

IN LOVING MEMORY OF OUR DEAR MOTHER
Mrs. **Hinda (Adrienne)** bas Reb **Tzvi Hirsch** ע"ה **Katz**
Passed away on 14 Iyar - Pesach Sheini, 5777

ת. נ. צ. ב. ה.

*

DEDICATED BY HER CHILDREN AND GRANDCHILDREN
Rabbi & Mrs. **Mordechai Avrohom HaKohen**
and **Rivka Leah** שיחיו **Katz**
Mr. & Mrs. **Aryeh Leib** and **Genesa Batya** שיחיו **Sonnenberg**

* * *

IN LOVING MEMORY OF
Mrs. **Leah Rivka** bas Reb **Dovid** ע"ה **Dekhtyarevsky**
Passed away on Pesach Sheni - 14 Iyar, 5777

ת. נ. צ. ב. ה.

*

DEDICATED BY
her children and grandchildren שיחיו

* * *

IN LOVING MEMORY OF OUR DEAR FATHER
Reb **Tzvi Hersh** ben Reb **Shmuel** ע"ה **Goldstein**
Passed away on 14 Iyar - Pesach Sheini, 5735

ת. נ. צ. ב. ה.

*

DEDICATED BY HIS CHILDREN שיחיו

* * *

IN LOVING MEMORY OF OUR DEAR FATHER
Mr. **Shmuel (Jerry)** ben Reb **Curt** ע"ה **Plotke**
Passed away on Friday, 16 Iyar, 5774

ת. נ. צ. ב. ה.

DEDICATED BY HIS CHILDREN שיחיו

LIKKUTEI SICHOS

AN ANTHOLOGY OF TALKS

by the
Lubavitcher Rebbe
Rabbi Menachem M. Schneerson

Reprinted for Parshat Acharei-Kedoshim, 5778
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THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE REDEMPTION

increase in “our actions and our service” in general that bring the Redemption, including and particularly - as talked about in the previous gathering - learning the Torah concerning Redemption, in the Written Torah (that “all¹⁴ the books are filled with this subject”) and the Oral Torah: Mishneh, Gemara, Midrashim, etc.

(From the talk of Shabbos Parshas Acharei-Kedoshim, 13 Iyar 5751)

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

IN LOVING MEMORY OF
Horav **Schneur Zalman Halevi** ע"ה
ben Horav **Yitzchok Elchonon Halevi** הי"ד
Shagalov
Passed away on 21 Tamuz, 5766
Reb **Dovid Asniel** ben Reb **Eliyahu** ע"ה
Ekman
Passed away on 5 Sivan - Erev Shavuot, 5765
Mrs. **Devora Rivka** bas Reb **Yosef Eliezer** ע"ה
Marenburg
Passed away on the second day
of Rosh Chodesh Adar, 5766
Reb **Yitzchok Moshe** (Ian)
ben Reb **Dovid Asniel** ע"ה
Ekman (Santiago, Chile)
Passed away on the 24th day of Shevat, 5769
ת. נ. צ. ב. ה.
AND IN HONOR OF
Mrs. **Esther Shaindel** bas **Fraidel Chedva** שתח'ל
Shagalov
DEDICATED BY
Rabbi & Mrs. **Yosef Y. and Gittel Rochel** שיחי
Shagalov

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Executive Director

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IN LOVING MEMORY OF

Mrs. **Rina** bat Reb **Moshe Yosef** ע"ה **Aaron**

Passed away on Lag B’Omer - 18 Iyar, 5775

ת. נ. צ. ב. ה.

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Rabbi **Chalom Mendel** שיחי **Boudjnah, Director**

actions and large, positive reforms that he would introduce to strengthen education in the country.

...And this is in addition to the many things that daily occur by Divine Providence, whether in general or in relation to each one in their personal matters. The purpose of all this is to reveal even more how the world is helping to make a dwelling place for G-d in this lowest world and bring the Redemption.

(This includes the discovery last week of precious stones and pearls in the farthest corner of the world, through the blessings of G-d. (This is analogous to “The princes brought the onyx stones and the stones for the ephod and breastplate.”¹¹ (These were used for the priestly garments, that were [miraculously] brought to them by the clouds.¹²) The intention is they should be used for adorning brides, increasing tzedekah, etc.)

The practical conclusion of what has been said is: the Redemption comes precisely through the service in exile, from revealing the master of the world in “exile,”¹³ so that this generation, the last generation of exile, will be the first generation of Redemption.

And G-d helps us see in the recent world events how the world itself is assisting and leading to the Redemption.

This simply means - as mentioned above - that every Jew must

11. *Vayakhel* 35:27.

12. *Targum Yonasan* on the verse.

13. [There is a play on words in the Hebrew: exile is “golah” and redemption is “geulah.” The difference between them in Hebrew is the letter “Aleph.” The word “Alufo” means L-rd or master. The letter “Aleph” also has the numerical value of one. Thus, the “Master of the world” is the “Alufo of the world.” He is also the “Alef” - the only One. By revealing the “Alufo,” the “Alef” is also revealed, which transforms “golah” (without an alef) into “geulah” (with an alef). Translator’s note.]

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

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Volume III: *Vayikra*

•

In English rendition
with Introduction and Notes
by
Jacob Immanuel Schochet

ACHAREI

אֲחֵרֵי

I. "And you shall guard the guarding of My (word)."¹ The *Gemara* interprets this verse: "Provide a guard for the guarding of My (word)."² This is the source for the precautionary measures instituted by the sages.³ It is also the source for the precautionary measures that every individual Jew must take upon himself, in order to avoid violating any prohibitions.⁴ These measures affect even things that are legally permissible.⁵

Texts dealing with *mussar* (ethical behavior) thus state that it takes restrictive measures in one hundred areas of the permissible in order to avoid trespassing the boundaries of a single area of the prohibited.

II. There are some who argue erroneously: "Why look for new stringencies? If it has been forbidden by our rabbis, of any generation, we have no choice but to abide by it, as Scripture says 'You shall not turn aside from the word they shall tell you...'⁶ Nonetheless, even in such cases one need not be overly cautious as these are

1. [Leviticus 18:30]

2. *Yevamot* 21a

3. [Rambam, Introduction to Commentary on the *Mishnah*; Introduction to *Mishneh Torah* (s.v. *vegam*); and *Hilchos Mamrim* 1:2.]

4. [*Avot* 1:1. See commentaries there.]

5. [*Cf. Berachot* 1:1 (2a). In other words, precautionary measures may demand that we are to refrain even from things or actions that are legally permissible; see below, note 18.]

6. [Deuteronomy 17:11. See *Sifre*, *Shoftim*, sect. 154.]

Rashi, *Shabbat* 23a [s.v. *heychan*, and s.v. *mi'lo*]. See Rambam, *Hilchos Mamrim*, ch. 1; *Sefer Hamitzvot*, *shoresh I*, and I:174.

Among the obvious things which occurred very recently, where we see how the world and the nations of the world are preparing and assisting the way to the Redemption, are the areas of *tzedekah* and education, two fundamental foundations for civilizing the world, "He formed it to be inhabited."⁹

The recent events have become well-known and publicized (in all the newspapers). This country (founded on *tzedekah* and kindness, as is known) has used its great power to help and rescue people in a distant region of the world (far away from the country), even though the citizens of this country receive no direct benefit.

This country sent many people and soldiers from its army to assist the refugees in those places, together with food, clothing and medicine. Instead of using the planes for conquest, and instead of using the food and clothing for its own citizens, it used them to rescue unfortunate people, particularly small children, from the cold, and indeed, from the very opposite of life.¹⁰

One sees thereby the compassion of the citizens of this country: when they heard and saw the suffering or others, not their own relatives, and with whom they had no connection - the country was aroused to help them. According to the principles of this country regarding *tzedekah*, it helps people throughout the whole world, and it doesn't even wait to be asked to help.

Similarly, it's also known that recently the leader of this country came out with a declaration and detailed directive regarding children's education. This was consistent with a declaration the president made at the beginning of his tenure, concerning his ambition to be remembered as the "education president" for the

9. *Yeshayahu* 45:18.

10. [*The Rebbe* - in the spirit of the Talmudic dictum to employ clean and positive language - frequently employed the euphemism "the opposite of life." Translator's note.]

And they will bring all your brethren, etc.).

And in this last year we see how this attitude towards the Jewish people has spread to other countries, even to that country,⁴ which (until recently) placed limitations on the freedom of the Jews in their observance of Torah and mitzvos, and also on their emigration from that country. Their attitude has now been reversed, for they permit Jews to observe Torah and mitzvos and allow Jews to leave there (without the previous restrictions). On the contrary - they are now helping the Jews to travel to the Holy Land. This is a prelude of the assistance the nations of the world will give the Jewish people to go out of exile and into the Holy Land, in the complete and true Redemption.

In addition to the direct assistance from the nations of the world to the Jews, we also see instances where the nations of the world themselves perform acts of goodness and kindness, which reveal even more that there is a Master to this palace.⁵ All of this is a preparation for “And the kingdom will be the L-rd’s”⁶ in the complete and true Redemption.

It was not this way previously, when specifically the Jewish people (even though “You are the smallest of all the nations”⁷) accomplished the intention of making a dwelling place in the lower world,⁸ while several governments of the nations of the world behaved in a cruel fashion to each other. Their main occupation was their own benefit, either by conquering the other countries, etc.

merely Rabbinic decrees. To look for *new* stringencies, however, is altogether unnecessary. ‘Enough for you with what has been forbidden to you by the Torah!’”⁷

They strengthen their argument by referring to a passage in *Yerushalmi*, where it is said that man will be held to account for all that he saw and did not consume.⁸

Moreover, they say, it is already difficult to observe all that has been ordained. To add further stringencies or zealouslyness, therefore, is not worthwhile, for these may lead to neglecting essential requirements. Too many restrictions may lead to a total diversion from the way of the Torah, Heaven forbid. They support this argument by referring to the sin with the Tree of Knowledge, which is the root and source of all sins⁹: that sin came about by adding to the Divine edict of “you shall not eat of it”¹⁰ a supplementary restriction of “you shall not touch it.”¹¹

III. This whole argument, however, is altogether fallacious, for the following reasons:

All obligations of the Torah were given by the one and same Shepherd.¹² By virtue of the prohibition of “You shall not turn aside..,” even the enactments of the rabbis, too, assume the full force and strictness of laws

7. *Yerushalmi*, *Nedarim* 9:1. [Rambam, *Hilchot De’ot* 3:1; and *She-monah Perakim*, ch. 4.]

8. *Yerushalmi*, *Kidushin* 4: end of 12

9. [*Torah Or*, *Mishpatim*, p. 79d. *Bati Legani* 5711, ch. 2.]

10. [Genesis 2:17]

11. [Genesis 3:3; see Rashi there (citing *Bereishit Rabba* 19:3): “She added to the commandment, and therefore she came to diminish from it (see Rashi on Genesis 3:4). Thus it is said, ‘Do not add to His words’ (Proverbs 30:6).” See also *Sanhedrin* 29a; and cf. *Avot deR. Nathan*, ch. 1.]

12. [Ecclesiastes 12:11. *Chagigah* 3b.]

4. [*The Soviet Union. Translators note.*]

5. See *Bereishit Rabba* beginning of chapter 39.

6. The end of *Ovadyah*.

7. *Va’eschanan* 7:7.

8. [*The Previous Rebbe explains in his discourse Basi L’gani that G-d’s intention behind creation was to make a dwelling place for G-dliness in even the lowest physical realm of existence, that is, this world. Translator’s note.*]

BESURAS HAGEULO

The Announcement Of The Redemption

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of the Torah itself.¹³ On the practical level we do distinguish between Biblical (*de'orayta*) and Rabbinic (*derabanan*) precepts.¹⁴ These legal distinctions, however, are themselves based on the premise established by the Torah that in the case of a doubt relating to a Biblical law we side with the stringent view, while in the case of a doubt relating to a Rabbinic law we side with the lenient view; and so forth.¹⁵

The same applies to the obligation, incumbent upon everyone, that one must set for oneself restrictions with regard to matters that are permissible. This is itself a command of the Torah, as it is written, "and you shall guard the guarding of My (word)."

The Torah states, "You shall be holy..,"¹⁶ "and you shall sanctify yourselves"¹⁷ — i.e., "sanctify yourself in that which is permitted to you."¹⁸ This injunction is not only a commandment by itself,¹⁹ but it is also part of the precept of "and you shall guard the guarding . . . — provide a guard for the guarding of My (word)."²⁰

IV. As for the references to the *Yerushalmi* and to the

13. [See above, note 6.]

14. [See *Beitza* 3b. *Berachot* 19b; and *Ketuvot* 56b.]

15. There are legal differences even among Biblical precepts themselves; see *Tanya*, ch. 24, for a number of examples. See also the commentaries on Rambam, *Hilchos Mamrim* 1:5, and on *Sefer Hamitzvot*, *shores* I.

16. [Leviticus 19:2]

17. [Leviticus 20:7]

18. [*Lekach Tov*, Preamble to *Kedoshim*. *Yevamot* 20a.]

19. *Tanya*, ch. 30. See *Sefer Charedim*, *Mitzvot Asei min Hatorah*, ch. 7:14. [Cf. below, *Kedoshim*, note 1.]

20. [Self-sanctification through restricting the use of permissible objects or actions, is part of the precautionary measures which man is enjoined to take upon himself.]

From what was said previously, one may discover several lessons regarding the service of the Jews to bring the Redemption, and what must be done to prepare for the Redemption, as we stand now at the end of exile, "golah," with the Redemption coming momentarily.

...Worldly affairs themselves and the nations of the world themselves (even in the time of exile) are (in truth) assisting in the service of bringing the Redemption.

It may be suggested that at the end of the time of exile, close to the Redemption, this assistance appears in a more open fashion.

We see this especially in the recent generations and even more in recent times, specifically in the latest days:

In previous generations, (most) Jews lived among countries which in general were a hindrance and an obstacle, etc. ([the trouble] will not rise twice)¹ to the service of G-d.

However, in recent generations, (most) Jews live among benevolent governments, primarily this country² (in which the largest number of Jews and Jewish institutions are located). This enables the Jews to achieve an inner Redemption in their service, so that they should perform the service which will bring the actual Redemption. Then the benevolent government will also help the Jews to return to the land of Israel (in the language of Scriptures:³

1. The language of Scriptures - *Nachum* 1:9. And see *Likkutei Sichos* volume 23, page 306, note 55.

2. [*The United States*. Translator's note.]

3. *Yeshayahu* 66:20.

ters there is an awareness of 'the One'. This will of itself lead to "You shall sanctify yourselves and you shall be holy — sanctify yourself in that which is permitted to you" — which touches him in his very essence, in the 'concealed aspect of Israel.' This, in turn, will render him into a vessel to take in and absorb the 'concealed aspect of the Holy One, blessed be He.'

(Excerpts from Maamar Ve'ata Im Shamo'a 5717,
and Acharon Shel Pesach 5717)

sin with the Tree of Knowledge, stated above, quite obviously these do not relate to our context:

Adam, as he was in *Gan Eden* (the Garden of Eden), was a 'chariot unto Divinity.'²¹ He had no association whatsoever with evil.²² This is seen clearly in the fact of his very presence in *Gan Eden*, a place which does not tolerate any form of evil at all.²³ That is why he could not remain in *Gan Eden* after the sin had been committed.²⁴

A chariot does not act on its own. It is completely subject to the will of the charioteer.²⁵ In a condition like this there is no need for any fences or precautions, because there is no fear of going astray. Precautionary measures under such circumstances are superfluous. Moreover, they would constitute a defect. For when one is a chariot for Divinity, he and all his doings reflect holiness. He sublimates everything that he is involved

21. [*Ma'amarei Admur Hazaken-Ethalech*, pp. 58-9. The expression "a chariot unto Divinity" is based on *Bereishit Rabba* 47:6, and it implies total submission to the Divine Will: "all their organs were completely holy and detached from mundane matters, serving as a 'vehicle' solely for the Supreme Will alone;" *Tanya*, ch. 23, and also beg. of ch. 34.]

22. [See *Likkutei Torah*, Matot, p. 84b; *Ma'amarei Admur Hazaken-Al Hatorah Vehamo'adim*, vol. I, p. 244.]

23. [To be in *Gan Eden* is to be in the presence of G-d, of which it is said: "no evil can sojourn with You." (Psalms 5:5) "You do not dwell with evil, nor does evil dwell with You;" *Midrash Tehilim* 5:7. See also *Shabbat* 149b: "G-d, You are righteous, therefore evil will not sojourn in Your habitation."]

24. ["Before Adam sinned, he ascended and stood in the supreme wisdom, and he was not separated from the Tree of Life. .. He separated from the Tree of Life and knew evil, and forsook the good. Thus it is written, 'For You are not a god who desires wickedness, no evil sojourns with You.' He who is drawn after evil cannot abide with the Tree of Life." *Zohar* I:52a, and II:193b.]

25. [See above, note 21.]

with. Withdrawing from anything, therefore, would be withholding its sublimation, as, for example, in the cases of consuming sacrifices, eating on Shabbat, and so forth.²⁶

Under other conditions, however, where there is a need for precautionary measures, these are a virtue.²⁷

(Adapted from the Sichot of Shabbat Parshat Shelach 5716)



26. [The Torah enjoins that many sacrifices must be eaten. Likewise, it is a *mitzvah* to eat on Shabbat and festivals. Fulfilling a *mitzvah* by eating such edibles, sanctifies and sublimates them and the person obeying the Divine precept. To withdraw from consuming them would mean to withhold that sublimation and to deprive them of their intended purpose. See above, Vayikra, note 41; and see *Sifre*, Nasso, par. 30; *Ta'anit* 11a — quoted and discussed in Rambam, *Hilchot De'ot* 3:1, and *Shemonah Perakim* ch. 4. (In this context see also Responsa of *Rashba*, I: no. 431 (and *ibid.*, no. 688.))

27. See *Likkutei Torah*, Matot, p. 84b (sect. 4). [Cf. *Tzava'at Harivash*, sect. 43a and 56, and the notes there; as well as the notes on sect. 106.]

fies a manifestation of miracles that were seen overpowering nature). In the future to come, however, there will be a two-fold reference to the term "This is",⁷⁰ signifying the additional manifestation of the 'concealed miracles.'

Divinity is presently manifest only in Torah and *mitzvot*, and not in the world itself. Divinity thus is perceived only in the supra-natural (in the 'overpowering of nature'), while Its presence in nature itself is hidden and concealed. In the future to come, however, there will be a revelation of the Divine Essence, and thus there will be a Divine manifestation even in the world itself.

XIII. "There are three bonds, one bound up with the other: Israel (is bound up) with Torah, and the Torah with the Holy One, blessed be He." The concealed aspect of the Holy One, blessed be He, can be attained only through an *avodah* involving the concealed aspect of the soul by way of the concealed aspect of the Torah.

Pnimitiyut haTorah (the inner core, the concealed essence of the Torah) explains the principle that *Havayah* and *Elokim* are truly one. That is, (the Divine Name) *Elokim*, the *gimatriya* of which is equal to that of the term *hateva* (nature),⁷¹ and (the Divine Name) *Havayah*, which signifies the supra-natural, are ultimately one and the same, and "there is nothing besides Him."⁷² When a person studies this principle, and delves into it in depth, *pnimitiyut haTorah* will evoke in him the consciousness of "One nation on earth,"⁷³ i.e., that even in 'earthly' mat-

70. ["It will be said on that day: Behold, *this* is our G-d in whom we put our hope . . . *this* is G-d, for whom we hoped . . ."] Isaiah 25:9.]

71. [See above, note 18]

72. [See above, note 62.] See *Derech Mitzvotechah*, Mitzvat Achdut Hashem, for a detailed explanation of all this.

73. [II Samuel 7:23]

aspect of Divinity which transcends the worlds (the Divine Transcendence) and gives cause to the 'supra-natural order' of miracles.

On a deeper level, even the supra-natural order, too, is included in the 'revealed aspect' of the Holy One, blessed be He. To be sure, it does transcend the worlds, and thus manifests itself by way of 'overpowering' nature because the world *per se* could not absorb it. Nonetheless, it may be said to be included in the 'revealed aspect' of the Holy One, blessed be He, because, after all, miracles are manifestly evident even now.

The 'concealed aspect' of the Holy One, blessed be He, is the source for those miracles which are hidden and concealed in natural manifestations. Of these it is said that "the person for whom a miracle is performed is himself unaware of the miracle."⁶⁴ The immensity of these miracles precludes their being manifest, even in the encompassing way of 'overpowering nature.' Scripture says of this that "He alone does wondrous things,"⁶⁵ meaning that no one but He alone knows about these wondrous things.⁶⁶

In the future era, however, even this type of wonders will be manifest, as it is written, "*Arenu* — I will show them wondrous things."⁶⁷ *Arenu* means "I will show them," implying a manifestation of the Divine Essence. The Midrash⁶⁸ thus notes: When the Red Sea was split, each of those who went up from the sea pointed with his finger and said "This is my G-d and I will glorify Him,"⁶⁹ a singular reference to the term "This is" (which signi-

64. [Nidah 31a]

65. [Psalms 136:4]

66. Nidah 31a. [Zohar III:200b]

67. [Michah 7:15]

68. *Shemot Rabba* 23:15

69. [Exodus 15:2]

KEDOSHIM

קְדוּשִׁים

A

I. At the very beginning of this *parshah* there are three commandments: a) "You shall be holy;"¹ b) "Every man shall fear his mother and his father;"² and c) "You shall keep my Sabbaths."³

Everything in the Torah is precise. The fact that these three *mitzvot* follow one another, therefore, must be of significance, and indicates that they are interrelated.

II. The term 'holiness' in this instance signifies separation, as it is stated at the end of the *parshah*,⁴ "You shall be holy unto Me, for [I, G-d, am holy, and] I have separated you from the nations..."⁵ That is, the Jewish people must be separated from the nations of the world, as it is written, "We shall be distinguished, I and Your people,

1. [Leviticus 19:2] *Sefer Charedim* (on the authority of a Gaon and R. Shelomo Ibn Gabirol) regards this as one of the 248 positive precepts of the Torah. Ramban, in his commentary on this verse, takes it as a general admonition [to 'sanctify yourself in that which is permissible to you' (*Yevamot* 20a; see above, Acharei sect. III, and below, sect. II and VIff.), and not as one of the 248 specific commandments. In this he follows the view of —] Rambam, *Sefer Hamitzvot*. Shores IV.

2. [Leviticus 19:3]

3. [*Ibid.*]

4. Leviticus 20:26. See *Tanya*, ch. 46.

5. [Cf. also *Sifra*, and Rashi, on Leviticus 19:2.]

from all the people that are upon the face of the earth.”⁶

One can speak of a need for separation only where the external factors are equal. The precept, “You shall be holy,” then, does not relate to Torah and *mitzvot*; for these do not relate at all to the nations of the world, as it is written,⁷ “He tells His words to Jacob .. He has not done so for all the nations...” Rather, it relates to common things which are permissible [and not ordained], such as eating, drinking, conducting business, and so forth. In these matters it would seem that Jews are externally identical to other nations, and that is why the Torah commands: “You shall be holy.”

How is it possible to preserve holiness in one’s involvements with mundane matters, especially in the time and conditions of the *galut* with its doubled and redoubled darkness? The Torah thus says: “For I am holy!”⁸ Jews, wherever they are, are bound up with the Almighty, with the One of whom we say “You are holy.” That is why they too are holy, a “Holy Nation,”⁹ to the point of there being an analogy to the holiness of the Holy One, blessed be He: “he *can* be (holy), like Myself.”¹⁰

6. Exodus 33:16

7. Psalms 147:19-20

8. [Leviticus 19:2]

9. [Exodus 19:6]

10. *Ma’or Einayim*, beg. of Kedoshim.

[*Vayikra Rabba* 24:9 interprets: “‘You shall be holy.’ *Yachol* — one might think ‘like Myself’? Scripture thus states ‘For I am holy’: My holiness transcends your holiness.” The word *yachol*, literally, means ‘one (or he) can (or is able to).’ Chassidic texts thus interpret this Midrash in a metaphorical way as well: “‘You shall be holy.’ He (the Jew) *can* (be holy) like Myself! Scripture thus states, ‘For I am holy.’” In other words, the fact that G-d sanctifies the people of Israel confers upon them a holiness analogous to the Divine holiness. *Ma’or Einayim* offers there a detailed discussion which shows

that level it no longer matters whether it is spiritual or material. In fact, the more sublime descends to manifest itself on proportionally lower levels.

Nonetheless, even after *matan Torah* there still remain the restrictive boundaries of the Torah: Divinity is vested exclusively in *mitzvot*, and not in other things.

Torah-law thus decrees that one must rise before those engaged in the performance of a *mitzvah*,⁵⁹ because “the Almighty dwells and vests Himself in their souls at such time.”⁶⁰ Obviously, though, this applies only with respect to those engaged in the performance of a *mitzvah*, and not with respect to those engaged in optional activities, even if the latter are done for the sake of Heaven. For the Almighty vested Himself in *mitzvot* only.

In the future to come, however, with the ultimate manifestation of the Divine Essence, there will no longer be any restrictions: Divinity will be perceived everywhere, in everything. There will be a manifest revelation of “there is no place devoid of Him”⁶¹ and that “there is nothing else besides Him.”⁶²

XII. In more explicit terms:

The *Zohar* states that there are three levels: the Holy One, blessed be He, the Torah, and Israel, and these are “both concealed and revealed.”⁶³

The ‘revealed aspect’ of the Holy One, blessed be He, is that aspect of Divinity which is related to the worlds (the Divine Immanence), and gives cause to the so-called ‘natural order.’ The ‘concealed aspect’ is that

59. [Kidushin 33a. *Yerushalmi*, *Bikurim* 3:3.]

60. *Tanya*, ch. 46

61. [Tikunei *Zohar* 57:91b]

62. [Deuteronomy 4:35. See *Tanya*, II:ch. 6, and cf. also *ibid.*, *Igeret Hateshuvah*, ch. 5.]

63. *Zohar* III:73a

while the *avodah* after *matan Torah* involves physical reality.⁵⁵ The *avodah* of the patriarchs could reach only as far as the source of created entities, thus it was restricted.⁵⁶ To be sure, a spiritual reality is a greater vessel or receptacle than something physical. Nonetheless, at the giving of the Torah it is said, "*Anochi* (I am)..."⁵⁷ *Anochi* is an acronym for 'Ana Nafshi Chesavit Yehavit — I Myself Have Written, Given' (i.e., I have written and given Myself):⁵⁸ the Divine Essence Itself was given (in the Torah). On

of the patriarchs, therefore, was essentially on the spiritual level of the *mitzvot*, and not on the physical level.]

55. [The Torah ordains the performance of *mitzvot* with physical objects. *Matan Torah* thus effects that the spiritual and the physical can interact: material reality can be infused with spirituality to become sublimated and sanctified. The original dichotomy and separation between 'those on high' and 'those below' was removed: "Those who are below shall ascend, and those on high shall descend" (*Shemot Rabba* 12:3; *Devarim Rabba* 10:2; cited below, Behar, sect. X, see there.). See at length L.S.-*Bereishit*, Chaye Sarah, sect. XVI; Vayeitze, sect. XII; and Vayishlach, sect. XI.]

56. [Man *per se* displays little evidence of his source in the Creator. The patriarchs, through effort (*avodah*), succeeded in attaining this source far above the material condition in which man finds himself. But even that level — the highest man can attain on his own — is still limited, because man's 'source' is not yet the ultimate level.]

Through *mitzvot* performed in the physical reality, and with the physical reality (which became possible by virtue of *matan Torah*), man attains far greater heights than his own source. For *mitzvot* unite man with the Divine Essence (as alluded in the term *mitzvah*, which is an idiom of *tzavta* — joined together; *Likkutei Torah*, Bechukotai, p. 45c, and see *Likkutei Sichot*, vol. VII, p. 30ff. Note also that the term *mitzvah* represents the Tetragrammaton: the first two letters — *mem*, *tzadik* — are substitutes for *Yod-He*, in the system of the *at-bash* alphabet; and the last two letters are *Vav-He*; *Tikunei Zohar* 70:131b, and cf. *Zohar* III:228b.) See *Tanya*, ch. 23, 35, and 46.]

57. [Exodus 20:2]

58. [*Shabbat* 105a]

III. The ultimate purpose of a Jew is not to be holy just for himself, but as Scripture says of our father Abraham, the first Jew: "in order that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of G-d..."¹¹ That is why the precept to be holy is followed by "every man shall fear his mother and his father" — which alludes to the obligation of *chinuch* (education). Parents are the first educators. The mother and father must instill in their children the feeling that they are different than the rest of the world, that they are part of a holy nation.

The sequence in that verse is "his mother and his father," mentioning first the mother. For the mother is the foundation of the house, and the major part of the actual education is in her hands.

IV. How does one imbue the children, and oneself, with the consciousness of "We shall be distinguished, I and Your people"? This is brought out by the third commandment, "You shall keep My Sabbaths."

The Sabbath is a sign between the Almighty and Israel.¹² It signifies belief in the creation of the universe.

that this is not an arbitrary *bon mot*, but follows consistently on certain basic premises. Cf. also *Eliyahu Rabba*, ch. 26: "Remember the Sabbath-day to keep it holy" . . . From here you learn that the sanctity of the Holy One, blessed be He, the sanctity of the Sabbath, and the sanctity of Israel — all three are as one. Of the sanctity of the Holy One, blessed be He, it is written, 'You are the Holy One, enthroned upon the praises of Israel; in You our fathers trusted' . . . (Psalms 22:4-5). Of the sanctity of the Sabbath it is written, 'You shall keep the Sabbath, for it is holy' (Exodus 31:14). Of the sanctity of Israel it is written, 'Israel is holy unto G-d' (Jeremiah 2:3)." There is then an analogy between the holiness of Israel and the Divine holiness by virtue of the former deriving from the latter. See also *Likkutei Sichot*, vol. VII, p. 321.]

11. Genesis 18:19

12. [Exodus 31:13]

It strengthens and reinforces the certitude that the Almighty is the Creator of the universe and continuously sustains and conducts it.¹³

In this context there is a difference between Jews and all the other people. The nations of the world claim that the Almighty has withdrawn His direct Providence from the world and has left it to be controlled by the forces of nature: "G-d has forsaken the earth"¹⁴ to be controlled by the stars and planets.¹⁵ The faith of Jews, however, binds them to the Almighty who transcends nature. Thus they need not be concerned about the laws of nature, as it is written: "Do not be frightened by the signs of the heavens (though) the nations are to be frightened by them."¹⁶ This is the difference between the Sabbath and the six week-days: The account of the creation contains thirty-two references to the Divine Name *Elokim*,¹⁷ the *gimatriya* (numerical equivalent) of which equals that of the term *hateva* (nature).¹⁸ Of the Sabbath it is said that it is "*Shabbat laHavayah* — a Sabbath unto G-d,"¹⁹ using the Divine Name *Havayah*, which

13. [*Mechilta* on Exodus 20:13 (Messichta Bachodesh, end of ch. 8). Ramban on Deuteronomy 5:15 (and cf. also his commentary on Exodus 34:21). Cf. *Moreh Nevuchim* II:ch. 31.] *Sefer Hachinuch*, nos. 31-32.

14. [Ezekiel 8:12, and 9:9]

15. [See *Moreh Nevuchim* III:ch. 17, and also ch. 19.]

16. Jeremiah 10:2

17. [*Zohar Chadash*, Tikunim:112c]

18. *Pardes Rimonim* 12:2. *Shaloh*, Sha'ar Ha'oti'ot, s.v. kedushah, citing the *Zohar* as source.

[See *Tanya*, II:ch. 6, and cf. Responsa *Chacham Tzvi*, no. 18. — 'Creation', and what people call 'nature' or 'laws of nature', are closely allied, though the latter are themselves a creation of G-d and subject to the Divine Will — 'like the axe in the hand of him that hews with it' (see *Moreh Nevuchim* III:ch. 29).]

19. [Exodus 20:10]

the verse⁵¹ "you shall be a cherished treasure unto Me": "You shall be possessed by Me and occupied with words of Torah and not with other matters."⁵² As one is completely divested of self-concern, realizing that even permitted matters are not really his own but related to holiness, one is "possessed by Me," his very being is absorbed in Divinity.

By serving G-d with one's very essence, one relates to the Supreme Essence: the very reality of one's essence becomes absorbed in the reality of the Ultimate Essence — "In the future to come 'holy' will be said before the *tzadikim* as it is said before the Holy One, blessed be He."

XI. The approach of "sanctify yourself in that which is permitted to you" elevates also the *avodah itself* more than a normative observance of Torah and *mitzvot*:

Matan Torah confers an additional quality to the observance of *mitzvot* as practised by the patriarchs⁵³: the *avodah* of the patriarchs was on a purely spiritual level,⁵⁴

51. [Exodus 19:5]

52. [*Mechilta*, Yitro, on that verse. See also *Mechilta deRashbi* on that verse, citing our verse from Leviticus 20:26 as an additional prooftext.]

53. See L.S.-*Bereishit*, Vayetze, sect. XII.

54. [The patriarchs observed all the *mitzvot* even before they became obligatory (*Yoma* 28b; *Kidushin* 82a; *Vayikra Rabba* 2:10). However, they did not — and could not — have done so in the presently normative manner with physical objects like, e.g., actual *tefillin*, because these *mitzvot* had not yet been revealed in that form. Moreover, the normative observance of some *mitzvot* is contingent upon events which occurred *after* the era of the patriarchs (e.g., the scrolls that must be placed into the *tefillin* recall the exodus from Egypt). Prior to *matan Torah*, therefore, the spiritual effects of such *mitzvot* were attained in different manners. For example, the incident of Jacob and the striped sticks (*Genesis* 30:37ff.) was Jacob's way of effecting the spiritual goals of *tefillin* (*Zohar* I:162a; see L.S.-*Bereishit*, Vayishlach, sect. XI, and also *ibid.*, p. 124, note u). The *avodah*

worlds"⁴⁹ — the term "to Him" implying the Divine Essence.

This is analogous to the abode of a mortal king: The totality of the king dwells in his abode, and not only those aspects of his royal personality that are manifest in specific powers or faculties. The "abode for Him in the lower worlds" is likewise an abode for the Divine Essence.

The realization of an abode for the Divine Essence requires that the *avodah*, as well as the person involved in that *avodah*, be affected in their very core and essence. This can be only with an *avodah* of "sanctify yourself in that which is permitted to you," as will be explained further on.

X. An *avodah* of "sanctify yourself in that which is permitted to you" has a greater effect on *the person involved* than his normative observance of Torah and *mitzvot*.

A normative observance of Torah and *mitzvot* allows for the possibility that one retain his ego, except that he submits his ego to the Divine Will when obligated to study Torah and to observe *mitzvot*. This normative approach, therefore, affects only the external levels or extension of his soul, but not its very core.

When sanctifying oneself, however, even in that "which is *permitted* to you," that is, even in such aspects and matters which are technically his *own*, one renounces, in effect, self-assertion and any claims deriving therefrom. There is a negation of the ego. This attitude touches the very essence of the soul.

This indeed is the meaning of "You shall be holy unto Me,"⁵⁰ analogous to the *Mechilta's* interpretation on

signifies "*hayah, hoveh veyihyeh* (was, is and will be) compounded into one,"²⁰ i.e., the concept of transcending nature.²¹

The *Shabbat* was given only to the Jewish people, and not to the nations of the world,²² to the point that "a heathen who keeps *Shabbat* commits a capital offense."²³ For the nations can relate only to *Elokim*, the *gimatriya* of which is *hateva*, and not to *Shabbat laHavayah*.²⁴

This aspect is seen also in the other significance of the Sabbath-day, namely that it commemorates the exodus from *Mitzrayim* (Egypt),²⁵ which signifies an exodus from all *meytzarim* (restrictions) and limitations of nature.²⁶

V. "You shall keep My Sabbaths" thus means to keep and guard the sign and covenant between Israel and the transcendent G-dhead. This is done by strengthening our faith in the fact that Jews are not subject to the forces of nature but are under the specific and individual providence of the Almighty.

In turn, this will effect in ourselves, as well as in our children, the principle of "You shall be holy," to the point

20. [*Zohar* III:257b]

21. [See above, Vayikra, note 15, and also Metzora, sect. III.]

22. ["For it is a sign between Me and you through your generations" (Exodus 31:13; and also *ibid.* verse 17) — "and not between Me and the nations of the world" (*Mechilta*, there). See also Rashi on this same verse: "It is a mark of distinction between us, that I have chosen you . . . for the nations of the world *to know* that I am G-d who sanctifies you."]

23. *Sanhedrin* 58b

24. [See above, Metzora-A]

25. [Deuteronomy 5:15. See Ramban on this verse, and *Moreh Nevuchim* II:ch. 31.] *Sefer Hachinuch*, no. 32.

26. [*Mitzrayim* is an idiom of *meytzarim* (*Torah Or*, Yitro, p. 71c. Cf. *Bereishit Rabba* 16:5.)]

49. [*Tanchuma*, Nasso:16. See *Tanya*, ch. 36.]

50. [Leviticus 20:26]

that even our mundane and physical matters will be infused with holiness. For we believe most profoundly that the physical reality of Jews, too, is bound up with the One of whom it is said "For I am holy."

Thus it is said further on in the *parshah*, "You shall keep My Sabbaths and revere My sanctuary"²⁷: the precept of *Shabbat* is put next to the precept about the sanctuary, because by keeping the Sabbaths the Jew effects that everything he is involved with becomes an abode and sanctuary unto G-d, may He be blessed.

(Adapted from the Sichot of Pesach 5717)

B

VI. It was stated above that the concept of *kedushah* (holiness) and *havdalah* (separation) means that there must be holiness even in those matters which appear externally identical with those of the nations of the world.

This is also the meaning of the verse, later in the *parshah*, that "You shall sanctify yourselves and you shall be holy,"²⁸ which means "sanctify yourself in that which is permitted to you."²⁹ There must be holiness even in that which is *permitted*, in those things that one is allowed to pursue, as it is written, "Acknowledge Him in all your ways."³⁰

VII. The obligation to "sanctify yourself in that which is permitted to you" is not, as some allege, an aspect of *hidur*,³¹ or the like. It is a positive precept of the

skin of the heart'⁴⁸). This removal relates not only to that which is forbidden, but even to that which is permitted, that is, the concept of "sanctify yourself in that which is permitted to you."

IX. All this explains the general premise that the future manifestation requires a greater *avodah* than any of the manifestations preceding it.

The special relationship between this future manifestation and the *avodah* of "sanctify yourself in that which is permitted to you" is seen from the following.

The uniqueness of the future manifestation is that it will be a revelation of the transcendent Essence of Divinity, which surpasses that of the Divine Immanence in the various worlds. For the future to come will see a realization of the ultimate purpose of the creation, that "there be to Him, blessed be He, an abode in the lower

the Holy Land. Thus before Joshua could take Israel into the Holy Land and subdue the nations living there, there was a need for *peri'ah*, a higher sanctity on the part of Israel (*Zohar* I:93b).

See *Or Hatorah*, Yitro, p. 810f. Cf. *Sidur im Perush Hamilot*, Sha'ar Hamilah (note there the parenthetical paragraphs on p. 144a and 145a); and *Derech Mitzvotcha*, Mitzvat Milah, ch. 3.

(On the relationship between circumcision and the Name *Havayah*, see also *Zohar Chadash*, Tikunim:117b, that *milah* reveals only *Vav-He* (the latter — 'lower' — half of *Havayah*), and *peri'ah* reveals *Yod-He* (the first — 'higher' — half of *Havayah*); both together, then, elicit a manifestation of the Tetragrammaton. Cf. also *Tikunei Zohar*, Intr.:2b (and *ibid.* 22:65b and 66a): "Mi ya'aleh lanu hashamaymah — who shall go up for us to the heavens' (Deuteronomy 30:11) — the first letters of these four words spell *milah*, and the last letters spell *Havayah*." *Ibid.* 70:130bf.: "The precept of *milah*, the excision of *milah* and *peri'ah* . . . the Name *Havayah* rests upon him . . . his soul shall ascend to Above.")

48. [Deuteronomy 10:16, and *ibid.* 30:6. See Ramban on both these verses, and cf. *Igeret Hakodesh*, sect. IV — referred to above, end of Tazri'a.]

27. Leviticus 19:30

28. [Leviticus 20:7]

29. [Yevamot 20a. *Sifre*, Re'ey, sect. 104 (on Deuter. 14:21).]

30. Proverbs 3:6. See above, Vayikra, sect. V.

31. ['Adornment' or 'beautification' of a *mitzvah*; i.e., going beyond the legal minimum. See above, Tzav, note 59.]

tion (of the Messianic redemption). It will transcend even the manifestation at Sinai, and thus requires a removal of even the most subtle obstruction (the 'fore-

offered why Abraham waited with the *mitzvah* of *milah* until he was commanded to do so — see the discussions in *Riva* on Genesis 17:1, and *Likkutei Sichot*, vol. V, p. 146. Cf. also *L.S.-Bereishit*, pp. 74-75). That is why "I was not known to [Abraham, Isaac and Jacob] by My Name *Havayah*" (Exodus 6:3).

Matan Torah, the giving of the Torah at Sinai, was the ultimate covenant between G-d and Israel. The Jewish people, therefore, needed for it circumcision, immersion (for purification), and the offering of a sacrifice, just as is required of anyone converting to Judaism and entering the covenant (*Keritot* 9a. Rashi on Exodus 24:6). That revelation at Sinai was on the supreme level of the Name *Havayah*: "I am *Havayah*, your G-d . ." (Exodus 20:2). Thus there was a need for both *milah* and *peri'ah*. This circumcision took place in Egypt, in context of the Pesach-offering (Exodus 12:48). Though Scripture relates that circumcision to the Pesach-offering, its true intent was for the purpose of taking Israel out of the impurity of Egypt and to give them the Torah at Sinai. (See *Shemot Rabba* 19:5; *Mechilta*, and Rashi, on Exodus 12:6 — in context of Exodus 3:12)

Peri'ah is not mentioned there explicitly, for it was ordained orally (*halachah leMosheh miSinai*; see *Halachot Gedolot*, Hilchot Milah, ed. Jerusalem 1971, vol. I, p. 209; *Tossafot*, *Yevamot* 71b, s.v. lo, and see also there s.v. mai ta'ama-2). According to *Bamidbar Rabba* 11:3 (and *Halachot Gedolot*) there was both *milah* and *peri'ah* before the exodus. According to *Zohar* II:40a (also *ibid.* 60b and 125b) *milah* was performed in Egypt, and *peri'ah* shortly after the exodus, in Marah (Exodus 15:25). In any case, there was *peri'ah* before *matan Torah*.

In this context, Joshua 5:2, cited above — "circumcise again . . . this second time" — is interpreted to refer to *peri'ah*, saying in effect: though the Jewish people were circumcised already in terms of *milah*, now circumcise them again, in terms of *peri'ah*. (For during their travels through the desert they did not perform *peri'ah*. See *Halachot Gedolot*, there; and *Tossafot*, *Yevamot* 71b, s.v. mai ta'ama-1. See also Rashi on Joshua 5:2, and *Pirke deR. Eliezer* ch. 29.) The command of *peri'ah* was reiterated at that time because just as *matan Torah* was a sublime manifestation of Divinity, so, too, was the entrance into

Torah.³² Of *mitzvot* it is said that "one is not to sit and weigh them,"³³ for the least weighty and the most weighty are essentially equal.³⁴ The same stringency and authority that applies to all *mitzvot*, applies no less to the precept of "sanctify yourself."³⁵

Moreover, Chassidut explains that the *avodah* of "sanctify yourself in that which is permitted to you" will effect the future redemption. The study of Torah, the observance of *mitzvot*, and the avoidance of things that are prohibited, are not enough to bring about the redemption to come. There is a need to "sanctify yourself in that which is permitted to you."

Our sages said of this: "In the future, 'holy' will be said before the *tzadikim* (righteous) as it is said before the Holy One, blessed be He."³⁶ All manifestations of the future depend on our present-day actions and *avodah*. Obviously, then, this applies also to the future manifestation of 'holy' being said before the *tzadikim*; that is, this will be achieved through the *avodah* of holiness, the *avodah* of "sanctify yourself in that which is permitted to you." (As for the term *tzadikim*, the righteous, this refers to all Jews, as it is said, "And Your people are all *tzadikim*."³⁷)

VIII. To explain this principle:

When speaking of sublime manifestations (*orot* — lights), the greater and more sublime the 'light', that

32. See above, note 1; and *Acharei*, sect. III.

33. [*Tanchuma*, Ekev:2. *Devarim Rabba* 6:2.] *Yalkut Shimoni*, Yitro, sect. 298, and *Mishlei*, sect. 937.

34. [*Yerushalmi*, *Pe'ah* 1:1. *Eliyahu Rabba*, ch. 26.]

35. See above, *Acharei*, sect. III.

36. *Baba Batra* 75b

37. *Isaiah* 60:21

much more it will be affected by even the slightest degree of concealment. This is analogous to our sages' comment on the verse³⁸ "It shall be very tempestuous round about him," that G-d is particular with *tzadikim* even for matters as light as a single hair.³⁹ The greater the *tzadik*, the more he is affected by even the most minute thing.

There is another analogy in the context of circumcision.⁴⁰ Our father Abraham merited that G-d manifested Himself to him as *E-l Sha-day*.⁴¹ But before Abraham was granted this revelation he first had to circumcise himself by removing the coarse foreskin — "walk before Me, and be perfect."⁴² At the time of *matan Torah* (when the Torah was given to Israel at Mount Sinai) there was a revelation of the Name *Havayah*,⁴³ which is of a higher level than the Name *Sha-day*, as it is written, "I appeared .. by (the Name) *E-l Sha-day*, but I was not known to them by My Name *Havayah*."⁴⁴ *Milah* (circumcision), a removal of the coarse foreskin, was not enough for that greater revelation at Sinai. It required also *peri'ah*, a removal of the thin membrane. Thus it is written, "Circumcise again the children of Israel this

second time,"⁴⁵ a reference to *peri'ah*⁴⁶ which was a new precept ordained to Moses at Sinai.⁴⁷

The same principle applies to the future manifesta-

45. [Joshua 5:2]

46. *Yevamot* 71b

47. *Tossafot*, *Yevamot* 71b, s.v. *lo nitnah*.

[Circumcision involves two basic parts: *milah* and *peri'ah*. *Milah* means the excision of the prepuce (the coarse foreskin which covers the glans). *Peri'ah* means the removal of the thin membrane under the prepuce. To excise the foreskin (*milah*) without also removing the thin membrane (*peri'ah*), is tantamount to not being circumcised (*Shabbat* 137b).

Both *milah* and *peri'ah* are acts of removing covers or partitions — first the coarse one and then a thin, more delicate one. This is so not only in the physical sense of circumcision, but also in its spiritual sense (see above, *Tazri'a*, note 80).

The *mitzvah* of circumcision was first given to Abraham, but (according to most views) only the obligation of *milah*, and not that of *peri'ah* (*Yevamot* 71b). Abraham was a 'chariot unto Divinity' (*Bereishit Rabba* 47:6; see above, *Acharei*, note 21) even before he was commanded about circumcision at the age of ninety-nine (*Genesis* 17:1ff.), and except for *milah* he observed all the precepts of the Torah even before they became obligatory (*Yoma* 28b; *Kidushin* 82a). Thus he merited many revelations prior to circumcision, but these were 'screened revelations,' manifestations of Divinity of a lower level (*Zohar* I:97b): Abraham had manifestations on the level of the Divine Name *Elokim*, of Divine Immanence in the world. Through circumcision, the removal of the physical foreskin which also implies the removal of a spiritual foreskin, he was able to perceive Divinity on the higher level of *E-l Sha-day* (signifying a manifestation of the creative reality of Divinity without the concealment implied by the Name *Elokim*). He did not, however, have a manifestation of *Havayah*, the Tetragrammaton, which signifies Divine Transcendence (see above, *Vayikra*, note 15).

A revelation on the level of *Havayah* requires *peri'ah*, a removal of even the most subtle membrane, cover or obstruction on the part of man. Though Abraham performed *peri'ah* also (*Tossafot*, *Yevamot* 71b, s.v. *lo*), he did so voluntarily.. A voluntary act does not have the same effect as an obligatory act (see *Kidushin* 31a. This is one of the reasons

38. *Psalms* 50:3

39. [*Yevamot* 121b.] *Baba Kama* 50a

40. [For the analogy following, see *Derech Mitzvotecha*, *Mitzvat Milah*, p. 10b, glossary note.]

41. [*Genesis* 17:1. *Exodus* 6:3.]

42. [*Genesis* 17:1; Rashi: "Walk before Me' — by observing the precept of circumcision, and through this you will be 'perfect,' because for as long as you have the foreskin, you are blemished before Me." See further *Genesis* 17:3: "And Abram fell on his face;" Rashi, quoting *Pirke deR. Eliezer* ch. 29: "Before he was circumcised he did not have the strength to stand whilst the Holy Spirit stood over him." See below, note 47.]

43. [*Exodus* 20:2]

44. [*Exodus* 6:3]