בס״ד

RESHIMU

SPECIAL EDITION · THE CHOSSON'S MAAMAR

לכה דודי

לקראת כלה · פני שבת נקבלה

"Come, my Beloved, to greet the bride"

A maamar of the Lubavitcher Rebbe · Shabbos Parshas Ki Seitzei, 13 Elul 5714 (1954)

✦ ✦ ✦

Said for a wedding. Meant for every home.

RESHIMU EDITION

Hebrew and English · explained from the beginning

The chosson's maamar

What a groom says before his chuppah — and why it is worth learning before he says it

At a Chabad wedding, before the chuppah, the chosson sits at the head of a table surrounded by family, friends and rabbis, and says a *maamar* — a discourse of Chassidus. It is customary for chassanim to repeat the maamar **Lecha Dodi**, the one the Frierdiker Rebbe said at the Rebbe's own wedding in Kislev 5689 (1928). Some chassanim repeat **this** maamar as well: the Rebbe's explanation of that wedding discourse, said twenty-five years later.[1]

Why a maamar of Chassidus, and not a halachic lecture or a speech? The Frierdiker Rebbe answered that question himself, in the words with which he opened Lecha Dodi at the Rebbe's wedding. At a wedding, he said, the souls of the couple's ancestors come from the World of Truth, up to three generations back and sometimes more. As an invitation to the souls of the Rebbeim to come to the chuppah and bless the couple, we say Chassidus — a teaching drawn from each of them. And "one who repeats a teaching in the name of its author should see him as if he were standing before him."[2]

SO A CHOSSON'S MAAMAR IS AN INVITATION

When a chosson says Lecha Dodi, he is not performing. He is calling the Rebbeim, and his own grandparents, to his chuppah — and he is putting into words, in front of everyone he loves, the Torah on which his home will stand.

Why this maamar fits the moment

Lecha Dodi is about exactly what happens under a chuppah. It explains how a giver and a receiver become one: first an outer closeness, then an inner one — and then the surprise, that the one who receives turns out to give back more than he received. In plain terms, it is a description of a marriage. *(That is our reading of why the custom chose this maamar; the maamar itself says it applies "especially to a chosson and kallah below.")*

And it is personal. The Rebbe said this maamar on 13 Elul 5714, the wedding anniversary of his father-in-law, in the twenty-fifth year of his own marriage. A groom of twenty-five years went back to the Torah that was said for him and his bride, and showed how much was inside it. He later edited the maamar himself, and it was published for 14 Kislev 5739, the fiftieth anniversary of his wedding.[3]

For a chosson preparing to say it

Learn it, don't memorize it.
Start weeks before the wedding, with a mashpia, your father or a friend. Go section by section until you could explain each one in your own words. A maamar you understand is said differently.

Say it slowly.
No one is timing you. The Frierdiker Rebbe's instruction was to see the author as if he stood before you. Say each phrase as something addressed to someone.

Take it home.
The maamar is not used up at the chuppah. Learn it again with your kallah in the first weeks of marriage — the "For a new home" boxes in this booklet are written for that — and again on your anniversary.

Said for a wedding. Meant for every home.

The maamar itself refuses to stay under the chuppah

It would be easy to file Lecha Dodi under "for chassanim." The maamar does not allow it. Read its last section closely: after explaining how the groom and bride are united Above, the Rebbe says, **"and as it is Above... so it is with every giver and receiver."** Only then does he add, **"and especially with a chosson and kallah below."** Especially — not only. §ו · p. 27

The rest of the maamar says the same thing in other ways. Its two parables are a teacher and his students §ב · p. 14 and a father with his baby §ג · p. 17. Its middle section is about every person's morning prayer and the first word of every day §ד · p. 19. Its last movement is about every Shabbos §ו · p. 25. And its title is a song every Jewish community sings every Friday night. This is Torah about being close to someone, and that is everybody's business.

Here is the pattern, laid over the relationships most of us actually live in:

RELATIONSHIP	STEP ONE · GO TOWARD	STEP TWO · TAKE IN	THE SURPRISE
Parent & child	Get down to their height; play, listen, praise.	Give what they can make their own: a value, a habit, a mitzvah.	You become a better person through raising them.
Teacher & student	Warmth first — a story, a smile, a joke.	The lesson they truly understand.	"From my students, more than from all."
Friends	Show up; be present at their simchas and their hard days.	Real conversation; shared learning; honest advice.	The friend you helped is the one who carries you later.
At work	Respect, encouragement, a clear welcome for a new colleague.	Skills and responsibility they can own.	The people you trained end up improving your work.
A shliach & a community	The open door, the Shabbos table, the warm greeting.	Torah learned, mitzvos taken on as their own.	The community's growth becomes the shliach's strength.
A person & G-d	Prayer: the morning's closeness.	G-dliness drawn into eating, working, speaking.	"Much produce by the strength of the ox."

HOW TO USE THIS BOOKLET

Each section ends with two practical boxes: **For everyone** and **For a new home**. A chosson and kallah can read both. Everyone else can read the first and borrow from the second: a home is not only a marriage, and every one of us is building one.

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

How to learn it

The page. In each section the original Hebrew is on the right and the English on the left, passage facing passage. If you read Hebrew, try the Hebrew first, even slowly.

TWO VOICES IN THE ENGLISH

Bold type is the maamar itself, a faithful translation of the Hebrew. *Lighter italic type is explanation* added to help you follow. Read only the bold and you have what the Rebbe said; read both and you have it taught.

Before you read
What to look for, in plain language.

Key point
The one idea to carry out of the section.

Living it
For everyone, and for a new home.

Summary
The section in two or three sentences.

Pacing. The maamar has seven short sections. A chosson can learn one a day in the week before his wedding. A couple, a family or a shiur can take one a week on Shabbos and finish in seven weeks.

Pointers. Tags like §ז · p. 19 tell you where in the maamar an idea lives, with its page. The front pages point into the text, and the text points back, so you can always find your place.

The names. The speaker is the Lubavitcher Rebbe, Rabbi Menachem M. Schneerson (1902–1994). He calls his predecessor and father-in-law, Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak Schneersohn (1880–1950), “my father-in-law, the Rebbe”; Chassidim call him the Frierdiker Rebbe. Other teachers are introduced as they appear.

OVERVIEW

The idea, in plain words

Why a love song for Shabbos is a guide to every relationship

On Friday evening we turn toward the door and sing to G-d: *Come, my Beloved, let us go out to greet the bride.* The "bride" is Shabbos; in a deeper sense she is the Jewish people; and the "Beloved," the groom, is G-d Himself. Jewish tradition has always described the bond between G-d and His people as a marriage — which means that what is true of that bond teaches us about every bond on earth.

The maamar notices that the song describes **two different moments**:

STEP ONE · THE OUTER

לכה דודי לקראת כלה

"Come… to greet the bride." A *going toward*. Nothing has yet passed between them, but she is lifted, honored, drawn close.

→

STEP TWO · THE INNER

פני שבת

"The face of Shabbos." Face to face. Something real is given and truly taken in, and her own inner self comes to light.

→

THE SURPRISE

נקבלה

"Let *us* receive." The giver receives too.

Step one is everything that surrounds a person without yet entering them: attention, honor, celebration, a warm word, a hand reaching down. Chassidus calls this kind of giving *makif*, "surrounding." The Rebbe insists it is not shallow. It is *too big* to be absorbed, which is exactly why it stays outside. A wedding is like that: more love and joy in one evening than anyone can take in.

Step two is quieter: giving that is measured to the other person, that they actually absorb and make their own. Chassidus calls this *pnimi*, "inner." It looks smaller. But the Rebbe shows that only this kind of closeness reaches the *essence* of the giver and of the receiver.

And then the surprise. The one who receives is not an empty vessel. Her root, the maamar says, is actually *higher* than the giver's; it is simply hidden, and the giver's love is what brings it out. Once it is revealed, the direction turns around: the student teaches the teacher, Shabbos blesses the week that prepared it, and אשת חיל עטרת בעלה, "a woman of valor is her husband's crown."

A map of the seven sections

Seven short sections. Each tag takes you to its page.

א **The groom, the bride, and the order of giving.** G-d and the Jewish people are groom and bride. All giving has two steps: outer, then inner. read it · p. 11

ב **First parable: the teacher's joke.** A great teacher opens with a joke. The joke opens the heart; the lesson enters it. read it · p. 14

ג **Second parable: the father lifts his child.** A father bends down and lifts his child, so that they can be face to face. read it · p. 17

ד **In avodah: prayer and the first word of the day.** Morning prayer, and how the first word of the day carries into everything after. read it · p. 19

ה **Above: why Malchus rises over Z"A.** The secret: the receiver's root is higher than the giver's. Giving reveals it. read it · p. 22

ו **Shabbos: the queen who receives, the day that blesses.** Shabbos receives from the week, and then blesses the week. read it · p. 25

ז **Lecha Dodi, read whole, and the bride below.** The song, read word by word. "Let *us* receive." Every giver and receiver; especially a chosson and kallah. read it · p. 27

A short guide to the language of Chassidus

Eight ideas, in everyday terms. Come back to this page whenever a word is unfamiliar.

Giver and receiver משפיע ומקבל

Mashpia and *mekabel*. Chassidus sees one pattern in every relationship where something flows from one to another: G-d and the world, teacher and student, parent and child, husband and wife. Learn the pattern in one and you understand them all.

first appears in §א · p. 11

Surrounding and inner מקיף ופנימי

Makif: something too large to absorb, which affects you from outside, like inspiration or the atmosphere of a wedding. *Pnimi*: something sized to you, which you take in and which becomes part of you, like an idea you truly understand.

first appears in §א · p. 11

The groom and the bride above ז"א ומלכות

Z"A (Ze'ir Anpin) is the name for G-d's attributes of the heart (kindness, strength, compassion), the "groom" who gives. *Malchus*, "kingship," is the "bride" who receives: the Divine presence in the world, and the soul of the Jewish people. Shabbos is Malchus.

first appears in §א · p. 11

Father and mother above אבא ואמא

Abba and *Imma*: wisdom and understanding, the flash of an idea and its development. They are called the "parents" because feelings are born from thought.

first appears in §א · p. 11

The chain of worlds השתלשלות

Hishtalshelus, literally "chaining down": the orderly way Divine light descends step by step until there is a physical world. To be "above hishtalshelus" is to be beyond that whole system of measure.

first appears in §ג · p. 17

The Thirteen Attributes of Mercy י"ג מדות הרחמים

The thirteen qualities of Divine compassion revealed to Moshe ("Hashem, Hashem, merciful and gracious..."). Kabbalah pictures them as the thirteen locks of a beard: mercy that flows from beyond all calculation.

first appears in §ג · p. 17

The crown and its inner depth כתר · עתיק · רדל"א

Kesser, "crown," is what is above the mind: G-d's will and delight. Its inner dimension is *Atik*, "the Ancient One," and its innermost point is *Radla*, "the unknowable head." Think of it as the difference between what a person wants and who a person is.

first appears in §ה · p. 22

The lower worlds, and refining בי״ע · בירורים

BY"A is shorthand for the three lower spiritual worlds, down to ours. *Birurim*, "siftings," is our weekday work: using physical things (food, money, time) for a good and holy purpose, and so drawing out the spark of good inside them.

first appears in §1 · p. 25

A WORD ABOUT THE "SEFIROS"

Kabbalah describes ten *sefiros*, ten channels through which the infinite G-d relates to a finite world, mirrored in the ten powers of the human soul. They are not separate beings and not parts of G-d; they are ways His one light is expressed, as a single person can be wise, kind and firm. When the maamar speaks of one sefirah "giving" to another, think of how a feeling in the heart becomes a word in the mouth.

Ten ways to live this maamar

Five for everyone, five for a new home. Each grows out of a line in the text; the tag shows you where.

1

Give in two steps.

First reach toward the other person: attention, warmth, honor. Then give what they can actually take in. Skipping step one makes giving cold; stopping at step one leaves it on the surface.

EVERYONE from §א · p. 11

2

Open with warmth.

A great sage would not teach until his students had laughed. Joy opens a heart the way nothing else can. Before you teach, correct or ask, make the other person glad you came.

EVERYONE from §ב · p. 14

3

Bend down first.

The father lowers his hands and lifts his child *before* they play. When someone is low, the first act of love is to meet them where they are.

EVERYONE from §ג · p. 17

4

Guard the first word of the day.

Everything in the day follows its first word. Begin with Modeh Ani, and let your first words to the people you live with be kind ones.

EVERYONE from §ד · p. 19

5

Expect to learn from the people you teach.

“From my students, more than from all.” Whoever you give to has a root you have not yet seen. Your giving is meant to reveal it, and then it will lift you.

EVERYONE from §ה · p. 22

6 The wedding is the beginning, not the peak.

All the glory of the wedding is the "going toward." It is real and it is holy. But the Essence comes through the quieter, inner closeness that follows. Your marriage is meant to go deeper than your wedding.

CHOSSON & KALLAH from §א · p. 11

7 Keep laughter in the house.

Guard your sense of humor with each other as something sacred. It is how hearts stay open.

CHOSSON & KALLAH from §ב · p. 14

8 Bring holiness into ordinary things.

Prayer becomes real when it reaches the kitchen, the office and the bank account. A home is built from small physical acts: Shabbos candles, a mezuzah, a kosher table, tzedakah, a blessing over food.

CHOSSON & KALLAH from §ד · p. 19

9 See the hidden root in each other.

Whatever you give your spouse, you are not filling a lack; you are revealing a greatness. Treat each other that way, and you will each become a crown for the other.

CHOSSON & KALLAH from §ה · p. 22

10 Make Shabbos the heart of the week, and say "we."

Shabbos gathers the week's effort and sends blessing back into all six days. Prepare for it together. And the song ends *nekabelah*, "let us receive": in a marriage there is no giver who does not receive.

CHOSSON & KALLAH from §ו · p. 27

א

SECTION 1 OF 7

The groom, the bride, and the order of giving

BEFORE YOU READ

The Rebbe begins with the song we all sing on Friday night, and with his father-in-law's reading of it: G-d is the groom, the Jewish people are the bride. Then he lays down the rule of the whole maamar (real giving comes in two steps, an outer one and then an inner one) and adds his own insight: each step is "higher" than the other, in a different way.

ENGLISH · **BOLD** = THE TEXT · ITALIC = EXPLANATION

לשון הקודש

"Come, my Beloved, to greet the bride; let us receive the face of Shabbos." *To explain the refrain of Kabbalas Shabbos,* **my father-in-law, the Rebbe, cites in his maamar Lecha Dodi** *(one of the wedding discourses — said at the reception before the Rebbe's own chuppah in 5689)* **(from Pirkei deRabbi Eliezer) that a groom is likened to a king and the bride to a queen. The groom is the Holy One, blessed be He, and the bride is Knesses Yisrael** *— the collective soul of the Jewish people.* **In the sefiros, this is Z"A and Malchus:** *Ze'ir Anpin, the six emotive attributes that give, and Malchus, sovereignty, the sefirah that receives.* **The groom is the level of Z"A, and the bride is the level of Malchus.**

לכה דודי לקראת כלה פני שבת נקבלה, ומביא כ"ק מו"ח אדמו"ר במאמרו לכה דודי (מדרושי החתונה) (מפדר"א) שחתן דומה למלך והכלה למלכה. חתן זה הקב"ה וכלה היא כנס"י, ובספירות הו"ע ז"א ומלכות, דחתן הוא בחי' ז"א וכלה היא בחי' מלכות.

This, then, is "Come, my Beloved...": the drawing-down of Z"A into Malchus. And the order of the drawing-down is that first there must be an external drawing-down *(from Z"A to Malchus)* **which is only in the mode of makif** *— a "surrounding" light that envelops the recipient without being absorbed by him —* **and afterwards comes the inner drawing-down. For this is the order in every influence from a giver (mashpia) to a recipient (mekabel): first the giver must reach out from his own externality to the recipient's externality;** *nothing yet passes from inside to inside.* **Through this the recipient is raised to come close to the giver's level, and afterwards he can receive the inner influence from the giver.**

וזהו לכה דודי לקראת כלה פני שבת נקבלה, שהו"ע המשכת ז"א למלכות, וסדר ההמשכה הוא, אשר תחילה צ"ל ההמשכה חיצונית (מז"א למלכות) שהיא רק בבחי' מקיף, ואח"כ היא ההמשכה פנימית. דכן הוא הסדר בכל השפעה ממשפיע למקבל, דתחילה צ"ל המשכת המשפיע מבחי' חיצוניות שלו לבחי' חיצוניות המקבל, שעי"ז מתעלה המקבל להיות קרוב למדרי' המשפיע, ואח"כ יוכל לקבל המשכה הפנימית מהמשפיע.

ומביא ע"ז ב' משלים [מהשפעת רב לתלמיד, ואב המשתעשע עם בנו הקטן]. ויש לומר, שכוונתו במשלים אלה היא לא רק להביא דוגמאות לסדר ההמשכה (שההשפעה חיצונית היא הקדמה להשפעה פנימית), אלא (גם) לבאר גודל העילוי שבב' השפעות אלו, דגם ההשפעה חיצונית היא דרגא נעלית ביותר, ועד שיש בה עילוי לגבי ההשפעה פנימית. כי ההשפעה חיצונית, שהיא בחי' מקיף, היא למעלה מכלי המקבל (משא"כ ההשפעה פנימית שמתקבלת בכלי המקבל). ומ"מ היא רק הקדמה להשפעה פנימית, כי דוקא ע"י השפעה הפנימית מגיעים לעילוי נעלה יותר (שלמעלה מבחי' המקיף).

On this he brings two parables [a teacher's influence on a student, and a father playing with his little son]. *Now the Rebbe adds his own reading:* **It may be said that his intent in these parables is not only to give examples of the order** *(that the outer influence is a prelude to the inner),* **but also to show the greatness of both influences. Even the external influence is an exceedingly lofty level — so much so that in one respect it surpasses the inner influence. For the external influence, being makif, is above the recipient's vessels** *— it stays outside precisely because it is too large to be held* **(whereas the inner influence is received within the recipient's vessels). Nevertheless it is only a prelude to the inner influence, because it is specifically through the inner influence that one reaches a still higher elevation (above the level of makif).** *Here is the double paradox the whole maamar unpacks: the outer is higher than the inner, and the inner reaches higher than the outer.*

וזהו על כל כבוד חופה שהם ב' בחי' כבוד, כבוד חתן וכבוד כלה, ולמעלה יותר כבוד דאבא וכבוד דאימא. ועי"ז הוא יחוד או"א ויחוד זו"ן. דעם היות ששניהם (כבוד (וחופה) דאו"א, וכבוד (וחופה) דזו"ן) הם בחי' מקיף, מ"מ ידוע שדוקא ביחוד זו"ן (שהוא יחוד פנימי) נמשך העצם.

This is "over all the glory, a canopy" *(Yeshayahu 4:5 — the chuppah)***: two levels of glory — the glory of the groom and the glory of the bride, and higher still, the glory of Abba and the glory of Imma** *(Chochmah and Binah, the "parents" of the emotive sefiros).* **Through this there is the union of Abba and Imma and the union of Z"A and Nukva** *(Malchus).* **Although both of them** *— the glory and canopy of Abba-and-Imma and of Z"A-and-Nukva —* **are makif, it is nevertheless known that it is specifically in the union of Z"A and Nukva, an inner union, that the Essence (atzmus) is drawn down.** *The lower, more inward union carries what the higher one cannot: the Essence itself.*

KEY POINT

Two kinds of "higher"

Makif is higher by *height* — it comes from above the recipient's capacity, which is exactly why it can only hover. Pnimi is higher by *reach* — once it is absorbed, it draws something deeper than the makif ever touched: the Essence. Keep both measures in mind; every later section uses them.

LIVING IT

FOR EVERYONE

At work, in a classroom, with a friend: notice whether you are still only "going toward" someone, or whether something has actually passed inside. Both are holy. Do not mistake the first for the goal.

FOR A NEW HOME

The engagement, the gifts, the chuppah, the dancing: all of that is *lecha*, the going-toward. It is glorious, but it is the first step. The marriage is what gets *inside* on an ordinary Tuesday. **Practice:** once a week, twenty unhurried minutes of conversation that is not about logistics.

SUMMARY OF §א

Groom and bride = Z"A and Malchus. All giving runs outer → inner. The outer (makif) is loftier because it exceeds the vessel; the inner reaches further because only an inner union draws down the Essence.

ב

SECTION 2 OF 7

First parable: the teacher's joke

Where we are: Outer then inner; each higher in its own way (אֵ).

BEFORE YOU READ

First example: a teacher. The Talmud tells of a sage who opened every class with a joke. Watch for a story about a son who turned his father's "perhaps" into "certainly," and for the surprising claim that the joke comes from a deeper place than the lesson, yet the lesson reaches deeper still.

ENGLISH · **BOLD** = THE TEXT · ITALIC = EXPLANATION

לשון הקודש

Now, the first parable is a teacher's influence on a student. The order is as our Sages said *(Pesachim 117a, of Rabbah)***: "Before he began with the Sages he would say something humorous, and the Sages would laugh; then he would sit in awe and open the halachic discussion." The humorous word before the learning [the "ordinary talk of Torah scholars that requires study"] is only external. Yet it is a prelude to the inner influence ("he opened the discussion"), because precisely through it the student's heart and mind are opened, so that he becomes a vessel to receive the inner influence.**

והנה המשל הראשון הוא מהשפעת רב לתלמיד, וסדר ההשפעה הוא כמו שארז"ל דמקמי דפתח להו לרבנן אמר מילתא דבדיחותא ובדחו רבנן ולבסוף יתיב באימתא ופתח בשמעתא, דהמילתא דבדיחותא שקודם הלימוד [שהו"ע שיחת חולין של ת"ח שצריכה לימוד] היא חיצונית בלבד, אמנם השפעה זו היא הקדמה להשפעה פנימית (דפתח בשמעתא) כי דוקא ע"י נעשה פתיחת הלב והמוח של התלמיד שיהי' כלי לקבלה להשפעה פנימית.

The source of this parable is the Mitteler Rebbe in Toras Chaim [though there it is not brought as a parable for Lecha Dodi. In the maamar Semuchim La'ad 5680 — the maamar the Rebbe Rashab said on his last birthday in this world, 20 Mar-Cheshvan — he links the humorous word to Lecha Dodi as a possibility ("and perhaps this is the idea..."). In the maamar Lecha Dodi, my father-in-law the Rebbe dropped the word "perhaps" and wrote it plainly], *a one-word change with a story behind it (see the Key Point).*

והנה מקור משל זה הוא מאדמו"ר האמצעי בתורת חיים [אלא שבתו"ח לא הובא זה כמשל להענין דלכה דודי. ובד"ה סמוכים לעד פר"ת (המאמר שאמר כ"ק אדמו"ר מהורש"ב נ"ע ביום הולדתו (כ' מ"ח) האחרון בעלמא דין) מקשר בדרך אפשר ("ואפשר שז"ע כו'") הענין דמילתא

דבדיחותא להענין דלכה דודי. ובד"ה לכה דודי השמיט כ"ק מו"ח אדמו"ר תיבת "ואפשר" וכותב זה בפשטות],

ובתו"ח שם (לאח"ז) מבאר, דשרש ענין השחוק הוא מתענוג הפשוט שבלתי מורכב כלל. ומזה מובן, דשרש של מילתא דבדיחותא (שהוא תענוג הפשוט) הוא למעלה מהשפעת השכל שלאח"ז (שהרי התענוג שבשכל הוא תענוג מורכב). אמנם מ"מ ה"ז רק בחי' חיצונית, וע"י ההשפעה פנימית מגיעים לעילוי נעלה יותר. והענין הוא דבתענוג הפשוט גופא יש ב' דרגות, תענוג הפשוט המורגש ותענוג העצמי הבלתי מורגש. ודוקא ע"י ההשפעה פנימית, שהתלמיד מקבל בפנימיותו, מגיעים לתענוג העצמי הבלתי מורגש. ולכן ארז"ל ומתלמידי יותר מכולן.

And in Toras Chaim there (further on) he explains that the root of laughter is simple pleasure (ta'anug pashut), not composite at all. It follows that the root of the humorous word (simple pleasure) is above the intellectual influence that follows (since the pleasure in intellect is composite) *— delight bound up with, and dependent on, the content understood.* **Even so, it is only the external level, and through the inner influence one reaches higher. The explanation: within simple pleasure itself there are two levels — simple pleasure that is felt, and essential pleasure that is not felt. Specifically through the inner influence, which the student takes in inwardly, one reaches the essential, unfelt pleasure.** *The joke touches the teacher's felt delight; the real learning reaches the delight he cannot even feel.* **That is why our Sages said: "and from my students — more than from all of them"** *(Taanis 7a).*

KEY POINT

"What for you is 'perhaps'..."

A story the Rebbe brings in a note here: the Rebbe Rashab once said something privately to his son "as a perhaps." Visiting his father-in-law in Kishinev, the Frierdiker Rebbe repeated the maamar — and stated the point as fact. Back in Lubavitch his father asked, "Where did you get that? I only said perhaps." He answered: "What for you is 'perhaps' becomes, for me, a certainty." Dropping *"ve'efshar"* in Lecha Dodi is the same move — the student turning the teacher's possibility into his own certainty: "from my students, more than all."

LIVING IT

FOR EVERYONE

Before you teach, correct or ask anything of anyone, open with warmth. Then measure success by what lands inside the other person, not by whether they smiled.

FOR A NEW HOME

Never open a hard conversation cold. Begin with warmth, a smile, something funny from the day. And remember the last line of this section: the teacher learns the most from the student. Expect your spouse to teach you.

SUMMARY OF §ב

The joke is outer but rooted in simple pleasure, above intellect. Learning that is absorbed reaches the essential, unfelt pleasure — which is why the teacher gains most from his students.

SECTION 3 OF 7

ג Second parable: the father lifts his child

Where we are: Outer then inner (§א); the joke and the shiur (§ב).

BEFORE YOU READ

Second example: a father and his baby. He bends down and lifts the child so they can play face to face. In the original telling the baby plays with his father's beard, and the Rebbe finds a whole teaching hidden in that detail.

ENGLISH · **BOLD** = THE TEXT · ITALIC = EXPLANATION

לשון הקודש

The second parable is of a nursing infant, a little one, with whom his father wants to play face-to-face. Since the infant is small, the father must lower his hands, etc., and lift his little son so he can play with him in face-to-face closeness. Lifting the infant is only external; it is merely a prelude to the inner closeness that follows (the play, etc.).

ומשל הב' הוא מבן יניק וקטן שאביו רוצה להשתעשע עמו פא"פ והרי התינוק הוא קטן, צריך האב להשפיל את ידיו כו' להרים בנו הקטן בכדי שיוכל להשתעשע עמו בקירוב פא"פ. דהגבהת התינוק הוא רק ענין חיצוני, והוא רק הקדמה להקירוב פנימי שלאח"ז (השעשועים כו').

The source of this parable is the Maggid's Or Torah *(on Hoshea 11:3, "I taught Ephraim to walk, taking them by their arms"),* **and there is an addition there (not copied into the maamar): the little one "plays with his beard" — the father's. It may be said that this hints that the drawing-down of makif (which precedes the inner influence) is above hishtalshelus** *— the ordered chain of worlds and levels* **— for the beard is the Thirteen Tikkunei Dikna, the Thirteen Attributes of Mercy, which are above hishtalshelus.**

והנה מקור משל זה הוא באו"ת להה"מ, ושם ישנה הוספה (שלא נעתקה בהמאמר), שהקטן "משתעשע בזקן שלו" (של האב). וי"ל שבזה מרומז, שהמשכת המקיף (שקודם ההשפעה פנימית) היא למעלה מהשתלשלות, דזקן הוא י"ג תיקוני דיקנא, י"ג מדה"ר שלמעלה מהשתלשלות.

Nevertheless they have some connection to hishtalshelus, as it is written, "Remember Your mercies... for they are from of old" [which is why they are called middos, "attributes," from the word for measure]. It is also known that hair is only a glimmer *— it grows from the body yet carries only a trace of its life.* **But through the inner influence that follows (though it is beneath the level of makif), the Essence that is above the makif is drawn**

אלא מ"מ יש להם איזו שייכות להשתלשלות, כמש"נ זכור רחמיך גו' כי מעולם המה [שלכן נק' בשם "מדות" מלשון מדידה]. גם ידוע בענין השערות שהוא הארה בלבד. אמנם ע"י ההשפעה

down — as above in §1, the superiority of the inner union of Z"A and Nukva over the union of Abba and Imma, as the Tzemach Tzedek explains in many places.

פנימית שלאח"ז (אף שהיא למטה מבחי' מקיף) נמשך העצם שלמעלה מהמקיף (ע"ד הנ"ל סעיף א' במעלת יחוד זו"ן (שהוא יחוד פנימי) על יחוד או"א כביאור אדמו"ר הצ"צ בכ"מ בזה).

KEY POINT

The beard: very high, yet only a glimmer

The Thirteen Attributes are above the system — that is the makif's height. But they are still "middos," measured, "from of old" — tied to the system — and hair is only a trace of life. The face-to-face play that follows is lower, yet it is where the father himself, his essence, is present.

LIVING IT

FOR EVERYONE

Bending down to someone is the beginning of love, not its end. After you have lifted someone, stay long enough to get to face-to-face.

FOR A NEW HOME

Some days one of you will be the small one: tired, worried, discouraged. **Practice:** before you ask for closeness, meet your spouse where they are today. Lift first. Take turns being the one who bends and the one who is carried.

SUMMARY OF §3

Lifting the child = makif; the play = pnimi. The beard (13 Attributes) shows the makif is from above hishtalshelus, yet still linked to it and only a glimmer; the inner closeness draws the Essence.

ד

SECTION 4 OF 7

In avodah: prayer and the first word of the day

Where we are: The principle (§א) and two parables (§ב–ג).

BEFORE YOU READ

Now the idea enters daily life. Morning prayer is the first, general closeness to G-d. It becomes real, "inner," only when it flows into the eating, working and speaking of the rest of the day. How can a few minutes at dawn do that? Through the power of the *first word*.

ENGLISH · **BOLD** = THE TEXT · ITALIC = EXPLANATION

לשון הקודש

The same holds in avodah (as the maamar explains): a person's service each day begins with prayer, as it is written, "Cease from man, whose breath is in his nostrils, for with what is he considered?" — "do not read ba-meh ('with what') but bamah ('an altar-mound')" *(Berachos 14a, on greeting someone before prayer).* **The Alter Rebbe and the Rebbe Maharash explained that before prayer a person is considered like a bamah** *— a heap of earth.* **Tefillah means "connection": through prayer a person bonds with G-dliness.**

ועד"ז הוא בעבודה (כמו שמבאר בהמאמר), שהתחלת עבודת האדם בכל יום היא עבודת התפלה, כמש"נ חדלו לכם מן האדם אשר נשמה באפו כי במה נחשב הוא, אל תקרי במה אלא במה, ובי' אדה"ז ואדמו"ר מהר"ש דקודם התפלה נחשב האדם כמו במה. ותפלה הוא לשון התחברות, שע"י התפלה מתקשר האדם באלקות.

The order of prayer: first a general closeness (an external drawing-down) [as the maamar explains], and afterwards the inner closeness, where the person bonds with G-dliness so that he draws G-dliness into all his physical affairs. *But how can minutes of prayer at dawn reach everything that comes after?* **This [that by praying at the start of the day he can bind all his physical affairs and make them vessels for G-dliness] is understood from the Baal Shem Tov's explanation of the prohibition against greeting someone before prayer,**

וסדר התפלה הוא, שמקודם צ"ל הקירוב כללי (המשכה חיצונית) [כמו שמבאר ענינו בהמאמר], ואח"כ נעשה הקירוב פנימי, שהאדם מתקשר לאלקות באופן כזה שממשיך אלקות בכל ענייניו הגשמיים. ויובן זה [מה שע"י התפלה בתחילת היום ביכלתו לקשר כל הענינים הגשמיים ולעשותם כלים לאלקות] ע"פ מה שביאר הבעש"ט ענין איסור שאילת שלום קודם התפלה,

which is like what the Arizal writes about honoring an older brother: it is because "the father left his spirit within him." The first son carries more of the father's spirit than the others, and all the other sons receive the father's spirit through the firstborn. Because of the father's spirit in the older brother, they must honor him as they must honor the father [which is why the law is learned from "Honor your father" itself — honoring an older brother is part of honoring the father].

שהוא ע"ד מ"ש בכתבי האריז"ל בענין כיבוד אח הגדול, שהוא מפני דרוחא הוא דשבק בגוי', שבבן הא' יש רוח האב יותר משאר הבנים, וכל שאר הבנים נוטלים מרוחא דאב ע"י בן הראשון. ומצד רוח האב שבאח הגדול מחוייבים הם לכבדו כמו שהם מחוייבים בכבוד האב [שלכן למדין דין זה מהפסוק כבד את אביך דוקא, כי כבוד אח הגדול נכלל בכיבוד אב].

So too a person's thought, speech and action all day long: they all branch out from and follow the first speech. Therefore a person's first speech [and first thought and act] on rising from sleep must be in G-d's service, and through it he draws holiness into all his thought, speech and action the whole day. *The first word is the day's firstborn; it carries the spirit to all the others.* **And specifically because his inner closeness to G-d (in prayer) draws divine light into his physical affairs, until he makes them vessels for G-dliness, one reaches higher — as is known regarding "much produce comes by the strength of the ox"** *(Mishlei 14:4: the "ox," the animal soul and physical life, once harnessed yields more than spirit alone).*

וכמו"כ הוא בנוגע למחדו"מ של האדם במשך כל היום, שכולם מסתעפין ונמשכין אחר הדבור הראשון, ולכן דבור [וכן מחשבה ומעשה] הראשון של האדם בקומו משינתו צ"ל בעבודת ה', שעי"ז ממשיך קדושה בכל המחדו"מ שלו במשך כל היום כולו. והנה דוקא עי"ז שהקירוב פנימי שלו לאלקות (בעת התפלה) הוא באופן כזה שממשיך אור אלקי בעניניו הגשמיים עד שעושה אותם כלים לאלקות מגיעים למעלה יותר, כידוע בענין ורב תבואות בכח שור.

KEY POINT

The day's firstborn

Modeh Ani, the first bracha, the first thought — they are not a ritual preface. Like the firstborn who carries the father's spirit to his brothers, the first word carries the morning's connection into every later hour. That is how the outer closeness of prayer becomes inner.

LIVING IT

FOR EVERYONE

Let your first words each morning be *Modeh Ani*. Then choose one ordinary thing today, a meal, a meeting, a drive, and consciously bring the morning's davening into it.

FOR A NEW HOME

Let the first words to each other each morning be kind ones, before the phone and before the news. Then bring the morning into the ordinary: a blessing before you eat together, a coin in the tzedakah box, a mezuzah you actually notice.

SUMMARY OF §ד

Prayer = the first, general closeness. It turns inner when it draws G-dliness into the physical day — possible because, like a firstborn, the first word carries its spirit to all that follows. Harnessing the physical ("the ox") reaches higher.

ה

SECTION 5 OF 7

Above: why Malchus rises over Z”A

Where we are: The principle (§א), two parables (§ב–ג), and prayer (§ד).

BEFORE YOU READ

This is the most Kabbalistic section; read it slowly and lean on the explanations. The question: why should the humble inner step reach higher than the grand outer one? The answer: because the receiver’s own source is higher than the giver’s. It is hidden, and the giver’s job is to reveal it.

ENGLISH · **BOLD** = THE TEXT · ITALIC = EXPLANATION

לשון הקודש

The same is understood of the drawing-down of Z”A into Malchus (the union of Z”A and Nukva). The order (as in §1) is first the external, then the inner drawing-down. Even the external one is exceedingly lofty (as in §§2–3): it is makif, above hishtalshelus and vessels (so Malchus cannot absorb it inwardly — it exceeds the limits of her vessels). Yet it is external, only a glimmer. Whereas through the inner drawing-down, received by Malchus inwardly, one reaches higher (than the makif).

וכמו כן יובן גם בענין המשכת הז"א במלכות (יחוד זו"ן), שהסדר בזה הוא (כנ"ל ס"א) אשר מקודם צ"ל ההמשכה חיצונית ואח"כ ההמשכה פנימית. דגם ההמשכה חיצונית היא המשכה נעלית ביותר (ע"ד הנ"ל ס"ב-ג), שהיא בחי' מקיף שלמעלה מהשתלשלות וכלים (ולכן אינה נקלטת בספירת המלכות בפנימיותה לפי שהיא למעלה מהגבלת הכלים שלה). אבל מ"מ, המשכה זו היא בחי' חיצונית, שהיא רק הארה בלבד. משא"כ ע"י ההמשכה פנימית, שמתקבלת במלכות בפנימיותה, מגיעים למעלה יותר (מבחי' המקיף).

The explanation: the root of Malchus is higher than the root of Z”A. Z”A is rooted in the externality of Kesser; Malchus is rooted in the inwardness of Kesser. *(Kesser, “crown,” is the level above intellect — the will and delight that precede everything.)* **And though it is said of Z”A as well that “Z”A is bound to and hangs upon Atik,” it is known that this does not mean Atik itself, only the externality of Atik. Whereas the root of Malchus is in the**

והענין הוא, דשרש המלכות הוא למעלה משרש ז"א. דשרש הז"א הוא מחיצוניות הכתר ושרש המלכות הוא מפנימיות הכתר. והגם שגם בז"א איתמר ז"א בעתיקא אחיד ותליא, הרי ידוע שאין הכוונה בזה על עתיק

inwardness of Atik — Radla *(Reisha d'Lo Isyada, the "unknowable head," the innermost peak of Kesser).*

ממש (רק חיצוניות עתיק). משא"כ שרש המלכות היא בפנימיות עתיק, רדל"א.

But because of her descent below, her root is hidden, and the root of Malchus is revealed specifically through Z"A — and through that very thing Malchus rises above Z"A. This is the order: first Z"A must be drawn into Malchus in a way that Z"A's superiority over Malchus is felt (for only through it is her root revealed). Yet because this drawing-down comes from the advantage of Z"A, it is tied to hishtalshelus [like the Thirteen Tikkunei Dikna, §3]. And specifically through the inner drawing-down that Malchus receives inwardly — since this comes from the advantage of Malchus — one reaches the root of Malchus, above the root of Z"A, until Malchus gives to Z"A: "a woman of valor is her husband's crown" *(Mishlei 12:4).*

אבל מ"מ, מצד ירידתה למטה הרי שרשה הוא בהעלם, וגילוי שרש המלכות הוא ע"י ז"א דוקא, ועי"ז גופא ספירת המלכות מתעלית למעלה מז"א. וזהו"ע סדר ההמשכה, דתחילה צ"ל המשכת הז"א במלכות באופן שיורגש ענין הז"א שלמעלה ממלכות (שדוקא ע"י הוא גילוי שרש המלכות). אבל מ"מ, מכיון שההמשכה היא מצד (מעלת) ז"א, יש לה שייכות להשתלשלות [ע"ד הנ"ל (ס"ג) בענין י"ג ת"ד]. ודוקא ע"י ההמשכה פנימית שמתקבלת במלכות בפנימיותה, הרי מכיון שהמשכה זו היא מצד (מעלת) המלכות, הרי מגיעים עי"ז לשרש המלכות שלמעלה משרש ז"א, ועד שהמלכות משפיע בז"א, אשת חיל עטרת בעלה.

KEY POINT

The hidden root of the receiver

Z"A hangs from the *outside* of Atik; Malchus is rooted in its *inside*. In the descent that root is concealed, so the giver must come first and be felt as greater. But what the giver ultimately unlocks is the receiver's own deeper root — and then the receiver crowns the giver.

LIVING IT

FOR EVERYONE

Look at the people who depend on you as hidden roots, not empty cups. Your job is to reveal what is already deepest in them, and to rejoice when they outgrow you.

FOR A NEW HOME

Never treat your spouse as a cup that you fill. Your giving exists to bring out what is already deepest in them. **Ask each other, often:** "What is something in you that I haven't seen yet?" And when your spouse outshines you, rejoice.

SUMMARY OF §ה

The external influence comes from Z"A's advantage and stays linked to the system. The inner one comes from Malchus' own advantage and reaches her root in the inwardness of Atik — above Z"A — so that she gives to him.

SECTION 6 OF 7

ו Shabbos: the queen who receives, the day that blesses

Where we are: The order of giving (§א–ד) and its root above (§ה).

BEFORE YOU READ

Two things are said about Shabbos that seem to clash: Shabbos has nothing of its own (you eat on Shabbos only what you prepared on Friday), and yet Shabbos blesses the whole week. With the previous section in hand, the Rebbe shows these are two stages of one journey.

ENGLISH · **BOLD** = THE TEXT · ITALIC = EXPLANATION

לשון הקודש

It may be said that this also explains the two extremes about Shabbos cited at the start of the maamar. Shabbos is called a queen — Malchus, lowest of the sefiros, receiving from them all, as the saying goes, "the moon has nothing of its own" [and as our Sages said of Shabbos, only one who toiled on Erev Shabbos will eat on Shabbos]. On the other hand, "all the days are blessed from Shabbos" — not only is Shabbos holier than all the days, it actually gives to them.

ויש לומר שזהו ג"כ הביאור בזה שמביא (בתחילת המאמר) ב' קצוות בענין השבת, דהשבת נק' מלכה שהיא ספירת המלכות שלמטה מכל הספירות ומקבלת מהן, כמאמר סיהרא לית לה מגרמה כלום [וכמאמר רז"ל (גבי שבת) דדוקא מי שטרח בערב שבת יאכל בשבת], ולאידך הרי כולהו יומין מתברכין מהשבת, היינו דלא זו בלבד ששבת מקודש מכל הימים, אלא עוד זאת, שהיא משפיעה בהם.

The explanation: the seven days of the week are the seven days of building. The six weekdays are in Z"A — "for six days G-d made the heavens and the earth," and the Zohar says "each day does its own work" — and Shabbos is Malchus. So, insofar as Malchus has descended below, especially into Beriah, Yetzirah and Asiyah ("her feet go down..."), Shabbos (Malchus) receives from the six weekdays (Z"A): the work of birurim — *refining* **the animal soul and all physical things — of the six days. But after, and through, that work, Malchus ascends (on Shabbos) from BY"A to her root and source; then she rises above Z"A, until she gives to all six weekdays as well — "from it all the days are blessed."**

אך הענין הוא, דז' ימי השבוע הם שבעת ימי הבנין, דששת ימי החול הם בז"א כמ"ש ששת ימים עשה הוי' את השמים ואת הארץ ואיתא בזהר כל יומא ויומא עביד עבידתי', ושבת היא מלכות (כנ"ל). ולכן, מצד זה שהמלכות ירדה למטה, ובפרט מצד ירידתה לבי"ע דרגלי' יורדות כו', השבת (מלכות) מקבלת משאת ימי החול (ז"א), שהו"ע עבודת הבירורים (בירור הנה"ב וכל

הדברים הגשמיים) דששת ימי החול. אמנם לאחרי (וע"י) עבודה זו נעשה (בשבת) עליית המלכות מבי"ע עד עלי' לשרשה ומקורה, ואז מתעלית למעלה מז"א עד שמשפעת גם לכל ששת ימי החול (ז"א), דמיני' מתברכין כולהו יומין.

KEY POINT

Receiving first, then giving

There is no contradiction between "the moon has nothing of its own" and "all days are blessed from it." The first describes Shabbos in her descent, collecting the week's refined work; the second describes her after she has risen to her root — and from there she blesses the very days that fed her.

LIVING IT

FOR EVERYONE

Bring the week into Shabbos: the real work you refined, not only fatigue. Then let one specific thing from Shabbos bless Sunday: a resolution, a niggun, a calm.

FOR A NEW HOME

Prepare for Shabbos together: cook, set the table, finish work in time. At the table, each of you names one thing from the week you are bringing in, and one thing you want Shabbos to send back into the coming week.

SUMMARY OF §1

Weekdays = Z"A; Shabbos = Malchus. In her descent Shabbos receives the week's birurim; through them she rises to her root, above Z"A, and then blesses the weekdays.

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SECTION 7 OF 7

Lecha Dodi, read whole, and the bride below

Where we are: The order (א–ד§), the root (ה§), the two faces of Shabbos (ו§).

BEFORE YOU READ

Everything comes home to the words of the song. “Lecha” is the going. “Penei” is the face, the inside. “Nekabelah” is plural. And the maamar ends, as a wedding maamar should, with a blessing for a chosson and kallah.

ENGLISH · **BOLD** = THE TEXT · ITALIC = EXPLANATION

לשון הקודש

This is “Come, my Beloved, to greet the bride; let us receive the face of Shabbos”: the request of the souls of Israel that Z”A be drawn into Malchus. The drawing-down begins with “Come, my Beloved, to greet the bride” — a going alone *(the approach from outside, the makif);* **and through this, “let us receive the face of Shabbos” — the inner drawing-down, the face (penei) of Shabbos** *(penim, inwardness)*, **where the inwardness of Malchus is revealed, all the way to how she is rooted in Atik. That is why nekabelah (“let us receive”) is plural: Z”A, too, receives from (the root of) Malchus — “a woman of valor is her husband’s crown.”**

וזהו לכה דודי לקראת כלה פני שבת נקבלה, שהוא בקשת נש"י שתהי' המשכת הז"א במלכות. דתחילת ההמשכה היא לכה דודי לקראת כלה, הליכה בלבד, ועי"ז פני שבת נקבלה, שהוא ההמשכה פנימית, פני שבת, שמתגלה בחי' פנימיות המלכות ועד כמו שהיא מושרשת בעתיק. ולכן נקבלה לשון רבים, שגם ז"א מקבל מ(שרש ה)מלכות, אשת חיל עטרת בעלה.

And as it is Above in Z”A and Malchus, so it is with every giver and receiver: through the receiver something is added to the giver — “and from my students, more than all.” And especially with a groom and bride below: specifically through the inner drawing-down, “a woman of valor is her husband’s crown,” and “all came from the dust” *(Koheles 3:20 — the lowest is the source of all).* **Through this the power of the Infinite is drawn into “a generation of the upright that will be blessed,” with children and grandchildren engaged in Torah and mitzvos.**

וכמו שהוא למעלה בז"א ומלכות, עד"ז הוא בכל משפיע ומקבל, שע"י המקבל נתוסף בהמשפיע, ומתלמידי יותר מכולם. ובפרט בחתן וכלה למטה, שדוקא ע"י ההמשכה פנימית, הנה אשת חיל עטרת בעלה, והכל הי' מן העפר. שעי"ז נמשך כח הא"ס בדור ישרים יבורך בבנים ובני בנים עוסקים בתורה ומצוות.

KEY POINT

Why "nekabelah" is plural

We do not say "I will receive." When the inner face of Shabbos is revealed, the giver receives too. In the sefiros, Z"A receives from Malchus' root; in a classroom, the teacher from the student; in a home, the husband is crowned by his wife — and from that inner union comes the infinite power of children and grandchildren in Torah.

LIVING IT

FOR EVERYONE

Every Friday night at *Lecha Dodi*, hear the two steps: the going-out and the receiving of the face. Then sing *nekabelah*, "let us receive," for the most important relationship in your life.

FOR A NEW HOME

Notice the last word of the song: *nekabelah*, "let us receive." Not I. We. Make "we" the grammar of your home. From that inner union, the maamar promises, comes "the power of the Infinite": children and grandchildren engaged in Torah and mitzvos.

SUMMARY OF §↑

Lecha = the going (makif); penei Shabbos = the inner face reaching Malchus' root in Atik; nekabelah is plural because the giver receives too. Below: through inner union, the wife crowns the husband and the Infinite flows into generations.

One pattern, six places

Each row is the same two steps, and the same surprise at the end.

WHERE	STEP ONE · OUTER	STEP TWO · INNER	WHY THE OUTER IS LOFTY	WHAT ONLY THE INNER REACHES
Teacher → student §ב · p. 14	The joke	The shiur	Felt simple pleasure, above intellect	The unfelt, essential pleasure; "from my students more than all"
Father → child §ג · p. 17	Bending down and lifting	Face-to-face play	The beard: the 13 Attributes, above hishtalshelus	The father himself, present in the play
Prayer → the day §ד · p. 19	General closeness in davening	G-dliness drawn into physical life	Pure connection, apart from the day	"Much produce by the strength of the ox"
Z"A → Malchus §ה · p. 22	Z"A felt as greater	Received in Malchus' inwardness	Above vessels; only a glimmer	Malchus' root in inner Atik; she crowns Z"A
Weekdays ↔ Shabbos §ו · p. 25	Shabbos receives the week's birurim	Shabbos rises to her root	—	"All the days are blessed from it"
Lecha Dodi §ז · p. 27	"Lecha": a going	"Penei Shabbos": the face	—	"Nekabelah": the giver receives too

SUMMARY OF THE WHOLE MAAMAR

G-d and the Jewish people are groom and bride; in the language of Kabbalah, Z"A and Malchus. Every true giving comes in two steps: an outer one that surrounds and lifts the receiver, and an inner one that the receiver truly takes in §א · p. 11. The outer step is lofty, coming from beyond what the receiver can hold, like a teacher's joyful opening §ב · p. 14 or a father bending to lift his child §ג · p. 17. But the inner step reaches further, to the Essence.

So it is in a person's day: prayer is the first closeness, and it becomes complete when it enters the physical world through the power of the first word §ד · p. 19. The reason is that the receiver's root is higher than the giver's; hidden at first, it is revealed by the giver, and then the receiver gives back §ה · p. 22. That is why Shabbos, which receives from the six days, turns and blesses them §ו · p. 25.

And that is the song: "Come, my Beloved" is the going; "the face of Shabbos" is the inner meeting; "let *us* receive" says that both receive. So it is with every giver and receiver, and especially with a chosson and kallah, through whose inner union the power of the Infinite is drawn into "an upright generation that is blessed" §ז · p. 27.

A dvar Torah from the maamar, in five minutes

Tonight we sang *Lecha Dodi*. Most of us sing it as one line. The Rebbe hears two.

"**Lecha dodi likras kallah**" — come, my Beloved, go out toward the bride. That is the first step of every relationship: going toward. The handshake, the smile, the invitation to a Shabbos meal. It looks small, but the Rebbe says it is actually enormous: it comes from a place too big to be absorbed. That is why it stays on the outside.

"**Penei Shabbos nekabelah**" — let us receive the *face* of Shabbos. Face, *panim*, is the same word as *penimiyus*, inwardness. This is the second step: when something actually gets inside. A conversation that changes you. A mitzvah you make your own.

And then the surprise is in the last word. We do not sing *akabel*, "I will receive." We sing *nekabelah*, "**we** will receive." The Rebbe explains: when the inner step happens, the giver receives too. The teacher learns from the student. The parent grows through the child. Shabbos, which received everything from the week, turns around and blesses the week.

That is why a chosson says this maamar before his chuppah, and why it belongs at every table: whoever you are giving to this week, go toward them, then let something real pass inside — and expect to receive more than you gave.

QUESTIONS FOR THE TABLE

1. Who did you "go toward" this week? Did it reach step two?
2. Who taught you something by letting you teach them?
3. What will this Shabbos send back into the coming week?

A practice for every Friday night

FRIDAY AFTERNOON · "LECHA"

Go toward Shabbos

Prepare, together if you can. Put the phone away a little early. Light the candles with a moment of quiet prayer for your home. This is the going-out to greet the bride. §1 · p. 25

FRIDAY NIGHT · "PENEI SHABBOS"

Face to face

At the table, ask three questions: **What did you bring into Shabbos this week? What did someone give you this week that really reached you? What did you receive from someone you thought you were only giving to?** §1 · p. 27

EVERY MORNING · THE FIRST WORD

Modeh Ani

מודה אני לפניך מלך חי וקיים, שהחזרת בי נשמתי בחמלה, רבה אמונתך.

"I thank You, living and eternal King, for You have mercifully restored my soul within me; great is Your faithfulness." §ד · p. 19

FOR A CHOSSON AND KALLAH · EVERY ANNIVERSARY

Come back to it

The Rebbe returned to his wedding maamar twenty-five years later and found more in it. Keep this booklet, and open it each year on your anniversary.

✦ ✦ ✦

ובפרט בחתן וכלה למטה, שדוקא ע"י ההמשכה פנימית,
הנה אשת חיל עטרת בעלה... שעי"ז נמשך כח הא"ס
בדור ישרים יבורך, בבנים ובני בנים עוסקים בתורה ומצוות.

"...and especially with a chosson and kallah below: through the inner bond, 'a woman of valor is her husband's crown'... and through this the power of the Infinite is drawn into 'an upright generation that is blessed,' with children and grandchildren engaged in Torah and mitzvos."

— the closing words of the maamar

Mazal tov

to every chosson and kallah, and to every home

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1. On the custom: *Yud-Daled Kislev* (English booklet on the Rebbe's wedding), p. 9: chassanim customarily repeat the maamar Lecha Dodi at their weddings; some repeat this maamar of 5714 as well.
2. The Frierdiker Rebbe's opening words at the reception, 14 Kislev 5689, as recorded in contemporary accounts collected in *Kovtzim u'Kesavos*, p. 12.
3. The maamar's own headnote in Toras Menachem: said on 13 Elul, the wedding day of the Frierdiker Rebbe (5657), in the twenty-fifth year of the Rebbe's marriage; edited by the Rebbe and published for 14 Kislev 5739.

Hebrew text: ד"ה לכה דודי, ש"פ תצא, י"ג אלול ה'תשי"ד · *Toras Menachem – Hisvaaduyos 5714, pp. 194–199 (edited by the Rebbe, muga), checked against a second digital printing. Translation and explanations are this edition's and are not part of the original.*
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