B"H

LIKKUTEI SICHOS

On the weekly Torah readings and holidays

Volume 25 | Yud Kislev

לקוטי שיחות
PROJECT LIKKUTEI SICHOS

THE MANY WERE WITH ME

From the Talks of
The Lubavitcher Rebbe
Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson

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General Editor:
Rabbi Zalmy Avtzon

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1.

Returning in Peace

Yud Kislev, the anniversary of the Mitteler Rebbe's liberation,[1] often falls during the week of *Parshas Vayeitzei*.[2] Indeed, in some years — as in this year[3] — it falls on Shabbos *Parshas Vayeitzei* itself.

The *Shelah* famously teaches[4] that all "the festivals of the year… are all connected with the *parshiyos* in which they occur." We can therefore draw on this week's *parshah* to understand the **significance** of the Mitteler Rebbe's liberation. Moreover, the liberation itself is alluded to in the *parshah*.[5]

The overarching theme of *Parshas Vayeitzei* is exile and redemption. It begins with Yaakov's descent into exile:[6] "Yaakov left Be'er Sheva and went to Charan." Yaakov leaves Eretz Yisrael for a foreign land. Specifically, he goes to Charan — a place associated with "Hashem's fierce anger (*charon af*)."[7] Moreover, he goes to Lavan the Aramean, {for whom he must toil as a servant, as Yaakov later says:} "I worked for you, [I completely fulfilled the terms of] my contract."[8]

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1) In the year 5587 (1826). [This is the tradition preserved in the Rebbeim's household; see the Frierdiker Rebbe's account in the introduction to *Bad Kodesh. Beis Rebbe* (vol. 2, note at the end of ch. 4) gives the year as 5586 (1825). See also the beginning of the *sichah* of Yud Kislev 5701.]

It is noteworthy that Tes Kislev also falls during the week of *Parshas Vayeitzei* in most years. This date marks both his birthday, in 5534 (1773), and the anniversary of his passing, in 5588 (1827). Indeed, in both the year of his birth and the year of his passing, Tes Kislev fell on Wednesday of that week.

2) Even when Yud Kislev falls during the week of *Parshas Vayishlach* — as it did in the year of the liberation itself, when it fell on Sunday of that week [whether in 5586 or 5587; see the preceding footnote] — it receives its blessing from Shabbos *Parshas Vayeitzei*.

It should be noted that, according to the tradition preserved in the Rebbeim's household (cited in the appendix to *Bad Kodesh*, the note on p. 22), the news of the liberation arrived on Shabbos *Parshas* ***Vayeitzei***, Tes Kislev.

3) 5746 (1985) — the year this *sichah* was originally published.

4) Beginning of *Parshas Vayeishev*. The *Shelah* states there that this applies to "the festivals instituted by the Sages" as well.

5) Note our Sages' statement that "a meritorious event is brought about on a meritorious day" (*Taanis* 29a). See *Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 5, p. 129ff.; vol. 10, p. 99.

6) See *Zohar*, vol. 1, 147a; *Bereishis Rabbah* 68:13. See also *Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 15, p. 262, **and the sources cited there**; vol. 25, end of p. 153.

7) *Rashi* on *Bereishis* 11:32.

8) See *Bereishis* 30:26, 29; 31:6, 41.

At the end of the *parshah*, we read of his "redemption" from this exile:[9] Yaakov is delivered from Lavan the Aramean and "goes on his way,"[10] heading back to Eretz Yisrael.[11]

The particular connection to the Mitteler Rebbe's liberation can be understood as follows.

As Yaakov set out for Charan, one of his requests was, "And I return **in peace** to my father's house."[12] He was asking not only to return to his father's house unharmed,[13] but also that the *return itself* should be peaceful and tranquil.[14]

His request was fulfilled: although Lavan pursued him with hostile intentions — as he himself told Yaakov, "I have the power to harm you"[15] — the entire encounter passed **peacefully**, without war.

The Mitteler Rebbe's liberation followed a similar pattern. As is well known, it was linked to the verse,[16] "He redeemed my soul in peace." In particular, as recounted by Chassidim,[17] the news of his liberation arrived "as he was reciting *Tehillim*,[18] at the verse 'He redeemed my soul in peace.'"

As explained {in *Chassidus*},[19] "He redeemed my soul in peace" means more than deliverance from an enemy: the *deliverance itself* takes place "peacefully, without any war at all." This parallels Yaakov's request, "And I return in peace."

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9) The *parshah* also describes the **ascent** brought about through the descent into exile: "The man prospered exceedingly" (*Bereishis* 30:43). Yaakov took all this with him "to come to his father Yitzchak, to the land of Canaan" (ibid., 31:18). For an extensive explanation of its significance in Divine service, see *Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 15, p. 244ff.

10) *Bereishis* 32:2.

11) This is evident from Rashi's explanation, ad loc., that "Angels of Eretz Yisrael {came to meet him} **in order to accompany him to the Land**." Re'em explains there that Machanayim is in Eretz Yisrael. See the discussion in *Ramban* and the commentaries on *Rashi* ad loc.; *Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 25, p. 150, footnote 4.

12) *Bereishis* 28:21.

13) This reflects Rashi's explanation {of the words "in peace" (*beshalom*)}: "Unblemished (*shalem*) by sin…." See also *Rashi* on *Bereishis* 33:18: "Whole (*shalem*) in his body… in his wealth… in his Torah knowledge…" (based on *Shabbos* 33b and other sources). See *Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 25, p. 168ff.

14) Note *Bereishis Rabbah* 73:3, and *Midrash Tehillim* 55:19: "'He redeemed my soul **in peace**'… this refers to **Yaakov**." See the explanation of "He redeemed my soul in peace" below in the main text.

15) *Bereishis* 31:29.

16) *Tehillim* 55:19.

17) *Beis Rebbe*, vol. 2, note at the end of ch. 5. See, however, footnote 2 above.

18) In the monthly cycle of *Tehillim*, {this verse is included in the daily portion for the tenth of the month}. See Section 2 below.

19) *Maamarei Admur HaZakein — HaKetzarim*, p. 216. See also the extensive explanation in the Mitteler Rebbe's discourse beginning *Padah Beshalom* in *Shaarei Teshuvah*, vol. 1, ch. 11, and elsewhere. See also *Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 25, p. 196.

2.

A Connection Shared by Everyone

Now, the verse "He redeemed my soul in peace" figures **prominently** in the Alter Rebbe's liberation as well. As he writes in his well-known letter,[20] "When I read in *Tehillim* the verse 'He redeemed my soul in peace'… I went free in peace."

Yet in one key respect, this verse has an even stronger connection to **Yud** Kislev, the day of the Mitteler Rebbe's liberation, than to Yud-Tes Kislev, the day of the Alter Rebbe's liberation.

As is well known, the Frierdiker Rebbe explains[21] why the Alter Rebbe was reciting this verse at the time of his liberation, even though it is not included in the daily portion of *Tehillim* for the nineteenth of the month. During his imprisonment, the Alter Rebbe recited *Tehillim* "in abundance," **adding** {to the monthly cycle} the portions assigned to each day of the **week**. Since Yud-Tes Kislev fell on a Tuesday that year, he was reciting chapter 55, which is included in Tuesday's portion.

Thus, the connection between "He redeemed my soul in peace" and the Alter Rebbe's liberation is **expressed openly through the recitation** of the verse only when Yud-Tes Kislev falls on a Tuesday. Even then, the verse is recited by those who recite *Tehillim* "in abundance," **not** by everyone. For others, the connection remains in thought,[22] through reflection on the verse's relevance {to the liberation}.

On Yud Kislev, by contrast, the verse "He redeemed my soul in peace" is recited by **everyone**, every year, because it is included in the daily portion of *Tehillim* for the tenth of the month.

[This is in keeping with the Frierdiker Rebbe's directive[23] that everyone recite the daily portion of *Tehillim* according to the monthly cycle. He emphasized[24] that this practice is equally suited to **everyone**.]

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20) This letter is printed in *Beis Rebbe*, vol. 1, ch. 18; the Alter Rebbe's *Igros Kodesh*, letter 38, and the sources cited there.

21) This explanation appears in the Frierdiker Rebbe's letter printed in *Kovetz Michtavim*, appended to *Tehillim Ohel Yosef Yitzchak*, p. 14 (200)ff.; the Frierdiker Rebbe's *Igros Kodesh*, vol. 3, p. 473ff., and the sources cited there.

22) The connection may also be expressed through a *niggun*, which is more closely associated with thought {than with speech, as reflected in its description as} "the pen of the heart." See *Likkutei Dibburim*, vol. 3, p. 510b, toward the end, and elsewhere.

23) It is readily understood that even before this directive was introduced, reciting *Tehillim* according to the monthly cycle was more accessible to everyone than reciting it according to the weekly cycle.

24) See the collection of letters cited in footnote 21, p. 5 (191)ff. and p. 24 (210); the Frierdiker Rebbe's *Igros Kodesh*, vol. 2, p. 81 and p. 523ff., and the

This distinction alone indicates that, in one essential respect, the **theme** of "He redeemed my soul in peace" is more openly expressed in the Mitteler Rebbe's liberation than in the Alter Rebbe's.

3.

Redemption Without Battle

To understand this distinction, we must first examine the connection between "He redeemed my soul in peace" and the liberation of both the Alter Rebbe and the Mitteler Rebbe.

As noted above, "He redeemed my soul in peace" expresses a dual achievement: deliverance from the enemy, and securing that deliverance *peacefully* {rather than through battle}.

These two forms of deliverance — through battle and by peaceful means — also exist within Torah. Broadly speaking, they correspond to the distinction between *nigleh*, the revealed dimension of Torah, and *pnimiyus haTorah*, its inner dimension.

Pnimiyus haTorah is "the Tree of Life, where there is neither a challenging question… nor a dispute."[25] *Nigleh*, by contrast, contains extensive dialectical discussion (*shakla vetarya*), questions, and apparent contradictions. It thus resembles deliverance through battle — "the **battle** of Torah."[26] To uncover the light of the *halachah* and arrive at Torah's conclusion, one must contend with the obscurity and concealment[27] presented by the questions and dialectical discussion.

A similar distinction exists within *nigleh* itself, between *Talmud Bavli* and *Talmud Yerushalmi*.[28] The verse "He has made me dwell in darkness"[29] is applied to *Talmud Bavli*,[30] because its teachings are presented in a way that requires one to work through dialectical

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references given at the beginning of those letters; **and elsewhere**.

25) See *Zohar*, vol. 3 (*Raaya Mehemna*), 124b, quoted and explained in *Tanya, Iggeres HaKodesh*, Epistle 26.

26) This expression is used by our Sages in *Megillah* 15b and the sources cited there; *Chagigah* 14a; and elsewhere.

27) See *Zohar*, loc. cit.: "A challenging question comes from the side of evil… dispute comes from the spirit of impurity." See *Tanya, Iggeres HaKodesh*, Epistle 26, p. 144b ff.

28) For the discussion that follows, see *Shaarei Orah*, the *maamar* entitled *BeChaf-Hei BeKislev*, ch. 54ff.; the *maamar* entitled *Amar Rava*, 5708, ch. 11; and elsewhere.

Note also our Sages' descriptions of "the Torah scholars in Eretz Yisrael, who treat one another pleasantly in matters of *halachah*," and "the Torah scholars in Babylonia, who assail one another" — "agreeable" and "bitter," respectively (*Sanhedrin* 24a).

29) *Eichah* 3:6.

30) *Sanhedrin* 24a.

discussion, questions, and the like before reaching clarity and arriving at a conclusion. This is the "darkness." *Talmud Yerushalmi*, by contrast, contains fewer questions and less debate. Its teachings are presented in a **clearer light** from the outset, allowing one to reach the conclusion more quickly.

Nevertheless, *Talmud Yerushalmi*, too, belongs to *nigleh*. It discusses worldly matters — "the Tree of Good and Evil"[31] — which obscure the truth of Torah. Consequently, it also contains a measure of concealment in the form of questions and the like.

In *pnimiyus haTorah*, however, "there is neither a challenging question… nor a dispute." It deals explicitly with G-dliness and spiritual realities that are themselves manifestly[32] beyond the world's obscurity and concealment. Questions and the like therefore have no place there. This is deliverance through peace — "He redeemed my soul in peace."[33]

This explains the connection between the liberation of the Alter Rebbe and the Mitteler Rebbe and the recitation of this verse. Their liberation was not merely personal; it was a liberation for the community as a whole. It was also a liberation of Torah — specifically, the teachings of *Chassidus*, *pnimiyus haTorah*. As explained above, this dimension of Torah embodies "He redeemed my soul in peace" within Torah itself.

4.

From Insight to Understanding

As is well known,[34] the teachings of *Chassidus* were revealed in an orderly progression, following the way a new idea develops. First comes the **kernel** of the idea — ***chochmah*** — which contains the idea **as a whole**, before its details emerge. It then develops into ***binah***, understanding and comprehension, where the idea is understood in all its **particulars**.

31) See *Zohar*, vol. 3 (*Raaya Mehemna*), 124b, quoted and explained in *Tanya, Iggeres HaKodesh*, Epistle 26.

32) Torah as a whole preceded the world by two thousand years (see *Midrash Tehillim* 90:4; *Bereishis Rabbah* 8:2; *Tanchuma, Vayeishev*, sec. 4, and the sources cited there; *Zohar*, vol. 2, 49a). This refers to the world as it was created in its consummate state, including even *Gan Eden* within it.

33) See also the conclusions of the *maamorim* entitled *Padah Beshalom*, 5675 (in *Hemshech 5672*, vol. 2), and 5677.

34) For the discussion that follows, see the references to *Likkutei Sichos* in footnote 5 above, as well as the sources cited in those references. See also *Likkutei Levi Yitzchak — Igros*, end of p. 333ff.

This progression can be seen in the revelation of *nigleh*. First comes the Mishnah, "a **concise** statement encompassing many matters."[35] Only afterward comes the discussion and analysis of the Mishnah — "first learn, then analyze."[36] This was also the historical sequence. The generations of the *Tannaim* and the Mishnah preceded those of the *Amoraim* and the *Gemara*, in which the Mishnah's "concise wording"[37] is explained and elaborated upon at length.

The same pattern is evident in the revelation of *Chassidus*, first through the Alter Rebbe and then through the Mitteler Rebbe.

The Alter Rebbe revealed the teachings of *Chassidus* in a manner in which their details were still contained within a single point — the level of ***chochmah*** within *Chassidus*. The Mitteler Rebbe then unfolded these teachings in expansive **explanations**, developing them with the "length and breadth" characteristic of ***binah***. This is evident in his *maamorim*, with their lengthy discussions and numerous explanations.

By presenting the teachings of *Chassidus* with the expansiveness characteristic of *binah* — understanding and comprehension — the Mitteler Rebbe enabled **everyone** to grasp and understand these teachings more fully.[38]

[This parallels the general distinction between *chochmah* and *binah* in a person's own intellect. In *chochmah*, one apprehends the core point of an idea, before it can be fully **grasped** by the faculties of understanding.

Only when this initial insight is developed through *binah* — by analyzing the idea in detail, with each point properly explained — can the person fully **grasp** it, so that it becomes integrated with their faculties of understanding.]

This explains why the Mitteler Rebbe's liberation, in particular, is associated with **everyone's** recitation of "He redeemed my soul in peace," as discussed above. This expresses his distinctive contribution to the revelation of *Chassidus*, beyond that of the Alter Rebbe. He revealed *Chassidus* — which embodies "He redeemed my soul in peace" within Torah — in a form that **everyone** could grasp and understand.

35) The Rambam's language in his introduction to the Commentary on the Mishnah, s.v. *Acharei kein ra'ah lehistapeik*.

36) *Shabbos* 63a.

37) The Rambam's language in his introduction to the Commentary on the Mishnah, loc. cit.

38) This may explain why the Mitteler Rebbe devoted particular attention to **printing** works of *Chassidus* and making them readily available to everyone. He even sought to have them printed in a way that would allow the poor to purchase them. See the Mitteler Rebbe's *Igros Kodesh — Kuntres HaMiluim* (Kehot, 5741), p. 13ff.; ibid., vol. 2, p. 81ff.

5.

Two Forms of Peace

We may suggest that there is a deeper dimension to this distinction.

The reason the theme of "He redeemed my soul in peace" is more clearly expressed in the Mitteler Rebbe's liberation is that his liberation brought about a more perfect form of peaceful deliverance.[39] The difference is not merely to what degree this peace is revealed — whether it remains concentrated in the kernel of an idea or unfolds until it becomes accessible to everyone. The peace itself is different in nature and quality.

This, too, is alluded to in *Parshas Vayeitzei*, in Yaakov's request, "And I return in peace to my father's house."

The Alter Rebbe explains in *Torah Or*[40] that ***be****shalom* (בְּשָׁלוֹם), "in peace," can be read as *beis shalom* (ב׳ שָׁלוֹם) — two forms of peace: "peace from above downward," i.e., peace that originates above, and "peace from below upward," i.e., peace that emerges from below. In asking to "return *beshalom* (in peace) to my father's house," Yaakov was praying for both forms of peace — peace from above downward and peace from below upward.[41]

[Indeed, both forms of peace were realized. Peace between Yaakov and Lavan came about not only from above downward — through Hashem's intervention: "G-d came to Lavan… 'Beware…'"[42] — but also from below upward, through **Lavan himself**. Of his own accord, Lavan proposed a covenant of peace: "Come, let us make a covenant, I and you…."][43]

This also explains the distinctive achievement of the Mitteler Rebbe's liberation — associated with the revelation of *Chassidus* in the manner of *binah* — beyond that of the Alter Rebbe. In the Mitteler Rebbe's liberation, the theme of "He redeemed my soul in

39) It is worth noting that, generally speaking, the Mitteler Rebbe's imprisonment was less severe than the Alter Rebbe's. See the *sichah* of Yud Kislev 5701, end of p. 50ff.; *Sefer HaToldos Admur HaEmtza'i* (Kehot, 5733 and subsequent editions), ch. 8.

40) *Torah Or*, *Vayeitzei*, pp. 21c, toward the end, and 22c. See also *Toras Chaim*, *Vayeitzei*, p. 26a ff.

41) The primary significance of "And I return in peace to my father's house" lies in its expression of peace from below upward. Indeed, even in its straightforward meaning, the verse describes an ascent from below — from Charan to his father's house.

Toras Chaim, cited above, explains that "And I return in peace" refers to ***teshuvah***, which embodies peace **from below upward,** as explained in *Torah Or*, cited above. See also *Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 15, p. 250, which explains that this is the primary purpose of the ascent brought about through the descent into exile.

42) *Bereishis* 31:24. Lavan also refers to this warning when speaking to Yaakov, ibid., verse 29.

43) Ibid., verse 44.

peace" clearly embodied the distinctive quality of the second form of peace as well — peace from below upward.

6.

Bringing Peace to the Intellect

This can be understood as follows.

The very meaning of "peace" implies that there was initially division or opposition — whether actual or at least potential — which peace overcomes and transforms. The differing and opposing views are now reconciled and united. Where there is no division, opposition, or difference of opinion to begin with, the concept of peace does not apply.

This is also one interpretation[44] of the verse, "He redeemed my soul in peace… **for the many** were with me." "The many" represents **opposing** views, which give rise to division and conflict rather than peace and unity. The deliverance takes place peacefully because "**the many were with me**": even "the many," the opponents, come to stand "with me." [This accords with our Sages' interpretation[45] of {"the many were with me" as referring to} Avshalom's men, {who were fighting against David yet} prayed for his victory.]

This helps explain the particular connection between "He redeemed my soul in peace" and **Chabad** *Chassidus*.

In the general school of *Chassidus* (*Chassidus HaKlalis*), the principal emphasis is on **faith**. Thus, the notion of "peace" is not relevant here, because faith leaves no room for two opinions in the first place, let alone many. Within faith, the truth[46] shines without concealment, to the point of **absolute unity**.

The distinctive achievement of Chabad *Chassidus* is that it brings the teachings of *Chassidus* into the realm of **intellect**. At first glance, this seems contradictory. Human intellect naturally allows for many opinions — "their minds are not alike."[47] Intellect[48] accommodates divergent approaches and, consequently, disagreement. Moreover, the

44) See *Or HaTorah* (*Yehal Or*) on *Tehillim* 55:19, p. 208; *Sefer HaMaamarim* 5659, p. 176; *Sefer HaMaamarim* 5665, p. 312; *Sefer HaMaamarim* 5704, p. 141; and elsewhere.

45) See *Talmud Yerushalmi, Sotah* 1:8, at the end, and *Korban HaEidah* ad loc.

46) Note that the words {*emunah*, "faith," and *emes*, "truth,"} share a common root.

47) See *Berachos* 58a; *Sanhedrin* 38a; and elsewhere.

48) This applies even to intellect directed toward **holiness**. Our Sages explain that "the words of Torah were not given as unequivocal rulings… but… forty-nine perspectives…." See *Midrash Tehillim* 12:7; *Talmud Yerushalmi, Sanhedrin* 4:1–2. Moreover, "these and these are the words of the living G-d" (*Eruvin* 13b and the sources cited there).

process of understanding an idea itself involves working through questions and obscurity before reaching a clear conclusion.[49]

Yet it is into this very realm that Chabad *Chassidus* brings the teachings of *pnimiyus haTorah*, where "there is **neither** a challenging question… nor a dispute." The intellect grasps these teachings without questions[50] or disagreement.

Through Chabad *Chassidus*, then, peace is brought **into** "**the many**."

7.

When the Many Become One

However, bringing peace to "the many" — so that they become "with me" — can itself take two forms.

One is peace from above downward: unity is drawn down into a realm of multiplicity and division. The other is peace from below upward. Here, peace and unity are not merely drawn down into that realm; they arise **from** "the **many**" **themselves**. This is clearly a far greater achievement, for the multiplicity itself is transformed into unity.

A halachic example of these two forms can be found in the rulings of the Sanhedrin.

A Sanhedrin must consist of multiple judges,[51] each naturally bringing a different perspective and understanding — "their minds are not alike." For this reason, "a father and his son, or a teacher and his student, are counted as only **one**."[52] Since they share the same basic approach to reasoning from the outset,[53] they do not count as two independent opinions.

49) As discussed on numerous occasions, even a tentative understanding or a question in Torah is itself Torah. One must therefore recite *Birchas HaTorah* before studying the question, even if one does not study the answer at that time.

50) It may be suggested that any questions that arise when studying *pnimiyus haTorah* stem from {the limitations of} the student, rather than from the Torah itself. This same principle resolves the apparent contradiction of how differing opinions and questions can be found even within the *Zohar* and other works of *pnimiyus haTorah*, though this is not the place to elaborate.

51) It should be noted that our Sages (*Midrash Tehillim* on *Tehillim* 55:19; *Yefeh Mareh* and *Amudei Yerushalayim* on *Talmud Yerushalmi, Sotah* 1:8) interpret "for **the many** were with me" as referring to the **Sanhedrin**.

52) *Sanhedrin* 36a, toward the end; *Rambam, Hilchos Sanhedrin* 11:7.

53) See *Rashi* on *Sanhedrin* 36b, at the beginning.

Nevertheless, these differing views must ultimately yield a **single** ruling. This is accomplished through the principle, "Follow the majority,"[54] which requires the judges in the dissenting minority to set aside their views in favor of the majority's.

There are, however, two ways to understand this, as explained by the later authorities (*Acharonim*).[55]

In the first, the minority judges' own understanding of the matter remains unchanged. Nevertheless, knowing that the Torah commands them to "follow the majority," they defer to the majority's opinion. The resulting unity therefore comes not from **their** own understanding, but from their deference to the majority, as required by the Torah.

In the second, once the votes have been counted and the majority's view has prevailed, the ruling becomes that of every member of the Sanhedrin, because they all come to agree with the majority. Knowing that the Torah commands them to "follow the majority," the minority judges reconsider the matter until **they**, too, are persuaded and adopt the majority's view. Here, peace arises from "the many" themselves.

8.

Why Reverse the Greeting?

The distinction between these two forms of peace also helps explain the Jewish custom of exchanging greetings. When two Jews meet, one says *Shalom aleichem* — "Peace be upon you" — and the other responds, *Aleichem shalom* — "Upon you be peace."[56]

Two questions arise.

54) *Shemos* 23:2. See also the passages in *Midrash Tehillim* and *Talmud Yerushalmi* cited in footnote 48 above.

55) For the discussion that follows, see *Tzafnas Paneach — Klalei HaTorah VehaMitzvos*, entry *Rov U'Miut*, and the sources cited there; the principles appended to *Get Pashut* by R. Moshe Chaviv, principle 1. See also *Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 21, p. 112ff. and footnotes 31 and 33 there; *Sefer HaSichos* 5749, vol. 2, p. 727.

56) This is also the wording used in *Kiddush Levanah* in the *Siddurim*. The *Tur* (*Orach Chayim*, end of sec. 426), the *Rema* (ad loc., 426:2), and other sources, however, give the singular wording *Shalom* ***alecha***. The *Bach* on the *Tur* (ad loc.) states that this is the wording in accurate texts. See also *Likkutei Dibburim*, vol. 1, p. 3a; *Sefer HaSichos* 5703, p. 25.

1) Why is the plural ***aleichem*** used even when addressing one person, rather than the singular *alecha*?[57] The *Gemara*,[58] for example, uses the greeting *Shalom alecha, rebbi* — "Peace be upon you, my teacher."

2) Why does the response, *Aleichem shalom*, reverse the order[59] of the original greeting?[60]

We may suggest the following explanation:[61] When two Jews meet, they constitute a plurality (for the plural can refer to as few as two people).[62] As such, "their minds are not alike," and their task is to bring unity to this plurality. They therefore say *Shalom* ***aleichem***, expressing the need to bring peace and unity into the plural ***aleichem***. "Shalom" is one of Hashem's names,[63] representing absolute unity.

This unity between the two people develops in two stages.[64]

When the first person says *Shalom aleichem*, all we know is that **he** is ready for peace. {For peace to be mutual,} the other person must also respond in peace. If he were simply to repeat *Shalom aleichem*, however, his response could be understood as merely acknowledging and affirming the first person's initiative, rather than expressing **his own** desire for peace. He therefore changes the wording to *Aleichem shalom*, emphasizing that

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57) *Shaar HaKollel* (33:7) explains this based on the words of *Mateh Moshe* (sec. 154, cited in *Shulchan Aruch Admur HaZakein, Orach Chayim* 189:5). He writes that even someone praying alone says ***Ve'imru*** *amen* — "And you shall say, 'Amen'" — in the plural, because he is addressing "the angels who accompany a person…." See also *Likkutei Maharich, Seder Rosh Chodesh*, for further explanations.

58) *Berachos* 3a and numerous other passages. See also the opinions concerning the wording of *Kiddush Levanah* cited in footnote 56 above.

59) This differs from the wording in *Berachos* 3a and other passages, where the **response**, too, is *Shalom alecha*.

60) See *Taamei HaMinhagim*, the collection of additional material at the end of the book, entries 32–33, for several explanations.

There is also a familiar humorous explanation: when someone says *Shalom aleichem*, the other person responds, in effect, "I would argue **the reverse**" — *Aleichem shalom*….

The explanation in the main text brings out a positive meaning in this humorous observation: the person responding wishes to **add** something to the original greeting, as explained below.

61) Regarding the discussion that follows, note *Likkutei Torah, Re'eh*, p. 26b; *Maamarei Admur HaZakein — 5570*, end of p. 128 and end of p. 210ff.; the *maamar* entitled *Shalom Aleichem* in *Or HaTorah, Vayeitzei*, p. 199b, and *Or HaTorah — Siddur*, p. 340.

62) For sources, see *Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 21, p. 111, footnote 21.

63) See *Shabbos* 10b, at the beginning.

64) See *Sefer HaSichos* 5703, loc. cit., concerning Avraham's efforts to reveal that "He, blessed be He, is everything, and everything is He, blessed be He." These are "two forms of unity" (*Sefer HaMaamarim* 5700, beginning of p. 141): unity from above downward and unity from below upward. For a discussion of these two forms, see *Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 18, p. 225ff., and the sources cited in footnote 71 there.

he does not merely agree to the **other person's** wish for peace; he **independently** desires peace as well.

This also explains the order of the words in each greeting.

The first person says *Shalom aleichem*, placing *shalom* before *aleichem*, because he **initiates** the peace. The peace originates with **him**, and he calls for it to unite the individuals represented by the plural *aleichem*. This is peace from above downward.

The second person's response establishes that the peace comes not only from the one who initiated it, but also from the one responding. He therefore says ***Aleichem shalom***. His response brings about something new: the **plurality itself** generates peace. ***Aleichem*** leads to *shalom* — peace from below upward.

9.

Peace from Within

We can now suggest an explanation for the two forms of "He redeemed my soul in peace" associated with the Alter Rebbe and the Mitteler Rebbe — *chochmah* and *binah*, respectively.

The multiplicity inherent in intellect, discussed in Section 6, comes primarily from *binah* — from the many distinct details of an idea. These distinctions allow for differences of opinion and disagreement. Similarly, the many details give rise to questions and apparent contradictions within the idea itself.

Chochmah, by contrast, reveals the kernel of the idea before it unfolds into distinct details. There is therefore less room for disagreement and questions.

This explains the difference between the peace brought about through *chochmah* and the peace brought about through *binah*.

When the kernel of an idea shines forth in *chochmah*, one senses that all the questions surrounding it are nullified, even before knowing how to answer them. This is because the kernel contains the idea as a whole and expresses its underlying truth, uniting all its details. *Chochmah* thus brings peace to the details of an idea — to "the many." This peace, however, comes from the **kernel** of the idea rather than from the details themselves. It is peace from above downward.

Through *binah*, by contrast, each detail is understood **in its own right**. The peace within the idea thus arises from the many details themselves — peace from below upward.

The same distinction applies to the revelation of *Chassidus*. As explained above, *Chassidus* embodies "He redeemed my soul in peace" — a peaceful, tranquil form of deliverance, in which "there is neither a challenging question…."

The Alter Rebbe revealed *Chassidus* in the manner of *chochmah*, bringing peace from above downward.

The Mitteler Rebbe revealed *Chassidus* through the understanding and comprehension of *binah*, bringing peace from below upward. The faculties of understanding at the lower level themselves absorb and grasp the teachings of *pnimiyus haTorah*. In this way, the multiplicity within intellect itself is united and transformed, coming to embody "He redeemed my soul in peace."

Based on sichos delivered on Yud Kislev 5744 (1983) and 5745 (1984), and the maamar entitled Veshavti Beshalom, 5738 (1977).[65]

65) The complete *maamar* is printed in *Sefer HaMaamarim Melukat*, vol. 2, p. 157. — **Publisher's note**.