בס"ד

CHASSIDIC DISCOURSE · MAAMAR

וְהָיָה כִּי תָבוֹא אֶל הָאָרֶץ

Vehoyo Ki Sovoi el Ho'oretz

Shabbos Parshas Ki Sovoi, 18 Elul 5743 (1983)

ש"פ תבא, ח"י אלול, ה'תשמ"ג

Delivered by the Lubavitcher Rebbe

Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson, of righteous memory

As published in Dvar Malchus for Parshas Ki Sovoi · hanachah bilti mugah

Full Elucidated Edition

Bilingual text with printed line numbers, source apparatus, deep-dive commentary, diagrams and glossary.

About this edition

This is a full elucidated bilingual edition of the maamar וְהָיָה כִּי תָבוֹא אֶל הָאָרֶץ — *Vehoyo Ki Sovoi el Ho'oretz* — delivered by the Lubavitcher Rebbe on Shabbos Parshas Ki Sovoi, 18 Elul 5743, and published in Dvar Malchus for Parshas Ki Sovoi 5773.

Genre

This is a **maamar**, not a sichah. It is built as a controlled collapse: a verse read plainly, a difficulty raised, the difficulty deliberately made worse, and only then a turn to the inner dimension — which arrives as the only remaining reading, not as an enrichment.

The text before you

The Hebrew is a **hanachah bilti mugah** (הנחה בלתי מוגה) — a transcription taken down by listeners and not reviewed or edited by the Rebbe. That status is stated on the source's own title page and is preserved here. Every Hebrew line was transcribed from rasterized images of the printed source; nothing in the Hebrew column has been reconstructed from memory.

Layout

Hebrew always occupies the **right** column; English translation and elucidation always the **left**. The text is aligned in small clusters of a few printed lines at a time, so that the elucidation can stay close to the words it is elucidating.

Line numbers

The small boxed numerals in the Hebrew column are the **printed line numbers of the source edition**, 1–109, set at the start of each printed line. They are reproduced so that a teacher can direct a class by line — "we're holding at line 46" — and have it map exactly onto the source printing. They are styled deliberately unlike any editorial mark: a muted boxed numeral, never a superscript.

Bold and light

Two weights carry two different things, and the distinction is strict. **Bold roman is translation of the Hebrew words themselves.** *Lighter italic is editorial elucidation — explanation, context, and the connective tissue the maamar assumes its listener already carries.* Nothing in bold has been supplied by the editor; nothing in italic is in the Hebrew.

Sources

The maamar's own printed footnote markers (numerals 1–30) are restored **inline in the Hebrew column**, as small gold superscripts set after the exact word each marker follows in the source printing — located word-by-word from the page images, not approximated. They are visually distinct from the boxed line numerals. Footnote 13 is printed twice, on lines 43 and 51, because the same verse is cited twice.

The references themselves are transcribed as printed and collected in a single apparatus in the back matter, keyed to the printed line on which each marker falls, 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 (page, volume, siman) not independently confirmed here.

Where the printing appears to contain a slip, it is reproduced as printed and the discrepancy is noted rather than silently corrected. A misattribution in matters of Torah is a substantive wrong, not a formatting error, and an uncertain citation is flagged at its true confidence level rather than replaced with a better-looking guess.

Deep dives

Where the maamar leans on a foundational concept of Chassidus — העלאה and המשכה, the four letters of the Name, אורות וכלים, Tohu and Tikkun, טעמים נקודות אותיות — a dedicated box treats it at the point where it is needed, not only in the glossary.

The argument at a glance

Line references are to the printed line numbers of the source edition.

1–5	The verse hangs bikkurim on entering the land — and does so דווקא. Why?
6–11	Halachically the obligation began only after fourteen years of conquest and apportioning. The Sifri says והיה means "immediately."
12–17	But even "immediately" cannot be literal: bikkurim needs a chosen place and a built Mishkon. Meanwhile challah דיד bind at the instant of entry.
18–26	Challah works by separation, which permits the dough on the spot. Bikkurim works by bringing, which needs a destination. Therefore, by force, bikkurim has a spiritual content.
27–33	That content is operative even now, when the act is impossible. The Midrash names it: Moshe foresaw the churban and instituted three daily prayers.
34–43	Prayer is the spiritual bikkurim. The Tzemach Tzedek: bikkurim is two acts — the bringing, and the reading.
44–51	The bringing is העלאה, from below to above. The reading is המשכה, from above to below.
52–61	Prayer has both: a ladder set on the ground whose head reaches heaven — the ascent of the heart, and the descent, down the same ladder, of everything the person needs.
62–71	Bikkurim must be from the choicest. So must prayer — the highest faculties of the soul, reached by knowing before Whom one stands.
72–83	And the descent is in ultimate completeness: from the full, open, holy and generous hand, through the Name from yud to final hei, from Atzilus into BY"A, into plain thought, speech and action.
84–95	וזהו: ארץ is running and desire — the ascent; וישבת בה is settling, lights in vessels; טנא is טעמים נקודות אותיות — the descent.
96–109	Therefore: pray, and by that merit come into the land כפשוטו — third Mikdash, bikkurim brought, מיד ממש by the measure of halachah.

SECTION 1

The Verse, and the Question It Leaves Open

printed lines 1–5

BEFORE WE READ

The maamar opens where the parshah opens, and it opens with a difficulty that is easy to walk past. The Torah introduces the mitzvah of bikkurim by attaching it to the moment of entering Eretz Yisroel. Why attach it there at all? A mitzvah could simply be legislated. Instead the verse builds a doorway in front of it and makes the mitzvah wait on the far side. Hold that question loosely — the maamar will sharpen it twice before answering it.

1 וְהָיָה כִּי תָבוֹא אֶל הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר ה' אֱלֹקֶיךָ נוֹתֵן

2 לְךָ נַחֲלָה וִירִשְׁתָּה וְיָשַׁבְתָּ בָּה גו'[1],

"And it shall be, when you come into the land which Havayah your G-d is giving you as an inheritance, and you shall take possession of it and dwell in it" — *the opening verse of our parshah. Four clauses, and by the end of the maamar not one of them will be decorative: the* **coming**, *the* **giving**, *the* **taking-possession**, *and the* **dwelling** *will each be doing work.* **and so on** — *the maamar cites the verse in the abbreviated form (גו') usual in a spoken discourse, where the listener is assumed to carry the continuation in his head. Here the continuation is the whole bikkurim passage, so the abbreviation is not a shortcut but a pointer: read on.*

3 וּמַמְשִׁיךָ וּמָבֵאר בַּכָּתוּב עִנְיַן מִצְוַת בִּכּוּרִים

4 שֶׁנִּצְטַוּוּ בָּהּ בְּבוֹאָם לָאָרֶץ, וְצָרִיךְ לְהָבִין[2] מַדּוּעַ

5 תָּלָה הַכָּתוּב מִצְוָה זוֹ דַּוְקָא בִּבְיאָתָם לָאָרֶץ. וְיֵשׁ

And *the verse* **continues and sets out in the text the matter of the mitzvah of bikkurim** — *the first-ripened fruits of the seven species, which the farmer gathers, places in a basket, carries up to the Beis HaMikdash, and hands to the kohen while reciting a fixed declaration. Note that the Torah does not pause between the entry and the legislation; it runs straight from one into the other, which is itself the first hint that they are one subject and not two* — **which they were commanded regarding upon their coming into the land.** *The Hebrew is exact and worth slowing down on:* **בְּבוֹאָם** *in their coming — not after their conquering, not after their apportioning, not once life in the land had steadied. In their coming.* **And it must be understood** — *the standard opening move of a maamar: a* צריך להבין *is not a confession of confusion but the raising of a question whose answer will turn out to be the whole teaching —* **why the verse hung this mitzvah specifically upon their coming into the land.** *"Hung"* **(תָּלָה)** *is the operative verb. The verse does not merely mention the entry alongside the mitzvah; it suspends the mitzvah from the entry, so that the entry becomes the condition on which the obligation hangs. And* **דַּוְקָא** *— specifically, precisely, and not by way of some other marker — tells us the choice of condition is deliberate. Something about entering the land and something about bikkurim answer to each other.* **And there is** *more to add here, which the next lines will do: the question is about to get harder, not easier.*

DEEP DIVE

Why a maamar begins with a question

A maamar is not an essay with a thesis announced at the top. It is built as a controlled collapse: a verse is read plainly, a difficulty is raised in the plain reading, the difficulty is deliberately made worse, and only when the plain reading has been pressed to the point where it cannot hold does the discourse turn to the inner dimension — not as an ornament laid over the plain meaning, but as the only reading under which the plain meaning becomes coherent again. This structure is doctrinal, not stylistic. It rests on the principle that the inner and outer levels of Torah are one text, so that a genuine pressure point in the פשט is evidence of something live in the סוד — the crack is where the light is. Read this way, the צריך להבין of line 4 is the load-bearing sentence of the entire maamar, and everything from line 6 to line 26 exists to make that one question unanswerable on its own terms. When a listener feels the discourse is "still asking" twenty lines in, that is the form working as designed, not the speaker delaying.

DEEP DIVE

What the mitzvah of bikkurim actually involved

Because the maamar treats bikkurim structurally rather than descriptively, it is worth having the act itself in view. The obligation applies only to the **seven species** by which Eretz Yisroel is praised — wheat, barley, grapes, figs, pomegranates, olives and dates — and only to produce grown on one's own land in the land. A farmer walking his field at first ripening would tie a reed around the earliest fruit to mark it, so that the designation was made while the fruit was still on the tree, before the crop existed as a harvest to choose from. Later the marked fruit was gathered, placed in a basket, and carried up to Yerushalayim — in the Mishnah's account, in processions, with music, the basket often carried on the shoulder even by the wealthy. At the Mikdash it was handed to a kohen, and the owner recited the declaration of Devarim 26:5–10 while the basket was still in his hands: an Aramean sought to destroy my father, and onward to *and now, behold, I have brought the first of the fruit of the ground which You, Havayah, have given me.* Three features of this will each carry weight later. It is **his own produce** — nothing imported. It is **carried**, not merely separated. And it ends in **speech**, aloud, in a public courtyard. The maamar will build its entire answer on the second and third of those.

SUMMARY

The parshah does not merely place bikkurim after the entry into the land; it suspends the obligation *from* the entry, and does so דווקא. That deliberate suspension is the question the maamar sets out to answer.

SECTION 2

The Difficulty Sharpened: Fourteen Years

printed lines 6–11

BEFORE WE READ

Now the maamar makes its own question worse. If the verse ties bikkurim to the moment of entry, halachah does not. By the Gemara's reckoning the obligation did not begin for fourteen years. So the verse has hung a mitzvah on a moment at which, in practice, nothing was owed.

6 לְהוֹסִיף בָּזֶה, שֶׁהֲרֵי אָמְרוּ רַבּוֹתֵינוּ זַ״ל בַּגְּמָרָא[3]

7 (וְהוּבָא בְּפֵירוּשׁ רַשִׁ״י עַל הַתּוֹרָה[4]) שֶׁלֹּא נִתְחַיְּבוּ

8 בְּמִצְוַת בִּכּוּרִים אֶלָּא לְאַחַר כִּיבּוּשׁ וַחֲלוּקָה,

There is more to add on this, *and what is added is not a second question but the same question with the ground removed from under it* — **for our Sages of blessed memory said in the Gemara** — *in Kiddushin, in the sugya that reads Scripture's unqualified "comings" as a family: wherever the Torah says "when you come" without further specification, it means after inheriting and after settling* — **(and it is brought in Rashi's commentary on the Torah)** — *the maamar notes this deliberately. A derivation buried in a Talmudic sugya is one thing; the same derivation set by Rashi directly onto our verse means the difficulty is not a specialist's puzzle but sits on the surface of the parshah, where any reader of the Chumash meets it* — **that they were not obligated in the mitzvah of bikkurim until after conquest and apportioning,** *that is: not until the land had been militarily taken and then divided among the tribes, each tribe settled in its own portion.*

9 שֶׁבַע שֶׁכָּבְשׁוּ וְשֶׁבַע שֶׁחִלְּקוּ, וְאִם־כֵּן מַדּוּעַ תָּלָה

10 הַכָּתוּב הַמִּצְוָה בַּבִּיאָה לָאָרֶץ. וְגַם לְפִי מַה

11 שֶׁכָּתוּב בְּסִפְרִי[5] אֵין וְהָיָה אֶלָּא מִיָּד, הַיְינוּ

seven that they conquered and seven that they apportioned — *fourteen years in total, the figure derived from Kalev's reckoning of forty-five years and confirmed in the Gemara's account of the Mishkan's fourteen years at Gilgal.* **And if so, why did the verse hang the mitzvah upon the coming into the land?** *The question is now much harder than it was at line 5. Then it was: why choose the entry as the marker? Now it is: why choose a marker at which the obligation demonstrably did not yet exist? The verse has attached the mitzvah to a moment fourteen years before anyone owed it.* **And also according to what is written in the Sifri** — *the maamar now turns to the one source that seems to rescue the plain reading, and will show that it does not* — **"אֵין וְהָיָה אֶלָּא מִיָּד — the word 'and it shall be' means nothing other than immediately,"** *a general rule of midrashic reading: the formula* והיה *signals immediacy, and the Sifri applies it to our verse together with the striking gloss "perform this mitzvah, for in its merit you are entering the land" — making the mitzvah not the consequence of the entry but its purpose* — **that is,** *as the next lines spell out, that the obligation begins at the moment of arrival.*

DEEP DIVE

The Kiddushin rule about "coming", and why Rashi matters here

Kiddushin 37b treats the Torah's various formulations of entering the land as a single interpretive system. Where one instance specifies that the law applies only אחר ירושה וישיבה — after inheritance and settlement — that specification is read back across the others, so that an unqualified "when you come" carries the same condition. Bikkurim is explicitly named in that sugya because our verse uses all three terms together: coming, inheriting, dwelling. The maamar's parenthesis about Rashi is doing real work and should not be read as a courtesy citation. There is a difference between a difficulty that lives in the Talmudic apparatus and a difficulty that Rashi has placed on the verse for the eleven-year-old learning Chumash. Rashi on Devarim 26:1 states plainly that they were not obligated in first fruits until they had conquered and divided the land. By invoking Rashi, the maamar establishes that the tension is a feature of the parshah as everyone reads it — which is precisely what licenses the move to a spiritual reading later. One does not reach for רוחניות to solve a problem manufactured in the footnotes.

DEEP DIVE

"מיד" — what "immediately" means when Torah says it

מיד is not a loose intensifier. In halachic usage it is a measured quantity: the standard shiur is either eighteen or twenty-four minutes — the time to walk a mil, or the time for dough to become chametz — and the maamar itself will return to this at line 105, where it insists that מיד ממש, על פי הלכה is meant literally of the redemption. This is why the Sifri's statement creates a genuine collision rather than a soft one. The Sifri is not saying "soon after arriving"; it is saying that the moment והיה attaches to is the moment the obligation lands. And the Sifri adds the reversal that makes the collision total: the mitzvah is not something one becomes able to do because one has entered — one enters in the merit of the mitzvah. The mitzvah is prior. Keep that inversion in view; it is the shape of the maamar's eventual answer. If bikkurim is the reason for the entry rather than its consequence, then bikkurim must be operative before the entry — which cannot be true of baskets of fruit, and must therefore be true of something else that bikkurim *is*.

SUMMARY

Halachically, bikkurim began fourteen years after the entry. The verse nonetheless attaches it to the entry, and the Sifri intensifies this by reading והיה as "immediately" — and by saying the entry happens *in the merit of* the mitzvah. The plain reading is now under real pressure.

SECTION 3

Even “Immediately” Is Not Immediate

printed lines 11–17

BEFORE WE READ

The maamar now closes the escape route it just opened. Grant the Sifri its “immediately” — it still cannot mean literally immediately, because bikkurim has a destination, and the destination did not yet exist.

12 שֶׁחִיּוּב הַמִּצְוָה הוּא מִיָּד בְּבוֹאָם לָאָרֶץ, מִכָּל־
13 מָקוֹם מוּבָן שֶׁאֵין זֶה מִיָּד מַמָּשׁ, שֶׁהֲרֵי צְרִיכָה
14 לִהְיוֹת הֲבָאַת בִּכּוּרִים אֶל הַמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר יִבְחַר
15 ה׳, דִּבְשְׁבִיל זֶה צָרִיךְ שֶׁיִּהְיֶה בִּנְיַן הַמִּשְׁכָּן וְכוּ׳.

that the obligation of the mitzvah is immediate upon their coming into the land — nevertheless it is understood that this is not literally immediate, *and the reason is structural rather than circumstantial:* **for the bringing of bikkurim must be to “the place which Havayah will choose,”** *and a place that is chosen is a place that must first be designated, revealed, and built. The fruits of bikkurim are not discharged by an act performed at home; the mitzvah is constituted by an act of carrying to a location —* **for which reason there must be the building of the Mishkan, and so on.** *So the chain is long even on the Sifri’s own terms: arrive, conquer, apportion, establish the chosen place, erect the Mishkan, plant, wait for first ripening, gather, travel, hand to a kohen. “Immediately” has become the name for a process of years. The maamar has now blocked both readings: on the Gemara’s account the mitzvah waits fourteen years; on the Sifri’s account it is immediate but cannot be. Neither reading lets the verse mean what it says.*

16 וְלִכְאוֹרָה יֵשׁ מִצְוֹת שֶׁחִיּוּבָן חָל לִפְנֵי־זֶה, תְּרוּמָה
17 מַמָּשׁ בִּכְנִיסָתָם לָאָרֶץ. וּכְגוֹן מִצְוַת חַלָּה,

And seemingly there are mitzvos whose obligation takes effect before this, literally at the moment of their entry into the land. *This is the turn that makes the difficulty final. Until now one might have made peace with the verse by supposing that no mitzvah could possibly bind at the instant of arrival — that “in their coming” is simply the Torah’s way of naming a new era, and that nothing more should be read into it. That defence now fails, because there is at least one mitzvah that did bind at that instant —* **such as the mitzvah of challah,** *the portion separated from dough. Which means the Torah had an available example of genuine immediacy and did not use the language of immediacy for it in the same way — while for bikkurim, which was not immediate, it did. The oddity is not that the Torah spoke loosely. It is that the Torah spoke precisely, about the wrong mitzvah.*

DEEP DIVE

“The place which Havayah will choose” — why the destination is part of the mitzvah

Several mitzvos are completed by an act of separation alone. Bikkurim is not among them. Its defining verbs are ולקחת — and you shall take — ושמת בטנא — and you shall place in a basket — and והלכת אל המקום — and you shall go to the place. The mitzvah has a vector. It is not fulfilled where the fruit grew but where the fruit arrives. That structural fact is what makes the fourteen years unavoidable and not merely historical. Rambam traces the sequence: after entering, the Mishkan stood at Gilgal for the fourteen years of conquest and

apportioning, then at Shiloh for 369 years, then Nov and Givon for 57, and only then the permanent House in Yerushalayim. The "chosen place" had to be identified before it could be built, and built before it could be reached. Hold on to the vector. When the maamar reaches its answer, the fact that bikkurim is a *bringing up to* rather than a *separating from* is exactly what will make it the counterpart of prayer rather than the counterpart of any other mitzvah.

DEEP DIVE

The fourteen years: where the number comes from

The figure is not a round estimate; it is derived, and the derivation is worth having because the maamar treats it as hard data against which the verse must be measured. Kalev tells Yehoshua that Hashem has kept him alive *these forty-five years, from the time Hashem spoke this word to Moshe*. Rashi unpacks the arithmetic: the spies were sent in the second year; thirty-eight years of wandering followed; the remaining seven are the years of the conquest — two plus thirty-eight plus seven is forty-five. The Gemara in Zevachim supplies the second half. The Mishkan's years are counted: forty in the wilderness less one, and then **fourteen years at Gilgal** — seven in which the land was conquered, and seven in which it was apportioned among the tribes. Seven and seven: the maamar's שבע שכבשו ושבע שחלקו. And a further source ties the two halves to the mitzvos directly: during those two sets of seven years the people were obligated in challah but not in maaser or terumah — which is the same asymmetry the maamar is about to exploit. Some obligations wait for the land to be settled. Challah does not. So the fourteen years are not an obstacle the maamar invents. They are the received halachic picture, and the question is why the verse speaks as though they were not there.

SUMMARY

On the Sifri's reading too, "immediately" cannot be literal: bikkurim requires a chosen place and a built Mishkon. Yet challah *did* bind at the moment of entry. So the Torah used the language of immediacy for the mitzvah that was not immediate.

SECTION 4

Challah as the Counter-Case, and the Forced Conclusion

printed lines 18–26

BEFORE WE READ

The comparison with challah is not an aside. It isolates exactly what bikkurim has that challah lacks — and it is that surplus, the upward carrying, that the rest of the maamar will explain.

18 שֶׁהַחִיּוּב הָיָה מִיָּד בְּבוֹאָם לָאָרֶץ[7], וְיֵשׁ אוֹמְרִים

19 שֶׁהַחִיּוּב הוּא אֲפִילּוּ עַל עִיסָה שֶׁמָּצְאוּהָ

20 כְּשֶׁנִּכְנְסוּ לָאָרֶץ[8]. וּבְפַשְׁטוּת הֲרֵי בְּמִצְוַת חַלָּה יֵשׁ

that the obligation was immediate upon their coming into the land, and there are those who say that the obligation applies even to dough that they found when they entered the land. *This second view, in the Yerushalmi, is stronger than the first and is cited precisely because it is stronger. Not only did new dough become obligated — dough kneaded by others before the Jewish people arrived, standing there already made, became obligated the moment they walked in. There is no waiting period at all, not even the length of a kneading. Challah's immediacy is total.*

21 חִיּוּב הַפְרָשַׁת חַלָּה הַמַּתִּיר אֶת הָעִיסָה גַּם לִפְנֵי

22 מְסִירָתָהּ לְגָבוֹהַּ כוּ'[9], דְּלֹא כְּבִיכּוּרִים שֶׁהַמִּצְוָה

And in plain terms, in the mitzvah of challah there is the obligation of separating challah, which permits the dough even before its handing over to the Most High, and so on — *and here is the precise structural difference the maamar has been driving at. In challah, the act of separation is itself the whole mitzvah in its operative respect: the moment the portion is lifted out, the remaining dough is permitted to anyone, even a non-kohen, even though the separated piece has not yet gone anywhere. Nowadays, with no Beis HaMikdash standing, it goes nowhere at all — it is burned. And the dough is still permitted. The mitzvah's effect does not wait on delivery* — **unlike bikkurim, where the mitzvah**

23 הִיא לַהֲבִיאָם אֶל הַמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר יִבְחַר ה' גו'. וּלְפִי

24 זֶה דּוֹרֵשׁ בֵּיאוּר בְּיוֹתֵר מַדּוּעַ מוּדְגָּשׁ בַּכָּתוּב

25 שֶׁתֵּיכֶף בְּבוֹאָם לָאָרֶץ נִצְטַוּוּ בְּמִצְוַת בִּכּוּרִים

26 דַּוְקָא. וּבְהֶכְרֵח לוֹמַר, שֶׁיֵּשׁ בָּזֶה עִנְיָן רוּחָנִי,

is to bring them to the place which Havayah will choose, and so on. *In bikkurim the delivery is not the mitzvah's aftermath; it is the mitzvah. Separation alone accomplishes nothing.* **And accordingly this demands explanation all the more:** *the difficulty has now been inverted into its sharpest form. The mitzvah with no destination bound immediately; the mitzvah that is nothing but a journey to a destination is the one the Torah attached to the moment of arrival* — **why is it emphasised in the verse that immediately upon their coming into the land they were commanded specifically in the mitzvah of bikkurim.** *Note* **מודגש** *— emphasised. The maamar is no longer asking why the Torah mentioned this; it is asking why the Torah stressed it. And now the conclusion is not a preference among readings but a compulsion:* **And it must perforce be said that there is in this a spiritual matter,** — **בְּהֶכְרֵח** *by force. The maamar does not say the spiritual reading is deeper or more beautiful. It says the plain reading has*

been exhausted and there is nowhere else to stand. This is the hinge of the discourse: everything before line 26 is pressure, and everything after it is release.

DEEP DIVE

Hafrashah and hava'ah: two shapes a mitzvah can have

The contrast the maamar builds here is worth stating on its own, because it recurs across Chassidus wherever *avodah* is analysed. Some mitzvos work by **separation** — הפרשה. Something is lifted out of a mass, and by that lifting-out the remainder is transformed: permitted, sanctified, released. The transformation is local and complete. Challah is the paradigm: the dough becomes permitted at the instant of separation, with no reference to any destination, and this holds even when there is no destination to speak of. Other mitzvos work by **bringing** — הבאה. Nothing is finished by the lifting; the object must travel, arrive, and be received. Bikkurim is the paradigm: fruit separated and never brought has accomplished nothing at all. Two consequences follow, and the maamar will use both. First, a separation-mitzvah can operate under any conditions, which is why challah bound the instant they crossed the border; a bringing-mitzvah depends on a whole world being in place — a chosen place, a built Mishkon — which is why bikkurim could not. Second, and more importantly: only a bringing-mitzvah has a *direction*. Separation is a change of status. Bringing is a movement from below to above. That directionality is what will make bikkurim, and not challah, the mitzvah that corresponds to prayer — because prayer, too, is not a change of status but a movement.

DEEP DIVE

What "בהכרח" licenses, and what it does not

The phrase ובהכרח לומר — it must perforce be said — is a technical move with a strict entry condition, and it is worth being exact about it, because it is frequently misused in loose retellings of Chassidus. It does not mean: the plain reading is shallow, so let us find a deeper one. It means: the plain reading has been pressed from every side and has failed on its own terms, and therefore the text is telling us that its subject is not what we assumed. The spiritual reading arrives as the only remaining candidate, not as an enrichment. This is why the maamar spent twenty lines making its own question worse. Had it moved to רוחניות at line 5, the reading would have been optional — and an optional inner meaning is, in the discipline of a maamar, no meaning at all. Having blocked the Gemara's reading, the Sifri's reading, and the comparison with challah, the maamar has earned the right to say בהכרח. Notice also what the compulsion delivers. It does not conclude "there is a spiritual lesson here." It concludes that *the mitzvah has a spiritual content which was operative at the moment of entry* — a much stronger claim, and the one the next section will cash out.

SUMMARY

Challah works by separation, and separation permits the dough on the spot — which is why it bound immediately. Bikkurim works by bringing, and a bringing needs a destination — which is why it could not. The verse emphasises immediacy for bikkurim anyway. There is therefore, by force, a spiritual content to bikkurim that *was* present at the moment of entry.

SECTION 5

Bikkurim in Ruchniyus — and the Midrash That Names It

printed lines 27–33

BEFORE WE READ

Having established that bikkurim has a spiritual content, the maamar draws the consequence that matters for us: a mitzvah's spiritual content is not suspended when its physical performance is impossible. Then it names what that content is, by way of a Midrash about Moshe Rabbeinu.

27 מִצְוַת בִּיכּוּרִים בְּרוּחָנִיּוּת, שֶׁעָנְיַן בִּיאַת הָאָרֶץ

28 תָּלוּי בָּהּ. וּבְמֵילָא אַף בִּזְמַן כָּזֶה שֶׁעֲדַיִן לֹא

29 הִתְחַיְּבוּ בְּמִצְוָה זוֹ בְּפוֹעַל, יֶשְׁנוֹ עִנְיַן זֶה בְּרוּחָנִיּוּת.

the mitzvah of bikkurim in its spiritual dimension, upon which the matter of coming into the land depends. *Read the dependency carefully, because it reverses the plain order. In the plain reading, entering the land makes bikkurim possible. In the spiritual reading, the spiritual bikkurim is what the entering depends on — which is exactly the Sifri's "in its merit you are entering the land." The mitzvah is the cause and the entry the effect.* **And consequently, even in a time such as this, when they have not yet become obligated in this mitzvah in actual practice, this matter exists in its spiritual dimension.** *This is the sentence for which the whole first half of the maamar was built, and it reaches much further than the fourteen years. The Rebbe is speaking in 5743, with no Beis HaMikdash and no bikkurim brought for nineteen centuries. If the spiritual content of the mitzvah was operative during the fourteen years before the obligation began, it is operative now, during the exile, when the obligation has lapsed. The mitzvah has not gone silent. Only its outer act has.*

30 וְיוּבָן זֶה עַל־פִּי מַה דְּאִיתָא בַּמִּ דְּרָשׁ[10], צָפָה

31 מֹשֶׁה רַבֵּינוּ עָלָיו־הַשָּׁלוֹם בְּרוּחַ הַקּוֹדֶשׁ

32 וְרָאָה שֶׁבֵּית הַמִּ קְדָּשׁ עָתִיד לִיחָרֵב וְהַבִּיכּוּרִים

33 עֲתִידִין לִפָּסֵק, עָמַד וְהִתְקִין לְיִשְׂרָאֵל שֶׁיִּהְיוּ

And this will be understood on the basis of what is brought in the Midrash: *Tanchuma at the opening of our parshah* — **Moshe Rabbeinu, peace be upon him, foresaw with the spirit of holiness and saw that the Beis HaMikdash was destined to be destroyed and the bikkurim destined to cease — he arose and instituted for Israel that they should be** *the Midrash's language is worth pausing on twice. First:* **צָפָה** *— he looked out ahead, prophetically, at a loss that would not fall in his lifetime or for many centuries after. Second:* **עָמַד וְהִתְקִין** *— he arose and enacted. This is not consolation offered to a future generation; it is legislation drafted in advance of a bereavement, so that when the loss came the thing lost would already have been provided for.*

DEEP DIVE

How a mitzvah operates when it cannot be performed

This is one of the load-bearing principles of Chassidus, and this maamar is among the cleanest places to see it argued rather than asserted. Every mitzvah has an outer act and an inner content, and the two are not related as body to ornament but as body to soul: the act is the inner content's full and proper garment, and the inner content is what the act accomplishes. When the act becomes impossible — no Mikdash, no kohanim, no altar — what happens to the content? It is not annulled, and it is not left in suspension

awaiting better conditions. It is re-vested. The Midrash's claim about Moshe is precisely a claim about re-vesting: he saw that a particular *avodah* would lose its garment, and he provided another garment for the same *avodah*. This is why the maamar can say that bikkurim exists "even in a time such as this." It is not saying we may draw inspiration from a defunct mitzvah. It is saying the work bikkurim did is still being done, three times a day, by every person who prays. Two guardrails, both of which the maamar itself observes. First, this is not a licence to substitute inwardness for practice: where the act is possible, the act is the mitzvah, and no amount of spiritual content discharges it. Second, the substitution is not the worshipper's invention — it was instituted, והתקין, by Moshe and formalised by the Sages. The re-vesting is halachic before it is mystical.

DEEP DIVE

Why the Midrash pairs the churban with the bikkurim in particular

The Midrash could have described Moshe as foreseeing the cessation of the korbanos generally — the far more obvious loss, and the one the Talmudic formula "prayers were instituted in place of the offerings" actually names. It does not. It singles out the bikkurim. The Midrash's own context supplies part of the reason. It contrasts a person petitioning a human king, who may pay for access, wait for an audience, and still be refused, with the Jew who sees a ripe cluster, a ripe fig, a ripe pomegranate, places it in a basket, walks up to Yerushalayim, stands in the courtyard, and pleads — for himself, for the people, and for the land. Bikkurim is the mitzvah in which a private person, holding the produce of his own labour, obtains a hearing. That is the profile of prayer, not the profile of sacrifice. And it is why the maamar will insist at line 38 that although prayer stands in for the korbanos in general, it is the bikkurim among them that it answers to in particular.

SUMMARY

The spiritual content of bikkurim is operative even now, when the act cannot be performed. The Midrash names what that content is by recording that Moshe, foreseeing the churban and the cessation of bikkurim, instituted three daily prayers in their place.

SECTION 6

Tefillah Is the Spiritual Bikkurim

printed lines 34–42

BEFORE WE READ

The Midrash has supplied the identification. The maamar now states it as a thesis, and then asks the obvious objection: if prayer replaces the offerings in general, why single out bikkurim? The answer, from the Tzemach Tzedek, will occupy the rest of the maamar.

34 מִתְפַּלֵּל לִין ג׳ פְּעָמִים בְּכָל יוֹם כו׳. וְהַיְינוּ, דְּעִנְיַן

35 הַבִּיכּוּרִים בַּעֲבוֹדָה רוּחָנִית הוּא עִנְיַן עֲבוֹדַת

36 הַתְּפִלָּה. דְּבְכָלָּוּת אָמְרוּ רַבּוֹתֵינוּ זַ״ל[11] תְּפִלּוֹת

37 בִּמְקוֹם קָרְבָּנוֹת תִּקְנוּם, אַךְ בִּפְרָטִיּוּת יוֹתֵר,

praying three times each day, and so on. And this is to say that the matter of bikkurim in spiritual service is the matter of the service of prayer. *The thesis, stated flatly. Bikkurim, considered as an inner avodah rather than as an agricultural obligation, is prayer — not merely resembles it, but is it —* **for in general terms our Sages of blessed memory said "prayers were instituted in place of the offerings,"** *and this general principle has real halachic teeth, as the Alter Rebbe sets out at length: because prayer stands in place of a korban, one must pray standing as the service was performed standing, keep a fixed place as each offering had its fixed place, allow no partition between oneself and the wall as an obstruction between vessel and offering disqualifies, and wear garments designated for prayer in the manner of the kohen's garments —* **but in greater particularity,** *and here the maamar tightens the lens —*

38 בְּקָרְבָּנוֹת גּוּפָא, הִנֵּה עִנְיַן הַתְּפִלּוֹת הוּא כְּנֶגֶד

39 עִנְיַן הַבִּיכּוּרִים. וּבִיאוּר הָעִנְיָן הוּא, עַל־פִּי מַה

40 שֶׁמֵּבָאֵר כ״ק אַדְמוּ״ר הַ״צֶּמַח צֶדֶק׳ בְּ׳אוֹר

41 הַתּוֹרָה׳[12], דְּבְמִצְוַת הַבִּיכּוּרִים יֵשׁ ב׳ דְּבָרִים,

42 הַפְרָשַׁת וַהֲבָאַת הַבִּכּוּרִים, וּקְרִיאַת פָּרָשַׁת

43 בִּיכּוּרִים כְּמוֹ שֶׁכָּתוּב[13] וְעָנִיתָ וְאָמַרְתָּ גו׳.

within the offerings themselves, the matter of the prayers corresponds to the matter of the bikkurim. *This is the claim that needs defending. Prayer replaces the korbanos as a class; but among the various offerings and gifts, it is bikkurim that it answers to specifically. Why should that be? —* **And the explanation of the matter is on the basis of what is explained by his honour, our master, the Tzemach Tzedek, in Ohr HaTorah:** *the third Rebbe of Lubavitch, whose Ohr HaTorah is the great running exposition of the Chumash in Chassidus —* **that in the mitzvah of bikkurim there are two things: the separating and bringing of the bikkurim, and the reading of the passage of bikkurim, as it is written "and you shall call out and say,"** *and so on. Everything from here to the end of the maamar unfolds from this single observation. The mitzvah is not one act but two acts of opposite direction — a carrying up, and a speaking out — and the reason prayer corresponds to bikkurim rather than to any other offering is that prayer is also two motions and not one.*

DEEP DIVE

"Prayers were instituted in place of the offerings" — and why תפלה means connection

The formula is familiar to the point of transparency, and its content is easy to lose. Prayer is not a memorial for the offerings, nor a stopgap. It occupies their halachic position, which is why its laws are shaped by theirs: standing, fixed place, no partition, designated garments, and the exclusion of foreign thought in the way that foreign thought disqualifies a *kodshim* offering. What was the offering

doing, that prayer now does? The word *korban* is from קרוב — to draw near. The offering was never primarily about the animal; it was the instrument by which the person bringing it came close. And the word תפלה carries the same freight from the other side. It derives from תופל, as in the Mishnah's הטופל כלי חרס — one who bonds or plasters a clay vessel — that is, joining one substance to another until they hold as one. The Frierdiker Rebbe defines the *avodah* of *tefillah* exactly so: nearness and cleaving, the soul bound into its root in G-dliness. So prayer inherits the offering's function because both are instruments of joining. Which sets up the maamar's refinement: if joining were only a movement upward, any offering would do. The bikkurim is singled out because joining runs both ways.

DEEP DIVE

Ohr HaTorah, and why the Tzemach Tzedek's distinction is the key that fits

The Tzemach Tzedek's observation is textual before it is mystical, and its force comes from that. Read the bikkurim passage and count the commanded acts. ולקחת — take. ושמת בטנא — place in a basket. והלכת — go. Those are one motion: fruit moving from the field to the chosen place, from below upward. Then וענית ואמרת — and you shall call out and say. That is not part of the carrying at all. Nothing moves. The farmer stands still and declares, aloud, a history: an Aramean sought to destroy my father, we went down to Egypt, we were made a nation, He brought us here, and here is the fruit of the ground He gave me. One mitzvah, two acts, opposite in direction. The carrying takes what is below and raises it. The declaration takes what is above — the record of what was done *for* the speaker, by a hand not his own — and publishes it below, in a loud voice, in the courtyard, in front of others. This is why bikkurim and not any other offering. A korban of the ordinary sort is a raising-up. Bikkurim is a raising-up with a bringing-down built into it as a second commanded act. And prayer, as the next sections show, is exactly that: a ladder, with traffic in both directions.

SUMMARY

Prayer stands in place of the offerings generally — with halachic consequences — but corresponds to bikkurim specifically. The Tzemach Tzedek supplies the reason: bikkurim is not one act but two, the bringing and the reading, and prayer likewise has two motions.

SECTION 7

The Two Motions: Bringing Up and Reading Out

printed lines 43–51

BEFORE WE READ

Here is the conceptual heart of the maamar. The two acts of bikkurim are identified with the two directions of all divine service — העלאה, elevation from below upward, and המשכה, drawing down from above downward.

44 דְּהַהֶפְרֵשׁ בֵּין ב׳ עִנְיָנִים אֵלּוּ הוּא, דְּעִנְיַן הֲבָאַת

45 הַבִּיכּוּרִים תּוֹכְנוֹ הַהַעֲלָאָה מִלְּמַטָּה לְמַעְלָה, כִּי

For the difference between these two matters is this: the matter of the bringing of the bikkurim — its content is the elevation from below to above, — **הַהַעֲלָאָה מִלְּמַטָּה לְמַעְלָה** *and the word* **תּוֹכְנוֹ** *— its content — is deliberate: not that the bringing symbolises elevation, but that elevation is what the bringing consists of. The physical act is the shape of the spiritual movement, not a picture of it* — **for**

46 מַפְרִישׁ אֶת כָּל הַבִּיכּוּרִים מִכָּל הַפֵּירוֹת וּמַעֲלֶה

47 אוֹתָם אֶל הַמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר יִבְחַר ה׳ גו׳. וְעִנְיַן

he separates all the bikkurim from all the fruits and raises them up to the place which Havayah will choose, and so on. *Both halves of the sentence matter. First* **מִכָּל הַפֵּירוֹת** *— from all the fruits: the bikkurim are taken from within the ordinary crop, the product of the man's own ploughing, sowing, watering and waiting. Nothing has been imported from elsewhere. Second* **וּמַעֲלֶה אוֹתָם** *— and raises them: the man does the lifting. This is the signature of* ***haala'ah****: something belonging to the lower world, worked on by a lower-world effort, moved upward by that effort — with the result that a plain fig becomes the object of a mitzvah. And this is why the mitzvah could not be discharged at home. A separation would have changed the fruit's status; only a carrying moves it.*

48 קְרִיאַת הַפָּרָשָׁה כו׳ הוּא הַהַמְשָׁכָה מִלְּמַעְלָה

49 לְמַטָּה, כִּי עִנְיָנָהּ שֶׁל קְרִיאָה הוּא לְפַרְסֵם בְּקוֹל

50 רָם אֶת גּוֹדֶל חַסְדֵי ה׳ עִם בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְכו׳, אֲרַמִּי

51 אוֹבֵד אָבִי גו׳[13], וַחֲסָדָיו עִמּוֹ בִּפְרָט, וְהַקְּרִיאָה

And the matter of the reading of the passage, and so on, is the drawing down from above to below, *the opposite vector* — **for the content of reading is to publicise in a loud voice the greatness of the kindnesses of Havayah with the Jewish people, and so on — "an Aramean sought to destroy my father,"** *and onward through the descent to Egypt, the affliction, the crying out, the outstretched arm, and the bringing to this land* — **and His kindnesses with him in particular,** *which is the turn from the national to the personal: having recited what was done for the people, the farmer continues "and now, behold, I have brought the first of the fruit of the ground which You, Havayah, have given me" — his field, his season, his crop, named as a gift received rather than a yield earned. That is the* ***hamshachah****: the man is no longer lifting anything: he is testifying that everything he holds came down to him* — **and the reading**

DEEP DIVE

העלאה and המשכה — the two directions of all avodah

These two terms organise a very large portion of Chassidus, and it is worth setting them out fully, because once they are in hand the second half of this maamar reads almost by itself. **העלאה** — elevation, from below to above — is movement initiated in the lower world by the effort of the created being. Its classical name is **אתערותא דלתתא**, an arousal from below. Its character is labour: something is worked on, refined, given up, carried. Its typical fruit is that a thing of the lower world is made into a vessel for what is above it. Prayer of the heart, the refinement of the animal soul, the giving of tzedakah from money one earned — all of these are העלאה. **המשכה** — drawing down, from above to below — is movement whose source is above and which arrives here. Its classical name is **אתערותא דלעילא**, an arousal from above. Its character is not labour but reception, and its typical fruit is that something higher than the recipient comes to dwell within him. Torah study is the paradigm, because Torah is not the mind's discovery but a wisdom that has come down. The maamar itself supplies this pairing: prayer is chiefly העלאה, since it is the work of the heart, while Torah is chiefly המשכה, since it descends. Two cautions that this maamar depends on. First, the two are not rival paths between which one chooses; a complete *avodah* requires both, and the maamar's whole point is that bikkurim and prayer each contain both. Second, the order is not arbitrary. העלאה comes first and המשכה follows, and the drawing-down is *in response to* the elevation — which is why the maamar will describe the descent as travelling "by means of the ladder of prayer" rather than independently of it. A descent that had not been called for would arrive without a vessel to receive it; that unreceived condition is the world of תוהו, and the maamar will name it obliquely at line 91.

DEEP DIVE

Why the declaration is a descent rather than an ascent

It is natural to hear the recitation as more *avodah* from below — after all, the man is the one speaking. The Tzemach Tzedek's reading turns on the content of what is spoken, not on who speaks it. Consider what the declaration actually says. Not one clause of it records an achievement of the speaker. An Aramean sought to destroy my father; we went down; we were afflicted; we cried out; He heard; He brought us out; He brought us here; He gave me this ground. The farmer holding the basket he filled with his own hands stands in the courtyard and states, at volume, that none of it is his doing. That is why it is המשכה. To publicise a kindness is to make it present where it was not present before — to bring an upper reality down into speech, into a courtyard, into other people's hearing. The loud voice is not emphasis; it is the mechanism. A kindness acknowledged silently remains above. A kindness declared aloud has descended into the world of speech, which is precisely the point at which the maamar will later place the descent "into thought, speech and action as they plainly are, of the person serving."

SUMMARY

The bringing of the bikkurim is העלאה — the man's own produce, raised by the man's own effort, from below to above. The reading of the passage is המשכה — the public, loud declaration that everything he holds was given from above to below.

SECTION 8

The Ladder: Both Motions in Prayer

printed lines 52–61

BEFORE WE READ

Now the identification closes. Prayer has both motions, and the verse that proves it is Yaakov's ladder — a single structure on which traffic runs in two directions.

צְרִיכָה לִהְיוֹת בְּקוֹל רָם כְּמוֹ שֶׁכָּתוּב[14] הִגַּדְתִּי

הַיּוֹם לַהֲוָיָ' אֱלֹקֶיךָ גו'. וּבָזֶה מוּבָן מַדּוּעַ

must be in a loud voice, as it is written "I declare this day to Havayah your G-d," *and so on — the volume is legislated, not incidental. And now the maamar cashes in the whole analysis —* **And with this it is understood why the prayers were instituted in place of the offerings,**

הַתְּפִלּוֹת בְּמָקוֹם קָרְבָּנוֹת תִּקְנוּם, כִּי גַּם בְּעִנְיַן

הַתְּפִלָּה יֶשְׁנָם ב' עִנְיָנִים אֵלּוּ. דְּהַתְּפִלָּה הִיא

סוּלָּם מוּצָּב אַרְצָה וְרֹאשׁוֹ מַגִּיעַ הַשָּׁמַיְמָה[15], הַיְינוּ

for in the matter of prayer too these two matters are present. *The correspondence is now exact and not merely thematic: bikkurim has an ascent and a descent; prayer has an ascent and a descent; therefore prayer is what bikkurim was —* **For prayer is "a ladder set upon the ground whose head reaches the heavens,"** *the verse from Yaakov's dream, and the choice of image is exact in three ways. A ladder is planted in the earth, so the ascent begins where the person actually stands. A ladder reaches heaven, so the ascent is not partial. And a ladder is used in both directions — in Yaakov's dream the angels were both ascending and descending upon it — which is the whole point being made —* **that is,**

שֶׁהִיא סוּלָּם שֶׁעַל־יָדוֹ עוֹלוֹת הַתְּפִלּוֹת לְמַעְלָה

מַעְלָה, עִנְיַן הַהַעֲלָאָה מִלְּמַטָּה, וְאַחַר־כָּךְ הֲרֵי

that it is a ladder by means of which the prayers rise up higher and higher — the matter of elevation from below, *this is the first motion, and it is the one a person feels: contemplation, the labour of the heart, words that begin in the mouth of someone standing on the ground. "Higher and higher"* **(לְמַעְלָה מַעְלָה)** *— not to a fixed ceiling; the ascent is open-ended —* **and afterwards**

עַל־יְדֵי סוּלָּם הַתְּפִלָּה יוֹרְדוֹת הַהַמְשָׁכוֹת שֶׁעַל־

יְדֵי הַתְּפִלָּה מֵהַשָּׁמַיְמָה לָאָרְצָה, לְמַלֵּא אֶת כָּל

צָרְכֵי הָאָדָם הַמִּתְפַּלֵּל.

by means of the ladder of prayer there descend the drawings-down which come about through prayer, from the heavens to the earth, to fill all the needs of the person who prays. *Three things to notice, each of them consequential. First, the descent travels* **by means of the ladder** *— the same structure, not a second channel: the very prayer that went up is the road the answer comes down. Second, the descent is* **because of the prayers**, *so it is not an unrelated act of generosity but the response the ascent called for. Third, and most striking in a discourse of this altitude, what descends is* **all the needs of the person who prays** *— the sustenance, the health, the success, the plain requests of a plain life. The maamar does not spiritualise the answer away. The ladder that*

reached the heavens comes back down to the ground it was standing on.

THE TWO MOTIONS, IN BIKKURIM AND IN PRAYER

	BIKKURIM	PRAYER
↑ העלאה BELOW → ABOVE	Separating the first fruits from all his produce and **carrying them up** to the place which Havayah will choose. His field, his labour, his basket.	The **ascent of the prayers** — contemplation and the work of the heart, from the highest faculties of the soul, rising higher and higher.
↓ המשכה ABOVE → BELOW	**Reading the passage aloud** — publicising in a loud voice that an Aramean sought to destroy my father, and that this ground was given to me.	The **drawing down**, by means of the same ladder and because of the prayers, to fill all the needs of the person praying.
DESTINATION	Not discharged by separation. The fruit must arrive.	Not discharged by intention. The answer must arrive — in thought, speech and action as they plainly are.

DEEP DIVE

Why a ladder, and not wings

The image is chosen against the obvious alternative, and the contrast is instructive. Wings leave the ground; a ladder stays fastened to it. Wings carry one being upward; a ladder carries traffic both ways at once. Wings are equipment; a ladder is a structure. Each of these matters for prayer. **מוצב ארצה** — set upon the ground. Prayer is not an escape from the situation of the person praying. Its lowest rung is where he actually is, with the concerns he actually has. This is also why the requests of the Amidah are so ordinary: knowledge, repentance, healing, a good year. **וראשו מגיע השמימה** — its head reaches the heavens. Yet nothing is truncated. The same continuous structure that begins in a man's ordinary trouble arrives, without a break in it, above. There is no point on the ladder where one thing ends and another begins. **Angels ascending and descending** — the two-way traffic. A person who has understood prayer only as petition-going-up has understood one direction of a two-direction structure, and will experience the answer, when it comes, as something separate from the prayer. The maamar's point is that it is not separate: על ידי סולם התפלה — by means of the ladder of prayer — the descent uses the road the ascent built.

DEEP DIVE

"All the needs of the person who prays" — the maamar's refusal to spiritualise the answer

It would be easy to read the descending half of the ladder as a purely inner event: illumination, closeness, a changed heart. The maamar does not permit that reading. What descends, in its own words, is למלא את כל צרכי האדם המתפלל — to fill all the needs of the person praying: sustenance, blessing, health, success, the fulfilment of whatever he asked for. This is doctrinally deliberate and it matches the liturgy. The Amidah is not a sequence of contemplations; it is a sequence of requests, and they are strikingly concrete — knowledge, repentance, forgiveness, healing, a good year, the ingathering, justice, Yerushalayim. A person who has been taught that real prayer is too elevated to ask for a livelihood has been taught something the text of prayer itself contradicts. And it is consistent with the maamar's governing criterion, stated structurally at lines 79–83 and again at line 98: a descent is complete in proportion to how *low* it reaches. A drawing-down that arrived only as inner light would have stopped at a boundary. The ladder is מוצב ארצה — set on the ground — at both ends: the ascent begins in a person's actual situation, and the descent returns to it.

SUMMARY

Prayer is a ladder: planted where the person stands, reaching to heaven, and carrying traffic in both directions. The ascent is the labour of the heart; the descent, travelling down the same ladder and because of it, supplies the actual needs of the person praying.

SECTION 9

From the Choicest

printed lines 62–71

BEFORE WE READ

A second feature of bikkurim now becomes explicable: the fruits must be the best. The maamar applies the same requirement to prayer — and to both of its directions.

62 וְזֶה יוּבָן גַּם עוֹד עִנְיָן, דְּהִנֵּה הַבִּכּוּרִים
63 צְרִיכִים לִהְיוֹת מֵרֵאשִׁית פְּרִי הָאֲדָמָה,
64 דְּהַיְינוּ מֵהַחֵלֶק הַמּוּבְחָר וְהַמְשׁוּבָּח וְכוּ', וּכְמוֹ

And with this a further matter is also understood: that the bikkurim must be "from the first of the fruit of the ground," *and* **מֵרֵאשִׁית** *is not only chronological. It is not merely whatever ripened earliest, but —* **that is, from the choicest and most praised portion, and so on,** *first in quality and not only first in the calendar —* **and as**

65 שֶׁכָּתַב הָרַמְבַּ"ם[16] דְּיָלְפִינַן מִמַּה שֶׁכָּתוּב כָּל חֵלֶב
66 לַהַוָיָ[17], שֶׁכָּל דָּבָר שֶׁהוּא לַהַוָיָ צָרִיךְ לִהְיוֹת מִן
67 הַטּוֹב וְהַמְשׁוּבָּח וְכוּ', וְכֵן הוּא גַּם בְּעִנְיַן הַתְּפִלָּה

the Rambam wrote, that we derive from what is written "all choicest fat is for Havayah" that everything which is for Havayah must be from the good and the most praised, and so on; *and the Rambam extends the principle far past the altar: one who wishes to gain merit and subdue his own inclination should bring from the most desirable of whatever he is bringing. A house of prayer should be finer than his own house. If he feeds the hungry, from the best of his table; if he clothes the naked, from his finest garments. The principle is not about sacrificial law; it is about the grammar of anything given upward —* **and so it is also in the matter of prayer**

68 וּבִכְבָר הָעִנְיָנִים הַנַּ"ל שָׁבָּה. דְּהַתְּפִלָּה עַצְמָהּ הִיא
69 מֵחֵלֶק הֲכִי נַעֲלֶה שֶׁבְּנֶפֶשׁ הָאָדָם, כַּמּוּבָן מִזֶּה
70 שֶׁבְּעֵת הַתְּפִלָּה הֲרֵי הָאָדָם מִתְבּוֹנֵן וְיוֹדֵעַ לִפְנֵי
71 מִי הוּא עוֹמֵד[18], שֶׁזֶּה מֵבִיא שֶׁתְּפִלָּתוֹ תִּהְיֶה

and in both of the aforementioned matters within it. *Both directions, and the maamar takes them in turn.* **For prayer itself is from the most exalted portion of the soul of man, as is understood from this: that at the time of prayer a person contemplates and knows before Whom he stands** *— the halachic requirement recorded in Berachos, and the maamar reads it as a statement about which faculties prayer engages. To know before Whom one is standing is not an item of information; it is an act of the deepest reach of the mind, and it draws the heart after it —* **which brings it about that his prayer will be**

DEEP DIVE

מראשית and כל חלב — the principle of the choicest, and why it applies in both directions

The Rambam's derivation is worth following, because it generalises a rule of the altar into a rule of relationship. The Torah lists several grades of oil as acceptable for the Menorah, and then lists them separately rather than as a single permitted category. Why enumerate grades if all are valid? The Rambam answers: so that one should know which is superior, which equal, and which inferior — in order that a person who wishes to gain merit should bring from the superior. The listing exists to make excellence choosable. He then anchors it in Hevel, who brought מבכורות צאנו ומחלבהן — from the firstborn of his flock and from their choicest — and "Havayah turned to Hevel and to his offering." Now apply this to prayer in both of its directions, as the maamar does. **Upward.** If prayer is the

ascent, then מראשית governs which faculties are brought. Not the leftover attention of a distracted mind, but the highest reach of the soul: התבוננות, sustained contemplation, and the emotional arousal that follows from it. The halachah that one must know before Whom he stands is precisely the halachah that requires the choicest — because a person who genuinely registers before Whom he is standing cannot then pray with his second-best. **Downward.** And by the same principle, the descent is בתכלית השלימות — in ultimate completeness — because what comes from Above comes from a hand described as full, open, holy and generous. The rule of the choicest is not a demand placed only on the worshipper. It describes the whole transaction from both ends. There is a practical edge here worth naming. מראשית also means *first*. The bikkurim are taken before the crop is consumed, before the harvest is enjoyed, at the moment of first ripening. Applied to prayer, this is the reason prayer stands where it does in the day — before the business of living begins, not after it has taken what it needs.

DEEP DIVE

"Knowing before Whom he stands" — halachah and avodah in one requirement

The maamar cites this as evidence that prayer engages the highest faculties of the soul, and the citation is doing double duty, because the requirement is simultaneously a law and a description of an inner state. As **law**: the Gemara in Berachos, carried into the codes, requires that one stand in the Amidah with the awareness of standing before the King of kings — hence the halachos the Alter Rebbe collects around it: a fixed place, no partition, no interruption, designated garments, the exclusion of foreign thought in the way that foreign thought disqualifies an offering. As **avodah**: to actually register before Whom one is standing is not an item of information one recalls; it is התבוננות — sustained contemplation — and it is the highest reach of the mind, which then draws the heart after it into feeling. This is why it is the proof text for מראשית. The maamar's logic runs: the choicest must be given; the choicest of a person is not his time or his effort but his deepest faculties; and the mechanism that engages those faculties is precisely the halachic requirement of knowing before Whom he stands. A person who has genuinely registered it cannot then pray with his second-best attention — not because he is forbidden to, but because the registering itself recruits the best. The practical inversion is worth naming. One does not first summon devotion and then stand before the King. One stands before the King, attends to that fact, and the devotion follows.

SUMMARY

Bikkurim must come from the choicest, per the Rambam's derivation from כל חלב לה'. The same governs prayer in both directions: the ascent must be from the highest faculties of the soul — which is what knowing before Whom one stands produces.

SECTION 10

The Descent, in Full Perfection: From the Yud to the Final Hei

printed lines 72–83

BEFORE WE READ

The maamar now traces the downward motion all the way to the bottom. What descends is not a portion but a fullness, and it does not stop at the spiritual worlds — it arrives in a person's ordinary thought, speech and action.

from the choicest and most praised of his faculties. And in the same way is the drawing down from above to below, which is in ultimate completeness, — **בְּתַכְלִית הַשֵּׁ לֵימוּת** *in ultimate completeness, which is the exact counterpart on the descending side of* **מובחר** *on the ascending side —* **for the Holy One, blessed be He, gives from His hand which is full, open, holy and generous,** *the four descriptions taken from the third blessing of Birkas HaMazon, which we say at every meal and which the maamar now reads as a technical specification: not one adjective but four, and shortly they will be mapped —* **and it is drawn down by means of**

72 בַּמּוּבְחָר וּמְשׁוּבָּח שֶׁבְּכֹחוֹתָיו. וְעַל־דֶּרֶךְ־זֶה הִיא

73 הַהַמְשָׁכָה מִלְּמַעְלָה לְמַטָּה, שֶׁהִיא בְּתַכְלִית

74 הַשְּׁלֵימוּת, כִּי הַקָּ בָ"ה נוֹתֵן מִיָּדוֹ הַמְּ לֵאָה

75 הַפְּתוּחָה הַקָּ דוֹשָׁה וְהָרְחָבָה[19], וְנִמְשָׁךְ עַל־יְדֵי

the Name Havayah — (and as is explained elsewhere, that these four matters (full, open, holy and generous) correspond to the four letters of the Name Havayah) — *so the fullness of what descends is not a quantity but a structure: the four qualities of the giving hand are the four letters of the Name through which the giving passes. The parenthesis is the Rebbe's own, and it converts a familiar liturgical phrase into a map —* **from the yud in the Name**

76 שֵׁם הַוָ"ה (וְכַמְּ בוֹאָר בְּמָקוֹם אַחֵר[20] שֶׁד' עִנְיָנִים

77 אֵלּוּ (הַמְּ לֵאָה הַפְּתוּחָה הַקָּ דוֹשָׁה וְהָרְחָבָה) הֵם

78 כְּנֶגֶד ד' אוֹתִיּוֹת דְּשֵׁם הַוָ"ה), מִן הַיּו"ד שֶׁבְּשֵׁם

Havayah down to the final hei, which is drawn down from the world of Atzilus to the three worlds Beriah-Yetzirah-Asiyah, *this is the* ***seder hishtalshelus****, the ordered chain of descent. The yud is the highest and most concentrated point, the final hei the lowest and most extended; that the descent runs from one to the other and not from some midpoint is the whole meaning of "in ultimate completeness." And it does not halt at the boundary of Atzilus, where a created and separate sense of self has not yet begun, but continues into the three worlds where it has —*

79 הַוָ"ה עַד לַה' אַחֲרוֹנָה, שֶׁהִיא נִמְשֶׁכֶת מֵעוֹלָם

80 הָאֲצִילוּת לְג' עוֹלָמוֹת בְּרִיאָה־יְצִירָה־עֲשִׂיָּה,

"I created him, I formed him, indeed I made him" *— Yeshaya's three verbs, read as the three worlds: created, Beriah; formed, Yetzirah; made, Asiyah —* **and the three matters of thought, speech and action, and further, down to thought, speech and action as they plainly are, of the person who serves.** *Follow the last step carefully, because it is the maamar's destination and it is easy to slide past. First the three worlds. Then the soul's three garments — thought, speech, action — which are their counterpart within a person. And then* **בִּ פְשׁוּטָם** *as they plainly are: the actual*

81 בְּרָאתִיו יְצַרְתִּיו אַף עֲשִׂיתִיו[21], וְג' הָעִנְיָנִים

82 דְּמַחֲשָׁבָה דִּבּוּר וּמַעֲשֶׂה, וְעַד לְמַחֲשָׁבָה דִּבּוּר

83 וּמַעֲשֶׂה כְּפְשׁוּטָם שֶׁל הָאָדָם הָעוֹבֵד.

thoughts a man thinks, the actual words he says to other people, the actual things he does with his hands. The descent that began at the yud of the Name arrives there. This is where the ladder's lower end is planted, and it is the same ground from which the ascent began.

בְּתַכְלִית הַשְּׁלֵימוּת — THE DESCENT IN ULTIMATE COMPLETENESS

THE GIVING HAND	THE NAME	WORLDS	IN THE PERSON
המלאה full	י yud the point	אצילות beside; no separate self	the root of the soul
הפתוחה open	ה hei breadth	בריאה "I created him"	thought
הקדושה holy	ו vav the line downward	יצירה "I formed him"	speech
והרחבה generous, wide	ה final hei breadth at the bottom	עשייה "indeed I made him"	action
כְּפְשׁוּטָם — THE PLAIN THOUGHT, SPEECH AND ACTION OF THE PERSON SERVING			

DEEP DIVE

Shem Havayah and the four descriptions of the hand

The Name has four letters and they are read, throughout Chassidus, as a sequence of contraction and extension rather than as a set of titles. The **yud** is a point: wisdom in its first flash, before extension, the most concentrated and least revealed. The **first hei** is breadth: the point unfolded into comprehension. The **vav** is a line drawn downward: extension, the middle attributes carrying what was comprehended toward another. The **final hei** is breadth again, but at the bottom: the point of reception, where what has descended becomes available to the recipient on the recipient's own terms. Read as a whole, the four letters say one thing: that influence given from the highest source reaches the lowest place *without ceasing to be what it was*. That is why the maamar names the yud and the final hei specifically rather than saying "through the Name." The claim is about the span. And this is what licenses the mapping onto the four descriptions of the hand. המלאה — full — speaks of the source's inexhaustibility. הפתוחה — open — that nothing withholds it. הקדושה — holy — that it remains what it is even in descending, without being coarsened by the places it passes through. והרחבה — generous, wide — that it arrives in breadth at the bottom. Four aspects of one giving, and four letters of one Name, and the same idea in both: a fullness that survives the whole distance.

DEEP DIVE

Atzilus and the three worlds — and why the descent must not stop at the boundary

Atzilus, from אצל — beside — is the world of emanation: attributes are already distinct there, yet nothing in it experiences itself as a separate existence. It is, in the classic phrase, still one with the light. Below it the three worlds begin, and the boundary between Atzilus and Beriah is the most significant divide in the whole chain, because it is where a sense of self enters. **Beriah** — creation, and specifically יש מאין — is where the first consciousness of self appears. **Yetzirah** — formation — is where existence takes definite shape and limit. **Asiyah** — action — is the lowest, and includes the physical universe we call "the world." Yeshaya's three verbs are read onto these three, and the reading is not decorative: בראתיו יצרתיו אף עשיתיו, with ולכבודי preceding them as Atzilus. Why does the maamar insist on carrying the descent past this boundary and then past the worlds altogether, into a man's plain thought, speech and action? Because a drawing-down that stopped anywhere higher would not be בתכלית השלימות. Completeness, here, is measured by how low the thing reaches, not by how high it originates. The three garments of the soul — thought, speech and action, which the Alter Rebbe describes in Tanya as the soul's instruments of expression, donned and shed at will — are the last stage of the chain, and כפשוטם, their plain

everyday operation, is the floor. This is the same logic that will govern the final section. A redemption that were only spiritual, or only eventual, would be the descent halted at a boundary. מיד ממש, על פי הלכה is כפשוטם applied to the Geulah.

SUMMARY

The descent is in ultimate completeness: from a hand that is full, open, holy and generous, through the four letters of the Name from the yud to the final hei, from Atzilus into Beriah-Yetzirah-Asiyah, and down into the plain thought, speech and action of the person serving.

SECTION 11

וְזֶהוּ — The Verse Read Back, with the Baal Shem Tov

printed lines 84–95

BEFORE WE READ

The maamar now returns to the opening verse and reads its clauses in order as the two motions it has established. This is the וזהו — the moment a maamar says: *and this is what the verse was saying all along.*

84 וְזֶהוּ וְהָיָה כִּי תָבוֹא אֶל הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר ה׳ אֱלֹקֶיךָ

85 נוֹתֵן לְךָ נַחֲלָה וִירִשְׁתָּהּ וְיָשַׁבְתָּ בָּהּ,

86 וִידוּעָה תּוֹרַת הַבַּעַל־שֵׁם־טוֹב עַל הַפָּסוּק[22],

And this is *the meaning of* **"and it shall be, when you come into the land which Havayah your G-d is giving you as an inheritance, and you shall take possession of it and dwell in it"** *— the same words as line 1, now to be read with everything the maamar has built —* **and the teaching of the Baal Shem Tov on the verse is well known,**

87 שֶׁוְּהָיָה כִּי תָבוֹא אֶל הָאָרֶץ, הִנֵּה אֶרֶץ יֵשׁ בָּהּ ב׳

88 פֵּירוּשִׁים, לָשׁוֹן מְרוּצָה[23] וּמִלְּשׁוֹן שֶׁרָצְתָה

89 לַעֲשׂוֹת רְצוֹן קוֹנָהּ[24], שֶׁזֶּהוּ בְּחִינַת הַהַעֲלָאָה

90 מִלְּמַטָּה לְמַעְלָה. וְזֶה נִמְשָׁךְ אַחַר־כָּךְ בְּאוֹפֶן שֶׁל

that "and it shall be when you come into the land" — behold, "אֶרֶץ" has two interpretations in it: an expression of "running" (מְרוּצָה, *from* רץ, *to run — the land is named for haste, for motion),* **and from the expression "that she desired to do the will of her Maker"** *— the midrashic reading in which* ארצ *is heard as* רצון, *will and desire; the earth is called* ארץ *because she wanted to carry out her Maker's will —* **which is the aspect of the elevation from below to above.** *Both readings give the same vector. Running is motion out of where one is; desire is reaching for what one lacks. And the maamar's own note is worth registering: the vision of the Merkavah uses* רצוא ושוב *— running and returning — where the running is a cleaving upward so intense it verges on expiry, and the returning is the descent back into vessels. The two motions are already inside the word* ארץ *—* **And this is drawn down afterwards in a manner of**

91 הִתְיַשְּׁבוּת, וְיָשַׁבְתָּ בָּהּ, וְעַד שֶׁנִּמְשָׁךְ אוֹרוֹת

92 בְּכֵלִים, וּכְמוֹ שֶׁמַּמְשִׁיךְ וְשַׂמְתָּ בַּטֶּנֶא, שֶׁבִּפְשַׁטּוּת

settling — "and you shall dwell in it" — and to the point that lights are drawn down into vessels, *and here the verse's third and fourth clauses do their work. First* **וְיָשַׁבְתָּ בָּהּ** *and you shall dwell: the opposite of running. Running belongs to what is still lacking; dwelling is what happens when a thing has been received and absorbed and is at rest. So the verse itself records the sequence — first the ascent of desire, then the settled descent —* **and as** *the verse* **continues, "and you shall place them in a basket," which in plain terms**

93 הֵם הַכֵּלִים, וּבִפְרָט עַל־פִּי הַיָּדוּעַ[25] שֶׁטֶּנֶא רָאשֵׁי־

94 תֵּבוֹת טְעָמִים נְקוּדוֹת אוֹתִיּוֹת, שֶׁהוּא בְּחִינַת

95 הַמְשָׁכָה מִלְּמַעְלָה לְמַטָּה.

are the vessels; and in particular according to what is known, that "טֶנֶא" is an acronym for טְעָמִים נְקוּדוֹת אוֹתִיּוֹת — cantillation marks, vowels, letters — which is the aspect of drawing down from above to below. *The reading is from the Maggid of Mezritch, and it closes the maamar's argument at the level of the verse's own vocabulary. A basket is a container: the plainest possible image of a vessel that holds. And the three*

components of the written word are exactly the apparatus by which something too high to be grasped becomes graspable: the notes carry the melody and the sense, the vowels give the consonants voice, the letters hold the whole so it can be read. The wisdom that was above descends through them into a form a human mind can receive. The fruits went up in a basket; the light comes down in one.

DEEP DIVE

מרוצה — ארץ and רצון: the Baal Shem Tov's reading

The Baal Shem Tov's teaching turns on hearing two words inside one. אֶרֶץ shares its consonantal core with רץ — to run — and with רצון — will, desire. Both are readings of motion, and both locate that motion in the lower world. The second reading has a midrashic pedigree: the earth is called ארץ שרצתה לעשות רצון קונה — because she desired to do the will of her Maker. What is startling in it, and what the Baal Shem Tov is drawing out, is that the desire is attributed to the earth itself. Not to the people on it and not to something above it. The lowest element of creation is named for its wanting. That is why the word can carry the העלאה of the whole maamar. If ארץ means the desire of what is lowest to do the will of its Maker, then "when you come into the land" is not a change of address. It is the arrival at that desire — and the reason the mitzvah could be hung on the coming, and be operative in that coming, and be the merit by which the coming happens. And note the honesty of the structure the maamar preserves. Running and desire are both motions of lack: one runs because one is not yet there, one desires because one does not yet have. That is genuine and it is where *avodah* starts — but it is not the end, which is why the verse does not stop there. וישבת בה follows.

DEEP DIVE

Orot and kelim, Tohu and Tikkun — what "settling" means

The phrase אורות בכלים, lights within vessels, names one of the central structures of Lurianic Kabbalah as it is developed in Chassidus, and the maamar leans on it at line 91 without spelling it out. A **light** is revelation, illumination, an influence. A **vessel** is what holds a light in a defined, bounded, absorbable way. The relation between them determines whether an illumination is usable. In the world of **Tohu** the lights are very great and the vessels few and narrow. The result is not abundance but breakage: the lights are not contained, not established, and the vessels shatter. Intensity without capacity is not a higher state; it is an unstable one. In the worlds of **Tikkun** — rectification — the lights settle into vessels. Less blaze, but the light stays. It can be worked with, transmitted, lived in. This is exactly what וישבת בה adds to the verse, and why the maamar glosses "settling" as internal absorption — as against running or wanting, which are about yearning for something one lacks and are therefore, by their nature, unsettled. A soul in the motion of רצון is reaching; a soul in התישבות is holding. And it explains the whole arc of the four clauses of the opening verse: **כי תבוא** — the coming, the running, the desire; **נחלה וירשתה** — what is given and taken hold of; **וישבת בה** — the settling, lights within vessels; **ושמת בטנא** — the vessel named outright.

DEEP DIVE

טנא — טעמים, נקודות, אותיות: how something too high to grasp becomes readable

The acronym is the Maggid's, and it is more than wordplay: the three elements it names are, in Chassidus, the standard analysis of how a supernal wisdom becomes available to a lower intellect. **טעמים** — the cantillation marks — are the highest of the three and the least tied to the letter. They carry melody, phrasing, and the sense of a verse: how it is to be sung, where it breaks, what governs what. In this analysis they correspond to תעם in its other meaning — taste, delight — the level at which something is savoured rather than merely known. **נקודות** — the vowels — sit below the notes and above the letters, and they are what give the consonants voice. A vowelless word is a skeleton with many possible readings; the points fix it and let it be pronounced. **אותיות** — the letters — are the lowest and the most fixed, and precisely for that reason the most transmissible. They can be written down, handed on, and read by someone who was not present. Taken together they are a mechanism of descent: the same wisdom, first as delight and melody, then as voiced sound, finally as a fixed shape on a page that a human brain can comprehend. Which is why the maamar can say that טנא is בחינת המשכה

מלמעלה למטה. The basket the farmer carries up the road to Yerushalayim turns out to be the same word as the vessel by which the Torah comes down into letters.

SUMMARY

The opening verse, read back: כי תבוא אל הארץ is the ascent — ארץ as running and as desire to do the Maker's will; וישבת בה is the settled descent, lights within vessels; and ושמת בטנא names the vessel outright — טנא as טעמים, נקודות, אותיות, the apparatus by which what is above becomes readable below.

SECTION 12

וְיִהִי־רָצוֹן — The Closing Request

printed lines 96–109

BEFORE WE READ

A maamar closes by turning what it has explained into a request. Here the request is that the verse be fulfilled כפשוטו — in its plain sense — and the maamar returns, deliberately, to the two words it began with: והיה and מיד.

96 וְיִהִי־רָצוֹן שֶׁזֶּה יָבִיא אֶת הַבְּרָכָה הַכִּי גְּדוֹלָה,

97 כַּאֲשֶׁר יְקוּיִם עִנְיַן כִּי תָבוֹא אֶל

98 הָאָרֶץ כְּפְשׁוּטוֹ, בִּבְיַאת מָשִׁיחַ צִדְקֵנוּ יָבוֹא

99 וְיִגְאָלֵנוּ וְיוֹלִיכֵנוּ קוֹמְמִיוּת לְאַרְצֵנוּ וּבַעֲגָלָא

100 דִּיַדַן, וּבִפְרָט עַל־יְדֵי מִצְוַת הַתְּפִלָּה שֶׁכְּנֶגֶד

And may it be His will that this bring the greatest of blessings, when the matter of "when you come into the land" is fulfilled in its plain sense — *and* **כְּפְשׁוּטוֹ** *is the operative word, and it is the same principle that governed line 83. The maamar has spent a hundred lines on the inner dimension of coming into the land; it does not conclude that the inner dimension is what the verse really meant instead. It asks for the plain one* — **with the coming of Moshiach our righteous one; he will come and redeem us and lead us upright to our land, and speedily in our days,** — **וּבַעֲגָלָא דִּ יַדַן** *speedily in our own time* — **and in particular by means of the mitzvah of prayer, which corresponds to**

101 בִּיכּוּרִים, אֲשֶׁר עַל מִצְוַת הַבִּיכּוּרִים אָמְרוּ[26] עֲשֵׂה

102 מִצְוָה זוֹ שֶׁבִּשְׁבִילָהּ תִּכָּנֵס לָאָרֶץ, וּבְאוֹפֶן כְּפֵירוּשׁ

103 הַסִּפְרִי[27], וְהָיָה כִּי תָבוֹא מִיָּד, וְכִלְשׁוֹן

104 הָרַמְבַּ"ם[28] הִבְטִיחָה תּוֹרָה שֶׁסּוֹף יִשְׂרָאֵל לַעֲשׂוֹת

105 תְּשׁוּבָה כוּ' וּמִיָּד הֵן נִגְאָלִין, מִיָּד מַמָּ ש, עַל־פִּי

bikkurim — concerning which mitzvah of bikkurim they said "perform this mitzvah, for in its merit you will enter the land" *the Sifri from line 11, now returning as the answer rather than the difficulty. If the mitzvah is the merit by which one enters, and if prayer is that mitzvah in its spiritual dimension, then prayer is the merit by which we enter now* — **and in the manner of the Sifri's explanation: "and it shall be when you come" — immediately;** *the second word from the opening also returns* — **and in the language of the Rambam, "the Torah has promised that Israel will in the end do teshuvah, and so on, and immediately they are redeemed" — immediately, literally, according to halachah,** *and this is the maamar's last and hardest insistence. It does not soften* מיד *into "soon." It presses it in the opposite direction:* **מִיָּד מַמָּ ש, עַל־פִּי הֲלָכָה** *— immediately in the literal sense, and by the measure halachah itself uses for immediacy, eighteen or twenty-four minutes. Not an era. A quantity of minutes.*

106 הֲלָכָה[29], וְאָז יִהְיֶה שְׁלֵימוּת הַתּוֹרָה וּשְׁלֵימוּת

107 הָעָם וּשְׁלֵימוּת הָאָרֶץ, וְתִהְיֶה הֲבָאַת בִּיכּוּרִים

108 בְּבֵית הַמִּ קְדָּ ש הַשְּׁלִישִׁי, מִקְדָּ ש אד' כּוֹנְנוּ

109 יָדֶיךָ[30], בִּמְהֵרָה בְיָמֵינוּ מַמָּ ש.

and then there will be the completeness of the Torah, the completeness of the people and the completeness of the land, *the three* שלימות*, and the ordering is not casual — Torah, people, land: the same descent from what is highest through those who receive it to the place in which it is lived* — **and the bringing of bikkurim will take place in the third Beis HaMikdash — "the Sanctuary, Havayah, which Your hands established"** — *and* **כּוֹנְנוּ יָדֶיךָ**, *Your hands established, refers to the third Mikdash, which will be built from Above. So the maamar ends where it began, on the same verse*

and the same mitzvah, with one difference: the bikkurim are being brought — **speedily in our days, literally.** ממש. *The last word of the maamar is the word it has been defending for a hundred lines: that a drawing-down which is* בתכלית השלימות *does not stop above, and neither does this one.*

DEEP DIVE

Why the maamar ends on כפשוטו and ממש

It is worth noticing what the closing section does *not* do, because it is the opposite of what a reader trained on general mysticism would expect. Having demonstrated at length that bikkurim has a spiritual dimension operative even in exile, the maamar does not conclude that the spiritual dimension is sufficient, or that the physical fulfilment is a symbol of it. It asks for the physical fulfilment, in a built Mikdash, with actual fruit, כפשוטו. This is the same principle the maamar established structurally at lines 79–83, and it is the reason those lines matter beyond their own subject. A descent is complete in proportion to how low it reaches. Light that stops in Atzilus has not fully descended; a Torah insight that stops in contemplation and does not reach מחשבה דיבור ומעשה כפשוטם has not fully descended; and a redemption understood only spiritually or only eventually is a descent halted at a boundary. Hence the insistence on מיד ממש, על פי הלכה. The Rebbe is not intensifying a hope; he is applying the maamar's own criterion of completeness to its final subject. And the choice of the halachic measure of מיד — eighteen or twenty-four minutes, the same measure by which we judge whether dough has become chametz — makes the point unmistakable: this is a quantity, not a mood.

DEEP DIVE

The three שלימות, and prayer as the merit

Two closing details reward attention. First, the three completenesses — שלימות התורה, שלימות העם, שלימות הארץ — are given in that order, which traces the same descent the maamar has been mapping: Torah, which comes from above; the people, who receive it; the land, in which it is lived and which is lowest and last. The completeness of the land is not an afterthought in the list; by the maamar's own logic it is the measure of whether the other two arrived. Second, and practically: the maamar says the Geulah will come בפרט על ידי מצות התפלה שכנגד ביכורים — in particular by means of the mitzvah of prayer, which corresponds to bikkurim. Trace the reasoning back and it is tight. The Sifri said: do this mitzvah, for in its merit you will enter the land. Bikkurim cannot presently be done. But bikkurim in its spiritual dimension is prayer, and prayer can be done now, three times a day, by anyone. Therefore the mitzvah in whose merit one enters the land is available today, and its performance is not a preparation for the entry but the merit that effects it. Which is why a maamar that opened with a difficulty about fourteen years of waiting closes on the word ממש.

SUMMARY

The closing request returns to והיה and מיד. The Sifri's "perform this mitzvah, for in its merit you will enter the land" now reads as: pray, and by that merit come into the land — כפשוטו, in a third Mikdash, with the bikkurim brought, מיד ממש by the measure of halachah.

Glossary

בִּכּוּרִים	Bikkurim	First-ripened fruits of the seven species, brought up to the Beis HaMikdash and handed to a kohen with a fixed declaration. Obligatory only after the conquest and apportioning of the land.
חַלָּה	Challah	The portion separated from dough. The separation itself permits the remaining dough — no delivery required. The maamar's counter-case to bikkurim.
הַפְרָשָׁה	Hafrashah	Separation — a mitzvah whose effect is accomplished by lifting a portion out of a mass.
הֲבָאָה	Hava'ah	Bringing — a mitzvah accomplished only by carrying to a destination and being received there.
הַעֲלָאָה	Haala'ah	Elevation, from below upward. Movement initiated by the created being's own labour. Also אתערותא דלתתא.
הַמְשָׁכָה	Hamshachah	Drawing down, from above downward. Movement whose source is above and which arrives here. Also אתערותא דלעילא.
מְיָד	Miyad	Immediately. In halachic usage a measured quantity — eighteen or twenty-four minutes — not a loose intensifier.
סוּלָם	Sulam	The ladder of Yaakov's dream, read as prayer: planted on the ground, reaching heaven, carrying traffic both ways.
תְּפִלָּה	Tefillah	Prayer. From תופל — to bond or plaster — hence connection: the soul bound into its root in G-dliness.
קָרְבָּן	Korban	Offering. From קרוב — to draw near. The instrument by which the one bringing it came close.
מֵרֵאשִׁית	Mereishis	From the first — first in time and first in quality; the choicest portion.
שֵׁם הַוָיָ'	Shem Havayah	The four-letter Name. Read as a sequence of contraction and extension: yud (point), hei (breadth), vav (line downward), final hei (breadth at the bottom).
אֲצִילוּת	Atzilus	Emanation, from אצל — beside. Attributes are distinct, yet nothing experiences itself as separate existence.
בְּרִיאָה	Beriah	Creation — יש מאין; where a consciousness of self first appears.
יְצִירָה	Yetzirah	Formation — where existence takes definite shape and limit.
עֲשִׂיָּה	Asiyah	Action — the lowest world, including the physical universe.
אוֹרוֹת וּכֵלִים	Orot u'Kelim	Lights and vessels. A light is revelation; a vessel is what holds it in bounded, absorbable form.
תוֹהוּ / תִּקּוּן	Tohu / Tikkun	In Tohu the lights are great and the vessels few, so they shatter. In Tikkun the lights settle into vessels and remain usable.
הִתְיַשְׁבוּת	Hisyashvus	Settling, internal absorption — as against running or wanting, which are motions of lack.
טֶנֶא	Tene	The basket of bikkurim; read as an acronym for טְעָמִים נְקוּדוֹת אוֹתִיּוֹת — the apparatus of descent into readable form.
הִתְבּוֹנְנוּת	Hisbonenus	Sustained contemplation — the labour of the mind that draws the heart after it in prayer.
הַנָּחָה	Hanachah	

A transcription of a discourse as delivered, taken down by listeners. בלתי מוגה means it was not reviewed and edited by the speaker.

The maamar's footnote apparatus

Transcribed as printed on the final page of the source, keyed to the printed line on which each marker falls.

FN	AS PRINTED	REFERENCE	STATUS	NOTE
1 L2	פרשתנו כז, א ואילך.	Our parshah, 27:1 ff.	AS CITED	*So printed in the source. The bikkurim passage under discussion is Devarim 26:1 ff.; the chapter numeral as printed appears to be a typesetting slip. Reproduced here as printed rather than silently corrected.*
2 L4	ראה המשך תער"ב ח"א ע' קיב. וכ"מ.	See Hemshech Taarav, vol. 1, p. 112; and in many places.	AS CITED	*Hemshech Taarav (5672–5680) — the Rashab's great hemshech, a separate work from Hemshech Samach Vov. Page locator not independently verified here.*
3 L6	קידושין לז, ב.	Kiddushin 37b.	VERIFIED	*The sugya deriving that where Scripture says "coming" without qualification it means after inheritance and settlement — and that bikkurim is among the mitzvos so governed.*
4 L7	עה"פ.	On the verse.	AS CITED	*Rashi ad loc. (Devarim 26:1), who brings the Kiddushin derivation onto the verse itself.*
5 L11	עה"פ שם.	On the verse there.	AS CITED	*The Sifri on Devarim 26:1 — "אין והיה אלא מיד."*
6 L15	ראה לקו"ש חי"ט ע' 603 בהערה.	See Likkutei Sichos vol. 19, p. 603, in the note.	AS CITED	*Volume and page as printed; not independently verified here.*
7 L18	ספרי ופרש"י שלח טו, יח.	Sifri and Rashi, Shelach 15:18.	VERIFIED	*The* בבאכם *derivation for challah — obligation from the moment of arrival, unlike the other "comings."*
8 L20	ירושלמי חלה פ"ב ה"א.	Yerushalmi Challah 2:1.	AS CITED	*The locus for the view that even dough found already in the land was obligated.*
9 L22	ראה אנציקלופדי' תלמודית ערך חלה. וש"נ.	See Encyclopedia Talmudis, entry "Challah"; and sources cited there.	AS CITED	
10 L30	תנחומא פרשתנו א. הובא באוה"ת דלקמן.	Tanchuma, our parshah, §1. Brought in Ohr HaTorah cited below.	VERIFIED	*Midrash Tanchuma Ki Savo 1 — Moshe foresaw the churban and the cessation of bikkurim, and instituted three daily prayers.*
11 L36	ראה שו"ע אדה"ז או"ח סצ"ח ס"ד. וכ"מ.	See Shulchan Aruch HaRav, Orach Chayim 98:4; and in many places.	VERIFIED	*The Alter Rebbe on prayer patterned after the korbanos — fixed place, standing, no partition, designated garments.*
12 L41	פרשתנו ע' תתרלט.	Our parshah, p. 1639.	AS CITED	*Ohr HaTorah (Tzemach Tzedek), Devarim / Ki Savo, page as printed. Not independently verified here.*
13 L43	פרשתנו שם, ה.	Our parshah there, verse 5.	VERIFIED	*Devarim 26:5 —* ועניתּ ואמרת, ארמי אובד אבי.
14 L52	פרשתנו שם, ג.	Our parshah there, verse 3.	VERIFIED	*Devarim 26:3 —* הגדתי היום לה' אלקיך.

PREPARED BY
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15 L56	לשון הכתוב - ויצא כח, יב. וראה ד"ה ויחלום תש"ח. ובכ"מ.	The language of the verse — Vayeitzei 28:12. And see the maamar "Vayachalom" 5708; and in many places.	VERIFIED	*Bereishis 28:12 — Yaakov's ladder. The maamar reference is as printed.*
16 L65	סוף הלכות איסורי מזבח.	End of Hilchos Issurei Mizbeiach.	VERIFIED	*Rambam, Hilchos Issurei Mizbeiach 7:11 — whatever is for the sake of the Good must be of the best.*
17 L66	ויקרא ג, טז.	Vayikra 3:16.	VERIFIED	כל חלב לה' — *all choicest fat is for Havayah.*
18 L71	ראה ברכות כח, ב.	See Berachos 28b.	VERIFIED	*On knowing before Whom one stands in prayer.*
19 L75	לשון ברכה ג' דברהמ"ז.	The language of the third blessing of Birkas HaMazon.	VERIFIED	מידך המלאה הפתוחה הקדושה והרחבה.
20 L76	ראה לקו"ש ח"כ ע' 576 הערה 20.	See Likkutei Sichos vol. 20, p. 576, note 20.	AS CITED	*Where the four descriptions of the "hand" are mapped to the four letters of the Name.*
21 L81	לשון הכתוב ישעי' מג, ז.	The language of the verse, Yeshaya 43:7.	VERIFIED	בראתיו יצרתיו אף עשיתיו — *the three verbs read as Beriah, Yetzirah, Asiyah.*
22 L86	הובא בשיחת שמע"צ תרצ"ז. וראה לקו"ש שיחת ח"י אלול ש.ז. ס"ה. וש"נ.	Brought in the sichah of Shemini Atzeres 5697. And see Likkutei Sichos, the sichah of Chai Elul of this year, §5; and sources there.	AS CITED	*The Baal Shem Tov's teaching on* ארצ *as transmitted in the Chabad sichah literature. References as printed.*
23 L88	ב"ר פ"ה, ח.	Bereishis Rabbah 5:8.	AS CITED	*The midrash reading* ארצ *as* שרצתה לעשות רצון קונה.
24 L89	נסמן בלקו"ש שם הערה 52.	Referenced in Likkutei Sichos there, note 52.	AS CITED	
25 L93	או"ת להה"מ ר"פ תבוא.	Ohr Torah of the Maggid, beginning of Parshas Tavo.	AS CITED	*The Maggid of Mezritch on* טנא *and the* ושמת בטנא *acronym.*
26 L101	ספרי ריש פרשתנו.	Sifri, beginning of our parshah.	AS CITED	*"Do this mitzvah, for in its merit you will enter the land."*
27 L103	שם. וראה לקו"ש חי"ט ע' 5 שבהערה.	Ibid. And see Likkutei Sichos vol. 19, p. 5, in the note.	AS CITED	
28 L104	הל' תשובה פ"ו ה"ה.	Hilchos Teshuvah 7:5.	VERIFIED	*Rambam — the Torah's assurance that Israel will repent at the close of exile and be immediately redeemed.*
29 L106	ראה שד"ח כללים כרך ג' תקמז, א.	See Sdei Chemed, Klalim, vol. 3, 547a.	AS CITED	*On the halachic measure of "immediately" (מיד). Locator as printed.*
30 L109	בשלח טו, יז.	Beshalach 15:17.	VERIFIED	מקדש אד' כוננו ידיך.

Colophon

SOURCE

Maamar וְהָיָה כִּי תָבוֹא אֶל הָאָרֶץ, Shabbos Parshas Ki Sovoi, 18 Elul 5743. Hanachah bilti mugah, as published in Dvar Malchus for Parshas Ki Sovoi 5773. Hebrew transcribed line-by-line from rasterized images of the printed source; printed line numbers 1–109 preserved.

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