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## Tziyon BeMishpat Tipadeh: The Month of Av - Section III

From the teachings of Rabbi Schneur Zalman of Liadi; adapted by Eli Touger

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אך All of the above, however, reflects an ideal state [in which one's emotions are motivated by spiritual concerns]. When, however, this is not so, and one's bitterness stems from matters of this world — a lack of children, health or material sustenance — and similarly, one's happiness comes from fulfillment in such matters, [this reflects the state of *galus*, internal exile. The person's] G-dly spark is in exile within his animal soul. To [such a situation] can be applied the verse:<sup>1</sup> “[He does not open his mouth...] as a ewe is silent before its shearers.”<sup>xiii</sup>

*I.e., the G-dly soul does not have the strength to express itself because of the material influences that overwhelm it.*

*The above prooftext allows for an additional inference: Kelipah, the kabbalistic term for the forces of evil, derives its nurture when G-dly influence is drawn down in a manner suggested by the analogy of hair. It is explained that hairs are hollow and through them flow a small amount of the soul's vitality. Nevertheless, because the life-energy must pierce through the skull, the skull presents an obstruction and only a minimal amount can be conveyed. Since the life-energy is reduced, the forces of kelipah can attach themselves and thus derive nurture. See Likkutei Torah, Bamidbar, pp. 93a, 98c-d, et al., where this analogy and its connection with the above prooftext is discussed.*

ויע"ר [The means to reverse this spiritual exile is alluded to by the verse cited initially:<sup>2</sup> “Zion will be redeemed through judgment and her captives, through charity.”] With regard to the [inner dimension of the soul],

*I.e., the inner G-dly spark.*

it is stated, “Zion will be redeemed through judgment.” The term “Zion” here means a “sign,” [and thus refers to that level of the soul of which it can be said]:<sup>3</sup> “I am a sign.”

*This passage quotes Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai as saying: “I am a sign in the world,” i.e., Rabbi Shimon was identified with G-dliness to the extent that he had no personal identity; his self-nullification was so great that his entire existence was nothing more than a sign indicating*

*the existence of G-dliness in this world.*

*A parallel quality exists with regard to every Jew. The essence of the Jewish soul is totally identified with its G-dly source to the extent that it has no individual identity. (See Sefer HaMaamarim Melukat, Vol. 1, p. 152ff.)*

[This refers to] the innermost dimension of the heart, the natural love and the inner love [for G-d that is] hidden in the heart of [every] Jew.<sup>xiv</sup>

*As stated in Tanya, ch. 2, the soul of every Jew is an actual part of G-d. As a consequence, every Jew, regardless of his spiritual level, has an inner love for G-d so great that he would be willing to sacrifice his life in martyrdom for Him (ibid., chs. 18-19).*

**אג** [This innermost dimension can] also be in exile

*i.e., its expression is restricted. It is not, however, in captivity, as stated above.*

and must be “redeemed through judgment.” [The latter term can be interpreted as referring to the study of] *halachos*, Torah law. Thus [Onkleos] translates the expression<sup>4</sup> “according to the original judgment,”

*We have translated the expression according to its meaning in the context of the maamar. In its original context, it would be translated otherwise.*

as “according to the original *halachah*.” In this vein, our Sages teach:<sup>5</sup> “The exiles will be gathered in solely in the merit [of their study] of *Mishnayos*.”

*For they were the first compendium of Torah Law.*

This is alluded to by the verse:<sup>6</sup> “Although they pay [tribute]

*תנו*, translated as “pay tribute,” also has the connotation of “studying *Mishnayos*,” i.e., the study of *Mishnayos* will serve as a catalyst for redemption. See Rashi, *Bava Basra 8a*; *Vayikra Rabbah*, loc. cit.

to the nations, [I will now gather them in],” for

*i.e., the capacity of this study to serve as a catalyst for redemption stems from the fact that...*

“the Torah is light.”<sup>7</sup>,<sup>xv</sup>

*As the Alter Rebbe proceeds to explain, the dimension of the soul referred to as Zion can be*

*in exile, i.e., it can be prevented from expressing its inner power, but it cannot become a captive, subjugated to a master. Therefore it is redeemed through the Torah which descends and involves itself with worldly matters, but is never dominated by them. In that vein, based on the verse (Yirmeyahu 23:29): "Behold, My words are like fire," our Sages comment (Berachos 22a): "The words of Torah cannot contract impurity." Even though they are recited by an impure person, their purity remains intact. Thus the Torah, which can never become impure, can redeem the dimension of the soul which can never become truly subjugated, for the Torah's light empowers this dimension of the soul to express itself (Sefer HaMaamarim Melukat, Vol. 1, p. 155).*

**ושביה** "Her captives" refer to the two ventricles of the heart [in which the qualities of happiness and bitterness are expressed]. These [qualities] are actually held in captivity, for the bitterness which should have been sparked by one's distance from G-d is now transposed and directed at the matters one lacks in this physical realm. Similarly, the happiness that should have been inspired by the *mitzvos* comes from one's desires for worldly matters. [These two feelings] are thus truly in captivity. This does not apply to the quality referred to as "Zion,"

*A captive is forced to work for his captors, using his energy on behalf of his new masters. Similarly, in the analogue, the energy that should be expressed in holiness is subjugated and channeled into worldly matters. This does not apply to the inner dimension of the soul referred to as "Zion." Although it can be exiled, it cannot be subjugated as a captive, because it represents the soul's essential G-dliness and, on that level, there is no equivalent potential in the forces of evil.*

for which there is no equivalent potential in the forces of evil.<sup>xvi</sup> These [emotional] feelings [of happiness and bitterness, however,] will be redeemed through charity,

*When performing the mitzvah of charity, one is deeply involved in worldly matters. Both the person observing the mitzvah and the mitzvah itself are enclothed in material things. Hence this mitzvah can serve as a catalyst to redeem those dimensions of the soul that are held captive by material concerns (Sefer HaMaamarim Melukat, Vol. 1, loc. cit.).*

[i.e., by] showing mercy to the poor.

**ומדה** [Our deeds evoke a corresponding influence Above, for spiritual rewards are given] "measure for measure."<sup>8</sup> [Our merciful actions motivate G-d to] "have mercy upon us and endow our hearts with understanding,"<sup>9</sup> for "the heart is [identified with] understanding."<sup>10</sup> , xv

*It can be inferred that endowing our hearts with understanding will enable the feelings of the heart — happiness and bitterness — to be redeemed and expressed in spiritual matters.*

[This will lead to the redemption of our emotional potentials.]

## Summary

The natural state of the G-dly soul is to feel happiness and bitterness because of spiritual matters. When this is not so and one's feelings of happiness and bitterness are triggered by worldly matters, his soul is in exile. The means to reverse this spiritual condition is intimated by the verse: "Zion will be redeemed through judgment and her captives, through charity."

This verse refers to two levels of the soul. "Zion will be redeemed through judgment" refers to the inner dimension of the soul, the innate love for G-d present within the heart of every Jew. That dimension of the soul is redeemed through "judgment," the study of Torah law, as our Sages state: "The exiles will be gathered in solely in the merit [of the study] of *Mishnayos*."

"Her captives" refer to the external expressions of the soul, the qualities of happiness and bitterness. These can truly be described as "captives," for they are subjugated to worldly concerns. These spiritual potentials are redeemed through charity. Showing mercy to the poor evokes a parallel influence Above, motivating G-d to "have mercy upon us."

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## FOOTNOTES

1. *Yeshayahu* 53:7.
2. *Ibid.* 1:27.
3. *Zohar*, Vol. I, p. 225a.
4. *Bereishis* 40:13.
5. *Vayikra Rabbah* 7:3.
6. *Hoshea* 8:10.
7. *Mishlei* 6:23.
8. *Sanhedrin* 90a, *et al.*
9. The blessing *Ahavas Olam* in the Morning Service.
10. The hymn *Pasach Eliyahu*, Introduction to the *Tikkunei Zohar*, p. 17a.

**FROM THE TEACHINGS OF RABBI SCHNEUR ZALMAN OF LIADI; ADAPTED BY ELI TOUGER**

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Rabbi Shneur Zalman of Liadi (18 Elul 1745-24 Tevet 1812), known as "the Alter Rebbe," was one of the main disciples of the Maggid of Mezritch, and the founder of the Chabad Chassidism. He is the author of Shulchan Aruch HaRav and Tanya as well as many other major works in both Jewish law and the mystical teachings.

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