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LIKKUTEI SICHOS

AN ANTHOLOGY OF TALKS

by the
Lubavitcher Rebbe
Rabbi Menachem M. Schneerson

Reprinted for Parshat Tazria-Metzora, 5778
(Vol. 29-30)



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 DEDICATED BY
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LIKKUTEI SICHOS

AN ANTHOLOGY OF TALKS

RELATING TO THE WEEKLY SECTIONS OF THE TORAH AND
SPECIAL OCCASIONS IN THE JEWISH CALENDAR

by the

Lubavitcher Rebbe

Rabbi Menachem M. Schneerson

•

Volume III: *Vayikra*

•

In English rendition
with Introduction and Notes

by

Jacob Immanuel Schochet

IN LOVING MEMORY OF A DEAR FREIND

Reb **Yosef Yisroel** ben Reb **Sholom** ע"ה **Rosner**

Passed away on 7 Menachem-Av, 5777

ת. נ. צ. ב. ה.

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TAZRI'A

תזריע

A

I. "A woman who has conceived and gave birth to a male."¹ Our sages interpret this verse: "If the man fructifies first she bears a female child; if the woman fructifies first she bears a male child."²

This rule applies only nowadays. In the future to come (the Messianic age), however, every child will be of the status of a *zachar* (male), even if the father fructifies first. Thus it is stated in *Torah Or*,³ commenting on the verse,⁴ "And to Zion will be said, man after man was born there": the repetition of the word 'man' indicates that even if the father fructifies first, she bears offspring of the status of *zachar*.

II. An instance of this principle is evident even nowadays.

In *Likkutei Torah*, on this *sidrah*,⁵ it is stated that joy in the performance of a *mitzvah* will effect that "she bears a male." For joy in the performance of a *mitzvah* here on earth, effects a corresponding joy above.⁶ "Joy breaks

occupy themselves with Torah, the Divine Presence dwells among them,"³⁵ there is a particular advantage when learning about Moshiach and the Redemption in public. Such public learning affects the excitement and the heart-felt joy through which comes an increasing desire and anticipation for the coming of Moshiach.³⁶

In addition -- and this is obviously most essential - one should increase the quality of one's observance of mitzvos; in particular one should enhance one's fulfillment of the mitzvah of tzedekah (comprehensive of all the mitzvos³⁷) with distinction, for it "draws near the Redemption."³⁸

It is proper and correct to connect the increase in **tzedekah** with an increase in **the Torah** concerning Moshiach and Redemption; by giving tzedekah with the **intention** to bring close and hasten the Redemption. This intention itself constitutes **learning Torah in matters of Redemption**. When one thinks of from time to time the saying of our Sages, of blessed memory, "great is tzedekah for it brings near the Redemption," it constitutes learning matters of Moshiach and Redemption.

(From the talk of Shabbos Parshas Tazria-Metzora, 6 Iyar 5751)

1. [Leviticus 12:2]
 2. *Berachot* 60a. [Rashi on Genesis 46:15.]
 3. *Torah Or*, Miketz, p. 37c.
 4. [Psalms 87:5]
 5. [*Likkutei Torah*, Tazri'a, p. 20c.]
 6. [See *Zohar* II:184b: "The cheerfulness of man draws upon himself another, a supernal cheerfulness." See also *ibid.* 218a; *Tzava'at Harivash*, sect. 15, and the sources cited there in the notes; and *Keter Shem Tov*, sect. 230.]

35. *Avos* chapter 3, mishneh 6. See *Iggeres HaKodesh*, section 23.
 36. Therefore, those who want to learn in depth, and in the give and take fashion of scholarly discourse (and to even contribute original Torah ideas about Moshiach and Redemption) in a quiet and peaceful setting, and therefore prefer to learn by themselves or with a partner, should still try (from time to time) to also join the learning of ten; this way they will also have the advantage of learning with ten (as mentioned in the text).
 37. See *Tanya*, chapter 27.
 38. *Bava Basra* 10a.

the Torah of our Rebbeim, our Leaders, and principally in the Torah (Ma'amarim and Likkutei Sichos³⁰) of the Leader of our generation. Learning this material is a sample of and preparation for learning the Torah of Moshiach, "For a new Torah shall go forth from Me,"³¹ meaning he will teach to all the people the Inner Teachings of the Torah (the reasons of the Torah) and knowledge of G-dliness ("know the G-d of your fathers"³²). This accords with the halachic ruling of the Rambam³³ that "in that time... the Jews will be great sages and know hidden matters, attaining knowledge of their Creator, etc."

This increase in learning the Torah concerned with Moshiach and Redemption ("Malchus sh'b'Tiferes") is the "straightforward path" to actually cause the revelation and coming of Moshiach and Redemption.

My intention here is action³⁴ - and certainly the following will be publicized everywhere:

In order to realize the immediate revelation and coming of Moshiach - each and every Jew (the men, whether they are dwellers in the tent (Yisachar) or men of business (Zevulun), and the women and children, each one according to his ability) should increase their learning of Torah, particularly the subjects of Moshiach and Redemption.

It would be even better if they would learn (in public) with ten others because, in addition to the advantage that "ten who sit and

beginning.

30. [Ma'amarim are discourses of Chassidic philosophy; Likkutei Sichos are collections of talks on the Torah and holidays. Translator's note.]

31. Yeshayahu 51:4. Vayikra Rabba chapter 13:3.

32. Divrei HaYamim 1 28:9.

33. The conclusion and completion of his work, the Mishneh Torah.

34. [Literally: "I have come for action." Translator's note.]

through fences;"⁷ thus all limitations of the natural order of creation fall by the side, including the one of "if a man fructifies first she bears a female."

For example, when a mortal king is in a state of joy, he will ignore his normative restrictions and statutes and manifest himself to all, to the small and great alike. The same applies to Above: when there is a state of joy, there is a manifestation of Divinity transcending normative limitations, and all restrictions are removed.

III. The inner meaning of this is as follows.

Joy in the performance of *mitzvot* comes from contemplating the special virtue of *mitzvot*. *Mitzvot* elicit an illumination exceedingly disproportionate to the worlds, transcending even the illumination manifest in *Gan Eden* (Garden of Eden).⁸ Thus it was said by our sages that "One hour of *teshuvah* and good deeds in this world is better than all the life of *olam haba* (the world-to-come)."⁹ For "all the life of *olam haba*" is relative to created entities who are finite. *Mitzvot*, on the other hand, are the will of G-d, and He is altogether infinite.

Contemplation on this principle effects that one's *avodah* will be with joy, and yet more — with 'gladness of heart.'

Thus it is written of serving "G-d, your G-d, with joy and gladness of heart — *merov kol* (exceeding the multitude of all things)."¹⁰ This means that the service of G-d on a level of 'with joy and gladness of heart' comes from contemplating the fact that *mitzvot* are much greater

7. [Same'ach Tesamach 5657, p. 49ff., see there at length. The implication is that joy overcomes normative restraints and limitations.]

8. [Cf. Igeret Hakodesh, sect. XXIX.]

9. Avot 4:17

10. Deuteronomy 28:47

than the multitude of all things — including even the highest worlds.¹¹

Joy in the fulfilment of *mitzvot*, therefore, is caused by binding oneself to the Divine Essence which is beyond any limitations. In turn, one removes all restrictions so that even if “the man fructifies first” it is possible that “she will bear of the status of a *zachar* (male).”

IV. In this context we can also understand how this will be in the future to come. In the future era there will be a manifestation of the Divine Essence, implying a removal of all restrictions.¹² Thus “To Zion will be said, man after man was born there,” that even when the male fructifies first, she will bear offspring of the status of a *zachar*.

V. This explains a dispute between *Bavli* (Babylonian Talmud) and *Yerushalmi* (Jerusalem Talmud): In *Bavli*¹³ it is stated that up to forty days after conception prayer may avail that the child to be born be male; after forty days, however, such a request would be a vain prayer. In *Yerushalmi*,¹⁴ on the other hand, it is stated

11. [The conventional translation of this verse is “Because you did not serve G-d, your G-d, with joy and gladness of heart for the multitude of all,” i.e., while you had all good things that He gave you. R. Isaac Luria, however, interprets “with joy and gladness of heart exceeding (the joy and gladness in having) the multitude of all” (good things)! That is, when serving G-d, when involved with Torah and *mitzvot*, one must do so with a joy and gladness of heart which are far greater than one would have when obtaining the greatest treasures on earth. *Sha’ar Ru’ach Hakodesh*, ed. Tel Aviv 1963, p. 33; *Reshit Chochmah*, Sha’ar ha’ahavah, ch. 10. See also *Tanya*, ch. 26; and cf. *Ikkarim* III:33; and *Tehillim-Yohel Or* (*Tzemach Tzedek*) on Psalms 100:2 (esp. p. 375).]

12. [Cf. Isaiah 30:20, 40:5, and so forth.]

13. *Berachot* 60a

14. *Yerushalmi, Berachot* 9:3

bring Moshiach through "**Malchus sh'b'Tiferes**"²⁵- can be understood in practical terms:

As a preface, since our righteous Moshiach is ready to come immediately, but he hasn't actually come, therefore the final effort required ("the edge of his clothes") of every Jew to bring Moshiach must be (not through Kingship in its purity, the concern of king Moshiach himself, but) through "**Malchus sh'b'Tiferes.**" That means, the subject of Moshiach (Kingship) as it is found in **Torah** (Harmony).

...Simply put: "Tiferes" refers to learning Torah, and "Malchus sh'b'Tiferes" refers to **learning the Torah concerning King Moshiach and Redemption** that are explained in many places.²⁶

These places are: the Written Torah (particularly "the words of the prophets... for all their books are filled with this matter"²⁷); the Oral Torah, in the Gemara (particularly the tractate Sanhedrin and the end of tractate Sotah) and in Midrashim; and especially the Inner Teachings of the Torah, beginning with the Zohar ("with this book of yours, the book of the Zohar, they will leave their exile in mercy"²⁸), through *Toras Chassidus* (that through the spreading of the wellsprings outward the master, king Moshiach, will come²⁹), to

25. [Literally, "*Kingship in Harmony.*" There are seven "emotional" *Sefiros* (emanations of G-dliness). These "character traits" such as kindness, severity or discipline, harmony, etc. are reflected in the individual's personality. Each of these also includes all the others. (There is a kindness within kindness, a discipline within kindness, etc.). Translator's note.]

26. They are easy to find - through indexes (which have proliferated in this generation), arranged alphabetically, in the appropriate entries: Redemption, Moshiach, etc.

27. Rambam, *Laws of Kings* chapter 11, halacha 2.

28. *Zohar* volume 3 124:2 - in *Raya Mehemna*. It is quoted and explained in *Igeres HaTeshuva* beginning of section 26.

29. *Igeres HaKodesh* of the Baal Shem Tov - *Keser Shem Tov* at the

himself and brings honor from man." ...²⁰ This can be explained in light of what was previously said regarding the revelation and coming of Moshiach:

..."Rabbi said, which is the straightforward path that a man²¹ should choose for himself:"

"The man" - refers to "this man²² (who is 'at a high level... complete in everything') when his actions are proper and all things corrected... only the residue hasn't yet been cleaned from the edge of his clothes, etc." because of the exile - as was the case with Rebbe. In our generation - the last generation of exile, the footsteps of Moshiach, when we have concluded and completed all aspects of the service we had to do during the time of exile - it can be said that every Jew is at this level.

The question is: Since we've already completed "our actions and service throughout the duration of exile"²³ - what is the **"straightforward path"** (the easiest and fastest among all the paths of Torah) that all the Jewish people, who have concluded their service, should choose **to realize the revelation and coming of Moshiach**?²⁴

...The explanation of "the straightforward path" to reveal and

20. *Avos* chapter 2, *mishneh* 1.

21. [Literally, "the man," implying the ideal man. Translator's note.]

22. *Likkutei Torah* on our parsha, 22:2.

23. *Tanya*, beginning of chapter 37.

24. Beginning with the revelation and coming of **Moshiach within each and every Jew**, for it is known the verse, "A star will go forth from Yaakov, etc." that refers to *Melech HaMoshiach* (*Yerushalmi Taanis*, chapter 4, Halacha 5) also refers to each and every Jew (*Yerushalmi Ma'aser Sheni* chapter 4, Halacha 6), since in every Jew there is a spark of the soul of Moshiach (Me'or Aynaim, end of Parshas Pinchas).

that prayer can avail even after forty days, and according to one opinion even when the mother has already gone into labor.

This difference of opinion can be explained in context of the above. Once the embryo assumes shape, any request would be a vain prayer. In the view of *Yerushalmi*, however, prayer can always be effective; for the Jerusalem Talmud, which is the very opposite of the 'dark places' and difficulties that signify the Babylonian Talmud, reflects the revelation of the future era.¹⁵ In its perspective, therefore, there are no restrictions at all.

15. [There are some basic differences between the Jerusalem Talmud (*Yerushalmi*) and the Babylonian Talmud (*Bavli*): a) *Yerushalmi* was completed many years before *Bavli*; b) the literary style of *Yerushalmi* is very terse and concise, while *Bavli* is much more extensive in both scope and style, going to great lengths to analyze issues. These differences have practical implications: a) In a sense it is easier to study *Yerushalmi*, because it is brief and to the point. b) *Bavli* is much more complex, but by virtue of i) analyzing the issues in great detail, and ii) having been completed after *Yerushalmi* (which means that its compilers were fully aware of the discussions in *Yerushalmi*), it is more authoritative than *Yerushalmi* in all Halachic matters. In other words, when there is a difference of opinions between *Yerushalmi* and *Bavli*, we follow *Bavli*. See *Rif*, and *Rosh*, on *Eruvin* 104a; Rambam, Introduction to *Mishneh Torah*; and *Sefer Hachinuch*, Introduction.

Bavli already alludes to these differences by stating "'He has made me dwell in dark places..' (Lamentations 3:6) — this, said R. Jeremiah, refers to the Babylonian Talmud" (*Sanhedrin* 24a) because it is very complex (Rashi, *Chagigah* 10a, s.v. *afilu*. Cf. also R. Jeremiah's statement in *Yoma* 57a, and Rambam's commentary on it, cited in *Chidushei HaRitva* there). See also *Zohar Chadash*, *Eichah*:93a in comment on "Remember your Creator .. before .. the light .. grow dark" (Ecclesiastes 12:1-2): "'the light' — this refers to the Jerusalem Talmud from which the light of Torah radiates. Afterwards .. they remained in darkness, 'He has made me dwell in dark places' — this refers to the Babylonian Talmud, in which the people of the world wander in darkness.." (see there the whole passage, and cf.

VI. There is an oft-stated principle that every physical entity, and especially one mentioned in the Torah, has a spiritual counterpart. In fact, each physical entity devolves from that spiritual reality.¹⁶

This applies also to the aspects of male and female, including the details mentioned above with regards to a) the difference whether the male or the female fructifies first, and b) the difference between the present and the future eras. All this is to be found in the spiritual realm relating to the *avodah* of man's soul.

VII. *Likkutei Torah*¹⁷ explains the spiritual meaning of the concept 'if the man fructifies..': The terms 'man' and 'woman' signify the Holy One, blessed be He, and the Congregation of Israel.¹⁸ 'The man fructifies first' signifies *it'aruta dile'eyla* — a stirring from Above, that is, a stirring initiated and beginning from Above. 'If the woman fructifies first' signifies *it'aruta diletata* — a stirring from below, a stirring initiated by man.

In the first case 'she bears a female.' This means, as the stirring comes from Above, its effect below is of the status of a 'female', something that will not endure, as it is said, "women are temperamentally lightheaded."¹⁹ For as the stirring comes from Above, man did not prepare

Shaloh, Bet Chochmah, p. 16b; *Or Hatorah*, Va'etchanan, pp. 75-77; *Likkutei Sichot*, vol. 24, pp. 24, 34, 57ff., and 168f.]

This subject is discussed at length in *Sha'arei Orah*, Sha'ar Hachanukah, I:ch. 54; and *Sefer Hama'amarim 5708*, p. 121ff.

16. [The spiritual worlds and entities precede the physical ones and are the very source from which the latter devolve in the creative process. See *Zohar* I:38a and II:20a. *Peri Etz Chaim*, Sha'ar hakorbanot, ch. 6; *Shaloh*, Toldot Adam. Cf. *Mystical Concepts in Chassidism*, pp. 37-38.]

17. [*Likkutei Torah*, Tazri'a, p. 20a.]

18. [See *Bamidbar Rabba* 9:45; and see below, notes 49 and 59.]

19. [I.e., they are more susceptible to change.] *Shabbat* 33b. *Kidushin* 80b.

long as the sun, may his name be perpetuated (Yinun)"; the School of Rabbi Chaninah said, Chaninah is his name, as it is written, "I will show you no favor;"¹⁴ others say Menachem ben Chizkiyahu¹⁵ is his name, as it is written, "for far from me is a comforter to revive my spirit."¹⁶

And we (Chassidim) follow their example¹⁷ (in regard to our Rebbeim, our leaders, in particular My sainted father-in-law, leader of our generation): Yosef is his name, as it is written¹⁸ "The L-rd will continue [Yosif] to apply His hand a second time, etc., and He shall gather the lost of Israel, etc." Yitzchak is his name, as it is written,¹⁹ "Then our mouths will be filled with laughter [s'chok]".

* * *

"Rabbi [Yehuda HaNasi] said, which is the straightforward path that a man should choose for himself? That which is honorable to

name" (and not that the students introduced the idea that his [Moshiach's] name is like that of their Rabbi).

14. [*Literally*, "I will not give you Chaninah." *Translator's note*.]

15. This is how it's written ("ben Chizkiyahu") in our editions, but in the *Yerushalmi* and *Eicha Rabbah*: just "Menachem. - Note that Rashi quotes the word "Menachem," and adds "ben Chizkiyah." It seems that Rashi's words should be amended thus: "The correct version is "ben Chizkiyahu, but the typesetter 'fixed' it and removed the words: "The correct version is..." This requires further study.

16. See also the *Yerushalmi Brochos* chapter 2, halacha 4. *Eicha Rabbah* 1:51. See *Likkutei Levi Yitzchak* on *Ma'amarei Razal*, p. 106, that "all the opinions are true and these and those are the words of the Living G-d." Note there. [*The verse quoted literally reads: "Menachem the comforter of my soul is far from me." Translator's note*.]

17. [*The Rebbe here refers to the tradition of Chassidim to interpret the names of their Rebbe as a reference to Moshiach. This is in the tradition of the Talmudic sages. Translator's note*]

18. *Yeshayhu* 11:11-12.

19. *Tehillim* 126:2. See *Brochos* 31a.

(As the Gemara states,⁶ "Rav said, if he is from the living, he is like our holy Rebbe [Yehudah HaNasi]."⁷ [And then it states,] "**If Moshiach is from those that are living now** he is certainly **our holy Rebbe**,⁸ who bears the afflictions and is a complete Chasid."⁹) And he waits impatiently and longingly¹⁰ to reveal himself (from the concealment of the time and situation of exile), for the King Moshiach redeems Israel with the complete and true Redemption, after which there will be no exile, according to the halachic ruling of Rambam,¹¹ "If there arises a king from the house of David, etc."

...And there¹² (at the beginning of the discussion): "the School of Rabbi Shilah said, Shiloh is his name, as it is written, "until Shiloh comes"; the School of Rabbi Yannai said, Yinun is his name (similar to Yannai, [thus] each one explained the name of Moshiach after his name¹³), as it is written, "May his name endure forever, as

6. *Sanhedrin* 98b.

7. According to the legal decision of the Rambam (Laws of Kings end of chapter 11), "If a king from the House of David arises, etc." - means that he is already a king.

8. [In the Gemara, Rav is referring to Rabbi Yehudah HaNasi, compiler of the Mishneh and known simply as "Rebbe." Translator's note.]

9. The explanation of Rashi there. This is why Moshiach is referred to as "the leper of the house of **Rebbe**," "because of our holy Rebbe [Rabbi Yehudah HaNasi] who is called **Rebbe**... because he bore the afflictions and sufferings like him" (*Chidushei Agadah* of the *Maharsha* there). [The term "Chasid" here refers to one who is pious and kindly. Translator's note.]

10. Therefore "he loosens one and binds one (he loosens the bandage on one wound, cleans it and rebinds it, then loosens the next bandage, and proceeds thus; he does not loosen two wounds together (as do the others afflicted with illness among whom he sits). He says, if I am called, I won't be detained (If I am asked to go and redeem Israel, I won't detain myself in order to bind two wounds)" *Sanhedrin* there and *Rashi's* explanation.

11. As in note 5.

12. *Sanhedrin* there.

13. Rashi's explanation there. - And the wording of Rashi is precise: "each one explained [the name of Moshiach] after his

an appropriate receptacle in which the supernal influence would be able to endure. If, however, 'the woman fructifies first,' that is, the stirring is initiated by man, which of itself implies that he has made himself into an appropriate receptacle, then 'she bears a male': it will endure, because the person absorbs it to his very core (*pnimiyut*).

VIII. Nonetheless, there still is an advantage to the *it'aruta dile'eyla* (stirring initiated from Above) as well. An *it'aruta diletata* (stirring initiated from below) will elicit no more than an illumination proportionate to the finite status of a created entity. In the case of an effluence initiated from Above, however, that illumination can — and will — be unlimited, beyond the normative capacities of the worlds.

Thus it follows that each of the two approaches has its own advantage. The advantage of the *it'aruta dile'eyla* is in the effected illumination itself, in the sense that it is of superior quality. The advantage of the *it'aruta diletata* is that it is absorbed in the *pnimiyut* (the very core) of man.

In the future era, however, there will be a state of "man after man was born there," that is, both advantages: There will be an illumination disproportionately greater than the normative capacity of the worlds, and it will also be absorbed inwardly. "It will be as this one and as that one."²⁰

IX. These two aspects of 'drawing forth from above downwards' and 'elevation from below upwards' also signify, in a general sense, the difference between the months of Nissan and Tishrei.

The Midrash²¹ says of these two months: "When

20. *Baba Batra* 75a. Cf. *Likkutei Torah*, Re'ey, p. 26c.

21. *Shemot Rabba* 15:11

BESURAS HAGEULO

The Announcement Of The Redemption

22

the Holy One, blessed be He, chose His world, He appointed therein new moons (months) and (cycles of) years; and when He chose Jacob and his sons, He appointed therein a new moon of redemption." When G-d chose His world, *rosh hashanah*, the beginning of the year, was fixed to be in the month of Tishrei; but when He chose Jacob and his sons, Nissan was fixed to be the month of redemption.

The significance of these two months is explained in *Akedat Yitzchak*,²² and in other sources: The Almighty governs the world in two ways: a) by a natural governance; and b) by a miraculous — i.e., supra-natural — governance. Tishrei is the *rosh hashanah* for the natural governance; for the first of Tishrei marks the creation of man, the completion of creation²³ in the natural order. Nissan is the *rosh hashanah* for the supra-natural governance; for in Nissan was the exodus from Egypt marked by miracles, by supra-natural events.

Why was it necessary to have the *rosh hashanah* for the miraculous governance at a different time? If it is because of the exodus which occurred in Nissan, then this itself raises a question: why indeed was the exodus in Nissan, and not in Tishrei? The *beginning* of the redemption was indeed in Tishrei, as stated in the *Gemara* that the bondage of our ancestors in Egypt ceased in Tishrei.²⁴ Why then was the complete redemption specifically in Nissan and not in Tishrei?

Tishrei and Nissan are distinct from one another. Tishrei signifies *gevurah* (the concept of judgment), *teshuvah*, elevation from below upwards. However, any

In recent times we have spoken about and emphasized strongly the necessity for each and every Jew to do everything that depends on him to actually bring our righteous Moshiach immediately.

Since in these days (with the conclusion of the month of Nissan of the year "it will be a year in which I will show him wonders") **"all the appointed times have passed"** ("the end of Yamim (days)" and "the end of Yamin (days)"¹)² **in the simplest sense**,³ certainly our righteous Moshiach will come immediately. And [then] each and every one will point with his finger and say, **"Here he (King Moshiach) has come."**⁴ This means that actually he already came in the moment before this one, for the past tense is used.⁵

* * *

Moshiach is found in the world in the time and place of exile,
and in the situation of exile, for he bears the afflictions of the exile.

22. [Parshat Bo, sha'ar 38.]

23. [Vayikra Rabba 29:1; Zohar I:37a and III:100b. See *Pessikta deR. Kahana*, ed. Buber, sect. 23, discussed at length in -] *Ran on Rosh Hashanah* 16a.

24. *Rosh Hashanah* 11a

1. See *Or HaTorah*, beginning of *Parshas Mikeitz*. And further references there.

2. [The word for "days" in Hebrew can be spelled with either the letter "mem" or a "nun": "Yamim" or "Yamin". The former, "Yamim," is connected to the left, the end of exile and removal of the negative. The latter, "Yamin," is a phrase from the end of the Book of Daniel, connoting the right, and the revelation of the positive. Translator's note]

3. In addition to the fact that already, in the time of the *Gemara* "all the appointed times have passed" (*Sanhedrin* 97b).

4. *Shir HaShirm* 2:8 and *Shir HaShirim Rabbah* on the verse (chapter 2:8(2)).

5. [In Hebrew, vowels are not usually written; rather they are understood either from the structure of the word, the grammar of the sentence or the context of the idea. Thus, in this case, the written form of the word for "come" can be read as present tense or past tense, depending on the pronunciation. Translator's note]

mode of *pnimiyut*. Thus it is written, "And to Zion it will be said, man after man was born there;" that is, though it will be the aspect of 'the man fructifies first,' i.e., *it'aruta dile'eyla*, nonetheless 'she will bear a male,' i.e., there will be endurance as well as *pnimiyut*.

(Excerpts from Maamar Hachhodesh Hazeh 5717)

ascent of created entities through their own *avodah*, regardless how high they may reach, will always be limited. Tishrei, therefore, is the *rosh hashanah* for the natural governance. Nissan, on the other hand, signifies *chessed* (the concept of Divine kindness), drawing forth from Above downwards to the point of transcending the order of all worlds. Nissan, therefore, is the *rosh hashanah* for the miraculous governance which transcends nature.²⁵

Thus we note also that in Tishrei we pray for rain, while in Nissan we pray for dew.²⁶ The difference

25. See Zohar II:186a: "This month shall be for you.. ' .. the month of *aviv* has its letters following in order .. The seventh month has its letters in reverse order." [The first letters of *aviv* — the Scriptural term for the month of Nissan — are *aleph-bet*, the first two letters of the alphabet in normal sequence. This indicates a progressive sequence, moving further and higher. The first letters of Tishrei *-tav-shin-reish* — are the last three letters of the *aleph-bet* in reverse sequence, indicating *teshuvah* — return to the source (the *aleph*), moving from below upward.]

See also Zohar II:51b: "The letters .. in alphabetical sequence .. are an indication of *chessed* (kindness; love) .. In reverse order .. they are an indication of *gevurah* (might; strictness; judgment)."

Cf. *Likkutei Torah* of R. Isaac Luria, Vayeitze: "Nissan to Elul .. are of the category of *zecharim* ('males'; *chessed*) .. From Tishrei on [the rainy season] .. it is *gevurot geshamim* [the might of rains; signifying *gevurah*], the *or chozer* [returning light; the light radiating from below upwards, reflecting the *or yashar*, the 'straight light' from above downwards], of the status of *nukva* [female; i.e., *gevurah*. For more specific explanations of these terms and concepts, see *Mystical Concepts in Chassidism*.] (This passage requires further consideration in view of other sources which seem to be contrary to this view: *Ta'amei Hamitzvot* of R. Isaac Luria, Bo — cited in *Ateret Rosh*, p. 50a; *Peri Etz Chaim*, Sha'ar Rosh Hashanah, ch. 4; *Sha'ar Hakavanot*, s.v. Inyan Rosh Hashanah, derush I; *Nehar Shalom*, in Warsaw edition of *Etz Chaim*, p. 95.)

Note also *Kehilat Ya'akov*, s.v. *yud-bet chadashim*.

26. [On Shemini Atzeret (in Tishrei) we pray for rain in its

between rain and dew is that rain comes by virtue of *it'aruta diletata* — “a mist went up from the earth,”²⁷ while dew comes by virtue of an *it'aruta dile'eyla*.

(This is the reason why rain may be withheld: as rain depends on the *avodah* of man, a deficiency in *avodah* will cause a deficiency in rain.²⁸ Dew, on the other hand, is never withheld,²⁹ for it is a Heavenly effusion which is not affected by man's *avodah*.)

In Tishrei, therefore, which signifies ‘elevation’, we pray for rain, and in Nissan, which signifies ‘drawing forth’, we pray for dew.

X. All this still leaves the question why the bondage of our ancestors ceased in Tishrei. Why was the ‘beginning of the redemption’ in Tishrei?

We can understand this by first explaining a nuance in the expression of “When the Holy One, blessed be He, chose His world.” It does not say “when He created”, but “when He chose His world.” ‘Choosing’ is more sublime than ‘creating’. G-d's choosing the world conferred a special quality upon the world, namely that it has a relationship to Divinity.

That is why it says, “When the Holy One, blessed be He, chose His world, He appointed therein new moons and years”: even the *rosh hashanah* of Tishrei — which is the *rosh hashanah* for the natural governance — was elevated beyond the status of the world as it was *per se* to the status of the world as it became by virtue of having been chosen by the Almighty.

proper season (see *Ta'anit* 2a), and on the first day of Pesach (in Nissan) we pray for dew. See *Agadat Bereishit*, ed. Buber, 44:3; and *Pirkei deR. Eliezer*, ch. 32, and see there *Be'ur Haradal*, note 37. See also *Yerushalmi*, *Ta'anit* 1:2.]

27. [Genesis 2:6]

28. [Cf. *Yerushalmi*, *Ta'anit* 2:1; *Bereishit Rabba* 13:14.]

29. *Ta'anit* 3a

wondrous things,”⁴⁵ and that exodus from Egypt was in Nissan, ‘from Above downwards’?

XIV. The explanation is as follows.

It was stated above that there is an advantage to the mode of elevation ‘from below upwards.’ To be sure, the illumination elicited that way is itself inferior, but it is absorbed inwardly. This fact makes it reasonable for the redemption to be in Tishrei, by virtue of the advantage of *pnimiyut* (inwardness).

The exodus from Egypt occurred before *matan Torah*. The Jewish people at that time were immersed in the ‘49 gates of impurity,’⁴⁶ and thus there was a need for the Holy One, blessed be He, to reveal Himself ‘in His glory by Himself’.⁴⁷ That redemption, therefore, was in Nissan.

The future redemption, however, will be after the *avodah* of man following *matan Torah*. For our *avodah* with Torah and *mitzvot* purifies and refines the world, transforming it into a vessel for Divinity. The effect of *matan Torah* is that even the most sublime matters should be absorbed by the world in a mode of *pnimiyut* (inwardness). This is to be to the point that even the manifestation of Mashiach, which transcends worldliness, must also be specifically in a mode of *pnimiyut*. That is why R. Eliezer says that the redemption will be in Tishrei.

R. Yehoshua, however, whose view has been adopted as the prevailing ruling, states that the future redemption will come from Above, yet will still be in a

45. Michah 7:15

46. [*Zohar Chadash*, Yitro:31a (quoted in *Haggadah for Pesach*, ed. Kehot, p. 20, note c).]

47. [*Haggadah. Mechilta* on Exodus 12:12 and 12:29. *Yerushalmi, Sanhedrin* 2:1. See *Zohar* I:117a (quoted in *Haggadah for Pesach*, ed. Kehot, p. 25, note a).]

'from below upwards.' The redemption, therefore, will be in Tishrei, the month which signifies elevation. Even on the plain level of understanding we find that the principal time for *teshuvah* is in Tishrei, as it is said, "Seek G-d when He may be found,"⁴¹ of which our sages say that this refers to "the ten days between *Rosh Hashanah* and *Yom Kippur*."⁴²

R. Yehoshua, on the other hand, is of the opinion that the redemption will be in a way of "You shall be redeemed without money"⁴³ — i.e., even without repentance... It will be in a manner of 'from Above downward.' That is why he says that the Messianic redemption will be in Nissan, and that, indeed, is how the matter has been decided, as follows from the unqualified statement to that effect in the Midrash.⁴⁴

XIII. We still need to understand the deeper meaning of this dispute about the future redemption — whether it will be by virtue of *avodah* or by means of a supernal manifestation.

Moreover, from the *Gemara's* discussion of this dispute it would seem more reasonable to assume that the future redemption will be in Tishrei, by virtue of an *avodah* 'from below upwards' (as stated by R. Eliezer), except that in final analysis the issue is resolved to the effect that it will be in Nissan, in a manner of 'from Above downwards' (as stated by R. Yehoshua). But how could there have been a suggestion that it will be in Tishrei when Scripture states, "As in the days of your going out from the land of Egypt I will show them

The creation of the world *per se* occurred on the twenty-fifth of Elul.³⁰ G-d's 'choosing the world' was on the first of Tishrei — (when man was created; for man's *avodah* makes the world into a vessel for Divinity) — of which it is said, "This day is the beginning of Your work."³¹ The twenty-fifth of Elul is the aspect of *koh* (like this), while the first of Tishrei is the aspect of *zeh* (this). *Zeh* is superior to *koh*, as it is said: "All the prophets prophesied with the expression *koh*, while Moses prophesied with the expression *zeh*."³² The world *per se* is the aspect of *koh*; for the concealment and obstruction of worldliness prevents us from pointing to it and saying *zeh*, because one can perceive no more than the semblance indicated by the term *koh*. By virtue of the creation and *avodah* of man, however, it is possible to say *zeh*: one can perceive Divinity, just as it was in the case of "every one pointed his finger and said, 'This is my G-d.'"³³ Even so, all this is only with regards to the aspect of Divinity related to, and condensed in, the

30. *Vayikra Rabba* 29:1. *Pirkei deR. Eliezer*, ch. 8; and see *Ran* on *Rosh Hashanah* 16a.

31. [*Mussaf*-prayer of *Rosh Hashanah*. *Rosh Hashanah* 27a (and see there *Maharsha*); and *Vayikra Rabba* 29:1.]

32. *Sifre*, and *Rashi*, on Numbers 30:2

[The term *zeh* (this; or 'this is') signifies a clear vision, seeing the object in its true state; one can, as it were, point with the finger and say "See, there it is, in full and clear vision." *Koh* (like this) signifies a screened vision, seeing no more than a semblance of the object. Moses was the only one who had a prophetic vision on the level of *zeh*. All other prophets had their visions on the level of *koh*. See *Rambam*, *Hilchot Yessodei Hatorah* 7:6; and his *Principles of the Faith*, no. VII. Cf. *L.S.-Shemot*, p. 21, notes 1-2.]

33. [When the Red Sea was split after the exodus from Egypt, there was a manifestation of Divinity to the extent of an empirical perception of the Divine Presence: the people pointed, as it were, with their fingers and said, "This is my G-d" (Exodus 15:2). See *Shemot Rabba* 23:15, and *Rashi* on this verse.]

41. [Isaiah 55:6]

42. *Rosh Hashanah* 18a

43. [Isaiah 52:3]

44. *Shemot Rabba* 15:11

world proportionate to its capacity. It expresses itself in the natural governance of the world, albeit in a manifest way, and not concealed. In the month of Nissan, however, there is an illumination of transcendent Divinity which is not, Heaven forbid, subject to natural limitations. By virtue of this illumination there is the miraculous governance which transcends nature.

This explains why the bondage of our ancestors ceased in Tishrei. For in Tishrei, too, there is an illumination of the essence of Divinity, resulting in the cessation of bondage and the beginning of the redemption. However, the people still were in *Mitzrayim* (Egypt) — which signifies *meitzarim* (straits) and limitations.³⁴ For that illumination of Divinity (in Tishrei) was vested in nature. The actual exodus from Egypt happened only in the month of Nissan. For in the month of Nissan there is an illumination of transcendent Divinity, and thus there was the exodus from all straits and limitations.

XI. We can now understand also why the Ten Commandments begin with "I am G-d, your G-d, who has taken you out of the land of Egypt..."³⁵ There is a well-known question:³⁶ Why does it say "who has taken you out of the land of Egypt" instead of "who has created heaven and earth," a fact much more wondrous than the exodus?³⁷

The effect of *matan Torah* (the giving of the Torah) is that it gives man the opportunity to be bound up with the very essence of transcendent Divinity by means of

34. [The term *mitzrayim* is an idiom of *meitzarim* - straits; boundaries; restrictions. *Torah Or*, Yitro, p. 71c. Cf. *Bereishit Rabba* 16:5.]

35. [Exodus 20:2]

36. Ibn Ezra on Exodus 20:2. [See also R. Bachaya on that verse; and *Kuzary* I:25.]

37. *Tanya*, II:ch. 2. See also *Sefer Hama'amarim* 5700, part II, p. 20.

Torah and *mitzvot*.³⁸ At the beginning of *matan Torah*, therefore, it does not mention the creation of heaven and earth, but only the exodus from Egypt. For the effect of *matan Torah* is to step out of all straits and boundaries and to become bound up with transcendent Divinity.

XII. This now explains also the Talmudic dispute about the time of the Messianic redemption: R. Eliezer states that in the past we were redeemed in Nissan, but the future redemption will be in Tishrei; and R. Yehoshua states that we were redeemed in Nissan and the future redemption, too, will be in Nissan.³⁹

R. Eliezer's opinion appears rather difficult: why should the future redemption be at a different time than the past one from Egypt?

In context of the aforesaid, however, we can understand R. Eliezer's view. For Nissan signifies a drawing forth from above downwards, while Tishrei signifies elevation from below upwards. R. Eliezer and R. Yehoshua follow consistently on their views in their dispute about how the future redemption will occur:⁴⁰ R. Eliezer is of the opinion that "if the Jewish people will do *teshuvah* they will be redeemed..." For as the *galut* was caused by sin — "because of our sins we were exiled from our land" — it follows that the redemption will be by virtue of a rectification of sin, i.e., *teshuvah*. *Teshuvah* means an *avodah*

38. [Torah and *mitzvot* are the very "wisdom and will of G-d." G-d and His attributes are one in absolute and simple unity (see *Moreh Nevuchim* I:ch. 56-7). Thus "the Torah and the Holy One, blessed be He, are entirely one" (see *Zohar* I:24a and II:90b). When involved with Torah and *mitzvot*, therefore, one becomes unified with these, and thus, in effect, with the very Essence of G-d. See *Tanya*, ch. 5, 23, and 35.]

39. *Rosh Hashanah* 11a

40. *Sanhedrin* 97b