

Rabbi's Article II

Why Our Work is Greater Than G-d's Work

Upon finishing a book of study in Torah, it is customary to have a *siyum* (closing) in which a *Hadran* is made. The word *Hadran* means "Return," as the *Hadran* closes with the words, "We shall return to you, book of..." A *Hadran* practically is presenting a Torah-thought, in which we immediately, "Return to you, book of..." through finding a connection between the closing and the opening of the book.

This week, we are reading the last portion in the *Book of Leviticus*, and hence, we are going to find a connection between the opening and closing of (i) the *Book of Leviticus*, (ii) our Torah-portion itself; *Bechukotai*, and (iii) the *Chassidic Torah-portion*, which refers to the teachings of Rabbi Schneur Zalman of Liadi (-[Link](#)) on the weekly Torah-portion in his book *Likkutei Torah*.

The Book of Leviticus: Leviticus begins with, "When a man from [among] you brings a sacrifice to the L-rd from animals..." *Likkutei Torah* explains the mystical teachings of this verse as, first there is, "When a man... brings a sacrifice," in which *man* refers to G-d, and G-d brings the soul of man as a sacrifice, after which there then is, "from animals..." in which the human brings a sacrifice from his own *animal* within. The word *Korbon* (sacrifice) is also from the etymology *korov*, which means *close*. We are speaking here of a person wanting to get close to G-d. However, for this to happen, we first need the, "For He (G-d) desires Good," meaning that in G-d's absolute grace (a goodness of G-d which isn't earned or solicited through our actions), from Above G-d draws our *G-dly Soul* ('*man*') close to Him. Only then can we *Below* bring our *Animalistic Soul* ('*from animals*'; physicality) close to G-d. So too, Leviticus ends with two offerings, that of the animal *First Born* (-[Link](#)) and that of *Herd Tithing* (-[Link](#)). The *First Born* is sanctified by G-d, and therefore, (1) does not need the owner to proclaim it as a first-born, and, (2) its sanctity (commandment) continues now in exile. However, the *Herd Tithing* is sanctified through the owner counting the herd and proclaiming each tenth animal as holy, and, (2) our sages instituted not to do this once the Temple was destroyed. And hence, here too, the verse first proclaims the sanctification from Above (*First Born*), and then the one from Below (*Herd Tithing*).

Our Torah-portion; Bechukotai: The closing of this portion we already discussed (*First Born* and *Herd Tithing*). Only now let us explain them on a deeper mystical level: *First Born* refers to the one, or first, offspring, which mystically refers to the *First Emanation of Wisdom*, which is an incorruptible essence *holiness* given from Above to each and every Jew as an *inheritance* (unearned grace). *Tithing* is the *Tenth*, which is the *Emanation of Kingship*, which are our *Thoughts, Speech and Actions*, which we *Below* need to sanctify. So too, these two concepts (1. Grace from Above (G-d), and, 2. Sanctifying through our work from Below (*man*)) are found also at the opening of *Bechukotai*: "If in My statutes you shall walk and observe My commandments."

Likkutei Torah explains that the deeper meaning of *walk* only applies to our going into the *Infinite* service, in which there are no constraints and limitations. And that this is possible only because of the *Bechukotai* (*My Statutes*) which mystically speaking comes from the etymology *Chakika* (*Engraved*), referring to the *Chakika* of the *Soul*. This refers to the *Essence of the Soul* (the *First Born* of the soul), as it is in its *Source* (-G-d) *Above*, in which -- unlike *Written Letters*, in which the letters (ink) and the parchment are two separated items connecting,-- as *Engraved Letters*, the letters are *part-and-parcel* of the stone. However, being that the soul descends to here *Below*, hence, in order to bring forth and reveal the *Chakika of the Soul* down here *Below*, we need to have *our* service (the *Tithing, Tenth Emanation* of the Soul: *Thought, Speech and Action*) and self-sanctification of the, "And observe My commandments."

We have explained the order of *Grace from Above* coming before *Service from Below* as being that for us to be able to do our *Service from Below*, we must first be empowered by the *Grace from Above*. However, being that the rule is (-Talmud, Brochois 12a), "Everything follows the sealing (closing)," hence, we must say that the reason as to why the *Service from Below* is the *seal* of the *Book of Leviticus* and the portion of *Bechukotai* is because the ultimate and higher sanctification is specifically in the *Service from Below*, and even over the *Grace from Above*. And here too, we have the insight of the *Likkutei Torah* to guide us, as it explains in the opening of its *Leviticus* that the sanctification of the *Grace from Above* will not last in giving us a *Love for G-d*, unless we then make it permanent through our *Service from Below*. However, the question begs to be ask, if we are speaking of an *unsolicited grace*, which needs not, nor is limited by, the finite of the *Below*, then why is the *Service of Below* necessary to make the *Grace from Above* permanent in the *Below*?!

Everything that comes from Above speaks of the *Light* and the *Revelation* of G-d. However, the intention and desire of the *Essence* of G-d is, "He desires that we make for Him, blessed be He, a dwelling place below." Therefore, it is only in our *Service from Below* that the *Essence* of G-d is drawn forth. Hence, the *sealing* of Leviticus and of *Bechukotai* is in the *Herd Tithing*, which is sanctified only through *Our Service Below*, which connects to the *Essence* of G-d, beyond what is drawn forth through the *Grace from Above*. And this is also why in the opening of *Bechukotai* it lists first the *Engraved Letters* of the soul, which is a *Grace* (inheritance) from Above, and then the *higher* sealing of the, "observe My commandments," *Service from Below*. For even though the *Engraved Letters* are *part-and-parcel* of the stone (*Essence*), nevertheless, they are the *letters* (engraved out hollow space within the stone) and not the stone itself! The "observe My commandments," *Service from Below* connects us with the *stone* (*Essence*) itself!

And this is also the closing of *Likkutei Torah Leviticus*, which speaks of the virtue of "ahn -where," *Below*, over the, "Ayin -nihilo," *Infinite Light* of Above.