

Chapter 51

The Tanya of Rabbi Schneur Zalman of Liadi, elucidated by Rabbi Yosef Wineberg
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The title-page of *Tanya* tells us that the entire work is based upon the verse (*Devarim* 30:14), “For this thing (the Torah) is very near to you, in your mouth and in your heart, that you may do it.” And the concluding phrase (“that you may do it”) implies that the ultimate purpose of the entire Torah is the fulfillment of the *mitzvot* in practice.

In order to clarify this, ch. 35 began to explain the purpose of the entire *Seder Hishtalshelut* (“chain of descent” of spiritual levels from the highest emanation of the Creator down to our physical world), and of man’s serving G-d. The purpose of both is to bring a revelation of G-d’s Presence into this lowly world, and to elevate the world spiritually so that it may become a fitting dwelling-place for His Presence.

To further explain this, ch. 35 quoted the words of the *Yenuka* in the *Zohar* that a Jew should not walk four cubits bareheaded because the *Shechinah* dwells above his head. This light of the Divine Presence, continues the *Zohar*; resembles the light of a lamp, where oil and wick are needed for the flame to keep burning. A Jew should therefore be aware, says the *Zohar*, of the *Shechinah* above him and keep it supplied with “oil” (good deeds), in order to ensure that the “flame” of the *Shechinah* keeps its hold on the “wick” (the physical body).

Basing himself upon this analogy of the *Zohar*, the Alter Rebbe asked (in the same chapter) why the “oil” — fuel — for the light of the *Shechinah* has to be good deeds. The divine soul is “truly a part of G-d above” (ch. 2); why is it not sufficient to serve as this “fuel”? He answers that the divine soul, even of a perfect *tzaddik*, is a conscious entity. This conscious existence of the soul does not become utterly overwhelmed and nullified by G-d’s Presence in the world to the extent that the soul can become one with G-d’s Presence. Therefore the soul cannot serve as fuel for the light of the *Shechinah*, for the “oil” must become totally converted into light (just as physical fuel is consumed, as it burns, to become converted into light), whereas the soul remains in conscious existence. Only good deeds — *mitzvot* — can serve as fuel for the light of the *Shechinah*, for they are G-d’s Will and His wisdom, which are expressions of His essence and thus utterly united with Him. For the soul to become united with G-d, it must therefore perform *mitzvot*.

In this union of the soul with G-d through *mitzvot* (ch. 35 continues) there are two levels. Through Torah study, the light of the *Shechinah* is revealed within the soul, together with the soul’s two inner “garments” — thought and speech — which become absorbed into G-d’s light and united with it in utter oneness. But for the *Shechinah* to rest upon the physical body and upon the animal soul that animates it, *mitzvot* must be performed in actual deed, on the *physical* level — and this can take place only through the medium of the animating (or vital) soul, together with the body.

In further chapters, the Alter Rebbe explained how the ultimate purpose of the entire *Seder Hishtalshelut* is the *practical* performance of *mitzvot*, which alone can reveal G-d’s presence in this physical world. From there, he went on to say that in order to observe the *mitzvot* properly, with enthusiasm and “soul”, one must have *kavanah* — devout concentration, animated by the awe

and love of G-d. And in chs. 41-50 the Alter Rebbe proceeded to elaborate on various means of arriving at the different forms and levels of awe and love of G-d.

Ch. 51 now explains further the teaching of the *Yenuka* — that “this light (of the *Shechinah*) needs oil.” In the *Zohar*, “oil” usually refers to the *Sefirah* of *Chochmah* (lit., “wisdom”). Here, though, the *Yenuka* takes it to refer to good deeds. What is the connection between practical *mitzvot* — and “oil”, which refers to *Chochmah*? To clarify this, ch. 51 will explain the meaning of the concept that the *Shechinah* “dwells” (or “rests”) upon something, and how practical *mitzvot* do indeed derive from the Divine level of *Chochmah*, which is why they can serve as the “oil” which enables the light of the *Shechinah* to remain burning upon the “wick” — the human body.

והנה לתוספת ביאור לשון הינוקא דלעיל

For further explanation of the words of the Yenuka, mentioned earlier, in ch. 35, where the Yenuka was quoted as saying that the light of the Shechinah, which dwells upon a Jew, needs “oil”, meaning good deeds,

Now what connection do good deeds have with oil, which usually refers to *Chochmah*?

צריך לבאר תחלה, להבין קצת, ענין השראת השכינה, שהיתה שורה בבית קודש הקדשים

it is necessary first to explain (so that one may understand a little) the concept of the Shechinah “dwelling” — that it “dwelt” in the Holy of Holies,

Indeed, there are detailed laws defining the marks of respect due to the Holy of Holies because of the “dwelling” there of the *Shechinah*.

וכן כל מקום השראת השכינה, מה ענינו

and likewise any other place where the Shechinah dwells — what does this concept mean? What is meant when we say that a particular location is distinguished as being a place where the *Shechinah* dwells, rather than elsewhere?

הלא מלא כל הארץ כבודו, ולית אתר פנוי מיניה

Surely “the whole world is full of His glory,” and “no place is void of Him”!

The Alter Rebbe will now explain that the *Shechinah*’s “dwelling” upon something means the *revelation* of that aspect of G-d’s Presence known as *Shechinah*. Although G-d exists everywhere, His existence is concealed. But when the *Shechinah* “dwells” upon something, this denotes a revelation of G-dliness.

אך הענין כדכתיב: ומבשרי אחזה אלוה-

However, the key to understanding the subject is to be found in the text,¹ “And from my flesh I see G-d.” The Alter Rebbe understands these words literally: from what we see within ourselves, in our own soul and body, we can visualize the parallel on the spiritual level — in the Divine emanations and the world in general.

שכמו שנשמת האדם היא ממלאה כל רמ”ח אברי הגוף, מראשו ועד רגליו

By way of analogy: The human soul² pervades all 248 organs of the body, from head (the highest part of the body) to foot (the lowest part of the body);

The soul pervades the body to the extent that no organ or portion of it remains void of the soul.

ואף על פי כן עיקר משכנה והשראתה היא במוחו, ומהמוח מתפשטת לכל האברים

nevertheless, the soul's principal abode (in a revealed form) and dwelling place (in an all-encompassing, non-revealed form) is in one's brain, and from the brain the soul is diffused throughout all the organs;

This takes place in all the organs *simultaneously*, for (as the Rebbe explains) this “diffusion” of the soul refers to the life-force from which the organs derive their vitality — in which respect all organs are equal. This is *one* aspect of the soul's emanation from the brain to the organs, and in chassidic terminology it can be termed “light” — a revelation which is equal throughout. A second aspect of the emanation that the organs derive from the soul which is in the brain is the following:

וכל אבר מקבל ממנה חיות וכח הראוי לו לפי מזגו ותכונתו

[moreover,] each organ receives from it (the soul) a different form of life force and functional power appropriate to it according to its (the organ's) composition and character:

In other words, the difference between the functional ability of one organ and that of another does not derive from the *organ* itself (like water in a colored glass, for example, which takes on the color of its containing vessel). Rather does each organ draw *from the soul* its ability to see or hear, and so on, as the Alter Rebbe continues:

העין לראות

the eye receives from the soul a life-force and ability *to see*; the power of sight accords with the smooth and translucent nature of the tissue of the eye;

והאזן לשמוע, והפה לדבר, והרגלים להלוך

the ear receives from the soul a life-force and ability *to hear, the mouth to speak, and the feet to walk*³ — each organ in the body, in accordance with its composition and character, receives its life-force and ability from the soul which “dwells” and becomes revealed initially in the brain —

כנראה בחוש, שבמוח מרגיש כל הנפעל ברמ"ח אברים וכל הקורות אותם

as we clearly sense how in the brain one is conscious of all that occurs within the 248 organs and of everything experienced by them, because the brain is the nerve-center and principal abode and source of the life-force of the entire body.

The Rebbe here adds a commentary which clarifies the subject.

By way of introduction: The life-force from the soul which animates the body comprises two aspects. One is its life-giving force — in that the whole body is alive and draws its vitality from the soul. In this aspect, there is no difference between one organ and the next. The head, for example, is no more alive than the foot, just as the foot is no less alive than the head. The entire body, with

all its organs, is equally alive throughout. In chassidic terminology, this aspect of the life-giving force is called the ‘light‘ of the soul (for light shines equally upon everything around the light-source, regardless of the quality or nature of the objects receiving the light).

The second aspect of the soul’s life-force is the specific functional power which each organ draws from the soul. This power is unique to each organ — the eye receives from the soul the power to see, the ear to hear, the mouth to speak, and the foot to walk.

The manner in which the organ receives the latter life-force and functional power can be explained in two ways.

One is that the life-force emanating from the soul to the organ is utterly “plain” and uncompounded, possessing none of the diverse qualities and powers of the various organs. According to this explanation, the various functional powers of the organs would be differentiated (with respect to the life-force emanating to them from the soul) only after that life-force actually becomes en clothed within the organs. For example, only after the life-force becomes en clothed within the eye would it become the power of sight, and only after it becomes en clothed within the ear would it become the power of hearing.

An analogy to this explanation would be water in a colored glass. Although it remains colorless, yet since it is seen through the walls of a white or red vessel, for example, it seems white or red to the viewer. Likewise each organ receives a plain, uncompounded life-force from the soul, and it is the *organ* that gives the life-force en clothed within it its specific functional ability: the eye enables the life-force to give the power to see, and the ear enables it to give the power to hear.

The second possible explanation — and that accepted by *Tanya* — is that the soul, despite its pristine, uncompounded essence, includes *in potential form* all the powers of the various organs, and it is these faculties which each individual organ receives. The eye *receives*, from the life-force of the soul, the power to see, and the ear *receives* from it the power to hear. These powers were originally included *in potentia* within the soul, and each becomes revealed as the life-force becomes en clothed within the respective organ. Thus the power to see or hear does not originate only when the life-force becomes en clothed within the eye or ear; it already exists *in potentia* within the comprehensive life-force emanating from the soul, although it is not yet revealed. *Tanya* proceeds to explain that this is the correct explanation.

The commentary of the Rebbe explains why we must accept this second explanation. If we were to say that the various functional powers are not differentiated (*in potentia*) within the life-force until *after* it becomes en clothed within the organs (like water or light which does not itself possess a color, but acquires it when viewed through colored glass), then the brain would be conscious of the same sensation from what is experienced in the eye as from what is experienced in the ear, *because these sensations have already left their respective organs*. (Thus too, water removed from a white vessel is no different from water removed from a red vessel: once removed from the vessel, it loses the vessel’s color. Likewise, “messages” conveying sensations from the eye would be no different from those coming from the ear — since they have already *left* their respective organs.)

One might argue (according to this explanation which *Tanya* does not accept) that when a particular organ calls into being a functional power in the life-force drawn into it from the soul, this differentiation becomes *acquired* in the life-force (like an ingot of silver which, once it has been molded into the shape of a vessel, remains in that shape later, too). According to this argument, the difference effected by each organ in the life-force drawn into it from the soul, remains also in the sensation transmitted from the organ back to the brain — even after it leaves the organ. This would account for the different messages received by the brain for the varying sensations and occurrences experienced by the eye and ear, for example.

If, however, we say that the soul, which is based in the brain, utterly transcends *any* kind of differentiation (even a differentiation *in potentia*, in which the various powers of the organs are included within the soul), then the soul within the brain would not distinguish between the sensation of what happens in the eye and the sensation of what happens in the ear or other organs, because the soul itself (according to this explanation) is utterly plain and uncompounded. Even, therefore, if the messages coming from the various organs to the brain are indeed different one from another, yet this difference would not be distinguished by the soul in the brain, which utterly transcends all differences between organic functions.

We must therefore say that a difference exists between the various functional powers later revealed in the organs even *before* the life-force is actually drawn from the soul to the organs. The *Tanya* will now explain at which level of the soul this differentiation takes place.

והנה אין שינוי קבלת הכוחות והחיות שבאברי הגוף מן הנשמה מצד עצמה ומהותה, שיהיה מהותה ועצמותה מתחלק לרמ"ח חלקים שונים, מתלבשים ברמ"ח מקומות, כפי ציור חלקי מקומות אברי הגוף

Now, the variation in receiving the functional powers and life-force by the organs of the body from the soul, each organ receiving from the soul a life-force and power in a different form, does not derive from the soul's essence and being, that we should say that its being and essence is divided into 248 different parts, which are encloded in 248 locations, according to the design of the various locations of the body's organs,

Were this the case, we would say that within the soul itself there are already revealed and differentiated the various functional powers — of sight, hearing, and so on — and that these 248 powers which exist within the soul are encloded within the body's 248 organs, each in its appropriate location. We cannot, however, accept this approach:

שלפי זה נמצא עצמותה ומהותה מצוייר בציור גשמי, ודמות ותבנית כתבנית הגוף, חס ושלום

because, according to this, it would follow that the soul's essence and being is designed in a physical design, and a likeness and structure similar to the structure of the body, G-d forbid. Just as the organs of the body have various shapes and forms, so, according to this outlook, are the functional powers, while still within the soul, different from each other in form. But, again, we cannot accept this:

אלא כולה עצם אחד רוחני, פשוט ומופשט מכל ציור גשמי, ומבחינת וגדר מקום ומדה וגבול גשמי

Rather is the soul entirely a single spiritual entity — it is (1) a single entity, (2) a spiritual entity. As a “single” entity, its *oneness* is *plain* and uncompounded. As a “spiritual” entity, its *spirituality* is in a form which is *divested of any physical design, and of any type of definition of physical space, measure, or limitation,*

מצד מהותה ועצמותה

The soul is free of all such dimensions *by virtue of its intrinsic being and essence.* In fact, the soul is so “plain” and free of all these, that even when it is actually encloded *within the organs*, they cannot effect any change in the soul. Therefore, the Alter Rebbe continues:

ולא שייך במהותה ועצמותה לומר שהוא במוחין שבראש יותר מברגלים, מאחר שמהותה ועצמותה אינו בגדר ובחינת מקום וגבול גשמי

And it is not valid to say, concerning the soul's being and essence, that it is in the brain of the head more than in the feet, since its being and essence is not subject to the concept and dimension of physical space and limitation. It is therefore impossible to attribute to the soul this limitation of being more in the head than in the feet.

רק שתרי"ג מיני כוחות וחיות כלולים בה, במהותה ועצמותה, לצאת אל הפועל והגילוי מההעלם

Rather, 613 kinds of functional powers and vital forces are included within the soul, within its being and essence, to become actualized and to emerge from this concealment and inclusion within the soul's essence.

Previously, while still included within the soul's essence, they are only *in potentia* and therefore hidden within the soul — not even as functional powers which are revealed as such while still included within the soul. In other words, within the soul is concealed a *potential* for 613 functional powers “to become actualized and to emerge from concealment” (i.e., to become revealed):

להחיות רמ"ח אברין ושס"ה גדין שבגוף על ידי התלבשותם בנפש החיונית, שיש לה גם כן רמ"ח ושס"ה כוחות וחיות הללו

in order to animate the 248 organs and 365 blood-vessels of the body, through the functional powers of the divine soul becoming enclothed within the animating (or vital) soul, which also possesses the corresponding 248 and 365 functional powers and vital forces.

Concerning these functional powers, as they are drawn and revealed from the soul into the body, the Alter Rebbe will now explain that the principal location to which they are drawn and where they are revealed is the brain. It is from there that the potential powers spread to all other organs of the body. But the essence of the soul exists equally in the foot just as in the brain.

Till now, the Alter Rebbe has mentioned mainly the 248 organs of the body and the corresponding 248 functional powers of the soul enclothed within them. Now, however, he goes into more detail, referring to all 613 functional powers, both those of the 248 organs and those of the 365 blood-vessels, each of which has its own, unique life-force from the soul. This explains why he now refers to 613 rather than 248.

והנה על המשכת כל התרי"ג מיני כוחות וחיות מהעלם הנשמה אל הגוף להחיותו

Now, concerning the flow of all the 613 kinds of functional powers and vital forces which are drawn from the concealment of the soul, where they are previously hidden, and from where they are now drawn to the body to animate it,

עליה אמרו שעיקר משכנה והשראתה של המשכה זו וגילוי זה, הוא כולו במוחין שבראש

concerning this flow [the Sages] have said that the principal dwelling-place and abode of this flow and revelation of the previously concealed powers and forces is entirely situated in the brains of the head.

ולכן הם מקבלים תחלה הכח והחיות הראוי להם, לפי מזגם ותכונתם, שהן חב"ד, וכח המחשבה, וכל השייך למוחין

Therefore it is they, the brains, which first receive the power and life-force appropriate to them according to their composition and character — namely, intellect which is divided into the three intellectual faculties called ChaBaD (Chochmah, Binah, Daat), and the faculty of thought, and whatever pertains to the brain. All these receive their life-force from the soul before the other parts of the body.

ולא זו בלבד, אלא כללות כל המשכת החיות לשאר האברים גם כן כלולה ומלובשת במוחין שבראש

And not only this — that the brains receive their own life-force before the other organs — but also the overall flow of all the individual streams of vitality to the other organs, is also first included and enclothed in the brains of the

head, before it becomes revealed in the individual organs,

ושם הוא עיקרה ושרשה של המשכה זו בבחינת גילוי האור והחיות של כל הנשמה כולה

and it is there, in the brain, that the core and source of the said flow exist in a form in which the light and vitality of the entire soul are revealed. In other words, when the general flow of vitality reaches the brain, then the “light” and vitality of the entire body begin to be revealed.

ומשם מתפשטת הארה לשאר כל האברים ומקבל כל אחד כח וחיות הראוי לו כפי מזגו ותכונתו: כח הראיה מתגלה בעין, וכח השמיעה באוזן, וכו’

From there, the brain, radiance flows to all the other organs, each of which then receives the functional power and vital force appropriate to it according to its composition and character: the power of sight is revealed in the eye, the power of hearing in the ear, and so on.

In other words: At which point does a power of sight come into existence, ready to be revealed in the eye, and a power of hearing in the ear? Only after the overall life-force of the whole body is drawn into the brain in a general manner, then a “radiance” is drawn from there to each organ, a radiance which is already constituted in accordance with the particular character of the individual organ.

וכל הכוחות מתפשטים מהמוח, כנודע, כי שם הוא עיקר משכן הנשמה כולה בבחינת גילוי

But all functional powers flow from the brain, as is known,⁴ for there, in the brain, is located the principal dwelling-place of the entire soul, in a revealed form,

Although the soul actually exists all over the body equally, with no difference between one organ and another, yet the principal place in which the soul is *revealed* is in the brain.

שנגלית שם כללות החיות המתפשט ממנה. רק כוחותיה של כללות החיות מאירים ומתפשטים משם לכל אברי הגוף, כדמיון האור המתפשט ומאיר מהשמש לחדרי חדרים

since there, in the brain, the overall life-force which flows from the soul is revealed. It is only the individual faculties of the overall life-force which shine forth and radiate from there, the brain, to all the organs of the body, just as light radiates and shines from the sun into the innermost of rooms.

ואפילו הלב מקבל מהמוח, ולכן המוח שליט עליו בתולדתו, כנ”ל

(*Even the heart*, which is a central organ from which all other organs receive vitality — “The heart diffuses to all organs” — *receives its own vital force from the brain, which is why the brain naturally dominates the heart, as explained above.*)

In ch. 12 it was explained that man is created with a natural supremacy of the brain over the heart, and the reason is explained here — because the heart, despite its centrality, must in turn receive its own vital force from the soul through the medium of the brain.

ובכח ממש, על דרך משל, אין סוף ברוך הוא ממלא כל עלמין להחיותם

In a truly similar manner, figuratively speaking, does the blessed Ein Sof fill all worlds so as to animate them.

There is a marked similarity between the soul pervading the body and *Ein Sof* permeating all the worlds: Just as in the analogy, the soul is found within and suffuses the entire body, in a parallel manner *Ein Sof* fills and is found in all worlds.

ובכל עולם יש ברואים לאין קץ ותכלית, רבוא רבבות מיני מדרגות מלאכים ונשמות כו'

And in each world there are creatures without limit or end, myriads upon myriads of various grades of angels and souls, and so on,

וכן ריבוי העולמות אין לו קץ וגבול, גבוה על גבוה כו'

and so, too, is the abundance of the worlds without end or limit, one higher than the other, and so on.

In the realm of the spirit separate and distinct entities are the result of their being on different spiritual grades and levels. Thus, a *multitude* of worlds implies a multitude of varying levels of spirituality. Hence the sheer numerousness of worlds and created beings: each differs from the other in its spiritual gradation.

Earlier on, when explaining his analogy, the Alter Rebbe pointed out that despite the vast differences that exist between one bodily organ and the other, the soul's essence is equally to be found in them all. He now goes on to explain that in the analogue of the *Ein Sof* as well, the essence of the *Ein Sof* is found in a hidden manner equally within all worlds.

והנה מהותו ועצמותו של אין סוף ברוך הוא שוה בעליונים ותחתונים, כמשל הנשמה הנ"ל

Now, the core and essence of the blessed Ein Sof is the same in the higher and lower worlds, as in the example of the soul mentioned above, wherein the Alter Rebbe explained that the soul's core and essence is not divisible, and thus it cannot be said of it that it is found in the brain to a greater extent than it is found in the feet,

וכמו שכתוב בתיקונים: דאיהו סתימו דכל סתימין

and as it is written in the Tikkunim that "He is hidden from all the hidden."

פירוש: דאפילו בעלמין סתימין דלעילא הוא סתום ונעלם בתוכם, כמו שהוא סתום ונעלם בתחתונים

This means to say, that even in the higher, hidden worlds He is hidden and concealed within them, just as He is hidden and concealed in the lower worlds.

Thus, the intent of the *Tikkunei Zohar* is not that G-d is more concealed than are all other hidden things, but that He is concealed even from the hidden worlds. The reason for this being:

כי לית מחשבה תפיסא ביה כלל, אפילו בעולמות עליונים

for no thought can apprehend Him at all, even in the higher worlds.

Because G-d is equally concealed from all worlds, no distinction can be made between higher and lower; He defies the comprehension of the higher worlds to the same degree that He cannot be apprehended in the lower worlds.

ונמצא: כמו שמצוי שם, כך נמצא בתחתונים ממש

And he is found, i.e., with regard to where G-d is to be found: *just as He is found there* — in the higher worlds — *so is He to be found in the very lowest* worlds.

וההבדל שבין עולמות עליונים ותחתונים הוא מצד המשכת החיות אשר אין סוף ברוך הוא ממשיך ומאיר בבחינת גילוי מההעלם

The difference between the higher and lower worlds is with regard to the flow of vitality which the blessed Ein Sof causes to flow and illumine in a manner of “revelation out of concealment,”

The Alter Rebbe will soon conclude that this revelation is intended for the purpose of vitalizing the worlds and their inhabitants, for the vitality of all worlds and creatures derives from the revelation of G-dliness within them. Thus, the difference between the higher and lower worlds lies in the varying degrees of Divine revelation within them.

With regard to “revelation out of concealment,” the Alter Rebbe now states parenthetically that this manner of revelation is one of the reasons why the G-dly vitality found within the worlds is called “light”.

שזה אחד מהטעמים שההשפעה והמשכת החיות מכונה בשם אור, על דרך משל

(which is one of the reasons why the influence and flow of this vitality is figuratively called “light”),

In Kabbalistic literature the flow and vitality of G-dliness is termed “light” rather than *shefa* (“flux”), as it is termed in Jewish speculative philosophy (*chakirah*). “Light” signifies “revelation out of concealment”: previously the light had been concealed within the luminary, the source of the light, and subsequently it is drawn forth from this source and is revealed as light. Thus, in the case of “revelation out of concealment,” only a minute illumination of the source is drawn down into a revealed state. Not so *shefa*, where it is the actual “flux” and “stream” of the source that flows down and is revealed. Hence the phrase *ושפעת מים* (“a flow of water”; *Iyov* 22:11): the selfsame water that was previously in one place flows to another place.

The above-mentioned “revelation out of concealment” of light serves the purpose of:

להחיות העולמות והברואים שבהם

thereby animating the worlds and the creatures therein.

Herein lies the difference between the higher and lower worlds:

שהעולמות העליונים מקבלים בבחינת גילוי קצת יותר מהתחתונים

For the higher worlds receive this vitality and light in a somewhat more revealed form than do the lower;

I.e., even in the higher worlds this light and vitality is not manifestly revealed.

וכל הברואים שבהם, מקבלים כל אחד כפי כחו ותכונתו

and all creatures therein — in the higher worlds — *receive* the *revealed* aspect of vitality, albeit *each according to its capacity and nature*,

Just as in the analogy each bodily organ receives vitality from the brain according to its “character and nature,” so too does the Alter Rebbe state in the analogue that each creature receives its vitality according to its “capacity and nature.” (- Note of the Rebbe.) This means that each being receives vitality according to its capacity to have the life-force and vitality revealed within it, and according to the manner in which this vitality is to be revealed — whether as a revelation of intellect and comprehension, or in an emotive manner.

(“But this is not to say that the ‘nature’ *conceals* the revelation; rather ‘it imbues and *illuminates* it.’” – Note of the Rebbe.)

שהיא תכונת ובחינת המשכה הפרטית אשר אין סוף ברוך הוא ממשיך ומאיר לו

which is the nature and form of the particular flow with which the blessed Ein Sof imbues and illuminates it.

והתחתונים, אפילו הרוחניים, אינם מקבלים בבחינת גילוי כל כך

But the lower worlds and creatures, *even the spiritual ones, do not receive* the Divine life-force *in quite such a revealed form* as it is received in the higher worlds,

רק בלבושים רבים, אשר אין סוף ברוך הוא מלביש בהם החיות והאור אשר ממשיך ומאיר להם להחיות

but only by means of many garments, wherein the blessed Ein Sof invests the vitality and light which He causes to flow and shine on them in order to animate them.

The Divine life-force is garbed in many garments so as not to be revealed. This concealment involves not only a multitudinous profusion of garments — a quantitative manner of concealment — but a qualitative one as well: There is vast difference between the insubstantial garments that conceal the vitality in the higher worlds and the much denser garments necessary to conceal the G-dly vitality to the degree that creation of the physical becomes possible.

Were there merely to be a vast quantity of ethereal garments, the Divine life-force would only be capable of creating spiritual beings and not physical ones; in order for this physical world with its corporeal creatures to be created, much *denser* garments were necessary. It is this that the Alter Rebbe now goes on to explain:

וכל כך עצמו וגברו הלבושים אשר אין סוף ברוך הוא מלביש ומסתיר בהם האור והחיות

These garments, wherein the blessed Ein Sof invests and conceals the light and vitality, are so strong and powerful

I.e., the garments are not only numerous in quantity, but they are also of such a type that their ability to conceal is greater than that of ordinary garments,

עד אשר ברא בו עולם הזה החומרי והגשמי ממש

*that thereby, with this life-force and light, He created this world that is verily corporeal and physical,*⁶

ומהווה ומחייהו בחיות ואור אשר ממשיך ומאיר לו

and [G-d] creates and animates it by the vitality and light which He draws down and shines forth unto it.

אור המלוּבש ומכוסה ומוסתר בתוך הלבושים הרבים והעצומים המעלימים ומסתירים האור והחיות

This illumination is a *light that is clothed, hidden and concealed within the numerous and powerful garments, which hide and conceal the light and vitality,*

עד שאין נראה ונגלה שום אור וחיות, רק דברים חומריים וגשמיים ונראים מתים

so that no light or vitality whatever is visibly revealed, but only corporeal and physical things that appear lifeless.

Gazing at corporeal things, such as at the physical orb of Earth, can cause a person to imagine them as utterly lifeless — totally devoid of any spiritual vitality.

אך בתוכם יש אור וחיות המהוה אותם מאין ליש תמיד, שלא יחזרו להיות אין ואפס כשהיו

Yet they contain light and vitality which constantly creates them ex nihilo, so that they shall not revert to nothing and naught as they had been prior to their creation.

Creation *ex nihilo* must be constant: the fact that the world and its creatures were already once created during the Six Days of Creation does not suffice. Rather, there must be a constant renewal of creation from its source. Thus, the G-dly light and vitality that is responsible for creation is constantly found within created beings, albeit in a concealed fashion.

ואור זה הוא מאין סוף ברוך הוא, רק שנתלבש בלבושים רבים

This light comes from the blessed Ein Sof, except that it is clothed in many garments,

וכמו שכתוב בעץ חיים, שאור וחיות כדור הארץ החומרי הנראה לעיני בשר הוא ממלכות דמלכות דעשיה

as is written in Etz Chayim, that the light and vitality of the physical orb of Earth, which is seen by mortal eyes, is derived from Malchut of Malchut of Asiyah,

Malchut of Asiyah is the lowest *Sefirah* of the World of *Asiyah*, the lowest of the Four Worlds. *Malchut* itself is composed of all Ten *Sefirot*, the lowest of which is *Malchut*. Thus, *Malchut of Malchut of Asiyah* represents the lowest degree of the lowest level of *Asiyah*.

ובתוכה מלכות דיצירה וכו'

and in it is contained Malchut of the next highest World, the World of Yetzirah, and so on; i.e., within *Malchut of Yetzirah*, in turn, there is contained *Malchut of Beriah*, and so on,

עד שבתוך כולן י' ספירות דאצילות

so that in all of them — within the level of *Malchut* of all Worlds, including the level of *Malchut of Asiyah* — *are contained the Ten Sefirot* of the loftiest World, the World of *Atzilut*,⁷

which are united with their Emanator, the blessed Ein Sof.

Thus, even the physical orb of Earth contains G-dly light and vitality. This results from the light passing through the *Sefirot* of the various worlds — the *Sefirot* being the G-dliness of each world — as well as through numerous and powerfully dense garments that serve to conceal this vitality.

The difference between the higher and lower worlds will be understood accordingly: The divine light and life-force is revealed to a greater extent in the higher worlds than in the lower, and within this physical world the light and life-force is completely concealed. However, this is the case merely in relation to the illumination of G-dliness. With regard to the core and essence of the *Ein Sof*, there truly exists no difference between the higher and lower worlds; He is equally concealed from all and He is equally found in them all.

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FOOTNOTES

1. *Iyov* 19:26.
2. “Regarding the text that follows, note *Zohar III*, 257b.” (- Note of the Rebbe.)
3. The Rebbe writes that the Alter Rebbe specifically chose the four faculties of seeing, hearing, speaking and walking, because these powers correspond to the activities alluded to in the opening verse: “...in your mouth and in your heart, that you may do it” — namely, thought, speech and action. Vision and hearing arouse thought. More specifically: vision arouses the aspect of *Chochmah* and hearing arouses *Binah*. “The mouth for speaking” refers to speech; “the feet for walking” — action. Within action itself, walking is the lowest form of action. Thus the example given here is action as it descends even to its lowest level (and hence the example of the hand’s action is not given).
4. The Rebbe notes that the Alter Rebbe goes on to use seemingly repetitive expressions, since each one refers to a different level of incorporation within the brain. This is explained in the *Maamarim*, *Az Yashir* 5670; *UvaChodesh HaShevi’i* 5663; and in *Hemshech Rosh HaShanah* 5708, ch. 7.
5. Parentheses are in the original text.
6. The Rebbe comments that the Alter Rebbe writes “this world that is verily corporeal and physical,” because this world exists on a spiritual plane as well, and the Alter Rebbe is referring to the inanimate aspect of this world in which no vitality is revealed. However, those aspects of this world, such as the vegetative and animal, in which some measure of vitality is revealed, derive their life-force in a different and more revealed manner. This is so notwithstanding the fact that these levels, too, receive their vitality from *Malchut* of *Malchut* of *Asiyah*, as stated later on in *Iggeret HaKodesh*, Epistle 20 (p. 264 in the standard edition of *Tanya*, Vilna, 1899). Accordingly we can also understand (a) why the Alter Rebbe goes on to state that they receive their existence *ex nihilo*, after having previously stated that reference is being made here to this physical and corporeal world — a world whose creation must perforce be *ex nihilo*; (b) the expression “which is seen by mortal eyes”; and (c) a number of other intentionally specific phrases. The reason for all the above is that the Alter Rebbe is speaking particularly of the inanimate aspect of this world. Concerning this he soon goes on to quote the *Etz Chayim*, which says that this vitality emanates from *Malchut* of *Malchut* of *Asiyah*. However, with regard to the World of *Asiyah* as a whole, which also includes the spiritual World of *Asiyah*, the Alter Rebbe will say in ch. 52 and 53 that they derive their life-force from *Malchut* of *Asiyah* and not from *Malchut* of *Malchut* of *Asiyah*.
7. “See further, p. א"מ"ק. [p. 279 in the standard edition; *Iggeret HaKodesh*, Epistle 25]: ‘The radiation that is in *Atzilut* pierces...and in this material world.’” (- Note of the Rebbe.)

**THE TANYA OF RABBI SCHNEUR ZALMAN OF LIADI, ELUCIDATED BY
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