

SAMPLE

LESSONS IN ספר  
המאמרים

DISCOURSE OF  
THE LUBAVITCHER REBBE

Shavuot

בחדש השלישי



# LESSONS IN ספר המאמרים

SELECTED DISCOURSES  
OF THE LUBAVITCHER REBBE  
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בחודש השלישי, ה'תשכ"ט  
BACHODESH HASHELISHI 5729

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**Kehot Publication Society**  
770 Eastern Parkway • Brooklyn, New York 11213  
5777 • 2017



## FOREWORD

**I**t is natural for a person to ask: What is the purpose of my Torah observance? Where is it supposed to take me?

The fundamentals underpinning the answers our Rabbis give to this question point to two basic thrusts: self-transcendence and self-development. Some define the purpose as dedicating oneself to G-d without any thought of self, while others focus on leveraging the Torah's potential in a journey towards perfection of one's character.

Each of these thrusts has obvious advantages and drawbacks. The emphasis on self-transcendence opens the potential for a person to reach a goal entirely beyond his own horizons. It, however, also allows for the possibility that in his desire to direct himself upward, a person will not focus on who he is and hence, fail to refine himself.

Conversely, a person who focuses on his own development will certainly enrich his life. However, there is a natural tendency for self-absorption, that his own growth and development overshadow all other concerns.

In the *maamar* that follows, the Rebbe explains that these thrusts are not mutually exclusive. Indeed, through their integration, each of these purposes can enhance the other. When a growth-oriented person focuses on transcendence, he aligns his personal identity with G-d's infinity, thus expanding the scope of his individual potential. By the same token, interweaving his commitment to transcendence with an emphasis on personal development enables the effects of his self-transcendence to be seen in his life and for it to affect the way he relates to the people and situations he encounters.

## GOING BEYOND *PILPUL*

The Rebbe introduces his treatment of this subject through a discussion of the preparations for the Giving of the Torah. The Torah begins its description of those preparations with the verse,<sup>1</sup> "In the third month after the exodus of the

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1. *Shmos* 19:1.



Children of Israel from the land of Egypt, on this day, they came to the Sinai desert.” Through a textual analogy,<sup>2</sup> our Sages<sup>3</sup> associate the above verse with the verse,<sup>4</sup> “This month will be for you the beginning of the months,” and derive that it was on *Rosh Chodesh* Sivan that the Jews came to Sinai.

The Rebbe notes that *Tosafos* (a collection of classic commentaries on the Talmud) question this passage, stating that seemingly, it would have been preferable to derive the timing of the Jews’ arrival at Sinai from an analogy to a different verse, “G-d spoke to Moshe in the Sinai desert... in the first month.”

The Rebbe takes a unique path in resolving *Tosafos*’ query that departs from the traditional approach to Torah scholarship. He explains that the resolution can be clarified through an understanding of the implications of the Giving of the Torah in our Divine service.

He develops this concept by focusing on the verse that introduces the Ten Commandments,<sup>5</sup> “G-d spoke all these words, saying (*leimor*) ....” The word *leimor*, usually translated as “saying,” is actually the infinitive meaning “to say.” Generally, *leimor* is thus understood as a command to convey G-d’s message to others. In this verse, however, this cannot be the case, for all the Jewish people were present at the Giving of the Torah; were even one Jew to have been missing, the Torah would not have been given.<sup>6</sup> Instead, in this verse the word *leimor* is used to imply that when a Jew studies the Torah, he is not speaking his own words, but merely repeating the word of G-d. His own identity is subsumed in *bittul* to the G-dliness of the Torah’s words.

This explanation enables us to understand why the final stages of preparation to receive the Torah began on *Rosh Chodesh* Sivan. *Rosh Chodesh* marks the birth of the new moon. The renewal of the moon’s light emphasizes that the moon’s light is not its own, but dependent on the sun, thus highlighting the need for *bittul*, self-transcendence. As implied by the word *leimor*, the Jews’ approach to Torah study should be characterized by a similar approach of *bittul*.

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2. In Hebrew, *gezeirah shavah*, an analogy drawn from the Torah’s use of the same wording in two contexts, one of the Thirteen Principles of Interpretation mentioned by Rabbi Yishmael (Introduction to *Sifra*).

3. *Shabbos* 86b.

4. *Shmos* 12:3.

5. *Ibid.*, 20:1.

6. *Mechilta*, *Yisro* 19:11; *Devarim Rabbah* 7:8.

## HARMONIZING TWO THRUSTS

There is another explanation why *Rosh Chodesh* Sivan served as the beginning of the final stage of preparation for receiving the Torah: After the Exodus, the Jewish people began carrying out Divine service that paralleled the Counting of the *Omer*.<sup>7</sup> The seven weeks of the Counting of the *Omer* are dedicated to the refinement of man's seven emotional attributes. On *Rosh Chodesh* Sivan, the third day of the seventh, final week, the Divine service associated with the refinement of the three primary emotive attributes, *Chessed*, *Gevurah*, and *Tiferes*, of the *sefirah* of *Malchus* was completed.

*Rosh Chodesh* Sivan thus reflects two dimensions:

- a) the birth of the new moon, emphasizing the quality of *bittul*, self-transcendence; and
- b) the completion of the Divine service associated with refining the emotions, self-development.

Both these aspects are fundamental because there are two requisite aspects of man's preparation to receive the Torah:

- a) that man reach a state of *shleimus*, "perfection"; and
- b) that he attain *bittul*; this is necessary because a person concerned with his own identity – a *yesh* in chassidic terminology – is (as it were) incompatible with the Torah.

## RAYS OF NEW LIGHT

The Torah teaches a person to interrelate these two thrusts by using his commitment to sense *bittul* to reveal the greatest amount of light. This is underscored by the fact that the birth of the new moon marks the renewal of the moon's shining. *Rosh Chodesh* is not the night of the conjunction, when the moon's light is not seen, but the following night when it reflects light anew. True, the renewal of the moon's shining highlights the quality of *bittul*. Nevertheless, this *bittul* is not expressed in self-nullification, but through shining forth light.

Similarly, the Torah's goal is not to erase a person's identity, but rather to enable

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7. *Torah Or*, p. 67c. The actual *mitzvah* of Counting of the *Omer* was commanded only at a later stage. However, the intent is that at that time, the Jews carried out the spiritual counterpart of that *mitzvah*, the refinement of their emotional qualities.

his light shine – and yet, have it shine with *bittul*. His identity will not cease to exist, but will be subsumed in a commitment to a goal above himself.<sup>8</sup>

## CROWNING SERVICE

The advantage of the Divine service of a person who redefines his identity and subsumes it in the service of G-d over that of one who totally obliterates his personal identity is reflected by our Sages' teaching in the Talmud:<sup>9</sup>

Before the Giving of the Torah, “When the Jews made the commitment of *naaseh*, ‘We will do,’ before *nishma*, ‘we will listen,’ the ministering angels came and attached two crowns to every Jew, one corresponding to *naaseh* and one corresponding to *nishma*.”

The Rebbe poses a question on this teaching: On one hand, our Sages imply that the two crowns were given by virtue of the order in which the Jews expressed their commitments, pledging *naaseh* before *nishma*. However, the Talmud's conclusion, “One corresponding to *naaseh* and one corresponding to *nishma*,” implies that the crowns were given for the commitments of *naaseh* and *nishma* themselves, i.e., each commitment itself warranted a crown.

The Rebbe resolves this difficulty by citing a teaching of the Rebbe Maharash<sup>10</sup> which explains the different thrusts in our Divine service represented by *naaseh* and *nishma*. *Naaseh* represents the acceptance of the yoke of the kingdom of Heaven, and *nishma*, the acceptance of the yoke of His *mitzvos*. The order in which the Jews pledged their commitments conforms to our Sages' teaching<sup>11</sup> that “One should first accept upon himself the yoke of the kingdom of Heaven, and [only] afterwards, the yoke of the *mitzvos*.”

The acceptance of the yoke of the kingdom of Heaven is identified with the Divine service of *ratzo*, “yearning for G-dliness,” while the acceptance of the

8. The above concepts provide the spiritual backdrop that enable an explanation of the Talmudic passage cited originally: *Tosafos* raise the question that the Talmud should have derived the fact that the Jews came to the Sinai desert on *Rosh Chodesh* from a *gezeirah shavah* based on the word *midbar*. The rationale is that *midbar*, “desert,” alludes to utter *bittul* to the extent that no vestige of personal identity remains. Implied is that such a commitment should characterize the Jews' readiness to receive the Torah.

The Talmud, however, focuses on the phrase, “this day,” because the phrase “this day” parallels Divine service in which a person's identity remains intact; indeed, he even expresses himself, but that self-expression is subsumed in his commitment to G-d's will. Such service represents a more consummate expression of *bittul*.

9. *Shabbos* 88a.

10. The *maamar* entitled *BeShaah Shehikdimu*, *Sefer HaMaamarim* 5629, p. 184ff.

11. *Berachos* 13a.



yoke of *mitzvos* is identified with the Divine service of *shov*, “return,” the commitment to carry out G-d’s will within the context of the framework of our world. Just as in a *ratzo veshov* synergy, the longing of *ratzo* must come before the downward focus of *shov*, so too must the acceptance of the yoke of *mitzvos* be preceded by the acceptance of the yoke of the kingdom of Heaven.

This explanation resolves the difficulty regarding the crowns the angels gave the Jews: Placing a crown is placed above a person’s head indicates a transcendent quality that surpasses his conscious potentials. The two crowns that the angels granted the Jews correspond to the commitments of *naaseh* and *nishma* respectively. However in order that the Divine service of *shov* (*nishma*) be worthy of a crown, i.e., that it draw down a transcendent Divine light, it must be preceded by *ratzo* (*naaseh*). Only then is the person’s involvement in the world (*shov*) an extension of his acceptance of G-d’s Kingship, for then it reflects his commitment to fulfilling G-d’s desire for a dwelling on this earthly plane.

## WHEN MAN BECOMES MORE THAN HIMSELF

Just as in a *ratzo veshov* motif, the ultimate intent in the upward thrust of *ratzo* is that it be complemented by the thrust of *shov*, so too with regard to the relationship between *naaseh* (the acceptance of the yoke of the Kingship of Heaven) and *nishma* (the acceptance of the yoke of G-d’s *mitzvos*): the ultimate intent of *naaseh* is that it lead to *nishma*. By integrating the two thrusts a person complements his Divine service of *naaseh*, providing it with a tether to the structures of this world. Moreover, by doing so, he expands the scope of the *bittul* that service represents.

In and of itself, *naaseh* represents man’s desire for self-transcendence. Nevertheless, even when a man realizes the need for – and desires – self-transcendence, he will not know how to translate that realization and desire into concrete activity. For on his own initiative, man – a limited human being – can never see beyond his own horizons. By harnessing his commitment to self-transcendence (*naaseh*) to the acceptance of the yoke of G-d’s *mitzvos* (*nishma*), a person steps beyond the limits of his human capacities and becomes G-d’s partner in establishing a dwelling on this lowly plane.

In the process of doing so, the person also expands his individual scope. For in this endeavor, he infuses the all-encompassing *bittul* of *naaseh* into the realm of his own identity, thereby aligning his conscious powers with G-d’s essential intent.

## THE POWER TO SERVE

This fusion of opposites – the fact that a person can simultaneously possess an individual identity and subsume it entirely in his commitment to carry out G-d's will – is possible only as a result of influence from G-d's Essence. At Sinai, G-d “spoke to [the Jews] face to face.”<sup>12</sup> *Panim*, literally translated as “face,” can also be understood as meaning “inner dimension.” When He gave the Jews the Torah, G-d imparted His innermost dimension to the Jewish people, infusing them with the potential to carry out the service described above.<sup>13</sup>

Every year on *Shavuot*, this infusion of Divine power is renewed, granting the Jews the potential to dedicate themselves to G-d's service with new vitality and energy.

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12. *Devarim* 5:4.

13. See *Likkutei Torah, Bamidbar*, p. 18b, c, *et al.*

(א) **בחודש** השלישי לצאת בני ישראל מארץ מצרים ביום הזה באו מדבר סיני,<sup>1</sup> ואיתא בגמרא,<sup>2</sup> כתיב הכא ביום הזה באו מדבר סיני וכתוב התם החודש הזה לכם ראש חדשים, מה להלן ראש חודש אף כאן ראש חודש. והקשו בתוספות,<sup>3</sup> דבמס' פסחים איתא (עה"פ) וידבר ה' אל משה במדבר סיני בשנה השנית גו' בחודש הראשון), אתיא מדבר ממדבר, כתיב הכא במדבר סיני וכתוב התם וידבר ה' אל משה

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**בַּחֹדֶשׁ הַשְּׁלִישִׁי לְצֵאת בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם בַּיּוֹם הַזֶּה בָּאוּ מִדְבַּר סִינַי, וְאֵתָא בְּגִמְרָא, כְּתִיב הֵכָא בַּיּוֹם הַזֶּה בָּאוּ מִדְבַּר סִינַי, וְכְתִיב הֵתָם הַחֹדֶשׁ הַזֶּה לָכֶם רֹאשׁ חֲדָשִׁים, מַה לְהֵלֵן רֹאשׁ חֹדֶשׁ אִף כֹּאן רֹאשׁ חֹדֶשׁ. וְהִקְשׁוּ בְּתוֹסְפוֹת, דְּבַמְס' פְּסִיחִים אֵיתָא (ע"ה"פ) וַיְדַבֵּר ה' אֶל מֹשֶׁה בַּמִּדְבָּר סִינַי בַּשָּׁנָה הַשֵּׁנִית גו' בַּחֹדֶשׁ הָרִאשׁוֹן), אֵתִיא מִדְבַּר מִמְּדְבַר, כְּתִיב הֵכָא בַּמִּדְבָּר סִינַי וְכְתִיב הֵתָם וַיְדַבֵּר ה' אֶל מֹשֶׁה** **"In the third month after the exodus of the Children of Israel from the land of Egypt, on this day, they came to the Sinai desert."**<sup>1</sup>

**וְאֵתָא בְּגִמְרָא, כְּתִיב הֵכָא בַּיּוֹם הַזֶּה בָּאוּ מִדְבַּר סִינַי, וְכְתִיב הֵתָם הַחֹדֶשׁ הַזֶּה לָכֶם רֹאשׁ חֲדָשִׁים, מַה לְהֵלֵן רֹאשׁ חֹדֶשׁ אִף כֹּאן רֹאשׁ חֹדֶשׁ. וְהִקְשׁוּ בְּתוֹסְפוֹת, דְּבַמְס' פְּסִיחִים אֵיתָא (ע"ה"פ) וַיְדַבֵּר ה' אֶל מֹשֶׁה בַּמִּדְבָּר סִינַי בַּשָּׁנָה הַשֵּׁנִית גו' בַּחֹדֶשׁ הָרִאשׁוֹן), אֵתִיא מִדְבַר מִמְּדְבַר, כְּתִיב הֵכָא בַּמִּדְבָּר סִינַי וְכְתִיב הֵתָם וַיְדַבֵּר ה' אֶל מֹשֶׁה** From this verse, our Sages derive that our ancestors entered the Sinai desert on *Rosh Chodesh Sivan* in preparation for the Giving of the Torah, as **the Gemara states,**<sup>2</sup> **"This verse states, 'On this day (bayom hazeh), they came to the Sinai desert,'**

**וְכְתִיב הֵתָם הַחֹדֶשׁ הַזֶּה לָכֶם רֹאשׁ חֲדָשִׁים, מַה לְהֵלֵן רֹאשׁ חֹדֶשׁ אִף כֹּאן רֹאשׁ חֹדֶשׁ. וְהִקְשׁוּ בְּתוֹסְפוֹת, דְּבַמְס' פְּסִיחִים אֵיתָא (ע"ה"פ) וַיְדַבֵּר ה' אֶל מֹשֶׁה בַּמִּדְבָּר סִינַי בַּשָּׁנָה הַשֵּׁנִית גו' בַּחֹדֶשׁ הָרִאשׁוֹן), אֵתִיא מִדְבַר מִמְּדְבַר, כְּתִיב הֵכָא בַּמִּדְבָּר סִינַי וְכְתִיב הֵתָם וַיְדַבֵּר ה' אֶל מֹשֶׁה** and elsewhere, it is written,<sup>3</sup> **"This month (hachodesh hazeh) will be for you the beginning of the months."**

**מַה לְהֵלֵן רֹאשׁ חֹדֶשׁ אִף כֹּאן רֹאשׁ חֹדֶשׁ. וְהִקְשׁוּ בְּתוֹסְפוֹת, דְּבַמְס' פְּסִיחִים אֵיתָא (ע"ה"פ) וַיְדַבֵּר ה' אֶל מֹשֶׁה בַּמִּדְבָּר סִינַי בַּשָּׁנָה הַשֵּׁנִית גו' בַּחֹדֶשׁ הָרִאשׁוֹן), אֵתִיא מִדְבַר מִמְּדְבַר, כְּתִיב הֵכָא בַּמִּדְבָּר סִינַי וְכְתִיב הֵתָם וַיְדַבֵּר ה' אֶל מֹשֶׁה** Just as the latter verse refers to *Rosh Chodesh*, so too is the former verse referring to *Rosh Chodesh*,<sup>4</sup> the birth of the new moon.<sup>5</sup>

The Talmud is employing the principle of exegesis known as *gezeirah shavah*<sup>5</sup> to teach that the Children of Israel arrived at the Sinai desert on *Rosh Chodesh*.

1. *Shmos* 19:1.

2. *Shabbos* 86b.

3. *Shmos* 12:2.

4. Indeed, this verse is the source from which the *mitzvah* to consecrate the new moon is derived (*Rosh HaShanah* 20a). As will be explained later in the *maamar*, the Divine service associated with *Rosh Chodesh* is intrinsically connected with the Giving of the Torah.

5. An analogy derived by the Torah's use of the identical word in two different verses, one of the Thirteen Principles of Interpretation delineated by Rabbi Yishmael (Introduction to *Sifra*).

במדבר סיני באוהל מועד באחד לחודש השני, מה להלן בר"ח אף כאן בר"ח, וכיון שגם בפסוק בחודש השלישי כתיב מדבר, אמאי לא יליף הכא מדבר ממדבר. וצריך להבין,

והקשו בתוספות, בדבמסכת פסחים איתא (על הפסוק וידבר ה' אל משה במדבר סיני בשנה השנית גו' בחודש הראשון), *Tosafos* raise a question regarding this teaching, suggesting that it would have been preferable to derive this concept from another source:<sup>6</sup> In Tractate *Pesachim*<sup>7</sup> (concerning the verse,<sup>8</sup> "G-d spoke to Moshe in the Sinai desert in the second year... in the first month");

אתיא מדבר ממדבר, our Sages derive that the verse is referring to *Rosh Chodesh* through the same principle of exegesis, but based on a different word, the word *midbar*, "desert," that is used in two verses.

כתיב הכא במדבר סיני In the verse under discussion, it is written,<sup>8</sup> "In the Sinai desert,"

וכתיב התם וידבר ה' אל משה במדבר סיני באהל מועד באחד לחודש השני, and in another verse, it is written,<sup>9</sup> "G-d spoke to Moshe in the Sinai desert, in the Tent of Meeting, on the first of the second month."

מה להלן בראש חודש אף כאן בראש חודש, Just as the latter verse is referring to *Rosh Chodesh*,<sup>10</sup> so too is the former verse referring to *Rosh Chodesh*.

וכיון שגם בפסוק בחודש השלישי כתיב מדבר, *Tosafos* ask: Since the verse "In the third month..." also contains the word *midbar*, "desert,"

אמאי לא יליף הכא מדבר ממדבר, why didn't our Sages derive that this verse, too, is referring to *Rosh Chodesh* on the basis of the *gezeirah shavah* stemming from the use of the word *midbar* in both verses?

וצריך להבין, *Tosafos'* question requires explanation:

6. S.v. *veksiv, Shabbos*, loc. cit.; see also *Tosafos*, s.v., *mimai, Pesachim* 6b.

7. *Pesachim*, op. cit.

8. *Bamidbar* 9:1, regarding the commandment to offer the Paschal sacrifice in the desert.

9. *Ibid.*, 1:1, regarding the commandment to conduct a census of the Jewish people.

10. Since it specifically says "on the first of the second month."

דלכאורה, הילפותא מהגז"ש הזה הזה מגלה שפירוש ביום הזה הוא בר"ח, משא"כ באם היו למדין מהגז"ש מדבר מדבר [שהלימוד הוא רק שהענין שנאמר בכתוב (באו מדבר סיני) הי' בר"ח] לא הי' מובן הפירוש דביום הזה [ועוד יתרון בהגז"ש הזה הזה על הגז"ש מדבר מדבר, כי החודש הזה פירושו הוא ר"ח, משא"כ מדבר סיני ואחד

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Seemingly, the derivation of the meaning of the verse through the *gezeirah shavah* based on the use of the word *hazeh* is preferable, for it demonstrates that the meaning of the phrase *bayom hazeh* is *Rosh Chodesh*.

מה שאין כן באם הי' למדין מהגז"ש מדבר מדבר [שהלימוד הוא רק שהענין שנאמר בכתוב (באו מדבר סיני) הי' בר"ח] לא הי' מובן הפירוש דביום הזה [ועוד יתרון בהגז"ש הזה הזה על הגז"ש מדבר מדבר, כי החודש הזה פירושו הוא ר"ח, משא"כ מדבר סיני ואחד

If, in contrast, the reference to *Rosh Chodesh* would be derived through the *gezeirah shavah* based on the use of the word *midbar*, [in which instance the *gezeirah shavah* would teach only that the event mentioned in the verse (the Jews' arrival at the Sinai desert) took place on *Rosh Chodesh*],

לא הי' מובן הפירוש דביום הזה [ועוד יתרון בהגז"ש הזה הזה על הגז"ש מדבר מדבר, כי החודש הזה פירושו הוא ר"ח, משא"כ מדבר סיני ואחד

then the meaning of the phrase *bayom hazeh* would not be understood as explicitly referring to *Rosh Chodesh*.

In contrast to the *gezeirah shavah* based on the word *midbar*, the *gezeirah shavah* based on the word *hazeh* focuses on the meaning of the phrase *bayom hazeh*, "on this day," defining the day itself as *Rosh Chodesh*.

[There is an additional advantage to the *gezeirah shavah* based on the word *hazeh* over the *gezeirah shavah* based on the word *midbar*:

כי החודש הזה פירושו הוא ראש חודש, [ועוד יתרון בהגז"ש הזה הזה על הגז"ש מדבר מדבר, כי החודש הזה פירושו הוא ר"ח, משא"כ מדבר סיני ואחד

For the meaning of the phrase *hachodesh hazeh* is *Rosh Chodesh*;<sup>11</sup> that is the intent of the word itself that forms the basis of the *gezeirah shavah*.

מה שאין כן מדבר סיני ואחד לחודש (ראש חודש) הם שני ענינים,

By contrast, in the other phrase, *bamidbar Sinai*, "the Sinai desert," the term that serves as the basis

11. See note 13 below.



לחודש (ר"ח) הם שני ענינים<sup>ט</sup>, ומהי סברת התוספות דהוה לי' למילף מדבר ממדבר.

of that *gezeirah shavah*, and “on the first of the month, (which refers to *Rosh Chodesh*), are two discrete matters.”<sup>12</sup>

ומהי סברת התוספות דהוה ליה למילף מדבר ממדבר. What, then, is the basis for *Tosafos*' reasoning that the interpretation of the verse should have been derived from the *gezeirah shavah* based on the word *midbar*?<sup>13</sup>

## SUMMARY

Our Sages derive that the phrase “on this day” in the verse “In the third month after the exodus of the Children of Israel from the land of Egypt, on this day, they came to the Sinai desert,” refers to *Rosh Chodesh*, based on a *gezeirah shavah* that associates the above verse with the verse, “This month will be for you the beginning of the months.” In their gloss to this passage, *Tosafos* raise a question, stating that it seemingly would have been preferable to derive that concept from a *gezeirah shavah* based on the verse “G-d spoke to Moshe in the Sinai desert in the Tent of Meeting, on the first of the month.”

*Tosafos*' question is problematic because there is an obvious advantage to the *gezeirah shavah* based on the verse, “This month will be for you the beginning of the months.” It reveals that the meaning of the term “this day” itself is *Rosh Chodesh*. What, then, is the basis for *Tosafos*' question?

12. The difference is borne out by comparing the wording of the text in *Pesachim*, loc. cit., “Just as the latter verse is speaking of an event that occurred on *Rosh Chodesh*,” to that in *Shabbos*, loc. cit., “Just as the latter verse is referring to *Rosh Chodesh*, so too is the former verse referring to *Rosh Chodesh*.” It is possible to explain that (after the concept is derived through the *gezeirah shavah*) it becomes evident that both phrases, *hachodesh hazeh* and *bayom hazeh*, are referring to *Rosh Chodesh*. By contrast, *bemidbar Sinai* is not referring to *Rosh Chodesh*; it merely relates an event that occurred on *Rosh Chodesh*.

13. True, the verse, “G-d spoke... in the Sinai desert (*bemidbar Sinai*)...” specifically mentions “on the first of the month,” i.e., *Rosh Chodesh*, while the verse that mentions *bachodesh hazeh* does not specifically mention *Rosh Chodesh*. Nevertheless, the proof that the intent is *Rosh Chodesh* is the statement of the *Midrash* that “the Holy One, blessed be He, showed Moshe the new moon, pointing with His finger, as it were” (as *Tosafos* writes in *Shabbos*, loc. cit.). Thus, it is the simple meaning of the text (as reflected in *Rashi*'s commentary to the verse in *Shmos*).

(ב) ויובן זה ע"פ המבואר בתו"א ד"ה זה"א, דעיקר"י קבלת התורה הוא כמ"ש (בהתחלת הענין דמ"ת"י) וידבר אלקים את כל הדברים האלה לאמר,

— 2 —

Rather than seek to resolve the question concerning *Tosafos*' query mentioned in the previous section according to the traditional pattern of Torah scholarship, the *maamar* explains that it can be resolved through an understanding of the implications of the Giving of the Torah in our Divine service.

ויובן זה The above question can be resolved<sup>1</sup>

על פי המבאר בתורה based on an analysis of the concepts explained in  
אור דבור המתחיל זה, the *maamar* entitled *BaChodesh HaShilishi in Torah Or*.<sup>2</sup>

דעקר קבלת התורה That source explains that the fundamental dimension of receiving the Torah<sup>3</sup> is reflected in the  
הוא כמו שכתוב verse

(בהתחלת הענין) (appearing at the beginning of the account of the  
דמתן תורה) Giving of the Torah):<sup>4</sup>

וידבר אלקים את כל "G-d spoke all these words, saying...."  
הדברים האלה לאמר,

The word *leimor*, usually translated as "saying," is actually the infinitive meaning "to say." Accordingly, throughout the Torah, *leimor* is understood as a command to convey G-d's message to others. Here, however, this cannot be the case, for all the Jewish people were present at the Giving of the Torah; were even one Jew to have been missing, the Torah would not have been given.<sup>5</sup> Nor can *leimor* be understood as a command for the people to communicate the Torah to their descendants, for the souls of all future generations were also in attendance at Sinai.<sup>6</sup>

1. The explanation of the resolution of this question continues until the end of sec. 6.

2. *Torah Or*, p. 66c ff. (The *maamar* also appears with the *Tzemach Tzedek*'s glosses in *Or HaTorah, Shmos*, Vol. 3, p. 772ff. and Vol. 8, p. 2975ff.) See also the *Hosafos to Torah Or*, p. 108c ff. See also the *maamarim* entitled *BaChodesh HaShilishi* in *Sefer HaMaamarim* 5567, p. 146ff., *Toras Chayim, Shmos*, p. 366b. ff. (in the latest edition, *Shmos*, Vol. 2, p. 251ff.), *Sefer HaMaamarim* 5655, p. 88ff., et al.

3. See *Torah Or*, p. 67b. See sec. 10, footnote 1.

4. *Shmos* 20:1.

5. *Mechilta, Yisro* 19:11; *Devarim Rabbah* 7:8.

6. *Shmos Rabbah* 28:6.

דפירוש תיבת לאמר בפסוק זה הוא שבשעת מתן תורה ניתן הכח לכל אחד מישראל, שלימוד התורה שלו [כל הדברים האלה, שקאי גם על כל התורה כולה] יהי באופן דלאמר, לחזור הדברים שהקב"ה אומר, כמ"ש ש"י תען לשוני אמרתך, שהתורה היא אמרתך, שלשוני תען כעונה אחר האומר. וזוהי השייכות דמתן תורה לחג השבועות,

דפירוש תב"ת לאמר בפסוק זה הוא	The meaning of the word <i>leimor</i> in this verse must therefore be interpreted differently. Here, the word <i>leimor</i> implies
שבשעת מתן תורה נתן הפ"ח לכל אחד מישראל,	that at the time of the Giving of the Torah, every Jew was granted the potential
שלימוד התורה שלו	that his Torah study,
[כל הדברים האלה, שקאי גם על כל התורה כלה]	[which is alluded to in the above verse by the phrase "all these words," which refers to the entire Torah,] <sup>7</sup>
יהיה באופן דלאמר,	should be carried out in the manner implied by the word <i>leimor</i> ,
לחזור הדברים שהקדוש ברוך הוא אומר,	i.e., to repeat the words that the Holy One, blessed be He, says. When studying the Torah, a Jew should realize that he is not speaking his own words, but merely repeating G-d's words,
כמו שכתוב תען לשוני אמרתך,	as reflected in the verse, <sup>8</sup> "My tongue will repeat Your sayings." <i>Ta'an</i> , translated as "repeat," is used to refer to the manner in which a chorus repeats what the leader says; so too
שהתורה היא אמרתך,	The Torah is "Your sayings"
שלשוני תען כעונה אחר האומר.	that "My tongue will repeat," i.e., repeating the words that the Reader, G-d, speaks.
וזוהי השייכות דמתן תורה לחג השבועות,	The above concepts can be understood based on an explanation of the connection between the Giving of the Torah and the festival of Shavuot.

7. See the *maamar* entitled *Vay'daber... Anochi*, 5728, sec. 1 (*Toras Menachem, Sefer HaMaamarim Melukat*, Vol. 3, p. 326), and the sources mentioned there.

8. *Tehillim* 119:172.

דבחג השבועות הוא המשכת הכתר ןוכידוע<sup>9</sup> בפירוש הכתוב<sup>10</sup> תספרו חמישים יום, שבחג השבועות נמשך שער הנו"ן דבינה, ושער הנו"ן הוא הכתר<sup>11</sup>],

Shavuot differs from all the other Jewish festivals in that it is the only one concerning which the Torah does not mention a specific date on which it is to be celebrated. Instead, its observance is dependent on the conclusion of the Counting of the *Omer*. The 6th of the month of Sivan is the anniversary of the Giving of the Torah. Although in the present era<sup>9</sup> our celebration of the festival of Shavuot links the two events together, according to Scriptural Law, they are not necessarily connected. Thematically, however, there is a clear relationship between the two, as reflected in the correlation between the mystical influences they both convey.<sup>10</sup>

דבחג השבועות הוא  
המשכת הכתר The rung of *Kesser*, “the Crown,” the source of the world of *Atzilus*,<sup>11</sup> is drawn down on the holiday of Shavuot,

ןוכידוע בפרוש הפתוי  
תספרו חמשים יום, [as indicated by the well-known interpretation<sup>12</sup> of the verse,<sup>13</sup> “You shall count 50 days...”

שבחג השבועות נמשך  
שער הנו"ן דבינה, On the holiday of Shavuot, the 50th Gate of Understanding is drawn down

ושער הנו"ן הוא הכתר], and the 50th Gate is identified with the rung of *Kesser*.]<sup>14</sup>

As will be explained shortly, the revelation of *Kesser* brought about the potential for the Jewish people to study the Torah in a manner characterized by the utter *bittul* implied by the term *leimor*.

9. I.e., as explained in the Alter Rebbe's *Shulchan Aruch*, sec. 494:1, in the present era, we follow a fixed calendar, and the Sages ordained that Shavuot always be celebrated on that date. By contrast, in the era when the monthly calendar was established by the testimony of witnesses with regard to the sighting of the moon, Shavuot, the fiftieth day of the *Omer*, could also fall on the fifth of Sivan (if both Nissan and Iyar were months of 30 days) or on the seventh of that month (if both Nissan and Iyar were months of 29 days).

10. The explanation of these mystical influences will enrich the understanding of the concept of *leimor* explained previously: that when studying the Torah, a Jew should feel that he is not speaking his own words, but merely repeating G-d's words.

11. *Kesser* is the source from which the *Sefiros* of *Atzilus* emanate. At times, it is reckoned as the first of those *Sefiros*. In *Chabad Chassidus*, however, it is most often understood as being above the realm of *Atzilus*.

12. *Likkutei Torah, Bamidbar*, p. 12a, et al.

13. *Vayikra* 23:16.

14. *Likkutei Torah, loc. cit.*; see also the *Hosafos to Torah Or*, p. 109c.

To focus on the uniqueness of the rung of *Kesser*: Our Sages<sup>15</sup> speak of 50 Gates of Understanding, relating that: "Fifty Gates of Understanding were created in the world. They were all given to Moshe except for one, as [alluded to by] the verse:<sup>16</sup> 'You have made him only a bit less than G-d.'"

As will be explained in the following section, the seven weeks of the Counting of the *Omer* correlate with G-d's seven emotive attributes. The first week corresponds to the attribute of *Chessed*, the second week, to the attribute of *Gevurah*, etc., until the final week, which corresponds to the attribute of *Malchus*.

Each week is associated with the revelation of one of these emotive attributes from Above, and similarly, man's efforts to refine and develop his expression of that emotional quality within his own character.

More particularly, 49 is the product of  $7 \times 7$ , for each of the seven emotive attributes is complemented and reaches its full potential by incorporating all the other six.<sup>17</sup> Just as our human emotions emanate from our intellectual faculties, so too are the sublime emotive qualities rooted in the sublime intellectual attributes. The 49 Gates of Understanding granted to Moshe represent the source of the sublime emotive qualities as they exist within the *Sefirah* of *Binah*. Since our world is brought into being from these emotive qualities and their source within *Binah*,<sup>18</sup> these "Gates" can be accessed by our human potential.

The 50th Gate, by contrast, is a unique G-dly quality: the *Sefirah* of *Binah* as it exists unto itself, which transcends any connection to the sublime emotive qualities. More particularly, the 50th Gate is identified with the inner dimension of *Binah*, which brings about the bond between *Chochmah* and *Binah*. The potential to bring together *Chochmah* and *Binah* – *sefiros* that are characterized by opposite tendencies – indicates that this rung is connected with G-d's infinite dimension, for it is only through that infinite potential that opposites can be brought together. And that infinite potential is vested in *Kesser*, as will be explained.

Shavuot is the 50th day after Pesach. *Chassidus* explains<sup>19</sup> that these 50 days parallel the 50 Gates of Understanding. On each of these 50 days, an additional, loftier Gate of Understanding is drawn down, culminating on the holiday of Shavuot when the 50th Gate is drawn down.

To connect this idea to the concepts explained previously:

15. *Rosh HaShanah* 21b.

16. *Tehillim* 8:6, translated according to the context of that Talmudic passage.

17. This is reflected in the passage *Ribono shel olam* recited every night after counting the *Omer* which speaks of *chessed shebeched* (the *chessed* of *chessed*), *gevurah shebeched* (the *gevurah* of *chessed*), etc.

18. See *Likkutei Torah*, *Bamidbar* p. 10d; *Sefer HaMaamarim* 5701, p. 12; *Toras Menachem*, *Sefer HaMaamarim Melukat*, Vol. 3, p. 147ff. See also the series of *maamarim* entitled *BeShaah SheHikdimu*, 5672, Vol. 2, p. 606ff.

19. *Likkutei Torah*, *loc. cit.*, p. 10b.



וזה שבמ"ת ניתן הכח שלימוד התורה דישראל יהי' בתכלית הביטול, שאינו מציאות לעצמו כלל והוא רק כעונה אחר הקורא, הוא לפי שבמ"ת נמשך גילוי הכתר. וזהו בחודש השלישי גו' ביום הזה באו מדבר סיני, שבר"ח סיון היתה ההכנה לקבלת התורה, כי בר"ח הוא מולד הלבנה, שאז (בעת המולד) היא נקודה בלבד, וזה מורה

וְזֶה שְׁבִמְתֵּן תּוֹרָה נִתֵּן הַפֶּחַ שְׁלִמּוֹד הַתּוֹרָה דִּישְׂרָאֵל יִהְיֶה בְּתַכְלִית הַבִּטּוּל, שְׁאִינוּ מְצִיאוֹת לְעֶצְמוֹ כָּלֵל

The potential that was granted at the Giving of the Torah for the Jewish people to study the Torah in a manner characterized by utter *bittul*, without being at all conscious of their own identities,

וְהוּא רַק כְּעוֹנָה אַחֵר הַקּוֹרֵא, but merely, "responding after the Reader" (as explained above with regard to the Divine service implied by the term *leimor*),

הוּא לְפִי שְׁבִמְתֵּן תּוֹרָה נִמְשָׁךְ גִּלּוֹי הַכֶּתֶר. resulted from the spiritual transformation brought about by the Giving of the Torah, the fact that the rung of *Kesser*, the utterly infinite dimension of G-dliness, was drawn down and revealed.

The revelation of this level of G-dliness called forth a spontaneous response of *bittul* on the part of the Jewish people. To quote the narrative:<sup>20</sup> "The people saw and shuddered, and stood at a distance."

וְזֶהוּ בַּחֲדָשׁ הַשְּׁלִישִׁי גו' בְּיוֹם הַזֶּה בָּאוּ מִדְּבַר סִינִי, On this basis, we can understand the verse. "In the third month... on this day, they came to the Sinai desert."

שְׁבִרְאשׁ חֹדֶשׁ סִיוָן הָיְתָה, הַהֲכָנָה לְקַבֵּלֶת הַתּוֹרָה, On *Rosh Chodesh* Sivan, the final stages of preparation to receive the Torah began,

כִּי בְּרֹאשׁ חֹדֶשׁ הוּא מוֹלֵד הַלְבָנָה, because *Rosh Chodesh* reflects the birth of the new moon.<sup>21</sup>

שְׁאֵז (בְּעֵת הַמּוֹלָד) הִיא נִקְדָּה בְּלִבָּד, Then (at the time of the birth of the new moon) the moon is only a point,

20. *Shmos* 20:15.

21. As the *maamar* proceeds to explain, through understanding the spiritual service of *Rosh Chodesh*, the question raised in sec. 1 will be resolved,

על הביטול שלה, דלית לה מגרמה כלום<sup>ט</sup>. וכן הוא בישראל שדומין ומונין ללבנה<sup>כ</sup>, שבר"ח הוא זמן המוכשר לגלות כח הביטול שישנו בכ"א מישראל. ולכן בר"ח סיון הוא ההכנה לקבלת התורה, שלימוד התורה דהאדם יהי' בביטול, כעונה אחר הקורא.

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וְזֶה מוֹרָה עַל הַבִּטּוּל שֶׁלָּהּ, which highlights the *bittul* with which it is characterized,

דְּלִית לָהּ מִגְרָמָה כָּלוּם. as the *Zohar* states:<sup>22</sup> “It has nothing of its own,”

In a literal sense, this means that the moon does not generate light; it merely reflects the light of the sun.

וְכֵן הוּא בִּישְׂרָאֵל A similar concept applies with regard to the Jewish people,

שְׂדוּמִין וּמוֹנִין לְלִבְנָה, “who resemble the moon and who structure their calendar according to the moon.”<sup>23</sup> They, like the moon, are fundamentally characterized by *bittul*.

שְׁבִרָאשׁ חֲדָשׁ הוּא זְמַן הַמְּכַשֵּׁר לְגִלּוֹת כֹּחַ הַבִּטּוּל שֶׁיִּשְׁנֻ בְּכָל אֶחָד מִיִּשְׂרָאֵל. *Rosh Chodesh* is the befitting time to reveal the power of *bittul* possessed by every Jew.

וְלִכֵּן בְּרָאשׁ חֲדָשׁ סִינַן הוּא הַהֲכָנָה לְקַבֵּל תּוֹרָה, Therefore, *Rosh Chodesh* Sivan served as a preparatory stage for receiving the Torah.

*Chassidus* explains that it is desirable that the revelation of G-d's light be drawn down through man's Divine service, and, moreover, that the Divine service that draws down His light be representative of the light that is drawn down. Since essential G-dliness, which evokes utter *bittul*, was drawn down at the Giving of the Torah, man's preparation to receive that revelation was the Divine service associated with *Rosh Chodesh* Sivan. This process enabled

שְׁלִמּוּד הַתּוֹרָה דְּהַאָדָם יִהְיֶה בְּבִטּוּל, man's subsequent study of the Torah to be characterized by *bittul*;

כְּעוֹנָה אַחֵר הַקּוֹרֵא. that the person studying the Torah would be like one merely repeating the words of the Reader.

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22. *Zohar*, Vol. I, p. 181a. See also *ibid.*, pp. 33b, 249b, Vol. 2, pp. 145b, 115a, Vol. 3, p. 113b, *et al.*

23. *Sukkah* 29a, *Bereishis Rabbah* 6:3.

## SUMMARY

The question regarding *Tsafos'* query raised at the beginning of the *maamar* can be resolved based on an analysis of the implications of the Giving of the Torah in our Divine service. The account of the Giving of the Torah begins: "G-d then spoke all these words, saying...." *Leimor*, translated as "saying," implies that when a Jew studies the Torah he is not speaking his own words, but merely repeating G-d's words, as reflected by the verse, "My tongue will repeat Your sayings"; he is merely repeating the words that the Reader, G-d, speaks.

This reflects the connection between the Giving of the Torah and the festival of Shavuos. On Shavuos, the rung of *Kesser* is drawn down. The revelation of *Kesser* calls forth a spontaneous response of *bittul* on the part of the Jewish people.

On this basis, we can understand the verse: "In the third month... on this day, they came to the Sinai desert." *Rosh Chodesh* Sivan began the final stages of preparation to receive the Torah, because *Rosh Chodesh* reflects the birth of the new moon. At the birth of the new moon, the moon is only a point, which highlights the *bittul* with which the moon's light shines.

A similar concept applies with regard to the Jewish people: *Rosh Chodesh* is the appropriate time to reveal the power of *bittul* possessed by every Jew. Therefore, *Rosh Chodesh* Sivan served as a preparatory stage for receiving the Torah, for man's study of the Torah must be characterized by *bittul*. He should be like one who is merely repeating the words of the Reader.

ג) וממשיך בהמאמר עוד ביאור בזה שבר"ח סיון הוא ההכנה לקבלת התורה, דבצאת ישראל ממצרים התחילו לספור ספירת העומר<sup>1</sup>, שהיא הכנה לקבלת התורה, וז' השבועות דספירת העומר (שבעה שבועות תספור לך<sup>2</sup>) הם כנגד ז' המדות, ובר"ח סיון שהוא יום הג' דשבוע הז' ישנם כבר ג' המדות חג"ת

— 3 —

וממשיך בהמאמר עוד  
ביאור בזה שבראש  
חדש סיון הוא ההכנה  
לקבלת התורה, The *maamar* proceeds to offer another explanation why *Rosh Chodesh Sivan* served as the beginning of the final stage of the Jewish people's preparation for receiving the Torah:

דבצאת ישראל  
ממצרים התחילו  
לספור ספירת העומר, After the exodus of the Jewish people from Egypt, they began counting the *Omer*,

This is the wording in *Torah Or*. True, the actual *mitzvah* of the Counting of the *Omer* was commanded only at a later stage. Nevertheless, it is possible to explain that the intent is the spiritual service that is the counterpart of that *mitzvah*.

שהיא הכנה לקבלת  
התורה, which served as preparation for receiving the Torah.

וז' השבועות דספירת העומר The seven weeks of the Counting of the *Omer*

(שבעה שבועות תספור לך) (as it is written,<sup>1</sup> "You shall count seven weeks,")

הם כנגד ז' המדות, correspond to the seven emotive attributes.

As explained in the previous section, each week is associated both with the revelation of one of these emotive attributes from Above, and similarly, with man's efforts to refine and develop the expression of that emotional attribute within his own character.

ובראש חדש סיון שהוא  
יום הג' דשבוע הז' On *Rosh Chodesh Sivan*, the third day of the seventh week,

ישנם כבר ג' המדות  
חסד גבורה תפארת the Divine service associated with the first three emotive attributes – *Chessed*, *Gevurah*, and *Tiferes* – has already been completed

1. *Devarim* 16:9.

(שהם עיקרי המדות) דספירת המלכות, וכאילו שישנו כבר כל שבוע הז', ולכן בר"ח סיון באו מדבר סיני כי אז נשלם עיקר ההכנה למ"ת.

ויש לומר, דזה שמבאר בהמאמר שני ביאורים בזה שבר"ח סיון הוא ההכנה לקבלת התורה, הוא, כי בההכנה לקבלת התורה שני ענינים. השלימות דהאדם,

(שֵׁהֶם עִקְרֵי הַמִּדּוֹת) (these being the primary emotive attributes)

As explained in *Chassidus*,<sup>2</sup> all the other emotive attributes derive from these three.

דְּסִפִּירַת הַמַּלְכוּת, of the *Sefirah* of *Malchus*, which is the *Sefirah* associated with the seventh week of the Counting of the *Omer*.

וְכֵאלוּ שֵׁשְׁנֵנוּ כָּכָר, Thus, it is as if the entire Divine service to be carried out in the seventh week has already been completed. Hence, man's efforts to refine his character are considered to have been consummated by this day.

וְלִכֵּן בְּרֹאשׁ חֹדֶשׁ סִיּוֹן, Therefore, on *Rosh Chodesh Sivan*, the Jewish people "came to the Sinai desert," i.e., they were ready to receive the Torah,

כִּי אָז נִשְׁלַם עֶקֶר הַהִכָּנָה לְמַתֵּן תּוֹרָה. for it was then, with the refinement of these seven emotional attributes, that the fundamental preparation for the Giving of the Torah was completed.

וְיֵשׁ לִוְמַר, דְּזֶה שֶׁמְבָאֵר בְּהַמָּאֵמֶר שְׁנֵי בִּיאוּרִים בְּזֶה שֶׁבְּרֹאשׁ חֹדֶשׁ סִיּוֹן הוּא הַהִכָּנָה לְקַבֵּל תּוֹרָה, It is possible to explain that the reason that the *maamar* in *Torah Or* offers two explanations why *Rosh Chodesh Sivan* represents the final stage in preparing for receiving the Torah<sup>3</sup>

הוּא, כִּי בְּהִתְקַנָּה לְקַבֵּל תּוֹרָה שְׁנֵי עֲנִינִים. is because there are two distinct aspects necessary in man's preparation to receive the Torah:

הַשְּׁלִימוּת דְּהָאָדָם, a) that man reach a state of *shleimus*, "perfection,"

2. See *Tanya*, ch. 3; *Likkutei Sichos*, Vol. 24, p. 119.

3. a) because *Rosh Chodesh* emphasizes the quality of *bittul*, and

b) because the fundamental dimension of the spiritual service of the Counting of the *Omer* was completed then.



שבכדי שיהי' ראוי לקבל התורה צריך להיות בתכלית השלימות<sup>4</sup>. והביטול שלו. דכיון שהתורה היא למעלה באין ערוך מהאדם (במכ"ש מזה שהיא למעלה מעולמות העליונים), לכן, כאשר האדם הוא מציאות, המציאות שלו היא (כמו) היפך התורה<sup>5</sup>, ובכדי שהאדם יקבל את התורה הוא ע"י הביטול שלו.

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שִׁבְכְּדִי שִׁיְהִיָּה רָאוּי לְקַבֵּל הַתּוֹרָה צָרִיךְ לְהִיטֵל בְּתַכְלִית הַשְּׁלֵמוֹת. for to be fit to accept the Torah, man must reach a state of ultimate perfection;

Our Sages<sup>4</sup> thus quote G-d as saying: "It is not befitting that I give My Torah to blemished people";

וְהַבְטוּל שֶׁלוֹ. and b) his attainment of *bittul*. To explain why *bittul* is necessary:

דְּכִיּוֹן שֶׁהַתּוֹרָה הִיא לְמַעַלָּה בְּאֵין עֶרֶךְ מֵהָאָדָם Since the Torah is incomparably loftier than a human being,

(בְּמַכְּלָל שֶׁכֵּן מִזֶּה שֶׁהִיא לְמַעַלָּה מִעוֹלָמוֹת הָעֲלִיּוֹנִים), (which can be understood from the fact that it is even loftier than all the supernal spiritual worlds,)

לִכֵּן, כְּאִשְׁרֵי הָאָדָם לְמַעַלָּה מִצִּיּוֹת, accordingly, when a person is concerned with his own identity, he is a *yesh* and a *metziyus* in chassidic terminology,

הַמִּצִּיּוֹת שֶׁלוֹ הִיא הַמִּצִּיּוֹת הַתּוֹרָה, his personal identity is (as it were) in opposition to the Torah.

Thus our Sages comment<sup>5</sup> on the verse,<sup>6</sup> "It [the Torah] is not in the heavens," that "It will not be found among the haughty." And they say,<sup>7</sup> "Whenever a person is characterized by haughtiness, the Holy One, blessed be He, says, 'He and I cannot coexist in the world.'"

וּבְכַדִּי שֶׁהָאָדָם יִקְבֹּל אֶת הַתּוֹרָה הוּא עַל יְדֵי הַבְטוּל שֶׁלוֹ. The manner in which a person makes himself fit to receive the Torah is through *bittul*.

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4. Midrash Tanchuma, Parshas Yisro, sec. 8 (see also Bamidbar Rabbah 7:1).

5. Eruvin 55a.

6. Devarim 30:12.

7. Sotah 5a.

ולכן מבאר בהמאמר, דזה שבר"ח סיון באו מדבר סיני והיו מוכנים לקבל התורה, הוא, כי בר"ח סיון ישנם שני הענינים. זה שבר"ח הוא מולד הלבנה, שאז היא נקודה בלבד, ביטול. וזה שבר"ח סיון נשלמו עיקרי המדות (גם) בספירת המלכות – שלימות האדם. ושני ענינים בהשלימות דהאדם שנעשית ע"י ספירת העומר. ספירת העומר הו"ע בירור וזיכוך המדות, ושע"י ספירת העומר הוא המשכת מ"ט שערי בינה כ"ה.

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- ולכן מבאר בהמאמר, דזה שבר"ח סיון באו מדבר סיני  
 Accordingly, the *maamar* in *Torah Or* explains that the reason that it was on *Rosh Chodesh Sivan* that the Jewish people came to the Sinai desert
- והיו מוכנים לקבל התורה, הוא,  
 and were prepared to receive the Torah is because *Rosh Chodesh Sivan* reflects both of these dimensions:
- כי בראש חודש סיון ישנם שני הענינים.  
 a) *Rosh Chodesh* represents the birth of the new moon,  
 when it is merely a point, emphasizing the quality of *bittul*;
- וזה שבר"ח סיון נשלמו עיקרי המדות  
 and b) On *Rosh Chodesh Sivan*, the Divine service associated with refining the primary dimension of our emotions is completed,
- (גם) בספירת המלכות – including (also) the *sefirah* of *Malchus*,  
 this refinement reflects man's *shleimus*.
- ושני ענינים בהשלימות דהאדם שנעשית על ידי ספירת העומר.  
 More particularly, there are two aspects of man's *shleimus* achieved through the Divine service of Counting the *Omer*:
- א) ספירת העומר היא ענין בירור וזכוך המדות,  
 a) Counting the *Omer* represents the refinement and purification of our emotions;
- ושעל ידי ספירת העומר הוא המשכת מ"ט שערי בינה.  
 and b) through the Counting of the *Omer*, the 49 Gates of Understanding are drawn down from Above.

It is possible to explain that the refinement and purification of the emotions is necessary so that man will not be lacking or blemished, and it is necessary to draw down the 49 Gates of Understanding to accomplish perfection (to create a “perfect place”) that will serve as a medium for the 50th Gate of Understanding.<sup>8</sup>

## SUMMARY

There is another explanation why *Rosh Chodesh Sivan* served as the beginning of the final stage of preparation for receiving the Torah: After the Exodus, the Jewish people began carrying out Divine service that paralleled the Counting of the *Omer*.

The seven weeks of the Counting of the *Omer* are dedicated to the refinement of man's seven emotional attributes. On *Rosh Chodesh Sivan*, the third day of the seventh, final week, the Divine service associated with the refinement of the three primary emotive attributes, *Chessed*, *Gevurah*, and *Tiferes*, of the *sefirah* of *Malchus* was completed.

*Rosh Chodesh Sivan* thus reflects two dimensions:

- a) the birth of the new moon, emphasizing the quality of *bittul*; and
- b) the completion of the Divine service associated with refining the emotions.

Both these aspects are fundamental because there are two requisite aspects of man's preparation to receive the Torah:

- a) that man reach a state of *shleimus*, “perfection,” for it is not befitting to give the Torah to one who is blemished; and
- b) that he attain *bittul*, for a person concerned with his own identity – a *yesh* in chassidic terminology – is (as it were) incompatible with the Torah.

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8. See *Likkutei Torah, Bamidbar*, p. 12b, *Shir HaShirim* 24a ff.

(ד) וְזֶהוּ בַּיּוֹם הַזֶּה בָּאוּ מִדְּבַר סִינִי, וּמִבְּאֵר בְּתוֹ"א, דְּמִדְּבַר הוּא מְלִשׁוֹן דִּיבּוּר, וְנִקְרָא מִדְּבַר בְּתוֹסַפַּת מ' (דמ' הוּא מֵאוֹתִיּוֹת הָאֵמֶנֶתִי"ו שְׁמוּרִים עַל הַקְטַנְת הָעֵנִינִי) לְהוֹרוֹת שֶׁהִדְבּוּר הוּא בְּבִטּוֹל. [וְעֵנִין זֶה שִׁיךְ גַּם לְמִדְּבַר כִּפְשׁוּטוֹ, אֶרֶץ לֹא זֹרְעָה<sup>1</sup>,

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- וְזֶהוּ בַּיּוֹם הַזֶּה בָּאוּ מִדְּבַר סִינִי, On this basis, we can understand the meaning of the verse, "On this day, they came to the Sinai desert."
- וּמִבְּאֵר בְּתוֹרָה אִוֵּר, The *maamar* in *Torah Or* explains
- דְּמִדְּבַר הוּא מְלִשׁוֹן דִּבּוּר, that the word *midbar* shares the same root as the word *dibbur*, meaning "speech."
- וְנִקְרָא מִדְּבַר בְּתוֹסַפַּת מ' Midbar adds a *mem* to the root *dalet-beis-reish*, thus reading *medabeir*.
- (דמ' הוּא מֵאוֹתִיּוֹת הָאֵמֶנֶתִי"ו (The letter *mem* is one of the letters alluded to in the mnemonic הָאֵמֶנֶתִי"ו.)
- שְׁמוּרִים עַל הַקְטַנְת הָעֵנִינִי) When one of the letters of that mnemonic is appended to a word as prefix or a suffix, **it limits the scope of the application** of the root word.)<sup>1</sup> For example, the term מֵהַבַּיִת, "from the house," implies not the house itself, but something from it.
- לְהוֹרוֹת שֶׁהִדְבּוּר הוּא בְּבִטּוֹל. With regard to the term *midbar*, in a spiritual sense, the limitation alluded to by the prefix *mem* **indicates that the person's speech is characterized by *bittul*.**
- [וְעֵנִין זֶה שִׁיךְ גַּם לְמִדְּבַר כִּפְשׁוּטוֹ, [This concept also relates to a desert in a literal sense.
- אֶרֶץ לֹא זֹרְעָה, A desert is described<sup>2</sup> as "an unsown land."
- דְּכִשְׁהִדְבּוּר הוּא עַל פִּי שְׂכָלוֹ וְרָצוֹנוֹ, When a person's speech is a product of his own thought and will,

1. See *Torah Or*, p. 67d; *Sefer HaMaamarim* 5567, p. 152; *Toras Chayim, Shmos*, p. 373b (in the latest edition, *Shmos*, Vol. 2, p. 255d).

2. *Yirmeyahu* 2:2.

דכשהדיבור הוא ע"פ שכלו ורצונו, השכל והרצון הם הזריעה שע"ז הוא צמיחת הדיבור. וענין מדבר ארץ לא זרועה הוא שהדיבור דתורה שמדבר הוא דבר ה' ואינו זרוע משכלו ורצונו<sup>3</sup>. וסיני הוא שירדה שנאה לאומות העולם<sup>4</sup>, והוא שהתורה נקראת

השכל והרצון הם הזריעה his thought and will are the "seeds"

שעל ידי זה הוא  
צמיחת הדבור. that enable his speech to sprout forth.

וענין מדבר ארץ  
לא זרועה הוא According to this understanding, the concept of a  
desert being "an unsown land" means

שהדבור דתורה  
שמדבר הוא דבר ה' that the words of Torah that a person speaks are  
the words of G-d.

ואינו זרוע משכלו ורצונו<sup>3</sup>. They are not sown by his own thoughts or will.<sup>3]</sup>

With regard to prophecy, it is written:<sup>4</sup> "And I will place My words in your mouth." When a prophet would speak, he would not speak his own words. Rather, it was G-d speaking through him. In a similar vein, when a Jew speaks words of Torah, the words are not the product of his own thoughts or desires but rather, they are G-d's words.

וסיני הוא שירדה שנאה  
לאומות העולם, The *maamar* in *Torah Or* then focuses on the name  
*Sinai*. Based on the phonetic relationship between that  
name and the word *sinah*, "enmity," our Sages state<sup>5</sup>  
that through the Giving of the Torah, "enmity (*sinah*)  
descended to the nations of the world."

והוא שהתורה  
נקראת תושיה In this vein, the Torah is referred to<sup>6</sup> as תושיה.

Our Sages note<sup>7</sup> that תש, the root of that word, also means "weakness," and state that Torah study "weakens a person's power." The inner intent of our Sages' teaching is not that the Torah weakens a person's physical well-being, but

3. See the *maamar* entitled *BaChodesh HaShlishi*, 5655 (*Sefer HaMaamarim* 5655, p. 94). See also *Toras Chayim*, loc. cit. (in the latest edition, loc. cit., p. 255b).

4. *Yeshayahu* 51:16.

5. *Shabbos* 89a ff.

6. *Yeshayahu* 28:29.

7. *Sanhedrin* 26b.

תושי'ל לפי שמתשת כח הסט"א. ויש לומר, דזה שביום הזה באו מדבר הוא לפי שביום הזה (ר"ח) הלבנה נוכן ישראל שמונין ללבנה] היא נקודה בלבד, וזה שביום הזה באו סיני שירדה שנאה ליצה"ר<sup>8</sup> הוא לפי שביום הזה (ר"ח סיון) נשלם הברור של עיקרי המדות דנפש הבהמית.

לפי שמתשת כח  
הסט"א אחרא. that it weakens the power of the *sitra achra*, the kabbalistic term for all that is not holy.

ויש לומר, It is possible to say that the two terms, *midbar* and Sinai, can be associated with the two preparatory stages for the Giving of the Torah explained above:

דזה שביום הזה באו מדבר The fact that "on this day" the Jewish people "entered a desert," a *midbar*, which, as explained above, connotes *bittul*,

הוא לפי שביום הזה  
(ראש חודש) הלבנה is because "on this day," (*Rosh Chodesh*,) the moon

[וכן ישראל שמונין ללבנה] [and, thus, the Jewish people who establish their calendar according to the moon,]

היא נקודה בלבד, shines merely as a point, i.e., is characterized by *bittul*.

וזה שביום הזה באו סיני The fact that "on this day" they arrived at Sinai, i.e., that enmity descended to the *yetzer hara*,<sup>8</sup>

הוא לפי שביום הזה  
(ראש חודש סיון) is because on this day (*Rosh Chodesh Sivan*),

נשלם הברור של עקרי  
המדות דנפש הבהמית. the refinement of the fundamental emotional qualities of the animal soul was completed, thus enabling the Jews to attain a level of perfection. This involves the rejection – enmity – of the *yetzer hara* and the character traits associated with it.

8. This is the wording with which our Sages' statement is quoted in *Sefer HaMaamarim* 5655, loc. cit., and other sources in *Chassidus*.

## SUMMARY

The word *midbar* shares the same root as the word *dibbur*, "speech." The prefix *mem* indicates that the person's speech is characterized by *bittul*. This concept is also reflected in the description of a desert as "an unsown land." When a person speaks as a result of his own thought and will, his thought and will sow the seeds from which his speech sprouts forth. When a person speaks words of Torah, the words are not the products of his own thoughts or desires. Rather, they are G-d's words.

The *maamar* in *Torah Or* then focuses on the word "Sinai," quoting our Sages, who understand it as implying that through the Giving of the Torah, "enmity" of the forces opposed to holiness "descended" from Above. This facilitates our Divine service of refining our emotional qualities during the Counting of the Omer.

Thus, in mentioning "the Sinai desert" the verse is referring to the two preparatory stages necessary to receive the Torah: a) *bittul*, "the desert"; and b) *shleimus*, the refinement of the emotions alluded to by the name "Sinai."



ה) וצריך להבין, דלפי הנ"ל, זה שבר"ח סיון נשלמו עיקרי המדות הוא ביאור בשלימות האדם, ובהדרוש שבתו"א מקשר זה עם זה שבר"ח הוא מולד הלבנה, ענין הביטול. וי"ל הביאור בזה, דענין מולד הלבנה הוא (לא הביטול שלה, אלא אדרבה<sup>1</sup>) שנולד מציאותה, ע"י שנמשך בה אור השמש.

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וְצָרִיךְ לְהַבִּין, Further clarification is still necessary:

דְּלִפִּי הַנ"ל, זֶה שֶׁבְּרֹאשׁ חֹדֶשׁ סִיוָן נִשְׁלְמוּ עֲקָרֵי הַמִּדּוֹת According to the explanations offered above, the fact that the refinement of the primary emotional attributes was completed on *Rosh Chodesh Sivan*

הוא באור בְּשִׁלְמוֹת הָאָדָם, highlights man's attainment of *shleimus*.

וּבְהִדְרוּשׁ שְׁפָתוֹרָה אוֹר מִקֶּשֶׁר זֶה עִם זֶה שֶׁבְּרֹאשׁ חֹדֶשׁ הוּא מוֹלֵד הַלְבָנָה, However, the *maamar* in *Torah Or* associates this dimension with the fact that the birth of the new moon occurs on *Rosh Chodesh*,

עֲנִינ׳ הַבִּטּוֹל. underscoring the quality of *bittul*.

וְיֵשׁ לוֹמַר הַבְּאוּר בָּזֶה, In resolution, it is possible to offer the following explanation:

דְּעֲנִינ׳ מוֹלֵד הַלְבָנָה הוּא The birth of the new moon highlights

(לֹא הַבִּטּוֹל שָׁלָה, (not the moon's *bittul*, but, on the contrary,) אֱלֹא אֲדִרְבָּה)

שֶׁנּוֹלֵד מְצִיאוֹתָהּ, the renewal of its existence

עַל יְדֵי שֶׁנִּמְשָׁךְ בָּהּ אוֹר הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ. through the light of the sun being drawn to it and subsequently, reflected by it. For *Rosh Chodesh* is not when the light of the moon is *hidden*, but when it shines anew.

In *Chassidus*,<sup>1</sup> similar concepts are explained in interpretation of the verse,<sup>2</sup> "Tomorrow is the new moon, and you will be called to mind, because your seat will be vacant."

"Your seat will be vacant," the quality of *bittul*, represents the Divine service associated

1. *Toras Menachem, Sefer HaMaamarim Melukat*, Vol. 1, p. 343, et al.

2. *I Shmuel* 20:18.

וזה שבעת המולד היא רק נקודה בלבד, שזה מורה על הביטול שלה (כנ"ל), הוא, שהמציאות דהלבנה, האור שלה, היא בבחינת ביטול, שנרגש בה שהאור שבה הוא לא משל עצמה ורק שמקבלת מהשמש. ועד"ז הוא בישראל שמונין ללבנה, דענין הביטול דר"ח בעבודת האדם הוא שהמציאות שלו היא בביטול. ניש לומר דזהו שמבואר בתו"א

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with the day preceding *Rosh Chodesh*, when the moon's light is not at all visible. *Rosh Chodesh*, by contrast, represents the Divine service of "you will be called to mind," the renewal of the moon's shining.

וְזֶה שְׁבַעַת הַמּוֹלָד הִיא  
רק נִקְדָּה בְּלִבָּהּ, The fact that the moon is merely a point at the time of its birth,

שְׁזֶה מוֹרָה עַל הַבִּטּוּל  
שְׁלָהּ (כַּנ"ל), which emphasizes its *bittul* (as explained above),

הוא, שְׁהַמְצִיאוֹת דְּהַלְבָנָה,  
הָאוֹר שְׁלָהּ, highlights that the very *existence* of the moon, its light,

היא בְּבַחֲיִנַת בִּטּוּל,  
is characterized by *bittul*;

שְׁנִרְגָּשׁ בָּהּ שֶׁהָאוֹר שְׁבָהּ  
הוא לא מְשַׁל עֲצָמָהּ it is perceived that its light is not its own,

וְרַק שֶׁמִּקְבִּלָת מֵהַשֶּׁמֶשׁ. but rather solely that which it receives and reflects from the sun.

וְעַל דִּרְךָ זֶה הוּא בִּישְׂרָאֵל  
שְׁמוֹנִין לְלִבָּנָהּ, Similar concepts apply to the Jewish people, who establish their calendar according to the moon.

דְּעִנֵּין הַבִּטּוּל דִּיאֵשׁ חֵדֶשׁ  
בְּעִבּוּדַת הָאָדָם הוּא The parallel to the *bittul* of *Rosh Chodesh* in man's Divine service is

שְׁהַמְצִיאוֹת שְׁלוֹ  
היא בְּבִטּוּל. not that his identity is totally erased, but rather that his identity does exist but is characterized by *bittul*.

נִישׁ לומר דְּזֶהוּ  
שְׁמִבְאָר בְּתוֹרָה אוֹר {<sup>3</sup>It is possible to explain that this is the intent of the explanation in the *maamar* in *Torah Or*

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3. The use of squiggle-brackets { } connotes brackets within brackets in the original text.

דזה שר"ח נקרא יום הזה (סתם) הוא כי יום הזה הוא אהבה שבבחינת ביטול נדיום  
הוא אור כמ"ש<sup>4</sup> ויקרא אלקים לאור יום ואהבה היא אור, וזה הוא יחוד"ע (שלכן  
משה רבינו נתנבא בזה<sup>5</sup>), ויום הזה הוא אהבה שבבחינת ביטול דידחוד"ע, כי

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דְּזֶה שְׂרָאשׁ חֲדָשׁ נִקְרָא    that *Rosh Chodesh* is called *yom hazeh*, "this day"  
יּוֹם הַזֶּה (סְתָם)    (with no accompanying description):

הוא כִּי יוֹם הַזֶּה הוא    "This day" refers to love of G-d characterized by  
אַהֲבָה שֶׁבְּבִחִינַת בִּטּוּל    *bittul*.

To explain:

נִדְיוּם הוא אור כְּמוֹ שֶׁכָּתוּב    ["Day" is identified with light, as it is written:<sup>4</sup>  
וַיִּקְרָא אֱלֹקִים לְאוֹר יוֹם    "And G-d called the light 'day'";

וְאַהֲבָה היא אור,    love is also identified with "light," as will be explained  
immediately below.

זֶה הוא יְחִידָא עֲלָאָה    *Zeh*, "this," reflects *yichuda ilaah*, "the sublime  
unity," i.e., a state of utter oneness with G-d.

(שֶׁלֹּכֵן מֹשֶׁה רַבֵּנוּ)    (Therefore, *Moshe Rabbeinu* – in contrast to all  
נִתְנַבֵּא בְּזֶה),    other prophets – began his prophecies with the  
word *Zeh*.)<sup>5</sup>

All the other prophets began their prophecies with the word *Koh*, "So" – i.e., like this – "spoke G-d." In contrast, *Moshe Rabbeinu's* identity was subsumed in G-dliness to the point where he had no independent identity. He would speak in the first person when speaking in G-d's name, as it is written:<sup>6</sup> "I will grant the rain for your land at its proper time... I will provide grass in your fields." Hence, he could say,<sup>7</sup> "This is what G-d has commanded."

יּוֹם הַזֶּה הוא אַהֲבָה    Thus, the expression "this day" points to love that  
שֶׁבְּבִחִינַת בִּטּוּל    is characterized by *bittul*, which reflects *yichuda*  
דִּיחִידָא עֲלָאָה,    *ilaah*, the sublime unity].

Generally, in a love relationship the identity of the person who loves is still felt

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4. *Bereishis* 1:5.

5. *Sifri* (quoted by *Rashi*), *Bamidbar* 30:2, et al.

6. *Devarim* 11:15.

7. *Bamidbar*, loc. cit.

מהטעמים על זה שאהבה נק' בשם אור, הוא, לפי שאהבה היא התפשטות<sup>8</sup> ולכן היראה שהיא כיווץ (היפך ההתפשטות) נקראת בשם חושך<sup>9</sup>, והביטול דר"ח הוא לא באופן שמתבטל ממציאותו (דוגמת הביטול דיראה), כי אם, שההתפשטות (המציאות) שלו היא בביטול. ועפ"ז יש לבאר הקשר דשני הענינים שבר"ח סיון

–*yesh mi she'oheiv*, in chassidic terminology.<sup>8</sup> On the level of *yichuda ilaah*, everything – even one's love – is subsumed in oneness with G-d.

One of the reasons why love is identified with light  
 כי מהטעמים על זה  
 שאהבה נקראת בשם אור,

is that love involves extending oneself outward.<sup>9</sup>  
 הוא, לפי שאהבה  
 היא התפשטות  
 Just as light radiates forth and gives expression to its source, love motivates a person to express himself to others.

[Therefore, conversely, fear, which involves contraction, withdrawing into oneself,

(the opposite of extending oneself),

is identified with darkness]. The light of the person's soul is in a state of withdrawal.

The *bittul* of *Rosh Chodesh* is not expressed through the nullification of one's being,  
 והבטול דראש  
 חודש הוא לא באופן  
 שמתבטל ממציאותו

(as is the *bittul* of fear),

but rather that his self-expression (his existence) should be characterized by *bittul*.<sup>3</sup>  
 כי אם, שההתפשטות  
 (המציאות) שלו  
 היא בבטול.

Based on the above, it is possible to explain the connection between the two aspects of *Rosh Chodesh* Sivan,  
 ועל פי זה יש לבאר  
 הקשר דשני הענינים  
 שבראש חודש סיון

8. *Torah Or*, p. 56a, et al.

9. See *Sefer HaArachim Chabad*, Vol. 2, *erech or*, in relation to darkness, p. 544, and the sources mentioned there. See also *Torah Or*, *Hosafos*, p. 109c., which states: "The arousal of love is called light, because it shines forth, extending [outward]."

(ביטול הלבנה והשלמת עיקרי המדות), כי ענין מולד הלבנה הוא שהמציאות הוא בביטול.

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(בטול הלבנה והשלמת עיקרי המדות), (the *bittul* of the moon and the perfection of the fundamental emotional attributes):

כי ענין מולד הלבנה הוא שֶהַמְצִיאוֹת הוּא בְּבִטּוֹל. For the birth of the new moon teaches how one's very existence and identity should be characterized by *bittul*.

## SUMMARY

There is a conceptual difficulty in the above explanations because the *maamar* in *Torah Or* associates the completion of the refinement of the primary emotional attributes (which seemingly highlights man's attainment of *shleimus*) with the fact that *Rosh Chodesh* represents the birth of the new moon (which highlights *bittul*).

In resolution, the birth of the new moon underscores the renewal of the moon's existence. The fact that the moon is merely a point at the time of its birth highlights the fact that its light is characterized by *bittul*.

Similar concepts apply to the Jewish people: The parallel to the *bittul* of *Rosh Chodesh* in man's Divine service is not that one's identity is completely erased, but rather that his identity exists, but is characterized by *bittul*.

In that vein, *Rosh Chodesh* is called "this day." "This day" refers to love characterized by *bittul*. Although love generally involves extending oneself outward, in this instance the love itself is characterized by *bittul*.

ו) ועפ"ז יש לבאר מה שהקשו התוספות דהוה לי' למילף מדבר ממדבר, כי זה שבר"ח סיון באו לבחינת מדבר הוא ביטול נעלה יותר מזה שר"ח נק' יום הזה. דענין יום הזה הוא שהוא במציאות (ועד למציאות דהתפשטות, יום) אלא שהמציאות שלו היא בביטול (הזה), משא"כ זה שבר"ח סיון באו לבחינת מדבר [שהדיבור שלו אינו דיבור עצמו כלל, ופה האדם הוא רק כלי לדבר הוי']

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ועל פי זה יש לבאר מה שהקשו התוספות	Based on the above, it is possible to explain why <i>Tosafos</i> raise the question (see sec. 1 above)
דהוה ליה למילף מדבר ממדבר,	that the <i>Talmud</i> should have derived the fact that the Jews came to the Sinai desert on <i>Rosh Chodesh</i> from a <i>gezeirah shavah</i> based on the word <i>midbar</i> :
כי זה שבראש חודש סיון באו לבחינת מדבר	For the fact that the Jews attained the level of <i>midbar</i> on <i>Rosh Chodesh</i> Sivan seemingly
הוא בטול נעלה יותר מזה שראש חודש נקרא יום הזה.	represents a loftier level of <i>bittul</i> than that alluded to by <i>Rosh Chodesh</i> being referred to as <i>hayom hazeh</i> , "this day."
דענין יום הזה הוא שהוא במציאות	For "this day" implies that a person's identity remains intact
(ועד למציאות דהתפשטות, יום)	(indeed, his identity is extended outward and expresses itself, as implied by the word "day"); <sup>1</sup>
אלא שהמציאות שלו היא בבטול (הזה),	but his identity is characterized by <i>bittul</i> , (as alluded to by the word "this").
מה שאין כן זה שבראש חודש סיון באו לבחינת מדבר	In contrast, the Jews' attainment, on <i>Rosh Chodesh</i> Sivan, of the level of <i>bittul</i> alluded to by <i>midbar</i> , "the desert,"
[שהדיבור שלו אינו דיבור עצמו כלל,	[i.e., that the person's speech is not his own at all, <sup>2</sup>

1. As explained in the previous section.

2. As explained in section 4.

המדבר על ידו, וע"ד דבר ה' בפי הנביא<sup>3</sup> הוא ביטול המציאות. וכיון שעיקר המעלה דר"ח סיון הוא שבו באו להביטול דמדבר, לכן מקום לומר שהרמז בכתוב (שזה הי' בר"ח סיון) הוא בתיבת מדבר<sup>4</sup>. וזה שהלימוד בגמרא הוא מביום הזה, הוא, כי הענין דיום הזה שבר"ח סיון הוא נעלה יותר גם מהביטול דמדבר, כדלקמן.

וּפֶה הָאָדָם הוּא רַק כְּלִי  
לְדַבֵּר הָרִי' הַמְדַּבֵּר עַל יְדוֹ, and that his mouth is nothing more than a medium  
for the word of G-d speaking through him,

וְעַל דֶּרֶךְ דְּבַר ה'  
כְּפִי הַנְּבִיא] <sup>3</sup> like the word of G-d uttered by a prophet,] who  
is speaking G-d's words and not his own,

הוא בטול המציאות. reflects how the the person's entire identity is *batel*.

וְכִיּוֹן שֶׁעֵקֶר הַמַּעֲלָה  
דְּרֹאשׁ חֹדֶשׁ סִיּוֹן הוּא שְׁבוּ  
בְּאוֹ לְהַבְטוֹל דְּמַדְבָּר, Since the primary positive quality of *Rosh Cho-*  
*desh Sivan* is that on that day the Jews attained the  
level of utter and consummate *bittul* alluded to by a  
desert,

לְכֵן מְקוֹם לִוְמֵר שֶׁהֶרְמִזוּ  
בְּכַתוּב (שְׁזֵה הִיָּה  
בְּרֹאשׁ חֹדֶשׁ סִיּוֹן) accordingly, it is possible to say that the Torah  
was alluding (to the fact that this level was reached  
on *Rosh Chodesh Sivan*)

הוא בתיבת מדבר. by its use of the word *midbar*.<sup>4</sup>

וְזֵה שֶׁהִלְמוּד בְּגִמְרָא  
הוּא מִבְּיּוֹם הַזֶּה, הוּא, Nevertheless, the *Gemara* derives the *gezeirah*  
*shavah* specifically from the words *bayom hazeh*,  
"on this day,"

כִּי הָעֲנִיָּן דְּיוֹם הַזֶּה  
שְׁבֹרֵאשׁ חֹדֶשׁ סִיּוֹן הוּא because in truth, the level of Divine service alluded to  
by *bayom hazeh*, which was attained on *Rosh Cho-*  
*desh Sivan*,

נִעְלָה יוֹתֵר גַּם מִהַבְטוֹל  
דְּמַדְבָּר, כְּדִלְקָמֶן. surpasses even the utter *bittul* alluded to by *midbar*,  
as will soon be explained.

3. *Toras Chayim*, loc. cit. (p. 256a).

4. On this basis, we can understand the wording of the *Gemara* (*Pesachim* 6b) that the *gezeirah shavah* is derived from the fact that the word *midbar*, "desert," is found in both verses. In truth, both verses contain the entire phrase *midbar Sinai* ("Sinai desert"). Nevertheless, the focus is on the word *midbar* and not on the term *midbar Sinai* (– and similarly, *Tosafos* question that the derivation should be from the word *midbar* –) because the positive dimension of *Rosh Chodesh* is the utter *bittul* alluded to by the word *midbar* whereas Sinai does not allude to *Rosh Chodesh*. Mentioning Sinai could detract from the focus on that concept.



## SUMMARY

Based on the above, it is possible to explain why *Tosafos* raise the question that the *Talmud* should have derived the fact that the Jews came to the Sinai desert on *Rosh Chodesh* from a *gezeirah shavah* based on the word *midbar*: *Midbar*, "desert," alludes to a consummate degree of *bittul*. As explained above, "this day" reflects a level of Divine service in which a person's identity remains intact; indeed, he even expresses himself, but that self-expression is characterized by *bittul*. "Desert," by contrast, implies utter and consummate *bittul* to the extent that no vestige of personal identity remains. Hence, it is possible to say that the verse was alluding to this loftier level of *bittul*. Nevertheless, the *Gemara* derives the *gezeirah shavah* specifically from the words *bayom hazeh*, "on this day," because the level of Divine service alluded to by this phrase surpasses even the utter *bittul* alluded to by *midbar*, as will be explained.

(ז) **ויוֹבֵן** זה ע"פ מה שאמרו רז"ל<sup>1</sup> בשעה שהקדימו ישראל נעשה לנשמע באו מלאכי השרת וקשרו לכל אחד מישראל שני כתרים אחד כנגד נעשה ואחד כנגד נשמע. וידוע הדיוק בזה<sup>2</sup>, דבתחלת המאמר בשעה שהקדימו כו' משמע דזה שקשרו להם שני כתרים הוא מפני שהקדימו נעשה לנשמע,

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**ויוֹבֵן** זה על פי מה שאמרו  
רבותינו זכרונם לברכה

**The above concept** – that there is an advantage to the Divine service of a person who redefines his identity and subsumes it in the service of G-d (as alluded to by the phrase “this day”) over the total obliteration of his personal identity (as alluded to by the word “desert”) – **can be understood on the basis of our Sages’ teaching:**<sup>1</sup>

בשעה שהקדימו  
ישראל נעשה לנשמע

Before the Giving of the Torah, “When the Jews made the commitment *naaseh*, ‘We will do,’ before *nishma*, ‘we will listen,’

באו מלאכי השרת  
וקשרו לכל אחד  
מישראל שני כתרים

the ministering angels came and attached two crowns to every Jew,

אחד כנגד נעשה  
ואחד כנגד נשמע.

one crown corresponding to *naaseh* and one corresponding to *nishma*.<sup>2</sup>

וידוע הדיוק בזה,

*Chassidus*<sup>2</sup> raises a well-known question based on the wording used by our Sages in their aforementioned statement:

דבתחלת המאמר בשעה  
שהקדימו כו' משמע

The beginning of their statement “When the Jews made the commitment of *naaseh* before *nishma*” implies

דזה שקשרו להם  
שני כתרים הוא

that the angels attached the two crowns to them

מפני שהקדימו  
נעשה לנשמע,

because they “made the commitment *naaseh* before *nishma*.<sup>2</sup>

1. *Shabbos* 88a.

2. See the *maamar* entitled *BeShaah Shehikdimu*, 5629 (as explained later in the main text), the *maamar* of this title in the series of *maamarim* entitled *Yom Tov shel Rosh HaShanah*, 5666, (p. 447), and the *maamar* of this title in the series of *maamarim* entitled *BeShaah Shehikdimu*, 5672 (at the beginning of that text), and others.

ובסיום המאמר אומר אחד כנגד נעשה ואחד כנגד נשמע, דשני הכתרים הם עבור נעשה ונשמע עצמם. ומבאר אדמו"ר מהר"ש במאמרו ד"ה בשעה שהקדימו שנאמר בש"פ במדבר לפני מאה שנה<sup>3</sup>, דנעשה הוא קבלת עול מלכות שמים ונשמע הוא קבלת עול מצוות. וענין הקדמת נעשה לנשמע הוא כמאמר רז"ל<sup>4</sup> למה קדמה פרשת

ובסיום המאמר אומר אחד כנגד נעשה ואחד כנגד נשמע, By contrast, the conclusion of the quote, "one crown corresponding to *naaseh* and one corresponding to *nishma*" implies

דשני הכתרים הם עבור נעשה ונשמע עצמם. that the two crowns were given for the commitments of *naaseh* and *nishma* themselves,

i.e., in their own right, each of the commitments warranted a crown regardless of the order in which they were made.

ומבאר אדמו"ר מהר"ש במאמרו דבור המתחיל בשעה שהקדימו שנאמר בשבת פרשת במדבר לפני מאה שנה, In resolution of this seeming contradiction, the Rebbe Maharash explains in his *maamar* entitled *BeShaah Shehikdimu*, which he delivered on *Shabbos Parshas Bamidbar* 100 years ago,<sup>3</sup>

דנעשה הוא קבלת עול מלכות שמים that the Jews' commitment of *naaseh* represents the acceptance of the yoke of the kingdom of Heaven, i.e., their recognition that G-d is our King and we are His subjects,

ונשמע הוא קבלת עול מצוות. whereas their commitment of *nishma* represents their acceptance of the yoke of G-d's *mitzvos*, i.e., their committing themselves to observe and fulfill His commandments.

וענין הקדמת נעשה לנשמע Prefacing the commitment of *nishma* with the commitment of *naaseh*

הוא כמאמר רבותינו זכרונם לברכה parallels our Sages' statement regarding *Kerias Shema*, the recitation of the *Shema*, in our prayers:<sup>4</sup>

3. I.e., 100 years prior to the delivery of this *maamar* (which was delivered in 5729). The Rebbe Maharash's *maamar* is published in *Sefer HaMaamarim* 5629, p. 184ff.

4. *Berachos* 13a.

שמע ליהי' אם שמוע כדי שיקבל עליו עול מלכות שמים תחלה ואח"כ יקבל עליו עול מצוות. ומבאר שם, דפרשה ראשונה היא רצוא ומסירת נפש ופרשה שני' היא שוב. וכמו

לָמָּה קִדְמָה פְּרִשְׁת שְׁמַע      “Why does the passage beginning *Shema* precede  
לְהִיָּה אִם שְׁמוּעַ      the passage beginning *Vehayah im shamoa*?

כְּדִי שִׁיקְבֹּל עָלָיו עַל      So that one should first accept upon himself the  
מַלְכוּת שָׁמַיִם תְּחִלָּה      yoke of the kingdom of Heaven,

*Shema* is associated with the acceptance of G-d's sovereignty, as the Alter Rebbe writes in his *Shulchan Aruch*:<sup>5</sup> “The word *echad* (‘one’) communicates the theme of sovereignty. [The implication is that] He is unique and unified [with all existence]; there is none that can be likened to Him, and His Kingship reigns over all.”

וְאַחֲרֵי כֵן יִקְבֹּל      and afterwards accept upon himself the yoke of  
עָלָיו עַל מִצְוֹת.      G-d's *mitzvos*.”

וּמִבְּאֵר שָׁם,      In that *maamar*, the Rebbe Maharash explains

דְּפִרְשָׁה רִאשׁוֹנָה הִיא      that the first passage, the passage beginning *Shema*,  
רִצּוֹא וּמִסִּירַת נֶפֶשׁ      is identified with the Divine service of *ratzo*,  
“yearning for G-dliness,” and *mesirus nefesh*,  
“self-sacrifice,” as reflected in its emphasis on G-d's  
transcendent oneness and in the corresponding com-  
mandment to love G-d “with all your might.”

This relates to the acceptance of the yoke of the kingdom of Heaven, because through accepting such a yoke, a person goes beyond his own identity and commits himself totally to G-d.

וּפְרִשָּׁה שְׁנִי' הִיא שׁוּב.      The second passage, which opens with *Vehayah im shamoa*, parallels the Divine service of *shov*,  
“return,”

i.e., the soul's resolve to live within the context of material reality, based on its awareness that this is G-d's ultimate intent. This is reflected in the passage's mention of mundane activities: “You will gather your grain, your wine, and your oil... you will eat and be satisfied.”<sup>6</sup>

5. Sec. 591:11 with regard to the verses of *Malchiyos* (“Sovereignty”) recited on Rosh HaShanah.

6. *Devarim* 11:14-15.

שברצוא ושוב, בתחלה צ"ל רצוא ואח"כ שוב, עד"ז הוא בקבלת עומ"ש וקבלת עול מצוות, שלפני קבלת עול מצוות צ"ל קבלת עומ"ש. ועפ"ז מבאר שם<sup>7</sup> מה שארז"ל בשעה שהקדימו כו', אף ששני הכתרים הם כנגד נעשה ונשמע עצמם [אחד כנגד נעשה ואחד כנגד נשמע], כי בכדי שיהי' השוב (נשמע) צ"ל קדימת הרצוא (נעשה).

This corresponds to the acceptance of the yoke of *mitzvos*, because the observance of *mitzvos* involves performing acts on this material plane with the intent of making this world into G-d's dwelling.

וּכְמוֹ שֶׁבְּרָצוּא וְשׁוּב, Just as in the *ratzo veshov* motif, one initially  
בְּתַחֲלָה צָרִיךְ לִהְיוֹת רָצוּא must be aroused with the longing of *ratzo*

וְאַחֵר כֵּן שׁוּב, and only afterwards pursue the thrust of *shov*,

עַל דֶּרֶךְ זֶה הוּא בְּקַבְּלַת so too do similar concepts apply with regard to  
עַל מַלְכוּת שָׁמַיִם the acceptance of the yoke of the kingdom of  
וְקַבְּלַת עַל מַצּוֹת, Heaven and the yoke of *mitzvos*:

שְׁלִפְנֵי קַבְּלַת עַל מַצּוֹת The acceptance of the yoke of *mitzvos* must be  
צָרִיךְ לִהְיוֹת קַבְּלַת preceded by the acceptance of the yoke of the  
עַל מַלְכוּת שָׁמַיִם. kingdom of Heaven.

וְעַל פִּי זֶה מְבַאֵר שֵׁם Based on the above, in that source, the Rebbe  
מֶה שֶׁאָמְרוּ רַבּוֹתֵינוּ Maharash explains<sup>7</sup> our Sages' statement: "When  
זְכוּרֵנוֹם לְבְרָכָה בְּשָׁעָה the Jews made the commitment *naaseh* before  
שֶׁהִקְדִּימוּ כו', *nishma*...."

אֲףִי שְׁשֵׁנֵי הַכְּתָרִים הֵם Even though the two crowns that the angels granted  
כִּנְגֵד נַעֲשֶׂה וְנִשְׁמָע עֲצָמָם the Jews correspond to the commitments of *naaseh*  
and *nishma*, respectively,

[אֶחָד כִּנְגֵד נַעֲשֶׂה] [as reflected by the continuation of their statement  
וְאֶחָד כִּנְגֵד נִשְׁמָע], "One corresponding to *naaseh* and one corresponding to *nishma*,"]

כִּי בְּכַדִּי שִׁיְהִיָּה הַשּׁוּב nevertheless, in order that the Divine service of *shov*  
(נִשְׁמָע) צָרִיךְ לִהְיוֹת (*nishma*) be deemed worthy of a crown, it must be  
קַדִּימַת הָרָצוּא (נַעֲשֶׂה). preceded by *ratzo* (*naaseh*).

7. At the end of the *maamar* cited above, *Sefer HaMaamarim* 5629, p. 192.

וממשיך בהמאמר שם, דזה שקשרו להם שני כתרים (כתרים דוקא), הוא, כי כתר

וּמְשִׁיךְ בְּהַמָּאֵר שָׁם, In that *maamar*, the Rebbe Maharash proceeds to explain

דְּזֶה שֶׁקָּשְׂרוּ לָהֶם שְׁנֵי כְּתָרִים (כְּתָרִים דּוֹקָא), הוא, his aforementioned resolution, emphasizing that when mentioning the angels conferring two crowns upon the Jewish people, (our Sages specifically employ the term “crowns”)

כִּי כְּתֹר הוּא מְקִיף, סוֹבֵב, because *Kesser*, the crown, refers to an encompassing light, reflecting G-d's light that is *sovev kol almin*, which transcends all worlds.

*Chassidus* distinguishes between *oros p'nimiim*, internal lights, and *oros makifim*, encompassing lights, explaining that *oros p'nimiim* are enclothed within the *keilim*<sup>8</sup> whereas *oros makifim* transcend the *keilim*.

The difference between these two types of light can be understood by comparing them to parallel influences on man's character. When a person approaches a mentor to learn how to refine and develop his character, he understands the lessons that the mentor imparts to him. He works them over in his mind and tries to internalize them and shape his character accordingly. *Chassidus* terms this type of influence as *pnimiyus*, i.e., it affects the person from within.

There are other occasions when a person's conduct changes due to an external influence. The setting in which he finds himself causes him to comport himself in a specific manner. No one instructs him how to behave, but he instinctively knows that he must act differently than usual. For example, when he is in the presence of a venerable personage, he intuitively feels the necessity of conducting himself in a befitting manner. This type of external influence is referred to as *makif*, encompassing.

Intellect is a *koach p'nimi*, an internalized power. The person understands and feels in control of what he knows. In contrast, will, *ratzon*,<sup>9</sup> is referred to as a *koach makif*, an encompassing power, because the person ultimately doesn't understand what it is that is motivating to want the object of his desire. He wants it because a core dimension of his being – something beyond his conscious mind – is drawn to it.

8. *Keilim* is the plural of *k'li* (lit., “vessel”), i.e., the medium through which Divine light is given definition and enabled to flow down to lower realms.

9. *Chassidus* distinguishes between *ratzon*, “will,” that transcends one's intellect, and will that is dependent on intellect – one desires an object or an activity because he understands that it is beneficial to him. Here, the intent is the higher level of will.

הוא מקיף, סובב, ויש בזה ב' ענינים, עליית ממלא בסובב והמשכת סובב בממלא.

To focus on the parallels to these concepts in the spiritual realms: G-d's light that is *memale kol almin* is described as an *or p'nimi* because it enclothes itself in the *sefiros* and takes on their character. His light that is *sovev kol almin* is described as an *or makif* because it transcends the *sefiros* and, when revealed, overpowers them and generates *bittul*, i.e., causing them to be subsumed entirely in its light. *Chassidus* explains that Divine revelations are drawn down through man's carrying out a mode of Divine service that reflects and corresponds to that particular revelation. To draw down an encompassing light, G-d's light that is *sovev kol almin*, that transcends all worlds, a person must transcend his own identity. This is achieved through *kabbalas ol*; a person goes beyond his individual desires and commits himself totally to G-d's service. Such *bittul* is a medium to draw down G-d's encompassing light (*kesser* – a crown).

More specifically, however, our Sages mention *two* crowns, i.e., that a crown was given not only for the commitment of *naaseh*, the acceptance of the yoke of G-d's Kingship, but also for *nishma*, the acceptance of the yoke of *mitzvot*. It is readily understandable why *naaseh* elicits G-d's encompassing light: In making such a commitment, a person declares himself G-d's servant. A servant is not his own person; he is his master's property. When a person makes such an *all-encompassing* commitment, he draws down an *all-encompassing* light, that is *sovev kol almin*.

However, the reason that the Jews' commitment of *nishma*, the acceptance of the yoke of *mitzvot*, warranted their receiving a crown is problematic. The observance of *mitzvot* involves a person's activity in the world. Although he is acting in G-d's service, he is nevertheless using his own personal powers of intellect, emotion, and action. Such efforts seemingly relate to G-d's light that is *memale kol almin*. Why then did making such a commitment warrant a crown, i.e., relate to G-d's light that is *sovev kol almin*?

In resolution, the Rebbe Maharash explains that

יֵשׁ בְּזֶה ב' עֲנִינִים, **there are two dimensions** of the connection to G-d's light that is *sovev kol almin*:

עֲלִית מִמָּלָא בְּסוּבָב **a) the ascent** of the light that is *memale kol almin* to the level of *sovev kol almin*,

וְהַמְשַׁכַּת סוּבָב בְּמִמָּלָא **and b) drawing down** the light that is *sovev kol almin* into the worlds that receive their vitality from the light that is *memale kol almin*.



ולכאורה הכוונה, דכתר שכנגד נעשה (רצוא) הוא עליית ממלא בסובב וכתר שכנגד נשמע (שוב) הוא המשכת סובב בממלא.

ויש לומר, דזה שמוסיף בהמאמר שזה שקשרו להם שני כתרים הוא כי כתר הוא מקיף, הוא, כי מלשון רז"ל בשעה שהקדימו כו' קשרו להם שני כתרים משמע שהדיוק

וְלִכְאוּרָה הַפְּנוּנָה, דְּכֶתֶר  
שְׁכָנְגֵד נַעֲשֶׂה (רְצוּא) **On the surface, the Rebbe Maharash's intent is that the crown that corresponds to *naaseh* (i.e., Divine service characterized by *ratzo*)**

הוא עֲלִית מְמָלָא בְּסוֹבֵב **represents the ascent of the light that is *memale kol almin* to the level of *sovev kol almin*,**

A person's going beyond his identity and accepting G-d's Kingship parallels G-d's light that is *memale kol almin* ascending to His light that is *sovev kol almin*.

וְכֶתֶר שְׁכָנְגֵד נִשְׁמָע (שׁוֹב) **and the crown that corresponds to *nishma* (i.e., Divine service characterized by *shov*)**

הוא הַמְשַׁכֵּת סוֹבֵב בְּמְמָלָא. **represents drawing down the light that is *sovev kol almin* into the worlds that receive their vitality from the light that is *memale kol almin*.**

The commitment to observe *mitzvos* – activities within the world – relates to the light that is *memale kol almin*.

וְיֵשׁ לוֹמַר, דְּזֶה  
שְׁמוּסִיף בְּהַמָּאָמֵר **It is possible to explain that the explanation that the Rebbe Maharash added in the *maamar* –**

שְׁזֶה שְׁקָשְׁרוּ לָהֶם  
שְׁנֵי כְתָרִים הוּא כִּי  
כֶּתֶר הוּא מְקִיף, **that our Sages were precise in their choice of wording: the reason the angels “attached two crowns” to the Jews was due to the fact that Kesser, “the crown,” is an encompassing light –**

הוא, כִּי מְלִשׁוֹן רַבּוֹתֵינוּ  
זְכוּרָנָם לְבִרְכָּה בְּשַׁעַה  
שְׁהִקְדִּימוּ כו' קָשְׁרוּ  
לָהֶם שְׁנֵי כְתָרִים **was necessary because the wording of our Sages, “When the Jews made the commitment *naaseh*, ‘We will do,’ before *nishma*, ‘we will listen,’ the ministering angels came and attached two crowns...”**

דהקדימו נעשה לנשמע שייך לשני הכתרים שכנגד נעשה ונשמע (ולא לנעשה ונשמע עצמם), ולכן מבאר דכתר הוא מקיף וסובב ושני הכתרים הם שני ענינים בסובב, כי זהו ביאור על זה שקשירת שני הכתרים היתה דוקא ע"י שהקדימו נעשה לנשמע (כדלקמן). וזה שמבאר לפנינו דזה שצריך להקדים נעשה לנשמע הוא כי נעשה ונשמע הם כמו רצוא ושוב, הוא ביאור על זה שהכתר שכנגד נשמע (מקיף וסובב) הוא

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מְשַׁמֵּעַ שֶׁהַדְיוּק דְּהַקְדִּימוֹ  
נַעֲשֶׂה לְנִשְׁמָע שֶׁיֵּךְ  
לְשֵׁנֵי הַכְּתָרִים שֶׁכֶּנֶגֶד  
נַעֲשֶׂה וְנִשְׁמָע  
implies that the fact that they made the commitment of *naaseh* before the commitment of *nishma* relates to the two crowns that correspond to *naaseh* and *nishma*  
(and not to the commitments of *naaseh* and *nishma* themselves).  
(ולא לנעשה ונשמע עצמם),

I.e., what warranted receiving the crowns was the order in which the commitments were made and not the commitments themselves.

וְלִכֵּן מְבָאֵר דְּכֶתֶר  
הוּא מְקִיף וְסוֹבֵב  
Therefore, the Rebbe Maharash explains that *kesser*, the crown, refers to an encompassing light, reflecting G-d's light that is *sovev kol almin*  
וּשְׁנֵי הַכְּתָרִים הֵם שְׁנֵי  
עֲנִינִים בְּסוֹבֵב, and the two crowns reflect two different motifs of interaction with the light that is *sovev kol almin*.  
כִּי זֶהוּ בְּאֹר עַל זֶה  
שֶׁקְשִׁירַת שְׁנֵי הַכְּתָרִים  
הִיְתָה דְּדוֹקָא עַל יְדֵי  
שֶׁהַקְדִּימוֹ נַעֲשֶׂה  
לְנִשְׁמָע (כְּדִלְקָמֵן). This explains why the Jews deserved the angels' attaching the two crowns to them because they made the commitment of *naaseh* before *nishma* (as will be explained).

וְזֶה שֶׁמְבָאֵר לִפְנֵי זֶה  
דְּזֶה שֶׁצָּרִיךְ לְהַקְדִּים  
נַעֲשֶׂה לְנִשְׁמָע הוּא  
The explanation that the Rebbe Maharash gave before that – that the commitment of *naaseh* must precede that of *nishma*,

כִּי נַעֲשֶׂה וְנִשְׁמָע הֵם  
כְּמוֹ רְצוּא וְשׁוּב, because *naaseh* and *nishma* correspond to *ratzo* and *shov* respectively –

הוּא בְּאֹר עַל זֶה  
שֶׁהַכְּתָר שֶׁכֶּנֶגֶד נִשְׁמָע  
(מְקִיף וְסוֹבֵב) הוּא  
is an explanation of the fact that a crown (which reflects an encompassing light) was granted corresponding to *nishma*

דוקא כשהנשמע הוא לאחרי הקדימה דנעשה. כי מקיף וסובב הוא למעלה משייכות לעולמות, וכיון שנשמע הוא שוב והמשכה למטה, לכן, זה שקשרו כתר (מקיף וסובב שלמעלה מעולם) כנגד נשמע (המשכה למטה) הוא דוקא מפני שהנשמע הי' לאחרי ההקדמה דנעשה<sup>10</sup>, רצוא ועלי' למעלה.

דוקא פֿשֶׁהנִשְׁמָע הוא specifically when the commitment of *nishma* was preceded by *naaseh*.  
לְאַחֲרֵי הַקְדִּימָה דְנִעְשָׂה.

To explain the latter point:

כִּי מְקִיף וְסוֹבֵב הוא G-d's encompassing light, His light that is *sovev kol almin*, transcends any connection to the structure of the spiritual worlds.  
לְמַעַלָּה מְשִׁיכוֹת לְעוֹלָמוֹת,

וְכִיוֵּן שֶׁנִּשְׁמָע הוא שׁוֹב Since, in contrast, *nishma* reflects the motif of *shov*, drawing G-dly energy down to a lower plane,  
וְהַמְשָׁכָה לַמָּטָה,  
לְכֵן, זֶה שֶׁקָּשְׂרוּ כֶּתֶר (מְקִיף attaching a crown (which, as explained above, reflects an encompassing light, G-d's light that is *sovev kol almin*, which transcends the structure of the spiritual worlds)  
וְסוֹבֵב שֶׁלְמַעַלָּה מֵעוֹלָם)

כְּנֶגֶד נִשְׁמָע (הַמְשָׁכָה corresponding to *nishma* (drawing down G-dly energy to a lower plane)  
לַמָּטָה)

הוא דוקא מִפְּנֵי is appropriate specifically because the commitment of *nishma* was preceded by *naaseh*,  
שֶׁהַנִּשְׁמָע הָיָה לְאַחֲרֵי  
הַהִקְדָּמָה דְנִעְשָׂה,

רְצוֹא וְעֲלִיָּה לְמַעַלָּה. *ratzo*, the yearning to ascend.

I.e., Although *nishma*, the approach of *shov*, can exist even when it is not preceded by *naaseh*, [it is then not worthy of a crown].<sup>10</sup> *Shov* reflects the thrust to descend and invest oneself in worldly activities. Such activities relate to G-d's light that is *memale kol almin*. For *shov* to be worthy of a crown, i.e., for it to draw down an encompassing light, it must be preceded by *ratzo*.

To explain: After a person has made the commitment of *ratzo*, desiring to go beyond his own identity, to then reverse course and focus on drawing down G-dliness into the world requires him to once again go beyond himself, for he personally is yearning for self-transcendence. His involvement in the world at this stage is not an ordinary commitment to

10. See the paragraph beginning "Based on the above, it is possible to explain our Sages' statement..." in sec. 8.

carry out G-d's will within the world but rather an extension of his acceptance of G-d's Kingship. Because he has identified himself as G-d's servant, he dedicates himself fully to carrying out His will through the observance of the *mitzvos*, notwithstanding his personal desire for self-transcendence. Such a commitment is worthy of a "crown," i.e., it draws down G-d's encompassing light which is identified with *Kesser*, "the crown."

## SUMMARY

The concepts presented in the previous sections can be further explained through the interpretation of our Sages' teaching: "When the Jews made the commitment of *naaseh*, 'We will do,' before *nishma*, 'we will listen,' the ministering angels came and attached two crowns to every Jew, one corresponding to *naaseh* and one corresponding to *nishma*."

That teaching is problematic: On one hand, it implies that the two crowns were given by virtue of the order in which the Jews expressed their commitments, pledging *naaseh* before *nishma*. However, the conclusion of the quote, "One corresponding to *naaseh* and one corresponding to *nishma*," implies that the crowns were given for the commitments of *naaseh* and *nishma* themselves, i.e., each commitment itself warranted a crown.

In resolution, the Rebbe Maharash explains that *naaseh* represents the acceptance of the yoke of the kingdom of Heaven, and *nishma*, the acceptance of the yoke of His *mitzvos*. The order in which the Jews pledged their commitments conforms to our Sages' teaching that "One should first accept upon himself the yoke of the kingdom of Heaven, and [only] afterwards, the yoke of the *mitzvos*."

The Rebbe Maharash proceeds to explain that the first passage in *Kerias Shema*, which opens with the word *Shema*, is identified with the Divine service of *ratzo*, "yearning for G-dliness," while the passage beginning *Vehayah im shamoa* is identified with the Divine service of *shov*, "return." Just as in a *ratzo veshov* motif, one must initially be aroused with the longing of *ratzo* and only afterwards pursue the thrust of *shov*, so too must the acceptance of the yoke of *mitzvos* be preceded by the acceptance of the yoke of the kingdom of Heaven.

On this basis, the abovementioned difficulty can be explained: A crown reflects an encompassing light, paralleling G-d's light that is *sovev kol almin*, which transcends all worlds, whereas the thrust of *shov* and the acceptance of the yoke of G-d's *mitzvos* involve man's service *within* the material world. Even though the two crowns that the angels granted the Jews correspond to the commitments of *naaseh* and *nishma* respectively, in order that the Divine service of *shov* (*nishma*) be worthy of a crown, i.e., to draw down G-d's encompassing light, it must be preceded by *ratzo* (*naaseh*). For then the person's involvement in the world (*shov*) is not an ordinary commitment to carry out G-d's will within the world but rather an extension of his acceptance of G-d's Kingship.

ח) וְצִרִיךְ ביאור, הרי כללות הענין דקבלת עול, גם קבלת עול מצוות (נשמע), הוא ביטול, דענין הביטול הוא שהאדם יוצא ממציאותו, וקשירת הכתר שכנגד נשמע הוא דוקא כשהנשמע הוא לאחר הקדימה דנעשה. וי"ל הביאור בזה ע"פ הידוע<sup>1</sup> שהמקיף דכתר הוא אמיתית המקיף שלמעלה מהמקיף השייך לפנימי.

— 8 —

The concept explained at the end of the previous section – that the acceptance of the yoke of the observance of the *mitzvos* is worthy of receiving a crown (i.e., of drawing down G-d's encompassing light) only when preceded by the acceptance of the yoke of G-d's Kingship –

וְצִרִיךְ בְּאִוָּר, requires further clarification:

הַרִי כָּלְלוֹת הָעֲנִיִן דְּקִבְלַת עַל, The overall concept of the acceptance of a yoke,

גַּם קִבְלַת עַל מִצְוֹת (נִשְׁמָע), including the yoke of the observance of the *mitzvos* (*nishma*),

הוּא בְּטוּל, reflects a commitment of *bittul*,

דְּעֲנִין הַבְּטוּל הוּא שְׁהָאָדָם יוֹצֵא מִמְּצִיאוֹתוֹ, for the concept of *bittul* involves transcending one's personal identity and becoming subsumed within G-dliness.

וְקִשְׁרֵת הַכֶּתֶר שֶׁכִּנְגַּד נִשְׁמָע הוּא דְּוָקָא כְּשֶׁהִנְשָׁמָע הוּא לְאַחֲרֵי הַקְדִּימָה דְּנַעֲשֶׂה. As such, why then was it explained that the crown corresponding to *nishma* was granted specifically after having been preceded by *naaseh*? Seemingly, *nishma* itself is an act of *bittul* and is worthy of a crown.

וַיֵּשׁ לוֹמַר הַבְּאִוָּר בְּזֶה עַל פִּי הַיְדוּעַ It is possible to offer an explanation based on the well-known concept<sup>1</sup>

שְׁהַמְקִיף דְּכֶתֶר הוּא אֱמִתִּית הַמְקִיף that the encompassing light of Kesser reflects the true concept of an encompassing light,

שְׁלִמְעָלָה מִהַמְקִיף הַשֵּׁיךְ לְפָנִימִי. i.e., a light that is loftier than an encompassing light that relates to a light that can be internalized.

1. The series of *maamarim* entitled *Yom Tov shel Rosh HaShanah*, 5666, p. 273.

דזהו החילוק בין כתר לגלגלתא, דגלגלתא הוא מקיף השייך לפנימי, בדוגמת הגולגולת שבאדם שמקיף את המוח אבל שייך אליו, שהרי הגולגולת היא מגופו כמו המוח. והמקיף דכתר הוא מקיף שלמעלה משייכות לפנימי, בדוגמת כתר

In *Chassidus*, it is explained that there are times when a power or light is described as “encompassing,” even though, to a greater or lesser degree, it relates to one’s internalized powers.

This category of encompassing light subdivides into many intermediate levels. To give a basic example: There are times when one begins to understand a concept, but has not fully grasped it. The concept is not totally beyond him, for it in essence is able to be grasped and understood; moreover, he has already attained some degree of comprehension. Nevertheless, in his present state it cannot be said that he has internalized the concept. Thus, such a concept can be described as *makif*, “encompassing,” for it is presently “above” the person, even though ultimately, it is within his capacity to internalize it.

The difference between this type of encompassing light and a true encompassing light can be illustrated by drawing a comparison

דְּזֵהוּ הַחִלּוּק בֵּין  
כֶּתֶר לְגִלְגֻלְתָּא, to the difference between a crown and the skull.  
Both these terms are used in *Kabbalah* as analogies to  
our encompassing powers.

דְּגִלְגֻלְתָּא הוּא מְקִיף  
הַשֵּׁיךְ לְפָנִימִי, The skull is an analogy for an encompassing light or  
power that relates to a light or power that is *p’nimi*,  
“internalized.”

בְּדִגְמַת הַגִּלְגּוּלִת  
שֶׁבְּאָדָם שֶׁמְקִיף אֶת  
הַמוֹחַ אָבֵל שֵׁיךְ אֵלָיו, like a person’s skull, which encompasses the per-  
son’s brain but which nevertheless relates to it.

שֶׁהָרִי הַגִּלְגּוּלִת הִיא  
מִגּוּפּוֹ כְּמוֹ הַמוֹחַ. For after all, the skull is part of the person’s body,  
just as is his brain.

וְהַמְקִיף דְּכֶתֶר הוּא מְקִיף  
שֶׁלְמַעְלָה מְשִׁיכוֹת לְפָנִימִי, By contrast, the encompassing light of *Kesser* is an  
encompassing light that transcends any connec-  
tion to an influence that can be internalized.

בְּדִגְמַת כֶּתֶר כְּפֶשׁוּטוֹ To refer to the analogy of an actual crown:

כפשוטו שהוא עטרה על המוח והגולגולת ואין לו קשר אליהם (שהרי הכתר הוא מאבנים טובות ולא מגוף האדם). והגם שגם גלגלתא נק' בשם כתר, זהו בכללות, אבל עיקר הכתר הוא המקיף שאינו שייך לפנימי (שלמעלה מהמקיף דגלגלתא). וע"ד הרצון שבאדם, דרצון הוא מקיף על כל הכחות והאברים, שיש בו שתי

שֶׁהוּא עֵטְרָה עַל הַמֶּחֱ וְהַגִּלְגּוּלִית it is a diadem worn on the head, above one's brain and skull,

וְאֵין לוֹ קֶשֶׁר אֲלֵיהֶם a separate entity, without any connection to them,

(שֶׁהַרִי הַכֶּתֶר הוּא מְאָבָנִים טוֹבוֹת וְלֹא מִגּוּף הָאָדָם). (for a crown is an inanimate object made of precious stones and not of a part of the human body).

וְהִגָּם שֶׁגַּם גִּלְגְּלֵתָא נִקְרָא בְּשֵׁם כֶּתֶר, Although in certain texts of *Kabbalah* and *Chassidus*, the skull is sometimes also identified with *Kesser*,

זֶהוּ בְּכָלְלוּת, that is speaking in a general sense.

אֲכַל עֵקֶר הַכֶּתֶר הוּא הַמְּקִיף שֶׁאֵינוֹ שִׁיךְ לַפְּנִימִי Fundamentally, however, *Kesser* refers to an encompassing light that transcends connection to any degree of influence that is able to be internalized

(שֶׁלְּמַעַלָּה מִהַמְּקִיף דְּגִלְגְּלֵתָא). (and which thus transcends the encompassing light described by the analogy of the skull).

וְעַל דֶּרֶךְ הָרָצוֹן שֶׁבָּאָדָם, To illustrate this concept by drawing a parallel to a person's faculty of will:

הָרָצוֹן הוּא מְקִיף עַל כָּל הַכֹּחוֹת וְהָאָבָרִים, The faculty of will affects all the person's other faculties and limbs in an encompassing manner.

A person who uses his *mind* to train his faculties or limbs lowers his thought, causing it to become encloded within them while interacting with them. For example, if he wishes to gain a specific skill, he learns what must be done to acquire that skill and repeatedly practices the activities necessary to cultivate it; he thinks over how his faculties or limbs are functioning, guiding and directing them to perform in accordance with his intent. In contrast, when he influences these faculties through his *will*, he commands them, directing their functioning from above.

The power of will itself



מדריגות<sup>2</sup>. הרצון לעשות איזה דבר ע"י הכחות שלו, דרצון זה עם היותו שולט על כל הכחות לפי שהוא מקיף עליהם, מ"מ, זה עצמו שהוא רוצה בפעולת הכחות, הוא הוכחה שיש לו שייכות אליהם – מקיף דגלגלתא. והוא ירידה לגבי הרצון עצמו כמו שהוא למעלה מהרצון לעשות – מקיף דכתר.

שֵׁשׁ בּוֹ שְׁתֵּי מַדְרָגוֹת. comprises two levels:<sup>2</sup>

הָרָצוֹן לַעֲשׂוֹת אִיזָה דָּבָר a) a person's desire to perform a particular act  
עַל יְדֵי הַכֹּחוֹת שֶׁלּוֹ, using his own abilities;

דְּרָצוֹן זֶה עִם הָיּוֹתוֹ although this desire rules over all his other  
שׁוֹלֵט עַל כָּל הַכֹּחוֹת faculties

לְפִי שֶׁהוּא מְקִיף עֲלֵיהֶם, because it functions as an encompassing light  
above them,

Unlike a person who functions on the basis of his intellectual powers, a person who is motivated by his will is not training his powers; he *orders* them to function.

מִכָּל מְקוֹם, זֶה עֲצָמוֹ שֶׁהוּא nevertheless, the very fact that he desires for his  
רוֹצֶה בְּפַעֲלַת הַכֹּחוֹת, powers to function

הוּא הֹכְחָה שֵׁשׁ לוֹ attests to the fact that his will shares a connection  
שְׁיִכּוּת אֲלֵיהֶם – with them.

מְקִיף דְּגִלְגְּלָתָא. This is the level of the encompassing light of the  
skull, i.e., an encompassing power that shares some  
degree of connection with the internalized powers,

וְהוּא יְרִידָה לְגַבִּי and that constitutes a descent in relation to

הָרָצוֹן עֲצָמוֹ כְּמוֹ שֶׁהוּא b) the faculty of will itself, as it exists above the will  
לְמַעַל מִהָרָצוֹן לַעֲשׂוֹת – to perform any particular action;

מְקִיף דְּכֶתֶר. this latter level is identified with the encompassing  
light of *Kesser*.

2. See *ibid.*, p. 281.

והנה זה שבחג השבועות הוא המשכת הכתר, הוא אמיתית הכתר שלמעלה מגלגלתא<sup>3</sup>. ועד"ז הוא בנוגע לשני הכתרים שכנגד נעשה ונשמע שנמשכו בערב חג השבועות<sup>4</sup>, שהם מקיפים שלמעלה משייכות לפנימימט. ועפ"ז יש לבאר שקשירת הכתר שכנגד נשמע היתה דוקא ע"י שהקדימו נעשה לנשמע, כי הביטול דקבלת עול מצוות הוא

והנה זה שבחג השבועות  
הוא המשכת הכתר, On the festival of Shavuos, the rung of *Kesser* that  
is drawn down,

הוא אמתית הכתר  
שלמעלה מגלגלתא. is the true, innermost dimension of *Kesser*, the  
crown, that transcends the *golgalta*, the skull.<sup>3</sup>

ועל דרך זה הוא בנוגע  
לשני הכתרים שפנגד  
נעשה ונשמע שנמשכו  
בערב חג השבועות, Similar concepts apply in regard to the two  
crowns corresponding to *naaseh* and *nishma* that  
were drawn down on the day before the festival  
of Shavuos.<sup>4</sup>

שהם מקיפים שלמעלה  
משייכות לפנימי. Both are encompassing lights that transcend  
any connection to the Divine light that is able to be  
internalized.<sup>5</sup>

ועל פי זה יש לבאר  
שקשירת הכתר שפנגד  
נשמע היתה דוקא על ידי  
שהקדימו נעשה לנשמע, On this basis, it can be explained why granting the  
crown for *nishma* resulted specifically from the  
Jews' having made the commitment of *naaseh* before  
that of *nishma*.<sup>6</sup>

כי הבטול דקבלת על  
מצות הוא בטול להרצון, The *bittul* associated with accepting the yoke of  
the *mitzvot* (*nishma*) reflects a *bittul* to G-d's will.

3. The conclusion of the *maamar* for *Yisro* in the *hosafos* to *Torah Or* (p. 110a-b) associates the revelation of the Giving of the Torah with the *golgalta* of *Arich* (thus appearing to contradict what is stated in the main text here). However, it is apparent from the conceptual flow of the exposition there that the focus is on a level of will that transcends the will to perform a specific activity. Thus, the *maamar* there explains that speech that emanates from a person's conscious choice and will is rooted in the expression (i.e., in the external dimensions) of will, while speech that does not emanate from a person's conscious will (the level of *midbar* described in sec. 4) relates to the inner dimension of *Kesser*, G-d's simple will, the level referred to as *raava d'chol raavin*, "the will of wills."

4. It was on that day, the 5th of Sivan, that the Jews made the commitment of *naaseh venishma* (Rashi, *Shmos* 24:4).

5. See the *hosafos* to *Torah Or*, which associate the two crowns bestowed upon the Jews with the revelation of G-dliness that accompanied the Giving of the Torah, which was so great that the Jews' "souls expired after hearing each one of the commandments" (see *Shabbos* 88b). Their souls' expiring (seemingly) reflects a connection to a level of Divine will that transcends the will to perform any particular action.

6. This further expands upon the explanation of the concept begun in sec. 7.

ביטול להרצון, וכיון שהמצוות הם ציוויים להאדם, הרי הרצון דמצוות הוא ע"ד הרצון (דהאדם) שרוצה לעשות ע"י הכחות שלו, מקיף דגלגלתא. והמשכת המקיף דכתר (מקיף שלמעלה משייכות לפנימי) הוא ע"י הביטול דקבלת עול מלכות שמים, ביטול לבצל

The person commits himself to carrying out everything that G-d commands.

וכיון שְׁחֲמָצוֹת הֵם צְוִיִּים לְהָאָדָם, Since the *mitzvos* are G-d's commandments to *man* obligating him to carry out specific actions and refrain from performing others,

הָרִי הָרָצוֹן דְּמָצוֹת הוּא עַל דְּרָף הָרָצוֹן (דְּהָאָדָם) שְׂרוּצָה לַעֲשׂוֹת עַל יְדֵי הַכָּחוֹת שְׁלוֹ, it follows that G-d's desire that man fulfill the *mitzvos* resembles (man's) desire to perform an action using his own faculties.

Man's *ratzon*, will, reflects the expression of the soul, the person's "inner self," which transcends all connection to performing any specific action. The very fact that a desire is associated with performing an action indicates that the focus is not on the person's inner self but rather on a level of the soul that relates to the world outside of him. Similarly, in relation to G-d, the fact that *mitzvos* involve actions that man performs in the world indicates that His desire for them reflects a level of G-dliness that takes the world into consideration; it does not reflect G-d as He exists unto Himself.

מְקִיף דְּגִלְגָּלְתָּא. This reflects the encompassing light described by the analogy of the skull.

וְהַמְשַׁכֵּת הַמְקִיף דְּכֶתֶר Drawing down the encompassing light described by the analogy of a crown,

(מְקִיף שְׁלִמְעָלָה מְשִׁיכוֹת לְפָנִימִי) (an encompassing light that transcends connection to any influence that can be internalized,)

הוּא עַל יְדֵי הַבִּטּוּל דְּקַבְּלַת עַל מַלְכוּת שָׁמַיִם, is brought about by the *bittul* of the acceptance of the yoke of the Kingship of Heaven,

בִּטּוּל לְבַעַל הָרָצוֹן. *bittul* to the Master of the will.

By accepting G-d's sovereignty, the person subsumes his identity not only to G-d's will, but to G-d Himself. He identifies himself as G-d's servant and by doing so

הרצון. וע"י שהקדימו נעשה לנשמע, קשרו להם שני כתרים אחד כנגד נעשה ואחד כנגד נשמע, כי ע"י הקדמת נעשה לנשמע, גם הביטול דקבלת עול מצוות הוא באופן שנרגש בו בגילוי: שהוא בא מהביטול דקבלת עול מלכות שמים, ביטול לבעל הרצון.

bonds himself with G-d as He is unto Himself, transcending any connection to the worlds.

ועל ידי שהקדימו  
נעשה לנשמע, By having made the commitment of *naaseh* before  
that of *nishma*, the Jews merited

קשרו להם שני כתרים  
אחד כנגד נעשה  
ואחד כנגד נשמע, receiving two crowns, one corresponding to  
*naaseh* and one corresponding to *nishma*,

כי על ידי הקדמת  
נעשה לנשמע, for when the commitment of *nishma* is prefaced by  
that of *naaseh*,

גם הבטול דקבלת  
על מצוות הוא באופן  
שנרגש בו בגילוי the *bittul* manifest in the acceptance of the yoke  
of the *mitzvos* is expressed in a manner that it is  
consciously felt as

שהוא בא מהבטול דקבלת  
על מלכות שמים, coming as an outgrowth of the prior acceptance  
of the yoke of the Kingship of Heaven,

בטול לבעל הרצון. one's *bittul* to the Master of the will.

By making the commitment of *naaseh*, a person redefines his identity. He is no longer an independent individual who has committed himself to carrying out G-d's will; he is now G-d's servant. He fulfills G-d's will not because he chooses to, but because he *must*; carrying out His will is an expression of his total commitment and self-subjugation to G-dliness.

Based on the above, it is possible to explain our Sages' statement (cited at the beginning of sec. 7): "So that one first accept the yoke of the Kingship of Heaven, and only afterwards accept the yoke of G-d's *mitzvos*." On the surface, it is impossible to accept upon oneself the yoke of G-d's *mitzvos* without first accepting upon himself the yoke of His sovereignty. [As is true in regard to a mortal king, the yoke of carrying out his decrees seemingly becomes relevant only after having accepted him as king.<sup>7</sup> Simply put, one who does not accept a ruler will not feel any obligation to carry out his commands.] Accordingly, the very fact that one has accepted upon himself the yoke of G-d's *mitzvos* seems to imply

7. See *Mechilta* (and *Yalkut Shimoni*) to *Shmos* 20:3.

וביאור העילוי שנעשה בהביטול דנשמע ע"י הקדמת הביטול דנעשה, יובן בהקדים, דכמו שלמעלה, הביטול דקבלת עול מצוות הוא להרצון (גילוי) והביטול דקבלת עומ"ש הוא לבעל הרצון, עד"ז הוא בנוגע להאדם, שהביטול דקבלת עול מצוות הוא בהגילויים דהאדם, שיעשה כל מה שיצטווה ויתירה מזו שזה (לעשות מה

that he has already accepted His sovereignty. Why, then, did our Sages have to ordain that one must first accept the yoke of the Kingship of Heaven?

In resolution, it is possible to say that the directive to first accept the yoke of the Kingship of Heaven implies that the acceptance of G-d's Kingship should be the beginning of the acceptance of His *mitzvos*, i.e., that the *bittul* characterizing one's acceptance of the yoke of the Kingship of Heaven be consciously felt in his acceptance of the yoke of the *mitzvos*, as stated above.

וביאור העילוי שנעשה  
בהביטול דנשמע על  
ידי הקדמת הביטול  
דנעשה, יובן בהקדים, The explanation of the superior quality endowed  
to the *bittul* of *nishma* by virtue of its having been  
prefaced by the *bittul* of *naaseh* can be under-  
stood by first clarifying the following concept:

דכמו שלמעלה, Just as Above, in relation to G-d, as it were,

הביטול דקבלת עול מצוות  
הוא להרצון (גילוי) the *bittul* expressed in the acceptance of the yoke  
of G-d's *mitzvos* is to His (revealed) will,

והביטול דקבלת עול מלכות  
שמים הוא לבעל הרצון, whereas the *bittul* expressed in the acceptance of  
the yoke of the Kingship of Heaven is to G-d Him-  
self, the Master of the will,

על דרך זה הוא  
בנוגע להאדם, so too in relation to man

שהביטול דקבלת עול מצוות  
הוא בהגילויים דהאדם, the *bittul* expressed in the acceptance of the yoke  
of G-d's *mitzvos* involves man's revealed powers –

שיעשה כל מה שיצטווה  
everything that he is commanded;

ויתירה מזו שזה  
(לעשות מה שנצטווה)  
יהיה הרצון שלו, moreover, this (to do what he has been com-  
manded) becomes his personal desire –

Nevertheless, the person retains his identity; despite having made such an all-en-

שנצטווה) יהי' הרצון שלו, והביטול דקבלת עומ"ש הוא בהאדם עצמו, שכל מציאותו הוא זה שהוא עבדו של המלך, מלך מלכי המלכים הקב"ה. ומזה מובן, שהמעלה דקבלת עומ"ש לגבי קבלת עול מצוות היא גם בענין הביטול. דבקבלת עול מצוות, נשאר אצלו ובו מציאות שאינה בטילה<sup>8</sup>, ואמיתית הביטול הוא בקבלת עומ"ש,

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compassing commitment, it is *he* who consciously decides to commit himself to carrying out G-d's will.

והביטול דקבלת עול מלכות שמים הוא בקבצדם עצמו, By contrast, the *bittul* expressed in the acceptance of the yoke of the Kingship of Heaven involves the very core of the person.

שכל מציאותו הוא זה שהוא עבדו של המלך, His entire existence i.e., his very being, is defined by his being a servant of the King,

מלך מלכי המלכים הקדוש ברוך הוא. the Holy One, blessed be He, King of kings. He no longer has any sense of personal identity whatsoever.

ומזה מובן, From the above it is understood

שהמעלה דקבלת עול מלכות שמים לגבי קבלת עול מצוות that the advantage inherent in the acceptance of the yoke of the Kingship of Heaven over the acceptance of the yoke of G-d's *mitzvos*

היא גם בענין הביטול. is also evident in the extent of the person's *bittul*:

דבקבלת עול מצוות, With regard to the acceptance of the yoke of G-d's *mitzvos*,

נשאר אצלו ובו מציאות שאינה בטילה, there remains within the person an element of his being that is not *batel* to G-d.

Indeed, the element that is not *batel* is not merely a peripheral or external dimension of his being, for example, it is not that that one hand is *batel* and the other hand is not. In this instance, it is the person's core, his fundamental identity, that is not *batel*.

Moreover, since the dimension that is not *batel* is the essence of the person's being, [which is (also) the essence of his revealed powers,]<sup>8</sup> it follows that even the *bittul* of his *revealed* powers will not be complete. Even though he has accepted the yoke of G-d's *mitzvos*, there remains within him (at least on a subconscious level, but a subconscious level that relates

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8. See the *maamar* entitled *VeAtah Tetzaveh, Lessons in Sefer HaMaamarim*, Vol. 1, sections 10-11.

שכל מציאותו הוא זה שהוא עבד המלך. [וזה שצ"ל (גם) קבלת עול מצוות הוא בכדי שהביטול יהי' (גם) בנוגע לקיום התומ"צ בפועל]. וכאשר הביטול דנשמע (קבלת עול מצוות) הוא לאחרי וע"י הקדמת הביטול דנעשה (קבלת עומ"ש), שנרגש בגילוי דזה

to his revealed powers) the possibility that at times he will not carry out G-d's command. Since he fundamentally remains "his own man," consequently, in a situation in which it is extremely difficult to carry out G-d's will, he might at least *consider* the possibility of not doing so.

וְאִמְתִּית הַבִּטּוּל הוּא      The true expression of *bittul* comes through one's  
בְּקַבְּלַת עַל מַלְכוּת שָׁמַיִם,      acceptance of the yoke of the Kingship of Heaven.

שֶׁכָּל מְצִיאֹתוֹ הוּא זֶה      In that instance, the person's entire existence is  
שֶׁהוּא עֶבֶד הַמֶּלֶךְ.      defined by his being a servant of the King.<sup>9</sup>

וְזֶה שֶׁצָּרִיף לִהְיוֹת (גַּם)      [Nevertheless, it is necessary that this essential com-  
קַבְּלַת עַל מִצְוֹת הוּא      mitment (also) be complemented by the acceptance  
of the yoke of His *mitzvos*

בְּכַדִּי שֶׁהַבִּטּוּל יִהְיֶה      in order that his *bittul* (also) be expressed in rela-  
(גַּם) בְּנוֹגֵעַ לְקִיּוֹם      tion to the actual observance of the Torah and  
הַתּוֹרָה וּמִצְוֹת בְּפִעֲלָהּ.      its *mitzvos*].

A specific commitment to the actual observance of *mitzvos* is necessary because the acceptance of the yoke of the Kingship of Heaven is (in and of itself) characterized by a state of *ratzo* and yearning to ascend upward to bond with G-d above the material plane. Thus, it is not necessarily related to the observance of the *mitzvos* in actual practice.

וְכַאֲשֶׁר הַבִּטּוּל הַנִּשְׁמָעִי      When the *bittul* of *nishma* (the acceptance of the  
קַבְּלַת עַל מִצְוֹת) הוּא      yoke of G-d's *mitzvos*) comes

לְאַחֲרֵי וְעַל יְדֵי הַקִּדְמָה      after – and through the preface of – the *bittul* of  
הַבִּטּוּל הַנִּעֲשֶׂה (קַבְּלַת      *naaseh* (the acceptance of the yoke of the King-  
עוֹל מַלְכוּת שָׁמַיִם),      ship of Heaven,)

שֶׁנִּרְגָּשׁ בְּגִלּוּי דָּזָה      that one consciously feels that his commitment  
שֶׁמִּקְבֵּל עָלָיו לַעֲשׂוֹת      to do everything that he has been commanded  
כָּל מַה שִּׁצִּטָּוָה

9. To refer back to sec. 7: In the spiritual realms, this corresponds to the ascent of G-d's light that is *memale kol almin* and its being subsumed in His light that is *sovev kol almin*.

שמקבל עליו לעשות כל מה שיצטווה הוא מפני שהוא עצמו עבדו של המלך, אזי, גם הביטול דנשמע הוא בכל מציאותו (בנוגע לכחות הגלויים שלו), ואין שייך כלל שלא יקיים הציווי.

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הוא מפני שהוא עצמו  
עבדו של המלך, results from his being the servant of the King,  
i.e., he no longer feels that he is “his own person” but  
solely G-d’s servant,

אזי, גם הביטול דנשמע  
הוא בכל מציאותו then the *bittul* of *nishma* permeates his entire  
being,

(בנוגע לכחות  
הגלויים שלו), (not only his essence, but also his revealed powers).<sup>10</sup>  
The redefinition of his identity as G-d’s servant domi-  
nates the way he thinks, feels, and acts.

ואין שיהי כלל שלא  
יקיים הציווי. Accordingly, it is utterly inconceivable that he not  
carry out G-d’s command. No matter what the dif-  
ficulty he may encounter, the thought of not fulfilling  
G-d’s command will not even cross his mind.

## SUMMARY

This section clarifies a concept explained at the end of the previous section: that only when a Jew’s acceptance of the yoke of the observance of the *mitzvos* is preceded by his acceptance of the yoke of G-d’s Kingship is it worthy of a crown, i.e., only then does it elicit G-d’s encompassing light. That statement appears problematic, for even the yoke of the observance of *mitzvos* (*nishma*) reflects a commitment of *bittul*, a commitment that seemingly should draw down an encompassing light on its own accord.

In resolution, it is explained that there are two levels of encompassing lights: one that transcends the G-dly lights that are *p’nimi*, “internalized,” but that nevertheless relates to them, and one that transcends them altogether. The skull is an analogy for an encompassing light that relates to the internalized powers and lights, while Kesser, the crown, is identified with the encompassing light that transcends connection to influence that can be internalized.

The difference between these two rungs can be illustrated by a comparison to two levels within the power of will: a) a person’s desire to perform a particular act via his own

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10. To refer back to sec. 7: In the spiritual realms, this corresponds to G-d’s light that is *sovev kol almin* being drawn down into His light that is *memale kol almin*.



powers, and b) the power of will itself as it transcends a desire to perform any action. Kesser is identified with the higher level of will, while the skull relates to the lower level.

To relate these concepts to the two crowns granted to the Jewish people for having made the commitments of *naaseh* and *nishma*: *Nishma*, accepting the yoke of the *mitzvos*, reflects a *bittul* to G-d's will. Since the *mitzvos* are commandments obligating man to carry out specific actions, the acceptance of the yoke to observe them reflects the encompassing light described by the analogy of the skull.

Drawing down the type of encompassing light described by the analogy of a crown, an encompassing light that transcends connection to influence that can be internalized, is brought about by the *bittul* of the acceptance of the yoke of the Kingship of Heaven, *bittul* to the Master of the will. The person subsumes his identity not only to G-d's will but to G-d Himself, and identifies entirely as G-d's servant.

By making the commitment of *naaseh* before that of *nishma*, the Jews merited to be granted two crowns, one corresponding to *naaseh* and one corresponding to *nishma*, for when the commitment of *nishma* is prefaced by that of *naaseh*, the *bittul* manifest in the acceptance of the yoke of the *mitzvos* is expressed in a manner that is overtly evident as having come about as an outgrowth of his prior acceptance of the yoke of the Kingship of Heaven, one's *bittul* to the Master of the will.

There is a further dimension to the superior quality endowed to the *bittul* of *nishma* by virtue of its having been prefaced by the *bittul* of *naaseh*: The *bittul* expressed in the acceptance of the yoke of G-d's *mitzvos* does not eclipse the person's identity in its entirety. Despite having made such an all-encompassing commitment, the person nevertheless retains his identity. In contrast, the *bittul* expressed in the acceptance of the yoke of the Kingship of Heaven involves the person's very core; his entire existence is that he is the servant of the King.

With regard to the acceptance of the yoke of G-d's *mitzvos*, there remains within the person an element of his being that is not *batel* to G-d. By contrast, through the acceptance of the yoke of the Kingship of Heaven the person's entire being becomes redefined by identifying as a servant of the King.

When the *bittul* of *nishma* (the acceptance of the yoke of G-d's *mitzvos*) comes after – and through the preface of – the *bittul* of *naaseh* (the acceptance of the yoke of the Kingship of Heaven), the person consciously feels that his commitment to carry out G-d's will stems from his identifying as the servant of the King. In such an instance, the *bittul* of *nishma* permeates his entire being, not only his essence but also his revealed powers.

Extending the essential commitment of *naaseh* to the acceptance of the yoke of His *mitzvos* also complements the commitment of *naaseh*. In this way, one's *bittul* is also expressed in relation to the actual observance of the Torah and its *mitzvos* instead of remaining merely an abstract spiritual desire.

ט) ויש להוסיף, דכמו שברצוא ושוב, תכלית הכוונה דהרצוא הוא בשביל השוב שלאחרי הרצוא<sup>1</sup>, עד"ז הוא בנעשה (קבלת עומ"ש) ונשמע (קבלת עול מצוות) שהם כמו רצוא ושוב, שתכלית הכוונה דנעשה הוא שיביא לנשמע. וע"י הקדמת נעשה לנשמע, שנעשה הוא הקדמה לנשמע, מיתוסף עילוי בנעשה. כי הביטול דנעשה

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Sec. 7 developed the teaching of the Rebbe Maharash that draws a parallel between the acceptance of the yoke of the Kingship of Heaven and the motif of *ratzo* and between the acceptance of the yoke of *mitzvos* and the *motif* of *shov*. On the basis of the explanations above,

וְיִשׁ לְהוֹסִיף, it is possible to add a further point:

דְּכֻמוֹ שֶׁבְּרָצוּא וְשׁוּב, Just as in a *ratzo veshov* motif,

תְּכַלִּית הַפְּנוּנָה דְּהָרָצוּא  
הוא בְּשִׁבְלִי הַשׁוּב  
שֶׁלֹאֲחֲרֵי הָרָצוּא, the ultimate intent in the upward thrust of *ratzo* is that it be complemented by the downward movement of *shov* that follows,<sup>1</sup> the intent being that a person rise above his own personal desire for G-dliness and dedicate himself to fulfilling G-d's desire through his efforts to make this world into a dwelling for Him,

עַל דֶּרֶךְ זֶה הוּא בְּנִעְשָׂה  
(קְבָלָת עַל מַלְכוּת שְׁמַיִם)  
וְנִשְׁמָע (קְבָלָת עַל מִצְוֹת) so too do similar concepts apply with regard to the relationship between the commitment of *naaseh* (the acceptance of the yoke of the Kingship of Heaven) and that of *nishma* (the acceptance of the yoke of G-d's *mitzvos*),

שֶׁהֵם כְּמוֹ רָצוּא וְשׁוּב, which correspond to *ratzo* and *shov* respectively.

שֶׁתְּכַלִּית הַפְּנוּנָה דְּנִעְשָׂה  
הוא שֶׁיְבִיא לְנִשְׁמָע. The ultimate intent in *naaseh* is that it lead to and be complemented by *nishma*.

וְעַל יְדֵי הַקְדָּמָה  
נִעְשָׂה לְנִשְׁמָע, Through a Jew's prefacing the commitment of *nishma* with that of *naaseh*,

שֶׁנִּעְשָׂה הוּא  
הַקְדָּמָה לְנִשְׁמָע, making *naaseh* a preparatory step for *nishma*,

1. See *Sefer HaMaamarim* 5649, p. 256ff., et al.

(מצד עצמו), עם היותו ביטול דמס"נ שהוא ביטול הכי נעלה, הוא הביטול של האדם<sup>2</sup>, וע"י שהנעשה הוא הקדמה לנשמע לקבל עליו עול מצוות (שוב והמשכה למטה), עי"ז נשלמת הכוונה דנתאוה הקב"ה להיות לו ית' דירה בתחתונים<sup>3</sup>, כוונת העצמות<sup>4</sup>.

מתוסף עלוי בנעשה. his Divine service of *naaseh* is itself enhanced and elevated.

כי הבטול דנעשה (מצד עצמו), To explain: The *bittul* of *naaseh* (in and of itself),

עם היותו בטול דמסירת נפש שהוא בטול הכי נעלה, though it reflects the *bittul* of *mesirus nefesh* (self-sacrifice), which represents the consummate expression of *bittul*,

הוא הבטול של האדם, is, ultimately, merely man's *bittul*, a created being's self-transcendence.<sup>2</sup>

ועל ידי שהנעשה הוא הקדמה לנשמע לקבל עליו על מצוות When *naaseh* becomes a preparatory step for *nishma*, the acceptance of the yoke of G-d's *mitzvos*,

(שוב והמשכה למטה), (the motif of the downward thrust of *shov*, which is characterized by drawing G-dliness down into the lower planes,)

על ידי זה נשלמת הכוונה דנתאוה הקדוש ברוך הוא להיות לו יתברך דירה בתחתונים, it makes possible the fulfillment of G-d's ultimate intent in creation, that a dwelling for Him be established in this lowly world.<sup>3</sup>

כונת העצמות. In this way, a person steps beyond the limits of his human abilities and becomes G-d's partner<sup>4</sup> in fulfilling His essential intent.<sup>5</sup>

No matter how lofty a person's self-transcendence (*ratzo*), it pales in comparison

2. See *Sefer HaMaamarim* 5629, p. 192.

3. See *Midrash Tanchuma*, Parshas Naso, sec. 16, Parshas Bechukosai, sec. 3; *Bereishis Rabbah* 3:9; *Bamidbar Rabbah* 13:6; *Tanya*, ch. 36.

4. See *Shabbos* 10a, 119b.

5. See *Toras Menachem*, *Sefer HaMaamarim Melukat*, Vol. 2, p. 24, et al.

ויש להוסיף, שהמעלה דנשמע שע"י הקדימה דנעשה על הענין דנעשה עצמו הוא גם בהביטול. כי הביטול דנעשה (מצד עצמו) הוא שאינו מציאות לעצמו (והוא רק עבדו של המלך), וע"י הקדמת נעשה לנשמע, שהביטול דנשמע הוא דוגמת הביטול דנעשה, הביטול הוא גם בהמציאות דהאדם.

to the thrust of *shov*, through which he identifies with and actualizes G-d's desire for a dwelling in this lowly world.

וְיֵשׁ לְהוֹסִיף, A further point can be added:

שְׁהַמְעָלָה דְּנִשְׁמָע שְׁעַל  
יְדֵי הַקְדִּימָה דְּנַעֲשֶׂה  
עַל הָעֲנִיָּן דְּנַעֲשֶׂה עֲצָמוֹ  
הוּא גַם בְּהִבְטוּל. The advantage inherent in the Divine service of *nishma* that is preceded by *naaseh* over the Divine service of *naaseh* alone also extends to the degree of *bittul* that a person is able attain.

כִּי הַבְּטוּל דְּנַעֲשֶׂה (מִצַּד  
עֲצָמוֹ) הוּא שְׁאִינוֹ  
מְצִיאוֹת לְעֲצָמוֹ The *bittul* of *naaseh* (in and of itself) lies in the fact that the person is no longer an existence unto himself,

(וְהוּא רַק עֲבָדוֹ שֶׁל הַמֶּלֶךְ), (he is nothing other than the servant of the King).

Through the all-encompassing *bittul* of *naaseh*, a person goes beyond his personal identity, forgoing all thoughts of self. However, such a spiritual thrust may have a drawback if the person has not elevated and refined his own identity. Although he may indeed function on a level transcending self-concern, he will not have elevated that realm itself. It is thus possible for a dichotomy to exist between his essential spiritual desire and his actual thoughts and feelings.

וְעַל יְדֵי הַקְדָּמַת  
נַעֲשֶׂה לְנִשְׁמָע, Through making the commitment of *naaseh* before that of *nishma*,

שְׁהַבְטוּל דְּנִשְׁמָע הוּא  
דְּגִמַת הַבְטוּל דְּנַעֲשֶׂה, thus rendering the two types of *bittul* comparable by infusing his Divine service of *nishma* with the all-encompassing *bittul* of *naaseh*, as explained in sec. 8,

הַבְטוּל הוּא גַם  
בְּהַמְצִיאוֹת דְּהָאָדָם. his *bittul* extends into the realm of his personal identity, encompassing the person in his entirety. His conscious powers become aligned with and reflect his essential *bittul* to G-d.<sup>6</sup>

6. See the *maamar* entitled *VeAtah Tetzaveh* (Lessons in *Sefer HaMaamarim*, Vol. 1), sec. 11.

## SUMMARY

Just as in a *ratzo veshov* motif, the ultimate intent in the upward thrust of *ratzo* is that it be complemented by the thrust of *shov*, so too with regard to the relationship between *naaseh* (the acceptance of the yoke of the Kingship of Heaven) and *nishma* (the acceptance of the yoke of G-d's *mitzvos*): the ultimate intent of *naaseh* is that it lead to *nishma*.

This enhances the person's Divine service of *naaseh*. Although the *bittul* of *naaseh* represents the consummate expression of *bittul*, it is, ultimately, merely man's *bittul*, a created being's self-transcendence. When *naaseh* becomes a preparatory step for *nishma*, by accepting the yoke of G-d's *mitzvos*, the person steps beyond the limits of his human abilities and becomes G-d's partner in fulfilling His essential intent of establishing a dwelling on this lowly plane.

A further point: The advantage inherent in the Divine service of *nishma* that is preceded by *naaseh* over the Divine service of *naaseh* on its own also extends to the *bittul* that a person is able to attain. The *bittul* of *naaseh* (in and of itself) is that a person transcends his individual identity. Through making the commitment of *naaseh* before that of *nishma*, the person infuses the all-encompassing *bittul* of *naaseh* into the realm of his individual identity, thereby aligning his conscious powers with G-d's essential intent.

(י) וְעַד"ן הוא בשני הענינים שבר"ח סיון, הביטול דיום הזה והביטול דמדבר,<sup>1</sup> שהמעלה דהביטול דיום הזה על הביטול דמדבר הוא בשני ענינים.

— 10 —

In sections 1-6 the *maamar* explains that there is an advantage to the Divine service of a person who redefines his identity and subsumes it in the service of G-d (as alluded to by the phrase *bayom hazeh*, “this day;”) over the total obliteration of one’s personal identity, (as alluded to by the word, *midbar*, “desert”).

Sections 7-9 amplify that concept by explaining our Sages’ teaching: “When the Jews made the commitment of *naaseh*, ‘We will do,’ before [that of] *nishma*, ‘we will listen,’ the ministering angels came and attached two crowns on every Jew, one corresponding to *naaseh* and one corresponding to *nishma*.” *Naaseh* refers to an absolute and total commitment of *bittul*, whereas *nishma* highlights a person’s commitment to G-d’s *mitzvos* and, through them, the establishment of a dwelling for G-d in this world, a service that involves the expression of his individual identity. Through making the commitment of *naaseh* before that of *nishma*, the person infuses the all-encompassing *bittul* of *naaseh* into the realm of his individual identity. This section integrates these two themes.

וְעַל דִּרְךָ זֶה הוּא בְּשָׁנֵי הָעֲנִינִים שֶׁבְּרֹאשׁ חֹדֶשׁ סִיוָן, Similar concepts apply with regard to the two expressions of *bittul* associated with *Rosh Chodesh Sivan*:

הַבִּטּוּל דְּיוֹם הַזֶּה וְהַבִּטּוּל דְּמִדְבָּר, the *bittul* of *bayom hazeh* and the *bittul* of *midbar*.<sup>1</sup>

שְׁהַמְעָלָה דְּהַבִּטּוּל דְּיוֹם הַזֶּה עַל הַבִּטּוּל דְּמִדְבָּר הוּא בְּשָׁנֵי עֲנִינִים. The advantage of the *bittul* of *bayom hazeh* over the *bittul* of *midbar* is twofold:

1. A similar contrast exists between the *mitzvah* of speaking words of Torah and the *mitzvah* of comprehending the Torah. The advantage of speaking words of Torah is *bittul*, that one is merely “repeating after the Reader” (see sec. 2). The advantage of the comprehension of the Torah is that man’s mind (which reflects his identity) becomes one with the Torah.

See the *hosafos* to *Torah Or* (at the beginning of the *maamar*), which explain that the study of the Torah must be verbalized – even though the primary dimension of Torah study is the comprehension of the Torah – because only when verbalizing the Torah that one studies, he is “repeating after the Reader.”

שהביטול דיום הזה (שהאהבה היא בביטול) הוא גם בהמציאות דהאדם. ושע"ז דוקא נשלמת הכוונה דדירה בתחתונים.

ויש להוסיף, דזה שהביטול דיום הזה נמשך גם בהמציאות דהאדם ונגם לאחר הביטול שנמשך בהמציאות הוא (לא ביטול היש, אלא) ביטול במציאות, הוא ע"י המשכת העצמות, שבכח העצמות הוא לחבר שני הפכים (ביטול ומציאות).

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א) *that the bittul of bayom hazeh (in which the person's love of G-d is characterized by bittul) also permeates the person's identity;*  
 שֶׁהַבִּטּוּל דְּיוֹם הַזֶּה (שֶׁהָאַהֲבָה הִיא בְּבִטּוּל) הוּא גַם בְּהַמְצִיאוֹת דְּהָאָדָם.

and b) specifically through such service G-d's intent for a dwelling in the lower realms is fulfilled.  
 וְשֶׁעַל יְדֵי זֶה דּוֹקָא נִשְׁלָמָת הַכּוֹנֵה דְּדִירָה בְּתַחְתּוֹנִים.

A further point can be added:

The possibility for the *bittul* of *bayom hazeh* to be drawn down so that it also permeates the person's identity  
 דְּזֶה שֶׁהַבִּטּוּל דְּיוֹם הַזֶּה נִמְשָׁךְ גַּם בְּהַמְצִיאוֹת דְּהָאָדָם

[and even after that level of *bittul* is drawn down within the context of the person's identity,

it is nevertheless (not *bittul hayeish*

but rather) *bittul bimetziyus*].  
 הוּא (לֹא בִטּוּל הַיֵּשׁ, אֱלָא) בִּטּוּל בְּמַצִּיאוֹת,

*Bittul hayeish* implies that the person retains his identity but dedicates himself to G-d's service. *Bittul bimetziyus* implies that the person loses all awareness of self and is conscious only of G-dliness. The intent of the *maamar* is that a person redefines his identity. He does not lose awareness of self, but instead sees himself solely as an extension of G-dliness.

This is possible only

as a result of influence being drawn down from G-d's Essence.  
 הוּא עַל יְדֵי הַמְשָׁכַת הָעֲצָמוֹת,

For it is G-d's Essence alone that possesses the capacity to fuse together two opposites,

(i.e., individual identity and *bittul*).  
 (בִּטּוּל וּמַצִּיאוֹת).

ויש לומר שזה מרומז גם בלשון הכתוב ביום הזה. דהנה מבואר בלקו"ת<sup>2</sup>, שלשון "זה", שהוא דבר שאפשר להראות עליו באצבע ולומר זה, הוא רק בהקב"ה, כמ"ש<sup>3</sup> זה א-לי ואנוהו, כי מלוא כל הארץ כבודו<sup>4</sup>. ומבואר במק"א<sup>5</sup> דאמיתית הענין ד"זה"

Opposites can only be brought together through the revelation of an unbounded Divine light that is not limited by the prevailing structures and patterns within the Spiritual Cosmos. It is those very structures and patterns that define such entities as opposites and, as such, only a light or power transcending those structures and patterns is capable of joining together and fusing these opposing entities.

ויש לומר שזה מרומז גם בלשון הכתוב ביום הזה. It is possible to say that this concept is also alluded to in the wording employed in the verse, *bayom hazeh*.

דהנה מבאר בלקוטי Likkutei Torah explains<sup>2</sup> that the word *zeh*, תורה, שלשון "זה",

שהוא דבר שאפשר להראות עליו באצבע ולומר זה, which refers to something that one can point to and say, "This is it,"

הוא רק בהקדוש ברוך הוא, can ultimately only be used in reference to the Holy One, blessed be He,

כמו שכתוב זה א-לי ואנוהו, as it is written,<sup>3</sup> "This is my G-d, and I will make a dwelling for Him,"

כי מלא כל הארץ כבודו. for, inasmuch as "the whole world is filled with His glory,"<sup>4</sup> wherever one points and says "this," he is in fact pointing to G-dliness.

ומבאר במקום אחר In another source,<sup>5</sup> it is explained that, in an ultimate sense, the word *zeh* can only be aptly used הוא רק בהעצמות. in reference to G-d's Essence.

2. Likkutei Torah, Devarim, p. 32b.

3. Shmos 15b; see Rashi's commentary to the verse and Shmos Rabbah 23:15.

4. Yeshayahu 6:3.

5. See the *maamar* entitled *Zeh Hayom Techilas Maasecha*, 5733 (*Sefer HaMaamarim* 5733, p. 485), et al.



הוא רק בהעצמות. כי פירוש "זה" הוא שהדבר שאומרים עליו "זה", הוא מציאותו של הדבר, וכיון שכל הנמצאים, כולל גם הגילויים הכי נעלים, מציאותם אינה מצד עצמם ותלוי' ברצון העצמות<sup>6</sup>, א"א לומר עליהם בשלימות זה הדבר, ואמיתית הענין ד"זה" הוא רק בהעצמות. וזהו ביום הזה, שגם המציאות דהתפשטות (יום) הוא כביטול (הזה), הוא ע"י גילוי כח העצמות, יום (גילוי) הזה.

כי פירוש "זה" הוא שהדבר שאומרים עליו "זה",	For the meaning of the word <i>zeh</i> , "this," is that the entity being pointed to
הוא מציאותו של הדבר,	is the true being of that entity.
וכיון שכל הנמצאים, כולל גם הגילויים הכי נעלים,	This cannot be said about any entity other than G-d, for all entities – including even the loftiest realms of revelation Above –
מציאותם אינה מצד עצמם	do not exist independently,
ותלוי'ה ברצון העצמות,	but rather are dependent on the will of G-d's Essence, <sup>6</sup> since it is His will that maintains all existence continually, <sup>7</sup>
אי אפשר לומר עליהם בשלמות זה הדבר,	and therefore in an ultimate sense, it is impossible to say about them, "This is it."
ואמיתית הענין ד"זה" הוא רק בהעצמות.	In truth, the word <i>zeh</i> can only be aptly used in reference to G-d's Essence.
וזהו ביום הזה,	This is the implication of the phrase <i>bayom hazeh</i> , "on this day,"
שגם המציאות דהתפשטות (יום) הוא כביטול (הזה),	that even the concepts of personal identity and self-expression ( <i>yom</i> ) are also characterized by <i>bittul</i> ( <i>hazeh</i> )
הוא על ידי גילוי כח העצמות,	and that this is achieved by the revelation of G-d's essential power,
יום (גילוי) הזה.	<i>yom</i> (which refers to the revelation of) <i>hazeh</i> (G-d's Essence).

6. See *Sefer HaMaamarim* 5711, p. 25ff., and p. 35.

7. See *Tanya, Shaar HaYichud VehoEmunah*, ch. 1.

## SUMMARY

This section explains how the conclusion of the previous section – that a Jew must infuse the all-encompassing *bittul* of *naaseh* into the realm of his individual identity – relates to the phrase *bayom hazeh*.

The *bittul* of *bayom hazeh* reflects two positive characteristics: a) it permeates the person's identity, and b) through such service, G-d's intent for a dwelling in the lower realms is brought to fruition.

The possibility for the fusion of opposites implied by *bayom hazeh* – i.e., that although one's personal identity be retained he will still consider himself solely as an extension of G-dliness – is made possible only as a result of influence from G-d's Essence.

יא) וַיֵּשׁ לומר, שזהו גם הקשר דביום הזה עם (מדבר) סיני, שירדה שנאה לאומות העולם שלא קיבלו בו את התורה<sup>ג</sup>. דכמוסד שישאל קיבלו התורה מפני שכפה הקב"ה עליהם הר כגיגית התגלות האהבה לישראל<sup>ה</sup> —

— 11 —

The previous sections explained that the revelation of G-d's Essence, as alluded to by the phrase *bayom hazeh*, made it possible for a person's individual identity to be characterized by *bittul* and for that approach to motivate his involvement in the world, pursuing the motif of *shov*. This section begins by emphasizing that such involvement should only find expression in the realm of holiness, for the revelation of G-d's Essence precludes any connection with the forces of unholiness.

וַיֵּשׁ לומר, שְׁזָהוּ גַם  
הַקֶּשֶׁר דְּבִיּוֹם הַזֶּה  
עִם (מִדְבָּר) סִינִי, On the basis of the above concepts, it is possible to also explain the connection between *bayom hazeh* and the Sinai (desert):

שְׁיִרְדָּה שְׁנֵאָה לְאַמּוֹת  
הָעוֹלָם שְׁלֹא קִבְּלוּ  
בּוֹ אֶת הַתּוֹרָה. Our Sages interpret<sup>1</sup> the word Sinai as alluding to the fact that at the Giving of the Torah, “enmity<sup>2</sup> descended to the nations of the world” because “they did not accept the Torah”<sup>3</sup> on that mountain.

דְּכִמוּ שְׁיִשְׁרָאֵל קִבְּלוּ  
הַתּוֹרָה מִפְּנֵי שְׁכָפָה  
הַקָּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא  
עֲלֵיהֶם הֵר כְּגִיגִית Implied is that the non-Jews' refusal to accept the Torah came about from a process of causation initiated from Above, beyond their conscious thought processes.<sup>4</sup> Just as the Jews accepted the Torah because the Holy One, blessed be He, “held the mountain over them like a tub,”<sup>5</sup>

— הַתְּגִלוֹת הָאֱהָבָה לְיִשְׂרָאֵל — interpreted in *Chassidus*<sup>6</sup> as referring to an overpowering revelation of His love for the Jewish people,

1. *Shabbos* 89a.

2. *Sinai* and *sin'ah*, “enmity,” share a phonetic similarity. On the level of interpretation known as *derush*, the letters *sin* and *samech* are often interchanged.

3. *Rashi's* commentary to *Shabbos*, *loc. cit.*

4. The explanations to follow reflect those appearing in *Likkutei Sichos*, Vol. 4, p. 1309.

5. *Shabbos* 88a.

6. *Torah Or*, p. 98d; *Likkutei Torah*, *Devarim*, p. 22a, *et al.*

ואוהב את יעקב<sup>7</sup>, כמו"כ הוא בנוגע לאוה"ע שלא קיבלו את התורה שזהו מפני שירדה שנאה לאוה"ע – ואת עשו שנאטיס<sup>8</sup>. וזה שואוהב את יעקב ואת עשו שנאטי הוא לא מפני המעלה דישראל, כי זה גופא שהחזירה הקב"ה (לתורה) על כל אומה ולשון<sup>9</sup> מוכיח שנתינת התורה היא ממקום נעלה ביותר, שכל המעלות, כולל גם המעלה דבנים

A mountain is often used as a metaphor for love.<sup>7</sup> A tub surrounds and encompasses. At the Giving of the Torah, the Jews were surrounded and encompassed by Divine love to the point that they had no choice but to wholeheartedly accept the Torah. The intense revelation of G-d's love for them left them no alternative.

וְאֶהָב אֶת יַעֲקֹב, as it is written,<sup>8</sup> "I have loved Yaakov,"

כְּמוֹ כֵּן הוּא בְּנוֹגֵעַ so too with regard to the non-Jews' refusal to  
לְאַמּוֹת הָעוֹלָם שֶׁלֹא accept the Torah,  
קִבְּלוּ אֶת הַתּוֹרָה

שֶׁזֶהוּ מִפְּנֵי שִׁירְדָה שְׁנֵאָה their conscious decision to refuse it was influenced  
לְאַמּוֹת הָעוֹלָם – from forces from Above, coming about because  
"enmity descended to the nations of the world,"

וְאֶת עֵשָׂו שִׁנְאָתִי. as it is written,<sup>8</sup> "and Esav I hated."

וְזֶה שֶׁאוֹהֵב אֶת יַעֲקֹב The reason that G-d loves Yaakov, the Jewish people,  
וְאֶת עֵשָׂו שִׁנְאָתִי הוּא and hates Esav, the enemies of the Jews,  
לֹא מִפְּנֵי הַמַּעֲלָה דִּישְׂרָאֵל, is not because of any superior quality that the  
Jews possess and which the non-Jews lack.

כִּי זֶה גּוֹפֵא שֶׁהַחֲזִירָה For the very fact that "the Holy One, blessed be  
הַקָּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא (לְתוֹרָה) He, first offered (the Torah) to every nation and  
עַל כָּל אֲמָה וְלָשׁוֹן tongue"<sup>9</sup>

מוֹכִיחַ שֶׁנִּתְּנָה הַתּוֹרָה indicates that the Torah was given from such a  
הִיא מִמָּקוֹם נְעֻלָּה בְּיוֹתֵר, lofty source

7. Likkutei Torah, Devarim, p. 60b, et al.

8. Malachi 1:3.

9. Avodah Zarah 2b, et al.

אתם לה' אלקיכם<sup>10</sup>, אינם תופסים מקום שם, ושניהם (ישראל ואוה"ע) שוים – הלא אח עשו ליעקב<sup>11</sup>, אלא שבבחירתו החפשית בחר להיות ואוהב את יעקב ואת עשו

שְׁכֵל הַמַּעֲלוֹת, כּוֹלֵל      that all the superior qualities possessed by the  
גַּם הַמַּעֲלָה דְּבָנִים      Jewish people, including the distinction of “You  
אֲתֵם לַה' אֱלֹקֵיכֶם,      are children unto G-d, your L-rd,”<sup>10</sup>

אֵינָם תּוֹפְסִים מְקוֹם שֵׁם,      are of no importance to it.

The Jews possess many virtues, but they all pale in importance when compared to G-d's Essence, which transcends the entire gestalt of creation. Since He utterly transcends the realm of creation, none of the positive qualities that are considered as virtues within that frame of reference carry any intrinsic importance for Him.<sup>11</sup>

וּשְׁנֵיהֶם (יִשְׂרָאֵל וְאֲמוֹת  
הָעוֹלָם) שְׁוִים –      Both of them (the Jews and the non-Jews) are  
equal in G-d's eyes,

הֲלֹא אַח עֶשָׂו לְיַעֲקֹב,      as the verse states,<sup>8</sup> “Is not Esav Yaakov's brother?”

אֲלֹא שֶׁבְּכִחַתּוֹ הַחֲפְשִׁית      But G-d chose, with absolutely free choice, to love  
בָּחַר לִהְיוֹת וְאָהַב אֶת      Yaakov and to hate Esav.  
יַעֲקֹב וְאֶת עֶשָׂו שִׁנְאַתּוֹ.

When a person's mind determines that a given object is worthy of being chosen, he is being *compelled* to select it; it is not free choice.

When a person's mind controls his behavior and he makes his decisions based on logic and thought, there is nothing more powerful for him than the recognition of the truth; it cannot be said that he is “choosing” how to act. Once he understands that a particular course of action is the correct one, that recognition is a more powerful motivator than any physical compulsion.

Similarly, with regard to one's inherent desires, a father cannot help but desire his son's welfare. He feels a natural affinity towards his son and therefore desires to help him. In both instances, the object – either on account of its worth or because it evokes a natural response – is what compels the person to take action. He is not choosing freely.

10. Devarim 14:1.

11. As will be explained, G-d in His Essence may choose to value certain qualities. In such an instance, however, their value is dependent on His choice and not on the intrinsic worth of these qualities.

שנאתי. וזהו הקשר דביום הזה עם מדבר סיני, דזה שירדה שנאה לאוה"ע הוא לפי שכך בחר בבחירתו החפשית (כנ"ל), ואמיתית ענין הבחירה הוא רק בהעצמות, זה. ועד"ז הוא גם בנוגע להענין דסיני שירדה שנאה ליצה"ר (שבשרא"ל), שע"ז ניתן הכח לברר המדות דנפש הבהמית, שהוא ע"י גילוי כח העצמות. דזה שנפש האלקית

The true concept of free choice is that one chooses, not out of intellectual recognition of the object's worth nor out of an inner desire for it, but because *he* chooses to act in this manner, entirely out of his own free choice; the chosen object exerts no influence whatsoever on him. Truly choosing freely means acting in a given manner when there is nothing pulling one toward, or repelling him from it; his actions depend solely on his own initiative.

וזהו הקשר דביום הזה עם מדבר סיני, This is the connection between the terms *bayom hazeh* (explained above as referring to the revelation of G-d's Essence) and *midbar Sinai* ("the Sinai desert"):

דזה שירדה שנאה לאמות העולם הוא The fact that "enmity descended to the nations of the world" (expressed by *Sinai*) is

לפי שכך בחר בבחירתו החפשית (כנ"ל), because G-d made that choice, choosing absolutely freely (as explained above),

ואמיתית ענין הבחירה הוא רק בהעצמות, זה. and the possibility for truly free choice exists only in G-d's Essence, which alludes to the word *zeh*.

ועל דרך זה הוא גם בנוגע להענין דסיני שירדה שנאה ליצר הרע (שבשרא"ל), So, too, with regard to the concept that *Sinai* implies that enmity descended to the *yetzer hara* (within a Jew's being), the aspect opposed to Jewishness that exists in each of us:<sup>12</sup>

שעל ידי זה נתן הפח לברר המדות דנפש הבהמית, The ability that is granted us from Above to refine the emotional attributes of the animal soul, the spiritual service of *Sefiras HaOmer* that is fundamentally concluded on *Rosh Chodesh Sivan* (sec. 3 above)

שהוא על ידי גילוי פח העצמות. derives from the revelation of the power of G-d's Essence.

12. Chassidus (Likkutei Torah, Devarim, p. 42b, et al.) often speaks of "the non-Jew in your midst," i.e., referring to a Jew's animal soul that is characterized by desires and tendencies resembling those of the non-Jews around us.

בטילה לאלקות, כולל שגם ההתפשטות שלה (האהבה) היא בביטול, אינו חידוש כ"כ, ועיקר הענין דגילוי כח העצמות, יום הזה, הוא בזה שבאו מדבר סיני, בירור וזיכוך הגוף ונה"ב.

אלא שאעפ"כ עיקר הביאור (באריכות ובפרטיות) בהדרוש שבתו"א בהמעלה דר"ח סיון הוא בענין הביטול דבחינת מדבר, כי המעלה בזה שגם המציאות הוא

דָּהָה שְׁנֶפֶשׁ הָאֱלֹקִית      The fact that a Jew's G-dly soul is *batel* to G-dliness  
בְּטִלָּה לְאֱלֹקוֹת,

כּוֹלֵל שְׁגָם הֶהֱתַפְּשׁוּת      – including the fact that even its self-expression  
שְׁלָה (הָאֶהְבָּה) הִיא בְּבִטּוֹל,      (love for G-d) is characterized by *bittul* –

אִינוֹ חֲדוּשׁ כָּל כָּךְ,      is not that great of a novelty. After all, the G-dly  
soul is an actual part of G-d, and as such, *bittul* is an  
inherent aspect of its makeup.

וְעֵקֶר הָעֲנִיָּן דְּגִלּוֹי      The fundamental aspect of the revelation of the  
כֹּחַ הָעֲצָמוֹת,      power of G-d's Essence,

יוֹם הַזֶּה,      as alluded to by the term *bayom hazeh* (see the end  
of sec. 10),

הוּא בְּזֶה שָׁבְאוֹ מִדְּבַר סִינִי,      is reflected in the Jews' arriving at the Sinai desert,

בִּירוֹר וְזִכּוּךְ הַגּוּף,      i.e., their refinement of the body and the animal  
וְנֶפֶשׁ הַבְּהֵמִית.      soul.

Since refining the body and the animal soul was a novel development, beyond their natural tendencies, in order to achieve it in a consummate manner it was necessary to draw down influence transcending the natural patterns that prevail in this world. The ultimate source of such influence is G-d's Essence.

אֲלֹא שְׂאֵף עַל פִּי כֵן      Despite the explanations offered above in regard to the  
עֵקֶר הַבְּאוֹר (בְּאֲרִיכוּת      superior qualities of the Divine service implied in *bayom*  
וּבְפִרְטִיּוֹת) בְּהִדְרוּשׁ      *hazeh*, the explanation in the *maamar in Torah Or*  
שְׁבִתוּרָה אֹר בְּהַמְעָלָה      regarding the positive dimension of *Rosh Chodesh*  
דְּרֹאשׁ חֹדֶשׁ סִיּוֹן      Sivan focuses (at length and in detail)

הוּא בְּעֲנִיָּן הַבִּטּוֹל      on the absolute *bittul* alluded to in the word *midbar*.  
דְּבִחִינַת מִדְּבָר,

בטל [בירור המדות דנה"ב, ועד"ז שהמציאות (אהבה) דנפש האלקית היא בביטול]  
היא שע"ז מתגלה כח העצמות (כנ"ל), אבל בכדי לעורר ולהמשיך הענין דמתן תורה  
(המשכת העצמות) הוא ע"י הביטול הבא מעצם הנשמה, דביטול זה מגיע בהעצמות.  
ויש לקשר זה עם שבר"ח סיון היו כל ישראל כאיש אחד בלב אחד<sup>13</sup>, ואמר הקב"ה

כי המעלה בזה שגם The reason for this is that the positive virtue that  
המציאות הוא בטל a) even an entity with an individual identity is  
*batel*

[בירור המדות דנפש] [as is reflected in the refinement of the emotional  
הבהמית, attributes of the animal soul,

ועל דרך זה שהמציאות and b) similarly, that the self-expression (love) of  
(אהבה) דנפש האלקית the G-dly soul be characterized by *bittul*],  
היא בבטול]

היא שעל ידי זה מתגלה which results from the revelation of G-d's essen-  
כח העצמות (פנזכר לעיל), tial power (as mentioned above) are not the focus  
of the *maamar*.

אבל בכדי לעורר Instead, the *maamar* in *Torah Or* emphasizes the ser-  
ולהמשיך הענין דמתן vice necessary to arouse and draw down the Giving  
תורה (המשכת העצמות) of the Torah (which draws down G-d's Essence).

הוא על ידי הבטול This comes about through the manifestation of the  
הבא מעצם הנשמה, *bittul* that comes from the very essence of the  
soul,

דבטול זה מגיע בהעצמות. for this level of *bittul* affects G-d's Essence.

Hence, since the *maamar* in *Torah Or* focuses on the preparations for the Giving  
of the Torah, it highlights the *bittul* of *midbar*.

ויש לקשר זה עם שבאש The above concepts can be connected with the idea  
חדש סיון היו כל ישראל that on *Rosh Chodesh* Sivan, the entire Jewish  
כאיש אחד בלב אחד, people bonded in complete unity, "as one man, with  
one heart."<sup>13</sup>

13. *Rashi, Shmos* 19:2.



הרי השעה שאתן להם את תורת<sup>14</sup>, כי זה שהיו כאיש אחד בלב אחד הוא ע"י הגילוי דשרש הנשמה שלמעלה מהנשמה המלוכשת בגוף, וכמבואר בתניא<sup>15</sup> שכל ישראל הם אחים ממש הוא (דוקא) מצד שרש נפשם, ולכן זה שהיו כאיש אחד<sup>16</sup> הגיע בהעצמות ונתעורר אצלו כביכול הרצון ליתן להם את תורתו.

וְאָמַר הַקָּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא הָרִי הַשְּׁעָה שְׂאֲתָן לָהֶם אֶת תּוֹרָתִי, As a result, the Holy One, blessed be He, said: "The time has come to give them My Torah."<sup>14</sup>

כִּי זֶה שֶׁהָיוּ כְּאִישׁ אֶחָד בְּלֵב אֶחָד The fact that the Jewish people united "as one man, with one heart" came about

הוּא עַל יְדֵי הַגִּלּוּי דְּשֶׁרֶשׁ הַנְּשָׁמָה שֶׁלְּמַעְלָה מִהַנְּשָׁמָה הַמְּלֻכְשֶׁת בַּגּוּף, because of the revelation of the source of the Jews' souls, which transcends that dimension of the soul encllothed in the body.

וְכַמְבָּאָר בְּתַנְיָא שְׂכָל יִשְׂרָאֵל הֵם אַחִים מִמֶּשׁ הוּא (דְּדִקָּא) מִצַּד שֶׁרֶשׁ נַפְשָׁם, As explained in *Tanya*,<sup>15</sup> the oneness that makes the entire Jewish people actual brothers stems (specifically) from the source of their souls.

The revealed powers of the soul are the source of each person's individual identity; hence, the differences between one person and another. It is the source of the soul that is above being encllothed in the body that transcends these differences and unites our people as one.<sup>16</sup>

וְלִכֵּן זֶה שֶׁהָיוּ כְּאִישׁ אֶחָד הִגִּיעַ בְּהֶעֱצָמוֹת Therefore, the fact that on *Rosh Chodesh Sivan* the entire Jewish people united together "as one man"<sup>17</sup> aroused G-d's Essence

וְנִתְעוֹרַר אֶצְלוֹ כְּבִיכּוֹל הָרָצוֹן לִתֵּן לָהֶם אֶת תּוֹרָתוֹ, and the desire to give the Jews His Torah was awakened within Him, as it were.

14. *Vayikra Rabbah* 9:9; *Derech Erech Zuta, erech HaShalom*. See *Midrash Tanchuma* (Buber edition), *Yisro*, sec. 9. See also the first two *sichos* on *Parshas Yisro* in *Likkutei Sichos*, Vol. 21 (p. 100ff.)

15. *Tanya*, ch. 32.

16. Footnote 20 in *Likkutei Sichos*, Vol. 4, p. 1059.

17. The unity of being "as one man" surpasses even the unity implied by saying that "all Jews are brothers." It is possible to explain that the unity of being "as one man" is made possible through the revelation of the essence of the soul. (This is a loftier level than the revelation of the source of the soul that transcends being encllothed in the body, which, as stated in *Likkutei Sichos*, *loc. cit.*, is the root of the unity implied by saying that "all Jews are brothers.")

## SUMMARY

This section begins by explaining the connection between *bayom hazeih*, the revelation of G-d's Essence, and the word *Sinai*, which our Sages interpret as alluding to the fact that at the Giving of the Torah, "enmity descended to the nations of the world."

The non-Jews' refusal to accept the Torah came about from a process of causation initiated from Above. Just as the Jews accepted the Torah because the Holy One, blessed be He, "held the mountain over them like a tub," interpreted in *Chassidus* as referring to an overpowering revelation of Divine love for the Jewish people, so too did the non-Jews' refusal to accept the Torah come about because "enmity descended to the nations of the world."

Both G-d's love for the Jews and His utter rejection of the non-Jews came about as a result of His free choice – and the possibility for truly free choice exists only in G-d's Essence. So, too, with regard to the concept that *Sinai* implies that enmity descended to the *yetzer hara*, the aspect opposed to Jewishness that exists in each of us. The ability granted us to refine the emotional attributes of the animal soul derives from the revelation of G-d's Essential power.

The *maamar* in *Torah Or* focuses on the absolute *bittul* alluded to by the word *midbar* and not on the outcome of the revelation of G-d's Essence (as implied by *bayom hazeih*) because that *maamar* emphasizes the service necessary to arouse and draw down the Giving of the Torah. In order to arouse and draw down the Giving of the Torah, which involves drawing down G-d's Essence, the *bittul* that comes from the essence of the soul must be manifest, for this *bittul* affects G-d's Essence.

The above concepts can be connected with the idea that on *Rosh Chodesh Sivan*, the entire Jewish people bonded in complete unity, "as one man, with one heart," for such unity stems from the essence of the Jews' souls.

(יב) וְזֶה בְּחֹדֶשׁ הַשְּׁלִישִׁי גו', ביום הזה גו', דהגם שהענין דיום הזה הוא בכל ר"ח, עיקר הענין דיום הזה הוא ב(ראש) חודש השלישי. והענין הוא (כמבואר בדרושי הצ"צ<sup>1</sup>), דחודש הראשון הוא בחינת סיהרא, מלכות. דהגם שגם בר"ח ניסן יש היחוד דשמשא וסיהרא (ז"א ומלכות), מ"מ, בר"ח ניסן, העיקר הוא המלכות. וחודש

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- וְזֶה בְּחֹדֶשׁ הַשְּׁלִישִׁי  
גו' בְּיוֹם הַזֶּה גו',  
On this basis, it is possible to explain the connection between *bachodesh hashlishi*, “in the third month” and *bayom hazeh*, “on this day”:
- דְּהַגֵּם שֶׁהַעֲנִיָּן דְּיוֹם הַזֶּה  
הוא בְּכָל רֹאשׁ חֹדֶשׁ,  
Even though the spiritual significance of *bayom hazeh* (interpreted in sec. 10 as referring to the revelation of G-d's Essence) is manifest every *Rosh Chodesh*,
- עֶקֶר הַעֲנִיָּן דְּיוֹם הַזֶּה הוּא  
בְּ(רֹאשׁ) חֹדֶשׁ הַשְּׁלִישִׁי.  
the fundamental dimension of *bayom hazeh* is manifest specifically on the (*Rosh*) *Chodesh* of the third month, the month of Sivan.
- וְהַעֲנִיָּן הוּא (בְּמִבְּאֵר  
בְּדְרוּשֵׁי הַצִּמְחָה צִדְקָה),  
The uniqueness of Sivan (as explained in the *maamarim* of the *Tzemach Tzedek*)<sup>1</sup> can be understood as follows:
- דְּחֹדֶשׁ הַרְאֵשׁוֹן הוּא  
בְּחִינַת סִיְהָרָא, מְלָכוּת.  
The aspect of *Rosh Chodesh* of the first month of the year, Nissan, is identified with the moon, which represents the *sefirah* of *Malchus*.
- דְּהַגֵּם שֶׁגַּם בְּרֹאשׁ  
חֹדֶשׁ נִיסָן יֵשׁ הִיחוד  
דְּשִׁמְשָׁא וְסִיְהָרָא  
Although on *Rosh Chodesh Nissan* there is also a union of the sun and the moon, as transpires on every *Rosh Chodesh*
- (ז"א ומְלָכוּת),  
(representative of *Z'eir Anpin* and *Malchus* respectively),
- מְכַל מְקוֹם, בְּרֹאשׁ חֹדֶשׁ  
נִיסָן, הָעֶקֶר הוּא הַמְלָכוּת.  
nevertheless, on *Rosh Chodesh Nissan*, the dominant aspect is *Malchus*.
- וְחֹדֶשׁ אִיָּר נִקְרָא זִיב,  
The month of Iyar is referred to as *ziv*, “radiance,”<sup>2</sup>

1. The *maamar* entitled *BaChodesh HaShelishi, Or HaTorah, Shmos*, Vol. 3, p. 772.

2. *I Melachim* 6:1; *Rosh HaShanah* 11a; *Zohar*, Vol. III, p. 117b.

אייר נק' זיוע<sup>3</sup>, הוא היסוד שמאיר במלכות<sup>ע</sup>. וזה שהיסוד נקרא זיו הוא לפי שהוא זיו והארה בלבד. ובחודש השלישי מקבלת המלכות מת"ת, דבת"ת הוא הגילוי דהוי' שהוא שם העצם<sup>ע</sup>. היינו שהגילוי דחודש השלישי הוא לא זיו (כהגילוי דחודש אייר), אלא גילוי העצם. ולכן, עיקר הענין דיום הזה הוא בר"ח סיון, בחודש השלישי. וע"י ההכנה לקבלת התורה בחודש השלישי ביום הזה (ר"ח סיון) – הן בבירור

הוא היסוד שֶׁמֵאִיר alluding to the attribute of *Yesod* that shines within  
בְּמַלְכוּת. *Malchus*.<sup>3</sup>

וְזֶה שֶׁהֵיְסוּד נִקְרָא The attribute of *Yesod* is referred to as *ziv*, “radi-  
זִיּוֹ הוּא לְפִי שֶׁהוּא ance,” for it is no more than a ray and a gleam.  
זִיּוֹ וְהָאֶרֶה בְּלִבָּהּ.

וּבַחֹדֶשׁ הַשְּׁלִישִׁי מִקְבֶּלֶת In the third month, Sivan, *Malchus* receives influ-  
הַמַּלְכוּת מִתְפַּאֲרֶת, ence from the attribute of *Tiferes*.

דְּבִתְפַּאֲרֶת הוּא הַגִּלּוּי *Tiferes* embodies a revelation of G-d’s name *Hava-*  
דְּהוּי' שֶׁהוּא שֵׁם הָעֶצֶם. *yah*, which is His essential name.<sup>4</sup>

הֵינּוּ שֶׁהַגִּלּוּי דְּחֹדֶשׁ Implied is that the revelation of the third month  
הַשְּׁלִישִׁי הוּא לֹא זִיּוֹ is not a mere radiance

(כְּהַגִּלּוּי דְּחֹדֶשׁ אֲיָר), (as is the revelation of the month of Iyar),

אַלָּא גִלּוּי הָעֶצֶם. but rather a revelation of His Essence.

וְלִכֵּן, עֵקֶר הָעֲנִיָּן דְּיוֹם Therefore, the fundamental spiritual significance  
הַזֶּה הוּא בְּרֹאשׁ חֹדֶשׁ of *bayom hazeh* is manifest on *Rosh Chodesh*  
סִיוֵן, בַּחֹדֶשׁ הַשְּׁלִישִׁי. Sivan, the third month.

וְעַל יְדֵי הַהֲכָנָה Through preparing to receive the Torah “in the  
לְקַבֵּל תּוֹרָה בַּחֹדֶשׁ third month, on this day”

הַשְּׁלִישִׁי בְּיוֹם הַזֶּה

– (רֹאשׁ חֹדֶשׁ סִיוֵן) (*Rosh Chodesh Sivan*)

3. Zohar, loc. cit., cited in Likkutei Torah, Bamidbar, p. 3a, and Or HaTorah, Bamidbar, Vol. 2, p. 367.

4. Kesef Mishneh, gloss to Hilchos Avodas Kochavim 2:7; Pardes, Shaar 19 (Shaar Shem Ben Dalet); Moreh Nevuchim, Vol. 1, ch. 61ff.; Sefer Halkarim, Discourse 2, ch. 28.

המדות דנפש הבהמית (סיני), והן בהביטול (מדבר) דנפש האלקית, ובפרט בהענין דכאיש אחד בלב אחד נשזו (אהבת ישראל) היא כל התורה כולה ואידך פירושה הוא<sup>ע</sup>] – זוכים לקבלת התורה בשמחה ובפנימיות, וממשיכים זה על כל השנה כולה.

הן בפרור המדות דנפש both through the refinement of the emotional attributes of the animal soul (as alluded to by the term *Sinai*)

והן בהביטול (מדבר) as well as through the Divine service of *bittul* (as דנפש האלקית, alluded to by the term *midbar*, “desert”) of the G-dly soul,

ובפרט בהענין דכאיש and, in particular, through joining together with all Jews “as one man, with one heart,”

[נשזו (אהבת ישראל) [for this (the love of one’s fellow Jew) is “the entire היא כל התורה כלה Torah; the remainder is merely commentary,”]<sup>5</sup> ואידך פירושה הוא] –

זוכים לקבלת התורה we merit to receive the Torah with joy and inner בשמחה ובפנימיות, feeling,

וממשיכים זה על and extend its influence over the course of the כל השנה כלה. entire year to come.

## SUMMARY

Although the spiritual significance of *bayom hazeh* (interpreted in sec. 10 as referring to the revelation of G-d’s Essence) is manifest every *Rosh Chodesh*, the fundamental dimension of *bayom hazeh* is manifest specifically on *Rosh Chodesh* of the third month, Sivan, because it is characterized by a unique quality: In that month, *Malchus* receives influence from the attribute of *Tiferes*, which embodies a revelation of G-d’s essential name *Havayah*. Thus, the revelation of the third month is not a mere radiance, but a revelation of G-d’s very Essence.

Through preparing to receive the Torah “in the third month, on this day,” we merit to receive the Torah with joy and inner feeling, and extend its influence over the course of the entire year to come.

5. *Shabbos* 31a.

(\*) יצא לאור בקונטרס ראש חודש סיון – תש"נ, "לקראת ראש חודש סיון.. ער"ח סיון, חודש השלישי, שנת ה'תש"נ".

- (א) יתרו יט, א.  
 (ב) שבת פו, ב.  
 (ג) בא יב, ב.  
 (ד) ד"ה וכתוב – שבת שם. וראה תוד"ה ממאי – פסחים ו, ב.  
 (ה) שם.  
 (ו) בהעלותך ט, א.  
 (ז) פרשתנו (במדבר) א, א.  
 (ח) ראה להלן הערה 10.  
 (ט) להעיר שלשון הגמרא בפסחים שם הוא "מה להלן בר"ח אף כאן בר"ח", ובשבת שם "מה להלן ר"ח אף כאן ר"ח". ויש לומר, כי "החודש הזה" וכן "ביום הזה" (לאחרי הלימוד דגו"ש) הם ר"ח, משא"כ "במדבר סיני".  
 (י) ואף שבפסוק וידבר גו' במדבר סיני מפורש בכתוב עצמו "באחד לחודש" משא"כ בפסוק "בחודש הזה" ההוכחה שזה ה' בר"ח הוא "דאמרינן במדרש שהראהו הקב"ה למשה באצבע" (לשון התוספות שם) – הרי זהו גם הפירוש בפשטות הכתובים (פרש"י בא שם).  
 (יא) יתרו סו, סע"ג ואילך (ועם הגהות – באוה"ת יתרו ע' תשעב ואילך. שם כרך ח ע' ב'תתקעה ואילך). וראה גם התוספות לתו"א יתרו (קח, סע"ג ואילך). ד"ה זה בסה"מ תקס"ז ע' קמו ואילך. תו"ח יתרו שסו, ב ואילך [בהוצאה החדשה – ח"ב רנא, א ואילך]. סה"מ תרנ"ה ע' פח ואילך. ועוד.  
 (יב) כ"ה בתו"א שם סז, ב. וראה לקמן הערה 57.  
 (יג) יתרו כ, א.  
 (יד) ראה ד"ה וידבר גו' אנכי גו' ה'תשכ"ח ס"א (לקמן ע' שכו). וש"נ.  
 (טו) תהלים קיט, קעב.  
 (טז) לקו"ת פרשתנו (במדבר) יב, א. ועוד.  
 (יז) אמור כג, טז.  
 (יח) לקו"ת שם. וראה גם התוספות לתו"א שם (קט, ג).  
 (יט) זהו ח"א קפא, א. וראה גם שם לג, ב. רמט, ב. ח"ב קמה, ב. רטו, א. ח"ג קיג, ב. ועוד.  
 (כ) סוכה כט, א. ב"ר פ"ו, ג.  
 (כא) כ"ה הלשון בתו"א שם (סז, ג). וי"ל שהכוונה היא להעבודה דספירת העומר ברוחניות.  
 (כב) ראה טז, ט.  
 (כג) ולהעיר מתנחומא יתרו ח [ועד"ז במדבר"ר פ"ז, א] "אינו דין שאתן את תורתך לבעלי מומין".  
 (כד) ראה עירובין נה, רע"א: לא בשמים היא, לא תמצא [התורה] בגסי רוח. וראה סוטה ה, א: כל אדם שיש בו גסות הרוח, אמר הקב"ה אין אני יכולין לדור בעולם.  
 (כה) ויש לומר, שבירור וזיכוך המדות הוא שלא יהי' בו חסרון ומום, והמשכת מ"ט שע"ב הו"ע השלימות ("אתר שלים") בדוגמת "כלי" לשער הנו"ן (ראה לקו"ת במדבר יב, ב. שה"ש כד, סע"א ואילך).  
 (כו) הובא בתורה אור שם סז, ריש ע"ד. סה"מ תקס"ז שם ע' קנב. תו"ח שם שעג, ב [שם רנה, ד].  
 (כז) לשון הכתוב – ירמי' ב, ב.  
 (כח) סד"ה זה תרנ"ה (סה"מ תרנ"ה ע' צד). וראה גם תו"ח שם [שם רנה, ב].  
 (כט) שבת פט, סע"א ואילך.  
 (ל) סנהדרין כו, ב.  
 (לא) כ"ה בסה"מ תרנ"ה שם. ובכ"מ.  
 (לב) להעיר מהידוע בפירוש הכתוב (שמואל-א כ, יח) מחר חודש ונפקדת כי יפקד מושבך, ד"יפקד מושבך" הוא בערב ר"ח, ובר"ח הוא "ונפקדת" (לעיל ח"א ע' שמג. ובכ"מ).  
 (לג) בראשית א, ה.  
 (לד) ספרי (הובא בפרש"י) ר"פ מטות.  
 (לה) וראה ספר הערכים-חב"ד כרך ב ערך אור – ביחס לחושך ע' תקמד. וש"נ. וראה גם התוספות לתו"א שם (קט, ג) "התפעלות אהבה שהוא נק' אור שמאיר בהתפשטות".

- (לו) נסמן בספר הערכים שם.  
 (לז) תו"ח שם [שם רנו, א].  
 (לח) ועפ"ז יומתק לשון הגמרא (פסחים ו, ב) "אתיא מדבר ממדבר" ולא "מדבר סיני ממדבר סיני" (וכן בקושיית התוספות "אמאי לא יליף הכא מדבר ממדבר") – כי המעלה דר"ח היא הביטול דמדבר.  
 (לט) שבת פח, א.  
 (מ) ד"ה בשעה שהקדימו תרכ"ט (דלקמן בפנים). ד"ה הנ"ל שבהמשך תרס"ו (ע' תמוז) ובהמשך תער"ב בתחילתו. ובכ"מ.  
 (מא) משנת אמירת מאמר זה (תשכ"ט) – נדפס בסה"מ תרכ"ט ע' קפד ואילך.  
 (מב) ברכות יג, א במשנה.  
 (מג) בסוף המאמר – ע' קצב.  
 (מד) היינו שהענין ד"נשמע" עצמו אפשר להיות גם בלי הקדימה ד"נעשה" [אלא שאז אינו שייך לכתר]. וראה לקמן הערה 50.  
 (מה) המשך תרס"ו ע' רעג.  
 (מו) ראה המשך הנ"ל שם ע' רפא.  
 (מז) בהוספות לתו"א יתרו שם בסיום המאמר (ק', א-ב) נזכר הלשון גלגלתא דאריך. אבל מהמשך הענין שם משמע, שמדובר שם בדרגא דרצון שלמעלה מרצון לעשות – ראה שם, שהדיבור שתלוי בבחירה ורצון שרשו הוא בהתפשטות הרצון והדיבור שאינו תלוי ברצונו (בחינת מדבר) מגיע בפנימיות הכתר, רצון הפשוט, רעוא דכל רעון.  
 (מח) כי הקדמת נעשה לנשמע היתה בחמישי בסיון – פרש"י עה"פ משפטים כד, ד.  
 (מט) ראה הוספות לתו"א שם (קט, א) שמקשר הענין דב' הכתרים עם זה שעל כל דיבור ודיבור פרחא נשמעת (ראה שבת פח, ב) – והרי הענין דפרחה נשמעת הוא (לכאורה) בדרגא שלמעלה מהרצון לעשות.  
 (נ) ועפ"ז יובן מה שארז"ל (הובא לעיל ס"ז) "שיקבל עליו עול מלכות שמים תחלה ואח"כ יקבל עליו עול מצוות" – דלכאורה, בלי קבלת עול מלכות שמים אי אפשר להיות עול מצוות [בדוגמת מלך בוד', שהעול לקיים גזירותיו שייך דוקא לאחר שקבלו אותו למלך עליהם (ראה מכילתא (ויל"ש) עה"פ יתרו כ, ג)], וא"כ, כשמקבל עליו עול מצוות, זה עצמו מוכיח שקיבל עליו עול מלכות שמים, ולמה צריך לצוות שיקבל עליו עול מלכות שמים תחלה. ויש לומר, שהציווי לקבל עליו עומ"ש תחלה הוא שהקבלת עומ"ש תהי' ה"תחילה" דקבלת עול מצוות, היינו שבעול המצוות שלו יורגש בגילוי הביטול דעול מלכות שמים, כדלקמן בפנים.  
 (נא) ויתירה מזו, דכיון שהמציאות שאינה בטילה היא עצם מציאותו [שהוא העצם (גם) דכחותיו הגלויים] – גם הביטול שבכחות הגלויים שלו אינו בשלימות, דהגם שמקבל עליו עול מצוות – נשאר אצלו (בהעלם עכ"פ, גם בדרגת ההעלם דכחות הגלויים) נתינת מקום שאפשר לפעמים לא לקיים הציווי.  
 (נב) כי הביטול דקבלת עול מלכות שמים (מצד עצמו) הוא באופן דרצוא והעלאה למעלה ואינו שייך לקיום המצוות – ראה סה"מ תרכ"ט שם (ע' קץ).  
 (נג) ראה בארוכה סה"מ תרמ"ט ע' רנו ואילך. ובכ"מ.  
 (נד) ראה סה"מ תרכ"ט שם (ע' קצב).  
 (נה) ראה תנחומא נשא טז. בחוקותי ג. ב"ר ספ"ג. במדב"ר פי"ג, ו. תניא רפ"ו.  
 (נו) ראה לעיל ח"ב ע' כד. ובכ"מ.  
 (נז) ועד"ז הוא בדיבור דתורה והשגת התורה, דמעלת הדיבור דתורה היא שהוא באופן דעונה אחר הקורא\* – ביטול; ומעלת ההשגה דתורה היא – שגם השכל דהאדם (ה"מציאות" שלו) נעשה חד עם התורה.  
 (\*) ראה הוספות לתו"א שם (בתחילת המאמר), דזה שצריך ללמוד תורה בדיבור דוקא, אף שעיקר ענין הלימוד הוא ידיעת התורה, הוא, כי דוקא הדיבור דתורה הוא באופן דעונה אחר הקורא.  
 (נח) ראה לב, ג.  
 (נט) בשלח טו, ב. וראה פרש"י עה"פ. שמו"ר ספכ"ג.  
 (ס) ישע"י ו, ג.  
 (סא) ראה ד"ה זה היום תחלת מעשיך, דכ"ט אלול ה'תשל"ג (סה"מ תשל"ג ע' 485). ובכ"מ.  
 (סב) ראה סה"מ ה'תשי"א ע' 25 ואילך. וראה שם ס"ע 35.  
 (סג) שבת פט, סע"א ובפרש"י שם.

- סד) בהבא לקמן ראה (עד"ז) לקו"ש ח"ד ע' 1309.  
 סה) תו"א מג"א צח, ד. לקו"ת ראה כב, א. ובכ"מ.  
 סו) מלאכי א, ג.  
 סז) ע"ז ב, ב. ובכ"מ.  
 סח) ראה יד, א.  
 סט) פרש"י עה"פ יתרו יט, ב.  
 ע) ויק"ר פ"ט, ט. דא"ז פ' השלום. וראה גם תנחומא באבער יתרו ט. וראה לקו"ש חכ"א שיחה א' וב' לפ' יתרו (ע' 100 ואילך).  
 עא) פרק לב. וראה לקו"ש ח"ד ע' 1059.  
 עב) שזה נעלה יותר גם מזה שכל ישראל הם אחים. וי"ל, שבכדי להיות "כאיש אחד" הוא ע"י גילוי עצם הנשמה (שלמעלה גם מדרגת הנשמה שלמעלה מהתלבשות בגוף).  
 עג) אוה"ת יתרו ד"ה זה (ס"ע תשעב ואילך).  
 עד) מלכים-א ו, א. ר"ה יא, א. זח"ג קיז, ב.  
 עה) זח"ג שם, הובא בלקו"ת במדבר ג, א. אוה"ת בהעלותך ע' שסז.  
 עו) כס"מ הל' עכו"ם פ"ב ה"ז. פרדס שער יט (שער שם בן ד). מו"נ ח"א פס"א ואילך. עיקרים מאמר ב' פכ"ח.  
 עז) שבת לא, א.



