

# Weekly shiur

10 Elul 5773

(Notes taken during class, not reviewed nor edited by Harav Ginsburgh)

Nigun: Ani ledodi vedodi li.

Medley

Nigun: Shamil

## 1. 5774: *The year of Tzadik-Rasha*

Lechaim lechaim. May it be a good and sweet year for the entire Jewish people.

### **Elevating the tzadik and submitting the rasha in yourself**

The month of Elul is a time for preparation for the coming year. Every year we prepare by noting some *remazim* for the new year, usually using the *gematria* of the coming year, in this case 5774. We'll connect this particular allusion to the *parashah* too, as the Alter Rebbe says. "Be a *tzadik* and do not be a *rasha*" (תְּהִי צַדִּיק וְאַל תְּהִי רָשָׁע) are the words the Tanya begins with.

In every Jew there is an aspect of a *tzadik* and of a *rasha*, because God created us with two inclinations, which are the animal soul and the Divine soul. So we each have the *tzadik* and the *rasha* in us. And our task is to strengthen the *tzadik* and to submit the *rasha* in us. This is one of the simple meanings of these opening words of the Tanya. Elevate the *tzadik* in you and lower the *rasha* in you.

So what is the sign in relation to 774? 774 is the exact value of "*tzadik rasha*" (צַדִּיק רָשָׁע). Usually, whenever we find a new *gematria* for the value of the year, we try to think what kind of book can we write that will use this *gematria* on its cover (for noting the publication year). So you need some imagination to think of what kind of book could be written.

There is only a single verse in the entire *Tanach* that includes these two words together sequentially. There are many verses that contain both words, but only one where they are together.

### **Tzadik-rasha in parashat Ki Teitzei**

We said that we have to connect everything to the *parashah*. What is connected there to this allusion? Near the end of the *parashah* in the seventh *aliyah*, there is the *mitzvah* of *malkot*, lashes, and there is the *mitzvah* not to add more than the required amount, from which the sages learn that it is forbidden to strike a Jew, and anyone who does this is regarded as a *rasha*. A non-Jew who strikes a Jew is punished with death.

The paragraph begins, "If there is a quarrel between people, they should approach the judgment, and they must acquit the *tzadik* and condemn the *rasha*" (כִּי יְהִי רִיב בֵּין (אֲנָשִׁים וְנִגְשׁוּ אֶל הַמִּשְׁפָּט וּשְׁפָטוּם, וְהִצְדִּיקוּ אֶת הַצַּדִּיק וְהִרְשִׁיעוּ אֶת הַרָשָׁע). There are not many verses in

the Pentateuch where a *tzadik* and *rasha* appear together and this one is particularly special, since the words appear twice each (acquit in Hebrew is from the same root as *tzadik*, and condemn is from the same root as *rasha*). The commentaries note that this is seemingly superfluous. What else are judges supposed to do but acquit the *tzadik* and condemn the *rasha*? That is their whole task. It's simple that this is what they should do. So why does the Torah have to write it.

The paragraph continues, "If the *rasha* has incurred lashes, the judge must have him bend over and flog him in front of him, a number of times as befits his evil." It says that there are 207 transgressions in the Torah that the person doing them deserves lashes. 207 is the value of "light," and in the *Hayom Yom* it says that whomever knows the secret of something can enlighten it. So there is some secret about the judge having to bend the person over and administer 39 lashes. The sages learn that the maximum number of lashes is 39 from the writing of the word "in the number" (בְּמִסְפָּר). because it is written with a *shva* and with a *patach*, implying "up to," but not "including."

In the second verse we find the mitzvah to strike him and in the third we find the prohibition not to strike him more than 39 times, "[Up to] forty [lashes] shall be administered, no more, lest he strikes him with a far more severe flogging, and your brother will be belittled in your eyes."

Now, the literal meaning of "they shall acquit the *tzadik* and condemn the *rashah*" seems to be referring to two different people, like in the beginning that two people quarrel and they go to be judged and the judges judge them (3 are required). And then one is declared a *tzadik* and the other is found to be a *rasha*. But, there are many commentaries that say that the Torah is actually referring to just one person, and in him there is an aspect of being righteous and an aspect of being evil and the task of the judge is to elevate the righteousness and to submit the evil causing the person to undergo separation (הבדלה), like all the secret of Rosh Hashanah regarding the *nesirah* (separation). Once the separation has been performed, we can come to sweetening. The sweetening is that after he is flogged he is transformed from a *rasha* into "your brother," as it says, "lest... your brother be belittled in your eyes" (ונקלה אחיך לעיניך). To make the *rasha* into a *ba'al teshuvah* who is even greater than the *tzadik*. The whole day, as the sages say, he is considered a *rasha* and suddenly he becomes "your brother."

So the *remez* for this year is צדיק רשע, *tzadik rasha*. So this is a year when we each need to meditate upon the *tzadik* in ourselves and the *rasha* in us. Not to think that I'm only a *tzadik*—we all have both in us. The Tanya is a book for *beinonim* (indeed, as Chassidim say, "were it so that we were [at least] *beinonim*"). And the *beinoni* always has both forces in him, and there is a judgment going on all the time inside, a judgment whereby the *tzadik* is acquitted (and elevated) and the *rasha* is condemned (and submitted).

Before we continue discussing the flogging, let's note that it is part of parashat *Teitzei* and parashat *Teitzei* is we always read in Elul, the month of *teshuvah*, so indeed, as we have already begun to explain, the stages of *teshuvah* that appear here are from the submission of flogging to the sweetening of becoming "your brother" once again.

### **“The rasha swallows he who is more a tzadik”**

But, now let's continue with the one time that these two words, צדיק רשע appear together in the Tanach. It's a pasuk in the Prophets, in Habbakuk (1:13) where he prays to God and he asks God: “How can You God stay silent while the rasha swallows he who is more a *tzadik* than him” (לָמָּה תִּבְּיֵט בּוֹגְדִים תַּחְרִישׁ בְּבֹלַע רָשָׁע צְדִיק מִמֶּנּוּ). The sages note that there is a difference here between the *tzadik* who is greater than him and the *tzadik* who is just a *tzadik*. The *rasha* can only swallow a *tzadik* who is more a *tzadik* than him (a relative *tzadik*), but he can't swallow the consummate *tzadik*. Still Habbakuk cries out, how can God stay silent when this happens.

A few verses earlier there is another connection between the *tzadik* and the *rasha*, but not exactly the two words one after another, but it is still a very important phrase connecting them, “the *rasha* crowns/surrounds the *tzadik*” (רָשָׁע מְכַתֵּיר אֶת הַצְּדִיק), then as we said it says that the *rasha* can swallow the *tzadik* relative to him. In the end he will throw him up. Like the verse that states, חֵיל בָּלַע וִיקִיאֵנוּ, there is an important *kavanah* here, since the initials spell the holy Name, חבו, which we have in mind during the Amidah blessing of גְּדוּל לַחֲרוּתֵינוּ. Now the word, חֵיל is also the same spelling as “soldier” (חַיִל), the acronym of the three blessings the Rebbe blesses every child with; that they be a chassid yerei shamayim and a lamdan (a chassid, a God-fearing Jew, and a scholar of Torah). But sometimes a person is just a relative *tzadik* and the *rasha* can swallow him, but even in such a case, the Torah promises, חֵיל בִּלְע וִיקִיאֵנוּ, that everything will come out of the *rasha* and everything will return to good and nothing will be lost. Sometimes it seems to us that the evil inclination is so strong that it seems it has swallowed the good inclination so much, but in the end it will be good.

### **The rasha crowns the tzadik – from swallowing to crowning**

Now just as the *rasha* sometimes swallows the *tzadik*, it also says that he crowns him, meaning that he surrounds him, attacks him, takes control of him. What does it mean in the inner dimension (these 2 statements from Habbakuk)? It says that Habbakuk's prophecy is related to the Mashiach, as he says, אִם יִתְמַהֵמָה חֶכְהָ לֹ, בֵּא יִבּוֹא לֹא יֵאָחֵר. What is the inner meaning of the *rasha* surrounds the *tzadik*. I don't usually think that he surrounds him or attack him, or swallows, but rather it sounds like putting a crown on his head, making him into a king, like we do to God on Rosh Hashanah. Likewise the Rebbe teaches us that we too should crown the king. It has to come out of our own will. Our will awakening from below to crown the Mashiach and make him into our king. This word, מְכַתֵּיר, crown, appears only this once in the entire *Tanach*. So even though the literal meaning is that he surrounds the *tzadik* and swallows him, the inner dimension of the meaning is that the *rasha* himself will do *teshuvah* (he has a potential that the *tzadik* doesn't have—he can become and will definitely become a *ba'al teshuvah*). The *tzadik* without the *rasha* does not have a crown. Who gives the *tzadik*—including the *tzadik* in me—his crown? The *rasha*. First he swallows the *tzadik* and then it turns out that he gives him his crown.

## The essence of the tenth day of Elul

This entire *kavanah* is related specifically to this day, *behashgachah*. Living with the time includes the date, and we are on the eve of the 10<sup>th</sup> of Elul. The 10<sup>th</sup> of Elul, is according to *Kabbalah*, corresponds to the *malchut* of *Adam Kadmon*. The first 10 days of Elul correspond to the ten *sefirot* of *Adam Kadmon*, then it continues with the 7 *sefirot* of *Akudim*, then of *Nekudim* and then finally the days of creation of the world of rectification, the world of *Berudim*. So we are now entering the *malchut* of *Adam Kadmon*. The *malchut* of *Adam Kadmon* is what becomes the Unknowable head of *Atzilut*, the unknowable head that is the faith of the world of rectification. So this is already special. 'אליל is equal to *mazal* (מזל). There is a lot of *mazal* on this day.

## Allusions to the tenth of Elul

Now, let's return to the prophecy of Habbakuk. We said that *מכתיר* appears only once in the entire Tanach. *מכתיר* is equal to 670. It contains the word *כתר* plus *מי מי* is 50, the 50 Gates of Understanding. Cast your eyes up and see Who (*מי*) created these. How is this connected to the 10<sup>th</sup> of Elul? It equals 10 times the value of Elul (67). 670 is usually connected with another basic secret in *Kabbalah*, to the words, *יחוד ברכה קדושה*, the secret of *יבק* (*Yabok*). It is also connected with *בקי*, the word hinted to in *Likutei Moharan* in connection with Elul. Like we said, *מכתיר* is the 620 pillars of light and the 50 Gates of understanding.

Now let's see the value of the entire phrase, *רשע מכתיר את הצדיק*. Just *מכתיר* is 670. So the best day for the rasha to crown the tzadik, specifically inside each of us, is today! The whole phrase is equal to 1850, a multiple of 10, 10 times *אני לדודי ודודי לי*, I am to my beloved and my beloved is to me, the acronym of Elul, the main task and toil of the month of Elul. There can't be anything more beautiful to connect the rasha crowning the tzadik with our present moment.

## Living today, in the present moment

Let's meditate on the final letters of *רשע מכתיר את הצדיק* which are *ערתק*, which equal 770. But, 770 is 10 times 10 Elul (which we said equals 77). So we have three allusions that connect the phrase *מכתיר את הצדיק* to the present moment. What did the Alter Rebbe want us? He wanted us to live in the present moment. Not yesterday, just today. If we live today, then the Mashiach will come today. This is what the Mashiach said to Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi, I will come today. And he thought he was lying, because he didn't come that day and so Eliyahu Hanavi told him, it depends on your doing what is right. If you live with him now, in the present moment, then Mashiach comes.

The rasha stands in a place that the tzadik can't so he can place the crown on the tzadik's head.

## Revealing the light of Atika in binah – Pillars of light in gates of understanding

Now let's continue with the second phrase, *בבלע רשע צדיק ממנו*. The word, *בבלע*, "As he swallows." In the previous phrase the main word was *מכתיר*. In this phrase, the word

בבלע is the special and unique word. It is also the word that parallels to crown him. What is the connection. The root of מכתיר is כתר, which in Kabbalah represents the 620 pillars of light, where each pillar is a mitzvah, spanning from the roof to the ground. The 620 represents the 613 mitzvot in the Torah and the 7 mitzvot of the sages. But, we said that מכתיר includes the 50 gates of understanding, too. The revelation of Atika is in the Mother principle, in the 50 gates of understanding. And מי קיימא לשאלה, this word is related to the question: Who created these? When meditating on creation there is a revelation of עתיקא.

### **620 pillars, 32 pathways, 50 gateways, and 72 bridges**

Now what about בבלע. What stands between the 50 Gates of understanding and the 620 pillars of light. This is one of the first lessons in Kabbalah. Each of the first 4 sefirot is connected with a certain image. Keter, the crown is related to an image of pillars of light, which are described as hollow so that there can be flow of the soul through them. 620 is itself the value of keter. In wisdom and understanding it is not the same (that the number is the gematria of the sefirah). The number related to wisdom is 32, 32 Pathways of Wisdom, the beginning of the Book of Formation. Then in understanding as we said is Gates of Understanding, and there are 50 of them. The notion of a gate is related to “ascertaining” to “contemplating” each person based on their abilities contemplates the answer to “Who created these?” There are 50 such gates. Finally in loving-kindness there are 72 Bridges. The value of chesed, loving-kindness, is again 72 (like in the Keter). A bride is like bridging between two souls, love of the Jewish people. The power of loving-kindness is to bridge. There are 72 such bridges. There is nothing like this in Kabbalah relating to the rest of the sefirot. This only is mentioned in regard to keter, wisdom, understanding, and chesed.

### **The first four sefirot and the land of Israel**

How much do the names of these sefirot equal. Keter is 620, wisdom (chochmah) and understanding (binah) together equal 140, and chesed (loving-kindness) is 72. It says that keter-chochmah-binah equals 760, and with chesed, they equal 832, which is a very important number. It itself equals 32 times Havayah (26), Havayah itself is related to wisdom. 32 is also the value of kavod, honor, the honor of Havayah. And 832 equals “the land of Israel” (ארץ ישראל). Sometimes it says that the land of Israel equals, אור הכתר, so that the entire land is the revelation of the keter. But, now we have that 832 is equal to אורה כתר. This is a first lesson in Kabbalah and Chassidut, how is it relevant to us.

### **The year 5774 and the first four sefirot**

We said that we have two central words: מכתיר בבלע, we see that מכתיר is 620 plus 50, and בבלע is made up of לב (32) and עב (72). So the מכתיר includes the keter and the understanding, while בבלע includes the wisdom and the loving-kindness. And together they exactly equal 774! The value of next year, and the value of צדיק רשע as we said. So the number 774 appears twice in these verses. So the coming year is the year to connect

the tzadik with the rasha, and there are many ways to interpret this. It might be that this is simply the best year to connect actual tzadikim with actual rasha'im. But, earlier we said that this is the best year to elevate the tzadik and to submit the rasha in myself. In the end we do want to connect them together. To create the separation, we have to exercise our power to choose, you have to choose what you want to be. God says, choose life. So this is the best year, 5774 is the year to choose which you want to be. Do you want to be a tzadik or a rasha. But, the end is ונקלה אחיך לעיניך.

From the fact that we said that 774 is equal to the 620 pillars, the 32 pathways, the 50 gates and the 72 bridges, then first of all it is a good year for artists. In our school, the children should learn how to draw these images next year.

### **Making the tzadik laugh, making the rasha silent**

Let's return to the vesre, והצדיקו את הצדיק והרשעו את הרשע, which we said seems superfluous, because what else should the judges do!? In the verse from Habbakuk, the verse is ולמה אתה ה' תחריש בבלע צדיק רשע ממנו, the word before בבלע is תחריש, meaning why are you silent. Tongue in cheek, we can say that if these words are superfluous we should maybe read it differently, we have room to offer such a reading. In a certain book when I saw these words, I thought it said, והצחיקו את הצדיק והחרישו את הרשע, they should make the tzadik laugh and make the rasha silent. The rasha makes a lot of noise, so you have to quiet him (maybe you make such noise in his ears, that he grows silent). There are a number of lawyers in the audience. So, who is the tzadik in the courtroom? The one that finds the whole situation of going to court funny! There is a lot of connection between the month of Elul and the month of Adar, whose sense is laughter. That is why Adar is the best time to have a trial (especially with a non-Jew). What is the connection with laughter? Because the one who will have the final laugh, he is the tzadik. But, it might also be that if he finds the whole situation funny, "make the tzadik laugh" then he is the tzaik.

### **A new understanding in flogging and its connection to Yehoshua and Agur ben Yakeh**

Then it continues, והיה and this word according to the sages indicates joy. What is the joy, the judge pushes him down and flogs him, והיה אם בין הכות הרשע. This word בין (bin) is very unique. The Or Hachayim and the Ba'al Haturim write that there is only one other בין with a chirik, Yehoshua bin Nun, and Agur bin Yakeh (אגור בן יקה). There are only these three instances of the word בין with a chirik. The Ba'al Haturim explains the connection between them. אגור בן יקה is King Solomon, it is one of his connotations in Proverbs, and he was so called because he gathered (אגור) all the wisdom in the world and then he threw it up (יקה). So this is not a very good gathering and storage. What does the word בין in his name mean? Understanding (like binah). And so והיה אם בין הכות הרשע, is like the phrase, אם לבניה תקרא, where we read the אם as mother (eim). And so Mother is related to understanding. So this all refers to binah, first והיה, joy, the inner experience of understanding, בין אם as we said. Why was Yehoshua called בין נון (bin nun), because Moshe Rabbeinu filled him with understanding. There is an explanation that

nun refers to Moshe himself, who filled him after his death with the 50<sup>th</sup> gate (the value of nun, נ). So again, there are 3 instances of bin in the Tanach. 3 times bin is equal to Yosef (יוסף). Yehoshua is his descendant.

So now we see that this rasha has a lot of merit, he is a friend to Yehoshua and to King Solomon.

### **Rebbe Elimelech of Lizhensk's understanding of flogging**

Let's look at the root of הכאה. The sages call this flogging (מלקות). At the end of the verse it says, ונקלה, in reverse order of the letters. The Noam Elimelech explains this whole section of the Torah as talking about someone who comes to the Rebbe for a private audience and reveals all his sins to the Rebbe, and the person together with the rasha in him come to the tzadik so that ושפטום, they shall be judged. This is the only instance of this word in the Tanach and its value is "truth" (אמת), meaning that the judgment should be true, as it says that every judge that makes a true judgment becomes a partner with God in creation. The value of the entire verse is equal to exactly 4410, 10 times the value of "truth" (אמת), 441. We had a few things multiplied by 10 before. And in this case the special word ושפטום multiplied by 10 is equal to the entire verse.

The whole rectification here is how the tzadik rectifies the rasha and in the end turns him into "a brother," for the sake of my brothers and friends. In the end the Noam Elimelech explains all three verses, and the words ונקלה אחיך לעיניך is explained by the sages as defaming. It is forbidden to strike him too many times until he is embarrassed, קלון. But, the word לקה is in this word too.

### **The secret of the crown in the lashes**

In the Tanach, lashes are called מכות, like "strikes." "He shall strike him" (והכהו) is a palindrome word, it is symmetrical in both directions. It is equal to 42, also a very important number. But, what is the 2-letter root (gate) of והכהו, it is actually just the single letter כ.

There is an interesting chiddush that if a Jew raises his hand and strikes another Jew, then even if the damage is just a שווה פרוטה (a penny) he has to pay him, but then he is free of the flogging—because you cannot be punished with two things. But, what if he struck him so lightly that it did not do enough damage to be equal a שווה פרוטה? Still he is punished with 39 lashes, something that can bring him close to death, as long as he can take it (if he can't then he is given what he can bear—this is another meaning of בג, that we need to contemplate carefully how much he can bear). The letter כ kaf, is related to both the crown and to the hand. So the entire secret of having to strike, as it says that a person should strike the rasha in himself, is all in order to connect with our own keter. There has to be a lot of joy in this meditation. How joyous it is when you understand what happens when the rasha is struck, according to the Torah. What is he given? He merits a crown.

### **How the tzadik rebukes**

The end of the paragraph on lashes reads, ארבעים יכנו לא יוסיף פן יוסיף על אלה מכה רבה, ונקלה אחיך לעיניך. Says the Noam Elimelech, ונקלה is like being burnt (קליי). A novel explanation. The tzadik when he strikes the rasha, he has to leave his Gan Eden and to see and identify with how this rasha is being burnt in Gehenom. If you would like to rebuke a Jew and bring him back to the right path, especially on the month of Elul (the Rebbe stresses that one should be very careful not to rebuke a Jew especially during Elul), the NOam Elimelech says you have to leave yourself and experience, as it were, how it is to be burnt in the fires of Geheinom. Striking him, finishes all his evil. And if already your are striking the evil, you should get rid of it completely. You have to finish it off entirely, so that it can't grow back. And so the one rebuking, he says, has to feel himself to a consummate tzadik. As much as to himself he seems, were it that I was a beinoni. But, in order to help someone do teshvuah, a person has to see himself as a consummate tzadik, and to reach that he has to enter into his friends Geheinom.

How much does ונקלה אחיך לעיניך? It equals 10 times 42, the value of וזהו.

### **Drawing a shape within a shape and running from evil**

So there are many beautiful things in this mitzvah of flogging and in the mitzvah of not adding, פן תוסיף. And this is all connected to the sign for the coming year, that 774 is equal to רשע צדיק. The initials spell רצ, meaning running. If the order is the opposite it spells צר like a painter. What is God's special talent as an artist? That he can draw one thing within another. And in our context that means drawing the rasha inside the tzadik. The literal meaning is that he can create a form within a form, a neshamah, a soul, in a body. It is very close to the meaning of drawing a tzadik (soul) inside a rasha (body). At first it seems that the external, the surrounding rasha, swallows the tzadik. But, in the end it will be revealed that the body will support the soul, it will reveal the light to the soul. But, the order as we said in the Tanach is always רצ, rasha then tzadik. And in order for the rasha to crown the tzadik, we have to run. Running is the power of the rasha, a tzadik by himself doesn't really run. The ba'alei teshuvah have to run very quickly to grab hold of the government. First the rasha is circling the tzadik. But, the tzadik has to adopt the rasha and his power, he has to grab the rasha right now. The tzadikim they work slowly.

All this is the sign for the coming year. We'll have a short intermission for some more music.

## ***2. Categories of individuals restricted from the Jewish people and their psychological counterparts***

### **The three categories of individuals restricted from entering the Jewish collective**

Lechaim lechaim.



Another topic in this week's parashah is who is forbidden from entering the Jewish people, the kahal Hashem. There are 3 categories of people forbidden from being part of the Jewish people. According to Chassidut, we need to find all 3 of these categories in the rasha within ourselves. The first is a person whose genital organs (testes or reproductive organ) are injured (פצוע דכא וכרות שפכה).

It is known that דכא (testes) is the word about which there is the greatest dispute in how it is written in the Torah, whether with an *alef* (דכא) or with a *hei* (דכה). Our minhag is to write it with an *alef*, דכא. The *pshat* as it is written in *halachah* is that "injured testes" refers to a person who was castrated by people (or himself) not if he was born this way. The reason is that we say that "false gods are castrated" (אל אחר איתריס). Being castrated, without the ability to give birth, is a sign of "the other side." A Jew must constantly give birth, must constantly create more, he should fill the land, and capture the kingdom. This flows from its source in the *malchut* of *Adam Kadmon*, as it is related to today.

The second category is a bastard (ממזר) who even in the 10<sup>th</sup> generation cannot enter the Jewish people. Here it says, לֹא יבוא בקהל ה', in addition to what it said about the first category. In the third category the Torah adds the words עד עולם. Meaning that the prohibition increases from one category to the next.

The third category is the Amoni and the Moavite.

### **The Torah shares its reasoning**

Then come a number of verses where the Torah explains why they should not become part of the people. This is one of the few instances in which the Torah explains the reason for the mitzvah. The reasons will be revealed by the Msahiach, which is why the Torha of the present is like nothing compared to the Torah of the Mashiach. And this makes this mitzvah very special because it mentions the reason here. The Torah dedicates 2 full verses to explain exactly why it is that the Moabite and Ammonite men are restricted from joining the Jewish people.

### **No peaceful warning to Moav and Edom**

#### **The prohibition of a father's wife**

At the beginning of the chapter it says something a little different which is not connected to what comes before and what comes after, לא יקח איש את אשת אביו ולא יגלה את, בנף אביו. But there must be a connection. It is explained so. In the previous chapter it spoke of a rapist and a woman who was raped, and then this prohibition about a son not taking the wife of his father, even a woman whom his father raped. Rashi writes that this is that we can understand what a bastard is according to halachah. It is only one who is born from a union between two people who are punished with כרת, which is similar to the prohibition of sleeping with the wife of one's father.

## **The three categories of restricted individuals: the castrated man, the strange person, and the person unable to do kindness**

There are a number of important points we wanted to make here. First of all, let's interpret how each of the 3 categories relate to each of us personally, how we can find these characteristics in ourselves. These are things that we are all prohibited from having. Being strelized by a person, being a bastard, and being a Moabite or Ammonite. A person who is born without genitals that work is still a Jew, and a bastard is also a Jew. But, the Ammonites and the Moabites are different in that they are wicked. The first prohibition is that a Jew may not sterilize himself, he may castrate his power to give birth. The Ramban writes that the literal meaning of a bastard, **ממזר** is a "strange man." Of course he connects it with the pshat that since we don't know who his father is, he is strange. But, according to the Ramban a Jew may not be strange. We have to think about this, because it says that the Mashiach will be a **יוצא דופן**, which is something that can be very positive. He is out of the ordinary. But, here the prohibition is from being strange. What about the third thing: we are forbidden from being an Ammonite or Moabite. The Torah itself says that because they didn't give us food and water when we were on our way out of Egypt. This is a person who has no sense of loving-kindness, of kind acts. It says that Jews have three signs: **רחמנים ביישנים וגומלי חסדים**. Someone who doesn't have these three characteristics, it is doubtful that the feet of his forefathers stood at Mt. Sinai. So this one is pretty straightforward.

## **Ruth and Na'amah**

The woman also gives food when someone knocks on the door, but the way of a man is to greet the person, to go out of his way to find him. From this we learn that only the males are forbidden from entering the Jewish people. It was because of this difference between men and women that Ruth and Na'amah, the two converts from Moab and Ammon, who are the mothers of the Mashiach. Ruth was David's great grandmother and Na'amah, the wife of Solomon, from whom the Mashiach will come.

## **The Degel Machaneh Efraim's interpretation for "testes" in Divine service**

We write **דכא** with an alef as we said. There is another verse that says, **תשב אנוש עד דכא**, **ותאמר שובו בני אדם**. The word there **דכא** is an acronym for the three things that expand a person's consciousness, his state of mind: a fine dwelling, fine vessels, and a fine wife. **דכא** is equal to 25. The value of these three, dwelling, vessels, and wife (**דירה כלים אשה**) is 625, or 25 times 25, **דכא** to the fourth.

The Degel Machaneh Efraim it says that a fine apartment, **דירה נאה** is in the heart, the heart is where the Divine Presence dwells in a person. That is why a person should prepare a pure heart. This is the fine dwelling in Divine service. The vessels, **כלים נאים** are the 248 organs. The woman, the fine woman is the Presence of the Shechinah in the heart. "They shall make me a dwelling place and I will dwell in them." The woman is who dwells in the home, likewise the Shechinah the Divine Presence dwells in the heart. Specifically on this verse the Degel writes this observation.

פצוע דכא is someone then who damaged these 3. How did he damage them? Mostly by the blemish of his thought. Thought has to be pure, like the pure sky. Without clouds, which are foreign thoughts. Through purity of thought a person merits having a fine dwelling, fine vessels, and fine woman. But, a פצוע דכא is someone who hurts this, with impurity of thought.

### **The injured procreative organ**

The next type in this category is כרות שפכה, which is a blemish, the Degel explains, in the pleasure in serving God. The organ of procreation represents pleasure, and a Jew should always have life in his service of God, and one who is כרות שפכה is someone who feels no life in his service of God. He does many good things, but he is “dead.” If he is dead he cannot run, he cannot be fruitful and multiply. It is forbidden for a Jew to be in this state. If he is, it says he will not come into the community of the Jewish people.

### **Dwelling and prayer, vessels and mitzvot, wife and Torah study**

Before we go to the strange bastard, let’s say something more about the dwelling, vessels, and woman. What is the service of the heart? That is prayer. The fine dwelling, preparing the heart to be a seat for the Divine Presence, that happens through prayer. The vessels are like organs. Every one of the mitzvot corresponds to a particular organ of the body. So the fine vessels are made such through mitzvot. Finally, what is the fine woman? Learning Torah, especially Kabbalah and Chassidut. How do we know this? From the Book of Proverbs, אילת אהבים ויעלת חן. This is all the Divine Presence. This is to understand that order. The dwelling is made for the purpose of the woman. The dwelling is created with prayer and the vessels with the performance of mitzvot, and the fine woman is the revelation of the secrets of the Torah, which a person whose heart worries in him (he is asking for Mashiach for the revelation of these secrets all the time) merits.

### **Being strange vs. being extraordinary**

Now, we turn to the bastard, the strange man. Strange means that he is not connected with other people, as he should. There is being extra-ordinary in a positive sense. The first Jew was Abraham. He is called the Ivri, he was on one side and the entire world was on another side. But, he was extraordinary but this didn’t cause him not to be connected to others. He was most connected, and all his being different was to bring people to his side. But, this strange person is someone who is not really involved with his community. Still if he learns a lot of Torah and he becomes a talmid chacham (in fact, there is a good chance that he can become a scholar, because he was born from a warm drop, which allows him to learn a lot). Strangeness in the sense of being separate from the community is something that a Jew should not have, and in essence it is the type that does not enter the community.

## **The Kedushat Levi's explanation regarding Ammon and Moav**

The third thing we'll take from Rabbi Levi Yitzchak of Berditchev. What is so terrible about the Moabites and Ammonites (because they didn't greet you with food and water...). He says that every non-Jew is worthy and should feel that all the sustenance he receives, he receives through the conduit of the Jewish people. And at some level even a non-Jew has a superconsciousness (which is why he can convert in the first place), in his makif demakif he has holiness. What is the consciousness that he should get from there (it is usually not conscious)? That he received all that he receives from the Jewish people. Once when the Rebbe was asked how to explain the difference between a Jew and non-Jew he explained that a Jew is someone who gives (משפיע) in his essence and the non-Jew receives (מקבל) in his essence. Now there are non-Jews who even in their makif cannot admit this, they do not sense this at any level. This is a very important definition of what a Moabite and an Ammonite. We are commanded not to greet them, not to help them, because in their deepest essence they cannot ever recognize that we gave them something.

## **The root of Ammon and Moav in Jews**

What has this to do with me? Even though I am a Jew, but it says in the Tanya that there is a Jew who doesn't recognize that the tzadik of the generation is the source of all sustenance. They could even be against the tzadik God forbid. They are thus like a Moabite or Ammonite.

How does the Kedushat Levi explain these words, על דבר אשר לא קידמו אתכם בלחם ובמים? That they didn't understand that you precede them in bread and water, that the sustenance they receive flows through you. Likewise a Jew should understand that as much as the sustenance comes from God, the entire Jewish people are like a single body, and just as the body receives all its life spirit from the head, so the entire Jewish people receive their existence through the *tzadik* of the generation. This too, recognizing the head of our sustenance is also very much a Messianic mitzvah. It calls upon us to connect with the head face to face.

## **Seven verses correspond to the seven lower sefirot**

After we've explained this, let's return and say in short that these 7 verses correspond to the 7 lower sefirot, in order. Beginning with the first verse, that seems a little out of place. To take the wife of one's father is a blemish of chesed. The פצוע דכא etc. is a blemish in gevurah. The strange bastard is tiferet. Ammonites and Moabites are netzach. They do not recognize the netzach, the eternity of Israel. But, then comes the first verse giving the explanation for why they are shunned from the congregation of Israel, because they brought Balaam to curse the people, because they didn't greet us they didn't come out on foot to bring us food and water, these are all blemishes of hod. But, then, and this is what we wanted to focus on. The yesod is ולא אבה ה' אלקיך לשמוע אל בעלם. God didn't want (deep will, אבה), to listen to Balaam and God transformed the curse into a blessing, because He loves you (אהבה, which is the opposite of אבה). The

words, ה אלקיך appear three times in this verse. These words indicate God's special relationship with us, that He is our God. This is the yesod, the foundation. But, then comes malchut which is another separate mitzvah, not to seek their wellbeing ever.

### **All seven verses are alluded to in the final verse**

There is a lot to say here, but we want to focus on just the yesod. Still we will say something more about the final verse. It has 7 words, and it itself is equal to exactly: חסד גבורה תפארת נצח חוד יסוד מלכות!

### **Rectifying the blemish of the covenant**

Returning to the verse of yesod, which is specifically about a ba'al teshuvah. Before we learnt how to turn the rasha into your brother (אחיך). The dynamic between the tzadik and rasha is what the entire world is about, because this is what free choice is about. Especially when it comes to the tzadik and the rasha in me. And the purpose is that we become ba'alei teshuvah and then the rasha gives the crown (he himself is the crown) to the tzadik. [There is an issue here with first and second witnesses.] To transform a rasha into a tzadik is like transforming a curse into a blessing. What we said before is turning the rasha into your brother (after submission and separation), and now we are speaking of how God was unwilling to listen to Balaam and he transformed ויהפוך, the curse into a blessing, because Havayah your God loves you. This is the rectification of the covenant.

We have said many times that b'aal teshuvah (בעל תשובה) is equal to איפכא מסתברא, the opposite is true, an idiom appearing in the Babylonian (only!) Talmud. The rasha has in his head an opposite possibility, that it is exacty the opposite that is true and thanks to this he can transform and from being a rasha become "your brother."

### **Rav Yehudah's sign for a ba'al teshuvah revisited**

There is another saying from the sages, which is that to be a ba'al teshuvah means (according to Rav Yehudah) that a person who has sinned has to come back to the same place he sinned and this time not sin. The 3 criteria are: woman, time, and place. These correspond as we said to the 3 dimensions of psyche, time, and space. The sign of these is אפם (woman, time, place). Is there such a word somewhere? It says in the Pentateuch just once, אפם כי עז, ארור אפם, which Yaakov says to his 2 sons, Shimon and Levi. This does not seem to be a blessing (as he blesses his other sons). Not only does he not bless them, he says they are cursed (ארור). At the very end of the blessings, it says that he blessed all the sons with all the blessings of his brothers, and so the cursed here is only about the אפם, about their evil inclination. This is the only instance of this word in the Pentateuch. So if Rav Yehudah motions and says "the same woman, the same time, and the same place." As we said, there are many different explanations of what he motioned at. Now we are saying that he motioned at the verse, ארור אפם כי עז. And he is saying that if you can change your cursed evil inclination into something positive, you are the true ba'al teshuvah.

### **Transforming the curse into a blessing**

As we said, עז, 77 is the value of 10<sup>th</sup> of Elul (י אלול). אפם is equal to 121. ויהפך is equal to 121 too. There are in the kelipah 11 sources of impurity, and 11 squared is “transformed” ויהפך. And this is what “their fury” (אפם) is equal to. אפם כי עז is equal to 228, the value of ברוך, “blessed.” By surmounting the test, not sinning with the same woman, at the same time in the same place, the person transforms the evil inclination into a positive one. This is the power of the month of Elul and is possible because a b’aal teshuvah בעל תשובה has the power of “the opposite is true” (איפכא מסתברא).

Ba’al teshuvah is equal to 815, which is 5 times the value of אצבע. The phrase קהל ה' the community of God appears 5 times in this parashah. All this is to get to the power to transform inherent in this parashah.

### **All seven verses represent the perfection of “Havayah your God”**

Let’s end with 2 wondrous gematriot. The final verse we said is equal to the names of the final seven sefirot. What about all 7 verses together. When we write דכא, then everything together equals 17160, which is 10 times 1716, or 10 times הוי times א-להיך, Havayah times “your God.” All the prohibitions here on these categories of people is to come to the state where Havayah is your God. These three categories of prohibited people represent the three impure kelipot, and all of them can be transformed. It all depends on love that is unconditional. This is the first gematria.

### **The Mashiach himself is alluded to in the rasha crowning the tzadik**

Another beautiful gematria. First Habbakuk said, רשע מכתיר את הצדיק and then בבלע רשע צדיק ממנו. Adding all 8 words together, we get 2864, which divides by 8 (a 1:8 chance) and equals 8 times 358, or Mashiach! So where is Mashiach? He is in these two phrases. In general Mashiach is in the number 8, which is above nature. These are the two phrases from which we took our two signs for the coming year.

So may the Mashiach be revealed already now on the 10<sup>th</sup> of Elul and all the more so in the coming year 5774.

Lechaim lechaim.