

Weekly Shiur

4 Adar 5773

(Notes taken during class, not reviewed nor edited by Harav Ginsburgh)

Lechaim lechaim.

1. *Identifying the tzadik*

Being a tzadik in the land of Israel

It is written that, “your people are all righteous [tzadikim]...” All Jews are righteous, but especially in the land of Israel everyone must be a tzadik. There is a ma’amar from the Alter Rebbe that outside the land of Israel, we are entrusted with the service of the beinonim [intermediates], but in the land of Israel the service should be that of the tzadikim [righteous]. So we all have to be tzadikim.

Tzadikim claim they are beinonim

Before we start with parshat Terumah, this week’s parashah we will continue with something from last week. We talked about staying distant from deceit and that this is the essence of the Tanya. The Tanya begins with the sages’ statement that even if the entire world tell you that you are a tzadik, you should see yourself as a Rasha, a wicked person. The Tanya then brings Raba’s statement about himself. Raba claims that he is a beinoni, an intermediate. His student Abayei asks him, if this is so, that you are but a beinoni, then what are the rest of us? You’ve left us no life, because we must all be resha’im [wicked] individuals. It is known that the Alter Rebbe said of himself that he is a beinoni. That is why we had many times an occasion to compare the Alter Rebbe with Raba, the Talmudic sage.

Can the Rebbe be a beinoni?

Now actually, if Raba, the greatest sage of his generation (and the Alter Rebbe) both say they are only beinonim, then we have to ask ourselves, how can we identify them as the tzadik of their generation, the Moshe Rabbeinu of the generation. By explaining that he is just a beinoni, he is teaching all of us not to cheat ourselves. But, being that I am his chassid, it may weaken me to think that my Rebbe is just a beinoni. There were a number of people who asked me about this, so we’ll talk about it.

Chashmal as a sign for recognizing the true tzadik

It is known that the BST said that based on the saying of the sages that if the Rav, the Master is like the angel of God, you should seek Torah from him, and if not, do not (אם לאו לאו לאו). And the question was asked of the BST, we have never seen an angel, so how is this a sign for who to take as our teacher. The BST

answered that the letters of “angel” (מלאך) are the same letters as “like a moot” (כאלם). And the idea here is that if I see that my teacher is silent, and he first circumcises his own heart through submission in his own soul, so if I see that my teacher has this ability to be silent before speaking, then that is the sign that he should be my teacher. This is the secret of the word *chashmal* (חשׁמל) according to the BST, *chash* (silent) before *mal* (speaking). If the teacher performs these two stages first, then, whatever he speaks afterwards is all sweetened (meaning the sense of self, the ego in it has been annulled). This three stage process gives the teacher the ability to speak all the Divine sweetness. This is one of the BST’s most foundational teachings. It is also known by the name of the three stages, which the BST himself called submission, separation, and sweetening (הַכְנָעָה הַבְדָּלָה הַמְתַקָּה).

Practical implications of chashmal

Now this entire teaching came out of the fact that we are not familiar with angels. Even after this Torah, who can say about himself that he can recognize a person whose silence is indeed an act allowing him to circumcise his heart. But, even so, even though it is difficult to apply the BST’s teaching to finding a Rebbe, a real teacher, we often explain that what we get out of this Torah is that the service of submission-separation-sweetening is relevant to each one of us in many ways. We have many different lessons on this foundation from the BST. But, again, originally by the BST, this was meant to be a way to recognize and identify the greatest teacher of the generation. So who can be sure of himself that he can identify this trait in a teacher?

Becoming a maven in chashmal

In Chabad, the one who can say this about himself, that he can recognize the real tzadik of the generation, for instance when he has to decide between two tzadikim (like between the Mittler Rebbe and Rebbe Aharon of Streshela), this was Rebbe Isaac of Homil. Once Rebbe Isaac sat and talked with Rebbe Hillel and Rebbe Isaac began to explain different things about the different Rebbe’s. Rebbe Hillel got angry at him for doing this. Rebbe Isaac explained that each of the first 3 Rebbe’s had a different levels of holy spirit (*ru’ach hakodesh*). The Alter Rebbe, he said, had it all day long; the Mittler Rebbe whenever he liked; and, the Tzemach Tzedek, a few times a day. Rebbe Hillel asked Rebbe Isaac, do you too have *ru’ach hakodesh* that you know these things? Rebbe Isaac replied, “No. I don’t have *ru’ach hakodesh*, but I understand (I’m a maven) in *ru’ach hakodesh*.” Not what this says for us is that the submission-separation-sweetening as a test for the chassid to connect with his Rebbe, requires at least an understanding in these things. The student has to be at a level where he understands how this works internally.

Chashmal is difficult to identify for others, but conscious to the Rebbe

So for simple people like us, it is not simple to identify their Rebbe. If what I need in a Rebbe is that he be like the Tanya’s perfect tzadik, and I can’t do with anything less, then that is more difficult to identify than the teacher who is like the BST’s angel of God—a teacher who performs submission-separation-sweetening. This is because, as we

said, that even the Alter Rebbe (who we would think was an example of the consummate tzadik) said about himself that he is a beinoni, and not a perfect tzadik. But, even if we cannot recognize this sense of circumcising his heart before speaking, the tzadik who performs it inwardly certainly recognizes it in himself, because without recognizing it for what it is, the BST would not have stated that this is a reality that is needed. In himself, whenever he feels that the circumcision has created a proper separation between himself and the evil inside, that is when he begins speaking, so he certainly recognizes this level. But, from someone from the outside, this remains difficult to recognize.

Rebbe Nachman's first sign for the tzadik: makes you feel embarrassed and lowly

What then can someone like us do? There are a number of teachings from Rebbe Nachman, that are accepted by everybody. In one place (Torah 72 in part 2 of *Likutei Moharan*), he offers us a sign for recognizing the consummate tzadik of the generation. The first two signs, as we said, are to be able to point at someone and say he is a perfect tzadik, or that he is like the angel of God, that he performs submission-separation-sweetening in himself.

But, says Rebbe Nachman, it is much simpler to look at what the Rebbe does to me. Not how he is himself, but how he affects me. It is like the way I look at Hashem. I can't know Hashem's essence, but I experience his Divine Providence and the way He acts with me, and through this I know Him. Likewise, says Rebbe Nachman, the way to identify the true consummate tzadik, the true teacher is that if you come out of the shiur, out of the lecture, with a strong feeling of embarrassment and lowliness, then he is your Rebbe. That is a good teacher for you. But, if what he gives you is a feeling of haughtiness and self-aggrandizement, then it may very well be that, to use Rebbe Nachman's language, he is one of those famous individuals that are entirely deceitful (מְפַרְסְמִים שֶׁל שָׂקָר). Such a person gives everybody a feeling of self, a feeling of self-importance and greatness. So this is a very good sign. If I choose my Rebbe based on what he does to me, that is applicable easily to everyone.

Rebbe Nachman's second sign for the tzadik: makes you clap and dance

In another place (Torah 10 in the first part of *Likutei Moharan*), Rebbe Nachman says something else. He says that the true Rebbe is the breath of life in the heart (רוּחַ שְׁבִלֵב) of his congregation. And the moment the breath of life is received from him and begins to beat in the heart, the sign then is that I begin to dance and clap my hands. This is written in Rebbe Nachman's famous Torah about how by dancing and clapping hands all the harsh judgments are sweetened. This is the true example of reaching spiritual heights, when it happens spontaneously. The Rav causes people to jump.

Mordechai and Esther: clapping and dancing

Rebbe Nachman connects this with Mordechai and Esther, that Mordechai is the hands, the revealed part of the Torah, the halachot, the laws. But, the feet, even though they seem to be lower than the hands, they are the secrets of the Torah and they

correspond to Esther. So, Esther is the feet that break out in spontaneous dancing. And Mordechai is the spontaneous clapping that comes as a result of the spirit received from the tzadik. So first of all let's meditate on these two teachings, which are seemingly opposite. Should we come out of shiur, a class, with great lowliness, or with clapping and dancing. Apparently both are true.

The first sign, recognizing the consummate tzadik, corresponds to Radla

What we have so far, is that we have four different signs for identifying the tzadik. The first, we recall, is a perfect tzadik—something no one can tell, even the person himself. This as we said is the beginning of the Tanya and corresponds to the Radla, the unknowable head (רִישׁ אֱלֹהִים אֲתִידַע) [identified with the first 3 *sefirot* of Atik, the higher *partzuf* in the *keter*, see below]. The head is the generation's Rebbe, and if he is rectified, then the entire generation is rectified. But, Radla means that he himself doesn't know he's a consummate tzadik, certainly others don't know. This whole topic in the Tanya corresponds to Radla, and it is interesting that this is the topic the Alter Rebbe opens his book with.

The second sign, being like an angel, corresponds to the 7 tikunei galgalta

The angel of God as explained by the BST that it means that he is silent before he speaks, that corresponds with the seven lower *sefirot* of Atik that are en clothed within the wisdom of Arich Anpin, to create the 7 tikueni galgalta. Using Chassidic terminology, we identify this as pleasure within will. So this is what happens when a person is able to properly perform the BST's three stages of submission-separation-sweetening. But, to get this, to be able to identify someone who has done this, you have to have a sense, and understanding in the crown, where this happens.

The third sign, receiving lowliness and embarrassment from the tzadik, corresponds to mochin de'abba

In the next two signs, the Rav here is someone who gives you mochin—mindfulness. There is a Rav who gives you mochin of Abba, the mindfulness that comes from the father principle. In Rebbe Nachman, what this translates is as he says embarrassment, a feeling of lowliness. This is also called supernal fear, as when Moshe Rabbeinu says, that the consequence of the Giving of the Torah is fear of God on your faces (Exodus 20:17). This level of fear is also described as "fear of embarrassment" (יִרְאָה בְּשֵׁת), which has the same letters as the Torah's first word, "In the beginning" (בְּרֵאשִׁית), and all the teachings that follow from that. In Chassidut the mochin of Abba are described as nullification of one's existence (בְּטוֹל בְּמִצִּיאוֹת), the inner quality of wisdom. So this is the influence of the mochin of Abba, to give you lowliness and embarrassment.

The fourth sign, making you clap and dance corresponds to mochin de'ima

But, the second sign that Rebbe Nachman gives us for identifying the consummate tzadik, that he causes me to clap and dance (to clap is like to eradicate the memory of

Amalek, as we mentioned earlier that Mordechai corresponds to clapping), this is binah or understanding, the mochin, the mindfulness that comes from the mother principle. This is simchah or joy. The Rav is giving a spirit of life, but in me it manifests as great joy, the inner quality of understanding (*binah*).

Rebbe Nachman's two signs manifest through Moshe Rabbeinu and Mashiach

So our full partzuf now is Radla, the 7 tikunei galta, the mochin of Abba, and the mochin of Ima. Each of these is very good. What is the relation between feeling selflessness and breaking out in spontaneous joy? We can say that this is the difference between Moshe Rabbeinu and Mashiach. The Rebbe said many times that Mashiach (מָשִׁיחַ) has the same letters as "he will be joyful" (יִשְׂמַח), or "he will give joy" (יִשְׂמַח). The Mashiach is one who is more connected with clapping and dancing, even though as we said it is a lower level than the father principle and its selflessness. What we get from this is that there is more redemption quality in the mochin of Ima, in the joy that leads to spontaneous clapping and dancing then there is in the self-nullification.

The phrase Rebbe Nachman uses (in LM2:72) is that one should come out with embarrassment and great lowliness (בְּיִשְׁתַּלְשֵׁל וְשִׁפְלוּת גְּדוּל מְאֹד), and the initials spell the word "in that" (בְּשָׁגָם), whose value equals 345, the value of Moshe (מֹשֶׁה). This word appears at the end of parasahat Bereisheet (Genesis 6:3) and refers to the soul of Moshe Rabbeinu that was present in the generation of the deluge. The gematria of the full phrase (בְּיִשְׁתַּלְשֵׁל וְשִׁפְלוּת גְּדוּל מְאֹד) equals Torah Torah (תּוֹרָה תּוֹרָה), 611 plus 611, corresponding to the Written Torah and the Oral Torah. What does the tzadik give you? He gives you himself. Did Moshe Rabbeinu ever dance and clap his hands? Maybe the closest thing is at the Song of the Sea. But what Moshe does give you is lowliness and selflessness.

But, there is also a Rav you may have who is more like the Mashiach. He is the spirit of Mashiach of the generation, and he is because of this in some danger, just as King Yoshiyahu was (see Lamentations 4:20 and Rashi there). We have to pray for the first revelation of the Mashiach, which is called Mashiach ben Yosef, but it should be known that the first revelation is prone to die. At this stage, the Mashiach is related to the mochin of Ima. And then, when he reaches the state of being a leader forever (nasi le'olam, נָשִׂיא לְעוֹלָם) he returns to the state of Moshe Rabbeinu, like Ra'aya Mehemna (the title with which Moshe Rabbeinu is known in the Zohar, and as explained in the ma'amarim of the Friedeger Rebbe, that this is the highest level of Mashiach). In the first stage there is great spontaneous joy, but in the second it becomes more like Moshe Rabbeinu.

Submission, separation, and sweetening in the phrase, "the angel of Havayah Tzevakot"

Let's return for a moment to the angel of God as explained by the BST, which we said relates to the unification of pleasure and will in the soul. Among the submission-separation-sweetening, what is the main thing. The most difficult is the beginning, that is why submission requires a lot of effort. Indeed this is apparent in the BST's teaching

too, as he learns the word “angel” and says it permutes to spell “moot,” someone who is silent. The silence only corresponds to the first stage, submission. Now if we meditate on this, and I’m not sure if we’ve every explained this, but since the full phrase in Malachi reads, “the angel of the God of Hosts” (מַלְאָךְ ה' עֲבָדוֹת) (מְלָאךְ), then these three words correspond to the three stages of submission, separation, sweetening. Like we said, the BST permutes the letters of “angel” (מְלָאךְ) the first word in this phrase, to spell “like a moot” (כְּמֹוֹת), which is clearly the stage of *chash*, the stage of silence (silencing one’s inner sense of ego), all of which is what he calls submission. The second word, Havayah, God’s essential Name corresponds to the separation stage, which we always explain, means attaining our higher identity is revealed, the fact that every Jew is part of God above. Then the third word in the phrase, the Name Tzevakot, the Name revealed first by Channah, Samuel’s mother. This Name refers to the power to descend from Atzilut (Emanation) to the three lower worlds (Creation, Formation, and Action), and to reveal that Emanation is everywhere and that the Divine is everywhere, this is of course sweetening.

As we explained, these three stages represent the ability of the lowest part of the higher to descend and enclothe itself in the highest part of the lower. The first place this appears is in the enclothment of pleasure (the lowest part, the 7 lower sefirot of the higher partzuf, Atik) in will (the highest part, the wisdom, of the lower partzuf in the keter, Arich) in the keter, the crown, creating the 7 tikunei galgalta. The will that every Jew has to publicize the Divine in reality, is given life by the pleasure inside. Like we said that there is a great deal of pleasure in speech, and we thus reveal that the Torah contains all the sweetness for reality, it has the real solutions for our problems and the ability to sweeten our reality.

What needs to be done to prepare to become a tzadik

So now we have explained these 4 levels. The first level is unknowable head, Radla. Once we said that the saying Arur haman, baruch mordechai, is to reveal these two facets inside each of us, like the Rebbe of Komarna who says that until the age of 40 he wasn’t sure whether he was a consummate tzadik, or a consummate rasha. This is the point of Purim, that by drinking we come to a state where we can’t tell about ourselves to which side we belong, whether we are like Mordechai or like Haman. Just as the person hearing the Rav can know how the Rav is affecting him, likewise the Rav (each of us) should always be receiving feedback. A Rav who is wise, we spoke about being a pike’ach last week, he looks at the students’ faces and knows where they’re at. Each of us should strive to all four levels in ourselves, to each be a tzadik. On Hoshanah Rabbah 5752, the Lubavitcher Rebbe said that each person should prepare to be a tzadik. So I need to learn the Tanya and know what a consummate tzadik is and not cheat ourselves, and I also need to know the continuation that it says that a beinoni is like a rasha, even actually like a rasha. The learning of the BST’s submission-separation-sweetening, that is the foundation of Chassidut for us. And then the two signs from Rebbe Nachman, they should cause two things in us, to be lowly and to be very joyful.

2. The Tachash

The happiest animal in the Tabernacle

Now, who is the happiest character in the Tabernacle? In this week's parashah, we learn about the construction of the Tabernacle so that the Divine Presence may dwell within us. Where is the joy here? The main thing is to serve God with joy. Among the different elements making up the Tabernacle, the 13 different types of material (there is a question on Rashi, because simply counting them, we find there are 15), among them there are the techashim, which are called sasgona (סַסְגוֹנָא) in Aramaic. The first two letters, סַסְ, are like the two letters שֶׁשׁ in Hebrew, which mean "joy" and therefore indicate that this animal is very happy. It is a very joyful animal. The main part of our shiur this evening will be dedicated to this animal, the tachash. Many times we choose a hero to focus on, a certain tzadik, but in this case, we will focus on an animal.

Tachash is an acronym for students, chassidim, emissaries

If we all have to be like the tachash (out of his skin, the highest covering of the Tabernacle was made). The first gematria is that the tachash's name, תַּחַשׁ, contains three letters tav, shin, chet. By the BST, the chassidim were first called students (תַּלְמִידִים), whose first letter is tav (ת). Then as the Chassidic movement developed and the students advanced, their connection with their Rebbe deepened and they came to be called chassidim (חַסִּידִים) whose first letter is chet (ח). Finally, if they advanced even more they would become emissaries (שְׁלִיחִים) for the Rebbe and his teachings, which begins with the letter shin (ש).

After the Magid passed away, Rebbe Zusha and the Alter Rebbe and the Maharil came to Rebbe Avraham, the Maggid's son, and gave him a contract where they said they were dedicating their entire souls to him. This is a chassid. But, this is still not the highest level. It is only run, without yet return. What does the tzadik, the teacher want? He wants his teachings to spread out, so that the redemption can come with mercy. So he is striving to send each of his students out as an emissary to spread his teachings. You begins as a student, then you become a chassid, and finally an emissary.

The tachash is happy because he is multicolored

The Tachash is the happiest, that is why it is called a sasgona in Aramaic. The sages explain the reason for his happiness and joy: that he sees his colors and is happy with them. Rashi adds another facet, that he is excited by his colors. Since this is the Tabernacle and the Tachash's skin makes up the highest covering, then we have to say that his self-excitement is actually something good (normally it is the opposite, if someone is excited by their appearance, that is negative self-consciousness). In the Tanya, excitement is from the element of wind. The tachash's excitement with his own colors is seemingly the opposite from Rebbe Nachman's idea about coming out lowly from your Rebbe's shiur.

Bronze and tachash: two examples of the union of male and female in kelipat nogah

When we look in the Arizal (*Eitz Chaim* 49:3), he says the tachash is the spark of holiness in the kelipah of nogah, the intermediate husk. There are two types of material brought as a donation for constructing the Tabernacle that have the same gematria: the plural of tachash, which is techashim (תַּחֲשִׁים) and bronze (נְחֹשֶׁת) both come from the two-letter root *chash* (חֶשׂ). Bronze is the material with which our parashah ends as well as parashat Vayakhel. There is a strong connection between bronze and the tachash. The Arizal analyzes the word “bronze” and says that its first letter, the letter nun (נ) is the letter of malchut, like in the verse, לִפְנֵי שְׂמֹשֶׁת יְנוּן שְׂמוֹ, where the Mashiach’s name is “nun” (נון). The next two letters, *chash* (חח) of both the bronze and the tachash (their two-letter root) is the male part of the *kelipah* of *nogah*. The final letter in “bronze” the letter tav (ת) is the *nukva*, the female part of the kelipah of nogah.

So what then is the secret of bronze? It is a great revelation of the malchut of Atzilut, the kingdom of Emanation, which descends into the lower reality and unifies the male and female components of kelipat nogah. This union has great importance because all the laws of nature are a result of this union. So who actually controls reality in this sense, the kelipah of nogah. Hashem’s kingdom (מַלְכוּת) is sovereign over all in this way. Again this refers to all of the laws of nature and thus corresponds to the tachash itself. In the word bronze the letters are in order, the nun, then the chash, and finally the tav. In the tachash, the malchut of Atzilut is not apparent at all, this is the letter nun, which is missing from tachash, but even though it is not explicitly present, there remains a residue of its presence like the spark that remains in the body even after death, the קִסְטָא דְחַיִּיתָא.

Tachash and bronze reveal that God is running everything

So both the tachash and the bronze represent the order of all the lower worlds, and they want to reveal that God is behind it all. The tachash according to this is like the hidden mask that he wears. And the tachash’s skin is placed on the highest part of the Tabernacle. It is a good choice for a costume for Purim. In the Midrash it says that the tachash’s Aramaic name sasgona actually is an acronym, שש (meaning 6) and גוּנָא, meaning “colors.” This is like the word Bereisheet, which is taught to mean that “He created” (בְּרָא) “six” (שֵׁשׁ). In the color wheel there are 3 primary colors and 3 secondary colors. The Tachash has 6 colors, which are explained as 6 different ways that God runs the world (הַנְהַגָּה).

A remedy for depression from the Tzemach Tzedek

In one of his letters, the Tzemach Tzedek replies to someone who is depressed that he should wear happy colors. If a person wears happy colors, and is himself full of happy and joyous way to run his life, then he can himself be full of joy and come out of depression. So the tachash has 6 colors.

The tachash's eternal nature

How many times is this animal mentioned in Torah. If you check you find that it mentioned 13 times, meaning that it corresponds to the 13 principles of mercy and to the 13 different elements that made up the Tabernacle. What was special about the Tabernacle? It was made by Moshe Rabbeinu and everything that Moshe Rabbeinu made is eternal. Likewise the Tabernacle was put away and it was not destroyed. The same is said about the tachash, that it was a special animal created just for the building of the Tabernacle and then became extinct. This species was revealed only for this generation, the generation that came out of Egypt. There are not many things that were nignaz (archived). The first is the original light that God created. Among the vessels of the Tabernacle, the one that was archived, or hidden, was the Holy Ark. The tachash too was archived or hidden.

3. Sasgona – tachash in Aramaic

The Aruch: multi-colored and joyous

The Aruch, one of the most important Rishonim has two explanations for sasgona. The first he says is that sasgona means being drawn. The tachash is drawn with many colors.

The second explanation he gives is that sas indeed means joy, but not that the animal takes joy in itself, but rather that Moshe Rabbeinu was very happy for the many colors in the Tachash. Earlier we said that Moshe represents lowliness and great embarrassment. But, when Moshe Rabbeinu saw the tachash we was very happy. There were chassidim who brought all kind of shtick to make the Rebbe happy, like a talking bird, in the Magid's parable. So here too, to make Moshe Rabbeinu very happy, God brings him the tachash who is so multi-colored.

Yalkut Teiman: bringing joy to those in mourning

There is another explanation from the Yalkut Teiman, a collection of teachings from the sages from Yemenite Jews, where it says that gona (the final part of sasgona) doesn't mean shades, or colors, but rather it means mourning. And it says that whomever, whatever Jew looks at the tachash, it takes away whatever worry or depression in the person's soul. The tachash makes the person happy, like sas-yagona. So the tachash is a remedy for healing the harsh judgment in their source. The sages say that even though Moshe Rabbeinu himself is wisdom, he received *binah* (מִשָּׁה זָכָה לְבִינָה) thanks to the tachash.

A fourth explanation: a worm

Finally, there is another source where the word sas means a worm. So sasgona would then be the many forms of life that are multicolored. There are many worms that have a wealth of coloring on their bodies. They are called "spotted" (מְנוקָרִים) Since the tachash is

something of a miracle, and to grasp it, we have to imagine it as similar to some animal. In this case a worm.

The partzuf of the meanings of sasgona

Let's order these explanations of what tachash (sasgona) means. That Moshe Rabbeinu is happy when he looks at this animal (he also receives joy from having students that became a chassidim and then became his emissaries). This of course corresponds with chochmah (wisdom).

That someone who is depressed looks at the tachash and becomes happy, that is the sweetening of the harsh judgments, this corresponds with the mindfulness of Ima.

The explanation that it means 6, that we will place in da'at.

The explanation given by Rashi, that we will put in tiferet.

The first explanation by the Aruch, that he is colored in many colors, that is yesod.

These 3 are related.

The final explanation that it is like a caterpillar (a worm) that of course corresponds to King David, to malchut, who said about himself that he is like a worm and not a human being. But, if he is lowly in his state, then he is also very happy. If he is multi-colored he has a great deal of joy in himself. The rectification of his being excited by his many colors (as brought by Rashi) is that this cause him to be lowly, like a worm. That is his rectification—like Rebbe Isaac's book, Hashiflut Vehasimchah.

4. Motion, sensation, and awareness

We'll end this part with the observation that tachash reminds of the modern word for 'sensation' (תחושה). Who invented this word? It's not from the Tanach, it comes from Ibn Tibon in his translation of the Kuzari. The source of sensations is thus from the Kuzari, where he explains that every living thing has motion, sensation, and awareness. We are used to the saying that all that is living is in motion. But, here the Kuzari in a number of different instances says that everything that is alive has not only motion (something apparent to the eye), but also (even if you are just a single cell), you have sensation. And moreover you have some awareness. Now if this a very low life-form, the sensation and awareness are very hard to discern, but they exist at some level. We know that the Arizal says that even the inanimate has some nefesh, making it easier to understand this point. This is a big foundation in Chassidut—motion, sensation, and awareness—and corresponds to the intellectual faculties, to the emotive, and to the habitual. If the living creature is something very primitive, then it is in a state of 3 within 3, where the habitual conceals the two higher levels. And therefore all you see is its motions and not its sensations or awareness. Now this makes it very easy to understand that the tachash if a higher lifeform that has sensations, techushot, like we just explained. But, the awareness is still concealed. The only creature that has all three revealed is man. We came to this simply by looking for where this word techushah (sensation) comes from. Apparently, by Divine Providence, the word tachash contains all the sensations in the world. Sensation in and of itself is the kelipah of nogah, this is the basic explanation that the Arizal gave for the meaning of tachash.

5. The mal that goes with tachash

We said that the chash of both bronze and the tachash is the masculine part of kelipat nogah, and it is also connected (even though the Arizal doesn't say this explicitly) to the chash of chashmal. So it behooves us to find the mal in this case. We find that if we look for a word that has the letters mal-mal twice, we find only one such word, "from above" (מלמעלה). This is the only word in the Tanach that has the two letters mem-lamed (mal) twice. It also has the letter ayin, ע (which itself equals mem-lamed, מל) and the letter hei. It appears 10 times in the Pentateuch, 5 of which it appears in relation to the word tachash. It appears another 15 times in the rest of the Tanach.

This is exceptional that this word "from above" (מלמעלה) appears in such frequency with the tachash, indicating that they are indeed related. The first instance (everything follows the inception), "You shall make a window to the ark and you shall make it end with a single cubit from above" (צַהַר תַּעֲשֶׂה לַתֵּבָה וְאֵל אַמָּה תְּכַלְכֶּנָּה מִלְּמַעְלָה). This is of course from among the instructions for Noah's ark. How does the BST explain this verse? He says that the word amah (אַמָּה) is an acronym for, "our God, King of the Universe" (אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם). It means that our God shall be revealed as the King of the Universe. This is the task of bringing the World of Emanation down into kelipat nogah, that we just discussed

6. The numbers behind the tachash

Grace and blessing

We said that there are many beautiful gematriot on this word. It is related to the word "grace" (חן), because the final nun is equal to 700, and then chen equals tachash. It says that being a woman of grace, אִשָּׁת חַן, will be exalted because of her multicolored nature. A woman is allowed to look in the mirror, while a man is not. Just as tachash is equal to chen, when the nun equals 700, there is another such word. This is the word "blessed" (בָּרוּךְ), with the final *chaf* equalling 500, and then the whole word baruch equals 708. So there is a lot of grace in this word, baruch. These are two simple gematriot.

Knowledge of the Creator

A little more deeply, there is an important phrase in the Rishonim and the Acharonim, which has two different explanations. There are things that everyone should repeat often and have on the tip of their tongues. The one phrase is "knowledge of the Creator" (יְדִיעַת הַבּוֹרֵא), this can refer either to God's omniscience, referring to God's knowledge of creation (the Rambam mentions this phrase in the context of the paradox of free-will and God's omniscience—the Rebbe says that God's knowledge is not a decree). The other explanation is that it refers to man's knowledge of God. The Sefer Chareidim writes in the first mitzvah, which the Rambam writes "it is the foundation of all foundations to know that there is a first Being...," that it is the mitzvah to know the Creator. This phrase "knowledge of the Creator" (יְדִיעַת הַבּוֹרֵא) is equal to tachash (תַּחַשׁ).

We said that the word tachash appears 13 times in the Pentateuch, sometimes in the plural. The plural form refers to both directions of knowledge, the Creator knowing

creation and my knowing the Creator. Just as it is a mitzvah for us to know God, it is a mitzvah for God to know us, particularly in the sense of having compassion over us since knowledge (da'at) is the inner soul of tiferet, or compassion.

7. The tachash and color

There is a sichah from the Lubavitcher Rebbe on the tachash. He says that its essential character is its many colors. The entire Tabernacle represents the knowledge of the Creator. Every element in creation contains three dimensions. The thing in and of itself (its etzem, עצם in Hebrew) its essence, and its accidental traits. Normally, color is considered accidental. When we want to know that everything is from God, we have to see how all the traits, be they the thing in itself, even its essential traits, and even its accidental traits, they all come from God's being. The further we go from the thing in and of itself, the more difficult it is to recognize how that too comes from God's essential being. To see the Creator's essence in color is more difficult, also implying that the source of color (since it is the most removed) is actually higher than that of the other traits, like the essential.

The Rebbe explains that the trait of color comes from the highest source, which is why the skin of the tachash was used as the highest covering in the Tabernacle. The essence of God being revealed in it, represents how custom is higher than even a law. There is a dispute between Rabbi Yehudah and Rabbi Nechmeyah about whether the top covering is made of both sheep skin and tachash, or just tachash (and the sheep skin covering is underneath it). What is the difference? Rashi says that color of the sheep skin is red, not because it is that way naturally, but because it is so colored. But, with the tachash, the color is essential to it. It is something alive in it. And this is what we dedicate to Hashem. There is the kavanah of the mitzvah, there is the mitzvah itself, and there is also the hidur (the beauty of the mitzvah, the adornment, meaning making the mitzvah beautiful) of the mitzvah. Each custom regarding a mitzvah is like a particular color on the tachash. The tachash thus represents all the different hidurim, all the different minhagim of all the different parts of the Jewish people. In any case, the revelation of God's essential being in an accidental trait, like color, is the same as bringing the malchut of Emanation down into kelipat nogah. Through the hidurim of the mitzvot, we bring the Almighty down even further than we do with the mitzvah itself and the kavanah of the mitzvah.

There is a question in the sages about whether the tachash was a kosher animal or not. In the Jerusalem Talmud the conclusion is clearly that it was kosher. But, in the Babylonian Talmud it is more complex. It is even a question about whether it is a domesticated type of cattle, or some other animal. Emmissary (שליח) equals joyful (שמחה). But, now let's make a notarikon from the word tachash: Torah chadashah (new Torah). This is an important phrase for Chassidut, especially the chassidut of our generation. So all the new Torah that the Mashiach is ready to reveal to all of us, is related to the tachash. If we take the letters of Torah chadashah and take out the tav-chet-shin, we are left with vav-reish-hei with dalet-hei. The dalet-hei equal tet (9), and then the rest of the letters equal "tahor" (kosher). What this is saying is that the kelipat nogah is kosher, it is

tahor. The simple explanation about “new Torah” is that the wild boar is shechted by the Leviathan and it is kosher. But here we have something new, new Torah, that the tachash is kosher.

8. The tachash's unicorn

What else do the sages say about the tachash? They say that it has one horn that comes out of its forehead. They also say that Adam sacrificed a one-horned bull to God. This was certainly a kosher animal. The sages say that this is the source of the question about whether the tachash is kosher or not, because there is another animal called keresh, which is a non-kosher animal with a single horn. So which one is the tachash, the one-horned ox or the one-horned keresh. In the Jerusalem Talmud, Rav Abin says that the tachash is itself the keresh, and then this is amazing that the highest part of the Tabernacle is a keresh. But keresh means wooden beams, the part that holds the Tabernacle up. You could with animation try to picture that the entire Tabernacle is being held up by animals instead of wooden beams.

Two horns vs. unicorns

There is a peirush from the Ben Ish Chai, who deals with what it means that this animal has a single horn in the middle of its forehead. When there are two of something (like two eyes or two ears, etc.) they represent chesed and gevurah. With the horns where there are 2, then the ox goars with the left horns, and with the right horn, he gains a state of eternity through his offspring. An animal that has two horns, the right one is related to eternity, to being able to build something, while the left horn is related to destruction, like a time to build and a time to destroy, depending upon our actions. So if the tachash would have two horns, it would indicate that there is a time when the Tabernacle is built, and there is a time for it to be destroyed. But, this is not the case. The Tabernacle was never destroyed, it was only put away for safe-keeping. So the tachash's single horn in the middle represents compassion, the tiferet. It means that Hashem is always compassionate over us, helping us choose the right thing. There is another gematria here, that the word of “skins” (orot) is equal to “man's free-will” (bechirat ha'adam).

Now we come to Ayin Beis this week. The fact that the tachash has a single horn, that means that it is like the point of eternal truth that does not change. It is the measure of Torah, the prophecy of Moshe Rabbeinu, which was with the word “this.” So there is building and destruction, the right and the left. The right is a constructive power that sustains the settlement of the land. But, if the opposite is decreed from above, it can all be destroyed. These two forces balance one another. But, we don't want either, we want the single horn coming out of the forehead. In this case it is eternal, and in worst case, it is sent into safe-keeping. But, what is in safe-keeping, its essence still exists as it was before. This is the one horn in the tachash's forehead. So we get from this that the tachash and the keresh are either the same animal, or they are very close.

It might be that the cherubim are also related. It says that their wings were spread out above them, just like the tachash was above the Tabernacle. We are here meditating

on the Tabernacle. The highest point is the tachash skin, and the entire Tabernacle is the wooden beams. The cherubim are the two symbols that cannot be made anywhere other than on the holy ark. Earlier we mentioned that everything that is alive has motion, sensation, and awareness. The symbol of awareness is the cherubim. The root cherub, means "to be aware of," according to the Ibn Ezra. The cherubim (כְּרֻבִים) means לְהַכִּיר בְּ to be aware of. So the awareness in the Tabernacle comes in the form of the Cherubim over the holy Ark. With sensation, which is related to the heart, it can be higher than the awareness. Apparently, the sensation is what the entire Tabernacle is based on the tachash skin covering. Finally the emotion is from the wooden beams.

Returning to the idea that the main part of the new Torah that the Mashiach will reveal is that the tachash is kosher.

9. Tachash and converts

The man named tachash

Let's return to the Arizal. He says that apart from the 13 times that the word tachash appears, it also appears as someone, as a person. He writes that he understood them the most. This is a 14th instance. Tachash is one of Nachor's children, born to him from his concubine Re'umah. In Chassidut it says that Re'umah is the kelipah of atzilut, the nogah of atzilut. She gives birth to Tevach, and Gacham, and Tachash, and Ma'achah. There are two explanations about Ma'achah, whether it is a boy or a girl. According to the Ramban she is a woman, according to the Talmud she is a man. In any case, Tachash is born from Re'umah. The verse preceding this verse is, "And Betu'el gave birth to Rivkah...." The next verse, which begins that "his concubine, Re'umah" it is not clear to whom it is referring.

Tachash could one of 3 different ancestries. The first option is that Nachor had 8 children from his wife. And 4 more with Re'umah. So Tachash is a son of Nachor, born to him from his concubine, representing kelipat nogah and self-excitement from herself. But, another option is that Re'umah is Betu'el's concubine. But, the Zohar adds another reading, it says something so surprising. Re'umah is Avraham's concubine and she gave birth to these children to Avraham. This is wondrous and apparently impossible to understand. Since this is so difficult to accept (Avraham had a concubine, Hagar, and then Ketorah), the Or Hachamah (the Chida's grandfather) gives an explanation that Re'umah is actually Hagar (just as the sages say that Ketorah was herself Hagar). And when earlier she was cast out by Abraham, sending her away from his home, she lived in the desert and married her son off. According to the Zohar, during this period, she searched for the closest person to Abraham and found that this was Nachor, Abraham's brother, and she married him. But, because she has Abraham's spirit within her, so even though divorce is supposed to remove this spirit from a woman, so she can marry someone else. But, in this case, it is still within her. That even though she gave birth to them while married to Nachor, they are named after Abraham. Among these 4 children, the 3rd Tachash is the most important. He is the source of the Tachash found for the Tabernacle.

Why would we think that Ma'achah is a boy not a girl? The Ramban writes that the question here is who is worthy with his genes to marry Isaac. Abraham here wants to get Isaac married, and he knows that it must be through Nachor's family, that is where the genes you need, that is where Terach lived. How do we know that Terach is the source of the genes and the source of Tachash, the kelipat nogah? We said that the minimum plurality is two techashim. The first time it says "The years of Terach were 205 years," where the initials of the words, "Terach five years" (תֵּרַח חֲמִשָּׁ שָׁנִים), spell Tachash in Hebrew. The second time there is such an acronym is in last week's parashah regarding helping a donkey up with its load if he has fallen down. The first Tachash says that the father of all the Tachash is the father of Jewish pedigree, Terach. The second instance is that you should gaze wisely on the donkey of your enemy, representing here the kelipat nogah in this world. What we have here then is that Abraham, the son of Terach, his concubine marries Nachor. She then gives birth, with Abraham's spirit, to Tachash. What was Abraham best known for? He was known for trying to bring the entire world closer to God, to serve Him. He began doing this in Charan, where Terach passed away. So the Tachash is the power of Abraham to make converts. All that we talked about this evening, all the secrets in the Tachash, it all points in the direction of the roof of the Tabernacle being the highest point of service, and this point is the conversion of many nations to a clear language to serve God.

Tachash shoes

Another wondrous thing: the Tachash is mentioned again in Ezekiel, when he describes the generation that was in the desert for 40 years. They wore shoes made out of Tachash. Tachash is very close to Nachash, snake. People like making shoes out of snake skin, but this was something new. So the Tachash is on the one hand the highest (the Tabernacle's roof) and it is also the lowest, on the feet. The higher something is, the lower it can reach. Another wonderful secret of the Tachash. A nice name for a company: Tachash shoes. It will certainly be successful. With the sin of the Golden Calf we lost these 13 garments, but received them again. The only one explicitly is the tachash. So what is the service of the tachash? To purify the kelipat nogah, which is the Torah of the Mashiach.

10. 13 types of gifts brought to construct the Tabernacle

Now we said that Rashi enumerates 13 elements that went into building the Tabernacle, but it seems there are 15. There are 4 ways to explain this discrepancy:

Mizrachi: 3 woollen gifts

The first is from the Mizrachi. He writes that because the different colors (purple, red, and crimson) were all actually wool. They were named different names, just for the colors with which they were dyed. But, in the end they were all wool. Since all three are wool, they are counted as a single material and you have 13 elements.

Maharal: Gifts brought by the nesi'im not counted

The second explanation comes from the Maharal of Prague (in the Gur Aryeh). He states that these three colors of wool are to be counted as three different materials (like the Rebbe said that as much as color is accidental it is important). He writes instead that the precious stones used were brought by the Nesi'im. But the 13 elements are those brought by everyone else.

Maskil Ledavid: the conjunctive "and" demarcates the 13 gifts

The third explanation is from the Maskil Ledavid, the author of the Chasdei David on the Tosefta. He gives a very rational explanation. He says that he agrees with the Gur Aryeh's criticism of the Mizrachi but says that the Gur Aryeh is also not correct, because the nesi'im brought more things, and these are counted among the 13. So he says something based on a question. He asks, Why does Rashi have to mention there are 13 things being brought here? Also, why does it have to appear in conjunction with the 3 donations (terumot): 3 types of silver brought as a donation for 3 different purposes. It is right before this that Rashi says, there are 13 elements being brought here for constructing the Tabernacle, if you take care to notice it. What is there to notice here, asks the Maskil Ledavid? He says that all the elements until the skins of the tachash are connected with the letters vav. But, the two verses describing what the nesi'im brought, they are not connected with conjunctive vav's (ands). The tachash skins were the last thing to be enumerated with a conjunctive "and." And until that point there are 10 elements brought, and to this you have to add the 3 types of donations, bringing the total to 13.

Taz: miracles don't count

The fourth explanation comes from the Taz. He doesn't accept any of the earlier opinions. The skins of Tachash and the wood used are exceptional. They are miraculous. God created them just for the purpose of the Tabernacle. If so, they are not meant to be counted as something brought for the Tabernacle, because that was the purpose of their creation. The wood was taken from the trees that Jacob commanded them to plant in Egypt. So if we take the Tachash out and the wood out, we are left with 13 elements brought by the people for building the Tabernacle.

The partzuf of the explanations

Since there are 4 explanations, let's correspond them to the four letters of Havayah.

The final perush, the Taz, what is difficult with his explanation? When we read in Vayakhel about what was brought we hear explicitly that the skins of the Tachash and the wooden beams were brought in a charitable manner. All was a donation to Hashem (nedavah laHashem). This is a beautiful phrase, which has a gematria of 117. It has 9 letters, so the average value of each letter is 13! This is a beautiful allusion that in the end there should only be 13 things. But, in any case, the Tachash and the wood were also a donation. The Taz is saying that since the people knew that these two elements were

created for the Tabernacle, even though they brought it, it wasn't a donation, because it had no other purpose. In any case, what we see is that these wondrous elements were dictated from above and that doesn't count. So his mindset is one of wisdom—connected with wonder.

The next point is the maskil ledavid. Here we have 11 consecutive letters vav at the beginning of a word. So we put this in the vav of Havayah! Just makes sense.

The next two explanations are the Mizrachi and the Gur Aryeh. The latter's mindset is related to malchut (like his name), saying that malchut is independent. He claims that the nesi'im are something else, and then it only makes sense to count them separately. So again this is malchut.

We are left with the Mizrachi, that color doesn't matter. What kind of thinking is this? It is the thinking of Binah, understanding. In color theory there are hue (צבע), the brilliance (how much white is in the color, or how much black, in Hebrew בְּהִירוּת) and saturation (which indicates how much water is in the color, how concentrated it is or not, and in Hebrew, עֲזִימָה). The acronym in Hebrew is "color" (צבע). Color comes from light. If we add the alef of light (אור), we get the word "finger" (אֶצְבָּע), the finger of God. When we correspond these to Chabad, the brilliance is wisdom, saturation is da'at (knowledge) and the hue is understanding (ima). So since he addresses color (saying that all 3 colored wools are one thing) or hue, he is in understanding, in binah.

What number gift is the tachash?

Now of course according to each explanation, the tachash is a different number in the 13 things brought. According to the Mizrachi, he is the 8th, the Notzer Chesed (Jews have no Mazal, they are above it). According to the Gur Aryeh, the tachash is the 10th, which is malchut. But, according to the Maskil Ledavid, the tachash is the 12th. According to the Taz, he is not in the elements at all. He is above them, together with the wooden beams. The 12th is the *puma kadisha*, the new Torah that comes out of the holy mouth. So we have 3 different numbers for the Tachash: 8, 10, or 12. Let's take the triangle of each of these: 36 plus 55, plus 78. The sum is then 169 or 13². We also see here an example of how every square is the sum of two consecutive triangles, since just 36 and 55 is equal to 91, the triangle of 13, which when we add the triangle of 12, we get 169, the square of 13.

Just 8 plus 10 is 18, the value of "living," referring to the question of whether the Tachash is an animal or a beast.

So we have seen how the entire Tabernacle is about the Tachash and he represents making many converts. May Hashem merit that we receive the Beit Hamikdash, built by the Mashiach. May we have a joyous Purim with Mordechai and Esther, with hands and feet.