



Likkutei Sichos

Volume 17 | Behar | Lag BaOmer

Uniting Opposites

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1.

RABBI SHIMON BAR YOCHAI, *PARSHAS BEHAR* AND LAG BAOMER

According to the custom¹ to learn one chapter of *Pirkei Avos* every Shabbos between Pesach and Shavuos, it turns out that in many years — including this year² — we learn the fourth chapter of *Pirkei Avos* on *parshas Behar*.

Since everything in Torah (which also comprises Jewish customs) is precise, this chapter (chapter four) is related, understandably, to *parshas Behar* which is read on this Shabbos.

Additionally, in some years, Lag BaOmer falls during the week of *parshas Behar*, as is the case this year. Based on the well-known teaching of *Shelah*³ — that every holiday is connected with the *parshah* that is read on the week on which the holiday falls — clearly, Lag BaOmer is relevant to *parshas Behar*, and also to the fourth chapter of *Pirkei Avos*.

Indeed, we find in this week's chapter (*mishnah* 13) quotes a teaching of Rabbi Shimon (ben Yochai)⁴ who passed away⁵ on Lag BaOmer: “There are three crowns: the crown of Torah, the crown of *kehunah*,⁶ and the crown of royalty, but the crown of a good name surmounts⁷ them all.”

There are many teachings of Rabbi Shimon ben Yochai, as it says,⁸ “In every chapter of the talmudic tractates, Rabbi Shimon is mentioned. Even in the

¹ Alter Rebbe's *Siddur* (in which it says: “We have the custom to **say** *Pirkei Avos*”). See *Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 7, p. 175, fns. 1, 2.

² 5738 (1978).

³ Beginning of *parshas Vayeshev*.

⁴ When a teaching is attributed to “Rabbi Shimon” without further qualification, the reference is to Rabbi Shimon ben Yochai. See Rashi on *Shavuos* 2b, s.v., “*mi'shmo*.” In our case, this lineage is explicitly noted in *Yalkut Shimoni*, “*Koheles*,” *remez* 973.

⁵ {In the original, “*yom histalkus*,” and “*yom hillula*.” The meaning of the term “*yom histalkus*” is day of passing, and the sources which say that Rabbi Shim ben Yochai passed away on Lag BaOmer are *Pri Eitz Chaim*, “*Shaar Sefiras HaOmer*,” ch. 7; *Siddur Im Dach*, “*Shaar HaLag BaOmer*,” et al. The term “*yom hilula*” means “day of rejoicing,” and the sources for this term are *Zohar*, vol. 3, 296b; *Zohar*, vol. 1, p. 218a. }

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⁶ {The status that Torah gives to *kohanim*.}

⁷ {In the original Hebrew, “עולה על גביהן.”}

⁸ *Likkutei Torah*, “*Acharei*,” 28a.

tractates of *Keilim*, *Negaim*, and *Uktzin*.”⁹ We learn this particular teaching in proximity to his day of passing — “when all of his deeds, his Torah study, and his lifetime *avodah*,”¹⁰ reach their fulfillment, as known¹¹ — because this teaching convey’s Rabbi Shimon ben Yochai’s (main) focus.

In light of the above — that Lag BaOmer is also related to the theme of *parshas Behar* — it stands to reason that this teaching is related to *parshas Behar*.

2.

TWO OPPOSITES

In our *parshah* over all, we find two paradoxical ideas:

The *parshah* begins with the mitzvah of *shemita*.¹² Its observance takes place in the land of Israel where the Jewish people lived as befitting “a settled land.”¹³ They lived there conforming with the laws of nature to the extent that even according to the Torah, there was room to worry: “Should you ask... ‘What are we to eat...?’ (so how will we be able to keep the mitzvah of *shemita*)?”¹⁴

Afterward, the subsequent sections {of the *parshah*} “follow the order”¹⁵ of a Jew’s spiritual decline. As our Sages remark,¹⁶ Scripture speaks first of a Jew selling himself to a gentile, (and then, even worse, “**to an idol** of a foreigner’s family,”¹⁷ “becoming a servant for it”).¹⁸ The situation deteriorates further until (according to the **Torah of Truth**) he may rationalize that “since my master

⁹ {Tractates that discuss topics related to ritual impurity, a very complex topic in Jewish law.}

¹⁰ *Igeres Hakodesh*, ch. 27, p. 147a.

¹¹ *Igeres Hakodesh*, ch. 27.

¹² {The seventh year of the seven-year *shemita* cycle. During the *shemita* year, the residents of the land of Israel must completely desist from cultivating their fields. They also relinquish personal ownership of their fields; whatever produce grows on its own is considered communal property, free for anyone to take.}

¹³ {*Shemos* 16:35.}

¹⁴ *Vayikra* 25:20.

¹⁵ Wording of Rashi on *Vayikra*, 26:1.

¹⁶ *Kiddushin* 20a.

¹⁷ *Vayikra* 25:47.

¹⁸ See Rashi on the verse.

engages in illicit relations, serves idols... desecrates the Shabbos, I will also behave like him.”¹⁹

On the other hand, this whole discussion is included in and a portion of *parshas Behar (Sinai)* {on Mt. Sinai}, an elevated (and lofty) place, the site of **the giving of the Torah**. This was the place where the Jewish people were on the ultimate spiritual plane, entirely beyond {the limitations of} this world (more so than even during their time in the desert, in general, which was the opposite of “a settled land”).

The explanation {of these paradoxical themes}: The question itself hints at the answer. The purpose of the giving of the Torah was not in order for the Jewish people to remain “at Mt. Sinai,” completely divorced from {the limitations of} this world and a life based on nature. On the contrary, the purpose was for the Jewish people afterward to enter into “a settled land” — into the natural order, which enables the whole downward spiritual spiral described in the *parshah* — and yet with the power derived from *Behar Sinai*, to overcome the concealment of G-dliness imposed by nature.

[So it is true that the concealment of nature makes it possible to ask the question, according to the **Torah**, “...What are we to eat?” (after all, a person may not rely on a miracle).²⁰ Nevertheless, the Torah provides the ability to overpower and dominate nature. Thus, it says, “I will ordain My blessing for you in the **sixth year**.”²¹ **Before** the *shemita* year begins, a person will already see that he has in hand “a crop sufficient for three years.”²²

Even a Jew who was sold to a gentile and who, based on Torah, is subjugated to his master such that it is conceivable for this Jew to think, “I will also behave like him,” the Torah insists, “You shall not make {false gods}...”²³ When it comes to Judaism, nobody has any control over a Jew.]

¹⁹ Rashi on *Vayikra* 26:1, citing *Toras Kohanim*, loc. cit.

²⁰ *Pesachim* 64b.

²¹ *Vayikra* 25:21.

²² *Vayikra* 25:21.

²³ *Vayikra* 26:1.

The substance and message of Rabbi Shimon ben Yochai's teaching is similar: "There are three crowns... but the crown of a good name surmounts them all." The "crown of a good name" refers to the reputation a Jew acquires through his "good deeds."²⁴ Rabbi Shimon ben Yochai was **occupied with Torah study**,²⁵ to the extent that "Rabbi Shimon ben Yochai and his peers" are the examples, given in the Gemara and the halachic decisors,²⁶ of those individuals for whom "Torah study was their occupation."

Rabbi Shimon ben Yochai says: True, Torah and "**the crown of Torah**" (within the realm of Torah itself) have tremendous value. And the optimum expression of "the crown of Torah" as it relates a Jew is expressed when he makes Torah study his occupation. Nonetheless, "the crown of a good name (on account of good deeds) surmounts them all." This is because the purpose of Torah is to bring a person to perform "good deeds" (which positively impact the world).

3.

TORAH STUDY OR GOOD DEEDS?

We need to clarify:

True, for most people, their occupation is **not** the study of Torah (as our Sages observed,²⁷ "**Many** have acted in accordance with the opinion of Rabbi Yishmael,²⁸ and were successful; in accordance with the opinion of Rabbi Shimon ben Yochai,²⁹ and were unsuccessful"). Rather, they belong to the class of the "masters of **good deeds**." We understand why for **them**, "the crown of a good name" (good deeds) is a greater accolade than "the crown of Torah."

²⁴ See the commentaries to that *mishnah*.

²⁵ Shabbos 11a.

²⁶ *Shabbos* 11a; *Tur* and *Shulchan Aruch*, and the Alter Rebbe's *Shulchan Aruch*, "*Orach Chaim*," end of sec. 106; Alter Rebbe's *Hilchos Talmud Torah*, sec. 4, par. 4-5.

²⁷ *Berachos* 35b.

²⁸ {Who maintains that a person should work for a living, in addition to studying Torah.}

²⁹ {Who maintains that a person must dedicate himself to Torah study exclusively.}

How was it possible that Rabbi Shimon ben Yochai, whose **occupation was Torah study** (and was a student of Rabbi Akiva, who asserted that “Torah study is greater {than action}”)³⁰ should opine that “the crown of a good name surmounts them all” — even “the crown of Torah?”

True, understandably, also according to Rabbi Shimon ben Yochai, Torah study alone is insufficient; a person must also perform “good deeds.”³¹ Moreover, the Jerusalem Talmud {by its question that follows implies that Rabbi Shimon does maintain interruptions in Torah study may be made for the sake of mitzvos. The Jerusalem Talmud} queries,³² “Does Rabbi Shimon ben Yochai not concede that **we interrupt** (Torah study) in order to build a *sukkah*...?”³³

Nonetheless, this would seem to imply only that even a person whose occupation is Torah study must not neglect the performance of good deeds. This requirement is analogous to the obligation of “masters of good deeds” to also learn **Torah**³⁴ (at least one chapter in the morning and one in the evening).³⁵ How can we explain why good deeds possess a **superior** quality than Torah study for those (also) whose occupation is Torah study {as implied by the question above in the Jerusalem Talmud}?

4.

INTERRUPTION

Seemingly, we can resolve this difficulty based on the above quotation from the Jerusalem Talmud: After asking, “Does Rabbi Shimon ben Yochai not concede that **we interrupt** (Torah study) in order to build a *sukkah*,” the Jerusalem Talmud asks further, “Does Rabbi Shimon ben Yochai not concede

³⁰ *Kiddushin* 40b, {There is a debate whether Torah study or performing *mitzvos* is more advantageous.}

³¹ See *Bava Kamma* 17a: Rabbi Yochanan says in the name of **Rabbi Shimon ben Yochai**... “Whoever engages in the study of Torah and in the performance of acts of kindness merits reward equal to the portion of two tribes....”

³² Jerusalem Talmud, *Berachos*, ch. 1, end of sec. 2; *Shabbos*, ch. 1, end of sec. 2.

³³ {Implying that sometimes the performance of a mitzvah overrides Torah study, even according to Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai.}

³⁴ *Mishneh Torah*, “*Hilchos Talmud Torah*,” ch. 1, par. 8.

³⁵ *Menachos* 99b.

that a person who studies in order to do {good deeds}... because a person who does not learn in order to do {good deeds} would have been better off not being born.”

This demonstrates that the reason why a person must interrupt {his Torah study} in order to build a *sukkah* is not only because he must **also** perform the mitzvos, but moreover, this is the purpose of the **study** – that he “studies” in order “to do.”

Since the objective of learning is to the performance of mitzvos, this implies that the performance of mitzvos is superior and more important {than learning Torah}.

In truth, however, reason dictates the opposite. A person must interrupt his Torah study to perform a mitzvah (**not** because of the intrinsic **advantage** of the **mitzvos**, but) in order to ensure the quality of his **Torah study** (because if he “studies” without intending “to do,” then his **study** (itself) is flawed).

As has been before discussed at length³⁶ concerning the wording of the Alter Rebbe in *Hilchos Talmud Torah*.³⁷ (He explains there the ruling that a person must interrupt his Torah study to perform a mitzvah if the mitzvah cannot be performed by someone else): “For this is the entire {purpose of a} person, as our Sages say, ‘the purpose of wisdom {Torah} is *teshuvah* and good deeds.’³⁸ And if a person does not {study with this intent}, it turns out that he **does not study** in order to do”

The Alter Rebbe’s point is to explain why a person must interrupt his studies in order to perform a mitzvah. The person must do so because this is the objective (and the capstone) of **wisdom** (Torah) itself. Consequently, “if a person does not do so, it turns out that he **studies** not in order to do”: If a person fails to interrupt his Torah study in order to perform a mitzvah (when it

³⁶ *Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 15, p. 138 ff.

³⁷ Ch. 4, par. 3.

³⁸ *Berachos* 17a.

cannot be performed by someone else), he sustains (not only the loss of a mitzvah, but also) a deficiency in the quality of his **study**.

What emerges is that our Sages are saying that *teshuvah* and good deeds are the **acme**³⁹ of wisdom, **not** that they are of a **higher** caliber than Torah study. As such, our original difficulty returns: Why does **Rabbi Shimon ben Yochai** say that “the crown of a good name surmounts them all?”

5.

CREATING A DWELLING PLACE

The explanation: Since the purpose of Creation is to create a dwelling place for Hashem in this **world**,⁴⁰ it is clear that to accomplish this purpose, **all** our ways of serving Hashem in this world are necessary. This is true not only of the performing mitzvos with physical objects,⁴¹ but also of Torah study. Even studying Torah as one’s occupation, when a person is entirely removed from this world, is also to make this world into a dwelling place for Hashem.

One of the explanations for this:

There is a principle that “a prisoner cannot set himself free.”⁴² Therefore, if Jews were **only to perform** the sort of *avodah* that entails being invested **in** the world, they would be unable to refine the world and **uplift** it above its state of obscurity and concealment.⁴³ Therefore, a Jew must (also) conduct himself in a way that **removes** him from, and uplifts him higher than, the (spiritual concealment of this) world.

This ability is derived from those whose occupation is Torah study. They must nurture this ambition (to make Torah study into one’s occupation) within

³⁹ {In the original Hebrew, “*shleimus*.”}

⁴⁰ {*Tanya*, ch. 36.}

⁴¹ See *Tanya*, ch. 37, et al; also examine *Igeres Hakodesh*, end of sec. 5, and end of sec. 9; et al.

⁴² *Berachos* 5b, and sources noted there.

⁴³ “World” {*olam*, in the Hebrew original} is etymologically related to *he’elem* — concealment. See *Likkutei Torah*, “*Shelach*,” p. 37d, et al.

all Jews, even the “masters of good deeds.” This means that during the times that they are required (by the Torah) to set aside to learn Torah, even if it is only one chapter in the morning and one in the evening, their study session should **emulate** the Torah learning of a person who has **no other** “occupation” (and consequently — no worries) outside of Torah.

6.

INVOLVEMENT WITH OTHERS

For a Jew whose occupation is Torah study to pull himself away from his studies and devote himself to and reach other Jews, it is insufficient to only think about this when he must immediately proceed to actually interact with another Jew. If so, when he is entirely immersed in learning, it is quite possible that he will be unable to pull himself away to concern himself with a Jew of a lower stature than one whose occupation is Torah study.

Therefore, the **Torah study itself** must be infused with the intent that the aim of this study is to inculcate in the **world** — also in other Jews — the impulse for {and appreciation of} learning Torah as one’s occupation.

[This is similar to the explanation given⁴⁴ about the unique quality of Rabbi Akiva — “he entered in peace and left in peace”⁴⁵ — unlike the others who “entered the *pardes*”⁴⁶ and did not leave in peace. The reason why Rabbi Akiva “left in peace” was because he “**entered** in peace.” His *ratzo*⁴⁷ to leave this world (and enter the *pardes*) was “in peace,” meaning, with the intent that this *ratzo* should develop into a “*shov*”⁴⁸ into this world. Therefore, “he left in peace.”]

⁴⁴ Sefer Hamamaarim 5646-5650, p. 260.

⁴⁵ *Chagigah* 14b, according to the version quoted in *Ein Yaakov*.

⁴⁶ {Lit., “the orchard,” there were four Sages who “ascended to Heaven by use of a Divine name” (Rashi in *Chagigah* 14b) in order to delve into the deepest secrets of the Torah.}

⁴⁷ {Lit., “running,” *ratzo* is a longing to cleave to Hashem; the passionate desire of the soul to transcend its material existence, to “run forward” and cleave to its Source.}

⁴⁸ {Lit., “returning,” *shov* is the soul’s sober determination to “return” and fulfill its mission in the body, the resolve to live within the context of material reality, based on the awareness that it is Hashem ultimate intent for use to refine the world, rather than try to escape it.}

On this basis, we can explain the above-mentioned quote from the Jerusalem Talmud (regarding interrupting one's Torah study, even the Torah study that is a person's occupation, in order to perform a mitzvah): "Does Rabbi Shimon ben Yochai not concede that we interrupt..." (and the Jerusalem Talmud adds **a further** point:) "Does Rabbi Shimon ben Yochai not concede that a person who studies in order to do {good deeds}...?" We can posit that the Jerusalem Talmud means to say:

[Not only did he **actually** interrupt his Torah study to build a *sukkah*, etc., and not only that the **purpose** of Torah study is accomplished when it leads to action (as mentioned above in section 4), but moreover:]

The Torah study itself was "**in order** to do": Already during the actual learning itself, the intent and purpose of the study — "to do" — must be felt (for otherwise, it may be impossible later to pull oneself away).

7.

BEYOND LIMITATIONS

We still need to clarify: If a person's occupation is **not** Torah study, and he is **not** altogether removed from materialistic matters, one can understand how, plausibly, even while studying, he is able to think about slipping into the world for the sake of another Jew.

However, since we are discussing someone whose occupation is Torah study, how can we expect him, while immersed in **such** {intense} study, to think about involving himself with a person occupied in {materialistic pursuits, e.g.}, "You shall gather your grain"⁴⁹? They are mutually exclusive activities!

The explanation: *Ratzo* (escaping this world) and *shov* (being **in** this world) are oppositional only on account of the finitude of created beings and

⁴⁹ *Devarim* 11:14. See *Berachos* 35b.

seder hishtaleshelus.⁵⁰ However, when a Jew rises beyond limitations — simply put: when a Jew has **bittul**⁵¹ to Hashem’s Will and behaves accordingly — then whether in a state of *ratzo* or *shov*, his inner state and condition are the **same: bittul** (to Hashem’s Will).

Another example: The Gemara says, “a person’s agent is **like the person himself**,”⁵² and “a servant of the king is considered like the king.”⁵³ This is true whether the agency or the service concerns matters apropos to the rank of the sender or the king, or if they concern matters that are apropos to the rank of the agent or the servant.

Furthermore, from the perspective of Hashem’s Essence, which can subsume opposites, both of these **impulses can exist at the same time**.

Therefore, if a person’s occupation is Torah study because it is predicated on his **personal enjoyment**, then the underlying intent of *shov* cannot coexist with it. However, when a person learns Torah to carry out the purpose intended by {Hashem in His} Essence (to make a dwelling place for Him in the lowest world), then for him, these two opposites can coexist: The person can be entirely immersed in Torah study and simultaneously, be permeated with the awareness that the purpose of his Torah learning is for him to lower himself and to exercise a positive influence on those who are in the working world.

⁵⁰ {The chain-like descent of spiritual worlds until this world. Each spiritual world denotes a complete realm of existence, resulting from its general proximity to or distance from Divine revelation.}

⁵¹ {Connotes self-nullification, humility, and the negation of ego. It is the antithesis of *yeshus*.}

⁵² *Berachos* 34b.

⁵³ *Sifri, Devarim*, ch. 1, par. 7.

8.

EMERGING FROM THE CAVE

Rabbi Shimon ben Yochai embodied this ideal:

The Gemara relates⁵⁴ that after he left the cave, having hidden there for twelve years, he beheld people busy plowing and planting. “He exclaimed, “These people abandon eternal life {i.e., Torah study} and engage in temporal life!’ Any place where Rabbi Shimon ben Yochai and his son Rabbi Elazar directed their gaze was immediately burned.” Only after {returning to the cave and emerging in} the thirteenth year, it says, “Any place that Rabbi Elazar would strike, Rabbi Shimon would heal. Rabbi Shimon said to Rabbi Elazar: My son, you and I suffice for the {entire} world {as the two of us are engaged in the proper study of Torah}.”

The nuance, “(of those who study Torah⁵⁵) you and I suffice for the {entire} world,” means (**not** that it would have been sufficient if they alone would have studied Torah while others did **not**, Heaven forbid. Rather) that their intense focus on Torah study sufficed to **propagate** this impetus **within the** {fabric of the} **world** (“suffice for the {entire} **world**”).

This is also alluded to in the difference between twelve and thirteen (years): The number “twelve” symbolizes *seder hishtaleshelus* (there are twelve months in a year, twelve oblique borders,⁵⁶ etc.) while “thirteen” symbolizes what is beyond *seder hishtleshelus*⁵⁷. Therefore:

From the perspective of “twelve” — *hishtleshelus*, where *ratzo* and *shov* are oppositional — Rabbi Shimon said, “These people abandon eternal life and engage in temporal life.” The **connection** between “eternal life” and “temporal life” was missing. (Meaning, even those who plow and plant would have the impetus to devote themselves to “eternal life”).

⁵⁴ *Shabbos* 33b.

⁵⁵ *Ibid*, *Rashi* s.v. “*dai le’olam*.”

⁵⁶ {*Yud beis gevulei ha’alachson* in the original Hebrew, referring to the twelve lines necessary to form a cube.}

⁵⁷ This is illustrated by the thirteen Divine attributes of mercy {which transcend *seder hishtalshelus*}.

Specifically, the perspective symbolized by the number “thirteen” enabled the act of healing, “Rabbi Shimon would **heal**.” He was not divorced from the world. On the contrary, he **healed** this ({spiritually} ill) world — he **imbued** the world with the impetus to be “occupied in Torah study.”

9.

A GOOD NAME ABOVE ALL

We can now understand why Rabbi Shimon says, “the crown of a good name surmounts them all.” He was referring to (on a deeper level) the “good deeds” that are integral to Torah study itself, i.e., devotion to **others**. This means that those who wear “the crown of Torah” — whose occupation is Torah study — should also have an impetus to perform good deeds.

Therefore, “the crown of a good name surmounts them all”: When **together with** his own **personal** Torah study, which earns him “the crown of Torah,” (Torah study is his occupation), there is “the crown of a good name **surmounts them all**” [meaning, the “crown of Torah” itself (and also “the crown of *kehunah*” and “the crown of kingship”) is with “a good name,” that is] a commitment to helping others, then “the crown of Torah” is “surmounted” — the {ultimate} purpose of his Torah study itself is achieved.

We can also suggest allegorically: In light of the above, we understand why this teaching of Rabbi Shimon was recorded in the **thirteenth mishnah** of this chapter. This hints that the ideal of “the crown of a good name surmounts them all” was achieved by Rabbi Shimon (after spending **thirteen** years in the cave when he attained) through the quality of “thirteen,” as discussed above.

10.

UNITING THE CONCEALED AND THE REVEALED

We can now understand how all of this is related to Lag BaOmer:

The *Zohar* says⁵⁸ that on the day of Rabbi Shimon ben Yochai's passing (aside from the deepest comprehension of the secrets of Torah that he himself attained), he **revealed** to his students, "holy words which I have not revealed until now."

This is consistent with Rabbi Shimon ben Yochai's general accomplishment regarding the secrets of Torah. Other *Tannaim*⁵⁹ who studied the secrets of Torah did not disclose them to others.⁶⁰ Rabbi Shimon ben Yochai's approach was to **unite** the concealed and revealed dimensions. He revealed the dimension of the Torah that had been in a "secret" state (because it is {innately} beyond revelation in this world). [This was analogous to his fusion of "eternal life" with "temporal life."]

11.

BEYOND LIMITS

This fusion of "eternal life" (beyond the limitations of this world) and "temporal life" (within the limitations of this world) is also the central theme of *parshas Behar*: The *parshah* emphasizes that even when a person is busy with "the land" and with nature, still, alongside of it, there is {the influence and imperative of} "*behar Sinai*." This represents that which transcends the world and nature. Furthermore, being involved in "the land" is a part of (*parshas*) "*Behar Sinai* {on Mount Sinai}," a part of achieving the purpose of the Giving of the Torah on *Har Sinai*.

⁵⁸ *Zohar* vol. 3, 287b.

⁵⁹ {A title given to the Sages of the era of the *Mishnah*.}

⁶⁰ *Zohar* vol. 3, 105b.

This is expressed at the beginning of the *parshah* (which includes the theme of the entire *parshah*) and at the conclusion of the *parshah* (“everything follows its ending”).⁶¹

The beginning of the *parshah* discusses the mitzvah of *shemita* which addresses Jews who are busy with the work of the earth, such that Torah justifies the question, “What are we to eat?” (as discussed in Section 2). They are told to mark a year that is a “Shabbos for *Havayah*”⁶² {devoted to holy pursuits}.⁶³ Then, every person can actually immerse himself in “*Har Sinai*” — Torah study — without any worries (similar to those whose occupation is Torah study). On a deeper level, the name *Havayah*⁶⁴ (“Shabbos **for *Havayah***”), which is beyond nature, will radiate for him.

The end of the *parshah* relates a greater novelty (it follows “an order”):⁶⁵ The Torah discusses a Jew who is sold to a gentile, which, in the spiritual descent into the limitations of this world and nature itself, is the ultimate spiritual fall. He has become subjugated to a gentile to the extent that (as discussed in Section 2) that the Torah of Truth addresses a {possible} rationalization that “I will also be like him.”

The Torah tells this person: Not only “you shall not make...”⁶⁶ (nobody has any control over a Jew when it comes to Torah and mitzvos), but furthermore, “I am Hashem, Who is faithful to pay your reward.”⁶⁷

The idea of reward for a mitzvah is that the Divine light,⁶⁸ which is drawn down and revealed through performing the mitzvah, illuminates the person and is grasped by him. This means that even a Jew who was sold to a gentile can uplift himself up beyond his subjugation to his master and connect with {the

⁶¹ *Berachos* 12a.

⁶² {The Tetragrammaton — the four letter name of Hashem.}

⁶³ *Vayikra* 25:2.

⁶⁴ {*Havayah* represents G-dliness itself, which transcends worlds.}

⁶⁵ {See Section 2 above, where the sequence of the *parshah* has been discussed.}

⁶⁶ {*Vayikra* 26:1.}

⁶⁷ *Vayikra* 26:2, see Rashi.

⁶⁸ {“Light,” as used in Chassidus, connotes Divine revelation and manifestation. For a comprehensive explanation of this term, see “Mystical Concepts in Chassidism” (by Rabbi Immanuel Schochet) p. 41 ff.}

level alluded to by the phrase} “I am Hashem,” which is beyond the limitations of nature.

– From talks delivered on *Shabbos parshas Behar-Bechukosai*, 5723 (1963) and 5724 (1964); and *Shabbos parshas Emor*, 5737 (1977)