

## Basi LeGani 5711

# באתי לגני Basi LeGani

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The Last Chassidic Discourse  
by the Previous Lubavitcher Rebbe  
Rabbi Yosef Y. Schneerson נ"ע  
Yud Shevat 5710 (תש"י; 1950)

and

The First Chassidic Discourse  
by the Lubavitcher Rebbe  
Rabbi Menachem M. Schneerson שליט"א  
Yud Shevat 5711 (תשי"א; 1951)



**KEHOT PUBLICATION SOCIETY**

770 Eastern Parkway  
Brooklyn, New York 11213

5750 • 1990

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ben Horav **Yitzchok Elchonon Halevi** ה"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  
ה. נ. צ. ב. ה.  
AND IN HONOR OF  
Mrs. **Esther Shaindel** bas **Fraidel Chedva** תח"ל  
**Shagalov**  
DEDICATED BY  
Rabbi & Mrs. **Yosef Y. and Gittel Rochel** שיחי  
**Shagalov**

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**Executive Director**

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The above, however, is the enjoyment of [mere] *manifestations* of G-dliness. Beyond this, the Rebbe will bind and unite us with the infinite *Essence* of G-d. It is this that constitutes the inner objective of the progressive descent of all the worlds; [the inner purpose] of sin and its rectification; [the inner meaning] of the demise of *tzaddikim*: that through all this “the glory of G-d rise [and be powerfully diffused].”

When he redeems us from the exile with an uplifted hand and the dwelling places of all Jews shall be filled with light, “Then will Moshe and the Children of Israel sing..., ‘G-d will reign forever and ever,’” (in accordance with the text of the prayers [that concludes the Song of the Sea with the verse, “G-d will reign...,”]) and also as expressed in *Targum [Onkelos]*,<sup>34</sup> “The sovereignty of the L-rd is established forever and to all eternity.” We conclude [the above-mentioned prayer]: “G-d will be King..., G-d will be One and His Name One” — no difference will exist between G-d and His Name.

All the above is accomplished through the passing (*histalkus*) of *tzaddikim*, that is even harsher than the destruction of the *Beis HaMikdash*. Since we have already experienced all these things, everything now depends only on us — the seventh generation. May we be privileged to see and meet with<sup>35</sup> the Rebbe here in this world, in a physical body, in this earthly domain — and he will redeem us.



34. See *Likkutei Torah, Shir HaShirim*, maamar beginning *Hinach Yafah*, beginning of ch. 2.

35. See conclusion of *Sefer Chassidim* (quoted in *Gilyon HaShas, Kesubbos* 103a); *Bamidbar Rabbah* 19:13.

**9.**

Although there exists no man who has the temerity to say, “I shall serve like our forefather Avraham,” nevertheless, some small measure of service in a similar vein can — and must<sup>29</sup> — be performed by each and every one of us. The power to do so has been granted to us through the conduct of the first [of the *Rebbe'im*], and from thence onwards, up to and including the conduct displayed by the Rebbe, of blessed memory. They have paved the way and granted us the necessary powers [that we may follow in their footsteps]. This in itself indicates the dearness of the seventh generation: so much power has been given and revealed for our sakes. Serving in this fashion will draw down the Essence of the *Shechinah* into this physical and material world to an even greater extent than was revealed prior to the sin [of the “Tree of Knowledge”]. This accords with what is written concerning *Mashiach*: מאד [וגבה] — “And he shall be exalted greatly...”:<sup>30</sup> even more than was Adam before the sin [of the “Tree of Knowledge”].<sup>31</sup>

And my revered father-in-law, the Rebbe, of blessed memory, who “bore the ailments and carried our pains,”<sup>32</sup> who was “anguished by our sins and ground down by our transgressions,”<sup>33</sup> — just as he saw us in our affliction, so will he speedily in our days and rapidly in our times, redeem the sheep of his flock simultaneously both from the spiritual and physical exile, and uplift us to [a state where we shall be suffused with] rays of light.

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29. See *Torah Or*, beginning of *Parshas Vaeira* and conclusion of *Parshas Vayeitzei*.

30. [*Yeshayahu* 52:13.]

31. See *Likkutei Torah* of the *AriZal*, *Parshas Sisa*; *Sefer HaLikkutim*, *Parshas Shmos*. The above requires examination, inasmuch as it seems to dispute a statement that appears in *Sefer HaGilgulim*, ch. 19, and is quoted in *Likkutei Torah*, *Parshas Tzav*, in the *maamar* beginning *VeHeinif*. This apparent contradiction can possibly be resolved by reference to the statement in *Sefer HaGilgulim*, ch. 7, quoted at the conclusion of *Likkutei Torah*, *Shir HaShirim*.

32. [*Yeshayahu* 53:4.]

33. [*Ibid.*, 53:5.]

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Edited by Uri Kaploun

## Chapter 8

“world” together, and not א-ל העולם — “G-d of the world.”<sup>28</sup> For the latter phrase would imply that G-d is an entity unto Himself and the world is a separate entity unto itself, except that G-d governs and rules the world; rather, G-dliness and the world are wholly one.

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28. See *Likkutei Torah*, conclusion of *Parshas Savo*; conclusion of *maamar* beginning *Anochi Havayah Elokecha*, 5673

8.

This, then, is the significance of the “departure of a *tzaddik*:”<sup>27</sup> Although there has already been considerable concealment and cloaking [of holiness], and there have also been many questions and inexplicable occurrences, nevertheless, all this did not suffice; in order for there to be the tremendous degree of revelation (*istaleik*) of the glory of G-d throughout all the worlds, there was also the demise of *tzaddikim* — something not only as harsh as the destruction [of the *Beis HaMikdash*], but more so. And the ultimate objective of all of this is that “the glory of G-d rise [and be diffused].”

This is demanded of each of us: To know that we find ourselves in the seventh generation, the quality of the seventh of a series merely being that he is seventh to the first. The conduct of the first was that he sought nothing for himself, not even *mesirus nefesh*, for he knew that his whole existence was for the sake of “proclaiming there the Name of G-d, L-rd of the world.”

This kind of divine service resembles that of Avraham: arriving in places where nothing was known of G-dliness, nothing was known of Judaism, nothing was even known of the *alef beis*, and while there setting oneself completely aside [and proclaiming G-d’s Name] in the spirit of the teaching of the Sages, “Do not read ‘he proclaimed,’ but ‘he made others proclaim.’”

It is well known that when expounding by means of the principle, “Do not read...,” both the former and the latter readings maintain their validity. Here, too, the Torah specifically states that “he proclaimed.” Nonetheless, it must be known that if a person desires to succeed in enjoying his own “proclamation”, he must see to it that others not only know but “proclaim” as well. And although until now one’s fellowman was utterly ignorant, one is now obliged to see to it that he too vociferously proclaim *א-ל ג-ד* joining “G-d” and

27. [Zohar III, 71b; see the above-mentioned Epistle 27.]

**The following *maamar*, which amplified ch. 1 of the preceding *maamar*, was delivered by the Rebbe *Shlita* on *Yud Shvat 5711 (1951)* in honor of the first *yahrzeit* of the Previous Rebbe, the Rebbe Rayatz זצ"ל.**

**Basi LeGani, 5711**

1.

My father-in-law, the Rebbe, of blessed memory, writes as follows in the *maamar* that he released for the day of his passing, the tenth of Shvat, 5710:

“I have come into My garden, My sister, My bride.”

*Midrash Rabbah* (on this verse) observes that the word used is not *לגן* [which would mean “to the garden”], but *לגני* [which means “to My garden”] — and this implies *לגנני* [which means “to My bridal chamber.” The Divine Presence is thus saying:] “I have come into My bridal chamber, into the place in which My essence was originally revealed.”

The *Midrash* continues: “...for the essence of the *Shechinah* was originally apparent in this lowly world.”

Let us understand why the *Midrash* uses the expression “the essence of the *Shechinah*.” Discussing the meaning of [the level of Divinity termed] *Shechinah*, the Alter Rebbe explains that the Divine Presence is thus named “because it dwells and is en clothed [in all worlds],”...”as in the Scriptural phrase, *ושכנתי בתוכם* — ‘that I may dwell within them,’<sup>1</sup> for [the *Shechinah*] is the initial revelation of the [infinite] *Ein Sof*-light.”<sup>2</sup>

1. [Shmos 25:8. N.B. Most of the source references that appeared in the previous *maamar* have not been repeated here.]

2. *Tanya*, chs. 41, 52.

From the Alter Rebbe's statement that "the initial revelation of the [infinite] *Ein Sof*-light" is called *Shechinah*, we understand that the *Shechinah* transcends by far even [the loftiest of the Four Worlds, the World of] *Atzilus*, [and that the *Shechinah* is to be found] even in the Divine light that precedes the [initial self-imposed contraction of Divine revelation that is known as the] *tzimtzum*, for revelation first occurs in the [infinite] *Ein Sof*-light that precedes the *tzimtzum*.

As the Mittlerer Rebbe writes: "The luminescence of the *Kav* and *Chut* [i.e., the narrow band of Divine illumination that shone forth following the *tzimtzum*] in relation to the essence of the *Ein Sof*-light is termed *Shechinah*."<sup>3</sup> For the meaning of the term *Shechinah* varies according to the spiritual level of its context. In relation to *Atzilus*, [for example,] it is *Malchus* [lit., "sovereignty", the lowest of the Supernal *Sefiros*,] that is termed *Shechinah*.

Even with regard to this use of the term, the *Tzemach Tzedek* explains that it applies only when *Malchus* becomes the level of *Atik* [i.e., when it serves as the fountainhead] for the World of *Beriah*. However, when *Malchus* is still in *Atzilus* it is united with them (i.e., with the *Sefiros* of *Atzilus*), and the term *Shechinah* cannot be applied to it.<sup>4</sup>

Nevertheless, this does not contradict the earlier statement that [even so lofty a level as] the *kav* [which is spiritually superior by far to *Atzilus*] is termed *Shechinah*, for the term *Shechinah* as used by our Sages refers to the level of *Malchus* of *Atzilus*, and even then, only insofar as it becomes the level of *Atik* for the World of *Beriah*. In its source, however, i.e., in the state in which it exists in relation to the *Ein Sof*-light, even the *kav* is termed *Shechinah*.

The Rebbe Maharash writes that one of the reasons why the *kav* is called *Shechinah* in relation to the *Ein Sof*-light, is

precincts of the Sanctuary] are unable to purify and elevate the three completely unholy *kelipos*. This can be accomplished only through an offering that is made *outside* it — such as the Red Heifer, which was offered outside. It is to this that the passing of *tzaddikim* is likened.

At present we lack the [expiation of the] Red Heifer, for our sins demanded that we be exiled from our land. But there has transpired the demise of *tzaddikim*. Concerning the passing of *tzaddikim* we find two Rabbinic comments: "The demise of *tzaddikim* is equivalent to the burning of the House of our L-rd";<sup>25</sup> and: "The demise of *tzaddikim* is even harsher than the destruction of the *Beis HaMikdash*."<sup>26</sup> Through all the above there comes about the prodigious degree of G-dly revelation that is described by the verb *istaleik*. Concerning the word *histalkus* all the *Rebbe'im* — the Alter Rebbe, the Mittlerer Rebbe, the *Tzemach Tzedek*, the Rebbe Maharash, the Rebbe Rashab, and the Rebbe, of blessed memory — have explained that it does not mean (G-d forbid) ascending on high [i.e., that the person who was *nistaleik* has left our midst], but rather that he is still found [with us] below, though in a transcendently lofty manner.

This, then, is what is demanded of us, the seventh generation from the Alter Rebbe — "all those who are seventh are most beloved": Although we have not earned it and have not toiled for it, nevertheless, "All those who are seventh are most beloved." The spiritual task of the seventh generation is to draw down the *Shechinah* truly below: transforming the folly of the animal soul — which every man knows only too well that he possesses — and the passions, if not worse, of his animal soul, converting and transforming them into the folly of holiness.

3. In his commentary on the verse, *Havayah Li Beozrai* (cited in the *maamar* known as *VeKachah HaGadol*, ch. 27), which appears in *Or HaTorah, Parshas Haazinu*, p. 1823.

4. *Likkutei Torah, Shir HaShirim*, the *Biur* on the *maamar* that begins *Shechorah Ani*, beginning of ch. 2.

25. *Rosh Hashanah* 18b.

26. *Eichah Rabbah* 1:9.

## 7.

Through the subjugation and transformation [of the folly of unholiness] into the folly of holiness the objective of creation is accomplished — to provide a dwelling place for G-d in this nether world. Indeed, the dwelling made for G-d in this world through the subordination and transformation of materiality — [so that the Creator can say,] “I have returned to My garden” — is superior to [that which existed] before the sin [of the “Tree of Knowledge”]. Just as when one razes a building in order to replace it with a new one, the new building must obviously be better than the old, so too must we say that the subordination and transformation of materiality build a superior dwelling [to that which existed before the sin of the “Tree of Knowledge”]. And so too does it state in the *maamar*, that “through the subordination of the forces of evil, the glory of G-d rises [and is diffused] throughout all the worlds” — a reference to a degree of illumination that is found equally in all worlds.

While it is true that the expression used in the *maamar* is that of a light that “encompasses” all worlds, the intention cannot possibly be that there is drawn down a level of illumination that falls within the category of worlds, but nevertheless only encompasses them. Rather the intent [of the *maamar*] is that there is drawn down a degree of illumination that utterly transcends the category of worlds. This revelation is therefore described by the verb *istaleik* [lit., “rises”].

This also explains why the demise of *tzaddikim* is termed *histalkus*, for this term suggests the revelation of an exceedingly brilliant light, [such as that brought about by the passing of a *tzaddik*.]

There are two epistles in *Iggeres HaKodesh*<sup>24</sup> that explain [the kind of demise that is described by the term] *histalkus*. In the second, it is explained in terms of its relationship to the sin-offering of the Red Heifer [which was offered outside the three camps]. Those offerings that are made *inside* [the

that the *kav* is drawn down in order to become encloded in the worlds and in Jewish souls. It is therefore termed *Shechinah* even at its outset.<sup>5</sup>

The Rebbe Rashab explains that on an even higher level the first source of *Shechinah* precedes the *tzimtzum*, for the revelation of Divine light prior to the *tzimtzum* is termed *Shechinah*.<sup>6</sup>

In general, there are three levels of G-dly illumination that precede the *tzimtzum*: [(a)] the *essence* of the [Divine] light (*etzem haor*), and [(b) and (c)] the two sub-categories within its *diffusion* (*hispashtus haor*). The first of these is the revelation of light insofar as it is revealed for G-d *Himself*, this revelation being the source of the light of *sovev kol almin* [the light that *transcends* (lit.: “encompasses”) all worlds]; the second is the revelation of light as revealed for *Himself* that bears a relation to the *worlds*, this revelation being the source of the light of *memaleh kol almin* [the light that is *immanent* in all worlds]. It is this [latter] illumination that is termed *Shechinah*.

Although this light precedes *tzimtzum* and thus cannot possibly serve as a source for [the creation of] worlds — for which reason it was necessary that there be *tzimtzum* [in the first place] — and, moreover, this first *tzimtzum* was [not a mere diminution of Divine light, but] an act of withdrawal, nevertheless, this [latter level of illumination] is termed *Shechinah*.

We may now appreciate the precise wording of the *Midrash*, which taught that “the *essence* of the *Shechinah* was originally found in this lowly world.” It informs us that the revelation of the *Shechinah* in this world is not of the level of *Malchus*, i.e., the *Shechinah* in relation to *Atzilus*, nor is it the level of the *kav*, i.e., the *Shechinah* in relation to the *Ein Sof*-light; rather, what was present specifically in this lowly world was the essential and innermost degree [i.e., the most transcendental and consequently non-manifest degree] of *Shechinah*.

5. The above-quoted *maamar* beginning *VeKachah*, *loc. cit.*

6. *Hemshech* 5666, the *maamar* beginning *Kadesh Yisroel*: see also the *maamar* beginning *Vaydaber Elokim Es Kol HaDevarim*, 5699.

24. [Viz., Epistles 27 and 28.]

[The reason why the *Midrash* must refer to the essential level of *Shechinah* is as follows:] For the [Divine] illumination<sup>7</sup> clothed within the worlds descends in an orderly and progressive manner, so that the loftier the world, the greater the degree of illumination; the lower the world within the progressive chain of descent [of worlds], the lesser the illumination. This is generally so regarding the illumination found within progressively descending levels. [Consequently, with regard to the lower levels of *Shechinah*, i.e., the illumination clothed within the worlds, this revelation is found to a greater degree in the higher worlds than in this physical world.] Although it is true that before the sin [of the “Tree of Knowledge”] the illumination was revealed in this world as well, nevertheless, even then the illumination was revealed to a greater extent in the higher worlds. In the words of our Sages, “He extended His right hand and created heaven; He extended His left hand and created earth.”<sup>8</sup> We must perforce say that the above statement [that “the essence of the *Shechinah* was originally found in this lowly world”] refers to the [Divine] illumination that *transcends* all worlds; this is what is meant by the *essence* of the *Shechinah*.

morning he had already concluded his prayers. Nonetheless, he traveled to a distant city and stayed there a considerable amount of time — for the sake of one young man.

When the Rebbe Rashab first became Rebbe, he was about to embark on a journey to Moscow because of a new [anti-Semitic] decree [which he sought to nullify]. His older brother, [R. Zalman Aharon, known by his acronym as] the Raza, said to him: “Time is very precious to you and you do not speak Russian well. (The Raza was a linguist.) You also have to make the necessary acquaintances. I will travel to take care of this matter and will follow your instructions.” However, the Rebbe Rashab did not agree: he went himself and was successful.

Similarly, there are many stories of how the Rebbe, of blessed memory, went out of his way to do material and spiritual favors, even to individuals. He selflessly set himself aside in order to do so, setting aside not only his physicality [i.e., his own physical needs], but also his spirituality [i.e., his spiritual needs], even though the person to whom he was benevolent was not only not in the category of his “equal in Torah and *mitzvos*,”<sup>23</sup> but did not compare to him at all.

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7. See at length the *maamar* beginning *Eichah*, *Parshas Devarim*, 5670.

8. See *Pirkei deRabbi Eliezer*, ch. 18; *Zohar* I, 30a; II, 20a, 37a, 85b.

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23. [Cf. *Shevuos* 30a.]

regarding the conduct of our mentors, the *Rebbe'im*: whatever they demanded of their chassidim and followers they themselves fulfilled as well.

The reason that they revealed to us that they too performed these things, was in order to make it easier for us to perform them. Accordingly, there are many stories regarding the love of a fellow Jew involving each of the *Rebbe'im*.

The Alter Rebbe, for example, once interrupted his prayers in order to go and chop wood, cook a soup and feed it to a woman who had just given birth, because there was nobody else to do it.

Likewise, at *Yechidus* with the Mittlerer Rebbe, a certain young man once lamented about those things that young men lament about. The Mittlerer Rebbe uncovered his forearm and said: "Observe how my skin clings to my bones.... And all this is from your 'sins of youth.'" The stupendous spiritual stature of the Mittlerer Rebbe needs no describing — by any standards, and all the more so in comparison to those who are subject to such things. Nevertheless, his spiritual bond with them was so strong that their unsatisfactory spiritual state affected his physical health — to the point that his skin shriveled and clung to his bones.

The Tzemach Tzedek once went out of his way before prayers in order to lend money to a very simple person who was in need.

Then there is the story<sup>22</sup> of how the Rebbe Maharash once traveled from a healing-spa to Paris, solely for the purpose of meeting with a young man, to whom he said: "Young man, forbidden wine stupefies the mind and heart; become a [practicing] Jew." The young man returned home and found no rest until he returned to the Rebbe Maharash and repented. Eventually, he became the head of a G-d-fearing and observant family.

It is well known that time was extremely precious to the Rebbe Maharash, to the extent that even his recital of *maamarim* was brief. There were times when at eight in the

## 2.

It is evident that when the [above-mentioned] *Midrash* says that "the essence of the *Shechinah* was originally found in this lowly world," it refers to this physical world; indeed, the *Midrash* goes on to explain that through the sin of the "Tree of Knowledge" the *Shechinah* departed from earth to heaven, and by giving the Torah on Mt. Sinai G-d "returned to [His] garden — to [His] bridal chamber."

Just as the sin itself of the "Tree of Knowledge" made possible sin in general, for it precipitated and brought about the sins of Cain and Enosh as well as later sins, so too, with regard to the effect of sin, which is the banishment of the Divine Presence: it was the sin of the "Tree of Knowledge" that was responsible for the most significant stage in the departure of the *Shechinah* — its ascent specifically from this physical world. For just as "the essence of the *Shechinah* was originally found in this lowly world," i.e., in this physical world, so too, the most significant stage in its departure was specifically the move from this world to heaven — and this move was brought about by the sin of the "Tree of Knowledge."

This also explains why [the Rebbe, of blessed memory] does not include the sin of the "Tree of Knowledge" together with the other sins [that caused the further departure of the *Shechinah*], but lists it separately. For the sins of Cain and Enosh [as well as the later sins] caused the *Shechinah* to depart from one heaven to the next, whereas the sin of the "Tree of Knowledge" caused its departure from earth to heaven. Apart from the fact that this stage in the distancing of the Divine is the one that most affects us [in this world], this stage is also [objectively] the most significant.

[The Rebbe, of blessed memory] continues his discourse [by quoting the conclusion of the *Midrash*]:

"Thereafter, seven *tzaddikim* arose whose divine service drew the Divine Presence down once more into

22. Recounted at length in *Sefer HaToldos* — Maharash, p. 77.

this world below. Through the merit of Avraham the *Shechinah* was brought down from the seventh heaven to the sixth....” (And after abridging the continuation of the *Midrash* the Rebbe concludes:) “...until, Moshe, the seventh of these *tzaddikim* (and ‘all those who are seventh are cherished’), drew the revelation of the *Shechinah* down once again into this world below.”

The main step in the drawing down [of the *Shechinah*] was thus taken by Moshe, for it was he who returned the *Shechinah* to this world. Just as the principal stage in its withdrawal and ascent was the departure from this world caused by the sin of the “Tree of Knowledge,” so too, the principal stage in the descent and return of the *Shechinah* was accomplished when it was drawn down into this world. Apart from the fact that this stage in the drawing down of the Divine is the one that most affects us [in this world], this stage is also [objectively] the most significant. And it was specifically through Moshe that the *Shechinah* was drawn down, the reason being — as explained parenthetically in the *maamar*, that “all those who are seventh are cherished.”

## 6.

At the conclusion of the *maamar* [in ch. 5] the Rebbe explains that the *Beis HaMikdash* was the principal place wherein the Essence of the *Shechinah* was revealed within this world. [He goes on to explain that] this was why the *Mishkan* was made of acacia wood [since שיטים (“acacia”) is related to שטות (“folly”)]. For man’s goal is to transform the folly of unholiness and the animal soul’s passions [i.e., a folly that is lower than reason] into the folly of holiness [i.e., a folly that transcends even the rationality of holiness]. As our Sages said [concerning a certain instance of such conduct], “The venerable sage has been well served by his folly” — for this was a degree of self-effacing divine service that transcended [even holy] intellect.

Whatever was demanded of us by the Rebbe, of blessed memory, and by all the *Rebbe'im*, they demanded of themselves. This recalls the Sages’ interpretation of the verse, מגיד דבריו ליעקב חוקיו ומשפטיו לישראל — “He tells His words to Yaakov, His statutes and ordinances to Yisrael.”<sup>20</sup> The Sages comment: “That which He does, He tells the Jewish people to do and observe.”<sup>21</sup> So, too, that which He commands the Jewish people to do, He Himself does. The same is true

20. [Tehillim 147:19.]

21. *Shmos Rabbah* 30:9: *Yerushalmi, Rosh Hashanah* 1:3. This [practice of commanding the Jewish people to do that which He does] constitutes an “arousal from Above” (אתערותא דלעילא) that precedes the “arousal from below” (אתערותא דלתתא). [This is alluded to in the text of the blessings:] *kidshanu bemitzvosav* — “He has sanctified us with His commandments.”

Thereafter [commences the converse dynamic, exemplified in the teaching of the Sages]: “Whoever sits and studies..., G-d studies opposite him.” [Another instance of this is the commandment of] *tzitzis* performed in this world, which arouses the Supernal performance of the *mitzvah* of *tzitzis*; this elicits an additional measure of Divine illumination, and so on, so that in this case it is the “arousal from below” that stimulates the “arousal from Above.” This is what is meant by the [addition of the] words in the body of the text. “So, too, that which He commands the Jewish people to do, He Himself does.”

See also *Torah Or, Biur* to *maamar* beginning *Ki Imcha Mekor Chayim*, and elsewhere.

they are intended not for that world but for this lowly world, [where they will be revealed with the arrival of *Mashiach*].

It is in this context that the Rebbe Rashab considers<sup>18</sup> the above quotation [from *Tanya*] as to why it is impossible to argue that “the ultimate intent [of the progressive, chainlike descent of the worlds] is not the loftier worlds, since for them this constitutes a descent from the light of G-d’s Countenance.” He explains as follows: The higher worlds are characterized by revelation, which implies descent. [It entails withdrawing from oneself and concealing the profundity contained within, in order to reveal a mere glimmer of that which exists within its source.] Moreover, G-d’s Essence is entirely removed from the quality of revelation.

The ultimate objective, then, is this lowly physical world, for so the idea arose in blessed G-d’s will that He experience delight “when the forces of evil are subdued and darkness is converted into light.” This is as explained in the *maamar*, that man’s service consists wholly of transforming the folly of the forces of evil to the folly of holiness. This brings about the Divine satisfaction expressed by the phrase, נחת רוח לפני שאמרתי, — “I derive pleasure from the fact that I spoke, and My will was executed.”<sup>19</sup>

This manner of service results in providing G-d with a dwelling in the worlds below. And just as a person’s entire essence and being dwells in his home, so too with regard to [our spiritual task of] making this lowly world a dwelling for G-d: It results in drawing down not only manifestations of Divinity, but also the infinite Essence of G-d. And this is the ultimate purpose of the creation and downward progression of all worlds.

18. *Maamar* beginning *Mitzvasa MiShetishka*, 5678; see also *maamar* beginning *Eirdah Na*, 5658.

19. [Sifri on *Bamidbar* 28:8.]

## 3.

The fact that our Sages say that “all those who are seventh are cherished” rather than “all those who are cherished are seventh,” indicates that the seventh’s primary quality lies in his being seventh. In other words, he is cherished not on account of his choice, desire, or spiritual service, but because he is seventh — and this is something that he is born into. Yet the fact remains that “all those who are seventh are cherished.” It was for this reason that it was Moshe who was privileged to have the Torah given through him.

The Rebbe, of blessed memory, explained<sup>1</sup> (soon after arriving in America) that even when we refer to the seventh of a series as being the most cherished, the special quality of the first is apparent. For the whole meaning of “seventh” is “seventh from the first.” The Rebbe then explained the qualities that the *first* — our forefather Avraham — attained through his spiritual service, which was performed with self-sacrificing devotion, with *mesirus nefesh*.

Not content with the above, the Rebbe adds (though this is seemingly not relevant to his central theme) that Avraham did not actively pursue *mesirus nefesh*. In this, his service was unlike that of Rabbi Akiva who did actively seek it, [saying]: “When will I be afforded the opportunity [for *mesirus nefesh*], so that I may actualize it.” Avraham’s *mesirus nefesh*, by contrast, was incidental [to his actual service]. He knew that the main object of divine service was [that defined by the Sages’ interpretation of the verse], ויקרא בשם ה' א-ל עולם, — “He proclaimed there the Name of G-d, L-rd of the world.”<sup>2</sup> [For our Sages say,] “Do not read *vayikra* — ‘he proclaimed,’ but *vayakrei* — ‘he made others proclaim.’”<sup>3</sup> I.e., let another man likewise proclaim [G-d’s Name]. And if in the course of this service *mesirus nefesh* was called for, he could supply that too. Indeed, so estimable was Avraham’s divine service

1. Conclusion of the *maamar* beginning *HaChodesh Hazeh Lachem*, 5700.

2. [Bereishis 13:4.]

3. [Sotah 10b.]

and *mesirus nefesh* that even Moshe was privileged to have the Torah given through him because he was the beloved seventh — the seventh to the first. [It is to this relationship between them that the Sages apply the verse:] במקום גדולים אל — “G-d told Moshe (referring to Avraham), ‘Do not stand in the place of the greats.’”<sup>4</sup>

It is true that the seventh of a series is very much loved and that this status comes not as a result of choice nor as a result of one’s divine service, but as a finished product, merely as a result of birth. Nevertheless, there are no inherent limitations that should cause an individual to say that this status is beyond him and that it is accessible only to a select few. On the contrary, this is a situation similar to that which is explained in *Tanna dvei Eliyahu* (chs. 9 and 25) and quoted in *Chassidus*, that every Jew, even a slave and handmaiden<sup>5</sup> can attain the inspiration of the Divine Spirit. [Similarly,] each and every Jew is obligated to say, “When will my actions equal those of my forefathers, Avraham, Yitzchak and Yaakov?”

At the same time we should not delude ourselves: we must know that we should “not stand in the place of the greats,” and that the merit of the seventh of a series consists of his being seventh to the first. I.e., he is capable of doing the divine service and fulfilling the mission of the first: “Do not read ‘he proclaimed,’ but ‘he made others proclaim.’”

This, then, is why the seventh is so cherished: it is he who draws down the *Shechinah*, in fact — the essence of the *Shechinah*; moreover, he draws it down into this lowly world.

It is this that is demanded of each and every one of us of the seventh generation — and “all those that are seventh are cherished”: Although the fact that we are in the seventh generation is not the result of our own choosing and our own service, and indeed in certain ways perhaps contrary to our

## 5.

It goes without saying that according to the opinion — cited by the *Tzemach Tzedek*<sup>16</sup> — that even the vessels of *Atzilus* are [but] a level of revelation of that which was previously concealed, that the ultimate purpose surely does not rest in them, for they are in a state of descent and mere revelation. But even according to the second opinion cited there, that the vessels are creations *ex nihilo*, it is explained in various sources that they are not truly creations *ex nihilo*; they are only considered so in relation to the light [that illuminates them].

[The vessels of *Atzilus* are considered as creations *ex nihilo* relative to the lights of *Atzilus*] because the source of the vessels is from the *Reshimah*, [the Divine power of limitation and finitude,] which is a state of concealment. The vessels therefore exist in such a way that their source is hidden from them. Thus, relative to the illumination they are considered to have been created *ex nihilo*. However, in relation to [their source,] the *Reshimah*, they are indeed revelations of that which was previously concealed.

It is thus clear that the ultimate [Divine] objective is not the higher worlds, but rather man’s spiritual service of subduing and transforming this world [into holiness].

Since presently the performance of *mitzvos* increases illumination within *Atzilus*, [so that it is not this world that currently benefits therefrom,] how can we then say that even now the ultimate objective of man’s divine service is specifically this world? The Rebbe Maharash [answers this question when he] explains<sup>17</sup> that these illuminations in *Atzilus* are there as if in storage; i.e., they are not revealed there, for

4. [Mishlei 25:6.]

5. Ch. 9 of *Tanna dvei Eliyahu* states “even an idolator.” This would seem to be contradicted by *Bava Basra* (15b), which clearly states that all opinions agree that the Divine Presence does not rest upon an idolator. See *Chidushei Aggados*, *ad loc.*, and the references cited there. See also *Iggeres Teiman* of the *Rambam*, from which it would appear that even an idolator may be a prophet. This subject requires further examination.

16. Discourse entitled *Shalosh Shitos* (which appears as an appendix to the second volume of *Sefer HaMitzvos* by the *Tzemach Tzedek*); see also the *maamar* beginning *Vaydaber Elokim Es Kol HaDevarim*, 5664; *Hagahos* to the *maamar* beginning *Pasach Eliyahu* that appears in *Torah Or* (5658); *maamar* beginning *Adam Ki Yakriv*, 5666.

17. *Maamar* beginning *Pizar Nasan*, 5642; see also the second note in *Tanya*, ch. 40; *maamar* beginning *Eirdah Na*, 5658.

to reveal [their] Creator, they actually hide and conceal their source; moreover, they feel that their being derives from themselves, (and only reason dictates that this cannot possibly be so)).

Although this [perception of a physical creation that its being derives from its own self] is but its own [false] impression, nevertheless, the very fact that it is able to imagine that it derives from its own self results from its being rooted in G-d's Essence — and *His* Being derives from His Essence.

It is thus understandable that the intent of creation is not the higher worlds whose purpose is revelation, but this lowly world — that imagines itself to be not a [mere] revelation (*gilui*) but a self-sufficient entity (*atzmi*), whose being derives from its own self. Through man's spiritual service in this world, subduing and transforming [the physical into holiness], G-d's Essence is revealed [in this world], in the world for the sake of which the worlds at large were created and for the sake of which they progressively descended.

will, nevertheless “all those who are seventh are cherished.” We are now very near the approaching footsteps of *Mashiach*, indeed, we are at the conclusion of this period, and our spiritual task is to complete the process of drawing down the *Shechinah* — moreover, the essence of the *Shechinah* — within specifically our lowly world.

## 4.

Having explained that the essence of the *Shechinah* was originally apparent in this lowly world and that in addition Moshe (the seventh) later drew it down specifically into this world, [the Rebbe, of blessed memory] goes on to say:

“Divinity was primarily revealed within the *Beis HaMikdash*, (and the Rebbe supports this statement with Scripture,) as it is written, ‘And they shall make Me a Sanctuary and I shall dwell *within them*.’” [Concerning this verse the Sages comment:] “The verse does not state ‘within *it*,’ but ‘within *them*,’ [thus implying that G-d dwells] ‘within each individual Jew.’”

[The Rebbe continues:] “This concept can grant us an insight into the verse, ‘The righteous shall inherit the land and forever dwell upon it.’ This means that the righteous shall inherit ‘the earth,’ which is an allusion to *Gan Eden*, because they cause ‘Him Who dwells forever, exalted and holy is His Name,’ to dwell and be revealed in this physical world below.” (The Rebbe does not explain “Him Who dwells forever” in the *maamar*; the concept is explained in *Likkutei Torah* in accordance with a teaching of the *Zohar*.)

[The discourse of the Previous Rebbe continues:] “With this in mind, we can better understand the interpretation of the verse, ‘I have come into My garden,’ as ‘I have come into My bridal chamber’; i.e., the *Shechinah* here speaks of its return to the original location of its essential abode — in the midst of the nether beings.’ The matter (i.e., the explanation as to why the essence of the *Shechinah* was specifically found in this world) is as follows: The ultimate purpose for the creation and progressive descent of the worlds is that ‘G-d desired to have a dwelling place in the lower worlds.’”

The Alter Rebbe explains this<sup>14</sup> [in the following manner]: “The ultimate intent of the progressive chainlike descent of the worlds is not the loftier worlds, since for them this constitutes a descent from the light of G-d’s Countenance.” The ultimate purpose cannot possibly be remoteness from G-d.

As is well known, creation derives solely from the power of G-d’s Essence, as is stated in *Iggeres HaKodesh*, in the Epistle beginning *Ihu VeChayohi*: As to G-d’s very Being and Essence, Whose being derives from His own self and Who has no cause preceding Him, He alone has the power and ability to create something out of absolute naught and nothingness.

Thus, creation does not result from G-dly revelation, rather from G-d’s Essence. Hence it is impossible to state that the ultimate intent of creation was for the sake of the higher worlds, for even [the loftiest of them,] the World of *Atzilus*, is [merely] a revelation of that which had previously been concealed. It therefore constitutes a descent from the light of the Divine Countenance, for when the luminous emanations of *Atzilus* were in a state of concealment [within their source] they were on a much loftier plane.

In addition, since these are merely degrees of revelation [i.e., glimmerings of G-d’s Essence], we cannot possibly say that Essence exists for the sake of such revelations. We must therefore say that the ultimate goal is this physical world, wherein — as the Mittlerer Rebbe explains on this week’s Torah reading<sup>15</sup> (*Parshas Beshalach*), while comparing the higher worlds and this world — it is felt that its being derives from its own self.

(This is as explained in the series of *maamarim* of Rosh HaShanah this year, in connection with the difference between created beings and [Divine] light: Light proves that there is a luminary; when we observe light, its very existence indicates and reveals that there is a luminary [from whence it emanates]. By contrast, [physical] created beings not only fail

14. *Tanya*, ch. 36.

15. *Biurei HaZohar*, *Parshas Beshalach*, towards the conclusion of the *maamar* beginning *Kegavna Dile’eila*.