

THE WEISS EDITION

ניצבים-וילך

Nitzavim-Vayeilech



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Light points

FROM THE TEACHINGS OF
THE LUBAVITCHER REBBE ON THE
WEEKLY TORAH PORTION

Lightpoints

לזכרון ולעילוי נשמת

הרה"ח הרה"ת הרה"ג ישעיהו זושא

ב"ר אברהם דוד ע"ה ווילהעלם

נלב"ע ביום ד' שבט התשפ"ב

תנצב"ה

לעילוי נשמת

הרה"ת יצחק ליב

ב"ר חיים אהרן ע"ה

בלאק

נלב"ע ביום י"ד תשרי ערב חגה"ס ה'תשע"ח

ולעילוי נשמת זוגתו

מרת לאה בת הרה"ת אליהו נחום ע"ה בלאק

נלב"ע ביום כ"ה אלול ה'תשע"ג

תנצב"ה

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נדפס ע"י חתנם ובתם

הרה"ת דוב וזוגתו מרת רבקה שיחיו באראן

נצבים *Nitzavim*

ל:ו | 6:30

וַיֹּמַר ה' אֱלֹהֶיךָ אֶת לְבַבְךָ וְאֶת לֵבב בְּרַעֲךָ

Hashem, your G-d, will circumcise your heart and the heart of your offspring...

To Cure the Heart

In Parshas Nitzavim, Moshe warns the Jewish people of the exile and desolation that will follow if they abandon their covenant with G-d. He foretells, however, that ultimately, “You will return to Hashem, your G-d... and He will bring back your exiles, and He will have mercy upon you.” Finally, “Hashem, your G-d, will circumcise your heart and the heart of your offspring, so that you will love Hashem, your G-d, with all your heart and with all your soul, for the sake of your life.”

The figurative circumcision of the heart is also mentioned in Parshas Eikev, where Moshe implores the Jewish people to take heed of G-d’s greatness, justness and kindness, and to not be impervious to the love that He has shown them:

“Circumcise therefore the foreskin of your heart, and do not be stiff-necked anymore.”¹

Noticeably, there Moshe speaks of circumcising “the foreskin of the heart,” whereas here he refers to circumcising or unblocking the heart itself. In addition, the wording of the two verses indicates that removing the foreskin of the heart is in the hands of the people, whereas circumcising the heart is up to G-d.

The reason behind these differences is that the “foreskin of the heart” refers to a “cover” or blockage which causes the heart to be foolish and callous.² In Parshas Nitzavim, however, where Moshe speaks about the era *after* “you will return to G-d” (upon witnessing the destruction resulting from abandoning His covenant), obviously the “foreskin of the heart” that blocks it from being attuned to G-d will have already been removed—by the people themselves.

What will remain will be to circumcise the heart itself—meaning, to cure the heart of its natural tendency to be misled and tempted by *foreign* passions and desires, in order to ensure that the Jewish people will not breach the covenant again. (This reflects Moshe’s earlier warning, “You have *seen* their detestable things... Lest there be among you a man, woman, family or tribe *whose heart strays* this day from Hash-em...,”³ implying that the issue being addressed here is not the heart’s insensitivity, but its natural susceptibility to outside influences.) To sever (“circumcise”) the natural association between the eyes’ sights and the heart’s desires, is in the hands of the Creator alone.

—*Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 29, pp. 167–170

1. Devarim 10:16.

2. See Rashi and Targum Onkelos ad loc.

3. Devarim 29:16–17.

 30:6 | ל:ו

וּמַל ה' אֱלֹקֶיךָ אֶת לִבְּךָ וְאֶת לְבַב יוֹרְעֶךָ לְאַהֲבָה אֶת
ה' אֱלֹקֶיךָ בְּכָל לִבְּךָ וּבְכָל נַפְשְׁךָ לְמַעַן חַיֶּיךָ

Hashem, your G-d, will circumcise your heart and the heart of your offspring, so that you will love Hashem, your G-d, with all your heart and with all your soul, for the sake of your life.

A Hint of Love

The mystics and Sages have long observed that by combining the first letters of each of the four words **אֶת לִבְּךָ וְאֶת לְבַב יוֹרְעֶךָ**—“your heart and the hearts of” (from the phrase “Hashem, your G-d, will circumcise your heart and the heart of your offspring”), we form the word **אלול**—Elul, the name of the month during which this verse is traditionally read.⁴

The hint to the month of Elul in the context of “circumcising your heart” is interpreted by some as alluding to the prevalent theme of penitence that characterizes this month preceding the Days of Awe—Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur.

A simple reading of the verse, however, implies that the “circumcision of the heart” referred to here is not remorse and contrition. Rather, it is a Divine act enabling us to *love* G-d more genuinely and profoundly: “G-d will circumcise your heart... so that you will love Hashem, your G-d, with all your heart and with all your soul, for the sake of your life.” When our hearts will be cured of their natural inclination toward foreign temptation and desire, we will be able to truly love

4. See Baal Haturim, Devarim 30:6; and others.

G-d with *all* our being. As such, the hint in this verse to the month of Elul highlights another prevalent theme in this season: our loving relationship with G-d.

This parallels the other acrostic associated with the word Elul, drawn from the words in Shir Hashirim⁵ אֲנִי לְדוּדִי וְדוּדִי לִי—“I am my beloved’s, and my beloved is mine.”⁶ In this verse, too, the emphasis is on our relationship with G-d as “our beloved,” and us as His.

Accordingly, the Alter Rebbe illustrates the spiritual potency of the month of Elul with the parable of a king who, prior to entering the capital, passes through the fields outside the city, where he graciously receives all who come to greet him, openly displaying his delight at encountering each of them.⁷ Just as the king’s radiant joy upon seeing his subjects undoubtedly inspires a reciprocal sense of love in all who come to greet him, G-d’s joyful acceptance of all who search for Him in the month of Elul arouses, in the heart of every Jew, profound feelings of love and attachment towards Him.

—*Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 29, pp. 170–171

5. Shir Hashirim 6:3.

6. See Avudraham, Seder Tefillas Rosh Hashanah; Pri Eitz Chaim, Shaar Rosh Hashanah, chapter 1; et al.

7. Likkutei Torah, Re’eh 32b.

וילך Vayeilech

לא:יח | 31:18

וְאֶנֶכִּי הִסְתֵּיר אֶסְתִּיר פָּנַי בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא

But I, hide, I shall hide My face on that day.

When G-d Hides

In Parshas Vayeilech, G-d foretells that the Jewish people will one day stray after foreign gods. As a result, His fury will rage against them and many troubles will befall them. “But I, hide, I shall hide My face on that day, because of all the evil they have committed,” says G-d.

The Baal Shem Tov explains that the double expression “Hide, I shall hide” denotes a state of Divine concealment so great that not only does G-d seem absent, His concealment and seeming absence also go unnoticed! When G-d conceals His very concealment, and the darkness is mistaken for light, no one even searches for a way to remedy the situation, and that is truly the worst form of darkness.

There is, however, a silver lining even to this most dark and dire of conditions. In fact, in light of the Chassidic perspective

that the curses stated in the Torah are actually hidden blessings,¹ the ominous (and double) threat “But I, hide, I shall hide My face on that day,” must truly convey an extraordinary blessing.

That blessing is conveyed in the first word of this phrase, וְאֲנִי, “But I.” The many names of G-d refer to the various manifestations of His infinite abilities; each name—even each letter—conveying a unique aspect of the Divine mystery.² Conversely, when G-d speaks of Himself in the Torah in the first person, not by any of His names but simply “I”—i.e., whoever I am—He refers to His unknowable essence, which cannot be described by any name nor hinted to by any letter.

This, then, is the truth behind the double-hiddenness of G-d, “But I, hide, I shall hide My face on that day”: this extreme concealment of G-dliness is testimony to the presence of the inconceivable and inscrutable Divine “I,” which not only is present *even* when unseen, indeed the hiddenness itself expresses its greatness and *inconceivableness*.

In the bleakest of situations, in which G-d’s presence is doubly hidden and unseen, we must realize that the darkness is not what it seems to be. Rather, it is an opportunity to come in touch with and thereby reveal the truly unknowable “I” of G-d, which transcends even the greatest of G-d’s “names” and manifestations.

—*Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 6, p. 194; *ibid.*, vol. 9, pp. 193–195

1. See Likkutei Torah, Bechukosai 48a.

2. See Zohar 3:257b.

 לא:כח | 31:28

הִקְהִילוּ אֵלַי אֶת כָּל זִקְנֵי שְׁבִטֵיכֶם וְשֹׁטְרֵיכֶם
וְאֶדְבָּרָה בְּאָזְנֵיהֶם אֶת הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה

Assemble to me all the elders of your tribes and your officers, and I will speak these words into their ears.

Moshe's Retirement

On the last day of Moshe's life, he instructed the Levi'im to gather all of Bnei Yisrael so that he could address them. Rashi notes that Moshe did not summon the people with the sounding of trumpets, as he normally would,³ affirming the words of Koheles, "There is no sovereignty on the day of death."⁴ The trumpets were associated with Moshe's leadership, and because he did not reign over Bnei Yisrael on the day of his passing, he could not use them to summon the people.

But is it possible that Moshe's status was diminished on the last day of his life? A *tzaddik*, a righteous person, rises every single day, "from strength to strength."⁵ Certainly, on the last day of Moshe's physical life he was at the height of his life's achievements, not the opposite!

Clearly then, the lack of rulership on the day of a *tzaddik*'s death is not a deficiency, but a sign of the truly exalted state he reaches on that day. For rulership requires an association between the ruler and the ones being ruled, albeit a relationship defined by authority of the ruler over the ruled. On the day of his death, however, the *tzaddik* becomes so transcendent that

3. See Bamidbar 10:2.

4. Koheles 8:8.

5. Tehillim 84:8; see Talmud, Berachos 64a.

he is removed even from the association inherent in “ruling over” the people and leading them.

Here we see the unique bond between Moshe and the Jewish people. Although “there is no sovereignty on the day of death,” and it would seem that Moshe was completely detached from Bnei Yisrael on the day of his physical passing, he nevertheless insisted that the people assemble before him. For beyond the relationship of “sovereignty” (which Moshe transcended on the day of his passing), Moshe and Bnei Yisrael were still bound to one another intrinsically—“Moshe is Yisrael, and Yisrael is Moshe.”⁶

—*Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 24, pp. 220–221

6. Rashi, Bamidbar 21:21.



לעילוי נשמת

הרה"ת יהודה ב"ר צבי הירש ע"ה

סטרול

נלב"ע כ"ז אלול

תנצב"ה

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נדפס ע"י בנו הרה"ת שמואל וזוגתו מרת מלכה שיחיו סטרול



לעילוי נשמת

הרה"ת ישראל יואל הכהן

ב"ר פנחס הכהן ע"ה

סוסיבר

נלב"ע ביום כ"ז אלול ה'תשנ"ג

תנצב"ה

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נדפס ע"י בני משפחתו שיחיו

לעילוי נשמת

הרה"ת יוסף יצחק

ב"ר חיים זושא ע"ה

וילימובסקי

נלב"ע כ"ז אלול ה'תשפ"א

תנצב"ה

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נדפס ע"י בני משפחתו שיחיו

לעילוי נשמת
הרבנית מרת **דבורה** בת ר' **אברהם** ע"ה
גוטניק
נלב"ע ביום כ"ג אלול ה'תשע"ה
תנצב"ה

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נדפס ע"י בנה
הרה"ת מאיר הכהן
וזוגתו מרת שינדל ומשפחתם שיחיו גוטניק



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