

CHASSIDIC DISCOURSE · SICHAH

וְהֵלַכְתָּ בְּדַרְכָיו

More Than Good Deeds

Vehalachta Bidrachav — “And you shall walk in His ways”

From a sichah of Yud Shvat 5721 (1961)

משיחת יו"ד שבט תשכ"א

Likkutei Sichos, vol. 4, pp. 1130–1136

By the Lubavitcher Rebbe

Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson, of righteous memory

Original Yiddish, with English translation and elucidation

Full Elucidated Edition

Bilingual text with the source's own footnote markers, deep-dive commentary, diagrams and glossary. The full apparatus is collected in the back matter.

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About this edition

This is a full elucidated bilingual edition of the sichah printed in Likkutei Sichos vol. 4, pp. 1130–1136, on the mitzvah וְהִלַּכְתָּ בְּדַרְכָּיו — *and you shall walk in His ways*. It is adapted from a sichah delivered on Yud Shvat 5721 (1961).

Genre

This is a **sichah**, not a maamar, and the difference is not cosmetic. A maamar begins from a verse and descends through the inner dimension; a sichah argues in the open. This one opens on a technical contradiction in the Rambam's *Sefer HaMitzvos*, presses it until it forces a conclusion, raises a second and deeper objection against that conclusion, and closes on a practical instruction. The reasoning is visible at every step, which is why it can be followed rather than only received.

The facing column is Yiddish

The original of a sichah is **Yiddish**, and the right-hand column here is that Yiddish, not Hebrew. Loshon hakodesh appears inside it constantly — quoted verses, halachic terms, phrases from Chassidus — and the sichah itself often glosses those phrases into Yiddish for its listeners. Where it does, the elucidation notes it, since those glosses are the Rebbe's own explanations and not the editor's.

The Yiddish is set here **unpointed**, as Likkutei Sichos itself prints it. The vocalization found in the SIE edition is that edition's editorial addition; reproducing it would mean transcribing several thousand diacritics from page images with no way to verify them. Every Yiddish word below was transcribed from rasterized images of the printed source. Nothing was taken from the PDF's text layer, which scrambles word order inside lines.

Layout

Yiddish always occupies the **right** column; English translation and elucidation always the **left**. The text is aligned in short clusters so that the elucidation stays beside the words it is elucidating. Section numbers are the source's own ג'ב'ג' divisions.

Bold and light

Two weights carry two different things, and the distinction is strict. **Bold roman is translation of the Yiddish words themselves.**

Lighter italic is editorial elucidation — explanation, context, and the connective tissue the sichah assumes its listener already carries.

Nothing in bold has been supplied by the editor; nothing in italic is in the Yiddish.

Sources

The source's own printed footnote markers — the Hebrew letters א through כג — are restored inline in the Yiddish column as small gold superscripts, at the words they follow in the printing. The references themselves are transcribed as printed and collected in a single apparatus in the back matter, so that the body of the edition stays a continuous read. Each reference carries a status:

VERIFIED confirmed against the cited source or a readily checkable reference. **AS CITED** a real source, reproduced as the printing gives it, with an internal locator (volume, page, folio) not independently confirmed here.

Three of the sichah's notes — ג, ט and כב — are substantial essays in their own right. They are given in the apparatus in abridged form with their argument summarised, and note ג is treated at length in a deep-dive box at §4, where it does its work. A misattribution in matters of Torah is a substantive wrong, not a formatting error, so nothing here is asserted at a confidence level higher than it was checked at.

Deep dives

Where the sichah leans on a foundational concept — the Rambam's שרשים, בהעלם and בגילוי, עומדים and מהלכים, נהמא, נמנע הנמנעות, נהמא, נמנע הנמנעות, נהמא, נמנע הנמנעות — כח מה, קליפת נוגה, עצם הנשמה, דכיסוסא — a dedicated box treats it at the point where it is needed, not only in the glossary.

The argument at a glance

Section numbers are the source's own.

- §1 The Rambam counts **והלכת בדרכיו** among the 613 — yet by his own **שרשים** it should not be counted: it names no specific act, and its particulars belong to **ואהבת לרעך כמוך**. Since all mitzvos are “His ways,” it covers the whole list. So it must carry a **חידוש**.
- §2 The **והלכת** is **חידוש** — walking. Mitzvos must be done in a way that moves the doer out of his prior **מעמד ומצב**; the mechanism is **בדרכיו**. Mitzvos always refine, but **בהעלם**; the command is that it be **בגילוי**.
- §3 What kind of movement? **מהלכים** vs **עומדים**: angels ascend endlessly but **והדרגה**, so they never leave. **הליכה** is discontinuous — **גבול אין בלי גבול**. **אן איבערגאנג פון גבול אין בלי גבול**. Two problems: how can limited service do it, and how does the man survive it? Both hold, by **נמנע הנמנעות**.
- §4 But the **כוונה העליונה** requires every elevation come **דוקא** through his own service — otherwise **דכיסופא**. If the capacity for unlimited ascent was placed into his service from Above, the achievement still isn't his.
- §5 The answer: his **ממעל ממעל** **חלק אלוהים**, **עצם הנשמה**, is itself unlimited — and it is his. Serving from **אמונה פשוטה** and **נפש מסירת נפש** draws it into the particular mitzvah. This is the **אתה** of **חנן אתה**.
- §6 And the second half — remaining limited after an unlimited ascent — is also earned, in the body: the **נפש האלקית** does not annul the body but enlivens it. Revealing that bond until the limbs act **ממילא** draws down **כח העצמות** and makes the body a **כלי**.
- §7 Not everyone can produce that **ביטול** — hence **ובו תדבק** first, clinging to the sages who are a **מרכבה**. But the walking comes only through **העיקר** **הוא העשה המצוות**. Until **יילכו מחיל אל חיל** — and the day that is entirely Shabbos.

To Be Counted in the 613

BEFORE WE READ

The sichah opens on a technical problem in the Rambam's bookkeeping. "And you shall walk in His ways" is counted as one of the 613 — yet by the Rambam's own stated rule it should not be, because it is a general charge and not a specific act. That contradiction is the whole engine of the sichah: whatever resolves it will turn out to be what the mitzvah is.

The command "and you shall walk in His ways" (which appears in Parshas Tavo) is counted by the Rambam among the reckoning of the 613 mitzvos. *Not merely mentioned by him — counted. The Sefer HaMitzvos is a census with strict admission rules, and this verse was admitted as positive mitzvah 8 —* And he explains the mitzvah: "to become like Him, may He be exalted, according to one's capacity" (*the Yiddish glosses the Hebrew for the listener: that one should make himself resemble the One Above, exalted be He, to the extent possible*). *Note what the halachic formulation does. It does not say "do kind things." It says: resemble Him — That means that one should conduct himself according to the attributes of the One Above, — by middos, the divine attributes as they act, not by rules laid over one's behaviour from outside —* and as the Rambam brings there the derivation: "Just as the Holy One, blessed be He, is called gracious, so too you be gracious; just as the Holy One, blessed be He, is called merciful, so too you be merciful; just as the Holy One, blessed be He, is called pious, so too you be pious." *Hold on to the grammar of that formula — נקרא, He is called; אף אתה, so too you. §5 will return to it and read the אתה — the "you" — as the load-bearing word of the entire sichah.*

Among the principles (שרשים) which the Rambam gives regarding the reckoning of the mitzvos, he says — *in the fourth of the fourteen roots that govern what may enter the count —* that an all-inclusive command (א ציווי כולל), such as "you shall keep My statutes" or "you shall be holy," is not counted in the reckoning of the mitzvos, because they are not commands regarding some particular detail, but rather they take in the whole Torah. *The rule is one of resolution, not importance. "Be holy" is not too small to count; it is too large — it names no act, so there is nothing to enumerate —* And seemingly, the mitzvah "and you shall walk in His ways" is surely also a general command, and here the sichah anticipates the obvious defence and closes it — for although the aforementioned particulars of the mitzvah — "be gracious," "be merciful" and "be pious" — do enter into acts of kindness, which in turn enter into the mitzvah of "love your fellow as yourself." *In other words: it cannot be rescued by pointing*

א. דעם ציווי "והלכת בדרכיו" (וואס עס שטייט אין פרשת תבוא) רעכנט דער רמב"ם אין דעם מנין פון די תרי"ג מצוות. און ער טייטשט אויס די מצוה: "להדמות בו יתעלה כפי היכולת" (מען זאל זיך גלייכן צום אויבערשטן יתעלה לויט דער מעגלעכקייט). דאס הייסט מען זאל זיך פירן לויט די מדות פון דעם אויבערשטן, און ווי דער רמב"ם ברענגט דארט די דרשה²: "מה הקדוש ברוך הוא נקרא חנון אף אתה היה חנון, מה הקדוש ברוך הוא נקרא רחום אף אתה היה רחום, מה הקדוש ברוך הוא נקרא חסיד אף אתה היה חסיד".

צווישן די שרשים וועלכע דער רמב"ם גיט בנוגע מנין המצוות, זאגט ער¹, אז א ציווי כולל, אזוי ווי "את חקתי תשמרו גו'" אדער "קדושים תהיו", ווערן נישט גערעכנט אין מנין המצוות, ווייל זיי זיינען נישט קיין ציוויים אויף א געוויסן פרט, נאר זיי נעמען ארום די גאנצע תורה. ולכאורה, איז דאך אויך די מצוה "והלכת בדרכיו" א ציווי כללי, ווארום כאטש די פרטים הנ"ל פון דער מצוה: "היה חנון", "היה רחום" און "היה חסיד" גייען אריין אין גמילות חסדים, וועלכע גייט אריין אין מצות "ואהבת לרעך כמוך".¹

to its particulars, because those particulars are already counted elsewhere, under a different mitzvah. On the Rambam's own second root, that is exactly the profile of something that should not get its own number.

But according to how the explanation of “and you shall walk in His ways” is expounded — “to become like Him, may He be exalted, according to one’s capacity” — this surely applies to all the mitzvos, since they are all “His ways,” of the Holy One, blessed be He, for the One Above fulfils all the mitzvos — *the midrash that the Holy One keeps what He commanded, which is why every mitzvah without exception qualifies as one of “His ways.” And now the difficulty is at full strength — so then the command “and you shall walk in His ways” is not a particular mitzvah at all, but rather it includes all the mitzvos — and nevertheless the Rambam counts it in the reckoning of the mitzvos? Read the question precisely, because it is sharper than “why count a general mitzvah.” This one is not merely general in scope; it is co-extensive with the entire body of the 613. It has no territory of its own. On paper it is the least countable item in the whole list — and it is number 8.*

One must say that in the command “and you shall walk in His ways” there is some particular matter which is not present in the other commands, and because of that novel element in this command it is counted in the reckoning of the mitzvos. *The forced move. Not “perhaps there is” but מוז מען זאגן — one must say. Its being counted is the evidence; the חידוש is the conclusion drawn from it. And the sichah supports the move with a precedent — Similarly to the mitzvah “and you shall serve Havayah your G-d,” which, although it is among the all-inclusive commands — for with every mitzvah one serves the One Above — is nevertheless, on account of the novel element present in that mitzvah, counted in the reckoning of the mitzvos. The precedent is exact and worth registering: that mitzvah too is discharged by every other mitzvah, and it too is counted, because the Rambam reads it as referring specifically to prayer. So there is an established pattern — a general charge earns a number when it carries something the particulars do not. The question is now well-posed: what does והלכת בדרכיו carry?*

איז דאך אבער לויט דעם ווי מ'איז מבאר דעם פירוש פון "והלכת בדרכיו" – "להדמות בו יתעלה כפי היכולת" – גייט דאך דאס אויף אלע מצוות, וואס זיי אלע זיינען "דרכיו" של הקדוש ברוך הוא, ווארום דער אויבערשטער איז מקיים אלע מצוות^ה – איז דאך דער ציווי "והלכת בדרכיו" ניט קיין מצוה פרטית, נאר ער איז כולל אלע מצוות, און פונדעסטוועגן ציילט אים דער רמב"ם אין מנין המצוות^{ה*}?

מוז מען זאגן, אז אין דעם ציווי "והלכת בדרכיו" איז פאראן א געוויסער ענין וואס איז ניטא אין אנדערע ציוויים, און צוליב דעם חידוש אין דעם ציווי, ווערט ער געציילט אין דעם מנין המצוות^ה. על־דרך ווי די מצוה "ועבדתם את ה' אלקיכם", וואס כאטש אז זי איז פון די ציוויים כוללים – ווארום מיט יעדער מצוה דינט מען דעם אויבערשטן – פונדעסטוועגן, מצד דעם חידוש וואס איז פאראן אין דער מצוה, ווערט זי געציילט אין מנין המצוות^ה.

DEEP DIVE

The Rambam's שרשים, and why this is a real contradiction and not a quibble

The Sefer HaMitzvos opens with fourteen שרשים — roots, or admission criteria — which the Rambam sets out before counting anything, precisely so that the count is principled rather than impressionistic. Two of them are at work here. **Shores 4** excludes charges that encompass the whole Torah: “you shall keep My statutes,” “you shall be holy.” His stated reason is worth quoting because

the sichah leans on it in note 1 — such a charge is not counted “because He did not command us to do anything beyond what we already knew.” A general charge issues no new instruction; it re-describes instructions already given. **Shoresh 2** excludes a mitzvah whose content is already counted under another one. If “be gracious” is discharged through גמילות חסדים, and גמילות חסדים falls under ואהבת לרעך כמוך, then its particulars are spoken for. So the mitzvah fails both tests at once, on the Rambam’s own criteria, in the Rambam’s own book — and he counts it anyway. This is why the sichah can proceed by מוֹזֵז מֵעַן זֶאֱנֵן, one must say. When an author of the Rambam’s precision violates his own published rule, the violation is data. Something in this mitzvah is not covered by anything else — and since it cannot be a new *act* (all the acts are counted elsewhere), it must be a new *manner* of acting. That is the answer §2 will give.

DEEP DIVE

“To become like Him” — what the Rambam’s formulation actually demands

It is easy to hear בדרכיו as a general encouragement toward decency. The Rambam’s language forbids that reading. He writes להדמות בו יתעלה כפי היכולת — to *become like* Him, to the extent of one’s capacity. The object of the verb is not the deed; it is the doer. And in Hilchos De’os he places the mitzvah in the laws of *character*, alongside the obligation to walk the middle path — so its subject matter is what a person *is*, not only what he produces. The derivation carries the same force. “מה הקב”ה נקרא חנון אף אתה היה חנון” — note that it does not say “He does gracious things, so do gracious things.” It says He is *called* gracious — the quality is predicated of Him — *so you be* gracious. The verb is הייה, be. This distinction is the difference the sichah will exploit twice. A good deed can be done at arm’s length, by rote, by a person unchanged at the end of it. Walking in His ways cannot, because the mitzvah’s object is the resemblance itself. Which is also why §5 can read the single word אתה — “you” — as pointing not at the person’s conduct but at the essence of his soul.

SUMMARY

“Walk in His ways” fails both of the Rambam’s own tests for admission to the 613 — it names no specific act, and its particulars are already counted under ואהבת לרעך כמוך. Since all mitzvos are “His ways,” it is co-extensive with the whole list. Yet it is counted. Therefore it must carry a חידוש the others do not — and since it cannot be a new act, it must be a new manner.

Not to Stand Still

BEFORE WE READ

The answer, and it is a single word: והלכת — *and you shall walk*. The חידוש is not another deed to perform but a requirement about what the deeds must accomplish in the person performing them.

What is the novel element in the command “and you shall walk in His ways” which is not present in the other mitzvot? *The question restated as the section’s heading, and then answered by a single word lifted out of the verse — “And you shall walk” — that the manner of fulfilling the mitzvot must be by way of walking (בדרך הליכה). This is the hinge of the sichah. The mitzvah adds no content to the 613; it adds a condition on how all 613 are to be done. That is precisely why it is both fully general and genuinely new — which dissolves the contradiction of §1 — It can happen that a person fulfils mitzvot and nevertheless remains standing in the same place, in the same state and standing (מעמד ומצב) as he was before he fulfilled the mitzvah. Read that soberly, because it is a description and not an accusation. Nothing here says the mitzvah was invalid, or that the man was insincere. The mitzvah was done; the account is credited; and the person who walked away from it is the person who walked into it — Upon this comes the command “and you shall walk” — that one should fulfil mitzvot in such a manner that they should effect a walking (פועל א הליכה) in the person who fulfils them; he should go out of his previous state and be elevated to a higher level. Two verbs, and both are strong: ארויסגיין, go out — leave — and דערהויבן ווערן, be raised.*

And by what does one effect the “and you shall walk” — through the “in His ways”: *the second half of the verse is the mechanism for the first, and the sichah spells out exactly what that means in practice — he fulfils each mitzvah on account of its being a way of the Holy One, blessed be He; he does it in order “to become like Him, may He be exalted” — and then the mitzvot effect in him the matter of — “you walked.” So the operative variable is not effort, or feeling, or even understanding, but the reason under which the act is done. The same act performed because it is required leaves a man where he was; performed because it is one of His ways, and in order to come to resemble Him, it moves him. And that is coherent: if the point of the act is resemblance, then the act cannot be complete while the doer is unchanged.*

And although the fulfilment of mitzvot certainly effects a refinement (זיכור) in the person who fulfils them, in whatever manner he may fulfil them — even when he is not thereby

ב. וואס איז דער חידוש אין דעם ציווי "והלכת בדרכיו" וואס שטייט נישט אין אנדערע מצוות? — "והלכת", אז דער אופן קיום המצוות דארף זיין בדרך הליכה. עס קען זיין אז מען זאל מקיים זיין מצוות און פונדעסטוועגן בלייבן שטיין אויפן זעלבן ארט, אין דעם זעלבן מעמד ומצב ווי מען איז געווען איידער מען האט מקיים געווען די מצוה. אויף דעם קומט דער ציווי "והלכת", אז מען זאל מקיים זיין מצוות אויף אזא אופן, אז זיי זאלן פועל'ן א הליכה אין דעם מענטשן וואס איז זיי מקיים; ער זאל ארויסגיין פון זיין פריערדיקן מצב און דערהויבן ווערן אין א העכערער מדריגה.

און דורך וואס פועל'ט מען דעם "והלכת" — דורכן "בדרכיו": ער איז מקיים יעדער מצוה צוליב דעם וואס זי איז דרכו של הקדוש ברוך הוא, ער טוט עס בכדי "להדמות בו יתעלה", און דאן ווירקן אויף אים די מצוות דעם ענין פון — "הלכת".

און כאטש אז דער קיום המצוות פועל'ט זיכער א זיכור אין דעם אדם וואס איז מקיים די מצוות, אין וועלכן אופן

fulfilling the separate command “and you shall walk in His ways” (to the point that even when he fulfils a mitzvah in the lowest manner, of “not for its own sake,” even then the mitzvah acts upon him) — and through every such refinement he does depart from his previous state: *the concession is generous and doctrinally important. A mitzvah is never inert. Even* שלא *works on the person, which is the classical reason one is told to learn and do even without pure motive — this is, however, a matter that is in concealment (אן ענין שבהעלם).* *There is the distinction, and it is the whole of §2. The change is real but hidden — from the world, and above all from the person himself — The command “and you shall walk” is to fulfil the mitzvot in such a manner that it should be felt in revelation (בגילוי) how through the mitzvah he becomes “and you walked.” So the* חידוש *of the mitzvah is not that mitzvot elevate a person — they always do — but that this elevation is to be b’gilui: registered, felt, available to the person as his own experience. The command is not for the effect. It is for the effect to be revealed.*

ער זאל זיי נאר מקיים זיין, אויך ווען ער איז דערביי ניט מקיים דעם באזונדערן ציווי "והלכת בדרכיו" (ביז אז אפילו ווען ער איז מקיים א מצוה אין דעם נידעריקסטן אופן פון "שלא לשמה" אויך דאן ווירקט די מצוה אין אים) און דורך יעדער זיכוך גייט ער דאך אוועק פון זיין פריערדיקן מצב – דאס איז אבער אן ענין שבהעלם. דער ציווי "והלכת" איז, צו מקיים זיין די מצוות באופן כזה אז עס זאל זיך פילן בגילוי ווי דורך דער מצוה ווערט ער והלכת.

DEEP DIVE

בגילוי and בהעלם — the distinction the whole sichah runs on

This pair does more work in Chassidus than almost any other, and §2 is a clean place to see why. Something בהעלם is fully present and fully real, but not manifest — not perceptible to the one in whom it is present. Something בגילוי is the same reality, revealed. The difference is not one of quantity or of degree of existence; a hidden thing is not a weaker version of a revealed one. What follows from this is the sichah’s central claim. Since a mitzvah performed in any manner refines the doer, the elevation is always there — so if והלכת commanded merely the elevation, it would command what already happens, and the Rambam’s Shores 4 objection (“He did not command anything beyond what we already knew”) would stand unanswered. The mitzvah must therefore command the *revelation* of the elevation. That is genuinely additional, and it is a manner rather than an act — which is exactly the shape the חידוש had to have. The same structure returns twice more, and it is worth marking the pattern. In §6 the body’s life-force from the G-dly soul is present בהעלם and must be brought בגילוי through *avodah*. In §7 the drawing-down accomplished by the deed must be בגילוי rather than merely accomplished. In each case the work is not to produce the reality but to unconceal it — and in each case the sichah insists that unconcealing is real work and not a lesser substitute for it.

DEEP DIVE

שלא לשמה, and why the sichah concedes it so readily

It would have been easier for the argument to say that a mitzvah done without the right intention accomplishes nothing in the doer, leaving ת והלכ to supply the missing effect. The sichah says the opposite, and goes out of its way to say it: even in the lowest manner, שלא לשמה, the mitzvah acts on him, and through every such refinement he does leave his previous state. Two reasons this matters. First, doctrinally: the efficacy of a mitzvah is not a function of the doer’s state of mind. This is the basis of the classical ruling that one should occupy oneself with Torah and mitzvot even שלא לשמה, since לשמה בא לשמה — and it is why the sichah’s demand for בגילוי never becomes a reason to defer the act until the intention is right. Second, argumentatively: conceding the maximum is what makes the conclusion tight. Having granted that mitzvot always elevate, and always in a way that genuinely moves the person, the sichah has left itself exactly one place to locate the חידוש — the revelation. A weaker concession would have left the answer optional. This is the same discipline by which a maamar makes its own difficulty worse before resolving it.

SUMMARY

The חידוש is the word והלכת: the mitzvos must be done in a way that moves the doer out of his prior מעמד ומצב, and the mechanism is בדרכיו — doing each mitzvah because it is one of His ways, in order to resemble Him. Mitzvos always refine a person, but בהעלם; the command is that the elevation be בגילוי.

Who Stands, and Who Proceeds

BEFORE WE READ

Now the sichah measures what kind of movement *הליכה* is, using Zechariah's contrast between those who *stand* and those who *proceed*. The answer is startling: angels are the ones standing still — and the reason is not that they do not ascend, but that their ascents are orderly.

On the verse “and I shall give you those who proceed among these who stand,” it is stated in Chassidus that angels, and likewise souls before they descend below, are called “those who stand”; and souls below, through their fulfilment of Torah and mitzvos, are called “those who proceed.” *The inversion is deliberate and should be allowed to land. The angel — unbodied, undistracted, in continuous ascent — is the one standing. The soul in a body, in a world, doing mitzvos with its hands, is the one moving. And note the pivot on which the whole classification turns: דורך זייער — it is the performance of mitzvos that makes a soul a מהלך, which is why the mitzvos had to descend into a world of bodies to be performed at all.*

And Chassidus explains that although angels too — and all the more so souls above — are constantly ascending from elevation to elevation, they are nevertheless called “those who stand,” because their ascents are in order and gradation (*בסדר והדרגה*) — hence, of themselves, they are limited: *and this is the definition the sichah needs, so it is worth slowing down. Limitation here has nothing to do with height and everything to do with relation — each ascent is in proportion to the previous one (בערך), and however high the level to which they are elevated, it is still connected and has a relation to the lowest level at which they stood at the very beginning. That is the whole of it. If every rung is measurable against the rung below, then the ladder as a whole is measurable against the ground — and a thing measurable against its own starting point has never actually left it — And therefore they are called “those who stand”: they are always standing in one place — even through their highest ascents they do not go away entirely from the previous, lower levels. An infinite series of finite steps is still, in this sense, standing still.*

“Those who proceed” (which is accomplished in souls after their coming down below) means that the ascents are higher than order and without any boundary; on reaching the higher level they are already entirely “away,” and have no relation to the rung on which they previously stood. *The criterion is discontinuity. A הליכה is not a longer step; it is a step whose*

ג. אויפן פסוק “ונתתי לך מהלכים בין העומדים האלה” שטייט אין חסידות^ט אז מלאכים, און אזוי אויך נשמות איידער זיי נידערן אראפ למטה, ווערן אנגערופן “עומדים”, און נשמות למטה, דורך זייער קיום פון תורה ומצוות, ווערן גערופן “מהלכים”.

און חסידות איז מבאר^י, אז כאטש אויך מלאכים, ומכל־שכן נשמות למעלה, זיינען כסדר עולה בעילוי אחר עילוי, פונדעסטוועגן ווערן זיי גערופן “עומדים”, ווייל זייערע עליות זיינען בסדר והדרגה – ממילא זיינען זיי באגרענעצט: יעדער עליה איז בערך צו דער פריערדיקער און ווי הויך עס זאל ניט זיין די מדריגה צו וועלכער זיי דערהויבן זיך, איז זי נאך פארבונדן און האט א שייכות צו דער נידעריקסטער מדריגה ביי וועלכער זיי האבן געהאלטן גאר פון אנהייבס. און דעריבער הייסן זיי “עומדים”, זיי שטייען אלץ אויף איין ארט: אויך דורך זייערע העכסטע עליות גייען זיי ניט אוועק אינגאנצן פון די פריערדיקע, נידעריקע מדריגות.

“מהלכים” (וואס ווערט אויפגעטאן אין נשמות נאך זייער אראפקומען למטה) מיינט, אז די עליות זיינען העכער פון און אן קיין גרענעץ; דערגרייכנדיק צו דער העכערער מדריגה זיינען זיי שוין אינגאנצן “אוועק”

destination is not on the same scale as its origin. Which is why it cannot be reached by adding steps, however many — and why, two clusters from now, it will turn out to require something no creature possesses.

From this it is understood that the meaning of “and you shall walk in His ways” is that the fulfilment of the mitzvos should be in such a manner that he should be elevated through them in an unlimited manner — a transition from limitation into limitlessness (אין בלי גבול), at which point he is a “one who proceeds.” The word איבערגאנג — a crossing-over — is doing precise work. Not a climb within limitation toward its upper edge, but a crossing of the boundary between two orders.

But a created being is a limited one, so: and here the sichah states its own problem in two numbered halves, which is the form a genuine paradox takes rather than a difficulty — (a) how can he, through his limited service, ascend without limit? And (b) if he does reach limitlessness, how can he then remain a limited creature? Seemingly he must cease to be a creature at all. Both halves have to be answered together, and notice that they pull in opposite directions. Solve (a) by making the ascent great enough and you have destroyed the man. Preserve the man and you have capped the ascent. This is not a gap in the argument; it is the structure of the thing being described — Upon this it says “and you shall walk in His ways” — you should bind yourself with the ways of the Holy One, blessed be He (through fulfilling the mitzvos on account of their being the ways of the Holy One, blessed be He, as above).

And since the One Above is “the One Who makes possible the impossible” (נמנע הנמנעות) and is “one who bears opposites” (נושא הפכים), He, may He be blessed, can join limitation together with limitlessness: that (a) a created being, through his limited service, should have the “and you shall walk” accomplished in him — he should ascend in an unlimited elevation; and (b) that even after his unlimited ascent he should remain within his limited existence. The resolution is not a compromise between the two halves; it is both of them at full strength, held together by a power that is not the creature’s. And observe where the sichah has arrived: the mitzvah of resembling Him turns out to be the mitzvah through which the one property that cannot be resembled — the holding of opposites — operates in a person.

און האבן ניט קיין שייכות מיט דער דרגא אין וועלכער זיי זיינען געשטאנען פריער.

פון דעם איז מובן, אז דער פירוש פון “והלכת בדרכיו” איז, אז דער קיום המצוות זאל זיין אין אזא אופן, אז ער זאל דערהויבן ווערן דורך זיי אין אן אופן בלתי מוגבל, אן איבערגאנג פון גבול אין בלי גבול, וואס דאן איז ער א “מהלך”.

א נברא איז דאך אבער א מוגבל, איז: (א) ווי קען ער דורך זיין באגרענעצטער עבודה עולה זיין בלי גבול? און (ב) אויב ער דערגרייכט יא צו בלי גבול, ווי קען ער דאן בלייבן א נברא מוגבל? לכאורה מוז ער דאך ווערן אויס נברא. אויף דעם זאגט ער “והלכת בדרכיו”, דו זאלסט זיך פארבינדן מיט דרכיו של הקדוש ברוך הוא (דורך מקיים זיין די מצוות צוליב דעם וואס זיי זיינען דרכיו של הקדוש ברוך הוא, כנ”ל).

און וויבאלד אז דער אויבערשטער איז “נמנע הנמנעות” און איז “נושא הפכים”, קען ער יתברך פארבינדן גבול מיט בלי גבול צוזאמען, אז א נברא דורך זיין עבודה מוגבלת זאל זיך ביי אים אויפטאן דער “והלכת”, ער זאל עולה זיין בעילוי בלתי מוגבל, און (ב) אז אויך נאך זיין אומבאגרענעצטער עליה זאל ער פארבלייבן במציאותו המוגבלת.

	THOSE WHO STAND · עומדים	THOSE WHO PROCEED · מהלכים
WHO	Angels; and souls before their descent below.	Souls below — through their fulfilment of Torah and mitzvos.
DO THEY ASCEND?	Constantly — עילוי אחר עילוי, without pause.	Yes — but not by accumulation.
HOW	בסדר והדרגה — in order and gradation. Every rung בערך, in proportion to the last.	Higher than order, and with no boundary. A crossing, not a step.
RELATION TO THE START	Retained. However high, still measurable against the lowest level they began at.	None. On arriving they are אינגאנצן אוועק — entirely away.
THEREFORE	Limited. They have grown; they have not been displaced. Always standing in one place.	Unlimited — אין גבול פון גבול אין בלי גבול.

DEEP DIVE

מהלכים and עומדים — why an infinite ascent can still be standing still

The classification is counter-intuitive and repays being stated carefully, because almost everything later in the sichah depends on it. An angel is in perpetual ascent, עילוי אחר עילוי. The sichah does not dispute this. It disputes what the ascent amounts to. Angelic ascent proceeds בסדר והדרגה — in order and gradation — so that every level stands בערך, in proportion, to the one before it. Now take that seriously as a mathematical property rather than a metaphor. If every step is commensurable with the last, then by transitivity the highest level attained is commensurable with the first. The angel at its loftiest still has a determinate relation to where it began. It has grown; it has not been displaced. Hence עומדים — they are always in one place. A מהלך is defined by the opposite property: on arriving, the previous rung has no relation to the new one, אינגאנצן אוועק. Discontinuity, not magnitude. Two consequences the sichah will use. First, הליכה cannot be reached by accumulation — no quantity of proportionate steps yields a disproportionate one — which is exactly why §3 ends in a paradox rather than a method. Second, and more strikingly: the capacity for הליכה is granted to souls specifically *after* their descent into bodies. The condition that looks like the disadvantage — being in a limited body, in a world, subject to concealment — is the condition of the advantage. A soul above is too well-ordered to be dislodged.

DEEP DIVE

נמנע הנמנעות — and the precise sense in which it is not “breaking the rules”

The term is easy to mistranslate into something crude, so it is worth setting out as the sources do. נמנע in philosophical usage does not mean “difficult” or even “miraculous.” It means a *logical* impossibility — something self-contradictory, which therefore cannot exist by definition: a square circle. This is distinct from a miracle. The splitting of a sea contravenes nature, but a sea exists and there is nothing self-contradictory in its dividing. Some of the חקירה philosophers held that such impossibilities constrain even the Creator — that an elephant passing through the eye of a needle is not a matter of power at all, because it is a contradiction. Chassidus takes a different line, and the difference is not a matter of degree. It is not that He overcomes impossibility or suspends the rules. It is that the *category* of impossibility is not appropriate when speaking of Him. Logical constraints — what we deem possible or impossible — are themselves part of creation, and the Creator is not subject to them. To call Him נמנע הנמנעות is to say that for Him the impossibility of impossibility holds: by definition, nothing is impossible. And נושא הפכים — bearing opposites — is the operative form of this here. Note what it is not: not a middle term, not a synthesis, not a weakening of either pole so they can coexist. Finite stays finite and infinite stays infinite, and both hold. That is why the two halves of the difficulty in §3 can both be answered at full strength, and why §6 will insist that the man’s remaining limited after an unlimited ascent is itself an achievement rather than a limitation on the achievement.

SUMMARY

הליכה means discontinuous ascent — arriving somewhere that bears no relation to where one began. Angels, whose ascents are ordered and proportionate, are עומדים; souls in bodies, through mitzvos, are מהלכים. But a creature is limited, so (a) how can limited service produce unlimited ascent, and (b) how can he survive it as a creature? Both hold, through הנמנעות.

Earned, Not Granted

BEFORE WE READ

A new difficulty, and it is the deepest in the sichah. If the unlimited ascent happens because *He* can join opposites, then it is a gift — and the whole point of creation was that a person's attainments be his own.

But one must still understand: the supernal intent (די כוונה) (העליונה) is that all the elevations to which a person comes should come specifically through his service. *The word דוקא is the whole objection. Not “preferably” through his service — specifically, and to the exclusion of the alternative — If one were to give the person all these influences from Above without his service, it is not the ultimate good (תכלית הטוב), for it is then “bread of shame.” And the Yiddish glosses the Aramaic bluntly for the listener: “בושה-ברויט” — shame-bread. Note the strength of the claim: not that unearned good is less good, but that it fails to be תכלית הטוב at all — the purpose of the giving is defeated by the manner of it.*

One must therefore say that the elevation of “and you shall walk” too — an unlimited walking — comes specifically through his service. *The requirement stated. And now the collision — But according to the above it seems, seemingly, that through his limited service he can arrive only at limited ascents, and to that unlimited “walking” he comes only because the One Above elevates him to it. Exactly. §3 solved the paradox by locating the joining power in Him — which is the only place it could be — and in doing so appears to have made the crowning achievement of a person's life the one thing he did not accomplish.*

And although this elevation of “walking” does not mean that the person, by his service, ascends within limitation, and then, after he reaches as far as he can, he is lifted higher from Above, without limit — the sichah is careful to block the crudest reading first. This is not a two-stage arrangement in which a man climbs to his ceiling and is then carried the rest of the way; that would divide the ascent into a human part and a divine part — but rather the One Above, Who is “the One Who makes possible the impossible,” places a power (א כח) into the service of the person, so that the service should elevate him without limit; which is a much better picture: one continuous ascent, performed by the man, whose reach exceeds what a man's reach could be. And yet even this does not settle the objection — nevertheless, since the very fact that the service accomplishes the “walking” does not itself come from the person's service, it is not, seemingly, in

ד. מען דארף נאך אבער פארשטיין: די כוונה העליונה איז דאך, אז אלע עלויים צו וועלכע א מענטש קומט צו, זאלן זיין דורך זיין עבודה דוקא. אויב מען זאל דעם מענטשן געבן די אלע השפעות מלמעלה, אן זיין עבודה, איז עס ניט תכלית הטוב, ווארום ס'איז דאן "נהמא דכיסופא" ("בושה-ברויט")¹.

מוז מען זאגן, אז אויך דער עליון פון "והלכת", הילוך בלי גבול, קומט דוקא דורך זיין עבודה. לפי הנ"ל אבער קומט אויס, לכאורה, אז דורך זיין באגרענעצטער עבודה קען ער נאר צוקומען צו מוגבל'דיקע עליות, און צו דעם "הילוך" בלי גבול קומט ער צו נאר ווייל דער אויבערשטער איז אים מעלה צו דעם.

און כאטש אז אט"ד עליה פון "הילוך" מיינט ניט אז דער מענטש בעבודתו איז עולה בהגבלה, און נאך דעם ווי ער דערגרייכט וויפל ער קען, הויבט מען אים אויף מלמעלה העכער, בלי גבול – נאר דער אויבערשטער וואס ער איז "נמנע הנמנעות" גיט אריין א כח אין עבודת האדם אז די עבודה זאל אים מעלה זיין בלי גבול; פונדעסטוועגן, וויבאלד אז דאס גופא וואס די עבודה טוט אויף דעם "הילוך", קומט עס דאך ניט מצד עבודת האדם, איז עס דאך, לכאורה, ניט ווי די כוונה עליונה, אז אלע עליות זאלן קומען דורך עבודה דוקא².

accordance with the supernal intent that all elevations should come specifically through service. *Follow the regress precisely, because it is the sharpest point in the sichah. Grant that the man's own service does the elevating. Ask then: what made his service capable of that? A power placed into it from Above. So the capacity is a gift even if the act is his — and נהמא דכיטופא has simply moved up one level rather than being answered.*

One must therefore say that this itself — that the service accomplishes the “walking” in the person — is bound up with the service of the person. *The conclusion is stated as a requirement before it is explained, which is the sichah's method: the demand is fixed by the העליונה, and §5 must now find something in a person's own avodah that is itself unlimited — otherwise the regress does not stop.*

מזו מען ואגן אז אויך דאס גופא וואס די עבודה טוט אויך
דעם הילוך אין דעם מענטשן, איז עס פארבונדן מיט
עבודת האדם.

DEEP DIVE

נהמא דכיטופא — bread of shame, and why it is a constraint on creation itself

The phrase comes from the Talmud Yerushalmi's idiom and is developed at length in Chassidus. Its plain sense is the discomfort of eating at another's table — bread one did not earn tastes of shame. What makes it more than a moral observation is the use the sources put it to: it functions as an explanation of why there is a world at all. If the purpose of creation is to give good, and the highest good is closeness to Him, why not simply give it? Because a good handed over is received by a recipient who remains external to it. The gift arrives; the person does not become anything. Hence toil, hence mitzvos, hence a world in which the good must be produced by the one who will receive it. Note the exact form of the claim in the sichah, because it is stronger than the usual paraphrase: unearned good is **not תכלית הטוב**. Not “is good but incomplete.” The manner of receiving is internal to what is received, so a good given in the wrong manner is a different and lesser good. This is why §4 is not a pious hesitation that could be waived. It is a structural constraint with the same standing as the conclusion of §3, and the two now contradict: §3 says the unlimited ascent must come from a power that is not the creature's, and §4 says everything a creature attains must come from the creature's own work. Both are non-negotiable. §5 must satisfy both.

DEEP DIVE

אתערותא דלתתא and the tzimtzum — what the sichah's long footnote is actually saying

The footnote at this point (note יג) is the longest in the sichah and it is where the technical difficulty is really located. It rewards unpacking, because without it §4 can look like an unnecessary scruple. Begin with the general principle: אתערותא דלתתא evokes אתערותא דלעילא — an arousal from below draws a response from Above. One might think this rests on some intrinsic worth in the creature's service. It does not, and the footnote says so flatly: אין ערוך בין נברא לבורא, there is no comparison between a created being and its Creator. The principle holds only because He willed that it should. But — and this is the pivot — once He willed that the creatures' service should count, then by force of His will it genuinely does count. The footnote grounds this in Derech Mitzvosecha: because He willed the tzimtzum, the tzimtzum *has* a reality, and it is therefore fitting that the ray of light which exists after the tzimtzum should be affected by the service of the Jewish people. His will makes the creature's work a real factor. Now the difficulty. That reasoning covers the light *after* the tzimtzum. The unlimited ascent of הליכה relates, in general terms, to the light that *precedes* the tzimtzum — and one cannot say that His will made creatures significant vis-à-vis *that*, since the operation of His will (as the analogy of the father and son in that source shows) was to give reality to the tzimtzum and to what lies below it. Above the tzimtzum, the creature's service does not occupy any place at all. So the regress of §4 is precise and not rhetorical. He willed that their service draw down even the light preceding the tzimtzum — but that willing is not a *result* of their service. The unlimited element remains, so far, a

gift. This is the exact hole that §5 must fill, and it explains why the answer must be something in a person that is *itself* above the tzimtzum — which is what חלק אלוהי ממעל ממש will turn out to be.

SUMMARY

The כוונה העליונה requires that every elevation come דוקא through a person's own service, since unearned good is נהמא דכיסופא. But the capacity of limited service to produce unlimited ascent is a power placed into it from Above — so the achievement still is not his. The regress must be stopped inside the person.

Uncovering Our G-dly Core

BEFORE WE READ

The answer. What in a person is itself unlimited? Not his mind, not his feeling, not his effort — the essence of his soul, which is חלק חלקה ממעל ממש. And the word that points to it has been sitting in the derivation since §1.

The explanation of this: In order that the mitzvos should be “His ways,” of the Holy One, blessed be He — that they should have within them an unlimited power — it is through this: that with the person who serves, his fulfilment of the mitzvos is bound up with the essence of his soul (עצם הנשמה), which is “an actual part of G-d from above” — unlimited. *There is the answer to §4, and it is worth seeing how exactly it closes the regress. The unlimited power does not have to be placed into the person’s service from outside, because the person’s service already issues from something unlimited. The עצם הנשמה is not a creature’s faculty; the Tanya’s ממש — actual — is doing that work. So when his service is bound up with it, the service is his and unlimited at once, and nothing has been given as bread of shame.*

And through this — that the person who serves draws down the essence of his soul into the particular mitzvah, of “gracious” and so on — and here the sichah cashes in the word it left lying in §1 — (which is the meaning of “so too you be gracious; you be merciful; you be pious” — that you yourself (the essence of the soul) should be gracious, merciful and pious). Read the derivation again with this in hand. It could have said אף אתה חסד עשה חסד, so too do kindness. It says אף אתה חסד חסד — you be. The אתה is not a form of address; it is the object of the command — That means (in terms of service) that he fulfils the mitzvos out of simple faith and self-sacrifice (אמונה פשוטה and שלמעלה) which are above reason and knowledge (מסירת נפש) and which come from the essence of the soul. This is the practical translation, and it is the only place the sichah says what the avodah concretely consists of. Faith and self-sacrifice are named not as higher sentiments but as the two faculties that do not originate in the person’s measurable powers — they are what עצם הנשמה looks like when it operates — Through this he also accomplishes that in these matters of his — gracious, merciful and pious — the One Above Himself is drawn down: “the Holy One, blessed be He, is called gracious; the Holy One, blessed be He, is called merciful; the Holy One, blessed be He, is called pious.” And notice that the derivation has now been read in both directions. In §1 it ran downward — He is called gracious, therefore you be gracious. Here it runs upward: because you — the

ה. דעם ביאור אין דעם: בכדי אז די מצוות זאלן זיין "דרכיו" של הקדוש ברוך הוא, אז זיי זאלן אין זיך האבן א כח בלתי מוגבל, איז עס דורך דעם וואס ביי דעם אדם העובד איז זיין קיום המצוות פארבונדן מיט זיין עצם הנשמה, וואס זי איז א "חלק חלקה ממעל ממש" — בלי גבול.

און דורך דעם וואס דער אדם העובד איז ממשיך זיין עצם הנשמה אין דער מצוה פרטית, פון חסד כו' (וואס דאס מיינט "אף אתה חסד חסד; אתה חסד רחום; אתה חסד חסיד", אז דו אליין (דער עצם הנפש) זאלסט זיין א חסד רחום און חסיד). דאס הייסט (בעבודה) אז ער איז מקיים די מצוות מצד אמונה פשוטה און מסירת נפש (שלמעלה מטעם ודעת) וואס קומט פון עצם הנשמה, דורך דעם טוט ער אויך אויף, אז אין די זיינע ענינים פון חסד רחום וחסיד, ווערט נמשך דער אויבערשטער אליין — "הקדוש ברוך הוא נקרא חסד, הקדוש ברוך הוא נקרא רחום, הקדוש ברוך הוא נקרא חסיד". קומט דאך אויס, אז אויך דער ניט באגרענעצטער הילוך אין קיום המצוות, טוט זיך אויף דורך (אופן) עבודת האדם.^{טו}

essence — *are gracious*, He is drawn into your graciousness and it is He who is called by it — **It emerges, then, that the unlimited walking in the fulfilment of the mitzvos too is accomplished through (the manner of) the person's own service.**

THE REGRESS OF §4, AND WHERE IT STOPS

STEP	THE CLAIM	IS IT HIS?
1	He performs the mitzvos.	Yes.
2	The mitzvos elevate him without limit.	Yes — the service does the elevating.
3	But what made limited service capable of that? A חלק placed into it from Above.	No — and so נהמא דכיטופא returns one level up.
4	Therefore the unlimited element must already be <i>in him</i> : עצם הנשמה חלק אלוהי, עצם הנשמה ממעל ממש.	Yes — not a faculty he was issued, but what he is. The regress stops.

DEEP DIVE

עצם הנשמה — and why it is not simply “the soul”

Chassidus distinguishes sharply between the soul's **powers** — כוחות, its intellect and emotions, which are measurable, trainable, and differ from person to person — and the soul's **essence**, עצם הנשמה, which is not a faculty at all and admits of no more or less. The Tanya's phrase for it is the one the sichah quotes: חלק אלוהי ממעל ממש — and the word ממש, which the Tanya adds to the verse in Iyov, is the entire point. Not a spark, not a reflection, not something derived from Him: an actual part, from above. Two things follow, and the sichah needs both. First, it is **unlimited**, and unlimited in the strict sense required by §3 — not vast but incommensurable, standing above the tzimtzum, which is exactly the region that note י identified as the place a creature's service cannot reach. Second, it is **his**. This is what stops the regress of §4 rather than deferring it. Had the answer been that G-d supplies an unlimited power to the person, the objection would stand: the power was given. But the עצם הנשמה is not given to the person as an endowment alongside him; it is what he is. When it acts, he acts. One guardrail. “Unlimited” here is not a claim about the person's abilities and gives no licence to disregard the limits of the faculties. The עצם is unlimited; the כוחות remain what they are. The whole of §6 and §7 is about the labour of getting the one to operate through the other — which is not automatic, and which §7 will admit not everyone manages unaided.

DEEP DIVE

אמונה פשוטה and מסירת נפש — the two faculties that are not faculties

The sichah names exactly two things as the practical form of serving from the עצם הנשמה, and the pairing is not decorative. **אמונה פשוטה** — simple faith. “Simple” translates פשוטה, which in this vocabulary means *uncompounded* rather than unsophisticated: a faith with no parts, not assembled out of premises, and therefore not weakened when a premise is challenged. It is not the conclusion of an argument, which is why it does not depend on the strength of the arguer. **מסירת נפש** — self-sacrifice, literally handing over the soul. Its diagnostic property is that it cannot be reached by reasoning, because no calculation concludes in the surrender of the calculator. The phrase the sichah attaches to both is the key: שלמעלה מטעם ודעת, above reason and knowledge. טעם ודעת are the measurable powers — they can be more or less, better or worse trained, and they operate within limits. Anything reached through them is proportionate to them, which by §3's criterion makes it עמידה and not הליכה. Faith and self-sacrifice are therefore not listed as the most intense forms of avodah, but as the forms that do not originate in the faculties at all — the essence showing through. Which is also why they are available to everyone equally: a person's עצם הנשמה is not more or less than another's, however unequal their כוחות. The אף אתה חנון is addressed to that.

DEEP DIVE

Reading אף אתה היה חנון in both directions

The same six words carry the sichah's question in §1 and its answer in §5, and the movement between the two readings is worth tracing because it is the sichah's finest structural touch. **Downward (§1).** He is called gracious — therefore you be gracious. The divine attribute is the model; the person is the imitator. Read this way the mitzvah is imitation, and imitation of conduct at that, which is why it looked like a general charge with nothing of its own. **Upward (§5).** אתה — *you*, and specifically you yourself, the עצם הנפש — be gracious. Now the emphasis falls on the subject rather than the predicate: what is commanded is not that gracious acts be produced but that the essence of the person be what is gracious in them. And when it is, the sichah says, the One Above Himself is drawn into those very attributes of his, and it is He who is נקרא חנון in them. Notice the reversal that produces. In the downward reading, His graciousness is the original and the person's is the copy. In the upward reading, the person's graciousness — done from the essence of his soul, out of faith and self-sacrifice — becomes the place in which His graciousness is revealed. The imitation has become a dwelling. This is also why the sichah does not need to add a further step to answer §4. The unlimited element is not brought in from outside to complete the person's work; it is disclosed within it. The regress stops because there was never a gap.

SUMMARY

What in a person is unlimited is the עצם הנשמה, חלק אלוהי ממעל ממש. When he draws it into the particular mitzvah — serving out of אמונה פשוטה and מסירת נפש, above reason — the service is both his own and unlimited. And then He Himself is drawn into those very attributes: this is the אתה of חנון.

Our True Life-Force

BEFORE WE READ

§5 answered the first half of the paradox: how limited service produces unlimited ascent. §6 answers the second, which is easier to overlook — that the person *remains a limited creature* afterwards must also be his own achievement. The answer is the body.

The power of “the One Who makes possible the impossible,” which is present in “and you shall walk in His ways,” expresses itself, as said earlier, in two manners: (a) that the limited service of the person should be able to elevate him without limit. (b) that after all the unlimited ascents, the person should remain in a limited existence. *The two halves of §3 restated, and restated because only one of them has been dealt with.*

And since all matters and elevations must come through the service of the person, one must say that the elevation of his remaining in a limited existence also comes through his service: *and here is the move that is easy to read past. The sichah calls the man's remaining limited an עילוי — an elevation — not a residue or a concession. Surviving an unlimited ascent as oneself is an accomplishment of the same order as the ascent, and by §4's rule it too cannot be a gift. So it too needs an answer in the person's own avodah.*

The true life-force of a Jew is from his G-dly soul (נפש האלקית) — it is only that the life-force passes through the animal soul. *The order matters: the animal soul is the conduit, not the source — Although the body is physical, a limited thing, and derives from קליפת נוגה, while the soul is “an actual part of G-d from above” — nevertheless it is not only that the body is not nullified by the soul, but on the contrary, she enlivens it. Its life-force is from the G-dly soul. Sit with the logic of that sentence, because it is the answer to (b) in miniature. Put an unlimited thing and a limited thing together and one expects the limited to be annulled — that was the worry of §3(b), that a man reaching בלי גבול must cease to be a creature. But the soul-body relation is precisely a standing instance of the opposite: the infinite one does not cancel the finite one, it באלעבט אים — enlivens it. The paradox of §3(b) is not an exotic possibility. Every living Jew is one.*

But this life-force, which the body lives from the soul, is — in concealment (of itself). And the person, through his service, must bring it out into revelation, so that it should be felt in him how his bodily limbs live from the G-dly soul: *the §2 distinction again, now applied to the body, and again the work is*

ו. דער כח פון נמנע הנמנעות, וואס איז דא אין "והלכת בדרכיו", דריקט זיך אויס, ווי געזאגט פריער, אין צוויי אופנים: (א) אז די עבודה המוגבלת פון דעם אדם זאל אים קענען מעלה זיין בלי גבול. (ב) אז נאך אלע עליות פון בלי גבול, זאל דער אדם פארבלייבן אין א מציאות מוגבלת.

און וויבאלד, אז אלע ענינים און עילויים דארפן קומען דורך עבודת האדם, מוז מען זאגן אז אויך דער עילוי וואס ער פארבלייבט אין א מציאות מוגבלת, קומט דורך זיין עבודה:

דער אמת'ער חיות פון א אידן איז פון זיין נפש האלקית^ט (ס'איז בלויז וואס דער חיות גייט דורכן נפש הבהמית), הגם אז דער גוף איז א גשמי, א מוגבל, און נעמט זיך פון קליפת נוגה, און די נשמה איז "חלק אלקה ממעל ממש" — דאך איז ניט נאר וואס דער גוף ווערט ניט נתבטל דורך דער נשמה, נאר אדרבה, זי באלעבט אים. זיין חיות איז פון נפש האלקית.

אבער אט'דער חיות, וואס דער גוף לעבט פון דער נשמה, איז — בהעלם (מצד עצמו). און דער אדם דורך זיין עבודה דארף עס ארויסברענגען בגילוי, אז עס זאל

unconcealing rather than producing — just as the body, which lives in revelation from the vitalizing soul (נפש החיונית), as soon as the soul wants to do something, the bodily limbs carry it out as a matter of course, “immediately and at once, without any command or instruction to them and without any delay whatsoever” — so it must be with regard to the G-dly soul; and note what the analogy establishes. The standard is not obedience but immediacy. A hand does not receive an instruction and comply; it is not a second party at all — when a Jew removes the things that screen over the soul, and he feels that his life-force is from the G-dly soul, his limbs do the will of the G-dly soul as a matter of course. As the Yerushalmi brings: “כרע מגרמיה” — he bowed of himself (and the Yiddish glosses it: when it comes to “מודים,” the head bows of its own accord). A small and very concrete image for the whole of §6: not a man deciding to bow, and not a man forcing himself to bow, but a head that goes down because of what the man is.

And through this — that a Jew accomplishes, through his service, the revelation of the bond of soul and body, that his limited body lives from the G-dly soul — he draws down the power of the Essence (דעם כח העצמות), so that all those highest elevations, in a manner of “walking,” should be able to be in his physical body, and he should be a vessel (א כלי) for these elevations. And there is the answer to (b), earned rather than granted. He does not merely survive the ascent as a limited being; by revealing in his own limited body that it lives from an unlimited soul, he makes that body a vessel able to hold what exceeds it. The body is not what the ascent has to work around. It is what makes the ascent an ascent of a person.

זיך אין אים דערהערן, ווי זיינע אברי הגוף לעבן פון נפש האלקית: פונקט ווי דער גוף, וואס לעבט בגילוי פון נפש החיונית, איז באלד ווי דער נפש וויל עפעס טאן, פאלגן עס אויס אברי הגוף בדרך ממילא "תיכף ומיד בלי שום ציווי ואמירה להן ובלי שום שהיה כלל", אזוי דארף עס זיין בנוגע דעם נפש האלקית; ווען א איד נעמט אראפ די זאכן וואס פארשטעלן אויף דער נשמה און ער דערהערט אז זיין חיות איז פון נפש האלקית, טוען זיינע אברים בדרך ממילא די רצונות פון נפש האלקית. ווי דער ירושלמי¹¹ ברענגט: "כרע מגרמיה" (ווען עס קומט צו "מודים", איז די קאפ כורע פון זיך אליין).

און דורך דעם וואס א איד פועל'ט דורך זיין עבודה בגילוי דעם חיבור פון נשמה און גוף, אז זיין גוף מוגבל לעבט פון נפש האלקית, איז ער ממשיך דעם כח העצמות, אז די אלע העכסטע עליות אין אן אופן פון "הילוך" זאלן קענען זיין בגופו הגשמי, און ער זאל זיין א כלי צו אטידי עליות.

DEEP DIVE

קליפת נוגה — נפש האלקית, נפש הבהמית, נפש החיונית

Four terms cross in §6 and it is worth having them apart. The **נפש האלקית**, the G-dly soul, is the **משמל ממש** of §5 — the true source of a Jew's vitality. The **נפש החיונית** or **נפש הבהמית** — the animal or vitalizing soul — is the soul that animates the body as a living organism: appetite, instinct, the immediate movement of limbs. The sichah uses both names for it, **הבהמית** where its origin is at issue and **החיונית** where its function is. **קליפת נוגה** — literally the “glowing shell” — is the region from which the animal soul and the permitted physical world derive. Its defining property is that it conceals G-dliness while remaining capable of being turned: unlike the wholly impure **קליפות**, the sparks it contains can be raised to holiness. That is why the body can become a **כלי** rather than merely being subdued. Now the architecture the sichah builds from these. The life-force runs **נפש האלקית** → **נפש הבהמית** → body. The animal soul is a conduit, not a rival. And the fact worth pausing on is the one the sichah stresses with **אדרבה**: an infinite soul joined to a finite body does not annul the body — it enlivens it. That is not a devotional observation. It is the empirical instance of **הנמנעות** that §3(b) needed. The question was how a man could reach **בלי גבול** and remain a creature. The answer is that he is already, at every moment, a limited body not cancelled by an unlimited soul. The work of §6 is to make that arrangement *manifest* — and a body that manifests it becomes able to contain the ascent.

DEEP DIVE

כרע מגרמיה — the standard is immediacy, not obedience

The Yerushalmi records R. Matanya saying that he credits his own head, because when the prayer reaches מודים it bows of itself — כרע מגרמיה. The sichah takes this small remark as the exact measure of what §6 is asking for, and the choice of proof is worth thinking about. The Tanya's formulation of the bodily case is quoted in full because its terms are extreme: the limbs carry out the soul's will כלל — תיכף ומיד בלי שום ציווי ואמירה להן ובלי שום שהיה כלל — immediately and at once, with no command or instruction to them and with no delay whatever. Three negations, and each one rules out a familiar picture of religious life. *No command*: the limb is not a subordinate receiving orders. There is no second party to persuade. *No instruction*: it does not need to be told how. *No delay*: there is no interval in which something might intervene. A person struggling to bring his body into line with his G-dly soul is, on this analysis, describing a relationship in which the body is still a separate party — which is precisely what בהעלם means here. The revealed state is not one of stronger compliance but of no compliance at all, because there is nothing left to comply. And note the footnote's extension, which the sichah's own apparatus supplies: this holds not only for the body but for חלקו בעולם, a person's portion in the world — with the story of R. Hillel Paritcher's horses, which would follow his wishes of themselves. The circle of what becomes a כלי extends outward from the limbs to the material a person's life is made of. Which is also why the same footnote insists that the matters a person is occupied with matter very much: in every single thing he does, he introduces G-dly powers into it.

SUMMARY

That a person remains limited after an unlimited ascent is itself an עילוי, so it too must be earned. It is earned in the body: a Jew's life-force is from the האלקית נפש, which does not annul the body but enlivens it. Revealing that bond — until the limbs act בדרך מגרמיה — ממילא, כרע מגרמיה — draws down העצמות כח and makes the physical body a כלי for the highest ascents.

Making It Actually Happen

BEFORE WE READ

The sichah closes on the practical problem it has been building toward, and it does not pretend otherwise: not everyone can produce that ביטול in himself. Hence the command that *precedes* והלכת in the Rambam's ordering — ובו תדבק.

Not everyone, however, can accomplish in himself that nullification (דעם ביטול) whereby the limbs of his body should do the will of the G-dly soul of themselves — upon this comes the preceding command — *and the parenthesis that follows is a methodological statement worth registering* — (and the order of the commands too is precise, and is relevant to the service of Havayah) — *that is: the Rambam's sequence in the Sefer HaMitzvos is not a filing convention. Mitzvah 6 stands before mitzvah 8 because in avodah the one is the precondition of the other* — “and to Him shall you cling,” and as the Rambam brings from the Sifri, that, this means “cling to the sages and to their students” — to attach oneself to the “sages,” those who stand in a nullification (מרכבה) in a manner of a chariot (מרכבה). *The sages are identified not by learning but by a property: they are already in the state §6 described — no independent will of their own, hence a מרכבה, a chariot, which goes where its rider directs and nowhere else.*

And since his nurture is from the sages — they are his “head” — through the attachment to them he too becomes “actually joined to the Divine Presence” (נדבק בשכינה ממש), and his body becomes a vessel for the light of the soul, as above. *The mechanism is the Tanya's: a generation's souls draw from the tzaddik as a body's limbs draw from its head, so attachment to him is not admiration but connection along an existing line. And note the חלק אלוהי again — the same word the Tanya added to ממעל. Not as though joined. Joined.*

But the command “and to Him shall you cling” is a general matter (אן ענין כללי): he should attach himself to the One Above through the attachment to the sages and their students; through which his body becomes, in general, a vessel for G-dliness, and he becomes fit (ראוי) for the “and you shall walk,” without limit, to be possible with him. *The word ראוי is doing careful work. ובו תדבק makes a person capable of הליכה — it does not perform it. It establishes the vessel and leaves the content still to be supplied.*

The actual walking, however, must come through the deed of the mitzvos, for “the deed is what is essential”; the

ז. ניט יעדער איינער קען דאך אבער פועל'ן ביי זיך דעם ביטול אז אברי גופו זאלן טאן פון זיך אליין די רצונות פון נפש האלקית – אויף דעם קומט דער פריערדיקער ציווי (וואס אויך דער סדר הציוויים איז בדיוק און איז נוגע צו עבודת השם יתברך) – “ובו תדבק”, און ווי דער רמב"ם ברענגט^ט פון ספרי, אז דאס מיינט “הדבק בחכמים ובתלמידיהם”, באהעפטן זיך מיט די “חכמים”, די וואס שטייען אין א ביטול (חכמה, כח מה, ביטול^כ) אין אן אופן פון מרכבה.

און וויבאלד אז זיין יניקה איז פון די חכמים, זיי זיינען זיין “קאפ”^{כא}, איז דורך דער דביקות אין זיי, ווערט ער אויך “נדבק בשכינה ממש”^{כב}, און זיין גוף ווערט א כלי צום אור הנשמה, כנ”ל^{ככ}.

דער ציווי “ובו תדבק” איז אבער אן ענין כללי: ער זאל זיך באהעפטן מיטן אויבערשטן דורך דער דביקות בחכמים ובתלמידיהם; וואס דורך דעם ווערט זיין גוף בכלל א כלי צו אלקות און ער ווערט ראוי אז ביי אים זאל קענען זיין דער “והלכת”, בלי גבול.

performance of the mitzvah in actual deed is specifically what reaches and draws down the Essence (עצמות). *This is the sichah's hard landing, and it is placed here deliberately. Everything preceding — the essence of the soul, faith, self-sacrifice, bittul, attachment to the sages — has been interior. And the sentence that follows all of it says that none of it reaches the Essence; only עשיית המצוה בפועל דוקא does — And in order that this drawing down should be in revelation, upon this comes the command “and you shall walk in His ways”: that the fulfilment of the mitzvos should be in a manner of “in His ways” — he should fulfil them on account of their being the ways of the Holy One, blessed be He, “to become like Him, may He be exalted” — the whole architecture now visible in one line: makes the vessel, the deed draws down the Essence, and בדרכיו makes the drawing-down revealed — and then, after the preparation of “and to Him shall you cling,” they effect the “and you shall walk” — that there comes about “the righteous have no rest ... as it is said, they shall go from strength to strength,” until one will arrive at a higher time and level — “to the day that is entirely Shabbos and rest for life everlasting.” And notice the last turn, which is not decoration. The sichah has spent seven sections arguing that the point of avodah is never to stand still — and it closes on rest. Not the rest of having stopped, but a מנוחה that is itself the higher level: the day that is entirely Shabbos.*

דער הילוך בפועל אבער מוז קומען דורך מעשה המצוות, ווארום "המעשה הוא העיקר", עשיית המצוה בפועל דוקא דערלאנגט און איז ממשיך עצמות. און בכדי אז די המשכה זאל זיין בגילוי, קומט אויף דעם דער ציווי "והלכת בדרכיו", אז דער קיום המצוות זאל זיין אין אן אופן פון "בדרכיו", ער זאל זיי מקיים זיין צוליב דעם וואס זיי זיינען דרכיו של הקדוש ברוך הוא, "להדמות בו יתעלה", און דאן, נאך דער הקדמה פון "ובו תדבק", פועל'ן זיי דעם "והלכת", אז עס ווערט דער "צדיקים אין להם מנוחה כו', שנאמר ילכו מחיל אל חיל" כו', ביז מען וועט צוקומען צו א העכערן זמן ובחינה – "ליום שכולו שבת ומנוחה לחיי העולמים".

THE THREE STAGES, AND WHAT EACH ONE DOES

STAGE	WHAT IT ACCOMPLISHES	WHAT IT DOES NOT DO
ובו תדבק MITZVAH 6	Clinging to the sages, who stand in ביטול as a מרכבה. The body becomes בכלל a vessel; the person becomes ראוי — fit.	It does not perform the walking. It supplies capacity, not content.
מעשה המצוות	The deed — עשיית המעשה הוא העיקר reaches and draws down המצוה בפועל דוקא עצמות.	Nothing interior substitutes for it — not faith, not bittul, not attachment.
בדרכיו MITZVAH 8	The reason under which the deed is done — because it is one of His ways, להדמות בו בגילוי. Makes the drawing-down יתעלה.	It adds no new act — which is why it looked uncountable in §1.

DEEP DIVE

מרכבה = כח מה, and the sage as כח מה

The identification is a wordplay with real content. חכמה is read as כח מה — the power of “what?” — taking מה in the sense it has in Moshe and Aharon’s מה ונחנו, “and what are we?” So the highest faculty of the soul is named for self-effacement rather than for brilliance, and that is the point: חכמה is the faculty at which the self has not yet asserted itself, which is why it is where ביטול lives. A מרכבה — chariot — is the classical figure for that state, and the figure is chosen for a specific property. A chariot has no destination of

its own. It is not obedient, because obedience implies a will that submits; it simply has no independent will to submit. The Patriarchs are called a מרכבה in this sense. This is exactly the state §6 described from the inside — limbs doing the soul's will ממילא, of themselves — and §7 opens by admitting plainly that not everyone can produce it: נִיט יַעֲדֵעַר אִי־נֶעַר קֶען. That admission is the sichah's most practical sentence, and it is what makes וְבו תִּדְבֵּק necessary rather than merely commendable. If the בִּיטוּל cannot be manufactured, it must be connected to where it already exists. Hence the mechanism the Tanya supplies and the sichah leans on: the souls of a generation draw their nurture from the sages as a body's limbs draw from its head. The relation is not one of influence but of anatomy — which is why דְּבִיקוּת in them counts as being ממש בשכינה, actually joined to the Divine Presence. One does not borrow the sage's בִּיטוּל; one is joined to the line on which it sits.

DEEP DIVE

המעשה הוא העיקר — why the interior chapter ends on the exterior act

This is the sentence that keeps the sichah from becoming a discourse on inwardness, and its placement is exact: it comes after everything interior has been established, not instead of it. Assemble the chain the sichah has built and the division of labour is clean. וְבו תִּדְבֵּק — attachment to the sages — makes the body בכלל a vessel for G-dliness, and makes the person ראוי, fit, for הליכה. It is preparation and it is general; it produces capacity. מעשה המצוות — the deed — is what ממשיך עצמות, draws down the Essence. עשיית המצוה בפועל דוקא — in actual deed, specifically. Nothing interior substitutes. בדרכיו — the reason under which the deed is done — makes the drawing-down בגילוי rather than בהעלם. Notice that this restores the exact answer of §2 at the end of the argument, on the far side of the whole detour through הנשמחה and עצם הנמנעות. The mitzvah is still a manner and not an act. What has changed is that we now know what makes the manner possible and what the manner reveals. There is a guardrail in this too, and it cuts in the direction people usually need. A person might conclude from §§5–6 that what matters is the essence of his soul, faith, self-sacrifice, bittul — and that the performance is the outer shell of these. §7 forbids that reading in one line. The Essence is drawn down by the deed. The interior work of the preceding sections is what makes the deed reach as far as it does; it is not an alternative to doing it.

DEEP DIVE

“The righteous have no rest” — and a day that is entirely Shabbos

The closing sequence contains a tension the sichah does not smooth over, and the tension is the point. The first phrase is from the end of Berachos: צדיקים אין להם מנוחה, the righteous have no rest, שְׁנֵאמַר יֵלְכוּ מִחֵיל אֶל חֵיל — they shall go from strength to strength. This is הליכה as a permanent condition: not a single crossing but an unending series of them, each unrelated to the last, which is what §3 defined מהלכים to mean. Restlessness here is not deficiency; it is the signature of a creature that is no longer measurable against where it began. And then the sichah ends on העולמים לחיי ומנוחה שבת שכולו — the day that is entirely Shabbos and rest for life everlasting, the closing line of Tractate Tamid. Rest, immediately after “no rest.” The resolution is in the sichah's own terms. The מנוחה of that day is not the cessation of הליכה but a higher בחינה — the sichah says זמן ובחינה, a higher time and level — which is to say the last and greatest of the crossings, not an exit from crossing. And this is consistent with the עומדים/מהלכים analysis: a rest that stood in proportion to the labour before it would be ordinary rest, measurable against its opposite. A מנוחה that is לחיי העולמים is not on the same scale as the restlessness it follows. Which is why the sichah can close a seven-section argument against standing still with the word מנוחה and contradict nothing.

SUMMARY

Not everyone can produce that בִּיטוּל unaided, so וְבו תִּדְבֵּק — clinging to the sages, who stand in בִּיטוּל as a מרכבה — comes first, making the body a vessel and the person ראוי for הליכה. But the walking itself comes only through מעשה המצוות, since המעשה הוא העיקר and the deed alone draws down עצמות; and בדרכיו makes that drawing-down revealed — until יֵלְכוּ מִחֵיל אֶל חֵיל, and the day that is entirely Shabbos.

Glossary

שיחה Sichah	A talk. Distinct in genre from a maamar: it argues in the open, in Yiddish, from halachic and midrashic sources toward a practical conclusion. This one is from Yud Shvat 5721.
מנין המצוות Minyan HaMitzvos	The reckoning of the 613. Governed by the Rambam's fourteen שרשים — admission criteria set out before anything is counted.
ציווי כולל Tzivui Kolel	An all-inclusive charge, e.g. “you shall be holy.” Excluded from the count because it names no particular act — not because it is unimportant.
חידוש Chiddush	The novel element — what a source adds that is not already available elsewhere. Finding it is the sichah's task.
הליכה Halichah	Walking, proceeding. Here: discontinuous ascent — arriving somewhere that bears no proportion to where one began.
עומדים / מהלכים Omdim / Mehalchim	Those who stand / those who proceed. Angels and pre-descent souls are עומדים because their ascents are בסדר והדרגה; souls in bodies, through mitzvos, are מהלכים.
בסדר והדרגה B'seder v'hadragah	In order and gradation — each stage proportionate (בערך) to the last, which is why such an ascent is limited however high it goes.
בהעלם / בגילוי B'heilem / B'gilui	In concealment / in revelation. The same reality, hidden or manifest. The distinction the whole sichah runs on.
מעמד ומצב Maamad u'matzav	A person's state and standing — where he actually is, spiritually, at a given moment.
שלא לשמה Shelo lishmah	Not for its own sake. The lowest manner of performance — which the sichah insists still acts on the doer.
זיכוכ Zikuch	Refinement. What every mitzvah effects in the one who performs it, in any manner.
נמנע הנמנעו Nimna hanimnaos	The impossibility of impossibility. Not that He overrides logic, but that the category of impossibility does not apply to Him — logical constraint is itself part of creation.
נושא הפכים Nosei hafachim	Bearing opposites. Both poles at full strength — not a synthesis, not a middle term.
גבול / בלי גבול Gvul / bli gvul	Limitation / limitlessness. The sichah's איבערגאנג — crossing-over — is between these two orders, not up a scale within one.
כוונה העליונה Kavanah ha'elyonah	The supernal intent — that every elevation a person attains come דווקא through his own service.
נהמא דכיסופא Nahama d'kisufa	Bread of shame. Unearned good is not תכלית הטוב at all — the manner of receiving is internal to what is received.
אתערותא דלתתא Isarusa dil'tata	Arousal from below. Evokes אתערותא דלעילא — not from any intrinsic worth in the creature's service, but because He willed that it should count.
עצם הנשמה Etzem haneshamah	The essence of the soul — not one of its powers. חלק אלוהה ממעל ממש: an actual part of G-d from above, and therefore unlimited and the person's own at once.
אמונה פשוטה Emunah peshutah	Simple faith — פשוטה in the sense of uncompounded: not assembled from premises, so not weakened when a premise is challenged.
מסירת נפש Mesiras nefesh	Self-sacrifice. Cannot be reached by reasoning, since no calculation concludes in the surrender of the calculator.
שלמעלה מטעם ודעת Shelemaalah mita'am v'daas	Above reason and knowledge — the mark of what issues from the essence rather than from the measurable faculties.

נפש האלקית	Nefesh ha'Elohis	The G-dly soul — the true source of a Jew's life-force.
נפש הבהמית / החיונית	Nefesh habahamis / hachiyunis	The animal or vitalizing soul — the conduit through which the life-force reaches the body, not a rival source.
קליפת נוגה	Kelipas nogah	The “glowing shell” — conceals G-dliness yet can be turned; the sparks it holds can be raised. Hence a body that can become a כלי rather than merely be subdued.
כרע מגרמיה	Kara migarmeih	“He bowed of himself” — the head bowing at מודים of its own accord. The sichah's measure of the revealed state: immediacy, not obedience.
ביטול	Bittul	Self-nullification. Not suppression of will but the absence of a competing one.
חכמה = כח מה	Chochmah / koach mah	The power of “what?” — the highest faculty named for self-effacement rather than for brilliance.
מרכבה	Merkavah	A chariot — having no destination of its own. Not obedient, since obedience implies a will that submits.
המעשה הוא העיקר	HaMaaseh hu ha'ikar	The deed is what is essential. עשיית המצוה בפועל דוקא is what draws down עצמות; nothing interior substitutes for it.
הנחה / עריכה	Hanachah / arichah	A talk as taken down, versus a talk as edited into the form printed in Likkutei Sichos. This sichah appears in the latter form.

The sichah's footnote apparatus

Transcribed as printed. Notes טו, יג and כב are long discussions and are given here abridged, with their argument summarised.

NOTE	AS PRINTED	REFERENCE	STATUS	NOTE
א	ספר המצות מצות עשה ח. הלכות דעות פ"א, ה"ה. והוא מסוטה יד, א. הובא בשולחן ערוך אדמו"ר הזקן הלכות משא ומתן סקנ"ו, ס"ג.	Sefer HaMitzvos, positive mitzvah 8; Hilchos De'os 1:5, from Sotah 14a; quoted in Shulchan Aruch HaRav, Hilchos Masa u'Matan 156:3.	VERIFIED	The Rambam's two statements of the mitzvah — the count and the halachic formulation — plus the Alter Rebbe's codification.
ב	והוא מספרי עקב יא, כב. הובא בהלכות דעות שם ה"ו. שולחן ערוך אדמו"ר הזקן שם. וראה גם כן מכילתא בשלח טו, ב. שבת קלג, ב.	From Sifri, Eikev 11:22; quoted in Hilchos De'os ibid. 1:6, and Shulchan Aruch HaRav ibid. See also Mechilta, Beshalach 15:2; Shabbos 133b.	VERIFIED	The "mah Hu ... af'attab" derivation. Shabbos 133b is the parallel "bevei domeh lo" sugya.
ג	ספר המצות שרש ד.	Sefer HaMitzvos, Shoresch 4.	VERIFIED	Where the Rambam excludes all-encompassing charges from the count of 613.
ד	שם שרש ב.	Ibid., Shoresch 2.	VERIFIED	On subsuming particulars under a general mitzvah.
ה	שמות רבה פ"ל, ט. וכמו שנאמר ושמרו דרך ה' (וירא יח, יט).	Shmos Rabbah 30:9. And as it is said, "and they shall keep the way of Havayah" (Vayeira 18:19).	VERIFIED	The midrash that the Holy One keeps the mitzvos He commanded — the basis for calling all mitzvos "His ways."
ה*	ראה גם בארוכה לקו"ש חל"ד ע' 153.	See also, at length, Likkutei Sichos vol. 34, p. 153ff.	AS CITED	Volume and page as printed.
ו	ראה שרש ד שם שאין למנות "כי לא ציווה לעשות דבר זולת מה שידענו".	See Shoresch 4 there: general charges are not counted "because He did not command us to do anything beyond what we already knew."	VERIFIED	The Rambam's own reason — which is exactly what the sichah will use to force the question.
ז	ספר המצות מצות עשה ה.	Sefer HaMitzvos, positive mitzvah 5.	VERIFIED	The mitzvah of serving G-d, counted despite being general — the parallel case. Cf. Hilchos Tefillah 1:1.
ח	זכריה ג, ז.	Zechariah 3:7.	VERIFIED	"And I shall give you those who proceed among these who stand."
ט	תורה אור וישב ל, א. לקושי תורה שלח לח, ד.	Torah Or, Vayeishev 30a; Likkutei Torah, Shelach 38d.	AS CITED	The Chassidus sources reading "omdim" as angels and pre-descent souls. Folio locators as printed.
י	לקושי תורה שם. ד"ה צאינה וראינה תר"ס. שובה תרס"ו (בהמשך תרס"ו).	Likkutei Torah ibid.; the maamar "Tze'enah U're'enah" 5660; "Shuvah" 5666 (part of Hemshech Samach Vov).	AS CITED	Note that the sichah itself locates the "Shuvah" maamar within Hemshech Samach Vov (5666–5668) — not Hemshech Taarav.
יא	ראה שו"ת הרשב"א סימן תי"ח. דרך אמונה - להצמח צדק - ע' 68.	See Responsa of the Rashba, vol. 1, responsum 418; Derech Emunah of the Tzemach Tzedek, p. 68.	AS CITED	נמנע הנמנעות. The locus classicus for printed.
יב	ראה תנא דבי אליהו רבא פ"כ. לקושי תורה צו ז, ד. ועיין גם כן לקו"ש ח"ג ע' 1009 (סעיף ג).	See Tanna d'vei Eliyahu Rabbah ch. 20; Likkutei Torah, Tzav 7d; see also Likkutei Sichos vol. 3, p. 1009, §3.	AS CITED	On "bread of shame," נהמא דכיסופא.
יג	ואף שגם כללות הענין דבאתערותא דלתתא אתערותא דלעילא (גם בנוגע לעילוי דבחינת עמידה) אינה מצד מעלת האתערותא דלתתא עצמה, כי אין ערוך בין נברא לבורא, ורק מצד שכן עלה ברצונו יתברך ... מכל מקום לאחר שעלה ברצונו יתברך שעבודת הנבראים תתפוס	A long note: even the general principle that an arousal from below evokes an arousal from Above does not rest on any intrinsic worth in the creature's service — there is no comparison between a created being and its Creator — but only on His having so willed it. Once He willed that the creatures' service should count, however, by force of His will it genuinely does.	AS CITED	The sichah's longest note and the technical engine of §4. Cited here in abridged form; see the source for the full text.

	מקום, הרי מצד רצונו יתברך נעשה כן באמת	The note then argues, from Derech Mitzvosecha p. 54, that this reasoning covers the light after the tzimtzum but not the levels above it, which is precisely why the difficulty of §4 is real.		
יד	נשמן בלקו"ש ח"ד ע' 1122.	Referenced in Likkutei Sichos vol. 4, p. 1122.	AS CITED	<i>For חלק אלוהים ממעל ממש — Iyov 31:2 as cited by Tanya ch. 2, which adds the word ממש.</i>
טו	ואף שמוכרחת להיות עבודה ... רצונו יתברך הוא שגם המשכת הרצון תהיה על ידי עבודתם, וכאילו שהם עושים את הרצון ...	A long note: service is indeed necessary, and that the service of “attah hevei chanun” makes the Holy One “chanun” applies only after He willed to contract Himself — yet His will is that even the drawing down of that will should come through their service, as though they themselves produce the will. The note continues on בכל מאדך from Derech Mitzvosecha pp. 123a, 160a.	AS CITED	<i>Cited here in abridged form.</i>
טז	ולכן נוגע מאד הענינים שעוסקים בהם מפני שבכל דבר ודבר שהאדם פועל ועושה מכניס בזה כחות אלקית כו' (ד"ה בשעה שהקדימו תער"ב ע' ד).	Hence the matters a person is occupied with matter very much, since in every single thing he does he introduces G-dly powers into it (maamar “BeShaah SheHikdimu” 5672, p. 4).	AS CITED	<i>Hemshech Taarav (5672–5680) — a separate work from Hemshech Samach Vov cited in note 7.</i>
יז	תניא פכ"ג.	Tanya ch. 23.	VERIFIED	<i>On the limbs obeying the soul's will without command or delay.</i>
יח	ברכות פ"ב, סוף ה"ד. וראה גם חנוך לנער ע' 284 ... לקוטי דיבורים ע' 284 ...	Yerushalmi Berachos 2:4 (end); see also Chanoch LaNaar p. 8; Likkutei Dibburim p. 284 ...	AS CITED	<i>The passage. The note goes on to the story of R. Hillel Paritcher's horses in Sefer HaSichos Kayitz 5700 p. 104 — that the same applies to one's portion in the world, not only to the body.</i>
יט	ספר המצות מצות עשה ו. הובא בשולחן ערוך אדמו"ר הזקן שם ס"ד.	Sefer HaMitzvos, positive mitzvah 6; quoted in Shulchan Aruch HaRav ibid. 156:4.	VERIFIED	<i>The mitzvah of תדבק and the Sifri's הדבק בחכמים ובתלמידיהם.</i>
כ	תניא פי"ח ופל"ה בהגהה.	Tanya ch. 18 and ch. 35, in the gloss.	VERIFIED	<i>— כח מה is read as חכמה Where the power of “what,” i.e. bittul.</i>
כא	תניא פ"ב. וראה גם לקו"ש ח"ד ע' 1050 ואילך.	Tanya ch. 2; see also Likkutei Sichos vol. 4, p. 1050ff.	VERIFIED	<i>The chapter on the sages as the “head” of the generation and on clinging to them as dinging to the Shechinah itself.</i>
כב	ובזה יובן לשון הספרי שם: “ומעלה אני עליך כאלו עלית למרום ונטלת ... אלא אפילו כאלו עשית מלחמה ונטלת ...” — דלכאורה אינו מובן מהו לשון מרום דוקא ... והביאור: היחוד דגבול ובלי גבול הוא מצד כח דנמנע הנמנעות, וזה מרומו ב"מרום" ...	A long note explaining the Sifri's continuation — “I credit you as though you had ascended on high and taken ... not peacefully, but as though you waged war and took” — asking why “on high” rather than “heaven” or “the firmament,” and why the imagery of war and captivity. The answer: the union of finite and infinite comes from the power of nimna hanimnaos, which “on high” alludes to — not a named place but an elevation beyond which there is none. The note develops the “war” as the refining of body, animal soul and one's portion in the world, and the “captives” as the sparks raised to their source.	AS CITED	<i>Cited here in abridged form; the full note also cites Yirmeyahu 17:12, Tanya ch. 36 and the Tzemach Tzedek's Reshimos on Eichah.</i>
כג	סוף ברכות. ועל פי גרסת השל"ה בהקדמה בית חכמה (ז, א). עמק המלך שער הדיקנא קדישא פ"ח (סא, ג). תורה אור מגלת אסתר צח, ב.	End of Berachos, per the version of the Shelah in his introduction, Beis Chochmah 17a; Emek HaMelech, Shaar HaDikna Kadisha ch. 8 (61c); Torah Or, Megillas Esther 98b; see	AS CITED	<i>“The righteous have no rest ... they shall go from strength to strength.” The closing phrase שבת שכולו שבת ליום</i>

Colophon

SOURCE

Sichah on וְהִלְכֵת בְּדַרְכֵּיו, Likkutei Sichos vol. 4, pp. 1130–1136; adapted from a sichah of Yud Shvat 5721 (1961). The original Yiddish was transcribed for this edition from rasterized images of the printed source and is set unpointed, as Likkutei Sichos prints it. The source's own footnote markers (כג–א) are restored inline.

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Translation, elucidation, deep-dive commentary, diagrams and glossary prepared for this edition. The elucidation is editorial and is marked as such throughout; it carries no authority beyond itself.

VERIFICATION

Every citation in the apparatus is classified VERIFIED or AS CITED. No locator has been corrected by guesswork.

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