

On the Essence of Chassidus

(IN'YANA SHEL TORAS HACHASSIDUS)



A Free Translation of an Essay by

RABBI MENACHEM M. SCHNEERSON שליט"א

THE LUBAVITCHER REBBE

חזקת חובת סניטור

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PUBLISHER'S FOREWORD

With gratitude to the Al-mighty, we hereby present a free translation into English of the discourse *In'yanah Shel Toras HaChassidus*, "On the Essence of Chassidus," originally given by the Lubavitcher Rebbe, R. Menachem M. Schneerson שליט"א on Yud-Tes Kislev, 5726. There has been a great and urgent demand for English translations of works of Chassidus, and it is hoped that the present volume will help further open the door to this literature for those to whom it has been inaccessible — and that it will also deepen the understanding of those who are already familiar with Chassidic writings.

This translation has been made in honor of the Lubavitcher Rebbe שליט"א's 76th birthday לאוריוש"ט by Rabbi Y. H. Greenberg and S. S. Handelman of Buffalo, New York. The publisher and translators would like to express their deep appreciation to Rabbi Zalman I. Posner of Nashville, Tennessee for his generous and expert advice, painstaking corrections, and invaluable contributions to the manuscript. Several explanatory footnotes have been written by him, and he has immeasurably enriched this translation. A special thanks is also due to Chabad House of Buffalo, New York, which has given its generous support to this project from its inception; and also to Rabbi A. D. Sufrin of London, England for reading and checking over the manuscript.

May this volume bring the illumination of Toras HaChassidus to many, and may we merit being able to learn and publish more and more of the Rebbe שליט"א's sichos and ma'amorim. And may it be G-d's will that the Rebbe שליט"א

enjoy long and good years, abundantly blessed with health — and may we merit soon to see the coming of Moshiach speedily in our days.

Va'ad L'Hafotzas Sichos

11 Nissan 5738



PUBLISHER'S FOREWORD TO SECOND EDITION

With thanks to the Al-mighty, we are herewith publishing this second revised edition of the essay "On the Essence of Chassidus."

We wish to express our sincere appreciation to Rabbi Yonah Avtzon of "Sichos In English" for his editorial assistance in preparing this edition for publication.

We pray that this new edition will further spread the well-springs of Chassidus and bring the illumination of Chassidus to many more people.

May G-d grant us the ability to continue to study and publish more discourses, talks and essays of the Rebbe, שליט"א, and may we merit, through the increased dissemination of Chassidus, the coming of our righteous Moshiach and the complete redemption, speedily and truly in our time.

Va'ad L'Hafotzas Sichos

7 MarCheshvan 5747
Brooklyn, N.Y.

TRANSLATORS' PREFACE

Translators' Preface

Chassidism, by now, is a familiar phenomenon, and a source of curiosity and fascination to many. Though its founders faced many difficult struggles, it has now become almost universally known and admired. Authors of all varieties of belief and practice have written countless volumes about its origins, history, philosophy, and its unique expression in music. Anthologies of stories and maxims told by and about Chassidim have been compiled and made available in English for many years.

Yet many of these works have been produced by outside admirers not always steeped in the knowledge of Chassidic philosophy, nor familiar with its more intricate and profound teachings. Hence many of these attempts made to define Chassidus, and to describe its precise relation to the rest of the Torah have not been at all satisfactory. The need of the English reader for a definition of Chassidus from "within," from Chassidic leaders and thinkers themselves, has long been recognized.

The following discourse by the present Lubavitcher Rebbe, R. Menachem M. Schneerson שליט"א, is a definitive explanation of the nature and idea of Chassidic philosophy. Indeed, Chabad (or Lubavitcher) Chassidus has as one of its prime aims the elaboration and definition of general Chassidus in intellectual and systematic terms, as will be explained presently in the text. Throughout the vast literature of Chabad Chassidus over the past 200 years, one may find numerous comments upon, and expositions of the nature of Chassidus itself. Particularly notable for the English reader are the three pamphlets written by the previous Lubavitcher Rebbe, R. Yoseph Yitzchak Schneersohn זצ"ל: *On Learning Chassidus*, *On the Teachings of Chassidus* (both translated by R. Zalman I. Posner), and *Some Aspects of Chabad Chassidus* (adapted and translated by R. Nissan Mindel).

TRANSLATORS' PREFACE

Chassidus has been popularly conceived, especially by outside historians and biographers, as a teaching which primarily emphasizes joy, enthusiasm, emotion, etc. — albeit within the framework of the traditional Jewish Codes of Law, i.e., Talmud, Shulchan Aruch, etc. One who probes more deeply into works of Chassidic philosophy might be surprised, therefore, to find great emphasis placed on actual practice, on the simple deed or action in itself. Though not explicitly referring to the seeming dilemma of whether Chassidus is expressed more in "affect," or in action, the Rebbe answers the question by presenting the concept of Chassidus as "essence," and analyzes the various modes in which "essence" comes to be revealed.

Hence the present discourse, has as its focal point, the *essence* of Chassidus. It is a deep and searching inquiry into the central core of Chassidic philosophy and practice, and is not only an introduction to the subject, but also an integral part of Chassidic literature.

Here the Rebbe שליט"א precisely defines the relation of Chassidus to the other parts of Torah, and the traditional levels of interpretation; to Kabbalah; to the levels of the soul; to the concept of Moshiach; and to the attributes of G-d Himself. He explains the function of Chassidus in the world, and the imperative reasons for its dissemination.

Furthermore, the Rebbe clarifies and illuminates its nature and essence by selecting one specific topic in Torah, analyzing it in light of the four traditional levels of interpretation, then in light of Chassidus, and proceeding to show how Chassidus vivifies and illuminates each of these four approaches to Torah. The topic, significantly, is the meaning of the first words a Jew utters when he awakens from his sleep in the morning, the prayer *Modeh Ani*, which itself is the fundamental starting point of a Jew's service and life throughout the entire day. Finally, the Rebbe demonstrates the manner in which all the ideas of Chassidus are reflected in, vitalize and illumine even

TRANSLATORS' PREFACE

the technical and legalistic parts of Torah, using the example of the law of "acquisition through four cubits."

2

This discourse was delivered by the Rebbe on the Chassidic holiday of "Yud-Tes Kislev," 5726 (1965). It was originally published at the end of *Sefer Ha'Arochim* (the Chabad Encyclopedia) in 1970, and reprinted in a separate cover in 1971. A supplementary Appendix to *In'Yanah Shel Toras HaChassidus* was added to the 1971 edition. This Appendix itself is an excerpt from another discourse which the Rebbe gave on the last day of Passover 5730 (1970). It is an explanation of why different parts of Torah come to be revealed at different times in Jewish history and, in particular, why Chassidus has been revealed only in these latter generations. Originally this Appendix was printed at the end of a volume containing the *ma'amorim* (Chassidic discourses) of the Rebbe Sholom Dov Ber ז"ל (the fifth-generation leader of Chabad) of the year 5666, for it also explains the distinctiveness of that work. It was subsequently reprinted in *Likutei Sichos* Vol. VII, pp. 206-210. Since this Passover discourse of 5730 (1970) is also very relevant to *On the Essence of Chassidus* and was a supplement to the 1971 edition, it has been translated into English here also, and the reader will find it at the end of the text.

"Yud-Tes Kislev," the date on which the discourse *On the Essence of Chassidus* was originally given, is a celebration of the day upon which the founder of Chabad Chassidus, R. Schneur Zalman ז"ל, was released from a Russian prison. He had been arrested and falsely accused of subversive political activities and treason because of his leadership in the Chassidic movement. On the 19th day of Kislev, 5559 (1798), he was completely exonerated and freed on express orders of the Czar. This date ever since has been celebrated by Jews the world

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over, and especially amongst Chabad Chassidim, for among other reasons, it marks the decisive turning point towards victory in the struggle to spread Chassidus. Hence, the Rebbe Sholom Dov-Ber ז"ל called it the "Rosh HaShana" of Chassidus, as will also be explained in the text (see notes 44, 46, 46a).

Thus the Rebbe's choice of the topic, *On the Essence of Chassidus* for his discourse on this special day is deeply connected to the meaning and inner significance of the holiday itself. It was R. Schneur Zalman who specifically brought the teachings of general Chassidus, as expounded by its founder R. Israel Ba'al Shem Tov, 5458-5520 (1698-1760), into systematic intellectual comprehension.

The Ba'al Shem Tov is well-known for his emphasis on and practice of the great principle of *Ahavas Yisroel*, the commandment to love a fellow Jew as oneself, even to great self-sacrifice — and for his affection for, encouragement, and teaching of the poor, unlettered, and oppressed masses of Jewry, who at that time were separated by a vast gulf from the learned, scholarly elite by whom they were regarded as inferiors. The Ba'al Shem Tov emphasized the holiness of every Jew, and stressed that everyone can serve G-d no matter what his background or endowments. As is also well-known, he especially re-emphasized the importance of joy in the service of G-d and performance of mitzvos. Furthermore, he taught the deepest doctrines of the "esoteric" part of Torah in a form that even the simplest Jew could understand, expressing these profound ideas through parables, stories, aphorisms, etc.

It was R. Schneur Zalman, as has been said, who formulated the general Chassidus of the Ba'al Shem Tov into a systematic intellectual philosophy comprehensible to the mind. Among his numerous and lengthy works on both the legal aspects of Torah, and Chassidus, *Likutei Amarim*, or *Tanya*, is the best known and most widely read, and has been translated into English and many other languages. It is a concise outline of

TRANSLATORS' PREFACE

his philosophy, written in a manner which enables people of all levels of understanding and knowledge to grasp and more deeply understand Chassidus, and is a classic of Rabbinic literature.

Each of the six Lubavitcher Rebbes succeeding R. Schneur Zalman have continued to expand Chassidus on all levels — not only in their discourses and theoretical writings, but in their lives, with their self-sacrificing work for the good of all Jews everywhere. They have intensely fought and resisted, continuing up to our times, the efforts of oppressive governments to destroy, G-d forbid, Yiddishkeit, placing themselves in great personal peril. The previous Rebbe, R. Yoseph Yitzchak Schneersohn ז"ע was imprisoned in 1927 and brutally treated by the Soviet government for his refusal to stop spreading Torah in Russia. After his arrival in America in 1940, he proceeded to establish Torah centers in the United States, and was determined to reawaken the flame of Torah and Yiddishkeit in the Jews of America. Upon his passing in 1950, he was succeeded by his son-in-law, R. Menachem M. Schneerson שליט"א, who has continued and intensified the work of spreading the light of Torah and Yiddishkeit throughout America and the entire world, to every Jew wherever he may be, and who has inspired countless Jews everywhere in love for G-d, for Torah, and for one's fellow Jew.

* * *

As a project of the Chabad House of Buffalo, New York, in honor of the seventy-sixth birthday of the Lubavitcher Rebbe שליט"א, and in hopes of contributing to what is explained in the text as the "dissemination of the fountains" of Chassidus — that all Jews may have access to and gain life from these wellsprings, and grow more deeply to love and fulfill the teachings of the Torah and the will of the Creator, and that thereby we may merit the coming of our righteous Moshiach, this translation has been made.

Translators' Note

In the original Hebrew text, 135 footnotes were added by the Rebbe שליט"א, some citations of sources, and others quite lengthy and detailed explanations of ideas in the text and their ramifications. These footnotes contain ideas of such profundity and importance, that all have been completely translated. The reader is urged to make full use of them.

The translators have also added to the Rebbe's footnotes, their own attempted clarifications, explanations of terms, concepts, names, etc. It should be understood that these commentaries and explanations are tentative and by no means an exhaustive or complete understanding of this text. They are meant to make the text clearer and more accessible to readers of all backgrounds. The text is a free translation, and the translators have attempted to make the language as clear and simple as possible. Nevertheless, the beginner may find some parts of the notes quite complex and perhaps difficult, but they are meant to be of aid to those who also already have some knowledge of Chassidus. Some of these notes develop independent topics and may be studied separately.

In addition, the translators have researched the Rebbe's references, and included summaries of the contents of those which they felt would be of invaluable aid to the reader, thus alleviating the reader of the task of looking up this information himself.

* * *

To facilitate distinguishing between the words of the Rebbe and those of the translators, minor variations in the text and notes have been made. All brackets are uniformly used to denote additions, remarks, clarifications of the translators;

parentheses are used for the words of the Rebbe. Footnotes added by the translators are distinguished by the addition of a small case alphabetical letter next to the numeral, e.g., 1a, 1b, etc., are also enclosed in brackets, and are set in a smaller type.

* * *

All chapter titles are the translators'.



GENEALOGY OF
THE FOUNDERS OF GENERAL CHASSIDISM
AND THE LEADERS OF CHABAD



Founder of the Chassidic Movement

RABBI ISRAEL BAAL SHEM TOV

Elul 18, 5458 - Sivan 6, 5526
(1698-1760)



Successor

RABBI DOV-BER, MAGGID OF MEZERITCH

Date of Birth (unknown) - Kislev 19, 5533
(?-1772)



Founder of Chabad

RABBI SCHNEUR ZALMAN OF LIADI

Elul 18, 5505 - Teves 24, 5573
(1745-1812)



Second Generation of Chabad

RABBI DOV-BER (SCHNEURI)

son of Rabbi Schneur Zalman

Kislev 9, 5534 - Kislev 9, 5588
(1773-1827)



Third Generation of Chabad

RABBI MENACHEM MENDEL (SCHNEERSOHN)

son-in-law of Rabbi Dov-Ber
grandson of Rabbi Schneur Zalman

Elul 29, 5549 - Nissan 13, 5626
(1789-1866)



Fourth Generation of Chabad

RABBI SHMUEL
son of Rabbi Menachem Mendel
Iyar 2, 5594 - Tishrei 13, 5643
(1834-1882)

●

Fifth Generation of Chabad

RABBI SHOLOM DOV-BER
son of Rabbi Shmuel
Cheshvan 20, 5621 - Nissan 2, 5680
(1860-1920)

●

Sixth Generation of Chabad

RABBI YOSEPH YITZCHAK
son of Rabbi Sholom Dov-Ber
Tamuz, 12, 5640 - Shevat 10, 5710
(1880-1950)

●

Seventh Generation of Chabad

RABBI MENACHEM MENDEL SCHNEERSON
sixth in direct parental line from Rabbi Menachem Mendel;
son-in-law of Rabbi Yoseph Yitzchok
Born Nissan 11, 5662 (1902) שליט"א

●

לזכות
ר' חיים ביריש בן שרה מלכה
אסתר נעמי בת רחל
בתם
דבורה חנה בת אסתר נעמי
קאופמאן

In honor of
Chaim Beirish ben Sara Malka
Esther Noami bas Rochel
their daughter
Devora Chana bas Esther Noami
Kaufman
שיחיו
— Paulo, Brazil —

***ON THE ESSENCE
OF CHASSIDUS***

On the Essence of Chassidus* (In'yanah Shel Toras HaChassidus)

I

The Creative Contributions of Chassidus

Many explanations have heretofore been given concerning the nature of Chassidus,¹ and the creative contribution which distinguishes it from those parts of the Torah which had been previously revealed.^{1a} And among them, one finds the following:

* Excerpted from a discourse given by the Rebbe שליט"א, R. Menachem M. Schneerson on the day of Yud-Tes Kislev, 5726 [1965], the Chassidic holiday celebrating the liberation of the Alter Rebbe, R. Schneur Zalman ז"ל from Russian prison. See below, n. 46 and Translators' Preface.

1. See also the treatises *On the Teachings of Chassidus* and *On the Learning of Chassidus* by the Rebbe, my sainted father-in-law [R. Yoseph Yitzchak Schneersohn ז"ל].

1a. [See Appendix for an in-depth elaboration of this concept. It is one of the fundamental principles of Judaism that both the Written and the Oral Torahs in their entirety were given to Moshe at Sinai. The Written Torah, or *TaNaCh*, includes the first Five Books, the Prophets, and the Holy Writings. The Oral Torah comprises the Mishnah, Talmud, Midrash, commentaries, etc. The Talmud furthermore states, "All that a distinguished scholar will introduce into Torah in the future was already given to Moshe at Sinai (*Megillah* 19b). That is to say, although all of Torah was given at Sinai, different parts were revealed at different times in Jewish history — for example, the Talmud in its appropriate time, the commentaries of Rashi in their appropriate time, etc. The fact that a particular idea or aspect of Torah was revealed at a specific time itself indicates that this was indeed the most fitting moment for its appearance, the time when it was most relevant. One of the earliest challenges to the Ba'al Shem Tov (the founder of Chassidism) and his new school concerned the question of the contribution of Chassidus to the tapestry of Torah — how does it differ, and why was it not articulated in earlier generations. — translators' note]

1) In the times of the Ba'al Shem Tov, the world was in a state of spiritual "unconsciousness," and through the revelations of the Ba'al Shem Tov and the teachings of Chassidus, the world was aroused from this condition.²

2) "A Chassid is one who does more than what is required by the letter of the law."³ As our Sages of blessed memory have said:⁴ "The one who burns them [nail parings] is a Chassid, even though he might be harmed thereby."

2. Found in an old Chassidic manuscript whose author is unknown. See also *Kovetz Yud-Shevat*, pp. 65-6.

[When the Ba'al Shem Tov initiated his movement, the material situation of Eastern European Jewry — economic and political — was precarious, and the religious state was hardly better. The pogroms of 1648, and the false Messiahs were critical blows the people barely survived. Their condition was virtually "comatose."

In the aforementioned reference, it is explained that when a person faints, there is a tradition of whispering his name in his ear in order to revive him, because a person's Hebrew name has an essential connection to his general life-force. The soul of the Ba'al Shem Tov was the "general soul" of all the Jews, as indicated in his own name, "Israel," which he shared with all Jews. As Israel's "general soul," of which the particular soul of every individual Jew was a "component detail," the Ba'al Shem Tov's purpose and mission was to revive all the Jews, even the lowliest, from their "unconsciousness," and to connect even the lowliest Jew with the Essence of G-d. — trans.]

3. "Padah B'Shalom" 5675 (5726) — Brooklyn, 5731. In series *B'Sha'ah SheHikdimu* 5672 (par. 376), Brooklyn, 5738, Vol. II, pp. 772ff.

[Commenting on the statement, "A Chassid is one who does more than what is required by the letter of the law," this reference explains that according to the Torah, one should desire and is allowed to pursue "revelations" (spiritual enlightenment) for himself, and to strive for his own spiritual interests. A Chassid, though, is one who reaches beyond that level and has no self-interest at all. In the reference, Moshe is given as an example, for his entire purpose in desiring to enter the Land of Israel was not for his own attainment of a higher level, but rather that the whole Jewish people should be enabled to bring a higher level of G-dhood into this world. — trans.]

4. *Niddah* 17a; *Tosefos* ad. loc. See also *Likutei Dibburim* I, 68a.

[The source in the Talmud explains that one who cuts his nails should not throw the parings on the ground, for there is a danger that they might

3) "The distinctive quality of Chassidus is that one's natural faculties are transformed into G-dly faculties."³ As the Alter Rebbe [R. Schneur Zalman ז"ל], author of the *Tanya* and *Shulchan Aruch* said, "The entire idea of Chassidus is to change the nature of one's attributes":⁵ this means to change not only one's natural characteristics themselves, but also the very "nature of one's character."⁶

cause a miscarriage in a pregnant woman who steps on them. One who does throw away his nails in this manner is called a *rasha* (wicked); one who buries them, following the letter of the Law is called a *tzaddik* (righteous); and one who burns them, taking extra precaution that they not be uncovered, is called a *Chassid* (pious).

Tosefos there explains that since burning something of one's own body might cause harm to oneself, he who does so is called a Chassid: he goes beyond the requirement of the Law and is prepared to suffer for it, though the Law does not require him to harm himself. See further *Ba'er Hetev*, *Orach Chaim* 260:2. — trans.]

5. *Likutei Dibburim*, *ibid.*, p. 56a.

[The passage referred to here relates that the "Tzemach Tzedek," R. Menachem Mendel ז"ל, the third Lubavitcher Rebbe and grandson of the Alter Rebbe, asked his grandfather, "What is the main idea of Chassidus?" He did not ask what Chassidus *was* because he already knew that Chassidus was a G-dly study and understanding which contained the inner teachings of Torah. He wanted to know, however, what was the *principal* idea of Chassidus. The Alter Rebbe answered that the essential idea of Chassidus is to change the nature of one's attributes — meaning not just to change one's nature from bad to good, but even if one has a good nature, to change it, for nothing should be done simply because it is one's nature. — trans.]

6. *Ibid.*, side b. Clarified in *HaTamim*, Vol. III, p. 66ff.

[In this article, which is from a journal published in Warsaw before World War II, the previous Rebbe elaborates on the process of changing the nature of one's character through a detailed explanation of the Chassidic concept of the three basic souls in every Jew — the "G-dly soul," the "intellectual soul," and the "natural soul." As he writes there, each of these three souls contains a full complement of both Intellectual and Emotional faculties in accordance with its nature. The natural soul is called the "animal soul," for all its desires are directed towards materialistic and animalistic ends, as is explained at length in Chassidus. The intellectual part of the animal soul engages in rationalizing actions according to its own understanding, and is concerned with self-preservation and self-justification. The emotional part of the animal soul is the "evil inclination" (*yetzer hara*) itself. That is to say,

4) The teachings of Chassidus created the possibility for every person, including even one who does not possess a lofty soul and who has not purified himself, to be able to grasp and comprehend G-dhood.⁷ By explaining the ideas of the

the intellectual part of the animal soul is the means of *justifying* the act; the emotional part of the animal soul is the *inclination to do evil*.

Until one has the appropriate instruments with which he can correct the inclinations of the animal soul, though, one must first *break one's* natural desires. The true Divine service, however, the previous Rebbe explains, is not *breaking*, but *fixing, mending (tikkun)*. And one begins this service of mending with the intellectual soul, the middle soul. The instrument is the study of Chassidus, which includes the contemplation of those ideas which are in consonance with one's level of understanding, and of material which also can be understood by and can arouse the heart.

Both the G-dly soul and the intellectual soul have emotional attributes, or "character traits" (*middos*): the nature of the intellectual soul is to be drawn to that which is below it, and the nature of the G-dly soul is to be drawn to that which is above it. The statement that the main idea of Chassidus is to change the nature of one's characteristics means to change the *middos* of both these souls. In the intellectual soul, this means the recognition that one should be drawn to do the good not because it is rationally acceptable, but because it is G-d's commandment. Consequently, one goes beyond the confines of reason in the pursuit of good. In the G-dly soul, the nature of the *middos* is the desire to leave the physical body and be absorbed in their source, in G-d. One changes these *middos* by directing them towards the service of G-d in this physical world, within the confines of the body. — trans.]

7. *Toras Sholom*, p. 113.

[Until Chassidus, the esoteric elements of Torah, like Kabbalah, were reserved for the spiritual elite, those with innately "lofty" souls, or those who had purified and refined themselves. As the text here notes, Chassidus made the most abstruse concepts accessible to all by articulating them in intellectual terms. In the aforementioned reference, the fifth Lubavitcher Rebbe, R. Sholom Dov-Ber זצ"ל explains that this was consistent with that which the Ba'al Shem Tov was told when he asked when the Moshiach would come and was answered, "When your wellsprings will be dispersed abroad (*chutza*)," meaning all the way out, even to unrefined and lowly people. Those who are *chutza* should also understand G-dhood. And, R. Sholom Dov-Ber adds — *chutza*, "outside, abroad," can even mean rational understanding. That is, the articulation of Chassidus — which, as the text will soon note, is of a transcendent level, beyond the realm of intellect — in rational terms, is already the first step in its extension to the "outside." — trans.]

"esoteric"^{7a} part of Torah, and making them accessible to the intellect through examples and analogies corresponding to the faculties and characteristics of the soul — as it is written, "From my flesh I perceive G-d"⁸ — Chassidus enabled every one to

7a. [There are four approaches or interpretations of Torah: *peshat* or plain meaning; *remez* or allusion; *drush* or homily; and *sod* or "mystery" — the esoteric interpretation as found, for example, in Kabbalah. see Chapter III ff. for detailed explanation and illustration of these four levels. — trans.]

8. Job 19:26. See also *Likutei Dibburim* II, p. 332b ff. And examine further *Toras Sholom*, p. 185, where it is written "that as a result of this (innovation of Chassidus that through the analogy of the faculties of a person, one can grasp their parallels 'Above,' in G-d, as it were), these faculties thereby become G-dly." On the basis of this idea, one can connect the fourth explanation of Chassidus with the third.

[In Chassidic literature, the verse from Job is taken to mean that by examining the structure of one's own soul and its faculties, which are made in the image of G-d, one can also come to understand Divinity itself. The second reference given here, *Likutei Dibburim*, relates the story of a great Chassid, Reb Hillel Paritcher who, when he learned the Chassidic explanation of this verse, "From my flesh, I perceive G-d," said: "Before I became a Chabad Chassid, my body was despicable to me, for all spiritual problems result from the body. When I understood the inner meaning of the words, 'From my flesh I perceive G-d,' that the body is a *shepectiva*, a magnifying glass through which one can see G-dhood, then the body assumed significance for me."

The reference in *Toras Sholom* explains that the innovation of Chassidus over Kabbalah is that Chassidus is Divinity made comprehensible through the analogy of human faculties. Though Kabbalah in one sense does the same, it is not truly perfect comprehension. Chassidus, however, brings G-dhood to perfect human comprehension, for from one's own human faculties, he can understand supernal matters. (See below, n. 53.) From one's own intellectual attributes, he can come to understand what the "intellect" of G-d is, and from his own emotional attributes or *middos*, he can understand the *middos* of G-d. And through this understanding and thus purification, one's faculties thereby become G-dly — fit vessels which can be absorbed into and become a part of G-dhood.

Thus the explanation of the fourth definition of Chassidus in the text (that it enables even a simple person to understand Divinity through its analogies to the soul) is connected to the third definition (that Chassidus changes the nature of one's character). By understanding G-dhood, one's own faculties become G-dly. — trans.]

comprehend even this part of Torah. Not only can one grasp it with the intelligence found in his G-dly soul, but also with the intelligence of his intellectual soul — and further, he can even comprehend it with the intelligence possessed by his animal soul.^{8a}

8a. [See n. 6 above. The intellectual soul bridges the gulf between the animal soul and the G-dly soul. Intellectual understanding is a vessel for G-dly understanding and thus can have an effect on the animal soul, exciting it about G-dly things. See *Sefer HaMa'amorim* 5702, p. 102 — trans.]



II

Chassidus as the "Extension of the En Sof"

It is self-evident, for reasons which later will be explained, that Chassidus is one central point; that it is a singular and indivisible core which is not a composite of various particular ideas. Now since all the distinctive qualities mentioned in the preceding definitions (and also in numerous other explanations)⁹ are different, one necessarily must conclude — that these qualities do not define and capture the *essential* nature of the teachings of Chassidus. The fundamental nature of Chassidus is a quintessential point, which is completely abstracted and removed from any particular ideas; however, it is by virtue of this quintessential point that all the above-mentioned special qualities exist and are derived.¹⁰

9. See *Sefer HaSichos, Summer 5700*, p. 26 ff., and elsewhere.

[This reference cites the answer of R. Gershon Ber (a distinguished Chassid of the Tzemach Tzedek, the third Rebbe of Chabad) when he was asked by a group of questioners, "What is Chassidus?" Though the questioners all agreed that Chassidus was a G-dly philosophy, they sought to know what advantage Chassidus had over Kabbalah and Philosophy. R. Gershon Ber answered: Kabbalah describes the *Sefiros*, the creative attributes and manifestations of G-d; philosophy explains how G-d is beyond description and definition, how one cannot really understand Him at all, for if one would know G-d, he would be G-d; Chassidus, however, maintains "Know Him and become like Him." Through the effort of actually understanding G-d, one becomes like Him. See also *Or HaChassidus* by A.C. Glitzenstein (Kfar Chabad: Kehot), 1965, for many other explanations. — trans.]

10. Nevertheless it is *only through* these specific different qualities that one can grasp the essential nature of Chassidus, as will be explained in Chapter XVIII.

This quintessential point of Chassidus (as discussed earlier in the *ma'amar*,^{10a} which is based on the *ma'amar* of the Rebbe Sholom Dov-Ber Schneersohn ז"ל¹¹ — is the effusion of a New Light^{11a} from the innermost level of *Kesser*¹² — and from

10a. [*Ma'amar* — a discourse on Chabad Chassidus given by a Rebbe (a Chassidic Leader). This present discourse was based on the *ma'amar* that the Rebbe שליט"א gave on Yud-Tes Kislev, 5726. — trans.]

11. *Ma'amar* "Padah B'Shalom," *loc. cit.*

11a. [*New Light* — "Light" is used as a favorite metaphor in Kabbalah and Chassidus to represent and describe the various manifestations, emanations and forces of the Divinity. It is often used in contradistinction to what is called *Atzmus* — the "Essence" of G-d, the level beyond all definition, manifestation, etc. R. J. Immanuel Schochet in his *Mystical Concepts in Chassidism*, appended to the English-Hebrew *Tanya* (London: Soncino-Kehot, 1973) uses Kabbalistic sources to explain the aptness of this metaphor as follows (pp. 814-815; see further there):

Of all physical phenomena, light is that which most closely approximates what is spiritual and freed from the limitations of matter. For example, it is not corporeal; it delights the soul; it enables one to see. It is also analogous to the nature of Divine emanations insofar as light is never separated from its source, spreads itself instantaneously, irradiates all physical objects, does not mix and mingle with any other substance, never *per se* changes, is essential to life in general, and is received and absorbed relative to the capacity of the recipient, etc.

Needless to say, however, the analogy is still only an approximation, and must not be taken in any literal sense. Terms and concepts related to the Divinity must be understood spiritually, without any temporal and spatial connotations whatsoever. — trans.]

12. *Op. cit.* (par. 373).

[*Kesser* — literally means "Crown," and in Kabbalistic and Chassidic literature refers to one of the most transcendent levels of G-d. It is the "Crown," or level that transcends the ten so-called *Sefiros*, creative Divine attributes and manifestations of G-d. The *Sefiros* are divided into two categories: *sechel* (intellect) and *middos* (emotions, dispositions). The *Ten Sefiros* are the source of and parallel to the ten powers of the human soul. Just as man reveals himself through his attributes, or their "garments" (thought, speech, and deed), similarly G-d reveals Himself through His attributes, the *Sefiros*.

There are *Four "Worlds,"* or basic levels, each of which is a general category of Divine manifestation (see below, n. 34a), ranging from the highest level, where there is total unity with G-d, down to this lowest

even higher: it is an effusion from the innermost level of *Atik*^{12a} itself, which is the level of the *En Sof*^{12b} [the Infinite]

physical world which we inhabit, where the Infinite is all but concealed. (Each of these Four Worlds contains numerous subgradations also described as "Worlds.") Now *Kesser* is the level which transcends all worlds, and which is the "Crown" to the *Sefiros*. It is identified with the Supernal Will, and is that which links G-d the Infinite *En Sof* with all His finite created worlds. For to link the infinite with the finite, an intermediary is necessary.

We may understand this concept further through an analogy to the human soul. The essence of the soul itself is beyond all description. It is neither intellectual nor emotional. How then does the soul express itself and give rise to intellect and emotions if it entirely transcends these realms? It does so through the faculty of *will*. Will (*ratzon*) is a general power not limited to any particular part or function of the body; will is all-encompassing and unlimited. And though will is still not the essence of the soul, but only an extension and reflection of it, will is the first state of movement from the pure soul to the faculties which express it; and thus it is an intermediary between the essence of the soul and its faculties.

In every "intermediary" there must be two levels — the factors it shares in common with the two levels between which it mediates. These two aspects may be described as 1) the "head" of the lower level and 2) the lower level of the upper. Likewise, in *will* itself there are two levels: 1) *Ratzon* — the external aspect of will and 2) *Ta'anug*, or "Delight," the internal aspect, which is the motivating force of all activity, including will.

From this analogy to the human soul, and in light of the manner in which will links the essence of the soul with its expression and faculties, we can now understand how, similarly, *Kesser* — G-d's Will — is that which links the Four Worlds with the Infinite G-d. And, similarly, here in *Kesser* there are also two levels of will: the external part, and the internal part. The external level of G-d's Will which transcends all worlds is called *Arich Anpin*; and the internal level is called *Atik*, and corresponds to "Delight."

When new light emanates from *Kesser*, all the *Sefiros* are rejuvenated, as it were, transformed into something higher than before. In our context, Chassidus is described as a "new light," a revelation of an aspect of G-d hitherto concealed, a deeper insight vouchsafed to man.

For further introduction and explanation of these concepts in English, see R. J. Immanuel Schochet's *Mystical Concepts in Chassidism* (op. cit.) and R. Zalman I. Posner's Translator's Foreword to *On Learning Chassidus* and *On the Teachings of Chassidus* (Brooklyn: Kehot, 1959). — trans.]

12a. [*Atik* — (see preceding note). The innermost level of the Supernal Will, corresponding to "Delight." — trans.]

12b. [*En Sof* — literally, "Infinite," "Endless," and meaning the most absolute Infinite force of G-d, totally beyond description, knowledge, and

that is found in רא"ל — *Radla*¹³ [*Reisha d'Lo Isyada* — "the Head or Beginning that is Not Known"].

It necessarily follows, then, from this very idea (which was elaborated in the *ma'amar*), that all the distinctive qualities of Chassidus which are explained in various places, are but the ramifications of the quintessential point. For since Chassidus is the extension of the state of *En Sof*, it is self-understood that *En Sof* is the essence [of Chassidus], and all other particular aspects are only ramifications and derivatives of it.

comprehension, completely beyond any boundaries; the Essence of G-d Himself, the innermost aspect of the innermost level of *Kesser*. As explained above, *Kesser* (Will) is the intermediary between the *En Sof* and the *Sefiros*. — trans.]

13. *Ma'amar* "Padah B'Shalom," (pars. 374, 376).

[*Radla* — a Kabbalistic term indicating the deepest and innermost level of the Essence of G-d which is entirely unknowable — not only because of its profundity, but because it is utterly beyond the realm of knowledge. Chassidus recognizes the bounds of intellect as innate. Intellect is a manifestation, a "power" of the soul or a *Sefira* of G-d, and is not Essence. Essence in turn transcends intellect. *En Sof* is beyond knowledge because knowledge itself originates on a lower plane than G-d's Essence. — trans.]



III

Torah: The Epitome of Perfection

What has been stated above, concerning Chassidus, also applies *in general* to all parts of the Torah, for the Torah encompasses all manner of perfection and quality to be found in the world. Generally these virtues are divided — as illustrated in man, who is a “miniature world”¹⁴ — into the attributes of Intellect and those of the Emotions, or character traits. Now in regards to the latter — to moral behavior and good character, the laws and ethical precepts of Torah (those contained, for example, in the tractate *Avos* [*Ethics of the Fathers*]¹⁵ et al.) are the epitome of goodness and truth. All other systems of morality, however, which men by themselves have contrived, mix together good and evil, truth and falsehood.^{15*} And, furthermore, the source of those portions of good that each one of these systems contains — is in Torah.

14. *Midrash Tanchuma*, “Pekudei,” 3. *Tikkunei Zohar*, Tikkun 69, p. 100a. Examine further *Avos de R. Nosson*, ch. 31; *Koheles Rabbah* 1:4; *Zohar* I, 134b; *Guide for the Perplexed* I, ch. 72; *Likutei Torah*, “B’Midbar,” beginning of the *ma’amar*, “VeHayah Mispar.”

15. See commentary of R. Ovadiah Bartinuro to the beginning of the tractate *Avos* [*Ethics of the Fathers*].

[There he points out why this tractate begins with the statement that Moshe received the Torah from Sinai, and why it details the transmission of the Tradition: while non-Jews contrived their own ethical systems, the ethics of the Jews are from Sinai, of Divine origin, and the basis of all ethics. — trans.]

15* For all G-d created in the world He created *la’asos*, in order to be worked with, fixed, completed, and perfected. See *Bereishis Rabbah*, 11:6 and Rashi’s commentary ad. loc. *Zohar* I, 47b ff., Or *HaTorah* on the verse Gen. 1:3 (p. 514 and p. 717). After the sin of eating from the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, good and evil,

(There is a well-known story about the Rebbe, my sainted father-in-law [R. Yoseph Yitzchak Schneersohn ז"ל],¹⁶ which illustrates this point. On one of his journeys, he encountered several men who were arguing and expressing differing opinions about the relationship of Torah to political systems, and debating with which system the Torah agreed. Each one of them brought forth as proof a source from Torah in support of his ideology. When they asked the Rebbe for his opinion on this question, he answered: "The Torah, since it is the absolute perfection of truth and goodness, contains within itself all of the best ideas which one may find in all ideologies.")

[This pre-eminent perfection and superiority of Torah apply not only to moral and political systems.] The Torah is, furthermore, the most elevated and the supreme wisdom in relation to all sciences and systems of knowledge — as it is written,¹⁷ "For it is your wisdom and understanding in the eyes of the nations."

Moreover [not only does Torah encompass all perfection found within the world] but, indeed, the entire vivifying and sustaining flow of life into the world (even into the Supernal Worlds)^{17a} depends upon (one minute detail of) Torah.¹⁸

which had been formerly totally separate, became mixed together. Nothing is pure any longer; there is no good without evil and vice-versa. (*Torah Or* end of "Toldos," *Toras Chaim*, "Toldos," 14b, and in several other places. See *Likutei Dibburim* I, 87a.)

16. From a letter dated the 4th of Teves, 5698 (mimeo).

17. Deuteronomy 4:6.

17a. ["Worlds," in Kabbalah and Chassidus, refers to the different stages of spiritual and physical existence, and levels of concealment of G-d. All the worlds are elevated and sustained through the performance of the commandments (*mitzvos*) and study of Torah; they depend on the appropriate observance of even its most minute detail, for the Torah is the wisdom of G-d. See below, n. 34a. — trans.]

18. *Kuntres Acharon, Tanya V*, s.v. "David! Do you call them songs!", Essay VI. *Derech Mitzvosecha* 41 a-b, and elsewhere.

Nevertheless, all these profound attributes and superior virtues still do not constitute the essence of Torah. The essence of Torah is that it is "completely united with the Infinite Light of the *En Sof* which is en clothed within it in a perfect and total unity."¹⁸ Therefore, since all the worlds are as absolute nothingness in relation to the *En Sof*, so are they also in relation to the Torah; and hence, in this light, "It is no praise whatsoever to extol the Torah as the vivifying life force of all Worlds, since they are reckoned as nothingness itself."¹⁸ Rather — by virtue of its quintessential point, which is its union with the Infinite Light of the *En Sof*, the Torah automatically includes every kind of superior virtue and perfection found in the world; and by virtue of this same quintessential point — the Torah is also the world's vivifying flow of life, etc.

Now even though the quintessential point of *all* parts of Torah is that they are united with the Light of the *En Sof*, in truth, nevertheless, the primary expression of this point is in Chassidus. (As was said of Chassidus in the *ma'amar*, it (alone) is the effusion of the *En Sof* that is found in *Radla*.)

This is primarily true of Chassidus because the state of *En Sof* which is found in all other parts of the Torah is clothed in a certain form, a form which defines and "expresses" the nature of that part. The form of that particular part of the Torah (*peshat* — the plain meaning; *remez* — the hinted, intimated meaning; *drush* — the homiletic, expounded meaning; *sod* — the esoteric meaning) conceals the unformed abstractness^{18a} of the *En Sof* which is clothed therein. This form is a concealing garment that "cannot" be changed. Chassidus,

18a. ["unformed abstractness" — literally, "Simplicity." By "Simplicity" is meant here not any "lack," of course, but rather the most absolute level of the *En Sof*, totally transcending description, boundary, form, or composition. That is, it is entirely abstracted from and beyond any form — even the forms and qualities of "perfection." It is utter Essence. — trans.]

however, is not bounded and defined by any form. And since those "forms" through which the ideas of Chassidus are revealed are — in the words of the Psalmist¹⁹ "like a garment that You will change, and *they will be changed*" (therefore, Chassidus includes *all* the four levels of *Pardes* [*peshat, remez, drush, sod*] and gives life to them, as will later be explained),²⁰ the form does not truly conceal the unformed abstractness^{18a} of the *En Sof* within.

19. Psalms 102:27. As it is known, there are two types of "garments," those that it is impossible to exchange for others (such as garments of "skin and flesh with which You have enclothed me") [Job 10:11, and ordinary garments which one can change. In other words, the four approaches to Torah, *Pardes*, are fixed forms through which it can be comprehended; the "garments" of Chassidus, however, are not fixed in any form. — trans.]

20. Chapter VIII ff.



IV

Some Ramifications of the Concept of Moshiach

We can further clarify the definition of the essential nature of Chassidus through explaining the inner meaning of the idea of *Moshiach* [the Messiah]. For "From the reward (of a commandment) we will know its essential nature";²¹ and since it is through (the dissemination²² of the fountains of) Chassidus that "The Master Comes,"²³ that is the King Moshiach,

21. *Tanya*, ch. 39 (p. 53a).

[Here R. Schneur Zalman bases his interpretation on the saying found in *Avos* 4:2 [*Ethics of the Fathers*], "The reward of a *mitzvah* (commandment) is a *mitzvah*," and takes it to mean that reward of a *mitzvah* reflects the essential nature of that *mitzvah* itself. — trans.]

22. In reference to the specific use of the expression "dispersal, spreading out" [or "dissemination"] of the fountains, see below, Chapter XXI.

23. The response of the Moshiach when asked when he would come — as the Ba'al Shem Tov wrote in the well-known letter concerning the matter of the ascension of his soul on Rosh HaShana, 5507, printed at the end of the book *Ben Poras Yoseph*; and in a book of collected letters of the Ba'al Shem Tov and his students (Lwow 5683, wherein the publisher writes that he copied this letter from the one hand-written by the Ba'al Shem Tov's son-in-law, R. Yechiel — which was signed personally by the Ba'al Shem Tov). This letter is also printed in the book *Ginzei Nistaros* (Jerusalem, 5684) I, ch. 65, — and a portion of it is also printed at the beginning of both the books *Kesser Shem Tov* and the Maggid of Mezritch's *Likutei Amarim*.

For an explanation of the Ba'al Shem Tov's question and the Moshiach's answer according to Chassidus, see *Likutei Dibburim* II, collections 16-18.

[The Ba'al Shem Tov often related certain spiritual experiences he had during his lifetime, when his soul "ascended" to spiritual heights, and he

then from the concept of Moshiach — the reward, we will know what is the essential nature of Chassidus.²⁴

With the coming of the Moshiach, many sublime events will be inaugurated. For example, Israel (and the *Shechinah*)²⁵

communicated with the souls of other great sages. In this case, it was the soul of the Moshiach. When the Ba'al Shem Tov asked the Moshiach when he would come, the Moshiach answered, "When your wellsprings will be dispersed abroad," using the words of Proverbs 5:16.

The Talmud (*Sanhedrin* 98a) relates a similar story concerning R. Yohua ben Levi, who also asked this question of Eliyahu the prophet, and was told to ask the Moshiach himself. To R. Yohua, the Moshiach answered, "Today." When the Moshiach did not come, R. Yohua returned bitterly depressed to Eliyahu, who explained to him that this answer meant, "Today — if you will listen to My voice" (Psalms 95:7). That is, Moshiach could come only when Israel listened to the voice of G-d.

The question raised in *Likutei Dibburim* is why, then, after such a clear, unequivocal answer, was it necessary for the Ba'al Shem Tov to ask the Moshiach again? The answer given there is that the Ba'al Shem Tov was the "Moshe" of general Chassidus, a "shepherd" of Israel who was concerned for the least of his flock. Known for his great love for all Israel, the Ba'al Shem Tov saw the good in each Jew, and the radiance in every mitzvah the Jews performed. Perceiving the great self-sacrifice of the Jews, the pain which they were suffering in Exile, the splendor of all their mitzvos, and thus the way in which they were listening to G-d's voice, he thought that it was now time for the Moshiach to come, and thus asked the question once more.

Likutei Dibburim further explains the metaphor of "wellsprings," used in the Moshiach's answer to refer to the Ba'al Shem Tov's teachings. Rashi comments that the verse, "When your wellsprings will be dispersed abroad," means to acquire disciples. The Moshiach's answer thus indicated that he would come when the Ba'al Shem Tov would acquire disciples and his teachings would become publicly and commonly known everywhere. Chassidus explains the meaning of the term "wellspring" even further: a wellspring is a small, narrow, dripping stream; a river, however, is wide and ranges over great areas, carrying the water far from its place of origin to the outside (*chutza*), to places which are not even fit for it. In like manner, Chassidus had to spread abroad, become so popular that everyone would be able to know the Ba'al Shem Tov's teachings, and become familiar with this G-dly understanding. — trans.]

24. See also the *ma'amar*, "Padah B'Shalom," cited above (ch. 375ff.), where it is written that this revelation of "Chassidus" is analogous to the future revelations of the Era of Moshiach.

25. As the Sages have said (*Megillah* 29a), "The Holy One

will be redeemed from Exile. Even greater — "All Israel will be great sages, they will know the things that are now concealed and will attain an understanding of their Creator . . . 'For the earth shall be full of the knowledge of G-d . . .'"²⁶ Still more, there will be a change and great innovation in the works of Creation.²⁷

Blessed be He will return with them from Exile."

[*Shechinah* refers to the Divine Presence, the immanence of G-d, literally, the "Indwelling," from the words "And I will dwell within them" in Exodus 25:8. — trans.]

26. Maimonides, end of the *Laws of Kings*, — that, even in the times of the Sanctuary, the whole earth was not "filled with the knowledge of G-d . . ."

27. See Maimonides, *ibid.*, that in the Era of Moshiach there will be no jealousy, etc., and there will be an abundance of all delights, etc. — predictions which he included despite his view (*ibid.*, beginning of the chapter) that the prophecies of the Era of Moshiach, "The wolf will lie down with the lamb . . ." are only to be taken allegorically and not literally. How much more so then will there be great changes according to the view (as also favored by Kabbalah and Chassidus) that the descriptions are to be taken literally. Examine also Ravad [R. Avraham ben David], who disputes Maimonides' allegorical interpretation (*Laws of Repentance* 8:2); *Avodas HaKodesh*, part 2, ch. 41, and elsewhere.

Perhaps the following explanation (although it is problematic) may be offered as a solution to this difficult issue: that also according to Maimonides, there are two distinct stages to the Era of Moshiach after it has become certain that the Moshiach has arrived. "The earth will be filled with the knowledge of G-d . . ." (Isaiah 11:9) will be the first stage of the Redemption; and that is the period to which Maimonides refers in the entire chapter cited above [wherein there will be no great change in the nature of creation]. As Maimonides does write in the *Laws of Repentance* 9:2, the verse "and the earth will be filled with the knowledge . . .," refers to the period in which the world will operate according to its natural order.

According to this explanation, one can answer the question of the *Lechem Mishneh* (*Laws of Repentance* 8:7). What is written in the Talmud and Maimonides concerning the Era of Moshiach, "There is no difference between the present age and the Era of

(And concerning the Talmudic saying that "The sole difference between the present and the days of the Moshiach is

Moshiach save only the servitude to the nations," refers only to *beginning* of the Redemption. (This further clarifies and supports the answer of the *Kesef Mishneh* (*Laws of Kings*, beginning of ch. 11) to the criticism of the Ravad, *ibid.*): for Maimonides is consistent with his own argument, that at the *beginning* of the Redemption, the Moshiach will not need to perform miracles and signs to prove himself, and he will not need to be able to "sniff certainty." Afterwards, however, Maimonides also agrees that there will be a great *change and innovation* in the world, and that what is written in Isaiah 2:4, "They will beat their swords into plowshares," is to be taken literally and not only allegorically. And since they will be abolished in the second period (at least) of the Redemption, that is a proof they are not ornaments.

[The *Lechem Mishneh* asks how Maimonides can in one place follow the Talmudic opinion of Shmuel — that there will be no great change in Creation with the coming of the Moshiach, and that all the prophecies are allegorical . . . and elsewhere follow the other opinion of the Sages, that there indeed will be a great change in Creation, and that the prophecies are to be taken literally. The *Lechem Mishneh's* question in part involves a discussion of whether one is allowed to carry a sword on Shabbos (Talmud, *Shabbos* 63a). In this Talmudic passage, the Sages rule against it, for it constitutes the prohibited act of carrying on Shabbos. R. Eliezer, however, maintains that swords are *ornaments*, and therefore one is allowed to carry them outside. The Sages reply by citing the Messianic prophecy of Isaiah 2:4, that "they shall beat their swords into plowshares . . ." If so, a sword is not an ornament, but a lethal weapon which will be abolished in the Era of Moshiach. On the other hand, the contrasting opinion — that these prophecies are only allegorical — will therefore also hold that there will be swords in the Era of Moshiach, and that they are ornaments, and consequently one can carry a sword. The *Lechem Mishneh's* question, then, is how Maimonides can rule in the *Laws of Shabbos* that one *cannot* carry a sword on Shabbos — for that means he would have to take the prophecies literally — and at the same time follow the opinion of Shmuel?

The Rebbe answers the *Lechem Mishneh's* question by proposing that when Maimonides maintains that there will be no difference, and that the prophecies are to be taken allegorically, he is referring to the *first* stage of the Redemption. However, in the *second* stage, Maimonides also agrees that there will be a great change, and the prophecies should be taken literally.

This explanation, the Rebbe adds, clarifies further the *Kesef Mishneh's* answer to the Ravad's criticism of Maimonides. Maimonides maintains that the Moshiach will not have to perform miracles to prove himself; but the

delivery from servitude to foreign powers,"²⁸ this refers only to the beginning of the Era of Moshiach.²⁹ In particular, according to *Raya Mehemna*,³⁰ this statement was meant to pertain only to ignorant people, and not to those learned in Torah.)

Continuing the innovations to accompany the coming of the Moshiach, the aspect of Divinity which transcends nature will then be revealed. (Therefore, the Name of G-d will be pronounced³¹ as it is written,³² for throughout the entire world

Ravad says this is not so, for when Ben Koziva (Bar Kochba) said that he was the Moshiach, the Sages tested him to see if he could answer questions "with his sense of smell" — that is, be so learned as to instantaneously know the answers. When he could not, they killed him. This proves, the Ravad says, that the Moshiach will have to perform miracles and signs.

The *Kesef Mishneh* answers this criticism of the Ravad as follows: All that the Ravad says about Bar Kochba, etc. is true if one follows the account given in *Sanhedrin* 93b. However, an alternate account given in the *Midrash Rabbah* on Lamentations relates that Bar Kochba was killed by the non-Jews. Maimonides is obviously following the Midrash, the *Kesef Mishneh* answers, because the version in *Sanhedrin* 93b is not consistent with the opinion of Shmuel — that there will be no difference between the present and the Era of Moshiach save servitude to the nations. The Midrash, however, is consistent with Shmuel's opinion, which is the one Maimonides follows, and that is why Maimonides accepts its version over that in *Sanhedrin*. Thus, there is no contradiction, and Maimonides is consistent with his own reasoning. — trans.]

28. *Berachos* 34b; and see cross-references there. Maimonides, *Laws of Repentance*, end of ch. 9. *Laws of Kings* 12:2.

29. See *Zohar* I, 139a. And see above, n. 27.

30. *Zohar* III, 125a. Explained in *Iggeres HaKodesh*, Sect. XXVI.

[*Raya Mehemna* is a part of the *Zohar*. — trans.]

31. As is evident (and see also *Iggeres HaKodesh*, Sect. XIX (p. 128a), *Likutei Torah* "Vayikra" (6d), "Shir HaShirim" (31c), the *kri* indicates the obvious, while the *ksiv* indicates the concealed.

[Numerous words in Torah are not pronounced as they are written. The pronunciation is called *kri* (read) and the spelling *ksiv* (written). The Tetragrammaton, the Name of G-d composed of four letters, is written *Yud, Hai, Vav, Hai*. The pronunciation in prayer is *Ado-nay*. The "ordinary" or colloquial pronunciation is *Hava-ye*. — trans.]

32. *Pesachim* 50a.

there will be a revelation of the Name of *Hava'ye*^{32a} — He was, He is, He will be, simultaneously³³ — the Name that is beyond time and space; and this revelation will be similar to that which was manifest in the times of the Sanctuary.)³⁴

These events, furthermore, will be innovations not only in this world, but their spiritual corollaries also will be introduced into all the worlds, for the behavior of the Supernal Worlds^{34a}

32a. [*Hava'ye* — the Ineffable Divine Name, or Tetragrammaton, composed of the four letters *yud-hai-vav-hai*, and pronounced in conversation as *Hava-ye*. See note 31 above. There are many Hebrew names for G-d in Scripture, each of which expresses a different aspect or attribute of the Divinity. *Hava'ye* refers to G-d the Infinite, transcending creation and nature, time and space completely — the level of Divinity which brings everything into existence *ex nihilo*. The name *Elokim* represents the level of G-d which conceals the Infinite Light and life-force, for this Infinite force is too intense for finite creatures to endure. *Elokim* is the power of G-d which makes the world appear as though it exists naturally and independently by itself. Therefore, *Elokim* has the numerical value of the word *hateva* (nature). In the Era of Moshiach, however, the level of *Hava'ye* will be revealed and perceived throughout nature. — trans.]

33. *Zohar* III, 257, end of side b. *Sha'ar HaYichud VeHaEmunah*, ch. 7 (82a).

34. But the revelation of the Era of Moshiach will be even greater than the revelation that existed in the time of the Sanctuary. For in the Era of Moshiach, the revelation of the name *Hava'ye* will be manifest throughout the entire world (not limited as it was during the days of the Sanctuary). This is analogous to the explanation in *Likutei Torah*, "Drushei Rosh Hashana" 57c, of the manner in which the First Sanctuary was superior to the Second: during the time of the First, the revelation of Divinity pervaded throughout the borders of Israel). [During the Second, it was limited to the Sanctuary. In the Era of Moshiach, though, this Infinite Light will pervade the entire world. — trans.]

34a. [*Supernal Worlds* and "Worlds" — R. Zalman Posner, in his footnotes to the Hebrew-English edition of the third part of *Tanya*, *Iggeres HaTeshuvah*, p. 343, writes: "Kabbalah and Chassidus explain the difficulty in creating a finite physical universe by an Infinite Creator with the concept of *zimtzum*, or contraction, concealment. There was a series of concealments of the presence and infinitude of the Creator, resulting ultimately, in our physical universe, in the virtually total obscuring of G-d. The non-

proceeds according to the order of behavior of this world. (*Rosh Chodesh* and the Holy Days, for example — into which is diffused an additional measure of Light — are established Above in accordance with their establishment Below.)³⁵ And because the coming of the Moshiach will completely transform the general condition of this world and all its particular aspects,

corporeal intermediate steps between the Creator and this material world are called 'Worlds.' " Thus "Worlds" refers to the basic levels of physical and spiritual existence in the creative process. The differentiation is according to their level of concealment of the Divine Light, the higher worlds receiving in a more revealed form.

In general, there are Four Worlds: *Atzilus* (World of Emanation — a state of proximity and relative unity with G-d); *Beriah* (World of Creation); *Yetzirah* (World of Formation); *Asiyah* (World of Action or Making — the final stage in the creative process). In illustration of this concept, the Glossary to the Soncino *Tanya* (p. 774) contains the example of one who desires to build a house. The following four stages are necessary: 1) A general idea, as yet undefined; 2) A definite idea of the house in one's mind; 3) The architectural plan or design; 4) The actual building of the house.

"Higher" (or "Supernal") and "Lower" refer to stages closer or more distant from the Creator, with a more or less deeper awareness of Him (not, of course, implying physical distance). Lower Worlds appear to be independent entities apart from the Creator.

Through the performance of mitzvos and subordination of the physical world to the Divine purpose, all Worlds are elevated, and experience a clearer apprehension of G-d. Cf. *Mystical Concepts in Chassidism*, ch. 2 (*Tzimtzum*) and ch. 4 (*Worlds*), Soncino *Tanya*, pp. 818-822; pp. 852-857. — trans.]

35. See *Rosh HaShana* 8, beginning side b., *Yerushalmi*, *Rosh HaShana* ch. 1:3, *Tanchuma* (Buber), "Bo," 13.

[Unlike the Shabbos, which follows an inexorable cycle, the Hebrew months are determined by the Court, based on Biblical sanction. Since the lunar cycle is about 29½ days, some months must be 29 days long and others 30. Based on testimony of witnesses who saw the new moon, the Court declared that day *Rosh Chodesh* and counted the days for the next festival (Passover, for example, on the fifteenth). *Rosh Chodesh* then was always on the thirtieth day or the thirty-first of the past month. Then reconciling the 354 days of 12 lunar months with the 365 days of the solar year created more complexity. The Court, depending on when the witnesses arrived to testify, was empowered to add a thirteenth month periodically. Briefly, then, the Holy Days were dependent on the actions of the human Court. — trans.]

there will be likewise a corresponding change in the Supernal Worlds.

Yet, in spite of all that has been explained above — and the great magnitude, the sublimity, and the wondrousness of all these matters — in truth, they are still only the ramifications of the essential point of the Moshiach.



V

The Essence of the Concept of Moshiach

The essential idea of the Moshiach is — *Yechida*. As it is known,³⁶ David possessed the level of *Nefesh*, Eliyahu of *Ruach*, Moshe of *Neshama*, Adam of *Chaya*, and the Moshiach will possess the level of *Yechida*.^{36a}

The superior quality of the *Yechida* in relation to the other four levels of “*NaRaNaCh*” [the acronym for *Nefesh*, *Ruach*, *Neshama*, *Chaya*] (within the context of these five levels which every individual soul possesses)³⁷ is that the four categories of

36. *Ma’amar* “*VaYidaber Elokim es kol HaDevarim*” 5699 (second), ch. 2, [*Sefer HaMa’amorim* 5699, p. 207] in the name of the Ramaz. Examine *Sha’ar* (and *Sefer*) *HaGilgulim*, at the beginning; and elsewhere. Here is not the place to go into detail.

36a. [These five names are the five levels of the soul. In rough translation: *Nefesh* (“Vitality”) is the lowest grade and life-force of the body, the natural soul and simple life of man. *Ruach* (“Spirit”) the next grade, is the spiritual faculty vivifying man’s emotional attributes. *Neshama* (“Soul”) is the Divine Force vivifying the intellect. *Chaya* (“Living”) is an even more refined G-dly level. *Yechida* is the Divine spark itself enclothed in the most refined spark of the soul. *Yechida* is the innermost point of the soul, “united” and one with G-d. It represents total *bittul*, self-nullification, nothingness. Since every one of Israel possesses each of the five, four obscure and one predominant, *Yechida* in this sense is expressed in *mesiras nefesh*, literal self-sacrifice, martyrdom if need be.

In the text, the five persons mentioned, David, Eliyahu, Moshe, Adam, and the Moshiach, each possess the *general level* of each of these five categories. The Moshiach possesses the *general Yechida* of all souls. — trans.]

37. See Midrash *Bereishis Rabbah* (14:9), *Devarim Rabbah* (2:37): Five names are given to the soul — *Nefesh*, *Ruach*, *Neshama*, *Chaya*, *Yechida*. In some editions of the Midrash, there are changes in this order, and also in *piyuttim* [liturgical hymns], etc. But in the writings of the Arizal [R. Isaac Luria, the great Kabbalist of Safed

NaRaNaCh are each particular individual levels — and the category of *Yechida* is the *essence* of the soul, which transcends particulars, as indicated by its name ("Sole, Only One"). It is important to clarify that although it is from the category of *Yechida* — the essence of the soul — that the four levels of *NaRaNaCh* are drawn, this does not mean that the state of *Yechida* may be classed as a source and "generalization" of these particular levels. For the very term *Yechida* indicates that it is a simple, non-composite Unity which excludes any relation whatsoever to details, even the relation of being their source (as is known from the difference between *Yachid* — Sole, Only — and *Echod* — One).³⁸ *Yechida*, rather, is the quintessence of the soul, and from it also issue the four categories of *NaRaNaCh*.^{38a}

Now in the same way that the *Yechida* of every individual soul is that soul's quintessential point, so also is the level of *Yechida* the quintessence of the (life-force and) soul of the general Order of Progression of Worlds [*Hishtalshelus*].^{38b} This latter category of the *Yechida* of the entire world (which is the level of the Moshiach) is — the essential core of the life-force that completely transcends the limitations of form. And from

1543-72 C.E.] (*Etz Chaim*, "Sha'ar 42," beginning; *Sha'ar HaGilgulim* at the beginning; and elsewhere), and in Chassidic literature this order *specifically* is stated. Examine also *Zohar* I, 81a, and see also 206a ad. loc.

38. See *Immrei Binah*, "Sha'ar HaKriyas Shema," ch. 8. See also *Likutei Torah*, "Balak" 70a.

[The text here means that the difference between *Yachid* (Sole, Only) and *Echod* (One) is the difference between G-d's unity as expressed within the multiplicity of creation (His Oneness, *Echod*) — and His essential unity above multiplicity (His Soleness, *Yachid*) in relation to which nothing has any existence. — trans.]

38a. [*Hishtalshelus* — "Order of Progression of Worlds," literally, "Chain of Worlds," meaning the giving of life to the various levels of creation through a process of gradual and ordered descent and downward gradation, by means of numerous contractions of the Divine force. See n. 34a for some English references. — trans.]

this central, seminal point, all the particular qualities, which are the general *NaRaNaCh* of all Creation, are derived.

For the Essence of the life-force is altogether without limitations. It is unlimited not only in terms of immortality, i.e., it is not subject to temporal change — for every essence is unchanging — but it is also unlimited in regards to quality and character. It is absolutely and completely perfect. Hence, when the category of *Yechida* will be manifested in the worlds, and they will be imbued with the Essence of the life-force, they thereby will become consummately perfect and complete.

(And herein is also one of the reasons why there will be eternal life in the Future to Come.³⁹ At present, since only an extension of the life-force is elicited into the world, there is the presence of death, because within the category of extension [as opposed to Essence] there can be change — even unto cessation and destruction. In the future, however, the Essence of the life-force will pervade, and every essence is immutable.)

39. See *Sanhedrin*, end of 92a. (And see also the *Midrash Ne'elam* "VaYerah" (Zohar I, 114b): "The righteous do not return to dust . . . but endure forever." The opinions of Maimonides and Nachmanides about the time when the essential part of the reward will be manifest, and the decisions concerning this are well known. (*Likutei Torah* "Tzav" 15c; "Shabbos Shuva" 65, end of side d; *Derech Mitzvosecha* 14b.

[Concerning this question of the nature of eternal life, Maimonides is of the opinion that after the first stage, which is the Resurrection of the Dead, the final and ultimate stage will be the existence of the soul without the body (the World to Come). Nachmanides disagrees, and is of the opinion that the Resurrection of the Dead is the ultimate stage, wherein the body and soul exist together. Chassidus agrees with Nachmanides. — trans.]



VI

Chassidus as a New "Life-Force"

As has been said previously [in Chapter IV], from the reward for (the dissemination of) Chassidus we can know its essential nature. Now all the innovations which Chassidus introduced ([A] into Torah — which includes bringing the "esoteric" part to open revelation;⁴⁰ [B] into the service of man — behavior beyond that which is required by the letter of the law, and changing the nature of one's character;⁴¹ [C] into the

40. It is only in relation to *Hishtalshelus* [the Order of Progression and gradual descent of the life-force of Torah into the worlds] that this limitation exists, i.e., that the portions of *peshat*, *remez*, and *drush* are revealed and the esoteric part, *sod*, is concealed. In relation to the *essence and inner being* of Torah, however, which is the level of *Yechida*, there is no division between the esoteric part and the rest of the other portions, and even the esoteric, secret part can be revealed.

41. In terms of the four levels of *Nefesh*, *Ruach*, *Neshama*, and *Chaya*, a person retains his selfhood, but he does serve his Creator. Since his self is undiminished, therefore: 1) His intention in his service of G-d is for "revelations" [the desirable consequences of serving G-d] (in general, this is the idea of behavior according to the standards of the law, as explained in the *ma'amar*, "Padah B'Shalom," referred to above, ch. 376); for even on the level of *Chaya* there is some objective, some self-interest (*ma'amar* "Zos HaTrumah" 5670 [Sefer HaMa'amorim 5670 p. 151], *Kuntres HaAvodah* ch. 5); 2) The nature of his character traits is not changed, but rather he exploits and makes use of those attributes which he already naturally possesses to love G-d, etc. On the level of *Yechida*, however, he attains complete nullification of his own "existence," and therefore: A) There is no self-interest in his service of G-d whatsoever — which is behavior beyond what is required by the law; B) The very nature of his character traits are also changed (from severity to kindness, or kindness to severity, etc.).

world in general — the arousal of the world from its spiritual “unconsciousness”⁴² were not separate innovations originating *individually* and *independently*. Chassidus, rather, is a new life-force, an “essence-vitality” which is the state of *Yechida*.⁴³ When, consequently, this new flow of life was brought into the world (general Chassidus through the Ba’al Shem Tov, the Maggid of Mezritch^{43a} et al., and afterwards the teachings of Chabad Chassidus⁴⁴ through the “new soul”⁴⁵ of

42. For this “unconsciousness” is only in relation to the manifest levels of the soul, but does not extend to its *essence*, which is the level of *Yechida*; and therefore it is possible to arouse it.

43. See the *ma’amar* “VaYidaber,” 5699 loc. cit. The innermost part of the Torah that the Moshiach will teach is by virtue of his level of *Yechida*. It is noteworthy that Ahiyah the Shilonite — who was the teacher of the Ba’al Shem Tov, the founder of Chassidus (which is the inner part of the Torah, and a taste of the Inner Torah that will be revealed in the future) — is called “Master of *Chaya-Yechida*” (*Sefer HaSichos* 5700, p. 159). So also are the leaders and heads of Israel in every generation — those leaders who revealed the teachings of Chassidus, in the category of the general *Yechida* of all Israel (*ma’amar* “Padah B’Shalom” in *Sha’ar HaTeshuvah* of the Mittler Rebbe, R. Dov-Ber Schneuri ז”ל, ch. 12).

[Ahiyah the Shilonite — a Biblical figure mentioned in I Kings 11:29ff., and in Maimonides’ Introduction to his *Mishneh Torah*. In his list of all the generations, he mentions that Ahiyah was one of those who left Egypt. This is based on the Talmud (*Bava Basra* 121b). In the Jerusalem Talmud (*Eruvin* 5:1) it is written that “he was one of those who left Egypt, a teacher of Eliyahu.” — trans.]

43a. [The successor of the Ba’al Shem Tov was the “Maggid of Mezritch,” R. Dov-Ber ז”ל. — trans.]

44. Chabad Chassidus was that part of Chassidus itself which brought general Chassidus into the realm of understanding and comprehension by the “ChaBaD” [the three intellectual attributes — *Chochma* (Wisdom), *Binah* (Understanding), and *Da’as* (Knowledge).] Thereby, Chabad Chassidus revealed the *essence* of the inner part of Torah (*ma’amar* “Padah B’Shalom,” 5685, in the name of R. Sholom Dov-Ber ז”ל, given on Yud-Tes Kislev, 5679. See also *Likutei Sichos* Vol. IV, p. 1138).

[In the reference to *Likutei Sichos*, the Rebbe explains further that the Ba’al Shem Tov and his successor, the Maggid of Mezritch, revealed the

the Alter Rebbe, whose liberation we commemorate and celebrate today),⁴⁶ all aspects of the world then began to live

inner part of Torah, but their revelations were in a form higher than rational understanding and beyond intellectual comprehension — which could not easily be apprehended. The doctrines were trans-rational, appealing to faith, and called for a response of emotion largely. Intellect was not the obvious instrument for dealing with Chassidic teachings.

R. Schneur Zalman, the founder of Chabad Chassidus, articulated these doctrines in a form which intellect could comprehend. Thus he revealed the essence of the teachings of the inner part of Torah. That is, he was able to take that which totally transcended reason and logic, and bring it into the realm of intellect. One can accomplish such a feat only by penetrating to the essence of the inner part of Torah. For essence is that which is not limited to any particular forms — be they rational, or emotional. It is expressed, nevertheless, through all these forms. See below, Chapter VII, and n. 49. Hence the revelations of the Ba'al Shem Tov and the Maggid were the preparation for the revelation of the essence of the Inner Torah, which was accomplished through R. Schneur Zalman.

In this reference in *Likutei Sichos*, the Rebbe cites a discourse of the previous Rebbe of the year 5688 which further explains this concept. In that source, an analogy is made between the contributions of the founders of Chassidus, the Ba'al Shem Tov and the Maggid, to the contributions of the Patriarchs before the Torah was given at Sinai. The Patriarchs fulfilled all the commandments of the Torah even before it was given, (see *Kiddushin* 82a). Yet as the Midrash says (*Shir HaShirim Rabbah* 1:3), this was but the "fragrance," not the substance of Torah. The revelation at Sinai, however, was the essence of Torah. Just as the deeds and teachings of the Patriarchs were a preparation for the giving of the Torah at Sinai through Moshe, so also the Ba'al Shem Tov and the Maggid prepared the way for the revelation of the essence of Chassidus through R. Schneur Zalman. — trans.]

45. *Sefer HaSichos* 5705, p. 127 ff. See Also *Likutei Torah*, "Shir HaShirim" (50a) for an explanation of "new souls." And see there for cross-references.

[By "new souls" is meant a soul which was not included in that of Adam's, the first man. According to the Arizal, there are two kinds of souls: 1) those included in that of Adam; 2) those not part of the soul of Adam and higher than all others — for example, the soul of *Moshiach*. The 600,000 who left Egypt were "general," containing the sparks of the souls of Israel of later generations. We may speculate that there are extensions, as it were, carrying further the service and efforts of the original 600,000. The "new" souls are not "extensions" carrying further and amplifying what existed earlier, but "pioneering," forging new paths in Torah and service of G-d. — trans.]

46. [The day of "Yud-Tes Kislev" is the date of R. Schneur

with a new vitality — an “essence-life-force”. And thereby, [from the all-pervasive flow of this essential life-force,]^{46a} all those innovations were engendered.

Zalman’s release from Russian prison, where he had been arrested for his teaching of Chassidus, and falsely accused.] The festival of Yud-Tes Kislev marks the turning point at which Chassidus was presented in intellectual terms (*Toras Sholom*, p. 114, and see *Likutei Dibburim* I, 22a ff.). Through this bringing of Chassidus into rational language, the essence of Chassidus was expressed, as explained in n. 44. It is noteworthy that Yud-Tes Kislev is called the “Rosh HaShana of Chassidus.” The term “Rosh HaShana” expresses inclusiveness [not only the particular] and on Rosh HaShana there is elicited “the depth and innermost . . . from the core and essence of the Light of the *En Sof*” (*Iggeres HaKodesh* of R. Sholom Dov-Ber זצ”ל on Yud-Tes Kislev 5662, printed in a facsimile in the Introduction to *Kuntres U’Ma’ayon*, p. 17).

[For further discussion of Yud-Tes Kislev in English, see *The Arrest and Liberation of Rabbi Schneur Zalman of Liadi: The History of Yud-Tes Kislev*, by A.C. Glitzenstein, translated by J.I. Schochet (Brooklyn: Kehot), 1964. See also *Rabbi Schneur Zalman of Liadi* by Nissan Mindel (Brooklyn: Kehot) 1969. — trans.]

46a. [“essential life-force”: It should be clarified that in the phrase “essential life-force” used here as well as other places in the text (as a translation of *chaiyus atzmi*), the adjective “essential” does not mean “important” — but refers to Essence. — trans.]



VII

Oil: A Metaphor for Chassidus

For the same reason [that it is the Essence of the life-force], Chassidus is compared⁴⁷ to *oil*, which represents the "secret of secrets."⁴⁸

47. This analogy of Chassidus to oil is even more appropriate after Yud-Tes Kislev ("after Petersburg"), as expressed in the well-known saying of the Rebbe Sholom Dov-Ber ז"ל about this event: "Just as the olive, when it is squeezed and pounded, gives forth its oil . . . similarly, it was only through the accusations of Petersburg that the essence was revealed . . ." (*Toras Sholom*, p.26).

[Students of Chabad note the striking difference in the style of R. Schneur Zalman's teachings before his arrest and after his release, "before Petersburg" and "after Petersburg." His earlier teachings were brief, pithy, difficult to absorb. His later works were expansive, rich in elaboration, no less deep but more accessible because of the more generous exposition. The fact that the hardships and ominous arrest marked the turning point is not fortuitous. The "oil" could only come forth after "pounding." Chassidic tradition interprets the arrest as symbolic of the test of the validity of Chassidus and its "right" to prevail. The release demonstrated that the "wellsprings may spread abroad" without hindrance. — trans.]

48. *Immrei Binah*, "Sha'ar HaKriyas Shema," ch. 54ff. Examine there further the difference between "wine" (the category of secret) and "oil" (the secret of secrets). Wine, through its being withheld and concealed by grapes, gains strength and power when it is finally pressed. Oil, on the other hand, through being contained and withheld in the olive, does not gain any additional power at all. Thus wine is in the category of concealment — and has the numerical value of the word *sod* ["secret"]. (Hence it derives strength from being withheld and concealed.) Oil, on the other hand, transcends "concealment" and "revelation" (and therefore the constraints of concealment do not give it any additional strength). From this it is understood that Chassidus, which is likened to oil, is also above "concealment" and "revelation" (and therefore it has the power to bring out revelation from concealment, as explained above in n. 40).

Oil symbolizes the distilled essence of everything. Hence it necessarily possesses the following two characteristics: on the one hand, it is in itself distinct and separate from everything (for were it to be bound to any one *particular* thing, it could not then be the essential aspect of *every* thing); yet at the same time, because it is "essence," it must also pervade and be found within everything,⁴⁹ for the essence, by definition, exists and is found everywhere. This concept, like all matters pertaining to the Inner Torah,^{49a} is also expressed in the Revealed Torah,^{49b} even in an actual *Halacha* [a practical law]: on the one hand, oil does not mix with any liquids,⁵⁰ and conversely, it penetrates

49. See *Torah Or* 39a; 110d; *Likutei Torah* "Naso" 27d; *Immrei Binah*, *ibid.*, ch. 56 (54b).

[The "essence" is apart from all particular aspects, manifestations, or qualities derived from it, and yet is the foundation and central point of everything. "Essence refers to the absolute, fundamental, non-derivative state of any being, the state which transcends revelation. It is non-composite. Manifestation does not involve the Essence of being, the Essence being the Source of the manifestation . . .," R. Zalman Posner, *op. cit.*, p. 15. See further there. — trans.]

49a. [The "Inner Torah" is a term used to describe the esoteric aspects of Torah, dealt with for example in Kabbalah, etc. The "Revealed Torah" refers to the exoteric parts, e.g., the Talmud, its Commentaries, the Codes of Law. The Inner Torah (*Pnimiyus*) is also called the "soul" of the Torah, and the Revealed Torah (*Niglah*) its "body." Just as the soul and body are correspondent to each other, so too, there is a correspondence of the Inner Torah to the Revealed Torah. — trans.]

49b. ["Revealed Torah" — see n. 49a above and Chapters VIII, XX. — trans.]

50. *Tevul Yom*, ch. 2, mishnah 5. Maimonides, *Laws of Impurity of Foods*, 8:10. (And even according to the opinion of R. Yochanan ben Nuri that "the two of them join together," the meaning is not that oil *mixes with* wine, but only that oil touches and adheres to wine — see *Immrei Binah*, *ibid.*, beginning 56). And see also *Shemos Rabbah* ch. 36:1.

[The discussion in the Mishnah to which the Rebbe is referring here concerns the question of the ritual purity of wine on top of which oil is floating, if someone who is ritually impure touches the oil. One opinion recorded in the Mishnah is that only the oil is contaminated because the two

into all matter.⁵¹

And thus, Chassidus is likened to oil, for it also possesses these two properties. By virtue of its nature as Essence, it does not mix with any other thing — it is the essential core^{51a} of the life-force, higher than any radiation and reflection;^{51b} on the other hand, Chassidus diffuses into and permeates every single thing, as explained above.

do not mix. R. Yochanan ben Nuri, however, holds that the wine is also contaminated because they are attached. The Rebbe clarifies that even according to R. Yochanan's opinion, though, the contamination is not because the oil *mixes* with the wine, but only because the oil touches and adheres to the wine. — trans.]

51. See *Chullin* 87 beginning of side a. *Shulchan Aruch*, *Yoreh Deah* 105:5.

51a. [See n. 46a above. — trans.]

51b. [The distinction made here is between "radiation" or "reflection" of the life-force, and its "Essence." The radiation of the life-force is merely a dimmed manifestation, or reflection of its source; while the source is the Essence of the Divine Light itself. Radiation is not G-d's Essence but only an emanation from Him, comparable to the body of the sun and its light (radiation). The *Essence* of his life-force, however, is that which encompasses and transcends creation, and permeates it in a *concealed* way. Chassidus is from this Essence of the life-force. — trans.]



VIII

The Four Levels of Torah Interpretation (Pardes)

The life and vitality which the teachings of Chassidus infuse into all aspects of the world (the "miniature world" of man, and the "real" world) issue from the vitality that Chassidus infuses into all the elements of Torah, and are generated from that life-force — for all the elements of Creation are drawn from⁵² and are derived through the Torah.

In the Torah itself there are four levels of interpretation: *peshat*, *remez*, *drush*, and *sod*,^{52a} and the teachings of Chassidus imbue each one with life and vitality. That is, in addition to the explanations which Chassidus gives to various subjects within *all four* parts of Torah (which negates the common conception that Chassidus arose in order to explain only the "esoteric" part of Torah)⁵³ — the learning of Chassidus also in-

52. *Zohar* II, 161a. See also *Bereishis Rabbah*, the beginning.

52a. [See n. 7a above. — trans.]

53. See *Toras Sholom*, beginning of p. 172: "The world thinks that Chassidus is an explanation of Kabbalah. That is a mistake . . ."

The conclusion of the statement, "Kabbalah is an explanation of Chassidus," can be understood as follows: Chassidus is the comprehension of Divinity. (*Yechida* is in the feminine form — it *receives* directly from *Yachid* [G-d, the Sole One]. And to note further what is written in *Etz Chaim*, "Sha'ar 42," beginning of ch. 1: "the small spark [of G-d] . . . enclothes itself in the small spark [of man] . . . and is called *Yechida*." Chassidus achieves this comprehension of G-d through the use of analogies, parallels, and explanations. Kabbalah, though, explains "the location" in terms of "the Body of the King," and the *Sefiros*, etc.

It should also be noted that the "revelation" of *Kesser* (analogous to darkness) is in *Chochma*. [As discussed in Chapter II,

fuses life into every subject (in all the parts of *Pardes* [the acronym for *peshat, remez, drush, sod*]) which we learn in Torah. And the subject then "lives" in an entirely different manner, with an Essential life-force. This vitality strikingly illuminates and profoundly deepens one's understanding of the idea.

Chassidus is the effusion of a new light from the innermost level of *Kesser*, the "Crown" or highest of the *Sefiros*. Kabbalah corresponds to *Chochma*, or "Wisdom," the next lower *Sefira*.] The "thorn" of the letter *yud* [in the Divine Name, and which represents *Kesser*] is revealed in the *yud*; *Yechida* is revealed in *Chaya*; *Ratzon* [Will] is revealed in *Chochma*, etc. But the intensity and essence of *Kesser* is expressed only through action.

[There are two major ideas being discussed in this footnote: 1) the manner in which Kabbalah is an explanation of Chassidus, and not *vice versa*; 2) the fact that Kabbalah is *only* an explanation, a reduced reflection, and does not capture the essence of Chassidus.

In the first part, the Rebbe distinguishes between the nature and methods of comprehending G-d in Chassidus and Kabbalah. Kabbalah is a descriptive "anatomy," so to speak, of the "Body of the King," i.e., the various manifestations of Divinity. It is interested in "indexing," "cataloging," "locating" these Divine revelations, assigning them "places" and names. Hence Kabbalah is concerned with the technical identities and relations between the *Sefiros*, the Worlds, the Order of *Hishtalshelus*, etc. Chassidus, however, is concerned with the direct perception of Divinity underlying all these terms, forms, "locations." It will thus employ all manner of explanation, example, parallels — including Kabbalah — in order to reveal the Essence of Divinity expressed in all levels. That is, Kabbalah is the technical explanation of these forms and terms in themselves; Chassidus only uses and is interested in these forms as a means for perceiving Divinity. As discussed earlier in Chapter III, Chassidus is not limited to any "forms".

Perhaps we can better understand this concept through the following analogy. A physician uses the particular studies of biology, chemistry, anatomy, etc. only to help him understand the essential life-force of the body, in order that he may be able to heal. He is not interested in anatomy in and for its own sake, but only insofar as it helps him further understand the nature of the body's existence. Similarly, Kabbalah is an "anatomy," so to speak, while Chassidus is concerned with the essential comprehension of G-d's being and existence.

In the second part of his footnote, the Rebbe further analyzes the nature of Kabbalah as a "revelation" of Chassidus. Perhaps one can again use the analogy of the physician to understand the Rebbe's idea: the anatomy text-

An analogy to this concept of additional illumination and vitality in the Revealed part of Torah,^{53a} and in a practical law is as follows: "The entire service of Yom Kippur is only acceptable when done by him" (the High Priest).⁵⁴ In the same manner that the holiness of Yom Kippur is effective for the special services of Yom Kippur, it also affects the daily and extra (Shabbos) sacrifices that are in themselves connected to all the regular days of the year; they, too, become sanctified through the sanctity of Yom Kippur.⁵⁵

book helps the physician understand the body; nevertheless, the text is only a schematized, secondary reflection of the body and not, of course, the essence of the body's life-force itself. Furthermore, the full force and essence of the physician's understanding of the human body is demonstrated not in his particular knowledge of anatomy, but in the practical effects of his healing. Similarly, Kabbalah, while it is a "revelation" and "explanation" of Chassidus, is *merely* an explanation, and not the essence of Chassidus itself. The essence of Chassidus is captured only in action, in practical deed.

Chassidus is likened above to the state of *Yechida*, to *Kesser*, to the thorn of the *Yud*, to Will — all of which refer to transcendent, concealed levels of G-d. *Yechida* is the quintessence of the soul transcending all form; *Kesser* transcends the *Ten Sefiros* and is analogous to darkness, a hidden level; the thorn of the *yud* is an unformed seminal point; Will is a general force (see n. 12 above). Now all these levels — although essentially beyond comprehension — are reflected in a reduced, dim way in their next lower manifestations. That is, in the *Sefiros*, a reduced reflection of *Kesser* is "revealed" in *Chochma*; the thorn of the *yud* is manifested in the *yud*, etc. Yet, these lower manifestations do not capture the essence of these higher transcendent levels. As explained in Chapter VII and n. 49 and 51a, "Essence" is that fundamental, non-derivative state which at once transcends all revelation, and yet permeates all. Hence in Chassidic terminology, the concept of "revelation" has a dual sense: it is a "manifestation," but *merely* a manifestation, a secondary reflection or glimmer of the "essence." Kabbalah, therefore, is an explanation, but only a dimmed manifestation of Chassidus. The true inner force and essence of Chassidus is expressed in action. For further explanation see Chapters XVII and XVIII below. — trans.]

53a. [See n. 49a above. — trans.]

54. *Yoma* 32, end of side b. And see there for cross-references. See also *Tzofnas Paneach* (by the Rogotchover Gaon) commentary on the Torah, beginning of Parshas "Korach."

55. So is it also in relation to prayers of Yom Kippur (the prayers correspond to the sacrifices, *Berachos* 26b). The cause for the

The same is true of Chassidus — the “Shabbos of Shabbos” of Torah:⁵⁶ it likewise affects and influences all the parts of Torah. For the four parts of *Pardes* are the four levels of the *Nefesh, Ruach, Neshama*, and *Chaya* of Torah, and Chassidus is the Torah’s *Yechida*; and the manifestation and revelation of the *Yechida* elevates all the other four levels of *NaRaNaCh*, as explained above.

addition of the *Ne’ilah* prayer (which contains the primary revelation of the fifth level — namely, *Yechida*) also affects the other four prayers of the day of Yom Kippur (even though they are also said on other days of the year). These other four correspond to the four levels of *Nefesh, Ruach, Neshama*, and *Chaya*. This effect of the *Yechida* is indicated in the expression, (*Likutei Torah*, end of “Pinchas”) “the day on which one is obligated to five prayers” (see *Likutei Sichos* IV, 1154).

[In this last reference, the Rebbe explains that just as in the times of the Sanctuary, the connection of the essence of the Jews to the Essence of G-d was accomplished through the entrance of the High Priest into the Holy of Holies on the day of Yom Kippur, in our times, this union is effected through the five prayers which we say on Yom Kippur, since prayer takes the place of the sacrifices which were offered in the Sanctuary. Yom Kippur is the only day of the year when one is obligated to offer five different prayers; those five prayers correspond to the five levels of the soul (*Nefesh, Ruach, Neshama, Chaya*, and *Yechida*). The fifth prayer called *Ne’ilah*, or “closing prayer,” is said *only* on Yom Kippur; through it, the *Yechida* of the soul is revealed, which is the state of complete union with G-d. That is the meaning of *Ne’ilah* or “closing,” — one closes all the doors and leaves no room for anything else but the union of Israel with the Essence of G-d.

Yechida permeates the *entire day* of Yom Kippur, as indicated in the expression “the day on which one is obligated to five prayers.” That is, throughout the entire day, at the time of each prayer, this category of the “fifth,” *Yechida*, illuminates and pervades. — trans.]

56. See *Likutei Torah*, “*Drushei Yom Kippur*,” end, where it is explained that “Shabbos of Shabbos” [as Yom Kippur is called], is the Light of the *En Sof* as it is enclothed in רדל”א *Radla*. And that is the category of *Chassidus*, as explained above in Chapter II.



IX

The Significance of the Prayer *Modeh Ani*

Needless to say, the subjects discussed in Torah are boundless and inexhaustible. We will attempt to explain only one topic in Torah as it is interpreted according to *peshat*, according to *remez*, according to *drush*, and according to *sod* — and then consider it in light of the vitality, illumination, and depth that Chassidus brings to each of these four approaches. From the analysis of this one topic, we will learn that all of the conclusions also hold true for the rest of the entire Torah.

The topic we will choose as an example is *Modeh Ani Lefanecha* . . .⁵⁷ [the morning prayer, "I give thanks^{57a} to You, O living and eternal King, for having restored my soul within me, with Mercy. Great is Your faithfulness"]. The reasons for this choice are the following:

1) Since it is incumbent upon every person to accustom himself to say *Modeh Ani* immediately upon awakening from his sleep, "and thereby to remember G-d who stands over him,

57. The source of the text of *Modeh Ani* is in *Seder HaYom*. Quoted in *Ateres Z'kainim* beginning of *Shulchan Aruch*, *Orach Chaim*; *Shulchan Aruch*, *Admor HaZaken*, 1:5 (and in the second version *ibid.*, paragraph 6); *Siddur Admor HaZaken*, beginning.

57a. [*Modeh* may be translated as "giving thanks" and also as "confessing," or "admitting," or "conceding." It is an expression of confronting a "fact" greater than the person. The contrasting word, as Chassidus explains it, is not denial (in our usage of the term *Modeh*), but "comprehension." One comprehends what is *not* greater than himself; he can master it, contain it intellectually. *Modeh Ani*, then, is gratitude, by all means, but also a pre-rational, or supra-rational declaration, not the reasoned product of sharp thinking. It is instinctive, spontaneous, emanating from the soul. — trans.]

and arise with zeal,"⁵⁸ this statement is the foundation and beginning of a person's service (namely, the fulfillment of *all* the teachings of Torah) and of his life for the rest of the entire day.

2) The idea behind this saying is that one should "contemplate immediately upon awakening, before whom he lies — before the King of the King of Kings, the Holy One Blessed be He, as it is written,⁵⁹ 'Behold, the heavens and the earth I fill . . .'"⁶⁰ — "Of this should one be aware *during all* his dealings and affairs."⁶¹ "This is a great principle in Torah, and a distinguishing quality of the righteous who walk always before G-d, as it is written, 'I place G-d *constantly* before me.'"⁶² That is to say, the whole day should be conducted in this same manner.

3) All the preceding — the service of man to his Maker — first come⁶³ through man's *awakening from his sleep*, his

58. *Shulchan Aruch Admor HaZaken* in the second version, *ibid.* And in the *Siddur* it states "he should remember . . . *hanitzav*" [instead of the word *omed*, the word which is used in the *Shulchan Aruch*. The word *nitzav* denotes a stronger presence than the word *omed*. See *Or HaTorah, Devarim*, p. 1202. — trans.]

59. Jeremiah 23:24.

60. *Siddur Admor HaZaken*, loc. cit.

61. *Shulchan Aruch Admor HaZaken*, the first version, op. cit., par. 2. See also *Darkei Moshe* on the *Tur*, *ibid.*, (taken from *Guide for the Perplexed III*, ch. 52).

62. *Shulchan Aruch Admor HaZaken*, second version, op. cit., par. 5. See also some changes from the first version. This, however, is not the place for further examination.

63. Perhaps it is possible to say, that in the obligation of learning Torah, which is *constant* and *ceaseless* (and is study which brings to practice — the service of the *entire* day) there is always an *element* of "waking from one's sleep." For the knowledge of Torah which a person attains is possible only (*Likutei Torah* "Shlach" 44a) because previously, when he was in his mother's womb, he was taught the entire Torah, until an angel came and tapped him on the mouth

slumber in the vanities of the world, to use the well-known expression of Maimonides.⁶⁴

(And in light of all the foregoing, we can also understand the proverb which the Rebbe Sholom Dov-Ber ז"ל said in his youth: that we must spread out the "dot" (period which is after the word "mercy") in *Modeh Ani* over into the entire day — because the service of *Modeh Ani* is required at every moment of the whole day.)

[making him forget] (*Niddah* 30b). Through his learning, he *regains* what he had known before, but what he had forgotten (and what had left him).

64. *Laws of Repentance* 3:4.



X

Modeh Ani Interpreted on Four Levels

To begin, then, our analysis: the subject of *Modeh Ani* according to *peshat* [the plain meaning of Torah] is — giving thanks to G-d for “having restored my soul within me.” Though we make the blessing of *Elokai Neshama*^{64a} for the restoration of the soul, it is still also necessary to say *Modeh Ani*, because the obligation to give thanks for the return of the soul applies *immediately* upon awakening from one’s sleep. For just as the blessing for the enjoyment^{64b} of food [*Birchos Hanehenin*] is obligatory immediately when pleasure is derived (and even before⁶⁵ one benefits⁶⁶) so, too, the blessing of

64a. [The blessing, *Elokai Neshama*, follows the blessing for washing the hands, and the blessing of thanksgiving for physical health (*Asher Yatzar*). It states: “My G-d (*Elokai*), the soul (*Neshama*) which You have given within me is pure. You have created it, You have formed it, You have breathed it into me, and You persevere it within me. You will eventually take it from me, and restore it within me in Time to Come. So long as the soul is within me, I offer thanks to You, L-rd my G-d and G-d of my fathers, Master of all works, L-rd of all souls. Blessed are You L-rd, who restores souls to dead bodies.” — trans.]

64b. [*Birchos Hanehenin*, blessings of gratitude for enjoying G-d’s Creation, include *Hamotzi* before bread, and similar blessings. *Birchos Hoda’ah* are blessings of “praise” and acknowledgment, recognizing Him in all His works. The first type are recited before partaking of the food, and the Rebbe applies the principle to the second type of *beracha* as well. — trans.]

65. In our case, however, it is obviously not possible to make a blessing for the restoration of the soul before (it is restored, the parallel of) deriving benefit; it is nevertheless obligatory to make the blessing immediately upon awakening. Just as in the case of the blessing for purification by immersion in a *mikvah* [ritual bath] (and hence in the case of the first blessing in the morning even more so) where the blessing cannot be recited before immersion, since “the person is not fit,” one does not postpone the blessing to a later time. Rather, the

thanksgiving for the restoration of the soul (which is the greatest benefit, and includes all specific pleasures and benefits in the world) is similarly obligatory immediately upon awakening from one's sleep.⁶⁷

And inasmuch as the blessing of *Elokai Neshama* contains mention of G-d's Name, and so cannot be said (in our times^{67a}) before the morning washing of the hands⁶⁸, one must therefore give thanks for the restoration of the soul immediately upon awakening at least through saying *Modeh Ani*. (Nevertheless, it is still necessary to say the blessing of *Elokai Neshama* later, for not only does the blessing *Elokai Neshama* contain certain details not found in *Modeh Ani*, but also in *Modeh Ani* there is no mention of G-d's name, and any blessing which does not contain the Name and attribute of G-d's kingdom is not truly a *beracha*⁶⁹.)

blessing is said immediately upon emerging from the water (*Pesachim* 7b; see also *Shulchan Aruch Admor HaZaken* 6:5: "One should make the blessing as close to the action as possible . . ."). [The blessing of acknowledgment for the restoration of the soul in the morning certainly should not be delayed. — trans.]

66. It is forbidden for a person to enjoy anything in the Creation without the appropriate blessing (*Berachos* 35a).

67. *Berachos* 60b; *Shulchan Aruch Admor HaZaken*, op.cit., par. 7.

67a. [See next paragraph in the text. — trans.]

68. Rosh [Rabbeinu Asher] *Berachos*, ibid.; *Shulchan Aruch Admor HaZaken* 46:3.

[*Modeh Ani* only contains the words "Everlasting King" in its reference to G-d, but does not mention any of His Names directly, for that is not permissible until after the ritual morning washing of the hands. Washing the hands restores the purity and cleanliness to the mind and body. *Shulchan Aruch Admor HaZaken* 4. — trans.]

69. *Berachos* 40b, *Shulchan Aruch Admor HaZaken* 214:1.

[A *beracha*, blessing, must by Halachic definition mention G-d's name and His Kingdom, as in the formula: "Blessed are You, L-rd our G-d, King of the universe . . ." (*Baruch Attah Ad-nai Elokenu Melech Ha'Olam . . .*) *Modeh Ani* does not. — trans.]

All the above will help us understand why in Talmudic times, *Modeh Ani*, in fact, was not said — and only the blessing of *Elokai Neshama* was recited. For in *Modeh Ani* there is nothing new or additional to the blessing *Elokai Neshama* (on the contrary, as explained before). Saying *Modeh Ani* is additionally required in our times only in order that the thanks may be given immediately upon awakening from one's sleep. In the Talmudic era, they said *Elokai Neshama* immediately upon awakening from their sleep⁷⁰ — they had, therefore, no need to say *Modeh Ani*.

Proceeding to the level of *remez* [the allusion; intimated meaning], the idea of *Modeh Ani* is that the restoration of the soul every morning *alludes to* the Resurrection of the Dead. For sleep is called "one-sixtieth of death",⁷¹ and hence, the restoration of the soul upon awakening is of an order of Resurrection. That is the meaning of "for having restored my soul within me . . . great is Your faithfulness": from this "restoring my soul within me," we know that "great is Your faithfulness" to the Resurrection of the Dead.⁷²

Continuing the analysis further, according to *drush* [the homiletic, expounded meaning], the interpretation of *Modeh Ani* is that through the restoration of the soul every morning — "They are new every morning" — G-d returns to a person the soul which was entrusted to Him, and does not withhold it for the "debts" which the person owes Him. This act shows the great faithfulness of the Holy One blessed be He — "Great is Your faithfulness." From this we *expound* and learn that a

70. Being "holy," they could make this blessing in cleanliness as soon as they awoke from their sleep. (Rabbenu Yonah in *Berachos* 60b — s.v. "Ki Shama"). [See note 68 above. — trans.]

71. *Berachos* 57b, *Zohar* I, 169b; III, 119a.

72. See *Eichah Rabbah* on Lamentations 3:8, "They are new every morning, great is Your faithfulness." See there for cross-references.

person should also be faithful and trusting in the same manner, and not withhold an article entrusted to him by another because of the debts owed to him.⁷³

And according to the "esoteric" part of Torah [sod] *Modeh Ani* is explained in the following manner: the words "Living and Eternal King" refer to the Divine attribute of *Malchus*^{73a} [Sovereignty, Kingship] as it is united with the attribute of *Yesod*^{73b} [Foundation]. (For the word *Melech* — King

73. *Zohar* III, *ibid.* *Nitzutzei Zohar* (on *Zohar*, *ibid.*, and also in the same Vol., p. 198b) refers to sources in the following books: *Sifre Hazinu* 32:4; *Zohar Chadash*, "Bereishis" (18b), and "Ruth" (88d); *Mordechai* on *Bava Metzia* 406 (likewise stated in *Kol Bo*, 116) — this is taken from *Responsa* and Rabbinical Edicts of Rabbenu Tam., *ibid.*, 408 — based on the Jerusalem Talmud; *Radvaz* Vol. I, 483; *Ba'al HaTurim* "Tezeh" 24:14; Rema in *Choshen Mishpat* 72:17; *Shach* on *Choshen Mishpat* 292: sub-paragraph 5 — taken from *Responsa of Mahara Sason*; *Ktzos HaChoshen* on *Choshen Mishpat*, 4; *Pischei Teshuva* on *Choshen Mishpat*, *ibid.*, sub-par. 2 — taken from *Birkei Yoseph* in the name of Rama of Fano.

73a. [*Malchus* ("Sovereignty," "Kingship") — is the Tenth and "lowest" of the Ten *Sefiros*, or Divine Attributes (see above, n. 12). *Malchus* is also called the "Word of G-d" which creates and vivifies all existence, just as a King rules by the "word" of his edict and command. *Malchus* is the instrument through which the original creative plan is brought from potentiality into actual, manifest reality. Since through *Malchus*, finite creatures come into being and the attribute of Kingship becomes real, it is the source of the light of the *En Sof* which extends to and illumines each individual entity in the world, and thus is identified with the *Shechinah*, the Divine Indwelling Presence, or Immanence. See also *The "Tzemach Tzedek" and the Haskala Movement*, transl. Z.I. Posner (Kehot: Brooklyn, 1962), p. 110, n. 3; p. 114, n. 8. And Chapter 3 (*Sefirot*) pp. 837-838 on *Malchus* in Schochet, *Mystical Concepts in Chassidism*, op. cit. — trans.]

73b. [*Yesod* ("Foundation") — is the Ninth and next to the last *Sefira*. *Yesod* is the Divine Attribute which is the blending channel of all the preceding *Sefiros*. *Yesod* is the all-inclusive principle which joins heaven and earth and makes it possible for all the emanations of the *Sefiros* to issue forth — it is the "foundation" of creation.]

As the Alter Rebbe writes (*Iggeres HaKodesh* Sect. XV): "The aspect of *Yesod* is, by way of example, the bond by which the father binds his intellect to the intellect of the son when teaching him with love and willingness, for

— indicates G-d's attribute of *Malchus*, and "Living and Eternal" His attribute of *Yesod*.⁷⁴) "Living and eternal King who has restored my soul within me" means, then, that the restoration of the soul comes from the level of *Malchus* as it unites with the level of *Yesod*.

he wishes his son to understand. Without this bond, even if the son would hear the very same words from the mouth of his father, he would not understand them as well . . ." i.e., *Yesod* is the *bond* uniting Emanator and recipient. See also Schochet, pp. 835-837, op. cit. — trans.]

74. *Siddur HaArizal* (*Kol Ya'akov*), beginning.



XI

A Chassidic Insight into Modeh Ani

The preceding exposition, which is based on the four levels of *Pardes* — the *Nefesh*, *Ruach*, *Neshama*, and *Chaya* of Torah — elaborates various particular ideas (in contrast to the “great general principle”) in the thanksgiving of *Modeh Ani*. Chassidus — the *Yechida* of Torah — comes forth to articulate the general, comprehensive explanation, by elucidating the quintessential point of *Modeh Ani*, which comes from the level of the *Yechida* within a person.

According to Chassidus, the explanation of *Modeh Ani* is as follows: we begin the order of the day with *Modeh Ani*, which we say before washing the hands, and even with hands which are ritually unclean, because all the impurities of the world cannot contaminate the *Modeh Ani* of a Jew.⁷⁵ It is possible that a person may be lacking in one respect or another — but his *Modeh Ani* always remains perfect.⁷⁶

And this perfection and purity are due solely to the *Yechida*: the four categories of *NaRaNaCh* allow for imperfections and even impurities; but in the *Yechida* of the soul which, however, is constantly united with the Essence of G-d, there is no connection to or possibility whatsoever for defects and impurities, G-d forbid. It always remains perfect and whole.

(This is the “inner” reason why *Modeh Ani* has no mention of any of the “seven names of G-d which one is not allowed to erase or destroy”: for *Modeh Ani* comes from the level of *Yechida* — which is the essence of the soul, and the

75. See n. 78.

76. *HaYom Yom*, p. 19.

thanksgiving expressed by the essence of the soul is directed to the Essence of G-d "which is not⁷⁷ contained in any name."⁷⁸

77. *Likutei Torah* "Pinchas" 80b. See also *Zohar* III, 257b.

78. On the *simple* level, the fact that none of G-d's names are mentioned in *Modeh Ani* and therefore it is permissible to say *Modeh Ani* even before the morning washing of the hands (see *Shulchan Aruch Admor HaZaken* 1:5 and in the second version, *ibid.*, par. 6; and *Siddur Admor HaZaken* at the beginning) — indicates that *Modeh Ani* is *below* the level of the Names. But on the inward level and understanding of these ideas, the reason why there are none of the Divine names in *Modeh Ani* (and also why we recite it before the washing of the hands) is that *Modeh Ani* is *above* the level of names.* (Note also the explanation of why in the *Megillah of Esther* there is also no mention of any of the names of G-d — *Torah Or* 100b, 121b.)

And accordingly, the seeming contradiction that "there is no Holiness in it," [namely, *Modeh Ani*] (*Shulchan Aruch*, first version, *ibid.*) can be explained: for *Modeh Ani* is analogous to the word "*Anochi* (*Hava'ye Elokecha*)" ["I am the L-rd your G-d" — Exodus 20:2]. Though *Anochi* ["I"] indicates the Essence that transcends all names (as noted in the sources cited in the previous footnote), nevertheless (and for this very reason) the name *Anochi* does not possess any Holiness (because the word *Anochi* is not a *vessel* for the Essence; it only alludes to and represents it).

[The "Seven Names of G-d are "vessels" for what they represent, e.g., Kindness, Eternity, etc., and as such are "holy" and must be treated with reverence — not be erased, for example. *Anochi* is not a "name" or a "vessel" for His Essence, but refers to Essence, hence has no "holiness." — trans.]

[The following is the Rebbe's note to his asterisk above:]

*According to the inner meaning, *Modeh Ani* has a quality, namely its *Yechida* aspect, not shared by *Elokai Neshama* (though on the "revealed" plane — as noted in Chapter X, *Elokai Neshama* contains all of *Modeh Ani* and more). Why, then, in view of the uniqueness of *Modeh Ani* according to Chassidus, was it not recited in the days of the Talmud? We may make the following conjecture: The arousal and expression of the *Yechida* comes only when even one who is in a state of impurity acknowledges the Eternal King (as will be explained later in Chapter XVIIIff.) This is similar to the

Therefore, this explanation is given only in Chassidus, for since the four parts of *Pardes* comprehend and comprise only the *NaRaNaCh* (of Torah) they do not *explain* and *elaborate*⁷⁹ the idea of *Yechida*. We find, moreover, (in the *Zohar*,⁸⁰ though it is the "esoteric" aspect [*sod*] of Torah) that in the enumeration and detailing of the levels of the soul, "*Nefesh, Ruach,*

thought expressed (*ma'amar* "Kol Dodi," 5709, [*Sefer HaMa'amorim* 5709, p. 107] and elsewhere), that the capacity for self-sacrifice (engendered by *Yechida*) is more evident in the times of the Exile, and especially in the later times, "the heels of the Moshiach" [end of the Exile and period preceding the Era of Moshiach, an expression from *Sotah* 49b; see Appendix n. 6a] than in the times of the Sanctuary. And it should be noted that it is likewise with respect to Chassidus — which is the category of *Yechida* — that Chassidus, too, came to revelation only in the later generations, when the world was in a state of "unconsciousness," as explained at the beginning of this discourse.

79. Though *Yechida* is mentioned in the Midrash — see above, n. 37, and also in the *Zohar* II, 158b, and the parts omitted from the *Zohar* (taken from *Sefer HaBahir* I (267a), etc. (One should further note that the category of *Yechida* written of in the *Zohar* II, is the level of "with all your soul," and not "with all your might" — implying that the *Zohar* is not referring to the true level of the *Yechida*.)

[That is, the *Zohar* does mention, although it does not elaborate the idea of *Yechida* in its interpretation of the *Shema* "... You shall love the L-rd your G-d with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your might ...". Here the *Zohar* associates *Yechida* with the second type of love — "with all your soul," and not with the highest love — "with all your might." The latter is the highest level and corresponds to the true *Yechida*; for "with all your might" represents an unlimited, boundless love that leads one to self-sacrifice, and can come only from the *Yechida*. Thus the *Yechida* of which the *Zohar* speaks is not the same as that which Chassidus elaborates. (*Yechida*, however, is sometimes applied to a lower level, the level of *Chaya*, to represent what is beyond the natural order in relation to and in context of the other faculties. See *Likutei Sichos* "Reah" 5737, n. 33. — trans.)]

80. *Zohar* I, 79b; 81a. (Also quoted in *Or HaChaim* "Emor" 22:12. The term *Neshama of Neshama* [soul of the soul] (and similar expressions) is also mentioned in *Zohar* III, 152a. *Zohar Chadash* on "Ruth" 78c.

Neshama, Neshama of Neshama," the category of *Yechida* is not even listed. It is included, instead, in the category of "*Neshama of Neshama*," which is the level of *Chaya*. In Chassidus, however — which is the *Yechida* of Torah — the subject of *Yechida* is explained and elaborated, and at great length.⁸¹

And since the *Yechida* is the category of the essence of the soul, from which the other four levels of *NaRaNaCh* are drawn, the explanation of Chassidus (which elucidates the quintessential point of *Modeh Ani* that comes from the level of *Yechida*) thus also invigorates and sharply illuminates the four interpretations of *Pardes* discussed above (which themselves elaborate the specifics of *Modeh Ani*), as will now be explained.

81. In contrast, [the subject of *Yechida* is not explained and elaborated in depth] in *Etz Chaim*, etc. See also the note in *Etz Chaim*, "Sha'ar 42" (the commentary on *Atzilus*, *Beriah*, *Yetzirah*, and *Asiyah*) beginning of ch. 1 and the notes and explanations found there.



XII

Awakening from Sleep: The Restoration of a Jewish Soul

The vitality that Chassidus introduces into the level of *peshat* in *Modeh Ani* (the idea that the thanksgiving is expressed for "restoring my soul within me") lies in the emphasis on the word *nishmasi* — "my soul." That is to say, all the gratitude is for the restoration of a Jewish soul. If a different soul were to be restored to the person (that of a non-Jew, or a bondsman)⁸² — even though that other soul would also revive him from the state of (one-sixtieth) of death to life — he would not give thanks. For through the illumination of the *Yechida*, he feels deeply within him that "life" is Jewish life only. (This is the life of a man, *Adam* — "you are called *Adam*,"⁸³ wherein "the spirit"⁸⁴ of men is that which rises upwards.") The life of the flesh *by itself* (the life of an animal — the nation that is compared to an ass,⁸⁵ or labeled "ass"⁸⁶ — wherein "the spirit"⁸⁴ of the animal descends downwards") in *his estimation* is not life at all, and he has no reason to give thanks for it.

Though the physical life is assuredly also a very important

82. See *Shulchan Aruch Admor HaZaken* 46:4.

83. *Yevamos* 61, beginning of side a.

[The Talmud states that when the Torah uses the word "Adam" to mean man, it is referring to a Jew; in referring to a non-Jew, the Torah uses other expressions. — trans.]

84. *Ecclesiastes* 3:21.

85. In reference to a bondsman — *Yevamos* 62a. And see cross-references there.

86. In reference to a non-Jew — *Ezekiel* 23:20. See also *Shabbos* 150a, *Yevamos* 98a (and *Tosefos* s.v. "Lidrosh," *Kesubos* 3b) and elsewhere.

state of existence,⁸⁷ especially if it is human life,⁸⁸ yet "all Israel are sons of Kings,⁸⁹ and the concept of "life" for a prince is his bond with his father the King. If a prince were to be offered life, but one in which he would be torn from his father the King and brought to a stable to live as an animal, he would not only not enjoy such an existence, but on the contrary, he would be thoroughly disgusted by and despise his life.

(As is known in the famous story of Reb Yekusiel Liepler, when the Alter Rebbe wanted to give him a blessing for long life, Reb Yekusiel said: "But not with peasant years" (not the life of peasants) "who have eyes and do not see, ears and do not hear, who do not see the Divine and do not hear the Divine."⁹⁰

87. Genesis 1:29-30 and commentary of the Sages ad.loc.

[The text states: "And G-d said: Behold I have given you every herb yielding seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree in which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for food. And to every beast of the earth, and to every fowl of the heaven and to everything that creeps upon the earth, wherein there is a living soul, I have given every green herb for food. And it was so."

Rashi comments, based on the Talmud, *Sanhedrin* 59b, that "He made equal to them [the human beings] the animals and the beasts as regards food, and He did not permit Adam and his wife to kill a creature and to eat its flesh . . ." Hence herein is seen the sanctity of the life of the flesh in any form. — trans.]

88. Genesis, "Noach," 9:5-6 and commentary of the Sages ad. loc.

[The text states: "And surely your blood of your lives will I require; at the hands of every beast will I require it; and at the hand of man, even at the hand of every man's brother will I require the life of man. Whoso sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed; for in the image of G-d made He man."

Based on the Talmud, *Bava Kama* 91b, Rashi comments that one is not allowed to take his own life, or injure himself. — trans.]

89. *Shabbos* 67a. And greater than this, as is explained in the inner aspect of Torah (*Zohar II*, 26 beginning of side b; Introduction to *Tikkunei Zohar*, beginning), that they are kings (in their inner aspect).

90. *HaYom Yom* p. 102.

At first glance, though, this response is most surprising. When someone is offered a gift, and especially a great gift, it is not appropriate for him to say that he doesn't want it except on condition that the gift be made even larger. And inasmuch as long life itself is a great thing (especially in light of what was mentioned earlier — that the pleasure and benefit of life includes in itself all other pleasures and benefits in the world), how then could Reb Yekusiel stipulate conditions for the blessing?

The explanation, however, is that Reb Yekusiel's stipulation was not that the measure of the blessing be *increased*, but rather that his longevity should be a true existence of *living* days. For it was absolutely basic and self-evident to him that all true existence and life consist in perceiving, seeing and hearing G-dhood. Hence he made the condition, "But not with peasant years," because to him days and years without seeing and hearing the Divine could not be considered existence at all; on the contrary, he *despised* such days and years.)

Such a feeling comes only from the manifestation of the *Yechida*. The four categories of *NaRaNaCh* are cast in a particular form (intellectual, emotional attributes, etc.) and are, therefore, entities of a sort, and the Divinity in them is as an additional aspect, not of their essence. Consequently, these four levels also have a measure of accommodation and potentiality (albeit very subtle) for life without perception, seeing and hearing of G-dhood. In contrast, on the level of *Yechida*, which by definition is union with the Essence of G-d — there is utterly no allowance for, nor significance given to anything else but G-d.



XIII

Resurrection as a Daily Phenomenon

It can be seen from this exposition of the simple meaning of *Modeh Ani* that Chassidus does not *add* another *interpretation* to the one already given in the *peshat* of *Modeh Ani* (for according to Chassidus also, the plain meaning is the thanksgiving for "restoring my soul within me"). Rather, Chassidus sharply clarifies and illumines this very meaning by emphasizing *what* is the soul (and vitality) of a Jew, and *that for which* he gives thanks. The same holds true for the interpretations of *remez*, *drush*, and *sod* of *Modeh Ani*; Chassidus strikingly clarifies and illumines these same interpretations as can be demonstrated through the following analysis:

On the level of *remez*, the allusion to the Resurrection of the Dead in the restoration of the soul every morning (without the elucidation of Chassidus) is, it would appear, very remote. (Not only is sleep merely "one-sixtieth" of death and not actually death itself, but —) the entire act of renewal in restoring the soul after sleep is restricted to the *re-connection* of the soul with the body; whereas the renewal at the time of the Resurrection of the Dead will affect both body and soul *proper*. Prior to the Resurrection, the *Luz* bone will be the only remnant left of the entire body,⁹¹ and from this fact it follows that the soul also (because the soul and body are — in general — related and correspondent to each other) will undergo a fundamental change. At the time of the Resurrection, a complete body⁹¹ will be con-

91. *Bereishis Rabbah* 28:3. *Zohar* II, 28b. [The *Luz* bone, a bone located at the back of the neck] is *completely* different from the rest of the body (examine these references and their commentaries).

structed from this bone, and in similar fashion, the soul will also pass through several stages until it, too, will be "built" and enter the body. And hence, the allusion to the Resurrection of the Dead in the morning restoration of the soul is but a faint and very imprecise symbol.

Chassidus, however, proceeds to clarify and explain that even in the daily restoration of the soul, the renewal is not only in the reconnection of the soul to the body, but is also in fact, a regeneration of the body and soul *themselves* (for this reason it is said that every morning a person becomes a *new* being).⁹² Indeed, because at every instant the entire creation is being brought into existence anew, literally, just as in the first Six Days of the original creation of the world.⁹³ (However, the

92. *Yalkut Shimoni, Tehillim, 702. Shulchan Aruch Admor HaZaken 6:1*. See also *Midrash Rabbah* referred to in n. 72.

93. See *Sha'ar HaYichud VeHaEmunah*, beginning.

[In the beginning of this work, ch. 1, the Alter Rebbe explains the concept of constant creation *ex nihilo* through the Ba'al Shem Tov's interpretation of Ps. 119:89, "Forever, O G-d, Your word stands firm in the heavens." "Your words," the Ba'al Shem Tov explained, means the original Ten Utterances of G-d by which the world was created in the first Six Days. Furthermore, the Alter Rebbe explains, these words "stand firmly forever within the firmament of heaven and are forever clothed within all the heavens to give life to them . . . for if the letters were to depart [even] for an instant, G-d forbid, and return to their source, all the heavens would become naught and absolute nothingness, and it would be as though they had never existed at all . . . And so it is with all created things, in the upper and lower worlds."

In chapter 2, he points out the error of those who conceive of creation through the false analogy of "comparing the work of G-d, the Creator of heaven and earth, to the work of man and his schemes. For, when a goldsmith has made a vessel, that vessel is no longer dependent upon the smith, and even when his hands are removed from it and he goes away, the vessel remains in exactly the same image and form as when it left the hands of the smith. In the same way, these fools conceive the creation of heaven and earth. But their eyes are covered [and they fail] to see the great difference between the work of man and his schemes — which consists in making one thing out of another which already exists, merely changing the form and appearance from an ingot of silver to a vessel — and the making of heaven and

Resurrection of the Dead is still indicated specifically in the morning restoration of the soul, because the precise expression and revelation of the continuous creation of the world *ex nihilo* [*yesh meayin*] is clearest in every morning.)⁹⁴

One truly recognizes and feels this [constant creation *ex nihilo*] only through the revelation of the *Yechida*. Since the four levels of *NaRaNaCh* are themselves inherently bounded by their respective "worlds" (*Nefesh* in *Asiyah* — the World of Action; *Ruach* in *Yetzirah* — the World of Formation; *Neshama* in *Beriah* — the World of Creation; and *Chaya* in *Atzilus* — the World of Emanation),⁹⁵ their spontaneous apprehension is the indisputable existence of their worlds. The feeling that there is no independent existence to the worlds whatsoever, and that their entire being is constantly created anew from utter nothingness is, on these four planes, a novel concept. Solely on the level of *Yechida*,⁹⁶ which transcends all

earth, which is *creatio ex nihilo* With the withdrawal of the power of the Creator from the thing created, G-d forbid, it would revert to naught and complete non-existence. Rather, the Activating force of the Creator must continuously be in the thing created to give it life and existence." — trans.]

94. See *Likutei Torah* "Achrei" 26a: "He renews [His works] . . . from absolute nothingness. No example or illustration at all of creation from nothingness may be found below in this physical world. One may perceive just a tiny bit of it when the light of each new day breaks forth from the darkness of the night . . . which is thus somewhat like creation *ex nihilo*."

95. *Sha'ar HaGilgulim*, beginning. And elsewhere. [For the definition of "Worlds," see n. 34a. — trans.]

96. To say that solely in *Yechida* is there an innate feeling that all the worlds are nothing is not any contradiction to what is mentioned elsewhere (see *ma'amar* "B'Succos Teishvu" (ch. 27), "Mi Yiten," 5706 [*Sefer HaMa'amorim* 5706 pp. 29, 114] (and elsewhere); that in *Atzilus* (also) Divinity is felt as absolutely primary and intrinsic, and the worlds are felt as novel creations — for in their particular aspects, the existence of the worlds begins from *Beriah*, but on the general level — even *Atzilus* is called the *World of Atzilus*. See also *ma'amar* "VaYehi He'anani VeHaChoshech," 5675 [in series

the worlds, is there an innate comprehension that all the worlds are nothingness, that their entire existence is a completely new creation, which is continuously renewed at every moment.

B'Sha'ah SheHikdimu 5672 vol. II, p. 934], where this distinction (between Divinity as absolutely and intrinsically felt, and Divinity as an acquired perception is applied to the following situations: before the *tzimtzum* and after it; to Adam in the Garden of Eden; and also to the great *tzaddikim*, etc. And thus it will be in the Time to Come. [In the Era of Moshiach, the entire world will be on this highest level where Divinity is innately and absolutely felt. — trans.] From this we see that there are many different levels in the application of this concept.

[That is, the category of feeling Divinity innately and fundamentally (*Elokus B'Pshitus*) is applied to many levels relative to what is under particular consideration. There are many different uses of the terms. Thus it is no contradiction that in certain contexts, *Atzilus* is also said to be on this level and not just *Yechida* alone. *Yechida*, however, is the highest degree of this level of *Elokus B'Pshitus*. — trans.]



XIV

Observance of the Mitzvos for Their Own Sake

The manner in which Chassidus vitalizes and illuminates the level of *drush* of *Modeh Ani* [homiletic interpretation] may be seen through the following discussion:

The prohibition against withholding an article with which one has been entrusted [*pikadon*], on account of the debts of the depositor [*mafkid*] (without the elucidation of Chassidus) is also, it would appear, not comprehensible. For since the depositor owes money to the one to whom he entrusted the article, and since this guardian [*shomer*] has no other means of collecting his debt, then when the opportunity arises for the guardian to obtain what is rightfully his — why shouldn't he seize it? What differentiates this case from that of an object which has been stolen from the guardian? If a stolen object cannot be recovered from the thief through the courts, the victim is allowed to tell another person to buy the object from the thief in order to regain it.⁹⁷

Chassidus explains that the fundamental principle of all the commandments, even those which have a discernible logic and intelligible reason is — the Supernal Will which transcends reason⁹⁸ (for the Divine Will, even when it is embodied in

97. In terms of one's responsibility to the buyer there is, however, (another prohibition): the prohibition against putting a stumbling block before the blind (*Sema* on *Choshen Mishpat* 146: 39). But in relation to one's responsibility towards the thief, there is no prohibition concerning recovering the object from the thief in this way.

98. End of *ma'amar* "Lech," 5666 [*Yom Tov Shel Rosh HaShana* 5666, p. 67]. And elsewhere.

[The rational is not the highest faculty of man. Will precedes it. — trans.]

reason, retains its own nature and abstractness).⁹⁹ Therefore, even the rational commandments which are called *Mishpatim* ["Judgments," or "Ordinances"] must be fulfilled primarily because they are the will of the Creator, in the manner of *Kabbalas Ol* ["acceptance of the Yoke"]; that is, in the same manner in which the commandments called *Chukim*¹⁰⁰ [the supra-rational Statutes] are fulfilled. (Nevertheless, it should be clear that those commandments which do contain a discernible reason, inasmuch as the Supernal Will within them has en clothed itself in reason — and therefore they are called in *Torah* by the name of *Mishpatim* — must be fulfilled¹⁰¹ for the

99. Ma'amar "VeAni Tefilasi," 5694 (Kuntres 27) [*Sefer HaMa'amarim Kuntreisim* II, p. 311]. ["Abstractness" describes the primitive Will, before it is embodied in reason. See n. 18a. — trans.]

100. Ma'amar "LeMa'an Da'as," 5690, ch. 5 [*Sefer HaMa'amarim Kuntreisim* I p. 84]. "Hava'ye Li BeOzerai" 5691 (5687) ch. 3 [ibid. p. 180]. *Sefer HaMa'amarim* in Yiddish, p. 46. And elsewhere.

[There are three categories of commandments in the Torah: 1) *Adus* 2) *Mishpatim* 3) *Chukim*. The *Adus* are those which "witness, testify" and commemorate the great events in Israel's history, such as Passover. The *Mishpatim* (Judgments, Ordinances) are laws dealing with man's just relation to man, and which are apprehensible through human reason. The *Chukim* or "Decreed Statutes," are those commandments such as the laws of *Kashrus* which are not comprehensible through reason.

The Rebbe's point here, and following, is that the root of *all* these categories, and their essence is — the Supernal Will, which transcends human reason, and thus *all* commandments must be performed with this awareness and intention in mind. — trans.]

101. But the foundation and basis of their fulfillment must be in the manner of *Kabbalas Ol*, acceptance of G-d's will, for *all* the commandments are the Supernal Will as stated in the text. (And it should be noted that concerning the *Mishpatim*, our Sages also said, "Before them" [the Jewish courts] and not before the non-Jewish courts . . . even if their law is the same as the Jewish law" [one is not allowed to take cases to the non-Jewish courts] *Gittin* 88b; *Shulchan Aruch*, *Choshen Mishpat* beginning 26.

And furthermore: even the concept that the commandments of the category of *Mishpatim* also should be fulfilled for the sake of

sake of their intellectual reason as well.)¹⁰²

Now in the same sense that the essence of all the commandments is — G-d's Will, for He and His Will are one; and just as it is impossible to say that G-d in Himself exists for the sake of some other purpose, G-d forbid, similarly His com-

their reason is because G-d so *decreed* that His Will which is embodied in these commandments also should be enfolded in "reason." * And see in depth *Likutei Sichos* "Chukas," 5730, ch. 9 [*Likutei Sichos* Vol. VIII, pp. 130-31].

*[Rebbe's asterisk and footnote:] And through this alone [fulfillment of the rational commandments not just for the sake of their reason, but in submission to G-d's Will] is the *Yechida* more revealed — even more than through fulfillment of the commandments called *Chukim* in which there can *only* be *Kabbalas Ol*, submission to His Will. For by this alone is it expressed that the fulfillment of the commandments comes from the *essence* of the soul, and hence one's intellect is also affected, for the "essence" is found in all the particular aspects, as will be explained in Chapter XVII of the text.

102. One should note the *Eight Chapters* of Maimonides, ch. 6 (quoted in *Derech Mitzvosecha* 84b) that concerning the evils which are considered evil even by reason, one must say, "I do not desire to do it."

And from this we can understand what the Sages said (*Eiruv* 100, end side b): "If He had not given the Torah (G-d forbid**) we would have learned modesty from the cat and laws of theft from the ant" — At first glance, though, one might ask what does this saying matter [since the Torah already has been given].

**[Rebbe's note:] So the Rebbe Sholom Dov-Ber ז"ל used to add (in a whisper) when he would quote this saying of the Sages.

[Translators' note: That is, since the Torah already has been given, why do the Sages present us with a seemingly irrelevant and merely hypothetical case? The answer to this question is, however, that even though the Torah lays down the laws of morality, we should nevertheless also use *our own powers of reason* in these areas, and learn what we can from the behavior of animals and nature — and fulfill the Torah's laws for the sake of their logic as well.

This answer, the Rebbe says further, can be understood in light of his first reference to ch. 6 of Maimonides' *Eight Chapters*. There Maimonides discusses the apparent contradiction between the point of view held by the

mandments do not exist for the sake of any other purpose. Their sole end and purpose is — themselves. In reference to our subject, the commandment to return an article given for safekeeping — the goal of the commandment is not (only) the benefit of the depositor (that his article should be freely and

philosophers, and that held by the Rabbis concerning the difference between the saintly (or highly ethical man), and he who by struggle subdues his passions and practices self-restraint. The philosophers rank the former, who acts from a disposition to be moral without having any inclination to do evil, as superior to the latter, who has such inclinations, but must overcome his passions to act morally. For it would seem that one who by nature has no desire to do evil is higher than one who does have such a nature.

The Rabbis say, however, that one who struggles, and only with great difficulty overcomes his evil inclination, is more praiseworthy than he who does not exert such efforts, and has a greater reward. Furthermore, the Rabbis forbid one to say — in the quotation cited by the Rebbe — “I, by my nature, do not desire to commit such and such a transgression” and give the example of saying, “I do not desire to eat meat together with milk, wear clothes of a mixture of wool and linen, enter into incestuous relationships.” Rather, one should say, “I do indeed want to, yet I must not, for my Father in heaven has forbidden it.”

Maimonides, however, further points out that in fact, the positions of the philosophers and the Rabbis really do not contradict each other at all. Both are correct and in agreement — but only in relation to those evils which the philosophers term evil through the use of reason, and of which it is commonly agreed that they are evil, such as murder, theft, robbery, fraud, etc. One who has no inclination to commit *these types* of evil is indeed superior to he who does desire to do them, but conquers his passions. In the Torah, this category of evil is prohibited by those commandments called *Mishpatim* (the rational laws, as explained above in n. 100).

When, however, the Rabbis maintain that one who does have a desire for evil, but overcomes his inclinations, is superior to and has a greater reward than one who does not, they are referring to the prohibitions in the category of laws called *Chukim*, the non-rational statutes (see n. 100 above), such as mixing meat and milk, etc. Were it not for the Torah's prohibitions against them, they would not rationally be considered transgressions. Regarding these, Maimonides says, a man should allow himself to “retain” his natural inclination for them, but yet overcome it because of the Law. (It should be noted, however, that a *ba'al teshuvah* — one who has already had an experience with the transgression — should not allow himself such inclinations. R. Dov-Ber of Mezritch, cited in *Likutei Torah* “VaEschanan” 9d.)

Concerning all that is evil also according to human reason, one of course

completely returned to him), but the act of restoration itself is the end and purpose.

Therefore, even though the depositor owes money to the guardian, and does not repay him this debt — there are still no grounds for maintaining that the guardian should withhold the object with which he has been entrusted, because he is obligated in the *mitzvah* of restoration.¹⁰³

must say, "I do not desire to do it." One who does have such a desire is in this case (*Mishpatim*) inferior; in the case of *Chukim*, however, one who has such a desire but overcomes it is superior. Thus, this is also why the Sages state the seemingly irrelevant information that we would have learned the rules of morality from animals, had the Torah (G-d forbid) not been given. They meant to convey the very practical message that we should still apply our own reason to these types of laws (*Mishpatim*), and fulfill them for the sake of their intellectual reason, as well as for the reason that the Torah simply tells us to do so. — trans.]

103. In *Ketzos HaChoshen* on *Choshen Mishpat* 340: sub-par. 4, it is stated that as long as the deposited article is safe, there is no obligation upon the guardian to return it (and only through neglect — or if it is lost or stolen in the case of a *shomer sachar* — does he then have an obligation to return and compensate for it in full). However, in the *Shulchan Aruch Admor HaZaken* (443: *Kuntres Acharon* sub-par. 2) it states: "In the fact that a *shomer chinam* is liable for negligence, the obligation is not by reason of the negligence itself; but rather, from the moment the article is given to him, he is obligated to return it intact to the depositor at the proper time. If, however, within that time it is lost, not through the negligence of the guardian, the Torah has pity on him and releases him from his obligation." And on the basis of what is written in *Kuntres Acharon*, *ibid.*, we can understand the words of *Yam Shel Shlomo* (quoted in *Ketzos HaChoshen*, *ibid.*), "As soon as one becomes a guardian, it is the same case as "I don't know if I returned it."

[To clarify the Rebbe's note — first: three of the four categories of guardians (*shomer*) listed in the Talmud are relevant here: 1) *shomer chinam* — one who undertakes safekeeping without compensation and is responsible only for negligence; 2) *shomer sachar* — one who is paid for guarding the object and is obligated to pay for its loss, theft, and his negligence (he is only exempted in the case of accident); 3) *shoel* — one who borrows the object and has to pay for whatever happens, except in the case of its "death" in the course of work.

The dispute the Rebbe analyzes here is that concerning the nature of the

The true feeling and genuine recognition of this [unembodied Will of G-d] comes solely through the *Yechida*. For since the ties of the *NaRaNaCh* to their Creator are (relative to and) dependent upon *their* particular forms, their comprehen-

obligation to return the deposited article. The *Ketzos HaChoshen* maintains that the guardian has no *obligation* to return the object *until* something happens to it. The Alter Rebbe maintains, however, that the obligation is incumbent upon him *from the moment* he receives it, regardless of whether or not something happens to it — simply because he has a *mitzvah* of returning it. This corresponds to the point which the Rebbe makes in the text: that there is no basis for maintaining that one can withhold the entrusted object for the debts of the depositor, for one is obligated in the *mitzvah* of restoration.

The second part of the Rebbe's footnote, citing the *Yam Shel Shlomo* concerns the following: One who borrows an animal (*shoel*), unlike the other categories of guardians, is liable even for accidents. The Torah does, however, release him from his obligation to pay if the animal dies in the course of its work.

When the *shoel* is in doubt if the animal died in the course of its work, or for other reasons, the authorities differ. The *Nimukei Yoseph* maintains that he is exempt since the obligation is of a doubtful nature. The owner of the animal can be compared to a creditor who claims money, and the debtor is in doubt if he had *ever borrowed* the money. The *Meharshal* in his *Yam Shel Shlomo* takes issue and argues that the *shoel* is indeed liable, and it should rather be compared to a different situation wherein the debtor replies in response to a claim, "I don't know if I *returned* the money or not." There he is obligated to pay. Our situation, says the *Yam Shel Shlomo* is as if the *shoel* had said, "I don't know if I returned the object or not," and therefore he is obligated to pay.

This opinion, the Rebbe says, can be understood in light of the Alter Rebbe's perception that a guardians' obligation commences the moment he is entrusted with the article. Hence, any doubt that arises is comparable to the case where he claims, "I don't know if I discharged my obligation," since the guardian concedes that an obligation *did* exist. The *Ketzos* maintains that the guardian has *no obligation until* something happens. Therefore, if there is a doubt concerning the nature of the accident, it is comparable to the situation where a doubt exists if there ever was an obligation. The position of the *Ketzos* is entirely at odds with the *Yam Shel Shlomo*.

The purpose of this footnote is to demonstrate that according to the Alter Rebbe and *Yam Shel Shlomo* there is indeed an obligation upon the *shoel*, and consequently he is not permitted to withhold the object for payment of his debts, since the *mitzvah* of restoration would not be fulfilled *without* returning the article. — trans.]

sion of the Supernal Will is also limited to the extent that it is embodied in some form. Only the *Yechida*, which has no form or desires of its own whatsoever, and whose attachment to Divinity is from and for the sake of *Divinity* alone — comprehends within itself the true essence of the Supernal Will in its absolute simplicity, that its sole purpose is the Will itself.



XV

The Chassidic Illumination of Kabbalah

Everything explained previously regarding the illumination and vitality which Chassidus brings to the interpretations of *peshat*, *remez*, and *drush* similarly applies to the "esoteric" level [*sod*] of *Modeh Ani*.

In the Kabbalistic interpretation, the words "Living and Eternal King" represent the attribute of *Malchus* ["Sovereignty," "Kingship"] as it is united with the attribute of *Yesod* ["Foundation"], and it is this level from which the restoration of the soul comes. Chassidus proceeds to clarify and explicate this idea with intellectually comprehensible explanations and elaborations (and this is true of all the concepts of Kabbalah, their rationally comprehensible explanation comes solely through Chassidus, as discussed earlier in Chapter I). Furthermore, through the explanations of Chassidus, the inner content of the interpretation is perceived, and the idea "lives" in a completely different manner.

Chassidus accomplishes this clarification of the Kabbalistic interpretation by explaining that the attribute of *Malchus* is that level of Divinity which is related to the world, and therefore, the boundaries of space and time issue from (and apply to) *Malchus*. The attribute of *Yesod*, though, is an aspect of Divinity which is above the realm of relation to the world. Thus in *all* the Divine attributes preceding *Malchus*, the limitations of space and time¹⁰⁴ do not exist. (As a result of the

104. *Sha'ar HaYichud VeHaEmunah*, ch. 7 (82a). And elsewhere.

[As explained in n. 73a, *Malchus* is the last and "lowest" of the Divine attributes, or *Sefiros*, and is the instrument through which all that is latent

manifestation of those attributes, time and space are completely nullified.) The concept of the union of *Malchus* with *Yesod*, then, is the revelation of the Light of the *En Sof* which transcends the worlds — within the level of G-dhood that is vested in the world.

This is the meaning of the statement that the restoration of the soul comes from the level of "Living and Eternal King": the restoration of the soul every morning means the making of a completely *new* being (as explained in Chapter XIII). Creation *ex nihilo* [*yesh meayin* — "something from nothing"] is concretely actualized specifically through the attribute of *Malchus* (for the attributes above *Malchus* cannot give rise to any "independent" existence). Nevertheless, the power of *Malchus* to create *ex nihilo* must come from the Essence of the *Or* [Light of the] *En Sof*,¹⁰⁵ which transcends the framework of relation to the worlds. For since the Essence of the *Or En Sof* is absolutely transcendent, it is consequently not related even to the

and potential emerges into manifest reality, actuality, existence. As the reference in *Sha'ar HaYichud* explains further, *Malchus* is the attribute which brings into existence and sustains the world as it is now, as a seemingly independent and separate entity. "World" refers here to that which possesses the dimensions of space and time, and space and time themselves are creations *ex nihilo* from *Malchus*. — trans.]

105. Examine *Iggeres HaKodesh* Sect. XX: "His Essence and His being . . . He alone . . ." (130a ff.) — but the explanation there is in a different manner.

[In the passages cited in *Iggeres HaKodesh*, the Alter Rebbe explains creation of "something from nothing" (*yesh meayin*) from the essence of G-d as follows: the feeling of a created being (*yesh*) that it is independent and self-existing, i.e., that it has no source, can come only from a level which *itself* has no source — "for the light is like its source, i.e., the nature and essence of the Emanator, whose Being is of His Essence, and He is not caused by some other cause preceding Himself. He alone, therefore, has it in His power and ability to create something out of absolute nothingness, without this "something" having any other cause preceding it." (130, end of side a, beginning of b) — trans.]

categories of "nothing" and "something," and therefore the Essence of the *Or En Sof* has the power to transform "nothing" into "something." That is not true, however, of the Light that is related to the worlds; it is confined, so to speak, within these limitations.

And this recognition [that creation *ex nihilo* comes from the Essence of G-d] comes to a person through his *Yechida*. There are two concepts herein: 1) The apprehension of the Essence of the *Or En Sof*, the transcendent, is possible only through that level of the soul which itself is united with His Essence. (The four levels of *NaRaNaCh*, in contrast, are related to the level of G-dhood which is manifest in the worlds); 2) The true *recognition* of the meaning of creation *ex nihilo* is that one should deeply *realize* and be *intensely aware* (and not simply understand intellectually) that there is utterly no possibility for any independent, separate existence, and that every existence is a completely new creation from Divinity; from which it necessarily follows that this creation *ex nihilo* comes from the Essence of the *Or En Sof*. Such a recognition is possible only by virtue of the level of *Yechida*, as explained previously in Chapter XIII.



XVI

Chassidus as the Link between All

Levels of Interpretation

The Chassidic explanations of the four levels of *Pardes* in *Modeh Ani* are all interrelated:

A person's realization that the creation of "something from nothing" comes from the Essence of the *Or En Sof*, which transcends all the worlds — the explanation of the "esoteric" interpretation of *Modeh Ani* — intensifies his awareness that all the worlds are constantly being created from *utter nothingness*,¹⁰⁶ which is the interpretation of *remez* in *Modeh Ani*. For

106. The recognition that creation comes from the Essence of the Light of the *En Sof*, derives from (and is necessarily implied by) the recognition that the worlds are created *ex nihilo* (as explained above in Chapter XV). Nevertheless, since the realization of creation *ex nihilo* produces the realization that creation comes from the Essence of the *Or En Sof*, this latter recognition — in turn not only *intensifies* the understanding of creation *ex nihilo* but further adds to it in depth. For the understanding of creation *ex nihilo* in itself [without the knowledge that it comes from the Essence of G-d] is (as explained in the text in Chapter XV) that "there is no possibility whatsoever for any independent separate being *of itself* . . ." But this definition does not yet prove that there is also no basis for the world's existence even in relation to the "Light" that creates it (see the next footnote). Through the recognition, however, that the creation comes from the Essence of the "Light" of the *En Sof* which transcends all the worlds, one then necessarily comes to realize that even in relation to the Light that creates the world, the world is "non-existent." And as a result, even *after* "it arose in the Divine Will to create . . .," the creation of the world at every instant is *totally new*.

[The question being addressed in this footnote is: How can it be said

if the worlds had been brought into being by the attribute of *Malchus* alone [and not from the Essence of the *Or En Sof*], then since the worlds are of significance and have a relationship with *Malchus* by its very nature — there could not be this totally new creation of their very existence *ex nihilo*.^{106a}

here in Chapter XVI that knowledge of creation from the Essence of G-d intensifies one's awareness of creation *ex nihilo* — when in Chapter XV, the Rebbe said just the opposite, that it was the recognition of creation as *ex nihilo* that leads one to realize that creation is from the Essence of G-d.

In this footnote, the Rebbe discusses two levels, so to speak, of one's understanding of the meaning of creation *ex nihilo*. The first level, the recognition that all creation is *ex nihilo*, leads one to realize that therefore creation must come from the Essence of G-d, and not from any "reflection" of His Light. But this recognition in turn casts new light on and gives one a deeper understanding of the meaning of creation *ex nihilo* in the following way:

Without knowing that this creation *ex nihilo* comes indeed from the Essence of G-d, we only understand its meaning by saying that there is no basis for any separate existence in itself. However, in relation to its source — to that "Light" which created existence, we might perhaps think that the world does have a prior basis. Until we realize, however, that the source of all being is the *very* Essence of G-d, we do not know that existence has no basis *even* in regards to its *source* (which is *Malchus*).

Before comprehending this latter fact, creation *ex nihilo* only meant that any separate, independent existence has to be created and does not have its *own basis*. With this understanding alone, though, we could think that once brought into being, creation does possess an independent ground within its *own source* (*Malchus*). However, since we now know that its source — the "Light" that created it — is also nothing in itself, and comes from the Essence of G-d, there is no basis for separate, independent existence whatsoever — neither *in itself*, nor *in its source*.

The result of this recognition is our new and deeper comprehension that even after G-d decided to create, He must renew the creation continuously, at every instant. Had the creation come through another level (or "Light"), and not from His Essence itself, such a continuous creation of every aspect of existence would not be necessary (as the text will now explain). Existence, instead, would attain its own grounds for being. But since creation is from the Essence of G-d, then even *after* the world is created, it still has no basis for existence, and must be constantly and completely renewed at every moment. — trans.]

106a. [The worlds possess a pre-existing basis and root within the attribute of *Malchus*, which is by definition that aspect of Divinity which is

(The vivification of the worlds, were they to be brought into existence from *Malchus* alone would be, rather, analogous to the way in which the soul gives life to the body, for even without the life-force of the soul, the body possesses its own existence.¹⁰⁷) Since, however, creation comes from the Essence

related to the world. Hence *Malchus*, while it actualizes the creation, is not the aspect of Divinity which creates from utter nothing — that is, which can give rise to something totally new. *Malchus* is an activating channel, or instrument, for what it receives from above. See n. 73 above. — trans.]

107. See *Derech Mitzvosecha* (23a) which further elaborates on what is explained in *Sha'ar HaYichud VeHaEmunah* ch. 6, concerning the idea of *En Od* — [“nothing else besides Him,”] not even any secondary or subordinate existence; this is in contradistinction to the manner in which the body is subordinate to the soul. That there is nothing else besides Him is true in terms of the state of *Sovev* [Transcendence] only. Hence, since the wisdom and knowledge of the nations of the world is perceived only from the level of *Memalle* [Immanence], they conceive G-d's relation to the world as analogous to the relation of the soul to the body. Examine further there.

At first glance, however, couldn't one ask whether even in their systems of belief, must there not be the recognition that G-d *creates* all beings and does not simply vivify them? The explanation, though, is that since the Light of the category of *Memalle* allows for the existence of the worlds, then after the worlds were created, their subordination and nullity to this Light (even though their entire existence and being is derived from it, and not just their vivifying life-force) is *analogous* to the subordination of the body to the soul. And this matter requires still further study.

[To clarify the terms and concepts used in the Rebbe's footnote, the translators offer the following explanation:

That the soul's relation to the body is analogous to G-d's relation to the world is a frequently discussed topic in Talmud and Chassidus. On one level, it is quite simple to see that just as the soul fills and vivifies the body, so does G-d fill and vivify the world (*Berachos* 10a). Yet the analogy is not absolute, as R. Schneur Zalman explains in *Sha'ar HaYichud VeHaEmunah*, ch. 6, because the soul and body are two separate existences entirely, and have different sources. The soul does not create the body, as G-d creates the world. The body is created from the seed of the parents. In the case of heaven and earth, however, “their very being and essence was brought into existence from absolute nothingness, solely through the ‘word of G-d . . .’ [which] still

of the *Or En Sof* — in relation to which the worlds have no ground or significance whatsoever, there is hence utterly no

stands forever [in all created things], and flows into them continuously, and continuously brings them into existence from nothingness, just as for example, the coming into existence of the light from the sun within the very globe of the sun." And just as in its source, the light of the sun is null, so also in relation to their source, which is G-d, all the worlds are considered as naught. The worlds only appear to be separate, independent existences because of G-d's "self-restriction" and concealment. Therefore, G-d does not fill and animate the worlds in the way that the soul animates the body, for the body has its own existence without the soul; but G-d constantly creates the worlds anew, and they are null completely to Him.

Now this constant creation *ex nihilo* cannot come from the attribute of *Malchus* alone, as the text explains — for *Malchus* is already associated with the worlds in their finite, seemingly separate existences in space and time. *Malchus* vivifies the world as the soul vivifies the body, but it cannot create the world *ex nihilo*, just as the soul cannot create the body. That power comes from the Essence of G-d which transcends all the worlds. Chassidus clarifies this point, and thus intensifies one's realization that the worlds are as nothing in relation to G-d, and must constantly be created anew, from the level of the Essence of G-d.

In Chassidus, these two levels of the creative force are called *Memalle kol Almin* and *Sovev kol Almin* — "Permeating Light" and "Encompassing Light." *Malchus* corresponds to the Permeating or Immanent Light which fills all the worlds in a revealed manner, giving life to each particular thing in accordance with its nature. The Essence of the Light of the *En Sof* is the category of *Sovev kol Almin*, for it transcends and encompasses all creation from above, in a concealed manner, and is of an Infinite order, beyond the grasp or apprehension of any created being. It is "encompassing" not in any spatial terms, of course, but in terms of its concealment; the revealed Permeating Light is only a dimmed manifestation and reflection of the Encompassing Light, just enough to bring the worlds into existence *ex nihilo* in a finite and limited form. In order that they not be nullified in the Encompassing Light of the *En Sof*, this Light must be concealed.

In the reference which the Rebbe cites in *Derech Mitzvosecha*, it is stated that the belief that G-d relates to the world in the same way that the soul vivifies the body is not called "faith" at all, for the "nations of the world," dealing with intellectual and quantitative categories, grasp this concept and understand the level of *Memalle kol Almin*. But the unique faith of the Jew in the unity of G-d is in the transcendent level of G-d, *Sovev*, in His Essence which does not clothe itself in the world, and in relation to which the world is completely nullified, like the light of the sun in its source in the sun-globe. There is literally *nothing else* besides Him, not even anything subor-

basis for them at all,^{107a} and even their elementary existence must be constantly created anew from the Light of the *En Sof*.

And consequently, one comes to realize and appreciate the Unity in which "there is nothing else besides Him," that all the worlds "are complete nothingness in relation to the Holy One blessed be He, and are not called by any name at all, not even the name *od* [else] which is an expression indicating secondary, subordinate status."¹⁰⁸ One therefore senses as something obvious and elementary that the life of the flesh has no real existence at all (not even a secondary or subordinate kind of existence) and "existence" is only — the connection to Divinity, as was discussed earlier in the Chassidic explanation of the "plain" meaning of *Modeh Ani*.

And from the realization that "there is nothing else besides Him," it becomes plainly evident to the person that in fulfilling the commandments of G-d, it is not possible to inject

dinate, as the nations of the world think. The other nations call Him the "G-d of gods," the First Power and Source of all other powers, but they still conceive the world as having a degree of independent and separate existence, analogous to the relation of the body to the soul, wherein although the body is dependent on the soul, it still has a degree of independence. The truth is, however, that He is completely transcendent, One, and there literally is nothing else.

It should be noted that "nations of the world" refers, of course, to "nations," but the idea can be extended. The perspective of the created being allows for perceptions of the created world (nature), and from observing the world certain conclusions may be drawn. One of these is the existence of a Creator, described perhaps as a First Cause or Prime Mover, etc. Inferred from creation, the Prime Mover cannot transcend creation. He is bound by the laws of nature, by time and space, by "impossibility," and is subject to predictability. *Memalle*, G-d permeating creation, manifest in creation, is *Elokim*, the Creator in action, and this name is numerically the equivalent of "nature." Acceptance of *Elokim*, the Creator, precluding a self-creating universe, is enjoined on all mankind, the "children of Noah." — trans.]

107a. [That is, the worlds have no pre-existent basis or root in the Essence of the *Or En Sof*, in relation to which they simply do not "exist" at all. — trans.]

108. *Sha'ar HaYichud VeHaEmunah*, ch. 6 (80 end of side b).

(even as something secondary) any other reason or purpose; the entire observance of the commandments should be because they are the Will of the Creator. This is, as was explained earlier, the Chassidic explanation of the *drush* [the homiletic interpretation] of *Modeh Ani*.



XVII

The Chassidic Emphasis on the Relation of Essence to Details

Though *Yechida* is an essence-state, it does not negate *NaRaNaCh*; on the contrary — *Yechida* is the essence of each of these particular levels. (That itself is one of the differences between the terms "manifestation" [*gilui*] and "essence" [*etzem*]: "manifestation" is particular, and therefore whatever does not correspond to its own specific form of revelation — is not "it." Since it is an outward revelation, extension, it negates what is not consonant with itself. In contrast, *etzem* is the essence-state of any given subject.) Therefore, [because essence underlies all the particular forms that are manifest], one of the fundamental emphases of Chassidus is the manner in which all the individual particulars are united with the essence. This emphasis on the relation of the particulars to the essence will be even better understood by considering the way in which Chassidus infuses life and vitality into the four levels of *Pardes* in *Modeh Ani*.

In relation to the subject of the *Sefiros* [Divine attributes], which is the "esoteric" level of interpretation of *Modeh Ani*, Chassidus emphasizes the way in which the attribute of *Malchus* is united with the attribute of *Yesod*, until they become one thing — "Living and Eternal King." Hence, the idea of Unity in "There is nothing else besides Him" does not negate the existence of the worlds, but means rather, that even the worlds themselves as found within the limitations of their existences (and subject to the bounds of space and time) are still united in a perfect and complete Unity with the Essence of the Light of the *En Sof*.

With regard to the subject of the *mitzvos*, which was discussed in the *drush* approach to *Modeh Ani*, Chassidus stresses that even those commandments which have a logical reason, and are called in the Torah of *truth* by the name *Mishpatim* ["Judgments"], (are united with and) their essential principle is the Simple Will that transcends reason.

Concerning creation, in the *remez* view of *Modeh Ani*, Chassidus stresses that even in those aspects of the world in which it appears to our eyes that the Creation has attained its own separate and independent existence (and thus we do not *sense and feel* the continuously new creation of the world), even here the renewal of a person (and the world) every morning, is indeed a re-creation of the entire essence of his existence, just as in the Act of Creation in the Six Days.

Concerning human emotions, the subject of the plain meaning of *Modeh Ani* on the level of *peshat*: even in the simple thanks one gives for his life (when he awakens from his sleep) is implicit the feeling that his entire vitality and life consist — in his being a Jew.



XVIII

"The Beginning Is Wedged in the End":**Essence Is Found in Action**

With all the foregoing in mind (the beginning of Chapter XVII), we can now understand the words of our Rebbes and leaders^{108a} when they said that certain particular qualities of Chassidus constituted the essential idea of Chassidus (as discussed earlier at the beginning of this discourse). Though these specific qualities are only the ramifications of Chassidus (as explained there earlier) nevertheless, through them alone is (the essence of) its nature expressed. For the indication of "essence" is that it "penetrates" and pervades and is found in all the particulars, to the smallest detail (as explained previously in the discussion of the difference between "manifestation" and "essence").

And according to the general principle that "The beginning is wedged specifically in the end,"¹⁰⁹ the more that Chas-

108a. [This refers to leaders (Rebbes) of Chabad Chassidus. — trans.]

109. *Sefer Yetzirah*, Ch. 1, mishnah 7.

[The general principle that "The beginning is wedged specifically in the end" from the ancient Kabbalistic text, *Sefer Yetzirah*, means in this context that only in the "end" is the first intention and purpose truly realized; just as, for example, man was created last, but was first in G-d's intent, and is the central purpose of all creation. It also means here that what is seemingly the lowest level contains the highest intent, and comes from the highest source. And, in particular, as the Rebbe proceeds to explain towards the end of the text, this lowest, unrefined physical world, and the lowest level within a person are the true places for the highest revelations and intentions of G-d. For it is man's task and mission to transform this lowest world and what is lowest in himself into an abode for Divinity, "a dwelling place for G-d here below," through Torah and Mitzvos. — trans.]

sidus is extended and diffused into the lowest level, even to transforming the nature of the animal soul itself (which is the "outside" [*chutza*] within the person; and even lower — through the purifying [*birur*] of one's portion in the world, which is the "outside" that is external to a person)^{109a} — then is the essence of its nature more pointedly expressed.

Therefore the Rebbe, my sainted father-in-law [R. Yoseph Yitzchak Schneersohn ז"ל], stressed in so many of his talks, that every idea which we learn in Chassidus must be carried out in action, because only through the service of actual deed do we grasp the essential nature of Chassidus.

109a. [The Rebbe's exhortation here for the dissemination of Chassidus until it reaches even the lowest level — in the person and in the world — the "outside" (*chutza*), also refers back to the expression explained in footnotes 22 and 23, of the answer of the Moshiach to the Ba'al Shem Tov — that he would come "when the wellsprings of Chassidus would be spread outside (*chutza*)" throughout the world, even to the lowliest place and person. Each person has his allotted "portion" in the world, which is his responsibility to refine and purify (*Birur*), and restore to Holiness through Torah and Mitzvos.

The Rebbe's point here also is that only through the dissemination to the "outside," is the *essence* of Chassidus revealed. — trans.]



XIX

Torah and the Transformation of the Evil Inclination

Now just as the infiniteness, the *En Sof* quality, that is found in Chassidus is *generally speaking* also to be found in all parts of the Torah (as explained previously in Chapter III), so too, the expression of *En Sof* through its extending to the lowest level — to transform and make even that a vessel for Divinity — is found generally throughout Torah (however, it is primarily in Chassidus).

And this is what our Sages meant when they said about G-d, "I created the Evil Inclination and I created the Torah to be as spices for it."¹¹⁰ At first glance, though, this statement is perplexing: Of all the worlds, this material world is the very lowest, "there is none lower than it."¹¹¹ And within this lowly world of physical matter, the lowliest is the Impulse to Evil, of which the Talmud observes, "G-d 'regrets' creating it."¹¹² Furthermore, all the worlds, even the Supernal Worlds, are utterly insignificant in relation to the Torah (and therefore when King David praised the Torah for the reason that all the worlds above and below depend on one minute commandment of it, he was punished).¹¹³ How much the more so, then, does there

110. *Kiddushin* 30b.

[See further for the significance of "spices." — trans.]

111. The expression of the Alter Rebbe in *Tanya* ch. 36 (at the beginning).

112. *Sukkah* 52b.

113. See references in n. 18 above — based on the words of our Sages (*Sotah* 35a).

[King David was punished for extolling the Torah with the praise that

seem to be no meaning at all in the statement that the Torah was created to be "spices" for the Evil Inclination?

According to our earlier discussion, however, this statement can be understood: the essence of Torah — that it is united with the Essence of G-d — is expressed precisely in its being *spices* for the Evil Inclination, for the power to "spice" the *Evil* Inclination, and moreover transform it to *good*,¹¹⁴ can come only from the Essence of G-d.

the entire vivifying force of all the worlds depends on one minute detail of it. For that is not the true recognition of the Torah's inner nature — which is its union with the *En Sof*, the Infinite Light of G-d, in relation to which *all* the worlds are as naught and are utterly insignificant. — trans.]

114. According to what is stated in the text, we can understand the expression: "I created the Torah as *spices* for it." At first glance, it would appear that the Evil Inclination must be eliminated — (and this is also accomplished through Torah, as the Sages have said — *Kiddushin*, loc. cit., "Drag it [the Evil Inclination] to the *House of Study*; if it is like a rock it will dissolve; if it is like iron, it will be shattered). Spices, however, do not destroy food but *on the contrary*, they flavor and season it.

Thus, it is necessary to destroy the Evil Inclination when "this disgraceful one meets you — the Evil Inclination *incites* you." But the essence of the Evil Inclination is in essence the power of craving *per se* (see *Likutei Torah* "Chukas" 56d, *Rosh HaShana* 61d), and thus one must *season* and *flavor*, and transform this craving to good, as explained in the text.

That is the meaning of the saying, "I created the Torah as *spices* for the Evil Inclination." The meaning of "I created . . . spices" refers to the essence of the Torah, the intention for which it was created. And the essence of the Torah expresses itself (not in the destruction of the Evil Inclination, but rather) in transforming it to good, as will be explained in the text.

[That is, there are two aspects to the Evil Inclination: 1) that which incites a person to do evil, and which, of course, obviously must be destroyed; 2) the essence of the Evil Inclination itself, which is the power to desire and crave; this is not necessarily evil in itself, for it depends towards what this craving is directed. And this precisely is the aspect of the Evil Inclination which one has to "season," and not destroy, but rather turn it towards a taste for the good. — trans.]

The explanation of this idea is that all the states of revelation, even the most sublime, are restricted by the limitations inherent in the forms of "Light" and "Revelation"; thus the existence of evil, which is the opposite of "Light" — can stand in contrast and opposition to them.^{114a} Consequently, it is not within their power to transform the evil to good (but only, rather, to wage war against evil until it is completely destroyed). Since the Essence of G-d is "Simple" with an absolute "Simplicity"^{114b} and exclusive of all forms, nothing can stand in contrast to and oppose Him; hence He alone has the power to change evil and transform it to good.¹¹⁵

For this reason, too, the level of Torah which is united with the Essence of G-d is described¹¹⁶ as "a delight before

114a. [Anything which is defined excludes whatever lies outside the definition. "Revelation" of G-d has definition, particularity, form, uniqueness, and as a result — other "things" exist in a different framework. Evil, the subject at hand, is not only in a different framework, but in an opposing one. Revelation and evil struggle for supremacy, the supremacy over evil being in its destruction.]

The Essence of G-d is "simple" — meaning undefined, formless, beyond categorizing (even to call Him "good" is irrelevant), since He transcends all bounds. Evil does not stand in contrast to abstraction, and since Essence is the ultimate in abstraction, evil is not in opposition to Essence. When Essence is summoned into confrontation with evil, it deals with more than the externals, the manifestation of evil, but its root, and can transform it to good.

This doctrine is well-based in Talmud (*Berachos* 54a), e.g., love G-d "with all your heart" is interpreted: with both your impulse to good and your impulse to evil; the latter impulse, also, should love G-d. — trans.]

114b. [See n. 18 above. —trans.]

115. See *Likutei Sichos*, "Vayikra," 5730, ch. 5 and the references noted there.

[This *sicha* has since been printed in a separate volume, *Likutei Sichos*, Vol. 7, p. 23. — trans.]

116. Proverbs 8:30. See also the references in n. 18, where it is stated that "delight before Him" refers to the inward aspect and essence of Torah.

[This level is the (*pnimiyus*) deepest, most inner part of the Torah, i.e., its union with the Infinite Light of the *En Sof*. As R. Schneur Zalman explains in *Kuntres Acharon*, Essay 6, this delight and pleasure of the Torah to

Him": delight (and pleasure) above come through the purification and amelioration of *darkness*¹¹⁷ — the transformation of darkness to light. And this is the meaning of "a delight before him": only through the transformation of darkness to light — the "delight" of Torah, is the innermost aspect of the Torah [*pnimiyus*] expressed, as it is united with the innermost aspect of the *Or En Sof* — which is the meaning of "before Him."

G-d and man is beyond the comprehension of man. It is only *before Him*, G-d Himself; man cannot truly appreciate this basic character of the Torah.
— trans.]

117. See *Torah Or* 17d ff.



XX

The Law of Acquisition in a Chassidic Perspective

These two special aspects of Chassidus (and of the Torah in general), namely: 1) its penetration into all the levels of *NaRaNaCh* until it also affects the animal soul and the world; 2) the expression of its essence only through its effects on the animal soul^{117a} and the world — have parallels (as is true of all the subjects of Chassidus), in the Revealed part of Torah,^{117b} and in *Halacha*, a Torah law. Furthermore, this practical law will attain greater clarification and be better understood by considering it in light of the two foregoing aspects of Chassidus.

"The four cubits of a person acquire objects for him wherever he is":¹¹⁸ in an alley, a side-street of a public domain¹¹⁹ (and concerning divorce and marriage^{119a} — also even in a public domain, according to several opinions).¹²⁰ This

117a. [See n. 6 above. — trans.]

117b. [See n. 49b above, and also Chapters VIII, XX. — trans.]

118. *Bava Metzia* 10a.

119. *Ibid.*, side b.

119a. [This refers to the law concerning the necessity of giving an object (a writ in the case of divorce, and an object of value or a contract in the case of marriage) into the hand, or domain of the woman — i.e., the four cubits.

Ownership of a moveable object does not take place through payment, but through an *act of acquisition*, e.g., lifting the object, etc. (*Choshen Mishpat* 198). An object may also be acquired through its being within four cubits of the person (this is considered his "domain"), and of course by being on his property, as discussed in the text. This act of acquisition by property is called *kinyan chatzer*. — trans.]

120. See *Beis Shmuel* on *Even HaEzer* 30: sub-par. 5. And see there for cross-references. (And the opinion of Rav Pappa — *Bava Metzia*, loc. cit. — that they also acquire an object found in a public domain.)

mode of acquisition was enacted by the Rabbis in order that "people should not come to quarrelling."¹¹⁸

Now even though the enactment stipulates only that an *object* located in the four cubits of a person belongs to him, nevertheless — to validate the act of acquisition, the Rabbis also appropriated to him the four cubits themselves, and made them as his own property [*chatzer*].¹²¹ Hence, through this appropriation of property, the four cubits automatically acquire for him the object located in them by the general rule of *kinyan chatzer* ["acquisition by property"].^{121a} (And therefore, a minor who has no *chatzer* — i.e., who cannot acquire possessions through his property — also has no four cubits i.e., therefore cannot acquire possessions when the object is in his four cubits).¹²² However, the Rabbis appropriated a person's four cubits to him only for the purpose of acquiring an object located in them, and not for any other purpose.¹²³

121. *Avnei Milluim* 30: sub-par. 5, writes that according to the opinion of Ramban (*Gittin* 78a), the Rabbis did not appropriate the place of the four cubits themselves, but rather — the object that is located in them. Examine there further. However, see the *Avnei Milluim*, *ibid.*, where it is said that according to the opinion of Ran (*Gittin*, *ibid.*) they also appropriated to him the four cubits *themselves*. (It also appears this way from the Ritva (*Gittin*, *ibid.* — second answer) and the Responsa of R. Yoseph Migash, ch. 106)

Why, however, did the Rabbis appropriate the four cubits themselves, since their reason of "people should not come to quarrelling," would necessitate only the appropriation of the object [and not the four cubits themselves]? One might answer that the Rabbis did not want to appropriate the object for the person in a manner which would be like "a law without a reason" completely. Therefore, they also appropriated the four cubits to the person, in order that through them he would acquire the object.

121a. [See n. 119a above. — trans.]

122. *Bava Metzia* 11, beginning of side a. Maimonides, *Laws of Theft and Loss* 17:10. *Shulchan Aruch*, *Choshen Mishpat* 243:23; end of 268.

123. Therefore, one opinion of the Tosefos (s.v. "Arba'"), and

Now even though the acquisition of objects through the mode of four cubits is based on the reason of *kinyan chatzer*, it is nevertheless superior to *kinyan chatzer*. In the law of *kinyan chatzer*, any property that is not enclosed or supervised (even when one stands so near the object that he could reach down and take it)¹²⁴ does not acquire the object for him until he declares, "My property acquires this object for me."¹²⁵ In acquisition through the four cubits, however, (even though they are not enclosed or supervised) one does not have to say "My property acquires . . ."¹²⁶ Furthermore, the four cubits acquire objects for a person even without his knowledge or desire.¹²⁷ But this superiority of the four cubits requires explanation: for since the entire mode of acquisition through four cubits is based on the reason of *kinyan chatzer* (and concerning the four cubits themselves — they are even inferior to *chatzer* because, as explained before, they belong to him *only* for the purpose of acquiring the object), how is it then possible that the acquisition through four cubits should be more powerful than *kinyan chatzer*?¹²⁸

the Rosh (*Bava Metzia* 10a) maintains that the four cubits do not acquire for theft (as for selling and giving — see Shach on *Choshen Mishpat* 243; sub-par. 9) even though the Rabbis made them as his own property. They did not designate the four cubits as his own property for *every purpose*, but only for the purpose of acquiring an object in certain specified situations (e.g., "for acquiring an object found," and the like).

124. See *Derishah* on *Choshen Mishpat* 268: sub-par. 7.

125. Maimonides, *Laws of Theft and Loss*, op. cit., law 8. And the *Beis Yoseph* on *Choshen Mishpat*, ibid. (near the end) — that this is the final opinion.

126. See *Bava Metzia* 10a-b: "If he has not said it, it makes no difference."

127. See *Choshen Mishpat*, beginning 268: And it [the law of *kinyan chatzer*] is not made inferior if he throws himself upon it (even though he thereby openly shows his intentions of not acquiring it through the method of four cubits).

128. This is the question of Rashba (quoted in the *Maggid*

The explanation, however, is that one's *Yechida* radiates and extends¹²⁹ throughout his four cubits; and, therefore, they can acquire objects for him without either his declaration or knowledge, because on the level of *Yechida*, knowledge and intelligence are immaterial. The extension of the *Yechida* into the four cubits, however, is for the purpose of acquiring an object — acquiring a physical object that is *outside* the person. A person's faculties in all his *four* levels of *NaRaNaCh*, corresponding to the *four* cubits,¹³⁰ are themselves unable to elicit

Mishneh — commentary on Maimonides, *Laws of Theft*, op. cit., and *Beis Yoseph*, loc. cit.).

The answer of the *Beis Yoseph* there [why four cubits is superior to *chatzer* and does not require any proclamation], "that since the Rabbis enacted the law of acquisition through four cubits so that people should not come to quarrelling, they did not see any reason to distinguish between the case of one who says 'My property acquires this object for me' and one who does not, for it would still lead to quarrelling" — this answer requires explanation: for since ultimately they enacted the law of four cubits through the mode of designating them *as his own chatzer* (see n. 121 above), it does not therefore appear to be possible that they should acquire for him in any manner that property itself (*chatzer*) *does not* acquire.

[That is, the answer of the *Beis Yoseph* does not appear sufficient: for if the four cubits are synonymous with *chatzer*, why then is the saying of these words necessary for *chatzer*, and *not* for the four cubits? — trans.]

129. *Immrei Binah*, "Sha'ar HaKriyas Shema," ch. 42.

130. One should further note *Eruvin* 48a: "One's body is three cubits and one cubit in order to . . ." The levels of the soul which are encloded in the physical body are only the three levels of *Nefesh*, *Ruach*, and *Neshama* [and correspond to the 3 cubits]. The fourth cubit, which is *additional* to the length of the body, but is connected to it, (thus the idea of this cubit is "in order to extend arms and legs" or "in order to pick up an object which is under his feet and place it under his head") — this cubit is the category "additional" to the *Nefesh*, *Ruach*, and *Neshama* — which is (close) *makif* [the "surrounding, encompassing" level], namely *Chaya*.

[Based on the Biblical verse in Exodus 16:29 that on the Shabbos "abide you every man in his place, let no man go out of his place on the seventh

and reveal the level of the *Yechida*. It is only when these powers are engaged in purifying some physical object which is outside the person — which corresponds to the acquisition of the object into one's domain (in order to refine and purify it through using it for the sake of Heaven) — then, and only then, does the aspect of *Yechida* reveal and manifest itself in these faculties.¹³¹

day," the Rabbis decreed that one is allowed to walk no more than 2,000 cubits from his "home-base" on the Shabbos. He may walk this 2,000 cubits in any one, or in several directions, and even walk back and forth several times up to the 2,000 cubit line. Once he passes beyond this 2,000 cubit point, however, he is only allowed another four cubits. He can neither walk backwards or forwards further than these four cubits. The Talmud gives two reasons for this allowance of *four* cubits: 1) his body occupies a space of three cubits, and one additional cubit is allotted in order that he may extend his arms and legs; 2) the additional cubit is allotted so that he may pick up an object which is under his feet and place it under his head.

In the above note, the Rebbe explains that this additional fourth cubit corresponds to the fourth level of the soul — *Chaya*. *Chaya* and *Yechida* are both "transcendent" aspects of the soul, and not enclined in the physical body. *Chaya*, however, is called *makif hakarov*, a transcendent level which is nevertheless still "close," and related to the other three levels of the soul (*Nefesh*, *Ruach*, *Neshama*). *Yechida*, on the other hand, is *makif harachok* — so "distant" from *NaRaNaCh* that it is utterly transcendent, and cannot even be classed as their "source," as was explained in Chapter V. In Chassidus, these two levels of transcendence, *makif hakarov* and *makif harachok*, are explained through an analogy to the difference between the encompassing nature of a garment and that of a house. A garment is *makif*, i.e., it is not part of but surrounds a person; yet it is also *karov*, "close" to him, moulding itself to the contours of his body. A house is *makif harachok*; it entirely surrounds and encompasses him, but has no relation to his body whatsoever. For further explanation of the four cubits, see *Likutei Sichos*, "Yisro," 5736, especially n. 46. — trans.]

131. And then the *Yechida* manifests itself (not only in the purification of the physical object which is outside the person; but also) in the different levels of the soul itself, the four levels of *Nefesh*, *Ruach*, *Neshama*, and *Chaya*. Only through them does the *Yechida* affect the physical object that is outside the person (though the arousal of the *Yechida* comes solely because of the purification [*Birur*] of the physical object).

(A parallel of this phenomenon can be seen in the *power* of the

Essence of G-d, "whose Existence comes from Himself" [i.e., the Essence of G-d is the only level that does not derive its origins and sustenance from other than itself: it is its own source]. Though this power is specifically expressed through the creation of a *physical* being, nevertheless, eliciting this power of Essence into an independent being comes only through the Light,* "the Light is that which mediates between True Being and created being. Thus, through the mediation of the Light, the power of Essence is enabled to bring about the existence of a 'thing' from complete and utter nothingness." (*Ma'amar "Yechayenu"* 5694, ch. 14 [*Sefer HaMa'amorim* 5711 p. 39]; see also *Iggeres HaKodesh* Sect. XX.)

Similarly in the individual's service: though the manifestation of Essence comes through the fulfillment of the *mitzvos* of action, nevertheless the manner of drawing the Essence into the performance of *mitzvos* is only through the inner powers (Intellect and Emotions). (See *Likutei Sichos* III, p. 956, that for this reason Love and Fear are called "the paths of G-d." Examine there further in detail.)

And therefore (for the purpose of acquiring an object) the four cubits themselves (*Nefesh, Ruach, Neshama, Chaya*) are also appropriated to the person; through this appropriation alone do the *four cubits* acquire the object for him as explained in the text.

One can further say that this is also the inner explanation of why the Rabbis did not want to appropriate the object in a manner which would be completely like "a law without a reason" (see above n. 121) — for even the purification of the physical, etc. must specifically flow from Intellect (reason).

[*"Light" (*Or*) see n. 11a. The power of Essence expresses itself in the creation of independent physical being, as explained in n. 105. "Light" (*Or*) is the medium, however, which brings Essence (*atzmus*) to the world. — trans.]



XXI

Chassidus: More Than a Prelude to Moshiach

Considering all we have discussed, it is most fitting that the preparation and "vessel"¹³² for the "coming of the Master" is precisely the "dispersal of the fountains abroad." For the revelation of the Moshiach will be not only throughout all aspects of the world, untill "all flesh will see . . . [that the word of G-d . . .]" and hence, the preparation and vessel for this revelation is the dissemination of the fountains outwards into *everything* — down to the very lowest level, the *outside* [*chutza*] — but also the essential nature of the fountains of Chassidus is expressed when, only and specifically when, they are spread and extended to the "outside."

Indeed, for as long as the wellsprings are found only "inside," their true nature is not yet expressed. And since the preparation and vessel for the coming of the Moshiach is — the *essence* of Chassidus, it is therefore imperative to disseminate the fountains specifically outwards — until the "outside," too, will be transformed into wellsprings — for through this, the essential nature of the fountains is manifested, and then "the Master comes," that is the King Moshiach.

And in the words of the Alter Rebbe,¹³³ "then the *dross of the body* will be purified (indicating that there will be physicality, but it will be purified) *and of the world . . .* (and the light of G-d will shine forth to Israel 'without any gar-

132. The preparation and the vessel also *elicit* (and are not only passive receptacles for the) effusion and light. As we find in *Tanya* at the beginning of ch. 37 (and quoted further in the text), *they cause the reward of the mitzvah*.

133. *Tanya* ch. 36 and beginning of ch. 37.

ment') and from the overflow of the illumination on Israel, the darkness¹³⁴ of the nations will also be illuminated, as it is written '... and *all* flesh shall see *together* ... and *all* the inhabitants of the world ...' " (As the Alter Rebbe explains there), "this culminating fulfillment of the Era of Moshiach and of the Resurrection of the Dead ... is contingent on our works and service¹³⁵ throughout the duration of the Exile. For what causes the reward of a commandment — the commandment itself."

May the true and complete redemption take place speedily in our days.

134. Perhaps one can understand his meaning through the explanation in *Sh'arey Orah* (end of *ma'amar* "Ki Attah") of the verse "G-d will illuminate my darkness," II Sam. 29:29 — that this refers to the transformation of darkness to light (in the manner explained previously in the text — i.e., evil itself will be transformed to good).

135. My father, teacher and master [R. Levi Yitzchak Schneersohn ז"ל], explained the meaning of these words: "The two expressions, 'our works and our service' can be understood from what is stated further in *Iggeres HaKodesh* Sect. XII, s.v., 'and the act of *tzedakah* [charity] ...' examine there. It can be said that 'our actions' refers to the Era of Moshiach,* and 'our service' to the Resurrection of the Dead" (notes to the *Tanya* — *Likutei Levi Yitzchak*, p. 15).

*[The Rebbe's footnote:] See also *Iggeres HaKodesh*, *ibid.* (118, end side a), on the explanation of *works*, "In his goodness He renews the act of creation every day," and "They are new every morning ..."

[In the reference to *Iggeres HaKodesh*, R. Schneur Zalman distinguishes between "works" and "service" by defining "works" as that level of man's deeds from "Below," which arouse a manifestation of G-d from "Above." This level of action, however, does not entirely separate good from evil, nor take the vitality out of evil. "Service" (*avodah*), on the other hand, applies to that which man does with great effort, and that which is contrary to his natural inclination. By this self-abnegation of his body, and his subordination to the will of G-d, he subdues evil to such an extent that evil can no longer arouse itself, and falls away. — trans.]



APPENDIX

***Excerpt from a Discourse Given
on the Last Day of Passover, 5730 (1970)***

Appendix

Excerpt from a Discourse Given on the Last Day of Passover, 5730 (1970)

It is written in the Zohar:¹ "In the sixth century of the sixth millenium,^{1a} the portals of wisdom above, and the fountains of wisdom below will be opened . . . This is alluded to in the words, 'In the six hundredth year of the life of Noah . . . all the fountains of the great depths burst forth.'" The Zohar plainly means that the gates to the "wisdoms," or sciences in general, and of more essential import, the gates to the wisdom of Torah in particular, will be opened at that time. Indeed, we have seen this fulfilled in the development of knowledge in the

1. Zohar I, 117a.

1a. [The "sixth century of the sixth millenium" (5600-5700) corresponds to the years 1740-1840 C.E. See *Likutei Sichos*, "Noach," 5738 where the Rebbe שליט"א elaborates on the significance of this period of time in relation to the dissemination of Chassidus. At the end of the sixth century of the sixth millenium, two Chassidic classics, *Torah Or* and *Likutei Torah* (collections of discourses on the Torah by the Alter Rebbe) were first published — *Torah Or* in 5597 (1837) and *Likutei Torah* in 5608 (1848). These two works were great breakthroughs in the process of articulating Chassidus in rational and intellectual terms.

The Rebbe cites further the remark of the "Tzemach Tzedek" (the third generation leader of Chabad, R. Menachem Mendel זצ"ל) that the predictions of the coming of Moshiach in the year 5608 (see below n. 27a) alluded to the publication of *Likutei Torah*. This work was an immense contribution to the "knowledge of G-d," and hence an important preparation for the Era of Moshiach, an essential aspect of which will be, as the prophet Isaiah writes (Is. 11:9) that "the earth will be filled with the knowledge of G-d . . ."

The "revelation" of these works at the end of the sixth century of the sixth millenium, was a crucial step in the process of bringing to fruition the attempts to disseminate the Ba'al Shem Tov's teachings; and the Ba'al Shem Tov's emergence as a leader of Israel coincided with the beginning of the sixth century of the sixth millenium, ca. 1740 C.E. — trans.]

sciences which occurred in that period. And in regards to the wisdom of Torah — it was also in those days that we merited the revelation of the inner aspect of Torah, that part of Torah which until then had been concealed.^{1b}

Originally, this knowledge had been revealed and known only "to a select few, and even then discreetly and not publicly."² They withheld these studies from the discussions and examinations of the majority of the people of Israel. The dissemination of the inner part of Torah began only with the Arizal^{2a} who said, "It is only in these latter generations that it is permitted and a duty to reveal this wisdom."² Even then, however, its revelation was not widespread, nor was it diffused in such a manner^{2b} that "it will sustain and nourish"³ — until the appearance of the Ba'al Shem Tov. Upon his arrival, and

1b. [See *Likutei Sichos*, "Noach," 5738. — trans.]

2. *Iggeres HaKodesh* Sec. XXVI (142b).

2a. [R. Isaac Luria — the great Kabbalist of Safed, 1534-1572 C.E. — trans.]

2b. [That is, revelation both to large numbers of people, and "revelation" in terms of ordinary intellectual comprehensibility. — trans.]

3. This is implied by the expression used in *Tikkunei Zohar* (Tikkun 6, end), in the words of Eliyahu the prophet announcing the redemption from our present exile (to R. Shimon ben Yochai): "Many people below will be *sustained and nourished* from this work [the Zohar] of yours, when it is revealed below in the last generation, at the end of days, and on *its account* 'you will proclaim freedom in the land . . .'"

Kiseh Melech there explains and emphasizes: "In the last generation only, near to the coming of the Moshiach . . . (even though) several hundred years have passed since it [the Zohar] has been revealed . . . (because the learning of it must be in such a manner that) it sustains and nourishes . . . wherein its [Zohar's] profound statements will be *clearly explained* by the introductions of the Arizal . . . so *they will understand* . . . for although one who learns it superficially has a good reward . . . nevertheless the virtue on whose account 'you will proclaim freedom' is when it will sustain and nourish, and is learned with the explanatory discourses . . ." See also the Introduction of R. Chaim Vital to *Sha'ar HaHakdamos*.

through his efforts, the extensive and all-embracing dissemination of this wisdom to all Israel began. This was in accordance with the response of the King Moshiach (to the question of the Ba'al Shem Tov, "When will the Master come?"): "When your wellsprings are *dispersed* abroad."⁴ And it was especially after the revelation of Chabad Chassidus through the Alter Rebbe⁵ that it attained the level of "nourishment," for then Chassidus was articulated in terms of man's intellectual understanding and in rational language ("food").⁶ From that point on, this

4. The Ba'al Shem Tov in his well-known letter concerning the matter of the ascension of his soul on Rosh HaShana, 5507, (printed at the end of the book *Ben Poras Yoseph*; and in a book of collected letters of the Ba'al Shem Tov and his students (Lwow 5683), wherein the publisher writes that he copied this letter from the one handwritten by the Ba'al Shem Tov's son-in-law R. Yechiel — which was signed personally by the Ba'al Shem Tov). This letter is also printed in the book *Ginzei Nistaros* (Jerusalem, 5684) I, ch. 65, — and a portion of it is also printed at the beginning of both the books *Kesser Shem Tov* and the *Maggid* of Mezritch's *Likutei Amarim*. For an explanation of the Ba'al Shem Tov's question and the Moshiach's answer according to Chassidus, see *Likutei Dibburim* II, collections 16-18.

[See n. 23 to the main text above. — trans.]

5. And especially after Petersburg (5559) (*Toras Sholom* end p. 112ff.).

[The year of the Alter Rebbe's imprisonment and release. See *The Arrest and Liberation of Rabbi Schneur Zalman of Liadi: The History of Yud-Tes Kislev*, by A.C. Glitzenstein, transl. J. I. Schochet (Brooklyn: Kehot), 1964; and *Rabbi Schneur Zalman of Liadi* by Nissan Mindel (Brooklyn: Kehot), 1969. — trans.]

6. See *Tanya*, end of ch. 5.

[The *Tanya* there states: "Since, in the case of knowledge of the Torah, the Torah is clothed in the soul and intellect of a person, and is absorbed in them, it is called "bread" and "food" of the soul. For just as physical bread nourishes the body as it is absorbed internally, in his very inner self, where it is transformed into blood and flesh of his flesh, whereby he lives and exists — so, too, it is with the knowledge of the Torah and its comprehension by the soul of the person who studies it well, with a concentration of his intellect, until the Torah is absorbed by his intellect and is united with it and they become one." — trans.]

knowledge was disseminated in a mode of "continuous progression and increasing light."

At first glance, however, this matter is difficult to understand. The period of the latter generations is the "advent of the Moshiach,"^{6a} as the Sukkah of David has fallen to a level of 'feet' and 'heels.'⁷ Furthermore, it is a "bereaved generation,"⁸ because its darkness is "doubled and redoubled." How is it possible that precisely these generations will merit the most sublime revelations, the like of which the earlier generations did not merit, not even the generations of the Tannaim, Amoraim, the Geonim, and Rishonim,^{8a} etc?

We find this same question, however, in regard to the Torah in general. Our Sages, of blessed memory, have said:⁹ "All that a distinguished scholar will introduce into Torah in

6a. ["advent of the Moshiach" — literally "heels of the Moshiach," an expression used in Psalms 89:52 and in the Mishnah *Sotah* 49b meaning the "footsteps" of the Moshiach. Rashi explains this expression in *Sotah* to mean "the end of the Exile, before the coming of Moshiach," i.e., his imminent coming. The "heels of Moshiach" in its literal sense expresses the lowliness of these latter generations, in contrast to earlier generations, described with the epithet "generation of intelligence." — trans.]

7. *Iggeres HaKodesh* Sect. IX.

8. *Iggeres HaTeshuvah* ch. 10.

8a. [*Tannaim*: "teachers," the Sages of the Mishnah who lived from the time of the Men of the Great Assembly to R. Yehudah Hanassi (ca. 350 B.C.E. to 150 C.E.). *Amoraim*: the Sages of the Talmud who lived from the time after the Mishnah was compiled until the completion of the Talmud (ca. 150-500 C.E.). *Geonim*: the heads of the leading rabbinic academies in Babylon between the 6th and 12th centuries C.E. *Rishonim*: the Early Authorities who lived from the 11th to the 15th century C.E., and who wrote commentaries on the Talmud, Codes of Law, etc. Rashi, Rambam, and the Tosafists are among them. — trans.]

9. See *Megillah* 19b. Jerusalem Talmud, *Peah* 2:4. *Shemos Rabbah*, beginning 47. *Vayikra Rab.*, beginning 22. *Koheles Rab.* 1:9; 5:8. Responsa Radach 5:3. *Toras HaOlah* III, ch. 55. Introduction of the *Shach* on the Torah. Or *Torah* of the Maggid, beginning of "Toldos." *Iggeres HaKodesh*, *Kuntres Acharon* s.v. "Lehavin Pratei Halachos."

the future was already given to Moshe at Sinai." It would seem that this idea, too, is difficult to understand: since all the creative contributions of the scholar were already "given" to Moshe at Sinai, why then were they not revealed to all the generations which preceded the arrival of this distinguished scholar and his introduction of the idea?

The explanation to these questions is as follows: It is written in the Torah,¹⁰ "He has made everything beautiful in its time." The Sages commented on this verse: "By rights the Torah should have been given through Adam . . . The Holy One, blessed be He, reconsidered the matter and said . . . I will give it to his descendants." For the Holy One, blessed be He, appoints a time for everything He does; and this is what is meant by "the beautiful time," the time which is appropriate, relevant, and necessary for this matter. Thus it can be understood that until the arrival of that time in which the idea came to be introduced into Torah by a distinguished scholar, there was as yet no need for the concept, and therefore it was not revealed.

Torah is derived from the word *hora'ah* ("teaching"),¹¹ because its purpose is to teach the Jewish people "the path in which they should walk," and the service by which they should strive to purify and refine the world — which indeed is the very purpose of the soul's descent to this world.¹² Hence since the world as yet had no need for the purification which would be accomplished through the teaching of the new idea — the innovation was not *revealed*.¹³ And thus the arrival of that time

10. Ecclesiastes 3:11. *Koheles Rab.*, *ibid.* Examine there also beginning of the portion on the verse "To everything there is a season and a time to every purpose."

11. *Zohar* III, 53b. *Gur Aryeh*, beginning of portion "Bereishis" in the name of the Radak.

12. *Tanya* ch. 37 (48b).

13. Even though it was then a part of Torah — and like the entire

specifically in which the scholar introduces the idea into Torah — itself demonstrates that this is the “beautiful” time for the idea; for the condition of the world is such that it urgently needs the instruction flowing from the scholar’s innovation.¹⁴

The same explanation applies to our subject. All the revelations of the future, with the coming of the Moshiach, “depend on our actions and service throughout the duration of the Exile.”¹⁵ This statement refers not only to the service of this final Exile — but in light of the saying of our Sages¹⁶ that “A mitzvah is ascribed only to he who completes it,” it is understood that when the service and the purifications of this Exile are completed, then the aim and purpose of all the Exiles will be fulfilled and consummated (for the Redemption from this Exile is a Redemption after which there will be no more exile).¹⁷ It follows accordingly, that our service, which brings to a conclusion the fourth Exile and inaugurates the succeeding redemption — thus affects and elevates the three preceding Exiles.

Torah, it “preceded the world” (*Pesachim* 54b, *Nedarim* 39b), and there were a select few who learned and fulfilled the whole Torah in its entirety before it was given (*Kiddushin* 82a; *Yoma* 28b). It was given to all Israel, however, after twenty-six generations.

14. This is also a reason why my sainted father-in-law [the previous Rebbe] זצ”ל revealed certain teachings and customs etc., only in the recent past — and some of them in the United States, in the lower hemisphere of the world (see his letter in *Sefer HaMa’amorim* 5708, p. 232), even though he had heard them many years before — because “for everything there is a time,” and the time had then come when the world needed them.

[“Lower hemisphere” means in relation to Israel, the “upper hemisphere.” — trans.]

15. *Tanya*, beginning of ch. 37.

16. *Sotah* 13b. Quoted in *Tanchuma* and Rashi’s commentary on “Akev” (8:1).

17. See *Mechilta* on the verse “Az Yashir”: “The redemption to come will have no other enslavement after it” (quoted in Tosefos s.v. “VeNomar” *Pesachim* 116b). Similarly in *Shemos Rab.* 23:11 (see Rashi on *Erachin* 13b s.v. “B’Nevel”).

Thus it is precisely inasmuch as these latter generations are the "heels of the Moshiach,"^{17a} for in them is to be found the purification and culmination of the fourth and last Exile — that these generations are charged with a greater responsibility, and their service must be of higher quality, and undertaken with greater strength and effort than the service of the preceding generations and periods of Exile. For our service is the final preparation for the complete and perfect Redemption: to transform the "doubled and redoubled" darkness — to doubled and redoubled light.¹⁸

Since "The Holy One blessed be He is not a tyrant to His creatures,"¹⁹ and demands of them only according to the measure of the powers He has given them, it is therefore specifically in these generations that the most sublime and inner portions of Torah are revealed (to which earlier generations were not privileged), and through these revelations, special powers flow from above for this elevated work — for the Torah is "strength and might";²⁰ it gives power for achievement in the service of G-d.

Furthermore: in addition to the fact that this great task in itself demands special powers — it is known that the more necessary the service, and the closer it is to its desired end and purpose, the *klippah*^{20a} and the Evil Inclination exert themselves more vigorously in order to oppose and hinder it.²¹ And since the service of the latter generations literally reaches to the culminating end of the entire process of purifying the world, the opposition of the Evil Inclination becomes greater and more intense — in order to prevent the person from fulfill-

18. See *Tanya* ch. 36, *Iggeres HaTeshuvah*, end of ch. 9.

19. *Avodah Zarah* 3a.

20. See *Torah Or*, beginning of "Yisro."

20a. [*Klippah* — literally "husks," "shells" signifying the forces of evil. See *Mystical Concepts in Chassidism* by J. I. Schochet, ch. 10 (*Kelipot*), Soncino *Tanya* (London) 1973. — trans.]

21. Examine *Tanya* ch. 28 — See *Likutei Sichos* III, "Bereishis."

ing the duty with which he is charged. Hence it is also for this reason that we in this generation most urgently require special powers, in order that through our service we be able to fulfill and perfectly realize the will of the Holy One, blessed be He, for "the Holy One blessed be He desired to have for Himself (may He be blessed)²² a dwelling place in the lower worlds."²³

2

It can be said, in light of all the above, that just as this general difference exists between the latter generations and the earlier generations, so does it also exist amongst the latter generations themselves. Just as the responsibility of each generation nearer to the coming of the Moshiach greatly increases²⁴ — so also the revelation of the most sublime ideas of

22. That is what the Rebbe Sholom Dov-Ber ז"ל would add (frequently) — explained in the *sicha* on "VaYishlach" 5729 [*Likutei Sichos* 5736, "Devarim" ch. 6]

23. *Tanchuma* "Naso" 16. Likewise in *B'Midbar Rab.* 10:6. — See *Tanya* ch. 36.

24. Note *Sotah* (49a): "Every single day . . ." See *Likutei Sichos* IV, p. 1226, and n. 32 there.

[The full quotation in the Talmud *Sotah* 49a is: "Every single day [of Exile] the curse becomes greater than the day before." In *Likutei Sichos* it is explained that although this generation is the "lowest," the "heels of the Moshiach," his advent is also only in this generation. For in this generation, the entire plan and purpose for which previous generations strove will be completed. Just as in the body, the feet are very low yet they support the head, so also our generation is likened to the "feet" which support the previous generations.]

In the footnote the Rebbe further explains that in this respect, every succeeding period (of Jewish history) has a certain distinction and advantage over the preceding ones, even though generally speaking, the latter periods are of lower quality and in a greater "Exile." This is true of the entire "Order of Progression of the Worlds" (*Hishtalshelus* — see main text n. 38b) which is analogous to a chain (*shalshelas*) wherein the top of the lower ring is higher than the bottom of the upper ring. The same is true of the chain of generations — the beginning of the succeeding generation is greater than the end of the preceding one. — trans.]

Torah greatly increases, in relation to the earlier generations. We have seen this to be true in regard to the revelation of the inner part of Torah: from generation to generation it becomes more *revealed*, and further expresses itself in terms of rational understanding and intellectual form.

An example of such greatly increased exposition is especially prominent in the *ma'amorim* [Chassidic discourses] of the Rebbe Sholom Dov-Ber נ"ע.²⁵ Here the concepts of Chassidus are articulated more broadly and clearly, in terms of rational understanding and intellectual comprehension, more so than (is apparent even to people on our level) in the *ma'amorim* of the Rebbes who preceded him.

There is a well-known²⁶ saying of the early Chassidim concerning the Rebbe Sholom Dov-Ber נ"ע that he is "the

25. See *Chanoch LaNa'ar* (p. 8, and see *HaYom Yom* p. 106) concerning what the Tzemach Tzedek said about the Rebbe Sholom Dov-Ber נ"ע: "He was born on the 20th of Cheshvan תרכ"א (5621). In this date are two *chofs*, an allusion to the Supernal Kesser" — and it is known (*Likutei Torah* "Shir Hashirim" 35c) that two *chofs* allude to the two levels of Kesser, Arich and Atik, i.e., he is connected not only to Arich (though it is above *Hishtalshelus*, nevertheless it is connected to *Hishtalshelus*) but also to Atik, which completely transcends *Hishtalshelus*.

Another related fact is that his circumcision was on the second light of Channukah, since it was on the second day of Channukah that the miracle of Channukah was openly revealed (a miracle emanating from a level higher than *Hishtalshelus*), not as on the first day when the miracle was not yet apparent. There is a whole discussion of this in Torah which requires a separate explanation. (See Taz beginning of *Laws of Channukah* 670, and elsewhere.)

And indeed, all this is related to the Redemption, for the Redemption also comes from a level higher than *Hishtalshelus*.

[The Hebrew date of the Rebbe Sholom Dov-Ber's birthday contains the Hebrew letter *chof* twice, alluding to the *chof* which is the initial of the word Kesser (כתר). For an explanation of the terms Kesser, Arich, Atik, and *Hishtalshelus*, see footnotes to the main text n. 12; n. 38b. — trans.]

26. *Likutei Dibburim* II, p. 296. And see *Sefer HaSichos* 5701, p. 160.

Rambam [Maimonides] of Chassidus," for in his *ma'amorim* the concepts of Chassidus were formulated in a highly ordered and systematic way, with step-by-step explanations and clarifying illustrations, etc. From what the Rambam writes²⁷ concerning his work the *Yad HaChazakah*, "I decided to put together the results . . . all in plain language and terse style, so that thus the entire Oral Law might become systematically known to all . . . statements clear, accessible, and correct . . ." — we can understand the nature of the *ma'amorim* of the Rebbe Sholom Dov-Ber ז"ל. In his discourses Chassidus was formulated (in revealed rather than arcane form, as mentioned above) into "plain language . . . consisting of statements accessible and correct."

3

The *ma'amorim* of the year 5666 (1905 C.E.) were a series about which the Rebbe Sholom Dov-Ber ז"ל spoke with unusual praise. All the distinctive qualities elaborated above in praise of his *ma'amorim* are expressed in a particularly outstanding manner in this series.

Furthermore, it is not only in these *ma'amorim* that Chassidus is revealed and articulated in broader and more widely comprehensible rational form, but also the connection of "this wisdom" to the future Redemption (as explained above, this is the very reason why the inner part of Torah is revealed more and more from generation to generation) is more readily apparent in this series.

As it is known, the Rebbe Sholom Dov-Ber ז"ל associated his discourses of this year (5666 — 1905 C.E.) with the predictions of the *ketz* ["end" ^{27a}] found in several works in reference

27. In his Introduction to his work *Yad HaChazakah*.

27a. ["end" — i.e., calculations of the years in which it is especially likely for the Moshiach to come. — trans.]

to that year²⁸ (and also with the fact that at that time there were pogroms in Russia, and that it was the year after a leap year.^{28a}

In practical terms: as explained previously, it is clear that we have been endowed with powers from Above in order to transform the "doubled and redoubled" darkness. It is written, "The *Shechinah* went into exile in Edom with them,"²⁹ and is called by the name *Shechinah* because "it dwells and clothes itself in all the worlds,"³⁰ which means that even though we find ourselves in a very humble condition, nevertheless He, may He be blessed, He dwells with us, even unto, "And I will dwell within them, 'within every single one.'"³¹ He gives us the ability to conclude the Exile, to purify the "small jars"^{31a}

28. It can be said that this was the reason he instituted the drinking of the Four Cups on the last day of Passover in that year (*HaYom Yom* p. 47) — because the last day of Passover, and its central meaning — is associated with the future Redemption, as indicated in the content of the Haftorah. (See *Likutei Sichos* IV, p. 1299).

One can suggest a special association to wine, because wine represents "revelation of the concealed." For at first, the liquid is concealed within the grapes, and afterwards it comes out; and therefore it *has the effect* of revealing the hidden, as it is written (Judges 9:13) "it gladdens G-d and men," since it reveals the concealed states of G-d and men (*Likutei Torah* "Devarim" 79d).

28a. [A leap year in the Jewish Calendar contains an extra month. According to Chassidus, a leap year therefore requires greater spiritual forces. — trans.]

29. *Sifre* (Num.) "Ma'asay" 35:34. (See *Megillah* 29a: "To Babylon . . ." and note also the difference: in *Tanya* ch. 17, *Iggeres HaKodesh* Sect. XXV (and elsewhere in Chassidus) "To Edom"; in *Iggeres HaKodesh* IV (and elsewhere) "To Babylon" and in several places [in Chassidus] where the same topic is discussed and the above statement of the Sages is not quoted at all).

30. *Tanya* ch. 41.

31. *Reishis Chochma* ("Sha'ar HaAhavah" ch. 6 near the beginning). *Shalah* ("Sha'ar HaOsiyos, Os Lamed." Tractate *Ta'anis* s.v. "Meinyan HaAvodah." "Trumah," sect. of *Torah Or* — 325b, 326b — and elsewhere).

31a. ["small jars" — The purpose of Exile, as seen in Kabbalah and

that as of yet have not been purified, and to merit that He will "set an end to darkness,"³² an end to the Exile, and afterwards — bring the beginning of the Redemption, followed by the complete, perfect, and true Redemption through our righteous Moshiach, speedily in our days.

Chassidic literature, is to purify the world by releasing the "sparks of holiness" from their spiritual bondage ("husks," *klippas*). In the course of the long Exile, most have been released, and all that is left are the "small jars." See Rashi's commentary on Gen. 32:25. See also Schochet, *Mystical Concepts*, ch. 11 (*Birur and Tikun*), op. cit. — trans.]

32. Job 28:3. Or *HaTorah*, "Miketz" (340a. As in the explanation of *Midrash Rab.* quoted there — so too in *Tanya* ch. 33) — he also cites *Zohar* I (194a). And *ibid.* on the verse "To everything there is a season and a time to every purpose" (explained in *Likutei Levi Yitzchak* on the *Zohar*:), "Come and see: for everything G-d does below, He appoints a time, and a set period. He sets the time for light"



GLOSSARY

GLOSSARY

(The words explained here are either those that have not been translated as they appeared in the text, or appear more than once. Where terms are explained in the text or footnotes, the reader is directed to refer to them in this glossary. Italicized words are explained in the glossary.)

Adam. The first man. Of the four Hebrew words for "man," "Adam" is the highest. The etymology of the word is both "Earth" (*Adamah*), and "I shall resemble the One Above," (*Adameh l'elyon* Isaiah 14:14).

Admor Hazaken. The Alter Rebbe. Ado-nay. "L-rd."

Alter Rebbe. lit. "Old Rabbi." Among *Chabad Chassidim*, the term *Alter Rebbe* refers to R. Schneur Zalman of Liadi. It was first used during the time of R. Menachem Mendel of Lubavitch (third generation *Chabad* leader), to differentiate between the incumbent *Rebbe* (always known as the "the Rebbe"), the previous *Rebbe* ("the Mittler Rebbe"), and the first *Rebbe* ("the Alter Rebbe").

Arich Anpin. lit. "Long Image." See n. 12 to main text.

Arizal. Acronym formed from the Hebrew words for "Our Master Rabbi Isaac [Luria] of blessed memory" (1534-1572 C.E.); the founder and head of the most prominent school of *Kabbalah*. His intricate *Kabbalistic* teachings were received by his pupils orally, and were posthumously recorded by his pupil R. Chaim Vital.

Asher Yatzar. lit. "Who has formed." Blessing of thanksgiving for physical health.

Atik. See n. 12a to main text.

Atzilus. See n. 34a to main text.

Atzmus. Essence; the Essence of G-d.

Ba'al Shem Tov. "Master of the Good Name"; applied to R. Israel, founder of *Chassidus*. (1698-1760 C.E.).

Ba'al Teshuvah. A penitent; one who returns to Judaism after going astray.

Beracha. A blessing.

Beriah. See n. 34a to main text.

Birur. lit. "Refining." One of the basic doctrines of *Kabbalah* is the idea of refining the "sparks" of holiness which are to be found in everything. This is accomplished by every *mitzvah*.

Chabad. Acrostic of *Chochma* (Wisdom), *Binah* (Understanding), *Da'as* (Knowledge). The branch of the *Chassidic* movement based on an intellectual approach to the service of G-d, and founded by R. Schneur Zalman of Liadi.

Chochma. "Wisdom; concept." One of the three primary intellectual powers. *Chochma* is the first and highest of the Ten *Sefiros*.

Chaf. Hebrew letter; numerical equivalent of 20.

Chassid. (pl. *Chassidim*); lit. "Pious man." Term applied to followers of the *Chassidic* movement; follower of a *Chassidic Rebbe*. See n. 4 to main text.

- Chassidic.** Appertaining to *Chassidus*.
- Chassidism.** Movement founded by R. Israel *Ba'al Shem Tov*. (1698-1760 C.E.).
- Chassidus.** Movement founded by R. Israel *Ba'al Shem Tov*; the philosophy of the *Chassidic* movement.
- Chatzer.** Property.
- Chaya.** One of the soul's five levels. See n. 36a to main text.
- Chukim.** "Statutes"; commandments for which no reason is given; supra-rational commandments, e.g. the prohibition against wearing wool and linen.
- Drush.** The homiletic, expounded meaning of the *Torah*; one of the four levels of interpretation known as *Pardes*.
- Echod.** "One." See n. 38 to main text.
- Edom.** Esau (Gen. 36:1). The destruction of the second Sanctuary by the Romans, who were the descendents of Esau, marked the beginning of the fourth and final exile, known as the Exile of *Edom*.
- Eliyahu.** The Prophet Elijah.
- Elokai Neshama.** "O, my G-d, the soul . . ."; morning blessing that mentions the various stages of the soul's descent, and expresses gratitude to G-d for restoring it every morning after sleep.
- En Sof.** "The Infinite; Endless;" term denoting the indefinable aspect of G-d.
- Gaon.** "Genius;" title given to the exceptionally brilliant Talmudist. Originally the title of the heads of the leading rabbinic academies in Babylon between the sixth and twelfth centuries C.E.
- Hai.** Hebrew letter; numerical equivalent of five. Comprises two of the letters of the Tetragrammaton.
- Halacha.** The Jewish legal system; also any practical *Torah* law.
- Halachic.** Appertaining to *Halacha*.
- Hamotzi.** "Who brings forth." Blessing before eating bread.
- Hava'ye.** See n. 32a to main text.
- Hishtalshelus.** See n. 38a to main text.
- Kabbalah.** lit. "Received Tradition." Esoteric Jewish wisdom; Jewish Mysticism; inner interpretation of the *Torah*.
- Kabbalas Ol.** lit. "Acceptance of the Yoke." Subordination to the Will of G-d.
- Kabbalistic.** Appertaining to *Kabbalah*.
- Kesser.** See n. 12 to main text.
- Kinyan Chatzer.** Acquisition by property. See n. 119 to main text.
- Kislev.** A winter month in the Hebrew calendar (third from Tishrei).
- Lubavitch.** "Town of Love" in White Russia. It became the residence of the *Chabad* movement in 1814, when R. Dovber, son and successor of R. Schneur Zalman settled there. For over a century (until 1916) and through four generations of *Chabad* leaders, it remained the center of the movement. Hence, the leaders of *Chabad* became known as the "*Lubavitcher Rebbes*" and their *Chassidim* as "*Lubavitcher Chassidim*."
- Lubavitcher Rebbe.** The leader of the *Chabad Chassidim*.
- Ma'amar.** (pl. *ma'amorim*). lit. "word" or "article." In *Chabad* circles, the term refers to a formal discourse by a *Chabad Rebbe*, in which a topic of *Chassidus* is expounded.
- Maggid of Mezritch.** The "preacher" of Mezritch, R. Dovber, was the leading disciple and successor of the *Ba'al Shem Tov*. He passed away on the

- nineteenth of Kislev 5533 (1772). R. Schneur Zalman, the founder of *Chabad*, was one of the Maggid's leading disciples.
- Maimonides.** See *Rambam*.
- Malchus.** "Kingship." See n. 73a to main text.
- Megillah.** lit. "Scroll." The Book of Esther is popularly referred to by this name; also title of a *Talmudic* tractate.
- Middos.** Attributes; character traits.
- Midrash.** Rabbinic homiletical literature, exegesis. *Midrash* Rabba and *Midrash* Tanchuma are two of the most famous *Midrashim*.
- Mishnah.** The codification of the Oral law by R. Yehudah HaNasi, (ca. 150 C.E.).
- Mishpatim.** Judgments; rational commandments. See n. 100 to main text.
- Mittler Rebbe.** R. Dovber Schneuri, son of R. Schneur Zalman (the founder of *Chabad*) was popularly known as the *Mittler Rebbe* (Intermediate Rebbe), i.e. the "middle one" of the first three generations of the "fathers" of *Chabad*.
- Mitzvah.** (pl. *Mitzvos*). Commandment(s); religious obligation(s); good deed(s).
- Modeh Ani.** "I give thanks unto You..." First prayer recited upon arising, thanking G-d for restoring the soul.
- Moshe.** Moses.
- Moshiach.** The Messiah.
- Nachmanides.** See *Ramban*.
- NaRaNaCh.** Acronym for: *Nefesh*, *Ruach*, *Neshama*, *Chaya*.
- Nefesh.** One of the five levels of the soul. See n. 36a to main text.
- Ne'ilah.** "Closing" prayer on *Yom Kippur*.
- Neshama.** One of the five levels of the soul. See n. 36a to main text.
- Nissan.** Name of a Hebrew month in the spring. Passover begins on the fifteenth of *Nissan*.
- Or En Sof.** "Infinite Light." Light is used in *Kabbalistic* and *Chasidic* literature as a metaphor for the manifestations of the Essence of G-d. Light, though only a reflection of its source, is also Infinite.
- Pardes.** Acronym for: *Peshat*, *Remez*, *Drush*, *Sod* — the four levels of *Torah* interpretation.
- Peshat.** The plain, straightforward meaning of the *Torah*; one of the four levels of interpretation known as *Pardes*.
- Radla.** Acronym for *Reisha d'Lo lsyada*.
- Rambam.** RaMBaM, the popular name by which R. Moses ben Maimon (Maimonides 1135-1204 C.E.) is known. Among his numerous writings, his two greatest works are his code *Mishneh Torah* (or *Yad HaChazakah*) and his philosophical work *Moreh Nevuchim* (*Guide for the Perplexed*). The Rambam's works, especially the *Mishneh Torah*, are distinguished for their clarity and comprehensiveness.
- Ramban.** RaMBaN, the popular name by which R. Moses ben Nachman (Nachmanides 1194-1270 C.E.) is known. One of the greatest Talmudists, Bible commentators, Kabbalists, and Jewish leaders of his age.
- Rashi.** Abbreviated name of R. Solomon Yitzchaki (1040-1105 C.E.). Greatest Biblical and *Talmudic* commentator of all times.
- Raya Mehemna.** A part of the *Zohar*.
- Reb.** An honorary and affectionate

- title used before a man's Hebrew name.
- Rebbe.** Rabbi and teacher; leader of a *Chassidic* group.
- Reisha d'Lo Isyada.** The "head or beginning that is not known." See n. 13 to main text.
- Remez.** The allusion or intimated meaning of the *Torah*; one of the four levels of interpretation known as *Pardes*.
- Rosh Chodesh.** First day of a Hebrew month.
- Rosh HaShana.** lit. "Head of the Year." The two day festival marking the beginning of the Jewish year.
- Ruach.** One of the five levels of the soul. See n. 36a to main text.
- Sefira.** (pl. *Sefiros*). Divine attribute(s), emanation(s) or manifestation(s). There are Ten *Sefiros*.
- Shabbos.** The Sabbath.
- Shechinah.** Divine Presence or Indwelling.
- Shema.** lit. "Hear." Passage of the *Torah* recited daily, in the morning and evening (Deut. 6:4-9).
- Shevat.** Name of a Hebrew month in the winter.
- Shulchan Aruch.** lit. "Set Table." Standard code of Jewish law, compiled by R. Joseph Karo (1488-1575 C.E.) R. Schneur Zalman's revision of this code carries the same name, otherwise known as the *Shulchan Aruch Admor HaZaken*, or *Shulchan Aruch HaRav*.
- Sod.** The esoteric meaning of the *Torah*; one of the four levels of interpretation known collectively as *Pardes*.
- Sukkah.** A hut or booth in which the autumn festival of *Sukkos* is observed.
- Talmud.** lit. "Teaching, learning." Applies to the compilation of the Oral *Torah* that includes the *Mishnah* and *Gemara*. The Jerusalem *Talmud* was compiled about the end of the third century C.E., while the larger and more popular Babylonian *Talmud* was compiled and edited about the end of the fifth century, C.E.
- Talmudic.** Appertaining to the *Talmud*.
- TaNaCH.** Popular name and acronym for *Torah* (Pentateuch), *Nevi'im* (Prophets), and *Kesuvim* (Holy Writings, Hagiographa).
- Tanya.** Primary work of *Chabad Chassidus* written by R. Schneur Zalman of Liadi, the founder of *Chabad Chassidism*. The name is derived from the initial word of this work. Also called *Likutei Amarim* and *Sefer Shel Benonim* (The Book of the Intermediates).
- Teves.** A winter month in the Hebrew calendar.
- Torah.** lit. "Teaching." In the narrow sense, the Five Books of Moses (Pentateuch), and in the comprehensive sense, the entire body of Jewish knowledge and literature (Bible, *Talmud*, *Kabbalah*, etc.).
- Tosefos.** "Additions." The name of a standard and major *Talmudic* commentary. The authors, known as the *Ba'alei Tosefos*, were the leading *Torah* authorities in France and Germany from about the twelfth to the fourteenth century C.E.
- Tzemach Tzedek.** "Seed of Righteousness." Famous work of responsa and *Halacha* by R. Menachem Mendel, third generation *Chabad* leader. (1789-1866 C.E.). The author is usually referred to as the "Tzemach Tzedek" after the name of his great work.
- Tzimtzum.** "Contraction"; a Kabbalistic doctrine that explains the

- creative process by means of the so-called "self-limitation" of the Infinite Light (*Or En Sof*).
- Vav.** Hebrew letter; numerical equivalent of 6; one of the four letters of the Tetragrammaton.
- Yachid.** "Sole, only one."
- Yad HaChazakah.** "The Powerful Hand." The name of *Maimonides'* code of law.
- Yechida.** One of the five levels of the soul; the *essence* of the soul. See n. 36a to main text.
- Yesh Meayin.** "Something from nothing"; *creatio ex nihilo*.
- Yesod.** See n. 73b.
- Yetzer Hara.** Evil Inclination.
- Yetzirah.** See n. 34a to main text.
- Yiddishkeit.** Jewishness, Judaism. A term covering the traditional culture of Jewry.
- Yom Kippur.** Day of Atonement, tenth day of the Hebrew month of Tishrei.
- Yud.** Hebrew letter; numerical equivalent of ten; one of the four letters of the Tetragrammaton.
- Yud Shevat.** The tenth day of the Hebrew month of *Shevat*. Anniversary of the passing of the sixth *Lubavitcher Rebbe*, R. Yoseph Yitzchak Schneersohn. (1880-1950 C.E.).
- Yud-Tes Kislev.** The nineteenth day of the Hebrew month of *Kislev*. The festival of *Yud-Tes Kislev* commemorates the release from Russian prison of R. Schneur Zalman of Liadi, founder of Chabad.
- Zohar.** Classic *Kabbalistic* work by R. Shimon bar Yochai.



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