiscuous. Those born under the sign of Mars will tend to be shedders of blood. Those born under the sign of Jupiter will tend toward righteousness and generosity. Those born under the sign of Saturn

197. **He conceals the light....** We have just seen that a person who has an unsettled spirit is considered untrustworthy. In preventing *chokhmah*/the intellect's light from illuminating the letters, he undermines the authority of the Torah, and the ensuing exile causes the Mystery of Intercalation to be lost to the Jewish people. But when a person possesses a spirit of wisdom, he is considered trustworthy. "He conceals the light with the palms"—i.e., he facilitates the intellect's light in illuminating our writings and strengthening the Torah's authority. As a result we remain in the "air of the Land of Israel" and keep the Mystery of Intercalation the exclusive possession of the Jewish people.

*

The *Parparaot LeChokhmah* points out that this lesson contains a number of central concepts in Breslov thought. The first of these is *emunat chakhamim*. In this teaching Rebbe Nachman emphasizes the great importance of strengthening one's faith, which then enables one to derive true advice from the writings of the sages and tzaddikim (§1). The Rebbe discusses also *semikhah*, granting authority to worthy disciples, and, conversely, the harm caused when authority is granted to unworthy leaders (§2). In the Rebbe's time, the appointment of unworthy rabbis resulted in Jewish communities being forced to incorporate secular studies, the teachings of the nations, into their educational curriculum. Over the generations, the study of speculative philosophy and similar branches of secular scholarship has undermined people's faith in God. It has weakened trust in Divine providence, as well as the Jewish people's devotion to the study of Torah and observance of mitzvot. In contrast, Rebbe Nachman's words regarding conferring authority on worthy students and rabbis are understood as his "ordination" of Reb Noson, appointing him to lead the Breslov Chassidim after the Rebbe's passing (see n.44).

Another important topic that this lesson addresses is *machloket*. Rebbe Nachman teaches that a person must know how to properly relate to dispute and controversy: rather than getting embroiled in *machloket*, one must use the opposition one encounters to motivate oneself to repent and to strengthen one's faith in the sages and tzaddikim (§5). One element of this *emunat chakhamim*, the Rebbe explains, is faith in one's own Torah insights. This last point, too, is understood as having been addressed particularly to Reb Noson (see n.128). Moreover, the Rebbe's teaching: "At present there are numerous books, and there will be numerous additional books in the future as well; the world has need of them all," was given concrete application later that year (5568; 1808), with the printing of *Likutey Moharan*. Prior to this, Rebbe Nachman had been very careful to conceal his writings from the public eye. Only his followers were privy to his lessons. But less than half a year after giving this Rosh HaShanah teaching, the Rebbe published the first volume of his collected lessons (see *Likutey Moharan*, vol. 1, Appendix E: Printing History).

Arguably the most fundamental of the Breslov teachings discussed in this lesson is the significance of traveling to be with Rebbe Nachman for Rosh HaShanah. From the Rebbe's words we learn that this is as essential today as it was when he was still alive (see n.166). The Rebbe passed away on the 18th of Tishrei, the fourth day of Sukkot, 5571 (1810). The *Hoshanah* prayer recited on that day was *Even Shetiyah* ("Foundation Stone"). Although greatly weakened by the tuberculosis that a few hours later would take his life, the Rebbe picked up his *lulav* and *etrog* and began reciting this prayer. His voice, both pleasing and firm, could be heard throughout the house. The message the words carried is as awesome as it is obvious: the Foundation Stone of which the lesson speaks is none other than the Rebbe himself. When those who come to his gravesite are bound with love and unity, their heartfelt prayers draw an influx from Upper Intellect/the Foundation Stone to mitigate all severe judgments and decrees (§7-

Since a person must be fully versed in intercalation and computing the months before he can be taught the Torah's mysteries, these astronomical calculations cannot themselves be the Torah's hidden teachings known as *Sod Ha-Ibur*. Rabbi Meir ibn Gabbai brings a further proof from the Talmudic teaching that one of the six oaths that God made Israel take was that they would not reveal the *Sod Ha-Ibur* to the idolatrous nations (*Ketuvot* 111a; see *Rashi* and *Tosafot* there). The fact that Israel was made to take an oath regarding this mystery certainly suggests that *Sod Ha-Ibur* refers to a far more esoteric teaching than the mathematical formulas for calculating the seasons and the constellations; that for all their complexity, the principles of astronomical calculation cannot be the hidden mysteries of Torah which the Jews are not to reveal to the nations (*Avodat HaKodesh* III:70).

Rather, the hidden mysteries that make up *Sod Ha-Ibur* are teachings that cannot be attained through the striving and investigation of the human mind, but must be received through instruction, when one is deemed worthy of being initiated into the tradition. We know that only the greatest sages of Israel were privy to *Sod Ha-Ibur* (see n.72). These lofty souls would focus on the mysteries of this wisdom whenever they gathered to proclaim the new moon or intercalate the year. Thus, many of their teachings regarding the Sanctification of the New Moon contain allusions to *Sod Ha-Ibur* and the astronomical principles for fixing the months—including certain elements of the mathematical principles for calculating the *molad* period—can be understood as external representations of the Mystery of Intercalation (see next paragraph). This is why before anyone was initiated into the secrets of *Sod Ha-Ibur*, he first had to master the calculation of the seasons and constellations and know how to intercalate the years and calibrate the months, since this knowledge is the outer garb for some of the Kabbalah's deepest mysteries of Creation.

One possible explanation of their connection appears in the writings of Rabbi Shlomo Elyashiv, author of *Leshem Shvo VeAchlamah*: There is a very deep reason for why the lunar year is eleven days shorter than the solar year, and why the Sages called the intercalation of the lunar and solar cycles—i.e., uniting the moon with the sun—*Sod Ha-Ibur*. From the Kabbalah we learn that the moon corresponds to the *sefirah Malkhut*. The Ari teaches that as a result of the Shattering of the Vessels at the time of Creation, *Malkhut* was rendered incomplete—countless sparks of its light fell from holiness and ever since are wanting rectification, *tikkun* (see also *Likutey Moharan* I, 54, n.81). These fallen sparks of holiness belong to eleven principal groupings in *Malkhut*, to which they are gradually restored through the deeds of mankind. Completion of this *tikkun* will only come in the End of Days. Until then, *Malkhut* lacks the full light of these eleven groupings, and this *sefirah's* counterpart in this world, the moon, lacks the eleven days it needs to fully “unite” with the sun.

Rabbi Elyashiv continues: The sparks of holiness that are rectified at any given time are precisely those that relate to that time—to that year, that month, that week, that day, and even to that precise moment. For a *tikkun* to be effected, the sparks are first raised from their fallen state and elevated into *Malkhut*. Metaphorically, the Kabbalah depicts this as *Malkhut* becoming pregnant with these sparks and, after rectifying them during a period of gestation, giving birth to them. This is the concept of *Sod Ha-Ibur*—literally, the Mystery of Impregnation—through which all the worlds in creation reach *tikkun* and perfection. The rectification of the sparks of all the moments in a day is completed through the daily prayers, which is when they become encompassed in the *tikkun* of that particular day. The rectification of the separate days of each week is completed on Shabbat, as it is then that they become encompassed in the general *tikkun* of that particular week. The rectification of the separate weeks of each month is completed at the month's end, as the new moon is about to appear; and the rectification of all the separate months of each year is completed at the year's end, at the moment of transition into the new

will tend toward inactivity, making plans but failing to fulfill them; or, alternatively, the plans others make against them tend to fail (*Shabbat* 156a).

In Halakhah, too, we find various laws relating to astrology. Of particular note are the following rulings, both of which appear in *Shulchan Arukh*, *Yoreh Deah*. Section 179:1 states that we do not consult stargazers or those who read horoscopes. This appears to be an outright prohibition of astrology. Yet the very next law, section 179:2, relates that the custom is to not begin a major endeavor on the second or the fourth day of the week, and to not get married in the part of the month that the moon is in wane. Commenting on the first of these customs, the *Turey Zahav* explains: Monday and Wednesday are inauspicious for new undertakings because the astrological forces dominant on these two days are for the most part negative. In his gloss to this law, Rabbi Moshe Isserles (ReMA) rules: One should not perform an action that he has already learned runs contrary to an astrological principle. Rather, the astrological knowledge that one has come by indirectly should be adhered to, lest one act irresponsibly and then be obliged to rely on Divine intervention for protection. However, Rema adds, one should not actively seek this knowledge, since the Torah advises: “Be wholehearted [in faith] with God your Lord” (Deuteronomy 18:13).

We can conclude from these teachings of the Bible, Midrash, Kabbalah, Talmud and Halakhah that Judaism’s general attitude toward the wisdom of astronomy/astrology, the one Rebbe Nachman follows here, is one of reserved endorsement: At the same time as we give credence to its teachings, we are cautious in regard to their application. The Torah teaches us to look to the wisdom of astronomy/astrology more for the insights it provides into one’s personality and the potentials, spiritual and physical, that each time period holds, than for predicting the future. In the “*Laws of Star Worshiping*,” Rambam states: A fortuneteller is someone who attempts to predict auspicious times, employing the principles of astrology and saying, “This day will be a good day,” or, “That day will be a bad day”...“That year” or “That month is a bad time to undertake such-and-such” (*Yad HaChazakah*, *Hilkhot Avodat Kochavim* 11:8). It is living our lives deterministically, based on predictions such as these, which the Torah forbids.

This approach is perhaps best illustrated by the ruling of the *Shulchan Arukh*, *Orach Chaim* 664:1. Regarding the ancient practice of reading the shadow cast by the light of the moon on the night of Hoshanah Rabba to foretell what the year holds in store for oneself or one’s family, the Halakhah states: We ought not pay attention to this practice lest we bring ourselves bad luck, and also because most people do not properly understand what this involves. It is better, therefore, to “be wholehearted [in faith] with God” and not seek to predict the future.

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ADDENDUM II

The Mystery of Intercalation

As proof that *Sod Ha-Ibur* (the Mystery of Intercalation) is not to be understood as the once guarded mathematical formulas for constructing the Jewish calendar, the Spanish-Turkish 16th century Kabbalist, Rabbi Meir ibn Gabbai, cites the Talmudic passage which teaches that there are five attributes a person must possess before he can be taught the hidden mysteries of the Torah. One of these five provisions is that he must be a *yoetz*, literally, someone who can advise and guide others (cf. above, nn.15, 35). The Sages explain that in this instance a *yoetz* is someone who knows how to intercalate the years and fix the months (*Chagigah* 13a-14a).

and undergoing renewal. Whatever happens in the creation, even the world's very existence itself, is therefore dependent on and dictated by the quality and quantity of the particular holy sparks being raised up and rectified at that moment. When the Sages of the Sanhedrin gathered to proclaim the Sanctification of the New Moon, their thoughts were focused on *Sod Ha-Ibur*—the cosmic Mystery of Intercalation/Impregnation, calculating which of the myriad sparks and souls and physical forms relating to that specific month and year were to be restored to holiness and receive their *tikkun*. Hence the words of *Pirkey deRabbi Eliezer* (chap. 8): Happy are those that were appointed to be there at that time. Of them Scripture says (Psalms 89:16): “They go in the light of Your countenance”—their ways are radiant with the light of the Holy Blessed One’s countenance (*Leshem Shvo VeAchlamah* II, 4:24:9).

year.... And with each renewal of the moon comes the raising up of the holy sparks related to that upcoming month; this is when their rectification and ascent into *Malkhut* begins, in the Mystery of Impregnation. Knowing precisely how many fallen sparks to raise into holiness each particular month of each year, and which of these sparks to raise on which day and even at which specific moment of the day—this was the *Sod Ha-Ibur* taught only to the chosen ordained Sages. Only those select few who had been invested with the authority to calculate the *molad* and intercalate the year—to unite the moon with the sun—were initiated into this hidden aspect of calculating the seasons and constellations.... For the sparks of holiness are the roots of all the souls born into the world, and also the roots of all that exists of the four forms of physical creation: mineral, vegetable, animal and human. They are in perpetual flux, constantly changing

ו שבת

"גדל" העצה ורב העלילה, אשר עיניך פקחות על כל דרכי בני אדם, ויודע ומבין מחשבותם וסודם, ומיד כל לוחציהם אתה גואלם ופודם.

רחם עלי למען שמך, ועזרני לעשות רצונך והושיעני מהרה. ותקנני בעצה טובה מלפניך, וחנני מאתך דעה בינה והשכל שאזכה לדעת לתת עצה לנפשי על כל דבר שבעולם, ותזכני לעצה שלמה תמיד. ולא אהיה מספק לעולם על שום דבר, ולא תתחלק עצתי לשתיים חס ושלום.

ותשפיע עלי "רוח חכמה ובינה רוח עצה וגבורה רוח דעת ויראת יי".

ותרחם עלי ותושיעני ותזכני לאמונת חכמים באמת כרצונך הטוב. ואזכה להאמין בכל החכמים האמתיים באמונה שלמה באמת ובלב שלם, ולא אסור מדבריהם ימין ושמאל.

ועל-ידי-זה תזכני למשפט דקדושה, שאזכה לשפט עצמי באמת. ותוציא משפטי לאור.

ואזכה ללמד תורתך הקדושה לשמה תמיד, ללמד וללמד לשמו ולעשות ולקיים את כל דברי תורתך באהבה.

ותאיר עיני בתורתך, ותתן לי חכמה ובינה ודעת דקדושה, להבין ולהשכיל מכל הלמודים שאזכה ללמד בכל ספרי תורתך הקדושה, להבין ולהוציא מכלם משפטי הנהגות ישרות באמת, ולא אטה ולא אסור מן האמת ימין ושמאל. רק אזכה לכון תמיד רצונך באמת, ולידע תמיד איך להתנהג בכל דבר על-ידי למודי התורה הקדושה.

אנא יי מלא רחמים, חומל דלים שומע אנקת אביונים, חוס וחמל עלינו למען שמך למען רחמיך הרבים, למען חסדיך העצומים, למען הצדיקים האמתיים.

6 SHEVAT

God, “great in counsel and mighty in deed, Your eyes gaze upon all the ways of human beings.” You know our secret thoughts and save us from the hands of those who would cause us distress.

In Your compassion and for the sake of Your Name, provide me with good counsel. Graciously grant me mindfulness, understanding and awareness so that I will provide myself with proper advice in every area of my life, and never suffer indecision.

Imbue me with “a spirit of wisdom and understanding, a spirit of counsel and might, a spirit of knowledge and the fear of HaShem.”

In accordance with Your desire, may I believe wholeheartedly in all the true sages and never turn aside from their words, right or left.

May I attain “holy judgment”—the ability to ascertain how to conduct myself.

Guide me to learn Your Torah for its own sake, to teach it and lovingly obey all its words.

Illumine my eyes with Your Torah. Give me the holy wisdom, understanding and awareness to derive from Your holy Torah the knowledge of how to act so that I will never stray from the truth. Instead, I will remain attuned to Your will and conduct myself in accordance with the Torah’s holy teachings.

Rectifying Faith in the Sages • HaShem, You have compassion on the poor. You hear the groans of the impoverished. Have pity on me for the sake of Your Name, for the sake of Your compassion, for the sake of Your love, and for the sake of the true Tzaddikim.

וְעִזְרָנוּ וְהוֹשִׁיעֵנוּ וְזַכֵּנוּ מִהֲרָה לְאַמוּנַת חַכְמִים בְּשִׁלְמוֹת בְּאַמֶּת.
וְתַעֲזָרְנוּ לְתַקֵּן פָּגַם אַמוּנַת חַכְמִים שֶׁפָּגַמְנוּ מִנְעוּרֵינוּ עַד הַיּוֹם
הַזֶּה.

וּתְטַהֲרָנוּ מִכָּל הַגְּלוּלִים וּמִכָּל הַטּוֹנֶפֶת הַנִּמְשָׁכִים וְעוֹלִים אֶל הַמּוֹחַ
חַס וְשָׁלוֹם עַל-יְדֵי פָּגַם אַמוּנַת חַכְמִים. כִּי בַּעֲוֹנוֹתֵינוּ הָרַבִּים
נִפְגַּם דַּעֲתָנוּ וְנִתְבַּלְּבַל מְאֹד עַל-יְדֵי פָּגַם אַמוּנַת חַכְמִים, אֲשֶׁר
עַל-יְדֵי-זֶה עוֹלִים בְּכָל עֵת עֲשׂוֹנִים סְרוּחִים אֶל הַמּוֹחַ, וּמִסְבִּין
אֶת דַּעֲתָנוּ, וּמַעֲקֵמִים וּמִבְלָבְלִים אֶת דַּעֲתָנוּ וּלְבָבָנוּ מְאֹד, סְבוּנוּ
גַּם סְבָבוֹנוּ, וַיִּמְרְרוּ אֶת חַיֵּינוּ מְאֹד בְּקִשּׁוֹת וּבִלְבוּלִים וּמַחֲשָׁבוֹת
זָרוֹת וְשֹׁעָעוֹן וְטֵרוּף הַדַּעַת וְעַקְמִימִיּוֹת הַלֵּב הַרְפָּה מְאֹד.

הַבִּיטָה בְּעֵינֵינוּ כִּי רַבּוּ מִכְאוּבֵינוּ וְצָרוֹת לְבָבָנוּ.

אֲבִינוּ מֶלֶךְ אֵל חַי וְקַיִם, רַחֵם עָלֵינוּ בְּרַחֲמֶיךָ הָרַבִּים, בְּרַחֲמֶיךָ
הָעֲצוּמִים, בְּרַחֲמֶיךָ הַגְּדוֹלִים, בְּרַחֲמֶיךָ הַטּוֹבִים, כִּי לֹא עַל
צְדָקוֹתֵינוּ אֲנִיחָנוּ מִפִּילִים תַּחֲנוּגֵינוּ לִפְנֶיךָ כִּי עַל רַחֲמֶיךָ הָרַבִּים.
רַחֲמֶיךָ רַבִּים יִי כִּמְשַׁפְּטֶיךָ חַיֵּינוּ.

וְטַהֵר רַעֲיוֹנָנוּ וּלְבָבָנוּ לַעֲבוֹדָתְךָ בְּאַמֶּת. וְתַגְרֹשׁ וְתַרְחֵק וּתְבַטֵּל
מִדַּעֲתָנוּ וּמִלְּבָבָנוּ כָּל מִינֵי בִלְבוּלִים רָעִים וְכָל מִינֵי מַחֲשָׁבוֹת רָעוֹת
שֶׁהִרְגָּלְנוּ בָּהֶם. וְנִזְכֶּה לְטַהֵר וּלְכַבֵּס וְלִרְחֹץ אֶת מוֹחָנוּ וּמַחֲשַׁבְתָּנוּ
וּלְבָבָנוּ מִכָּל מִינֵי טְנוּפוֹת וְלִכְלוּכִים וּמִכָּל הָעֲשָׂנוֹת סְרוּחִים
וְלֹא יַעֲלוּ וְלֹא יִבֹּאוּ עַל לְבָבָנוּ וְדַעֲתָנוּ כָּלֵל, וְנִזְכֶּה לְקַדֵּשׁ אֶת
מוֹחָנוּ וּמַחֲשַׁבְתָּנוּ וּלְבָבָנוּ מֵעַתָּה בְּקִדְשָׁהּ וּבְטַהֲרָה גְדוֹלָה, וְנִזְכֶּה
לְמַחֲשָׁבוֹת קְדוּשׁוֹת תָּמִיד בְּלִי שׁוּם בִּלְבוּל הַדַּעַת כָּלֵל.

וְתַרְחֵם עָלֵינוּ וְתוֹשִׁיעֵנוּ אֲבִינוּ שֶׁבְּשָׁמַיִם אֲדוֹן כָּל, אֲדוֹן
הַשָּׁלוֹם, מֶלֶךְ שֶׁהַשָּׁלוֹם שְׁלוֹ, וְתַמְשִׁיךְ עָלֵינוּ בְּרָכָה וְחַיִּים וְשָׁלוֹם,
וְתַצִּילֵנוּ מִכָּל מִינֵי מְרִיבוֹת וּמַחֲלָקֶת. וְהִגּוּ בַּעֲדָנוּ וְהִסֵּר מֵעָלֵינוּ
אוֹיֵב דָּבָר וְחָרֵב וְרָעַב וְיָגוֹן וְהִסֵּר שִׁטָּן מִלִּפְנֵינוּ וּמֵאַחֲרֵינוּ.

Rectify the imperfection of my faith in the sages since my youth until this moment, so that I will attain a perfect faith in them.

Purify me of the idolatrous atmosphere that enters the mind of a person whose faith in the sages is damaged. My imperfect faith in the sages has stained and confused my consciousness. As a result, all sorts of unpleasant fumes rise to my brain, leading it astray, twisting and confusing my mind and heart, enveloping me and embittering my life with doubt, confusion, alien thoughts and even madness.

Look down upon my agitation, my distress and my pained heart.

My Living Father and King, I do not appeal to You on the basis of my righteousness, but on the basis of Your compassion. HaShem, give me life in accordance with Your just ways.

Purify my thoughts and heart to serve You. Remove every instance of wretched confusion and every foreign thought to which I have grown accustomed, so that I will purify my thoughts of all filth and fetid fog and they will never again enter my heart and mind. Help me to sanctify and purify my thoughts and heart from this moment on, so that I may always acquire holy thoughts without disturbance.

Remove My Antagonists • My Father in Heaven, Master of peace and King Who commands peace, send me blessings of life and peace. Rescue me from every sort of dispute. Remove my every enemy, all disease, the sword, hunger and lament. Remove Satan from before me and after me.

הצילנו נא מיד אויבנו ורודפינו בגשמינות ורוחניות, הצילנו מכל החולקים והשונאים ומכל המלשינים הדוברים רע על נפשנו ומכל המקטרגים.

ותספור את פיהם, "ולא תעשנה ידיהם תשיה".

וכל הקמים עלינו לרעה, מהרה הפר עצתם וקלקל מחשבתם. ויקים בהם מקרא שכתוב: "עצו עצו ותפר, דברו דבר ולא יקום, כי עמנו אל". ונאמר: "י הפיר עצת גוים, הניא מחשבות עמים".

ושמרנו והצילנו ברחמיך הרבים שלא יזיק לנו המחלקת כלל, לא בגשמינות ולא ברוחניות, רק נזכה על-ידי המחלקת לשוב בתשובה שלמה על כל חטאינו ועוונותינו ופשעינו, ובפרט על פגם אמונת חכמים אשר פגמתי בכבוד חכמים אמתיים ובספריהם הקדושים, ולא האמנתי בהם בשלמות באמת, והיו דבריהם אצלי למותר, ולא היו יקרים וחשובים בעיני דבריהם וספריהם הקדושים.

אנא יי זפני ברחמיך הרבים לתקן כל זה, שאזכה לחוס על נפשי, ולהסתכל על עצמי היטב, ולהבין ולהשכיל מתוך המחלקת שחולקים עלי, עד היכן פגמתי באמונת חכמים.

ולשוב בתשובה שלמה על זה, ולתקן כל מעשי מעתה. ואזכה לקיים דברי החכמים האמתיים, ולבלי לסור מדבריהם ימין ושמאל, ואזכה שיחזרו ויחשבו בעיני כל ספריהם הקדושים, והיו יקרים בעיני מפז ומפנינים, וכל חפצים לא ישוו אצלי נגד כל ספר וספר מדברי החכמים האמתיים. ויתרבו מאד הספרים הקדושים בעולם עד אין קץ.

ונזכה על-ידי תשובתנו בשלמות, שיהיה נעשה על-ידי-זה ספר קדוש למעלה בעולם העליון, כמו שכתוב: "אז נדברו ויראי

Rescue me from the hands of my enemies, both in the material and spiritual realms. Save me from all the slanderers and accusers who speak ill of me.

Shut their mouths and “do not allow their hands to act with cunning.”

Quickly eradicate the ideas and frustrate the thoughts of those who would rise against me to harm me. May the verses be realized, “If you take counsel, it will be struck down; if you speak, it will not come about—for God is with us.” “HaShem has struck down the counsel of the nations; He has annulled the thoughts of the people.”

Prevent their aggression from harming me. Instead, may their antagonism inspire me to repent fully of all my sins—particularly my lack of faith in the sages, my having besmirched their honor and that of their holy books, and my having disparaged their words, which I failed to appreciate.

Creating Holy Books • HaShem, help me to see myself clearly and understand from the disputes waged against me the degree to which I have damaged my faith in the sages.

Help me to repent fully and rectify all my deeds from this moment on. May I cleave to the words of the true sages and never turn aside from them. May I appreciate their holy books, each one more precious to me than gold and pearls, compared to which nothing means anything to me. May those books increase without number.

And may my own repentance create a holy book in the supernal realm. As the verse states, “When those who fear HaShem spoke, one man to his comrade, HaShem took note

יִי אִישׁ אֶל רַעְהוּ וַיִּקְשֹׁב יִי וַיִּשְׁמַע, וַיִּכְתֹּב סֵפֶר זִכְרוֹן לְפָנָיו לִירְאֵי
יִי וּלְחֹשְׁבֵי שְׁמוֹ".

וּתְזַכְּנוּ מֵעַתָּה לְאַמוּנַת חֲכָמִים בְּאַמֶּת, בְּשִׁלְמוֹת בְּכָל הַבְּחִינוֹת.
וְנִזְכֶּה שְׂיִתְחַבְּרוּ סִפְרֵי הַרְבֵּה דְקֻדְשָׁה, וַיִּתְחַדְּשׁוּ בְּכָל פַּעַם
סִפְרֵי הַרְבֵּה בְּתוֹרַתְנוּ הַקְדוּשָׁה.

וַיְהִי לָנוּ אֱמוּנָה שְׁלֵמָה בְּכֻלָּם, וְלֹא יִהְיֶה אֲצִלָּנוּ לְמוֹתָר שׁוּם
סֵפֶר הַמִּדְבָּר מֵעַנְיֵי תוֹרַתְנוּ הַקְדוּשָׁה, הֵן הַמִּדְבָּרִים בְּפֶשֶׁט רָמַז
דְּרוֹשׁ סוּד, הֵן סִפְרֵי הַמִּפְרָשִׁים וְהַמְבַּאֲרִים, הֵן סִפְרֵי הַפּוֹסְקִים
וּשְׂאֵלוֹת וּתְשׁוּבוֹת, הֵן סִפְרֵי מוֹסֵר, הֵן סִפְרֵי תַפְלוֹת וּתְחִנוּת
וּבִקְשׁוֹת וּדְוִיִּים וְשִׁירוֹת וְתִשְׁבָּחוֹת לַהֵשֶׁם יִתְבָּרַךְ, וְכָל מִינֵי
סִפְרֵי הַמִּדְבָּרִים בְּעַנְיֵי תוֹרַתְנוּ הַקְדוּשָׁה, כָּלֵם יִהְיוּ חֲשׁוּבִים
וַיִּקְרִים בְּעִינֵינוּ מְאֹד, כָּל סֵפֶר וְסֵפֶר, הֵן אוֹתָן שֶׁנִּתְחַבְּרוּ כָּבֵר, הֵן
הַעֲתִידִים לְהִתְחַבֵּר. כִּי כָלֵם מְכַרְחִים לְהַעֲוֹלָם, וְאֵנוּ צָרִיכִים כָּלֵם,
כִּי הֵם חֲיִינוּ וְאִרְךָ יָמֵינוּ, וְכָלֵם עוֹמְדִים בְּרוּם עוֹלָם, וּמִשְׁמִיעִים
בִּירְאָה יַחַד בְּקוֹל דְּבָרֵי אֱלֹהִים חַיִּים וּמְלֶךְ עוֹלָם, כָּלֵם אֲהוּבִים
כָּלֵם בְּרוּרִים כָּלֵם קְדוּשִׁים, וְכָלֵם מִדְבָּרִים מְרֻצֹנֶה הַטוֹב הַגָּנוּז
בְּתוֹרַתְךָ הַקְדוּשָׁה. וְכָלֵם מְעוֹרְרִים לַעֲבוֹדָתְךָ וּלִירְאָתְךָ.

וְכָלֵם "נִחְמָדִים מְזֻהָב וּמְפֹז רַב וּמְתוּקִים מְדַבֵּשׁ וְנוֹפֶת צוּפִים".

ז שבת

רְבוּנוּ שֶׁל עוֹלָם הַצִּילָנוּ מִכַּת לְצִים, וְתִשְׁמְרֵנוּ תָמִיד וְתִצְלִילָנוּ
שֶׁלֹּא אֲלַעֲיָג וְלֹא אֲתִלְוֹצֵן חֵס וְשָׁלוֹם מִשׁוּם סֵפֶר מִתּוֹרַתְךָ
הַקְדוּשָׁה.

וְתִצְלִילָנוּ מֵעַנְשׁ הַקְשָׁה וְהַמֵּר הַמּוֹעֵץ לְהַמְלָעִיג עַל דְּבָרֵי חֲכָמִים
שֶׁהוּא נִדּוֹן בְּצוּאָה רוֹתַחַת רַחֲמָנָא לְצִלּוֹן, הַצִּילָנוּ נָא שְׁמֵרְנוּ נָא
שֶׁלֹּא אֲכַשֵּׁל בְּעוֹן זֶה חֵס וְשָׁלוֹם לְעוֹלָם.

שְׁמֵרְנוּ שֶׁלֹּא אֲכַנֶּה בְּגַחְלָתוֹן שֶׁל חֲכָמִים אֲמִתִּיִּים דְקֻדְשָׁה. וְאַזְהַר
בְּכַבּוּדֵם תָּמִיד וְלֹא יִהְיֶה עָלֵי שׁוּם קִפְדָּא מִשׁוּם חֶכֶם אֲמִתִּי
דְקֻדְשָׁה. עֲזָרְנוּ בְּרַחֲמֶיךָ הַרְבִּים, הוֹשִׁיעֵנוּ בְּחִסְדֶּיךָ הָעֲצוּמִים.

and heard, and it was written as a scroll of remembrance before Him for those who fear HaShem and value His Name.”

From this moment on, may I attain faith in the sages on every level. As a result, may many holy books containing new insights into Your holy Torah be written.

May I attain complete faith in all these books and consider none of them superfluous—books of simple exposition, allusion, homiletics, mysticism, explication, halakhah and responsa, ethical instruction, prayer, confession, song, praise, and so forth. May I appreciate each book—that which has already been written and that which has yet to be written. The world needs all of them and I need all of them; they are my life and the length of my days. They stand at the height of the world and together proclaim Your words, my Living God and King of the universe. They are all beloved, pure and holy. They reveal Your beneficent will hidden in Your holy Torah, and they awaken me to serve You.

They are “more beloved than gold and fine gold, and sweeter than honey and the honeycomb.”

7 SHEVAT

Rescue from Cynicism • Master of the Universe, rescue me from cynics and from their derision of the books that expound on Your holy Torah.

Keep me from mocking the words of the sages and from suffering the terrible and bitter punishment, of suffering in burning excrement, that comes from doing so.

Protect me from being scorched by the coals of the true, holy sages. May I always defend their honor and never incur their vexation.

וְזָכְנִי בְּרַחֲמֶיךָ הָרַבִּים שְׁאֲזָכָה לְהַתְנַגֵּעַ בְּתוֹרַתְךָ הַקְדוּשָׁה בְּיָגִיעָה גְדוֹלָה וְלַהֲגוֹת בָּהּ יוֹמָם וּלְלַיְלָה, עַד שְׁאֲזָכָה לְהַבִּין וּלְהַשְׁכִּיל וּלְחַדֵּשׁ חֲדוּשִׁים אֱמִתִּיִּים בְּתוֹרַתְךָ הַקְדוּשָׁה, חֲדוּשִׁים שֶׁיְהִיוּ לָךְ לְנַחַת וּלְרָצוֹן לִפְנֵי פָסָא כְבוֹדְךָ.

וְאֲזָכָה לְהִתְחַזֵּק וּלְהִתְאַמֵּץ וּלְהַזְדַּרֵּז בְּכָל עֵז לְחַדֵּשׁ חֲדוּשִׁין דְּאוֹרֵייתָא תָּמִיד. וְתִהְיֶה מַחְשַׁבְתִּי קְשׁוּרָה וּדְבוּקָה וְאַחוּזָה תָּמִיד בְּתוֹרַתְךָ הַקְדוּשָׁה. וְאַתָּה תִּרְחַם עָלַי וְתִשְׁפִּיעַ לִי בְּכָל עֵת חֲדוּשִׁין דְּאוֹרֵייתָא אֱמִתִּיִּים, חֲדוּשִׁים שֶׁיְהִיוּ תִקּוֹן לְנַפְשִׁי רוּחִי וְנִשְׁמָתִי, עַל כָּל הַפְּגָמִים שֶׁפִּגְמַתִּי נִגְדָּה מֵעוֹדִי עַד הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה.

וְתִתְחַזַּק אֱמוּנָתִי שְׁאֲזָכָה לְהֶאֱמִין בְּעֶצְמִי שֶׁהַחֲדוּשִׁין שְׁלִי יִקְרִים בְּעֵינֶיךָ מְאֹד, וְיֵשׁ לָךְ שֶׁעֲשׂוּעִים גְּדוֹלִים מִכָּל דְּבוּר וּדְבוּר שְׁאֵנִי זוֹכֶה לְחַדֵּשׁ בְּתוֹרָה הַקְדוּשָׁה. וְאַתָּה מִתְפָּאֵר וּמִתְפַּדֵּד וּמִתְיַקֵּר בָּהֶם בְּכָל הָעוֹלָמוֹת.

וְיִתְזַכְּנִי לְכַתֵּב כָּל הַחֲדוּשִׁים שְׁלִי עַל סֵפֶר בְּזִרְיוֹת גְּדוֹל כְּרָצוֹנְךָ הַטוֹב, וְיִתְרַבּוּ סֵפְרִים הָרַבָּה בְּעוֹלָם עַל יְדֵי, סֵפְרִים אֱמִתִּיִּים וְקְדוּשִׁים.

יְהִי רָצוֹן מִלְפָּנֶיךָ יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ, שֶׁתְּזַכְּנִי לְתִקּוֹן הָאֱמוּנָה חֲכָמִים גַּם אֶצְלֵ הַהֶמוֹן, עַל-יְדֵי שְׁאֲזָכָה לְדַבֵּר עִמָּהֶם הָרַבָּה דְּבָרִים הַמְתִּישְׁבִּים עַל הַלֵּב, עַד שְׁאֲזָכָה לְהַכְנִיס בָּהֶם אֱמוּנָה חֲכָמִים בְּשִׁלְמוֹת שִׁיאֲמִינוּ גַּם הֵם בְּכָל דְּבָרֵי הַחֲכָמִים הָאֱמִתִּיִּים, וְלֹא יִסּוּרוּ מִדְּבָרֵיהֶם יָמִין וּשְׂמָאל. וְיִהְיוּ כָּל הַסֵּפְרִים הַקְדוּשִׁים שֶׁנִּתְחַבְּרוּ עַל-יְדֵי הַחֲכָמִים וְהַצַּדִּיקִים אֱמִתִּיִּים, וְאֶפְלוּ עַל-יְדֵי סֵתָם כְּשֶׁרִים שֶׁבִּישְׂרָאֵל, וּבְנוֹיִם עַל יְסוּדוֹת הָאֱמוּנָה הַקְדוּשָׁה וְהַהֲקָדְמוֹת הַקְדוּשׁוֹת שֶׁקִּבְּלָנוּ מֵאֲבוֹתֵינוּ הַצַּדִּיקִים אֱמִתִּיִּים, כָּל הַסֵּפְרִים הִלְלוּ וְכָל הַחֲדוּשִׁים-תּוֹרָה שִׁישׁ בָּהֶם וְכָל הָעֲצוֹת הַקְדוּשׁוֹת, וְאֶפְלוּ כָּל הַשִּׁיחוֹת הַקְדוּשׁוֹת הַנוֹגְעוֹת לִירְאָתָא יְיָ וְלַעֲבוֹדָתוֹ בְּאַמֶּת, כָּלָם יִהְיוּ יִקְרִים וְחֲשׁוּבִים אֶצְלָנוּ מְאֹד, עַד שֶׁנִּזְכָּה כָּלָנוּ לְלַמֵּד וּלְהַגִּיתָ בָּהֶם יוֹמָם וּלְלַיְלָה,

Creating Original Torah Thoughts • Compassionate God, inspire me to learn Your holy Torah day and night, until I understand it and create my own Torah thoughts to please You.

Grant me the enthusiasm to constantly create original Torah insights, so that my mind will always cling to Your holy Torah. Constantly imbue me with true insights, for these will purify my soul of all the blemishes that I have brought into being in the course of my life.

Strengthen my faith in myself, so that I will believe that my insights on Your holy Torah are precious to You and You take delight in my every one, that You take pride in my words and are honored by them.

Inspire me to write down all my ideas, so that I will compose many true and holy books, in accordance with Your desire.

Inspiring Faith in the Sages • [HaShem, my God and the God of my fathers, help me to rectify people's faith in the true sages by speaking with them and touching their hearts, so that they too will believe in all the words of the sages and not turn aside from them. Nor may they turn aside from any of the holy books written by these true sages or by worthy Jews in general—books built on a foundation of holy faith that present the holy principles taught by our forefathers and teachers, the true Tzaddikim; books of original Torah thought, holy counsel and discourses on the fear of Heaven and on how to serve You. May all these books be precious in our eyes. May we study them

וּלְקַיִם כָּכָל דְּבָרֵיהֶם הַקְדוּשִׁים הַנֶּאֱמָרִים בָּהֶם, בְּזִרְיוֹת יִתְרָה
וְאַהֲבָה גְדוֹלָה וְחֲשִׁיבוֹת גְּדוֹלָה וּבְאַמּוּנָה שְׁלֵמָה.

וְעַל-יְדֵי-זֶה שִׁיתְּרָבוּ הַסְפָּרִים הַקְדוּשִׁים שֶׁל הַתּוֹרָה הַקְדוּשָׁה,
עַל-יְדֵי שִׁיתִּתְקַן אֲצִלְנוּ הָאֱמוּנָת חֲכָמִים בְּשִׁלְמוֹת, שֶׁזֶה בְּחִינַת
שְׁלֵמוֹת הַתּוֹרָה הַקְדוּשָׁה עַל-יְדֵי תּוֹרָה שֶׁבַע-פָּה שֶׁכָּלוּלָה
מִכָּל דְּבָרֵי הַחֲכָמִים הָאֱמִתִּיִּים.

עַל-יְדֵי-זֶה תִּקְבַּל הַתּוֹרָה הַקְדוּשָׁה הָאֲרָה שְׁלֵמָה וּגְדוֹלָה
מִשְׁרָשָׁה הָעֲלִיּוֹן, שֶׁהוּא חֲכָמָה עֲלֵאָה, בְּחִינַת אֶבֶן-שֶׁתִּיהָ,
קִדְשֵׁי-קִדְשִׁים. וְהַתּוֹרָה הַקְדוּשָׁה בַּעֲצָמָה תִּשְׁפִּיעַ הָאֲרֶת
הַחֲכָמָה עֲלֵאָה, שֶׁהוּא בְּחִינַת שְׁכָל-הָעֲלִיּוֹן הַכּוֹלֵל, לְתוֹךְ כָּל
הַחֲכָמוֹת וְהַשְׁכָּלִים פְּרָטִיִּים, עַד שֶׁעַל-יְדֵי-זֶה יִהְיוּ נִמְתָּקִין
כָּל הַצִּמְצוּמִים וְכָל הַדִּינִים מֵעֲלֵינוּ וּמֵעַל כָּל עַמּוֹד בֵּית-יִשְׂרָאֵל
בְּכָל־לֵיּוֹת וּבְפִרְטִיּוֹת בְּהִמָּתָקָה שְׁלֵמָה.

וְתוֹצִיא כָּאוֹר מִשְׁפָּטָנוּ בְּגִשְׁמִיּוֹת וּבְרוּחָנִיּוֹת. וְנִזְכֶּה שִׁיתְּרָחֵב
שְׁכָלְנוּ וּמַחְנוּ וְדַעֲתָנוּ, וְנִזְכֶּה שְׁכָל אֶחָד וְאַחָד מֵעַמּוֹד בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל
יִקְבַּל הָאֲרָה גְדוֹלָה עַל-יְדֵי הַתּוֹרָה הַקְדוּשָׁה מִבְּחִינַת הַחֲכָמָה
עֲלֵאָה, שְׁכָל-הַכּוֹלֵל, לְתוֹךְ גִּשְׁמָתוֹ שֶׁהוּא בְּחִינַת הַשְׁכָּל פְּרָטִי,
עַד שֶׁנִּזְכֶּה עַל-יְדֵי-זֶה לְקַבֵּל מִכָּל הַלְמוּדִים שֶׁאֵנוּ לוֹמְדִים,
מִשְׁפָּטֵי-אֱמֶת וְהִנְהָגוֹת-יִשְׁרוֹת. וְנִזְכֶּה לְעֲצוֹת טוֹבוֹת יִשְׁרוֹת
וּשְׁלֵמוֹת בְּגִשְׁמִיּוֹת וּבְרוּחָנִיּוֹת וּלְיִשׁוּעָה שְׁלֵמָה.

וּיְקִיִּם בָּנוּ מִקְרָא שְׁכָתוֹב, יִשְׁלַח עֲזָרָה מִקֹּדֶשׁ וּמִצִּיּוֹן יִסְעֶדְךָ].

מֵלֵא רַחֲמִים מֵלֵא מִשְׁאֲלוֹתֵי לְטוֹבָה בְּרַחֲמִים, וְזִפְנֵי מֵהֲרָה
לְאֱמוּנָת חֲכָמִים בְּשִׁלְמוֹת בְּאֱמֶת בְּכָל הַבְּחִינּוֹת.

וְתִזְרַק עָלֵינוּ מִיָּם טְהוֹרִים וְתִטְהַרְנוּ מִכָּל טְמְאוּתֵינוּ וּמִכָּל
גְּלוּלֵינוּ, כְּאָמֹר: "וְזָרַקְתִּי עֲלֵיכֶם מִיָּם טְהוֹרִים וְטָהַרְתֶּם, מִכָּל
טְמְאוּתֵיכֶם וּמִכָּל גְּלוּלֵיכֶם אֲטַהֵר אֶתְכֶם".

וְתִשְׁפִּיעַ עָלֵי עֲצָה שְׁלֵמָה תָּמִיד, וּיְקִיִּם מִקְרָא שְׁכָתוֹב: "וְלֹא
יִטְמְאוּ עוֹד בְּגִלוּלֵיהֶם, וְלֹא יִחָצוּ לְשִׁתֵּי מַמְלָכוֹת עוֹד".

day and night, and heed all their holy words with enthusiasm, love, appreciation and faith.

And when our faith in the sages—a faith that corresponds to the entire Torah, including the Oral Torah which is composed of the words of the sages—is rectified, may there be an increase in written expositions of the holy Torah.

Then the Torah will receive a full and great illumination from its root of supernal wisdom—the Foundation Stone, the Holy of Holies—and it will pour forth an illumination of that wisdom, an all-inclusive consciousness, into our minds, until all constrictions and judgments will be fully eased for every Jew, including myself.

“Bring forth my judgment like light” in both the material and spiritual realms. May each Jew broaden his awareness so that he will be illuminated by the holy Torah’s light of supernal wisdom—an encompassing awareness in his soul, his individual consciousness—until he attains true guidelines on how to conduct himself in both the material and spiritual realms and how to attain complete salvation.

As the verse states, “He will send your help from the holy place, and your support from Zion.”]

Purifying Waters of Faith • God, may I quickly attain complete faith in the sages, on every level.

Sprinkle upon me the waters that will purify me of my uncleanness and idolatry. As the verse states, “I will sprinkle pure waters upon you and purify You; of all Your contaminations and all your idols, I will purify you.”

Always imbue me with perfect counsel, so that the verse will be realized, “They will no longer be divided into two kingdoms, and no longer create pollution with their idols.”

ח שבט

חוס וחמל על נפשי העלובה מאד, ומלטני מעצות נבערות, מעצת נשים, מעצות חלושות, מעצה חלוקה לשתיים, ולא תעלים ממני עצתך האמתית, ולא תתחלק עצתי לשתיים לעולם.

כי אתה יודע מריה דעלמא כלא, עצם רבוי הספקות והבלבולים שיש לי תמיד ועצתי חלוקה לשתיים, ואני מספק בכל עת ואני יודע לתת עצה שלמה לנפשי איך להתנהג בשום דבר, כי בכל פעם אני מתגעגע וחותר במחירת למצא עצה טובה איך להתקרב אליך באמת, ואינו עולה בידי. ומחמת זה עצתי חלוקה וספקותי רבים מאד, לפעמים עולה על דעתי לעשות כך, ולהתנהג בדרך זה, ויש לי סברות והוכחות הרבה שאני מכרח להתנהג כך, ואחר כך כשנגמר עצתי לעשות כך, בתוך כך עולה על מחשבתי סברא אחרת וסותרת כל עצתי הראשונה. ונמשכים לי סברות והוכחות הרבה שאני צריך לעשות בהפך ממש, עד אשר עצתי נחלקת לשתיים ממש ותלויה בכך מאזנים תמיד, ואני יודע להכריע לא לכאן ולא לכאן.

ואפלו אם לפעמים נסכם אצלי העצה לצד אחד לעשות כך, אני זוכה שתהיה העצה חזקה אצלי. ותמיד עצתי חלושה מאד, ועולים בלבבי בכל פעם ספקות ובלבולים ומחלישים עצתי ומהפכים את דעתי ולבבי בכל עת, שלא כך הייתי צריך לעשות, עד אשר "כלו ביגון חיי, ושגותי באנחה, כי כלו בעשן ימי ועצמותי כמוקד נחרו".

כי העשנים סרוחים עולים תמיד על המוח, ומסבבים ומבלבלים ומעקמים את דעתי ולבבי מאד מאד, ומהפכים ומגלגלים את דעתי בכל פעם ממחשבה למחשבה ומעצה לעצה, כאבן בתוך כף הקלע, לא יתנוגי השב רוחי.

ולכמה פגמים ולכמה מכשולות ולכמה חטאים ועוונות ופשעים רבים ועצומים, באתי על-ידי-זה, על-ידי עצות נבערות וחלושות

8 SHEVAT

Attaining God's Counsel • God, have mercy on my poor soul. Save me from unreliable advice and never conceal Your true counsel from me. Never allow the clarity of my resolutions to grow clouded.

Master of the Universe, You know all my doubts and hesitations in every area of my life. I am always yearning and striving to find guidance on how to come close to You, but without success, and so I cannot accomplish anything. Sometimes I gather many reasons to act in one way. But as soon as I start to act, I am overcome by a flood of opposite thoughts. I am unable to evaluate these contradictory points of view, and so I cannot come to a clear decision, and remain dismayed.

Even if I do make up my mind, my resolution is weak. Doubts assail me and wear away my resolve, until I question my actions so thoroughly that “my life is worn away with sighing and my years with moaning,” and “my days are worn away like smoke, and my bones are scorched like a hearth.”

Unpleasant fumes rise to my brain, surrounding, confusing and twisting my thoughts and emotions so that my mind bounces from one idea to another like a stone in a slingshot, and cannot come to rest.

I am afflicted by foolish, weak and self-contradictory impulses which cause me harm and even lead me to sin. And in the midst

וּחְלוּקוֹת הָאֵלוֹ. אָבִי שְׁבַשְׁמִים רַחֵם עָלַי, אָבִי שְׁבַשְׁמִים אִינִי יוֹדֵעַ
בְּאִיזָה לְשׁוֹן שֶׁל רַחֲמִים, בְּאִיזָה לְשׁוֹן שֶׁל צַעֲקָה, בְּאִיזָה לְשׁוֹן
שֶׁל אֲנָחָה וְאֲנָקָה אֲזַעֵק אֵלֶיךָ, בְּאִפֹּן שֶׁתַּעֲנֵנִי וְתַעֲמִיד בְּעֲזָרְתִּי
וְתַתְּקֵן כָּל זֶה בְּעֶצְמָהּ וּבִכְבוֹדָהּ בְּרַחֲמֶיהָ הַרְבֵּים.

כִּי אֵין לִי כֹחַ לְתַקֵּן כָּל זֶה. וְאֶפְלוּ נִקְדָּה אַחַת מִכָּל אֵלֶּה אִינִי
יָכוֹל לְתַקֵּן, רַק עָלֶיךָ לְבַד נִשְׁעָנְתִּי. עֲזָרְנִי מְלֵא רַחֲמִים, עֲזָרְנִי
מְלֵא יְשׁוּעוֹת מְלֵא הַצְלוֹת מְלֵא עֲצוֹת טוֹבוֹת, תַּקְנֵנִי בְּעֶצֶה
טוֹבָה מִלִּפְנֵיךָ. זַכְּנִי לְעֶצֶה שְׁלֵמָה שְׁאֵזְכָּה לְקִימָה בְּאִפֹּן שְׁאֵזְכָּה
לְהַנְצִיל מֵעֲתָה מִכָּל מָה שְׁאֵנִי צָרִיךְ לְהַנְצִיל.

וְאֵזְכָּה מֵעֲתָה עַל-יָדֶי עֲצָתְךָ הַשְׁלֵמָה לְשִׁמִּיּוֹת הַבְּרִית קֹדֶשׁ
בְּאַמֶּת כְּרִצּוֹנְךָ הַטוֹב, וְלֹא אֶפְגֵּם עוֹד כָּלֵל, לֹא בְּמַחֲשָׁבָה וְלֹא
בְּדַבּוּר וְלֹא בְּמַעֲשֵׂה, וְלֹא בְּשׁוּם חוּשׁ מַחֲמֶשֶׁה חוּשִׁים, וְלֹא
אֶתוֹר אַחֵר לְבָבִי וְאַחֵר עֵינִי, וְלֹא אֲבַלְבֵּל אֶת דַּעְתִּי עוֹד כָּלֵל.

עֲזָרְנִי עֲזָרְנִי, חֲנֻנִי חֲנֻנִי, לְמַעַנְךָ לְמַעַנְךָ וְלֹא לְמַעַנִּי, לְמַעַנְךָ
עֲשֵׂה וְלֹא לָנוּ, רְאֵה עֲמִידָתְנוּ דְּלִים וְרָקִים. "רְאֵה יי כִּי צָר לִי,
מַעֲי חֲמֻרְמֻרוֹ, נִהַפֵּךְ לְבִי בְּקֶרְבִּי כִּי מָרוּ מְרִיתִי. רְאֵה יי וְהִבִּיטָהּ,
לְמִי עוֹלָלָתָ כֹּה, רְאֵה יי וְהִבִּיטָהּ, כִּי הֵייתִי זוֹלָלָה. זָכֹר יי מָה
הָיָה לָנוּ, הִבִּיטָהּ וּרְאֵה אֶת חֲרָפָתְנוּ".

הִבִּיטָהּ בְּעֵינֵינוּ כִּי רַבּוּ מַכְאוּבֵינוּ וְצָרוֹת לְבַבְנוּ.

"אֵל תִּטְשֵׁנִי וְאֵל תַּעֲזֹבֵנִי אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל, אֵל תַּעֲזֹבֵנִי יי, אֱלֹהֵי אֵל
תִּרְחַק מִמֶּנִּי, חוּשָׁה לְעֲזָרְתִּי יי תִּשְׁוּעָתִי, הַצִּילֵנִי מִטֵּיט וְאֵל
אֲטַבְּעָה, אֲנַצֵּלָה מִשׁוֹנְאֵי וּמִמַּעֲמָקֵי מִים. הָרֵב כִּפְסֵנִי מֵעוֹנֵי
וּמִחַטָּאתֵי טְהָרְנִי, תַּחֲטֹאֵנִי בְּאִזּוֹב וְאִטְהַר, תִּכְבֹּסֵנִי וּמִשְׁלַג
אֲלַבִּין".

כִּי עִמָּךְ עֲצָה וְתוֹשִׁיָּה, עֲצָתְךָ אֱמוּנָה פֶּעֱלָתְךָ אֶמֶת. צְדִיק וְיֹשֵׁר
קָרוֹב לְקוֹרְאָיו בְּאַמֶּת, רַחֵם עָלִי לְמַעַנְךָ וְחוּס וְחַמֵּל עָלִי וְעַל

of all this, my Father in Heaven, I do not know how to plead with You, how to cry out to You, how to sigh so that You will answer me and lead me out of my quandary.

I myself cannot correct as much as an iota of my indecisiveness, and so I turn to You. Please, rescue me and rectify me with Your good advice! Guide me to attain perfect counsel—counsel that I will heed—and in that way, may I be delivered of all my difficulties.

May I keep Your perfect counsel and guard my sexual purity, in accordance with Your desire, so that I will do no wrong in thought, speech or deed or with any of my five senses, or turn after my heart and eyes, or sully my mind.

Help me for Your sake, not for mine. Look upon my poverty and barrenness. “See, HaShem, how I suffer. My inner organs burn; my heart has turned over within me because I am so embittered.” “Look, HaShem, and see to whom You have done this.” “Look, HaShem, and see how I have grown despised.” “Remember, HaShem, what has happened to us; see and look upon our disgrace.”

Look upon my distress, because I am in pain and my heart is suffering.

“Do not cast me aside and do not abandon me, God of my salvation. Do not abandon me, HaShem; my God, do not grow distant from me. Hurry to help me, HaShem of my salvation. Rescue me from the mud so that I will not sink. May I be rescued from my enemies and from the depths of the waters. Cleanse me thoroughly of my sins and purify me of my transgressions. Purify me with the hyssop so that I will be purified; wash me so that I will be whiter than the snow.”

You possess counsel and faithful advice. Your actions are true, righteous and straight. You are close to those who call

נפְּשֵׁי וְעַל עוֹלָלֵי וְטָפִי, וְעַל כָּל הַתְּלוּיִים בִּי, וְתֵן לִי עֲצָה שְׁלֵמָה
אֲמִתִּית וְנִכּוֹנָה שְׁאֲזָכָה לְקִיָּמָה, בְּאִפֹּן שְׂאוּכַל לְמַלֵּט נַפְשִׁי מִנִּי
שְׁחַת.

"בְּעֲצָתְךָ תִּנְחֲנִי וְאַחֲרֵי כְבוֹד תִּקְחֵנִי", וְאֲזָכָה לִילְךָ תָּמִיד בְּדֶרֶךְ
הָאֱמֶת בְּלִי שׁוּם בְּלָבוּל הַדְּעֵת כָּלֵל, וְלַעֲבֹד אוֹתְךָ תָּמִיד עֲבוּדָה
תָּמָה בְּאֱמֶת כָּל יְמֵי חַיֵּי אָנִי וְזִרְעִי וְזִרְעַי זִרְעֵי מַעֲתָה וְעַד עוֹלָם".

הוֹרֵנִי יְיָ דֶּרֶכְךָ וְנִחֲנִי בְּאַרְחֵי מִישׁוֹר לְמַעַן שׁוֹרְרִי. אֵל תִּתְּנֵנִי בְּנֶפֶשׁ
צָרִי כִּי קָמוּ בִּי עַדֵּי שְׁקָר וַיִּפַּח חָמֶס. הַדְּרִיכֵנִי בְּנִתִּיב מִצְוֹתֶיךָ כִּי
בּוֹ חִפְצָתִי, הַדְּרִיכֵנִי בְּאֱמֶתְךָ וְלִמְדֵנִי כִּי אַתָּה אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אוֹתְךָ
קוִיתִי כָּל הַיּוֹם".

חוּס וְחַמֵּל עָלֵי אָבִי אָב הַרְחֵמֶן, עֲשֵׂה עִמִּי פְּלָאוֹת, "נוֹרְאוֹת
בְּצִדֶּק תַּעֲנֶנּוּ אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל, מִבְּטָח כָּל קַצּוֹי אֶרֶץ וְיָם רְחוֹקִים".

וּשְׁמֵרְנוּ וְהַצִּילֵנוּ בְּרַחֲמֶיךָ הַרְבֵּים מִמְּנֵהִיגִים שֶׁל שְׁקָר,
וְתִשְׁמְרֵנוּ שְׁלֵא נִתְקַרֵּב אֲלֵיהֶם וְלֹא נִתֵּן לָהֶם תִּקְוָה וְלֹא נִסְמִיךְ
אוֹתָם בְּשֵׁם רַבִּי וְנִתְרַחֵק מֵהֶם בְּכָל מִינֵי הַתְּרַחֲקוּת, וְלֹא יִזְיקוּ
לָנוּ בְּשׁוּם דָּבָר לֹא בְּגִשְׁמִיּוֹת וְלֹא בְּרוּחָנִיּוֹת.

כִּי אַתָּה יוֹדֵעַ אֵת עֲצָם הַפְּגָמִים וְהַקְּלָקוּלִים שְׂגוּרִים בְּעוֹלָם
חֹס וְשְׁלוֹם אֵלֹהֵי הַמִּפְרָסָמִים וְהַמְּנֵהִיגִים שֶׁל שְׁקָר, הַנִּקְרָאִים
בְּשֵׁם רַבִּי, וְנִסְמְכוּ שְׁלֵא כִּדִּין. כִּי הֵם בְּעֲצָמָן אֵינָם יְכוּלִים
לָתֵת עֲצָה לְנַפְשָׁם וְהַעֲשִׂנִים סְרוּחִים מִבְּלָבָלִים מִחֶם וּמִסְבָּבִים
דַּעְתָּם, וְאֵינָם יוֹדְעִים לְהוֹצִיא מִשְׁפָּטִי אֱמֶת וְהַנְּהוּגוֹת יִשְׁרוֹת
לָהֶם בְּעֲצָמָן, וְאִיךָ יוֹכְלוּ לְהַנְהִיג אַחֲרֵיהֶם.

רְבוּנוּ שֶׁל עוֹלָם זָכְנוּ לְתַקֵּן כָּל זֶה וְתֵן לָנוּ דַּעַת שְׁלֵם שְׁנוּזָכָה
לִידַע מִי הֵם הַשְּׁקָרָנִים וְהַמְּנֵהִיגִים שֶׁל שְׁקָר, וְלְהַתְּרַחֵק מֵהֶם,

out to You. For Your sake, then, have compassion on me, my children and everyone who depends on me. Give me perfect, true and proper counsel that I will heed, and rescue my soul from destruction.

“Guide me in Your counsel and afterwards receive me with glory.” May I walk in the way of truth always, without confusion. May I and all my offspring, for all generations, serve You wholeheartedly.

“Direct me, HaShem, in Your ways and conduct me on the straight path against those who gaze upon me. Do not give me over to the desire of those who cause me distress, for false witnesses have risen up against me, each breathing violence. Guide me on the path of Your commandments because that is what I have desired. Guide me in Your truth and teach me, for You are the God of my salvation; it is You for Whom I have hoped all the day.”

Have mercy on me, my compassionate Father, and do wonders for me. “In justice, answer us with awesome things, God of our salvation, Stronghold of all the ends of the earth and the distant seas.”

Avoiding False Leaders • God, rescue me from false leaders. May I not grow close to them, give them any power, or even call them “rabbi.” Instead, may I stay as far away from them as possible, so that they will not injure me in either the material or spiritual realm.

You know all the damage that these false, improperly ordained leaders cause. Because their minds are confused and surrounded by fetid fumes, they cannot run even their own lives or evaluate their own actions properly. How, then, can they guide others?

Distinguishing Between True and False Leaders • Master of the Universe, give me a perfect awareness to recognize false leaders and stay far away from them—and on the other hand,

ומי הם הצדיקים והחכמים האמתיים שצריכין להאמין בהם, ולהתקרב אליהם.

ונזכה שיהיו נסמכים בעולם מנהיגים ורבנים הגונים הראוים לסמכם.

ועל-ידי-זה יתחזק כתב ידינו, ולא יצטרכו עמך ישראל ללמד כתב ולשון אחר, כי אם כתב ישראל לבד, כתב הקדוש והנורא, אותיות קדושות, אותיות מחכימות המשרשים בתמונות אותיות תורתך הקדושה, אשר בהם בראת כל העולמות כלם ברצונך הטוב, בחכמתך הגדולה.

זכנו ברחמיה ועזרנו שנזכה להמשיך הארת השכל בהידים, ויקבלו ידי הפתיבה הארת סוד החכמה מידי הסמיכה.

ויהיה כל התקף לכתב יד ישראל וכל המשפטים והעסקים יהיו נעשים על-ידי כתב ישראל לבד. ויתחזק ביותר כתב ישראל עד אשר אפלו כל משפטים והנהגתם יהיה על-ידי כתב ישראל, ונזכה "לעשות בהם משפט כתוב".

ותזכנו לקדש האויר על-ידי פתיבת ידינו, ויהיו האותיות מחכימות של קדשת כתב ישראל נחקקים ונרשמים בהאויר, ועל-ידי-זה יתקדש אויר העולם בקדשת אוירא דארץ ישראל.

ויקיים מקרא שכתוב: "ואהי להם למקדש מעט". ויהיו כל מקומות מושבות בני ישראל קדושים בקדשת ארץ ישראל.

ותשמרנו ותעזרנו שלא יגרשו אותנו ואת כל עמך ישראל ממקומנו לעולם.

ותזכנו להוליד בנים חיים וקיימים לעבודתך וליראתך ולתורתך.

to recognize the Tzaddikim and true sages in whom one must believe and to whom one must cling.

May those who are worthy of being called “rabbi” and “leader” be recognized and addressed as such.

In this way, strengthen the “writing of our hands.” May Your nation, the Jewish people, not need to learn any handwriting or language of any other nation, but only its own holy, awesome script—which consists of holy letters that give wisdom, letters that are rooted in the forms of the letters of Your holy Torah with which You created all the worlds, in accordance with Your desire and wisdom.

Compassionate God, guide me to draw down the illumination of mindfulness into the “hands,” so that that the “hands of writing” will receive an illumination of the secret of wisdom from the “hands that bestow ordination.”

Sanctifying the Atmosphere with the Writing of Our Hands • May the handwriting of the Jewish people attain its full vigor so that all judgments and activities in the world will be performed solely through the script of Israel—which will grow stronger until even all the judgments and conduct of non-Jews will be in accordance with the script of Israel, so that we will “apply to them the judgment as it is written.”

May we sanctify the atmosphere with the “writing of our hands.” May the wisdom-giving letters of the holiness of the script of Israel be carved and impressed into the air, so that the world will be sanctified with the holiness of the air of the Land of Israel.

May every area in which the Children of Israel live possess the holiness of the Land of Israel, so that the verse will be realized, “I will be to them a small Sanctuary.”

May neither I nor any other Jew ever be evicted from his place.

Parenting Great and Holy Souls • May I parent healthy children who will serve You, and fear You and Your Torah.

וְתַעֲזְרֵנוּ שְׁתַּהֲיָה אֲכִילֵתֵנוּ וְזוּיָגֵנוּ בְּקִדְשָׁהּ גְדוֹלָהּ, עַד שְׁנִזְכֶּה לְהוֹלִיד גּוֹפִים זָכִים וְקְדוּשִׁים, שִׁיְהִיו כָּלָם רְאוּיִם לְקַבֵּל נְשָׁמוֹת גְּדוּלוֹת, נְשָׁמוֹת קְדוּשׁוֹת, שִׁיְהִיָּה לָהֶם הַשָּׁגָה גְדוֹלָה, שְׁיִזְכּוּ לְהַשִּׁיג בְּעוֹלָם סוּד הָעֶבּוֹר לְדַעַת סוּד תַּהֲלוּכַת הַגְּלָגָלִים וְכָל הַדְּבָרִים וְהַשְׁנוּיִם הַבָּאִים עַל יָדָם כְּרִצּוֹנָהּ הַטוֹב אֲשֶׁר אַתָּה מְנַהִיג אוֹתָם בְּרַחֲמִים עַל-יְדֵי הַנְּשָׁמוֹת וְהַשְׁכָּלִיִּים הַגְּבוּהִים.

וַיִּקָּיֵם מִהֲרָה מִקְרָא שְׁכָתוֹב: "וְשִׁמְרַתֶּם וַעֲשִׂיתֶם, כִּי הִיא חֻכְמַתְכֶּם וּבִינַתְכֶּם לְעֵינֵי הָעַמִּים, אֲשֶׁר יִשְׁמְעוּן אֶת כָּל הַחֻקִּים הָאֵלֶּה, וְאָמְרוּ רַק עִם חֻכְם וְנִבּוֹן הַגּוֹי הַגָּדוֹל הַזֶּה".

ט שבט

לראש השנה

וְעִזְרָנוּ בְּרַחֲמֶיךָ הַרְבֵּים שְׁנִזְכֶּה לְנִסְעַ לְצַדִּיקִים אֲמִתִּיִּים עַל רֹאשׁ הַשָּׁנָה, וְשֵׁם יִהְיוּ נִכְלָלִים כָּל נַפְשוֹתֵינוּ יַחַד בְּכָלִלִיּוֹת גְּדוֹל וּבְאַהֲבָה רַבָּה. וְנִזְכֶּה לְאַהֲבַת הַחֲבֵרִים, שִׁיְהִיָּה בֵּינֵינוּ שְׁלוֹם וְאַהֲבָה גְדוֹלָה בְּאֵמֶת, עַד שְׁנִהְיָה כָּלֵנוּ נִכְלָלִים יַחַד בְּאַהֲבָה וְאַחֲוָה וְרַעוּת בְּתוֹךְ נַפְשׁוֹת הַצַּדִּיקִים הָאֲמִתִּיִּים תָּמִיד, וּבִפְרָט בִּימֵי רֹאשׁ-הַשָּׁנָה הַקְּדוּשִׁים.

וְנִזְכֶּה לְהַכְלִיל יַחַד בְּתוֹךְ הָאָבֶן שְׁתִּיָּה, בְּתוֹךְ קִדְשֵׁי קִדְשִׁים, בְּתוֹךְ הַשְּׁכָל הַכּוֹלֵל שֶׁהוּא חֻכְמָה עֲלֵאָה.

וְעַל-יְדֵי-זֶה יִהְיוּ נִמְתָּקִין כָּל הַדֵּינִים וְכָל הַצְּמֻצוֹת מֵעַלֵּינוּ וּמֵעַל כָּל עַמָּה בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל.

וְכָל מְקוֹם שֶׁנִּמְצָא אֵיזָה צְמֻצוֹת וְדִין וּגְזֵרָה שְׂאִינָה טוֹבָה עַל עַמָּה יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּכָלֵל אוֹ בִּפְרָט, הַכֹּל יִהְיֶה נִמְתָּק וְנִתְּבַטֵּל עַל-יְדֵי אוֹר הַשְּׁכָל הַכּוֹלֵל הָעֲלִיּוֹן הַיּוֹצֵא מִבֵּית יי, וְיִהְיוּ נִמְתָּקִין כָּל הַדֵּינִים בְּשֶׁרֶשֶׁן.

וְתַכְתְּבֵנוּ בִּימֵי רֹאשׁ הַשָּׁנָה הַקְּדוּשִׁים לְחַיִּים טוֹבִים וְאַרְפִּים, לְשָׁנָה טוֹבָה וּמִתּוֹקָה. שְׁנִזְכֶּה לַעֲשׂוֹת רְצוֹנָהּ בְּאֵמֶת, וּלְקַבֵּל עַל

May I eat and engage in marital relations in great holiness. As a result of the latter, may I generate pure and holy bodies fit to receive great and holy souls which possess insight into the secrets of the leap year and the pathways of the spheres and all the things and permutations that come about through them—all this in accordance with Your desire, You Who compassionately guide matters via supernal “souls” and “intellects.”

And may the verse soon be realized, “Guard them and do them, because that is your wisdom and your understanding in the eyes of the nations, who will hear all these laws and say, ‘This great people is a wise and understanding nation.’”

9 SHEVAT

FOR ROSH HASHANAH

Compassionate God, help us to travel to true Tzaddikim on Rosh HaShanah, so that our souls will be bound together into one whole, a great camaraderie; so that peace will reign among us and we will be joined in love, brotherhood and friendship in the company of the spirit of the true Tzaddik, particularly during the holy days of Rosh HaShanah.

And may we be bound to the Foundation Stone, the Holy of Holies, which is the all-inclusive consciousness, supernal wisdom.

As a result, may all judgments and constrictions be sweetened for me and for Your entire nation, the House of Israel.

May every constriction, judgment and decree harmful to Your Jewish people—as a whole and as individuals—be sweetened and nullified by the light of the inclusive mind of the supernal intellect that comes from the House of HaShem, which sweetens all judgments at their root.

Inscribe us during the holy days of Rosh HaShanah for a good and long life, and for a sweet year in which we will always do

מלכותך עלינו תמיד. חוס וחמל עלינו, ועזרנו להיות כרצונך הטוב באמת.

זכנו שיהיו נפשותינו נכללות יחד באהבה גדולה בתוך נפשות הצדיקים האמתיים, עד שנזכה על-ידי-זה לשמחה גדולה וחדוה רבה ועצומה, כמו שכתוב: "אור צדיקים ישמח".

וביותר בימי ראש השנה הקדושים, נזכה לשמחה יתרה ועצומה, כמו שכתוב: "אכלו משמנים ושתו ממתקים ושלחו מנות לאין נכון לו, כי קדוש היום לאדנינו, ואל תעצבו, כי חדות יי היא מעזכם".

ונאמר: "אשרי העם ידעי תרועה, יי, באור פניך יהלכון. בשמך יגילון כל היום, ובצדקתך ירמו. כי תפארת עזמו אתה, ובכרונך תרום קרננו. כי ליי מגננו, ולקדוש ישראל מלכנו".

ותבטל כל מיני מריבות ומחלוקת מעלינו ומעל כל עמך בית ישראל מעתה ועד עולם.

עזרנו כי עליך נשעננו, הורנו דרכיך, הדריכנו באמתך ולמדנו, כי אתה אלהי ישענו, אותך קוינו כל היום.

וזכני להיות "נאמן רוח מכסה דבר". ותתן לי כח מאתך, ותשפיע עלי רוח חכמה דקדשה ואמונה שלמה באמת, ותשמרני ותצילני שלא אהיה חס ושלוש "הולך רכיל מגלה סוד", רק תתן לי כח להעלים ולהצפין את כל הדברים שאין רשאין לגלותם.

חוס וחמל עלינו, ומלא משאלותינו לטובה ברחמים, כי צרכנו מרבים מאד ודעתנו קצרה לבארם ולפרטם, על כן יהיו בעיניך כאלו פרטנום. כי לפניך נגלו תעלומות לב והמון נסתרות שמבראשית.

Your will and accept the yoke of Your kingship.

In accordance with Your desire, may our souls be bound together in the midst of the souls of the true Tzaddikim, so that we will reach great joy and prodigious happiness. As the verse states, “The light of the Tzaddikim will rejoice.”

In particular, may we attain this joy during the holy days of Rosh HaShanah. As the verses state, “Eat the fat and drink sweet drinks, and send gifts to someone for whom nothing was prepared, because this day is holy to our Lord; do not be upset, because the gladness of HaShem is Your strength.”

“Fortunate is the nation that knows the joyful shout; HaShem, they walk in the light of Your face. They rejoice in Your Name the whole day and they are exalted in Your righteousness, because You are the glory of their strength. In accordance with Your desire, our horn is raised, because HaShem is our shield and the Holy One of Israel is our King.”

Nullify every sort of dispute against me and against Your entire nation, the House of Israel, from now and forever.

I rely only on You. Guide me on my way and teach me Your truth, because You are the God of my salvation. “For You, we have hoped the entire day.”

Guide me to be “a faithful person who conceals a matter.” Give me Your strength and imbue me with a spirit of holy wisdom and complete faith. Guard me from being “a person who goes as a talebearer, revealing a secret.” Give me the ability to conceal everything that I am not permitted to tell.

In Your compassion, fulfill my requests for good, because my needs are many and my mind is too limited to explicate them. Therefore, consider it as though I enumerated them, because the hidden matters in my heart—as well as a multitude of hidden things from the very beginning of creation—are revealed to You.

וְתַמְלֵא עָלֵינוּ רַחֲמִים כִּי אַתָּה הוּא בַּעַל הַרְחָמִים, וְתִזְכְּנוּ
לְאַמוּנַת חֲכָמִים בְּשִׁלְמוֹת בְּאַמֶּת בְּכָל הַבְּחִינוֹת, וּלְעֶצֶה שְׁלֵמָה
וַיִּשְׁרָה תָּמִיד כְּרִצּוֹנָה הַטּוֹב בְּאַמֶּת.

וְנִזְכֶּה לְלַמֵּד וּלְהַגִּיד בְּתוֹרַתְךָ הַקְדוּשָׁה תָּמִיד, וּלְהוֹצִיא מִשְׁפָּטִי
הַנְּהֻגוֹת יִשְׁרוֹת מִכָּל מָה שֶׁנִּלְמַד בְּסִפְרֵי תוֹרַתְךָ הַקְדוּשָׁה.

וְתִזְכְּנוּ מִהֲרָה לִילֵךְ בְּכָל הַדֶּרֶךְ אֲשֶׁר הוּרִי אֹתָנוּ רְבוּתֵינוּ
הַקְדוּשִׁים בְּסִפְרֵיהֶם הַקְדוּשִׁים, לְקַיֵּם כָּל דְּבָרֵיהֶם הַנֶּאֱמָרִים
בְּאַמֶּת וְצֶדֶק. וְאֵת הַכֹּל נַעֲשֶׂה יָפָה בְּעֵתוֹ בְּכָל עֵת וְעַתָּה בְּמוֹעֵדוֹ
וּבְזִמְנוֹ כְּרִצּוֹנָה וְכָרֶצוֹן יִרְאֶיךָ הַקְדוּשִׁים וְהַטְהוֹרִים.

וְנִזְכֶּה לְבָלוֹת יָמֵינוּ בְּטוֹב הָאֱמֶתִי וּשְׁנוֹתֵינוּ בְּנֻעִימִים, לְבָלוֹת כָּל
יָמֵינוּ עַל הַתּוֹרָה וְעַל הָעֲבוֹדָה הָאֱמֶתִיּוֹת כְּרִצּוֹנָה הַטּוֹב.

וְתַמְשִׁיךְ שְׁלוֹם בְּעוֹלָם, וְתַבְטִיל כָּל הַדֵּינִים וְכָל הַגְּזֵרוֹת שְׂאִינִן
טוֹבוֹת מֵעָלֵינוּ וּמֵעַל כָּל עַמָּה יִשְׂרָאֵל מֵעַתָּה וְעַד עוֹלָם.

וַיְקִים מִקְרָא שְׁכָתוֹב: "יִשְׁלַח עֲזָרְךָ מִקְדָּשׁ, וּמִצִּיּוֹן יִסְעֶדְךָ".

וְתִקְנֵנוּ בְּעֶצֶה טוֹבָה מִלְּפָנֶיךָ וְתוֹשִׁיעֵנוּ מִהֲרָה לְמַעַן שְׁמֶךָ. כְּאִמּוֹר
רְבוֹת מַחְשְׁבוֹת בְּלֵב אִישׁ, וְעֶצֶת יי הִיא תִקּוּם. עֶצֶת יי לְעוֹלָם
תַּעֲמִד, מַחְשְׁבוֹת לְבֹ לְדוֹר וָדוֹר. כִּי יי צָבָאוֹת יַעֲץ, וּמִי יִפֹּר, וְיָדוּ
הַנְּטוּיָה וּמִי יִשְׁבִּינָה. מִיִּם עֲמָקִים עֶצֶה בְּלֵב אִישׁ, וְאִישׁ תְּבוּנָה
יִדְלָנָה. מַחְשְׁבוֹת בְּעֶצֶה תִכּוֹן, וּבִתְחִלּוֹת עֲשֵׂה מְלַחְמָה".

וַיְקִים מִהֲרָה מִקְרָא שְׁכָתוֹב: "יִתֵּן לָךְ כְּלָבְבָהּ, וְכָל עֲצָתְךָ יִמְלֵא.

יְהִי לְרִצּוֹן אִמְרֵי פִי וְהִגִּיוֹן לִבִּי לְפָנֶיךָ יי צוּרִי וְגוֹאֲלִי":

Master of compassion, guide me to gain complete faith in the sages on every level and gain perfect counsel always, in accordance with Your desire.

Guide me to study Your holy Torah constantly and to learn how to act properly.

Guide me to walk in the path which our holy rabbis discuss in their holy books. May I heed all their words, which express truth and righteousness. May I perform my every deed properly and in its proper time, in accordance with Your will and with the will of these holy and pure, God-fearing people.

May I spend my days in true goodness and my years in pleasantness, devoting all my time to Torah study and serving You, in accordance with Your desire.

May I draw peace into the world. May I nullify all judgments and decrees against me and against Your Jewish people, from now and forever.

May the verse be realized, "He will send your help from the holy place, and your support from Zion."

Perfect me with Your counsel. Save me quickly, for the sake of Your Name. As the verses state, "Many are the thoughts in the heart of man, but the counsel of HaShem will endure." "The counsel of HaShem will endure forever; the thoughts of His heart are for all generations." "When HaShem of Hosts has given counsel, who will strike it down? When His hand is stretched out, who will cause it to withdraw?" "Counsel in the heart of man is deep water, and a man of understanding will draw it up." "Establish thoughts with counsel; to wage war, employ strategies."

May the verse soon be realized, "May He give You what your heart desires, and fulfill all your counsel."

"May the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable before You, HaShem, my Rock and my Redeemer."

סא – חדי רבי שמעון

א. על־ידי אמונת חכמים נזדכך המלח וזוכה לשכל ברור ועל־ידי־זה יזכה להוציא ולקבל מכל מה שלומד בתורה משפטי אמת, דהינו הנהגות ישרות לעבודתו יתברך. שיידע איך להתנהג בכל דבר הן לעצמו הן לאחרים שמתנהגים לפי דעתו. אבל כשפוגם חס ושלום, באמונת חכמים הוא נדון ביגיעת בשר דהינו במותרות, כמו שאמרו רבותינו, זכרונם לברכה: 'הלועג על דברי חכמים נדון בצואה רותחת' שנאמר "ולאג הרבה יגיעת בשר" (ערובין כ"א). ואז עולים עשנים סרוחים אל המלח ומערבין ומבלבלין דעתו ואינו יכול להוציא מלמודו משפטי אמת והנהגות אמתיות אדרבה הוא מוציא דברים הפוכים מן האמת. כמו דואג האדומי שהוציא משפט מעקל שאין דוד ראוי לבוא בקהל על־ידי שלמודו היה מבחינת אלו המותרות (עין פנים):

ב. יש מנהיגים שנקראים בשם רבי שלמודם ממותרות ופסלות. ובדאי אינם יכולים להנהיג אפלו את עצמם מכל־שכן את אחרים ואף־על־פי־כן נוטלין גדלה לעצמם ורודפים אחר התנשאות להנהיג את העולם. וצריך כל אחד לראות שלא להסמיק אותם ושלא לתן להם שום תקף ועז שלא יהיו מכונים

11 NISAN

61 – “Rabbi Shimon rejoiced”

(*Zohar III, 128a*)

1. Through faith in the Sages [this refers to the Rabbis of the Mishnah and Talmud, as well as to those of later generations], a person’s mind is purified and he attains a clear intellect. In turn, he merits to glean and to receive true judgments from everything that he studies in the Torah – in other words, [he is able to derive] correct, practical instruction in the service of God, so that he knows how to behave in every matter, regarding both himself and those who act in accordance with his guidance. But when a person lacks faith in the Sages, God forbid, he is punished with “weariness of the flesh” – that is, with superfluous waste material, as our Sages, of blessed memory, said, “Whoever ridicules (*haLo’eiG*) the words of the Sages is punished in boiling excrement, as it is written, ‘Much study (*LahaG*, which sounds like the word *La’aG*, “ridicule”) leads to a weariness of the flesh” (Ecclesiastes 12:12; *Eruvin* 21b). Consequently, foul-smelling vapors rise up to the person’s mind, jumbling and confusing his thoughts, and then he is unable to derive true judgments and correct instruction from his studies. To the contrary, he gleans things that are contrary to the truth, like Doeg the Edomite, who passed a distorted judgment that King David was unfit to marry into the Jewish people (*Yevamot* 76b) – and this occurred because Doeg’s Torah study was from the aspect of this superfluous waste material (see more in this lesson in *Likutey Moharan*).

2. There exist leaders who are called by the name “rabbi,” whose Torah study derives from superfluous waste material and refuse. There is no doubt that these people cannot lead even themselves, let alone others. Nevertheless, they take positions of status and authority for themselves and they pursue leadership positions in order to lead the people. Every person must be certain not to bestow any rabbinical authority upon these

בְּשֵׁם רַבִּי. כִּי הֵם עֲצָמָם אֵינָם חַיִּבִּים כָּל־כֹּף כִּי יֵשׁ לָהֶם יֵצֵר
הָרַע גָּדוֹל לְהַנְהִיג אֶת הָעוֹלָם. אַךְ אֵלּוּ הַנוֹתָנִים לָהֶם תִּקְוָה וְעַז
וְנִסְמָכִים עַל יָדָם שֶׁיְהִיו נִקְרָאִים בְּשֵׁם רַבִּי הֵם עֲתִידִים לִתֵּן דִּין
וְחִשְׁבוֹן:

יב ניסן

ג. עַל־יְדֵי שְׁמִסְמִיכִין רַבִּי שְׁאִינוּ הָגוֹן נִחַלֵּשׁ כְּתָב יִשְׂרָאֵל
וְנוֹתָנִים כֹּחַ בְּכָתֵב יָדָם. וּמַחֲמַת זֶה הֵם גּוֹזְרִים שְׁלֹא יִהְיֶה
תִּקְוָה לְכַתְּבִים שְׁלָנוּ רַק לְכַתְּבִים שְׁלָהֶם וְיִשְׂרָאֵל יִהְיוּ מְכַרְחִים
לְלַמֵּד כְּתָב שְׁלָהֶם. וְעַל־יְדֵי־זֶה גּוֹזְרִין לְגַרֵּשׁ בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל מִמָּקוֹם
הַיָּשׁוּב שֶׁנִּתְיָשְׁבוּ שָׁם יִשְׂרָאֵל מִכָּפָר אֶל מְקוֹמוֹת שְׁלֹא הָיוּ
שָׁם יִשְׂרָאֵל מֵעוֹלָם שְׁזֶה בְּחִינַת גְּרוּשׁ מֵאֶרֶץ יִשְׂרָאֵל. וְעַל־
יְדֵי־זֶה נִלְקַח מֵאֲתָנּוּ חֻכְמַת תְּהִלּוּכַת גִּלְגָּלִי הָרָקִיעַ לִידַע כָּל
הַהִשְׁתַּנּוּת וְהַעֲתִידוֹת הַבָּאִים עַל־יְדֵי גִלְגָּלִי הָרָקִיעַ שְׁזֶה בְּחִינַת
סוּד הָעֵבֹר, וְנִמְסָר לָהֶם. כִּי הַנִּשְׁמָה מִנְּהֻגַת כָּל גִּלְגָּלִי הָרָקִיעַ
(עֵין פָּנִים), וּמִי יוֹדֵעַ הַנְּהֻגָתָם כְּמוֹ הַמְּנַהִיג, אֲבָל הַנִּשְׁמָה הַזֹּאת
צָרִיכָה שֶׁיִּהְיֶה לָּהּ גּוֹף זָךְ וְנָקִי. וּבְמָקוֹם שֶׁיִּשְׂרָאֵל יוֹשְׁבִים שָׁם
נִתְקַדֵּשׁ הָאֹוִיר בְּבְחִינַת אֹוִירָא דְאֶרֶץ יִשְׂרָאֵל (עֵין פָּנִים), וְאֵז כָּל
הַפְּרוֹת וְהַתְּבוֹאוֹת הַגְּדֻלִּים שָׁם שְׁמֵהֶם נִזּוֹן הָאָדָם וּמֵהֶם בָּא
הַטָּפָה זִרְעִית וּמִשָּׁם נִרְקָם הַגּוֹף הַכֹּל הוּא בְּבְחִינַת: "פְּרִי הָאֶרֶץ"
(יִשְׁעִיהָ ד' ב). וְאֵז רָאוּי לְקַבֵּל נִשְׁמָה גְּדוֹלָה שְׁמִנְהֻגַת כָּל גִּלְגָּלִי

people, nor strengthen or empower them, so that they will not be given the title of “rabbi.” In point of fact, these leaders themselves are not so terribly guilty, since they have a strong evil inclination impelling them to lead the people. However, those who strengthen and empower them, and by whose agency they are ordained so that they will be called by the name “rabbi,” will be held accountable in the future.

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3. By ordaining a rabbi who is not worthy, the writing of the Jews is weakened and the writing of the gentiles is strengthened. Because of this, the gentiles pass decrees which deprive our documents of their legal force, granting this power to their documents alone; and the Jews are forced to learn their writing. Consequently, the gentiles pass decrees banishing the Jews from inhabited areas where Jews settled long ago, to places where Jews have never lived – which is conceptually parallel to banishment from the Land of Israel. In turn, the knowledge of the paths of the heavenly bodies – that is, the secret of intercalating leap years, whereby we know all the changes and future events governed by the movements of the heavenly bodies – is taken from us, and this knowledge is given over to them.

The explanation for this [i.e., why we lose this knowledge] is that it is the soul that directs all the heavenly bodies (see more in this lesson in *Likutey Moharan*) – and who knows their courses like the one who directs them? But this soul must have a body that is pure and clean. Now, in a place where Jews live, the air is sanctified like the air of the Land of Israel (see more in this lesson in *Likutey Moharan*). Accordingly, all of the fruits and produce that grow there, from which people are nourished, and from which the seminal drop is produced, and from which the [embryo's] body is formed – they are all in the category of “the fruit of the Land” (Isaiah 4:2). [A body formed like this] will be fitting to receive a great soul that directs all the heavenly bodies, and that

הָרָקִיעַ וְעַל־יְדֵי־זֶה יוֹדֵעַ חֲכָמַת תְּהִלּוּכַת הַגְּלָגָלִים שֶׁזֶה בְּחִינַת סוּד הָעֶבֶר כַּנִּל. אֲבָל כְּשֶׁנִּתְגַּרְשִׁים מִבְּחִינַת אֶרֶץ יִשְׂרָאֵל וְאֵז אֵין יְכוּלִים לְהִתְרַקֵּם גּוּפִים זָפִים וְאֵין יְכוּלִים לְקַבֵּל נִשְׁמָה גְדוּלָה עַל כֵּן עַל־יְדֵי־זֶה נִלְקַח מֵאִתְּנוּ סוּד הָעֶבֶר וְכָל זֶה עַל־יְדֵי שְׁמִסְמִיכֵין רַבִּי שְׁאִינוּ הֶגוֹן. אֲבָל כְּשֶׁהַחֲכָם הָרָאוּ לְסִמִּיכָה נִסְמָךְ בְּשֵׁם רַבִּי עַל־יְדֵי־זֶה מְבִיא הָאֶרֶה וְכֵחַ כְּתֹב יְדִינוּ וְאֵז גַּם כָּל מִשְׁפָּטֵי הַנְּהֻגוֹת שֶׁלָּהֶם כָּלֵם עַל־יְדֵי כְּתֹב יְדִינוּ. וְעַל־יְדֵי כְּתֹב יִשְׂרָאֵל נִתְקַדֵּשׁ הָאֱוִיר בְּבְחִינַת אֱוִירָא דְאֶרֶץ־יִשְׂרָאֵל וְעַל־יְדֵי־זֶה נִתְתַּקֵּן כָּל הַנִּל:

יג ניסן

ד. גַּם עַל־יְדֵי פָגֶם אֲמוּנַת חֲכָמִים אֵין לוֹ עֲצָה שְׁלָמָה לְעוֹלָם וְהוּא תְּמִיד מְסַפֵּק וְעֲצָתוֹ חֲלוּקָה לְכָאן וּלְכָאן. כִּי עַל־יְדֵי פָגֶם זֶה עַל־יְדֵי שְׁנִדוֹן בְּמוֹתְרוֹת כַּנִּל נַעֲשֶׂה לְבוּ מְטָנָף כְּמוֹ בֵּית הַפֶּסֶא שֶׁהוּא מְקוֹם עֲצַת הַנָּשִׁים כְּמֵאֲמַר רַב עִילִישׁ (גִּטִּין מ"ה). וְאֵז כָּל עֲצוּתֵיו הֵם עֲצוֹת נִבְעָרוֹת וְאֵינוּ יוֹדֵעַ לְגַמֵּר עֲצָה שְׁלָמָה בְּלִבּוֹ אֵין לְהִתְנַהֵג בְּשׁוּם דְּבָר:

ה. כָּל הַמַּלְעִיג עַל הַסְּפָרִים הַקְּדוּשִׁים שֶׁהוֹלְכִים עַל־פִּי תוֹרָתֵנוּ הַקְּדוּשָׁה הוּא נִדוֹן גַּם כֵּן בְּצוּאָה רוֹתַחַת. וְאֵינוּ זוֹכֶה לְהוֹצִיא וּלְקַבֵּל מִלְּמוּדוֹ הַנְּהֻגוֹת יְשׁוּרוֹת וְתְּמִיד עֲצָתוֹ חֲלוּקָה עַד שֶׁיָּשׁוּב עַל־זֶה בְּתִשׁוּבָה שְׁלָמָה וְאֵז יִתְתַּקֵּן כָּל הַנִּל:

ו. מִי שֶׁכָּבֵר נִשְׁקַע בְּאֵלוֹ הַמוֹתְרוֹת יֵשׁ מִים שְׁמִטָּהר מִזֹּאת הַטְּנֻפֶת בְּחִינַת: "וְזָרְקִתִּי עֲלֵיכֶם מִים טְהוֹרִים וְכוּ' וּמִכָּל גְּלוּלֵיכֶם אֶטְהַר אֶתְכֶם" (יִחְזָקָא ל"ו כה). וְאֵלוֹ הַמִּים הֵם בְּחִינַת מַחֲלֻקַּת

consequently has knowledge of the paths of the heavenly bodies – which is the secret of intercalating leap years. But when the Jews are banished from the Land of Israel [and from places that Jews have formerly inhabited], it then becomes impossible for pure bodies to be generated and to receive great souls. Therefore, as a result, the secret of intercalating leap years is taken from us. All this is brought on by ordaining a rabbi who is not worthy. But when the sage who is fit to be ordained is granted the title of “rabbi,” it brings illumination and power to our writing, and then all of the gentiles’ legal procedures take place in our writing. Through Jewish writing, the air becomes sanctified like the air of the Land of Israel, and in turn, all of the above is rectified.

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4. When a person lacks faith in the Sages, he never has the perfect counsel that he needs. He is always in doubt and he is never certain about which course to take. For by lacking faith in the Sages – for which a person is punished with superfluous waste material – his heart becomes fouled like a bathroom, which is “where women take counsel,” as Rav Ilish said (*Gittin* 45a). Thus, all of his plans and decisions are sheer foolishness, and he cannot firmly resolve in his heart as to how to act in any matter.

5. Anyone who scoffs at holy books that follow the teachings of our holy Torah is also punished in boiling excrement. Such a person is unable to derive and to receive correct, practical instruction from his studies, and he is constantly plagued by indecision until he fully repents for this shortcoming. Then all of the above is rectified.

6. For a person who is already steeped in this superfluous waste material, there exist waters that purify [him] from this filth, as expressed in the verse, “I will sprinkle pure water upon you ... and from all of your idolatry, I will purify you” (Ezekiel 36:25).

שְׁנִקְרָא פְּלוּגְתָּא בְּחִינַת: "פֶּלֶג אֱלֹהִים מָלֵא מִים" (תהלים ס"ה י) כִּי עַל־יְדֵי הַמַּחֲלָקֶת שָׁבָא עָלָיו הוּא שָׁב בְּתִשְׁבּוּבָה וּמִתְקַן פָּגַם אֱמוּנַת חֲכָמִים. כִּי עֵקֶר הַמַּחֲלָקֶת שָׁבָא עַל הָאָדָם הוּא מַחֲמַת פָּגַם אֱמוּנַת חֲכָמִים וּלְפִי גֹדֶל הַפָּגַם כֵּן בָּא עָלָיו מַחֲלָקֶת. וְעַל כֵּן עַל־יְדֵי הַמַּחֲלָקֶת יוֹכֵל לְהִתְבּוֹנֵן אִיךָ פָּגַם בְּאֱמוּנַת חֲכָמִים וְלָשׁוּב עַל־יְדֵי־זֶה לְאֱמוּנַת חֲכָמִים וְעַל־יְדֵי־זֶה יִתְתַּקֵּן כָּל הַנֶּ"ל. וַיֵּשׁ צַדִּיקֵי הַדּוֹר שְׁאֵמוּנָתָם שְׁלֵמָה בְּדַאִי וְאִי־עַל־פִּי כֵן יֵשׁ עֲלֵיהֶם מַחֲלָקֶת וְהוּא בְּבִחִינַת: "וְהוּא חֹטֵא רַבִּים נֶשֶׁא" וְכו' (ישעיה נ"ג יב), שְׁסוּבְלִין צַעַר הַמַּחֲלָקֶת בְּשִׁבְלֵי פָגַם אֱמוּנַת חֲכָמִים שֶׁל הָעוֹלָם, וְעַל־יְדֵי הַמַּחֲלָקֶת שָׁבָא עֲלֵיהֶם מִתְקַנִּים אֱמוּנַת חֲכָמִים אֲצֵל הַהֲמוֹן עִם:

יד ניסן

ז. כְּשֶׁנִּתְעוֹרֵר מִן הַמַּחֲלָקֶת שָׁבָא עָלָיו לָשׁוּב עַל פָּגַם אֱמוּנַת חֲכָמִים, עַל־יְדֵי־זֶה נִמְתָּקִין כָּל הַדִּינִים וְכָל מְקוֹם שֶׁיֵּשׁ אִיזָה צִמְצוּם וְדִין נִמְתָּק עַל־יְדֵי־זֶה. כִּי יֵשׁ כְּמָה סְפָרִים עֲכָשׁוּ הַהוֹלָכִים עַל־פִּי תוֹרַתְנוּ הַקְדוּשָׁה שֶׁבִּכְתָּב וּבְעַל־פֶּה וְכֵן עֲתִידִין לִהְיוֹת עוֹד כְּמָה סְפָרִים וְכָלֶם צְרִיכִים לְהָעוֹלָם וְאֶסוּר לְהַלְעִיג עַל שׁוּם אֶחָד מֵהֶם כְּנ"ל. וּבִתְחִלָּה כְּשֶׁלֹּא הָיָה לוֹ אֱמוּנַת חֲכָמִים אֲזַי כָּל הַסְּפָרִים הָיוּ אֲצִלּוֹ כֹּלָא כִּי הָיָה מַלְעִיג עֲלֵיהֶם, וְעַל־יְדֵי שְׁנִתְעוֹרֵר מִן הַמַּחֲלָקֶת שָׁבָא עָלָיו לָשׁוּב בְּתִשְׁבּוּבָה עַל פָּגַם אֱמוּנַת חֲכָמִים חוֹזְרִים וְנִחַשְׁבִּים בְּעִינְיוֹ הַסְּפָרִים שֶׁהָיוּ בְּעִינְיוֹ

These waters are [the waters of] of opposition and conflict – what is called *PeLuGta* [in Aramaic], as in the verse, “The stream (*PeLeG*) of God is full of water” (Psalms 65:10). The explanation for this is that the opposition that a person experiences induces him to repent and to correct the deficiency in his faith in the Sages. For the main cause underlying the opposition that a person experiences is a lack of faith in the Sages; and the greater his lack of faith, the more vehemently he is opposed. Therefore, through opposition, a person can reflect upon how his faith in the Sages might be lacking and he can return to belief in them, by which he can rectify all of the above. There are, however, tzaddikim of the generation whose faith is undoubtedly perfect, and yet they still suffer opposition. This phenomenon is described in the verse, “He bore the sin of the many” (Isaiah 53:12), whereby the tzaddikim suffer the pain of opposition due to the people’s lack of faith in the Sages. Through the opposition that the tzaddikim suffer, they rectify faith in the Sages for the vast majority of people.

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7. When as a result of the opposition a person faces, he is stirred to repent for his lack of faith in the Sages, strict judgments are thereby mitigated. Any place where there exists any kind of constriction [of God’s lovingkindness] or any strict judgment – they are all mitigated through this. The explanation of this is as follows: There presently exist many books that follow the teachings of our holy Torah – both the Written and Oral Torah – and there will be many more such books in the future. The world requires all of these books, and it is forbidden to ridicule any of them. Initially, however, when a person did not have faith in the Sages, all of these books were meaningless to him, since, [after all,] he was ridiculing them. But when as a result of the opposition he suffers, he is stirred to repent for his lack of faith in the Sages, the books that he once viewed as meaningless take on [new] importance for him. This

כלא. וְזֶה בְּחִינַת: "וְסֹפֵר כָּתַב אִישׁ רִיבִי" (איוב ל"א לה), שְׁעַל־יָדֵי הָרִיב וְהַמַּחֲלֶקֶת שָׁבָא עָלָיו נַעֲשֶׂה מִזֶּה סֵפֶר. וַיֵּשׁ צַדִּיקֵי הַדּוֹר שְׂאֵמוֹנֶתָם שְׁלֵמָה בְּיָדָיו וְאֶף־עַל־פִּי־כֹן יֵשׁ עֲלֵיהֶם מַחֲלֶקֶת מִחֲמַת שְׂאֵין לָהֶם אֱמוּנָה בַּעֲצָמָם. וְאִינֶם מֵאֲמִינִים שִׁישׁ לַהֲשֹׂם יִתְבָּרֵךְ שְׁעֲשׂוּעִים מִחֲדוּשֵׁי תוֹרָתָם שֶׁהֵם מְחַדָּשִׁים וְעַל־יְדֵי־זֶה הֵם מִתְרַשְׁלִים בְּחֲדוּשִׁים שְׁלָהֶם וְאִינֶם כּוֹתְבִים אוֹתָם בְּסֵפֶר. כִּי מִי שְׂוֹכָה לְחַדֵּשׁ חֲדוּשֵׁי תוֹרָה בַּעֲצָמוֹ וְכוֹנֵנִתוֹ לְשִׁמְיָם צָרִיךְ שְׂיִהְיֶה לוֹ אֱמוּנָה גַם בַּעֲצָמוֹ שְׂיֵאֱמִין שִׁישׁ לַהֲשֹׂם יִתְבָּרֵךְ שְׁעֲשׂוּעִים גְּדוֹלִים גַּם מִהַחֲדוּשִׁים שְׁלוֹ כַּנ"ל. וְאֵם אִינוּ מֵאֲמִין בְּחֲדוּשִׁים שֶׁל עֲצָמוֹ הוּא גַם כֵּן פֶּגֶם אֱמוּנַת חֲכָמִים וְעַל־יְדֵי זֶה בָּא עֲלֵיהֶם גַּם כֵּן מַחֲלֶקֶת, וְעַל־יְדֵי־זֶה הֵם שָׁבִים בְּתִשׁוּבָה וְנִחָשְׁבִים אֲצֵלֶם חֲדוּשִׁים שְׁלָהֶם וְחוֹזְרִים וּמְחַדָּשִׁים וְכוֹתְבִים אוֹתָם בְּסֵפֶר וְנַעֲשֶׂה מִזֶּה סֵפֶר. וְהִנֵּה הַמִּתְקַת כָּל הַדִּינִים הִיא עַל־יְדֵי הַשֹּׁכֵל שֶׁנִּקְרָא קֹדֶשׁ כִּידוּעַ וְכָל דִּין וְצִמְצוּם יֵשׁ לוֹ שֹׁכֵל פְּרָטִי שֶׁנִּמְתָּק עַל יְדוֹ אֶף יֵשׁ חֲכָמָה עֲלָאָה שֶׁשֶּׁם נִמְתָּקִים כָּל הַצִּמְצוּמִים וְכָל הַדִּינִים. וְהַתּוֹרָה יוֹצֵאת מִחֲכָמָה עֲלָאָה (כְּמוֹ שֶׁמֵּבָאָר בְּזֶהר הַקָּדוֹשׁ חֵלֶק ב ס"ב) וְאִינָה יְכוּלָה לְקַבֵּל מִחֲכָמָה עֲלָאָה רַק כְּשִׁישׁ לָהּ שְׁלֵמוֹת, וּשְׁלֵמוֹת הַתּוֹרָה הוּא עַל־יְדֵי תּוֹרָה שְׁבַע־עַל־פָּה, וְעַל כֵּן עַל־יְדֵי הַסִּפְרִים שֶׁנִּתְחַדָּשִׁים אֲצֵלוֹ עַל־יְדֵי הַמַּחֲלֶקֶת עַל־יְדֵי־זֶה נִשְׁלָם הַתּוֹרָה. וְאִזּוּ הִיא יְכוּלָה לְקַבֵּל מִחֲכָמָה עֲלָאָה שֶׁהִיא בְּחִינַת שֹׁכֵל הַכּוֹלֵל בְּחִינַת קֹדֶשׁ יִשְׁעֵי בְּחִינַת אֶבֶן שְׂתִיָּה וּמִשְׁפַּעַת בְּכָל הַחֲכָמוֹת וְהַשֹּׁכְלִיִּים

is the interpretation of the verse, “My adversary has written a book” (Job 31:35) – that is, through the antagonism and opposition that a person encounters, a book is created.

There are also tzaddikim of the generation whose faith is undoubtedly perfect, and yet they suffer opposition because they lack faith in themselves. They do not believe that God has delight from the new Torah ideas that they develop, and consequently, they are negligent with their ideas and do not write them down in a book. For a person who is worthy of developing original Torah insights, and whose intention is for [the sake of] Heaven, also needs to have faith in himself, believing that God also has great delight from his Torah ideas. If he does not believe in his Torah innovations, however, this is also considered a lack of faith in the Sages. As a result, he, too, will experience opposition which will induce him to repent; and then his new Torah insights will take on greater import for him. Such a person will again start developing new ideas in Torah and he will write them in a book – and in this way, a book will be made.

Now, all strict judgments are mitigated through the intellect, which is called “holy,” as is known; and every strict judgment or constriction has some specific intellect by which it is mitigated. There exists, however, a supernal wisdom wherein all of the constrictions and strict judgments are mitigated [at once], and the Torah emanates from this supernal wisdom (as explained in the holy *Zohar* II, 62a). But the Torah cannot receive from this supernal wisdom unless the Torah is complete – and the completion of the Torah is the Oral Torah. Therefore, through those books which take on new significance for a person as a result of the opposition he suffers, the Torah is thereby completed [since beforehand, these books “did not exist” for him]. In turn, the Torah is able to receive from the supernal wisdom, which is the all-encompassing intellect, the Holy of Holies and the Foundation Stone. It then channels its influx

וְעַל־יְדֵי־זֶה נִמְתָּקִין כָּל הַדִּינִים:

ח. עַל־יְדֵי שְׁנוּסָעִים עַל רֹאשׁ הַשָּׁנָה לְצַדִּיקִים אֲמַתִּיִּים עַל־יְדֵי־
זֶה נִמְתָּקִין כָּל הַדִּינִים שֶׁבְּעוֹלָם וְזֶה צָרִיכִין בְּרֹאשׁ הַשָּׁנָה עַל כֵּן
נוֹסָעִין עַל רֹאשׁ הַשָּׁנָה דִּיקָא:

ט. גַּם עַל־יְדֵי שְׂבָאִים כַּמָּה נַפְשׁוֹת יִשְׂרָאֵל לְהַצְדִּיק הָאֶמֶת עַל
רֹאשׁ הַשָּׁנָה וְנִכְלָלִים יַחַד בְּאַהֲבָה רַבָּה עַל־יְדֵי־זֶה בָּאָה שְׂמִיחָה
גְּדוֹלָה וְחֻדּוֹה רַבָּה:

