

# Weekly Shiur

19 Adar 5773

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

We'll start with another nigun for Menuchah Vesimchah. We learnt the Nadvorna version, now we'll learn the Gur version. First we'll hear it without the words.

Let's now play the Chabad version we learnt for Menuchah Vesimchah and then the Nadvorna version, and then maybe we'll add one more.

We are now in parashat Ki Tisa and Parah, the Red Heifer, we are in the time between Purim and Pesach and Purim is still predominant. It says that Parah (the heifer) is connected to Purim, as they are similar words. Just as Purim is until one does not know, so the law in the Red Heifer is unknowable, the logic cannot be known. Parashat Ki tisa begins with the mitzvah of half the shekel, which is given as a donation to the Temple by every male 20 years and older. The Rishonim dispute about whether this mitzvah is only for those who are 20 years and older, or whether it is like every mitzvah, which a Jewish male is required to perform at the age of 13. What is the significance of the age of 20 in the Torah. Later it says that it is the age that one goes to the army. The half a shekel is given as a kaparah for the sin of the Golden Calf. Moshe Rabbeinu did not come by midday, the half of the day, and therefore the kaparah is with half a shekel. According to a second opinion in the Yerushalmi, they transgressed all 10 commandments and a half shekel is ten gerah. Now, since once one is 13 he already needs kaparah, recitification, why is he not included? How many times does this phrase, מִבְּנֵי עֶשְׂרִים שָׁנָה וּמַעְלָה appear? It appears 21 times. 19 times at the beginning of Numbers (במדבר), where the army is constructed. There it is not in reference to a mitzvah but in the description of the encampment. But, here it is in relation to a mitzvah. So what is this that the 13 year olds are not included. The Rambam and so says the Ramban, that even though it is written simply that it is for those who are 20 years and older, this was only for that first time. But, for all generations it is for a 13 year old male and older. This is stated in the mishnah. There are those who explain that the meaning of 20 years and older was only for the donation out of which the bases of the wooden beams of the Tabernacle were constructed (they were made exactly out of the amount of silver given). But, for every subsequent year, the silver coins are used to buy the public sacrifices and then it is from 13 years and older. But, there is a midrash that does not make this difference between the bases and the sacrifices. Rather, that in the desert, it was a one-time decree that only 20 years and older should bring the half shekel, but for all subsequent generations it is for 13 years and older. But, there are other Rishonim, like the Sefer Hachinuch, who usually follows the Rambam's shita (but, here the Minchat Chinuch notes that he deviates from the Rambam), who say that for all generations it is from 20 years and older. The Bartenuira on the mishnah in shekalim also writes that this is a special mitzvah for all generations and it is connected with those going out to army service, from 20 years and up. We have to explain this more.

This year, when we read Parah and Shekalim, they are both from parashat Ki Tisa. So there is an interesting unification here between these two of the 4 special parashot that we read before Pesach. First parashat Shekalim, then Zachor before Purim, then Parah, then parashat Hachodesh. We will explain more later that Moshe Rabbeinu had difficulty with understanding what the shekel coin was, until God showed him a coin of fire, that weighed that amount. About Parashat Hachodesh, the sanctification of the new moon, Moshe too had difficulty envisioning what the new moon is like until God showed it to him. So these are related.

The 4 special parashot read before pesach correspond to the 4 letters of Havayah. Shekalim corresponds to malchut, Zachor to the vav, the yesod. Then the parah, which is a rectification of Ima, teshuvah for the sin of the Golden Calf, corresponds to the higher hei, understanding. Finally, parashat Hachodesh is related to renewal and to the wisdom which is described as being found out of nothingness. The small new moon, is thus like the small size of the letter yud. This shabbat as we said, we begin with Shekalim and end with Parah. This is a unification of **מִי זֹאת עוֹלָה מִן הַמִּדְבָּר**, connecting the lower and higher hei's, the unification of the feminine, thought and speech. Both of these, Shekalim and Parah are a rectification for the sin of the Golden Calf. We can say that the kaf of **בְּפָרָה**, kaparah alludes to the age of 20 of Shekalim.

So again, we started with the question about whether the limit of 20 years and older was for just that first time, and then afterwards, is required from every 13 year old, or whether it is always for 20 years and older. The Gra holds halachically like the Chinuch, the Bartenura (and the Roke'ach), that this mitzvah is unique in that it is always for 20 years and older. The Gra says he found this explicitly in the yerushalmi. The others who follow the same opinion do not quote the Yerushalmi. Now it gets interesting, because we know that the Yerushalmi reflects the mindset of Abba, **מוֹחֵין דְּאַבָּא**. The Babylonian Talmud reflects the mindset of Ima. When it comes to tefilin, we follow the Babylonian Talmud, which is good for every soul, while the Yerushalmi is the Rabbeinu Tam tefilin.

What is special about age 20 that at this age a person is able to be go to the army? The Arizal says that at age 20 a person receives his mochin d'abba, **מוֹחֵין דְּאַבָּא**. So it is very appropriate that the Yerushalmi writes that the half shekel is always only for those 20 years and older. We could then guess that the Babylonian Talmud would hold that it is from 13 years and older. This is reflected in the minhag that a 13 year old only put on tefilin of Rashi, while when the man becomes 20 he receives a second set of tefilin, Rabbeinu Tam. In our generation, the Lubavitcher Rebbe was careful that every 13 year old should have both pairs.

We said that seemingly a 13 year old also needs to have kaparah for the sin of the Golden Calf. The Chizkuni says that this is not so (meaning he holds that for all generations, the mitzvah of half a shekel is only from 20 years and older), he says that the reason is that the sin was against the heavens and not against other people, and that one is judged for only once he is 20. Now what is hiding behind all this? At age 20 a person is able to be recruited to the army, and is to be counted in a census, and is able for any kind of public leadership role. What does it mean then to be 13 years old, to be an adult? It means taking responsibility for myself. Until a child is an adult, he can not

yet, he does not have enough consciousness to take responsibility. When a child reaches 13 years (12 for a girl), the Torah tells him, you can now take responsibility for your own life. Until now you were under your parents, but from now on you are responsible for yourself. But, at the age of 20, what happens then, what is the difference between Ima and Abba? Mochin D'Abba means taking responsibility at the communal level, upon the Jewish people. By being able to devote oneself to communal affairs, it means that one can now take responsibility over the community, over others. It says that "20 years old to pursue" people understand that this means to pursue one's livelihood. That is true, but it also includes pursuing after the livelihood, the needs of the public. Once a person can enter the marketplace to earn a living, he becomes part of the people, he knows what's going on at the communal level, he becomes part of the community. To our dismay, we see that there are many people who have way after 20 years of age, and they are very frum, but still they act only out of the mochin d'Ima, which means that they are only interested in "saving themselves." But, to devote themselves to the public, to the Jewish people. And this is what is tarrying the ge'ulah. This is especially true according to those opinions that state that the mitzvah of half a shekel is always from age 20 and up.

Now, returning to the Chizkuni who says that until age 20 you are not judged above. What this means is that the Almighty, what concerns Him above, is how the Jewish people are responsible for one another, how we are each to help others. There is a general responsibility that we each have for the community, that if there was something we could have prevented, but didn't, we are held as if we did it ourselves. What people are concerned with, what the human court system is concerned with is private matters. It has the mochin d'Ima approach to life. But, in the Heavens what is important is the responsibility that a person takes for the community, for the entire world.

Now, from the content, let's enter into a שְׁעִשׂוּעַ, a playful thing. Until now we've eaten, but to digest it well, we have to do a gematria, it will help digestion. The phrase that appears 21 times in the Torah is מִבְּנֵי עֲשָׂרִים שָׁנָה וְמַעְלָה, and it begins here in our parashah. 21 is the value of the Name Ekyeh (אֶהְיֶה), the name of the redemption. So if this is the first time this phrase appears, it corresponds to the alef of Ekyeh. The phrase equals 1218, which divides into 21 times 58 (חֵן). A very important word, whose most concentrated appearance in the Torah is in our parashah. Indeed, Ki Tisa is the 21<sup>st</sup> parashah from Bereisheet. And the most important word that appears in it, the highest concentration of this word in the Pentateuch, is חֵן, after the sin of the Golden Calf. The phrase contains 16 letters, so we can write it as a square:

מ	ב	נ	ע
ש	ר	י	ם
ש	נ	ה	ו
מ	ע	ל	ה

Since this phrase appears 21 times, all the phrases together equal 21 squared, or 441, truth (אֱמֶת) times 58. The idea here is that there is true grace (חֵן), חֵן אֱמֶת is considered a holy Name in Kabbalah. It is equal to יְצִבְאוֹת, the holy Name of the Hosts, of the army.

Looking at the square we see that the value of the two diagonals is 420, which is 20 times 21. 20 alludes to the age of 20 years, and the words “and up” (וּמַעְלָה) in the phrase alludes to 21. The 2 diagonals are made up of 8, or half the letters of the entire phrase, so the other 8 letters equal 21 times 38, or 798. So חן, is divided here into 20 and 38. The word that these two numbers make up is “blue” (כָּחֹל). Meaning that this is a very good color for an army. Where does this color appear? When do you paint something blue. It is related to women, who paint their eyes blue. Apparently when painting the eyelids blue, it finds favor (חן), since the two words are equal.

Now let's return to the beginning of the parashah. It says, “This is what they shall give” (זֶה יִתְּנוּ). The Yerushalmi, as we said, states that Moshe Rabbeinu had difficulty understanding what they should give, until God showed him a coin of silver whose weight was 10 geirah. There is another teaching from these words, זֶה יִתְּנוּ, that all 12 = 12 tribes must bring the half shekel, and this is to exclude the opinion that the Priests were not required to do so. So this is a stress on the communal aspect of this mitzvah. In the Bavli in Menachot the talmud brings those things that Moshe Rabbeinu had difficulty with, but the idea that the half shekel was one of them is not brought. The Tosafot give an explanation there. One of the Acharonim says that the Yerushalmi's opinion that this was one of the things he had difficulty with is because it is a singular opinion and the Bavli didn't hold by singular opinions. Still, the Tosafot give a different explanation. Rashi brings this in his commentary, that Moshe Rabbeinu had difficulty with what should be brought. There is a gemara that asks: Who is a son of holy people? He who doesn't know what a coin looks like. Meaning that he never looks at money, he is so removed from the world. And the sages ask, who is the son of holy people? They answer: Rabbi Menchem ben Simai, he's not well known, but worth knowing. If his name is Menachem, he is a Messianic figure and the Mashiach needs a lot of money to bring the redemption. His father's name is Simai, he is the one who is holy. Simai סימאי equals 121 or 11 squared, or “coin” (מַטְבֵּעַ). His son, Menachem doesn't know what a coin looks like, so he apparently doesn't know his father, but it's his father, who is the coin itself, who is holy. So there must be a holy coin, apparently the coin of the Mashiach. The Ramban asks, why is the Shekel called the holy Shekel, as the Torah says.

In passing we should also explain the rest of the verse, בְּלֹא הַעֲוִיבַר עַל הַפְּקוּדִים, which means “anyone transgressing the mitzvot.” We said that in the Heavens they are primarily concerned with mitzvot, commandments. Just public the for responsibility takes one how is God though even, But individuals as, privately for responsible all are we mitzvot personal the to refers with more concerned is he, with concerned is he thing main the not is it, mitzvot these in interested פְּקוּדִים, a synonym for mitzvot that also means “role” or shlichut, your public role in life. Again, returning to the holy shekel, why is it called “holy.” The Ramban asks, what is holy about Hebrew that we call it “the holy tongue” (לְשׁוֹן הַקֹּדֶשׁ)? He brings the Rambam's opinion that Hebrew does not have words for the procreative words, but rejects this, saying that if so it should have been called the “clean tongue” (לְשׁוֹן נְקִיָּה). Rather, if money is called holy, then it means that there is holiness in the money. The most difficult type of craving is craving for money, which a person has to break free from. So, says the Ramban, Hebrew is called the holy language because God is holy and

God spoke the Torah in this language. Likewise, there are a number of different mitzvot, holy commandments that we perform with money, and therefore this money is holy. This is what it means that the shekel is holy, because we perform the mitvah of donating to the Tabernacle with it.

The Ramban adds that Moshe Rabbeinu was the first king in the Torah as it says, וַיְהִי מֶלֶךְ בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל. Every king has to mint a coin. To make a coin that should be worth something, which is what makes him a king. So if Moshe Rabbeinu is a king, he needs a coin. He minted the coin called a shekel. Why did he call it a shekel? Why not call it something else? Because it is “pure” (שְׁקוּל טָהוֹר) if it is made of silver, it is 100% silver, there is no other metal mixed in. What this means is that he is 100% trustworthy, and he doesn’t cheat anyone with his money. The money we use today, even 100% silver coins are not really 100%, so they are fake in a certain respect. What this means is that all dealings with money are fake, in all the world. But, Moshe Rabbeinu’s money is 100% pure and therefore all his dealing are trustworthy and true.

It is known that Moshe Rabbeinu prophesized with the word זֶה, “this,” everything that is exact and not fake and impure is “this.” The opposite of Moshe Rabbeinu in regard to Purim was Haman. He is described as “this wicked Haman” (הַמֶּן הָרַע הַזֶּה). Haman himself says, “and all this...” (וְכָל זֶה אֵינְנו שׂוֹה לֵי). Haman is the opposite “this” of Moshe Rabbeinu. This is why the mitzvah of the half shekel begins with the word, זֶה, “this.” In the continuation of the parashah, there is another important appearance of “this” (זֶה), in regard to the anointing oil, where it says, וַיִּהְיֶה זֶה לִי לְדֹרֹתֵיכֶם. The anointing oil is the source for Mordechai in the Torah מִרְא דְבִינָא מִרְדֵּי, which is translated as many miracles were connected with the anointing oil. The first is that it contained 12 log (לֹאגִין), and regardless of all that was anointed with it in the Tabernacle and then the Temple, it always remains 12 log. It remains eternal, as alluded to by the word, לֵי. So there is something in this parashah that Moshe Rabbeinu’s particular type of exact nevu’ah, prophecy is alluded to in the two instances of זֶה, “this.” Two instances of “this” allude to the verse, וַתִּקְרָא זֶה אֵל זֶה וְאָמַר.

Now what exactly was so difficult for Moshe Rabbeinu about this coin? Why is it Rabbi Meir that says this in the Yerushalmi? The word coin is the source for the word “nature” (טִבְעָה). You can drown (לְטַבֵּעַ) in nature. One of the most important concepts we have in learning Chassidut is natural consciousness. There is the self-consciousness, which a person has to come out of, then there is Divine consciousness. The natural consciousness is the Messianic consciousness. We have an number of books on this topic. So what Moshe Rabbeinu had difficulty with was, how can one sanctify nature in one’s consciousness. How can one come to natural consciousness which is all holy. A holy coin is a reflection of holy nature. It is reflected in the coinage, but reflects how one sanctifies all of nature. What was the half shekel given for? To buy the public sacrifices, so that they all come from the public, it has to be something that unites everyone together, makes them all part of the same whole. The individual needs the community and the community needs the individual. There is an opinion that women are not required to daven, to pray, Musaf. This is brought by Rabbi Akiva Eiger in the name of the Rosh, because this prayer is only in correspondence and in memory of the Musaf

sacrifice which was taken from the half shekel's. And since women were not required to give half a shekel, they are not required to pray the Musaf prayer. Of course this doesn't mean that a woman may not pray the Musaf prayer, rather she can do it as one who is not commanded (which is actually the higher level of mitzvah performance of the future). According to the Chinuch, etc, a child who is only 13 years old, will not be able to serve as the chazan in Musaf, until he is 20 years old. He can pray himself, but he can't fulfill the requirement for others. Of course, according to the Rambam and the Ramban there is no question. Again, this is to fulfill the obligation of the community, to be a **שְׁלִיחַ צְבוּר**.

So again, returning to what a coin of fire is? We said that it is natural consciousness regarding money. And this was difficult for Moshe to understand. How can it be that things that are separate, how the separation in nature, not be something negative, like **טְבַעְתֵּי בֵּינָן מְצִילָה בְּאֵין מְעַמְד**. So Hashem had to show him the coin of fire, to show him the natural consciousness of the Mashiach, the holiness in relation to money. And one merits this during this week's parashah. To better understand this, let us return to what we spoke of on Purim. In the Mishnah it says that Ptachyah is Mordechai, that Mordechai has a second name. His role in the Temple was to take care of the nests, there are many laws related to these nests that were brought as a sacrifice. This is talking about the second Temple. Mordechai returned to the land of Israel with Nechmiah and helped rebuild the Temple. Then, his name was Ptachyah, yet as the mishnah says, his name was Mordechai. Why is he called Ptachyah (**פְּתַחְיָה**), because he opens things (gives chidushim)—this comes from his chochmah, connecting with his super-consciousness, and then explains them, and this is related to his binah (understanding). Two weeks ago, when we were here, we learnt about the tachash, which had many colors, it was happy and excited about its many colors, as Rashi writes. Now notice that the two roots of Ptachyah and explaining (**פּוֹתֵחַ בְּדַבָּרִים וְדוֹרְשֵׁן**), are **פתח דרש**, contain the word **תַּחַשׁ**, tachash. The other word you can make is **פְּרָד**, which is a combination, one that is forbidden to perform. It is the son of a donkey (male) and a horse (female). A mule is one who cannot give birth, he is like the false God's that have no power of procreation. But, mule (**פְּרָד**) is an acronym for **פְּרָה אֲדוּמָה** (Red Heifer). Kings would ride mules, as we know for King David. In the words "Red Heifer" the main letters are (**פרה**) (**אדומה**). Who was the scientist, the great geneticist who invented the mule? His name was **עֲנָה בֶן עֲבֵעוֹן**, the only person in the Torah whose name is connected with color, and his son invented the mule. Mule (**פְּרָד**) means something separate. Moshe Rabbeinu's question was how can natural consciousness be sanctified. The kelipah's consciousness is described as "being (existing) and separate unto itself." How can such consciousness be rectified. The being does not need rectification, but the feeling of being separate, and being "unto oneself," these need to be rectified. These three parts of the consciousness of the kelipah are progressively worse. The fact that the "being" feels itself separate is not what needs to be rectified, but rather that the separation can exist, but it cannot be "unto itself." Then what is left is a holy consciousness of "being and separate."

On Purim we explained that regarding Achashverosh the sages say that he was the same from beginning to end. On the other hand it says that he was transformed, turned

upside down, וְנִהְפֹךְ הוּא. So how can it be that he remained the same yet completely transformed. This is the secret of “not knowing” on Purim, this is what cannot be understood. This is exactly the problem that Moshe Rabbeinu had with the half shekel. How can nature remain being and separate, and yet be holy? What’s explained in Chassidut is that in every mitzvah there is a taste, a reason, pure Divine enjoyment. In transgression, apparently, Hashem has no enjoyment, He doesn’t enjoy them at all. But, with mitzvot, He receives nachat as it were. Now when a person has transgressed regarding a public mitzvah, he has to do teshuvah. In Chassidut it says that to do teshuvah is to reach the same place we’re meant to reach on Purim, called “general enjoyment” (תַּעֲנוּג קָלְלִי). Enjoyment, the nachat within every mitzvah is known as “personal enjoyment” (תַּעֲנוּג פְּרָטִי). The general enjoyment that Hashem receives, that is the essence of enjoyment and it can be made and appear in anything in the world. This is what is so difficult to explain. When will this “general enjoyment” be revealed, only once you do teshuvah. If a person does teshuvah the proper way, he reaches God’s general enjoyment which is as it were, the enjoyment that Hashem, God, receives from a transgression, but again it is revealed only once you do teshuvah. This is what a coin of fire is referring to. On the one hand there is nature which feels “being and separate.” And yet it is holy. Like Achashverosh who is all being and all separate, but he is not separate unto himself. Even though God’s Name does not appear explicitly in the Megilah, He is there implicitly. Because of the teshuvah done by the Jewish people during the whole year, Achashverosh too was no longer “unto himself,” but rather just being and separate.

So we have already 4 version of Menuchah Vesimchah, and now we’ll add a fifth, based on one of our nigunim, that fits really well with the words.

The one who is most similar to Achashverosh is Ana (עֲנָה), we mentioned him earlier. He is mentioned at the end of parashat Vayishlach, he is the father of Ohalivamah, one of Esau’s wives. He is Esau’s father in law. The verse says, וּבְנֵי צִבְעוֹן וְאֵיהָ הוּא עֲנָה אֲשֶׁר מִצָּאן. אֵת הַיָּמִים בְּמִדְבַּר בְּרַעְתּוֹ אֵת הַחֲמוּרִים לְצִבְעוֹן אָבִיו. The commentaries compare this verse with the verse, Achashverosh who is Achashverosh. This is a common formula that the commentaries look at. It is also said about King David. What he found in the desert were the Yeimim (הַיָּמִים), while shepherding the donkeys (usually flocks are made of sheep and goats) for his father Tzidon. How could Tzidon both be his father and his brother, because it was his brother who fathered him through his mother, meaning that he performed incest. Tzidon also gave birth to Ohalivamah. His name is the only example of “color” in the Torah. And he has a flock of donkeys. And the one shepherding them was Ana (עֲנָה), his son and brother. The sages, the Mizrachi and the Maharal, say that he is the most similar to Achashverosh, because in this verse it sounds like the Torah is trying to identify who this person is, like in the verse, Achashverosh, he is Achashverosh. Likewise here it says, Ana, he is the Ana who found the Yeimim in the desert. But, the commentaries say that this can’t be, because we don’t know of any other Ana in the Torah. So why would we need to identify him as being this Ana and not another. Likewise in regard to Achashverosh, the Tanach does not talk about another person with this name. But, like we said the Mizrachi says that this is an identity,

because there is indeed another Achashverosh in the Tanach (in regard to Nechmiah). But, when it comes to Ana, there is indeed not another Ana. But the Maharal says that regarding Achashverosh there is no such identity either. But, when it comes to Ana and Achashverosh, there is some other reason to write it this way. In any case, there is something common to both of them.

Now, “who rules” (הַמְלִיךָ) and “the Yeimim (הַיִּמִּים), both equal 95, the value of Haman (הָמָן). Who are these Yeimim? They are the mules. What does it mean that he “found them.” The usual meaning is that he “invented them.” He took a horse and a donkey and bred them, and got a mule. The mules are called יָמִים, Yeimim, because it is cognate with the word “fear,” as their fear is cast upon all creatures. So he was the one who cross-bred these two species creating the mule. The mule is sterile, like a false God is described as being sterile.

The Ramban and others explain that he was a great man. A great man is one who finds an exception in nature, an exception to the laws of nature known, and then from this exception creates a whole new theory. Now the mule, the pered, is cognate with the word for “particular” (פְּרָט). Because of this one particular case, it is necessary to create a far wider and more encompassing theory. The law that Ana found was that the rule of nature is that inter-breeding two species, cannot be done. In fact, this is the definition of species used today: if two animals are from two different species, you cannot make them breed and give birth to viable offspring. But, what Ana found is that there is an exception. If in science, which is an establishment, you find an exception to the rule, that is an affront to the establishment and a threat. This is especially true today in medicine where a lot of money is involved. The archetypal individual who threatens science by finding an exception to a law, is called Ana. And indeed, Ana found that two species, a horse and a donkey should not be able to breed. And yet, he was able to show that they could breed and give birth to a mule. What happened to the rule? It was passed on to the offspring. Meaning that mules are sterile. You cannot breed them with one another. The parents as it were broke the rule, but then the rule was passed on to their offspring. Who is Tzivon? His name is similar to a hyena (צִבּוֹנִי). Just as there is false grace (חַן שֶׁל שְׂקָרָה), there is also true grace (חַן שֶׁל אֱמֶת). Who are these Tzivonim today? These people who come upon their mother and give birth to Ana, etc. They are the different parties in the government today. We know this because they are elected (מַצְבִּיעִים). To cast a vote is the same as to point a finger at. There is no one to cast your vote for, because they are all hypocritical (in Hebrew, צִבּוֹנִי). What is our task? Our task is to invent, the greatest innovation, which is completely new is to invent a new color. All the known colors (political parties) have already been voted for, but we have to create a new color, a new political party which is true. How much does “true color” (צִבֵּעַ אֱמֶתִי) equal? 613, the value of Moshe Rabbeinu (מֹשֶׁה רַבֵּינוּ). So much for the verse “Ana, the Ana who found the Yeimim in the desert, while shepherding his father’s donkeys.”

Let’s continue with the word “grace” (חַן) appearing in parashat Ki Tisa, as we mentioned earlier. In the Third Aliyah, Moshe Rabbeinu asks Hashem to show him his ways. There are 82 words in this parshiyah. It is after the Sin of the Golden Calf. In these 82 words, Moshe asks four times, “If I have found favor in your eyes.” This is the highest



concentrations of the word “grace,” or “favor” in the Tanach. This is the source for our method of counting the location of words in a paragraph or in a verse. This is the binyan av for this method, and when you see it once very strongly, from then on you believe that the Torah has this in mind.

The location of the first two “grace” from the beginning of the parashah, are 26 and 32 (= to “heart” and to “honor.”) So the first two locations are “the honor of Havayah,” which together equal “grace” (חן) themselves. Now we’ll do the same for the next 2 appearances, but from the end. The 3<sup>rd</sup> is in the 16<sup>th</sup> and the 42<sup>nd</sup> location, and again together they equal 58 (חן), grace once again. The word “grace” also means symmetry, alluding to the notion of counting their location from the beginning and from the end.

If we just count the locations from the beginning, they will be 108 together. From the end it will also be exactly 108. The connection is in the word Chanan (חנן), whose value is 108. Twice Chanan is 216, one of the most important numbers in Kabbalah.

There is another important pasuk in the parashah connecting it with Purim: הִנֵּה מְקוֹם אֶתִי וְנִצְבֹּתָ עַל הַעֲזָרָה. This is before the 13 Principles of God’s mercy. In order to see God’s posterior, God has to place him in the cave in the stone, so that he may see the backside of God’s tefilin knot, which is the partzuf of Leah. It is described in Chassidut as the primordial thought of Adam Kadmon. Such a place, a hidden place is called a מְסֻתָּר. God prepared for Moshe this hidden place so that he may stand there and see God’s posterior. When we say the word מְסֻתָּר, a hidden place it can mean either that, or that it is a concealed place. These two words, concealed and secret, always go together in Chassidut. Concealed is related to chochmah (wisdom) while secret is related to binah (understanding). This is learnt from the words, הַנְּסֻתָּרִת, which means “the secret,” and it begins with a hei. The concealed is related to time, while the secret is related to space. So this was a secret place, a secret space. In relation to Purim this is the verse, וְאֵנֹכִי הַסֵּתֵר אֶסְתִּיר. Now to be concealed, related to wisdom, perhaps that is related to Mordechai the Jew. But, when we look in the Megilah we see that time is related to Achashverosh, while Esther is related to secret, to space. As we said, Achashverosh is so-called because he is the same from beginning to end, again connecting him with time. Normally in the Tanach, the word “world” (עוֹלָם) means time, while only later it takes on the meaning “time.”

He begins with time, and then his kingdom, his space is described, from India to Kush. But, like we said space is more related to Esther. Why did we bring all this? Because we wanted to describe a rule in the Megilah. The four main characters in the megilah are Achashverosh, Mordechai, Esther, and Haman. Now in the Book of Formation, time is divided into two extremes, the extreme of beginning and the extreme of end-times. Though the source of space and its 6 extremes is in Ima, but it is revealed in the emotive sefirot. IN the Book of Formation, apart from the 2 extremes and the 6 just described, the final 2 extremes correspond to the 2 crowns of da’at. They are called the extreme of good and the extreme of evil. Mordechai is the extreme of good and Haman is the extreme of evil. We find many times this latter description, that Haman is concentrated evil. So now we have that the megilah contains all four characters: Time is Achashverosh, Place is Esther, Mordechai is the extreme of good and Haman is the

extreme of evil. What important verse does the ba'al Shem tov discuss regarding hiding something: "If a person hide himself in a concealed place, and I won't see him?"

Now, let's end with something from the Kedushat Levi. On Purim we talked of verses that have "beginning and end" (רֵאשִׁית אַחֲרִית) in them. Earlier we said that women are patur from Musaf. The apex of Musaf is the kedushah of Keter. After we sing together, we say the words, "Behold I have redeemed you in the end as the beginning" (הֵן גְּאֻלְתִּי (הֵן גְּאֻלְתִּי אֶתְכֶם אַחֲרִית כְּרֵאשִׁית), but the Alter Rebbe writes (הֵן גְּאֻלְתִּי אֶתְכֶם אַחֲרִית כְּרֵאשִׁית). Of course the best gematriot appear when you use the Alter Rebbe's exact version.

Now if you look for this phrasing with a beit, the only place you find it is in the kedushat levi. He says that there in Adam Kadmon's primordial thinking, that is called "רֵאשִׁית" the inception, and there in that place he does not feel that he created the world. In order to make God look in this place and ask the question of why did I create a world? When he does, the redemption will come only once the inception reaches the very end. Why does Hashem not look at the inception? He says that it is dependent on the Jewish people's merit.

He gives two beautiful allegories. The first is that God is like a person who built a palace, but doesn't live it. If he could be reminded why he built it in the first place. If anyone trespasses he will immediately go and evict him from his home.

The second allegory is even deeper. He says that there are people – and his is related to everyone – who everything they do in life, it is all without thought, without planning. What is the sign for this? That the person is unable to tell the difference, he doesn't have the secret of havdalah, separation. For instance, he can't tell the difference between Jews and non-Jews. This is called acting without "יָשׁוּב הַדַּעַת." And so democracy is entirely based on seeing everyone equal and not being able to differentiate between them.

What is the purpose of the half shekel? It gives you the ability to differentiate, to divide things. Someone who has a half shekel, he is able to tell the difference. What then is the exile? It is like a time when God rules the world without havdalah, without yishuv hada'at, and God gives everyone equally. How can we say this? How can we say that he forgot the purpose for which he created the world. It all returns to us. If the Jewish people merit it, then God will have shikul hada'at. What is the merit, we'll go back to what we began with. The main merit is that a Jew is careful to take responsibility for the klal. This is called da'at of Moshe, which is also called da'at hamchria (דַּעַת הַמְּכַרִּיעַ). Moshe Rabbeinu's da'at is to force God to differentiate. And for this one needs the mindset of Abba מוֹחִין דְּאֲבָא. For submission, הַכְּנָעָה, you only need the mindset of Ima, מוֹחִין דְּאִמָּא. Sweetening it follows is then the Crown. All this is to explain the Kedushat Levi. Lechaim lechaim. May we all merit true separation, and may we all merit to do everything with יָשׁוּב הַדַּעַת and שְׂקוּל הַדַּעַת.