

Likkutei Sichos

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Light and More Light

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A note on the translation: Rounded parentheses and square brackets reflect their use in the original *sichah*; squiggly parentheses are interpolations of the translator or editor. The footnotes in squiggly parentheses in this translation are those of the translators or editors, and do not correspond to the footnotes in the original. Great effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the translation, while at the same time striving for readability. However, the translation carries no official authority. As in all translations, the possibility of inadvertent errors exists. **Your feedback is needed** — **please send all comments to:** info@projectlikkuteisichos.org

לְקוּטֵי שִּׁיחוֹת חלק טז, פורים א׳ הַרְגוּם חוֹפִשִׁי לְלַשׁוֹן הַקּוֹדֵשׁ * כַּל הַזְּכוּיוֹת שָׁמוּרוֹת לקה״ת THE STORY OF ESTHER: INCREMENTAL RECOGNITION

In tractate *Megillah*, the Talmud relates:¹ "Esther petitioned the Sages: Establish me for posterity." Meaning, Esther asked the Sages to designate the fourteenth and fifteenth of Adar "as a festival on which to read {the story}, 'לקריי', for my renown."²

א. אִיתָא בַּגְמֶרָא בִּמְגִילָּה: ״שֶׁלְחָה לָהֶם אָסְתֵּר לַחֲכָמִים קְבְעוּנִי לְדוֹרוֹת״ – אֶסְתֵּר בִּיקְשָׁה שֶׁיִּקְבְּעוּ יְמֵי י״ד וט״ו בַּאֲדָר ״לְיוֹם טוֹב וּלְקַרְיֵיהּ לְהִיוֹת לִי לְשֵׁם״.

Then the Talmud relates a different teaching on this subject: "Esther asked the Sages: 'Record me {my story} for posterity." Esther requested that they write the *Megillah*, which was called by her name, and to include this written account "in the sacred Writings."³

ּוּרְהֶמְשׁׁךְ הַגְּמָרָא הוּבָא מַאֲמָר שׁנִי בְּעִנְיָן זֶה: ״שָׁלְחָה לָהֶם אֶסְתֵּר לַחֲכָמִים כִּתְבוּנִי לְדוֹרוֹת״ – אֶסְתֵּר בִּיקְשָׁה שֶׁהַמְּגִילָה (הַנְּקְרֵאת עַל שְׁמָה) תִּיֹכָּתֵב ״עם שְׁאָר הַכְּתוּבִים״.

In other words,⁴ at the outset she asked only to "establish me for posterity" — "as a festival on which to read {the story}." That is, the story of Purim should be recounted every year but not necessarily read from a sacred text {in the biblical canon}.⁵ Later, she asked that the *Megillah* should be recorded for future generations and be incorporated into *Kesuvim*.⁶ Therefore, we were obligated to read the

יְהַיְינוּ, שֶׁבַּתְּחִילָּה בִּיקְשָׁה רַק ״קְּבְעוּנִי לְדוֹרוֹת״ – ״לְיוֹם טוֹב וּלְקַרְיֵיהּ״ – שָׁפִּיפּוּר פּוּרִים יִיקָרֵא בְּכָל שָׁנָה, אֲבָל לְלֹא חִיּוּב לְקוֹרְאוֹ מִתּוֹדְ הַכְּתָב; וּלְאַחֲרֵי זֶה בִּיקְשָׁה שֶׁהַמְּגִילָּה תִּיכָתַב לַדּוֹרוֹת וְתֵיעָשֶׂה חֵלֶק מִן הַ״כְּתוּבִים״ – וּמִמֵילָא יֻשְׁנוֹ חִיּוּב לִקְרוֹתָה מִתּוֹדְ הַכְּתָב, וְאִם ״קְרָאָה עַל פֶּה לֹא יָצָא״.

¹ 7a.

² Ibid, Rashi ad loc, s.v. "קבעוני.".

³ Rashi on Esther 9:32; see Chidushei Aggados of the Maharsha, ad loc.

⁴ Turei Even on Megillah, loc cit.

⁵ This idea is expressed in *Turei Even*, ibid. Put a little differently: The need for the story to be written was only for the purpose of reading it (but not for the purpose of including it in Scripture).

⁶ {Lit., "the Writings," this is the third section of the *Tanach*.}

Megillah from a written scroll, "and one who recounts the narrative from memory {even verbatim} does **not** discharge his obligation."

2.

ESTABLISHING PURIM AS A HOLIDAY

In the Talmud *Yerushalmi*,⁸ it says: "Mordechai and Esther sent a message to the Rabbis. They {Mordechai and Esther} asked the Rabbis, 'Take it upon yourselves to establish these two days, every year...." In other words, both Mordechai and Esther (wrote to the Sages and) petitioned to have Purim commemorated. This version in the *Yerushalmi* differs from the version in the Talmud *Bavli* cited above. The *Bavli* states that Esther *alone* sent the request: "Esther sent a request... establish me... record me."

ב. וְהַנֵּה, בַּיְרוּשֵׁלְמִי נָגְמֵמר: ״מְרְדְּכֵי וְאֶסְתּר בְּתְבוּ אִגֶּרֶת וְשָׁלְחוּ לְרַבּוֹתִינוּ שָׁבֶּן אָמְרוּ לְהָבּוֹתִינוּ שֶׁבֵּן אָמְרוּ לְהָם מְקַבְּלִין אַתֶּם עֲלִיכֶם שְׁנֵי יָמִים הַלָּלוּ בְּכָל שָׁנָה כו׳״ – וְהַיִינוּ שֶׁנְוֹ הַכְּלוּ בְּכָל שָׁנָה כו׳״ – וְהַיִינוּ שֶׁנְוֹ הַכָּוֹיְהַ, מָרְדְּכֵי וְאֶסְתֵּר, (בְּתְבוּ וּ) פָּנוּ לַחֲכָמִים בְּבַקשָׁה עַל־דְּבֵר זִכְרוֹן הַפּוּרִים לַחֲכָמִים בְּבַקשָּׁה עַל־דְּבֵר זִכְרוֹן הַפּוּרִים וֹכו׳, וְלֹא (כְּבַבּּרְלִי, שֶׁבּוֹ נִזְכְּרָה רַק) אֶסְתֵּר לְבַדָּה (״שְׁלְחָה לָהֶם אֶסְתַר . . בִּתְבוּנִי״).

Conceivably, the *Bavli* and *Yerushalmi* do not disagree (about the facts) whether Esther submitted the request alone, or whether Esther and Mordechai submitted it together. Rather, the *Bavli* and *Yerushalmi* discuss distinct points:

אֲבָל יֵשׁ לוֹמַר, שָׁאֵין כָּאן פְּלוּגְתָּא בֵּין הַבַּבְלִי לִיִּרוּשַׁלְמִי (וּבִפְּרָט שָׁזּוֹ מַחֲלוֹמֶת בִּמְצִיאוּת – אָם הַבַּקְשָׁה הָיְתָה שֶׁל אֶסְתֵּר לְבַדָּה, אוֹ שֶׁל שְׁנֵיהֶם יַחְדָּיו), אֶלָא שָׁמַדוּבַּר אוֹדוֹת שָׁנֵי עַנְיַנִים שׁוֹנִים:

The *Bavli* speaks about the edict to read the *Megillah*. [Therefore, Rashi

בַּתַּלְמוּד בַּבְלִי הַנִּידּוֹן הוּא תַּקְנַת קְרִיאַת הַמְגִילָה,

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⁷ Mishnah in Megillah, beg. ch. 2.

⁸ {I.e., the Jerusalem Talmud, as opposed to the Babylonian Talmud (Talmud *Bavli*), to which tractate *Megillah*, cited above in the text, belongs.}

interprets the phrase, "establish {for} me {a day}," as meaning, "(not only) as a festival (but also) on which to **read** {the story}." Because the main point of **Esther's** request — "establish **me**" — "for my renown," focused on the reading of the *Megillah* (which was to be called by her name).] Also, the *Bavli* speaks about (afterward) incorporating the *Megillah* into the *Writings* — "record me." Esther alone made **these** two requests (without Mordechai).

ַנְלָכֵן מְפָּרֵשׁ רַשִּׁ״י ״ִקְבְעוּנִי״ – (לֹא רַק) ״לְיוֹם טוֹב (אֶלָּא גַּם) וּלְקַרְיֵיהּ״ כִּי עִיקַּר בַּקְשַׁת אֶסְתֵּר ״קְבְעוּנִי״ (״לְהְיוֹת לִי לְשֵׁם״) הָיְתָה בְּקֶשֶׁר לְקְרִיאַת הַמְּגִילָּה (הַנְּקְרֵאת עַל שְׁמָה)],

וְכֵן (לְאַחֲרֵי זֶה –) שֶׁתִּיכָּתֵב הַמְּגִילָּה וְתִיכָּלֵל בְּ״כְּתוּבִים״ (״כִּחְבוּנִי״) – וּשְׁתֵּי בַּקְשׁוֹת אֲלוּ הָיוּ שֶׁל אֶסְתֵּר לְבַדָּה (לְלֹא הָשִׁתַּתִּפוּת מַרְדְּבֵי).

In contrast, the *Yerushalmi* only speaks about the **core** of the enactment, to establish the days of Purim as "days of feasting and joy; the sending of food gifts between friends; and the giving of presents to the poor" every year. This request to the Sages⁹ was made by **both** Esther and Mordechai together [as can be inferred readily from the *Yerushalmi*: "Take it upon yourselves {to establish} these two **days**, every year..."].

וְאִילּוּ בַּיְּרוּשַׁלְמִי הַנִּידּוֹן הוּא רַק עֶצֶּם הַתַּקְנָה לִקְבּוֹעַ אֶת יְמֵי הַפּוּרִים בְּכָל שָׁנָה לְ״יְמֵי מִשְׁתָּה וְשִׁמְחָה וּמִשְׁלוֹחַ מָנוֹת אִישׁ לְרֵעֵהוּ וּמַתָּנוֹת לָאֶבְיוֹנִים״ וְכְפַשְׁטוּת לְשׁוֹן הַיְּרוּשַׁלְמִי, ״מְקַבְּלִין.. שְׁנִי יָמִים הַלָּלוּ בְּכָל שָׁנָה כוי״], וְאֶת זֹאת בִּיקְשׁוּ שְׁנִיהֶם יַחְדָּיו מַהַחְכָמִים.

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⁹ Seemingly, this point requires further analysis, considering that the reply of the Sages to Mordechai and Esther's request in the *Yerushalmi* is the same reply found in the *Bavli* regarding Esther's request to "establish me." (Similarly, Mordechai and Esther's response to the Sages in the *Yerushalmi* is the same response made by Esther to them recorded in the *Bavli*.)

Possibly, we may posit that Esther's request to "establish me" was made simultaneously with the request (of both Mordechai and Esther) to "take it upon yourselves {to establish} these two days." This scenario seems to be supported by Rashi who interprets "establish me" as implying (not just a request to enact a "reading" of the story, but by) a request to enact a" festival."

THREE DISTINCT REQUESTS

[So the three requests made were: (a) "Take it upon yourselves to establish these two days"; (b) "establish me"; (c) "record me." The first request was made by Mordechai and Esther *together*, while the last two were made by Esther *alone*.] These three requests, and the differences between the first one and the last two, are expressly alluded to in the *Megillah*:

ג. וְיֵשׁ לוֹמַר, שֶׁשְׁלוֹשֶׁת הָעִנְיָנִים הנ״ל
[(א) ״מְקַבְּלִין אַתֶּם עֲלֵיכֶם שְׁנֵי יָמִים
הַלְּלוּ״, (ב) ״קְבְעוּנִי״, (ג) ״כִּתְבוּנִי״]
הַחָּילוּק הנ״ל בֵּינֵיהֶם [שֻׁהָעִנְיָן הָרִאשׁוֹן

— בִּיקְשׁוּ מָרְדְּכֵי וְאֶסְתֵּר, וְהַשְׁנִים
הָאַחַרוֹנִים — אֶסְתֵּר לְבַדָּה] — מְרוּמָּזִים
הָהַרְגָשָׁה בִּמְגִילָה:

When we are told how the Jews accepted upon themselves¹⁰ "to observe these days of Purim," the *Megillah* adds,¹¹ "as **Mordechai** the Jew and Queen **Esther** had obligated them to do." The following verse says,¹² "And the ordinance of **Esther** validated these observances of Purim, and was transcribed in a scroll." These two verses refer to the three above points:

בְּתוֹךְ סִיפּוּר הַדְּבָרִים עַל כָּךְ שֶׁקְיבְּלוּ הַיְּהוּדִים עַל עַצְטָם ״לְקַיֵּם אֵת יְמֵי הַפּוּרִים הָאֵלֶּה״, נָאֲמֵר בַּכָּתוּב ״כַּאֲשֶׁר קיַם עֲלֵיהֶם מֶרְדֶּכֵי הַיְּהוּדִי וְאֶסְתֵּר הַמַּלְכָּה״, אֲבָל לְאַחֵר מִכֵּן נָאֲמֵר ״וּמַאְמַר אֶסְתֵּר קִיַּם דִּבְרִי הַפּוּרִים הָאֵלֶּה וְנִכְתָּב בַּסֵּכֶּר״. וְיֵשׁ לוֹמֵר שֶׁבִּשְׁנִי בְּסִוּקִים אֵלוּ מְדוּבֶּר אוֹדוֹת שְׁלשֶׁת הַעְנַיֵנִים הנ״ל:

The first verse discusses the enactment of the days of Purim (as days of feasting and joy, etc.), as implied by the phrase, "to observe these **days** of Purim." It corresponds to what the *Yerushalmi* says, "Take it upon yourselves to establish these two **days**." That's the reason why the

בַּפָּסוּק הָרִאשׁוֹן מְדוּבָּר אוֹדוֹת הַתַּקְנָה שֶׁל יְמֵי הַפּוּרִים (שֶׁיִּהְיוּ יְמֵי מִשְׁתֶּה וְשִׂמְחָה וגו׳) – כְּמֵשְׁמָעוּת הַלְּשׁוֹן ״לְקַיֵּם אָת יְמֵי הַפּוּרִים הָאֵלֶּה״ (עַל־דֶּרֶךְ הַלָּשׁוֹן הנ״ל בַּיְּרוּשַׁלְמִי ״מְקַבְּלִין . שְנִי יָמִים הַלָּלוּי״); וְלָכֵן נִזְכְּרוּ כָּאן שְׁנִיהֶם, ״מַרְדָּכֵי הַיְּהוּדִי וְאֶסְתֵּר הַמַּלְכָּה״, כִּי

 $^{^{10}}$ After the second letter was distributed, as only then was the festival established as obligatory throughout the world (*Megillah* 7a; Rashi, ad loc.).

¹¹ Esther 9:31.

¹² Ibid., v. 32.

verse mentions both of them: "Mordechai the Jew and Queen Esther," as this edict was enacted as a result of their joint¹³ petition, as explained above.

תַּקְנָה זוֹ בָּאָה ע״י בַּקְשָׁתָם הַמְּשׁוּתֶּפֶת, כנ״ל.

The second verse, in contrast, speaks of the edict to read the Megillah14 and how to write it. The verse, "And the ordinance of Esther validated (these) observances of (Purim)," alludes to the edict to read the Megillah. Therefore, it says, "observances of, דברי, Purim" (and not "days of Purim"), which denotes (at least by allusion) **speech**¹⁵ — to speak about and narrate the story of the Purim miracle — "...on which to story}."16 read {the phrase, The "transcribed in a scroll," connotes that the story of Purim, the Megillah, was recorded in a {sacred} text and added to the "Kesuvim," כתבוני ("record me," כתבוני).

וְאִילוּ בַּפְּסוּק הַשֵּׁנִי מְדוּבְּר אוֹדוֹת תַּקְּנִת קְרִיאַת הַמְּגִילָּה וְאוֹדוֹת כְּתִיבַת הַמְּגִילָּה: ״וּמֵאֲמֵר אֶסְתֵּר קִיַּם דְּבְרֵי (הַפּוּרִים הָאֵלֶה)״ קָאֵי עַל תַּקְנַת קְרִיאַת הַמְּגִילָּה, וְלַכֵן נָאֲמֵר כָּאן ״דִּבְרֵי הַפּוּרִים״, וְלֹא ״יְמֵי״, שֶׁפֵּירוּשׁוֹ (בְּרֶמֶז עַל־כָּל־פָּנִים) דְּבָרִים הַנָּאֲמָרִים – הַדִּיבּוּר וְהַסִּיפּוּר עַל־ דְבָרִים הַנָּאֲמָרִים – הַדִּיבּוּר וְהַסִּיפּוּר עַל־ דְבָרִים בְּסֵבֶּרִ״ פֵּירוּשׁוֹ שֶׁסִיפּוּר פּוּרִים, הַמְּגִילָּה, נִכְתַּב בְּחַפֶּר״ פֵּירוּשׁוֹ שֶׁסִיפּוּר פּוּרִים, הַמְּגִילָה, נִכְתַּב וְנִכְלָל בְּ״כְּתוּבִים״

Accordingly, in alluding to these {innovations about the reading and writing of the *Megillah*}, the verse says, "And the ordinance of **Esther**," and doesn't mention Mordechai, because only Esther had petitioned for these two enactments.

וְלָכֵן לָשׁוֹן הַכָּתוּב בָּזֶה הוּא ״וּמַאֲמֵר אֶסְתֵּר״ (וְלֹא נִזְכֵּר כָּאן מָרְדְּכֵי) – כִּי אֶת שִׁנִי הָעִנָיִנִים הַלַּלוּ בִּיקִשָּה אֵסְתֵּר לְבַדָּה.

¹³ The verse mentions Mordechai first, because in this respect, Esther was subordinate to him.

¹⁴ It is noteworthy that the *Megillah* is not read specifically on "these days of Purim," since the *Megillah* is (also) read on the 11th, 12th, and 13th of Adar — *Shulchan Aruch*, "*Orach Chaim*," sec. 688, par. 1, and in the *Ramah* — beginning from Rosh Chodesh Adar.

¹⁵ {In Hebrew, "דברי" (translated here as "observances of") is cognate to the word, "דיבור"," meaning, "speech." ¹⁶ Cf. *Rif* on *Ein Yaakov*, *Megillah* 7a (s.v. "she sent... establish me.")

QUESTIONS ON THE EXPLANATION

Still, we need to clarify:

ד. אַך עַרַיִין צָרִיךְ לְהָבִין:

a) How could Mordechai have requested the Sages to establish only the days of Purim as a holiday but **not** the reading and writing of the *Megillah*?

 א) מַהוּ בֶּאֲמֶת הַהֶּסְבֵּר לְכַךְּ, שֶׁמֶּרְדְּכֵי בִּיקֵשׁ מַהַחְּכָמִים רַק עַל־דְּבַר תַּקְנַת יְמֵי הַפּוּרִים, וְלֹאׁ עַל קְרִיאַת הַמְּגִילָּה וּכְתִיבָתָה?

b) Moreover, Mordechai was a member of the Sanhedrin, and among the sages who had **consented** to Esther's request to "establish me" and to "record me." Accordingly, he should have certainly joined together with Esther in making this request.

ב) יְתֵירָה מִזּוֹ: הֲלֹא מֶרְדְּכֵי הָיָה חָבֵּר הַפַּנְהֶדְרִין, וְנִמְצָא שֶׁהוּא הָיָה מֵהַחֲכָמִים שֶּׁהַסְּכִּימוּ לְבַקְּשׁוֹת אֶסְתֵּר ״קִבְעוּנִי״ וְ״כִּתְבוּנִי״ – וְאִם כֵּן בְּוַדֵּאִי הָיָה לוֹ לְהִשְׁתַּתֵּף בַּבַּקִשְׁה זוֹ יַחַד עִם אֶסְתָּר.

We must posit that Mordechai functioned in two capacities: (i) As his own individual, and from this perspective, there was no need to "establish me" or to "record me"; therefore, he was not a party in Esther's requests; (ii) Mordechai's role as a member of the Sanhedrin; from this perspective, it was reasonable to grant Esther's request to "establish me," and to "record me."

ְנְצָרִיךְ לוֹמַר, שֶׁאֵצֶל מְרְדְּכֵי גּוּפָּא הָיוּ בָּזֶה שְׁנֵי אוֹפָנִים: (א) מִצֵּד מְרְדְּכֵי עַצְמוֹ – אֵין צוֹרֶךְ בְּעִנְיָן ״ִקְבְעוּנִי״ וְ״כִּתְבוּנִי״, וְלָבֵן לֹא הִשְׁמַתֵּף בְּבַקְשׁוֹת אֶסְתֵּר; (ב) מִצֵּד הֱיוֹתוֹ חָבֵר הַפַּנְהֶדְרִין, יֵשׁ מָקוֹם לְמִילּוּי בַּקְשׁוֹת אֶסְתֵּר ״קִבְעוּנִי״.

c) Every aspect of Torah is absolutely precise. As such, presumably the fact that Esther's request to "establish me for posterity," and "record me for ג) כָּל עִנְיְנֵי הַתּוֹרָה הֵם בְּדִיּוּק. וְצָרִיךְ לוֹמַר, שַׁמָּה שֶׁבַּקְשׁוֹת אֶסְתֵּר ״קְבְעוּנִי לְדוֹרוֹת״ וְ״כִּתְבוּנִי לְדוֹרוֹת״ הוּבְאוּ רַק בַּבַּרְלִי (וְלֹא בַּיְרוּשַׁלְמִי), וּלְאִידָךְ, בַּקְשַׁת מָרְדְּכֵי וְאֶסְתֵּר ״מְקַבְּלִים אַתֶּם עֲלֵיכֶם מָרְדְּכֵי וְאֶסְתֵּר ״מְקַבְּלִים אַתֶּם עֲלֵיכֶם posterity" is found only in the Talmud *Bavli* (and not in the Talmud *Yerushalmi*), and conversely, Mordechai and Esther's joint request to "take it upon yourselves to establish these two days" is found only in the Talmud *Yerushalmi* (and not in the Talmud *Bavli*) — is all absolutely deliberate.

שְׁנֵי יָמִים הַלָּלוּ״ נִמְצֵאת רַק בַּיְרוּשַׁלְמִי (וְלֹא בַּבַּבְלִי) – הִנָּה כָּל זֶה הוּא בְּדִיּוּק.

5.

ESTHER IS LIKE THE DAWN

To understand the two functions of Mordechai, we need to first clarify that the composition of the *Megillah* ("record me") was not simply an additional detail and facet of the Purim miracle. Rather, it was connected to the miracle's main theme.

ה. וְיוּבֵן זֶה בְּהֶקְבִּים, דְּהִנֵּה, כְּתִיבַת הַפְּגִילָה (״כִּתְבוּנִי״) אֵינָה רַק עוֹד עִנְיָן וּפְרָט נוֹסַף בְּנֵס פּוּרִים, אֶלָא הַדָּבָר קְשׁוּר לְעֶצֶם תּוֹכֶן הַנֵּס;

This key connection {of the *Megillah* to Purim} can be adduced also from a passage in tractate *Yoma*:¹⁷

יָכֵן מוּכָן גַּם מִמַּאֲמָר הַגְּמָרָא בִּיוֹמָא:

"Why was Esther likened to the dawn? To teach us that just as the dawn marks the end of the whole night, {the miracle of} Esther marked the end of all the miracles."

״לָמָּה נִמְשְׁלָה אָסְתֵּר לַשַּׁחַר לוֹמֵר לָךְ מָה שַּׁחַר סוֹף כָּל הַלַּיְלָה אַף אָסְתֵּר סוֹף כָּל הַנִּסִים״,

True, the *Gemara* explains, "there was {the miracle of} Chanukah," which occurred after the Purim miracle. Nonetheless, Esther's miracle is regarded as "the end of all miracles," because it was

וּמְבוֹאָר בַּגְּמָרָא, שאע״פּ דְ״אִיכָּא חֲנוּכָּה״ (וְנֵס חֲנוּכָּה אֵירַע לְאַחֲרֵי נֵס פּוּרִים) – מִכָּל מָקוֹם נָחְשֶׁבֶת מְגִילַת אֶסְתֵּר לְ״סוֹף כָּל הַנִּסִים״ כִּי אֶסְתֵּר ״נִיתְנָה לִכְתוֹב״ – הַנֵּס הָאַחֲרוֹן שֶׁנְכְתַב

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^{17 29}a.

"given to be transcribed." Meaning, the miracle of Esther was the final miracle to be **written** (in Scripture, in *Tanach*).

תַבָּתוֹרָה שֶׁבִּכְתָב, בַּתַּנַ״ך) הוּא מְגִילַת (בַּתּוֹרָה שֶׁבִּכְתָב, בַּתַּנַ״ך) אָסְתֵּר.

Put differently, the miracles that were recorded {and canonized} comprise a **distinct** class of miracles. With Esther's miracle, **this** class was closed. [Therefore, specifically (because the story of her miracle was "given to be transcribed,") Esther can be compared to the "dawn... the end of the whole night," sharing the same characteristic as "dawn." Were her story not written {and included in Scripture}, this comparison would not be possible.]

וְהַיְינוּ, שֶׁהַנְּפִּים אֲשֶׁר ״נִיתְּנוּ לְכְתּוֹב״ הֵם סוּג מְיוּחָד שֶׁל נִפִּים, וְאֶסְתֵּר הִיא ״סוֹף״ סוּג זֶה [וְדַוְלָא מִפְּנֵי שֻׁאַסְתֵּר ״נִיתְּנָה לְכְתּוֹב״ אֶפְשַׁר לְדַמּוֹתָה ״לַשַּׁחַר . . סוֹף לְכְתּוֹב״ אֶפְשַׁר לְדַמּוֹתָה ״לַשַּחַר . . סוֹף לְכְתּוֹב״ אֶפְשַׁר יְדַמּוֹתָה ״לַשַּׁחַר . . סוֹף פָּל הַלַּיְלָה״, וּלְפָּרִשׁ שֶׁ״אֶסְתֵּר״ תּוֹכְנָה שָׁוֹה לַתִּלֹבֶ שְׁיִלְ שֶׁל ״שַׁחַר״; וְלוּלֵא הְיְתָה עָּהְה לִהְרָה לוֹמַר מְשָׁל זֶה].

6.

ESTHER WAS LIKE THE DAWN

The following is the explanation. The obvious difference between Mordechai and Esther in their respective roles in nullifying Haman's decree was that Mordechai was involved mainly in inspiring the Jews to repent for the sins responsible for Haman's decree. Although it was Esther who had instructed Mordechai to "go... assemble the Jews... and fast...," Mordechai was the one who **implemented** this plan.

In contrast, Esther exerted herself and undertook several initiatives, in a

וֹהַבֵּיאוּר בְּכֹל זֶה: הַחִילּוּק בְּפַשְׁטוּת בֵּין מְרְדְּכַי לְאֶסְתֵּר בִּפְעוּלֶּתָם לְבִיטוּל גְזֵירַת הָמֶן הוּא:

מֶרְדְּכֵי הָתְעַפֵּק (בְּעִיקַר) בְּהִשְׁתַּדְּלוּת לְעוֹרֵר אֶת יִשְׁרָאֵל לִתְשׁוּכָה עַל הָעֲבִירוֹת שָׁגְּרְמוּ לִגְזֵירַת הָמָן; וְגַם עִנְיָן ״כְּנוֹס אֶת כָּל הַיְּהוּדִים גו׳ וְצוּמוּ גו׳״ – אַף שֶׁנַּעֲשָׂה לְפִי בַּקְשַׁת אֶסְתֵּר, הַרִי מָרְדְּכֵי הוּא שֶׁהַבִיא לְקִיּוּמוֹ בְּפוֹעַל;

ַרְאִילּוּ אֶסְתֵּר, שֶׁהָיְתָה בְּבֵית הַמֶּלֶךְ (– שֶׁלֹא בֵּין הַיְּהוּדִים) וְעָלֶיהָ נֶאֲמֵר ״לְעֵת שָׁלֹא בִּין הַיְּהוּדִים) וְעָלֶיהָ נֶאֲמֵר ״לֹא הָגַעַהְּ בָּזֹאת הָגַּעַהְּ לַמַּלְכוּת״ – ״לֹא הָגַעַהְ

^{18 {}*Yoma*, ibid.}

¹⁹ Esther 4:16.

natural way, to manoeuvre **Achashverosh** to nullify Haman's decree. Since she lived in the the royal palace (not among Jews), and "it was for such a time that you became **queen**"²⁰ — "you ascended to royalty only to intervene in such a crisis, to rescue the Jewish people,"²¹ she was uniquely positioned to do so. So she approached Achashverosh uninvited, and organized several banquets for him and Haman, etc.²²

לַמַּלְכוּת אֶלָּא בַּעֲבוּר הָעֵת הַזּאת שָׁתּוֹשִׁיעִי אֶת יִשְּׂרָאל״ – הִשְׁתַּדְּלָה וְעָשְׂתָה כַּמָּה פְּעוּלוֹת בְּדֶרְךְ הַשָּׁבַע כְּדִי שָׁאֲחַשְׁוֵרוֹש יְבַטֵּל אֶת גְּזֵירַת הָמָן: הִיא בָּאָה אֶל אֲחַשְׁוֵרוֹשׁ מִבְּלִי שֶׁתִּיקָרֵא, הַכִינָה הַסְּעוּדוֹת עֲבוּר אֲחַשְׁוֵרוֹשׁ וְהָמָן וכו׳.

Put differently: Mordechai was busy (primarily) in dealing with the spiritual part in squashing the royal decree — taking action to have the decree rescinded from that end, Above. To Mordechai's involvement was with (and among) the Jews. For her part, however, Esther was taking (mainly) natural steps (by which the abolishment of the decree Above would be achieved on this plane below, acting entirely) through Achashverosh. continued her efforts until Achashverosh finally nullified the decree; and moreover, "the tables were turned, and the Jews overpowered their enemies."23

בְּסִגְנוֹן אַחֵר: מָרְדְּכֵי עָסַק (בְּעִיקַר)
בְּחֵלֶק הָרוּחָנִי שֶׁל בִּיטוּל הַגְּזִירָה –
לְּהָבִיא לְבִיטוּל הַגְּזִירָה לְמַעְלָה – וְלָכֵן
הָיְתָה הִתְעַסְּקוּתוֹ עם הַיְּהוּדִים (וּבְתוֹכָם); וְאִילּוּ אֶסְתֵּר פָּעֲלָה (בְּעִיקַר) בְּיִלְּוֹת בְּדַרְכִי הַשֶּׁבֵע (שֻׁעַל־יָדָה בְּיטוּל הַגְּזֵירָה שֶׁלְמַעְלָה בָּא לִידִי פּוֹעֵל בְּיטוּל הַגְּזֵירָה שֶׁלְמַעְלָה בָּא לִידִי פּוֹעֵל לְמַשָּׁרִרוֹש, עַד שֶׁלְבַסּוֹף בִּיטֵל אֲחַשְׁוֵרוֹשׁ אֲחַשְׁוֵרוֹשׁ אֶחַשְׁוֵרוֹשׁ אָתַהְנִירָה מִזּוֹ – ״וְנַהְפּוֹךְ הוּא אָתַהְיִם הַמַּה בְּשׁוֹנְאִיהַם״. אַשֶּׁר יִשׁלְטוּ הַיִּהוּיִם הַמַּה בְּשׁוֹנְאִיהַם״.

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^{20 {}Ibid., v. 14.}

²¹ Ibid., Ibn Ezra, ad loc; cf. also Esther Rabbah, and Rashi, on Esther 2:11.

²² Similarly, when the Jewish people {after their departure from Egypt} fought Amalek in the desert, Moshe's role was analogous to Mordechai's. Moshe raised his arms and inspired the Jewish people to subjugate their hearts to their Father in Heaven (*Mishnah* in Rosh Hashanah, end of ch. 3). Yehoshu'a task was to actually engage Amalek in battle (*Shmos* 17:9-13).

²³ Esther 9:1.

THEIR DIFFERENCE VIS-À-VIS THE MIRACLE

Just as Mordechai and Esther fought on different fronts to revoke the decree, similarly, they **emphasized** different facets of the novelty introduced by the miracle of Purim. ז. וְיֵשׁ לוֹמַר, שֶׁכְשׁם שֶׁחֲלוּקִים מָרְדְּכֵי וְאֶסְתֵּר בְּנוֹגֵעַ לִפְעוּלוֹתֵיהֶם לְבִיטוּל הַגְּזֵירָה, כַּךְ יֶשְׁנוֹ חִילוּק זֶה בֵּינֵיהֶם, בְּאוֹתוֹ הָאוֹפֶן, גַּם בְּנוֹגֵעַ לַהַדְגָּשָׁה בְּנֵס הַפּוּרִים וְהַחִידּוּשׁ שֶׁבּוֹ:

For Mordechai, the main element of the Purim miracle was the spiritual "victory" of the Jewish people. Their teshuvah was such that "they confirmed what they had accepted long before,"24 and "they reaccepted the Torah in the days of Achashverosh." With their teshuvah, they "a good excuse" eliminated {for irreligiosity, based on how the Jewish nation had been "compelled"25 to accept the Torah} at *Matan Torah*. [Therefore, Mordechai had wanted work²⁶ to be forbidden on Purim, similar to Yom Kippur, the {biblical} day of repentance on which Hashem had given the second **Luchot**. Mordechai had wanted Purim to be a holy day devoted to matters of the **soul**.]27

לְנַבֵּי מֶּרְדְּכִי, הַהַדְּנָּשָׁה בְּנֵס פּוּרִים הִיא הַ״נְצְּחוֹן״ הָרוּחָנִי שֶׁל הַיְּהוּדִים – שֶׁעֲשׂוּ מְּשׁוּבָה, וְאַף בְּאוֹפֶן שֶׁהַכִּיא לְכָּף שֶׁ״קִיְּימוּ מָה שֶׁקִיבְּלוּ כְּבָר״, וּמְה שֶׁ״קִיְּימוּ מָה שֶׁקִיבְּלוּ כְּבָר״, וּמְה שֶׁ״קִיְימוּ מָה לָּבְּלוּהָ בִּימִי אֲחַשְׁנֵרוֹשׁ״ הַסִיר אֶת הַ״מוֹרְעָא רַבָּה לְאוֹרַיִיתָא״ דְּתַּוֹלַוֹ אָת הַ״מוֹרְעָא רַבָּה לְאוֹרַיִיתָא״ דְּתַּוֹלַוּ וּוֹרָה [וּמִפְּנִי זֶה בִּיִקְשׁ מַרְדְּכֵי שֶׁפּוּרִים יוֹם הַמּוּקְבָּשׁ לְהִתְעַסְּקוֹת לִּוּחֹוֹת – וְיִהְיֶה יוֹם הַמּוּקְבָּשׁ לְהִתְעַסְּקוֹת בְּעִינִת לּוּחוֹת בְּמִינִת לְהַתְעַסְּקוֹת בְּעִינִנִ הַנְּנָשׁוֹן.

In contrast, Esther underscored the miraculous deliverance of the Jewish people from Haman's decree "to

משא״כ אֶסְתֵּר הִדְגִּישָׁה בַּנֵּס אֶת הַהַּצְּלָה מִגְּזֵירַת הָמָן ״לְהַשְׁמִיד לַהְרוֹג וּלְאַבֵּד אֶת כָּל הַיְּהוּדִים גו׳״ – הַצָּלַת הַגּוּפִים שָׁל הַיָּהוּדִים, וּבִלְשׁוֹן הַלְבוּשׁ: שֵׁהַיָּתה

²⁴ Shabbos 88a.

²⁵ {The awesome and overwhelming revelation of G-d at Mt. Sinai made refusal of the Torah impossible.}

²⁶ See Megillah 5b. {The same sort of "work," melachah, biblically forbidden on Shabbos.}

²⁷ See Megillas Sesarim {by R. Yaacov Lisa (1770-1832)} on Esther 9:19 (near the end).

exterminate and annihilate all the Jews"²⁸ — the rescue of the {physical} **bodies** of the Jews {from the threat of imminent death}. As the *Levush* puts it,²⁹ "The decree was to destroy and kill their bodies... not their souls...; therefore, when they were

הַגְּזֵירָה לְהַשְּׁמִיד וְלַהֲרוֹג אֶת הַגּוּפּוֹת . . וְלֹא אֶת הַנְּפָשׁוֹת . . לְכָךְ כְּשֶׁנִצְלוּ מִמֶּנוּ כו׳.

8.

THREE WAYS OF REMEMBERING: THOUGHT, SPEECH, ACTION

In light of the above explanation, we can clarify why, when it came to **commemorating** the miracle, Mordechai and Esther requested "establish these two **days**," whereas only Esther made the requests "establish me" and "record me." The reason is because these three requests correspond to three different ways of commemorating the miracle of Purim:

ח. וּבָזֶה יֵשׁ לְבָאֵר הַטַּעַם שֻׁגַּם בְּוֹכֶרוֹן הַגַּס, הַנָּה הַבַּקְשָׁה ״מְקַבְּּלִין אַתֶּם עֲלֵיכֶם שְׁגִּי יְמִים הַלָּלוּ״ בָּאָה מִמְּרְדְּכֵי וְאֶסְתֵּר, שְׁנֵי יְמִים הַלְּלוּ״ בָּאָה מִמְּרְדְּכֵי וְאֶסְתֵּר, וְהַבַּקְשׁוֹת ״קְבְעוּנִי״ וְ״בִּתְבוּנִי״ – רַק מֵאֶסְתֵּר לְבַדְּה, כִּי בִּשְׁלוֹשָׁה עִנְיָנִים הַלְּלוּ מֵאֶסְתֵּר לְבַדְּה, כִּי בִּשְׁלוֹשָׁה עִנְיָנִים הַלְּלוּ בָּא לִידִי בִּיטוּי הַזִּכְּרוֹן שֶׁל גֵס פּוּרִים בּאוֹפנים שׁוֹנִים:

Establishing "days of Purim," although linked to action-oriented mitzvos of "feasting and rejoicing, sending gifts of food... and presents to the poor," serves as a means to promote the mindful and soulful remembrance of the miracle by the Jewish people.

קייּם ״יְמֵי הַפּוּרִים״, אע״פּ שֶׁנַּעֲשָׂה ע״י מִצְּוּוֹת מַעֲשִׁיּוֹת, ״מִשְׁתָּה וְשִׂמְחָה יּמִשְׁלוֹחַ מָנוֹת גו׳ יּמַתָּנוֹת לָאֶבְיוֹנִים״ – הֲבִי עִנְיָנָן בְּפַשְׁטוּת הוּא, שֶׁעַל־יָדָן יַגִּיעוּ הַיְּהוּדִים בְּמַחְשַׁבְתָּם, בְּנַפְשָׁם, לִיבִי זִכְרוֹן הַנֵּס.

With {the objective of Esther's request} "establish me"... "read {the

וע״י ענְיָן ״קְבְעוּנִי״ – ״לְקַרְיֵיהּ״, בָּא זִכְרוֹן הַנֵּס וְנִמְשַׁךְּ בְּדִיבּוּר, ״עֲקִימַת שְׂפָתָיו הָוֵי מַעֲשָׂה״ –

saved...."

²⁸ Esther 3:13.

²⁹ Orach Chaim, sec. 670, par. 2; his opinion is cited by Taz, ibid., sub-par. 3.

story}," the miracle is remembered verbally, and "movement of the lips is an action."³⁰ Nonetheless, speech is only "a **minor** action."³¹

אֲבָל מִכֶּל מָקוֹם, הַדִּיבּוּר הוּא ״מַצַּשֶׂה זוּטָא״ בִּלְבַד;

Afterward, through fulfilment of Esther's request to "record me," the miracle would be remembered by a "major action." The story of the miracle was transcribed using *tangible* ink, on *tangible* parchment.³²

וּלְאַחֲרֵי זֶה, ע״י בַּקְשַׁת ״כִּתְבוּנִי״, יוֹרֵד זִכְרוֹן הַנֵּס וְנִמְשָׁףְ בְּ״מֵצֲשֶׂה רַבָּא״ – הַנֵּס נָכְתַּב בִּדְיוֹ גַּשְׁמִי עַל קְלָף גַּשְׁמִי וכו׳.

Consequently: Since from Mordechai's perspective, the main facet of the miracle was the spiritual victory, therefore, what was most important to commemorate the miracle was to remember it, thereby engaging the spiritual side of a person. And as noted earlier, this would explain why Mordechai had wanted work, on Purim, to be forbidden.

וְלָכֵן: לְגַבֵּי מָרְדְּכֵי, שֶׁהַדְגָּשַׁת הַנֵּס הִיא הַנְּצָּחוֹן הָרוּחָנִי, הֲרִי גַּם בְּזִכְרוֹן הַנֵּס נוֹגֵעַ בְּעִיקַר הַזִּכְּרוֹן בְּמַחְשָׁבָה – רוּחָנִיוּת הָאָדָם [וכנ״ל, שֶׁרְצוֹנוֹ הָיָה שֶׁפּוּרִים יִהְיֵה אַף אָסוּר בִּמִלָאכָה];

In contrast, from Esther's perspective, the main facet of the miracle was the simple salvation of the Jews, saving their **physical** lives. As such, cognitively remembering the miracle was insufficient. Rather, remembrance of the miracle

משא״כ לְגַבֵּי אֶסְתֵּר, שֶׁהַרְגָּשַׁת הַגַּס הִיא הַהַצְּלָה כִּפְשׁוּטָה, הַצְּלַת הַגּוּף הַגּשְׁמִי, לֹא דֵּי בְּכָךְ שָׁוּכְּרוֹן הַגַּס יִהְיֶה בְּמַחְשָׁבָה, אֶלָא בְּעִיקַר צָרִיךְ לְהַמְשִׁיכוֹ בְּ״עֲשָׁיָה״ (בְּ״מַעֲשֶׂה זוּטָא״, וּלְאַחֲרֵי זֶה בְּ״מַעֲשֶׂה רַבַּא״).

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³⁰ The opinion of Rabbi Yochanan, *Bava Metzia* 90b; *Sanhedrin* 65b; and this is the decisive view. See *Tanya*, ch. 37, 38, 53.

³¹ Sanhedrin, ibid.

³² Even according to what was cited earlier, in fn. 5, that in order to read the *Megillah* ("establish me"), it was necessary to write it, this was not writing, *qua* writing (or an *action*). Rather, it was a prerequisite (*hechsher*) or a detail of the reading (speech). At this stage, the writing was similar to what is explained in the text regarding "the days of Purim." Namely, the *mitzvos* of Purim were enacted to serve as a means through which a person would reflect on the memory of the miracle.

needed to be expressed mainly through "action" (a "minor action," and then afterward, a "major action").

9.

MORDECHAI'S DUAL VIEWS

When Mordechai had requested {together with Esther} only, "Take it upon yourselves to establish these two days" (not "establish me" or "record me"), this expressed Mordechai's own, individual quality. This was the plane from which he perceived **his generation** (the generation over which he was the leader and of which he was the patron). From him, the people drew their spiritual sustenance,33 commensurate to {the level of} their souls and spirituality. To remember the miracle from their spiritual station, it sufficed to do so in thought. There was no need to commemorate the miracle in action, as explained above.

 ט. אָמְנָם, מָה שֻׁמֶּרְדְּכֵי בִּימֵשׁ רַק ״מְקַבְּלִין אַתֶּם עֲלֵיכֶם שְׁנִי יָמִים הַלָּלוּ״ (וְלֹא ״קְבְעוּנִי״ וְ״כִּתְבוּנִי״), הַיְינוּ מֶרְדְּכֵי כְּפִי שֶׁהוּא מִצֵּד מֵצָּב וּמַצְלַת עַצְמוֹ, אֲשֶׁר רוֹאָה גַּם אֶת אַנְשֵׁי דּוֹרוֹ (שְׁהוּא פַּרְנָס עֲלֵיהֶם וְרֹאשָׁם, וְנִשְׁמוֹתֵיהֶם יוֹנְקוֹת וְחֵיוֹת מִמֶּנוּ) בְּמַצְמָדָם מִצֵּד נִשְׁמָחָם וְרוּחָנִיּוֹת מִמֶּנוּ) וֹמַצִּד מַצְּבָם הָרוּחָנִי אָכֵן דִּי בְּכָךְ שֻׁזִּכְּרוֹן הַנֵּס יִהְיֶה בְּמַחְשָׁבָה, וְאִין נוֹגַעַת כָּלֹ־כָּךְ יְרִידְתוֹ וְהַמְשְׁכָתוֹ לְמַצְשֶׁה, כנ״ל;

The Sanhedrin, however, was the place where difficult questions were brought to be resolved and the judges were responsible to decide the law in actual **deed**. To accomplish this required the judges to lower themselves to the people, and discern their **material** situation as it related to their **bodily** lives. (The rendered decision was carried out in **deed**.) As a

אֲכָל בְּעֵת יְשִׁיכָתוֹ בְּסַנְהֶדְרִין, שֶׁאֵלֶיהָ מוּכָא כָּל דָּבָר הַקְּשֶׁה – וְעִנְיֵן הַסַּנְהֶדְרִין הוּא לִפְסוֹק אֶת הַדִּין לְמַעֲשֶׁה, וּלְשֵׁם כָּדְ עַל הַחֲכָמִים לְהַשְׁפִּיל עַצְמָם אֶל יִשְׂרָאַל וְלְרְאוֹת אֶת מַצְּבָם בָּעוֹלֶם הַגַּשְׁמִי, מִצֵּד גוּפָם (וּפְּסַק הַהַלֶּכָה צָּרִיךְ לְהִתְבַּצִּעַ בְּמַעֲשֵׂה) – אֲזַי רוֹאֶה הוּא אֶת יִשְׂרָאַל בְּמוֹ שֶׁהֵם מִצֵּד גוּפָם, וּמִצֵּד זֶה צָּרִיךְ זְּכַרוֹן הַנֵּס לְהִיוֹת נִמְשַׁךְ בִּמַעֲשֵׂה מַמַּשׁ,

³³ See Tanya, ch. 2.

כִּי דַּוְקָא כָּךְ חוֹבֵר הַדָּבָר וְכוֹבֵשׁ אֶת הַגּוּף בְּתַכְלִית.

member of the Sanhedrin, Mordechai therefore looked at the Jews in their physical bodily state. From this perspective, commemoration of the miracle needed to be expressed in tangible action, for only in this way would the message completely suffuse the corporeal **body**.

10.

THE PURIM MIRACLE — LIGHT AND VESSELS

The explanation of the subject according to Chassidus:

The difference between the level of Mordechai and Esther is as follows: The essence-character of Mordechai was "Yesod Abba," {lit. "Foundation of Father." From the vantage point of Abba (the sefirah of wisdom {chochmah}), "light" $\{Or\}$ ³⁴ is of primary importance. In contrast, Esther embodied the sefirah of sovereignty {malchus}, and as this sefirah itself has descended into the spiritual worlds Creation $\{Briah\},\$ **Formation** {Yetzirah}, and Action {Asiyah}. [This association is alluded to by her name Esther, אסתר, connected to the verse,35 "I will utterly hide, אסתיר הסתר ..." —

י. עִנְיָן הנ״ל בְּסִגְנוֹן תּוֹרֵת הַחֲסִידוּת:

הַחִילּוּק בֵּין מַדְרֵיגַת מָרְדְּכֵי לְמַדְרֵיגַת אָסְתֵּר הוּא: מָרְדְּכֵי עִנְיָנוֹ – ״יְסוֹד אַבָּא״, אָסְתֵּר הוּא: מָרְדְּכֵי עִנְיָנוֹ – ״יְסוֹד אַבָּא״, וּמְצֵּד ״אַבָּא״ (סְפִּירַת הַחָּכְמָה) נוֹגֵעַ עִנְיַן הַ״אוֹר״; וְאֶסְתֵּר הִיא סְפִירַת הַמַּלְכוּת, וּכְּיִם שִׁיוֹרֶדֶת וּכְּיָם הַמֵּלְכוּת כְּפִי שֵׁיוֹרֶדֶת לְעוֹלְמוֹת בְּרִיאָה יְצִירָה עֲשִׁיָּה [כִּמְרוּמְּז לְעוֹלְמוֹת בְּרִיאָה יְצִירָה עֲשִׂיָּה [כִּמְרוּמְּז בְּיִּשְׁמָה ״אֶסְתֵּר״ – מִלְשׁוֹן ״וְאָנֹכִי הַסְתֵּר אַסְתִּר הַמָּלְכוּת נוֹגַעַ עִנְיַן וּמָבְיִת הַמָּלְכוּת נוֹגַעַ עִנְיַן וּמִיּכִים״.

³⁴ {**Oros & Keilim:** Lit. "lights and vessels"; in <u>Kabbalah</u>, the <u>sefiros</u> (divine attributes) consist of "lights" or divine emanations, channeled through "vessels" that define and qualify their effect upon creation.}

³⁵ Devarim 11:15.

³⁶ Chullin 139b.

extreme cover-up and concealment.] From the perspective of the *sefirah* of *malchus*, "**vessels**" {*kelim*} are imperative.

From the vantage point of *Or* and of *kelim*, the Purim miracle is understood and sensed differently:

וְהַחִילּוּק בֵּין הָאוֹפֶן שֶׁבּוֹ נֵס פּוּרִים מוּרְגָּשׁ מִצַּד עִנְיָן הַ״אוֹר״ לָאוֹפֶן הֱיוֹתוֹ מוּרְגָּשׁ מִצַּד הַ״כֵּלִים״:

The miracle of Purim, being one of the miracles vested in nature, incorporates two extremes: On the one hand, since the miracle was performed **within** nature in a manner that "nothing of it could be visibly be seen as supernatural,"³⁷ understandably, the miracle was connected to the Divine Light as it is clothed within the world.

גַס פּוּרִים, בִּהְיוֹתוֹ מֵהַנִּסִים הַמְּלוּבְּשִׁים בַּטֶבַע, יֵשׁ בּוֹ שְׁנֵי קְצָוֹת: מֵחַד נִּיסָא, כֵּינָן שֶׁהַנֵּס מְלוּבָּשׁ בְּתוֹךְ הַטֶּבַע בְּאוֹפֶּן ״שֶׁלֹא הָיָה דְּבָר נִרְאָה לָעַיִן שֶׁהוּא לְמַץְלָה מַהַטֶּבַע״, הֲרֵי מוּבָן, שֶׁהוּא נוֹבֵע מִן הָאוֹר הָאֲלֹקִי הַבָּא בְּהִתְלַבְּשׁוּת בָּעוֹלָם;

On the other hand, since what happened was clearly a miracle and a **revelation** of G-dliness (such that 'all could see empirically the supernatural orchestration of events'), understandably, the miracle was rooted in the Divine Light that is beyond nature. Moreover, the very fact that the miracle could be clothed within nature proves that the source of this miracle was more sublime than the source of even overt miracles. For this reason, the miracle was not "limited" by the restriction of having to be supernatural. It {could be and} was enclothed in nature itself.

מֵאידָךְ גִּיסָא, מֵאַחַר שֶׁזֶּהוּ עִנְיָן שֶׁל נֵס וְגִילּוּי אֱלֹקוּת (עַד שֶׁ״נְרְאֶה בְּחוּשׁ שֶׁכָּל הַסִבּוֹת הָיוּ רַק לְמַעְלָה מֵהַשֶּׁבַע״), הֲרִי מוּבְּן, שֶׁשׁוֹרֶשׁ הַנֵּס הוּא מֵהָאוֹר הָאֱלֹקִי שֶׁלְמַעְלָה מֵהַשֶּׁבַע; וְיְתֵירָה מִזּוֹ: הָא גוּפָא שֶׁהַנֵּס יָכוֹל לְהִתְלַבֵּשׁ בְּטֶבַע, הֲרִי זוֹ הוֹכָחָה שֶׁבְּשֶׁרְשׁוֹ הוּא לְמַעְלָה גַּם מִן הַנִּסִים הַגְּלוּיִים, וְלָבֵן אֵין הוּא ״מוּגְבָּל״ בְּהַהַגְּבָלָה שֶׁל לְמַעְלָה־מִן־הַשֶּבַע, אֶלָא הוּא נִמְשָׁךְ בַּשֶּבַע גוּפָא.

³⁷ Torah Or, 93c, 100a.

In light of the above, we can understand the difference between the miracle of Purim as perceived from the aspect of Or, and as perceived from the precipitates kelim: aspect of Or"revelation" and the miraculous, the presence of a miracle as found in the miracle's source and origin. The makeup of kelim is to **lower** the miracle into the concealment and obscurity engendered by the garments of nature. This {descent} expresses the miracle's purpose: transform the concealment of nature so that we can see how Hashem Himself conducts nature.

וְזֶהוּ הַחִילּוּק בֵּין נֵס פּוּרִים כְּמוֹ שֶׁהוּא מִצֵּד הַ״אוֹר״ וּכְמוֹ שֶׁהוּא מִצֵּד הַ״בּלִים״: עִנְיַן הַ״אוֹר״ פּוֹעל אֶת הַ״בִּלִּים״: עִנְיַן הַ״אוֹר״ פּוֹעל אֶת הַ״בִּלוּי״ וְאֶת הַנֵּס – הַנֵּס כְּפִי שֶׁהוּא מִצֵּד שְׁרְשׁוֹ וּמְקוֹרוֹ; וְאִילוּ עִנְיַן הַ״בֵּלִים״ הוּא לְהוֹרִיד וּלְהַמְשִׁיךְ אֶת הַנֵּס בְּתֹּלְים״ הוּא לְהוֹרִיד וּלְהַמְשִׁיךְ אֶת הַנֵּס בְּתוֹךְ שֶׁל לְבוּשִׁי הַשֶּׁל לְבוּשִׁי הַשֶּׁל הַשֶּׁלִם הַמְּכֵנְוּן שֶׁל הַנֵּס – לְשַׁנּוֹת אֶת הַהֶּעְלֵם שֶׁל הַטֶּבַע, עַד לְּבִי״ה שָׁהַיֶּעְלֵם שֶׁל הַטֶּבַע, עַד שָׁיִרְאָה שֶׁהַטֶּבַע מוּנְהָג ע״י הקב״ה עַצְּמוֹ.

11.

MORDECHAI — LIGHT: ESTHER — VESSELS

This is the difference between Mordecai and Esther:

From Mordecai's perspective, the perspective of *or*, the main point of Purim was not the **purification of nature** but the revelation of light. Through the Purim miracle, the boundlessness of God was revealed, descending below into the conduct of nature

Consequently, also when commemorating the miracle, there is no great need for action. It suffices for the remembrance of the miracle to be expressed through the practical *mitzvos* of

יא. וְזֶהוּ הַחִילּוּק בֵּין מָרְדְּכַי לְאֶסְתֵּר:

מִצֵּד מֶרְדְּכֵי, עִנְיַן הַ״אוֹר״, עִיּקַר הַהַּדְגָּשָׁה שֶׁל גֵס פּוּרִים הוּא (לֹא בִּוְיכּוּךְ הַטֶּבַע, אֶלָּא) בְּהִתְּגַּלוּת הָאוֹר – בְּכָךְ שע״י הַגֵּס מִתְגַּלֶּה הַבְּלִי-גְּבוּל הָאֲמִיתִּי יִתְבָּרַךְ (הַיּוֹרֵד וּמַגִּיעַ עַד לְמַטָּה מַטָּה, לְהַנְהָגַת הַשָּבַע);

וּמִפְנֵי זֶה, גַּם בְּזּכָרוֹן הַנֵּס אֵין נוֹגֵעַ כְּלֹ־ כְּךְ שָׁיִּהְיֶה נִמְשָׁךְ בְּמַעֲשֵׂה – דֵּי בְּכְךְ שָׁזְּכְּרוֹן הַנֵּס יְבוֹא לִידֵי בִּיטוּי בַּמִּצְוֹת הַמַּצְשִׂיּוֹת שֶׁל פּוּרִים, וְאִילוּ זִכְרוֹן הַנֵּס גוּפָא יָכוֹל לְהִישָׁאֵר בְּמַחְשָׁבָה וּבְרוּחַנִיּוּת; Purim. However, remembrance of the miracle itself can remain intellective and spiritual.

[Therefore, we find **this** concept addressed in the Talmud *Yerushalmi*, which in the realm of Torah is predicated on the idea of "light." In it, we are presented immediately with the conclusion {of a halachic debate} and with the correct solution {to a difficultly}, and so forth, like a person who sees {everything clearly} in a well-lit room.

ַוְלָכֵן מוּבָא עִנְיָן זֶה בְּתַלְמוּד יְרוּשַׁלְמִי, שַׁבְּתוֹרָה גּוּפָא הוּא עִנְיָן הַ״אוֹר״ (− בּוֹ שֻׂבְּתוֹרָה גוּפָא הוּא עִנְיָן הַ״אוֹר״ (− בּוֹ מוֹצְאִים לְאַלְתַּר אֶת הַפְּבָרָא וְהַתִּירוּץ הַנְּכוֹנִים וכו׳, כְּאָדָם הָרוֹאֶה חֵפֶץ בְּמָקוֹם מוּאָר)].

In contrast, from the perspective of Esther, who represented the idea of *kelim* {as alluded to by the verse}, "I will utterly hide, הסתר אסתיר," the main idea of the Purim miracle was that it transformed the concealment and darkness of nature. As such, when commemorating the miracle, it was also important to do so in the **sphere of action** — by reading and writing {the wondrous story of Purim}. For specifically in this way would the miracle's goal be achieved, i.e., **nature itself** would radiate light.

וְאִילּוּ מָצֵּד אֶסְתֵּר – עִנְיֵן הַ״כֵּלִים״, ״הַסְתֵּר אַסְתִּר״ – עִיקַר הַהַדְגָּשָׁה בְּנֵס פּוּרִים הוּא עַל כָּךְ שֶׁעַלֹייָדוֹ נִשְׁתַּנָּה וְנֶהְפַּףְ הַהֶּסְתֵּר וְהַחוֹשֶׁךְ שֶׁל הַשֶּבַע; וְלָכֵן נוֹגעַ הַדָּבָר שֶׁגַּם וִכְרוֹן הַגֵּס יִהְיֶה נִמְשֶׁךְ בְּ(עוֹלֵם הָ)עֲשִׂיָּה – בִּקְרִיאָה וּכְתִיבָה, כִּי ע״ז דַּוְקָא נִשְׁלֶמֶת כַּוָּוֹנַת הַגַּס, שֶׁהַשֶּבַע עצִמוֹ יַאִיר.

[Accordingly, this perspective is adopted by the Talmud *Bavli*, {whose mode of analysis is} alluded to by the verse,³⁸ "He made me dwell in deep darkness...,"³⁹ since the *Bavli* focuses on

ַוְלָכֵן מוּבָא עִנְיָן זֶה בַּתַּלְמוּד בַּבְלִי, שֶׁכֵּן, ״בְּמַחֲשַׁכִּים הוֹשִׁיבַנִי . . זֶה תַּלְמוּדָה שֶׁל בָּבֶל״ – עִנְיָנוֹ הוּא ״בֵּירוּר הַחוֹשֶׁךְ״ (בַּתוֹרָה גּוּפָא)].

^{38 {}Eicha 3:6.}

³⁹ Sanhedrin 24a; see Rabbeinu Chananel, ad loc.

the "purification of the darkness" (as this process applies within Torah itself).]

12.

ESTHER — THE END OF ALL MIRACLES

In light of all the above, we will better appreciate the comparison of "Esther" to the "dawn": "Just as the dawn marks the end of the whole night, {the miracle of} Esther marked the end of all the miracles." We will also appreciate how this simile is related to Esther's story being transcribed and included in Scripture.

יב. ע״פּ כָּל הנ״ל יוּמְתַּק גַּם הַדִּמְיוֹן בֵּין ״אֶסְתֵּר״ לְ״שָׁחַר״ – ״מָה שַׁחַר סוֹף כָּל הַלַּיְלָה אַף אֶסְתֵּר סוֹף כָּל הַנִּסִּים״, וְשַׁיָּיכוּתוֹ לְכָךְ שָׁאֶסְתֵּר ״נִימְנָה לְכְתּוֹב״:

The Gemara draws an equivalence between the "end of the whole **night**" and "the end of all **miracles**" even though, seemingly (as *Maharsha* asks),⁴⁰ a miracle and the night's end are conceptual opposites. The equivalence is valid, however, because as mentioned above (end of section 10), the purpose of a miracle is to alter **nature** itself. Meaning, nature, which is innately emblematic of "night" and darkness, should sense Divine light and revelation.

הַשַּעַם שָׁ״סוֹף כָּל הַנִּסִים״ נִמְשָׁל בַּגְּמָרָא לְ״סוֹף כָּל הַלַּיְלָה״ – דְּלֹכְאוֹרָה, הְבִי ״נִס״ וּ״לַיְלָה״ הם הָפְּכִיִים בְּתַכְלִית (כְּמוֹ שְׁהַקְשָׁה הַמָּהַרְשָׁ״א) – הוּא, כַּמְבוֹאָר לְעִיל (סוֹף ס״י), כִּי תַּכְלִיתוֹ שֶׁל נֵס הִיא שֶׁהַטָּבַע (שֻׁמִּצֵּד שְׁהַעָּבַע (שָׁמִּצֵּד שָׁהַעָּבוֹ הוּא עִנְיָן שֶׁל ״לַיְלָה״ וְחוֹשֶׁךְ) עַצְמוֹ הוּא עִנְיָן שֶׁל ״לַיְלָה״ וְחוֹשֶׁךְ) אַלקוּת;

Esther was "the end of all **miracles**." Her miraculous story was the culmination and the purpose of all miracles, which is the telescoping of the

ְזֶהוּ שֶׁ״אֶסְתֵּר״ הִיא ״סוֹף כֶּל הַנִּפִּים״, הַיִּינוּ, שֶׁהִיא הַפּוֹף וְהַתַּכְלִית שֶׁל כָּל הַנְּפִים – לְהַמְשִׁיךְ אֶת הַנֵּס וְאֶת גִּילוּי הָאֱלֹקוּת בְּתוֹךְ הַהֶּעְלֵם וְהַהֶּסְתֵּר שֶׁל הָעוֹלֶם, כִּי פְּעוּלְתָה הִיא (לא רַק בְּחוֹשֶׁךְ הַעוֹלֵם הַזָּה שֵׁיָשׁ לוֹ שַׁיֵּיכוּת (– הוּא

⁴⁰ Chidushei Aggados, on Yoma, loc cit.

miracle and G-dly revelation into the fog and murkiness of the world. For she impacted (not only the darkness of the world that was linked to (proximate to) "Or," the more refined elements of this world), but also the "end of the night," the culmination ofthe darkness concealment foretold by the verse, "I will utterly hide, הסתר אסתי..." of this world. This extreme darkness is totally unrelated to light. [This {spiritual darkness in the world} is {metaphorically} comparable obviously to the darkness prevalent at "the end of the whole night," because before dawn, the darkness of the night is more intense than any other time during the night.]

״בּסְמִיכוּת״) לֶ״אוֹר״, בְּעִנְיָנִים הַזַּכִּים וְהַבִּלְתִּי חוֹמְרִיִּים שֶׁבָּעוֹלָם הַזֶּה, אֶלָא) בְּ״טוֹף כָּל הַלַּיִלָה״ – בְּתַכְלִית הַחוֹשֶׁךְ וְהָעְלֵם וְהַסְתֵּר אַסְתִּיר שֶׁל עוֹלָם הַזֶּה, בְּמָקוֹם שָׁאֵין לוֹ שַׁיָּיכוּת כְּלָל לְ״אוֹר״ [כְּמוֹ ״סוֹף כָּל הַלַּיְלָה״ כִּפְשׁוּטוֹ, שֶׁבּוֹ דַּוְקָא (לִפְנֵי עֲלוֹת הַשַּׁחַר) חוֹשֶׁךְ הַלַּיְלָה הוא בְּיָתֶר הִתְּגַבְּרוּת מֵאֲשֶׁר בְּמֶשֶׁךְ הַלַּיְלָה].

In this context, we can understand why specifically those miracles that warranted to be written {and included in the Holy Writings} are analogous to "night," and in particular, to "the **end** of the whole night": These miracles were commemorated in "writing" and in deed, which in this world {and level} itself, belong to the {lowest} class of **inanimate** entities, representing the **end** of all the levels in the world of *Assiah*, since the purpose of these miracles was to transform the "night," and especially, to transform "the end of the whole night."⁴¹

ועפ״ז מוּבֶן הַטַּעם שֶׁדּוְקָא הַנּּסִים שֶׁבְּסוּג ״נִיתְּנָה לִכְתּוֹב״ אֶפְשַׁר לְדַמּוֹתָם לְ״לִילָה״, וּבִפְּרָט לְ״סוֹף כָּל הַלַּיִלָה״; זֶה שֶׁבַּנִּסִים הַלָּלוּ הִתְלַבֵּשׁ זִכְרוֹן הַנֵּס בְּ״כְּתִיבָה״ וַעֲשִׂיָּה – אֲשֶׁר בָּעוֹלָם הַזֶּה גוּפָא, הֵן מִסּוּג הַדּוֹמֵם, סוֹף כָּל הַמַּדְרֵיגוֹת שֶׁל עוֹלָם הְצְשִׁיָּה – הוּא מִפְּנִי שֻׁנִּסִים אֵלּוּ עִנְיָנָם הוּא לַהְפוֹךְ אֶת הַיֵּלִילָה״, וּבִפְּרָט – אֶת ״סוֹף כָּל הַלַּיִלָה״.

⁴¹ For this reason, possibly, the miraculous story of Chanukah was not written because the Chanukah miracle relates (mainly) to a Jew's soul and spirituality. See *Levush*, *Taz* on *Orach Chaim*, sec. 670, par. 2.

DAWN AND ESTHER — THE LIGHT DERIVED FROM DARKNESS

In this context, we can better appreciate why Esther is compared to the dawn: The light of dawn that splits the darkness at "the end of the whole night," symbolizes the light that "emerges specifically from the preceding darkness" — the transformation of darkness itself into light. This idea is alluded to in the Hebrew word for "dawn," This word is related to murk, blackness, and to murky and dark.

יג. וְזֶהוּ גַּם הַבֵּיאוּר בְּכָךְ שֶׁ״נִמְשְׁלָה אֶסְתֵּר לְשַׁחַר״: אוֹר הַשַּׁחַר, הַבּוֹקֵעַ אֶת הַחוֹשֶׁךְ שֶׁבְּ״סוֹף כָּל הַלַּיְלָה״, מוֹנֶה עַל הָאוֹר אֲשֶׁר ״נִמְשָׁךְ דַּוְקָא מִן הַחוֹשֶׁךְ שֶׁקְדְמוֹ״ [הַפִּיכַת הַחוֹשֶׁךְ גּוּפָא לְאוֹר]; כִּמְרוּמָּז בְּתִיכַת ״שַׁחַר״, שֶׁהִיא מִ״לְשׁוֹן שַׁחֲרוּת וְקַדְרוּת וְחוֹשֶׁךְ״;

The same relationship applies to the sefiros: "'Ayeles of the אחר,'42 refers to the Congregation of Israel,"43 the sefirah of malchus. Since "the dawn is the end of the night," understandably, whole {Zohar's} reference is not to *malchus* as it is found in its {original} place in Atzilus, or even as malchus egresses into atik of Briah, where the quality of malchus is revealed. The reference, however, is to malchus as it slides under the cover and concealment of the worlds of Briah, Yetzirah, and Asiyah, doing so in order to transform the concealment there into light, as discussed earlier concerning Esther.

וְכֵן הוּא גַּם בִּסְפִירוֹת: ״(אַיֶּלֶת הַ)שַּׁחַר דָּא כְּנֶסֶת יִשְׁרָאֵל״ – סְפִירַת הַמַּלְכוּת; וְכֵיוָן שֶׁ״שַׁחַר סוֹף כָּל הַלַּיְלָה״, הְרֵי מוּבָו, דְּהַיִינוּ סְפִירַת הַמַּלְכוּת

רֹא כְּמוֹ שֶׁהִיא בִּמְקוֹמָה בַּאֲצִילוּת, וְאַף לֹא כְּמוֹ שֶׁנִּעֲשֵׂית ״עַתִּיק לִבְרִיאָה״ – לֹא כְּמוֹ שֶׁנַנְשֵׁית ״עַתִּיק לִבְרִיאָה״ בְּמְקוֹם שֶׁעִנְיַן הַמֵּלְכוּת הוּא בְּגִילוּי, אֶלָא

כְּמוֹ שֶׁהִיא יוֹרֶדֶת לְהֶעְלֵם וְהֶסְתֵּר שֶׁל עוֹלְמוֹת בִי״ע (בְּרִיאָה יְצִירָה עֲשִׁיָּה), עַל־ מְנָת לַהַפוֹךְ אֶת הַהֶעְלֵם לְאוֹר (עַל־דֶּרֶךְ הַמְּבוֹאָר לְעִיל בִּנוֹגֵעַ לְאָסְתֵּר).

^{42 {}Tehillim 22:1.}

⁴³ Zohar vol. 3, 21b; ibid., 25b.

IN ESSENCE, ESTHER IS UNAFFECTED BY CONCEALMENT

Esther ability to **transmute** the concealment in the world, despite her essence-character itself being related to concealment, הסתר אסתיר, did not only avail itself of Mordechai's strength (since Mordechai's essence-character was *Or* and revelation, as elucidated above), but also emanated from Esther herself, since inwardly, she **transcended** concealment completely.

יד. וּמָה שֶׁ״אֶסְתֵּר״ מְהַפֶּכֶת אֶת הֶעְלֵם וְהָסְתֵּר הָעוֹלָם – אע״פּ שֶׁעְנְיָנָה הוּא ״הַסְתֵּר אַסְתִּיר״ – אֵינוֹ רַק בְּכֹחוֹ שֶׁל מְרְדְּכֵי (שֶׁעִנְיָנוֹ הוּא אוֹר וְגִילוּי, כנ״ל בַּאְרוּכָּה), אֶלָא גַּם מִפְּנִי שֶׁאֶסְתֵּר עַצְמְה הָיא, בִּפְנִימִיּוּתָה, לְמַעְלָה לְגַמְרי מִץ הָיא, בִּפְנִימִיּוּתָה, לְמַעְלָה לְגַמְרי מִן הַהָּסְתֵּר;

This is the deeper meaning of the verse,⁴⁴ "**Hadassah, also known as Esther**": As she (also) descends into the world's cloaking and concealment ("אסתר"), the aspect of "Hadassah" ("these are the righteous")⁴⁵ persists. This aspect is the inwardness of *malchus*, which remains united with the *sefiros* above it.

ְּוֶהוּ הַפֵּירוּשׁ הַפְּנִימִי בַּפָּסוּק ״הְדַּטָּה הִיא אֶסְתֵּר״: (גַּם) בַּיְּרִידָה לְתוֹךְ הָעְלֵם וְהַפֵּתֶר הָעוֹלָם (״אֶסְתִּר״) יֶשְׁנָה בְּחִינַת ״הְדַפָּה״ (אֵלוּ הַצֵּדִּיקִים) הַמּוֹרָה עַל פְּנִימִיּוּת הַמַּלְכוּת הַמְּיוּחֶדֶת עִם הַסְּפִירוֹת שֵׁלְמַעְלָה מִמֵּנָה.

This is also the lesson to be gleaned and applied to everyone's *avodah*: Even when a Jew finds himself in a situation of spiritual darkness in which G-dliness is concealed, one should not be intimidated. On the contrary, since inwardly a Jew stands on high ground above the fog, a Jew has the fortitude not only to remove the

וְזוֹהִי גַּם הַהוֹרָאָה בַּעֲבוֹדַת כָּל אֶחָד וְאֶחָד: גַּם כְּשֶׁיְהוּדִי נִמְצָא בְּמַצָּב שֶׁל ״הַפֵּתֶר״ וְחוֹשֶׁךְ, אֵל לוֹ לְהִתְפַּעֵל מִזֶּה – וְאַדְרַבָּה: כֵּיוָן שֶׁבִּפְנִימִיּוּתוֹ הוּא לְמַעְלָה מִן הַהֶּסְתֵּר, הָבִי בְּכֹחוֹ לֹא רַק לְהִתְּנַבֵּר עַל הַהֶּסְתֵּר, אֶלָא יְתִירָה מִזּוֹ – לַהַפּוֹךְ אֶת הַהֶּסְתֵּר עַצְמוֹ לְאוֹר.

⁴⁴ Esther 2:7.

⁴⁵ Megillah 13a.

concealment but also to transform it into light.

15.

THE HINT IN SHULCHAN ARUCH

As often explained, all the ideas found in the mystical dimension of Torah can be found, at least as hints, in the Torah's revealed dimension. This hold true in the subject under discussion:

טו. כְּפִי שֶׁנְּתְבָּאֵר פְּעָמִים רַבּוֹת, כָּל עִנְיְנֵי פְּנִימִיּוּת הַתּוֹרָה יֶשְׁנָם, בְּרֶמֶז עַל־כָּל־ פַּנִים, בִּנְגַלֶּה דְּתוֹרָה. וְכֵן הוּא בִּעְנִיֵנֵנוּ:

The above lesson for one's divine service — how a Jew, inwardly, stands higher than "concealment" ⁴⁶ — is alluded to by the Alter Rebbe in his *Shulchan Aruch* (in the second edition). At the beginning of the laws concerning "Arising in the Morning," there is a pertinent clue in the ruling that states, ⁴⁷ "I awaken the dawn, the dawn does not awaken me."

הָעִנְיָן הנ״ל בַּעֲבוֹדַת כָּל אֶחָד וְאֶחָד – הְּעִּבוֹדַת כָּל אֶחָד וְאֶחָד – אֲשֶׁר יְהוּדִי בִּפְנִימִיוּתוֹ הוּא לְמַעְלָה מֵ״הֶסְתֵּר״ – רָמְזוֹ רַבֵּינוּ הַזָּקֵן בְּשֵׁלְחָן־ עָרוּך שֶׁלוֹ (מַהְדוּרָא תִּנְיִינָא) בְּרִישׁ עָרוּך שֶׁלוֹ (מַהְדוּרָא תִּנְיִינָא) בְּרִישׁ הַלְכוֹת הַשְּׁכָּמַת הַבּוֹקֶר, לְגַבֵּי הַדִּין ״אֲנִי הִשְׁתַר מֵעִיר אוֹתִי״;

The above point also has a bearing on a baffling difficulty found in the remarks of the *Turei Zahav*,⁴⁸ and on a discrepancy between the wording found in the first and second editions of the Alter Rebbe's *Shulchan Aruch*. Both these issues can be

וּבְקֶשֶׁר לָזֶה, תִּתְיַישֵׁב תְּמִיהָה בט״ז וְיוּבַן שִׁינוּי בשו״ע רַבִּינוּ הַזָּקֵן בֵּין מַהְדוּרָא קַמָּא לְמַהְדוּרָא תִּנְיִנָא – ע״פ הַבֵּיאוּר הַפָּנִימִי (דְּלְעֵיל סי״ג) בְּמַדְרֵיגַת ״שַׁחַר״.

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⁴⁶ As *Tanya*, end of ch.24, puts it, "(even during a sinful act) a person remains faithful to Him," similar to what is said about Esther (*Esther* 2:20).

⁴⁷ The phrasing of the Alter Rebbe, based on *Tur*, "*Orach Chaim*," sec. 1. This ruling conforms with what is stated in Talmud *Yerushalmi*, *Brachos*, ch. 1, par. 1; *Midrash Tehillim*, *Ps.* 22, 108, et al; cited by Rashi in his commentary on *Tehillim* 57:9.

⁴⁸ {A halachic work known by the acronym, *Taz*, written by <u>Rabbi David HaLevi</u> (1586-1667).}

resolved in light of the deeper explanation (presented in section 13) of the spiritual level that "dawn" represents.

16.

TWO APPROACHES — "I AWAKEN THE DAWN" OR "THE DAWN AWAKENS ME"

In *Tur* (in the first section of "*Orach Chaim*"), it says:⁴⁹

A person must be courageous as a lion and arise in the morning to serve his Creator... The person should awaken the dawn; the dawn should not awaken him. As King David, may peace be upon him, declared..., implying, "I awaken the dawn, and the dawn does not awaken me."

In contrast, in *Shulchan Aruch*, the author {*Mechaber*}⁵⁰ references only the beginning of this passage {in *Tur*}, "a person should awaken the dawn," but doesn't reference the conclusion ("the dawn does not awaken me").

The author of the *Turei Zahav* explains:⁵¹ The word "*shachar*," *dawn*, alludes to the Congregation (sanctity) of Israel, to the holiness residing in the

טז. הַבִיא הַטוּר (בַּפִּימָן הָרְאשׁוֹן דְּחֵלֶק אוֹרַח חַיִּים):

״צָרִיףְ הָאָדָם לְהִתְנַּבֵּר כַּאֲרִי לַעֲמוֹד בַּפֹקֶר לַעֲבוֹדַת בּוֹרְאוֹ . . שֶׁתְּהֵא אַתָּה מְעוֹרֵר הַשַּׁחַר וְלֹא יְהֵא הוּא מְעִירְךְּ כְּמוֹ שֶׁאָמֵר דָוִד ע״ה .. אֲנִי מֵעִיר הַשַּׁחַר וְאֵין הַשַּׁחַר מִעִיר אוֹתִי״;

אָמְנָם, בשו״ע הָבִיא הַמְחַבֵּר רַק אָת הַתְחָלַת הָעִנְיָן – ״שֶׁיְהֵא הוּא מְעוֹרֵר הַשַּׁחַר״, וְלֹא אֶת סִיּוּמוֹ (״וְאֵין הַשַּׁחַר מֵעִיר אוֹתִי״).

ְּוָהְסְבִּיר הט״ז: שַׁחַר הַיְינוּ כְּנָּסֶת (קְדוּשַׁת) יִשְּׁרָאֵל – הַקְּדוּשָׁה הַשׁוֹרָה בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל; וּבָזֶה יֶשְׁנָם שְׁנֵי אוֹפַנִּים: ״אֲנִי מֵעִיר הַשַּׁחַר״ – הַהָּתְעוֹרָרוּת מִלְּמֵטַּה

⁴⁹ {Rabbi Jacob Ben Asher - (circa 5029-5100; 1269-1340).}

⁵⁰ {Rabbi Yosef Caro, 5248-5335 (1488-1575 CE).}

^{51 {}The substance of what Taz explains in paraphrased in this paragraph,}

Jewish people. In this relationship, there are two approaches: I awaken the dawn, which means an arousal from **below** in order to reach the "dawn." Alternatively, "the dawn awakens me," an arousal from **Above**, stemming from the level of "dawn."

לְהַגִּיעַ אֶל הַ״שַׁחַר״; וְ״שַׁחַר מֵעִיר אוֹתִי״ – הַהִּתְעוֹרְרוּת מִלְּמַעְלָה, מִבְּחִינַת ״שַׁחַר״.

This is what King David had in mind when he declared, "and the dawn does **not** awaken me": "His arousal from below was so extraordinary that an assisting arousal from Above was not needed." Since this level is appropriate only to someone of King David's spiritual stature, the *Mechaber* does not cite this part in *Shulchan Aruch*.

וְזֹּהִי כַּנְּוֹנַת דָּוִד – ״וְאֵין הַשַּׁחַר מֵעִיר אַרִּיִי. ״שֶׁהַהִּתְעוֹרְרוּת שֶׁלּוֹ מִלְּמַטָּה גְּרוֹלָה כָּל כָּךְ שָׁאֵין צָרִיךְ לְסִיּוּעַ גְּרוֹלָה כָּל כָּךְ שָׁאֵין צָרִיךְ לְסִיּוּעַ הַתְעוֹרְרוּת שֶׁל מַעֲלָה״. וְכֵיוָן שֶׁזּוֹהִי הַתְעוֹרְרוּת שֶׁל מַעֲלָה״. וְכֵיוָן שֶׁזּוֹהִי מַדְרֵיגָה הַשַּׁיֶּיכֶת רַק ״לְדָוִד וְכֵיוֹצֵא בַּיְּהֶי, לֹא הַבִּיא זֹאת הַמְחַבֵּר בַּשֵּׁלְחָן־ עָרוּך.

Seemingly, this is puzzling: How can anyone not possibly need support from Above? It says, after all,⁵² "If the Holy One, blessed is He, would not help a person, he would not be able to prevail against his evil inclination." And isn't every Jew, even a righteous person, cautioned not to be overly self-confident, "Do not be sure of yourself"?⁵³

וְלְכְאוֹרָה תָּמוּהַ בְּיוֹתֵר: אֵיךְ אֶפְשָׁר לוֹמַר שָׁיֶשְׁנוֹ מִי ״שָׁאֵין צָרִיךְ לְסִיּוּעַ הִתְעוֹרְרוּת שֶׁל מַעְּלָה״ – וַהְלֹא ״אִלְמָלֵא הקב״ה עוֹזְרוֹ אֵין יָכוֹל לוֹ״, וּלְכָל אֶחָד מִיִּשְׂרָאָל, וַאֲפִילוּ הוּא צַדִּיק נָּמוּר, אָמְרוּ ״אַל תַּאֲמִין בְּעַצְמְךּ״?

⁵² Kiddushin 30b; Sukkah 52b.

⁵³ Avos ch.2, mishnah 4; Brachos 29a.

THE WORDING OF THE ALTER REBBE IN THE SECOND EDITION

The Alter Rebbe, in the first edition of his *Shulchan Aruch*, also cites (similar to the *Mechaber*) only that "a person should awaken the dawn." In contrast, in the second edition, the Alter Rebbe writes: "A person should awaken the dawn, as it says,⁵⁴ 'I awaken the dawn.' {This implies that} I awaken the dawn; the dawn does not awaken me. This is the approach suitable for the average person."

יז. וְהִנֵּה, נֵּם רַבֵּינוּ הַזָּקֵן בְּמַהְדוּרָא קַמָּא הַבִיא (כְּהַמְּחַבֵּר) רַק הָעִנְיָן ״שֶׁיְהֵא הוּא מְעוֹרֵר הַשַּׁחַר״ – אֲבָל בְּמַהְדוּרָא תִּנְיִנָּא כָּתַב: ״שֶׁיְהֵא הוּא מְעוֹרֵר הַשַּׁחַר כמ״ש אָעירָה שַׁחַר אֲנִי מְעוֹרֵר הַשַּׁחַר וְאֵין הַשַּׁחַר מֵעִיר אוֹתִי וְזוֹ מִדָּה בֵּינוֹנִית״.

We need to clarify: Since the second edition is also part of the Alter Rebbe's *Shulchan Aruch*, equally germane to everyone, why does the Alter Rebbe make note of the idea that "the dawn does not awaken me," since it speaks to a spiritual level suited only to King David and to those of his calibre?

ְּאֵינוֹ מוּבָן: פֵּיוָן שֶׁגַּם מַהְדוּרָא תִּנְיָנָא הִיא חֵלֶק מֵהַשֵּׁלְחָן־עָרוּךְ – דָּבָר הַשְּׁנֶוּה לְכָל הַנָּפָשׁ – לְמָה הֵבִיא שָׁם רַבֵּינוּ הַדָּקֵן אֶת עִנְיָן ״וְאֵין הַשַּחַר מֵעִיר אוֹתִי״ הַשַּׁיִּיךְ רַק ״לְדָוִד וְכַיּוֹצֵא בָּזָה״?

What is even more puzzling: From the flow of what the Alter Rebbe writes, it is clear that the statement, "This is the approach suitable for the **average** person" was said —

וְגָּדְלָה הַתְּמִיהָה: מֵהֶמְשֵׁךְ לְשׁוֹּנוֹ שֶׁל רַבֵּינוּ הַזָּקֵן מַשְּמָע, שֶׁהַתִּיבוֹת ״וְזוֹ מִדָּה בֵּינוֹנִית״ קָאֵי

[not in a general way just regarding the ruling that a person should arise before "the light of morning" (for those who cannot fulfil the teaching, "It is appropriate

ַנְלֹא רַק עַל כְּלָלוּת הַדִּין עַל־דְּבֵּר קִימָה ״קוֹדֶם אוֹר הַבּוֹקֶר״ (אֲשֶׁר אֵין מַעֲלָתָה מַגִּיעָה לְמַעֲלַת מָה שֶׁ״רָאוּי לְכָל יְרֵא שָׁמֵיִם כו׳ לָקוּם בַּחֲצוֹת הַלַּיְלָה״), אֶלָא]

⁵⁴ Tehillim 57:9; 108:3.

for every G-d fearing person... to arise at **midnight**").⁵⁵ Rather, this statement was said]

also regarding the matter {of the lofty avodah alluded to by phrase}, "the dawn does not awaken me." In other words, this law {and the avodah it entails} is not just pertinent to exceptional individuals. On the contrary, it is "suitable for the average person."

גַּם עַל עִנְיָן ״וְאֵין הַשַּׁחַר מֵעִיר אוֹתִי״. וְהַיְינוּ שָׁאֵין זֶה שַׁיִּיךְ לִיחִידֵי סְגוּלָּה דַּוְקָא, כִּי אָם אַדְרַבָּה – ״זוֹ מִדָּה בֵּינוֹנִית״.

18.

TWO APPROACHES — "I AWAKEN THE DAWN" OR "THE DAWN AWAKENS ME"

In light of what was explained above, that the level of *dawn* refers to the Congregation of Israel (*malchus*), as it descends into the concealment and hiddenness of the world, we can say as follows: When the *Taz* writes that a person "does not need an assisting arousal from Above," he meant that the assistance coming from the level of *dawn* was not required. However, assistance from an **even more sublime**⁵⁶ level of G-ddliness is still needed.⁵⁷

יח. וע״פ הנ״ל (סי״ג) בְּנוֹגעַ לְמַדְרֵיגַת ״שַׁחַר״ — שֻׁוּוֹהִי ״בְּנֶסֶת יִשְׂרָאֵל״ (מַלְכוּת) בְּמוֹ שֶׁהִיא יוֹנֶדֶת לְתוֹךְ הָעְלֵם וְהַפֵּתֶר הָעוֹלְם — יֵשׁ לוֹמַר: בַּוָוֹנַת הט״ז בְּדְּבֶרִיו ״אֵין צָרִיךְ לְסִיּוּעַ הִתְעוֹרְוּת שֶׁל מַעֲלָה״ הִיא שֶׁאֵין הוּא זָקוּק לְסִיּוּעַ מַעֲלָה״ הִיא שֶׁאֵין הוּא זָקוּק לְסִיּוּעַ שֵּקְלוֹרוֹ בִּבְחִינַת ״שַׁחַר״, אֲבָל צָרִיךְ שֶׁמְקוֹרוֹ בִּבְחִינַת ״שַׁחַר״, אֲבָל צָרִיךְ הוּא לְסִיּוּעַ מִן הַמַּדְרֵיגוֹת הַנַּעֲלוֹת יוֹתֵר בּּאֱלֶלוֹת יוֹתֵר בּאֱלְלוֹת.

⁵⁵ Shulchan Aruch, loc cit., par. 2.

⁵⁶ As the nuanced wording of our sages, "If the Holy One {הקדוש}, blessed is He, would not help...." {This Divine name alludes to a sublime level of G-dliness that is removed, קדוש, from the world.}

⁵⁷ It is readily understood that the divine assistance needed upon rising from sleep at the beginning of the day is not comparable to the assistance that a person receives after his prayers and petitions for this assistance during the course of that day's *avodah*.

The explanation: Regarding assistance from Above, in general, there are three levels:

וְהַבִּיאוּר בָּזֶה: י״ל שֶׁבְּסִיּוּעַ מִלְמַעְלָה יֵשְׁנַם בִּכְלַלוּת שָׁלֹשֵׁה מַדְרִיגוֹת:

a) There is the support afforded to people to prevent them from indulging in **forbidden** desires, G-d forbid. **This** divine aid comes from the level of *dawn*, as *malchus* descends into "the end of the whole night," the nadir of concealment in this world.

א) סִיּוּעַ שֶׁלֹא לְהַכְּשֵׁל בְּתַאֲוֹת אִיסוּר
 רח״ל – וְסִיּוּעַ זֶה הוּא מִבְּחִינַת ״שַׁחַר״
 הַמַּלְכוּת כְּפִי שֶׁיוֹנֶדֶת וְנִמְשֶׁכֶת בְּ״סוֹף בְּלֹ הַלַּיְלָה״, מְקוֹם תַּכְלִית הַהֶּסְתֵּר שֶׁל הָעוֹלָם הַזֶּה.

b) There is the support given to help someone from indulging in a permissible desire. This support comes from the level of *malchus* as it functions in its role of *atik* of *Briah*. Still, this level is also "night," as it represents the descent of *malchus* {from *Atzilus*} into the {lower, created worlds of} *Briah*, *Yetzirah*, and *Asiyah*. Thus, its influence in one's *avodah* is to prevent a person from indulging in **desires**. However, since it is not "the **end** of the whole night," its influence helps a person to eschew **permissible** desires.

ב) הַפִּיוּעַ לְהִשָּׁמֵר מִפְּנֵי תַּאֲוֹוֹת הֶיתִּר –
וְּהָ בָּא מִן הַמַּלְכוּת כְּמוֹ שָׁנַּעֲשֵׂית ״עַתִּיק
לְבְרִיאָה״ [דְּאַף שָׁנֵּם בְּחִינָה זוֹ הִיא עִנְיָן
שֶׁל ״לִיְלָה״ (יְרִידָה לְעוֹלְמוֹת בי״ע) –
וְעַל־דֶּרְדְּ־זֶה בָּעֲבוֹדָה: הִיא בָּאָה לִשְׁמוֹר
מַפְּנֵי תַּאֲוֹוֹת – מִכָּל מָקוֹם אֵין הִיא ״סוֹף
כָּל הַלַּיְלָה״, שֶׁהֲרֵי סִיּוּעַ זֶה הוּא עֲבוּר
תּאוֹוֹת היתּרן.

c) Help is given a person to enable him to ascend from one level to the next in the realm of sanctity itself. This Divine assistance originates from *malchus* of *Atzilus*, as *malchus* is found in its {proper} place in *Atzilus*. Then, *malchus* is called "day."

ג) הַפִּיוּעַ לְכָךְ שֶׁיּוּכַל הָאָדָם לְהִתְעַלוֹת מִמַּדְרֵיגָה לְמַדְרֵיגָה בִּקְדוּשָׁה גּוּפָא – וְזֶה בָּא מִמַּלְכוּת דַּאֲצִילוּת כְּמוֹ שֶׁהִיא בִּמְקוֹמָה בָּאֲצִילוּת, כַּאֲשֶׁר הִיא נִקְרֵאת ״יוֹם״. WHY THE VARIANCE IN WORDING BETWEEN THE TWO EDITIONS

These three levels parallel, in a general way, the three levels in Divine service: the *avodah* of a righteous person {*tzaddik*}; an *intermediate* person {*beinoni*}; and a wicked person {*rasha*}, as explained in *Tanya*:

יט. וּשְׁלֹשֶׁת הָעִנְיָנִים הנ״ל מַתְאִימִים בִּכְלָלוּת לִשְׁלֹשֶׁת הַמַּדְרֵיגוֹת שֶׁבַּעֲבוֹדָה: עֲבוֹדַת הַצַּדִּיק, הַבִּינוֹנִי וְהָרָשָׁע, כְּפִי שָׁנִּתְבָּאֲרָה מַדְרֵיגָתָם בְּתַנְיָא:

A *tzaddik* is not connected **at all** to desires arising from the animal soul.⁵⁸ His *avodah* consists of ascending continually in the levels of holiness itself. For a *beinoni*, transgressing is absolutely precluded. As *Tanya*⁵⁹ puts it, "He has never sinned... nor in the **future will he ever sin.**" However, he has to constantly struggle to refrain from indulging in permissible desires. For his part, a *rasha* has to fight not to stumble over a prohibition. Accordingly, he needs help from Above from the level of "dawn."

הַצַּדִּיק אֵינוֹ שַׁיִּידְ כְּלָל לְעִנְיָנִים שֶׁל תַּצְוֹוֹת, אֲשֶׁר מְקוֹרָם הוּא בְּעֵלִיָּה הַבְּהַמִית, וְתּוֹכֶן עֲבוֹדְתוֹ הוּא בַּעֲלִיָּה בְּקְרוּשָׁה גּוּפָּא; אֵצֶל הַבֵּינוֹנִי מוּשְׁלֶלֶת בְּיִרְנִית עֲבִירָה רח״ל (״לֹא עָבַר עֲבִירָה כו׳ וְלֹא יַעֲבוֹר לְעוֹלֶם״), אֲבָל הוּא צָרִיךְ לְמִלְחָמָה עַלֹּמְנָת לְהִשָּׁמֵר מִתַּאֲוֹוֹת הָיִמֵר; וְהָרָשָׁע צָרִיךְ לְמִּלְחָמָה עַלֹּמְנָת הָימִר; וְהָרָשָׁע צָרִיךְ לְמִּלְחָמָה עַלֹּמְנָת הָימִל בְּאִיסוּר – וּלְשֵׁם כָּךְ הוּא נִזְקָק לְסִיּוּעַ מִלְמַעְלָה מִבְּחִינַת ״שַׁחַר״.

We may posit that the aforementioned also clarifies what it says in the Alter Rebbe's *Shulchan Aruch*:

וי״ל שֶׁזֶּהוּ גַּם הַבֵּיאוּר בְּדְבְרֵי רַבִּינוּ הַזָּקֵן בִּשִׁלְחַן־עַרוּך:

According to the **revealed dimension** of Torah, a *beinoni* is one who has a 50/50 split of merits versus transgressions. Someone who has more than half — "a **majority** of merits" — is

מָצֵּד וֹגְלֶה דְּתוֹרָה, הַבֵּינוֹנִי הוּא מִי שָׁמַּצְמָדוֹ הוּא ״מֶחֶצָה עַל מֶחֶצָה״, וּמִי שָׁיֵּשׁ בְּיָדוֹ יוֹתֵר מִמֶּחֶצָה – ״רוֹב זְכִיּוֹת״ – הֲבִי הוּא צַדִּיק, וּלְפִיכָדְּ, בְּמַהְדוּרָא קַמָּא שֶׁנִּכְתְּבָה ע״פ הַכְרָעַת ״גְּמָרָא וּפוֹסְקִים״, לֹא הַבִיא רַבֵּינוּ הַזָּקֵן אֶת עִנְיָן

⁵⁸ *Tanya*, ch. 10.

⁵⁹ Ibid., beg. ch. 12.

deemed to be a *tzaddik*.⁶⁰ Accordingly, in the first edition, which conforms with the viewpoint of the Gemara and the legal codifiers,⁶¹ the Alter Rebbe omits the point that "the dawn does **not** awaken me" (that there is no need for assistance of the "dawn" in order for a person to eschew transgressions {because a *beinoni* of this sort *does* need assistance; he does need to be "awakened by the dawn"}).

״וְאֵין הַשַּׁחַר מֵעִיר אוֹתִי״ (שֶׁתּוֹכְנוֹ, שֶׁאֵין הָאָדָם נִזְקָק לְסִיּוּעַ מִבְּחִינַת ״שַׁחַר״ הַשׁוֹמְרוֹ מִלַּעֲבוֹר עֲבֵירָה).

However in the second edition, the Alter Rebbe decides in favour of the mystics.62 According to what is explained in the inner dimension of Torah, the beinoni also has no need to fight {with his inclination} refrain to transgressing. As such, he does not need Divine assistance from Above from the level of "dawn." Consequently, in the second edition, the Alter Rebbe also mentions the idea that "the dawn does not awaken me." He concludes, "This is the approach suitable for the average person {beinoni}," alluding to the rank of a beinoni.

משא״כ בְּמַהְדוּרָא תִּנְיָנְא הִכְּרִיעַ רַבּינוּ הַזָּקֵן ״בְּהַמְּקוּבָּלִים״, וּמָצֵּד (וע״פּ הַבּיאוּר בִּ)פְּנִימִיּוּת הַתּוֹרָה, אַף הַבּינוֹּנִי מוּשְׁלֶל מִלַּעֲבוֹר עֲבֵירָה (וּמִמֵּילָא אֵין הוּא צָרִיךְ לְסִיּוּעַ מִבְּחִינַת ״שַׁחַר״); וְלָכֵן הַבִיא שָׁם אַדְמוֹ״ר הַזָּקֵן גַּם ענְיָן ״וְאֵין הַשְּׁחַר מֵעִיר אוֹתִי״, וְסִיִּים ״וְזוֹ מִדָּה בֵּינוֹנִית״ (דְּבָזֶה רָמַז לְבְחִינַת בִּינוֹנִי).

This is the viewpoint that the Alter Rebbe establishes as the *halachah*, of equal relevance to everyone. For after the Alter Rebbe publicized the true spiritual personality of a *beinoni*, **this** became "the

וְאֶת זֹאת גּוּפָּא קָבֵע רַבֵּינוּ הַזָּקֵן בְּתוֹךְ הַשֵּׁלְחָן־עָרוּךְ, בְּתוֹרַת פְּסַק דִּין הַשְּׁנֶה לְכֹל נֶפֶשׁ – כִּי לְאַחַר שֶׁגִּילָה רַבִּינוּ הַזָּקֵן בְּתַנְיָא אֶת אֲמִיתַת עִנְיַן הַבֵּינוֹנִי, הְרֵי דַּרִגָּא זוֹ נֵעִשִּׁתָה ״מִדַּת כָּל אָדָם וִאַחַרִיהָ

⁶⁰ See the commentary of Rashi and *Tosefos* on *Rosh Hashanah* 16b; see Tanya, ch. 1.

⁶¹ See Alter Rebbe's Shulchan Aruch, "Orach Chaim," sec. 25, par. 28.

^{62 {}In the Hebrew original, "mekubalim."} See Shaar HaKolel, at the beginning.

בָּל אָדָם יִמְשׁוֹךְ שֶׁבֶּל אָדָם יָכוֹל לִהְיוֹת בִּינוֹנִי בְּכַל עֵת וּבְכַל שַׁעָה״.

rank that is attainable by **every** man; each person should strive after it, for every person can, at any time or hour, be a *beinoni*."⁶³

20.

INWARDLY, A JEW TRANSCENDS CONCEALMENT

The Alter Rebbe demands a person to demonstrate this trait as soon as he arises in the morning, even before reciting the "Modeh Ani" prayer. Meaning, even before a person's soul radiates it light, when the person still finds himself in "darkness," he is told to "overpower his {evil} inclination as a lion."⁶⁴ This {subjugation of his inclination} should be done such that support from Above is not needed for the person to avoid succumbing to sin, Heaven forfend. ("The dawn does not awaken me.")

How can we expect a Jew to reach such a plane and spiritual state? The explanation is as follows: When a Jew finds himself in a situation of darkness, this is only the external reality. Inwardly, a Jew **transcends** the concealment (as explained in section 14, concerning the verse, "Hadassah also known as Esther").

On the contrary, the situation of "concealment" calls forth the inwardness of a person's soul {so that it reveals itself}

כ. וְהַנָּה, רַבֵּינוּ הַזָּקֵן תּוֹבֵעַ לְקַיֵּים אֶת הָעְנְיָן הנ״ל מִיָּד בְּעֵת הַשְׁכָּמַת הַבּוֹקֶר, אֲפִילּוּ קוֹדֶם אֲמִירַת מוֹדֶה אֲנִי. כְּלוֹמֵר, גַּם כַּאֲשֶׁר עֲדַיִין אֵין גִּילוּי אוֹר בְּנֶפֶשׁ הָאָדָם, וַעֲדַיִין יֵשׁ בּוֹ מַצָּב שֶׁל ״חוֹשֶׁךְ״, נְדְרָשׁ מִמֶּנוּ ״לְהִתְגַבֵּר עַל יִצְרוֹ כַּאֲרִי״ בְּאוֹפֶן שֶׁלֹא יִזְדַּקֵק אֲפִילוּ לְסִיּוּעַ מִלְמַעְלָה שֶׁלֹא לַעֲבוֹר עֲבֵירָה רח״ל (״אֵין הַשַּׁחַר מֵעִיר אוֹתִי״).

וְכֵיצֵד בֶּאֲמֶת אֶפְשָׁר לְדְרוֹשׁ מִיהוּדִי לְבוֹא לְדַרְגָּא וּלְמַצֶּב כְּזֶה? – הַנָּה הַבּּיאוּר בָּזֶה הוּא: מָה שִׁיְּהוּדִי נָתוּן בְּמַצֶּב שָׁלְ חוֹשֶׁךְ, הְבֵי זֶה רַק מִצֵּד מְיצוֹנִיּוּתוֹ; בִּפְּנִימִיּוּת – הֲבִי הוּא לְמַעְלָה מִן הַהֶסְתֵּר (וכנ״ל סי״ד בְּעִנְיָן ״הְדַפְּה הִיא אֶסְתֵּר");

וְאַדְּרַבָּה — מַצָּב הַ״הַסֵּתֶר״ מְעוֹבֵר אֶת פְּנִימִיּוּת הַנְּשָׁמָה בְּיֶתֶר שְׁאֵת וְיֶתֶר עָז, וְהִתְעוֹרְרוּת זוֹ בָּאָה לִיבִי בִּיטוּי בְּכֹחַ הַמַּסִירַת־נַפָּשׁ שֵׁיָּשְׁנוֹ בַּכַל יְהוּדִי; וּכְפִי הַמַּסִירַת־נַפָּשׁ שֵׁיָּשְׁנוֹ בַּכַל יְהוּדִי; וּכְפִי

⁶³ *Tanya*, beg. ch. 14.

⁶⁴ The wording of the Alter Rebbe in the second edition, loc. cit.

more powerfully and more forcefully. In turn, this gives expression to a person's self-sacrifice, a power possessed by every Jew. And as transpired in the days of Esther, throughout the entire year {that followed Haman's genocidal decree}, the Jewish people exhibited literal self-sacrifice at every moment of every day, because self-sacrifice suffuses a person **totally**. Self-sacrifice permeates all of a person's faculties and "even {the soul's} external garments."65

שֶׁהָיָה בִּימֵי אֶסְתֵּר, שֶׁבְּמֶשֶׁךְ ״כָּל הַשְּׁנָה כּוּלָה״ עָמְדוּ הַיְּהוּדִים ״בִּבְחִינַת מְסִירַת־ נֶפֶשׁ מַפָּשׁ בְּכָל יוֹם וּבְכָל צֵת וּבְכָל שְׁעָה״, כִּי כֹּחַ הַמְּסִירַת־נֶפֶשׁ חוֹבֵר בָּאָדָם כּוּלוֹ וּמְמַלֵּא אֶת כָּל כֹּחוֹתִיו, וְ״אֲפִילוּ בּּלְבוּשֶׁיהָ הַחִיצוֹנִים״;

Similarly, in every person's *avodah*: A situation of "darkness," in particular, elicits the **core**⁶⁶ of a person's soul even more so than a situation of "revealed light." In turn, this expresses itself in one's disciplined obedience {kabbalas ol}, a demonstration of the soul's essence, which suffuses the person completely. As a result, "at any time or hour, every person can be a *beinoni*."

וְעַל־דֶּרֶךְ־זֶה בַּעֲבוֹרַת כָּל אֶחָד וְאֶחָד: דַּוְקָא מַצַּב הַ״חוֹשֶׁךְ״ מְעוֹרֵר אֶת פְּנִימִיּוּת נַפְשׁוֹ, יוֹתֵר מֵאֲשֶׁר מַצָּב שֶׁל ״גִּילוּי אוֹר״; וְהַדְּבָר בָּא לִידֵי בִּיטוּי בְּקַבְּלַת־עוֹל דְּעֶצֶם הַנְּשָׁמָה הַחוֹדֶרֶת בְּכֹל מְצִיאוּתוֹ, וּמִצֵּד זֶה – ״יָכוֹל לְהְיוֹת בֵּינוֹנִי בְּכָל עַת וּבְכָל שְׁעָה״.

-Based on talks given on Purim, and on Shabbos *parshas Sisa*, 5724 (1964) משיחות פורים וש״פ תצא תשכ״ד. לקוטי שיחות טז, פורים א בַּתַרְגוּם לְלֵשׁוֹן הַקּוֹרֵשׁ)

⁶⁵ Tanya, end of ch. 19.

^{66 {}In the Hebrew original, "pnimius nafsho."