LESSONS IN קונטרס החלצו

A TREATISE ON AHAVAS YISRAEL BY THE REBBE RASHAB

פרק כח

לזכות הרה"ח **לוי יצחק** שי' וזוגתו **חנה** שתחי'

הרה"ח **מנחם מענדל** שי' וזוגתו **חי' מושקא**

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PUBLISHER'S FOREWORD

As mentioned, the theme of the *maamar* entitled *Heichaltzu* is that unity is not synonymous with uniformity, but rather involves the synergistic bonding of different and even opposite potentials.

The Rebbe Rashab began the abstract explanation of that concept in ch. 21 by citing the example of the bonding between the *Sefiros* of *Chochmah* and *Binah,* which are opposite in nature. In chs. 21-26, he elaborated in explanation of the difference – and the unity established – between these two *Sefiros*. He identified *Chochmah* with concealment, i.e., the grasping of a concept as it flashes within one's mind as a seminal point that a person cannot explain not only to others, but even to himself. *Binah,* by contrast, he associated with revelation, the manner in which a person brings a concept down to the extent that he comprehends it thoroughly and can explain it to others.

In ch. 26, the Rebbe Rashab clarified how *Chochmah* and *Binah* function synergistically: The concealment of the point of *Chochmah* becomes revealed through the understanding engendered by *Binah,* and the revealed understanding of *Binah* becomes crystallized through the abstraction identified with the power of *Chochmah*.

At the end of that chapter, he explained that such synergy defies logic. Since the two potentials are opposite in nature, it is hard to understand how they come together. In resolution, he explained that this results from the revelation of a higher power that transcends them both.

In chapter 27, he begins the explanation of the latter concept by stating that it can be clarified by describing the unity of opposite potentials as the concept exists in its loftiest source, G-d's light that existed before the *tzimtzum* – the ultimate of revelation – and the *tzimtzum* – the ultimate of concealment. He described the initial stages of the sequence through which the Spiritual Cosmos and ultimately, our material world came into existence, namely:

a) the initial revelation of G-d's infinite light*;*

b) the withdrawal of that light, the *tzimtzum*, leaving merely a concentrated point, the *reshimu*;

c) the emanation of the *kav,* a vector of light, from the *reshimu.*

In the present chapter, he explains what motivated this process of revelation and concealment: G-d's desire to bring the worlds into existence. That essential desire brought about the harmonious function of the two conflicting motifs of revelation and concealment that enable existence as we know it to come into being.

Sichos In English

24 Cheshvan, 5781

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כח) **אך** הנה כ"ז אינו שייך רק כאשר הוצרך להיות בחי' השפעה והמשכה מעצמות אוא"ס ב"ה בשביל שיהי' בחי' מקור כללי להשתלשלות העולמות מאין ליש, שבהכרח צ"ל תחלה ע"י צמצום והעלם דאור העצמות ממש שנבדל ומרומם

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In the previous chapter, the Rebbe Rashab began explaining the motifs of revelation and concealment as they exist in their ultimate source: G-d's infinite light and the *tzimtzum* that brought about the withdrawal of that light.

He explained the stages in the sequence:

a) the initial revelation of G-d's infinite light;

b) the withdrawal of that light, the *tzimtzum*, to the extent that all that remained was a concentrated point, the *reshimu*;

c) the emanation of the *kav,* a vector of light, from the *reshimu;* and

d) the manner in which the entire realm of limited existence came into being from the *kav*.

In the present chapter, he explains that this process of revelation and concealment is relevant only because of G-d's desire to bring the worlds into existence. Since the creation of limited worlds involves a drastic transition, the process of *tzimtzum* was necessary.

אַךְ הִנֵּה כָּל זֶה אֵינוֹ שַׁיָּיךְ רַק

Nevertheless, the entire sequence described above – the *tzimtzum* and the radiation of the light of the *kav* – **became relevant only**

כַּאֲשֶׁר הוּצְרַךְ לִהְיוֹת בְּחִינַת הַשְׁפָּעָה וְהַמְשָׁכָה מֵעַצְמוּת אוֹר אֵין סוֹף בָּרוּךְ הוּא

when G-d desired to bring the world into existence. Consequently, **it was necessary that effluence flow forth from the essence of** G-d's **infinite light**

בִּשְׁבִיל שֶׁיִּהְיֶה בְּחִינַת מָקוֹר כְּלָלִי לְהִשְׁתַּלְשְׁלוּת הָעוֹלָמוֹת מֵאַיִן לְיֵשׁ,

so that it could serve as a general source for the chain-like progression of worlds – the spiritual worlds and our material world – bringing them **into being from** absolute **nothingness.**

שֶׁבְּהֶכְרַח צָרִיךְ לִהְיוֹת תְּחִלָּה עַל יְדֵי צִמְצוּם וְהֶעְלֵם דְּאוֹר הָעַצְמוּת מַמָּשׁ

For limited existence to come into being, **it is necessary that the light of** G-d's **Essence first undergo *tzimtzum* and concealment,**

בערך כו׳, וכנ"ל[150] במשל דמשפיע שנבדל בערך מן המקבל, שמוכרח לצמצם כל עצמותו, ונשאר רק אפס קצהו בבחי׳ נקודה א׳ כו׳, וכמו"כ הוא בדוגמא כזאת בעצמות אוא"ס ב"ה, שבהכרח לצמצם אור העצמות, ונשאר רק נקודה אחת מה שאפשר להיות מקור להשתל׳, והנקודה היא ג"כ בחי׳ העלם עדיין, ומן הנקודה נמשך בחי׳ הקו שהוא בחי׳ גילוי כו׳. וזהו שאמרו[136] כברייתו של עולם ברישא

שֶׁנִּבְדָּל וּמְרוֹמָם בְּעֶרֶךְ כוּ׳,

for that light **is separate and elevated beyond** all connection to our entire limited framework of existence,

וּכְנִזְכָּר לְעֵיל בְּמָשָׁל דְּמַשְׁפִּיעַ שֶׁנִּבְדָּל בְּעֶרֶךְ מִן הַמְקַבֵּל

as mentioned above in the analogy of a *mashpia* whose understanding **is set apart, beyond comparison with those who receive** teachings from him.

שֶׁמּוּכְרָח לְצַמְצֵם כָּל עַצְמוּתוֹ

When he desires to share his wisdom with them, **he must** first **withdraw the entire essence of his** understanding,

וְנִשְׁאָר רַק אֶפֶס קָצֵהוּ בִּבְחִינַת נְקוּדָה א׳ כוּ׳.

leaving only a trace of his original conception, **a single,** concentrated **point.**[1]

וּכְמוֹ כֵן הוּא בְּדוּגְמָא כָּזֹאת בְּעַצְמוּת אוֹר אֵין סוֹף בָּרוּךְ הוּא

A similar motif **applies regarding the essence of** G-d's **infinite light.**

שֶׁבְּהֶכְרַח לְצַמְצֵם אוֹר הָעַצְמוּת

First, **the light of** G-d's **Essence must be withdrawn,**

וְנִשְׁאַר רַק נְקוּדָה אַחַת

leaving only a single point,

מַה שֶּׁאֶפְשָׁר לִהְיוֹת מָקוֹר לְהִשְׁתַּלְשְׁלוּת,

which can serve as a source for the chain-like progression of existence.

וְהַנְּקוּדָה הִיא גַּם כֵּן בְּחִינַת הֶעְלֵם עֲדַיִין

Even then, **this point is also still concealed,** above revelation.[1]

וּמִן הַנְּקוּדָה נִמְשָׁךְ בְּחִינַת הַקַּו שֶׁהוּא בְּחִינַת גִּילוּי כוּ׳.

For the worlds to come into being, a further stage is necessary, that being **the emanation of the *kav*,** a vector of light, that brings about **revelation from this** concealed **point.**

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1. See ch. 27, above.

חשוכא והדר נהורא, פי׳ כברייתו של עולם, דוקא כאשר בא לכלל השפעה להיות נקרא משפיע מלמעלמ״ט בבחי׳ דילוג הערך, אז ברישא חשוכא, בחי׳ ההעלם והצמצום, והדר נהורא, בבחי׳ הנקודה דרשימה וגילוי הקו כו׳. וכמו״כ הוא מאצי׳ לבי״ע, שצ״ל ע״י צמצום והעלם בתחלה, והדר נמשך גילוי אור בבי״ע (ושם הוא

וְזֶהוּ שֶׁאָמְרוּ כִּבְרִיָּיתוֹ שֶׁל עוֹלָם בְּרִישָׁא חֲשׁוֹכָא וַהֲדַר נְהוֹרָא,

This is the meaning of **the teaching,**[2] **"Like the creation of the world,** there was **first darkness and then light."**

פֵּירוּשׁ כִּבְרִיָּיתוֹ שֶׁל עוֹלָם דַּוְקָא כַּאֲשֶׁר בָּא לִכְלַל הַשְׁפָּעָה

"Like the creation of the world" refers specifically to the process initiated **when** G-d desired **to transmit** light and vitality to bring existence into being and

לִהְיוֹת נִקְרָא מַשְׁפִּיעַ מִלְּמַעְלָה לְמַטָּה בִּבְחִינַת דִּילּוּג הָעֶרֶךְ

be referred to as a *mashpia.* Conveying that light and vitality **from above,** i.e., the essence of G-d's infinite light, **to below,** the created worlds, including this material realm requires **a "leap" (*dilug*),** the bridging **of an** incomparable **gap.**

אָז בְּרִישָׁא חֲשׁוֹכָא בְּחִינַת הַהֶעְלֵם וְהַצִּמְצוּם

To bridge that gap, **there must be "first darkness," i.e., concealment and *tzimtzum*,**

וַהֲדַר נְהוֹרָא בְּבְחִינַת הַנְּקוּדָּה דְּרִשִׁימָה וְגִילּוּי הַקַּו כו׳.

"and then light," i.e., the point of the *reshimu* and the revelation of the *kav*.

וּכְמוֹ כֵן הוּא מֵאֲצִילוּת לִבְרִיאָה-יְצִירָה-עֲשִׂיָּה

A similar process occurs during the transition **from *Atzilus,*** the realm of existence that is one with G-d, **to *Beriah, Yetzirah* and *Asiyah,*** the three realms where created beings feel their own identity. The drastic transition from *Atzilus* to the realms below it

שֶׁצָּרִיךְ לִהְיוֹת עַל יְדֵי צִמְצוּם וְהֶעְלֵם בַּתְּחִלָּה,

requires that there first be *tzimtzum* and concealment;

וַהֲדַר נִמְשָׁךְ גִּילּוּי אוֹר בִּבְרִיאָה-יְצִירָה-עֲשִׂיָּה

and only **afterwards is the light revealed in** these three worlds.

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2. *Shabbos* 77b. The Talmud is referring to the narrative of creation, where first there was darkness and then G-d created light.

בחי' הפרסא כו', ועמ"ש מזה בתו"א ד"ה פתח אלי' בפ' וירא[151]. ועמ"ש בע"ח שער הנקודים[152] פ"ב). וכן מה שכללות אצילות הוא ממוצע בין המאציל אל הנבראים[153]

(וְשָׁם הוּא בְּחִינַת הַפַּרְסָא כו')

(However, **in this case,** the nature of the concealment the light undergoes is different. In contrast to the absolute withdrawal of light that constitutes the initial *tzimtzum,* the manner in which the light is transmitted from *Atzilus* to *Beriah, Yetzirah* and *Asiyah* **is** described by the analogy of passing through **a *parsa* ("shade").**

The initial *tzimtzum* involved a total withdrawal of the light. Otherwise, it would not have been possible to bring limited existence into being. The light of the *kav,* by contrast, is already a limited light. Therefore, a total withdrawal was not necessary. Nevertheless, to enable a transmission from one spiritual world to another, there has to be a *tzimtzum*, because every level of the Spiritual Cosmos is unique. If the light on one level would continue to shine – even if the amount of light that shines was reduced – there would not be another level. Rather, it is necessary that there be a *tzimtzum* involving a radical transition that intervenes between the loftier level and the level below it.

However, unlike the first *tzimtzum* that involved a total withdrawal of light, the *tzimtzumim* between levels in the Spiritual Cosmos are of a different nature. They are described with the term *parsa,* "shade." That analogy is appropriate to describe these transitions because when light shines through a shade, the initial source of that light is not seen, and the light itself undergoes a change. Similarly, the light that shines in one spiritual "world" is different than the light that shines in a world lower than it and the light of the higher realm is not perceived as it inherently shines forth..

וְעַיֵּין מַה שֶּׁכָּתוּב מִזֶּה בְּתוֹרָה אוֹר דִּיבּוּר הַמַּתְחִיל פָּתַח אֵלִיָּהוּ בְּפָרָשַׁת וַיֵּרָא.

See the statements concerning this in *Torah Or*, the *maamar* entitled *Pasach Eliyahu* in *Parshas Vayeira*;

וְעַיֵּין מַה שֶּׁכָּתוּב בְּעֵץ חַיִּים שַׁעַר הַנִּקּוּדִים פֶּרֶק ב').

see also what is written in *Etz Chayim, Shaar HaNikkudim*, ch. 2.)

הוא ג״כ באופן כזה, שנתעלם תחלה אור עצמות המאציל, ונשאר רק נקודה אחת, והיא נקודה דחכ׳, יו״ד דשם הוי׳, שזהו מה שאפשר לבוא לידי גילוי כו׳. אמנם היא ג״כ בבחי׳ העלם עדיין, ובאה לידי גילוי אח״כ בבינה, שהוא בחי׳ אות ה״א כו׳ כנ״ל. וכ״ז הוא כמו שנעשה מקור לעולמות, אבל קודם שנברא העולם הרי הי׳ הוא ושמו

וְכֵן מַה שֶּׁכְּלָלוּת אֲצִילוּת הוּא מְמוּצָּע בֵּין הַמַּאֲצִיל אֶל הַנִּבְרָאִים הוּא גַּם כֵּן בְּאוֹפֶן כָּזֶה

A similar process occurs regarding ***Atzilus,*** **which in a general sense,** serves as **an intermediary between** G-d, **the Source of emanation, and the created beings:**

The manner in which, as a whole, *Atzilus* serves as an intermediary between G-d, the Source of emanation, and the created beings, follows a pattern similar to that described above:

שֶׁנִּתְעַלֵּם תְּחִלָּה אוֹר עַצְמוּת הַמַּאֲצִיל

First, the light of G-d's **Essence, the Source of Emanation, is concealed,** there is a *parsa* separating between *Atzilus* and the realms above it,[3] restraining the light that shines in those realms,

וְנִשְׁאַר רַק נְקוּדָה אַחַת וְהִיא נְקוּדָה דְחָכְמָה יו״ד דְשֵׁם הוי׳

leaving only a single point – the point of *Chochmah*, the *yud* of G-d's **name *Havayah*,**

שֶׁזֶּהוּ מַה שֶּׁאֶפְשָׁר לָבוֹא לִידֵי גִילוּי כו׳.

This point contains within it **the potential for** all **that can be revealed.**

אָמְנָם הִיא גַּם כֵּן בִּבְחִינַת הֶעְלֵם עֲדַיִין

Nevertheless, it is also still concealed,

וּבָאָה לִידֵי גִילוּי אַחַר כָּךְ בְּבִינָה

and becomes revealed only **afterward, in *Binah*,**

שֶׁהוּא בְּחִינַת אוֹת הֵ״א כו׳ כְּנִזְכָּר לְעֵיל.

which is represented by **the letter *hei*, as mentioned previously.**[4]

וְכָל זֶה הוּא כְּמוֹ שֶׁנַּעֲשֶׂה מָקוֹר לָעוֹלָמוֹת,

All the above – the process of concealment followed by revelation **relates to** G-d's light **as it becomes a source of the worlds,** i.e., it is relevant only after G-d desired to bring limited existence into being.

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3. This is not the same *parsa* that distinguishes between *Atzilus* and *Beriah*. Rather it is of a different nature, causing a less radical transition.

4. See ch. 23.

בלבד[139], דהיינו שלא הי׳ רק גילוי אור דעצמות הא"ס ב"ה כמו שהוא, שלא בא עדיין לכלל השפעה והמשכה מעצמותו ית׳ כו׳, והיינו כמו שהי׳ אור הראשון מאיר וממלא כל החלל ומקום פנוי דעכשיו כו׳[154], וכמ"ש בע"ח[137] שהי׳ אור עליון פשוט ממלא כל המציאות כו׳, קודם שעלה ברצונו כביכול לברוא כו׳.

אֲבָל קוֹדֶם שֶׁנִּבְרָא הָעוֹלָם הַרֵי הָיָה הוּא וּשְׁמוֹ בִּלְבָד,

However, "Before the world was created" – i.e., before His desire for existence – **"there was only Him and His name."**[5]

דְּהַיְינוּ שֶׁלֹּא הָיָה רַק גִּילוּי אוֹר דְּעַצְמוּת הָאֵין סוֹף בָּרוּךְ הוּא כְּמוֹ שֶׁהוּא

There was nothing but the revelation of the light of the Essence of G-d's **infinity,** His light as **it exists unto itself,**

שֶׁלֹּא בָא עֲדַיִין לִכְלַל הַשְׁפָּעָה וְהַמְשָׁכָה מֵעַצְמוּתוֹ יִתְבָּרֵךְ כו׳.

before that light **was** in any way on a level that allowed for **transmission and drawing down from His Essence,**

וְהַיְינוּ כְּמוֹ שֶׁהָיָה אוֹר הָרִאשׁוֹן מֵאִיר וּמְמַלֵּא כָּל הֶחָלָל וּמָקוֹם פָּנוּי דְּעַכְשָׁיו כו׳,

i.e., as the original light radiated forth and filled the entirety of what is now "the void and the vacant space."

The Rebbe Rashab is emphasizing that before the *tzimtzum*, there was no concept of anything other than His light. The concept of a "void and vacant space" became relevant only after the *tzimtzum*.

וּכְמוֹ שֶׁכָּתוּב בְּעֵץ חַיִּים

Thus, *Etz Chayim* states,[6]

שֶׁהָיָה אוֹר עֶלְיוֹן פָּשׁוּט מְמַלֵּא כָּל הַמְּצִיאוּת כו׳

"The simple Supernal Light filled all of existence...

קוֹדֶם שֶׁעָלָה בִּרְצוֹנוֹ כִּבְיָכוֹל לִבְרוֹא כו׳.

before there arose in His will, as it were,[7] the desire **to create..."**

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5. See sec. 27, quoting *Pirkei d'R. Eliezer*, ch. 3. See *Shelah* at the beginning of his Introduction.

6. *Etz Chayim, Shaar* 1, *anaf* 2.

7. The Rebbe Rashab uses the qualifying phrase, "as it were," to describe the arousal in G-d's will because there is a fundamental difference between such an arousal and the arousal of a person's will. A person undergoes change when his will is aroused. There is a difference between his state before his will was aroused and afterwards. This is not at all appropriate when speaking of G-d's will. Instead, the term is used only to imply that emanation of His light at all the various stages in the process of its transmission are willful, i.e., He invests Himself in that light. See the *maamar* entitled *Zos Chukas*, the series of *maamarim* entitled *Yom Tov shel Rosh HaShanah, 5666*, p. 234ff., *et al.*

קיצור. להשפעה צריך להיות צמצום והעלם, וכמו: מעצמות אוא״ס, מאצילות לבי״ע, ממאציל לנבראים. משא״כ קודם שנברא העולם.

קִיצּוּר.

לְהַשְׁפָּעָה צָרִיךְ לִהְיוֹת צִמְצוּם וְהֶעְלֵם

וּכְמוֹ מֵעַצְמוּת אוֹר אֵין סוֹף,

מֵאֲצִילוּת לִבְרִיאָה-יְצִירָה-עֲשִׂיָּה,

מִמַּאֲצִיל לַנִּבְרָאִים.

מַה שֶּׁאֵין כֵּן קוֹדֶם שֶׁנִּבְרָא הָעוֹלָם.

Summary:

To transmit from a *mashpia* on a lofty level to a recipient on a drastically lower level, **there must** first **be *tzimtzum* and concealment.**

For example, in all the following instances – **from the essence of** G-d's **infinite light** to the Spiritual Cosmos, the chainlike order of existence,

from *Atzilus* to the worlds of ***Beriah*, *Yetzirah,* and *Asiyah*,**

and **from** G-d, **the Source of Emanation to the created beings** as they come into existence through the intermediate stage of *Atzilus* – *tzimtzum* is necessary.

By contrast, before the world – and indeed all existence, even the loftiest rungs of spiritual assistance – were brought into being, there was no concealment. G-d's infinite light was revealed.

150) פכ״א. פכ״ז.
151) יד, א ואילך.
152) שער הנקודים: כ״ה בעץ חיים דפוס שקלאָוו, תק״ס. בדפוסים שלפנינו: שער דרושי נקודות.
153) ראה תו״א מגילת אסתר צג, א. לקו״ת ואתחנן יא, א. אוה״ת מגילת אסתר ע׳ קלב. ע׳ ער. הגהות לד״ה פתח אליהו תרנ״ח ע׳ יב ואילך. המשך תרס״ו ע׳ עג. המשך תער״ב ח״א ס״ע שיח ואילך. סה״מ תרע״ח ע׳ רצג. ע׳ רצו. תרפ״ט ס״ע 16 ואילך. ע׳ 21 ואילך. תרצ״ו ע׳ 69. ע׳ 79.
154) ראה הערה 138.