באתי לגני

בاسي לֶגאנִי
Over the course of the year, the drama had intensified from day to day. From the moment of the passing of the Rebbe Rayatz, it was widely understood that the mantle of leadership had passed – albeit unofficially – to our Rebbe. Nevertheless, the Rebbe had declined to fully accept that position. For example, one of the fundamental practices associated with a chassid-Rebbe relationship is for a chassid to hand a pan, a written request for a blessing, to his Rebbe. By and large, throughout the year, the Rebbe had refused to accept pannim.

Another example: In the time-honored tradition of Lubavitch, only a Rebbe delivers a maamar, a formal chassidic discourse. Though the Rebbe had held farbrengens with the chassidim every Shabbos Mevarchim, as he had done on the instruction of the Rebbe Rayatz even during the latter’s lifetime, he had yet to deliver a maamar.

As Yud Shvat, the first yahrzeit of the Rebbe Rayatz, approached, the interplay surged to a crescendo. Throughout the world, chassidim joined together to sign a ksav hiskashrus, a declaration of their allegiance to the Rebbe. Announcements were made of the farbrengen to be held in commemoration of the yahrzeit, mentioning the Rebbe’s participation and, for the first time, referring to him with the title of Rebbe.

After leading the communal prayers and visiting the Ohel, the resting place of the Rebbe Rayatz, on the evening following Yud Shvat, the Rebbe went to visit his mother. He returned to “770” and took his place at the head table of the farbrengen at about 9:45 p.m. He delivered two sichos, joined the chassidim in niggunim, and responded to toasts of LeChayim.

After about an hour, a seasoned chassid, R. Avraham Sender Nemtzov, took a daring initiative. He stood up and declared, “The chassidim request that the Rebbe deliver a maamar of Chassidus! The sichos (the informal talks) are fine, but the chassidim request Chassidus....” All those assembled hushed, 

1. An acronym for the words pidyon nefesh, lit., “redemption of the soul.”
2. The Shabbos on which the coming new month is blessed.
and shortly thereafter the Rebbe began the delivery of his first *maamar*, the *maamar* entitled *Basi LeGani*.

He delivered it in three segments (sec. 1–3, sec. 4–5, and sec. 6–9). In the interim, *niggunim* were sung and the chassidim toasted *LeChayim*.

At the first interval, R. Avraham Sender climbed onto the table and, joined by the other chassidim, joyously recited the blessing *Shehecheyanu*.³

**INVITING THE SHECHINAH INTO ITS HOME**

The Rebbe’s *maamar* is an explanation of the *maamar* of the same name,⁴ delivered one year earlier by the Rebbe Rayatz,⁵ focusing particularly on the first section of that *maamar*.⁶ In the first segment of his *maamar*, the Rebbe cited the statement of the *Midrash* quoted by the Rebbe Rayatz at the beginning of his *maamar*, that directly after Creation, the Essence of the *Shechinah* was manifest in the lower realms. Later, recoiling from the respective sins of seven generations, the *Shechinah* withdrew, stage by stage, to the heavens. In due course, however, in response to the Divine service of seven righteous men, it was drawn back to this earth.

The Rebbe emphasizes that the most significant stage in the sevenfold withdrawal of the *Shechinah* was its initial withdrawal from this world, and conversely, the most significant stage in the sevenfold process of drawing it back was its ultimate restoration to this world below. The latter feat was accomplished by Moshe, for Moshe had the distinction of being the seventh of those righteous men, and “All those who are seventh are cherished.”⁷

³. See *Yemei Bereishis* (Kehot, 5753 [1993]), which chronicles the events of the year between the passing of the Rebbe Rayatz and *Yud* Shvat, 5711, in detail.
⁴. *Yud* Shvat is also the *yahrzeit* of the Rebbe Rayatz’s grandmother, *Rebbitzin* Rivkah. The Rebbe Rayatz had directed the Rebbe to prepare and print copies of the *maamar*, which was to be studied on the day of her passing. Providentially, he passed away on that day and, as will be explained, his *maamar* is considered as his spiritual testament to his chassidim.
⁵. Similarly, the first *maamar* delivered by the Rebbe Rayatz, *Reishis Goyim Amalek*, reviews and explains the last *maamar* delivered by his father, the Rebbe Rashab.
⁶. *Basi LeGani* begins a series of four *maamaries*, comprising 20 sections in all. Each year of his *nesius* in connection with *Yud* Shvat, the Rebbe delivered (or prepared for publication) a *maamar* that focused on a successive section of those *maamaries*.
⁷. *Vayikra Rabba* 29:11. This statement is taken from a different Midrashic source than the *Midrash* from *Shir HaShirim Rabba*, which focuses on the verse, *Basi LeGani*, “I came into My garden,” and which serves as the theme of the *maamar*. It is cited by the Rebbe Rayatz in connection with the concept that the critical step in drawing down the *Shechinah* was accomplished by Moshe, the seventh of the righteous men, who drew it down to this physical world. It is thus seen as an allusion to the dawning of the seventh generation of *Chabad*. 
Significantly, the seventh in a series is cherished, not because of a virtue dependent on his choice, his desire, or his personal achievements in Divine service, but because he is the seventh – because he carries on the heritage of his forebears. Thus, through the achievements of the seventh in a series, the unique virtue of the first becomes apparent.

The first in the chain of righteous men who preceded Moshe was Avraham Avinu. Avraham was distinguished by the uniqueness of his mesirus nefesh. It is possible to view mesirus nefesh as a personal goal, the most complete expression of one’s lifelong quest for spiritual fulfillment. For Avraham, however, mesirus nefesh was not a personal objective. His sole motivation was to let the world know of G-d’s Presence; if mesirus nefesh was needed to accomplish that purpose, he was willing to make that commitment as well. And because Moshe was the seventh in the lineage of Avraham’s spiritual legacy, he was privileged to draw the Shechinah back into this world.

Similarly, the Rebbe underscored, the mission of our generation, the seventh generation of Chabad chassidism, is to complete the process of drawing down the Shechinah back into our world.

ILLUSORY SELF-SUFFICIENCY VS. SPIRITUAL REALITY

In the second segment of the maamar (secs. 4-5), the Rebbe clarified the conceptual underpinning of the above statements: The ultimate purpose for all existence is that “G-d desired to have a dwelling place in the lower worlds.” Accordingly, at the very beginning of the world’s existence, the Shechinah was manifest in this world.

The statement that the ultimate purpose of Creation is specifically our material world is based on the concept that the whole of creation stems from G-d’s very Essence, for His unique potential to bring existence into being from a state of non-being (yesh me’ayin – “something from nothing” in chassidic terminology) derives solely from His Essence. For creating something new means bringing into being an entity that does not recognize its Source and feels that it exists independently, as it were. In the entire Spiritual Cosmos, there is no entity other than G-d’s Essence that is truly independent. Hence, it is only G-d’s Essence, which truly exists independently, that can bring into being a world that is a

chassidism.

8. Midrash Tanchuma, Parshas Naso, sec. 16; Tanya, ch. 36.
new creation, i.e., that feels that it exists independently.

In truth, the feelings of self-sufficient existence, *yeshus*, that permeate this world are an illusion. Paradoxically, the very fact that those feelings are possible reflects the source of the world’s existence – G-d’s Essence, the *Yesh HaAmiti*, the One Who is truly self-sufficient.

These concepts highlight the purpose of man’s Divine service in this world: overcoming the false perception of *yeshus* (independent existence) and revealing G-d’s intent – that the world serve as His dwelling. This is accomplished by subduing the challenging forces that characterize our material reality and transforming them into holiness.

**MARCHING ORDERS**

The Rebbe began the third segment of the *maamar* (secs. 6-9) by recapitulating the above concepts: that the purpose of Creation is that a dwelling for G-d be created in this world by subduing its darkness and transforming it into light. This involves transforming the folly of the forces of evil, the folly that leads to sin, into the super-rational “folly” of holiness, that is, Divine service and *bittul* that transcend the limits of intellect.

The superiority of the manifestation of G-dliness that will be achieved through this mode of Divine service is alluded to by the *Zohar’s* statement:9 “Whenever the *sitra achra* is subjugated, the glory of G-d is revealed throughout all the worlds.” Now, the Aramaic term *istalek*, here translated as “revealed,” literally means “elevated” and “withdrawn.” The intent, however, is not that this spiritual light is elevated and withdrawn above the reach of this world; but rather, that this elevated and transcendent light will be revealed specifically within this world.

The Rebbe then shifted the focus to the passing of the Rebbe Rayatz. He pointed out that the term *histalkus*10 is similarly used to refer to the passing of *tzaddikim*. Hence, he continued, it is clear that the intent is not, Heaven forbid, that the person who has passed has left our midst, but rather that he is still found with us, though in a transcendent and lofty manner. As such, the *histalkus* of the Rebbe Rayatz empowers us, the seventh generation, to persevere in our efforts to complete the mission of drawing down the *Shechinah* to this material plane.

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10. A noun form of the verb *istalek* explained above.
In explicit terms, the Rebbe told his listeners: It is required of every one of us that we realize that we are living in the seventh generation counting from the Alter Rebbe, and that the uniqueness of the seventh of a series is that he is seventh to the first, and that he carries out the legacy of the first. The path of Avraham, the first of his series, was that he sought nothing for himself, not even mesirus nefesh. He knew that the sole purpose of his existence was to make G-dliness widely known. Not only did he personally make G-d’s Presence known: he also motivated others to do so. In the same way, this is the mission with which we are charged.

A POINT OF CLARIFICATION

When this maamar was republished as part of the series Toras Menachem, additional footnotes were added. They were printed with different numbers than the notes originally included by the Rebbe. Accordingly, in the translation of that maamar, there are three types of footnotes.

EVERYTHING DEPENDS ON US

The Rebbe viewed the seminal maamar of the Rebbe Rayatz as a “spiritual will,” highlighting the fundamental elements of Divine service that he desired to inculcate within his chassidim. In similar vein, the maamar that appears here – the Rebbe’s Basi LeGani – can be clearly seen as a mission statement, defining the spiritual objective of this generation. Whenever a chassid studies this maamar, he becomes aware of this purpose, and is empowered to carry it out. As the Rebbe states in the penultimate line of the maamar, “Everything now depends only on us, the seventh generation.” When we carry out that service, we will merit the fulfillment of the prayer that concludes the maamar: “May we be privileged to see and meet with the Rebbe down here in this world, in a physical body, in this earthly domain, and he will redeem us.”
In the maamar that he had published to be studied on the day that providentially, became the day of his passing,⁴ the tenth of Shvat, 5710 –

Yud, “the tenth of,” Shvat marks the yahrzeit of the Rebbe Rayatz’s grandmother, Rebbitzin Rivkah. Often the Rebbe Rayatz delivered – and many times, particularly in his later years published for study – a maamar in connection with that date. The Rebbe Rayatz did so in 5710 as well, but passed away on that day. The Rebbe viewed the maamar as a “spiritual will,” defining the mission of the coming generation.

– my revered father-in-law, the Rebbe, of blessed memory, begins with a verse from Shir HaShirim,² which serves as an analogy for the ongoing love relationship between G-d and His bride, the Jewish people.

“I have come into My garden, My sister, My bride.”

Shir HaShirim Rabbah (on this verse) observes that the word used is not legan which would mean “to the garden,” but legani which means “to My garden,” but which our Sages interpret as meaning “to My bridal chamber.”³

The Midrash explains that the verse is referring to the time of the Giving of the Torah⁴ and the construction of the Sanctuary. At that time, G-d “came into His garden,” i.e., His Presence was manifest in this world, which can be described as a garden.⁵ However, the verse does not merely say, “I came into the garden.” It says “My garden,” implying that G-d shared a connection with the garden beforehand. The Divine Presence is thus saying: “Although for a time, I have been removed

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1. Basi LeGani, 5710 (Sefer HaMaamarim 5710, p. 111).
3. See Yafah Kol to Shir HaShirim Rabbah.
4. See sec. 2 and the sources mentioned there.
5. See the sichos of Yud Shvat, 5732, regarding the implications of that metaphor.
from the world, now — with the Giving of the Torah and the construction of the Sanctuary – I have come into My garden, My bridal chamber,

into the place in which My Essence was originally revealed.”

The Midrash continues: “...for the essence of the Shechinah, the Divine Presence, was manifest in the lower realms.” Although the Midrash uses a plural term, tachtonim, the intent is our material world, as explained at length in sec. 2.

This concludes the wording of the Midrash.

To focus on the expression “the essence of the Shechinah”:

The Alter Rebbe states* that this name is used to describe the Divine Presence “because it dwells and is enclothed in all the worlds

There are two dimensions to the Alter Rebbe’s definition: a) that the light descends and is revealed in the lower realms; and b) that it is “enclothed” in those realms. The latter term implies that just as clothes are tailored to fit the person who wears them, G-d’s Divine light undergoes an adjustment so that it can be internalized within the worlds in which it shines. The term Shechinah thus implies not only gilui (“revelation”), but also hislabshus (“enclothing”).

*Malshon ‘reshbethin b’hamifletesh, – as in the Scriptural phrase, ‘And I will dwell among them.’” –

6. Tanya, chs. 41, 52. In each of the three sections of this maamor, the Rebbe quotes teachings of the five Rebbeim who preceded the Rebbe Rayatz.
The Shechinah represents the initial revelation of Or Ein Sof, G-d’s infinite light.

From the Alter Rebbe’s statement that “the initial revelation of Or Ein Sof” is called Shechinah, it is evident that the Shechinah transcends by far even the loftiest of the Four Spiritual Worlds, the World of Atzilus.

Indeed, the Shechinah surpasses the Divine light that precedes the initial self-imposed contraction of Divine revelation that is known as the tzimtzum, for the initial revelation occurs in the Or Ein Sof that precedes the tzimtzum.

And the Mitteler Rebbe writes: “The ray of the kav and chut, i.e., the narrow vector and thread of Divine light that shined forth following the tzimtzum,

8. Tanya, ch. 52.
9. This is implied by the literal meaning of the Hebrew term translated as “Spiritual Cosmos,” Seder HaHilkhot shelos, “the chainlike order.” In a chain, the bottom of a higher link descends into the lower link.
10. In his interpretation of the verse, Havayah Li BeOzrai (cited in the series of maamarim entitled VeKachah HaGadol, 5637, sec. 27), which appears in Or HaTorah, Parshas Haazinu, p. 1823. The concept is also found in Masei Admor HaZekain 5564, p. 239; see also the Tzemach Tzedek’s Biurei HaZohar, Vol. 2, p. 819ff.; Sefer HaMaamarim 5657, p. 199ff.; Sefer HaMaamarim 5679, p. 100ff.
in relation to the essence of G-d’s infinite light, is termed Shechinah.”

For the meaning of the term Shechinah varies according to the spiritual level of its context. In relation to Atzilus, for example, it is Malchus, lit., “sovereignty,” the lowest of the Sefiros, that is termed Shechinah.

Even with regard to this use of the term, the Tzemach Tzedek explains\textsuperscript{11} that it applies only when Malchus descends and serves as the rung of Atik, i.e., when it serves as the source for the creation of the World of Beriah, for only then can it be said to enclothe itself in the lower levels of existence.

The passage Pasach Eliyahu\textsuperscript{12} refers to Malchus with the analogy of a mouth, i.e., man’s power of speech. In speech, there are two dimensions: a) a person’s potential to speak, i.e., one of the powers of his soul; and b) the actual words he says which can be appreciated by others as well.

However, when Malchus is still in Atzilus, it is united with them (i.e., with the Sefiros of Atzilus), and the term Shechinah cannot be applied to it. Only when it descends to the lower realms – like a person who speaks to others – is the use of that term appropriate.

\textsuperscript{11} Likkutei Torah, Shir HaShirim, the biur on the maamar that begins Shechorah Ani, beginning of ch. 2, p. 8b.
\textsuperscript{12} Introduction to Tikkunei Zohar, p. 17b.
Nevertheless, this does not contradict the earlier statement that even so lofty a level as the kav, which is spiritually superior by far to Atzilus, is termed Shechinah,

for the term Shechinah as used by our Sages refers specifically to the level of Malchus of Atzilus,

and even then, only insofar as it becomes the level of Atik for the World of Beriah.

In its source, however, i.e., in the state in which it exists in relation to G-d’s infinite light, i.e., the revelation of light that precedes the tzimtzum,

even the kav is termed Shechinah.

The Rebbe Maharash writes that one of the reasons why the kav is called Shechinah in relation to G-d’s infinite light is –

Explanation is necessary, because even though the kav represents a descent in relation to the light that shines before the tzimtzum, the second dimension of the definition of the term Shechinah seemingly does not apply to it. For the kav itself is not enclothed in the worlds but is merely a vector of light. Nevertheless, the term is appropriate because the kav is drawn down with the intent that it become enclothed in the worlds and in the souls of the Jewish people.

Hence, even its initial revelation which is not enclothed in the worlds is termed Shechinah because of that intent.

On an even higher level, in its initial source, as it precedes the tzimtzum, there is a loftier definition of the term Shechinah.

As the Rebbe Rashab explains, the revelation of Divine light prior to the tzimtzum is termed Shechinah.

As explained, the term Shechinah implies two functions: gilui, “revelation,” and hislabshus, “enclothing.” Before the tzimtzum, there was gilui, but seemingly the concept of hislabshus does not apply because on that level of being, it is incorrect to speak of the existence – indeed, even the possibility for the existence – of the worlds, let alone G-d’s light adapting and being enclothed in them. To explain how the term Shechinah can nevertheless apply even before the tzimtzum:

In general, there are three levels of G-dly light that precede the tzimtzum. First, there are two fundamental divisions:

- the essence of the Divine light (etzem ha’or), which is above all revelation
- and the diffusion of the light (hispashtus ha’or). On this level, the concept of revelation is relevant.

The diffusion of the light subdivides into two levels.

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14. The series of maamarim entitled Yom Tov shel Rosh HaShanah, 5666, the maamar entitled Kadesh Yisrael; see also the maamar beginning Vaydaber Elokim Es Kol HaDevarim, 5699, (Sefer HaMaamarim 5699, p. 175). The latter maamar is based on the maamar entitled Vaydaber Elokim, 5668 (Sefer HaMaamarim 5668, p. 161).
a) The revelation of light for G-d Himself. On this level, there is no conception of existence outside of Him. His light is revealed, not for others, but as a natural function of the light itself. G-d has the potential to shine forth light and that potential seeks expression. This revelation is the source of the light of sovev kol almin, the light that transcends (lit.: “encompasses”) all worlds; and

b) The revelation of the light that bears a relation to the worlds – as it is for Himself.

The maamar is referring to the light that is intended to be enclothed within the worlds as it exists in a preparatory stage, i.e., before the tzimtzum.

This revelation is the source of the light of memale kol almin, the light that is internalized in all the worlds.

To explain by analogy, it is like a person who prepares the message he wants to communicate to others in his own mind. The message (i.e., the light) is intended for others (i.e., to bring about the existence of the worlds that appear as entities separate from Him). Nevertheless, on this level, it is still in the person's own mind. In the analogue, the light shines before the tzimtzum and thus, there is no concept of existence outside of Him.

It is this latter illumination that is termed Shechinah.

Seemingly, this term is not relevant, for this light is, by definition, above the worlds.

True, this light precedes the tzimtzum and thus cannot possibly serve as a source for the creation of the worlds –

For before the tzimtzum, even the light that was intended to shine within the worlds was included within His unlimited light.
for which reason it was necessary that there be a tzimtzum. Moreover, a unique type of tzimtzum – the first tzimtzum, which involved a complete withdrawal of G-d’s light.

All of the subsequent tzimtzumim involve a mere reduction of Divine light. In this instance, in order for the worlds to come into existence, a complete withdrawal of the light is necessary.

Nevertheless, despite it being above the level of the worlds this light is termed Shechinah. The term is appropriate based on the explanation of the Rebbe Maharash given above. In this instance as well, the ultimate intent of this light is that it would descend and enclothe itself in the worlds that would come into being.

On this basis, we can understand the precise wording of the Midrash: “the essence of the Shechinah was manifest in the lower realms,” i.e., our material world.

The revelation of the Shechinah in the lower realms refers not to the term Shechinah as it applies in relation to Atzilus, i.e., Malchus, nor the term Shechinah as it applies in relation to G-d’s infinite light, i.e., the kav.

Instead, it was the essence and innermost dimen- sion of the Shechinah that was manifest in the lower realms, our material earth.

Why is it necessary for the Midrash to say that the essence of the Shechinah was
manifest in the lower realms? Because the *Midrash* is commenting on the verse, “I came into My garden,” which implies that not only was G-dliness manifest in this world, but it was manifest in this world to a greater extent than in the spiritual realms above. The only level of G-dliness that could be referred to as “I” and still be manifest in this world to a greater degree than in the higher realms is G-d’s light that shined before the *tzimtzum*. As the *maamar* explains,

The Divine light enclothed within the worlds descends in an orderly and progressive manner.  

In the loftier realms, G-d’s light is revealed to a greater degree,

and the greater the extent of the descent through the chainlike pattern of existence, the lesser the illumination.

Hence, following that pattern, the G-dly light that would be enclothed in this world would be of an extremely low level. It would not be appropriate to say that the verse “I came into My garden” refers to such a light.

For this pattern of descent characterizes the Divine light manifest within *Seder HaHishtalshelus* (the chainlike pattern of spiritual existence) as a whole. All levels following the *tzimtzum* follow that pattern – the loftier the realm, the greater the degree of revelation; the lower the realm, the lesser the degree of revelation. Hence, this light could not be manifest in this world to a greater degree than in the higher realms.

True, before the sin of the Tree of Knowledge, G-dly light was revealed in this world. Thus, it could be said that before the sin, when G-dliness was

15. See at length the *maamar* beginning *Eichah, Parshas Devarim*, 5670.
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revealed in this world, the G-dly light that was revealed there surpassed that of the higher realms. This, however, cannot be said, because

Nevertheless, even then, the light was revealed to a greater extent in the higher worlds.

As our Sages state,17 “He extended His right hand and created heaven; He extended His left hand and created earth.”

Just as in a physical sense, the left hand is weaker and thus the right hand denotes primacy, so too, in a spiritual sense, the heavens – the spiritual realms – were created with G-d’s right hand, i.e., they received a greater degree of Divine light. And the earth – this material world – was created with His left hand, i.e., it received a lesser degree of Divine light. This verse is referring to the time before the sin, i.e., the world directly after its creation. Nevertheless, the pattern was that the loftier the realm, the greater light that shined in it.

Instead, the intent is G-d’s light that transcends the worlds, the light that shined before the tzimtzum. Since that light transcends the entire Spiritual Cosmos and all its prevailing patterns, it is possible that it be manifest in this material realm to a greater degree than in the spiritual realms.

This is what is meant by the essence of the Shechinah, that this sublime level of G-dly light was manifest in our material world.

SUMMARY

The maamar is based on a verse from Shir HaShirim, which serves as an analogy for the ongoing love relationship between G-d and His bride, the Jewish people. In its

description of the descent of the Shechinah, the Divine Presence, into the world at the time of the Giving of the Torah and the construction of the Sanctuary, the Midrash quotes the verse: “I have come into My garden, My sister, My bride.” The Midrash observes that the verse does not use the term legan which would mean “to the garden,” but legani which means “to My garden,” i.e., a place to which the Shechinah shared a previous connection. On that basis, our Sages conclude that originally, “the essence of the Shechinah was manifest in the lower realms.”

The maamar emphasizes that the term Shechinah is used to refer to several different levels depending on the rung of the Spiritual Cosmos about which it is speaking. When speaking of the Shechinah that was manifest in this physical world, however, the intent is the essence and innermost dimension of the Shechinah.
Regarding the statement cited above: “The essence of the Shechinah was manifest in the lower realms” – from the conceptual flow of the Midrash, it can be understood as implying that the term tachtonim, “lower realms,” refers to this physical world.

At times, the term tachtonim can refer to the worlds of Beriah, Yetzirah, and Asiyah, which are “lower,” and of a different nature than Atzilus. (For as the Rebbe Rayatz explains in his maamar,18 Atzilus is entirely identified with G-dliness, while the worlds of Beriah, Yetzirah, and Asiyah are characterized by independent existence.) More particularly, tachtonim is occasionally used to refer to the spiritual world of Asiyah which is lower, i.e., far less refined, than the worlds of Beriah and Yetzirah.

Nevertheless, in this Midrash, the intent of the term is clearly this physical world.

For the Midrash proceeds to explain that because of the sin of the Tree of Knowledge, the Shechinah withdrew, ascending from the earth to heaven, and at the Giving of the Torah on Mt. Sinai, G-d “came into His garden— to His bridal chamber,”19 i.e., He manifested His Presence on this earth again. Thus, it is obvious that the intent of the Midrash is that originally, the Shechinah was manifest on this physical plane. Accordingly,

the primary dimension of the withdrawal of the Divine Presence that came about as a result of sin was brought about specifically by the sin of the

Tree of Knowledge. For it was as a result of that sin that the Divine Presence withdrew from the earth.

The Midrash, and thus the Rebbe Rayatz in his discourse, mention seven sins. Nevertheless, the Rebbe Rayatz places the sin of the Tree of Knowledge in its own category. To explain: There is a relationship between the seriousness of a sin and its effect.

With regard to the seriousness of the sin,

the primary sin was the sin of the Tree of Knowledge.

Indeed, the sin of the Tree of Knowledge made all other sins possible.

It precipitated and brought about the sins of Cain and Enosh as well as later sins.

G-d created man without a tendency to sin. Violating G-d’s will was totally out of character. After the sin, by contrast, the possibility of sinning existed within a person’s mind and heart and it was necessary to struggle to avoid sinning in the future.\(^{20}\)

The same is true with regard to the effect of sin, i.e.,

the withdrawal of the Shechinah because of the sin:

the fundamental dimension of the withdrawal of the Shechinah was its withdrawal from this physical world as a result of the sin of the Tree of Knowledge.

\(^{20}\) One might then ask: How was the sin of the Tree of Knowledge possible? There are lengthy explanations concerning this which are outside the scope of this maamar. See Toras Chayim, Bereishis, p. 153d ff.; Likkutei Sichos, Vol. 18, p. 395, and the sources mentioned there.
Just as originally, “The essence of the Shechinah was manifest in the lower realms,” specifically in this physical world,

so too, the fundamental dimension of its withdrawal is its departure from this world.

This was brought about by the sin of the Tree of Knowledge.

It caused the withdrawal of the Shechinah from the earth to heaven.

This also explains why (in the maamar) the Rebbe Rayatz does not include the sin of the Tree of Knowledge together with the sins of Cain and Enosh but lists it separately.

The Midrash lists the seven sins that caused the Shechinah to withdraw from the earth and ascend to the higher levels of the heavens in one continuum. In the maamar Basi LeGani, the Rebbe Rayatz places an emphasis on the sin of the Tree of Knowledge, and merely mentions in brief or omits entirely the other sins that caused the further ascent of the Shechinah. The rationale for the distinction is that the sins of Cain and Enosh, as well as the later sins, caused the Shechinah to ascend merely from one heaven to the next,

whereas the sin of the Tree of Knowledge caused its withdrawal from the earth to heaven.
Apart from the fact that the withdrawal from the earth
is what primarily affects us,
it is also the fundamental aspect of the withdrawal. For what is of primary importance is that the Shechinah be manifest in this world.

After mentioning the effect caused by the sin of the Tree of Knowledge and the other sins, the Rebbe Rayatz continues his discourse by quoting the conclusion of the Midrash which highlights the reversal of this process:

“Afterwards, seven righteous men arose whose Divine service drew the Divine Presence into this world.

Through the merit of Avraham, the Shechinah was brought down from the seventh heaven to the sixth....”

(The Rebbe Rayatz abridges his citation of the Midrash and concludes:)

“...until Moshe, the seventh of these righteous men –

here, the Rebbe Rayatz adds a parenthetic statement from another Midrash:21

21. Vayikra Rabbah 29:11. This Midrash has no direct connection with the Midrash from Shir HaShirim Rabbah, “I came into My garden,” which serves as the theme of the maamar. It is cited by the Rebbe Rayatz in connection with this section: that the primary step in drawing down the Shechinah was accomplished by Moshe who drew it down to this physical world. Why was Moshe able to accomplish this? Because he was the seventh (as mentioned here and explained in sec. 3 of this maamar).

It is worth noting that the Midrash beginning with the words Basi LeGani, “I came into My garden,” is cited by the Rebbe
drew the Shechinah into this world below.

The primary aspect of drawing down the Shechinah was achieved by Moshe, as it was he who drew the Shechinah back into this world.

Just as the fundamental element of its withdrawal and ascent upward was the withdrawal from this world caused by the sin of the Tree of Knowledge, so too, in the reversal that involved drawing down the Shechinah from above, the fundamental element was drawing it down into this world.

Apart from the fact that this stage in drawing down the Shechinah is the one that affects us most, it is the most fundamentally important phase in drawing it down.

Rayatz in several maamarim, (e.g., the maamar entitled B’Etzem HaYom HaZeh, 5683 (Sefer HaMaamarim 5682-5683, p. 173ff); the maamar entitled Basi LeGani, 5686 (Sefer HaMaamarim 5686, p. 231ff.); the maamar entitled Padeh BiShalom, 5687 (Sefer HaMaamarim 5687, p. 83); the maamar entitled Tik’u, 5691 (Sefer HaMaamarim 5691, p. 11); the maamar entitled Basi LeGani, 5692 (Sefer HaMaamarim 5692, p. 288), et al. In many of those maamarim, Moshe’s merit in being the seventh is not mentioned at all. Why then is it mentioned in the maamar released for Yud Shvat, 5710? Chassidim have interpreted this as an allusion to the seventh generation of Chabad which dawned on that day, as emphasized in sec. 3 of this maamar. See also Sefer HaSichos, Vol. 2, p. 400, note 81. (It is also mentioned in the maamarim cited above that are associated with Beis Nissan, the yahrzeit of the Rebbe Rashab, because when counting from the Baal Shem Tov, the founder of Chassidism, the Rebbe Rashab was the leader of the seventh generation.)
Just as in the withdrawal of the Shechinah it was the withdrawal from this earth that was of primary importance, so too, the primary aspect of drawing down the Shechinah is bringing it into this material world.

This was accomplished specifically through Moshe,

the reason being – as explained in the quote included in parentheses in the maamar:

“All those who are seventh are cherished.”

SUMMARY

This section focuses on the term “lower realms” in our Sages’ statement, “The essence of the Shechinah was manifest in the lower realms.” It emphasizes that the intent of this term is this material world. It supports that statement by citing the continuation of the Midrash which states that after the sin of the Tree of Knowledge, the Shechinah withdrew from the lower realms and, at the time of the Giving of the Torah and the construction of the Sanctuary, it returned. From those statements, it is clear that the intent of the term “lower realms” is this material world.

The most significant element of the Shechinah’s withdrawal is its withdrawal from this physical world (and not its subsequent ascent within the hierarchy of the spiritual worlds above) and the most significant element of the process of drawing it back down was drawing it back to this world. The latter was accomplished by Moshe, for Moshe had the distinction of being the seventh in the chain of righteous men whose merits drew the Shechinah downward, as is quoted from the Midrash, and “All those who are seventh are cherished.”
The *maamar* proceeds to focus on the concept highlighted in the previous section: that the fundamental step in the process of drawing down the Shechinah was drawing it back into our material world. This was accomplished by Moshe. What virtue enabled Moshe to accomplish this? The fact that he was the seventh.

The fact that our Sages say that “all those who are seventh are cherished”

rather than “all those who are cherished are seventh,”

indicates that the seventh’s primary virtue lies in the very fact of being the seventh.

Were the *Midrash* to have said that “all those who are cherished are seventh,” it could be understood to mean that the person who is seventh is cherished because of the virtues that he attained through his Divine service, and as a result of those virtues, he was selected for the unique mission associated with being seventh.

The *Midrash*, however, states that “all those who are seventh are cherished,” indicating that

he is cherished simply because he is the seventh.

He is cherished, not because of a virtue dependent on his choice, his desires, or his Divine service,

but because he is the seventh.

This is something that he is born into.

Even so, i.e., even though being seventh is seemingly a matter of mere coincidence and not a product of
the person’s internal makeup or striving for growth, nevertheless,

“all those who are seventh are cherished.”

Implied is that there is a virtue conveyed upon him from Above that surpasses his own attainments that is granted him because he is the seventh.

Therefore, it was Moshe who was privileged to have the Torah given through him.22

(Soon after arriving in America) my revered father-in-law, the Rebbe Rayatz explained23

that even when it is highlighted that the seventh of a series is most cherished,

the unique virtue of the first is apparent.

For the meaning of “seventh” is “seventh from the first,” i.e., the first embarked on a unique path of Divine service which the seventh brought to consummate fulfillment.

The Rebbe Rayatz then explained the uniqueness of the first of the seven

− our forefather Avraham −

which he achieved because of his Divine service

22. It is impossible to ignore the fact that the Rebbe was making these statements at the dawning of the seventh generation of Chabad Chassidism. In his modesty, he is emphasizing that the unique mission of the seventh generation – to draw the Divine Presence back to this material world – is conveyed not because of the positive virtues of that generation, but because they are the seventh, those who carry on the service begun by the Alter Rebbe.

23. The conclusion of the maamar beginning HaChodesh HaZeh Lachem, 5700 (Sefer HaMaamarim 5700, p. 29f).
He carried out his Divine service with self-sacrificing devotion, *mesirus nefesh*.

Not content with the above, the Rebbe Rayatz adds (though this is seemingly not relevant to his central theme) that Avraham carried out his Divine service with *mesirus nefesh* and yet, he did not seek *mesirus nefesh*.

This marked the distinction between Avraham’s *mesirus nefesh* and that of Rabbi Akiva.

Rabbi Akiva set *mesirus nefesh* as a goal for his Divine service, saying:  

“**When will I be afforded the opportunity for *mesirus nefesh* so that I may actualize it?**”

Avraham’s *mesirus nefesh*, by contrast, was incidental to his actual service.

He knew that the main object of Divine service was creating an awareness of G-d’s Presence,  

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24. Berachos 61b.
as reflected by the verse,\textsuperscript{25} “He proclaimed there the name of G-d, eternal L-rd.”

More particularly, as our Sages emphasize, his service was entirely outward oriented. Thus they state, “Do not read \textit{vayikra} – ‘he proclaimed,’ but \textit{vayakri} – ‘he motivated others to proclaim’”;\textsuperscript{26} i.e., he motivated the wayfarers he met to also proclaim the name of G-d.\textsuperscript{26}

Avraham knew that these efforts would meet opposition. Nevertheless, he continued unfazed with the resolve that if in the course of these efforts, \textit{mesirus nefesh} would be required, he would manifest that quality as well.

In this manner, his \textit{mesirus nefesh} surpassed that of Rabbi Akiva. What is the positive dimension of \textit{mesirus nefesh}? That one transcends his own identity entirely and gives himself over to G-d in a complete manner. When one carries out such service because he appreciates its greatness, he cannot be said to be transcending himself entirely.

For Rabbi Akiva, \textit{mesirus nefesh} was a personal goal, the zenith of his Divine service. Thus, while on one hand, he rose above self-concern – indeed, he gave his life for the sanctification of G-d’s name – nevertheless, he saw \textit{mesirus nefesh} as the most complete expression of his lifelong quest for spiritual fulfillment.

Avraham, by contrast, was totally above self-concern. He did not consider even the highest of personal attainments – the service of G-d with \textit{mesirus nefesh} – as an objective. His sole motivation was to publicize G-d’s Presence.

So great was Avraham’s Divine service and self-sacrifice.

\textsuperscript{25} Bereishis 13:4.
\textsuperscript{26} Sotah 10b.
that Moshe was privileged to have the Torah given through him

because “all those who are seventh are cherished,”

i.e., he was the seventh to the first, the heir of Avraham’s Divine service and mesirus nefesh. As such, even at the peak of his greatness,

the Holy One, blessed be He, “told Moshe (referring to Avraham), ‘Do not stand in the place of the greats.’”

True, the cherished quality possessed by the seventh is very great.

And this status comes not as a result of choice nor as a result of one’s Divine service, but as a finished product, as a consequence of birth.

Nevertheless, there are no inherent limitations that should cause an individual to say that this status is beyond him

and that it is accessible only to a select elite.

On the contrary, the matter is comparable to the statements of Tanna dvei Eliyahu (chs. 9 and 25), quoted in Chassidus:

that every Jew, even a slave and a handmaiden, can have the Divine Spirit rest upon him.

Similarly, each and every Jew is obligated to say, “When will my actions equal those of my forefathers, Avraham, Yitzchak and Yaakov?” There are no limits to the spiritual heights one can reach.

At the same time, we should not delude ourselves: we must know that we cannot “stand in the place of the great,”

and that the merit of the seventh of a series consists of his being seventh to the first.

Since the seventh has the unique merit of drawing the Divine Presence back to the earth, it is possible that a member of that generation will have visions of grandeur and think that he possesses praiseworthy individual qualities. That is self-delusional. The greatness of the seventh is that

28. The citation of this teaching takes on added significance in view of this maamar’s role as a mission statement for the seventh generation. By stating that the Divine Spirit can rest on an idolator, the Rebbe could be seen as implying that even those on the lowest levels can play a role in accomplishing the unique mission of this generation: drawing the Shechinah down to the earth.
he is capable of continuing the mission of the first. And the greatness of the first is expressed in the mission implied by the teaching:

“Do not read ‘he proclaimed,’ but rather, ‘he made others proclaim.’” Following the example of Avraham, he teaches all humanity to proclaim G-d's oneness.

The seventh is cherished because it is he who draws down the Shechinah, indeed, the essence of the Shechinah.

And he draws it down and causes it to be manifest in this lowly world. On the basis of the concepts explained above, the Rebbe proceeds to define the role and the mission of our generation.

This is what is demanded of each and every one of us of the seventh generation.

“All those who are seventh are cherished.”

Although the fact that we are in the seventh generation is not the result of our own choice or our own service, i.e., it is not a result of virtues that we have worked to attain, and indeed in certain ways it may be contrary to our will,
nevertheless, "all those who are seventh are cherished."

We are now in the era of Ikvesa diMeshicha, the time when the approaching footsteps of Mashiach can be heard;

indeed, we are at the conclusion of this period.

Our mission is to complete the process of drawing down the Shechinah

– indeed, the essence of the Shechinah –

into our lowly world.

SUMMARY

This section focuses on the statement “All those who are seventh are cherished,” explaining that the seventh is cherished not because of a virtue dependent on his choice, his desires, or his individual achievements in Divine service, but because he is the seventh – because he perpetuates the heritage of his forebears. Thus, through the achievements of the seventh, the unique virtue of the first is apparent.

The first of the chain of righteous men who preceded Moshe was Avraham. Avraham was distinguished by the uniqueness of his mesirus nefesh. It is possible to view mesirus nefesh as a personal goal, the most complete expression of one’s lifelong quest for spiritual fulfillment. Avraham, by contrast, did not consider mesirus nefesh as a personal objective. His sole motivation was to publicize G-d’s Presence; if mesirus nefesh was necessary to accomplish that purpose, he was willing to make that commitment as well. Because Moshe was the seventh, the sixth heir of Avraham’s spiritual legacy, he was privileged to draw the Shechinah back into this world.

Similarly, our generation, the seventh generation of Chabad Chassidism, has the mission to complete the process of drawing the Shechinah back down to the earth again.
After explaining at the beginning of the *maamar* that the essence of the *Shechinah* was originally manifest in this lowly world, and that afterwards, Moshe (the seventh) drew it down specifically into this world, the Rebbe Rayatz goes on to say:

“G-dliness was primarily revealed within the *Beis HaMikdash,***

(and he supports this statement with a prooftext)

“*They shall make Me a Sanctuary and I shall dwell within them.*”

Concerning this verse our Sages comment:29 “The verse does not state ‘within it,’ but ‘within them,’ thus implying that G-d dwells ‘within each and every Jew.’”

The *maamar* continues: “This concept can grant us an insight into the verse,30 ‘The righteous shall inherit the land and dwell upon it forever.’

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29. This statement is quoted in the name of our Sages – although an explicit source in the Talmud or *Midrashim* has not been found – in *Liḥḥatei Torah, Bamidbar*, p. 20b, and in several other sources. It is found in *Reishis Chochmah, Shaar HaAhavah*, ch. 6; *Ahich*, commentary to *Shmos* 25:8; *Shaloh*, pp. 69a, 201a, 325b, and 326b. See *Liḥḥatei Sichos*, Vol. 26, p. 173, fn. 45.

This verse can be interpreted to mean that the righteous shall inherit ‘the earth,’ which is an allusion to Gan Eden, because they cause ‘He Who dwells forever, exalted and holy is His name,’31 to dwell (i.e., to be drawn down)32 –

(the Rebbe Rayatz does not explain the implication of the term ‘He Who dwells forever’ in the maamar; but the concept is explained in Likkutei Torah33 based on a teaching of the Zohar)34

– and be revealed in this physical world below.”

The maamar of the Rebbe Rayatz continues: “This enables us to understand the interpretation of the verse, ‘I have come into My garden,’ as ‘I have come into My bridal chamber,’ into the place in which My Essence was originally revealed,”

As mentioned, the fact that the verse states “My garden” and not “the garden” indicates that the Shechinah already shared a connection with that place.

“As...for the essence of the Shechinah was manifest in the lower realms.

31. The maamar is citing a phrase found in our Shabbos prayers. Shir HaShirim Rabbah quotes a different prooftext (Yeshayahu 57:15): “He Who dwells forever and Whose name is holy.”
32. See the commentary of R. Zaev Wolf Einhorn to Bereishis Rabbah, loc. cit.; the commentary of Matnas Kehunah and of R. Zaev Wolf Einhorn to Bemidbar Rabbah, loc. cit.
33. Likkutei Torah, Shmos, pp. 4d ff., 7b ff.
34. Zohar, Vol. II, p. 22a; see Biurei HaZohar to that source.
To explain:
(The Rebbe Rayatz explains why the essence of the Shechinah was manifest specifically in the lower realms.)

The ultimate purpose for the creation and the progressive descent of the worlds is that ‘G-d desired to have a dwelling place in the lower worlds.’

The dwelling for G-d’s Essence is to be established through the Divine service of the Jewish people and will not be manifest in a complete fashion until the Era of Mashiach. Nevertheless, since this was G-d’s original intent, His Presence was manifest in the world from the very outset.

The manifestation of His Presence can be understood as being comparable to a “mission statement,” i.e., immediately upon bringing the world into being, G-d made the goal of its creation obvious.

The Alter Rebbe explains* the above concept in the following manner:

“The ultimate intent of the progressive chainlike descent of the worlds is not the loftier spiritual worlds, since for them, this process constitutes a descent from the light of G-d’s countenance,”

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35. See Midrash Tanchuma, Parshas Naso, sec. 16; Parshas Bechukosai, sec. 3; Bereishis Rabbah 3:9; Bamidbar Rabbah 13:6; Tanya, ch. 36.

36. Tanya, loc. cit. As mentioned in the foreword, the Rebbe recited the maamar in three sections and in each of the sections, he mentioned the five Rebbeim who preceded the Rebbe Rayatz.
and it cannot be said that the ultimate purpose is for a descent. The Rebbe proceeds to clarify that statement, giving two explanations. The following concept lies at the basis of both of them:

As is well known, creation, i.e., the potential to bring existence into being from non-being (yesh me’ayin, “something from nothing” in chassidic terminology) derives solely from the power of G-d’s Essence, as is stated in Iggeres HaKodesh, in the epistle beginning Ihu VeChayohi:

G-d’s very Being and Essence, Whose Being derives from His own self

and Who has no cause preceding Him –

In his Sefer Halkarim, R. Yosef Albo describes G-d’s existence as follows: “His existence must be (mechuyav hametzius), i.e., His existence is from Himself, and is not the result of any other cause which preceded it.”

With these words, he clarifies the difference between G-d’s existence and all other entities. Every other being was brought into existence from utter nothingness. And it was brought into existence by a cause – the ultimate Cause being G-d’s will.

G-d’s existence, by contrast, has no cause. He just is. And He always was. The very definition of Him as G-d implies that He was not brought into being at any time or by any other cause. Instead, He exists independently as the Truth of all being.

He alone has the power and ability to create something out of absolute naught and nothingness.

37. Tanya, Iggeres HaKodesh, Epistle 20, p. 130b.
As will be explained below, creating something new (yesh me’ayin) means bringing into being an entity that does not recognize its source and feels that it exists independently, as it were. In the entire Spiritual Cosmos, there is no entity other than G-d’s Essence that is truly independent. Every other entity recognizes that it was brought into being from G-dliness. Since it does not have the feeling of independent existence, it cannot bring into being an entity that possesses that feeling. Only G-d’s Essence, which truly exists independently, can bring into being a world that is a new creation, i.e., which feels that it exists independently.

(As will be explained below, the feeling of independent existence experienced in this world is a misunderstanding. In truth, our world also derives from the spiritual realms above it. Nevertheless, the fact that misunderstanding is possible, and the source for our world’s existence is not perceived, results from the fact that the world derives from G-d’s Essence.)

To explain from another perspective: Every spiritual entity was made with a specific definition: it is what it is and can be no more than that. And it can bring into being only entities that are included within the scope of that definition and are within the potential with which it itself was brought into being. Now, since these entities which are brought into being exist within the potential of the entity that is their source, they cannot truly be termed as new creations.

What can bring into being something that is utterly new? An entity that has no definition whatsoever; that exists independently. As such, that entity will not be bound by preexisting structures and can therefore bring into being a new entity that is out of the scope of all existing structures. The only entity that can be so described is G-d’s Essence.

Thus, creation does not result from revealed levels of G-dliness, but rather from G-d’s Essence.

Hence – this represents the first explanation as to why it cannot be said that the Creation was for the sake of the higher worlds, because bringing them into being involves a descent –

it is impossible to state that the ultimate intent of Creation was for the sake of the higher worlds,
for even the loftiest of them, the World of Atzilus, is merely a revelation of that which had previously been concealed.

The potential for the world of Atzilus existed previously in more abstract realms. Nevertheless, in those higher realms, the light was too transcendent for the specific qualities within the light to take shape and form. Only after there were several degrees of tzimtzumim was it possible for these qualities to become distinct entities. Thus, the Sefiros of Atzilus existed beforehand but in a hidden state, and after their descent into Atzilus, they became revealed as distinct entities.

It therefore constitutes a descent from the light of the Divine Countenance,

for when the lights of Atzilus were in a state of concealment within their source, they were on a much loftier plane. Thus, we cannot say the purpose of existence is only to bring the world of Atzilus into being, since this involves a descent.

In addition – here, the Rebbe provides a second, more abstract explanation of the statement that the creation could not be for the sake of the revealed realms because this involves a descent –

since these are merely revealed levels of light; mere rays of G-dliness,

we cannot possibly say that Essence exists for the sake of such revelations. For G-d’s Essence is fundamentally higher than the revelations that emanate from it.

To explain this concept from a deeper perspective: Seemingly, the very fact that G-d continued the process of Creation and brought into being our lower world makes it obvious that the intent is not for the higher worlds. Nevertheless, one
might argue that the intent is the higher realms. Why does our world exist? To prove, as it were, the greatness of the higher worlds. Just as the proof of a validity of an abstract concept is its application in actual fact, so too, it could be said that the creation of this world is necessary to demonstrate that the loftier energies vested in the higher realms are genuinely great.

This premise is untenable because, as explained above, this material world could only be brought into being by G-d’s Essence. And if the above logic were true, G-d’s Essence would be acting for the sake of the revealed worlds – to show their greatness. That would involve a descent and, as stated above, it cannot be said that the Creation was for the sake of a descent.

We must therefore say that the ultimate purpose of creation is this lower world, a world that is imbued with G-d’s Essence. Why He created such a world is indeed a question. Nevertheless, the fact that He did create such a world indicates that the purpose of the creation is vested in it.

As the Mitteler Rebbe explains on this week’s Torah reading38 (Parshas Beshalach),

in comparing the higher worlds and this world,

in this world, the created beings feel that their existence derives from their own selves.

The created beings in this world feel that they are independent entities. They do not sense that their existence is dependent on an outside factor. With the exception of G-d’s Essence, that feeling does not exist on any other level of the Spiritual Cosmos. On the contrary, all the other entities in the Spiritual Cosmos are aware, to one degree or another, that their existence is dependent on G-d and therefore, they subsume their identity in His.

38. Biurei HaZohar, Parshas Beshalach, towards the conclusion of the maamar beginning KeGavna Dile’ela, p. 43c.
On this physical plane, the created beings feel their own selfhood (yeshus). The maamar is emphasizing that such feelings are possible only because this world derives from G-d’s Essence which is the Yesh HaAmiti (True Existence).

{The series of maamarim published in connection with Rosh HaShanah this year⁴⁹ explains}

the difference between a created being and light:

Light shows the existence of a luminary;

when we observe light, its very existence indicates and reveals that there is a luminary from which it emanates.

By contrast, regarding created beings,

not only do they not reveal their Creator,

they actually hide and conceal Him.

Indeed, they feel that their being derives from themselves.

(It is only that reason dictates that this cannot possibly be so).⁴⁰

Intellectually, it is clear that no entity comes into being on its own. Hence, the existence of the world necessitates that there must be a Creator.

⁴⁹. The series of maamarim delivered on Rosh HaShanah, 5694, first published in 5711 and printed afterwards in Sefer HaMaamarim 5711, p. 4ff. (See p. 37ff. where the subject the Rebbe mentions here is discussed.)
⁴⁰. See Sefer HaMaamarim 5677, p. 150, which discusses this point.
True, the perception felt by a created being, that its existence derives from its own self, is but its own false impression.

Nevertheless, the very fact that it is able to imagine that it derives from its own self results from its being rooted in G-d's Essence, Whose Being in truth derives from His Essence.

Created beings are spiritually unaware. They do not know the truth – that their existence derives from the spiritual realms above them and that it is G-d Who creates them. Nevertheless, the very fact that created beings can feel that they exist independently indicates that they were brought into being by an entity, G-d’s Essence, which in truth exists independently. For only an entity which itself possesses true independence can endow even such a feeling of independence to the creation brought into being.

From the above, it is understood that the intent of Creation and the progressive descent of the worlds is not the higher worlds, whose purpose is revelation, but this lowly world which imagines that it is not a mere revelation (gilui) but a self-sufficient entity (atzmi), whose being derives from its own self.

Through man's Divine service in this world,
This section explains why the essence of the Shechinah was manifest specifically in the lower realms: Since the ultimate purpose for all being is that “G-d desired to have a dwelling place in the lower worlds,” at the very beginning of the world’s existence, the Shechinah was manifest in this world.

The maamar quotes the rationale given by the Alter Rebbe to explain why we are forced to say that the ultimate purpose of creation is this world and not the loftier spiritual worlds: For the higher realms, the chainlike process of descent that characterizes the Spiritual Cosmos constitutes “a descent from the light of G-d’s countenance,” i.e., they existed in a higher, more refined form before they came into being and their coming into the form in which they presently exist involves a descent. Since G-d is fundamentally good, it cannot be that He brought existence into being for a descent.

Moreover, G-d’s creation of our world stems from His very Essence, for the potential to bring existence into being from non-being (yesh me’ayin, “something from nothing” in chassidic terminology) derives solely from G-d’s Essence. It cannot be said that His Essence acted for the sake of the revealed worlds.

Instead, the motivating force for creation was G-d’s desire for a dwelling in the lower realms, i.e., this material world. In this realm, in contrast to every other realm in the Spiritual Cosmos, the created beings feel that their existence derives from their own selves. They imagine that they exist independently.

Man’s Divine service in this world involves subduing our material reality and transforming it into holiness, overcoming the false perception of yeshus (independent existence) that pervades the world and revealing G-d’s intent – that the world was intended to serve as His dwelling.
This section continues the discussions of the concepts mentioned in the preceding one: that the ultimate intent of creation is this material world and not the loftier, spiritual worlds.

It goes without saying that the above statement applies according to the opinion cited by the Tzemach Tzedek that even the vessels of Atzilus are but a revelation of what was previously concealed.

The Sefiros of Atzilus are comprised of oros (“lights”) – the dynamic energy of the Sefiros – and keilim (“vessels”), the medium through which the oros are given definition and associated with the particular attribute that is manifest through a given Sefirah.

The phrase gilui hahelem, “a revelation of what was previously concealed,” is certainly an appropriate description for the lights of Atzilus. These lights are rooted in the transcendent realms of G-dliness above that world. Nevertheless, in those transcendent realms, they are too elevated to shine in a revealed manner. As they descend into Atzilus, they are condensed and given form to the extent that their light can be revealed to lower levels.

With regard to the keilim of Atzilus, by contrast, there is a difference of opinion among the kabbalists. Some maintain that they are also no more than gilui hahelem, “a revelation of what was previously concealed,” for they too are rooted in a higher source. That source is hidden and, as Atzilus comes into being, the qualities of that source are revealed.

41. See Sefer HaMaamarim 5661, p. 158ff.
42. The discourse entitled Shalosh Shitos which appears as an appendix to the second volume of Sefer HaMitzvos by the Tzemach Tzedek and in Or HaTorah, Inyanim, p. 259ff.; see also the maamar beginning Vaydaber Elokim Es Kol HaDevarim, 5664 (Sefer HaMaamarim 5664, p. 230ff. in the printing of 5754, p. 80ff.); the hagahos to the maamar beginning Pasach Eliyahu that appears in Torah Or (Sefer HaMaamarim 5658, p. 9ff.); the maamar beginning Adam Ki Yakriv, 5666 (the series of maamarim entitled Yom To’ shel Rosh HaShanah, 5666, p. 191ff.).
According to the latter opinion, the logic – that creation would not be brought into being for the sake of a descent – mentioned in the previous section still applies. Certainly, the ultimate intent of creation is not for Atzilus, for the fact that Atzilus came into being involves a descent, i.e., both the oros and the keilim were on a higher level in their sources and they are merely revealed levels of G-dliness, while the creation involves G-d’s Essence. As explained in the previous section, it cannot be said that G-d’s Essence acts for the sake of the revealed levels of G-dliness. There is, however, a second opinion among the kabbalists, as cited in that source, that the keilim are creations brought into being out of nothingness. For in Atzilus, the keilim are entities with definition and form with a distinct identity. Hence, they can be termed yesh, “something,” and therefore, considered a new entity. Accordingly, it might be said that G-d’s intent in creation is vested in them. It is explained in various sources that the description of the keilim as creations brought into being out of nothingness is a relative statement. The intent is not that, in an absolute sense, they are entities of actual substance (yesh) that are brought into being from nothingness. For even the keilim of Atzilus are Elokus, G-dliness, and cannot be described with the
term *yesh*. Even though each *Sefirah* has its own identity – *Chochmah* ("wisdom") is distinct from *Binah* ("understanding"); *Chessed* ("kindness") is distinct from *Gevurah* ("might") etc. – all of these (and the other six *Sefiros*) are subsumed within G-d’s light to the extent that they are totally identified with G-dliness and do not see themselves as independent entities. For example, the *Chessed of Atzilus* is the radiation of G-d’s love and kindness. In contrast, the *Chessed of Beriah* is the angels’ love for G-d.

Instead, they are considered as *yesh me’ayin*, new entities coming into being from nothingness, only in relation to the light that shines within them.

The source of the *keilim* is from the *reshimah*, the imprint left after the withdrawal of Divine light (through the first *tzimtzum*), which is characterized by hiddenness.

The vessels therefore exist in such a way that their source is hidden from them.

The lights, on the other hand, are extensions of their source. Like the lights themselves, their source is also characterized by the tendency to revelation, but it is too abstract to be revealed and manifest. The lights of *Atzilus* bring into revelation those lights which are too transcendent to be revealed. Hence, the connection between the lights and their source is apparent. The *reshimah*, the source of the *keilim*, by contrast, is characterized by hiddenness and a tendency to withdrawal. Hence, when *keilim* come into existence from the *reshimah*, they appear as new entities.

Thus, relative to the lights, the *keilim* can be considered as *yesh me’ayin*, new entities created from nothingness.

However, in relation to their source, the *reshimah*, they are indeed revelations of that which was previously concealed, for the potential for the *keilim* existed beforehand.
Since both the lights and the *keilim* of the *Sefiros of Atzilus* are revelations of the energies that existed on a higher level before,

it is thus clear that the ultimate Divine objective in creation is not the higher worlds, since, as explained in sec. 4, this involves a descent,

but the objective is, instead, this material world where man will serve G-d by subduing darkness and transforming it into light, as explained by the Rebbe Rayatz in his *maamar Basi LeGani* and elaborated upon in this *maamar* in the subsequent sections.

Another question can be raised concerning the concept that our material world represents the purpose of creation. It is stated

that, at present, our observance of *mitzvos* increases the light within *Atzilus*.

If so, how can we then say that even at present, the ultimate objective of creation is specifically this world? Even if, as explained, 4 in the Era of *Mashiach*, these lights will ultimately be revealed in this world, nevertheless, at present, it appears that the intent is the world of *Atzilus*.

The resolution to this question can be understood on the basis of the Rebbe Maharash’s explanation 45 that these lights are, by way of analogy, “stored in a chest” in *Atzilus*.

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44. See *Etz Chayim*, Shaar 39 (shaar man vimad), derush 11, siman 9; *Tanya*, Kuntreis Acharon, p. 155a, et al. See also the sources mentioned in the following note.

45. The *maamar* entitled *Pizar Nassan*, 5642 (this *maamar* is part of the series of *maamarim* entitled *Mi Yitanecha*, 5642, beginning ch. 14. That *maamar* is based on the *maamar* entitled *Pizar Nassan* published in *Maamarei Admor HaZakein*, Hanachos HaRav Pinchas, pp. 57-58, which appears with the *Tzemach Tzedek’s* notes in *Or HaTorah*, *Bamidbar*, Vol. 4, p. 1487ff. See also the second footnote in *Tanya*, ch. 40; the *maamar* beginning *Eirdah Na*, 5658 (*Sefer HaMaamarim* 3658, p.33).
For they are not intended for *Atzilus*

but for this lowly world, where they will be revealed with the arrival of Mashiach.

Indeed, they are not revealed in *Atzilus* even at present when they are “stored” there. Thus the fact that our Divine service generates light in *Atzilus* does not contradict the concept stated above: that the ultimate purpose of Creation is for G-dliness to be drawn down into this material world.

On this basis, we can understand the Rebbe Rashab’s explanation\(^46\) of the above quotation from *Tanya* that it is impossible to postulate that “ultimately, the progressive, chainlike descent of the worlds is intended for the loftier worlds, but rather for this world, since this constitutes a descent from the light of G-d’s countenance for these loftier realms.”

The explanation is that the higher worlds are characterized by revelation, which implies descent, i.e., that light that was on a higher level descends to such an extent that it can be revealed to beings on a lower plane.

Moreover, G-d’s Essence is entirely removed from the quality of revelation. Hence, inherently, all revelation involves a descent from G-d’s Essence.

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46. The *maamar* entitled *Mitzvasa MiShetishka*, 5678 (*Sefer HaMaamarim* 5678, p. 112); see also the *maamar* entitled *Eirdah Na*, 5658, (*Sefer HaMaamarim* 5658, p. 33).
The ultimate objective of creation is this lowly world,
for it arose in G-d’s will that He experience delight “when the forces of evil are subdued” – which comes about through a person’s exercise of self-control, holding back and refraining from indulging his natural desires and drives – and darkness is converted into light.” This reflects an even higher rung of service, transforming negative influences into positive ones.

It is written, “...like the superiority of light over darkness.” Chassidus explains that the phrase translated as “over darkness” actually reads min hachoshech, “from the darkness.” Implied is that there are two levels of light: ordinary light and a superior light that is produced by the transformation of darkness into light. G-d’s desire in creating our material world was to bring darkness into being and for man to transform that darkness into the higher quality of light.

As the Rebbe Rayatz explains in the maamar Basi LeGani,

the totality of our Divine service involves transforming the folly of the forces of evil to the folly of holiness. (See the following section which elaborates on this theme.)
This brings about the Divine satisfaction as expressed by the phrase, “I derive pleasure from the fact that I spoke and My will was carried out.”

The reference to G-d’s will in this quote, and the expression “it arose in G-d’s will” cited above, indicate that the fact that the higher quality of light is brought about through the transformation of darkness into light is a consequence of G-d’s will. True, this pattern is embedded in the fabric of the world’s existence, but that is so only because G-d so desired, not because of a logical necessity that it be so.

Through such transformation, a dwelling for G-d is drawn down into this lower world.

Just as a person’s entire essence and being becomes manifest in his home,

so too, G-d’s Essence will be manifest within our world.

When a person goes outside, he dresses and conducts himself in a manner suited to the people and settings he will confront, adapting his dress and his behavior according to the prevailing norms. At home, he does as he wants, clothing himself and conducting himself as he desires, giving expression to the very essence of who he is.

Similarly in the analogue, on all the different levels of the Spiritual Cosmos, G-dliness is revealed according to “the prevailing norms,” the structure of that given world. This world, by contrast, is His dwelling. Here, He reveals His Essence.

This is the intent of our Divine service: to draw down not only the revealed levels of Divine light,

52. Torah Kohanim and Rashi to Vayikra 1:9, et al.
This section continues the discussions of the concepts mentioned in the preceding one: that the ultimate intent of creation is this material world and not the loftier, spiritual worlds, since for those realms the process of creation constitutes a descent from the light of G-d’s countenance.

The maamar raises a question concerning that statement based on a difference of opinion found in certain kabbalistic texts as to the nature of the Sefiros of Atzilus. One opinion maintains that not only the oros (“lights”) of Atzilus, but also the keilim (“vessels”) of Atzilus are revelations of spiritual forces that existed on a higher level before Atzilus came into being. According to that opinion, there is no difficulty with the statements made in the previous section, because the descent also involves the keilim. However, according to the opinion that the keilim of Atzilus are considered as having been brought into being yesh me’ayin, from nothingness, one might say that G-d’s intent for creation was vested in them.

Nevertheless, the description of the keilim as creations brought into being out of nothingness is a relative statement. The intent is not that, in an absolute sense, they are entities of actual substance (yesh) that are brought into being from nothingness. Instead, they are considered as yesh me’ayin only in relation to the light that shines within them. In relation to their source, the reshimoah, they are indeed revelations of that which was previously concealed.

Another question can be raised concerning the concept that our material world represents the purpose of creation. It is stated that, at present, our observance of mitzvos increases the light within Atzilus. If so, how can we then say that the ultimate objective of creation is specifically this world?

This question can be resolved based on the explanation that these lights are by way of analogy, “stored in a chest” in Atzilus, but the intent is that they be revealed in this world.

Thus, the purpose of creation is that a dwelling for G-d be created in this world by subduing its darkness and transforming it into light, and transforming the folly of the forces of evil into the folly of holiness.
At the conclusion of his maamar, the Rebbe Rayatz explains that since “the essence of the Shechinah was manifest in the lower realms,” the Beis HaMikdash was the principal place wherein the Shechinah was revealed. Although the Divine Presence was manifest in the world as a whole, it was in the Beis HaMikdash that His Presence was primarily revealed.

For this reason, the Sanctuary in the desert was made of acacia wood.

Shittim, “acacia,” shares the same root letters as the word shtus, “folly.” Since the dwelling for G-d established in this world is fashioned through the transformation of darkness into light, that motif also had to feature in the Beis HaMikdash and in the Sanctuary, for it was the place where the Shechinah was primarily revealed.

For the goal of our Divine service is to transform the folly of unholiness, and the fire of the animal soul, a folly that is lower than reason –

The folly of unholiness really does not require much explanation. We are all familiar with situations in which we act in a manner that we recognize as foolish because we are driven by certain desires. In particular, the folly of unholiness can be associated with our Sages’ statement, “A person will not violate a transgression unless a spirit of folly takes hold of him.” Such folly must be transformed into the folly of holiness (shtus dikedushah).

54. Sec. 5 (Sefer HaMaamarim 5710, pp. 117-118).
55. Sotah 3a.
To exemplify this concept, the Rebbe refers to the narrative cited by the Rebbe Rayatz in sec. 5 of his maamar Basi LeGani. The Talmud\textsuperscript{56} relates an example of such conduct:

[When] Rav Shmuel bar Rav Yitzchak would dance [at a marriage celebration], he would juggle three (“twigs of myrtle,” Rashi). Rabbi Zeira [reproved him]: “The venerable sage is embarrassing us” (i.e., “making light of the respect due to Torah scholars through his undignified behavior,” Rashi).

When Rav Shmuel bar Rav Yitzchak passed away, “a pillar of fire appeared, separating him from all those who were near him.”

Rabbi Zeira thereupon retracted his previous remark and commented:\textsuperscript{57}

“\textit{The venerable Sage has been well served by his folly},” i.e., he recognized the positive nature of Rav Shmuel bar Rav Yitzchak’s conduct – that it represented Divine service and \textit{bittul} which transcended the limits of intellect.

King David describes his intense love for G-d with the verse,\textsuperscript{58} “I was foolish and unknowing; I was animal-like with You.” “No thought can grasp G-d,”\textsuperscript{59} for G-d is utterly boundless without any limitations whatsoever and even the most abstract peaks of thought have limits. Hence, our relationship with Him cannot be bound by the limits of intellect, but rather reaches complete expression through “the foolishness of holiness,” committing oneself to G-d beyond the restraints of logic.

Though this is an extremely lofty level of Divine service, we are granted assistance from the Rebbeim to attain it, for

\textit{whatever my revered father-in-law, the Rebbe Rayatz – and all the Rebbeim – demanded of us, they demanded of themselves.} And their service makes it easier for us to emulate them. This motif follows

\textsuperscript{56. Kesabos 17a.}
\textsuperscript{57. According to one of the three versions cited by the Talmud.}
\textsuperscript{58. Tehillim 73:22. See Tanya, ch. 18.}
\textsuperscript{59. The introduction to the Tikkunei Zohar, p. 17b.}
Our Sages’ interpretation of the verse,60 “He relates His words to Yaakov, His statutes and judgments to Yisrael.”

Our Sages comment: “That which He does, He tells the Jewish people to do and observe.”61

So, too, that which He commands the Jewish people to do, He Himself does.

G-d’s commanding the Jewish people to emulate “that which He does” constitutes an “arousal from Above” that precedes the “arousal from below,” the Jewish people’s observance of the mitzvos. This concept is alluded to by the words of the blessing recited before the observance of a mitzvah: “He has sanctified us with His commandments,” i.e., the mitzvos that He observes.

Thereafter commences the converse dynamic, as reflected by our Sages’ teaching:62 “Whenever one sits and studies..., G-d studies opposite him.” Similarly, wearing tefillin arouses tefillin as they exist Above, drawing forth an additional measure of Divine light, i.e., an “arousal from below” that awakens an “arousal from Above.” This second stage is alluded to by the words, “So, too, that which He commands the Jewish people to do, He Himself does.”

The same is true regarding the directives of our Rebbeim:

Whatever they demanded of their chassidim and followers, they themselves fulfilled as well.

The reason they revealed to us that they, too, carried out these directives

60. Tehillim 147:19.
61. Shmos Rabbah 30:9; Yerushalmi, Rosh HaShanah 1:3. See also Torah Or, biur to the maamar beginning Ki Imcha Mekor Chayim, and elsewhere.
62. Tanna dvei Elyahu, ch. 18.
was to make it easier for us to perform them.

For example, regarding ahavas Yisrael, the love of a fellow Jew:

There are many stories involving each of the Rebbeim which express the importance of this mitzvah.

For example, the Alter Rebbe once interrupted his prayers on Kol Nidrei night and went and chopped wood, cooked a soup, and fed it to a woman who had just given birth, because there was no one else at home.

What is unique about this story is not that the Alter Rebbe performed this act. After all, the life of a Jew was at stake and a threat to life supersedes all the Torah’s prohibitions. Nor is it a wonder that he performed the act himself rather than instructing others to do so. Concerning the violation of a commandment to save a life, it is stated: “The mitzvah is that a person of stature should do so.” What is remarkable is that despite it being Yom Kippur, when the Alter Rebbe was involved in the deepest spiritual meditation, his love for his fellow Jews was so great that he sensed the woman’s need.

63. See Reshimos, issue 199 (from “the winter of 5695 in Vienna”), p. 9, where the story is related and sources are cited.
64. See Yoma, p. 84b; Rambam, Hilchos Shabbos 2:3.
65. Toras Menachem 5744, p. 627.
Similarly, with regard to the Mitteler Rebbe, it is related that once, at yechidus, a certain young man lamented about those things that young men lament about.

The Mitteler Rebbe bared his forearm and said: “Observe how ‘my skin clings to my bones....’”

All this is from your ‘sins of youth.’”

The wondrous and lofty spiritual stature of the Mitteler Rebbe needs no describing by any standards, and all the more so in comparison to those who are subject to such things. Nevertheless, his spiritual bond with them was so strong that their unsatisfactory spiritual state strongly affected his physical health to the extent that his skin shriveled and clung to his bones.

66. Beis Rebbe, Vol. 2, the fn. at the beginning of ch. 3.
Similarly, it is told of the Tzemach Tzedek that once, before his Morning Prayers, he went out of his way in order to lend money to a simple person who was in need of a loan for the sake of his livelihood.

And of the Rebbe Maharash, it is told that he once traveled from a healing-spa to Paris, solely for the purpose of meeting a young man.

He told him: “Young man, forbidden wine stupefies the mind and heart; become a practicing Jew.”

The young man returned home and found no rest until he returned to the Rebbe Maharash and repented.

Eventually, he became the head of a G-d-fearing and observant family.

It is well known that time was extremely precious to the Rebbe Maharash, to the extent that even his recital of maamarim was brief.

68. See Sefer HaSichos Kaysitz 5700, p. 98; Sefer HaMaamarim 5711, p. 153; the Igros Kodesh of the Rebbe Rayatz, Vol. 4, p. 522.

69. Recounted at length in Sefer HaToldos Admur Maharash, p. 77, and also published in Sefer HaSichos 5705, p. 30ff.
There were times when at eight in the morning he had already concluded his prayers.

Nonetheless, he traveled to a distant city and stayed there a considerable amount of time for the sake of one young man.

And of the Rebbe Rashab, it is told that in the initial years of his leadership, he was about to embark on a journey to Moscow because of a new anti-Semitic decree which he sought to nullify.

His older brother, R. Zalman Aharon, known by his acronym as Raza, said to him:

"Time is very precious to you and you do not speak the local language well."

(Raza was a linguist.)

You also have to make the necessary acquaintances.

I will travel to take care of this matter and will follow your instructions."

70. Here, as was his constant practice, the Rebbe refers to the Rebbe Rashab as "כ"ק אדמו"ר נשמתו עדן," the Rebbe whose soul abides in Gan Eden."

71. Note the Igros Kodesh of the Rebbe Rashab, Vol. 4, p. 245, where he writes, “I lack command of the local language.” The Rebbe Rayatz writes in his notes to that letter, “My revered father, the Rebbe, understood the local language thoroughly and did not require a translator at all. Even when complex matters were read to him in the local language, he understood. Nevertheless, he did not desire to speak in this language... and always used an interpreter. I asked him why he does not speak Russian... and he answered me with three rationales..., instructing me not to reveal them.”
However, the Rebbe Rashab did not agree: he undertook the journey himself and was successful.

Similarly, there are many stories of how my revered father-in-law, the Rebbe Rayatz went out of his way to do material and spiritual favors, not only for the Jewish people as a whole, but also even for individuals.

He selflessly set himself aside in order to do so, setting aside not only his physical concerns, but also his spiritual concerns, even though the person to whom he was benevolent was not only not in the category of his “colleague in the Torah and its mitzvos,” but was of no comparison to him at all.

SUMMARY

In his maamar, the Rebbe Rayatz explains that the Beis HaMikdash was the principal place of the revelation of the Shechinah. Since the dwelling for G-d established in this world is fashioned through the transformation of darkness into light, that motif also had to feature in the Beis HaMikdash and in the Sanctuary, for it was the place where the Shechinah was primarily revealed. To highlight the transformation of darkness into light, the Sanctuary in the desert was made of acacia wood. Shittim, “acacia,”

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72. Cf. Bava Metzia 59a; Tanna dvei Eliyahu Rabbah, ch. 18; see Tanya, ch. 32.
shares the same root letters as the word \textit{shtus}, “folly.” The intent is that the folly of unholiness be transformed into the folly of holiness.

The folly of holiness refers to Divine service and \textit{bittul} that transcends the limits of intellect. Though this is an extremely lofty level of Divine service, we are granted assistance from the Rebbeim to attain it, for whatever the Rebbeim demanded of us, they demanded of themselves. Their service makes it easier for us to emulate their example.

An example of this is the \textit{mitzvah of ahavas Yisrael}, “the love for our fellow Jew.” Each of the Rebbeim served as exemplars of this quality and their efforts empower us to show similar love.
In this and subsequent sections, the Rebbe returns to the concept explained at the beginning of the maamar, that at the time of the Giving of the Torah and the construction of the Sanctuary, “I came into My garden,” the Shechinah returned to this world. The Rebbe explains that not only did the Shechinah return to the world, but a higher level of G-dliness than was originally revealed became manifest.

Through the subjugation and transformation of the folly of unholiness into the folly of holiness the objective of creation is accomplished – i.e., that we fashion a dwelling place for G-d in this nether world.

Indeed, the dwelling made for G-d in this world through the subjugation and transformation of the challenging dimensions of material existence, which draws the Shechinah into the world, enabling it, as it were, to say, “I came into My garden,” surpasses the revelation of the Shechinah that preceded the sin of the Tree of Knowledge.

If the intent was only to reach the same level of Divine revelation that existed before the sin, the entire sequence would not have been worthwhile. Instead, the entire process of the concealment of G-dliness is – to borrow the wording of our Sages73 – a descent for the sake of an ascent. To use an example from our world:

When one razes a building in order to replace it with a new one,
obviously, the new building must be superior to the preceding one.

Similarly, we must say that our subjugation and transformation of the challenging aspects of material existence builds a dwelling superior to that which existed before.

Were all the phases of the descent brought about from Above, it would be obvious that the descent was for the purpose of an ascent, for everything that comes from Above is obviously intended for the good. Since, however, several phases in the descent, beginning with the sin of the Tree of Knowledge, came about through man's acts, how can it be said that the descent is structured from Above to lead to an ascent? Nevertheless, as our Sages explain, although the actual descent was caused by man's deeds, it was intended from Above with the objective that it lead to a higher light.

The higher level of Divine revelation that will characterize the dwelling for G-d that will be revealed in the Era of Mashiach is explained in the maamar Basi LeGani from the Rebbe Rayatz, by quoting the Zohar: “Through the subjugation of the sitra achra, the glory of G-d will be revealed throughout all the worlds” –

The term istalek (אסתלק), translated above as “revealed,” literally means “depart” or “withdraw.” It is used in this context because it refers to a level of light that is fundamentally “withdrawn” – entirely transcendent – from the worlds. By using this term, the maamar implies that even when this light is revealed, its transcendent nature is apparent.

74. See Midrash Tanchuma, Vayeishev, sec. 4. See also Likkutei Sichos, Vol. 5, p. 65ff.
76. The kabbalistic term for the forces of evil.
As mentioned in sec. 1, with regard to the light that enclothes itself in the worlds and provides them with life and vitality, there is a progressive descent, and the light enclothed in the lower levels is far less than that enclothed in the higher levels. G-d's essential light, by contrast, is present equally in all worlds. The revelation of this light is referred to with the term *istalek*, because it transcends the entire framework and structure of all the worlds.

A question can be raised regarding this explanation, for the *maamar* speaks of the or *hasovev kol almin*, “the light that encompasses all worlds.”

It is explained in *Chassidus* that, by and large, when the term or *hasovev kol almin* is used, the intent is a light which, though it transcends the worlds, bears a certain connection to them. Indeed, the very name *sovev kol almin*, “encompassing all the worlds,” implies that concept, for the worlds are mentioned in that name. To borrow an idea (that is not entirely analogous), it is like defining infinity as transcending finitude, in which instance, the two concepts share a relationship – albeit a negative one.

Nevertheless, in the *maamar Basi LeGani*

it is impossible to say that the intent is that man's service of subjugating and transforming material existence draws down a light which relates to the worlds, but encompasses and transcends them.

Instead, the intent is that man's service draws down a light that utterly transcends the worlds, i.e., G-d's essential light. His Essence is above the entire context of worlds, for, by definition, an essence is a single, fundamental whole without any connection to anything else. Similarly, His essential light is utterly above any connection to the worlds.
Therefore, the revelation of this light is described with the verb *istalek*, which implies withdrawal, for it refers to a revelation that is fundamentally transcendental; i.e., even as the light is revealed, its transcendent nature is evident.

This also explains why the passing of *tzaddikim* is termed *histalkus*, for this term implies the revelation of an exceedingly lofty light. The uniqueness of this light can be understood from the Alter Rebbe’s explanation of the *histalkus* of a *tzaddik*.

There are two epistles in *Iggeres HaKodesh* that explain the term *histalkus*.

In the second, the *histalkus* of a *tzaddik* is compared to the offering of the Red Heifer.

In contrast to the other sacrifices, the Red Heifer was offered outside the *Beis HaMikdash* – and indeed, outside of Jerusalem.

The sacrifices offered inside the *Beis HaMikdash* were unable to refine and elevate the three completely unholy *kelipos*.

That could be accomplished only through a sacrifice offered *outside* the *Beis HaMikdash*, the Red Heifer.

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77. Torah Or, p. 89d.
78. Epistles 27 and 28.
It is to this that the passing of tzaddikim is likened.  

At present, we lack the purifying influence of the Red Heifer,

for “as a result of our sins, we were exiled from our land.”

But there has transpired the passing of tzaddikim, i.e., the passing of the Rebbe Rayatz.

Concerning the passing of tzaddikim, we find two statements from our Sages:

“The passing of tzaddikim is equivalent to the burning of the House of our L-rd”,

and, “The passing of tzaddikim is even more severe than the destruction of the Beis HaMikdash.”

All the above will lead to the prodigious G-dly revelation implied by the term istalek.

Concerning the meaning of the term histalkus,

79. Moed Katan 28a; Talmud Yerushalmi, Yoma 1:5.
80. The Mussaf liturgy for festivals.
81. Rosh HaShanah 18b.
82. Eichah Rabbah 1:9.
all the Rebbeim – the Alter Rebbe, the Mitteler Rebbe, the Tzemach Tzedek, the Rebbe Rashab, and my revered father-in-law, the Rebbe Rayatz – have explained\textsuperscript{83} that the intent of the term \textit{histalkus}, although it is used to refer to a person’s passing, is not, \textit{Heaven forbid}, an ascent upward, \textit{i.e.}, that the person who has passed has left our midst, but rather that he is still found with \textit{us} below, though in a transcendent and lofty manner. The influence of the Rebbe Rayatz empowers us to persevere in our Divine service and accomplish the unique mission entrusted to us. To state it succinctly:

\textit{This is what is demanded of us, the seventh generation from the Alter Rebbe. “All those who are seventh are cherished.”}

\textit{Although we have not earned this distinction and have not toiled for it, nevertheless, “All those who are seventh are cherished.”}

\textsuperscript{83} Torah Or, loc. cit.; Or HaTorah, Bamidbar, Vol. 6, p. 1781; Sefer HaMaamarim 5671, p. 157ff.; et al.
The mission of the seventh generation is to draw down the Shecinah below, to this material plane, following the example of Moshe, who was the seventh from Avraham. This is accomplished by transforming the folly of the animal soul – which every person knows only too well that he possesses, and the fire of the animal soul which, as well, everyone possesses and it is possible, at times, that one sinks even lower than that.

These must be converted and transformed into the folly of holiness.

SUMMARY

This section begins by restating the concepts stated in sections 5 and 6: that the purpose of creation is that a dwelling for G-d be created in this world by subduing its darkness and transforming it into light, and by transforming the folly of the forces of evil into the folly of holiness. When this objective is accomplished, not only will the Shechinah return to the world and be manifest as it was originally, but a higher level of G-dliness will be manifest. To explain with an analogy: When one razes a building in order to replace it with a new one, obviously, the new building must be superior to the preceding one.

The superiority of the manifestation of G-dliness that will be achieved is alluded to by the Zohar’s statement: “Through the subjugation of the sitra achora, the glory of G-d will be revealed throughout all the worlds.” The term translated as “revealed,”...
istalek, literally means “withdrawn.” The intent is that a light that is fundamentally transcendent, withdrawn from the world, will be revealed.

Similarly, the term histalkus is used to refer to the passing of tzaddikim. The intent is not, Heaven forbid, that the person who has passed away has left our midst, but rather that he is still found with us but in a transcendent and lofty manner.

This empowers us, the seventh generation, to persevere in our efforts and bring to completion the mission to draw down the Shechinah to this material plane,
The above clarifies the significance of the passing of a tzaddik. 84

Although there has already been considerable concealment and veiling of holiness, and many questions had been raised and inexplicable matters have occurred previously, nevertheless, all this did not suffice.

For there to be the revelation of the glory of G-d throughout all the worlds, there also occurred the passing of tzaddikim, i.e., the passing of the Rebbe Rayatz, something considered not only as severe as the destruction of the Beis HaMikdash, but even more severe.

The ultimate objective of all this is that “the glory of G-d be revealed,” in a manner reflected by the term istalek.

This is demanded of every one of us:

To know that we are living in the seventh generation,

and that the uniqueness of the seventh of a series is that he is seventh to the first, and carries out the legacy of the first.

The path of the first was that he sought nothing for himself,
not even mesirus nefesh, as explained above (sec. 3), when contrasting the mesirus nefesh of Avraham and Rabbi Akiva,
for he knew that the sole purpose of his existence was to “proclaim there the name of G-d, eternal L-rd.”

This service resembles that of Avraham our Patriarch:
He arrived in places where the people knew nothing about G-dliness,
nothing about Yiddishkeit,
nothing even about the alef-beis.

While there, he set himself completely aside and publicized G-d’s Presence.
in the spirit of our Sages’ teaching, 85 “Do not read ‘he proclaimed,’ but ‘he motivated others to proclaim.’”

It is well known 86 that when expounding concepts by means of the principle al tikra, “Do not read...,”

both interpretations – the simple meaning of the verse and the meaning inferred by our Sages – are valid.

In this instance as well, the Torah specifically states that “he proclaimed.”

Nonetheless, one must know

that if he desires to succeed in “proclaiming G-d’s name” himself,

he must motivate others to proclaim;

he must see to it that others not only know about G-d, but also proclaim His name.

Although until now one’s fellowman was utterly without knowledge,

now one is obligated to see to it that he, too, calls out Ei-l olam, actively proclaiming G-d’s Presence.

Moreover, that phrase does not read

85. See sec. 3 above.
“G-d of the world” – In the verse, אֵ-ל עוֹלָם means “eternal G-d.” The word olam, translated as “eternal,” also means “world.” In that context, by saying אֵ-ל עוֹלָם, rather than אֵ-ל הָעוֹלָם, the implication is that G-d is “the G-d of the world,” i.e., He governs and rules it; instead, (אֵ-ל עוֹלָם) G-dliness and the world are entirely one. There is no separation between them.

SUMMARY

The ultimate objective of the passing of the Rebbe Rayatz is that “the glory of G-d be revealed” in a manner reflected by the term istalek.

It is demanded from every one of us that we know that we are living in the seventh generation, and that the uniqueness of the seventh in a series is that he is seventh to the first, and carries out the legacy of the first. The path of Avraham Avinu, the first of the seven, was that he sought nothing for himself, not even mesirus nefesh. He knew that the sole purpose of his existence was to publicize G-dliness. Not only did he personally make known G-d’s Presence, he motivated others to do so. This is the mission incumbent on us.
— 9 —

Although there exists no one who is so bold as to say,

“I will carry out Divine service that resembles that of our forefather Avraham,” the first of the seven tzaddikim whose service led to the Giving of the Torah.

Nevertheless, each and every one of us can – and must – perform Divine service which reflects Avraham’s service.

The power to do so has been granted to us through the conduct of the Alter Rebbe, the first of the Rebbeim – for, as stated previously, the virtue of the seventh generation is that it continues and carries out the service of the first –

and his successors,

up to and including the conduct displayed by my revered father-in-law, the Rebbe Rayatz.

They have paved the way and granted us the powers necessary to follow in their footsteps.

This itself indicates the dearness of the seventh generation:

that so much power has been granted to us and revealed for our sakes.

88. See Torah Or, beginning of Parshas Va’ei ra, p. 55a, and conclusion of Parshas Vayeitzei, p. 23a ff.
Serving in this fashion will draw down the essence of the Shechinah into this physical and material world to an even greater extent than was revealed prior to the sin of the Tree of Knowledge. For, as explained in sec. 7, the intent of the descent caused by that sin was to draw down a level of G-dliness higher than that revealed beforehand. This is alluded to in the verse describing Mashiach, "And he shall be exalted greatly...," reaching an even higher level than Adam, and, indeed, even higher than his level before the sin of the Tree of Knowledge.

Adam (אדם) and meod (מאד), translated as "greatly" in the above verse, share the same letters. Nevertheless, Adam implies a structure, while meod, the level of Mashiach, points to the transcendence of all structures.

And my revered father-in-law, the Rebbe, who "bore our ailments and carried our pains"; and was “anguished by our sins and crushed by our transgressions,”

89. Yesayahu 52:13.
90. See Likkutei Torah of the AriZal, Parshas Sisa; Sefer HaLikkutim, Parshas Shmos. The above appears to dispute a statement that appears in Sefer HaGilgulim, ch. 19, and which is quoted in Likkutei Torah, Parshas Tzav, p. 17a, in the maamar beginning VeHeinif. This apparent contradiction can possibly be resolved by referring to the statement in Sefer HaGilgulim, ch. 7, quoted at the conclusion of Likkutei Torah, Shir HaShirim, p. 53a. See also Sefer HaMaamarim 5635, Vol. 1, p. 265ff., Sefer HaMaamarim 5698, p. 200.
92. Ibid.:5.
באת ה'תשי”א, באתי לגני, ה'תשי”א

just as he saw us in our affliction,
so will he speedily in our days and hastily in our
time
redeem his flock from both spiritual and physical
exile,
enabling us to stand where we will be exposed to
a vector of light.

All of this refers to mere revelations of G-dliness.

Beyond this, he will bind and unite us with the
very Essence and Being of the Ein Sof. As explained
in the maamar entitled VeAtah Tetzaveh, 93 this is the
fundamental purpose of a Jewish leader.

This is the inner objective of the progressive
descent of all the worlds,
the inner purpose of sin and its rectification;
and the inner purpose of the passing of tzaddikim:
that through all this, “the glory of G-d will be
revealed” in a manner reflected by the term istalek.

When he redeems us from exile “with an uplifted
hand,” 94

93. Translated below in this volume.
then, “There will be light for all the Children of Israel in their dwellings,”

and “Then Moshe and the Children of Israel will sing...” and that song will conclude,

“G-d will reign forever and ever.”

(And as we say in our prayers) adding also the interpretation of the verse by Targum Onkelos:

“The sovereignty of G-d will be established forever and for all eternity.”

In our prayers, after reciting this song, we conclude with the verse: “G-d will be King..., G-d will be one and His name one” –

that there will be no difference between G-d and His name. As our Sages explain, in the Ultimate Future, the inner truth of G-d’s name Havayah will be openly revealed.

All the above is accomplished through the passing of tzaddikim, something that is even more severe than the destruction of the Beis HaMikdash.

95. Cf. ibid. 10:23.
96. Ibid. 15:1.
97. Ibid.:18.
98. See Likkutei Torah, Shir HaShirim, the maamar entitled Hinach Yafah, beginning of ch. 2, p. 13d. There, the Alter Rebbe explains that the Targum often reveals the inner intent of the Scriptural verse.
100. Pesachim 50a.
Since we have already experienced all these things, 

everything now depends only on us — the seventh generation.

May we be privileged to see and meet with the Rebbe here in this world, in a physical body, in this earthly domain — and he will redeem us.

SUMMARY

The power to carry out the service described previously has been granted to us through the conduct of the Alter Rebbe, the first of the Rebbeim and his successors, up to and including the Rebbe Rayatz. They have paved the way and granted us the powers necessary to follow in their footsteps.

Emulating their Divine service will draw down the essence of the Shechinah into this physical and material world to an even greater extent than was revealed prior to the sin of the Tree of Knowledge.

Everything now depends only on us — the seventh generation. May we be privileged to see and meet with the Rebbe here in this world, in a physical body, in this earthly domain, and he will redeem us.

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101. See conclusion of Sefer Chassidim (quoted in Gilyon HaShas, Kesubah 103a) which states that even after his passing, Rabbi Yehudah Hanasi would come to his home every Friday night and recite Kiddush for his family, and Bamidbar Rabah 19:13, which states that G-d told Moshe that it was not appropriate for him to enter Eretz Yisroel when the people of his generation would be buried in the desert. Instead, G-d told him that he too would be buried in the desert. At the time of the Resurrection, he would enter Eretz Yisroel together with them.

102. The actual words the Rebbe used were “below ten handbreadths high.” In the sichos delivered on Motza'i Shabbos Parshas Beshalach, Yud Shvat, 5737, the Rebbe explained the intent of that expression, stating that with regard to the laws of Shabbos, it is known that the public domain, often employed as an analogy for the forces of kelipah (see Tanya, ch. 33), only extends ten handbreadths high. Thus, the revelation of G-dliness below ten handbreadths high implies the obliteration of the domain of kelipah.
בתניא פמ"א ופנ"ב
א) עיינ, פכ"ז) נדפס באוה"ת האזינו ע' א'תתכה תרל"ז [בביאור ע"פ הוי' לי בעוזרי (הובא בד"ה וככה הגדול במטה).]
ב) למטה.

הערה קעה.
ח, ב [שה"ש ביאור דשחורה אני רפ"ב בלקו"ת.]
ב) ה'ש"ת ע' כט ואילך [סח"מ]
ג) abused תרצ"ט ע' [ﺳח"م תרצ"ט ע' תקטז ואילך [שים"מ תרנ"ח ע' קצא ואילך] (בהוצאת תשנ"ד – ע' פ ואילך)
ד) אדם כי יקריב תרס"ו ע' טואילך [תרנ"ח]
ה) על בתדב"א פ"טйти דאפילו עוע"ז. ולכאורה קשה מב"ב (טו, ב) דמוכח שם דלכו"ע אין שכינה שורה [עוע"ז. ועיי"ש בחדא"ג ובמה שнести שם. ועיין אגרת תימן להרמב"ם דמשמע דאפ"ל נביא גם מעוע"ז. וצ"ע.

ברכות סא, ב [ברכות יא, ב. איכה רבה א, לז.]
כ) והם מיוסד על ד"ה וידבר אלקים תרס"ח (סח"מ תרס"ח ע' קסא).

ס' התולדות מהר"ש ע' עז בארוכה. עיינ הערה טו), ובכ"מ.
כ) על כהלתת המהשה ע"ש תאתדל"ת, ל"א, ג [שה"שחי שלמה נגזרה לפי התורה, לקו"ת שה"ש ד"ה הנך יפה רפ"ב]
וכ) והארן דו"א ע"ש בiao, ג [ראה ל.]
כג, סע"ג ואילך [א, ויצ נה, א [ראה תו"א ר"פ וארא]
ו) ולא דלי כuko מצותה נשתקע, תרע"ח [יד] למטה. ועיין הגהה שני' בתניא פ"מ. ד"ה ארדה נא, תרנ"ח 27 [באתדל"ת כל השונה כו' הקב"ה שונה כנגדו, ציצית שלמטה מעוררים ציצית שלמעלה בתוס' אורות וכו', למטה. ועיין תור"ט ביאור לד"ה כי עמך מקו"ח 36 ]
ד) באתדל"ת [ראה לקוטי תורה להאריז"ל פ' תשא. ס' הלקוטים פ' שמות. ולכאורה צ"ע מס' הגלגולים פי"ט הובא בלקו"ת שה"ש בסופו]
ה) וֹאָלֶקֶה נַעַר יִרְבָּה, תרנ"ח [אכה"ד תרנ"ח]
ו) לעכי, עניין והתרומת רבי מיכאל, עניין האuctose, עניין הא الاستثمار, עניין האIALOG בין האנשים בין הגרים, עניין האIALOG בין האנשים בין הגרים

111 'רד"ה באתי לגני ה'שי"ת (סה"מ ה'שי"ת ע [1].
2 ש"ה באהת אפק, 1. נב, ב., [ראה פכ"ז, יא ו"אAscending] [ 컴퓨터 שלבית\"י, יא [ראה סו"ס חסידים (הובא בגליון הש"
3] כב) [ראה ל.]
כג, סע"ג ואילך [א, ויצ נה, א [ראה תו"א ר"פ וארא]
ד) וליlishה הגרים]
א) והוא מיוסד על ד"ה וידבר אלקים תרנ"ח (סח"מ תרנ"ח ע' קסא).

5) [ראה מע"מש י"א ניסן, ה'תש"א"]. בהוצאה זו ניתוספו ע"י המו"ל מראי מקומות לפסוקים מחז"ל (בהערות הממוספרות). המאמר מיוסד בעיקרו על הפרק הראשון מד"ה באתי להאריז"ת (סח"מ להאריז"ת, ע[2].
6) [ראה מע"מש י"א ניסן, ה'תש"א"]. בהוצאה זו ניתוספו ע"י המו"ל מראי מקומות לפסוקים מחז"ל (בהערות הממוספרות). המאמר מיוסד principalmente על הפרק הראשון מד"ה באתי להאריז"ת (סח"מ להאריז"ת, ע[3].
באתי לגני, ה’תשא

וירא כא, לג

סוטה י, א

דב''ר פ''ב, ז

הובא בשם רז''ל בלקו''ת ר''פ נשא כ, סע''ב. ובכ''מ. וראה ראשית חכמה שער האהבה פרק ו קרוב לתחילתו

173 ' (ד''ה ושני פסוקים). אלשיך תרומה כה, ח. של''ה סט, א. רא, א. שכה, ב. שכו, ב. וראה לקו''ש חלק כו ע

הערה. ב''ר פי''ט, ז. במדב''ר פי''ג, ב.

173 ')

מע''פ נוסח התפלה. ובשהש''ר שם: שוכן עד וקדוש שמו (ישעי' נז, טו).

פקודי ד, סע''ד ואילך. ז, ב ואילך

ח''ב ר''פ וארא. וראה ביאורי הזהר שם

ראה תנחומא נשא טז. בחוקותי ג. ב''ר ספ''ג. במדב''ר פי''ג, ו. תניא רפל''ו

קל, ריש ע''ב

ראה תו''א בראשית ג, א. וירא יד, א. משפטים עו, ב. ובכ''מ

ואילך (ראה שם ע

4 '). ושני פסוקים). אלשיך תרומה כה, ח. של''ה סט, א. רא, א. שכה, ב. שכו, ב. וראה לקו''ש חלק כו ע

הערה. ב''ר פי''ט, ז. במדב''ר פי''ג, ב.

173 ')

18-117 ' פרק א (סה''מ ה'שי''ת ע

18-117 '). שפה המדינית חסרה לי. וברשימת כ''ק אדמו''ר מוהריי''צ שם בשוה''ג: הוד כ''ק אammo''ר הרה''ק, הבין

בשפת המדינה היטיב, ולא הי' צריך למתורגמן כלל, גם בדברים עיונים כשהיו קוראים לפניו בשפת המדינה

הי' מבין, אך לא חפץ לדבר בשפה זו.. ושאלתיו מדוע אינו מדבר בשפה הרוסית.. עני''ג ג' טעמים כו'. עי''ג.

ראה תניא פרק לב.

ראה גם סה''מ תרל''ו ח''ב ע' שכז

18-117 ')

ראה גם סה''מ תרל''ו ח''ב קכח.

ועם הגהות – אוה''ת במדבר ח''ד ע' א'. וירא יד, א. משפטים עו, ב. ובכ''מ

שמשף ימי צדיק תרמ''ב פרק יד. והוא מיוסד על ד''ה פזר נתן במאמרי אדמו''ר הזקן הנחות הר''פ ז''ל ע' נז-נח.

ב (ובלקו''ת שם מציין לזהר שם סז, ב. וראה גם שם קפד, א). וראה גם תו''א ויקהל פט, ד. לקו''ת חוקת סה,

ג.

ראה גם סה''מ עזר''ת ע' קנ

ראה סה''מ תרס''א ס''ע קנח ואילך

ראה גם דרוש ג' שיטות והגהות לד''ה פתח אלי' בהערה יא. סה''מ תרס''א שם. ובכ''מ

ראה גם תנחומא נשא טז. בחוקותי ג. ב''ר ספ''ג. במדב''ר פי''ג, ו. תניא רפל''ו

ראה גם אגרות-קודש אדמו''ר מוהריי''צ ח''ד ע' תקכב

153 '). סה''מ תשי''א ע

98 '.

ראה "רשימות" חוברת קעט ("חורף תרצ''ה, ווין") ע

18-117 ')

ראה תנחומא נשא טז. בחוקותי ג. ב''ר ספ''ג. במדב''ר פי''ג, ו. תניא רפל''ו

ראה גם סה''מ תרל''ו ח''ב קכח

ראה גם תנחומא נשא טז. בחוקותי ג. ב''ר ספ''ג. במדב''ר פי''ג, ו. תניא רפל''ו

ראה גם סה''מ תרל''ו ח''ב קכח

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ראה גם סה''מ תרל''ו ח''ב קכח

ראה גם תנחומא נשא טז. בחוקותי ג. ב''ר ספ''ג. במדב''ר פי''ג, ו. תניא רפל''ו
ע"פ תפלת מוסף דיו"ט (48)

ורא הורקל בשלח ע"ד, והודר כיladeshא. ס"מ חרוב"א ע"ע וואכל, ודודו. (49)

ראה הור ת"ג ע"ד, התباشر באנער"פ על סמי וריו. (50)

הילחח על כמו ג. ודודו. (51)

ישע יב. ט. (52)

ראה המ לת"מה הורילה ח"א ע"ע והוהי ע"ע. ודודו. (53)

ישע, נב. ג. (54)

ישע, ח. (55)

ע"פ לשון המחבר – בשלח ר. (56)

ע"פ לשון המחבר – בא, וב. (57)

בשלח, ו. א. (58)

ע"פ, ו. (59)

שורד, ו. (60)

ראת פסחים, ו. א. (61)

항ן בוני ה" – נתבר בgetSession מ"ג, שלח, ויז"א שמע והוהי ד"כ, וסמס בתו"ה ושלח

(62)