

# 24<sup>th</sup> Tevet and the Changes in the Halachot of Learning Torah

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## 1. The Daily Rambam and the 24<sup>th</sup> of Tevet

The daily chapter of Rambam learning today is the third chapter of Hilchot Talmud Torah—the halachot of learning Torah. The chapter begins:

*Israel has been coronated with three crowns: the crown of Torah, the crown of priesthood, and the crown of kingship (kingdom). Aaron received the crown of priesthood... David received the crown of kingship... The crown of Torah, behold it is placed, standing and ready for anyone, as the verse reads, "Moshe commanded us the Torah, the inheritance of the congregation of Yaakov," whomever wishes to, can come and claim it.*

What we will see is that there is an essential connection between this chapter and the 24<sup>th</sup> of Tevet this year, the *yahrzeit* of the Alter Rebbe.

...a few minutes are missing...

The heroine of Chanukah was Yehudit, the entire Jewish tradition is called the religion of Yehudit. Just as someone who refutes false idols is called a Jew, so the word Yehudit means a woman who refutes false religion, which is exactly what she is known for. The Name Shakai (ש-כ-י) is related to יהודית דת שומרת, just as it is an acronym for שומר דלתות ישראל. A few weeks ago we talked about how it is the acronym of שומר דרך הוי'. What is this path of Hashem? About Abraham, the verse reads, "For I have known him, that he shall instruct his offspring to keep the path of *Havayah*, acting with loving-kindness and giving charity...." (כִּי יָדַעְתִּיו לְמַעַן אֲשֶׁר יִצְוֶה אֶת (בְּנָיו וְאֶת בֵּיתוֹ אֲחֵרָיו וְשִׁמְרוּ דֶרֶךְ הוִי' לַעֲשׂוֹת צְדָקָה וּמִשְׁפָּט).

In any case, the value of this date, the 24<sup>th</sup> of Tevet (כד טבת) is equal to 435—there is no other date on the calendar whose value is 435—and 435 is the value of Yehudit (יהודית), and as mentioned, 3 times 435 is equal to the phrase "three crowns" (שלשה כתר), which is the topic of today's one chapter of Rambam per day learning (which means that since there are 3 crowns, the "average" value of each crown is 435). This is

an essential connection that we have this year between the daily Rambam and the Alter Rebbe *yahrzeit*.

Now if we calculate the value of the word “crowns” (כתרים), with the ם equal to 600, it equals 1230, which is equal to “holy, holy, holy” (קדוש קדוש קדוש). In his writings, the Rebbe’s father, Rebbe Levik writes that the three holies in this phrase correspond to the three crowns. If we add the inclusive-one (הכולל), 1230 becomes 1231, the value of “the crown of Torah” (כתר תורה).

The early sages, such as Rabbi Abraham Abulafia, said that the value of “the crown of Torah” (כתר תורה) is the same as the words for “twenty-six” in Hebrew (עשרים ושישה). Not only that, but the word for “twenty” (עשרים) equals “crown” (כתר) and the word for “and six” (וששה) equals Torah (תורה). 26 is of course the value of *Havayah*. It also equals the value of the phrase with which the Torah calls the “Ten Commandments” (עשרת הדברים). The word for “crown” (כתר), *keter*, itself can be seen as acronym for “the crown of Torah” (כתר תורה). There is no similar hint in the word that implies a connection with either the priesthood or to kingdom, even though it is the king who usually wears the crown. But, in Hebrew the word *keter* suggests Torah much more than it does kingdom, or even priesthood.

Going back to the phrase, “three crowns” (שלשה כתרים), it possesses 9 letters. The beginning, middle, and end, spell the word “Shechem” (שכם). It says that in the future all the nations of the world will serve God with one Shechem, meaning that they will shoulder the burden of serving God together. Referring to the Mashiach, the verse says, “the task will be on his shoulder” (ותהי המעשרה על שכמו), implying that the Mashiach will shoulder all 3 crowns. All this was so that we might begin tonight with some *remez*.

## 2. From a Discrete to a Continuous Understanding of Human Nature

### The two types of beinoni

Now, a second introduction. Just as the chapter of Rambam for today is most related to the Alter Rebbe, so there is something very special in the chapter we learn today in the Tanya, based on the division instituted by the Friedeger Rebbe, a division that allows us to complete the *Tanya* every year. The Tanya is called the Book of the Intermediates (ספר של בינוניים). We just talked about the path of the intermediates, which is the path that every person should try to follow.

Today's portion of Tanya is from chapter 15. Until chapter 15, we knew that there are 2 types of tzadikim (righteous individuals)—צדיק וטוב לו צדיק ורע לו—that there are 2 types of wicked individuals—רשע וטוב לו רשע ורע לו—and the *beinoni*, the intermediate in between them. But, in chapter 15, the Alter Rebbe says something new. He tells us that there are actually 2 types of *beinoni*. The one is called “he who is serving God” (עובד אלקים), and the second is called, “he who has not served Him [God]” (אשר לא עבדו). The idea here is that there is another distinction between a tzadik and a *beinoni*. The tzadik is someone who is called a servant already, he is so connected with his Avodat Hashem that he is referred to by a title—a servant. But the *beinoni* is someone whose Avodat Hashem can only be described as a work in progress. He is in the state of presently serving Hashem, at this very moment. In his life, he is constantly struggling against his animal soul. One who is consciously engaged in this type of service is called “he who is serving God.” The Alter Rebbe's point is that it is not enough to just be a *beinoni* who doesn't commit any sins—for we know that he defines a *beinoni* as someone who has never sinned and never will sin. Rather, one should strive to be a *beinoni* who serves God in the present moment, in a positive manner, by fighting against his animal soul and overpowering it. The Alter Rebbe wants us to be like soldiers who are constantly engaged in struggle. We might say that the Tanya is a book of chinuch for soldiers.

If it's easy for you to refrain from iniquity, or it's easy for you to learn, you love learning, it's all part of your nature and you don't have to struggle to do God's will (be it refraining from evil or engaging in doing good), then you are 100% ok, you are a *beinoni*, but you are still called “he who has not served God”—a *beinoni* who doesn't serve God. To serve God, a person has to go beyond his nature, beyond what comes easily, or as we say today, he has to leave his comfort zone. Even going just a bit beyond what you are comfortable with makes you into a *beinoni* who is serving God at the present moment. Our nature, our comfort zone, even though it is 100% kosher and righteous is called in Chassidut our Egypt of holiness (מצרים דקדושה). Just like from Egypt, one cannot escape from one's comfort zone except through tremendous effort. But, if you are able to overcome your animal soul and fight with it over things that don't come naturally, that make you free from Egypt. It allows you to enter the world of freedom (עלמא דחירו).

After he establishes that you should strive to be a *beinoni* who is serving God in the present moment, the Alter Rebbe explains that there are two motivations that lead to this type of life. In other words, there are two types of *beinoni*, and the second type has two sub-types. The first sub-type of one who serves God in the present receives

his strength from *hitbonenut*—out of his meditation upon what he has learnt. From his learning of Torah, a person receives the strength to go beyond his comfort zone. Torah awakens the high mindedness, *mochin degadlut* (מוחיין דגדלות) needed to go beyond one's nature. The second sub-type receives his motivation from the concealed love for God in one's heart. So either it's from *mochin degadlut*, or by recalling one's Yiddishkeit and awakening the love for God in our heart.

This section in the Tanya is learnt every year on the 24<sup>th</sup> of Tevet, meaning that it contains the message that the Alter Rebbe has for us on this day, his *yahrzeit*. He wants us to be a *beinoni* who actively engages in serving Hashem, whether it be through mindfulness or by awakening the concealed love for God in our hearts—the sense of Yiddishkeit in our hearts. Of course this is the difference between a true Chabad chassid and a chassid from other circles.

### We are all beinonim

What we get from chapter 15, from today's Tanya reading is that there are actually 6 types of individuals described in the Tanya: two types of *tzadik*, two types of *beinoni*, and two types of *rasha*. There is a famous *remez* that the word for “congregation” (צבור) is an acronym for “*tzadikim, beinonim, resha'im*” (צדיקים בינונים ורשעים). But note that in this *remez* each type appears in its plural form (ending with ים). This fits beautifully with what we just saw, that there are two sub-types of each type of members of the congregation and the congregation is not complete without all of them..

Now if we write out how each type is called in Hebrew— צדיק וטוב לו צדיק — ורע לו בינוני עובד אלקים בינוני אשר לא עבדו רשע וטוב לו רשע ורע לו — we find that their sum equals 3328, a multiple of 26, Havayah. Specifically,  $3328 = 26$  times 128, where 128 is the value of “intermediate,” *beinoni* (בינוני). What this gematria reveals is that these 6 types of people are like 26 different intermediates, 26 *beinonim*. The *beinoni* is at the essence of all 6 levels. It is usually very difficult to imagine how anyone could attain the level of being a *beinoni*—defined again as one who has never sinned and never will sin. It just doesn't sound realistic. The sages say that there is not a Jew who is not required to bring a sin-offering. But, what this *remez* reveals is that, regardless of what you are, you are actually a type of *beinoni*. We are all the children of Abraham who kept the path of *Havayah*, the path that the Rambam describes as the intermediate path.

### Corresponding the 6 types with the sefirot

Whenever we have such a division into 6 different types, we would like to correspond it with some well known Kabbalistic model. What model then can we use to correspond these 6?

Since there are 6 types, our first intuition might be that they correspond to the *sefirot* of *Ze'er Anpin*, the 6 extremities (ו'קצוות) as they are known: the 6 *sefirot* from loving-kindness to foundation. When corresponding them, the simplest and most straightforward way is to correspond them in order to the sefirot. If so, we have that chesed, loving-kindness, is the “tzadik and good” (צדיק וטוב לו). Gevurah, might is the “tzadik and evil” (צדיק ורע לו), this fits nicely since this *tzadik* still has remnants of the evil inclination, or in other words he has *dinim*, the harsh judgments (גבורות) of might. The *beinoni* who is presently engaged in serving Hashem corresponds to the *tiferet*—he is the central topic of the Tanya, just as the *tiferet* is the central *sefirah* that ties all 6 extremities together. *Netzach*, the first of the habitual (natural, מוטבע) *sefirot*, represents the habitual *beinoni*, the one who doesn't fight his nature, but naturally does good. Then the *hod* is the first *rasha* (וטוב לו), and this is very fitting since *hod* is the first *sefirah* always prone to fall into evil, as in the verse, הודי נהפך עלי למשחית, למשחית. And, finally the לו רע לו, is *yesod*, since the *rasha* in the Zohar is one who doesn't guard the covenant.

### The 6 levels and the partzufim in each world

But, we can make a deeper correspondence based on the 6 partzufim that are in every world. The first two partzufim are *Atik* and *Arich*, the two partzufim of the crown, which are also termed pleasure and will, respectively. We then get that the two tzadikim correspond to these two partzufim. *Atik* is the צדיק וטוב לו, pleasure—clearly a good description of the “pleasurable love” (אהבה בתענוגים) with which the high tzadik serves Hashem. The לו רע לו צדיק is *Arich*, the will. Why does he have will as so central in his life, because will is about filling something that is missing, something that one wants. The evil that he has in him represents the will.

The next two partzufim are *Abba* and *Ima*—the intellectual *sefirot*, wisdom and understanding. Let's say something general: the 6 partzufim in every world are divided so that above the mind there are two partzufim (*Atik* and *Arich*), then the intellect has 2 *partzufim*, and finally the emotions have 2 *partzufim* (זעיר אנוני). So we have that the intellect corresponds to the two types of *beinoni*. *Abba* is the *beinoni* who serves God by overcoming his nature. What gives him the power to overcome his nature is the might of *Atik* (גבורה דעתיק) that shines through the wisdom of *Arich* (מוחא סתימאה). For this reason in the early Kabbalah, *Abba* was

associated with *din*, with harsh judgment or *gevurah*. This is the *gevurah*, the might, that allows him to overcome his nature. The *beinoni* who is 100% ok, but doesn't overcome his first nature, that is Ima.

Something more about the two types of *beinoni* being in the intellect. We mentioned earlier that it always seems unrealistic for someone to truly attain the level of a *beinoni*, since the *beinoni* has never sinned and never will sin. This actually fits well with the correspondence here with the intellect, the *sefirot* of wisdom and understanding since they are detached from the world, from our reality. How so? Relative to the six emotive *sefirot* which represent the six days of creation and the 6000 years span for our present reality, the two intellectual *sefirot*—wisdom and understanding—represent the 2000 years that preceded creation. In the Torah the relationship between the intellect and the emotions is described in the verse, “The concealed [wisdom and understanding] are for Hashem, and the revealed [the emotive *sefirot*] are for us and our children.” And so, it fits very nicely that the types of *beinoni* are in a certain sense a bit unrealistic, a bit other-worldly.

#### Father and mother: ideal states and de facto situations

Another point about wisdom and understanding. One of the differences between Abba and Ima is that Abba is the *lechatchila*—the ideal, while Ima represents the *bedi'eved*, the de facto state. One of the most important manifestations of *lechatchila* is in the Rebbe Moharsh's statement “*Lechatchila Aribet*,” which means “First of all, ideally, jump over any hurdle.” What this means is that one should not capitulate to nature, but live above nature and go beyond one's natural abilities. Every person can create a miracle in his life in this sense. The miracles come from Abba and the revelation of nature (which is 100% ok—but when it comes to the *beinoni*, is still unrealistic as we said it) comes from Ima.

*Lechatchila* and *bedi'eved* are strongly manifested in the mother and father in every home. The father tells his children how to do things *lechatchila*—how things should be ideally (and he's not very happy with results that don't seem to follow the ideal), but the mother is willing to accept the de facto state of things. For the mother, non-ideal conduct and the like should be considered 100% ok. Both of these are Chabad, but one is Abba and the other is Ima and this is the main content of the Tanya.

Finally there are the two *resha'im*, which correspond to *Ze'er Anpin* and *Nukva*, the *partzufim* relating to the emotions and action. As such, they are probably more relevant to all of us, and were that we would be at least like the higher *rasha*. The higher *rasha* is *Ze'er Anpin* and the lower *rasha* is *malchut*, kingdom, whose feet descend all the way down to death (רגליה יורדות מות), meaning that kingdom descends from

the world of Atzilut, Emanation, all the way to three lower worlds, Creation, Formation, and Action. It says that someone who functions only in these three lower worlds, it is like being buried alive. So what we have now is an even more profound correspondence for these 6 levels.

### The 6 levels and a king

Returning to our first correspondence between the 6 types of individuals and the *sefirot*. If there are 6 *sefirot*, there should also be a *malchut*, kingdom at the end. All the rivers flow to the sea. The rivers are the 6 levels corresponding to the *sefirot*, while the sea that they flow into is the kingdom, the sea of kingdom. What might this sea be? Who is kingdom?

One option is that the kingdom in this whole correspondence is King David who is also a *ba'al teshuvah*. The king's role is to lift everyone higher. He is like a lever—even if you are at the lowest level he can lift you up. That is what it means to truly be a *ba'al teshuvah*.

But, the simplest thing is to say that after our 6 types of individuals, comes the king. The king stands in correspondence with the *sefirah* of kingdom in this model. We've said many times that our generation is an intermediate generation between the leaders being *tzadikim* and the leaders being kings. What is the difference in approach between a *tzadik* and a king?

### From extremes to a continuum

Usually people think of *tzadikim* and their opposite being *resha'im*. It's not clear that there is an intermediate level between them called the *beinoni*. In the past it was common to think of reality as composed of extremes: extremities. Either something is hot or it is cold. It is either wet or dry. But, our way of thinking today is more complex, or to say it more exactly, we see levels situated on a continuum (like a temperature scale: it's not just hot or cold. It might be 0 degrees or 20 degree or a 100, and everything in between). So, when it came to defining the spiritual level and conduct of an individual, it was common to think of someone as being either a *tzadik* or a *rasha*—and that these were complete opposites. But, then comes the Tanya and adds an intermediate level, a *beinoni*. At the same time, Rebbe Pinchas of Koritz explained that there is a connection between the extremes: a true *tzadik* is someone who can love a true *rasha*.

But, today, given that we place things on a continuum, when thinking of people, we have to think of a temperature scale. We have to say that like in temperature, all temperatures are levels of heat. Likewise, all Jews are really *tzadikim*, they lie along the scale of *tzadikim*, which leads us to understand that a *rasha* is simply a small

tzadik, a רשע ורע לו, is a very low *tzadik*. A great *tzadik* is just a very big *tzadik*—he's very high up on the scale.

Who can understand this way of thinking about Jews and seeing them this way? Only a general inclusive soul—the soul of a king. So the king, the final level that corresponds to kingdom, that is exactly what we are looking for. On the one hand he is a *ba'al teshuvah*, and on the other, he is a king and able to see how every single Jew is a *tzadik*, but at different levels. This is a good way to unify the entire Jewish people: regardless of what you might be, you are a *tzadik*.

### The king is an angel

Now, we have the number 3328, 26 times 128. There are two verses in the Tanach where we see that a king is an angel (מלאך). The first is in Samuel: ויהי לעת תקופת השנה לעת צאת המלאכים. In the parallel verse in Chronicles (דברי הימים) it says, לעת צאת המלאכים. There are different explanations of the relationship between the king and angels. One is that every king has many angels/messengers who accompany him. The literalist commentaries simply say that this is the same word in two different variations. What this means is that in every king there is a letter *alef*, like the *alef* that needs to be added to exile to create redemption. The value of “angel” (מלאך)—a king with an *alef*—is 91, one of the most important numbers.

The second verse is also in Samuel. Mefiboshet came to greet King David after Absalom's mutiny, and says, ואדני המלך כמלאך האלקים, My master the king is like the angel of God.

All this was for our *remez*. Because, if we now add the word “king” (מלך) written with an *alef* to the value of our 6 types above, 3328, we get 3419, which equals 13 times 263, where 263 is the value of “a *tzadik* and good” (צדיק וטוב לו), revealing that we can now see that all these levels are on the continuum of measuring all of them being a level of *tzadikim*.

## 3. The changes in the laws of Torah study

### The Torah is eternal and unchanging

There is a surprising thing that we find in the chapter of Rambam for 24<sup>th</sup> of Tevet. The Rambam stresses a great deal that the Torah is eternal and will never be replaced, God forbid. He even includes this statement as one of his 13 Principles of Faith.

Since the Torah itself is eternal, I might have expected that this eternity and unchanging nature would carry over to *hilchot talmud torah*, the law of studying Torah as well. Just as the 613 mitzvot in the Torah are eternal and unchanging (you can't suddenly start wearing tefilin using something different than what Moshe Rabbeinu

perscribed), the mitzvah of learning Torah—which is equal to the entire Torah—should be all the more so unchanging.

Now, according to the Rambam the entire goal of the Torah is to uproot false religions, which is why he also includes the mitzvot pertaining to Avodah Zarah, to uprooting false idols in the book of Mada, the first book of his work whose centerpiece is the laws of learning Torah. Likewise he includes the laws of teshuvah, since teshuvah came before the world. But, again, in the laws of Talmud Torah it would seem that there should be some eternal statement about learning.

But, the wonder and surprise is that the Rambam mentions that the halachah by which we perform the mitzvah of learning Torah has indeed changed. And indeed, by our era, it has gone through a number of revolutionary changes since the Torah was given. Now, if we're able to understand why this occurred and why there are changes, we could understand the relationship between the crown of Torah and the other crowns, and how the Mashiach himself, who is David himself, about whom it says, "And God is with him" and that the halachah is like him in every issue. In David, his crown of kingdom is included within his crown of Torah, as it says, "Who are the kings? The sages" (מאן מלכין? רבנן!). Kingdom itself goes through many changes. In kingdom we find the concept of a temporary edict, הוראת שעה.

#### The first revolution: committing the Oral Torah to writing

The Rambam mentions the first revolution in Torah learning in the general introduction to his book. When explaining the passing of the Torah through the generations, when he arrives at Rabbi Yehudah Hanassi, whom he calls רבינו הקדוש (there are only 2 that he calls רבינו: Moshe Rabbeinu and him), he explains why he did something that is against the halachah. He made a very big change. There is a great principle that the Torah and the mitzvah are the Written and Oral Torahs. When Moshe received them they were exactly this way: the oral Torah must not be committed to writing, because it has to be alive and growing from generation to generation: it must not be stagnant, it must be left oral. The oral Torah includes the entire Torah. And yet, Rabbinu hakadosh comes and he learn that it is the time to do something for the sake of God, עת לעשות לה' הפרו תורתך. This is a kingly feeling: the ability to sense the pulse of the generation: Torah is in danger of being forgotten because of the many difficulties of the generation following the destruction of the Temple. And so he says we have to do the complete opposite from the entire grain of the Torah, and we have to commit the oral Torah to writing. There is still room for growth. What every Jew must learn in order to perform the mitzvah to learn the entire Torah is now committed to writing: these are the halachot. And so, what was changed

and what was annulled was the prohibition regarding the Torah itself. We'll now see a few more examples of this same principle whereby the crown of Torah goes through a change and is able to bring the crown back to King David's head. King David is completely identified with Torah, but specifically with this Torah that changes, and again these are wondrous things being said now. About this type of change the Torah says: **בִּי מַלְכִּים יִמְלֹכוּ**, with me, kings will rule.

### The second revolution: Allowing students to receive money for their learning

Who was the second to perform such a change? In chapter 3 he repeats something that he already wrote in his commentary on the Mishnah in Avot, about the prohibition of using the Torah to make a living. There the Rambam writes that if a person learns in a kollel, meaning that he makes a living from learning Torah: **הָרִי זֶה חִילֵּל אֶת ה' וּבִיזָה אֶת הַתּוֹרָה, וְכִיבָה אֶת מְאֹר הַדָּת וְגֵרַם רַעָה לַעֲצָמוֹ וְנִטְלָ חַיִּיו** the five verbs equals 441, or "truth" (**אמת**).

We learned many times that desecrating God's Name is a blemish in the keter. Based on this we can correspond all 5 of these blemishes to the tip of the yud and the four letters of Havayah. This is a general blemish in all levels and in all worlds. This is the place where the Shulchan Aruch goes out in total war against the Rambam. This is one of the longest comments from the Kesef Mishneh and all the justifications that the Rambam brings for his opinion, he tries to refute, one by one. He then brings many examples of sages from the generations who did receive money from the congregation in order to sit and learn and to grow in Torah. At the end of his comment, the Kesef Mishneh says, that if I was able to show that the law is that in practice no one ever followed the Rambam's ruling, even in the Rambam's time, and if not then I'll say that even if the Rambam is correct and this is the halachah, still **עַתָּה לַעֲשׂוֹת לֵה' הִפְרוּ** – תורתך – that in order that Torah not be forgotten from the Jewish people, we have to act the opposite from what the halachah is in this case.

There is a teshuvah from the Igrot Moshe that brings this halachah in the Rambam and the whole controversy with the Beit Yosef in a beautiful summary. In any case, we've seen that Rabbeinu Hakadosh cancelled the original way that Torah worked, all to save Torah. And then we saw that the Kesef Mishneh and others (he was just the most outspoken) changed the way that one can treat one's Torah learning in order to save Torah. We might even say that the biggest difference between the Rambam and the Shulchan Aruch is whether or not one who learns Torah can be given money from tzedakah to support him while learning. If you think about it a little, this issue relates to all the problems in our society today between people who learn and those who don't. According to the Rambam you have to learn a trade, and then if you learn a

trade in the land of Israel you have to go to the army. But, if this is that case, then you have to close all the yeshivot from how they are today. So maybe this will cause the cancellation of the Torah. How do we paskin? We rule based on the Shulchan Aruch and not according to the Rambam.

Are there any more changes in learning Torah that are meant to save the Torah? We will now see that there are 2 more: one that already was, and one that is about to be in the present.

### The third revolution: Teaching Torah to women

The third time is in regard to the teaching of girls. If we ascribe the first bitul of Torah—the writing of the oral Torah to Rabbeinu Hakadosh, and the second to the Beit Yosef (the other source that is usually quoted is the תשב"ץ). IN the language of Reish Lakish—בטולה של תורה הוא קיומה—if the Torah would cease to be, then there would not even be any faith. There is a reason why the first verse that we teach a child is תורה צוה לנו משה מורשה קהילת יעקב even before Shema, because without the Torah there is no faith.

The sages state that whomever teaches his daughter Torah, it is as if he taught her cunningness. It is forbidden according to Rabbi Eliezer to teach girls Torah and so rules the Rambam. And yet, the sages of the past few generations used this concept, לעשות לה' הפרו תורתך, to justify making schools for girls where girls are taught Torah—not just those laws that they need, but the entire Torah. The fact that it has become required to do something that is forbidden according to the Shulchan Aruch, is a complete switch in the learning of Torah. About the third time, the Lubavitcher Rebbe writes a great deal. In the Sefer Hazichronot it says that there were women who knew how to rule the halachah even when great rabbis didn't. In a letter from the Friedeger Rebbe he writes that there were women in the previous generation, wives of the greatest sages, who edited their husbands books, added sources, removed them, and even forced them to change their ruling when it was wrong. We might still say that these were exceptional women, out of the ordinary, but not the general rule. Returning to the Rambam, he makes no distinction: a woman who learns Torah receives a rewards—it's not a sin for her. The same is true of when she performs a mitzvah (even though she is not obligated). Now if she receives a reward, why is it forbidden to teach her Torah? He writes that his is because most women's consciousness is not focused enough and she might misrepresent the Torah's intent. And so, writes the Rambam, that the father does not really know his daughter. You can't trust him to say "I know my daughter." And since a father cannot know his daughter, he cannot place himself in a state of uncertainty, since most women's

thought is not focuses to learn Torah and therefore a father may not teach his daughter Torah. Only after that he brings the sages' saying that כל המלמד בתו תורה כאלו למדה תפלות. In the source in the tractate of Sotah, Rashi explains that תפלות means a blemish of the covenant, like prostitution. Other commentaries say that תפלות means "half-baked" and therefore a woman's learning is not whole. But, if a particular woman is an exception to the rule, she can decide to take upon herself to learn Torah.

### Making Torah into Prayer

Before we leave this issue, let's say something tongue in cheek. תפלות, does this word appear in the TAnach? It appears once, in chapter 72 of Psalms, the final verse of the second book of psalms: כלו תפלות דוד בן ישי. Here in this verse it means "prayers." Apparently Rabbi Eliezer who said this ( כל המלמד בתו תורה כאילו למדה (תפלות), was a Breslover, and his intent was that if you want to teach your daughter Torah, you must teach her to make out of every Torah a prayer— לעשות מהתורות תפלות.

### Women and

How does the Rambam begin the laws of Talmud Torah? With the word נשים, women. Women are free from the obligation to learn Torah. If he begins with this word, and he's very calculated, then there must be some very essential relationship between women and learning Torah. How does the Alter Rebbe begin his laws of Talmud Torah? This is the first thing he published, albeit anonymously, and it made him the subject of talk among all the sages of Lithuania. He begins it with the word א. The sages say that there were three who began speaking with the word א... Still, he begins this way, "Even though children are not obligated to learn Torah..." So we have נשים and א. [The word א appears once more in the Rambam's laws of learning Torah, א. חכמת עמדה לי.] Apparently the Alter Rebbe wanted to start his very first published work with the word that the BST used to utter constantly, א—and his meaning was to connect all the worlds together, even the lower world of Action. In the 7<sup>th</sup> commandment it says, לא תהנה לא—לא תנא, which means either that it prohibits smelling the perfumes a woman dons, or it comes to prohibit an actual improper sexual conduct, which gives pleasure to the א, the angel of death. So now we can say that from these two beginnings—Torah comes to rectify the covenant of procreation. The Rebbe Shmuel says this that the learning of Torah, and specifically the inner dimension of Torah, comes to rectify the blemish of the covenant. נשים equals 400 or 20 squared. א equals 81, or 9 squared.

Together they equal טבעת, the Torah is the wedding band, the wedding ring binding us to the Almighty.

Another idea is that even though the ruling was that one may not teach Torah to women, still נשים לא, even women should be taught Torah: and as the Lubavitcher Rebbe says: in the merit of women, the Mashiach will come. שניאור זלמן equals רבי חב"ד. We know that the Alter Rebbe liked Rebbe Nachman and in the dispute the latter had with other leaders, the Alter Rebbe said that he is with Rebbe Nachman but that for some reason, this should not be publicized.

### Revolutions reflect the nature of the world

Now again, the Rebbe says that what the Rambam writes that most women's consciousness is not focused, this has changed. So if in previous generations, great women who were greater than their great husbands, were an exception to the rule, in our generation, which is already the generation of Mashiach, the reality has changed. This is a sign in and of itself of this being the generation of Mashiach. This is different from what the Chafetz Chaim said. His reasoning was that if you don't teach girls Torah, they will be swayed by the foreign winds of the time. The Rebbe adds that the reality of most women has changed, and this is a taste of the time of Mashiach—that most women's consciousness is focused and they should be taught Torah, even regarding things that are not relevant to them. There was a husband who wrote to the Rebbe that he is very upset that his wife wants to learn the teachings of the Arizal (he could fathom her learning Chassidut, but not Kabbalah)—this question passed through us. The Rebbe replied that, if she really wants to learn, it is fine. A woman can learn anything she wants, and she can say the blessing on the Torah for whatever she learns. The Rebbe writes that it is good for women to learn Ein Yaakov, since all the secrets of the Torah are in this book and the best time to learn this is between day and night, between Minchah and Maariv. It is also very fitting for a woman to learn every day the daily one chapter in Rambam. It is proper and fitting for children as well. In any case, this is all related to the third time that the verse, עת לעשות לה' הפרו תורתך, was taken to change the way that Torah is learnt.

The Rebbe writes that there are women kindergarden teachers who need to teach little boys the laws of tzitzit. To know them, she has to learn these laws. And so it is very simply accepted that she knows these laws that are not relevant to her own life at all. Every time there is a change in the laws of learning Torah, it is a revolution, מהפכה.

In the laws of learning Torah, the Rambam writes that a student who knows quite a lot, but does not know how to rule, but he really can't rule, he is not yet worthy of this: הגם לבו בהוראה. In the sages' original statement is: הגם לבו בהוראה. This equals 1167, which when divided by 3 equals 389, or 3 times טפ"ט.

### Changes of reality in the Arizal: the elevations of kingdom

Now, if there were 3 such revolutions in the laws of learning Torah: 1) to write the oral Torah, 2) to live off of learning Torah, 3) that women should learn Torah, all so that the Torah not be lost, because if the daughter does not learn Torah then the children will not learn either. The sages of the previous generation saw that if the girls would not be educated in Torah, the entire Jewish household would change. These changes in reality are called in the Arizal, שער מיעוט הריח, in the his book Eitz Chaim. Zeer Anpin does not change, but malchut changes constantly. Malchut has 7 different stages called עליות המלכות. The state in which the wife edits her husbands works, that is when she is even higher than her husband. The Rambam also writes that a woman is not responsible for educating her children. But, the Rebbe writes that the Shlah writes that nonetheless, the mother has a responsibility to rebuke her children. The Rebbe adds that not only does the mother engage in educating the children, she actually does it much better than the father, because she is softer and with greater attachment (קירוב דעת) than the father. The fathers wants to test his children, that is how fathers see education, chinuch. To be able to be successful in a test, to get a good grade, that is the father's outlook. Every educational institute has to have a mother and a father. The mother doesn't have to be a woman, it can just be someone who doesn't think that tests are the most important thing. This is another example of Abba being related to gevurah. So writes the Rebbe, the mother has a much stronger impact on her son. All this is related to the feminine revolution in the learning of Torah. From the BST and on, the entire Jewish culture becomes feminine. And again this is all described in the שער מיעוט הירח.

### The changes in reality that fueled the first 3 revolutions

After all this, we have the final revolution, which is happening today. We saw that the changes were changes in reality, these changes forced the revolution. The first revolution was the result of difficulties of the exile. It was only because of a lack. Was there a positive change that was behind this too? It seems that the sayings of the oral Torah did not reach a state in which they could be written yet. It was in such flux and with so much alteration going on, that in the earlier generations it would have been like a premature birth to write them. The 600 orders of mishnah that were reviewed orally, were not yet in a final state, so they could not have been committed to writing. Everything was too vaporous before the generation of Rabbeinu Hakadosh. The Oral Torah was still growing and finally could be committed to be part of the Written Torah.

What about the second revolution—learning to make a livelihood. Indeed, once it was the case that if someone learnt for a living it was a terrible thing. But, now we have

to say that something changed in the desecration of God's Name and it is no longer the case that one who learns as a living is desecrating God's Name.

### Introducing the fourth revolution

To introduce the fourth revolution we note that the Rambam brings a verse 3 times: 2 times in Talmud Torah and once in the Laws of Kings (מלכים). The verse is תורה יעקב צוה לנו משה מורשה קהילת יעקב. The first two times in the laws of Talmud Torah, we didn't stress that it is in regard to 2 different issues: the first time is that this is the first verse that a father should teach his son. In the laws of Talmud Torah there are 2 mitzvot: 1 is to learn Torah and the second is to honor those who learn it and know it (תלמידיה ויודעיה). The mitzvah to teach others also includes to learn oneself. The sages learn this from the verse, וילמדתם אתם, which can be read as teach Torah to others and learn Torah yourself. Your first responsibility is to teach yourself, then to teach your son, and then your grandson, and finally to teach the children of others. These four levels correspond to the four letters of Havayah. Himself is the yud, his son is the hei, grandson is tiferet, and finally, other's children are kingdom, it represents the recitification of society in general. So again, the main requirement to honor is to honor those who teach Torah. Who receives honor? The king, and whomever teaches other's children as we saw is in kingdom.

The second time he brings this verse is at the beginning of chapter 3, that the crown of Torah is ready for every Jew to claim it. In the exact versions of the Rambam, the first time he mentions the verse he only brings its beginning. In the second time, he brings only the end. And finally, in chapter 8 of the laws of Kings, he writes that the Torah was given only to the Jewish people and to those who want to convert to Judaism. These 3 instances follow the order of chash-mal-mal, submission, separation, and sweetening. The first time is in regard to the child being educated, making him into a vessel for receiving holiness. By teaching a child this verse, the father makes him into a vessel.

The second time he says that the Torah is ומוכר ועומד ומונח these three verbs are in the order of ויהי, the order that corresponds to Tiferet, the sefirah that corresponds to Torah in general. The fact that the Torah is relegated to the Jewish people alone and it is waiting for anyone to come and pick it up. That is separation of course.

Finally, the third instance says that the Torah belongs even without picking it up to every single Jew and convert, and this is sweetening.

### The fourth revolution: Teaching Torah to non-Jews

So now what is the fourth revolution? It has to be something that once you change it, there is no turning back. The change is forever and ever. To teach non-Jews Torah.

What do we do with the Arabs in our lands? A simple thing is that we have to first of all take responsibility for their education. The first thing is to teach them not to hate Jews. But, now we're saying much more, that we have to actually teach them Torah. The original law is that you can teach them only what is relevant to them. How much does a non-Jew have to know in order to perform his mitzvah of making courts: he has to learn all of Choshen Mishpat. So if you accept this, you have to understand that there is no limit on the 7 laws. A non-Jew has to learn the entire Torah in order that the world be rectified and that they all come to serve Hashem. How can a non-Jew learn about God? Only if they actually learn Torah. The Torah is meant like the Rambam to pull us out of idolatry, and that is what it will do for non-Jews. For all the non-jews to leave their false religions, is only if they learn Torah. Why would a non-Jew want to keep the 7 laws if he doesn't know the Torah and its beauty. The verse says, **אז אהפך אל עמים שפה ברורה**. Reality goes through a revolution. As we know, the elevation of the worlds transforms non-Jews into mitnagdim and the mitnagdim into chassidim, and chassidim into rebbe's. And so in Korea, where they are now learning Talmud, they want to learn like in Ponovizh. They should be taught this way.

What about someone like Berg? That is all a lie. He didn't teach them true Torah at all. It is up to us to bring the truth to them.

#### [The four revolutions as four elevations in the Name Havayah](#)

These are the 4 revolutions in the learning of Torah. The structure is that the oral Torah elevates to become part of the Written Torah. Meaning that Ima elevated to be included in Abba, thereby becoming **אימא עילאה**.

The Rebbe explains that the reason that the Rambam thought that making a living from Torah was so serious was because he took the money for his own sake. But, if he's taking the money for the sake of Torah, to make sure that Torah survives and continues, then the law changes. Another reason for the change is whether it's **לכתחילה** or **בדיעבד**. For the Torah's sake is **לצרכה**, with a hei at the end. For his sake it is **לצרכו**, which ends with a vav. So what happened here is that the vav elevated to become a hei.

The second reason is that when a child first learns in cheider, he does not receive money. This is **לכתחילה**. He started learning for the Torah sake and not for his own, and once he's grown and has no trade but can make a living by teaching Torah to others, then it's **בדיעבד** ok. To hold on to the **בדיעבד** is the mindset of Ima, as we explained earlier. The example the Rebbe brings is that a person is not allowed to travel with a caravan on Shabbat. For this reason, he cannot leave with a caravan on Wednesday if it will continue travelling on Shabbat. But, if he leaves on Tuesday, it is

permitted, even if he knows that it will continue to travel on Shabbat. The bedieved makes it ok.

So in both cases, the vav elevates to the hei. A deeper explanation is that in the vav, in tiferet, there are 2/3 that are revealed and 1/3 that is concealed by the foundation of Ima. In the time of the Rambam making a living from Torah was in the bottom 2/3 of tiferet and were therefore not permitted. But, the elevation since then has been to the top 1/3 of tiferet, of the vav, and now it is concealed by the hei, Ima, and it becomes clear that in the foundation of Ima—the secret of mutual responsibility between Jews—is the only place that the Torah can continue to exist.

Regarding the women's revolution it is very simple that the nukva elevates to connect with the foundation, with the mashpi'a. This is called the elevation of the Name of Shakai, as we mentioned earlier in respect to the acronyms of Shakai. If a woman does not have to teach she does not have to learn, and vice versa. But, now since she does teach, she has to learn herself. Again this is the elevation of the lower hei to the vav.

The final revolution is the elevation of the three lower worlds, בריאה יצירה עשייה, into the malchut, into the lower hei. This is very pertinent to Torat Chaim. We have to change the way we talk. It has to be very clear that we are universal in our message. We are looking for the good of the world and this will win over even the media. We believe that Torah is good for everyone. We want them to enjoy the light of the Torah. And what was once forbidden is now permitted, and without this the Mashiach cannot come. We're not talking about converting them. If they want to convert, they can convert, but they can of course remain how they are, it's up to them. [Do we have to conceal anything from them?] The same way that you can't talk to a Jew in Tel Aviv about everything, so it is with non-Jews, but in truth they hear this even more easily than Jews.