

שער הבטחון

The Gate of Trust



חובות הלבבות

Duties of the hearts

—CHAPTER 3—

Soul WORDS

חיינו
CHAYENU

DAILY TORAH STUDY. DELIVERED.

פרק שלישי Chapter 3

THE FIVE FACTORS THAT OBLIGATE TRUST IN GOD

אך ההקדמות אשר בברורן ואמתתן
ישלם לאדם הבטחון באלהים, הן חמש.

אחת מהן, שיאמין ויתברר אצלו
התקבצות השבעה ענינים באלהים,
אשר בהתקבצם כמי שבומחים בו יתכן
לכמוח עליו. וכבר זכרתי והעירותי
עליהם כמה שנודמן לי מן הכתוב, והם:

הראשון, שהבורא יתברך מרחם על
האדם יותר מכל מרחם, וכל רחמים
וחמלה שיהיו מזולתו עליו, בלם הם
מרחמי האל וחמלתו, כמו שאמר
הכתוב "ונתן לך רחמים ורחמך והרבך"
(דברים יג, יח).

והשני, כי הבורא יתעלה לא יעלמו
ממנו אפני תועלת האדם.

There are five introductions, which when properly understood and realized to be true, will cause a person to have complete trust in the Almighty:

The first one of them is that he must believe and clearly recognize¹ that the Almighty possesses all the seven qualities mentioned in the previous Chapter, which when all of them are present in someone, make it possible for a person to trust in him. I already mentioned them in the previous Chapter and commented on them citing Pesukim that were accessible to me which state that G-d possesses these qualities.

The first quality that a person must believe that G-d possesses, in order to have proper trust in Him, is that the Creator, may He be blessed, has more compassion on a person than any other compassionate being does. In fact, any compassion and mercy that you receive from anyone else ultimately all comes from G-d's compassion and mercy as well, who is the one who puts in the heart of that person, to have mercy and compassion towards you, as Scripture says (in Devarim 13:18) "and He will grant you compassion, and be compassionate with you, and multiply you"

The second quality that a person must believe that G-d possesses in order to have *trust* in Him, is that it is not hidden from the Creator, may He be exalted, the ways which benefit the person.

¹ Being that as mentioned in the previous chapter, the Pessukim themselves state how G-d possesses all these qualities, the Chovot Halevavot says that one must "believe" this to be the case. However, since, as has also been mentioned in the previous Chapter, logic also dictates this to be true, the Chovot Halevavot writes that one must "clearly recognize" it to be true (Nedar Bakodesh).

והדין נותן זה, מפני שהוא אחד
ממעשיו, ואין מי שיודע באפני תקנות
העשוי והפסדו ובפגעים המשיגים אותו
ובאפני מחלתו וארוכותו, יותר מעושהו.

ואם יהיה זה נמצא בעושים מפני אדם,
אשר לא יחדשו במעשיהם וזולתי צורה
מקרית, אף השרש והצורה העצמות
אין להם בהם שום תחבולה ולא יכלת
לחדשם, ואשר חדש שרש האדם
וצורתו ותכונתו וסדר חבורו, הוא
החכם היודע בעניני תועלותיו ונגזיו
והטוב לו בעולמו ואחריתו בלי ספק,

כמו שכתוב "אני ה' אלהיך מלמדך
להועיל, מדריךך בדרך תלך" (ישעיה
מה, יז), ואמר "כי את אשר יאהב ה'
יכית, וכאב את בן ירצה" (משלי ג, יב).

והשלישי, כי הבורא יתברך חזק מכל
חזק, ודברו נגזר מכל דבר, ואין משיב
דינו, כמו שנאמר "כל אשר חפץ ה'
עשה" (תהלים קלה, ו), ואמר "כן יהיה
דברי אשר יצא מפי לא ישוב אלי ריקם,
כי אם עשה את אשר חפצתי" (ישעיה
נה, יא).

Logic dictates this, since the person is one of His handiwork, and there is no one who knows better, - as to what is beneficial or harmful for that which has been made, as well as the troubles that may catch hold of it, the ways in which he becomes ill as well as healed - than the one who made it himself.

If we find this to be true regarding objects made by human beings, who don't actually create anything new through their actions, other than the external form of the raw material, and who have no skill or power to create the raw material itself, then all the more so, must it be true regarding G-d, who creates the raw material itself, from which the person is made, as well as his form, his make-up and the orderly unity, both of the body and the soul as well as the interaction between the various parts of the body. It follows that He is most definitely the wise one who knows what will benefit the person and what will harm him, and what is good for him both in this world and in the world to come.

As it says (in Yeshayahu 48:17): "I am the L-rd your G-d, who teaches you for your benefit, who leads you by the way you should go, and as it says (in Mishlei 3:12): "For the L-rd rebukes the one He loves, and placates, as a father to a son."

The third quality that a person must believe that G-d possesses in order to have trust in Him is that the Creator, may He be blessed, is stronger than any other strong being, that His word is more unchangeable than any other person's words and that no one can reverse His decisions. As it says (in Tehillim 135:6): "All that the L-rd wished, He did" and as it says (in Yeshayahu 55:11): "So shall be My word that emanates from My mouth; it shall not return to Me empty, unless it has done what I desire."

והרביעי, כי הוא משגיח על הנהגת עניני האדם בלם, לא יניחם ולא יתעלם מהם, ולא יסתור ממנו דבר מהם מקטנם ועד גדולם, ולא ישכיחהו דבר את דבר,

כמו שכתוב "למה תאמר יעקב ותדבר ישראל, נסתרה דרכי מה' ומאלהי משפטי יעבור" (ישעיה מ, כו), ואמר "הלוא ידעת אם לא שמעת, אלהי עולם ה' בורא קצות הארץ, לא יעף ולא ייגע, אין חקר לתבונתו" (ישעיה מ, כח).

והחמישי, שאין ביד אהד מהברואים להועיל את נפשו ולא להזיקה ולא לזולתו כי אם ברשות הבורא ותברך.

פ העבד כשיהיה לו יותר מאדון אחד ויהיה כל אחד מהם יכול להועילו, לא יתכן לו לבטוח על אחד מהם, מפני שמקוה התועלת מכל אחד מהם. ואם יהיה אחד מהם יכול על תועלתו יותר משאריתם, יהיה חזק בטחונו בו כפי יכלתו, אף על פי שהוא בוטח בשאריתם.

אם לא יוכל להועילו ולהזיקו כי אם אחד מהם בלבד, על פרחו ובטח עליו לבדו, מפני שאינו מקוה תועלת מזולתו.

The fourth quality that a person must believe that G-d possesses in order to have trust in Him, is that He supervises the governance of all people, He does not forsake them, but rather helps them out with all of their needs. He does not ignore them when they are in a time of hardship, nor are any of their matters concealed from Him, whether it be small or big, nor does His being involved in one matter cause Him to forget about another matter.

As it is written (in Yeshayahu 40:27): "Why should you say, O Jacob, and speak, O Israel, "My way has been hidden from the L-rd, and from my G-d, my judgment passes"? And as it says (in Yeshayahu 40:28): "Do you not know - if you have not heard - an everlasting G-d is the L-rd, the Creator of the ends of the earth; He neither tires nor wearies; there is no fathoming His understanding."

The fifth quality that a person must believe that G-d possesses in order to have trust in Him, is that no creation has the power to help himself or harm himself or to help or harm another person, without the permission of the Creator, blessed be He.

For when a slave has more than one master, and each one is able to help him, then it does not make sense for the slave to rely solely on one of his masters, because he expects to be helped by each one of them. If in fact one of them, as a result of his greatness, is more capable than the others to help him out, then his reliance on that master will be stronger in accordance with his ability to help him, despite the fact that he relies on the other masters as well.

All the more so, if only one of them is able to help him or cause him harm, then he will be forced to rely solely on him alone, because he does not expect to be helped by anyone else other than him.

וְכֵן כְּשִׁירְגִישׁ הָאָדָם שֶׁלֹּא יוֹעִילָנוּ וְלֹא
יִזְקָנוּ אֶחָד מֵהַנְּבָרָאִים אֲלֵא בְרִשּׁוֹת
הַבּוֹרָא יִתְבַּרְךְ, יָשׁוּב לְבוֹ מִיִּרְאָתָם
יִתְקַוְתָם וְיִכְמַח עַל הַבּוֹרָא לְבָדוֹ, כְּמוֹ
שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר "אֵל תִּבְטְחוּ בְנִדְבִיכִים, כִּי בֶן אָדָם
שֶׁאֵין לוֹ תְּשׁוּעָה" (תהלים קמו, ג).

הַיְשׁוּעָה שֶׁיִּדְעֵה רַב טוֹב הָאֱלֹהִים עַל
הָאָדָם, וְזֶה שֶׁהִתְחִיל אוֹתוֹ בּוֹ מֵרַב
הַחֶסֶד וְהַטּוֹבָה, מִבְּלִי שֶׁיְהִיָּה רְאוּי אֲצִלוֹ
לְכָף, וְלֹא לְצָרָה שֶׁיְהִיָּה אֵלָיו, אֶךְ נְדָבָה
וְטוֹבָה וְחֶסֶד, כְּאֲשֶׁר בְּאִרְנוּ בְּשִׁעַר
הַבְּחִינָה מִן הַסִּפְרָה הַזֶּה. וְכְמוֹ שֶׁאֶמַר
דָּוִד עָלָיו הַשְּׁלוֹם "רַבּוֹת עָשִׂיתָ אֶתָּה ה'
אֱלֹהֵי נִפְלְאוֹתֶיךָ וּמַחְשַׁבּוֹתֶיךָ אֵלָינוּ,
אֵין עָרוֹךְ אֵלֶיךָ, אֲגִידָה וְאֶדְבָּרָה, עֲצֹמוֹ
מִסִּפְרָה" (תהלים מ, ו).

וְהַשְּׁבִיעִי, שֶׁיִּתְבַּרְר אֲצִלוֹ כִּי יֵשׁ לְכָל
הַתְּהוּוִיִּת שֶׁבְּעוֹלָם הַזֶּה מְעַצָּם וּמִקְרָה
גְּבוּל יְדוּעַ, וְלֹא יוֹסִיף וְלֹא יִנְרַע עַל מֵה
שֶׁנֶּגְזַר הַבּוֹרָא יִתְבַּרְךְ בְּכַמּוֹתוֹ וְאִיכּוֹתוֹ
וְזִמְנוֹ וּמִקּוֹמוֹ,

Likewise, when a person feels that no creation can either help him or harm him; without the permission of the Creator, blessed be He, this will cause him to stop being afraid of other people causing him harm and to stop relying on them to help him. Instead, he will rely solely on the Creator, as it says (in Tehillim 146:3): "Do not trust in princes, in the son of man, who has no salvation."

The sixth quality that a person must believe that G-d possesses in order to have trust, is that he must realize the great kindness that the Almighty bestows on people, and how He started already to be so kind and good with him, at the time of the beginning of his formation in the womb of his mother, without him being deserving of it, and without Him (i.e., G-d) having any need to do so. Rather, it is out of his generosity, goodness and kindness that he does so, as we explained in the Gate of Examination (*Shaar Habechina*) which is in this book. And as King David of blessed memory said (in Tehillim 40:6): "You have done great things, You, O Lord my God. Your wonders and Your thoughts are for us. There is none to equal You; were I to tell and speak, they would be too many to tell."

The seventh quality that a person must believe that G-d possesses in order to have trust, is that it should be clear to him, that all those things in existence in this world, both those that are essential, referring to the beings and objects themselves which were brought into creation and those that are accidental, referring to the events which happen to those objects and beings, have a clear and defined limit to them and it is impossible to add or subtract from that limit which G-d, may He be blessed, has decreed.

אין מרבה למה שגזר במעוטו, ולא
ממעט ממה שגזר ברבותו, ולא מאחר
למה שגזר להקדים, ולא מקדים למה
שגזר לאחרו.

One cannot change its quantity, quality, time or place; one cannot increase that which was decreed to be few, nor can one decrease that which was decreed to be many. Similarly, one will not be able to delay something which has been decreed to be early, nor is one able to hasten something which has been decreed to be delayed.

ומה שיהיה מן הדברים על ההפך מזה,
הוא הנגזר אשר קדם בתחלת הדיעה,
אלא שלכל הגזרות הקודמות בידיעת
הבורא סבות, ולסבות סבות.

That which does happen in this manner, has been decreed by the Creator from the beginning of creation. It is just that all the prior decrees of G-d which were in the foreknowledge of the Creator were decreed in such a way that they have direct causes which caused them to happen, and those causes have prior causes.

THE ILLUSION THAT A CREATION CAN BE A CAUSE

ומי שאינו מבין עניני העולם והשוב, כי
הסבה המתחדשת מחיבת שנוי הענינים
והתהפכותם מענין אל ענין.

However, someone who doesn't contemplate the manner in which the world is run, when seeing a change in reality, will think that it is the new "cause" that forces there to be a change in reality and which causes things to turn over from one matter to another.

והסבה חלושה ונקלה מהיות ממנה
שנוי או חלוף בעצמם, באשר נראה
הגריר האחד מן החטה מצמיח שלש
מאות שבליים, ובכל שבלת שלשים
גרירים, ויהיה הגריר האחד סבה
לעשרת אלפים או קרוב להם.

In truth however, the cause is too weak and insignificant, for it to be the cause of the change or to be able to turn around matters from the way they have been until now. As can be illustrated from the fact that a single grain of wheat produces three hundred ears, and each ear of grain has thirty grains, so that it emerges that one grain is the cause for ten thousand grains or close to that number to be produced.

היעלם כי כח הגריר חלוש מעשות
כמות זו, וכן שאר הגרירים הנזרעים
והנמועים.

Is it not apparent to a person's mind that the grain itself is too weak to be able to produce such a massive quantity. In a similar vein with regard to all other seeds which are sown and planted?

וכן נאמר בַּהַיּוֹת הָאֲדָמָה וּשְׂאֵר הַחַיִּים
מִמַּטַּת הַזֶּרַע וְכַמוֹ כֵּן הַיּוֹת הַדָּג הַגָּדוֹל
מִבִּיצַת הַדָּג עִם קִטְנוּתָהּ.

וּמְרַדַּת הַנֶּפֶשׁ לְהַקְדִּים מִה שְׂאֵחַר
הַבּוֹרָא יִתְעַלֶּה, וְלֵאחֵר מִה שְׂהַקְדִּים,
וְלֵהֲרֹבוֹת מִה שְׂהַמְעִיט, וְלֵהַמְעִיט מִה
שְׂהַרְבָּה, מִקְנִינֵי הָעוֹלָם, מִבְּלֵי סֶבֶב
אֵל קִיּוֹם מִצּוֹת עֲבוּדָתוֹ וְקַבּוּל תּוֹרָתוֹ,
חֲלִישׁוֹת הַהִכָּרָה בְּאִמְתּוֹת יְדִיעָתוֹ,
וְסִכְלוֹת מַהֲבִין מוֹבוֹת הַנְּהַגְתּוֹ.

וְכִבֵּר רַמְזוֹ הַחֶכֶם אֵל הָעִנְיָן הַזֶּה בְּמֵאֲמָרוֹ
"לְכָל זְמַן וְעַת לְכָל חֶפֶץ תַּחַת הַשָּׁמַיִם"
(קהלת ג, א), וְאֵחֵר כִּד זְכַר מֵהֶם
עֲשָׂרִים וּשְׁמוֹנֶה עֶנְיָנִים, וְהוּא מִה שְׂאָמַר
"עַת לְלֶדֶת וְעַת לְמוֹת" עַד אָמְרוֹ "עַת
מִלְחָמָה וְעַת שְׁלוֹם" (שם ג, ב-ח),
וְאָמַר "כִּי עַת וּפְגַע יִקְרָה אֶת כָּלָם"
(קהלת ט, יא), וְאָמַר "כִּי גְבָה מֵעַל גְּבָה
שׁוֹמֵר וּגְבָהִים עֲלֵיהֶם" (קהלת ה, ז).

Likewise, we will say regarding the creation of human beings and other living creatures which are created from a drop of semen. Here too it is apparent that the drop of semen itself does not have within itself the power to be the source of the entire person. This is also evidenced from the fact that a big fish is created from a small egg of a fish.

When a person troubles himself with efforts to provide for his financial needs or any other needs, to hasten that which the Creator may He be exalted has decreed should be delayed, or to delay that which has been decreed should be hastened, or by trying to produce many of that which has been decreed should be few, or by trying to produce few of that which has been decreed should be many, regarding matters of the world - with the exception of those matters which are necessary for the advancement of one's observance of mitzvot and the learning of Torah - it is due to one's weak understanding of G-d's foreknowledge, who knows and has already decided at the beginning of creation, all that is going to be. It is also due to a lack of understanding of the inherent goodness in which He conducts himself with the person, for in truth everything G-d does is for the good of the person.

This concept has already been alluded to by the Wise Man, King Solomon, when he said (in Kohelet 3:1): "Everything has an appointed season, and there is a time for every matter under heaven." After saying this he mentions twenty eight different things which each has its time, as he says (in Kohelet 3:2): "A time to give birth and a time to die" until the end of his list when he says (in Kohelet 3:8): "A time for war and a time for peace." Likewise, he says (in Kohelet 9:11): "for time and fate will overtake them all." He also says (in Kohelet 5:7): "for the Highest over the high waits, and there are higher ones over them."

והליכות דיני הבורא יתעלה יותר
נעלמות ועמוקות ועליונות מהגיע אל
ידיעת חלקיהן, כל שכן כללן. וכבר
אמר הכתוב "כי גבהו שמים מארץ,
כן גבהו דרכי מדרכיכם ומחשבותי
ממחשבותיכם" (ישעיה נה, ט).

The ways in which the Creator upholds his decrees are too hidden, deep and lofty for us to understand even part of them. All the more so, are we not capable of understanding all of them. Scripture already says (in Yeshayahu 55:9): "As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways and My thoughts are higher than your thoughts."

COMPLETE TRUST: NOT LIP-SERVICE

וההקדמה השנית, שידע ויתברר
אצלו כי הבורא יתברך משקוף עליו
ואין נעלם ממנו נגלהו ונסתרו וצפונו
וגראוהו, ואם בטחונו באלהיו בלב שלם
אם לא,

The second introduction is that he should know and it should be clear to him, that the Creator is looking over him and nothing is concealed from him, neither those actions that the person performs in public and are revealed for others to see, nor those actions that the person performs in private and are hidden from others. Even his thoughts are not concealed from G-d, both those that are hidden from other people as well as those thoughts which are apparent to other people through his speech and actions. G-d also knows if the person's reliance on him is wholehearted or not.

כאשר אמר הכתוב "ה' יודע מחשבות
אדם כי המה הבל" (תהלים צד, יא),
ואמר "הלא תוכן לבות הוא יבין"
(משלי כד, יב), ואמר "כי אתה לברך
ידעת את לב כל בני האדם" (דברי
הימים ב' ו, ל).

As the verse says (in Tehillim 94:11): "The L-rd knows the thoughts of man, that they are vanity," and as it says (in Mishlei 24:12): "Surely he understands the inner recesses of a person's heart," and as it says: (in Melochim I, 8:39) "For you alone know the hearts of all people."

וכשיתברר זה לבוטח, אין ראוי לו
למעון שהוא בוטח באלהים יתעלה
בדבורו, מבלי שיבטח עליו בלב
ובמצפונו, ויהיה במעלת מי שגאמר
עליהם "בפיו ובשפתיו בדרוני ולבו רחק
ממני" (ישעיה כט, יג).

When this becomes clear to the person who relies on G-d, then he will understand that it is not proper for him to claim that he is a person who relies on the Almighty, may He be exalted, as a result of him verbally doing so - without him truly relying on Him in his heart and in private. If he only pays lip service to having *bitachon*, then he will be on the level of those that it says about them (in Yeshayahu 29:13): "With his mouth and with his lips he honors me, but he distances his heart from me."

EXCLUSIVE TRUST IN GOD

וההקדמה השלישית, שייחוד אלהיו
בבטחונו בו כמה שהוא חייב לבטוח בו,
ואל ישתף זולתו עמו ויבטח עליו ועל
אחד מהברואים, ויפסד בטחונו באלהיו
בהשתתף זולתו עמו.

The third introduction necessary for a person in order to have proper *Bitachon* is that he singles out G-d, as the only one in whom he relies upon for those things regarding which he is obligated to rely on Him, and does not partner any other being with him, relying both on G-d as well as another being. For if he does so his trust in G-d will be ruined when he partners another being with Him.

וכבר ידעת מה שנאמר באסא עם
חסידותו עת שפסק על הרופאים,
דכתיב (דברי הימים ב' מז, יב) "וגם
בחליו לא דרש את ה' כי ברופאים",
ונענש על זה, ואמר הכתוב (ירמיה יז,
ז) "ברוך הגבר אשר יבטח בה' והיה ה'
מבטחו".

This is well known from that which is said regarding Assa the king of Judah, who, despite his great piety, at the time when he was ill, relied upon the doctors, as it is written (in Divrei Hayamim II 16:12): "And also when he was ill he did not seek the L-rd, only the doctors" and he was punished for this. Likewise, it says "Blessed is the man who relies on the L-rd and the L-rd will be his support."

ומן הידוע כי מי שימנה מבני אדם
שני ממנים או יותר לעשות דבר, מנויו
מפסד,

It is a well-known matter that when somebody appoints two or more people to perform a specific task, the appointment will fail.

כל שכן מי שבטח על האלהים וזולתו,
שיסתר בטחונו ויהיה זה הסבה החזקה
להמנע ממנו מה שבטח עליו, כמו
שאמר "ארור הגבר אשר יבטח באדם
ושם בשר זרועו ומן ה' יסור לבו"
(ירמיה יז, ה).

All the more so does this apply to one who relies on the Almighty as well as on others; that his reliance in G-d will be demolished. This will be the main reason why the matter about which he relied on G-d will be withheld from him. As it says in the verse (in Yirmiyahu 17:5): "Cursed is the man who relies on man and places flesh as his support, and who removes his heart away from the L-rd."

DO WHAT IS RIGHT

וההקדמה הרביעית, שתהיה השגחתו
חזקה והשתדלותו גדולה לקיים מה
שחיבו בו הבורא מעבודתו, ולעשות
מצותיו, ולהזהר מאשר הזהירו ממנו,
כפי מה שהוא מבקש שיהיה הבורא
מסכים לו במה שהוא בוטח עליו בו,

The fourth introduction is that the person should pay strong attention and make great efforts to uphold that which G-d has obligated him in as part of his service to him, both to do his mitzvot as well as to refrain from doing that which he has exhorted us not to do, in accordance with his requests. For then the Creator will agree to give him those things which he is relying on him for.

כמו שאמרו רבותינו זכרונם לברכה
"עשה רצונו כרצונך כדי שיעשה
רצונך כרצונו, כפול רצונך מפני רצונו
כדי שיכפל רצון אחרים מפני רצונך"
(משנה אבות ב, ד), ואמר הכתוב
"בטח בה' ועשה טוב, שכן ארץ ורעה
אמונה" (תהלים לו, ב), ואמר "טוב ה'
לקויו, לנפש תדרשנו" (איכה ג, כה).

As the Rabbis of blessed memory said (in the Mishna, Avot 2:4): "Make His will like your will, so that He may make your will as his will; nullify your will before his will, so that he may nullify the will of others before your will." As the verse says (in Tehillim 37:3): "Trust in the L-rd and do good, dwell in the land and be nourished by faith." Likewise, it says (in Eicha 3:25): "The L-rd is good to those who wait for Him, to the soul that seeks Him."

אבל מי שיבטח על הבורא והוא ממרה
אותו, במה הוא סכל וכמה דעתו
חלושה והפרתו,

However, one who relies on the Creator for his needs, while rebelling in Him, neglects the observance of mitzvot, how foolish he is and how weak is his knowledge and understanding.

כי הוא רואה כי מי שנתמנה לו מבני
אדם על דבר, כשהוא מצוה אותו
להתעסק בצורך מצרכיו או מזהיר אותו
מדרך ויעבור על מצותיו ויגיע לממנה
עברו על מצותו, כי יהיה הסבה החזקה
להמנע ממנו העשות מה שבטח עליו
בו.

For a person knows that if somebody is appointed by another person to do a specific job, whether he instructs him to busy himself with one of his needs, or whether he instructs him to refrain from a certain matter, and he then goes and disobeys those instructions; when the one who appointed him finds out that he disobeyed his instructions, it will be strong grounds for him to refrain from doing to him that which the other person had relied upon him to do.

כָּל שֶׁכֵּן מִי שֶׁעָבַר עַל חֻקי הָאֱלֹהִים
וּמִצְוֹתָיו אֲשֶׁר יָעַד וְהַעִיד עֲלֵיהֶם,
שֶׁתְּהִיָּה תוֹחֵלֶת הַבּוֹטֵחַ עָלָיו נִכְזָבָה
כְּשִׁמְרָהּ, וְלֹא יִהְיֶה רֹאֵי לְהַקְרֵא בְּשֵׁם
בּוֹטֵחַ בְּאֱלֹהִים,

אֲדָהּ הוּא כְּמוֹ שֶׁאָמַר הַכֶּתוּב (אִיּוֹב כו,
ח־ט) "כִּי מַה תִּקְוֶה חָנָף כִּי יִבְצָע כִּי
יִשָּׁל אֱלֹהֵי נַפְשׁוֹ, הֲצַעֲקָתוֹ יִשְׁמַע אֵל",
וְאָמַר (יִרְמִיָּה ז, ט) "הֲנִגְנוֹב רִצּוֹחַ וְנִאֻף
וְהִשְׁבַּע לְשֶׁקֶר", וְאָמַר (יִרְמִיָּה ז, י)
"וּבֵאתֶם וְעַמְדֶתֶם לְפָנַי בַּבַּיִת הַזֶּה אֲשֶׁר
נִקְרָא שְׁמִי עָלָיו", וְאָמַר (יִרְמִיָּה ז, יא)
"הֲמַעֲרַת פְּרִיצִים הִיָּה הַבַּיִת הַזֶּה אֲשֶׁר
נִקְרָא שְׁמִי עָלָיו".

If this applies with respect to relying on human beings, all the more so, would it apply to somebody who disobeys the Almighty's statutes and mitzvot, which he himself designated for us to observe and warned us about them, that the hopes of the one who relies on him will be dashed when he rebels against him, and he will not be fitting to be classified as "one who relies on the Almighty."

Rather, he is like the person about which Scripture says (in Iyov 27:8): "For what is the hope of a flatterer who robs, when G-d casts off his soul? Will G-d hearken to his cry?" and as it says (in Yirmiyahu 7:9): "Will you steal, murder, commit adultery, swear falsely" and then it says in the following verse regarding those people (Yirmiyahu 7:10): "Will you come and stand before Me in this house, upon which My name is called" and then it says in the next verse (Yirmiyahu 7:11): "Has this house upon which My name is called, become a cave of degenerate men".

HUMAN EFFORT

וְהַקְדָּמָה חֻמְיִשִּׁית, שִׁיתְּבָאֵר אֲצִלוֹ כִּי
הַשְּׁלֵמֹת הַדְּבָרִים הַמְתַּחַדְשִׁים בְּעוֹלָם
הַזֶּה לְאַחַר הַיְצִירָה, הוּא בְּשֵׁנֵי דְבָרִים,

אֶחָד מֵהֶם, גְּזֵרוֹת הַבּוֹרָא יִתְעַלֶּה וְחִפְצוֹ
בִּיצִיאָתָם אֶל גְּבוּל הַהֵוֶה, וְהִשְׁנִי סְבוֹת
וּמִצְוִעִים, מֵהֶם קְרוּבִים וּמֵהֶם רְחוּקִים,
וּמֵהֶם נִגְלִים וּמֵהֶם נִסְתָּרִים, וְכֻלָּם רְצִים
לְהַשְׁלִים מֵהַ שְׁנֵי גִזְרֵי הַבּוֹרָא וְהַרְאֹתוֹ
בְּעֶזֶר הָאֱלֹהִים לָהֶם עַל זֶה.

The fifth introduction is that it should be clear to him that the completion of all the matters which come to be in this world after its creation, come to be in one of two ways:

One of the manners in which they come to be is solely due to the decrees of the Creator, may he be exalted, and due to his desire that these things should immediately come into existence. The second manner, in which they come to be is through various means and intermediaries, some of those intermediaries are immediate to the matter which comes to be, while some of them are remote, some revealed and some hidden, but all of them hasten to complete that which He, G-d has decreed should be and how those things should appear, while the Almighty helps them do this.

וְדַמְיוֹן הַסְּבוֹת הַקְּרוֹבוֹת, כְּהוֹצֵאת הַמַּיִם מִמַּעַמְקֵי הָאָרֶץ בְּגִלְגַּל בְּכֵלִים הַמַּעֲלִים אֶת הַמַּיִם מִן הַבְּאֵר, וְסִפְתוֹ הִרְחוֹקָה, הָאָדָם שֶׁהוּא קוֹשֵׁר הַבְּהֵמָה אֶל הַגִּלְגַּל וּמְנִיעֶתוֹ לְהַעֲלוֹת הַמַּיִם מִתַּחַת־הַיָּד הַבְּאֵר אֶל פְּנֵי הָאָרֶץ.

אֲדָּה הַסְּבוֹת אֲשֶׁר בֵּין הָאָדָם וְהַכֵּלִים, מְצוּיִים בֵּין שְׁנֵי הַדְּבָרִים, וְהֵם הַבְּהֵמָה וְהַעֲגוּלִים, שֶׁמְנִיעַ קִצְתָּם אֶת קִצְתָּם, וְהַחֲכָל. וְאִם יִקְרָה פְּגַע לְאַחַת מִן הַסְּבוֹת הַנִּזְכָּרוֹת, לֹא יִגְמַר הָעֵנִין הַמְּכֻוֵן בָּהֶם.

וְכֵן שְׂאֵר הַמַּעֲשִׂים הַיּוֹצֵאִים אֶל גְּבוּל הַתְּהוֹמָה לֹא יִתְקַבְּצוּ מִן הָאָדָם וְזוּלָתוֹ, כִּי אִם בְּגִזְרַת הָאֱלֹהִים וְהוֹמְנָתוֹ הַסְּבוֹת אֲשֶׁר בֵּהֵן הַגְּמָרָם,

כְּמוֹ שֶׁאָמַר "וְלֹו נִתְּכְנוּ עֲלֵי לֹו" (שְׁמוּאֵל א' ב', ג'), וְאָמַר "גְּדוֹל הָעֵצָה וְרַב הָעֲלִילָה" (יִרְמִיָּה ל"ב, י"ט), וְאָמַר "כִּי הִיְתָה סִבָּה מֵעַם ה'" (מַלְכִים א' י"ב, מו').

וְאִם תִּהְיֶינָה הַסְּבוֹת נְעֻדְרוֹת בְּכֻלָּן, לֹא תִגְמַר יְצִיאַת דְּבַר מִן הַפְּעֻלוֹת הַטְּבֻעִיּוֹת אֶל גִּזְרַת הַתְּהוֹמָה.

An example of one of the immediate causes would be the drawing of water from the depths of the earth by means of a pulley system and a jug which is tied to it which draws the water out of the well. The remote cause would be the person who ties the animal to the rope which is attached to the vessel, and his moving of the animal which pulls the rope to draw the water from deep down in the well to the ground surface.

Then there are those causes which are in between the person and the vessels (which are being used to draw out the water), which are intermediary causes between the two matters. They are the animal, the wheels which move one another and the rope. If one of these above-mentioned causes would get ruined then the intended goal (of drawing the water) would not come to be.

Likewise, when it comes to other actions that come to be; they do not come to be as a result of people's actions or through any other entity. Rather they all exist due to the decree of G-d and his preparation of the means through which the action will be completed.

As it says (in Shmuel, 1 2:3): "to him all the causes have been counted," and as it says (in Yirmiyahu 32:19): "Who is great in counsel and master in carrying it out and as it says in the verse (in Melochim 1, 12:15): "for it was something brought about by the L-rd."

If the means would be lacking then nothing would come to be as a result of the natural activities.

PROOF THAT HUMAN INTERVENTION IS OFTEN NEEDED

וְכַאֲשֶׁר נִסְתַּכַּל בְּצִרְדָּה הָאָדָם לְסַבֵּב
וּלְהַתְגַּלְגַּל לְגַמֵּר עֲנִיּוֹ, נִמְצְאוּ בְּרֵאוֹת
הָעוֹן. כִּי הַצִּרְדָּה אֶל הַמְּזוֹן, כְּשִׁיּוֹשֵׁם
לְפָנָיו הַמֵּאֲכָל בְּרֵאוֹי לוֹ, אִם לֹא יִתְגַּלְגַּל
לְאָכְלוֹ בְּהִנְבְּהָתוֹ אֶל פִּיּוֹ וְלַעֲסוֹ לֹא
יִשְׂבֵּר רָעֲבוֹנוֹ. וְכֵן הַצֵּמָא בְּצִרְכּוֹ אֶל
הַמַּיִם.

When one will contemplate the needs of a person, how he is required to engage in various means and to exert himself in order to obtain his needs then we will clearly observe this to be the case that without the various means, the matter will not come into actuality. For when somebody needs food, even if the food is placed in front of him in a state already fit for him to eat, if he doesn't exert himself to eat it by lifting it up to his mouth and chewing it, he will not satiate his hunger. Likewise, somebody who is thirsty who is in need of water will also need to lift up the water to his mouth to drink it.

וְכָל שֶׁפֶן אִם יִמְנַע הַמֵּאֲכָל מִמֶּנּוּ עַד
שִׁיתְגַּלְגַּל לְתַקְנֵהוּ בְּטַחֲוִיָּה וְלִישָׂה וְאַפִּיָּה
וְהַדּוּמָה לוֹה.

All the more so, is effort necessary if the food is not ready for him to eat, so that he is required to exert himself to prepare it by grinding the flour and kneading the dough and baking the dough into bread and the like.

וְיֹתֵר גְּלוּל מִזֶּה וְקָשָׁה אִם יִצְטָרֵךְ
לְקַנְתוֹ וּלְתַקְנֵהוּ. וְיֹתֵר מִזֶּה עוֹד אִם
לֹא יוֹדְמֵנוּ לוֹ הַדָּמִים שִׁיקְנָה אוֹתוֹ
בָּהֶם, וְיִצְטָרֵךְ לְגַלְגֹּל וּלְסַבֵּב גְּדוֹל
מִמֶּה שִׁזְכְּרָנוּ קִדְּם שִׁישְׁתַּכֵּר בְּדָמִים אוֹ
שִׁימְכּוֹר מֶה שֶׁהוּא צָרִיךְ לוֹ מִחֻפְצִים
וְקִנְיָנִים וְכִיּוֹצֵא בָּהֶם.

More exertion than this will be necessary - and it will be even more difficult if he will need to buy it, as well as prepare it. Even more exertion than this will be necessary if he doesn't have the money with which to buy the food, in which case he will need a far greater exertion and involvement in various means than that which has been mentioned earlier. For then he will be required, either to hire himself out for work, or to sell some of his objects and possessions, or the like.

THE REASON FOR HUMAN EFFORT

וְהַעֲלָה אֲשֶׁר בַּעֲבוּרָה חַיֵּב הַבוֹרָא אֶת
הָאָדָם לְחַזֵּר וּלְסַבֵּב עַל סְבוֹת הַתְּרָף
וּשְׂאָר מֶה שֶׁהוּא צָרִיךְ אֵלָיו, לְשִׁנֵּי פָּנִים.

There are two reasons why the Creator made it in such a way that a person must make efforts to pursue and search for the means of his livelihood and other needs:

אחד מהם, מפני שחיבה החכמה בחינת הנפש בעבודת האלהים ובהמרותו, בחן אותה במה שמראתה זה ממנה, והוא הצורך והחסרון אל מה שהוא חוץ לה ממאכל ומשתה ומלבוש ומעון ומשגל, וצוה אותם לחזור עליהם להביאם בפסות המוכנות להם, על פנים מיוחדים ועתים ודועים.

ומה שגזר הבורא שיוגמר לאדם מהם, יגמר וישלם בהשלמת הזדמנות הסבות. ואשר לא גזר לו להגמר בהם, לא יגמר, וימנעו ממנו הסבות.

ונתבררו ממנו העבודה והעברה בכונה ובבחירה לאחת מהנה מבלתי האחרת, ויתחייב אחר זה הגמול והענש, ואפלו לא גמר בהם המעשה.

והשני, כי אלו לא הצורך האדם למרות ולחזור ולסבב להבאת מרפו, הנה בוטט ורודף אחר העברות, ולא הנה משגיח על מה שהוא חייב בו על טובת האלהים עליו,

The first reason is because G-d in his wisdom decided to test the person, as to whether he will choose the service of the Almighty or to rebel against Him. Therefore He tested him in a matter through which it will be evident which path he chose. The way He did this is by causing a person to be needy and lacking that which is outside of him, be it food or drink, clothing, shelter or cohabitation. He then instructed the people to pursue these things and to obtain them through means which he prepared for them, but only in specific manners and in specific times.

Those things that the Creator decreed that the person will obtain, he will obtain as a result of G-d making available all the means that he requires, while those things which G-d did not decree that he will obtain, he will not obtain them since those means will be withheld from him.

As a result, it will become clear if he wishes to serve him or disobey him, based on his choice of the means with which he chooses to obtain his needs. On account of this he will either be rewarded or punished, even if he did not end up obtaining that which he tried to obtain.

The second reason why G-d made it that people be required to make efforts and employ various means to obtain their livelihood is because if a person would not need to exert himself to pursue and search for means of sustainment, he would rebel and pursue that which is forbidden, and he would not pay attention to his obligations toward G-d in exchange for the kindness of G-d over him.

כמו שנאמר (ישעיה ה, יב) "והיה כנור ונגבל תוף וחליל וזין משותיהם, ואת פעל ה' לא יביטו ומעשה ידיו לא ראו", ואמר (דברים לב, טו) "וישמון ישראל ויבטט, שמנת עבית כשית, וימש אלוה עשהו".

As it says (in Yeshayahu 5:12): "And there are harp and lute, tambourine and flute, and wine at their drinking feasts; and the work of the L-rd they do not regard, and the deed of His hands they have not seen." Likewise, it says (in Devarim 32:15): "And Jeshurun became fat and rebelled; you grew fat, thick and plump; Israel forsook the G-d Who made them."

ואמרו זכרונם לברכה (משנה אבות ב, ב) "יפה תלמוד תורה עם דרך ארץ שיגיעת שניהם משפחת עון, וכל תורה שאין עמה מלאכה סופה במלה וגזירת עון".

In a similar vein, the Rabbis of blessed memory, said (in Avot 2:2): "Torah study goes well with *Derech Eretz* (work), since the toil of both of them makes misdeed scarce. Any Torah study that is not accompanied by work will cease in the end, and lead to misdeed."

וכל שכן מי שאין לו חלק באחת מהן, ולא שם לבו על אחת מהן.

All the more so would someone rebel if he doesn't have either one of these, and does not pay attention to either one of them.

והיה מחמלת הבורא יתעלה על האדם שהמרירו בעניני עולמו ואחריתו להתעסק כל ימי חייו בזה, ולא יבקש מה שאינו צריך לו ולא יוכל להשיגו בשכלו, כמו עניני ההתחלה והתכלה, כמו שאמר החכם (קהלת ג, יא) "גם את העולם נתן בלבם, מבלי אשר לא ימצא האדם את המעשה אשר עשה האלהים מראש ועד סוף".

It is out of the compassion of the Creator on man, that He preoccupied him with being busy all the days of his life with obtaining his worldly needs and with doing Torah and mitzvot which serve as provisions for the world to come in order that he will not have time to seek out that which he does not need and that which he is not able to comprehend with his intellect, such as those matters pertaining to the beginning of creation and the end of the world. Like the Wise Man, King Solomon said (in Kohelet 3:11): "Also the [wisdom of] the world He put into their hearts, save that man should not find the deed which G-d did, from beginning to end."

THE RIGHTEOUS PERSON: WHEN MAN NEEDS NOT TO TOIL

ואם הוא מגביר עבודת האלהים ובוחר ביראתו, ובוטח בו בעניני תורתו ועולמו, וסר מן הדברים המגנים, וכסף למדות הטובות, לא יבעט במנוחה, ולא יטה אל השלחה, ולא ישאהו היצר, ולא יפת בכשפי העולם,

If a person strengthens himself in the service of the Almighty, choosing to be fearful of Him, and to rely on him both with regard to Torah matters as well as with regard to worldly matters; In addition, if he turns away from inappropriate character traits and instead, strives toward good character traits, does not rebel against G-d even at times when he is at rest from his stresses and does not turn toward leisure, rather constantly involves himself with the service of G-d, not being swayed by his evil inclination nor being enticed by the indulgences of the world.

יסתלק מעליו מרח הגלגול והסבוב בהקאת מרפו, מפני הסתלקות שני הפנים הנזכרים מעליו, הבחינה והבעיטה בטובה ויבואהו מרפו בלי מרח ובלי יגיעה כפי ספוקו ומזונו, כמו שנאמר "לא ירעב ה' נפש צדיק" (משלי י, ג).

Then in turn, such a person will be relieved from the need to exert himself in the search to obtain his sustainment, since the two reasons mentioned above why a person is required to make efforts to provide for himself, namely, for the purpose of the testing of man by G-d to see whether he will choose permitted or forbidden means of obtaining his needs and so that a person will not rebel due to the goodness that he enjoys, do not apply to him. Instead he will be sustained without any exertion or hard work, according to his needs and sustainment as it is written (in Mishlei 10:3): "The L-rd will not starve the soul of the righteous."

THE RIGHTEOUS SUFFER AND WICKED PROSPER

ואם יאמר האומר, הנה אנהנו רואים מקצת צדיקים לא יודמן להם מרפם אלא אחרי העמל והיגיעה, ורבים מאנשי העברות בשלחה וחייהם בטוב ובנעימים. נאמר, כי כבר קדמו הנביאים והחסידים לחקור על זה הענין,

If one will ask: Behold we see some righteous people whose sustainment becomes available to them only after much hard work and toil, while we find many sinners who are at peace and live good and pleasant lives. We will respond by saying, that the prophets and Pious have already preceded you in questioning this matter,

מהם מי שאמר "מדוע דרך רשעים
צלחה" (ירמיה יב, א), ואמר האחר
"למה תראני און ועמל תביט וישד והמם
לנגדי, ויהי ריב ומדון וישא" (חבקוק א,
ג), ואמר "כי רשע מכתיר את הצדיק"
(חבקוק א, ד), ואמר "תחריש בכלע
רשע צדיק ממנו" (חבקוק א, יג),

ואמר אחר "הנה אלה רשעים ושלוי
עולם השגו חיל" (תהלים עג, יב), ואמר
"אך ריק זכיתי לכבי וארחץ בנקיון פני,
ואהי נגוע כל היום ותוכחתי לבקרים"
(תהלים עג, יג-יד). ואמר אחר על אנשי
דורו "גם בחנו אלהים וימלטו" (מלאכי
ג, טו), והרבה כזה.

אך הניח הנביא התשובה בבאור עלת
זה, מפני שעלת כל אחד מן הצדיקים
הנבחרים, וכל אחד מן הרשעים שהם
בטובה בעולם הזה, זולת עלת האחר.

לבן העיר על זה באמר "הנסתרות לה'
אלהינו והנגלות לנו ולבנינו" (דברים
כמ, כח)

Such as one of them, Yirmiyahu who said (in Yirmiyahu 12:1): "Why has the way of the wicked prospered?", and another prophet, Chavakuk said (Chavakuk 1:3): "Why do You show me iniquity and look upon mischief; and plunder and violence are before me; and the one who bears quarrel and strife endures?" And he said in the following verse (Chavakuk 1:4): "For a wicked man surrounds the righteous", and he said (in the same chapter, verse 13) "You be silent when a wicked man swallows up one more righteous than he".

Another Prophet, King David, said (in Tehillim 73:12): "Behold these are the wicked, and they are ever tranquil, they have gained much wealth," and as he said in the following two Pessukim (in Tehillim 73: 12-14): "Surely in vain have I purified my heart, and washed my hands in cleanliness; for I was afflicted all day, and my rebuke came each morning." Another Prophet, Malachi, said about the people of his generation (Malachi 3:15): "They also tempt G-d, and they have, nevertheless, escaped." And there are many other verses like this.

Yet, while the prophets asked this question, they did not offer a response which explains the reason for this. This is because the reason why each righteous person is tested with poverty, as well as the reason why each wicked person is blessed with good in this world, is different one from the other.

Therefore, it merely commented regarding this matter, in general terms, when it says (in Devarim 29:28): "The hidden things belong to the L-rd, our G-d, but the revealed things apply to us and to our children."

ואמר החכם בדומה לזה "אם עשק רש וגול משפט וצדק תראה במדינה, אל תתמה על החפץ" (קהלת ה, ז), ואמר הכתוב "הצור תמים פעלו, כי כל דרכיו משפט" (דברים לב, ד).

The Wise Man, Shlomo Hamelech likewise said (Kohelet 5:7): "If you see oppression of the poor and deprivation of justice and righteousness in the province, wonder not about the matter," and Scripture says (in Devarim 32:4): "The deeds of the [Mighty] Rock are perfect, for all of His ways are just."

REASONS FOR THE RIGHTEOUS SUFFERING

ועם כל זה ראיתי לבאר בענין הזה מה שהיה בו מעט הספקה.

Nonetheless, I have seen a need to explain this matter - why some righteous people suffer, while some wicked people prosper - in such a manner that it should be somewhat sufficient of an explanation.

ואמר, כי הפנים אשר בעבורם ימנע מהצדיק הודמנות מרפו עד שימרח עליו ויכתן בו:

I will say that the reasons why the righteous person's livelihood is withheld from him, until he exerts himself to obtain it and is tested in it are as follows:

אפשר שיהיה עון שקדם לו התחייב להפרע ממנו עליו, כמו שנאמר "הן צדיק בארץ ישלם" (משלי יא, לא).

It is possible that it is because of a sin that he performed previously which he was liable to be punished for. As it says (in Mishlei 11:31): "Behold! The righteous man will be paid for his sins on earth."

ויש שיהיה על דרך התמורה בעולם הבא, כמו שכתוב "להיטיבך באחריתך" (דברים ח, מז).

Another possible rationale for the righteous' suffering: There are some righteous who suffer in exchange for increased reward in the world to come. As it is written (in Devarim 8:16): "To benefit you in your end".

ויש שיהיה להראות סבלו והסברתו הטובה בעבודת הבורא ותבירו כדי שילמדו בני אדם ממנו, כמו שידעת מענין איוב.

Another possible rationale: There are some righteous who suffer, to show other people his level of tolerance of his suffering and his good demeanor in the service of his Creator, so that other people can learn from him, as we know from the story of *Iyov*.

וַיֵּשׁ שְׂיֵהִיָּה לְרִשְׁעֵי אֲנָשֵׁי דוֹרוֹ, וַיִּבְחַנְהוּ הַבּוֹרָא יִתְעַלָּה בְּעֵנֵי וּבְרִישׁ וּבְחַלְאִים לְהַרְאוֹת חֲסִידוֹתוֹ וְעִבּוֹדָתוֹ לְאֱלֹהִים מִבְּלַעֲדֵיהֶם, כְּמוֹ שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר "אֲכַן חָלִינִי הוּא נֶשָׂא וּמְכַאֲבֵינוּ סְבָלָם" (ישעיה נג, ד).

There are some righteous who suffer due to the wickedness of the people of their generation, and the Creator tests him with poverty, want and illness, to show other people his piety and service of G-d. This is in contrast to those other people who don't serve G-d despite their peaceful lives. As it says (in Yeshayahu 53:4) "Indeed, he bore our illnesses, and our pains, he carried them". This verse is discussing Moshiach who will endure suffering as a result of the sins of the people in his generation.

וַיֵּשׁ שְׂיֵהִיָּה מִפְּנֵי שְׂאִינְנוּ מְקַנָּא לְאֱלֹהִים לְקַחַת הַדִּין מֵאֲנָשֵׁי דוֹרוֹ, כְּמוֹ שְׂיִדְעַתָּ מַעֲנֵן עָלָי וּבְנִי שְׂאָמַר בְּהֵם הַכְּתוּב "וְהָיָה כָּל הַנּוֹתָר בְּבֵיתְךָ יָבֹוא לְהִשְׁתַּחֲוֹת לוֹ לְאַגְרוֹת כֶּסֶף וְכֶכֶר לָהֶם" (שמואל א' ב, לו).

There are some righteous people who suffer because, although they are righteous in their own personal lives, they are not zealous for the sake of G-d, in protesting the sins of the people of their generation as you know from the story with *Elli* and his sons, which Scripture (in Shmuel 1, 2:36) says about them: "And it will be that everyone who is left in your house, will come to prostrate himself before him for a silver piece and a morsel of bread."

REASONS FOR THE WICKED PROSPERING

אָבַל טוֹבַת הָאֵל יִתְבַּרַךְ עַל הַרְשָׁע:

But the kindness that the Almighty blessed be He performs on behalf of the wicked are for the following reasons:

יֵשׁ שְׂתֵהִיָּה בְּעִבּוּר טוֹבָה שֶׁקִּדְמָה לוֹ וַיִּמְלְהוּ הָאֱלֹהִים עָלֶיהָ בְּעוֹלָם הַזֶּה, כְּמוֹ שְׂאָמַר "וּמִשְׁלָם לְשׂוֹנְאָיו אֵל פְּנֵי לְהַאֲבִידוֹ (דברים ז, י) וְתִרְגְּמוּ בוֹ הַרְאֵשׁוֹנִים: "וּמִשְׁלָם לְסִנְאוֹהֵי טָבָן דֵּי אַנְוִן עֲבָדִין קְדְמוֹהֵי בְּתִיָּהוֹן לְאוֹבְדֵיהוֹן".

There are some wicked people who prosper, due to their previous good deeds which the Almighty rewards them for in this world, as it says in (Devarim 7:10): "And He repays those who hate Him, to their face, to cause them to perish" which one of the early commentators, Onkelos, translated as follows: "And he rewards those who hate him - for the good deeds that they have performed before him - in this world, in order to ultimately destroy them in the world to come."

וַיֵּשׁ שְׂתֵהִיָּה עַל דְּרֹךְ הַפְּקֻדִין אֲצִלוּ עַד
שִׁיתָן לוֹ הָאֵל יִתְבָּרַךְ בֶּן צַדִּיק יִהְיֶה
רְאוּי לָהּ, כְּמוֹ שֶׁאָמַר "יִבִּין וְצַדִּיק
יִלְבָּשׁ" (איוב כו, ז), וְאָמַר "וְלַחֹמֵא
נָתַן עֲנִין לְאִסּוּף וְלַכְּנוּם לָתֵת לְטוֹב לְפָנַי
הָאֱלֹהִים" (קהלת ב, כו).

וְאִפְשֵׁר שְׂתֵהִיָּה הַסְּבָה הַגְּדוֹלָה
שֶׁבְּסִבּוֹת מוֹתוֹ וְרַעְתּוֹ, כְּמוֹ שֶׁכְּתוּב
"עֲשֵׂר שְׂמֹר לְבַעֲלָיו לְרַעְתּוֹ" (קהלת
ה, יב).

וְאִפְשֵׁר שְׂתֵהִיָּה לְהֶאֱרִיךְ הַבוֹרָא יִתְעַלֶּה
לוֹ עַד שֶׁיִּשׁוּב וְיִהְיֶה רְאוּי לָהּ, כְּמוֹ
שֶׁיִּדְעַתָּ מֵעֲנִין מְנַשֶּׁה.

וַיֵּשׁ שְׂתֵהִיָּה לְחֶסֶד שֶׁקָּדַם אָבִיו וְהִיָּה
רְאוּי לְהִיטִיב לְכַנּוֹ בַּעֲבוּרָו,

כְּמוֹ שֶׁאָמַר לִיהוּא בֶּן נִמְשִׁי "בְּנֵי רִבְעִים
יִשְׁבוּ לָךְ עַל כִּסֵּא יִשְׂרָאֵל" (מלכים ב'
י, ל), וְאָמַר "מִתְהַלֵּךְ בְּתַמּוֹ צַדִּיק אֲשֶׁרֵי
בְּנָיו אַחֲרָיו" (משלי כ, ז), וְאָמַר "נֶעַר
הָיִיתִי גַם זָקֵנְתִי וְלֹא רָאִיתִי צַדִּיק נֶעְזֵב
וְזָרְעוֹ מִבְּקֵשׁ לֶחֶם" (תהלים לו, כה).

וַיֵּשׁ שְׂתֵהִיָּה לְנִסּוֹת אֲנָשֵׁי הַתְּרַמִּיּוֹת
וְהַמְצַפּוֹנִים הַרְעִים, כְּשֶׁהֵם רוֹאִים זֶה
מִמֵּהֶרִים לְסוּר מֵעֲבוּדַת הַבוֹרָא וְחָשִׂים
לְהַתְרַצוֹת אֶל אֲנָשֵׁי הַרְשָׁע וְלִלְמוּד
מִמַּעֲשֵׂיהֶם,

Sometimes, the good fortune of the wicked is like a deposit by him, and remains with him until the Almighty will give him a righteous son, who will be deserving of it. The wicked person only amasses wealth so that his righteous son can inherit it. As it says (in Iyov 27:17): "He will prepare, and a righteous man will wear them" Likewise it says in the verse (Kohelet 2:26): "But to the sinner He has given an occupation to gather and to accumulate, to give to him who is good in God's sight."

It is possible that the reason why the wicked person is given good, is so that it will be the main cause for his death or for his bad fortune, as it is written in the verse (Kohelet 5:12): "Riches kept by their owner for his harm."

Additionally, it is possible that despite being wicked, the Creator allows him to have good fortune for a while, until he repents and will be deserving of it, as you know from the story of Menashe.

Some wicked people are given good fortune due to an act of kindness that his father performed, and therefore it is fitting for G-d to be kind to his son as a result of it.

As G-d said to Yehu the son of Nimshi (in Melochim 2, 10:30): "Your descendants of the fourth generation shall occupy the throne of Israel" and as it says (in Mishlei 20:7): "He who walks innocently is righteous; fortunate are his sons after him." Likewise, it says (in Tehilim 37:25): "I was young, I also aged, and I have not seen a righteous man forsaken and his seed seeking bread."

Sometimes, G-d makes wicked people prosper for the purpose of testing those tricksters who pretend to be righteous so that they can deceive others and those who hide their wickedness out of fear of other people. When these people see this (i.e., the success of the wicked), they hasten to turn away from the service of the Creator, and try to appease the wicked people and learn from their ways.

ויתברר הנבר לאלהים ויראה הנאמן
בעבודתו, בקבלו עת ששולטין בו
ומבייטין אותו, ויקבל שכר מהבורא
יתעלה על זה, כמו שידעת מענין אליהו
עם איזבל, וירמיהו עם מלכי דורו.

כיון שהתברר חיוב הגלגול על הסבות
על בני אדם, נבאר עתה כי אין כל אדם
חייב לחזור על כל סבה מסבות הפורה,

כי הסבות רבות, מהן נקלות שטרחה
מעט, כסחורה בחנות, או מלאכת
יד שטרחה מעט כתפירה וכאחוי,
והספרות ואצור המסחרים ושכיר
הארסים והפועלים והשמשים בעבודת
האדמה.

ומהן סבות יש בהן יגיעה ומרח, בעבוד
העורות, והוצאת הברזל והנחשת
והעופרת מן מוצאיהם, וזקוק הכסף
בעופרת, ונשוא המשאות הכבדות,
ולכת בדרכים רחוקים תמיד, ועבודת
האדמה וחרישתה, וכיוצא בהם.

ומי שהוא מבני אדם חזק בגופו וחלש
בהכרתו, ראוי לו מהן מה שיש בו מן
היגיעה כפי שיכול לסבול,

As a result it will become clear as to who is the wholehearted in his service of G-d and it will become apparent as to who is loyal in his service of G-d, when they tolerate those times when others rule over them and embarrass them for it. He will receive reward from the Creator for this, as you know from the story of *Eliyahu* who was pursued by *Izevel*, and likewise with *Yirmiyahu* who was persecuted by the rulers of his generation. Choosing an occupation: What do you love doing?

Since it has been demonstrated above, that people are obligated to make efforts to engage in the means of obtaining their livelihood and other needs, we will now explain that not every person is obligated to pursue each means of obtaining one's livelihood, as there are many different means in which one can engage in.

Some of those means are relatively easy, as they entail little exertion, such as selling merchandise in the store, or engaging in types of handiwork that involve little exertion such as sewing, weaving, writing or storing merchandise and safeguarding it until it goes up in value. Other examples of easy occupations include those who contract sharecroppers and other workers to work the land and those who are responsible to oversee the workers who are working the land.

However, there are other means of obtaining one's livelihood which involve much toil and exertion, such as tanning skins, mining iron and copper from the depths of the ground, refining silver using lead, lifting heavy loads, regular long distance travel, working the land and plowing it and the like.

For a person who is physically strong, but intellectually weak, it is appropriate that he chooses one of those occupations (mentioned above) that require toil, but only as much as he can tolerate.

ומי שהוא חלש בגופו והפּרתו חזקה,
אל יבקש מסבּות המרר מה שמונע
גופו, אך יטה אל מה שיהיה קל על גופו
ויוכל להתמיד עליו.

ולכל אדם יש חפץ במלאכה או סוּרָה
מבּלתי וולתה, כּבר הטביע האל לה
במבועו אהבה וחכה,

וכן בשאר החיים, כמו שהטביע במבוע
החתול צידת העכברים, ובמבוע הנץ
צידת מה שראוי לו מן העוף, ובמבוע
האיל צידת הנחשים, וכן יש מן העופות
שיצודו הדגים לבד, וכן במבוע מין ומין
ממיני החיים נטיה ותאוה אל מין ממיני
הצמחים והחיים, הטביע עליו להיות
סבה למזונו

ותכונת גופו ואבריו ראויין לדבר שהוא,
כפה הארץ והשוק הארץ לעוף שהוא
צד את הדגים, וכשן והצפרן החזק
לארי, והקרניים לשור ולאיל, ואשר תוכן
מזונו מן הצמח לא נתן לו כלי הציד
והמרר.

ועל הדמיון הזה תמצא מדות בני אדם
וגופותם מוכנות לסחורות ולמלאכות.

Conversely, one who is physically weak but has strong intellect should not pursue those means of livelihood that tire out the body, instead he should turn to those occupations which are easier on the body, and will therefore be able to engage in constantly.

In truth, every person has more of a desire for one type of work or commerce than others, which the Almighty has ingrained in his very nature to love and cherish.

So too, we find by other living creatures, that G-d ingrained in their very nature, the means with which they sustain themselves, like that which He ingrained in the nature of a cat to prey on mice, in the nature of the hawk to prey on those birds which are fitting for it, and in the nature of the deer to prey on snakes. Likewise, there are certain birds which will only prey on fish. In a similar fashion, G-d ingrained in the nature of each and every living species a predisposition and a desire for one of the species of plants or living creatures so that they shall serve as its source of food.

Even the makeup of the body and limbs of each species of living creatures are such, so that they are fit for the consumption of the food that it is in their nature to eat, as is evidenced by the long mouths and long legs of the bird which preys on fish, by the teeth and sharp nails of the lion, and by the horns of the bull and the ram. However, those animals whose food is from vegetation, G-d did not give them body parts to use as instruments with which to hunt and prey.

In a similar manner, you will find that the various character traits of people and the makeup of their bodies are each suited for a specific type of business or work.

ומי שמוצא במדותיו ומבכו פסוף אל
מלאכה מהמלאכות ויהיה גופו ראוי לה
ויכול לסבול את מרחקה, יחזור עליה וישים
אותה סבה להקצת מזונו,

ויסבול מתקנה ומרירותה, ואל יקוין
כשימנע ממנו המרף בקצת העתים, אך
יבטח באלהים שיספיק לו מרפו כל ימי
חיו.

One who finds that his character traits and nature are suited for a certain work and also by nature desires it, and whose body is suited for it, and is able to tolerate the exertion which is required for it, should pursue it and make it his means for obtaining his livelihood.

He should tolerate both its pleasant aspects as well as its difficult aspects. He shouldn't become sick with it, if at times it doesn't sufficiently provide for his sustenance. Rather he should rely on the Almighty, that he will provide him with sufficient livelihood for his entire life.

ATTITUDE TOWARDS ONE'S WORK

ויכון במרדת לבו וגופו בסבה מן הסבות
והסבוב עליה, לעמוד במצות הבורא
שצוה האדם להתעסק בסבות העולם,
כעבודת האדמה וחרישתה וזריעתה,
כמו שכתוב "ויקח ה' אלהים את האדם
ויניחהו בגן עדן לעבדה ולשמרה"
(בראשית ב, טו),

ולהשתמש בשאר בעלי חיים
בתולדותיו ומזונו ובגן המדינות והקנת
המזונות, ולהשתמש בנשים ולבעול
אותן להרבות הזרע.

When one's mind and body are occupied with the means of obtaining one's livelihood as well as when he is pursuing those means, he should have in mind that he is doing so in order to fulfill the commandment of the Creator who instructed a person to engage himself in worldly means of obtaining his livelihood, such as the working of the land, plowing it and sowing it. As it is written (in Bereshit 2:15): "The L-rd, G-d took the man, and He placed him in the Garden of Eden to work it and to guard it".

Likewise, G-d instructed a person to use out the living creatures for his benefit and food, for the development of the countries, and to prepare food from them. He instructed us to use women, by cohabiting with them for the purpose of bearing children.

ויהיה נשָׁכָר על כוונתו בהם לאלהים
 בלבד ומצפּוֹנוֹ, בֵּין שִׁינְמַר לוֹ חֲפֵצוֹ
 בֵּין שֶׁלֹא יִנְמַר לוֹ חֲפֵצוֹ, כְּמוֹ שֶׁכָּתוּב
 "וַיֵּיטֵב כִּפְיָךְ כִּי תֹאכַל אֶשְׂרֵיךָ וְטוֹב
 לָךְ" (תהלים קכח, ב), וְאָמְרוּ רַבּוֹתֵינוּ
 זְכוּרָנָם לְבָרְכָה "וְכָל מַעֲשֵׂיךָ יִהְיוּ לְשֵׁם
 שָׁמַיִם" (משנה אבות ב, יב).

ויהיה בטחונו באלהים שלם, ולא יִזְקֵנו
 הסבוב על הסבות להקצאת טרפו בהם
 מאומה כשהוא מכון בהם בלבד ומצפּוֹנוֹ
 לִשְׁם שָׁמַיִם.

ואל יחשוב כי טרפו מעמד על סבה
 ידועה ושואם תמנע הסבה יהיה ממנו
 לא יבא בסבה אחרת, אבל יבטח על
 האלהים בטרפו,

וידע כי הסבות בלן אצל הבורא שוות,
 יטריפהו כמה שירצה מהן ובעת שירצה
 מאיזה ענין שירצה,

כמו שאמר הכתוב "אין לה מעצור
 להושיע ברב או במעט" (שמואל א' יד,
 ו), וְאָמַר "כִּי הוּא הַנוֹתֵן לָךְ כֹּחַ לַעֲשׂוֹת
 חֵיל" (דברים ה, יח), וְאָמַר "לֹא בְחֵיל
 וְלֹא בְכַח כִּי אִם בְּרוּחִי אֲמַר ה' צְבָאוֹת"
 (זכריה ד, ו).

A person will be rewarded for doing these actions when his intention in doing them is for the sake of G-d. He will be rewarded, regardless of whether or not he achieves that which he desired, as it is written (in Tehillim 128:2): "If you eat the toil of your hands, you are praiseworthy, and it is good for you," and as the Rabbis of blessed memory said (in the Mishna Avot 2:12): "All your deeds should be for the sake of Heaven."

When his intention is for the sake of Heaven, then his reliance on G-d will be wholesome, and his efforts in engaging with the various means to obtain his livelihood will not in any way harm his trust in G-d.

A person shouldn't think that his livelihood hinges upon the specific means of livelihood that he chose for himself, and that were that means to be withheld from him, then his livelihood would not come through other means. Instead, he should rely on G-d that he will sustain him.

He should also recognize that from the perspective of the Creator, all the various means are equal, and He can sustain him in whichever one of these means that He chooses and at any time that He chooses, and in any manner in which He decides.

As Scripture says (in Shmuel 1, 14:6): "For with the L-rd there is no limitation to save with many or with few," and as it says (in Devarim 8:18): "For it is He that gives you strength to make wealth," and as it says (in Zecharya 4:6): "Not by military force and not by physical strength, but by My spirit, says the L-rd of Hosts."