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Retro Remedies

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1.

WHEN THE TORAH WAS GIVEN

As known, even before the Torah was given at Mt. Sinai, the Torah was not a closed book. We see this from explicit references to the “Torah academy” of Shem and to the “Torah academy” of Ever,¹ where Torah wisdom was taught and learned. Also, Hashem had given some mitzvos already (beginning with Adam).² The Patriarchs, too, kept the entire Torah before it was given.³

Nonetheless, the Giving of the Torah introduced a well-known **innovation**.⁴ At the Giving of the Torah, the Jews were **commanded** to observe **all** 613 mitzvos, and **the entire Torah** was (**given**) **conveyed** to every Jew. Additionally, Torah and mitzvos were then **given** by “**I**, אֲנִי, (am Hashem, your G-d).”⁵ This intimates a transmission, described in the Gemara,⁶ as originating from אֲנִי, an acronym for, “אֲנִי אֶנְפְּשִׁי כְּתִבִּית יְהִיִּית” — I, My self {lit., “My *nefesh*”} was transcribed and given over.” Hashem “transcribed” and “invested” **Himself** in the Torah.

Because⁷ the Torah is Hashem’s *nefesh*⁸ (or in the Chassidic vernacular, Torah expresses {His} essential desire),⁹ understandably, “this Torah will never be exchanged” (this a foundational principle of our faith). In Rambam’s words: “It is clear and explicit in the Torah that it is an everlasting mitzvah, without

¹ *Bereishis Rabbah*, sec. 63, par. 10; Rashi on *Bereishis* 25:27. {In the original Hebrew, “*beis midrash*.”}

² See *Mishneh Torah*, “*Hilchos Melachim*,” beg. of ch. 9. {The reference to “Adam” is to Adam HaRishon, “First Man.”}

³ See *Yoma* 28b; *Kiddushin* 82a (in the mishnah).

⁴ See, at length, *Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 5 (p. 88 ff.); et al — that the physical {mitzvah} “item” becomes imbued with the holiness of a mitzvah is as a consequence of this innovation introduced when the Torah was given.

⁵ *Shemos* 20:2.

⁶ *Shabbos* 105a, in the version that appears in *Ein Yaakov*; see also *Likkutei Torah*, “*Shelach*,” 28d ff.

⁷ See Rambam’s *Mishnah Commentary*, “*Sanhedrin*,” introduction to ch. *Chelek*, “Ninth Foundation.” However, in R. Kapach’s edition, the principle that the Creator transmitted the Torah does not appear in this Foundation; see there.

⁸ {Although *nefesh* is typically translated simply as *soul*, in this context, “(innermost) self” is more accurate.}

⁹ *Nefesh* {soul} here is semantically similar to its usage in the verse, “My *nefesh*, desire, is not for this people” (*Yirmiyahu* 15:1 {see Rashi, ad. loc.}).

change, diminishment, or addition,”¹⁰ that “this Torah, its statutes, and its laws, are eternal and will never change.”¹¹

Before the Torah was given, the Divine commands and directives were subject to substantive supplements. This is evident in what Hashem commanded Noach, as compared with what He had commanded Adam; what He commanded to Avraham, as compared with what He commanded Noach; and so forth.¹²

We may postulate that this occurred because the primary purpose of those precepts was for humanity’s benefit. It follows that as humanity’s nature changed, consistent with these changes (advancements, etc.), amendments (so to speak) were made to the Divine precepts given to mankind.

In contrast, after the Torah was given¹³ and Hashem had “transcribed and gave over [His] *nefesh*” into the Torah, it is understood that the mitzvos of the Torah became the primary **objective and purpose** because they are Hashem’s “*nefesh*.” (In other words, the mitzvos are not only a “conduit” for a person to receive a reward, “for the sake of refining creations,”¹⁴ or to enable the person to attain the stature and loftiness of becoming “a treasure... a kingdom of ministers and a holy nation.”¹⁵ Were this the case, then presumably consistent with any changes in people fulfilling the mitzvos, there would be corresponding changes in the mitzvos themselves.) Therefore, just as¹⁶ there cannot be any changes in His *nefesh*, G-d forbid, so, too, there cannot be any changes in the Torah and mitzvos,¹⁷ as elucidated elsewhere.¹⁸

¹⁰ *Mishneh Torah*, “*Hilchos Yesodei HaTorah*,” beg. of ch. 9; see also Rambam’s Introduction to his *Mishnah Commentary* (cited in his commentary on *Sanhedrin*, loc cit.) s.v., “*ha’chelek ha’rishon (ha’misnabeh besheim)*,” ff.

¹¹ *Mishneh Torah*, “*Hilchos Melachim*,” ch. 11, end of par. 3 (in many editions, including the extant one, there are several changes and omissions here as enforced by censors. See also citations in *Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 18, p. 271, 275); see also *Mishneh Torah*, “*Hilchos Maaseh HaKorbanos*,” end of ch. 2.

¹² As stated by Rambam (*Mishneh Torah*, “*Hilchos Melachim*,” beg. of ch. 9): Adam was commanded regarding six matters... an additional command was given to Noach...

¹³ See *Rosh Amanah*, *ibid.*; and at length (though without a distinction made between before the Torah was given and after) — (*Mabit’s*) *Beis Elokim*, “*Shaar HaYesodos*,” ch. 34 ff; et al.

¹⁴ *Tanchuma*, “*Shemini*,” sec. 8 (see also sec. 7); *Bereishis Rabbah*, beg. of sec. 44 and citations there; see also *The Guide for the Perplexed*, vol. 3, ch. 26; see also *Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 19, p. 182 ff, and citations there.

¹⁵ *Shemos* 19:5-6.

¹⁶ *Beis Elokim*, loc cit., ch. 34.

¹⁷ This sheds light on many details mentioned in *Reish Amanah*. Elaboration is beyond our current scope.

¹⁸ See *Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 19, p. 182 ff, and citations there.

2.

THE ETERNALITY OF THE TORAH AND MEDICINE

Since the eternal quality of the Torah is interconnected with the Torah consisting of “His *nefesh*” as it is “given over” and invested within “the wisdom and will of the Holy One,”¹⁹ it stands to reason that this eternal quality applies not only to the Written Torah but also to the Oral Torah.²⁰ (For “all the mitzvos given to Moshe at Mount Sinai [which begin with ‘I am...’] were given together with their explanation {the Oral Torah}”)²¹ with all of its provisions.²² As such, “Scripture,²³ Mishnah, Talmud, and *Aggadah*,²⁴ and ‘everything an astute disciple is destined to teach before his mentor,’²⁵ was already transmitted to Moshe at Sinai,” and “all words of the Torah are one.”²⁶

Therefore, the Talmudic discussions of human nature, medicine, and so forth are also included in the Torah’s eternity and will never change because they are part of the Oral Torah.

In light of this principle, we must clarify how many of the metaphysical cures²⁷ remedies, and even medical treatments recorded in the (Oral) Torah differ nowadays since nature has changed²⁸ from how they were in the past in the Talmudic era).

¹⁹ In the words of *Tanya*, “*Likkutei Amarim*,” ch. 4; et al.

²⁰ See Rambam’s Introduction to his *Commentary on Mishnah*, op cit., and on *Sanhedrin*, op cit; *Beis Elokim*, op cit.

²¹ Beginning of Rambam’s Introduction to *Mishneh Torah*.

²² The entire Torah is eternal, in general and in detail. Even the individual laws... (*Tanya*, “*Kuntres Acharon*,” end of s.v., “*uLehavin Pratei*” {160b}).

²³ *Talmud Yerushalmi*, “*Peah*,” ch. 2, sec. 4; “*Megillah*,” ch. 4, sec. 1; see also sources cited in *Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 19, p. 252.

²⁴ See Responsa of *Radbaz*, vol. 4, ch. 232 (1350).

²⁵ This is how it appears in *Talmud Yerushalmi*, loc cit; in many places the term “**will innovate**” is used — see *Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 19, p. 252, and fns. 20-21, ad loc.

²⁶ *Sifrei*, “*Haazinu*” (32:2), which then continues: They contain Scripture, Mishnah, *Halachah*, and *Aggadah*. Regarding *Aggadah*, see — *Encyclopedia Talmudis*, vol. 1, “*Aggadah*.”

²⁷ {In the original Hebrew, “סגולות.”}

²⁸ See *Rema*, “*Even HaEzer*,” sec. 156, par. 4; *Magen Avraham*, “*Orach Chaim*,” sec. 173, sub-par. 1; Alter Rebbe’s *Shulchan Aruch*, “*Orach Chaim*,” end of sec. 179; et al. See, also, *Sedei Chemed*, vol. 1, 210a ff; vol. 10, p. 194 [2206a].

There would be no issue regarding those things that the Sages prohibited out of concern for specific dangers, for which reasons were given.

For example, the law regarding a container of water left uncovered {overnight}, which “the Sages prohibited out of concern that a snake may have drunk from the water and injected its venom {inside the container}.”²⁹ In this case, it is considered as if the Torah had explicitly stated that the prohibition only applies in a time and place where snakes are commonly found.³⁰ Therefore, “nowadays that snakes aren’t commonly found in inhabited areas, it is permitted {to drink such water}.”³¹ The same applies to similar cases.

This is analogous to reconciling the Torah’s timelessness with those mitzvos that are only obligatory in particular times and places. For example, some mitzvos may only be performed during the day, when the Temple exists, or in the Land of Israel. There is no contradiction because, from the outset, **the Torah** determined that a particular mitzvah applies in a specific time or place. Therefore, this limitation is a provision of the mitzvah (**similar** to positive time-bound mitzvos).

However, regarding the remedies and medical treatments in the Torah, which the Torah does **not** link with the specific terms and conditions of time and place but are given unconditionally — certain behavior is dangerous, and certain things have medicinal properties, etc.: How can we assert that these pronouncements are not eternal and that in the present age, they are no longer binding now that nature has changed?³² (In fact, it has been stated that using the Talmudic treatments is **forbidden**.)

²⁹ *Shulchan Aruch*, “Yoreh Deah,” beg. of sec. 116.

³⁰ As stated explicitly by *Tosafos* at the end of s.v., “chada” (*Avodah Zarah* 35a) and also for the reason given in *Magen Avraham*, “Orach Chaim,” beg. of sec. 468 that “originally, it was not prohibited universally, but only in places where are {poisonous} snakes are found, and this is true in all similar cases.” See also *Turei Zahav*, “Yoreh Deah,” beg. of sec. 116, and sec. 115, sub-par. 10. Note *Pischei Teshuvah*, ad loc., in the name of *Shelah* that all the same, a safety-conscious person should refrain from drinking such water.

³¹ *Shulchan Aruch*, “Yoreh Deah,” beg. of sec. 116.

³² See *Sdei Chemed*, vol. 1, 210a ff.; vol. 3, 658a ff., and sources cited there.

[As many commentaries³³ maintain concerning several matters that since the prohibition that they entail are rooted in halachos communicated to Moshe at Sinai,³⁴ they cannot be affected by any shift in the times, since “the word of our G-d will stand forever.”]³⁵

3.

THE ETERNITY OF HEALTHY CONDUCT

A similar difficulty arises regarding Rambam’s teachings: An entire chapter in *Hilchos Deos*³⁶ is devoted to outlining how a person should conduct himself regarding eating and drinking, etc., “since maintaining a healthy and sound body is among the ways of Hashem.”³⁷ Considering that Rambam includes these instructions in *Yad HaChazakah*³⁸ — a book containing “halachos, halachos”³⁹ — clearly, these directives are classified as *bona fide* halachos⁴⁰ and {are to be treated as} words of the Torah. (Conversely, those directives prescribed by a doctor, which a patient must follow on account of {the command to} “guard your lives exceedingly,”⁴¹ and similar injunctions, are not classified as actual words of Torah.)⁴²

This is especially so because Rambam does not suffice by stating that “since maintaining a healthy and sound body is among the ways of Hashem, for... therefore, a person must avoid harmful things and accustom himself to healthful and restorative habits.” Instead, Rambam goes on to say that one should consult books on science and medicine to identify what things are

³³ *Maharam Shik’s Responsa*, “Yoreh Deah,” ch. 244; see also *Rashba’s Responsa*, vol. 1, ch. 98 — cited in *Sdei Chemed*, vol. 1, *ibid.*

³⁴ {In the original, *halachah leMoshe miSinai* — traditions that Hashem conveyed orally to Moshe.}

³⁵ {*Yeshayahu* 40:8.}

³⁶ *Mishneh Torah*, “*Hilchos Deos*,” ch. 4.

³⁷ Rambam’s wording at the beginning of this chapter; see also *Likkutei Sichos* vol. 2 (third ed. and subsequent eds.), p. 531, fn. 12; vol. 3, end of p. 806, and fn. 9, ad. loc.

³⁸ {*Yad HaChazakah* or *Sefer HaYad* are alternative names for Rambam’s *magnum opus Mishneh Torah*.}

³⁹ {A consecutive list exclusively of laws} as Rambam writes in the (end of his) Introduction to his *Mishneh Torah*, see there.

⁴⁰ See *Mishneh Torah*, “*Hilchos Deos*,” *ibid.*, par. 20 “Whoever conducts himself in the ways which **we have instructed**.” — See *Nimukei Maharei*, ad. loc.

⁴¹ *Devarim* 4:15.

⁴² Note *Tzafnas Paneach*, ad loc: “Does medicine have the status of law or...”

harmful. (At the end of this very chapter,⁴³ Rambam also writes explicitly that a sick person should abide by a different set of guidelines “as outlined in medical books.”)

Since he {also} enumerates, in great detail, how and what a person should eat,⁴⁴ it is understood that these particulars {also} fall under the rubric of “halachos, halachos” and are considered words of Torah just as much as any other topic discussed in the *Sefer HaYad*.

There is also a practical consequence {from these instructions being deemed to be part of the Torah}: When a Jew learns the details of how to conduct himself regarding eating and drinking, etc., as discussed in *Hilchos Deos*, he then fulfills the mitzvah of Torah study. Consequently, he would be obligated to recite the blessings over the Torah beforehand. [This logic would also apply when learning the laws in *Sefer HaYad* (chapter 3 and [most of] chapter 4 of *Hilchos Yesodei HaTorah*), which discuss planets and angels, etc. This is all the more true regarding the many chapters discussing astronomy in *Hilchos Kiddush HaChodesh*,⁴⁵ etc.]

This is puzzling, though. Rambam was particular to include in the *Sefer HaYad* only those laws relevant for **all** generations⁴⁶ and not those in force for only a specific time. In *Hilchos Deos*, cited above, many laws — such as dining etiquette, etc. — are no longer applicable because the natural world has shifted. Since the characteristics and nature of the body are contingent on the locale and the era and vary from place to place and from time to time (just as human nature had changed in Rambam’s time from that of the Talmudic era — which is why Rambam omitted many medical matters **explicitly** mentioned in the Talmud),⁴⁷ seemingly, Rambam should **not** have included these laws in his *Sefer HaYad*.

⁴³ *Mishneh Torah*, “*Hilchos Deos*,” ch. 4, par. 21.

⁴⁴ Which is unlike Rambam’s medical advice given to a sick person in Rambam’s own **medical** works.

⁴⁵ Chs. 11 and onwards. This is despite what is stated there at the end of ch. 17 {that “the rationales for all these calculations... and how all these principles are known, and the proofs for each of these principles are the subject of the wisdom of astronomy and geometry, concerning which the Greeks wrote many books. These texts are presently in the hands of the sages”}. See also *Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 12, p. 197 ff.

⁴⁶ See *Lechem Mishnah*, “*Hilchos Talmud Torah*,” ch. 4, par. 1: Rambam does not mention those laws that are applicable only nowadays. He mentions only those laws which are **always** relevant, even after Moshiach’s arrival, with Hashem’s help. See also *Sedei Chemed* (vol. 9), “*Kelallei HaPoskim*,” 5:11.

⁴⁷ See *Sefer Kovetz LeRambam*, “*Hilchos Talmud Torah*,” ch. 4, par. 8; *Sedei Chemed*, vol. 3, end of 658a ff.

Instead, he should have conveyed the general directive that “a person must avoid...,” and then, in each time and place, we would act according to the nature (and medical advice) of the day.

[With a touch of humor, we might explain as follows: Rambam included health-related laws, even though the benefit from these halachos would only last for a few generations or years, to indicate the preciousness of a Jew’s health.]

We still need to clarify: Rambam, at any rate, should have included a disclaimer. He ought to have clarified that these health-related halachos were written only to accord with the nature of his times. He should not have stated them without qualification, seemingly establishing them as fixed legislation for all generations.

4.

MITZVOS FOR ALL GENERATIONS

We can offer the following explanation — analogous to Rambam’s own explanation (in his *Sefer HaMitzvos*)⁴⁸ — as to why he enumerates among the {count of 613} mitzvos the mitzvah to eliminate the seven nations {of Canaan}. After all, this ostensibly is a mitzvah that, in future generations, will not be enforced. (This type of mitzvah is not included in the count of {613} mitzvos.) In Rambam’s words:⁴⁹

A mitzvah that is fulfilled once its objective has been accomplished, with no time limit attached, is still in force for all {subsequent and} future generations. This is true because the mitzvah still applies to any generation in which the mitzvah would become possible to fulfill.... In general, you must understand and contemplate the difference between a mitzvah itself and the object of the mitzvah. Some mitzvos remain in force for all generations, although the object of the mitzvah has ceased to exist in an earlier generation....

⁴⁸ Positive Mitzvah 187.

⁴⁹ Quoted here is Rabbi Y. Kapach’s translation {from the original Arabic}. There are some changes in wording from the extant version (as well as Rabbi C. Heller’s translation).

Presumably, we could say that the same applies in our case: Although we see that the nature of humans has undergone changes (which have rendered the Talmudic medical treatments ineffective, and the same applies to many of Rambam's prescriptions for healthy behavior), this has no bearing on this concept or law (as stated in the Talmud or by Rambam) being a directive **for generations**, and a part of the **eternal** Torah. For the **directive** itself is eternal, whereas the "object of the mitzvah" has "ceased to exist" (after having changed) — the bodies that existed when the command was given no longer exist.

[This is **analogous** to the caveat Rambam himself gives⁵⁰ to his "guarantee." Rambam says, "Whoever conducts himself in the ways we have directed... will never become ill throughout his lifetime." However, he goes on to say that his assurance does not apply to anyone "whose body was defective from birth, or..." (and several other provisions are given).]

However, this explanation is also not completely smooth: Concerning the mitzvos to eliminate the seven nations and eradicate Amalek, the Torah discloses the exact objective of these mitzvos. The objective is an integral part of the mitzvah itself.

However, in the context of our discussion, the Talmud and Rambam gave their prescriptions unconditionally, immaterial to the prevailing natural circumstances (the constitution of human beings, the medicinal properties of herbs, etc.).

⁵⁰ *Hilchos Deos*, loc cit., par. 20.

5.

TORAH ABOVE AND BELOW

We can posit the following explanation and begin by prefacing with a general principle regarding Torah and mitzvos:

Our Sages articulated a well-known principle⁵¹ that “the Torah, in essence, discusses the supernal realms, and secondarily alludes⁵² to the lower realms” (*Shelah* discusses this principle at length).⁵³ Meaning, matters discussed in the Torah are not (“in essence”) intended to relate primarily to the way they are in the material world while only alluding to the way they are spiritually (“Scripture speaks about the lower realms and alludes to the supernal ones”).⁵⁴ On the contrary, the Torah, **in essence**, discusses “the supernal realms” — matters as they exist spiritually — and (only) alludes to these matters as they exist “in the lower realms” in the material world.

— Of course, “no verse departs from its straightforward meaning,”⁵⁵ and one cannot say that a verse **only** communicates the spiritual meaning of the matter.⁵⁶ The simple meaning of a verse, as it is interpreted “in the lower realms,” is always valid. Nonetheless, essentially, the Torah discusses how things are in the supernal realms. —

The same is true of mitzvos: Mitzvos exist in the lower realms — the straightforward performance of a mitzvah — and in the supernal realms — the **spiritual** significance of the mitzvah.⁵⁷ To explain: A mitzvah does not contain spiritual meaning **besides** its practical execution. On the contrary, when the Torah discusses mitzvos, it actually “in essence” refers to the mitzvah as it is “in

⁵¹ *Asarah Maamaros*, “*Chikur Din*,” vol. 3, ch. 22.

⁵² This is the term used in *Asarah Maamaros*, *ibid.*.

⁵³ *Shnei Luchos HaBris* 13b ff.; 161a ff.; see also Arizal’s *Likkutei Torah*, beg. of “*Bereishis*” (see also *Sefer HaMaamorim* 5700 p. 68, fn.); *Likkutei Torah*, “*Tazria*,” 22b ff, and sources cited below in fn. 78.

⁵⁴ In the words of *Ramban* on *Bereishis* 1:1 (end) — cited in *Asarah Maamarim*, *loc cit.* However, it is unnecessary to presume that *Ramban* is disagreeing {with *Shelah*}. Further discussion is beyond the scope of this work.

⁵⁵ *Shabbos* 63a, and sources cited there.

⁵⁶ See *Responsa of Rashba*, vol. 1, ch. 417.

⁵⁷ In the words of the *Chinuch* (end of Introduction) “a hint... from the source of the mitzvah, when it is revealed... and when it is hidden, I will tell over....”

the supernal realms” (spiritually). The mitzvos, in their physical form, are an outcome and **consequence** of their spiritual counterpart.

Our Sages⁵⁸ explicitly express this point in their exposition of the verse,⁵⁹ “*He declares His words to Yaakov... — the Holy One... tells Israel to do and observe that which He {Himself} does.*”

This does not at all contravene the principle that **deed** is primary,⁶⁰ and in the context of Torah, the rule⁶¹ that “the Torah is **not** in Heaven.”⁶² For the supernal desire lies (primarily) in the fulfillment of the mitzvos, specifically **in this world**, in its simple sense. (Similarly, issues about Torah’s laws must be adjudicated explicitly by earthy courts: “It is not in the Heavens.”)⁶³ Because from the perspective of Torah and mitzvos, as they are **in their own right**, the opposite is true: The source and origin of Torah and mitzvos are in the spiritual realms (as indicated in the verse,⁶⁴ “I was **by Him...** a delight” and as expressed by our Sages,⁶⁵ “a cherished treasure hidden for you,” among other such expressions). They are then drawn down from the spiritual realms (as it says,⁶⁶ “**From the Heavens**, I spoke to you”; “From the Heavens, He caused you to hear His voice... and on earth”), and they descended into the material realm.⁶⁷ Therefore, the meaning of all Torah concepts “in essence” is to be understood in the way they exist on their spiritual plane.⁶⁸

⁵⁸ *Shemos Rabbah*, sec. 30, par. 9; see also *Talmud Yerushalmi*, “*Rosh HaShanah*,” ch. 1, par. 3.

⁵⁹ *Tehillim* 147:19.

⁶⁰ *Avos* 1:17; see also Responsa of *Rashba*, loc cit.

⁶¹ *Bava Metzia* 59b; *Temurah* 16a; *Mishneh Torah*, “*Hilchos Yesodei Torah*,” beg. of ch. 9.

⁶² In the words of Scripture, *Devarim* 30:12.

⁶³ See *Tanya*, “*Iggeres HaKodesh*,” ch. 26 (144b ff) regarding the clarification of laws and doubts in the Torah — an additional reason for this. Further discussion is beyond the scope of this work.

⁶⁴ *Mishlei* 8:30; explained in *Tanya*, “*Kuntres Acharon*,” 161a; *Likkutei Torah*, “*Bamidbar*” 17c ff.

⁶⁵ *Shabbos* 88b.

⁶⁶ *Shemos* 20:16; *Devarim* 4:36.

⁶⁷ See *Tanya*, “*Likkutei Amarim*,” ch. 4: The Torah descended from its place of glory, which is the Divine will and wisdom... and from there it journeyed until it was clothed in material matters.

⁶⁸ See *Biurei HaZohar*, “*Vayishlach*,” 20a ff.; *Likkutei Levi Yitzchak*, “*Igros*,” p. 265 ff.

6.

SPIRITUAL MEDICINE

On this basis, we may also come to a similar understanding in the context of our discussion on the subject of medicine, etc.:

When the Torah advises on medicine and remedies, etc., it “, in essence, discusses the supernal realms.” Namely, the Torah first and foremost refers to these matters as they exist spiritually, and only then (as a consequence of the essence {i.e., the matter’s essential spiritual state} and as an extension thereof) do they devolve and descend below into physicality — “and secondarily alludes to the lower realms.”

As they exist spiritually, these matters are eternal and are always therapeutic because of their spiritual source.

Simply put: Bodily functions — eating, drinking, etc. — devolve from the analogous functions in the person’s soul. As spiritual “food” and “health” of the soul, the treatments and remedies as they exist in the supernal realms — on the spiritual plane — have eternal strength and never change. Only as they descend below and devolve into a physical state can differences crop up: At a time when all is as it should be, these concepts have the same significance in the world as they do above; as such, these treatments and remedies are effective.

In contrast, when a change (and descent) occurred **in the world**, the complete integrity of these spiritual dynamics could no longer descend.⁶⁹ Consequently, there was a deterioration in the efficacy of these dynamics in healing the body, and the directives remained {operative} only in spirituality.

A suggested illustration of this idea: Certain mitzvos conferred a sort of “healing” (for the soul): When the Temple stood, a Jew could attain atonement

⁶⁹ See also *Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 16, p. 98 ff. — where this concept is elaborated on in relation to numerous other topics.

by offering a (physical) sacrifice — “he repents and is healed”⁷⁰ — the harmful effects of his sin would be healed. After nature and circumstances changed — “because of our sins we were exiled from our land,” and “our Temple was destroyed”⁷¹ — the above “treatment” of offering a sacrifice is no longer beneficial. (On the contrary — bringing a sacrifice is {now} prohibited.) Nevertheless, one can attain atonement and be healed by offering a **spiritual** sacrifice — prayer, repentance, etc.⁷²

7.

DIVINE INSIGHT

Similarly, we can explain the chapter in *Hilchos Deos*, etc., in Rambam’s *Mishneh Torah*:

As is well known, {the author of} the *Tumim*⁷³ writes regarding the commentaries of *Beis Yosef*⁷⁴ and *Rema*:⁷⁵ “*Everything was in writing by the hand of Hashem, which He gave me to understand*”⁷⁶ — Hashem’s spirit was endowed within them so that the {fine points of their} diction may be used to infer the correct halachah {even} regarding points not directly addressed by the author. Through the commentaries of *Beis Yosef* and *Rema*, Hashem’s plan successfully materialized.”

From here, it is understood that when Rambam wrote these laws — proper conduct that ensures a healthy and sound body — “Hashem’s spirit was endowed within them” — the halachah was aligned with him, including the Torah’s eternal quality. This means that even when a time comes when not all of these instructions regarding eating, etc., will be effective for the **physical** body to be

⁷⁰ *Yeshayahu* 6:10.

⁷¹ {*Siddur*, “Festival *Musaf*.”}

⁷² See *Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 18, p. 416 and fns., ad. loc.

⁷³ {Rabbi Yehonasan Eibschitz,} in his commentary on *Tokfo Kohen* {by the *Shach*}, end of sec. 124 (cited by the Tzemach Tzedek in his *Responsa*, “*Yoreh Deah*,” ch. 176, beg. of sec. 3 (116b)).

⁷⁴ {Rabbi Yosef Karo, author of *Beis Yosef* and *Shulchan Aruch*.}

⁷⁵ {Rabbi Moshe Isserles, author of *Darkei Moshe* and interpolated glosses to *Shulchan Aruch*.}

⁷⁶ {Cf. *Divrei HaYamim I* 28:19.}

healthy and whole (for the **nature** of the body changes, consistent with the state of the world, as mentioned above), these directives are still eternal and can be effective when **spiritually** eating, drinking, etc.,⁷⁷ in a person's **soul**. The spiritual content is the “essence” — the truth of the concept — despite Rambam apparently and outwardly discussing the body's physical health.

8.

DEEPER AND REVEALED TORAH

The concept discussed above (in Section 5) — that the Torah, in essence, discusses the supernal realms — is also relevant to a person's Torah **study**:

There is Torah study as it is in the lower realms — the revealed dimension of the Torah — and there is Torah study as it is in the supernal realms — the deeper dimension of the Torah (which is the main focus of the {Torah study of the} souls in *Gan Eden*).⁷⁸ The deeper dimension of Torah includes both the study of the deeper meaning of the laws that are revealed — “the deeper dimension of the mitzvos and their hidden reasons”⁷⁹ — and also the knowledge and study of the continuum of Creation,⁸⁰ Hashem's Oneness, etc. —

Regarding this, it says that although halachah is actually codified based on how Torah matters are grasped on the **revealed** plane (by a soul in a body in this world), the Torah, in essence, discusses matters in the supernal realms. The essence of the Torah is accessed when a Jew here learns it according to its deeper dimension. This then also draws light and vitality into the Torah as it “secondarily {is expressed and} alludes to the lower realms,” namely. in the study of its revealed dimension.

⁷⁷ See *Berachos* 57a; note *Koheles Rabbah* 2:24, and sources cited there.

⁷⁸ See *Tanya*, “*Likkutei Amarim*,” ch. 41 (58a); “*Iggeres HaKodesh*,” ch. 29 (149b); see also *Kuntres Limud HaChassidus*, ch. 11 ff.; *Sefer HaMaamarim* 5700, p. 75 ff.; **et al.**

⁷⁹ *Tanya*, “*Iggeres HaKodesh*,” end of ch. 26.

⁸⁰ {In the Hebrew original, “*sefer hishtaleshelus*”; the chain-like descent of spiritual worlds until this world. Each spiritual world denotes a complete realm of existence, reflecting its general proximity to, or distance from, Divine revelation.}

In fact, the light and vitality drawn actually assist the person. In addition to his simple faith, he also **truly becomes conscious** of and **senses** within his learning of the Torah's revealed dimension, as learned in this world ("it clothed itself in material matters and things of this corporeal world"),⁸¹ that the Torah is the will and wisdom of **the Holy One**.⁸²

By increasing both types of Torah study — by learning the deeper and revealed dimensions — we will merit that the Torah of Moshiach will be revealed. Regarding Torah study in the era of Moshiach, it says:

People will engage in Torah and mitzvos, not to extract the sparks {hidden within}, but to consolidate more sublime unifications, and everything will be {accomplished} through the deeper dimension of the Torah, by performing mitzvos with lofty devotion... and that is why the principal occupation with Torah will also concern the deeper dimension of mitzvos and their hidden reasons.⁸³

In the words of Rambam⁸⁴ — in his book consisting of "**halachos, halachos**"⁸⁵ — about Torah study in the Messianic Era:

The Sages and the prophets yearned for the Messianic era... to be at liberty to engage in the Torah and its wisdom.... The occupation of the entire world will be **solely** to know Hashem. Therefore, the Jewish people will be great sages and fathom **esoteric** matters,⁸⁶ grasping the knowledge of their Creator according to the full extent of human potential...

May this yearning materialize with the actual arrival of our righteous Moshiach speedily in our days.

— From the talk delivered on Shavuos, 5725 (1965), and 4 Iyar, 5743 (1983)

⁸¹ *Likkutei Amarim*, "*Tanya*," ch. 4; see, also, ch. 5 there.

⁸² Further study is needed as to whether it would be possible to **truly be aware** that it is "[His] *nefesh*," similar to the contention that if one knew Him, they would be Him (*Sefer HaIkarim*, sec. 2, end of ch. 30; *Midrash Shmuel* 6:7; see also *The Guide for the Perplexed*, vol. 1, ch. 58). Further discussion is beyond the scope of this work.

⁸³ *Tanya*, "*Iggeres HaKodesh*," ch. 26.

⁸⁴ The end and conclusion of *Mishneh Torah*, "*Hilchos Melachim*."

⁸⁵ {See above fn. 39}

⁸⁶ Examine Rashi's commentary on *Shir HaShirim* 1:2, on the words "for it is better": He gave them His Torah and spoke to them face to face... and they are assured by Him that He will appear to them again to explain to them the secret of its reasons and its hidden mysteries, and they entreat Him to fulfill His word, and this is the mystical meaning of the verse, "Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth."