



# Likkutei Sichos

Volume 24 | Reeh | Sichah 2

## Freedom's Final Touch

---

Translated by Rabbi Mendel Marcus

**General Editor:** Rabbi Eliezer Robbins | **Senior Editor:** Rabbi Lazer Danzinger

**Content Editor:** Rabbi Zalmy Avtzon

© Copyright by Sichos In English 2024 ◦ 5784

A note on the translation: Rounded and square brackets reflect their use in the original *sichah*; curly brackets are interpolations of the translator or editor. The footnotes in curly brackets are those of the translator or editors and do not correspond to the footnotes in the original. Words in bold type are italicized in the original text.

Considerable effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the translation while maintaining readability. As in all translations, however, the possibility of inadvertent errors exists.

**Your feedback is appreciated — please send it to [info@projectlikkuteisichos.org](mailto:info@projectlikkuteisichos.org)**

## 1.

### THE MITZVAH OF SEVERANCE

Regarding the mitzvah of giving severance (to a Jewish servant or maidservant) {when freed from servitude} — the verse explains:<sup>1</sup> “You shall remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt, and Hashem, your L-rd, redeemed you; therefore, I command you regarding this matter today.”

The *Sifri* interprets the verse as follows:<sup>2</sup>

*You shall remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt* — I gave you an award once, and I gave it once again; you, too, give him an award once and once again.<sup>3</sup> Just as in Egypt, I bestowed upon you with a generous hand, you, too, give with a generous hand. Similarly, it says:<sup>4</sup> *Even if you lie among the cooking pots, {you will be like} the wings of a dove that is coated with silver* — the spoils of Egypt; *and her pinions with brilliant gold* — the spoils of the Sea; *wreaths<sup>5</sup> of gold shall we make for you* — the spoils of the sea; *with spangles of silver* — the spoils of Egypt.

In other words, the verse, “You shall remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt, and Hashem, your L-rd, redeemed you,” teaches us that since Hashem redeemed the Jewish nation from the land of Egypt and gave them (doubled) “severance pay” (“the spoils of Egypt” and “the spoils of the Sea”), “therefore, I command you regarding this matter” — {we were given} the mitzvah of giving severance pay to a Jewish servant or maidservant.

This needs to be clarified:<sup>6</sup> {If this is indeed the verse’s intent, then} the main point is missing in the verse! The main point — the **severance pay** given when leaving Egypt — isn’t mentioned at all!

---

<sup>1</sup> *Devarim* 15:15.

<sup>2</sup> {*Sifri* on *Devarim* 15:15.}

<sup>3</sup> See Rashi on the verse.

<sup>4</sup> *Tehillim* 68:14.

<sup>5</sup> *Shir Hashirim* 1:11.

<sup>6</sup> Also see *Alshich* here (Question 6); also see *HaKsav VeHaKabbalah* here.

## 2.

### A MISALIGNMENT OF DETAILS

To understand the solution to this question, we must first elucidate the *Sifri's* interpretation of this mitzvah's details. To preface:

Since we derive the **law** to give severance, and its particulars, from (the Egyptian exodus) “**you, too**, give him a reward once and once again...,” it follows that the spoils taken from Egypt and at the Sea constitute actual “severance.” These were not just a departing gift to some servant released from servitude.

This is puzzling:<sup>7</sup>

- a) Severance laws<sup>8</sup> apply specifically to objects given that are “indicative of blessing” (objects that can grow and multiply). This excludes money and the like.<sup>9</sup> The spoils from Egypt and at the Sea, however, consisted mainly of silver, gold, and garments {items that do *not* grow or multiply} (as stated explicitly in numerous verses<sup>10</sup> and midrashim).<sup>11</sup>
- b) Severance laws don't apply to a servant sold to a Gentile. If so, how can we say that the spoils obtained from the **Egyptians** were considered “severance”?
- c) The obligation to pay severance rests upon the servant's **master**. However, in this context, the *Sifri* **emphasizes** that the severance obtained during the

---

<sup>7</sup> See *Parshas Derachim*, “*Derech Mitzrayim*,” ch. 5; *Toldos Adam* and *Malbim* on *Sifri* here; *Responsa of Tzafnas Paneiach — Dvinsk*, vol. 2, sec. 1 (cited in *Tzafnas Paneiach Al Hatorah* on *Devarim 15:15*; *Tzafnas Paneiach Al Hatorah* on *Shemos 3:22, 6:13*; *Tzafnas Paneiach* on *Sanhedrin 91a*).

<sup>8</sup> *Kiddushin 17a*; *Sifri* on *Devarim 15:14*.

<sup>9</sup> Although the *Tannaim* dispute this matter {whether money can be considered a severance} (*Kiddushin* and *Sifri*. *ibid*; see *Tzafnas Paneiach*, *ibid.*, which implies that his view is that this exposition in *Sifri* is in accordance with the opinion that money can be given as severance pay), the {Egyptians'} gift of **vessels**, according to all opinions, is not indicative of blessing.\* Furthermore, it is Rabbi Shimon who holds that money is excluded {from being considered severance} — and “an unattributed *Sifri* is attributed to Rabbi Shimon” (*Sanhedrin 86a*, and the sources cited there).

\* However, *Tzafnas Paneiach* maintains that silver and golden vessels are considered monetary instruments.

<sup>10</sup> *Shemos 3:22; 11:2; 12:35*. Also see *Tzafnas Paneiach* referenced in fn. 7.

<sup>11</sup> See Rashi on *Shemos 15:22*; and in many other places.

departure was from **Hashem**. (After all, it was Hashem who induced the Egyptians to give their silver vessels, and so on, to the Jewish people.) — “I gave you an award once... and I gave it once again... I bestowed”!

### 3.

#### A DEEPER UNDERSTANDING OF THE MITZVAH

Just as the Jewish nation received severance pay when they left Egypt, according to the *Sifri*, the same is true regarding Yosef, a servant of Potiphar. When he was released from servitude, he received severance pay — as my father {HaRav Levi Yitzchak, the Rebbe’s father} explains in his notes on *Kiddushin* (where it discusses the laws of severance pay), as follows:<sup>12</sup>

Yosef, who began as a Jewish servant — as it says, “And there, with us, was a youth, a Jewish servant”<sup>13</sup> — when he was released {from servitude} and received his liberty, he had to be given severance. The severance he received, aside from the gifts that Pharaoh gave him<sup>14</sup> — the ring and the golden chain... and garments of linen... the main severance was what Hashem had given Yosef, viz., He had dispatched Gavriel to teach Yosef the seventy languages....<sup>15</sup> Do not wonder: Severance must be given by the former servant’s master {Potiphar, not Hashem}!... We can presume that from Potiphar, Yosef received the hand of Potiphar’s daughter, Asenas {in marriage}.<sup>16</sup>

At first glance, this is puzzling:

- a) Yosef was indeed Jewish. However, his master was not. Accordingly, how can we say that “he **had** to be given severance” (as mentioned above)?
- b) Since the severance must be given by the servant’s former **master**: (a) Why was it that “the **main** severance was what **Hashem** had given Yosef”? (b) And how can we say that **Pharaoh’s** gift of the ring, golden chain, and other

---

<sup>12</sup> *Toras Levi Yitzchak*, p. 120.

<sup>13</sup> *Bereishis* 41:12.

<sup>14</sup> *Bereishis* 41:42.

<sup>15</sup> *Sotah* 36b.

<sup>16</sup> *Bereishis* 41:45.

benefactions was considered the “severance” Yosef earned through serving **Potiphar?**

- c) Even when we account for all of the precious articles that Yosef was given (the ring, golden chain, Pharaoh’s other benefactions, knowledge of the seventy languages, and Asenas), the obligation to give severance was not fulfilled {halachically}, as explained above.

And even though this note {authored by HaRav Levi Yitzchak} was composed from a kabbalistic perspective, nonetheless, as is known, great effort is exerted (in various ways) to align Kabbalah and *nigleh*,<sup>17</sup> especially in light of the well-known teaching that Kabbalah and *nigleh* constitute “one Torah,”<sup>18</sup> like the union of body and soul. Kabbalah uncovers the depth and mystical dimension concealed within *nigleh*.

We can posit that the idea introduced by this note (the construct of providing severance applied to Yosef) is based on the *Sifri* mentioned *above*. In *Sifri*, we see that this severance also applies to (a) a Jewish servant who was sold to a non-Jew, with (b) severance being made up of objects that “aren’t indicative of blessing,” and (c) even when it doesn’t come from the **master**. —

The same holds regarding Yosef — (a) although he was a Jewish servant sold to a Gentile, and (b) the severance consisted of a ring, golden chain, Pharaoh’s other benefactions, knowledge of the seventy languages, and Asanas {things that “aren’t indicative of blessing,”} and (c) it didn’t only come from the master, but was primarily from Pharaoh and the gift that “he received from Hashem” — it nonetheless is considered “severance.”

---

<sup>17</sup> {The revealed dimension of the Torah.}

<sup>18</sup> See *Zohar*, vol. 3, 152b.

## 4.

### THE TWO DIMENSIONS OF SEVERANCE

The explanation:

The obligation to give severance has two aspects : (a) the **master** paying and (b) the **servant** receiving — the gift affecting the servant.

The obligation for the **master** to give severance is linked with the servant's (earlier) **servitude**: The severance expresses gratitude for all the servant's previous work. [From this perspective, there is even a consideration that the severance (is not only an act of charity but) is considered part of the *payment* for the servant's work.]<sup>19</sup>

Aside from the benefit and utility that the **servant** receives from the severance — the severance is a detail and component of his **release**. A servant attains his ultimate freedom when he (doesn't leave empty-handed, but rather) receives a unique gift that countermands and offsets his prior servitude. The severance helps create and sustain his status of freedom, prosperity, and so forth.

This second aspect of the severance — effectuating the complete release of the servant — is emphasized by the rationale stated explicitly in the verse: “You shall remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt, and Hashem, your L-rd, redeemed you; therefore, I command you regarding this matter....”

Since the Jewish people were servants and “Hashem, your L-rd, **redeemed you**,” they were now required to ensure the servants' **redemption** was executed correctly.

---

<sup>19</sup> For further discussion, see *Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 19, p. 154, and the sources cited there.

## 5.

### LOOSE GUIDELINES

We can now understand the *Sifri's* interpretation that the spoils from Egypt and at the Sea were considered “severance”:

Scripture (doesn't discuss the **master's** obligation to give severance but) focuses on the **servant's** release — that it should be a complete redemption. Therefore: (a) who the servant **previously** served is irrelevant, and (b) who gives the severance (that the master exclusively should give it) isn't (as) germane. Instead, the emphasis is that this servant should receive “severance” now and in the future — a state of freedom.

Now, we can understand how the severance received when leaving Egypt could (also) comprise objects that weren't “indicative of blessing” {contrary to the general rule of severance}:

The stipulation that the severance must consist of objects expressive of blessing is only relevant to the **master's** obligation. (He must provide a severance that will continue to express his gratitude for some time).

However, when it comes to the effect that the severance has on the **servant** (enhancing his release and freedom), once the severance is provided, there is no need for the gift to have a continuous effect, for he is already a free man.

## 6.

ONCE, AND ONCE AGAIN

Given the above, we can propose a new insight into the law taught by the *Sifri*. The *Sifri* states: “I gave you an award once, and I gave it again; you, too, should give him an award once and again.” It continues: “Just as in Egypt, I bestowed upon you with a generous hand, you, too, should give with a generous hand.” This teaching is not merely about a master’s obligation to provide severance. Instead, it reveals something deeper regarding the servant’s release:

When it comes to the master’s obligation of providing severance, even when performed in an ideal manner, there is a **maximum** amount that discharges the master’s obligation. (This amount suffices entirely to prove his gratitude proportional to the measure of service rendered by his former servant.)

However, when it comes to completing the servant’s liberation, there is no limit: The more gifts that he receives — objects that now belong to him (whether they are objects in the realm of the poor or of the rich, or even a surplus) — the more they contribute to his freedom. Therefore {*Sifri* teaches that} “give him an award once, and once again... with a generous hand.”

For this reason, the verse makes no (explicit) mention of the “great wealth” that Hashem gave the Jewish nation when they left Egypt. It only mentions that “Hashem, your L-rd, redeemed you.” The takeaway from the exodus from Egypt is not regarding the *quantity* of the severance— “I gave you an award once, and I gave it once again...” — that happened then. Instead, the takeaway is that just as at the exodus, the liberation from Egyptian bondage was complete — He “redeemed you,” which *automatically* included receiving great wealth (to the extent that “I gave you an award once, and I gave it once again...”) — the same is true regarding the mitzvah to give severance: The release of a person’s servant must be complete. Accordingly, they must be given a grant “{once and} once again” and “with a generous hand.”



## 7.

### A TRUE STATE OF FREEDOM

In light of this explanation, we can now make sense of the nuances pointed out above in my father's note:

Since Yosef was a Jewish servant who was being released, even though his master was a Gentile, nevertheless, "it was required to give him a grant" so that *Yosef's* release would be complete.

This severance itself had two dimensions: The full release was practically accomplished through Pharaoh appointing him as second in command (the polar opposite of servitude), which was itself achieved by giving Yosef a ring, golden chain, etc.

However, the element that enabled and prepared Yosef to become the second-in-command was his second severance, which neutralized the claim of Pharaoh's astrologers, "Will you appoint a servant whose master bought him for twenty silver coins to rule over us? ...He should know the seventy languages!"<sup>20</sup> — {Hashem's severance} that "Gavriel came and taught him the seventy languages."<sup>21</sup>

Therefore, this is considered the "**primary** severance" for this prepared Yosef (on his end), enabling him to achieve the complete status of freedom. As opposed to the gift of the ring and golden chain, etc., which he received from Pharaoh, these were only the outcome and realization of this original severance.

Then, he introduces another novel concept: "The servant's master must give the severance." The servant's freedom is more significant when the master himself provides the severance — because when the servant receives a gift from the very person he served, it cements his status of freedom in a far better way.<sup>22</sup>

---

<sup>20</sup> {*Sotah* 36b.}

<sup>21</sup> {*Ibid.*}

<sup>22</sup> **Similar** to the law that if one's master provided him a free woman as a wife... he is emancipated (*Gittin* 40a).

Therefore, Yosef also received the severance from Potiphar (Asenas). Nevertheless, this remained secondary, and the primary factors were the gifts he received from Pharaoh and the knowledge of the seventy languages — because this was the severance that brought him to a state of complete redemption and freedom, as discussed above.

## 8.

### THE SUBSTANCE OF FREEDOM

The explanation mentioned above (in the *nigleh* approach) regarding the nature of the severance — that it is connected to the servant’s freedom — aligns with the kabbalistic perspective that my father writes regarding the mitzvah of severance:

In the note quoted above, my father explains<sup>23</sup> that “A Jewish servant is... only on the level of *mochin d’katnus*<sup>24</sup>... and when his service ends... he becomes a free man. Freedom is the {revelation of the} faculties of *chochmah*<sup>25</sup> and *binah*...<sup>26</sup> When he goes free... a severance must also be provided.... We can posit that the doubled expression, “extend, you shall extend {a grant}” corresponds to *chochmah* and *binah*, and this is because he becomes free through his *chochmah* and *binah*, as mentioned above, and through *chochmah* and *binah*, he receives his grant as well.”

This shows us that the severance that the servant receives upon being released is not a separate or secondary entity (that serves as a reward for his previous **service**); instead, the severance actually contains the substance of redemption — the revelation of the faculties of *chochmah* and *binah*. This aligns with the above explanation (in the approach of *nigleh*) that the severance brings completeness to the servant’s release.

---

<sup>23</sup> *Toras Levi Yitzchak*, p. 117-118.

<sup>24</sup> {Lit., “small mindedness,” a state of constricted and limited intellectual capacity.}

<sup>25</sup> {Lit., “wisdom,” the highest of the intellectual faculties.}

<sup>26</sup> {Lit., “comprehension,” the second of the ten *sefiros*.}

## 9.

### THE CANAANITE SERVANT

We can now (possibly) propose the (deeper) reason why the mitzvah of severance only applies to a Jewish servant or maidservant and not to a Canaanite one:

Simply speaking, we can explain that when it comes to a Canaanite servant, there is an obligation that “you shall keep them in your possession for your sons after you... you shall work with them forever.”<sup>27</sup> We are forbidden to free a Canaanite servant<sup>28</sup> (unless they are being released for a mitzvah or the like).<sup>29</sup> And since “Torah discusses the norm,”<sup>30</sup> it does not mention the mitzvah to provide severance in exceptional cases when someone was allowed to free his Canaanite servant.

Nonetheless, from the perspective of the inner dimension of the Torah, this matter calls for further explanation. If a Jewish servant and maidservant, who, as known,<sup>31</sup> correspond to the worlds of *Yetzirah*<sup>32</sup> and *Beriah*,<sup>33</sup> respectively, must receive an award — an illumination of the intellectual faculties — then a Canaanite servant,<sup>34</sup> who corresponds to the world of *Asiyah*,<sup>35</sup> must *surely* need (an award, meaning) an illumination of their intellectual faculties!

However, based on the above explanation that the severance and the servant’s release are (substantively) dependent upon each other and have the same effect, this can be understood. For when it comes to a Jew whose service is on the level of a Canaanite servant, he always remains a **servant** in his (spiritual) **character**, as will be explained.

---

<sup>27</sup> *Vayikra* 25:46.

<sup>28</sup> *Berachos* 47b, and the sources mentioned there.

<sup>29</sup> See *Pesachim* 113a; *Berachos* 47b; also see *Kiddushin* 24a.

<sup>30</sup> See *Guide for the Perplexed*, vol. 3, ch. 34.

<sup>31</sup> *Shaar HaMitzvos Ve’taamei HaMitzvos*, beg. of *parshas Mishpatim*; et al.

<sup>32</sup> {Lit., “formation”; the third of the four spiritual worlds.}

<sup>33</sup> {Lit., “creation”; the second of the four spiritual worlds.}

<sup>34</sup> See Tzemach Tzedek’s *Sefer HaMitzvos*, 83b; et al.

<sup>35</sup> {Lit., “action”; the fourth and lowest of the four spiritual worlds.}

## 10.

### THE CHASSIDIC DIMENSION

Various works of Chassidus<sup>36</sup> explain that in *avodah*,<sup>37</sup> the Jewish servant and maidservant personify the spiritual work of refining one's emotional faculties. In contrast, the Canaanite servant personifies the spiritual work *kabbalas ol*<sup>38</sup> — like the (Canaanite) servant in its literal sense, who (personally) “prefers being unrestricted”<sup>39</sup> and serves his master only out of fear.

Although the level of a “Canaanite servant” is indeed lower than that of a “Jewish servant” or a “Jewish maidservant” — whose service of Hashem is performed with enthusiasm and joy (the emotional faculties) — nevertheless, the service of the “Canaanite servant” is superior in respect to the virtue of self-nullification.<sup>40</sup>

A “Jewish servant” and “Jewish maidservant” — whose service is contingent on their emotional faculties — they, too, are **servants** who serve Hashem with *kabbalas ol* and self-subordination (the defining factor of a servant's service). Nevertheless, their self-awareness and sense of self also taint their service. In contrast, the Canaanite servant's heart is not involved in his service. His service to Hashem is entirely motivated by his *kabbalas ol* and submission to Hashem's Will (without any admixture of his ego).

This is the deeper reason why the Torah says regarding a Canaanite servant, “You shall keep them in your possession... you shall work with them forever,” and he can never be released:

The *avodah* of refining the emotional faculties performed by the “Jewish servant” and “Jewish maidservant” is associated with their human **identities**.

---

<sup>36</sup> *Toras Chaim*, “*Shemos*,” 71b ff.; *Or Hatorah*, “*Mishpatim*,” pp. 1127 ff.; Tzemach Tzedek's *Sefer HaMitzvos*, 83b ff.; and more.

<sup>37</sup> {Divine service.}

<sup>38</sup> {Lit., “accepting the yoke of the kingdom of Heaven,” connoting self-subordination to Hashem, regardless of the person's personal feelings or desires.}

<sup>39</sup> *Gittin* 13a.

<sup>40</sup> For the following explanation, also note *Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 9, pp. 73 ff., and the sources mentioned there.

Therefore, (a) it is a bounded form of service and, consequently, has an end; and (b) furthermore, the ultimate form of their service itself is to **leave** (this servitude) for freedom — to leave and transcend the service of emotion and ascend to a level of *avodah* that is directed by their intellect, *avodah* grounded in reason and understanding.<sup>41</sup>

The same cannot be said for the service of a Canaanite servant — *kabbalas ol* — which entails **complete self-nullification**. The servant surrenders his existence, leaving his desires, enjoyment, and emotions behind. He dedicates himself entirely to his master.<sup>42</sup> Therefore, releasing him makes no sense since (a) this service (complete self-nullification) is unbounded and leaves no room for “freedom”;<sup>43</sup> (b) furthermore, in this *avodah*, intellect (a **person’s** reason and understanding) only brings confusion. It renders “severance” of this kind — the illumination of **a person’s** {limited} intellect — immaterial, as explained.

{Instead of relying on his intellect, the servant must rely} on only the intellect of the master as *he* understands things,<sup>44</sup> as our Sages say {regarding Moshe’s selflessness}: “The *Shechinah*<sup>45</sup> speaks through his throat”<sup>46</sup>; to learn (including understanding and comprehending) in a manner of “אֵי תִמַּר.”<sup>47</sup>

---

<sup>41</sup> And this correlates with the content of **freedom**, because the emotional faculties are limited in form, as opposed to intellect, whose entire essence is freedom (relative to the emotions) since it is not limited to one approach (see *Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 6, p. 115, **and the sources mentioned there.**)

<sup>42</sup> *Hemshech* 5666, pp. 325, ff.

<sup>43</sup> See *Hemshech* 5666 (pp. 321-322): “His service is constant, without any change or replacement... and his service will never diminish.”

<sup>44</sup> *Hemshech* 5666, pp. 325, ff.

<sup>45</sup> {The manifestation of the Divine presence in this world.}

<sup>46</sup> {*Zohar*, vol. 3, 232a.}

<sup>47</sup> {Lit., “it was stated”; a Talmudic term indicating a teaching that comes automatically, unmediated by personal intellect, because Hashem is actually speaking through him, echoing the verse “I will put My words in your mouth” (*Yeshayahu* 51:16).} See *Likkutei Torah*, “*Naso*,” 25b.

Despite the great virtue of the service of the “Canaanite servant,” the overarching service of the Jewish people is explicitly likened to the service of a Jewish servant. As explained in various Chassidic texts,<sup>48</sup> the verse,<sup>49</sup> “he shall work for six years; and in the seventh, he shall go to freedom,” alludes to “the *avodah* that servants — the Jews — must execute over the six-thousand years of the world’s current natural existence. The ultimate divine reward will be given in the seventh millennium, and then they will go free, without mitzvos.”

[Just as this trajectory applies to this *avodah* in a general sense, the same is true for the personal *avodah* of every Jew: Throughout the six days of the week, the Jew’s *avodah* must be performed with effort and toil. Then comes the **tranquility** of the Shabbos day, when the Jew is “released” from his labor.]

To explain:<sup>50</sup> Notwithstanding the wondrous virtue of the Canaanite servant’s total self-nullification, the ultimate goal is for a person to incorporate *both* modes of service<sup>51</sup> — self-nullification *and* the use of his soul’s faculties (with his self-surrender permeating his faculties). Thus, by integrating his understanding and feeling, he enjoys his *avodah*. Lifeless self-nullification does not do the trick; the person must relish his *avodah*.

Therefore, his service must be the service of a “Jewish servant” — with his emotions (and feelings) until he reaches the level of “going free.” He is ready to rise above the service based on emotion and move to the plane of service guided by intellect, grounded in reason and understanding. Finally, the Jew reaches the ideal form of freedom, accomplished through the “severance” he merits to

---

<sup>48</sup> Tzemach Tzedek’s *Sefer HaMitzvos*, 83a; also see *Torah Or*, “*Mishpatim*,” 76a; *Sefer HaMaamarim* 5565, p. 285.

<sup>49</sup> *Shemos* 21:2.

<sup>50</sup> **Similarly** — every person must have both the service of a *baal teshuvah* and the service of a tzaddik, just as in the course of the year we have the month of Tishrei and the month of Nissan.

<sup>51</sup> Similar to *Tanya*, “*Likkutei Amarim*,” ch. 41 (p. 57a): “in his divine service, every man must belong to two categories and levels... the category of a servant, and the category of a son.” Also see *Hemshech* 5766, *ibid*.

receive **from Above**. His intellect is illuminated. This, in turn, brings consummate wholeness to his *avodah* based on reason and understanding.

## 12.

ALREADY NOW

“He tells his words {Torah} to Yaakov, His statutes and ordinances to Israel.”<sup>52</sup>

A well-known midrashic interpretation of the verse says:<sup>53</sup> “What He performs, He says to Israel to perform.” The same is true concerning the mitzvah of “severance.” Hashem performs this mitzvah, awarding severance to the Jewish nation as a master {who gives severance} to his servants. Thus, we can propose that aside from the reward that the Jewish nation will receive in the seventh millennium — fulfillment of the verse, “and in the seventh, he shall go to freedom” — they will also receive extra severance from Hashem, as intimated by the verse,<sup>54</sup> “you shall surely award<sup>55</sup> him.”

And since on *Erev Shabbos*, we must taste “every cooked dish”<sup>56</sup> prepared for Shabbos, the same is true now on *Erev Shabbos*. Although we have already been given a foretaste of the “tranquility” of the coming seventh millennium, we need also to experience a foretaste of the severance to come.

May it be Hashem’s Will that once we experience a foretaste of the “reward,” of the “severance,” and of the “tranquility,” we will imminently merit to actually **partake** of every cooked dish (which then will be absorbed into our very being) — the days of Mashiach and the Resurrection of the Dead. In this future era, we will see “the fulfillment and culmination of the world’s creation, for which reason it was first created,”<sup>57</sup> culminating with the primary receipt of the reward in the “seventh millennium.”

— From talks delivered on Shabbos *parshas Re’eh*, 5736 (1976) and 5740 (1980)

---

<sup>52</sup> *Tehillim* 147:19.

<sup>53</sup> *Shemos Rabbah*, ch. 30, par. 9.

<sup>54</sup> {*Devarim* 13:14.}

<sup>55</sup> {In the original, “הַעֲנִיךָ הַעֲנִיךָ”; repetition of the verb for emphasis.}

<sup>56</sup> Alter Rebbe’s *Shulchan Aruch*, “*Orach Chaim*,” sec. 250, par. 8.

<sup>57</sup> *Tanya*, “*Likkutei Amarim*,” ch. 36.