



# Likkutei Sichos

Volume 20 | Bereishis | Sichah 1

## Emphatic Beginnings

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## 1.

### WHY BEGIN WITH BEREISHIS?

Concerning the verse,<sup>1</sup> “*Bereishis bara Elokim*, in the beginning, Hashem created,” Rashi cites the principle of Rabbi Yitzchak: “He should not have begun the Torah but from {the section} ‘*HaChodesh*, this month shall for you.’”<sup>2</sup> ... Why did He open with *Bereishis*? Because {Hashem wished to convey the message of the verse},<sup>3</sup> “The power of His acts He told to His people to give them the estate of nations.” Rashi explains that should the nations of the world allege — “You are bandits,<sup>4</sup> for you conquered the lands of the seven nations {of Canaan},’ this verse provides the retort: For the Jews will answer, ‘The entire earth belongs to the Holy One; He created it; and He gave it to the one who is proper in His eyes....’”

From Rashi’s nuanced wording, “He should not have **begun**.... What is the reason that He **opened** with *Bereishis*?”<sup>5</sup> — which is different than the wording used in some Midrashim<sup>6</sup> {in which Rabbi Yitzchak’s statement is cited}: “He should not have written the Torah.... What is the reason that He wrote from *Bereishis*? (and similar wording) — it is implied that the question raised in **this** statement {as cited by Rashi} is not that these sections (from “*Bereishis*” until “*HaChodesh*”) should not have been recorded at all in the Torah, but rather that they should not have been written at the **beginning** of the Torah.<sup>7</sup> (For the Torah should have begun with, “*HaChodesh*, this month shall be for you,’ the section that contains the first mitzvah to the Jews.”)<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *Bereishis* 1:1.

<sup>2</sup> *Shemos* 12:2.

<sup>3</sup> *Tehillim* 111:6.

<sup>4</sup> See *Bereishis Rabbah*, sec. 1, par. 2. See as well *Likkutei Sichos* vol. 15, p. 104, fn. 41 and marginal notes, ad loc.

<sup>5</sup> A similar expression is found in *Yalkut Shimoni*, *Shemos*, ibid.

<sup>6</sup> *Midrash Tanchuma* (Buber ed.), “*Bereishis*,” 11; *Midrash Lekach Tov*, beg. of “*Bereishis*”; similarly in *Bereishis Rabbah*, ibid., and in **Rashi’s** commentary on *Tehillim*, ibid.

<sup>7</sup> See *Sifsei Chachamim*, ad. loc. (second explanation); see *Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 5, p. 3 (fn. 9) — that in view of *pshat*, it is more reasonable to understand that it is Rashi’s view as well that {the intention of Rabbi Yitzchak’s statement} “He should not have begun....” is that Hashem need not have written *Bereishis* in the Torah entirely, examine there. (This also fits with the plain meaning of the verse that “He **told** to his people”). However, for the “wine of Torah” {i.e., the deeper meaning} in Rashi’s commentary, we may explain it as explained here, especially since Rashi specifically uses {the expression} “**opened** with *Bereishis*” (and in *Yalkut Shimoni*, ibid.: “began with *Bereishis*”).

<sup>8</sup> In Rashi’s own words.

Since the answer to this question {as to why the Torah begins with *Bereishis*} is (also), “So that if the nations of the world say...,” it follows {that by using the specific terms that he does, Rashi intimates that his view is} that to counter their claim that “you are bandits...,” it would have been inadequate for {the verses beginning} “*Bereishis bara Elokim...*” to have just been recorded (anywhere) in the Torah. They had to have been recorded at the **beginning** of the Torah. As such, this is puzzling:

Even if “*Bereishis*” appeared **after** “*HaChodesh*,” the concept that “the entire earth belongs to Hashem. He created and gave it...,” would still have been publicized. Why would that rebuttal be inadequate? Why does the Torah need to “**open** with *Bereishis*” {to counter the claim of the world’s nations effectively}?

## 2.

WE TOO HAVE TO KNOW!

We also need to clarify:

The teaching, “He should not have begun the Torah but from, ‘*HaChodesh*, this month shall for you...’” maintains that from the point of view of the Torah, the beginning of the Torah should **not** have been *Bereishis* (or that *Bereishis* should not have been recorded at all), especially considering how the author of this teaching emphasizes his point. He uses the rhetorical device, “not... but.”<sup>9</sup> This wording excludes the alternative.<sup>10</sup> If so, how could it be that just for the sake of squashing an allegation from **the nations of the world**, the sequence of the (Written) **Torah** should be **changed** (let alone a full section added)?

Moreover, it would have been sufficient if the answer {to this claim} had been passed on orally throughout the generations (as is the dynamic of the entire Oral Torah). We do find in the Gemara<sup>11</sup> {in similar circumstances} that Geviha

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<sup>9</sup> {Instead of simply stating, “the Torah should have begun with *HaChodesh...*”}

<sup>10</sup> See *Menachos* 83b, *Tosafos*, s.v., “*Masnisin*.”

<sup>11</sup> *Sanhedrin* 91a.

ben Pesisa also refuted the claim of “the Africans”<sup>12</sup> (that “the land of Canaan belongs to us”) with a (different) explanation **not (explicitly)**<sup>13</sup> recorded in the Written Torah. (And he continued to do so when refuting the claims of the descendants of Yishmael and the descendants of Keturah that “the land of Canaan is our and yours.”)

Therefore, it is fair to assume that the Torah “opened with *Bereishis*” not only to refute the claim of the nations of the world but also for a reason relating to the Jews themselves, concerning **their** ({understanding of} Torah and) *avodas*<sup>14</sup> Hashem.

[This would also explain why the verse (cited in Rabbi Yitzchak’s statement), “The power of His acts He told to His people, to give them the estate of nations,” does not present this as a retort to the nations of the world, but rather {it says}, “**He told to His people.**” This implies that “the power of His acts He told to His people” is relevant for Jews themselves:<sup>15</sup> To prevent them from thinking of themselves as “bandits” for having conquered “the lands of the seven nations,” they are told immediately, at the beginning of the Torah, “*Bereishis bara Elokim.*”]

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<sup>12</sup> {Those Canaanites who had relocated to Africa.}

<sup>13</sup> Although his reply was based on “a proof... **from the Torah**” (from that which it states (*Bereishis* 9:25): “Canaan shall be a slave of slaves to his brothers,” {and everything a slave owns belongs to his master.} — this was only as “a proof” but not something **explicit** in the Written Torah. {Furthermore,} “to **his brothers**” refers to **all the nations**, not just the Jews. See also *Likkutei Sichos* vol. 5, (p. 4, fn. 14) that, according to *pshat*, this verse is simply a curse, and it would be entirely unfounded to say that by the power of a curse, Canaan could actually {legally} **become** a slave to his brothers. Examine there.

<sup>14</sup> {*Avodas Hashem*, also referred to as *avodah*, connotes Divine service.}

<sup>15</sup> See also *Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 10, p. 1, fn. 8.

### 3.

#### THE AVODAH OF CONQUEST

This will be understood based on the Tzemach Tzedek's (deeper) explanation<sup>16</sup> of this statement:

The “conquest” referred to in the pronouncement, “You conquered the lands of the seven nations” (spiritually) concerns the *avodah* of Jews while in these lands (and in a more general sense — in the world at large):<sup>17</sup> When Jews “conquer,” that is, when they take hold of and utilize the aspects of the world (those that are permissible) for the sake of Heaven, they transform them. No longer do these things belong exclusively to the domain of the gentile or even just to the mundane domain. Rather, they become articles used for holy purposes within the domain of holiness, holy articles, and even — holy of holies.

Therein lies the accusation (of the world's nations) that “you are bandits”: The nations claim that these objects, originally under gentile control or at least being mundane, belong to them. [This point of view corresponds to the teaching in the Midrash<sup>18</sup> that Yaakov and Eisav apportioned among themselves possession of the different worlds — Yaakov took the World to Come while Eisav took This World]. Thus (according to the nations of the world), this *avodah* of “conquest” — through which we “broaden the boundaries of holiness”<sup>19</sup> — is tantamount to “robbery.”

The rebuttal to this claim: “In the beginning, Hashem created,” so “all is from You.”<sup>20</sup> “The entire earth belongs to the Holy One; He created it; and He gave it to the one who is proper in His eyes.” The fact that the nations formerly possessed certain things, or that certain things, at any rate, belonged to the mundane (before anyone had engaged in *avodah*) was only because “by His will He gave it to them” — it was Hashem's will (due to the Sin of the Tree of

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<sup>16</sup> *Or HaTorah*, “*Shemos*,” p. 262 (based on the beg. of *Emek HaMelech*); see also *Maamar* “*Ki Yedaativ 5684*.”

<sup>17</sup> See at length *Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 10 (p. 2 ff.).

<sup>18</sup> *Seder Eliyahu Zuta*, ch. 19; *Yalkut Shimoni*, “*Bereishis*,” *remez* 111.

<sup>19</sup> See beg. of *Emek HaMelech*; see also *Meor Einayim*, beg. of “*Toldos*,” quoted and explained in *Or HaTorah*, “*Shemos*,” (vol. 4, p. 799b ff).

<sup>20</sup> *Divrei HaYamim I* 29:14.

Knowledge) that these objects be given to them.<sup>21</sup> However (this itself was for the objective that) subsequently — “by His will He took it from them and gave it to us”: Hashem wants Jews to relieve the nations of these objects and restore them to “the boundaries of holiness” (as they were before the sin) through the *avodah* (of conquest) conducted by Jews.

This is also the meaning of the teaching, “He should not have begun the Torah but from, ‘*HaChodesh*, this month shall for you.’” “Torah” is **loftier** than Creation.<sup>22</sup> This includes even the ***avodah*** conducted with the works of creation (or worldly matters) — the *avodah* of “conquest.”<sup>23</sup> This is also evident plainly in the person engaged in such an *avodah*: When a Jew learns Torah or performs a mitzvah, he is, at that moment, involved in a matter of holiness,<sup>24</sup> and is beyond worldly affairs. However, when he is engaged with his own interests, even when his involvement is for the sake of Heaven, they remain (even then) “**your** actions” and “**your** ways”<sup>25</sup> — permissible matters that a person desires {out of consideration} for his own body, existence, and life, all stemming from his animalistic soul.<sup>26</sup>

According to **this** explanation, however, the question above (raised in Section 1) — “What is the reason that He **opened** with *Bereishis*?” — is only strengthened. It may be true that *Bereishis* had to be recorded in the Torah so that we would be aware of the requirement for such an *avodah* {that involves the created world} (and so that we would be aware that in engaging in this *avodah*, we are not at all “bandits”). Nevertheless, since the *avodah* of “conquest” is on a lower level than that of Torah and mitzvos, how could *Bereishis* be placed at the

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<sup>21</sup> See also *Ramaz on Zohar*, vol. 2 (40b), quoted and explained in *Maamar “Zeh HaYom 5694,”* ch. 4, (in *Sefer HaMaamarim Kuntreisim*, vol. 2).

<sup>22</sup> See *Or HaTorah*, “*Shemos*,” p. 262, concerning how Torah signifies the light of *Ein Sof* {the infinite level of G-dliness} being drawn down from beyond the *tzimtzum* {the contraction and concealment of G-dliness that allows space for Creation}, while the account of the “act of creation” comes from after the *Tzimtzum*.

<sup>23</sup> See *Maamar “Vayered 5662”* and “*Bereishis Bara 5705*” (ch. 30).

<sup>24</sup> See *Tanya*, “*Likkutei Amarim*,” ch. 46 (66a); note *Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 15 (pp. 245–6), which says that anyone who fulfills a mitzvah — even if first he had to overcome his evil inclination — is on the level of a *tzaddik*; see there.

<sup>25</sup> {From the verse (*Mishlei* 3:6), “Know Him in all your ways” and the mishnah (*Avos* 2:12), “All your actions shall be for the sake of Heaven.”}

<sup>26</sup> {The *animalistic soul* is one of the two souls possessed by every Jew, the other being the G-dly soul. A fundamental element of the animalistic soul is that it desires physicality, and all negative traits are rooted in the *animalistic soul*. The primary objective of a Jew’s divine service is to subdue the desires of the *animalistic soul*. Ultimately, the righteous are given the ability to transform the *animalistic soul*, redirecting its powers for holy ends.}

beginning and **opening** of the Torah (for precedence in order — in Torah — indicates precedence in status)?

#### 4.

##### THE AVODAH OF BIRURIM

One of the explanations that can be given:

True, the *avodah* of conquest, in the Chassidic vernacular called the *avodah* of *birurim*,<sup>27</sup> is on a lower **level** than the study of Torah and the fulfillment of mitzvos (as discussed above). Nevertheless, Hashem's ultimate intention in creating the world was "(the Holy One desired) for Him to have a home in the lower realms."<sup>28</sup> This denotes (as explained by the Alter Rebbe)<sup>29</sup> a low realm "which nothing is lower than it." **This** objective is achieved more broadly and deeply through the *avodah* of *birurim* than by learning Torah and fulfilling mitzvos since an abode is also made for Hashem in a person's **discretionary** matters, which are really the "lowest."<sup>30</sup>

[Similarly, a person's soul also benefits from this *avodah*. To carry out the *avodah* of *birurim*, a person must tap into the deeper powers of his soul than are needed for the study of Torah and the fulfillment of mitzvos: To guarantee that even while a person is not working within the confines<sup>31</sup> of holiness, but is instead engaged with worldly matters, he will remain bound-up with holiness to the extent that all his permissible matters are conducted only "for the sake of Heaven" (or on a loftier level — "Know him in all your ways"), he needs to — obviously — be more devout.<sup>32</sup> He needs to attain a stronger bond between his

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<sup>27</sup> {Lit., "selecting, separating," often translated as "refining" — when using mundane objects for G-dly purposes, sparks of holiness are separated out and elevated to the realm of holiness.}

<sup>28</sup> *Tanya*, "*Likkutei Amarim*," beg. of ch. 36, based on *Tanchuma*, "*Naso*," ch. 16; et al.

<sup>29</sup> *Tanya*, *ibid.*

<sup>30</sup> See also *Likkutei Sichos* *ibid.*, p. 245.

<sup>31</sup> {In the original, אמות פון קדושה, lit., "the four cubits of holiness."}

<sup>32</sup> {In the original Yiddish, "פריימער," denoting authentically observant.}

soul and Hashem, which will not be weakened even when involved in worldly matters.]<sup>33</sup>

And this is also why He “**opened** with *Bereishis*.”<sup>34</sup> The main intention and the ultimate goal of Creation is to have an abode in the **lower realms** with **no** realm lower than it. This goal is accomplished through the *avodah* of “*Bereishis*,’ in the beginning He created”<sup>35</sup> (the *avodah* of *birurim*).

## 5.

### NOT OUR JOB TO REFINER THE FORBIDDEN

The above explanation, however, falls short. From Rashi’s subsequent remarks — “What is the reason that Hashem opened with *Bereishis*?... So that if the nations of the world say...,” it is evident that the reason He “opened with *Bereishis*” is that if He had not done so, (even if *Bereishis* had been placed later in the Torah) there still would have been room for the allegation of the nations that “you are bandits” (as discussed above in Section 1).

However, in light of our above discussion, it emerges that the reason Hashem “opened with *Bereishis*” was not to negate the claim that “you are bandits” but only to prioritize and emphasize the virtue of the *avodah* of *birurim* (“*Bereishis Bara*”) over that of the *avodah* of Torah and mitzvos (“*HaChodesh*”).

This will be clarified based on the well-known thought that all worldly matters fall into one of two categories:<sup>36</sup>

- a) Permissible matters — the conquest and *birur*<sup>37</sup> of these things are accomplished by the *avodah* of “all your actions {shall be} for the sake of

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<sup>33</sup> See at length *Likkutei Sichos*, ibid (ff) how this is comparable to the advantage of a *baal teshuvah* over a *tzaddik*.

<sup>34</sup> See also *Maamar “Bereishis Bara”* 5738, ch. 3 (printed in *Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 20, p. 263; {*Sefer HaMaamarim Melukat*, vol. 1, p. 267})

<sup>35</sup> {An *avodah* that takes into account, and interacts with, creation.}

<sup>36</sup> See *Tanya*, chs. 6-7; et al.

<sup>37</sup> {The singular of *birurim*.}

Heaven,”<sup>38</sup> and, “know Him in all your ways,”<sup>39</sup> and also, obviously — by the study of Torah and fulfillment of mitzvos; and

- b) Forbidden matters — their vitality comes from the three impure *kelipos*<sup>40</sup> that contain no good. **These** objects also have a spark of holiness that brings them into existence and gives them life (for the existence of all things comes from holiness). In the case of these objects, the holy light of these sparks is concealed<sup>41</sup> so that they cannot be refined and elevated to holiness and are therefore forbidden.

Only rarely (not in the majority of cases, and the Torah concerns itself with the majority) can these forbidden things have a *birur* — through nullification in the majority or in sixty,<sup>42</sup> etc., or in cases where **intentional** sins become like merits through *teshuvah* out of love,<sup>43</sup> and the like.

On this basis, we may say that the primary accusation that “you are bandits” (spiritually) concerns **these** entities. Regarding them, there is room in the Torah for such a claim. For it is impossible for a Jew whose conduct is aligned with the Torah to **refine** forbidden things. He needs to “**turn** from evil”<sup>44</sup> and **push** away forbidden things.<sup>45</sup> According to the Torah, such entities are not within the province of Jews. (Instead, they lay within the province of *kelipah*.)

Therefore, if “*Bereishis*” had been recorded in the Torah after “*HaChodesh*” [and moreover, {Rashi uses} wording that excludes the

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<sup>38</sup> {*Avos* 2:12; *Shulchan Aruch*, “*Orach Chaim*,” sec. 231, par. 1.}

<sup>39</sup> {*Mishlei* 3:6.}

<sup>40</sup> {*Kelipah* translates literally as “a shell” or “a peel.” The term refers to anything that conceals just as a shell or a peel conceals the fruit within. *Kelipah* is often used to refer to evil or impurity. *Kabbalah* delineates two distinct types of *kelipah*: *kelipas nogah* — literally *kelipah* that is translucent, and so can be illuminated; and the *shalosh kelipos hatmeios* — “three totally impure *kelipos*.”}

<sup>41</sup> See *Sefer HaMaamarim* 5670, p. 103; *Hemshech* 5672, ch. 374.

<sup>42</sup> {In the dietary laws of *kashrus*, non-kosher ingredients that have been mixed with kosher ingredients can be nullified in specific instances — in some cases when there is a majority of kosher ingredients, and in other cases when the kosher ingredient is 60 times the quantity of the non-kosher ingredient.} However, one may not nullify a forbidden entity from the outset (*Shulchan Aruch*, “*Yoreh Deah*,” sec. 99, par. 5).

<sup>43</sup> *Yoma* 86b; see at length *Derech Mitzvosecha*, 191a ff.; et al.

<sup>44</sup> {*Tehillim* 34:15.}

<sup>45</sup> See *Likkutei Torah*, “*Shir HaShirim*” (6d) — “The spark is not elevated... it is just expelled...”

alternative: “He should **not** have begun the Torah **but** from, ‘*HaChodesh*, this month shall for you” — the Torah, from its perspective, **demands** that it begin with “*HaChodesh*”] this would imply that the way to conduct the *avodah* of “conquest” and *birurim* is only through Torah and mitzvos. Were this true, {the allegation of the nations that} “you conquered the lands of seven nations” (which includes refining the sparks of the three impure *kelipos*)<sup>46</sup> would be {validated — and this conquest would be} robbery.

## 6.

### *BIRUR OF THE PERMITTED AND FORBIDDEN*

This claim is refuted by the Torah having “opened with *Bereishis*!”

From the perspective of Torah, the sparks within forbidden objects cannot undergo *birur*; however, from the perspective of “the Holy One” alone (Who is loftier than Torah), since a person is given the wherewithal to do *teshuvah*, and with *teshuvah* out of love, the person can transform his intentional sins into merits. [This is akin to the statement of our Sages<sup>47</sup> that specifically when “the Holy One was asked, ‘What is the punishment {for a sinner}?’ He replied, The person shall do *teshuvah*, and he shall receive atonement.” (In contrast, the reply received was different when the Torah was asked)].<sup>48</sup> It emerges that through *teshuvah*, **these** sparks can also undergo *birur*.

Since “all is from You” — which includes also forbidden objects (and as explained above, their existence and vitality derive from the spark of holiness within), and they, too, are under the “ownership” of Hashem; and since Hashem’s Essence is beyond the constraints {of differentiation between states}

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<sup>46</sup> Note the statement of our Sages (cited by Rashi on *Vayikra* (18:3) from *Toras Kohanim* ad loc.) “for those nations whom the Jews conquered were **the most corrupt of all nations.**”

<sup>47</sup> *Pesikta D’Rav Kahana*, “*parshas Shuvah*”; *Yalkut Shimoni*, “*Tehillim*,” ch. 25; *Jerusalem Talmud*, “*Makkos*,” ch. 2, par. 5.

<sup>48</sup> For although even from (the Torah’s reply —) “he shall bring an atonement sacrifice” {the advantage of *teshuvah* is conveyed} as it is only effective together with *teshuvah* — {nevertheless,} according to the Torah’s reply, {*teshuvah* is incomparable to the one prescribed by Hashem, for} *teshuvah* only affects that intentional sins be counted as unwitting transgressions (but are not atoned for entirely), and afterward “the sacrifices are effective, as by way of a sacrifice his unwitting transgression is atoned for” (*Or HaTorah*, “*Yom Kippur*,” p. 1557 ff.); et al.

of concealment and revelation — even **these** sparks of holiness (in which the light of G-dliness is completely concealed) are unified with Him. From there, the power of *teshuvah* comes that can refine even these sparks and elevate them to holiness.

Since “the Torah is light,” the revelation of all matters of holiness comes through the Torah (including even those entities that, in their own right, are loftier than the Torah). Therefore, the concept of *teshuvah* (the *birur* of the sparks within forbidden objects) is stated and explained by Torah.<sup>49</sup>

This is the basis for the difference between the two versions of Rabbi Yitzchak’s statement mentioned above (in Section 1): (a) “What is the reason that He **wrote** from *Bereishis*?”; and (b) “Why did He **open** with *Bereishis*?”:

{Had *Bereishis* only been written to illustrate the need} for the *birur* of permissible objects, it would have been sufficient “that He **wrote** from *Bereishis*” — for *Bereishis* to have been recorded (anywhere) in Torah. Notwithstanding the advantage this *avodah* has over the *avodah* of Torah and mitzvos (as discussed above in Section 4), nonetheless, Torah sanctions such an *avodah*, and in fact — Torah obligates this *avodah*.

However, the *birur* of forbidden objects is not based on the **regular protocol** of the Torah, for even one who says, “I will sin and then do *teshuvah*” still commits a sin and will be liable for punishment in proportion to the blemish caused.<sup>50</sup> For {despite its temporary nature, by sinning} he also causes blemishes, etc. And for {the sake of validating the possibility of} **this** aspect {of *birur*} accomplished by conquering the lands of seven nations, *Bereishis* had to have been recorded at the **opening** of the Torah. After all, since the ability to engage in this type of *birur* comes from a place that transcends the Torah,<sup>51</sup> its placement, therefore (in the Torah itself) is at the beginning and **opening** of the Torah.

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<sup>49</sup> See *Hemshech* 5672, vol. 3, p. 1408.

<sup>50</sup> *Tanya*, end of ch. 24 and in the note. ad loc.

<sup>51</sup> Analogous to how *teshuvah* can even atone for the neglect of Torah study and makes it count for him as merits.

This is also {the deeper meaning of} what Rabbi Yitzchak said: “What is the reason that He opened with *Bereishis*? Because, “The power of His acts He *told* to His people, to give them the estate of nations.””

There is a downflow (“told” connotes a downflow)<sup>52</sup> to the Jews (“His people”) that infuses them with “the **power** of His acts”<sup>53</sup> — the G-dly power (and spark) embedded in (all) “His acts.”

Since the Jews and Hashem are all one<sup>54</sup> — {unified at} an even loftier level than the unity of the Torah and Hashem, in accord with the statement of our Sages,<sup>55</sup> “Israel precedes” the Torah — Jews, therefore, receive the capacity from “The Holy One” (Who is loftier than Torah) for *teshuvah*, through which a Jew’s intentional sins become like merits for him.

Just that, insofar as a person’s *avodah* must proceed in gradual stages, so it is as well in terms of *teshuvah*:

At the start of a person’s *avodah*, when the level of *teshuvah* (at which he is holding) is still such that he perceives his *avodah* to involve **tearing** himself **away** from evil — this *teshuvah* (as he deems it) is comparable to “robbery” — for it requires him to requisition an object that appears to “belong” in the domain of *kelipah*.

Subsequently, however, when he attains a greater level of *teshuvah* — {described as} “the spirit *tashuv*, returns to Hashem who gave it”<sup>56</sup> — and within his *teshuvah*, he perceives a shift in **returning** to his root and source (all the

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<sup>52</sup> Mezritcher Maggid’s *Or Torah*, “*Tehillim*,” on *Tehillim* 111:6 (72a); “*Bereishis*,” (10d); {Mezritcher Maggid’s} *Likkutei Amarim*, ch. 94.

<sup>53</sup> See also *Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 10, p. 6, regarding the usage of the particular term “power.”

<sup>54</sup> {See *Zohar*, vol. 3, 73a.}

<sup>55</sup> *Bereishis Rabbah*, sec. 1, par. 4; *Tanna DeVei Eliyahu Rabbah*, ch. 14; see also *Likkutei Torah*, “*Shir HaShirim*,” 19b-c; et al.

<sup>56</sup> *Koheles* 12:7; *Likkutei Torah*, “*Devarim*,” 71c; **et al.**

way to “Hashem who gave it” — his initial root and source) because (the source of) his soul, as it is unified with “Hashem who gave it,” radiates through him —

the same will then occur concerning the *birur* of the sparks of holiness (found within forbidden objects) that are refined through his *teshuvah*. He will then understand that (this is not any sort of “robbery,” but rather) “all is from You.”

And {he will realize that} from the outset, the entire descent (of these sparks) was only for the sake of their {ensuing} ascent — destruction for the sake of construction<sup>57</sup> — that a Jew through *teshuvah* should restore and elevate them to their root and source.

Through this, Jews will attain the advantage of *teshuvah*. “In the place that *baalei teshuvah* stand, even the completely righteous cannot stand.”<sup>58</sup>

And therefore (even) *tzadikim* will need to engage in *teshuvah*<sup>59</sup> — as seen from the directive given by our Sages to **every** Jew concerning **every day**: “{A person should spend} all his days in a state of *teshuvah*.”<sup>60</sup>

— From the talk delivered on Shabbos *parshas Vayikra*, 5740 (1980)

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<sup>57</sup> {By Jewish law, destruction conducted solely to make room for construction is considered itself a stage in construction; so too, when one utilizes these sparks for the ultimate purpose by refining them, their previous state when they were trapped within the *kelipos* is perceived as a stage in their eventual elevation.}

<sup>58</sup> *Mishneh Torah*, “*Hilchos Teshuvah*,” ch. 7, par. 4, in accordance with the opinion of Rabbi Avahu in *Berachos* 34b; see also *Sefer HaMaamarim* 5709, p. 183 in the footnote.

<sup>59</sup> {See *Zohar* vol. 3, 153b.}

<sup>60</sup> *Shabbos* 153a.