



Likkutei Sichos

Volume 18 | Korach | Sicha 1 Source Sheet

א.

1. במדבר ט"ז:א-ל"ה

(א) וַיִּקַּח קֹרַח בֶּן-יִצְחָר בֶּן-קְהָת בֶּן-לֵוִי וְדָתָן וְאַבִּירָם בְּנֵי אֱלִיאָב... וְאַנְשֵׁים מִבְּנֵי-יִשְׂרָאֵל חֲמִשִּׁים וּמֵאֵתַיִם... (ג) וַיִּקְהֲלוּ עַל-מֹשֶׁה וְעַל-אַהֲרֹן וַיֹּאמְרוּ אֲלֵהֶם רַב-לְכֶם כִּי כָל-הָעֵדָה כָּלָם קִדְּשִׁים וּבְתוֹכָם ה' וּמִדְּוַע תִּתְנַשְּׂאוּ עַל-קְהָל ה': (ד) וַיִּשְׁמַע מֹשֶׁה וַיִּפֹּל עַל-פָּנָיו: (ה) וַיַּדְבֵּר אֶל-קֹרַח וְאֶל-כָּל-עֵדְתוֹ לֵאמֹר בְּקֹר וַיִּדַע ה' אֶת-אֲשֶׁר-לוֹ וְאֶת-הַקְּדוֹשׁ וְהַקְּרִיב אֵלָיו וְאֶת אֲשֶׁר יִבְסֶרְבוּ יִקְרִיב אֵלָיו: (ו) זֹאת עָשׂוּ קְחוּ-לְכֶם מַחְתֹּת קָרַח וְכָל-עֵדְתוֹ: (ז) וַתֵּנוּ בָהֶן אֵשׁ וַיִּשִׂימוּ עֲלֵיהֶן וְקִטְרֹת לִפְנֵי ה' מִחֹר וְהִזָּה הָאִישׁ אֲשֶׁר-יִבְחַר ה' הוּא הַקְּדוֹשׁ רַב-לְכֶם בְּנֵי לֵוִי... (יח) וַיִּקְחוּ אִישׁ מִחֲתֹתָיו וַיִּתְּנוּ עֲלֵיהֶם אֵשׁ וַיִּשִׂימוּ עֲלֵיהֶם קִטְרֹת וַיַּעֲמִדוּ פֶתַח אֹהֶל מוֹעֵד וּמִשָּׁה וְאַהֲרֹן: (יט) וַיִּקְהֲלוּ עֲלֵיהֶם קֹרַח אֶת-כָּל-הָעֵדָה אֶל-פֶּתַח אֹהֶל מוֹעֵד וַיִּבְרָא כְּבוֹד-ה' אֶל-כָּל-הָעֵדָה... (כח) וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה בְּזֹאת תִּדְעוּן כִּי-ה' שָׁלַחְנִי לַעֲשׂוֹת אֶת-כָּל-הַמַּעֲשִׂים הָאֵלֶּה כִּי-לֹא מִלְּבִי... (לה) וְאִשׁ יִצְאָה מֵאֵת ה' וְתֹאכַל אֶת-הַחֲמִשִּׁים וּמֵאֵתֵיכֶם אִישׁ מִקְרִיבֵי הַקְּטֹרֶת:

Bamidbar 16:1-35

(1) Now Korach, son of Izhar son of Kohath son of Levi, betook himself, along with Dathan and Abiram sons of Eliab... together with two hundred and fifty Israelites... (3) They combined against Moshe and Aaron and said to them, "You have gone too far! For all the community are holy, all of them, and Hashem is in their midst. Why then do you raise yourselves above Hashem's congregation?" (4) When Moshe heard this, he fell on his face. (5) Then he spoke to Korach and all his company, saying, "Come morning, Hashem will make known who is His and who is holy, and will grant him access to Himself; He will grant access to the one He has chosen. (6) Do this: You, Korach and all your band, take fire pans, (7) and tomorrow put fire in them and lay incense on them before the LORD. Then the man whom Hashem chooses, he shall be the holy one. You have gone too far, sons of Levi!"... (18) Each of them took his fire pan, put fire in it, laid incense on it, and took his place at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting, as did Moshe and Aaron. (19) Korach gathered the whole community against them at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting. Then the Presence of Hashem appeared to the whole... (28) And Moshe said, "By this you shall know that it was Hashem who sent me to do all these things; that they are not of my own devising... (35) And a fire went forth from Hashem and consumed the two hundred and fifty men offering the incense.

ב.

2. רש"י על במדבר ט"ז:

רב לכם בני לוי. דבר גדול אמרתי לכם; ולא טפשים היו, שפך התרה בהם וקבלו עליהם לקרב? הם חטאו על נפשותם, שנאמר "את מחתות החטאים האלה בנפשתם" (במדבר י"ז:ג'), וקרח שפקח היה מה ראה לשטות זה? עינו הטעתו, ראה שלשלת גדולה יוצאה ממנו — שמואל ששקול כנגד משה ואהרן — אמר בשבילו אני נמלט, וכ"ד משמרות עומדות לבני בניו, כלם מתנבאים ברוח הקדש, שנאמר "כל אלה בנים להימן", אמר אפשר כל הגדלה הזאת עתידה לעמד ממני ואני אדום? לך נשתתף לבא לאותה חזקה, ששמע מפי משה שכלם אוכדים ואחד נמלט, "אשר יבחר ה' הוא הקדוש" — טעה ותלה בעצמו, ולא ראה יפה, לפי שבניו עשו תשובה, ומשה היה רואה:

Rashi on Bamidbar 16:7

means, "It is a great (an important) thing that I have told you, ye sons of Levi"). But were they not fools in that although he so sternly warned them they nevertheless undertook to offer! They, however, sinned against their own souls (i.e., they were regardless of their lives) as it is said, (17:3) "the censers of these sinners against their souls". — But Korach who certainly was a clever (lit., open-eyed) man, what reason had he to commit this folly? His mind's eye misled him. He saw by prophetic vision a line of great men (more lit., a great chain) descending from him, amongst them the prophet Samuel who was equal in importance to Moshe and Aaron together (cf. Psalms 99:6: שמו בקראי שמו), and he said to himself, "On his account I shall escape the punishment". And he further saw twenty-four Mishmars (shifts of Levites who formed the Temple Choir) arising among his grand-children, all of them prophesying by the Holy Spirit, — as it is said, "All these (prominent musicians) were sons of Heiman" (Heiman was a descendant of Korach; — He said, "Is it possible that all this dignity is to arise from me and I shall remain silent (be myself of no importance)?" On this account he joined the others in order to attain to that prerogative, because he had indeed heard from the mouth of Moshe that all else of them would perish and one would escape: "He whom Hashem will choose will be holy". He mistakenly applied this to himself. But he had not seen correctly, for his sons repented of their rebellious attitude and therefore did not die at that time (cf. Bamidbar 26:11), and it was from them that Samuel and the Levitical singers were descended. Moshe, however, foresaw this.

3. רש"י על במדבר ט"ז:

זאת עשו קחו לכם מחתות. מה ראה לומר להם קח? אמר להם, בדרך הגוים יש נימוסים הרבה וכו' (אין) מתקבצים בבית אחד, אנו אין לנו אלא ה' אחד, ארון אחד, ותורה אחת ומזבח אחד וכהן גדול אחד, ואתם ר"ן איש מבקשים כהנה גדולה, אף אני רוצה בך, הא לכם תשמיש חביב מכל, היא הקטרת החביבה מכל הקרבנות, וסם המנות נתן בתוכו, שבו נשרפו נדב ואביהו, לפיכך התרה בהם והיה האיש אשר יבחר ה' הוא הקדוש — כבר הוא בקדשתו, וכי אין אנו יודעים שמי שיבחר הוא הקדוש? אלא אמר להם משה, הריני אומר לכם, שלא תתחייבו, מי שיבחר בו יצא חי וכלכם אוכדין (תנחומא):

Rashi on Bamidbar 16:6

THIS DO: TAKE YOU CENSERS — What reason had he to speak to them thus? He said to them: according to the custom of the heathens there are numerous forms of divine worship, and consequently numerous priests, for they cannot assemble for worship in one temple; we, however, have One G-d, one Ark, one Law, one Altar, all constituting one form of worship and therefore we need but one High Priest; — and you, 250 men, all demand the High Priesthood?! I would like this myself, but events will prove that this is impossible. Here you have a rite which is dear to G-d more than any other — it is the offering of incense, which is even dearer to Him than all the sacrifices, but a deadly poison is contained in it, for through

it Nadab and Abihu were burnt!" (cf. Vayikra 10:2). It was on this account that he warned them by saying, And it shall come to pass that the man whom Hashem will choose is the holy one — he is already in his state of holiness (not "he will become holy"; he thus warned them that there was not the slightest likelihood that they would be chosen). This must be the meaning of הוא הקדוש, not "he will become holy", for do we not know that he whom He would choose would become holy? But this, in effect, is what Moshe said to them: "I am telling you this in order that you may not imperil your lives, for only he whom He will choose will come out of this alive, but all of you will perish".

4. שמות י"ט:

וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל־מֹשֶׁה הִנֵּה אֲנֹכִי בָא אֵלֶיךָ בְּעָבַן בְּעָבָן יִשְׁמַע הָעָם בְּדַבְרֵי עַמְךָ וְגַם־בְּךָ יֵאָמְרוּ לְעוֹלָם וַיִּגַּד מֹשֶׁה אֶת־דְּבָרֵי הָעָם אֶל־יְהוָה:

Shemos 19:9

And Hashem said to Moshe, "I will come to you in a thick cloud, in order that the people may hear when I speak with you and so trust you ever after." Then Moshe reported the people's words to Hashem.

5. משנה תורה, הלכות יסודי התורה ח'א'

מֹשֶׁה רִבְּנוּ לֹא הֶאֱמִינוּ בּוֹ יִשְׂרָאֵל מִפְּנֵי הָאוֹתוֹת שֶׁעָשָׂה. שֶׁהִמָּאֵמִין עַל פִּי הָאוֹתוֹת יִשׁ בְּלִבּוֹ דְּפִי שְׂאֵפְשֵׁר שִׁיעֵשֶׂה הָאוֹת בְּלִט וְכִשְׁוִף. אֲלֵא כָּל הָאוֹתוֹת שֶׁעָשָׂה מֹשֶׁה בְּמִדְבָּר לְפִי הַצֵּרֶךְ עָשָׂאָם. לֹא לְהַבְיֵא רְאִיָּה עַל הַנְּבוּאָה. הִיָּה צָרִיךְ לְהַשְׁקִיעַ אֶת הַמְצָרִים קִרְעַת אֶת הַיָּם וְהַצִּלִּיל בְּתוֹכוֹ. צָרְכֵנוּ לְמַזוֹן הוֹרִיד לָנוּ אֶת הַמָּן. צָמְאוּ בְּקִיעַ לֶהֱנֹךְ אֶת הָאֶבֶן. קִפְרוּ בּוֹ עֲדַת קָרַח בְּלַעַה אוֹתוֹן הָאֶרֶץ. וְכֵן שְׂאֵר כָּל הָאוֹתוֹת. וּבִמְהָ הֶאֱמִינוּ בּוֹ. בְּמַעֲמַד הַר סִינַי שֶׁעִינֵינוּ רָאוּ וְלֹא זָר וְאֶזְנֵינוּ שָׁמְעוּ וְלֹא אַחַר הָאֵשׁ וְהַקּוֹלוֹת וְהַלְפִידִים וְהוּא נִגַּשׁ אֶל הָעֶרְפֶּל וְהַקּוֹל מִדְּבַר אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֵנוּ שׁוֹמְעִים מֹשֶׁה לֶךְ אָמַר לֶהֱנֹךְ קָרַח וְכֵן. וְכֵן הוּא אוֹמֵר (דְּבָרִים ה' ד') (פְּנִים בְּפָנִים דְּבַר ה' עִמָּכֶם". וְנֹאמֵר) דְּבָרִים ה' ג' (לֹא אֶת אֲבֹתֵינוּ כָּרַת ה' אֶת הַבְּרִית הַזֹּאת". וּמִנֵּן שֶׁמַּעֲמַד הַר סִינַי לְבַדּוֹ הִיא הַרְאִיָּה לְנְבוּאָתוֹ שֶׁהִיא אֱמֶת שְׂאִין בּוֹ דְּפִי שֶׁנֹּאמֵר) (שְׁמוֹת יט ט') (הִנֵּה אֲנֹכִי בָא אֵלֶיךָ בְּעָבַן בְּעָבָן יִשְׁמַע הָעָם בְּדַבְרֵי עַמְךָ וְגַם בְּךָ יֵאָמְרוּ לְעוֹלָם". מְכַלֵּל שֶׁקֵּדָם דְּבַר זֶה לֹא הֶאֱמִינוּ בּוֹ נֶאֱמַנּוֹת שֶׁהִיא עוֹמֶדֶת לְעוֹלָם אֲלֵא נֶאֱמַנּוֹת שֶׁיִּשׁ אַחֲרֶיהָ הַרְהוֹר וּמַחֲשָׁבָה:

Mishneh Torah, Foundations of the Torah 8:1

Moshe our Master was not believed in by Israel because he delivered tokens, for whosoever bases his belief contingent upon tokens retains suspicion in his heart, for it is possible that the token was delivered by means of enchantment and witchcraft. But all the tokens delivered by Moshe in the wilderness were responsive to necessities, and not as testimony for prophecy. When it became necessary to have the Egyptians sunk, he divided the sea and drowned them therein; when our need was food, he brought down for us Manna; when they became thirsty, he split open the rock for them; when the Korach confederacy denied him, the earth swallowed them up. Likewise came to pass all the other tokens. Wherein, then, did they believe in him? In being present at Mount Sinai; for our own eyes saw and not through a stranger's, and our own ears heard and not that of another; the flame, the thunder and lightning, and he drew near the thick cloud and the Voice speaking unto him, we listening, saying: "Moshe, Moshe, go and tell them thus and such," for so he also said: "Hashem spoke with you face to face in the mount out of the midst of fire" (Deut. 5.4); and it is moreover said: "Hashem made not this covenant with our fathers, but with us, even us" (Ibid. –31). Whencefrom do we know that the standing at Mount Sinai alone is the evidence which makes his prophecy true without a shadow of suspicion? Because it is said: "Lo, I come unto thee in a thick cloud, that the people may hear when I speak unto thee, and may also believe thee forever" (Ex. 19.9). Evidently, hitherto they did not believe in him with

an everlasting belief, but with a belief wherein there is after-thought and reflection.

.ג.

6. שמות ל"ב:כ"ה-כ"ח

וַיֵּרָא מֹשֶׁה אֶת־הָעָם כִּי פָרַע הוּא כִּי־פָרַעַה אַהֲרֹן לְשִׁמְצָה בְּקִמְיָהֶם: וַיַּעֲמֵד מֹשֶׁה בְּשַׁעַר הַמַּחֲנֶה וַיֹּאמֶר מִי לַיהוָה אֵלַי וַיֵּאֱסָפוּ אֵלַי כָּל־בְּנֵי לֵוִי: וַיֹּאמֶר לָהֶם כֹּה־אָמַר יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל שִׁימוּ אִישׁ־חַרְבּוֹ עַל־יָרְכוֹ עִבְרוּ וְשׁוּבוּ מִשַּׁעַר לְשַׁעַר בְּמַחֲנֶה וְהָרְגוּ אִישׁ־אֶת־אָחִיו וְאִישׁ אֶת־רֵעֵהוּ וְאִישׁ אֶת־קָרְבּוֹ: וַיַּעֲשׂוּ בְנֵי־לֵוִי כְּדָבַר מֹשֶׁה וַיִּפֹּל מִן־הָעָם בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא כִּשְׁלֹשֶׁת אַלְפֵי אִישׁ:

Shemos 32:25-28

And Moshe saw the people, that they were exposed, for Aaron had exposed them to be disgraced before their adversaries. So Moshe stood in the gate of the camp and said: "Whoever is for Hashem, [let him come] to me!" And all the sons of Levi gathered around him. He said to them: "So said Hashem, the G-d of Israel: 'Let every man place his sword upon his thigh and pass back and forth from one gate to the other in the camp, and let every man kill his brother, every man his friend, every man his kinsman.' " The sons of Levi did according to Moshe' word; on that day some three thousand men fell from among the people.

.ד.

7. דברי הימים א כ"ג:י"ג-י"ד

בְּנֵי עֲמָרָם אַהֲרֹן וּמֹשֶׁה וַיַּבְדֵּל אַהֲרֹן לְהַקְדִּישׁוּ קֹדֶשׁ קְדָשִׁים הוּא־וּבָנָיו עַד־עוֹלָם לְהַקְטִיר לִפְנֵי יְהוָה לְשִׁרְתוֹ וּלְבַכֵּר בְּשֵׁמוֹ עַד־עוֹלָם: וּמֹשֶׁה אִישׁ הָאֱלֹהִים בָּנָיו יִקְרְאוּ עַל־שֵׁבֶט הַלְוִי:

I Chronicles 23:13-14

The sons of Amram: Aaron and Moshe. Aaron was set apart, he and his sons, forever, to be consecrated as most holy, to make burnt offerings to Hashem and serve Him and pronounce blessings in His name forever. As for Moshe, the man of G-d, his sons were named after the tribe of Levi.

.ה.

8. רש"י על במדבר ט"ז:ג'

רב לכם. הרבה יותר מדאי לקחתם לעצמכם גדלה: כלם קדשים. כלם שמעו דברים בסיני מפי הגבורה: ומדוע תתנשאו. אם לקחת אתה מלכות, לא היה לך לברר לאחיד כהנה, לא אתם לבדכם שמעתם בסיני "אנכי ה' אלהיך", כל העדה שמעו (שם):

Rashi on Bamidbar 16:3

You TAKE TOO MUCH UPON YOU — i.e. much more than is proper have you taken for yourselves in the way of high Office. [FOR] ALL [THE CONGREGATION] ARE HOLY — they all heard the utterances on Sinai from the mouth of the Almighty (Midrash Tanchuma, Korach 4). WHY THEN LIFT YE UP YOURSELVES [ABOVE THE ASSEMBLY OF HASHEM] — "If you have taken royal rank for yourself, you should at least not have chosen the priesthood for your brother — it is not you alone who have heard at Sinai: 'I am Hashem thy G-d', all the congregation heard it!"

9. שמות י"ט:ו'

ואתם תהיו לי ממלכת כהנים וגוי קדוש אלה הדברים אשר תדבר אל בני ישראל:

Shemos 19:6

but you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.' These are the words that you shall speak to the children of Israel."

.ז

10. רש"י על במדבר ט"ז:א'

ויקח קרח . לקח את עצמו לצד אחד להיות נחלק מתוך העדה לעורר על הכהנה, וזהו שתרגם אנקלוס "ואתפלג" — נחלק משאר העדה להחזיק במחלוקת, וכן "מה יקחך לבך" (איוב ט"ו) — לוקח אותך להפליגך משאר בני אדם.

Rashi on Bamidbar 16:1

lit., AND KORACH TOOK — He betook himself on one side with the view of separating himself from out of the community so that he might raise a protest regarding the priesthood to which Moshe had appointed his brother. This is what Onkelos means when he renders it by — "he separated himself" — "he separated himself" from the rest of the community in order to maintain dissension. Similar is, (Job 15:12) "Why doth thy heart take thee aside ()", meaning, it takes you aside to separate you from other people.

11. במדבר י"ז:א-ה'

וידבר יהוה אל־משה לאמר: אמר אל־אלעזר בן־אהרן הכהן וגם את־המחתת מבין השרפה ואת־האש זרה־הלאה כי קדשו: את מחתות החטאים האלה בנפשתם ועשו אתם רקעי פחים צפוי למזבח כ־הקריבם לפני־יהוה ויקדשו ויהיו לאות לבני ישראל: ויקח אלעזר הכהן את מחתות הנחשת אשר הקריבו השרפים וירקעום צפוי למזבח: זכרון לבני ישראל לְמַעַן אֲשֶׁר לֹא־יקרב אִישׁ זָר אֲשֶׁר לֹא מִזֶּרַע אַהֲרֹן הוּא לְהִקְטִיר קִטְרֹת לִפְנֵי יְהוָה וְלֹא־יְהִי כְקִרְחָה וְכַעֲדָתוֹ כְּאֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר יְהוָה בְּיַד־מֹשֶׁה לֵאמֹר:

Bamidbar 17:1-5

Hashem spoke to Moshe, saying: Order Eleazar son of Aaron the priest to remove the fire pans—for they have become sacred—from among the charred remains; and scatter the coals abroad. [Remove] the fire pans of those who have sinned at the cost of their lives, and let them be made into hammered sheets as plating for the altar—for once they have been used for offering to Hashem, they have become sacred—and let them serve as a warning to the people of Israel. Eleazar the priest took the copper fire pans which had been used for offering by those who died in the fire; and they were hammered into plating for the altar, as Hashem had ordered him through Moshe. It was to be a reminder to the Israelites, so that no outsider—one not of Aaron's offspring—should presume to offer incense before Hashem and suffer the fate of Korach and his band.

.ח

12. ויקרא כ"ז:כ"ז

ולמה לא זכה לוי בנחלת ארץ ישראל ובבזתה עם אחיו מפני שהבדל לעבד את ה' לשרתו ולהורות דרכיו הישרים ומשפטיו הצדיקים לרבים שנאמר (דברים לג י) "יורו משפטיך ליעקב ותורתך לישראל". לפיכך הבדלו מדרכי העולם לא עורכין מלחמה כשאר ישראל ולא נחלין ולא זוכין לעצמן בכח גופן. אלא הם חיל השם שנאמר (דברים לג יא) "ברך ה' חילו". והוא ברוך הוא הזכה להם שנאמר (במדבר יח כ) "אני חלקך ונחלתך": ולא שבט לוי בלבד אלא כל איש ואיש מקל באי העולם אשר נדבה רוחו אותו והבינו מדעו להבדל לעמד לפני ה' לשרתו ולעבדו

לדעה את ה' והלה ישר כמו שפעשהו האלהים ופרק מעל צנארו על החשבונות הרבים אשר בקשו בני האדם הרי זה נתקדש קדש קדשים ויהיה ה' חלקו ונחלתו לעולם ולעולמי עולמים ויזכה לו בעולם הזה דבר המספיק לו כמו שזכה לכהנים ללויים. הרי דוד עליו השלום אומר (תהילים טז ה) "ה' מנת חלקי וכוסי אתה תומיה גורלי:"

12. Mishneh Torah, Sabbatical Year and the Jubilee 13:12-13

Why were the Levites not allotted land in Eretz Yisrael or a share in its booty along with their brethren? Because they were singled out to serve Hashem and minister to him, to teach his upright ways and just laws to many people, as it is written: "They shall teach thy laws to Jacob, and thy instruction to Israel" (Deuteronomy 33:10). For this reason, they were separated from worldly affairs: they fought no battles like the rest of Israel; they inherited no land; they won nothing by means of their physical ability. They are indeed Hashem's army, as it is written: "Bless, O Lord, his substance" (11). He, blessed be he, has won them for himself, as it is written: "I am your portion and your share" (Bamidbar 18:20).

Not only the tribe of Levi, but each well-informed thinking person whose spirit moves him to devote himself to the service of Hashem, to know Hashem, and has walked uprightly after casting off his neck the yoke of many a cunning wile that men contrived, is indeed divinely consecrated, and Hashem will forever and ever be his portion. G-d will provide sufficiently for his needs, as he did for the priests and the Levites. David, may he rest in peace, declared: "Hashem is my allotted portion and my cup; thou holdest my lot" (Psalm 16:5).

.ט

13. תניא פרק ד'

דאורייתא היא חכמתו ורצונו של הקב"ה, והקב"ה בכבודו ובעצמו כולא חד, כי הוא היודע והוא המדע וכו', כמו שהבאנו לעיל בשם הרמב"ם. ואף דהקב"ה נקרא אין סוף, (תהלים קמה ג): "ולגדלתו אין חקר", ולית מחשבה תפיסא ביה כלל. וכן ברצונו וחכמתו, כדכתיב: (ישעיהו מ ח): "אין חקר לתבונתו", וכתיב: (איוב יא ז): "החקר אלוה תמצא"; וכתיב: (ישעיהו נה ח): "כי לא מחשבותי מחשבותיכם", הנה על זה אמרו: במקום שאתה מוצא גדולתו של הקב"ה שם אתה מוצא ענותנותו (ילקוט שמעוני פרשת עקב רמז תתנו, ילקוט שמעוני ישעיהו רמז תפח). וצמצם הקב"ה רצונו וחכמתו בתרי"ג מצוות התורה ובהלכותיהן, ובצרופי אותיות תנ"ך, ודרשותיהן שבאגדות ומדרשי חכמינו ז"ל, בכדי שכל הנשמה או רוח ונפש שבגוף האדם תוכל להשיגן בדעתה ולקיימן כל מה שאפשר לקיים מהן במעשה דבור ומחשבה, ועל ידי זה תתלבש בכל עשר בחינותיה בשלשה לבושים אלו. ולכן נמשלה התורה למים: מה מים יורדים ממקום גבוה למקום נמוך, כך התורה ירדה ממקום כבודה, שהיא רצונו וחכמתו יתברך ואורייתא וקודשא בריך הוא כולא חד ולית מחשבה תפיסא ביה כלל, ומשם נסעה וירדה בסתר המדרגות, ממדרגה למדרגה, בהשתלשלות העולמות, עד שנתלבשה בדברים גשמיים וענייני עולם הזה, שהן רוב מצוות התורה ככולם והלכותיהן, ובצרופי אותיות גשמיות בדיו על הספר, עשרים וארבעה ספרים שבתורה נביאים וכתובים; כדי שתהא כל מחשבה תפיסא בהן.

Tanya Chapter 4

...The Torah, which is the wisdom and will of the Holy One, blessed be He, and His glorious Essence are one, since He is both the Knower and the Knowledge, and so on, as explained above in the name of Maimonides. And although the Holy One, blessed be He, is called *En Sof* ("Infinite"), and "His greatness can never be fathomed," and "No thought can apprehend Him at all," and so are also His will and His wisdom, as it is written: "There is no searching of His understanding," and "Canst thou by searching find G-d?" and again: "For My thoughts are not your thoughts"—nevertheless, it is in this connection that it has been said: "Where you find the greatness of the Holy One, blessed be He, there you also find His humility." For the Holy One, blessed be He, has compressed His will and wisdom within the 613 commandments of the Torah, and

in their laws, as well as within the combination of the letters of the Torah, the books of the Prophets and the Hagiographa, and in the exposition thereof which are to be found in the *Agadot* and *Midrashim* of our Rabbis of blessed memory. All this in order that each *neshamah*, or *ruach* and *nefesh* in the human body should be able to comprehend them through its faculty of understanding, and to fulfil them, as far as they can be fulfilled, in act, speech and thought, thereby clothing itself with all its ten faculties in these three garments.

Therefore has the Torah has been compared to water, for just as water descends from a higher to a lower level, so has the Torah descended from its place of glory, which is His blessed will and wisdom; [for] the Torah and the Holy One, blessed be He, are one and the same and no thought can apprehend Him at all. Thence [the Torah] has progressively descended through hidden stages, stage after stage, with the descent of the worlds, until it clothed itself in corporeal substances and in things of this world, comprising almost all of the commandments of the Torah, their laws, and in the combinations of material letters, written with ink in a book, namely, the 24 volumes of the Torah, Prophets and Hagiographa; all this in order that every thought should be able to apprehend them...

14. ברכות כ"ב א'

תנא, רבי יהודה בן בתירא היה אומר: אין דברי תורה מקבלין טומאה. מעשה בתלמיד אחד שהיה מגמגם למעלה מרבי יהודה בן בתירא. אמר ליה: בני, פתח פירך ואירו דבריך, שאין דברי תורה מקבלין טומאה, שנאמר: "הלא כה דברי קאש נאם ה'", מה אש אינו מקבל טומאה אף דברי תורה אינן מקבלין טומאה.

Berakhot 22a

It was taught in a *baraita* that **Rabbi Yehuda ben Beteira would say: Matters of Torah do not become ritually impure** and therefore one who is impure is permitted to engage in Torah study. He implemented this *halakha* in practice. The Gemara relates **an incident involving a student who was** reciting *mishnayot* and *baraitot* **hesitantly before** the study hall of **Rabbi Yehuda ben Beteira**. The student experienced a seminal emission, and when he was asked to recite he did so in a rushed, uneven manner, as he did not want to utter the words of Torah explicitly. Rabbi Yehuda **said to him: My son, open your mouth and let your words illuminate, as matters of Torah do not become ritually impure, as it is stated: "Is not my word like fire, says Hashem"** (Jeremiah 23:29). **Just as fire does not become ritually impure, so too matters of Torah do not become ritually impure.**

.

15. ברכות ל"ה ב'

תנו רבנן: "ואספת דגנך" מה תלמוד לומר? — לפי שנאמר: "לא ימוש ספר התורה הזה מפירך" — יכול דברים ככתבן, תלמוד לומר: "ואספת דגנך" — הנהג בהן מנהג דרך ארץ, דברי רבי ישמעאל. רבי שמעון בן יוחאי אומר: אפשר אדם חורש בשעת חרישה, וזרע בשעת זריעה, וקוצר בשעת קצירה, ודש בשעת דישה, וזורה בשעת הרום, תורה מה תהא עליה? אלא בזמן שישראל עושין רצונו של מקום — מלאכתן נעשית על ידי אחרים, שנאמר: "ועמדו זרים ורעו צאנכם וגו'", ובזמן שאין ישראל עושין רצונו של מקום — מלאכתן נעשית על ידי עצמן, שנאמר: "ואספת דגנך". ולא עוד אלא שמלאכת אחרים נעשית על ידן, שנאמר: "ועבדת את אויבך וגו'". אמר אביי: הרבה עשו כרבי ישמעאל, ועלתה בידן. כרבי שמעון בן יוחאי, ולא עלתה בידן.

Berakhot 35b

The Sages taught: What is the meaning of that which the verse states: "And you shall gather your grain"? Because it is stated: "This Torah shall not depart from your mouths, and you shall

contemplate in it day and night” (Joshua 1:8), **I might** have thought **that these matters are** to be understood **as they are written**; one is to literally spend his days immersed exclusively in Torah study. Therefore, **the verse states: “And you shall gather your grain, your wine and your oil,”** assume in their regard, **the way of the world**; set aside time not only for Torah, but also for work. This is **the statement of Rabbi Yishmael. Rabbi Shimon ben Yoḥai says: Is it possible that a person plows in the plowing season and sows in the sowing season and harvests in the harvest season and threshes in the threshing season and winnows in the windy season,** as grain is separated from the chaff by means of the wind, and is constantly busy; **what will become of Torah? Rather,** one must dedicate himself exclusively to Torah at the expense of other endeavors; as **when Israel performs G-d’s will, their work is performed by others, as it is stated: “And strangers will stand and feed your flocks,** and foreigners will be your plowmen and your vinedressers” (Isaiah 61:5). **When Israel does not perform G-d’s will, their work is performed by them** themselves, as it is stated: **“And you shall gather your grain.”** **Moreover,** if Israel fails to perform G-d’s will, **others’ work will be performed by them, as it is stated: “You shall serve your enemy** whom G-d shall send against you, in hunger, in thirst, in nakedness and in want of all things” (Deuteronomy 28:48). Summing up this dispute, **Abaye said:** Although there is room for both opinions, **many have acted in accordance with** the opinion of **Rabbi Yishmael,** and combined working for a living and learning Torah, **and** although they engaged in activities other than the study of Torah, **were successful** in their Torah study. **Many have acted in accordance with** the opinion of **Rabbi Shimon ben Yoḥai and were not successful** in their Torah study. They were ultimately forced to abandon their Torah study altogether.