"Open my eyes so that I may see the **wonders** of Your Torah"

בס"ד

Wonders

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of HaRav **Yitzchak Ginsburgh**

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שַׁבָּת שְׁמִינִי ❁ כז-כח נִיסָן תשפ"ה



"Even when one finds himself traveling for the purpose of business or some other reason, he should know that the mundane goal is not God's inner intent.... God truly wants the individual to illuminate the place they arrive at and publicize the Divine Presence there."

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The Lubavitcher Rebbe to Rav Ginsburgh, Elul 5741

"…It would be proper to publish your classes in book form. With blessings for success…"



Wonders

An anthology from the shiurim and farbrengens
of Harav **Yitzchak Ginsburgh**

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Wonders Staff
Editor: R' Moshe Genuth • Associate Editor: Shelli Karzen
Contributing Editor: R' Nir Menussi • Typesetting: Yoel Broderick

PARTZUF
THE NUMBER EIGHT

Our *parashah* this week, *Shemini*, begins with a very distinctive idiom, "the eighth day" (יום השמיני), "On the eighth day, Moses called Aaron and his sons and the elders of Israel."[1]

Perhaps you already know that the number 8 stands above the commonplace, beyond the natural. Seven represents the consummate wholeness of nature, most strongly captured by the seventh day, Shabbat, with which the Almighty brought Creation to its conclusion. But if we do not stop at seven and continue to eight, we are in a sense penetrating the realm that lies above nature. The number 8 transcends the mundane and therefore represents eternity. One of the most intriguing facts related to this quality of the number 8 is that it was chosen to represent "infinity" (∞). Technically, this figure is known as a lemniscate and why it was chosen is shrouded in mystery, however, it is worth noting that the symbol used in ancient Hebrew script[2] to represent the letter *chet* (ח), the eighth letter in the Hebrew *alephbet*, whose value is 8, looks like a number 8: 𐤇.

The eternity associated with the number eight is most strongly identified with circumcision which is also performed on the eighth day of life. When we circumcise on the eighth day it is as if we are saying, nature is not enough and the beauty and meaning of life can transcend nature. In other words, even the perfection of nature in this world can never be enough. The eighth day, which is so essential to Jewish life, sends us the message that we can never say we are content with what we have achieved (in spirit). The essence of being Jewish is to be able to feel that everything I have done so far is relatively nothing. Rebbe Zusha used to say, "Until today, I have done nothing." Like Zusha, we too must begin the whole story of being Jewish today, and every day.

Now, the opening phrase of our *parashah*, "the eighth day" appears 13 times in the Torah, in 8 different contexts. The connection between 8 and 13 is known in Kabbalah. In the Ashuri script used when writing a Torah scroll, *tefillin*, and *mezuzot*, the letter *chet* (ח), whose value is 8, is written—according to the Arizal—as a *vav* and a *zayin* (וז) connected; the sum of these two letters is 13. The golden ratio of 13 is also 8 and 5.

Often, the number 13 is divided into 8 and 5. For instance, with regard to circumcision, the sages state that, "Great is circumcision as 13 covenants were made on it."[3] The act of circumcision, which takes place on the 8th day, represents these 13 covenants. What we are adding now may be the most amazing thing about this relationship between 8 and 13 is that the 13 instances of the phrase "the eighth day" in the Torah clearly appear in 8 different contexts, with 5 of these contexts including two appearances of the phrase.

This is truly a beautiful division of 8 and 5. There is another connection between "the eighth day," the name of our parashah and the number 8. There are years when we read *Shemini* eight times, a phenomenon described as "eight *Shemini*—fat [i.e., opulent]" (שְׁמוֹנָה שְׁמִינִי שְׁמֵנָה), indicating that when this occurs, the year itself will be opulent, filled with blessings both physically and spiritually.

The instance of "the eighth day" in our *parashah* is not its first appearance in the Torah. "Everything follows the inception" and the first time it appears is in *Parashat Mishpatim*. It is the first time and also the only time in the Book of Exodus, and there is no appearance of this phrase in the book of Genesis. The verse in Exodus is: "You shall do the same to your ox, to your sheep: seven days it shall be with its mother; on the eighth day you shall give it to Me"[4] (כֵּן תַּעֲשֶׂה לְשֹׁרְךָ לְצֹאנֶךָ שִׁבְעַת יָמִים יִהְיֶה עִם אִמּוֹ בַּיּוֹם הַשְּׁמִינִי תִּתְּנוֹ לִי). This verse refers to an animal that can be brought as a sacrifice and states that it can only be offered once it is 8 days old. Even though it sounds like an obligatory statement—when the animal reaches 8 days, you must bring it as a sacrifice—in fact, it is voluntary and only revealing that you must wait until the animal's eighth day of life.[5]

Reflecting only on the final words in this verse, the words that contain the phrase "the eighth day"—"on the eighth day you shall give it to Me"—we notice that they end with "to Me" (לִי), about which the sages say, "Wherever it says 'to me,' it means that once done it will not move, neither in this world nor in the world to come."[6] So, when you offer the animal on the eighth day there is a special quality to the giving as it lasts forever.

This is the deeper meaning of "On the eighth day you shall give it to Me." The giving of the animal on the eighth day is akin to the circumcision of the child on the eighth day—both actions exhibit the characteristic eternity/transcendence of the eighth.

The value of the phrase "On the eighth day you shall give it to Me" (בַּיּוֹם הַשְּׁמִינִי תִּתְּנוֹ לִי) is 1369 (לִי, or 37 squared, where 37 is the value of *yechidah* (יְחִידָה, the singular one, the highest level of the soul). This number first appears in the Torah in the second verse, in the words, "And the spirit of God was hovering over the waters," (וְרוּחַ אֱלֹהִים מְרַחֶפֶת עַל פְּנֵי הַמָּיִם), which the sages explain refers to the spirit of the Mashiach, which is also identified with the soul's highest level.

When we consider this commandment from *Mishpatim* in terms of Divine service, we note that the verse begins with, "thus shall you do for your ox and for your sheep," referring to every individual's animal soul. Some animal souls are likened to an ox, others to a sheep, but what they all require is that the spark of Mashiach within each individual repeatedly subdue the animal soul and make it subservient. God wants us to continuously strive to serve Him even with our animal soul, which is rooted above the root of the Divine soul.

How does a person submit and sacrifice the animal soul? It is written in Tanya that by giving more charity, again and again, he sacrifices the animal soul.

THE 7 ADDITIONAL INSTANCES OF "THE EIGHTH DAY"

The second time "the eighth day" is mentioned is in this week's *parashah*,

Shemini.[7] Here the eighth day refers to the eighth day of the inauguration of the Tabernacle. Though the Tabernacle was impermanent—it was dismantled and reconstructed each time the Israelites moved in the wilderness—its most important feature, the permanence of the Divine indwelling—"And I will dwell among them"[8]—began on the eighth day. Thus, the Tabernacle is the second eighth day.

The third instance appears in next week's parashah, *Tazria*, in reference to *Brit Milah* (circumcision), "And on the eighth day the flesh of his foreskin shall be circumcised."[9] The next four instances appear in *parashat Metzora*, twice in the purification of the *metzora* (the so-called leper)[10] and twice in the purification of the *zav* (a man experiencing genital discharge)[11] and of the *zavah* (a woman experiencing menstruation)[12] both of which conclude on the eighth day of their purification process. We see then that the words "on the eighth day" are a *segulah* (remedy) for purification.

The next time this phrase appears is regarding *Shemini Atzeret*, an independent festival that is known as the eighth day of *Sukkot*. "Seven days you shall bring offerings by fire to *Havayah*; on the eighth day, you shall observe a holy occasion and bring a [separate] offering by fire to *Havayah*…."[13]

The next instance of "on the eighth day" is found in the laws of the Nazirite whose consecrated hair was defiled, "On the eighth day he shall bring to turtledoves or to pigeons…."[14] Here we have another rectification of a state of impurity that happens on the eighth day.

The eighth context in which "the eighth day" appears is the inauguration offerings brought by the kings of the twelve tribes to the Tabernacle. Each of the kings, following the order of their encampment round the Tabernacle, brought an identical offering, and "On the eighth day, it was the king of the children of Manasseh, Gamliel son of Pedahtzur"[15] (בְּיוֹם הַשְּׁמִינִי נָשִׂיא לִבְנֵי מְנַשֶּׁה גַּמְלִיאֵל בֶּן פְּדָהצוּר). This is the final appearance of the "eighth day" in the Pentateuch. Notice that the entire verse has 8 words. Its value is 1872, which is the product of 72 and 26, where 72 is the value of "loving-kindness" (**חֶסֶד**) and 26 is the value of God's essential Name, *Havayah* (1872 .(**י-הוה** is also a multiple of 8. This also connects with the fact that the tribe of Menasheh corresponds to the eighth month of the year, Cheshvan.

PARTZUF OF "THE EIGHTH DAY"

Since we have found that all the instances of "the eighth day" belong to 8 distinct issues, let us conceptualize and order them as a *partzuf*, a Kabbalistic model. In this case, even though we have eight elements to correspond to a Kabbalistic model, we will use the *sefirot*.

In the crown, we will place the Nazirite. The word "nazir" in Hebrew literally means crown.

So-called leprosy is associated in Kabbalah with a burst of revelation from the *sefirah* of wisdom, and so we will place the purification of the *metzora* in wisdom.

We correspond the eighth day of *Sukkot*, *Shemini Atzeret* with the *sefirah* of understanding because it is considered the day of reception, the day on which all the spiritual effluence from *Sukkot* is received

into the womb of the Mother Principle (*Imma Ila'ah*), which represents the *sefirah* of understanding. In fact, understanding is the eighth *sefirah* (from below to above, starting with kingdom) and is therefore referred to as "the eighth firmament."[16] What this also means is that this entire *partzuf* that we are now constructing is related to the Mother Principle (*Imma Ila'ah*).

The phrase "the eighth day" which appears in context of the Tabernacle corresponds to the *sefirah* of knowledge (*da'at*). The Tabernacle, and the Temple in Jerusalem after it, represent the spread of knowledge of God everywhere as in the verse, "For the earth will be filled with the knowledge of *Havayah*, just as waters cover the sea,"[17] and King Solomon's prayer, "Hear in Your heavenly abode and grant all that the foreigner asks You for; thus, all the people of the earth will know Your name and revere You, as does Your people Israel; and they will know that Your name is attached to this House that I have built."[18] The ultimate purpose of the Divine Presence in Israel is to fill the world with the knowledge of God. Similarly, in *parashat Shemini*, the Divine Presence came down to the mundane realm on the eighth day of the inauguration, which was the first day of Nissan and it was on that day that the death of Nadav and Avihu occurred.

Next, we have the man and woman purifying from a genital discharge and menstruation, respectively. These we will place in victory and acknowledgment (*netzach* and *hod*), following the Zohar's statement that "He is in *netzach*, she is in *hod*." Impurity and purity are connected to "understanding [*binah*] extends to acknowledgment [*hod*]" which includes victory [*netzach*]; in principle, we could identify both purifications with acknowledgment as well, since victory and acknowledgment are considered "two halves of the same body."

It is easy to see that circumcision corresponds to foundation.

Finally, we have the first instance of "the eighth day" regarding the animal offering. We place it in kingdom (*malchut*). One of the most well-known numerical allusions is that the two fillings of God's essential Name, *Havayah*, that equal 45 (**יוד הא ואו הא**) and 52 (**יוד הה וו הה**), which correspond to the *sefirot* beauty and kingdom, also equal "man" and "animal" respectively. Thus, kingdom is related to the animal, specifically to the animal soul in man, which is rectified by offering it on the altar. Everything begins with elevating and rectifying kingdom, subduing the animal soul by offering either a sacrifice or, as we saw earlier, by giving, giving again, and giving without end.

We still need to identify the categories that correspond to loving-kindness, might, and beauty. We are left with "the eighth day" regarding the kings of the tribes, particularly the king of the tribe of Menasheh. The the letters of Menasheh (מְנַשֶּׁה) permute to spell "*neshamah*," or soul (נְשָׁמָה) as well as "fat" (שְׁמֶנָה). The 12 tribes are all branches of the three patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, who correspond to loving-kindness, might, and beauty; this is one of the reasons that they encamped in groups of three around the Tabernacle. Menasheh thus represents all the souls of the tribes.

Recall that the kings of the Tribes began bringing their offerings for the inauguration of the Tabernacle on the first day of Nissan, which the Torah describes as "the eighth day." Menasheh was thus the eighth [to bring his offering] after the eighth [day, when the kings began bringing their offerings]. So, we might say that he draws, intensifies, and amplifies the first of Nissan—"the eighth day"—drawing down knowledge from the Tabernacle to all those seeking the knowledge of God. This is another way to understand how he specifically includes all three axes on which lie loving-kindness, might, and beauty, i.e., all the souls and all the kings.[19] In short, we have identified the eighth day appearing in the Tabernacle inauguration with the three emotional sefirot—loving-kindness [*chessed*], might [*gevurah*], and beauty [*tiferet*]—and particularly with beauty on the middle axis, which rises to knowledge to bring down knowledge of God to all the souls of Israel.

Our final partzuf is thus,

crown-keter כֶּתֶר
Nazirite נָזִיר

understanding-binah בִּינָה
Eighth Day of Sukkot שְׁמִינִי עֲצֶרֶת

wisdom-chochmah חָכְמָה
purification of leprosy טָהֳרַת הַמְּצֹרָע

knowledge-da'at דַּעַת
Eighth Day of Inauguration of Tabernacle שְׁמִינִי לְמִלּוּאִים בַּמִּשְׁכָּן

loving-kindness-chessed חֶסֶד
might-gevurah גְּבוּרָה
beauty-tiferet תִּפְאֶרֶת
Offering of the King of Menasheh קָרְבַּן נָשִׂיא מְנַשֶּׁה

splendor-hod הוֹד
purification from menstruation טָהֳרַת הַזָּבָה

victory-netzach נֶצַח
purification from masculine ejection טָהֳרַת הַזָּב

foundation-yesod יְסוֹד
Circumcision בְּרִית מִילָה

kingdom-malchut מַלְכוּת
Animal offering הַקְרָבַת בְּהֵמָה

Notes:
1 . Leviticus 9:1.
2 . Before the Torah was given, Hebrew used the common letters of what is known as Phoenician script, but which the rabbis call *ro'etz* or *do'etz* (see *Torah Shleimah* vol. 29 for a complete discussion). The Hebrew letters in this writing are: 𐤀𐤅𐤋𐤐𐤉𐤍𐤎𐤏𐤑𐤒𐤓𐤔𐤕. Note that the letters are written from right to left, beginning with *alef*; the *chet* is the eighth letter from the right.
3 . Mishnah *Nedarim* 3:11. This refers to the 13 times that the word "covenant" (בְּרִית) in various forms appears in God's commandment to Abraham to circumcise himself, his male offspring, and the males in his household (Genesis 17:1-21).
4 . Exodus 22:28.
5 . See Rashi on this verse for the explanation of how we learn that it is not obligatory.
6 . *Vayikra Rabbah* 2:2.
7 . Leviticus 9:1.
8 . Exodus 25:8.
9 . Leviticus 12:3.
10 . Ibid. 14:10 and 14:23.
11 . Ibid. 15:14.
12 . Ibid. 15:29.
13 . Ibid. 23:36.
14 . Numbers 6:10.
15 . Ibid. 7:54.
16 . See *Zohar* 1:162b and *Mikdash Melech* there. See also *Hilchot Yesodei HaTorah* 3:1, that the eighth firmament is where the stars (as opposed to the planets) are situated. As the eighth firmament, understanding is like the womb of the souls of the Jewish people, from where all the souls issue forth and the souls are related to the many stars in the eighth firmament. In that sense, all Jews are kin.
17 . Isaiah 11:9.
18 . 1 Kings 8:23.
19 . Note also that the eighth day of *Nissan*, the day on which Menasheh brought their offering, is the middle day between *Rosh Chodesh Nissan* (the eighth day of the inauguration and the day of the establishment of the Tabernacle, etc.) and the first day of the Passover holiday, the time of our freedom.

STORY

REBBE MENACHEM MENDEL OF VITEBSK: A TIME FOR JAIL

Rebbe Menachem Mendel of Vitebsk, author of 'Pri Ha'aretz', was born in 5490 (1730) to Rabbi Moshe, a disciple of the Baal Shem Tov. In his youth, he visited the Ba'al Shem Tov several times but received most of his Torah from the Maggid of Mezritch, becoming one of his greatest disciples. Many of the Maggid's disciples, including the Alter Rebbe of Chabad, accepted his authority after the Maggid's passing. In 5537 (1777), he led three hundred chasidim (a very significant number for that time) on aliyah to the Land of Israel, establishing a community first in Tzfat and later in Tiberias. The tzaddik's personality combined regal leadership with tremendous humility, along with self-sacrifice for the Land of Israel and the hastening of the redemption. He passed away on the 1st of Iyar, 5548 (1788) and was buried in Tiberias.

Once, when Rebbe Menachem Mendel was a young married man, he was falsely accused of something and placed in prison. The jail housed murderers and non-Jewish criminals, and Rebbe Menachem Mendel had to share a cell with them. The cell was unclean, and for him to be able to pray there, Rebbe Menachem Mendel would go to a corner and try to clean it as best he could.

Rebbe Mendel noticed that when he prayed in his corner, one of the prisoners, who appeared like all the non-Jews, watched him intently and his face would change. This prisoner began to approach him and assist him. After some time, Rebbe Mendel asked him about this. He answered that he was a Jew named Nachum who had strayed from the path and become a thief, and because of his descent to such a low level, no one was making efforts on his behalf. Rebbe Mendel understood that God had placed him in prison through Divine Providence, to help Nachum better connect with his Jewish soul.

Rebbe Mendel began to study with him and guide him in observing the mitzvot that could be performed in prison. Nachum completely repented for his past, and Rebbe Mendel promised him that when they would leave prison, he would take him to his teacher, the Maggid of Mezritch, so that he could achieve complete rectification. At a certain point, the judges investigated Rebbe Mendel's case and understood that he had been falsely accused. The chief jailer came and told Rebbe Mendel: "You are free, go home." But Rebbe Mendel refused: "I'm not leaving here until you also release Nachum the thief...."

They explained to him that Nachum the thief was indeed a thief and deserved to remain in prison for a long time, but he insisted. Finally, Rebbe Menachem Mendel managed to reach the judges and told them: "I take responsibility for Nachum that he will not steal again, I am adopting him." The judges were convinced and released Nachum along with him. Immediately upon leaving the prison, Rebbe Mendel took Nachum with him to the Maggid of Mezritch. They traveled to the Maggid, and there Nachum became a devoted disciple of the Maggid, and one of the tzaddikim of the Chasidic movement.

Rebbe Menachem Mendel is likely the first among the Chasidic *tzaddikim* to be characterized by what later became a sort of "chasidic custom": to be imprisoned due to false accusations. In essence, for everyone who sits in prison, there is always such a "Nachum", a divine reason for which the entire imprisonment, with all its hardships and complications, was worthwhile.

The prison, one could say, is a place where *ba'alei teshuvah* (penitents) stand. Completely righteous individuals cannot stand there, but Rebbe Menachem Mendel, a man of humility, who after moving to the Land of Israel even signed his letters as "the truly lowly," merited through his humility to be there and thus bring Nachum closer to God. For how does one bring such a Jew, who seems so distant, closer? Only through the power of humility can one see the unique virtue in every Jew and sense his existing closeness to God and consequently illuminate this point within him. Thus, explained the Alter Rebbe, a follower of Rebbe Menachem Mendel's "prison custom"—he too was falsely imprisoned, twice—that the tzaddik is like a lever: he lowers himself beneath the lowest level, and thereby raises the entire structure.

In fact, one could say that this lever itself is also the point of light within the various "underworld" characters sitting in prison. They sense the injustice and lack of righteousness in the seemingly-ordered world outside, the one run by the establishment, and in a kind of rebellion or protest, they descend beneath it with a hidden desire, as the Rebbe says, "to turn the world over today!" and lift it up.

Even when the wicked break the boundaries of society (and of course, there is such wickedness inside each of us), there is light to be found in the chaos they cause. It is a great light with no vessels capable of containing it. When evil encounters a *tzaddik*, or the inner tzaddik within each of us (for "your people are all righteous"), the tzaddik is able to elevate the underworld character to holiness and insert his lights of chaos into the broad vessels of the world of *tikkun* (rectification).

It's also interesting to note that when the Rebbe Rayatz established the daily study known as *Chitat* (*Chumash*, *Tehillim*, and *Tanya*), the Chitat portion for Rebbe Mendel's day of passing (in a regular year) is the section in Tanya about Rabbi Elazar ben Durdaya, the teacher of all penitents. He too reached the lowest place in the lowest world and emerged from there, and in his merit, and in the merit of those like him, the redemption will come.

DIVINE PROVIDENCE (PART 3)

THE BA'AL SHEM TOV'S TEACHINGS FROM THE GARDEN OF EDEN

DIVINE PROVIDENCE WHILE WALKING

We now turn to the Addendums to the collection of teachings from the Ba'al Shem Tov known as Keter Shem Tov. The addendums include quotes from the Chabad Rebbes regarding the Ba'al Shem Tov and his teachings. One of the central fixtures of the addendums is the seven teachings that our teacher, the Baal Shem Tov, said in Gan Eden on the 18th of Elul, 1892. This is a relatively unique phenomenon in Chasidic literature and documents what the fifth Lubavitcher Rebbe, Rebbe Shalom Dov Ber heard in his "soul elevations" (עֲלִיַּת נְשָׁמָה) to the Garden of Eden.

The first and second teachings were both given as part of "a Hakhel [gathering], in the presence of the Ba'al Shem Tov's disciples and their disciples, with their followers and their wives"[1] (and these are also included in the *Hayom Yom*). The first and second teachings heard are essentially identical, but in the second the Ba'al Shem Tov added a few additional points of elucidation. These first two teachings are on the verses regarding the bringing of the first fruit to the Temple, the mitzvah known as *Bikurim*. The Torah writes,

> When you enter the land that *Havayah* your God is giving you as an inheritance, you must take possession of it and settle it. You must take the first of all the fruit of the earth, which you must then bring from your land that *Havayah* your God is giving you; you must place them into a basket and you shall go to the place on which *Havayah* your God will choose to rest His Name.[2]

The way the Ba'al Shem Tov explained these two verses calls upon one of the foundations of Divine Providence.

> "…You shall go to the place on which *Havayah* your God will choose." A Jew must know that when he goes from one place to another, it is not that he is going, but rather that he is being led from above, and the intent is, "to rest His name there," meaning to publicize the Divine Presence in the place where he is.

When the Ba'al Shem Tov repeated this teaching, he added:

> "You shall go to the place… to rest His name there"—you must exercise *mesirut nefesh* [self-sacrifice] to rest the Divine Presence there. How does one publicize the Divine Presence? By reciting a blessing and with a verse from Psalms.

Here, there is a special emphasis on Divine Providence over a person's walking, following the verse, "The steps of a man are established by God, and He desires his path,"[3] which describes this exact situation whereby God leads the person to fulfill a mission—to make a blessing, to say a verse, or to perform a *mitzvah*, and elevate the sparks waiting in a specific place. This is not about repentance, equanimity, or prayer—all of which are considered Divine service relative to Divine Providence—but about the recognition that Providence sends the person on a mission.

Even when the person finds himself traveling for the purpose of business or some other reason, he should know that the mundane goal is not God's inner intent; the revealed goal is only an exterior garment, cloaking what God truly wants from the individual, which is to illuminate the place they arrive at and publicize the Divine Presence there.

We have in the past taught about the "reasons" or "causes" (סִבּוֹת) that Rebbe Asher Freund would speak of often. This is the origin of this notion in his thought. In Rebbe Asher's language, everything that God does is an external "cause" or "reason" meant to be uncloaked and God's true will be discovered inside.

Here, Divine Providence is specifically associated with the feet, in the person's walking, and therefore we can identify two additional elements. First, the vessel or instrument with which one can sense Divine Providence in general, and specifically in the context of "the law of the Land" (דִּינָא דְמַלְכוּתָא) of the Kingdom of Heaven, is lowliness (שִׁפְלוּת). It would seem that the instrument for sensing Divine Providence when walking (i.e., traveling) is modesty, as it says, "And walk humbly with your God."[4] The more a person practices walking with humility, the more they understand the Divine Purpose of their journey.

Walking requires both feet, which correspond to the sefirot of victory (*netzach*) and acknowledgment (*hod*). According to Kabbalah, it is the left foot, the *sefirah* of acknowledgment, that exercises control over the sense[5] of walking, a concept captured in the verse, "When one walks with earnestness [the inner experience of acknowledgment] one walks confidently [the inner experience of victory]"[6] (הוֹלֵךְ בְּתֹם יֵלֵךְ בָּטֶחַ).

Earlier, we presented the 5 verses of repentance taught by Rebbe Zusha. The focus then on the verses, "I have set Havayah before me always" and "In all your ways know Him." Now the focus is on another of Rebbe Zusha's verses of repentance, "You shall be earnest with Havayah your God"[7] ("The one who walks with simplicity")—relating directly to the verse, "When one walks with earnestness…."

DIVINE PROVIDENCE EVEN IN THINGS THAT ARE MISSING

In the addendum to *Keter Shem Tov*, we also find a collection of comments made by the Lubavitcher Rebbe on these seven teachings from the Ba'al Shem. The Rebbe addresses the fact that in two places in these seven teachings, there is a notation that the teaching is "incomplete." These can be found at the ends of the third and seventh teachings, corresponding to the

sefirot of beauty (*tiferet*) and kingdom (*malchut*), if we parallel them to the seven emotive faculties. The Rebbe says that the reason for the incomplete state of these two teachings is irrelevant (it might have originated with the transmission of the teachings by the Rebbe Rashab who heard them or by the Rebbe Rayatz who passed them on, or it might stem from the listeners who wrote them down and forgot. Either way, the incompleteness is by Divine Providence, just as everything in creation is, and particularly matters related to Torah), and we must find the lesson in it for our service of God.

Here, we once again encounter the Chabad principle that every person should engage his spiritual task in an active manner and not feel content with just passive belief that everything is under Divine Providence, and even that it pertains to the ultimate purpose of creation, but to seek a lesson in it for their personal service. The surprising lesson that the Rebbe learns here is that if there is something that is "incomplete," it invites the person to fill it in and complete it.

The Rebbe brings other examples of how an incomplete teaching was completed.

> An example is found in the *Tanya;* at the end of *Sha'ar HaYichud VehaEmunah* [Gate of Unity and Faith], the word "incomplete" appears, and this appeared in the first few printings of the *Tanya*. As explained by the Alter Rebbe's great disciple, Rebbe Aharon Halevi of Staroszele, in his introduction to his identically titled book: "time did not permit him to complete it according to his holy intent and will" (which is why the work remains incomplete).
>
> Nevertheless, in all subsequent editions of the *Tanya*, the word "incomplete" was omitted certainly with the knowledge, agreement, or instructions of our Rebbes. The omission of "incomplete" can be explained in the following manner. Thanks to all the elucidation of Chasidut provided by our Rebbes, who after the writing and printing of the *Tanya* shared their explanations of the matters elaborated upon in *Sha'ar HaYichud VehaEmunah*, what was left "incomplete" by the Alter Rebbe was properly rendered complete. Therefore the word "incomplete" was removed from the later editions.

When studying *Sha'ar HaYichud VeHaEmunah*, one can feel the "incomplete"—it is clear that it could have been written in much greater detail, as noted by his disciple, Rebbe Aharon (and it is nice to note that the Lubavitcher Rebbe here praises him). Indeed, in the first editions of the *Tanya*, the word "incomplete" was still printed. However, its omission in later editions signals a state of "silence is equivalent to acknowledgment," that subsequent teachings of the Rebbe's filled the lack.

The Rebbe then notes that,

> An example and proof for this [that what was incomplete should be filled in by later generations] can be found in the revealed teachings of the Torah. It is written that, "Rabbi Yehoshua said, 'I heard [such and such], but I cannot explain it' [this is like an incomplete], and then Rabbi Akiva said, 'I will explain it' (thereby filling in what was left incomplete]."

Rabbi Akiva, the disciple of Rabbi

Yehoshua, completes what his teacher could not. Likewise, every good disciple should strive to complete what is "incomplete" in their teacher's words (whether in the original, or in the way it was transmitted, due to the forgetfulness of the students themselves, which is also part of Divine Providence). This injunction follows the saying, "And from my students, I learned more than from everyone else."

The Rebbe then explains that regarding the "incompletion" in the teachings of the Ba'al Shem Tov that were said in Gan Eden:

> the use of the word "incomplete" is meant to awaken the learner's effort—from below to above—to add and complete that which is incomplete. This is in line with the saying, "Give to the wise and he will become wiser," meaning that in addition to the matters that are given to the wise person, with a good eye ("All who give with a good eye are giving"), certain matters are left for them to struggle with on their own in order to increase their wisdom.
>
> We can draw a parallel to the process of creation by the Creator. Even after the Creation was complete and all was described as being "very good," the Torah still writes, "all that God had created to do," meaning "to perfect." This implies that God leaves a deficiency for the person to correct through their work. Similarly, in this case, although the teachings are revealed, certain matters are intentionally left in a state of being "incomplete" so that the person will engage in effort and become wiser through their own efforts.
>
> This is clarified further according to what was explained elsewhere, that the revelation of the seven teachings of the Ba'al Shem Tov by the Chabad Rebbes, stresses a top-down revelation that emphasizes even more the need to complete that which was left "incomplete."
>
> Even though one may wonder who is worthy to approach and complete the "incomplete" in these seven teachings, following the great revelations revealed by our Rebbes until today, there is the possibility to "become wiser" even regarding the "incomplete" in the seven teachings.

When one gives to the wise—directly—he becomes wiser—by reflecting the light given to him. This means that the wise person must constantly feel a sense of incompleteness within himself, even after receiving much without effort. He then merits to see the fulfillment of the saying, that when "I have labored and found, [I may] believe it," and know that I have filled the incomplete. Through this effort, they are able to discover supernal truths beyond measure.

Even in cases where there is no explicit "incomplete" left unsaid, such as in *Kuntres HaHitpa'alut* [A Treatise on Excitation] where the Mittler Rebbe assures the reader that he has left nothing hidden, there is still the need to carry opposites and know that even after all that has been revealed and explicitly stated, there is still a degree of "omission," which even if it is not intended by the teacher (in this case, the Mittler Rebbe), certainly originates in the learner, who does not fully grasp everything properly. The learner must put in effort themselves to discover more things.

In a slightly harsh way, one could say that even at the end of the Written Torah, the Pentateuch (which is most precise in its letters, to the point that if any letter is missing or there is an excess letter, the entire Torah scroll is disqualified), one should feel that the word "incomplete" is written, inviting us to complete it with the entire Oral Torah that was developed throughout the generations. Again, the emphasis on "effort through one's own ability" is especially characteristic of the Chabad approach, the demand for strength from below to above, as opposed to the general Chasidic path, where the emphasis is on revelation from above to below.

In any case, there is a great novel principle to be learned here regarding Divine Providence—especially fitting for the Rebbe: that there is Divine Providence even in the negation and in that which is not complete. Divine Providence is not only when God does something in a positive way, filling me, but also when He does *not* do something, when there is an incomplete state. There is Divine Providence in the "yes," when something happens, and also Divine Providence in the "no." This is the secret of the words, "Not so My servant Moses," where the "no" precedes the "yes"). When something that was supposed to happen according to nature does not occur, there is even more noticeable Divine Providence than if the thing had happened as expected.

The "lack," the negated or missing element illustrates Divine Providence in the form of an "embossed seal," which calls upon the individual to act like an "engraved seal" making them into a source of positive influence. In today's science, the example of this is dark matter, which is completely incomprehensible—we have no access to it, no ability to sense it—but it fills the entire universe. The lack is a type of "unmoving driving force," an unseen force that moves and guides us.

In our generation, as the Rebbe emphasized, the most prominent example of this kind of Divine Providence is that despite that "all the deadlines for rectification have been crossed," and despite the fact that we cry out with all our might, "How much longer?!" and "Mashiach now," we still do not see the coming of Mashiach. This "lack," the missing redemption, as it were, demands that we do everything in our power to fill the void and bring Mashiach.

1 . These teachings are also mentioned in *Hayom Yom* for the 18th of Elul.
2 . Deuteronomy 26:1-2.
3 . Psalms 37:23 (and see *Ma'or Einayim*, *Vayakhel*).
4 . Micah 6:8.
5 . Every one of the Jewish months is endowed with a particular "sense" (חוש). The sense of walking belongs to the month of Sivan. Each of the senses is controlled by a bodily organ. See *Sefer Yetzirah* 5:7.
6 . Proverbs 10:9.
7 . Deuteronomy 18:13.

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