



LESSONS IN LIKUTAY TORAH

PRECIOUS TEACHINGS THAT AWAKEN THE HEART
TO DIVINE SERVICE FROM THE HOLY MASTER
❧ **RABBI SHNEUR ZALMAN OF LIADI** ❧
TRANSLATED AND EXPLAINED

לקוטי תורה

פרשת מטות


דבור המתחיל

ושמע אביה את נדרה

“Loving Hashem through Being
Careful with Mitzvos”

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Likutay Torah English translation project:

With Hashem's help we would like to present this installment of **Lessons in Likutay Torah**.

The original text of the maamarim with נקודות and punctuation is presented side by side with a phrase by phrase translation and explanation. The translation of the text is in **bold** whereas the commentary is in regular font. The explanations of general concepts that are not directly relevant to understanding the flow of the maamar are in footnotes.

All of the commentary of the Tzemach Tzedek printed with brackets in the original Likutay Torah have been moved to the Hebrew footnotes and left untranslated.

The main purpose of this project is to enable the reader to learn the Likutay Torah in the original. By learning the words, structure, and concepts of the maamarim, eventually they should be able to learn it by themselves in the original.

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and to R' Baruch Katz for creating the website and the editing.

Please Donate to Keep this Project Going:

Translating these maamarim takes many hours of work per week, and funding is needed to cover the expenses to make this possible. Please donate at our website www.LearnChassidus.com

For comments and questions, please email me at avraham.t.katz@gmail.com

Likutay Torah

לקוטי תורה

פרשת מטות

דבור המתחיל

וְשָׁמַע אָבִיהָ אֶת נִדְרָהּ

דף פ"ד עמוד ד'

“Loving Hashem through Being Careful with Mitzvos”

The verse towards the beginning of Parshas Matos describing the law of a father nullifying his daughter's vows states (Bamidbar 30:5):

"וְשָׁמַע אָבִיהָ אֶת נִדְרָהּ וְאָסְרָה
אֲשֶׁר אָסְרָה עַל-נַפְשָׁהּ וְהִחְרִישׁ לָהּ אָבִיהָ
וְקָמוּ כָּל-נִדְרֶיהָ וְכָל-אֲסָר אֲשֶׁר-אָסְרָה
עַל-נַפְשָׁהּ יָקוּם:" (פרשתנו ל, ה):

“And if her father will hear her vow or her prohibition that she places on herself and her father will remain silent (and not nullify them right away), then all of her vows and prohibitions she places on herself will be effective.”

The Torah gives a father the ability to nullify his young daughter's vows or voluntary prohibitions. However, he can only annul them if he declares them invalid right when he hears about them. If he waits until the next nightfall before saying anything, then he loses the ability to nullify them.

לְהִבִּין עֲנִין "דְּקְדוּקֵי סוּפְרִים"¹

We need to understand the idea of the "extra careful measures of the Sages" in order to understand the inner meaning behind a father's power to nullify his daughter's vows and prohibitions:

- שָׁאֲנוּ רוּאִים, כְּמַעַט שְׁכָל
הַתְּלִמּוּד מְלֵא מַהֲלָכוֹת
וְחוֹמְרוֹת שֶׁהַחֲמִירוּ חֲזו"ל
וְהוֹסִיפוּ כְּמָה גְדָרִים וְסִיגִים
לַתּוֹרָה שֶׁבְּכֹתֵב.

We see that most of the Talmud is full of the laws and stringencies which the Sages imposed, adding additional "boundaries and fences" to protect us from transgressing the commands in the **Written Torah**, the Chumash.

Just like a fence prevents someone from accidentally trespassing into someone else's property, so too, the Sages established extra careful measures to prevent us from coming near to transgressing what it says in the Torah. For example, in the Torah it says that one may not cook meat from a land animal with milk or eat them together, and the Sages established that we shouldn't even eat meat from a bird with milk so that we shouldn't get it confused with meat from a land animal with milk.

The question is: Why do we need more stringencies and precautions in the later generations of the Talmud and onwards? If they were so important then why didn't we always have them from the time of

¹ (מגילה יט, ב: מאי דכתיב (עקב ט, י): 'וְעַלֵּיהֶם כָּל הַדְּבָרִים אֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר ה' עִמָּכֶם בְּהַר?' מִלְּמַד, שֶׁהָרָאָהּ הַקָּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ־הוּא לְמַשֶּׁה דְּקְדוּקֵי תוֹרָה וְדְקְדוּקֵי סוּפְרִים [שְׁדַקְדְּקוּ הָאַחֲרוֹנִים מִלְּשׁוֹן מִשְׁנַת הָרִאשׁוֹנִים - רש"י. "שֶׁהוֹסִיפוּ לְדַקְדֹּק אַחֵר מַעֲשֵׂה הַבְּרִיּוֹת וְלַחֲמִיר וְלַעֲשׂוֹת סִיג וְאַזְנוּם לַתּוֹרָה וְגִזְרוּ גְזֵרוֹת לְהַרְחִיק אֶת הָאָדָם מִן הָעֲבִירָה" - רש"י סוּפָה כח, א. "כְּגוֹן גְּזִירוֹת שֶׁגִּזְרוּ חֲכָמִים שְׁלֹא יָבֹא לִידֵי אִיסוּר תּוֹרָה" - רש"י בָּבָא בִּתְרָא קלד, א).

Moshe Rabeinu? What changed as time went on, causing us to need additional stringencies?

וְהֶעֱנִין מוֹבָן, כְּמוֹ שֶׁאָמְרוּ רַז"ל
עַל פֶּסוּק (שִׁיר הַשִּׁירִים א, ב)
"יִשְׁקֵנִי מִנְּשִׁיקוֹת פִּיהוּ כִּי טוֹבִים
דוֹדֶיךָ מֵיַיִן":

The idea will be understood based on our Sages explanation of the verse (Shir Hashirim 1:2): "Hashem should 'kiss us with His mouth' (meaning He should connect to us through our mouths saying words of Torah), because Your 'love' is better than 'wine'."

"אָמְרָה כְּנֶסֶת יִשְׂרָאֵל: עֲרֵבִים
עָלֵי דְבָרֵי סוּפְרִים יוֹתֵר מֵיַיִנָּה
שֶׁל תּוֹרָה".

Our Sages comment: The Jewish People said to Hashem: The instructions of the Sages (referred to in verse as "Your love") are sweeter to me than the 'wine' of the Torah."

פִּירוּשׁ: "יַיִנָּה שֶׁל תּוֹרָה" הוּא
פְּנִימִית הַתּוֹרָה וְסוּדוּתֶיהָ,
כְּמָה שֶׁאָמְרוּ רַז"ל: "נִכְנָס יַיִן -
יֵצֵא סוּד"²;

The explanation of this cryptic statement is as follows: The 'wine of the Torah' refers to the inner dimension and secrets of the Torah, as our Sages said the "when someone drinks wine, his secrets come out", thus the 'wine' of the Torah refers to the secrets of the Torah which require prompting to discover, just like a person's private secrets which need prompting (like by drinking wine) for him to reveal.

² (עֲרוּבִין סד, א).

"דְּבָרֵי-סוּפְרִים" עֲרָבִים עַל
בְּנֵי-יִשְׂרָאֵל יוֹתֵר מִסּוּדוֹת
הַתּוֹרָה -

Thus, the 'instructions of the Sages' are sweeter to the Jewish People than the secrets of the Torah,

כִּי כָּל הַגְּדָרִים וְהַחֲוִמּוֹת
שֶׁבְּדְּבָרֵי רַז"ל, וְדַרְכֵי מוֹסֵר
שֶׁבְּאַגְדוֹת, ו"פְּרָקִי-אֲבוֹת" -
כּוֹלֵם נִמְשָׁכִים מִבְּחִינַת אֲהָבָה -
רַבָּה, כִּמּוֹ שֶׁכָּתוּב (מִלֶּאכִי א,
ב): "אֲהַבְתִּי אֶתְכֶם אָמַר ה'".³

since, all of the "boundaries" and stringencies instructed to us by the Sages, and the moral instructions which are found in the Aggada⁴ and in the Pirkei Avos (Ethics of the Fathers), they are all expressing the idea a Great Love from Hashem to us, like it says (Malachi 1:2): "Hashem says: I love you (the Jewish People)", and because Hashem loves us, this is why He is extra careful with our behavior.

כִּמּוֹ לְמִשָּׁל, אָדָם מִחֲמַת אֲהָבָתוֹ
עַל בְּנוֹ מְדַקְדָּק עִמּוֹ יוֹתֵר,
לְהוֹסִיף עָלָיו שְׂמִירָה מְעוּלָה
בְּסִיגִים וּגְדָרִים, בְּכָל הָאֲפָשָׁרִי
בְּעַל כָּרְחוּ, שִׁיְהִי מְנוּקָה מִכָּל
וְכָל.

For example, because a person loves his son, which is why he pushes him to be extra careful in his conduct, and he protects him from acting inappropriately by making "boundaries and fences" for him not to cross. The father will do whatever he can to encourage his son to act properly, even if its seemingly against the will of the son

³ (וְעֵינַי מֵה שֶׁנִּתְבָּאָר עַל פְּסוּק (תִּצַּא כג, ו) "כִּי אֲהַבְךָ ה' אֱלֹקֶיךָ" - בְּדַבּוֹר הַמִּתְחִיל "לֹא אָבָה").

⁴ Aggada- Portions of the Talmud with stories, quotes and non-literal interpretations of verses.

(since the son doesn't appreciate the consequences of his conduct), since he wants his son to be totally clean of any inappropriate behavior.

וְכֵן חָפֵץ מְאֹד שְׂיִמְצָא חֵן וְשִׁכְלָה⁵
בִּיתֵר שְׂאֵת;

Furthermore, he greatly desires for his son to be very gracious and intelligent, and therefore he pushes him to act kindly and to learn diligently.

וְכִמּוֹ לְמִשְׁלַל מְרָגְלִיּוֹת, מֶה
שֶׁהֵי א יִקְרָה בִּיתֵר שׁוֹמְרָה
בִּיתֵר שְׁמִירָה מְעוּלָה, כָּלִי
בְּתוֹךְ כָּלִי;

This is similar to the idea regarding pearls or other gems, the more valuable they are, the more one invests in guarding them, employing multiple layers of protection.

כִּךְ מִחֲמַת גּוֹדֵל אֲהַבְתוּ יִתְבָּרַךְ
אֵלֵינוּ, מִחֲמִיר וּמִדְקָדֵק עָלֵינוּ
בְּדִקְדּוּקֵי סוּפְרִים, שֶׁהֵן הֵמָּה
דְּבָרֵי תוֹרָתוֹ, הַנִּמְשָׁכוֹת
מֵאַהֲבָה רַבָּה בְּסִיּוּגִים וּגְדָרִים,
לְזִכּוֹתֵינוּ לְטוֹב לָנוּ, שְׁנֵהִיָּה
נִקְיִים לְפָנָיו יִתְבָּרַךְ.⁶

So too, because of the great love from Hashem to us, He is extra careful and stringent with our behavior. He gives us the “extra careful measures of the Sages,” which are actually part of the Torah expressing the Great Love from Hashem to us by protecting us with

⁵ (על פי משלי ג, ד: "ומצא חן ושכל לאדם").

⁶ (עיין מה שנתבאר מזה על פסוק "שחורה אני ונאווה". ועיין ברבות ריש פרשת שמות, גבי (משלי יג, כד): "ואהבו - שחרו מוסר [זה הקדוש ברוך הוא, על שאהב את ישראל, דכתיב (מלאכי א, ב): 'אהבתי אתכם אמר ה', שהוא מרבה אותן ביסורין]").

**“boundaries and fences.”
They are there for our benefit
to refine us so that we will be
spotless before Hashem.**

Now that we understand what the “extra careful measures of the Sages” accomplish, we will understand why they are needed more in the time of exile than in the time of the Beis Hamikdash (The Holy Temple in Jerusalem):

וְהָיָה, בְּזִמְנֵי שְׁבִית הַמִּקְדָּשׁ הָיָה
קַיִּים, הָיָה סָגִי ב'דְּאוּרֵייתָא'.

Now, in the time when the Beis Hamikdash existed it was enough to fulfill the mitzvot as defined “by the Torah’s definition”, without the extra precautions from the Sages.

כִּי הָיְתָה נֶאֱמָנָה אֶת ה' רוּחָנוּ,
וְלֹא מִשְׁכָּנוּ חֲבִלֵי עֲבוֹתוֹת
אֶהְבְּתָנוּ לְתַאוּת גְּשָׁמִיּוֹת,
וְהָיָה בְּנִקְלָה לִהְיוֹת אֶהְבֵּת ה'
קְבוּעָה בְּלֵב כָּל אִישׁ, לִהְיוֹת
בְּהִתְלַהְבוֹת לְעִבּוּדֵת ה' וְתוֹרָתוֹ
גַּם מִבְּלֵי שְׁנַתְעוּרֵר מִזֶּה אֶהְבֶּה
רַבָּה.

This is because our spirit was faithful to Hashem and we were not drawn with strong ropes of love for physical desires. It was therefore easier to have the love of Hashem firmly established in the heart of every man, and to be passionate in the service of Hashem and the learning of His Torah, even without these extra careful measures of the Sages inspiring a great love of Hashem.

אֲךָ דוֹר אַחֵר דוֹר, כִּי נִתְמַעְטוּ
הַלְבָבוֹת הַשְּׁלִימוֹת בְּעִבּוּדֵת ה'
בְּאֶהְבָּה עֲזָה בְּרִשְׁפֵי אֵשׁ,

However, with every successive generation, those whose hearts are complete in their service of Hashem with

⁷ (על פי תהלים עח, ח: "דור . . נאמנה את אל רוחו").

an intense fiery love decreased.

וְנִכְוִינוּ בְּאֵשׁ זָרָה בְּאַהֲבוֹת
וְתַאֲוֹת גּוֹפְנִיּוֹת, וְכִמּוּ כֵּן גָּבְרוּ
עָלֵינוּ עַד אֲשֶׁר לֹא נוֹכַל לַעֲבֹד
ה' בְּאַהֲבָה, בְּלִתִּי שְׁנַתְעוֹרֵר
מִזֶּה אַהֲבָה-רַבָּה עַל יְדֵי דְקֻדּוּקֵי
סוֹפְרִים וְחוֹמְרֵיהֶם בְּכָל
פְּרִטֵיהֶם:

We became 'burned' with the 'strange fire' of love and desire for physical things. These physical desires became so overwhelming to us until we are not able to serve Hashem with love unless we first awaken in ourselves a great love for Hashem through fulfilling the 'extra careful measures of the Sages' and their stringencies in every detail:

הֵן בְּבַחֲיִנַת "סוּר-מֶרַע" - בְּכָל
הַחוּמֹת שֶׁבְּגִמְרָא וּפּוֹסְקִים,

We must fulfill these precautions both in regard to 'turning away from wrong' by fulfilling all of the stringencies mentioned in the Gemara and later rulings,

וְהֵן בְּבַחֲיִנַת "וַעֲשֵׂה טוֹב" -
בְּדַבְרֵי מוֹסֵר שְׂבָאגְדוֹת ו"מִלִּי
דְּאֲבוֹת"⁸: "עֵין טוֹבָה" - שִׁירָאָה
אֶת חֲבִירוֹ בְּטוֹב עֵין, וְרַעַת
רַעְהוּ אֶל יַחֲשׁוּב בְּלִבּוֹ⁹;

and in regard to 'doing good' by fulfilling the ethical guidance found in the Aggada and the teachings found in the Pirkei Avos. For example, it instructs one to have "a good eye," meaning to view his friend with a generous eye and not think bad of his friend in his heart.

⁸ (אבות ב, ט: "אִיזוּהִי דֶרֶךְ יִשְׂרָאֵל שֶׁיִּדְבֹק בָּהּ הָאָדָם? .. עֵין טוֹבָה .. חֶבֶר טוֹב .. לֵב טוֹב").

⁹ (על פִּי זְכַרְיָה ח, יז: "וְאִישׁ אֶת רַעַת רַעְהוּ אֶל תַּחֲשַׁבוּ בְּלִבְכֶּם").

And so too the other instructions in Pirkei Avos, that וכן "לב טוב", ו"חבר טוב כו"¹⁰.

¹⁰ (ועיין מה שנתבאר בדבור המתחיל "כה תברכו את בני ישראל" (נשא ו, כג), בפירוש: "איך לא אשא פנים לישראל כו", והם מדקדקים על עצמן עד כזית כו" - נמצא, שעל ידי שכנסת ישראל מדקדקים על עצמן, להחמיר על עצמן ביותר ממה שכתוב בתורה שבכתב, מזה נמשך בחינת "ישא ה' פניו" (שם), שהוא בחינת אהבה רבה שלמעלה מההשתלשלות כו'. ונמשך בחינה זו "אליך" ממש, להיות גילוי אהבה רבה זו גם באדם.

וכמו שנתבאר גם כן בדבור המתחיל "שחורה אני ונאווה" הנ"ל, שעל ידי זה תתעלה הנפש הבהמית גם כן כו'. עיין שם.

ועיין מה שנתבאר בפ' פרשת מקץ, סוף דבור המתחיל "כי אתה נרי" (תורה אור מא, א), גבי: "והנה בדורות הראשונים כו' [כמו בנביאים ושופטים מצינו דור שכולו זכאי או כולו חייב. ומי שהיה זכאי היה זכאי במדרגת צדיק גדול או נביא, ומי שהיה חייב היה רשע גמור, ועל ידי זה לא היו ממוצעים]. אבל דורות האחרונים כו' [דור אחר דור אין בהם רשעים כל כך, ולא צדיקים כל כך טובים.

והענין: שבדורות הראשונים היו נשמות עליונות ממדרגות גבוהות, ומצד נשמתם בעצמם, היו יכולים לשלוט על הרע שבנפשם. ומיד כשיתבונן בגדולת אין סוף ברוך הוא יגיע אליו היראה כו'. רק רשע גמור - שמגביר הרע שבנפשו בשאט בנפש. אבל דורות האחרונים, עיקבא דמשיחא, בחינת עקביים, אין כח בנשמתם עצמם לשלוט על הרע, וצריך יגיעה רבה יגיעת נפש ויגיעת בשר].

וזהו "והו' ה' יגיה חשכי" (שמואל ב' כב, כט) כו', [היינו בחינת חשך שבדורות האחרונים. כי דוד המלך עליו השלום אמר זה בעד כללות ישראל, שיש בהם בחינת חשך בדורות האחרונים עיקבא דמשיחא, שאין 'אתה' נרי הו' ה', כלומר שאין נר הו' ה' נשמת אדם, מכל מקום 'והו' ה' - היא בחינת הו' ה' עליונה שלמעלה מההשתלשלות - 'יגיה חשכי'"]. ועיין שם, שהוא למעלה מסדר ההשתלשלות.

וזהו ענין "ישא ה' פניו אליך", והיינו על ידי שמדקדקים על עצמן. וכמו שכתוב ב"רעיא מהימנא", בפ' פרשת פינחס (דף רל"ח, עמוד ב'), שהוא בחינת "ישאנו על אברתו" (האזינו לב, יא), שהוא למעלה ממה שנמשך על ידי "רמ"ח

**one should have a ‘good heart’
and a ‘good friend,’**

All of these instructions teach us how to fulfill the Torah’s command to “love your fellow as much as you love yourself” in the highest and most complete manner; much more than the bare minimum requirement which someone might fulfill from just looking at the “Torah’s definition” of loving your fellow.

וְזֶהוּ שְׁכָתוּב (פֶּרֶשְׁתָּנוּ ל, ה-ו):
 "וְשָׁמַע אָבִיהָ אֶת נִדְרָהּ וְאָסְרָהּ
 אֲשֶׁר אָסְרָה עַל-נַפְשָׁהּ וְהַחֲרִישׁ לָהּ
 אָבִיהָ וְקָמוּ כָּל-נִדְרֶיהָ וְכָל-אֲסֻרֵּי-
 אָסְרָה עַל-נַפְשָׁהּ יָקוּם, וְאִם-הֵנִיא אָבִיהָ
 אֶתָּה בַּיּוֹם שֶׁמָּעוּ כָּל-נִדְרֶיהָ וְאֲסֻרֶיהָ
 אֲשֶׁר-אָסְרָה עַל-נַפְשָׁהּ לֹא יָקוּם וַיְהִי
 יִסְלַח-לָהּ כִּי הֵנִיא אָבִיהָ אֶתָּה",
 שֶׁהָאֵב מִפֶּר אֶת הַנֶּדֶר:

And this is the idea behind what is written (Bamidbar 30:5–6): **“And if her father heard her vow or her prohibition she placed on herself and her father will remain silent (and not nullify them right away), then all of her vows and prohibitions which she places on herself will be effective. However, if her father removes (i.e. nullifies) her vow on the day he hears about it, then all her vows and prohibitions she places on herself will not be effective, and Hashem will forgive her (if she transgresses her vow without knowing it was nullified) because her father removed it.”** We see from this **that**

פְּקוּדֵינָּה, דְּאִינוּן רַמ"ח אַבְרִינִין דְּמִלְכָּא".
 וְעֵינִין בְּגִמְרָא בְּמִגִּילָה (דָּף כ"ז, עמוד ב'. וְדָף כ"ח, עמוד א'), גָּבִי "וּבְמָה הָאֲרֻכָּת
 יָמִים כו". יְעִינִין שָׁם.

וְעֵינִין מַה שֶּׁנִּתְבָּאָר בְּמָקוֹם אַחֵר, בְּפִירוּשׁ "כָּל הַמַּאֲרִיךְ בְּאַחַד מֵאֲרִיכִין לוֹ
 יָמָיו כו" (תוֹרָה אור זָכוֹר פד, ג. לְעֵיל בְּהַעֲלוֹתָךְ לַד, ד. פִּנְחָס פ, א. לְקַמֵּן
 וְאַתְחִנֵּן יב, ב. רֹאשׁ הַשָּׁנָה סג, א)).

specifically **the father is able to מִפֶּר-remove a vow.**

כִּי מִבְּחִינַת אֱהָבָה-רַבָּה הוּא
מִפֶּר - בְּתַרְגּוּמוֹ¹¹: מִבְטֵל - כָּל
הָאִסּוּרִים וְהַקִּשּׁוּרִים אֲשֶׁר
בְּנֶסֶת-יִשְׂרָאֵל הִיא אֲסוּרָה
וְקִשּׁוּרָה.

The deeper meaning behind this is: **From the aspect of the ‘great love’ from Hashem to the Jewish People He (Hashem) מִפֶּר-removes (and as the word מִפֶּר is translated by Rabbi Yonasan ben Uziel this means Hashem nullifies) all of the restrictions and bonds of unholiness to which the Jewish People are restricted and bound.**

וְ"אֵין חָבוּשׁ מִתֵּיִר עֲצָמוֹ" - כִּי
אִם עַל יְדֵי מִדַּת אֱהָבָה-רַבָּה -
בְּחִינַת "אָבִיָּה".

It's necessary for this ‘great love’ to come and release the Jewish People from their connection to unholiness since **“a prisoner is unable to free himself”. It is only through the aspect of the ‘great love’ from Hashem to us which is the idea of the “father”.**

Meaning, just as a father does everything he can to encourage his children to go on the proper path out of his great love for them, so too Hashem loves us so much this is why He gives us the fullest possible way of keeping Torah and mitzvos, so that we can express our love of Hashem fully. Just as the father of a girl is able to nullify her vow since he cares about her and knows what's best for her, so too Hashem can reverse and “nullify” our bonds with unholiness and physical desire through giving us some of His great love in the form of the ‘extra careful measures of the Sages’ which are an expression of His deep love for us.

¹¹ ('הַנִּיָּא' תַּרְגָּם יוֹנָתָן - 'יִבְטֵל').

The following is an explanation of the Tzemach Tzedek¹² (found in the text of Likutay Torah) on the above statement of the Alter Rebbe that the connection of the person to unholiness is like being bound in an oath, and the 'great love' of Hashem nullifies thus bond just as a father nullifies a vow.

וְעִנִּין הָאִסּוּרִים שֶׁהִיא אֲסוּרָה
וְקִשּׁוּרָה בָּהֶן, יֵשׁ לֹאמַר דִּהְיִינוּ
חִלּוּשֵׁת כַּח הַנֶּפֶשׁ, שְׁאִין בְּכַחַה
לְצֵאת מִנִּרְתָּקָה וּמֵאֲסָרָה כּו' -
חֻמְרֵי הַגּוֹף וְנֶפֶשׁ הַבְּהֵמִית.
וְכִמוֹ שֶׁנִּתְבָּאֵר בְּמָקוֹם אַחֵר.¹³

What is the idea of these 'restrictions the person is restricted and bound by' mentioned above? We can possibly explain this as a reference to weakness of the Divine soul; which is not strong enough to leave its covering and prison which are the coarseness of the body and the animal soul, as explained elsewhere.

וְשֵׁם נִתְבָּאֵר: שֶׁעַל יְדֵי הַתּוֹרָה
נִמְשָׁךְ כַּח וְעוֹז לַנֶּפֶשׁ לְבַטֵּל
קִישּׁוּרִים אֵלּוּ כּו'.¹⁴

There it is also explained how through the study of the Torah, power and strength are given to the Divine soul to nullify all of these bonds to unholiness.

וְיֵשׁ לֹאמַר, שֶׁהַפֶּרֶת נִדְרִים בְּיוֹם
הַכִּפּוּרִים,

We can possibly explain that this is the idea of nullifying vows on Yom Kippur at the Kol Nidrei service:

¹² Even though generally the comments of the Tzemach Tzedek have been moved to the Hebrew footnotes, due to the relative shortness of the maamar it was felt necessary in this case to include this explanation to give a complete understanding of the maamar.

¹³ בְּדִבּוּר הַמִּתְחִיל "בַּחֲדָשׁ הַשְּׁלִישִׁי", בְּפָרֶשֶׁת יִתְרוֹ (תּוֹרָה אור 10, א).

¹⁴ וּבְמָקוֹם אַחֵר נִתְבָּאֵר, דְּקִישּׁוּרִים אֵלּוּ נִקְרָא "סִירְכוֹת" בְּ"רַעְיָא מְהִימָנָא" - שֶׁהַנֶּפֶשׁ מְסֻתָּכֶת בָּהֶם וְעַל יְדֵי זֶה אֵינָה יְכוּלָה לְעֵלוֹת כּו', בְּדִבּוּר הַמִּתְחִיל "פִּירוּשׁ הַפְּסוּק 'מִי אֵל כְּמוֹךְ'" (לְקַמֵּן רֹאשׁ הַשָּׁנָה 10, א).

הַיְינוּ שְׁעַל יְדֵי הַתְּשׁוּבָה נִמְשָׁךְ
בְּחִינַת הַפֶּרֶת וּבִיטוּל
הַקִּישׁוּרִים וְגִלּוֹי הָאֲהָבָה רַבָּה
בְּנֶפֶשׁ כּו'.

Through teshuva (repentance/return to Hashem) which is the essential idea of Yom Kippur **there is drawn down** a revelation of Hashem **which removes and nullifies these ‘bonds’** to unholiness created by the animal soul, just as the bonds of the vows became nullified at the Kol Nidrei service, **and this allows the great love that a Jew has for Hashem to become revealed.**

וְעוֹד יֵשׁ לֵאמֹר בְּעֵינֵי שׁ"ה אָב
יִמְכֹּר, וְהוּא עַל דֶּרֶךְ מֶה
שֶׁכָּתוּב בַּזֹּהַר¹⁵,

We can further explain the idea that specifically the father can remove vows from his daughter, **based on what is written in the Zohar,**

גְּבִי "בְּזִמְנָא דְּנִטְלָא מִבִּי אָבָא,
וְלֹא בְּזִמְנָא דְּנִטְלֵי מִבִּי אִימָא".

as explained regarding the concept that in order for there to be a complete unity of Ze'eir Anpin¹⁶ and Malchus¹⁷ it needs to be **“at the time when she (Malchus) receives from the**

¹⁵ פְּרִשְׁתַּת אֲמֹר (דָּף ק', עמוד ב')

¹⁶ The six “emotive” attributes of Hashem in the spiritual world of Atzilus. Meaning, the way that Hashem relates to us in a manner of reward and punishment (kindness and severity), giving kindness to those who do good and punishing those who do bad.

¹⁷ The aspect of how Hashem is actually involved in the creation and guiding of the world. When these two types of attributes are united then then we actually see in the physical world how Hashem is running everything and is part of His plan, but when these two types of attributes of Hashem are not fully united, then Hashem's Divine Providence in everything becomes concealed.

“house of the Father”
(meaning from Chochma), **and**
not at the time when she
receives from “the house of the
Mother” (meaning Bina).

In the verse (Bereshis 20:12) it says: וְגַם-אֶמְנָה אֶחָתִי בֵּת-אָבִי הוּא אֶךְ לֹא בֵּת-אִמִּי וְתַהֲיִי-לִי לְאִשָּׁה:

“And besides, she is in truth my sister, my father’s daughter though not my mother’s; and she became my wife.”

The simple meaning of the verse is that Avraham is explaining to Avimelech, king of the Pelishtim, the reason he called Sara his sister even though she was really his wife. She is related to him like a sister; she was his father’s granddaughter, his niece, but only from his father’s side. Sara’s father Haran was Avraham’s half-brother since they shared the same father but had different mothers. Thus, Sara was related to him from his father’s side, as though she was his sister (even though she was actually his niece), but not from his mother’s side.

In the Zohar it gives a mystical explanation of the verse to mean that for Ze’eir Anpin and Malchus to be united like a husband and wife (וְתַהֲיִי-לִי לְאִשָּׁה), then it isn’t enough for them to receive from Bina (אֶךְ לֹא בֵּת-אִמִּי), rather they need to receive from Chochma (וְגַם-אֶמְנָה אֶחָתִי בֵּת-אָבִי הוּא). This is the idea of saying “at the time when they receive from the house of the father-Chochma, and not at the time when they receive from the house of the mother-Bina.

כִּי מִבְּחִינַת הַבִּינָה וְהַדַּעַת נִמְשָׁךְ
לְהִיוֹת "אֶתְכַפֵּי" סֹטְרָא-
אַחֲרָא, וְזֶהוּ עֲנִין הַ"נִּדְרִים סִיג
לְפָרִישׁוֹת".

This is so because from the aspect of Bina and Daas there is brought forth the ability to “restrain the Sitra Achra (the side opposed to holiness)”, which is the idea of what it says in Pirkei Avos that **“vows are a fence protecting a person that he be separate and**

removed from indulging in worldly matters.”

אָבֵל לִהְיוֹת "אֶתְהַפֵּכָא חֲשׁוּכָא
- מִמָּוֶשׁ - לְנִהוּרָא" אִי אֶפְשָׁר
לִהְיוֹת מִבְּחִינַת בִּינָה, שׁ"מִינָה
דִּינִין מִתְעָרִין",

But to “actually transform spiritual darkness into spiritual light”; this cannot happen from the aspect of Bina alone, since “from it (Bina) judgements from Hashem’s Heavenly court are aroused against the created beings for their improper conduct”,

אֶלָּא מִבְּחִינַת חֲכָמָה-עֵילָאָה,
וְ"הַחֲכָמָה תַּחֲיָה" (קֹהֵלֶת ז, יב),

Only from the aspect of the Higher Level of Chochma (Chochma of Atzilus) regarding which it says (Koheles 7:12) “and Chochma (wisdom) will give life to those who have it” can there be the nullification of the bonds to unholiness (the opposite of life) created by the animal soul.

וְהוּא הַבִּיטוּל שֶׁלִּמְעַלָּה מִהַשְׁגָּה
וְדַעַת כּו'¹⁸.

This level of Chochma is a type of selfless dedication to Hashem beyond all logic and reason and is therefore unaffected by the animal soul’s pull to physicality, and can even transform that pull into a drive to connect to Hashem.

¹⁸ כְּמִבּוֹאֵר בְּדִבּוּר הַמִּתְחִיל "רְאֵה אֲנֹכִי נוֹתֵן" (לקמן ראה).

וְהוּא שֶׁהָאב מִפֶּר וּמְהַפֵּךְ
חֲשׂוֹכָא לְנִהוּרָא.

This is the idea that the *father* (meaning the power of Chochma) is able to nullify spiritual darkness and transform it into spiritual light.

וּמִבְחִינָה זוֹ נִמְשָׁךְ גַּם כֵּן בְּחִינַת
"וְאִם הָיָה תְהִיָּה לְאִישׁ" (פֶּרֶשְׁתָּנוּ
ל, ז) הַנִּזְכָּר לְמַעַלָּה. וְעַיִן בְּזוּהַר
שָׁם.

Specifically from this aspect (of the *father*-Chochma) is drawn forth the ability for “her (the daughter mentioned at the beginning) to become married to a man”, meaning in a mystical sense that from the *father*-Chochma is drawn forth the ability for Ze’eir Anpin to become united and fully revealed in Malchus, as described above.

From the sequence of the verses we are discussing, it would seem that the daughter’s marriage is connected to her father’s ability to nullify her vows. In simple terms, this connection is that just as the girl’s father can nullify her vows, so can her husband nullify her vows. However, in a mystical sense we are using the reference of the “daughter” to mean Malchus of Atzilus and the “father” to mean Chochma of Atzilus. The verse is telling us that for Malchus to get “married” to her “husband” who is Ze’eir Anpin, she needs to first be connected to her “father” who is Chochma, since only from Chochma is there the ability for a complete union of Ze’eir Anpin and Malchus.

In other words: Only from a totally selfless dedication to Hashem (Chochma) is one able develop their great love for Hashem (Ze’eir Anpin) so that it be expressed in everyday life (Malchus). This selfless dedication is especially nurtured through practicing the “extra careful measures of the Sages” who taught us how to be totally dedicated to Hashem.

אך פִּירוּשׁ "וְשָׁמַע אָבִיהָ אֶת
נִדְרָהּ וְאַסְרָה אֲשֶׁר אָסְרָה עַל־נַפְשָׁהּ
וְהִחְרִישׁ לָהּ אָבִיהָ וְקָמוּ כָל־נִדְרֶיהָ וְכָל־
אֲסֹר אֲשֶׁר־אָסְרָה עַל־נַפְשָׁהּ יָקוּם"

However, now we need to understand the mystical meaning of "And if her father will hear her vow or her prohibition that she places on herself and her father will remain silent (and not nullify them right away), then all of her vows and prohibitions that she places on herself will be effective."

הֵינּוּ, שְׁעַל יְדֵי אֶתְכַפִּיּא
בְּתַחֲלָה, שֶׁזֶּהוּ עֲנִין הַנִּדְרִים,
מִזֶּה נִמְשָׁךְ אַחֵר כֵּן גִּילּוֹי בְּחִינַת
"אָבִיהָ" לְהִיּוֹת "אֶתְהַפְּכָא
חֲשׂוֹכָא לְנֹהוֹרָא"¹⁹.

Meaning that specifically through first "restraining" the unholiness by restraining the desires of the animal soul, which is the point of vows (which are intended to restrain a person from indulgence), from this he will afterwards come to experiencing the revelation of the level of "her father (Chochma)" which causes that "spiritual darkness will be transformed into spiritual light".

וְזֶהוּ שְׁכָתוּב גַּם כֵּן (שָׁם ל, ב):
"וַיְדַבֵּר מֹשֶׁה אֶל רָאשֵׁי הַמִּטּוֹת
לְבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל לֵאמֹר זֶה הַדָּבָר אֲשֶׁר
צִוָּה ה'":

And this also the meaning of what is written (Bamdibar 30:2): "And Moshe spoke to the heads of the tribes of the Children of Israel saying: This is the matter that Hashem has commanded", the commandment that a father may nullify his daughter's vows, and

¹⁹ וְעֵינֵינוּ עוֹד מַעֲנִין בְּחִינַת "אָבִיהָ" - ב' פִּרְדָּס, שְׁעַר חֲמִישִׁי, פֶּרֶק ג'.

a husband may nullify his wife's vows if done in the correct time and manner.

What's the lesson in specifically stressing here that this mitzva was transmitted through Moshe, when all mitzvos were?

שָׁעַל יָדֵי "לֵאמֹר זֶה הַדְּבָר"
שֶׁמִּבְחִינֵת מֹשֶׁה, עַל יָדֵי זֶה יוּכָל
לְהַתִּיר הַנֶּדֶר כּו'.

This is to teach us **that through Moshe "saying** (to the heads of the tribes) **that this is the matter"** meaning from the **aspect of Moshe** (who represents the level of Chochma of Atzilus) **can the vows become nullified.** From Chochma itself (represented by Moshe) comes the power for the Divine soul to free itself from the "vows," the bonds of the animal soul's passions.

גַּם, "רֹאשֵׁי הַמִּטּוֹת" הוּא בְּחִינַת
רְעוּתָא דְּלִיבָא, אֶהְבֵּה-רִפְּה.
וּכְמִבּוֹאֵר לְמַעְלָה): .

In addition, the idea of "heads of the tribes" is that they represent the "essential desire of the heart to connect to Hashem", in a manner of **"great love for Hashem", as explained above.**

In other words, by saying that specifically Moshe spoke to the heads of the tribes about nullifying vows, the verse is hinting to us that from Chochma- represented by Moshe- can someone reveal in themselves the true love for Hashem which is represented by the "heads of the tribes". The "heads of the tribes" mystically means

that highest part of the soul of the Jewish people, just like the head is the highest part of the body, so too the deep essential love for Hashem in every Jew is the idea of the “heads of the tribes”, and this deep love -the *heads* of the tribes- is revealed through Moshe, which is Chochma.

Summary of the Maamar

- Q1 What is the reason why in the generations after the destruction of the Beis Hamikdash we find that the Sages places many additional restrictions more than what the Torah demands, and instructed us to be extra careful in mitzvos beyond the letter of the law of the Torah?
- A1 Because in the time of the Beis Hamikdash we experienced so much revelation of Hashem that our animal souls were naturally more refined and it was much easier to reveal our love for Hashem even by just by keeping the laws of the Torah itself without extra measures. However, after the destruction of the Beis Hamikdash when our animal souls are more coarse and have a much stronger passion for physicality, thus making it very difficult to reveal our love for Hashem. Therefore, in the time of exile the only way to overcome the animal soul and reveal our love for Hashem is through keeping the “extra careful measures of the Sages”.

- Q2 How do the “extra careful measures of the Sages” help us reveal a great love for Hashem?
- A2 Because the motivating factor behind these “extra careful measures” is the fact that Hashem has a great love for us. Just like a father who truly loves his son will push him to be careful in his conduct that he should behave in the most refined manner and that should attain wisdom and sensitivity etc., so too because Hashem loves us that’s why He wants us to keep the Torah and Mitzvos in the most complete manner possible, and that’s the purpose of the “extra careful measures of the Sages”. Since the motivation behind these measures is Hashem’s great love for us, they have the power to reveal the great love for Hashem we have hidden in us. This is because our love for Hashem is a reflection of His infinite love for us.
- Q3 How does this tie into our parsha, Parshas Matos, in giving a deeper understanding of the passage about a father nullifying his daughter’s vows?
- A3 The mystical meaning of a *father* nullifying vows is how *father* represents Chochma, total selfless dedication to Hashem beyond all reasoning which comes from the deepest part of the soul, and only through this type of selfless dedication which is expressed in fulfilling the “extra careful measures of the Sages” can someone remove the “vows and prohibitions” that they are bound to. What are these “vows and prohibitions” a reference to? They are referring to the fact that the animal feels “bound” to pursue physical pleasure and the Divine soul is stuck dealing with the animal soul’s drives, just like someone who is bound by an oath is stuck dealing with the consequences of the oath. By saying that the “father” nullifies the “vows” it means to say that through the dedication to Hashem on a level of Chochma by keeping everything in Torah law, even every Rabbinic decree and

instruction, this will remove the coarseness and passion of the animal soul which “binds” the Divine soul to pursue its goals. Once those “bonds” to materiality are “nullified” through the power of Chochma, then a Jew can reveal his true love for Hashem.

- Q4 Why does the Torah stress the fact that Moshe himself gave over the command regarding annulling vows, didn't he give over all of the commandments?
- A4 Since Moshe Rabeinu himself embodies the power of Chochma in its most absolute state, specifically by connecting to him we receive the spiritual power to “nullify” the “bonds” of the animal soul stopping us from loving Hashem, this is why in this mitzva there is special emphasis on the fact that Moshe gave over the commandment.

Lessons from the Maamar in the service of Hashem

- 1 Keeping every detail of halacha doesn't just make us have more fear of Hashem, it is what refines us and gives us the ability to reveal our love for Hashem during davening.
- 2 Someone who really cares about himself, his children, his family and friends, will encourage himself and others to act in the most refined manner and pursue wisdom and sensitivity.
- 3 Sometimes we feel "bound" to listen to the animal soul's demands on us to pursue physical pleasure or something seemingly foolish. We need to know that we have the power to free ourselves from any of its demands by dedicating ourselves more strongly to serving Hashem and revealing Him in this world. When a person is busy learning Torah, teaching, and spreading the knowledge and practice of Torah and Mitzvos to every Jew he can, then there won't be any room left for the animal soul to convince us that he has us "bound" to his wishes.
- 4 In order to receive this power to totally dedicate ourselves to Hashem, we need to connect to Moshe Rabeinu in our generation, the Rebbe, who shows us what dedication to Hashem is all about.

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